

Social and Economic Integration of Cultural Heritage in Austria

From Past to Presence: The Widening of the Term "Preservation of Monuments and Sites"

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Some months ago the Federal Office for the Preservation of Monuments in Austria celebrated its 150 anniversary of state protection:

In 1850 it was recognized that the protection of monuments has to be partly the state's responsibility which led to the foundation of the "K.K. Central-Commission zur Erforschung und Erhaltung der Baudenkmale" (Imperial Commission for the Investigation and Maintenance of Historical Monuments)¹. This commission consisted of several scientists who worked on a voluntary basis and had at first only advisory function.

Examples:

- Adalbert Stifter, the famous Austrian writer, was member of this commission and became one of the most important persons in the development of monument's preservation in Austria².

In 1923, only some years after the founding of the Republic in Austria, the first law on the protection of monuments was created, which is still valid – naturally with many revisions.

The big tradition of monument preservation in Austria can be underlined by mentioning names like Josef Alexander Helfert who created already in 1845 the first inventarisaton card³, Alois Riegl, who formulated the values of monuments on a scientific basis for the first time in the world in 1903 in his famous book "Der moderne Denkmalkultus"⁴, or Max Dvorak, who showed in 1916 in his book "Katechismus der Denkmalpflege"⁵, the importance of the surrounding of monuments.

Protection of monuments and sites in Austria from the time after the Second World War up to now is characterized by a continuous widening of the term "monument", following the European wide development.

We should not forget that till the end of the fifties in the 20th century this generation of politicians, architects and art historians had to deal primarily with the reconstruction of their towns after the damages of the war, that means, more or less, with single monuments.

Examples⁶:

- Vienna, St. Stephan's Cathedral, going back to roman and gothik times, burnt out in 1945, restored immediately after the Second World War.

- Vienna, Opera house, built 1861-69 by plans of August Sicard von Sicardsburg and Eduard van der

Nüll, bombed in 1945, reopened in 1955.

Even since the beginning of the 20th century - thanks to movements like the famous "Bund Heimatschutz" in Dresden, which was founded in 1904 - the importance of manmade and natural sites was well known. This lasted more than 50 years till this importance was accepted legally and practically.

The famous "loi Malraux", the first law on urban revitalization in Europe, passed in France in 1962 had a large influence in Austria⁷. With this the first laws on protected zones were created in 1968 for Salzburg and in 1972 for Vienna.

An amendment of the old Monument-Protection-Act in 1978 used the term "Ensemble" for the first time as criteria for the protection of monument heritage. Already some years before, in 1972, UNESCO in Paris passed the World Heritage Convention, where for the first time in the world the equal importance of architecture and its natural surroundings, especially the importance of their interactivity were deposited officially.

Austria signed this international act in 1993 with more than twenty years of delay...In this context special attention has to be given in regard to the protection of historical parks and gardens in Austria.

Example:

Vienna, garden and palace of Schönbrunn from baroque times⁸, the first Austrian monument, set on the World Heritage List in 1996.

In 1964 the Court of Constitution ("Verfassungsgerichtshof") declared that "appearances of forms of nature, as there are fields, tree-lined alleys and parks, are not monuments in the sense of the law". That means parks and gardens have been part of the Protection-Act of Nature, which is under separate jurisdiction of each Austrian province.

But of course the guidelines, which are expressed in the 1981 Charta of Florence, have been accepted in Austria too and in 1986 even a special department for historical gardens was founded within the Federal Office for the Protection of Monuments. Finally in the most recent amendment of the old law dating from 1923, which came into effect on 1st January, 2000 concerning the most famous gardens and parks, are now protected as monuments.

Examples:

- Vienna, Stadtpark, created by sketches of the painter Josef Selleny, realized by the gardener Rudolf Siebeck 1862/63

- Vienna, the famous tree-lined Ringstraße, built after the decision of the emperor Franz Josef to demolish the old fortifications in 1857, opened officially in 1865.

The Austrian sites, set on the "World Heritage List" up to now, underline the world-wide widening of the term "monuments and sites" from the single monument to the definition of a "cultural landscape". One of these typical Austrian examples is the Hallstatt-Dachstein-region the famous "Salzkammergut" set on the "World Heritage List" in 1998.

The nomination of the Semmering-railway and the surrounding cultural region in the same year has been of world wide importance: It has been the first technical monument on the "World Heritage List", built in 1848-1854 by plans of the engineer Carl Ritter von Ghéga, the first big mountain railway of the world⁹.

1. The Present: Protection of Monuments and Sites. State of the Art

Summing up the history and development of preservation in Austria we have to remind concretely that protection of monuments is part of the Federal administration while nature and urban zones, like historical centers, normally are under control of the provinces and towns. Typically today only 6 urban zones are protected by the Federal Office for the protection of monuments and sites.

Example:

Lichtenwörth (Lower Austria)¹⁰, working class town built between 1747 and 1756.

A special guideline of the Austrian Protection Law (which will be finished in 2008) states those buildings in possession of the State, Countries, and official religious unions etc. are protected "ex lege". In regard to the total amount of buildings in Austria, i.e. about 1.8 million of houses, we estimate that only about 2% of the whole building stock are under protection in Austria today.

In addition, there are protected zones, as explained, in the most famous historical cities of Vienna, Salzburg, Graz, Innsbruck and so on. - As an example today, Vienna has 111 protected zones, made up of more than 13.000 individual objects or almost 10% of the total number of buildings in this city¹¹. The biggest protected zone covers the whole historical center and the area of the Viennese "Ringstraße", consisting of approximately 1.500 objects.

2. Economic Dates: Hard Facts and some Ideas

The financial situation of the protection of monuments and sites in Austria - in reference to the federal budget - is a very sad one: The whole sum of grants given to monuments by the responsible Ministry of Culture is not more than about €11 Mio per year.

Including the country's funds, this sum climbs to about €36 Mio per year. In contrary to this situation, Austrian cities have discovered that the goal of a systematic restoration of the built heritage and a sufficient control of work can be reached only through an adequate and consequent sponsoring.

As an excellent example the "Vienna Old Town Preservation Fund"¹² (Altstadterhaltungsfonds) has to be mentioned which is viewed as a model character in all of Europe. The Fund was established in 1972, together with the introduction of the regulations governing protected zones in Vienna. At that time, all responsible politicians and experts were already fully aware that implementation of protected zones and top-quality rehabilitation of structures, in order to be sustainable in practice, can be achieved only by targeting public moneys by way of subsidies towards this goal.

The Fund is endowed mainly from the revenues of the "Vienna Culture Schilling Act" (*Wiener Kulturschillinggesetz*), which was adopted by the Municipal Council in January 1972, simultaneously with the decision to establish the Fund. Under this Act, a levy (currently 20%) on fees payable for a radio or TV/radio license in Vienna is dedicated to cultural purposes, and particularly to the preservation of the old town.

As a rule, the Fund subsidizes "additional costs accrued from monument protection" in the course of rehabilitating or revitalizing a building. In other words, the Fund fully covers all restoration costs, which exceed those expended on the straightforward rehabilitation of a house.

One third of each of the annual subsidies is allocated to privately owned houses, city-owned houses and ecclesiastical buildings respectively.

From its creation in 1972 until late 2000, the Fund supported altogether 3,633 projects, allocating approx. € 162,00 million. The highest annual distribution so far was in 1995, at

about €9.5 million. In 2000, the latest complete business year, some 89 projects were subsidized at approx. € 9.2 million.

It is deviously evident that this fund is responsible for the quick development of restoration and the good condition and outlook of the city of Vienna today.

3. Two Case Studies: Schönbrunn Palace in Vienna and Foundation "Cultural Park Austria"

In relation to social and economic integration of cultural heritage in Austria there are two projects of special interest:

First: Schönbrunn Palace, successfully realized.

Second: The foundation "Kulturpark Österreich" (Cultural Park - Austria), currently in discussion.

Schönbrunn Palace¹³

Schönbrunn Palace is one of Austria's most important cultural assets. - The history of the building may be well known too:

The origins of Schönbrunn go back as far as the Middle Ages; the estate came into Imperial ownership in 1569, via Maximilian II; then, in the 17th century, a hunting lodge was built, and the existing zoological garden was expanded. Johann Berhard Fischer von Erlach planned the new construction of a hunting lodge in 1696, which Empress Maria Theresia had converted into her residential palace in around the middle of the 18th century, under the direction of her court architect, Nikolaus Pacassi.

The function as a residential palace for the Imperial family was ultimately also a decisive factor governing the restructuring work of the 19th century, influenced primarily by the emperor Franz Joseph, who had an exceptionally long reign. The furniture, fixtures and fittings impressively reflect the lifestyle of the Palace residents, and are of major significance in terms of cultural history. The attractiveness of Schönbrunn Palace lies in its largely original interior from the 18th century, as well as in the Baroque garden landscape which remains scarcely altered.

Since the 1960s, the Palace has become one of Vienna's major tourist attractions. Notlong after the end of the monarchy, the people of Vienna discovered the allure of the Palace grounds as a recreational park. Later, the Palace itself was also opened to both national and international visitors, and it now attracts around 1.5 million visitors a year. The park and all the other attractions at Schönbrunn draw a further 5.2 million people annually, meaning that a total of around 6.7 million visitors frequent the impressive palace complex of Schönbrunn each year.

The Palace is in possession of the Republic of Austria and was managed by a local government body. Year by year millions of Austrian Schillings have been necessary to spend for restoring the building and to run the museum inside.

In 1992 the "Schloß Schönbrunn Kultur- und Betriebsges.m.b.H." was founded – based on private economic rules. The company is owned by the Republic of Austria, and has sole responsibility for managing the Palace. Its contract with the Austrian Republic is based on a usufructuary right. The society is a tertiary sector organization seeking to offer a top-quality service to its diverse range of clients from all over the world. The management's aim is to bring in the funds needed for the renovation and maintenance of this historic gem, at the same time preserving its historical substance to a maximum extent. Three central aspects mark the organization's philosophy, and thus all the company's activities:

1. Preservation and revitalization of Schönbrunn Palace as a cultural monument

The primary object of all activities of the operating company is the preservation and restoration of the monuments and their historical features.

2. Expanding the Palace's range of use, and improving service facilities.

The operating company is keen to determine existing but currently unused resources, and to develop its range of services accordingly, constantly adapting to cultural, touristic and municipal needs.

3. Creating an economic basis for the task of maintaining and communicating cultural heritage.

Future-orientated management methods are intended to ensure a solid financial basis for the preservation and material improvement of one of Austria's most important historic-cultural monuments. This goal is to be achieved on the one hand through rigorous and efficient administrative organization, and on the other through an up-to-date range of services which will fulfil the diverse expectations of a whole range of interest groups.

The cultural and scientific success of the new society is – after ten years of work – out of discussion, the economic one also: Meantimes the company earns year by year a profit of about 5.8 Mill. Euro, which are spent in the restoration of the buildings.

***The Foundation "Kulturpark Österreich"*¹⁴**

The success of Schönbrunn, the pattern of the National Trust system in Great Britain, examples like the "Caisse Nationale des Monuments Historiques et des Villes" in France or the "Fondo per l' Ambiente Italiano" and many others led directly to the idea of a similar National Foundation in Austria, called "Kulturpark Österreich". An extensive scientific study, sponsored by the Austrian National Bank, was published in 2000 which established the basic criteria for the necessary discussion between politics, economy, media and the public.

Nature of the "Kulturpark Österreich" is similar to the mentioned international examples somewhat like a "pool" of national monuments, developed and run by private economical criteria using possibilities and advantages of taxes and the interest of cultural tourism.

The project is currently in discussion but it seems that time in Austria for such an undertaking still is not mature. But we would need this Foundation urgently because still today there are a lot of national monuments in danger.

Example: Vienna, Palace "Neugebäude", built after 1567, the only renaissance castle in the north of the alpes, today still a monument in danger!¹⁵

4. From present to future: Threats and Benefits of Social and Economic Impacts

Hugo Portisch, a famous Austrian political author, wrote in the study of the "Kulturpark Österreich"¹⁶:

Nothing in Europe will be as it was or as it is. The borders within the European Union are not existing anymore, the currencies of the major part of the member states of the European Union are linked and the currency-unit was inevitably within the process of economical and political integration of Europe. However the nationalities will be able to keep their identity but will have to work harder for their existence. Never the less it will be about keeping or creating national profits. The instruments for that, like national subsidies, taxprofits, very profitable labour costs und low social obligations, won't be there hardly in the future. Nowadays one tries to abolish these concurrence profits, to harmonize the taxes and to flatten the salary and social level. A harder concurrence not only in the commercial but also in the cultural und social world will be the outcome of this integration.

Who wants to overlive has to be in frontline with new ideas and national profits of different kinds as the nowadays usual ones. We are already united how these will have to be: in the education of professional experts of highest quality, in the promotion of research and development and the will, to open these research and development centers to international firms. To accomplish this major step - on one hand by the education and on the other hand in the apply of modern technologies - is a challenge of politic, science and economy.

Without question this new situation in Europe has already influenced our relation to our heritage and has underlined the importance of the social and economic impacts. Regarding the Austrian examples and being personally involved in a considerable amount of them as an architect, I would like to state the situation as follows:

1. A nice word exists in my mother tongue called "Gesamtkunstwerk", which means to see a piece of art in its totality. We have learned and we must learn to look at our monuments in their totality. More and more men become important who are part of this "Gesamtkunstwerk". We have learned that our heritage is part of our environment, which we have to protect in its totality. Our monuments are part of this new discovered "quality of life".

Example: Vienna, the valley of the Vienna-River. After years of discussion, there is a project in realization which creates a 12,6 km long route for pedestrians and cyclists along the Vienna-River¹⁷.

2. In the same sense we have learned that monuments, above all historical cities, are living organisms. A city is not and must not be a museum. Use and function from an economic point of view have become an essential part in our relation to monuments and sites. This leads directly to the interactivity between old and new, which can be seen in most of our revitalization projects.

Example: Vienna, Revitalization of the four gasholder, built 1896-99. The project by the architects Jean Nouvel, Paris, Coop Himmelb(l)au, Manfred Wehdorn and Wilhelm Holzbauer changes the old structure for a multifunctional use (car-desks, shopping and entertainment mall, music hall, living units and offices)¹⁸. Realized 1998-2001.

3. Our heritage, especially the term "landscape", has become the most important factor in saving our national identity in the common Europe. A marketing study of the "Sozialwissenschaftlichen Studiengesellschaft"¹⁹ in Austria has shown that 90% of the persons questioned identify themselves with the picture of St. Stephan's cathedral in Vienna but also 62 - 70 % with typical Austrian landscapes.

Example: The Wachau Valley²⁰, Lower Austria, the youngest Austrian World Heritage Monument, nominated in November 2000.

4. At a minimum these "symbols" of nationality have become key roles in a new kind of a "cultural tourism" for two decades. -Tourism as we know includes a lot of threats but it has become one of the most important factors in our economy. According to an estimation of the World Travel Organization (WTO)²¹ about 37% of all tourists are guided by cultural motivations. The increasing rate is about 13% per year.

The City of Vienna - like Graz, Salzburg and other historical cities in Austria - has been taking action for some time now to keep tourism in a harmonious balance and is opting for quality tourism.

The results of recent guest surveys are evidence that this objective is being met: According to a 1999/2000 statistic²² the motivation for visitors to come to Vienna is determined by age (almost half of them are 30 to 50 years old) and social status (one in two has a higher educational background). Visitors come mainly to see the city's sites and cultural events. In regard to incentives and activities, visiting historical sites ranks first among visitors (57%), followed by atmosphere, flair and image (48%) then culture (33%).- The importance of cultural facilities is reflected in the following data²³: In 1999, Vienna registered some 3,15 million incoming tourists. During the same year, the federal museums in Vienna registered a total of 2,82 million visitors!

A last remark to the financial aspect of cultural tourism:

A tourist on holiday in Austria spends normally per day €60, a "cultural-tourist" spends €85, about 40% more²⁴.

The trends in cultural tourism can be withdrawn very simply:

- The trend to short holiday week-end-tourism, is still increasing,
- The tourist looks for new adventures which must not be similar to a Walt Disney Image and could be found in somewhat of a cultural amusement park. The tourist seems to prefer organized, concentrated tours in a full-service sense including culture, entertainment, gastronomy, shopping etc.
- A strong trend in consummation is security, simplicity and charity (in the sense of having a good survey).

5. Cultural heritage has created and will create new jobs and new qualifications as in cultural administration, cultural management, etc.

Already today it is assumed that in Austria about 115,000 persons are working in the cultural economy earning a total sale of more than 23 billion Euros per year. Part of this sale is the cultural building industry; building costs in Austria for restoration are approximately 2,9 billion Euros per year.

Example: Vienna, the Museum Quarters in the former stables of the imperial court. At present the biggest cultural enterprise in Europe,²⁵ covering some 60.000 m², opened in June 2001.

6. We have to look for new forms of financing which can be seen in

- a modern form of fundraising
- new assessment figures
- tax reduction for cultural investments
- administration of cultural heritage on a private economic basis as shown in the Schönbrunn case study

Example: In January 2001 the Austrian ministry for Cultural affairs started a special lottery campaign together with the Austrian Casinos Society, which focused on sponsoring cultural heritage and will bring about 2,3 millions of Euros for this purpose.

Scientific research of the Federal office for the protection of monuments and sites shows that for 830 objects with a subsidy of 5,2 millions Euro of the government a total sum of nearly 60 mill. Euro was spent, which means pumped into the economy. In this view the means for restauration of ruring cultural heritage and the means of archeological monuments are not included. And: The with this created work places need nearly no energy and row material and labour cost are intensive. This means in comparation to other economical branches a working place in the "restauration of monuments and sites" is cheaper. When one counts that you have to add for all these works also 20 percents tax (VAT) than you may conclude that for each Euro spent on subsidies of the government for restauration of monuments and sites Euros on tax returns.

I would like to close with the statement that the European Union understands one another, not only as an economic community but also as a cultural whole. The first contract of the European Economic Society (EWG) was signed in 1957 in Rome - one of the centers of European Culture - and this should be symbolic.

5. Notes:

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2. Otto Jungmair, *Adalbert Stifter als Denkmalpfleger, Linz 1973.*
3. To Josef Alexander Helfert and the development of preservation of monuments see:
Josef Alexander Helfert, *Denkmalpflege. Öffentliche Obsorge für Gegenstände der Kunst und des Altertums nach dem neuesten Stande der Gesetzgebung in den verschiedenen Culturstaaten, Vienna-Leipzig 1897.*
4. Alois Riegl, *der moderne Denkmalkultus, Wien 1903.* To Riegl's contribution to restoration of monuments in general see: Ernst Bacher (ed.), *Kunstwerk oder Denkmal? Alois Riegls Schriften zur Denkmalpflege, Vienna-Cologne-Weimar 1995.*
5. Max Dworak, *Katechismus der Denkmalpflege, Vienna 1926.*
6. To the damages of the Second World War in Vienna see: Heinz Schwarz, *Der Wiederaufbau in Wien mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des ersten Bezirks 1945-1955 (diss. techn.), Vienna 1997.*
7. Hans Foramitti, Peter Leisching, *Wiederbelegung historischer Stadtviertel. Die Lösung in Frankreich als mögliches Vorbild, Graz-Cologne, 1965.*
8. *Österreichische Ingenieur- und Architektenzeitschrift, Jg. 142. H.7-8 (special edition "Schloß Schönbrunn"), Wien 1997.*
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10. Manfred Wehdorn, Ute Georgeopol-Winischhofer, *Baudenkmäler der Technik und Industrie in Österreich, vol. 1: Wien-Niederösterreich-Burgenland, Vienna-Cologne-Graz 1984, p. 188/189.*
11. Thanks to an information of the Magistrat of the City of Vienna, department no. 19, Dipl.-Ing. Peter Scheuchel.
12. Mario Schwarz, Manfred Wehdorn, *101 Restaurierungen in Wien. Arbeiten des Wiener Altstadterhaltungsfonds 1990-1999, Vienna 2000.*
13. All information: SKB-Schönbrunn Kultur- und BetriebsgesmbH., Director Dr. Wolfgang Kippes.
14. All information: Kulturpark Österreich. Verein zum Schutz von Bundesdenkmälern (ed.), *Kulturpark Österreich, Vienna 2000.*
15. Manfred Wehdorn, *das Schloß Neugebäude in Wien - Aufbau, Verfall, Vision (ein Werkstattbericht), in: Aldo de Marco, Istituto di Urbanistica e Pianificazione. Università di Udine (Hrsg.), Castelli e città fortificate. Storia Recupero Valorizzazione, Udine 1991, p. 104-115.*
16. Kulturpark Österreich, cit. note 14, p. 13.
17. Magistrat der Stadt Wien-MA 45 (ed.), *Der neue Wienfluß. Natur und Technik in Einklang, Vienna 1996.*
18. WWFF-Wiener Wirtschaftsförderungsfonds (ed.), *Gasometer Simmering, gestern-heute-morgen. Ein Revitalisierungsproject (catalogue of the exhibition), Vienna 1996.*
19. Kulturpark Österreich, cit. note 14, p. 191.
20. Amt der NÖ Landesregierung (ed.), *Wachau. Zur Pflege einer der schönsten Kulturlandschaften Europas (Denkmalpflege in Niederösterreich, vol. 3) Mödling 1988.*

21. Kulturpark Österreich, cit. note 14, p. 206.
22. Source: City of Vienna, Wien-Tourismus.
23. Source: City of Vienna, Wien-Tourismus.
24. Kulturpark Österreich, cit. note 14, p. 207.
25. Architektur aktuell, 6/2001 (special edition "Museumsquartier Wien"), Vienna 2001.