

The use of decorative elements in the interior design of the nineteenth-century spa buildings

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ABSTRACT

The paper presents a short history of the spa architecture, some elements that compose the spa pavilions constructed in the XIX century and reviews the architectural styles of the historical period. The aim of the study is to generate a possible concept for the restoration and interior design intervention in a historical building of the spa resort.

Keywords: spa architecture, historicism, Heimatstil, historic monument, boutique hotel, Bazar hotel Buziaș

I. INTRODUCTION

More than 70 years after the forced nationalization imposed by the Communist regime, the vast majority of the historical buildings of Romanian spa architecture are today in a lesser or greater degree of devaluation and degradation. According to the legislation concerning the protection of historical monuments, their owners are obliged to ensure the safeness and preservation of these heritage buildings. The real chance of these buildings is, however, the return to the touristic touring circuit, which involves the restoration of the buildings and the interior refurbishment.

Lately, we have seen a growing public interest in patrimony issues, increasing media campaigns on this topic, a concern for tourism development by local authorities in spa resorts, a steady growth of domestic tourism in Romania and an increasing interest in investment in tourism. Therefore, in our country, there are the premises for the restoration in the following years of some spa architecture historical buildings.

II. SPA ARCHITECTURE. SHORT HISTORY

The spa buildings are used for relaxation, recovery and medical treatment and are usually found in resorts and large cities. The architecture of remote coastal health centers is generally referred to as spa architecture (Kurarchitektur germ.) although it is not a uniform architectural style, but a collective term for a type of spa building. The name has expanded to other buildings with tourist functions in spa resorts. The spa architecture has been developed since the 17th century and the peak was the 19th century. Baths owe their origin to the medicinal effect of hot springs that have been seen since antiquity. The most important Roman resort was Baiae in the Gulf of Naples (Fig. 1). After the flowering period of antiquity, the bathing culture disappeared in the Middle Ages. The Crusaders brought the Islamic bathing culture from the Orient. With the advent of the bourgeoisie in the 12th century cities, public baths appeared, which did not produce their own architectural language and could not be distinguished from the rest of the residential buildings. In the 15th and 16th centuries, the culture of the baths has flourished

and has become an important economic factor. In the second half of the 17th century, the habit of consuming mineral waters became more important than the habit of bathing [1].



Fig. 1. Roman mosaic, Baiae, archaeological site Gulf of Napoli

The most important spa towns of the 18th century are Bath in England and Aachen. Both cities played a decisive role in the development of the spa architecture in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The Aachen Center has been recovering since the end of the 17th century from the consequences of the Thirty Years' War. A decisive influence was played by Dr. François Blondel, who popularized Aachen in Europe with his balneology books. Blondel's most important achievements were the extension of the drinking court and its participation in designing new bathroom facilities. Aachen has grown into the mainland's spa destination and has maintained this position until the French occupation since the end of the 18th century [1].

The spa architecture underwent a stronger specialization in the 19th century due to the development of rail transport and the high influx of tourists. Apparently, the development of European rail transport was also positively influenced by the development of spa resorts [2].

With the spread of the industrial revolution in Europe, America and the World, society witnessed unprecedented changes, the Western world being completely transformed by the middle of the nineteenth century in terms of the means of production, transport and lifestyle [3]. Since 1800, the spa architecture has been distinguished by a wide range of buildings ded-

icated to social events, dedicated to education, communication and leisure for a large number of guests. Specific programs have been developed, such as the spa house, the drinking room and the thermal baths. There were landscaped gardens, hotels and villas, theaters, museums, mountain railways and watchtowers. Spa buildings no longer combine all functions, such as public halls, bathrooms and accommodation under the same roof, as happened during the Baroque period. The mineral water drinking room or pavilion (Fig. 2) was a well-known construction type, usually spread through covered galleries called colonnades [1].



Fig. 2. Drinking water springs pavilion, Karlsbad/Karlovy Vary

The 19th-century spa building (Kurhaus germ.) is a building dedicated exclusively to social events. Bathrooms and accommodation rooms are outsourced to dormitories and hotels specially built for this purpose. In the center of the spa building, there is a large hall (Fig. 3). In addition, there are several auxiliary rooms for a variety of activities such as gambling, reading and restaurant operation [1].



Fig. 3. The main hall, Kurhaus Băile Herculane

A representative spa building is Kurhaus Baden-Baden (Fig. 4), built between 1822 and 1824, according to Friedrich Weinbrenner's plans. The three-part system has a length of 140 meters. The building consists of a building with a large central lobby flanked in the north and south of the theater and restaurant pavilions, with galleries linking the three buildings [4].

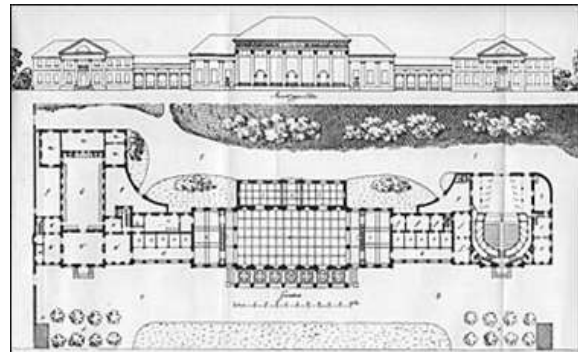


Fig. 4. Ground floor plan, Kurhaus Baden-Baden

After banning gambling in 1872, spas invested in the baths to continue to be attractive to guests. Such a thermal bath is Raitzenbad in Budapest (Fig. 5) [1].



Fig. 5. Moorish Hall, Raitzenbad, Budapest

III. HISTORICISM STYLE IN SPA ARCHITECTURE

In the 19th-century German architecture, the persistence of a plurality of historically derivative styles of exterior design was matched only by the persistence of the desire for a newly normative style. In 1828 the architect Heinrich Hübsch published a treatise whose very title posed the question that preoccupied architects for much of the century: In welchem Style sollen wir bauen? (In what style should we build?). His

own answer was the Romanesque style [5].

The result of the epoch was an eclectic architectural style, empty of meaning, lacking vitality and creativity. Historicism (about 1830-1900) is the 19th-century eclectic architectural style, so-called in the German-speaking countries. Historicism is contemporary with the styles of Ludovic Phillip and Napoleon III of France, the Victorian style in England or the Umbertino style in Italy. Unlike the neoclassical styles, Historicism did not focus on reinterpreting ancient styles, but on creating his own eclectic style, with the peak of development around 1860, which postulated "the free use of all architectural history" (César Daly apud André Meyer) [6].

Almost all large public buildings were built in the 19th-century in this new composite manner. They were pompous constructions that impressed by wealth, so they were cherished by the general public. We can meet on the same street various buildings, each belonging to another historicist trend, such as the buildings on the famous Ring Boulevard in Vienna - the Gothic Revival town hall, the Italian Renaissance Revival University, the Parliament build in the Hellenistic style, the French Renaissance Revival style of the opera house, or even the architectural elements from different streams found in the same building, as is the case with the Vienna Art Museum. Throughout Europe, the decorative forms of different historical styles are mixed. There are overlapping styles of different countries and periods with the main purpose of engraving a wealth of shapes and generating a decorative effect [7].

Heimatstil is a historical architectural current of romantic fact, present in Switzerland, Prussia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but also in Victorian England and sometimes in northern and eastern France, as well as in Belgium and Flanders. The origin of the style is not as expected in the rural Alps, but in the life and nature of the country, idealizing romanticism on the one hand and the art of 18th century English gardening on the other. In these parks, there are small buildings with Gothic elements, often endowed with decorative elements borrowed from rural architecture, as well as artificial ruins. On the continent, but especially in Austria

and in the crown lands, this phenomenon was received with enthusiasm. For the nobility, the Tyrolean or Swiss farm became the symbol of a healthy, natural rural life, associated with the noble prestige. Heimatstil is characterized by the use of wood for the facade, carved beams and rustic ornaments, taking models from local folklore. Its decline inspired by the alpine architecture is called the Swiss-style (Fig. 6) [8].



Fig. 6. Villa in Heimatstil - Swiss style, Burgberg Bavaria

At that time, for the wooden houses made in the Swiss style, they were sold even prefabricated. Architect Friedrich Hitzig reports in 1850 how he used the elements of the Swiss cottage: "The client, trader and timber merchant bought a rural property with a half-timbered wooden building with a tall roof that was used earlier as an inn, he wanted the exterior of the building to have a picturesque look because the location is romantic, so that wood is the least valuable material for the owner as a timber trader, it seemed very useful to choose the Swiss-style for the exterior" [9].

Another historicist architectural trend that emerged in the 19th-century, along with the development of seaside resorts is Bäderstil (Fig. 7).



Fig. 7. Kviknebastrand Hotel, Norway

The new hotels and guest houses have been built as functional buildings, serving the need to host a lot of guests. The construction activity is subject to various stylistic elements. The practice was to take various elements and ornaments from Heimatstil-Swiss style and to apply them to the so-called house with balcony or terrace, Loggiahaus (Fig. 8). The Loggia is considered as an independent component without a constructive connection to the building, made largely of industrial wood panels. The ornamentation is extremely varied, with floral or geometric decorative motifs, of folkloric or even oriental inspiration [10].



Fig. 8. Loggiahaus, Sassnitz, Rügen

After the Loggiahouse appears, the design options have no limits in the following phases of the resort style. There is a large number of towers and turrets of no functional importance. As a rule, they have taken over the existing roof form. Besides the roofs of the rectangular tower, towers with a curved outer shape enjoyed great popularity. The Industrial Revolution was one of the factors that led to the development of rich ornamented architectural styles such as Heimatstil and Bäderstil, because it was already possible to order prefabricated ornamental elements through a catalogue. In the case of zinc ornaments, the ornamental plant pressed everything from the tower's railing to the roof of the attic [11].

IV. EXAMPLES OF BUILDINGS IN ROMANIA BUILT IN THE HISTORICIST STYLE

Brătuleanu believes that “the notion of the vacation resort is used in the modern era, but the architectural framework which it assumes

is present in Wallachia at the end of the 17th century”, during the period of Constantin Brâncoveanu [12].

In the spa resorts on the current territory of Romania, we can find examples of 19th-century Heimatstil/Spa architecture buildings, which attest to the importance and popularity of the hunting activity among the people of those times as well as the architectural program and this widespread style until the beginning of the 20th century in Central and Eastern Europe [13]. The Elena Rosa Villa in Govora is built in the Heimatstil/spa architecture style under Romanian administration (Fig. 9).



Fig. 9. Elena Rosa villa, Govora

The Emil Villa in Borsec is built in Heimatstil/spa architecture style under Romanian administration (Fig. 10).



Fig. 10. Emil villa, Borsec

The Central Hotel in Băile Moneasa is built in Heimatstil style under imperial administration (Fig.11).



Fig. 11. Hotel Central, Băile Moneasa

V. SPA ARCHITECTURE BUZIAȘ. BAZAR HOTEL CASE STUDY

V.1. Current situation

Hotel Bazar is classified as a historical monument (TM-II-a-A-06191) and it is part of "Ansamblul de arhitectură balneară Zona cu parcul, cu colonada, Hotelul Bazar, Hotelul Grand și cazinoul" ("Spa heritage – area with parc, colonnade, Bazar Hotel, Grand Hotel and Casino") Buziaș [14].

Hotel Bazar is located at the northern end of the Central Park, in the vicinity of the Imperial Baths and Muschong Hotel.



Fig. 12. Franz Joseph in front of the Bazar Hotel, 1895

The Buzias spa resort in Timis County was established in 1811 after discovering the curative properties of the mineral water springs. It was in the lease of Anton Hoffmann who for 13 years managed to develop it from a touristic point of view by building villas (Adela, Marghit), holiday homes, the Bazar Hotel and the Casino in the center of the park in 1856. In 1856 construction

of the colonnade started, whose architecture and construction were made by carpenters specially brought from Austria. The construction was completed in 1875 becoming the longest covered colonnade in Europe (512 m in length), the length of the colonnades in Karlovy Vary and Baden Baden. In 1815, the two parks of the resort, Liget and Central, began to be built according to projects that have been made over a period of about 100 years and which were largely carried out by Austrian specialists who brought rare species of trees [15].

The Bazar Hotel, built up to 1858, opens its rooftops in the colonnade, has its wooden floor layout and ornamental motifs in line with the colonial architecture. On its northern facade appears the motif of the wooden tower with trophy, which refers to the image of the loggia house in the central European resorts. The motif of the turret, existing in the Romanian folk architecture and in simple forms in Banat, is therefore solved here rather by the model of spa resorts than by the traditions of the place. The elements of the trapped wood colonnade are made in oriental style (Moorish, Ottoman) as a result of the influences from Central Europe for this type of architecture [16].

At present Hotel Bazar has a new private owner and is in a state of preservation, to be restored and interior decorated. Cleaning, sanitation, re-development of the space after the historical study, the required expertise, the project and the necessary approvals, including the Ministry of Culture's opinion for intervention on a historic building, are required. The rehabilitation of the hotel is intended to be played in the tourist circuit under the concept of a boutique hotel.

V.2 Historic decorative treatments specific for the eclectic style. Contemporary methods of intervention

The proposed program for interior design is, therefore, a boutique hotel. In addition to the accommodation, the hotel will have its own restaurant, a confectioner's shop, a wine presentation shop and a souvenir shop. The design concept derives from retaining its original name - Bazar, wanting to create a contrast between furniture pieces and contemporary-style light-

ing that is juxtaposed to the surface finish that will be achieved in the spirit of the 20th century eclectic period. At the same time, the design of the accommodation rooms will be customized. Thus, in the style of Historicism, wooden floors are often used in the form of a central carpet with decorative motifs and a single background. Colorful tiled stone with varied shapes and colors is a floor used in the era, along with the development of sanitary facilities in the interior. At the beginning of the eclectic style the walls were divided into three registers and a detailing of all constructive elements was observed. The decorative accent falls on the median area, regardless of the finish. Wallpaper is used as a simple way to cover vertical surfaces with geometric, floral or Oriental inspirational designs (Fig. 13). In the eclectic style, halls and desks were usually the same as dungeons, where dark wood was used in particular. The skin was used in rooms where a masculine atmosphere was desired. The ladies' rooms were lightly decorated. In more rustic houses, the texture of the materials remained visible, whether they were wood, brick or stone. In terms of ceilings, in the nineteenth century there was a transition from the very rich ornamentation to edge ornamentation and the central medallion. In the eclectic period, doors were a key component for styling. Doors with neoclassical and neo-Gothic details are common. In the eclectic style, the French windows develop with the interior opening towards the gardens. Large-scale shutters are also used, made of two rotated sheets or two folded sheets [17].

The proposal for flooring is the use in the ground floor of the terraced terraces with floral or oriental inspiration (Fig. 14).



Fig. 13. Wallpaper with oriental motifs



Fig. 14. Terazzo tiles

Considering that ornamentation is unlikely to occur in the restoration process, the decoration of the ceilings will be discrete, possibly having a supporting role for lighting. A number of original carpentry kegs have been preserved in the hotel, where possible they will be restored and integrated into the design.

On certain door fronts, the proposal is to intervene with CNC cut elements, taken from the logic of the building log and processed graphically (Fig. 15). The hotel windows and ornamental windows were destroyed at a rate of 75%. By preserving the original pattern, they will be restored and restored (Fig. 16, 17). As mentioned, the chosen pieces of furniture will have a contemporary design.



Fig. 15. Ornamentation vector artwork by Alin Rotariu



Fig. 16. Example of ornamentation applied to the door leaf



Fig. 17. Example of ornamentation applied to the door leaf

VI. CONCLUSION

Most of the buildings in spa resorts, including Buziaș Colonnade, were built in a period of architectural eclecticism.

In the case of restorations and interior design interventions in these buildings, a prudent approach is desirable. I think an example of good practice is to propose finishes in line with the architectural style of the historic building. Perhaps the architects and builders of the empire have not posed the problem of style purity, but they certainly wanted to install a well-being in the villages. Built according to the boutique hotel concept, the Bazar hotel has all the premises to be visited and appreciated by the park and resort guests, if treated with caution and respect for the historical substance, in a contemporary style attracting young tourists with a note of luxury and elegance that reminds of the beginning times of the spa and which are part of the affective memory of the inhabitants and tourists who visit the resort.

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