

The Role of Building Heritage Preservation in Overcoming the Gap Between Theory and Practice

ABSTRACT

Due to the absence of programs on heritage protection during primary and secondary education, we encounter students who do not have basic knowledge of this subject. There are many teaching methods about heritage protection, but most are general. Through the program of compulsory subjects of the Department of History and Theory of Architecture and Protection of Architectural Heritage at the Faculty of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy of the University of Banja Luka; The Protection of Architectural Heritage and Revitalization of Architectural Heritage, as well as optional subjects from this field, we strive to raise awareness of the importance of heritage. The goal is to use a multidisciplinary approach to involve students in heritage education, in cooperation with the Institute for the Protection of Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage of the Republic of Srpska, museums, archives and the local community. The resources of cultural institutions are used as a teaching tool. In this way, students are introduced to basic research methods, such as finding information, analyzing available historical materials, analyzing individual cultural assets or wholes, drawing conclusions and presenting proposals for action in relation to the protection of architectural heritage, which encourages critical thinking. Students are particularly motivated by the possibility of field, practical work, which results in a richer and more precise educational experience, and participation in the creation of project documentation for the restoration of certain cultural assets is particularly important.

KEYWORDS

Heritage, education, teaching methods, practice

INTRODUCTION

At the Department of History and Theory of Architecture and Protection of Architectural Heritage, Faculty of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy, University of Banja Luka, ten courses are related to the protection of architectural heritage, two of which are compulsory; Protection of Architectural Heritage, which is studied in the 5th semester, and Revitalization of the Architectural Heritage, which is still studied in the 7th semester this academic year, and in the coming period it will be part of the Studio Project 8-Renovation of Architectural Structures, also in the 7th semester. Elective courses are Interventions on Historical Buildings, Conservation Technologies, Architecture of Industrial Heritage, Management of Architectural Heritage (VI semester), Integral Protection of Architectural Heritage (VII semester), Cultural Aspects of Planning, Folk Architecture and History and Theory of Restoration (VIII semester).

Preservation of heritage is not possible without adequate education, it is our strongest tool and basis for applying knowledge in the future. The process of preserving heritage emphasizes the importance of education and is intertwined with the issue of awareness, because we cannot expect heritage to be preserved if there is no awareness of its importance. The special feature of architectural heritage is that its value lies in its significance for people, not only in the physical structure. Due to the absence of heritage protection programs during primary and secondary education, we encounter students who do not have basic knowledge of this subject. There are many teaching methods about heritage protection, but most are general. The question arises, how can we effectively teach about heritage within existing study programs?

EDUCATION ON THE PRESERVATION OF ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE; CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVE

Heritage education programs vary greatly and can be defined as activities that promote the preservation and/or restoration of cultural property. We need to know which heritage education programs are effective and why. Students need to understand why a building is part of the heritage, to understand what and why we preserve and what are the possible benefits, so that they can be advocates of preservation. That is why they should be provided with opportunities for a better understanding of the overall sequence that includes architectural heritage. Education should be an integral part of any heritage preservation project, and historic preservation must be part of any heritage education program. If they understand the value of the built environment, they will also understand the responsibility of current generations to leave their mark on it. The task is to recognize the potential of heritage and create a good basis for responsible use for modern society, which should be able to pass these values on to the generations to come.

Heritage protection in the 21st century is a problem that raises many questions – related to the very concept of cultural heritage, its treatment in legal regulations, in terms of its fundamental purpose; preservation and transmission to future generations.



Fig. 1
Fieldwork of
AGGF students in
Herzegovina
(© M. Okilj)

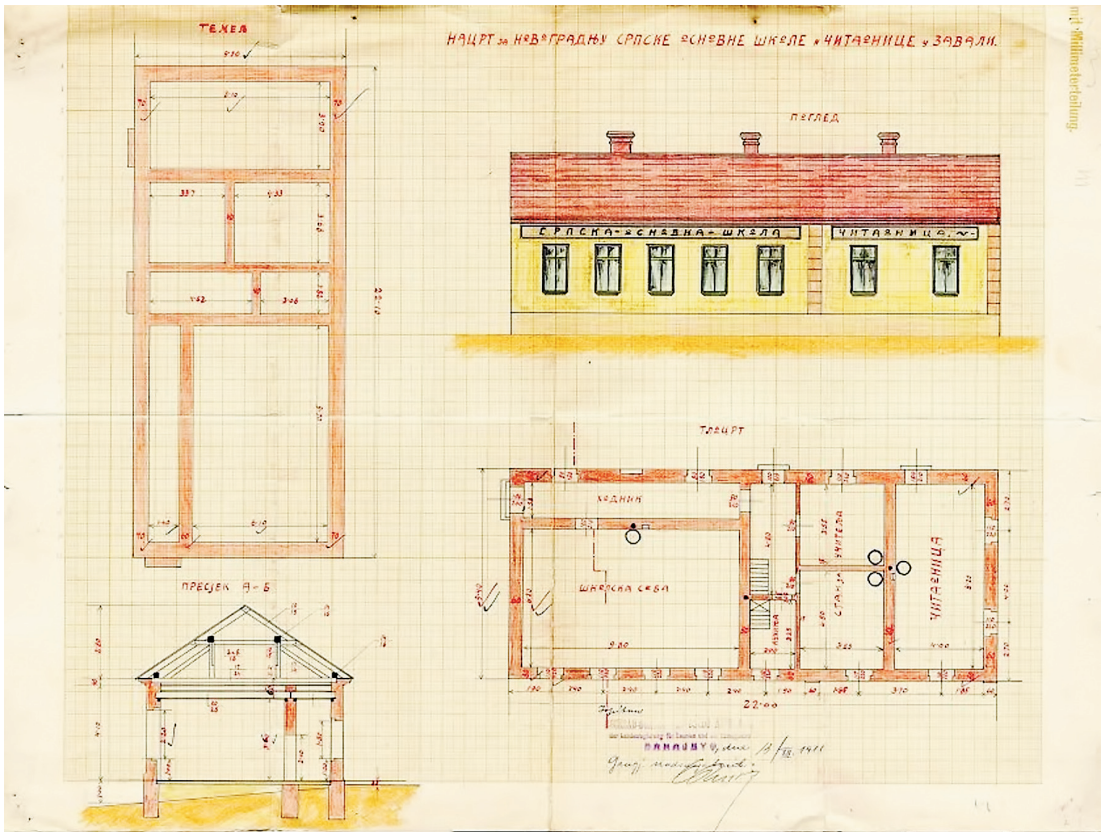


Fig. 2
Project of the
monastery school
from 1911

Legally, there are many different ways to organize the connection between memory, history and heritage and, in this respect, diversity dominates.¹

Higher education encompasses all types of study, training or research training at the post-secondary level by universities or other educational institutions that are approved as institutions of higher education by the relevant government authorities.² Article 7 of the *World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century* refers to strengthening cooperation with the world of work and analyzing and predicting social needs. Among other things, it states that higher education systems and the world of work should jointly develop and evaluate learning processes, bridging programs and prior learning assessment, which integrate theory and practical training.³

At the international level, the World Heritage Center launched an education program in 1994, in accordance with Article 27 of the Convention on the Protection of the World's Natural and Cultural Heritage from 1972, which reads: *The member states of this Convention shall endeavor to the greatest extent that all appropriate means, and especially educational and informative programs, stimulate respect and appreciation of cultural and natural heritage among their peoples...* The goal of this program is to raise awareness and encourage young people to get involved in heritage preservation by developing new approaches.⁴

Education should encourage the development of skills such as communication, decision making, problem solving, creativity, etc., and the educational approach should be interactive and analytical. In March 2001, STOA (The European Parliament Unit-Scientific and Technological Options Assessment) commissioned the study “Technological Requirements for Solutions in the Conservation and Protection of Historical Monuments and Archaeological Remains”. This study made several recommendations, and of particular importance is the recognition of the key role of education in bridging the gap between research and conservation practice.⁵

Future architects should be involved in multidisciplinary teams dealing with heritage protection. If interest in the preservation of architectural heritage is encouraged, the question is how to give them adequate education, not only to raise awareness of its importance, but also to train them for conservation work. We must ask ourselves the following:

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- 1 M. Cornu, *Safeguarding Heritage: From Legal Rights over Objects to Legal Rights for Individuals and Communities?* in *Cultural Heritage Ethics-Between Theory and Practice*, Cambridge 2014, 197.
 - 2 Definition approved by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 27th session (Paris, October 25-November 16, 1993) in the *Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education*. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000095621> (accessed March, 2023).
 - 3 *World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-first Century: Vision and Action and Framework for Priority Action for Change and Development in Higher Education*, adopted by the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education, Higher Education in the Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action, Paris, 9 October 1998, 6.
 - 4 *World Heritage in Young Hands Kit. To know, cherish and act. An educational resource kit for teachers*, UNESCO, Paris, <https://whc.unesco.org/uploads/activities/documents/activity-54-19.pdf> (accessed March, 2023).
 - 5 M. Cassar, Education and training needs for the conservation and protection of cultural heritage: Is it a case of ‘one size fits all’? In: Koslowski, R at all (eds.) (Proceedings) *5th European Commission on Research for the Protection of Cultural Heritage: A Pan European Challenge*. Brussels: European Commission (2003) 160.

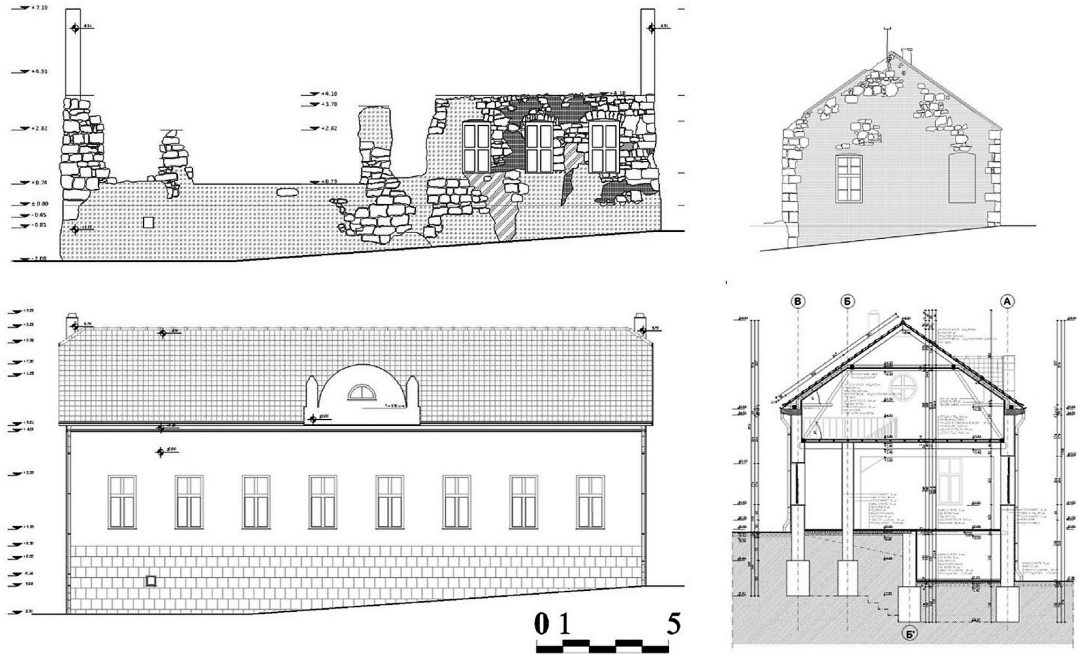


Fig. 3

School project in Zavala; snapshot of the existing state of the western and northern facades, projected state of the southern facade and cross-section, work of AGGF students, 2016/17



Fig. 4

Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Ljubinje, lecture by a local priest for AGGF students (© M. Okilij)

- Does the existing education fully meet the needs for conservation?
- Where is the place of the conservation profession today, in the new socio-economic circumstances?

In addition to theoretical knowledge, we have chosen an approach to teaching and learning about history and culture that uses information available from material culture and the built environment as teaching resources. We strive to teach students how to apply theoretical knowledge in practice. The goal of practical work is for students to learn from case studies how to use theoretical education, among other things, as a tool for changing attitudes and raising awareness about the protection of cultural and historical heritage. They should also be able to develop investigative learning, find information and analyze it, and not just depend on facts provided by teachers.

Using a multidisciplinary approach, students are involved in heritage education in cooperation with the Institute for the Protection of the Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage of the Republic of Srpska, museums, archives and the local community. Resources of cultural institutions and cultural goods are used as effective teaching aids.

The selected approach enables the establishment of a dialogue between theory and practice, between academic and professional approaches. Students have the opportunity to exchange ideas with experts of various profiles employed in the field of heritage protection. They can also recognize the key difficulties and challenges faced by employees in this area.

The theoretical teaching includes the history of protection, legal regulations, types of cultural property, types and causes of damage... Legislation, inventory and arrangement of cultural property provides the framework and structure of conservation. Surveys and reports provide data relating to each individual building and, if previous reports are available, they are invaluable evidence and assist in the assessment of damage propagation and decision-making.⁶

The protocol on business-technical cooperation between the Faculty of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy of the University of Banja Luka and the Institute for the Protection of Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage of the Republic of Srpska was signed in 2008. The competence of the Institute is to carry out the activity of protection of cultural assets, study immovable cultural assets and prepare studies, studies and projects for the most effective protection and use of certain immovable cultural assets. After the signing of the Protocol, there was a series of Institute activities in which students participated. In this way, students had the opportunity to become familiar with basic research methods, such as finding information, analyzing available historical materials, analyzing individual cultural assets or wholes, drawing conclusions and presenting proposals for action in relation to the protection of architectural heritage, which encourages critical thinking.

Students are particularly motivated by the possibility of field, practical work, which results in a richer and more precise educational experience, and of particular

6 B. M. Fielden, *Conservation of Historic Buildings*, Oxford (2001) 185.



Fig. 5

Zavala Monastery dining room project, work of AGGF students, 2019/20

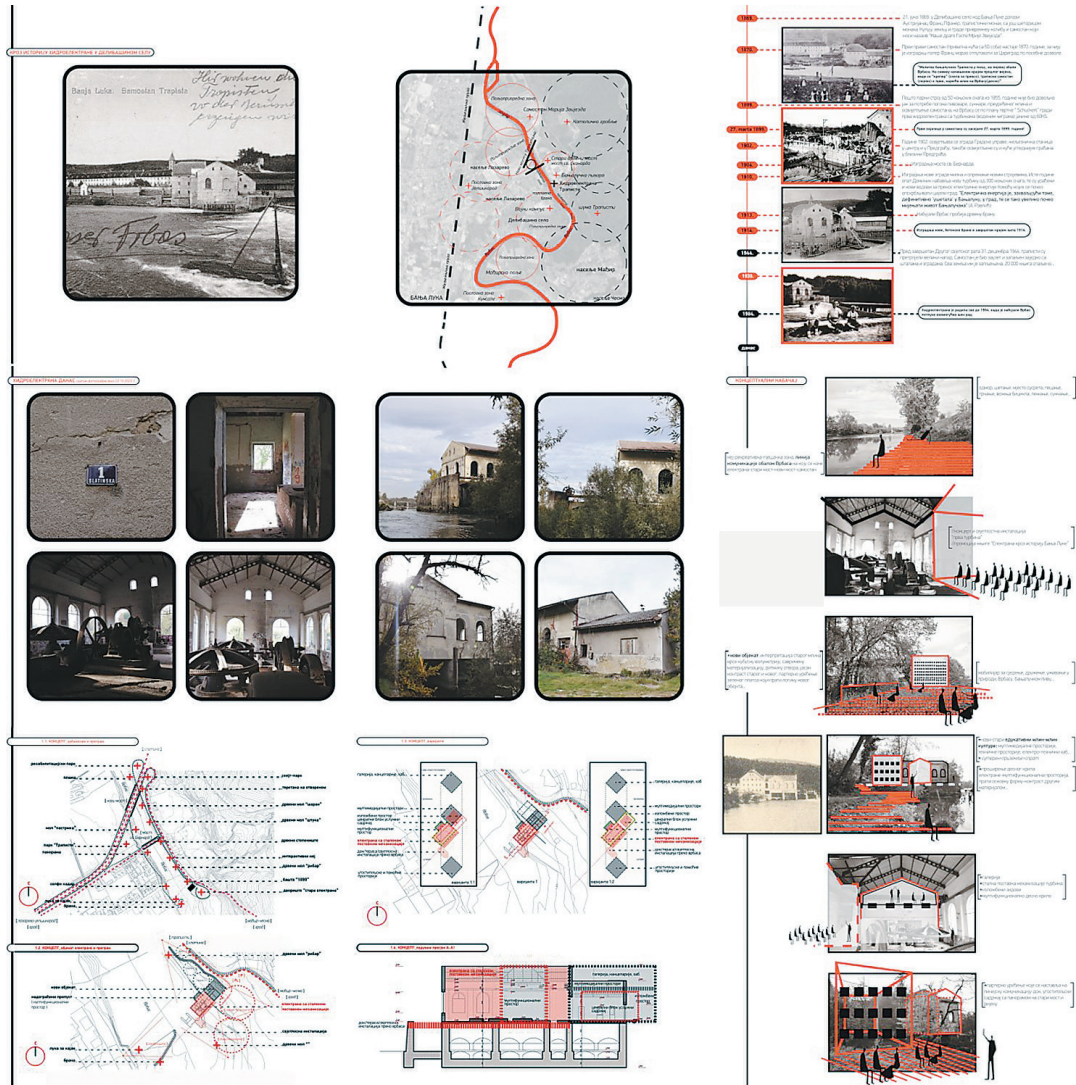


Fig. 6

History and location analysis, Power plant in Delibašino selo, work of AGGF students, 2022/23

importance is participation in the development of project documentation for the restoration of certain cultural assets (fig. 1). In the educational process, the students' visit to the locations proved to be extremely useful, which contributes to a better understanding of the importance and value of architectural heritage. In the last fifteen years, several types of practical work have been successfully carried out within the mandatory courses Protection of Architectural Heritage and Revitalization of Architectural Heritage and the elective course Interventions on Historic Buildings. Valorization of the cultural-historical heritage was carried out for certain urban units or their parts, students learned how to prepare preliminary protection studies in accordance with existing legislation, which includes research work in the field and in cultural institutions. They also participated in the development of project documentation for the restoration of architectural heritage. During field work, they had the opportunity to see specific examples of characteristic damage to cultural monuments, to look at the possible causes, which they determined by inspecting the building. This type of fieldwork resulted in the creation of an architectural record of the existing state. Some of the semester assignments were done in cooperation with the Department of Architectural Design.

EXAMPLES FROM PRACTICE

From the beginning of cooperation with cultural institutions, primarily the Institute for the Protection of Cultural-Historical and Natural Heritage, students had various tasks, all of which included practical field work. For example, the urban solution narrowly includes the location of Manjača as a tourist and recreational complex, for which an internal student competition was organized, and the project was made in cooperation with the City Development Agency of the City of Banja Luka and the Center for Village Development and Improvement. Then they worked on the valorization of the cultural and historical heritage of Prnjavor in cooperation with the local administration, and an integral part of the task was the analysis and creation of an architectural drawing of the existing state of the building of the County Prefect. It is a series of tasks where the end result is the research of the object and the creation of a drawing of the existing state, such as the churches in Veličani (City of Trebinje) and Meka Gruda (Bileća Municipality), both medieval, dedicated to Saint Michael the Archangel.

During the 2016/17 academic year, the task was carried out in collaboration with the Revitalization of Architectural Heritage and Architectural Design 11 (Agricultural Buildings) courses, the Institute for the Protection of Cultural-Historical and Natural Heritage and the Eparchy of Zahum-Herzegovina. The semester assignment related to the Zavala Monastery, and consisted of two parts, the first part was the preparation of a feasibility study, and the second part was the preparation of project documentation; the monastery school renovation project (RAH) and the winery project (AD11). By choosing this location, the students had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with an extremely valuable cultural and historical asset. By the decision of the Commission for the Preservation of National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Zavala

Monastery was declared a national monument in 2003 under the title of the Building Complex of the Church of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary in Zavala. The natural and historical area of Zavala and Vjetrenica are included in the Tentative List of Bosnia and Herzegovina, for inclusion in the World Heritage List.

The Zavala Monastery with a church dedicated to the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary is located in the village of the same name, at the foot of the Ostrog mountain, on the edge of Popovo polje, about 50 kilometers northwest of Trebinje. From the monastery gate there is a magnificent view of Popovo polje, and the natural rock, which is also the northern wall of the church, makes the monastery a part of nature.⁷

According to folk tradition, the establishment of the Church of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary is related to the first Christian emperor Constantine, who, after building a large church in Slano, arrived in Zavala and, seeing that the population was pious, decided to build a temple there as well. The oldest written document, from 1514, is a confirmation of the sale of the vineyard to Serafion, the abbot of the monastery. The monastery was given a permission (*ferman*) to rebuild its dilapidated church in 1587, with the condition that the church should not be bigger than before. The names of dukes from the Hrabren-Miloradović line are listed in the Zavala Monument, which is why it is assumed that the nobles from that family were the founders of the reconstruction. The specificity of the architectural design of the Church of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary is determined by its position, which gives the impression of a hermitage monastic residence. On the north side, the church is tucked under the rock that largely forms its northern wall. From the outside, the church has a single-nave base finished with a semicircular apse in the east, while the interior is more complex. It belongs to the developed type of Churches with blind arches. The interior of the church was decorated with frescoes in 1619 by the great Serbian painter of the 17th century, the Hilandar monk Georgije Mitrofanović.⁸

According to folk tradition, the origin of the Church of the Presentation of the Holy Cave is located 300 meters east of the village of Zavala on the western edge of Popovo polje. The cave was first mentioned by Pliny the Elder in the work *Historia Naturalis* in AD 77 as a cave from which a strong whirlwind blows. The cave was from 1912–1914, was explored by the Czech speleologist Karel Absolon, while it was first scientifically described by the Belgrade researcher Mihajlo Radovanović in 1929. It got its name from the strong wind at the entrance and strong currents of air in several places in the interior. Medieval drawings are carved on the entrance rock.

An elementary school operated at the monastery during the Turkish and Austro-Hungarian rule (fig. 2). The school resumed work in 1886.⁹ A modest building within the monastery complex was used as a school room. A new building for the needs of the school was built in 1911, on a plot of land outside the monastery walls, on the right

7 M. Okilj, *The Zavala Monastery*, Banja Luka 2015, 15–16.

8 M. Okilj, paper cited with older literature, 34.

9 M. Z. Kozić, *Ljubinje pod austrougarskom (1878–1918)*, Ljubinje 2014, 488, with older literature.

side of the road leading from the monastery to the road connecting Ravno and Slano. The building was set on fire during the 1992–95 war, and today it is in ruins.

In the first part of the assignment, the students did a Feasibility Study, which today is one of the necessary documents required when applying for donations from various funds. We considered it useful to introduce the students to the study methodology, which includes, among other things, a SWOT analysis. As strengths, the students recognized the natural beauty of the environment, the good integration of the monastery complex into the natural environment, strong cultural identity, proximity to the regional center of Trebinje... Weaknesses that were recognized are poor economic development, underdeveloped service sector, low population of the area... They were enabled to understand the locality and see the possibilities in a wider context, all in accordance with the modern approach to the restoration of architectural heritage.

In the second part of the task, they determined the condition of the school building by visual observation, made the necessary measurements and made an architectural photograph of the building (fig. 3). A school project from 1911 was found in the monastery archive.¹⁰ The final result is the Zavala Monastery School Renovation Project, which was carried out at the Institute for the Protection of Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage of the Republic of Srpska with the cooperation of students from the Faculty of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy of the University of Banja Luka in 2018.

During fieldwork, they visited the Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Ljubinje, where a lecture on archaeological research was held and where they had the opportunity to see the way of protection and presentation of archaeological remains (fig. 4). They also visited the Tvrdoš monastery, in order to familiarize themselves with the capacities and working methods of the winery operating within the monastery.

In the 2019/20 academic year, students visited Herzegovina again, where they were divided into three groups. One group had the task of designing the dining room of the Zavala Monastery, and the other two groups took pictures of the existing condition of a couple of medieval churches in Popovo polje.

The topic in the academic year 2021/22 was national construction, and the ethnic group Topići, in the area of the City of Banja Luka, was analyzed. During the visit to the site, there was a lecture by an ethnologist from the Institute (fig. 5).

The building complex of Delibašino selo, City of Banja Luka, was processed during two academic years. The semester task 2021/22 from the subject Protection of architectural heritage was the valorization of the cultural and historical heritage

10 Documentation about the monastery was previously found in the Archives in Vienna (“Austrian State Archives, Department of War Archives (Österreichisches Staatsarchiv Abteilung Kriegsarchiv), signature: Zone 34, Column XVIII, Section 10, Quarter a Sixteenth a/3, c/1, relating to the Province of Herzegovina, the area of Mostar, communities (Gemeinde) Čvaljina, Trnčina, Zavala, and Veličani.”) and the Archives of BiH in Sarajevo, at the request of the Eparchy of Zahum-Herzegovina.

of Delibašino selo, which included research work. In the academic year 2022/23, in the course Revitalization of Architectural Heritage, the task was the analysis of the Delibašino selo power plant facility and the creation of a restoration and adaptation project into the Museum of Technical Culture.

The most significant for the development of Delibašino selo are the monks, members of the Trappist order, who arrived in Banja Luka on June 21, 1869, led by the Austrian Franz Pfanner. The following year, they founded the Maria Zvijezda monastery, and Father Franz traveled to Constantinople for construction permits. They built a brewery, a clothier, a mill and a power plant. The printing house, part of the monastery, was opened in 1879.¹¹ Since the 50 horsepower steam engine from 1855 was not strong enough for the new needs, the first hydroelectric power plant with turbines (water terns) of 60 hp was built on Vrbas, according to the plan of the “Schuckert” company, thanks to which the first light bulbs lit up in to the monastery on 27 March 1899. The City Administration building, the railway stations in the center and the suburbs, and the houses of prominent citizens were illuminated in 1902.¹² The first wooden dam was washed away by the swollen Vrbas, so it was replaced by a concrete one.

The power plant facility has not been used for a long time, and part of the concrete dam has collapsed. The Institute has been trying to preserve this building for many years, and the proposal is to adapt it for the needs of the Museum of Technical Culture. There were various inappropriate proposals from “interested parties”, from demolishing the building to turning it into a mini-hydroelectric plant. Through work on this task, the students became aware of the value of the whole and the need to preserve the hydroelectric power plant building. They felt the need to discuss this topic among themselves, write on social networks, which we consider a positive outcome (fig. 6).

CONCLUSION

The Heritage Education Program, which is applied in the Department of History and Theory of Architecture and Heritage Conservation, in which a combination of theoretical and practical work is more effective compared to the earlier, exclusively theoretical way of studying heritage. Thanks to practical work, students better understand the importance of heritage, strengthen their awareness of the need for preservation, recognize the potential of heritage, and possibilities for its use in modern society. Collaboration with cultural institutions contributes to education and positively impacts the overall knowledge of heritage protection methodology. By combining theoretical and practical teaching, communication development is encouraged (between students, teachers, and interested parties), and students have shown a great interest in this teaching approach.

Students are provided with the opportunity to participate in decision-making and problem-solving, applying their theoretical knowledge to specific tasks in the

11 S. i D. Vicić, *Pozdrav iz Banjaluke 1897–1941*, Beograd 2006, 26.

12 A. Ravlić, *Banjaluka, razdoblja i stoljeća*, Sarajevo 1979, 16–17.

field of heritage preservation. Through activities within the framework of semester assignments, cultural assets are analyzed, a database is formed, restoration projects are developed, and in this process, each participant contributes to the improvement of heritage.

Interaction with the local community, owners of cultural assets, and employees in cultural institutions leaves a strong impression on students and contributes to their understanding of the decision-making process and the potential benefits of heritage preservation. This includes contributions to economic development, tourism, and overall improvement in the quality of life for local communities, as well as more efficient and successful problem-solving in the field of heritage conservation. The active participation of teachers and heritage experts in this educational program has contributed to both an understanding of multidisciplinary and a better insight into the complexity of conservation activities.

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МИЛИЈАНА П. ОКИЉ

Универзитет у Бањој Луци, Архитектонско-грађевинско-геодетски факултет
Катедра за историју и теорију архитектуре и заштиту градитељског наслеђа
Завод за заштиту културно-историјског и природног наслеђа Републике Српске

УЛОГА ОБРАЗОВАЊА О ОЧУВАЊУ ГРАДИТЕЉСКОГ НАСЉЕЂА У ПРЕВАЗИЛАЖЕЊУ ЈАЗА ИЗМЕЂУ ТЕОРИЈЕ И ПРАКСЕ

Одсуство програма о заштити наслеђа током основног и средњошколског образовања, препознато је као проблем јер се на почетку студија сусрећемо са студентима који не посједују основно знање о овој материји. Улога образовања о наслеђу је да пробуди свијест о његовом значају и оспособи студенте за рјешавање проблема у овој области. Постоје многе наставне методе о заштити наслеђа, али већина је уопштена, углавном сведена на теоријску наставу. Често се дешава да се теоријска знања не примјењују у пракси на адекватан начин, односно да студенти по окончању студија нису оспособљени за правилну примјену теоријских знања. На Катедри за историју и теорију архитектуре и заштиту градитељског наслеђа на Архитектонско-грађевинско-геодетском факултету Универзитета у Бањој Луци одлучили смо се за приступ који комбинује теоријску и практичну наставу. Организовање практичне наставе, која укључује теренске студије, омогућава студентима да стекну практична знања о очувању градитељског наслеђа. Такође се упознају са проблемима и изазовима у овој области и развијају вјештине потребне за њихово рјешавање. Важно је да се образовање о градитељском наслеђу укључује и рад на културним добрима које подразумева конкретне пројектне задатке.

Студенти се подстичу на примјену научно-истраживачког приступа, а као наставно средство користе се ресурси институција културе. Коришћењем мултидисциплинарног приступа студенти се укључују у образовање о наслеђу, у сарадњи са Заводом за заштиту културно-историјског и природног наслеђа Републике Српске, музејима, архивима и локалном заједницом. На овакав начин студенти се упознају са основним методама истраживања, попут проналажења информација, анализе доступне историјске грађе, анализе појединачних културних добара или цјелина, доношења закључака и изношења предлога за дјеловање у односу на заштиту градитељског наслеђа, чиме се подстиче критичко мишљење. Од 2008. године када је потписан Протокол о пословно-техничкој сарадњи између Архитектонско-грађевинско-геодетског факултета Универзитета у Бањој Луци и Завода за заштиту културно-историјског и природног наслеђа Републике Српске, било је низ активности Завода у којима су учествовали студенти. Студентима је омогућен практичан рад, а у Заводу је архивирана документација коју су радили студенти, а која је коришћена за израду елабората

претходне заштите или су архитектонски снимци постојећег стања споменика културе послужили за израду пројекта обнове.

Овај вид образовања даје успјешне резултате јер је омогућена практична примјена теоријских знања у току студија. Циљ је побољшање квалитета очувања градитељског наслеђа. На простору са богатим градитељским наслеђем архитекти треба да стекну квалитетно образовање о очувању наслеђа без обзира на будуће запослење; рад у општинској или државној администрацији, пројектним бироима, урбанистичким заводима.