

**PROMOTING ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF FORMING THE CULTURAL
IDENTITY OF ARCHITECT STUDENTS**

**PROMOVAREA PATRIMONIULUI ARHITECTURAL
DIN PERSPECTIVA FORMĂRII IDENTITĂȚII CULTURALE
A STUDENȚILOR ARHITECȚI**

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CZU: 72:008(478)=111

Rezumat. În perioada contemporană, patrimoniul arhitectural istoric reprezintă un adevărat tezaur al neamului și un element fundamental al identității naționale, transmis generațiilor viitoare. Articolul propune un studiu teoretico-practic ce reflectă importanța și oportunitățile formării viitorilor specialiști capabili să aplice strategiile legale din domeniul restaurării, conservării și protecției patrimoniului arhitectural al Republicii Moldova. Autorii menționează, de asemenea, necesitatea abordării responsabile, privind protejarea patrimoniului și restaurarea monumentelor arhitecturale din variate perioade istorice, integrată în procesul educațional al studenților-arhitecți, direct responsabili pentru consolidarea domeniului profesional și dezvoltarea durabilă a țării. Pe teritoriul Republicii Moldova s-au păstrat până în secolul al XXI-lea numeroase monumente arhitecturale, în special vile urbane și rurale ale familiilor boierești care au locuit de-a lungul timpului în Basarabia. Casa boierească *vila* reprezenta un ansamblu arhitectural și peisaj complex, alcătuit din casa principală, locuința pentru oaspeți, anexe pentru slujitori și animale, pivniță, moară, cavou familial, precum și un parc cu vegetație valoroasă, completată de arbori exotici, havuzuri, sculpturi și alei amenajate frumos. O parte semnificativă a acestor monumente, incluse în patrimoniul istoric național, au fost distruse în timpul celui de *Al Doilea Război Mondial*, iar multe dintre clădirile rămase au fost ulterior utilizate drept depozite, spitale, tabere de odihnă etc., ceea ce a dus la degradarea lor accentuată și la distrugerea anumitor părți sau elemente originale. Astăzi, numeroase astfel de edificii se află în stare de abandon, din cauza lipsei de responsabilitate, de interes sau de resurse financiare necesare pentru restaurare. În scopul protejării construcțiilor istorice, acestea au fost incluse în *Registrul Monumentelor*, statul asumându-și rolul de protecție și ocrotire asupra lor.

Conștientizând gravitatea stării actuale a patrimoniului arhitectural și valoarea sa pentru identitatea culturală a țării, instituții precum: *Guvernul Republicii Moldova și Agenția de Inspectare și Restaurare a Monumentelor (AIRM)* participă activ în proiecte finanțate de către *Uniunea Europeană*, pentru atragerea investițiilor în sprijinirea procesului de restaurare și conservare a monumentelor arhitecturale, componente ale patrimoniului istorico-cultural național.

Cuvinte-cheie: *patrimoniul arhitectural, monument de arhitectură, identitate națională, conservare și restaurare.*

Abstract. In contemporary times, historical architectural heritage represents a true treasure of the nation and a fundamental element of national identity, passed on to future generations. The article proposes a theoretical and practical study that reflects the importance and opportunities of training future specialists capable of applying legal strategies in the field of restoration, conservation, and protection of the architectural heritage of the Republic of Moldova. The authors also mention the need for a responsible approach to the protection of heritage and the restoration of architectural monuments from various historical periods, integrated into the educational process of architecture students, who are directly responsible for strengthening the professional field and the sustainable development of the country. Numerous architectural monuments have been preserved in the Republic of Moldova until the 21st century, especially urban and rural villas belonging to the boyar families who lived in Bessarabia over time. The boyar villa was a complex architectural and landscape ensemble, consisting of the main house, guest quarters, outbuildings for servants and animals, a cellar, a mill, a family tomb, and a park with valuable vegetation, complemented by exotic trees, ponds, sculptures, and beautifully landscaped alleys. A significant part of these monuments, included in the national historical heritage, were destroyed during World War II, and many of the remaining buildings were subsequently used as warehouses, hospitals, holiday camps, etc., which led to their severe deterioration and the destruction of certain original parts or elements. Today, many such buildings are in a state of neglect due to a lack of responsibility, interest, or the financial resources needed for restoration. In order to protect historical buildings, they have been included in the Register of Monuments, with the state assuming the role of protecting and preserving them. Aware of the seriousness of the current state of the architectural heritage and its value for the cultural identity of the country, institutions such as: the *Government of the Republic of Moldova* and the *Agency for Inspection and Restoration of Monuments (AIRM)* are actively participating in projects funded by the *European Union* to attract investment in support of the restoration and conservation of architectural monuments, which are part of the national historical and cultural heritage.

Keywords: *architectural heritage, architectural monument, national identity, conservation and restoration.*

Architecture is humanity's great book, the heritage of our people and our national identity./V. Hugo/

Introduction. Historic buildings – whether urban or rural villas or residential complexes – are some of the most valuable architectural structures of Moldovan society's cultural and historical heritage. Historical monuments are important testimonies of the past and contribute to shaping the cultural identity of the national heritage. Our country's architectural treasure gives localities cultural diversity, tourist appeal, expressiveness, and national identity, thus becoming a veritable calling card for the region [5].

In the context of the globalization of contemporary society, there is an increasingly acute need to restore and protect historical monuments, many of which have been forgotten, leading to a weakening of the connection with the past that is becoming increasingly necessary for the consolidation of a sustainable cultural identity.

The issue of conserving and capitalizing on architectural resources of national and international importance increasingly involves specialists in the field in collaborative actions focused on the restoration, revitalization, and protection of architectural heritage. Historic buildings not only reflect the historical evolution of society, but also fulfill cultural, social, economic, and educational functions. At the same time, the meaning of the concepts of architectural monument and restoration has evolved considerably, changing over time according to the philosophical, artistic, and cultural conceptions of different historical periods [9, 10].

Therefore, historical monuments are testimonies of civilizations of the past, they have an artistic, historical, scientific, aesthetic and spiritual value, and in this context their preservation, rehabilitation and restoration is very important. Therefore, the concept of restoration has had a historical evolution, undergoing changes over time depending on the change in conceptions regarding the history and theory of architecture, but also the ways of preserving a historical monument. And, the term restoration refers to the process of returning a building or structure to its state from a certain period of time [1, 15].

Restoration is defined as the process of restoring a damaged architectural monument to its original form. Depending on the purpose, the restoration process of a historic building includes preserving the original and authentic character as much as possible, reproducing the materials or replicating masonry techniques, interior and exterior finishes [8].

In the villages of Moldova there are still a number of unexploited boyar mansions, which have parks, orchards and arable land. In the Republic of Moldova, in the 21st century we have over 80 boyar mansions, 10 of which have a dendrological park. And one of the largest and most imposing from an architectural and landscape point of view is the Mandi Mansion, Drochia district [11].

Today we are witnessing a national phenomenon where heritage objectives are increasingly neglected and most of the existing mansions on the territory of

the country are either in an advanced state of degradation or totally neglected, being on the verge of collapse, from the list of state funding.

Therefore, the ensemble of the Míndic Mansion with a dendrological park of the Ohanowicz family of Polish nobles, is a testimony of the beautiful history of this locality, which deserves the attention of being restored and of offering it new functions through which to capitalize on the space of the mansion, but the entire spirit of the place [26].

The country's architectural heritage plays an important role in creating a complete picture of our future national identity, which is why our mission is to protect our cultural heritage, preserving its original character so that it can be passed on to future generations. These provisions are protected by the Agency for Inspection and Restoration of Monuments (AIRM), with monuments entered in the Register of Valuable Monuments and taken under state protection [12, 14].

Research methodology. Considering that the field of architecture is an interdisciplinary one, a restoration project includes: images, historical photographs, diagrams/diagrams, elaboration of concept sketches, etc. In the field of restoration, the research program is a complex one, and historical research is a first step to know and understand the architectural objects made in the past. Historical research is an objective and constructive scientific research at the same time, in the sense that the architectural historian first discovers the fact in the most rigorous way, by searching for sources, preferably primary ones (in archives and in direct contact with the objects of research).

The main actions and research methods undertaken for the accumulation of the necessary information and for the realization of the project-concept are: research of bibliographic sources, study of relevant statistical data, case study, comparison, analysis and synthesis, etc. [10].

Principles and stages of carrying out an architectural restoration project of a cultural monument. The project for the restoration of the cultural monument, of the Ohanowicz Family Mansion Complex, were designed to solve the economic problems and ensure the continuity of the use of the site in local and national interest, taking into account the historical value that the place has acquired over time, through the efficient use of the existing buildings. Aware of these things, the purpose of this project follows: the restoration and conversion of the mansion building and the annexed buildings as well as of the monument of landscape architecture (dendrological park), which would allow the correct and harmonious use of the cultural character specific to the given region [8].

In order to achieve this well-defined goal, the following objectives are proposed:

- ✓ Drawing up a historical study to create a correct view of the restoration of the building;
- ✓ study and analysis of the specialized literature specific to the given project;

- ✓ elaboration of a strategic intervention plan on the historical site;
- ✓ identifying and proposing convincing and correct solutions for the restoration of architectural monuments.

Enhancement of the building through consolidation, restoration and rehabilitation:

- ✓ Restoration of the mansion building, by arranging and equipping a new village museum with modern standards;

Creating typological and functional diversity of existing buildings;

- ✓ capitalizing on the landscape potential of the landscape park;
- ✓ developing an intervention strategy for the rehabilitation of green areas;
- ✓ rehabilitation of green areas by clearing old and unorganized vegetation;
- ✓ gradual rejuvenation of the park by planting new planting material, without affecting its authenticity [16].

The problems identified during the study reflect the factors that led to the emergence of unfavorable indicators in the issue of protecting historical monuments, and one of them is the lack of funding for the implementation of the project.



Figure 1, 2. The mansion in the village of Mândic of the Polish nobles Ohanowicz – historical photo 1995, contemporary photo from 2015 [25]

The Ohanowicz Family Manor Complex monument was taken under state protection by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the MSSR of 13.03.1962 No. 111, and the protection status was reconfirmed by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the MSSR of 08.01.1975 No. 5 and Law No. 1538 of 25.02.1998 on the fund of state-protected natural areas. In 1997, by a Government Decision, the Mândic Park was declared a branch of the Museum of Ethnography and Natural History - the "Mândic Villa and Park" Museum Complex. An action plan was immediately developed to enhance the complex, but it was not implemented due to lack of financial resources. A similar plan was made in 2003, but this one also did not find funding. [7, 21].

Heritage site–Architectural complex–Villa from Mândic, Drochia district. The mansion in the village of Mândic, Drochia district, was built at the end of the 19th century (construction began in 1896 with some modernizations carried out by architect Alexandru Bernardazzi) and was the property of the Polish noble family Ohanowicz [3, 12]. The project of the complex was designed

with elements specific to traditional Polish architecture, with a protruding roof in Chinese style, and it also had a park similar to classical Roman gardens. The landscaped park was completed with rare species of trees and flowers and spread over an area of 16 ha, with three lakes, a water mill, several alleys, terraces, a cellar with three rooms and an attic with five entrances, with openings that offered a stunning view. The few historical photographs depict views of the boyar complex's buildings in addition to the contemporary ones, Figure 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

However, over time, after the owners left, the complex was used for other purposes, hosting a rest camp without taking into account the fact that it is a monument of history and landscape architecture.

Since 1997, the architectural complex Villa with Park Mândâc, is subordinated to the National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History in Chişinău and presents a historical and architectural monument of national value.



Figure 3, 4. The mansion in the village of Mîndic – the family tomb of the Polish nobles Ohanowicz – historical photographs 1995-2015 [12]



Figure 5, 6. The mansion in the village of Mîndic of the Polish nobles Ohanowicz – outbuildings and the water tower, historical photographs 1995-2015 [12]

There have been several attempts to renovate or preserve this object, but today the nominated monument is in an advanced state of degradation, with a degree of wear of the buildings of the complex constituting 40-60 (%) [24].

In our research study, we present an example of a project-concept for intervention with restoration of buildings, proposed in a graduation thesis of the

student-architect, which would highlight the villa of the Polish nobleman of Armenian origin Kajetan Ohanowicz [4, 12].

Saving this architectural monument, part of the cultural heritage, through a research study, to restore its former beauty, would become in time a tourist center, aligned with the northern route of the country. The rich history of the Ohanowicz family Manor through tradition, through the architectural and landscape style, can restore the historical and cultural value, educational principles in the training of future architects-restorers within the School of Architecture of the Republic of Moldova [5, 6].



Figure 7, 8. The mansion of the Polish boyar Ohanowicz – the interior space on the ground floor and the staircase leading to the basement [25]

The documentation of the site gave some very vague information, the historical illustration of the construction of the complex is brief, and the image of the interior spaces is limited only to the zonal layout, the aspects of wall, ceiling or floor finishes, pieces of furniture, all are missing, Figure 7, 8. The photographs of the interior spaces reflect the destruction of the authentic interior finishes, painfully visualizing the construction materials of red brick, stone and wood [7].

The main goal of the project is to create a concept that would contribute to the restoration and conversion of the historical architectural object Vila cu parc Mîndic into a tourist attraction with rest areas, Figure 9.



Figure 9. Restoration and conversion project of the Polish boyar Ohanowicz Manor in Mîndic, Drochia district (developed by st. gr. ARH-161, Călcîi Stanislav) [2]

Therefore, the project aims to regenerate and enhance the monument by developing and designing new functions that will be able to serve the residents of the area in the future, but also attract tourists and visitors from outside [9].

Rural tourism, the impact of tourism, economic and socio-cultural, restoration, revitalization, museum, historical-architectural heritage

Rural tourism-Destinations that present historical, architectural and landscape monuments, agricultural communities and picturesque villages, can offer various services to tourists who want to relax in the natural environment:

- accommodation in traditional rural houses;
- the possibility of engaging in rural activities and pursuits;
- familiarization with local folklore, entertainment and traditions;
- familiarization with crafts practiced in the locality or in the given area, as well as the possibility of those who wish to participate in the crafting process;
- the possibility of purchasing craft products.

Ultimately, such a project for the restoration and conversion of a historical monument seeks a harmonious approach in relation to the spirit of the place on which interventions are made only according to current legislative regulations such as in the Republic of Moldova:

- Decision No. 1009 of 05.10.2000, on the approval of the Regulation on natural and built protected areas;
- Decision No. 217 of 26.10.2022 of the Ministry of Culture on the approval of the Regulation on the content and methodology for the development of the historical-architectural reference plan and the project of protection areas of historical localities;
- Law No. 1530 of 22.06.1993, on the protection of monuments
- Law No. 1538 of 25.02.1998, on the fund of state-protected natural areas;
- Law No. 369 of 30-11-2023 on the fund of state-protected natural areas;
- Law No. 319 of 08-06-2023 on the protection of monuments, etc. [18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23].

The impact of economic and socio-cultural tourism is manifested through the competent launch of tourist products, leading to special effects regarding the connections that will be made between the host and tourists, the relationships between the way of appreciating national values, but also the standard of living among participants in the act of tourism, communication, through exchanges of ideas, etc.

And the major importance of a tourism project-concept, competently conceived for the purposes of cultural activities intended for tourists and local people, are doubled by hospitality, interest, motivation and aspiration for better, which will contribute to the development of truly sustainable tourism.

The localities where tourism projects will be carried out, by implementing restoration and conversion projects with guest spaces, become ensembles with all the elements of local sustainable development. Such a project also aims to

improve the infrastructure, increase the economic level, spiritual life of the community, etc. Likewise, by restoring and protecting these monuments of national importance, other strategic principles for the rural environment are also pursued:

- stopping the migration of the population from certain disadvantaged environments, from the rural area and stimulating the return, at least partially, of the population from these areas;
- ensuring living conditions and civilization in the respective environments, stimulating the stability of the active population in these environments;
- restoring, preserving and protecting architectural and cultural monuments, the natural environment, being a factor of valorization, of attraction of the local and foreign population [13].

When developing the graduation project, integrated studies program 0731.1 Architecture, with the theme Restoration of Villa Mîndîc with the creation of a center for promoting tourism in northern Moldova, student author, promotion 2022, gr. ARH-161, Călcâi Stanislav, coordinator, architect Negruța Igor, Department of Architecture, Faculty of Urban Planning and Architecture, Technical University of Moldova, solutions were used taking into account the rational use of the land, through functional zoning, the framing of new constructions designed within the site, their successful inclusion within the natural landscape.

For the rehabilitation and landscaping of the dendrological and fruit-growing park, the revitalization of the park was provided for, by replanting the missing portions of the park with exotic trees and shrubs, and the trees of historical interest will be preserved to the maximum. At the same time, the project provides for the rehabilitation of aquatic basins, the arrangement of green and rest areas around them. It also provides for the arrangement of access roads for transport and pedestrians, parking spaces for cars and buses. Access for people with locomotor disabilities will be provided in all areas. [2, 3, 17].

Architectural solutions

The volumetric form was solved in accordance with the selected location of the site, with the existing relief of the land (according to the topographic elevation) and depending on the functional requirements for the designed buildings. The concept project will be developed in accordance with sanitary, ecological norms and norms regarding access for people with disabilities. The constructive solutions will provide for the use of authentic materials of the historical monument, as well as for the objects for guests, which will form a unitary concept of the historical and tourist complex rehabilitated through multifunctional activities, Figure 10.



Figure 10. Graduation Project Plan with the theme Restoration of Villa Mîndic with the creation of a center for promoting tourism in northern Moldova, (of the Polish boyar Ohanowicz Manor in Mîndic, Drochia district) student author, class of 2022, gr. ARH-161, Călcâi Stanislav [2]

The actual implementation of this restoration project-concept, in the northern area of the Republic of Moldova, where there are 17 more historical sites (manors and churches with parks) analogous to Villa Mîndic, which could be united in a tourist network in the northern area of Moldova, would solve multiple social and economic problems for local communities [26].

In conclusion, we note that the summary of our research results from the specific educational principles and methods of the School of Architecture of the Republic of Moldova and the field of training future architects in the restoration, rehabilitation and protection of monuments of national value, specialists who have the mission to protect, restore and preserve the historical architectural heritage, a rich page of the nation's history, a legacy for future generations.

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