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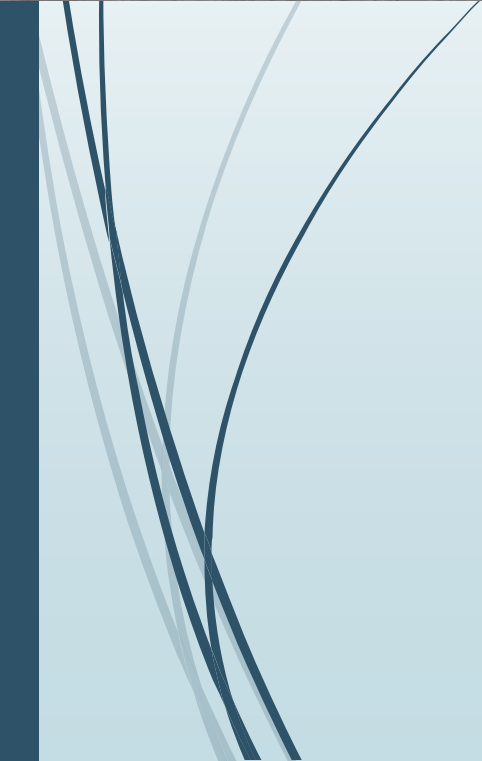
Case Report 4 –

Buda Castle Reconstructions

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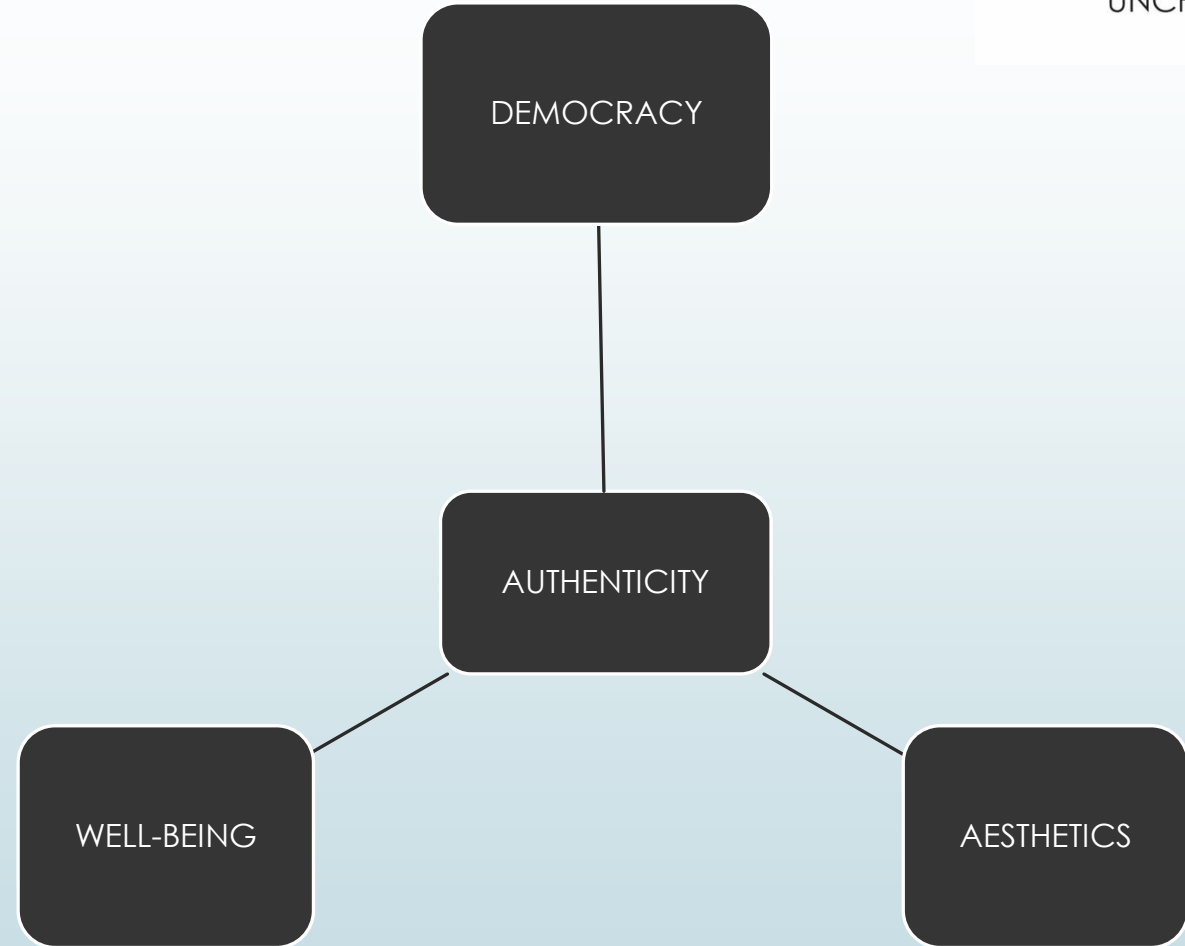


Period	Context	Character of the Buda Castle area	Reference for NHP
1867-1918 (constructions: 1880-1905)	Austro-Hungary; Budapest as an imperial, but not residential capital	Centre of political power	The absolute reference – its aim is the revival of this period (Alajos Hauszmann was the main architect of the period in charge of the urban development of the BCA)
1920-1944	Interwar period with governor Horthy, who resided here as the ruler of the country (first time since the 16 th century)	Centre of political power	The absolute reference as a centre of political power, where the ruler resides and exercises its symbolic power
1946-1958	Stalinist regime, post-WWII plans to reconstruct the totally destroyed BCA without much tangible results	Centre of political power	Counter-reference because of the demolitions following the WWII.
1958-1980s	State socialism with post-1956 consolidating intentions. BCA became a World Heritage site (1987)	Centre of culture and science	The absolute counter-reference – it destroyed fin-de-siècle architecture and deprived the BCA from its original functions
1990s-2010	Post-state socialist period, democracy	Centre of culture and science	Counter-reference, since it kept the cultural character of the BCA and missed the reconstructions
2010-	Orbán regime	Centre of political power	Reconstruction of the first two phases both in character and aesthetics



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Value system and tensions



Political instrumentalization vs professional/academic freedom

The different interpretations of Authenticity are considered as indicators of the political practices of the actors, i.e., how they use the society as a reference: is the reconstruction of the BCA **achieved for or with the society?**

Thus, this reconstruction can be interpreted as the rectification of the tormented history of Hungary in the 20th century by healing the wounds caused by the WWII and State socialism and by the re-establishment of the authentic (i.e., fin-de-siècle) atmosphere and urban setting. If this intention does not meet the expectations of monument experts and some architects, who either wish to follow the standards of international monument protection or appreciate certain accomplishments of the 20th century architecture, their opinion and their claim for **participative (both professional and public) decision making** can be ignored in the name of contemporary nation building.

This debate defines a series of conflicts rooted in the lack of democratic decision making and in the variety of the interpretations of authenticity as a fundamental value, which are determined by the **definition of nation building (exclusive or inclusive)**; the conflictual significance of reconstruction; the conflictual interpretation of historical periods.

Entertainment/free-time vs historical significance

The interpretations of the authentic BCA are based on **two divergent understandings of the past**: one regards it as a continuous entity, in which ruptures can be repaired and the built environment can be embellished in order to create an appropriate decoration for contemporary events reuniting with the glorious past.

Some architects and the official exhibition about the **reconstruction impart that it is the lost glory**, which is reconstructed, which is particularly appealing for events resuscitating the good old times.

On the other hand, the critical interpretation of the past, which is guided by the determination of ruptures and by the demystification of illusions and it intends to prepare a present, in which ecological perspective of constructions and the critical processing of dark heritage are take into consideration. It is not the purposes of the two understandings, which are in conflict, but the **instrumentalization of these interpretations**, which can reverberate the populist vs professional conflict presented in the previous section.

'Good' vs 'bad' architecture

The notions of 'good' and 'bad' architecture are **intellectual constructions to justify one's position in debates about the preservation of modern architecture in the context of monument preservation** (authenticity) and public acceptance and taste (aesthetic value).

These notions alter from one social actor to the other as much as from one period to the other. While fin-de siècle architecture was not appreciated in the second (post WWII) reconstructions of the BCA ('bad' architecture) it became intriguing by certain art historians in the 1990s and worth of reconstructions in the 2010s by the power.

Modern architecture of the second half of the 20th century, however, never gained an approval from the Hungarian public, which is extremely traditionalist from the perspective of its architectural taste. This **public taste** justifies reconstructions avoiding architectural innovation and producing edifices deemed to be worthless, old-fashioned and false by contemporary architects and critics. The distinction of 'good' and 'bad' post-1990 architecture also creates collision between contemporary architects **satisfying and astonishing the public or the power.**



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To be continued on

- ❑ The interpretations of Authenticity
- ❑ Cultural Heritage and Democracy
- ❑ Well-being and leisure society
- ❑ The instrumentalization of modern and contemporary architecture



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Thank you
for your attention

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