“Quality of Public Space in World Heritage Cities - Opportunities and Threats”

Life and death of a historic City Square: The case of Bardejov

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Urban Public Open Spaces

Agora, Forum, Street, Marketplace, Garden and Park Square,

Why do some thrive and others are dead?
Bardejov in 1853 and today. Once, international trade center and its central square, main market place
80 years ago
living square, market,
parades, shops,
residential houses
Life in the square – in the past
World Heritage site – the square is beautiful, but “dead”
No residential use of the houses
Businesses suffer
Square is empty
No traffic
Good conservation
Why? Among others:

• New neighborhoods have their new and modern centers.

• Maybe the square is too big on the small town – but therefore, much more has to be done to keep it alive and functional.

• Could it be that conservation restrictions ‘museified’ the square?

• No alternative functions replaced the historic markets
Some points to think of:

• Cities are not museums.

• Conservation should not come at the cost of use and life.

• One of the most important values of cities is being alive, serving their citizens and visitors.

• The square should be utilized as much as possible for market, playground, resting and fun site,

• The houses surrounding it should serve commercial as well residential activities
Let us see how can we help our historic cities and their squares to remain alive and attractive.

Let us be careful not to ‘kill’ our monuments out of love.

Thank you!

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