

## The lights of a settlement

(Protection of the value by night)

In connection with the new function of the monuments or in connection with the changing settlement context a lot of new possibilities, facilities, special devices have been appeared - as the requirements are changing steadily. The development of the world technique gives new possibilities as well.

In general the technical innovation serves only the function in the first time. Later it gives a new prospective possibility. The next step when the new technique gives a new possibility to denote the original value from a new aspect.

The new technique development may give a chance for a new special usage. Additional possibilities of the new technique appear sometimes not respecting the original elementary values later.

The natural light as the illumination of the historic buildings was always very important. In all ages the lighting of the interiors helped to recognize the inner space. The natural light was used as the enhancement of the original value. The historic buildings and settlements had different relationship with the illumination than nowadays. The difference is in the different nature of natural and artificial illumination.

The technical development of artificial illumination gives other possibilities as well. Orthodox statement, that the historic building should be authentically seen only at sun light because there was no possibility to see them at night when the only light source was the moonlight.

From the other hand, the artificial lights give a new possibility to the historic buildings as well. The monument may get a new visualization. The serious technical illumination development has originated new appearance with the new possibilities. But finally the overstepping new technique lead up to art for art's sake while this technique don't find its own self-expressive methods.

That is naturally supported to take advantages of artificial illumination of historic settlements. A new vision of the monument offers a good opportunity also keeping in mind the requirement of the authenticity.

If we review the historical usages of the artificial illumination, we can define the following periods :

### 1 functional period

The lights for the everyday life. In this period the original basic function gives the light to the settlement in darkness. There is no building with extra illumination, nor extra building accent in the street and in the settlement.

2. period      Amazing floodlight is used for illumination to emphasize the historic appearance of the settlement.

Those buildings that got an important role in the settlement silhouette got a special illumination. In this period the function of the illumination was to represent the same characteristic settlement structure what developed in a historic way.

3. period      The individual building got a special accent

The important, characteristic building of the settlement get a special accent with illumination in the town. The light on the whole surface, or the silhouette illumination is the reminiscence of the daylight appearance. The lights represents the importance of the building in the settlement structure even at a given urban point.

4. period      Beginning of the individuality of the illumination

As the lighting technique develops, the buildings get anti-natural aggressive illumination at darkness from strange direction.

Contemporary architecture use the extravagant illumination but in this case this is a new valuable possibility for the architecture. The architecture always consider the new technique as a new possibility. New architecture always follow the new possibilities of the appearance of a building. This determines the culture of the illumination reacting the culture of the light.

5. period      The monuments get strange appearance by night

The light technique has been developed in quite another way than the traditional historic monument care method was. The strange lights appears all of a sudden and try to introduce itself as traditional tool.

6. priod              The monument as subsidiary object became only a screen for a new art.

The computer science and technique gives a new way for the illumination. The historic monument became only the medium of the new visual experience. What is the function of a historic monument? – this is ethical question. How is this fits to the original preservation context?

The cultural tourism is directed by the commercial interest. There is the same problem of the usage of the monuments and in connection with this, the appearance of them in darkness.

Sometimes the new kind of illumination not transmit the original value. That is mirroring the new nature of consumption of the contemporary man and his behavior - or his misbehavior.

Doubtless the appearance of the building and the settlement are in immediate connection. The building is the important part of the settlement system, and that has the same role also in darkness. In the settlement buildings always have the same importance - independently from the part of the day. Generally the investors consider only the building. Artificial illumination is important part of the renewing program - sometimes without settlement-level coordination.

The appearance of the settlement cannot be a diffuse complex of amazing lights, not even if this appear as a picturesque scene. Can be problem the integrity of historic buildings in darkness without their original context?

The usage of the monument as canvas maybe also ethical question. Everything for the tourism, and tourists like the astonishing strange artistic illumination. The monument should represent its own inner value without depreciation meanwhile it is used as medium for a nondescript art.

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