

Tradition means passing on the fire and not worshipping the ash

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On the one hand highly valuable buildings are to be sustained as an architectural monument. On the other hand old buildings of less value that do not function very well are to be pulled down.

Furthermore, there are a lot of buildings which people like and which we will sustain and which have to be renovated. It is very often the case that these buildings are pulled down blindly and unnecessarily. What also happens is that these buildings are renovated ostensibly so that they give the impression of being old without being a historical building any longer. In other cases buildings are renovated so that one does not realise the renovation because people are afraid of changing something. Or no renovation at all is carried out.

In my view there is a deep cultural pessimism behind these inhibitions to renovate self-confidently: our age which is about to destroy the future of the next generation has understandably a lot of inhibitions to express our age in the form of architecture in the historical context for the future. Ecological architecture need not have any inhibitions. Since this kind of architecture has sustainable solutions about which we need not be embarrassed for the future generation. It must be said that it is ecological architecture which considers itself to be embedded in the historic context and which has the power to cope with the problems of the future is the kind of architecture that keeps tradition alive: the tradition of a self – confident renovation of a building, the tradition of expressing our age self – confidently in architecture and the tradition of believing in a better future.

Bearing this in mind I would like to come up for discussion with three examples:

1. Solar renovation in historical buildings, Krems – Stein
2. Solar renovation in the city centre of Vienna
3. Solar renovation of a building of the 70s, Klosterneuburg