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SPACE OF MEMORY, SPACE OF IDENTITY: CONTEMPORARY LANGUAGE OF ARCHITECTURAL CREATION AND PRESERVATION PRINCIPLES IN THE REVITALISATION OF HISTORICAL BUILDINGS AND PUBLIC SPACE – THE CASE OF PLAC LITEWSKI IN LUBLIN

A b s t r a c t

The Author of the paper presents his own point of view on conservation rules concerning the historical space based on his own architectural practice – using the Plac Litewski – (Litewski Square), the major historical public space in Lublin – as an example of an architectural and urban revitalization concept (2010).[1] In a search of the right answer within the winning competition project, the Author presents the principles and rationale behind the concept resulting from his attempt to *understand locality* and read out correctly *the 'DNA' of a place with all its layers of diverse local history*[2] respecting the existing *'Identity Code'*.[3]

Keywords: *preservation of monuments, urban design, architectural design, sustainable development*

1. Introduction

A preventive and a creative approach to architectural and urban design within a historical built environment has been a major subject of never-ending discussions since the 19th century, when there was an increase in the awareness of the need for historical heritage protection, and the first conservation doctrines were formulated. Although much time has passed since then, there is still no universal answer to questions about the limits and range of contemporary intervention in all cases and it would be unrealistic to expect one. Instead, the Author thinks that it is more appropriate to ask about real principles of preservation in every single case in search of a reasonable calculation of costs and possibilities, and to adopt a general approach. Remaining passively focused on just the maintenance of the physical *status quo* is merely a part of the task that has to be performed. It is also necessary to consider possibilities of restoring the monument to contemporary usage and, consequently, the necessary adaptations. Particularly so, when there appears an opportunity to uncover the sometimes hidden historical values with all their connotations and this can be done using the expressive language of contemporary forms.

2. Aims of preservation

We are living in times when our awareness of the uniqueness and cultural singularity of the material heritage of past centuries clashes with a sense of repetitiveness and uniformity of the products of contemporary global civilization. Protection of cultural heritage is an obvious responsibility of all the individuals and institutions that can maintain its utility, which is often public. The responsibility is not limited solely to conservation or renovation works and the indispensable reconstruction, but also includes adaptations, which restore functionality of the objects to meet contemporary needs and standards. Adapting a heritage building to a new use is the best (sometimes the only) way to secure its survival even at the cost of some alterations and additions. In each case, preservation procedures may involve difficult and often controversial design solutions that interfere directly with the fabric of the historical object or space. Needless to say, this requires special sensitivity on the part of the architect and, first of all, the awareness of the fact that he/she deals with priceless historical heritage which no longer grows in quantity.

3. Limits of intervention

An issue, both sensitive and crucial, is the ability to set conservation guidelines so that they would take into account the opportunity the heritage object is given while, at the same time, clearly defining justified limitations to conservation interference and also leaving a margin for the creation of new values specific to a particular case. Thus, on the one hand, we deal with the need for protecting and conserving the historical and unique value and, on the other hand, the inevitability of changes that need to take place for the heritage object to assume a new function, provided it will not be limited to that of an open-air museum.

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[2] *the 'DNA' of a place with all its layers of diverse local history* – understanding locality (one of sub-themes proposed as a guideline for the 3rd Annual International INTBAU Conference, Kraków 2014).
[3] *'Identity Code'*, *'Space and the Community'*, *'Contemporary Agora'* – subtitles used by Author within the text description of competition project for Plac Litewski.

There is no doubt that some impassable limits of intervention do exist. However, the problem is that they need to be set anew in each individual case and cannot always amount to simple proscriptions or prescriptions for preservation of the heritage fabric. Developing proper guidelines often requires reconciling conflicting needs and interests, but practice shows that even the best guidelines do not secure the outcome expected by conservators since, in the end, it is always a result of a vision of the architect who acts within the sphere of the conservator's constraints, the investor's expectations and his/her own ambitions, which are hardly ever confluent. Conservators still find it a problem to become reconciled with the fact that, in places not covered by guidelines, there is space for the architect's individual interpretation, which does not necessarily match the conservator's ideas. Also, in the case of urban space to which history has ascribed various forms of usage none of which has become obviously permanent, it is advisable to turn to modern forms and style of interpretation of the heritage place's history and retaining its cultural values to meet the current and future needs.

4. The Reality of practice

From the Author's perspective as a designer and from other architects' experience, it seems that conservators find it hard to accept the necessary changes and assume that their mission consists solely in retaining the heritage fabric in an unchanged form, whereby they artificially restrain the natural transformation of the heritage object, which also took place in the past.. The same concerns modern infill buildings in historic built environments, which are sometimes designed from scratch as there are no historic predecessors. It also applies to creative adaptation of historic urban space, which undergoes even greater changes due to different needs, technical standards or a new life style of its users. As a result, architects face a difficult choice between a conservative compromise and creative development at the risk of failing to get the conservator's planning permission.

5. Fear of novelty

Considerable resistance of conservators to modern intervention has, for many years, been observed in Poland. Although no intervention passes unnoticed, or without understandable controversies,[4] in any country with legal regulations of the status of a heritage object and its protection,

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[4] Significant example: contemporary reconstruction of the Roman amphitheater in Sagunto, Spain (1993) [Fig. 1–2] by architects: Giorgio Grassi and Manuel Portaceli has found its final in Spain's highest court (2008) upholding decision in 17-year-old case that requires the removal of a controversial restoration. See: D. Cohn [1]. See also articles presenting opposite point of views conc. amphitheater in Sagunto in: K. Frampton [2]; A.G. Moreno-Navarro [4]. Commenting on the decisions of architects in the case of the amphitheatre in Sagunto, Frampton wrote: *'Here, as in Rafael Moneo's Roman Archeological Museum in Merida, the antique ground has been both respected and violated at the same time.'*
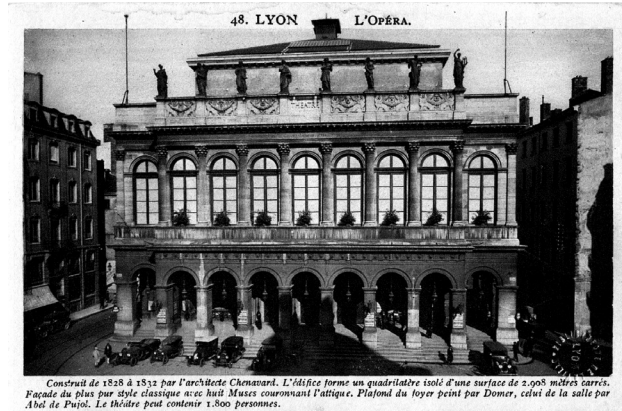

Fig. 1. Opera, Lyon. Historical view of front elevation (built in 1832, project of architects Antoine-Marie Chenavard and Jean-Marie Pollet). Source: Archives Municipales de Lyon – Patrimoine Lyon (online) at http://www.patrimoinelyon.org/ uploads /images/Gallery/Presquile/Docu_anciens/AC069123_ 4FI11971.jpg (date of access: 2015-01-23)

Fig. 2. Opera, Lyon. The current view of building rebuilt in 1993 according to the project of architect Jean Nouvell. Fot. Ludovic Courtès. Source: Wikipedia (online) at: http://upload. wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/eb /Lyon-Opera.jpg (date of access: 2015-01-23)

Fig. 3. Sagunto. Roman amphitheatre. Archival view of the amphitheatre (built about 50 AD) and view after restoration finished in 1994, project of architects: Giorgio Grassi and Manuel Portaceli. Source (online): http://4.bp.blogspot.com/Aw0B0lp-cZys/UO7yZMrELkI/AAAAAAAABPk/_E9SLQebJuI /s16 00/ sagunto_VN-05314_P.jpg (date of access: 2015-01-23)

Fig. 4. Sagunto. Roman amphitheatre. The current view after restoration finished in 1994, project of architects: Giorgio Grassi and Manuel Portaceli. Source: Mercedes Navarro – Brutalment Valencià (online) at: http://merxenavarro.com/2013/10/27/te-atro-romano-sagunto-1992-1994-grassi-portaceli (date of access: 2015-01-23)

nowhere else is this such a strong doctrinal barrier, often to the detriment of the protected object. Legal protection alone does not guarantee that the heritage objects will survive and the amount of funds supporting conservation and adaptation works is far from sufficient given the scale of needs. Saving and maintaining heritage objects involves huge costs and requires finding wise, wealthy and often private patronage, which is not easy considering the excessive conservation restrictions that discourage potential clients at the very start.

6. Preconditions of patronage

Whoever takes into account engaging in this sort of venture is aware of the fact that the heritage object enhances the rank and prestige of the venture. Each successful adaptation or extension can bring measurable business profit even though it is spread over time. However, this assumption does not mean that it is possible to passively pick and choose from a wide range of investors. The ones who have already incurred costs that are often high and hard to estimate and who have taken up time consuming renovation and conservation works deserve the greatest possible assistance from appropriate institutions, both in terms of money and expert advice that can help them to plan and carry out the necessary works, including adaptation practices in a broad sense.

Thus, the main aim of conservation guidelines is to provide proper indications as to the range and form of the intervention in the spatial and functional structure of the heritage object and its surroundings with the following important reservation: the admission of changes or a substantial infill can be a necessary condition for sustaining the interest in the object and, consequently, for its survival. It should be remembered that all the restrictive or doctrinal approaches to this matter can, unintentionally,

do irreparable damage through dooming the object to ruin due to lack of public funds to save it, on the one hand, and lack of interest on the part of potential private investors, on the other, because they can be discouraged by the restrictions, which are hard to reconcile with their plans. Since no country or international fund have enough money to preserve and maintain all valuable heritage objects, we have to make choices and calculate costs of suspending or altogether dropping action as well as taking up action bearing in mind the consequences of the outcomes of any potential clients' interests.[5]

7. Origin of the monument

The contemporary form of historic architecture is usually a result of the adaptation changes made in the past. They often obliterated the original spatial, functional or aesthetic concept, but did not diminish the cultural value of the object. On the contrary, they added many features of style and function that were equally valuable. In this way, successive generations contributed to the creating of an accumulated value inherent in the layers of the adaptive changes. Although the adaptations were often quite substantial and their introduction completely erased, the original features of the object they are considered an obvious consequence of the evolution in the needs for its use or simply aesthetic taste and no attempts are made at 'clearing' the accumulated layers off the heritage object in the name of the so-called 'clarity of style'.[6] Obviously, there are examples of ruthless, destructive changes made in the past, but this is no excuse for following suit nowadays.

Thus, we may seem to be fully entitled to make further changes as a natural consequence of the contemporary demand, but this would be a simplification going too far. The essence of heritage protection is the need for preserving the heritage object's features, which clearly testify to past cultural uniqueness that we see vanishing and are evidence of the contribution of local cultures, communities, nations to the world heritage of our civilization. A problem appears when the suggested changes obliterate the object's outstanding features that are distinct from the more common or recurrent ones and in this case questioning such changes is understandable.

[5] The competition for the revitalization of Litewski Square in Lublin proves that there is no guarantee that a public investor, e.g. local self-government, who theoretically represents local community will act in the best interest of the community because a combination of often conflicting social, political or even corporate interests can contribute to neglect or obstruction of actions that have been agreed upon during years of debates and preparations. See the Author's article [7].

[6] Some examples from Krakow: the buildings located in the Market Square today such as the Pod Baranami Palace, the Jablonowskis' Palace, the Krzysztofory are results of the connection and complete rebuilding of two or even three original buildings that had been situated on narrow, medieval plots. They would never have been built if conservator limitations had existed at the time.

Fig. 5. CaixaForum, Madrid. Archival photograph of previous building of Central Eléctrica del Mediodía (build in 1902, project of architects: Jesús Carrasco and José María Hernández). Source: Circarq (online) at https://circarq.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/caixaforum001.jpg (date of access: 2015-01-23)

Fig. 6. CaixaForum, Madrid. The current view of the previous building of Central Eléctrica del Mediodía, rebuilt in 2008 according to the project of architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron. Source: Bidaiahmadrid (online) at http://bidaiahmadrid.files.wordpress.com/2012/01/caixa-forum-madrid.jpg (date of access: 2015-01-23)

At the same time, the age as the only criterion of protection does not seem sufficient, this justifies the relatively recent trend towards protecting the acknowledged examples of contemporary modernist architecture and urban design. Unfortunately, this is not a widespread practice so there are many cases where conservators fail to notice, before it is too late, that contemporary architecture objects which are acknowledged as part of cultural heritage, although hardly ever formally so, get ruthlessly razed to the ground.[7]

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[7] In Poland, consent is given to barbaric demolition of acknowledged masterpieces of modernist architecture as there is no protection program. This kind of irresponsibility can result in losing the valuable representation of the modernist movement in architecture which comes under anticipatory criticism on the part of representatives of various trends of the 'new' way of thinking about space that have originated from postmodernism ideology (see the demolition in 2010 of the unique concrete structure of the Katowice railway station, Silesia, Poland, an unique and valuable example of brutalism architecture – the demolition took place despite protests of architects circles).

8. Litewski Square – origin of the place

Litewski Square in Lublin is a special place – not only for the history of the city, but for the history of Poland as a whole. It is situated on the former outskirts of the city and centrally in relation to the border of the Kingdom of Poland, at the crossroads where the Lithuanian delegation made camp before signing the Polish-Lithuanian union act during the 1569 parliament session. In the second half of the 16th century, the event was commemorated by a monument to the Lublin Union (an obelisk featuring two females, one representing Lithuania and the other the Crown), which was destroyed in 1819 during the demolition of the walls of the Hospitaller Order monastery, which had stood in the Square from the second half of the 17th century. Another commemoratory obelisk was unveiled there in 1826.

Over centuries, the Square went through numerous transformations: at one time, it was an open interior with a wood market, a straw depot, a parade square, a palace garden; buildings were erected there (the Hospitaller Order's church with a hospital, an orthodox cathedral) and removed. It had never developed strong links with the surroundings in terms of its composition [Fig. 7–11].
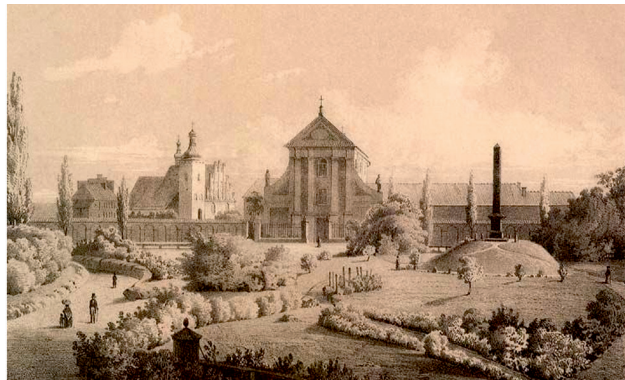

Fig. 7. Plac Litewski (Litewski Square), Lublin. Archival view towards St.Peter and Paul's church and Unia Lubelska monument (lithography by Adam Lerue, 1860). Source: Library of Teatr NN (online) at http://biblioteka.teatrnn.pl/dlibra/dlibra/docmetadata?id=12358&from= &dirids=1&ver_id=&lp=13&QI= (date of access: 2015-01-23)

Fig. 8. Lublin, Archival Plan of the City: Litewski Square and the center of the city on the map of 1780. Source: Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie (State Archive in Lublin) (online) at http://lublin.ap.gov.pl/goltest/wp -content/gallery/lokietek4/pl-35-22-pml-3-1-0.jpg (date of access: 2015-01-23)
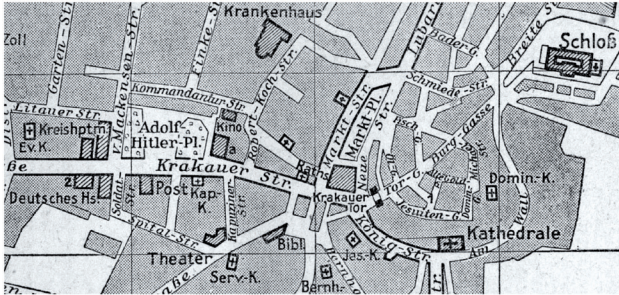
Fig. 9. Lublin. Archival plan of the city: Litewski Square and the center of the city on the map of 1943 (that time renamed to the Adolf Hitler Platz). Source: Archiwum Map WIG (online) at http://www.mapywig.org/m/City_plans/Central_Europe/LUB-LIN_15K _IV.1943.jpg (date of access: 2015-01-23)
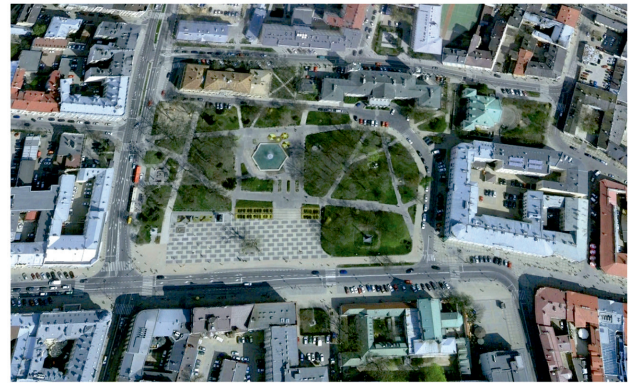

Fig. 10. Plac Litewski (Litewski Square), Lublin. Contemporary aerial view – existing state. Source (online): https://www.google.com/maps/place/Lublin,+Poland (date of access: 2015-01-23)

Buildings (mainly palace-style), which mark today's spatial framework of the Square appeared there in later periods and obviously influence its interior although the architectural forms are drowning in the sea of chaotic greenery, which makes the Square look like a green yard rather than a legible urban interior [Fig. 10–11].[8] There are no traces of the garden that used to be there for some time, except for the relics of trees that have survived in varied condition. Making the square accessible to vehicular traffic forces pedestrians to focus on safe movement among cars rather than on contemplation of the expanse of the Square's interior with the beautiful palace architecture. The impression of chaos is further strengthened by the disorganized development including five monuments which do not seem to follow any composition rules in terms of their mutual relations or connections with the surrounding built environment. Gaps in frontages are also a serious problem, although they are outside the scope of the intervention in the volume. A significant, not to say crucial, drawback of Litewski Square was the lack of programs for the space, which deprived the Square of vitality because the ground floors of the surrounding buildings are taken over by institutions and do not generate public activity or social interactions within the space of the Square.[9] [10]

Fig. 11. Plac Litewski (Litewski Square), Lublin. Contemporary aerial view – existing state. Source (online): http://www.lublin.eu/images/media/1295614746_PM_2010_0425_132424.1._1a.jpg (date of access: 2015-01-23)

9. Litewski Square – basics of the concept

Conservation officials, who participated in the setting of the competition rules, suggested a longitudinal division of the Square into three parts and a latitudinal division into two parts. Later, the diagonal division was added to the competition concept, which was in fact a modification of the proposed latitudinal division. The basic assumption underlying the concept, apart from outlining the guidelines for spatial arrangement of the Square, was a reference to the history of the site situated at the junction of the Cracovian tract and the Mazovian tract, which used to be important communication routes. The routes, which initially lay outside the urban structure of Lublin are not visible within the Square. One of the routes was preserved by the building pattern that followed (the Cracovian tract- currently Krakowskie Przedmieście street), while the other was obliterated (the Mazovian tract – it can currently only be discerned partially at I Armii Wojska Polskiego street, out of the Square). The presence of the historical crossroads is marked somehow only by the Lublin Union obelisk now.

The design concept assumed that the trace of the former Mazovian tract would be delineated as the edge of the

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[8] "Litewski Square – situated at the confluence of two historic routes which gave rise to the development of Lublin, a city once at the heart of Poland. The place of extraordinary events, extraordinary history written by extraordinary people in extraordinary space".

As if in spite of its tremendous importance for the history of Lublin and Poland, Litewski square today presents a picture of decomposed space, devoid of clear relationship with the surrounding buildings. Traces of many historical functions, buildings, layouts have already faded. Repeatedly changing its spatial image, functions and 'inventory' from the historical camp of the Union signatories, a wood market, a parade square through palace parks, it declined to the rank of a compositionally illegible, huge square surrounded by a communication infrastructure. Silent witnesses of this evolution are old trees waiting patiently to be reincarnated in a new context' (quote from the Author's competition entry).

[9] See: J. Wrana [9].

[10] See also: W. Wicher [6].

sunken part of the Square in the north with the entrance to the mixed-use underground pavilion below the upper part of the Square in the south. The former Cracovian tract along the southern frontage of the Square would be additionally set off by a row of trees replacing the old trees elsewhere in the Square, which would have to be felled [Fig. 12].[11]
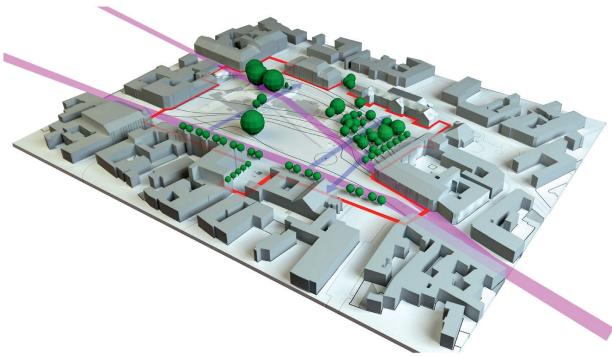

Fig. 12. Plac Litewski (Litewski Square), Lublin, on the conceptual competition model with the principal composition guidelines. Source: author's competition project scheme

According to the competition rules, the upper level was to provide a public space for mass events and, therefore, no development had been planned there. The only remaining elements included a small mound-like lawn with the existing Lublin Union obelisk, an old, branchy black poplar tree called a 'baobab' by the city residents and very popular with them, and the equestrian statue of Marshal Józef Piłsudski with the Unknown Soldier tomb plaque.

The Square's lower level was designed as a foreground for a mixed-use pavilion under the upper level floor, but also as a venue for smaller-scale events with amphitheatrical seating for the audience. The mixed-use pavilion was intended to permanently enliven the Square which otherwise would have remained just a space, no matter how beautifully composed, animated solely by externally organized events. The access to the place was designed in multiple ways, but the main solutions were gently inclined ramps along the historic Mazovian tract. Additional access was provided through various types of stairs dependent on the surroundings [Fig. 13–19].

The lower level of the Square was conceived primarily as a place commemorating the historic residents of the city of Lublin representing different nationalities that contributed to the growth of the city and settled here as a result of successive immigration waves. The best known and most numerous

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[11]"Trees – diverse species that are relics of the past design of the park and undeniable value of the Square but also a spatial problem. While growing, they started to get into one another's way and their number makes it impossible to see a clear relationship between the square interior and the most valuable buildings and feel the proper rank of the place. Not all of the trees have survived in good condition. We want to make a careful selection to indicate which of them should or can stay and which ones must go. Sometimes this will be like agreeing to euthanasia and sometimes choosing a lesser evil but always in the name of clarifying compositional relationships and creating a field for additions to emphasize the obvious value and cover up the weaker areas" (quote from the Author's competition entry).

Fig. 13. Plac Litewski (Litewski Square), Lublin. Visualization of the Author's and SAO Investment's concept of revitalization (awarded 1st prize in the 2010 competition) – general view. Source: author's competition project drawings and renderings
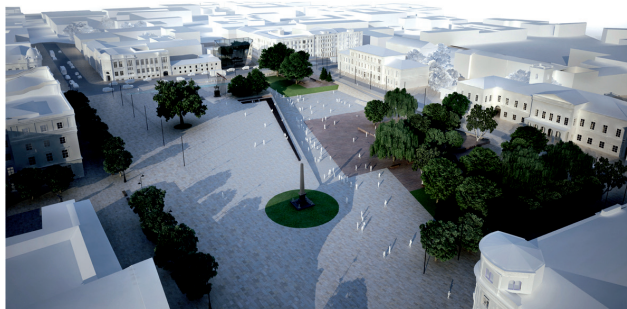

Fig. 14. Plac Litewski (Litewski Square), Lublin. Visualization of the Author's and SAO Investment's concept of revitalization – bird's-eye view from the south-east (on the left Krakowskie Przedmieście Street, below Unia Lubelska monument, at the top glass conservatory at the junction of 3-go Maja Street and I Armii Wojska Polskiego Street, on the right: old trees in front of the palace of Komisja Woj. Lubelskiego). Source: author's competition project drawings and renderings
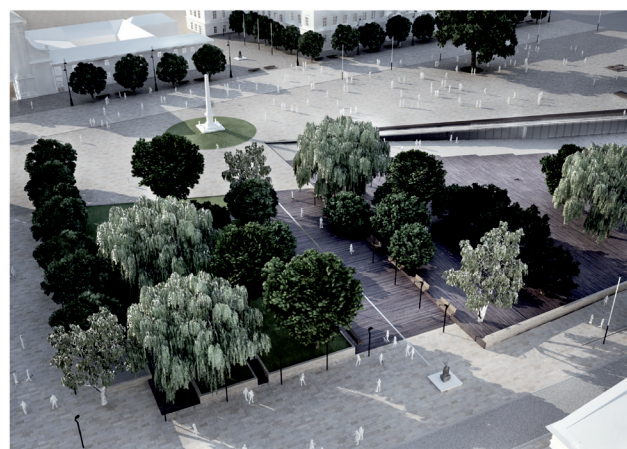

Fig. 15. Plac Litewski (Litewski Square), Lublin. Visualization of the Author's and SAO Investment's concept of revitalization – park viewed from the north-east (looking towards the Unia Lubelska monument and transposed monument of Konstytucja 3-go Maja). Source: author's competition project drawings and renderings
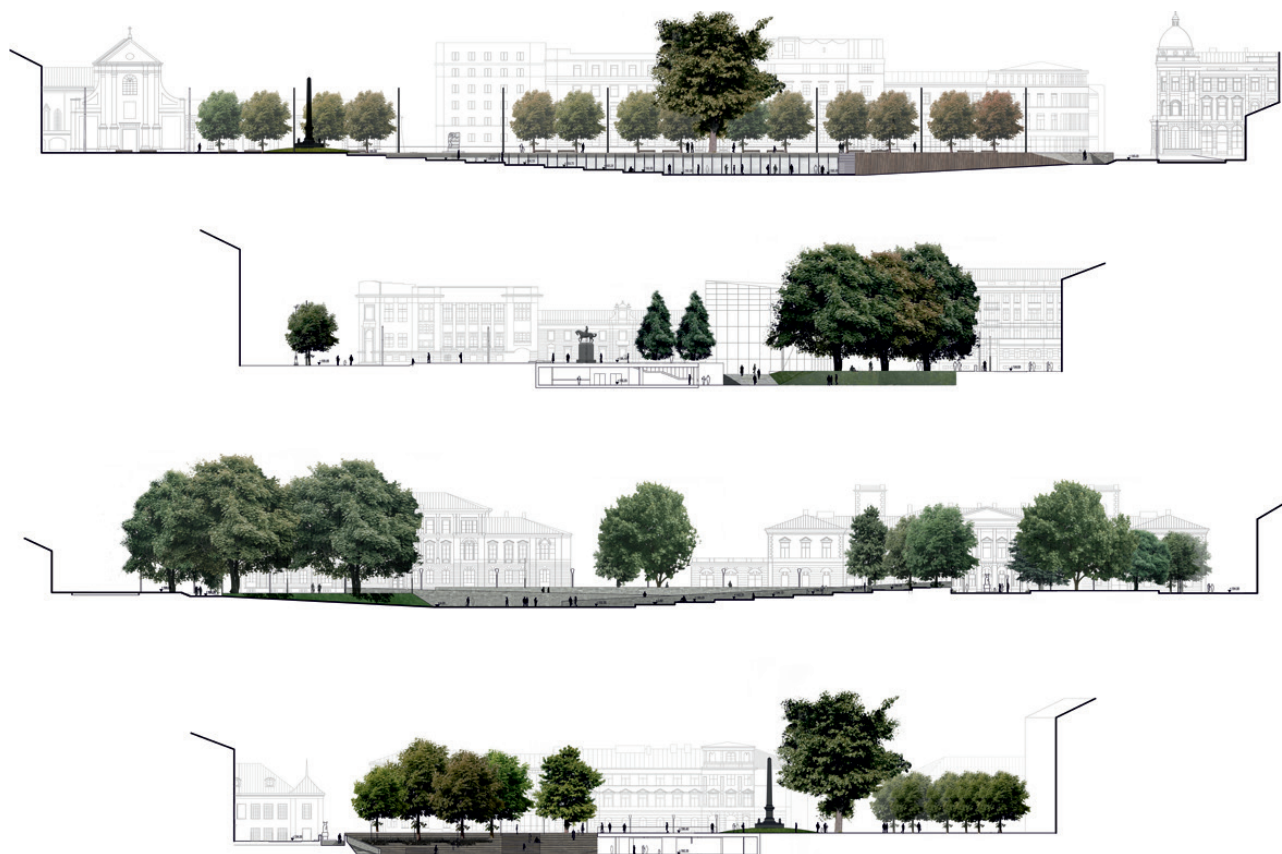
Fig. 16–19. Plac Litewski (Litewski Square), Lublin. Visualizations of the author's and SAO Investment's concept of revitalization:
Fig. 16. Longitudinal section with the built environment of Krakowskie Przedmieście street with St.Peter and Paul's church of Capuchin Friars monastery, post office buildings, the building of Kasa Przemysłowców Lubelskich and the elevation of the proposed underground pavilion (southern frontage)
Fig. 17. Cross section with the view of the buildings in ul 3-go Maja, the palace of Komisja Obwodowa with proposed conservatory in front of it and 'Janina' pension house (western frontage)
Fig. 18. Longitudinal section showing view of the building of Rząd Gubernialny and palace of Komisja Woj.Lubelskiego (northern frontage);
Fig. 19. Cross section with the view of the Sieniawskis' (Czartoryskis') palace and Europa hotel (eastern frontage). Source: author's competition project drawings and renderings

at the time was the Jewish community, but there were also Germans, Armenians, Lithuanians, Italians, Hungarians, the French, the Dutch and Scots. For centuries, many religious communities lived side by side here: there were Catholics, Jews, Evangelicals, Mennonites, members of the Orthodox Church and Greek Catholic Church, Muslims. They made up a rich cultural conglomerate. They had various professions such as merchants, masons, stonemasons, bell-founders, goldsmiths, tailors, hatters, chemists, barbers and enjoyed general recognition and respect as proved by the fact that that many of them occupied prominent positions such as a village mayor, a mayor, a bishop. Lublin, at the time, can be said to have been a model of tolerance and an example of peaceful coexistence of multinational and multicultural communities.[12] Nowadays, this could still be an exemplar and, therefore, we decided to restore the memory of the period using the planned revitalization of Litewski Square as the best opportunity to do so.[13]

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[12] The period has been called by historian Tadeusz Radzik as a '*the golden page in the history of Lublin*'. See: Radzik T. [5].

[13] "Today Lublin is no longer a city with such a diverse community and yet using and multiplying the heritage of past generations we

10. Litewski Square – incomprehensible

It might seem that the assumptions underlying the concept of revitalization of Litewski Square in Lublin, which won the first place in the 2010[14] competition for project execution, were interpreted correctly and accepted not only because they met the conservation requirements, but also because they further developed them creatively – such inferences could have been made on the basis of the competition verdict. However, what happened later to the project shows that it was apparently misunderstood by conservators.[15]

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see the need for commemorating those who hand in hand with Poles laid the foundations for the development of Lublin and for whom, over the centuries, Poland and Lublin remained places where they could realize their life plans. They used the opportunities for the benefit of their families and the city with all its residents. The tribute paid in this way to the communities of the past would be a good signal for others in the future that it is a place worth choosing in the globalized world" (quote from the Author's competition entry).

[14] The competition rules and guidelines are available on the internet at: http://um.lublin.eu/ngo/ index.php?t=200&fid= 9226

[15] Decision of jury in case of admitting the 1st prize had not passed unanimously. Two of seven jurors (just representing conservators so-

The criticism concerning the winning concept proves that conservators find it easier to understand and accept superficial re-painting and formal 'tricks' redolent of former built environment, even though it might be historically misconceived, than proposals for revoking memories of the city's rich history and its multinational community by means of a universal language of contemporary forms and program.[16] In the end, the winning concept became subject to pre-election political manipulations and intense extra-procedural actions by the authors of the concept that was in 3rd place.[17]

11. The Past as a subliminal stimuli

The fact that conservators fail to understand the contemporary language of architecture can often be attributed to their lack of practical design experience, which forces architects to constantly search for the forms of expression, which do not always aim at engaging in a direct dialogue with a historic form, but which sometimes enter into a dialogue with immaterial determinants of the site's history.[18] The contemporary language of architectural statements is often treated as too distinct and one that does not suit historic forms as it usually lacks the profusion of the stylish detail, which makes it foreign in terms of its appearance. However, it is sometimes just the simplified and synthesizing language of contemporary forms that makes it possible to make additions which do not obscure the past, maintain a clear distinction between historic authenticity and its contemporary complement and not to rule out the possibility of justified reconstruction or parallel conservation activities. At the same time, it can be the only carrier of abstract content due to the forms and the detail, understood in classical terms, which enrich space like a subliminal message. This, after all, is a frequent feature of modern mass communication means causing a subconscious state of existence, presence of something which does not physically exist or remains deeply hidden in the implication and context or metaphorical message.[19]

However, if we were forced to make our evaluation criteria amount to only visible and physically experienced stimuli, it would seem right to preserve, in the first place, the composition determinants (but not the literal forms of their realizations), the material relevance (but not necessarily mimicking the neighborhood) or typology (but only when fully justifiable). The structure of built environment and historical space are hybrid in nature and it is just in the hybrid approach that the golden mean should be looked for. This seems to be the course taken by the countries, which have richer and older heritage architecture and urban design resources when they make bold decisions concerning structural infill and enter into a dialogue with the past in this respect [Fig. 1–6].[20] Obviously, a misconceived proposal is a feature independent of style and yet the contextual approach does not preclude contrasts provided they do not lead to total abstraction. Sometimes, however, the language of abstraction hides connotations, which cannot be conveyed in any other form and thus becomes an example of an equally valuable form of expression.

One way or another, there is no universal rule for conveying the *genius loci*, and the fact that there are many good answers to the same question is a value in itself – the more so, the more evidence they contain of the existence of the language of contemporaneity.[21]

ciety) declared their *votum separatum*, because of (not precised yet that time) breaching the conservator's guidelines. Rejecting forms of proposed solutions within finally awarded concept project, they declared emphatic sympathy towards eclectic proposals included in the other concepts, however in major cases being based on uncritical mimicry and improper citations of forms carried with historically bad connotations.

[16] "It is on Litewski Square, at former crossroads, where the greatest integration of Eastern European nations had taken place (not imposed but stemming from the needs and aspirations of both nations), where citizens commemorated important events and figures from the city's history, that we see a modern agora. Each period in the city's history has left its mark here and so it should happen now and in the future". Our project is addressed to everyone regardless of age, status, belief, religion, in equal measure to the residents of Lublin and to visitors. Our concept takes into consideration everybody at any time of the day and year. We want everybody to feel at home on Litewski square, to enjoy privacy or get involved in public events, to watch others and be noticed by them, to be a spectator and an actor at the same time.
"We want our proposed solution to transform Litewski Square into a place of successful meetings for everyone" (quote from the Author's competition entry).

[17] See also more information about the winning project in: Wicher W. [7].

[18] "(...) Our code of identity is both the past and the present. The future is yet to come, we cannot predict it, we can only ask about its image those who are currently entering it. The risk of creating its material framework is ours. Therefore we tried to follow in our work the key determinants of the value of the place seeking spatial narration of the material and immaterial facts it experienced. The code of identity of the space forming over the centuries is treated as a key which we want to use in shaping the space of Litewski Square for the future. It will be a place with permanent testimonies of the past like fossils and at the same time a living place of today: a place of arranged and chance meetings, of dialogue and confrontation, social activities and integration". (quote from the Author's competition entry).

[19] An exceptional example from Poland, successfully completed: Cricoteka (Tadeusz Kantor Museum) in Kraków – extension and adaptation of the former old power station building in Podgórze district. Winning project by Konsorcjum IQ: S. Deńko, A. Szultk, P. Nawara, S. Zieliński (2014), although conservators expressed polemical opinions – can be seen (online) at: http://www.infoarchitekta.pl /artykuly:4-projekty:8046-cricoteka-muzeum-tadeusza-kantora.html (date of access: 2015-01-23).

[20] See also: W. Wicher [8]. To the most remarkable examples, selected for analysis within this article (i.e. extension of Opera building in Lyon, France – by Jean Nouvel, 1993 [Fig. 1–2], reconstruction of the Roman amphitheatre in Sagunto, Spain – by Giorgio Grassi and Manuel Portaceli, 1994 [Fig. 3–4] or transformation of the Castelgrande in Bellinzona, Switzerland – by Aurelio Galfetti, 2000). In the context of the article one could add such examples like: extension of Egyptian exposition in Louvre, Paris, France – by Ieoh Ming Pei,1988 or much further: CaixaForum in Madrid, Spain – by Herzog & de Meuron, 2008 [Fig. 5–6].

[21] Worth remembering here are words of Hermann Muthesius (1981– 1927), Werkbund's co-founder: "...that is best behoves us to honour the spirit of our times for the eyes of future generations by leaving behind for their judgment not ridiculous historical masquerades, but the true works of architecture in their own right".'

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