

Supervisor's report

Preservation History of Art Nouveau Heritage
in Hungary, Czech Lands and France, Paris 2013

Lilla Zambó

Lilla Zambó has conceived her master thesis as a study of three cases of the preservation history of the most relevant architectural monuments of Art Nouveau in „long durée“ perspective. She was aware that she will have to deal with very different ideological and political systems and different policy in respect to preservation of architectural heritage in Hungary, the Czech Lands and France in the 20th century. Particularly Hungary and Czech Lands in the last years of Austria-Hungary, post WW I republics, and post WW II situation.

The main research question of the thesis was about the influences of Art Nouveau in the society on one hand and about the attitude of the society towards Art Nouveau. It is a very interesting and rather new approach. The candidate opened an issue of various attitudes, aesthetic judgments, definition of modernity, political attitudes, which all are involved.

Lilla has chosen four important “Art Nouveau cities” of Europe: Budapest, Prague, Nancy and Strasbourg. In every city she chose an important, emblematic building. Concerning Czech and Hungarian case the question of pursuing national goals, desire to establish national architectural style linked with nation-building processes is discussed. In French case she chose to study Nancy and Strasbourg, i.e. Alsace and Lorraine, where she explores tension between modernity and the identification with Imperial France (Nancy) and with Germany in annexed Strasbourg. She follows the reception of the style, its rejection after WW II, and a new period approval and admiration in last quarter of 20th century up to protection of Art Nouveau as historical monumental architecture. The patrimonialization procedure may be in future expanded through comparison with yet other case studies. I was very satisfied with her responsible approach to her MA research project, and Lilla's contribution to the study program.

Proposed grade: A = excellent (tres bien)

Prof. PhDr. Luďa Klusáková, Csc.