

RE-CREATION OF ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE AS A SOURCE OF AUTHENTICITY

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Abstract. The problem of re-creation of architectural heritage has traditionally remained within the field of conflicting assessments. The classical doctrine established by the Venice Charter interpreted authenticity through the material substance of the monument; therefore, any re-creation was regarded as falsification. At the same time, historical experience shows that when not only the material fabric but also the very space of memory is lost, re-creation becomes the only means of restoring cultural continuity. At the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, under the influence of the Nara Document, the Burra Charter, and the Riga Charter, the concept of authenticity expanded beyond material substance to include cultural, social, and semantic dimensions and, with this shift, the very understanding of re-creation also changed.

The purpose of the study is to substantiate re-creation as a cultural act capable of generating its own authenticity. The methodological framework combines instruments of architectural and conservation practice with interdisciplinary approaches. The use of historical-analytical, comparative, system-structural, and hermeneutic methods made it possible to consider re-creation not merely as a technical procedure but as a cultural act in which architecture becomes a carrier of memory and a medium of reflecting on the past.

As a result, a conceptual model of the multiplicity of authenticity was proposed (including material, functional, contextual, and conceptual dimensions), along with a typology of re-creation forms: scientific, representational, adaptive, imitative, and falsification. The article examines two polar forms – scientific and falsification – as examples of opposing strategies of interaction between authenticity and contemporaneity.

The study demonstrates that re-creation is not the antithesis of authenticity: it may serve as its source, creating conditions for renewed experience and interpretation of the past. In this process, the genuine and the imagined, memory and the re-created image continuously interact, forming a new, dynamic authenticity. An open question remains whether a falsified re-creation can, over time, become living heritage – accepted by society as its own.

Keywords: authenticity, architectural heritage, forms of re-creation, identity, falsification.

Introduction. The issue of re-creating architectural heritage has always generated divergent views. On the one hand, the classical understanding of authenticity required the highest degree of care for the original fabric of a monument – for those «traces of time» that convey historical truth. Within this framework, any re-creation of a lost structure was regarded as falsification, an attempt to construct the appearance of the real where it no longer existed. This approach is codified in the 1964 Venice Charter [1], which for decades defined the parameters of international restoration practice.

On the other hand, the experience of many countries demonstrates that the need for re-creation has repeatedly emerged – after wars, disasters, ideological prohibitions or simply through the passage of time. In some cases, this occurred even before the very notion of a «heritage monument» acquired its contemporary meaning; in others, it took place when protection systems failed. This raises a key question: does a re-created object continue the historical narrative, or does it already constitute a new version of it?

The late twentieth century marked a broadening of the concept of authenticity. The 1994 Nara Document on Authenticity [2], the 2000 Riga Charter [3] and the Burra Charter (1979–2013) [4]

demonstrated that authenticity may be expressed not only through material substance but also through functions, traditions, techniques and collective memories and meanings. From this perspective, re-creation does not necessarily appear as a substitution of truth; it may operate as a means of restoring cultural memory and as a gesture of continuing historical dialogue.

The Ukrainian context is particularly illustrative. Here, the issue of re-creation carries a dual meaning: it is both a response to the immense losses of twentieth- and twenty-first-century architectural heritage, and an attempt to restore the spaces of memory that were destroyed together with material structures. In a setting of legal uncertainty and ongoing tension between the «copy» and the «monument», the cultural dimension of re-creation becomes decisive [5]. Ukrainian examples – from the reconstruction of historic urban centres to the recovery of lost religious buildings – demonstrate that re-creation increasingly extends beyond a technical operation and becomes a means of interpreting authenticity in a wider sociocultural sense.

Review of recent studies and publications. The problem of re-creating architectural heritage occupies an intermediate position between restoration theory, architectural practice and cultural studies. Several main directions can be distinguished in contemporary academic discourse, within which this issue is being developed.

Theoretical and doctrinal direction. This group of studies is concerned with interpreting the principles of authenticity and the permissibility of reconstruction within ICOMOS and UNESCO international documents, as well as post-conflict recovery guidelines [6].

The problem of re-creation is examined through the debate between the classical school (J. Viollet-le-Duc, C. Brandi) [7] and contemporary approaches (S. Labadi, S. Muñoz Viñas) [8–10]. These works emphasise the shift from «physical preservation» to «value-based authenticity», which includes the social and communicative dimensions of a monument.

Cultural and social approach. Re-creation is understood as a form of collective memory, identity and symbolic representation of the past (P. Nora) [11].

National and regional studies. Another direction comprises works analysing the practice of re-creation in specific countries – particularly in the post-socialist context (S. Kulevičius) [12]. These studies show how re-creation is often used as an instrument of memory policy and national identity.

Ukrainian context. In Ukrainian research (O. Plamenytska, O. Chahovets, K. Cherkasova and others), the topic of re-creation is examined within restoration methodology, regulatory frameworks and contemporary challenges of heritage protection [13–16]. The focus lies on the relationship between historical authenticity, legal constraints and the societal demand for recovering what has been lost.

Thus, the current state of research demonstrates a shift from interpreting re-creation as a «mistake» to understanding it as a cultural process that generates new types of authenticity.

The aim of this study is to articulate and substantiate the «concept of re-creation» in architectural heritage as a cultural act capable of generating its own modes of authenticity and shaping new layers of meaning within a monument.

Research tasks. To disclose the contradiction between re-creation as a «copy» and re-creation as a source of memory. To delineate the boundary between scientific re-creation and falsification. To identify the conditions under which re-creation can shift from a technical operation into a mechanism for reactivating authenticity.

Materials and methodology. The methodology is based on architectural restoration tools and interdisciplinary approaches. The study applies the historical-analytical method to trace the development of ideas about «re-creation» and authenticity in restoration practice; the comparative method to examine different forms of re-creation and their influence on the understanding of authenticity; systemic-structural analysis to identify the relationships between architectural material, symbolic meanings, and community memory; and a hermeneutic approach to interpret re-creation not only as a technical operation but also as a cultural act within contemporary restoration theory.

Research results. As a result of summarising the approaches presented in the works of A. Tomaszewski, S. Labadi, S. Muñoz Viñas, as well as in international ICOMOS documents, a conceptual model of the multiplicity of authenticity was proposed.

The model synthesises four interrelated dimensions – material, functional, contextual and conceptual which together form an integrated field of authenticity of an architectural object. Each dimension has its own carriers: the material (original structures and historical construction techniques); the functional (the initial use and preservation of the object's operation); the contextual (the historical and cultural environment and visual connections); the conceptual (the author's intention, architectural idea and symbolic content) (Fig. 1).

Thus, authenticity appears not as a fixed property of matter, but as a dynamic system of interaction between different levels of meaning, which may be reactivated even in cases of complete material loss.

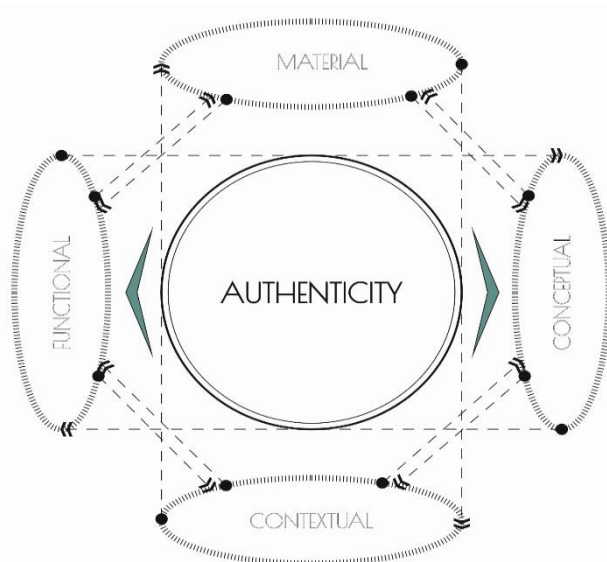


Fig. 1. The multiplicity of authenticity. Conceptual model. (Author)

Within this multidimensional model, re-creation emerges as a tool capable of activating different types of authenticity. Depending on its aims, methods and societal context, it may reinforce the material, functional, contextual or conceptual dimension. For this reason, contemporary practice demonstrates not a single but several forms of re-creation, which differ according to the source of authenticity that they reproduce.

The author's research made it possible to trace how the concept of «re-creation» functions within contemporary academic, professional and cultural discourses: from terminological and theoretical approaches to sociocultural and regulatory contexts. As a result, a typology of re-creation forms was developed, comprising five main forms (scientific, representational, adaptive, imitative and falsification), which differ in their relation to authenticity and in the ways, they activate it (Fig. 2). Each of them represents a specific way of actualising authenticity, yet none is an ideal or final model: all forms contain internal methodological and ethical conflicts – between accuracy and interpretation, memory and function, matter and meaning. These tensions define the contemporary field of discussion on re-creation as a cultural phenomenon.

This article examines two forms of re-creation: scientific and falsification as two polar models of interaction between authenticity and contemporaneity.

Scientific re-creation is based on reliable historical sources: drawings, archaeological research and photographic documentation and is aimed at restoring the original appearance of a monument as accurately as possible. Its key conflict lies in choosing between economic feasibility and the reliability of material authenticity: whether it is justified to use historical technologies, rare materials or manual craftsmanship when this significantly increases the cost of the work.

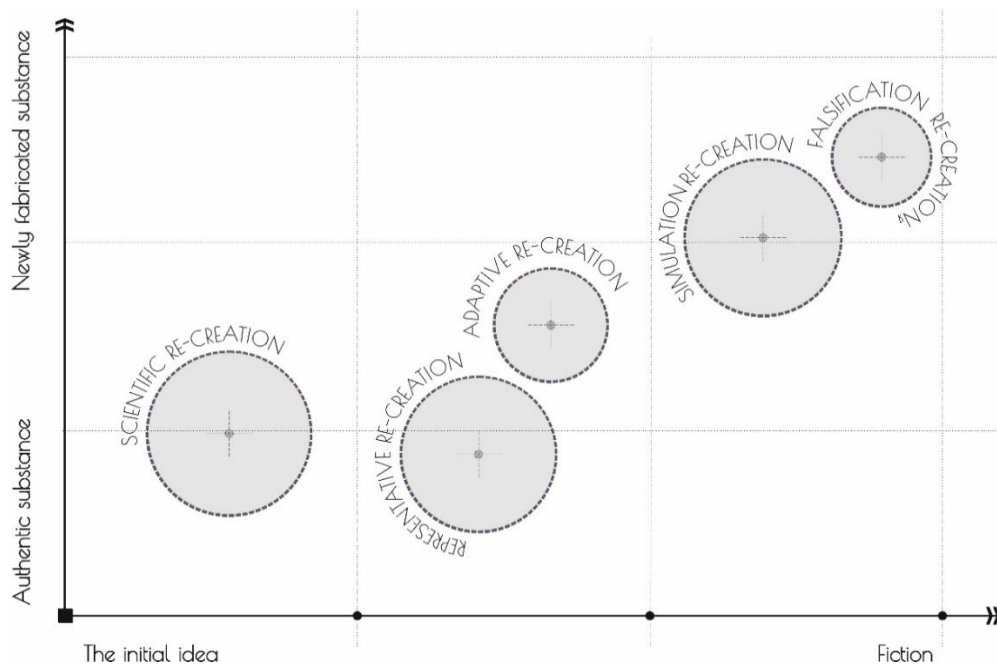


Fig. 2. Forms of re-creation. (Author)

The re-creation of the Ottoman bridge in Mostar, destroyed in 1993 during the Bosnian War, became one of the examples of scientific re-creation carried out under the auspices of UNESCO in 1997–2004 (Fig. 3). The reconstruction project was based on comprehensive archival and archaeological research, precise on-site recording of the surviving structural elements and an analysis of the hydrological conditions of the Neretva River. For the restoration of the arch, local Tenelija stone was used quarried from the same source as in the sixteenth century, along with the traditional technique of vaulting without reinforcement, using wooden centring. Each block of the bridge was crafted and numbered by hand, and the old fragments discovered during excavations were reintegrated into the structure [17].



Fig. 3. The Old Bridge in Mostar. Before destruction and after re-creation

The reconstruction of the bridge became not only a technical re-creation (reconstruction) but also a gesture of reconciliation, a restoration of trust between divided communities through the act of joint re-creation. In this case, authenticity appears not only in the material but also in the process, in which architecture becomes a means of cultural healing and a symbol of unity.

Falsification re-creation. This is the most radical form, creating the illusion of historical truth while in fact replacing it with a contemporary ideological or aesthetic interpretation. The conflict here lies between the modern perception of the past and its actual history. Such objects are presented as authentic but construct an «improved» or «convenient» past that corresponds to political or commercial agendas.

The Royal Palace in Vilnius (the Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania) was the principal state residence of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries. In the nineteenth

century, it was completely demolished by the Russian administration as part of the imperial policy of Russification. No vertical elements or structural parts of the palace survived – only archaeological remains of the foundations [18].

The re-creation carried out in 2002–2009 became a political and cultural project of independent Lithuania, a symbol of national dignity, the restoration of state continuity and cultural identity. The project was actively supported by the government and was perceived as an act of historical justice. At the same time, the building was constructed entirely from new materials, based on fragmentary archaeological data, reconstructive hypotheses and a national narrative, rather than on complete historical and architectural documentation. The palace was presented as «restored», without a clear public distinction between the new and the old. It was precisely this hypothetical character, together with the focus on visual recognisability and decorative persuasiveness, that created a situation in which imitative features merged with an ideological claim to authenticity.

In theoretical terms, this example demonstrates a falsification form of re-creation, in which re-creation executed without a sufficient source base acquires the status of historical truth, replacing scholarly verification with an emotional and political narrative (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania. Image on an engraving and after re-creation

If in Mostar re-creation became an act of reconciliation, then in Vilnius it functions as an act of self-assertion. The restoration not so much of the historical object as of the image of statehood. Here, reconstruction does not transform into reconciliation, remaining a symbol of cultural revenge rather than a renewal of dialogue with the past.

The typology of re-creation forms (scientific, representational, adaptive, imitative and falsification) is an authorial development created within the framework of the dissertation research (2022–2025). The full version of the model constitutes part of the materials of the forthcoming defence. This article provides only brief definitions of the three additional forms that complement scientific and falsification re-creation.

Representational re-creation is based on the idea that the memory of an object may be conveyed not through literal replication but through an image. In this form, creative reinterpretation is allowed, provided that it «honestly» indicates the loss. Here, the intention to preserve memory prevails over material authenticity. A building or space may take on a new form while still performing the role of a symbol. This is no longer a copy of the past but rather a system of signs and markers that recall what has been lost.

This form of re-creation responds to the question: can society accept a new form as a representation of the past, even if it does not reproduce a specific historical building?

Adaptive re-creation arises when a historical object is brought back into contemporary life as a repurposed space that preserves only fragments of its historical appearance. The aim of such re-creation is to integrate the monument into the contemporary socio-economic and cultural context. As a result, the authenticity of the historical appearance may dissolve and give way to functional requirements (a museum, tourist centre, art space or administrative building).

The key question is whether such objects remain part of heritage if their present outweighs their past.

Adaptive re-creation does not deny history but shifts the focus. The monument retains only certain features of its past, while the new function gradually defines its appearance and mode of existence.

Imitative re-creation creates the «appearance of historicity». It is a stylisation of the past. The «architectural mask» reproduces recognisable elements of historical architecture but does not claim

accuracy and does not refer to an actual heritage object. This form of re-creation operates with emotional «codes of memory»: stone, bastions, medieval roofs, Baroque silhouettes. However, these elements have no historical anchoring.

Imitation may be honest (when it does not present itself as restoration), but its semantic depth is always limited: it creates an atmosphere of «once», yet does not reproduce a specific «this was here». The main question is whether stylisation can be considered part of heritage or whether it always remains an architectural decoration.

In Ukraine, the experience of re-creating architectural heritage is extremely diverse. In the period of independence, a number of large-scale projects were implemented: the re-creation of the St Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery in Kyiv, the Assumption Cathedral in Poltava, the Transfiguration Cathedral in Odesa and others. These examples demonstrate a wide range of motivations, from restoring lost sacredness to creating symbols of national identity.

At the same time, the experience of the Soviet period is of particular interest. Today, several decades later, it becomes possible to assess these re-creations without ideological layers – not only as architectural objects but also as carriers of a particular model of authenticity.

One of the most illustrative examples is the re-creation of the Pyatnytska Church in Chernihiv, which makes it possible to trace how, in post-war restoration practice, the image of «authentic Old Rus' architecture» was formed – an image that simultaneously embodied scholarly inquiry and the mythologisation of the past [19].

Before the Second World War, the Pyatnytska Church in Chernihiv had the appearance of a Baroque church of the seventeenth–eighteenth centuries with a nineteenth-century belfry. During the bombings of 1941, the building was almost completely destroyed, with only fragments of the foundations and lower masonry courses of the twelfth–thirteenth centuries surviving, revealed through archaeological investigation. These remnants became the basis for the subsequent re-creation carried out under the direction of Petro Baranovskyi in 1944–1972 (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5. The Pyatnytska Church in Chernihiv. Before destruction and after re-creation

The work was based not on direct visual sources, images or drawings of the original church which did not exist but on archaeological research and comparative analysis of Chernihiv monuments from the pre-Mongol period. The reconstructed volume reproduced a hypothetical image of an Old Rus' church, while all later historical layers were removed. Thus, in the post-war re-creation, the Baroque church was transformed into an idealised image of «authentic Rus'» – a materialisation of an imagined past that had been preserved neither in sources nor in memory.

In this case, the re-creation acquired falsification features, creating the illusion of historical truth without marking its hypothetical character. Today, the Pyatnytska Church functions as an active place of worship, in which the life of the religious community continues. In this way, the new form has ultimately become fixed in public consciousness as «authentic», which further complicates the assessment of its authenticity.

Such cases raise complex questions for researchers: what happens to authenticity when the hypothetical acquires life, and the imagined is accepted as one's own? Can an object that originated as a falsification form of re-creation acquire features of authenticity over time through acceptance, use and incorporation into cultural memory? At what moment does re-creation cease merely to restore the past and begin to produce its own history?

More than half a century of the Pyatnytska Church's existence shows that, at a certain point, the hypothetical may become living, and this raises the question: is authenticity measured only by origin, or also by the duration of cultural life?

Conclusions. The proposed forms demonstrate that «re-creation» manifests in multiple ways but shares a common foundation: in each case, it functions as a means of engaging with the past within present-day conditions. These forms make it possible to observe how a society conceptualises its past, whether by seeking accuracy or by constructing an interpretative image. In this regard, re-creation operates not as a technical action but as a cultural practice.

Despite their differences, all forms of re-creation exhibit a shared feature: they not only reproduce an image of the past (including an imagined one) but also create conditions for its renewed experience and interpretation. Under certain circumstances, re-creation may generate a new form of authenticity by establishing a framework in which the past interacts with the present. At the same time, this framework contains inherent ambiguities, as factual and imagined elements, memory and reconstructed representations may overlap or shift in meaning. Within this zone of uncertainty, a contemporary understanding of re-creation emerges as a process through which society repeatedly defines what it recognises as «authentic».

A question that remains open for further research is whether a falsified or interpretative form of re-creation can become living heritage when it is accepted, used and incorporated into collective memory.

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ВІДТВОРЕННЯ АРХІТЕКТУРНОЇ СПАДЩИНИ ЯК ДЖЕРЕЛО АВТЕНТИЧНОСТІ

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Анотація. Проблема відтворення архітектурної спадщини традиційно перебуває у полі суперечливих оцінок. Класична доктрина, сформована Венеційською хартією, трактувала автентичність через матеріальну субстанцію пам'ятки, тому будь-яке відтворення розглядалося як фальсифікація. Водночас історичний досвід свідчить: коли втрачено не лише матерію, а й сам простір пам'яті, відтворення стає єдиним засобом повернення культурної тяглості. Наприкінці ХХ – на початку ХХІ століття під впливом Нараського документа, Бурра-хартії та Ризької хартії поняття автентичності вийшло за межі матеріальної субстанції, охопивши культурні, соціальні й смислові виміри, а разом із цим змінилося й розуміння самого відтворення.

Метою дослідження є обґрунтування відтворення як культурного акту, здатного породжувати власну автентичність. Методологічна основа дослідження спирається на інструменти архітектурно-реставраційної діяльності та міждисциплінарні підходи. Поєднання історико-аналітичного, порівняльного, системно-структурного й герменевтичного методів дало змогу розглядати відтворення не лише як технічну дію, а як культурний акт, у якому архітектура стає носієм пам'яті й осмислення минулого.

У результаті було запропоновано концептуальну модель множинності автентичності (матеріальний, функціональний, контекстуальний і концептуальний виміри) та розроблено типологію форм відтворення: наукову, репрезентаційну, адаптивну, імітаційну й фальсифікаційну. У статті розглянуто дві полярні форми: наукова та фальсифікаційна, як приклади протилежних стратегій взаємодії між автентичністю й сучасністю.

Показано, що відтворення не є антиподом автентичності: воно може виступати її джерелом, створюючи умови для повторного переживання й осмислення минулого. У цьому процесі справжнє та уявне, пам'ять і реконструйований образ постійно взаємодіють, формуючи нову, динамічну автентичність. Відкритим залишається питання, чи може фальсифікаційне відтворення з часом перетворитися на живу спадщину, прийняту суспільством як власну.

Ключові слова: автентичність, архітектурна спадщина, форми відтворення, ідентичність, фальсифікація.

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