

## The usage of the agrarian technical monuments built by the first half of the 20th century in tourism

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### Abstract

The report presents the agrarian technical monuments built by the first half of the 20th century in the area of Slovakia. It defines their position within Slovakia and analyzes them as technical monuments as well as their usage in tourism. In Slovakia there are still a lot of agrarian technical monuments, especially in its southern part, that have not been analyzed and introduced as potential touristic destinations. This report is an introductory presentation of the historical and archival research of particular locations with their agrarian technical monuments and the possibilities of their usage in tourism. The partial results of this research have been published in other original scientific works.

**Key words:** cultural monuments, agrarian technical monuments, agricultural buildings and facilities, tourism, Slovakia

### INTRODUCTION

In Slovakia the agrarian relics/monuments have been perceived and evaluated in a negative way. Their position in the list of cultural values and cultural monuments is very unfavourable. Only the rustic technical monuments are a kind of exception, those that were connected with agricultural production such as mills, forges and various small agricultural rustic buildings (Mlynka & Haberlandová, 2007).

Since the first half of the 19th century, in connection with industrial architecture, other architectonically valuable buildings were constructed also in the field of agriculture, either as industrial halls for the production of agricultural machines, technical buildings of basic agricultural production (stalls, hay barns, granaries, drying houses) or as buildings for agricultural product processing (sugar houses, distilleries, mills, malt houses, starch houses) etc. These buildings that had

been built by the first half of the 20th century were destroyed because of the agricultural production concentration that led to "schematic architecture", typical for the socialist agricultural building construction. Agrarian monuments in the countryside were more exposed to devastation than industrial buildings from this period which are situated in town centres nowadays. At the present the Monuments Fund pays less attention to the research and protection of agrarian monuments than to the industrial buildings. Bratislava is a typical example (Obuchová, 2009).

In Slovakia the existing agrarian technical buildings and their relics have a great potential for their usage in tourism. But if we want them to be attractive for tourists, first of all the particular buildings have to be processed and promoted, but today this is absent in Slovakia. Therefore in this report we will try to point out this unused potential for our tourism.

## GOAL AND METHODOLOGY

The goal of this report is to map and shortly present the possibilities of agrarian technical monuments built in connection and for needs of the agricultural production from the second half of the 19th century to the first half of the 20th century.

For example L. Kudela and V. Lednický (Kudela & Lednický, 2002) and V. Lednický (Lednický, 2004) dealt with the usage of technical monuments in tourism but only on a general level.

We can mention the long-term research of mining technical monuments in Slovakia as an example of a complex research of technical monuments for touristic needs. Historical mining monuments processed in this way have become the main attraction in the still developing geotourism and mining tourism in Slovakia. Here we have to mention the most important works in this field that we used in the methodological part of our report. They are studies that deal with geotourism and mining tourism written by prof. C. Schejbal (Schejbal, 2005, 2011), by prof. P. Rybár (Rybár, 2010), also by prof. Rybár and corporate authors (Rybár et al. 2010a; Rybár et al. 2010b; Rybár, Hvizdák, 2010; Rybár et al., 2012).

We worked out the methodological starting points of tourist trade, tourism according to prof. M. Gúčík (Gúčík, 2000, 2007, 2010) and also according to the works he published together with his corporate authors (Gúčík et al., 2004, 2006). Also K. Kompasová dealt with tourism and geotourism (Kompasová, 2010). Also the publications of I. Chorvát (Chorvát 2006, 2007) are important, he deals with the conceptions, theories and the terminology of travelling and tourism.

The agrarian technical relics/monuments can be used also in agrotourism that is developing quite well in the Slovak countryside (Habán & Otepka, 2004).

In the research of particular locations and during the almost five-year study of historical documents we worked with written, picture and material historical

sources stored in archives, museums, libraries and we also worked in the terrain. In the terrain research we used interviews as the main method in oral history (Veselská, 2009) and in picture history (Lengyelová, 2009).

When we were processing the research results into texts, characterizing the particular regions, as a background material for tourism, we were working according to M. Hroch and his corporate authors (Hroch et al., 1985).

## TECHNICAL RELICS/MONUMENTS

A technical relic/monument is every item or object that was created as the result or consequence of human activity and its purpose is to adapt the nature and its sources to the needs of the mankind with its present historical value, they document this activity to such an extent that it determines the need for permanent preservation of the particular relic/monument as a cultural property.

According to their nature we divide technical relics/monuments into movable and immovable. In terms of our research and processing of technical monuments connected with agriculture as main tourist destinations, their division according to farming branches is really important. The agrarian technical relics/monuments are all those objects and items that were created in connection with the development of agriculture or for the needs of agriculture. According to our research we can divide the agrarian technical relics/monuments into two groups as per the reason why they had been created. In the first group we have buildings and relics from engineering plants producing agricultural machines, devices and tools. In the second group we have agrarian technical relics/monuments such as building and facilities and their relics created for the needs of agricultural plants that had been involved in the basic agricultural production.

## THE USAGE OF THE AGRARIAN TECHNICAL RELICS/MONUMENTS IN TOURISM

The monolingual dictionary "Cestovný ruch – hoteliérstvo – pohostinstvo" (Gúčík et al. 2006) does not define the term **tourism**. The specialists in the field of tourist trade (especially economists and marketing specialist whose works are also used by geographers) narrow this term to sport activities connecting with physical activities and stay directly in the countryside in order to know one's own home country, its natural beauties and its cultural heritage (Chorvát, 2006; Kompasová, 2010). This term is also explained in Slovak monolingual dictionaries (turizmus = tourism, turistika = hiking, trekking). Nowadays in the more and more globalized world, where the main communication means is the English language, this term is more often used also in Slovakia. Slovak specialists in the field of geotourism (Schejbal, 2005; Rybár et al. 2010a) consider the terms tourist trade and tourism to be synonyms. They perceive the term tourism as an international term and therefore they prefer it in their works.

**Tourist trade** (*tourism*) is a set of activities that focus on satisfying needs related to travelling and stay of people outside their permanent residence and usually in their leisure time. Their aim is rest, knowing, health, amusement and fun, cultural and sport usage, business trips, i. e. gaining a complex experience (Gúčík et al., 2006; Gúčík 2010). The term that was created by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in 1991 is also frequently used: "Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the places visited." (downloaded on 7 October 2012, available online: <http://www.linkbc.ca/torc/downs1/WTOdefinitiontourism.pdf>).

While using the agrarian technical relics/monuments in tourism, the most important factor is the authenticity that today, in the modern over-technicized world, is becoming more and more important. The current generation of young people is losing the real concept of our ancestors' life. They do not know the meaning of a lot of terms (e. g. gápel', majer, silo, sýpka, mlynica) and they do not differentiate the meaning of particular terms connected with agriculture (straw - hay, bull - ox, stall - stable, fuller - mangle, barn - hayloft etc.)

In the current tourism we use mainly the so-called staged authenticity. There is a danger that we do not see the real historical reality but only mediated and customized pictures, impressions and images in the way they suit the tourism industry (Chorvát, 2006). This is typical for various festival, e. g. Hontianska paráda in Hrušov (District of Veľký Krtíš, Agrokomplex Exhibition in Nitra. The same things can be seen also during different shows about the life and work of people in the field of agriculture in the past that have become a routine part of "live" open-air museums.

We can understand authenticity as "an objective criteria that we can apply on particular events, objects and activities offered by the tourism industry and that we can use to measure the quality of the experience among individual tourists. Different people will review authenticity in a different way that is the result of for example their actual experiences, expectations, education, relation to the reviewed object, the environment they come from and also the degree of alienation that results from the conditions of life in a modern society and different people perceive it in a different way..." (Chorvát, 2006). The application of authenticity is very important in tourism in the presentation of agrarian technical relics/monuments.

The basic document related to the cultural monuments in Slovakia and also to the agrarian technical monuments is the Act

No. 49/2002 Coll. on the protection of monuments and historic sites from 2001. The act includes basic definitions of cultural monuments and also provisions how to proceed in their usage in practical life and also in tourism (Anonymus 2001). In the development of tourism related to the agrarian relics/monuments we have to proceed also in accordance with international documents published by the International Council on Monuments and Sites that was founded in 1964 and that accepted many charters and recommendations. The most important document for our study and for the practice is the International Cultural Tourism Charter – Managing tourism at places of heritage significance, that was accepted in Mexico in 1999 (Dvořáková & Husovská eds., 2002).

### OUTLINE OF MACHINE FACTORIES PRODUCING AGRICULTURAL MACHINES, DEVICES AND TOOLS

At the beginning of the 19th century there was a great demand for tools and machines because there were still less and less people employed in agriculture in the countryside, they moved to towns because of finding work in industry. After the abolishing of

corvee seigneuriale in the Hungarian Monarchy in 1848 there was an acute lack of labour power in agriculture and in the countryside, and machines were replacing man-power and work very slowly.



**Fig. 1** Hotel and restaurant in the historic granary in Babe

Gradually craftsmen started to specialize in the manufacture of tools and devices, for them it was their main source of livelihood. In the beginning they exchanged their products with agricultural workers for agricultural products but later they sold them – this led to the narrow specialization of the craftsmen. Gradually they became specialized blacksmiths, carpenters, wheelers who manufactured products also for agricultural workers.



**Fig. 2, 3** Jabloňov nad Turnou. Granary with the wine cellar, after reconstruction hotel and restaurant



Fig. 4 Mill on the Small Danube (Malý Dunaj) in Jelka, now museum

In the middle of the 19th century we can see great development in the area of metalworking and woodworking industry, in foundry, industrial forges where new materials and metal alloying started to be used. The industrialization of the agricultural machine and tool production was in progress also in the area of Slovakia. Various workshops, of local importance only, manufactories and factories were founded; later they developed and produced different agricultural tools, devices, machines and also some energetic means for agriculture.

In the first stage of the existence these specialized workshops producing agricultural machines existed in country estates, eventually manors that produced machines first for their own use and only later for other users (Pálffy in Pezinok, Károlyi in Palárikovo, Sztáray in Michalovce, the workshop of August Koháry-Coburg in Rimavská Seč). Later these workshops were separated from agricultural plants and they existed independently. Larger industrial plants came to existence also due to the investments of foreign capital, in Rimavská Seč it was the Czech Innfeld, outside the area of Slovakia but still within the

Hungarian Monarchy it was the businessman Kühne from Hamburg in Moson, in Pest it was the Hoffherr company from Vienna.

This gradual development led to the foundation of manufactories and industrial plants that took over the production of agricultural tools, devices and more and more often also machines from the particular craftsmen. The technology that was gradually introduced into various areas of basic agricultural production from the second half of the 19th century meant decrease in the proportion of physical work of people in performing agricultural works. The production of agricultural tools, devices and later machines gradually got factory and industrial character, products were constantly developing and they were mass-produced. This was connected with the number of technical inventions and patents that were introduced into the production of agricultural machines and still today many of these machines work on these principles.

At the end of the 19th century specialized factories were founded to produce agricultural machines; besides foundries they also run blacksmith, carpentry, mounting, moulding and painting



**Fig. 5** The agricultural machine factory on the Sereď square. Factory building is demolished

workshops, later also arch and gas welding. In this period there were good rail connections and the transportation of products and goods became easier. The factories started to operate directly in the sale places of agricultural machines, not in the iron industry sites. The raw materials were imported there. Industry from these towns, mountain valleys of Slovakia gradually disappeared.

Gradually specialized factories were established that produced agricultural machines. Some of them had their own foundries and they produced also casts. These were Ipvovitz in Komárno, machinery works in Čermel'ské údolie from 1879 Fleischer & Co., an agricultural machine factory, in the 1920s iron foundry Čermel'ská dolina in Košice, Karol Poledniak, machine factory, iron foundry, mill constructions in Košice, the first agricultural machine factory in Lučenec, Alexander Verő, agricultural machine factory in Nitra, farm machine factory and foundry, stock company in Rimavská Sobota, Friedmann and Würsching, laetr Perl & Co., machine and iron factory and iron foundry in Sereď, and Kachelmann Karol and Son, machine factory and foundry in Vyhne.

In the interwar period only a small

number of them was operational. Only the Kachelmann machine factory, the machine factories in Lučenec and in Košice supplied their own products, including casts. Most of the factories were in fact workshops where only few workers were employed. Some factories were only hidden commercial subsidiaries of significant foreign producers of agricultural machines. They imported ready-made casts from abroad, they machined them in their workshops, mounted them and complemented with some wooden parts. The cast frequently had the initials of a Slovak producer on them. In fact it was because they wanted to avoid custom charges. Another reason was the absence of a Slovak producer of quality machines. In the interwar period there was no Slovak producer of large machines, mainly steam locomotives, motor-drive ploughs, universal tractors, threshing machines.

And in fact the products made in Slovakia were not Slovak products. In Slovakia there were no construction workshops, no machine development existed. Nobody was interested in patent rights so they simply bought a machine from a foreign producer, they demounted it, draw simple drawings and the subsequent production and sale of machines could run without any difficulties.



Fig. 6 The agricultural machine factory on the Stúrovo square. Factory building is demolished

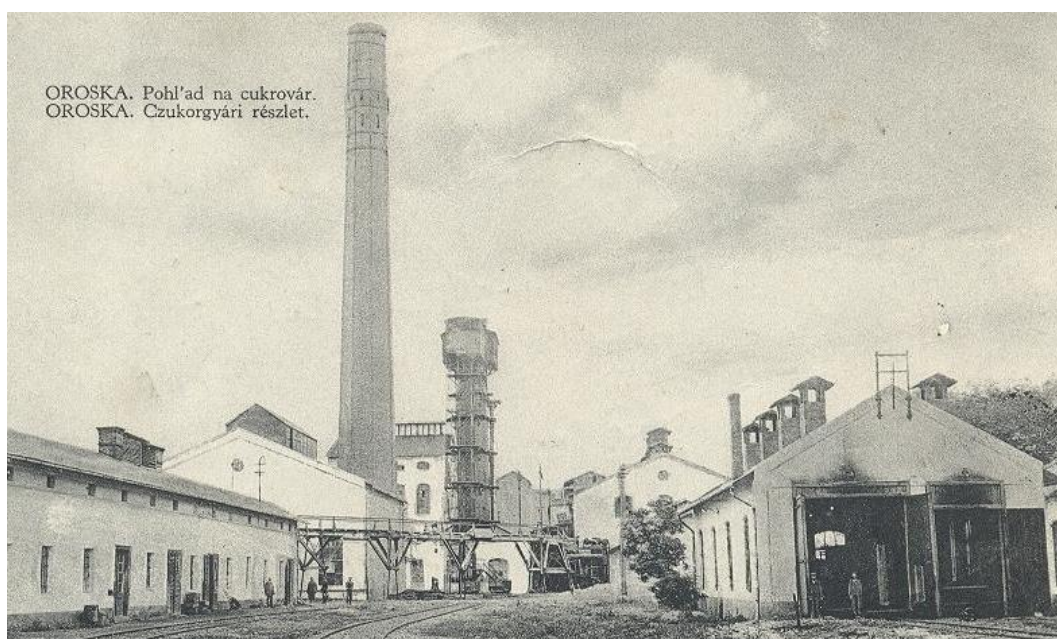


Fig. 7 Sugar factory in Pohronský Ruskov in the interwar period

Following the archival research and analyses of published works, eventually of preserved machines in museums and various expositions in Slovakia, we identified 29 factories and companies that produced agricultural technology. On the ground of the current state of our research we can say that this number was higher due to many different manual workshops of local interest. The particular factories, according to the period of their foundation, can be divided into two categories: 1.

factories that were founded in the 19th century, 2. factories that were founded after the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic.

**Factories that were built in the 19th century:**

- Bratislava: Jozef Dohnál, machine factory, later Dohnál et Mayer, then Mária Dohnálová. The last trade name J. M. Steper
- Bratislava: Karol Feitzelmayer, machine

- factory and mechanical workshops
- Pezinok: Pálffy's farm machine factory
  - Sered': Perl & Co., machine and iron factory and iron foundry
  - Sered': Friedmann and Würsching Landmaschinen Fabrik, later Perl
  - Nitra: Alexander Verő, agricultural machine factory
  - Palárikovo (formerly Slovenský Meder): Workshops in the country estate of Earl Károlyi
  - Bytča: Michal Treskoň, farm machine workshop (Treszkony Mihály gazdasági gépgyára Nagy Bittsén, Trencsén megye)
  - Veľký Bysterec (part of Dolný Kubín): Farm machine factory of G. Macko (*Gazdasági gép- és ekegyára Nagybiszterc, Alsókubin*)
  - Ružomberok: Gustáv Ráth's workshops
  - Liptovský Mikuláš: Ondrej Bacher's workshop
  - Matejovce (part of Poprad): Factory of A. C. Scholtz
  - Vyhne: Kachelmann Karol and Son, machine factory and foundry (*Kachelmann Károly és fia Gépgyára Selmecz és Vihnye*)
  - Banská Bystrica: Enterprise for metal and iron industry, The Mayer Brothers
  - Lučenec: The first agricultural machine factory in Lučenec (*Első losonci mezőgazdasági gépgyár*)
  - Kunova Teplica: Farm machine factory and foundry, stock company
  - Rimavská Seč: Agricultural machine and tool factory of Earl August Koháry-Coburga
  - Rimavská Sobota: Farm machine factory and foundry, stock company (*Mezőgazdasági gépgyár és öntöde*)
  - Plešivec: Miklossy steel factory
  - Krompachy: Machinery works at metal works in Krompachy (Krompachy Metalworks)
  - Spišská Nová Ves: Reich's farm machine and metal factory and iron foundry
  - Košice: Machinery works in Čermel'ské údolie (*Csermelyvölgyi gazdasági*

*gépgyár Kassán*), from 1879 Fleischer & Co., farm machine factory (*Fleischer és Társa, csermelyvölgyi gazdasági gépgyára, Kassán*), in the 1920s Iron foundry in Čermel'ská dolina

- Košice: Karol Poledniak, machine factory, iron foundry, mill constructing
- Michalovce: Machine workshop in the country estate of the Stáray family

### **Factories that were founded after the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic**

Komárno: Jozef Dosztál, locksmith workshop, Schwartz Jenő, machine factory

Komárno: Ipovitz machinery works

Štúrovo (formerly Parkáň): Aladár Drozdy

Bytča: Ján Balala

Nižný Medzev: Simon Pöhm & Co., metal factory

Nižný Medzev: Production company of metal and steel producers Metal factory

Plešivec, 19. Spišská Nová Ves, 20.

Krompachy, 21. Nižný Medzev, 22. Košice,

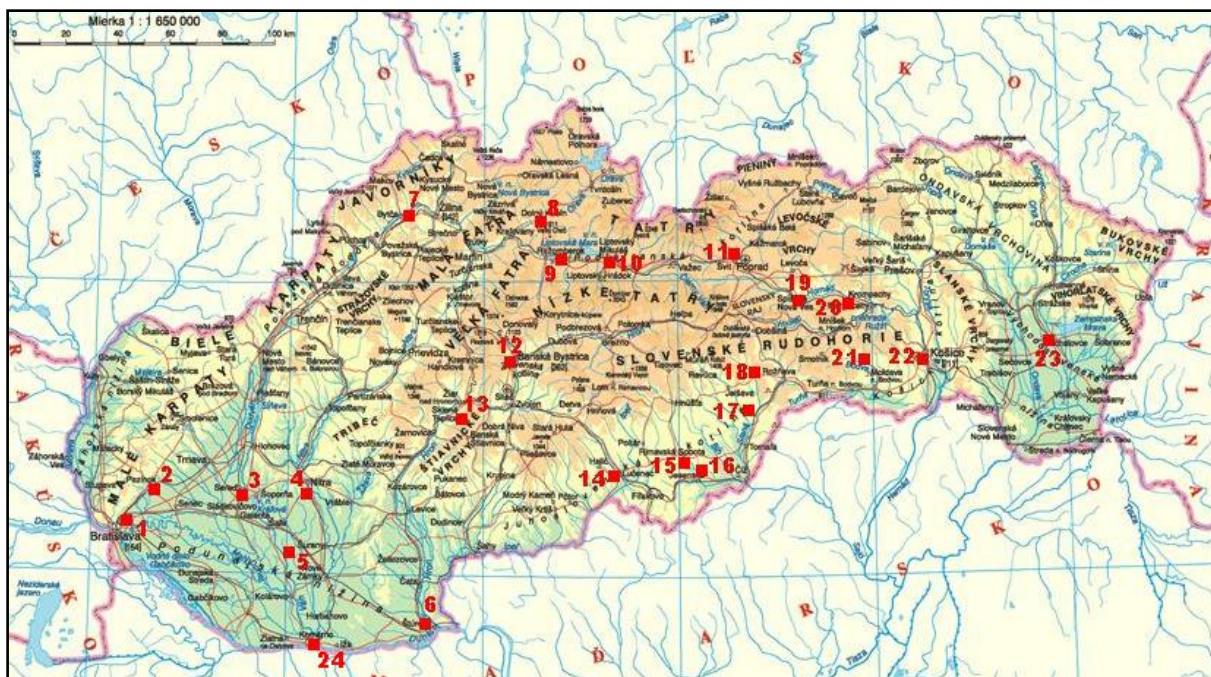
23. Michalovce a 24. Komárno

### **Outline of chosen agricultural plants that were involved in basic agricultural production**

In Slovakia there were larger agricultural plants – country estates, manors, cooperative farms and farm associations that were engaged not only in plant production but in these facilities, thanks to large shareholders, they had better financial possibilities to buy new, powerful and modern agricultural machines and technology. Exactly these factories used agricultural machines and technology in plant production. They were located mainly in the southern parts of Slovakia that have better conditions for agricultural production. In light of tourism we have chosen the following country estates:

- The sugar beet farm in Sládkovičovo
- (Diószeg) - Farm, sugar beet and distillery stock company in Diószeg
- The country estate of Earl Károlyi in Šurany and Meder





**Fig. 8** Locations of agricultural machine factories in the interwar period in the area of Slovakia: 1. Bratislava, 2. Pezinok, 3. Sereď, 4. Nitra, 5. Palárikovo, 6. Štúrovo, 7. Bytča, 8. Veľký Bysterec (Dolný Kubín), 9. Ružomberok, 10. Liptovský Mikuláš, 11. Matejovce, 12. Banská Bystrica, 13. Vyhne, 14. Lučenec, 15. Rimavská Sobota, 16. Rimavská Seč, 17. Kunova Teplica, 18. The country estate of Earl Eszterházy in Želiezovce

- The sugar beet farm in Trebišov - Trebišov sugar beet factory, stock company
- The family country estate Zichy in Novohrad
- The country estate of Baron Lukáč in Veľké Straciny (Novohrad)
- Other agricultural farms in southern Slovak basins (the country estate of Jolana Bendová, maiden name Weissová in Malý Krtíš, the country estate of Jakub Shusdek in the cadastral area of Opatovská Nová Ves and Lesenice)

## CONCLUSION – AGRARIAN TECHNICAL MONUMENTS, THEIR REAL STATE AND TOURISM

During our research of the above-mentioned locations in the terrain we identified a lot of agrarian technical monuments on site. At present many of them are in critical technical condition and many of them are close to complete destruction, some of them cannot be

identified at all.

According to the damages and attractiveness of particular agrarian technical monuments as target destinations for tourism we can divide them into four groups:

- extinct agrarian technical monuments,
- existing, but damaged agrarian technical monuments,
- existing agrarian technical monuments in good technical condition, eventually serving their original purpose, and
- existing agrarian technical monuments rebuilt to secondary usage.

For example the machinery works in Sereď (today there is a bus station) and in Lučenec (today there is a Tesco supermarket) that in the past produced agricultural machines and devices are extinct. In the second category – existing but damaged agrarian technical monuments we can find the largest number of objects (e. g. stalls, granaries and storage facilities in former country estates belonging to the sugar beet factory in Sládkovičovo, Šurany,



**Fig. 9** Farm buildings and stall in Víglaš, part Pstruša. Now are rebuilt by roadhouse with a restaurant and a guesthouse.

Pohronský Ruskov and Trebišov). For example the mill in Pohronský Ruskov, the mill in Malý Krtíš with a steam engine, the mill in Peťov, there is also a part of the machinery are in good technical condition. Both technical monuments are in the District of Veľký Krtíš. There are also objects that were rebuilt, today they are for example museums, guest houses or restaurants.

Our research will focus on the archival historical research of particular agrarian technical monuments according to the above-mentioned lists, we will also identify them in the terrain and evaluate their current condition. The processing of their attractiveness and availability as target touristic objects.

An example of a reconstruction and new commercial usage of agrarian technical monuments in tourism are the farm buildings and stall in Víglaš, part Pstruša. The buildings were constructed in the second half of the 19th century and belonged to the Víglaš Castle. After 1918 the whole estate became the property of the state under the name State estate of T. G. Masaryk. At the present the buildings are deteriorating but there is a project to rebuild them to a roadhouse with a restaurant and a guesthouse. The guesthouse Sýpka u Ludvíka is a reconstructed former granary

in Báb, part Alexandrov dvor, the District of Nitra. In Jablonov nad Turňou, the District of Rožňava there is a wine bar in the historical building that belonged to the Andrassy family in the past under the name: Uradalmi pince és magtár – manorial cellar with a granary. In the cellar there is a n original wine bar and the granary is used as a unique guesthouse. There is also a stove garden nearby. In Jelka (the District of Galanta) in the mill on the river Malý Dunaj there is a museum and also an exhibition of agricultural tools and machines. Near the mill there is a popular place of rest and a target destination with a restaurant for water sportsmen.

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