

**CIVVIH**  
**GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND SCIENTIFIC INTERNATIONAL MEETING**  
**CORFU, 18-20 APRIL 2002**

**PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF HISTORICAL TOWNS IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup>**  
**CENTURY, TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE HERITAGE, THE FUNCTIONS OF**  
**THE TOWN. THE CASE OF CORFU.**

The historical town of Corfu hosted the International Scientific Committee on Historic Towns and Villages (CIVVIH) of the International Council for Monuments and Sites of ICOMOS between 18 – 20 April. Parallel to the General Assembly of CIVVIH a Scientific Meeting was organised by the Technical Chamber of Corfu, ICOMOS Hellenic and the municipality of Corfu.

The opening of the business coincided with the **International Day for Monuments**, a fact which ascribed particular significance to the event.

The choice of Corfu to host the International Assembly is of particular significance. Corfu is not only a popular tourist resort, but also a region where culture thrived from prehistoric times to this date. It is a crossroad of civilizations, the meeting point of East and West that merits world attention.

This assembly was attended by more than 40 foreign scientists-members of ICOMOS and UNESCO experts from 16 countries, various entity representatives, 400 architects, engineers, archaeologists, etc.

The aims of that assembly were:

- a) presentation of the old town of Corfu,
- b) investigation of modern current issues pertaining to protection and development of historical towns, particularly with regard to the towns' social and functional and physiognomy, as well as discussion on monitoring processes and measures of protection of historical towns.

This assembly was particularly significant for the town of Corfu, in view of the fact that the town has filled an application to be listed in UNESCO's World Heritage List on the initiative of the municipality of Corfu and the Ministry of Culture.

The **first meeting** of the Scientific Assembly was devoted to the town of Corfu with extensive references to the town's history, unique cultural features, as well as to the policy of protection that is the cause for functional and morphological changes to the profile of the town.

Efforts to register the old, historical sector of the town of Corfu to UNESCO's World Heritage List by the competent authorities are being thwarted by the reshuffling of competencies among the authorities involved. At the same time inconsistencies identified in relevant legislation undermine efforts aiming for the protection and conservation of the unique architectural wealth and layout of the old town.

The historic town of Corfu has been subject to risk factors with consequences that are quite evident today, as for example with regard to:

- the functional and social fabric of the town, given the fact that lack of legislation with respect to property/land use undermines habitual and traditional use of heritage buildings in favour of commercial enterprises or occupation of residences by the lower social strata,
- traffic and parking space requirements are constrained dramatically year after year,
- interventions in the architecture and contour of the buildings resulting from their new use (e.g. signs, annexes, shelters, air conditioners, etc.)

The Programme Agreement for the Old Town of Corfu, signed by the Ministry of Environment, Town Planning & Public Works, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of National Economy, Public Enterprise for Town Planning & Housing and the Municipality of Corfu, aims to change the bleak prospects for the town of Corfu. To this end the Ministries are working on an operational programme focusing on protection, wise development and quality upgrade/enhancement of the old town.

The budget for this programme is in the range of 3.25 billion Greek Drachma to be covered by national and E.U. resources. Expedient interventions have already taken place, as for example rearrangement of public utility networks (from over ground to underground) and restoration of road pavements inside the old quarters, as well as the reshaping of fairly recent (1950's & 1960's) residences and restoration of facades for heritage buildings. Only few of those heritage buildings have been completely restored. Among those are included the ruined monastery complex of Ayia

Aikaterini and the belfry of St. Annunziata, as well as the rearrangement of the monastery's surrounding area.

The works contemplated by the programme constitute the first and most vital intervention to public spaces of the town and set the conditions for future interventions both by the public authorities and the private sector.

In view of the above, the establishment of an Office for the Old Town, as a competent authority for handling sensitive issues pertaining to the historical town of Corfu, is a necessary condition in line with international practices.

Foreign scientists, particularly the members of the International Scientific Committee on Historic Towns and Villages CIVVIH-ICOMOS, were quite impressed by the detail descriptions on efforts spinning around the conservation and protection of Corfu and its historic quarter.

The newly elected president of CIVVIH and member of the International Executive Bureau of ICOMOS, **Mr. Ray Bondin** stated the following: *«I must state that I was very much impressed about Corfu. It shows clearly that sometimes one cannot fully appreciate the beauty and authenticity of a city from simply reading about it. The city presents a very important view of the islands of Greece. The fortifications are really remarkable. The urban centre is extremely interesting and a good example of such a centre. Of course like many other islands it has the effects of tourism but to me I must say that I was very impressed that as a whole the city is very authentic and deserves to be given more attention. The monuments, the palaces, the churches, the archaeology, are all very very important and interesting».*

#### **THE PROGRAMME OF THE MEETING**

In addition to the case of Corfu, other Greek and foreign speakers made detailed references with respect to the issue of protection and development of other historical towns. In particular, discussions focused on the social and functional physiognomy of those towns. Emphasis was placed **on monitoring systems and protection measures**. Currently, all historical towns are subject to acute pressure from residential and leisure operation demands. This is anticipated to effect dramatic changes to the character of old towns, possibly resulting to collateral damage.

The schedule of presentations of the Scientific Meeting was finalized as follows:

THURSDAY 18 APRIL 2002

**1<sup>st</sup> UNIT: THE HISTORIC CITY OF CORFU. TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE HERITAGE.**

Presidency: **C.Vlassis, T.Moropoulou, R.Bondin, V.Grigoriadis, G.Kaloudis**

**A. Karamanou**, archaeologist: *The remains of the city of Corfu, from prehistoric to early Christian period*, **N. Karapidakis**, professor of history in Ionion University: *The historic formation of the city of Corfu, from the middle Ages to the modern age*, **Nasos Martinos**, doctor: *The intangible heritage. [culture, arts and sciences]*, **D. Zivas**, professor emeritus N.T.U.A: *History and evolution of the Ionian islands' settlements. The case of Corfu*, **A. Agoropoulou –Birbili**, professor N.T.U.A: *The architecture of the city*, **A. Karidi** architect, town planner [MSc LSE]: *Modern Corfu, facing history. – Plans and works [1995-1999]*

WEDNESDAY 19 APRIL 2002

**2<sup>nd</sup> UNIT: THE SOCIAL IDENTITY OF THE HISTORIC CITIES IN THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY.**

*1<sup>st</sup> part: HOUSING REHABILITATION AS A TOOL OF URBAN PRESERVATION.*

Presidency: **N.Spiggos, E.Petroncelli, V.Alektoridou**

**Alvaro Gomez-Ferrer Bayo**, architect, town planner, professor in the University of Valencia, SPAIN: *"Urban Rehabilitation through Functional Changes"*, **Helen Maistrou**, architect, Ass. Professor N.T.U.A, member of CIVVIH-ICOMOS: *The protection and development of historic town centers in Greece. The case of Plaka in Athens*, **Joao Campos**, architect, town planner, CRUARB's adviser, Porto, PORTUGAL: *The Question of residence in the historic center. The case of Porto.*", **Michel Polge**, architect, town planner, (en chef de l'Etat), France: *Operations planned for the amelioration of dwellings. (OPAH)*", **George Dellas**, architect: *"Rehabilitation of the medieval city of Rhodes"*, **Nur Akin**, architect, town planner, Professor in the Technical University of Istanbul, TURKEY: *Rehabilitation as a tool of safeguarding heritage*, **Pavel Gregor**, Ass. Professor, University of Technology, Slovakia: *"Housing rehabilitation as a tool of urban preservation-case study 'Historical center of the town Banska Stiavnica, Slovakia"*

Presidency: **T.Vlaxopoulos, M.Bonnette, G.Xatzigogas**

**Michel Van der Meerschen**, architect, town planner, president of ICOMOS Walloon, BRUSSELS: *"Protected historic centers in Walloon region, Brussels"*, **Andras Roman**, architect, Member emeritus of CIVVIH-ICOMOS, HUNGARY: *"The situation of rehabilitation of historic towns in Hungary"*, **Yuichi Fukukawa**, professor in University of Chiba, JAPAN: *"Difficulties of Conserving Historic Town Houses in Japanese Modern Cities."*

*2nd part: FUNCTIONAL CHARACTER AND PRESERVATION. TOURISM IS A FACTOR OF DEVELOPMENT OR A FACTOR OF DETERIORATION?*

Presidency: **G.Kaloudis, M.Polge, E.Maistrou**

**Sofia Avgerinou – Kolonia**, Ass. Professor N.T.U.A, general secretary of the Hellenic section of ICOMOS, member of the CIVVIH bureau: *Tourism as city destination. The Greek case*, **Delphine Lecouvreur**, architect (engineer of patrimony), FRANCE: "*Cities of art and history*", **Teresa Coletta** architect, town planner, Professor in University of Naples 'Federico II', ITALIA: "*Naples and the revival of its cultural touristic vocation*", **Milos Drdacky**, architect, Academy of Science of the Czech Republic PRAGUE: "*Impact and risks of tourism in cultural heritage environment*", **Anna Nurmi-Nielsen** director of museum Rauma, FINLAND: "*The Future of Old Rauma as a living town.*", **Ray Bondin**, general secretary, CIVVIH-ICOMOS, MALTA: *Archaeological excavations in the cities.*

## **SATURDAY 20 APRIL 2002**

### **3rd UNIT: MONITORING OF WORLD HERITAGE AND HISTORIC CITIES.**

*Presidency:* **M. Mitropia, J.Campos, K.Sklia**s

**Jean Louis Luxen**, general secretary of ICOMOS, BELGIUM: "*Monitoring of historic cities* », **Christopher Pound**, ENGLAND: "*Reflections on Monitoring World Heritage Sites.*", **Tatiana Kirova**, Professor Architect, Institution of Architecture, Caliali, ITALY: "*The historic identity of Bethlehem and measures of safeguarding patrimony in danger.*", **Elvira Petroncelli**, Professor Architect, Department of Planning and Territorial Science, University of Naples "Federico II", ITALY: *Monitoring of historic cities. Reflections.*

*presidency:* **K. Nikolouzos, A. Gomez Ferrer Bayo, S. Avgerinou-Kolonias**

**Junko Taniguchi** *Protection charts and pilot programmes for historic towns*, **Michel Bonnette** Assistant Director of Chair of Unesco in cultural patrimony. University of Laval, CANADA, UNESCO : "*Monitoring: instrument of control and communication*", **Josef Stulc** ICOMOS, CZECH REPUBLIC: "*Projects Endangering the Integrity of the Historic Core of Prague as World Heritage Site*", **Nils Ahlberg** Senior executive officer, Central Board of National Antiquities, SWEDEN,: "*Developing the Heritage-Guiding the Future*".