

SCIENTIFIC SYMPOSIUM ON SMALL TOWNS AND VILLAGES

Presentation of the theme

Following the 20th century disruptions, the issue of Historic Small Towns and Villages is now worth being investigated again and updated by the CIVVIH. The definition of what is a Small Town or a Village differs however widely from country to country. Quantitative or administrative Criteria are far from being able to establish a universally admitted distinction. This is why the observation of series of converging characters would somehow be more appropriate:

- They have a smaller scale than others in the same country,
- Their building materials and techniques as well as their architectural style are often shared with neighbouring villages,
- Their open spaces were often linked to rural practices and are specifically arranged,
- The local character and the "spirit of the place" are different from larger cities,
- Social and Economical issues are distinct (more agriculture, less wealth, demographical problems, etc.),
- Some environmental issues are more acute (water provision and pollution, loss of biodiversity, etc.),
- Their site may be sometimes dramatic (for topographic and defensive reasons),

The specificity of Small towns or Villages would imply the satisfaction of several of these criteria, but not necessarily of all. It may also happen that a former small town has become the core of a huge urban metropolis. It wouldn't then belong anymore to our subject of study.

As practitioners or research professionals concerned by architecture, landscape and planning interventions on the Heritage of Small Towns and Villages we are particularly interested by what is original and innovative in present processes and projects. Those may be expressed different ways, with a growing complexity according to considered scale. One may mention:

- **Outstanding actions** on individual elements: a house, a farm, a town hall, a square, a city wall, etc.
- **Thematic actions:** Housing rehabilitation, integration of public facilities, sustainable tourism development or mass tourism limitation, commercial signs and fronts, design of public spaces, etc.
- **Comprehensive Small Town or Village Plans:** Urban regeneration through social, economical and cultural development, Sustainable development (when environment is added), etc.
- **Regional Planning** in rural areas (including several villages and small towns): Comprehensive actions on several aspects simultaneously, as landscapes, environment, access (pedestrian or bike trails, vehicular roads), Socio-

economical and cultural development programs, etc. Regional parks may even provide a useful continuity and durability.

Other aspects may contribute to strengthen the local and regional basis of undertaken actions:

- Local governance, Public and private involvement, community action, craftsmen contribution, etc.
- Legal, regulatory and planning local protections,
- Surveys, inventories, study of traditional materials and their production, study of building structure, typological and colour analyses, local history and economy, social traditions and sense of identity, etc.
- Information, raising awareness, participation of the local population, etc.
- Architectural, planning and landscaping advisory services,
- Training of craftsmen and other local professionals

Call for papers

The Papers for the Scientific Symposium should be presented by CIVVIH members who personally participate to the Narni Scientific Symposium. They should fit in the above-described framework.

As a first step, proposals should be written in English or French on no more than one page and be sent by e-mail to the President of CIVVIH **before the 7th May 2009**.

After examination by a selection committee, an answer will be sent to candidates by e-mail **no later than the 21th May**.

Oral presentations, given in English or French, would be ten minutes long each and supported by a PowerPoint projection (Memory sticks should be used). Eight papers per session would be enabled per session with a panel discussion at the end of each session

Alternatively, the selection committee may decide a display of A1 posters if too many papers are proposed.