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Management of Mixed Cultural and Natural World Heritage Sites in East-Central Europe: A
Case Study of Visegrád

Activity Report for 2004 and 2005

In the first two months of the project I was carrying out the necessary background research to the project. I studied the structure and working of UNESCO World Heritage, with special attention to the Periodic Reporting and, in connection with this, the recent policies concerning Management Plans of the (proposed or listed) sites. I also researched the Hungarian legal background of Monument Protection, Nature Protection, and UNESCO World Heritage. I analysed a number of Management Plans of sites already on the World Heritage List.

All through the year, I was building contacts and making interviews with

- the relevant agencies of in the Czech Republic, through the person of Jan Dolák, chairholder of the UNESCO Chair of Museology and World Heritage at the Masaryk University in Brno, and Libor Kabát and Jiri Petru, Mayors of Lednice and Valtice towns.
- Polish partners, namely Bogdan Jaroszewicz, Deputy Director of Bialowieza National Park and World Heritage Site and Tomasz Samojlik of the Mammal Research Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences.
- English partners: Helen Read, Conservation Officer at Burnham Beeches, Corporation of London; Adrian Clark, Property Manager of Hatfield Forest, National Trust; Oliver Rackham, Fellow of Corpus Christi College, historical ecologist; Ted Green, consultant to Windsor Great Park.
- people involved in the management of Visegrád and Pilis: Sándor Hadházy, mayor of Visegrád; Árpád Kalotai, vice-mayor of Visegrád; Péter Erdős, leader of the Visegrád unit of Pilis Parkforestry Ltd; Miklós Papp, leader of the Pilis unit of the Duna-Ipoly National Park; András Fűri, vice-director of the Duna-Ipoly National Park Directorate; Mátyás Szőke, director of King Matthias Museum in Visegrád; Gergely Buzás, archaeologist, King Matthias Museum in Visegrád.

10 – 19 July, I travelled to England, where I visited a number of important sites that offer highly relevant analogies to the situation that exists at Visegrád. These sites were Hatfield Forest, one of the closest parallels to Visegrád and Pilis anywhere in the world. Burnham Beeches and Windsor Forest, which, besides the historical resemblances, helped me to form conclusions about Visegrád, because they are also very close to a major city (Windsor, in fact, is part of London).

26 July – 3 August, I travelled to Poland, to the World Heritage Site of Bialowieza National Park. I met Bogdan Jaroszewicz, deputy director of the local National Park and Tomasz Samojlik, woodland historian at the Mammal Research Institute.

11 – 19 August, I travelled to the Czech Republic, to the World Heritage Site of Lednice-Valtice. Here I scheduled a meeting with the mayor of Lednice, Libor Kabát, however, the meeting had to be cancelled. I met and was guided by Radim Hedl, ecologist of the Botanical Research Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences. I travelled to Lednice again on 7 – 11 December, and met Mr. Kabát on 8 December.

On 29 September, I participated in the *International Workshop on Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Preservation within the Light of New Technologies*, organised by EPOCH

and Archaeolingua in Százhalombatta, Hungary. I presented the results of my project, with the title “The Visegrád World Heritage Project: Problems and Tasks”. A written version of this presentation will appear in the post-conference volume some time in 2005. I have already submitted the manuscript.

In 2005, I have commenced an informal co-operation with Éva Tétényi on a possible joint application of Esztergom (another site on the Hungarian Tentative World Heritage List) and Visegrád. Her, my group mentor and myself met Tamás Fejérdy, deputy director of the Hungarian National Office of Cultural Heritage, and received positive feedback on the creation of the „Danube-Bend Cultural Landscape.” We have preliminary agreements to prepare a feasibility study for this site. I have modified both the final research and policy papers to include this new aspect. To date, it is likely that the policy paper (the management plan) will serve as the basis for the management plan – part of the World Heritage application material – for the newly created site.

Part of my project is the edition of a book on Visegrád and Pilis. My intention with this volume is to enhance the chances of the site to become part of the World Heritage. The reason for this is that during the first (unsuccessful) application, the UNESCO World Heritage expert delegated to evaluate the site stressed that the most significant advances should be made on the topic of the cultural landscape that surrounds the town. In this volume, virtually all Hungarian experts dealing with the site and the topic write an article of their respective fields. The result will be a comprehensive, scholarly, yet reader-friendly collection of essays that will summarise the present knowledge about the site. I will co-edit the volume with my group-mentor, József Laszlovszky. The present list of contributors is the following: Zoltán Batizi, Gergely Buzás, Andrea Kiss, Enikő Félegyházi, Péter Gróf, István Kovács, Andrea Kőrösi, József Laszlovszky, Orsolya Mészáros, András Pálóczi Horváth, Pál Sümegi, Péter Szabó, and Gábor Virágos. The book will be published by L’Harmattan in the series “A múlt ösvényén,” series editor Gábor Gyáni. All the manuscripts have been submitted by the end of March 2005. This, however, was later than the original deadline, therefore the publication of the volume is now scheduled for the second half of 2005. I have been continuously working on the edition of the manuscripts. My group and individual mentors and myself believe that this volume will be a major contributions to a future successful application of Visegrád – or in the more recent version: the Danube-Bend Cultural Landscape – to the World Heritage.