

BULGARIA

Ancient City of Nessebar

Brief description

Situated on a rocky peninsula on the Black Sea, the more than 3,000 year-old site of Nessebar was originally a Thracian settlement (Menebria). At the beginning of the 6th century B.C., the city became a Greek colony. The city's remains, which date mostly from the Hellenistic period, include the acropolis, a temple of Apollo, an agora, and a wall from the Thracian fortifications. Among other monuments, the Stara Mitropolia Basilica and the fortress date from the Middle Ages, when this was one of the most important Byzantine towns on the west coast of the Black Sea. Wooden houses built in the 19th century are typical of the Black Sea architecture of the period.

1. Introduction

Year(s) of Inscription 1983

Agency responsible for site management

- National Institute for Cultural Monuments
Knyaz Dondukov Blvd. 16, 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria
e-mail: nipk-sof@inet.bg
website: www.mc.government.bg
- Ministry of Culture
Al. Stamboliisky Blvd. 17
1040 Sofia, Bulgaria
e-mail: c.andreeva@mc.government.bg
website: www.mc.government.bg

2. Statement of Significance

Inscription Criteria C (iii), (iv)

Justification provided by the State Party

Cultural property:

- The Ancient City of Nessebar is a unique example of a synthesis of a century-long human activity in the field of culture, where many a civilization have left their tangible traces, brilliantly unified in a homogenous ensemble, in itself, and in respect to Nature.
- Nessebar's importance is unusually great: different moments in the development of its wooden house just outgrow the local meaning to become

stages in the architectural style all over the Balkans and the East Mediterranean region.

iii) Nessebar possesses a unique antiquity. Its urban structure even today keeps some elements from the Second Millennium B.C., the Antiquity, and the Middle Ages.

iv) The medieval ecclesiastical architecture, transformed under the traditional Byzantine clichés, provides Nessebar with perfect instances of the characteristic ceramics ornamentation, the genuine colouring, and the plastic shaping of facades.

v) Four thousand year-old Nessebar has been a remarkable spiritual center of Christian culture.

Natural property:

An exceptional and unusual natural configuration of a relatively small peninsula built of rock and connected with the mainland by a long and narrow isthmus. This is the only such coastline shape along the Black Sea shores and as a land space is a unique site along the whole European coastline.

As provided in ICOMOS evaluation

ICOMOS recommends the inscription of Nessebar on the World Heritage List based on criteria iii and iv and would underscore that this exceptional cultural property bears testimony to several civilizations which have disappeared, and it has illustrated, on several occasions, the significant historic position of a frontier city on the outposts of a threatened empire.

Committee Decision

The Committee made no statement

- Statement of significance adequately defines the outstanding universal value of the site
- No change required

Boundaries and Buffer Zone

- Status of boundaries of the site: adequate
- Buffer zone: adequate

Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- World Heritage site values have not been maintained. In 1986 the National Institute for Cultural Monuments ascertained certain negative impacts, due to the constant development of the tourist, public and residential functions of the town, as well as the need of urgent consolidation of the waterside of the peninsular. It should be noted that in the past years the illegal construction has been found out (realized in abuse of the Cultural

Monuments Act), which affects the traditional size and scale of some of the existing buildings, violates the new buildings by exceeding the scale of the traditional houses, and are situated very closely to the cultural monuments. This leads to changes in the traditional scale have resulted in partial loss of the authenticity of the urban structure, architectural view and atmosphere from the period of the Bulgarian Revival

3. Protection

Legislative and Administrative Arrangements

- Law: Law on Cultural Monuments and Museums (1969)
- Ordinance No.8 of the Culture Committee and the Committee on Architecture and Public Works for the architectural historical reserves Sozopol and Nessebar (1981)
- Directive Plan - a concept paper (NICM)
- The current Construction and regulatory plan of the town (1981) and the preliminary construction and regulatory plan (1991) by the Ministry of construction and urban planning
- The Spatial Planning Act (2001)
- The protection arrangements are considered not sufficiently effective

Actions taken/proposed:

- Improvement of the existing legislation

4. Management

Use of site/property

- Visitor attraction, urban centre, religious use, archaeological, architectural urban reserve with scientific and cognitive aspects

Management /Administrative Body

- Steering group: None at this time, but plans exist to create one
- No site manager exists at this time, but it is seen as necessary
- Levels of public authority who are primarily involved with the management of the site: national, local
- The current management system is not sufficiently effective

Actions proposed:

- Development of a Management Plan based on amendments in the current legislation

5. Management Plan

- No Management plan is being implemented, however the Ordinance and Concept Paper [see above] are used as guidelines
- Implementation commenced: 1981 (Ordinance)
- Title: Ordinance No.8 of the Culture Committee and the Committee on Architecture and Public Works for the architectural historical reserves Sozopol and Nessebar
- Not adequate
- Responsibility for over-seeing the implementation of the management plan and monitoring its effectiveness: Ministry of Culture, NICM, local authorities

6. Financial Resources

Financial situation

- Budget sources: main source - the municipality, the State budget, Owners of sites (physical and legal entities).
- Other assistance: World Monuments Fund, Leventis Foundation
- Insufficient

7. Staffing Levels

- number of staff: not given

Rate of access to adequate professional staff across the following disciplines:

- Good: conservation, management, promotion, interpretation, education
- Bad: management, visitor management

8. Sources of Expertise and Training in Conservation and Management Techniques

- Museum conservation facilities: University of Architecture, Building and Urban Planning – on the protection of the archaeological aspects of the sites; National Academy of fine Arts – restoration school; National gathering of architects for the promotion of culture; Directorate “Old Nessebar”; Archaeological museum – Nessebar
- Training on site management: need for training in restoration and conservation, surveying, documentation

9. Visitor Management

- Visitor statistics: 150,000 counted by ticket sales (2004)
- Trend: increasing
- Visitor facilities: accommodation, restaurants, gift shops, tourism agencies, interpretation panels
- Visitor needs: control over portable souvenir stands in the immediate vicinity of the site

10. Scientific Studies

- Risk assessment, studies related to the value of the site, monitoring exercises, condition surveys, impact of World Heritage designation, archaeological surveys, visitor management
- Studies used for: protection, monitoring, support for appeals for funding and partnerships, by municipal council for decision making, promotion

11. Education, Information and Awareness Building

- Not enough signs referring to World Heritage site
- World Heritage Convention Emblem used on some publications
- Adequate awareness of World Heritage among: visitors, local communities (not businesses, local authorities)
- Need for awareness raising: awareness raising and promotion is needed, namely amongst the local people and the owners of the real-estate in the Old Nessebar. They should be taught to be aware of the high cultural and historic value of the site, as well as raising creating particular attitude for the cultural values. Amendments in the existing legislation are also needed, in order to guarantee the respect of the legal provisions in the field of immovable heritage protection
- Events: 20th Anniversary of inscription celebrations, European Heritage Days, International Museum Days, television and film documentaries, scientific forums, lecture series, town-twinning programme
- Web site available: www.bulgariatravel.org, www.bulgaria/domino.bg/hessebar
- Local participation: participate as employees in the local tourism industry

12. Factors affecting the Property (State of Conservation)

Reactive monitoring reports

- N/A

Conservation interventions

- Conservation: there have been studies for the protection of the site's value, including scientific developments, analyses for the protection of the landscape, the structure characteristics and the single monuments on the territory of the reserve; for the territory of the Ancient City of Nessebar and for its protection zone there has been worked out a directive plan – a conception, based on: an extensive analysis of the condition and the value gradation, as well as an evaluation of the activities, directly connected with the protection of the cultural-historical heritage and of the factors, influencing the ways of its adequate inclusion in the living conditions of the city's environment
- Present state of conservation: Patchy

Threats and Risks to site

- Development and environmental pressures; visitor & tourism pressure
- Specific issues: marine humidity and salinity, erosion of the coast
- Emergency measures planned: amendments to the legal framework, installation of an emergency system for humidity control, creation of air channels to prevent penetration of capillary moisture

13. Monitoring

- Monitoring is carried out regularly on the separate sites, as well as on the entire urban structure of the reserve
- Measures taken: NICM conducts periodic instrumental monitoring of the microclimate in the churches. Long-term monitoring of the microclimate of the St. Stefan church, thus the technical conditions for microclimate's control have been set up.

14. Conclusions and Recommended Actions

- Main benefits of WH status: conservation, social, economic, management
- Strengths of management: the following have been carried out:
 - studies for the protection of the site's value, including scientific developments, analyses for

the protection of the landscape, the structure characteristics and the single monuments on the territory of the reserve

- large-scale conservation activities, restoration and exposure of the sites – the archeological structures, the medieval churches and the wooden houses from the period of the Bulgarian Renaissance

- monitoring of the entire condition of the reserve and of the separate sites

- Instrumental monitoring of the most precious archeological sites and medieval churches

- Actions have been taken, though inadequate for the management of the tourist flow. These include:

- for the territory of the Ancient City of Nessebar and for its protection zone there has been worked out a directive plan based on: an extensive analysis of the condition and the value gradation, as well as an evaluation of the activities, directly connected with the protection of the cultural-historical heritage and of the factors, influencing the ways of its adequate inclusion in the living conditions of the city's environment

- in this plan for differentiated zones with different value characteristics and concentration of cultural heritage, there have been differentiated regimes for permissible contemporary intervention

The national institute for cultural monuments has repeatedly conducted commission visits, under which there have been found violations regarding the reserve protection. The results from these commissions are reflected in the respective protocols, sent to the municipality of Nessebar and to the Department for national building control

- Weaknesses of management: there is no specialized management plan and respectively appointed management and coordinator of the site. It is also pointed out that:

- the current normative documents are outdated, and their following is not guaranteed by the current decrees

- the local authorities do not conduct on-place management and supervision regarding the site's protection

- because of the lack of coordination between the Law on cultural monuments and museums, and the Law on spatial planning, the Department for national building control, and in a number of cases also the local authorities, remain indifferent in the process of protecting the immovable cultural-historic heritage

Future actions: Amendments to the legal framework

- Legislation amendments to be adopted:
 - regulating procedures and structures to be provided, securing the application of the legislation decrees
 - there is a need for coordination of the orders of the normative documents, connected with the protection of the real estate cultural heritage and the other legal acts in the field of spatial planning
 - elaboration of management plans to be required by these normative activities