

# ***Evaluation of the added value of the UNESCO brand in Slovakia***

*Institute of Cultural Policies, 2016*

## *Table of Contents:*

*Introduction / Magdaléna Vášáryová*

*UNESCO World Heritage / Martin Katuščák*

*The evaluation report of the Institute for Cultural Policies on the status of selected sites on the World Heritage List and a recommendation to increase the added value of the UNESCO brand*

*Methodology / Jana Javorská*

*Folk Architecture Reserve of Vlkolínec, inscribed in 1993 / Jana Javorská*

*The Historic Town of Bardejov / Jana Javorská*

*Caves of the Slovak Karst / Martin Katuščák*

*Carpathian beech forests / Martin Katuščák*

*Herliansky geyser awaiting inscription / Martin Katuščák*

*Music of Terchová, UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Heritage, 2013 / Magdalena Vášáryová*

*Monitoring of UNESCO in Slovakia / Martin Katuščák*

*Final recommendations of the ICP*

## *Introduction*

Heritage is knowledge, memory, a cultural product, and political goods, Gregory Ashworth wrote in *Heritage planning*, a book published by the International Cultural Centre in Krakow in 2015.

It would seem to us that heritage is something fixed, given, immutable, finally something for the perpetuity, the eternal times. Beautiful, unfortunately, but only a romantic dream that we have fallen for in Slovakia for a long time. In "communism", those 40 years, we lived through times deprived of the properties that characterise the natural living processes that are constantly changing their forms and contents. No wonder, since we inexorably, with scientific evidence, headed towards the utopian future that should have been static. For ever. The utopia of managing knowledge and memory scientifically is over now. Like everything in the world and in the universe, in every time of culture and in every culture, the attitude to heritage is constantly changing and must change, too.

Before 1972, when the World Heritage Convention was adopted, the most important question to be asked by our cultural public - **how to save the heritage?** - at that time, it seemed to be important. (Let us think about the rescue and the extension of the Bratislava Castle.) A monument, a piece of heritage, was seen as a solitary object, single thing which had nothing to do with the environment or life around it. This has established a dangerous basis for a simplified perception of its preservation, while residents just kept watching passively, and many often damaged buildings, stole without remorse exposed precious parts of buildings, just to own a piece themselves, or they just destroyed them. Monuments, or heritage, have not been explained to people as an important part of a comprehensive historical narrative which would arouse curiosity and various associations, and the totalitarian regime avoided the strengthening of the culture of memory, based on the recollections of individuals. These monuments were just "placed in a box", behind a glass panel, subjected to conservationist protection, thus preventing the most important aim of restoration or preservation of heritage, which is to see a monument as a contribution to the maintenance of the cultural continuity.

Since 2003, when the Convention on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage was adopted the word "patrimonium", a Latin expression, started its career which we can translate as cultural heritage. Thus, we moved from dogmatism of heritage preservation only for future generations on to the adaptation of the buildings and sites - not only to restoration, but also adjusting these to new functions and uses today, for us, for the present. Back in the period from 1999 to 2009, the Dutch made an experiment in this area titled their project the Belvedere programme. Care of selected historical heritage was combined not only with research but also spatial design and planning of the use of a heritage site. They needed to cope with the phenomenon called "expanding heritage", i.e. an incredible quantitative increase in entries in the World Heritage List, which meant

huge financial, material and personnel costs. This contributed to "neo-style opportunism and contextual autism" (Ashworth), which we have witnessed in Slovakia.

Today, after the adoption of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in 2005, we are asking different questions. Not how to save a piece of heritage, but how to understand it, how we can and we want to interpret and thus to transform it. For a long time, it has not been just simple numinous reverence before heritage to be on the agenda, but the pursuit of developing a culture of memory, and its preservation for the society through the heritage. For the past is dead, unlike the memory which is an open, dynamic system. Heritage in our modern understanding is not only the beauty of the oldest landmark or sight, the harmony of medieval squares, simple "gusle" or anything romantic with the "genius loci", the popular term people have learnt to say these days. Heritage as memory is connected with the community, it creates its identity and its preservation is a relationship, built anew over and over again, between the past and the present, by people of a given time choosing from a multitude of cultural heritage objects and sites those which they deem relevant to the current objectives of the society.

Every piece of cultural heritage, anywhere in the world, is both universal and unique. Its re-interpretations have got an impact on the quality of historical memory and the selection of myths, which are essential to any culture. The tearful and still persisting Romanticism as sadness for something never coming back, provokes nationalist efforts to appropriate heritage sites and triggers many cultural conflicts. One of the prophets was Victor Hugo and similar Romantic writers whose books and appeals we can read, today saying "For God's sake, people, let's save everything before it's too late! As if the past was more real than the present, and the past values were more than those of today!" Until now these thoughts and attitudes periodically produce "defenders of the ruins", who go out to the war against the present time under the waving flags. (Let us remember, for example, the defenders of the PKO "Culture and Leisure Park" in Bratislava.) Like all generations before us, we could build new architectural styles on the old ones, or demolish and clear room for our style, because, frankly, we no longer need the old in its original function. We have no kings, nobility, coaches, long skirts, we need flushing toilets, lifts, wide roads, and illuminated billboards. Because it is the present. We who have experienced some ideological demolitions, but are more sensitive and culturally more romantic especially in confrontation with the defaced centres of our medieval towns and with senseless dehumanised housing complexes which we have built around them and which we find disgusting. We did not build them as our new cities, we cannot perceive their pragmatic function, and we long for the aesthetics and harmony of yesterday. But we have to finally understand that heritage, its modern design, is in particular the creation of something new, not only preserving and protecting. In fact, by revitalising sites we form some new relics according to a fashion existing today, and even if we place museum artefacts under bulletproof glass, our development - both economic and cultural - is partly based on the presentation of heritage. We suppose we preserve and protect heritage, but this way we merely give the

future generations the opportunity to understand who we are and what we think is significant. We select and draw the dividends of identity and for future generations we prepare the consequences of our selections, which they will hardly change. "Look what we have struggled sweating to save for you, what we have reconstructed, and what we did not like!" We colonise the future of our value ranking system and our fashion. We are those who sacralise selected heritage for them, and so it is important that we are aware of it also in the selection of sites for protection under the auspices of UNESCO.

*"Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations.... culture may now be said to be the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterise a society or social group",* Ashworth wrote in his book.

UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, is the patron of preservation of cultural heritage with its UNESCO World Heritage programme, which was established in 1972. The listing criteria can be summarised in the three concepts: **creativity, important universal value** and **exceptionality**. The founders of the Programme understand heritage as an amazing instrument. It allows us to meet a large number of different goals and can be a source of joy and pride, if it not just a subject of "fetishism of being on the List", or a definition of many cultural sites in order to prevent the devastation initiated by the locals, or simply a mere effort of getting more visibility. Heritage, it is not just stocks in a store room. It is endless, depending on what we want to perceived as a signal from the past. That is to say, heritage brings about a whole spectrum of emotions. It can both startle and soothe, cause suffering and heal the wounds, cause complexes and treat them, can be a source of pride, but may also expel whole groups of people from heritage. It can trigger development, but can also be a financial burden. It can be both Panaceum and Pandora's Box. Needless to ask whether heritage is an instrument used for national or even nationalist goals. It has always been and will be. It legitimises opposing political ideas, accepts or throws entire groups and nations out of national fairy tales. Finally, the past, no matter how difficult and tragic, cannot be deleted. And because today there are many rivalling present times, the past provides ample ammunition for all conflicts. So the question is not **whether to use the past or but how we will use it**. The social amnesia pursued by the Communists is a project doomed to failure. But what can be said with certainty is that we need heritage, a legacy, in modern and post-modern societies.

The expectations which heritage should meet are enormous. While previously the main question was - **how to protect**, today we have to ask - **why? And for what? And for whom?** Which heritage once multicultural will we protect against disfiguring or extinction? What do we want to use commercially? Who will pay and who will benefit from it? Also, one needs to reckon with conflicts between producers and consumers of heritage on the one hand, and environmentalists and crusaders on the other. Of course, authenticity of a building or site is of significance for the concept of preservation but for the heritage and its use it may not be a precondition. Only we are authentic, we who are

living now. What we present as heritage, are our ideas about the past. They help us in creating the identity of individuals, groups, places and everything that goes with it. Because if heritage is not to be associated with the local community, whom it helps and benefits, why should we protect historical medieval towns? They see heritage as a chance, but also a great limitation to options. It is a chance even where the other possibilities of development proved to be unrealistic. Then what is important is a good marketing and commercial use plan, otherwise all dreams will fail to come true. Demand for heritage, monuments, sights is certainly growing, but the global competition is huge. For historical towns, heritage is a time bomb, because fashion is changing rapidly, sometimes too fast ... and who will bear the costs of the heritage-related industry? Residents who yearn for a historic town pleasant to live in, but also making it possible to live in a modern lifestyle without having to be constantly in the conflict between the protected heritage and the modern architecture, the so-called *heritage construct*. We must be aware that by offering a city in the tourism sector we are changing it fundamentally. Therefore we should not yield to public opinion, or *heritagisation*, as it is identified by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, but knowingly select those artifacts and cities which we want to use to send a message to the world. The inflow of tourists and guests who want to familiarize themselves with the sites and sights will not always bring added value for our needs. This is not a selection process of producing values, which has a neutral connotation. This is a connection (nexus) between politics and bottom-up pressure from below, a kind of insidious competition to attain symbolic dominance. Or substantialisation, according to Jean Davallon. Therefore, sites need infrastructure, advanced management and a clear business plan. Local and regional governments need to know why to protect these sites and not others. Otherwise, a town or a monument will suffer irreparable damage.

The dream of every true Slovak is developed and flourishing tourism for sports and our cultural heritage. We yearn for the creation of such a tourist product for both foreigners and locals which would not only help reinforce the local identity, but also contribute to, preferably immediate, development and indeed of wealth. But have we identified sufficiently what suits cultural tourism and what does not? For it is this area where conflicts arise very often. And what about the mutilated heritage, the heritage of hatred, heritage of the resettled or evicted? Heritage without heirs - what about that? Where should the *lieux de mémoire*, the places of memory be, and what are those *cultural goods* we want to expose to the world? Today's monuments are not just sacrum, but also goods which we must be able to offer and sell. The past is an infinite reservoir of ideas and objects. Why should our heritage be left out of this lucrative industry? As the Dutch experts wrote in their project: heritage should be proactive, future-oriented, financially self-sustainable and more effective." To achieve this in Slovakia, we have also to ask the right questions and understand be able to answer them in the process of presenting our UNESCO heritage. Then we will not have problems to decide which monuments to offer for the World Heritage List and which to keep to ourselves, or just for the neighbours, and which to hide and erase from the map, which is the best protection against

destruction, as suggested jokingly by the Japanese expert on cultural heritage, Professor Tokimasa Sekiguchi. Let us therefore ask these questions:

- What significance does any given piece of heritage have - local, national, continental, or global?
- Whose heritage is that - critical, heterogeneous, or neutral?
- Whom does the memory represent - an individual or a group?
- Who has created it and what was the objective - private, collective, national, or transboundary?
- What will we forget? What should we not remember and who should be disinherited? - this is where we are very experienced.
- How will we defend an over-commercialisation of a heritage site and its conversion to a commodity - by change of ownership, legislation or through regulation?
- Whom the heritage should serve - is it to be accessible only to the chosen ones, or just specialists and experts, or to everyone?
- What is today's market value of a heritage site - does it have to grow or stagnate?
- And who will cover the losses - the state, local government or the residents?

There are certainly more questions, but these are the basic ones. G. Ashworth draws attention to the fundamental errors in thinking and heritage planning:

1. heritage is not protecting the past, because the past has been, and now make it into something new
2. heritage is not a bridge between the past and the future, because only the present is real and therefore we only pick from the past what we need now, and let us not feel ashamed because of it
3. heritage is associated everywhere with the word "ours", when in fact it means "mine"
4. we conserve, heritage but no one has neither more nor less, it cannot be used up or overused, only destroyed
5. Heritage does not unify all people, because every heritage disinherits somebody.

Throughout 2016 the Institute for Cultural Policies (ICP) tried to answer at least some of these questions in the face of our heritage already inscribed on the UNESCO List, or those which in preparation, and to avoid the mistakes Ashworth pointed out. We do not know whether we have been successful, but we believe that the process of the post-evaluation of the benefits and problems of heritage under the UNESCO brand can help us avoid future errors or exaggerated expectations. It is a critical voice which is always needed and so little present today, especially in such a welcoming form.

*Magdaléna Vášáryová*

*INSTITUTE FOR CULTURAL POLICIES*

## UNESCO World Heritage

**Objects** on the **UNESCO World Heritage List**. Sites that are seriously threatened, are also on the **List of World Heritage in Danger**.

The List is prepared by the **World Heritage Committee** on the basis of nominations by the Member States. The Committee also monitors the status of cultural and natural heritage inscribed on this list and the makes decisions if required urgently to move the registered sites to the List of World Heritage in Danger, or delete it from the list. The Committee further states how and under what conditions the resources **from the World Heritage Fund to assist Member States in the protection of their cultural and natural heritage** can be used.

*In 2016, the UNESCO World Heritage List included 1052 sites in 165 partner states, including 814 cultural heritage sites, 203 natural heritage sites and 35 combined sites. 34 sites are located in more than one country, 55 are endangered and 2 were excluded from the list.*

### UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Slovakia and year of inscription

- Banská Štiavnica, 1993
- Spiš Castle and cultural heritage around the castle, 1993
- Vlkolínec, 1993
- Caves and abysses of the Slovak Karst, 1995, 2000
- Bardejov, 2000
- Carpathian Beech Forests in Poloniny National Park and the Protected Landscape Area of Vihorlat, 2007
- Wooden Churches, 2008
- Levoča, 2009

### Monuments proposed for inclusion on the List of UNESCO World Heritage Sites

- The concept of lenticular historical centre of Košice
- Limes - Romanus - Romant ancient monuments
- Gemer and Abov churches with medieval wall paintings
- Turkish fort in Komarno
- Chatam Sofer Memorial
- Tokaj wine region, wine cellars
- Nature reserves of the Tatras (assumed joint proposal with Poland)
- Karst valleys of Slovakia
- Danube natural and cultural landscape (with the Czech Republic, Austria and Hungary)
- Mycoflora of the Bukovské vrchy Hills
- Herliansky geysir
- Great Moravian monuments (with the Czech Republic)

Intangible cultural heritage in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage:

- Fujara - musical instrument and its music (2008)
- Music of Terchová (2013)
- Bagpipe Culture (2015)
- Slovak and Czech puppetry (2016)

## UNESCO World Heritage in Slovakia

The responsibilities for aspects of sustainability and protection of World Heritage sites lies with commissions, local governments, various organisations and ministries (Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Environment).

At the national level, the cooperation of all actors is coordinated by the Slovak Commission for UNESCO. The formal platform for cultural sites under UNESCO in Slovakia is the **Commission for coordination of tasks of protection of the World Heritage sites**, as an advisory body of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic. The Ministry of Culture prepares annually a report on the state of World Heritage sites in Slovakia, which is discussed at management meetings at the Ministry of Culture. The Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic acquires the status of cultural sites through interim report entitled **Monitoring on the state of conservation of world culture heritage sites** which is prepared bi-annually by the Monuments Board of the Slovak Republic, in which there is a specialised World Heritage Department. **Informative report note on the state of cultural sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List with a proposal of measures to improve the effectiveness of their protection and to maintain an adequate state of 2013** notes that the unique universal value of all the World Heritage sites in Slovakia in 2013 were maintained, even if there were some problems. Furthermore, the report stresses the need to pool and coordinate the efforts of the different components of public administration at all levels of management and also build as a priority a system of cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment. **The monitoring report 2015** there is a similar statement regarding the preservation of the unique universal value and existence of some gaps, some of long-term nature.

The memorandum **of the UNESCO Slovak Heritage Association** concluded by the representatives of the Slovak sites listed among the UNESCO World Cultural and Natural Heritage was created as an informal platform in 2012, nearly two decades since the first inscriptions in Slovakia. It is bottom-up initiative, "from below", on the part of the towns, communities and other organisations in response to the need for concerted action in the promotion and preservation of cultural and natural sites under UNESCO. The Association created a website and its own visual style with slightly modified logo of UNESCO World Heritage. The *unesco-slovakia.sk* website provides a single gateway to the UNESCO heritage sites in Slovakia.



*Promotional poster of the Association of Slovak UNESCO Heritage*

## Definitions of basic terms

The definition of cultural and natural heritage by the UNESCO Convention on the protection of natural and cultural heritage:

The cultural heritage includes (Article 1):

- Monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the viewpoint of history, art or science;
- groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their placement within a landscape have an outstanding universal value from the viewpoint of history, art or science;
- sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological aspects.

The natural heritage includes (Article 2):

- natural features consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of outstanding universal value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view,
- geological and physiographical formations and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation of nature,
- natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty. <sup>1</sup>

Articles 4-7 of the Convention set out the rights and obligations of Contracting States. **The principal duty** of each Contracting State is to ensure **identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations** of cultural and natural heritage defined in the Convention and situated within its territory. If the State in whose territory the property is located, is requested by another Contracting State to assist in the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage, by acceding to this Convention it undertakes to provide it.

---

<sup>1</sup> UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage

## **The evaluation report of the Institute for Cultural Policies on the status of selected sites on the World Heritage List and a recommendation to increase the added value of the UNESCO brand**

### **Methodology**

ICP faced a challenge to cover the entire width of the issues of UNESCO sites in Slovakia while not losing the focus on the common features of all entries, whether they relate to the natural or cultural heritage, and to contribute with a critical analysis of to raising awareness of the various issues related to the UNESCO brand. After analysing the possible methods we have chosen two basic methods:

- Studying a broad scope of available literatures which are at least partially devoted to the evaluation of registrations of domestic and foreign origin with personally interviewed experts and local residents
- Case studies of selected characteristic sites inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List in consultation with the Monuments Board of the Slovak Republic, as well as a selection from the tentative list.

Given the global character of the UNESCO brand, we look particularly into

- A. what global issues a site brings and communicates to the present day's visitors and citizens so as to ensure its effectiveness. A lack of global issues is a problem for a UNESCO monument/site as it keeps us from developing a generally applicable, internationally interesting story. One to be understood and accepted by domestic and foreign public and through which they will create a picture of themselves and of Slovakia.
- B. topics of local importance which we consider necessary for the identification of the local, domestic communities with the heritage, with its acceptance and development. Missing local stories and myths cause a lack of interest on the part of the locals in the heritage and leads to its destruction.

## Case studies

### Folk Architecture Reserve of Vlkolínec, inscribed in 1993

This is the first Slovakia's entry in the UNESCO World Heritage List and one of those where there is a heavily noticeable conflict ranging from sustainability to conservation and commercialisation, nailed by a gradual depopulation. The fundamental question is, what do we want this site to tell the world about ourselves. A myth about the rural fundamentals of the Slovak nation? About subordinated, pugnacious society which can survive in inhospitable mountains? Or about a well-maintained area, which can keep residents even in historically preserved area and allow them to live an interesting and inspiring life?

#### Site description

"A village where time stands still"<sup>2</sup>, read the lines in tourist guides of Vlkolínec. A village lying at an altitude of 718 m asl in the southeastern spur of the National Park of Veľká Fatra, in a side vale of the Revúcka valley at the southern foot of a hill called Sidorovo. This open air museum with dwellers is a municipal part of the town of Ružomberok. In 1977 it was declared a historical reserve of folk architecture of Slovakia. It represents a type of rural settlement with architecture of mountain and foothill areas of undisturbed line of log buildings in the middle of a countryside with fields and pastures. This is a set of 45 objects of folk architecture with many unique design specifics - log houses, farm buildings, a bell tower, a well. There is also a brick church with a tower. "It is the Carpathian region's best preserved settlement of its kind," says the preparatory report. The criterion V., according to the document 38COM 8E - Adoption of Retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value, means that the site is an outstanding example of a traditional settlement and land use by man which is representative of a given culture, especially if it is a case vulnerable due to the impact of irreversible changes.

For assessing the eligibility of inscription in the UNESCO List, Vlkolínec brings three topics at the different levels:

- The first topic is the visual aspect of the site and its architecture, which is the topic of international importance under all UNESCO criteria.
- The second one is an example of a unique connection between the people's life and nature, farming life, work and practices, which is also a topic of international importance.
- The third topic is an image of agricultural rural society transformed into the customs, traditions and literature which we also see through the original preserved stories. This level has got a national, local significance.

---

<sup>2</sup> Vdovcová, S. *Idylka len na prvý pohľad : Ako sa žije vo Vlkolínci 20 rokov po zápise do UNESCO*, (Idyll only at first glance: How do people live in Vlkolínec 20 years after the UNESCO inscription) Plus JEDEN DEŇ, 2013

## Stories

The folk tales about Vlkolínec are interconnected and are included in the package of the folk tales of Liptov. The neighbouring locations, including Ružomberok, hold out legends associated with bears, wolves ... Liptov is generally seen as a powerful representative of the Wallachian culture, life of outlawed bandits, life in the mountains, a region which suffered from serfdom but was able to survive in harsh natural conditions, and often rebelled. For example, "the rebellion of the four streets against the town in 1771", which took place between Vlkolínec and Ružomberok. A story having great social overtones.

When looking for other topics or stories we can be helped by the texts of the tourist portals, which remain in the plane of a debate over the origins of the name of Vlkolínec. It is fascinating to imagine wolf dens around the village and its people who allegedly caught them in the proverbial wolf pits.

Vlkolínec was also significantly affected by the Slovak National Uprising in 1944 - it is the third topic, or story. There were fights between partisans and fascist soldiers. On September 12th, 1944, a German fascist unit tried to get to the back of the rebel front in the area of Biely Potok - Ludrová, where fights took place in which, in addition to casualties, 13 houses were burnt down in the northern part of the village. Vlkolínec was honoured with the 1st Class Order of the Slovak National Uprising, and there is a memorial plaque of the Uprising in the village. Today there are events held to commemorate the events of the days of war.

At the level of a standard story, Vlkolínec is presented through folk crafts, activities to enrich the visit of tourists.

The uniqueness of Vlkolínec, however, in our opinion, lies mainly within the fact that this is a place where each one house, each farm tells its own story. If we want to get to the original nature of stories, we need to have a word with the residents who make the best storytellers after overcoming shyness and lack of confidence. Vlkolínec is still not/not yet a museum. This sets it apart from similar museum-like sites in Slovakia and that is its greatest potential.

## Community

Until today, there are just two families living permanently in the village. Of the 55 houses, 18 have dwellers. The population today is more transient, it consists mostly of cottage owners and tourists.

The first mention of Vlkolínec dates back to 1461, which means the village is not among the oldest in Slovakia, in fact, it was just a settlement near Ružomberok. In 1625, the hamlet of Vlkolínec had 4 farm settlements and 5 tenant farmer households (a tenant farmer was at that time a member of the poorest group of the population). Although sheep breeding, which means selling wool processed to cloth, fed many families, it is important to know that the people did not go around dressed in costumes, but like the townspeople of the nearby town of Ružomberok. So this is not a typical example of rural population, an image which is still regarded as the foundation of the Slovak nation and a part of our national identity. The largest population was documented in 1869 (345 people), and 1944 saw the highest number of yards.<sup>3</sup> During the World War II most of

---

<sup>3</sup> Bradiaková, E. Jaňák, P. *Vlkolínec História*, Available at: <http://www.vlkolinec.sk/vsk/menu/historia>

the people were evacuated to Liptovská Lužná and never returned. With the arrival of collectivisation, people were forced to hand over their land and animals, and thus their attitude to the house and the land weakened and, paradoxically, it is precisely the reason why Vlkolínec remained in a conserved state. Another paradox is that such conservation contributed to an accelerated entry into the UNESCO List.

### **What comes next?**

After 23 years that have passed since the inscription the fundamental problem of the residents and cottagers is the protection of their privacy from tourists, therefore addressing the question whom this heritage should serve? The residents, the city, or tourist? As a matter of fact, in the recent years Vlkolínec has set records in visitor numbers. While previously, the annual visitor numbers were at 30,000 tourists a year, in 2016 this level was already overcome during the two summer months of July and August. The Economic and Social Development Plan of Ružomberok (PHSR) provides a clearly legible attempt to open the site to tourism in particular through the promotion and dissemination of information about the site.

The locals believe that the inscription and the brand of UNESCO has not brought them any benefits. Any repair not only on a house, but also inside the house, is a "bureaucratic nightmare".<sup>4</sup> The locals yearn for life in the romantic village, but the efforts of conservationists towards the sustainability of the heritage in its previous, conserved appearance cause that they feel "caught in a trap." They do not even have properly maintained road to get to their houses. The inadequate infrastructure makes the visual idyll end today by the fleet of cars parked in the main street by locals and the cottagers. The level of services whether for the locals or for tourists is generally insufficient. "What really did finish me off and kept hitting me for the entire time has been the approach of the property's owner - the City of Ružomberok - to my activity"<sup>5</sup> an entrepreneur of Vlkolínec commented on the efforts to install a bread furnace. Tourists on the websites that are an essential reference source for visitors, in almost every post deal with the site's problematic approach to tourism and services.

The site's dramaturgy since 2001 is mainly in the hands of the Vlkolínec Civic Association, whose members are contemporary, and even some former temporary residents of the village, together with the Liptov Museum, Liptov Region Tourism Administration OOCCR and the municipality of Ružomberok. When taking a closer look at the programme of events, we see that it is about maintaining traditions typical of many other rural areas (fujara festivities, hand mowing, giving thanks for the harvest, ...) rather than something typical of "Vlkolínec", let us say often even urban customs. In reality, the residents used to mow their meadows in urban shirts and not belted with a wide belt with a folklore punch.

The Folk Architecture Reserve Management Plan already in 2009 provided the results of a questionnaire showing the locals considered as most valuable the local protected objects, followed immediately by the natural environment. "The infrastructure problems identified still persist (sanitation, shop, ...). Tourists would appreciate in

---

<sup>4</sup> Vdovcová, S. *Idylka len na prvý pohľad : Ako sa žije vo Vlkolínci 20 rokov po zápise do UNESCO*, (Idyll only at first glance: How do people live in Vlkolínec 20 years after the UNESCO inscription) Plus JEDEN DEŇ, 2013

<sup>5</sup> Pribilovič, P. available at: <http://www.zilinsky-kraj.sk/vlkolinec/>

particular an educational trail. However, most refuse to provide their own resources as financial support. In the case of lack of interest in supporting Vlkolínec the respondents stated as the reason a lack of time or resources and the fact they are not local, "they are not at home." <sup>6</sup> Who should then cover the financial losses and contribute to the elimination of deficiencies, only the local government? The residents want to preserve the authenticity of the historic site, but with a possibility to install inside the achievements of the modern age. They also want to avoid "construction of non-native buildings, necessary for the development of commercial tourism (lifts, etc.), and there is a general effort to exclude cars from the village."<sup>7</sup> Taking into the account the fact that the survey is from 2009 and that the need for improving infrastructure, car parks, roads, is also found in the strategic plan for Ružomberok in 2015 too, we are beginning to understand the rebel mood of the local people.

### **Evaluation by ICP**

The starting point for sustainability of Vlkolínec as an item on the List is the realisation that the site is not an open-air museum. This means that it is not required to show exclusively the agricultural life of the last centuries. Not even the life of bandits hiding in the mountains from serfdom to, as the stories suggest in the form of legends and tales tied to Vlkolínec. Indeed, it may also show how people can now use the buildings, the architecture, layout, colours, and design. How they are able to link original technologies with the new technology. The residents do have experience with structures compliant to the typical features of the architecture. The fact that the farm outbuildings of Vlkolínec fell into disrepair because the locals do not keep cattle, and we can find almost no evidence of what once were picturesque terraced fields, means that one of the "pro-inscription" arguments for the UNESCO List is disappearing. A return to the original state is now impossible.

Vlkolínec is dying and becoming a settlement for cottagers "from Bratislava". How should the City of Ružomberok respond? How could the monument "conservationists" help?

The site is losing the precious source of its exceptionality - its people. The City has not identified this source of sustainability, as there is no mention of working with the people in the Ružomberok's development plan. This is probably the reason why no effective instruments of cooperation with temporary and permanent residents were sought, who are the cheapest keepers of the UNESCO value. Not even thousands of colourful promotional materials (accentuated by the PHSR development plan) will not change the fact that Vlkolínec is a place where one cannot get behind the fences around the houses. The locals consider it as an unwanted visit into their private space. At the same time, the residents of Vlkolínec represent the most substantial future potential of this heritage site. Thanks to them, we can talk about a living heritage, about a life in a conservation reserve, they are those who retrieve and create a bridge between the past and the present, and thus represent a valuable and effective source of communicating the stories Vlkolínec carries with itself. As long as they feel that most of the time decisions about

---

<sup>6</sup> Hudeková, Z. et al. *Manažmentový plán pamiatkovej rezervácie ľudovej architektúry (Folk Architecture Reserve Management Plan)*, 2009, p. 27, ISBN 978-80-89320-04-2

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 27.

them are made somewhere in Ružomberok, or in Bratislava, it is not only a historically embedded feeling (indeed, the history of the place tells stories of feudal practices, rebellions), at some moments understandable even today (considering the postponed practical agenda of infrastructure development and no involvement of the community in the Development Plan), but also a fact that the entry in the UNESCO List and its implications were not communicated to them sufficiently.

As far as dramaturgy of events is concerned, for us and for tourists it is important to maintain the customs and traditions that are unique to Vlkolínec. Events which generally act as typically Slovak and are fashionable today threaten the authenticity of the original local programmes. For visitors, citizens of Slovakia, Vlkolínec is a place which combines elements representing myths about the traditional life of Slovaks in the 19th century. It is a beautiful place, but there are several places like that in Slovakia, and in each one we may feel that we need not enter the world of fantasy just to see some gingerbread houses. In Vlkolínec we may not remain only with the maintenance of these myths, but we need to focus on the contemporary, original creation, from the town which Vlkolínec has always been a part of. A positive trend is the fact that the site starts to be a point of interest from creators, artists from abroad, especially from the audiovisual sector.

Tourism development brings a lot of positive, but also negative externalities to a site. One of the biggest and most complicated challenges is still the reflection on the issue of managing sustainable tourism, particularly by not making Vlkolínec and its surroundings, even under the pressure of commercialisation, turn into another "Donovaly" ski resort.<sup>8</sup> We must have the ability to identify and support especially the unique nature of the place, with a distinctive flair and understanding, while emphasising the topics and messages which come with this place, and why it deserves the stamp by UNESCO as a representative of exceptional universal heritage from Slovakia.

As a unique and indispensable tool for solving otherwise stalemate situations appears to be the existence of the civic association of Vlkolínec.

Its objectives include:

"A) Support for landscape, architectural and urban development in accordance with the approved zoning plan for Vlkolínec and vicinity and in compliance with the approved Statute of the city part of Ružomberok - Vlkolínec

b) Creating conditions for meeting the needs of citizens and reviving traditions

c) Creating conditions and background for tourism, development of crafts and services in the area with the development of cultural and social activities for a positive promotion of the site

d) Active participation in the creation and development of the area in cooperation with public authorities and professional organisations."

It is this association which can do what nobody else can - no authority, no office. Is it a possible intermediary agency for communication for all the parties and stakeholders, the bearer of ideas and innovation. The members know the needs of the site, visitors, and their own needs, and are forced to approach their own home sensitively so as not to

---

<sup>8</sup> Demko, M. Svrček Ml., P. *Vlkolínec mimo sezóny (off-season)*, časopis .týždeň, 19. 1. 2008, available at: <http://www.tyzden.sk/casopis/1733/vlkolinec-mimo-sezony/>

destroy its value. This initiative should be supported and given as much responsibilities as possible.

Communication and collaboration of planning and decision-making bodies and the local community seems to be a must if we want to continue to talk about a living village. Preserving the life appears to be unsustainable in the long term, it is therefore a matter of time when it will be necessary to make some peace offerings also towards the people and their standard of living and potential innovation, no matter how blasphemous it sounds.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bradiaková, E. Jaňák, P. *Vlkolínec História*. available at: <http://www.vlkolinec.sk/vsk/menu/historia>
- Demko, M. Svrček Ml., P. *Vlkolínec mimo sezóny (off-season)*, časopis .týždeň, 19. 1. 2008
- Džavan, V. a kol. *Slovensko v klenotnici UNESCO. (Slovakia in the UNESCO treasure)* Rax, 2005, ISBN 8096931504
- Hudeková, Z. a kol. *Manažmentový plán pamiatkovej rezervácie ľudovej architektúry (Folk Architecture Reserve Management Plan)*. 2009, 80 p., ISBN 978-80-89320-04-2
- Chovan, M. I. *Liptovské čriečky (Fragments of Liptov)*. Epos, 2013, ISBN: 978-80-89547-19-7
- Krbatová, L. *Pamiatky UNESCO zmenili život obcí. (UNESCO Heritage Sites changed the lives of communities.)* Pravda, 27.12.2013
- Milan, J. *Vo Vlkolínci vraždila jednotka Waffen SS, zložená najmä z kriminálnikov (Waffen SS group of mostly criminals murdered people in Vlkolínece.)* Ružomberok 24, 2013, available at: <http://ruzomberok.dnes24.sk/vo-vlkolinci-vrazdila-jednotka-waffen-ss-zlozena-najma-z-kriminalnikov-160324>
- mojliptov spol. s r.o. <http://www.mojliptov.sk/>
- Economic and Social Development Plan - Ružomberok 2015 - 2022*
- SLOVAKIA TRAVEL, <http://slovakia.travel/vlkolinec>
- Timoracký, M. et al. *Branding Slovenska*. a study for MFEA SR, 2013, 56 p. Available at: [https://www.mzv.sk/documents/10182/12495/BRANDING\\_SLOVENSKA\\_studia\\_komunikacne\\_posolstva.pdf/675019fa-077d-45ea-9b38-3b01bb71d566](https://www.mzv.sk/documents/10182/12495/BRANDING_SLOVENSKA_studia_komunikacne_posolstva.pdf/675019fa-077d-45ea-9b38-3b01bb71d566)
- UNESCO. *38COM 8E - Adoption of Retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value*. 2014, available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/622/documents/>
- Vdovcová, S. *Idylka len na prvý pohľad : Ako sa žije vo Vlkolínci 20 rokov po zápise do UNESCO*, (Idyll only at first glance: How do people live in Vlkolínece 20 years after the UNESCO inscription) Plus JEDEN DEŇ, 2013
- Vrlík, P. – Mišák, P. *Povesti z Liptova (Folk tales of Liptov)*. Matica slovenská, 2008, ISBN: 9788070908976

## **The Historic Town of Bardejov**

Slovak medieval towns are a real phenomenon of global importance, the issue is only to choose some of these to be offered as UNESCO World Heritage Site. Bardejov was chosen by ICP for its study for several reasons. The works on the restoration of the square and adjacent streets are well advanced, the local government actively works with the brand of UNESCO, and Bardejov has also some attributes comparable to Vlkolínec.

### **Site description**

"The historic centre of Bardejov is a truly unique set of highly developed medieval town. The town's layout which is carefully preserved to this day, with regularly planned streets around the market square, is an important piece of evidence of the European civilisation in the 13th-14th centuries. 500 townhouses of Bardejov date back to the first half of the 15th century They encircle the Market Square and represent well-developed burgess culture of multi-ethnic population and an interesting multicultural society including the Jewish suburban area, the only preserved group of former Jewish baths and a synagogue from the late 18th century, built by Talmud regulations." <sup>9</sup> The fortified town of Bardejov provides exceptionally well-preserved evidence of the economic and social structure of medieval trade cities in Central Europe, which developed along the trade routes of the time. It represents both tangible and intangible evidence and fulfils many criteria to support the inclusion in the UNESCO List. <sup>10</sup>

Three level in which Bardejov meets the UNESCO criteria:

- architecturally functional and socially beneficial use of exceptionally well-preserved public space meets the criterion of international importance
- many ethnic groups living side by side and the multicultural environment of the town is a topic of international importance
- the lively market and cultural centre of the region as a counterweight to the romantic myth about the Slovak territory having only a rural nature is a topic of national importance

### **Stories**

The fabulous colourful look of the town resembles a fairy tale with a touch of the mysterious Middle Ages. The individual stories are proof of the imagination and creativity available to Bardejov for creating an effective communication strategy for the UNESCO brand.

The tale of the Witch of Bardejov begins poetically by describing a place where the a woman comes on the first Wednesday of June at midnight, "desperately wandering up and down, as if looking for something. She was forced to work as a servant of a wealthy merchant named Drégely somewhere "from the lowlands". Having fled from him for fear of being dishonoured, she was accused of witchcraft and executed in the square. Her soul still keeps wandering there , and if there is a good man to help her, whe will show

---

<sup>9</sup> UNESCO. *Bardejov Town Conservation Reserve*, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/> <http://whc.unesco.org/>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

him the hidden secret treasure of Drégely"<sup>11</sup>, then a description of the town follows "... It was a long time ago when the royal town of Bardejov boasted its new ramparts, the council members were proud of their town whose wealth and fame grew, its rich fairs were well-known far and wide, where merchants would come from near and far. Not even the richest towns in the area could boast vineyards in Tokay, they could not be truly proud of the new cannons, which by then the town had procured, and the massive town ramparts made it impregnable. The cloth which was once manufactured in the town, was well-known throughout Hungary." <sup>12</sup>

These are the words that complete the picture of a developed, multicultural town, where even someone from "the lowlands" settled down, meaning somewhere from the southern territory of Hungary.

Stories are told not only by the square but also by the churches, by every house and the abundant works of art.

One legend is the one about "Roland the Knight, a symbol of incorruptible and honest champion depicted on the southern gable of the ancient Town Hall. It is a symbol of the legal system of the German settlers who were invited to the city by Hungarian kings. Roland became a symbol of the town's privileges in trade and customs, a personification of the water and customs rights, a peacekeeper, and a symbol of the storage rights." <sup>13</sup> The story links the town with the European culture.

The story about an spectre from the Lacková hora mountain describes the atmosphere of the markets and fairs. "He sold his goods almost immediately, because the local Jews bought all that he had brought in just a listtle while. As the fair lasted three days, Maťko rented a room at a townsman's and decided to have some fun. Not only merchants but also thousands of people from the surrounding communities gathered for such a fair. There were Jews, Polish, Ruthenian and Slovak mountaineers, Mazurs, which means lowland Poles, and also Gypsies."<sup>14</sup> We would like to experience today the magic of the town in this for, now vanished.

## Community

One of the fascinating ideas that come to one's mind immediately when visiting the town is the image of migrating diverse peoples, languages and religious groups that settled the town and leave their footprint in its history, language, architecture, and culture. Until the mid-20th century the community of Bardejov consisted of an ethnical and cultural mix comprising Slovaks, Hungarians, Germans, Poles, Ruthenians, and Jews. "Since 1453 Bardejov also has its own coat of arms, which was granted by King Ladislaus. Within a century the city developed so much that in 1437 it recorded 517 houses and 3,000 residents in the inner city. Behind the ramparts there were additional 300 houses. The town was granted a status of a free royal town and became a centre of the development of crafts, trade and education. Bardejov's grew in importance to a European centre of cultural significance. A humanist school was established in the town which had a good

---

<sup>11</sup> *The Witch of Bardejov* - a tale

<sup>12</sup> *The Witch of Bardejov* - a tale

<sup>13</sup> Gutek, F. *Rytier Roland sa stal symbolom čestného a neúplatného bojovníka. (Knight Roland became a symbol of a honest and incorruptible champion.)* 2004, available at: <http://presov.korzar.sme.sk/c/4571161/rytier-roland-sa-stal-symbolom-cestneho-a-neuplatneho-bojovnika.html>

<sup>14</sup> *Prízrak z Lackovej hory (A Spectre from the Lacková hora Mountain)* – a tale

reputation throughout the Hungarian Kingdom. Principal Leonard Stöckel issued an organisational and study rules called *Leges scholae Bartphensis* (Rules of the Bardejov School), which is the oldest educational document in Slovakia. The parish library was made available to the , two book printing presses were founded, Klösz and Gutgesel, in which the Catechism of Martin Luther was printed in 1581, considered the first publication translated to the then Slovak language. Unfortunately, the town was also hit by the unrests in the 16th century, and the great plague. The darkest pages of the modern history concern Jews. "From April to October 1942, about 3,600 Jews were deported from Bardejov and the surrounding villages. Therefore, today in Bardejov we can only talk about a vanished Jewish community."<sup>15</sup> After World War II, the German and Hungarian population was forcibly displaced as well. If we add to this the economic emigration, which continues to this day, it is no wonder that the town is now inhabited by only a minimum number of the original families to commemorate the roots of multiculturalism in the town. The current population of Bardejov is over 32,000 residents. 14.5% of which are minors under the age of 15 years, 68% of the population constitutes productive population aged 15 years to retirement age, and a high percentage (18%) is represented by people of a post-productive age. Besides the Slovak majority, the region is now home to the Ruthenian (3.24%), Roma (2.37%), Ukrainian (0.76%), Czechs (0.29%), and to a small extent, Hungarian (0.1% ) population groups. In addition to the Roman Catholic Church (about 56%) the region has a high representation of the Protestant religion (almost 16%). However, unlike in the past, multiculturalism, religious and ethnic diversity has disappeared from Bardejov of today. So much emphasised multiculturalism also means opening less pleasant topics in the community's debate. However, if Bardejov was to build its historical memory only within the intentions of a fabulous scenic beauty of the town, it would be a superficial, distorted and unattractive image of its own past. A loss of even a single part of it leads to a risk of losing the exceptional value of the town, its underlying story which would then lose an impetus for the development of creativity and new modern stories.

### **What comes next?**

In the perception of the ICP, the intertwining of ethnic groups, cultures, and languages is one of the most important topics that Bardejov embodies. The problem is that this subject is not alive in the town. Today, the square of Bardejov is not a place where one can meet a diverse, multicultural community living in a modern style. Therefore, for residents and visitors it is increasingly difficult to form a valid idea of the stories from the past. The picturesque look of the buildings and sights as proof of a living, vibrant community suffices only to those having ample imagination and an adequate volume of information about the historical context. Nevertheless, the prerequisite for interest in the site and sustainability of the UNESCO brand is a sufficiently effective communication of the topics mentioned. We cannot only stay with what our ancestors left behind as a folk poetic art and rhetoric. Therefore, one of the most important tasks is to find someone to write the new stories about the heritage. One to retell these in the real time.

---

<sup>15</sup> The Jewish suburb of Bardejov. *History of the Jewish community*. Available at: <http://suburbiumbardejov.sk/zidovsky-bardejov/dejiny-zidovskej-komunity/>

Reflections on the potentially painful past will open up the way for new stories. Only then will a resident feel in the town not only as a tenant without any ties to it, without a desire to protect it and leave in it his or her own message. The people living in today's Bardejov must have a desire to become the co-creators of this exciting history.

One of the interesting tools is the project "Bardejovské potulky (Bardejov wanderings)" by the civil association "Our Bardejov" ( <http://nasbardejov.sk/> ) which works with the Tourist Information Office TIK of Bardejov. The effort of the organisation is to use regular "wanderings" to present the history of various sites in Bardejov, but also in the vicinity, to the local community through expert-assisted field trips. An inspiring example is rebuilding the attics of houses in the historic zone to dwellings and renting them to the locals. The ability to adapt buildings without conserving them but further developing their function is a positive and sustainable trend also at present.

In the dramaturgy of cultural events of the town we can follow two major lines:

- the tradition of market in the square aimed at crafts while keeping a medieval-fairy-tale atmosphere
- the use of the famous spas that allow organising programmes of a more commercial nature, which, however, strictly pursue a goal of a pleasant spending of time of the spa guests in the town

"A short film about Slovak historical monuments of Bardejov" and the work titled Lucid by two authors from Bardejov which represented us at the Swiss Film Festival are a good way of presenting the town. In 2013, Adrian Sorger launched his book Legends of the Old Town of Bardejov here, which fits into the dramaturgy of the town, with festivals and markets. The town also introduces the fabulous scenic beauty of its architecture in its visual materials, whether these are various tourist guides or maps. We can feel this in the choice of the colour range, or the font, which is rather playful than strictly formal and official. An exception is perhaps only the website of the Cultural and Tourist Centre, which gives a more pragmatic impression. Searching for information, we encounter the slogan "the most beautiful city in Slovakia". Almost no presentation of Bardejov would be complete without mentioning the UNESCO link of the site. The Bardejov Television covers nearly all the cultural and social life of the site. It concentrates in itself the information which shows the picturesque medieval town a living, pulsating organism. However, such an insight is not obtained by a visitor who does not know anything about television and has no access to it. For this person, although the city remains beautiful and fabulous, but the life within it is conserved. Yes, the town's website has an English version, but the cultural calendar remains in this version in Slovak. So even though the city embodies the positive aspects of multiculturalism, the visitor sees the city as a homogeneous society. Such closing-in causes cultural isolation and loss of the ability to receive stimuli from the external environment. A visitor who is to receive a message of multiculturalism as a fundamental quality of the UNESCO brand, needs the information resources available to introduce him or her to the real life in the town before coming to the tourist information centre.

Bardejov's history is characterised by fluctuating prosperity, falling and rising up again, decay and re-growth. It is this viability, vitality, which can ensure the town's prosperity

today, even if it is located in a region burdened with many problems. It seems that the town's approach to the UNESCO objects includes pride and responsibility. However, in today's turbulent world, if we expect heritage to be sustainable and bring pragmatic benefits in the long-term, this approach must be replaced with being pro-active and following "fashionable" trends in cultural tourism, which are currently changing faster than ever before. It is not just about services and pricing policies, but also about the ability to tell the story of the heritage in a form that is meaningful to a clearly defined target group.

Today, an important position in the town is that of light-industry enterprises, the service sector has grown in strength too, there remains a tradition of food processing industry, engineering, wood-processing industry, commercial organisations, small and medium-sized private companies, or business groups. At present, there is an industrial zone being developed on the northern outskirts of Bardejov, and there is also a gradual revival of the attenuated shoemaking craft. Bardejov also makes use of funding opportunities through various development projects. It uses the EU Structural Funds, EU funds, Regional Operational Programme and the like.<sup>16</sup> But is it able to leverage the potential of the cultural heritage in its possession? Can we find an interconnection among dexterity, vitality and entrepreneurial initiatives in the field of cultural tourism?

In the words of a member of the city government, the director of the Bardejov Television, Štefan Hij, the town has got a sufficiently developed infrastructure in terms of tourism. After all we are talking about a spa town for which tourism is a matter of course, from a historical perspective. However, town, like many other municipalities of in Slovakia, fights with one-day tourism. Also, the fact that the spa tourism is relatively isolated from the town itself and the spa outside spa guests visit the city poor (assessed SWOT analysis, prepared as a basis for strategic plan for economic and social development of Bardejov) and too seasonal oriented summer. The strategy paper (the Economic and Social Development Plan) mentions a system of a more sophisticated use of "cultural vouchers" for households, various discounts, coupons, season tickets, improvement on marketing, arts education in schools, and improvements on the management of cultural organisations. Indeed, the SWOT analysis elaborated as a basis for the Strategic Plan for Economic and Social Development of Bardejov points out the city dwellers have got a feeling that the Bardejov is a boring town where, literally, "a dog dropped dead".

On the contrary, a useful tool in the city's thinking is the networking and cooperation. One of them is the creation of a regional network of the "Slovak royal towns", where in a joint memorandum the towns Bardejov, Kežmarok, Levoca, Stara Lubovna have undertaken to strive for a sustainable development of tourism, to respect and enhance the natural and cultural heritage. The potential of this idea was gradually adopted also by selected travel agencies offering the towns as a "package" and, and this potential certainly is far from being exhausted. This was, Bardejov gets into search engines twice, which is not a negligible benefit.

## **Evaluation by ICP**

---

<sup>16</sup> Town of Bardejov <http://www.bardejov.sk/>

The starting point for attracting attention and visitors to Bardejov is a reputation of an interesting vibrant city with remarkable multicultural traditions which the town is trying to present, regardless of the tragic past. In this sense, further strengthening of the cooperation with the neighbouring royal towns represents an advantage especially when Bardejov will be best equipped with hotel and restaurant services, for which it has a good starting position.

For an effective dissemination of messages by the site under the mark of UNESCO it needs to develop an appropriate mix of communication channels and to determine exactly which channel will be determined for which target group, and it also needs to open the gates of the local life to visitors. It is necessary to take this into account already at the stage of making the dramaturgy of cultural and social events, of activities by the network of cultural and social organisations in the town.

The planning of Bardejova omits an entire crucial part of the cultural and community life, that is the mapping of the local creative initiatives, their involvement in the official culture and thereby boosting the official programme of the town. Top-down management of culture through the municipality and its organisations according to the analysis does not bring the effect of involving the local population. The modern approach is to look for existing sources of creativity directly in the community itself. As the municipal development plan is not bearing towards such a solution, it is likely that the status quo will be maintained. In this case we may describe UNESCO heritage sites and their history on as many as 30 pages of beautiful colourful prospects, but when the population does not engage voluntarily in their revival, the actual inscription can then be seen only as a tool and trigger of processes, and not a goal which the town is heading to. In the Economic and Social Development Plan of Bardejov, for example, tourism is separated from the culture, and there are just minimum references to the local culture. This is a weakness of the Plan, because in projects for tourism we can find mentions of an involvement and development of civic activities in this area. These are interconnected containers, and while these two initiatives fail to interconnect synergistically, the region will fail to keep visitors for a longer time. Regardless of whether it is an elderly person, a family, a relatives, a former resident, or just a visitor from Slovakia or from abroad.

The threat which can be seen in other areas too, for example, in Vlkolínec, may be an overly superficial dramaturgy of culture in an effort to meet the expectations of a too broad range of people. This ambush is present in Bardejov in both of the dramaturgical lines. As long as the "mainstream" programmes for spa audience or the superficial fairy-tale-like dramaturgy of markets and fairs, based only on returning to the Middle Ages, strengthened by some generalising features and as long as there are not enough original specifics of the site present, that is what it has been exceptional not only in the past but also today, the effectiveness of UNESCO inscription will fade away and lose its meaning.

For all former royal towns it holds true, which seems to be something Banská Štiavnica is successfully avoiding by having become the home of "the creative spirits from Bratislava or Banská Bystrica", that in addition to strict protection and conservation of a UNESCO site, all the heritage, both tangible and intangible, needs a pulse, life, dissatisfaction, creativity of modern people. They must constantly bring about surprises, not only to look in the past, but also to create new and new stories. They must not settle

for the above-mentioned pietistic revered deification of heritage. Consistent segmentation of target groups and getting to know the needs of the individual segments will make it possible to sell the stories of heritage more effectively and thus to strengthen the solidarity of the locals, equipped with sufficiently elaborate historical memory and attractiveness to visitors.

The Bardejov site is the bearer of timeless and almost global issues of possible vitality of a multicultural society so often questioned nowadays. It presents a perfect arrangement of public space and its inclusion in the World Heritage List is of a tremendous significance for the Slovak society as an example. Therefore, we are obliged not only to protect and preserve, but also look for ways to transfer such an arrangement to the modern times and to communicate this effectively to the public at home and abroad. To make the historical centre of Bardejov live a contemporary, modern life, which underlines an legacy from the past.

### List of literature:

*Bardejovská bosorka (The Witch of Bardejov)* - a tale

Budinský-Krička, V. *Bardejov v praveku a na úsvite dejín. (Bardejov in the prehistoric times and at the dawn of history)* 1903-1993

Džavan, V. et al. *Slovensko v klenotnici UNESCO. (Slovakia in the UNESCO treasure)* Rax, 2005, ISBN 8096931504

Gutek, F. *Rytier Roland sa stal symbolom čestného a neúplatného bojovníka. (Knight Roland became a symbol of a honest and incorruptible champion.)* 2004, available at: <http://presov.korzar.sme.sk/c/4571161/rytier-roland-sa-stal-symbolom-cestneho-a-neuplatneho-bojovnika.html>

Kovačka, M. *Bardejovský katechizmus (The Catechism of Bardejov)*. Slovenská národná knižnica, 2013, ISBN: 9788081490460

Mesto Bardejov. *História mesta (The town's history.)* <http://www.bardejov.sk/>

*Prízrak z Lackovej hory (A Spectre from the Lacková hora Mountain)* – a tale

*Program hospodárskeho rozvoja a sociálneho rozvoja mesta Bardejov (Economic and Social Development Plan) 2015 - 2024*

Timoracký, M. et al. *Branding Slovenska.* a study for MFEA SR, 2013, 56 p. Available at: [https://www.mzv.sk/documents/10182/12495/BRANDING\\_SLOVENSKA\\_studia\\_komunikacne\\_posolstva.pdf/675019fa-077d-45ea-9b38-3b01bb71d566](https://www.mzv.sk/documents/10182/12495/BRANDING_SLOVENSKA_studia_komunikacne_posolstva.pdf/675019fa-077d-45ea-9b38-3b01bb71d566)

Turisticko- informačná kancelária Bardejov. *História mesta (The town's history.)* Available at:

<http://bardejov5.webnode.sk/historia-mesta/>

UNESCO. *Bardejov Town Conservation Reserve*, Available at <http://whc.unesco.org/>

UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage

The Jewish suburb of Bardejov. *Dejiny Židovskej komunity (History of the Jewish community.)* Available at: <http://suburbiumbardejov.sk/zidovsky-bardejov/dejiny-zidovskej-komunity/>

<http://suburbiumbardejov.sk/zidovsky-bardejov/dejiny-zidovskej-komunity/>

## **Carpathian beech forests, entered in the UNESCO List as a part of ancient beech forests of the Carpathians in 2007**

The inscription of one of the many precious natural sites which Slovakia is incredibly full of, today arouses great embarrassment. That is why we chose it as an example of how not to prepare for inscription in the List, and what this means for the future.

### **Site description**

The Slovak component of the beech forests is a part of a larger area of the Carpathians with an area approximately 210 000 square kilometres which stretches from Austria through the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, Ukraine to Serbia. In the territory of the Slovak Republic there are three UNESCO World Heritage sites in Poloniny National Park and one in the Vihorlatské vrchy mountain range. The isolated forest areas evolved as a result of long-lasting natural development processes with minimal human intervention.

The main tree species in these natural ecosystems consists of beech, which creates jointly with fir some precious fir-beech communities. The beech trees have a height of up to 40 m and a life expectancy of 150-200 years. Firs grow to a height of up to 50 m and some reach the age of nearly 300 years. In the primeval forests there is an ongoing development without an artificial intervention with a natural forest cycle having the stages of growth (less than 150 years), middle age (150-250 years) and decomposition (forests older than 250 years). While some sites are located in remote locations, in the midst of extensive forests, others, for example, the Morské oko site, is publicly available also for motor vehicles. Hiking trails are built, but only partially marked.

The international importance of the Carpathian beech forests is represented by the fact that they are natural monuments of (at least partially) intact "lungs of the Earth", while the local significance lies in the awareness of the relation of man to the immediate surroundings.

### **Commentary on the issue**

The theme of lack of protection and the need for a clearer definition of the territory of UNESCO sites in the Carpathian beech forest is subject to meeting of the World Heritage in 2013 at its 37th session expressed concern about the level of threat which could affect the outstanding universal value and integrity of the site, especially in the Slovak component, as well as a lack of adequate action by the management against the pressures exerted by several stakeholders.

At its 38th session the World Heritage Committee noted with regret that the Slovak Republic as the contracting party did not provide any information about solutions to the situation. The decision of the 39th session of the World Heritage Committee commended Germany, Slovakia and Ukraine for cooperation in the management and preservation of the sites, but it was also noted with concern that the Slovak component of the property still lacked an integrated management framework, and that the forest management and felling plans interfere with the area of the property. Based on this decision, the Slovak Republic was to provide to the World Heritage Centre, as of December 1st, 2016, an updated report on the state of conservation of the site, indicating to what extent and how it managed to eliminate the deficiencies. The devastating human intervention is a condition to be prevented by the UNESCO brand, and so any excuses behind tree-felling in this case are absurd and irrelevant. In the evaluation report on the Slovak component

from October 2014, Pierre Gallard of UNESCO states, on the one hand, that the universal value of the site is fairly well maintained, however, on the other hand, there has been a repetitive criticism from the non-governmental sector, and this topic is also reflected in the Slovak media. The VLK forest conservation association, for example, suggested even an exclusion of site from the List of UNESCO World Heritage Sites due to the insufficient protection. According to the Prales Civic Association (Ing. Juraj Vysoký) the site of the Slovak component of the World Heritage is clearly a major attraction for tourists and professionals, but the state does not use this great potential, but it even destroys it, either directly, by authorization of economic activity, and inactivity. IKP adds that the state also destroys the natural heritage indirectly, as it subsidises the use of wood chips and the consequent increased tree felling in these areas. The UNESCO mark seems to work in people's minds in a way as if the protection applies only to designated areas and as if beyond the boundaries anything is possible. This means that it rather preserves the remains and does not have a spill-over effect as a model to be followed to preserve other forests which, whether we like it or not, are part of an virtual world heritage, although not explicitly defined. According to the results of the project aimed at charting primeval forest in Slovakia implemented by the Prales Civic Association only 68% of primeval forests in Slovakia have adequate protection, and 32% have insufficient protection or no protection.

Since the inscription in 2007, the boundaries are in fact not defined precisely and the condition according to the nomination project does not correspond to reality. The maps were drawn "in the office" and the area under the auspices of UNESCO was drawn to include forests with planned or ongoing felling, and there are even primeval forests felled in some places. The Prales Civic Association on its website provides a freely available map layers with delineation of primeval forests, including the UNESCO sites, which should be taken into account when revising the boundaries of the UNESCO sites and the buffer zones. Locations such Havešová and Rožok, according to the Prales Civic Association are defined exactly, which is not the case for other sites of the Poloniny National Park and the protected landscape area of Vihorlat. In these territories there is a conflict of interests and initiatives between the state authority for nature conservation, the state forest enterprise, the forest owners, local governments, investors and conservation associations. The stakeholders and responsible parties pass the responsibilities to one another, solutions are deferred and due to the overall inactivity, a catastrophic situation has arisen. The Slovak Republic first declared in the inclusion process that it had more primeval forests than it actually had, and it fails to properly conserve even the little areas which got on the List.

## **Recommendations by ICP**

It results from the case of the Slovak part of the Carpathian primeval beech forests that the inclusion of the site should have been considered only after settlement of property rights and guaranteeing the State's influence. Now it is the State's turn to review the areas and declare an adequate level of protection, to exclude young forest, not to provoke owners, delimit the site and mark trails for visitors. It would be appropriate to take these recommendations into consideration when trying to include other natural sites in the Slovak Republic in the UNESCO World Heritage List, such as the Tokay wine region, karst valleys of Slovakia, natural and cultural landscape of the Danube region, the original grasslands and pastures of Slovakia, and the nature reserves of the Tatras.

It is evident that the intention to include these areas under the brand of UNESCO are meant to protect the territory from its own inhabitants and its activities which destroy the site, and also to raise the sites' profile for tourism in areas that are considered problematic in terms of unemployment, lack of investment and poverty of the population. The inscription of the Carpathian Primeval Beech Forests among the World Natural Heritage has satisfied this idea of having more people coming to the site, but when they come, they will not find anything. There is a lack of systematic guide services provided both in the public parts of the territory as well as in parts with the highest level of protection where entry is subject to an official authorisation. At present, tourists often wander and do not find the primeval beech forests, or see only felled beech wood being loaded on lorries. The information system still has some gaps, basically, no one knows exactly where the forests lie.

Due to the escalation of the conflict, the parties concerned should admit that the quality of protection, local awareness and tourism marketing of the proposed sites are stagnating, as if they saw the end result of their efforts merely in obtaining the UNESCO auspices. Slovak Republic must admit that the project was not well prepared, and elaborate a revision even at the expense of reducing the UNESCO World Heritage area. Slovakia and the responsible authorities should fully and timely communicate not only internally to the stakeholders, but also with the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, to completely eliminate the possibility of even considering a removal of the Carpathian Primeval Beech Forests from the list. The Slovak Republic would then be exposed to international disgrace and gain an image of a country unable to protect its natural heritage. The paradox is that neither international cooperation nor the global brand can guarantee that.

It is important to remember that expanding the awareness about granting the status of World Heritage is only the beginning of work, investment and accountability. The nomination of the primeval beech forests gives the impression of the proverbial saddle ahead of the horse. According to the report of the International Union for Conservation of Nature the mark of World Heritage Site constitutes an outstanding universal value, induces expectations in tourists that visiting the site will be a unique experience while providing the tourism sector an easily marketable and fail-proof destination, which, however, Slovakia has underutilised, and it has not been prepared for it in the nomination.

UNESCO World Heritage Sites in different countries are among the most popular and strongest advertised attractions. The UNESCO brand also serves to identify sites with strictly defined and controlled protection regime. This interaction attractiveness and strict protection can be used in particular to further educate people about the preservation and conservation of heritage, of cultural and natural values. A specific proposal is to establish cooperation with Hungary, Poland and Ukraine to offer international clientele tours, where the attractiveness lies mainly in the possibility to visit several countries and sites within a single trip.

In planning and marketing activities, it is recommended to emphasise the environmental aspect, which means preference of biking, hiking, electric vehicles and use of renewable resources. In 2010, the Prales Civic Association developed a set of recommendations for the of the Carpathian beech forests in the field of tourism. Six years later, based on a survey of the regions concerned, only a partial progress has been observed. Development of a project on how to communicate with the community that lives around

the site, to inform the owners of the nearby forests, to involve mainly young enthusiastic people to the site's conservation is a task that Slovakia has failed to do in this case.

The ICP evaluates positively and as a model worth following the project of the community of Zemplínske Hámre, in which in a partnership of local governments, cultural institutions and non-governmental sector, and in particular with the financial contribution from the Swiss Confederation, the Hámorský educational trail was built, aimed at exploring the history of mining and iron production. It links to the international Carpathian tourist route, passing from Poland to Hungary. Although the project does not involve the Carpathian primeval beech forests directly, it has brought to their surroundings some elements that enhance the tourist attractiveness of the broader area - the community's museum, restored technical monuments, a tourist centre in the village, information boards, marked trails. On the other hand, it is merely a lone initiative with only partial regional links. In connection with that community ICP recommends not to continue the plan declared - the Biele kamene ski resort, which envisages the clearing of forests forming a system with the forests under the UNESCO brand.



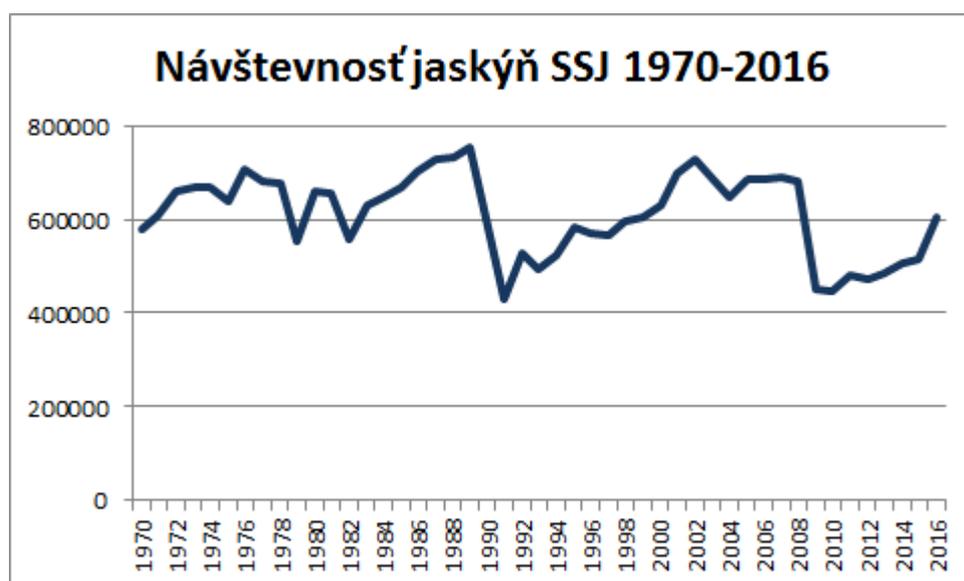
*Information for visitors of the Carpathian beech forest (photo: Juraj Vysoký, 2016)*

## Caves of the Slovak Karst, included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1995

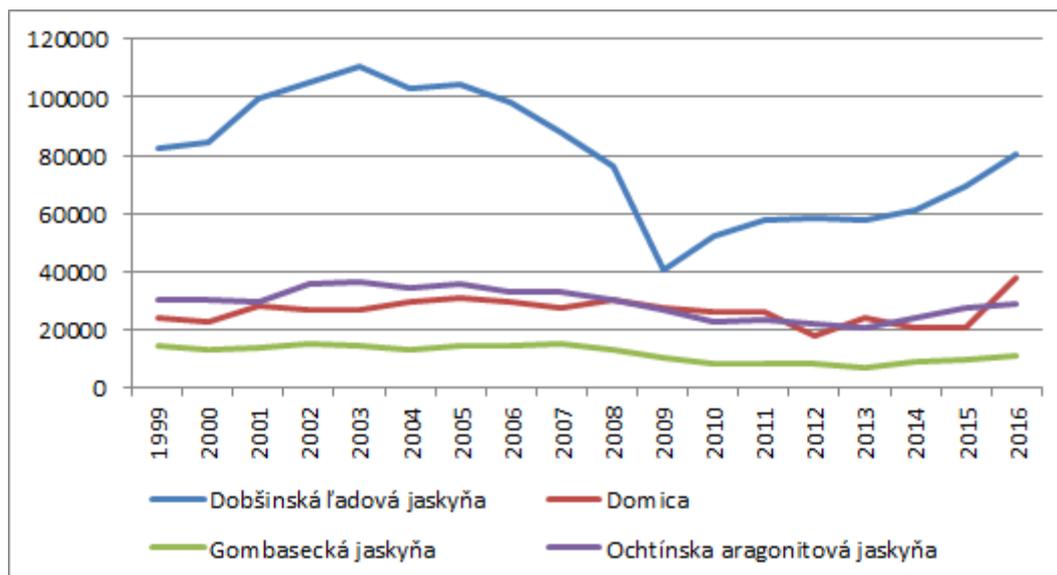
It is a commonly known fact that Slovakia is a territory with the largest number of caves, of which the majority is still not discovered, and the caves constitute a part of its national identity like the Tatry mountains and the original folk music. In this case the inscription in the World Heritage list is not only an anticipated event, but also a reality accepted by all the people of Slovakia, arousing curiosity and pride, the phenomena required by the inscription.

### Site description

Site forms a complex of more than 712 caves of the Slovak and Aggtelek Karst. In the list, there are the Ochtínska Aragonite Cave, the Domica Cave, the Gombasecká Cave and the Jasovská Cave, in 2000 the Dobšinská Ice Cave was added. Accessible to the public are also the Krásnohorská Cave and the Jasovská Cave. These are caves of various types, significant from the geological, zoological, archaeological and anthropological point of view, as in some remains of prehistoric cultures have been discovered. The caves are an extraordinary combination of tropical and glacial effects, which allow the study of history in tens of millions of years. Some of them are open to the public. The global significance of caves is that it is a place documenting the evolution of the Earth, while the local significance lies in the fact that the caves are popular tourist destinations and a topic of local research.



Graph 1 - Long-term trend of visitor rates in caves in the period 1970-2016 (Slovak Cave Administration, 1999, 2016)



Graph 2 - Visitor rates in selected caves of the UNESCO World Heritage List (Slovak Cave Administration, 2016)

### Commentary on the issues

At the end of the tourist season of 2016, ICP visited the Ochtínska Aragonite Cave and the Domica Cave. **The Ochtínska Aragonite Cave** is located completely outside of the village. Although the cave is placed within the boundaries of the community of Ochtiná, the access to the cave from this village is by more demanding forest paths. The cave may rather be regarded as "their" by the residents of the small town of Jeľava, or of a small village or Gočaltovo. The access road to the cave is privately owned and in bad condition. The incomprehensible situation is reinforced by the fact that the road leads through the Banská Bystrica Region, while it starts and ends in the Košice Region. This creates a tangle of stakeholders and many opportunities for fruitless wrangling to last for years. Near the Cave there is only a company's accommodation and catering establishment with a partially limited accessibility to the public. Right at the entrance to the cave is a round entrance hall with seating, information boards with multilingual commentary on the caves, a kiosk selling souvenirs and refreshments, restrooms and vending machines. Visitors before or after visiting the caves can sit in front of the entrance building on benches and while sipping a drink from a plastic cup, they can admire the surrounding countryside. Today it means to see the Slovak rudohorie mountains and the forest destroyed by a calamity, where the forest birds chirping alternates with the sounds of chainsaws. **The Domica Cave** in its area also lacks plentiful supply of accommodation and dining facilities, at least not in the territory of Slovakia. A nearby ranch was in the time of our visit out of service, the buildings near the parking lot at the cave were all closed and abandoned, except one kiosk with typical kitch souvenirs for more simplex tourists. A helpful man collecting parking fees advised us to go looking for tourist facilities outside of Slovakia, on the Hungarian side of the cave area, just a few minutes away. Should there be some non-Hungarian tourists without the Hungarian currency, they can pay with a credit card at the restaurant from the time of deep socialism, but it cooks not earlier than the noon. Fortunately, small entrepreneurs in stands with refreshments and souvenirs apparently routinely accept euros at a very good rate of exchange. The crossing of borders there and back is simple thanks to the Schengen arrangement, without any checks and stops, despite the security measures declared by the governments of both countries against emigrants.

Regarding the accessibility of the caves under the management of the Slovak Cave Administration, not only the caves of the World Heritage site, and based on personal field research, we would like to highlight the high professionalism of the employees, high quality of guiding services in several languages, information easily accessible to visitors, welcoming personal communication with visitors, as well as clear traffic and information signs in the broader area. In the long term the visitor numbers to the caves listed in the UNESCO World Heritage are stable and rising slightly, as shown in 4 representative caves on Graph 2. The long-term visitor numbers (Graph 1) over the past 46 years oscillate at around 600 000 visitors per year, in the previous eight years this had a significantly upward trend, and in 2016 it is at the level of half a century's average. It should be noted that the caves are closed ecosystems that are highly sensitive to the presence of foreign elements and increasing the number of visitors is probably no longer possible, which strictly limits the opportunities to increase profits from tickets and secondary economic benefits for the region. The added value of the UNESCO brand therefore cannot be monitored in the case of caves by volume of tourism, however, it is possible to assume that the current visitor rates of the caves corresponds to the available possibilities of the caves and their surroundings.

A positive assessment goes to the overall scientific base and the research activities in the caves of Slovakia. Caves are generally threatened mainly by mining operations, forestry and agricultural activities, and last but not least, the behaviour of visitors, which has in some cases led to the disfigurement of the cave. Even though there are cement pathways in the caves and electrical equipment installed using high-quality materials, this is essentially a disturbance to the environment in the form of a large amounts of concrete, safety nets, cables, switchboard cabinets and security monitoring systems. They are certainly important, but in some places they give an impression of overly drawing attention to the investment and care, which should be a neatly hidden matter of course.

### **Recommendations by ICP**

ICP notes that there has been an overall satisfaction with the way the Slovak Republic conserves and makes access to the natural heritage of caves. The geographical location of the UNESCO caves and other sights in the southeastern part of the Slovak Republic offers additional untapped potential for tourism with a very interesting cross-border spill-over potential. The fact that there is no proper infrastructure for the current tourism can be attributed to the overall economic situation of the eastern Slovak regions. It is important for a good assessment of the benefit resulting from putting the caves on the list that the periodic evaluation report of the UNESCO WH Committee notes poor to fair co-operation with the local community. The cause is not only the obvious physical distance between the sites and the local people, but it is a long-term problem, involving all UNESCO sites in Slovakia. Such a serious deficiency may be removed only with the help of a major appeal from the central level (i.e. the Government, Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Environment) to encourage local governments and regional authorities to start work intensively also using financial incentives with local NGOs having the best relationships with the communities.

In the case of the Slovak-Hungarian cave system we would like to point out the remarkable cross-border cultural links, which harbours a great potential. On the one hand, in terms of the present day's economic and human ties, and, on the other hand, in terms of acceptance of the story shared by the two nations in the past, and the creation of its modern continuation. Like in the case of sites of cultural importance, the narratives

of natural heritage sites refer to the centuries-old history of Slovakia. Not only two of them are directly linked to a cross-border system, their history are also bound to the culturally and ethnically diverse history of Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The use of this moment, also rare in the European context, may also be to improve the perception of the UNESCO brand besides changing the definition of the goal of preserving heritage as the cultivation memory as the key goal.

## **Herliansky geyser awaiting inscription**

### ***Site description***

The Herliansky geyser is located within the territory of the community of Herľany in the Košice region, at the foot of the Slanské vrchy range. In the 18th century, thanks to the presence of mineral springs, this was a place of a spa which disappeared after the 2nd World War. In 1870, the search for new sources of healing mineral waters led to making a well, 404.5 meters in depth. The first geyser eruptions were much stronger than those of today, they lasted about 10 hours and reached the heights of more than 100 meters. The intervals between eruptions gradually extended from 8-9 hours to the current 36 to 38 hours. Today, water sprays from the geyser to a height of 15-20 meters, only for about 30 minutes. It is expelled to the surface by carbon dioxide collected rhythmically in an underground cavity and released with the water to the surface.

The unique value of global importance is that the Herliansky geyser was not formed as a natural phenomenon, but from an engineering bore in a volcanically inactive area, in contrast to natural geysers around the world. A special feature is the relatively low water temperature of 12 to 24 °C. The owner of the well itself is the State which in 1984 declared it the national natural monument. The owner of the area around the technical and natural monument is the Technical University in Košice, a public university which uses the former spa resort sporadically for educational, sporting and cultural purposes, and the geyser serves it as an interactive demonstration of physical, chemical and geological processes.



*Herliansky geyser (Photo: ICP, 2016)*

### **Commentary on the issue**

IKP was interested in and trying to figure out the source of motivation to include the Herliansky Geyser on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The mayor of Herľany, Jana Tóthová, who says that the geyser, "despite the disinterest of the competent ones, has erupted since 1875", apparently sees a shortage of a real interest to use the geyser not only as a lift to an imaginary limelight of technological progress, but also for her community.

In spite of the fact that there are two big cities of Eastern Slovakia in the vicinity, Košice and Prešov, the area surrounding the village of Herľany is a relatively underdeveloped

region with high unemployment rate (in November 2016, according to the data of the Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, the unemployment rate in the Košice - okolie district was 17.38%), with Roma settlements and insufficiently developed infrastructure for tourism. Roads are of poor quality, and foreign tourists can experience almost a shock when in contact with the reality of economic and social problems. The offer of catering and accommodation is in a desperate state: Near the geyser there is just one small stand, where the locals during our visit were buying almost exclusively alcoholic beverages. The picture of the area around the geyser was completed quite romantically by a drunk man hugging a bin at the information panel. The facilities of the University were closed. The nearby park, partly maintained and used for the locals as a park for children, harboured an open-air exhibition of sculptures. In the summer of 2016 when ICP's field research was conducted, there were reconstruction works underway in the area on the drain collection pool immediately surrounding the well. Thanks to the measures the concentration of the water flow and preventing its losses in the underground cavities, the geyser will squirt up to about 22 meters.



*The area around the geyser in Herľany (photo: ICP, 2016)*

## **Evaluation and recommendation by ICP**

### **Story**

The story of the UNESCO world natural heritage site in Slovakia also reflects the attitude of man to the nature and the environment. The question arises, what kind of message we send out about our relationship to the natural sites? While the caves offer a relatively easily graspable story of their discovery or close-up observation of slow natural processes, in the case of the primeval forest telling a clear story is a huge challenge, also due to the contradictory course of action, which means the significant contrast between the declared conservation of small and often inaccessible islets of the original undistorted ecosystem and the status the surrounding countryside with cleared areas, muddy forest roads, which makes the story hardly believable. A myth. The Herľiansky Geyser offers an intriguing story of a unique element in Europe, which should be more persuasive and not lose its momentum like the time can weaken the geyser itself. The ideal continuation of the story may be, for example, investment in the renewal the spa traditions dating back to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Herľiansky spring is a unique opportunity to tell the story of water.

### **Adaptability**

Conservation of UNESCO natural heritage is an opportunity to demonstrate the ability to work together in an era of globalisation, to raise awareness of the vulnerability of the planet, as well as to update the approach to the conservation of heritage to the conditions of the 21st century when the source of pride should not be the mere existence of monuments but especially our ability to protect it and use the knowledge acquired for the benefit of mankind. Here we have an opportunity to show our unique character in a positive sense.

### **Secretiveness**

The example of caves and beech forest allows us to see a poor identification of residents with the place, mainly because of their remoteness. ICP sees some space to open up the entire region in the cumulative effect of the UNESCO World Heritage brand, which, according to a research from Israel, has a clear correlation with the willingness to revisit a particular country. The concentration of UNESCO heritage sites in the eastern part of Slovakia offers ideal opportunities to develop closer cross-regional and cross-border cooperation and offering comprehensive all-in-one tourist products, which requires some dexterity of Slovakia especially in diplomatic relations, in joint search and drawing of resources, and practical cooperation.

### **Skills and dexterity**

A space to express skills in the case of the Herliansky Geyser is, for example, in inducing higher demand for water from the geyser, which is currently in spite of its partial mineral content and spa tradition of the site left to drain without further systematic exploitation. Visitors are free to collect the run-off water with positive effects, but no monitoring is ensured. It is estimated that the geyser has already spewed several million cubic meters of water during its existence - the vast majority of this volume was washed away, and with a little creativity, it can be used to increase the added value of the site.

### **Community**

*The publication of UNESCO World Heritage in Europe Today* from 2016, based on the second round of regular evaluation of the sites, has identified problems and recommended next steps, which should lead to an improvement in the preservation of heritage in Europe. It points out that the overall level of knowledge of the world heritage concept is still insufficient, especially for decision makers. Local communities, landowners, commercial and industrial sectors are characterised with a limited understanding of the importance of World Heritage and the reasons for the inscriptions. Besides the easily predictable factors such as financial and human resources, a crucial emphasis is placed in the recommendations on better education on the UNESCO World Heritage Sites and their outstanding universal value, not only in relation to visitors and the general public, but especially to the local community. In the Village of Herľany, it is positive that the area is visually cultivated and well-maintained and that the park is used by the local residents to relax. In the case of this proposed site, ICP highlights the findings and recommendations of UNESCO, in particular the need for education and cooperation with the local community and understanding the importance of a UNESCO World Heritage site. In the context of the education of community one can look for synergistic opportunities even in the presence of a rather numerous group of residents from nearby villages, many of whom have spent time abroad, and their language skills

may be a pleasant surprise for foreign tourists. The key to success in a creative approach to the protection of monuments is digital technology and Internet marketing.

### **Ambition**

ICP is of the opinion that it cannot be difficult to organise and offer potential global clients some tours, for example through global portals and applications for mobile devices. At present, for example, there is a mobile application of a private US company which covers comprehensively and globally the information on all UNESCO World Heritage sites. It also offers personalised services and tours as complete packages. While it is certainly a great ambition to compete with attractions such as Yellowstone National Park, Fuji, Grand Canyon, and others, we ought to set high goals and demonstrate our ability to offer the worldwide digital audience some personalised service packages with an added value of visiting a large number of UNESCO sights within a short period of time.

### **Innovation**

Although it is still early to talk about the gradual loss of power and thus the uniqueness of the geyser, since it is essentially a matter of decades to centuries given the trend, it is necessary today to consider the aspect of sustainability of the site and the potential threats and to answer the question whether there will be certainly be no activities around the site that could change drastically the nature of the site overnight – either human activities (more drilling, an explosion, accident, construction activity and the like, which can be done by the individual entities in good faith of an "improvement"), or natural processes (seismic activity, floods, landslides). Based on the identified critical points in the existing entries, it is required from the state to protect the site and its surroundings, including the an effective legal protection of the so-called buffer zone. The ideal solution would be a transfer of ownership of the entire area and the buffer zone into the administration of the State, whereas, for example, the public university is in essence an autonomous organisation whose administrative can potentially inflict irreparable damage on the site by their decisions, as well as the potential activities of other land owners in the wider environment, which the State must regulate. As a country, we can find innovative ways of governance while maintaining a balance between human activities and their demands to change the country, and the preservation of the country's heritage, including its waters. This creates a large diapason of opportunities to show eco-innovation in agriculture, forestry, or geoengineering procedures. If we want to capture attention, how about using that water from the geyser to show its life cycle and environmentally friendly utilisation?

## **Music of Terchová, inscribed into the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Heritage in 2013**

Certainly no one in Slovakia would be surprised that folklore is the only "export goods" of intangible Slovak culture. For over one hundred years we have seen it and have been persuaded to see it as our most precious cultural product which we offer in the world heritage market as the most valued. That is another reason why we took a closer look at the inscription of something as purely local as the music from Terchová.

### **Description**

The Wallachian colonisation which moved over centuries throughout the Carpathians, struck the Slovak mountains in early 15th century and it reached Orava around the 16th century. These dates are not very accurate, because the scope of research of this major shepherd migration from Romania and Ukraine (Ruthenians) is still insufficient. Wallachians settled down on empty lands in the mountains, cleared and sheep-grazed them to build homesteads based on the Wallachian law, or the German law. In times of serfdom they were relatively free, but handed over tenths to landowners. In the 17th century Wallachians blended with the Slovak population ethnically and linguistically. Their pastoral culture, however, fundamentally affected the indigenous population so much that we still consider it as our genuine and most original culture. It has finally penetrated the national identity of Slovaks through the romantic myths of which the most popular is that of outlaw Janošík, who was born in a settlement near Terchová.

One can observe much inspiration from Ukraine, Romania, Hungary in the Slovak folk music and songs, which reappears in the works of musicologists only in the last 30 years. They claim the only exception is the music of Terchová and they all agree that it happened precisely because Terchová "was a godforsaken region for centuries"! This is how its stylistic purity, archaic nature and originality was preserved. Until now it was not affected even by the Gypsy "primas" lead violinists who changed and unified the sound and rhythm of folk musicians in other valleys of Slovakia. Initially, shepherds played whistles, which in Terchová were long and without holes. Later on another original instrument of shepherds was added - the fujara.

Stringed instruments, including the composition of today's ensembles in Terchová, started to expand later. Since then, the "heavenly music" has been played consistently by the lead violinist ("primáš"), backing violinist ("sekund"), second violinist ("kontráš"), and bass. Cimbalom, harmonica and clarinet, which substantially changed popular music in the 19th century, have never made it to Terchová.

### **The community of Terchová**

Family is the basis of ensembles and school of young musicians in Terchová. Most often these are brothers or neighbours at most. Children learn to play by listening tradition which is very effective and also prevents the "modernisation" of playing. The tradition ensures transmission of all original features of music which is not only in how the second leading violinist (backing violinist, "sekund"), and kontrás violinist are used, but also the way they hold the fiddlesticks which has already vanished in other locations.

In Terchová, live music still an essential part of the community's cultural life. Not only when celebrating together, but also as a daily part of the residents' leisure time. This

ensures a constant supply of new and younger groups. By passing the way of playing and the songs from one generation to another, they may play well together without difficulty. In a folklore film which was created as an initiative of filmmaker Slivka and a Slovak folk culture expert and member of the Slovak women's association of Živena, Ms. Paulovičová-Baková there is a shot of more than 30 musicians playing together at the Jánošík's Days festival. The oldest one is over 70 and the youngest 12 years old. The popularity of the music of Terchová was supported by the well-known Slovak film from 1960s "The Earth Sings".

### **Evaluation by ICP**

The music of Terchová seem to have a problem concerning neither recognisability, popularity, nor continuity. The central village and the small settlements around it are hatching places of more and more musicians. Although they hardly come from the same family.

There are several dangerous tendencies which may threaten the archaicity and originality of the "heavenly music". Some are natural, and there is virtually no way to eliminate them. These include professional training of players in childhood in elementary schools of art, the effect of the popularity of individual songs which can be heard in recordings on the radio, the change of lifestyle. All this will be affected not only by when and who will continue to cultivate this style of playing, but also by the fact that the musicians will keep playing the same songs over and over, and in fear of loss of authenticity, they will be afraid of making new songs, which naturally will be considered as a "desecration of the heavenly symbol".

So far, the music of Terchová has successfully avoided a coordination ("Gleichschaltung") of its sound and instruments that affected all of the popular music in Slovakia. With the arrival of cimbalom and by playing to order and for reward the musicians started playing other songs, which in turn affected their style in the once original compositions. From the moment folk music started to be played by trained professionals and individual instruments, the folk songs were "professionalised", musicians have stopped playing a bit off the key, instruments are perfectly tuned and players are able to play cleanly even at high speed, which amateurs fail to do. This also extinguishes the archaic sound and the original tempo of the songs. (A similar trend is also fashionable in the interpretation of classical music. The faster it is, the more awards - the proof is the Chopin competition in Poland.) It has miraculously avoided the threat of "ideologisation" even during early communism, although the preference of the outlaw Jánošík myth and popularity of mass performances for representatives of the state was a big attraction to give rise to "cuddly" songs to celebrate the regime.

There are two ways to keep the originality of a location or intangible heritage. One is not popular. It is "forgetting" that a phenomenon exists at all. Not to influence it any longer by professional research and let it continue to live in amateur conditions. This is probably the most difficult variant, and, unlike forgetting, the UNESCO brand is actually bringing an artefact to light not only national but almost global. The second possibility is from the opposite end. To document and record professionally everything which can be captured, but without trying to popularise inappropriately and constantly promote in a simplified manner at the national level everything related to the music of Terchová. And to leave the development and conservation of the music to the people of Terchová themselves and only to observe from a distance its further progress and wisely support

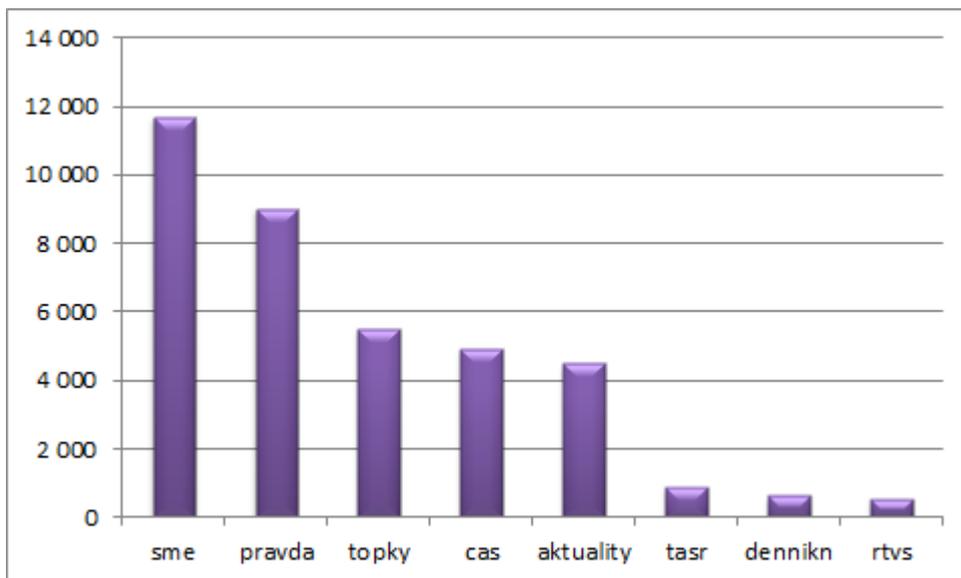
financially only those efforts closest to the original sound, and manner of playing for pleasure and in domestic conditions. According to foreign experts, these are only two ways to avoid the virtually unavoidable trend of extinction of the original archaic customs and festivities that transform into artificially maintained folklore with additions of "Folies Bergère."



*Promotion of UNESCO heritage at the train station in Bratislava (photo: ICP, 2016)*

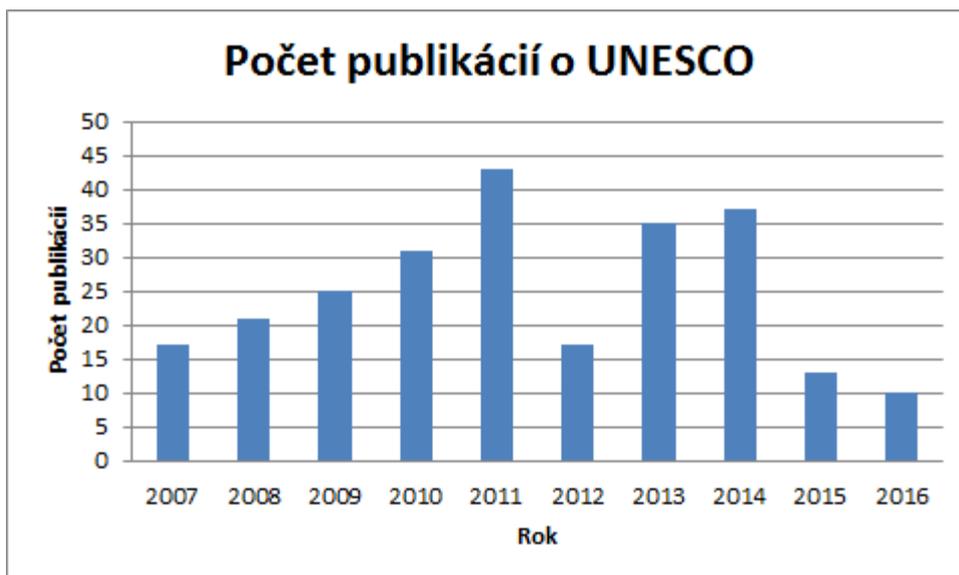
## Monitoring of UNESCO in Slovakia

ICP has monitored the rate of occurrence of the UNESCO topic in the media and academic environment. From Internet servers in the Slovak Republic, the expression UNESCO most frequently on the servers of *sme.sk* (11 700 results; Figure 3).



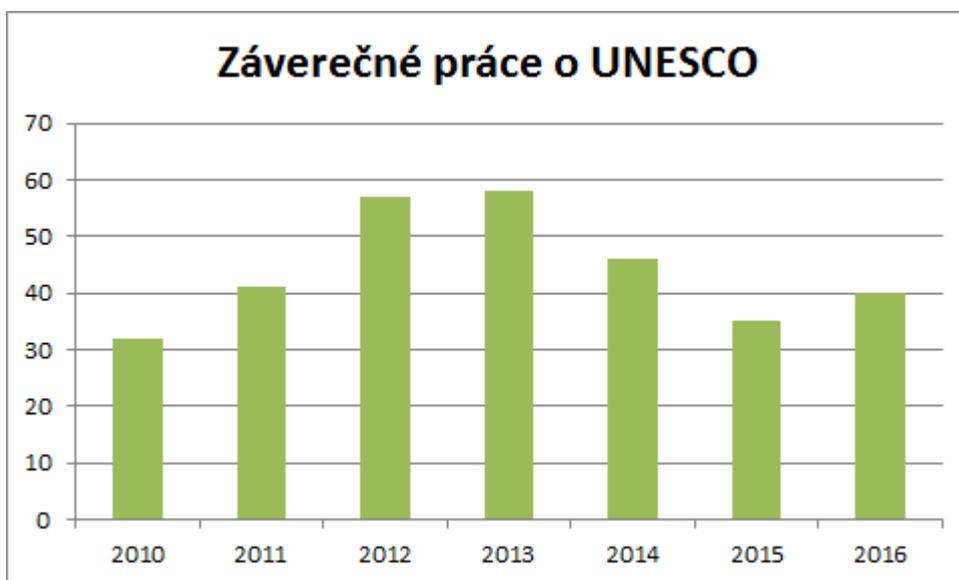
*Graph. 3 - The occurrence of the acronym UNESCO in news sites in Slovakia (Google Inc., December 2016)*

In Slovakia, there are four departments in the field of human rights, sustainable development and bioethics and translation at three public universities (Comenius University in Bratislava, Prešov University, Technical University in Zvolen) - they represent the knowledge, research and training capacities to further increase the value of the auspices of UNESCO.



*Graph No. 4 - Publications on UNESCO in the period 2007-2016 (CREPČ, 2016)*

According to the Central Register of Publication Activity that records the output of the academic community, the topics associated with the UNESCO brand were addressed in 254 publication dealing with issues of environmental protection, human rights and heritage preservation. 170 publications are in Slovak, 67 in English and the remaining 17 are in other languages. As seen in chart no. 4, the academic community's interest in UNESCO topics in 2007 increased and peaked around 2011, and currently is falling.



*Graph No. 5 - Publications on UNESCO in the period 2010-2016 (CRZP, 2016)*

In the Central Registry of Final Papers there are 309 records, including 161 bachelor papers, 134 Master theses, in the remaining 14 cases, these are doctoral theses, dissertations and other papers. Graph 5 shows that student interest in topics related to UNESCO was the highest in the years 2012-2013, is currently lower and maintained at around the long-term average.

## List of literature:

- Borges, M.A., Carbone, G., Bushell, R., Jaeger, T., 2011. sustainable\_tourism\_and\_natural\_world\_heritage\_report.pdf [WWW Document]. URL [http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/sustainable\\_tourism\\_and\\_natural\\_world\\_heritage\\_report.pdf](http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/sustainable_tourism_and_natural_world_heritage_report.pdf) (accessed 1.13.17).
- Centre, U.W.H., n.d. UNESCO World Heritage Centre - Decision - 39 COM 7B.19 [WWW Document]. UNESCO World Heritage Centre. URL <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6276> (accessed 1.13.17).
- Centrálny register evidencie publikačnej činnosti, URL <http://www.crepc.sk/>
- Centrálny register záverečných prác, URL <http://www.crzp.sk/>
- Čupka, M., 2015. Unesie Slovensko UNESCO? [WWW Document]. Pravda.sk. URL <http://zurnal.pravda.sk/neznama-historia/clanok/345059-unesie-slovensko-unesco/> (accessed 12.12.16).
- e-PRO group a.s., Centrum pokročilých vizualizácií, Inštitút kreatívnej ekonomiky, 2015. Stratégia rozvoja cestovného ruchu v Košickom kraji do roku 2020.
- Galland, P., Lisitzin, K., Oudaile-Diethardt, A., Young, C., 2016. World Heritage in Europe Today.
- Poria, Y., A. Reichel a R. Cohen. (2011). World Heritage Site—Is It an Effective Brand Name?: A Case Study of a Religious Heritage Site. Journal of Travel Research, 50(5) <http://jtr.sagepub.com/content/early/2010/09/23/0047287510379158> (IP edu)
- Pralesy.sk (website) OZ Prales, Rosina
- ROP: Posilnenie kultúrneho potenciálu regiónov a infraštruktúra cestovného ruchu, 2011.
- ROHÁČ, Ján. Karpatské bukové pralesy Možnosti turistického využitia Banská Štiavnica, 2010 URL [http://www.pralesy.sk/images/stories/core/kniznica/studijne\\_materialy/Pralesy\\_moznosti\\_turizmu.pdf](http://www.pralesy.sk/images/stories/core/kniznica/studijne_materialy/Pralesy_moznosti_turizmu.pdf)
- TASR/HERLANY. Herliansky gejzír je európsky unikát. Čím je iný? TV Noviny Markíza, 17. 08 2015. URL <http://www.tvnoviny.sk/zaujímavosti/1802273-herliansky-gejzir-je-europsky-unikat-cim-je-iny>
- TREND.sk, 2013. UNESCO malo pravdu, Slovensko nevie ochrániť prírodné dedičstvo [UNESCO was right, Slovakia can not protect the natural heritage] [WWW Document]. www.etrend.sk. URL <http://www.etrend.sk/ekonomika/unesco-malo-pravdu-slovensko-nevie-ochranit-prirodne-dedicstvo.html> (accessed 12.10.16).
- UNESCO, 2015. RM Mission Report Beech Forests Slovakia WHC-IUCN Oct. 14.
- UNESCO World Heritage Centre. Sustainable Tourism Toolkit, n.d.URL [whc.unesco.org/sustainabletourismtoolkit](http://whc.unesco.org/sustainabletourismtoolkit)
- UNESCO World Heritage Centre. World Heritage in Europe Today 2016 URL <http://whc.unesco.org/document/140015>

## ***Final recommendations of ICP***

1. The territory of the Slovak Republic, not much destroyed by wars, is the "exhibition hall" of monuments, buildings, natural wonders, and the originality of the cultural expressions which have shaped and developed throughout centuries. Although we still do not regard all of these as our property in the national narrative, given the multiethnic, multi-religious and multicultural environment, which is reflected in the destructive trends and indifference towards them over decades, in particular in the Communist period, subscribing to the preservation and modern approach to heritage under the UNESCO brand is a great chance to get the hold of the heritage in order to take care of it. It is a challenge for the new generation to give up faded prejudices and pseudo-Romantic myths and to create something new, not only more modern, but also more authentic in relation to the environment in which we live. For our diplomacy and representation, both cultural and business – it will be more natural to operate within such a truer context than defending the stale contents of old strongboxes after our grandmothers.
2. If we are "buried under the heritage" in Slovakia, we need to learn to decide what, how and why we will see as the heritage we should pass on to future generations, and enjoy in the meantime. However, we cannot resist the impression that the selection of some sites for inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage List was driven in particular by the fear of destroying the sites by ourselves. Our site survey confirmed that the UNESCO brand is not a way to protect heritage against destructive factors from domestic sources. To prevent thefts of the original elements and dismantling walls, and to eliminate the detrimental creativity of graffiti makers. The path leads only through the creation of interesting and impressive stories to make the locals identify themselves with the heritage and prepare a great feeling for the visitors which we know from certain locations abroad, where, in particular, the locals feel well around the site, who then convey this feeling to the visitors.
3. In all the debates on the future inscriptions, there must be one the priority of generating a favourable atmosphere among the local community. It is a half of the success not only in the preparation of a heritage object and the site, but for the entire duration of being on the list. It seems that the this decisive moment was not accounted for by those who prepared the nomination, not even by the local government in whose territory the sites are located. This factor will determine the success of marketing and financial plans for the use of heritage for cultural tourism. The approach to the local community and the life span of new stories and myths will be sparked off enthusiastically by the local non-governmental organisations, who are also the protectors of the heritage. The establishment of associations and the groups of friends around the heritage sites is an effective way of ensuring attractive and genuine programmes for visitors. The energy released among the residents will pay off greatly.
4. The conflict between the reverence of conservationists and the use of heritage with modern adaptations will probably be present at all times, especially in the sites on the UNESCO World Heritage list. The starting point is certainly a compromise, which we have found in Bardejov and which seems to be missing

(so far) in Levoča. The fate of residents the medieval towns is nothing to be envied. They constantly hit the boundaries of the "middle ages", even if they want to live a life as simple as possible, but still they need somewhere to park their cars, or upgrade their bathrooms. For example, the manner in which Banská Štiavnica expelled the dweller os the main squiare and moved them in the "rabbit hutches", a high-rise housing complex outside of the town's built-up area, is a mistake never to be repeated because its consequences are irreparable. People have never returned to the old historic houses, and they have forgotten about the well-proven urban way of life which gave the city its peculiarity and created its atmosphere. Today, Banská Štiavnica has to rely on "strangers" to make the charms of town come back.

5. The heritage sites inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage list are certainly the main promotional product of each country and culture. They are not just an expression of the importance of the territory's history but our current selection, our ideas about values and preferences. Therefore, when selecting new sites to be nominated it is important to rely on a long-term approach, which includes the basic features of how we want to actually present ourselves. Slovakia has already tried several times to elaborate a similar concept prepared by experts, which is currently "the story of the brand of Slovakia" with the slogan Good Idea Slovakia. People who work in the field of culture and diplomacy abroad must have a uniform and dependable concept to follow in order to achieve a synergy of impressive exhibitions and presentations. To form an image which is stable and flexible at the same time is therefore in the interest of all who care about a good promotion of Slovakia and selection of other candidates for entry on the list of UNESCO World Heritage sites.
6. ICP sees in the concept of the UNESCO World Heritage a huge untapped potential for cooperation, and wishes to push through the proposition that cultural growth brings economic growth. In Slovakia, they are generally still fully unused opportunities for destination marketing by utilizing digital mobile apps, augmented reality, joint promotion of the territory, creating itineraries which ICP proposes to use in the implementation of strategies on tourism, whereas in the marketing strategy of the Slovak Agency for Tourism the UNESCO World Heritage has been an integral part of the promotion of Slovak destinations. ICP proposes to create one state-backed platform that would serve as an umbrella for cultural, natural and intangible heritage.