

# Outline of our International Cooperative Project

Prof. Akira Ishii, Former President of ICOMOS/Japan

In October 1996, almost 9 years ago, the 11th ICOMOS General Assembly was held in Sofia with a great success. All the Japanese participants, including me, were deeply impressed by Bulgarian colleagues' extraordinary efforts which were made under Prof. Krestev's leadership in the thick of social difficulties after the national reform. As far as I remember, taking that occasion ICOMOS/Japan established an exceptional friendly relationship with ICOMOS/Bulgaria.

One day in October 1999, during the 12th ICOMOS General Assembly held in Mexico, Prof.Krestev, Arch.Staneva, and I myself had a memorable dinner at a certain Japanese restaurant, where we discussed an experimental project to be undertaken someplace in Bulgaria for exchanging our professional expertise on the conservation of historic secular wooden buildings. Actually, this was the very germ of our present project "Conservation of Monuments in the Ancient Plovdiv Reserve".

## CHRONOLOGY

- Feb.2000 ICOMOS/BG sent to ICOMOS/JP a concrete proposal suggesting Bayatova House in Ancient Plovdiv Reserve as a most suitable place.
- Apr.2000 ICOMOS/JP accepted the proposal, and started informal talks with the Japanese Government (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) for grant aid.
- Jul.2000 I visited Bulgaria, and together with Prof.Krestev, Arch.Staneva, Mr.Tokmakchiev (ICOMOS/BG), Mme.Stoikova, Arch.Kekemanov (Ancient Plovdiv Directorate), Arch.Kolarova, Arch.Proikova, Arch.Raeva, and others (National Institute for Cultural Monuments) made an intensive research in the Ancient Plovdiv Reserve. Through this research, all the participants came to agree that (1) the project should be expanded so as to cover several other historic houses in addition to Bayatova's, and (2) a Preliminary Project Document should be drawn up by Bulgarian-Japanese ICOMOS Joint Working Group as soon as possible.

- Sep.2000 ICOMOS Joint Working Group submitted the Preliminary Project Document to the Japanese Government.
- Mar.2001 The Japanese Government gave informal consent to allot an adequate budget for our project from UNESCO/Japan Trust Fund.
- Aug.2001 The Bulgarian Government (Ministry of Culture) submitted Letter of Request with the Preliminary Project Document to UNESCO through diplomatic channels.
- Jun.2002 Cultural Heritage Division of UNESCO organized a Project Formulation Mission in the Ancient Plovdiv Reserve. Professors Ishii, Fumoto, and Kretev (ICOMOS Joint WG) were among its 6 members.
- Dec.2002 The Japanese Government received the final draft of Official Project Document from UNESCO.
- Apr.2003 Talks between UNESCO and the Japanese Government on budgetary issues arrived at conclusion.
- Aug.2003 Official Agreement was signed by UNESCO Director General and Bulgarian Foreign Affairs Minister..

## **BUDGET**

Total amount of the grant aid from UNESCO/Japan Trust Fund is: 999,738 US\$

It is allocated as follows –

- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| - Plovdiv Municipality-----                          | 767,724 US\$ |
| - Bulgarian-Japanese ICOMOS Joint Working Group----- | 117,000 US\$ |
| - UNESCO (Project Support Cost)-----                 | 115,014 US\$ |

National Contribution is provided in kind (persons, facilities, documents, etc.)

## **OBJECTIVES**

Our international project “Conservation of Monuments in the Ancient Plovdiv Reserve” has the following two principal and three subordinate objectives.

[Principal Objectives]

**1) Conservation of 3 Monuments ensuring their Future Effective Use**

- B-B Ensemble (Alexandra Bayatova's and Evdokia Bakalova's Houses)
- Georgiady House (Dimitar Georgiady's House)
- Klianty House (Georgy Klianty's House)

**2) Emergency Measures for 4 Monuments**

- Nedkovich House (Nicola Nedkovich's House)
- Hindlian House (Stepan Hindlian's House)
- Nihanjan House (Filibos Nihanjan's House)
- Stambolijan House (Veren Stambolijan's House)

[Subordinate Objectives]

**3) Exchange of Professional Expertise**

- Activities of the Bulgarian-Japanese ICOMOS Joint Working Group
- Workshop regarding Architectural Preservation Practice
- Publishing of Scientific Reports

**4) Training and Public Awareness**

- Professional Training of University students in Architecture, Structural Engineering, Fine Arts, Conservation Science, etc..
- Exhibitions on Conservation Works in progress.

**5) Enhancement of Heritage Management**

- Correlation between National, Regional and Local Authorities in Bulgaria and International Partners

**PROGRESS**

According to the Official Project Document, the implementation of our project was originally scheduled to start in late 2003 or early 2004. Most regrettably, however, UNESCO's administrative stagnation caused us a great deal of distress at the beginning. In fact, UNESCO decentralized the management on our project from its Paris Headquarters to its Venice Branch Office in early 2004, after which, due to the latter's dereliction, the Plovdiv Municipality as well as the ICOMOS Joint Working Group did not receive any remittance for about one year..

It is since February 2005 that such circumstances have been gradually improved. On 15th and 22nd of March, the Plovdiv Municipality could carry out the two-step competitive tender for selecting 5 Project Teams, in close cooperation with the Selection Panel (or Jury) appointed by Mayor of Plovdiv and approved by Minister of Culture and Tourism. Practically, this event marked the genuine start of our project implementation.

The following list shows the 5 Project Teams and their members. The first team and the last team are assigned to 2 houses and 3 houses for convenience in terms of location and budget respectively. Each team, consisting of chief architect, art restorer, and constructor, is totally responsible for investigation, documentation, policymaking, designing, supervision, etc. at its target house(s).

**Project Team for :**

**Bayatova and Bakalova Houses** – Rumyana Proykova (chief architect), Zdzislav Karchevski (art restorer), and Peiko Manov (constructor)

**Georgiady House** – Valentina Peneva Varvanova (chief architect), Raina Mlekanova (art restorer), and Raina Nedelcheva (constructor)

**Klianty House** – Vyara Vasileva Kolarova (chief architect), Zdzislav Karchevski (art restorer), and Peiko Manov (constructor)

**Nedkovich House** - Zdravka Ivanova Geneva (chief architect), Svetla Koinova Mechkueva (art restorer), and Tosho Todorov (constructor)

**Hindlian, Nihanjan, and Stambolijan Houses** – Veneta Ivanova Gerginova (chief architect), Diana Stoyanova (art restorer), and Rumyana Ahryanova (constructor)

Generally speaking, our project is now being implemented quite smoothly. The 5 chief architects and their colleagues are carrying out their tasks with professional enthusiasm. On 31st May and 7th June, 3 general contractors for Georgiady House, Nedkovich House, and Set of Three Houses were selected through a two-step competitive tender. They begin their works soon. The other 2 general contractors for B-B Ensemble and Klianty House are going to be selected on 27th

September and 6th October this year. All these facts make us confident that our current project will be successfully accomplished by the end of 2007

## **WORKSHOP**

This Workshop co-organized by the ICOMOS Joint Working Group and the Plovdiv Municipality under the title “Architectural Preservation Practice in Bulgaria and Japan” is one of the most important parts of our project. I sincerely hope, not only it will promote participants’ personal expertise, but also it will bring desirable effects directly to the ongoing works here in Ancient Plovdiv Reserve.

### **Members of the Bulgarian-Japanese ICOMOS Joint Working Group**

Prof. Todor Kretev

Prof. Akira Ishii

Arch. Hristina Staneva

Prof. Masaru Maeno

Prof. Valentin Todorov

Arch. Kazuyuki Yano

Art. Angel Tokmakchiev

Prof. Kazuyoshi Fumoto

(Ishii’s Lecture, 03 August 2005, 30 minutes)