

ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS
МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ
WORLD HERITAGE LIST N° 401 Rev.

A) IDENTIFICATION

Nomination : Hollókő, rural architecture

Location : Comitat of Nógrád

State Party : Hungary

Date : November 12, 1986

B) ICOMOS RECOMMENDATION

That the proposed cultural property be included on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion V.

C) JUSTIFICATION

The Convention has specifically provided for the inscription on the World Heritage List of those sites which constitute "an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement which is representative of a culture and which has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change" (criterion V).

Application of this criterion is problematic because of the technical and socio-economic upheavals affecting all cultural areas of the world without exception. It is, therefore, particularly urgent to conserve the memory of some of the great examples of traditional urban and rural structures which are now in danger of disappearing in the more or less distant future.

With this in mind, the choice must not only be made carefully but must also be subject to careful prospection and study. Simply to include on the World Heritage List such sites as a high altitude village, a lake dwelling, an oasis or a hacienda is not enough to ensure their future : the risk of destruction, decline, insidious change or radical transformation of such sites must be carefully examined.

The Hungarian nomination of the village of Hollókő and its surrounding area deserves the Committee's attention both (a) because of the intrinsic exemplary value of the site and (b) because of the guarantees offered by the remarkable conservation policy started for the village in 1972, strengthened by further measures taken in 1977 and crowned with success during the last ten years (an extension of the conservation area was even proposed in 1981).

About 100 km north-east of Budapest, Hollókő is a small rural community whose 126 houses and farm buildings, strip-field style farming, orchards, vineyards, meadows and woods cover 141 hectares. The village and the surrounding area are given the same protection as a historic monument such as the castle.

Mentioned as early as 1310, this castle, whose ruins lie to the north-west of the village today, played a decisive part in the feudal wars of the Palócz and the Hussite wars. It served as protection for the village whose ruins have been found a little way from its walls.

At the end of the Ottoman occupation (1683) the castle and the village were finally abandoned and the present village grew up below. It developed gradually throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. As was customary in the region, the first generation of inhabitants settled on either side of the main street. In this one-street village, subsequent generations built their houses at the back of the narrow family plots, thus progressively enlarging the built up area. The barns were built apart from the village, on the edges of the fields, according to Palócz custom.

The development of the village and the soil can be traced from various documents. In 1782 it was still a typical one-street village. Later, a second street developed to the east of the main street. In 1885 plan shows the topography was already like that of the present-day plan : the amount of cultivated land had reached its maximum by the middle of the 19th century and the village could therefore grow no further. Some limited growth started again in 1960 and is now strictly controlled.

The inhabitants of Hollókő never heeded a 1783 decree prohibiting the use of wood for building, considered to be too inflammable. Consequently the village was periodically devastated by fire. The last of these fires dates back to 1909 but the houses were again built according to the traditional techniques of Palócz rural architecture : half-timbered houses on a stone base with rough cast white-washed walls, enhanced by high wooden pillared galleries and balconies on the street side protected by overhanging porch roofs. The church with its shingled tower is simply a transposition of this domestic architectural style.

In recommending that Hollókő should be included on the World Heritage List on the basis of **criterion V** of the "Guidelines", ICOMOS wishes to point out clearly the reasons for this decision.

1. Hollókő is not a museum village devoid of any traditional activity but a living community whose conservation not only includes farming activity but also ensures its success.
2. Hollókő provides a certainly exceptional and may be unique example of voluntary conservation of a traditional village with its soil. The plots that were modified by the regrouping of land were returned to their original strip shape within the framework of the 1983 "preserved natural region" project, which is so characteristic of the old system of land occupancy linked with family farming. The vineyards, orchards and vegetable gardens have been recreated, the ecological balance has been restored, even in the forestry environment, taking infinite care to respect historical authenticity.

3. Hollókő not only represents the Palócz sub-group within the Magyar entity, but also bears witness, for the whole of Central Europe, to the traditional forms of rural life which were generally abolished by the agricultural revolution in the 20th century.

ICOMOS, April 1987