

IDENTIFICATION

<u>Nomination</u>	:	Historic core of Český Krumlov
<u>Location</u>	:	Southern Bohemia
<u>State Party</u>	:	Czechoslovakia
<u>Date</u>	:	26 September 1991

DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

Český Krumlov is located on an ancient east-west communication route at a crossing of the Vltava River. The earliest documentary record of 1253 refers to the existence there of a castle belonging to a member of the ruling Vitkovici family of south Bohemia.

The core of the Castle (Hrádek) dates from the 13th century. Settlement developed to the east (Latrán) and also on the opposite bank of the river round a central square. This multi-nodal urban development is a characteristic of medieval town development, especially in northern and central Europe.

It was the seat of the influential Rožmberk family for 300 years from the mid 14th century. The Gothic Castle was reconstructed in Renaissance style, with the involvement of leading artists of the period. The wealth and importance of the town is reflected in the high quality of many of the burgher houses, since the presence of the seat of government led to Český Krumlov becoming an important craft and trade centre. There was also considerable ecclesiastical development, illustrated by the major 15th century church of St Vitus and monasteries of various preaching and itinerant Orders. The town later passed to the equally influential Schwarzenberg family, and it retained its importance well into the 19th century.

There are two main historic areas - the Latrán area below the Castle and the town proper on the opposite bank, in the meander of the Vltava River. The town has a regular street layout, typical of the planned towns of the Middle Ages, with streets radiating out from the central square and a circular intra-rampart road.

The Castle contains elements from the Gothic, High Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque styles. It is dominated by the Gothic Hradek with its round tower; this was subsequently converted into a Baroque chateau with the addition of a garden, the Bellaire summer palace, a winter riding school, and a unique Baroque theatre of 1766.

Both Latrán and the town proper contain undisturbed ensembles of burgher houses from High Gothic onwards. They are notable for their facades, internal layouts, and decorative detail, especially carved wooden Renaissance ceilings.

The Church of St Vitus, dating from the early 15th century, anticipates High Gothic in its reticulated vaulting and is significant in the European context. Other important historic elements are the Renaissance Jesuit College and Baroque seminary, the Town Hall (created by combining several burgher houses and embellishing them with a Renaissance facade), the remains of the fortifications, especially the Budějovická Gate (a Renaissance structure modelled on Italian originals), and the Renaissance armoury in Latrán.

AUTHENTICITY

Český Krumlov has profited from a relatively peaceful history in that it has retained its entire medieval layout and most of its historic buildings relatively intact. Restoration and conservation has been slight and so there can be no question as to the authenticity of both the townscape and its components.

MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION

The town centre is protected by Decree as a Municipal Historic Reserve (1963), a Conservation Zone (1987), and a National Historic Monument (1989). The historic reserve covers 46 ha and contains 315 buildings, of which 248 are designated individually for protection.

The town receives many tourists and is an important centre for cultural activities (concerts, exhibitions, festivals, etc). Its proximity to the Šumava International Park development is likely to bring increased numbers of visitors. The reconstruction of Český Krumlov was accepted as a project justifying central government funding in the 1960s and a major programme of work began in 1970; it is due to be completed in 1995. This is based on a master plan prepared in 1963-64; a development plan was drawn up in 1987 for further implementation.

The successive protective regulations define clearly the protected area, which comprises an adequate buffer zone.

EVALUATION

Qualities

The small towns of Bohemia are, because of their relatively untouched condition, of great importance in illustrating organic urban evolution in medieval and Renaissance central Europe in response to political, social,

and economic developments, and Cesky Krumlov is the finest surviving example, in terms of both its intactness and the quality of its buildings and townscape.

Comparison with other sites

ICOMOS has not carried out a comparative study of other Bohemian and central European small towns of medieval origin. However, there is an ample documentation relating to this clearly defined group (which extends from Bavaria to the Ukraine and from southern Poland to Hungary) and, moreover, the area is well known to several ICOMOS Bureau members. Ceský Krumlov is unquestionably the best preserved and most representative surviving example, with the additional merit of an exceptional natural setting.

Additional comments

The tourist pressure on the town is already heavy, and the Czech authorities must ensure that safeguards are provided to guard against any potential adverse impact from the Sumava International Park project.

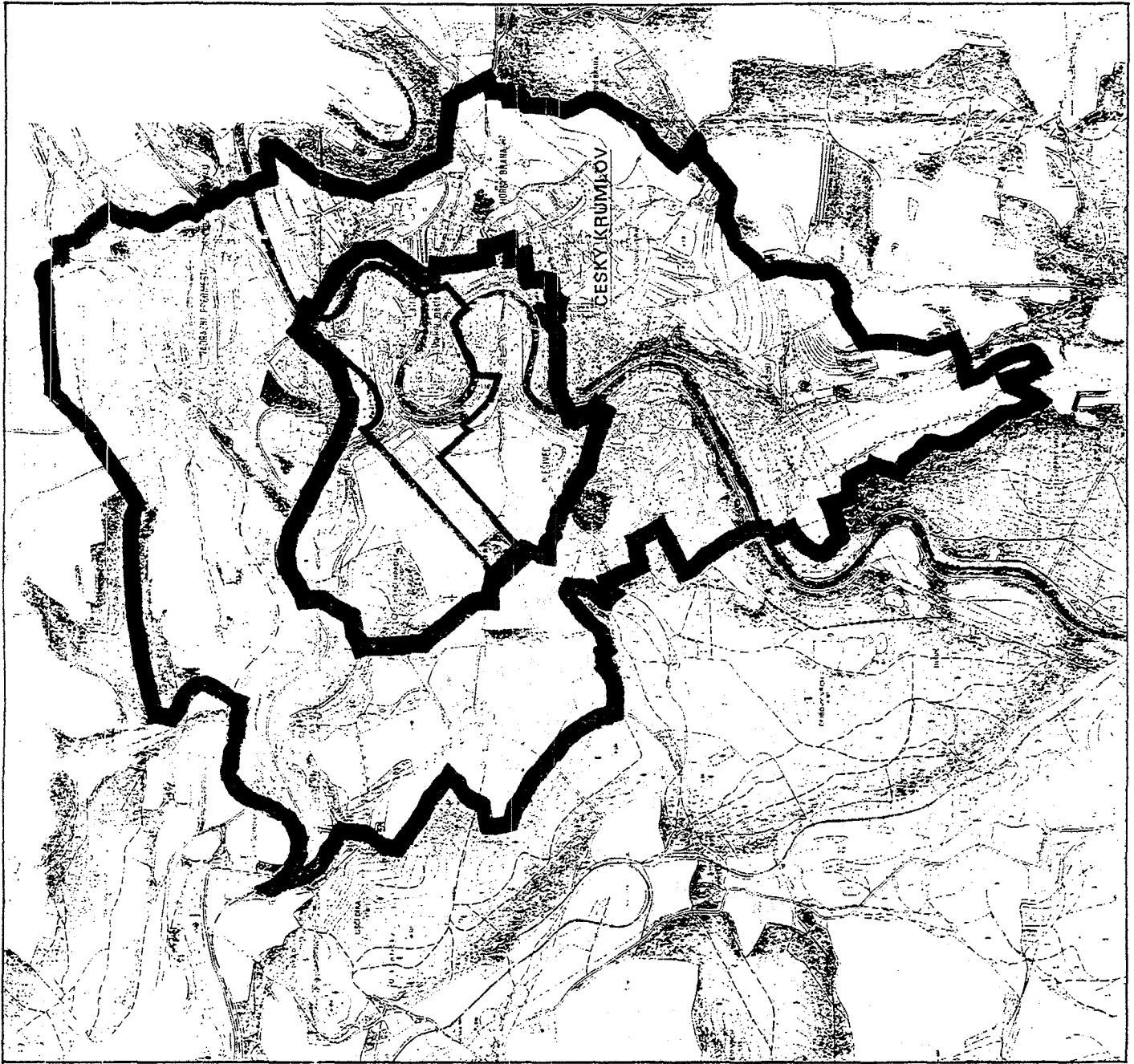
Five members of the ICOMOS Bureau had personal knowledge of the town.

ICOMOS RECOMMENDATION

That this cultural property be included on the World Heritage List on the basis of Criterion iv.

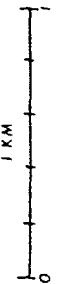
- **Criterion iv** : Český Krumlov is an outstanding example of a central European small town dating from the Middle Ages which owes the structure and buildings of its historic core to its economic importance and relatively undisturbed organic development over some five centuries. Ceský Krumlov grew up within a meander of the Vltava river, which provides a natural setting of great beauty. Its evolution over time is evident with startling clarity from its buildings and its urban infrastructure.

ICOMOS, October 1992



BOUNDARIES OF PROTECTED AREA

- PROTECTED AREA
- BUFFER ZONE I
- BUFFER ZONE II



Cesky Krumlov : plan