

## WORLD HERITAGE LIST

### Trogir (Croatia)

No 810

#### Identification

<i>Nomination</i>	The historic city of Trogir
<i>Location</i>	County of Split and Dalmatia
<i>State Party</i>	Republic of Croatia
<i>Date</i>	9 September 1996

#### Justification by State Party

In terms of space and population Trogir is a miniature city, but its significance for the cultural and economic history of the Adriatic outweighs its restricted urban scale. Its institutions, its way of life, and its contribution to national and universal culture and science make it one of the most important Adriatic towns. In this city the echo of ancient civilization never died out. It is the city of uninterrupted humanist traditions, legends, and local myths.

The uniqueness of Trogir become immediately evident by virtue of its geographical position. The town evolved in the prehistoric and Hellenistic periods on a flat islet in the marshy strait between the mainland and the island of Ciovo. Today its urban fabric encapsulates a series of historic configurations in a perfectly balanced relationship of stylistic formations. The oval outline of the historic centre was defined in prehistoric times. The street pattern follows the rectangular grid of the Hellenistic and Roman city, whose forum has recently been located from archaeological investigations. Some two hundred Romanesque and Gothic blocks, made up of houses and palaces, and public buildings dominated by the Cathedral of St Lawrence (c 1200), make Trogir the best preserved medieval town on the eastern coast of the Adriatic.

The remodelling of the main town square and the city gate in the Renaissance period are model examples of the urban planning of that period. The Baroque fortifications and the contemporary management of the green and built-up areas on the mainland and on the island of Ciovo have left an equally powerful imprint on the rich cultural and historic stratigraphy of the town and its surroundings.

Because of the harmony of its historical styles and the balanced values of the architectural achievements in its private and public buildings from all periods, Trogir is without parallel on the eastern coast of the Adriatic. Especially characteristic is the excellent quality of the sculpture from all periods on the facades and in the interior of the Romanesque cathedral, in the early Renaissance and Baroque chapels and fortifications, in funerary and public monuments, and in the many patrician palaces and houses. Trogir has always been the repository of sculptural masterpieces, from the relief of Kairos after the Hellenistic master Lysippus to the late antique and pre-Romanesque sculpture and statues by later masters of the 13th-17th centuries, many of them Tragurians who earned their reputations because of the work that they produced in other European countries.

Whilst Trogir itself is a collective work of art, there are individual masterpieces such as the portal of the Cathedral by Radovan (1240) or the early Renaissance chapel of Blessed John of Trogir by Nicolò di Giovanni da Firenze (after 1467), a pupil of Donatello, that are worthy of inclusion in any hypothetical museum of universal sculpture. They owe much to the superb limestone of Trogir, for which it was famous in antiquity.

[**Note** The State Party does not make any proposals in the nomination dossier concerning the criteria under which it considers the property should be inscribed on the World Heritage List. However, the ICOMOS expert mission was informed that it was envisaged that the property should be inscribed on the basis of *criteria i, ii, v, and vi.* ]

#### Category of property

In terms of the categories of cultural property set out in Article 1 of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, Trogir is a *group of buildings*.

#### History and Description

##### *History*

The ancient town of Tragurion ("island of goats") was founded as a trading settlement by Greek colonists from the island of Vis (*Issa*) in the 3rd century BC on an islet at the western end of the bay of Manios, in a strait between the mainland and one of the Adriatic islands, where there was already a small settlement. The Hellenistic town was enclosed by megalithic walls and its streets were laid out on a "Hippodamian" grid plan; the line of the ancient *cardo maximus* is that of the modern main street.

The town flourished in the Roman period as an *oppidum civium romanorum*, linked with the neighbouring cities of Salona, capital of the Roman province of Dalmatia, and Siculi, a colony for Roman military veterans. During the Late Roman period it was extended and refortified. Extensive Roman cemeteries have been discovered, outside the town, as was customary, and a basilica was erected in one of

these in Late Roman times. Although it was not made a bishopric in the early Christian period, Trogir was endowed with two large aisled basilicas, sited where the latter-day Cathedral and Benedictine Church of St John the Baptist now stand.

In the second half of the 9th century Trogir became part of the Byzantine *theme* of Dalmatia, with its capital at Zadar, and it was occupied by Venice at the end of the 10th century. Early medieval Trogir expanded to the south and new fortifications were constructed. At the beginning of the 12th century Trogir accepted Hungarian rule when the *theme* of Dalmatia was overrun. There was a short period of Venetian rule in the early 14th century, but it was not until 1420 that the town became part of the Venetian empire. Between the 13th and 15th centuries much new building took place, this period seeing the construction of the Cathedral and the Camerlengo fortress, a radical remodelling of the main square, and two campaigns of reconstruction and strengthening of the fortifications.

The Treaty of Campofornio handed Trogir over to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, to which it belonged, apart from a short period under French rule (1806-10), as part of the Illyrian Provinces until 1918.

#### *Description*

The plan of contemporary Trogir reflects the Hellenistic layout in the location, dimensions, and shapes of its residential blocks. The two ancient main streets, the *cardo* and the *decumanus*, are still in use, and paving of the forum has been located by excavation at their intersection.

Its development is clearly expressed in the town plans. Ancient Tragurion lies at the eastern end of the islet; this spread out in the earlier medieval period, and the plan of two concentric circles of houses and streets, within the former walls, is still visible. The medieval suburb of Pasike developed to the west on a different alignment, and was enclosed by the later fortifications. The port was located on the south side. Finally, the massive Venetian fortifications incorporated the Genoese fortress known as the Camerlengo.

The townscape of Trogir is determined by the pattern of, for the most part, narrow streets. Its homogeneity is stressed by the predominant local limestone, now mellowed by time with a golden patina.

Construction of the *Cathedral of St Lawrence*, built on the site of an earlier basilica and dominating the main square, began around 1200. The south portal was finished in 1213, in 1240 Master Radovan finished the main west portal, and the walls were complete by the mid 13th century. The main nave was vaulted in the first half of the 15th century and the bell tower was added in the late 16th century.

This relatively protracted period of construction has meant that successive architectural styles - Romanesque, Gothic, and Renaissance - are all represented. It is a three-aisled basilica, each of the aisles terminating in an apse. Two ranges of four massive columns separate the nave from the two side-aisles. Inside the porch at the west end is the

baptistery, the work of Andrija Aleši (1467), who embellished it with fine reliefs of St Jerome and the Baptism of Christ.

Aleši worked with Nicolò di Giovanni da Firenze and Ivan Duknovic on the Chapel of St John of Trogir between 1468 and 1497. The coffered ceiling is decorated with angels and a Christ Pantocrator. Niches around the walls contain statues of the Apostles by the three artists. The red marble sarcophagus of the 11th century bishop is in Gothic style. The greatest artistic treasure of the Cathedral is probably the Romanesque west portal, by Master Radovan, with its magnificent scenes from the Bible and everyday life.

There are several other churches in Trogir. The oldest is the Church of St Barbara (originally dedicated to St Martin), basically an 11th century building but rebuilt in Romanesque style in the 11th century. The Benedictine Church of St John the Baptist is, like the Cathedral, built on the site of an earlier edifice and is in Romanesque style. The Church of St Sebastian on the main square is noted for its well proportioned Renaissance loggia of 1471-77.

The Cathedral is flanked by one of the fine public buildings of Trogir, the Town Hall, from the 14th and 15th centuries. This was extensively restored in the 19th century, but retains its Renaissance appearance and contains many original features in place.

Of the numerous palaces of the aristocracy of the town, the Cipico Palace, facing the west end of the Cathedral, is the most outstanding. It consists of a complex of structures covering an entire town block. Most of it dates back to the 13th century, but some elements of buildings from the Late Roman period are incorporated in it. During the 15th century the then owner, Koriolan Cipico, brought in the three most celebrated artists of the period, Nicolò di Giovanni da Firenze, Andrija Aleši, and Ivan Duknovic, to embellish its facade and interior.

Throughout the town, and in particular round the ramparts, are the palaces of other leading families - Cega, Vitturi, Lucic, Garagnin Fanfogna, Paitoni, Statileo, Andreis. Many of these rise directly from the foundations of Late Classical or Romanesque structures and are in all styles from Gothic to Baroque. All that remains of the successive fortifications of the town are the Camerlengo fortress and one of the bastions of the Venetian defences.

### **Management and Protection**

#### *Legal status*

Act No 252 of the Regional Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments in Split: "On the protection of the historic centre of Trogir" imposes strict control over every aspect of development within the historic town.

#### *Management*

Ownership of the individual properties that make up this nominated area is the hands of various bodies -

national, municipal, ecclesiastical, and private - and individuals.

Controls over planning and regulation with the historic town come within the purview principally of the local authorities. There is a comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Commune of Trogir (1989/1993) and a Master Plan for the Town of Trogir (1993). A decree regulates vehicular traffic within the historic centre. Currently under active preparation are a Land Use Plan for the Town of Trogir and a Master Plan for the Historic Centre of Trogir, and a study is under way for regulation and improvement of the waterfront of the historic town. These measures have the strong support of the inhabitants of the town.

There is an overall supervisory function exercised by the National Service for the Protection of the Cultural and Natural Heritage of Croatia, part of the Ministry of Culture, working primarily through its Branch Office in Split. Scientific and technical backup is provided by the University of Zagreb and the Mediterranean Centre for the Architectural Heritage, also in Split.

### Conservation and Authenticity

#### *Conservation history*

Regulation of the town centre and its surroundings has a remarkable history, since it may be deemed to have begun with a statute of 1322, followed by later ordinances with the same objectives.

Trogir also played a significant role in the modern protection and conservation, since Ivan Luka Garagnin, the first Conservator for Dalmatia, who was appointed by the Central Commission in Vienna in 1853, was a native of the town. Restoration work began in the closing years of the 19th century and has continued since that time. After World War II work took place on the fortress of Camerlengo, the bombed belfry of St Michael, the Dominican Monastery, the Lucic and Cipico Palaces, and the Romanesque tower of St Nicholas. During the last two decades the Regional Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments has been responsible for a number of important projects on, *inter alia*, the loggias, the churches of St John the Baptist, St Barbara, St Nicholas, and St Peter, the Cathedral, and the Cipico Palace.

In 1985 the Town Council made it mandatory for archaeological excavations to be carried out on the ground floor of every house that was being repaired or adapted to commercial use. As a consequence, some 60% have now been investigated, and a substantial amount of significant information acquired, making it possible to prepare a measured plan at 1:200 of the entire historic centre.

#### *Authenticity*

The authenticity of the overall ensemble is very high, since there are few, if any, later interventions, and official policy is to prevent these at all costs. There is an equal concern for authenticity in material and workmanship: abrasive stone cleaning is rejected in

favour of maintenance of patina and where replacement is necessary, authentic materials and traditional techniques are always employed.

### Evaluation

#### *Action by ICOMOS*

An ICOMOS expert mission visited Trogir in December 1996. The views of the ICOMOS International Committee on Historic Towns and Villages were also obtained.

#### *Qualities*

Trogir is a medieval town on classical foundations that has preserved its urban fabric and individual buildings from a period of some five hundred years to a remarkably high degree and with the minimum level of interventions in order to conserve that quality.

#### *Comparative analysis*

The historic towns on the eastern coast of the Adriatic with which Trogir should be compared are Dubrovnik and Split, both already on the World Heritage List. By comparison with both of these, Trogir may be judged to be superior in terms especially of its authenticity, since it has not been subject to the degree of restoration and reconstruction that they have. It is also in many ways a more integrated and coherent town, since the townscape of the late 20th century represents and clearly demonstrates an organic growth since its foundation in the Hellenistic period of the 3rd century BC, without any major interventions in the 19th or 20th centuries in the name of restoration.

#### *ICOMOS recommendations for future action*

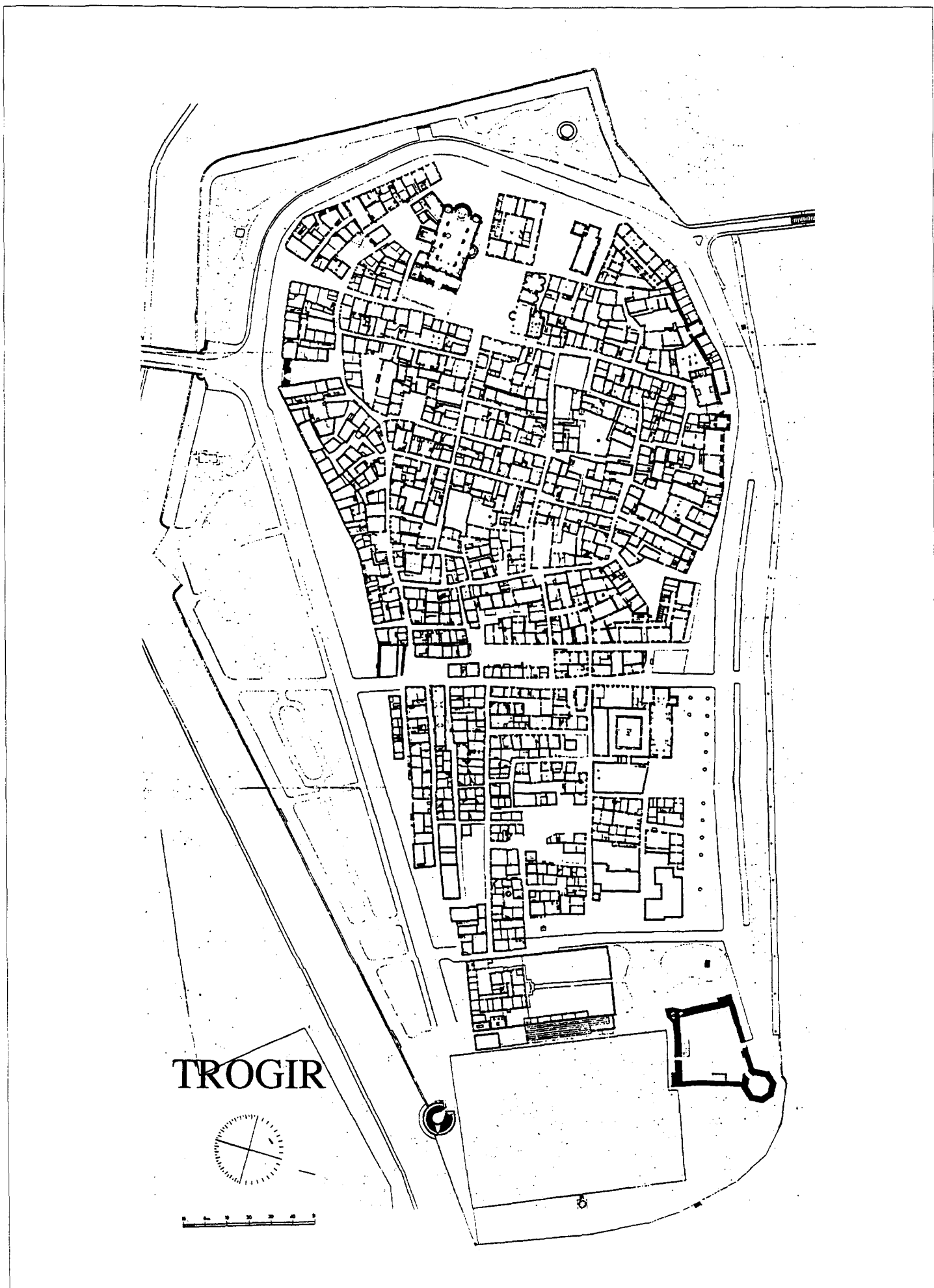
The ICOMOS expert mission expressed some concern about the implications of the policy of the State Party directed towards the development of a major tourist industry on the Adriatic coast. The commitment of local administrators and officials to maintenance of the character of Trogir as a living town is clearly strong. However, it is to be hoped that an uncompromising plan for the controlled development of the historic town within this overall tourism policy will be drawn up and implemented without delay.

### Recommendation

That this property be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of *criteria ii and iv*:

Trogir is an excellent example of a medieval town built on and conforming with the layout of a Hellenistic and Roman city that has conserved its urban fabric to an exceptional degree and with the minimum of modern interventions, in which the trajectory of social and cultural development is clearly visible in every aspect of the townscape.

ICOMOS, September 1997



**Trogir :**  
**Plan du centre ville indiquant la zone tampon /**  
**Plan of town centre, showing buffer zone**



**Trogir :**  
**Vue aérienne de la cathédrale /**  
**Aerial view of cathedral**



**Trogir :**  
**Façade du palais Cipico /**  
**Facade of the Cipico Palace**