RehabiMed 9

QUARTERLY BULLETIN OF THE PROJECT TO PROMOTE THE REHABILITATION OF TRADITIONAL MEDITERRANEAN ARCHITECTURE

MARCH 2007

RIWAQ wins the 2006 Best Practice Award

The Best Practices Programme promoted by UN-Habitat was created in 1997 with the aim of helping to create an international network of professionals in government departments, councils, associations, NGOs, etc., and promote exemplary practices that contribute to sustainable development. The areas of work cover a broad range, from revitalizing run-down areas to projects to help to reduce poverty.

This programme includes a biannual international competition sponsored by the municipality of Dubai, in which prizes were awarded to the 12 most significant and exemplary interventions with a direct influence on improved living conditions for their residents. This year 650 projects were submitted in the Dubai International Award for Best Practices to Improve The Living Environment (DIABP). RIWAQ, Centre for the Conservation of Palestinian Heritage, was one of the winners for its contribution to job creation with the rehabilitation of historic centres in Palestine. Many interventions were carried out, from projects to revitalize the historic centre of Hebron to one-off interventions to find new uses for existing buildings, such as the Village Council building at Beit Ijz and its environs, or the restoration of Ramallah Law Courts. The excellent work carried out by RIWAQ over the last 14 years has served to improve the economy of the population, which, in turn, has contributed to conserving, restoring, rehabilitating and reconstructing its cultural heritage. ■

Urban Study for the Town of Kavala

In the course of 2005, the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, with the backing of the Operational Programmes of the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Trace and the Municipality of Kavala, carried out a study of the urban centre of Kavala, Greece, in the framework of a knowledge transfer project.

Kavala, ancient Neapolis founded in the 7th century BC, served as a settlement for inhabitants from Thasos. Situated at the foot of Mount Simbolon, its port played a vital role in the Roman epoch. It formed part of the Ottoman Empire from 1391 to the early 20th century. In the 20th century, Kavala was seriously affected by armed conflicts. The study centred on assessing the transformations and reconstructions of the 20th century in an urban fabric that has been thoroughly modified by reconstruction work after the war. Using an innovative methodology, it analyses the constantly changing historic centre. The publication Kavala intra muros: mobility summarizes the project and offers solutions for the future urban management of the ancient city of Neapolis. ■

Chaouen Backs Rural Tourism

The province of Chefchaouen, Morocco, has developed a network of services incorporating quality rural tourism, promoting economic development and preserving landscape values and traditional heritage. More information: www.chaouenrural.org . ■

Rehabilitation of the Cairo District of Sayeda Zeinab

Sayeda Zeinab is a district in the south of Fatimid Cairo where there are 30 listed monumental sites, including the mosque of Ibn Toulum and an interesting complex of traditional Ottoman architecture such as Bayt al-kritiliyya. Its geographical situation is key as an area of urban transition between the historic districts and the modern city.

In 2002, the City of Paris and the Governor of Cairo, along with other institutions, signed a collaboration agreement to carry out the urban revitalization of Sayeda Zeinab. The first phase to be carried out after a detailed diagnostic study was the intervention in Abdel-Méguid Al-Labban Street. Phase two comprised the project to relocate the mechanics' workshops that occupied literally all of Abdoul-Dahab Street and recover it as a public space.

The exhibition "The Rehabilitation of the district of Sayeda Zeinab: photographs, maps and plans", held at the CFCC in Cairo last January, gave a detailed account of the rehabilitation projects carried out there between 2002 and 2006. The exhibition included the preliminary studies and the projects carried out by mixed teams belonging to Paris Council and Cairo City Government. APUR, a town-planning workshop in Paris, was responsible for preparing all the documentation needed to set up the exhibition. ■

This programme is financed by the European Union

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AGENCIA ESPAÑOLA DE COOPERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL

Project coordinated by: Col·legi d'Aparelladors i Arquitectes Tècnics de Barcelona

Presentation of the Pilot Operation in Lefkara, Cyprus

Réhabilitation et paysage urbain

Lefkara, situated in the central region of the island of Cyprus, is a village with an important legacy of traditional architecture. Starting in the 1960s, as a result of the development of tourism in the region, some traditional houses were demolished and replaced by modern constructions. The use for tourism of traditional architecture has hitherto been based on very functional criteria, applying poorly understood stereotypes of rusticity and incorporating the services needed to increase comfort conditions without the least respect for architecture or tradition. This is, of course, the case of many tourist centres in the Mediterranean.

The situation of the main street of Lefkara, the area chosen to carry out the pilot operation, was a perfect model, including ordinary dwellings, shops, second homes, hotels and abandoned buildings, set in a run-down urban environment within a high quality urban fabric. It includes original façades that needed restoration and altered façades that needed to be recovered or rehabilitated, alterations to pavements, chaotic electrical installations, outdated lighting systems and poor quality street furniture and signposting. The impact of rehabilitation work on the urban image of this part of the village has been exceptional both for the population (over 100 people directly affected) and the local authorities, which are considering continuing the operation in nearby areas to promote the village as a model of urban rehabilitation for Cyprus and the Mediterranean as a whole. The project has not merely involved physical renovation, as it has turned this area into a meeting place, a pleasant space to get together, rest and maintain neighbourhood contact. ■

The opening

The pilot operation in Lefkara, Cyprus, was inaugurated on 10 February 2007, once rehabilitation work was complete. The event was organized by the Department of Antiquities with the aim of presenting the project to the public. The media were invited to the ceremony, along with representatives of the corresponding authorities of the Ministry of Works and Communications, the Department of Urban Planning and Housing, the District Officer and the MPs for Larnaca district, the Delegation of the European Union in Cyprus, Ambassadors, the presidents of nearby communities, the Municipal Council and the inhabitants of Lefkara. The Minister of Justice and Public Order, who was Mayor of Lefkara at the start of the project, also attended.

In his declarations during the opening ceremony, the Minister of Works and Communications, Mr Haris Thrassou, commented on the benefits of Cyprus' participation in Euromed Heritage projects such as CORPUS and RehabiMed, and the increasing importance in recent decades of traditional architecture as a factor of sustainable development. "Obviously, the conservation of architectural heritage and its administration and appropriate use by encouraging traditional uses, and the introduction of new ones, can make a positive contribution to the revitalization of country and rundown urban centres, improving tourism and the economy of areas and settlements that have few resources but are rich in cultural heritage", said the Minister.

The Director of the Department of Antiquities, Dr Pavlos Flourentzos, explained the aims and activities of RehabiMed and how the pilot operation in Lefkara has applied the RehabiMed Method for building rehabilitation. The basic aim of the project is to create a model of built landscape that serves as an example and point of reference of appropriate methods for the rehabilitation of traditional architecture, said Dr Flourentzos.

The project architect, Mr Vasilis Iereidis, gave a short presentation of the project. He explained how the rehabilitation project is based on preliminary historical research, using old photographs, oral sources and documentation about traditional architectural elements, obtained during local research. He added that the project also set out to design a square in front of the church as a meeting space for use by the local community.

Finally, the Mayor of Lefkara, Mr Andreas Shosheilos, presented the result of the project to the Director of the Department of Antiquities. In his presentation he praised the work carried out in Lefkara and reiterated that the municipality's aim is to revive tradition in Lefkara by means of a more dynamic valorization of its architectural heritage. We have many projects in mind, said the Mayor, and aim to implement as many as we can, with the help of the Government and, we hope, European Union funding.

The inauguration ended with a visit to the pilot operation area. ■

RehabiMed Conference in Deir Hana, Israel

A one-day conference was held on 27 March in Deir Hana, a small town in Galilee, on the rehabilitation of traditional Mediterranean architecture, promoted by RehabiMed with the collaboration of Deir Hana Council, the Israel Antiquities Authority and the Council of Preservation of Building and Sites.
The RehabiMed project was presented with an explanation of its aims and the four core themes on which work is being done with the four pilot operations in Lefkara, Kairouan, Marrakech and Cairo. A special session was devoted to publicizing rehabilitation projects carried out in Israel. ■

"DIFFERENT VIEWPOINTS: Traditional Mediterranean Architecture"

RehabiMed has organized an international digital photography competition with the aim of promoting and diversifying ways of seeing traditional architecture throughout the Mediterranean—ways that are complacent, critical, creative, respectful, approving or bold. All views are possible, because they allow us to reflect on this body of heritage today.
The photographs submitted demonstrate the purity of traditional forms, the dehumanization of this form of architecture, the gradual deterioration of its environment, continuing tradition, etc. As of 23 April, the 30 shortlisted photographs will be posted on RehabiMed's website before going on show to the public in the exhibition "DIFFERENT VIEWPOINTS: Traditional Mediterranean Architecture", which will open at the headquarters of the CAATB on 10 July 2007. ■

Over 400 Rehabilitation Experiences On Line

RehabiMed's network of experts in 15 Mediterranean countries has identified and documented a large body of interventions of territorial, urban and building rehabilitation throughout the Mediterranean.
The methodology used involved creating a model form to collect information about the three most important phases of any rehabilitation project. The form is divided into three basic blocks: identification of the building or urban area requiring rehabilitation; the necessary documentation and the preliminary studies and diagnosis carried out, and the project, work carried out and evaluation of the results.
This database is open to new experiences. If you are interested in contributing new experiences, please contact RehabiMed at rehabimed@apabcn.cat.
To consult existing experiences, visit RehabiMed's Technical Department:
www.rehabimed.net. ■

RehabiMed Presents its Experience in Rehabilitation and Social Cohesion in Beijing

The international conference "Balanced urban revitalization: between social cohesion and heritage preservation" took place between 21 and 23 January 2007 in Beijing, China, organized by the UNESCO and the University of Tsinghua.
The conference included interesting international and Chinese examples of how rehabilitation is taking on a vital role in the social revitalization of historic districts all over the world. The examples of Lyons, Porto Alegre, Budapest, Seoul, Naples, Barcelona, Afghanistan and Slovakia were compared and contrasted with the rehabilitation policy being carried out in China and particularly in Beijing, where, with the argument of modernization, much of its traditional architecture heritage is being systematically demolished.
RehabiMed was invited to present its experience in the Mediterranean area over the last three years. Xavier Casanovas, Project Manager, gave the address. The organization of the pilot operations in Cyprus, Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt, with training seminars and workshops, and the experience of Barcelona's Ciutat Vella, were of great interest to the participants, lecturers and students at the University of Tsinghua, seeking parallels with regard to social issues and protection of the traditional architectural heritage that is under threat. ■

Presentation of RehabiMed in Liège, Belgium

On 16 March, the Institut du Patrimoine wallon organized the Archéoforum study conference to complement the exhibition "Living in the Mediterranean", which runs until 3 June 2007. The conference included the presentation of the RehabiMed Project, its methodology, aims and the fundamental vectors of its actions, specifically the pilot operation in Lefkara to improve the urban landscape. This included a detailed explanation of the RehabiMed Method and the Rehabilitation Manuals produced by CORPUS Levante about traditional Syrian and Lebanese architecture. Also presented were the projects for the revitalization of the district of Darb al-Ahmar and the Al-Azhar Park of the Aga Khan Foundation in Cairo and the training programme for heritage professionals in Tunisia. ■

Evi Fiouri

Evi Fiouri is an archaeologist. Since 1995, she has worked in the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus, in the Traditional Architecture and Popular Art sector. Although she specialized in Byzantine art, she finds the rehabilitation of traditional architecture a fascinating subject that gives her the opportunity for ongoing contact with architects, owners and artisans, and visiting buildings all over the country and studying their typologies, evolution, materials and construction techniques, which vary from region to region. For her, the most important sources of information about traditional architecture are the now elderly builders and carpenters who know more about construction techniques and materials than anyone. Her visits around Cyprus led to a particular interest in old oil mills, about which she has written a study that is to be published in the near future.

She is currently involved in the RehabiMed Project whose pilot operation has just been completed. Taking part in RehabiMed is, for her, one of the most productive experiences of her career with the Department of Antiquities and she is grateful for the acceptance and approval by the inhabitants of Lefkara and the public of work carried out.

In addition to RehabiMed, Evi Fiouri is involved in a project on watermills at the University of Cyprus. The research under way will be published in a book of historical, typological and technical information at the end of the project.

Do we have a "moral" obligation to continue defending an architecture that is linked to uses that are gradually disappearing?

Of course! It is the heritage of our parents and our grandparents, which reminds us of our roots and evokes a way of life that we must not forget. Even if the original uses associated with this architecture have disappeared, the buildings can always be used for other purposes that will preserve them and keep them alive. These new uses should also respect and adapt to the buildings, not the other way round. ■

What do you consider the essential values of traditional architecture that need to be preserved, and which can we give up?

For me, traditional architecture has an elegance that lies in its simplicity, its involuntary disdain for absolute symmetry, its perfect adaptation by means of volume and form to the relief and environs, and its colours, which are sometimes discreet, sometimes bright. I like the irregularities of stone walls and the colour of the stones that have been exposed for so long to the sun. Unfortunately, there are elements that it is impossible to conserve when carrying out rehabilitation, like the patina of time on the built fabric or earthen roofs. But the volumes and materials should be preserved as far as possible, as should the colours of traditional architecture and its setting. ■

> I don't expect the owners to come back and work the land, but they could open a small café, a shop to sell local products, a craft workshop… but no souvenirs made in China"

The tourist sector has brought about major transformations in traditional enclaves. Can sustainable tourism generate overall interventions that also respect traditional architecture?

In a country like ours, where tourism is the main source of income, we cannot ignore this sector. A huge effort was made to relaunch tourism in the south when the Turkish invasion in 1974 deprived us of the best tourism enclaves, which are situated in the north of the island. We have managed it, but not without severe damage that can be seen in many villages along the coast. Now, the latest thing is rural tourism, with subsidies that have become

available since we joined the European Union. Traditional buildings are being rehabilitated for transformation into small hotels, restaurants, workshops, cafés, souvenir shops… We also have international tourism that comes in search of good weather and buys and does rehabilitation work on traditional houses. All of this can contribute to sustainable tourism, but it is necessary to supervise work and keep an eye on uses—and I can tell you, it is by no means easy! ■

City centres are like hives. You have to look after the bees if you want your hives to be alive and full of honey

Some rehabilitation interventions turn small enclaves into great theme parks. Is this kind of caricature preferable to disappearance?

Caricature? That depends. If these enclaves are correctly rehabilitated and manage to introduce activities related to shops and local traditional production, then they can become living museums that are of interest to everyone, not just tourists. We are not there yet in Cyprus, but I think the idea is growing in some councils and communities. Furthermore, there are many small farmhouses that have been abandoned because the owners have given up farming. Personally, I would really like to see one of these houses turned into a "theme park" about rural life in the past, to remind people about everyday life in the country not so long ago that is now unknown to young people. I don't expect the owners to come back and work the land, but they could open a small café, a shop to sell local products, a craft workshop… but no souvenirs made in China! ■

Is turning some buildings into museums the only way we have of handing down the authenticity of this heritage to future generations?

For the purists, I'll say yes. Talking of Cyprus, it is impossible to completely preserve the authenticity of a building if it is to be used. People want comfort, to adapt spaces. At the same time, what we do not want is to "museify" traditional architecture, if you'll forgive my use of such a word. I think it is a good idea to restore at least some buildings—the most characteristic of their time, territory and typology—as they were and turn them into museums, in order to convey a precise idea of the original traditional architecture and also the living conditions they provided when they were built. For example, a rural house from the last century, with its rammed-earth floors, whitewashed walls and flat earth roof cannot be preserved in all its authenticity unless it becomes a museum. But it is still interesting to visit! We nod and say to our children, "look, that's how your grandparents lived!". The buildings preserved in this way are sources of information for students of traditional architecture, materials, construction techniques, and so on. ■

Is the rehabilitation of buildings and the revitalization of urban areas the key to preserving heritage values? Where is the dividing line?

This may sound a bit of a cliché, but city centres are like hives. You have to look after the bees if you want your hives to be alive and full of honey. Unfortunately, urban centres are still undervalued, both here and all over the world. Most of the houses are inhabited by the least favoured social sectors, such as immigrants or elderly people of varying degrees of poverty. Their economic activity is also contradictory. chic restaurants, clubs and cafés spring up like mushrooms beside old declining businesses in certain neighbourhoods that become difficult places for families to live. And property speculation is on the increase, leading to price rises that put a city-centre apartment beyond the reach of many. It must be said that in recent years, efforts have been made in some municipalities to concentrate rehabilitation work on buildings with grants for the residents, and management is aimed at measures to produce balanced revitalization, such as improved infrastructures and services for inhabitants of all ages. Other councils think that a facelift will give the centre a new lease of life. I think greater efforts should be made to ensure the overall management of the buildings and attention to the inhabitants on the part of the town planners and managers. ■

Reflections

The Skill of the Craftsman, Today

The shores of the Mediterranean lost their working crafts years ago (the verb "lose" is in fact a euphemism, as the processes of industrialization are based on wiping out trades and promoting the division of labour). However, the truth is that trades are sorely missed in the "construction industry" when it comes to carrying out rehabilitation work. Unqualified workers used to specialized tasks find it difficult to adapt to the more meticulous dynamics of rehabilitation and are incapable of valuing work that they will never know how to reproduce.

Artisan skills were handed down from generation to generation in a relationship between the master and the young apprentice. However, the chain was broken with the advent of cultural models that removed young people from traditional crafts, considering them "manual " or old-fashioned. What is at stake, then, is the "knowledge" of the artisan, which is not written down and, if not repeated before the apprentice, cannot be transmitted and handed down.

This is a global problem, but one with different nuances, because in each Mediterranean country we find slight variations on the same problem, according to its socio-economic situation, the type of primary and secondary schooling, institutional support for vocational training and the business fabric that can absorb these trades.

It is true that for some years various craft schools, workshop-schools and crafts guilds have been trying to recover these techniques and train up new generations of young artisans. Unless construction companies learn to value the workers who have acquired these "skills", however, and unless we (developers, governments, architects, engineers, etc.) insist on the need for this type of artisan to rehabilitate architecture and hire companies that offer professionalized standards in these "new young artisans", these institutions will not be able to survive and nor will it be possible to rehabilitate traditional Mediterranean architecture with the dignity it deserves. ■

RehabiMed Vocabulary

	Earth	Timber	Stone	Brick
Arabic	(تُرْبَــة (طِيـن	خَــشَــب	حَــجَــر	(لَبِــر (طُــوب
Catalan	Terra	Fusta	Pedra	Maó
French	Terre	Bois	Pierre	Brique
Greek/Cypriot	Χώμα	Ξύλο	Πέτρα	Πλίνθος
Hebrew	אדמה	עץ	אבן	לבנה
Italian	Terra	Legno	Pietra	Mattone
Spanish	Tierra	Madera	Piedra	Ladrillo
Turkish	Toprak	Ahşap	Taş	Tuğla

Graphic testimony

"*Istanbul is a narrow conglomeration; all mortal homes are built of wood, all the dwellings of Allah are built of stone. (…/…) The city has just two types of architecture: the great sloping roofs topped with channel tiles, and the bulbs of the mosques with the needles of their minarets.*" These reflections were written by Le Corbusier during his stay in Istanbul in 1911, leaving far behind the accounts and descriptions of Byzantium, Constantinople or Istanbul, written under the romantic influence, by Baroness Durand de Fontmagne or the classic travel literature of the *Collection de l'Univers Pittoresque*. Le Corbusier, like the watercolour that illustrates this page, looked at the city and interpreted its architecture as *an interplay of volumes in the light.*

Agenda

STREMAH 2007

Organized by the Wessex Institute of Technology (United Kingdom), the 10th international conference "Studies, Repairs and Maintenance of Heritage Architecture", STREMAH, invites specialists from all over the world to present papers. This meeting is devoted to the application of the latest technologies to the conservation of architectural heritage, and it has become a world referent in the field. It will be held from 4 to 6 July 2007 in Prague. More information:
www.wessex.ac.uk/conferences/2007/stremah07/index.html

Preserving Heritage

The World Association for Tangible Cultural Heritage is organizing the 5th international conference on Science and Technology in Archaeology and Conservation, with the collaboration of Legado Andalusí de Granada and the International University of Andalusia in Seville. It will take place from 7 to 12 July 2007 in Granada, Spain. Two of the main themes are the protection of cultural heritage in times of conflict and natural disaster and modern documentation processes and their role in the protection of cultural heritage. More information:
www.eyeonculture.net/fifthInternationalConference.asp

Urban Conservation

The CECI (Centre for Advanced Studies in Integrated Conservation), with the collaboration of other bodies, is organizing the 5th International Urban Conservation Seminar, "The Changing Role and Relevance of Urban Conservation Charters" from 19 to 21 November 2007 in Recife, Portugal. This event sets out to effect a critical revision of the documentation and protocols generated since the Athens Charter in 1931. More information:
www.ceci-br.org/5seminar/

Landscape Conservation in Conflict Zones

The Engineering Faculty of the University of Birzeit, Palestine, in collaboration with other Palestinian and foreign entities, is organizing the international conference "The Conservation and Management of Landscape in Conflict Zones" between 29 November and 1 December 2007.
The meeting is set to be an ideal international platform for landscape professionals to exchange knowledge and explore together the future of this discipline, particularly in conflict zones. One of the main themes covered will be "Rehabilitation and Conservation: Policies and Planning". More information:
http://home.birzeit.edu/eng/landscape/Introduction.ph

Study and Conservation of Earthen Architecture

The 10th International Conference on the Study and Conservation of Earthen Architecture is organized by the Getty Conservation Institute and the Ministry of Culture of Mali, with the collaboration of Africa 2009, CRATerre-ENSAG, ICOMOS, ICOMOS South Africa and the World Heritage Centre. This meeting, coming after the success of previous years, will be held in Bamako, Mali, in February 2008, and hopes to attract more than 300 experts in the field. Details at:
www.getty.edu/conservation/field_projects/terra/mali_conference.html

"Inshallah. Morocco 1996-2006"

From 3 to 27 May 2007, the Dar Sanâa gallery at the School of Arts and Crafts in Tetuan, Morocco, is the venue for this photography exhibition that brings a literary approach to a contemporary, fundamentally urban Morocco, where cultural crossover is visible in the coexistence of Arabic tradition and the influence of Western culture. The exhibition will travel to Tangier, Rabat, Fez and Casablanca. More information: www.tresculturas.org

PUBLICATION NEWS
Guida al Recupero dell'Architettura spontanea

Valentina PICCINNO and Enzo PASCOLO
Forum, Udine, 2006. ISBN 88-8420-3222-8
Language: Italian 207 pages. 25 euros

The authors of this guide to rehabilitating the traditional architecture of the Italian province of Udine offer specific solutions for each construction element in this form of architecture, not forgetting a preliminary discourse on the value of the building and its context. The manual devotes a separate chapter to each construction element, including a systematic analysis. The entire guide is illustrated with graphic material of a high standard.

WEB
Union of Mediterranean Architects
www.umar.org

This organization was set up in 1994 in Rabat, Morocco, with the specific aim of being an open portal between professionals interested in architecture, the city, the territory and the Mediterranean landscape. Its website provides permanent updates about the sector's latest news in this geographical area. It organizes interesting workshops for both students and professionals, and is a very dynamic, constantly updated portal.

BULLETIN REHABIMED Téléphone : +(34) 93 393 37 70 Fax : +(34) 93 240 23 60 E-mail : rehabimed@apabcn.es Page web : www.rehabimed.net

Editor: Xavier Casanovas Editorial board: Ramon Graus, Oriol Cusidó and Montserrat Villaverde Coordinator: Elisenda Pucurull
Documentary consultant: àqaba. documentació històrica Translation: Elaine Fradley Graphic design: Lluís Mestres Printed by: INGOPRINT

Published in: Spanish, French and Arabic Copies: 3000 (1000 in each language) Digital edition: English and Catalan

PUBLISHED BY: RehabiMed - Col·legi d'Aparelladors i Arquitectes Tècnics de Barcelona
Bon Pastor número 5, 08021 Barcelona, Spain

Editorial Board: Xavier Casanovas (Spain), Gilles Nourissier (France), Paraskevi Fiouri (Cyprus), Mahmoud Ismail and Wahid El-Barbary (Egypt), Faissal Cherradi (Morocco) and Mourad Rammah (Tunisia) Administration: Inma Dávila