

## მუზეუმ-ნაკრძალები: დაცვისა და მართვის საკითხები

დოლიძე ირმა

საქართველოს კულტურული მემკვიდრეობის დაცვის ეროვნული  
სააგენტო

მუზეუმ-ნაკრძალები კულტურული მემკვიდრეობის სფეროს ცალკე ჯგუფს ქმნიან. ისინი თავის თავში აერთიანებენ: არქეოლოგიურ, არქიტექტურულ ძეგლებსა და კომპლექსებს (საკულტო, საერო, საფორტიფიკაციო), მუზეუმებს, მათში დაცული ასეულ-ათასობით ექსპონატით და ა.შ. მათი დაცვა, შესწავლა, პრეზერტირება და ახალგაზრდა თაობის დაინტერესება მუზეუმ-ნაკრძალების უმთავრესი ფუნქციაა. მუზეუმ-ნაკრძალის პასუხისმგებლობა ვრცელდება მათს სამოქმედო არეალში არსებული ძეგლების მონიტორინგზე, მდგომარეობის შეფასებასა და დოკუმენტირებაზე. ვინაიდან მუზეუმ-ნაკრძალები, სამოქმედო არეალებითურთ, ქვეყნის ტერიტორიის დიდ ნაწილს მოიცავენ, შესაბამისად, მართვის მოქნილი სისტემის ჩამოყალიბება, მათი გამართული ფუნქციონირების გრძელვადიანი პერსპექტივით, კვლავაც აქტუალურია.

საქართველოს კულტურული მემკვიდრეობის დაცვის ეროვნული სააგენტოს ინიცირებით და ქართულ-ნორვეგიული თანამშრომლობის ფარგლებში დაიწყო კომპლექსური არქიტექტურულ-არქეოლოგიური კომპლექსის - ნოქალაქევის მუზეუმ-ნაკრძალის - მართვის გეგმის შემუშავება. მისი მიზანი საიტის ფარგლებში მოქცეული უნიკალური კულტურული მემკვიდრეობის კომპლექსური დაცვა, განვითარება, მართვის მექანიზმის გაუმჯობესება, ტურიზმის ხელშეწყობა და თანამედროვე საინფორმაციო-საგანმანათლებლო სივრცის ჩამოყალიბებაა. იგი სახელმძღვანელო გახდება საქართველოში არსებული სხვა მუზეუმ-ნაკრძალებისა თუ კომპლექსებისათვის.

## **Museum-Reserves: Some Aspects for Protection and Management**

*Dolildze Irma*

National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia

The richest and divers cultural heritage of Georgia is millennia old. Its defense, preservation and bequest to future generations require implementation of the wide-scale, multidisciplinary and permanent measures, that is possible only in case of existence of planned and scheduled state policy and its consecutive realization.

Final decade of the last century that is so called Post-Soviet period was one of the harshest periods in the history of our country. Shortcomings in almost every aspect of life had affected the sphere of preservation of cultural heritage that was left beyond of the most topical issues of the activities financed through the state budget at those times. Solution of many problems accumulated in almost every aspect has become possible since 2004, when the state governed and financed “State Program for Protection of Cultural Heritage” was first launched. Up to now it has been the most effective measure for implementation of the State Policy in the field of cultural heritage protection, facilitation and support of its further promotion and protection. From that period onwards several multidisciplinary measures towards different aspects of protection of the monuments of cultural heritage have been planned and implemented. The most noteworthy of them are as follows:

- Protection and rehabilitation of samples of Georgia’s cultural heritage (including preparation of rehabilitation project documentation and reconstruction of the monuments of cultural heritage);
- Inventory and documentation of the monuments heaving cultural heritage properties located in urban areas and regions of Georgia (including both moveable and immoveable monuments, museums, establishment of zones if protection around the monuments, etc.)
- Cultural heritage monitoring throughout the country;
- Creation of the integrated database of cultural heritage
- Georgia’s cultural heritage research and promotion program;
- International projects and responsibilities. Sharing of the up to date western experience and implementation of joint projects;
- Monitoring and research of the monuments of Georgian culture located abroad;

Application of different programs and widening of their range necessitated utilization of modern principles of management that has become the main reason for establishment of the National Agency for Protection of Cultural Heritage of Georgia (2008). The Agency is the main body responsible for implementation of the State Policy regarding country’s cultural heritage that runs the State Program for Cultural Heritage Protection and through this effective tool almost entirely covers all spheres of cultural heritage of the country.

National Agency for Protection of Cultural Heritage of Georgia comprises several museums<sup>1</sup> and all museum-reserves<sup>2</sup> located in all parts of the country.

The museum-reserves constitute the separate group of cultural heritage incorporating the wide range of monuments of cultural heritage, such as archaeological sites, single archaeological monuments and the entire complexes including cult service, secular and defensive structures, museums with their collections frequently depositing several hundreds of thousands of items, etc.

Almost all of the museum reserves are really the most complicated structures and hence the issue of their effective protection and management requires multidisciplinary and integrated attitude and comprehensive consideration. Only such kind of approach can provide successful development of the museum-reserve, being the essence of those approaches.

Protection, further research, effective preservation and promotion of cultural heritage sites under their management, elaboration and implementation of attractive education programs and rising of interest in broader audience, particularly in the young make the basics of roles and responsibilities of every museum-reserve. Moreover, museum reserves have the areas and territories they supervise. Their staff is directly involved in looking over the monuments of cultural heritage located on those territories through their systematic monitoring, assessment and precise documentation of their condition. It means that through the system of supervision territories museum-reserves cover the entire country.

Consequently, the museum-reserves are neither the museums in the literal understanding of this term nor are they the mere integrity of different monuments. They are far more complicated establishments. Respectively, their management shall be based on timely implemented and consecutive permanent protective measures that include protection and conservation of typologically different monuments (moveable and immovable), their exhibition and presentation, monitoring, attribution and registration, elaboration and implementation of the related education programs, provision of infrastructure and their promotion. All these issues can't be properly addressed but through the modern methods of management with the long term perspective, implementation of which still remains one of the most topical issues of nowadays.

An Agreement was signed in 2009 between the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia and the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage – Riksantikvaren setting forth several directions of cooperation between the parties, creation of Nokalakevi Museum-Reserve management plan being the most important of all others. Upon its completion the management plan should serve as a sample for other management plans elaborated pertinent to other similar establishments<sup>3</sup>.

The question comes forward on why Nokalakevi museum-reserve has been selected as the first touchstone?

Among ancient settlements of Antique Age and early medieval Georgia Nokalakevi is the only one of its type where the entire picture of urban planning and development is still preserved with all essential parts of urban life

being constructed: fortifications, palaces, churches, secret tunnels, bathes and other public buildings are all in place.

Located in the village of Nokalakevi of Senaki Municipality this ancient settlement known as Archaeopolis of Byzantine chronicles is unparalleled monument throughout the whole Caucasus thanks to its scale and urban infrastructure. This ancient settlement that covers up to 20 hectares of rather complicated terrain was the capital of the West Georgian Kingdome of Egrisi throughout the period of IV-VIII cc AD.

The town remembers harsh periods including several devastations, heavy fires and destructions. Consequently only part of structures has survived till nowadays. Still, the entire structure of the settlement can be well defined. It contained three basic parts that are as follows: lower part of the city- downtown with the King's palace and mansions of noblemen and priests; middle section occupying hill slopes with several military barracks, where most of the city garrison apparently was located; and the third –highest section- the citadel occupying the top of the hill.

Next to the still active church of the forty martyrs build in the late VI c AD that initially was designed as a three-nave structure but thanks to several reconstructions has been transformed into the domed church with the XVI-XVII cc wall painting, containing some remains of aniconic style that is definitely much earlier compared to the rest of the frescoes, the viewer can see the remains of two and three storey palaces, coupled with those of one of the earliest single nave and three-nave basilicas built in IV-VI cc.

Several Roman-type royal and public bathes of late-antique period excavated in Nokalakevi are best proofs of promoted urban lifestyle in those times. The potable water cistern-reservoir built sometime IV-VI cc AD is arranged on the lower section of the city. Alternative way effectively providing citizens and military with potable water has been arranged on the western edge of the city. It is a tunnel cut through a massive rock with vaulted ceiling and stairs leading to the river stream. This extraordinary sample of engineering art is safely preserved up to nowadays.

The defense walls with towers erected with the intervals of 70 meters enveloped the entire city. The earliest layers of the defense walls are dated back to the 3-rd- 4-th cc AD. The defense fortifications contain three layers of masonry walls running southwards and eastwards parallel to each other. The entrance –gateway openings are cut through them. The citadel defense system also includes several towers.

Since 1979 Nokalakevi complex holds the statute of the museum-reserve. Finds made during chorological excavations being applied here for decades are deposited and exhibited in the museum that is located on the territory of the establishment. These materials clearly reveal almost all aspect of this one of the oldest settlements in Georgia.

Besides typologically highly diverse cultural heritage focused on the territory of Nocalakevi Museum-Reserve it has got all features more or less common for other similar establishments in Georgia.

Based on generally accepted principles of site management the management plans for every museum-reserve will be elaborated individually. However, taking in account the entire potential pended within the

museum-reserves and almost identical problems in different regions of the country they could be regarded as one of the important instruments for regional development.

The essence of Nokalakevi Museum-Reserve management plan that is expected to improve the establishment's administration lies upon the integrated and scheduled measures that are to be implemented according to the respective Action Plans where all aims, ways of their achievement, roles and responsibilities are detailed and precisely defined.

These Action Plans are as follows: Registration, Documentation and Conservation Action Plan (implies full scale registration, documentation and protection of the site, comprehensive assessment of the physical state of the monument, registration of all fall down/ loosen stones, threats and risks, working out of rehabilitation and conservation programs based on the conservation documentation data), Management, Monitoring and Protection Action Plan (vegetation management regarding monuments protection and esthetic perception, establishment of the monitoring routine, control over the visitors behavior, state of ruins and vegetation, etc.), Educational, Tourism and Presentation Action Plan (visitor's walkway routes delimitation, rehabilitation of traditional wooden residential house - Oda Sakhli and its transformation into the visitor's centre, development and implementation of educational programs, support for organization, production and sale of local production, publication of scientific-popular literature about Nokalakevi and making of documentary films).<sup>4</sup>

A museum is an inseparable part of the Museum-Reserve holding the unique collection of more than 3.300 exhibits all revealed on the territory during the archaeological excavations. Chronology of the collection covers vast period of time from the 2-nd Millennium BC till 18-th c AD.<sup>5</sup> The exhibition opened in 1988 is still in place. The expected reconstruction of the museum that envisages building of new office and storing spaces and re-arrangement of the exhibition is one of the basic components of the future Nokalakevi Site Management Plan. It should constantly be borne in mind that the museum is a part of the huge and diverse complex and this should condition its natural association with other immovable monuments of the site.

Nokalakevi Museum-Reserve Management and Development Plan that is expected to be completed by mid-2011 will be the first document of its kind addressed to the many-sided and diverse monuments of cultural heritage in Georgia.

Hereby it should be noted that several projects were carried out during 2009 and the following year, when the management plan components were worked out. For instance, infrastructure projects were prepared for Uplistsikhe Historical-Architectural Museum- Reserve, Gonio – Apsarus Archaeological-Architectural Museum-Reserve and Archaeological Museum-Reserve of Petratsikhe Fortress. Currently the designs are in the stage of implementation. A new exhibition hall was created at Gonio Museum-Reserve that hosts the very first exhibition of the best samples of the museum collections containing finds made during the archaeological excavations of the territory.

Several projects were realized in the Great Mtskheta State Archaeological Museum-Reserve, where the tourist information area has been arranged in

the museum coupled with commencement of the educational program for children “First Steps in Archaeology” organized on Samtavro Valley. Armaztsikhe –Bagineti archaeological site conservation project funded within the scope of the USA Ambassador’s Program for Preservation of Cultural Heritage has been successfully implemented.

Mtskheta, Vardzia and Uplistsikhe Museum-Reserve Guidebooks were published. The process of inventory of the museum collections has been launched and is underway. This process envisages detailed documentation of the items kept in collections and creation of the electronic version of the respective information that will be included in the Integrated Cultural Heritage Database.

Truly all these aspects considered in previous paragraphs are important for the adequate operation and effective function of the museum-reserves, however, creation of the modern flexible and easily adaptable system of management for the museum-reserves as a whole as well as for its separate components.

Under reasonable usage Georgia’s rich and diverse cultural heritage can truly be regarded as a component capable to serve as an important factor for further economic development of the country, as a property that can facilitate and stimulate its progress in many aspects.

### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Nuko Pirozmanishvili House-Museum in Mirzaani, Borjomi Museum of Local History, Stepantsminda History Museum.

<sup>2</sup> Archaeological Museum-Reserve of the Fortress of Petra; Gonio-Apsarus Archaeological- Architectural Museum-Reserve; Ekvtime Takhaishvili Archaeological Museum-Reserve of the Country of Guria; Parmen Zakaraia Nokalakevi Architectural – Archaeological Museum-Reserve; Kutaisi Historical-Architectural Museum-Reserve; The Great Mtskheta State Archaeological Museum-Reserve; Kldekari Historical-Architectural Museum-Rserve; Uplistsikhe Historical-Architectural Museum Reserve; Ksani Gorge Historical-Architectural Museum-reserve; Didi Liakhvi Gorge State Museum-Reserve; Vardzia Historical-Architectural Museum-Reserve.

<sup>3</sup> A group of Norwegian experts headed by Dr. Anna Sophia Hiegen (PHD, head of the Consulate for Cultural Heritage Protection of the Country of Ostofold) and including Dr. Knut Helskog (Professor of the University of Tromso and of its museum) and Karin Tansem (curator of the Museum in Alta) made their first visit to Nokalakevi in November 2009 for the purpose of working out of the preliminary model of Nokalakevi Management Plan and outlining several future projects.

<sup>4</sup> Besides of cooperation between the Norwegian and Georgian Parties on creation of Nikalakevi Management Plan a workshop shall be organized within the framework of this cooperation devoted to site presentation technologies. The up to date experience shall be shared during the workshop through dealing with various aspects of site presentation and interpretation. The Presentation Model for this extremely diverse monument of cultural heritage is expected to be worked out as the final outcome of the workshop. Another workshop on stone and masonry preservation has also been planned that envisages practical implementation of conservation activities on the remain of the Royal bathhouse (5-6 cc AD) by the Norwegian experts. All monuments of the unique site are building of stone and lime mortar. In the 80-ies of the last century cement solution was used to some extent for the conservation purposes, basically focused on the monuments located on the lower terrace of the ancient city. Except of visual affects caused by cement solution usage, it has become one of the key contributors in further damages of the monuments, so the expected preparation shall basically be devoted to the methodologies of lime mortar and lime solution preparation and their utilization/ application.

<sup>5</sup> Thousands of finds were made during archaeological excavations being carried out on-site since 1973. They are preserved either in the local museum, existing on the territory of the Museum-Reserve or in Georgian National Museum.