



ANNUAL REPORT 2004

THE SUPERINTENDENCE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

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1

Mission Statement



The Mission of the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage is to ensure the protection and accessibility of cultural heritage in terms of the Cultural Heritage Act 2002.

2

Legal and Policy Issues



2.1 Core Functions

- The core business of the Superintendence as set by the Cultural Heritage Act 2002 includes the following functions:
- Heritage Data Management and Processing: national heritage databases, national inventory of cultural heritage assets, museums and sites, clean storage/archiving of documents and artefacts, data provision to the general public.
- Planning development issues: field evaluations, planning process consultations, recommendations for scheduling, Environmental Impact Assessments, Appeals Board.
- Museums and Sites Monitoring: assessment, auditing, guardianship.
- Surveillance, Enforcement and Prosecution: all aspects of the Cultural Heritage Act 2002.
- Movement of Cultural Goods: import/export, Customs, border control, EU regulations.
- Heritage Data-Capture: field work, excavation, evaluation of art objects, collections, documentation and other, covering all territory including territorial waters.
- International Commitments: UNESCO, Council of Europe, European Union, European and Euro-Med partnership, bi-lateral and multi-lateral relations.
- Communication and Outreach: press, public relations, education, Local Councils, schools, publication programme.
- National Forum: compilation and upgrade of the State of the Heritage Report.

- Policy Development: policy, standards, guidelines, regulations, heritage management plans, advice to Government on heritage matters.

2.2 National Forum 2004

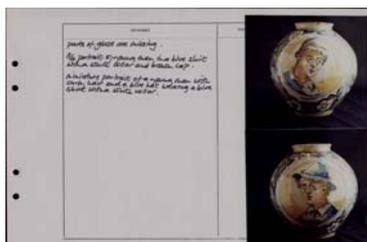
The National Forum for Cultural Heritage is this year being held at the end of November 2004. The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage has been involved by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture in the planning and organisation of the Forum. The 2004 Forum is expected to mark the start of the consultation process necessary for the formulation of the National Strategy for Cultural Heritage by the Minister responsible for Culture, as required by the Cultural Heritage Act 2002. In the course of the Forum the Superintendence is also expected to submit the State of the Cultural Heritage Report for 2004.

2.3 Exercise of the Right of Preference

A policy document has been drafted by the Superintendence which includes recommendations for the regulation of the State's power to exercise the Right of Preference, as per Article 40 (1) of the Cultural Heritage Act 2002. The Right of Preference gives the Superintendent the right to acquire cultural property on a preferential basis from private owners, following approval of the Minister responsible for Culture in consultation with the Committee of Guarantee. The draft policy document has been presented to the Committee of Guarantee for further discussion, prior to the issue of a specific legal notice on the regulation of the Right of Preference.

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The National Cultural Inventory



3.1 Cultural Heritage Information Management Systems

The Cultural Heritage Act 2002 identifies the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage as the statutory body responsible for the development and management of a National Inventory of Cultural Property.

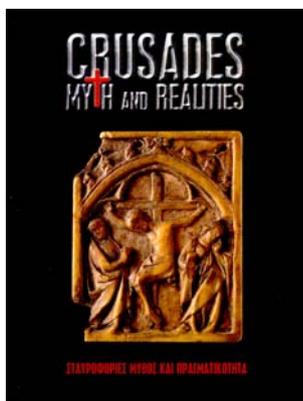
To this effect, the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage launched the Cultural Heritage Inventory Management Systems Project (CHIMS), which aims to create a new knowledge-based context for understanding, managing and disseminating data concerning Malta's cultural heritage through the creation and maintenance of an electronic database.

The Superintendence published a Request for Proposal for the development of a software system for the operation of CHIMS. Submissions to this RFP were received at the Department of Contracts in January 2004.

An Adjudication Team was set up consisting of Superintendence and MITTS officials and chaired by the Superintendent of Cultural Heritage. Since January 2004, this Team has conducted a thorough evaluation of the submissions to the RFP, and is at present in its final stages of the adjudication process.

4

Outreach and Education



4.1 Superintendence Website

The Superintendence Website was first launched in October 2003. The development of the official website of the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, (www.culturalheritage.org.mt) has continued during 2004.

In particular, the section entitled Education and Outreach has been expanded through a number of initiatives undertaken by the Superintendence. These are linked with the European Heritage Days, which this year focused on the theme of historic windmills. A number of downloadable lesson plans for different categories of school classes have been prepared, including handouts and also games.

Other areas of the website which have been improved include the photo galleries, with the inclusion of several new images related to Malta's cultural heritage. A large number of useful links have also been included in the website. The website also carries information about the different initiatives undertaken by the Superintendence during 2004.

A number of games having a cultural heritage theme have been developed. Moreover, a number of downloadable wallpapers were also prepared. Work is currently being done on the creation of a forum for the public discussion of cultural heritage issues, and on the generation of a periodical newsletter.

4.2 Culture 2000 – Crusades Program

In 2004, the Superintendence made a successful bid for European Union funding under the Culture 2000 Program. The funding was obtained for a project centred on the idea of cross-cultural influences in the Medieval and Contemporary Mediterranean World.

The project is the result of an international partnership between different entities, made up of the following partners:

- Pereides Foundation, Cyprus – Project Coordinator
- Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, Malta
- Foundation for the Hellenic World, Greece
- Istituto per le Technologie Applicate ai Beni Culturali –
- CNR, Italy
- Centre de Recherces en Arts , University of Picardie,
- France

The object of the project is to organise two thematic touring exhibitions on the following subjects:

- **Crusades Exhibition** – An exhibition aimed at examining the historical phenomenon of the Crusades in the Medieval and Early Modern Mediterranean. The exhibition aims to illustrate how the Crusades were both a movement of division and of union between the different geopolitical aspects of the Mediterranean. A wide range of historical sources and ancient artefacts are being used for the development of this exhibition, including archaeological material, art-historical items and documentary material.

The cultural heritage left by the Order of Saint John in Malta is expected to feature very prominently in this event.

- **Crossings Contemporary Art Exhibition** – A collective exhibition of contemporary artists who have personal experience of the displacement of local communities either as emigrants or as refugees, across the North-South divide of the contemporary Mediterranean.

These exhibitions are expected to start touring different locations in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, France and Malta as from November of 2004. They are planned to last over a period of three years. The entire project has a total budget of 1,521,498 Euros.

4.3 European Heritage Days 2004

The European Heritage Days 2004 have been held between the 17th and the 24th of October. The theme selected by the Superintendence for this year's Heritage Days was 'WINDMILLS – Lost Landmarks in the Maltese Landscape'. This was Malta's contribution to the awareness campaign organised on a European level by the Council of Europe in collaboration with the European Union.

The European Heritage Days is a yearly event, prepared by most Council of Europe Member States, aimed at improving the public's appreciation of Europe's common cultural heritage.

This year's edition of the Heritage Days has been very positively received by the general public. Participation by schools and families has been noticeably particularly enthusiastic. Media reception of the Heritage Days has also been extensive, involving the press, television as well as internet coverage.

An innovative feature of this year's Heritage Days events is the provision of a variety of related information and services by the Superintendence by means of its official website. This included a pilot project for the development of downloadable lesson plans for primary and secondary students has also been concluded.

Events for this year also included a national competition for school children and a heritage week at ta' Xarolla Windmill. The Xarolla event included organised tours of the archaeological site which in the area. The Zurrieq Local Council participated in this very successful event by organising the opening of the windmill and by putting up their own cultural heritage events. The Superintendence also provided for this event three educational panels on the sites at Xarolla, as well as two leaflets on the same theme aimed at children and adults respectively. Both panels and leaflets were handed over to the Zurrieq Local Council at the end of the event to assist it in its presentation of the Xarolla Heritage Site. Copies of the leaflets were also forwarded to Tourist Information Offices for wider dissemination.

Numerous other Local Councils and Non-Government organisations have participated in the 2004 Heritage Days campaign by providing free access to various cultural sites, many of which are little known or of difficult access. Din L-Art Helwa provided access to St. Agatha's Tower (Mellieha) and to Wignacourt Tower (St. Paul's Bay) and to the Msida Bastion Garden of Repose (Floriana). Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna provided access to the Simblija cave dwellings (Dingli), to Notre Dame Gate (Vittoriosa) and to the R15 Wartime Reserve Post (Naxxar).

5

Research



5.1 Archaeological Investigations

The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage carried out various archaeological investigations, both on land and at sea. The principal cases treated in the course of 2004 were the following:

5.5.1 Historic Clock-Tower at Birgu

Following a request by Birgu Local Council, an investigation was carried out of the site at Victory Square, formerly occupied by the Civic Clock Tower. The investigation was carried out by officers of the Superintendence with the logistical assistance of the Cottonera Rehabilitation Project. The remains of the Tower were positively identified at the indicated site. It was possible to ascertain that the walls of the Tower had been almost entirely removed, although its rock-cut foundations have survived. A previously undocumented cistern was located within these foundations, as well as traces of the adjoining houses. The Tower was demolished in the 1950s following its being extensively damaged by Axis bombing.

5.5.2 Doni Steet, Rabat

The excavation of a site at Doni Street, Rabat has been restarted by the Superintendence. The site had first been investigated in 2003, revealing extensive traces of medieval archaeological remains. Following this discovery a development on site was re-designed in order to ensure the preservation of the archaeological remains. The current work is extending the area of investigation in order to allow the continuation of the development works, according to the re-designed plans.

5.5.6 Torri Falka, Mgarr

A stretch of agricultural terraces at Torri Falka has been investigated by the Superintendence at an area impacted by a proposed quarry extension. It had been noted that the site in question contained a concentration of surface ceramic scatter. Monitored stripping of the topsoil revealed a stretch of stratified deposits of the Classical period, lying directly over bedrock. Evaluation of this site is still ongoing.

5.5.4 Ramla Tat-Torri, Mellieha

Officers of the Superintendence have participated in a training program organised within a UNIMED Project, La Navigation du Savoir. Part of the training involved the re-investigation of an Early Modern wreck site with Ramla Tat-Torri, Mellieha. The site was partly investigated in 1964, when two iron swivel cannons were recovered and which are now on exhibit at the Palace Armoury. Various exploratory trenches were excavated into the sandy bed of the bay, aiming at identifying any surviving traces of this reported wreck. However few signs of wreck were identified, probably due to its being extensively damaged by the strong currents at this part of the coastline. This investigation was carried in collaboration with the University of Malta and with the Group de Recherch d'Archeologie Naval.

5.5.5 Gnejna Bay, Mgarr

The collaboration with Group de Recherché d'Archeologie Naval (GRAN) was extended further with the carrying out of a remote sensing survey of the outskirts of Gnejna Bay. The survey utilised a magnetometer provided by GRAN, and was aimed at attempting to gauge the effectiveness of this type of technology on Maltese sea bed conditions. The results obtained by this survey are being currently reviewed by both the Superintendence and by GRAN.

6

Land Use Issues



The Superintendence carries out various roles related to land use issues and land development, when such issues have bearing on the cultural heritage.

6.1 Scheduling of Cultural Heritage Property

In 2004 the Superintendence has recommended to the Malta Environment and Planning Authority the scheduling of two cultural heritage properties, which have been judged to be endangered. The properties in question are:

- 19th Century Villa and Gardens sited at 28th St. Angelo Street, Zejtun

A development permit application had proposed a very damaging re-development of the gardens of this historic town house. The garden in question still retains its original layout. The proposal for scheduling is motivated by the need to protect this structure as an integral whole.

- Remains of Old Parish Church sited at Triq il-Knisja il-Qadima, Siggiewi

The site includes the remains of the old medieval parish church of Siggiewi. Significant portions of the original structure, including important decorative architectural elements, have survived of this structure. The remains of the church had fallen into disuse after the completion of the new parish church in 1682.

6.2 Co-Ordination with MEPA

Between January and September of 2004, the Superintendence had been consulted by the Malta Environmental and Planning Authority on approximately 350 cases linked to development issues. Of these:

- 1.5% regulated issues of monuments and plaques
- 4% had potential or actual impact on fortifications

69% had potential or actual impact on archaeological remains

17% regulated developments that impacted on buildings with historic significance

20% were located in Mdina or urban Rabat

8% were located in Valletta

7% were located in Victoria, Gozo

7

Export and Movement of Goods



7.1 Policy Issues

As from July 2004 the Superintendence took over the responsibility of vetting documents covering the export and movement of cultural property outside national territory. This task is being currently handled on a case by case basis. However appropriate procedures are currently being drafted and will include:

- Procedures for the registration of shippers and packers
- Procedures for the examination of cultural goods for the purpose of export or movement by recognised experts
- An inspectorate to vet applications and carry out on site inspections.

The following three legal notices have also been drafted to regulate this area of activity, namely:

- Export of Cultural Property Outside the European Union Regulations 2004
- Movement of Cultural Goods from Maltese National Territory to the European Union Regulations 2004
- Cultural Heritage Appeals Board Regulations 2004

7.2 Export or Movement of Cultural Goods – major cases

Authorisation for the temporary export/movement of cultural artefacts has been granted for the following exhibitions:

1. Monaci in Armi , Castel Sant Angelo (Rome), 29th November to 29th March 2005
2. Wonders from Prehistory, Allard Pierson Museum, 28 October – 28 February 2005

Authorisation for the temporary export/movement of cultural artefacts has been granted for the purpose of restoration:

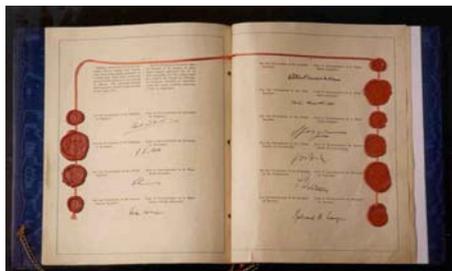
1. Late 17th Century Organ Components
Authorisation granted to the St. John's Co-Cathedral
Foundation

2. Fob Watch dated 1791
Authorisation granted to Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti

3. Painting entitled 'Ecce Homo' by Mario Minniti
Authorisation granted to the Catholic Cultural Heritage
Committee

8

International Commitments



8.1 The Council of Europe

8.1.1 European Heritage Days – National Co-ordinators Meeting

Malta was represented at this meeting by the Superintendence for Cultural Heritage during the meeting of National Co-ordinators of the European Heritage Days held in Strasbourg by the Council of Europe. The meeting included the evaluation of the Heritage Days Campaign on a European level. It also included training sessions and workshops on new cultural awareness projects being promoted by the Council of Europe, such as a program entitled 'Heritage from Here, Heritage from Elsewhere'.

8.1.2 CDPAT – Cultural Heritage Steering Committee Meeting

The Superintendence represented the Maltese Government at this meeting held between the 25th and 27th October 2004. The meeting reviewed the current state of matters relating to Council of Europe Initiatives in the area of Cultural Heritage. The meeting also discussed in depth the new draft Framework Convention of the Value of Cultural Heritage which is being currently completed by the Council Secretariat.

8.2 The European Union

8.2.1 CEN Technical Committee on the Conservation of Cultural Property

The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, together with other Maltese national organisations, forms part of the CEN Technical Committee on the Conservation of Cultural Property, chaired by the Malta Standards Authority. CEN, the European Standardization Institute is responsible for the establishment of European standards and guidelines related to non-electrical objects.

The Superintendence holds the Secretariat of the local Technical Committee. This is part of the European Technical Committee. A Superintendence officer, representing Malta, attended the first meeting of the European Technical Committee, held in Venice in June 2004. This meeting was attended by representatives of all countries forming the Committee, by a CEN representative and by representatives various leading restoration and conservation institutes.

One of the roles of this Committee is to create a number of working groups, aimed at drafting of standards related to the field of conservation of cultural property. The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage shall be participating in the working group dealing with the standardisation of general conservation guidelines and terminology. The Committee's final aim is to publish these standards for adoption within the EU.