

**Living sites: The Past in the Present –  
The monastic site of Meteora, Greece**

**Towards a new approach to conservation**

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of the University of London

Institute of Archaeology  
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## **Declaration**

I declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own, and that all sources have been duly acknowledged in the text.

**Ioannis Poullos**

## **Abstract**

This work deals with the complexities in the operation and management of living heritage sites. It attempts to reconcile their process of creation, which continues today, with the protection of their heritage significance. The monastic site of Meteora, Greece (a World Heritage site) is used as the case study, while comparisons are drawn with sites from different parts of the world.

After reviewing existing definitions of the concept of ‘living sites’, this work presents a new interpretation of such sites. Living sites are sites whose process of creation continues today in accordance with their original function (‘functional continuity’). Emphasis is also placed on the way the nature of functional continuity changes over the course of time.

On this basis, this research explores the functional continuity of Meteora, rooted in the Orthodox monastic tradition, and examines the way its nature changes over the course of time. Meteora is a monastic site that is increasingly gaining significance also as a tourist destination and a heritage site, influenced by changing wider circumstances.

It is then demonstrated that the current theoretical framework and practice of conservation (as best epitomised in ‘values-based’ approaches) and the World Heritage concept in particular, is based on discontinuity created between the monuments considered to belong to the past and the people of the present, thus seemingly unable to embrace living sites.

Thus, a new approach is suggested for the operation of living sites. The living sites’ approach concentrates on communities as the creators of the sites, viewing communities and sites as an inseparable entity. The ultimate aim is to shift the focus of conservation from ‘protection’ towards a continual process of ‘creation’ in an ongoing present, attempting to change the way heritage is perceived, protected and, more importantly, further created.

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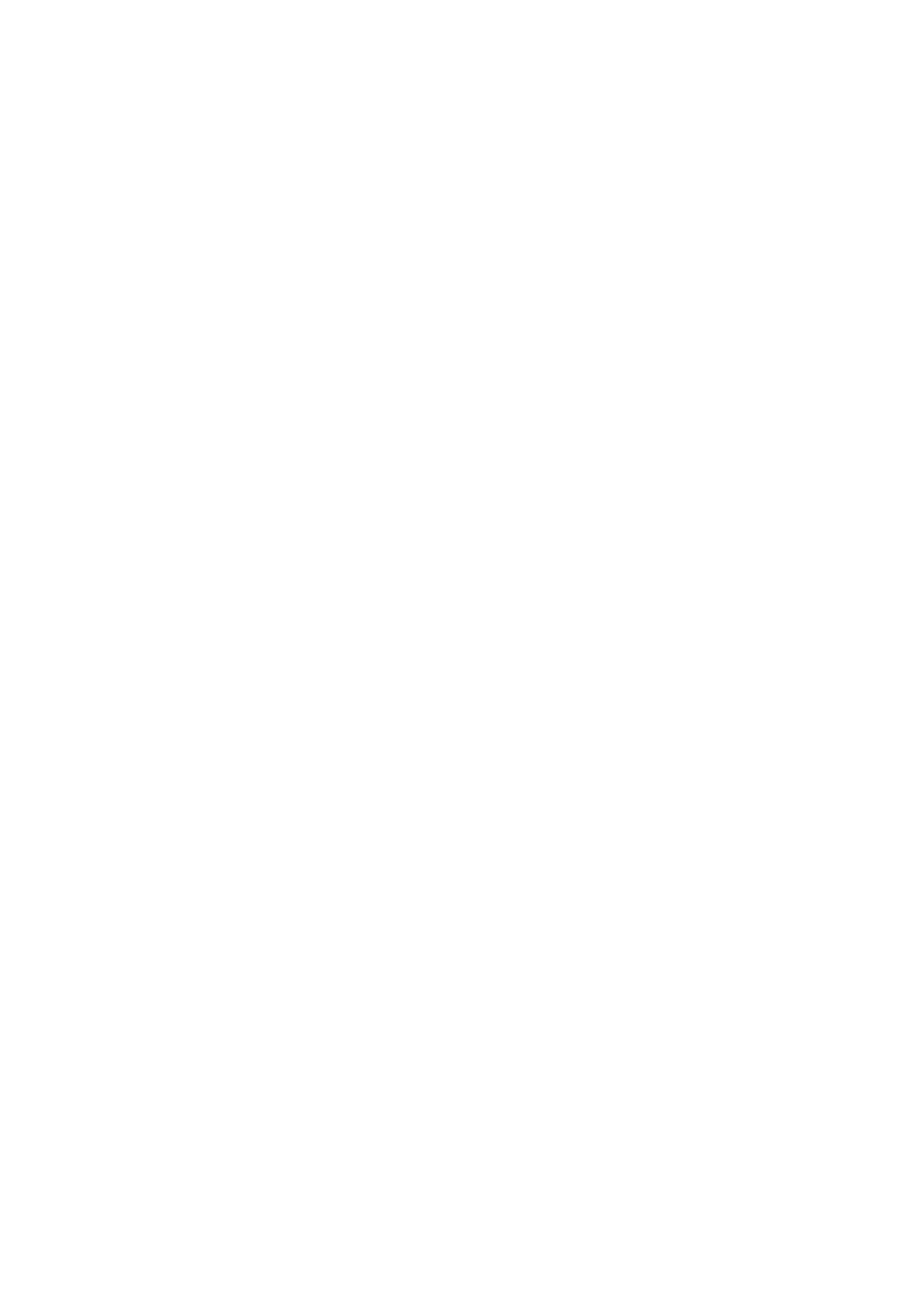
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# 1. Introduction

*To the layman, the phrase 'living heritage' might sound like an oxymoron. Is not 'heritage' something inherited from the past? Is it not, almost by definition, no longer 'living'?... The emergence of this concept [of 'living sites'] seems important in its own right as a step in the evolution of conservation thinking... Or is it, in fact, merely a recognition of the obvious – that many places deemed to be of heritage significance are still foci of traditional cultural practices? (Stanley-Price 2005, 1).*

## 1.1. The problem

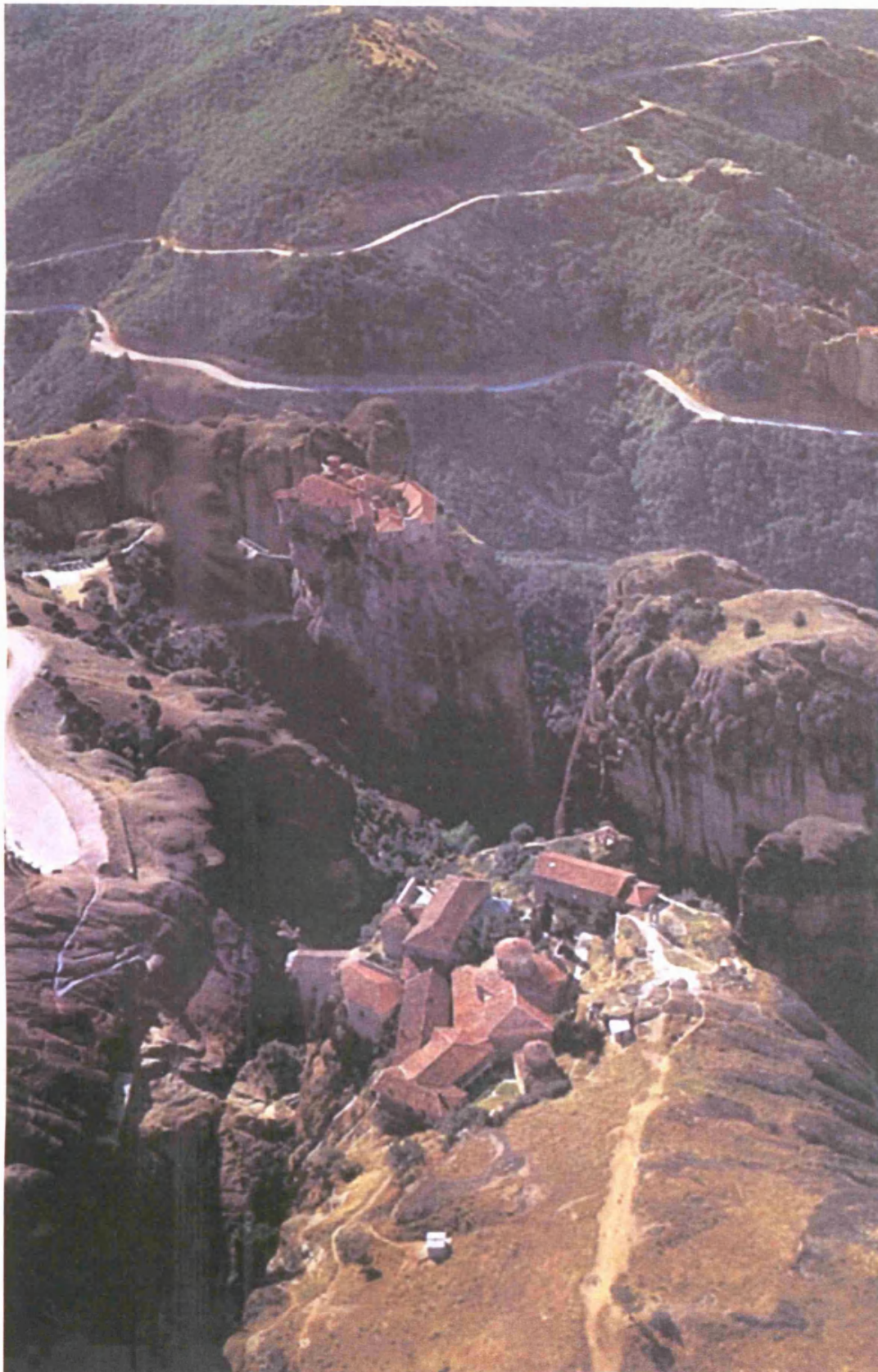
Since World War II there has been an increasing tendency towards the formulation of laws and conventions for the protection and management of heritage sites at national level and increasingly at an international level. Conservation approaches, however, often prove to be simplistic and linear in relation to the much more complicated living dimension at some heritage sites. Furthermore, despite the increasing rhetoric about the importance of recognising this living dimension of heritage sites and the need to involve local communities in site management, accompanied by a growing use of the term 'living heritage sites', in practice conservation professionals seem to marginalize local communities and exclude them from site management.

At the Orthodox monastic site of Meteora, Greece, in particular, there are currently six monastic communities, consisting of sixty eight monks and nuns, devoted to the worship of God (Figures 1 and 2). It is thanks to the permanent presence of this religious community that the site is still operating, as the visitor-sign at the entrance of the Great Meteoron monastery clearly demonstrates: 'You are entering a living monastery. These grounds are sacred and you are asked to show reverence during your visit' (Figure 3).

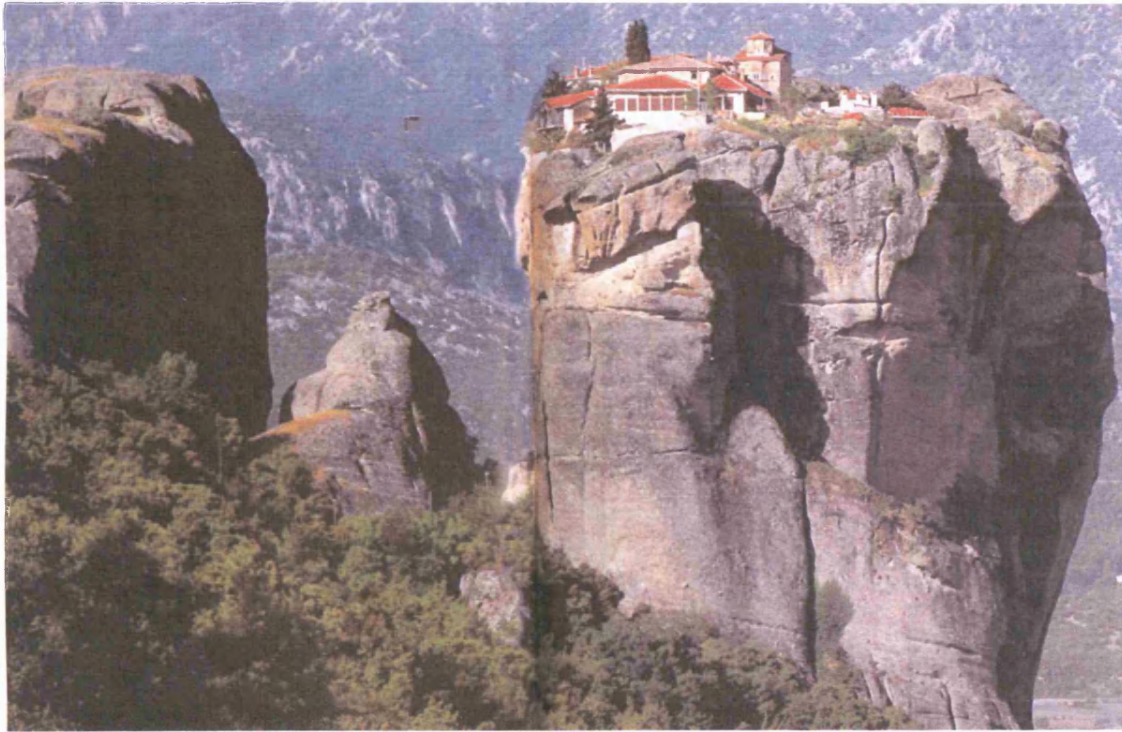
The monks and nuns continue to lead their monastic-ritual life in a site that is gaining increasing significance as a heritage site and also as a tourist attraction due to changing wider circumstances (Figures 4 and 5). The use of Meteora as a tourist and a

heritage site has had a remarkable impact on the life of the monastic communities. At the same time the permanent presence of the sixty eight persons affects significantly the use of the site by the other thousands of people involved in its tourism exploitation and heritage protection at local, national and international level.

The relationship between the living (monastic) function of the site, its heritage protection and its use as a tourist attraction becomes in practice a question of who is in charge of the operation and management of the site on an everyday basis.



**Figure 1:** The Great Meteoron and the Varlaam monasteries: external view (source: Nikonanos 1992, 20).



**Figure 2:** The Holy Trinity monastery: external view (source: Choulia and Albani 1999, 116-17).

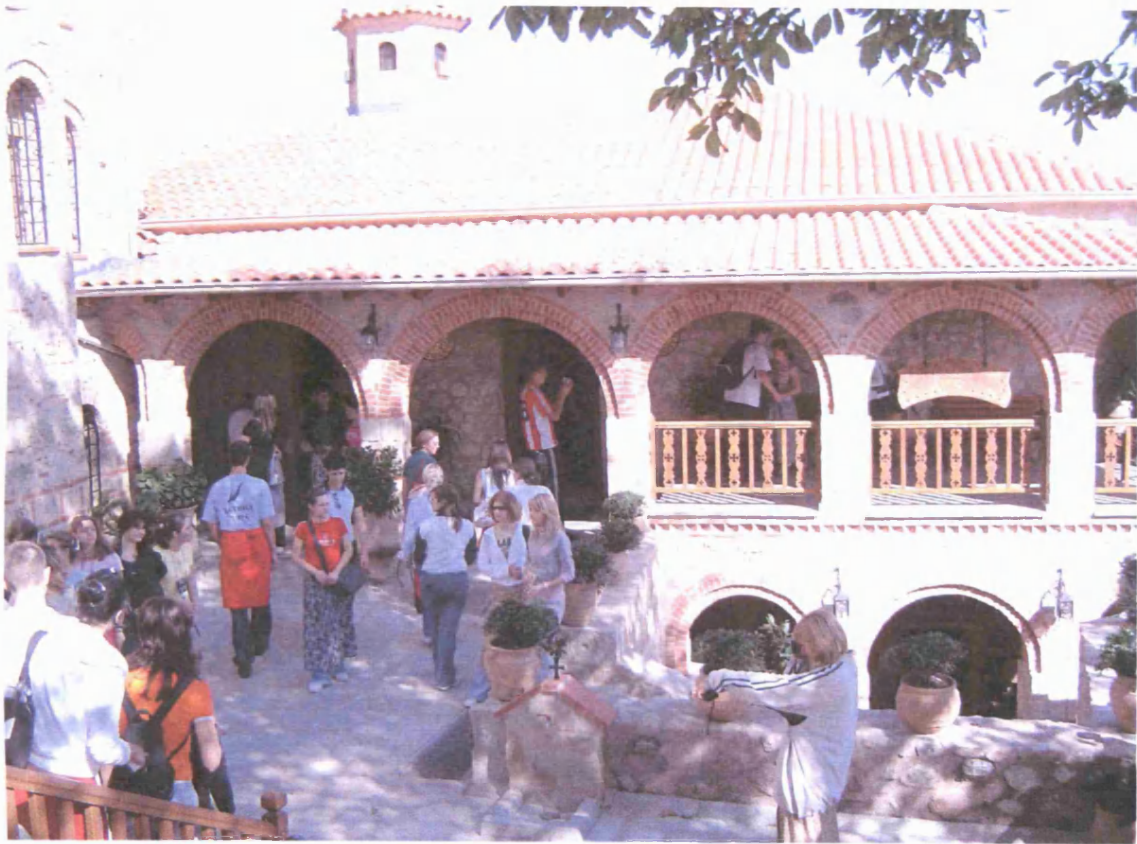


**Figure 3:** The Great Meteoron monastery: entrance sign (source: author's photo).

The inscription says, in Greek and English: 'You are entering a living monastery. These grounds are sacred and you are asked to show reverence during your visit'. It should be noted that the phrase 'you are entering a living monastery' is written only in English but not in Greek, which could imply that it is considered that the Greek visitors are aware of the living function of the monastery.



**Figure 4:** The Varlaam monastery: monks in the church (source: Provatakis 1991, 30).



**Figure 5:** The Great Meteoron monastery: visitors (source: author's photo).

The reconciliation of the monastic function of Meteora (Figure 4) with its use as a tourist attraction (Figure 5) creates considerable complexities.

## **1.2. Research subject, objectives and questions**

This work deals with the complexities of the operation and management of living heritage sites. The main objective of the research is to reconcile their continuing process of creation with the protection of their heritage significance.

The main questions that this research addresses are:

- What is understood as a living site, and how does this understanding conflict with other definitions of the term?
- What are the complexities in the operation and management of living sites, how do they differ from other sites in terms of operation and management? What are the problems faced by conservation professionals in dealing with these sites?
- Can the operation and management of living sites fit within the current principles and practices of conservation, particularly in the World Heritage context?
- If the operation and management of living sites lies outside currently understood principles and practices, what approach can be suggested for the management of living sites?

## **1.3. Case study**

In order to explore the aforementioned questions, this study will focus on the site of Meteora as the case study, but comparisons will be made with various other sites from different parts of the world. The intention is not to formulate a management plan for Meteora, but to draw on some broader conclusions about the nature and operation of living sites that can be applied elsewhere.

This study concentrates on World Heritage sites because these sites can reveal, at a greater scale and with greater clarity, the mechanisms and complexities of heritage management. These sites are regarded and treated, in the national and international context, as the most significant ones. This means that stakeholder groups, especially government authorities, have a stronger interest in the operation and management of these sites, and thus the conflicts between the stakeholder groups in terms of values, power and ethics are more explicitly demonstrated.

The case study of Meteora was chosen for the following reasons:

During the first degree at the University of Athens, Greece and the MA course at the University of Birmingham, UK Meteora was studied from an archaeological and art-historical perspective, with a focus on the wall paintings of the monasteries.

For the requirements of the MA dissertation official permission for the study and photographing of the wall paintings of the St Nikolaos Anapafsas monastery had to be obtained from the heritage authorities and the monastic communities of the site. The conflicts between the two sides (i.e. the heritage authorities and the monastic communities) with regard to the meaning of the site, its present situation and future development helped to introduce the operational and management complexities of the site, and finally led to the decision to explore these complexities in detail by undertaking a PhD at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, UK. The conflicts between the monastic communities and the heritage authorities led, in particular, to the decision to attempt to reconcile the monastic function of the site with the protection of its heritage significance.

Meteora explicitly demonstrates the complexities of living sites. The monasteries of Meteora, as monuments of the past, are part of the national heritage of Greece and belong to the Greek state, which protects them with a specific interest in their archaeological and art-historic value. The state has a well-established and strict system for the protection of its antiquities, which is historically attached to the Classical past. At the same time, as living monasteries, they belong to the Orthodox Church of Greece, which concentrates on their ritual function. The Orthodox Church is the predominant religion of the Greek state, still followed by the vast majority of the Greek citizens and with considerable influence in the everyday life of society, showing strong historic links with the State but frequently with a contradictory policy to that of the State. Finally, the monasteries are owned, inhabited and used by the monastic communities. The monastic communities have a strong influence upon the life of local society and, though part of the Church in administrative as well as spiritual terms, frequently hold their own views. Thus:

- Meteora is a living site where its permanent users (the monastic communities) have a very strong attachment to the site, a permanent presence in it and increased power in terms of its ownership and administration as well as financial wealth. The power of the monastic communities has most considerable, by international standards, implications for the operation and management situation of the site. The power of the monastic communities is often manifested, for example, in

the unauthorised construction of numerous large-scale buildings, the most characteristic example of which is a five storey building at the Roussanou monastery. This has considerable implications for the fabric and space of the site and subsequently for its national and World Heritage status. Thus, given the power of the monastic communities Meteora is key example to explore the operational and management complexities of living sites internationally, and attempt to reconcile the continual process of use and creation of living sites with the protection of their heritage significance.

- Meteora is a typical Byzantine site in Greece in terms of administration (unlike Mount Athos, for example, which is a semi-independent region in Greece: section 6.2), and thus faces all the issues that any Byzantine site in Greece may possibly have as a monastic, heritage and/or tourist site.

In terms of operation, however, Meteora should be differentiated from other Byzantine sites in Greece, given the magnitude and complexity of the issues it faces at a local, national and even international level. Meteora is the second largest monastic complex in Greece (after Mount Athos) containing six monastic communities with often conflicting views concerning the development of the site, which causes significant complexities in its operation. Meteora has been inscribed in the World Heritage List as a site of outstanding cultural and natural significance, and is affected by developments in archaeology and heritage management at a state and international level. Meteora is also one of the most popular tourist destinations in Greece. This causes considerable problems for the everyday life of the monastic communities. It also brings significant financial benefit to them, frequently with consequences for the protection of the heritage significance of the site. Thus Meteora poses significant challenges regarding the reconciliation of monasticism, heritage protection and tourism in Byzantine sites in Greece.

In an attempt to understand and deal with the aforementioned complexities of the living site of Meteora, research was undertaken into the international theoretical principles and practical tools of conservation, mostly within the context of values-based approaches, as the current most preferred approaches to conservation. However, through application of these international principles and tools to Meteora, it became clear that such an approach was inappropriate to the specific complexities of the site, and there was a need to develop alternative methods to its operation and management.

## **1.4. Outcomes**

The contribution of this work in the field of conservation may be summarised as follows:

- This research suggests a new, radical approach to conservation, which goes beyond the current ones. This approach concentrates on the creators of the site as an inseparable part of the site, and distinct from other groups of people protecting and using the site. This approach shifts the focus of conservation from ‘protection’ towards a continual process of ‘creation’ of sites, attempting to change the way heritage sites are perceived, protected and, more importantly, further created.

- This research suggests a new interpretation of living sites, clearly differentiating them from other sites, and an innovative way of looking at the operational and management complexities of these sites.

- Being the first analysis dealing with the operation and management of Byzantine heritage sites in Greece, this work serves as a pilot introducing new ways of understanding and managing these sites.

## **1.5. Methodology**

In developing a new management approach for living sites, the following steps were undertaken:

A literature review allowed exploration and synthesis of the concept of ‘living sites’ and the formation of an alternative interpretation. In addition to the literature review, dialogue with individuals involved in the management of living sites in different parts of the world helped the exploration of the operational and management complexities of such sites.

Visits to international organisations and institutions provided a firm understanding of differing conservation approaches, particularly concerning the living dimension of heritage and community involvement in site management, and helped the examination of whether living sites can fit within the current principles and practices of conservation. These visits allowed the exploration of the underlying philosophy, the latest trends and the future perspectives of these differing approaches.

The UNESCO World Heritage Centre in Paris, France is currently the management body with exclusive responsibility over the protection of heritage sites at an international level. At the World Heritage Centre it was possible to explore the changes in the way the living dimension at the World Heritage sites has been dealt with over the course of time, and the difficulties of ensuring community involvement in site management during the World Heritage nomination process and after the World Heritage inscription of the sites. The general impression gained was that personnel at the World Heritage Centre are generally satisfied with the developments of the World Heritage concept so far, and confident that further developments in the existing context in the future will be beneficial.

In contrast, personnel at the UNESCO Intangible Heritage Sector in Paris have a different viewpoint to the safeguarding of heritage, and also an alternative perspective on the future protection of heritage. They favour the merging of tangible and intangible heritage, not simply as two categories of heritage assimilated but as an attempt at changing the wider context of heritage protection internationally.

The Getty Conservation Institute (GCI), Los Angeles, USA is currently the most prominent centre for the development and advocacy of values-based approaches to conservation internationally. A visit to the GCI allowed exploration of the achievements, complexities and the weaknesses of values-based approaches.

The International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) in Rome, Italy shows a consistent interest in the living dimension of heritage and in community participation in site management, in a way that tends to move beyond values-based approaches.

Field trips to India, Cyprus, Russia and Greece allowed study of living sites in various parts of the world. They also gave the opportunity to make comparisons between these sites and Meteora in terms of their living dimension and examine diverse ways of dealing with their living dimension. The trip to India allowed the exploration of the very strong association of local people with particularly religious sites in the context of a heritage protection system, strongly influenced by colonialism. Added to this was the context of a rapidly changing wider economic, political and social environment with its concomitant implications for heritage. The visits to Cyprus and Russia resulted in an examination of differing approaches to the protection of Byzantine heritage. Other World Heritage Byzantine sites in Greece

helped placed Meteora in the context of other sites within the same system of heritage protection.

The above allowed evaluation of Meteora in a wider framework which led to the formulation of a series of findings. These were then applied to the study of Meteora in the context of living sites internationally, giving a much broader context and a much greater perspective.

Sources of data concerning the site of Meteora are as follows:

- The World Heritage listing documents of the site (World Heritage Centre, Paris).

- Publications of the monastic communities, studies for the tourist promotion of the site and the wider region, and local press. The local press is mostly restricted to expressing strictly local views, but is helpful as an important source of information. This material is published in Greek and, wherever it appears in the text, is translated by the author.

- Material from the archive of the heritage authorities in Greece (central Ministry of Culture and local Ephorate): the archive of the Directorate of Restoration of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Monuments (DABMM), Ministry of Culture concerning the operation and management of the site during the first decades after World War II (approximately 1950-1980), and the archive of the local Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities with regard to more recent management issues of the site.

The available material from the archive of the heritage authorities is often not well-informed and up-to-date and access to it is not always easy, for the following reasons. First, because of the heritage authorities' focus on the art-historical significance of the site in the past (with emphasis on the main buildings and wall paintings of the monasteries) at the expense of an understanding of the operation and development of the site and its spatial arrangement at present. Second, because of the extensive scale of the monastic communities' unauthorised construction activity at the site. In this respect it is tempting to argue that the more extensive the monastic communities' construction activity at the site over the course of time, the less informed is the archive of the heritage authorities and the more difficult the access to it. Third, it seems that on-going communication between the Greek heritage authorities and the World Heritage Centre, as part of the periodic evaluation of the site, has made access to this material more difficult.

The material that concerns the spatial arrangement of the monasteries, in particular, is clearly out-of-date and extremely difficult to access, mainly because of the extensive scale of the monastic communities' unauthorised construction activity. To give an example, a five storey high building has been erected at the Roussanou monastery, and the heritage authorities do not have a single map or ground plan of it. Consequently, in order to examine changes in the use and arrangement of the space, analysis relied on a few ground plans that have been published (Papaioannou 1977, 30), which depict the 'original' arrangement of space without taking into account contemporary changes.

It should also be noted that there is no management plan for the site.

- Discussions with stakeholder groups at local and state level. These allowed the development of an understanding of monasticism, heritage protection and tourism in Greece, and the exploration of specific complexities at the site of Meteora. This helped significantly in filling the gap created by the limited availability of, or accessibility to, the available material.

Such discussions were either with specific individuals (cited in the text as, for example, 'pers. comm. Maximi' or 'pers. comm. Antonis Piniaras', and listed all together on page 304) or with groups of people (cited in the text as, for example, 'pers. comm. Roussanou Monastery' or 'pers. comm. Kalampaka city'). In the case of groups, members of authority within a group who could give a more general impression of the view of the group as a whole were approached (it was practically impossible to gather and talk to all the members of a group at a given time). There were also cases in which anonymity was requested, which was respected.

- Personal investigation and photographs of the site. This approach helped in filling the gap created by the unavailability or inaccessibility of the available material particularly with regard to the contemporary changes in the spatial arrangement of the monasteries. Photographs of the monasteries' buildings were taken with the permission of the monastic communities at the site.

## **1.6. Structure**

Chapter 2 explores how differing internationally conservation approaches deal with the living dimension of heritage, thus setting the framework for the discussion of living sites.

Chapter 3 deals with the definition of the concept of 'living sites', concentrating on the continuity of their original function as reflected in their process of creation ('functional continuity').

Chapter 4 investigates to what extent living sites can be embraced within the current principles and practices of conservation, particularly in the World Heritage context.

Chapter 5 develops the concept of living sites (explored in chapter 3) and further considers the boundaries of conservation in relation to living sites (discussed in chapter 4) through the study of five examples of living sites. This chapter concentrates on the way the nature of functional continuity changes over the course of time due to changing wider circumstances. It examines the varying ways of change, and explores to what extent these ways can be embraced within the current principles and practices of conservation, particularly in the World Heritage context.

Chapter 6 presents the monastic site of Meteora, placing it within the context of living sites internationally.

Chapter 7 explores the nature of functional continuity of Meteora, rooted in the Orthodox monastic principles.

Chapter 8 concentrates on the way the nature of functional continuity at Meteora changes over the course of time through the study of the operation and management of the site over the course of the recent history of the site, i.e. since the 1960s, with an emphasis on the current situation. It explores the operational and management complexities of a site that retains its monastic function while at the same time it is increasingly used as a tourist destination and a heritage site.

Chapter 9 (the conclusion of the thesis) summarises the main points of the definition of living sites, and presents a new approach for the operation of these sites.

## **2. Conservation approaches in relation to the living dimension of heritage sites**

*[Journalist]: Which are the loudest voices [regarding the management of Kakadu National Park]?*

*[Minister]: Oh I think all voices are being very clearly heard. That's one of the advantages of the process that we're going through at the moment. Everybody's got a chance to state their views.*

*(Australian Department of the Environment and Heritage 2004a)*

## **2.0. Objectives**

This chapter deals with the development of conservation approaches internationally, concentrating on the increasing recognition of the living dimension of heritage and the complexities this creates.

The first part focuses on ‘conventional’ approaches to conservation.

The second part examines values-based approaches as the current most preferred approaches to conservation.

The third part explores approaches that focus specifically on living heritage.

The conclusion of the chapter compares those approaches.

This chapter places living sites within the framework of conservation internationally, setting the scene for later discussion of living sites.

## 2.1. 'Conventional' approaches to conservation

### 2.1.1. The birth of conservation

Conservation can be defined as '(1) a careful preservation and protection of something; especially: planned management of a natural resource to prevent exploitation, destruction or neglect, (2) the preservation of a physical quantity during transformations or reactions' (Merriam dictionary: 'conservation') (For other very similar definitions see also: wictionary: 'conservation'; Oxford English Dictionary: 'conservation', 1. a, b, e).

The discipline of conservation emerged from a Western European world that had experienced the Protestant Reformation, the Catholic Counter-Reformation and the Enlightenment, and was based on a firm belief in science and rationality. Conservation was born and grew up in the first decades surrounding the turn of the Nineteenth Century within the larger package of Western European modernity, identified by industrial capitalism, the nation state, rapid economic development, and a sense of human mastery over the natural world (Byrne 2004, 17; Jokilehto 1995, 20-21; 26-29; Cleere 1989, 1-2; 7-8).

The criteria for conservation, and the meaning and scope of authenticity, which emerged as the key concept of conservation (see below; also section 4.1), have been continually changing, influenced by the increasing recognition of heritage values and the diverse interpretations of heritage values by different groups (see Lowenthal 1995; Jokilehto 1995).

The debate on authenticity in the area of conservation seems to have firstly begun in England with the activities of the *Cambridge Camden Society* founded in 1834, which considered that the authenticity of monuments is associated with their 'original', 'pure' architectural fabric. Thus, in order to revive the religious symbolism attached to the churches and recreate the lost medieval environment, for example, the *Cambridge Camden Society* argued for the removal of later architectural additions to the churches and the bringing back of the 'original' form of the medieval period (see Jokilehto 1986, 295-98).

In the late Nineteenth Century, the 'conservation movement', which included philosophers like John Ruskin, saw the actions of the *Cambridge Camden Society* as 'vandalism', emphasizing instead the material authenticity and documentary value of

the monuments, and understanding fabric as a memorial of and legacy from the past and also as part of the heritage of the nation. For these philosophers the monuments of the past belonged both to those who had built them and those yet to be born. Conservation meant providing protection to the material remains of the past, decayed by natural causes and human actions (Ruskin 1849 [1996], chapter 6, nos. 18-20, cited in Stanley-Price *et al.* 1996, 322-23; see also Stanley-Price *et al.* 1996, 309-10; see also Jokilehto 1986, 304-13).

In the early Twentieth Century, the work of philosophers like Alois Riegl concentrated on a critical historical evaluation of a work of art in the various types of its values at different periods within which artistic production achieved its character. The criteria for this evaluation were considered subjective, and the values of heritage were rationally classified in categories such as aesthetic, historical and use ones (Riegl 1903/1928 [1996], 144-93, cited in Stanley-Price *et al.* 1996, 69-83; see also Stanley-Price *et al.* 1996, 18-21; see also Jokilehto 1986, 378-81).

These early approaches to conservation formed the foundations of modern conservation theory as reflected in international charters like the *Venice Charter* (see below) and in the policy of existing major international organisations such as UNESCO, ICOMOS and ICCROM (Jokilehto 1986, 4) but they could be seen as materialistic ones. They understood tangible physical and natural heritage as a non-renewable resource and emphasized the need for the protection of this heritage from human practices considered to be harmful. In this way, these approaches implied a form of discontinuity between the past and the present, and between the monuments and the people (see below: section 4.1).

### **2.1.2. The World Heritage concept: presentation**

It was only after World War II, in the *Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict* (UNESCO 1954), that cultural property was clearly recognised, at an international level, as human heritage (UNESCO 1954, article 1). However, the scope of the convention was limited to protection in cases of war or violence (UNESCO 1954, article 3).

The *Venice Charter* (ICOMOS 1964), based to a significant extent on the *Athens Charter* (League of Nations 1931), stated the fundamental principles of modern conservation such as: minimum intervention, respect for historic evidence,

avoidance of falsification, preservation of the original, reversibility of interventions, compatibility of materials used in restoration, and the need to distinguish the original from the new material, ruling out reconstruction but only in the case of *anastylosis*. In this way the *Venice Charter* highlighted the significance of documentary value and authenticity of the materials, and concentrated on cultural, aesthetic and historic values (ICOMOS 1964, article 9), influenced by Riegl (see above; Jokilehto 1986, 6). The *Venice Charter* broadened the meaning of sites from individual monuments and architectural structures, as recognised in the *Athens Charter* (League of Nations 1931, article 1), to entire landscapes, sites and urban and rural settings (ICOMOS 1964, article 1).

In the *Venice Charter* the human dimension of heritage was clearly recognised (ICOMOS 1964, preamble), but there was ‘no direct reference to those people who may live in target buildings, perhaps because target buildings are largely uninhabited and in the public domain’ (Miura 2005, 5).

The adoption of the *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (henceforth cited as the *World Heritage Convention*) (UNESCO 1972), developed from the initiatives by mainly Western European states in 1972, was a milestone in the protection of the cultural and natural heritage at an international level (see Simmonds 1997). Under this Convention independent signatory states were expected to abide by international rules and responsibilities, yet able to maintain and assert their own sovereignty and the right to manage issues such as land ownership and use (UNESCO 1972, article 6). The *World Heritage Convention* was accompanied by the *Operational Guidelines for the World Heritage Committee/for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* (UNESCO 1977, henceforth cited as the *Operational Guidelines*), which offered more explicit recommendations for the protection of sites. The *Operational Guidelines* posed certain criteria which the sites had to satisfy in order to be inscribed in the so-called *World Heritage List*.

Under the *World Heritage Convention* for the first time cultural and natural heritage were brought together and protected (UNESCO 1972, article 1). To this end there were two categories of inscription criteria: cultural and natural ones. The sites considered to meet any of the cultural criteria were enlisted as ‘cultural properties’, those considered to meet any of the natural criteria were enlisted as ‘natural properties’ and those considered to meet criteria from both categories were enlisted as

‘mixed’ properties (UNESCO 1972, articles 5-7). Associative value (i.e. cultural criterion vi) was the only criterion that was not recognised in its own terms but only in association with one of the other criteria.

The key concepts of the *World Heritage Convention* are ‘outstanding universal value’, ‘authenticity’ and ‘integrity’. Those sites considered worthy of inscription in the *World Heritage List* are claimed to gain an ‘outstanding universal value’. The two ‘qualifying conditions’ that determine which sites enter the *World Heritage List* (and thus gain the ‘outstanding universal value’) are stated to be authenticity and integrity (UNESCO 1977, articles 5-11). Authenticity could be seen as an ‘effort to ensure that those values are credibly or genuinely expressed by the attributes that carry those values’, and integrity as an ‘effort to refer to the completeness of the cultural heritage system which holds or contains those values’ respectively (Stovel 2004, 131-32). The concepts of authenticity and integrity also become conditions for the protection of the sites once they are inscribed in the *World Heritage List*. This means that the goal of the protection and management of World Heritage sites is to maintain their authenticity and integrity at the time of their inscription. Thus, if the authenticity or the integrity of an enlisted property is considered to be affected, then the property should be deleted from the *World Heritage List* (UNESCO 1977, article 5).

The *World Heritage Convention* acknowledged not only the values of the *Venice Charter*, but also ethnological-anthropological values as well (UNESCO 1972, article 1). The *World Heritage Convention* made a direct link between the sites and the communities:

Each State Party to the Convention shall endeavour ... to adopt a general policy which aims to give the cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of the community and to integrate the protection of that heritage into comprehensive planning programmes (UNESCO 1972, article 5).

Initially, however, the *Operational Guidelines* did not take into account community involvement in the World Heritage nomination process:

...to avoid public embarrassment to those concerned, States Parties should refrain from giving undue publicity to the fact that a property has been nominated for inscription pending the final decision of the committee of the nomination in question (UNESCO 1988; 1992; 1994c, paragraph 14).

The inclusion of ‘cultural landscapes’ (and particularly of ‘associative’ cultural landscapes) and the subsequent modifications to the *Operational Guidelines* in 1995 (UNESCO 1995) brought about considerable changes to the World Heritage concept, mostly by introducing living cultural traditions. The inculcation of culture and nature was highlighted, intangible/less tangible values were included (such as ‘religious, artistic or cultural associations of the natural element rather than material cultural evidence’) and traditional management mechanisms and systems of customary land tenure were recognised as viable for the protection of World Heritage properties (UNESCO 1995, articles 35-42; see also Cleere 1995, 63-68; Rossler 2004, 45-49).

These changes to the World Heritage concept marked an attempt at embracing non-western cultures. Cultural landscapes categories provided the criteria for the World Heritage listing of sites without any tangible remains, such as indigenous sacred sites, and also encouraged the re-listing of World Heritage sites adopting indigenous voices, as in the cases of Tongariro National Park, New Zealand and Uluru Kata-Tjuta National Park, Australia (see Cleere 1995, 67-68; Rossler 2004, 45).

The ‘aim to give a new dynamic to the *World Heritage Convention* and make it more relevant to the diversity of the world’s cultural heritage’ expanding to other, non-western cultures was enhanced by the Nara Conference in 1994 and the *Global Strategy for a Balanced, Representative and Credible World Heritage List* launched in 1994 (Labadi 2005, 96). The *Nara Document on Authenticity* (UNESCO 1994a; see also Larsen 1995) introduced the concept of ‘cultural diversity’, recognising that the authenticity of a site is rooted in specific socio-cultural contexts and can only be understood and judged within those specific contexts:

All judgments about values ...may differ from culture to culture, and even within the same culture. The respect due to all cultures requires that heritage properties must be considered and judged primarily within the cultural contexts to which they belong (UNESCO 1994a, articles 11-12).

The *Global Strategy for a Balanced, Representative and Credible World Heritage List* (UNESCO 1994b, henceforth cited as *Global Strategy*) emerged from the need of UNESCO to correct the severe imbalances of certain categories of

heritage and regions being over-represented in the *World Heritage List* (namely European heritage, historic towns and religious buildings, Christian churches, elitist and monumental architecture), working towards a broader concept of World Heritage with wider criteria and towards the formulation of thematic studies for a representative *World Heritage List* (see also Labadi 2005). In this way, *Global Strategy* marked 'a move away from a purely architectural view of the cultural heritage of humanity towards one which was much more anthropological, multi-functional and universal' through the recognition of local and indigenous perceptions of heritage values (UNESCO 1994a, 4; see also Labadi 2005, 97).

The overall developments in the theoretical principles of conservation were crystallized in the Australian ICOMOS *Burra Charter* (ICOMOS Australia 1999; see also Truscott and Young 2000), which is probably the most influential conservation document internationally (ICOMOS Australia 1999, article 34). In the *Burra Charter* the meaning of heritage sites was expanded to include intangible/less tangible aspects such as living traditions and meanings, and the definition of values further broadened to include social and spiritual ones as well (ICOMOS Australia 1999, articles 1; 5; 12). More flexible recommendations about conservation practice (than those of the *Venice Charter*: see above) were also adopted such as varied approaches allowing reconstruction depending on the nature and values, the 'cultural significance', of the sites (section 2.2), thus making a distinction between the concepts of conservation and preservation.

Places of cultural significance enrich people's lives, often providing a deep and inspirational sense of connection to community and landscape, to the past and to lived experiences... where the use of a place is of cultural significance it should be retained... [S]ignificant associations between people and a place should be respected, retained and not obscured- For many places associations will be linked to use... Opportunities for the continuation or revival of these meanings should be investigated and implemented (ICOMOS Australia 1999, preamble, articles 7.1, 24.1-2).

The *Burra Charter* also attempted to 'democratize' the planning process by including local, mostly indigenous, communities, in site planning and management process (ICOMOS Australia 1999, articles 12; 26.3). The values of future generations, along with current ones, were also to be taken into consideration in site management process (ICOMOS Australia 1999, article 5).

The *Operational Guidelines* have been modified several times to embrace the changes brought about mainly by the *Nara Document on Authenticity* and *Global Strategy* (see above). The concept of authenticity was broadened to include ‘form and design; materials and substance; use and functions; traditions, techniques and management systems; location and setting; language, and other forms of intangible heritage; spirit and feeling; and other internal and external factors’ (UNESCO 2005, article 82). The two formerly separate lists of cultural and natural heritage criteria for the World Heritage inscription of sites (see above) were merged in a single list (UNESCO 2005, article 77), something that was considered to provide a more coherent World Heritage identity (see Labadi 2005, 95). Associative value was now recognised in its own right for the inscription of a property on the *World Heritage List* (UNESCO 1996; see also Labadi 2005, 95-96).

Furthermore, the participation of local, especially indigenous, communities in site management was established and promoted. The World Heritage recommendation that did not consider the participation of local communities in the nomination process in order to avoid ‘undue publicity’ and ‘public embarrassment’ (see above) was replaced with the firm statement that ‘participation of local people in the nomination process is essential to make them feel a shared responsibility with the State Party in the maintenance of the site’ (UNESCO 1996/UNESCO 1999a, paragraph 14). The concept of a management plan was replaced with the much broader concept of a ‘documented management system’ which ‘may vary according to different cultural perspectives, the resources available and other factors’ (UNESCO 2005, articles 108, 110). Traditional management practices were recognised, initially only in the case of cultural sites and as supplementary to the modern management systems (UNESCO 1997, article 24b), but then in relation to natural sites as well and additionally, in their own right, as exclusive systems for the management of sites: ‘All properties inscribed on the *World Heritage List* must have adequate long-term legislative, regulatory, institutional *and/or* traditional protection and management’ (UNESCO 2005, article 97: author’s emphasis).

The *Budapest Declaration on World Heritage* in 2002 (UNESCO 2002) focused on the concept of sustainability, seeking to

ensure an appropriate and equitable balance between conservation, sustainability and development, so that World Heritage properties can be protected through appropriate activities

contributing to the social and economic development and the quality of life of our communities (UNESCO 2002, article 3c).

Recently UNESCO has undertaken several initiatives in order to further stress the importance of traditional knowledge and community involvement in site protection, and foster synergies between modern science and local knowledge that are relevant to both cultural and natural sites. An example is the UNESCO Netherlands Conference on 'Linking Universal and Local Values: Managing a Sustainable Future for World Heritage' (UNESCO Netherlands 2004).

### **2.1.3. The World Heritage concept: review**

The way the World Heritage concept is defined and put into action is claimed to be expanding. The concept of authenticity is apparently being widened. The definition of site has broadened, from individual monuments and architectural structures (League of Nations 1931) to landscapes, sites, urban and rural settings (ICOMOS 1964) and to less tangible aspects such as living traditions and meanings (UNESCO 1994a, 7; ICOMOS Australia 1999). The definition of values has broadened, from cultural, aesthetic and historic (ICOMOS 1964) to embrace ethnological, anthropological (UNESCO 1972) and social and spiritual value (ICOMOS Australia 1999). Conservation practices have become more flexible, from ruling out reconstruction (ICOMOS 1964) to varied approaches allowing reconstruction depending on the nature and values of the site (ICOMOS Australia 1999). The gap between cultural and natural heritage has gradually been lessened, through the concept of mixed sites (UNESCO 1972) and the concept of (associative) cultural landscapes (UNESCO 1996) and finally through the merging of the two categories of cultural and natural heritage in a single one (UNESCO 2005).

The World Heritage concept is claimed to be increasingly taking into account the values of non-western indigenous communities and their connections with places, mostly through concepts such as associative landscapes and intangible values (cultural landscapes), cultural diversity (UNESCO 1994a) and cultural significance (ICOMOS Australia 1999), and also through attempts to correct the imbalances and achieve a more representative *World Heritage List* (through *Global Strategy*).

There is thought to be an increasing recognition of the need to involve local communities in the management of sites. The management process has become

increasingly inclusive. In 1993, World Heritage recommendations were not in favour of publicity of the World Heritage process (UNESCO 1993), while some years later the World Heritage recommendations firmly encouraged the inclusion of all the interested parties in the process (UNESCO 1996/1999a). The role of local communities in site management has increasingly become more active, initially in the understanding of sites, in the form of consultation, later also in the planning and management of the sites, in the form of participation (ICOMOS America 1996, attachment, 1; ICOMOS Australia 1999). The traditional management practices of the local communities have gradually been recognised, initially as supplementary to modern conservation systems (UNESCO 1997) and later also as exclusive management systems (UNESCO 2005), in parallel with a shift from the narrow concept of a management plan to the much broader concept of a management system (UNESCO 2005). The everyday social and economic interests of local communities in the operation of sites have increasingly been taken into account through the shift in site management from conservation towards a much broader sustainable development of local communities based on the operation of sites (UNESCO 2002).

Currently, the World Heritage view towards community involvement in site management may be summarised as follows. Priority in terms of site management is given to ‘the cultural community that has generated the cultural heritage’, yet under state responsibility, in ‘adherence to the international charters and conventions’ (UNESCO 1994a, article 8), under the ‘competent direction and supervision’ of ‘the organisations and individuals responsible for management decisions’ [i.e. heritage authorities] and with help of ‘people with appropriate knowledge and skills’ (ICOMOS Australia 1999, articles 29-30).

The importance of the involvement of local communities in the management of sites at a World Heritage level has been declared in statements such as:

The new paradigm is: local populations have to benefit from the protection of sites and protected areas in general which can only exist if local people are included in their protection, management and conservation (Saouma-Forero 2001, 155).

Part of our role as experts and bureaucrats... is to give up some of our certainties and the power... For many this is a threatening process, and implies the loss of central control over the protection of World Heritage values. But in the long run it is the local community which has

the future of World Heritage values in its hands, and which needs to have effective control to protect it (Sullivan 2004, 54).

In the final analysis, we have to realize that the long-term management of heritage sites anywhere in the world will depend on continued evaluation of the local environment rather than on huge inputs of international aid. The finest system is *a management ethos* that arises from the local social environment (Ndoro 2004, 84).

These claimed developments of the World Heritage concept have often led to arguments such as ‘the World Heritage Convention is forever’ (pers. comm. Merchtild Rossler).

Nevertheless, despite these claimed developments, the essence of the World Heritage concept does not seem to have substantially changed. Despite the aforementioned attempts to broaden the concept of authenticity, it is still far from being significantly changed. The notion of authenticity is inherently linked to a particular type of value, i.e. historic value:

Authenticity...presumes that some kind of historic value is represented by –inherent in- some truly old and thus authentic material (authentic in that it was witness to history and carries the authority of this witness). Thus, if one can prove authenticity of material, historical value is indelibly established (Mason 2002, 13).

Despite the attempted broadening of the meaning of sites, the World Heritage concept is still ‘a uniform and non-flexible set of conservation theory without recognizing the broader meanings of heritage and cultural diversity’ and without embracing a significant range of intangible heritage elements (Wijesuriya 2003, 3; also Matsura 2004, 4-5). Despite developments such as the merging of cultural and heritage criteria, values are still rigorously classified in categories and measured. In spite of the attempts towards a more coherent World Heritage identity, the *World Heritage List* is still ‘hierarchical’, and ‘splits heritage into that which gets on the List – the minority – and that which is deemed not worthy of World Heritage status –the majority’ (Sullivan 2004, 50).

Despite attempts to embrace non-western cultures, World Heritage concept so far has moved only gingerly and partially towards including the heritage concepts,

values and places of other societies (Titchen 1995). As a consequence, despite consistent attempts to correct the imbalances of the *World Heritage List*, the List is demonstrably far from being a representative one (Labadi 2005, 93-99). The basic reason for the inability of the World Heritage concept to include the values of non-western cultures is that authenticity is essentially a Western European concept (section 4.1), not applicable or even existent in several non-western cultures. In Japan, for example, there is an equivalent term for authenticity, which means something like authoritarianism and is not used in the field of conservation (Ito 1995, 34-35).

Despite efforts towards the promotion of community involvement in site management, community involvement is still far from being successful. Most of the international charters, such as the *Athens* and the *Venice Charters*, tend to have a quite particular understanding of community involvement in site management:

...a belief that the public either desires the conservation of heritage places in the manner advocated by the charters or should be encouraged to do so through education and involvement in conservation work. The charters are thus advocates for the conservation ethic. The assumption is that the public should learn about conservation rather than conservationists should learn from the public about the social value and context of places (Byrne 2004, 19).

Heritage charters, such as the *Athens* and the *Venice Charters*, have the tendency to address the issue of community involvement

in presumptuous and naïve terms... whereas the physical act of conservation is necessitating rigorous research in the field of conservation science, the social dimension of heritage is more often treated as a realm of common knowledge or common sense (Byrne 2004, 19).

Additionally, officially there is no World Heritage mechanism to insure the involvement of local communities in the World Heritage nomination and inscription process. Very few World Heritage nomination dossiers detail participatory policies (Labadi 2005, 96-99; pers. comm. Alessandro Balsamo). Thus 'the issue of how to deal with local people has been left to site managers or to the authorities in charge, who may have different interpretations of what this means, may be ignorant of it, or disregard it' (Miura 2004, 5). Therefore, there is a concept of 'a faceless abstract public', defined and assessed by the heritage authorities (Jones 2006, 111; see also Cleere 1989, 10-11), and the concern for its involvement in site management remains

to be converted into inclusive public debate, regulated by the heritage authorities (Schadla-Hall 1999, 156).

#### **2.1.4. Conclusion**

The key principles that underpin international heritage charters may be summarised as follows (see McBryde 1997, 94; Clavir 2002, xxi; Jones 2006, 111): first, the moral responsibility for the preservation of cultural heritage for future generations; second, that the authenticity of heritage is primarily associated with the fabric of the sites despite the increasing recognition of intangible elements; third, the emphasis on the original meanings and uses of the sites despite the increasing recognition of the later developments in the history of the sites; and fourth, that the exclusive responsibility for the operation and management of sites is in the hands of heritage authorities.

The underpinning principles for conservation, often referred to as 'conventional' ones (section 2.2), stem from the early work of the *Cambridge Camden Society*, the 'conservation movement' and Riegl. This demonstrates that conservation has not changed substantially since these early efforts despite the stated intention to develop and adapt.

Community involvement in site management is to be understood within the framework of the aforementioned principles. On the one hand, heritage authorities are eager to create and maintain a community that, as it is assumed, will derive meaning and value from cultural heritage. On the other hand, the concept of a community and the ways of its involvement in site management remain abstract and problematic, under the exclusive authority of the heritage authorities.

## **2.2. Values-based approaches to conservation**

Values-based approaches are the current most preferred approaches to site conservation. Values-based approaches are largely based on *Burra Charter* (section 2.1), and have been further developed and advocated mostly through a series of publications of the Getty Conservation Institute. Mason and Avrami (2002) focused on the theoretical background of values-based approaches, exploring the multiplicity and complexity of values ascribed to sites through the varied perspectives and judgments of persons, professional groups and communities, and the importance of these values in the management of sites. Mason (2002) concentrated mostly on the assessment of the varied values as part of the planning process. Sullivan (1997) and Demas (2002) were more concerned with the practical application of values-based approaches, providing a thorough step-by-step explanation of the planning models. de la Torre, MacLean, Mason and Myers (2005) compared, in terms of management, four case studies from different parts of the world where the use of a values-based approach could be clearly demonstrated (sites in Australia, UK, US and Canada), presenting and reviewing the latest developments in this respect.

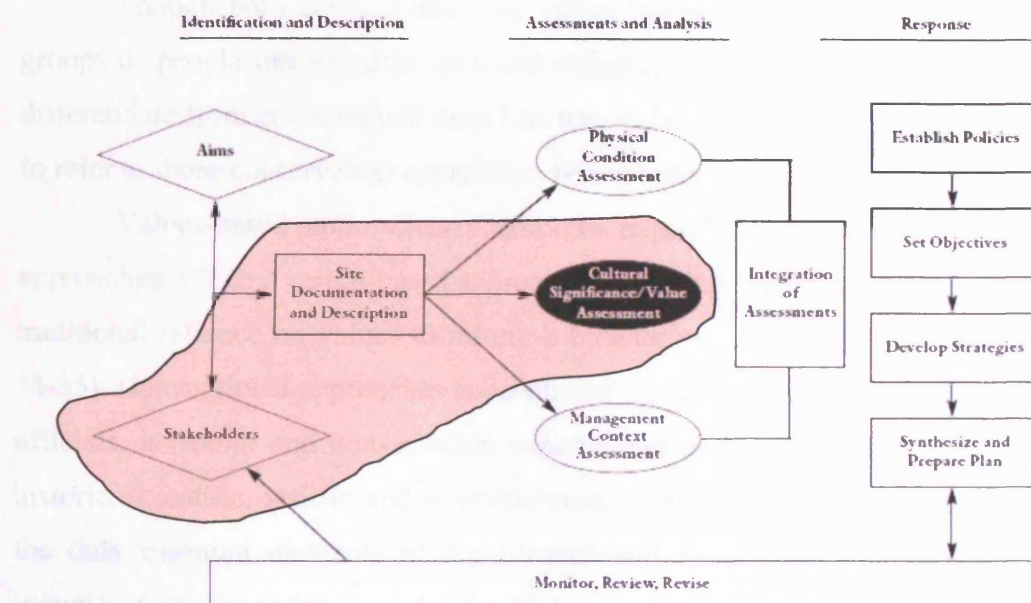
Another example of a values-based approach, addressed as ‘culturally relevant conservation’, is that applied in the case of indigenous pueblo sites of the American southwest in Tsankawi, New Mexico, USA (Matero 2004; see below).

### **2.2.1. Definition of values-based approaches**

A values-based approach may be defined as ‘the coordinated and structured operation of a cultural/heritage object or site with the primary purpose of protecting the significance of the place’ (significance is ‘the overall importance of a site... with respect to one or several of its values, and in relation to other comparable sites’) as ‘determined through an analysis of the totality of values’ (value is ‘a set of positive characteristics or qualities’) that society, consisting of various stakeholder groups (stakeholder group is ‘any group with legitimate interest in the site’), attributes to this object or site (Mason 2002, 27; de la Torre and Mason 2002, 4, n. 2; Mason and Avrami 2002, 15; de la Torre 2005a, 5; de la Torre, MacLean and Myers 2005, 77). Thus, the key concept of values-based approaches is ‘stakeholder groups’ ascribing values, and giving meaning, to heritage objects and sites.

2.2.3 Values-based approaches rest on a 'planning process' (with the identification and consultation of all stakeholder groups) which leads to a 'statement of significance' (i.e. an account of all the values that the various stakeholder groups ascribe to the site), which in turn results in a 'management plan' (i.e. a decision-making plan 'that articulates the importance of the place and the goals for its conservation and development in the future', with the participation of all stakeholder groups) (Demas 2002, 48; see also Sullivan 1997, 15-22). The coordination of, and responsibility over, the overall site management process is under one strong and powerful leading managing authority (Demas 2002, 48).

The philosophy and the methodology of values-based approaches may be summarised in the following diagram (Figure 6).



**Figure 6:** A values-based approach: diagram of the planning process methodology (original figure: Mason 2002, 6, with author's additions).

This diagram shows the central and decisive role of the managing authority in all the stages of the process (i.e. identification and description, assessments and analysis, and response). The area marked indicates that the transition from the stakeholders and their values (i.e. identification and description) to their assessment and decision-making by the managing authority (i.e. assessments and analysis, and response) is not clear.

### **2.2.2. Presentation of values-based approaches**

The discussion of values and (stakeholder) groups of people with interests in heritage sites and objects is not new in the field of conservation. Values and (stakeholder) groups lie behind conservation guidelines and principles such as those included in the *Athens Charter* or the *Venice Charter* (section 2.2). Yet it is only since the 1980s, within the developments of post-processual archaeology (which encouraged archaeologists to become more engaged in the world beyond the academic and to recognise other values, voices and perspectives in the practice and interpretation of archaeology), that the conservation profession started moving in the direction of developing and advocating values-based approaches to site management (Demas 2002, 50; 34-35).

Though both conventional and values-based approaches refer to values and groups of people interested in sites and objects, values-based approaches attempt to differentiate from conventional ones [the term ‘conventional approaches’ is used here to refer to those conservation approaches before values-based ones: section 2.1].

Values-based approaches attempt to expand the concepts of conventional approaches. ‘With a values-based approach to planning, we are simply expanding on a traditional reliance on values to inform a broader range of decisions’ (Demas 2002, 34-35). Conventional approaches concentrated on stakeholder groups such as political officials, investors and conservation experts, and took into account values such as historic, scientific, artistic and aesthetic ones. They recognised tangible materials as the only essential elements of significance and those sustaining authenticity and integrity, focusing on ‘master plans’ with long lists of specific actions and activities of the experts (Mason and Avrami 2002, 19-23; de la Torre 2005a, 4-5). Values-based approaches tend to include new stakeholder groups such as: communities living in and around the site, groups with traditional links with the site (such as indigenous groups), people beyond those located around a site (such as indigenous peoples or researchers worldwide), people who used to live near the site but who have since moved away, and even future generations. They tend to take into account new values including social ones such as ethnic dignity, economic development, spiritual life and social stability. They in no way diminish the value of the physical remains, but try to consider intangible/less tangible values such as traditional uses of sites. For values-based approaches a ‘management plan’ or ‘conservation plan’ should not only be seen

as a matter for the experts, but should engage the whole range of stakeholders early on and throughout the planning process (Mason and Avrami 2002, 19-23; de la Torre 2005a, 4-8).

Values-based approaches also attempt to further articulate and give a new meaning to concepts of conventional approaches. The once fixed or self-evident values tend to give way to relative, pluralistic, flexible, changeable, context-bound and contested 'value systems' (Mason and Avrami 2002, 16). The once fixed (stakeholder) groups tend now to be seen in a much less strict way that allows for a considerable degree of fluidity between stakeholder groups and even within the same stakeholder group. Cultural significance is no longer expected to be presented as a static and timeless assessment of value, fixing the meaning of a site according to the assessments of experts, but rather as 'more rigorous and inclusive about determining what is significant, to whom and in what ways', widening the net of values considered and the range of stakeholders consulted and included in the process (Mason and Avrami 2002, 23). The methods of decision-making and the determination of policies are expected to 'have moved away both from over-regulated, state-dominated process and the simplistic use of optimization models ... to partially chaotic, not foreseeable social processes' (Nanda *et al.* 2001, 76). The management plan of values-based approaches is supposed to be not a conservation text but a 'strategic and dynamic' document, 'a tool for change containing a vision of the future and outlining the rules and principles that will be followed to achieve it' (de la Torre 2005b, 218).

Thus, conventional approaches saw heritage as a static set of objects with fixed meaning, using stable norms like masterpieces, intrinsic value and authenticity that would dictate what should be qualified as heritage. Values-based approaches in contrast, tend to focus on heritage as a fluid phenomenon, as a social construction resulting from social processes specific to time and place, biased by the values and perspectives of various individuals and interest groups, in its core politicized and contested, and as 'never merely conserved or protected, [but] modified – both enhanced and degraded – by each new generation' (Lowenthal 2000, 410). In this way, every conservation decision is considered to give added value to heritage, and actively create heritage, something that introduces the concept of valorising, i.e. adding new value, in distinction to valuing, i.e. recognising existing value (Avrami, Mason and de la Torre 2000, 6; 8).

### **2.2.3. A review of values-based approaches**

Values-based approaches are claimed to place people (stakeholders) at the core of conservation. Heritage is not self-evident; it is people that ascribe values to it, and thus define heritage. Site values are people values. Thus, the main goal of site management is not the preservation of the site itself, but the protection of the significance and values imputed to it, i.e. the management of the people (stakeholders) giving meaning to the site. The goal is to ‘understand conservation planning not as a technical problem to solve but as a social and political process’ and ‘bring a meaningful representation and balance among heritage values as held by outsiders as well as insiders to the process of decision making and planning’ (Mason and Avrami 2002, 25; 22).

In this way, values-based approaches try to collect the views of all stakeholder groups and resolve conflicts that inevitably arise between them assuring equity, ‘avoiding those in which the values that prevail belong to the group with the more political power’ (de la Torre 2005a, 5). Values-based approaches are supposed to assure subjectivity of conflicting stakeholders and different values. ‘Perhaps the greatest challenge is acknowledging that values are mutable and that there are few absolutes in terms of what is right or wrong’ (Demas 2002, 49).

In this context of equity and subjectivity of all stakeholder groups and values, values-based approaches appear to have the following strengths: first, consultation and involvement of public in site management, and awareness of all stakeholder groups and values and consequently deeper understanding of the site; second, encouragement of the communication between the stakeholder groups and consequently the bridging of large cultural differences; third, achieving of sustainability for heritage sites through the participation of society; fourth, efficiency of one strong management authority, legitimacy for results of the planning process and assistance in the implementation of the plans provided by the broad involvement of the public; and fifth, practical usefulness of the classification of values when it comes to the process of valuing (Mason and Avrami 2002, 24; de la Torre 2005a, 5).

Values-based approaches have several weaknesses. The main weakness of values-based approaches is linked to the exclusive, absolute and unquestionable power of one leading managing authority in the entire planning and implementation process (Figure 6). The extreme power of the leading managing authority is not

justified in the first place, but is provided legitimacy through the broad involvement of the public. This power is further established by the absence of concrete criteria in the decision-making process: for example, subjectivity of all stakeholders and values, and fluidity between the stakeholder groups and even within the same stakeholder group (see above). The gathering of extreme power in one leading managing authority means that the assessments of values and stakeholders may differ greatly depending on who is doing the assessment. 'Values-based approaches may become capable of being manipulated or, for the faint of heart, of being turned into formulas of rules' (Demas 2002, 49; see also Mason and Avrami 2002, 16).

The promoted equity of stakeholders and values in site management process is theoretically debased and practically inapplicable. It is taken for granted that there are conflicts between the stakeholder groups and between the values, and that it is impossible to satisfy all stakeholder groups and protect all values equally at the same time. Thus, any decision taken will inevitably favour certain stakeholder groups and values at the expense of others (de la Torre 2005a, 8).

The attempted expansion of conventional conservation approaches fails in practice most of the time. Though supposed to equally consider all stakeholder groups and all values (both conventional and new: section 2.2.2) in the site management process, values-based approaches frequently end up favouring the same stakeholder groups as the conventional approaches, i.e. those

involved with the place when its significance was first recognised, ... the ones with a long-term interest in, and strong association with, the 'original' values [i.e. those at the time of the designation of heritage], and with privileged relationship with the powerful managing authority (de la Torre 2005a, 7).

Though expected to equally consider tangible and intangible elements, values-based approaches concentrate in most cases on the tangible ones, taking into account the intangible only to the extent that they contribute to the better understanding and protection of the tangible ones. 'While the values and significance of a place ought to be the touchstone of management decisions, day-to-day operations are most often concerned with the use and care of the physical resources' (de la Torre 2005a, 8).

The attempt to further articulate and give new meaning to the concepts of conventional approaches fails in several cases. For example, the concept of values is



still developed as a static characteristic of a site that can be fairly described and even measured, and values are rigorously categorized and classified (Mason and Avrami 2002, 21).

#### **2.2.4. Examples of the application of values-based approaches**

An example is the World Heritage site of Chaco Culture National Historical Park (CCNHP), New Mexico, USA (de la Torre, MacLean and Myers 2005). In the late Sixteenth or the early Seventeenth Century local native Indian groups (Navajo) arrived in the area now occupied by the Park, established camps and lived from farming and herding. However, in designating the site as a national monument and as a National Historical Park in 1907, the Park authorities recognised officially only the scientific, aesthetic and age values of the archaeological remains, and their main concern was to maintain the physical resources unimpaired. Thus the Park authorities ‘considered that the protection of the ruins required the cessation of the activities’ of Navajo (de la Torre, MacLean and Myers 2005, 74). The Park authorities themselves, nevertheless, have made several changes to the resource since then, through excavations and enhancement mostly for interpretation and the enjoyment of the visitors (de la Torre 2005b, 224).

Though no longer living in the designated Park area, many Navajo retain strong family, cultural and religious ties to the place. The Park authorities still consider Navajo a most important stakeholder group, and the management of the Park is based on a Joint Management Plan (1990) of the Park authorities and the Navajo representatives. It should also be noted that the position of Native Americans was strengthened by the passing of a national law in 1990 (de la Torre, MacLean and Myers 2005, 75).

In the 1980s ‘New Age’ groups claimed the right to perform rituals within the site. Some of the practices introduced by ‘New Age’ groups were, however, seen by some Native American groups as violating their own religious beliefs. Faced with this conflict between these two stakeholder groups, the Park authorities felt they had only two alternatives: either allow both groups to perform rituals or ban them totally. Favouring one group over another in religious issues would be considered discrimination on the basis of religion, according to the American Constitution. As a result, the Park authorities decided to prohibit all religious ceremonies in places regarded as sacred (de la Torre, MacLean and Myers 2005, 88-89).

This example demonstrates that the values-based approach applied in this case attempted to focus on the consultation and participation of indigenous communities in the operation and management of the site, yet within heritage authorities' rules and under their supervision and control. However, the result is that the meaning of the site and the community involvement in the operation of the site today do not seem to have changed substantially since the declaration of the site as a National monument and a National Historical Park (1907):

To this day, the official 'purpose of the park' remains anchored to its archaeological and aesthetic significance. However, in managing the site, the National Park Service must take into consideration also the ecological value and the spiritual and cultural values to Native American and other groups... [But still] some values, such as those attributed to the ruins by Native Americans, can be denied or receive less recognition if they are seen to have an impact on the physical remains of the ruins (de la Torre 2005b, 220; 224).

A second example relates to the indigenous Pueblo culture of the American southwest in Tsankawi, New Mexico, USA (Matero 2004). The heritage authorities at this site attempted to focus on the current inhabitants of Tsankawi and their 'interactive relationship with the landscape', explicitly stating that 'culturally the site belongs to them and their interpretation, advice, concerns and restrictions concerning Tsankawi should continue to be sought out' (Matero 2004, 73; 77; 75). The heritage authorities acknowledge at the same time, however, that 'new definitions of space, place and use based on ownership, protection and modern stewardship have been imposed upon the site, adding another layer to the traditional cultural landscape' (Matero 2004, 73).

This example shows, similarly to the previous one, that the values-based approach attempts to focus on indigenous communities' participation in the operation of the site, yet under the control of the heritage authorities. The result is, again, that the continually evolving culture and the intangible qualities of indigenous sites are embraced strictly within a policy of preserving the material fabric of the sites.

The philosophy of values-based approaches is reflected in the words of the Minister of the Environment and Heritage of Australia, with regard to the management of the World Heritage site of Kakadu National Park:

[Minister]: Equally there are many ... who feel that they've been short-changed by that decision and I think that the positive to come out of that decision is that there's now a very much greater realisation on the part of all concerned... that there has just got to be a much closer relationship between these partners if ... decisions are going to be well made and owned by everybody.

[Journalist]: So what structure will be set up to facilitate that?

[Minister]: Well there'll be very wide consultation and I think coming out of that, we will see what needs to be done, but it's not just formal structures. It's really informal relationships as well that are critically important...

[Journalist]: Which are the loudest voices?

[Minister]: Oh I think all voices are being very clearly heard. That's one of the advantages of the process that we're going through at the moment. Everybody's got a chance to state their views.

(Australian Department of the Environment and Heritage 2004a, Management of Kakadu National Park)

### **2.2.5. Conclusion**

Values-based approaches presuppose the existence of a powerful official managing authority, which is basically the same as that encompassed by the conventional approaches. Values-based approaches apparently attempt to expand the scope of conventional ones by giving a full account of stakeholders and their values to be considered in site management process. However, values-based approaches do not provide sufficient criteria that would indicate what stakeholders and values to choose or favour (Figure 6). In the (inevitable) case of conflict between differing stakeholders and between alternative values, they tend to incline to an 'all or none' approach. Thus, values-based approaches allow, and even legitimize, the one managing authority of the site to take its own decisions based on its own criteria, which are basically the same with those encompassed by conventional approaches.

In this context, values-based approaches, though supposedly placing people (through the concept of stakeholder groups) at the core of conservation and actively involving them in site management process by taking into account their values, actually sense and promote community involvement strictly within heritage

managers' rules and under their ultimate control. Thus, the concept of stakeholder groups, as defined and applied in values-based approaches, is clearly problematic, obtaining meaning and existence only through heritage managers' power (Figure 6).

## **2.3. Approaches to the conservation of living heritage**

Below is itemised the most important approaches to conservation, that focus specifically on living heritage.

### **2.3.1. The UNESCO Convention and other initiatives for the safeguarding of living Intangible Cultural Heritage**

UNESCO adopted the *International Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (henceforth cited as the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention*) in 2003 (UNESCO 2003). The *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention* was adopted, from the initiatives of Japan, as a separate addition to the *World Heritage Convention* ‘at a time when it appeared impossible to many states to extend further the concepts and arrangements of the *World Heritage Convention*’ (Luxen 2004; see also Matsura 2004, 4-5; Bouchenaki 2004, 6-11). The *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention* was actually ‘intended as the counterpart [to the *World Heritage Convention*]’ (Smeets 2004, 138).

UNESCO initiatives that prepared the way for the adoption of the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention*, through the exploration of the concept of intangible heritage and of appropriate means for its protection, were mainly: the *Recommendation on the Safeguarding of the Traditional Culture and Folklore* in 1989, the *Living Human Treasure Programme* in 1993 and the programme of *The Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity* in 1997-2005 (Aikawa 2004, 137-42).

The adoption of the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention* opened the way for a variety of initiatives that aimed at a further exploration of intangible heritage and of its links with the tangible heritage. An example is the Okinawa International Forum on *Utaki in Okinawa and Sacred Spaces in Asia: Community Development and Cultural Heritage* held in Japan (The Japan Foundation 2004), which concluded its activity with the adoption of the *Okinawa Declaration on Intangible and Tangible Cultural Heritage* (Okinawa Declaration, 155-57; see also Masuda 2004, 152-54). Another example is the Nara International Conference on *The Safeguarding of Tangible and Intangible Heritage*, also held in Japan, which concluded its activity

with the adoption of the *Yamato Declaration on Integrated Approaches for Safeguarding Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage* (Yamato Declaration 2004).

The development of the UNESCO strategy for safeguarding intangible heritage internationally was significantly influenced by the Japanese system of the protection of intangible heritage, mainly through the concept of 'living human treasures'. The concept of 'living human treasures' refers to the practitioners of intangible heritage elements, and does not only include communities or groups but also individuals. The philosophy of living human treasures could be reflected in the words of a famous living human treasure of Kyogen performance: 'I developed my own style following my nature as an artist, but I taught my son only what my father taught me' (cited in Inaba 2005, 50-51). It should be stressed that the concept of 'living human treasures' does not only apply to elements of a pure intangible nature but also to tangible heritage as well (Kurin 2004, 67-68; Inaba 2005, 50-52).

The essence of the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention* is completely different to that of the *World Heritage Convention*. In contrast to the *World Heritage Convention*, the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention* safeguards exclusively living intangible heritage,

that is such manifestations that are spontaneously transmitted from generation to generation, that are liable to change at every manifestation and that are characteristic for the groups and societies for whose sense of identity and continuity they are of primary importance (Smeets 2004, 141).

The *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention* is not concerned with dead elements of intangible cultural heritage, i.e. 'decontextualised, frozen or staged' (Smeets 2004, 141; 146; see also van Zanten 2004, 38-39).

Unlike the *World Heritage Convention*, the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention* conceives of living intangible heritage elements as inextricably linked to their practitioners (van Zanten 2004, 38-39; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004, 60-61; Smeets 2004, 141; 149; The Japan Foundation 2004, 3; Stovel 2004, 130-31), who are also referred to as 'tradition-bearers' or 'holders' 'or holding body' or 'transmitters' and are not necessarily communities or groups but also individuals (Smeets 2004, 141; 149; UNESCO 2003, article 2.1; van Zanten 2004, 38). The practitioners are

considered an inseparable factor for the creation, existence/enactment and survival of living intangible heritage elements: intangible cultural heritage elements are seen as ‘literally embodied’ and their existence in terms of location is seen as dependant on the presence of these persons given that

the depository of the knowledge required for enacting and recreating intangible cultural heritage elements, and the regulatory system from where the necessary skills are activated, are located in the human mind, and the main means of expression of intangible cultural heritage is the human body (Smeets 2004, 146-47).

Intangible heritage elements, because of their inextricable association with their practitioners, are seen as continually evolving, as ‘processes and practices’ and not as ‘end products’ (Aiwaka 2004, 139-46). The changes of intangible heritage elements

often have a systematic character and are not only due to human creativity but also to changes in the social context and the habitat of the tradition bearers. Both form and function of intangible cultural heritage manifestations may change, ultimately such manifestations may change beyond recognition (Smeets 2004, 146-48).

Given this link of intangible heritage with its practitioners and also given the evolving nature of intangible heritage, *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention* defines and implements protection in a completely different way to the *World Heritage Convention*. First, the safeguarding of intangible heritage is not based on concepts like ‘authenticity’ or ‘integrity’ at the time of the heritage inscription since such measures of protection might lead to the freezing of heritage at a point in time. The protection of intangible heritage is not based on the concept of ‘outstanding universal value’ either, since such a concept would create a hierarchy among intangible heritage elements, with the implication that those in the list are more important than those outside the list; *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention* is simply a ‘representative’ list (Smeets 2004, 143-44). Second, the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage is based on the specific persons, the practitioners of the intangible heritage elements. These persons are involved from the very beginning as the main actors in the process of the protection of intangible heritage (Smeets 2004, 149). Third, the safeguarding of intangible heritage aims at ‘ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the... promotion, enhancement,

transmission... as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage' (UNESCO 2003, article 2.3). For the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention* it is 'the scope of the heritage' that matters, which (scope) is not simply about specific rituals, but about an entire belief system. Thus, the safeguarding of intangible heritage mainly depends on the protection of 'the conditions for the survival of this belief system' (Stovel 2004, 132).

The *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention* envisages the relationship between tangible and intangible heritage in a completely different way to the *World Heritage Convention*. In the context of the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention*, intangible heritage was seen, mainly through the concepts of cultural spaces (such as Jemaa el-Fna Square in Marrakesh, Morocco, inscribed as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity: Smeets 2004, 140; Aikawa 2004, 140-41) or sacred spaces (such as Utaki in Okinawa: The Japan Foundation 2004, 155), as 'the larger framework within which tangible heritage could take its shape and significance' (Munjeri 2004a, 18; see also Bouchenaki 2004, 8-10). Cultural spaces, a key concept of *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention* (UNESCO 2003, article 2.1), could be defined as

built or natural settings, or specific junctures of time on a calendar, that may be indispensable for the enactment of a manifestation that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage (Smeets 2004, 140).

The plan for the future, at least from the perspective of the intangible heritage sector of UNESCO, is to merge the two Conventions, the *World Heritage* and the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Conventions*, into one unified Convention (pers. comm. Rieks Smeets; Stovel 2004, 133-35), possibly under the name of 'mixed heritage' (Bouchenaki 2004, 10). The merging of the two Conventions is considered essential on the grounds that

a common goal lies behind both [Conventions], if you go to a high-enough level. The common goal is in some way to preserve the human memory: the human memory as a support for fostering identity, the human memory as a support for fostering continuity in community life, and for sustaining community development (Stovel 2004, 130).

The concept of cultural space, on the side of the *Intangible Heritage Convention*, as well as criterion vi (concerning living traditions, ideas and beliefs: section 2.1) and the concept of cultural landscapes, on the side of the *World Heritage Convention*, are considered to help this merging (Matsura 2004, 2-3; Stovel 2004, 130; Smeets 2004, 150; pers. comm. Rieks Smeets). A further step would be to start developing integrated management plans for specific heritage cases (cultural sites or spaces) (pers. comm. Rieks Smeets).

### **2.3.2. The ICCROM initiatives for the conservation of living heritage sites**

ICCROM shows a consistent interest in the living dimension of heritage and in community participation in site management (Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003, 2-3; Stovel 2005, 2-3). To this end an important initiative is the on-going *Living Heritage Sites Programme*, a project

designed to promote a community-based approach to management of heritage sites in the Mekong River [Southeast Asia]..., particularly heritage sites of archaeological value which have sought to achieve management goals by separating the sites from local communities (Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003, 2).

The summary report of the *First Strategy meeting* of this programme (Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003) demonstrated the complexities of the management of living heritage sites and explored possible ways to tackle these complexities, attempting to challenge existing principles and practices in conservation.

The complexities of living heritage sites are clearly illustrated in the variety of definitions given to living heritage sites. A first group of participants referred to

a 'technical term' [or a 'representative word'] used to highlight present focuses in the conservation activities to create and develop favourable communication between cultural heritage and the current society... Living heritage site is a measure to evaluate the depth of communication or interaction between cultural properties and their populations' (Takaki and Shimotsuma 2003, 4-5).

This communication between cultural heritage and the current society was seen through various 'living elements', 'living aspects of heritage' or 'heritage components

in a living environment’, or ‘kinds of living elements’ at each site that ‘bring opportunities to create or strengthen the relation between cultural properties and the populations, or motivate the population to cooperate in achieving their common future visions’ (Takaki and Shimotsuma 2003, 4). Such living elements were considered to be temples, landscapes, monuments and objects (Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003, 21; 8). Thus

it might be possible to say that “tourism”, “religion”, and even “national monument” can be pointed out as potential living elements’ in some heritage sites such as Borobudur and Sukhotai where local inhabitants have been removed from the sites (Takaki and Shimotsuma 2003, 4).

A second group of participants saw living heritage as ‘the way of life of people’ (Rohit Jigyasu, cited in Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003, 13-14).

A third group of participants focused on the concept of continuity of a community’s association with a site. In this context a living site was defined as ‘a heritage (tangible or intangible) that is being used by locally or nationally based group or groups of people for their original purpose. Excludes those adapted or used by the tourists’ (Gamini Wijesuriya, cited in Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003, 9). Or living heritage was seen as ‘the heritage which has its own original functions and historical-cultural values. A heritage is considered ‘living’ only when it was used and promoted its values in other fields such as economics, culture, tourism...’ (Nguyen The Son, cited in Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003, 15).

Despite the variety of definitions of the concept of a living site, the key concept in the discussion of living sites in the particular meeting and in ICCROM’s *Living Heritage Sites* Programme as a whole is continuity (pers. comm. Gamini Wijesuriya).

The differing definitions of a living site were incorporated, on the basis of continuity, into a unified ‘living heritage approach’. This approach was seen as a ‘community-based’, ‘bottom-up’ and ‘interactive’ one concentrating on the users of the sites and ‘seeking for the appropriate equilibrium between use and heritage protection’ of the sites (Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003, 28-29).

To this end a ‘sociological approach’ to conservation was adopted, shifting conservation focuses from restoration to ‘daily management’ (Shimotsuma, Stovel

and Warrack 2003, 21). This means that although core restoration concepts, such as those of the *Venice Charter* (section 2.2), were still considered valid, at the same time there was an increasing recognition of various degrees of possible intervention in restoration, based on the relationships between people and their heritage. For example, at the restoration of the Temple of the Tooth Relic in the World Heritage city of Kandy, Sri Lanka and of the statue in Angkor Wat, in the World Heritage site of Angkor, Cambodia, damaged or missing parts of heritage were not maintained as they were, as evidence of historic events, but were replaced or added to with replicas respecting the religious significance of these cultural properties in the societies (Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003, 21; 9; 16; on the Temple of the Tooth Relic see Wijesuriya 2000; section 5.1). These examples demonstrate an increased emphasis on the safeguarding of intangible elements even when tangible ones have been lost.

Because of this increased emphasis on intangible elements at the expense of tangible ones, this approach may be seen as moving beyond existing material-oriented conservation principles and practices (Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003, 29).

Another important recent initiative of ICCROM concerning the protection of living heritage sites was an international forum on *Living Religious Heritage: conserving the sacred* (Stovel and Stanley-Price and Killick 2005). Here the main aims were to explore the ways in which living religious heritage might differ from cultural heritage in general and to make suggestions for the reconciliation of faith and conservation (Stovel 2005, 1-11).

The forum built upon the aforementioned concepts of the *Living Heritage Sites* Programme. Wijesuriya noted that what distinguishes religious heritage from other types of heritage is its inherent 'livingness', which he considered 'synonymous with continuity', linking it with the 'survival of the original values and the associated communities of this heritage' (2005, 30; 37). Wijesuriya had referred to these 'associated communities' elsewhere as

different to 'communities' we talk about in conservation... the immediate owners/users/patrons of heritage, who are the closest associates of heritage at present who will continue to be responsible for conservation... the best allies of the conservators (Wijesuriya 2004, 7).

Wijesuriya also placed emphasis on intangible elements like ‘cultural meaning, significance of places, and symbolism attached to heritage’ at the expense of tangible ones (2005, 37; 2003a). In order to retain these intangible values ‘the primary goal of conservation becomes continuity itself, based on the process of the renewal of the physical forms and material’, which suggests that cultural heritage is renewable (Wijesuriya 2005, 37; Wijesuriya 2003, 7; 11). In this context, he proposed the use of the present and ‘the present linkages of people to heritage’ as the starting point for understanding and protecting the past (Wijesuriya 2005, 30; 37; Wijesuriya 2004, slides, 3). He concluded that his suggested approach is beyond the existing material-oriented conservation principles and practices (Wijesuriya 2005, 42).

Inaba, using Ise Shrine and the *Gion* Festival in Japan as case studies, defined living heritage as ‘fruit from traditional life before the modernization and the globalization of the world started in the last century [and] closely related in a complicated manner to our traditional social system itself’. In this way, Inaba saw living heritage as ‘inseparable from the framework of the religion or the belief system of its society’ (Inaba 2005, 46). She focused on the persons or groups of persons performing intangible heritage activities, concentrated on the intangible rather than the tangible elements and on the process rather than the material, and further proposed the merging of tangible and intangible heritage. She also concluded that her approach contradicts the existing conservation principles (Inaba 2005, 45-46; 51; 45).

### **2.3.3. The INTACH initiative for the conservation of living heritage sites in India**

The Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) published in 2004 a Charter for the conservation of the vast number of unprotected (i.e. non-designated) sites in India, with an emphasis on living heritage sites (INTACH 2004).

Though not presenting a clear definition of the term living heritage sites, the Charter refers to sites ‘still in use’ that ‘embody values of enduring relevance to contemporary Indian society’ (INTACH 2004, article 1.1), while clearly concentrating at the same time on the concept of continuity, referring to the need of adopting and ensuring traditional building practices and retaining the original functions of the sites (INTACH 2004, article 3; article 4.2).

The Charter states that the objective of conservation is to ‘maintain the significance of the architectural heritage or site’, which (significance) is ‘constituted in both the tangible and intangible forms’ (INTACH 2004, article 2.1), and also to

maintain ‘the symbiotic relationship binding the tangible and intangible heritage’ (INTACH 2004, introduction). In this context, though Western conservation practices that advocate minimal intervention (such as those of the *Venice Charter*: section 2.1.2) are not rejected, priority is given to a variety of traditional, indigenous approaches to fabric with considerable implications for the original material form of the sites (such as rebuilding and replacement) provided that the significance of heritage is retained or enhanced, that the continuity of cultural practices is ensured and that the needs and quality of the life of the local community are satisfied (INTACH 2004, article 3).

The Charter concentrates on the indigenous communities, encouraging their active involvement in the decision-making process and ensuring that ‘the symbiotic relation between the indigenous community and its own heritage is strengthened through conservation’ (INTACH 2004, article 3.5). The Charter places special emphasis on the master builders ‘who continue to build and care for buildings following traditions of their ancestors’, proposing even their official registering (INTACH 2004, introduction; article 5.1.4).

Finally, the Charter refers to the need for redefinition of the meaning and the boundaries of contemporary conservation practices (INTACH 2004, introduction).

#### **2.3.4. Other approaches to the conservation of living heritage sites**

In addition to the aforementioned initiatives of organisations such as UNESCO, ICCROM and INTACH, there are also approaches of individuals that focus specifically on living heritage sites. An example of such is provided by Miura (2004; 2005). In her study of the World Heritage site of Angkor, Cambodia, Miura considered the site a living since ‘people are dwelling in it’. In this way, she linked the concept of a living site not only to the religious aspect of the site but also to the everyday life of the local villagers, given that ‘religion cannot be dissected from the rest of people’s everyday life’ (Miura 2004, 212; 19).

Miura saw the site and the people living in it as ‘an organic whole that is ever-changing’, and argued that conservation should be ‘people-centred’ and should ‘incorporate the idea of making the site ‘living’’ (2005, 15; 2004, 212; 19). On this basis, the concept that heritage is composed of separate elements, i.e. intangible, tangible and people, should be abandoned, and the relationship between heritage sites and people should ‘not [be] seen as dichotomies of hierarchies between universal-

local values, science-local knowledge, tangible-intangible culture, place-people, culture-nature and past-future' (Miura 2005, 15). Miura argued that her suggested approach contradicts World Heritage principles (2004, 215; 2005, 3).

#### **2.3.5. Conclusion**

The approaches towards living heritage discussed in this section move beyond values-based approaches in various ways. There is a concentration on specific communities, on the basis of their closest links with sites (mostly communities with a continual association with sites), which contradicts a concept of equity of all stakeholder groups and values encapsulated in values-based approaches. These communities are recognised as having increased rights and power over the use and management of the sites, which is clearly differentiated from values based approaches' concept of equity of all stakeholder groups (the 'all or none' approach, as summarised in section 2.2) under the ultimate power of a leading managing authority. These communities are also increasingly identified not only as groups but also as individuals (such as the practitioners of intangible heritage elements), something that can be differentiated from values-based approaches' exclusive reference to (stakeholder) groups.

## 2.4. Conclusion: Synthesis of approaches to conservation

‘Conventional’ approaches (section 2.1) and especially values-based approaches (section 2.2), are based on the concept of ‘stakeholder groups’ ascribing values to heritage sites. The recent initiatives of ICCROM and INTACH and the approach of Miura (sections 2.3.2 and 2.3.3) are being developed within the broader framework of stakeholders and values, but are consistently moving beyond values-based approaches through concepts such as ‘associated communities’. The UNESCO Convention and other initiatives dealing with intangible cultural heritage (section 2.3.1) developed independently from the aforementioned approaches, based on their own concepts such as ‘living human treasures’ and ‘cultural spaces’.

The various approaches to conservation, discussed in this chapter, have differing underlying philosophies. ‘Conventional’ approaches and values-based approaches, on the one hand, have been formulated mostly within the Western European world, and have gradually expanded to other cultures, but are still applied within the framework of ‘western-ness’. It is not coincidental that the adoption of the *World Heritage Convention* was the result of initiatives taken mainly by Western European states. The approaches that focus particularly on living heritage sites, on the other hand, have been created mostly within the non-western world. It is not coincidental that the adoption of the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention* was under the influence of Japan.

These approaches suggest and apply differing principles and practices to site conservation. In summary, the main points discussed in this chapter are as follows. ‘Conventional’ approaches and values-based approaches focus on the past. They are primarily concerned with tangible heritage elements, seeing the safeguarding of intangible elements as incorporated within and serving the conservation of tangible remains. The general viewpoint is that the fabric is protected as a non-renewable resource. In contrast, the approaches towards living heritage sites increasingly focus on the present, seeing and protecting the past as part of the living present. They primarily emphasise intangible elements, and envisage that the protection of tangible elements is encompassed by the safeguarding of intangible ones. They even tend to place the entire concept of heritage under broader intangible processes and belief systems (e.g. through the concept of ‘cultural spaces’). The association of

communities with sites is given priority even at the expense of the fabric, which is thus treated as a renewable resource. In this way, 'conventional' and values-based approaches regard the protection of heritage as detached from the process of its creation, while approaches that focus particularly on living heritage sites tend to link conservation with creation, and are thus concerned with the broader conditions that are essential for the process of (further) creation of heritage.

Thus, 'conventional and values-based approaches should be seen in the same context. Values-based approaches attempt to expand, but not contradict, conventional principles and practices. In contrast, the approaches that focus particularly on living heritage sites clearly contradict conventional principles and practices.

All the aforementioned approaches to conservation tend to concentrate on communities, placing them in the core of conservation and supporting their participation in site management. However, the ways in which the various approaches define these communities and envisage their participation in site management are very different.

'Conventional' and especially values-based approaches refer mostly to local communities, which they see as one of the stakeholders groups, placed under the ultimate power of heritage managers. In contrast, the approaches that focus particularly on living heritage sites refer to communities with a continual association with sites, described as 'different to the communities we know at conservation' (through such concepts as 'associated communities' or 'holders' or 'holding bodies' or 'living human treasures'). These communities are allowed increased power through 'joint management' schemes and 'alliances', even against the choices of the conservation professionals (as illustrated in the restoration of the Temple of the Tooth Relic, Sri Lanka and of the statue at Angkor Wat, Cambodia).

'Conventional' and values-based approaches tend to make a separation between communities and sites, and envisage community involvement within, or as a means serving, the preservation of the fabric of the sites. The approaches that focus particularly on living heritage sites envisage the essence of sites in the people and their closest association with the sites, protecting people and sites as an entity.

In this context, values-based and 'conventional' approaches show that living sites (perceived mostly as sites with local communities) can be embraced within the current, conventional principles and practices of conservation, and within the World

Heritage concept, while the approaches that focus particularly on living heritage sites increasingly show that the concept of living sites (seen in the context of continuity) contradicts the existing principles and practices of conservation, especially in the strict World Heritage context.

### **3. Defining a living site**

*A cetiya should be treated as a living Buddha. All the respect and honour that one pays to the Buddha should be paid to the cetiya as well (Rahula 1956, 284).*

*Do not reside in a place that has no temple (Old Tamil proverb, cited in ASI 2003, 262).*

### **3.0. Objectives**

This chapter explores and defines the concept of a ‘living site’.

The first part of the chapter examines existing definitions of the term, and then proposes a set of criteria for defining living sites, based on the concept of ‘functional continuity’.

The second part examines various practices of caring for living sites serving their functional continuity, which reveal a variety of approaches towards the fabric of the sites.

The chapter suggests a new interpretation of the term ‘living site’. It sets the basis for the discussion of whether a living site, as defined here, can be embraced within the existing principles and practices of conservation, especially in the World Heritage context (chapter 4). This proposed interpretation of a living site will be further explored through the analysis of specific examples of sites (chapter 5).

### **3.1. The concept of a living site**

#### **3.1.1. Existing definitions**

The term ‘living site’ appears in the existing literature in different and often confusing contexts and ways.

This is an attempt to present and analyse the various uses of the term ‘living sites’ on the basis of different understandings and applications of the term ‘community’, with reference to examples from various parts of the world. In this analysis there will be some overlap between the different uses of the term, but the aim is to stress the strong points as well as the weaknesses of each use.

##### **3.1.1.1. A tool (or technical term) to evaluate the communication between sites and their populations through living (or potential living) elements**

The term living site can be seen as ‘a tool to evaluate the communication between sites and their populations’ through various ‘living elements’ or ‘living aspects of heritage’ or ‘heritage components in a living environment’ and even ‘potential living elements’ such as tourism along with religion and national monument. Even sites where local inhabitants have been removed, as in the cases of Borobudur and Sukhotai, may be seen as living, which indicates that the concept of a ‘living site’ may not be necessarily associated with the actual, physical presence of a community in a site (Takaki and Shimotsuma 2003, 4-5; see the *First Strategy meeting* of ICCROM’s ‘Living Heritage Programme’: section 2.3).

This use of the term does not consider the physical presence of a community in a site essential to describe a site as living. This use of the term may embrace any kind of association with, and use of, a site: All sites have some of the aforementioned ‘living elements’ and can be seen as living. Thus, this definition is too broad, leading to the weakening and even debasement of the concept of a living site.

##### **3.1.1.2. A site with a local community**

The term living site refers most of the time to a site with a local community, i.e. a community living near or around the site (section 2.1).

This understanding of a living site is supposed to concentrate on a specific community of fixed boundaries using the site at a local level, differentiating this community from other local, national or international ones.

This understanding of a living site has certain weaknesses. First, defining a local community is ambiguous and problematic. The boundaries between local, national and international are blurring, particularly in the increasingly globalised world with an increased mobility of people. As a result, the range of the membership of a local community may stem from a small group of people to cover the entire living world population (Cohen 1985, 117-18). 'Much of what is often declared to be local is in fact the local expressed in terms of generalized recipes of locality', and 'local' is often 'constructed on a trans or super-local basis' (Robertson 1995, 26) and thus 'the shifting ways of seeing and representing localities are firmly rooted in the global' (Erb 2003, 131). This ambiguity of boundaries may be further taken advantage of by groups in dominant positions:

My concern is the ambiguity of boundaries and a sense of community that is perceived by and referred to differently by the diverse groups concerned. This ambiguity is often manipulated by dominant groups who tend to impose their definitions on the others, stretching the boundaries well into the domains perceived by others as their own (Miura 2004, 20).

Second, a local community may have a weak association with the site. The World Heritage site of Volubilis, Morocco demonstrates this point. The post-Roman/Islamic part of the site is associated to Moulay Idriss, a most important Muslim figure who was assassinated there, where he was most probably buried as well. The widespread belief in the Muslim world, however, is that the tomb and shrine of Moulay Idriss is in the homonymous town (close to Volubilis), something that has led to a considerable growth of tourism in the city. The local community, though Muslim and actively involved in the worship of the Moulay Idriss, is not in favour of seeking, let alone promoting, the truth concerning his actual burial place mainly considering a future impact on the development of tourism at their city. The heritage authorities of the site do not seem to be particularly willing to promote the truth either, because that would definitely drive large numbers of pilgrims to Volubilis, especially to the post-Roman/Islamic part of the site, with considerable implications for the protection of its fabric (pers. comm. Helen Dawson). A local community's

weak association with the site may be easily taken advantage of by groups in dominant positions. In the case of Volubilis, for example, heritage authorities, against the firm recommendations of UNESCO consultants and other international experts, separated the site from the local community through a fence and significantly restricted local community's use of the site:

The erection of a physical barrier between an outside and an inside separates the community from the area that we claim has to be part of the cultural and economic life of the community (Fentress and Palumbo 2001, 15).

In extreme cases a local community might be even in favour of the destruction of the sites. It was (part of) the local community that decided the destruction of the mosque at Ayodhya, India (Layton and Thomas 2001, 6-11; Rao and Reddy 2001) and the Bamiyan statues, Afghanistan (Gamboni 2001, 10-11; van Krieken Pieters 2002, 305-09; Wijesuriya 2003).

Thus, the physical presence of a local community near a site is not a sole criterion to describe a site as living.

#### **3.1.1.3. A site with a dwelling community**

A living site is also perceived as a site with a dwelling community (Miura 2004; 2005; section 2.3.3). An example of such a living site is the World Heritage site of Angkor, Cambodia (Miura 2004; 2005; section 2.3.3).

This use of the term is supposed to concentrate on a specific community of fixed boundaries living permanently in the site, differentiating this community from other communities using the site at other international, national and even local levels. The site obtains a special meaning for those living permanently in it, becoming their 'homeland': '...It is the space which connects the past to the future, and is vital for their [the dwellers'] identity, security, and meaning of life. It is their homeland' (Miura 2004, 191).

A community's permanent physical presence in a site can be, however, quite easily disturbed, with severe implications for the community's association with the site. This is demonstrated in the case of Angkor. The local villagers and the monks of

the site (it is basically the local villagers who become monks at the site) have been gradually restricted in the site and occasionally even removed from it by the heritage authorities, 'to the extent that the notion of a 'living heritage site' sounds like a hollow slogan' (Miura 2005, 3; see also Winter 2004, 342-44). The association of the local villagers with the site is changing: the local villagers are now becoming increasingly interested in the financial aspect of the site through their involvement in tourism, while becoming a priest is now seen as a form of investment (Miura 2004, 191-92).

Another example of a site in which the dwelling community's physical presence was disturbed, with implications for the community's association with the site, is the World Heritage site of Petra, Jordan. The community of the Bdul (a Bedouin tribe), associated with one of the historic phases (the Islamic) of the site and once the exclusive residents of the site (McKenzie 1991), were removed in 1985 from the site to a nearby settlement (Akrawi 2002, 102; Hadidi 1986, 109-10; Bienkowski and Chlebik 1991). The Bdul became thus part of 'local inhabitants...relating to the site' (Akrawi 2002, 103). In the late 1990s there was a suggestion and attempt for the removal of the Bdul even from their new settlement (pers. comm. Fadi Balawi). After the removal of the Bdul from the site, their association with the site has been changing, increasingly linked to the tourism development of the site. Today, even if hypothetically allowed to permanently resettle in the site, the Bdul would find it difficult given their adjustment to the new way of life (pers. comm. Gaetano Palumbo; see also Bienkowski and Chlebik 1991, 163-78).

As these two examples demonstrate, a dwelling community (i.e. a community living permanently in a site) may eventually become, influenced by external factors and relationships with other communities, a local community (i.e. a community living near or around the site), with implications for its association with the site. Therefore, the physical presence of a specific community in a site, even on a permanent basis, is not a sufficient criterion for a site to be living.

#### **3.1.1.4. A site with a changing community**

A living site is also seen as a site with a changing/evolving (not the original) community using the site in a different context to the original one. Such sites are often called 'dynamic' ones, as in the *Declaration of San Antonio*: 'Dynamic cultural sites, such as historic cities and landscapes, may be considered to be the product of many

authors over a long period of time whose process of creation often continues today' (ICOMOS America 1996, article 5). At these sites

our traditions are maintained as they evolve to respond to the needs of society [and] this evolution is normal and forms an intrinsic part of our heritage, [while] some physical changes associated with maintaining the traditional patterns of communal use of the heritage site do not necessarily diminish its significance and may actually enhance it (ICOMOS America 1996, article 5).

Amsterdam can be seen as an example of such a living site. In the UNESCO Netherlands Conference 2004 (section 2.1) specific reference was made to *Hotel Arena*, where the conference was being held. The building was constructed in 1890 as a Roman Catholic orphanage, and maintained its original function until the 1950s, when it was abandoned by its religious Order. It then fell into an advanced state of disrepair, before it was converted in 1980 into a hotel, restaurant, café and conference venue. In this way *Hotel Arena*

captures the essence of the living site and dynamic metropolis that is Amsterdam today... The Netherlands has a deep-rooted history of adapting its historic monuments to the requirements of the modern world, and to the evolving values of the people (van Vucht Tijssen 2004, 23).

Another example of such a living site can be the World Heritage site of Diocletian's Palace, Split, Croatia. The Palace is the nucleus of the city of Split, the core from which the entire city was later created and developed (Wilkes 1986, 72-77; Marasovic 1986, 57-62; Marasovic 1975, 17-23).

Its [Palace's] importance is not restricted to the value of its original state only, i.e. its look from about 293-305 A.D., but applies also to the changes that took place from Diocletian's time up to present day. The Emperor's residence has been enriched by other historical layers from the period of pre-Romanesque, Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque and other modern styles which are all coexistent in the historical core of the lively Mediterranean town of Split (Marasovic 1986, 57).

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This understanding of a living site concentrates on the continually evolving association with, and use of, the site, in response to the changing conditions and needs of the wider society.

However, this changing association with the site is, generally speaking, relatively weak, and most probably much weaker than the association of the original communities with the site. For example, the current owners or the visitors of *Hotel Arena*, or the municipality of Amsterdam which took the decision for the current operation of the Hotel, have a much weaker association with the building than the Catholic Order, which originally constructed and operated it. Or the current residents of Diocletian's Palace have a much weaker association with the site than those who built it.

In terms of its relatively weak association with the site, a changing community of the site might end up being very similar to a local community or a dwelling community (sections 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 respectively).

#### **3.1.1.5. A site whose community has a claimed special association with the site, and a site with an indigenous community**

A living site can be also seen as one whose community has a suggested special, strong association with the site. In this sense, indigenous sites could be seen as living ones on the grounds that indigenous people are 'people for whom the place has special associations and meanings, or who have social, spiritual or other cultural responsibilities for the place' (ICOMOS Australia 1999, article 12). On this basis, it was suggested that

native or indigenous sites and traditional cultural properties...constitute a living heritage, a cultural vehicle of enormous significance embodying the corporate values and beliefs of the traditional societies who made and continue to use them (Matero 2004, 69).

An example of a site whose community has a claimed special association with it is Okinawa, Japan (section 2.3):

Utaki and traditional performing arts in Okinawa are "living cultural heritage". Still today, they are deeply entwined with the hearts and minds of people who live on the islands of Okinawa, and closely linked to the very roots of their existence (The Japan Foundation 2004, 3).

Another example of a site whose community has a claimed special association with it is Tsankawi, New Mexico, USA (section 2.2):

For San Ildefonso Pueblo, Tsankawi is living heritage and a sacred place. The mesa top pueblo villae, cavates, postherds, petroglyphs and surrounding area retain, in whole, the spirit of those who created them and continue as living entities forever after their creation. It is the land, the flora, fauna, the whole biosphere that forms the all-inclusive basis of traditional pueblo belief and world view... Its inhabitants had an interactive relationship with the landscape during occupation, as do San Ildefonso Pueblo members today (Matero 2004, 75).

This understanding of a living site is expected to concentrate on specific communities with a special association with the sites, differentiating these communities from those with a much weaker association with the sites.

This understanding of a living site, however, has certain weaknesses. The concept of a community's special association with a site can be problematic. Specifically:

There are cases in which a claimed special association with a site is a fake one. For instance, the Druids demand a special association with, and use of, the World Heritage site of Stonehenge, UK. For them Stonehenge

was, and is still, a Temple, or rather the Temple of the nation. Not a ruin, or monument of lost traditions, but a living Temple still in use... It belongs to the world, we who live in this sacred Isle are its custodians and we should be its users, not for trivia, not for political ideology, and not for profit, but for the encouragement of the youth of the world in their strivings to better the world for their children... Stonehenge belongs to the future (Sebastian 1990, 88; 119).

Despite these claims, it was not earlier than the Seventeenth Century that Stonehenge was associated in the minds of many people with the Druids, it was not until the Nineteenth Century that there was a resurgence of interest in Druidism, and not until 1905 that 'Druids' started assembling at Stonehenge at the summer solstice to perform their rituals (Jones 1990, 75-77).

There are also cases in which claims over a special association with a site may be directly linked to land claims and attempts to establish or legitimise control over other stakeholder groups of the site. In Uganda, for example, local communities

‘invented’ numerous sacred shrines in order to establish land claims and legitimize their power to areas (Robertshaw and Kamuhangire 1996, 739-43; pers. comm. Andrew Reid).

In other cases the validity of communities’ claimed special association with a site cannot be proved and remains questionable (e.g. because of the insufficiency of the available historic and archaeological evidence), with implications for communities’ rights over the ownership, management and even the use of the sites. In the World Heritage site of Great Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe, for example, there are various local and religious communities who claim an exclusive original association with the site for themselves. The existing historic and archaeological evidence, however, is insufficient to prove the validity of any of these claims (Pwiti 1996, 154-57; Ndoro 2001, 97-100; 110-11). But even if the evidence were sufficient, it is not certain whether the heritage authorities of the site would be willing to satisfy one group at the expense of the others, since any proven legitimized privileges of a specific community over the site would probably upset the current management status of the site (pers. comm. Gilbert Pwiti; also section 4.1).

Communities’ suggested special association with sites may have significantly suffered or eventually ceased to exist mostly as a result of wider changes such as: ‘conquest or colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries’ (UNESCO 1989/1957, part 1, articles 1-2) or modernization, urbanization of lifestyles and development (a danger currently faced by Utaki and Okinawa performing arts: The Japan Foundation 2004, 3; Stovel 2004, 130-31). And once communities’ association with sites has significantly suffered or ceased to exist, it is very difficult to revive. As it was argued with reference to Utaki and Okinawa performing arts, ‘in many parts... people have come to reappraise the rich and precious nature of culture that has been lost. But it is not easy to revive lost culture in this way’ (The Japan Foundation 2004, 3).

The aforementioned examples suggest that a community’s claimed special association with a site may not be a sufficient criterion to describe a site as living.

#### **3.1.1.6. A site that has not suffered from modernization**

A living site is also defined as a site that has not suffered from modernisation. For example, Inaba, using Ise Shrine and the *Gion* Festival in Japan as case studies, envisaged living sites as fruits from traditional life and linked to the traditional social

system before modernization (section 2.3; Inaba 2005, 46). In the same context, Rohit Jigyasu linked living sites to ‘the way of life of people’, and further stated, mostly with reference to Southeast Asia, that ‘the current “Euro-centric notions” of development based on a strong belief in technological and economic growth brings it in conflict with the needs of ‘living heritage’’ (Rohit Jigyasu, cited in Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003, 13-14; section 2.3). In a similar way, it was suggested that the tongkonans (i.e. ancestral houses of Kete Kesu) of the World Heritage site of Tana Toraja, Indonesia are

living heritage in the true sense. They go beyond the sense of “home”, being regarded as living symbols of local families who insist on maintaining their religious, cultural and environmental traditions... Preserving the genius loci of Tana Toraja villages goes beyond protecting the unique architecture of the dwellings. It means preserving a total lifestyle while attempting to make the traditional lifestyle, severely threatened by 21<sup>st</sup> century influences, continue to be relevant (Villalon 2001, 3).

This understanding of a living site as a site that has not suffered from modernization is supposed to focus on the ‘traditional’ that is under assault by, and should be thus protected from, contemporary ‘influences’.

This understanding of the term has the following weaknesses. First, it denies the fact that the association of a living community with a site may retain its character even through contemporary changes such as modernization (see section 3.1.7). Second, in extreme cases this use of the term ‘living site’ might end up associating the concept of a living site not necessarily with a community’s actual, physical presence in, and use of, a site, but with the memory of an unchanging archetype of a past ‘traditional’ life-style. As it was noted in response to the aforementioned view on Tara Toraja:

the Toraja village of Kete Kesu is celebrated as a utopic and quintessential ancestral ‘home’ where humans live as they always have, in harmony with the environment, ....[as an] idyllic Eden’ (Adams 2003, 92).

#### **3.1.1.7. A site whose original community retains its association with the site (continuity)**

There is a recent tendency to consider continuity of the original community's association with the site to be the key concept in the discussion of a living site (Gamini Wijesuriya, cited in Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003, 9; Nguyen The Son, cited in Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003, 15; Wijesuriya 2005: section 2.3). Such definitions focus on the original purpose and values (Wijesuriya 2004; Nguyen The Son, cited in Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003, 15) or the 'cultural meaning' (Wijesuriya 2003; 2005) of the original or 'associated' community (Wijesuriya 2004; 2005). These original values are also seen as promoted in other fields such as economics, culture and tourism (Nguyen The Son, cited in Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003, 15). Continuity of the original communities' association with the sites is thus seen as the primary goal of conservation (Wijesuriya 2005).

This understanding of the term has certain strong points. The continuity of the original community's association with a site can indicate the strength of this association (unlike a site with a changing community: section 3.1.1.4). The continuity of the original community's association with a site can also indicate the validity of this association (unlike a site whose community, for example an indigenous one, may have a suggested special but fake or questionable association with the site: section 3.1.1.5). The continuity of the original community's association with a site can embrace contemporary changes such as modernization and tourism (unlike a site that has not suffered from modernization (section 3.1.1.6).

This understanding of the term has certain weaknesses as well. There are cases in which the continuity of the original community's association with a site may not be necessarily related to the actual site. For example, indigenous communities of Jigalong, Western Australia, who have voluntarily left their home territories and settled near Europeans, retain their original association with their sacred ancestral sites and associated beings through dream-spirit journeys (rituals consisting of singing and dancing: 'going badundjari'). These journeys, however, have most of the time nothing to do with the actual sites: they are performed away from the sites, and by people who in most of the cases have never physically been in the sites but are simply imagining them (Tonkinson 1970, 277-91; pers. comm. Peter Sutton). In a similar context, there was a recent case in which indigenous communities of the World

Heritage site of Uluru, Australia performed in court a ritual about the site, in an attempt to justify the continuity of their association with the site, but this ritual is no longer performed on the site itself (pers. comm. Peter Sutton). Similarly, in the case of the World Heritage site of Canterbury Cathedral, UK, despite the continuity of the religious association of part of the local, national and international community with the site, the site is 'treated less and less as a sacred place' and more as a tourist attraction and seems to be 'now as much a tourist attraction as a place of worship' (Hubert 1994, 12; 14). Or in the World Heritage site of Mount Taishan, China, despite the continuity of the religious association of the broader local communities with the site, today the site could be considered an 'open-air museum' and a 'memorial' (ICOMOS 1987b, 3; 1).

There are also cases in which the continuity of the original community's association with a site may not be a sufficient criterion to even prevent the destruction of the site. In the site of Ayodhya, India the Muslim local community's continual association with the mosque and their struggle to protect it did not eventually prevent its demolition (Layton and Thomas 2001, 6-11; Rao and Reddy 2001, 142-43). Similarly, in the case of the Bamiyan statues, Afghanistan, the continual association of Buddhist communities internationally (such as those in Sri Lanka, Thailand and Japan) with the statues and their consistent attempts to save them, did not eventually prevent their destruction (pers. comm. Gamini Wijesuriya; Wijesuriya 2003, 8).

### **3.1.2. Towards a new approach- defining 'functional continuity': a site whose original function is continually reflected in the process of its creation**

So far the existing possible definitions of living sites have been reviewed. Even in the case of continuity (section 3.1.1.7) there remain weaknesses.

A far better approach would be to define functional continuity.

In an attempt to link the continuity of the original community's association with a site with the site itself, the following set of criteria should be offered: First, continuity of the original community's association with a site should be associated with the original function of the site (as defined by the site's original community), and could be thus called 'functional continuity'. In this way a living site is a site that retains its original function.

With reference to Buddhist sites, for example, a *cetiya/stupa* (i.e. a permanent structure of Buddhist monasteries built to enshrine relics) ‘should be treated as a living Buddha. All the respect and honour that one pays to the Buddha should be paid to the *cetiya* as well’ (Rahula 1956, 284). In Buddhism continuity is considered to be rooted in the context of religion itself and then applied in the context of heritage (Wijesuriya 2005, 30). Specifically, the Triple Gems (i.e. the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha) constitute the core of Buddhist religion, and are still living. The (Sakyamuni) Buddha, though his demise is acknowledged to have taken place in the Sixth Century BC, belongs to the present, his teachings (Dhamma) are current all the time, and his order of Sangha monks is the living legacy of the Sangha of the past (Wijesuriya 2005, 33). Buddhist heritage, consisting of intellectual, intangible and tangible elements (tangible and intangible are seen as mostly inseparable elements in the Buddhist context), supported the Buddhist religion throughout its history and is still living. In this context, since dilapidated monasteries are not suitable for the meditative life of monks, a *cetiya* should thus ‘be seen only in its full functional state and convey the symbolic meaning it represents’. Thus, the caring for the monasteries, through the continual renewal of decayed material, is considered a religious obligation (Wijesuriya 2005, 34).

In another example, Hindu temples are considered living ‘when the religious activities and rituals are conducted in accordance with the Agamas’ (i.e. a codified set of rules governing the practice of religion and ritual as well as the operation and the construction of Hindu Temples); Hindu temples are ‘not mere architectural monuments, instead they are living bio-organisms which have served as a centre of social, economic and political life in many succeeding centuries’ (ASI 2003, 262; 8; also 27; 242). In this way, in Hinduism continuity is seen as rooted in religion, i.e. in the ‘traditional continuity’ and originality of religious rituals still performed in the site (ASI 2003, 262; 8), and is then reflected in other spheres of the life of the temple, such as: the construction of temples over the course of time resulting in the temple’s overall homogeneity and integrity (ASI 2003, 21-27), the close relationship of the site with its surrounding urban settlement in terms of spatial arrangement, with the temple forming the centre around which the surrounding environment is developed and is thus called ‘temple town’ (ASI 2003, 262-64); the active participation of the local community in social and cultural activities of the site originally associated with its religious character (ASI 2003, 242; 263); the traditional management and ownership

mechanisms of the site, which are still valid today (ASI 2003, 263); the primary role of the local community, recognised ‘as devotees’, in the operation and management of the site (ASI 2003, 280; 258); and the traditional maintenance practices of the site, still in use, based on the continual renewal of the decayed material (ASI 2003, 262-63).

Second, functional continuity should be also seen as continually reflected in the spatial arrangement of the site, as a natural expression of the original community’s association with the site. Continual changes in the site’s spatial arrangement within functional continuity become a quintessential requirement for a site to be living. In this way, a living site is a site whose process of creation continues today, in accordance with its original function. For example, in Sri Lanka several temples were built for the housing of the Tooth Relic of Buddha, with the latest/current one being the so-called Temple of the Tooth Relic in the World Heritage city of Kandy. Thus, after an incidence of a major destruction of the temple, the first priority of the restoration project was the revival of the function of the temple (section 5.1). In another example, in Benin, temples constructed for the conduction of voodoo rituals have shifted several times depending on circumstances such as the appointment of a new priest for the conduction of the rituals (Munjeri 2001, 17-18; Munjeri 2004a, 15-16). In the World Heritage city of the Vatican in Rome, Italy, several churches and shrines have been constructed upon the tomb of St Peter (if the tomb is correctly attributed to St Peter) since the First Century AD, the latest of which is the current *basilica*.

In several cases, as long as the function for which the structures had originally been built ceases, the structures are deliberately abandoned and even allowed to decay. This is, for example, the case of the World Heritage site of Great Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe, where, when it lost its original function, the local communities abandoned the site and let it to decay, believing that wall collapses were the result of the deliberate actions of spirits destroying their own homes just as living people do when they wish to move to a new area. The local communities thus firmly opposed the heritage authorities’ attempt to preserve the walls of the site on the grounds that such an attempt would make the evil spirits stay in the site. At the event of a severe drought in the wider region, the local communities even put the physical catastrophe down to the stay of the evil spirits in the site because of the preservation of its walls by the heritage authorities (Ucko 1994a, 271-75; Pwiti 1996, 155, Ndoro 2001, 98-99; 102;

Munjeri 2001, 17; pers. comm. Webber Ndoro). This is also the case of many defensive structures and city walls at Zinder, Niger, which, when no longer in use, are abandoned or destroyed for re-use (Joffroy 2005, 4).

Third, given that the original function of a living site cannot be retained, and the process of its creation cannot continue, without the presence of the site's original community, functional continuity should be seen as inextricably linked to the permanent physical presence of the site's original community in the site. A living site cannot exist without this living community. Similarly, this community cannot define itself, in terms of identity, pride, self-esteem as well as physical location, detached from the site, and considers the caring for the site its own inherent obligation. Thus, this community should be seen as an inseparable part of the living site, clearly differentiated from any other communities related to the site, protecting or using the site, at international, national and local level. This community could be called the actual 'site community'.

Thus, the proposed interpretation of a living site does not simply embrace the concept of continuity of the association of the site's original community with the site (section 3.1.1.7), but moves further by concentrating on the continuity of the original function of the site and on the continuity of the process of creation of the site in accordance with its original function (functional continuity), as continually reflected in the changing spatial arrangement of the site. On this basis, the community of a living site should be seen as the site's original community that does not simply retain its original association with the site (section 3.1.1.7) but also maintains the original function of the site and continues the process of creation of the site over the course of time to present (site community).

### **3.1.9. Synthesis of the definitions of a living site**

The term living site is used in various and conflicting ways. These uses of the term may indicate different steps in the understanding of the concept of a living site: a technical term (evaluating the communication between sites and populations), without necessarily indicating an actual presence in the site; a (actual) community living near the site; a community dwelling in the site; a community with a suggested special association with the site; a community whose original association with the site has not

suffered from contemporary circumstances such as modernization; and the continuity of the original community's association with the site to present (continuity).

My proposal is that the concept of a living site should relate to the continuity of the original function of the site as reflected in the continual process of its creation in accordance with its original function ('functional continuity').

### 3.2. Approaches towards the fabric of living sites

There is a whole series of practices of caring for living sites serving the functional continuity of the sites.

The practices of caring for living sites are traditional and existed before the formation and establishment of the modern principles and practices of conservation. These practices are often accompanied with a series of local community norms to promote the maintenance of the natural and cultural resources including sacred and pragmatic controls, customary laws, traditions, taboos and myths (Edroma 2001, 55-56; see also Joffroy 2005, 2-4; Ndoro 2004, 81). For example, in the World Heritage site of Kasubi, Uganda, the royal tombs are shielded behind bark-cloth curtains and access is limited to the spiritual guardian (Nalinga) and the prime minister of the Buganda kingdom (Katikkiro), people are not allowed to turn their back inside the main tomb (Azaala-Mpanga) and shoes are removed out of respect and to keep the place clean (Munjeri 2004b, 77; Kigongo 2005, 31; 34-36).

These practices ruling the construction and operation of the sites are often based on, and guided by, texts. Examples of such texts are *Mayamatha* for Buddhist temples and *Agamas* and *Vedas* for Hindu temples (see Wijesuriya 2000, 102; Wijesuriya 2005, 34-37; ASI 2003, 262-63; Champakalakshmi 2001, 18-20). There are cases in which such texts apply only to specific sites. For example, the Hindu Temple of Srirangam follows specifically the *Agamas* texts of *Paramesvara-Samhita* (pers. comm. Sri Vaishnava Sri).

There are also cases in which the relationship between the texts and the practices is not a one-way influence, with the texts guiding the practices, but a complex two-way interaction. This is clearly illustrated in the relationship between texts and practices in Hinduism (Champakalakshmi 2001, 20; pers. comm. Radha Champakalakshmi; pers. comm. Archana Verma).

There are cases, however, in which these practices are not based on written sources and might have not survived today (Edroma 2001, 54-55). Ndoro and Pwiti have raised this issue:

The fact that Europeans found so many heritage sites intact means that they survived thanks to some form of traditional management. Obviously, places associated with religious practice

and those in everyday use received more attention than those that had been abandoned (Ndoro and Pwiti 2001, 22).

The practices of caring for living sites serving functional continuity reveal varying approaches towards the fabric of sites. Specifically:

### **3.2.1. Partial replacement of existing material with same material**

This replacement practice is a partial one and takes place irregularly, when and where repairs are needed. This process is mostly applied in structures made of fragile, normally organic, materials, often in hostile climates. There are a series of examples:

Wooden Shinto, Buddhist and even contemporary buildings in Japan need continual maintenance because of the country's high temperatures and high humidity in the summer season (Larsen 1988; Larsen and Ito 1990; Inaba 2005, 51-52).

Kasubi tombs, Uganda need continual maintenance through the thatching of the tomb houses and the wrapping of bark cloth on support poles because of the fragile, organic nature of the building materials (Kigongo 2005, 34-36; Ndoro 2004, 84; Munjeri 2004b, 77-78).

Similarly, the Grand Mosques of Timbuktu, Mali require frequent changes and repairs because of the organic nature of the building materials, eroded and damaged by the rare but violent rains (Ould Sidi and Joffroy 2005, 23-25).

In Northern Ghana or Southern Burkina Faso, mud house decorations are repaired before the rainy season by groups of Nankani women. It should be noted that this regular repair of the decorations never attempts to imitate the existing designs; entirely new decorations are applied, inspired by the mood and trend of the moment and the need of the women to express their kindness (Kwami and Taxil 2005, 75-79).

The practice of partial replacement of existing material with same material is also used for the maintenance of Buddhist and Hindu temples (section 3.1; Wijesuriya 2005, 34, ASI 2003, 262-63).

In the practice of partial replacement emphasis is on the continuity of the same type of material, craftsmanship and design.

### **3.2.2. Partial renewal of existing material with different material**

This practice is applied mostly in cases where the replacement material is stronger and longer-lasting, less expensive or easier to find and use than the existing one. This practice sometimes serves broader social, economic or religious purposes as well (see also Joffroy 2005, 3-4). For example:

The tribes of Bambara, Senufo and Bozo in Mali replace the mud roofs of their houses with ones made of corrugated iron. The basic reason for this replacement is that mud is a very fragile material that is easily destroyed, especially in the heavy weather conditions of Mali, while corrugated iron is a much stronger and more permanent material. A corrugated iron roof also becomes an indication of wealth and higher social status (pers. comm. Renata Anna Walicka-Zeh).

In the sacred forest of Bamezoume, Benin local people replace wooden parts of statues with others made of metal car (and other) parts. The basic reason for this replacement is that metal is much stronger than wood. The decaying of the material is also considered to be affecting the sacred power of the statues, something that may indicate that the replacement process ensures the preservation and even the enhancement of the sacred power of the statues (pers. comm. Joseph King).

In the 'northern' Hindu temple architecture today materials such as concrete and steel have replaced to some extent the more costly and cumbersome stone or brick, without influencing the overall form of the temple, as in the case of the complete recreation of the Shiva temple at Somnath in Gujarat (Michell 1977, 183-84).

In Kasubi tombs, Uganda, local people used corrugated iron instead of thatching (section 3.2.1) in the making of the house walls because corrugated iron is a much stronger and more permanent material (pers. comm. Webber Ndoro; pers. comm. Andrew Reid; section 4.2).

This practice of partial renewal involves the application of different type of material and consequently different craftsmanship and design as well.

### **3.2.3. Total physical renewal**

This practice serves primarily symbolic, ritual rather than practical reasons (related to the decay of the existing material, as in the case of partial replacement of existing material with same material: section 3.2.1). There are a series of examples:

‘Shikinen Zotai’ is a Shinto ritual in Japan that requires renewing of the shrine buildings of the entire precinct every twenty years, dating back to the Seventh Century (Shikinen Zotai is thus clearly differentiated from the practice of partial renewal of buildings in Japan: section 3.2.1). In addition to the shrine buildings, the objects to be enshrined as well as offerings and instruments used for the ceremonies that take place during the ritual are also included for renewal. Until the mid-Nineteenth Century various Shinto shrines carried out this ritual, but since then the ritual has faded in the majority of the cases. At present only one Shinto shrine, namely the Ise Shrine, continues the practice in its pure form (Inaba 2005, 51-54; Inaba 1995, 331-32; Ito 1995, 44).

In Nagaland, India, houses with central post are reconstructed in their entire precinct every twelve years, as part of a local tribal tradition (pers. comm. Ranesh Ray).

In a similar context, every year during the feast of Bulo in the Dogon country, Mali, the main façade of the Temple of Arou is roughcast with clay. The trichromatic totem-like drawings representing the world system are also touched up using the traditional colours (ochre) made of traditional material (crushed local rice) (Cisse 2005, 90-94).

Another example of total physical renewal is the ritual of repainting of rock art images as a way of renewing the spiritual power of the images (see Walderhaug Saetersdal 2000, 163-80), as with Wandjina rock images in the Kimberley area in Australia (Mowaljarlai, Vinnicombe, Ward and Chippindale 1988; Bowdler 1988, 517-23; Mowaljarlai and Peck 1987; Ward 1992a; Mulvaney and Kamminga 1999, 361-62; Layton and Thomas 2001, 17). Aboriginal communities consider themselves the original creators of Wandjina rock images, and consider the repainting of these images as an essential part of their cultural identity and even of their very existence. As a member of their community stated,

...to us they [rock art paintings] are images. Images with energies that keep us alive –every person, everything we stand on, are made from, eat and live on. Those images were put down for us by our Creator, Wandjina, so that we would know how to stay alive, make everything grow and continue what he gave to us in the first place. We should dance those images back into the earth in corroborees. That would make us learn the story, to put new life into those images... In those images we read how the Creator made nature for us and how he put us in

charge to look after it on his behalf (Mowaljarlai, Vinnicombe, Ward and Chippindale 1988, 691).

The ritual of repainting follows very strict rules in terms of the selection of the images to be repainted and the motifs to be added, as well as the repainting tools and techniques to be used (Bowdler 1988, 520; Mulvaney and Kamminga 1999, 362-65).

In the practice of total physical renewal emphasis is on the continuity of craftsmanship and design.

#### **3.2.4. Immersion of physical material**

The practice of immersion of physical material (in water) is in most of the cases part of a ritual ceremony. For example:

The objects made for, and used in, rituals are immersed in water as part of rituals of Zuni Ahayuda, New Mexico. As a Zuni spokesman stated: ‘everything for ceremonial, religious, and ritual purposes that my culture makes... is meant to disintegrate... to go back into the ground’ (Edmund Ladd, 1992, quoted in Sease 1998, 106; see also Clavir 2002, 155).

The objects made for, and used in, rituals are immersed in water as part of rituals in Australia as well (Jokilehto 1995, 25).

There are numerous examples of immersion of clay, plaster and wax objects in water as part of Hindu rituals in India. For example, during *Durga Dussehra-Durga Puja* Festival of Hindu Bengalis (e.g. in Calcutta), held in memory of the victory (Vijaha) of Goddess Durga over Demon Mahishasura, clay statues of the Goddess riding a lion and fighting with the demon, are installed in temporary shrines or pandels. At the end of the festival the statues are sunk into the river and let to immerse (Visarjan), a practice that symbolises the departure of the Goddess from the world after her victory over the demon (Berkson 1995, 215-19; pers. comm. Ranesh Ray; pers. comm. A.R. Ramanathan; pers. comm. Archana Verma).

Other examples of immersion of objects in water as part of Hindu rituals in India are provided by *Ganesh Chaturthi* Festival in Maharash, India, held in memory of the birth of God Ganesh, and by *Samachakeva* Festival in Bihar State, which has the form of a domestic ritual ceremony (pers. comm. Ranesh Ray).

The *Rath Jatra* Festival, India, held to commemorate the visit of Lord Jagannatha, his brother Lord Balarama and their sister Debi Shubhadra to the house of their aunt Debi Gundicha, could be seen in a similar context. A main element of the festival is a procession of idols on a chariot, which (both the idols and the chariot) are made of a specific kind of local wood (Margova tree). Every twelve years the idols and the chariot are discarded and the discarded material is reused, with the addition of some new material, to make new idols and chariot (pers. comm. Archana Verma).

### **3.2.5. Replacement of the entire structure with a new one**

In some cases the entire structure may be replaced, mainly in the context of a religious ritual. For example:

In Buddhism and Hinduism the belief is that, if broken, a statue loses its sacredness, and is thus to be replaced not partially but as a whole. This practice was illustrated in the case of the Buddhist statue of Ta Reach at Angkor Wat, Cambodia as part of the folk religion known as ‘Nakta’ and in the case of the Temple of the Tooth Relic, Sri Lanka (Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003, 16: section 2.3; also section 5.1).

In a quite similar context, Archana Verma described the following Hindu domestic ritual to me:

Once my aunt invited a priest to perform a domestic ritual. The priest was supposed to bring some figurines of gods with him for the needs of the ritual, but forgot one of them. This, however, caused no problem to him. He immediately asked my aunt to take off her ring, blessed it and used it as a substitute for the missing god figurine. At the end of the ritual he blessed it again and gave it back to my aunt, who continued to use it as a ring (pers. comm. Archana Verma).

### **3.2.6. Synthesis of the approaches towards the fabric of living sites**

The practices of caring for living sites serving the functional continuity of the sites may have completely different and even contradictory implications for the material of sites: from the partial replacement/renewal of existing material with same or different material, to the total physical renewal, to the immersion and subsequently dissolving of physical material, and to the replacement of the entire structure.

Behind these differing approaches towards fabric there appears to be a common underlying philosophy. Emphasis is not considered to lie in the material and in elements of materiality of sites and objects. The age of a structure, for example, may not be considered important, as the repainting of rock images dating back to prehistoric times demonstrates (section 3.2.3). Sometimes even the determination, in the first place, of the age of a structure (i.e. the date of its initial creation) is practically impossible, as in the cases of total physical renewal (section 3.2.3).

The type of material may not be considered important either. In Hinduism, for example, as long as contact with the gods is achieved, any construction material may be acceptable (Michell 1977, 183-84). In Hinduism the type of material of a structure is determined, in the first place, by the function of the structure: a structure that is of permanent use (for example, a temple) is made of strong material (such as stone), while a structure that is of temporary use (for example, the images that are eventually immersed in water) is made of soft material (such as clay, plaster or wax) (pers. comm. Archana Verma). There are also cases in which the material of a structure is renewed by a different material if the new material serves the function of the structure more effectively, as in the cases of partial replacement/renewal of existing material with the same or different material (sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2).

Even the structure as a whole may not be considered important, as the practices of immersion of objects in the water or the replacement of objects demonstrate (sections 3.2.4 and 3.2.5).

The different approaches towards fabric place emphasis on the non-physical elements of sites and objects: the sites' and objects' wider cultural significance and conceptual integrity.

The transmission of knowledge and know-how forms the real basis of cultural heritage; objects produced in this process are principally a 'by-product' and even destined to be destroyed as part of rituals. However, even in countries where the physical cultural heritage acquires importance, the non-physical heritage remains the essence of the quality of life, as a basis for the understanding and appreciation of the physical patrimony, and for the continuation of traditional crafts and technologies required for its maintenance and care (Jokilehto 1995, 25).

Thus, sites and objects are 'often described culturally, in terms of "process" rather than "product" ' (Clavir 2002, 245; see also Ward 1992b, 33-34; 36-37; Mowaljarlai,

Vinnicombe, Ward and Chippindale 1988). Changes in the fabric are an inseparable part of this process, and thus an essential requirement for the survival and continuation of a living site.

Therefore, in the context of the suggested interpretation of a living site (based on functional continuity: section 3.1.8) there can be a whole series of approaches towards fabric, in which the physical, material structure may be given a low priority. Site communities (associated with the continual process of creation of living sites in accordance with the sites' original function: section 3.1) care about material, but this caring is placed in a broad context and scope:

the materiality of artifacts and monuments is implicated in, indeed lives at the heart of, their biographies: things are born, they grow, breathe, live and die; they are conceived as having a soul and a personality, and as being nourished and harmed by other substances such as air, soil and water (Jones 2006, 122).

### **3.3. Conclusion**

This chapter demonstrated that the concept of a living site should relate to the continuity of the original function of a site as reflected in the continual process of its creation ('functional continuity') by the site's original community ('site community'). Functional continuity should be seen as continually reflected in the spatial arrangement and in the fabric of the site. Thus, continual changes in the spatial arrangement and the fabric of the site within the original function of the site become quintessential requirements for a site to be living.

#### **4. Conservation in relation to living sites**

*Conservation is a disservice to my culture (Zuni spokesman, Edmund Ladd, 1992, quoted in Sease 1998, 106).*

## **4.0. Objectives**

This chapter examines to what extent the concept of living sites (understood in the context of functional continuity: section 3.1) and the variety of approaches towards their fabric (section 3.2) can be embraced within the existing principles and practices of conservation (as defined by the ‘conventional’ approaches and expanded by values-based approaches: sections 2.1 and 2.2) and especially in the World Heritage context. In particular, this chapter presents and reviews the attempts of conservation, especially in the World Heritage context, to embrace living traditions and sites.

The first part focuses on the concept of living sites.

The second part deals with the approaches towards the fabric of living sites.

If this chapter demonstrates that living sites are unlikely to be embraced by the existing principles and practices of conservation, then there is a need to develop a new approach for the operation and management of living sites.

## **4.1. Conservation in relation to the concept of living sites**

The discipline of conservation was formed largely within Western Europe, and is still considered to be suffering from

what I would call the Western Dreaming. By this I mean the cultural assumptions that we take as given – our own unconscious vision of our society and ourselves which profoundly influence heritage practice... [and] which we tend to take for granted (Sullivan 2004, 49).

Authenticity is essentially a Western European concept, a product of Western European cultural history (Jokilehto 1995, 18-19; Lowenthal 1995, 125-27; section 2.1.1).

The Western European world has a feeling of dissatisfaction with the present caused by its rapid change and mobility experienced in the last centuries. This feeling of dissatisfaction has created a taste for the known, the familiar, the predictable, the expected, the repeatable, rather than the unexpected, the innovative, the original. In this rapidly changing reality, the past affords a comfortable and controllable context, and is thus seen in a nostalgic way. The dissatisfaction with the present creates a strong desire or need to experience traces of an 'authentic', supposedly more fulfilling past, and repossess and re-experience something untouched by the present. Reality and authenticity are considered to be elsewhere: in other historical periods and other cultures, in purer simpler lifestyles and in a concern for nature (MacCannell 1999, 2-3; Lowenthal 1995, 122).

The discipline of conservation has as its fundamental objective the preservation of physical heritage of the past from loss and depletion in the present. Thus, conservation, formed and still operating in this western context of dissatisfaction with the present, creates discontinuity between the monuments, considered to belong to the past, and the people and the social and cultural processes of the present (Ucko 1994a, 261-63; Walderhaug Saetersdal 2000; Jones 2006, 122; section 2.1). In this way, 'conservation ... is a modern concept that sees the past as divorced from the present and existing self-consciously outside tradition' (Matero 2004, 69).

Given this discontinuity created between the present and the past, two main ways of approaching and preserving the past may be identified. A first way is to

protect or ‘freeze’ the past, or rather a specific period or aspect of the past that is considered ‘glorious’, ‘pure’, ‘pristine’, ‘traditional’ and ‘authentic’. In this way the present and its continually changing nature [‘present’ in this context is seen as any period following the specific past chosen to preserve] are sacrificed in the name of the past and its unchanging stability (Ucko 1994b, xviii; Lowenthal 1995, 130-31). This is the case of the World Heritage site of Stonehenge, UK, where heritage authorities

attempt to ‘freeze’ the landscape as a palimpsest of past activity... [F]reezing time and space allows the landscape or monuments in it to be packaged, presented and turned into museum exhibits (Bender 1999, 26).

A second way of preserving the past is to enliven the ‘dead’ past and the ‘dead’ sites, for example through reconstruction sites and recreation ‘performances’ mostly serving tourism purposes (Ucko 2000). A characteristic example of a reconstruction site is the so-called *Great Zimbabwe Traditional Village*. This is a model of a Nineteenth-Century Shona village constructed as a ‘live’ museum’ within the World Heritage site of Great Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe, to be later relocated just outside the site (Ndoro and Pwiti 1997, 4-8; pers. comm. Gilbert Pwiti). An example of a recreation ‘performance’ is *Inti Raymi* (or *Sun Festivity*). This is inspired by the *indigenista* movement in 1944 and based on accounts of the last performance of 1535, and takes place in the site of Sacsayhuaman and in the World Heritage site of Cusco, Peru (Ucko 2000, 67-68; see also Hamre n.d.). Through this enlivening process a chosen present is imposed upon the past. In this way, the archaeological evidence of the past acquires ‘a totally new ‘authenticity’ of its own, little if anything, to do with what it might have signified in the past’ (Ucko 2000, 85), altering the experience of those who attend these enlivening activities as well as the identity of those who perform these activities. As a consequence,

‘free floating’ heritage can be a dangerous thing; devoid of compassion and controlled by those who are in dominant positions, it can even become a killer (Ucko 2000, 88).

The differences between these two ways of preserving the past might end up being blurred given that any attempt of protecting, ‘freezing’ the past could be also

seen as a way of ‘enlivening’ it and imposing a chosen present upon the past (see Lowenthal 2000, 410: section 2.2.2).

This discontinuity created between the present and the past defines the main principles of conservation, such as the emphasis on the past and its tangible remains, the notion that authenticity of sites is non-renewable and the care for future generations (section 2.1). This discontinuity also defines the main practices of conservation regarding the physical fabric of monuments and sites, (practices) such as those included in the *Athens* and *Venice Charters* (section 2.1). It is this discontinuity that generally

makes the discipline [of conservation]... such a difficult and crucial one, ...much more conscious and artificial than ever before, and still it seems that there is no other path which the responsible modern heritage manager can take... we [heritage managers] dare only, in the words of the Burra Charter, to do ‘as much as necessary but as little as possible’ to conserve the site as it now is (Sullivan 2004, 50).

The Western European approach to conservation was transferred or imposed in the non-western world (Byrne 1991, 270-76), envisaging non-western/indigenous cultures through western eyes. In this colonial context, indigenous people were initially considered ‘living proofs’ of inferiority (Gathercole and Lowenthal 1990, 8), and

‘backwardness’ [was assigned] to others [indigenous people], thereby not only denying the validity of alternative contemporary cultures and alternative directions for economic development, but justifying the continued expropriation of other people’s land, labour and resources in the name of progress (Layton 1989a, 11).

The Western European approach to conservation, having created discontinuity between the present and the past, did not take into account the continuing, living indigenous traditions, in terms of spiritual (rather than rational) associations with the past, an emphasis on non-material (rather than material) values and the use of traditional (rather than modern) management systems. This led to a separation of indigenous communities from their sites (Ucko 1994b, xiii-xxiii; Layton 1989a; Layton 1989b; Ucko 1990, xv-xx; Langford 1983). The past (or rather the specific

period of the past that was envisaged as 'traditional' and 'authentic' in the Western 'imagination') was chosen to be preserved ('frozen' in time), at the expense of other periods of the past and of the present (Said 1978; Abu-Lughod 1989; Bahrani 1998; Scham 2003, 173-76; Ndoro and Pwiti 2001, 31-32). An example of this is Great Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe, where until the early 1990s the heritage authorities of the site had seen and preserved the site as an ancient medieval structure, at the expense of any other post-medieval phase of the history of the site and at the expense of the present-day associations of the local people with the site (Ucko 1994a, 271-75; Ndoro 1994, 619-22; Ndoro and Pwiti 2001, 30-32; Ndoro 2001, 37-51). A most recent example to this end is provided by the on-going war in Iraq. Western archaeologists saw the ancient, Mesopotamian part of Iraqi past and heritage, which seemed to appeal more appropriately to their Western 'imagination', as 'their' past and heritage, and decided to protect it on behalf of the Iraqi people (Hamilakis 2003, 107-108). In some cases even the invading forces were involved in the protection of the antiquities (Hamilakis 2003, 105). At the same time, Western archaeologists internationally publicly 'mourn the loss of artefacts but find no words for the loss of people' (Hamilakis 2003, 107).

Despite the attempts of western-based conservation to seek and preserve an authentic past within its own cultures and also within non-western cultures, authenticity remains unattainable and 'chimerical' (Lowenthal 1992, 185; see also McBryde 1997). Preserving of an authentic past is 'illusion', and actually brings the opposite result:

Preservation in itself reveals that permanence is illusion. The more we save, the more aware we become that such remains are continually altered and reinterpreted... what is preserved like what is remembered is neither a true or resemble likeness of past reality (Lowenthal 1985, 410).

Every nicely motivated effort to preserve nature, primitives and the past, and to represent them authentically contributes to an opposite tendency – the present is made more unified against its past, more in control of nature, less a product of history (MacCannell 1994, 83).

The concept of World Heritage arose, in the 1970s, mainly in the centres of Western Europe, and evolved with the evolution of the global community (Titchen

1995), and its underpinnings could possibly be seen in the aforementioned colonial context (Byrne 1991, 273-75; Ucko 1989, xii-xiii). Key characteristics of the World Heritage approach, such as the concept of 'outstanding universal significance', the rigorous classification and measurement of listing criteria and categories, the separation between natural and cultural heritage, and the hierarchical character of the List (section 2.1), could be put down to the discontinuity created by western-based conservation between the monuments of the past and the people of the present (Sullivan 2004, 50). In this context, until the 1990s there was no reference in the *World Heritage Convention* and the *Operational Guidelines* to any living traditions; it was only 'cultural traditions or civilizations which have disappeared' that were taken into account (cultural criterion iii in UNESCO 1980; 1984; 1994c). This can demonstrate that the World Heritage concept was originally developed on the concept of dead traditions and sites, which were classified in strict listing categories.

The term 'living' first appeared in the mid-1990s: cultural traditions or civilizations 'which are living or which have disappeared' (UNESCO 1997 onwards, cultural criterion iii); sites 'directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions' (UNESCO 1994 onwards, cultural criterion vi); or 'continuing cultural landscapes' that 'retain an active social life in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life, and in which the evolutionary process is still in progress' (UNESCO 1995). The World Heritage Committee attempted to take under consideration living traditions and sites by expanding the existing listing criteria and categories. In this way, living traditions and sites were added to the existing strict categories, and treated in the same way with the dead ones. For example, cultural traditions or civilizations 'which are living' were, and are still, included in the same category with those 'which have disappeared', while 'continuing cultural landscapes' were, and are still, included in the same category with 'fossil cultural landscapes'. This attempt to include living traditions and sites into existing categories proved to fail, revealing the subjectivity, ambiguity and ineffectiveness of classification. For example, the differences between a 'cultural site', a 'mixed site' and a 'cultural landscape' (see Rossler 2004, 48) are not significant, especially 'when it is clear that most of the world is a cultural landscape' (Sullivan 2004, 50).

In the mid-2000s a further attempt was made to include living traditions and sites by merging different categories into new, unified ones. Thus cultural and natural heritage criteria were merged in a single set of criteria in 2005 (section 2.1), and

tangible heritage and the intangible heritage elements and Conventions are in the process of merging (section 2.3).

Most recently there was an attempt to establish World Heritage Indigenous Peoples Council of Experts (WHIPCOE) as a consultative body of the World Heritage Committee or as a network to report to the World Heritage Committee (Labadi 2005, 98). This attempt failed, which 'indicates that, for some countries, local empowerment, and especially giving local minorities an international voice, can be considered dangerous and destabilising' (Sullivan 2004, 55).

Despite these attempts, living traditions and sites are unlikely to be taken on board in the World Heritage concept. In contrast with the 'outstanding universal significance' of the global community, the manifest continuity and traditional links of the local people with sites are not considered universal values. The categorisation of values and sites, which is inherent in the World Heritage concept as based on the concept of dead sites, is against continuing living traditions. Sullivan raised this issue:

The methodology we use [in World Heritage] can inadvertently mummify or destroy aspects of value by disregarding the less tangible and subtler elements of continuity which many of them have. The concrete quantifiable values are easier to measure and manage but living natural and cultural sites are organic in the way they change and adapt and our practice sometimes does not suit the conservation of these values (Sullivan 2004, 50-51).

Given this failure to take on board living traditions, the World Heritage approach is sometimes taken advantage of by national heritage authorities in an attempt to suppress or deny local and indigenous communities' associations with places. There are cases in which the World Heritage inscription of sites was sought in the first place in an attempt to suppress present associations with sites. As it was noted with reference to the World Heritage site of Great Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe, the denial of suggested special associations of various communities with the site (section 3.1) through the declared recognition or imposition of a new 'unified' National Heritage and especially World Heritage status is very convenient from the heritage authorities' perspectives (Ucko 1994a, 271-75; see also Pwiti and Ndoro 1999, 150; Pwiti 1996, 154-56; Ndoro 2001, 97; 121-23).

Present associations with sites are further suppressed after the World Heritage inscription of sites:

Nation-states feel that once a place is declared a World Heritage site, the interests of local and traditional communities become irrelevant to its management demands. International interests ... become paramount. The result has been that, in many cases, we [conservation professionals] have sought to replace traditional systems with what we think are better modern management systems. Very often we have succeeded in ensuring that people no longer recognize or own their heritage. We have also succeeded in undermining the very significant values that formed the basis for their inclusion on the World Heritage list... In many cases, heritage management practices have denied people access to their heritage (Ndoro 2004, 81-82).

## **Conclusion**

The discipline of conservation, originated in the Western European world, creates discontinuity between the heritage, which is considered to belong to the past, and the people of the present, and faces severe difficulties while attempting to take on board living traditions of the non-western world.

The World Heritage concept originally considered only dead traditions, and it was much later that it attempted to include living traditions, and still by expanding or amending its criteria and categories rather than by substantially changing its underlying philosophy and fundamental principles.

## **4.2. Conservation in relation to the approaches towards the fabric of living sites**

The caring for living sites is expressed through a variety of practices revealing differing approaches towards the fabric of the sites (section 3.2). However, not all of these approaches can be embraced by western-based conservation, especially in the World Heritage context.

Western-based conservation, creating discontinuity between the present and the past, concentrates on the past and its tangible remains, based on the notion that authenticity of sites and objects is non-renewable (sections 2.1 and 3.1). In this context, western-based conservation heavily focuses on the material of sites and objects and on elements of materiality such as the age of a structure and the type of its original material. As a result, practices that do not consider the significance of the age of a structure (such as repainting of prehistoric rock images: sections 3.2.3) or that make the defining of the age of a structure very difficult in the first place (such as total physical renewal practices: section 3.2.3) are unlikely to be embraced within western-based conservation. Similarly, practices that do not consider the importance of the type of the original material are unlikely to be taken on board either. Examples of such practices are those that define the material on the basis of the function of the structure (as in Hindu religious heritage: section 3.2.6) or practices that require the renewal of the material by a different material that would serve the function of the structure more effectively (such as practices of partial replacement/renewal of existing material with same or different material: sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2). Furthermore, practices that do not even consider the significance of the object as a whole (as with the practices of immersion of objects in the water or the replacement of objects: sections 3.2.4 and 3.2.5) are unacceptable to western-based conservation. Generally speaking, change of fabric (serving functional continuity, in the context of sites' wider cultural significance and conceptual integrity), which is essential for the survival and continuation of living sites (section 3.2.6), is unlikely to be accepted within western-based conservation:

Most conservation debates discuss change in terms of the loss of something, as opposed to new possibilities, mostly because people (especially the propagators and patrons of

conservation effort) will easily react to any sort of new condition as worse than some “magic” moment in the past (Mehrotra 2004, 26).

Therefore, western-based conservation is generally unlikely to embrace approaches towards the fabric of living sites in which the physical, material structure may be given a low priority (such as immersion and replacement of structures: sections 3.2.4 and 3.2.5).

The World Heritage concept can take on board only those practices that prove to have positive results in the preservation of the fabric of the sites, in terms of authenticity and integrity (section 2.1): ‘...which should specify how the outstanding universal value of a property should be preserved’ (UNESCO 2005).

This emphasis on the preservation of the fabric of the sites implies that many practices would be unacceptable to the World Heritage concept. From the variety of practices discussed earlier (section 3.2) only examples of partial replacement of existing material with same material (which may be considered the simplest of the approaches in terms of materiality: section 3.2.1) can be embraced in the World Heritage context. In this line, some of the sites of this category have been inscribed in the *World Heritage List*, such as the Kasubi tombs, Uganda, the Grand Mosques of Timbuktu, Mali, the Hindu Chola Temple at Tanjore, India, and the Buddhist Temple of the Tooth Relic as part of the city of Kandy, Sri Lanka.

Other practices, such as those of partial renewal of existing material with different material, or total physical renewal, or immersion, or replacement of the entire structure with a new one (sections 3.2.2 to 3.2.5), are not recognised, as a general principle, in the World Heritage context. Repainting of rock images in Australia (a case of total physical renewal: section 3.2.3), for example, has often faced such accusations as that of ‘desecration [of] some of the most significant relics of traditional Aboriginal culture in Australia... [and] irreparable damage [of] part of the cultural heritage of all mankind’ (quoted in Bowdler 1988, 520; see also Ward 1992b, 32-35). In Australia repainting as a legitimate option in contemporary site conservation could be acceptable to government statutory bodies, but mostly in specific cases as in the Gibb River project (certainly not in sites listed in the *World Heritage List*) and in most of the cases under very strict regulations (such as: not upon existing layers of significant cultural value or in a way that would not destroy the

existing paintings, and only after the existing layers have been fully recorded) and still under severe conflicts (Mulvaney and Kamminga 1999, 361; Ward 1992b, 32-35; pers. comm. Peter Sutton). In a similar context, in the site of Domboshava, part of Matobo Hills, Zimbabwe (inscribed in the World Heritage List in 2003), repainting as part of rain-making rituals was banned and the local communities conducting the ritual were removed from the site by the heritage authorities in the 1980s. This ban led to a serious conflict between the two sides and an act of severe damage to the rock paintings caused by the local communities in 1998. The result was that rain-making rituals have been accepted by the heritage authorities of the site, but have been relocated to another part of the site which does not interfere with the rock paintings (Pwiti and Mvenge 1996, 818-21; Taruvinga and Ndoro 2003, 5-9). Rain-making rituals were also banned from the site of Siloswane, also part of Madobo Hills, Zimbabwe (Taruvinga and Ndoro 2003, 4; Ndoro 2004, 82). In another example, with regard to 'Shikinen Zotai' (an example of total physical renewal: section 3.2.3), Ise Shrine, which is the only shrine which continues the ritual in its pure form/in the entire precinct of the site (section 3.2.3), has not been designated as a national heritage let alone a World Heritage site, because the ritual is seen as going beyond the assessments and classification of value and authenticity based on tangible form (Inaba 2005, 54). Only shrines in which the original ritual has not survived or has survived in a faded form (section 3.2.3) have been designated as National Heritage monuments, as is the case of 'Onbashira Matsuri' of Suwa Shrine (Inaba 2005, 52-53). The case of Kasubi tombs, Uganda could be seen in a similar context. The heritage authorities of the site, those associated with the World Heritage inscription of the site, did not allow local communities to use iron in the making of the house walls (an example of partial renewal of existing material with different material: section 3.2.2). They, instead, re-established, and trained the local communities in, the practice of thatching (a practice of partial replacement of existing material with same material: section 3.2.1), which was they considered to be the 'traditional' practice of maintenance of the site (pers. comm. Webber Ndoro; pers. comm. Andrew Reid; Munjeri 2004b, 76-77; Kigongo 2005, 36-37). Therefore, the aforementioned cases tend to imply that practices of caring for sites have to be reduced in their own right or suppressed by heritage authorities in order to be recognised as relevant to official conservation systems, and still at a national heritage rather than a World Heritage level.

In the cases of sites already inscribed in the *World Heritage List*, such practices, whenever taking place, run counter to the current principles and practices of conservation. Two examples are the restoration of the Buddhist statue of Ta Reach at Angkor Wat, Cambodia as part of the folk religion known as ‘Nakta’ and the restoration of Temple of the Tooth Relic, Sri Lanka (section 2.3; section 5.1).

Because of the emphasis of the World Heritage concept on the preservation of the fabric of the sites, traditional practices of caring for living sites can be acceptable in most cases not in their own right but in connection with modern conservation-based practices and systems (see also Joffroy 2005, 3-4), as the aforementioned case of the Kasubi tombs suggests. The only site that has been inscribed in the *World Heritage List* exclusively under traditional law is the natural site of East Rennell, Solomon Islands, and still its inscription could be seen as a rather ‘adventurous’ one (IUCN 1998, 82-83; UNESCO 1999b, 26-27).

Given this failure of the World Heritage concept to take on board most of the practices of caring for living sites, the declared recognition or imposition of a new World Heritage status may become a tool in the hands of national heritage authorities in their attempt to suppress or deny such practices. As it was noted with regard to the practice of repainting (section 3.2.3),

the phrase which seems to have acted like a bell on the Pavlonial dogs of the heritocracy is ‘cultural heritage of all mankind’ ...Defining something as belonging to that transcendent category is a means of excluding anyone who might have a particular interest in it (Bowdler 1988, 521).

## **Conclusion**

Despite the claims that there is an increasing tendency among the conservation charters and conservation professionals internationally to recognise and appraise traditional practices (section 2.2), there is still a significant gulf between changing approaches and what actually happens. Western-based conservation, especially in the strict World Heritage context, can embrace the practices of caring for living sites only to a limited extent: in the cases that these traditional practices prove to have positive results in the preservation of the fabric of the sites, and mostly in connection with modern conservation-based practices. The majority of the practices of caring for

living sites have not been embraced within World Heritage context and most of the time not even within national heritage contexts.

### **4.3. Conclusion: Conservation and living sites: discontinuity from the past and functional continuity**

This chapter demonstrated that the current theoretical framework and practice of conservation and the World Heritage concept in particular, based on discontinuity created between the monuments considered to belong to the past and the people of the present, and heavily focusing on the preservation of the fabric of sites, seem unable to embrace living sites and the variety of approaches towards their fabric.

This discontinuity created between the present and the past contradicts the continuity of the original function and of the process of creation of sites (functional continuity) by the sites' original community (site community). Conservation is based on sites whose original function has been broken and whose process of creation (in accordance with the original function of the sites) has ceased.

In this context, conservation professionals see site communities simply as a stakeholder group to be identified, taken into consideration and managed, and see site communities' association with their sites as a (group's) value to be classified and assessed. The classification of values and stakeholder groups in categories and their rigorous assessment, however, works to a degree against the unified organic character of living sites as continually defined and created by site communities. Thus, conservation professionals deprive site communities of their special association with the sites (as those associated with the continual process of the creation of the site); they, instead, establish and justify their own association with the sites and their right to keep all stakeholder groups, including site communities, under their control. In this respect, conservation professionals see the concept of a living site within their own association (rather than within site communities' association) with the sites.

Conservation professionals (based on discontinuity between the sites considered to belong in the past and the people of the present) and site communities (associated with functional continuity) see and protect authenticity in different and even conflicting ways. For conservation professionals authenticity is considered to lie in the past and to be associated mostly with the tangible aspects of the sites. For site communities authenticity is in the present, and is associated mostly with their (intangible) association with the sites. Conservation professionals concentrate on the

protection of the sites (through strict rules and limitations on the use of the sites), as an obligation to the past generations and also in the name of the present public and the future generations. Site communities place emphasis on the continual process of creation of the sites by themselves, as a constant obligation of theirs to their sites, and tend to envisage no limitations in this process of creation. Conservation professionals mostly see heritage as a product, and see any change in the fabric of this product as something to be avoided, while site communities treat heritage as a process, considering change of the fabric as an inseparable part of this process. Thus site communities feel that, even if the physical material of the sites may be harmed or even destroyed, the authenticity of the sites is not actually harmed as long as the process of the creation of sites continues. For conservation professionals the past is mostly regarded as 'dead', and seeking authenticity is unattainable, while for site communities the past is part of the ongoing present, or rather there is only present (the boundaries between the past, the present and the future are eliminated), and authenticity can never be lost or destroyed thanks to the continual process of the creation of sites by them. Thus, it could be argued that conservation professionals seek, and try to preserve, an 'aura' of authenticity (Lowenthal 1989, 846; Holtorf and Schadla-Hall 1999, 231; Cunha 1995, 262-63), while site communities create and define the actual authenticity. Actually, site communities might not even have the concept of authenticity: they seem to consider their own everyday presence in, and creation of, the sites to be the exclusive definition of authenticity. Therefore, conservation professionals tend to see and protect the sites as 'heritage', while site communities experience and create the sites as a 'living reality'.

This difference between conservation professionals' 'heritage' and site communities' 'living reality' is reflected in Buffy Saint-Marie's song '...now that my life is known as your heritage' (Saint-Marie 1966) and in Ndoro's words, with reference to Great Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe 'Your Monument Our Shrine' (Ndoro 2001). This difference is raised, with reference to Australia, as follows:

Archaeologists and others involved in the study of Aboriginal culture, past or present, should ask themselves what is more important, the preservation of a few relics of the recent past, or the active continuation of that living culture? (Bowdler 1988, 523).

As a Zuni spokesman claimed, ‘conservation is a disservice to my culture’ (Edmund Ladd, 1992, quoted in Sease 1998, 106).

## 5. Examples of living sites

*Built within a span of about 150 years, the three sites [the Temple of Brihadisvara at Tanjore, the Temple of Brihadisvara at Gangaikondacholapuram and the Temple of Airavatesvara at Darasuram] display commonality as well as divergence. Overriding these contradictory factors are the requirements of a living temple (ASI 2003, 262).*

## 5.0. Objectives

Chapter 3 explored the concept of a living site, seen in the context of functional continuity, and chapter 4 examined the boundaries of conservation in relation to living sites.

This chapter further explores the concept of a living site and the boundaries of conservation in relation to living sites. It concentrates on: the way the nature of functional continuity changes over the course of time due to changing wider circumstances; the consequences of the different ways in which the nature of functional continuity may change, for the operation, management, spatial arrangement and fabric of the sites; and the extent to which these different ways can be embraced within World Heritage and national heritage contexts.

In order to explore these questions, the chapter looks at specific examples of living sites from different parts of the world.

The first part briefly presents the sites.

The second part compares the sites in terms of operation and management, concentrating on the ways heritage authorities deal with the complexities of living sites in a national and international context.

The examples of sites discussed in this chapter are: the Hindu Temples of Tanjore, Srirangam and Tirupati in India, the Buddhist Temple of the Tooth Relic in Sri Lanka and Kakadu National Park in Australia. The specific examples of sites were chosen for the following reasons:

India is a good example to demonstrate a consistent attempt, on the part of heritage authorities, to take on board the strong association of local communities with particularly living religious sites and the continuing traditional practices of maintenance of sites (it is not coincidental that INTACH Charter was composed in India: section 2.3.3). The Temples of Tanjore, Srirangam and Tirupati, in the same country and with the same religion and thus under a uniform administrative and management system, provide good examples for exploring the difficulties of embracing living sites within a national heritage context. The Tanjore Temple is designated at a national (as well as international) level, the Srirangam Temple is designated at a state level, while the Tirupati Temple is a non-designated site.

The Temple of Tanjore, the Temple of the Tooth Relic and Kakadu National Park are World Heritage sites that demonstrate a firm emphasis, on the part of heritage authorities, on the living character of the sites, and thus provide good examples for exploring the difficulties of embracing living sites within the World Heritage context. The Temple of Tanjore is a case in which even the term 'living' is included in its World Heritage inscription, something that is claimed to demonstrate that the living character of sites can be embraced and even promoted in the World Heritage context (ASI 2003, 26). Kakadu National Park is a case in which heritage authorities take on board, in a formally established way, the views of the indigenous community of the site, in the context of a values-based approach (values-based approaches in general are largely based on *Burra Charter*, which was composed in Australia: section 2.2). On this basis, Kakadu is frequently highly acclaimed, often cited as a model, internationally as an example of community involvement within the existing principles and practices of conservation and World Heritage (Flood 1989, 87; Press and Lawrence 1995, 14; UNESCO 1998, 20). The Temple of the Tooth Relic is a case in which its religious community has the primary role in the operation and management of the site. During a major restoration project at the site (following an event of severe destruction of the site) the religious community took decisions that clearly favoured the living, religious function of the site at the expense of the protection of its heritage significance. Thus, the site is frequently referred to internationally as an example that challenges the existing principles and practices in conservation, especially in the strict World Heritage context (Wijesuriya 2000, 104-107).

## 5.1. Examples of living sites: presentation

### 5.1.1. Hindu Temples in Tanjore, Srirangam and Tirupati, India

The Tanjore Temple and the Srirangam Temple are in the state of Tamil Nadu, while the Tirupati Temple is in the state of Andhra Pradesh (Figure 7). The Tirupati Temple and the Srirangam Temple are devoted to Vishwa, while the Tanjore Temple is devoted to Shiva.



**Figure 7:** The Hindu Temples of Tanjore, Srirangam and Tirupati, India: Location (original figure: India map n.d., with author's additions).

1: Tanjore. 2: Srirangam. 3: Tirupati.

These temples, in the same country and with the same religion, are under a uniform administrative and management system, which could be briefly described as follows (Act 1959, cited in ASI 1979; pers. comm. Ranesh Ray; pers. comm. M.N. Rajesh; pers. comm. Archana Verma).

The system of heritage protection in India, applying to all sites whether in use or not, lies at a federal and at a state level. At a federal/central government level the responsibility belongs to the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), within the

Department of Culture, Ministry of Tourism and Culture, while at a state level the responsibility is under State Departments of Archaeology (SDA). ASI is responsible for those monuments and sites designated as National Heritage sites (including the World Heritage sites), while SDAs are responsible for those monuments and sites designated at a state level.

Religious historic sites of India that are still in use fall also under another administrative system (on the basis of the religion to which they belong), which lies at a state and at a local level. In this context, Hindu Temples that are still in use are managed by the State Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HRCE) at a state level and by the Temple Board of Trustees, consisting mainly of members of the local community, and are owned by the Hereditary Trustee, who is an influential member of the local community. The State HRCE has the ultimate responsibility for the administrative control and the overall operation of the temples, while the local Temple Board of Trustees is responsible for the practical issues of the every-day operation of the site, with a focus on the caring for the needs of the local community.

The power in the operation and management of Hindu temples is in theory officially in the hands of the State HRCE. The State HRCE appoints the head and most of the members of the Temple Board and supervises the everyday operation of the site by the Temple Board, and defines the role and the responsibilities of the Hereditary Trustee (ASI 2003, 268-70). In practice, however, much depends on the power of each particular Temple Board and its internal power-relations, as affected by the interactions between the state government and the local government.

Thus, in Hindu Temples still in use that are designated for their historic importance, the responsibility for the protection of the archaeological material is under ASI or SDA, while the responsibility for the overall operation and management of the temples is under the State HRCE and the Temple Board. These two responsibilities, though originally differentiated, may sometimes become interlinked, overriding and even conflicting.

### **The Brihadisvara Temple at Thanjavur/Tanjore (World Heritage site)**

The Brihadisvara Temple at Tanjore was inscribed in the *World Heritage List* in 1987. The inscription of the site was extended in 2004 to include the nearby Temples of Brihadisvara at Gangaikondacholapuram and of Airavatesvara at Darasuram (inscribed all together as ‘Great Living Chola Temples’). The main argument for the extension of the World Heritage status of the site was the living character of the Temples (see introductory quote of the chapter; pers. comm. Ranesh Ray; pers. comm. A.R. Ramanathan).

This account will focus on the Brihadisvara Temple at Tanjore.

The Brihadisvara Temple at Tanjore consists of a main temple and several other temples and shrines in a spacious courtyard, enclosed by two walls (Pichard 1995, 23-25) (Figures 8 and 9).

The Brihadisvara Temple at Tanjore was a royal temple, ‘deliberately created by an act of royal policy as a royal/ceremonial centre’ of the royal palace, at the end of the Tenth-beginning of the Eleventh Century (Pichard 1995, 113). The palace was centred on the Temple, and the city was centred on the palace (Pichard 1995, 113; ASI 2003, 25; ASI 1960, 15-16).

The foundation of a new royal capital in the Eleventh Century meant the construction of a new royal palace, with a new royal temple, and subsequently the removal of the majority of royal and temple officials and servants and also of part of the population from the old capital to the new one (Pichard 1995, 15). As a consequence, the Temple ceased to function as a royal temple, thus losing a most significant part of its original importance and reputation, but continued to function as a temple in use by the remaining local community of Thanjavur.

In the Sixteenth Century Thanjavur became the royal capital again. A new royal palace was built, and a new city was centred on the new palace. The Temple became the royal temple again, with the construction of new buildings in it.

With the abandonment of the royal system and the establishment of a new capital of the state in the Nineteenth Century, the Temple lost its royal character for good, but remained in use by the remaining local population of the city. In the Twentieth Century the Temple was declared a heritage site, initially at national level (in 1922) and later at international level as well (in 1987), under the protection of ASI.

Thus the Tanjore Temple was originally built as a royal temple, functioning as the centre of the royal palace and the royal capital. Over the course of time it became a temple in use by the local community (a local temple), then a royal temple in a royal city of a different form and structure, centred around a new royal palace, i.e. actually a new royal city, and now a national and world heritage site.

Today the Tanjore Temple operates mainly as a heritage site. It is also an active religious as well as social and cultural centre for the local community. It is increasingly becoming a tourist attraction for non-Hindu visitors as well (ASI 2003, 258).

The ultimate power over the operation and management of the site is clearly in the hands of ASI (ASI 2003, 271). The local Temple Board has limited power, and is mainly dealing with the organisation of the social and cultural activities for the local community, always under the supervision of the State HRCE and ultimately ASI. The priests, consisting mostly of local people, have even less power, and are responsible exclusively for the performance of the religious rituals. A priest of the Temple noted, in response to my question whether he would remain serving the temple and performing rituals in case the heritage authorities of the site would not allow him to do so or if no local people or visitors would come to visit the temple: 'I would leave the place to go somewhere else. I am simply working here'.

The ultimate power of ASI over the operation and management of the site is reflected in the condition and use of the space and fabric of the site. ASI clearly concentrates on the protection of the fabric of the site. Thus, only the historic structures remain within the Temple enclosure. In the other two sites included as additions to the initial World Heritage inscription of the Tanjore Temple (Brihadisvara Temple at Gangaikondacholapuram and Airavatesvara Temple at Darasuram) local residences and shops that existed within the Temple enclosures were considered 'encroachments' and removed, and the sites were fenced in (ASI 2003, 288). The effect of religious rituals upon the fabric of the buildings is strictly assessed by ASI (ASI 2003, 290). The access to areas under increased protection for their fabric is strictly forbidden for the visitors and the local people and severely restricted even for the priests (access allowed only in specific occasions and after special permission from ASI).



**Figure 8:** The Brihadisvara Temple at Tanjore, India: internal view (source: ASI 2007).  
The main temple is depicted on the left.



**Figure 9:** The Brihadisvara Temple at Tanjore, India: entrance (source: ASI 2007).

## **The Temple of Srirangam**

The Temple of Srirangam, situated on a village close to the city of Trichy, has a main temple in the centre, surrounded by seven wall enclosures with altogether twenty one towers. The first wall enclosure is dominated by the main temple. The following wall enclosures (second to fifth) include secondary temples as well as kitchen and storehouse premises, mostly for the needs of the pilgrims. The last two enclosures (sixth and seventh) include residences of the priests and also residences and shops of the local people (Srirangam Temple n.d.; Aruniappan 1987, 5-19) (Figures 10, 11 and 12).

The Temple of Srirangam is a self-manifested shrine (i.e. a shrine believed to be located on one of the sacred spots of Hinduism, and not created by a human act, e.g. an act of royal policy, like the Tanjore Temple). Originally it was a small shrine, which developed over the course of time in a major one, mainly due to the consistent support from the royal families. The Temple was built in the already existing urban settlement of Trichy and developed separately from the city, yet with strong links to each other (Aruniappan 1987, 19-24; Rao 1961; Figures 10-13).

The Temple has several phases of construction. Originally the Temple consisted of strictly religious buildings, following the strict rules of the *Agamas* texts of *Paramesvara-Samhita*. Over the course of time, however, various types of buildings were added due to the active participation-intervention of different groups in the operation of the site: members of the royal families added temples and shrines of their own choice; priests were given some temporary space to use, which over the course of time became permanent; and powerful local administrative officers, under the allowance of the Temple Board, built residences there, which were later purchased by members of the local community and converted into shops. Although originally all the buildings within the Temple enclosures complied with the rules of the *Agamas* texts, some of the later buildings, mostly the local houses and shops, do not comply with these rules (pers. comm. Sri Vaishnava Sri; pers. comm. Sivanagi Reddy).

Today the Temple of Srirangam operates as an active religious, social and economic centre for the local community and a significant pilgrimage centre for Hindu devotees (mainly from within India) (Figure 14), managed by the Temple Board under the supervision of the State HRCE. It also operates as a heritage site designated at state level, under the protection of SDA. The responsibility of SDA

covers the temples and the wall enclosures but not the local houses and shops, which are under the ownership of members of the local community.

The power in the operation and management of the Temple is in theory officially in the State HRCE and SDA. In practice, however, the Temple Board has an increased role in the life of the site, operating under a significant influence from the local government. As a consequence, power in the decision-making process lies in the Temple Board, which is influenced by the state government on the one hand and the local government on the other.

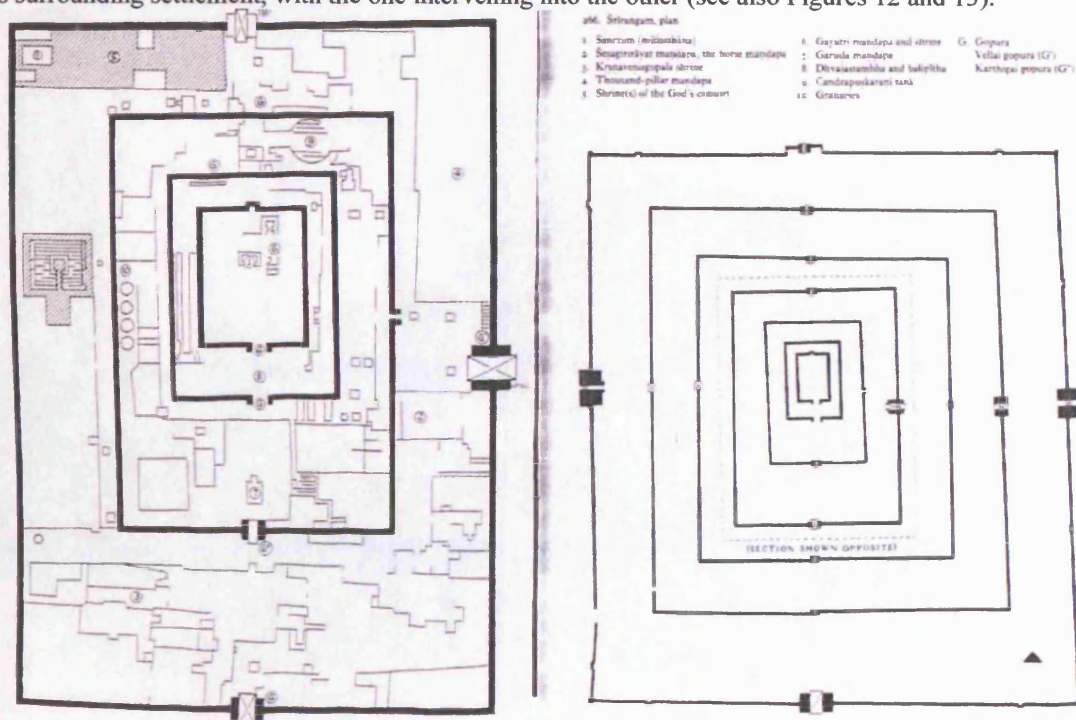
The power conflicts between the groups involved in the operation and management of the site are reflected in the space and fabric of the site. The Temple Board, under the influence of the State HRCE, and with the support of SDA, is currently trying to remove the local shops and houses from the Temple, and thus gain control over the entire site. But the local shop- and house- owners are resisting, enjoying the support of the local government: the local owners have strong personal and financial links with the local government, and also the local government uses the local owners as a means to influence the operation of the Temple. The local owners also enjoy the support of the majority of the local members of the Temple Board. Thus, the issue of the removal of the local residences and shops from the temple is currently open and has been directed to the courts, but it seems that the decision is not likely in the near future. Until then, selling or buying of buildings within the Temple enclosures is strictly prohibited (pers. comm. Sri Vaishnava Sri). Therefore, the Temple Board is now facing the problems it created or at least actively encouraged over the course of time through allowing or encouraging the interventions of other groups (such as the local owners) in the operation of the Temple. The Temple Board is now trying to remove the local owners, whom it, itself, partly supports.

At the same time, the Temple Board, under the State HRCE, and with the support of the local administration and community, is continuing the maintenance and caring for the buildings within the Temple enclosures against the regulations of SDA. Thus the most recent tower of the wall enclosures was built in the 1980s, and some of the shrines were white-washed and part of the wall paintings was repainted in the early 2000s (pers. comm. Sri Vaishnava Sri).



**Figure 10:** The Srirangam Temple, India: the Temple and its surrounding settlement (source: Srirangam Temple n.d.).

The main temple is depicted in the centre, surrounded by several wall enclosures with towers. This figure can show the complex relationship, in terms of spatial arrangement, between the Temple and its surrounding settlement, with the one intervening into the other (see also Figures 12 and 13).



**Figure 11:** The Srirangam Temple, India: ground plan (source: Sanford 2005).

The plan on the right depicts all the wall enclosures of the Temple, while the detailed plan on the left depicts only the inner wall enclosures, i.e. the ones with the temples. The outer enclosures, containing the local residences and houses, are not shown.



**Figure 12:** The Srirangam Temple, India: shops within the (outer enclosures of the) Temple (source: author's photo).



**Figure 13:** The Srirangam Temple, India: shops and houses outside the Temple (source: author's photo).

These two figures (Figures 12 and 13) illustrate the complex relationship, in terms of spatial arrangement and use, between the Temple and its surrounding settlement, with the one intervening into the other.



**Figure 14:** The Srirangam Temple, India: a pilgrim and a priest in the Temple (source: author's photo).

## **The Tirumala Temple at Tirupati**

The Tirumala Temple is the core of a village situated on the Tirupati hills, above the town of Tirupati. The village consists of several temples and numerous smaller shrines, and a great variety of facilities for the devotees, including inns, restaurants, a visitor centre, hospitals and shops, all associated with the Tirumala Temple (Tirumala Temple n.d. a; Viraraghava Charya 1953; Tirumala Temple n.d. b; Viraraghava Charya 1953, vol. 1, maps 1 and 2) (Figures 15 and 16).

The Tirumala Temple is a self-manifested shrine (i.e. believed to be located on one of the sacred spots of Hinduism). It was originally a small shrine, which gradually developed in a major shrine, with the constant support from the royal families, and has attained immense recognition and fame in the Eighteenth and the Nineteenth Century to present (Ramesan 1981, vi; 82; Viraraghava Charya 1953, vol. 1, 35-55). Today the Tirumala Temple has become one of the most important international Hindu pilgrimage centres (pers. comm. Y.G.V. Babu) (Figure 15).

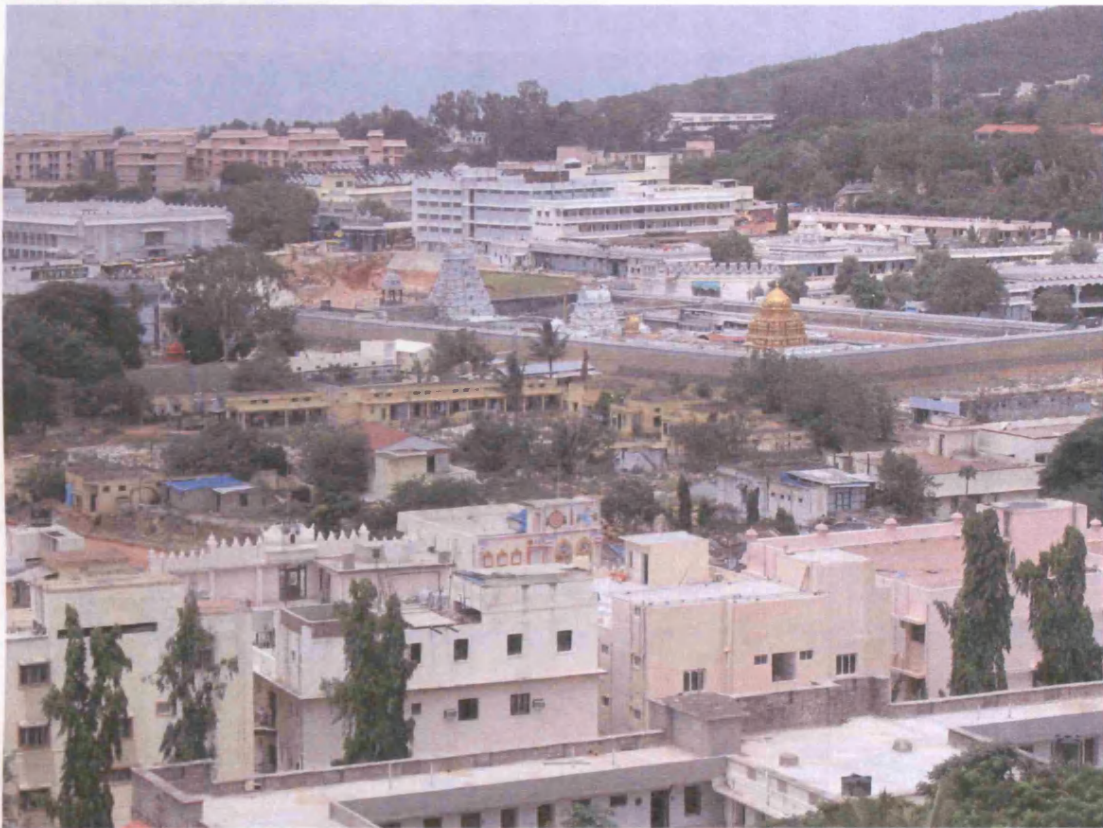
Throughout its history and until today the temple has undergone major construction works with the continual additions of new buildings (Satyanarayana 2003, 35-49; Viraraghava Charya 1953, vol. 1, 56-71) (Figure 16). The Tirumala Temple was built in an area where there was no existing urban settlement. The village on the Tirumala hills and the nearby city of Tirupati owe their existence and development to the development of the Temple (pers. comm. Y.G.V. Babu).

As a Hindu Temple in use the Tirumala Temple was supposed to be placed under the control of the State HRCE (see above). But the Tirumala Temple was considered too important and powerful to 'equate... with all the minor and small temples' in India (Ramesan 1981, 569), and was thus given a special management status: The Temple is managed exclusively by its Temple Board ('Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams'/TTD), appointed and controlled directly by the state government. The priests give their silent approval to the decisions taken by the Temple Board, and are responsible exclusively for the performance of the rituals, and still under the constant control of the Temple Board. The local community has no involvement in the decision-making process (pers. comm. E. Sivanagi Reddy).

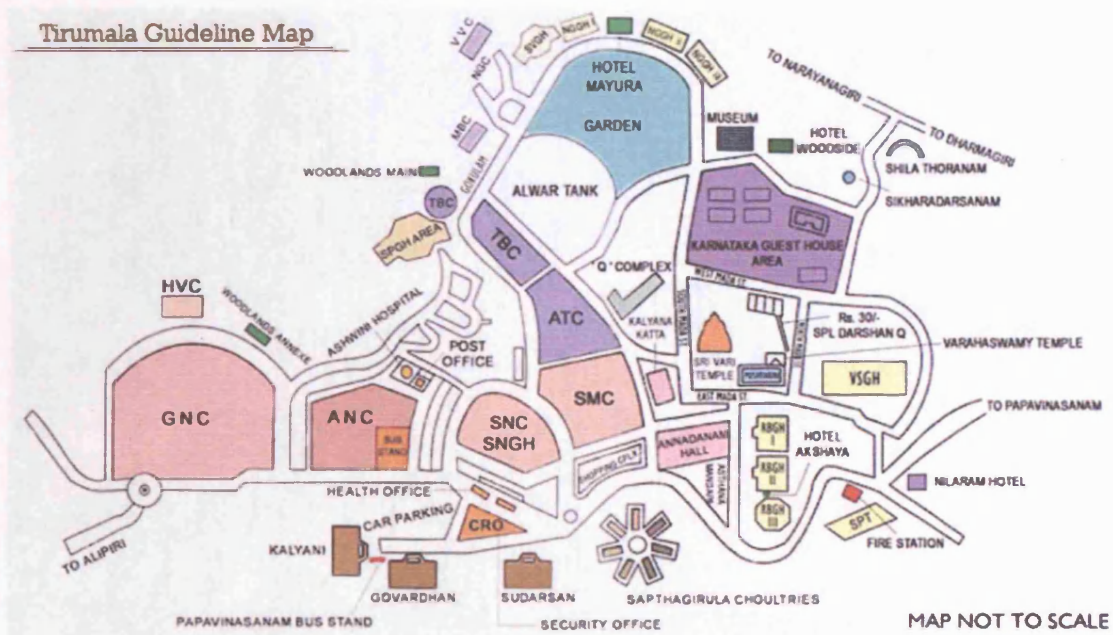
The priorities of the Temple Board for the management of the Temple are: the maintenance of the temples (Ramesan 1981, 571), the caring for the huge number of the pilgrims, the exploitation of the Temple's property, and philanthropic activity 'in furtherance of the propagation of Hindu Religion and Culture' (Ramesan 1981, 569)

(Tirumala Temple n.d. a; pers. comm. Y.G.V. Babu, TTD; pers. comm. E. Sivanagi Reddy).

The emphasis placed by the Temple Board on the caring for the temples and the pilgrims is reflected in the spatial arrangement and the fabric of the Temple (see figure 16). For example, local shops within the Temple enclosure and local houses close to the Temple were removed in the last decade to allow space for the construction of new temples and pilgrim facilities (pers. comm. R. Satyanarayana; pers. comm. M. N. Rajesh). In the early 2000s a Fifteenth-Century thousand-pillar temple was ‘ironically ... pulled down by the temple administrations for the inconvenience it causes to the functioning of the temple’ (Satyanarayana 2003, 38): for example, to allow for more space for the procession of chariots with the image of the god during the *Brahmotsavam* festival. The thousand-pillar temple is now in the process of being reconstructed in a different location (pers. comm. R. Satyanarayana; pers. comm. M. N. Rajesh).



**Figure 15:** The Tirumala Temple, India: the Temple and its surrounding settlement (source: author's photo).



**Figure 16:** The Tirumala village, India: plan (source: Tirumala Temple n.d. b). The Tirumala Temple is depicted on the right part (in orange colour).



**Figure 17:** The Tirumala Temple, India: pilgrims visiting the Temple (source: author's photo).



**Figure 18:** The Tirumala Temple, India: internal view (source: author's photo).  
This figure could give an indication of the extensive construction activity taking place in the Temple.

### **5.1.2. Kakadu National Park, Australia (World Heritage site)**

The indigenous communities of the Mirrar are the traditional owners of the site. However, their power in the ownership, operation and management of the site has been affected over the course of time mostly as a result of colonialism (see Sullivan 1985; Langford 1983, 3-6).

Today the Park operates as a heritage site and mostly a tourist attraction, and is also occupied by indigenous communities (Figures 19 and 20).

The power in the operation and management of the site has clearly passed into the hands of the heritage authorities. The indigenous communities have retained official titles of land ownership, under the condition imposed upon them that they would lease the land to National Parks Australia (in 1979). The indigenous communities living in the Park actively participate in the management of the site in a formally recognised way, through a joint management scheme, established and supervised by the heritage authorities (Flood 1989, 87; Press and Lawrence 1995, 1-8, Sullivan 1985, 141-44; Wellings 1995, 242-44; Jones 1985, vi; 299-300).

The priorities of the heritage authorities in the operation of the site are, first, to heavily invest in the development of tourism in the site, so that ‘the visitor satisfaction levels remain very high’, and, second, take care of the indigenous communities of the site, encouraging them to become involved in the tourism operation of the site (Australian Department of the Environment and Heritage 2003; see also Morse, King and Bartlett 2005, 3-5; Moffatt 2000, 306-11; Ryan 2001, 128-37). In this line, the Minister of the Environment and Heritage, Australia declared:

We want a framework which helps Aboriginal traditional owners build a sustainable tourism industry — one that helps them care for country and creates opportunities for their children (Australian Department of the Environment and Heritage 2004b).

Or, in a different wording:

I think it's important that there be proper respect on the part of the tourism industry and visitors for the traditional owners, it's their home, it's their country, they obviously do need some privacy in terms of their living arrangements (Australian Department of the Environment and Heritage 2004c).

Despite the aforementioned legal and institutional frameworks for indigenous empowerment in the operation and management of the site, in practice it seems that 'effective indigenous influence ...is abating' in the face of increasing development pressures as well as existing and proposed changes and political interventions affecting the membership of the Board and the independence of the Director of National Parks (UNESCO 1998, 22). An example that demonstrates the difficulties, and the failure, of indigenous empowerment in the management of the site was the Australian government's decision for the extension of the operation of Jabikula uranium mine in the area in the late 1990s, which meant the desecration of indigenous sacred sites (Cleere 2006, 72; see also Ryan 2001, 126-28). This decision led to a major dispute between the Australian government and the UNESCO World Heritage Committee (UNESCO 1998, 10-24; Australian Department of the Environment and Heritage 1998), in which dispute, should be noted, the government seemed to have tried to make selective use of the views of the indigenous communities of the site in an attempt to enhance its own views (Australian Department of the Environment and Heritage 1999). As a result of the difficulties of indigenous empowerment in the management of site, the indigenous communities of the site are experiencing a 'deterioration of relations and communication with a range of external parties' (including the Australian Government, the Northern Territory Government, Environment Australia and the Northern Land Council) (UNESCO 1998, 22). Thus, Parks Australia is often accused of 'forcing traditional owners from the park' (see Australian Department of the Environment and Heritage 2003).

Furthermore, despite the heritage authorities' claimed concern for the indigenous communities of the site and their consistent attempts to involve the indigenous communities in tourism, there has been

little sustained progress in improving the social and economic well being of Aboriginal communities despite the large amounts of money that has flowed to Aboriginal people in the area (Kakadu Region Social Impact Study report, 1997, cited in UNESCO 1998, 17).

The emphasis of the heritage authorities on the tourist operation of the site is reflected in the space of the site, with an increasing construction activity taking place mostly in the form of tourism infrastructure (Australian Department of the Environment and Heritage 2003).



**Figures 19 and 20:** Kakadu residents and rangers (source of figure 19: Savanna Links 2005, 8, source of figure 20: Australian Department of the Environment and Heritage 2007).

### **5.1.3. The Temple of the Tooth Relic in the city of Kandy, Sri Lanka (World Heritage site)**

The city of Kandy consists of the historic core of residences, the royal complex and the Temple of the Tooth Relic (Temple of Tooth Relic 2001). This account will focus on the Temple of the Tooth Relic (Figures 21 and 22).

The Tooth Relic of the Buddha is the most venerated object of worship in the Buddhist world. Since its arrival in Sri Lanka (in the Fourth Century AD), rulers have continually taken care of it, constructing special buildings to house it. The significance of the Tooth Relic was reflected in the widespread belief that the one who owned the Tooth Relic was the king of the country. Thus the frequent shifting of the capital was accompanied by the transferring of the Tooth Relic and the construction of a temple to house it (Wijesuriya 2000, 99-103). After several moves, the Tooth Relic ended up in Kandy in the Seventeenth Century, with the construction of a new palace with a new temple in the centre. Since then the Temple has maintained its position as a major place of worship, with constant state patronage, and has gone through several phases of construction (Temple of Tooth Relic 2001).

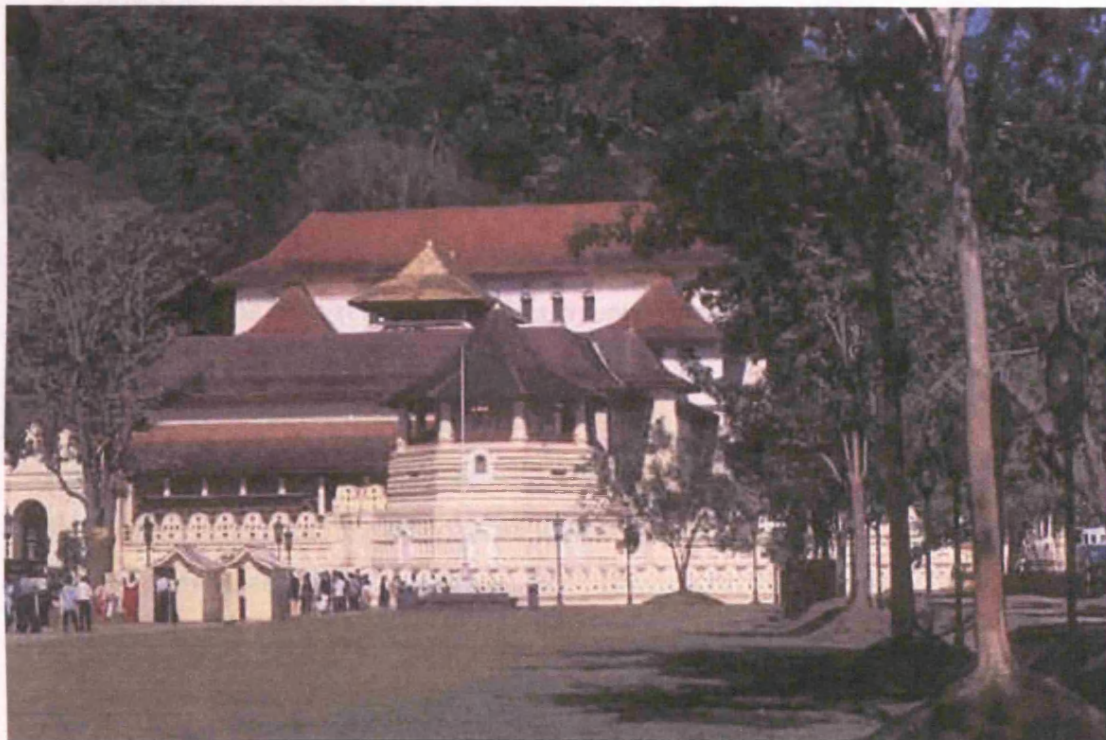
Today the Temple of the Tooth Relic of the Buddha in Kandy is the most sacred Buddhist site and the most important heritage site in Sri Lanka, and one of the most significant international Buddhist pilgrimage centres.

The operation and management of the Temple is the responsibility of two high priests, who are the heads of the two most powerful Buddhist fraternities in Sri Lanka (Malwatta and Asqiriya), and the lay custodian, who is the officer of the Temple (Diyawadana Nilame). These are very influential persons at state level, even with links with the President of Sri Lanka. The protection of the fabric of the site is the responsibility of CTO/ UNESCO Sri Lanka Cultural Triangle Project, which takes care of several World Heritage sites in Sri Lanka (established in 1982), and the State Department of Archaeology. The local community of Kandy is also participating in the operation of the Temple through the 'Kandy Heritage Trust'. The power in the decision-making process lies clearly in the heads of the fraternities and the lay custodian of the Temple (Wijesuriya 2000, 103; Gamini Wijesuriya, cited in Shimotsuma, Stovel and Warrack 2003, 9; pers. comm. Raj Somadeva).

The most important event in the recent history of the Temple was its significant destruction as a result of a terrorist bomb attack in 1997. The restoration of the Temple became a national task of the highest importance and urgency, with the

active personal involvement of the President of the State (Wijesuriya 2000, 100). Despite the participation of all main stakeholders in the restoration project, it was made clear from the very beginning that any decision taken would be 'subjected to the approval of the two high priests and the lay guardian' (Wijesuriya 2000, 104; 106).

In this context, the first priority of the restoration project, as firmly stated by the religious fraternities and the lay guardian, was the revival of the function of the Temple as a place of worship. In this line, the restoration solutions, proposed by the religious fraternities and the layman of the Temple and eventually accepted by the heritage authorities, clearly favoured the living (religious) function of the site at the expense of the protection of its heritage significance, and generally run counter to conservation principles and practices (Wijesuriya 2000, 104-107). For example, the badly damaged stone carvings at the main entrance of the Temple were not left in their deteriorated state 'as evidence for the future generations to see the damage incurred by terrorists' or were not 'minimally restored [with the use of original material] and left in situ', as suggested by the heritage authorities, but restored 'as a whole' with replicas. Or the paintings on the front wall of the inner temple depicting a series of Buddhas, which had lost a large percentage of their original colour to such extent that the original figures could not be distinguished, were not filled in their missing parts, as proposed by the heritage authorities, but were made complete (Wijesuriya 2000, 104-107).



**Figures 21 and 22:** The Temple of the Tooth Relic in Kandy, Sri Lanka: external view (source: Temple of Tooth Relic n.d).

## **5.2. Examples of living sites: review**

### **5.2.1. National Heritage protection in relation to living sites: Hindu Temples of Tanjore, Srirangam and Tirupati, India**

These sites have retained their functional continuity. This functional continuity is rooted in the continuity of the ritual activities of the sites (the core of functional continuity), and is then reflected in their operation, management, spatial arrangement and fabric. The construction of Temples over the course of time results in the Temples' overall homogeneity and integrity. The sites are in close relationship with their surrounding urban settlements in terms of arrangement of space. The local communities have a strong association with the sites in social and cultural terms, and actively participate in the operation and management of the sites. The traditional management and ownership mechanisms of the sites and the traditional maintenance practices of the sites are still valid (see section 3.1.8 with reference to the Temple of Tanjore).

The three sites are also under a uniform system of operation and management (section 5.1).

What differentiates the three sites is the way the nature of functional continuity has changed over the course of time due to changing wider circumstances (such as social, political and economic ones). As discussed above (section 5.1), the Tanjore Temple started as a royal temple; after the royal capital was moved, it became a temple in use by the local community; and today it is primarily a national (and world) heritage site. Thus, the nature of functional continuity of the site was briefly interrupted, then (re)established in a different way, and now 'stabilised' in a state that is in accordance with the original religious rules governing the operation of the Temple. The Srirangam Temple was initially a small shrine which increased in importance for the local community. The nature of functional continuity of the site has evolved beyond the original religious rules: from purely and strictly religious activities taking place in the Temple to political and commercial ones. The Tirupati Temple was initially a small shrine which developed into a major international pilgrimage centre. The nature of functional continuity of the site has been continually enhanced, in accordance with the original religious rules but rather seeing hardly any

boundaries in its enhancement. Therefore, the main complexities in the operation and management of the sites are the interruptions of the nature of functional continuity over the course of time in the case of the Tanjore Temple, the evolution of the nature of functional continuity in the Srirangam Temple, and the enhancement of the nature of functional continuity in the Tirupati Temple.

The difference in the way the nature of functional continuity at the three sites has changed over the course of time has considerable implications for the power of the site communities in the operation and management of the sites. In the Tanjore Temple, as a result of the change of the character of the site over the course of time, today the local community has limited and not formally, legally recognised power over the site, and the exclusive power is in the hands of the heritage authorities (the Government of India through ASI). In the Srirangam Temple, because of the interventions of various groups in the operation of the site over the course of time, today the local community has significant and officially recognised power over the site (it is even holding legal, official titles of ownership for the houses and shops within the Temple enclosures), while the power of the heritage authorities is relatively less significant. In Tirupati, as a result of the continually increasing importance of the Temple over the course of time, the status of the Temple Board has been officially, legally enhanced, and today the Temple Board has the ultimate control over the ownership and management of the Temple.

The difference in the way the nature of functional continuity has changed over the course of time also affects the administrative and management status of the sites. In the Tanjore Temple the traditional management system of the site is still valid, 'stabilised' in accordance with the original religious rules. In the Srirangam Temple the continual interventions of state and local government officials to the Temple Board are reflected in the internal conflicts within the Temple Board. This means that the operation of the site seems unlikely to conform to the traditional management practices. In the Tirupati Temple, the strengthening of the religious and pilgrimage character of the Temple led to the official, legal change of the management status of the site, clearly beyond the traditional management systems.

The difference in the way the nature of functional continuity has changed over the course of time is also reflected in the spatial arrangement of the sites. With regard to the external space to the Temples (i.e. the relationship between the Temples with their surrounding settlements), the Tanjore Temple was originally the core of its

surrounding settlement, and defined the arrangement of space in its settlement. With the transferring of the royal capital, the Temple ceased to be the core of its settlement and started to be affected by the changes in the spatial arrangement of its settlement. Later, with the re-establishment of the royal capital in the city, the Temple was affected by the new arrangement of space in its settlement, i.e. the new royal palace and the new city. Today, with the establishment of the National and World Heritage status, the site is clearly separated from its settlement. The local residences that previously existed within the Temple enclosure, for example, have been removed (a situation similar to the other two Temples inscribed in the *World Heritage List* as additions to the Tanjore Temple, i.e. the Brihadisvara Temple at Gangaikondacholapuram and the Airavatesvara Temple at Darasuram). The Tirupati Temple has defined the spatial arrangement in its surrounding settlement, giving existence and development to it. The Srirangam Temple and its surrounding settlement have a two-way interactive relationship: residences and shops of the surrounding city have found their way into the Temple enclosures, while the Temple has been expanding towards/within the city.

As far as the internal space of the Temples (within the Temples) is concerned, when the Tanjore Temple ceased to be a royal temple and became a local one, the changes in its spatial arrangement decreased significantly, and when it was declared a national (and world) heritage site, the changes ceased. Thus, the condition of the buildings of the Temple is now 'stabilized' in a state that is in accordance with the original state of space. The spatial arrangement of the Srirangam Temple is in a process of continual change yet outside the boundaries of the original religious tradition and with little respect to the original state of space, as indicated by the erection of residences and shops within the Temple enclosures. The space of the Tirupati Temple is in continual development within the boundaries of the original religious tradition but without respect to the original state of space.

It should be noted that, within this process of change of the spatial arrangement of the sites, the buildings that are more likely to remain in their original position are those directly associated with the function of the sites, i.e. the temples (where gods are believed to reside and where the rituals take place). The buildings that are of a secondary role and importance, such as kitchen facilities, are more likely to be affected and replaced. This is evident in the Srirangam Temple, where the continual changes in the operation and the spatial arrangement of the site over the

course of time have not affected the core, inner wall enclosures (the ones with the temples) but only the outer ones (the ones with the secondary buildings). This is also evident in the Tirupati Temple, where the continual growth of the site and the subsequent rearrangement of space over the course of time seem to have affected all the buildings apart from the main temples.

The difference in the way the nature of functional continuity has changed over the course of time is also reflected in the condition of the fabric of the sites. In the Tanjore Temple the fabric of the buildings is very well preserved, and 'stabilized' in its original condition, with reference to the contemporary conservation guidelines, as applied by ASI. In the Srirangam Temple the changes in the fabric of the buildings by the Temple Board often alter the original state of fabric, against the regulations of SDA, as illustrated by the recent white-washing and the repainting in the shrines. In the Tirupati Temple the continual changes of the fabric of the buildings by the Temple Board have significantly and irreversibly altered the original state of fabric, without any reference to any contemporary conservation guidelines, as clearly illustrated by the recent demolition of the Fifteenth-Century thousand-pillar temple.

These differences between the Tanjore Temple, the Srirangam Temple and the Tirupati Temple in terms of the state of the original space and fabric could be seen as reflected in the different official status of recognition of the historic significance of the three sites. The Tanjore Temple is designated at a national (as well as international) level, the Srirangam Temple is designated at a state level, while the Tirupati Temple is a non-designated site.

Thus, as a consequence of the different ways in which the nature of functional continuity has changed over the course of time, today the Tanjore Temple is mostly a heritage and, increasingly, a tourist site under the responsibility of the government of India (through ASI), with an emphasis on the preservation of its original space and fabric. The Srirangam Temple is mainly a site in use by the local community, with complexities regarding the protection of its original space and fabric. The Tirupati Temple is a major international religious and pilgrimage site managed by its Temple Board, without any concern for its original space and fabric.

### **5.2.2. World Heritage protection in relation to living sites: Hindu Temple of Tanjore in India, Kakadu National Park in Australia, and the Temple of the Tooth Relic in Sri Lanka**

These sites retain their functional continuity. However, the way the nature of functional continuity has changed over the course of time is different in each case.

The Hindu Temple of Tanjore has already been discussed above (section 5.2.1).

Kakadu National Park retains its functional continuity as a traditional settlement for the indigenous communities of the Mirrar, but the nature of functional continuity of the site has been affected over the course of time by colonization, with considerable implications for the operation and management as well as the spatial arrangement of the site. The power in the operation and management of the site has passed from the indigenous communities to the heritage authorities of the site. As a consequence, the site operates primarily as a heritage site of national and international significance and as a major tourist attraction and, on a secondary basis, as a site dwelled by indigenous communities. The indigenous communities of the site are increasingly marginalized in terms of their physical presence in the site, and are severely restricted from a further construction activity at the site. The continuing construction activity at the site is mostly conducted by the heritage authorities, serving mainly the development of tourism at the site.

The functional continuity of the Temple of the Tooth Relic has been maintained, and the nature of functional continuity has been continually enhanced over the course of time, under the constant support from the royal families and the governors of the country. The fraternities and the layman of the site retain their most significant, legally established, power in the operation and management of the site, beyond the control of the heritage authorities. The site remains a most significant religious and pilgrimage centre, and, clearly at a secondary level, a heritage site of national and international significance. The spatial arrangement and the fabric of the site are continually changing in accordance with the original function of the site. These changes often move clearly beyond the existing principles and practices of conservation, particularly in the strict World Heritage context, as illustrated in the recent restoration of the site after the bomb attack.

The discussion of these examples of sites demonstrates that in the Great Living Chola Temple in Tanjore, India and Kakadu National Park, Australia the nature of functional continuity of the sites has been affected over the course of time, and the site communities have lost a significant part of their power in the operation and management of the sites. This may be seen in terms of the following factors. First, site communities' physical presence in the sites is sometimes interrupted or restricted (as with the marginalization of indigenous communities in Kakadu National Park). Second, site communities' association with the sites and their role in site operation and management, is not clearly established in a formal, legal way (as is the case of the Tanjore Temple) or, if established, is considered inferior to the role of the heritage authorities (as in Kakadu National Park). This means that site communities do not form separate management bodies of the sites, but are mostly integrated in management systems and structures established and supervised by the heritage authorities. Third, the further changes in the arrangement of space in accordance with the original function of the sites are severely restricted.

These sites are under the responsibility of the heritage authorities, and operate primarily as heritage and tourist sites, with an emphasis on the preservation of their space and fabric. The site communities do not create significant complexities to the operation and management of the sites: they are consulted and even encouraged to participate in the management of the sites by the heritage authorities, and their management systems are respected and to some extent incorporated within the modern management systems.

These sites can be embraced within the World Heritage principles and practices.

In the case of the Temple of the Tooth Relic in Kandy, Sri Lanka (and also in the cases of the Srirangam Temple and the Tirupati Temple, India) the nature of functional continuity at the sites has been maintained and even enhanced over the course of time, and the site communities have retained their power in the operation and management of the sites. This may be demonstrated by: site communities' constant physical presence in the sites; site communities' firm and undisputable legal recognition as independent (from the heritage authorities) and as the primary management bodies of the sites; and the further arrangement of space in accordance with the original function of the sites.

The power of site communities creates several complexities to the operation and management of the sites and has negative implications for the original condition of the space and fabric of the sites. Furthermore, the management systems of site communities are unlikely to be embraced by the modern management systems (as in the case of the Tirupati Temple).

These sites are actually beyond the boundaries of World Heritage principles and practices. In the case of the Temple of the Tooth Relic, in particular, though the site has been inscribed in the *World Heritage List*, its recent restoration run counter to the World Heritage principles and practices.

Therefore, the discussion of these examples of living sites leads to the conclusion that it seems that the nature of functional continuity has to be suppressed in its own right over the course of time or to be suppressed by heritage authorities in order to (be made to) conform to the existing conservation principles and practices, particularly in the strict World Heritage context.

### 5.3. Conclusion

This chapter clarified and developed the concept of a living site. Chapter 3 showed that the concept of a living site should relate to the continuity of the original function of a site as reflected in the continual process of its creation ('functional continuity') (chapter 3). This chapter demonstrated that the concept of a living site should also relate to the way the nature of functional continuity has changed over the course of time. The changes in the nature of functional continuity may be seen in terms of the following factors: first, site community's physical presence in the site; second, the formal recognition of site community as a separate from the heritage authorities and the primary management body of the site. Thus, in a living site there are two management bodies: the outside one, i.e. the heritage authorities of the site (mostly appointed by the government), and the inside one, i.e. the site community; and, third, the continual process of arrangement of the space of the site in accordance with the original function of the site.

This chapter also demonstrated, through the analysis of specific examples of living sites, the considerable complexities of living sites in terms of the operation, management, spatial arrangement and fabric of the sites, depending on the way the nature of functional continuity changes in each case. It was also illustrated how difficult it is for conservation professionals at a national and an international level to cope with these complexities, despite their concern for the living character of the sites and the involvement of site communities in the management of the sites. It was shown that a site that retains the nature of its functional continuity is most unlikely to conform to the existing conservation principles and practices, particularly in the World Heritage context.

And if such a site has already been inscribed in the *World Heritage List*, it is most likely to face considerable complexities and problems. This is where the monastic site of Meteora is considered.

## **6. The site of Meteora, Greece**

## **6.0. Objectives**

This chapter presents the site of Meteora.

In the first part of the chapter Meteora is described in terms of location, status of ownership, space, history and operation. It is then discussed as a living site on the basis of the definition of the term proposed in this thesis (chapters 3 and 5).

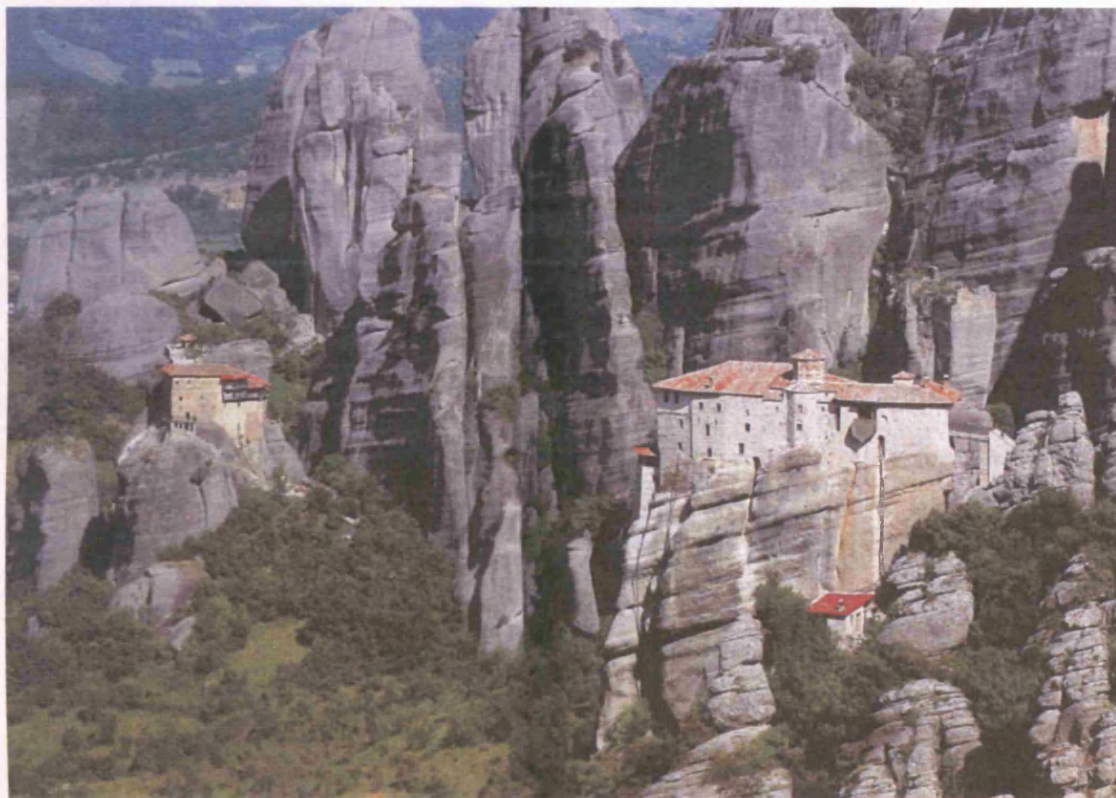
In the second part Meteora is related to the other World Heritage Byzantine monastic sites in Greece.

This chapter places Meteora within the broader discussion of living sites, setting the scene for the analysis of the functional continuity of Meteora (chapter 7) and the way the nature of functional continuity at Meteora changes over the course of time (chapters 7 and 8).

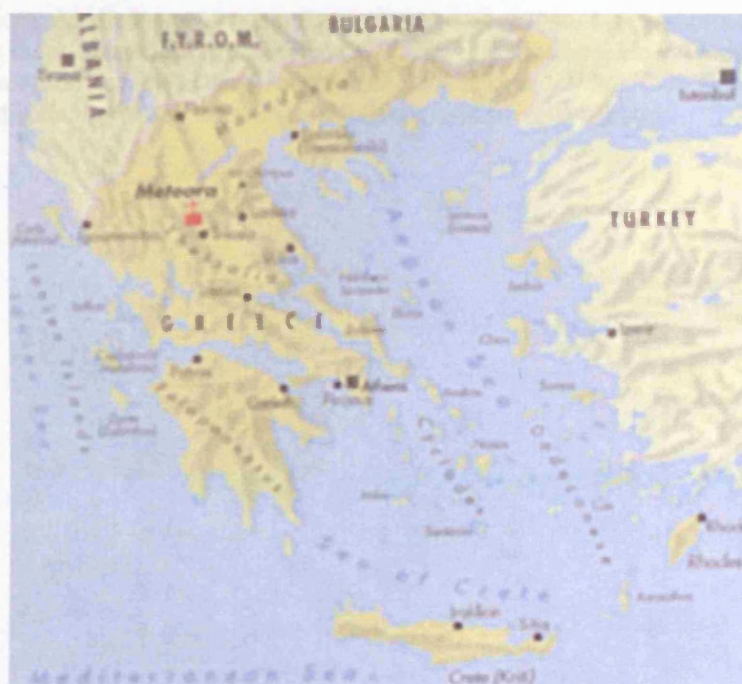
## **6.1. The site of Meteora- Presentation**

Meteora is a geologically important landscape that contains monasteries built on high rocks (Figure 23 and 25). The monasteries look as if they are 'suspended/floating in the air', as the Greek term 'Meteora' means. Meteora is located in central Greece, District of Thessaly, Prefecture of Trikala, Province of Kalampaka, next to the village of Kastraki and the city of Kalampaka (Figure 24). The monastic complex is in state ownership under the control of the Greek Orthodox Church. Each of the individual monasteries of the complex has its own property and the exclusive rights to use it, but their finances are under the control of the State and the Church (UNESCO 1988, 3-4).

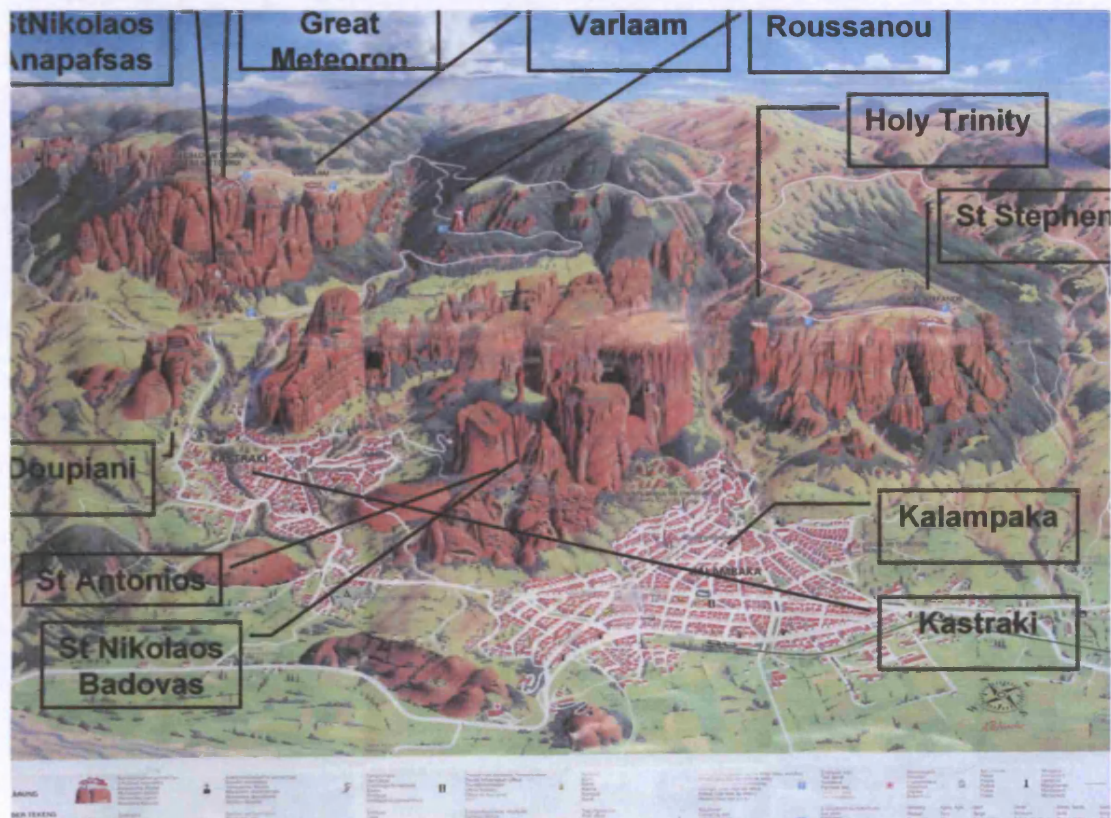
The space of Meteora could be described as follows (Figures 26 and 27). In terms of physical topography, Meteora may be divided into the space inside the physical boundaries of the individual monasteries (i.e. the internal space to the monasteries) and the space outside the physical boundaries of the individual monasteries (i.e. the external space to the monasteries). In terms of status of ownership, the internal space of the monasteries belongs exclusively to the monastic communities, while the external space to the monasteries is mostly public land and, only to a small extent, private land belonging to the monasteries and to private citizens. In terms of status of use, the internal space to the monasteries is the exclusive responsibility of the monastic communities, in accordance with the regulations of the Greek government and under the supervision of the relevant government bodies (the Ministry of Culture). The status of use of the external space to the monasteries is much more complicated, with the involvement of various groups of people (such as the monastic communities, the local community, the visitors and the tourist agencies), in accordance with the regulations of the Greek government and under the supervision of the relevant government bodies (the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry for the Environment, Spatial Planning and Public Works, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Tourism).



**Figure 23:** The Roussanou and the St Nikolaos Anapafsas monasteries: external view (source: Choulia and Albani 1999, 40–41).



**Figure 24:** Meteora: location (source: Meteora map 1996).

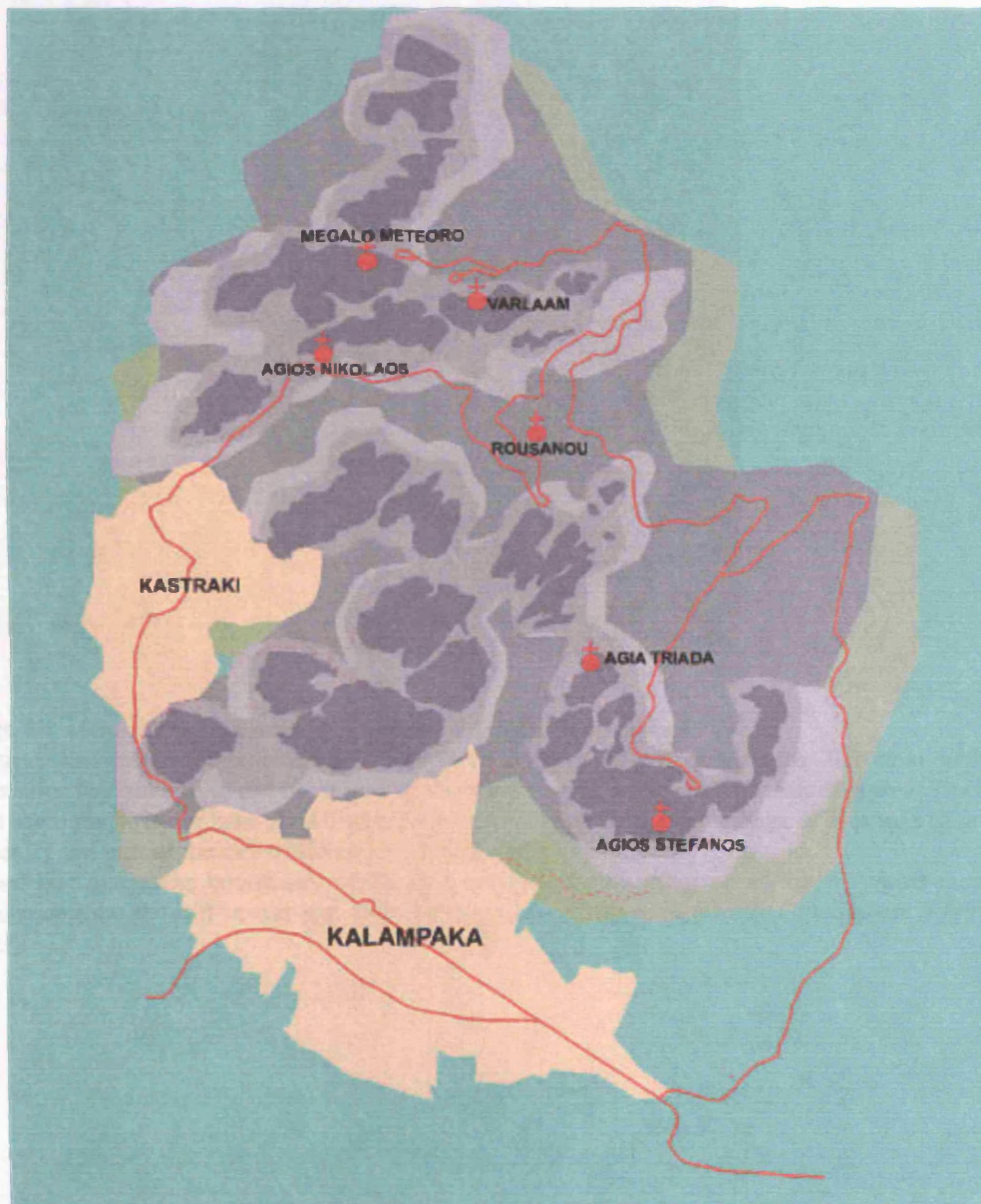


**Figure 25:** Meteora: detailed map (original figure: Meteora map 1996, with author's additions). The map depicts the monasteries (Great Meteoron, Varlaam, Roussanou, Holy Trinity, St Stephen, and St Nikolaos Anapafsas) and the *skites* (Doupiani, St Antonios, and St Nikolaos Badovas) that are still in use, the city of Kalampaka and the village of Kastraki, and the road network.

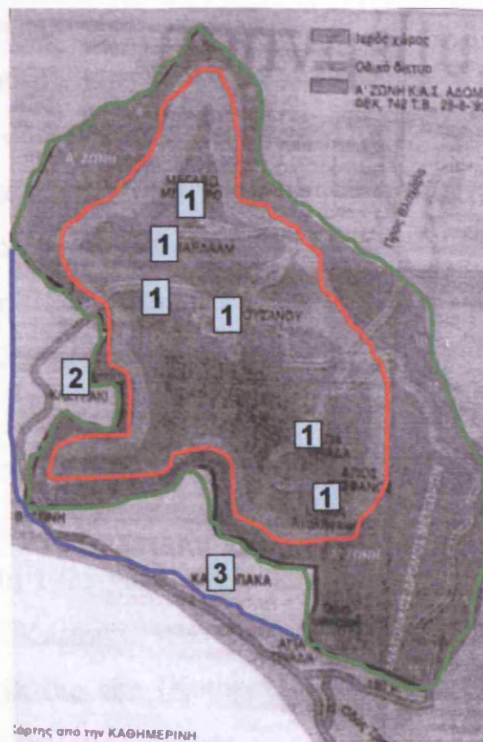
**Figure 26:** Monastery map of Meteora (Kalampaka Tour Guide 2003)

The map depicts the 12 monasteries that are still in use, the city of Kalampaka and the village of Kastraki, and the road network.

The different colors indicate the different levels of the topography of the site (the darker the color the higher the elevation).



**Figure 26:** Meteora: map of topography (source: Kalampaka Tour Guide 2000). This map depicts the monasteries that are still in use, the city of Kalampaka and the village of Kastraki, and the road network. The different colours indicate the differences in the topography of the site (the darker the colour the higher the altitude indicated).



**Figure 27:** Meteora: map of zones of protection (source: Kalokairinos 1995).

The green line marks the boundaries of zone A of the heritage site of Meteora. This zone includes the monasteries that are still in use (indicated by number 1) and their broader surrounding area. The blue line marks the boundaries of zone B of the heritage site, which includes the village of Kastraki (indicated by number 2) and part of the city of Kalampaka (indicated by number 3).

The red line marks the boundaries of the area recognised and protected as ‘holy’, which includes the monasteries that are still in use and their directly surrounding area (Greek Government 1995: section 8.1.2.3).

#### **6.1.1. Meteora as a monastic site**

Meteora has been an Orthodox monastic site since the end of the tenth-beginning of the Eleventh Century to the present date. Throughout its history some of the monasteries of the complex have experienced periods of monastic absence (the latest of which was during the World War II and the Greek Civil War), which ended with the re-establishment of the monastic communities, without affecting the monastic function of the site. The monastic function of the site is continually reflected in changes in the spatial arrangement of the site throughout the course of its history to the present.

Meteora contains monastic communities of monks and nuns. Initially only monks lived in the site, but later monastic communities of nuns also appeared. This was after a major fire in 1925 when the monks asked for the help of the residents of the nearby village of Kastraki, who subsequently established the first monastic communities of nuns in the site (Kotopoulos 1973, 125-27; Tetsios 2003; 342-43; pers. comm. Kastraki village).

The history of the monastic site of Meteora may be summarised as follows (Kontoyannis 1990, 19-28; Nikonanos 1992, 18-19; Sofianos 1990, 11-18; Tsiatas 2003, 161-62; Nikodimi 2002, 21-22; Choulia-Albani 1999, 152-55). At the end of the Tenth-beginning of the Eleventh Century the first hermits established themselves on the rocks of Meteora. In the Twelfth Century the monks concentrated around the *skiti* [house of groups of monks] of Doupiani, forming the first monastic community in the area. The milestone in the monastic life of Meteora was the establishment of the first organised monastery [*koinobio*], the Great Meteoron, by monk Athanasios in 1347. It was monk Athanasios (later St Athanasios of Meteora) who gave the name 'Meteora' to the site. Monastic life at Meteora reached its peak in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when there were twenty four monasteries and numerous independent cells in the site. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was a period of decline for the monastic life at the site, which continued until the World War II and the Greek Civil War in the 1940s.

#### **6.1.2. Meteora as a heritage and tourist site**

Despite the physical isolation of the monasteries, Meteora very quickly acquired fame as a monastic site of remarkable artistic significance, located in an impressive landscape, attracting the attention of numerous visitors from all over the

Christian world (Kontoyannis 1990, 24; Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1997, 221-22; 235-40).

During the Twentieth Century Meteora was designated by the Greek government as a heritage site. In 1921 and 1962 the monasteries were officially recognised and protected for their historic and artistic significance as individual monuments. Later, in 1967, Meteora was recognised as a single heritage site with unified boundaries including the local village of Kastraki and part of the city of Kalampaka. In 1988 Meteora was recognised at an international level through its inscription as a World Heritage site of ‘outstanding’ cultural and natural (‘mixed’) significance.

During the Twentieth Century Meteora gradually developed as a tourist site attracting non-Christian visitors. The events that helped to develop tourism in the site were the following (Anastasiou 1994a, 203): First, the construction of stairs for the easier access to the monasteries in the 1920s, with the abandonment of the original way of access to the monasteries through the *vrizoni* (i.e. ‘an elevator peculiar to Meteora, used until today for the transportation of heavy loads. It is made of a net, inside which the visitor entered and was pulled upwards through a wheel situated on the monastery tower’: Choulia-Albani 1999, 157); second, the construction of a road network for the easier access to the site in the late 1940s; third, the abolition of *avaton* (i.e. the exclusion of women from visiting the monasteries), which continued at the Great Meteoron and the Varlaam monasteries until the end of the German Occupation. The main tourism development took place after World War II and Civil War, and in the last two decades Meteora has developed as an international mass tourist destination.

### **6.1.3. The site of Meteora today**

Today Meteora is one of the largest monastic complexes in Greece and in the entire Orthodox world and one of the most popular tourist destinations in Greece as well as a significant heritage site at national and international level.

As a result of this increasing popularity of the site a variety of groups of people, of different backgrounds and with different, and sometimes conflicting, needs, views and practices concerning the present operation and the future development of the site, are involved in its life at local, national and international level.

As a monastic site, Meteora currently contains six monastic communities (four of monks and two of nuns, currently consisting of sixty eight individuals listed) leading a monastic life far from the influences of the outside world, whilst at the same time performing spiritual and philanthropic activity for the benefit of mostly the broader local community (i.e. the residents of Kastraki, Kalampaka and the broader region). The monastic communities are, in terms of administration, dependent upon the local bishopric of the Church of Greece, which is responsible for the supervision of their monastic and spiritual life so that it complies with the rules of the Orthodox Church. As a monastic site, Meteora attracts the interest of part of the local community, which comprises the congregation of the monasteries, as well as the interest of part of the national and even international community, which visits the site as pilgrims.

As a national and a World Heritage site, Meteora is within the interest and the developments of archaeology and heritage management at a national as well as international level. The protection of the fabric of the site is under the authority of the Greek Ministry of Culture (based on Athens) and its local service (Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities, based on the city of Trikala). The World Heritage Centre (in Paris) is responsible for the monitoring of the site through the state party (the Greek government).

As a major tourist destination, Meteora operates within the broader, global developments of the tourism industry. It attracts approximately one million and a half visitors from various parts of the world per year as well as the interest of several others at local, national and international level benefiting from the visitors, such as international tour operators and local tour agents, the Greek Ministry of Tourism and the broader local community.

#### **6.1.4. Conclusion: Meteora as a living site**

Meteora could be defined as a living site, based on the following elements:

- **Functional continuity:** the continuity of the function of Meteora as an Orthodox monastic site. The functional continuity of Meteora is rooted in the continuity of its religious/ritual activities (the core of functional continuity).
- **Site community:** the monastic communities of the site, initially exclusively of monks but since 1925 of nuns as well. In the case of Meteora, site community is not a single

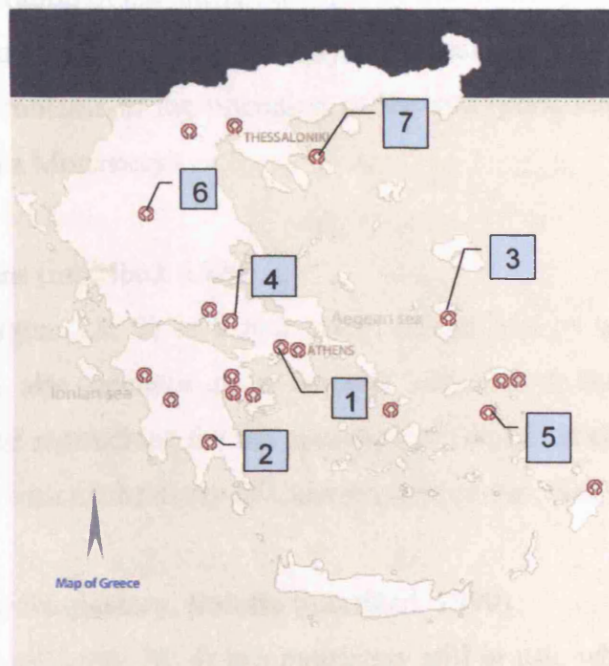
group but several groups (currently six monastic communities), and consists of a clearly defined number of persons (currently sixty eight members).

- The way the functional continuity at Meteora has changed over the course of time: Initially, since the end of Tenth-beginning of the Eleventh Century (i.e. the beginning of the monastic life in the site) until approximately the 1960s, Meteora was exclusively a monastic site. Later, from the 1960s onwards, Meteora retains its monastic function, while at the same time it is increasingly used as a heritage and tourist site.

The strength of the nature of functional continuity of the site could be seen as indicated by the following factors: first, the monastic communities' permanent physical presence in the site (with some short breaks in some of its monasteries over the course of time); second, the clear and undisputable formal, legal recognition of the monastic communities' association with the site in terms of ownership as well as management of the site; third, changes in the spatial arrangement of the site over the course of time, in accordance with its monastic function.

## 6.2. The site of Meteora in relation to the other World Heritage Byzantine monastic sites in Greece

Byzantine heritage monastic sites in Greece, under the control of the Ministry of Culture, that are inscribed on the *World Heritage List* are the following (Figure 28):



**Figure 28:** The World Heritage monastic Byzantine sites in Greece: Location (original figure: Ministry of Culture 2007, with author's additions).

The Byzantine monastic sites are:

1. Daphni Monastery, Attica (World Heritage inscription: 1990)
2. Mystras, Lakonia (1989)
3. Nea Moni, Chios (1990)
4. Hosios Lukas Monastery, Boiotia (1990)
5. Monastery of St John the Theologian, Patmos (1999)
6. Meteora (1988)
7. Mount Athos (1988)

#### **6.2.1. Daphni Monastery, Attica (inscribed: 1990)**

Daphni (Figure 28: 1) is a monastic site no longer in use, which operates as a heritage and tourist site. Since no monastic community occupies the site, the Ministry of Culture faces no significant problems in the management of the site (pers. comm. Daphni Ephorate).

#### **6.2.2. Mystras, Lakonia (inscribed: 1989)**

Mystras (Figure 28: 2) operates mostly as a heritage site and a major tourist attraction, with the small monastic community of Pantanassa living in it. The regulations for the operation of the site are defined by the Ministry of Culture, and the monastic community adjusts its life accordingly. As a result, the Ministry of Culture faces no significant problems in the operation of the site (pers. comm. Nikos Zias; pers. comm. Pantanassa Monastery).

#### **6.2.3. Nea Moni, Chios (inscribed: 1990)**

Nea Moni (Figure 28: 3) is a monastery still in use by a small monastic community, while it also operates as a heritage and tourist site. The monastic community defines the regulations for the operation of the site according to its own needs, in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture (pers. comm. Nea Moni Ephorate).

#### **6.2.4. Hossios Luckas Monastery, Boiotia (inscribed: 1990)**

Hossios Luckas (Figure 28: 4) is a monastery still in use, which operates also as a heritage site and a tourist attraction. The use of space is divided between the monastic community and the Ministry of Culture in a balanced way. From the two *katholika* [main churches] of the monastery the monastic community uses, for its everyday ritual practices, the one dedicated to the Virgin, while the Ministry of Culture is responsible for the one dedicated to Hossios Luckas. The original refectory of the monastery currently operates as a museum, under the control of the Ministry of Culture (pers. comm. Charis Koilakou).

The regulations for the operation of the site are set mainly by the monastic community in accordance with its liturgical needs. It should be stressed that, despite the location of the site very close to the mass tourist attraction of Delphi, the monastic community deliberately chooses not to favour the development of tourism at the site. To this end the monastic community has defined the opening hours of the site

according to its liturgical needs, in a way that clearly discourages the tour agents and the visitors from including the site as a temporary stop on their way to Delphi (pers. comm. Charis Koilakou). The monastic community does not charge any entrance fees for the site (the only entrance fees are for the refectory/museum, collected by the Ministry of Culture) (pers. comm. Charis Koilakou).

The balanced use of space by the monastic community and the Ministry of Culture as well as the careful attitude of the monastic community towards the development of tourism should be mostly credited to the Abbot/Head monk of the Monastery (pers. comm. Charis Koilakou).

#### **6.2.5. Monastery of St John the Theologian, Patmos** (inscribed: 1999, as part of the historic city of Patmos)

St John the Theologian Monastery (Figure 28: 5) is still in use, and also operates as a heritage and tourist site. The regulations for the operation of the site are defined by the monastic community. The increasing size of the monastic community as well as its significant power at local level pose considerable complexities for the protection of the fabric of the site by the Ministry of Culture (pers. comm. Nea Moni Ephorate; pers. comm. St John the Theologian Monastery).

#### **6.2.6. Mount Athos** (inscribed: 1988)

Mount Athos (Figure 28: 7) is a monastic complex consisting of twenty monasteries. Mount Athos is an exceptional case in terms of its official, legal administrative and management status: It is legally recognised as a semi-independent region within the state of Greece, with the monastic communities having the administrative and management control through their own official body (the Assembly of the Holy Monasteries of Mount Athos). The site is open to visitors with considerable restrictions: The number of visitors allowed into the site per day is limited, and the *avaton* (i.e. the exclusion of women from entering the site) still continues. The power of the monastic communities at local, state and even international level pose significant challenges to the protection of the original fabric of the site by the Ministry of Culture (Chatzigogas 2005, 67-73).

#### **6.2.7. Conclusion: Synthesis of World Heritage Byzantine monastic sites in Greece**

With the exception of the Daphni Monastery, all the other Byzantine monastic sites discussed in this section, including Meteora, could be defined as living in terms of the continuity of their function as Orthodox monastic sites. Their functional continuity is rooted in the continuity of the religious activities of the sites (the core of functional continuity). These sites are also under a uniform system of operation and management by the Ministry of Culture.

They present, however, a range of levels of 'livingness': from Mystras, which operates mostly as a heritage site and a major tourist attraction, with a small and powerless monastic community living in it, on the one side, to the most powerful semi-independent region of Mount Athos, on the other. Each of these living sites pose different operational and management issues.

The differences between these sites in terms of their 'livingness' relate to the different ways the nature of functional continuity has changed in each site over the course of time. For example, Mystras was a major Byzantine city that ceased to exist in the Fifteenth Century as a result of the Ottoman conquest. In 1921 Mystras was declared a national heritage site, and the few local people still residing in the site were gradually removed and their residences were demolished. Pantanassa Monastery was not in use for most of the Ottoman period (*ca* 1453-1821), and became active again some years after the designation of the site as a national heritage site, when members of the personnel working on the site as archaeologists and conservators formed a small monastic community there (pers. comm. Nikos Zias; pers. comm. Pantanassa Monastery). Thus, today Mystras is a heritage site, with a small monastic community living in it. In another example, the monastic complex of Mount Athos has been in use and has retained its ritual and religious traditions as well as its official, legal administrative and management status as a relatively independent region from the outside world throughout Byzantine and Ottoman period up to present day (Chatzigogas 2005, 68-69).

In an attempt to relate Meteora to the other living inscribed Byzantine monastic sites, it should be noted that, on the one hand, Meteora, unlike Mount Athos, is a typical Byzantine site in Greece in terms of its legal and administrative status. On the other, it is different from the other Byzantine sites in Greece in terms of the magnitude and complexity of the issues that exist mostly because of the presence of

six separate monastic communities in the site and the operation of the site in the context of a close relationship with the tourism industry.

## 7. The Orthodox monastic site of Meteora as a living site

*Authenticity helps a Christian to constantly act in the boundaries between God and man, between rationale and mystery, between the love of God and the pain of man, between freedom and obedience. This [authenticity] inspires him to move also in the beyond of personal space, of humane measure, of secular time, of ego. It is in these boundaries that God is hiding. It is in this beyond that one meets his brother, eternity, grace, truth, God Himself...*

*The authentic/real Christian is truly humane. He does not find salvation on his own, he shares salvation. He can be devoid of his pride, and thus unify with God and with his brothers (Nikolaos 2005, 154).*

## 7.0. Objectives

This chapter is on the analysis of the nature of functional continuity of Meteora.

The first part explores the nature of functional continuity of Meteora, rooted in the Orthodox monastic *Tradition*, in terms of the meaning, administration, operation, management and spatial arrangement of the site.

The second part examines a different approach to monasticism, the philanthropic-missionary approach, which is not strictly within the Orthodox monastic *Tradition* and has affected the nature of functional continuity of Meteora.

The second part of this chapter and also chapter 8 refer to the way the nature of functional continuity at Meteora has changed influenced by external and internal influences. The philanthropic-missionary approach, discussed in this chapter, is an internal influence on the functional continuity of the site, associated with the monastic communities, and relating to the way the monastic communities see monasticism, Meteora and their relationship with the outside world. The growth of the tourism and heritage industries, discussed in chapter 8, is an external influence on the functional continuity of the site, associated with the outside world, and relating to the way the outside world sees the Meteora and its relationship with the monastic communities of the site.

## **7.1. The Orthodox monastic *Tradition***

This section attempts to draw the link between God as believed and worshipped in the Orthodox Church and the specific space of Meteora. Emphasis is on the definition of the concept of authenticity in the Orthodox Church.

The functional continuity of Meteora relates to the following beliefs of the Orthodox Church: \*

### **7.1.1. God**

At the core of the Orthodox Church is the belief in the inextricable relationship between the persons of the Holy Trinity (the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) in a communion of Love (Vasileios 1974, 75-77). The substance of God is love (John 4. 8, translated by Bible 1966). The entire creation, comprising the angels, the universe and man is the 'natural' ['by nature'] expression of the Love of God.

God is always present in, and defines, the history of humanity through the creation of man by the Father (the beginning of history), the Incarnation of Christ/the Son (the centre of history) and the Second Coming of Christ (the end of history). Thus, the history of humanity is viewed in the Orthodox Church as a linear process, centred on the Incarnation of Christ.

God created man 'in his own image and likeness'. In this way

...it is this unity that in substance connects the three persons of the Holy Trinity that God gave by the grace to his creature. This constitutes the ontological basis of the 'in his own image' and the capacity of achieving the 'in his own likeness'. This is the harmony and balance of our nature as beings and of our relationship with our creator (Vasileios 1974, 75-77).

Through his fall, however, man destroyed the harmony and balance of his nature and his relationship with God, and consequently experienced death (Iosif 1996, 38). And it was God Himself (Christ, 'the Word': John 1. 1-16, translated by Bible 1966) who restored this harmony through His personal intervention in history, i.e. through His Incarnation, Death and Resurrection.

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\* This chapter makes an extensive use of quotations (from Greek literature) in an attempt not to alter the meanings in terms of belief and doctrine. All translations are the author's.

The relationship between man and the environment is placed within the relationship between God and man. God created the environment as a tool for man to glorify and serve Him. Thus the environment does not have value in its own right but only through its service to man. The ultimate aim of God is the salvation of man and not the salvation of the environment (Nikodimi 2002, 4-5). The fall of man, and consequently the destruction of the relationship between man and God, unavoidably affected the relationship between man and the environment. And it was only through the personal intervention of Christ in history that the environment was restored to its original essence (Nikodimi 2002, 5-6; Zizioulas 1992, 17-37).

Thus, Christ, the Incarnated Son of God, is the exclusive cause of salvation of man and the entire creation, and thus the exclusive source of true life.

#### **7.1.2. Church**

The Church exists through its permanent relationship with God: 'The living God continues to reveal Himself in and through the Church' (Nellas 1987, 148-54). The Church was founded by Christ and with the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Church operates as a unified communion modelled upon the relationship within the Holy Trinity. The members of the Church are linked to each other through their individual linking with Christ.

God created man, as noted above, 'in His own image and likeness'. His image is given through the creation to everybody regardless of religion and doctrine. However, His likeness was offered through the Incarnation of Christ, and can be achieved only within the Church, through the Grace of God/the Holy Spirit and with the co-operation of man (Iosif 1996, 40-41).

#### **7.1.3. The *Tradition* of the Church**

The definition of authenticity in the Orthodox Church is linked to the *Tradition*. *Tradition* (with capital 'T') is the continuous presence and revelation of God/the Holy Spirit in the Church throughout time and space (Vlachos 1937, 32; Nellas 1987, 148-54; Damianos 1987, 161-66).

Tradition in Church is not simply the continuation of human memory or the continuation of the ritual activities and habits. It is, above all, the continuation of the guidance and

illumination from God, it is the maintaining, living presence of the Holy Spirit. Church is not attached to the letter [of the law], but is steadily driven by the Holy Spirit (Florovsky 1960, 241).

The *Tradition* of the Church defines the Church as a whole, consisting of the Holy Scripture, the writings of the Holy Fathers, the decisions of Ecumenical and local Councils, the administration, the liturgical life and the art of the Church. The *Tradition* is unified, something that is rooted in the unity of the Holy Trinity (Vasileios 1974; Vasileios 1986, 16-17; Damianos 1987, 161-66). As it was noted,

everything in Church emerges from the same font of the liturgical experience. Everything co-operates in a triadic way... Everything emerges from the knowledge of the Holy Trinity (Vasileios 1974, 7-10).

*Tradition* as an entity is experienced by the entire Body of the Church (Vasileios 1974, 69-70). As nothing is done within the Holy Trinity without the cooperation of the three Persons, similarly 'nothing is achieved in the Church without the participation of its entire Body, without the consent of the ecclesiastical, triadic consciousness of the Church' (Vasileios 1974, 75-77).

In the first place, however, *Tradition* is revealed by God only to the Saints, who in turn pass it to the entire Body of the Church through their writings, their decisions and their art. Saints are the authentic, the real Christians, 'the living examples of authenticity', they 'become Tradition themselves' and are 'sons of God by the grace' (Damianos 1987, 161-66; Vlachos 1987, 167). In this way,

...the authentic man does not simply constitute a model of moral completion, but is actually transformed in a vessel of revelation of the dogmatic truths [of the Church]. He experiences and reveals the Economy of God [i.e. all the actions of God for the salvation of man] in its entity (Nikolaos 2005, 158-59).

The real Christian is compatible with the doctrine, but also brings something new and original of his/her own:

The image of the authentic person is not something that exists and everyone should imitate, but something that does not exist and everyone is asked to create. It is the expression of the

one for which man is chosen. Authenticity is what demonstrates the holiness and the uniqueness of the person (Nikolaos 2005, 133-34).

The real Christian is contemporary at any time:

...not ... worldly 'contemporary'; But ... 'contemporary' in the sense of bearing/incarnating the eternal message of God in the present [of each times]. He bears/incarnates the tradition of the Church and also the image of the ultimate... The Christian life is authentic... when we experience the kingdom of God as more real than the historic events' (Nikolaos 2005, 157-58; 132).

The real Christian 'constantly acts in the boundaries between God and man', but remains 'truly humane' (Nikolaos 2005, 154: see introductory quote of the chapter).

Thus, Church is not to be seen as a group of people operating on the basis of majority, but as a community of saints operating on the basis of the *Tradition* of the Church.

#### **7.1.4. Worship (The Holy Liturgy)**

The Holy Liturgy is the most significant aspect, the *sine qua non*, the core of the *Tradition* of the Church since it unifies the faithful with Christ. Holy Liturgy is 'a ritual, ...the transition from the empirical world to the symbolic one, ...communion with God and with society' (Papadopoulos 1991a, 44-45). Given that Christ is the reason for the salvation of the entire creation (section 7.1.1), it is basically the Holy Liturgy that gives salvation as well as essence to the entire creation:

The Holy Liturgy makes the organism of creation as a whole operate in the triadic way. The one who participates in the Holy Liturgy has an esoteric view of the world. Time and space become new (Vasileios 1974, 123).

The Church cannot exist without the Holy Liturgy:

There is no Church or Orthodoxy without the Holy Liturgy, and there is no Holy Liturgy and Orthodoxy outside the Church. Holy Liturgy is the constant centre of our life (Vlachos 1987, 169-70).

The Holy Liturgy gives meaning to all the other elements of the *Tradition* of the Church. The *Tradition* as a whole is purely functional, acquiring its existence and meaning serving the worship of God (Vlachos 1987, 168). The elements of the *Tradition* do not have meaning and existence in their own right but are created as an entity, through the Holy Liturgy.

Thus, the aim of the existence of man is the ultimate unification with Christ, which is actually achieved through the Holy Liturgy. In this context, the definition of authenticity in the Orthodox Church is centred on the Holy Liturgy, and the real Christian, the Saint, is the one who is absolutely dedicated to the worship of God.

#### **7.1.5. The art of the Church**

The art of the Church, in all its expressions (such as architecture, sculpture, painting, poetry, and music), acquires its existence and meaning exclusively within the *Tradition*. The art of the Church is a purely functional one, created and operating as an entity serving the worship, and is guided and defined, in terms of its boundaries, by the unified *Tradition* of the Church, i.e. by the Holy Spirit. The aim of the art is to lead to the knowledge of God and subsequently to the unification with Him and the salvation through Him (Vasileios 1986, 16-20; Vasileios 1974, 127-30; Paliouras 1997, 18-19).

In this context, an icon, for example, is clearly differentiated from a religious painting. A religious painting is the outcome of the artistic capacity of an individual, while an icon is the expression of the liturgical life of the Church: 'An icon is not a man-created image, but the incarnated grace of God' (Vasileios 1974, 137-38). An icon is an eternal and ever-lasting reality that transcends the physical reality of time and space of a particular era and beyond history, and expresses the ultimate/the Great Beyond, which is the time and space of Paradise. In this way, an icon is 'not a representation of past events, but participation in a new, transformed history and materiality, the outcome of the merging of the created and the uncreated'. Thus, an icon is not an item of the past, but 'a presence within the continuous life of the Church that is living, bears life and gives life' (Vasileios 1974, 123-30; 136-40; also Vasileios 1986, 15).

Therefore, the entire *Tradition* of the Church, including art, is created and operates as an entity, stemming from the one Church and from one God, and serving the one Holy Liturgy.

#### **7.1.6. The monastic *Tradition* of the Church**

Monastic life is the most absolute path in the Orthodox Church for the devotion to, and unification with, Christ (Iosif 1996, 40; Vasileios 1974, 173; Ioannou 2003, 124-29). Monastic life is considered 'the quintessence of Christianity, the most dynamic, most complete and most consistent expression of it' (Metallinos, in Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1997, 269), thus serving as the ideal model for the Church as a whole (Yannaras 1973, 68; Meteora Monasteries 1994a, 16-17).

Monasticism as a way of life developed and still operates within the *Tradition* of the Church. The constitutional form and regulation of monasticism were revealed by God to the Fathers of the Church, who were considered real Christians, Saints (Iosif 1996, 40; see section 7.1.7).

Monastic art, as part of the *Tradition* of the Church, is unified and purely functional, serving the Holy Liturgy, in the context of the unification of man with Christ. It is the Holy Liturgy that creates art, gives meaning to it and defines its boundaries.

A monastic community is a community of people absolutely dedicated to Christ, and aiming at unifying with Him. The unification with Christ is achieved through the Holy Liturgy and with the support of the Abbot/Head monk of the monastic community.

The Abbot is the most prominent person in a monastic community, the one who gives the character and the essence to it (Aimilianos 1991, 119). The Abbot is considered the person who receives the *Tradition* directly from God and transfers it to the monks. Thus, he is considered the real Christian, the Saint, the living *Tradition* for his monks (Aimilianos 1991, 120; see section 7.1.3). The relationship between the monk and his Abbot is a personal and a closest one, modelled upon the relationship within the Holy Trinity (Iosif 1996, 38), while the relationships between the members of a monastic community are indirect ones, passing through the Abbot. This spiritual role of the Abbot is also reflected in the administration of a monastery: The Abbot is the Head of the 'Holy Assembly' [the ultimate administrative body of a monastic

community consisting of the Abbot and of two supervisors], is elected but is irremovable. As the members of the Meteora monastic communities firmly stressed, their Abbots and Abbesses was the primary reason for them to move in their monasteries in the first place (pers. comm. Maximi; pers. comm. Ioasaph).

The Holy Liturgy, what unifies man with God, is the essence of monasticism. Monastic life 'imitates the eternal worship, in accordance with the example of the eternal glorifying of angels to God' (Aimilianos 1991, 120). Thus, 'worship is not an interval of schedule in a worldly life, but a permanent state of living' (Fountoulis 1991, 136). Monastic life as a whole could be seen as a way of continuous exercise and preparation for the Holy Liturgy (Vasileios 1974, 173; Metallinos 2003, 231-38). Thus, in the everyday monastic schedule a major part of the day is devoted to the conduct of worship. The rest of the day is devoted to the sleep and prayer of monks in their cells, the communal monastic exercises [*diakonimata*] and the communal meals, which have a practical purpose, aiming at the physical survival of the monks, but also a spiritual character, in the context of the preparation for the Holy Liturgy (Zias 1999, 11-12).

The Holy Liturgy conducted in a monastery is not attended exclusively by the members of the monastic community but also by laity, who thus become an organic part of the life of the monastery (Aimilianos 1991, 120). Hence, it is the Holy Liturgy that connects the 'inside' world (i.e. the monastic community) with the 'outside' one.

The Holy Liturgy also defines space and time in a monastery, transforming the monastery into a world of its own, different to the outside. The core of the monastery is the *katholicon* [the main church in a monastery], where the Holy Liturgy is conducted, and the cells and the other monastic buildings are centred around the *katholicon* (Papadopoulos 1991b, 64; section 7.1.8). In terms of the everyday monastic schedule, the communal as well as the private activities of the monks are regulated on the basis of the Holy Liturgy, which is conducted according to Byzantine time, based on the cycle of nature (Papadopoulos 1991, 32-44).

The Holy Liturgy conducted in a monastery defines space and time in the surrounding area of the monastery as well. A monastery is most of the time located on a high position, easily noticeable, with the crosses of its *katholicon* dominating the skyline (Papadopoulos 1991b, 64). It also sets the sound for the surrounding area through the ringing of the bells of its *katholicon* for worship (Papadopoulos 1991b, 64).

The continual conduct of the Holy Liturgy renders a monastery 'a symbolically structured and ritually experienced view of the world'. A monastery is a symbolic world, in which, in the views of the monks, the actual scale of space is heaven and the actual scale of time is eternity (Papadopoulos 1991b, 64-73). The monastery is considered to connect earth and heaven, being in fact 'heaven on earth' (Iosif 1996, 40-41). Above the monastery there is a different world, that of true life: Paradise. The monastery is considered the ideal community, and the *katholicon* the symbol of the world, 'a living image of the Kingdom of God' (Papadopoulos 1991b, 75-77; Papadopoulos 1991a, 44).

Between the monastery and Paradise, i.e. between earth and heaven, there is a world with transitory space and time, in expectation of the Second Coming, which (world) is represented by the cemetery. That is why the cemetery of a monastery is constructed as a completely different unit, outside the walls of the monastery and surrounded by a wall (Papadopoulos 1991a, 45).

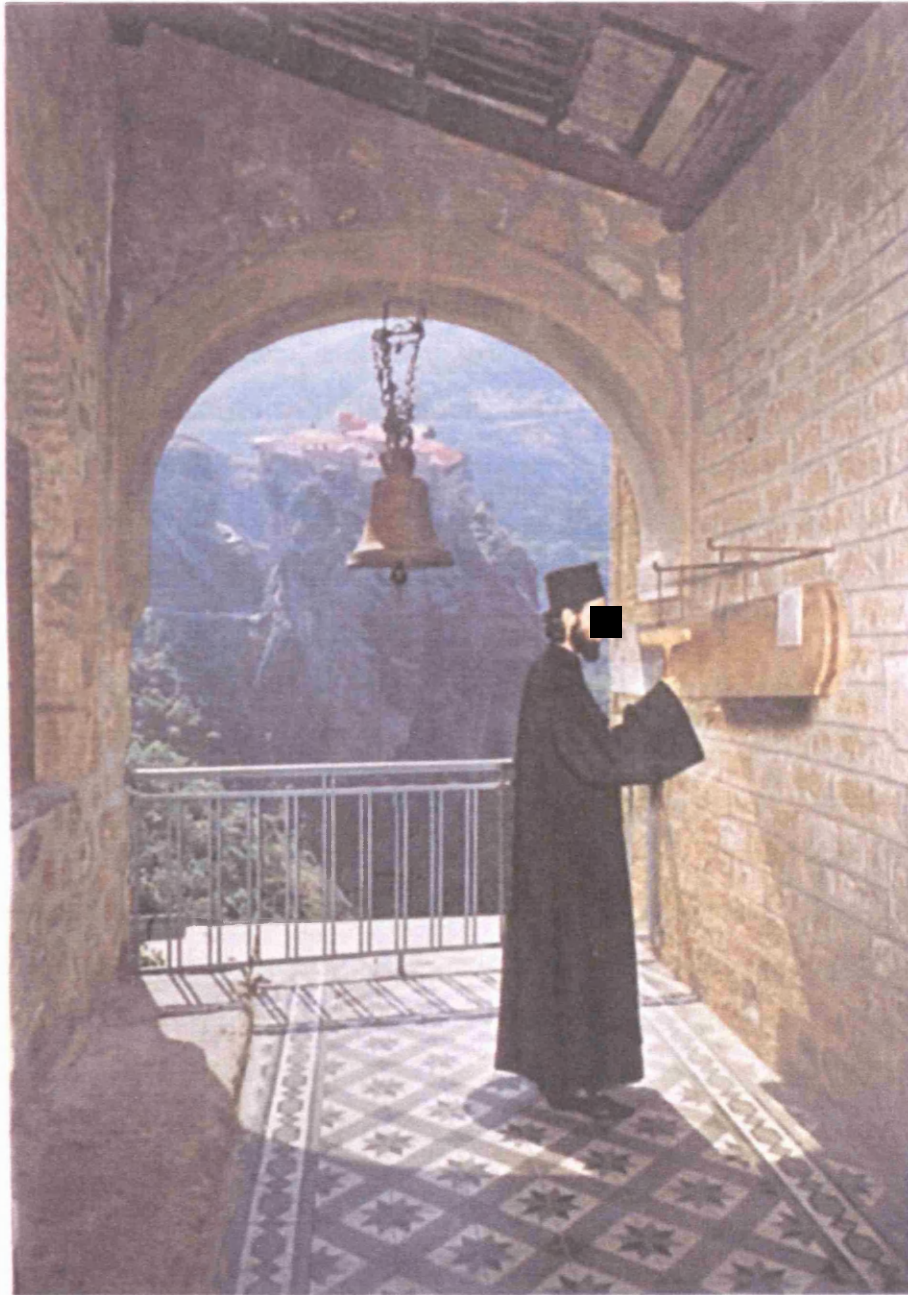
Through the continual conduct of the Holy Liturgy, a monastery is also considered to transform, in terms of meaning, its surrounding landscape into a new, monastic landscape formed and operating within the constant service and worship of God, setting a model for the establishment of balance and harmony in the entire creation (Nikodimi 2002, 9-10; Theoxeni 1999, 84-86; Keselopoulos 2003, 322-36).

Therefore, the actual essence and power of a monastic community is inextricably and exclusively associated with the monastic *Tradition* of the Church and particularly with the Holy Liturgy. If the Holy Liturgy stops in a monastery, as a result of the departure of the monastic community from the site, then the Grace of God/the Holy Spirit (which is believed to be continuously present everywhere and cover everything) remains inactive in the site, and, as a consequence, the life in the monastery stops, and the monastery loses its symbolic meaning as a new world (pers. comm. Ioasaph) (Figure 29).

In this context, Orthodox monasteries are centres of spiritual activity, and not centres of scientific research or social philanthropy. In this respect, Orthodox monasteries could be differentiated from the Catholic ones (Zias 1999, 11-12; Ioannou 2003, 130-32; Feidas 1996, 39-40). In Orthodox monasticism the salvation of the people is achieved through the salvation of the monk himself, and any reward to the monk is given only from God and not from the people (Moisis 1997, 29-32). The ultimate and exclusive aim of a monastery is the making of saints: monastery is 'an

arc of saints, a community of blessed' (Aimilianos 1991, 131). Any other social activities (such as the operation of schools, hospitals, homes for the elderly, and workshops for the making of icons and crosses, and the organising of missions to non-Orthodox people or for the benefit of the nation) are not an essential part of monastic life and, if undertaken, should be clearly fit into, and not undermine let alone replace, this ultimate aim of the monastery. As the Meteora monastic communities state, 'the making of saints from the Monastic Community is the most significant social contribution of Monasticism' (Meteora Monasteries 1994a, 16).

This section demonstrates that monasticism, as the most absolute path for unification with Christ, is centred on the Holy Liturgy. In this context, a monastic community is an introverted community devoted to the worship of God. The most significant contribution as well as responsibility of the monastic community towards the wider world is to keep their site 'living', to keep alive the *Tradition* of the Church by leading their monastic life and conducting the Holy Liturgy (Mosis 1997, 32-33).



**Figure 29:** The Varlaam monastery: the hitting of the *simantron* (source: Provatakis 1991, 96). The Great Meteoron monastery is depicted on the background.

The hitting of the *simantron* [wooden gong inviting the monks to the holy services] marks the beginning of the life of the monastery.

### 7.1.7. The *typicon* of a monastery

The operation and administration of an Orthodox monastery, and particularly its liturgical life, are defined by a text called *typicon* (Apostolakis 2002d, 19-20). The Meteora monastic communities follow the *typicon* of the Great Meteoron monastery, composed by St Athanasios of Meteora, the founder of organised monasticism at Meteora (Tsiatas 2003, 161-62; Apostolakis 2002d, 20-24) (Figure 30).

The *typica* of all Orthodox monasteries stem from the same *typicon*, that of St Sabbas Monastery at Jerusalem, something that reveals the unity and continuity of the monastic *Tradition* and worship (Fountoulis 1991, 133). At the same time each monastery has its own distinctive *typicon*. The *typicon* of a monastery is recognised as part of the *Tradition* of the Church, as followed by the specific monastic community, and defines the boundaries of the *Tradition* for the specific monastic community (Fountoulis 1991, 133-34; Ephraim 1996, 26).

The *typicon* of each monastery is written by the founder of the monastery. The founder of the monastery is considered to receive the *typicon* (as part of the *Tradition* of the Church) directly from God and transfer it to the monks. He is considered a real Christian, a Saint (section 7.1.6), officially canonised by the Church (as in the case of Saint Athanasios who founded the Great Meteoron monastery: Figure 30) or considered to have shown signs of sanctity and treated as a holy person (as in the case of the founders of the Roussanou monastery: pers. comm. Roussanou Monastery). Thus, the *typicon* of a monastery is an indication of the continuity of worship and operation in the specific monastery, traced back to its holy founder.

The *typicon* is not a static document that is taught or transferred from one generation to the other but is learnt in practice with the conduct of worship on an everyday basis, and is thus evolving in accordance with the changing needs of the specific monastic community over the course of time (Fountoulis 1991, 133-34).

Thus, the greatest contribution of a monastic community to the wider world, in order to keep their site living, is to continue to conduct the worship by following the *typicon* of their monastery (Fountoulis 1991, 135).



**Figure 30:** The Great Meteoron monastery: the founders, St Athanasios and St Ioasaph, depicted in the *katholicon* of the monastery (source: Choulia and Albani 1999, 90).

St Athanasios is the composer of the Great Meteoron *typicon*, followed by all the monastic communities of Meteora.

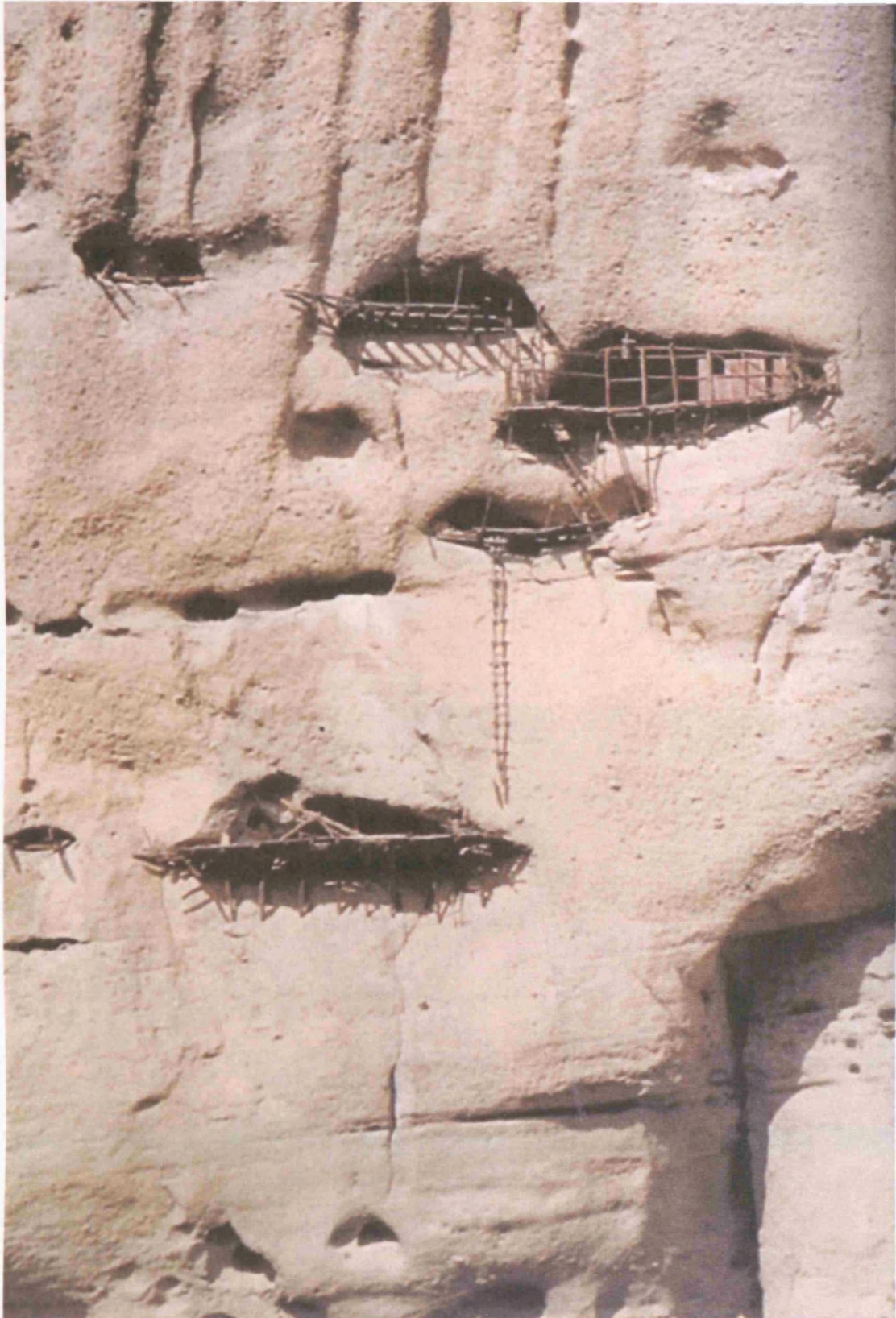
### 7.1.8. Monastic space

The worship of God through the conduct of the Holy Liturgy is the primary factor that defines the formation of monastic space. It is also the primary factor that defines the architectural form as well as the nature and arrangement of the internal and external space of an organised monastery. Specifically:

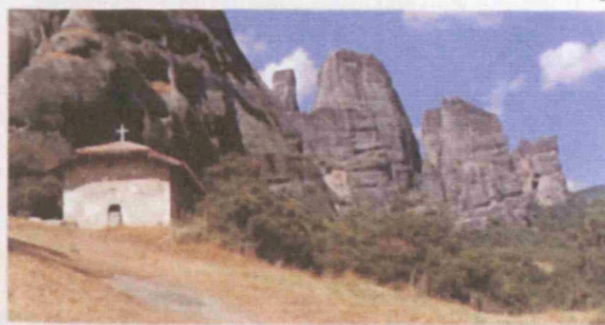
#### 7.1.8.1. Forms of monastic space

There are basically four patterns of monastic life, defined mainly by the (individual or common) monastic life and worship. These patterns of monastic life create the following forms of space (Nikodimi 2002, 9-10; Paliouras 1997, 17-18): First, the *hermetic* pattern, based on individual monastic life and worship, creates an incoherent and rather badly organised form of space, with small isolated cells scattered in a larger area. Second, the *skiti* [house of groups of monks], based on individual monastic life but common worship, creates a not well-organised form of space, with cells centred around a single church [*kyriakon*] where the common worship takes place. Third, the organised monastery [*koinobion*], based on common worship and life, creates a well- and strictly- organised arrangement of space, with a single large monastery. Fourth, a monastic complex, based on the parallel operation of several monasteries in the same area, which operate individually but with links to each other and often under a unified administrative and management scheme, consists of several monasteries scattered in a larger area.

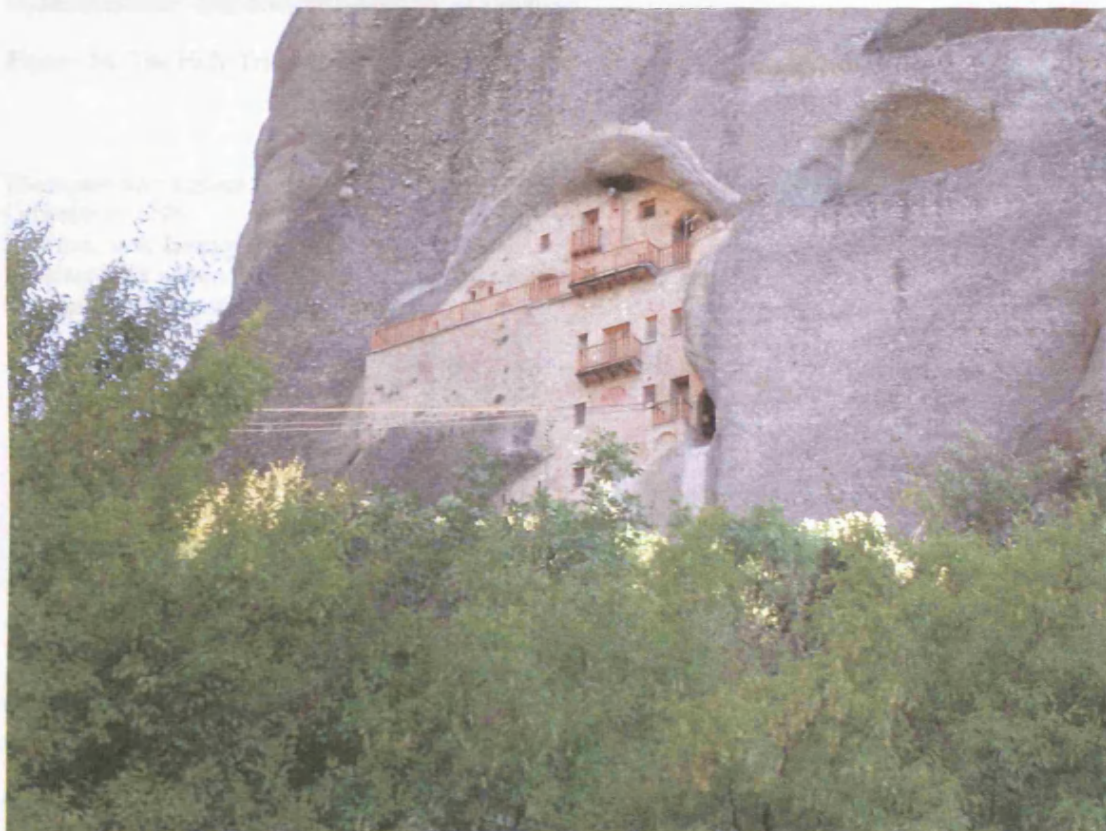
Meteora is a monastic complex, in which all the patterns of monastic life exist (Tetsios 2003, 340-42; Nikodimi 2002, 19-20): The *hermitic* cells, no longer in use, are simple structures, mostly made of wood or bricks and stones, supported by wooden balconies (Figure 31). The *kyriaka* of the *skites* that are still in use are those of Doupiani and St Antonios (Figure 32). The organised monasteries [*koinobia*] are monumental structures built on the top of the rocks. Six of them are still in use: the Great Meteoron, the Varlaam, the St Stephen, Roussanou, the Holy Trinity and the St Nikolaos Anapafsas monasteries (Figure 34). At Meteora there is also a special type of *skites* which are enclosed in the rocks by a wall, which (type) marks the transition between the *skites* and the *koinobia*. Only two examples of this special type of *skites* are still in use: St Nikolaos Badovas and the Meeting of Christ (Figure 33).



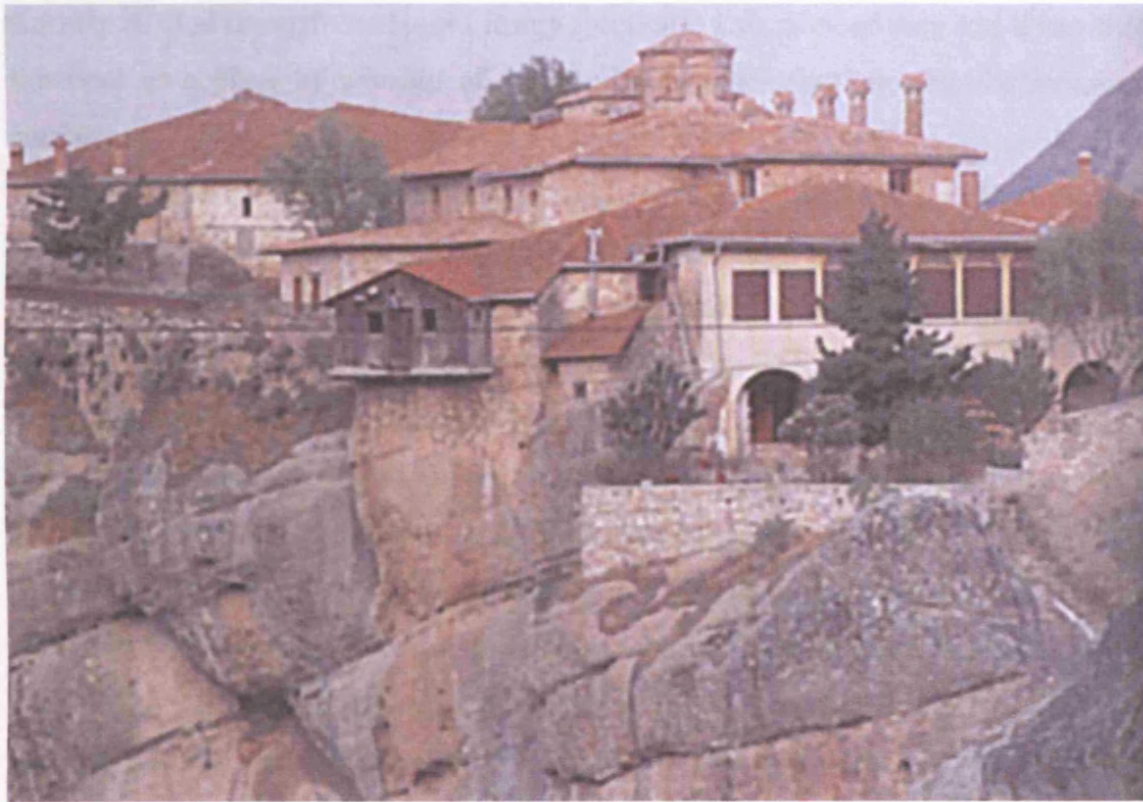
**Figure 31:** Hermetic cells: external view (source: Provatakis 1991, 81).



**Figure 32:** The *kyriakon* of the *skiti* of Doupiani: external view (source: Great Meteoron Monastery 1997, 25).



**Figure 33:** The St Nikolaos Badovas *skiti*: external view (source: author's photo).



**Figure 34:** The Holy Trinity monastery: external view (source: Choulia and Albani 1999, 117).

The above four figures (Figures 31-34) show the different forms of monastic space at Meteora:

- 1) Hermetic cells
- 2) *Skites*, with *kyriaca*
- 3) *Skites* built within rocks (as an intermediate stage between 2 and 4)
- 4) Organised monasteries [*koinobia*]

#### **7.1.8.2. The function of a monastery**

Given that a monastic community is a community of people devoted to the worship of God through the Holy Liturgy (section 7.1.6), a monastery has a two-fold function: as a place of worship of God and as a place that sustains the monastic community.

In accordance with the introverted character of the life of the monastic community (dedicated to the worship of God: section 7.1.6), a monastery is an independent and closed unit, isolated from the outside world, with specific, clear boundaries. A monastery is in most of the cases founded in remote areas, and is surrounded by walls with a monumental gate (Paliouras 1997, 18-19; Theocharidis 1991, 87; Papadopoulos 1991b, 58-64). The entrance of a monastery faces towards the road, something that implies the link of the monastery with the outside world (Papadopoulos 1991b, 58-64). Thus, a monastery is basically isolated from the outside world but at the same time in communication with it. The Meteora monasteries (apart from the St Stephen monastery) are an exception to this rule: because of the inaccessibility of their location, they are not surrounded by wall enclosures, and are not in communication with the outside world.

Given the central role of worship in the life of the monastic community (as a permanent state of living: section 7.1.6), the *katholicon* is the core of the monastery. The *katholicon*, through its location in the centre of the monastery and its orientation towards the east, which has a strong symbolic meaning (east is the symbolic point of the First and the Second Coming of Christ), defines the arrangement and the orientation of the monastery as a whole in relation to its surrounding environment (Papaioannou 1977, 13-17).

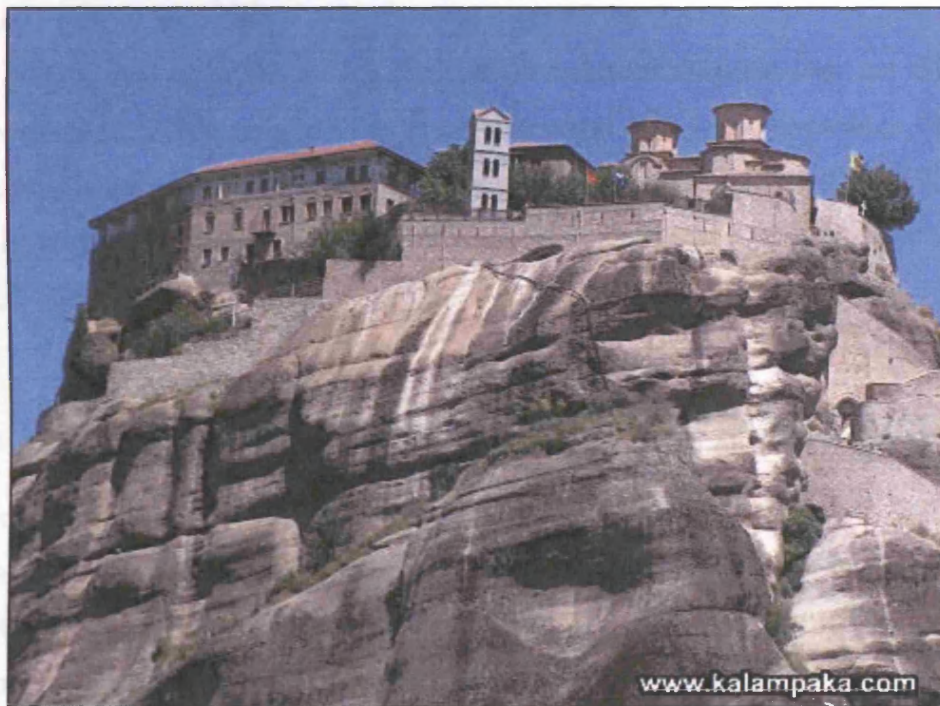
#### **7.1.8.3. The external space to a monastery (The monastery and its landscape)**

A monastery is in absolute harmony with its surrounding landscape, with a limited and discreet effect on it, and makes a most sensitive use of the available physical resources (Theocharidis 1991, 87-88). The way monastic communities treat the natural environment is in accordance with the importance of materiality as defined by the *Tradition* of the Church: to the extent that the natural materials are essential for the survival of their bodies and the maintenance of their monastery (Nikodimi 2002, 6-10).

The Meteora monasteries give the impression of being the physical continuation of the rocks on which they are built; or rather the rocks look like the physical foundations of the monasteries. The monasteries have left the surrounding landscape largely intact. Only the absolutely essential buildings have been built, and in a way that makes the best possible use of the available space. The external outline of the monasteries follows the furthest edges of the surface on the top of the rocks, which gives an irregular shape to the monasteries. There has also been a further attempt to increase the available space on the top of the rocks by filling the edges of the surfaces with rubble (Nikodimi 2002, 23; Tetsios 2003, 339-40) (Figure 35).

Hence, it seems that the Meteora monasteries complemented, as well as completed, the landscape. As the Meteora monastic communities stated with reference to their monasteries:

The human presence did not abuse its privileged position within the creation of God, did not upset or violate the natural ecosystem and did not distort the beauty of the landscape, but placed its creations (i.e. the holy monasteries) in the landscape, with significant sensitivity and care towards it, with the aim of emphasizing the holiness and spirituality of the space and not disrupting the balances (Meteora Monasteries 1994a, 56).



**Figure 35:** The Varlaam monastery: external view (source: Kalampaka Tour Guide 2000). The external outline of the monastery follows the surfaces of the rocks on which the monastery stands, giving an irregular shape to it. The monastery looks like the the physical continuation of the rocks.

#### **7.1.8.4. The architectural form and the fabric of a monastery**

The architectural form of a monastery has been basically the same since Byzantine times. The continuity of the architectural form could be put down mostly to the *typica* of the monasteries and the common strict needs of worship, which rendered the architectural form part of the monastic *Tradition* (Papaioannou 1977, 11-13).

The fabric of a monastery is being continually changed over the course of time. A monastery is an institution of particularly long life, whose life exceeded, in principle, the physical endurance of its individual architectural parts, which means that the renewal of these parts is essential for the physical survival of the whole. Thus a monastery never actually reaches completion, but is being continually created towards a never-reached end (Papaioannou 1977, 11-13). As the Meteora monastic communities noted with reference to their monasteries:

...in a living monument and a carrier of cultural value, such as the [Meteora] monasteries, the protection from the physical damage and the covering of the functional needs are never achieved in a static way but in an every time contemporary recreation (Tetsios 2003, 343).

The renewal of the fabric of a monastery has the form of partial replacement of existing material with same material (see section 3.2.1).

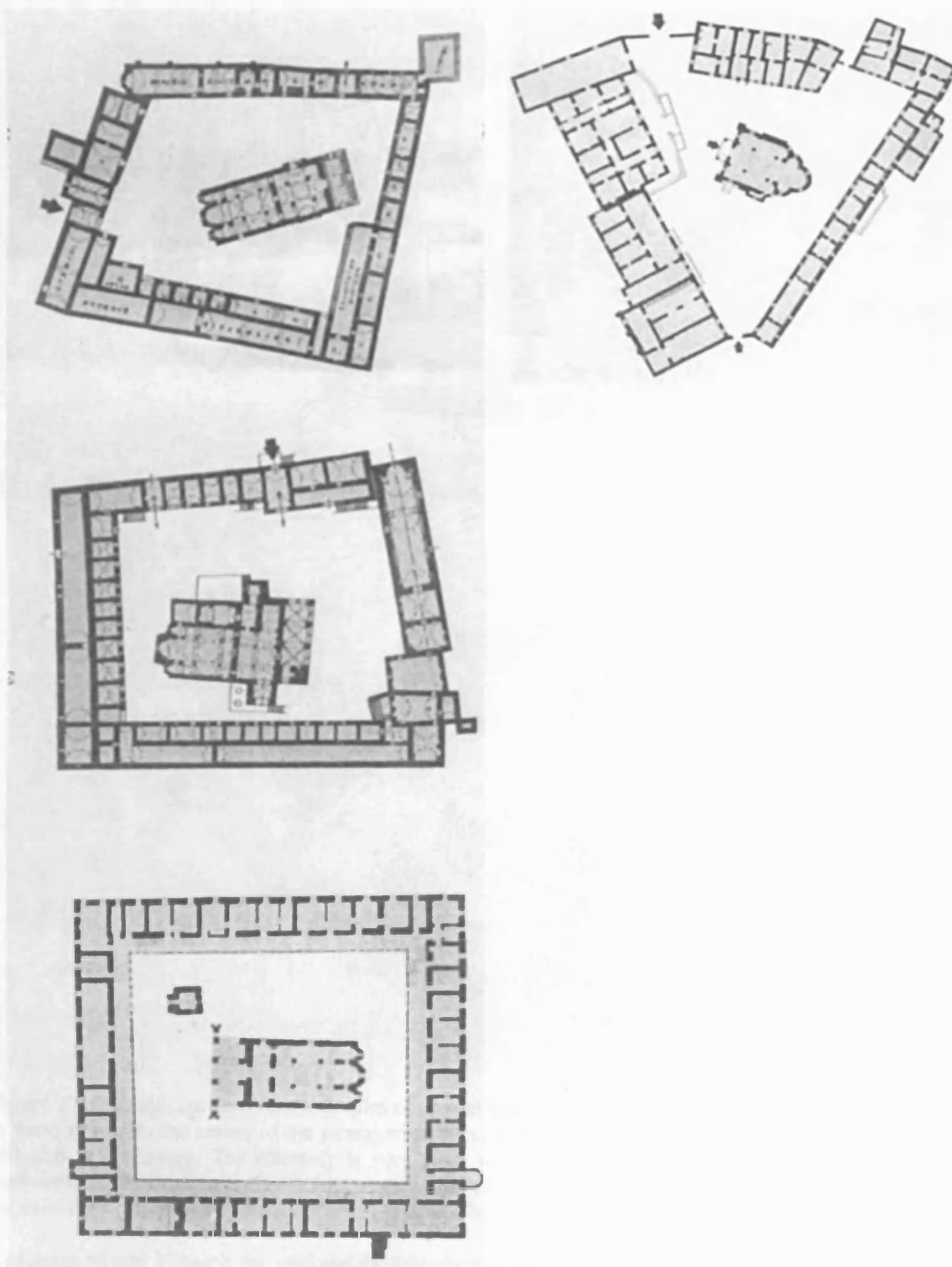
The continual renewal of the individual architectural parts does not affect, but is incorporated in harmony within, the architectural type of a monastery. Hence, a monastery is an expression of a free organic growth, while maintaining at the same time its architectural homogeneity and entity over the course of time (Papaioannou 1977, 11-13).

#### **7.1.8.5. The internal space of a monastery**

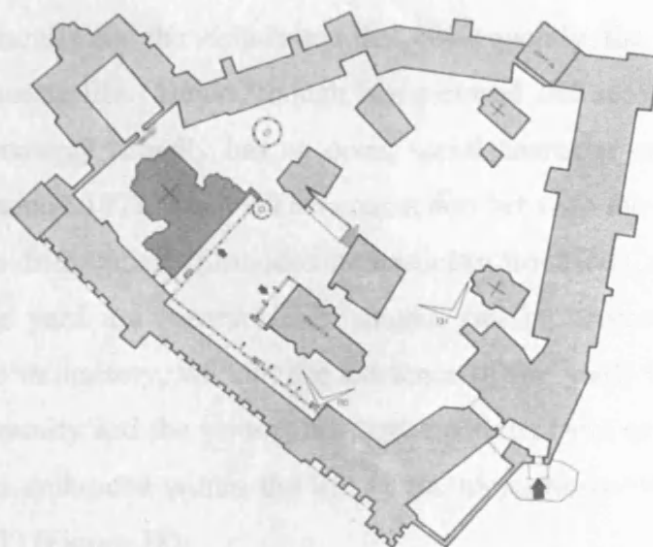
The arrangement of the internal space of a monastery may be summarised as follows (see Zias 1999, 13-14; Paliouras 1997, 19-23). The central part of the monastery is occupied by the yard. The *katholicon* is in the centre of the yard, and the refectory is often close to the *katholicon* (Figure 37). The periphery of the monastery, around the yard, includes the cells and the other, secondary buildings, such as the storerooms, the hospital and the bell-tower (Figures 36 and 37).

The location of the *katholicon* in the centre of the yard and of the cells has a strong symbolic meaning: Christ is the consistent point of reference as well as the ultimate and exclusive aim of the monks, and thus the everyday life of a monastic community is centred on Him and His church (Zias 1999, 13-14; Fountoulis 1991, 136-62; see also section 7.1.6). This demonstrates that the focal factor as well as the starting point for the formation of the internal space of a monastery is the worship of God.

The location of the refectory close to the *katholicon* also has a strong symbolic meaning, reflecting the view of the Church that food and materiality in general are not exclusively linked to the survival of the body but also have a spiritual character as well, linked to the conduction of the Holy Liturgy (Zias 1999, 13-14; Vasileios 1986, 27-28; pers. comm. Theophanis). The location of the refectory close to the *katholicon* also covers practical needs given that the monks go to the refectory for their meal immediately after their vigils in the *katholicon* (Vasileios 1986, 27-28).



**Figure 36:** Orthodox monasteries: examples of ground plans A (source: Papaioannou 1977, 25a,b,c,d). In these examples the centre of the monasteries is occupied by the yard and the *katholicon*.



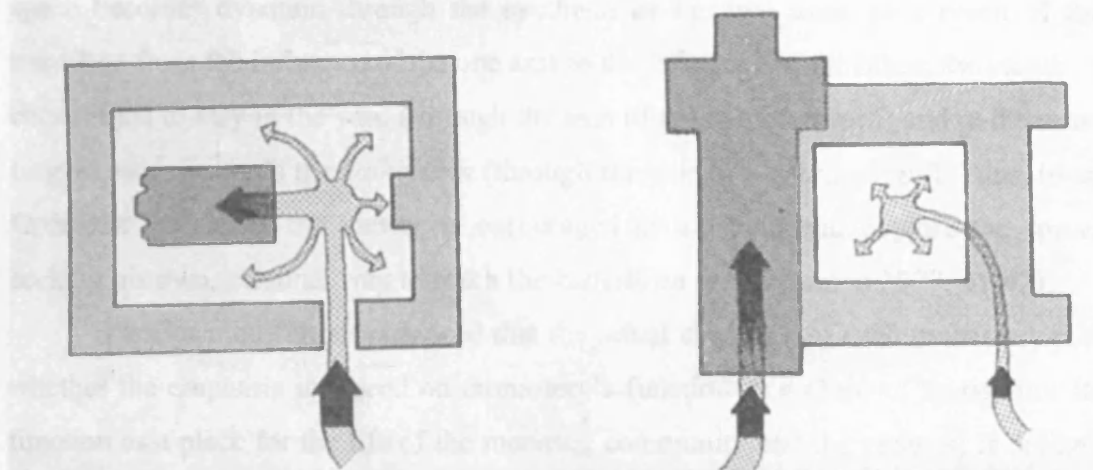
**Figure 37:** Orthodox monasteries: examples of ground plans B (source: Papaioannou 1977, 26). In these examples the centre of the monasteries is occupied mainly by the yard, the *katholicon* and also the refectory. The refectory is very close to, actually opposite, the *katholicon* (The *katholicon* is depicted in darker colour and is marked with a cross, and the close relationship between the *katholicon* and the refectory is indicated by two very small arrows).

As figures 36 and 37 show, the yard and the *katholicon* (and sometimes the refectory: Figure 37), are the most important elements in a monastery and are located in the centre, while the cells and the secondary buildings are in the periphery of the monastery.

[Note: The monasteries shown in figure 37 are more complicated, in terms of spatial arrangement, than those in figure 36. This difference has mainly to do with the irregularities of the rock surfaces on which the monasteries stand: the monasteries in figure 37 are on Mount Athos.]

This brief description of the arrangement of the internal space of a monastery demonstrates that the most prominent elements in a monastery are the *katholicon* and the yard. The *katholicon* is the core of the monastery as the place of worship of God, while the yard is the centre of the life of the monastic community and the visitors (Zias 1999, 13-14; Paliouras 1997, 19-21; Papaioannou 1977, 33-35). These two elements are inter-connected, indivisible, and the one cannot exist without the other: the yard has the *katholicon* as its most prominent building, and the *katholicon* cannot be accessed from the entrance of the monastery without the existence of the yard. This inextricable link between the two elements demonstrates the connection between the two functions of the monastery (as a place of worship of God and a place that sustains the monastic community: section 7.1.8.2) (Papaioannou 1977, 33-35).

The fact that both the monastic community and the visitors share the yard reveals that in an Orthodox monastery there is direct communication between the monastic community and the visitors and that, consequently, the visitors are embraced within the monastic life. Hence, though being closed and separate from the outside world, the monastery actually has an open, social character embracing the outside world (Papaioannou 1977, 18-19). This connection between the monastic community and the visitors differentiates Orthodox monasticism from the Catholic one. There the church and the yard are separated: the church can be accessed directly from the entrance of the monastery, without the existence of the yard, which means that the monastic community and the visitors are kept separated from each other, and that the visitors are not embraced within the life of the monastic community (Papaioannou 1977, 18-19; 71) (Figure 38).



**Figure 38:** Orthodox and Catholic monasteries: schematic representations of ground plans (source: Papaioannou 1977, 18).

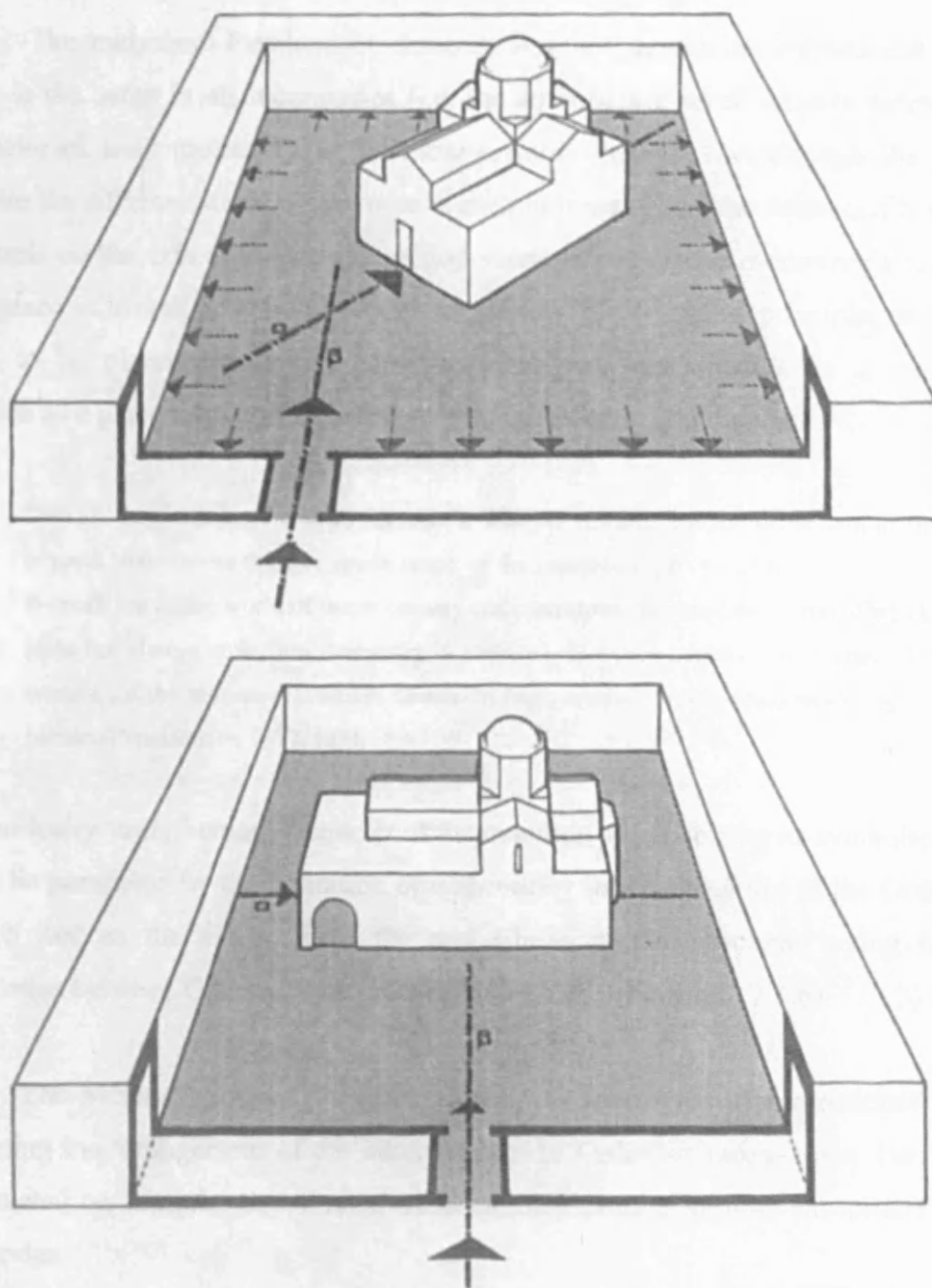
In an Orthodox monastery (on the left) the *katholicon* and the yard are interconnected, indivisible. Thus, the visitors and the monastic community share the same space. In a Catholic monastery (on the right) the church and the yard are separated: the church can be accessed directly from the entrance of the monastery, without the existence of the yard. Thus, the visitors do not share the same space with the monastic community.

Papaioannou (1977) studied the dynamics of the space of a monastery by examining the route of the viewer in it [the ‘viewer’ of a monastery refers to both a visitor and a member of the monastic community] (Figure 39). The starting point of the route of the viewer was marked by the entrance of the monastery, given that the entrance defines the relation of the monastery with the outside world (section 7.1.8.2). The ultimate end of the route was marked by the *katholicon*, given its primary symbolic significance and its central position in the monastery (section 7.1.8.2).

He identified two axes in the route of the viewer in the monastery (Figure 39). The first axis starts from the entrance of the monastery and continues and ends into the yard. The second axis passes through the *katholicon*, and is projected, through the opening of the façade of the *katholicon*, in the yard of the monastery, exercising influence upon the part of the yard that is immediately in front of the façade of the *katholicon*. The first axis is associated with the yard and the function of the monastery as a place for the life of the monastic community (and the visitors), while the second axis is associated with the *katholicon* and the function of the monastery as a place for the worship of God (Papaioannou 1977, 33, 67-69; see section 7.1.8.2).

The two axes intersect in the yard. In this way, the viewer's experience of space becomes dynamic through the synthesis of the two axes, as a result of the transition from the influence of the one axis to the influence of the other: the viewer is encouraged to stay in the yard (through the axis of the entrance-yard) and at the same time to move towards the *katholicon* (through the axis of the *katholicon*). Thus, in an Orthodox monastery the viewer is encouraged to move in and explore the space, seeking his own, personal way to reach the *katholicon* (Papaioannou 1977, 41-42).

Papaioannou further proposed that the actual character of each monastery (i.e. whether the emphasis is placed on monastery's function as a place of worship or its function as a place for the life of the monastic community and the visitors) is defined by the way the two axes intersect. There are two cases. First, the intersection of the two axes is 'direct' and strong (Figure 39 upper). In this case, the yard is increasingly 'dependant' upon the *katholicon*, functioning mainly as a kind of reception hall for the *katholicon*. Emphasis is placed on the *katholicon* and subsequently on monastery's function as a place of worship. Thus the viewer is mostly encouraged to move towards the *katholicon* (Figure 39 below). Second, the axis of the *katholicon* is projected outside the yard, and thus the intersection of the two axes is 'indirect' and weak. In this case, the yard acquires increasing 'independence' from the *katholicon*. Emphasis is placed on the yard and subsequently on monastery's function as a place for the life of the monastic community and the visitors. Thus the viewer is mostly encouraged to stay in the yard (Papaioannou 1977, 71).



**Figure 39:** Orthodox monasteries: schematic representations of routes within the monasteries, as identified by Papaioannou (1977) (source: Papaioannou 1977, 70).

The beginning of the route is the entrance of the monastery, while the end of the route is the *katholikon*. 'B' is the axis of the entrance-yard, associated with the function of monastery as a place for the life of the monastic community (and the visitors), while 'A' is the axis of the *katholikon*, associated with the function of monastery as a place for the worship of God.

In the case shown above, the intersection of the two axes is 'direct' and strong. Emphasis is placed on the *katholikon* and subsequently on monastery's function as a place for the worship of God.

In the case shown below, the intersection of the two axes is 'indirect' and weak. Emphasis is placed on the yard and subsequently on monastery's function as a place for the life of the monastic community and the visitors.

The analysis of Papaioannou demonstrates that, though the ultimate end of the route is the same in all monasteries (i.e. the *katholicon*), what actually defines the character of each monastery is the route towards the end (i.e. through the yard). Despite the differentiations of the route in each monastery and the occasionally strong emphasis on the axis of the *katholicon* and subsequently on the monastery's function as a place of worship, in an Orthodox monastery, as a general principle, emphasis tends to be placed on the entrance-yard axis and subsequently on monastery's function as a place for the life of the monastic community and the visitors.

Though the *katholicon* always remains a window towards the symbolic world/ the great beyond, nonetheless the free inside space of the monastery [the yard] becomes the centre of the real, the actual world of the monastery and constitutes the basic core around which the so plain but always multiform monastery is arranged. The yard becomes the carrier of the true content [of the monastery], which, despite its high, symbolic roots, remains simply and truly human (Papaioannou 1977, 123).

The basically 'truly human' character of the monastic space despite its symbolic roots could be paralleled by the definition of authenticity in the *Tradition* of the Orthodox Church and to the character of the real Christian, that, though 'acting in the boundaries between God and man', remain 'truly human' (section 7.1.6).

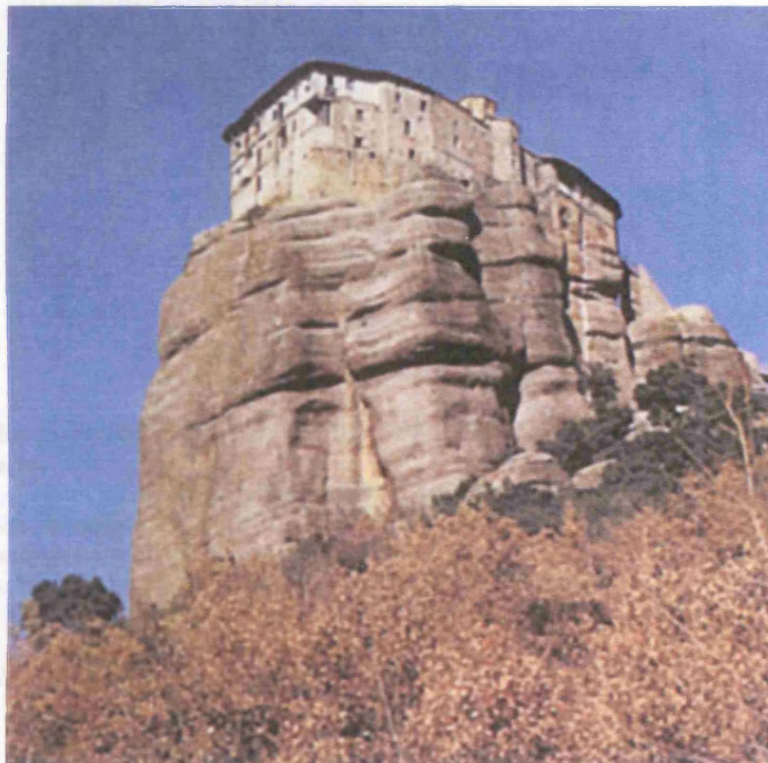
The Meteora monasteries generally tend to follow the aforementioned rules governing the arrangement of the internal space of Orthodox monasteries. However, constructed on irregular and limited surfaces, they present various exceptions from these rules.

The Meteora monasteries are developed in various ways and axes in an attempt to adjust to the conditions of the available rock surfaces. Some monasteries, particularly those built on very limited rock surfaces such as Roussanou and St Nikolaos Anapafsas, are structured on a vertical axis and laid out in several storeys in an attempt to make the maximum use of the available space (Figure 41). These monasteries externally acquire an increased height, while internally each storey is of a very limited height, and occasionally each storey (and even the same room) has ceilings of different height adjusted to the surrounding rock, as in the case of Roussanou. Other monasteries, such as the Holy Trinity and St Stephen, are structured

on a horizontal axis, on the same storey (Figure 40). Other monasteries, such as the Great Meteoron and Varlaam, are laid out on different and irregular levels within the same storey.



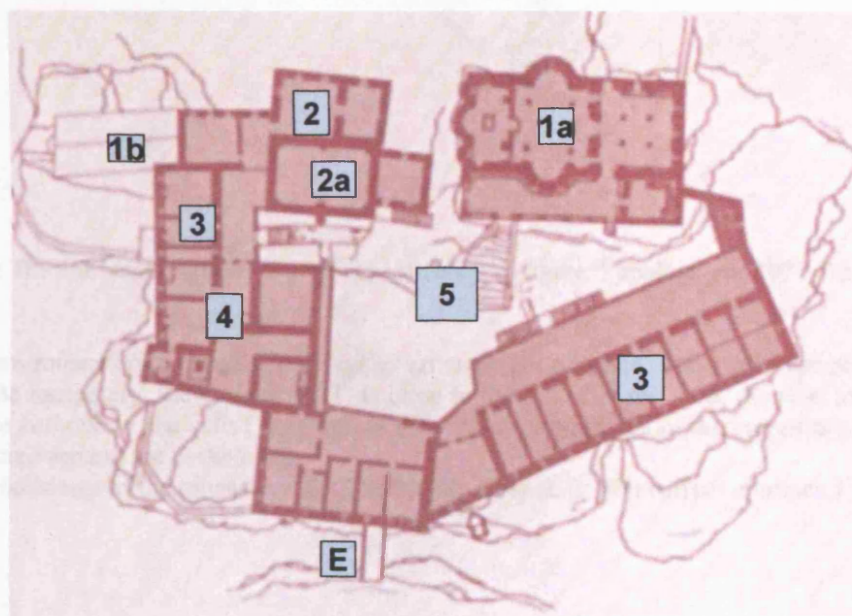
**Figure 40:** The Holy Trinity monastery: external view (source: Choulia and Albani 1999, 118).



**Figure 41:** The Roussanou monastery: external view (source: Nikonanos 1992, 71).

The Holy Trinity monastery is structured on a horizontal axis, while the Roussanou monastery is structured on a vertical axis.

The Meteora monasteries present a freer and more complicated arrangement of space compared with the standards for the Orthodox monasteries (Figures 42, 43 and 44). The *katholicon* is in some cases not situated on the centre of the yard, as in the Varlaam, the Great Meteoron and the Holy Trinity monasteries (Figures 43 and 44). The cells are in some cases not centred around the *katholicon*, as in the Holy Trinity and the St Nikolaos Anapafsas monasteries (Figure 44). Unlike most Orthodox monasteries, at Meteora the cemeteries are not separated from, but incorporated within, the monasteries.



**Figure 42:** The St Stephen monastery: ground plan (original figure: Papaioannou 1977, 30, with author's additions).

The St Stephen monastery presents a rather regular, compared to the standards of the Orthodox monasteries, arrangement of space. The yard (indicated by number 5) is in the centre of the monastery, the main *katholicon* (1a) is close to the centre of the yard, the refectory (2) is close to the *katholicon*, and the cells (3) as well as the secondary buildings of the monastery (4) tend to be centred around the *katholicon*.

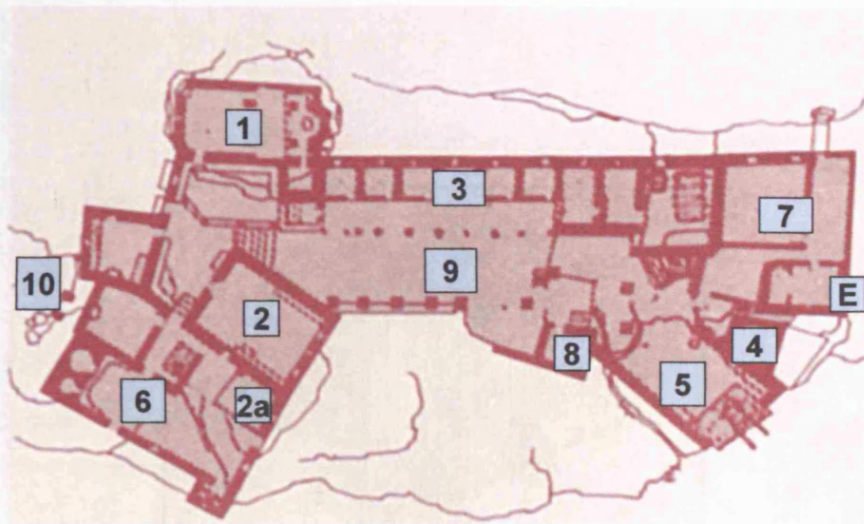
[The other buildings of the monastery: 1b: The older *katholicon*. E: Entrance.]



**Figure 43:** The Varlaam monastery: ground plan (original figure: Papaioannou 1977, 30, with author's additions).

The Varlaam monastery presents a less regular arrangement of space. The yard (number 10) is in the centre of the monastery, the *katholicon* (1) is close to the centre of the yard, the refectory (2) is quite far from the *katholicon*, the cells (3) as well as the secondary buildings of the monastery (5, 7, 8 and 9) are not centred around the *katholicon*.

[The other buildings of the monastery: 4a: Church. 4b: Chapel. E: The current entrance.]



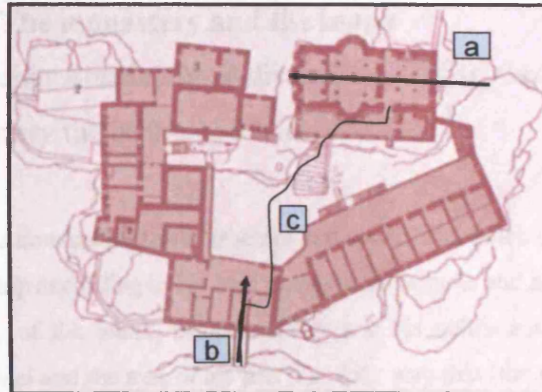
**Figure 44:** The Holy Trinity monastery: Ground plan (original figure: Papaioannou 1977, 30).

The Holy Trinity monastery presents a clearly irregular arrangement of space. The yard is in the centre of the monastery (number 9), but the *katholicon* (1) is clearly in a corner of the monastery, and is thus separated from the yard, the cells (3), the reception hall (7) and the secondary buildings of the monastery (8). Only the refectory (2) is close to the *katholicon*.

[The other buildings of the monastery: 2a: Kitchen. 4: Chapel of St John. 9: An inside corridor, used as an inside yard. 5: The *vrizoni* tower (i.e. the original way of access to the monastery). E: The current entrance.]

The application of the approach of Papaioannou in the Meteora monasteries leads to the following conclusions (Figure 45). The intersection of the axis of the entrance-yard and the axis of the *katholicon* is defined by the irregular conditions of the ground and by the position of the *katholicon* within the monastery. In most Meteora monasteries the *katholicon* is positioned in such a way that its façade (western side), which is the carrier of the axis of the *katholicon*, is not visible from the entrance of the monastery. Furthermore, the entrance of the *katholicon* is in some cases opened on a different side (not the western) of the building (as in the Great Meteoron, St Stephen, Holy Trinity and St Nikolaos Anapafsas). This means that the axis of the *katholicon* is hardly (or not at all) projected towards the yard. As a result, the two axes do not intersect to each other. Thus, in the Meteora monasteries,

emphasis is clearly placed on the entrance-yard axis and subsequently on monastery's function as a place for the life of the monastic community and the visitors.



**Figure 45:** The St Stephen monastery: schematic representation of the route within the monastery (original figure: Papaioannou 1977, 30, with author's additions).

'C' is the route of the viewer within the monastery. The beginning of the route is the entrance of the monastery, while the end of the route is the *katholicon* of the monastery. 'B' is the axis of the entrance-yard, associated with the function of monastery as a place for the life of the monastic community (and the visitors). 'A' is the axis of the *katholicon*, associated with the function of monastery as a place for the worship of God.

As this figure shows, the two axes do not intersect to each other (not even in an 'indirect' and weak one: above, figure 39). Thus, the yard tends to be completely separated from the *katholicon*. In this case, emphasis is clearly placed on the yard and subsequently on monastery's function as a place for the life of the monastic community and the visitors.

Thus, the analysis of the arrangement of the internal space of an Orthodox monastery demonstrated the following. First, the two-fold function of an Orthodox monastery (as a place of worship of God and a place that sustains a monastic community) is clearly reflected in the inextricable connection between the *katholicon* and the yard. Second, the incorporation of the visitors and the outside world in general within the life of the monastic community is clearly reflected in the fact that the yard of a monastery is shared both by the monastic community and the visitors. Third, the

definition of authenticity in the Orthodox monastic *Tradition* is reflected in the fact that, although the arrangement of space in each of the monasteries is unique, dependant upon the synthesis of the two functions, emphasis is actually placed on the 'human' rather than the religious function of the monastery. It should be noted that these elements differentiate an Orthodox monastery from a Catholic one.

#### **7.1.9. Conclusion: The monastery and the monk**

A monk, being absolutely dedicated to Christ through the Holy Liturgy, considers his monastery the centre of his life.

Monastery as a community, as a structure and space, as a place of worship by its founder and a way of worship according to his own example, as miracle and as history, is the basic element of the identity of the monk, his personality and his uniqueness. It is the primary point of reference for him and the axis of his life. The only way that [the monk] can experience heaven on earth (Papadopoulos 1991b, 64).

A monk has renounced his home in the world in order to create a new home in a remote place (his monastery) in which to gain the true life (heaven), through the unification with Christ. 'As the victory against death is seen and achieved through the Cross of Christ, similarly the true life is seen and achieved through His Resurrection' (Fountoulis 1991, 161).

A monk does not consider himself the owner of his new home (i.e. his monastery) but a temporary resident of it. For him the only actual home, and the constant point of reference and ultimate intention is heaven. As a human, however, he is attached to his monastery as his only home on earth: as the place for the worship of his God and the place of his spiritual father/his Abbot, who is the link between him and his God (section 7.1.6) (Meteora Monasteries 1994a, 38; Anastasiou 1994a, 208; pers. comm. Ioannis).

As a human, a monk may become attached to his monastery for a variety of further reasons related to the worship of God, which (reasons) are different for each site. In the case of Meteora, for example, the members of the monastic communities are particularly attached to their site because of the following elements. Thanks to its distant location Meteora is a peaceful and quiet place, ideal for praying (outside the opening hours of the monasteries) (pers. comm. Maximi; pers. comm. Ioannis). The

most impressive character of the landscape, radically changing according to the weather conditions (such as rain, snow and fog), helps the monks and nuns sense the presence of God through the landscape. Thus, for example, when the Holy Services finish, the monks and the nuns have the habit of admiring the landscape. They have even named a rock 'the woman who prays' (pers. comm. Maximi). The absence of wall enclosures surrounding the monasteries makes the monks and nuns not feel 'imprisoned' but free, as if they were part of the entire landscape worshipping God (pers. comm. Maximi; pers. comm. Ioannis). The presence of other monastic communities in the same area gives, along with the help and support in practical and administrative issues, also a sense of shared spiritual life, and creates among them a sense of spiritual 'rivalry' (pers. comm. Maximi).

A monk considers his monastery and the surrounding area as well as the elements he uses in his everyday life (the so-called 'treasures', such as icons and liturgical vessels) holy, through their participation in the continual worship of God (constituting thus parts of the monastic *Tradition* as followed by the specific monastic community: section 7.1.6). The monastery, the area and the 'treasures', inherited to the current monastic community by its predecessors, are also signs of the monastic community's temporal continuity. These views are shared by the Meteora monastic communities (Great Meteoron Monastery 1997, 3; Anastasiou 1994a, 186; pers. comm. Nikodimi; pers. comm. Maximi; pers. comm. Ioasaph).

A monk considers his permanent presence in his monastery and the constant conduct of the Holy Liturgy in it the core of the operation and protection of his monastery. For example, the Meteora monastic communities are not willing to abandon their monasteries or restrict their ritual habits, firmly considering such possibilities a sacrilege, regardless of the reasons these possibilities might possibly serve, such as the protection of the fabric or the satisfying of the visitors' needs (pers. comm. Nikodimi; pers. comm. Maximi; pers. comm. Ioasaph). In this context, the Meteora monastic communities feel that their monastic needs (such as increases in the size of their communities or the development of their style of life over time) are paramount and come before any need for the maintenance of the fabric and space of the monasteries (pers. comm. Tetsios; pers. comm. Maximi; pers. comm. Nikodimi; Meteora Monasteries 1994a, 36).

## **7.2. The philanthropic-missionary approach to Orthodox monasticism**

The previous section described the principles of the Orthodox monastic *Tradition*, and how these principles are applied to Meteora.

However, over the course of the history of the Church there have been different approaches to monasticism, not (strictly) within the Orthodox monastic *Tradition*. This section refers to the so-called ‘philanthropic-missionary’ approach to monasticism, which had a considerable influence on the life of the Church of Greece and on monasticism since the early Twentieth Century to present, and examines how this approach affected the monastic communities of Meteora.

This section presents this contemporary approach to monasticism, and explores its roots, linking it to the ideology and activity of the so-called ‘ecclesiastical organisations’ (i.e. religious organisations that imposed non-Orthodox Christian ideologies and systems upon the Greek Church and society), and then briefly discusses the relationship of this contemporary approach with the principles of the Orthodox monastic *Tradition*. It then refers to the way this contemporary approach was introduced to Meteora, concentrating on the different responses of the Meteora monastic communities to it.

### **7.2.1. The philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism: presentation**

The so-called ‘ecclesiastical organisations’ are religious organisations that bore the ideology of Western Christian non-Orthodox systems/brotherhoods and operated as ‘societies’ under civil law [*astika somateia*] within the cities, independent from the existing ecclesiastical structures (local Bishoprics). They appeared in Greece in the early Twentieth Century and reached their peak in the period following World War II and the Civil War as an organised attempt to help the Greek population recover from the sufferings of this period and also, more importantly, to achieve the modernization and reformation of the official Church and thus ‘save’ the Church and give it a dominant position in the Greek society (Yannaras 1992, 348-65; Yannaras 1987).

In order to achieve this modernization of the Church, the ‘ecclesiastical organisations’ attempted to impose upon the life of the Church of Greece a so-called

‘modern’, ‘innovative’ Christian ideology of ‘good morals’ and extensive philanthropic activity [*ofelimo ergo*]. The ‘ecclesiastical organisations’ themselves served as a substitute for monastic communities, discouraging particularly young people from becoming monks by promoting other, more ‘efficient’ ways to follow these ‘good morals’ and produce this philanthropic activity, with a negative effect upon the monastic life of Greece (Yannaras 1992, 364-68; 391-405; Yannaras 1987). This attitude of the ‘ecclesiastical organisations’ had a negative effect on Meteora as well, as noted by Bishop Dionysios of Meteora (i.e. the person who brought the first organised monastic communities back to the site in the 1960s: section 8.1), with specific reference to the St Stephen monastery:

[Numerous] disasters hit the monastery: the [German] Occupation,... the Civil War... Then the anti-monastic wind blew strong. Even the religious people, though arguing that they respected and loved the monasteries, in fact systematically discouraged young people from becoming monks. Their recipe was the following: Little spirituality, participation in some [religious] gatherings and more turnout’ (Dionysios 1976, 66).

The 1960s and 1970s are a most crucial period in the life of the Church of Greece. It is the period of the beginning of the rapid decline of the influence of the ‘ecclesiastical organisations’ and at the same time the period of the beginning of a strong tendency of return to the pure Orthodox monastic *Tradition* with the rebirth of organised monasticism (as, for example, in the case of Mount Athos after a long period of monastic decline, to a significant extent thanks to the moving of monastic communities from the Great Meteoron monastery to the Simonopetra and Xenofontos monasteries at Mount Athos: Anastasiou 1990, 391; Anastasiou 1994a, 204). This return to the *Tradition* was, however, not always devoid of the remains of the influence of the ‘ecclesiastical organisations’. Thus, in some cases there was a conscious or underlying attempt to give a more social, open, ‘beneficiary’ and ‘productive’ character to organised monasticism, in the context of a modern organisational and managerial approach based on a strict schedule of monastic life and aiming at specific tangible benefits, targets visible to the wider world. In such cases Orthodoxy was still identified and experienced as an ideology of social benefit, and Orthodox monasticism as a way to save the wider society. This new philosophy was crystallised in the new concept of ‘missionary monasticism’

[*monachoierapostoli*] adopted at that time by the official Church (Yannaras 1992, 385).

### **7.2.1. The philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism: review**

This philanthropic-missionary approach towards monasticism is not, strictly, in accordance with the Orthodox monastic *Tradition*. In this philanthropic-missionary context, Christ is viewed as the ideal moral model to imitate, in order to save the wider world, rather than as the ultimate and exclusive cause for the existence and salvation of each person – as the personal God. Orthodoxy is identified as an ideology of social benefit rather than as the exclusive way of true life through the unification with God mainly through the Holy Liturgy. Orthodox monasticism is seen as a way to save the wider society rather than as the ultimate expression of the existential need of an individual for unification with God. A monastic community is seen as a mainly extroverted community taking care of the needs of the wider society rather than as an introverted community dedicated to the worship of God. A monastery is considered to be an extroverted unit attempting to respond to the needs of the visitors rather than an introverted unit for the worship of God, attempting to incorporate the visitors and the wider society into its ritual life (Moisis 2003, 351-58).

As a result of the aforementioned mixture of the *Tradition* of the Church with the ideology of the ‘ecclesiastical organisations’ (section 7.2.1), the *Tradition* of the Church (with a capital ‘T’), perceived and experienced as the maintaining, living presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church beyond any time and space (section 7.1.3) tended to be transformed into a ‘tradition’ (with a small ‘t’), seen as a past to be preserved at a specific space and time, with the application of specific (modern) techniques and methods. Monastic *Tradition* thus

became absolute as a value in its own terms... in a desperate attempt to preserve historically – in other words, as a museum- a past that was bright and glorious ... detached from the present/living experience of the Church –hence dead’ (Yannaras 1988, 74-75).

### **7.2.3. Introduction of the philanthropic-missionary approach to Meteora**

It has been argued that this philanthropic-missionary approach of the ‘ecclesiastical organisations’ has affected the monastic life of Meteora (Xydias and

Totsikas and Braoudakis 1994, 4/3-5; 4/24-26; Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1997, 248-52; 320-30; Moisis 2003, 352; 355-56).

The re-establishment of the monastic communities in the site in the 1960s could be seen in the context of the complexities in the broader life of the Church of Greece at that period, with the influence of the 'ecclesiastical organisations' on the one hand and the tendency to return to the principles of the Orthodox monastic *Tradition* on the other (section 7.2.1). This philanthropic-missionary approach, first introduced by the Varlaam monastic community (which was very influential at that time), led to the formation of a new programme for the operation of the Meteora monasteries. This new programme would be centred on the active promotion of the Orthodox faith to the wider society at a local, national and international level. In this context, there would be intensive care for the following: the conduct of sermons and philanthropic activity at the broader region and the promotion of the Orthodox faith to the visitors; the maintenance and further development of the monasteries; and the establishment of the basic rules for the isolation of the members of the monastic communities, which (rules) would allow Meteora to operate as a monastic site (Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1994, 4/3-5; 4/25; Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1997, 250-52; 328-30).

Thus, in this philanthropic-missionary context, the Meteora monks and nuns have three main objectives. First, Meteora should become a popular site that would promote the Orthodox faith to the largest possible number of visitors (Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1997, 320-330). Second, Meteora should be a well-maintained complex. The monasteries should reflect a sense of strength and glory, in an attempt to attract the largest possible number of visitors and portray the power of the Orthodox faith to them (Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1997, 248-252; 320-30; Meteora Monasteries 1994a, 45-47). Third, Meteora should become an important monastic site with monastic communities that are flourishing and increasing in size and influence, and have a significant contribution to the wider society (Meteora Monasteries 1994a, 37-43; Meteora Monasteries 1995, 10; Anastasiou 1994a, 204-06; Anastasiou 1990, 391-92).

This philanthropic-missionary approach is reflected in the words of Bishop Dionysios of Meteora in the early 1960s (see section 8.1):

With the return to the magnificent and holy ideals of Orthodox monasticism and their careful development on the part of the Brotherhood and also with the parallel development of missionary activity, the monastery will become again a spiritual centre and a bright lighthouse (Dionysios 1964, 37).

And in the words of one of the current Abbots of the Meteora monastic communities:

The monk of Meteora, because of the large number of visitors, Greeks [who are] Orthodox and foreigners who belong to other Christian denominations or other religions, has today a large field of exercise and promotion of the Orthodox faith in practice. This monk does not come [to Meteora] for a mission. He comes [to Meteora] for the obedience and isolation from the outside world... But Meteora is in fact 'a city built on the hill' [Matthew, 5. 14-16], and he either demonstrates or spoils the Orthodox faith in practice internationally (Anastasiou 1990, 391).

The attempt to incorporate visiting the site and the maintenance and development of the monasteries within the monastic life in the context of the philanthropic-missionary approach can be seen in the words of one of the current Abbots of the Meteora monastic communities:

We [the Meteora monastic communities], of course, with the grace of God and the blessings of our Saints, will never stop fighting for these high and pleasing to God/pious aims [the welcoming and hospitality offered to the visitors], for the benefit of our city and the residents of our area... The Holy Monasteries [of Meteora] have shown in the last years a special interest and a huge and very expensive activity for the formation of areas for the receiving/welcoming and guiding of their numerous visitors. Key expression of this activity is the operation of storerooms [*skeuofilakeia*] and museums in most of the monasteries. Thus, buildings of significant architectural value have been chosen, restored and formed, so that their visitor appreciates, in parallel to their significance as treasures, also the value/wealth of their architecture. Especially in our monastery [the Great Meteoron monastery] six such buildings have been arranged and operate... The formation of all these buildings, which have been formed, operate and preserved with the effort, expenses and interest of the monks themselves, significantly extend the stay of the visitors in the Holy Monasteries and subsequently in the area as well- which is our city's agonising and primary demand (Anastasiou 2004, 21).

The Meteora monastic communities, though all broadly sharing this philanthropic-missionary approach, have differing responses to it. The monastic communities seem to form two different groups, on the basis of their degree of commitment to this approach. The first group of monastic communities, namely the Great Meteoron and St Stephen, is more committed to this approach. These monastic communities tend to see the philanthropic-missionary activity as an inseparable part of their monastic life and among the basic reasons for their establishment in the site in the first place (pers. comm. Great Meteoron Monastery; pers. comm. St Stephen Monastery; Anastasiou 2004, 21: see immediately above). The second group of monastic communities, especially the Holy Trinity and Roussanou, is less committed to this approach and more attached to the traditional monastic principles (pers. comm. Holy Trinity Monastery; pers. comm. Roussanou Monastery).

The first group of monastic communities expresses its high level of concern about the wider world at local, national and international level in a variety of ways. At a local level, they are highly concerned about the conduct of a most extensive philanthropic activity, about the promotion of the Greek identity and history (for example, through the organisation of festivals dedicated to local heroes of the Greek revolution against the Ottomans, such as *Vlachaveia*) and about the promotion of the ideals of Meteora monasticism in the broader local community (for example, through the construction of churches dedicated to Saints of Meteora as in the case of the Church of St Athanasios of Meteora in Ypati, Lamia) (Great Meteoron 1995; Anastasiou 1994b, 282-85; Anastasiou 1994a, 201). These monastic communities are even accused by members of the local community of intervening in the local administrative and political issues and also of intervening in issues of the local Bishopric (pers. comm. Kalampaka city).

At a national level, these monastic communities are more likely to take actions for the protection of the Orthodox faith against those seen as attempting to do harm to it (Great Meteoron 1995). For example, they organised campaigns and made publications against the movie *The Last Temptation*, which they considered a harsh insult to the Church and Christ Himself (pers. comm. Great Meteoron Monastery). They often intervene in issues regarding the relationship between the state, the Church and the monastic communities. A most characteristic example for this was the successful struggle of the Great Meteoron monastic community against the Greek

state's attempt to expropriate part of monastic estate on a national basis (Apostolakis 2002b, 24; Papadakou and Fotopoulou 1995).

At an inter-state level, these communities conduct extensive philanthropic and missionary activity in foreign countries with Orthodox populations (Paradosi 1994, 293; 297). They are also consistently against the dialogue between the Orthodox and the Catholic Church, a dialogue which is encouraged by the Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople (pers. comm. Great Meteoron Monastery).

These monastic communities are highly concerned about conveying and promoting the Orthodox faith (and possibly the Greek national identity as well, often seen as inextricably linked to the Orthodox faith) to the largest possible number of visitors as a kind of obligation towards them. They show a high level of concern about the condition and development of their monasteries through an extensive maintenance and construction activity, which increasingly serves the covering of the visitors' needs. They also show an increased care for the protection of the monastic and holy character of the site considering themselves to be the exclusive guardians of this holiness. In this context, they tend to associate the protection of the site with their own exclusive and ultimate power in the operation of the site. On this basis, they see any attempt of other groups of people (such as the local community) to take a role in the operation of the site, even a clearly secondary or minor one, as potentially threatening the monastic and holy character of the site (pers. comm. Great Meteoron Monastery; pers. comm. St Stephen Monastery).

The second group of the Meteora monastic communities tends to place more emphasis on the principles of monastic isolation. These monastic communities conduct philanthropic activities, but mainly in a narrower, local context and in a less intense way. These monastic communities accept and take care of the visitors, but concentrate on their monastic life, without any special concern for promoting the Orthodox faith to them. They conduct the necessary maintenance and construction works, almost exclusively for their monastic needs, and without any intense sense of developing their monasteries. They do not show a high level of concern for the protection and defence of the holiness of the site, do not demand the exclusive power in the operation of the site, and are more open to other groups of people using the site (pers. comm. Holy Trinity Monastery; pers. comm. Roussanou Monastery).

The response of each of the Meteora monastic communities to the philanthropic-missionary approach is mostly a matter of the Abbot of each monastic

community given the Abbot's spiritual and administrative power in each monastic community (section 7.1.6).

### 7.3. Conclusion

The functional continuity at Meteora is maintained over the course of time. The functional continuity of Meteora, in accordance with the monastic *Tradition* of the Church, is based on the continual conduct of the Holy Liturgy: Meteora is a place of worship of God. The worship of God is the most significant contribution as well as responsibility of the monastic communities towards the wider society, and the entire operation and management of the site (including the visiting of the site and the maintenance and development of the monasteries) should be incorporated within it.

At the same time, however, contemporary influences, namely the philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism, which are not strictly within the Orthodox monastic *Tradition*, affect the way the nature of functional continuity at Meteora changes over the course of time. These contemporary influences relate to the way the monastic communities see their site and their relationship with the outside world: Meteora is not simply a place of worship of God; it is mainly a place for the conduct of philanthropic-missionary activity to the wider society. The conduct of philanthropic-missionary activity is the most significant contribution as well as responsibility of the monastic community towards the wider society, and the entire operation and management of the site (including the visiting of the site and the maintenance and development of the monasteries) should be incorporated within it.

## **8. The operation and management of Meteora**

## 8.0. Objectives

This chapter examines the way the nature of functional continuity at Meteora has changed over the course of time influenced by the growth of the tourism and heritage industries: how the monastic function has been maintained in a site that is increasingly developing into a tourist and a heritage site.

This issue is explored through the analysis of the operation, the management and the spatial arrangement of Meteora during the recent history of the site starting from the re-establishment of the monastic communities in the site in the 1960s, with a focus on the current situation.

The first part of the chapter gives a brief chronology of the recent history of Meteora, and also refers to specific examples of current operational and management issues of the site.

The second part analyses the recent history of Meteora (in a series of phases) and the current situation of the site, on the basis of its monastic function, the protection of its heritage significance and its tourism development.

The third part explores the changing use of space during the recent history of Meteora, with an emphasis on the current situation.

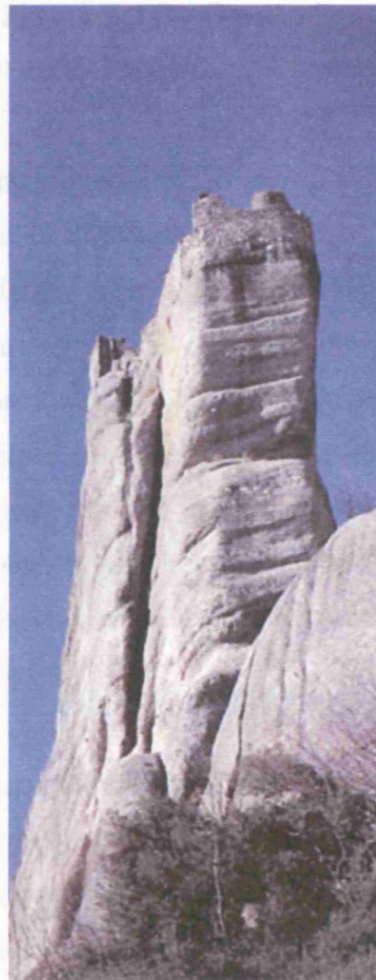
The fourth part briefly reviews the current framework of the operation and management of the site and makes some broad suggestions for a new framework.

This chapter examines the growth of the tourism and heritage industries, as an external influence on the functional continuity of Meteora (associated with the outside world and relating to the way the outside world sees Meteora and its relationship with the monastic communities of the site). It also explores the way the monastic communities of the site, in the context of their philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism (chapter 7), respond to the growth of the tourism and heritage industries, i.e. the relationship between the internal and the external influence on the functional continuity of the site.

## 8.1. The operation and management of Meteora: presentation

### 8.1.1. The recent history of Meteora (1960s to present)

From the end of World War II (1945) and the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) most monasteries at Meteora were not in use, and the rest, such as the Great Meteoron and the Varlaam monasteries, had very few monks. The monasteries, already in a dilapidated condition in terms of fabric because of the wars (Tzimas 2000, 395) (Figure 46), further suffered during the period of the monastic absence. For example, the monastery of Hagia Moni collapsed in the 1960s (Figure 47), while the Holy Trinity and the Roussanou monasteries suffered from theft (Theotekni 1978, 86-87; Tetsios 2003, 342; Tzimas 2000, 404; Meteora Monasteries 1980a; Meteora Bishopric 2002; pers. comm. Holy Trinity Monastery; pers. comm. Roussanou Monastery).



**Figure 46:** The Roussanou monastery: post-war condition (source: Tzimas 2000, 407)

**Figure 47:** The Hagia Moni monastery: external view (source: Great Meteoron Monastery 1997, 24).

From the early 1950s to the early 1960s the Ministry of Reconstruction and Development and the Hellenic Tourism Organisation allocated money for the restoration of the monasteries. The interest of the government agencies was to rescue the monasteries from collapse and also to develop tourism at the site:

We believe that Meteora should be dealt with as follows: a) as monuments of Byzantine art and architecture and Christian history, b) as the only tourist area of special interest for the connection of the route of Athens-Larissa with the route of Athens-Delphi-Ioannina-Metsovo ... so that the necessary requirements for the maintenance of Meteora as a site that has tourism potential are not lost (Hellenic Tourism Organisation 1951).

The above extract demonstrates that government agencies already had specific plans for the tourism exploitation of Meteora (based on specific tourist routes) in the 1950s. The government agencies' interest in developing tourism at the site is also illustrated by the construction of a very large and luxurious hotel (by the standards of that time), named 'Xenia', in Kalampaka in the late 1950s by the Hellenic Tourism Organisation (Chatzidakis 1993, 3).

In the context of developing tourism at the site, in the early 1960s the Hellenic Tourism Organisation constructed guesthouses within the monasteries, as in the case of the Great Meteoron (Meteora Bishopric 1960; pers. comm. Ioasaph). Thus, the Great Meteoron monastery was mainly used by visitors as a guesthouse while at the same time the only monk living in the monastery at that time was isolated in a smaller part of the monastery leading his spiritual life. Bishop Dionysios of Meteora considered this guesthouse 'profoundly incompatible to the holy character of the site' (Meteora Bishopric 1960). The current monks of the Great Meteoron monastery note the oral tradition according to which the monk died of sorrow because he considered the guesthouse a sacrilege (pers. comm. Ioasaph).

In the early 1960s, mainly as a result of the initiatives of Bishop Dionysios of Meteora, the first organised monastic communities were re-established in the site (Tzimas 395-96; Tsiatas 2003, 162; pers. comm. Ioasaph). As Bishop Dionysios stated, asking for the cessation of the contract with the Hellenic Tourism Organisation regarding the guesthouse in the Great Meteoron monastery: 'The Great Meteoron

monastic community... is restructured and increasing in terms of size, and the space is absolutely essential for it' (Meteora Bishopric 1961).

In the late 1960s the Church (through a central Ecclesiastical Council and the local Bishopric), with the agreement of the developing monastic communities of Meteora, cleared part of the estate of the Church and of the monasteries and allocated money for the maintenance and development of the monasteries. The local community actively helped in the maintenance works in kind, without asking any money in return. It gradually became the congregation of the monasteries, with active participation in the ritual life and with spiritual as well as personal links with the members of the monastic communities.

These maintenance and development works, undertaken by the monastic communities with the help of the local community, were not scientifically-based, and were without reference to contemporary conservation guidelines. As a consequence, the monastic communities significantly, and in some cases even irreversibly, damaged the original fabric and altered the original spatial arrangement of the monasteries, but still managed to rescue them from collapse. An example of this is the Holy Trinity monastery (Tzimas 2000, 395-96; 403; pers. comm. Tetsios; Figure 48).



**Figure 48:** The Holy Trinity monastery: the reception hall [*archontariki*] before and after the scientifically-based restoration (source: Tzimas 2000, 414).

During the 1960s there was an interest on the part of the government bodies to further emphasize and establish the heritage significance of Meteora. Thus in 1967 the Ministry of Culture (which had previously protected the monasteries as individual monuments in the 1920s) assigned the site as a whole with single boundaries including the local village of Kastraki and part of the city of Kalampaka.

During the 1960s visitors started arriving in Meteora in larger numbers. These visitors were mostly individuals rather than organised groups, and were mainly interested in the monastic life of the monasteries as pilgrims (Kouros 1965, 46-47; Kotopoulis 1973, 12-20). The majority of the Meteora monks and nuns accepted and embraced tourism from the very beginning, seeing it as a source of income through the donations from visitors, which would help towards the growth of their communities and the restoration of their monasteries. One of the very few exceptions to this was the attitude of some of the Great Meteoron monks, who on the arrival of the first visitors left their monastery and occupied the monastery of the Meeting of Christ which they used as a hermitage (pers. comm. Great Meteoron Monastery). At that time the local community was primarily concerned with the ritual and spiritual life of the site, and was cautious or even negative towards the phenomenon of tourism mostly on the grounds of its effect on the monastic character of the site (Kouros 1965, 44-45; Kotopoulis 1973, 13-20). It seems clear that at that time the local community had not recognised the economic benefits of tourism.

During the 1970s and the early 1980s the monastic communities increased in size with the support of the local Bishop (Tzimas 2000, 396). At the same time there was also an increase in the visitors to the site. The visitors in this period consisted not only of those interested in the monastic life of the monasteries as pilgrims, but also those more interested in the landscape and the monastic buildings as an inseparable part of the landscape, and were increasingly visiting the site as a result of more organised tourism. The government agencies supported the development of more organised tourism in an attempt to further develop and enhance its contacts with foreign, mostly Western European, states (Ministry of Coordination and Development 1980, 26-27; 39; pers. comm. KENAKAP). The monastic communities continued to accept tourism on the site, with an increasing recognition of the financial benefits of tourism. During this period admission charges for the non-Greek visitors were introduced (pers. comm. Great Meteoron Monastery). The local community, whilst continuing their involvement in the ritual and spiritual life of the monasteries as the congregation, which had increased in size, also started to recognise the financial benefits of tourism, gradually becoming involved in tourism by opening shops, restaurants and small hotels in Kalampaka and Kastraki (Alexiadis 2004).

During the 1970s and the early 1980s the Ministry of Culture launched, through its local Ephorate, large-scale restoration projects, particularly at the Roussanou and the St Nikolaos Anapafsas monasteries. As a result of these projects these monasteries were rescued from collapse (Tetsios 2003, 342-44; Meteora Ephorate 1977; pers. comm. Lazaros Deriziotis). These projects were primarily a result of the government agencies' increasing interest in the protection of the monuments as part of national heritage, as well as their constant concern to maintain and increase tourism at the area.

The monastic communities developed smaller-scale projects at their monasteries, through the income derived from tourism, and with the continuing support of the local community, which now started to be paid for its work. These projects aimed at the maintenance and development of the monasteries, the improvement of the communication of the monasteries with the outside world and the satisfying of the visitors' needs. Thus, stairs were constructed for the easier access of the members of the monastic communities and the visitors to the monasteries, and small rooms were arranged for the protection and exhibition of monastic treasures (Tzimas 2000, 396-97; 399; Nikodimi 2001, 276). These works were mostly unauthorised, with considerable implications for the original fabric and also for the tourism character of the site, as reflected in the views of the Ministry of Culture officials:

In very few years, if the allowance on the part of the authorities and the unauthorised [construction] activities on the part of the monks continue, it is scientifically certain that the [architectural] style of the Meteora monasteries will be irreversibly harmed (Ministry of Culture 1982b).

By the early 1980s Ministry of Culture officials had begun to complain about not being informed about construction activity taking place in most of the Meteora monasteries, as in the Great Meteoron and Varlaam (Ministry of Culture 1982a).

By the early 1980s Ministry of Culture officials described the complexities of the operation and management of Meteora as follows:

The Meteora monasteries are united against any danger/issue... They also have remarkable financial power, law consultants, covering from the Church and contacts with Mount Athos,

etc. They also influence a large part of the local society, which willingly supports them in any initiative of theirs, regardless if it is right or wrong (Ministry of Culture 1982b).

From the mid-1980s to present is the period of mass tourism at the site. Mass tourism developed with the constant support of the government agencies and the acceptance and encouragement of the monastic communities. The local community also became increasingly involved in tourism, with considerable implications for the local population and economy: The local economy changed its character, increasingly relying on tourism, where it had previously been based on agriculture and cattle-raising. During this period the rural population began moving from the surrounding villages to the city of Kalampaka (Kalyvas 2002, 97; 166; 198-99).

From the mid-1980s until the mid-1990s the government bodies' concern for the heritage protection of the site was strengthened. This concern was manifested mainly in two ways: first, through the funding of extensive restoration projects at the monasteries. This funding came mainly from the European Union, and was assigned through the Ministry of Culture and especially the Ministry for the Environment, Spatial Planning and Public Works for restoration works at the monasteries; and second, through the promotion of the World Heritage inscription of the site, which took place in 1988. It should be noted that the government bodies initiated and completed the World Heritage nomination process of the site without any attempt to involve the monastic communities. The monastic communities did not show any willingness to participate in, or oppose, the process either. Nevertheless, in the nomination file the Ministry of Culture placed heavy emphasis on the monastic communities' association with the site, clearly reflecting their views. It stressed that 'this area [of Meteora] has been continuously used by the Meteora Monasteries since the end of the tenth century till now and it has been also continuously resided by monks and nuns' (Ministry of Culture 1986, 2-3), and also attached a book written by a Meteora nun (Theotekni 1978).

The concern on the part of the government bodies for the heritage protection of the site was also linked to the tourism exploitation of the site, given that both the allocation of money from the Greek government and the European Union and the World Heritage inscription of the site required that the monasteries would remain open to the public (Greek Government 2002, article 11; Greek Government 1932).

The monastic communities continued to carry out maintenance and development works, increasingly on a much larger scale. From the late 1980s onwards, with the establishment of the current St Stephen monastic community, comprising nuns of a higher educational status, generally the monastic communities started to show a greater concern to carry out scientifically-based studies, with reference to contemporary conservation guidelines (Tzimas 2000, 398). However, the monastic communities, because of their income through tourism, continued not to necessarily depend on the authorisation and the funding from the Ministry of Culture for their works (pers. comm. Meteora Ephorate).

From the mid-1990s onwards Meteora became a popular tourist destination in Greece. As a result, the monastic communities have increased their income, which has ensured them financial independence from the governmental bodies. This enables the communities to conduct almost any project they might desire often without the authorisation of the Ministry of Culture (*Ereuna* 2002). Such projects concern the restoration or replacement of existing buildings, but also involve the construction of new buildings, in the context of a form of rivalry between the monastic communities towards giving their monasteries the strength and glory of the past (pers. comm. Meteora Ephorate). The projects carried out by the monastic communities also include the restoration of ruined monasteries on the site, in an attempt to revive the past glory of the site while at the same time reviving the monasteries' function (pers. comm. Great Meteoron Monastery). For example, the Great Meteoron monastic community restored the monastery of the Coming of Christ, which today operates as its monastery dependency [*metochi*], and the Holy Trinity monastic community restored the St Nikolaos Badovas and the St Antonios *skites*, which also operate as its dependencies (Tetsios 2003, 341-42; Ioasaph 2002, 4-6; n. 10-11). The unauthorised works on the part of the monastic communities, and especially the erection of a five storey building in the Roussanou monastery (section 8.1.2.11), caused the following reaction on the part of the Ministry of Culture officials:

One can notice an act/situation of barbarism for the country, which tends to take the form of a severe illness... Aren't the monks citizens of this state? Aren't they subject to the state legislation and regulations? (pers. comm. Ministry of Culture, cited in *Ereuna* 2002).

### **8.1.2. Examples of current operational and management issues of Meteora**

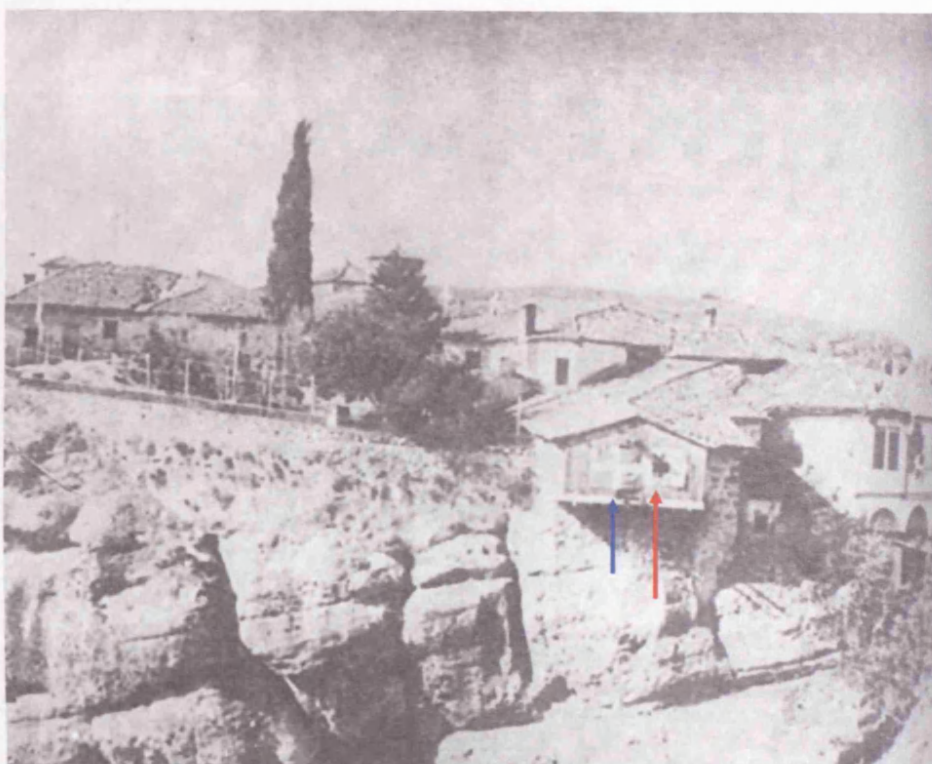
The current operation and management of Meteora is presented through separate examples of issues. These examples concern the tourism development and the heritage protection of the site in relation to its monastic function. These examples reveal the different and even conflicting ideologies, priorities and relationships between the monastic communities and the other groups involved in the operation of the site, and even between the monastic communities themselves.

#### **8.1.2.1. Developing tourism at Meteora: the shooting of *James Bond's* film (1980)**

An international film company attempted to shoot scenes of *James Bond's* film *For your eyes only* (United Artists 1981) at Meteora and particularly in the Holy Trinity monastery. The Greek tourist agencies and the local government were in favour of the project because it linked to the tourist promotion of the site. The monastic communities, acting as one body, mainly at the initiative of the Abbot of the Great Meteoron Monastery and with support from the local Bishopric (Meteora Bishopric 1980), refused permission, considering this project a sacrilege to the holy and monastic character of the site. The monastic communities raised Greek and Byzantine flags on the Holy Trinity monastery (Figure 49), and temporarily closed the monasteries to all visitors (Figure 50). They also launched a campaign to stop the shooting of the film, motivating, and achieving support from, the official Church authorities and numerous ecclesiastical and monastic cycles within and outside Greece (Meteora Monasteries 1980a; Meteora Monasteries 1980b; Meteora Monasteries 1980c; Paradosi 1994, 402; 424). Thus, 'Meteora became a new symbol of resistance, national and pan-Orthodox' (Paradosi 1994, 403).

The film company, with permission from the Ministry of Culture and support from the local community, shot a few general views of the area and the Holy Trinity monastery, and then completed the film in a studio with fake structures that were supposed to substitute the actual monastic buildings (Paradosi 1994, 421; 423; Figures 51 and 52).

This event clearly demonstrates the views of the monastic communities regarding the monastic and holy character of their site, and their power.



**Figure 49:** The reaction of the Meteora monastic communities against the shooting of *James Bond's* film at the site: Greek and Byzantine flags raised on the Holy Trinity monastery (source: Paradosi 1994, 402, with author's additions). The Greek flag depicts a white cross (indicated by a blue arrow), and the Byzantine flag depicts a black double-headed eagle (indicated by a red arrow).



**Figure 50:** The reaction of the Meteora monastic communities against the shooting of *James Bond's* film at the site: a sign informing the visitors of the closure of the Meteora monasteries (source: Paradosi 1994, 424).



**Figure 51:** The shooting of *James Bond*'s film at Meteora: a studio with fake structures imitating the actual buildings of the Meteora monasteries (source: Paradosi 1994, 421).



**Figure 52:** The shooting of *James Bond*'s film at Meteora: *James Bond* (Roger Moore) and his partner in the studio (source: Paradosi 1994, 423).

#### **8.1.2.2. Developing tourism at Meteora: the KENAKAP study (1994)**

In 1994 the 'Centre for the Development of Kalampaka and Pyli' (KENAKAP) commissioned a study on the development of tourism at Meteora and the broader region for the benefit of the local community (Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1994). KENAKAP is a private company formed by, and operating under the supervision of, the Municipalities of the city of Kalampaka and other neighbouring villages (such as Pyli) that allocates financial resources of the European Union to the planning and implementation of projects for the development of the local community (KENAKAP 2007).

The study attempted to help the local community benefit from the development of tourism at Meteora. It presented the main groups of people involved in the operation of the site (stakeholders) and described their values, and developed an inter-disciplinary approach towards the organisation and operation of tourism at the area. The study also attempted to reconcile the tourist operation with the monastic function of the site. Thus it proposed stricter controls over the tourist use of the site through a variety of measures: enclosure of the monastic complex with gates, restriction of the number of visitors entering the complex, introduction of a ticketing system for the entire complex, development of parking areas outside the complex and an internal bus-transfer system, and restricted opening hours of the complex. The study, finally, proposed changes in the management status of the site: It suggested the formation of a committee, consisting of representatives of the main stakeholder groups of the site, which would be responsible for the overall operation and management of the site. The study gave the monastic communities the primary role in the proposed management status, but suggested at the same time an increased role for the local government: through the control of the gates, the ticketing system and the buses and through an increased participation in the management committee (Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1994, xxiii-xxvi; 5/1 - 10/33; 4/1-5; pers. comm. Vassilis Xydias; pers. comm. Great Meteoron Monastery; pers. comm. St Stephen Monastery).

The study led to a major conflict between the local government and the monastic communities. The local government saw this plan as an ideal opportunity to become actively involved in the operation and management of the site and gain more control over the tourism industry, at the expense of the monastic communities (*Ta*

*Meteora* 1995a). The monastic communities, acting as one body ('the Assembly of the Holy Monasteries of Meteora', consisting of the Abbots and Abbesses of all Meteora Monasteries), at the initiative of the Abbot of the Great Meteoron Monastery, opposed the study on the grounds that it was threatening to impose tourism upon the monastic and holy character of the site. The monastic communities feared that the study would lead to an uncontrollable tourism exploitation of the site: 'The site would end up being a religious park, with the monks and nuns imprisoned in it' (pers. comm. Maximi). The monastic communities saw the study as a potential weapon in the hands of groups with limited knowledge regarding the operation of the site and often without respect for the monastic character of the site (i.e. the local government and private companies) to intervene in their territory and challenge their power. As a result, the monastic communities firmly opposed any changes to the existing management status of the site (*Meteora Monasteries* 1995, 11-26; *Meteora Monasteries* 1994c; *Meteora Monasteries* 1994b, 137-141; pers. comm. Great Meteoron Monastery; pers. comm. St Stephen Monastery).

The conflict between the two sides affected the other stakeholder groups as well. The local Bishopric clearly took the side of the monastic communities (*Meteora Bishopric* 1994; *Meteora Monasteries* 1995, 4-5). The local community was unable to come to a single agreement about the study, proving disorganised and lacking the appropriate knowledge and experience to understand even the basic points of the study. Thus the local community was divided between the two sides, caught within local ideological and political conflicts and personal contacts and subject to the influence of the monastic communities and the Bishopric (on the side of the local government: *Ta Meteora* 1995b; Kourelis and Kouroupas 1995; on the side of the monastic communities: Detziortzio 1994, 210-16). The Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Culture chose not to intervene in the conflict (pers. comm. Ministry of Tourism; pers. comm. Ministry of Culture, pers. comm. Vassilis Xydias; *Ereuna* 1995), while the local Ephorate took the side of the monastic communities (*Meteora Ephorate* 1995; pers. comm. Meteora Ephorate).

The monastic communities, led by the Abbot of the Great Meteoron Monastery, launched a campaign to oppose the conclusions of the study, and received support from the official Church authorities and numerous ecclesiastical and monastic cycles as well as political cycles and prominent personalities within and outside Greece (*Meteora Monasteries* 1995, 14-15; *Paradosi* 1994, 337; 376-99; Kalokairinos

1995). The monastic communities even managed to approach and receive support from the office and the family of the then Prime Minister of Greece (*Ta Meteora* 1995c). It should be noted that these groups took the side of the monastic communities based on personal contacts and ideologies rather than on a careful examination of the study.

As a result of the campaign, the KENAKAP study was rejected as a whole, and any further discussion about the existing complexities and future perspectives of the operation of the site ceased.

The study was from the start restricted by the terms set by the local government, with an increased emphasis on the tourism exploitation rather than the monastic function of the site, and on the potential role of the local government in the management of the site. The study made some important points, particularly with regard to the reconciliation of the tourist operation with the monastic function of the site, through the stricter control of tourism. The various stakeholder groups of the site, however, saw the study as an opportunity to develop their own positions in the tourist operation of the site, without carefully considering the points of the study itself (also Marinos 1995). The easiest but not necessarily the best solution for the monastic communities was to reject the study as a whole and cease any further discussion.

#### **8.1.2.3. Regulating the use of the site: the law on the holiness of the site (1995)**

As a result of the monastic communities' campaign to reject the conclusions of the KENAKAP study, and especially their approaching to the office and the family of the Prime Minister, the government passed law 2351/1995. This law 'recognised the area of Meteora as a holy site' and 'safeguarded its distinct religious character' (Greek Government 1995, article 1; Figure 27 on page 147). On this basis, it did not allow any use of the land or exploitation or exercise of any commercial activity that 'would upset in any way the holy character of the area or obstruct the exercise of monastic life or the worship of God' (Greek Government 1995, article 1). The law provided that the specific restrictions in the use of the site were to be defined by a Presidential Decree (section 8.1.4), which would pass upon the suggestion of the Minister of Culture and the advice of the 'Assembly of the Holy Monasteries of Meteora' (henceforth cited as the Assembly) and the local government. Finally,

regarding the protection of the monuments and their ‘treasures’, the law provided that any construction activity within the boundaries of the site would require the authorisation of the Ministry of Culture, while any construction activity within the individual monasteries would be dependant upon the agreement of the Assembly and the Ministry of Culture (Greek Government 1995, article 2).

The law was intended to safeguard the monastic and holy character of the site from activities that were considered harmful to it. It also recognised the Assembly as the primary management body of the site. The law heavily favoured the monastic communities, in relation to the local community (Tzimas 1994, 335-36), and was seen as ‘a present of the government to the monastic communities’ (pers. comm. Great Meteoron Monastery).

The issue of the operation of the Assembly, however, caused a disagreement between the Bishop and particularly the Great Meteoron monastic community. The Bishop felt that the Assembly should not have a permanent character (unlike the Assembly of the monasteries of Mount Athos, for example: section 6.2), and should gather only on specific occasions (in cases of a serious issue or threat for the site, as in the case of the KENAKAP study) and strictly at his initiative and under his control (Meteora Bishopric 2000; pers. comm. Serapheim). The Great Meteoron monastic community favoured a more permanent role for the Assembly, which would to some extent be independent from the local Bishop and would help develop a more effective, unified management of the site by the monastic communities (Great Meteoron Monastery 2000; pers. comm. Great Meteoron Monastery). In this context, it appears that the Great Meteoron monastic community saw the arguments of the Bishop about the Assembly as an attempt, on his part, to extend his spiritual supervision over the monastic communities into other fields such as the everyday operation and management of the site. The Bishop saw the arguments of the Great Meteoron monastic community as an attempt to gain increased independence from him, further enhancing their power in the management of the site.

The disagreement between the Bishop and the Great Meteoron monastic community was soon reflected in the attitudes of the rest of the monastic communities. For example, the St Stephen monastic community took the side of the Great Meteoron monastic community (St Stephen Monastery 2002), while the St Nikolaos Anapafsas monastic community favoured the views of the Bishop (pers.

comm. Polykarpos). It seems that the monastic communities divided on this issue on the basis of spiritual and personal links between them, rather than on the basis of a detailed calculation and analysis of the situation for the benefit of the site: for example, the Abbot of the Great Meteoron Monastery is the spiritual father of the St Stephen monastic community, and the Bishop is the uncle of the Abbot of St Nikolaos Anapafsas Monastery.

As a result of the differences between the monastic communities and the Bishop, the Assembly remains inactive to present. This means that there is no unified management of the site by the monastic communities, with considerable implications for the operation of the site: First, there is no forward or long-term planning for common operational and management issues of the individual monasteries and the site as a whole. Second, the monastic communities' attitude towards the other groups involved in the operation of the site, especially the local community, is not unified. Practically this means that anyone desiring to perform an activity at the site simply needs the unofficial or even silent consent of an Abbot or even a monk of the site. Third, there is no cooperation between the monastic communities with regard to construction activity at the monasteries. Fourth, even the philanthropic activity of the monastic communities for the wider society is significantly hindered. Finally, the failure of the monastic communities to manage the site in a unified way tends to leave a gap in the operation and management of the site, which other groups of people attempt, at least theoretically, to take advantage of in the future, with possible implications for the monastic function of the site (pers. comm. Great Meteoron Monastery).

The failure of the monastic communities to implement a unified and effective management of the site indicates that the monastic communities have failed to take advantage of, and potentially benefit from, the considerable support of the government through the passing of the law on the holiness of the site.

#### **8.1.2.4. Regulating the use of the site: the Presidential Decree (in progress since 1995)**

The complexities and failures of the implementation of law 2351/1995 on the holiness of the site, in terms of the inactivity of the Assembly, hinder significantly the

passing of the more detailed Presidential Decree that would pose specific regulations over the use within the boundaries of the holy site.

The local government clearly opposes the passing of the Presidential Decree, because it would further restrict its economic activities in the site. The monastic communities do not have a unified approach towards the issue: The Great Meteoron and the St Stephen monastic communities, who had pressed for the passing of law 2351/1995 and are in favour of the activity of the Assembly, press for the passing of the Presidential Decree (Great Meteoron Monastery 2000), while the Bishop and the other monastic communities do not consider this issue significant (pers. comm. Serapheim; pers. comm. Polykarpos; pers. comm. Holy Trinity Monastery; pers. comm. Roussanou Monastery).

Despite all these differences, the monastic communities, the Bishop and the local government eventually concluded a unified proposal to the Ministry of Culture, with considerable compromises by the local government (Meteora Monasteries, Trikala Prefecture and Kalampaka Municipality 1999). However, it seems that the Greek government is no longer willing to continue the heavy support to the monastic communities against the local community, especially after the failure of the monastic communities to take advantage of law 2351/1995 (pers. comm. Ministry of Culture). As a result, the work on developing the Presidential Decree has ceased.

#### **8.1.2.5. Regulating the construction activity at the site: the re-definition of the buffer zone of protection (2002)**

In 2002 the Ministry of Culture decided to extend the buffer zone for the heritage site and set stricter conditions on the non-monastic construction activity within it. The new regulations would make it difficult for the owners of the pieces of land within the buffer zone, mostly members of the local community, to exploit and also sell their land. The local community was clearly against this proposal, favouring a much more restricted buffer zone (Kalampaka Municipality 2002), but eventually had to accept the proposal under the pressure from the Ministry of Culture and the monastic communities (Meteora Ephorate 2002; Apostolakis 2001b, 540-54).

This example demonstrates the limited power of the local community, compared with that of the monastic communities and the Ministry of Culture. It also indicates that the monastic communities tend to seriously consider the need for the

heritage protection of the site when it comes to the local community's construction activity (but not when it comes to their own construction activity).

#### **8.1.2.6. Developing tourism at Meteora: the Kalampaka Municipality study (2004) and the Trikala Prefecture study (2005)**

In 2004 and 2005 the Municipality of Kalampaka and the Prefecture of Trikala commissioned studies for the development of tourism at the broader region of Meteora (Petreas 2004 and Charalambeas 2005). Similarly to the KENAKAP study, these studies linked the development of the broader area primarily to tourism at Meteora. However, after taking into account the failures of the KENAKAP study, these studies did not attempt to interfere with the relationship between the tourist use and the monastic function of the site, but concentrated on how to increase the visitor figures of the site. Unlike the KENAKAP study, these studies accepted the existing management operation of the site.

Given the fact that the studies accepted the existing management scheme and attempted to increase the visitor figures of the site, the monastic communities did not oppose these studies and seemed to be in favour of them. The Great Meteoron monastic community, for example, had a positive reaction to the study for the Municipality of Kalampaka (Anastasiou 2004). The local and national government agencies explicitly expressed their support to the studies. For example, the then Ministers of Tourism indicated support by attending the official presentation of the studies (pers. comm. Kalampaka city). The local community was in favour of the studies, particularly because of their expectation of increasing the visitor figures of the area (pers. comm. Kalampaka city; pers. comm. Kastraki village). As with the KENAKAP study, however, the local community seemed unable to present a united approach towards the tourism industry, which might have benefited them.

A brief analysis of the two studies showed that the local government, both at a municipality and at a prefecture level, had realized, after the experience of the KENAKAP issue, that becoming involved in a conflict with the monastic communities would do harm to them, and that nothing could be achieved at local level without the consent of the monastic communities. The current improvement in the relationship between the local government and the local community, and the monastic communities (particularly those communities who had been against the KENAKAP

study, and in favour of the laws regulating the use of the site, i.e. namely the Great Meteoron) (pers. comm. Antonis Piniaras) should be seen in this context.

#### **8.1.2.7. Developing tourism at Meteora: the ‘Tourist and Cultural Committee’ (2006)**

The improvement of the relationship between the local government and the local community, and the monastic communities led to the setting up of a ‘Tourist and Cultural Committee’ in 2006. This involved the participation of various local groups involved in the tourism industry and also of the monastic communities, namely the Great Meteoron (Anastasiou 2006).

The Committee’s first project was intended to be the production of a single new tourist guide for the site and the surrounding area. However, the local groups were unable to come to a single agreement about tourism issues (pers. comm. Kostas Tsilakos).

This failure demonstrates that, despite the improvement of the relationship between the local government and the local community, and the monastic communities, there has not been any positive practical outcome for the benefit of the overall operation of the site to date.

#### **8.1.2.8. Developing tourism at Meteora: the widening of the road network (in progress)**

The Ministry of Tourism, through its local office in the Prefecture of Trikala, allocated funds (from the European Union) for the widening of the road network within the site in an attempt to respond to the increasing traffic levels and the increasing size of tourist buses (see ICOMOS Greece 2005). The monastic communities agreed to the project (Anastasiou 1994, 206). The Ministry of Culture initially disagreed with the project on the basis of its considerable impact on the sensitive landscape of Meteora. However, it later accepted, under the pressure from the Ministry of Tourism, the tourist agencies and the monastic communities, the partial widening of the road network considering that the impact upon the landscape would be relatively limited (pers. comm. Ministry of Culture).

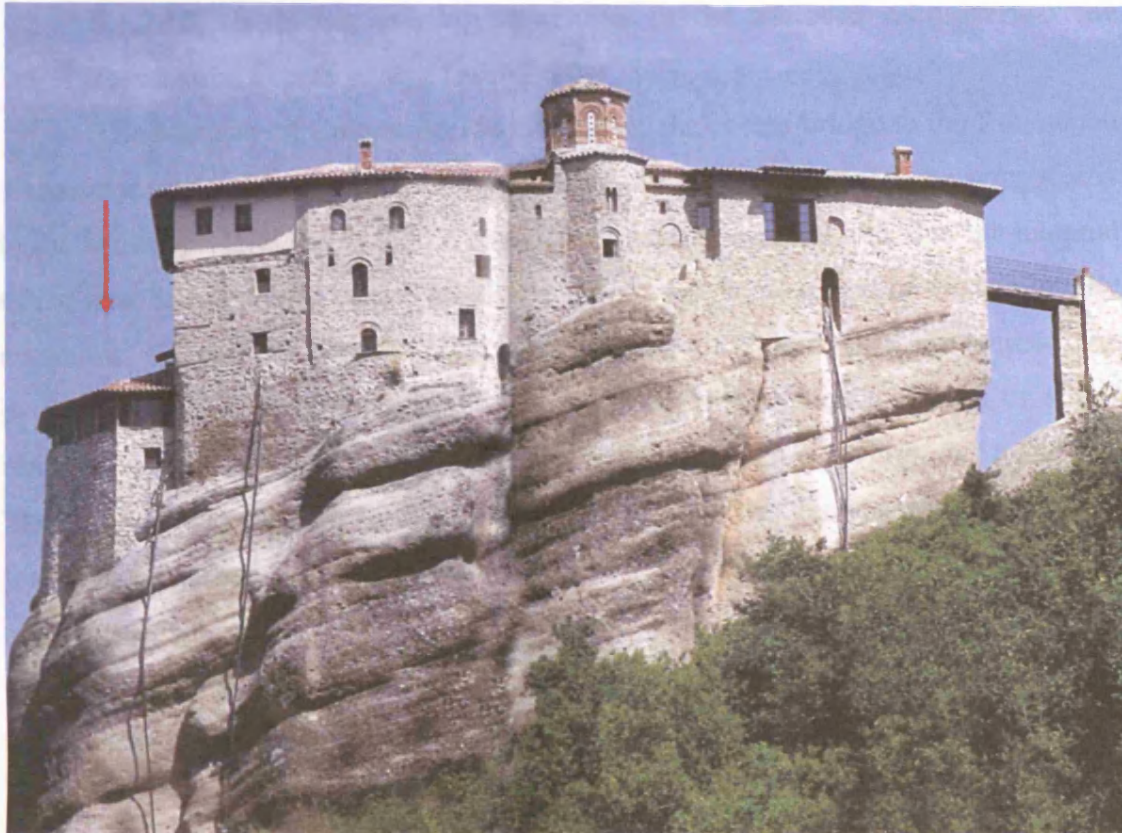
This example demonstrates the conflict within the government bodies (Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Tourism) as well as the positive attitude of the monastic communities towards the development of tourism, even at the expense of the landscape of the site.

#### **8.1.2.9. Erecting new structures in the Meteora monasteries: the Roussanou enclosed balcony (early 1990s)**

Roussanou is the monastery with the smallest available ground surface at Meteora. The Roussanou monastic community had already made the maximum use of the available surface, by constructing rooms with ceilings of different height adjusted to the rock surface, by having two separate reception halls [*archontarikia*] instead of a single unified one, as a result of the existence of a rope-lift for goods, and by using even the smallest areas of the monastery as storerooms. Despite this the monastic community required more space to cover its everyday monastic needs.

As a result, the monastic community decided to expand the space of their monastery by constructing an enclosed balcony. The Ministry of Culture did not give its authorisation for this on the grounds that the proposed style and material of the balcony (iron framework with glass windows) did not conform to the existing architectural character of the monastery (Figures 53 and 54). Despite the disagreement, the monastic community completed the project.

This example demonstrates the power of the monastic communities. It also indicates that the monastic communities give priority to their monastic needs over the heritage significance of the site as perceived and protected by the Ministry of Culture.



**Figure 53:** The Roussanou monastery's enclosed balcony: external view (source: Choulia and Albani 1999, 44-45). The balcony is shown on the left (indicated by an arrow).



**Figure 54:** The Roussanou monastery's enclosed balcony: internal view (source: author's photo).

#### **8.1.2.10. Replacing existing structures in the Meteora monasteries: the Roussanou access bridge (mid-1990s)**

The Ministry of Culture decided to replace the access bridge to the Roussanou monastery, made of iron, with a new one, made of wood, which would be sympathetic to the landscape. The Roussanou monastic community was cautious that the material of the new bridge would be potentially dangerous for the members of the community as well as the visitors when it rains. The Ministry of Culture officials assured and eventually convinced the monastic community that this would not be the case, and replaced the bridge with the consent of the monastic community (Figures 55 and 56). The result is that the new bridge caused the problems that the monastic community feared (pers. comm. Roussanou Monastery).

This example shows the different ways by which the Ministry of Culture officials and the monastic communities approach the fabric of the monasteries: The former place emphasis on style, while the latter are primarily concerned about function.



**Figure 55:** The Roussanou monastery's access bridge (source: author's photo).



**Figure 56:** The Roussanou monastery's access bridge: detail (source: author's photo).

The material that was chosen for the construction of the bridge (wood) is sympathetic to the landscape, but proved to be dangerous for the members of the monastic community as well as the visitors when it rains.

#### **8.1.2.11. Erecting new structures in the Meteora monasteries: the Roussanou extension (mid-1990s to present)**

The Roussanou monastic community decided to erect new buildings because of its continuing need for more space for its everyday monastic needs. The construction of the enclosed balcony (section 8.1.2.9) provided a temporary relief rather than a permanent solution to the problem of space in the monastery. The problem of space increased with the gradual increase of the size of the monastic community (pers. comm. Maximi; Meteora Bishopric 2002; *Ereuna* 2002). This indicates a short-term planning by the monastic community: The monastic community built a structure in order to solve a specific problem, but realized shortly after the completion of the structure that the problem remained, and that another, much larger structure had to be built.

The need to erect new buildings was, in addition to the need for more space, a result of the need for a new church, since the original *katholicon* was always occupied by the visitors during the opening times of the monastery (pers. comm. Maximi).

As a result of these two requirements, the monastic community felt it might have to consider abandoning their monastery and moving to a different one, as its immediate predecessors had been forced to do. The community rejected this possibility because of its strong attachment to its monastery, and because any community that might succeed it would have to face the same problem at some point. The community decided that a permanent solution had to be found. It also feared that its departure and the abandonment of the monastery would have a negative effect on the monastic character of the site (pers. comm. Roussanou Monastery).

Thus, the monastic community decided to expand the available space of their monastery (Figure 57) by constructing a five storey and a two storey building on a piece of land that they owned next to the rock of the original monastery (Figure 58). The five storey building could easily stand and operate as a separate monastery on its own, comprising a church, fourteen cells, a large reception hall, a library, workshops for the making of icons, a small medical centre, some guestrooms and a separate entrance from the road. The other two storey building would serve as a guesthouse and possibly as a future permanent residence of the local Bishop after his retirement. The five storey building would be connected with the original monastery through a tower-lift (Figures 59 and 60).

The monastic community initially asked for permission to build a much smaller building (and not the five storey one that it actually planned to build). The Ministry of Culture gave authorisation for this on the grounds that the proposed building complied with the architectural character of the original monastery. The monastic community started the construction of the supposedly proposed and authorised building, but, after the completion of its lower levels, decided to add more levels and also erect the other two storey building, for which the community did not have a permit.

The monastic community, presenting their project to the Ministry of Culture and the local Ephorate, argued that the five storey building, the two storey building and the lift were separate steps that were desperately required if the community was to continue to occupy the monastery, and carry out its monastic role, on a difficult, in terms of the irregular surfaces, site. The community argued that it was only when it reached the second storey of the much lower building (for which it had official permission) that it realized that it had to move higher so that the new building could get closer to the ground storey of the original monastery (on the top of the rock), for the easier connection between the original and the new building. And it was only in the middle of the erection of the five storey building that the monastic community realized that the project would take a great deal of time to complete while the community was in urgent need of more space, and thus decided the erection of the other, two storey building. And that it was only after the community had completed the five storey building that it realised that the best way to connect the five storey building with the original monastery would be through a tower-lift. However, despite the community's arguments, it seems clear, judging from the careful arrangement of the new buildings in such a limited and irregular surface and also from the arrangement of the space inside the buildings, that the five storey building, the tower-lift and the two storey building were steps connected in a single and unified plan.

The local Ephorate opposed any further construction activity apart from the officially proposed and authorised one, and two local residents filed a petition against the construction of the new buildings (Meteora Bishopric 2002). However, the monastic community, presumably making use of its contacts with members of the local Ephorate and receiving support from the local Bishop (see Meteora Bishopric 2002) and from the greater part of the local community, managed to obtain, apparently unofficially, the verbal permission of the local Ephorate officials, and

continued the project. Even the local judge, deciding on the residents' petition, found the monastic community innocent. The central Ministry of Culture only seriously considered attempting to stop the project when the five storey building was nearing completion and the tower-lift was half complete (see *Ereuna* 2002). Nevertheless, the project was completed. The failure to stop the project seems to be the result of a number of reasons. First, the Ministry of Culture was reluctant to come into conflict with the monastic community, which had considerable power. Second, it seems that the Ministry of Culture officials considered, possibly under the influence of the Ministry of Tourism and the tourist agencies, that in the period prior to the 2004 Olympic Games in Greece it would not have been appropriate for the international tourism image of the country to have such a major project incomplete in one of the country's most popular tourist attractions (pers. comm. Meteora Ephorate; pers. comm. Ministry of Culture). Third, the whole project was nearing completion, and it was *de facto* too late to seek alternative solutions. It is surprising, however, that the Ministry of Culture retrospectively authorised the tower-lift (but not the five storey building and the two storey building).

The end result, despite the conflict between the monastic communities and the Ministry of Culture, was the erection of the buildings that the community wanted. Thus, the monastery is now in three parts: the original monastery, on the top of the rock, the five storey building next to the rock, with a tower-lift connecting it with the original monastery, and a two storey building close to the five storey one (Figures 58, 59 and 60).

The construction of the new buildings causes a series of problems: The disproportionate size and prominent position of the new buildings significantly affect the character of the Roussanou monastery. The monastery may no longer be considered a *meteoron*, i.e. 'floating/suspended in the air'. In addition to this, the huge new space created and the great variety of needs covered by the construction of the new buildings poses the danger that the new buildings might potentially replace to a considerable extent the original monastery in terms of function. Thus, it appears that the construction of the five storey building and the two storey building was not based on a well-defined plan regarding their specific function. The monastic community rather intended to simply create a new, huge space that would cover any of its current and potential needs for space, and would then define the precise function of each

specific part of the new buildings. And, in case it changes its plans, it would still have the opportunity to alter the function of some of the parts of the new buildings in the future.

It should be also stressed that the tower-lift, in particular, presents numerous problems in its operation. For example, the monastic community felt it had to block the entrance of the lift (on the original monastery) with a door, in an attempt to prevent the visitors from noticing the existence of the lift. However, as a result of the existence of this door, the lift cannot be opened from the inside, which means that someone from the outside has to open the door. In another example, the top of the lift, which looks like a balcony of the original monastery, is heavily affected when it rains. As a result, the monastic community has to keep it covered by plastic.

All groups of people involved in the process of the erection of the buildings are now disappointed by the final outcome, but are not willing to accept their own responsibilities and failures.

The central Ministry of Culture and the local Ephorate officials express their anger at the final outcome, arguing that they took all the necessary actions against the project, and place the blame on each other and ultimately on the Roussanou monastic community. What actually happened, however, was that the local Ephorate officials seem to have acted more as members of the local community (rather than as government officials), caught within personal contacts and ideologies in the local context and subject to the influence of the monastic communities. The Ministry of Culture officials acted in a short-term and reactive way without realizing the actual complexities and implications of the issue, showing a remarkable allowance towards the monastic community and, possibly, eventually giving into the pressures of the tourist agencies. UNESCO and ICOMOS officials did not give any official reaction during the period of the construction of the buildings (for example, through a reactive monitoring process by the ICOMOS branch in Greece), giving the impression of not being able to implement the principles they support and promote such as authenticity. The World Heritage periodic evaluation process for the site is still in progress, and the outcome of the process is not known yet. It is worth stressing, however, that a recent report as part of the evaluation process for the site did not make any reference to these unauthorised construction works, and confirmed that 'the World Heritage principles of authenticity and integrity are maintained' (UNESCO 2006, 3). Therefore, it seems that the system of national heritage protection cannot be implemented from central to

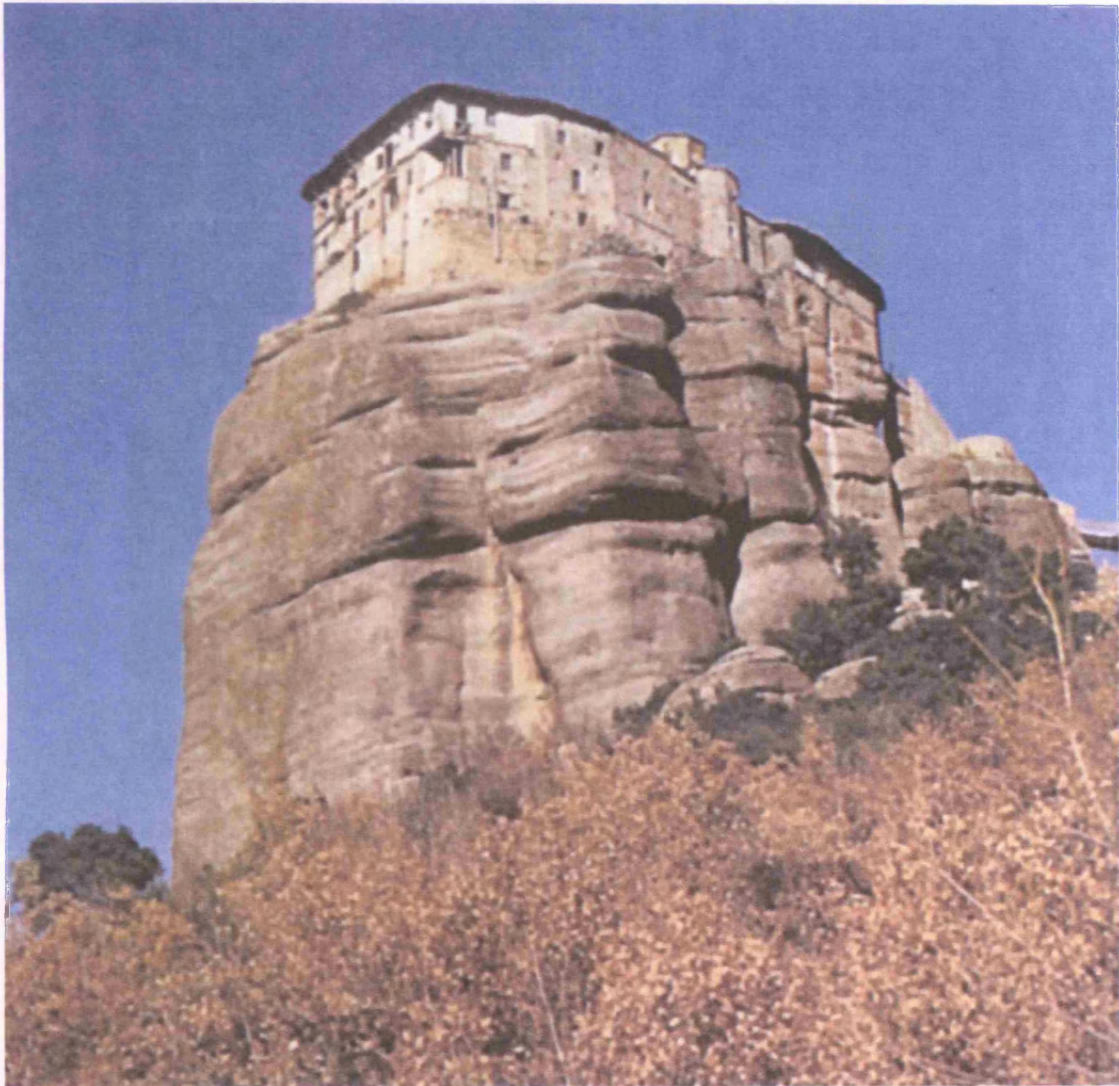
local level, and that there is no well-defined policy of national heritage protection at central level in the first place. In addition, the international regulations have no actual effect at state level.

The members of the Roussanou monastic community themselves admit that they are not happy with the final outcome. They argue at the same time that what happened was essential for the continuation of their presence in the monastery and for the continuation of the worship of God at Meteora, and thus for the benefit of the monastic character of the site (pers. comm. Maximi). The members of the monastic community even believe that the completion of their project was the will of God: if God would not have been in favour of the project, the project would not have been eventually completed (pers. comm. Roussanou Monastery). What had happened, however, was that the monastic community was consciously making use of its spiritual role, and even its philanthropic activity in the local society as well, in an attempt to establish its 'expertise' and enhance its negotiating position towards government bodies, while at the same time not taking into account of, or even seeking in the first place, the advice of the actual experts.

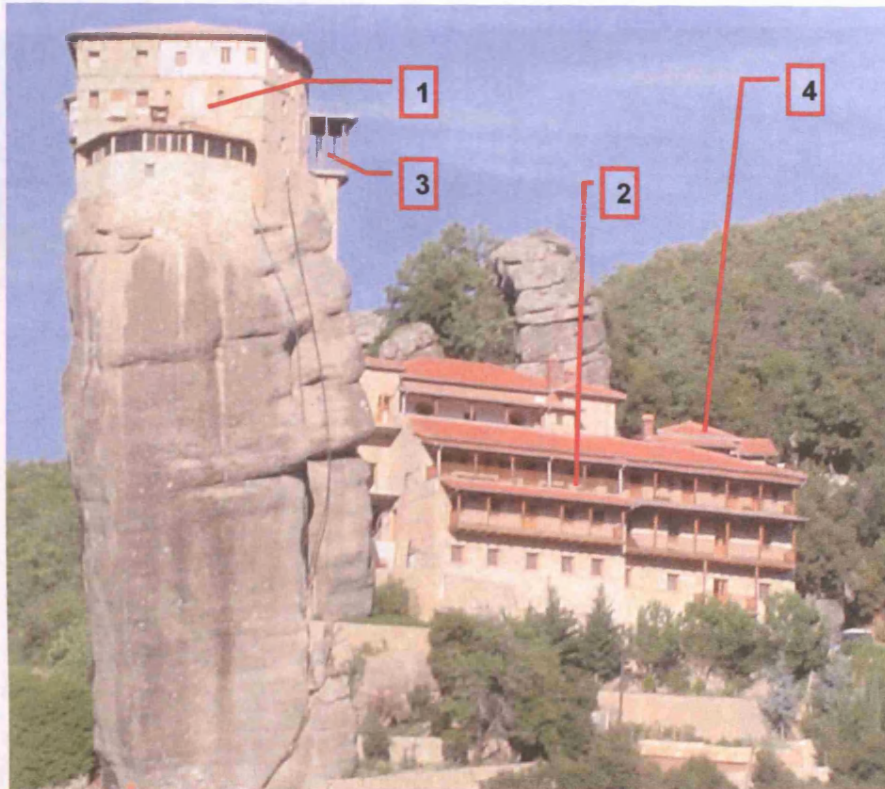
The other monastic communities of Meteora also admit that such projects do irreversible harm to the character of the site, and place the blame on the insufficiencies of the Ministry of Culture and the local Ephorate for allowing such things to happen and, clearly at a secondary level, on the Roussanou monastic community (pers. comm. Great Meteoron Monastery; pers. comm. Varlaam Monastery). Nevertheless, it seems possible to argue that the other monastic communities of Meteora believe that the grand-scale unauthorised project of the Roussanou monastic community tends, in a way, to set the path for, or even *a priori* justify, any potential unauthorised construction activities of theirs in their monasteries – or tend to *a posteriori* justify any past unauthorised construction activities in their monasteries.

The needs of the monastic community that led to its decision to erect new structures (i.e. the need for more space and the need for a new church) are reasonable in the first place. However, the Ministry of Culture, on the one hand, never actually realized the scale of these needs, approaching the proposed construction activity of the monastic community with an immense emphasis on the preservation of the original fabric and space, and in a rather bureaucratic way (focusing on formal

processes such as applications and authorisations). The Roussanou monastic community, on the other, never seriously discussed their needs with the Ministry of Culture officials in order to seek advice on the best way to cover them. It seems that the monastic community, instead, made use of these reasonable needs as an excuse for a disproportionate construction on the site.



**Figure 57:** The Roussanou monastery: before the construction of the new buildings (source: Nikonanos 1991, 71).

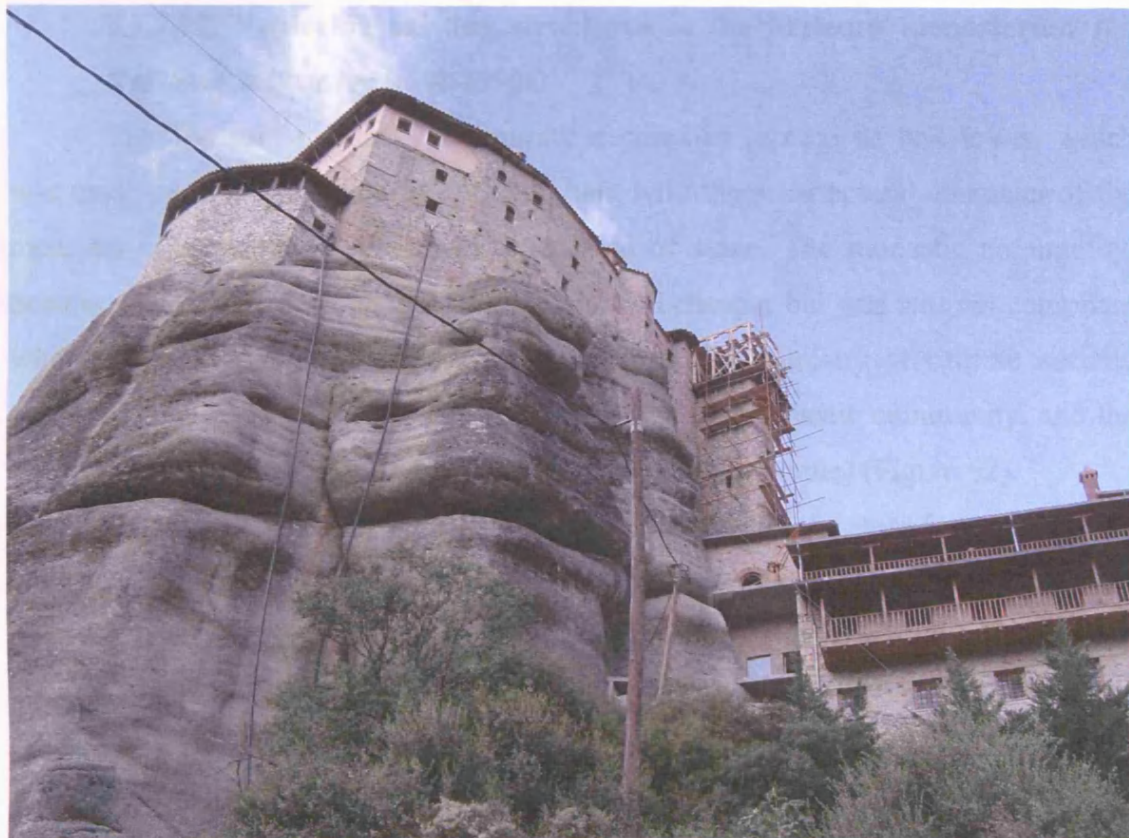


**Figure 58:** The Roussanou monastery: after the construction of the new buildings (source: author's photo).

Today the Roussanou monastery consists of the following parts: the original monastery, on the top of the rock (number 1); the five storey building, next to the rock of the original monastery (number 2); the tower-lift, attached to the rock of the original monastery, connecting the five storey building with the original monastery (only the top part of the tower-lift is shown in the figure: number 3); the two storey building, next to the five storey one (only the roof of the two storey building is shown in the figure, on the top right of the five storey building: number 4).



**Figure 59:** The Roussanou monastery: the tower-lift connecting the five storey building with the original monastery (source: author's photo). The tower-lift ends on its top to a roofed structure that looks like a balcony of the original monastery.



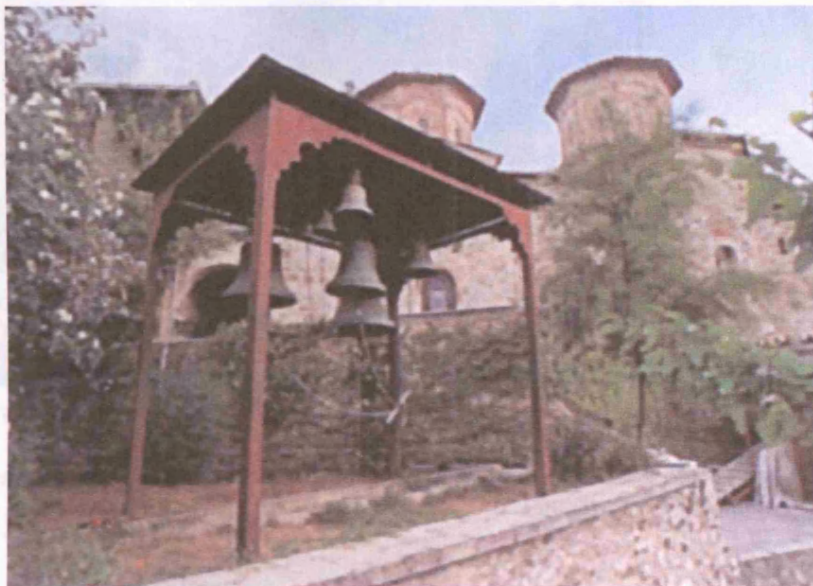
**Figure 60:** The Roussanou monastery: the tower-lift that connects the five storey building with the original monastery, under construction (source: author's photo).  
This figure shows the connection between the five storey building and the original monastery through the tower-lift.

#### **8.1.2.12. Replacing existing structures in the Meteora monasteries: the Varlaam bell tower (mid-1990s)**

The Varlaam monastic community decided to replace its bell tower, which was made of iron and was thus not compliant with the architectural character of the monastery (Figure 61), with a new one made of stone. The monastic community, however, chose stone which was easier to cut and cheaper but was still not compliant with the architectural character of the monastery. The Ministry of Culture initially disagreed, but eventually gave into the pressure of the monastic community, and the new bell-tower was constructed (pers. comm. Meteora Ephorate) (Figure 62).

Even the monastic community has now realized that the stone is not compliant with the architectural character of the monastery (Figure 62), but, despite the relatively low cost of the replacement, is not willing to proceed with its replacement, at least in the near future, due to continuing construction works in the monastery (pers. comm. Venediktos).

This is another example that demonstrates the power of the monastic communities and the weakness of the Ministry of Culture to implement its policy, with an effect on the fabric of the monasteries.



**Figure 61:** The Varlaam monastery: the old bell tower (source: Choulia and Albani 1999, 57).



**Figure 62:** The Varlaam monastery: the new bell tower (source: author's photo).

This figure can show the stark difference between the bell tower and the other monastic buildings (for example, the *katholicon* of the monastery, on the background) in terms of fabric.

#### **8.1.2.13. Forming visitor museums in the Meteora monasteries: the Great Meteoron and the Varlaam museums (late 1990s to mid-2000s)**

These are examples of cooperation between the monastic communities and the Ministry of Culture, with positive results in terms of the arrangement of space and the compliance with the overall architectural character of the monasteries (pers. comm. Venediktos; pers. comm. Ioasaph; pers. comm. Lazaros Deriziotis; pers. comm. Jannis Vlachostergios). The plans of the government bodies for the formation of museums that would serve mostly tourist purposes (the protection and exhibition of monastic ‘treasures’ to the visitors) suit the monastic communities.

These examples demonstrate the common interest of the government bodies and the monastic communities in the development of tourism at the area.

## **8.2. The operation and management of Meteora: analysis**

### **8.2.1. Controlling activity at Meteora: monasticism, heritage protection and tourism in the recent history of the site (1960s to present)**

The recent history of Meteora may be divided into three broad phases.

**Phase A:** the 1960s. This is the period of few visitors in the site, before the establishment of an organised tourist system.

In this phase Meteora functioned primarily as a monastic site. The local community was involved in the religious life of the site, comprising the congregation of the monasteries, which means that at that time visiting the site was incorporated within its monastic function. The monastic communities and the local community, with the support of the official Church, attempted to protect the fabric of the site, something that indicates that heritage protection was also situated within the monastic function of the site.

**Phase B:** the 1970s and the early 1980s. This is the period of an increase in the number of visitors in the site and the development of state-sponsored organised tourism.

In this phase the visitors started being attracted to the site for reasons other than its monastic function. The government agencies supported the development of tourism for non-religious purposes, and the monastic communities were primarily concerned about the financial gains derived from tourism and did not actively encourage the visitors to participate in the religious life of the monasteries. The local community continued to be involved in the religious life of the monasteries as the congregation of the monasteries (which had become much greater than in phase A), but also started becoming increasingly involved in tourism.

At that time the government bodies became increasingly concerned about the protection of the heritage significance of the site, linking protection to the development of tourism in the site rather than to its monastic function.

Thus, in this phase the site remained primarily a monastic one, used mainly by the monastic communities and their congregation. The heritage protection and the tourism exploitation of the site, however, started developing separately from its

monastic function, with the acquiescence and even the encouragement of the monastic communities. The monastic function and the heritage protection of the site started to be increasingly linked to its tourism exploitation.

**Phase C:** from the mid-1980s, especially the mid-1990s, to present. This is the period of the development of mass tourism industry in the site. Mass tourism has had huge implications for the site and also the broader region. The monastic communities became even more actively concerned about tourism, and interested in the financial benefits derived from it. Elements of the local community became clearly interested in the tourism industry, ceasing to constitute the congregation of the monasteries.

The government bodies established the heritage significance of the site at an international level, by promoting the site for World Heritage inscription, and linked the inscription to the promotion of tourism at the area. The World Heritage inscription process was carried out without the involvement of the monastic communities.

Thus, in this phase the site remained a monastic one, but the heritage protection and the tourism exploitation of the site were developed and established, clearly separately from the monastic function, with the acquiescence and even the encouragement of the monastic communities. The tourist exploitation of the site was increasingly emphasized at the expense of the monastic function and the heritage protection of the site.

The operation of the site has become formalized today as follows. The monasteries are mainly occupied by the visitors from *ca* 9 in the morning to *ca* 5 in the afternoon (possibly with a small break). Outside these hours the monasteries are exclusively used by the monastic communities. In the Holy services on Sundays and on major feasts there is participation of the congregation, consisting mostly of members of the local community. Thus, the congregation has been incorporated within the life of the monastic communities, while the life of the monastic communities (including the congregation) seems to have adjusted to the presence of the visitors.

### **8.2.2. Controlling activity at Meteora: the current situation of monasticism, heritage protection and tourism**

This section analyses the current operation of monasticism, heritage protection and tourism at Meteora, concentrating on the monastic communities as the key players in the operation of the site. It explores monastic communities' approach to monasticism, heritage protection and especially tourism, in the context of their philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism (section 7.2).

#### **8.2.2.1. Monasticism**

The relationship between the State, the Church and the Monasteries in Greece may be summarised as follows (Troianos and Poulis 2002, 60-68; 79-81; 109-19; Venizelos 2000, 55-61; 76-84; 91-93; on the side of the State: Stathopoulos 2000, 59-70; on the side of the Church: Ramiotis 1997, 80; 89-92; on the side of the Monasteries: Apostolakis 2002b, 9-12; 17-22; Apostolakis 2003, 11-18; 23-32).

Within the framework of the freedom of religious expression and worship and of the respect to all religious groups as fundamental human rights within a western democratic state (Greek Government 1975, article 13), the Church of Greece is at the same time recognised as the predominant religion in Greece, still retaining close links with the State and holding a primary position in the Greek society (Greek Government 1975, article 3).

The Church of Greece is recognised as a 'legal entity governed by public law' [*nomiko prosopo dimosiou dikaiou*] within the State in the context of 'rule of law' [*kratos dikaiou*] model. It is an entity that, though legally distinct from the State, performs state-like functions and is empowered with competence to control its own administrative and operational affairs *quasi* a public body. Thus, the State grants the Church control of its own operational issues, in strict compliance with the Constitution and the laws of the State (Greek Government 1977). The relationship between the State and the Church in Greece is in everyday practice characterised by the efforts of the State, on the one hand, to define and regulate the operation of the Church, and by the attempts of the Church, on the other, to resist the pressures from the State (see Koliopoulos and Veremis 2002, 140-51). In the context of State-Church relationship, Greek people are at the same time citizens of the State and congregation of the Church.

The Church is governed by the Holy Synod of the Hierarchy, which consists of the Bishops of the Greek territory with the Archbishop of Athens as its President. The Church is operating in a decentralized way. Each Bishopric has a considerable degree of independence from the central Church in dealing with the issues of the operation and management of its own diocese and congregation.

Monasteries are recognised as ‘legal entities governed by public law’ within the Greek state (Greek Government 1977). Monasteries are, in terms of administration, dependant upon the local Bishopric. The supervision of the local Bishopric over the Monasteries officially covers spiritual and liturgical issues (i.e. whether the monastic communities operate within the *Tradition* and the rules of the Orthodox Church) and not issues of their operation and management, which remain the responsibility of the individual Monasteries. Monasteries are also obliged to give part of their income to the local Bishopric. In practice, however, a local Bishopric’s cooperation with, and influence on, the Monasteries may extend to a variety of issues other than strictly spiritual ones (Kostopoulos 2003, 267-73).

The relationship between the State, the Church and the Monasteries with regard to the site of Meteora presents further complexities (Apostolakis in process). Initially there was a single Bishopric, but during the period of dictatorship in Greece (1967-1974) it was divided into two Bishoprics: one of Trikala and one of Meteora and Stagoi. Meteora Monasteries now belong in the latter. As a result of this division, the two Bishoprics are not on very good terms with each other, often with implications for the local people and Meteora Monasteries.

Another complexity of the site of Meteora is the operation of six separate Monasteries, with different spiritual, ideological as well as personal links between them and with different views with regard to the operation and management of the complex. These differences affect the Monasteries’ relationship with the local Bishopric, the local community and the local and national government bodies.

#### **8.2.2.2. Heritage protection**

The ownership of the monuments and sites within the territory of Greece recognised as national heritage, and the responsibility for their protection, is in the hands of the state (Greek Government 1975, article 24). National heritage protection in Greece (defined by Greek Government 1932 and Greek Government 2002) ‘aims at

the safeguarding of their [monuments'] material substance and their authenticity' (Greek Government 2002, article 40). The responsibility for national heritage protection lies in the Ministry of Culture. In cases where other government bodies (such as the Ministry for the Environment, Spatial Planning and Public Works) are also involved, the Ministry of Culture retains the final responsibility.

Heritage protection in Greece is administered centrally by the Ministry of Culture through its local offices, i.e. the Ephorates of Prehistoric and Classical, and Byzantine Antiquities. The Ministry sets the policy, while the Ephorates deliver this policy at local level (Ministry of Culture 2003; Greek Government 2002, articles 49-50; Doris 1985, 359-408; 416-46; Eugenidou 1993, 6-10). The communication between the central Ministry and the local Ephorates, however, often proves far from ideal, with implications for the setting of the heritage policy at central level and its delivery at local level (Papachristodoulou 2002, 29-32; Pantos 1993, 12-15).

The Greek government bodies appear confident of the national heritage protection in terms of its long history and its strict regulations, and thus their participation in international *fora* concerned with heritage protection such as UNESCO seems to take place primarily for reasons of international prestige (pers. comm. Ministry of Culture). However, despite their participation in international *fora*, the Greek government bodies seem to have an insufficient expertise and training in the latest developments in the field of heritage management such as 'values-based' approaches and site management plans (pers. comm. Ministry of Culture; see also UNESCO 2006, 4).

The protection of those sites inscribed on the UNESCO *World Heritage List* is generally the same as that of the other national designated heritage sites. The only difference is the further increased responsibility of the central Ministry, with very little involvement of the local Ephorates (Greek Government 2002, article 50).

The underlying philosophy of national heritage protection in Greece is based on Western European Classical ideals and is characterised by a strong attachment to its Classical past. This attachment to the Classical past may be put down to a variety of factors such as: the strong involvement of Western Europe in the political and cultural life of Greece during the Ottoman occupation of Greece (*ca* 1453-1821), during the Greek Revolution against the Ottomans and at the birth of the Greek state (1821-1832), and the development of the Greek state adopting Western European

political principles (1832 until present day) (Yalouri 2001, 187-96; Hamilakis 2000, 69-71; Hamilakis and Yalouri 1999, 116-27; Hamilakis and Yalouri 1996, 118-27; Lowenthal 1988). 'Antiquity became authoritative resource in modern Greek society through an externally originated mechanism of valuation' (Hamilakis and Yalouri 1996, 121).

The continuing attachment of modern Greece to the Classical past, in parallel with the ongoing Classical ideals in the western world, has brought considerable benefits to modern Greece in cultural, historical, political and economic terms. However, this attachment to the Classical past has at the same time increasingly become a burden for modern Greece in terms of a limited appreciation of any other (than Classical) past and contemporary cultural and political developments, and of a limited consideration of future cultural and political perspectives (Yalouri 2001, 187-88). A political cartoon of Kostas Mitropoulos illustrates in a very characteristic way this attachment, and even 'imprisonment', of modern Greece to the Classical past: 'The Greek', i.e. the 'typical' inhabitant of modern Greece, is depicted inside an ancient Greek column depicted as a prison, with the flutes of the column as the metal bars of the prison (Figure 63). Hence, the externally imposed ideology of Classicism has been internally developed and exploited, becoming an advantage and burden at the same time for Greece.

**Figure 63:** 'The Greek' imprisoned in an ancient Greek column (Kostas Mitropoulos, 1996, cited in Hamilakis 2000, 61, figure 4).

The State's attachment to the Classical past developed at the expense of the Byzantine one (Yalouri 1993, 24-35). During the early history of the Greek state the

word ‘antiquities’ meant in the terms of the period exclusively monuments of the Classical Greek past (Kotsakis 1991, 65). Consequently, the establishment of national heritage regulations in 1833 referred exclusively to the protection of Classical antiquities, and it was not until 1899 that provisions were made for the protection of the Byzantine antiquities as well (Zias 1995, 84-86; Zias 1993, 17-18). Until 2002 it was only monuments and sites dating before 1453 that were automatically recognised and protected as national heritage, while those after 1453 required a specific listing (Greek Government 2002, article 6 replacing Greek Government 1932).

Even after the recognition of Byzantine sites as ‘heritage’, the State’s emphasis on the Classical past has substantially affected the overall way Byzantine sites were, and are still, approached and protected. Byzantine sites are looked upon from a Classical perspective, with considerable emphasis on their artistic and art-historical significance and on the need for the preservation of their fabric. Their continuing ecclesiastical and liturgical meaning and use are largely ignored (Zias 1995, 83-84). At the same time, the State does not include Church authorities, such as Bishoprics and monastic communities, in the protection of religious cultural sites and objects (Zias 1995, 83-84). Thus, religious cultural sites and objects, despite their continuing ecclesiastical and liturgical meaning and use, are not treated as a special category of heritage under a special set of heritage regulations (Greek Government 2002; Greek Government 1932, article 2).

Therefore, it appears that Byzantine heritage was simply added to an already well-established and strict set of regulations, modelled upon Western European Classical principles, which tend to *de facto* establish a separation between the sites and their users. Despite the attempts to develop the set of regulations, the continual process of creation of Byzantine sites cannot be embraced within this set of regulations. Thus, it appears that national heritage protection in Greece faces similar difficulties, in its attempt to embrace living sites, as the World Heritage concept (section 4.1).

In the case of Byzantine monastic sites in use that are declared as national heritage sites, the Ministry of Culture, though having the responsibility and power over the protection of their heritage significance (see above), has to take into account and cooperate with the monastic communities given the latter’s officially recognised ownership of the sites (Greek Government 2002, article 73; see Zias 1993, 18).

The most effective way for the Ministry of Culture to control the monastic communities is through the provision for the funding for restoration of the monasteries. The Ministry of Culture imposes two requirements for the monastic communities to qualify for funding: first, to respect the fabric of the monasteries, which means that the restoration works must be authorised and supervised by the Ministry of Culture, and, second, to have the monasteries open to the visitors (public access) (Greek Government 2002, article 11). This means that practically the control by the Ministry of Culture depends on the relative financial power of the individual monastic communities and on their attitude towards the visitors. Consequently, the protection of the heritage significance of Byzantine sites still in use is, in practice, a struggle of power between the Ministry of Culture and the monastic communities.

Meteora was designated at a national level (see Apostolakis 2002c, 109-19) initially through the inscription of individual monuments: the Varlaam, the Great Meteoron, the St Stephen and the Holy Trinity monasteries were inscribed in 1921 (Greek Government 1921), while the Roussanou, the St Nikolaos Anapafsas, the Coming of Christ, Hagia Moni and Moni Ipsiloteris were inscribed in 1962 (Ministry of Culture 1962). In 1967 Meteora was recognised as a single heritage site with unified boundaries including the village of Kastraki and part of the city of Kalampaka (Ministry of Culture 1967), while the boundaries of the heritage site were re-defined in 2005 (Ministry of Culture 2005). Meteora was designated a World Heritage site in 1988, recognised as a cultural and natural ('mixed') 'property' of 'outstanding universal value' on the basis of cultural criteria i, ii, iv, v and natural criterion iii (UNESCO 1988; ICOMOS 1987a; IUCN 1988). Buffer zones for the protection of the site were defined in 1995 and 1996 (Ministry of Culture 1995; Ministry of Culture 1996), and were re-defined in 2002 (Ministry of Culture 2002: section 8.1.2). Buffer Zone A (around the Meteora monasteries) strictly prohibits the erection of any buildings in it, while buffer Zone B (around the Meteora rocks) sets conditions on the construction of buildings in Kastraki and Kalampaka settlements (Figure 27 on page 147).

Despite the general policy of the Greek government bodies not to provide any special legal framework of protection for its religious heritage (see above), Meteora was actually given a special legal status. It was recognised in 1995 as a holy site, protected against any commercial activity that would do harm to its holy character

(Greek Government 1995: section 8.1.2), with the boundaries of the holy site being defined in 1999 (Ministry of Culture and Ministry for the Environment, Spatial Planning and Public Works 1999).

The responsibility for the protection of the site of Meteora, given its World Heritage status, lies primarily in the central Ministry of Culture and, at a clearly secondary level, in the 19<sup>th</sup> Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities (currently based on the city of Trikala). Given the significance of Meteora also as a natural heritage site, the Ministry for the Environment, Spatial Planning and Public Works is also involved in the management of the site, but the final responsibility remains in the Ministry of Culture.

#### **8.2.2.3. Tourism**

Tourism is one of the current pillars of the economy of Greece (Patsouratis 2002, 1-12; Research Institute for Tourism 2004, 47-52).

The Greek government runs in a basically centralized system, with responsibilities increasingly allowed to local level. The Ministry of Tourism and the Hellenic Tourism Organisation (EOT) set the policy at central level, while the EOT offices in each prefecture, in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and (central) EOT, set and deliver the policy at local level. These government bodies cooperate with various independent tourist agencies for the setting and delivery of the policy (Varvaressos 1999, 160-66).

Key elements of the policy of the Greek government agencies (i.e. the government bodies and the independent agencies) in the international tourist market are to emphasise culture and quality. Specifically:

Within the international tourist market, which is dominated by tour operators and is operating through the selling of holiday packages for mass tourism on an 'image and price' basis, Greece is mainly promoted on the basis of the 'Sea and Sun' model mostly for the summer period (Hellenic Tourism Organisation 2001, 7-9; 12-14).

The Greek government agencies position Greece within the international tourist market in two ways. First, within the 'Sea and Sun' model: by differentiating Greece from its competitors (especially the European Mediterranean countries that are also promoted on the basis of 'Sea and Sun' model, such as Spain, Italy and Turkey), through a model based on 'Sea, Sun *and Culture*', with an emphasis on quality. Thus,

culture becomes the quintessential aspect of the new international tourism image of Greece (Hellenic Tourism Organisation 2001, 7; 12-18; Chatzidakis 2004, 7; see also Patsouratis 2002, 205; 214-15). In this new tourism image, culture is given a much broader meaning and perspective. It is no longer associated only with cultural heritage. It is also associated with aspects of the contemporary Greek style of life (such as hospitality, a pleasant and relaxing style of life and picturesque scenery), as part of the broader coexistence and communication between people (Hellenic Tourism Organisation 2001, 17; Chatzidakis 2004, 1-2; 7-8). In this new tourism image, cultural heritage acquires a new perspective. It is no longer treated as an exploitable resource that would accommodate the largest possible numbers of visitors, with often negative implications for the fabric and the landscape of the sites (as was the case in the first two to three decades after World War II: Chatzidakis 1993, 1-2). Cultural heritage is now approached in a sustainable way, in the context of the development of tourism on the basis of 'qualitative intensity rather than spatial extension' (Chatzidakis 2004, 1-3; 7). The part of cultural heritage that is emphasised, within this new tourism image of Greece, continues to be the ancient Classical one, as the one more easily associated with Greece internationally, due to the continuing Classical interest of the western world (see section 8.2.2.2) (Chatzidakis 1993, 2-3).

Second, outside the 'Sea and Sun' model: by developing smaller, alternative tourism trends, outside the mainstream mass tourism trends and beyond the summer period, with an emphasis on quality. The aim is to attract segments in the existing market that cannot be satisfied by the current mass tourist trends, and potentially develop these segments and create new markets (Hellenic Tourism Organisation 2003b, Phase B, 33-35; Hellenic Tourism Organisation 2001, 11; 14; Patsouratis 2002, 212-14; Chatzidakis 2004, 7-8; Chatzidakis 1993, 4-7; Varvaressos 1999, 33-35). Such alternative forms of tourism are cultural tourism (associated with heritage monuments and sites), religious tourism (which is mainly aimed at the Orthodox, mainly Eastern European, markets), rural tourism and rock-climbing (On religious tourism: Hellenic Tourism Organisation 2000; Hellenic Tourism Organisation 2003a; on religious tourism based on monasteries in use: Konsola 1996, 269-70; Kazazaki 1996, 325-28; Kazazaki 1999).

The Greek government agencies also promote the development of internal tourism (i.e. based on the Greek visitors), outside the 'Sea and Sun' model and beyond the summer period (Patsouratis 2002, 23-26). Among the most significant

types of internal tourism is religious tourism based on monastic sites in use, with the participation of the official Church authorities and the monastic communities. A project of extensive collaboration between the Ministry of Tourism and the central Church authorities in this direction is about to start (pers. comm. Ministry of Culture; pers. comm. Church of Greece).

Meteora is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Greece, attracting approximately one and a half million visitors per year (pers. comm. Meteora Monasteries; pers. comm. Kalampaka city; there are no accurate visitor figures of the site because the Greek visitors are not required to pay for a ticket in order to have access to the monasteries).

Meteora fits within the policy of the Greek government agencies in the following ways. Within the 'Sea, Sun and Culture' model, Meteora provides an excellent example of a site that demonstrates that Greece is much more than 'Sea and Sun' and much more than ancient Classical culture (pers. comm. Ministry of Tourism; Hellenic Tourism Organisation 2003b, Phase B, 97). Outside the 'Sea, Sun and Culture' model, the region of Meteora offers a great variety of alternative forms of tourism, such as religious tourism, rural tourism and rock-climbing (Hellenic Tourism Organisation 2003, Phase B, 34-35; Charalambeas 2005, 206-10; 255-56; Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1994, 10/17-26; 10/29-32; Chormova 1997, 285; Livanidis 1988, 2; Ministry of Coordination and Development 1980, 19). Meteora is at the same time among the most popular destinations for internal tourism as by far the most popular monastic site in Greece (Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1994, 10/20). Unlike Mount Athos, which is the other most popular monastic site in Greece (section 6.2.6; Chatzigogas 2005, 67-73), for example, Meteora is open also to women, is much easier to access by a well-organised transportation system, and there are no special entry procedures or restrictions in the number of the visitors.

The Greek government agencies approach the tourism development of the region of Meteora as follows. They promote a model of sustainable development for the region that takes into account the current tourism character of Meteora as a well-established and 'mature' destination and also the carrying capacity of the region given its sensitive natural, cultural and religious environment (Hellenic Tourism Organisation 2003b, Phase B, 34-35). They also attempt to take advantage of the well-established, 'mature' destination of Meteora as a main focus for the formation of a

broader tourist network in the region, which would benefit the much less 'mature' nearby tourist destinations (Hellenic Tourism Organisation 2003b, Phase B, 26-32; Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1994, 10/2-3; Livanidis 1988, 2). However, the Greek government agencies do not link the development of the economy of the region exclusively to tourism, but also support other traditional economic activities, such as agriculture and cattle-raising (Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1997, 7/35-38 unlike Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1994; Adamos 1988, 3).

The operation of Meteora may be seen from a tourist point of view as follows. In the 'Sea, Sun and Culture' model, Meteora operates as a transitory destination added to other, primary destinations and routes (such as sea resorts, and from Athens to Thessaloniki) mostly during the summer period (Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1994, 10/18-19). The visitors spend approximately two to three hours visiting a couple of monasteries, make a brief stop at shops and restaurants located on the two access roads to the site and move on to their final destinations. The most visited monasteries are those with more open space, museums and shops (such as the Great Meteoron and the Varlaam monasteries) or those with the easiest access from the road (the St Stephen monastery). The most preferred restaurants and shops are those located on the roads of access to the site. The majority of the visitors do not pass through Kalampaka or Kastraki because of congestion and lack of parking, although a minority will spend one night in either Kalampaka or Kastraki (Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1994, 10/18-19; pers. comm. KENAKAP; Alexiadis 1998).

Outside the 'Sea, Sun and Culture' model, Meteora is established as a primary tourist destination at a more extended period throughout the year (Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1994, 10/19; Hellenic Tourism Organisation 2003b, Phase B, 97-98). The visitors spend some days in Kastraki and Kalampaka: Rock-climbers, for example, stay in the area for approximately seven days (Liolios 2006, 6).

The impact of the development of tourism at Meteora at a national and local level is as follows (pers. comm. Ministry of Tourism; pers. comm. KENAKAP; Anastasiou 2004). The benefits are most significant for the Greek government agencies through the contribution of tourism in the overall development of the country. The benefits are rather limited for the local community, with the exception of a few restaurants, souvenir shops and hotels (see above). The benefits for the Meteora monastic communities, as the ones who control the access to the monasteries, are significant. Therefore, the key-players in the tourism industry are the tour operators

(international level), the Greek government agencies (national level) and the Meteora monastic communities (local level), while the other groups of people, such as the local agents and the local community, are trying to benefit through their relationship with these key-players.

#### **8.2.2.4. Monasticism, heritage protection and tourism: synthesis**

In accordance with their philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism (section 7.2), the Meteora monastic communities have accepted the growth of the tourism industry, as a most effective means to promote the Orthodox faith on a large scale and at an international level (Meteora Monasteries 1994a, 39-41). They have accepted their central position in the tourism industry, as the ones who control the access to the monasteries. They also recognise the significant benefits they derive from their role in the tourism industry: they keep all the entrance revenue for themselves, without sharing them with other groups of people involved in the operation of the site (for example, the Ministry of Culture), and also develop contacts with powerful people at local and state level (for example, politicians and major public officials) (see Ministry of Culture 1982b).

The monastic communities recognise the current requirements of the tourism industry, such as: mass tourism, 'package tourism', the tourism character of Meteora as a transitory destination based on a brief visit to the site, and the attempt to increase the visitor figures of the site. The monastic communities have adjusted their everyday monastic life to these requirements, in a way that does not hinder, but allows and even encourages, the smooth operation of the tourism industry (Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1994, 4/3-5; see Meteora Monasteries 1994a, 37-41; Meteora Monasteries 1995, 23). There are numerous examples to illustrate this point. First, the opening times of the monasteries are mostly adjusted to the needs of the visitors. Every day there are some monasteries open for the visitors, while during the peak tourist season more monasteries stay open, and for longer periods of time. Second, the timing of the holy services is also adjusted to the requirements of tourism. The vespers, for example, is performed after the closure of the monasteries for the visitors. Third, the communal monastic activities [*diakonimata*] often serve the needs of the visitors. In larger monastic communities, such as the St Stephen monastic community for example, one of the basic communal monastic activities is the running of the visitor shops and the arrangement of bureaucratic issues related to tourism. Fourth, there are

even cases in which the monastic communities might perform activities outside their normal monastic schedule simply for the sake of the visitors. A characteristic example is the striking of the *simantron* [wooden gong inviting the monks to the holy services: see Figure 29 on page 168] in the Roussanou monastery at the request of the tour guides and the visitors. This kind of ‘performance’ sometimes places the Roussanou nuns in a difficult position, especially if followed by the applause of the visitors (pers. comm. Maximi). Fifth, there are cases in which even the increase of the size of the monastic communities might relate to their pressing need to deal with the increasing pressure of tourism and the satisfying of the needs of the visitors.

In accordance with their philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism (section 7.2), the Meteora monastic communities have also accepted the increasing need for the protection of the heritage significance of the site and the subsequent growth of the heritage industry, as a means to maintain their monasteries in a good condition.

The Meteora monastic communities clearly link the heritage protection to the tourism development of the site, placing emphasis on the tourism development rather than on the heritage protection. They favour an increase in the visitor figures of their monasteries in the short term, without considering the potentially low carrying capacity of the site and the implications of tourism for the protection of the fabric and the landscape of the site. This was illustrated by their attitude towards the widening of the road network of the site (section 8.1.2.8).

The Greek government bodies/agencies seem to face an internal conflict. The Ministry of Culture, on the one hand, is concerned about the protection of the fabric and the landscape of the site, while government agencies, on the other, are more involved in the development of tourism at the area. The priority is clearly on the development of tourism, as illustrated in the widening of the road network (section 8.1.2.8) and also by the failure of the Ministry of Culture to stop the completion of the Roussanou unauthorised buildings partly under the pressure from the government agencies (section 8.1.2.11).

The government agencies tend to link the tourism development of the area to the short-term increase of the visitor figures of the site, without any respect to the low carrying capacity of the site, as illustrated by their decision to widen the road network of the site (section 8.1.2.8). They also find it difficult to link the tourism character of

Meteora (as a well-established and ‘mature’ tourist destination) to the tourism development of the region, as illustrated by the failure of the KENAKAP study (section 8.1.2.2). Thus, they have considerable difficulty in implementing their own policy for the sustainable tourism development of the site (as presented in section 8.2.2.3).

The Ministry of Culture has no real control over the Meteora monastic communities with regard to the protection of the fabric of the monasteries. The Meteora monastic communities have their own perception of the protection of the fabric (strictly within the continuation of their monastic presence in the site and the covering of their everyday monastic needs: section 7.1.9), and do not need to depend on the Ministry of Culture officials, because of their financial benefits and their contacts (mostly through their role in the tourism industry). They instead rely on their own expertise and on their chosen experts. Various examples demonstrate the inability of the Ministry of Culture to control the monastic communities. First, the monastic communities have not put a ‘UNESCO World Heritage site’ sign or relevant notice in the site despite the pressure from the Ministry of Culture officials. Second, the monastic communities have erected several unauthorised buildings in their monasteries, with considerable implications for the original fabric and space of their monasteries (sections 8.1.2.9, 8.1.2.11 and 8.1.2.12). They even have the financial ‘luxury’ to afford to implement any projects and experiments of theirs on the space of their monasteries, as was illustrated in the case of the Roussanou new buildings (section 8.1.2.11). The number as well as the scale of the unauthorised buildings of the monastic communities, especially at the Roussanou monastery, seems to currently raise questions about the removal of the site from the World Heritage List (though this issue was not raised in the recent progress evaluation report: UNESCO 2006) (pers. comm. Ministry of Culture). The removal of the site from the World Heritage List would strike a blow to the international prestige of the Greek state in terms of its ability to protect sites of the significance and fame like Meteora (pers. comm. Ministry of Culture).

The Meteora monastic communities cooperate with the Ministry of Culture mainly in two cases. First, in cases related to the development of tourism at the site, which is the main common interest of both the government agencies and the monastic communities. The cooperation between the Meteora monastic communities and the Ministry of Culture in the erection of museums in the Great Meteoron and the

Varlaam monasteries (section 8.1.2.13) illustrates this point. Second, when the monastic communities attempt to maintain their independence or increase their power by stopping encroachments or threats from others, especially the local community. This was illustrated in the cases of the preparation of the unified proposal to the government for the passing of the Presidential Decree (by the monastic communities, the local Bishop and the local community) (section 8.1.2.4) and also in the re-definition of the buffer zone of the site (section 8.1.2.5). In these two examples the local community made compromises under the pressure from both the Ministry of Culture and the monastic communities.

The local community has a strong concern about the development of tourism at the area. However, the way it is attempting to gain power in the tourism industry has in general been unsuccessful (Kalyvas 2002, 81-84; 210-12; 225-26; Alexiadis 2004; Anastasiou 2004; Charalambeas 2005, 232-52). The failure of the local community is evident in various ways. First, caught within personal dislikes and local conflicts, the local community is not able to come to a single view on tourism issues. This was illustrated by its reactions towards the KENAKAP study (section 8.1.2.2) and towards the more recent studies of Kalampaka municipality and Trikala prefecture (section 8.1.2.6), and also by the failure of the 'Tourist and Cultural Committee' to publish a single tour guide of the site (section 8.1.2.7). Second, the local community is caught within an attempt to increase the visitor figures of the site in the short term rather than trying to benefit from the large existing visitor figures. Thus, it is joining any project that tends to promise an increase in the tourist figures of the site, without any careful consideration of the implications of the projects or any preparation of plans for the implementation of the projects. This was evident in the cases of the KENAKAP study and the recent tourist studies of Kalampaka municipality and Trikala prefecture (sections 8.1.2.2 and 8.1.2.7). Third, the local community heavily concentrates on the development of tourism at the area, linking the majority of the other traditional economic activities to tourism. This results in the dramatic decrease or even cessation of most of the traditional activities, with considerable implications for the economy and the society of the region (Xydias and Totsikas and Braoudakis 1994, 12/1; Chormova 1997, 279-80). These examples demonstrate that the local community clearly acts against the policy of the

government agencies concerning the tourism development of the site (as presented in section 8.2.2.3).

The local community is clearly affected and influenced by the Meteora monastic communities. Initially it made an attempt to gain power in the tourism industry at the expense of the monastic communities, as evident in the local government's role in the KENAKAP study (section 8.1.2.2). This attempt failed, as illustrated by the rejection of the conclusions of the KENAKAP study and the subsequent passing of the law on the holiness of the site (section 8.1.2.2 and 8.1.2.3). Then the local community understood that nothing could be achieved without the consent of the monastic communities, and started developing good relationships with them. However, the improvement of its relationship with the monastic communities has not led to any considerable benefit yet, as reflected in the failure of the 'Tourist and Cultural Committee' to publish a new single tourist guide for the site (section 8.1.2.7).

The local Bishopric is also influenced by the Meteora monastic communities. The monastic communities, given their power through the role in the tourism industry, have in practice a very high degree of independence from the local Bishopric in terms of operation and management. This position in turn seems to have led to an attempt by the local Bishopric to extend its officially strictly spiritual control into other areas of monastic activity, as reflected in the Bishopric's disagreement on the gathering of the Assembly (section 8.1.2.3).

The Meteora monastic communities, though all broadly accepting the growth of the tourism industry, their role in it and the power they derive from it (in the context of their philanthropic-missionary to monasticism), have differing responses to tourism and exercise the power derived from it in different ways, in accordance with their differing degree of commitment to the philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism (section 7.2). The different ways in which they exercise their power results in varying relationships with the other groups involved in the operation of the site.

The monastic communities that are more committed to the philanthropic-missionary activity to the wider society in an attempt to promote the Orthodox faith to the largest possible number of people, such as the Great Meteoron and the St Stephen

monastic communities, are more concerned about control of the site. These monastic communities consider tourism an essential part of their everyday monastic life, embrace it and attempt to strengthen their position in it. They are actively involved in the tourism industry and focus on increasing the visitor figures of their monasteries. Thus, they have developed close contacts with key people at local and state level involved in tourism and intervene in local issues related to tourism (as in the case of the Great Meteoron monastic community's participation in the local 'Tourist and Cultural Committee': section 8.1.2.7). They also develop publications for the promotion of tourism at Meteora, and become involved in the promotion of the site in tourist campaigns abroad particularly within states with large Orthodox populations (pers. comm. Great Meteoron Monastery; Anastasiou 1990, 390-91; Anastasiou 2004).

These monastic communities also appear very confident concerning their 'expertise' on heritage issues. They tend to deliberately make use of their monastic identity in order to establish this 'expertise', while claiming at the same time that anyone who might disagree with them (for example, the Ministry of Culture and the local Ephorate officials) is opposed to the monastic and holy character of their site, as well as the Church as a whole (St Stephen Monastery 2002). This is an attempt to belittle external expertise. It seems that they even take advantage of their power (mostly through their role in the tourism industry) in order to influence the officials of the Ministry of Culture and especially of the local Ephorate, so that they can proceed with unauthorised construction activities in their monasteries. Thus, the local Ephorate officials are often accused of having selective relationships, and showing greater degree of allowance, to these monastic communities (Meteora Bishopric 2002).

These communities show a high degree of concern about safeguarding the monastic and holy character of the site, demanding for themselves the exclusive role in its operation and management against those attempts identified as threats for it. For example, they fought against the KENAKAP study (section 8.1.2.2), pressed for the passing of the law on the holiness of the site (section 8.1.2.3) and still press for the passing of the much stricter Presidential Decree (section 8.1.2.4). They are also in favour of the more regular and even permanent operation of the Assembly as the exclusive body for the management of the site and to some extent even independently from the local Bishopric (section 8.1.2.4).

The monastic communities that concentrate on traditional monastic principles rather than on the conduct of philanthropic-missionary activity to the wider society, such as the Holy Trinity and the Roussanou monastic communities, are less concerned about the development of tourism at the site. Though recognising the existence of visitors and the implications this has, they see tourism as unimportant and concentrate deliberately on their monastic life. They do not attempt to enhance their role in the tourism industry or increase the visitor figures of their monasteries.

They appear much less confident about their own 'expertise' on heritage issues, are thus more open to cooperation with the Ministry of Culture officials. For example, the Holy Trinity monastic community admitted its mistakes regarding its post-wars maintenance and development works in the monastery (see section 8.1.1), and cooperated with the Ministry of Culture officials towards the replacement of these mistakes (pers. comm. Tetsios).

These monastic communities are also much less worried about the safeguarding of its holy and monastic character, and do not expect for an exclusive role in its operation and management. For example, they participated in the campaign against the KENAKAP study but only at the initiative of the former group of monastic communities (section 8.1.2.2), did not press for the passing of the Presidential Decree (section 8.1.2.4), and are in favour of the operation of the Assembly only in specific cases and still exclusively under the control of the local Bishopric (section 8.1.2.4).

In the context of these differences within the Meteora monastic communities, whenever there is an operational and management issue of the site that demands a single, unified view on the part of the monastic communities, it is mostly those communities more concerned about control of the site that take the lead. Thus, it was those communities who led the way and managed to unify the other communities in all the major issues of the recent history of the site, such as: the campaign against the shooting of *James Bond*'s film (section 8.1.2.1), the campaign against the KENAKAP study (section 8.1.2.2), and the passing of the law on the holiness of the site (section 8.1.2.3). Therefore, the responsibility for the management of the monastic site is in the hands of a few monastic communities rather than being equally shared by all the monastic communities of the site.

The gathering of responsibility in specific monastic communities has the following implications. First, the decisions taken will reflect the views and principles of the few, and might not be fully shared by the other monastic communities. Second,

the specific monastic communities unavoidably come to conflict with the other groups involved in the operation of the site, while the other monastic communities are deprived of this active role and have the 'privilege' of maintaining good relationship with the other groups. As a result, the other groups tend to focus their attack on the specific monastic communities (in some cases even through promoting, or making use of, the other monastic communities). This is, for example, the case of the local community who often accuses the specific monastic communities of heavily concentrating on the financial benefits of tourism (while at the same time appraising and promoting the other monastic communities for a more spiritual way of monastic life), mainly in an attempt to cover its own failures in tourism issues (sections 8.1.2.2, 8.1.2.6, 8.1.2.7). Third, the other groups of people demanding a role in the operation of the site attempt to form personal relationships with, and get attached to, the specific monastic communities. This is illustrated, for example, by the recent attempt of the local government and the local community to be on good terms with the specific monastic communities (namely the Great Meteoron), as in the cases of the Kalampaka municipality and Trikala prefecture tourist studies (section 8.1.2.6) and also the setting up of the 'Tourist and Cultural Committee' (section 8.1.2.7).

Therefore, the Meteora monastic communities' attitude of acceptance towards tourism (in accordance with their philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism) defines their relationship with the outside world, and particularly with the government bodies and agencies. The government bodies and agencies avoid conflicts and have to maintain good relationships with the monastic communities, and make compromises to ensure this. The monastic communities, in return, firmly avoid stopping access to their monasteries (though they theoretically have the right to do so being the owners of the monasteries: section 8.2.2.3), and comply with the requirements of the tourism industry. Thus, through tourism, the government bodies and agencies allow increased power to the monastic communities but at the same time keep them under control.

It is even possible to argue that the gathering of controlling power, at a local level, by mainly the monastic communities, rather than the equal allocation of power to various stakeholder groups in the site (with conflicting views), makes it easier for the government bodies and agencies to keep the operation of tourism at the region under control.

Each of the Meteora monastic communities' specific (active or passive) response to tourism (in accordance with their specific degree of commitment to the philanthropic-missionary approach) further defines their relationship with the outside world and particularly with the government bodies and agencies. The government bodies and agencies, though often accusing specific monastic communities of not concentrating on their monastic life but on gaining more benefits from the tourism industry, are in favour of active responses to tourism on the part of the monastic communities. The government bodies and agencies want a suppressed monastic life for the sake of the smooth running of the tourism industry, with the role of the monks being reduced to the safeguarding of the monasteries – 'something like lions in a cage', as a Ministry of Tourism official put it in an extreme way (pers. comm. Ministry of Tourism).

It is even possible to argue that the gathering of controlling power by specific monastic communities and Abbots, rather than the equal allocation of power between the monastic communities (with conflicting views), makes it even easier for the government bodies and agencies to keep control over the operation of tourism at the region.

### **8.2.3. Conclusion**

The most important factor that has affected the life of Meteora throughout its recent history is the growth of the tourism industry. It is on the basis of the increasing pressure from tourism that the recent history of Meteora was divided into three phases (section 8.2.1). It is because of the increasing development of tourism that the monastic communities have acquired considerable power in the operation and management of the site (section 8.2.2).

Tourism did not emerge as a result of monastic activity. It was the result of broader, global changes supported by the Greek government agencies. The monastic communities, however, willingly accepted and encouraged tourism, in accordance with their philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism.

The monastic communities' response to tourism has been complex. They claimed their aim was to put emphasis on their religious life, and thus attempted to integrate tourism within their religious life and use tourism as a means to promote the Orthodox faith to the visitors. The result has been exactly opposite. The monastic communities actually saw tourism as a means to achieve financial benefits, and did not attempt to incorporate it into their religious life. As a consequence, the visitors were excluded from the worship of God. What happened was that monastic life was made to conform to the requirements of the growth of tourism, especially in phases B and C of the recent history of the site (section 8.2.1).

They attempted to combine the monastic function, the heritage protection and the tourism development of the site. However, the result was a clear separation between monastic function on the one hand and heritage protection and tourism development on the other, especially in phases B and C (section 8.2.1).

They accepted and encouraged the growth of tourism in the site. The result was that this increasing emphasis on tourism developed clearly at the expense of the monastic function and the heritage protection of the site, especially in phases B and C (section 8.2.1).

These are the main problems in the operation and management of Meteora that developed over the course of the recent history of the site and have become formalized today.

### 8.3. The use of space at Meteora

#### 8.3.1. The use of space during the recent history of Meteora (1960s to present)

This section explores the implications of the changing wider circumstances of the operation of the site, i.e. the growth of the tourism and heritage industries, on the use of space.

The evolution of the spatial arrangement in the recent history of Meteora may be summarised as follows:

##### **Phase A: the 1960s.**

In this phase the site operated primarily as a monastic one (section 8.2.1). This was clearly reflected in the use of space: The external and internal space to the monasteries was used primarily by the monastic communities and also the local community, who participated in the religious life of the site as the congregation of the monasteries.

The concerns of the monastic communities as they re-established their monasteries were, in order of importance: the worship of God; their permanent residence in their monasteries; and the care for their predecessors. These concerns were manifested in the space of the monasteries as follows (Tetsios 2003, 345-47; pers. comm. Maximi).

- The *katholicon*. Reviving the function of the *katholicon* guarantees the continuity of the conduct of the Holy Liturgy in the monastery.
- The cells, which cover a monastic community's basic need for accommodation. The permanent presence of a monastic community in the monastery is inextricably linked to the conduct of the Holy Liturgy (section 7.1). As soon as the local community (the congregation of the monastery) sees a monastic community having settled in a site, it will offer its support in various ways, for example by providing food or construction materials (pers. comm. Maximi).
- The refectory, which provides the monastic community's food. The refectory is the second most important building in a monastery after the *katholicon*, closely linked to it in terms of symbolism and use (section 7.1). Once a monastic community has its own refectory, it becomes independent, in the sense that it can survive on its own, without the aforementioned support of the local community (pers. comm. Maximi).

- An inside yard to connect the *katholicon*, the refectory and the cells. The yard is the quintessential element for the life of the monastic community and is also inextricably linked to the *katholicon* serving as its reception hall (section 7.1).
- A storeroom for the protection of the past ‘treasures’ of the monastic community that are no longer in daily use [*skeuofilakeio*] (Tetsios 2003, 346-47; Tzimas 2000, 405; 399; pers. comm. Ioasaph; pers. comm. Nikodimi). These ‘treasures’ are considered holy items and are also signs of the monastic community’s temporal continuity (section 7.1.9).

Thus, in the first phase of the recent history of the site, the monastic communities focused mainly on the central part of their monasteries, i.e. that consisting of the *katholicon*, the refectory, the yard and the cells.

**Phase B:** the 1970s and the early 1980s.

In this phase the site remained primarily a monastic one, used mainly by the monastic communities and the congregation of the monasteries, which increased in size. The site also started developing as a tourist attraction (section 8.2.1). As a consequence, the external and internal space of the monasteries, though still used mainly by the monastic communities and the congregation, started to be divided, in terms of use, between the monastic community and the congregation on the one hand and the visitors on the other.

The needs of the congregation were, in order of importance, to participate in the worship, and to communicate with the members of the monastic community and also have a meal with them. The monastic communities responded to the needs of the congregation in the following ways (pers. comm. Tetsios; pers. comm. Maximi).

- A larger church, which accommodates the congregation’s need to participate in the worship.
- A larger reception hall [*archontariki*], which accommodates the congregation’s need to communicate with the monastic community after the holy services, especially on Sundays and major feasts.
- A larger refectory, as a response to the congregation’s need to have a meal with the monastic community after the holy services.
- A larger yard to connect the church, the reception hall and the refectory.

Thus, in order to satisfy the needs of the congregation, the monastic communities made alterations to the central part of the monasteries, that consisting of the *katholicon*, the refectory and the yard (see phase A: above).

**Phase C:** from the mid-1980s, especially the mid-1990s, to present.

This is the period of mass tourism. In this phase the site remained a monastic one but at the same time has clearly developed into a major tourist attraction (section 8.2.1). This increasing emphasis on the tourist use of the site is clearly reflected in the use of space. The external space to the monasteries is used by the visitors, whilst the monastic communities are restricted to their monasteries. The internal space of the monasteries is divided, in terms of use, between the monastic communities on the one hand and the visitors on the other (see also section 8.3.2).

The monastic communities attempted to satisfy the needs of the visitors in the following ways (Tzimas 2000, 396-406).

- A variety of museums/exhibition halls with exhibits mostly concerned with the past life of the site (Tzimas 2000; Tetsios 2003, 346-47; Nikodimi 2001, 276-84). These museums should be differentiated from the storerooms of the 1960s-early 1970s (see phase A): the storerooms of the 1960s-early 1970s were mainly the expression of the monastic communities' need to protect the monastic 'treasures' (as an obligation of theirs towards the monastic *Tradition* and their predecessors), while the museums under discussion were mainly the expression of the monastic communities' desire to exhibit a whole variety of items that they considered relevant to the visitors.

Refectories, hospitals, and houses for the elderly and other secondary buildings, no longer in use, have been transformed into such museums.

- Space that allows the visitors to move around the buildings of monasteries, and also admire the surrounding landscape. This space includes: staircases and bridges for the easier access from the road to the monasteries, entrances and structures for the selling of tickets, larger inside yards, separating doors with signs preventing the visitors from entering the private areas of the monasteries, and signs asking the visitors to 'respect the holiness of the place'.
- Shops with items about the site or the monastic life in general and even souvenirs from Greece in general.
- Structures that cover basic needs of the visitors, such as toilet facilities, drinking water facilities and telephone boxes.

Thus, in order to satisfy needs of the visitors, the monastic communities changed mostly secondary and peripheral areas and buildings of the monasteries (and not the central part of the monasteries, as in phases A and B: see above).

### **Examples of use of internal space**

The evolution of the spatial arrangement of the Meteora monasteries during the recent history may be examined in the following examples:

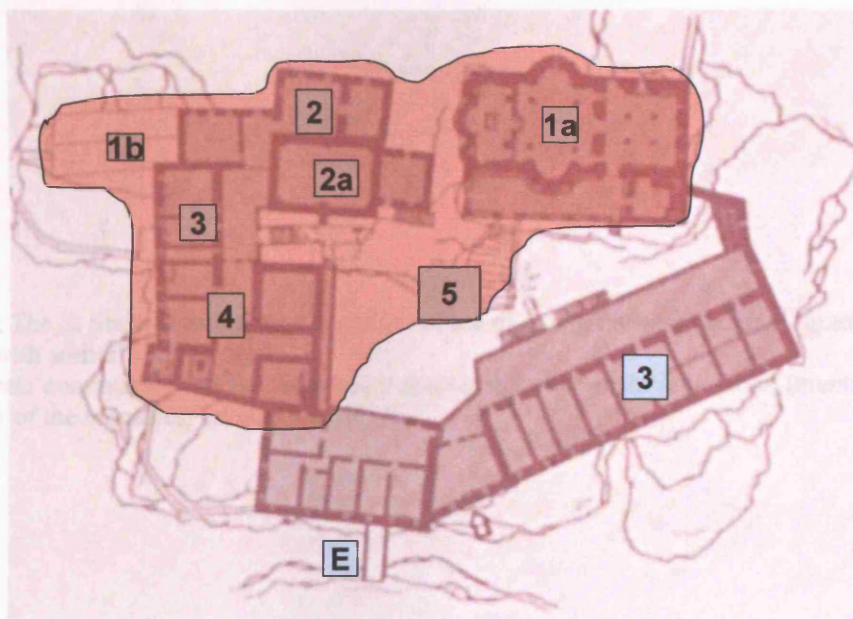
**1) The St Stephen monastery** (Tzimas 2000, 398-401; Tetsios 2003, 343-47). The St Stephen monastery has, relatively speaking for the standards of the site, a large available rock surface and is structured on a horizontal axis.

On reoccupying the monastery after the World War II and the Civil War, the monastic community transformed the refectory and the kitchen into halls for the exhibition of the monastic ‘treasures’, and constructed a new, much smaller, refectory and kitchen on the part of the monastery to the left of the entrance, together with the cells (Figure 64). Thus, in this period the life of the monastic community was mainly centred on the part of the monastery to the left of the entrance.

Later the monastic community moved the refectory, the kitchen and the reception hall, and also constructed administrative offices and a library, in the part of the monastery to the right of the entrance (Figure 65). This evolution of the spatial arrangement was the result of the monastic community’s attempt to be closer to the congregation. Thus, at that time the life of the monastic life and of the congregation was mainly centred on the part of the monastery around the yard and the *katholicon*.

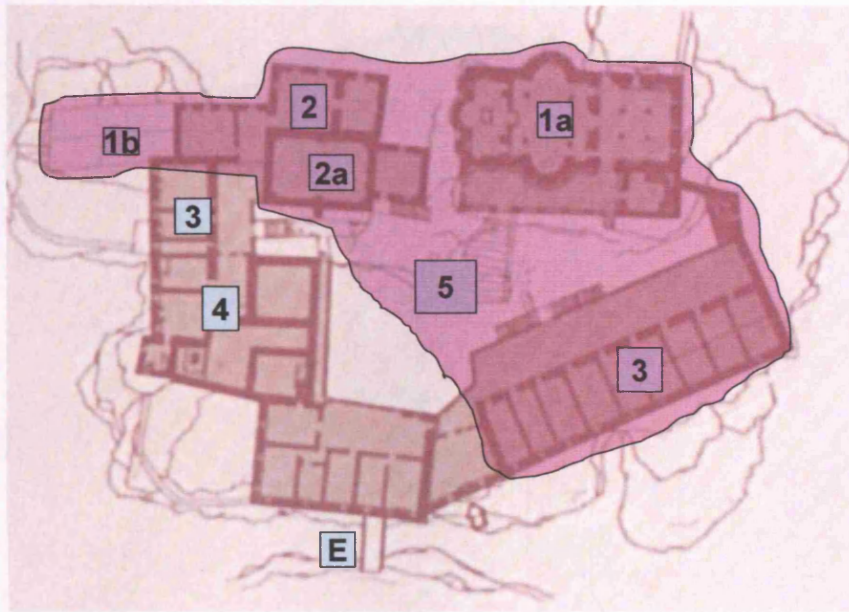
Then the monastic community moved the refectory, the kitchen, the administrative offices, the library and the cells to a part even further to the right of the entrance. Today the monastic community is constructing a cemetery church on the very left corner (from the entrance) of the monastery. The cemetery church will also operate as a church for the conduct of the holy services and for prayer during the visitors’ opening times (Figures 66, 67 and 68). It should be stressed at this point that the monastery has two *katholika*, an earlier one dedicated to St Stephen on the left corner of the monastery and a later one dedicated to St Charalambos in the centre of the monastery. Initially the visitors had access only to the *katholicon* in the centre of the monastery, while the monastic community used the other one. Over the course of

time, however, the monastic community gave into the increasing pressure of the visitors to have access to the other *katholicon* as well, and now resorts to the use of the cemetery church (pers. comm. St Stephen Monastery) (Figure 66). This change of the spatial arrangement relates to the monastic community's attempt to stay as far as possible from the visitors. Thus, it is mainly the visitors who use the part of the monastery around the yard, while the monastic community uses the peripheral buildings of the monastery: mainly the part of the monastery to the right of the entrance and also the part of the monastery to the left of the entrance.



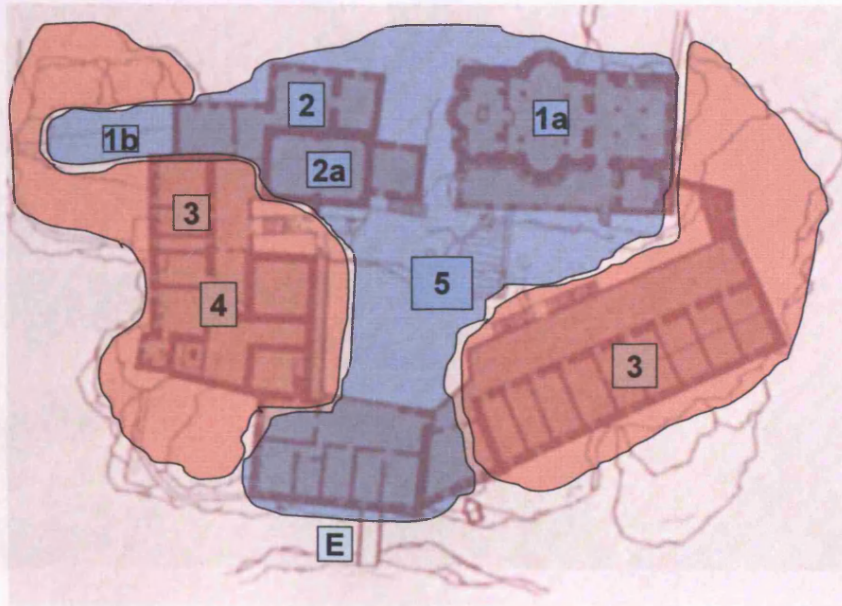
**Figure 64:** The St Stephen monastery: evolution of use of space, Phase A (original Papaioannou 1977, 30, with author's additions):

The monastic community uses mainly: the main *katholicon* (number 1a) and the part of the monastery to the left of the entrance (2, 2a, 3, 4).



**Figure 65:** The St Stephen monastery: evolution of use of space, Phase B (original figure: Papaioannou 1977, 30, with author's additions):

The monastic community and the large congregation share the main *katholicon* (number 1a) and the central part of the monastery around the yard (5).



**Figure 66:** The St Stephen monastery: evolution of use of space, Phase C (original figure: Papaioannou 1977, 30, with author's additions):

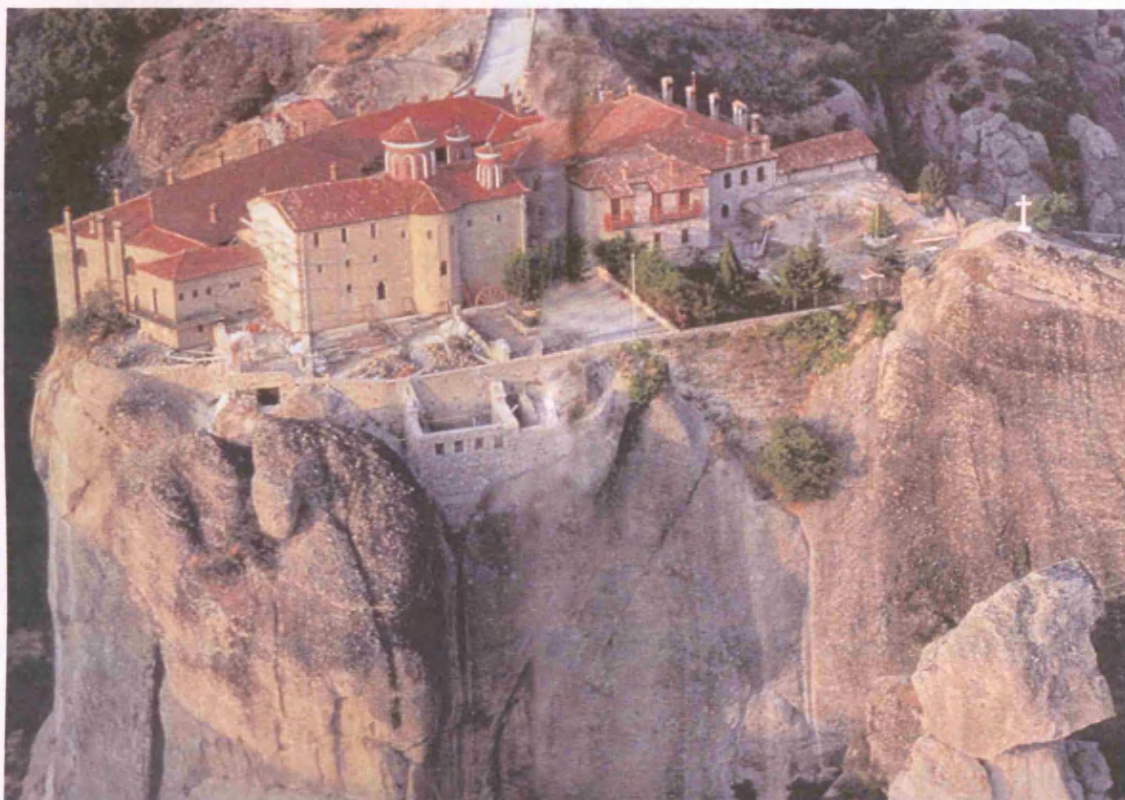
The visitors have access to the central part of the monastery around the yard (number 5). Initially, the visitors had access only to the later *katholicon* of the monastery (1a), but then they were allowed access also to the older *katholicon* (1b). The monastic community uses the peripheral buildings of the monastery: mainly the part of the monastery to the right of the entrance (3), which expanded further to the right (to the area between 3 and 1a, not shown in the figure) and the part of the monastery to the left of the entrance (3 and 4). The new (cemetery) church is in the very left corner of the entrance, further beyond the older *katholicon* (in the area above 1b, not shown in the figure).

The buildings of the St Stephen monastery, as shown in the above figures, are:

- 1a: The later *katholicon*, dedicated to St Charalambos.
- 1b: The older *katholicon*, dedicated to St Stephen.
- 2: The original refectory, transformed into a museum for the 'treasures' of the monastery.
- 2a: The original kitchen, transformed into a museum for the 'treasures' of the monastery.
- 3: Cells.
- 4: Secondary buildings.
- 5: Yard.
- E: Entrance.



**Figure 67:** The St Stephen monastery: internal view (source: Choulia and Albani 1999, 136).



**Figure 68:** The St Stephen monastery: external view (source: Choulia and Albani 1999, 132-133).

Today, the yard of the monastery (Figure 67) is occupied by the visitors. The monastic community has to create new space outside the yard, as clearly shown by the extensive construction works in progress (Figure 68).

**2) The Roussanou monastery** (Tzimas 2000, 401-03; Tetsios 2003, 343-47). Roussanou has the most limited available surface at Meteora and is structured on a vertical axis.

On return to the monastery after the wars, the monastic community retained the existing arrangement of space. The monastic cells, the refectory and the kitchen remained to the right of the entrance of the monastery, on the upper, main storey of the monastery (i.e. the storey of the *katholicon*) (Figure 69). This space was shared by the monastic community and the large congregation.

Later the monastic community moved the cells, the refectory, the kitchen and a small library, and also constructed an enclosed balcony (section 8.1.2.9), in the lower storey of the monastery (i.e. below the storey of the *katholicon*). Thus, the upper, main storey of the monastery was used by the visitors, while the lower storey was used by the monastic community (Figures 70 and 71). This evolution of the spatial arrangement demonstrates the need for the monastic community to stay as far as possible from the visitors, even in such severely limited space.

Recently the monastic community erected a separate five storey building next to the Roussanou rock for their exclusive use (section 8.1.2.11). The visitors have access to the old monastery, while the monastic community occupies the new building outside the original monastery (Figure 72). The evolution of the spatial arrangement shows the monastic community's attempt to stay even further from the increased pressure of mass tourism.

**3) The Holy Trinity monastery** (Tetsios 2003, 376-77; Tzimas 2000, 403-04). The Holy Trinity monastery has, relatively speaking for the standards of the site, an average available rock surface at Meteora and is structured on a horizontal axis.

On reoccupying the monastery after the wars, the monastic community constructed cells and various secondary monastic buildings in the lower storey of the monastery (Figure 73). At that time the life of the monastic community was mainly centred on the *katholicon*.

Later the monastic community transformed the original refectory opposite the *katholicon* into a larger church, so that it would accommodate the increased in size congregation, and the cells into a reception hall, and also formed an inside corridor (used as a yard) connecting the *katholicon*, the new church, the reception hall and the refectory (pers. comm. Lazaros Deriziotis; pers. comm. Tetsios) (Figure 74). It is worth noting that the reception hall of the Holy Trinity monastery was altered twice in order to adjust to the continually increasing size of the congregation over the course of time (pers. comm. Tetsios). At that time the space of the monastery was unified, and shared by the monastic community and the congregation.

Today the visitors have access to the entire lower storey of the monastery, while the monastic community is mostly restricted on the upper storey of the monastery, consisting of cells and a small library (Figure 75).



**Figure 72:** The Roussanou monastery: external view, after the construction of the new buildings (source: author's photo).

Evolution of use of space in the Roussanou monastery, Phase C: The visitors have access to the original monastery, while the monastic community uses a separate building outside the original monastery.



**Figure 70:** The Roussanou monastery: internal view A (source: author's photo). This figure depicts the upper storey, the one leading to the *katholicon* of the monastery (The *katholicon* is shown on the left hand side of the figure). The staircase (shown on the left hand side of the figure) leads to the lower storey of the monastery.



**Figure 71:** The Roussanou monastery: internal view B (source: author's photo). This figure depicts the lower storey of the monastery (below the *katholicon*).

Evolution of use of space in the Roussanou monastery, Phase B: The visitors have access to the upper storey (Figure 70), while the monastic community uses the lower storey of the monastery (Figure 71).



**Figure 69:** The Roussanou monastery: external view, before the construction of the new buildings (source: Choulia and Albani 1999, 44–45). The monastery is developed on a vertical axis, in different storeys.

Evolution of use of space in the Roussanou monastery, Phase A: The monastic community and the large congregation share the entire monastery.

The monastic communities that have a more passive approach to tourism, such as the Holy Trinity and Roussanou, tend to arrange the space mainly according to their own needs without a special care for the visitors. It is worth stressing, for example, that the Holy Trinity monastery, unlike all the other Meteora monasteries, has no shops for the visitors, something that constitutes a deliberate choice of the Abbot (pers. comm. Tetsios).

The arrangement of space is linked to the everyday tourism operation of the monasteries. The monasteries of those communities with an active approach to tourism (as the Great Meteoron and St Stephen) attract the largest numbers of visitors, while the monasteries of those communities with a passive attitude towards tourism (as the Holy Trinity and Roussanou) attract a much smaller number of visitors.

these communities tend to show a special concern about the promotion of the national Greek history and identity to the visitors, with an emphasis on the participation of the monastic communities and the Church as a whole in the struggles of the nation. For example, the hall with historical and folklore treasures in the Great Meteoron monastery exhibits among others, a model of the Parthenon, national flags and posters from recent wars of Greece.



**Figure 85:** The Great Meteoron monastery: the cellar (source: Choulia and Albani 1999, 88-89).

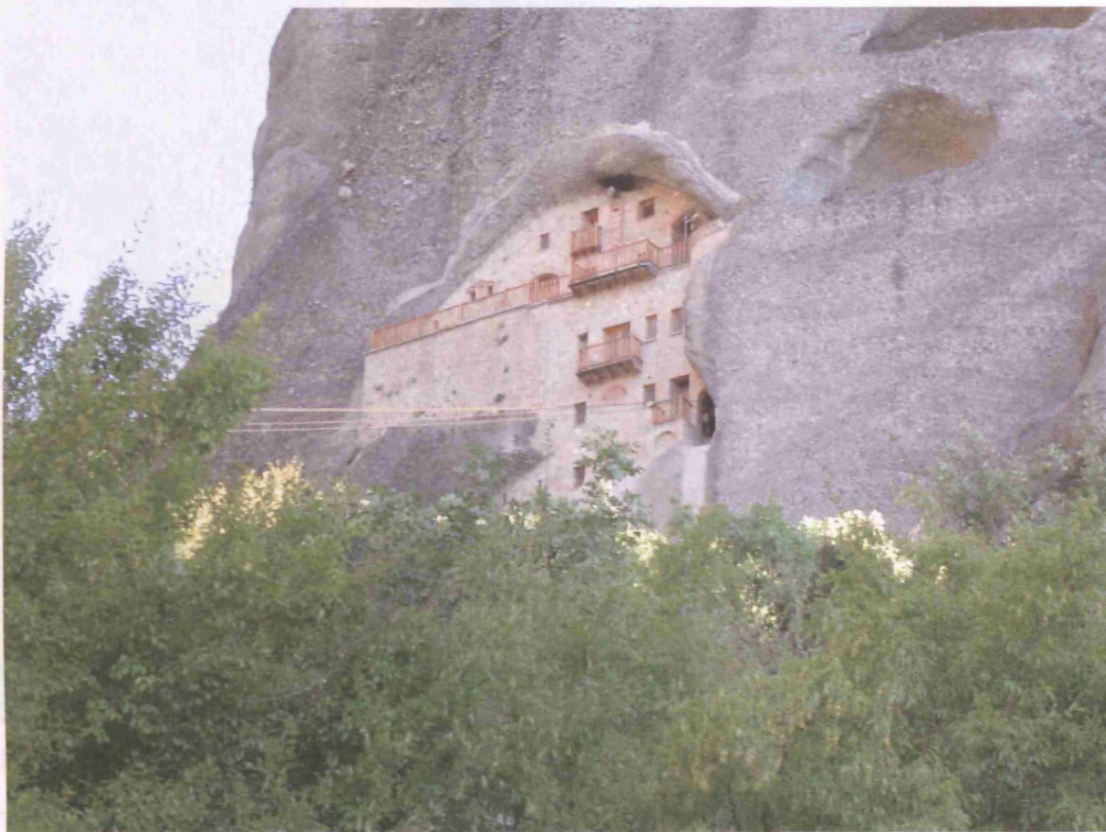
In the Great Meteoron monastery six buildings have been arranged and operate as museums and exhibition halls for the visitors: the old refectory of 1537, the old hospital, the old house for the elderly of 1572, which accommodate the halls of manuscripts, neo-martyrs and wooden carvings, icons and textiles, the hall of historical and folklore treasures, the old cellar, the old furnace and the old ossuary of the monastery (Anastasiou 2004).

Apart from the aforementioned, unavoidable, changes in the spatial arrangement, as a result of the monastic communities' restriction within their monasteries because of tourism, the monastic communities cause deliberate changes to the spatial arrangement as a result of their specific response to tourism. Thus, the differing responses of the Meteora monastic communities to tourism, in accordance with their differing commitment to the philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism, lead to different spatial arrangements.

The monastic communities that actively embrace tourism, such as the Great Meteoron and St Stephen, tend to deliberately arrange the space clearly according to the needs of the visitors rather than their own needs. These communities show an increasing concern over: how to accommodate the largest possible numbers of visitors and how to encourage them to extend their visit to their monasteries for as long as possible; how to meet the needs of the visitors; and what messages to convey and promote to the visitors (Anastasiou 2004). These communities, first, place an increased emphasis on the formation of the internal yard and corridors for the visitors to move within the monastery (as in the Great Meteoron, the St Stephen and the Varlaam monasteries). Second, they focus on the formation of museums for the visitors. There is a great variety of museums: museums for the exhibition of monastic 'treasures' (as in the Great Meteoron, the St Stephen and the Varlaam monasteries); storerooms with tools used in agriculture and barrels for the storing of wine, no longer in use (as in the Great Meteoron and the Varlaam monasteries) (Figure 85); kitchens with cooking utensils, no longer in use (as in the Great Meteoron monastery); ossuaries, no longer in use; the *vrizoni* towers (i.e. the original way of access to the monasteries, before the construction of staircases: section 6.1) (as in the Great Meteoron and the Varlaam monasteries); hall with exhibition of photos about the past life and the landscape of the site (as the photos of Kostas Balafas in the Great Meteoron monastery); hall with historical and folklore treasures (in the Great Meteoron monastery). Third, these communities focus on the development of visitor shops. For example, the Great Meteoron, the St Stephen and the Varlaam monasteries have two or three shops each, sometimes selling even tourist souvenirs (as in the Great Meteoron monastery). Fourth, these communities are concerned about the promotion of the Orthodox faith to the visitors through labels with small extracts from the Holy Scriptures in Greek and English (as in the Great Meteoron monastery). Fifth,

4) The monastic communities move out of their monasteries to the external space of the monasteries

The monastic communities form dependencies [*metochia*] within the site that operate as hermitages, as in the cases of the Great Meteoron, the Holy Trinity, the Varlaam and the St Stephen monasteries (Figure 84). The monks and nuns stay in their hermitages during the visiting times of their monasteries. There are cases, however, that the monks and nuns prefer to stay in their hermitages even outside the visiting times of their monasteries (pers. comm. Varlaam Monastery), which may reveal an increasing tendency of theirs to stay away from their monasteries because of the increasing pressures of tourism.



**Figure 84:** The St Nikolaos Badovas *skiti*: external view (source: author's photo).

The St Nikolaos Badovas *skiti* operates as a hermitage for the Holy Trinity monastic community. The monastic communities move out of their monasteries to the external space to the monasteries.

5) The monks and nuns move out of their monasteries to a different site

From the 1970s until now approximately eighty monks and nuns have abandoned the site for different monastic sites (pers. comm. Tetsios).

3) The monastic communities become restricted within the internal space, which expands towards the external space to the monasteries

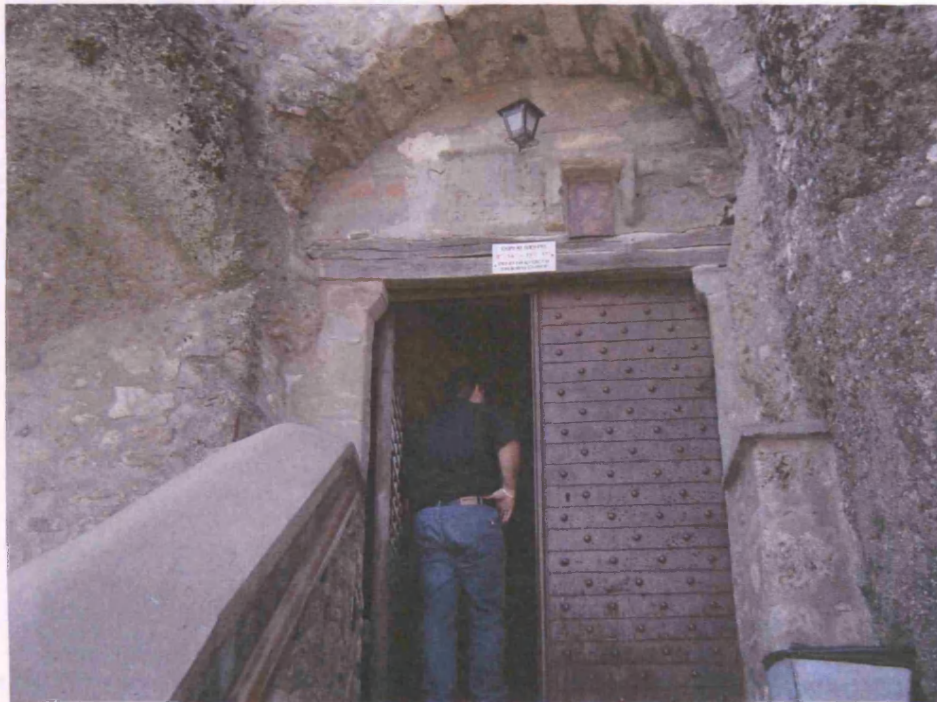
This expansion of the internal space is achieved through the addition of new buildings which are essentially whole new monasteries, as in the case of the Roussanou new buildings.

In this case the division of space is more clear-cut than in the previous one (case 2 above): The visitors have access to the original monastery, while the monks and nuns mainly use the new buildings (Figure 83).

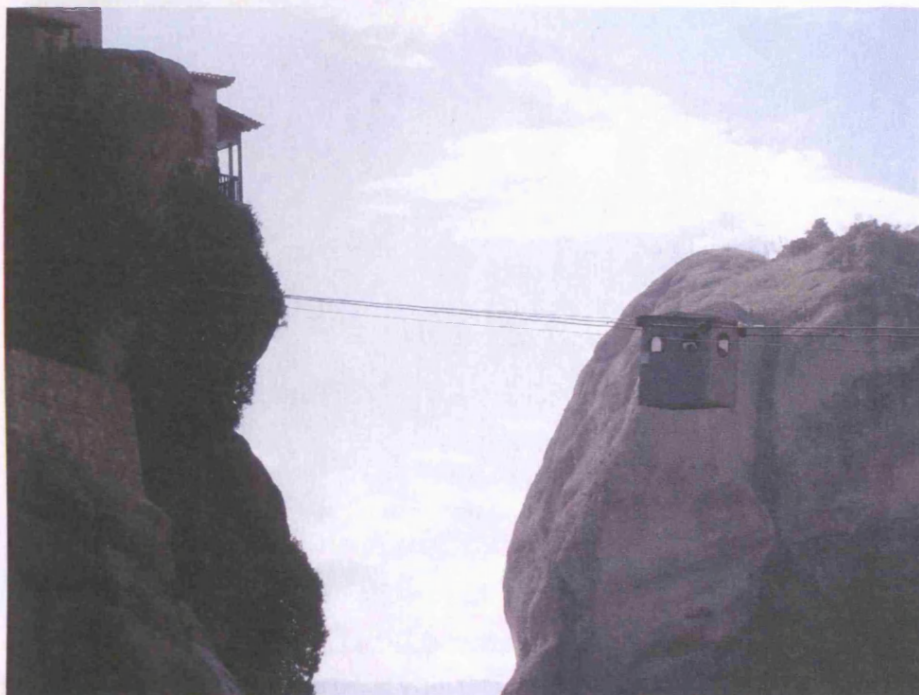


**Figure 83:** The Roussanou monastery: the new buildings (source: author's photo).

The addition of new buildings that are basically whole new monasteries may reveal the monastic communities' further restriction within the internal space which expands towards the external space to the monasteries.



**Figure 81:** The Varlaam monastery: the entrance (source: author's photo).



**Figure 82:** The Varlaam monastery: the cable car (source: author's photo).

These figures show different types of access to the monasteries: the monks (as well as the important visitors) use the cable car, while the rest of the visitors use the entrance of the monastery. This is another form of the division of the space within the monasteries.

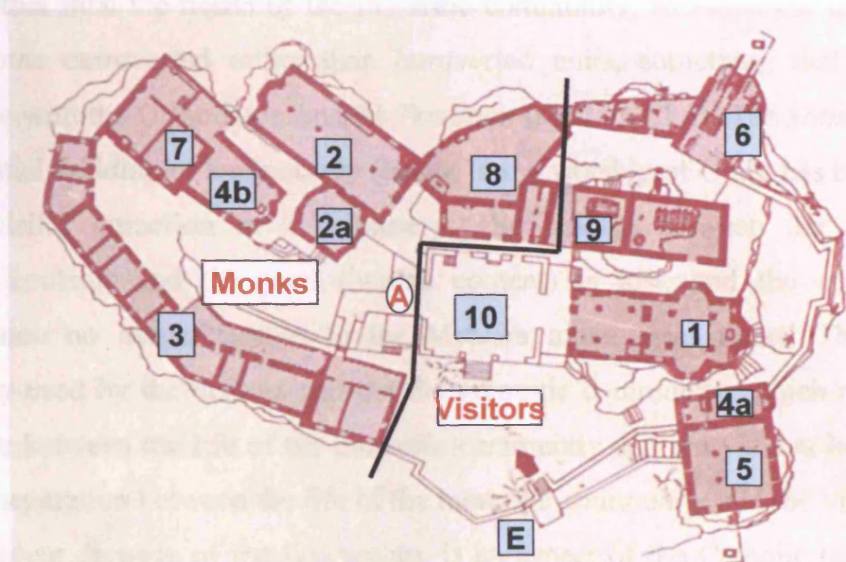


**Figure 79:** The Varlaam monastery: internal view B (source: author's photo). This is the space (to the right of the door) used by the visitors. The entrance to the *katholicon* is on the right hand side, on the right to the icon.



**Figure 80:** The Varlaam monastery: internal view C (source: author's photo). This is the space (to the left of the door) used by the monastic community. Construction works are in progress.

These figures show the division of the internal space of the monasteries. The monastic communities become restricted within the internal space of the monasteries. The visitors occupy the largest part of the monastery, including the *katholicon*, and thus the monastic communities have to create new space within the monastery (as indicated by the construction works in Figure 80).



**Figure 77:** The Varlaam monastery: current use of space (original figure: Papaioannou 1977, 30, with author's additions).

This figure shows the division of the internal space of the monastery between the visitors and the monks. The marked line is the dividing line between the space used by the visitors (to the right of the line) and the space used by the monks (to the left of the line). Point A marks the dividing point between the two spaces (the door kept closed, depicted in figure 78).

1: *Katholicon*. 2: Refectory. 3: Cells. 4a: Church. 4b: Chapel. 5: Home for the aged, transformed into a museum of monastic 'treasures'. 6: *Vrizoni* tower (i.e. the original way of access to the monastery). 7, 8, 9: Secondary buildings (the building 7 is transformed into a kitchen and a small refectory for the monks). 10: Yard. E: The current entrance.



**Figure 78:** The Varlaam monastery: internal view A (source: author's photo).

This door is the dividing point between the space for the visitors and the space for the monks (Fig. 77).

thus the spatial concepts in which Orthodox monasteries are best understood (section 7.1.8) no longer apply. The arrangement of space is defined by the needs of the visitors rather than the needs of the monastic community, and thus the monasteries have become extroverted rather than introverted units, something that is not in accordance with the Orthodox monastic *Tradition* (section 7.1.8). The *katholicon*, the quintessential building of a monastery (linked to the worship of God), has become the primary visitor attraction in a monastery. The linkage between the *katholicon* (religious content) and the yard (human content) is lost, and the approach of Papaiaoannou no longer applies to the Meteora monasteries today. The yard is exclusively used by the visitors and not the monastic community, which means that the linkage between the life of the monastic community and the visitors is lost. This complete separation between the life of the monastic community and the visitors, and the subsequent division of the two spaces, is an aspect of the Catholic (and not the Orthodox) monastic tradition. Finally, the new space created by the monastic communities is an immediate and rather superficial response to the increasing pressure of tourism rather than a conscious attempt to follow the established rules of the Orthodox monastic *Tradition*. For example, the St Stephen monastic community constructed a cemetery church, also to be used as a main church, in response to the desire of the visitors to have access to the *katholicon* of St Stephen in addition to the *katholicon* of St Charalambos (section 8.1).

2) The monastic communities become restricted within the internal space of the monasteries

As a result of the presence of the visitors, the once unified internal space of the monasteries is now divided between the monks and nuns and the visitors (Figures 77-80). It should be stressed that, as a consequence of this division, in most of the monasteries the visitors do not even see the monks and nuns but only the private personnel hired to cover their practical needs.

The visitors have access to entire monasteries (Figures 77 and 79). The *katholicon*, though retaining its strongest symbolic and liturgical significance, ceases to serve as the constant point of reference for the everyday life of the monks and nuns. The refectory has, in most of the cases, been transformed into a museum for the exhibition of monastic 'treasures' for the visitors (as in the St Stephen, the Great Meteoron and the Varlaam monasteries), and thus its sacred and symbolic character in connection to the *katholicon* is lost. The yard is occupied by the visitors, which makes the conduct of the communal activities [*diakonimata*] impossible. The secondary monastic buildings on the periphery within the monastery (such as kitchen, hospital, home for the elderly, guesthouse and various types of storerooms) are also transformed into museums for the visitors (as in the Great Meteoron and the Varlaam monasteries). The reception hall retains its character but serves the needs of the congregation and the important visitors of the monasteries and not the rest of the visitors.

Thus, the monastic communities create a new monastic space with all the necessary buildings (Figures 77 and 80) such as: a new subsidiary church that might replace, in terms of function, the main *katholicon* during the opening hours of the monastery, a new refectory, a new kitchen and new cells, new secondary monastic buildings, a new entrance (for example, through a cable car, as in the Great Meteoron, the Varlaam and the Holy Trinity monasteries: Figures 81 and 82), and space for the conduct of communal monastic activities [*diakonimata*]. Therefore, what the monastic communities require and create is not simply some additional, supplementary space for their existing monasteries but in some cases a completely new monastic space within their existing monasteries.

The traditional usage of space is no longer possible. The pressures of tourism have removed the essential nature of monastic life in terms of physical layout, and

### 8.3.2. The current use of space at Meteora

This section analyses the implications of the changing wider circumstances of the operation of the site, particularly tourism, for the use of space.

The Meteora monastic communities, as a result of their acceptance of tourism (in accordance with their philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism), unavoidably become suppressed in their space under the pressure of tourism.

This suppression takes the following forms.

1) The monastic communities become increasingly deprived of the use of the external space to the monasteries

As a result of the presence of the visitors, the monks and nuns are deprived of the use of the external space, and are obliged to stay within their individual monasteries (Figure 76).



**Figure 76:** The Great Meteoron monastery: visitors at the entrance of the monastery (source: author's photo).

This figure shows that the external space to the monasteries is used exclusively by the visitors and, consequently, the monastic communities become restricted within their monasteries.

their experiences concerning the changing use of space, and tend to repeat the same mistakes.

It seems, however, that the monastic communities do not realise in the first place the importance of a proactive, long-term and unified planning of the use of space. They tend to feel that their financial power (mostly derived from tourism) allows them the 'luxury' to afford any further changes in terms of spatial arrangement.

phase, the monastic community and the large congregation mainly used the space around either the original *katholicon* (as in the St Stephen and the Roussanou monasteries) or a new, larger church (as in the Holy Trinity monastery). In the final phase, the visitors have access to the original *katholicon*, while the monastic community uses another church (as in the Roussanou and the St Stephen monasteries).

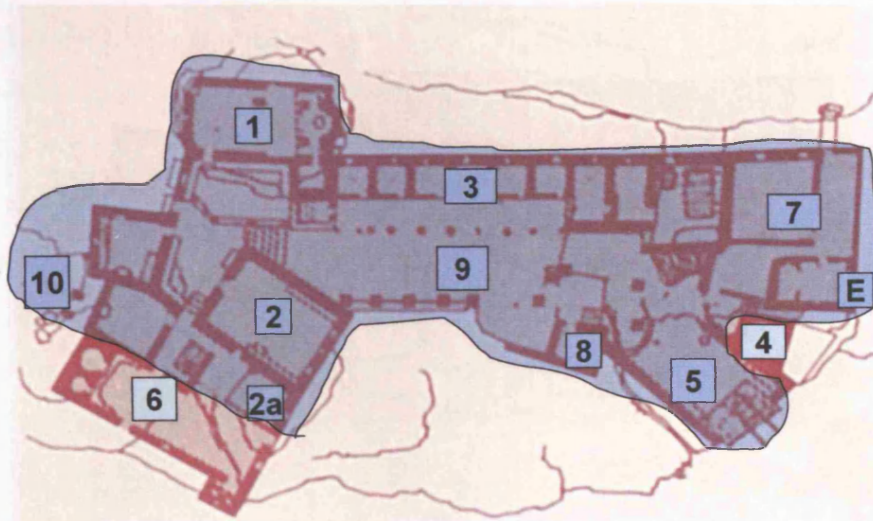
## Conclusion

The analysis of the evolution of the use of space in the recent history of the site leads to the following conclusions.

On reoccupying the site (phase A), the monastic communities maintained, in most of the cases, the existing arrangement of space of their monasteries. Later, however, in order to respond to the needs of the large congregation and especially the needs of the visitors, they changed the existing arrangement of space: they changed the central part of their monasteries (in phase B) and the periphery of their monasteries (in phase C).

In every new arrangement of space, the monastic communities did not take into consideration the existing arrangements. There are cases in which the construction of new buildings, within the new arrangement of space, unavoidably replaced, in terms of function, earlier buildings. As a result, today the Meteora monasteries demonstrate a variety of continually changing spatial arrangements, with buildings of interwoven and conflicting functions.

The changes in the spatial arrangement of the monasteries reflect the failure of the monastic communities to face the wider changes affecting the operation of their site (re-establishment of the monastic communities in the site, formation of the large congregation and its participation in the religious life, and tourism) in terms of proactive and long-term planning. Every time there is a wider change in the operation of the site, the monastic communities tend to substantially change the earlier arrangement of space. The changes in the spatial arrangement of the monasteries also reflect the failure of the monastic communities to cooperate with each other and come to a unified planning of the use of space for all the monasteries. Thus, though the wider changes affecting the operation of the site are common for all the monasteries (though appearing at each of them in slightly differing periods, which has to do with the specific circumstances in each monastery), the monastic communities do not share



**Figure 75:** The Holy Trinity monastery: evolution of use of space, Phase C (original figure: Papaioannou 1977, 30, with author's additions):

The visitors have access to the lower storey of the monastery, including the *katholicon* (1), while the monastic community uses mainly the upper storey.

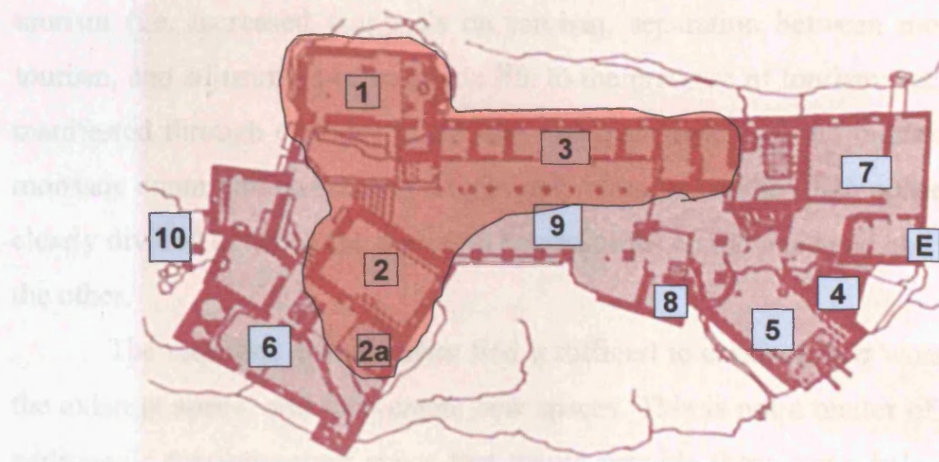
The buildings of the Holy Trinity monastery, as shown in the above figures, are:

- 1: *Katholicon*.
- 2: Original refectory, transformed into a church (larger than the *katholicon*).
- 2a: Original kitchen, today part of the new church (number 2).
- 3: Original cells, partly demolished and partly transformed into secondary buildings, mainly storerooms.
- 4: Chapel of St John.
- 5: The *vrizoni* tower (i.e. the original way of access to the monastery).
- 6: Secondary buildings.
- 7: Original reception hall, transformed into a large refectory.
- 8: Original secondary building, transformed into a large reception hall [*archontariki*] and a small kitchen.
- 9: The inside corridor, used as an inside yard.
- E: The current entrance, which has replaced the *vrizoni* (number 5).

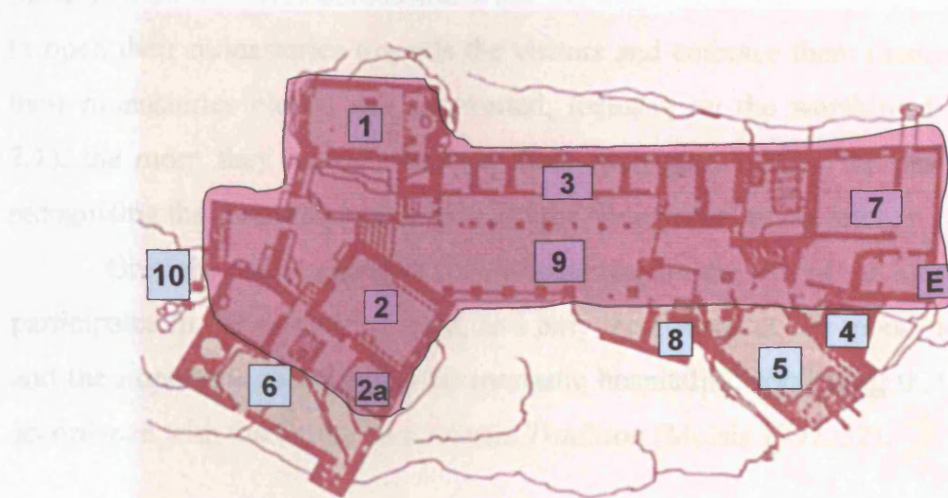
The use of internal space of the monasteries, with a specific emphasis on the *katholicon*, over the course of the recent history of Meteora, through these examples of monasteries, may be summarised as follows. In the first phase, the monastic community was mostly using the space around the original *katholicon*. In the second

### 8.3.3 Conclusion

This section discusses the evolution of the use of space in the monastery, as a result of the management of the site as a result of the historical and cultural changes.



**Figure 73:** The Holy Trinity monastery: evolution of use of space, Phase A (original figure: Papaioannou 1977, 30, with author's additions):  
The monastic community uses the space centred around the *katholicon* (number 1).



**Figure 74:** The Holy Trinity monastery: evolution of use of space, Phase B (original figure: Papaioannou 1977, 30, with author's additions):  
The monastic community and the large congregation share the space around the new, larger church (2).

### 8.3.3. Conclusion

This section demonstrated how the main problems in the operation and management of the site as a result of the monastic communities' attitude towards tourism (i.e. increased emphasis on tourism, separation between monasticism and tourism, and adjustment of monastic life to the pressure of tourism: section 8.2.3) are manifested through changes in the use and arrangement of the monastic space. The monastic communities become increasingly restricted within their space. The space is clearly divided between the monastic communities on the one hand and the visitors on the other.

The monastic communities find it difficult to conduct their worship of God in the existing space, and thus create new spaces. This is not a matter of seeking some additional, supplementary space that would provide them some help with practical issues in their monastic life, but an existential need of theirs directly linked to the functional continuity of the site.

The visitors are excluded from the worship of God. They are also significantly hindered from communicating with the members of the monastic communities. The fact that in most of the monasteries they do not even see the monks and nuns (but only private personnel hired to cover their practical needs) creates the impression to the majority of the foreign visitors that the monasteries are no longer in use (pers. comm. Meteora visitors). This demonstrates that the more the monastic communities attempt to open their monasteries towards the visitors and embrace them (instead of keeping their monasteries closed and introverted, focusing on the worship of God: section 7.1), the more they actually exclude them from participating in, sharing and even recognising the functional continuity and the 'livingness' of the site.

Only the congregation of the monasteries, mostly part of the local community, participates in the worship of God, and only the friends of the monastic community and the important guests enjoy the monastic hospitality, something that is yet not in accordance with the Orthodox monastic *Tradition* (Moisis 1997, 32).

## 8.4. Conclusion

The functional continuity at Meteora as a monastic site is maintained through time. However, contemporary changing circumstances in the outside world, such as the growth of the tourism and heritage industries, affect the way the nature of functional continuity at Meteora has changed over the course of time. These contemporary influences relate to the way the outside world views Meteora and its relationship with the monastic communities: Meteora is no longer seen and used simply as a monastic site, but mainly as a place of heritage significance and a tourist attraction (section 8.1).

In an attempt to further develop their philanthropic-missionary activity for the benefit of the wider society (section 7.2), the Meteora monastic communities have accepted their role in the tourism and heritage industries (section 8.2).

The monastic communities' acceptance of their role in the tourism and heritage industries has brought about a series of problems in the operation and management of Meteora: the separation between the monastic function, the heritage protection and the tourism exploitation of the site; the incorporation of monasticism within the tourism industry; and an immense emphasis on tourism (section 8.2).

These problems became evident over the course of the recent history of the site, in phase B and especially in phase C (section 8.2). However, the roots of these problems can be traced back to the first appearance of the philanthropic-missionary approach in the monastic life of Meteora with the re-establishment of the monastic communities in the site in the 1960s.

The philanthropic-missionary approach was criticized even when it first appeared in Meteora in the 1960s. Kouros, a member of the local community at that time, saw the new reality of Meteora in the 1960s (with the re-establishment of the monastic communities, the arrival of the first tourists and the increasing recognition of the heritage significance of the site) in the following way:

Meteora as a fabulous, flourishing monastic centre and a significant religious centre undoubtedly does not exist any longer. But it does exist, and will always exist, as an invaluable holy trust/keeper of Orthodox Christianity... The Meteora monasteries are already significant religious museums thanks to their history and thanks to the many treasures that are still kept there... Even if it is not an ascetic centre with the old meaning any longer, Meteora

is at least a trust of holy treasures, religious artworks, written sources and scientific knowledge...

Meteora, as a location and as a historic content is undoubtedly something unique... Within the archaeological cycle of the country, referring to older times and all other types of Greek civilizations, the uniqueness of Meteora in terms of location and in terms of the type of history renders the site a very interesting change for those willing to know Greece... [hence] the tourism potential and the tourism exploitation of the Meteora area [by the government authorities]... Thus if not all the monasteries, at least the five of the monasteries that exist and are active, are protected very effectively, are growing and getting organised, thus presenting ideal conditions for their future maintenance' (Kouros 1965, 43-47).

Kouros highlighted the clear separation between the monastic function of the site, the heritage protection and the tourism development, and stated that, unlike heritage protection and tourist exploitation, the monastic (in the sense of ascetic) function of the site will be very difficult to maintain in the future, and can be maintained only within the context of heritage protection and especially tourism development.

The analysis of the operation and management of the site over the course of the recent history of the site (section 8.2) clearly suggests that Kouros was right.

The objectives of the Meteora monastic communities in the context of their philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism (section 7.2) seem to have been successfully applied in the case of Meteora. Today Meteora has become a popular tourist destination promoting the Orthodox faith to hundreds of thousands of visitors. It is a well-preserved heritage site reflecting strength and glory. At the same time it is an important monastic site with monastic communities that are flourishing and increasing in size and have an increasing contribution to the wider society (Meteora Monasteries 1994a, 37-43; Meteora Monasteries 1995, 10; Anastasiou 1994a, 204-06; Anastasiou 1990, 391-92).

An assessment of the operation and management based on the Orthodox monastic principles, however, leads to completely different conclusions. The visitors, or the vast majority, are unable to participate in the religious life of the monasteries, and most of the time are not even aware of it. There is an increasing and confusing construction activity, not always in accordance with the Orthodox monastic principles, with often irreversible effects on the fabric and the space of the site.

Meteora is not a flourishing monastic site either. Monastic life is suppressed, under the influence of the tourism industry, and the monastic communities are increasingly restricted within their monasteries, in an opposing need of new space within and even outside their site. The monastic communities are in some cases increasing in size, yet mostly in an attempt to deal with the increasing pressure of tourism. The monastic communities seem unable to manage their site, given the inactivity of the Assembly.

Thus, the objectives of philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism do not conform to the strict Orthodox monastic principles, and have been applied at Meteora at the expense of the site and its monastic communities. Tourism, accepted by the monastic communities as a means to promote the Orthodox monastic life to the outside world, has ended up affecting the reason that 'brought' it and made it develop at the site, i.e. the monastic life.

From this analysis it appears that the Meteora monastic communities, with the help of the heritage authorities and the other stakeholder groups protecting and using the site, should move away from the philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism and concentrate more on the traditional monastic principles, redefining their everyday monastic life and their attitude towards the visitors and the outside world. This will contribute to solving the main problems in the operation and management of the site: the focus will be diverted from developing tourism to worshipping God, and tourism development and heritage protection will be incorporated within the monastic life.

## **9. Living sites: towards a new approach to conservation**

### **9.1. Towards a new interpretation of living sites**

A living site, as proposed in this thesis, is a matter of the continuity of the original function of a site as reflected in the continual process of its creation ('functional continuity') by its original community ('site community') (chapter 3).

A living site is more about the way the nature of functional continuity changes over the course of time as a response to changing circumstances within the context of the broader community at local, national and international level. The changes in the nature of functional continuity may be seen in terms of three factors: first, the formal recognition of site community's association with the site (site community as a separate from the heritage authorities and the primary managing body of the site); second, the changing arrangement of the space of the site in accordance with the original function of the site; and, third, the site community's permanent physical presence in the site (chapter 5).

Thus, the key concepts in the definition of a living site are: 'functional continuity', 'site community', and the way the nature of functional continuity changes over the course of time. On this basis, a living site may be defined as follows. A site is living if the original community continues the process of the creation of the site in accordance with the original function of the site and in response to the changing circumstances of each time within the context of the broader community at local, national and international level.

This definition of living sites can be applied in the case of Meteora as follows:

The functional continuity of Meteora is rooted in the Orthodox monastic *Tradition*, based on the Holy Liturgy, as followed by the monastic communities of the site (chapter 7).

The nature of functional continuity at Meteora has been affected over the recent history of the site by the philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism (internal influence on functional continuity: chapter 7) as well as the growth of the tourism and heritage industries (external influence on functional continuity: chapter 8). As a result of the Meteora monastic communities' attitude, in the context of their

philanthropic-missionary approach to monasticism, towards the growth of the tourism and heritage industries (i.e. the relationship between the internal and the external influences on functional continuity), the operation and management of Meteora faces the following problems: separation between the monastic function, and the heritage protection and the tourism development of the site; incorporation of the monastic function into the tourism development of the site; and increasing emphasis on the tourism development of the site (chapter 8).

The changes in the nature of functional continuity at Meteora, as affected by the aforementioned factors, may be currently seen in terms of: first, the inactivity of the Assembly (affecting the formal recognition of the monastic communities' association with the site as a separate from the heritage authorities and the primary managing body of the site); second, the confusing construction activity at the monasteries that is not strictly in accordance with the Orthodox monastic *Tradition*; and, third, the restriction of the monastic presence within the monasteries, with the frequent departure of monks and nuns from the site (chapter 8).

The solution proposed in this thesis is that the Meteora monastic communities, with the support of the heritage authorities and the other stakeholder groups protecting and using the site, should concentrate more on the Orthodox monastic *Tradition* (chapter 8).

Living sites, as defined in this thesis, cannot be embraced within the 'conventional' conservation approaches and within the World Heritage concept, even though attitudes are changing as the problem is increasingly recognised. Conservation and the World Heritage concept, formed and operating within the Western European world, create a discontinuity between the sites considered to belong to the past, and the people of the present. Conservation and the World Heritage concept are firmly attached to the preservation of the 'original' fabric. As a result, they seem unable to embrace the continual process of creation of sites in accordance with their original function (functional continuity) and the whole series of approaches to the fabric of these sites (serving functional continuity) (chapter 4).

Living sites cannot be embraced within values-based approaches (as currently the most preferred approaches to conservation) either. The concept of value/stake, as defined and applied in these approaches, seems to run counter to the functional continuity of a living site as an inseparable entity between the sites and their site

communities. The concept of stakeholder group works to a degree against the concept of site community as the original community associated with the continual process of the creation of a living site. The concept of the equity of values and stakeholders defined, assessed and managed by a strong leading authority is against the concept of site community as a separate from the heritage authorities and the primary management body of a living site (chapter 4).

Living sites present considerable complexities in terms of operation, management, spatial arrangement and fabric, depending on the way the nature of functional continuity changes over time in each site, which makes it even more difficult for conservation professionals to cope with them, in the national heritage contexts and especially in the World Heritage context (chapter 5).

Thus, there is a need for a new conservation approach to living sites.

## **9.2. Towards a new conservation approach to living sites**

A living sites' approach concentrates on the continual process of creation of the site, linking past, present and future in an ongoing present, in accordance with its original function (functional continuity).

The site is in a continual process of creation by its site community (single or in groups). Site community is seen as an inseparable part of the site, and is thus differentiated from the other groups of people involved in the operation of the site. Site community has the power in the operation and management of the site, officially recognised as separate from the heritage authorities and as the primary management body of the site.

The other groups of people involved in the operation of the site, i.e. the heritage authorities (protecting the site) and the stakeholder groups (using the site), actively participate, through the site community (living in the site), in the continual process of the creation of the site.

Thus, a living sites' approach accepts that site community continues the process of the creation of the site with the constant support of the heritage authorities and the stakeholder groups of the site on the basis of the original function of the site.

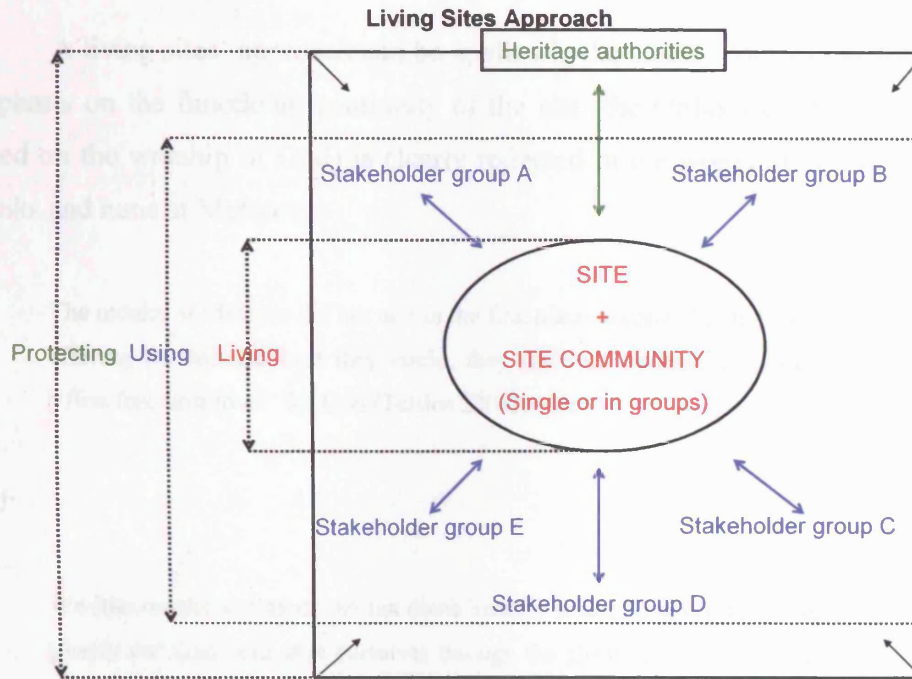
The boundaries of the power of these communities in relation to the operation and management of the site are set on the basis of the functional continuity of the site.

A living sites' approach concentrates on functional continuity rather than on site community, accepting that a site community might possibly act against the functional continuity of the site, and should thus be continually checked and supported in the further process of creation of the site by the other groups of people.

A living sites' approach places emphasis on functional continuity rather than on the members of site community as individuals. Even though the creation, definition and protection of the site is necessarily through the members of the site community, their protection as individuals is infeasible due to their physical mortality.

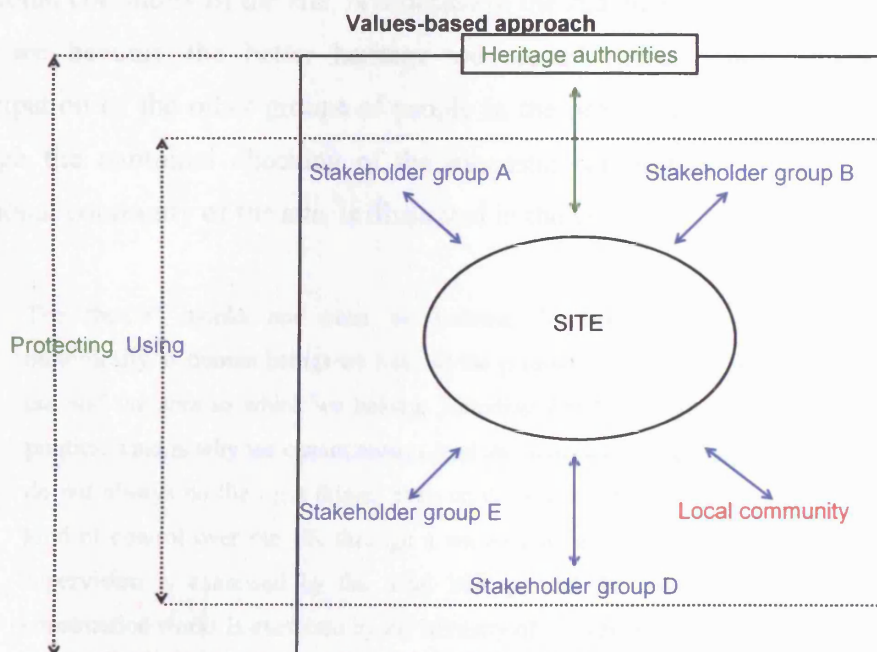
A living sites' approach accepts that the concept of a living site is much broader than that of a heritage site. A living (but not designated as heritage) site can still be continually created by its site community with the help of other groups of people on the basis of its functional continuity.

A living sites' approach may be depicted in the following diagram (Figure 86), clearly differentiated from a values-based approach (Figure 87).



**Figure 86:** Living sites' approach: schematic representation.

The arrows on the corners of the square, which move inwards, attempt to indicate that the heritage authorities (protecting the site) and the various stakeholder groups (using the site) support site community in the continual process of the creation of the site. Living sites' approach is thus an introverted model, concentrating on the continual process of the creation of the site.



**Figure 87:** Values-based approach: schematic representation.

A living sites approach sees 'site community' as an inseparable part of the site, living in the site and continuing the process of its creation (Figure 86), while values-based approaches refer to a local community simply as one of the stakeholder groups using the site (Figure 87).

A living sites' approach can be applied in the case of Meteora as follows. The emphasis on the functional continuity of the site (the Orthodox monastic *Tradition*, based on the worship of God) is clearly reflected in the words of two of the current monks and nuns at Meteora:

The monks of Meteora did not aim in the first place to create heritage on the hostile rocks. By offering to God the best they could, they rendered heritage the natural outcome of their "first/foremost love" for God (Tetsios 2003, 338).

And:

We [the monks and nuns] did not come here [to Meteora] to create heritage. We came here to glorify our God, and save ourselves through the glorification of God. Heritage is simply the outcome of the glorification of God. Even if the entire site is destroyed, we should and will still remain here glorifying our God (pers. comm. Nikodimi).

The unity between the monks and nuns, and the site, on the basis of the functional continuity of the site, is reflected in the statement: 'The 'better' monks and nuns we become the better heritage we create' (pers. comm. Nikodimi). The participation of the other groups of people in the process of the creation of the site, through the continual checking of the monastic communities on the basis of the functional continuity of the site, is illustrated in the view:

The 'better' monks and nuns we become the better heritage we create. But even biologically/as human beings we bear all the positive and negative aspects of the society, the era and the area to which we belong, including family and people, education, culture, and politics. That is why we cannot always lead the monastic life in the proper, ideal way, and we do not always do the right things, even on the site itself. That is why there should be some kind of control over our life through a network of laws and experts. For example, spiritual supervision is exercised by the local Bishop, and the control over our restoration and construction works is exercised by the Ministry of Culture' (pers. comm. Nikodimi).

An extreme example of the participation of other groups of people in the continual process of the creation of the site on the basis of functional continuity, was the case

where in the early 1930s members of the village of Kastraki burned down one of the Meteora monasteries because the monks of this monastery were seducing girls from their village (pers. comm. Kastraki village). This event demonstrates, apart from the possible aspect of revenge, that the meaning of the site is inextricably linked to the Orthodox monastic *Tradition* as practiced by the monastic communities of the site. Thus, if the monastic communities do not operate within the Orthodox monastic *Tradition*, then there is no actual reason for the monasteries to exist.

The emphasis on the functional continuity of the site over the association of the site community with the site is illustrated by the frequent cases of departures of individual monks and nuns or of entire monastic communities from the site. They abandoned the site mostly because they felt they were not fully dedicated to the worship of God here, mainly as a result of the increasing pressure of tourism. These cases of departures are harmful for the site, but demonstrate the healthiness and strength of the Orthodox monastic *Tradition*. For example, the monastic communities that left from the Great Meteoron monastery and moved to the Xenophontos and Simonopetra monasteries on Mount Athos made a major contribution in the re-birth of monasticism at Mount Athos and in Greece as a whole, marking a strong tendency of return to the pure Orthodox monastic *Tradition* (section 7.2).

The emphasis on the functional continuity of the site rather than on the members of site community as individuals is well demonstrated by the oral tradition (believed and transmitted by the current monastic community of the Great Meteoron) that the operation of the Great Meteoron monastery as a guesthouse in the aftermath of World War II (which dramatically affected the functional continuity of the site) resulted in the death of the only monk living in the monastery (section 8.1).

The view that ‘heritage is simply the outcome of the glorification of God, [and] even if the entire site is destroyed, we should and will still remain here glorifying our God’, the oral tradition of the death of the monk because of the operation of a guesthouse in his monastery and the event of the participation of the residents of Kastraki in the process of creation of the site through the destruction of the monastery seem to define the boundaries of a living sites’ approach.

Therefore, a living sites’ approach moves beyond the concepts of heritage site and site community (as individual persons) and beyond the association between the heritage site and the site community, in favour of functional continuity as a broader

belief system. A living sites' approach sees (tangible) heritage sites as created within a broader intangible process (functional continuity).

### **9.3. Towards a new World Heritage approach to living sites**

A living sites' approach accepts that tangible and intangible heritage elements constitute an inseparable entity, operating and further created within a broader intangible process, i.e. the functional continuity of the site. For example, the analysis of the essence of the Orthodox monastic *Tradition* demonstrated that the elements of the *Tradition* ('tangible' or 'intangible'/'less tangible' ones) cannot be differentiated from each other, but derive meaning and existence from the Holy Liturgy and are further created within it (section 7.1).

A living sites' approach is close to the philosophy of the protection of intangible heritage elements by the UNESCO's Convention and other initiatives for the safeguarding of living Intangible Cultural Heritage (section 2.3).

The fact that living sites are differentiated from other types of sites is paralleled by the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention's* focus on exclusively living (and not dead) heritage.

The fact that the very essence, creation and maintenance of living sites is inextricably linked to the physical presence of a specific community (site community) is very similar to the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention's* understanding of heritage as 'literally embodied' and dependant on the presence of its practitioners. Site community's clear differentiation from other groups of people involved in the operation of the site is related to the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention's* concept of living human treasures or holding body as the performers of the intangible heritage elements. The understanding of site community not only as a community but as specific, individual groups and persons is similar to the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention's* understanding of living human treasures and holding bodies also as individuals.

Living sites' linking between protection and creation is close to the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention's* understanding of protection as an inseparable part of the manifestation and creation of heritage elements. The fact that living sites are in a

continual process of creation within an intangible process (functional continuity) can be seen in the same context with the creation of intangible heritage elements within a broader belief system (the concept of cultural space).

Site community's recognised power in the operation and management of living sites is very similar to the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention's* emphasis on the formal role of living human treasures or holding bodies in the protection of intangible heritage elements.

The changes affecting the nature of functional continuity of living sites is paralleled by the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention's* understanding of intangible cultural heritage manifestations as continually changing within a broader belief system.

The fact that the ultimate emphasis in living sites is not on the members of site community (as individuals) but on the functional continuity is similar to the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention's* emphasis on living human treasures or holding bodies not as objects to be protected but as the carriers of the traditions.

Thus, living sites are tangible heritage sites that could be seen as created (and protected) in a similar way to the intangible heritage elements. Living sites could be thus seen as constituting the link between tangible and intangible heritage.

In this way, the discussion of living sites leads to the suggestion for the merging of tangible and intangible heritage elements and Conventions, within a broader intangible framework. This merging could be based on existing concepts that suggest strong links between these two categories of heritage elements, such as: 'associative cultural landscapes' on the side of tangible heritage and 'living human treasures' or 'holding bodies' and 'cultural spaces' on the side of intangible heritage. The merging of tangible and intangible heritage elements and Conventions could lead to a new unified concept: living heritage or living space.

#### **9.4. Living sites: shifting from protection towards creation**

The definition of a living sites' approach suggest that the discipline of conservation and the World Heritage concept should not simply attempt to expand within the existing framework (as defined by 'conventional' and values-based

approaches to conservation: sections 2.1 and 2.2) but should be substantially changed. Conservation and the World Heritage concept should move towards a completely different context of understanding and protecting heritage: shifting the focus from protection to creation. They need to 'escape' from the discontinuity created between the monuments, considered to belong to the past, and the people of the present and also from the attachment to physical remains, and move towards the understanding of people's identities and associations with sites and the continual process of creation of sites in the context of these associations. Thus, the World Heritage Convention should not operate as a uniform set of regulations applied to all sites internationally but as a mechanism, a process concentrating on, and promoting, specific associations between people and sites.

The merging of tangible and intangible heritage elements and Conventions should be seen as the first step towards a substantial change of the World Heritage concept. The aim is to change the entire way heritage as a whole is perceived, protected and, more importantly, further created.



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