GE-710

Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery (Georgia)

Date inscribed: 1994
Criteria: (iv)
City of Kutaisi, Region of Imereti
N42 15 43.992 E42 42 59.004

Date of report: 31/01/2012

Report on the State of Conservation

The report is submitted in response to the World Heritage Committee Decision 35COM 7A.29 requesting the State Party …"to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2012, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and on the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 36th session in 2012".

The report reflects the activities implemented by the State Party in the period 08.2010-30.01.2012

1. Response from the State Party to the World Heritage Committee's Decision(s)

Decision: 35 COM 7A.29	State Party response
7. *Urges the State Party to develop a rehabilitation strategy for the Bagrati Cathedral that reverses the maximum amount of recent work, incorporates fragments on site if possible where they form part of the walls, ensures any lightweight roof provides a profile for the building that is similar to what might have once existed and leaves the interior unplastered;*	The draft Rehabilitation Strategy has been prepared by the State Party with the involvement of international consultant (Dr. Jukka Jokilehto) in full coherence with the outline prepared by ICOMOS and provided to the State Party in October 2011. The Strategy assures that the maximum amount or recent incompatible works are reversed where possible, it leaves interior unplastered and provides the possibility to rehabilitate the original form of the building with the use of modern technologies accepted by internationally recognized conservation doctrine.
8. Requests the State Party to submit this rehabilitation strategy to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, before any commitment is made	Following the discussion and approval of the proposed Rehabilitation Strategy at the working meeting in WHC on 9th November 2011, the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation has established a working group with the leadership of Dr. Jukka Jokilehto, to develop the Rehabilitation Strategy requested by the WH

	Committee. The draft Strategy was submitted for consideration to the WHC and its advisory bodies in January 2012. Meanwhile some urgent stabilization works were continued as explained in the State Party's letter to the WHC (ref.12/13/882 27.09.2011) and approved by the letter of the WHC (Ref. CLT/WHC/4406/GE/AS/KR 05.10.2011). These included the stabilization of the West wall and arrangement of necessary support structure to prepare the site for possible implementation of the rehabilitation project prepared in accordance to the Rehabilitation Strategy after its approval by the WHC and advisory bodies and authorization by the WH Committee.
9. <u>Also requests</u> the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to assess the overall state of conservation of the property and to discuss approaches to the rehabilitation strategy of Bagrati Cathedral;	In accordance with the WH Committee decision, the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission was invited by the state party (Ref. 08/13/725, 09.08.2011) and, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre, scheduled for 10-20 October 2011. Regrettably, due to the reasons outside the control of the World Heritage Centre, the mission was cancelled by the WH Centre in the last minute (Ref: CLT/WHC/4406/GE/AS/KR 05.10.2011). To discuss the State of Conservation of Bagrati Cathedral the working meeting took place on 9th of November 2011 at the World Heritage Centre in scopes of the 18th Session of the General Assembly of the States Parties to the World Heritage Convention, with the participation of WHC, ICCROM and ICOMOS representatives, the representatives of the State Party including the permanent delegation of Georgia to UNESCO and the international experts co-operating with the State Party on the issue of rehabilitation of Bagrati Cathedral. The meeting was honoured by the presence of Dr. Francesco Bandarin, the Assistance Director General for Culture of UNESCO and H.E. Mamuka Kudava, Ambassador Extraordinary and Pnelipotentiary to France and the Permanent representative of Georgia to UNESCO. Together with other high level meetings organized between the representatives of the State Party and the WHC in 2011 on different matters

	concerning the World Heritage properties in Georgia, this meeting reaffirmed the continuous support from the WHC and the motivation of the State Party for co-operation. The meeting of Mr. Nikoloz Rurua, the Minister of Culture and Monuments Protection of Georgia and Mr. Francesco Bandarin, Assistant Director-General for Culture, in scopes of the 36th Session of the General Conference of UNESCO has reinforced the commitment for communication on the future of the Georgia's World Heritage Sites.
*10. Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1February2012**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 36th session in 2012;*	The SoC Report submitted to the WHC within the set deadlines.

a. Progress towards the removal of the property from the list of the World Heritage in Danger

Acting in full co-ordination with the World Heritage Centre and in accordance with the World Heritage Committee decisions, throughout 2011 the State Party has made significant progress in implementing the requested measures to create necessary conditions for the withdrawal of the site from the list of the world heritage in danger.

a. Internationally renowned conservation experts Dr. Andrea Bruno and Dr. Jukka Jokilehto have been invited by the State Party to elaborate the documents requested by the WHC and advisory bodies, namely:

    - the alternative proposal for the rehabilitation project for the Bagrati Cathedral
    - SOUV of the property
    - The Rehabilitation Strategy as outlined by the ICOMOS

b. Thanks to the involvement of Dr. Bruno the alternative rehabilitation proposal was prepared and submitted to the WHC for consideration. The active discussion and consultations with the WHc and advisory bodies on the proposal has been sustained throughout the year. The respective amendments have been eventually incorporated in the proposal that was presented at the working meeting in the WHC on 9th Noveber 2011 in the presence of by the advisory bodies and the Assistant Director General for Culture, the SP representatives and the international experts involved in the project.

c. The Rehabilitation Strategy and the SOUV of Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery were developed by Dr. Jokilehto in co-operation with the working group established at the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia. The draft was presented for further comments to the WHC and advisory bodies in January 2011.

d. The draft retrospective statement of OUV has been elaborated in accordance to the guideline of the World Heritage Centre and its advisory bodies and integrated in the Bagrati Cathedral Rehabilitation Strategy to be presented for examination to the World Heritage Committee at its 36th session in 2012 (**See Annex 1**).

e. With an aim to ensure the scientific interpretation of the wider archaeological area around Bagrati Cathedral, in addition to the topographic and cadastral survey of the site carried out in early 2011, a non intrusive archaeological survey of the entire World Heritage territory of the Bagrati Cathedral was undertaken in November-December 2011. The works have been implemented with the use of the GEO RADAR (model *GSSI SIR3000*) with the 400MHz frequency antenna (The profile network density 5 m, effective depth of penetration 2m) and Seismic Station (model *OYO MCSeis* with 24 channels) with 100 MHz frequency Geophones (length of profiles 24 m, depth of penetration 5m).

a. The results of this survey revealed high density of archaeological layers all over the territory. The data is highly important for planning further archaeological survey and for the evaluation of the significance of the site in its full context (**see Annex 2**).

f. In scopes of the Gelati Monastery Conservation Master Plan the conservation works were continued in 2011. The scheduled conservation works funded by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia (NACHPG) were targeted on the Rehabilitation of the palace of Bishop Gabriel (**see Annex 3**).

a. More importantly thanks to the co-operation with the Restoration Faculty at the State Academy of Fine Arts, it was made possible to involve international conservation specialists in the stone conservation program of the site. With the financial support of the Swiss National Science Foundation and in partnership with the Lugano University the State Adademy of Fine Arts implemented the two years project (2010-2011) for assessment of the stone and wall painting conservation issues of Gelati Monastery. The project included the student exchange and on site workshops with the guidance of following international specialists: Mr. Stefano Volta for stone conservation, Mr. Giovanni Cavallo, Geologist and Mr. Alberto Felicci for mural paintings. As a result of this co-operation the following works were undertaken:
    - Assessment of condition of mural paintings in the St. Marine chapel of the main church of Gelati
    - Stone condition assessment of the St. George church of Gelati and risk mapping
    - Conservation of carved stone frame around the entrance door of the St. George church of Gelati.

    With the support of the NACHPG it is planned to continue the stone and wall painting conservation works on Gelati monastery with the involvement of mentioned international specialists and the students trained in scopes of the abovementioned program.

    The updated information on the state of conservation of buildings of Gelati monastery as well as of Bagrati Cathedral, including the mission reports of Dr. Andrea Bruno and alternative project proposal have been submitted to the WHC Committee in 2011.

    The State Party is open to continue close cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and its advisory bodies as well as with different Member States with an aim to implement the WH Committee decisions.

We hope that the realized measures and efforts made by Georgian Government in 2011 will be acknowledged by the World Heritage Committee as a progress towards the withdrawal of Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery from the list of the World Heritage in Danger.

Still the most important progress factor is the raised political awareness of the national authorities and improved coordination between all stakeholders. The visits of the Minister of Culture and Monuments Protection of Georgia to the World Heritage Centre, high level official meetings with UNESCO, as well as working meetings with the WHC and advisory bodies, the high level representation of the State Party at the 35th session of the World Heritage Committee, the 18th General Assembly of the States Parties to the World Heritage Convention and the 36th UNESCO General Conference, as well as the efforts of the SP to implement in practice the decisions of the WH Committee and the recommendations of the advisory bodies provides for sustained political support at the national level to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Georgia.

A significant step made by the State Party towards meeting the requests of the Committee was to reverse the incompatible new interventions in the western part of the Bagrati Cathedral**.**

The efforts undertaken by the state party, including the continued consultations with the WHC and the leading international experts promise that the best solution will be found to reconcile the functional demands and conservation needs of the site.

b. The success factors and difficulties in implementing the corrective measures

As to the present date the most important success factor is the full involvement of the leading international experts in the development of the rehabilitation strategy and project and commitment of the State authorities to improve the state of conservation of the building.

The state authorities are fully involved in developing the strategies appropriate to the principles set out in the Convention.

c. The timeframe for corrective measures

The corrective measures indicated in this report have been realized in 2011. The National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia plans to follow the timeframe of corrective measures defined by the decision of the Committee to ensure the continuation of efforts in 2012 and beyond. In this regards, it is highly important to receive timely assessment and recommendations on the Draft Rehabilitation Strategy submitted to the WHC in January 2012 that is to become the fundamental document to guide the rehabilitation works.

The Georgian authorities are open to discuss any comments and suggestions concerning the Strategy and other issues related to the site.

The Georgian authorities are also open to discuss the possibility of the joint UNESCO/Advisory Bodies mission to the site in 2012 that was regrettably cancelled by the WHC in 2011.

2. Other current conservation issues

The State of Conservation Report presented to the WHC in July 2011 provides the comprehensive information about the works implemented on the site and its state of conservation.

In accordance to the Committee's request the new incompatible additions to the Cathedral were reversed in September-October 2011.

The need for more urgent consolidation works that were indispensable to stabilise the condition of the Bagrati Cathedral were brought to an attention of the WHC and its advisory bodies in September 2011.

The conservation and rehabilitation works were continued at the Gelati monastery throughout 2011. The 2011 annual plan was focused on the rehabilitation of one of the components of the site Palace of Bishop Gabriel. The Gelati monastery conservation master plan, presented to the WHC in 2010, remains the guiding document for implementing and planning the long term rehabilitation and conservation of this property. Thanks to the continued efforts and funding by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation important portion of works have already been completed, including the rehabilitation of entrance gates, the academy building, the palace of Bishop Gabriel, the church of St. Nikolas and the bell tower. With the view to developing the comprehensive assessment of stone and mural paintings of Gelati monastery the 2 year co-operation program was developed by the Conservation faculties of the he Tbilisi State Academy of Fine Arts and Lugano University, Switzerland.

In scopes of this programme the detailed stone condition assessment and risk mapping of the St. George church, as well as the assessment of condition of the mural paintings in the interior of the main church and the physical conservation of the carved stone decoration of the South Gate were implemented in 2011 by the international experts (Mr. Alberto Felici, Mr. Stefano Volta, Mr. Giovanni Cavallo) and the Georgian and Swiss students.

3. Potential interventions

The state party plans to continue its efforts towards implementation of the recommendations of the World Heritage committee.

In 2012 the priority is to finalize the rehabilitation strategy and the rehabilitation project and, following the approval by the WH Committee, to implement it under the guidance of international experts.

Signature on behalf of the State Party
Nikoloz Vacheishvili

Director General
National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia
31.01.2012

Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery, C 710

The present folder contains:

1. Progress Report, Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery WHS, C710, Georgia

   Annex 1: Draft Rehabilitation Strategy for Bagrati Cathedral, including the OUV of the site, Jukka Jokhileto

   Annex 2: Summary Report, Non intrusive archaeological survey of Bagrati WH territory

   Annex 3: Summary report, Bishop Gabriel Palace rehabilitation project, Gelati monastery

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NATIONAL AGENCY FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION OF GEORGIA

Rehabilitation Strategy for the Site of Bagrati Cathedral, Kutaisi, Georgia

Draft by J. Jokilehto, 30 December 2011

The scope of the document

The scope of this document is to examine the qualities and values of the World Heritage property of Bagrati Cathedral - the component of the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery World Heritage Site in Georgia, and propose a strategy for its conservation and rehabilitation following the requirements and recommendations of the World Heritage Committee.

Rationale for the Rehabilitation Strategy

Details on the profile of the building within the religious community in Georgia -the way it is perceived and its relationship to other religious monuments

Bagrati Cathedral is one of the largest Cruciform Domed buildings in Georgia. By the time of its construction (1003) it was the largest in Caucasus Region. It crowns the artistic-architectural explorations of local masters in IX-X cc. and gives foundation to the architectural style of united Georgian kingdom (XI-XII).

Together with the Oshki church (963-973) Bagrati Cathedral symbolizes the cultural and political power of the Kingdom of Georgia - the neighbor of and culturally and politically closely related to the Byzantine Empire - the most powerful of that time.

In the construction of the Cathedral Georgian architects and executors were involved. Due to great political importance, the King of united Georgia – Bagrat made the day of the inauguration of the Cathedral a major event, to where leading political elite from Georgia and neighboring countries was invited.

With its architectural forms and similarity with other important churches of ancient Georgia, Bagrati Cathedral gives evidence to the historical limits of the united Georgian kingdom. Therefore the restoration of the Cathedral symbolically embodies the idea of united Georgia.

Bagrati Cathedral remains the spiritual centre of the country for all Georgians. Due to this very reason, immediately after Georgia got independent in early 1990s the church service was restored in the preserved remains of the Cathedral under the open sky. It is a great desire of the Georgian orthodox clergy that the Cathedral gets back the historical Episcopal see.

Details on the need to revive this building in order to allow its use to reflect its high religious value

The Church of Dormition of the Mother of God, named traditionally as “Bagrati Cathedral” after the king who built it, was the first ambitious architectural project of united Georgia. It symbolizes the far reaching aspirations of the king of the newly united state - Bagrat to achieve the dominant position in the region.

Till today Bagrati Cathedral retains its original political and religious significance, especially because Kutaisi still remains perceived as the second capital of the country (the Parliament of Georgia is currently being relocated to Kutaisi). Georgians appraise it as a spiritual centre of all Georgia and the symbol of united country.

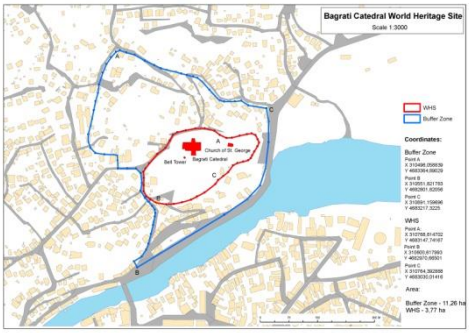
The restoration of the Cathedral is important also from the structural and architectural point of view: the cupola crowns the upward architectural forms of the building and bonds the structure together. Moreover the religious community perceives the cupola as the representation of the sky under which the liturgy is served.

The revival of Bagrati Cathedral is thus important to allow its continued public use and to restore and bring to fore its high religious and symbolic values. For this reasons the restoration of the Cathedral has always been great desire of religious as well as secular communities of Georgia.

World Heritage Inscription

In 1994, Bagrati Cathedral together with the Gelati Monastery was inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion iv. In its assessment regarding the qualities of the property ICOMOS stated:

The two properties proposed in this nomination represent the flowering of feudal monarchy in medieval Georgia. By virtue of the location of this country, it developed its own distinctive stylistic idiom. The two properties are the highest expressions of this idiom, in the context of the royal capital.[1]



1. **Location of WH property of Bagrati Cathedral in Kutaisi**

Bagrati Cathedral together with Gelati Monastery was inscribed in 1994 on the basis of criterion (iv): Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery represent the highest flowering of the architecture of medieval Georgia. The World Heritage area of the Bagrati Cathedral comprises the archaeological site of Ancient Kutaisi with its fortifications on the top of the hill. The buffer zone extends to the north over the suburban area, and down to the river under the hill south-east. From its position on the hill, the Cathedral dominates the view over the modern town of Kutaisi across the river. The Gelati Monastery is distant some 12km east of Kutaisi.

The reconstruction policy of the ancient Cathedral was based on the guidelines expressed in the international doctrine such as the Venice Charter. Thus, all original structures and stones were carefully preserved and, when possible, relocated in original position, a kind of anastylosis. All new masonry was clearly distinguished but built in the same stone so as to be consistent with the whole.

In their report, the ICOMOS 1994 mission to the site praised the work done so far: '*The mission bad high praise for the quality of the restoration and conservation work being carried out on them*.' It was noted that the authenticity was adequate. However, it was recommended not to continue the reconstruction. The works were indeed interrupted in the 1990s though mainly due to financial restrictions.

Retrospective Statement of OUV (Draft), Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery

The ensemble of Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery is intimately related with the political, social and cultural development in the Caucasus Region, and represents the highest expression of the distinctive stylistic idiom in the 'Golden Age' of the medieval Georgia.

Georgia was closely related to the development of feudal monarchy in the Caucasus Region. The origin of the early political entities in the territory of the present-day Georgia goes back to the second and first millennia BC. Kutaisi already emerged as a capital of the kingdom of Colchis at that time. From 66 BC, the region became part of the Roman Empire and subsequently the Eastern Roman Empire/Byzantium. From the 3rd and 4th centuries AD, the city of Kutaisi experienced a new period of growth, marked by intensive building activity. King Bagrat III (978-1014), of the Bagrationi dynasty, crowned in Kutaisi as king of Abkhazians in 978, united Western and Eastern Georgia. The process of the political unification of the realm was completed by King David IV the Builder (1089-1125). From 978 to 1122, Kutaisi was the capital of Georgia, starting a period of major reforms and building activities. The heyday of the Georgian Kingdom extended from the 11th to early 13th centuries.

The distinctive stylistic expression of church architecture in the Caucasus Region developed gradually from the 4th century, and achieved its highest expression in the great cathedrals and monastic churches conceived from the late 10th to early 13th centuries. Due to its location in the Caucasus Region, ancient Georgia was subject to diverse influences from the east and west. Christianity was introduced here in the 1st century AD, and it was as the state religion as early in early fourth century. The first Christian church in Kutaisi was built in the 4th century, and rebuilt in successive centuries.

As soon as Bagrat III became king, he initiated the construction of Bagrati Cathedral on the site of the earlier churches in the centre of the Old Kutaisi, completing it in 1003. Bagrati Cathedral (measuring 50 x 37m), the principal church in the Royal Capital City of the medieval Georgia is an outstanding early example of the series of great cathedrals built in this period. It has cruciform plan with four structural pillars supporting the tall central tower that culminates in a high dome, and an elongated nave with narrow side aisles towards the west. The church has elaborate entrance porches from the west, north and south. The western section of the cathedral is surrounded by an external ambulatory. In the exterior, the walls are articulated with tall blind arches that accentuate the height of the building. The rich sculpted details offer a mature expression of the stylistic idiom created in Georgian churches. The cathedral remained in ruins after its destruction by the Ottomans, in 1691, until its reconstruction started in the early 20th century.

The royal Monastery of Gelati, near Kutaisi, encloses the Church of the Virgin, its principal church, founded by King David the Builder in 1106, as well as the churches of St. George and St. Nicholas dating from the 13th century. The monastery of Gelati was one of the principal cultural and intellectual centres in Georgia. It had an Academy, which gathered the most celebrated Georgian scientists, theologians and philosophers thus integrating influences from Constantinople and the wider Byzantine world. The monastery also became the burial place for a long list of Georgian kings, starting with David IV the Builder, one of the greatest. The Gelati Monastery has preserved a great number of mural paintings and manuscripts dating from the 12th to 17th centuries, as well as the renown 12th-centry mosaic, depicting Saint Mary and child.

Criteria of justification

Criterion (iv): be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.

Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery, in Kutaisi, represent the flowering of feudal monarchy in medieval Georgia. By virtue of its location, the country was subject influences from Roman, Byzantine , Persian and Arab empires. Christianity was introduced here as early as the 4th century, resulting in the construction of the first churches in Kutaisi. King Bagrat III ordered the construction of Bagrati Cathedral on the foundations of earlier churches in 978-1003. Gelati Monastery, founded by King David IV the Builder, was constructed in the 12th and early 13th centuries. it was a centre of science and education, and the Academy established there was one of the most important centres of culture in ancient Georgia. Both these ensembles represent the highest expression of the distinctive stylistic idiom that developed in medieval Georgia, illustrating a significant stage in Eastern Christianity.

Authenticity and integrity

The ancient town of Kutaisi with the Bagrati Cathedral and the Monastery of Gelati represent a highly innovative contribution to the development of medieval Orthodox architecture in its Golden Age, expressed in the architectural layout, and artistic expression of the sculpted decoration, as well as the mosaics and mural paintings of the Gelati Monastery. The site remained in ruins from the destruction by Ottoman army in 1691. The Cathedral has been subject to restoration and reconstruction starting in the 1930s, which has been carried out with respect to the international doctrine in terms of authenticity.

As regards the condition of integrity, the property of Bagrati Cathedral includes the most valuable archaeological site of the medieval Kutaisi with its defence systems and the remains of royal residences. The restoration and reconstruction of the Bagrati Cathedral is based on scientific and archaeologically verified data. The historical stratigraphy and the original parts of the structure are conserved, and any new work bears a contemporary stamp. The property of Gelati Monastery encloses the whole monastic ensemble. It has remained in continuous use from its foundation, and any repairs and restoration have been carried out in harmony with the existing structure. This is the case also with the roof constructed over the Academy building.

Protection and Management

Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery are protected under the provisions of the Law on Cultural Heritage. Both are public properties, but are administered by the Patriarchate of Georgia. Formal administration of the two properties is the responsibility of the Patriarchate of Georgia, shared with the Kutaisi-Gelati Museum Reserve that is part of the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia From the Soviet period booth of the properties have been located in "Strict protection zones". The historic town was protected as a "culture-historical and natural landscape complex". while the scenic area to the east of the town was declared a "historical-anthropogenic landscape restoration, protection, and suburban cultural-recreation zone" of the old town, that included an area of karst landscape and caves and a natural forest park of Sataplia. In accordance with the amended national cultural heritage legislation the proposal has been developed by the Ministry of Culture and Monuments Protection to re-establish the cultural heritage protection zones in the old town of Kutaisi, incorporating the both World Heritage properties. Since 2007 the Natural Forest Park is preserved as Imereti Caves Protected Area.

Desired state of conservation

The ancient site of Kutaisi will be preserved and presented mainly as an archaeological site taking into account visitor management. The Bagrati Cathedral, the restoration and reconstruction of which already started in 1951, will be completed respecting the international doctrine. Reconstruction will be limited to parts that have been verified by archaeological and scientific data. The roof and other parts of the Cathedral, for which there are no secure data, will be designed and built in modern but compatible materials and forms. In the case of Gelati Monastery, the conservation of the site will continue taking into account the use requirements. Coherent visitor management strategy will be established for both sites. In the case of Gelati, this will include the reorganization of the visitor access using the original southern entrance porch, which includes the tomb of King David The Builder.

History of Interventions to the Building

Summary of archival information available

The following documents are available:

- Historic photographs before any conservation work had started, in the 19th and early 20th century, and during the reconstruction process;
- Historic maps of the city of Kutaisi indicating the Cathedral site;
- Archaeological survey report with graphic and photographic documentation;
- Updated map of the archaeological site of ancient Kutaisi, where the Cathedral is located;
- Full set of measured drawings of the Cathedral structure and its details;
- Full set of drawings indicating the original historic parts that have preserved, the parts that have been added from the 1950s to 1994, and the proposed new parts to be added according to the 2009 rehabilitation scheme.
- Engineering drawings regarding the structural consolidation and reinforcement, including the construction of new foundations.
- Additional material regarding the identification and research of inscriptions and decorative elements found in the Cathedral and the surrounding site.

Brief summary of interventions before inscription

The Caucasus region, including Georgia, is amongst the earliest where Christianity was introduced starting in the first century AD. The origin of the early political entities in the territory of the present-day Georgia goes back to the second and first millennia BC. Kutaisi already emerged as a capital of the kingdom of Colchis that was the early state formation on the territory of present Georgia. From the 3rd and 4th centuries AD, the city of Kutaisi experienced a new period of growth, marked by intensive building activity. From 978 to 1122, Kutaisi was the capital of united Georgian Kingdom, starting a period of major reforms and building activities.

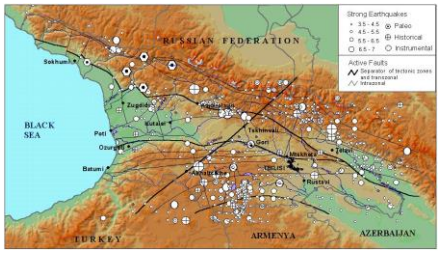
King Bagrat III (978-1014), of the Bagrationi dynasty, crowned in Kutaisi as king of Abkhazians in 978, united Western and Eastern Georgia. As soon as Bagrat III became king, he initiated the construction of Bagrati Cathedral in the centre of the Old Kutaisi, where the first church had already existed in the fourth century AD, followed by others in successive centuries. The new Cathedral was completed in 1003. It was called the 'Cathedral of the Dormition of the Mother of God'. It became

the symbol of the united kingdom of Georgia, having been founded by the first king of the united Georgia, and a prime religious monument of the country.

Unification of the Georgian kingdom was completed by David IV the Builder (1089-1125), who built the Gelati Monastery, another component of the WH property. The heyday of the Georgian Kingdom extended from the 11th to early 13th centuries. In the 16th and 17th centuries, Georgia was subject to increasing number of armed conflicts with its neighbours. In 1691/2, Kutaisi was invaded by the Ottoman army, and the Bagrati cathedral was plundered. An explosion destroyed its cupola and the roof, and the building remained in ruins. After this, the city of Kutaisi continued to develop on the opposite side of the river down the hill. However, the majestic ruins of the Cathedral continued to dominate the panorama of Kutaisi and to recall the ancient glory of Georgia. Indeed, Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery represent the highest flowering of the architecture of medieval Georgia. Thus the desire for rebuilding. In the early 1950s, researchers found that much original material could still be found, and a decision was taken to start the reconstruction. The work was already fairly well advanced in the 1990s, when the property was inscribed on the World Heritage List.

Description of interventions since inscription

In 2002, the property was taken over by the Church of Georgia, and a new project team was involved. This time, a new approach was taken involving a detailed measured drawing, an architectural analysis of the measurements and proportions of the building, as well as a detailed structural analysis of the state of conservation. In their report on the condition, the project team expressed serious concern on the state of conservation of the structure.



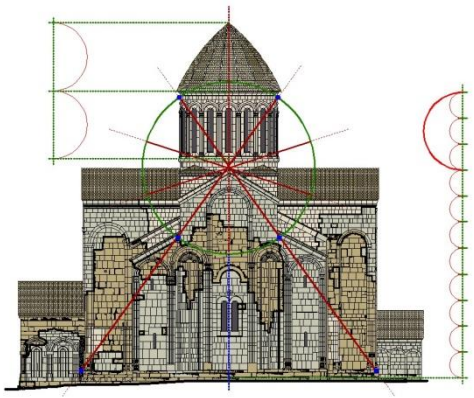
2. Seismic hazard map of Georgia

As to the state of bearing structural elements, apart from damaging factors, restoration work implemented in the past century, the engineering solutions and materials used are also to be taken into account. It is of note that the restoration work done so far included only wall reinforcement and partial restoration of the cathedral. For example, the piers in the interior were erected only for visual interpretation and were not designed to have a full bearing capacity. Moreover, recent intervention was made by using cement mortar, physical and mechanical properties of which differ from the original wall properties. Due to this the bond between the earlier and later layers is weak.[2]

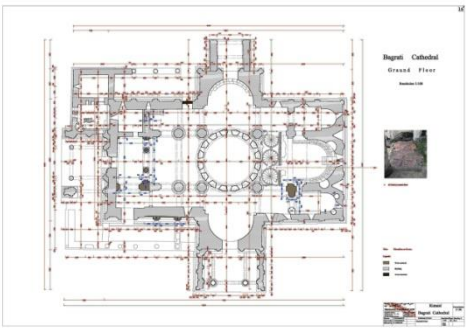
It can be noted that, by 2002-03 when the new project team started surveying the structure, the building had been without maintenance for a decade. There were numerous structural problems, including dislocated elements and structural cracks. The foundations were partly based on earlier structures, and were even lacking altogether in some sections. Furthermore, the carrying capacity of the soil varied from one part to another. It should also be recalled that the Caucasian region is subject to seismic hazard, and there are frequent earthquakes here. Consequently, the state of conservation of the Cathedral structure was weak and needed urgent attention. The west front was particularly fragile, and lacked support.

Regarding the rest of the site, most of the structures have remained in the condition as found in the 1950s; little work has been undertaken since then. Substantial parts remain of the fortification but are is covered with vegetation and need due attention. As noted above, the project team, appointed in 2002, undertook a systematic survey of the Cathedral and its state of conservation. This included the following:

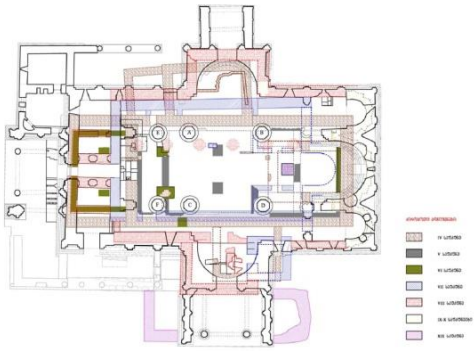
- Archaeological survey and documentation of the entire site, including excavations in selected areas. Excavations were undertaken particularly inside the Cathedral itself, under its floor, and in its immediate surroundings.
- Architectural analysis of the principles, proportions and measurements used in the design and building of the cathedral. This included confrontation and comparison with other churches of the same type and period in the region.
- Systematic study and documentation of the inscriptions and sculpted details discovered in the cathedral and in the surrounding areas.
- Recovery and identification of building materials that were scattered in the site and the surrounding area. Some had been used as spoils in the construction of other buildings.
- Scientific and engineering survey and analysis of the state of conservation of the building in its structure, materials and individual elements.
- Extensive technical report and detailed survey drawings of the cathedral, including general architectural measured drawings (plans, elevations and sections) in scale 1:100, with details and discovered features in larger scale.



3. East elevation with proportions & hypothetical completion



4. Ground plan of Cathedral



5. Archaeological survey under the Cathedral floor, showing five layers of earlier structures, earliest dating 4th AD

The survey conducted in 2002-2003 provided much substantial new information, and contributed to a better understanding of the architecture and a proper interpretation of the artistic solutions applied to main elements of the present building, and of the history of the site in general. The state of conservation of the building proved to be problematic:

- The seismic resistance of the Cathedral was weakened; the western wall was structurally unstable, and the rest also needed urgent consolidation; the stones were loose, especially in the upper section of the western and northern walls; the mortar of the walls was weakened;
- The northern façade was in a very difficult condition. The ground surface along the elevation was settled, the pedestal and the walls were wet due to rising damp; plaster was falling from the wall; the fragments of paintings were covered with the soot and dirt;
- Atmospheric precipitation continued to damage building materials; unprotected upper parts of the walls were swollen; water pools remained in the interior after rain; grass grew on the

6. The condition of walls before consolidation

walls, and the north-west section was completely covered with greenery;

Options considered for rehabilitation

On the basis of the research carried out in 2002-03, there were basically three options considered for rehabilitation.

1. Leave as 'ruin': this option was sustained by various conservationists. This was not considered feasible due to the fragile state of the already advanced rebuilding of the structure. It would have required, in any case, important consolidation works.

2. Building lost sections in modern forms: the idea was to recreate the architectural form in striking contrast with the traditional architecture. For example, it could have meant building the roof as a space frame allowing light to come through. This option was seen as too radical for the Church authority, even though it attracted some other institutions.

3. Reconstruct in the original style: a) using original type of stone; b) using artificial stone. Using an artificial stone would have met the requirement of distinction from the original. Nevertheless, the option of using natural stone was chosen. This choice meant that the lost sections of the interior would have been rebuilt according to the results coming out from the theoretical study of the architecture.

On the basis of the new information provided by the many fragments that were discovered on the site, the detailed archaeological and architectural surveys of the cathedral and its site, the project team felt confident to propose the option to reconstruct in the original style even the sections of interior for which there was not sufficient information. The works were undertaken from 2008 to 2010 included the following:

1. **Masonry structures**: Temple walls were treated with pesticides and freed of vegetation and fungi; all loose and damaged stones of internal and external surfaces and cornices were removed, cleaned, labelled and stored separately; the same was done in load-bearing structures. For purposes of prevention, 92 m^2 of damaged wall surfaces was covered with new coating. In order to prevent water penetration all loose mortars was removed to the depth of 5cm. and replaced with new mortar, matching texture and colour.
2. **Foundations**: pile foundations in reinforced concrete were built for five out of 10 columns in the interior, and taken down to the bedrock (10 - 20m deep). These were connected with beams at ca. 50-60cm below original ground surface. The foundations of the entire perimeter wall were consolidated, and covered with water-resistant layer of clay;
3. **Excavated areas**: All the remains of the excavated historic layers excavated under the church were kept safe. New concrete structures were mainly built below the layers of archaeological interest.
4. **Reconstruction**: the four central stone pillars, built before the 1990s, were dismantled and rebuilt on concrete core and new pile foundation; reconstruction was started in the western section of the interior according to a hypothetical plan, based on analogical studies and archaeological evidence.

World Heritage Committee Decisions

Decision - 28COM 15B.87 (2004):

The World Heritage Committee, acknowledging the outcomes of the joint UNESCO-ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to the property, urged the State Party not to carry out any reconstruction work which may adversely affect the outstanding universal value and authenticity of the property, and not to commence any constructions before consideration of the project by the Committee.

Decision: 31 COM 7B.97 (2007):

5. *Expresses its serious concern about irreversible interventions carried out by the State Party as part of the preparations for the Bagrati Cathedral reconstruction project prior to any review or approval of the project and its impact on the Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and authenticity of the property;*

6. *Urges the State Party to halt immediately all interventions at Bagrati Cathedral, which threaten the Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and authenticity of the property;*

7. *Also urges the State Party to immediately adopt all necessary measures aiming to ensure the safeguarding of the Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and authenticity of the property, monitoring and survey of the state of conservation of the property, preparation, adoption and implementation of a Management Plan (including a tourism strategy and guidelines for the use of historic buildings and monuments, an Urban Master Plan and a Conservation Master Plan for the monuments);*

10. *Considers that the State Party has not complied with all the requests expressed by the Committee in Decision* ***33 COM 7B.103****, and that therefore the property is in danger in conformity with Chapter IV.B of the* Operational Guidelines *and* ***decides to inscribe the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery (Georgia) on the List of World Heritage in Danger****;*

Decision: 34 COM 7B.88 (2010):

8. *Invites the State Party to organize a consultation with international conservation engineers and architectural conservators in order to consider how the interventions already carried out might be reversed entirely or in part and to consider the overall consolidation of the Bagrati Cathedral ruins;*

11. *Adopts the following Desired State of Conservation for the property based on its Outstanding Universal Value, in view of its future removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger:*

- *a) The reconstruction of the Bagrati Cathedral halted,*
- *b) Interventions already carried out at the Bagrati Cathedral reversed (entirely or in part),*
- *c) The overall consolidation project of the Bagrati Cathedral ruins, elaborated in consultation with international conservation engineers and architectural conservators, implemented,*
- *d) The boundaries and buffer zone of all component parts of the World Heritage property precisely clarified,*
- *e) A comprehensive management system including an integrated management plan with tourism strategy and guidelines for the use of historic buildings and monuments, conservation master plan for all components of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone and urban master plan including land-use regulations approved and implemented,*
- *f) Long-term consolidation and conservation of the historical monuments of the Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery ensured;*

Furthermore, the Committee also adopted a list of corrective measures and a timeframe for their implementation, based on the above decisions.

Decision: 35COM 7A.29 (2011):

3. *Welcomes the halting of all work on the Bagrati Cathedral, as well as progress in the implementation of the rehabilitation programme and the conservation master plan for Gelati Monastery;*
4. *Notes with satisfaction that the coordination between the Georgian Church and the national authorities has been enhanced, joint activities reinforced and the management of religious and sacred World Heritage properties in Georgia improved;*
5. *Also notes that the State Party has appointed an international conservation architect as a consultant for Bagrati Cathedral and that Georgian engineers are working on a three-phased approach to fully rehabilitate the Bagrati Cathedral, as an enclosed space;*
6. *Takes note that the international consultant considers that the incomplete structural condition of the Bagrati Cathedral is not sustainable, that it might not be feasible to reverse what has been recently built as the interventions are almost irreversible, and that a lightweight roof could be mounted on the existing concrete columns;*
7. *Urges the State Party to develop a rehabilitation strategy for the Bagrati Cathedral that reverses the maximum amount of recent work, incorporates fragments on site if possible where they form part of the walls, ensures any lightweight roof provides a profile for the building that is similar to what might have once existed and leaves the interior unplastered;*
8. *Requests the State Party to submit this rehabilitation strategy to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, before any commitment is made;*

13. ***Decides to retain Bagrati Cathedral and Gelati Monastery (Georgia) on the World Heritage List in Danger.***

New Project proposal for enclosing the Cathedral (2011)

As a response to the decisions and recommendations of the World Heritage Committee, all work on the Bagrati Cathedral structure was halted in 2010. At the same time, the Georgian authorities contracted architect Prof. Andrea Bruno as an expert consultant. After careful examination of the state of conservation and condition of the Cathedral, having searched all information available, and having consulted all those involved in the rehabilitation scheme so far, architect Bruno prepared a new project. This project proposes to take fully into account the requirements of the World Heritage Committee and the Advisory Bodies.

The concept of the project is to again verify the seismic behaviour of the existing structure together with proposed enclosing. The principle is to limit all reconstruction to the parts for which secure evidence exists, i.e. completion of the external walls and the cupola. Here, any new work is carried out according to modern restoration principles, distinguishing from the existing. The structures built during the past decade that were based on analogy, and objected to by the Advisory Bodies, will be removed. In their place, there would be a new structure, based on modern design and modern materials, which would facilitate the functionality of the church for religious and cultural purposes. At the same time, the concept is to make sure that this modern structure is harmonious with the traditional interior and spatiality.

This project was presented by Andrea Bruno at in a meeting at UNESCO on 9 November 2011. The meeting was attended by the Georgian authorities, UNESCO, the World Heritage Centre, and Advisory Bodies, ICOMOS and ICCROM. The project was approved by the meeting in principle. Following the discussion at the meeting, and referring to the project presented by Bruno, the guiding principles can be summarised as follows:

Principles for the rehabilitation of Bagrati Cathedral

The project will be guided through an interdisciplinary team of conservation architects, structural engineers, Cathedral architect and architectural conservators. The project shall be developed in agreement with the following principles.

Respect the authenticity of the building as it existed at the time of inscription.

Note: The structures and parts that existed at the time of inscription shall be conserved and maintained intact. Any new additions shall be built ensuring that new masonry is distinguished from the original ashlar and decorative elements, while maintaining an overall balance and harmony in the building. In the interior, the ashlar masonry shall be left without plaster rendering. New decorative features shall be restricted to free-standing additions.

Set out a documented understanding of work undertaken since inscription.

Note: The works carried out since the inscription are recorded and documented in detail, distinguishing the original fabric before 1951 and the restoration until 1994. This shall include detailed architectural measured drawings, and archaeological research, illustrating the justification of the rehabilitation project. The report of archaeological research and the results of excavations shall be published.

Remove the part of the work that was not based on secure evidence.

Note: Removal concerns particularly the new pillars and aches built in the western part of the church interior. This will be replaced with modern design in accord with the overall image of the interior. The parts of the reinforcement and restoration work undertaken in recent years and proven not reversible shall be retained. This includes the foundations as well as the four reinforced central pillars and related structures.

Conserve and provide structural stability to fabric existing at time of inscription.

Note: Information is essential on the structure in its original and earlier states, on the techniques that were used in the construction, on the alterations and their effects, on the phenomena that have occurred, and on its present state. In order to ensure structural stability, the structural system already initiated shall be completed. This will include connecting the four pillars with each other and to the external walls.

Incorporate masonry fragments so far recovered if possible where the original position can be identified.

Note: Any new intervention will be based on a thorough analysis of the existing standing fabric and of fallen masonry. The parts without sufficient material evidence shall be rebuilt to a modern design. This can involve modern design and the use of materials, such as steel and glass, in areas such as the the western section of the interior. An access to the upper level of this section shall be studied.

Set out a rationale for the overall form of the building in terms of historical and archaeological evidence and religious use.

Note: The overall form of the church shall be based on detailed architectural and archaeological analysis of all available data, and taking note of religious and visitor use of the building and the site. The roof to be built to cover building shall be in the form of the original volume of the church, and

harmonious with the traditional fabric. It shall be built as a modern light-weight roof structure. The ceiling of the central and eastern sections of the church can be formed of a stone vault. The ceiling over the newly designed western section of the church will be of modern design but ensuring formal continuity.

Appraising Options for enclosing the Cathedral

With reference to the *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessment for Cultural World Heritage Properties* (ICOMOS, Draft May 2010), the values of the World Heritage property and the impact of the proposed rehabilitation scheme can be assessed as follows:

Assessing the values

***Very High**: The architectural elements that have justified OUV at the time of inscription, including:*

- The remains of the historic structure of Bagrati Cathedral that have survived until the present, including the enclosure walls and the three-storied tower;
- The carved and sculpted decorative elements that have been preserved as part of the original structure;
- Ashlar masonry stones and sculpted elements discovered subsequently and integrated into the restored fabric, or that could be integrated subject to identifying the original location;

***High**: The features that form the immediate setting for the Cathedral, and elements that have been discovered in recent research and archaeological excavations, including:*

- The archaeological remains of earlier churches on the site of Bagrati Cathedral;
- The archaeological area of Old Kutaisi as the setting to the Bagrati Cathedral;
- The remains of the fortifications and other extant structures of Old Kutaisi, included in the nominated area;

***Medium**: Features that contribute significantly to the overall integrity of the property:*

- The reconstructed parts of the Bagrati Cathedral prior to World Heritage inscription;
- The suburban area included in the buffer zone of the nominated property;
- The historic urban landscape of present-day Kutaisi, which has retained its historic integrity and setting;

***Low**: Other features that are integral part of the property;*

- Reconstructions and restorations after World Heritage inscription when coherent with the integrity of the property;
- Service structures of recent date;

Assessing magnitude of impact

The first scope of this section is to assess the magnitude of impact (positive/negative) of the works undertaken after inscription and based on the research of 2002-03, and carried out from 2008 to 2010. Secondly, the scope is to assess the impact of the works proposed to be carried out based on the revised rehabilitation scheme, which has been discussed by the Georgian authorities, the earlier project team and international consultants.

Assessing the impact of works carried out after inscription.

The first phase has consisted of a detailed analysis and documentation of the architectural, artistic and archaeological features of the Bagrati Cathedral and the archaeological site of Old Kutaisi, in 2002-03. The following project and works have been based on the assessment of the structural stability and the state of conservation of the partly reconstructed structure, proposing to respect the existing historic fabric. The following are the principal actions taken in this phase:

There has been a major archaeological excavation under the cathedral, which has brought to light the remains of previous five church buildings on the same site. This has a major positive impact on the fuller understanding of the significance of the site and of the nominated property. The works have been carried out so that any removed elements have been carefully referenced and brought back to their original location. Therefore, the operation has had a negligible impact on the authenticity and integrity of the earlier known structure. The discovered historic layers have been recorded, and have been again covered up under the later floor structure.

The construction of new foundations in reinforced concrete has had a major positive impact on the structural stability of the church, even though it has also been criticized for having disturbed the underground structures. Nevertheless, the foundations have been built under the archaeological strata, and there has been special care to avoid any disturbance.

Five of the ten pillars in the interior were dismantled and provided with new foundations using reinforced concrete piles down to the bedrock. This was justified due to seismic hazard and the fact that the construction was not found stable. The pillars were rebuilt around a concrete core using the same stones. This operation was necessary due to structural stability, even though there was some loss of original material to give space for the new core. However, the visual integrity of the church interior was maintained.

The walls were cleaned of vegetation and fungi; all loose and damaged stones were removed, cleaned, labelled and stored separately until being returned to their original place. Similarly, loose mortar was replaced to the depth of 5cm, matching texture and colour. This had a major positive impact on the state of conservation. Any negative impact on authenticity or integrity is considered negligible.

In the western part of the interior, new structures were built based on analogy with similar buildings. There is no secure evidence of how these were originally even though traces of column foundations exist. These structures were considered to give a negative impact on the overall authenticity, and are reversible.

In summary, the impact on key archaeological materials that are of very high value for the OUV of Bagrati Cathedral has been none or negligible. The structures that had been built on the basis of analogy are reversible. Their removal has been ordered.

Assessing the impact of the revised project of rehabilitation

This project resulted from further consultations with international experts, and was elaborated by architect A. Bruno during 2011.[3] The seismic behaviour of the structure was verified and the project was prepared on the basis of the outcome. This allowed for the creation of a new structural system that uses the four central columns already partly rebuilt, and faithfully traces the original structural scheme, being consistent with the spatiality and religious use of the building. Therefore no change is proposed to the original scheme.

The external walls that have been partially rebuilt before inscription to the WH List, and consolidated in 2008-10, will be reintegrated using more modern restoration criteria, and using present-day materials and technology, compatible with and respectful of the architecture. This means that the integrity of the building is fully respected with minimum alteration following modern restoration principles.

At the western branch, the original structures in the interior have been lost. The structures built there recently in style will be removed. The new project foresees the erection of a new steel and glass structure, proposing the original idea though the use of new means to achieve it. This also allows the possibility to arrange an exhibition space for visitors at the upper level, accessible via a new staircase built in the exterior in a space, where the original structure has been partly lost. While introducing a new structure into the interior, this is designed so as to be consistent with the character of the internal space. Therefore, there is no negative impact. Rather, it allows for the more fruitful use of the building for religious and other cultural purposes.

At the level of the new ceiling (the antique *matroneum* level to accommodate women) the present project does not modify the primitive form of the church volumetrically. The original tripartition of the western section is maintained and results in a division into three naves with barrel vaults.

The Cathedral will be covered with a new roof that will extend uniformly over the whole building, re-proposing the original architectural volume of the church. The original levels will be maintained, both at the top and at the eaves as well as at the projecting dimension of the roof corresponding to the original. An eaves system, integrated at the structure of the roof, will collect rainwater and water will also be able to flow down to the ground through a series of copper downpipes adequately placed. The roof will be covered with sheets of copper.

In summary, the proposed rehabilitation project follows the guidelines suggested by the ICOMOS. It will guarantee that all the structures that existed at the time of inscription will be preserved. The restoration and partial rebuilding of the walls and the cupola are carried out according to modern restoration criteria, integrating the newly discovered elements and fragments when their location has been securely identified. The new structures in modern design and materials will be limited to the western section of the interior and the new staircase on the north side. These will be designed and built so as to avoid any negative impact, and rather to harmonise with the architectural and spatial qualities of the historic building. These will allow an improved religious and cultural use of the building in the future. Therefore, it can be concluded that the impact on the OUV is negligible, and rather the new knowledge and improved understanding of the history and architectural qualities of the building will improve the appreciation of its significance.

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1 ICOMOS evaluation in 1994

2 'Executive Summary of the Rehabilitation Project of Bagrati Cathedral', by Ivane Gremelashvili, June 2009

3 Reference: Illustrated Report of the project by Andrea Bruno, 2 November 2011

National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia

Summary report

Non intrusive Archaeological Survey of the World Heritage Property

As a result of the survey significant \disturbances were revealed under the ground surface. The comparative analysis with the previous archaeological excavations results proved that some of the revealed traces are indeed archaeologically valuable elements, other parts are the traces of 20 century built fabric and still some areas are of unknown archaeological value. Based on this survey the National agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation and the Kutaisi Gelati Museum Reserve, that is one of its structural units, are planning excavation works within the World Heritage property in 2012. It is expected that the excavations will reinforce the value of the setting of the present cathedral and bring to fore the importance of the whole archaeological site.

2011

Fig. 1 Distribution of the Seismo-Tomographic profiles on the survey area

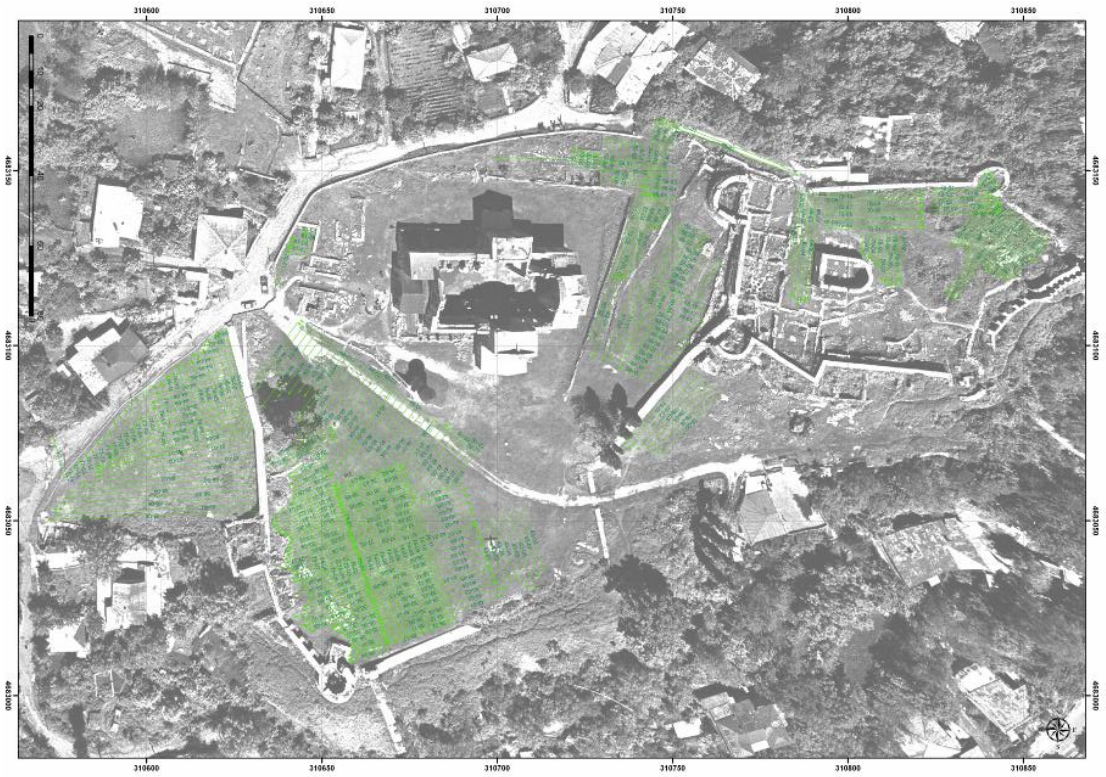

Fig. 2 Distribution of the Georadar profiles on the survey area

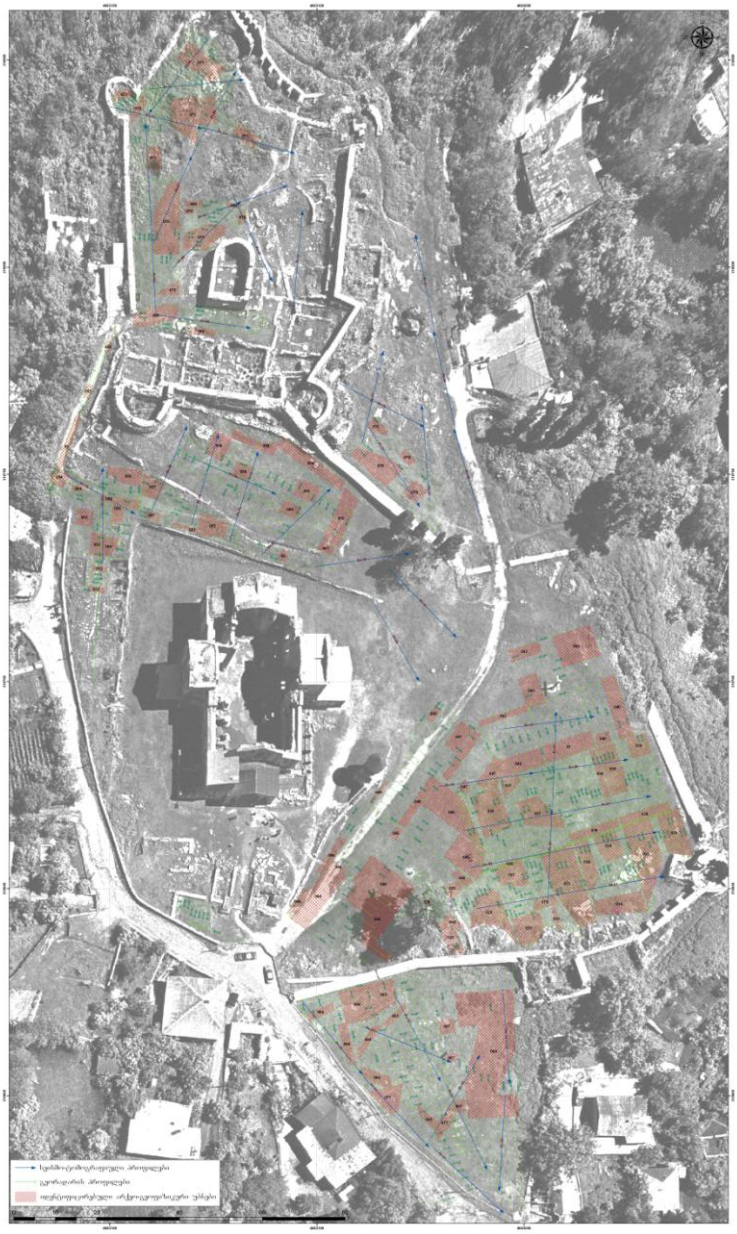

Fig. 3. Survey results: revealed underground disturbances

National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia

Summary Report

On Restoration works of Bishop Gabriel Kikodze palace in Gelati monastery complex

List of implemented works:

- Removal of old tin roof of the building
- Change of the roof rafters
- Placement of a new tiled roof
- Replacement of rotten wooden balcony elements from 20th c.
- Improvement of the interior flooring
- Restoration of the interior
- Installation of new plumbing system

Photo illustration:

Before restoration

After restoration