

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY – NATIONAL GALLERY  
UNIVERSITY OF SS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS IN SKOPJE

# ON THE CROSS-PATH OF CULTURAL IDEAS

Macedonia, the Balkans, Southeast Europe -  
Heritage, Management, Resources

*A collection of papers from the international conference  
held in Ohrid in September 2019*



*Edited by  
Elizabeta Dimitrova &  
Irena Teodora Vesevska*

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Heritage, Management, Resources

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In September 2019, an international conference was organized by the Faculty of Philosophy entitled *On Cross-path of Cultural Ideas: Macedonia, the Balkans, Southeast Europe – heritage, management, resources* with forty participants from: Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Germany, Spain, Austria, France and Israel. The conference was mainly dedicated to the protection of cultural heritage and held in Ohrid, a world heritage site by UNESCO and one of only twenty eight sites that are part of UNESCO's map of cultural, as well as natural sites. The participants of the conference (professors and experts in the domains of protection and management of cultural heritage) have disclosed the latest results of their investigations, as well as methods of protection of the heritage in the spheres of: archeological sites (tangible and intangible heritage), sacral monuments (architectural ensembles, interior structures, fresco painting, icons and iconostases), monumental complexes (design and maintaining), museum exhibits (museum practice, curatorship, management of exhibitions), thus promoting the new principles, methods and technologies for preservation, protection (conservation and restoration techniques) and management of diversified components of historical, archeological, artistic and literary heritage. In that regard, the Organization committee of the Conference made an effort to design and publish this Collection of conference papers as a witness to the first ever organized academic event by the Faculty of Philosophy related to the scholarly horizon of cultural heritage and its contemporary maintenance. Although not all participants have sent their contribution due to the epidemic crisis and isolation restrictions, the majority of the speakers at the Conference have authorized papers dealing with: management of crucial archeological sites, identification of preservation issues within medieval religious monuments, detection of issues that need international protection experiences, impact of the current situation of desolated monuments on the investigation of their structural and aesthetic features, management of museums and galleries in regard to their activities for organization of exhibitions, new models and methods of management of museums and art galleries, modern technologies for revitalization of cultural heritage, as well as cultural traditions, ways and manners of adequate usage of cultural and artistic heritage in everyday's life, social concepts, cultural tourism, etc. The main quality of the published papers is their reference to the on-going issues and challenges in the sphere of protection and management of cultural heritage,

as well as the hazard of sidestepping the contemporary technologies essential for further preservation.

The organization and realization of the Conference, as well as the Collection of conference papers, is due to the efforts of the Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy, Professor Ratko Duev, PhD and his academic ideas for enhancement of the international cooperation of our institution. We appreciate the participation of the speakers who gave their contribution to the successful course of the conference; however, our gratitude is mostly reserved for our colleagues who sent their papers regardless of the difficult times which still do not give up.

The arrangement of the papers follows the order in which they were presented at the conference.

Elizabeta Dimitrova & Irena Teodora Vesevska

# ANTIQUÉ AND MEDIEVAL CULTURAL HERITAGE IN MACEDONIA DURING WW1

BASED ON GERMAN AND AUSTRIAN ARCHIVAL EVIDENCE

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Mihajlo POPOVIĆ

Vienna

Toni FILIPOSKI

Skopje

In this article we aim at shedding light on the Southern Balkan Peninsula during the First World War (1914-1918) and in particular on Macedonia along the so-called Salonica Front. Closely connected to wars and armed conflicts is their devastating impact on the Antique and Medieval Cultural Heritage, which has been documented meticulously and discussed thoroughly after 1945. If we take the First World War into consideration, could there have been any initiatives to do scholarly research on and to protect cultural monuments along or behind the front-lines? Our aim is to highlight Antique and Medieval monuments in Macedonia, be it churches, monasteries or archaeological remains, which were seen and documented by German armed forces as well as scholars in situ.

In this article we aim at shedding light on the Southern Balkan Peninsula during the “Great War” or First World War (1914-1918) and in particular on the so-called *Salonica Front* or *Macedonian Front*.<sup>1</sup> Closely connected to

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<sup>1</sup> One of the authors, Mihailo St. Popović, has dealt with some aspects of Cultural Heritage and the *Salonica Front* in recent articles: Mihailo St. Popović, “Kunstschutz im Kriege – The Forgotten Scholarly Expeditions of the Central Powers in South-East Europe during World War I”, *Thetis, Mannheimer Beiträge zur Klassischen Archäologie und Geschichte Griechenlands und Zyperns*, 20/2013, 287-292; Mihailo St. Popović, “Das Herrschaftsgebiet des Zaren Samuel im Mittelalter und dessen Erforschung zwischen 1890 und 1918”, *Evropejskijat jugoiztok prez vtorata polovina na X – načaloto na XI vek. Istorija i kultura. Meždunarodna konferencija, Sofija, 6–8 oktombri 2014 g.*, Sofija 2015, 277-298; Mihailo St. Popović, “Das Zarenreich Bulgarien und der Souveräne Malteser Ritter Orden – Die österreichische

wars and armed conflicts is their devastating impact on the World's Cultural Heritage, which has been documented and discussed thoroughly after 1945. In our days the incessant world-wide media coverage has contributed significantly to public awareness and sensibility regarding the destruction of cultural monuments.<sup>2</sup>

If we take the disastrous effect of the First World War into consideration, could there have been any initiative to do scholarly research on and to protect cultural monuments along or behind the front-lines?

Let us turn to the historical and geographical setting first. After the beginning of the First World War on 28 July 1914 the Kingdom of Serbia succeeded in resisting the Austro-Hungarian Empire throughout the year 1914 and during the first half of the year 1915. A momentous change in the overall strategic situation on the Balkan Peninsula occurred, when Bulgaria joined the Central Powers in autumn 1915 and declared war on Serbia on 14 October 1915. Faced with simultaneous attacks from three sides (that is from West, North and East), the Serbian army started an organised retreat towards Kosovo and Metochia and from there via Albania to the Adriatic coast, from which it was finally evacuated to the islands of Vido and Corfu. After the victory of the German, Austro-Hungarian and Bulgarian troops over Serbia in October 1915 and over Montenegro in January 1916, both countries were occupied by the Central Powers and their territories divided between three military commands as well as interests. Bulgaria organised the territories held by its troops into two zones, namely the "Morava Military Inspection Area" and the "Macedonia Military Inspection Area" with its headquarters in Skopje. Finally, the front came to a halt and was stabilised in today's Southern Albania and Northern Greece, where the so-called *Salonica Front* was established. The Central Powers divided

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Sanitätsmission in Sofia (1915-1918)" [in press]; together with Veronika Polloczek, "Die Regionen von Bitola und Prilep und deren kulturelles Erbe während und nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg", *Die Ursprünge der österreichischen Diplomatie in Mazedonien – mit Schwerpunkt auf das österreichisch-ungarische Konsulat in Bitola/Monastir 1851-1919* [in press]. The present article is, amongst others, based on scholarly results of the project "Die digitale Tabula Imperii Byzantini (Dig-TIB) als Beitrag zum Weltkulturerbe", which is funded by the **Jubiläumsfonds der Österreichischen Nationalbank (Project No. 17771)** from 1 March 2018 until 29 February 2020 as digital sub-project of the Long-Term Project "Tabula Imperii Byzantini (TIB)" of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna (cf. <https://tib.oeaw.ac.at/index.php?seite=sub&submenu=digitib>; accessed 31 January 2020).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. on the issue of Cultural Heritage and armed conflicts for example: Joris Kila, *Heritage under Siege: Military Implementation of Cultural Property Protection following the 1954 Hague Convention (Issues in Cultural Heritage Protection)*. Leiden 2012; Joris D. Kila, James A. Zeidler, *Cultural Heritage in the Crosshairs. Protecting Cultural Property during Conflict (Issues in Cultural Heritage Protection)*. Leiden 2013.

the front-line into several zones of responsibility. This front-line remained unchanged until May 1916. Then, the Bulgarian army advanced with German and Austrian support, occupied the area to the east of the river Strymon / Struma (that is the towns of Drama, Serres and Kavala) and created the “Drama Military Inspection Area”. In a counter-offensive the Allied Powers succeeded in conquering the town of Bitola in November 1916 after fierce fighting. The damage to the town’s monuments and civil infrastructure was substantial. The impact of destruction along the *Salonica Front* was remarkable. Most of the settlements were destroyed within a breadth of 50 to 60 km. In 1917/18 the German army had to withdraw the biggest part of its troops from South-East Europe in order to enhance its military potential in the West, thus weakening the position of the Central Powers in the Balkans. In the middle of September 1918 the Serbian army, which after its recovery on the island of Corfu had been despatched to the *Salonica Front* in the spring of 1916, launched a major offensive with French and British support with the aim to breach the front and liberate Serbia. In the battle of Dobro Pole Serbian units achieved a breakthrough after heavy fighting creating a gap in the German-Bulgarian section of the *Salonica Front*. The Bulgarian government signed a truce on 29 September 1918 in Thessalonica, which signified the capitulation of the Bulgarian army. The Serbian troops continued their advance towards the North and reached Belgrade on 31 October 1918.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. for example the following publications on the First World War on the territory of Macedonia: Jürgen Angelow, Gundula Gahlen, Oliver Stein, (ed.), *Der Erste Weltkrieg auf dem Balkan. Perspektiven der Forschung*, Berlin 2011; Cyril Falls, A. F. Becke, *History of the Great War based on Official Documents by Direction of the Historical Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence. Volume I: Military Operations Macedonia from the Outbreak of War to the Spring of 1917. Volume II: Military Operations Macedonia from the Spring of 1917 to the End of the War*. Reprint London-Nashville, TN 1996; Richard C. Hall, *Balkan Breakthrough. The Battle of Dobro Pole 1918*. Bloomington, IN 2010; Paul Kirch, *Krieg und Verwaltung in Serbien und Mazedonien 1916-1918 (Beiträge zur Geschichte der nachbismarkischen Zeit und des Weltkrieges 3)*. Stuttgart 1928; Bogdan Krizman, “Der militärische Zusammenbruch auf dem Balkan im Herbst 1918”, *Österreichische Osthefte*, 10/1968, 268-293; Stilijan Nojkov, “Die Waffenhilfe des österreichisch-ungarischen Armeekommandos für das bulgarische Heer nach dem Durchbruch der bulgarischen Verteidigungsfront in Makedonien 1918”, *Miscellanea Bulgarica* 12/1998, 55-58; Björn Opfer, *Im Schatten des Krieges. Besatzung oder Anschluss – Befreiung oder Unterdrückung? Eine komparative Untersuchung über die bulgarische Herrschaft in Vardar-Makedonien 1915-1918 und 1941-1944 (Studien zur Geschichte, Kultur und Gesellschaft Südosteuropas 3)*. Münster 2005, 62-79; Petar Stojanov, *Makedonija vo vremeto na Balkanskite i Prvata svetska vojna 1912-1918*. Skopje 1969; Aleksandar Stojčev, *Dojran 1915-1918 (voeni operacii). Dojranskite pozicii - na Makedonskiot front - 1915-1918 godina*. Skopje 2007; Aleksandar Stojčev, *Makedonija i Makedoncite vo Prvata svetska vojna 1914-1918*. Skopje 2017; Vanče Stojčev, *Military History of Macedonia*. Skopje 2004, 485-528; Aleksandar Trajanovski, “Probitot na Makedonskiot

Various historical and ecclesiastical monuments were severely afflicted by the above-mentioned destruction along the *Salonica Front*. At this point we would like to present two interesting examples from the viewpoint of Cultural Heritage.

The first example is the Monastery of Saint Christopher in the village of Krstoar, which was originally erected in 1837 and lies approximately 4 km to the South of the city of Bitola. Photographs preserved in France reveal that the Monastery was destroyed by French artillery in 1916/17, which is clearly indicated by the French caption of the photograph: “Le Monastère détruit par notre artillerie”.<sup>4</sup> It is evident that the church was renovated after the First World War, when we consider its state in the year 2016 as shown in *Fig. 1*.



*Fig. 1* The Church of *Sveti Hristofor Krstoarski* in the Village of Krstoar  
(Mihailo St. Popović, *TIB* 16, 2016)

As second example we would like to introduce the Church of St. Nicholas in the village of Gradešnica, approximately 35 km to the East of the city of Bitola. On a photograph from the First World War (*Fig. 2*) we are able to

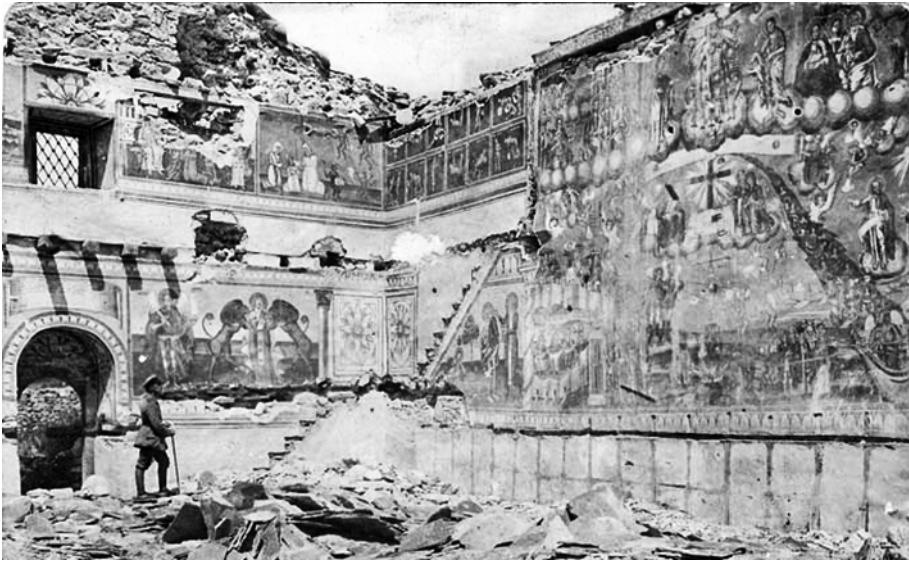
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front (1918)”, *60 godini Institut za Istorija. Zbornik na trudovi od međunarodnata naučna konferencija “Makedonija i sosedite”, Skopje 08-09.12.2006 godina*, Skopje 2010, 149-165.

<sup>4</sup> L’Armée d’Orient commandée par le général Sarrail (3 octobre 1915 – 21 décembre 1917) : Sur le front de Florina et de Monastir (septembre 1916 – avril 1917), No. de série OR551A, No. tirage OR095031, Cote photographe K6068, Ministère de la Culture (France) – Médiathèque de l’Architecture et du Patrimoine – Diffusion RMN.

Cf. [http://www2.culture.gouv.fr/public/mistral/memsmn\\_fr](http://www2.culture.gouv.fr/public/mistral/memsmn_fr) (accessed 31 January 2020).

discern that the church was severely damaged during the fierce fighting along the *Salonica Front*. Its current state is documented by *Fig. 3*. Thorough scholarly research is still needed to evaluate the relevant sources, especially the pictorial ones, on the particular monuments in the region from Byzantine times until the First World War and to combine them in order to create a holistic picture of the respective Cultural Heritage.



*Fig. 2 A German Photograph of the Destroyed Church of Sveti Nikola in the Village of Gradešnica in the First World War (Mihailo St. Popović)*

Turning to the sector of the German 11th army at the *Salonica Front* with the town of Prilep as its center, we come across the monograph “Auf den Trümmern Stobis” published by Karl Hald in 1917, which attests lively German archaeological activities behind the front-line. Archaeological finds and excavations were made in or near the villages of Stobi, Palikura, Rosoman, Sirkovo and Demir Kapija.<sup>5</sup> At this point we would like to put an emphasis on the sites in Stobi and Palikura.

Today the archaeological site of Stobi is well researched and renowned in Macedonia as well as within the international scholarly community.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Karl Hald, *Auf den Trümmern Stobis. Mit 62 Abbildungen und Kartenskizzen*. Stuttgart 1917. Cf. also the following reviews: M. Fichna, *Mitteilungen der Geographischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, 65/1922, 130; Balduin Saria, *Glasnik Skopskog Naučnog Društva*, 2/1927, 337f.

<sup>6</sup> A bibliography on and summary of the excavation history is to be found in: Jelena Jarić, “Late Roman “Anti-Pagan” Laws and Their Appearance in the Research of Roman Theatres in the Republic of Macedonia”, *70 godini Institut za Istorija. 70 godini makedonska istoriografija*, Skopje 2017, 387-413; Dafina Gerasimovska, *Antički kuki vo Makedonija*. Skopje

The city of Stobi was located on the old Balkan traffic artery, which connected, through the valleys of the rivers Morava and Vardar, the Danube in the North with the city of Thessalonica in the South of the Balkan Peninsula. Most probably Stobi was founded in the Hellenistic period during the 3rd to 2nd century BC. The city was taken over by the Romans during their expansion in South-East Europe and urbanised according to Roman designs. Different written sources attest to the importance of the city in Byzantine times. Around 450 AD a major destruction of the city occurred, which could be connected to Hunnish incursions. In 472 and 479 Stobi was conquered by the Ostrogoths. The city was hit by two earthquakes in 518 and 527, which led to a partial abandonment of Stobi by its population. Nevertheless, the city continued to be the see of a bishop throughout the 6th and 7th centuries. The last mentioning of the city in the sources dates to the year 1014, when the Byzantine Emperor Basil II dispersed a local military garrison during his campaign against tsar Samuil in the Balkans.<sup>7</sup>



Fig. 3 The Church of Sveti Nikola in the Village of Gradešnica (Mihailo St. Popović, TIB 16, 2016)

1996, 25-29, 33-34; Liljana Miladinovska, *Makedonsko arheološko naučno društvo. Bibliografija na makedonskata arheologija (1945-2000)*. Skopje 2001, 21-22, 356-357, 380; Mikulčič, *Stobi. Antički grad*. Skopje 2003, 10-19.

<sup>7</sup> A summary of the source-based and archaeological evidence in: Dimče Koco (ed.), *Arheološka karta na Republika Makedonija, Tom II (Makedonska akademija na naukite i umetnostite, Muzej na Makedonija – Arheološki oddel)*. Skopje 1996, 64-67.

As has already been mentioned, the starting point of the excavations at this site dates back to a German initiative during the First World War. Karl Hald informs us in his above-mentioned monograph that French and Serbian forces had dug out trenches in the area of the ancient city trying to resist the German, Austrian and Bulgarian offensive in 1915: “Das Ruinenfeld des einst so bedeutenden Knotenpunktes ist heute von französischen Schützengräben durchzogen, in denen sich Franzosen und Serben auf ihrem Rückzuge nach Süden im November 1915 gegen die anstürmenden Verbündeten zäh verteidigten, [...]”<sup>8</sup> Hald even documented the trenches of the French and Serbian troops with photographs.<sup>9</sup> These trenches unearthed remnants of the ancient city and inspired the German side to transform the “military excavations” into scholarly ones.<sup>10</sup>

As a consequence of this survey, the German army discovered the basilica in Palikura in 1916, located 2 km to the South-West of Stobi, as well as the cemetery basilica in 1917 and the episcopal basilica in 1918 in Stobi itself. Hald does not name the archaeologists involved in the respective campaigns, on which a later written source of the 1930s provides us with very useful information.<sup>11</sup>

Fascinating is the story of the discovery of the basilica in Palikura. Hald reports that a troop of German engineers, who were encamped in Palikura and had the duty to construct roads in the area, noticed a pile of rubble, from which a marble column was sticking out. Neither a German landowner in Palikura named Zeisset, who had lived in the area for 33 years and on whose land the pile stood, nor the other inhabitants of the village had any relevant information. It was Field Marshal August von Mackensen (1849-1945), the commander in chief of the German-Austro-Hungarian-Bulgarian campaign against Serbia, who in person ordered the column to be excavated. The German soldiers discovered in 2 to 2,5 m depth a three-aisled basilica, which was documented by Hald.<sup>12</sup>

After the breakdown of the Central Powers at the *Salonica Front* in 1918 and the end of the First World War systematic archaeological excavations were undertaken in Stobi between 1924 and 1934 by the National Museum

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<sup>8</sup> K. Hald, *Auf den Trümmern...*, 19.

<sup>9</sup> K. Hald, *Auf den Trümmern...*, 17.

<sup>10</sup> We are grateful to our colleague Antonio Jakimovski, PhD (Faculty of Philosophy, University of Skopje) for the information that he and Goran Sanev accidentally found sections of the above-mentioned trenches during an archaeological campaign in the court of the House of Peristeri in 1997.

<sup>11</sup> K. Hald, *Auf den Trümmern...*, 29.

<sup>12</sup> K. Hald, *Auf den Trümmern...*, 29f.

in Belgrade under the supervision of the historians and archaeologists Balduin Saria (1893-1974) and Vladimir Petković (1874-1956). It was Vladimir Petković who applied the designation “Macedonian Pompeii” to Stobi. He also introduced the designations “Balkan Pompeii” and “Yugoslavian Pompeii” for the excavated city. From 1935 until 1941, the year which was marked by the attack of Nazi Germany against the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the excavations were continued by Jozo Petrović (1892-?) and Djordje Mano-Zissi (1901-1995). By 1941 the following structures had been excavated: the Episcopal Basilica, the Theatre, the *Via Sacra*, parts of the Porta Heraklea, the Episcopal Residence, the Domus Fulonica, the Synagogue Basilica, two baths, the Theodosian Palace, the House of Parthenius and the House of Peristeri.<sup>13</sup>

In 1931 Vladimir Petković discovered a complex, which became known as “Synagogue Basilica”. The name of the building stems from the fact that below the Basilica there are remains of two older Synagogues. The excavations were completed from 1970 to 1974. The archaeological discovery of the Synagogue in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia stirred a remarkable international media attention. The archive of the Austrian Archaeological Institute (Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna preserves an undated press report of the Vienna office of the *Times Wide World Photos*, which has to be dated to the 1930s and gives the following account: “Oldest Synagogue Excavated in Macedonian Pompeii. Professor VLADA PETKOVITCH has been supervising the excavations at Stobi, Macedonia, which is sometimes called the Balkan Pompeii, and is very satisfied with this years excavations, which have given very fine results. Among the excavated houses he has found a synagogue, which should be the oldest discovered synagogue in the world. This synagogue has been changed into a church, but there are still sufficient trances [sic!] existing to prove that the building was originally built as a synagogue.”<sup>14</sup>

On the eve of the Second World War, at the end of July 1939, a certain Kurt Fiebig from the region of Senftenberg in Lower Austria addressed a letter to the Archaeological Institute of the German Reich in Berlin, in which he explains to have read an article on Stobi in the newspaper “Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung” in 1938 or 1939. He narrates that he was serving as military personnel at the railway hub of Gradsko in the vicinity of Stobi in 1917 and 1918. Fiebig

<sup>13</sup> Cf. the following reports in Austrian newspapers on the excavations in Stobi: *Neues Wiener Abendblatt*, Nr. 251, 11.9.1924, 3; *Linzer Volksblatt*, Nr. 213, 16.9.1924, 6; *Salzburger Volksblatt*, Nr. 83, 10.4.1928, 10; *Reichspost*, Nr. 232, 23.8.1929, 5; *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, Nr. 18, 19.1.1930, 10; *Reichspost*, Nr. 251, 11.9.1930, 6; *Neues Wiener Journal*, Nr. 13897, 29.7.1932, 10; *Salzburger Volksblatt*, Folge 20, 25.1.1936, 7.

<sup>14</sup> Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften (ÖAW), Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut (ÖAI), Karton Makedonien, Mappe Stobi.

remembers a German professor, whose name he has forgotten, and who conducted the excavations at Stobi with the support of the German back area. He thinks that the very same professor published a booklet on the excavations, which could be obtained in the library of the railway hub of Gradsko during the Great War, as well as postcards of the excavated monuments, which Fiebig had bought and lost at the end of the war. He asks the Archaeological Institute of the German Reich for help to provide him with the title of the above-mentioned booklet or with the quotations of other German or Yugoslav publications on Stobi. The Archaeological Institute of the German Reich in Berlin sent the respective letter to the local branch of the Institute in Vienna asking for a response to Fiebig's query. That is why the entire correspondence is preserved today in the archive of the Austrian Archaeological Institute in Vienna.<sup>15</sup>

It is at this point that our article comes full circle. On 15 August 1939 the Viennese branch of the Archaeological Institute responded to Kurt Fiebig. From this letter we learn that the German professor who made photographs of the monuments in Stobi was the archaeologist and architect Friedrich Krischen (1881-1949), which gives us the answer to the above-mentioned question who was involved in the German excavations in the years 1916 to 1918. Moreover, the archaeologists in Vienna indicated to Fiebig the title of the booklet: it was Karl Hald's "Auf den Trümmern Stobis" – "On the ruins of Stobi" from 1917. ...

Our article has the aim to provide a first insight into a fascinating topic, namely the policies concerning Cultural Heritage in the Southern Balkan Peninsula in two World Wars. Our evidence spanned from German accounts of excavations behind the *Salonica Front* and their pioneering results, especially with regard to the ancient city of Stobi, to the scholarly initiatives, which were undertaken after the Allied victory in the newly formed Southern Slavonic Kingdom of Yugoslavia in order to deal with the cultural legacies of the First World War and to preserve the Cultural Heritage in this very area, and finally to the perception of archaeology in the First World War as reflected in sources on the eve of the Second World War.

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<sup>15</sup> Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften (ÖAW), Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut (ÖAI), Karton Makedonien, Mappe Stobi. The entire correspondence will be published for the first time in the forthcoming article of: Mihailo St. Popović, Veronika Polloczek, "Die Regionen von Bitola und Prilep und deren kulturelles Erbe während und nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg", *Die Ursprünge der österreichischen Diplomatie in Mazedonien – mit Schwerpunkt auf das österreichisch-ungarische Konsulat in Bitola/Monastir 1851-1919* [in press].



## THE ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN TIMARION'S JOURNEY

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Византиската сатира Тимарион, за која се сметало дека е дело на Псевдо-Лукијан, се датира во XII век. Насловот е даден според името на главниот лик, Тимарион, кој му раскажува на својот соговорник Кидион за своето патување од Константинопол до Солун и во Хадот, по наведениот редослед. Целта на патувањето е годишниот панаѓур во чест на Св. Димитриј Маченик Солунски. Тимарион дава детален опис на патувањето, кое може да се подели на два дела. Прво ги опишува местата околу Солун, реката Вардар и Стара Македонија, а потоа панаѓурот и сјајноста на религиозната процесија во Солун, како и различните народи кои присуствуваат на празникот. Вториот дел се однесува на патувањето и доживувањата во Хадот. Она се истражува во овој труд е дали воопшто етничките називи имаат значење за сатирата, и која е разликата во употребата на истите во Горниот и во Долниот свет. Имено, сатирата во ова дело се темели на нешто многу поважно, што го означува дегенерирањето на Византиското високо општество, но станува сосем очигледно дури кога ќе се спореди со античката култура, за која читателот треба да е исклучително информиран.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The subject of this paper is the Byzantine satire *Timarion*, written by an anonymous author. The work is dated to around 1100, in the period of the so-called Byzantine Renaissance. It has unusual tradition; namely, it was preserved in a single manuscript, *Codex Vaticanus Graecus* 87, dated to the 14<sup>th</sup> or early 15<sup>th</sup> century, along with the work of Lucian of Samosata. The manuscript was brought to Paris from Vatican by Napoleon Bonaparte, together with other

Greek manuscripts.<sup>1</sup> Bonaparte appointed professor Hase to make a catalogue of the Greek manuscripts contained in the *Codex*; Hase was amazed by the discovery of this satire and very promptly, in 1813, he published the Greek text with a Latin translation. Since then, this satire, along with other profane Byzantine works, became available to a broader audience.

The discovery of the text was very important fact, because Byzantine literature, with exception of historiography and theology, was unknown, especially to the West. This work gives different picture of the Byzantines and the Byzantine society. This particular satire is important for the plentitude of information on geography, people who lived in the Empire as well as outside its borders, their culture, and the vices of the high Byzantine society. I tried to investigate and demonstrate how the author presents the different people that Timarion encounters during his journey. Sometimes the difference is based on their ethnic origin, other times on historical origin and religious background, depending on the context, because Timarion temporarily dies and goes to Hades where he meets contemporaries from the high society and people from the classical past. In short, I want to clarify if the naming of the ethnic groups is important element of the satire, or the satire is based on something more important that marks the high Byzantine society, but becomes visible only in comparison with the ancient culture.

### 1.1. THE FORM

The format of this work is a dialogue between two acquaintances: Kydion and Timarion. According to most philologists, this dialogue is framed, artificial, and necessary only for the narrative to flow with digressions. Anthony Kaldellis (2012: *passim*), though, demonstrates that the dialogue is essential for the satire to be realized. He is quite right. Kydion, the interlocutor to the main character Timarion, is very eager to hear about Timarion's absence from Constantinople and his trip to Thessalonica, and Timarion is anxious to narrate about his unfortunate and unusual travel to Hades, which happened on his way back home. The purpose of Timarion's travel was the festival Demetria, held annually in Thessalonica in honor of the St. Demetrios Martyros. The dialogue takes place in Constantinople, the city where the interlocutors live, but the events that happened to Timarion before the dialogue, took place in Thessalonica and Hades, respectively. According to Kydion, Timarion should abandon this practice of narrating without concept, giving only the

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<sup>1</sup> In 1809 Napoleon Bonaparte ordered the entire Vatican Archive transferred to Paris, but in April 1814, following Napoleon's defeat, the new French government ordered the Archive returned.

beginning and the end of the events, missing the essential part, i.e. the middle. He, therefore, presents himself as an excellent orator, representative of the Oratory School. Timarion, on the other hand, is representative of the Philosophers, which he accentuates on several occasions. Because of Kydion's persistence, Timarion first gives a graphic description of the festival Demetria and the surroundings of Thessalonica, by using two literary devices: *ekphrasis* and *encomium*, which were common in Byzantine literature. Secondly, he narrates in detail his whereabouts in Hades.

## 2. DESCRIPTION OF THESSALONICA AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

Timarion starts his *ekphrasis* with the Axios River and its surroundings, which is useful detail for the geography of the period. He says that Axios is the biggest river in Macedonia that originates in the Bulgarian mountains, flowing in separate streams at first, and then contracting into a single basin for its descent. It runs towards old Macedonia and Pella, and empties at the nearest shore. According to Timarion the Macedonian area of Axios is worth for a detailed description, because the land is fertile, and it is good for the army to practice maneuvers, as well as for hunting. He uses the term *παλαι Μακεδονία* (ancient Macedonia), because its glory was a relic from the past, as were the Hellenes in Hades. The people that live in Thessalonica and the area, though, are named Macedonians, but some of them are autochthonous, while the others are just born there. The *ekphrasis* continues in Thessalonica, first outside the city walls, then inside. The festival starts with the fair outside the walls; looking at the crowd from about the nearest hill, Timarion concludes that it looks like a giant centipede. He is very graphic in his description. These people came here to merchandize. Entering the town, he continues with the description, this time making *encomium*, praise to the city Governor, which is very similar to the one composed for Demetrius Poliorcetes by the Athenians, preserved in Athenaeus (*Deipn.* 6.63). However, the praise is not overemphasized and it doesn't look overly pretentious. This was the fine part from the trip, the part that was extorted from Timarion. Next follows the tragic part, or as Baldwin translates: the Gothic story, which is conveniently announced with citation from Euripides' *Medea*; he quotes the part where Jason is informed by the Corinthian women that his children are murdered by their mother (1314-16)<sup>2</sup> and he is about to open the door to see the horrors. These verses correspond to the terrors that Timarion is going to see when he'll enter the

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<sup>2</sup> "Servants, remove the bar at once so that I may see a double disaster, these children's corpses and her who did the deed, so that for these children's murder I may exact punishment." (transl. Kovacs)

gates of the Underworld; well, he is not going to see murders, but only high representatives of the Byzantine society, and their true nature there.

Before we see what follows in the Underworld, it is inevitable to give clarification on the first part – Timarion's journey in this world. It is logical on festival like Demetria, which importance and magnitude correspond to the Panathenaia in Athens, and Panionia in Miletos, to be crowded with people from all over the inhabited world, even outside the borders of Byzantium. The comparison with Panathenaia and Panionia is intentionally made, because both are ancient Greek, i.e. pagan festivals, and this is interlude to the paganism he is going to face. Anyway, Timarion doesn't classify the participants as Byzantines or non-Byzantines, but simply as: (1) Greeks from wherever they happened to live, (2) Mysians, (3) Campanians, (4) Italians, (4) Iberians, (5) Lusitanians, and (6) Transalpine Celts, using the ancient names whenever he can. People from all around Europe, he says. He doesn't make satire based on their *genos*. There are few exceptions, which are proverbial and have the shape of comparison: (1) He says about himself that he, being Cappadocian from abroad, never having been to the fair before, but only having heard about it, wanted to see everything there was to see, at the same time to make sure he didn't miss anything. But it doesn't necessarily mean that he was a Cappadocian by origin; he only uses the phrase to announce his behavior at the fair: he was like a child in Disneyland, delighted and gazing with wonder. The name Cappadocian was obviously a synonym for this type of behavior. (2) The second remark is about the Jews; he compares his non-acceptance of idleness, i.e. his diligence, to Jews' custom of non-eating pork. (3) The third remark is about his running away from the subject they discuss, which is the reason why Kydion compares him to a Scythian. Their running was proverbial.

The real satire in this work is based on the contrast of the world here, on Earth, and the world down there in Hades. This is accomplished not by ethnic based satire, but partially with profession made satire. At the beginning of the dialogue Timarion describes himself and his friends as philosophers, dressed modestly, but they were being treated as satraps on their way to Thessalonica, which is opposed to the philosophical way of life, at least the one that Timarion represents. It is obvious that he is taking on classical perception of the philosopher, who is always hungry and underdressed. He is therefore mocked in comedy and other genres also. The tragediographer Lycophron in one of his satyr-plays titled *Menedemus* describes how the philosophers were conducting their dinner-parties. According to the Silenus<sup>3</sup> in this

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<sup>3</sup> “Cursed children of most excellent father, 1, as you see, wax riotous. For not in Caria, by the gods, nor in Rhodes, nor in Lydia, do I remember to have dined so well ! Apollo ! what a feast ! But the boy carried round a watery cup of five-obol wine, slightly turned; and the

play, one can hear everything on a philosopher's party, but cannot get food or a drink. This description of the philosopher is common in Attic comedy as well. Well, how does the philosopher look like? He is pale, hungry, and with modest outfit. Theocritus in *Idyll* 14 (4-8) describes the philosopher as Pythagorean, pale, skinny, with moustache, yellow hair, barefoot and hungry<sup>4</sup>. But Byzantine philosophers and people of importance are obviously far from the classical stereotype, and we find out only when Timarion gets in Hades. We found out that they are greedy for food and luxurious life, which eventually caused their demise and brought them in Hades.

### 3. TIMARION IN HADES

But why is Timarion in Hades? After the festival, he got sick with fever, vomiting and diarrhea. On his way back home, they stopped to have rest by the river Hebrus in Thrace. Due to his excessive losing of bodily liquids, he lost his bile (χολή), which is one of the four humors in the human body<sup>5</sup>, according to Hippocrates. He didn't even leave his body, when two demons, Oxybas and Nyction, came to take his soul in Hades. Before narrating his travel to Hades, Timarion explains the difference between the demons: there are avenging demons (ποίνιμοι δαίμονες), who restore balance, benevolent demons (ἀγαθοί), who award the good, and there is a third type, the one that Timarion met, whose mission is to bring down the souls that already left their body. The last type is described as "shadowy, dusty-looking creatures, flying through the air" (σκιοειδές ἄνδρες, γνοφεροὶ τὴν ὄψιν, ἄερί πετόμενοι) (*Tim.* 13<sup>6</sup>). They took him wrongfully, and this was to be rectified in the Underworld.

In the Underworld, Timarion comes across different kinds of people, but they can be divided in two main categories according to their provenience: people from the ancient past and contemporaries, i.e. Byzantines. The role of each group is different, and they collaborate in exceptional cases. Accordingly they have different religious beliefs.

#### 3.1. THE ANCIENTS

The very concept of Hades and katabasis is taken from the ancient literature, with which the author was very much acquainted, especially with

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accursed hangman lupine danced on abundantly — the boon-companion of poor men and the dining-room" (Lycophron, fr. 2, *TGrF*); trans. A.W. Mair, 1921)

<sup>4</sup> - Why are you so skinny with a long moustache and yellow hair? Recently such a figure was a Pythagorean, who approached us. He was pale and barefoot. He said he was an Athenian. – Was he in love? – Perhaps in love with a baked bread.

<sup>5</sup> Blood, phlegm, black bile, and yellow bile (αἷμα, φλέγμα, χολή μελαίνη καὶ ξανθή) (*Tim.* 38).

<sup>6</sup> The English translation of *Timarion* in this paper is by Baldwin.

the Lucianic dialogue to which he owe the very structure and the themes. When Timarion entered Hades, after flying between the demons, he saw deep darkness. People were lightened with artificial light, and the intensity of their light depended on their quality of life in the upper world. Timarion first met some historical figures from the Byzantine past, not necessarily contemporaries to the hero, as well as anonymous people from the crowd. However, I am going to speak first about the ancients, because theirs is the Underworld. They are determined by the ethnic name "Ἕλληνες, but this name doesn't have the same meaning in Hades as it has in the upper world. In the upper world it denotes simply Byzantines who lived on the territory of ancient Greece, and probably spoke Greek, but in the Underworld the name "Ἕλληνες signifies most of all the religion of these people. Namely, they are not Christians (χριστιανοί or Γαλιλαῖοι), but "Ἕλληνες which means they belong to different religion(s), announced as pagan by the Church, and also they belong to various philosophical Schools and systems, without being punished for that. Their excellence had made them practically in charge in the Underworld. They were the ones that issued laws for various situations; they were the judges in the Underworld, because their sense of justice was impeccable. Even Theodore of Smyrna, the famous Constantinopolitan sophist, told Timarion that the judges are just, because they are Ἑλληνόθρησκοι, i.e. Greeks by religion:

"And another thing, don't be afraid of the judges because they are pagan ("Ἕλληνες). For they are genuinely devoted to justice. It is precisely for that reason that they were elevated to the supreme court. They aren't concerned about religious differences between themselves and people who come before them. Everyone is allowed to stick to the religion of his choice." (*Tim.* 29)

When Timarion starts his narration about the underground journey, and makes the classification of the demons, he also informs us that the judges in the Underworld were Pluto, Aeacus, and Minos, who examine the souls that were brought to them, "according to the customs and laws of the dead before being allotted their destiny and destination" (*Tim.* 13). However, at the trial of Timarion's soul, Pluto was silently replaced with Theophilus, a former Byzantine emperor. Theophilus wasn't a pagan, but a Christian. Anyway, his honesty during his life, and his high sense of justice, made him appropriate judge in Hades. It is unclear though, if he was appointed as a judge only on this particular case, or he definitely replaced Pluto, the Master of Hades. There is a parody in this section about the eunuchs who were very common councilors of the Court. Timarion saw such eunuch next to Theophilus, but his advocate, Theodore of Smyrna explained to him that every Christian emperor has an angel to advise him on what to do. Theophilus has the same one in Hades. Theodore rationalizes the involvement of Theophilus in this way:

"[...] since the religion of the Galilaeans has spread all over the world, prevailing as it does in all of Europe and much of Asia, divine providence deemed it only fair that somebody of that persuasion should sit on the bench along with these pagan judges. And so Theophilus, who once ruled over Byzantium, is the legal partner of the other two, and no decision of any sort could be put into effect without his consent." (*Tim.* 29)

The other dominating group of ancients was comprised of famous medical doctors. Asclepius was the only one with divine nature, while Hippocrates, Galen and Erasistratus were historical figures. They were very important because they issued the rules about dying and staying alive. The rule was that a man should not live if he loses one of his humors. The demons, Oxybas and Nyction, following the doctors' prescription, took poor Timarion's soul. The judges, before deciding finally about Timarion, consulted these men, the doctors. They confirmed that Timarion soul was taken violently and it never left the body voluntarily; the proof for this unlawful act was the remains of flesh and blood on Timarion's soul. However, it seems that at the end the doctors' opinion was not that important, as was the brilliant performance of Timarion's advocate, the persuasive sophist, Theodore of Smyrna, who belongs to the next category.

### 3.2. THE CONTEMPORARIES

The words Phrygian and Phrygia are used on several occasions in the text, when Timarion was describing the Byzantines, every time denoting non-Byzantines. When Timarion first entered Hades and his guards, i.e. the demons, took digression, he saw an old man with a peculiar outlook. The old man was sitting next to a "large bronze pot full of salt pork and Phrygian cabbage, all drenched in fat." (*Tim.* 17) This old man was eating from the pot with his entire hand, using the whole palm as a spoon, and licked the remains of food from his chin greedily. However, the story didn't end because Timarion met a man, who was from the crowd, and had the role of an informer. This curious man asked Timarion first about the situation in the upper world, and afterwards he answered Timarion's question: who the old man was. In fact, he couldn't reveal the old man's identity, since it was forbidden by law issued by Pluto. Nevertheless he was legally free to tell that the old man comes from Great Phrygia, from a noble and famous family. He lived long and rich life. But here in Hades, mice were stalking him, because they were munching on the remains of fat that the old man had on his beard. This was the reason why the mice were enormous. Timarion also found out that the mice were earthborn, and their place of living was in Hades, from where they travel to the upper

world. They were very happy with this old man, because his greediness for food was a benefit for them, and made them fat and big.

On the next stop in Hades, Timarion met another old man, whose groaning he heard outside the tent. He saw that this old man was comforted by another old man, but without success. Timarion was curious about this old man as well, especially because he saw him with his eyes pulled out. Luckily, once again, he met an old man who informed him about the old man in the tent and his companion: he was the Byzantine emperor Diogenes of Cappadocia, who died infamously. The old man beside him was a noble from Great Phrygia, who was his councilor during his lifetime.

At the end, before the trial, Timarion met his former teacher, the famous Byzantine sophist Theodore of Smyrna. He failed to recognize him at first, because Theodore has changed his looks. In the upper world he was very fat, due to his luxurious way of living, with sybaritic dinners. This was his demise, because he got arthritis and his body suffered a lot. He couldn't walk, but was carried around on a stretcher. Eventually he gave up and died. But here, he looked very thin and healthy, because he changed his diet. Involuntarily, though. Being a chair of the sophistry in Constantinople, Theodore was very eloquent and persuasive. So naturally, he became Timarion's advocate on court and he was very good at that. However, he didn't perform his practice pro bono. He asked Timarion to send to him from the upper world some foods, which he wasn't allowed to consume here. He was quite a gourmand: "five-months-old lamb, two three-years-old hens that had been fattened and slaughtered [...], and a one-month-old suckling pig and a nice fat and fleshy sow's belly." (*Tim.* 46)

By the way, after the trial, Timarion saw other famous Byzantines: he saw John Italus following Parmenides, Pythagoras, Melissus, Anaxagoras, Thales, and other founders of philosophical schools. Pythagoras rejected the company of John Italus, because Italus was indecisive about his religious beliefs. After that, although not named, he saw Theodore Prodromos, the famous iambic poet during the Comnenian dynasty. He had only bad words for this coarse poet, who came into fight with Diogenes the Cynic. Italus also came in fight with Diogenes, and Cato the Roman came and took him away, but while they were passing by the dialecticians, they were abusive about Italus' incompetent writing. At the very end, he saw the Professor, whose excellence was exquisite here as it was in the upper world. It was Michael Psellus. This great philosopher and literate man was hailed with the words: Ἦ βασιλεῦ ἤλιε (Hail, king Sun), which was an allusion to Psellus' speech composed in honor of the emperor. Of course, there is a parody on Psellus' laudatory attitude towards the Court.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The satire *Timarion* is related to the degeneracy in Byzantine high society, as greediness and social division. Byzantine philosophers, Byzantine noblemen, people of high society were unseen gluttons, and flatterers when needed. Their greediness in the Underworld is manifested as greediness for food. They can do anything for more food and in Hades; they were not ashamed to show their real vice. The mice were exceedingly happy about their vice. It seems that it is very important to know from where does a person come, but his *genos*<sup>7</sup> is not mentioned, because it is not important. What is important is their position in the society, which very much speaks about the person. According to Timarion's description, once people get in Hades, they show their ugliness, but when they are alive, they are worthy of encomium, i.e. laudatory song, as he performed in the description of the Governor of Thessalonica. However, their vice is obvious only when they enter the peculiar surrounding in Hades, where the ancients are in charge. In Hades the name Hellenes bears religious connotation, and is a synonym for justice and fairness. Only the ancients are Hellenes, so being a Hellen is a privilege in the Underworld, while in the upper world the same name denotes one of the many ethnic groups that live inside the borders of Byzantium.

Anyway, this is a satire for intellectuals, who have excellent knowledge of classical literature, most of all Homer and Greek tragedy. These are the classical works that were studied in Byzantine schools. The author of *Timarion* doesn't use his knowledge of classical heritage vaguely, but with careful intention: he is careful about the context of the citation as well. Even the geographical names that he uses are ancient, which obviously points to his intentional archaizing. This is a proof that the learned Byzantines didn't read their classical authors from some textbook, but from the books themselves. In this particular satire, the influence of Lucianic dialogue is undeniable; however, not as a subject of imitation, but as a proof of the author's appreciation and acquaintance with this literary genre.

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<sup>7</sup> According to Malatras' (2011) research "three terms are used in the sources of 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries to denote what we would call ethnic group: *genos*, *ethnos* and *phylon*. There is no essential difference between these terms and they are used interchangeably for the Franks, the Italians, the Venetians, the Turks etc.. Most importantly all three terms are used for the Romaioi as well."

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## THE NATIONAL GALLERY AS A CULTURAL HUB

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### HISTORY

The National Gallery of Macedonia started its history as an Art Gallery in 1948 and is considered to be the oldest gallery in Macedonia. Today, with over 70 years of existence, the National Gallery exceeds its primary gallery function and grows into a large "hybrid" institution with two main activities - gallery and museum.

"The initiative for the establishment of such an independent museum - gallery institution was prompted by the Macedonian Association of Fine Artists, together with the cultural and social public, and with the support of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. (...) The aim was creation of a rich collection, as well as a specialized library with literature in the field of fine arts." It is important to note the following: the summary of original archival documentation related to the establishment of the Gallery, the gallery collection and the management method was recently presented in the exhibition and catalogue titled "Memorable beginnings 1948-1956 / Exhibition from the archive of the National Gallery of Macedonia", presented some very important information which will also be used as part of this text.

On 1/1/1949, by a decision of then the Ministry of Science and Culture, the painter Borko Lazeski was appointed as the first acting director of the Gallery, which, at the beginning, operated as part of the National Museum, on the "Marshal Tito" square in Skopje, in the premises of the "Metropol" restaurant building. During this time, under the management of Commission for protection of Cultural Heritage and the Government of the Republic of Macedonia,

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<sup>1</sup> Aleksoska, Slavica, "Memorable Beginnings 1948 - 1956 / Exhibition from the archive of the National Gallery of Macedonia, Skopje", Skopje: *National Gallery of Macedonia*, December 2018 (cat. exh.)

the conservation and restoration of the “Daut Pashin Hammam” was performed towards its final transformation into art gallery.<sup>2</sup>

The first task of the Gallery was to collect as many works of the best Macedonian and Yugoslav artists, from classical to contemporary, and it was achieved by a systematic and rapid purchase of works which has started at the end of 1948 and the beginning of 1949. The commission for purchase included the following artists and prominent art history figures in Macedonia: Lazar Lichenoski, Dimche Koco, Dimo Todoroski, Nikola Martinoski and Boriko Lazeski. The first purchased works were by artists Krsto Hegedushic, Paja Jovanovic, Vilim Svechnjak, Antun Augustinčić, Miroslav Kraljevic, Vlaho Buhovac, Bozidar Jakac, Zdenko Kalin, Boris Kalin etc, and Macedonians Boriko Lazeski and Nikola Martinoski. At the same time, about fifty icons from the Archaeological Museum were handed over to the gallery.<sup>3</sup>

Since the end of 1949 the director of the Art Gallery - Skopje was the famous Macedonian painter Nikola Martinoski who made persistent pressure to the Ministry aiming to open the gallery at the middle of 1950, but it finally happened on August 2<sup>nd</sup> 1951 with the first permanent exhibition which consisted from icons from XIV-XIX century, and artworks by Macedonian and Yugoslav modern artists. In this period works from Stevan Aleksich, Stevan Todorovich, Pavle Simich, Novak Radonich, Milo Milunovich, Paja Jovanovich, Marko Murat, Petar Dobrovich, Konstantin Daniel, Krsto Hegedushic, Ivan Meshtrovic, Sava Shumanovic, Matej Sternen, Rihard Jakopic, Miroslav Kraljevic, Matija Jama etc. were purchased. Urosh Predic left the gallery “Tryptich of Church Paintings” (3 small paintings) in his will written 3 years before his death (June 25, 1949).<sup>4</sup>

The Art Gallery also maintained a rich exhibition activity with solo exhibitions, thematic, retrospective and international exhibitions, such as: “Half a Century of Yugoslav Painting” (1954); Retrospective exhibition of Lazar Lichenoski; Japanese graphics, and many more in 1954 with an impressive number of visitors - 57.572. During 1955/1956 there were also the following exhibitions: retrospective exhibition of Nikola Martinoski, Belgian Graphics, English graphics, German Graphics, Ravenna Mosaics, Henry Moore with total visits of 33.929 visitors.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

## AIM

The main program task of the newly established gallery was to register, collect and present the national movable cultural heritage, and also to research, purchase and present the current contemporary artistic works.

As stated in the informative book “Museums in the Republic of Macedonia”, which includes taxative information, this gallery is among 36 museum/gallery institutions in the Republic of Macedonia and is one of the oldest. “Since the very beginning this institution organized a number of retrospective exhibitions of the most important Macedonian authors, the founding fathers of the contemporary Macedonian painting art: Lazar Lichenoski (1954, 1968), Nikola Martinoski (1955); Vangel Kodzoman (1958), Ljubomir Belogaski (1963), Dimche Koco (1968), including solo, jubilee, study and thematic presentations and exhibitions by Macedonian painters”, as well as “hosted exhibitions of the very important artists such as Henry Moore - sculptures, drawings (1955), Opy Zouny (1989) and others.”

During 1980s and till today number of exhibitions were organized abroad, through direct cooperation with the galleries from Nuremberg, Dresden, Berlin, Vienna etc.; features masterpieces not only from the contemporary painting art but also medieval art pieces such as icons, fresco replicas.

The National Gallery of Macedonia contributes towards affirmation of the painting art and of the Macedonian culture - since 1997 in main organizer (with 12 presentations) of the Macedonian exhibitions presented at the Venetian Biennale.<sup>6</sup>

## OBJECTS / SPACES

Today the National Gallery consists of 4 significant objects, of which 3 are protected cultural monuments: Daut Pasha Hammam, Cifte Hammam and Memorial House of Lazar Lichenoski, as well as the Multimedia Center Mala Stanica.

1. Daut Pasha Hammam - located in the center of the city, or the beginning of the Old Bazar and near the Stone Bridge and the Kale fortress. It was built by Daut Pasha between 1468-1497, 900 m<sup>2</sup>, has square form, two main domes and 11 small ones and is considered as one of the most representative examples of the Islamic profane architecture, type of double hammams (male and female). Daut pasha (known as Kodja Daut pasha) is mentioned as Anadolian and Rumelian beglerbeg and Bosnian sandzakbeg - important positions

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<sup>6</sup> Aleksoska Bacheva, Zaharinka, Mihajlova MA, Branislava, Bogoeski PhD, Krste, “Museums in the Republic of Macedonia”, Skopje: *ICOM Macedonia*, 2015 (p. 34-35)

in the Osman state, one of Mehmed II Fatih (1451 - 1481) vezirs, and in the time of sultan Bajazit II (1481 - 1512) becomes Grand vezir. Daut - pasha died very old in 1499 in Istanbul and is buried next to the mosque he built. After many damages until it's renovation, the hamam was used as warehouse. Since 2000, the Permanent exhibition of Macedonian art is located in Daut Pashin hamam.



2. Chifte Hammam - As the name says “chifte = double”, built in the mid of 15 century. With total area of 1056 m<sup>2</sup>, located in the center of Old Bazar by Isa beg, it is the second-largest hammam in Skopje from that period. It was built by the third regional leader Isa Bey, stated as patronage in the book of the Isa Bey mosque in 1531. In the records of the renowned writers of travels Evliya Celebi, the Cifte Hammam is also called “a new hammam”.

It has lost its function as hamam in 1916/17 and ever since is used as warehouse. Today, Chifte hamam is a place where many temporary exhibitions are held.



3. Multimedia space Mala stanica - part of the National Gallery since 2005. In chronological terms, the object which is popularly known as “Mala Stanica” is part of the recent history of the construction of Skopje, in particular, comes from the period between the two world wars. As part of the campaign for the construction, rehabilitation and renovation of certain railway stations and other facilities for the railway in 1922 was added onto “tesno-linejkata” that the station “Upper Skopje”, commonly known as “Mala Stanica”

by Gorce Petrov, supposed to allow connection of Skopje, Ohrid and Struga. Due to the needs for smooth functioning of "Little Station" at that time will be built and a number of associated objects: toolbars, warehouse etc..., Built in 1924, represents one of the last such facilities in this part of Skopje. Total area of 2.000 m<sup>2</sup>, on two floors, holds many temporary exhibitions and events. As part of an "Industrial Heritage", which according to international reference documents and guidelines, Mala stanica is considered a specific category of cultural heritage which should be taken and a mode of conduct and specific terms of usage.

4. Museum - memorial house of Lazar Lichenoski - part of the gallery since 2015 (Decision from the Government no. 42-5687/1 since 23.06.2015 according to the will of Zoe Lichenoska from 2007). At the moment under reconstructions of different types and projects for reconstruction, renovation and revitalization (paintings, mosaics, ethnological and bibliographic material).

## COLLECTION

The Revision of the Inventory of the National Gallery of Macedonia was held between 17.3.-15.9.2016 with the following overview of the public collections managed by NGM and their protected status:

No	Title	Total No	Protected status
01	Macedonian Contemporary Art Between Two World Wars	85	cult. heritage of particular importance, subcat. of exceptional importance
02	Pictures and sculptures from the former YU republics	205	cult. heritage of particular importance, subcat. of exceptional importance
03	The beginnings of Macedonian profane painting	33	cult. heritage of particular importance, subcat. of exceptional importance
04	Painting and watercolor	622	significant cultural heritage ex lege
05	Graphics	297	significant cultural heritage ex lege
06	Drawings	199	significant cultural heritage ex lege
07	Sculpture	161	significant cultural heritage ex lege
08	Mosaics	03	significant cultural heritage ex lege
09	Tapestry	08	significant cultural heritage ex lege
10	"New Media"	56	significant cultural heritage ex lege
11	Painting accessories	47	significant cultural heritage ex lege
12	Icons	34	cult. heritage of particular importance, subcat. of exceptional importance
<b>TOTAL (for the end of 2015):</b>		<b>1750</b>	

Apart from the gallery function, from the beginning extremely important mission of the National Gallery, whose fund of works already has almost 2,500 works (mid of 2019), is the preservation of cultural heritage, i.e. collection, conservation, communication, research, and exposing the movable cultural heritage (works of art, ethnological material, library material).

Formerly static institution, the National Gallery, as well as other museums, is changing in order to become more interactive, focused on audiences and communities, flexible, adaptable and mobile. We can point out several examples of successful managing from the last years:

- retrospective exhibitions of prominent Macedonian artists (Petar Mazev, Spase Kunoski, Tanas Lulovski, Tomo Shijak and many more) with research, presentations and monographic publications.
- successful work of the educative department and marketing department
- collaboration with independent projects and companies (Encyclopedia for the founders of the Macedonian fine art)
- awards (Project of the year 2012 for Retrospective exhibition of Vasil Vasilev and 2017 Retrospective exhibition of Petar Mazev)

## MISSION AND VISION

The title of the text refers in many aspects to the theme chosen for International Museum Day 2019 is “Museums as Cultural Hubs: The future of tradition” with the following explanation:

The role of museums in society is changing. Once static institutions, museums are reinventing themselves to become more interactive, audience focused, community oriented, flexible, adaptable and mobile. They have become cultural hubs functioning as platforms where creativity combines with knowledge and where visitors can also co-create, share and interact.

While preserving their primary missions – collecting, conservation, communication, research, exhibition – museums have transformed their practices to remain closer to the communities they serve. Today they look for innovative ways to tackle contemporary social issues and conflict. By acting locally, museums can also advocate and mitigate global problems, striving to meet the challenges of today’s society proactively. As institutions at the heart of society, they have the power to establish dialogue between cultures, to build bridges for a peaceful world and to define a sustainable future. As museums increasingly grow into their roles as cultural hubs, they are also finding new ways to honor their collections, their histories and their legacies, creating traditions that will have new meanings for future generations and relevance

for an increasingly diverse contemporary audience at a global level. This transformation, which will have a profound impact on museum theory and practice, also forces museum professionals to rethink the value of museums and to question the ethical boundaries that define the very nature of their work.

At once a focal point for the community and an integral part of a global network, museums offer a platform for translating the needs and views of local communities into a global context.<sup>7</sup>

To be aware of our positions today, strengths and weaknesses, in order to overcome them, we have to start from the basis of the definition of museum:

#### Article 3 - Definition of Terms

Section 1. Museum. A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.<sup>8</sup>

Development of the Museum Definition according to ICOM Statutes (1946 - 2007)

ICOM News Thematic Files: The Definition of the Museum (ICOM News, vol. 57, 2004 n°2)

#### Proposal for the New Museum Definition:

Over recent decades museums have radically transformed, adjusted and re-invented their principles, policies and practices, to the point where the ICOM museum definition no longer seems to reflect the challenges and manifold visions and responsibilities. We invited members and other interested parties to take part in creating a new, more current definition.

The Executive Board selected the below as a new alternative museum definition for a vote to be included in the ICOM Statutes instead of the current museum definition at ICOM's next Extraordinary General Assembly (EGA), which took place on 7 September 2019, at the Kyoto International Conference Center (ICC Kyoto) in Kyoto, Japan:

Museums are democratising, inclusive and polyphonic spaces for critical dialogue about the pasts and the futures. Acknowledging and addressing the conflicts and challenges of the present, they hold artefacts and specimens in trust for society, safeguard diverse memories for future generations and guarantee equal rights and equal access to heritage for all people.

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<sup>7</sup> Theme and explanation for International Museum Day 2019.

<sup>8</sup> (ICOM Statutes art.3 para.1, 2007)

Museums are not for profit. They are participatory and transparent, and work in active partnership with and for diverse communities to collect, preserve, research, interpret, exhibit, and enhance understandings of the world, aiming to contribute to human dignity and social justice, global equality and planetary wellbeing.

Although the New Museum Definition was not accepted on the ICOM General Conference this September and has a deadline to be adapted till 2020 (because of its difficult implementation in different areas or developing countries in the world), we can conclude that the National Gallery has real capacity, perspectives and possibilities to answer almost completely to this ideological vision of the 21st century.

The National Gallery can be considered an exceptional example of cultural center, a rare combination of architecture - cultural and historical monuments, immovable cultural heritage objects which preserves and presents important items of movable cultural heritage in the Balkans and Southeast Europe.

As an institution, part of the Balkans and Southeast Europe, the National Gallery based on its collection and cooperation between different institutions, NGO's and individuals, has the power and capacity to establish dialogue between different cultures at a regional level. The National Gallery (may) function(s) as a broader platform that aims to face the challenges of today's modern society through its ongoing growth in its role as a cultural hub, a point where there will be collecting as well as emerging, while at the same time, finds new ways to evaluate its collection and heritage, to transform local museum theory and practice, etc.



## TREE SYMBOLIST PAINTERS IN THE SKOPJE NATIONAL GALLERY COLLECTION

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The National Gallery (NGM) keeps paintings of Stevan Aleksić, Marko Murat and Leon Koen. Their opus indicates three different interpretations of Symbolist expression. Through the presentation of their paintings, this paper will describe, thanks to the features such as individuality of Symbolist formulation, dislocation of creative space and Munich, as the origin of their Symbolism, that the mentioned artists are related by their own unique poetic, which is currently a focus of art history research.

Key words: Symbolism, National Gallery, Skopje, Marko Murat, Stevan Aleksić, Leon Koen, Munich.

After the Second World War, “people’s” museums and galleries were being established or restored in most Yugoslav cultural capitals. The newly formed collections were initiated by the idea of communion in post-war Yugoslavia, and, as “people’s” institutions, they had a mission to present art on the entire Yugoslav territory. A similar idea, fostered by the work of notable artists and experts (Lazar Ličenoski, Nikola Martinoski, Dimče Koco, Dimo Todorovski, Borko Lazeski), initiated the establishment of Skopje Art Gallery collection.<sup>1</sup> Such efforts, along with the systematically organized purchase, that was carried out since 1949, commenced the development of this significant gallery collection. As a whole, it represents a balanced overview of fine arts that begins with Classicist and Romantic endeavours of early 19<sup>th</sup> century and ends with paintings, prints and sculptures by the artists from the period immediately following the Second World War, as well as works of then very popular naive art.

The collection was shared with the public through a catalogue and exhibition held in March and April 1986 at the Art Gallery in Skopje. The

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<sup>1</sup> Boris Petkovski, *Sliki i skulpturi od jugoslovenski umetnici*, Umetnička galerija, Skopje 1986

analysis in the foreword of the catalogue is based on contemporary methodological criteria for evaluating the art history which the modernity of artistic developments at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries viewed primarily in terms of plein air painting and Impressionism. Only Leon Cohen was rendered as "symbolically defined". It should be kept in mind that the acceptance of Symbolism as an artistic expression in European art history began ten years before the publishing of this catalogue, and that domestic fine arts experts rarely discussed symbolism until the international scientific conference "Serbian Symbolism: typological studies" (SASA, 1985). The first review of this topic was presented by Katarina Ambrozić.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the acquisition of paintings by three artists for the Modern Gallery in Skopje: Leon Cohen, Marko Murat and Stevan Aleksić should be interpreted as a far-sighted gesture. Despite the ambiguity in symbolic expression, there is a common ground that binds their work into a single whole, which, above all, has the same source.

### Munich at the End of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century: The Source of Symbolism

When Maximilian II ascended the Bavarian throne in 1848, he promised that "he would make Munich such a city that no one would be able to say that they had met Germany if they had not seen Munich".<sup>3</sup> The city also became a significant university and arts hub,<sup>4</sup> with famous art collections and a growing reputation of its Art Academy. The continuous expansion of the royal art collections resulted in their opening to the public - the Glyptothek in 1830 and the Alte Pinakothek in 1836. Finally, in 1853, the Neue Pinakothek was founded as an institution to attend to modern art, and around 1900 already had an enviable number of works by contemporary Munich painters in its repository. Also, in 1853-54, a modern steel and glass exhibition pavilion was built and appropriately rendered as Glaspalast which would host annual International art exhibitions since 1858. The circumstances on the artistic stage of Munich in the mid-nineteenth century also stimulated painting in the South Slavic countries, at the same time directing artists to the new metropolis of European painting, which we define also by the common denominator "Munich School".<sup>5</sup> Among the painters from many European and non-Euro-

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<sup>2</sup> Katarina Ambrozić, "Simbolizam u likovnoj umetnosti i njegov odjek u Srbiji", in: *Srpski simbolizam: tipološka proučavanja* (Predrag Palavestra ed.), SANU, Beograd 1985, 653–661

<sup>3</sup> Max Schattenhofer, "München unter den Königen Max II und Ludwig II (1864–1886)", in: *Die Münchner Schule 1850–1914*, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, München 1979, 9

<sup>4</sup> Max Schattenhofer, *ibid.*, 9–19; Kristijan Lenc, "Minhensko slikarstvo XIX veka", in: *Minhenska škola*, Narodni muzej, Beograd 1988, 7–8

<sup>5</sup> *Die Münchner Schule (1850–1914)*, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, München 1979 – the catalogue of an exhibition held in 1979 at the Haus der Kunst in Munich. The exhibition

pean countries who studied in Munich, there was a large number of future artists of Slavic origin, from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and from Serbia.<sup>6</sup> They made first contacts with Realism at the Academy, in some of the private studios or exhibition spaces, they got acquainted with the work of Gustav Courbet, acquired knowledge of plein air painting, Impressionism, Secession, Expressionism and, most importantly for us, Symbolism. The diverse influences of the European Old Masters, as well as the German Romantic Schools, also contribute to the distinctive identity of the Munich School's achievements. In the mid-nineteenth century, Munich became a significant European research centre for photography<sup>7</sup> and science. The influence of contemporary theatre – especially the operas of Richard Wagner – was also immense: his opera "Tristan and Isolde" was performed in Munich in 1865, and the first two parts of the Nibelungs saga, "Rhine Gold" and "Valkyrie" were performed in 1869 and 1870. Among other tendencies, somehow suppressed and stifled by all the aforementioned accounts of the Munich students' artistic expression, a term emerges today and embraces different visual patterns allowing the art to be viewed from a new standpoint: Symbolism. Although the symbolist perception is recognized in the works of numerous Serbian artists from Munich, due to certain circumstances, the work of three painters: Leon Koen, Marko Murat and Stevan Aleksić, imposes itself as an example for the comparison. Their life and art, more than other contemporaries, bear the stamp of specific cultural and historical frameworks of the regions in which they lived and worked and the times and the circumstances that followed them.

#### Leon Koen (1859-1934): Sarah Martin I

Born in Belgrade, Koen<sup>8</sup> studied under painters Steva Todorović (1881-82) and Đoka Milovanović (1883-84). Both being adherent to Munich Realism, they could point Koen in only one direction: the Munich Art Academy. He enrolled at the Antikenklasse Academy on April 4, 1884, and was recorded in the enrolment book as Leon Koen, 22, from Belgrade, Israelitisch; at Malschule

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featured works by Munich painters as well as other artists from other European countries and America who were educated in Munich and formed their artistic expression there; *Minhenska škola 1850-1900*, Narodni muzej, Beograd 1988

<sup>6</sup> Jovan Sekulić, "Minhenska škola i srpsko slikarstvo", *Zbornik radova Narodnog muzeja*, no. II, Beograd 1958, 251-278; Jasna Jovanov, *Minhenska škola i srpsko slikarstvo*, Galerija Matice srpske, Novi Sad 1985; <http://matrikel.abdk.de/> (accessed on 15 September 2019)

<sup>7</sup> Sigfried Wichmann, *Franz von Lenbach und Seine Zeit*, DuMont, Köln 1973

<sup>8</sup> Zora Simić Milovanović, "Slikar Leon Koen", *Godišnjak Muzeja grada Beograda*, no. 2, Beograd 1955, 377-428; Dejan Medaković, "Leon Koen", in: *Srpski slikari*, Matica srpska, Novi Sad 1968, 271-877; Nikola Šuica, *Leon Koen*, Jugoslovenska galerija umetničkih dela, Beograd 2001

he enrolled on April 13, 1885,<sup>9</sup> to continue his studies at Naturklasse under Ludwig Herterich in 1887. The painting **Joseph's Dream**, awarded at the Academy Exhibition in 1896, was exhibited in Belgrade in 1898. The Belgrade exhibition, held at the same time when the Munich student, Marko Murat, had his exhibitions, was an opportunity to show Koen in a good light. Paintings such as **Joseph's Dream**, **Eternal Judah** and **Autumn or Charon's Boat**, prompted the writer of *Brankovo kolo* to portray Koen as a painter who "used such elements, actually non-elements, that only the intelligent eyes can imagine or describe them in words, but it would seem bold to think that they could be painted on the canvas."<sup>10</sup> Due to "impalpability" of the themes, a thorough support of the conservative Belgrade art admirers somehow lacked. "Nobody understands art. No one knows what painting is. I'll show the world what kind of genius I truly am," Koen said later in his moments of depression, convinced of his own ingenuity.<sup>11</sup> **Joseph's Dream** was also exhibited at the Venice Biennale, 1899,<sup>12</sup> and Koen also displayed in the Serbian Pavilion at the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris. He spent nearly twenty following years in Munich, at one time being directly involved in its artistic life. Then he began working on the allegorical cycle "Tragedy and triumph of humanity," was active within the circle of "Secession" painters (Von Stuck, Von Uhde), while acquaintance with Kandinsky led him closer to the "Phalanx" art association with which he exhibited in 1903. "Suppler, more refined and more resonant" are words that the critic of the *Die Kunst* newspaper used comparing him to Kandinsky, while the paintings **Village Paradise** and **Idyllic Village** are described as "truly idyllic, pleasant, revealing a special way of observing nature".<sup>13</sup>

Besides his studies at the Academy, Koen was also interested in other fields while he was in Munich (he authored the first Serbian translation of Friedrich Nietzsche's "Thus Spoke Zarathustra"),<sup>14</sup> which led him to different layers of tradition and learning processes; the consequence of this is evident in his paintings today, such as the more or less present influences of teachers and friends painters – Herterich, Böcklin, Von Marées, Von Stuck or Kandinsky – blurred only by his strong individuality. Koen's painting is close to

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<sup>9</sup> [https://matrikel.adbk.de/matrikel/mb\\_1841-1884/jahr\\_1884/matrikel-05053](https://matrikel.adbk.de/matrikel/mb_1841-1884/jahr_1884/matrikel-05053) (accessed on 15.09.2019)

<sup>10</sup> Anon, "Slikarska izložba Leona Koena", *Brankovo kolo*, no. 23, June 1898, 736

<sup>11</sup> Nikola Šuica, *ibid.*, 4

<sup>12</sup> [http://asac.labiennale.org/it/ricerca/ricerca-persona.php?p=381512&c=r\\_](http://asac.labiennale.org/it/ricerca/ricerca-persona.php?p=381512&c=r_) (accessed on 15.09.2019)

<sup>13</sup> Boža S. Nikolajević, "Zaboravljeni velikan novijeg srpskog slikarstva", *Vreme*, 3. april 1926, 4

<sup>14</sup> See: Vesna Adić, "The Tragic Story of Leon Koen, the First Sephardi Painter from Belgrade: A Symbolist and Admirer of Nietzsche", *Ars Judaica*, no. 5, 2009, 67–84

the circle of German Neo-Romanticists and Symbolists, as well as to the ideas of the Jugendstil and the leading figures of the Secession. Only a part of his paintings in Belgrade survived the Second World War: 15 artworks and 7 photographic reproductions of lost paintings.



Leon Koen, Sara Martin I (1892–94). Oil on canvas, 94 x 123,5 cm. Inv. No. 370

In the list of his works made before the Second World War, there are several versions of the Sarah Martin theme.<sup>15</sup> The painting from Zora Simić Milovanović's list, known as **Praying Woman**, is actually **Sarah Martin I** canvas which has been in the Art Gallery in Skopje since the mid-20<sup>th</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Two oil paintings and two charcoal drawings with the name **Sarah Martin** are listed, as well as the oil painting **Woman in Prayer** "purchased by the Private Gallery in Skopje", in: Zora Simić Milovanović, *ibid.*, 425, 428

century.<sup>16</sup> Koen was clearly fascinated by the personality of this little-known Protestant, "an English dressmaker who was devoted to caring for prisoners, trying to improve their condition, teaching them crafts, and offering moral encouragement and support through Bible verses."<sup>17</sup> Perhaps one source of Koen's interest in Sarah Martin (1790–1843) lies in his fate to spend part of his life in the Munich sanatoriums in which he was treated using the "outdated, painful method,"<sup>18</sup> and he was more aware than any other of the horrors that lurk in such places. While studying Nietzsche and listening to lectures at the University of Munich (art history, philosophy, psychology, physiology), he also became acquainted with the study "Genio e follia" (1863) in which Cesare Lombroso, from the angle of physiology, psychology, morality, society and politics, deals with the connection between ingenuity and madness. Genius and madness are the two elements that Lombroso brings together; preoccupied with ideas of the mentally disturbed, their ingenious accomplishments and prophetic visions, he compared them with the leaders of religious movements, geniuses whose mental state led to psychosis, or melancholy, suicidal tendencies, megalomania, timidity or infantile infatuation. "Koen probably paid closer attention to the study of the Italian criminologist because he considered himself a genius";<sup>19</sup> and in Lombroso's study he also discovered the story of Sarah Martin. Koen could not miss the fact that Lombroso included her among the geniuses because of her dedication and contribution to the reform of the prison system. "Koen, touched by her kindness, portrayed her in a praying posture, illuminated by gentle light, surrounded by a group of prisoners in the gloomy atmosphere of a dungeon," which was probably not very different from the ambience of an asylum at that time. Koen's Sarah Martin is not an unrealistic, typologically conceived character like the young couple in *Charon's Boat*, but her appearance is not based upon facts. In bright light clothing, she is portrayed more as a luminous body, a spectre surrounded by intertwined bodies, wraiths that kiss the hem of her dress, spread the arms like angelic wings, or, blinded by her appearance, throw themselves on the ground. Koen applied a similar principle of articulating the central figures in the scene by defining them in light tones in the paintings from the cycle "The tragedy and triumph of humanity," but placed them in an allegorical setting. Instead of the threatening geniuses of death in the paintings *Autumn* and *Spring*, illuminated, kneeling figure of Sarah Martin's emerges from the

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<sup>16</sup> *Sarah Martin I* (1892–94), oil on canvas, 93x123 cm, inv. no. 370

<sup>17</sup> Vesna Adić, "Ničeov koncept apolonskog i dioniskog u stvaralaštvu Leona Koena", part 1, <https://casopiskult.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/cropped-kult5> (accessed on 20.09.2019)

<sup>18</sup> Zora Simić Milovanović, *ibid.*, 398

<sup>19</sup> Vesna Adić, *ibid.*

darkness with the convicts, or perhaps the feebleminded, making the whole structure autobiographical, or perhaps expresses the artist's hope for salvation from the dark passages of his eclipsed consciousness.

### Marko Murat (1864-1944): Interior of St Basil's Church

Life and work of Marko Murat combined the traditionally oriented Belgrade with the Mediterranean ambience of the Dubrovnik coastline filled with colours, sounds and scents. Murat arrived in Munich in 1886, and at the age of 23, in October 1887, enrolled at the Naturkasse,<sup>20</sup> under Karl Raupp. Initially, his education was supported by Baron Lujo Vranyczany and then by Velimir Teodorović.<sup>21</sup> In Munich, he met a law student Milenko Vesnić, a later Serbian politician and diplomat, and on his initiative after the Academy Murat decided to start his career in Belgrade.<sup>22</sup>

Although Professors Raupp, Von Herterich, and Lindenschmidt<sup>23</sup> greatly influenced the development of inborn interests in Murat's painting, in the light of recent analysis of Marko Murat's oeuvre, it is evident that Professor of painting technique, Otto Seitz, played a crucial role in directing him towards Symbolism.<sup>24</sup> The studies and stay in Munich lasted until 1893, when Murat successfully presented himself at the exhibition of the Munich Art Association, with a painting known as **Palm Sunday in Dubrovnik** which is kept in the Art Gallery in Skopje under the title **Interior of St Basil's Church**.<sup>25</sup> From 1894 to 1898, when he finally settled in Belgrade, Murat also

<sup>20</sup> Jovan Sekulić, "Minhenska škola i srpsko slikarstvo", Zbornik radova Narodnog muzeja, no. II, Beograd 1958, 251–278; Jasna Jovanov, Minhenska škola i srpsko slikarstvo, Galerija Matice srpske, Novi Sad 1985; <http://matrikel.abdk.de/> (accessed on 15 September 2019)

<sup>21</sup> Velimir Teodorović (1849–1898), an extramarital son of Prince Mihailo Obrenović. Until 1857 he lived in Vienna; in Belgrade he continued his education, under a painter, Steva Todorović. He converted to the Orthodox faith in 1866, and in 1867 continued his education in Geneva. After the assassination of Prince Mihailo in 1868, he returned to Belgrade and then went to live on the Nagoj estate in Mala Vlaška (Romania) which he inherited. In Munich he studied agronomy, politics and economy; since he was not allowed to return to Serbia, he lived for a while on Lake Tegernsee near Munich and then in Munich for the rest of his life. Serbian students and intellectuals gathered in his house. He assisted many of them, including Milenko Vesnić and Marko Murat; he bequeathed the property to charity as an endowment "Veliminarium", which was active until 1971.

<sup>22</sup> Vera Ristić, *Marko Murat 1864–1944*, Narodni muzej, Beograd 1969, 8, 10

<sup>23</sup> <http://matrikel.abdk.de/> (accessed on 15 September 2019)

<sup>24</sup> Nenad Simić, "Marko Murat", *Letopis Matice srpske*, vol. 374, issues 1–2, 74

<sup>25</sup> Marko Murat, **Interior of St Blaise's Church/Palm Sunday in Dubrovnik** (1893), oil on canvas, 177x118, inv. no. 359. See. V. Ristić, *ibid.*, 10; This painting was also purchased during the Gallery establishment, as recorded in the October 26, 1951 receipt including the information that it was purchased from the painter Ivan Radović. The title **Palm Sunday in Dubrovnik**

stayed in Novi Sad. He spent his summers in Dubrovnik and its vicinity, where he created paintings shown at solo exhibitions in Belgrade in 1894, 1898 and 1904.<sup>26</sup> These "summer" paintings from Dubrovnik come out on top of Murat's painting while many of them poetically follow the path started in Munich. "The magical motif of a blossoming summer garden, rich in sunshine and colour, the landscape where the painter resided even when he was in Belgrade or elsewhere ..."<sup>27</sup> – shows how displacement from the native environment can influence the formation of artistic expression. Marko Murat himself rarely justified his views, but sometimes, in a few well-chosen words, described impressions and feelings, thus providing essential explanations relevant to the analysis of a number of his paintings: "A painter who considers art a form of prayer, the mystical connection between the artist and the eternal, unlimited Creator..."<sup>28</sup> That mystical connection is reflected in the process of visual interpretation of abstract concepts, showing that the imagination of the ordinary observer is often not able to create scenes that the artist's eye can perceive. In his autobiography, Murat recalls what a summer evening on Šipan looks like: "The smell of the sea, pines, salted sardines, tar, forests ... the mild skies, almost tired, from which the first star of the fisherman's boat will fall asleep, the laid oarsman backs, in oaring motion, dark sails in the scorched sky, cold lights against the backdrop of the shore ... *Hail Mary* bells are ringing ... comforting, reprimanding ... the holy sound binds the souls of those who now piously revere their heads and pray to the souls of those whose bones rest under the dark cypresses covered with ancient tiles and returning to the land that had created them."<sup>29</sup> In the painting **Palm Sunday in Dubrovnik**, Murat concentrated the diverse knowledge gained during his studies at the Academy, but did not neglect the childhood memories he brought in his luggage to Munich. The focus of the painting is a procession of young women dressed in sumptuous costumes common for the region, walking on the ground covered with petals and roses. At their feet are ancient plaques with carved coats of arms that should give the religious ceremonial a taste of tradition. The service has not yet begun, but the figure of the praying man determines the centre of spirituality and ceremony that takes place before our eyes. In the gorgeous scenery of the church's interior, attention is drawn to the absent, almost empty expression on the young women's faces so that the

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follows the painting from its beginning in the contemporary press and exhibition catalogues and has been accepted in professional literature.

<sup>26</sup> Miodrag Kolarić, *Izložbe u Beogradu*, Narodni muzej, Beograd 1985, 63, 64, 102–107, 143–154

<sup>27</sup> Vera Ristić, *ibid.*, 11

<sup>28</sup> Marko Murat, *Iz mog života*, (Aleksandra Mamić Petrović; Petar Petrović, ed.), Zavod za udžbenike, Beograd 2007, 5

<sup>29</sup> Marko Murat, *ibid.*, 66

whole group actually makes a bright spot contrasted by the dark mass of the stirring background. The conflict between the emotions that the event represents and those actually portrayed is underscored by the conflict of light: the mystical flickering of candles in the depth of composition and the directional sun rays that laterally fall on the figures of young women. The fragile rays, which will move with the passage of time, indicate the transience of the moment, but also the transience of existence. Although **Palm Sunday in Dubrovnik** may at first glance be explained by Murat's focus on the religious genre, the parade of young women with palm and laurel branches in their hands depicts a parallel with an classical pagan ritual commemorating the awakening of spring, or as a longing for the purity and innocence of the lost Arcadia.<sup>30</sup> In other words, in this painting, Murat "visualized a state of mind and general restlessness"<sup>31</sup> and symbolically emphasized the significance of the ceremony with the feminine principle as the embodiment of the "woman-angel" or "woman-Madonna" as opposed to the masculine principle – dark figures of men whose emotions reflect in facial expressions and live gesture.



Marko Murat, *Enterieur of St. Basil Church – Dubrovnik* (cc. 1898).  
Oil on canvas, 118 x 177 cm. Inv. No. 359

<sup>30</sup> Simon Renolds "The Longing for Arcadia", in: Ingrid Erhardt; Simon Renolds, ed., *Kingdom of the Soul. Symbolist Art in Germany 1870–1920*, Prestel, Munich, London, NY, 2000, 60–63

<sup>31</sup> Melania G. Mazzucco, "La Sfinga je la fanciulla: femine letali nell'immaginario del tardo Ottocento", in: Giandomenico Romanelli; Franca Lugato, ed., *Il demone della modernità*, Marsilio, Venezia 2015, 47

As a counterpart to this painting, Murat envisioned a composition **In front of St. Basil's Church** (1896),<sup>32</sup> apparently conceptualized as an excerpt from an urban landscape. In **Palm Sunday**, he put his religious beliefs to the test by synthesizing pagan and Christian within the same painting, while here he displaced the scene from the temple and thus identified it with an ancient pagan ceremony in which the ritual takes place on a proscenium in front of the temple. Observing them from a lateral point, the painter did not pay attention to the buildings themselves nor to the men in folk costumes sitting leisurely, but instead assigned them the role of scenery "closure". The focus of his interest is an empty space in front of an imaginary line connecting a young woman in white and a young altar boy whose fragile figure evokes the nullity of a man before the powers of religion and the ethereal (perhaps autobiographical reminiscence), who turned his back to the observer, in front of the church entrance with a cresset in his hand – two white spots in a space unusually intersected by the play of illuminated and shaded segments. In both cases, the play of light and shadow as a means, complemented by body language in the *Mise-en-scène*, as well as the altered spatial relations of the real ambience, displace these scenes from the traditional context and shift their meaning to the level of the symbolic. Already in the painting **Palm Sunday in Dubrovnik**, "one feels suggestively imposed by the artist's philosopheme that light is the source of all joys and circumstances, a thought that will intersect with his artworks for two decades."<sup>33</sup> Similar effect was achieved in the painting **Prayer**, exhibited in Rome (1911), in which each participant has his or her own autonomous place in the arrangement thus becoming a kind of painting within a painting, an autonomous "monad" with specific lightning, but defined solely by a subjective interior and distanced from reality.

Marko Murat's Symbolism was also highlighted by his contemporaries; in the text entitled "Au vernissage to Murat's Exhibition" by a critic signed with the initials "S.K.R.," published in the newspapers *Male novine* and *Dubrovnik* in 1898, he emphasizes that the painting "in which he senses the tone of Symbolism is the **Evening Prayer**: a profile of a classic, pure mystical girl who, at dusk, calls God in prayer."<sup>34</sup> Nadežda Petrović establishes a connection between Murat's Symbolism and the works of Giovanni Segantini and Arnold Böcklin.<sup>35</sup> Symbolist poetic is present throughout Murat's work, subject to variations, and depending on the changes that affected the life of the artist himself. Changes are made in the approach to the painting as well as thematically,

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<sup>32</sup> Vera Ristić, *ibid.*, 27

<sup>33</sup> Nenad Simić, "Marko Murat", *Letopis Matice srpske*, vol. 374, issues 1-2. Novi Sad 1954, 74

<sup>34</sup> Miodrag Kolarić, *ibid.*, 102-104

<sup>35</sup> Nadežda Petrović, *Likovne kritike* (Branko Kukić ed.), Umetnička Galerija Nadežda Petrović, Čačak 2015, 91

but the essence of Murat's Symbolism remains unchanging – it is manifested itself through landscapes, portraits and, above all, the historical and religious genre.

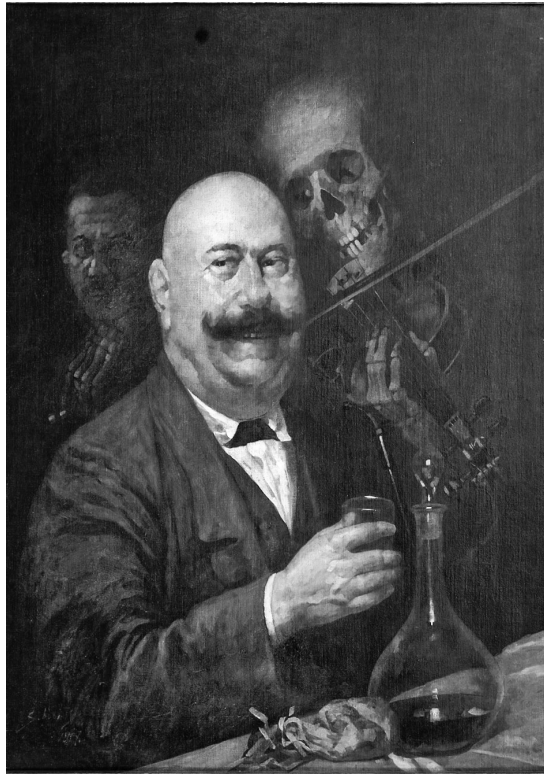
### Stevan Aleksić (1876-1923): Szeged Innkeeper

With the talent he inherited from his grandfather Nikola and father Dušan, both well-known painters, Stevan Aleksić began his art education in 1895 in Munich.<sup>36</sup> He prepared for the Academy in the studio of Heinrich Knirr, and enrolled in the Antikenklasse at the Academy, in 1896, with Professor Nicolas Gysis.<sup>37</sup> Due to his father's death in 1900, he quit the studies and no longer returned to Munich. During the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, he was painting churches on the territory that is today Hungary, Romania, Croatia and Vojvodina. In addition to the more or less established program of iconographic themes, as part of the decorative concept in churches, Aleksić also painted the events from Serbian medieval history, placing them in the *Mise-en-scène* of the opera spectacle. With the outbreak of the WW I and the departure of people who commissioned church decorations, he retired to the studio in Modoš, where his most significant and modern, but for many years less known, paintings of small-format and symbolic content were created. Aleksić had embraced Symbolism much earlier, even during his Munich studies, which means that the creative tension between artistically effective fulfilment of the requirements set by the traditional style, religious dogma and ideological national program, and the emergence of new, individual interests, was noticeable from the beginning of his professional career. Based on a variation of the allegorical motif in the painting **Artist and the Muse** (1900), these interests gain the strength of a shifting impulse in the works **Self-Portrait in a Tavern** (1901) and **Self-Portrait** (1903). Inspired by the motif of the death playing the fiddle by Arnold Böcklin, beginning with these paintings, Aleksić created a world of symbolic themes identified by an authentic personal seal and culminated in the artwork **Merry Bohemian** (1917). In this painting, the artist portrays himself twice: once through the death with a fiddle and the other in the form of a clamorous guest. The basic coordinates of this space are a reflection on the demonic-angelic origin and contradictory nature of the artistic inspiration and a critical but nostalgic portrayal of a lost and lonely individual in a wasteful and futile world, devoid of interaction and meaning. Enriching this thematic space with the relation of Death and Eros, as well as the motif of counterparts, the artist stepped away from narrative and naturalistic patterns,

<sup>36</sup> See: Jasna Jovanov, *Stevan Aleksić 1873–1923*, Matica srpska, Novi Sad 2008

<sup>37</sup> Horst Ludwig, "Nikolaus Gysis – ein Grieche in Bayern", *Die Weltkunst*, Heft 11, München 1979, 1400–1402

approaching the mainstream of modern, symbolic sensibility. In the same year (1917) *Szeged Innkeeper*<sup>38</sup> was created where the painter repeated the already applied symbolic pattern: in addition to the portrait, a tavern owner, his friend Stevan Majstorović, Aleksić shows his face emerging from a dark background, and looming over the portrayed person his favourite, annoying companion, a skeleton with a fiddle. Although the relationship between the artist and his companion is a constant, the allegorically codified meaning changes, stratifies and branches within the symbolic ambiguity of the entire painting. Placed in specific and distinctive environments (a tavern or a studio), brought into relationship with other protagonists (the artist's counterparts, models, friends, his wife Stefanija), the figure of the death/skeleton becomes a variable hybrid construct (skull, skeleton), and at the same time the basis of the entire symbolic network that conveys Aleksić's tragic view of art and human fate: "The allegory opens like the expected abundance of meaning – the mystical reconciliation of content and shape – that will never come. The procession of empty, repetitive scenes has no end."<sup>39</sup>



Stevan Aleksić, *The Innkeeper from Szeged* (1917). Oil on canvas, 65,5 x 82 cm. Inv. No. 345

<sup>38</sup> *Szeged Innkeeper*, oil on canvas, 82x65,5 cm; signed bottom left: *S.Alexits 1917*; Inv. no. 345

<sup>39</sup> Deborah L. Madsen, *Rereading Allegory*, St. Martin's Press, New York 1992, 125

In the context of the artist's confrontation with the figures of his own counterparts, the "painting-within-painting" method contributes to the symbolic representation of a dual reality, but also of a tragically duplicate artist's personality. In some close-up self-portraits, Aleksić successfully applies the method labelled as "pantomime symbolism," using the motif of hiding and masking as an opportunity to express a range of moods from irony to indifference, from superiority to covert horror: **Self-Portrait** (1911/13)<sup>40</sup> is a perfect example where the painter emphasized the headscarf "artistically" tied around his neck while explicitly expressing his inner state through a grimace. Thus, it reaches deeper harmony between his own, often nightmarish, internal conflicts and the apprehensive even violent sensations of the outside world. In this way, he sets, as Odilon Redon puts it, "as far as possible, the logic of the visible in the service of the invisible,"<sup>41</sup> and transforms the basic themes and prevailing visual strategies of Symbolism into effective agents of his subjectively intoned Symbolist iconography.



Stevan Aleksić, *Selfportrait* (1911–13).  
Oil on canvas, 38 x 51 cm. Inv. No. 350

If we try to compare the symbolic frameworks in which the three artists work, we get a glimpse into the ambiguity of Symbolic poetics. Leon Koen, as a sovereign herald of Symbolism in Serbian painting, built his oeuvre upon indigenous interpretations of Symbolic themes and motifs, upon a pronoun-

<sup>40</sup> *Self-Portrait*, oil on canvas, 38x51 cm; signed top right: *Alexits 19*; Inv. no. 350

<sup>41</sup> Carlo Munari, *Arte e costume del XIX secolo*, Giorgio Tacchini editore, Milano 1976, 118

ced tendency towards narration and interest in Jewish tradition, the Bible and Shakespeare, as well as upon fascination with the tragedy of national history and a fairy-tale cruelty of a classical myth. Due to its multiple layers, his Symbolic language is often extremely complex and difficult to understand. Most of the paintings that have been preserved and available to our examination today were created during the years Leon Koen spent in Munich, occasionally as an active participant in the city's artistic life. Interested in philosophy, psychology and anthropological studies, such as the case of the painting **Sarah Martin I**, he often incorporated fragments of knowledge into his paintings. Also, for his painting achievements it is impossible to find any parallel in Serbian painting, and the painting interpretation itself eludes any comparison, since it also contains the mystical dimension of Von Marées and the complex narrative present in most German Symbolists; the impression is that Koen certainly saw the Edvard Munch's exhibition held in Munich in 1893, and that in his expressive mysticism he found the key to his own artistic expression. A genius of his own belief, constantly monitored by the wraiths of his own disturbed consciousness, he found a fertile ground in Munich for articulating his creativity.

Marko Murat imprinted himself in the artistic life of Munich with the painting **Palm Sunday in Dubrovnik**, a theme that corresponds with the efforts of his German contemporaries to penetrate the essence of the Mediterranean world and find in it their Arcadia, as an artistic territory free from the many challenges of modern life, philosophy, science and society.<sup>42</sup> His symbolic paintings not only grew under the Mediterranean sky of the Adriatic coast, but also carry the light, the Symbolism of the vegetation, traditions and customs of the region. A respected artist and pedagogist who spent two decades in Belgrade, Marko Murat never quite reconciled himself to living on land. And when he painted displaced naked figures among the blossoms of Calicotome, as well as entranced faces in prayer or lonely dark cypresses over ancient ruins and coastal last resorts, those were the images of his own Arcadia, which he wanted to share with the world. In comparison to Murat's, Aleksić's Symbolism is more direct, more explicit and, therefore, more open to analysis and at the same time more amenable to comparison with Munich's art sources. Staying in Munich, however, also meant acquiring broader, indirect experiences and absorbing an entire spiritual climate, whose effects were manifested in rich and beneficial way in the mature stages of the art. The very composition of the artist's personality and his tendency to articulate boundari-

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<sup>42</sup> Hans Henrik Brummer, "The Böcklin Case Revisited", Ingrid Erhardt; Simon Reynolds, ed, *Kingdom of the Soul. Symbolist Art in Germany 1870–1920*, Prestel, Munich, London, New York, 2000, 31

es made Aleksić choose from this spiritual climate, among others, a model most closely related to his sensibility - the Böcklin theme of death as well as Böcklin's specific motif of death with a fiddle. Also, Aleksić's numerous self-portraits are characterized by ironic accents and the atmosphere of the grotesque, often crossed with the mystical relation of Eros and Thanatos, or with a highly hedonistic understanding of life.



## STRATEGIC PLANNING AND BUILDING AUDIENCE AT THE GALLERY OF MATICA SRPSKA FROM NOVI SAD

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The paper gives an overview of the strategic planning process at the Gallery of Matica srpska from Novi Sad, Serbia, explaining basic goals and how they are related to the transformation process that started in 2004. After fifteen years of experience in strategic planning, with the emphasis to improve the attractiveness of the Gallery, raise the number of visitors and build new and diversified audience, the results are discussed, as well as new challenges that arose during the transformation process.

Keywords: The Gallery of Matica srpska, strategic planning, building audience.

### INTRODUCTION

The Gallery of Matica srpska from Novi Sad, Serbia, was the typical example of the museum in a Western Balkan country in transition. It had an important collection of national art (icons, paintings, graphics and drawings), a building with the exhibition space in the center of Novi Sad as the capital of the Province of Vojvodina, organised curatorial and conservation departments, and very low number of visitors. Although it was highly recognised in expert circles, a big percentage of the citizens of Novi Sad did not even know about the existence of this museum, and have certainly never entered the building.

That was the situation in the beginning of the 2000, when some staff changes were made, bringing in the Gallery of Matica srpska people with different previous experiences and new energy. At the same time, after 2000

there were important political changes in the country, with implications to the politics of the Ministry of Culture and the preparations for the project oriented management in the state museums, including the setting of the strategic plans. As it is broadly recognized, the base for the strategic planning are the mission and vision statements, as well as the definition of the goals.

## THE QUESTION OF THE IDENTITY

The Gallery of Matica srpska is one of the oldest and richest national art museums among Serbs. It was founded in 1847 in Buda within the framework of Matica srpska, the oldest Serbian literary, scientific and artistic society, with the idea of collecting items relevant to the history of the Serbian people. The collection and its role evolved through history, due to the change of states and state regulations in more than 170 years.

Initially, within the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the task of the newly formed artistic collection was to support the identity of Matica srpska, collecting the portraits of Serbian intellectuals as officers and benefactors.<sup>1</sup>

After the WW I, in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the Museum of Matica srpska was opened to public the first time in 1933. At that time, the collection was of a complex type with an artistic, archeological and ethnological items, with regional characteristics.

The WW II brought the greatest change, as in 1947 the Gallery of Matica srpska was defined as fine art museum, separating fine art pieces from other collections of the former Museum of Matica srpska. At that period there were number of dilemmas about the possible identity profiles of the Gallery: whether to collect and exhibit art created only on the territory of the Province of Vojvodina or on the whole territory of the newly established Republic of Yugoslavia; whether to collect only Serbian art or extend it to the art of all peoples in the state; whether to limit the collection to the historical art or open it to the contemporary art. However, the decisions taken by the museum managers at the time changed in the next decades.<sup>2</sup>

The last change of state regulation happened in 2006, with the sovereignty of the Republic of Serbia. The name of the Gallery with the adjective 'Serbian' was in alignment with the state in which it operates and whose culture it represents.

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<sup>1</sup> L. Šelmić, (ed.), *Galerija Matice srpske*, Novi Sad, 2001, 24.

<sup>2</sup> T. Palkovljević Bugarski. *Galerija Matice srpske – živ muzej*, in: A. Kostić (ed.), *Kultura: osnova državnog i nacionalnog identiteta*, Proceedings from the Scientific Conference (Belgrade, November 24-25, 2016.), Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Belgrade 2017.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE MODERN GALLERY OF MATICA SRPSKA

Starting from 2004, strategic planning has been used as base for the decision making process of the museum management. The development of the first plan was based on the theoretical instructions of the Ministry of culture, as well as dispersed knowledge and skills of the employees, with no considerable managerial experience. Nevertheless, following the basic principles, under the guidance of the theoretical instructions and with honest and thorough SWOT analysis, the mission and vision statements were set, goals defined and action plan developed. The management was aware of the reality of long and dedicated work ahead, as well as of presence of many obstacles on that road. Two main big goals were defined with the idea to improve the **quality of the museum system**, and the **quality of the museum products**.

The museum system encompasses all the activities oriented 'inwards', including the collection, the building, the internal organisation of the departments, the documentation system, the professional capabilities of the employees, and other features that contribute to the museum running as 'well-oiled machine'.

Museum products were activities oriented 'outwards', intended for the audience of all categories, including exhibitions, lectures, books, educational programs and many other actions that are the reason of the existence of the modern museum - to serve to the society.<sup>3</sup> And these products need to be good to attract and retain their 'consumers'.

Of course, those two basic strategic lines: museum system and museum products, were not separated, and can not be separated completely. For example, professional expertise (museum system) influences strongly the quality of the programs (museum product), or well-equipped exhibition spaces (system) contribute to the diversity of activities offered to the audience (programs). Nevertheless, the setting of basic goals explained earlier proved to be effective over time, as the next Strategic plans (2008-2012, 2013-2017, 2018-2022) maintained the same principles and enabled the review of what was done and what is to be done, as well as the assessment of the progress.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> T. Palkovljević, D. Korolija Crkvenjakov. Muzej kao edukativni centar, in: N. Grdinić (ed.): *Umetnost, obrazovanje i društveni kontekst*, Zavod za kulturu Vojvodine, Izvršno veće AP Vojvodine, Novi Sad, 2005, 89–93.

<sup>4</sup> Strategic plans of Gallery of Matica srpska 2004-2007, 2008-2012, 2013-2017, 2018-2022 (Archive documents of the Gallery of Matica srpska Novi Sad).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The strategic planning as the base for the long term management decisions at the Gallery of Matica srpska has been active for last 15 years. Now the Gallery is in its fourth strategic period (2018-2022), remaining faithful to the basic goals set in the first one, constantly striving to improve in the two big categories: the quality of the museum system and the quality of the museum products. The list of parallel undertakings is long: step by step reconstruction of the building providing the best possible conditions for display, storage and work; reorganisation of the internal structure of the departments, thorough revision of the documentation parallel to the digitalisation process, creation of the multidisciplinary working groups suitable for the project oriented approach; introduction of the whole range of the new programs created within the museum, while opening the museum to the wide spectrum of activities in partnership with external organisations. All of this was done with the idea to attract more visitors, improve visibility and build audience.

The results are clearly visible: the number of visitors increased almost 13 times (2000: 3 974; 2009: 21 288; 2019: 51 739) and the number of programs and their visibility is considerably higher, as can be seen from the mass media attention and reporting on Gallery's activities (2017: 1 801; 2018: 2 468; 2019: 2 008 media articles). Following the goals defined at the beginning of the transformation, the Gallery of Matica srpska became recognised as the place with interesting initiatives, highest standards of operation and open for a variety of social groups: educational programs for children in cooperation with Pre-school institution in Novi Sad, creative workshops for children every Saturday, program for babies and parents *Growing up with Art*, projects for secondary school children *HearMe*, *Museology for Beginners*, *COOLtour through Novi Sad*, *Art and Inclusion*, friday lectures and tours, weekend tours in the Permanent Collection and ongoing exhibitions.<sup>5</sup>

The transformation of the museum and the widening of the activities was not an easy process, as it required the change of old way of working and a lot of learning in all fields of museum activities. Moreover, the process of transformation in fast changing environment never ends. Although the dynamic development of a traditional museum in a country with low economic factors may be seen as very difficult task, the example of the Gallery of Matica srpska proves that it is possible. To achieve these results, besides enthusiasm

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<sup>5</sup> S. Misić, A. Stefanov. From enthusiastic ideas to the realization of high quality programmes educational activities in the Gallery of Matica Srpska; in: Ž. Jelavić (ed.) *Old questions, new ideas: quality criteria for museum education*, ICOM Croatia, Zagreb 2012, 324.; *Muzejski priručnik HearMe. Bringing Youth and Museums Together*, Novi Sad 2017; I. Rastović, *Muzej za sve?*, Novi Sad 2020.

and the creativity of the majority of the employees (as there is always part of the staff that shows resistance to the changes), there were partnerships with important museums which offered insight in the best practice examples<sup>6</sup>; partnerships with companies such as banks, insurances, industry and other, where the Gallery programs were supported as the part of their societal responsible activities<sup>7</sup>; partnerships with small private enterprises and individuals which raised the conscience of the importance of the link with the local community and additionally enriched the audience<sup>8</sup>.

The annual support of the Ministry of culture to the Gallery's projects is the base for the majority of activities, as is for all state museums throughout the world (with very few exceptions). In other words, the Gallery relies on the state budget for the culture, as do all other national museums. But when the financial indicators are analysed, it is very visible that there is a result unusual for the traditional museums in Serbia. To measure the 'productivity' of the museum, one needs to look into the 'value of the programs' that are produced annually per unit of budget for the museum operations. Basically, the budget allocated to the 'museum system' (eg salaries, maintenance, standard processes and equipment) needs to have as low as possible ratio to the budget of the 'museum products' (programs). For the Gallery of Matica srpska, this ratio is 1:1, which shows very high efficiency compared to the same indicators for similar state museums (up to 9:1). Moreover, museum income outside the state budget, such as income from the tickets, museum commercial activities and donations, although variable in years, is not to be neglected (5%).

This can seem quite ideal, but the constant analysis of the performance of the 'museum machinery', quarterly, yearly and in the strategic periods of 4 years, shows some new challenges to face and find answers to. Fifteen years of devoted transformation process of the Gallery of Matica srpska is a valuable experience to study. Were all the programs worth energy and resources invested? Are there internal strength, ideas and energy for something totally new, modern and creative? Are there new risks? Here are some examples.

- The European Museum Night was embraced with enthusiasm in the first years when it started in Serbia (2007), but it turned out that there is no considerable rise of the number of visitors outside that

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<sup>6</sup> Creative Europe Project *HearMe* (partners National Gallery of Slovenia, Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Gallery of Matica srpska Novi Sad and organization ISES from Spain).

<sup>7</sup> Vojvodanska banka – OTP Group, Generali Insurance, Tarkett, DDOR Insurance company, Telenor Foundation.

<sup>8</sup> Here is the list of some of the small local private companies that support the Gallery of Matica srpska activities: Eugen Chocolate, ZAGA Clothing, Rotary Club, Restaurant "Špajz Salaša 137", Quet Vinary, Salaxia Vinary, Pastry shop "Vremeplov".

overcrowded night, when the museum had to hire additional security staff and manage the crowd many times higher than the capacity of the exhibition spaces, thus putting artworks at risk. After few years, the Gallery decided to stop with the overload of European museum night programs. Now the Museums Week is marked with programs that are considered more appropriate.

- Among the variety of new programs to improve visibility of the museum, there is increasing number of exhibitions organised and displayed outside the Gallery building, in Serbia and abroad, which raises questions of the security of the artworks in frequent moving, packaging, unpacking and transports.<sup>9</sup> The security of the collection as the fundamental museum task is always in the first line of the management concerns. The answer to the challenge of increased transports, loans and displays was found in the continuous education of conservation, curatorial, law and financial sector, in order to find suitable solutions. As a result, the standards of storage, packaging and transports, as well as condition-check procedures and accompanying travel documentation are considerably higher than before.
- Communication using social networks shifted ingeniously to video instead of traditional images, thanks to creativity of the young curators.<sup>10</sup> When there are creative and enthusiastic individuals with fresh ideas and skills, they are given space, trust and encouraged to continue. Yet this comes with inherent challenge of balancing the new and original activities with the more traditional, yet basic and unavoidable museum tasks, such as collection documentation and care. The two need to co-exist within the limited and non-expandable dimensions of time and resources available to any museum institution, to deliver on its strategic plan. This is exactly the challenge that multi-dimension strategic plan, and its goals and activities need to address.

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<sup>9</sup> Here are some examples of the intense exhibition activities that included considerable loans and transports of artworks: *May Assembly 1848 – 170 Years After* (Sremski Karlovci, Serbia), *Images of the Ephemeral World. Relations between Serbian and French Intimism* (Paris, France), *Serbian Cathedral Church in Taban. Following the disappearance of the Serb town in Buda* (Budapest, Hungary), *European Phenomena in the Collection of the Gallery of Matica srpska* (Banja Luka, Bosnia and Hercegovina), *Sava Šumanović and the Secret of the Coupole* (Paris., France), *Inspired by Italy* (Belgrade, Serbia).

<sup>10</sup> The Gallery of Matica srpska Youtube channel: [www.youtube.com/channel/UCCqp8O8K9-op7QHQoMODog](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCqp8O8K9-op7QHQoMODog), Facebook: [www.facebook.com/galerijamaticesrpske](http://www.facebook.com/galerijamaticesrpske), Twitter: [twitter.com/galmaticesrpske](https://twitter.com/galmaticesrpske).

## CONCLUSION

Clear strategy, continuity of ideas and aspirations of the management of the Gallery of Matica srpska, united with the creativity and enthusiasm of both a great percentage of employees and external collaborators, were the base for the result exposed above. The Gallery of Matica srpska has chosen the strategy of small, but precisely defined steps that lead to the bigger goals: the position of the national gallery, high museum standards and contemporary and innovative museum practice. After fifteen years with smooth and wise changes in management, thanks to the far-sighted politics of the founder - the Matica srpska – the Gallery of Matica srpska has become one of the leading Serbian museums, the place of good practices that are selflessly shared with others through lectures, conferences and workshops. The strategic planning was the solid base, encompassing all the aspects that need to be thought about. Parallel execution of so many and so different processes and steps - from transformation of the building to the long life learning strategy for employees - required the intellectual and professional capacity. Luckily, this condition was fulfilled from the very beginning, and with the combination of the experience and creativity, brave decisions could have been made and executed.



# YUGOSLAV CULTURAL POLICY IN MACEDONIA: THE EXPRESSION OF THE MACEDONIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY, 1945 - 1991

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The text focuses on socialist Yugoslav cultural policy in Macedonia during the latter part of the twentieth century (1945-1991). After the Second World War, Republic of Macedonia became one of the founding members of the new socialist Yugoslav state. The ruling Yugoslav Communist party, in order to solidify its base and expand its grip on the political and economic structures of the country, instituted a number of cultural policies which were placed in service of its ideology. At the same time a new Yugoslav identity was created, one which differed from that of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. This new identity, based on the revolutionary and liberation struggle during the 1941-1945 period and on the basic principles of socialism, became a state identity and an integration factor within the Federation itself. However, unlike the other Yugoslav republics, Socialist Macedonia was allowed to explore, demonstrate and publicly display a distinctiveness and a national identity which differed from that of the other republics in relation to the 1941-1945 period and the common supra-national Yugoslav identity. The text points to several examples of state sponsored patronage of the visual arts, and elaborates on the reasons behind Macedonia's freedom in expressing a national identity beyond the common socialist Yugoslav model.

Key words: Yugoslavia, Cultural policy, Macedonia, national identity, monuments, Makedonium, Ilinden.

The Republic of Macedonia became one of the constitutive members of Socialist Yugoslavia<sup>1</sup> on the 29<sup>th</sup> of November 1943, and remained within that country until the latter's breakup in the early 1990's.<sup>2</sup> However, its posi-

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<sup>1</sup> For the history of Socialist Yugoslavia see PETRANOVIĆ 1988.

<sup>2</sup> On the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 1991, The Republic of Macedonia held a referendum where the majority of voters, voted for independence from Yugoslavia. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of the same month, the Macedonian Parliament adopted a Declaration of Independence, making the Republic of

on regarding certain key Yugoslav cultural policies was unlike that of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia or Montenegro. Focusing on public display and state sponsored patronage of national identity, this paper looks into some of the key differences between Macedonia and the other republics of the Yugoslav federation.

Although Socialist Yugoslavia was a successor state to the pre-World War Two Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the post-war Yugoslav government was a revolutionary government. The authority of the ruling Communist Party was founded of the successful liberation struggle during the Second World War. It was the only political subject to mount any kind of serious challenge to the occupying German, Bulgarian, Italian and Hungarian forces during the war.<sup>3</sup> Like all communist revolutions, the creation of the new country brought on a historical discontinuity.<sup>4</sup> The new government and the new state distanced themselves from the previous political, social, economic and cultural systems and values.<sup>5</sup> In order to solidify its base and expand its grip on the political and economic structures of the country,<sup>6</sup> a number of cultural policies were placed in service of its ideology.<sup>7</sup>

Foremost among the cultural changes was the creation of a new Yugoslav identity that was different from that of the pre-World War Two Yugoslavia. Based on the revolutionary and liberation struggle during the 1941-1945 period, as well as on the basic principles of socialism, this new identity became a state identity and an integration factor within the Federation itself. It is important to note that when accepting it, the various nationalities of the Yugoslav state were not forced to give up their independence, traditions or cultural markers.<sup>8</sup> In fact, all of them, and on a grander scale the six individual republics, retained their previously formed cultural identity,<sup>9</sup> because Yugoslav

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Macedonia an independent country. For more see *Историја на македонскиот народ*, ур. Д-р Тодор Чепреганов, Институт за национална историја, Скопје, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> See for example BRAJOVIĆ-ĐURO 1986, especially sections 7 and 8, pp. 145-202, also KNEŽEV 2003.

<sup>4</sup> For a general overview see the chapter 'Uvodna razmatranja' in DOKNIĆ 2013, pp. 9-15.

<sup>5</sup> For more see chapter 1 'Kulturna politika i komunizam' in DOKNIĆ 2013, pp. 17-93.

<sup>6</sup> See PETRANOVIĆ 1998 for a more detailed overview of this historical period.

<sup>7</sup> Milovan Đilas (ĐILAS 1990, p. 30) is unequivocal as he points out that after securing its political dominance, the Communist party of Yugoslavia undertook '... a comprehensive and sudden alteration of the spiritual culture and the system of values within the country...'. Likewise see DOKNIĆ 2013, especially pp. 40-42 and DIMIĆ 2004, pp. 449-486.

<sup>8</sup> ISAKOVIĆ 2000 provides an excellent overview of the cultural markers (divided in separate chapters: Myths and shared memories on common origin and ancestry; State traditions; Religious affiliation; Language and culture) of all the Yugoslav republics. For more on popular Yugoslav culture see TURKOVIĆ 2008 and JANJETOVIĆ 2011.

<sup>9</sup> DOKNIĆ 2013, p. 263.

nationalism, contrary to the classical theory of civic nationalism, acted through an ethnic medium. 'People were not Yugoslav because they wanted to be. They were Yugoslav just by being Macedonians or Serbs, or Croats or Slovenians, Bosnians or Montenegrins. They were the peoples of Yugoslavia. Each of them was determined by a mixture of factors, among which are language, religion, history and the connection to a certain republic theory. Membership of the individual in one of these communities automatically made him a member of a wider community to which the people joined indiscriminately. While the category Yugoslav connected the peoples, the membership to a nation connected the citizens as individuals'.<sup>10</sup> Croats remained Croats and Montenegrins Montenegrins, but above all now stood a new signifier – Yugoslav. This new signifier, one that went hand in hand with the new governmental organisations and policies, became a unifying term within the Federation as a kind of a supra-nationality.

One telling case where this new identity was displayed on a grand scale, was during the so called 'Day of Youth', a day to mark Josip Broz Tito's birthday on 25<sup>th</sup> of May. Josip Broz (the leader of the Yugoslav Communist Party, the first Prime Minister of Yugoslavia and, from 1953 until his death in 1980, also the President of Yugoslavia), was seen not only as the military leader who successfully liberated the country during the Second World War, but as the founding father of the new Yugoslav state, and with that as the father of the new supra-nationality. The festivities held in connection with this holiday, dwarfed even those dedicated to the celebration of the country's foundation date on 29<sup>th</sup> of November. Although formalized as a national holiday only in 1957 (the last time the festivities were held was in 1988), the first celebrations were actually organized in 1945 and had 12 000 direct participants. In 1949 they had close to half a million, while the 1962 celebrations had 1.6 million participants and 7.5 million direct observers.<sup>11</sup> The 'Day of Youth' was a unique opportunity for several million people, during the course of some months, to directly participate in a singular assignment, an open display of the dedication and loyalty to the state authorities.<sup>12</sup>

Similarly, the individual Yugoslav republics had state holidays celebrating their participation in the liberation of the country. For example, the principal state holiday in Serbia during 1945-1991 period, was the 7<sup>th</sup> of July, the day of the uprising against the fascist occupation in 1941. On the other hand, the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> of February, both of which are observed today - unlike that of the 7<sup>th</sup> of July, were not. 14<sup>th</sup> February is the anniversary of the First

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<sup>10</sup> БРАУН 2010, p. 44.

<sup>11</sup> All data is taken from the *Archive of Yugoslavia (Arhiv Jugoslavije - AJ)*, 318, n. 269.

<sup>12</sup> DOKNIĆ 2013, pp. 216-217.

Serbian Uprising against Turkish rule in 1804, whereas the 15<sup>th</sup> is the date of the proclamation of the first modern Serbian Constitution in 1835.

As the new identity, much like the foundations of the new state, was based on the Yugoslav peoples' struggle during the war period, it also meant that the visual culture of the Socialist Yugoslavia supporting and promoting it, was constructed in such a way as to give backing and provide expression to its character.<sup>13</sup> Film, literature and other arts were generously supported by the state in this effort.<sup>14</sup> But perhaps the most significant case of state sponsored patronage of the visual arts, was the creation of a large number of public monuments, spread throughout the country, with a distinct visual language based on modern monumentality.<sup>15</sup>

Unlike the other Yugoslav republics, Socialist Macedonia was allowed to explore, demonstrate and publicly display a distinctiveness and a national identity which differed from that of the other republics in relation to the 1941-1945 period and the common supra-national Yugoslav identity.



ill. 1. Ljubomir Dalcev, *Goce Delčev*, bronze, Skopje City Park.

An example of this is a life-size bronze statue, a work by the Bulgarian sculptor Ljubomir Dalcev, displaying the likeness of Goce Delčev (illustration 1). Delčev is a Macedonian national hero and one of the leaders of the Macedonian revolutionary movement from the turn of the twentieth century who was killed by Ottoman forces in 1903. Much like the sculpture, so prominently

<sup>13</sup> See *Partisans in Yugoslavia: Literature, Film and Visual Culture*, ed. Miranda Jakiša, Columbia University Press, 2015.

<sup>14</sup> DOKNIĆ 2013, pp. 183-253.

<sup>15</sup> See for example *Spomenici revoluciji – Jugoslavija*, ur. Miloš Bajić, SUBNOR Jugoslavije, Beograd, 1968 or Niebyl, Donald, *Spomenik Monument Database*, Fuel Publishing, London, 2018.

displayed in the centre of the Macedonian capital Skopje, Delčev's mortal remains, which arrived in Macedonia as a gift from the Bulgarian capital city of Sofia in 1946, were ceremoniously interned in a specially designed sarcophagus in the courtyard of the Church of the Ascension close to the Skopje fortress.

The Goce Delčev sculpture is a monument dedicated to a historical, nationalist figure that gave its life for *Macedonian independence* and one that had no connection to the 1941-1945 period, the Yugoslav federation or with communist ideology. As such, the Delčev monument was a singularly unique occurrence in the Yugoslav context, but not an isolated case in Macedonia.

A 1986 survey of all public monuments, plaques or memorial places in Macedonia shows that there were no less than 137 such cases (all erected or constructed from 1945 to 1986), which were in some fashion associated with the Macedonian struggle for independence from the Ottoman empire.<sup>16</sup> This number equates to almost twenty percent of all public monuments. Chief among these is the 'Makedonium'; also known as the 'Ilinden' memorial.

Designed by Jordan Grabul,<sup>17</sup> with participations of several other modern Macedonian artists,<sup>18</sup> it is a memorial complex dedicated to the participants of the Ilinden uprising of 1903 who managed to establish a short lived republic in the small town of Kruševo.

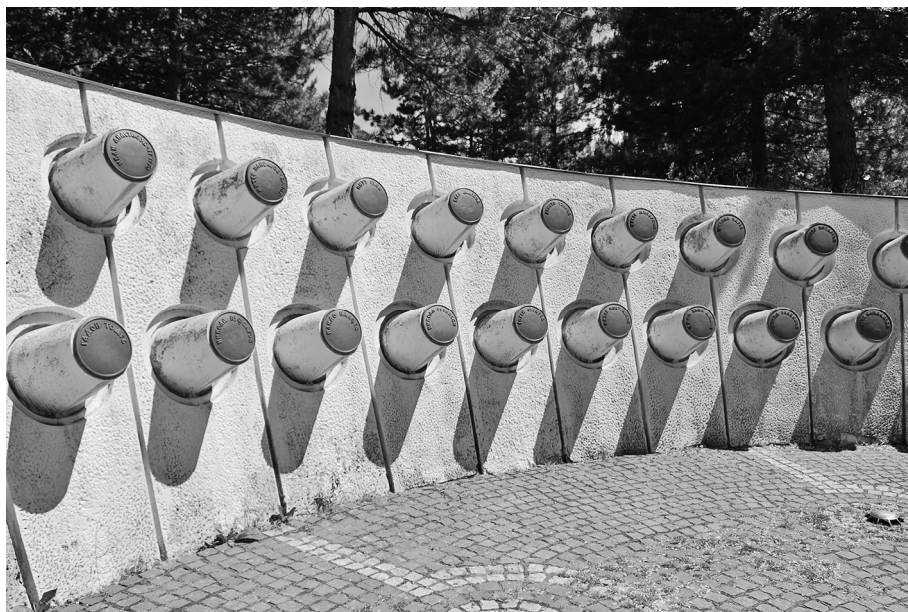


ill. 2a. Jordan Grabul, *Broken Chains*, Kruševo

<sup>16</sup> ТРАЈКОВСКИ 1986.

<sup>17</sup> For more on Jordan Grabul see АБАЏИЕВА 1988.

<sup>18</sup> Chief among these was Borko Lazeski who designed and executed a number of murals and stained glass windows. For Lazeski see АБАЏИЕВА 1979, also *Борко Лазески*, кат. изл., Национална галерија на Македонија, Скопје, 2017.



ill. 2b. Jordan Grabul, *The Macedonian Crypt*, Kruševo



ill. 2c. Jordan Grabul, *Makedonium*, Kruševo

Constructed in three sections, 'Broken chains', 'The Macedonian Crypt' and the dominant section called 'Makedonium' (that contains the tomb of Nikola Karev, 1877-1905; a revolutionary figure of Macedonian history and the Precedent of the Kruševo Republic), it was officially opened on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Au-

gust of 1974 on the 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Ilinden uprising (illustrations 2 a, b and c). However, the design and the construction of the monument first started in 1968, on the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Uprising, and it was well underway when Josip Broz Tito visited the town of Kruševo and the site in August 1969.

In particular, the second section of the monument, the so called 'Macedonian Crypt', is of extreme importance. It is a semi enclosed oval space containing circular bronze plaques that cover concrete cylinders. There are 58 bronze plaques, twenty-nine on each side placed in in two rows, and all have names written in Macedonian Cyrillic. The names are not just personal names, but also names of places, events, organizations and even a title of a book published in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. They are in chronological order, from the oldest to the newest, starting from the right side. The names are placed in remembrance of certain key figures and moments in Macedonian history, predominantly from the Macedonian struggle for independence from the Ottoman Empire, and have no connection to Yugoslav movement.<sup>19</sup>

Josip Broz Tito placing a laurel wreath in Kruševo was an exceptionally important event. It was, by gesture, the State sanctioning and codifying certain aspects of the Macedonian national character. This was the Yugoslav government, rather than the Macedonian state authorities, 'authorising' a monument that had no direct connection with Socialist Yugoslavia or with the Yugoslav identity.

It is important to note that the local Macedonian government had, ever since the liberation of the Macedonia at the end of the World War, very actively celebrated the memory of the Ilinden Uprising.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 1946, during the 1<sup>st</sup> Regular meeting of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Extraordinary session of the Peoples' Assembly of the Peoples Republic of Macedonia in Skopje, the Macedonian Parliament had voted on a Draft Version Act,

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<sup>19</sup> In chronological order starting from the right side of the crypt and going counter-clockwise these are: Иљо Малешевски, Ѓорѓија Пулевски, Разловци 1876, Кресна 1878, Теодосиј-Митрополит Скопски, ТМРО 1893-1908, Солунски конгрес 1896, Гоце Делчев, Ѓорче Петров, Даме Груев, Пере Тошев, Јане Сандански, Петар Попарсов, Васил Главински, Никола Карев, Димо Хаџи-Димов, Крсте Мисирков, Лазар Поптрајков, Христо Узунов, Ѓорѓи Стругарев, Веле Марков, Никола Русински, Питу Гули, Пандо Кљашев, Митре Панџаров-Влаот, Никола Пушкаров, Иван Атанасов-Грчето, Радон Тодев, Сава Михајлов, Ордан Пиперката, Арсени Јовков, Локвата и Вињари 1903, Гемидиците 1903, Смилевски конгрес 1903, Илинден 1903, Крушевската Република 1903, Дину Вангел, Клисура 1903, Слива 1903, Смилево 1903, Кабуруница 1903, Мечкин Камен 1903, Невеска 1903, Арменско 1903, Рашанец 1903, Чаништа 1903, За македонските работи, Војдан Чернотрински, Никола Киров-Мајски, Рилски конгрес 1905, Таската Серски, Апостол Петков, Димитар Влахов, Кашина 1905, Ножот 1907, НФП 1908-1910, Димитрија Чуповски, МХЛД-Петроград 1904-1917.

unanimously passed, for the creation of the so-called 'Ilinden Pensions'.<sup>20</sup> These were state pensions for all those who had participated in the Macedonian independence movement at the turn of the century. What is striking is that the Parliament voted on this issue, number three on the agenda for that session, right before it was to vote on a Draft Version Act for a Law codifying the Crest of the People's Republic of Macedonia.<sup>21</sup> The leadership of the Republic placed the issue of the 'Ilinden Pensions', and by association that of the Ilinden Uprising, before it established and codified the insignia of the new state. Those particular historical events were deemed to be part, not only of the identity of the Macedonian people, but also of the Socialist Macedonian state.



Ilinden Memorial Medal, gilded bronze

The successful applicants for the Ilinden Pensions, received a monthly state pension, health care and other benefices, and a formal acknowledgement as 'Ilindenians', with which, they were recognised as members of a selected group of national heroes.<sup>22</sup> As a visible sign of this status, they were awarded the Ilinden Memorial Medal (illustration 3).<sup>23</sup> Somewhat later, the Macedonian Parliament petition to the central Yugoslav Ministry of Finances for the use of 24 carat gold to be used in the gilding of the medals was approved.<sup>24</sup>

What these examples illustrate, is that from the very beginnings of the new Yugoslav state, Yugoslav cultural policy, so strict in implementation in the other Republics of the Federation, was different in Macedonia. It was the sole of the six republic that had the liberty to forego the newly established

<sup>20</sup> For more on the Ilinden pensions see the comprehensive volumes of testimonies published by the Macedonian State Archives entitled: *Илинденски сведоштва*, Државен архив на Република Македонија, Скопје, 2016-2017.

<sup>21</sup> See *Службен весник на Народна Република Македонија*, н. 24, Скопје, 30.07.1946. The law for the Ilinden pensions and the medal was inaugurated with a decree passed on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 1948, while the conditions for the award were given in the Official Gazette of the Peoples Republic of Macedonia n. 16 from the 19<sup>th</sup> of June 1950 and again in n. 23 from the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 1951.

<sup>22</sup> БРАУН 2010, p. 222.

<sup>23</sup> The medal itself was made according to the design of the Croatian sculptor Antun Augustinčić and was produced in the Industrial Forge 'Orešković Marko' in Zagreb, the authorised workshop for the production of medals in Yugoslavia.

<sup>24</sup> See illustrations in section 38, 'Дописи и одлуки во врска со изработувањето на споменицата 'Илинден 1903', 1951 г.' in *Илинденски сведоштва*, в. 3, Скопје, 2016, pp. 520-522.

cultural policies with regards to the new Yugoslav identity and to express a national identity that drew upon momentous events from its pre-socialist history. The reasons for this was Macedonia's distinctive social, historical, economic and political circumstances.

Five centuries of Ottoman rule over Macedonia constituted a challenging historic period. Underdevelopment, the unequal inclusion into economic currents and its colonial status, restricted the economic growth and the development of Macedonia to such a degree, that it could rightly be considered as the economic 'backwater' of the Kingdom.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, after the partition of Macedonia as an aftermath of the Balkan Wars, the imperialistic Serbian regime, in the part of Macedonia which it incorporated into its territory - this part later became the Republic of Macedonia, conducted systematic denationalization and exploitation of the country and its people.<sup>26</sup> The Macedonian population was deprived of the opportunity for any kind of national, cultural or artistic development. It was a period when a foreign history and tradition was forcefully being imposed onto the Macedonian locality.<sup>27</sup>

The Yugoslav Communist Party fully acknowledged the problematic history of Macedonia and the fact that, for the first time in its long history, only during the Second World War Macedonia and its people had won the right to self-determination.

During the first celebration of the Ilinden Uprising, held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August 1945, at a time when there were still fighting in the northern part of the country, a Yugoslav delegation of high Party and State officials was in Skopje. Moša Pijade, a leading Party member and later President of the Federal Assembly of Yugoslavia, delivered the following speech, which clearly underscores the difficult past of the Macedonian people and the views of the Yugoslav Communist Party in regards to the Macedonian national identity and the position of the Ilinden Uprising within it.

'The Macedonian people living among the other nations were surrounded by free Balkan states... who only saw how to pillage and rob Macedonia. The Serbians, Bulgarians and the Greeks came to Macedonia in 1912 [during the two Balkan Wars] not to liberate it, but to divide it. Instead of freeing it, they broke her into three pieces. In each of the sections they sought to op-

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<sup>25</sup> For more on this period of Macedonian history see *Историја на Македонскиот народ*, ед. Михајло Апостолски, Институт за национална историја – Скопје, Скопје, 1969, particularly volume 1 section 4 and volume 2 section 5.

<sup>26</sup> For more on the colonisation practices and policies of the Serbian government see ЗОГРАФСКИ 1969 1, 2 and 3.

<sup>27</sup> For the re-naming of public buildings and spaces after people or localities taken from Serbian history, see ТОМОВСКИ И ПЕТКОВСКИ 2003, p. 33. There was also a practice of forceful change of personal names to reflect Serbian grammar and ethos.

press the Macedonian people and did not recognize it as a nation. The Serbians wanted to make Serbians out of it, the Bulgarians – Bulgarians, and the Greeks wanted to make Greeks.

Friends, I am happy that I belong to a political party who was the only one in the time of ex-Yugoslavia who stood up for the rights of the Macedonian people, who had the courage in the reactionary oppressive Yugoslavia to raise its voice for the freedom of Macedonia and of the Macedonian people. The only one in ex-Yugoslavia that said: They are not Serbians, nor Bulgarians, nor Greeks, but those are Macedonians.<sup>28</sup>

The Yugoslav Communist Party acknowledged the Macedonian national liberation movement and the historical events taking place at the turn of the century, as indispensable parts of the character, not only of the Macedonian people, but also of the People's Republic of Macedonia. Furthermore, those events were not only celebrated because of their national character, but because they were viewed as steps in a process which directly lead to their socialist present. 'Historians, politicians and artist gave to the Ilinden heroes a new role as predecessors of the pan-Yugoslav partisan movement or 1941-1944: so the Kruševo Republic was celebrated not only as Macedonian, but also as socialist and Yugoslav'.<sup>29</sup> In essence, The Yugoslav Communist Party saw the Macedonian nationalist liberation movement and the heroes of the Ilinden Uprising as precursors of itself.

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<sup>28</sup> The full speech was published in the daily newspaper *Нова Македонија*, n. 178, 02-03. 08.1945, p. 2.

<sup>29</sup> БРАУН 2010, p. 7.

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## BUILDING SOCIALIST ART TOGETHER: CULTURAL EXCHANGES BETWEEN ROMANIA, YUGOSLAVIA AND BULGARIA IN THE AFTERMATH OF WW2

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*Să construim împreună arta socialistă! Schimburile culturale între România, Iugoslavia și Bulgaria după Al Doilea Război Mondial.* Tratatetele bilaterale semnate între țările în care, după 1945, s-au instalat regimuri comuniste au contribuit la formarea unor relații culturale transnaționale privilegiate. Acestea au avut propria lor istorie de-a lungul perioadei comuniste fiind dependente de schimbările politice. Primele țări cu care România a semnat astfel de tratate au fost Iugoslavia și Bulgaria, ocazii cu care Josip Tito și Gheorghii Dimitrov au vizitat Bucureștiul. Schimburile culturale între țări constând în expoziții, vizite documentare și articole de presă au însoțit diversele negocieri politice, dar au și susținut reciproc impunerea și formarea unei noi concepții artistice pe care va fi altoit realismul socialist.

At the end of 1947 and the beginning of 1948 Josip Tito (17-19 December 1947) and Georgii Dimitrov (16-19 January 1948) came to Bucharest. They were the first communist leaders to visit Romania in the aftermath of the Second World War. Although their visits were acts of a larger plan of cooperation between the countries of the newly designed Eastern Bloc, they were also the heralds of a different political plan. Moreover, for the communist government in Bucharest it was the right time for being in the company of its peers. As Romania was just going through a transition period from monarchy to republic during which the Communist Party raised to full power, such official sojourns functioned as legitimacy tools for the new Romanian government and helped to build a new image of the country's postwar geopolitical position. Aware by their propaganda potential, the Romanian leaders organized an ample program for both visits, all generously covered by *Scântea*, the main mouthpiece of the party. Thus, the initial missions of Tito and Dimitrov to sign bilateral agreements grew into a much wider celebration of communist

power and prospects. Both Balkan leaders dedicated their multiple speeches held in Bucharest to the solidarity and transparency among all countries embracing the communist ideology, which propelled them toward a new historical stage.<sup>1</sup> While Tito kept his message along the general lines of peaceful cooperation in the Bloc, without failing to mention the leadership of USSR<sup>2</sup>, Dimitrov introduced a regional flavor by listing the bilateral agreement with Romania next to the ones with Balkan countries such as Yugoslavia and Albania.<sup>3</sup> Tito, whose claims for independence from Moscow had already been numerous, did not inform Stalin about his visit to Romania,<sup>4</sup> whereas Dimitrov's speech was reproved for its emphasis on federalization.<sup>5</sup> In spite of the grandiose welcoming of the Balkan leaders to Bucharest, the official discourse was different in each country. The Yugoslav press proclaimed the treaties with both Romania and Hungary as forwarding steps towards an extended union, which would have comprised the Balkan states as well as the Danubian ones.<sup>6</sup> On the contrary, the Romanian regime did not publicize at all its involvement in the federalization of the Balkans.

Creating the Eastern Bloc in the postwar era entailed an intricate process of transformation and adjustments of Soviet institutions and politics as well as a system of interstate political alliances. In the aftermath of the war, bilateral agreements between the countries with new communist regimes were a compulsory direction of their international politics. In spite of the fraternal ties and close cooperation claimed recurrently in the political discourse of the Cold War, the system of political, economic, and cultural agreements did not bring about instant unity to the Bloc. On the contrary, cooperation was not only time dependent, but also sensitive to political turnovers and to institutional or personal relationships. Cultural exchanges that came along the political treaties shared a similar discourse about solidarity and common goals within the Bloc. But, in certain cases, they were not mere accessories of political decision, but they constituted a kind of soft diplomacy, sometimes externalizing political negotiations more than the official discourse of politicians.

Although Romania signed bilateral treaties with all countries from the Bloc, the alliances with Yugoslavia and Bulgaria have been accompanied by

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<sup>1</sup> "Cuvântarea lui Gheorghii Dimitrov", *Scântea*, 19.01.1948, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> "Discursul Mareșalului Tito", *Scântea*, 19.12.1947, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> "Răspunsul lui Gheorghii Dimitrov", *Scântea*, 16.01.1948, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Geoffrey Swain, *Tito. A Biography*, London – New York, I. B. Tauris, 2011, p. 92.

<sup>5</sup> Georgi Dimitrov, *The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov 1933-1949*, ed. Ivo Banac, New Haven – London, Yale University Press, 2003, p. 434.

<sup>6</sup> Tanja Zimmermann, "The Visualization of the Third Way in Tito's Yugoslavia", Jérôme Bazin, Pascal Dubourg Glatigny, and Piotr Piotrowski (eds.), *Art beyond Borders. Artistic Exchange in Communist Europe (1945-1989)*, Budapest, Central University Press, 2016, p. 474.

far greater preparations and by special political events and more intense cultural exchanges. All these could have been a part of underground prospects for a Balkan federation. The project was not new. However, the aura and the powerful position held Marshal Tito seemed to bring it closer to accomplishment in the aftermath of the Second World War. The Yugoslavian leader sought to implement his own vision of socialism, as well as to counterbalance the ever growing influence of USSR over the Eastern European countries.<sup>7</sup> Even if Tito took as main partner Georgi Dimitrov, the leader of the Communist Party of Bulgaria, more countries have been involved or tempted by negotiations in view of this project. The Romanian engagement with the idea of a Balkan federation is still under-researched, and therefore little is known about the possible discussions between the communist leaders. Seen through the lens of artistic exchanges, the intention to collaborate with Bulgaria and Yugoslavia closer than with other countries from the Bloc seemed rather conspicuous. Leaders and officials of the three countries did not underestimate the political and diplomatic potential of artistic events since they attended exhibition openings, contributed to their catalogues, gave dinners in honor of guest artists, and saw to their reflection in the press. On each occasion, an art exhibition was opened that, as their titles suggested (*Three Romanian Painters in Yugoslavia*, December 1947; *Romanian Painters Present Bulgaria*, January 1948), argued for a better knowledge about one another countries and for the transfer of social and political experience in their common task of building socialism.

Artistic exchanges between socialist countries endorsed connections and cooperation between their artists' unions that were created on a Soviet model but with local material, artists and also artistic practices. Over time, the artists' unions along with other institutions created a network of official channels for art circulation within the Bloc and beyond. On the local front, the way in which the artistic relations between Romania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia advanced echoed the changes in the artistic field and also shaped new tasks inside artistic institutions that were being transformed under the pressure of the new regime. Moreover, the ways in which the artistic events were organized and perceived reflected how Romanian artists related to their own state and how they interpreted official signals and requirements. In addition to the changes underwent by artistic institutions and artists, investigating the context of Balkan artistic exchanges in the early postwar era shed a new light on the pre-history of Socialist Realism in the Eastern Bloc. More than a style, Socialist Realism was a model of institutional organization, which resulted from a process of adapting different Soviet art policies to the local realities.

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<sup>7</sup> Geoffrey Swain, *Tito. A Biography*, London – New York, I. B. Tauris, 2011, p. 92.

Going back to the period before the full accomplishment of the centralization of the art system has the advantage of disclosing various aspects of the process itself, as well as negotiations between the political and artistic institutions, their reversal or their failure. After this period, as the art system acquired stability, the debates, compromises and arrangements were less visible falling behind more constrictive rules regarding representation.

The Romanian-Balkan exchange started by inviting a small number of Bulgarian artists to the Official Salon resumed in 1945 and reached its peak towards the end of 1947, and in the first months of 1948. Firstly, a Bulgarian section was added to the Official Salon in Bucharest in 1945, which by the time was the largest national exhibition originating in the modern system of arts adopted in Romania from France in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Its new international character must have been, however, unexpected. The first postwar Salon put forward, for the very first time, new institutional structures supported the state, the Syndicate of Fine Arts in Romania (which was to become the Artists' Union in 1950) and the Bulgarian Artists' Union. In spite of apparently small changes, art did not seem to have left its track from before the war. The same kind of artistic exchange was taking place between Bucharest and Belgrade starting with 1947. This time, the involvement of the state could be clearly perceived as well as the partial appropriation of the Salon in order to convey political messages. The double introduction of the exhibition catalogue written by the Romanian minister of arts and information Ion Pas and the Yugoslav ambassador to Bucharest Dane Medacović appeared as a clear diplomatic gesture. Both of them argued for a more effective role of the artists in people's life and for their embarking on the postwar reconstruction in each of their countries. In exchange, as the Romanian minister promised, artists would gain the support of the state:

"It is the servants' of art great merit that, by understanding their mission in the life of people, whose sorrows and aspirations they share, they do not despair and, all along, it is the great merit of our democratic regime that, in spite of the overwhelming tasks of the present moment, undertakes the duty of stimulating artistic manifestations and of assisting the artists.<sup>8</sup>"

His Yugoslav counterpart underlined the role art can play in diplomatic relations:

"Yugoslav art do not close upon itself for its creators have a mission to accomplish. Just like they have let themselves modeled after their people's struggle, the artists are now contributing to consolidate the

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<sup>8</sup> Ion Pas, "Săptămâna artelor", *Salonul Oficial*, Bucharest, 1947, p. 7.

friendship with our neighboring peoples and, in particular, the friendship between Romania and Yugoslavia. The exhibition of Yugoslav art in Bucharest, which is not only the political and economic capital of Romanian people, but also its cultural center, will greatly support reciprocal understanding and mutual recognition opening an even larger path towards the collaboration between the Romanian people and the peoples of Yugoslavia.<sup>9</sup>

However, both the Romanian official and his Yugoslav colleague showed moderation in their discourses, flattering the artists rather than putting pressure on them. The discourse outran the production of art since, either from Romania or Yugoslavia, the exhibits did not turn down the genres and the representational style established by the interwar modernism. For the moment, the newly installed communist regimes sought to attract artists' collaboration and to appropriate any art, even created in the bourgeois past that could have been interpreted as showing any sign of political or social engagement.<sup>10</sup> Despite these public endorsements of each other's art policies, the course taken by the exchanges between Romania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria was to be altered soon by the changes in the international politics within the Bloc.

The artistic exchanges between Romania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia comprised multiple forms of cooperation throughout several years. Besides adding an international section to the Official Salons, artists and writers pay mutual visits and upon their return, special exhibitions were organized and dedicated articles were published. Such visits constituted the first version of the so-called documentation trips that were to be instrumental in the process of production of Socialist Realist works. They were meant to put artists in direct contact with the new socialist reality and to provide them with subjects able to represent it appropriately.

There were a few groups of Romanian artists visiting Bulgaria and Yugoslavia and the-other way-around throughout the years 1945-1949, but their organization is not entirely retraceable. The trips took place at different moments in time, either by groups or individual artists. Such journeys from a country with closed borders to a foreign land could have been counted among the benefits offered to artists by the new official institutions. The documentary trips were a mixture of artistic residency, cultural tourism, cultural diplomacy and institutional experience.

The trips were organized differently by each country. Every trip entailed a mandatory institutional exchange. For instance, artists Mihailo Petrov

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<sup>9</sup> Dane Medacović, "Arta iugoslavă astăzi", *Salonul Oficial*, Bucharest, 1947, p. 11-12.

<sup>10</sup> For Yugoslavia see: Carol S. Lily, *Power and Persuasion. Ideology and Rhetoric in Communist Yugoslavia 1944-1953*, Boulder, Colorado – Oxford, Westview Press, 2001, p. 95.

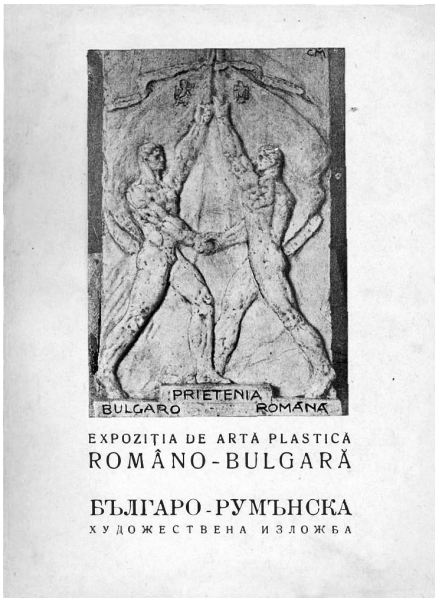
and Pivo Karamantijević paid a visit to the Union of Patriots, an antifascist organization which had a branch at the School of Fine Arts in Bucharest.<sup>11</sup> Also, Romanian artists were received at the Artists' Union in Sofia which they praised very much for the benefits given to its members. As one can read between the lines of the articles published on the occasion of every visit in Romanian newspapers and magazines, and also by taking into account the sites represented by the works displayed in the official exhibitions, the documentary trips were conceived as propaganda tours meant to convey a favorable image of the communist regime. One visit, made by Bulgarian artists in Romania in 1946, is well documented by articles and works. They were taken on a tour that connected the very few industrial sites of the country, such as Breaza (oil industry), Brașov (machine and equipment industry), Hunedoara (steel plant), and Ghelar (mining). The titles of the works selected for the future show communicated the exact objectives of the journey accomplishing the mission set for the new artist to take direct contact with reality in order to be able to represent it. The represented reality was also 'new' since it shifted (or attempted to do so) the gears of the local identity from a rural image to an industrial one. In fact, putting forth industrial development in a country, whose economy was largely based on agricultural production, offered an illustration of communist conceptions about modernization and social strata. The artworks were thus not representing reality as such but future prospects or what Andrei Jdanov had called "reality in its revolutionary development".

From today's perspective, in spite of their subject matter belonging to the propaganda repertoire, they seem far away from the style, activism and representation type that one usually associates with engaged art and Socialist Realism. The representations – paintings, drawings or watercolors – were mainly distant, non-narrative images, which rarely depicted industrial work as such, making use of modernist means of representation, drawn particularly from post-impressionism. On the contrary, the industrial work was replaced by landscapes or urban views, and sometimes even portraits featuring industrial constructions in the background (Bencio Obrechkov, *Urban Landscape in Romania*; Zlatiu Boyadjev, *Hunedoara*, both in The National Museum of Art, Bucharest). Furthermore, the people portrayed in landscapes or in individual scenes were far from the heroic muscled figure of the socialist realist worker. Instead, peasants or peasant like figures populated their works, linking back to the images of national specificity that were central to the art scenes of both countries in the period prior to the Second World War. Beyond this continuity, the representations of peasants were revealing for the actual social structure in the visited places in which the percentage of industrial

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<sup>11</sup> Matilde Ulmu, "Artiști plastici iugoslavi, oaspeți ai Uniunii Patrioților", *Victoria*, 15.09.1947, 3.

workers was very low (David Peretz, *Hundoara*, National Museum of Art, Bucharest).



Catalogue of the Romanian-Bulgarian exhibition, 1947. On the cover: Cornel Medrea, Romanian-Bulgarian Friendship

The major action, carefully prepared by both sides, gathered Bulgarian and Romanian artists in a number of occasions and reached its climax with an exhibition, which travelled from Bucharest to Sofia in 1947. Its illustrated catalogue was an exception in the aftermath of the war, when art publications were poor or inexistent. Equally exceptional was its trilingual text (Romanian, Bulgarian and French) that testified to a wider international scope outpacing simple bilateral connections.<sup>12</sup> The exchange of works, which were to enter state museums in both countries, has completed but not concluded the efforts to shape cultural diplomacy under the conditions of new artistic systems directed entirely by the state. The close link with the policies of the regimes was underlined by the exhi-

hibition's honorific committees, containing official hierarchies headed by the Romanian and Bulgarian prime ministers, Petru Groza and Georgi Dimitrov, while the artists were assigned only the back of the list. The catalogue was again proclaiming, by verbal and visual means, the friendship connecting both countries considering the event "a new achievement in the life of Balkans."<sup>13</sup> Cornel Medrea's two projects for sculptural reliefs, featured in the exhibition, represented the Romanian-Bulgarian alliance as the fraternal bond of two muscled male figures uniting their hands (ill. 1), and respectively as the embrace of two vaguely peasant-like female and male characters. All the works selected for the Bulgarian-Romanian exhibition shared an intermediary nature between old and new, between modernist representation and socialist realist subject-matter, between the personal choice of the artist and the pressures of art institutions. They configured an initial stage in the pro-

<sup>12</sup> *Expoziție de artă plastică româno-bulgară. Pictură – Sculptură – Grafică*, Bucharest (April-May) – Sofia (May-June), 1947.

<sup>13</sup> Dimo Kazasov (ministry of information and arts), [Introduction], *Expoziție de artă plastică româno-bulgară*, p. 8. News about the exhibition were published in Bulgaria under the umbrella of Balkan encounters. See "Confluences balcaniques", *Bulletin d'informations culturelles*, Ministère de l'Information et des Arts, Direction des Arts, Sofia, 29, 1947, p. 3.

cess of instilment of Socialist Realism, which was soon to be overcome and forgotten.



Jules Perahim, *Tito*,  
*Contemporanul*, 28.11.1947

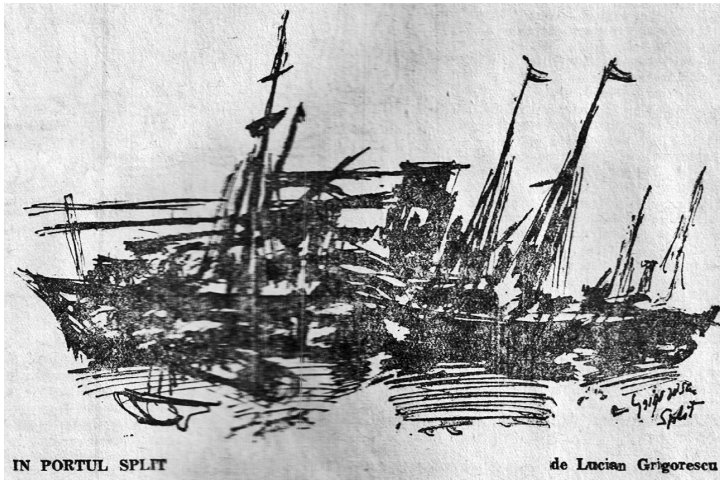
Although there is lesser information about the trips taken by Romanian and Yugoslav artists, one can detect a similar effort to build a new postwar image focused on the reconstruction of the country under the guidance of Marshall Tito (ill. 2). Not only the works made by Ligia Macovei, Eugen Ispir and Lucian Grigorescu during their stay in Yugoslavia in 1947, but also several articles written by Romanian writers who were also invited, possibly in the same group, emphasized the same topics: the extraordinary development and recovery after the losses of the war taking place on different worksites and the admirable heroism of partisans. *Contemporanul*, the main cultural magazine in postwar Romania, dedicated more issues to different cultural aspects of Yugoslavia from poetry to art and art history.

Authors from both countries united their voices to praise the optimism of the postwar era as embodied by the Yugoslavian reconstruction sites. Most pages were illustrated with militant graphic works by Đorđe Andrević Kun. In an article in which he recounted his visit in Yugoslavia, Romanian avant-garde writer Geo Bogza compared it to Spain altering to some extent the cliché image conveyed by the general discourse. He outlined instead the survival of the past into the present: “All bits and pieces on these worksites are modern and look toward the future, but in the songs voiced by people gripping a steering wheel or an industrial lever resurges all that has been primitive and wild in their past.”<sup>14</sup>

The exhibition taking place in Bucharest featured only three Romanian artists who had been sent on an official trip to Yugoslavia in the frame of the cultural exchanges set out by the communist regimes of both countries. Just like the Bulgarian artists in Romania, they toured certain places especially selected to match the ideal image of the country. But, the most consistent chronicle of the exhibition used this ideal image in order to criticize the artists.<sup>15</sup> Two of them, Lucian Grigorescu (ill. 3) and Eugen Ispir, were accused

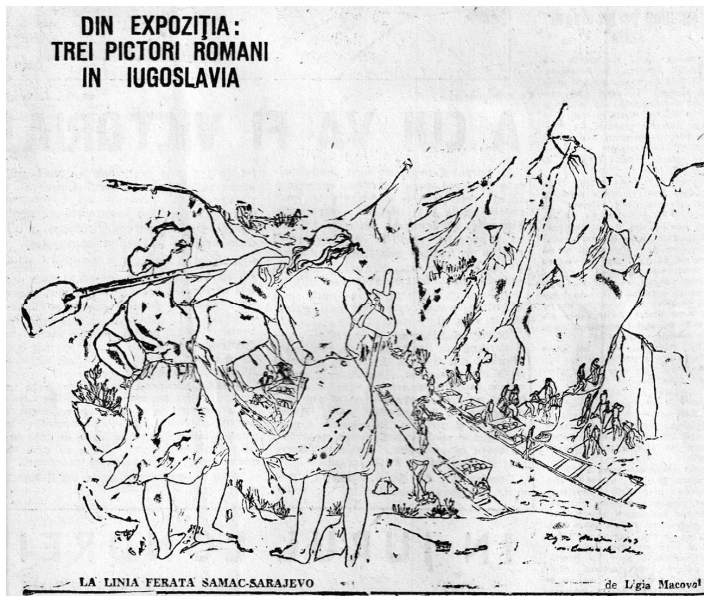
<sup>14</sup> Geo Bogza, “Călătorind prin Iugoslavia”, *Contemporanul*, 28.11.1947, p.1.

<sup>15</sup> Radu Bogdan, “Trei pictori români în Iugoslavia”, *Contemporanul*, 5.12.1947, p. 5.



Lucian Grigorescu, Harbour of Split, *Contemporanul*, 5.12.1947

of “not seeing Tito’s Yugoslavia” because they brought back only landscapes from their journey. They had thus failed to fulfill the requirements of the engaged art which called the artists to adhere to the socialist reality. Unlike them, Lucia Macovei represented in her drawings “the Yugoslavia that utterly vibrates under the ambition of its youthful forces to rise high. Enthusiastic Yugoslavia, heroic Yugoslavia, new Yugoslavia animated by Tito’s legendary figure” (ill. 4)<sup>16</sup>.



Ligia Macovei, On the railway from Samac to Sarajevo, *Contemporanul*, 5.12.1947

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*.

The 1948 the Romanian Salon was expected to be a highpoint of the artistic exchanges within the Bloc, by extending the invitation to more fraternal countries such as Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Furthermore, some of the subject matters displayed by the artworks have been designed especially on this occasion such as Eugen Gâscă's painting, *Welcoming Comrade Tito*.<sup>17</sup> But in less than a year, state's requirements for art had begun to change, particularly after the proclamation of the People's Republic of Romania. In the meanwhile, Yugoslavia was expelled from the Bloc so that it could not be a part of the exhibition anymore. Finally, the Salon was banned stating even more clearly that not only the international balance of power had been reassessed, but also that the relationship between the communist regime, now fully in power, and the artists had taken a new course.

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<sup>17</sup> National Archives of Romania, Ministry of Arts and Information 1948-1950 collection, file 135/1948, p. 23.

TRANSDISCIPLINARITY AND TRANSMEDIALITY  
AS A POSSIBLE MODEL OF PROTECTING  
THE MOVING CULTURAL HERITAGE  
(CULTURAL POLICY, DIGITALIZATION, CONTEMPORARY ART)

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Transdisciplinarity, as a separate research strategy in which the boundaries of different disciplines are erased, can offer a model for eventual protection of movable cultural heritage, primarily in museums and galleries, creating a holistic approach, or an approach in which there is causality or interdependence of all parts within the whole, ie. museology would not be taken into consideration without cultural policies, digitization implementation, conservation, management, contemporary art etc.

The transdisciplinarity in the given constellation would mean determining a group of axioms that are common to all disciplines, which will then be used as a system, a base for exploring and possible finding the model for protection of the movable cultural heritage. The individual approach to each of these disciplines to the heritage covers the problems selectively, superficially and non-strategically. The cultural heritage itself is multimedia: artifacts and archaeological findings are made of different material, written documents are part of the cultural heritage, then images in various techniques and materials, sculptures in various techniques and materials, etc., but if these same artifacts are "translated" or adapted in another medium become transmedial, and thus more easily accessible and easier to be consumed, which can more intensively affect the primary protection of the heritage and develop a greater awareness of its cultural meaning and importance.

I have taken cultural policies, digitalization and contemporary art as disciplines to be researched, since they are often correlated (even opposed) in a variety of ways or dependent on/with cultural heritage. Cultural policies build "systems" that need to enforce the protection

of cultural heritage, often without direct determining the key issues acquired or acknowledged through accurate experience working with heritage; digitization is the necessary integration, technological modernization and keeping pace with the time, but also a necessary discipline that will memorize the cultural heritage and all documentation related to it, thus protecting it from oblivion and making it accessible and open to the public; and finally the contemporary art - divergent to cultural heritage, which through a certain transdisciplinarity in the approach, can offer interesting models for a different promotion of the two final products to the public (cultural heritage and the contemporary concept of artistic critical thinking)..

Key words: transdisciplinarity, transmediality, cultural heritage, cultural policies, digitalization, contemporary art.

## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this text is to try to propose the method of implementing transdisciplinarity and transmediality as a platform for protection of the cultural heritage (movable and non-movable). How? The idea is to implement those two systems (separately or together) primarily in the cultural policies as one of the most important strands for protection of cultural wealth, and then to use it through digitization or by other non-traditional contemporary forms of protecting cultural heritage. The text intentionally consist of several formally separate approaches and not connected essays (the first explains the insiders mode of movable cultural heritage – the National Gallery of Macedonia; second describes the most important terms being used – transdisciplinarity and transmediality; third uses excerpts from the states cultural strategies and laws, some addressing the malformations of the relevant ones, and other emphasizing the new ideas and approaches for creation of the improved cultural policies; than we skip to the explanation of the digitization and protection of the cultural heritage through contemporary art exemplifying two very relevant cases related to the very core sample of movable cultural heritage – the National Gallery of Macedonia).

## MOVABLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

(Collection of the National Gallery of Macedonia)

National Gallery of Macedonia is one of the most important art institutions in the country, and this is the institution where I am curating. That is the reason why I do start this text with it and take this institution as an example of one of the most relevant samples regarding the question of a movable

cultural heritage. The National Gallery of Macedonia was established in 1948 in DautPasinAmam, and is actually the first / oldest gallery in Macedonia after the Second World War. Today the main activities of the National Gallery of Macedonia are museum and gallery activities, and many different cultural events are maintained in its facilities (concerts, banquets, conferences, discussions, etc.). It consists of three facilities:

*Daut Pasha Hamam*, dating from the second half of the XV century, and is a rare example of a secular Islamic architecture. The building was declared as a monument of culture of the Republic Macedonia. It currently houses the permanent national exhibition of artworks (paintings, sculptures, installations) conceptualized in 2001 and it presents art in the period from XIX until XXI century, as well as icons (from XIV until XIX century), presented in 8 exhibition halls. On display are nearly 200 works, predominantly owned by the National Gallery of Macedonia, a small part temporarily borrowed from other institutions, in order to obtain the most representative examples of the contemporary Macedonian art. DautPasinHamam have 3 storage rooms. The size of the Hamam is 900 m<sup>2</sup> and is surrounded with a yard.

*Chiftehamam* is from the second half of the 15th century as a gift from Isa Beg. It is also a rare example of Islamic secular architecture and has been declared a monument of culture of the Republic Macedonia. As its name implies, it is a double Hamam - is divided into male and female part and is composed of two almost identical parts with separate entrances. This facility significantly damaged in the Skopje earthquake in 2000 was assigned to the National Gallery of Macedonia, when it is renovated and became a gallery space. There we constantly hold various exhibitions of contemporary art production, as well as other types of cultural events. This house has two storages for paintings and sculptures. The facility has an area of 1056 m<sup>2</sup>.

*Multimedia center Mala stanica* started to function as a part of the National Gallery of Macedonia in 2005. Built in 1924, for the usage of the railways, but obtained by the military. This so called industrial heritage has an area of 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> on two floors and is designed for multimedia space with different content (exhibitions, screenings, presentations, etc.).

Apart from these three grandiose buildings, in 2015 the National Gallery of Macedonia is awarded with the *Memory House of Lazar Licenski*, as a fourth facility, which haven't been renovated yet.

The National Gallery of Macedonia numbers more than 2000 artworks in its collection, out of which we have a small collection of icons from XIV – XIX c. pronounced as a cultural heritage of first category, a collection of artworks from the ex-Yugoslav countries, as well with works pronounced to be from the I<sup>st</sup> category of cultural heritage, and a collection of artworks (pain-

tings, sculptures, drawings, graphic prints, installations, photography, video works etc.) dating from the end of the XIX c. to the beginning of XXI c. among which a great number as well bearing the sign of a cultural heritage from Ist category. Just a small part of them is presented on the permanent show on a display in the gallery space of Daut Pasha Hamam (around 200) and the remaining are stored in 5 inadequate storages, that doesn't fit neither the minimum criteria for collecting and protection of cultural heritage. That is a problem that lasts for decades, it has been pointed out and accentuated to the highest authorities, but unfortunately nothing was done.

The general situation of protection of the cultural heritage (unmovable, movable and non-material) is very problematic and is mainly related with the wrong and inapplicable cultural policies, the administrative and rough low for culture and cultural protection, bad institutional organization, lack of professionals etc. How can we work more intensively on pointing out the priorities and preserve the cultural wealth that we own as a country?

The proposed paper discusses the possibilities of using the transdisciplinarity and transmediality as a key platforms for some possible solutions for protection of movable cultural heritage (in the case of the National Gallery of Macedonia).

## TERMS EXPLANATION

### *Transdisciplinarity*

In order to discuss the term of transdisciplinarity, what is disciplinarity? Disciplinarity sets knowledge into separate, and in many cases, dichotomous disciplines, sub-disciplines and specializations and as a result fragments knowledge. This way of thinking creates definite divides between disciplines. This means that there is a gap in the system requiring a way to describe research that does not fall clearly into one discipline or was pollinated by other disciplines. This type of research is often classed as either multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary research. Although this research paper focusses on transdisciplinary research, providing definitions of interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinary gives us an important starting point for discussing and exploring transdisciplinarity. It is difficult to discuss any one of the terms without referring to the differences between them because they are so closely related.

Nicolescu Basarab writes about the differences between inter-, multi- and transdisciplinarity in "Transdisciplinarity – past, present and future" as a difference between the goals of the three. "Multidisciplinarity concerns itself with studying a research topic in not just one discipline only, but in several at

the same time. Any topic in question will ultimately be enriched by incorporating the perspective of several disciplines. The multidisciplinary approach transgresses disciplinary boundaries while its goal remains limited to within the framework of disciplinary research.

Interdisciplinarity has a different goal than multidisciplinary. It concerns the transfer of methods from one discipline to another. Like multidisciplinary, interdisciplinarity transgresses the boundaries of disciplines while its goal still remains within the framework of disciplinary research. Interdisciplinarity even has the capacity to generate new disciplines, like quantum cosmology and chaos theory.

Transdisciplinarity concerns itself with what is between the disciplines, across the different disciplines and beyond all disciplines. Its goal is the understanding of the present world, of which one of the imperatives is the unity of knowledge.”<sup>1</sup>

I feel that this is significant because it implies that transdisciplinarity stands apart from multi- and interdisciplinarity as the one practice that values the outcome of the research over the interests of the disciplines involved.

In a report from a colloquium that happened in Australia in 1998 Solomon Benatar wrote: “I understand the concept of transdisciplinarity as an integrated approach to complex problems using the methodology and insights from a range of disciplines with differing perspectives on the problem under consideration. Clearly, the term needs to be distinguished from what is meant by multi- and interdisciplinarity, but these three terms can be seen as a continuum, with transdisciplinarity as the most evolved version of an interaction that transcends individual disciplines.”<sup>2</sup>

### *Transmediality*

The term *media* has traditionally been used as a label for mainstream news outlets. More recently, its use has been reclaimed from such negative and political connotation, now commonly used to refer to the variety of multimodal (and increasingly digital) communication forms.

Plural form of the singular *medium*, media are simply ‘ways’ of communicating ideas and is a cause and effect of **digital literacy**: letters, novels, magazines, emails, paintings, videos, and countless other forms can be

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<sup>1</sup> Basarab Nicolescu (ed.), *Transdisciplinarity - Theory and Practice*, Hampton Press, Cresskill, New Jersey, 2005, 143-144.

<sup>2</sup> Solomon Benatar, “Perspectives from Physicians and Medical Scientists”, In *Transdisciplinarity: reCreating Integrated Knowledge*, edited by Margareta Somerville, David J Rapport, McGill-Queen's University Press, Quebec, 2000, 171.

considered media. It can come in classic or modern forms, formal and informal, all boiling down to the basic human need to communicate.

Today, media is in a brilliant state of flux. There is frankly so much of it—so many forms, so many platforms, so much consumption. Notions of fluid texts, hypertexts, and quasi-intertextuality preside can sometimes overwhelm the content itself. (McLuhan might nod his head and insist that the “media is the message.”)

And with this fluidity comes a kind of passing of the guard in terms of pop culture forms. Videogames have surpassed classic media forms like music, DVDs, and now movies increasing our interaction with narrative texts, and gamifying media consumption.

The definition of transmedia is a narrative that extends beyond multiple media forms that also plays to the strength those forms. It may or may not be interactive. This makes it possible to have interactive video game portions of a narrative married to prose-rich novellas combined with smart use of specific social media platforms, all collaborating strategically to tell a compelling story while offering the potential for innovative use of crowdsourcing and audience engagement.

Transmediality is a term used in intermediality studies, narratology, and new media studies (in particular in the collocation ‘transmedia storytelling’ derived from Henry Jenkins, to describe phenomena which are non-media specific, meaning not connected to a specific medium, and can therefore be realized in a large number of different media, such as literature, art, film, or music. The medium from which a given phenomenon originated is either irrelevant or impossible to determine; it is not an adaptation of a phenomenon from one medium to another.

Jenkins warns that the term “transmedia” *per se* means “across media” and may be applied to superficially similar, but different phenomena.<sup>3</sup>

## TRANSDISCIPLINARITY AND TRANSMEDIALITY THROUGH CULTURAL POLICIES

Cultural policy is the government actions, laws and programs that regulate, protect, encourage and financially (or otherwise) support activities related to the arts and creative sectors, such as painting, sculpture, music, dance, literature, and filmmaking, among others and culture, which may involve activities related to language, heritage and diversity. Generally, this involves

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<sup>3</sup> Terry Heick, The Definition Of Transmedia, *The Future Of Learning*, (June 19, 2019), <https://www.teachthought.com/the-future-of-learning/the-definition-of-transmedia/> [accessed on 4.09.2019]

governments setting in place processes, legal classifications, regulations, legislation and institutions (e.g., galleries, museums, libraries, opera houses, etc.) which promote and facilitate cultural diversity and creative expressions in a range of art forms and creative activities. Cultural policies vary from one country to another, but generally they aim to improve the accessibility of arts and creative activities to citizens and promote the artistic, musical, ethnic, sociolinguistic, literary and other expressions of all people in a country. In some countries, especially since the 1970s, there is an emphasis on supporting the culture of Indigenous peoples and marginalized communities and ensuring that cultural industries (e.g., filmmaking or TV production) are representative of a country's diverse cultural heritage and ethnic and linguistic demographics.

The current cultural environment in the Republic of Macedonia does not provide solid bases for systematic strategic planning based on clear indicators of the level of cultural development, as well as on separate strategic development documents in other areas. There is only general data on the number of institutions, their staff and outdated funding and accountability systems. There is no serious research on cultural capital, and no perceptions of uneven cultural development. Also, the need for participation in culture is not well understood. Even statistics in the field of culture are quite uncertain. At the same time, Macedonian culture is faced with deep division and partisanship, with a strong undemocratic legacy and with wrong and failed cultural policies.

The main weaknesses in actual cultural policy in Macedonia are: reactive cultural policy; creating cultural policies is not transparent enough; setting goals and priorities of cultural policy is not supported by appropriate indicators. Analysis, research and calculations, and the impact and results of cultural policy are rarely subject to evaluation; legislative acts are adopted without previously conducted assessments and analysis of the situation. needs and outlined strategic goals, which make them largely non-linear and contradictory.

The attitude towards immovable cultural heritage has changed dramatically in the last decade, especially with regard to the use of heritage as a means of realization of the political interests of the central government. This is reflected in the numerous unprofessional changes in legislation, the diversion of financial protection policy, the tide of reconstruction and imitation of historic buildings, the treatment of contemporary heritage, and so on. An additional problem are legal solutions introducing conservation tenders, liberalization of access to the profession and inadequate criteria for obtaining a conservation license, the ability to conserve construction firms, the redefiniti-

on of professional staff as administrative workers. All the recent amendments to the Law on Protection of Cultural Heritage (2004) make the law an offensive conglomerate of legal provisions that regulate the sphere of cultural heritage protection which by nature is a by-law or has already been laid down in the bylaws. As such, this law has become almost useless for regulating what its primary purpose is - the protection of cultural heritage.

Inadequate state conservation policy results in the loss of a range of valuable cultural goods. Hence the necessity of adopting a new law. The new law on cultural heritage protection will define the methods of cultural heritage protection and the competencies needed to implement integrated heritage conservation. The law will regulate integrated protection, with emphasis on the special nature of heritage and its social significance, and will be implemented through development planning and other measures of central and local government. All of this calls for the need for fundamental changes, especially in terms of new policies, research and education, which will be applied at different levels. The cultural heritage in the Republic of Macedonia needs to change the basic attitudes and approaches, introduce appropriate education, amend the laws and bylaws, improve the practical processes and methods of work and strengthen the political will for fundamental changes in the conservation system. It is necessary to establish a functional institutional framework for the protection of cultural heritage and to create legal and organizational conditions for the development of strategic visions for sustainable development.

The main priorities are: development of a strategy for protection of cultural heritage, reparation of a new law on protection of cultural heritage, revision of the status and role of the Cultural Heritage Protection Office; assessment of the situation in the institutions for protection of cultural heritage and redefining their role; revision and deletion from the register of all illegally listed monuments and objects of the project "Skopje 2014", which by their nature cannot represent cultural heritage; preventing crime through coordinated cooperation between the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Interior and the establishment of specialized police units, as well as the development of a national action plan for the prevention of cultural heritage from crime (obligation introduced in the 2004 Law on Protection of Cultural Heritage); encouragement of study programs for specialists in conservation and restoration of movable and immovable heritage; adoption of standards for the conservation of cultural heritage and development of expert methodological manuals, guidelines and norms for the conservation of all individual types of cultural property, as well as adoption of more advanced and up-to-date standards for the preparation of conservation studies and cultural heritage documentation; establishing professional methods of identification, recording and

valorisation of cultural landscapes, initiating an integrated approach in their protection and training of the staff responsible for their development and implementation; establishing mechanisms for more active cooperation between all institutions responsible for the protection of cultural and natural heritage.

Culture is not an isolated part of a society that operates according to its own laws, but is an integral part of the overall development processes. Sustainable development, particularly in culture, is directly related to the degree of democratic freedoms and rights, to the reduction of ethnic tensions and to the rise of the general standard of living. Cultural development is conditioned by a number of specific factors (tradition, inherited patterns and values, etc.) but primarily by total socio-psychic, social and economic movements. It is planned on the basis of appropriate methodology, interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary research, data and situation analysis.

The planning (short, medium, long term) of cultural development should be based on indicators of past and present conditions and an analysis of cultural practice and citizens' needs. That, in turn, implies a professionally equipped state body that will be at the height of this task.

The main priorities in this segment are: establishing culture as an important integral part of all general development plans of society; developing awareness of culture as an important factor in the general development of society; putting culture at the very heart of executive policy on important issues such as enhancing social cohesion; boosting productivity, tourism development, etc.; activation of the existing Department for Strategic Planning, Cultural Policies and Monitoring within the Ministry of Culture (which had no staff members so far) and its transformation into a Department for Cultural Policies and Development; initiation of a research institute - Institute for Cultural Policies and Development (in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science).<sup>4</sup>

This are some excerpt from the new cultural strategy for the years 2018-2022 that the new Government implemented, but it still doesn't have any action plan of its implementation. But the important part that goes together with the proposed platform is the need of transdisciplinarity and established methodology, together with research, discussions and digging into the real problems in order to create an implementable and valuable cultural policy that will change the situation with the culture in Macedonia and set the priorities (protection and valuation of cultural heritage according to European concepts, wide availability of culture and equal and active public participation, development of regional and international cultural co-operation, etc.).

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<sup>4</sup> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gfzA76RBOTS1\\_AoofNn62n352E3nr8kB/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gfzA76RBOTS1_AoofNn62n352E3nr8kB/view) [accessed on 2.09.2019]

## DIGITALIZATION

The critical role that digitization plays in cultural heritage initiative was recognized in European Union's eEurope 2002 Action plan, aimed at stimulating European initiative to realize opportunities created by the digital technologies, and summarized by DigiCult 2003 (Digital Heritage and Digital Content): "Digitization contributes to the conservation and preservation of heritage and scientific resources; it creates new educational opportunities; it can be used to encourage tourism; and it provides ways of improving access by citizen to their patrimony".

Digital materials: data bases, catalogues, virtual reconstructions, web pages, e-mail, digital photographs, Internet, DVD and CD-ROMs can be made available to a broader audience than those who have the sources or ability to travel to see the collections. Some institutions have a policy of creating an electronic image of every item in their collection and placing it on their Website. The National Gallery in London is one organization that has done so ([www.nationalgallery.org.uk/](http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/)). Other possibilities are to collect electronic images based around exhibition themes, or to make educational modules, as it was done by the Metropolitan Museum of Arts in New York ([www.metmuseum.org/](http://www.metmuseum.org/)). We cite Michael S. Shapiro, Secretary and General Council International Intellectual Property Institute, Washington, DC (in: *Managing Museum Digital Assets: A resource guide for museums*): "The digital future is bright for museums. Many museums are beginning to mount "virtual exhibition" using the most advanced technologies. Museum educators are bringing cultural treasures directly into the classroom for use by students and teachers. World cultural heritage information is becoming more widely available for tourists and scholarly use." The public response has been overwhelming. Some museums count more attendance in cyberspace than on Earth, with the international museum audience estimated to be 1 billion. The Internet offers to cultural institutions possibilities of distribution of information that are relatively limited in costs and their public is enlarged geographically and on a social level. From one hand, the presence of digitized cultural heritage on Internet allows the spread of itself on a wide area and for the other, the tools for user, fitted to personal needs of the user himself.<sup>5</sup>

What is the situation alike with the digitization in Macedonia, and more specifically what is the situation alike with the digitization with the catalogues, documentation, photos, memory and possible the cultural heritage in the National Gallery of Macedonia?

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<sup>5</sup> George Pavlidis, Anestis Koutsoudis, Fotis Arnaoutoglou, Vassilios Tsioukas, Christodoulos Chamzas, *Methods for 3D digitization of Cultural Heritage*, <http://www.ipet.gr/~akoutsou/docs/M3DD.pdf>, [accessed on 2.09.2019]

In the cultural policy there were talks about digitization of the cultural heritage on national level even more than a decade ago, but the process of implementing it went very slowly, almost without any applicable improvement in that field. For me it is more than a delight that a contemporary art group OPA have initiated and is still working on the biggest and most important online collection or archive of notes related with the Macedonian “contemporary” art. The Zaum Archive arises from the need to gather in one place, and to offer online use, as much as possible about contemporary Macedonian fine art. Designed for students, researchers, artists, historians, journalists and anyone interested in fine art. The archive is exclusively educational and non-commercial. OPA’s view is that knowledge upgraded over generations is a public good and they consider access to it unfair.

For this purpose, materials have been collected at the beginning of building this archive, found in free circulation online. In the second phase they communicate directly with authors and institutions, with the aim of making their materials and archives publicly available through Zaum.

The archive is organized into posts (“posts”). Each post is dedicated to an event (exhibition, manifestation, book publishing, daily newspaper reviews, etc.) and contains brief information and additional material such as documentation (catalog, poster, leaflet, photographs, video, etc.). Content search is enabled through several filters or categories (event type, institution type, author name, discipline, type of documentation, period, venue).

The archive is edited, organized and digitized by: Denis Saraginovski, Slobodanka Stevcevska, Aneta Redzepagic, Nadica Tolevska and, in the beginning, Vladimir Jancevski. The realization of the Zaum archive is made possible by the “OPA Foundation”. OPA Foundation is the second parallel identity derived from OPA. It focuses on developing practical utilitarian solutions and constructive art practices as an alternative to critical ones. It arose from the necessity for a direct contribution to the community and with a strong belief that solidarity and education are crucial for today’s world.

<https://www.opafondacija.org/zaum/> in a transdisciplinary and transmedial way make an excellent blend of contemporary art and the mechanism of archiving and digitization as one of the important measures for the preservation of cultural heritage.

## CONTEMPORARY ART

The third discourse I would like to address is the connection between contemporary art and the protection of cultural heritage or their transdisciplinarity and transmedial causality as a possible platform seen through the

example of the latest project held in the National Gallery, in collaboration with the independent curator Ivana Vaseva, is the project entitled "The unnamed is the answer". At the core of this project lies the following idea: We live in a time where choice and the way the past is presented is crucial to the democratization of modern society. History is a collective memory that gives meaning to our political existence and action. Whether we lead our life and professional endeavors in emphasizing public, community and development, or towards greater individualization and growth, typical of today's global capitalism, depends on how we value the past and where we go to create history...

Seen from a postcolonial perspective, institutionalized modernism, as still the dominant paradigm, authority, and assumption of knowledge, is the result of colonial, or in this case, voluntarily accepted self-colonized rule, which contradicts wishes and reality, but not authorship, but authorship. long-term maintenance and self-empowerment. It manifests itself in the ways in which art is produced, distributed, perceived and presented, and strongly perpetuates the economic growth typical of the Western modern project.

The "Anonymous is the answer" starts at this point. "The Anonymous is the Answer" is an exhibition of constant resistance to the world we live in and is built on resilient political subjectivity. They talk about the importance of interrupting / contextualizing existing forms of knowledge and acting as crucial to the processes of decolonization of knowledge within the art institution. The exhibition tests the limits of endurance, not in the physical sense of the word, but in resonating within the boundaries of the canon and the past, as well as in the aesthetic representation, whose artistic gestures sometimes appear as random events or reactions. It also speaks of the loss of identity in identity and the introduction of concepts of community and solidarity.

The works are set between a network of memory materials that should add further meaning to a multilayered, multi-temporal and diachronic image that is happening to us right now, here and now. "

This exhibition is set inside a permanent display, in some way as an explanation, in some way as a subversion, or above all as a criticism of the inefficiency and undemocratic approach of our institutions. It includes documentary and memoirs by 6 contemporary artists Goran Djordjevic - featured behind the premise - MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART in Berlin and in collaboration with Walter Benjamin, then Eli GA (performance artist) (multimedia artist from Albania and Italy), DOPLINGER (Belgrade), OLIVER MUSOVIC (Skopje), FILIP Jovanovski (Bitola / Skopje).

This type of exhibit pushes the boundaries and shakes the comfort zone where institutional politics are blurred and offers a critical interpretation

of the essential meaning of museums, which is the preservation of cultural heritage, its affirmation and presentation.<sup>6</sup>

## CONCLUSION

As a conclusion I would like to sum up that in order to understand each other we have to start listen to each other. In order to create better conditions for protection of our history, identity and culture we have to learn that not just one way is true, that not just one approach is wright, that not just one opinion is the limit. We need to learn more and provide more for the best of the protection of cultural heritage. The examples of overlapping of the disciplines and media, that are on first hand unreliable, can be very productive, very helpful, extremely useful for different aspects of affirmation, valuation, protection, providingadequate policy normative that will help the institutions and individuals, and finally making better conditions and concepts for making the cultural heritage closer to the wider audience. But let's not forget that we should not discuss and criticize just the big macro narrative, but bare on mind that with our small examples and micro narrative we can help the formation of some first pioneering moves of improvement of the circumstances in which we would like to work and dill with.

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# ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOPOGRAPHY OF THE OLD TOWNS AND FORTRESSES AROUND LAKE OHRID

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If we want to be serious in our intentions, to know, protect, affirm, and maximally activate the rich ancient civilization in the cultural and tourist development of the Republic of Macedonia,<sup>1</sup> the basic precondition is to prepare precise textual and technical archeological documentation for all old Macedonian cities and fortifications. This documentation includes: basic location data, cultural horizon content, archeological plans of old towns and fortresses, significant archaeological artifacts (ceramics, metal, other), basic gallery photographs, and preliminary conclusions on fortress functions and classification in the context of the ancient human communities and the administrative frameworks in which these forms of civilization existed.

However, if we critically refer to the plans of the old towns and fortresses on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia, through the period of the 20<sup>th</sup>, and the first two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we will see an interesting situation. In the Republic of Macedonia, a country with several hundred archaeologists, this subject dedicated, persistently, constantly and quite successfully, was treated almost exclusively by two professors at the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje: Dr. Ivan Mikulchic and Dr. Viktor Lilchikj Adams. Let's

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<sup>1</sup> See: Viktor Lilchikj Adams, Igor Shirtovski, Vladimir Atanasov, Viktor Simonovski, Filip Adziewski, *The Ancient Kingdom of Macedonia and the Republic of Macedonia*, ed. Cultural Heritage Protection Office, Skopje 2016. Scientific research has shown that the ambitious kings of the ancient kingdom of Macedonia, after forming the first city, Aegae under Olympus, expanded the kingdom to the east, west and north through the Classical and Hellenistic periods. The first royal dynasty, Argeadae, ruled the areas along the Vardar River, to Demir Kapija, and the southern part of the Pelagonija plateau. The second royal dynasty, Antigonids, was annexed to the kingdom, the entire territory of today's Republic of Macedonia.

see the numbers. I. Mikulchic managed to gather information about about 450 old towns and fortresses.<sup>2</sup> He physically visited and documented (together with V. L. Adams) about 250 sites. V. L. Adams managed to raise this number to 750 sites.<sup>3</sup> The full list of V. L. Adams, in the old towns and fortifications on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia, has close to 1000 sites.

Let's now briefly follow this matter in the southwest corner of the Republic of Macedonia. In the area of Dassaretia (Fig. 1), the region around Lake Ohrid, where, even in the Archaic period, the civilizational lights of several cities radiated, mentioned by historians Polybius and Titus Livius. Among them only for the city of Lychnidus, we know that it was located on the site of today's Ohrid.

In early antiquity, a few principalities existed in Dassaretia. It is not known whether the principalities succeeded in uniting into a single kingdom. Later, Dassaretia became part of the early Roman province of Macedonia. And later, part of the Late Roman province of Epirus Novus.

At one point, a dilemma arose in science over the problem of the relationship between the tribe of Dassaretians and the city of Lychnidus. The challenge came from the pen of historian Polybius. According to him, the Illy-

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<sup>2</sup> Ivan Mikulčić, *Spätantike und frühbyzantinische befestigungen in Nord-Makedonien*, München 2002.

<sup>3</sup> Working as a student, later an assistant to I. Mikulchic, in 1975 I started drawing plans for the old towns and fortresses. Later, I improved drawing plans with horizontal and vertical geographic coordinates. I have created a huge database for old cities and fortresses. I failed to publish all the materials for a number of reasons. But for general insight, the reader can see at least my following references: В. Лилчиќ, *Линкестида и Девриоп, Корпус на старите градови и тврдини во Република Македонија том I*, МЦС, Скопје 2009, 1-232 (V. Lilchikj, *Lyncus and Deuriopus, Corps of Old Towns and Fortresses in the Republic of Macedonia Volume I*, MCS, Скопје 2009, 1-232, in Macedonian language); В. Лилчиќ Адамс, *Доцната антика во Македонија, во Милениумски факти том 2*, Скопје 2013, 963-1032 (V. Lilchikj, *Late Antiquity in Macedonia, in Millennium Facts Volume 2*, Скопје 2013, 963-1032, in Macedonian language); V. Lilčić Adams, *The Archaeological Topography of Ancient fortresses in the Resen Region, Golem Grad Prespa II*, Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts&Matica Makedonska, Скопје 2015, 53-76; V. Lilchikj Adams, *The visual Communication System of the Early Byzantine Castles along the Via Axia in the Republic of Macedonia in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century AD*, во: *Space, Landscapes and Settlements in Byzantium*, Presented to Hohannes Koder, Vienna – Novi Sad 2017, 237-249, илустрации, карта: 484-498; V. Lilčić Adams, *Fanula Papazoglu's Research and the City of Pelagonia in the Light of Recent Discoveries*, paper from the Professor Fanula Papazoglu Centenary Symposium, Belgrade, October 17-18, 2017, Belgrade 2018, 53-76; В. Лилчиќ, *Скупи и античката цивилизација на Скопско, Скопје осум милениуми живот, култура, творештво, Филозофски факултет Скопје, Скопје 2019, 117-324* (V. Lilčić, *Scupi and the Ancient Civilization of Skopje, Skopje Eight Millennia of Life, Culture, Creativity, Faculty of Philosophy Skopje*, Скопје 2019, 117-324, in Macedonian language).

rian ruler Skerdilaidas, in 217 BC, wanting to save himself from the Macedonian dependence, on the pretext that the Macedonian king Philip V did not pay him the promised reward, entered Pelagonia, where he robbed the Pelagonian town of Pisaeon. During this expedition, he conquered the Dassaretian cities of Antipatreia, Crisondion, Gertus, and then entered the neighboring Macedonian areas, probably in Lyncus. Due to that, the Macedonian King Philip V went on the offensive. He recaptured these Dassaretian cities, but also conquered the cities of Ecnhelana, Kerax, Sathion, Boioi, in the area around Lake Lychnidus.<sup>4</sup>

A certain light in the problem, brought the discovery of two types of bronze coins, in the Plaoshnik in Ohrid. It is a Type 1 with Heracles / club, and Type 2 with Zeus-Amon / Lightning, and with the legend ΔΑΣΣΕΑ ΠΗΤΙΩΝ, dating to the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC.<sup>5</sup> During the early antiquity, the Dassaretia region became the leading place of the ethnic Dassaretians. These coins confirm that in early antiquity, the city of Lychnidus fought for the country's leading city of ethnic Dassaretians.

The plan of the ancient city of Lychnidos was drawn and published by I. Mikulčić. However, Academician V. Bitrakova Grozdanova paid much more attention to the study of ancient zones in the fortified perimeter of Lichnidus. She drew and published the second plan.<sup>6</sup> The old towns and fortresses around Lake Ohrid have been explored through written sources, cabinet and field by several researchers. However, the greatest attention to the past of the whole area was given by Academician Prof. Dr. Vera Bitrakova Grozdanova.<sup>7</sup>

In the period from 1983 to 2019, I visited, documented and drew in georeferenced form, planimetry of all old cities and fortresses in the region.

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<sup>4</sup> В. Битракова Грозданова, Споменици од Хеленистичкиот период во СР Македонија, Скопје 1987, 30 (Vera Bitrakova Grozdanova, Spomenici od Helenistichkiot period vo SR Makedonija, in Macedonian language).

<sup>5</sup> Vera Bitrakova Grozdanova, Lychnidos et Dassaretie, Academie Macedonienne des Sciences et des Arts & Librairie „Matica Makedonska“, Skopje 2017, 434-436, fig. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Ivan Mikulčić, Spätantike und frühbyzantinische befestigungen in Nord-Makedonien, München 2002, 476-479, сл. 395; В. Битракова Грозданова, Топографијата и урбаниот развој на Лихнидос, Историја, год. XXII бр. 2, Скопје 1986, 249-265 (V. Bitrakova Grozdanova, Topography and Urban Development of Lihnidus, History, Vol. XXII no. 2, Skopje 1986, 249-265, in Macedonian language); V. Bitrakova Grozdanova, Le développement urbain de Lychnidos et ses rapports avec les villes du sud-ouest des Balkans, 6ème Congrès international des études du Sud-Est Européen (Sofia 1989), Skopje 1991.

<sup>7</sup> From the huge opus of academician V. Bitrakova Grozdanova, I will point out the following studies: Vera Bitrakova Grozdanova, Lychnidos et Dassaretie ...; *ibid*, Golem Grad Prespa I, ed. Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts & Dante, Skopje 2011; *ibid* and coauthors, Golem Grad, Prespa II, Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts & Matica Makedonska, Skopje 2015.

The construction of cities and fortresses in the region was based, in part, on local resources and more on road communications. The roads led mainly in the east-west, south-north directions. The Egnatia Road, also known as Candavian Road or Macedonian road, passed through the region. This route was followed by several side roads, north and south.

The Egnatia road entered the territory of the Republic of Macedonia, at the mountain pass Kjafasan. He descended and went a shore on Lake Ohrid near the village of Radozhda. In the hilly area of the village of Mali Vlaj, I documented the remains of the fortress on the site of Gradishte. This castle may have had some kind of context (visual), connected to the Egnatia Road (Fig. 2), but it was 2.2 km away. The Egnatian road led along the shore, from the area of Struga, to the city of Lychnidus, along the southern edge of the Struga Field. There are dilemmas in science, whether the Egnatian road led under the hill Kulishte Sv. Razmo, directly towards Lychnidus, or passing through the gorge of the village Trebenishta, continuing towards Kosel and Resen.

Through the northwestern part of the Struga Field, along the mountain base, passed the road that came from the valley of the river Drim, from Debar, which Petar Lisičar claimed to be the real Egnatia Road.<sup>8</sup>

At the same time, another significant road was coming from the north, towards the town of Trebenishko Kale and towards the town of Lychnidus. It was the road from the neighboring region of Kichevo (the land of the tribe of Penestae with their capital Uscana).<sup>9</sup>

The road, which came from the valley of the Drim River and ran along the northern edge of the Struga field towards the town of Trebenishko Kale and the town of Lychnidus, was controlled by two powerful castles. These were the castles: Kale, the village of Gorno Tateshi and Kale, the village of Delagozhda. With the method of surface research of the powerful fortification of Kale, Gorno Tateshi, we recorded two cultural horizons. Older, Early Antiquity and Dominant Early Byzantine (Fig. 3). The castle of Kale, Delagozhda, has a early Byzantine cultural horizon from the 6<sup>th</sup> century (Fig. 4). Undoubtedly, there was a visual signalization with the acropolis of Trebenishko Kale in the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD. East of Delagozhda, with Professor Dr. Kosta Adzievski, on Kale, village Koroshishta, we recorded a small iron-fortified settlement. And it was in relation to the mentioned road (Fig. 5).

On the hill named Gaber, known as Trebenishko Kale, in 1997, I measured and drew a planimetry of an ancient city that covered an area of about 5 hectares. The city had a dominant acropolis, upper and lower city (Fig. 6). The

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<sup>8</sup> Petar Lisičar, *De Cadmi fibula*, *Antiquite Vivante* 3, Skopje 245-261.

<sup>9</sup> Viktor Lilčić, *Perseus' Campaign in Uscana*, edited by Macedonian Heritage, no 14, Skopje 2000, 2-72.

city of Trebenishko Kale is known in the literature as a city from the archaic and classical period where the rich nobles come from, buried in the famous archaic necropolis of Trebenishte.<sup>10</sup> As part of field research at this site, in 2019, except coins from the early and late antiquity, we discovered the remains of a medieval church, then three Byzantine coins (of the Byzantine emperors: Isaac II (1185-1195), Michael VIII (1261-1282) and Andronicus II (1282-1328), as well as part of a medieval bronze cross - encolpion (Fig. 7, 8).<sup>11</sup> A similar bronze cross from type encolpion, in 1953-1954, was discovered by Dr. Vasil Lakhtov.<sup>12</sup>

From the town of Trebenishko Kale, to the south, stretches about 7 km long, dominant mountain range, with the peaks Bajrak (1203 m) and Chobanska Chuka (1052 m). This small mountain, in the south, ends with the low hill Kulishte Sv. Razmo. At the Kulishte St. Razmo, the village of Dolni Lakocherej, in the early antiquity was built a powerful fortress with a strong defensive character. We have noticed cultural horizons from antiquity and the Middle Ages. Vasil Lakhtov mentions and publishes findings from the late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age and the Iron Age, ie the Archaic period.<sup>13</sup> Was the city of Trebenishko Kale, the city of Enhelana, mentioned at Polybius? Or maybe one of the other dassaretian cities that Polybius also mentions: Kerax, Sation, Boioi?

Through the mountain gorge, between the mountain peaks Bajrak and Chobanska Chuka, there was an alternative road to the Ohrid Field, and approached from the north to the town of Lychnidus. It seems that the fortification of Gradishte Visho, above Dolni Lakocherej, played a role in its control (Fig. 9). But the main approach to the city of Lychnidus, from the west, led through a narrow plain corridor, between the lake shore and the hill Kulishte Sv. Razmo. And precisely because of the protection, the blockade of this approach to Lychnidus, the ancient Macedonian army in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, raised the most powerful ancient Macedonian military base on the territory of today's Republic of Macedonia. There are different ideas about which Macedonian king ordered the erection of this base. Philip II or Alexander III of Ma-

<sup>10</sup> Bogdan Filow & Karl Schkorpil, *Die archaische Nekropole von Trebenishte am Ochrida-See*, Berlin und Leipzig 1927, 3, f.n. 6.

<sup>11</sup> Within the scientific research project "Trebenishko Kale, Trebenishta, research 2019", Agreement for realization of the Municipality of Debarca (no. 03-1091 from 16.06.2019) and the Faculty of Philosophy from Skopje (no. 09-988 from 30.05.2019); Permit the Office for Protection of Cultural Heritage (UP No. 08-468 dated 26.07.2019); and Decision on additional elements of the same, under number 08-738 from 07.10.2019.

<sup>12</sup> В. Лахтов, Археолошко ископување на Требенишко Кале, Требеништа 1953-1954, Лихнид II-III, Охрид 1959, 24, Т. VI. 2 (Vasil Lahtov, Archaeological excavation of Trebenishko Kale, Trebenishta, Lihnid II-III, Ohrid 1959, 24, T. VI. 2, in Macedonian language)

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, o.c., 60-73.

cedon? However, the ancient Macedonian soldiers, on the hill Kulishte Sv. Razmo left a powerful cultural heritage. At least 7 defensive towers. The towers and the wall were built in opus isodomum, with huge stone blocks. The Macedonian soldiers, in the north, fortified the higher hill Ajdinica (969 m), and built a defensive wall from the lowest elevation (750 m), through the military base Kulishte Sv. Razmo to Ajdinica, 1300 meters long. And it happened in the time of Alexander and Cassander. Most likely, the construction started in 335, during the march of Alexander the Great to the city of Pelium.<sup>14</sup> The initial numismatic picture of this site indicates coins of Alexander III and Cassander.<sup>15</sup> This was confirmed during the research in 2014. Within the Archaeological Cadastre Project of the Republic of Macedonia in 2014 were discovered: a bronze coin of Philip II (posthumous, minted under Alexander III), two coins of Alexander III, two coins of Cassander and half a silver medieval coin. Earlier, a bronze coin of Alexander III, was discovered at the site, which is kept in the Archaeological Museum Collection at the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje. Within the capital project of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, for research - excavation of Kulishte Sv. Razmo (2009-2011, organized by Pasko Kuzman), revealed the full size of the base - along the perimeter of the defensive walls, then a large number of coins, two-cut arrows and against armored arrows, lead grains - missiles of soldiers sent and others ( Fig. 10).<sup>16</sup>

It is obvious that in early antiquity, there was a rivalry between the towns of Trebenishko Kale and Lychnidus. But the city of the lake, using its water and other resources as well as the crossroads, has risen through antiquity, to the incredible 32 hectares at that time (Fig. 11). Lychnidus was the second largest city, after Scupi (42 hectares), in the Republic of Macedonia.

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<sup>14</sup> V. L. Adams, and coauthors, *The Ancient Kingdom of Macedonia and the Republic of Macedonia*, Skopje 2016, 18-21, 34-38.

<sup>15</sup> Никола Шелдаров – Виктор Лилчиќ, *Кралевите на античка Македонија и нивните монети во Република Македонија*, издавач Македонска Цивилизација, Скопје 1994, 152, 159, 182 авторите го водат како Габавски Рид Св. Размо Охрид (Nikola Sheldarov - Viktor Lilchikj, *Kings of Ancient Macedonia and Their Coins in the Republic of Macedonia*, publisher Macedonian Civilization, Skopje 1994, 152, 159, 182 (in Macedonian language), the authors lead him as Gabavski Rid Sv. Razmo Ohrid; Nikola Šeldarov, *Macedonia and Paeonia*, Šeldarov Collection, Skopje 2003, 467 Alexander III, 490 Alexander III, 496 Cassander, 507 Cassander, 676 autonomous coin.

<sup>16</sup> The Capital Project for Archaeological Research - Excavation of St. Razmo's Cave, took place over a period of three years. 8 years have passed from this date (2009-2011) to 2019. At the time, the results of the study were not published. Dejan Stanoev, from the National Conservation Center, recorded the site's plan with a total station. But that plan does not meet the archaeological criteria. Therefore, during 2019, I re-measured and drew the plan of the site, and here I am publishing it for the first time.

The Egnatian road to Resen, to the east, led through at least two sections, known as the Summer Road and the Winter Road (Fig. 12). The first, Summer Road, ascended to the Petrino Pole plateau on Mount Istok. The beginning of this road was controlled by the Castle on the site Kulishte-Olmec, village Velgoshti (Fig. 13). The Summer Road, on the eastern edge of Mount Istok, was controlled by the castle of Petrinska Kula, the village of Petrino (Fig. 14). The dilemma remains whether the castle of Kale, the village of Evla, played a role in the context of the Egnatia Road (Fig. 15). The northern so-called The Winter Road, on the Egnatia Road, was controlled by the castles of Gradishte village of Kosel, Pirschiste village of Svinjishta (Fig. 16) and Kale Nestinski Rid, village of Ilino (Fig. 17), located near the mountain pass Bukovo.

On the eastern mountain edge of the Resen Field, south and southwest of the Gjavato mountain pass, an early Byzantine signal complex was formed, at the locations: Markova Kula, Podmochani (Castel military base) and Markovi Kuli Vrtushka, Malovishte (Castel Specula) (Fig. 18). For a long time I have been researching the early Byzantine visual signaling system for alerts in the valleys of Axios, Bregalnica, Kriva Reka and throughout Poreche. In the future, I will expand these analyzes to Dassaretia, because I assume that some of the castles played the role of castel - speculae.

South of Lychnidus, on the western slope of Mount Galichica, are the castles: Gradishte, Peshtani (4<sup>th</sup> century AD, fig. 19) and Osoj, Trpejca, a powerful military-strategic base, probably from the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD. (Fig. 20).

The road along the eastern foot of Galichica and the shores of Lake Prespa was protected by castles: Kale, the village of Shurlenci (6<sup>th</sup> century AD) and Kulishte-Pirk, the village of Oteshevo (Fig. 21). While, on the eastern shore of Lake Prespa, ie in Dassaretia, are located the fortified settlement from the early antiquity of Kulishte, the village of Kurbinovo and the late antique castle on Kula village Ljubojno (Fig. 22).

The road through the region of Debrca, towards Kichevo, was controlled by the castle Kula, the village of Pesochan. This dominant castel played an extremely important role throughout ancient antiquity until the turbulent 6<sup>th</sup> century AD. (Fig. 23).

Northeast of the village of Slatino, in Debrca, on the mountain elevation 1297.4 meters, I researched and documented the remains of a dominant fortification at the Gradishte site (Fig. 24). The massive north tower and the supposed south tower, as well as a series of interior rooms along the walls, represent the military-strategic character of the castle in the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD. The castle of Gradishte, the village of Slatino was either a castel specula for the transfer of a signal or just a castel guard, for the crossing of Ilinska Mountain. We discovered coins from the 6<sup>th</sup> century and a three rim arrow Avar type.

However, we also discovered medieval Byzantine coins and a medieval ear-ring, which indicate the continuation of Gradiste Slatino's existence throughout the Middle Ages. I have a feeling that fortification has grown into a small town with a continuum of existence until the Middle Ages.

The castle, on the site of Gornopolsko Gradishte, the village of Velmej, (with the older early antique cultural horizon, findings: part of the so-called Megarian bowl and part of the carrier for the handle for an lebes / cauldron; and with the younger, dominant early Byzantine cultural horizon), was -strategic castel base, which grew into a later small town, for the control of road crossings to the neighboring regions of Deuriop (Demir Hisar) through Ilinska Mountain, and the crossing Gazinec to Ohrid, (Fig. 25) between the mountains Plakenska and Mazatar (Fig. 26).

The fortified settlement on the Kula hill, in the village of Godivje, in the northwestern corner of the Debrca region, existed from the mountain road which led over the Karaorman and Stogovo mountains, towards Centar Zupa to the old town of Kale the village Kodzadzik, and perhaps from the exploitation of iron ore (Fig. 27). The functions of the castles Gradishte, the village Laktinje, Straishte, the village Zlesti, Kutlishte, the village Mramorec, Gradishte, the villages Leshani / Velmej and Gradishte the village Brezani (Fig. 28) are debatable.

And the function of the high and dominant fortification of the site Gradiste, Vaitos, village Oktisi, in the mountainous area northwest of Struga is also debatable. It was a strong mountain fortification, far from the road lines, with a stable economic and existential continuity through antiquity to the Middle Ages, but with elements of the *moenia aeacia opus* in the north wall, and an emphasis on life in early antiquity (Fig. 29).<sup>17</sup>

The small fortifications: Gradishte, the village of Labunishte, Gradishte, the village of Borovec and the village of Gradishte, the village of Tashmarunishta, which probably existed partly from the hilly mountainous environment, but perhaps partly from the Drim Road, are difficult to attribute to their pure military-strategic role (Fig. 30).

However, the case of the early Byzantine castle guard, and the watch castle, Kale, on the borders between the villages of Jablanica, Piskuspshtina, Bezovo, is quite different (Fig. 31). It is located on the edge of a mountain, on a dominant hill with distant views of the Drim River Valley to the east. The finds date back to the early 6<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>17</sup> Vera Bitrakova Grozdanova, Lychnidos et Dassaretie, Academie Macedonienne des Sciences et des Arts & Librairie „Matica Makedonska“, Skopje 2017, 28, 47; Анастас Ќушкоски, Вајтос и неговата околина во антиката, издавач Ирис, Струга 2004 (Anastas Kjushkoski, Vaitos and its surroundings in antiquity, ed. Iris, Struga 2004, in Macedonian).

On the site of Chengene Kale, the village of Lukovo, there was a castel guard for the road in the valley of the river Drim (Fig. 32). While on the Castle of Gradiste / Kale, the village of Modrich, drawn into the valley of the Modrichka River, we registered coins of the Macedonian king Antigonus Gonatas, early Byzantine coins and medieval Byzantine coins. This dominant 956-meter elevation may speak to the castel function for observation and signaling (Fig. 32).

In the valley of the river Drim, we discovered part of the *summa crusta* from an ancient road, which connected the Struga Field with the Debar Field. It is part of a road, about 100 meters long, which descends from the direction of the village Lukovo, in the western slope of the hill Bunari to the Modrich Bridge. I received information that part of the same road can be seen in the area of the village Dzepiste. According to the construction of the road, it is obvious that it was an expensive investment. Maybe, however, Petar Lisichar was right. Perhaps it is a section of the Egnatian Road on the route Dyrrhachium - Debar - Struga in the Roman imperial period.

I conclude the review of the fortified ancient sites on the territory around Lake Ohrid with the northernmost fortifications. It is about the alternative road that led between Centar Zhupa, from Debar, through the town of Kale Kodzadzik, through Malesia to Struga. The beginning of the road is marked by the small but strong castle on the hill Gradiste village Vapa, which protected the approach to the town of Kale village Kodzadzik.

On Gradishte village Vapa, I documented two cultural horizons. Older dates back to the time of early antiquity. It is part of the defensive wall and two coins of the Macedonian kings. Alexander III of Macedon and Antigonus Gonatas. And a younger, early Byzantine cultural horizon. The top of the hill is an elongated plateau, which was protected by a defensive wall (Fig. 33). The finding of a coin, of the Roman emperor Valens, and the foot of a fibula of the so-called bulbous T-type, indicate that the castel was formed in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. We have found many finds, and many coins from the 6<sup>th</sup> century, of the emperors Anastasius, Justin I, Justinian I and Justin II (Figs. 34-37). These coins and objects from the 6<sup>th</sup> century convince us that the castle was renovated in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, with the obvious function of guarding the road through Malesia to Struga. It is obvious that the castle of Gradishte, the village of Vapa, protected the road to the town of Kale Kodzadzik. And it is obvious that in both cases, it is a higher investment than by the local community. It is likely that this road corridor was used by various Illyrian or Dardanian invaders in early antiquity. And in the turbulent 6<sup>th</sup> century it could be the Huns, the Ostrogoths, the Avars, the Slavs and other hostile attackers.

The town of Kale, the village of Kodzadzik that I once pointed out as a possible but unreliable candidate for the ubiquity of Uscana, ancient center of the Penestian tribe.<sup>18</sup> This town grew thanks to this road, and probably partly to local resources, in which besides agriculture and animal husbandry, it may have been the exploitation of a mine. The site was first visited by V. Bitrakova Grozdanova. Much later, with two research visits, professors Kosta Adziewski and Viktor Lilchikj Adams made the first field measurement of the acropolis and northern suburb, and discovered surface artefacts from the Iron Age, Early Antiquity, Early Byzantine and Middle Ages, which predate the long life in this place.

Continuing south, the road through Malesia to Struga was controlled by the military-strategic early Byzantine castles of Kale, above the villages of Burinec and Selci and Gradishte, the village of Prisovjani (Fig. 39).

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It is obvious that in this short text there is no place to detail all the data we have collected on the stated 48 fortified old towns and fortresses in the areas around Lake Ohrid. I sincerely hope to do so soon.

The area around Lake Ohrid has at least 48 old towns and fortresses. Undoubtedly, two large cities were built during the Archaic period. One was the town of Lychnidus on the shores of Lake Ohrid. The second was the town of Trebenishko Kale. The elevation of the town of Trebenishko Kale was due to the significant crossroads between: 1) the road Kichevo-Ohrid and 2) the Struga field - Lioishta - Vapila - Kosel. However, during the Roman Empire, the city of Trebenishko Kale lost its significance, although it continued to exist. As the city of Lychnidus rose even higher, it expanded thanks to the Egnatian route that passed through it.

Later, in the Middle Ages, John Cantacuzenus wrote about the military campaign of the Byzantine emperor Andronicus III Palaeologus (1328-1341). Andronicus III, in July 1330, set out through Pelagonia to overthrow the Serbs, who were attacking the city of Ohrid. Cantacuzenus wrote: "And he conquered, with a fast attack, a fortification called Vuchin (Buchin) (Βουτζοῦνιν), the other fortifications (towns): Deurican (Δεῦριζαν) and Dobrunion (Δουβροῦνιν) and Kavalation (Καβαλλάριον), and Siderokastron (Σιδηρόκαστρον), he received with their surrender."<sup>19</sup> Reconstruction of the direction of his expedition, and the discovery of the locations of these small fortified towns, is nearing

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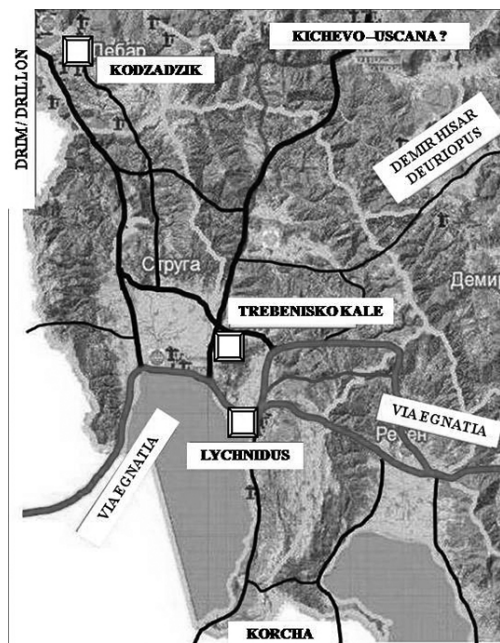
<sup>18</sup> Viktor Lilčikj, *Perseus' Campaign in Uscana*, edited by Macedonian Heritage, no 14, Skopje 2000, 44-46, 48, 50, 52 (Graph 2), 71.

<sup>19</sup> Ioannis Cantacuzeni, *ex imperatoris historiarum, libri IV, graecae et latine I-III*, cura L. Schopeni, Bonnae 1828-1832.

completion. Frurion Buchin was located on Kale, above the village of Buchin. Kavalariion was probably located on Chagorsko Kale, Lopatica village. Dobrun was located in Gradishte, the village of Graishite. Siderokastron was located on Gradishte village of Zheleznec. And the frurion Deurican was "one step" ahead of Ohrid, on the site of Trebenishko Kale, village Trebenishka".<sup>20</sup>

Among the other fortifications, small towns stand out. High in the north is Kale, the village of Kodzadzik. In the area of Debrca there are Gornopolsko Gradishte village Velmej, Gradishte, village Slatino and Kula, village Godivje. These fortifications were formed on mountain roads, which means that depending on the road frequency, they existed for a longer period of time. They were probably originally formed as guard castles, which later became permanently inhabited. Analogous examples in other parts of Macedonia are: the castle - town on the site Kuka village Rogle municipality Zhelino / Tetovo, the castle - town on the site Kale village Debreshte, municipality Dolneni / Prilep, the castle - town on the site Kale village Kazhani (Castrum Nicea) Bitola, or the castle - a town on the site of Kale, village Kozjak (Bargala).

Most of the other fortifications were ancient and medieval castles with the task of protecting road communications, mining or castles speculae, for receiving and sending visual signals.



**REGION AROUND LAKE OHRID  
IN EARLY ANTIQUITY:  
DASSARETIA**

**SURROUNDED BY:  
LYNCUS, DEURIOPUS, FENESTIANS**

**IN EARLY ROMAN PERIOD:  
PROVINCIA MACEDONIA, PART**

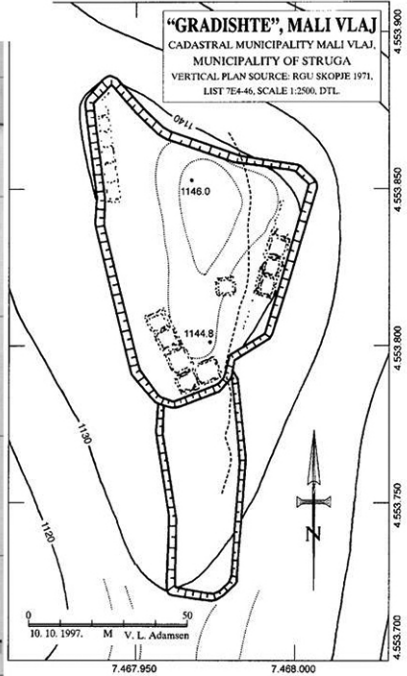
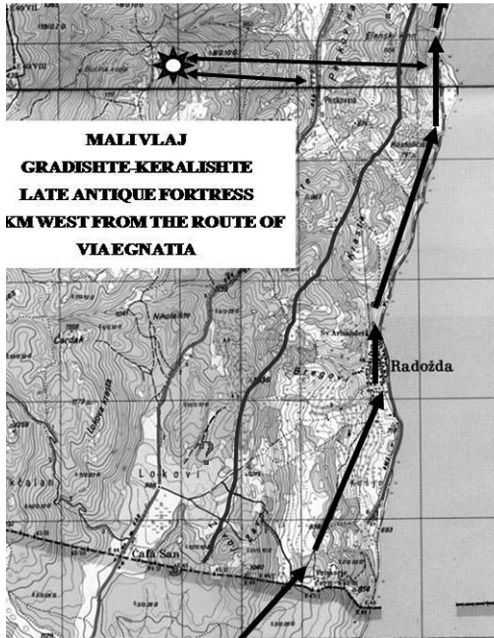
**IN LATE ROMAN PERIOD:  
PROVINCIA EPIRUS NOVUS, PART**

**FIRST RESEARCHERS:  
FANULA PAPAZOGLU  
VASIL LAHTOV  
VERABITRAKOVA GROZDANOVA  
VLADO MALENKO  
PASKO KUZMAN  
TOMO TOMOSKI  
IVAN MIKULCIC  
KOSTA ADZIEVSKI  
VIKTOR LILCIC ADAMS**

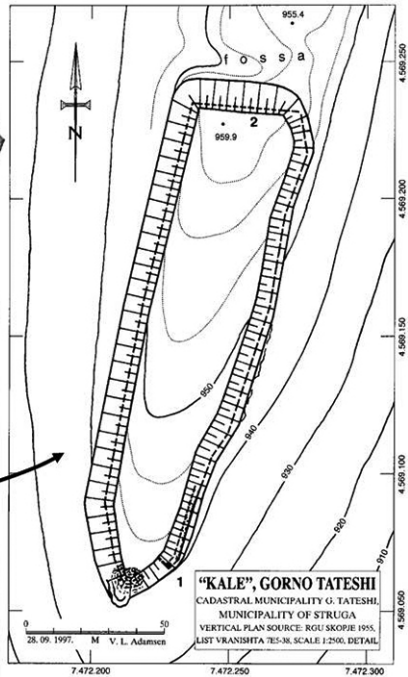
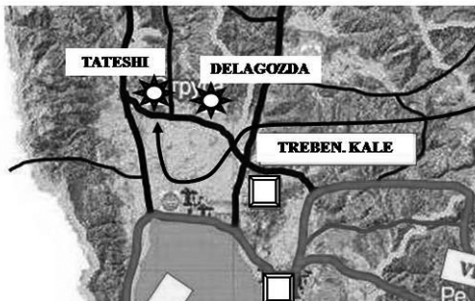
**ACTUAL MUNICIPALITIES:  
OHRID  
STRUGA  
RESEN  
DEBRCA  
VEVCHANI**

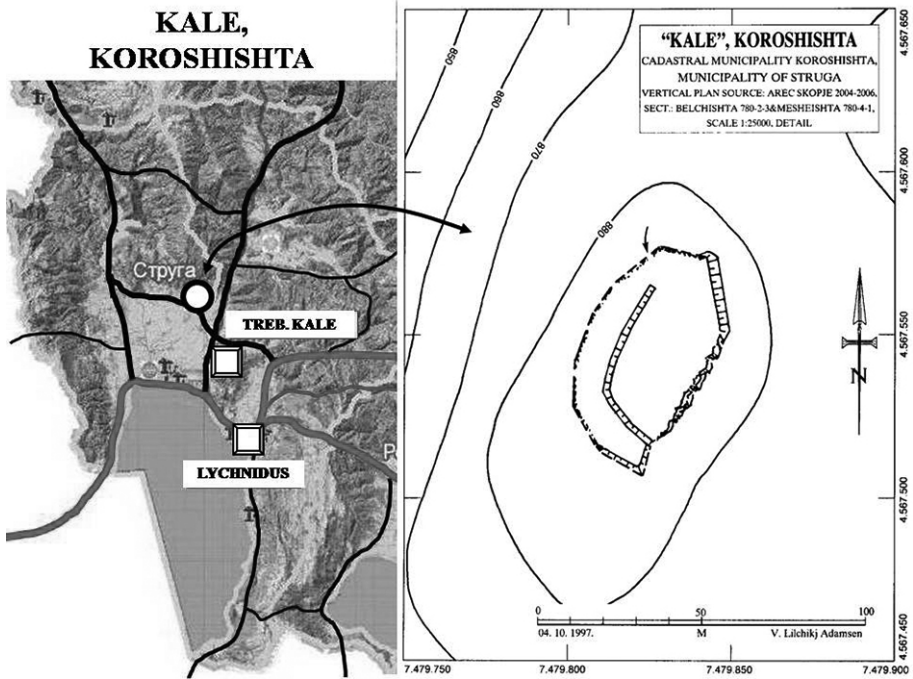
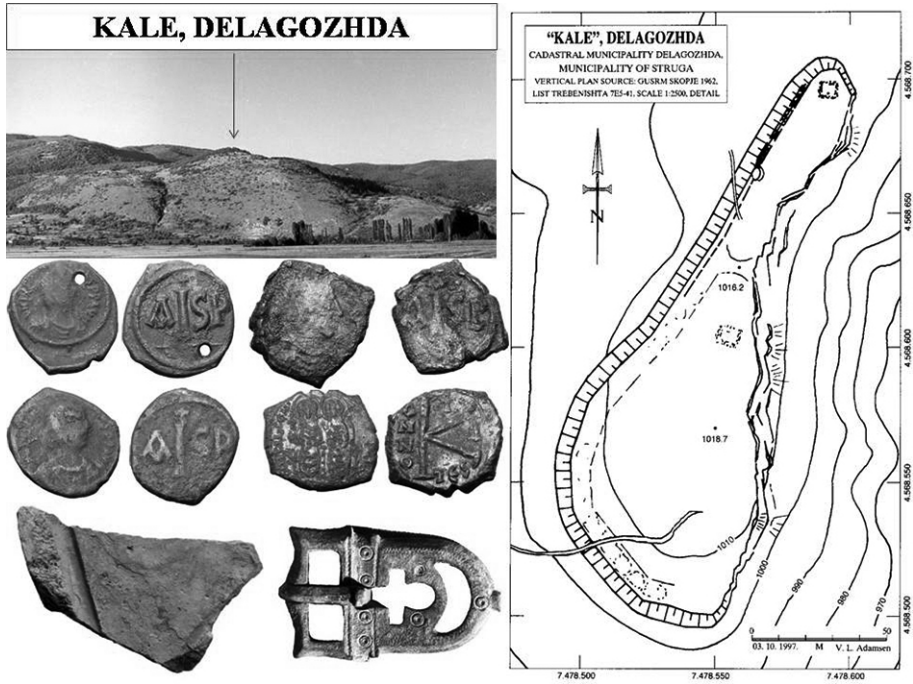
<sup>20</sup> Boshko Angelovski, Viktor Lilchikj, Antonio Jakimovski, Attempt for location of the Medieval Town of Kavalariion, ed. Macedonian Heritage, No 38-39, Skopje 2011, 103-121.

### GRADISHTE, MALI VLAJ

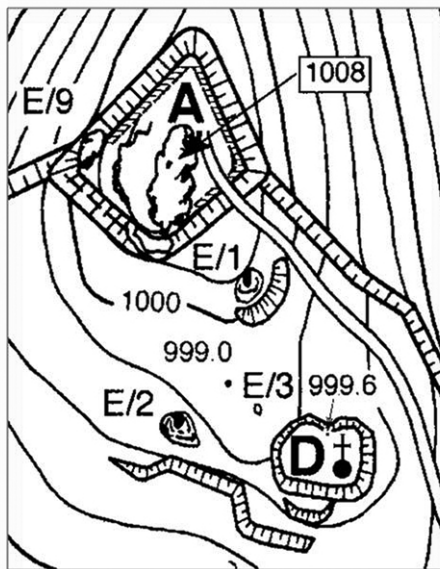
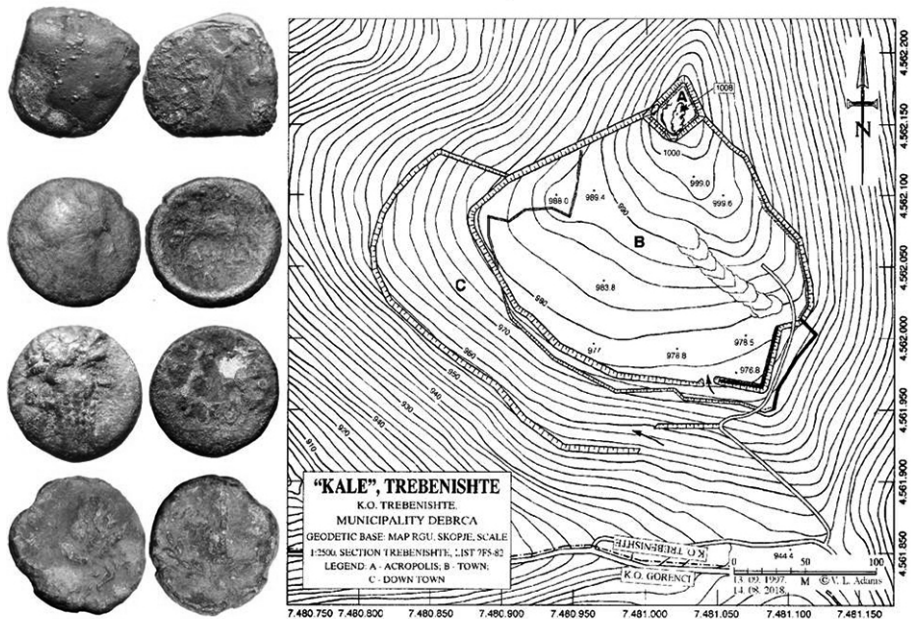


### KALE, GORNO TATESHI



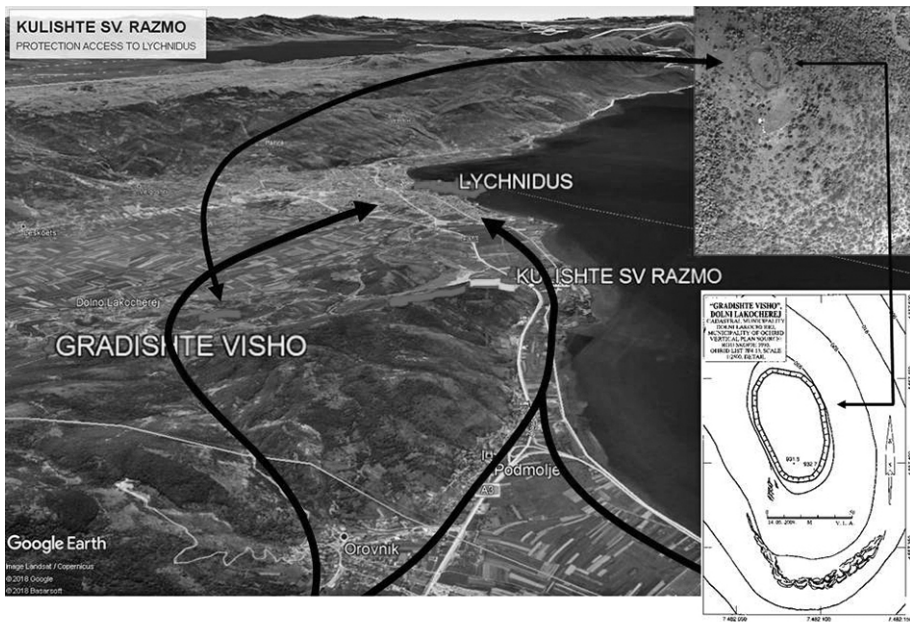


### TREBENISHKO KALE, TREBENISHTE



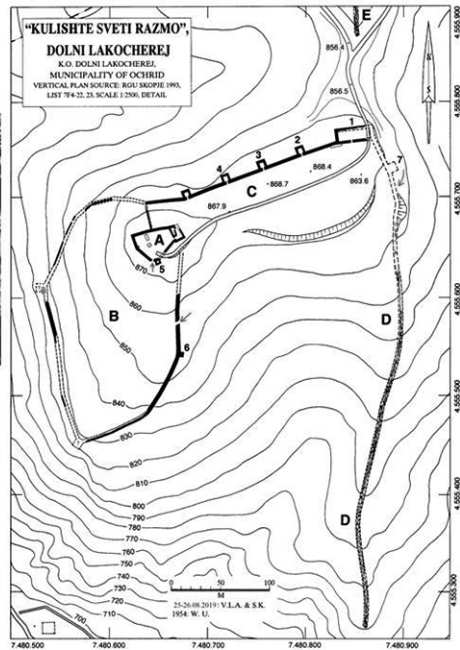
### TREBENISHKO KALE - MEDIAEVAL TOWN DEBREC

### TREBENISHKO KALE, TREBENISHTA, MEDIAEVAL DEBREC

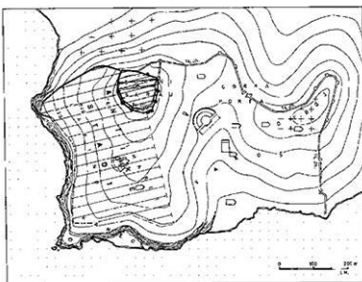


### GRADISHTE VISHO, DOLNO LAKOCHEREJ

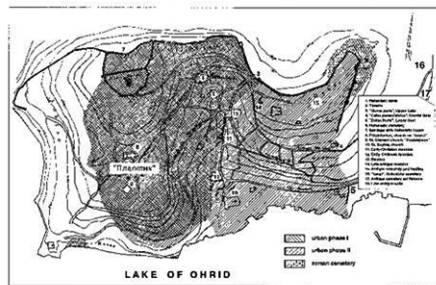
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DOLNI LAKOCHEREJ**



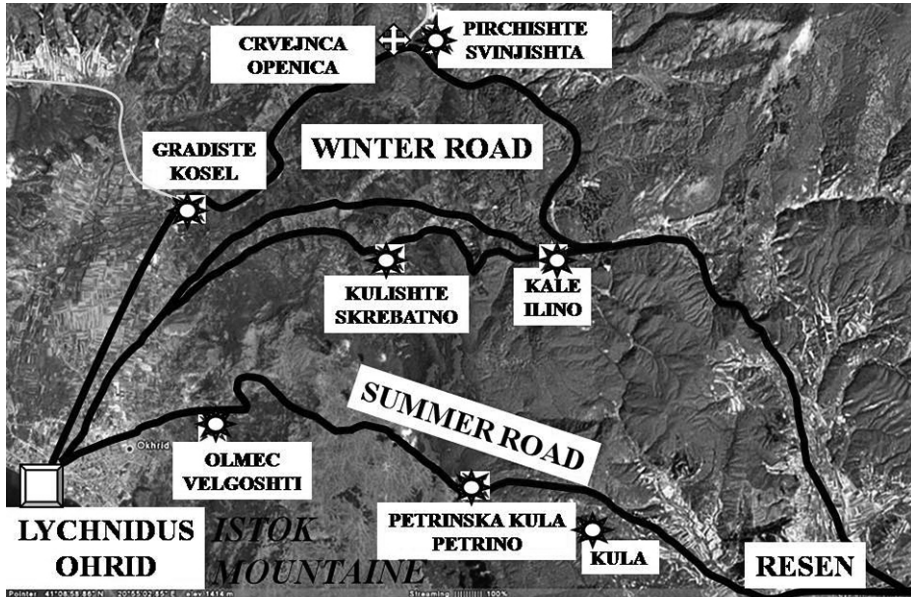
**LYCHNIDUS 32 ha**



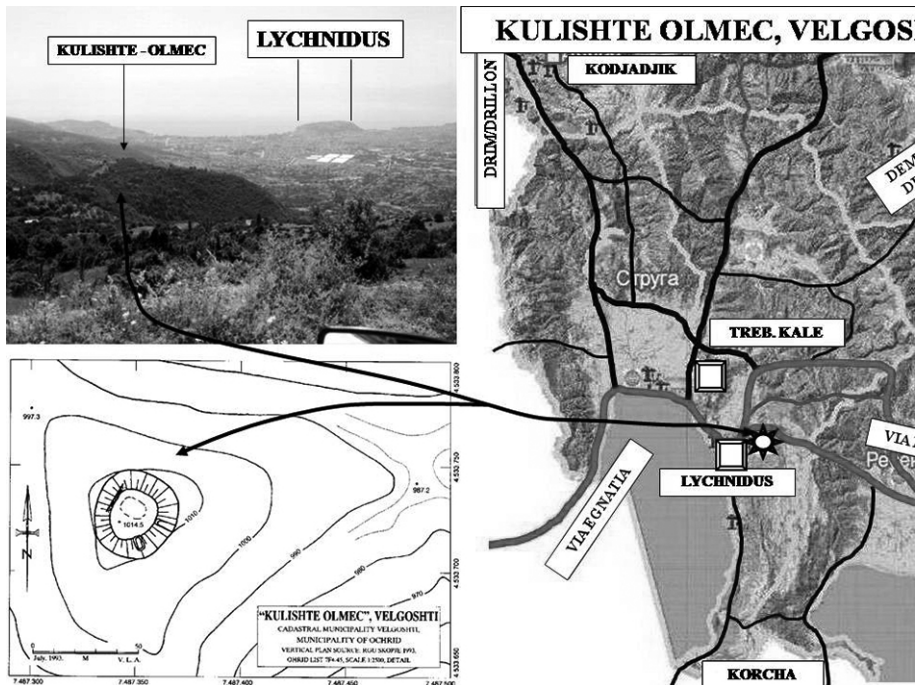
**IVAN MIKULČIK, 2002**



**VERA BITRAKOVA, 1989**

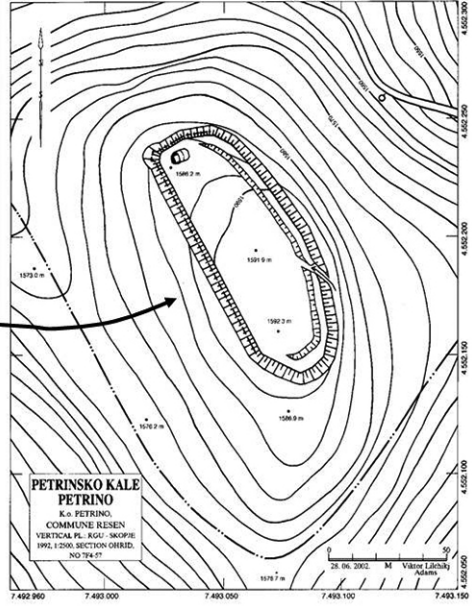


THREE POSSIBLE TRACES LED THROUGH THE MOUNTAINEOUS SPACE OF ISTOK, BETWEEN OHRID AND RESEN

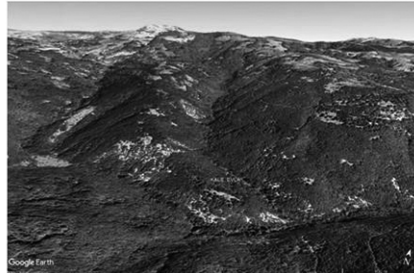
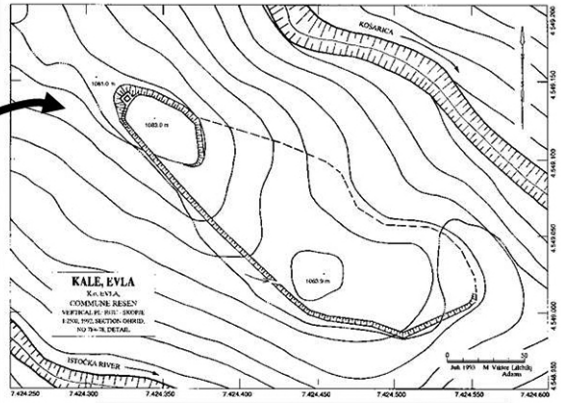
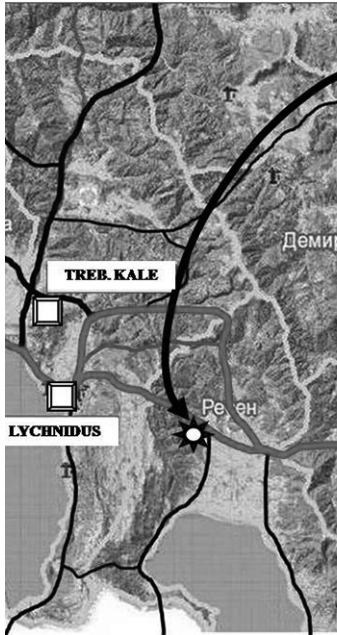


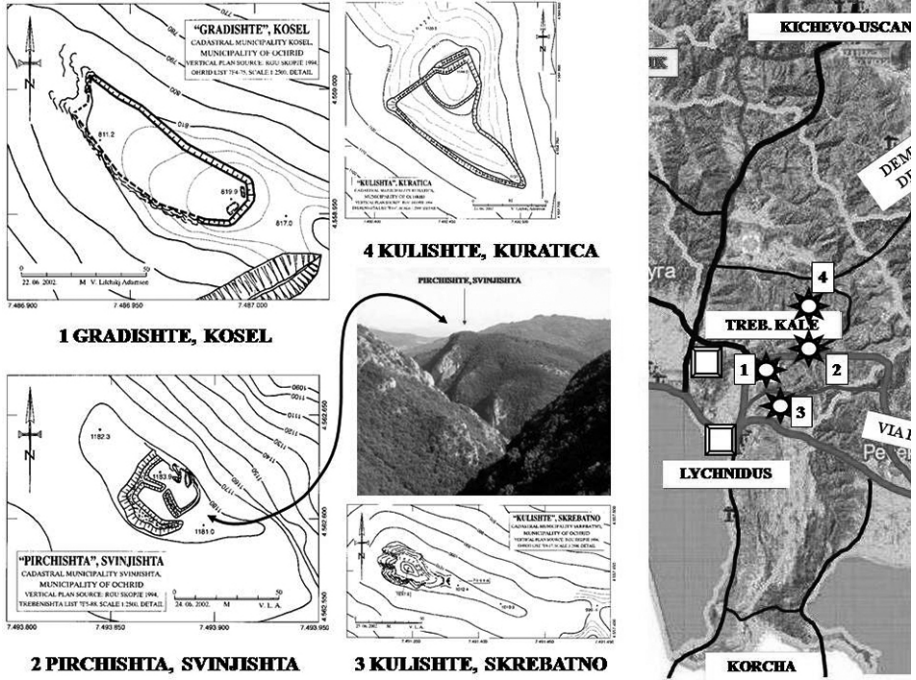


### PETRINSKO KALE, PETRINO

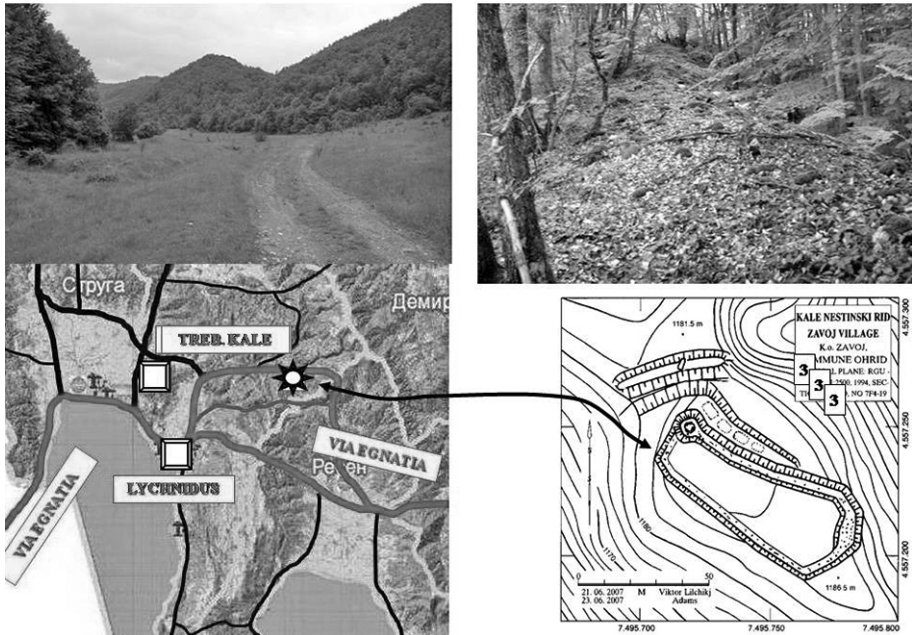


### KALE, EVLA

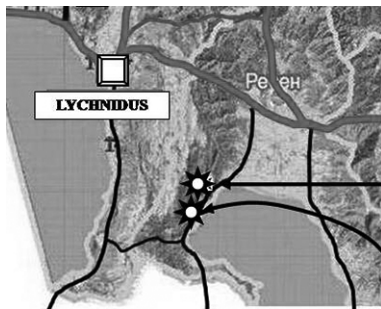
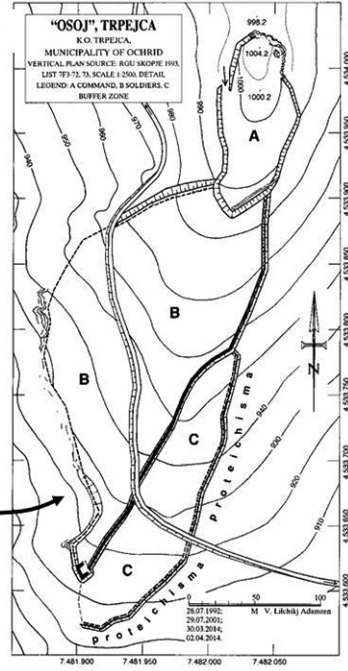
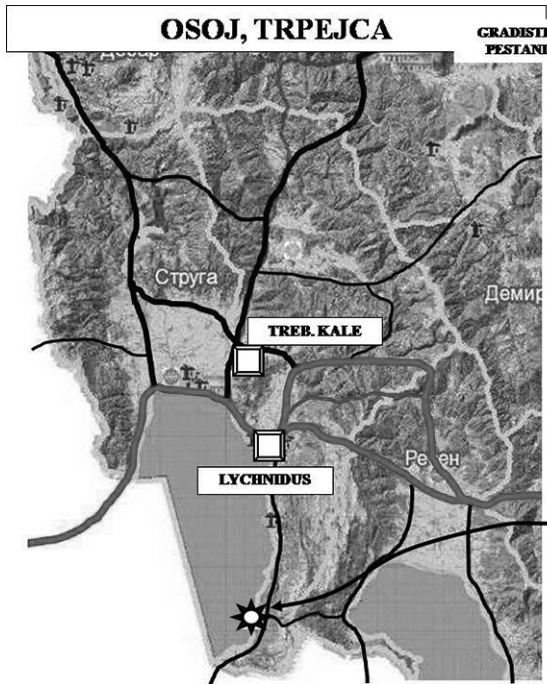




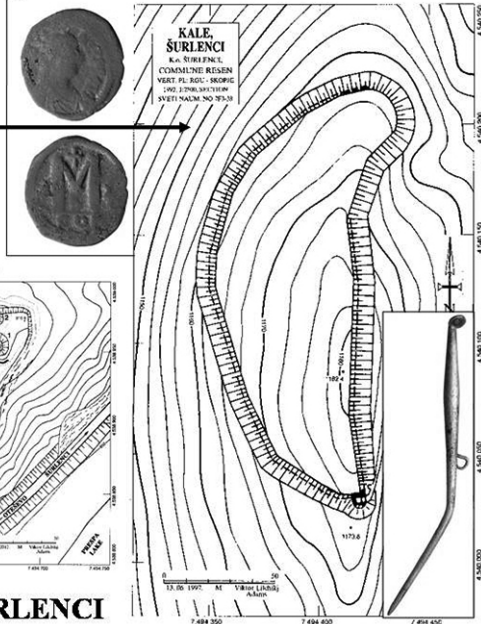
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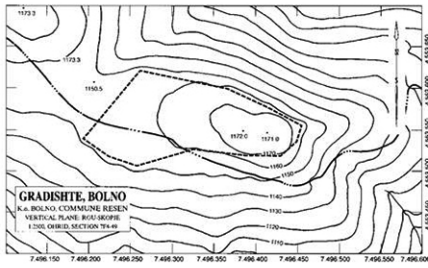
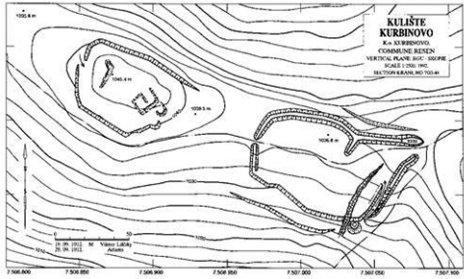
### KALE, SHURLENCI



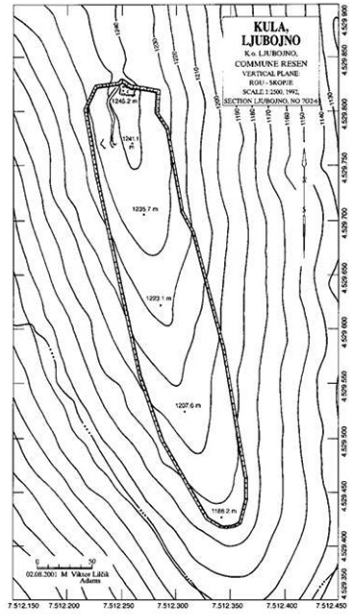
**GOLEM GRAD  
KONJSKO**

**PIRK, SURLENCI**

### KULISHTA, KURBINOVO

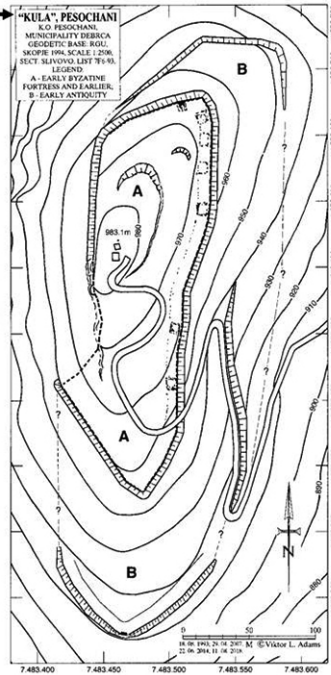
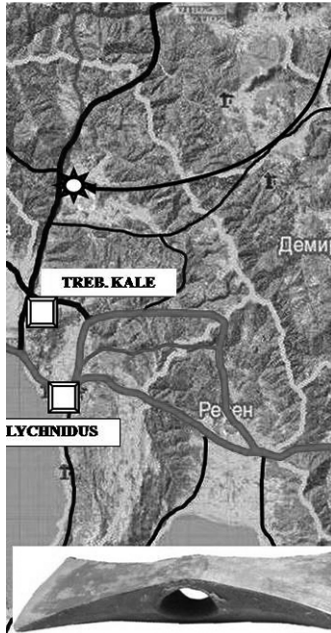


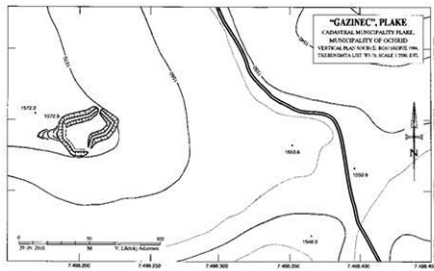
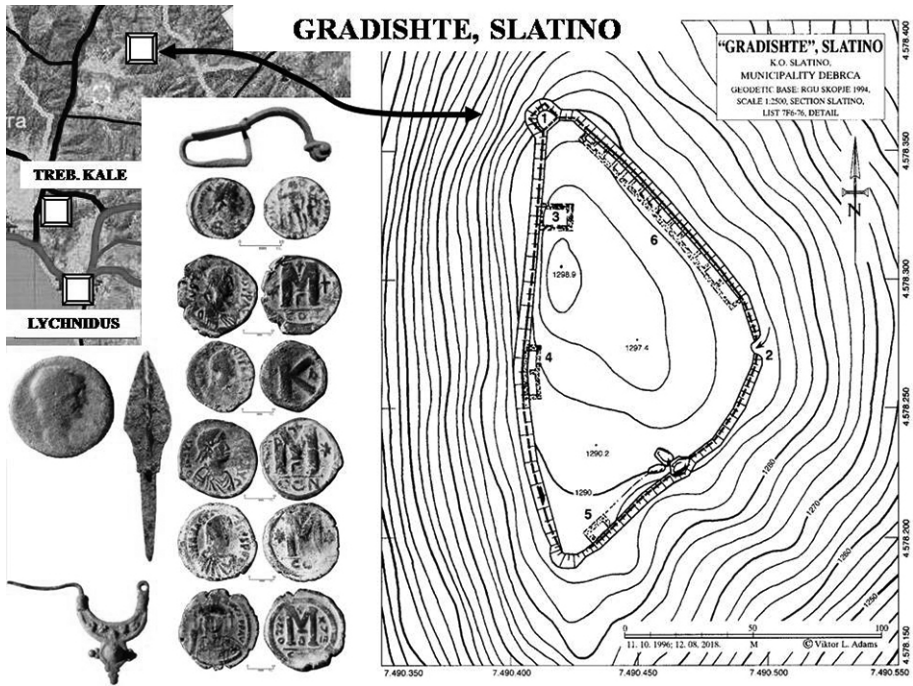
### GRADISTE, BOLNO



### KULA, LJUBOJNO

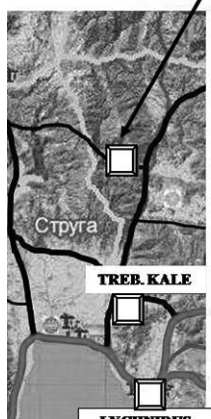
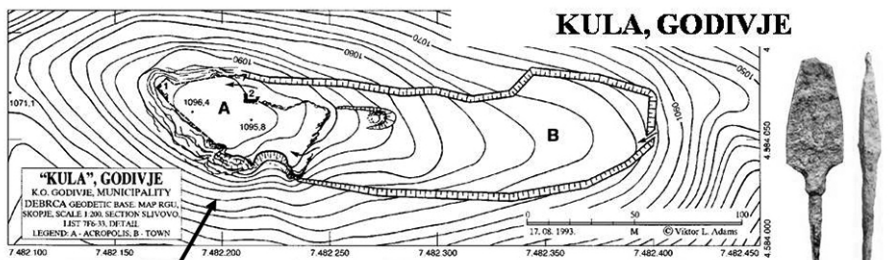
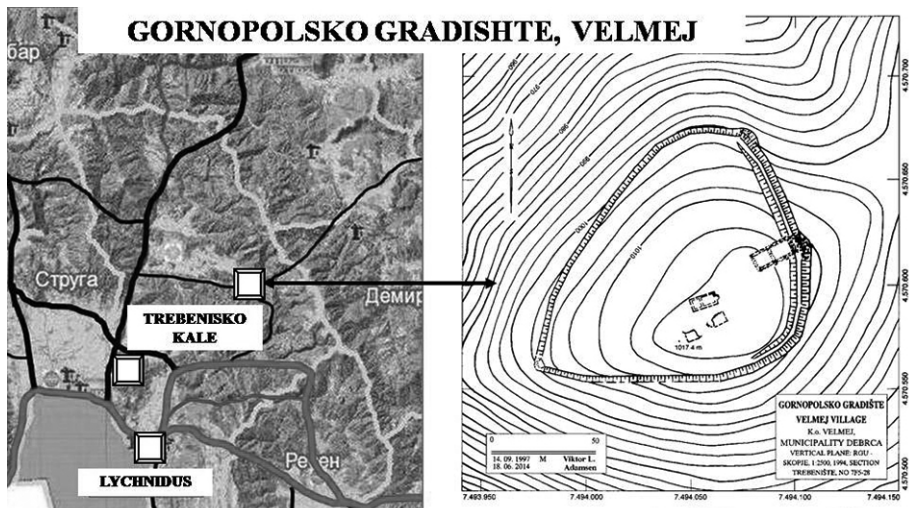
### KULA, PESOCHAN





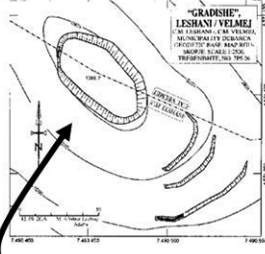
**GAZINEC, PLAKE**



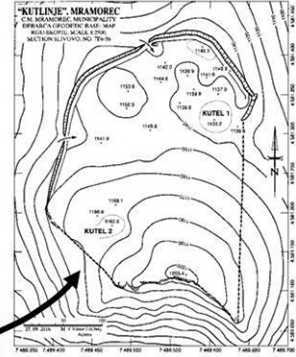




**GRADISHTE, LAKTINJE**



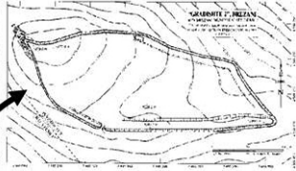
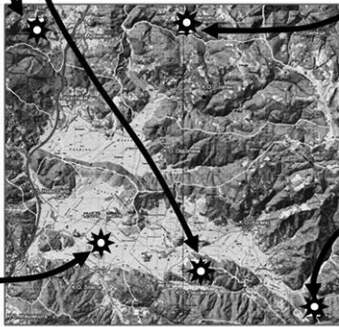
**GRADISHTE, LESHANI / VELMEJ**



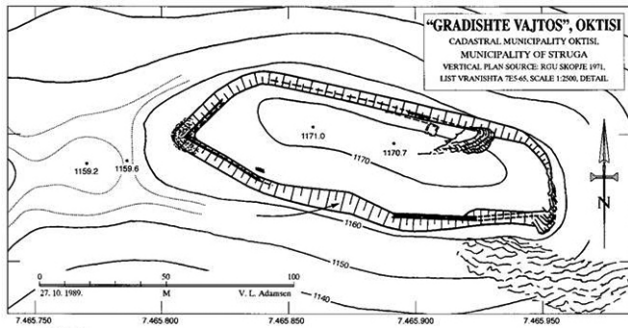
**KUTLINJE, MRAMOREC**



**STRAISHTE, ZLESTI**



**GRADISHTE, BREZHANI**



**GRADISHTE VAJTOS, OKTISI**



**KASSANDAR**



**AMFIPOLIS**



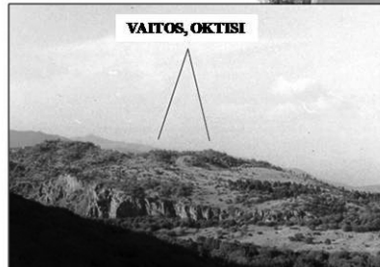
**ISTRIA**



**APOLONIA**

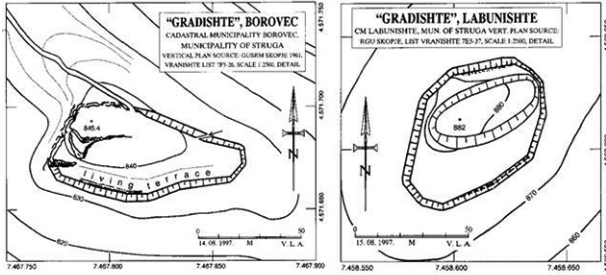


**DYRRHACHIUM**



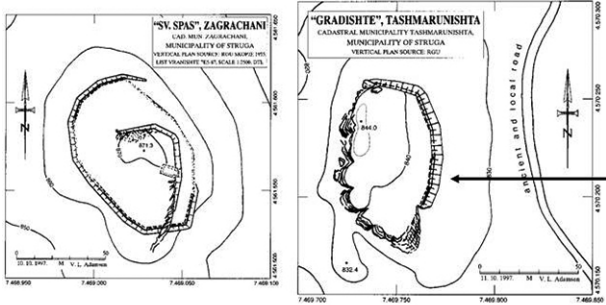
**VAJTOS, OKTISI**

**LYCH...**



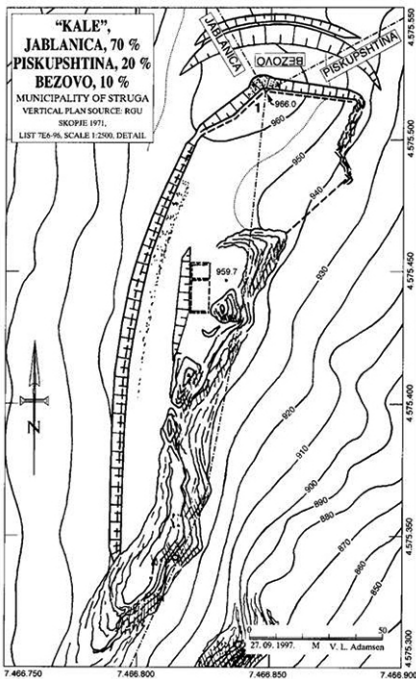
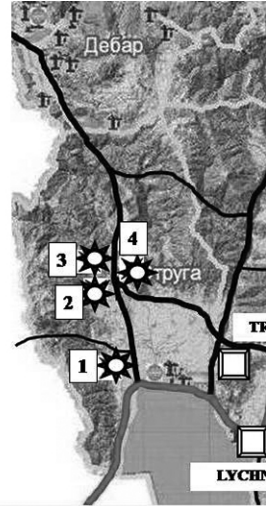
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**2 GRADISHTE, LABUNISHTE**

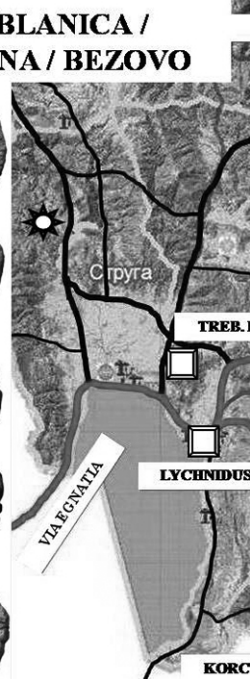


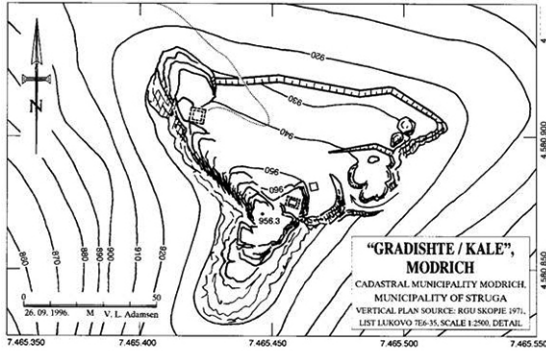
**1 SV. SPAS, ZAGRACHANI**

**4 GRADISHTE, TASHMARUNISTA**

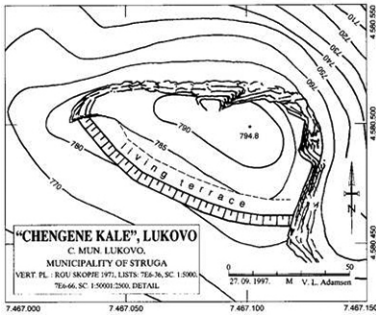
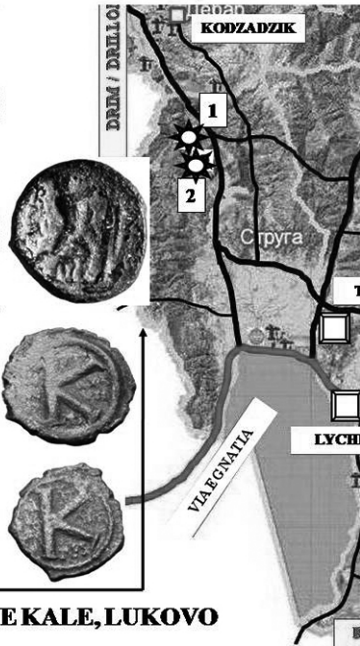


**KALE, JABLANICA / PISKUPSHINA / BEZOVO**

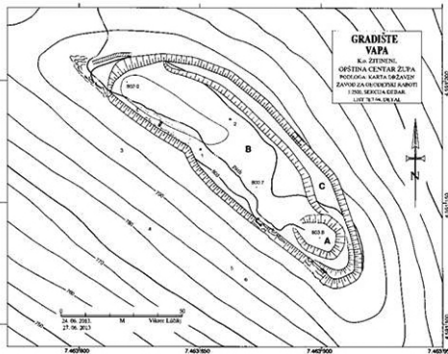




**1. GRADISHTE, MODRICH**



**2. CHENGENE KALE, LUKOVO**

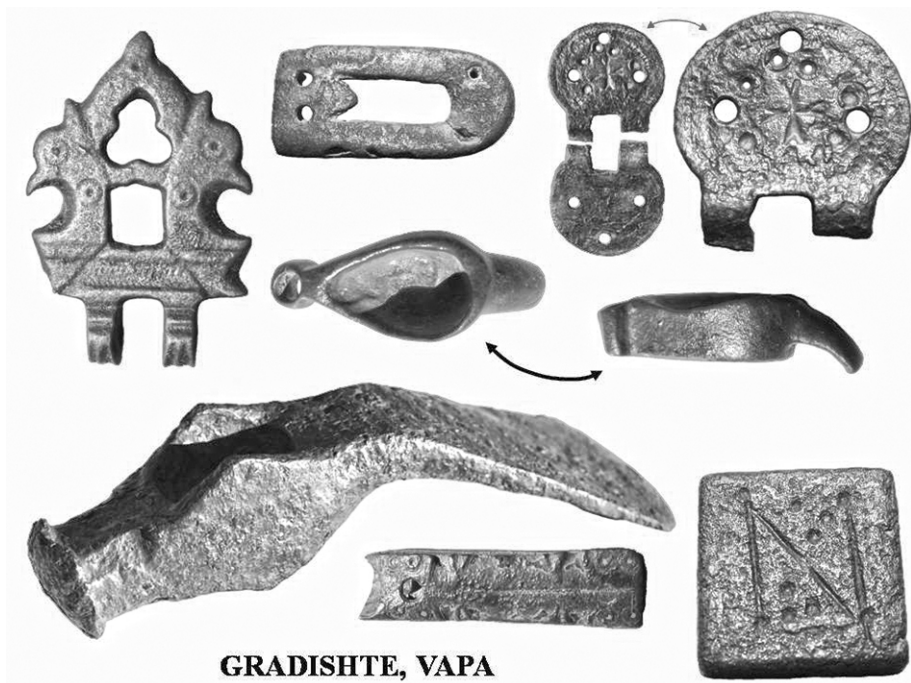


**GRADISHTE, VAPA**



**KALE, KODZADZIK**

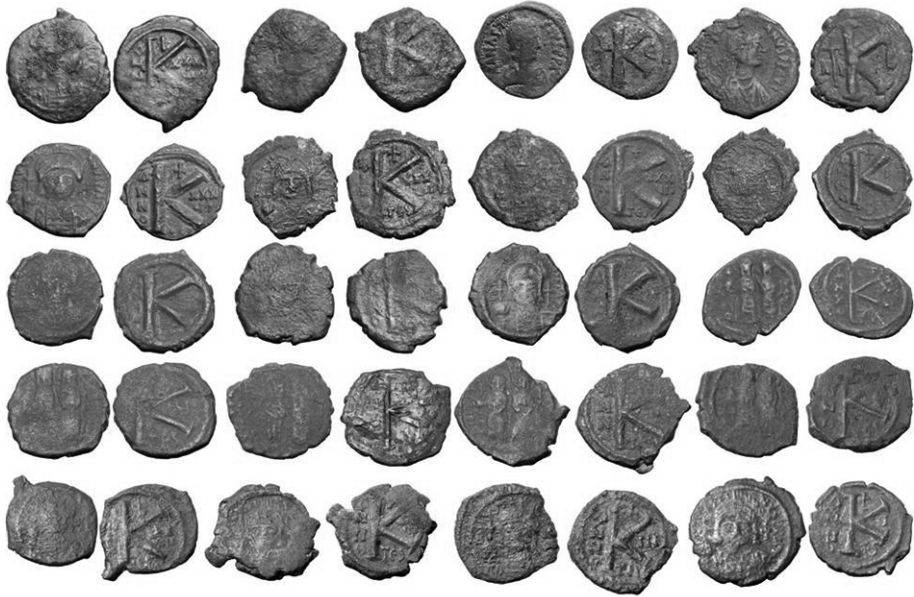




**GRADISHTE, VAPA: VALENS, IUSTINUS, IUSTINIANUS**



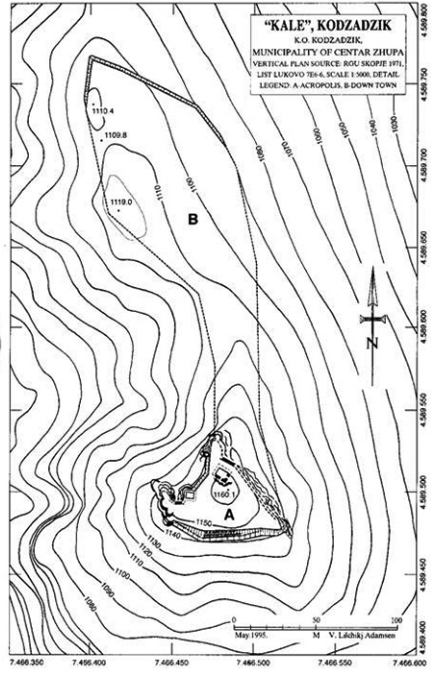
**GRADISHTE, VAPA: ANASTASIUS, IUSTINIANUS, ISUTINUS II**



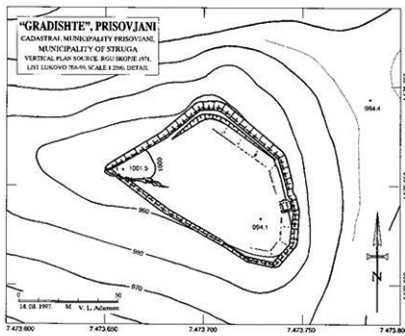
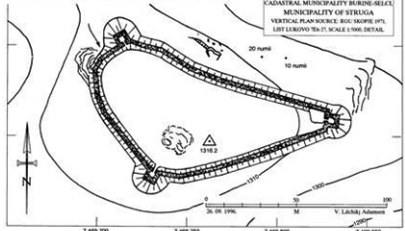
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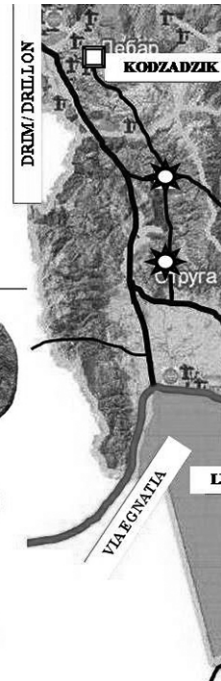
**KODZADZICHKO KALE, KODZADZIK**



**KALE, BURINEC-SELCI**



**KALE, PRISOVJANI**



## RECONSTRUCTING OR DECONSTRUCTING THE SPACE IN TIME? THE CASE OF SKOPJE FORTRESS

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The Fortress "Kale" is a multifaceted and complex archaeological site that has breathed through prehistory, antiquity and throughout the Middle Ages. With its position and dominance above the left bank of the river Vardar, the hill with its walls seems to have always been a tempting place for sheltering through centuries of restless flows, with housing facilities, craft workshops, medieval palaces and residences, Ottoman military and auxiliary facilities.

Used until the middle of the 20th century for the needs of the former Yugoslav federation, visibly damaged in the 1963 earthquake, later transformed into a promenade and recreation zone, with minimal aesthetical sanations, but without thorough scientific research; the systematic archaeological research performed with interruptions from 2006 to 2010, was supposed to finalize the exploration, conservation, reconstruction and presentation of the site.

Unfortunately, due to a series of political, quasi-ethnic and social factors, this project has never been fully completed.

### TELLING A MILENNIA LONG STORY

The earliest records of Kale as an important archaeological site date back to 1885 when it was noted by the English archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans. From the end of the 19th to the beginnings of the 20th century there are a series of visits and studies by many scholars: travelers, archaeologists, historians, ethnologists, architects, art historians, philologists, etc. (V. Knčov, J. Hadzi-Vasiljević, N. Vulić, R. Grujić, A. Deroko, J. Trifunovski, K. Petrov, T. Tomovski, V. Mošin, S. Antoljak, F. Vinčić, B. Babić, I. Mikulčić, A. Sukarova, V. Lilčić Adamsen, M. Boškovski, D. Mitrevski).



In 1953, the first archaeological excavations were undertaken after Kale ceased serving as a military barracks (Гоцкова-Славска, П, 1955).

The earthquake of 1963 caused major damage to both modern Skopje and the Skopje Fortress. Modern museums and the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments located in the area were also severely affected.

In 1967/8, extensive, archaeological excavations were undertaken that focused on the ramparts, towers and in general on detecting the perimeter of the site. (Бабиќ, Б 1974, 45-54; Бабиќ, Б., Микулчиќ, И. 1983, 55 – 63; Микулчиќ, И. 1982, 118 – 128; Винчиќ, Ж 1971 etc.)

In the period 2000-2004, separate, preventive, conservation works of Kale were carried out, which in themselves did not bring new knowledge of the site.

With intense systematic archeological and conservation campaigns in the period 2007 - 2014 conducted by a team led by D. Mitrevski, about 90% of the site was explored (Митревски, Д. 2015, 18, 19). It has been found that the same area was used from distant prehistoric times to this day, with layers of sediment from a total of 10 different settlements. The first, initial settlement was established as a large Eneolithic settlement, the remnants of which are today 8 m below the surface of the earth. On the remains of that settlement, designated Kale I, were the remains of other settlements, up to Kale X, or until the last use of that area, mainly during the twentieth century, until 1963 (Митревски, Д, 2019, 53). Following the factual situation after these studies, Kale's stratigraphy proved to be very complex. It can be traced to the existence of life in five long epochs:

### 1. Prehistory

A large Eneolithic settlement, unusually spacious, occupied the entire area of the fortress, extending eastward to present-day Old Bazaar. Divided into residential space and so-called cult-warehouse space, built relatively quickly and on pre-planned space, which is perhaps the oldest example of the existence of urban elements of prehistoric settlement in Macedonia. (Митревски, Д, 2019, 54)

Above the layers of the oldest Eneolithic settlement, there are stratified remains of the next three settlements covering almost all of the Bronze Age. Thus, the Early Bronze Age settlement is named **Kale II**, the Middle one as **Kale III**, while **Kale IV** marks the settlement of the Late Bronze Age and the Transitional period (Митревски, Д, 2019, 72).

Early, middle and late Bronze Age settlements were significantly smaller. From the Middle Bronze Age settlement a rampart is preserved, the only one ever discovered in Macedonia. The wall of the Middle Bronze Age settlement is a unique example of that type and time in Macedonia. It can be followed with all its features, fifty meters in length. Built of compacted earth and stones as a core, framed in a skeletal wooden structure, it enclosed and protected the settlement on its eastern side. ((Митревски, Д, 2019, 73)

### 2. Antiquity

A phase from early antiquity, which, in conditions of devastated cultural horizon, located with limited intensity and in a state of secondary context within the leveling terrain for elevation of the medieval city buildings from the 10th century, leaves us with hesitation about its character: was it a settlement or a cult space?! Sacrificial pits and cult objects with the oldest coin from Alexander III of Macedonia were found. (Лилчиќ Адамс, В, 2019, 146).

**Kale V** can be divided into two phases: *Va as Early Antiquity and Vb as Roman Imperial or Late Antiquity*. The period of V-IV century BC or early antiquity is the period when Skopje Fortress was a cultural place for the wider area. The end of this period probably was marked by the Celts and their breakthrough in 280/279. BC.

**Kale Vb** or *the Roman, Imperial and Late Antiquity periods* is not abundant with findings of consistent archaeological context. This was also due to the leveling of the terrain and the subsequent intensive use of the same space. However, the discovery of a hoard of ancient coins dating from the time of Nero (54-68) to Justin II (565-578), the discovery of three fragmented fibulae from the end of III - beginning of the IV century, characteristic of Roman military equipment, and the lack of more striking, settlement finds in Roman times suggest the existence of a military castron that played a role in protecting

Scupi, as well as other fortresses erected in the area, elevated on important strategic positions. It is certain that it the supposed castron that served to house Scupi's military bases in the tumultuous times of antiquity, was erected here, and then restored until the time of Justin II when the area was probably deserted (Манева, Е, 2019, 371).



### 3. Medieval times

The medieval Kale is represented by the layers of *Kale VI* and *Kale VII*. *Kale VI* is designated as *Byzantine*, and it includes *Samoil's Age*, through the striking *Comnenian phase* and most of the restless XIII century until 1282. The fall of Constantinople in 1204 and the political chaos that ensued in the area of Byzantine influence is also reflected in the historical events in Skopje. Rulers and states were changing rapidly: Kaloyan in 1203, Strez to 1214, Serbian, Epirote, and Bulgarian domination until the time of Ivan Assen II and a few brief intrusions and reigns, until the return of Byzantium in 1261.

*Kale VII* as a *mature age of the Middle Ages* corresponds to the period of the conquest of Skopje by Serbian King Milutin in 1282, until its conquest by the Ottomans in 1392 (Манева, Е, 2019, 371/372).

### 4. Ottoman period

*Kale VIII* is the time of the early Ottoman stage when Skopje's Kale or *Kala*, or the city – *Sheher* whose name was transcribed in *Üsküp*, lived its life

as an important administrative center of the *Sanjak* and the military center for the vast Ottoman Empire.

Early Ottoman phase 1392-1700: administrative and military center, 1492, 1495 emigration of Sephardi Jews from Spain and Portugal (Манева, Е. 2013/2, 1957-2032) 1555 catastrophic earthquake, the fire of Piccolomini and his armies in 1689 with immediate consequences - economic collapse, plagues, etc.

The late Ottoman phase from round 1700 to 19th Century followed by the modern age or the tenth settlement of Kale that ended with the 1963 earthquake (Митревски, Д. 2016, 36 - 41).

### 5. *Modern age*

The role of the barracks that Skopsko Kale had in the Ottoman period continued in the period of the Kingdom of SHS, as well as within ex-Yugoslavia until 1953. This centuries-old use of the site for military purposes has further devastated the cultural layers with the assumed leveling of the terrain and actions in accordance with its purpose. After 1953 the area of the Kale was dedicated to museum and leisure activities. Following the archaeological excavations, the conservation and presentation processes *were to be followed by arrangement of three museum stands.*



### REALITY (BITES)

The fortress that overlooks the capital of Macedonia has stood at the crossroads of civilisations from prehistory, antiquity, through the Middle Ages and the Ottoman domination of the Balkans. Towering over the Vardar River on one side and the Bazaar on the other, one cannot miss its stone walls and

towers topped by national flags. If climbed, the fortress offers one of the best vantage points from which to view the city below.

Yet for the past eight years the area behind its walls has languished as an unfinished excavation and construction site, effectively abandoned by the authorities but still open to tourists at their own risk. The shutdown followed inter-ethnic violence at the site, leaving omnipresent and tangible neglect all around.



The steel doors of the main entrance have been blocked by giant boulders for years. Locals, however, may guide a first-time visitor to a side entrance, previously used only when vehicles needed access but now the only way to enter the fortress. The main road inside reveals a vast grass plateau, riddled with large holes from an abandoned archaeological dig.

Signs, ripped from the ground, warn visitors “Do not cross”. A glass-covered dome soon comes into sight. But red tape prevents visitors from approaching. It is the prehistoric-era museum that never opened.

Close to it is another empty building that is off-limits, this one built in stone in order to hold Ottoman-era artefacts found in the fortress. It, too, never opened.

Deeper into the fortress are piles of rubble and construction material and several porta cabins.

While the site is fairly clean, there are no benches to rest on or functioning garbage bins in sight.

Deeper still, and there is a third unfinished building. Its steel frame holds white brick walls but there is no façade or roof. This building is the reason for Kale’s current sorry state. The plan was to excavate and then reconstruct some of the old fortress walls and create new content that would draw more visitors.

But in February 2011, mid-construction, it all came to an abrupt halt when the fortress became the scene of a pitched battle between ethnic Albanians and Macedonians over a small museum designed in the shape of a church and erected on the foundations of the medieval church. The steel frame and white brick walls were as far as it got. Eight people were injured in clashes after which police shut down the fortress and halted construction. It was off-limits to locals and tourists for the next three years.



The first church-shaped building was to hold artefacts from medieval times, the stone Ottoman-era tower would contain Ottoman-era treasures and prehistoric findings would be kept beneath the glass dome.

The funding dried up in 2013, however, and the work halted. The government was instead spending hundreds of millions of euros on the controversial makeover of the capital, Skopje 2014.

The problem with neglect in general is that we, the people, grow used to it. If a place remains neglected over a long period, this becomes the norm.

## THE FUTURE IS (NOT) LOOKING BRIGHT

In collaboration with the Skopje Museum of Modern Arts and the State Faculty of Architecture, city authorities said recently they would launch a competition for ideas as to what to do with the site.

The Museum of Modern Arts called for "bold and inventive, but at the same time simple and applicable ideas and concepts for cultivation of the Kale hill into a 'fortress of arts'".

City authorities, however, appeared more circumspect.

It is yet to determine what kind of content we need to build on the fortress. However, one should have in mind the status of the fortress as protected cultural heritage and preserving its authenticity should be one of the top priorities.

"Kale" stands in the very centre of Skopje, as a big elephant in the room, and as a reminder for a site with immense potential for valorisation, presentation and active use of the cultural heritage, which we knowingly choose to pass by and let it perish.

Will it?



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## PROJECT ANCIENT THEATRE SCUPI 2013- 2017

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The project titled *Scupi Antique Theatre - Research, Protection, Conservation, Reconstruction and Presentation 2013-2017* is a capital project of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, coordinated by the Ministry of Culture and the Cultural Heritage Protection Office of the Republic of Macedonia. The project holders are the Faculty of Philosophy Skopje and the Museum of the City of Skopje.

The set goal of the project was the complete excavation and exploration of the theatre, its conservation, reconstruction and commissioning by 2017. A number of archaeologists from museum institutions in the Republic of Macedonia<sup>1</sup> were hired to carry out these researches successfully and more dynamically, graduated archaeologists, students from the Institute of Archaeology at the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje<sup>2</sup> and other experts such as architects, photographers, documentaries, conservationists for immovable and movable cultural heritage etc. Around 200 - 250 manual workers were hired for the rough field work and physical excavation as required.

The systematic archaeological researches were carried out according to a predetermined program, which due to the complexity of the task and the size of the theatre with the environment, were divided into several stages:

The first phase (June - October 2013) covered all the preparatory activities necessary to begin intensive systematic archaeological excavations to fully discover the theatre, as part of preparations for the next research phases

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<sup>1</sup> Due to the scope of the project, archaeologists from the Archaeological Museum of Skopje, Prilep Institute and Museum, Strumica Institute and Museum, Gevgelija Institute and Museum, Štip Institute and Museum and many unemployed archaeologists were also involved in the project.

<sup>2</sup> During the project, three graduate theses related to different aspects of theatre research were defended.

that follow in 2014 and 2015.<sup>3</sup> The first was the removal of vegetation from the entire area above the theatre and its surrounding area with an area of about 10,000 square meters. After complete removal of the vegetation, and the land of the previous excavations, the next phase was the commencement of non-destructive activities such as: aerial photography, geo-magnetic, geo-electrical and geo-radar exploration of a site area of about 22 500 m<sup>2</sup>, which was intended to facilitate the following two phases.

The second phase (February - December 2014) focused on the systematic archaeological excavation of the entire theatre area and partly the immediate vicinity of approximately 10,000 m. In this excavation, the first stage was auditing and investigating the scene, which had previously been excavated on two occasions.<sup>4</sup> In 2014 the excavations were designed to confirm or revise existing knowledge of dimensions, constructional architectural elements, timelines and the use of sections in the scene.<sup>5</sup> The excavations confirmed some of the previous findings, the dimensions were more precisely determined, and new facts were discovered, especially with regard to the constructive elements. Complete technical and photographic documentation of the area has been prepared, which is the basis for developing a basic project plan for the preservation and restoration of the scene.

The third phase, due to the established dynamics, started at the beginning of January 2015 and continued without interruption until the end of December. In this final phase of the theatre's archaeological research, the auditorium and orchestra were completely excavated. In the course of these excavations, we have completely discovered the preserved architecture of the auditorium and completed the stratigraphy on an area occupied by the theatre. With this, we have fully completed this part of the project, and have also completed the technical and photo documentation that forms the basis for the next two phases (fourth and fifth).

During 2015, the "Basic Project for Conservation and Restoration of the Stage Theatre Building in Scupi" was developed and accepted.

The fourth phase began in November 2015, and during 2016, at the planned pace, the conservation work on the stage building was completed.

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<sup>3</sup> At the beginning of the project and direct archaeological excavations in 2013 were under the direction of Dr. Viktor Lilic Adams, and then the same year, continue under the leadership of Dr. Antonio Jakimovski.

<sup>4</sup> During the period from 1935 to 1937, excavations were carried out under the leadership of N. Vulić, (results published in: Вулић Н., 1961, 3–23.; Vulić N., 1981, 37–43.) and later in 1959–60 by D. Rendić Miočević (results published in: Rendić-Miočević D., 1981, 45–52.

<sup>5</sup> In previous excavations, the main outlines of buildings have been discovered: scaenae frons, central postcaenium and part of the Eastern lateral wing (basilica).

The fifth phase, according to the adopted dynamics, was planned and implemented during 2016 and 2017. Based on the results of the archaeological research, as well as the complete photo and technical documentation, the Skopje Conservation Center has made an existing and preliminary project for the conservation, restoration, reconstruction, revitalization and presentation of the auditorium in Scupi. Thus, by the end of 2017, the conservation of the existing state of the auditorium has been completed, thus completing the project "Ancient Theatre – Scupi, Research, Protection, Conservation, Preservation, Presentation, Restoration and Reconstruction 2013-2017".

At the end of the research in 2017, a book titled "Roman Theatre - Scupi" has been published which derives from the results and findings obtained from the archaeological research within the project: "*Ancient Theatre - Scupi, Research, protection, conservation, restoration, reconstruction and presentation 2013 - 2017*".<sup>6</sup>



Fig. 1. The Theatre before the excavations in 2013



Fig. 2. The Theatre near the end of the third excavation campaign in 2015

The publication is conceived as a collection of papers by (several) authors who, in the process of archaeological research, worked on a particular issue within the project, in order to present all aspects related to the architectural composition of the Roman theatre and the complex cultural stratigraphy of space.<sup>7</sup>

Along with these excavations, the archaeological artefacts were conserved, and by the end of the project we had conserved and restored and

<sup>6</sup> Jakimovski A., et. all., Roman Theatre Scupi, Skopje 2017, 1-488.

<sup>7</sup> The book is in Macedonian / English, by 13 authors, featuring 11 texts covering all aspects of research as well as stratigraphy of theatre space from 8/7 BC. to the 11th century.

ready for presentation, over 10,000 finds made of ceramics, metal, bone and glass, and about 3,300 coins.<sup>8</sup>



Fig. 3. The Theatre after the end of excavations and the conservation of the scene building in 2016

The archaeological excavations within this project almost completely reveal the size of the theatre<sup>9</sup>, thus confirming that it is the largest ancient object in the Republic of Macedonia. In addition, the timing of its construction, existence and end, as well as the stratigraphy of the space occupying the theatre, have been determined. Numerous archaeological and architectural sites and a large quantity of moving archaeological material have been discovered, which greatly enrich our knowledge of the prehistory, antiquity and the Middle Ages in the region of the Skopje region, the Republic of Macedonia, and even wider in the Balkans.

The Scupi theatre is the biggest antique building in the Republic of Macedonia.<sup>10</sup> Its grandiose dimensions, and the architectural concept, in a unique way reflect the cultural level of the citizens and the urbanism of *Colo-*

<sup>8</sup> Some of these items were exhibited at the closing annual exhibitions at the Archaeological Museum of Macedonia in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016, and an exhibition of research and material posters was also opened at the 2018 Museum of Sarajevo at the Zemajski Museum in commemoration of 135 years of existence at the museum.

<sup>9</sup> Except for a small part of the north-western end of the theatre building which is located beneath the modern cemetery of the village Zlokukjani.

<sup>10</sup> With its impressive dimensions, volume and capacity of about 9,000 spectators, this monumental architectural facility is the largest of the four preserved Roman theatres on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia (Stobi, Heraclea and Lychnidos).

*nia Flavia Scupinorum*.<sup>11</sup> In the course of the excavations, most of the remains of the theatre were discovered, except for a part of the scene building which lies under the modern cemetery of the village Zlokukjani. The theatre was built in one sequence, without subsequent intervention. By the architectural concept, the building belongs to the western Roman type of theatre, with semicircle auditorium built on a natural slope and partially supported by complex walls. The scene building and the orchestra have been placed in a levelled area, and the scene is associated with the auditorium through two arched corridors (*aditus maximi*). The *scaenae frons* had four porches with columns in three stories, and three entrances between the porches. Above the central entrance (*valva regia*), on the same level as the columns, there was a semicircular niche, and above the both side entrances (*hospitalia*) there were rectangular niches.



Fig. 4. The Theatre and its relation with the excavated buildings

According to the existing elements it may be concluded that the performances took place in the orchestra. The theatre had a multifunctional character, beside theatrical plays it was also used as a venue for gladiatorial combat and fights with animals. This is suggested by the lack of stage (*pulpitum*), the high orchestra podium and the rectangular pit of 3.20 meters in length, dug in the rock in the central part of the orchestra. The pit is connected with trenches that are parallel to the scene building. At the end of the usage of the theatre, the pit which was associated with the requirements of gladiator shows

<sup>11</sup> Jovanova L., 2008.; Jovanova L., 2015.; Лилчиќ Адамс В., 2019, 117-324. these three publications give a complete review on the history of the buildings seen through the prism of excavated ruins.

and fights with animals was filled with soil, and five stone blocks were laid on top. The blocks have a hole in the middle for vertical positioning of wooden posts, which again is connected with this type of fights.

The date of construction, function and the end of the theatre, can be provided by combining the information from archaeological evidence, historical circumstances and written sources. A coin found in the mortar of one of the walls is a bronze AS of the emperor Caligula, minted during the period between 37 and 41 AD, and it gives us a *post-quem* date for the construction.<sup>12</sup> According to architectural elements, namely the part of architectural elements that adorned the scene building, construction time can be dated to the first quarter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.<sup>13</sup> This is further supported by historical data, i.e. the visit of the Roman emperor Hadrian of Scupi in the period between 121 and 125 AD. The final usage period of theatre is illustrated by numerous finds, especially a large number of coins, and also many deposits from the period when the theatre was out of use. According to written sources, the emperor Theodosius (*Flavius Theodosius*) visited Scupi on two occasions in 379 and 388 AD, when he issued two edicts, called *Scupis* and *Scopis*. Knowing that he was supporting Christianity and persecuted all other religions, we presume that the end of the theatre is during this period i.e. at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>14</sup>

In the area of the theatre, five later phases were documented. Most likely, right after the theatre went out of use, the area was used as a burial site as suggested by five graves, dug in the bedrock and two more cenotaphs, dated in the early 5<sup>th</sup> century and possible connected with the cult of the Martyrs.<sup>15</sup>

The next phase is represented by Late Antique dwellings, confirmed by a large number of moveable finds and architectural remains, dated from the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century all the way up to the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Buildings from this period are found in multiple locations over the abandoned theatre area, and generally these are houses with one or more rooms. The houses are very rustic, built from crude stone and bricks bound with mud, in the so-called technique of drywall. The houses had fire places, kilns and pits for storage of food, and there were a large number of waste pits found.

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<sup>12</sup> Miloševski V., Lilčić G., 2017, 419 – 470.

<sup>13</sup> Лилчиќ В., 2001, Македонскиот камен за боговите, христијаните и за животот после животот, Том I, Скопје., This publication focuses on the marble decorations which covered the façade of the scene building.

<sup>14</sup> Jakimovski A., 2017, 11-28.

<sup>15</sup> Jakimovski A., 2017, 11-28.

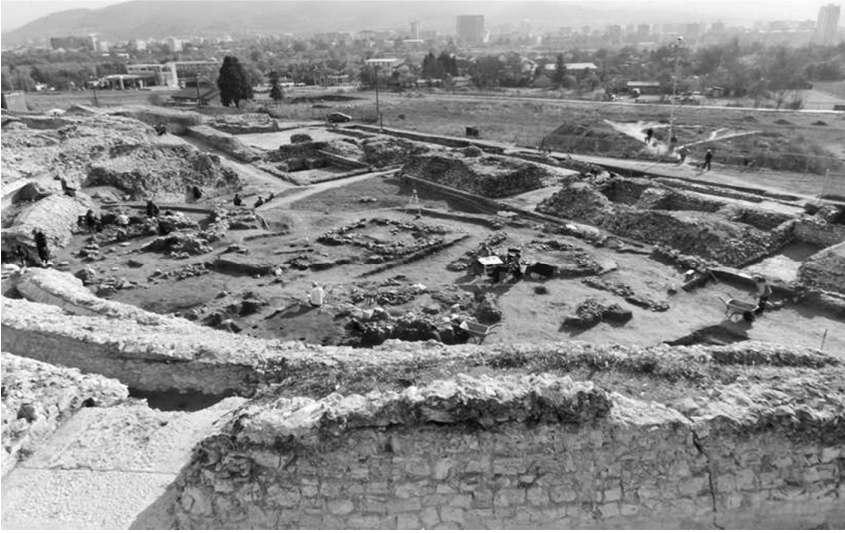


Fig. 5. Medieval settlement in the orchestra



Fig. 6. Detail of the medieval necropolis

Above the Late Antique houses, there was early medieval stratum found in the orchestra, dated in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> century according the finds. Except for numerous moveable archaeological finds, this horizon includes several extremely rustic houses.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Tolevski I., 2017, 367 – 418. Jakimovski A., Tolevski I., 2016, 1-19.

After the abandonment of the settlement, the area was used as a burial ground from which we discovered more than 60 skeleton graves. According to the finds in the graves they can be dated to the period of X and XI century.<sup>17</sup> With this stratum, ends the usage of the space above the theatre and its surrounding where the oldest discoveries are the two Iron Age graves, dated to the period of the 8<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Kuzmanovski I., 2017, 367 – 418.

<sup>18</sup> Mitrevski D., 2017, 147 – 159.

## MACEDONIAN CULTURAL HERITAGE AS A PART OF THE WORLD'S TREASURE - TOWARDS THE IMPROVEMENT OF ITS MANAGEMENT

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The title of the Ohrid conference (24-26 September 2019): *On the Cross-Path of Cultural Ideas: Macedonia, the Balkans, Southeast Europe- Heritage, Management, Resources*, implicates several significant facts that should be underlined. The meaning of the expression „Cross-Path of cultural ideas“ is, among other things, connected with the position of the territory of Macedonia, and its importance through the ages as a cross-path of many various and different cultures. As a part of the Balkan Peninsula this region shows an abundance of cultural treasure. That is mostly the result of the interference of influences, and the presence of many cultural layers which are the outcomes of different civilizations and turbulent history. Today, a large part of this tangible and intangible heritage is within the borders of the Republic of North Macedonia and its management is mostly under the state's competence.<sup>1</sup> Macedonian citizens build their national identity around their country's cultural heritage and respect it as a part of their past and present, as something that reflects their way of life, historic circumstances and it is understandable for it to be of greatest national interest.

Macedonian cultural heritage can't be separated by state borders, because it belongs to the wider region of the Balkans, as it belongs to Europe and at last to the world. That is why we are bound to properly maintain it and offer it for public display, while using the best methods and resources in order to preserve it for the next generations. The globalization views on heritage have also been changing in the attempt to perceive the valuated cultural diversity as all nations' mutual concern. Breakthrough ideas have been included in

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<sup>1</sup> <http://uzkn.gov.mk/mk/легислатива/> Accesible at the official site of the Macedonian Government.

the »Convention on the protection of World cultural and natural heritage« adopted at the UNESCO meeting in Paris, in 1972. Maybe the most propulsive idea is the one presented in the preamble of the convention, which states that the world's cultural heritage belongs to all humanity.<sup>2</sup>



The narthex of the church St. Sophia in Ohrid.

The fertile valley of the river Vardar had always been a desirable living territory and a natural path towards the Mediterranean Sea. The Macedonian part of the Balkan Peninsula has a rich history of cultural existence, as a crossing path of various migrations, and often as a battlefield which shaped the destiny of different ethnic groups throughout -history. The rich material heritage, found in various forms, nowadays encompasses and presents the entire ethnic, cultural and historical profile, which occurred on Macedonian soil throughout the centuries. It originates from prehistoric cultures, like the Neolithic settlements, and also from the legacy of the antic times. The forming of the antic Macedonian kingdom, its development and affirmation in the time of Phillip II and Alexander of Macedonia, the forming of Macedonian continental empire, as well as the fall of the Macedonian state and the conquest of Macedonia by the Roman Empire, can be followed through the material testimonies. A significant part of it depicts the period of the Middle Ages, a time of the founding of medieval state of King Samuil and of the Ohrid Archbishopric. This was a period when a substantial cultural and clerical life developed in Macedonia, marked by the activities of Ss. Cyril and Methodius, St. Klement and St. Naum. The domination of the Byzantine state over the Balkans was a period embellished by the numerous precious and in beauty unsurpassed works of icons and fresco-paintings, and the woodcarving arts, which

<sup>2</sup> <https://whc.unesco.org/en/convention>

the highlights of local or foreign artistic talent (S. Kiselinovski, Z. Todorovski, 2001, 6-7). The list of precious monuments, buildings, churches, mosques, archaeological sites, sarcophaguses, statues and figurines, jeweler, frescos, icons, paintings, woodcarvings, regional national costumes, poems, folk music, folk dances etc. goes on and on. They represent our region and they are the epicenter of our national proud.

During the centuries of the Ottoman occupation there had been intensive political and cultural emancipation of the Macedonian population, which is the reason why the nation's goal became to create an autonomous and independent state. Today, great number of documents are kept in the State Archives of the Republic of North Macedonia (constitutions, manifestos, declarations, resolutions, appeals, protests etc.), including testimonies of the social, political, economic, cultural and educational-clerical conditions throughout the historical development of Macedonia in the following period and of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This includes the Balkan wars, the First and the Second World War, and the period of the formation of the contemporary Macedonian state and its institutions, up until today.



The facade of the church St. Sophia in Ohrid, 11th century.

Conservation science, as a new field, is interdisciplinary, complex, global in character, both scientific (theoretical) and technological (practical) and adopts the modern concept of integrated conservation (P. Spiridon, I. Sandu, 43). Managing the cultural heritage in our country has taken a systematic and scientific approach since the end of the Second World War. Until Macedonia's independence in 1991, it seemed that this field had been well covered and taken seriously, as a part of a larger system lead from the government and the Ministry of Culture of Former Yugoslavia, as well as from the

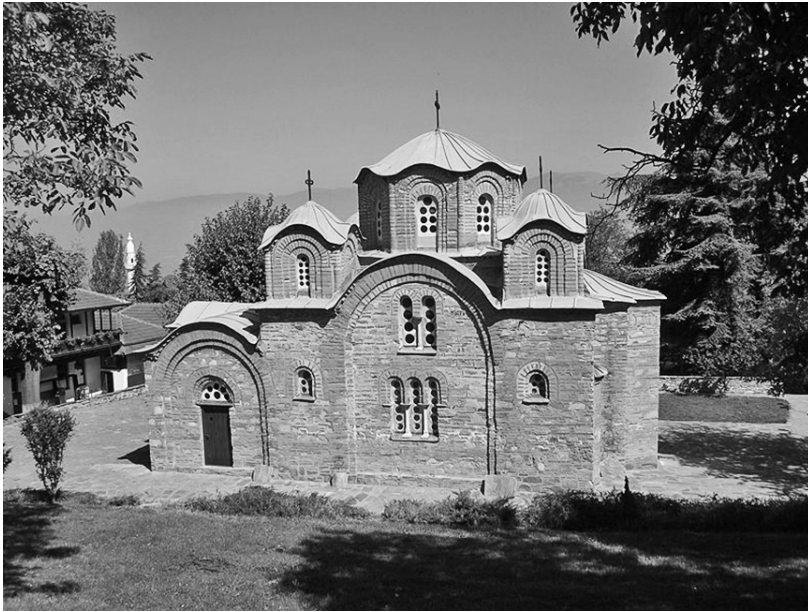
Macedonian institutions. The Republic's (Macedonia as a part of Yugoslavian Federation) union of culture and its Assembly, formed in 1976, had a special role in financing the state's activities in culture in general, and in protecting the cultural heritage and natural rarities, among other obligations. This institution was the creator of cultural policy, and a body responsible for the publication of the periodical *Kultura* (see *Култура* from 1983), which informed regularly the public on the annual programs and their realization during the late 70-s and 80-s. (Републичка заедница за култура)



The ceiling fresco paintings in the church St. Sophia in Ohrid.

The first domestic professionals who practically established the earliest cultural institutions in our country could recognize the most valuable monuments in order to start with their conservation. Right after the war, in 1947, they overtook the conservatory treatment of the church St. Sophia in Ohrid, whose building structure was in a very poor condition. In the same year the Commission for Protection of the Cultural Heritage was found by few professionals with modest experience. In the next year the law for the protection of the cultural heritage and natural rarities finally regulated this field. In the next few years important monuments in Skopje were also treated: Daut Pashin Hamam, the church dedicated to St. Panteleimon (near the village of Nezezi on Vodno mountain), Kurshumli Han, also the church of St. Georgi (St George) in the village of Curbinovo, as well as the archaeological site Stobi, one of the most important archaeological sites on the Balkans and in South-East Europe. At last, in 1949, the Central Institute for Protection of the Cultural Heritage and Natural Rarities was found and considered as a most relevant

institution for the organized, systematic and scientific approach in the field of protection of movable and unmovable monuments and artifacts (А. Николовски 1983, 6). Its periodical publication of „Cultural Heritage“ was important for the following the actual activities as for pointing the future tasks in field. Art historians, archaeologists, architects, and other scientists and professionals published the results of their work on regular basis, keeping the public informed about the status, condition and needs of various monuments and sites. With financial support from the Republic's Union of Culture in 1983 the Republican Institute for protection of monuments of culture- Skopje published the special edition: „30 Years Protection of the Cultural Monuments in Socialistic Republic of Macedonia“, as an important summary of the systematic work and achievements of the three decades.



The church of St. Panteleimon, Nerezi, 12th century.

Without considering previous attempts, the conservation of the frescos of St. Sophia in Ohrid, during the 60s, was a pioneering achievement during which our conservators collaborated with UNESCO's foreign experts, Ferdinando Forlati from Venice, Cesare Brandi from Rome, and Eve Broadvoax from Paris (А. Николовски editor, 6-7). Young conservators who were participating as educated painters, and were working on this object, were collecting primary knowledge as this was their first, but important experience. The other important task for them was cleaning the frescos inside the church of St. Bogorodica Perivleptos (The Holy Mother of god- Peribleptos) in Ohrid, in 1951. The group of most valuable cultural monuments in the Republic of Ma-

cedonia was already defined, with the expectation of its enlargement in the next period. Cleaning and conservation of the group of ten icons from 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century, practically marked the foundation of the Ohrid Icon Collection.

Although there are many buildings, works of art, artefacts and sites being discovered, documented, protected and presented until today, the aforementioned monuments are still the jewels in the crown of the Macedonian cultural heritage, which need permanent care and attention. Perivleptos' frescos have been cleaned again recently with experts help and donations from the American Embassy in the Republic of North Macedonia.<sup>3</sup> The donating cocktail party held on June 28<sup>th</sup> 2019 in the residency of the French ambassador, His Excellency Mr. Timonie, which purpose was to support the restoration of the recently fired gothic church Notre Dame in Paris, was also used for donating activities for restoration of the small, but extremely important church of St. Gjorgji in Curbinovo.<sup>4</sup> These noble acts, although encouraging, are also alarming for our institutions and professionals, whose duty and obligation is to make more serious efforts for the restoration and protection of worldly known monuments that have been neglected for a long time.



Pietà, a fresco painting in the church of St. Panteleimon, Nerezi, 1164

Perivleptos' frescos, executed in the 1295, are probably the best known work of the Mihail and Evtihij, one of the most talented Middle Age painters active in the Balkans. It's cathedral status in Ohrid (later named St. Climent),

<sup>3</sup> <http://uzkn.gov.mk/mk/св-богородица-перивлепта/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://uzkn.gov.mk/mk/донаторски-коктел-за-црквата-нотр-дам/>

makes this temple attractive and frequently visited by locals and tourists. The interior of the monument still contains precious books, manuscripts, icons and other ecclesial things, including the rest of St. Clements` body. Fresco-decoration inside the church represents the last phase of the so-called new monumental style within the byzantine art of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, which will soon be replaced with the Paleologian manner in the Constantinople painting at the beginning of the next century. (П. Миљковиќ- Пепек, 1967, 33-34) Professor Miljkovich-Peppek mentions the similarities in the modeling the faces from Perivleptos`s frescos with those from the mosaics in St. Marco in Venice (Genesis cycle from about 1260), and with some of the mosaic examples from the ciborium in Eufrasie`s basilica in Porech (1272), as well as with some of the faces from the frescos in Vatoped (1212) (Ibid., 35).

Equally famous and profoundly researched are the churches of St. Panteleimon near Skopje (Nerezi) and of St. Gjorgji in Curbinovo. Well known for its architecture, St. Panteleimon has real respect in the scientific circles, especially among byzantologists, because of the frescos inside the building, painted in 1164, probably by Constantinople masters. They had done their best trying to satisfy the prince Alexios Angelos patronage. This fresco-decoration overcame all expectations of its own time and style, and since it was executed much earlier than Giotto`s frescos from the 13<sup>th</sup> century in Italy, it become an early Renaissance example that the western art still hadn`t experienced. The Nerezi`s frescoes burst with energy and emotional intensity which might surprise viewers accustomed to think of Byzantine art as static and lifeless. (Е. Греам –Диксон, 2017, 38-40) The wall scenes in the church are also crowded and varied figures have sense of movement and action. Though Giotto himself surely never saw this image, the comparison of Nerezi`s example with his own Pietà is so striking that it challenges any notion of coincidence and, indeed, it challenges the notion that Giotto had done something unprecedented in seeking to capture the intensity of human experience in the look of a face or the shape of a body (A. Omissi, 2016).

Concerning the church of St. Gjorgji in Curbinovo, it is not necessary to stress the fact that it was promoted internationally as a monument which, after Nerezi, demonstrates the drama, the visionary character, the greatness and courage of the master-painter, a genius who with his assistants on the shores of Lake Prespa gave visual utterance to the most powerful and most emphatic cry of his age (C. Grozdanov, 2015, 10). In 1191 the inner walls of the small and simple building were painted with frescos. Beside the fact that the modest temple, built away from the big cultural and religious centres, was neglected for a long time, the fresco-decoration in relatively good condition was uncovered as one of the best examples of the byzantine painting in the so-called Comnenian style, typical for the period. The spiritual beauty of the

forms, body motions and elasticity, as well as the vivid drapes, are making this unique art recognizable as one of the most important parts in the evolution of the byzantine painting (К. Балабанов, А. Николовски, Д. Корнаков, 1980, 238-243; E. Dimitrova, 2015, 24).

By mentioning well known facts about the small, but elite group of monuments in the Republic of North Macedonia, my intention is to appeal about the importance of a more serious approach in conservation, restoration and especially in presentation of this worldly known cultural treasure. Without doubting in skills and efforts of the professional stuff, the main problem is absence of physical guarding and systematic care as a result of the lack of permanent financial support. It is always a challenge for a small and underdeveloped country like ours to maintain the enormous number of monuments, but it is necessary to increase the state's budget needed for these purposes and to coordinate the institutional actions in order to improve the protection and presentation of the cultural heritage of highest range.



Kurbinovo, the entrance in the church of St. Georgi, 11th century.

Economic problems, present since the 80s, have become even more severe during the period of transition of the young Macedonian state, which reflected negatively on the managing of the cultural heritage. This means that the management of the cultural heritage in the Republic of North Macedonia is still in a kind of a cross-path. Besides using its own resources, it should be supported by the resources from the European Union, as well as to use the help of the countries like USA, Japan, Turkey, Slovenia, and many other states

and organizations, willing to support the proper care of some parts of our cultural treasure, financially or with their expertise. We have to step away from this cross-path and towards the improvement of the role of the local authorities and the state in this area.



Kurbinovo, Archangel Gabriel, 1191, a fresco painting in the church of St. Gjorgji.

Contemporary concepts relating to architectural (building) heritage apply to the whole immediate environment and to all cultural goods within. They have to be understood in the global ecological context. Contemporary relations to intangible cultural heritage mainly define the relationship of modern society to development, the evaluation of heritage in the framework development and the established needs and demands, evolving in society. There are usually recommended preservation approaches that are appropriate at a range of sites, paying particular attention to the tensions that arise when balancing the need to maintain authenticity and integrity with the needs of the people who live in or visit these sites (Lj. Lah, 2001, 130, 131). Identifying and maintaining authenticity and integrity at cultural heritage sites are, however, challenging goals, (I. Hodder, 2010, 862; H. C. Alberts and H. D. Hazen, 2010, 56).

Sustainable development is not that of 'heritage for heritage's sake'. Cultural heritage is to be seen as paying its own way in the benefits it brings both to its immediate surroundings and to the wider nation (R. Mawrey, 2016, 7). The concepts are difficult to define and are open to different interpretations in different cultural settings. Additionally, the diversity of sites and

wide variety of influences on them require individualized approaches to preservation in many cases. Nonetheless, authenticity and integrity are useful guiding concepts in striving for a systematic approach to preservation in diverse contexts.

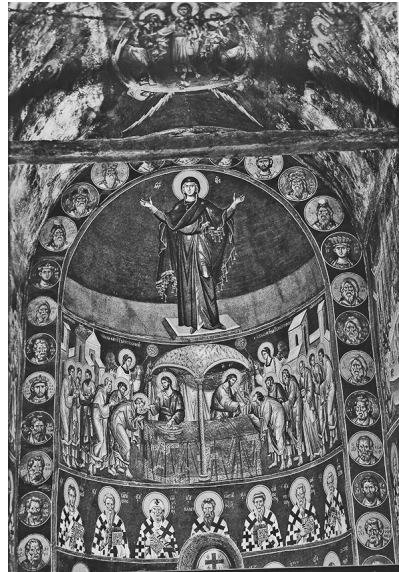
Having in mind the historical context regarding the region of Macedonia, as well as the political tensions derived from it, during the second half of the twentieth century the states of the Southern Balkan often use the cultural heritage for nationalistic causes. Also many issues between the neighboring countries have been developed because of it. The unsolved problems are still actual today, and even after Yugoslavia's collapse, misunderstandings about cultural heritage are even more intensive. Instead of treating the cultural heritage as a mutual obligation concerning the scientific research, documentation, preservation and presentation, the level of cooperation between neighboring states is on a low level, if not absent. Expecting the positive effects from gathering around these activities, such kind of collaboration would probably have a positive impact over the cost and finances on each side. That will also improve the efficiency and quality of managing the cultural heritage in the whole region. Closer collaboration between the Balkan states in this field can provide using the world's newest methodology experience and practice in different levels. It is necessary to rectitude professional contacts with the colleagues from Greece, Albania, Bulgaria, Austria and Italy, countries with longer and more profound experience, especially in conservation.



Bogorodica Perivlepta, a church in Ohrid, 13th century.

Recognizing the increasing threats to natural and cultural sites coupled with traditional conservation challenges, the 1972 Convention established a new provision for the international and collective protection of heritage with "outstanding universal value". The World Heritage Centre (WHC) was established in 1992 with the intention to act as the Secretariat and coordinator within UNESCO for all matters related to the Convention. The Centre organizes the annual sessions of the World Heritage Committee (the Committee) and provides advice to States Parties in the preparation of site nominations. The Centre, along with the Advisory Bodies, also organizes international assistance from the World Heritage Fund and coordinates both the reporting on the condition of sites and the emergency action undertaken when a site is threatened (L. Meskell, 2014, 220).

Following the UNESCO Conference held on a high level in the Organization's Headquarters in Paris (April 2004) on cooperation between UNESCO and South-East European Countries, the interest in and the support of this regional cooperation, within the frameworks of the UNESCO, was intensified. This promoted a new quality in the regional cooperation of the countries of South –East Europe, including the establishment of the Council of Ministers of Culture of South-East Europe, the signing of the Statute in Copenhagen, and the holding of the third ministerial conference in Ohrid. The important process of reconciliation and reinforcement of peace and stability in the region was accelerated and a dialog on mutual understanding, tolerance and the respect for the cultural, ethnic and religious differences began. It is particularly important to emphasize the continuity of the meetings so far that, through mutual exchange of experiences and presentations, have managed to define the priorities and the common needs of the region. It is exactly the culture and the cultural heritage with all its varieties and similarities in this region that make it more promising (L. Topuzovska, Dec 2006/Jan 2007, 57).



The frescos in the olthar of the church of Bogorodica Perivlepta in Ohrid, 1295.

The new spirit of regional cooperation, led also to the expert net and a long –lasting strategic program in all areas of culture and also to inter-cultural processes of sustainable development. Although a small country, the Republic of North Macedonia is making efforts to improve the cooperation with the

member states of the South-East Europe Council with the active involvement in their program initiatives. Such activities are also a chance for solving the problems between our country and the neighbors on several levels, including the management of the cultural heritage.

Cooperation on cultural heritage issues within the region consistently follows the idea of the founding idea of the European Union and UNESCO invoking for a world without limitations. The topic of the Ohrid Ministerial Conference in 2006 had a significant meaning: *Cultural Heritage: a Bridge Towards a Shared Future* (Topuzovska, 2006/2007). More than ten years later, in this critical moment of its existence, we shall work seriously on the preserving the status of Ohrid as a city of UNESCO, making it a solid part of that bridge. The city of Ohrid, the so-called Macedonian „pearl“, have to remain an outstanding universal value without threatening its „integrity“ and „authenticity“. Our duty is to take care of its present and future condition properly. If we want to keep our cultural pride in the future, we shall recognize the greatest responsibility over the most exceptional monuments in the Republic of North Macedonia. They belong to us and to the world as well.

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## РЕЗИМЕ

### МАКЕДОНСКОТО КУЛТУРНО НАСЛЕДСТВО КАКО ДЕЛ ОД СВЕТСКОТО БОГАТСТВО - КОН ПОДОБРУВАЊЕ НА НЕГОВОТО МЕНАЦИРАЊЕ

Како централен дел на Балканскиот полуостров, територијата на Република Северна Македонија претставувала вистински крстопат на различни етникуми и култури низ вековите, практично од праисторијата до најново време. Како природен пат кон Медитеранот, долината на реката Вардар низ бурната историја на регионот претставувала особено привлечна позиција за создавање населби, утврдувања, некрополи, воени логори и слично. Воени судири, земјотреси, епидемии, промени во

политичкиот, економскиот и религиозен контекст, го диктирале и нивното создавање и опстојување низ вековите.

Иако територијално мала, територијата на денешната држава изобилува со движно и недвижно културно наследство, чие менаџирање последниве децении е проследено со сериозни потешкотии од финансиска и институционална природа. Ангажманот и ресурсите вложувани на планот на заштитата на културното наследство од крајот на петтата деценија на минатиот век, практично даваа задоволувачки резултати до осумдесетите години, кога започнаа економски проблеми и рационализација во сите области на живеењето на некогашната СФРЈ. Дополнителни искушенија за менаџирањето на културното наследство настапија со нејзиното распаѓање и осамостојувањето на Република Македонија. Солидната легислатива денес не гарантира сериозни достигнувања во истражувањата, конзервацијата и презентацијата на културното наследство. Покрај недостатната финансиска поддршка на државата, која ја има клучната улога на ова поле, недостига и ефикасна екипираност, координираност и соработка меѓу институциите во областа на заштитата. Недостига и соработка со останатите земји во регионот, како и со оние кои можат да понудат експертска помош. Заштитата на културното наследство во Република Северна Македонија не смее да се потпира инцидентно на добрата воља и помошта која ја обезбедуваат во овој сегмент блиски и пријателски земји. Должност е државата да го сочува тоа богатство за идните генерации.

Вклучувањето на Републиката во активностите на УНЕСКО даваат надеж во подобро искористување на европските фондови, но истовремено изискуваат поголема одговорност од наша страна. Поттикнувањето на регионална соработка и стабилност во рамките на тие процеси, полесно, но сигурно води кон вклучување на Македонија во поширокиот контекст на заштита и менаџирање на културното наследство. Најпосле, тоа нè претставува и ни припаѓа нам, но припаѓа и на светот како драгоцен сегмент на историските и цивилизациски дострели на целото човештво.

## ON THE PATH FROM KURBINOVO TO POLOŠKO: THE PICTURESQUE MACEDONIAN GENRE AND ITS HISTORIC DESTINY

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If one should venture to take a journey through Macedonian medieval artistic treasury, one should be aware that such an enterprise could be both pleasing and dramatic at the same time. The reason for such a duality is two-fold: one's orbit will revolve around some of the master-pieces of Byzantine visual creativity, while their actual situation might not be very satisfying to the eye of the beholder due to the damage caused by natural disasters, earthquakes, military campaigns, and most sad of all, human neglect. As a small and struggling, yet modern state, we tend to investigate and present the results of our research activities dedicated to iconographic, stylistic and aesthetic analyses of the fresco arrangements dated in the medieval era, as well as discover their genuine features, both visual and ideological. However, the least attention in regard to the preservation of our cultural heritage has been paid to their actual well being, in other words – at this very moment, dozens of representative works of art from the Byzantine artistic production in the territory of the Republic of Macedonia are at high risk of degradation and deterioration – Saint George at Kurbinovo (1191)<sup>1</sup>, Saint Nicholas at the village of

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<sup>1</sup> V. N. Lazarev, *Živopis XI-XII vekov v Makedoniji*, Actes du XIIe Congrès international d'études byzantines I, Beograd 1963, pp. 129-131; G. Babić, *Hristološke raspre u XII veku i pojava novih scena u apsidalnom dekoru vizantijskih crkava*, Zbornik za likovne umetnosti 2, Novi Sad 1966, pp. 11-30; L. Hadermann-Misguish, *Kurbinovo. Les fresques de saint Georges et la peinture Byzantine du XII siècle*, Bruxelles 1975, pp. 43-318, 321-551; R. Hamann-Mac Lean, *Grundlegung zu einer Geschichte der mittelalterlichen Monumentalmalerei in Serbien und Makedonien*, Giessen 1976, pp. 276-281; A. Wharton, *Art of Empire. Painting and Architecture of the Byzantine Periphery. A Comparative Study of Four Provinces*, University Park and London 1988, pp. 123-126; C. Grozdanov - L. Haderman-Misgviš, *Kurbinovo*, Skopje 1992, pp. 51-64, 74-79; Sh. Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries. Program of the Byzantine Sanctuary*, Seattle and London, 1999, pp. 91-92; S. Korunovski, E. Dimitrova, *Macedonia L'arte medievale dal*

Manastir in Mariovo (1271)<sup>2</sup>, Dormition of the Holy Mother of God at Treskavec monastery (ca. 1340)<sup>3</sup>, Dormition of the Holy Mother of God at Matejče monastery (1348-1352)<sup>4</sup>, to name but a few.

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*IX al XV secolo*, Milano 2006, 64-74; E. Dimitrova, "THE DA VINCI MODE" – *Unsloved Mysteries of Macedonian Medieval Fresco Painting*, Niš and Byzantium Symposium, Collection of scientific works VIII, Niš 2010, pp. 249-253; E. Dimitrova, S. Korunovski, S. Grandakovska, *Srednovekovna Makedonija. Kultura i umetnost*, Makedonija. Mileniumski kulturno-istoriski fakti, Skopje 2013, pp. 1577, 1597-1607; E. Dimitrova, *Cuia Culpa? Lapses and Misdemeanors of Medieval Artists in Macedonia*, Niš and Byzantium Symposium, Collection of scientific works XII, Niš 2014, pp. 301-303; E. Dimitrova, *V. I. Personalities in Medieval Macedonia. Five Paradigms of Supreme Commissionership (11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> Century)*, Folia Archaologica Balkanica III, Skopje 2015, pp. 617-620; E. Dimitrova, G. Velkov, *Seven Medieval Churches in the Republic of Macedonia*, Skopje 2014, pp. 46-63; E. Dimitrova, *The Church of Saint George at Kurbinovo*, Skopje 1916; E. Dimitrova, Ph. Niewöhner, R. Paligora, G. Velkov, *Seven Medieval Churches in the Regions of Pelagonia, Mariovo and Prespa*, Skopje 2019, pp. 11-29.

<sup>2</sup> D. Koco, P. Miljković-Peppek, *Manastir*, Skopje 1959; F. Barišić, *Dva grčka natpisa iz Manastira i Struge*, Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta VIII/2, Beograd 1964, pp. 13-27; R. Hamann-Mac Lean, *Grundlegung zu einer Geschichte der mittelalterlichen Monumentalmalerei in Serbien und Makedonien*, pp. 291-295; P. Kostovska, *Mačeničkite bisti vo crkvata Sv. Nikola vo Manastir, Mariovo*, Muzej na Makedonija. Zbornik na trudovi, nova serija, br. 6. Srednovekovna umetnost 3, Skopje 2001, pp. 50-75; Eadem, *Reaching for Paradise – Program of the North Aisle of the Church of St Nicholas in Manastir, Mariovo*, Kulturno nasledstvo 28-29, Skopje 2004, pp. 67-89; Eadem, *The Concept of Hope for Salvation and Akakios' Monastic Programme in St. Nicholas at Manastir*, Proceedings of the 21<sup>st</sup> International Congress of Byzantine Studies, London 2006, pp. 289-290; Korunovski, E. Dimitrova, *Macedonia L'arte medievale dal IX al XV secolo*, pp. 86-89, 140-144; E. Dimitrova, *Seven Streams. The Stylistic tendencies of Macedonian Fresco Painting in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century*, Niš and Byzantium Symposium, Collection of scientific works VI, Niš 2008, pp. 194-198, 200-203; E. Dimitrova, S. Korunovski, S. Grandakovska, *Srednovekovna Makedonija. Kultura i umetnost*, pp. 1618-1620, 1666-1671; E. Dimitrova, Ph. Niewöhner, R. Paligora, G. Velkov, *Seven medieval Churches in the Regions of Pelagonia, Mariovo and Prespa*, pp. 31-51.

<sup>3</sup> M. Gligorijević-Maksimović, *Slikani calendar u Treskavcu i stihovi Hristifora Miltilenskog*, Zograf 8, Beograd 1977, pp. 48-54; B. Babić, *Manastir Treskavec so crkvata Sv. Uspenie Bogorodičino*, Spomenici za srednovekovnata i ponovata istorija na Makedonija IV, Skopje 1981, pp. 37-52; C. Grozdanov, *Hristos car, Bogorodica carica, nebesnite sili i svetite voini vo živopisot od XIV i XV vek vo Treskavec*, Kulturno nasledstvo XII-XIII, Skopje 1988, pp. 5-19; S. Smolčić-Makuljević, *Carski deizis i nebeski dvor u slikarstvu XIV veka manastira Treskavac. Ikonografski program severne kupole priprate crkve Bogorodičinog uspenja*, Treća jugoslovenska konferencija vizantologa, Beograd-Kruševac 2002, pp. 463-472; Eadem, *Sakralna topografija Treskavačkog manastira*, Balkanika XXXV, Beograd 2004, pp. 552-585; S. Korunovski - E. Dimitrova, *Macedonia L'arte medievale dal IX al XV secolo*, pp. 112-115, 176-177; E. Kasapova, *Arhitekturata na crkvata Uspenie na Bogorodica vo manastir Treskavec*, Skopje 2010; E. Dimitrova, S. Korunovski, S. Grandakovska, *Srednovekovna Makedonija. Kultura i umetnost*, pp. 1642-1644, 1710-1712; A. Vasilevski, *Manastir Treskavec*, Skopje 2016; E. Dimitrova, Ph. Niewöhner, R. Paligora, G. Velkov, *Seven medieval Churches in the Regions of Pelagonia, Mariovo and Prespa*, pp. 87-105.

Damaged roofs (in the church of Saint Nicholas at the village of Manastir the roof is leaking, letting the water coming down the walls in the south aisle), collapsing vaulting structures (as in the church dedicated to the Dormition of the Holy Mother of God at Treskavec monastery where the south dome over the exonarthex has “slit” almost 40 cm below its original architectural position), plasters chipping off (in Saint Nicholas at Manastir and Saint Archangel Michael in Prilep, destroying the frescoes in the western parts of the edifices), plants growing out of the construction components of the edifices (still visible on the roof structure of the Holy Mother of God Peribleptos church in Ohrid), doors missing from their original entrance positions or being heavily damaged (both portals at the church of the Holy Mother of God at Matejče have been removed in the course of the Albanian military activities in 2001, replaced several times, yet constantly being demolished and/or taken away), facades flaking off (Kurbinovo, Treskavec monastery), moist running down interior walls (Saint Nicholas at Manastir), floors ruined by gold diggers (in the main altar space, as well as in the subsidiary chapels at Matejče monastery, the floor in the main aisle has been replaced by modern furnishing), mineral salts penetrating into the tissue of the fresco arrangements (Holy Mother of God Peribleptos church where, somehow, salts disappear and reappear in uneven chronological cycles) memorabilia of unprofessional treatments during past conservation processes (Kurbinovo, Lesново monastery), traces of childish games with the iconographic repertoire (in the Monastery of Zahum – graffiti exposing names and nicknames of several individuals), disfiguration of the paintings done by reasons incomprehensible to human mind (in Matejče monastery where Albanian military groups have pictured their national symbols over the images of the depicted saints), traces of nests where squirrels have nurtured their offspring protecting them from animal predators (in the upper parts of the church dedicated to Saint George in Kurbinovo),

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<sup>4</sup> M. Gligorijević-Maksimović, *Les scènes inédites du cycle des Actes des apôtres à Mateič*, XVI Internationalen Byzantinisten Kongress Wien 1980, Actes 32/6, Wien 1982, pp. 173-176; A. Nitić, *Ciklus sv. Jovana Preteče u Mateiču i vizantijska tradicija*, Zograf 23, Beograd 1993-1994, pp. 75-86; E. Dimitrova, *Manastir Matejče*, Skopje 2002, p. 75-247; E. Dimitrova, *On the new dating of the fresco ensemble of the church of the Holy Virgin in Matejče*, Balcanoslavica 30-31, Prilep 2002, pp. 95-103; E. Dimitrova, *Za mizanscenu i za kulisite. Sceni od likovnata dramatopeja na makedonskoto srednovkovno slikarstvo*, Makedonsko nasledstvo 6, Skopje 2008, pp. 19-22; E. Dimitrova, *Dimensio Sacra: za prostornite vrednosti na kompozicijata vo slikanite ansambli na Teorijanovoto atelje*, Zbornik posveten na Vojislav Đurić, Beograd-Skopje 2010, pp. 85-93; S. Korunovski - E. Dimitrova, *Macedonia L'arte medievale dal IX al XV secolo*, pp. 126-130, 186-191; E. Dimitrova, S. Korunovski, S. Grandakovska, *Srednovkovna Makedonija. Kultura i umetnost*, pp. 1656-1658, 1727-1733; E. Dimitrova, *The Church of the Holy Mother of God at Matejče*, Skopje 2016.

clusters of insects feasting on the frescoes (in the subsidiary chapels at Matejče monastery) - are some of the issues that one would face when one tries to combat the destruction of cultural monuments from the medieval era<sup>5</sup>. Amidst all of these problems, we have to find the beauty within and present its features and qualities with dignity and care. For this paper, I have chosen a subject often neglected by scholars who have investigated Macedonian medieval frescoes – the subject of genre scenes<sup>6</sup> inserted in the frames of depicted Old and New Testament spectacles.

In pursuit of inventive and visually exciting elements that represent unconventional details of daily life enclosed in the compositional matrixes of religious sights, we start our journey in the most vulnerable monument of our medieval cultural heritage – the church dedicated to Saint George at the village of Kurbinovo in Prespa<sup>7</sup> (Fig. 1). As I have pointed out so many times in my earlier papers<sup>8</sup>, this work of art is permeated with such a great number of visual oddities, most of which might be easily considered not only as painterly witticisms, but ideological concepts, as well. Namely, in the composition representing the Nativity<sup>9</sup>, the visual construct of the scene is elaborated according to the description of the event given by the evangelist Luke; therefore, one

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<sup>5</sup> Data acquired by personal visit to the monuments in the course of the last decade (2010-2019) preserved in photo documentation and video material. Some of the churches have been subjects of documentaries aired on national tv stations (Saint George at Kurbinovo, Holy Mother of God at the village of Matejče, Saint Nicholas at Manastir in the region of Mariovo, Treskavec monastery near Prilep).

<sup>6</sup> Contrary to the analysis of the western painting which penetrates into the social and cultural roots of genre scenes, cf. P. C. Sutton (Ed.), *Masters of Seventeenth Century Dutch Genre Painting*, Philadelphia, 1984; R. Jeazell, *Art of the Everyday: Dutch Painting and the Realist Novel*, Princeton 2008; A. Waiboer (Ed.), *Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting: Inspiration and Rivalry*, New Haven 2017, Byzantine art has not been taken into account for its genre subjects and compositions.

<sup>7</sup> L. Hadermann-Misguish, *Kurbinovo. Les fresques de saint Georges et la peinture Byzantine du XII siècle*, pp. 43-318, 321-551; C. Grozdanov - L. Haderman-Misgviš, *Kurbinovo*, pp. 51-64, 74-79; S. Korunovski - E. Dimitrova, *Macedonia L'arte medievale dal IX al XV secolo*, 64-74; E. Dimitrova, S. Korunovski, S. Grandakovska, *Srednovekovna Makedonija. Kultura i umetnost*, pp. 1577, 1597-1607; E. Dimitrova, G. Velkov, *Seven Medieval Churches in the Republic of Macedonia*, pp. 46-63; E. Dimitrova, *The Church of Saint George at Kurbinovo*, Skopje 1916; E. Dimitrova, Ph. Niewöhner, R. Paligora, G. Velkov, *Seven medieval Churches in the Regions of Pelagonia, Mariovo and Prespa*, pp. 11-29.

<sup>8</sup> E. Dimitrova, "THE DA VINCI MODE" – *Unsloved Mysteries of Macedonian Medieval Fresco Painting*, pp. 249-253; E. Dimitrova, S. Korunovski, S. Grandakovska, *Srednovekovna Makedonija. Kultura i umetnost*, pp. 1577, 1597-1607; E. Dimitrova, *Cuia Culpa? Lapses and Misdemeanors of Medieval Artists in Macedonia*, pp. 301-303; E. Dimitrova, V. I. Personalities in Medieval Macedonia. Five Paradigms of Supreme Commissionership (11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> Century), pp. 617-620;

<sup>9</sup> E. Dimitrova, G. Velkov, *Seven Medieval Churches in the Republic of Macedonia*, Fig. 8;

can see the nursing mother,<sup>10</sup> the cradle with the newborn, the angelic suite and the shepherds, complemented with the images of two midwives and the monumental frame allusive to the Bethlehem cave where the birth of Jesus has allegedly taken place<sup>11</sup> (Fig. 2). Yet, amidst these Biblically substantiated components of the story, there is an interesting painterly detail that adds a very vivid dimension to the picture, which, according to our opinion, is not its one and only purpose in the visual explication of the theme.



Saint George at Kurbinovo, Prespa, external view

Namely, the depiction of the shepherd dog that watches over the sheep pen in the right portion of the scene is not only an inventive pictorial testimony to the Biblical tale that his masters have gone for the adoration of the newborn Christ; it obviously alludes to the season of Jesus' birth, in other words to the colder months of the year when the flocks are fenced in their enclosure, further substantiated by the scarce and feeble vegetation, as well as astrakhan-like furry coat worn by the shepherd equipped with all of his professional tools<sup>12</sup>. In that regard, the watchful canine which has climbed on a boulder to keep a vigilant eye on the sheep, the undergrowth and quite stunted vegetation, the destitute, rocky landscape and particularly the warm,

<sup>10</sup> Gospel according to Luke: 2, 12-20 from the Holy Bible, Old and New Testament in the King James Version, Nashville 1972.

<sup>11</sup> Gospel according to Luke: 2, 15.

<sup>12</sup> E. Dimitrova, Ph. Niewöhner, R. Paligora, G. Velkov, *Seven Medieval Churches in the Regions of Pelagonia, Mariovo and Prespa*, Fig. 8.

woolen pants and leather footwear worn by the old shepherd are more than a testimony to the intent of the iconographer to create an authentic, vigorous and highly convincing visual paradigm of one of the most significant Biblical events celebrated as Christmas by the entire mankind.



Saint George at Kurbinovo, Prespa, *Nativity*

In the 13<sup>th</sup> century Macedonian fresco ensembles created after the breakthrough of the Paleologan painterly revolution, some peculiar visual supplements can be observed in the rather canonically designed scenes of Biblical nature, such is the representation of Christ before Pilate in the church dedicated to Saint Nicholas in Prilep<sup>13</sup>, where the governor of Judea is depicted wrapped with a cloth that is, no doubt, a Jewish prayer shawl, which only adds more drama to the already anxious composition structured by the condemnatory locomotion of the demanding Jews<sup>14</sup> (Fig. 3). However, the most

<sup>13</sup> P. Miljkovic-Pepck, *Sur la chronologie de l'église de saint Nicolas à Varoš près Prilep*, Studien zur byzantinischen Kunstgeschichte. Festschrift für Horst Hallenseleben zum 65. Geburtstag, Amsterdam, 1995, pp. 73-84; P. Kostovska, *The Prophetic Figures and their Quotations in the church of St. Nicholas in Varoš, near Prilep (The symbolism of their meaning)*, Balcanoslavica 25, Prilep 1998, pp. 159-182; Eadem, *Programata na živopisot vo crkvata Sveti Nikola vo Varoš kaj Prilep i nejinata funkcija kako grobna kapela*, Zbornik za srednovekovna umetnost 3, Skopje 2001, pp. 50-75; S. Korunovski, E. Dimitrova, *L'arte medievale dal IX al XV secolo*, pp. 98-99, 147-150; E. Dimitrova, S. Korunovski, S. Grandakovska, *Srednovekovna Makedonija. Kultura i umetnost*, pp. 1630-1631, 1678-1679; E. Dimitrova, Ph. Niewöhner, R. Paligora, G. Velkov, *Seven Medieval Churches in the Regions of Pelagonia, Mariovo and Prespa*, pp. 69-85.

<sup>14</sup> E. Dimitrova, Ph. Niewöhner, R. Paligora, G. Velkov, *Seven Medieval Churches in the Regions of Pelagonia, Mariovo and Prespa*, Fig. 14.

exciting genre elements of this period can be found in the fresco ensemble of the church of the Holy Mother of God Peribleptos in Ohrid<sup>15</sup>, where the vistas are filled with genuine visual spices embedded in the seemingly conventional tissue of the represented scenes. For example, the sorrowful images of the lamenting women who watch the funeral procession of the Virgin from the windows of their homes or galleries in the spectacle of the Dormition<sup>16</sup> give the picture a distinctive feminine touch to the accentuated manly character of its visual constellation (Fig. 4). Contrary to the ceremonial demeanor of the angels, the festive mimicry of the apostles and the ritualistic attendance of the archpriests - all gathered around the catafalque of the Virgin Mary, the spontaneous expression of grief visible on the images of the female characters who observe the drama from the intimacy of their homes, give the site a gentle spice of feminine vulnerability to the restrained and highly official character of the compositional mise-en-scene.



Saint Nicholas in Prilep, *Christ before Pilate*

<sup>15</sup> O. Demus, *Die Entstehung des Paläologenstils in der Malerei*, Berichte zum XI Internationalen Byzantinisten Kongress, München 1958, pp. 30-31; R. Hamann-Mac Lean und Horst Hallensleben, *Die Monumentalmalerei in Serbien und Makedonien von 11 bis zum frühen 14. Jahrhundert*, pp. 28-29; P. Miljkovic-Peppek, *Deloto na zografite Mihailo i Eutihij*, Skopje 1967, pp. 43-51; C. Grozdanov, *Crkva Sv. Kliment, Ohrid*, Zagreb 1979, pp. 4-12; S. Korunovski - E. Dimitrova, *Macedonia L' arte medievale dal IX al XV secolo*, pp. 152-161; E. Dimitrova, S. Korunovski, S. Grandakovska, *Srednovekovna Makedonija. Kultura i umetnost*, pp. 1879-1689; E. Dimitrova, G. Velkov, *Seven Medieval Churches in the Republic of Macedonia*, pp. 64-81.

<sup>16</sup> E. Dimitrova, *On the Mise-en-scene and the Backdrops. Scenes from the Dramatopee of the Macedonian Medieval Painting*, *Macedonian Heritage* 29, Skopje 2006, pp. 5-6, Fig. 1.



Holy Mother of God Peribleptos in Ohrid, *Dormition*

When we talk about femininity in the Virgin Peribleptos church, where all female characters are depicted according to somebody's robust masculine taste<sup>17</sup>, we have to mention the finely constructed scene of the Annunciation in which the Virgin is accompanied by her maidens while receiving the message from the archangel<sup>18</sup>. While one of them is standing next to the well, the other two are attending on her in the moment which appears to be the conception<sup>19</sup> (Fig. 5). Why else would they care to hold her body during her communication with the heavenly messenger if not for the reason of her fainting as a symptom of an early pregnancy. As much as we could criticize master Eutykhios for his masculine female characters in Peribleptos deprived of elegance, delicacy, tenderness and grace, we have to admit that he has applied highly sensitive approach to feminine matters when it comes to depicting the most sensual moment of their emotionally vulnerable gender. Also, we have to mention that the physically expressive response of the Virgin to the "immaculate" message of the archangel is the first ever depicted example of carnal reaction to the divinely transferred commandment in the illustration of the scene showing the Annunciation. In that manner, one of the most substantial moments of Christian religious history has been transformed into a

<sup>17</sup> S. Korunovski, E. Dimitrova, *L'arte medievale dal IX al XV secolo*, p. 160.

<sup>18</sup> E. Dimitrova, S. Korunovski, S. Grandakovska, *Srednovekovna Makedonija. Kultura i umetnost*, Fig. on pp. 1684-1685.

<sup>19</sup> E. Dimitrova, G. Velkov, *Seven Medieval Churches in the Republic of Macedonia*, Fig. 7.

picturesque genre spectacle permeated with seemingly realistic and highly tactile sentiments.



Holy Mother of God Peribleptos in Ohrid, *Annunciation*

In the church dedicated to Saint George in Staro Nagoričino<sup>20</sup>, Michael Astrapas, the master-mind of the painterly atelier, unlike his father in the Peribleptos church, tends towards more delicate inclusion of genre motifs in the richly and vividly composed Biblical scenes<sup>21</sup>. The insertion of the naughty youngsters intensifying the farce in the front prospect of the scene representing the Mocking<sup>22</sup>, the display of the whole arsenal of offensive weaponry in the second plan of the composition showing the Bedrail of Judas<sup>23</sup> and the dynamic motion of the elderly character who is coaching the young man how to

<sup>20</sup> R. Hamann-Mac Lean und Horst Hallensleben, *Die Monumentalmalerei in Serbien und Makedonien von 11 bis zum frühen 14. Jahrhundert*, pp. 34-36; P. Miljkovic-Peppek, *Deloto na zografite Mihailo i Eutihij*, pp. 23-24, 56-62, 190-197; B. Todić, *Staro Nagoričino*, Beograd 1993, pp. 71-138; Idem, *Serbian Medieval Painting. The Age of King Milutin*, Beograd 1999, pp. 55-56, 65-68 et passim; S. Korunovski - E. Dimitrova, *Macedonia L' arte medievale dal IX al XV secolo*, pp. 161-168; E. Dimitrova, S. Korunovski, S. Grandakovska, *Srednovekovna Makedonija. Kultura i umetnost*, pp. 1689-1699; E. Dimitrova, G. Velkov, *Seven Medieval Churches in the Republic of Macedonia*, pp. 82-101.

<sup>21</sup> E. Dimitrova, *On the Dynamics of the Compositional Structures in the Paleologue Painting on the Territory of Macedonia*, *Macedonian Heritage* 32, Skopje 2008, pp. 6-9.

<sup>22</sup> S. Radojčić, *Ruganje Hristu na fresci u Starom Nagoričnu*, *Uzori i dela starih srpskih umetnika*, Beograd 1975, p. 156.

<sup>23</sup> E. Dimitrova, G. Velkov, *Seven Medieval Churches in the Republic of Macedonia*, Fig. 18.

properly consolidate the wooden cross in the hill of Golgotha in the spectacle of Christ climbing the cross<sup>24</sup> (Fig. 6) are only some of the manners of master Astrapas to bring the visualization of the Gospel stories closer to the imaginative minds of the believers. The carefully prepared table in the composition illustrating the Last Supper on the surface of which the utensils are arranged according to the disposition of the seated apostles<sup>25</sup>, the pieces of silver greedily received in the folds of the traitor's chimation in the scene depicting Judas taking the silver from the Jewish priests<sup>26</sup> and the metal vessel that serves as a sink, but could have also been used for other necessities, in the picture showing Trial before Pilate<sup>27</sup>, can be seen as tasteful seasoning added to the conventionally prepared compositional substances. The neatly folded swaddling bands of the baby representing Virgin's soul in the Dormition<sup>28</sup>, the firmly tied knot of the tunic worn by the soldier in the Trial before Annas<sup>29</sup>, as well as the ceramic lamp lightened by an individual attending the Betrayal<sup>30</sup> disclose the capacity of master Astrapas to permeate Staro Nagorično's Christological scenes with sparkles of common life and daily trivia loosely concealed within the religious tissue of the expressive Biblical spectacles.

Similarly to Staro Nagorično, in Saint Nicetas near the village of Banjani<sup>31</sup>, master Astapas is not restraining himself from inclusion of genre details; only in this case, they are bolder and intended to create an energetic and exuberant atmosphere in the Biblical sights<sup>32</sup>. In that regard, by positioning the two children who are distracting the guests at the festivity in the front

<sup>24</sup> E. Dimitrova, *The Staging of the Passion Scenes: A Stylistic Essay. Six Paradigms from 14<sup>th</sup> Century Fresco Painting*, Zograf 31, Beograd 2006-2007, Fig. 2.

<sup>25</sup> E. Dimitrova, *Cuia Culpa? Lapses and Misdemeanors of Medieval Artists in Macedonia*, pp. 307-309, Fig. 6.

<sup>26</sup> B. Todić, *Staro Nagorično*, T. V.

<sup>27</sup> Idem, *Srpsko slikarstvo u doba kralja Milutina*, Fig. 142.

<sup>28</sup> E. Dimitrova, G. Velkov, *Seven Medieval Churches in the Republic of Macedonia*, Fig. 17.

<sup>29</sup> B. Todić, *Srpsko slikarstvo u doba kralja Milutina*, Fig. 141.

<sup>30</sup> E. Dimitrova, G. Velkov, *Seven Medieval Churches in the Republic of Macedonia*, Fig. 18.

<sup>31</sup> H. Hallensleben, *Die Malerschule des Königs Milutin*, Giessen 1963, pp. 29-30, 54-56, 121-127; R. Hamann-Mac Lean und Horst Hallensleben, *Die Monumentalmalerei in Serbien und Makedonien von 11 bis zum frühen 14. Jahrhundert*, pp. 31-32; P. Miljkovic-Peppek, *Deloto na zografite Mihailo i Eutihij*, pp. 188-190; B. Todić, *Serbian Medieval Painting. The Age of King Milutin*, pp. 83-86, 134-137 et passim; S. Korunovski - E. Dimitrova, *Macedonia L' arte medievale dal IX al XV secolo*, pp. 168-172; E. Dimitrova, S. Korunovski, S. Grandakovska, *Srednovekovna Makedonija. Kultura i umetnost*, pp. 1699-1706; E. Dimitrova, G. Velkov, V. Iljovska, *Skopje. Seven Monuments of Art and Architecture*, Skopje 2010, pp. 24-35; E. Dimitrova, G. Velkov, *Seven Medieval Churches in the Republic of Macedonia*, pp. 102-117; M. Marković, *Sveti Nikita kod Skoplja. Zadužbina kralja Milutina*, Beograd 2015, pp. 111-217.

<sup>32</sup> E. Dimitrova, S. Korunovski, S. Grandakovska, *Srednovekovna Makedonija. Kultura i umetnost*, p. 1704-1706.

prospect of the scene representing the Marriage Feast at Kana<sup>33</sup>, the painter has given the sight a cheerful dimension of a welcoming and family-friendly household. On the other hand, in the dynamic scene of the Expulsion of the Merchants from the Temple<sup>34</sup>, he is showing his animal-friendly side representing the young ram, which, hearing the wooden benches overturned, is looking to see if the other members of its herd are alive and well.



Saint George at Staro Nagoričino, *Christ climbing the cross*

Furthermore, the incense burner placed on a wooden bench beneath the catafalque of Virgin Mary in the scene of the Dormition<sup>35</sup>, the stool positioned near the cross on Golgotha in order to help Christ climb on the martyr devise<sup>36</sup>, as well as the auxiliary furniture elements facilitating the role of the protagonists in the scene picturing the Deposition from the cross<sup>37</sup> testify to the imaginative energy of the painter and his capacity to complement the religious content of the vistas with utilities taken over from everyday life. Trying to infuse energetic charge in all the elements of his painterly procedure in Saint Nicetas, master Astrapas has animated even the ornamental décor (Fig. 7), creating a source of life in the center of the decoration in a form of an

<sup>33</sup> E. Dimitrova, G. Velkov, *Seven Medieval Churches in the Republic of Macedonia*, Fig. 11.

<sup>34</sup> M. Marković, *Sveti Nikita kod Skoplja. Zadužbina kralja Milutina*, Fig. 39.

<sup>35</sup> E. Dimitrova, G. Velkov, V. Iljovska, *Skopje. Seven Monuments of Art and Architecture*, Fig. 11.

<sup>36</sup> M. Marković, *Sveti Nikita kod Skoplja. Zadužbina kralja Milutina*, Fig. on page 172.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, Fig. on page 173.

animal-like head from which the luscious branches, with all their floral abundance, are springing up in colourful playfulness.



Saint Nicetas at Banjani, Skopje, Ornamental decoration

In regard to the genre motifs, the fresco painting of the church dedicated to Saint George at the village of Pološko<sup>38</sup> could be “compared” to Hieronymus Bosch’s *Garden of earthly delights*<sup>39</sup>, not only due to their frequent appearance in the depiction of Biblical scenes, but their explicit and rather insolent vivacity, as well. Almost all of the sights that illustrate episodes from the Gospel stories in Pološko contain some kind of visual spice “sprinkled” over the canonical nature of the represented event: some of them refer to the down-sides of human nature, some other to the weaknesses of the genders, many of

<sup>38</sup> V. J. Đurić, *Pološko. Hilendarski metoh i Dragušinova grobnica*, Zbornik Narodnog muzeja VIII, Beograd 1975, pp. 327-342; C. Grozdanov - D. Kjornakov, *Istorijski portreti u Pološkom I*, Zograf 14, 1982, pp. 60-66; Eadem, *Istorijski portreti u Pološkom II*, Zograf 15, Beograd 1984, pp. 85-93; Eadem, *Istorijski portreti u Pološkom III*, Zograf 18, Beograd 1987, pp. 37-42; I. M. Đorđević, *Zidno slikarstvo srpske vlastele*, Beograd 1994, pp. 147-150; S. Korunovski - E. Dimitrova, *Macedonia L' arte medievale dal IX al XV secolo*, pp. 177-181; E. Dimitrova, *The Portal to Heaven, Reaching the Gates of Immortality*, Niš & Byzantium Symposium, The Collection of scientific works V, Niš 2007, pp. 370-371; E. Dimitrova, S. Korunovski, S. Grandakovska, *Srednovekovna Makedonija. Kultura i umetnost*, pp. 1712-1717.

<sup>39</sup> P. Glum, *Divine Judgement in Bosch's "Garden of Earthly Delights"*, The Art Bulletin 58, 1976, pp. 45-54; M. Gomez, *Hieronymus Bosch: The Garden of Earthly Delights*, in Gaillard J. and M (Ed.): *Hieronymus Bosch: The Garden of Earthly Delights*, New York 1989; A. B. Rooth, *Exploring the garden of delights: Essays in Bosch's paintings and the medieval mental culture*, California 1992.

them - to the vulnerability of the peoples' souls. Scattered all over the fresco panorama of the temple which, by itself is quite dynamized in regard to the energetic charge of the scenes and highly succulent in terms of the palette of colors, the genre elements make a substantial contribution to the vividness, as well as the impressive outlook of the entire painterly decoration. Among the great number of surprisingly bold and unexpectedly witty visual spices added to the scenes of religious nature in Pološko, we have chosen the one depicting the Mocking of Christ<sup>40</sup> (Fig. 8), a spectacle that should, by all means, provoke a bitter emotional response from the beholders of the represented event. Although the composition of the Mocking has already been complemented with some interesting genre elements even in the earlier fresco ensembles, such as Staro Nagoričino<sup>41</sup>, the scene of the Mocking in Pološko surpasses all previous examples of this subject in the history of Byzantine painting with the unconstrained charge of its visual explication.

Namely, in the composition in which Christ has been humiliated by the lowlife of Jerusalem, the painter has intensified the degrading atmosphere of the event by representing the two characters<sup>42</sup> who express their contempt by spiting Jesus in the face with a high quantity of, what appears to be, thick mucus of saliva snores. As if that was not enough brutal for the painter to recreate the atmosphere of the shameful event filled with grotesque sarcasm, he added another element to spice up the visual story of Christ's embarrassment. In the right side of the picture, he depicted a youngster performing a gymnastic salto move<sup>43</sup>; due to the fact that the underwear has not been invented until much later, his overturned tunic reveals a very intimate part of his body which has been made clearly visible to the spectators. And that is not where the story ends, because the visible chain tucked to the body of this gymnastic performer clearly alludes to an individual who has been deprived of freedom, possibly a lunatic or a criminal, loosen up and allowed to attend the mockery. If we take into account all the elements of the depicted story: the soldiers who spit Jesus in the face, the servant who is amusing himself playing the cymbals, the youngsters who rave as if going to a public festivity, the lunatic who is not embarrassed to show everybody his rear body part, as well as the helpless figure of "the man of the hour" amidst the chaotic atmosphere of dissonant demeanor, we have to admit that we are looking at a scene which resembles

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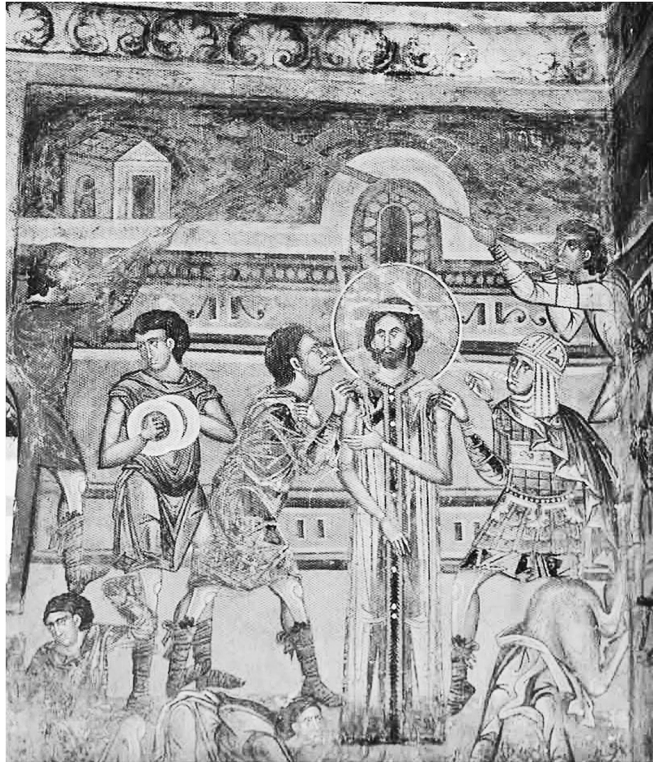
<sup>40</sup> E. Dimitrova, *The Staging of the Passion Scenes: A Stylistic Essay. Six Paradigms from 14<sup>th</sup> Century Fresco Painting*, pp. 118-119, Fig. 8.

<sup>41</sup> S. Radojčić, *Ruganje Hristu na fresci u Starom Nagoričinu*, p. 156.

<sup>42</sup> E. Dimitrova, *The Staging of the Passion Scenes: A Stylistic Essay. Six Paradigms from 14<sup>th</sup> Century Fresco Painting*, Fig. 8.

<sup>43</sup> E. Dimitrova, S. Korunovski, S. Grandakovska, *Srednovekovna Makedonija. Kultura i umetnost*, Fig. on p. 1715.

some kind of postmodern performance honoring worthlessness rather than a Biblical spectacle of a passion event. The fresco ensemble of Saint George a Pološko offers a great number of explicit genre motifs<sup>44</sup>; yet, none of them tops the spectacle of Mocking and its unrestrained, robust and highly sardonic sense of painterly humor.



Saint George at Pološko, Kavadarci, *Mocking*

All these and many other scenes that could not be mentioned in this article are as vulnerable as the rest of the fresco arrangements to which they belong as constitutional elements. They too suffer from deterioration caused by mineral salts, moisture, physical damages, graphic interventions, as well as incompetent and inappropriate conservational treatments. All these reasons can lead to serious and irreversible consequences such are: fading away of the pigments, pilling of the layers, damages of the painterly structure and/or complete demolition of the frescoes. Hence, as long as we care for the monuments, the genre motifs can give the painted ensembles a sparkle of enjoyable temper and feed our perception with the unimposing spirit of witticism and humorous pleasantry. However, genre subjects, as well as the other canonical

<sup>44</sup>S. Korunovski - E. Dimitrova, *Macedonia L' arte medievale dal IX al XV secolo*, pp. 180-181.

components of the fresco monuments, are far from being resistant to relentless illnesses such as incompetent conservational treatments, unverified methods of restoration and the worst of all possible sicknesses – the intentional human neglect. Unfortunately, all three have become constant companions of our medieval works of art and can be recognized as obvious symptoms of continuous deterioration of creations commissioned by some of the most respectable individuals of Macedonian Middle Ages<sup>45</sup>. Referring to one of my favourite TV characters, Dr Gregory House, who in one occasion said: the treatments don't always work, but the symptoms never lie<sup>46</sup>, I would like to add - if we neglect the symptoms, we facilitate the demise of the patient. If the patient's name is Kurbinovo<sup>47</sup>, than we facilitate the demise of more than 800 years of cultural history and precious artistic creativity.

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НА ПАТЕКАТА ОД КУРБИНОВО КОН ПОЛОШКО.  
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Во рамките на комплексната иконографија која ги илустрира сцените со библиска тематика во ликовните споменици од византиската епоха на територијата на Република Македонија, мајсторите зографи вклучувале и жанрови компоненти, кои, во вид на живописни досетки од средновековното секојдневие, придонесувале кон живописноста и наративната експликативност на фрескопретставите. Во таа смисла, во текстот се укажува на најзначајните примери од жанровата иконографија во некои од најрепрезентативните монументи на византиското сликарство од периодот XII – XIV век: Свети Ѓорѓи во Курбиново (сцената која го прикажува Христовото раѓање со референца кон сезоната на неговото

<sup>45</sup> E. Dimitrova, V. I. *Personalities in Medieval Macedonia. Five Paradigms of Supreme Commissionership (11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> Century)*, pp. 602-620.

<sup>46</sup> Dr. House (Fox Network), NBC Universal TV Studio, III season, episode 23.

<sup>47</sup> A large sum of money was allocated for Kurbinovo's conservation treatments three years ago by the government that was in office until 2016. To this day (October 22, 2019), nothing has been done in that regard. For reasons unknown to anybody, the church has been left to destruction and devastation, or better to say to the "mercy of high powers", also unknown to anybody.

пристигнување меѓу луѓето), Света Богородица Перивлепта (композицијата Благовести во која е прикажана ранливата страна на женскиот род), Свети Ѓорѓи во Старо Нагоричино (илустрациите на настаните од Христовите страдања надополнети со елементи од вообичаеното секојдневие), Свети Никита во Бањани (сликите од циклусот на Христовата јавна дејност „населени“ со додавки на живописна и динамична атмосфера), Свети Ѓорѓи во Полошко (претставата на Исмевањето Христово која мајсторите ја “зачиниле” со, во Византискиот свет, невидена ликовна игра на сардоничен хумор, создавајќи глетка дрска во својата иконографска содржина и храбра во начинот на нејзината визеулна експозиција). Притоа, текстот укажува и на непосредната опасност од оштетување и деструкција на презентираниите мотиви, кои, како интегрален дел од фрескоаранжманите на кои им припаѓаат, се подложни на штетните влијанија од влагата, минералните соли, инсектите, несовесните интервенции и човечката негрижа. Оттука, во текстот се упатува и на најзагрозените фрескоансамбли во Република Македонија, чии програмски, иконографски, стилски и естетски карактеристики ги вбројуваат во трезорот на ремек-делата од средновековната епоха: Свети Ѓорѓи во Курбиново, Свети Никола во селото Манастир, Свети Архангел Михаил во Прилеп, Богородичината црква во Матејче, храмот посветен на Успението Богородичино во манастирот Трескавец, Богородичиниот храм во манастирот Заум итн. Прочувањето и заштитата на спомениците претставуваат интегрални делови од пристапот кон нивното толкување и токму на тој методолошки узанс е посветен текстот на авторката.

## MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE OF HERITAGE SITES IN MACEDONIA

### TWO EXAMPLES OF CONSERVATION OF SACRED SITES IN THE CITY OF SKOPJE AND IN THE REGION OF PRESPA

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Panče VELKOV

President of the *Makedonida* Foundation

#### 1. THE BURRA CHARTER, THE CONCEPT OF STRUCTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE OF HERITAGE SITES

The Burra Charter is a set of guidelines for conservation and management of places of cultural significance (cultural heritage places) and is based on the knowledge and experience of the members of the Australia International Council of Monuments and Sites (Australia ICOMOS). It was adopted in 1979 in Burra, South Australia. Revisions were adopted in 1981, in 1988 and in 1999 (1).

The Burra Charter got quickly an international recognition and has been widely used all around the world. It can be applied to all kind of places of cultural significance including natural, indigenous and historic places with cultural values. It is recommended by UNESCO and ICOMOS – the International Council for Monuments and Sites based in Paris.

Its guidelines are based on the concept of cultural significance of the Place which is the subject of preservation. Cultural significance means a set of aesthetic, historic, scientific, social and spiritual values for past, present and future generations. It is embodied in the Place itself, its fabric, its setting, its use, its associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects.

The Burra Charter advocates a cautious approach of change: to do as much as necessary to care for the Place and to make it usable, but otherwise change it as little as possible so that its cultural significance is retained.

The aim of the conservation, as the Burra Charter puts it, is to retain the cultural significance of the Place. It should be based on the respect of the existing fabric, the use, the associations and the meanings of the heritage site.

– the Place. In order to retain their cultural significance, most of the Places need to go through the process of change of their fabric, form and function. The conservation process deals with the management of change of the Place.

The Burra Charter recommends a set of guidelines about how to proceed in the conservation process, in other words in the management of change of the Place. These guidelines are called the *Burra Charter Process* (1) and consist of a sequence of collecting and analyzing information before making decisions. The whole process should be presented at its simplest in a document called the Conservation Plan (2) which sets out what is the significance of a Place and consequently what policies are appropriate to enable that significance to be retained in the future use and development. Understanding cultural significance comes first which requires gathering and recording information about the Place. Then comes the assessment of its cultural significance which is to be presented in a statement of cultural significance. After that we need to gather information about the development of the conservation policy and its implementation. Developing the conservation policy evolves development of strategies and options for its implementation, or in other words, it means development of the process of management of change.

In many cases the proposed conservation plan of change would imply an alternation of the different values of the cultural significance of the place. Some values may become more important than others, which would at the end of the conservation process produce a different Place with an altered set of cultural values and a changed cultural significance. Nevertheless, demolition of significant fabric as an evidence of cultural significance of a Place is not acceptable. Preservation should always be used as a method in the process of conservation whenever possible instead of the method of restoration of an earlier state of the fabric to be used only when there is sufficient evidence.

As it is often the case some of the aspects of cultural significance may be conflicting each other. Nevertheless, according to the Burra Charter, we should always try to restore or even to establish a balance between the different aspects of the cultural significance in the process of management of change as proscribed in the Conservation Plan. Public debate involving experts but also representatives from the concerned communities which are culturally related to the Place can be helpful in finding the right conservation policy and the right management of change of the Place and the whole of its cultural significance.

## 2. FIRST EXAMPLE – MUSTAFA PASHA MOSQUE IN SKOPJE

The Mustafa Pasha Mosque is the most beautiful and the most elegant mosque in the city of Skopje, and one of the most important mosques in terms of cultural heritage in the Balkans. Built in 1492, it is an outstanding example of the classical Ottoman architecture. Erected at the footsteps of the mediaeval city fortress it dominates the Old Down town of Skopje with its markets and numerous edifices from the Ottoman period - mosques, hamams, caravanserais and clock towers (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. The Mustafa Pasha mosque in Skopje

The mosque, as most of the buildings from the early Ottoman period (15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century), is striking with its architectural coherence - a sum of lines, forms and masses. It is erected on the plateau over the Old Down town as very logical and powerful edifice, and stirs a feeling of subordination, respect and reconciliation (3). The structure of the building is topped by an imposing monumental dome with a diameter of 16.30 meters. There is a passage between the exterior and interior of the mosque via an open portico with three pointed arches. The open portico works as an effective counterpoint against the important proportions and monolithic structure of the dome. On the right side of the mosque there is a slender and proportional minaret, which gives a strong vertical accent to the whole structure. The interior of the mosque is equally harmonious and elegant (Fig. 2). We could notice the authentic windows executed in simple “clean cut” geometrical forms and the original decoration on the eastern pendentives executed in a rare meticulous technique

known as “*malakari*” (Fig. 3). The ornaments are executed in stucco in a recessed multi-layer relief pattern and then colored. Nuances of pastel blue, red, green, yellow and orange could be noticed on the decoration. To our knowledge this is (was) one of the finest preserved example of this technique in the world and the only one outside Turkey.



Fig. 2. The Interior of the Mustafa Pasha Mosque

Let us use the Burra Charter to define the cultural significance of the Place using the Burra Charter Process. The cultural significance of the Place as a heritage site - the Mustafa Pasha Mosque is based on its *aesthetic values* - the extraordinary architecture as a whole, as well as the interior of the building including the authentic window design and especially the original 15<sup>th</sup> century technique of multi layer recessed ornaments executed in stucco technique on the two eastern pendentifs. Another aspect is the *historical value* of the site and the building. The mosque has preserved its functions as a religious site for most of its long history. Practically all of the architectural and decorative elements of the building used in the religious service are authentic. Another aspect of the cultural significance is the *social value* of the Place. The Mustafa Pasha mosque is today the most important place of warship in Skopje Old Downtown. So it is its *spiritual value* for the Muslim community in the old city of Skopje that matters as well. To conclude we can say that all these aspects of the cultural value of the Place – the Mustafa Pasha Mosque are (were) in balance: on one side the aesthetic and the historic values of the Place, and on the other side the social value of the site as an important spiritual Place of warship for the Muslims in Skopje.

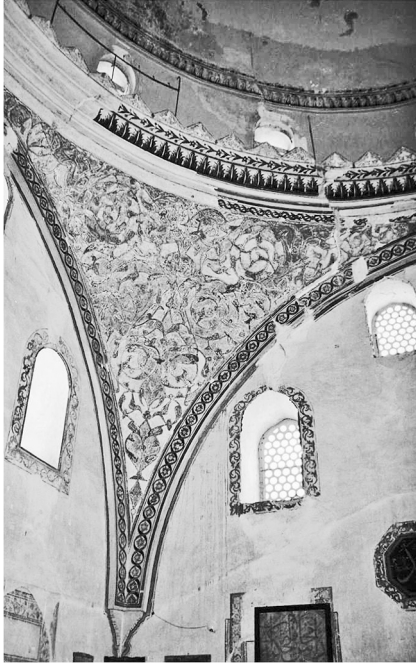


Fig. 3. Malakari technique on the pendentives



Fig. 4. The Pendentives after Conservation

Unfortunately the Mosque as we knew it in Skopje is no longer there. The Mustafa Pasha mosque was subjected to a massive conservation and restoration campaign conducted by the Turkish National Agency for Development called TIKA. The project was finalized in 2011. The exterior of the Mosque was embellished and the fountain was taken away. But it is the interior of the Mosque that was subjected to the biggest changes. The windows opening look totally different now – the original ones were removed and the new ones were executed in the so called Turkish neo- baroque style. And the pendentives were repainted only in two colors, in sparkling nuances of red and blue. The original recessed multi-layer *malakari* technique had been removed (Fig. 4). With the conservation project most of the other existing authentic elements and features in the interior have been changed as well. All together, what we have now is a brand new mosque in the heart of Skopje now (Fig. 5).

The result of the massive destructive conservation project is a new Mosque which obviously does not have the same cultural significance as the old one. The aesthetic and the historic values of the Place have been almost completely lost. Particularly damaging is the loss of the unique decoration of the pendentives. What prevails now is the social value of the site as a place of warship for the citizens of Old City Skopje. The balance between the social value of the site on one hand and the aesthetic and the historical values on the other, has been lost. The institution in charge of the conservation project gave

no justifications to the experts or to the public about the decisions taken during the conservation process. There was no public debate. The whole conservation project which lasted several years was conducted away from the public eye.

A more respectful and a more open approach in the conservation process following the Burra Charter guidelines would have saved the cultural value of one of the most beautiful Ottoman mosques in the Balkans.



Fig. 5. The Interior of the Mosque after Conservation

### 3. SECOND EXAMPLE – THE CHURCH OF ST. GEORGE AT KURBINOVO

The Church of St George at Kurbinovo in the region of Prespa lake is one of the most beautiful enigmas of Byzantine Macedonia. The church is built on a plateau above the village of Kurbinovo in a picturesque setting overlooking Lake Prespa with the island Golem Grad. The architecture is simple, a single nave with a pitched roof (figure 6). The walls are built in a local timber frame construction filled with rubble stone. Nothing prepares the visitor for the superb quality of the frescoes that decorate all interior walls and rank among the masterpieces of the middle Byzantine period (figure 7, 8). A faded image of the emperor Isaac II Angelos, who reigned from 1185 to 1195 and then again from 1203 to 1204, provides a date for the frescoes, but it remains a riddle why this modest building in a remote location received such an extraordinary decoration (4). The frescoes in the church are not only beautiful, they are also interesting for scholars and amateurs of Byzantine art for

their innovative character, This can be seen on the frescoes in the altar – first of all in the iconography where we have the presentation of Christ as a fair – haired newborn playing in his mother’s embrace in the conch (Fig. 7), and then in the program itself with the oldest known example of Officiating Church Fathers to the *Amnos* in the lower zone where the newborn Jesus is laid on the altar of human sins (6). First depicted in Kurbinovo the scene of *Amnos* with Jesus laid on the altar as sacrifice becomes a mandatory element in the Byzantine iconography in the centuries that followed.



Fig. 6. The Church of St. George at Kurbinovo

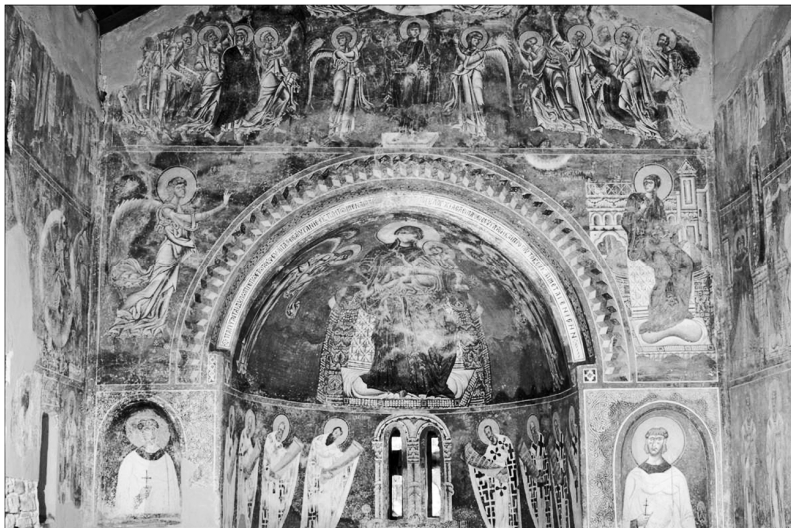


Fig. 7. Fresco Decoration in the Altar Space

It is obvious that the cultural significance of the Kurbinovo church will be defined first of all by its aesthetic value – the superb and outstanding fresco painting. We should also not leave out the picturesque setting and wonderful breathtaking view on the lake Prespa and the island Golem Grad that the visitors can admire from the entrance of the church. So, the aesthetic value of the site of the Kurbinovo church site would consist first of all of the extraordinary artistic value of the painting and then the attractive ambient value of the site setting. The social value of the Kurbinovo church as a heritage site consists of its spiritual value as a place for worship for the community, most of all for the villagers of the village Kurbinovo. This said, we could observe that presently the church is used for service only once a year on day of St George which is in the month of May. So to conclude we can say that the prevailing aspect of the cultural significance of the site is its aesthetic value.



Fig. 8. Holy Archangel Gabriel

The church of St. George at Kurbinovo has been not been properly maintained for decades. Damages could be noticed on the fresco painting and cracks started appearing in the walls. The road leading to the church from the Kurbinovo village is in a very bad state. Next to nothing had been done to promote the Kurbinovo church with its fabulous frescoes as a key site to visit in Macedonia. No wonder that there have been less and less visitors to the site, both from the country or from abroad. The church was finally subjected to a major conservation campaign since 2013. Sponsored by the Government of Macedonia via the Ministry for Culture, the conservation project has been in charge of the National Center for Conservation and the Museum of Bitola. The objective

of the conservation project was and still is, to redress the church, first of all the structure of the building, and to conserve the fresco painting and the site as a whole. But the aim of the conservation project is also to reshape the church and the whole setting around the church into a heritage site with important potentials for touristic development according to the latest international standards. Let us add that the whole region of Prespa lake with its natural and cultural heritage is one of the regions in Macedonia with highest potentials for tourism. This would add a new social value to the cultural significance of the site – which would be its potential for touristic development.

The conservation project started with a detailed analysis of the soil conditions, the building technique, the analysis of masonry, analysis of the structural system as well as the physical and chemical analysis of the fresco painting. Special attention was paid to the analysis of the level and type of damage to the architecture, but also to the fresco painting. The old roof which was leaking was replaced by a new roof (figure 6). The next phase consisted of initial conservation of the fresco painting which would later serve as a basis for integral conservation for fresco painting (figure 9).

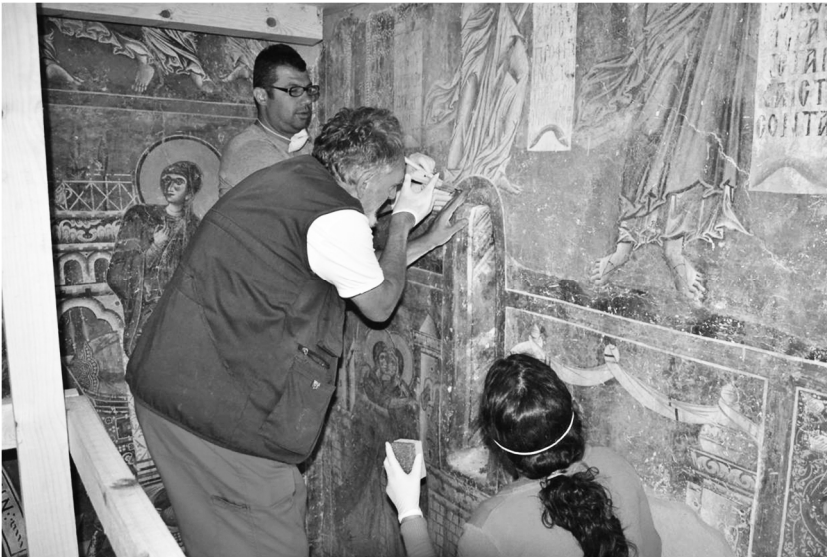


Fig. 9. Initial Conservation of the Frescoes, St. George at Kurbinovo

Unfortunately, due to the ever lasting political turmoil in the country the conservation project has been stalled now for more then two years – since Fall 2017. The conservation project and the Kurbinovo church has attracted lot of attention ever since, in the country but abroad as well. The Makedonida foundation from Skopje in partnership from the French Embassy in Macedonia engaged French architects to draft proposals about the architectural arrangement of the site and its setting. In 2018 the office of the European Delegation to the Republic of North Macedonia sponsored a project – an international seminar aimed to highlight the cultural significance of the Kurbinovo site under the auspices of European Year of Cultural Heritage campaign – EYCH2018. The New York Times published an article about the church in July 2019 (6). There is also a possibility from the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Skopje to help the Kurbinovo conservation project with some expertise and funding which we hope would revive the conservation project.

However, it is first of all the responsibility of the Macedonian government to join efforts of the national preservation agencies and the interested international partners eager to help and to put the conservation of the Kurbinovo church as an absolute priority on its agenda. The Kurbinovo site can only function if a balanced approach is implemented in the conservation project. The project should allow an arrangement of the site which would include infrastructure for the visitors with an information center, parking place and other facilities. However this development should not be implemented on the expense of the authentic setting of the Place as a cultural heritage site. The conservation project should establish a balance between the authentic esthetic values of the site - the wonderful frescoes in the church and the extraordinary settings of the site on one hand, and the social value of the site as a potential center for major touristic development for the region of Prespa and the whole country on the other hand.

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# HIGHLIGHTING THE VALUE OF ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE. THE EXAMPLE OF ST. GEORGE AT KURBINOVO

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## 1. Valorization of Architectural Heritage

How to explain the notion of highlighting the value from architectural heritage? Let's start with a little bit of linguistics. When I was preparing my speech for the Ohrid Conference it was very interesting to see that the translation from the French word "Valorisation" doesn't have exactly the same sense in English and in Macedonian.

In French language "valorisation" excludes all financial aspect and doesn't involve to give value to an object or a building. It touches only on the aesthetical approach. That would not mean that we, French are idealist or we imagine that heritage can be restored as if by magic without funds, with no money. In fact absolutely not. Our philosophy is precisely to separate this two aspects: on one hand the aesthetic, or we can also say the cultural, on the second hand the financial aspect. It's very important not to mix this two approaches and to manage to sort out each one of them separately because often they do not go hand in hand.

We work all of us in the field of heritage which is of general interest: the one of all humanity, of all civilizations and of all of their histories. And it has no prize. Not everything can be expressed as a monetary value. As important as the arrival of man on the moon, man has lived on earth since millenniums and has left signifiers of his activity. It's important to learn to protect this heritage and to understand it.

But by preserving the past, we are going against the current trend. My analysis of the concept of development, as an architect specialized in heritage conservation, is that the current trend of development goes in direction of urbanization, densification and mass tourism. I'm very often confronted in

my professional life with a strong willingness to destroy or to let heritage “go to the dogs”. Obviously we can't go to war against this attitude, but we have to be wise and to adapt our noble convictions to these situations. We have to be the best heritage ambassadors as to be able to convince the people and institutions which take decisions about the merits of heritage conservation. Acknowledgment of the cultural significance of the cultural heritage according to the current legislation for preservation is a first step to highlight its value and importance.

On a second level, we have to make sure that a good conservation project must be able to find solutions to make a monument live, preserve its “sense” and also reveal it. Finding the right strategy involves also the necessity to step back and analyze objectively the situation, its strengths and its weaknesses.

It's not always as evident, but it's important to keep in mind the necessity to restore, specifically architectural heritage, with traditional materials and techniques. This helps preserve old manufacturing production that we are progressively loosing, but it helps also to give a boost to disappearing jobs. It can lead also, for example, to re-open stone or sand quarries or even manufactures of traditional bricks or tiles. This naturally produces a singular approach which protects ancestral know-how and contributes to give a particular human value to the restoration process. It allows also to give back the monuments their original aspect that they should never have lost. In most cases, investigations in archives or in cooperation with archeologists are necessary to reveal the true original conditions.

Too often historical buildings have been consolidated in haste with cement, reinforced concrete or inadequate materials. We must recognize that sometimes the modern materials have protected historical buildings when urgent measures were needed. But most of the time, all these interventions were the wrong solutions and they have often been damaging to the conservation and to the aesthetic of the monuments.

## 2. The Case of the Church St George at Kurbinovo

I had a chance to visit the St. George church at Kurbinovo, not far away from Orhid in the region of lake Prespa (*Fig 1*). The church was built and painted in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and treasures some of the finest Byzantine frescoes in the world. By chance the church and its surroundings have not suffered much from transformations. So we have here the possibility to engage into an exemplary opportunity to highlight and conserve correctly this symbol of Macedonian's culture.



At some point of the church history a part of the original roof has collapsed leaving the frescoes painted on the facade wall above the entrance unprotected from severe weather conditions. This situation has seriously damaged these frescoes and today they have almost disappeared. A temporary roof is currently in place to protect the church (*Fig 2*)

St George church is not only exceptional because of its frescoes from the 12<sup>th</sup> century contrasting with the simple exterior aspect of the building. St George church is also a discovery of a beautiful site isolated in the middle of mountains with extraordinary views. It is a rough diamond in its natural setting.



It's important to take a step back from the church in order to understand it better and to appreciate it even more. Just walking around the church we can discover fantastic point of views on the Prespa lake with the island Golem Grad in the middle and the Pelister National park just behind it.

We can say sometimes that to discover is actually more important than to see. So if wish to open the site to the visitors, it is important to remember that the way to rich a monument is as important as to see what we have imagined in our mind. This stenography can significantly modify the memory you will keep from the monument. It's crucial to prepare and lead the visitor slowly to immerse himself in the twelfth century story. It's also important to manage the touristic aspect. It must not prevail over the discovery of the heritage – sacred site.

On the Kurbinovo site what we observe today is a very direct access to the church not really giving credit neither to the setting nor to the church. Actually the road leading to the site ends with a parking at the footsteps of the church building. Moving the parking little bit to the North in a clearing between the trees would allow to preserve the coherence of the site and its authentic appearance from the 12<sup>th</sup> century limiting the visual pollution (*Fig 2*). The position of the parking in the landscape is strategically very important to let the visitor fully benefit from the panorama and from the church. This would also allow to create an itinerary for the visitor to approach the site through the landscape. The path to the church could gradually be intercepted with information of historic, cultural, touristic and commercial character. Then the church would not be lost in a middle of restaurants or shops which would grow day by day and which considerations are far away from the considerations from the original builders which were far more spiritual.

The ideal is to secure the church's surroundings with a large protection perimeter and restricting regulations. Inside this perimeter, all commercial activity must be excluded as to keep integrity of the site and its wild authentic character.

The arrangements of the site should integrate perfectly in the landscape in order to limit the impact of the intrusion. For the parking it is important to design vegetal and alveolar pavement (*Fig 4*) in order to avoid the intrinsic quality of the site and to assure its sustainability.

The signalization of the site has to be discrete and should be implemented with materials and techniques adapted to the site (*Fig 5*). The site is an a mountain area, so it is very important to design the path for the visitors who need to mount to access the site. Respecting the local topography, steps made of local timber (*Fig 6*) would be the most simple and actually the best solution to design the access to the church.

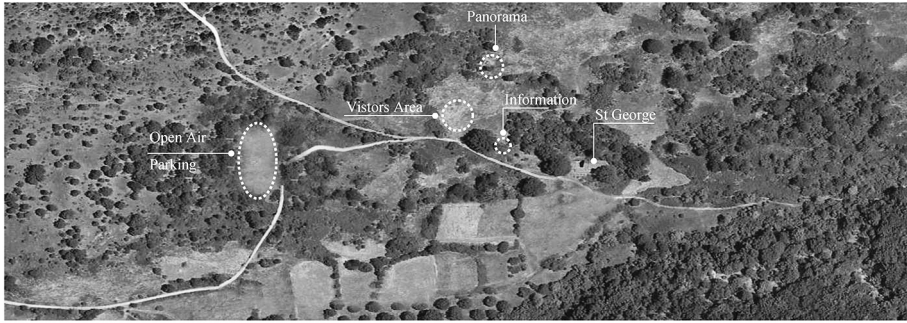


Figure 4 : Open Air Parking



Figure 5 : Signalization



Figure 6 : Access



For the visitors the arrival on the visiting plateau would consist the first phase of the discovery of the site and its panorama. This zone for the visitors could be used to arrange a picnic area with banks and garbage disposals, as well as with information signs and an orientation table. The purpose of the whole space – the zone for the visitors is to prepare the visitors for the discovery of this exceptional church.

Figure 7 : Zone for the Visitors



Figure 8 : Information Center



Figure 9 : Orientation Table



Figure 10 : Night Lightening



Figure 11 : Fountain

An information center built (*Fig 8*) between the church and the zone for the visitors would serve as a shop for souvenirs but would also allow to manage the visitor flux. The center should also be used as a center for dissemination of information for the church, the site and the whole Prespa region around the Prespa lake. Here again we would suggest a simple wooden construction made from local timber submerged in the greenery landscape surrounding the church would be the least intrusive solution.

Some specific features deserve to be improved into the immediate church's surroundings. That's the case of the fountains (*Fig 11*), the big oaks, the traces of ruins. We could imagine possibilities to visit the site by night too and so introduce lightening all around the church (*Fig 10*). All of this would contribute to the quality and the atmosphere of the place.

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## HOW TO PROTECT THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE FROM THE HERITAGE AUTHORITIES?

Towards a holistic approach in the protection and management of  
the archaeological heritage in the Republic of Macedonia

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### INTRODUCTION

Located in South-Eastern Europe, Republic of Macedonia is a country with rich history, complex socio – economic development and represents a crossroad between civilizations in the past which have resulted with a remarkable cultural diversity and rich archaeological heritage. According to the states "Law on protection of cultural heritage" (2014), archaeological heritage shall include *"immovable and movable goods, their remains or other evidence of the human existence and creation in the past epochs whose discovery provides information and whose research and protection helps to reveal the human history and its connection with its natural environment. Archaeological heritage especially represents the: structures, constructions, group of objects, developed sites, movable objects and remains of different kind, no matter whether they are found in the ground or under water"*. In this regard, according to the Archaeological map of the Republic of Macedonia (1996), more than 5000 archaeological sites dating from the Palaeolithic to the Ottoman epoch are registered in Macedonia. Around 100 of them are protected by law, and in addition, the archaeological sites of Skupi, Stobi and Heraclea Lyncestis, including all archaeological sites discovered in the old town core of Ohrid are protected with legal Act by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. In addition, approximately 30 archaeological collections located in the national and local museums have *ex lege* protection.

However, it is recognized that the archaeological heritage in Macedonia has deteriorated in the recent years, and improvement of the state sector is necessary. This paper is an attempt to make a critical overview of the current management systems and propose areas of improvements for better protection of the archaeological heritage.

#### CURRENT STATUS OF THE LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

##### INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The protection of the archaeological heritage in Macedonia is solely under the responsibility of the government institutions across the country. The main governing body is the Ministry of Culture as a Governmental institution. In 2004 an independent governmental administrative body was established as constituent part of the Ministry of Culture, as the main coordinative body for the heritage protection and management - the Directorate for Protection of Cultural Heritage. The National Conservation Center is the main institution responsible for the heritage conservation in specific regions across the country, and there are seven regional conservation centers established in the regions with the highest density of cultural heritage: the National Institution (hereafter NI) Conservation Center – Skopje, NI Institute for Protection of Monuments of Culture and Museum – Ohrid, NI Institute for Protection of Monuments of Culture and Museum – Prilep, NI Institute for Protection of Monuments of Culture and Museum – Shtip, NI Institute for Protection of Monuments of Culture and Museum – Bitola, NI Institute for Protection of Monuments of Culture and Museum – Strumica and NI Conservation Centre in Gostivar. With the goal to manage and protect the archaeological site of Stobi, the National Institution Stobi was established in 2008. Apart from the local museums responsible for the protection and presentation of the archeological movable findings, the main institution in charge for the movable archaeological heritage is the NI Archaeological Museum of Macedonia.

##### LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The legal framework is defined by the "Law on Protection of Cultural Heritage" adopted in 2004 and has been amended ever since. It defines the heritage system, the mandatory steps in heritage conservation, the responsible institutions and the penalty provisions if not respected. According to Article 11 of the Law, *"Protection of cultural heritage shall include the research, identification, evaluation, re-evaluation, categorization, announcing, registration and designation of the cultural heritage, its preservation, respecting, concern,*

*maintaining, conservation, restoration, reconstruction, dislocation and revitalization, as well as prevention, supervision, restitution, presentation, popularization and any other form of immediate or indirect preservation of the cultural heritage which is attained in a public interest"* (2004). Furthermore, it states that the protection of cultural heritage is first and foremost on obligation and responsibility of the state and its institutions and public services, and for this reason the heritage management system is highly centralized, leaving insignificant opportunities for engagement of the private sector in this field. The role and responsibilities of the museums are defined with the "Law on Museums" adopted also in 2004 and amended over the years. The "Law on Construction Works" needs to be followed when there are construction activities as part of the conservation works, and finally, there are several bi-laws adopted for areas that contain high density of built cultural heritage, like the "Law on Proclamation of the Monumental Ensemble Old Town Nucleus of Ohrid as Cultural Heritage of Special Significance".

#### THE CURRENT SITUATION IN THE PROTECTION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

In the period from 2007 until 2017, all the above mentioned institutions were involved in major archaeological excavations that were fully founded and conducted across the country by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. The largest excavation campaigns were carried out in the archaeological sites Scupi and Skopje Fortress (Skopje), Bargala and Isar (Shtip), Vinichko Kale (Vinica), Stobi (Gradsko), Stibera (Prilep), Heraclea Lyncestis (Bitola), Carevi kuli (Strumica), Vardarski Rid (Gevgelija), Plaošnik and Samoil's Fortress (Ohrid) and Bal Tepe (Tetovo). Vast number of archaeological structures of various periods and cultures were discovered throughout the extensive digs at these sites. Unfortunately, after the conclusion of the archaeological excavations, the majority of the newly discovered buildings were left without taking any protective measures. Most of the newly excavated buildings are not conserved or restored, thus leading to their extremely poor condition (Fig. 1-3). Some of the sites, such as Stobi and Heraclea Lyncestis already had a significant number of excavated buildings that were not properly preserved, but regardless to the actual situation, the funds were used only for new excavations, which led to increasing the problems and generating new challenges for protection of these sites (Fig. 4-5).

In order to understand the malfunction of the heritage authorities who created this unpleasant situation with the archaeological sites (Fig. 6-9), first we should look into the legislative documents. In the Article 59 from the "Law on protection of cultural heritage", the responsibilities of the holder of

the archaeological research license are clearly stated and among others, they include the following obligations:

- (1) 1. To keep methodical documentation and evidence for the archaeological researches regarding the protection measures which were undertaken;
2. To provide preservation and maintenance of the site and the findings;
3. Not to leave uncovered or exposed outside the archaeological findings, without previous provision of appropriate protective measures;
4. To carry out or organize the performance of conservation works at the site, i.e., the findings;
5. To provide seldom information to the public about the progress of the researches;
6. To provide prospect to sightseeing of the site and the findings by the authorized persons, upon consent given by the head of the researches and sightseeing by interested scientists and experts.

(2) The holder of the archaeological research license shall be obligated before leaving the terrain as follows:

1. To undertake the necessary measures for technical security of the site including the arrangement of its immediate surrounding; to reconstitute the previous condition in the terrain, as much as possible, if the site was not preserved, i.e., presented.

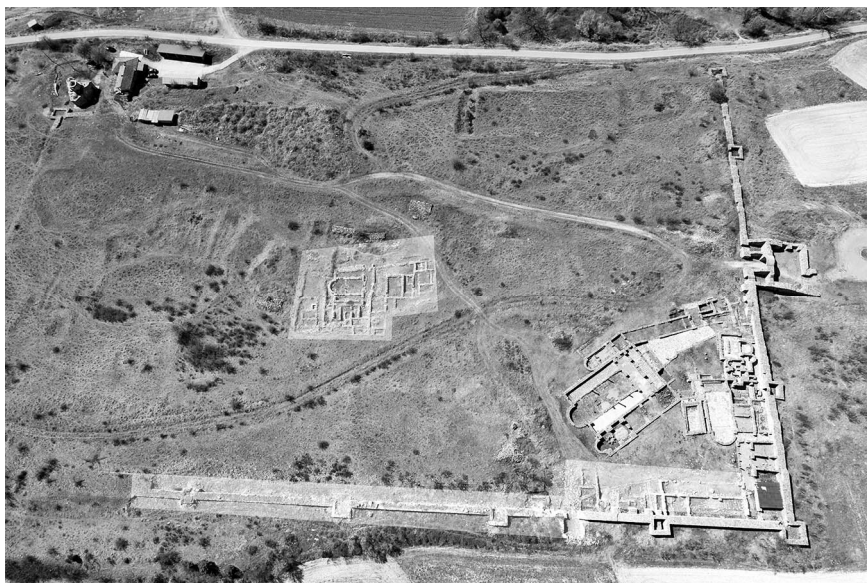


Fig.1 Aerial view of the archaeological site Bargala (2019).  
Lighter areas showing recently excavated and not conserved buildings



Fig.2 Aerial view of the archaeological site Plaoshnik (2019).  
Lighter areas showing recently excavated and not conserved buildings



Fig.3 Aerial view of the archaeological site Skopje Fortress.  
Lighter areas showing recently excavated and not conserved buildings

The conducted research shows that these obligations are not fully followed and respected, and for this reason problems are arising from lack of respect of the established legal mechanisms, and due to the unprofessional and ignorant approach in the protection of the archeological heritage by the holders of the archaeological research license, that is, the archaeologists and their institutions. On the other hand, the responsible authorities who are funding, controlling and supervising all the activities regarding cultural heritage

in Macedonia, were not responsive for these multiple law violations. For this reason every institution and heritage professionals that were engaged in the archaeological researches during that period share equal responsibility for the hazardous condition of the archaeological sites that we witness today in Macedonia.

WORKING TOWARDS A HOLISTIC APPROACH IN THE  
PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE:  
SOME LESSONS FROM INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS

With the interest to improve the protection system, a holistic approach and management of the archaeological heritage through an interdisciplinary and integrated approach is urgently needed in order to secure that the values of the archaeological remains and artifacts are long-term protected and properly presented.

There are many international recommendations and guiding principles which promote holistic approach and protection of the archaeological heritage. The "Recommendation on International Principles Applicable to Archaeological Excavations", adopted during the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in New Delhi, dates back to 1956. According to this Recommendation, the Archaeological Excavations are defined as *'...any research aimed at the discovery of objects of archaeological character, whether such research involves digging of the ground or systematic exploration of its surface or is carried out on the bed or in the subsoil or inland or territorial waters of a Member State'* (1956). Furthermore, it is taken into consideration that it is impossible for the Member States to adopt a uniform system of organization in the administrative services responsible for excavations; certain common principles should nevertheless apply to all national services including:

1. The archaeological work should be conducted in collaboration with research institutes and universities in order to provide technical training to the excavators;

2. Steps should be taken to ensure in particular the regular provision of funds, in order to administer the services in a satisfactory manner, to carry out a programme of work proportionate to the archaeological resources of the country, including scientific publications, to exercise control over accidental discoveries, and to provide for the maintenance of the excavated sites and monuments;

3. Careful supervision should be carried out over the restoration of archaeological remains and objects discovered;

4. Prior approval should be obtained from the competent authority for the removal of any monuments which ought to be preserved in situ;

5. The responsible authority should consider maintaining untouched, partially or totally, a certain number of archaeological sites of different periods in order that their excavation may benefit from improved techniques and more advanced archaeological knowledge;

6. On important archaeological sites, a small exhibit of an educational nature – possibly a museum – should be set up to convey to visitors the interest of the archaeological remains;

7. The competent authority should initiate educational measures in order to arouse and develop respect and affection for the remains of the past by the teaching of history, the participation of students in certain excavations, the publication in the press of archaeological information supplied by recognized specialists, the organization of guided tours, exhibitions and lectures dealing with methods of excavation and results achieved, the clear display of archaeological sites explored and monuments discovered, and the publication of written monographs and guides. In order to encourage the public to visit these sites, the responsible authorities should make all necessary arrangements to facilitate access to them (UNESCO, 1956).



Fig.4 Aerial view of the archaeological site Stobi (2019).  
Lighter areas showing recently excavated and not conserved buildings.



Fig.5 Aerial view of the archaeological site Heraclea Lyncestis (2018).  
Lighter areas showing recently excavated and not conserved buildings.



Fig.6 View of the excavated buildings at Skopje Fortress (2019)

The Recommendation continues by setting the regulations, governing excavations and international collaboration, the preservation of the archaeological remains, documentation on excavations, regional meetings and scientific discussions in order to facilitate the study of problems of common interest etc.

The "International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites" known as the *Venice Charter*, adopted during the Second International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments in May, 1964, sets the guiding principles for preservation and restoration of ancient buildings, agreed and laid down on an international basis. In accordance with Article 14 which defines the principles for preservation of *Historic sites*: "The sites of monuments must be the object of special care in order to safeguard their integrity and ensure that they are cleared and presented in a seemly manner" (ICOMOS, 1964). The conservation and restoration works should be carried out by the principles set forth in the other articles.

Article 15 of the *Venice Charter* which defines the principles for 'Excavations', recalls the abovementioned international principles for archaeological excavations adopted by UNESCO in 1956 noting that excavations should be carried out in accordance with scientific standards and with the recommendations that define these principles.



Fig.7 View of the excavated buildings at Plaoshnik (2019)

In 1990, a specific set of guidelines were adopted by the International Council on Monuments and Sites – ICOMOS, which was prepared by its International Scientific Committee for the Management of Archaeological Heritage (ICAHM), called the "Charter for the Protection and Management of Archaeological Heritage". In this Charter, it is stated that the protection of the archaeological heritage cannot be based upon the application of archaeological techniques alone. It requires a wider basis of professional and scientific knowledge and skills. Some elements of the archaeological heritage are components of architectural structures and in such cases must be protected in accordance with the criteria for the protection of such structures laid down in the *Venice Charter* (ICOMOS, 1990). It continues by noting that the protection of the archaeological heritage must be based on interdisciplinary approach and on strong collaboration between the responsible authorities and the stakeholders. This Charter encompasses 9 articles and guiding principles for the protection and management of the archaeological heritage that should be adapted on national and regional level accordingly.



Fig.8 View of the excavations at the "Late antique settlement" at Stobi (2009)

On July 5<sup>th</sup> 2005, the National Assembly of Macedonia ratified the "European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage" (Revised version of the European Convention for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage signed in London in 1969). This European Convention sets forward the guiding principles for the protection of the European archaeological heritage through 17 articles, stressing out that the responsibility for the protection of the archaeological heritage should rest not only with the State directly concerned but with all European countries, with the aim to reduce the risk of deterioration and promote conservation by encouraging exchanges of experts and the comparison of experience (Council of Europe, revised 1992).

Another international guideline to be taken into consideration for improvement of the heritage system in Macedonia is the "Salalah guidelines for

the management of public archaeological sites" adopted by ICOMOS in 2017. These guidelines are suggestions to follow for the stakeholders, when they decide to open an archaeological site to the public. It is noted that taking into consideration the rich diversity of archaeological heritage worldwide, these guidelines should be modified according to the regional and local stewardship. These guidelines are developed with the aim to identify the studies necessary to assess the feasibility of establishing a sustainable management framework and system for archaeological sites that are, or are likely to become open to the public and to guide the development of a sustainable management system by reference to such a feasibility assessment (ICOMOS, 2017). In this regard, it is noted that the experience of visiting an archaeological site should be available to as wide audience as possible, with the proviso that this does not compromise or destroy the physical evidence of what transpired in the past. According to these guidelines, the following elements are essential to all management planning:

1. A thorough shared understanding of the property by all stakeholders;
2. A cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback;
3. The involvement of partners and stakeholders;
4. The allocation of necessary resources;
5. Capacity-building and
6. An accountable, transparent description of how the management system functions (Salalah Guidelines, 2017).

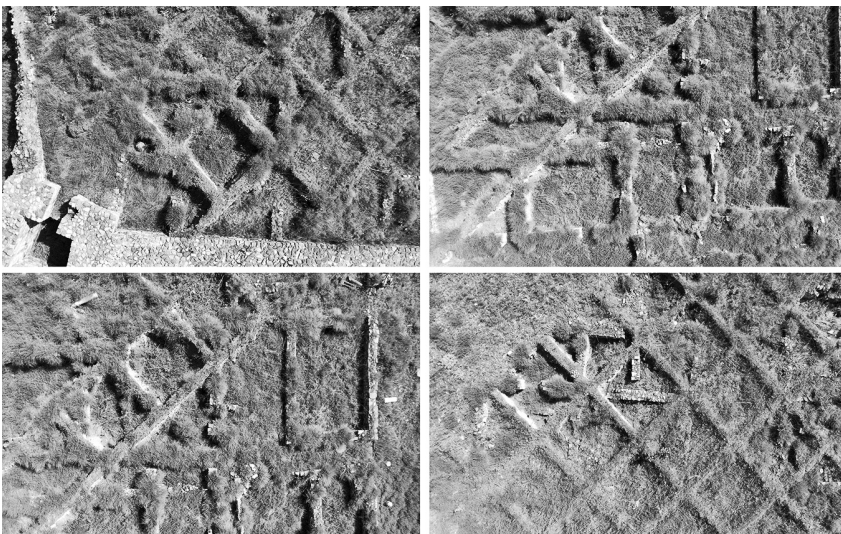


Fig.9 Aerial view of the "Late antique settlement" at Stobi (2019)

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, integrated management of the archaeological heritage through an interdisciplinary and holistic approach is urgently needed in order to secure long-term protection of the values of the archaeological remains and artifacts and to provide genuine presentation. In this sense, the protection of the archaeological heritage requires a wider basis of professional and scientific knowledge and treatment which the Macedonian authorities fail to provide.

In order to provide a holistic approach, certain steps need to be followed and respected by the responsible authorities. First of all they should respect the legislative documents and archaeological ethics in their entirety, furthermore, to understand that archaeological excavations should be conducted only when all future steps (documentation, data analyzing, conservation, presentation, maintenance, public access, valorization, publication, use of the heritage etc.) are planned and enabled. Unless these mandatory steps are not beforehand planned then the archaeologists should resist starting excavations.

General directions in order to perform a proper archaeological researches and management of the sites shall include detailed planning of the archaeological research beforehand, including analyze of the human and institutional capacities and comprehensive planning of the budget for execution of all mandatory steps. In this context, it is necessary to emphasize that conservation and protection of the archaeological findings is a mandatory step, followed by monitoring and maintenance of the site. Developing capacity-building programs should be considered as well, because the lack of professional staff is evident in every institution that is managing the archaeological heritage in Macedonia.

This can be achieved through creating strategies and master plans for integrated and holistic approach in the protection of the archaeological heritage by the responsible authorities and the stakeholders, taking into consideration the international documents and recommendations. These recommendations needs to be respected and implemented thoroughly so we won't lose permanently our valuable archaeological heritage and our history.

## КАКО ДА ГО ЗАШТИТИМЕ АРХЕОЛОШКОТО НАСЛЕДСТВО ОД НАДЛЕЖНИТЕ ИНСТИТУЦИИ? КОН ХОЛИСТИЧКИ ПРИСТАП ВО ЗАШТИТАТА И УПРАВУВАЊЕТО СО АРХЕОЛОШКОТО НАСЛЕДСТВО ВО РЕПУБЛИКА МАКЕДОНИЈА

Овој труд има парадоксален наслов кој алудира на состојбата во која се наоѓа археолошкото наследство во Република Македонија во почетокот на третата декада од 21. век. Во земја во која долго време функционира систем со посебни закони и правилници кои се однесуваат на археолошките истражувања и заштитата на културното наследство не се очекува да има проблематични и нелогични ситуации, но, сепак, анализата на актуелната состојба го покажува токму спротивното. Имено, најзначајните локалитети во Македонија како Скупи, Скопско кале, Стоби, Стибера, Хераклеја Линкестис, Лихнид, Бургала, Исар-Штип, Цареви кули, Виничко кале, Вардарски рид, Бал Тепе и други, денес се наоѓаат во исклучително лоша состојба, која се должи, пред сè, на екстензивните археолошки ископувања кои се одвиваа во периодот од 2006 до 2010 година, а во намален обем продолжија и во следните години. За време на овие ископувања беа откриени голем број на археолошки структури и наоди кои припаѓаат на различни периоди и култури, но, за жал, најголемиот дел од откриените градби сè уште не се конзервирани, и не се преземени никакви мерки за нивна заштита.

Нашите согледувања покажуваат дека голем дел од законските норми кои ја имаат воспоставено методологијата за археолошките истражувања не се почитувани, ниту целосно спроведени од страна на надлежните институции и од страна на раководителите на археолошките истражувања, кои покажуваат непрофесионален и игнорантски однос кон правните норми за заштита на археолошкото наследство. Од друга страна, надлежните институции кои ги финансираат и контролираат сите активности поврзани со културното наследство, засега не презеле соодветни мерки за повеќекратните прекршувања на законските прописи.

За надминување на актуелната ситуација, неопходно е да се зајакне и да се подобри системот за заштита и управување со археолошкото наследство. Пред сè, тоа подразбира целосно почитување на законските и институционалните норми, како и почитување на етичките принципи од областа на археологијата, а со имплементација на бројните меѓународни стандарди и принципи кои се посочени во овој труд може да се подобри методологијата на археолошките истражувања кои треба да се сфатат како комплексни активности кои вклучуваат ископувања, документација, проучување на наодите, соодветна заштита на недвижните и

движните наоди, подготовка на стручни и популарни публикации за истражувањата итн. За таа цел е неопходно сите археолошки истражувања најпрво добро да се испланираат, што подразбира детална анализа на капацитетот на надлежните институции кои треба да ги спроведат истражувањата, анализа на човечките ресурси и нивниот потенцијал за справување со обемната работа и одговорноста која произлегува од едно археолошко истражување и потребата за соодветна заштита и презентација на откриеното, и обезбедување на финансиски средства кои се неопходни за преземање на сите чекори од истражувањата на археолошкото наследство. Односно, неопходно е да се примени „*холистички пристап*“ во истражувањата и заштитата кој ги опфаќа сите претходно споменати чекори како една целина, и наложува нивно почитување и имплементирање во целост. На крај, сите археолошки истражувања треба да се стремат кон финалната цел на археологијата, а тоа е реконструкција на животот на луѓето во минатото и презентација на истото пред стручната и пошироката јавност. Доколку не се имплементира холистички и индисциплинарен пристап во заштитата и зачувувањето на археолошкото наследство, состојбата само ќе се влошува, а археолошкото наследство ќе пропадне до степен на неповрат.

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# INFORMATION SYSTEM DAGIS 4.0. A SOFTWARE FOR THE MUSEUMS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

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Svilen STOYANOV

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Information System DAGIS 4.0 (Digital Archives for GIS) is being developed since 1998, finished like structure basically in 2001 and put into operation on the Internet in 2005. The system is open for completion in various aspects, allowing be introduce additional parameters. At present, we introduced more than 3,816 archaeological sites from different periods and regions of the country, more than 1,679 artifacts, and 4708 book titles to serve for work and demonstration of the system; future data entrance will remain constant. Here's the place to say that filling it with material (especially finds) is highly labor intensive, requires serious preparation and a good knowledge of computer technology. We must say that one can hardly imagine the creation of a "single" software because the information comes from different types, nature and type of sources requires a different approach to its interpretation and further processing. That's why I think that the creation of such a single software can not be the work of one man - DAGIS system was created for over three years by attracting about 25 people - specialists in different areas, continues to evolve.

Information System DAGIS 4.0 is a multi-layered database that will integrate 11 separate, independent and interrelated specialized databases with a common user interface. The system covers 11 different branches of the humanities - history, archeology, ethnography, folklore, linguistics, historical demography, anthropology (physical), bibliography, historical geography, historical cartography and art which are directly or indirectly related to the problems of society in historical perspective. The system allows to be introduced, processed, searched and displayed data for all Balkan countries (with references and links data to and from European countries, the Middle East and the

former USSR) in a different form - text, graphical and map suitable for scientific educational and tourist purposes. The entire system is accessible over the Internet, which allows registered users to work from anywhere that has Internet access - [www.dagis-bg.eu](http://www.dagis-bg.eu). Data is stored centrally on a main server assisting production and maintain two complete mirror server to secure access in the event of problems. In development is a special responsive design and interface optimized for mobile devices and having any standard web browser.

All data is entered via an interface conforming to the specifics of working in the field and established methods of work of relevant specialists. The search can be done in different ways - in whole or parts of keywords on a map, or mixed, the final result allows the extraction of data found in an appropriate form.

We have completed and work 9 out of 11 programs - **Arche** - for archaeological sites and materials, **Biblos** - for the creation and use of dynamic bibliographic references and electronic books, **Folk** - introducing folklore data of different types - text, image, music, dance and **Glotta** - for linguistic data. In 2010 it was added and the program **MuseumM** for entering data inventory records in each museum, as is made complete list of museums in Bulgaria and in 2018 – for museums in Northern Macedonia. Works program **Map\_Tour**, designed to extract information about cultural tourism. Separately were introduced and work full several ancillary but important programs: **PhotoStorage**, **TabulaR** and **Settlement**, which serve as a base and provide base data supply for whole system. A new part in Dagis syste is **PIN - Field Inventory**: a tool designed to work during archaeological excavations. We have created a software tool that visualizes the form shown above which store entered data in local XML storage container. In practice, this eliminates the need for a server or other software - our tool fulfills both the role of editor and server.

The goal is that every log created has its own GUI (General Unique Identifier). To protect ourselves from the minimal chance of a GUI lack when we first synchronize a data container, we add another GUI value on the server side. It is logged in the header of data container that has already been prepared and, in subsequent synchronization, the Dagis server already "knows" this storage and can track any change that will occur.

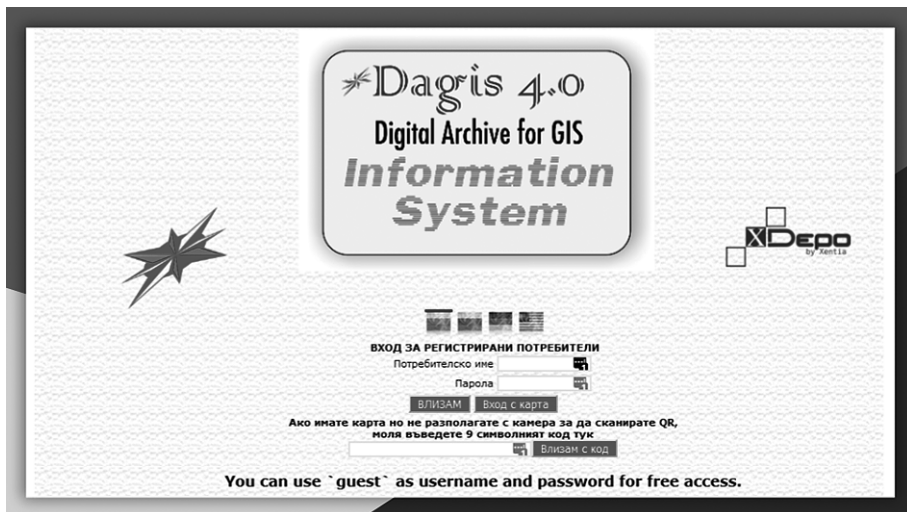
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In this section you will see a screen captured version of official Dagis presentation which was presented at the conference in Ohrid. The presenter's notes will be listed immediately below each slide.

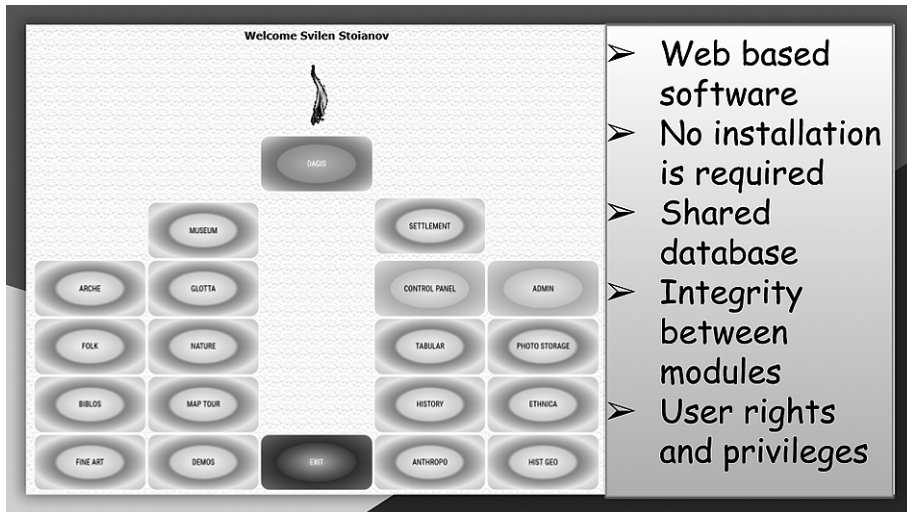


## DAGIS 4.0 - OFFICIAL PRESENTATION

So let's start with some general information about Dagis.



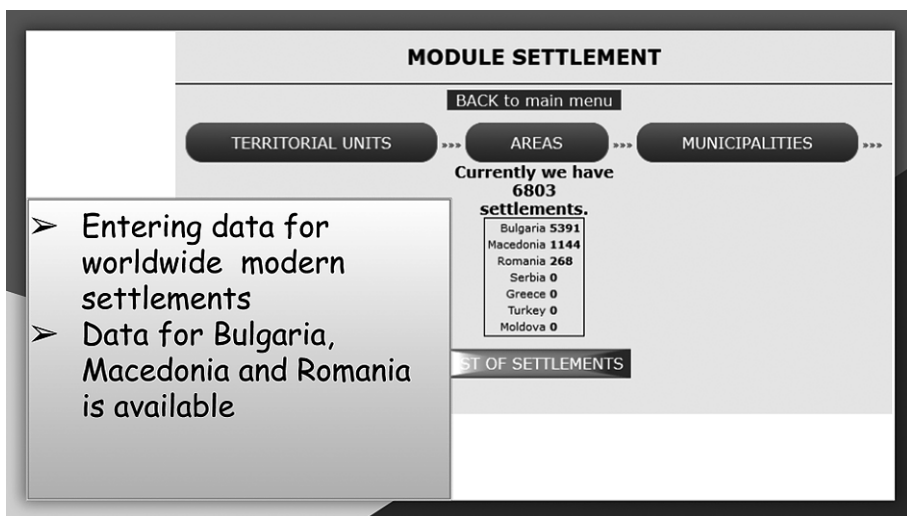
Dagis was created in 1996. Version fourth is the latest one - which is fully implemented as a web application with access via Internet with centralized storage of information in a database server. The system can be accessed with name and password combination, as well as through a personal code provided with a user card or QR image. The system supports a multilingual interface. We hope to add the Macedonian flag to our welcome screen soon :)



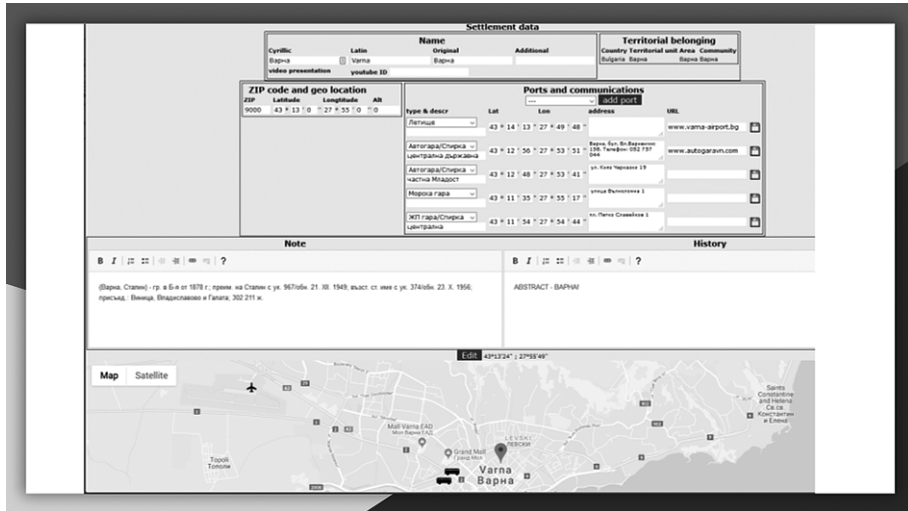
Our system contain 16 modules. Some of them are fully functional, others at different stages of development. On the slide you see the main menu accessible after successful login. All modules are fully integrated and can exchange data with each other. Each of our users has certain rights and privileges to work with the various modules.

Dagis has a number of basic modules providing basic functionality to process text data, spreadsheets, photos and multimedia. We will take a closer look at two of them which are related to our topic.

## SETTLEMENTS

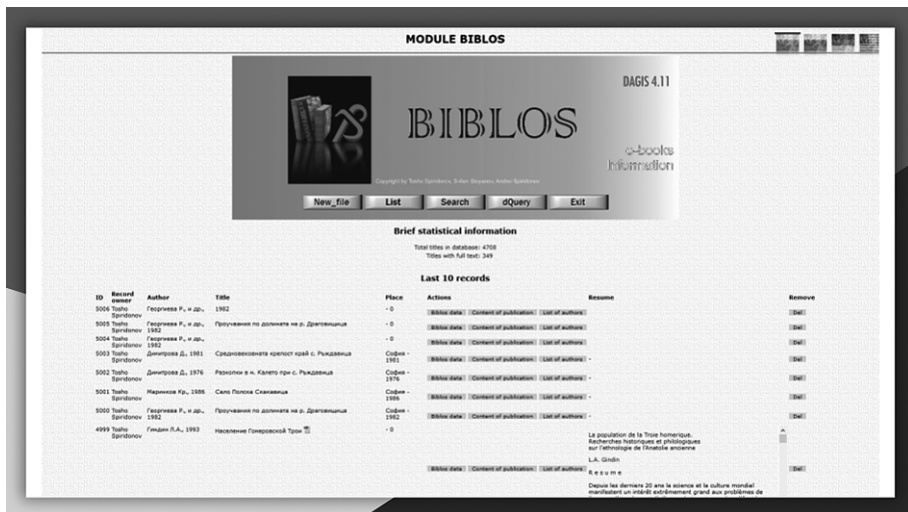


This is our Settlement module designed for entering and processing data for modern settlements. We currently have data for Bulgaria, Macedonia and Romania and ye are ready to receive data from Serbia, Greece, Turkey and Moldova. The module has the ability to import data prepared in most standard GIS and geoJson formats (settlement location. meta data, etc)

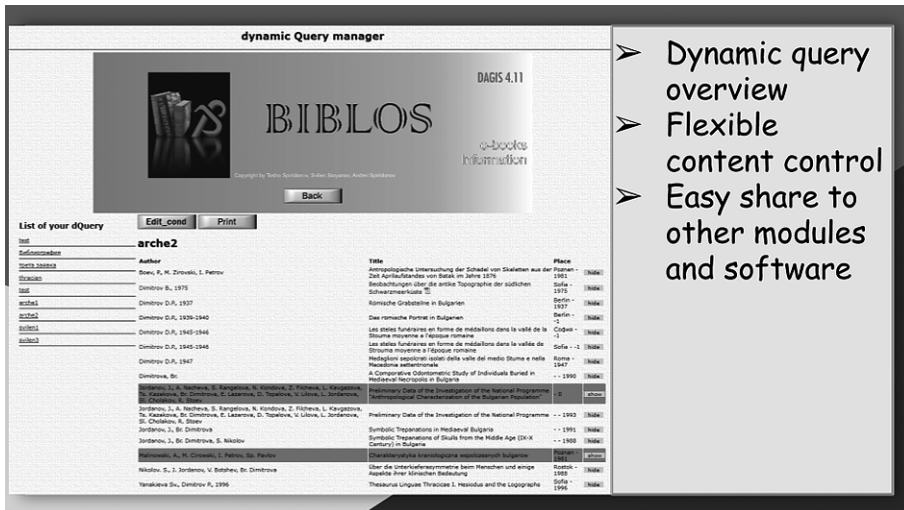


## BIBLOS

We have access to detail data of a settlement. For example my hometown Varna. We have complete geographical data, brief historical information, location of major transport hubs. The information is used directly by the other modules of the system.



A brief look to **Biblos** module designed to process bibliographic information. We currently have over 4,700 (4 thousand and 7 hundred) titles, and we have the full text for which we have permission from the authors.



The screenshot shows the 'dynamic Query manager' interface for the 'BIBLOS' database. The interface includes a search bar, a 'Back' button, and a list of search results. The results are displayed in a table with columns for 'Title', 'Author', and 'Place'. The table contains several entries, including titles like 'Antropologische Untersuchung der Schädel von Skeletten aus der Zeit Ahräurkandes von Batak im Jahre 1976' and 'Königliche Gräberfelder in Bulgarien'. The interface also features a 'List of your dQuery' section with 'Edit\_cond' and 'Print' buttons.

- Dynamic query overview
- Flexible content control
- Easy share to other modules and software

For example, let's see the most flexible functionality of the module - dynamic requests. They allow easy preparation of bibliographic requests according to set criteria, which are then used directly in other modules or by external software. Each title in query result may be removed manually (marked with red background). If a new title that meets the query criteria appears, it will be automatically appear in query result

## ARCHE

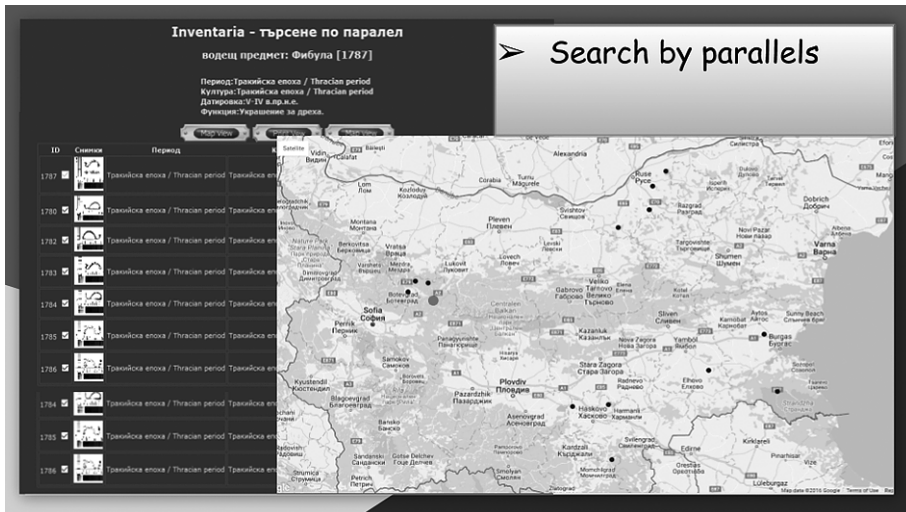
Now let's take a look at two modules which is relevant to our event - Arche and Map tour.

### Arche - SITES

The **Arche** module is intended for processing archaeological information. The archaeological objects - called **SITUS** (you can see them on list on the left) and the findings - **INVENTARIA** - discovered in the object (right - the area in which the characteristics of the find, material and its photograph) are consecutively described.

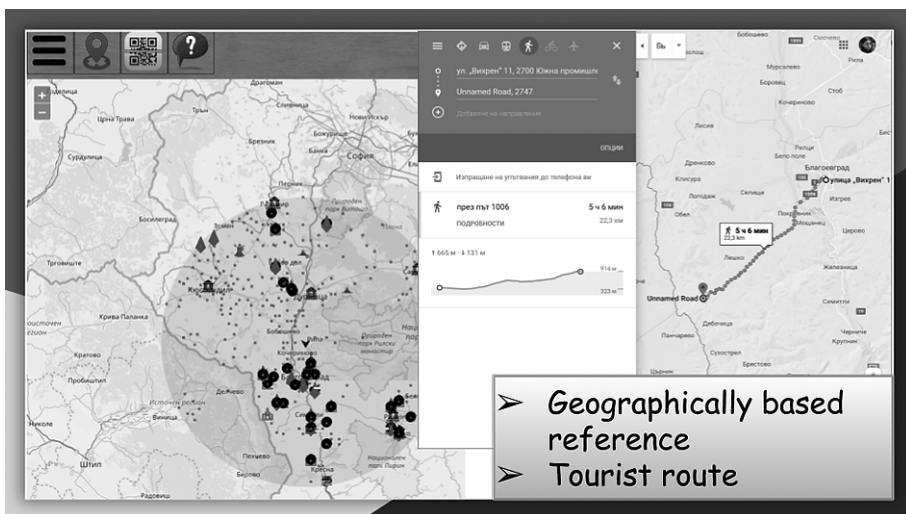
One of the key future in **Arche** is search engine. Search can be performed according to a set of criteria and the result can be either in tabular form or in map mode.





### MAPTOUR

The MapTour module is one of our public mobile optimized modules. It demonstrates very clearly the connection between the different modules. Its purpose is to show existing objects in given surroundings by given geographical coordinates. On the screen on the left, we have selected the city of Blagoevgrad. The small red dots are the modern settlements of Module Settlement (seen in Macedonia as well). Objects from the Arche module and museums from the Museums module are displayed. Based on our current location, a route can be generated to reach a selected object - pedestrian, by car, etc.



## INFORMATION SYSTEM for MUSEUMS FUNDS For the Republic of North Macedonia

And now let's take a closer look at the Museums module and our proposal for legal integration in the Republic of Northern Macedonia, which is our main focus here.

DAGIS 4.12

### Information System for Museums Funds

Classification Museums Exit

**Work with inventory book**  
please enter your museum code

**Редакция на данни за музеј ID:3**

поле BG RU EN

Вид: Археолошки музеј

Свѐр, селшце: Хисари-Хисари-Пловдив (България)

Адрес: Хисари 4180 ул. "Ап. Симеоновски" № 8 | Хисари 4180 ул. "Ап. Симеоновски" № 8 | 4180 Hisarya B. Al. Stamboliyski Str.

Телефон: 0337/ 62068; 62796

уеб сајт: http://museum-hisarya.org

e-mail: museum.hisarya@gmail.com

Лат: 42.5019

Гео локација: Лонг: 24.7063

Работно време: 8.00 - 12.00 ч. | 8.00 - 12.00 ч. | 8.00 - 12.00

Директор: Димитър Маджаров | Димитър Маджаров | Dimitar Madzharov

- Supporting the activities of museum workers
- Classification and management of basic museum data

The main task of **Museums** module is to support the activities of museum workers. We can enter a list of museums that will work with it and of course to be linked to settlement module allowing its geolocation in tourist data. We can maintain all the basic museum data - contacts, opening hours, geo location and more.

Мuzeумски податоци

Називни податоци

Категории

Послужба на датуми

Видови документи

Категории на датуми

Регистар на датуми

- Entry of museum exhibit data in accordance with the rules in the Republic of Northern Macedonia
- Import data from external sources
- Share data with museums in other country

This is the data processing form according to Macedonian laws - you can see its general appearance in left side. All form fields are from official Macedonian inventory template file. To the right you can see the area for additional information - what inventory we work with, authorized employees, search engine and more. An important point here is the link to the **Settlement**, **Biblos** and **Arche** modules - they allow for the given artifact to enter or select relevant information that subsequently enables its proper "participation" in the overall scheme of work. There is an opportunity to enter registry information - checks, movements and more. Up to 7 photos and an unlimited number of external files can be attached to each record for example - digitized copy of a old book. All tools in that area are same for different countries - ie. this is general functionality for the module. Generally this data have a key role in the implementation of the real "digitalization" - not just to capture the artifact and write a text description, but to create the appropriate semantic links between all the findings in a museum to the Daxis information space, as well as to other software systems. In respect of this, version 4 of **Daxis** will be the first to support a fully open standard for data exchange. We have received permission from Romania and we import data from Romanian archeological sites - over 17,000 complex multilayer sites (which makes about 40-45,000 separate sites) in the **Arche** module, we have started work on software development for sites and museums in Moldova!

**#9217**  
Save Passport Print

**1. ИДЕНТИФИКАЦИЈА**

**1.1. Идентификација на музејот**  
 Институција каде што е снетен предмет: Stobi - Археолошки музеј  
 Име на институцијата сопственик: Stobi - Археолошки музеј  
 Научна област: Археологија

**1.2. Идентификација на предметот**  
 Инвентарен бр.: НУС-А-К-2120 Број од влезна книга: Ознака според НККН: 2.1.2.5.3.5 унгвентариум  
 Име на предметот: вретенест унгвентариум ЕМБ: Број во Нац. регистар:  
 Категоризација - вредност на предметот: --- Степен на заштита: ---  
 Збирка: Археологија Локално име: Име во друг јазик:  
 Постојано снесување: депониран во дело 2 Проценка: 0 0 0 Дополнителна информација:

**2. ОПИС НА ПРЕДМЕТОТ**  
 Форма: вретенест унгвентариум Дел од телото: Пол: --- Датирање: I век п.н.е

**Search result**  
 Total 12 records was found

Description	Historical info	Inv #	Book #	Storage	Dating	Purch. Donated	Reg.date	Settlement situs
Вретенест унгвентари...	...	НУС-А-К-2120	депониран во дело 2...	...	...	...	0.0.0	Stobi град / urbs, municipius Стоби / Stobi
Драбока чинија со пр...	...	НУС-А-К-2121	депониран во дело 2...	...	...	...	0.0.0	Stobi град / urbs, municipius Стоби / Stobi
Шмсе со северно афин...	...	НУС-А-К-2126	депониран во дело 2...	...	...	...	0.0.0	Stobi град / urbs, municipius Стоби / Stobi

Here we can see a closer look to macedonian form - his first part. Work is still in progress here.

We can search locally by inventory book content and by external search whereby museums can search accessible content from other muse-

ums. Museums managers can set what of their content will be shared in that external search space. So - we already have a form for entering data from Macedonian museums and they can access that external search functions. The integration of the modules allows this information to be passed to MapTour and young tourists can easily and quickly understand what they can see in a museum in advance - all data is accessible via mobile devices.

➤ A scientific passport of the find

➤ Edit & print view

1. Назив и место на музејот	Stobi - Археолошки музеј
2. Број во влезна книга	
3. Начин на прибавување	Западна некропола / сектор 115 / кв.110.17 / гроб 2633-2 - булбус во гроб 2633
4. Инвентарен број	НУС-А-К-2135
5. Назив на предметот	инвентариум
6. Збирка	Археологија
7. Димензии	в. 10.3 см / пречник - обод 3.5 см / дно 2.7 см
8.1. Материјал	печена глина
8.2. Техника	грнчарско тркало

**9.Опис**  
Краток опис на предметот: Булбус инвентариум од кој недостасува мал фрагмент од ободот и вратот. Има крушовидно тело, извезен раб, висок врат и рамно дно. Максималниот дијаметар е во доњата половина од телото. Горната половина е потоплена во разреден и неоведнажен темно сив до кафен прагаз. Глината е прористена, но содржи примеси од лека. Печеното е квалитетно и вевдначено.

**10. Начин на прибавување**  
Западна некропола / сектор 115 / кв.110.17 / гроб 2633-2 - булбус во гроб 2633

**11. Датумање**

**12. Постапка на непосредна заштита на предметот**

**13. Изложен-депонирање**

**14. Фотографија**

**15. Забелешка**

QR  
ID: 000009247  
QT: 122916018

Save

Museums allows the scientific passport to be easily and quickly prepared and submitted for print or electronic storage in accordance with the relevant regulations. The QR code present in the passport is a unique identifier for the find. When it is scanned according to the user's privilege, either the public information about it or the data editing form is opened.



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*Техничка обработка* Јована САВЕВСКА  
*Печати* МАР-САЖ – Скопје



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2020

The participants of the conference – professors and experts in the domains of protection and management of cultural heritage – have disclosed the latest results of their investigations, as well as methods of protection of the heritage in the spheres of: archeological sites (tangible and intangible heritage), sacral monuments (architectural ensembles, interior structures, fresco painting, icons and iconostases), monumental complexes (design and maintaining), museum exhibits (museum practice, curatorship, management of exhibitions), thus promoting the new principles, methods and technologies for preservation, protection (conservation and restoration techniques) and management of diversified components of historical, archeological, artistic and literary heritage.

The main quality of the published papers is their reference to the ongoing issues and challenges in the sphere of protection and management of cultural heritage, as well as the hazard of sidestepping the contemporary technologies essential for further preservation.



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