

HISTORICAL MEMORIAL



This activity is made possible by the regional project “Support from the EU for building confidence in the Western Balkans”, which is financed by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

This publication was prepared with the assistance of the project “EU Support to Confidence Building in the Western Balkans”, funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The content of this publication is a sole responsibility of Analytica Skopje and does not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union or UNDP.

INTRODUCTION

This memorial aims to highlight the cultural and historical landmarks of the cities of Gostivar, Skopje and Strumica. The memorial was made within the framework of the project „Youth activism for multiculturalism - to nurture, to act“, which was made possible by the regional project „EU Support to Confidence Building in the Western Balkans“, which is financed by the European Union and conducted by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and is implemented by Analytica Skopje.

The memorial contains the photographs taken by the young participants during the field workshops with a brief overview of the cultural, historical and national significance of the objects, persons and other landmarks. At the same time, this memorial aims to promote intercultural dialogue, social cohesion and understanding between different communities. This publication is proof that each of these cities has its own unique mark and history that is worth telling and remembering. Skopje, as the capital, is known for its multiculturalism and history of international solidarity. Gostivar, with its symbols like the Clock-Tower and its rich ethnic and cultural heritage, is a place where diversities are nurtured and celebrated. Strumica, on the other hand, is known for its legends and natural beauties, as well as for significant historical and cultural events and landmarks.

In this memorial you will find information about the most significant cultural-historical objects and monuments, which have formed and shaped the history of these cities. From the Clock-Tower in Gostivar, through the Bridge of Art and Porta Macedonia in Skopje, to the thermal baths and the legends about Momin Bunar in Strumica, every page of this memorial is a journey through the time and space of our homeland.

It is our wish that this memorial be an incentive for young people to explore and respect their cultural heritage, to be proud of their history and to carry that pride with them, as a foundation for building the future. Let this memorial be an inspiration and a guide for all of you who want to know more about the wealth of our country.

STRUMICA

Do you know that Strumica is one of the oldest cities on the Balkan Peninsula and that its existence dates back BC?

Do you know that the first name of Strumica is Astraion, which was mentioned for the first time in 181 BC and that it means – a star city?

Do you know that the legend of the name of the city is related to the daughter of the Roman emperor Tiberius - Struma, who betrayed her father in the name of love?

Strumica is a city with a long and rich history, located in the southeastern part of the Republic of North Macedonia. Its past stretches back several millennia, and the city is known for its cultural and historical significance. There are records about Strumica that show that it was inhabited since prehistoric times. In antiquity, under the name of Astraion, it was an important city in the region. Near Strumica, at the archaeological site of Tsarevi Kuli, remains of ancient settlements were found, testifying to rich cultural and commercial activity during that period. In the Roman period, the city was part of the province of Macedonia and played an important role as a trade center. In the Byzantine period, the city became an important religious and administrative center. Tsarevi Kuli, a medieval fortress above Strumica, is testimony to the strategic importance of the city in that period.

Tsarevi kuli

Do you know that the archaeological site „Tsarevi Kuli“ which rises above Strumica is a silent witness to the existence of several civilizations that existed in these areas for 7000 years?

This cultural-historical landmark tells a wonderful story about the origin of the city of Strumica and highlights the significance of water and the mercy of God. The legends told by this landmark play an important role in preserving and celebrating the traditions and culture of the local community. Tsarevi Kuli is a historical fortress, located on a hill in the city of Strumica, and is an significant archaeological and cultural monument of the region. Under this fortress, during several millennia, the city of Strumica developed.



The fortress has a rich history dating back to ancient times. Tsarevi Kuli were mainly used as a defending structure which with its strategic location on top of the hill, they provided an excellent view of the surroundings and were ideal for defense against enemies. The walls and towers provided protection for the inhabitants and the defending garrison. In the Middle Ages, the fortress was repeatedly reconstructed and strengthened to serve as protection against enemy attacks. Tsarevi Kuli is an important symbol of the city of Strumica and an important object for the study of history. In some periods, Tsarevi Kuli were also used as a residence for the local population and rulers. This was especially the case in times of danger, when the population took refuge behind the walls. In the Middle Ages, Tsarevi Kuli also had an administrative function, they were the seat of the lo-

cal government and administrators who managed the city and surrounding areas. Today, Tsarevi Kuli is an important archaeological and tourist site, which bears witness to the rich history and cultural heritage of Strumica.

Museum - Strumica

Do you know which significant artifacts and exhibits you can see in the museum in Strumica and how they contribute to understanding the history and culture of the region?



The museum is located in a building that itself has historical significance and architectural value. The location of the museum is central, making it easily accessible to visitors. The museum in Strumica represents an important institutional pillar in the preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage of the city and the region, offering visitors a rich and interactive view into the history and culture of this part of the Republic of North Macedonia. Distinctive aspects of the museum are the rich archaeological collection that includes artifacts from prehistoric times, the ancient period and the Middle Ages.

Here you can see pottery, coins, weapons, tools and other objects discovered in this region. The museum also houses

an ethnological collection, which includes traditional folk costumes, household tools, and handicrafts that represent the culture and lifestyle of the people of Strumica and the surrounding area over the centuries. A collection of historical documents and photographs documenting the history of the city and its inhabitants from the Ottoman period to the present day. The museum also has a collection of works of art, including paintings, sculptures and other art objects by local and national artists. The museum has a significant role in the preservation of cultural heritage, education, research and promotion of local heritage. It collects, preserves and exhibits artefacts that illustrate the rich cultural and historical heritage, including objects from prehistoric, ancient, medieval and recent periods. By

organizing educational programs, workshops and exhibitions, the museum introduces visitors to the history and culture of the region. These programs are aimed at different age groups, from schoolchildren to adults, and play an important role in the education of the local community. The museum in Strumica is also a center for archaeological and historical research, where expert teams conduct archaeological excavations and research, revealing new aspects of the history. Through its activities and exhibitions, the museum actively promotes and popularizes the local cultural and historical heritage, both nationally and internationally.

Rural and urban women's costume

Do you know that in the Strumica museum there is a display of rural and urban women's costumes that symbolize the tradition, culture and lifestyle of women from this region through different periods?

Through its ethnographic collection, the museum in Strumica manages to preserve and transmit the spirit of the past to future generations, offering visitors a unique view of the cultural and historical wealth of this part of North Macedonia. The women's rural and urban costumes exhibited in the Museum of Strumica are not just ordinary clothes, but carry a deep symbolic and cultural meaning, representing a significant part of the history and identity of the local community. The rural costumes symbolize the local tradition and culture, with unique designs and motifs that showcase the skill and creativity of local artisans, a testament to the art and labor involved in their creation. The costumes reflect the everyday life of women in rural communities, including customs, holidays and important



moments of their lives. On the other hand, the urban costumes symbolize a higher social status and greater elegance. More expensive materials and richer decorations indicate the well-being and status of the wearer. The urban costumes reflect the fashion and trends of a certain period, helping to understand how fashion styles changed and what the aesthetic values of the urban community were at

a certain time. The costumes in the museum serve to preserve and display the cultural heritage of Strumica and its region, helping to understand the history and culture of the local community. They are a significant part of educational programs and exhibitions, providing significant educational value to visitors. Costumes allow local residents to identify with their heritage and appreciate their cultural history, representing a symbol of pride and cultural identity.

The women's costume from Strumica is unique and represents a significant part of the ethnographic tradition of the region. It consists of several basic elements:

- **Shirt:** The basic part of the costume is the shirt, which is made of cotton and is often decorated with embroidery.
- **Dress or skirt:** Over the shirt, women wear a dress or skirt that is richly decorated with embroidered details.
- **Apron:** The apron is a mandatory part of women's costume and is decorated with various ornaments and lace.
- **Belt:** A wide belt is worn around the waist, which is often decorated with beads and embroidery.
- **Shawls and scarves:** Women wear a variety of shawls and scarves on their heads, which are decorated with embroidery and lace.

The woman has a central role in the culture of Strumica, not only as a bearer of tradition through costumes, but also as a creator and guardian of cultural values. Through making and wearing these costumes, women express their creativity, dedication and pride to their community. Their role in maintaining traditions and culture is invaluable, and the museum acknowledges and highlights this aspect through its exhibitions and educational activities.

Orta Mosque

Do you know that in Strumica there is the cultural monument „Orta mosque“ (11th - 12th century) under whose foundations a medieval church and remains from other eras of the city's existence were found?

The Orta Mosque was built in the 17th century, during the Ottoman period. It served as an important religious center for the Muslim population in Strumica and its surroundings. Over the centuries, the mosque has undergone several renovations and reconstructions to preserve its original appearance and function-

ality. An interesting fact is that under the foundations of Orta Mosque there are remains of an old church, which indicates the continuity of religious and cultural life in this region. This symbiosis of different historical layers makes the object particularly significant for studying and understanding the rich past of Strumica. The architecture of the mosque is an example of classical Ottoman architecture. One of the most significant elements of the mosque's architecture is its large dome, which is decorated with various artistic details. The facade of the mosque is a classic example of Ottoman architecture with stone and mud, and the decoration of the interior is striking with its mosaics and marble columns. It should also be mentioned that the Orta Mosque has a distinctive triumphal arch at the entrance, which makes it even more impressive. These architectural details make the mosque not only a religious building, but also a significant part of the cultural heritage of Strumica and the Republic of North Macedonia as a whole.



The Orta Mosque is of great importance to the local community and the wider region. It is an important religious center where Muslims from Strumica and the surrounding area gather for prayers, especially for Friday and holiday prayers. In addition to the religious sphere, the mosque is also a significant cultural and historical monument that bears witness to the Ottoman period and the rich multicultural heritage

of Strumica. With its architecture and artistic details, the Orta Mosque attracts tourists and researchers interested in Islamic architecture and history. In addition to all this, the mosque also plays a role as a social center, where various social and cultural events and activities take place

Strumin's grave

Do you know that there are several legends related to the existence of the Strumica grave, one of which connects the Strumin's grave with the betrayal committed by the beautiful girl Struma?

There are three legends about the origin of the grave:

- According to the first legend, Struma, Krale Marko's sister, is placed in the tomb.
- According to the second legend, the tomb belonged to Prince Perseus, a relative of Alexander the Great.
- According to the third legend, this is the tomb of Struma, the daughter of a great commander of the Slavs of the Strumica region.



About the grave that is located in the immediate vicinity of the village of Banica, even today, the residents mostly want to tell the legend of the beautiful Struma, who betrayed her father because of her love for one of the military leaders who wanted to subjugate her people. This legend says that the city was besieged by a strong Byzantine army, but they never managed to conquer it until then. Then there was a betrayal of Struma, who was in love with a Byzantine commander and revealed to him the secret of the impregnable Strumica castle. The Byzantines conquered the fortress, and the father cursed his daughter that when she died, the earth would throw her out of her grave nine times. The legend connects the nine layers of broken limestone with the nine expulsions and burials of Struma. Struma's grave is a significant archaeological site that

reveals a lot about the rich and varied history of Strumica and its surroundings. The found artifacts and tombs provide valuable information about the life, culture and customs of the people who lived in these areas at different times. The grave has a mausoleum appearance and consists of 9 layers of broken limestone. The grave is 230 cm high, 240 cm wide and 400 cm long.

Strumica woman under mask

Do you know that Strumica with the Strumica carnival is a member of the association of European carnival cities?

Strumica is known for its carnival, which has a long tradition and is one of the oldest and most significant carnivals on the Balkans. The carnival in Strumica is considered to have a very long tradition. It was mentioned by the famous Ottoman travel writer Evliya Çelebi as early as in 1670. He, passing through Ustrumdzha, wrote: ... I came to a city, located at the foot of a high mountain and saw how that night masked people ran from house to house, laughing, screaming and singing... which clearly indicates the possibility that it is about the trimer carnival festivities in Strumica. The carnival in Strumica is held every year and attracts a large number of visitors and participants from all over the country and beyond. The monument „Strumica woman under mask“ was erected as an honor and symbol of this significant cultural event. The monument „Strumica woman under mask“



is a significant cultural symbol of the city and it represents the rich cultural heritage and traditions of the carnival, which are an important part of the identity of the local community. In recent times, the carnival has acquired a more contemporary, modern dimension, with some influences from similar carnivals in the world, and at the same time it has also acquired an award-winning character. However, the traditional character of the carnival and going to the houses of engaged girls as a custom still remained. Through the variety of colors, figures and masks with different motifs and themes, the participants of

the carnival strive to show the eternal struggle between good and evil. As a tourist attraction and a work of art, the monument plays an important role in the promotion of the culture and history of Strumica. The monument is placed in a central location in Strumica, which makes it easily accessible to local residents and tourists and is surrounded by a landscaped area where visitors can rest and enjoy the surroundings.

Bansko thermal baths

Do you know that the thermal baths in Bansko are known for their healing mineral waters, and the water temperature is around 72°C, which makes it one of the warmest mineral waters in the Republic of North Macedonia?

Bansko thermal baths are known for their healing mineral waters and picturesque natural surroundings. The mineral waters of the baths in Bansko are rich in various minerals that have healing properties. The water temperature is around 72°C, which makes it one of the warmest mineral waters in North Macedonia. The mineral composition of the water includes sulfates, chlorides, sodium, potassium and calcium, which contributes to its healing power. Bansko thermal baths have a long history dating back to the ancient period. These baths were used by the Ro-

mans and later by the Byzantines and Ottomans, who recognized the healing properties of the mineral waters. The locality known as Roman Therma is actually a late Roman thermal mineral treatment center (Balneum) which was built in the 3rd and 4th centuries. It is located about 12 km east of Strumica, at the foot of Belasica mountain. The therma was discovered in 1978, during the digging of the foundations of the „Tsar Samuil“ hotel.

The facility used the healing waters of the „Parilo“ spring, which is located 50 meters southwest, whose capacity is 42 liters per second, and the temperature is 72°C. The preservation is greatest in the rooms that served as a sauna and the pool with cold water - frigidarium. In all the rooms, the floors, which are built of brick and mortar, and the initial parts of the arched structures have been preserved. The complete system



of floor and wall heating has been preserved, and the supply and drainage channels have also been preserved. With the latest excavations, new buildings were found in which polychrome floor mosaics from the middle of the IV century were discovered.



Momin bunar

Do you know that Momin bunar in Strumica has a meaning as a symbol of female love and devotion?

Momin Bunar in Strumica is not only a historical, but also a culturally significant object that marks the identity of the city. This well has a depth of 11 meters and is located in the eastern part of Strumica. It was built in a memory of the sick daughter of the Turkish father, who before her death, bequeathed him to build a well with the money from the sale of her clothes.

The meaning of Momin Bunar is multiple. Primarily, it represents a place of memory and remembrance of the action of a girl who had a great influence on her environment. This story carries the message of the love of a parent's heart for his child, as well as the strength of love and comprehensiveness to the needs of others.



Historically, Momin Bunar is part of the road to Thessaloniki, which in the past was significant for communication and trade between different regions. It was a place of rest and refreshment for travelers passing through this part of the city.

Culturally, Momin Bunar is significant as part of the cultural heritage of Strumica. The status of Momin bunar as a cultural monument was established in 2004 with the support of the local residents and the ecological association „Planetum“, which confirm the significance that the local community attaches to this object.

GOSTIVAR

Do you know that there is a legend according to which the name of this city means „a place where guests always come“?

Do you know that the city represents a typical multicultural environment, in which almost all nationalities from North Macedonia live?

The legend of Gostivar is an amusing anecdote related to the history of the city. Although it may not be the true history of the city's name, the legend nevertheless highlights the significant role of hospitality and traditions in forming the identity of this city. This legend says that in the Middle Ages, the city was often visited by guests from all over the world, and on summer days, a large trade meeting (fair) was traditionally held in the city. This tradition continued during the Turkish Empire. Due to the large number of visitors to the city, the locals often called each other „gostivar“ (there are guests) in Turkish. At that time, there were many inns in the city, so it is assumed that the „hospitable city“ or the „city of guests“ became - Gostivar. Otherwise, the etymological meaning of the term in science has not yet been determined.

The population in Gostivar is of different cultural and ethnic origin, which makes the city an example of a multicultural community, with good inter-ethnic and inter-cultural relations that have been developed and maintained over the years.

Culture Center ASNOM

Do you know that the Culture Center ASNOM is a place where the residents of Gostivar nurture, develop and celebrate multiculturalism through a variety of events, exhibitions and cultural programs?

The Culture Center ASNOM was founded in 1969 under the name Memorial House of Culture ASNOM Gostivar. Namely, the center is the most significant place for cultural events in the city. The most important cultural and artistic events are held in this cultural center throughout the year. The center of culture in Gostivar is a significant cultural institute in the city that plays an important role in promoting cultural wealth and art in the region. It is a center for various cultural events and activities, such as exhibitions, concerts, theater performances, cinema screenings, educational programs, workshops and other events that enrich the cultural life of the community. The Center of culture is a place where people can gather and enjoy cultural activities, as well as educate themselves about the cultural diversity of their community. It is particularly significant due to the numerous events that promote diversity and multicultural dialogue, through ex-



hibitions, concerts, theater performances and other cultural activities. The „Vuk Karadzic“ library is located right behind the Culture Center ASNOM and has over 8,000 titles, i.e. over 80,000 books.

Begova kukja

Do you know that the Begova kukja is one of the best-preserved monuments of the specific Ottoman architecture with its authentic architectural elements?

Bolettini's House, known as the Begova kukja or the Yellow House — Daut Bolettini's House, or the so-called Begova kukja, has been declared a cultural monument. It is a unique example of authentic old town architecture from the 18th century and is one of the most significant cultural-historical landmarks in the city. It was built in the 18th or 19th century by Daut Boletini and is a complex of two houses, characteristic of the wealthy Turks in the city. Namely, there were two parts of the famous house, a male and a female part, but unfortunately only the male part has been preserved. The house has witnessed important historical events and is associated with the influential family Boletini, which had a significant role in local history.

The Bolettini family played a significant role in the political and social developments in the city during the Ottoman period. Important gatherings and meetings of local leaders and beys were held here, who made decisions of great importance for the local community. One of the significant events associated with the house is its use as a headquarters during the Ottoman uprisings.

On the other hand, the complex with oriental architecture and lively elements on the front façade, captivates with its unique style in which it was built. In 1984, the house was protected and placed on the list as part of the cultural heritage of the Republic of North Macedonia, while in 2013 the facade was renewed and restored with its previous protection. Today, the Boletini House is an important part of Gostivar's cultural heritage, preserving memories of the past and representing a significant part of the city's cultural identity.



Clock Tower

Did you know that the clock tower in Gostivar is one of the best-preserved clock towers in our country?

It was built in 1728 by Ismail Agha, son of Haji Yusuf Agha. The year of construction and the name of the builder are written in the Ottoman-Turkish language on a stone slab located above the entrance door of the tower. This cultural-historical building has been declared a monument and together with the towers in Skopje, Bitola and Prilep is one of the most preserved original clock towers in Macedonia. The Clock tower is located in the center of Gostivar and serves as a symbol of the city, a symbol that is on the coat of arms and on the flag of the municipality and can also be found on numerous local postcards and photographs. In the beginning, the tower had only a mechanical clock and a bell that marked the hours with its sounds. During the World War I, the wooden structure burned down and only the stones of the walls remained. It was renovated in 1986, and in 2017 the mechanisms that measure the time were completely renewed.



The Clock tower not only measured the time, but was also a place where people gathered and socialized. Today it is a tourist and cultural destination visited by many tourists. Unlike before, when citizens and visitors could only look at it from the outside, today the Clock Tower is open to those who want to go inside, climb the stairs and enjoy a panoramic view of Gostivar from the highest part. This historical building with its architecture and long history is one of the first places that foreign tourists express their desire to see when they visit Gostivar.

Saat Mosque

Did you know that madrasahs in the Ottoman Empire were religious educational institutions where Islamic sciences and other sciences such as mathematics, astronomy, and literature were taught?

Saat Mosque (or Ebu Bekir Pasha Mosque) — an old Ottoman mosque that belongs to the Gostivar Mufti of the Islamic Religious Community and is the main Muslim temple in the city. The mosque was built by Abu Bekir Pasha in 1676. Ebu Bekir Pasha was the son of the first Bey of Gostivar, Kara Mustafa Pasha Kemankesh, who was Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire from 1638 to 1644. The mosque of Abu Bekir was built near the Beg Maalo. The original structure of the mosque was demolished and then rebuilt by his uncle Ismail Agha, who also built the Clock Tower next to it, after which the mosque got its vernacular name. According to the “vakafname” from 1688, a madrasah was built next to the mosque, which was the first school in Gostivar.

Madrasahs in the Ottoman Empire were religious educational institutions where Islamic sciences were taught, but often also other sciences such as mathematics, astronomy, and literature. This makes the madrasah the first place of education in the city, indicating the importance of education and culture for the local population during that period. In addition to the madrasah, a library was also built next to the mosque. Although this library does not exist today, its existence is important because it shows that the Saat Mosque was not only a religious building, but also a center for education and cultural development. Libraries within religious complexes were places where manuscripts and books from various fields of science and art were kept and used, which further enriched the cultural life of the community. In 1920, the mosque had its first renovation, and in 1944 it underwent a second reconstruction. In 1994, a new large temple was built with one minaret and two sherefins. Saat Mosque is not only an important religious building, but also a cultural-historical monument, which testifies to the rich heritage of the Ottoman period in Gostivar. Its architecture and history represent an important part of the city's cultural identity.



St. Mother of God Church

Do you know that the “St. Mother of God” Church in Gostivar is the most important religious building in the city where the Christian religion and traditional customs are nurtured through the celebration of significant holidays?

The „St. Mother of God“ Church is one of the most significant religious and cultural buildings in the city. Located on the city square, it not only dominates with its beauty and architecture, but also represents the center of the spiritual life of the local population. The construction of the church began in 1924, and after five years of hard work and dedication, it was consecrated in 1929. This church is a testimony to the skill and dexterity of the craftsmen and architects of that time, who managed to create a temple that conveys the spirit and traditions of the past. In 2003, a major restoration work was carried out on the church, which restored and protected its original beauty and significance.



The “St. Mother of God” is a symbol of the traditional architecture and lifestyle of the rich and influential families of that period. It provides an insight into the history and cultural heritage of the region, representing a significant part of the cultural and spiritual history of Gostivar. The architecture of the church is rich in details and ornaments, which testify to the artistic and cultural refinement of the time when it was built. Nurturing the Christian religion and traditions is of great importance for believers who visit this church. Through regular services, liturgies, and celebrations of Christian holidays, the church „St. Mother of God“ plays a key role in the maintenance and transmission of religious customs through the generations. A large number of believers gather in this church during the major Christian holidays when the church is packed with believers praying and celebrating their religion.

It is an important center for cultural activities and events, where various concerts of spiritual music, exhibitions of icons and other works of art are held, which enrich the cultural life of the city. Through these activities, the church not only maintains the religious spirit, but also promotes cultural exchange and dialogue between different communities. In this way, the „St. Mother

of God“ Church in Gostivar is not only a religious building, but also a significant part of the cultural heritage of the region, which maintains and nurtures the spirit of tradition and belief in Christianity.

The Ahmed Chako House

Do you know that the Ottoman houses were divided into harem-lak (house for women) and selamlak (house for men)?

This building allows us to understand a lot in terms of the development of the function and the construction, architectural and urban features, the way of living at that time, and they also have a special significance in the development of the architectural design of the city and its surroundings. The Ahmed Chacko House in Gostivar is a typical example of profane architecture, i.e. Muslim (Ottoman house). According to the data of the owner of the house, as well as according to the combination of functional and stylish elements, it can be determined that the building was built in the middle of the 18th century. Despite the fact that the house is old, as well as the small changes that have been made over the years, the house generally preserved its structure, ethnological content and the architectural elements. The Muslim house was always surrounded by a wide yard, protected by high walls, with a lot of water and greenery, which is also found in The Ahmed Chacko House. In the past, the building was divided into: haremlak (house for women), although it was called women's house, all the family members lived there, and selamlak (house for men), served to welcome guests, men. Today, the selamlak is on the left side at the entrance gate, but it is not functional. The house in planimetry has a rectangular shape, in the lower floor it is built with massive stone walls, connected with mud and with a wooden belt to give the building flexibility in case of an earthquake and in the top floor the walls are built with a bondruk system, and a structure shown with beams, filled with adobe bricks.



The House of Kancheski

The House of Kancheski in Gostivar is an old house declared a cultural heritage of North Macedonia and represents a significant part of the architectural heritage of the city. It is located in the western part of the city, set back from the street, with a large yard and surrounded by large residential buildings of recent construction. The house has a rectangular base and consists of a basement, first floor, second floor and attic, finished with a roof tiles. The House of Kancheski is characterized by its unique architectural style, which includes high walls, spacious courtyards and richly decorated facades. The interior of the house is also significant, with carefully crafted wooden details, traditional Macedonian ornaments and original furniture pieces that reflect the cultural and aesthetic value of the time in which



it was built. Historically, the House of Kancheski was the home of a prominent family that played an important role in the social and economic life of Gostivar. Over the years, the house witnessed many significant events and developments that marked the history of the city. It is a famous cultural-historical monument and one of the most significant examples of traditional Macedonian architecture from the 19th century.

SKOPJE

Do you know that the City of Skopje is known as the city of international solidarity because, after the catastrophic earthquake in 1963, it received help from many countries around the world for its reconstruction?

Do you know that the City of Skopje is known for its variety of architectural styles, which include Ottoman, neoclassical and contemporary architecture?

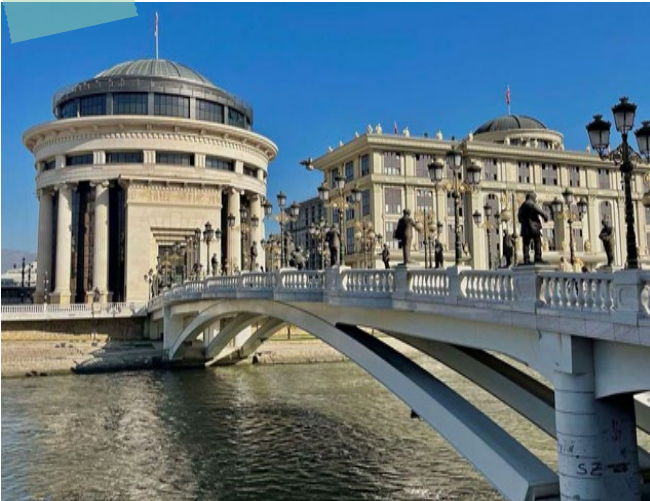
The City of Skopje traces its beginnings back to the old Roman Empire when, under the name of Skupi, it was located on the left side of the river Vardar. The city developed from a legionary camp in 13-11 BC, during the reign of Octavian Augustus. The city became the capital of the province of Dardania, until its destruction in the catastrophic earthquake in 518 AD. In its place, a new city was built, mainly on the territory of today's Skopje, which in the Byzantine period was called Justiniana Prima, after its resident, Emperor Justinian, who was born in the vicinity of Skopje. After the death of Justinian and the multi-year attacks of the Slavs on the city, the Berziti tribe occupied Skopje and settled in it forever. During the next few centuries, Skopje was constantly conquered and liberated, and the ruling of the Byzantines, then the Serbs, and the Bulgarians changed. In the 14th century, Skopje became the second imperial capital of the Serbian king Dushan. In that period, the city had not only political, but also cultural significance due to the restoration and construction of many churches, monasteries, hospitals, etc. Thanks to its geographical position, Skopje has emerged as an important commercial and economic center. Inns were built in which trade caravans rested. After the conquering of Skopje by the Turks in 1392, there was a period of stagnation and emigration of the Slavic population from it, and the city was colonized by the Turkish population. The city suffered constant growth and decline from natural disasters. However, several foreign travel writers wrote that by the 17th century, Skopje had grown into a large commercial and economic center, with a lively bazaar, a caravan-saray, markets, waterworks, a bazaar and a beautiful clock tower. All this beauty was destroyed by the fire in 1689 by the Austrian general Piccolomini. With its turbulent history, Skopje grew into a regional center where civilizations met. One of the more recent episodes of the City of Skopje is the catastrophic earthquake in 1963, when the city lost its character and gradually in the years that followed it got its present appearance. „The City of Solidarity“, the title given to the city after the earthquake. Namely, nations and countries from all over the world participate in its reconstruction.

THE BRIDGE OF ART

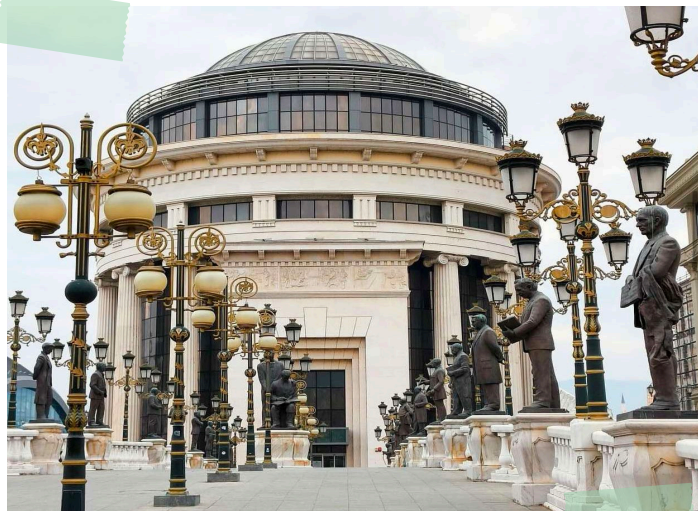
Do you know that if you walk along the Bridge of Art in Skopje, you can see the sculptures of Macedonian artists, and enjoy the rich artistic atmosphere it offers?

The Bridge of Art is a pedestrian bridge over the Vardar River, located in the center of the City of Skopje. Many statues of famous Macedonian artists are placed on it. It is located between the „Sloboda“ bridge and the „Oko“ bridge. There are a total of 27 sculptures on the bridge, 13 on each side and one in the middle. It is 83 meters long and 9.2 meters wide, with the central part expanding to 12 me-

ters. On the bridge there are sculptures of famous Macedonian writers, educators, actors, directors, composers, etc. Among the most famous are the Miladinovci brothers, Blazhe Koneski, Slavko Janeski, Petre Prlichko, Toshe Proeski, Trajko Prokopiev and others. The Bridge of Art in Skopje has a significant cultural and symbolic meaning for the city. With its numerous sculptures of Macedonian artists, the bridge highlights the importance of the art and cultural heritage of the Republic of North Macedonia. It serves as a link between different parts of the city, promoting art and culture as central elements of urban life. The



bridge also attracts tourists and art lovers, further enriching the cultural landscape of Skopje and encouraging interest in Macedonian history and culture.



Fountain on the square in Skopje, known as „Macedonia“ (Monument of Alexander II of Macedonia)

Do you know that the Warrior on Horse monument and the fountain in the center of Skopje through their magnificent size and detailed display symbolize the glory and power of the great warrior Alexander II of Macedonia?

The fountain on the square in Skopje, known as „Macedonia“, is one of the most representative symbols of the city. With its striking architecture, symbolism and interactive effects, it attracts visitors and leaves them with an impression on their visit to the city. The fountain not only decorates the square, but also enriches the urban landscape and increases the attractiveness of the city as a tourist destination. The monument to Alexander II of Macedonia is a symbol of the national pride and historical heritage of North Macedonia. It is a reminder of the ancient Macedonian state and its famous leader, who is one of the most famous military leaders in history. It is a composition of several elements. The bronze monument of Alexander has a height of 14.5 meters and weighs 30 tons. In the middle of the ten-meter-high pillar is placed the warrior Alexander II of Macedonia, known as Alexander the Great, looking towards the sunrise. On that pedestal are three rings with mounted tablets, on which three battles are represented. Among them there are three rings of bronze, with decoration and decorative reliefs. Around the pillar is the fountain, supplemented by eight bronze soldiers three meters high and eight lions, two and a half meters high, four of which face the fountain.

The fountain on the square in Skopje is also known for its interactive effects. At certain times of the day, usually in

the evening, the fountain presents a water show with synchronized light and music effects. This creates an impressive and magical experience for the visitors of the square. Despite the controversies about the „Warrior on Horse“ Fountain, it is a symbol of Macedonian history and culture and is one of the most significant points in the new urban landscape of Skopje. With its greatness and position in the center of the city, it plays a key role in the modern identity of Skopje and attracts a large number of visitors.



The Mustafa Pasha Mosque

Do you know that in order to restore the former splendor of the Mustafa Pasha Mosque, the weavers in Novi Pazar were given the opportunity to weave two hundred square meters of carpets and that these carpets were taken for Guinness and can now only be seen in photos?

Mustafa Pasha Mosque is a significant historical and architectural monument in Skopje, located on the stretch between Kurshumli an, the church „St. Spas“ and the Fortress (Kale). This mosque was built in 1492 as a bequest of Vizier Mustafa Pasha, and today it bears his name. Historically, the building included a turbe, a



fountain, an imaret and a madrasah, of which today the turbe of Mustafa Pasha, the sarcophagus of his daughter Umi and the fountain in the courtyard of the mosque, as well as the remains of tombstones and the imaret and the madrasah, are preserved. Mustafa Pasha Mosque is an excellent example of Ottoman architecture, with a large central dome, spacious prayer hall and minaret. The mosque was built in honor of Mustafa Pasha, a high official in the Ottoman Empire, who owned a large property in the vicinity of Skopje. The architecture of the mosque is a characteristic example of early Constantinople

architecture. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1912, the mosque was turned into a military warehouse. In 1933, at the request of the manager of the Skopje vaqf, it was allowed to be restored. In order to restore it to its former glory, the weavers in Novi Pazar were given to weave carpets for the mosque with an area of two hundred square meters. The carpets were 20 meters long and five meters wide, and their total length corresponds to the height of the mosque to the minaret, exactly 40 meters.

These Guinness carpets were removed from the floor of the Mustafa Pasha Mosque and it is not known what happened to them, they can only be seen in photographs. The entire building is very complex and difficult to build, and the fact that during the catastrophic earthquake in 1963, the mosque suffered minimal damage, is a testimony to that. At the entrance there is a plaque that testifies that the building was built on the site of a demolished Christian church. The tomb of Mustafa Pasha, where he was buried in 1519, as well as the sarcophagus of his daughter Umi, are located within the Mustafa Pasha Mosque. The mosque remains a significant historical and architectural monument, attracting visitors and scholars interested in Ottoman history and Islamic art.



Chifte Hammam

Do you know that the former Ottoman bathhouse is now part of the Skopje Art Gallery, and functions as a multimedia exhibition space?

Chifte Hammam is a significant historical building in Skopje. The Hammam is an Ottoman bathhouse and is one of the most famous cultural and architectural monuments in the city. Chifte Hammam was built in the mid-15th century by Isa-beg Isakovic, a prominent Ottoman general. The hammam served as a public bath for men and women, hence the name „Chifte,“ meaning „two“ or „twofold.“ The Chifte Hammam is a cultural and historical monument in the very core of the Skopje Old Bazaar, and today it has been re-adapted into an art gallery. With this revitalization, the object continues to live in today's city, representing one of the key Ottoman monuments in Skopje. The Chifte Hammam completes the Islamic urbanistic triple consisting of Suli An and the Murat Pasha Mosque.

There were more such triples throughout the Skopje bazaar, but this is the only one whose three buildings are still preserved. The bathhouse had the main function of a city bath, which, apart from maintaining hygiene, also had a great social role. The process of bath-

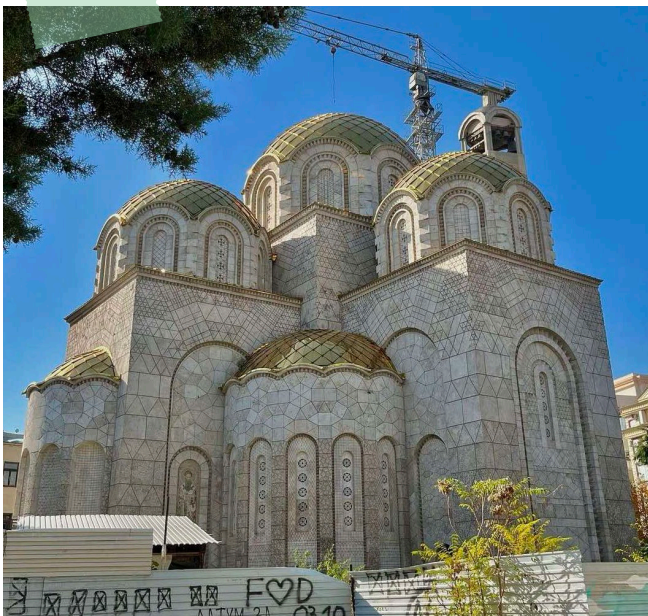


ing was a social event that once carried with it certain rituals. So, in the women's section there were special customs of preparing and bathing the brides, which were followed by wedding songs. The first major damage to the structure of the building was during the earthquake in 1555 when the two large domes collapsed. After their reconstruction, the hammam continued to function for many years, surviving the great fire in Skopje in 1689. Three centuries later in 1963, just shortly after the beginning of the reconstruction of the already old structure of Chifte Hammam, Skopje was hit by another catastrophic earthquake. The seismic forces again cause great damage to the structure of the building, especially in its northeastern part. After several unsuccessful attempts to reconstruct it and put it back into operation, the Cifte Hammam remains in a state of ruins until 2002 when it finally experiences its complete reconstruction. A series of changes are being made to the building in order to adapt it to the new program - exhibition space of the National Gallery of Macedonia

St. Konstantin and Elena Church

Do you know that the original church sanctuary was consecrated in 1926 and later demolished in the 1970s to build the City Trade Center?

St. Konstantin and Elena Church has a significant place for the Orthodox community in Skopje and represents an important part of the religious and cultural heritage of the city. It was built in a traditional Byzantine style, with elements typical of Orthodox architecture, such as domes, apses and iconostasis.



The interior of the church is decorated with rich frescoes and icons depicting scenes from the lives of St. Konstantin and St. Elena, as well as other saints and religious motifs. Its construction began in 1909, however, due to the turbulent years following the Balkan period, it was only completed in 1919, and then consecrated in 1926. In the 1963 earthquake, the church suffered damage, but not severe enough to be demolished. In the early 1970s, the temple was demolished to build the City Trade Center. It was originally planned that the restoration of the church would be carried out a few meters from the old foundations, on the square „Macedonia“ in Skopje. However, after violent reactions and disagreements by

Muslims and atheists, the location was moved right next to the House of ARM, not far from the authentic place on the Skopje square. The consecration of the foundations was performed on November 11, 2012, personally by the Archbishop of the MOC g.g. Stefan, together with the metropolitan Hilarion of Bregalnica and priests from the diocese of Skopje. The church is a significant symbol for Orthodox believers, contributing to the nurturing of religion and the preservation of cultural heritage.

Porta Makedonija

Do you know that the Porta Makedonija monument in Skopje was built as a symbol of Macedonia's independence and national identity, and is decorated with reliefs depicting significant moments and personalities from Macedonian history?

A symbol of the great historical victory - the creation of an independent and sovereign Republic of North Macedonia. It was built in 2011 and put into use on Christmas 2012. The object has dimensions of 20 by 10 meters and a height of 21 meters. The facade is decorated with 32 reliefs in deep carving, with a total area of 193 m². The reliefs show scenes from prehistoric times through the settlement in the Bay of Bones, from antiquity with Philip II and Alexander III of Macedonia, from the Roman period with Justinian I, from the Middle Ages with Tsar Samuil, Krale Marko and Karposh, and up to the 20th century with Ilinden, ASNOM, the Exodus from Aegean Macedonia and September 8, 1991 – the declaration of independent

Macedonia. There are also reliefs of the monastery of St. Jovan Bigorski, an Ohrid house, Daut Pasha hammam, The Bridge of Poetry in Struga. Inside, there is a souvenir shop and gallery space on two levels, with an observation platform at the top. Porta Makedonija is a monumental building that is a symbol of the national identity and historical heritage of North Macedonia. It attracts many tourists and is one of the most recognizable buildings in Skopje, becoming an important part of the cultural and tourist landscape of the city. It is also a cultural place that has rooms where various cultural and business events are held every day



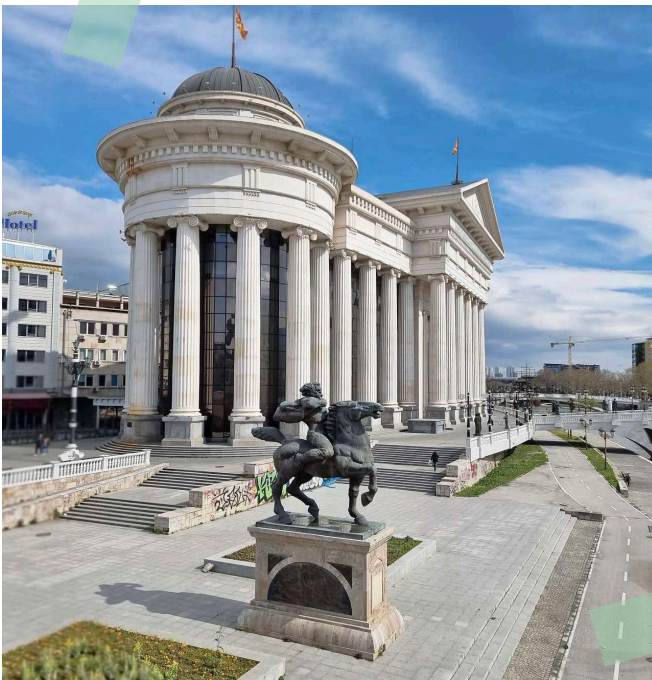
Archaeological Museum

Do you know that the Archaeological Museum of the Republic of North Macedonia is among the 15 best museums in Europe, according to the European Museum Academy?

The Archaeological Museum of the Republic of North Macedonia presents moving cultural heritage, more precisely about 7,000 archaeological objects discovered by archaeological explorings on the entire territory of the country since 1924, and thus this museum represents the most important and oldest museum institution in the Republic of North Macedonia. Visitors can enjoy the artifacts exhibited in the departments of prehistoric archaeology, ancient archaeology, medieval archaeology, numismatics, anthropology and lapidary. A large number of the subjects that are part of this institution are exclusive on a global scale. The existing laws on culture and protection of cultural heritage register the largest part of this

fund as cultural heritage of particular importance. In 2015 the Archaeological Museum of the Republic of North Macedonia was ranked among the 15 best museums in Europe, winning the high seventh place according to the European Museum Academy. Located on the left bank of the Vardar River, the museum is a sight from the outside and from the inside.

Within the museum there is a museum shop as well as a library. The library counts over 6,000 books, as well as more than 20,000 professional and scientific works by domestic and foreign authors, rare editions, published since the beginning of the 20th century. The oldest edition among them is from 1881.



Museum of the City of Skopje

Do you know that the Museum of the City of Skopje contains a rich collection of artifacts and exhibitions that show the cultural and historical development of Skopje from prehistory to the present day?

One of the most significant symbols of the City of Skopje, which bears witness to the entire history of the City. A recognizable monument of Skopje that can be found on many postcards, pictures and other souvenirs by which Skopje is recognized. The museum is located in the adapted part of the Old Railway Station, destroyed in the catastrophic earthquake in 1963. The relatively preserved part of the building is today used by the museum, which has an area of 4,500 m², of which 2,000 m² is exhibition space. The museum owns a fund of about 22,000 museum objects from the Skopje region, distributed in sections in the areas of archaeology, history, ethnology and history of art. „Walk through the past“ is a permanent exhibition in the museum, which covers the period from prehistory to the beginning of the 20th century for Skopje and its surroundings. Apart from systematic



research, collection, arrangement, protection and storage, the museum also carries out professional processing and scientific study of the museum material as well as its public presentation through thematic projects and exhibitions both in the country and abroad. Since 1973, an integrated photo laboratory with three photographers and modern technical equipment has been operating in the Museum.



Although the formal pedagogical-propaganda department existed from the founding of the Museum, it began active work only in 1975, when a curator - pedagogue and a guide were employed. In the Museum, especially in the settings of the historical exhibitions, historical classes were held where famous people - participants in NOV and prominent social figures made their appearances. From the very beginnings of the Museum until today, the curators pay attention to the application of contemporary museology as a significant segment in the operation of the Museum and its professional staff.

Memorial House of Mother Teresa

Do you know that the Memorial House of Mother Teresa in Skopje was built on the site of the demolished Catholic Church where Gondza Bojadziu was baptized?

The Memorial house of Mother Teresa has a special place for Skopje and the people of Skopje. Built in honor of the great Missionary of Mercy. The Memorial house located in Skopje is also the only museum in the world dedicated to Mother Teresa. The desire to pay tribute to the most famous woman from Skopje and Nobel laureate from Macedonia was realized on January 30, 2009 with the opening of the Memorial house of Mother Teresa. With this Memorial house, her work has been worthily preserved, and it is visited throughout the year by a large number of tourists, diplomats and other prominent persons from various fields in the daily cultural and political life, both from the country and from abroad. She won



the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979. The very location of the Memorial house has its own symbolism, because it is located on the site of the Catholic Church that was demolished in the Skopje earthquake, and in which Mother Teresa was baptized just one day after her birth.

The setting in the Memorial house of Mother Teresa is really something special and is full of photos of old Skopje, from the period of the beginning of the 19th century. The goal is to follow and present the entire life of Mother Teresa from her childhood in her native Skopje, through the period spent in the Missionaries of Mercy, until her death.

Among the most important items are the famous white robe with blue patterns, a copy of the Nobel Peace Prize and a copy of the letter written by the mayor of Skopje, Metodi Antov, as well as her prayer book. Today, the Memorial house of Mother Teresa is one of the buildings of special importance for the city of Skopje, attracting numerous visitors who want to learn about the life and work of this world-famous humanitarian. This museum complex not only offers insight into her personal history and missionary work, but also promotes the values of love, peace and solidarity, making it worth a visit for all generations.

References and links

Rujak Zoran, Tsarevi Kuli-Strumica, from the Roman Empire to the late Middle Ages, book II, NU Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments and Museum, Strumica, Strumica 2022

- Archaeological map of the Republic of Macedonia. T. 2. Skopje
- „Strumica cultural - historical heritage“ (2005) - NU Institute and Museum
- NU Conservation Center - Gostivar, from the source 2022-08-23
- List of protected goods. Administration for the Protection of Cultural Heritage
- Map of religious buildings in Macedonia. Menorah - Skopje
- National information system for cultural heritage of UZKN
- <https://web.archive.org/web/20160320060520/http://niskn.gov.mk/Detail.aspx?kdID=660>
- <https://ceipa.pmf.ukim.mk/mk/node/22>
- Мустафа-пашина џамија (archive.org)
- <https://ceipa.pmf.ukim.mk/mk/node/109>
- <https://amm.org.mk/>
- <https://web.archive.org/web/20160423121319/http://www.mgs.org.mk/index.php/istorijat>

