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Report

Analysis of culture heritage BULGARIA

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1. CULTURAL HERITAGE UNDER THE SCOPE OF FOCAL PROJECT (COUNTRY SPECIFIC, BASED ON THE RESULTS OF THE “HOW WELL I KNOW MY CULTUYRE” QUESTIONNAIRE)

1.1 Cultural Heritage

This report aims at presenting basic aspect of the Bulgarian cultural heritage. This report does not aim at presenting in detail the cultural heritage of the country; rather it aims at inspiring the reader towards exploring the cultural heritage of the country further. Through this report we aim at setting up a basis whereupon an explorative journey towards the understanding of the Bulgarian culture can begin.

Cultural heritage is ‘the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations’¹. According to UNESCO (official Unesco website, available online at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/about/>) and ICOMOS 2012, ‘cultural heritage’ is a wide concept that includes ‘tangible culture’ (such as buildings, monuments, landscapes, books, works of art, and artifacts), ‘intangible culture’ (such as folklore, traditions, language, and knowledge), ‘underwater cultural heritage’ (i.e. shipwrecks, underwater ruins) and ‘natural heritage’ (including natural sites that demonstrate cultural interest, biodiversity, geological formations and more).

‘Cultural heritage is unique and irreplaceable’ (Jokilehto, 2005, p.4). Thus, it is not only of great significance but also international duty and responsibility to preserve the heritage from the present for the future. Interestingly, there are some international organizations, foundations and governmental groups (such as UNESCO) whose main mission is to protect and preserve the heritage of many nations (Jokilehto, 2005, p.4).

1.2 Intergenerational dialogue

«Intergenerational dialogue» is a term used to describe the dialogue that can take place between the generations. This term is also used to describe a significant part of the policy area on lifelong learning at a European level². Beyond all dispute, older generation has knowledge and experience that is valuable and is worth being transferred to the young generation. In this way, older people can share their knowledge with the young people; young people on the other hand can use their skills to support older people, to update older people’s practices and to encourage them in carrying out tasks and participating in social activities³. In the context of this project, intergenerational dialogue is encouraged; seniors and young people are brought together and are engaged in a dialogue with intense cultural character.

¹ Definition retrieved from Wikipedia, online at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_heritage

² Information retrieved from partnership/ekcyp/BGKNGE/Intergenerational.html and <http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth->

³ Information retrieved from cf. European Youth Forum 2009, p.3.

2. INTRODUCING THE COUNTRY

2.1 Geographical Position – Landscape

The location of the Bulgarian Republic on the Balkan Peninsula is quite determining as far as it concerns its history development. It was with the its establishment back in the year 681 that the country became one of the most important geo-strategy centers in Europe. Spreading on a territory of 110 994 km, Bulgaria is located in the eastern part of the Balkans and is surrounded by Romania, by the north border, the Black Sea – by the east, Turkey and Greece – by the south and Serbia and Macedonia – by the west. This strategic position of the European political map puts Bulgaria in the position of a major transport crossroad between Europe, the East and the Mediterranean. Concerning its geography location, Bulgaria can simultaneously be classified as both European and Balkan country, and Danube and Black Sea's one.



Map of Bulgaria

Source: <http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-XbJX7lo0hDY/TZD4iGYUv-I/AAAAAAAAAAjI/eYJO8--vZw/s1600/BULGARIA.jpeg>,
15.12.2012

2.2 Demographical Data

The demographic situation in Bulgaria, by the present day, is by its great percent influenced by the specifics and the economical processes, developed in the different periods of the historical, economical and cultural growth and development of Bulgaria. Right in the middle of that worsened demographic map in Europe, Bulgaria holds no difference compared to the rest and states some serious aggravation of the major demographic statistics – age structure of the population, birth rates, death rates, average life expectancy, marriage, divorces, emigration. According to some stats, provided by the National Statistic Institute, by 1 of February 2011 the population of Bulgaria is 7 364 570. 3 777 999 (51.3%) of them are women and 4 586 571 (48.7%) men.⁴ The main factors influencing the population numbers are the birth rate, the death rate and the outside migration. As far as the territory aspect is concerned the factors are inside migration processes and the administration changes. Quite a worrying fact is that in the period between the last two national population counting, which took place between 2001 and 2011, the population of Bulgaria has decreased by 564331 with its annual percent of aggravation – 0.7%. This drop is mainly due to the negative natural growth (more people dying, than ones being born) and the outside migration, because of

⁴ National Statistical Institute. Population. Press Release: Count of population 2011 (final data) (<http://www.nsi.bg/EPDOCS/Census2011final.pdf>, 15.02.2012)

which the population has decreased with respectively 389 087 and 175 224. In the aging structure aspect there is a certain tendency being noticed – a tendency of aging, which is mainly represented in the reducing of the relative proportion of the population beneath 15 years (13.2%) and the increasing of the proportion of 65 year-olds and the elders (18.5%). These unfavorable demographic tendencies and the increasing intensity of the emigration processes during the last few years have a serious impact on the ethnic map of Bulgaria. According to the research of the National Statistic Institute the Bulgarian ethnic group spreads to 5 664 624 (84.8%) of the people, who voluntarily declared their ethnic self-definition during the last official national count in 2011. The second largest ethnic group in Bulgaria is the Turkish one – 588 318 (8.8% of the total population). The gypsies are the third largest ethnic group 325 343 (4.9%).

2.3 Religion

Concerning the population structure by creed the largest part of Bulgarians (76%) are orthodox Christians. The Muslims (10%) are on second place, followed by the Protestants (1.1%) and the Catholics (0.8%). Different kind of creeds take 0.2%, and 11.8% are self-defined as non-believers.

3. THE COUNTRY AS A HISTORICAL LAND

3.1 Brief Historical Information

In the history of the European civilization the act of constituting of the Bulgarian state and the development of medieval Bulgarian culture is a key gear into a complex mechanism, consisting processes and events of ethnical, political, social, economical and cultural nature in the ancient world. The founding and the organization of a nation of Slavs and ancient Bulgarians and the crystallization of a specific material and religious culture in its depths are both a result and a new beginning. This is a result of a development of Slavs' culture in the lands of Middle and South-Eastern Europe that took place throughout centuries on the one hand, and the political and ethnic uprising of the ancient Bulgarians in the barren land of Eurasia on the other. The major ingredients of the medieval Bulgarian nation and culture have a consequently large history. Once founded, Bulgaria with its political organization, unitary economical and cultural policy eases the formation of a new nationality in which the Slavs, the ancient Bulgarians and some parts of the local Balkan population intermingle altogether in one. This new Slav nationality, which calls itself Bulgarian one, turns out to be a vital social organism with its unique material and religious looks. This nationality happens to be the keystone for a new European culture in the following centuries, living in a Europe that survives countless difficulties and trials for to live through the modern times⁵.

3.2 Forming of the country nation and culture

After Bulgaria was founded in 681 the unity and cooperation between its two major components – the Slavs and the ancient Bulgarians is happening not only due to the

⁵ Vaklinov, Stancho. Forming of Bulgarian culture VI –IX century. Sofia, 1977, 9 p.

functioning of a common state organization, but also due to the common complementation between the developed rural economy of the Slavs and the animal handling of the ancient Bulgarians. The new Bulgarian culture, however, didn't survive only because of the cooperation of the two tribes in the northern parts of the state, along the shores of the Danube River. On the south side of Stara planina it bares the significant marks of the local Byzantine population, which means that in this specific part of the state the culture had been formed because of the intense cultural exchange between the Slavs and the Byzantine Empire. Because of this the earliest Bulgarian culture is characterized with its specifics in the northern part of the state where the prevailing element is the ancient Bulgarian population, where in the southern parts the Byzantine style prevails and suppresses the Slav's culture. Noticing the up to here said it becomes clear the Slavs are the common element for the whole territory of the state and they are the connecting part in the Bulgarian culture in the age in which Bulgaria had begun its massive expansion on the Balkans.

The 60s of IX century are decisive not only for the Bulgarian culture, but for the state as well. The acceptance of the Christian religion as an official state religion 865/866 forged certain conditions for development of the Bulgarian culture and art, conditions and certainly processes connected with the Slav's literature (the deed of the brothers Cyril and Metodi), the slavianization of the public worship and the cultural work, executed by the students of Cyril and Metodi, and their followers. In the sculpture and the decorative arts certain themes, connected to the new religion, certain matters taken from the Christian cultural heritage had been implemented.⁶ In other words the formation of a specific national culture, which succeeds in reaching its peak during the rule of Simeon the Great, had begun. It is the period of his rule that holds the name "The Golden Age" of the Bulgarian literature and culture.

The chronological borders of the Bulgarian the Renaissance embrace the period from XVIII to the Bulgarian Freedom from the Turkish slavery in 1878. The transition from the medieval ages to the bourgeoisie age happened within these chronological frames, between which some radical historical chances occurred in the lives of the Bulgarians. These facts lead the nation out of the chaos of the Asian medieval ages and welcome them in the bourgeoisie world. In this context the Renaissance age and the new Bulgarian history match, as far as they are concerned in the sphere of time.⁷

The founding of new Bulgarian culture throughout the Renaissance can be defined as an extraordinarily complex and long process, which happens in the poor conditions of slavery. A strong component of the development of the Renaissance culture in Bulgaria has the aspiration for social knowledge and the movement of new Bulgarian social acknowledging, the cultural deeds and innovations in the pas centuries, the foreign cultural influence to which Bulgarians get in touch in the XVIII and XIX. The originality, which preserved the nation through the immensely hard centuries and foreign slavery, breaks apart and actually stops playing its part of an isolator.⁸

All of these factors, in one way or another, are connected with the forming of the new Bulgarian printed literature, which symbolical and actual beginning had been put by "Nedelnik" and its author Sofronii Vrachanski (1806). The early Bulgarian Renaissance had occurred in the surroundings of a newborn national rivalry on the Balkans. By that time not

⁶ There again, 168p.

⁷ Genchev, Nikolay. Bulgarian Renaissance, Sofia, 1978, p.16.

⁸ Stoyanov, Ivan. History of the Bulgarian Renaissance. Veliko Turnovo, 1999, 195p.

only the Ottoman Empire, but the neighbour countries, which had already acquired their freedom, execute a purposeful policy of assimilation of the remaining Bulgarian population. In its beginning the Bulgarian Renaissance is the counter-reaction to the foreign nationalism. Throughout that immensely hard struggle the major support of the Bulgarian nation is the Church. It's the Church that opposes the Ottomanism and the elinism with the means, widely spread in the medieval Bulgarian nation – homilies and literature.

During the Bulgarian Renaissance an especially strong accent is being put on the education. The school is a new type of cultural institution. It becomes a major engine of the cultural and educational movement of the Bulgarians. The new-formed Bulgarian language, by that time, has its strong impact in the development of the Bulgarian literature and culture. Thanks to it the of foot the modern Bulgarian literature had been placed.

The changes in Bulgarian society, which occurred during the 30s-40s of the 19 century, started to show their particular impact on the Bulgarian culture. Gradually, some different literature styles begin to rise – journalism, educational literature, fiction, poetry etc. In that time the first magazines and newspapers had already begun being printed. In 1824 the “Ribn bukvar”, a deed of doc. Peter Beron is already in emit. It is a herald of the educational and literature improvement and progress. It's the first book intended for wide social use and benefit.⁹ In the sphere of educational literature, right after P.Beron the most significant literature pieces are Neofit Rilski (Bulgarian Grammar, Chrestomathy of the Slav's language), Emanuil Vaskidovich (“Slavqnobulgarskoe detevodstvo”), Hristaki Pavlovich (Razgovornik, Grammar, “Carstvenik ili istoriq Bolgarskaq”).

Some significant representatives of the pedagogical literature through the Renaissance are Vasil Aprilov (“Bulgarian knijnici”, “Denica of the new Bulgarian education”). Rayno Popovich (“Hristoitiq”), Konstantin Fotinov, Ivan Bogorov, Neofit Bozveli etc.

During the 30s-40s of the 19th century the journalism in Bulgaria speeds its development quite rapidly, especially after the appearance of the Bulgarian periodic press. In 1844 in Smirna the first Bulgarian magazine “Luboslovie”, emit by Konstantin Fotinov starts being printed. Only two years later in Leipzig, Ivan Bogorov starts emitting of the first Bulgarian newspaper “Bulgarian eagle”.

In that time the Bulgarians make their first steps in the science sphere as well, where particularly active is P.Beron, who produces a series of scientific works in the sphere of Medicine, Physics, Astronomy, Chemistry etc. Names, also recognizable in these spheres are N. Rilski, N. Gerov (literature and linguistic research), Sp. Palauzov and V. Aprilov (history), Neofit Rilski (Bulgarian folklore), Iv. Seliminski and N. Pikolo (Research activities).

The prose and poetry has their peaks and, of course, representations in the age of the Renaissance. The first poetry pieces in the new Bulgarian language are from Neofit Rilski, Neofit Bozveli and Dimityr Popski. As one of the most recognizable figures in this particular sphere of the literature life of the Bulgarians during this time Dobri Chintulov presents his most popular works “Where are you, you faithful national love”, “Rise up, rise up, Balkan hero”, “Vqtyr echi, Balkan stene”, “Bulgari Iunaci”.

The early Bulgarian Renaissance is characterized with some changes in the architecture sphere. The search for new styles and forms in building had already begun. They have an aim to impose a national style. Special attention is given to the building of churches and schools which are built in extremely large and magnificent manner. Simultaneously with the

⁹ Gergova, Ani. Knigoznanie. Sofia. 1995, 153 p.

architecture, the painting crafts swiftly expand, as wood-carving and jewelcrafting are the ones with the most interest in. The most important representatives of wood-carving art are the masters in the Trevenskata and Samokovska schools. As a result of the large scale of building certain crafts become more popular in the social sphere – wall-painting, graphics, icon-painting. A representative of the Samokov school – Zahari Zograph is the most popular painter by the time.

Right after the Cirm war (1853- 1856) some grim changes occur in the life of Bulgarian society. They embrace the material, social and religious spheres. The strengthened Bulgaria bourgeoisie becomes a leader of the Bulgarians in their struggle for an independent Church and in their aspiration towards cultural and religious emancipation. In the conditions of economy and cultural upsurge the first socially-culture organizations appear.¹⁰ Extremely important for the cultural upsurge of the Bulgarians in this period appear to be the community centers – “Bulgarian community center”, “Brotherly love”, Constantinople community center etc. In a specific parallel to them, other cultural institutions begun to evolve – different associations and boards, which aim improving of the Bulgarian literature, education and culture.

The Bulgarian Renaissance literature marks a significant breakthrough. By the end of the Cirm war different parts of the literature are being defined – poetry, drama, prose, critics. In the 60s of 19 century on the literature scene shows up Petko R. Slaveykov with his poems “The spring of the Whitefoot” and “Boyna Voyvoda”. Along with him there are other poets mastering their works – Lyben Karavelov, Dobri Voynikov, Nikola Kozlev and Rayko Zhinzifov.

In the 70s on the poetic scene shines the personality of Ivan Vazov with his collection: “Pryaporec i gusla”, “Melancholy of Bulgaria”. During that time poetry is being written by Konstantin Velichkov, Stephan Stambolov, Stoyan Mihaylovski, Krystiu Pishurka, Pandeli Kisimov, Bacho Kiro Petrov¹¹. Along with those Bulgarian authors during this productive times Hristo Botev is working on “Hadzhi Dimitur”, “My prayer”, “Patriot”, “Hayduti” and others. These years are quite significant as far as prose is concerned. The most active authors in the genre are Vasil Drumev (“Family in the Misery”) and Iliya Bluskov (“The lost Stanka”, “The unfortunate Krustinka”). Luben Karavelov is the author that shines the brightest in the sphere of fiction. His deeds are over 30 short stories, which represent the whole slavery in its real appearance (“Mother’s child”, “Bulgarians from the old times” etc.).

The years right before the Freedom of Bulgaria mark an enormous upspring in the sphere of journalism, due to which two new genres are being formed – pamphlet and feuilleton. These genres are mainly used from L. Karavelov, Hr. Botev, P.R. Slaveykov and D. Voynikov. In these times Bulgarian drama writing is being born within the work of D. Voynikov, S. Dobroplodni, Krustui Pishurka, T. Ikonov and V. Drumev.

The changes in the social life of Bulgarians shows its impact over painting as well, which from its previous state of entirely church based becomes socially oriented. The following artists are the mere example of the painting elite by that time: N. Pavlovich, Hr. Cokev and St. Dospevski.

In the years before Bulgarian Freedom, Bulgarian theatre was born as well. Music as a whole gains an entirely new perspective which overruns and changes in a more social way the

¹⁰ Stoyanov, Ivan. History of Bulgarian Renaissance. Veliko Turnovo., 1999, 197 p.

¹¹ There again, 201p.

previous religious music styles, comparing to the western civilization music. Some of the most productive composers are Dobri Voynikov and Petur Gruev.

The stages and works which Bulgarians achieved through the age of the Renaissance are significant, concerning the immensely hard political situation on the Balkans, the lack of any kind of support on behalf of the state and the unstoppable contra actions on behalf of the Ottoman Empire, which by that time is a slave master. Overcoming all of these impediments, Bulgarians manage to form an entirely new, democratic within its core, culture.

After the freedom granted in 1878 a process of forming and establishing of institutions in the modern Bulgarian state begins. The culture by that time is a descendant of what was reached and accomplished in the Renaissance, when the foundations of the Bulgarian social culture were built. This entirely new period of history development of the Bulgarian nation is characterized with a massive building process in the sphere of political and cultural institutions. An important part in this process is performed by the state, which entirely supports the work of Bulgarians in the sphere of education, building, and other initiatives. A number of social places and libraries were build with state funds. Among them is the National Library in Sofia (1879). The main idea is that the material heritage, exposed in the first museums must be preserved – there are: Ethnographic museum, Archeology museum and a Museum of the Bulgarian social upspring.

In the first years of the young Bulgarian state a wide recognition takes the literature classics. Its most significant representative is Ivan Vazov, who is called the "patriarch of Bulgarian literature". In his work he almost entirely focuses in the national-patriotic problems. His most famous work is the book: "Pod Igoto", translated in more than 50 languages. Another literature genius of the time was Aleko Konstantiov, who was famous for his "Bay Ganyo" and "To Chicago and backwards".

The end of 19th century is the time when the classic Bulgarian painting was born. It is a specific mixture of contemporary western art and Bulgarian tradition. In 1896 the State painting school in Sofia was founded.

In the beginning of the 20th century Bulgaria focuses in the movie-making industry. In the capital Sofia a process of massive projecting of documental and featured films had begun. In 1915 the first Bulgarian movie "A Bulgarian is a gallant" was projected. In the first decade of XX century Bulgaria continues its temps of high social and economy development. Right before the Balkan wars (1912-1913) the Bulgarian population is the most literate one on the Balkans.¹²

3.3 Forming country religion and believes

The outlook of life for a nation is the expression of its way of living, social and economy habitat, its cultural development and the origin of its historic tradition. Just like the most developed societies in which every sphere of the religious life has its own logic, thus in the mythological cult the actual beliefs are relatively independent, conservative and still strong enough to have their massive impact on the social order and life.¹³

The search of the origin of the Bulgarian religious phenomena, entirely leading and forming the life and the historical destiny of the Bulgarian nation, needs to begin its quest in

¹² History. (http://212.39.92.39/e/prosveta/istoria_11/50.html, 20.12.2012)

¹³ Stoynev. A. , "The outlook of life in the ancient Bulgarian society", S., 1985, 58 p.

the era of the ancient Bulgarians. This was the time of strong cults and religious waves such as: Tangrizm, Thracian Orphism and the Bogomil cult. This trends has a determining role in the religious and the mythological societies, which directly reflects on the social and economical development of the Bulgarian nation.

The ultimate god of the ancient Bulgarians is Tangra – sky – which is characterized with few major functions: Constructiveness, Guarding, Punishing, Leading and Defining of human faith. This is the god that defines the male origin. ¹⁴ As a typical Turkman nation, the ancient Bulgarians had their moon calendar with a cyclic round of 12 years. Each year has the name of a different animal (horse, mouse, tiger, ram etc.) The most worshiped animal amongst ancient Bulgarians, Thracians and Slavs is the horse, which was considered invulnerable for the evil.

The Cult of Orpheus is presented as a moral religious system, connected to immortality. The leading part in it is the idea of the never-resting and developing soul – the will of the believer to reach immortality has to be through his soul. The pilgrims of the cult had to attend all sermons, singings and traditional cult practices. The Orpheus Cult traditions are consumed by the nations on the Balkans. The ancient Bulgarians and Slavs too absorb these methods, which play their role in the forming of the Bogomil principles. ¹⁵

The ultimate god, worshiped by the Slavs is Perun – the God of Thunder. They are a monotheistic tribe, so they worshiped more then one god – Svarog, God of fire and crafts, Dazhbog – god of Fertility; Volos – god of the herds; Lada – Fertility, the Love and the Family. The Slavs believed and worshiped Nature and its phenomena, they believed in the supernatural powers of ancient trees, rivers and lakes. They believed that mythical creatures were living in the forests – mermaids, witches, fairies etc. Some of them were human-like, but all of them were evil. So the Slaves figured a technique to made them calm by sacrifices. ¹⁶

With the acceptance of Christianity in 864 the ancient struggle between the two major ethnic elements – Slavs and Ancient Bulgarians, had been ended. Thus the tribes could unite in the forming of a single strong nation, alike the other dominating Christian nations in Europe by the time. This is the policy of prince Boris offspring – Simeon, the ruler that founded an independent Church, declared the Slav's language as an official national language, as well as improved and developed the cultural and religious life of his servants. King Simeon was using the already existent Byzantine model of religious ruling, but didn't attempt to radically vanquish the differences in the country's social life and between the two ethnic elements. This mainly includes the royal servants (bolyari) and the offspring of the united Slavs. ¹⁷

Just like the bolyari, the elite clerics were too making use of the conditions of society in order to improve their material state. A major part in Bulgarian social life by the time were playing the constant wards, lead by Simeon, as well as the high rate of taxes, intended to support the vast growing Bulgarian army. All of these factors were an impediment for the Christian religion and on the other hand were a premise for the birth of the heretic cult – the Bogomil principles (Cult).

¹⁴ Meridian27. Religion: Tangra – ultimate Bulgarian God (<http://www.meridian27.com/Mer27/Vol8/f38.htm>, 20.12.2012)

¹⁵ Zhivkov, Nikolai. About Orpheus, the Thracian Orphism and state regulation// Dialogue, 2009, N 4 (<http://www.uni-svishtov.bg/dialog/2009/4.2009-NJ.pdf>, 03.01.2013)

¹⁶ History (http://212.39.92.39/e/prosveta/istoria_11/4.html, 03.01.2013)

¹⁷ Zlatarski, Vasil. History of the Bulgarian state – medieval times, S., 1971, p. 521

The appearance of the Bogomil Cult amongst the Bulgarians is due to the political and social processes running in the country by the mid of 10th century. A premise for the new cult was the moral crisis in the Bulgarian religious life. The founder of the new cult was the cleric Bogomil. The main perspective, shared by the bogomils was that the education actually created the world. They believe in the existence of two major forces: Good (God) and Evil (Satanail) – the world and the man were created by Satanail and the human soul – by God.

In the beginning of 12th century the bogomil cult was quite a strong religion, which struggles not only against the church, but against the authority as well; they were fighting for a better social habitat. Bulgarian rulers and the Church were opposing them through cruel banishments and punishments. They started with the rule of king Petur I (927 – 969). In 1211 king Boril called a great Church fair against the bogomils, which resulted in a massive banishment, fulfilled with cruelty, of the bogomils.

Bulgarian national beliefs and customs are a specific ethno-cultural phenomenon, which is a result of the collision between ethno groups, who formed the Bulgarian nation. The heritage of the mythical beliefs does not exist anymore, but still have their impact on the new modern society. They are well integrated in medieval Bulgarian society and its outlook of life. They intermingle with beliefs far later acquired; integrate within the new era and its ideology system.¹⁸

The birth, dissemination and development of the Bulgarian mythological system are processes undoubtedly connected with the whole historical development of the Bulgarian life outlook and religious culture. The customs of the Thracians, Slavs and ancient Bulgarians manage to survive in the Bulgarian religious perception. The inability of the Church to make these pagan culture and beliefs vanish, transforms into a different approach towards the issue – assimilation of the pagan cults. Thus Bulgarians manage to preserve many pagan customs up to the present day, such as different traditional sayings, customs, holidays etc.

The stability of the mythological beliefs in the Bulgarian religious culture and life outlook has to be explained with the fact that upon the coming of industrial society, the conditions of life were likely to produce and preserve national fantasy and imagination, concerning myths, beliefs, cults and supernatural forces.¹⁹

4. EXPLORING COUNTRY ARCHITECTURE

4.1 Buildings with architectural interest

Following the tragic history of the Bulgarian state, it fails to form stable national architectural styles. Its highest valuables had been destroyed, and its culture had been estimated and replaced. However, the Bulgarian lands managed to form a network of cultural routes, on which most ancient settlements and treasures of Europe can be seen. This is where we find the oldest European settlements from the Neolith era, the oldest towns and the oldest European treasure.

Over the years the Bulgarian lands were settled on, crossed and conquered by various peoples, tribes and ethnic groups that left their impact on architectural monuments and landmarks of the country.

¹⁸ Georgieva, Ivanicka "Bulgarian national mythology", Sofia, 1981, p. 244

¹⁹ See Georgieva, Ivanicka, p. 245

The beginning of the architectural process in Bulgarian lands, covering the central part of the peninsula, we can determine approximately the time of the rise of the prehistoric civilization of gold – between the sixth and eighth millennium BC. Birth of the first settlements is sure sign of the existence of organized communities, residential culture - high enough and development, which can now be defined as the architecture.²⁰

Prototypes of the Bulgarian architectural structures are prehistoric dwellings located around the villages and Karanovo, Hotnitsa and tombs located near Sveshtari, Alexandrovo and Kazanlak. In fact, the true beginning of the Bulgarian architectural history is the settlement of the Thracian cities - Sevtopolis (lower dam Koprinka, Kazanlak) Kabyle (Montana) Pulpudeva (Plovdiv) and Greek colonies - Apollonia (Sozopol) Messemvria (Nessebar) and Odessos (Varna). Conquest of Thrace by the Romans also left its mark on existing cities - it develops and improves them. The Romans had built a number of public facilities, temples, amphitheatres, military bases and fortifications. The most vivid illustration of the great Roman architectural work in Bulgarian lands are the church "St. Sofia" (Sofia), the church "St. George" (Sofia), Red church in Perushtitsa, Episcopal residence in Nessebar, the stadium and the ancient theater Trimontium, thermal baths Varna and Roman city of Nicopolis ad Istrum, Nove, Eskus, Nicopolis ad Nestum. Architectural remains dating from Roman times can be seen in Plovdiv, Sofia, Varna, Stara Zagora, Ivaylovgrad, Hisar, Nessebar and Silistra.

The period of the First Bulgarian Empire was characterized by intense construction of churches and monasteries. Most large monumental church of this period was the Great Basilica, located inside the old capital of Pliska. Stone wall surrounds the "inner city", which is located in the throne hall, castle church and wealthy homes. The monasteries are located mainly in remote areas of the country, a large part of them were originally functioned as

independent churches or chapels to various feudal castles. During the 30 years of 10 c. was built also the largest and most famous monastery in Bulgaria - Rila Monastery. His creator is considered the first Bulgarian hermit monk Ivan Rilski.

The Fortress of Preslav, Pliska like, consists of external and internal defense system. The inner fort is located near the middle of the outer city. Its form is L-shaped, with round towers at the corners and square along the walls. The fort was positioned and "Golden Church"



Church "St. Dimitar"

Source: <http://4coolpics.com/pics/0206/173710206344.jpg>, 03.01.2013

which is considered one of the most unique monuments of medieval Bulgarian architecture.²¹

²⁰ Koeva, Margaita. Introduction to architectural theory and history: Cultural model of Bulgarian lands and its architecture.// LiterNet. 2003, N 1 (<http://litenet.bg/publish9/mkoeva/teoria/kulturen.htm>, 03.01.2013)

²¹ Koeva, Margarita. Introduction to architectural theory and history: Architecture of the First Bulgarian Kingdom.// LiterNet, 2003. N1 (<http://litenet.bg/publish9/mkoeva/teoria/pyrvoto.htm>, 03.01.2013)

In 1018 Bulgaria was conquered by Byzantium. This period of Bulgarian history is connected with the destruction of Bulgarian monasteries and churches. However, most of them manage to save their functions and continue to fulfill their role as the main cultural and literary centers. At this time the second largest monastery in Bulgaria is built – Bachkovo - that complements Bulgarian architectural heritage.

1185 was the beginning of the uprising against the Byzantine Empire, led by the brothers Asen and Peter, resulting in restoring the Bulgarian state the following year, while its capital was proclaimed Tarnovo. The city has firmly entrenched on the hills Tsarevets and Trapezitsa. On the hill there were built Tsarevets Imperial Palace, and the Patriarchate. The palace is an independent architectural ensemble forming inside its spacious courtyard. Besides the royal palace, interest from the viewpoint of an architecture are also the numerous churches and monasteries built during this time - the churches "St. Dimitar", "St. Peter and Paul", "" Boyana Church "and Patriarchal Monastery" St. Trinity."

One of the richest architectural monuments of medieval Bulgarian towns is Nessebar, and the best preserved monument till nowadays is the "fortress tower", situated in the Rila Monastery.

When Bulgaria fell under Ottoman rule, in architecture, as in other areas of cultural and social life of the Bulgarians, a clear distinction between official - national and Ottoman - Bulgarian architecture began to show. Typical of this period is mass pillaging and destruction of palaces, churches and monasteries. Only the remote and inaccessible monasteries survive. To be hidden from the sight of the Turkish oppressors constructed church buildings at that time are small, basilicas and hidden among the houses of the settlements or behind the walls of monasteries, but carefully decorated with frescoes and carvings and subsequent solid traditions of the past. Monasteries that survived the invasion protect their medieval churches, and where they were destroyed, replace them with new, small and modest buildings. So nave church became a major architectural composite type for the period XV-XVI century.²²

Turks left their architectural mark on Bulgarian lands through the construction of many mosques, medreses and Muslim monasteries, many of which have undeniable architectural qualities - Dzhumaya Mosque (Plovdiv), Banya Bashi Mosque (Sofia) and Tombul Mosque (Montana).

At the end of the 17 c. changes occurred in the Ottoman Empire, which allow the Bulgarian church and residential architecture to acquire new direction. Renaissance builders recreate the small single-nave church in real composite structures, demonstrating the unity of the Bulgarian Christian people. Upgraded during this period are the churches' Christmas "(Arbanasi)" St. Archangels Michael and Gabriel "(Arbanasi) and cemetery church" St. Athanasius "(Arbanasi).

During the Renaissance the Bulgarians began to insinuate new and different ideas about architecture and urbanism. Cities bourgeois in character are formed, together with the typical for this period trade and handicraft centers. At this time the urban spatial organization changes differentiating separate production areas and commercial areas located between settlements. Cities begin to form also central squares, which are the main focus for putting public buildings. In the central parts of the settlements are located craft workshops, shops and commercial buildings. Impact of urban revival in the smaller towns can be seen in Panagyurishte, Elena, Gabrovo, Tryavna, Koprivshitsa, Trojan, Kotel Municipality. In

²² There again

contrast, big cities are much more eclectic. They reveal a mixture of different architectural styles. Large-scale church domes and bell towers, high clock towers stand out. Up to 18 c. residential buildings are the most common long wooden structures under which people live together with their domestic animals. During the Renaissance that style almost completely changed. The houses were now built by craftsmen who give the building a different artistic style and composition. Increasing the number of floors and buildings, as a majority of them were semi-open spaces, courtyards and gardens. Wealthy Bulgarians had large and richly decorated with frescoes and carved houses whose interior was purchased from abroad; there were often separate rooms for offices, warehouses and workshops. Model for this type of residential architecture are the houses in Plovdiv, Melnik and Samokov.



Kordopulov House

Source: http://melnik-bg.eu/modules/captcha/text_image.php?img=../images/1.jpg, 03.01.2013

After the Liberation of Bulgaria the process of building a culture of European character started before gives its manifestations in the field of architecture. For a short period of time many Bulgarian towns grew into cities, European-style, as a great contribution to this is a number of foreign builders and architects who express their creativity and talent on many of the public buildings in Bulgaria. Bulgarian architecture during this period is strongly influenced by the Russian architectural work, as it clearly expresses both national and Orthodox home - two very important aspects for the Bulgarians, especially after five centuries of Ottoman assimilation, up to 1878.

In the 19th century on the architectural map of Bulgaria several monumental buildings such as the church "St. Alexander Nevsky "National School of Drawing," St. Nikolai "(Russian Church), the National Palace of Culture, Sofia University" St. Kliment Ohridski ", the National Assembly and others appear.

More and more cities begin construction of new residential buildings, hotels, banks, office buildings, etc.



Church "St. Alexander Nevsky"

Source: <http://fakti.bg/img/news2013/69030/a385370dc31dac79f0f272ca5f4b725b.jpg>, 03.01.2013

4.2 Modern architecture – Reflection

After World War II, Bulgaria's government is taken by the Communist Party. Consequently, in the late 40's and early 50's of the 20th century the principles of totalitarian architecture, representation and impressiveness are combined with classic architectural forms. The result can be a new architectural style seen in some buildings in Sofia - eg. Hotel "Balkan" (now the "Sheraton"), Department Store, Party House, etc.²³ In terms of housing, it rapidly turned to the construction of large apartment buildings and blocks. Bulgarians are increasingly starting to use the services of architects and designers in selecting the exterior and interior of their homes and offices. Latest trends of architectural work in most cases start a real life in the Bulgarian sea resorts such as Sunny Beach, Golden Sands, Sunny Beach, Albena, Sozopol.

After the fall of the communist regime in 1989 the construction of representative public buildings was abruptly terminated. More housing buildings are constructed. 20th century is characterized by the widespread construction of shopping centers, shops, restaurants and



Arena Armeets Sofia

Source: http://www.dnevnik.bg/shimg/zx980_1131663.jpg, 04.01.2013

cafes. Changes to streets, squares, centers, parks. In the late 20th and early 21st century is now the trend for construction of luxury residential buildings, business centers and commercial areas. Increasingly residential and gated communities are built, forming small residential "towns" that are distinguished by their own architectural style.

To date, the hallmarks of the Bulgarian architecture can be considered active development of scale shopping centers, business parks, multipurpose halls, hotels,

stadiums and supermarkets. All are bright specimen of contemporary Bulgarian architecture, which is most pronounced in larger cities like Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, Burgas, Veliko Tarnovo, Kardzhali and others.

5. THE COUNTRY AND LOCAL ART

5.1 Brief overview of the status quo in the country

Bulgarian folk art embodies the spirit and traditions of the Bulgarians, their ancient traditions, rich folklore and ancient wisdom. It bears the marks of a well-developed cultural system, functioning to this day.

5.2 Traditional crafts related to the region or the country

²³ Europe of 27 (www.srep.ro/europe27/de/documents/rr_bg_bg.doc , 04.01.2013)

Since ancient times on the Bulgarian lands a variety of crafts are developed and distributed, largely recreating the lifestyle of the Bulgarians for centuries. Products created by Bulgarian craftsmen originally were used for subsistence, to satisfy the daily needs of people. Gradually, however, everyday life craft products are replaced by those created by skilled craftsmen or in other words Bulgarian craftsmanship takes a new direction. The heyday of Bulgarian craftsmanship was during the Bulgarian Renaissance. It is from this period back to lead several examples of craftsmanship that are extremely important for the Bulgarian traditions and culture. The Craftsmanship during the Renaissance is characterized by narrow specialization of the separate craft guilds - followers of the art schools in Chiprovtsi, Trojan, Kotel, Busintsi emerged at that time.

The bloom and subsequent decay of crafts in Bulgaria in the 20th century as a result of historical changes and expansion of mechanized production is accompanied by a constant presence in the life of Bulgarian citizens of practicing skills in domestic classes. 24 Despite the modernization of the production process as a whole, creating products born from the hands of master craftsmen is still practiced today. In contrast to the period of the Bulgarian Revival, however, when the craft is practiced everywhere in the cities and villages, it is currently practiced mostly in rural areas.

Pottery is one of the oldest traditional Bulgarian crafts that existed since the ancient Thracians who made unique vessels for their time. It is a crafted technology for the production of different pottery like bowls, vases, pots, jars, plates and more. In developing a pottery the master relies mainly on hands, of course, using some tools such as lathe, blades, cutting tools and more. The uniqueness of pottery arises mainly from the different decorations, gracing the pottery, achieved through the application of various techniques for engraving and coloring. Products produced by the Bulgarian pottery art can be seen in the architectural and ethnographic complex "Ether" (Montana), "Ethnographic Area Complex - Zlatograd" Museum of crafts and applied arts (Trojan).

Woodcarving is a craft perfected over the centuries, which is a working wood art by displaying decorative motifs, intricate shapes and images. Across the Bulgarian lands carving is known since the ancient Slavs. Today it is used in a variety of forms - from threading objects for the home and lifestyle to complex architectural compositions - screw ceilings, furniture, doors, chests and more. Very typical of the Bulgarian carving are decorations (figure compositions, assemblages and arabesques), animal (lion, snake, eagle, peacock) and floral (sunflower, vines, jack oak leaf) motives. The main types of wood used to make woodcarving products are walnut, maple, linden and beech. They are processed with carpentry tool called a chisel. Several schools associated with this craft originated from the Renaissance - Bansko Art School, Kalofer carving school, Debar School of Art and others. Woodcarving is best developed in the towns of Tryavna, Teteven, Koprivshtica.

Iconography is a kind of art, characterized by the painting of icons. The word icon is of Greek origin and means image portrait. This type of craft became popular in the Bulgarian lands in the middle of the ninth century, when Christianity was established as the official religion in Bulgaria. Renaissance painters display on their icons most men and women in traditional costumes, gradually it changes and they begin to draw Bulgarian saints, kings, philosophers, teachers and others. During the process of icon painting craftsmen use wooden

²⁴ Alive human treasures. Analyses: Traditional crafts, household activities, habits (<http://www.treasuresbulgaria.com/main.php?act=html&file=analiz.html>, 07.03.2013)

base, on which fabric is glued and then coated with primer, then the edges of the image are applied. Then, the almost finished icon is done with gilding gold forged notes or gold plates and gold dust - technology entered later. Currently iconographers use leaf - real gold petals. After gilding, the icon is colored with paint. The whole process ends with the deposition of notices and polishing the icon with lacquer. In Bulgaria there are also ceramic and mosaic icons, such as the found around Preslav ceramic icon with the image of St. Theodore stratum. The most famous Bulgarian painters are Zachary Zograf, Pimen Zograf, Stanislav Dospevski, Dimitar Molerov, Theophanes of Crete, Mikhail Damascus etc. The images most often painted are those of St. Ivan Rilski, the Virgin Mary and Child, John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, St. Michael, and many others. Centers of iconpainting art in Bulgaria are the cities Tryavna, Samokov, Bansko, Veliko Tarnovo.

Bulgaria is the country where the oldest known gold treasure in the world was found - in the Varna Necropolis. Processing and production of gold ornaments and other objects of it is technology used since the Chalcolithic. From its inception till nowadays this art form has gone through different stages of development. During time techniques used by goldsmiths became more subtle and sophisticated. Numerous gold treasures, found in the Bulgarian lands, prove this. The most used technique by goldsmiths in past centuries, but also



Gold treasure in the Varna Necropolis

Source: http://uchilishte-mechta.dir.bg/files/t_2581488.jpg, 04.01.2013

now is Filigree - using fine gold thread, which is then made in patterns like lace. The most famous goldsmith school in Bulgaria is the Chiprovtsi Goldsmith School. Various gold objects are stored in the Museum of Folk Crafts and Applied Arts in town of Troyan.

Weaving is known to Bulgarian people since ancient times. Weaving requires work with vertical or horizontal loom, which weaves clothes, carpets, rugs, rugs, blankets, bedspreads, towels and curtains. The main materials used are wool, cotton, linen, silk, fur and hemp. For staining of cloth in different colors natural dyes are used, which are derived from plants, animals and various minerals. Soot, ash and lime can also be used. In the past, this process was carried out manually, while today different machines and chemical dyes are used. Chiprovtsi carpets, whose production began in the early 17c are world famous. They are double-sided hand-made cotton and wool carpets, which even won awards at various exhibitions worldwide and in our country. Besides Chiprovtsi carpet centers have evolved in the towns of Samokov, Boiler and Panagyurishte.²⁵

Copper processing is an ancient craft with traditions from the time of the Thracians, who were famous masters of copper. Copper utensils and ornaments preserved today arouse admiration for its rich decoration and graceful forms. Copper art consists primarily in profiling the basins, which is made easy by the great malleability of copper. The coppersmith

²⁵ Rucksack. About Bulgaria: Craftsmanship (<http://ranica.eu/#article,12>, 08.01.2013)

further processes his products by tinning them and adding ornamentation.²⁶ A wide range of examples of coppersmith's art is stored in the Museum of Folk Crafts and Applied Arts (Trojan) and architectural and ethnographic complex "Ether".

5.3 Traditional clothing related to the country

Traditional Bulgarian costume is an integral part of everyday and festive life of the Bulgarians. It can be defined as a specific cultural phenomenon, characterized by long historical roots. Costume can be defined as the main distinguishing feature of the Bulgarian folk culture, which clearly presents ethnic characteristics and ethnographic diversity of the people. Bulgarian costumes are mainly divided into male, female and children. The overall composition, used textiles, jewelry and embroidery across traditional Bulgarian clothing gives a clear picture of the life of Bulgarians in various domestic, ritual and festive environment in which they are placed. Moreover, in the past people could know by the costume which family one comes from, or from which part of Bulgaria he/she is.

Female costumes are divided into one-apron female, two-apron, "saya" and "sukman" and males are white and black colored. Traditional Bulgarian folk costumes are made at home under the skillful hands of the Bulgarian. Men were very rarely involved in its production process. Over time, however, this is changing due to the formation of specialized crafts shops, where tailors, called "terzii" made clothes, most of them used in male traditional costumes. The main materials used to make the costumes are linen, hemp, cotton, wool; rarely silk and leather. The structure of folk costumes is extremely complex, and it varies in the different parts of the country. Female traditional costumes are distinguished by the cut and the way of dressing of the clothing, while men traditional clothing is defined by the shape and color of the outer garment.

The composition of one-apron female costume is: tunic-like long shirt and ornate apron. It can be seen mostly in the Rhodopi mountain areas and in most of the villages around the Danube plain. For these regions the typical black male costume consists of shirt, dark colored trousers, belt, jacket and hat.²⁷

Two-apron-type female costume includes shirt, two aprons - front and rear and a belt. This type of clothing is used mostly in northern Bulgaria. As for the men's traditional national



Rhodian traditional clothes

Source:

http://horo.bg/resources/images_full/2_1_11.jpg,

08.01.2013

²⁶ Fellowship of the masters of national crafts. Description of craft: copper processing (<https://sites.google.com/site/nszmnhz/opisanie-na-zanaatite/mednikarstvo>, 08.01.2013)

²⁷ Official tourist portal of Bulgaria, Customs and culture: Traditional Bulgarian clothing (http://bulgariatravel.org/data/doc/019_Tradicionninosii-BG_3839.pdf, 08.01.2013r.)

costume in this part of the country the most distinctive costume is white colored, consisting of shirt, belt, pants (dimii) and a coat.

The main part of the Saya costume is the saya - permanent coat of varying length skirts and sleeves. Other immutable elements are tunic-like shirt, skirt and belt. This type of dress is typical of the southern and southwestern areas of the country. Sukman female costume is most widespread – it is used in the central highlands of the country, the coastal region, southeast Trace.²⁸ Its main components are: sukman (dress), shirt, skirt and belt. Decorative ornamentation is most pronounced in the front of the apron and the neck of the sukman.

5.4 Traditional music related to the country

Bulgarian folk songs are characterized by exceptional aesthetic value and artistic qualities. Despite the many changes over the centuries it managed to retain its authentic style and expressive form. In folk songs poetry, music and dance coexist, combined into one complex on the basis of the overall rhythm.²⁹ In the past, their authors remain anonymous, as it is the nation that maintains and passes from generation to generation these musical works. Today the situation is a little different, songwriting is given to people fully engaged in this activity as songwriters and composers. Many of these professionals, who create folk music, now use well-known old songs as basis. In this sense, we can say that folk songs to some extent derive from one another. The value of a Bulgarian folk song is extremely important, particularly in the years of slavery, in which it was a major sustainer of the Bulgarian spirit.

Bulgaria is divided into folklore regions, each characterized by its own folk art. This spatial separation is particularly strong to the songs and dances. Folklore areas are seven - Dobrudja, Northern, Pirin, Strandja, Rhodope, Thracian and Shopska.

Dobrudjanska folklore area covers the administrative districts of Varna, Dobrich and Silistra. Folk songs from this region are divided into a harvest type, type used during gatherings (sedenki or vechornitsi) and table type, all of which are characterized by long texts. Most prominent among them are "Moon is rising", "Are you a tulip or a hyacinth", "Yanka talked to her mother" and others. Dobrudja region is characterized by a specific instrumental style, played on fiddle, flute, bagpipes.

Popular artists: Verka Siderova, Ivan Georgiev, Anastasia Kostova Moraliyska Dimitar, Vasil Valchev.

Folk groups: Folklore Ensemble "Varna", ensemble "Odessos", children folklore ensemble "Ivan Vazov".

Northern folklore music area is a sort of compilation of the folklore of other areas. Typical here are a rebel and lyrical songs that are performed in one voice. Very often in the lyrics of this region mythical creatures like dragons are present. The most popular musical works are "Elena, girl", "Janissaries go, Mother", "Eh, girl" and "Baa, lamb." Typical for this area are brass musical instruments - pipe, ocarina, flute and bagpipes.

Popular artists: Lalka Pavlova, Boris Mashalov, Ivan Panovski, Daniel Spassov, Mita Stoycheva and others.

²⁸Horo.Traditional Bulgarian clothing (<http://horo.bg/index.php?menunode=4&show=material&materialid=160>, 08.01.2013)

²⁹ Velikova,Pel., Minkova, Sv., Traditional songs in Bulgarian music folklore, Researches, Russe University, 2008, № 47(<http://conf.uni-ruse.bg/bg/docs/cp/5.2/5.2-33.pdf>, 08.01.2013)

Folk groups: Children and Youth Folklore Ensemble "Bulgarian", Folklore ensemble "Elite" - Lovech, folk group "Palm Sunday" (Montana) and others.

For **Pirin Folk field** typical are the heroic songs which glorify Bulgarian heroism. Common are also harvest and "sedeshki" type songs (songs that are sung during specific types of gatherings) which are of happier and more dancing style. They are performed with hiccups and jitter of voice. Pirin popular songs are: "If I am dead", "Macedonian girl", "Liliana lass", "Pirin, Pirin", "Iovano Iovanke", "Ludo Mlado", "Katerino lass" and many others. Widespread musical instruments are tambura, bagpipe and shepherd flute called "svorche."

Popular artists: Nikolina Chakardakova, Ilia Lukov, Ivan Dyakov, Volodya Stoyanov, Guna Ivanova, Rajko Kirilov, Sevdalina and Valentin Spasovi, Iva Tsvetkova, Lily Tsvetkova, Vasil Valkanov.

Folk groups: Ensemble "Pirin", Children's Folklore Ensemble "Pirin kitka", Folklore Ensemble "Nishan".

Strandja folklore region extends on the territory of the administrative district of Burgas. Typical of this region are the harvest songs, wedding, horo, sedenkarski and those which are sung at the table. Very often chieftains and rebels are praised such as Captain Petko Voivoda, Inje Voivoda, Hadji Dimitar and others. Among the most famous songs from Strandja are "Captain Petko Voivoda", "Rado, Rado white Rado", "Clear moon rises", "Yana is sitting" and many others. Typical instruments are fiddle, mandolin, bagpipes, flute, drum, flute and tambourine.

Popular artists: Thomas Yanchev, Zhechka Slaninkova, Magda Pushkarova, Dimka Vladimirova, Manol Mihailov, Stoicho Petkov.

Folk groups: Folklore Ensemble "Sunny Beach", Children's choir "Trepetlika" and Folklore formation "Trakiyche".

For **Rhodope Mountains region** love-themed songs are typical, performed mostly on gathering, working-bees, engagements and weddings. Typical are also Gurbeti songs, wedding and shepherd, historical and rebel songs. There are sad songs about the pain of the people from the heavy burden of slavery. Songs are sung for Momchil the hero, the brave chieftain Delyu, revolutionary and rebel Petko Voivoda. One of the most famous Rhodope songs are "Delyu rebel goes out" (Valya Balkanska's song is included in the human message that travels space "Voices of the Earth"), "Maiden, you beautiful", "Pusto ludo I mlado", "Dance ladybird", "Bella sum, Bella Yunache."³⁰ The Rhodope song is generally characterized as one voice, but in the town of Nedelino and some parts of the municipality of Velingrad two-voices singing is typical. Musical instruments typical of this region are bagpipes, flute, bells and drums.

Popular artists: Valya Balkanska, Radka, Maria, Anka and Stefka Kushlevi, Rumen Rhodopski, Lydia and Venelina Hadzhievi, Veselin Djigow, Rosica Peycheva, Georgi Marinov and others.

Folk groups: Vievka Folk group, Folk Ensemble "Manol Radichev", Women folk group "Atanas Kapitanov."

³⁰ Rucksack. About Bulgaria: Folklore (<http://ranica.eu/#article,17>, 10.01.2013)

Shopska folklore region is well known for its special two-voice songs, where some of the performers sing the main melody and the second holds "iso" or in other words, keeping a low tone. Typical are the harvest, heroic and historical songs called kralimarkovski. In the village of Bistrica (Sofia) Bulgarian folklore fans can enjoy the unique chanting of three voices. Since 1946 triphthongs songs are performed by folk group "Bistritsa Grannies". One of the most popular shopski songs are "Wow, Svashke", "Dilmano, Dilbero", "Lille, Lille," "Oi, Shope, Shope" and others. The most important instruments in this region are dvoyanka, troyanka, fiddle, bagpipe and flute.

Popular artists: Bistritsa grandmothers, Olga Borisova, Pavlina Gorcheva, Vera Andonova and others.

Folk groups: Folklore Ensemble "Bulgare", Folklore Ensemble "Philip Kutev", Folklore Ensemble "Light" and others.

The Thracian folklore region is characterized by slow songs, mainly performed on one voice during evening gatherings and table songs. Also popular are horo and carol harvest songs. Most prominent among them are "Where is it heard, where is it seen", "Dan's mother," "Lying Gergana", "Do not say, my love, good night," "Old Mother" and others.

Popular artists: Slavka Kalcheva, Binka Dobрева, Petranka Zaharieva, Yanka Taneva, Todor Kozuharov, Yordanka Ilieva and others.

Folk groups: Folk Songs and Dances "Pazardzhik", "Chudesia", Orchestra "Canaries", Folklore Ensemble "Zagora", Folk Songs and Dances "Sliven", "Bravo" and others.

5.5 Traditional dances related to the country

Bulgarian dance folklore is rich and varied. Historical, political and socio-economic conditions under which the nation formed its history left an impact on dance too. Bulgarian folk dances, like the songs, reproduce the material and spiritual life of the Bulgarians - their manners, customs and traditions. The main feature defining the style of Bulgarian folk dance is mainly focusing on the movements of the legs, the head, arms and body – as a whole these are an expression of rich mental state of the dancing person.³¹ Bulgarian folk dance is very diverse in terms of rhythm, movement, form, method of attachment, as well as a number of dancers involved in this dance. The most popular Bulgarian folk dance is called horo. The style and character of Bulgarian folk dances are determined by the ethnographic field in which they fall

Dobrudja dances are danced with a sure step; in most cases recreate elements of daily work. The main movements are mainly down in order to show the relationship of Dobroudjan to the ground. Typical of this area are also movements with arms and shoulders. The majority of the Dobrudja dances begin slowly, gradually tempo is increased. The most popular horo in this area are mixed, ie those that both men and women take part in. The most popular dances of Dobrudja are: Dobrudjanska rychenica, Povlekana, Varna horo, Trunka, Ruka, Tropanka, Lyasata and others.

Typical for the **Northern folk dance** is alternating slow and fast rhythms, and the use of tiny/small steps. Freedom and ease in horo dance is accompanied by springy legs and

³¹ Velikova, Pel., Minkova, Sv., Style and character of Bulgarian folk dances – specifics Researches Russe University, 2011, № 50 (<http://conf.ru.acad.bg/bg/docs/cp11/6.2/6.2-43.pdf>), 10.01. 2013)

shoulders, jitter, also known as "natrishane". In most cases, the dancers hold hands, but often snap each other's belt. In lowland areas of the region, dances are simple and modest, while parts of the Predbalkan are more complex - rhythmic and fast. The most popular Northern horo dance are: Danube horo, Gankino horo, Elenino Horo, Paidushko, Sitno Vlashko horo, Chichovo horo, Grancharsko horo, Shira and others.

Pirin horo dances are complex and varied, influenced by neighboring countries and ethnographic regions. Only in this region, however, there are horo dances, which are played in one step size in their slow part, and another - in the rapid part. This speaks of the extraordinary dance talent the people from this region have and their sense of improvisation.³² The female dances are mostly danced with small, smooth steps, while male dances are more dynamic and characterized by squatting, jumping, kneeling, ran and rotation. Pirin most popular dances are: Macedonian horo, Melnik horo, Ograzhdansko horo, Quadruple dance, Shirto, Krivata, Petrino and others.

Strandja dances have their own specifics too. They are extremely varied from mild and gentle horo to fast, energetic and crazy dances. Characteristic only for this area is the folklore "Silent dance", which is danced without music and in which humorous elements are intertwined.

Strandja most popular dances are: Kopanitsa, Ruche, Paydushko horo, Kableschkovo horo, Strandja horo, Petrunino and Elhovo horo.

Rhodope folk dance is mostly reserved and moderately slow, as it is typically easy and does not have complicated steps. Dancing people make a hand grip, shoulder or belt grip. Men play more freely, making imaginative movements, crouch and kneel, while women dance with more twists and standing close to each other. Interesting in this field is the order in which the dancers are arranged in the dance - first men are gathered and women after them. Most popular Rhodope folk dances are: Yenino horo, Mitrino horo, Chukano horo, Momchilovsko horo, Ripni and Kopche.

The dances from **Shopska folklore area** are temperamental, dynamic and playful. They are very diverse in their form and movements. Like in the Northern dance "natrishane" is a common movement. Typical of this ethnographic field are shouts, made by men during the dances. People from this area are "signed", "led" people of "the forest" and the dances can also be played individually or in pairs. The most popular horo is "led dance" ("characterized by a grip to the belt"), also known as "Rural" and played mixed by men and women.³³ Most popular shopski dances are: Graovsko horo, Petrunino horo, Chetvorno horo, Sitno shopsko horo, Transko horo, Bistrishka Kopanitsa, Kyustendil rychenica, etc.

National folk dances from the **Thracian area** also cover a whole range of movements and rhythms. Typical are men's dances and ripped dances. Women dance in a more moderate and smooth way, while men focus on fast rhythms. Well known movement is the "tropoli" movement, through which the dancer talks with Earth.

³² Club for Bulgarian dances „Accent”. Pirin folk dances (<http://www.aksent.com/repertory/pirin> , 10.01.2013)

³³ Rucksack. About Bulgaria: Folklore (<http://ranica.eu/#article,17>, 10.01.2013)

The most popular Thracian dances are: Thracian rychenica, Glavinishka Kopanitsa, Pravo Thrakisko horo, Vartyano horo, Krivo Plovdivsko horo, Buchimish, Three times, Sedi Donka and Chapraz..

5.6 Tranditional literature related to the country

Bulgarian literature, with its rich history is characterized by a rich diversity of genres and styles. It is a kind of reflection of the aspirations, ideals and characteristics of the Bulgarian people accompanying it through the various stages of its historical development. Old Bulgarian literature originated with the formal adoption of Christianity as the official religion in the middle of the ninth century. The adoption of Slavic language as sacred and official administrative language on the Preslav council in 893 gives a powerful impetus to the development of Christian literature, which is literature, not only intermediary between the Byzantine tradition and Eastern Slavs, but mostly literature paradigm model and adjustment for other Orthodox Slavic literatures most of the Middle Ages.³⁴ Bulgarian manuscript literature of this period is all about the Christian faith and Cyril and Methodius literary work. Emerging in the context of Christianization Old Bulgarian literature was influenced by the Byzantine Empire in familiar genres - translation work is active in basic theological writings. After king Simeon's death in 927 Bulgarian scholars turned their attention to the various books contents - legal and church. Readable works such as short stories, biographies and chronicles are preferred.

Bulgarian literature reached its zenith during the reign of Ivan Alexander and king Shishman. The literary center of that time is Tarnovo. Achievements in literature at that time are due mainly to the activities of Patriarch Euthymius, and the school he sat up.

After Turnovo fell under Ottoman rule in 1393 official literature ceased to exist. Its traditions are maintained by Bulgarian writers, found refuge on Mount Athos, Russia, Serbia, Wallachia and Moldova.³⁵ Characteristic of this period is the writing of collections containing narrative and moral-didactic works, and apocryphal writings. This is the time when the Dobromirovo gospel and Bitola triode were created. Extremely popular in the 12th and 13th century are collections of mixed content - damascus, which are written in a language closer to the spoken language.

Printed versions of 18 c., led by "Nedelnik" of Sophronius of Vratsa mark the beginning of the Bulgarian Renaissance. Early printed Bulgarian literature is in line with the aspirations of the Bulgarians towards religious independence. Established as a new kind of cultural institution, the school is a prerequisite for the development of academic literature in the early 18th century. Remarkable in this area is the activity of P. Beron ("Fish Primer"), Neofit of Rila (" Bulgarian Grammar", "Book of the Slavic language") and Emmanuel Vaskidovich ("Slavyanobolgarskoe detevodstvo "). Pedagogical literature of this period is written by Vasil Aprilov, Rayno Popovich, Ivan and Bogorov Konstantin Fotinov.

In the 30s and 40s of the century the first Bulgarian scientific papers in the fields of medicine, physics, astronomy and chemistry are issued. Ivan Seliminski and N. Piccolo are dealing with intensive research work. Other Bulgarian scientists writing papers at that time

³⁴ Dimitrova-Marinova, Dimitrinka. Biblical texts and Ancient Literature.// Bulgarian Language and Literature, 2001, N 4 (<http://liternet.bg/publish7/ddmarinova/biblejskite.htm#2a> , 10.01.2013)

³⁵ Gergova, Ani. Knogoznanie, Sofia, 1995, 84 p.

are N. Rilski, N. Gerov (linguistic development), Sp. Palauzov and V. Aprilov (history), Neofit of Rila (Bulgarian folklore).

Fiction and poetry are also characteristic of the Renaissance. The first poems in Modern Bulgarian are the work of Neofit of Rila, Neofit Bozveli and Dimitar Popski. Outstanding contribution to the literary life of the Bulgarians at the time was made by Dobri Chintulov whose most popular works are "Where are you, true people's love", "Arise, arise, Balkan Superman," "Wind Blows, Balkan moans", "Bulgarian heroes".

After the Crimean War (1853 - 1856) Bulgarian Renaissance literature marks an unprecedented boom. Fiction is divided in different genres such as poetry, fiction, drama, literary criticism. 60 years of the 19th century are times, in which the beginning of his literary work places Petko R. Slaveykov. His works are known to this day works "Izvorut na Belonogata" and "Boyka Voivoda". Together with him at that time work Karavelov, Voinikov, Nicola Kozlev and Rajko Jinzifov. The Bulgarian literary scene in the 70s and rises the star of Ivan Vazov, issuing his first poetry "Pryaporets and harp" and "Woes of Bulgaria". Among the prominent Bulgarian artists at that time is also Hristo Botev, who created his poetic works - "Hadji Dimitar", "My Prayer", "Patriot", "Hajuti" and others.

During the Renaissance another genre that comes popular is fiction. Its representatives are Vasil Drumev ("Unhappy family") and Ilia Blaskov ("Lost Stanka", "Unfortunate Krastinka"). In the field of fiction most actively manifests Lyuben Karavelov. Fruit of his talents are more than 30 short stories and novels that reflect the full reality ("Mommy's boy", "Bulgarians from olden times", etc.).

Years before the Liberation are favorable for the development of Bulgarian drama. Prominent Bulgarian playwrights are Dobri Voinikov, Sava Dobroplodni, Krastyu Pisarushka, Todor Ikonomov and Vasil Drumev.

In the post-Independence era Bulgarian literary classic appears as a main genre. The brightest representative of this time is Ivan Vazov – the Patriarch of Bulgarian literature. In his work he focuses almost exclusively on national-patriotic issues. His best known work is the novel "Under the Yoke" which has been translated into more than 50 languages. Another literary genius is Aleko Konstantinov, whose most famous works are "Bai Ganyo" and "To Chicago and Back".

90 years of the 19th century are characterized by dynamic development of socialist literature. Socialism puts the main emphasis in historical books, guides and publications.

The most important distinction of Bulgarian literature created in the 20th century was a tendency towards the creation of a modern literature. This impulse is reflected in the activities of the most significant creative unity - circle "Thought" - Dr. Krastev, P. Slaveikov, P. K. Yavorov and P. Todorov. Known to date community and national values are replaced by such anthropocentric - the fore personality. The most prominent literary artists of this period along with the four from the "Thought" circle are Dimitar Boyadjiev, Atanas Dalchev Elizabeth Bagryana, Dimcho Debelyanov, Nikolai Liliev, Elin Pelin, Geo Milev, Vaptsarov and others.

5.7 Traditional visual arts (including icon-paintings) related to the country

Art is an integral part of the material and spiritual culture of the Bulgarian society. It is ancient as human history and is civilization's universal language. Art involved in the

formation of national cultural traditions and historical memory reflects what surrounds us - society and nature, and at the same time creates new interpretations of the real world.³⁶

The earliest monuments of Bulgarian art are the petroglyphs in one of the galleries of the cave "Magura" located in Rabisha, Vidin. Aesthetic art of the ancient artist is expressed in decorating pottery. The use of white and red paint is very characteristic, as the combination of curved lines. Spectacularly skillful mastery of various geometrical ornaments – this is still a role model for many artists modernists. Evidence of high craftsmanship is the antiquity exquisite murals, found in Kazanlak Tomb, the Sveshtari tomb and Alexander tomb.

The works of art from the Middle Ages almost entirely rely on the newly adopted Christian religion. The number of preserved today monuments of monumental painting in the territory of the Bulgarian state is very high. Most of them consist of murals on tombs and mosaics. Early Christian basilica in the village of Khan Krum (Shoumen) is a very rare example of the work of figural painting. Senior art center is Preslav, where especially popular are ceramic icons. Bulgarian art from this period is strongly influenced by the Byzantine cultural traditions.

During the Second Bulgarian Kingdom as artistic centers the new capital - Sofia, Melnik, Nesebar, Rila and Bachkovo monasteries are set. From this period are the icons "St. Nicholas with scenes from his life "(Nessebar)", "Mary - Lady of Life "(Nessebar) and "Archangels' Fare"(Bachkovo monastery).

The fall of the Bulgarian state under Turkish rule is detrimental to art. To continue its existence it had to be extremely quick to adapt to the current new reality. This happens at the end of the 15th century when in some Bulgarian monasteries – Rila, Dragalevski, Boboshevski and others artists revive their activities. Beneath their hands the icons "St. George on horseback"(Boyana),"Christ Pantokrator "(Monastery Kremikovski) and "Mother and Child"("St. Stephen" church, Nessebar) appear.

During the Bulgarian Renaissance a change in artistic tastes comes. Particularly important is the role of painters, whose main goal is to revive Bulgarian art. Their creative center became the Athos monasteries. In the second half of the century the first Renaissance art schools are created - Tryavna (Krastyu Zahariev, Simeon Tsonyuv and Dimitar Kanchov) Debar (The brothers Peter, Mark, Joseph and Jovan Filipovi) , Samokov (Zachary Zograph and Nichola Obrazopisov), Banska (Thoma Vishanov Molera).³⁷ Notable, in the development of Bulgarian art, is the art contribution of Zachary Zograf. He is the founder of Bulgarian secular painting. Typical for the icons created by him is the integration of household items. His murals adorn most glorious Bulgarian monasteries - Troyan, Rila, Bachkovo, Transfiguration and even the Great Lavra on Mount Athos.

Bulgarian art from the Liberation to the middle of the 20th century is characterized by the inclusion of modern European culture. The development of Bulgarian art follows the path of ethnographic-descriptive genre scenes painted by the artists after the Liberation (Ivan Mrkvicka, Anton Mitov, Ivan Angelov, Jaroslav Veshin), through the exquisite landscapes and elegiac portraits typical of the early 20th century (Nicola Petrov, Nikola Marinov, Stefan Ivanov, Elena Karamihailova) and expressive decorativeness of the 20s (Ivan Milev, Ivan Penkov, Pencho Georgije) to extremely rich and diverse artistic talents plastic searches in the

³⁶ Dimchev, V., Rakanov, S., Painting and art. Book for teacher institutes, S. Narodna Prosveta, 1980.

³⁷ National art gallery. Collections: Medieval and Renaissance Orthodox art.
(<http://www.nationalartgallerybg.org/index.php?l=46>, 14.01.2013)

30s and 40s of the 20th century (Vladimir Dimitrov - Master, Zlatyu Boyadjiev, Dechko Uzunov, Nenko Balkan, Orphan Ranger, Vera Nedkova, Ivan Nenov, Bencho Obreshkov).³⁸

In the second half of the 20th century art changes – diversification of styles and genre searches. This is due to the creative artists at that time Ivan Nenov, Vera Nedkova, Dechko Uzunov, Ilia Petrov, Ivan Funev, Vaska Emanouilova, whose work is among the best achievements of Bulgarian art. The new paint and plastic searches of contemporary Bulgarian art are show through the work of Galin Malakchiev, Alexander Petrov, Nayden Petkov, Genko Genkov and Dimitar Kirov. While introducing new storylines and creative experiences, traditions can aslo be seen in the paintings Zlatyu Boyadjiev, Stoyan Venev, Nadezhda Kuteva and Dimitar Kazakov.

In the late 20th century Bulgarian painting, sculpture and graphics are mostly oriented to the abstract. Compositions are constructed entirely following geometric principles; they are more typical for the development of individual artists. During this period it is very popular among young Bulgarian artists to use unconventional forms.³⁹

5.8 Cultural art events taking place in the country

Bulgarian traditions inherited, passed through different historical eras, suffered critical twists managed to preserve to this day in almost pure form and it is extremely important for the Bulgarian people. They are a symbol of Bulgarian roots, of Bulgarian life and the Bulgarian state. Affection and esteem of Bulgarians to present these traditions is reflected in the rich cultural calendar, which abounds in national and international festivals, fairs and cultural events. Among the largest and most attended gatherings of folk art are the National Gathering "Rozhen", National Festival of Bulgarian Folklore "Koprivshtitsa", Festival of Bansko traditions, Festival of folk traditions and crafts, International Folklore Festival "Radnevo", International Festival of Mummer and Masquerade Games "Kukove", International Festival of Masquerade Games "Surva" and many others.

National Folklore Festival "Rozhen" has a long tradition. It was first held in 1898 and then became the biggest stage of the Rhodope song. Many Bulgarian artists promote their talent precisely on this festival - George Chilingirov, Boyka Prisadova, Nadezhda Hvoineva, Christina Lyutova, Rumen Rodopski, Veselin Dzhigov, Mladen Koynarov. Rozhen gave birth to the song "Izlel Delio hajdutin" performed by Valya Balkanska, which along with the music of Bach, Beethoven and Mozart sounds in space today in search of new civilizations. The fair is held every four years during the summer month of August and lasts two days. Rozhen festival attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors from around the world.

National Festival of Bulgarian Folklore "Koprivshtitsa" stems from 1965, when more than 4,000 folk singers, dancers and musicians took part in it. Since then, authentic Bulgarian folk songs sound around Koprivshtitsa every five years. Traditionally, it is held in

³⁸ BezRamka. Bulgarian Renaissance in art

(<http://www.bezramka.bg/%D0%91%D1%8A%D0%BB%D0%B3%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%BE+%D0%92%D1%8A%D0%B7%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B6%D0%B4%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B5+%D0%B2+%D0%B8%D0%B7%D0%BE%D0%B1%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B7%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%BD%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%BE+%D0%B8%D0%B7%D0%BA%D1%83%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B2%D0%BE> , 14.01.2013)

³⁹ National art gallery. Collections: Bulgarian art in the second half of 20th c. And contemporary Bulgarian art (<http://www.nationalartgallerybg.org/index.php?l=48>, 14.01.2013)

the county "Voyvodenets", which became a platform for singers, musicians, dancers, dance and singing groups from across the country.

On the first day of the year, interspersed with mummers games, up to Mitrovdan until late fall, Bansko celebrates old and new holidays. **Holiday in Bansko** is proclaimed by a solemn bell ringing, with geranium stalk in his hand, and if you hold to the tradition it has to necessarily end at the table with sweet banitsa with rice. For three decades, from 17 to 24 May, Bansko holiday tradition stands. During the holidays you can visit the ethnographic and culinary exhibitions, exhibitions of fine and applied art, themed evenings devoted to Bansko humor, songs, people, customs, then you can see also furniture exhibition "Made in Bansko," which represents the traditions and current trends in production and woodcarving. In May, along with the festivals for Bansko traditions, the festival "Between three mountains" is also held, which involves over 300 dance and singing folklore groups of the region. In August there is even a summer jazz festival.⁴⁰

Very popular and famous is the **festival of folk traditions and crafts organized in Razgrad**. Along with there is a Fair of Bulgarian yogurt. Traditionally the holiday is celebrated in the month of July, when a meeting of all the participants and guests of the festival is given. Hundreds of artists participate in the exhibitions. Crafts festival goes along with dozens of folk groups visiting Razgrad at this time of year.

International Folklore Festival "Radnevo". The festival is a celebration of art and friendship. The messages that are sent are for peace and understanding between nations. The first edition of the festival dates back to 1998, under the name International Folklore Festival of instrumental groups. During the years of its existence, it has grown into a festival of instrumental and dance. On its stage their mastery have shown instrumental groups and ensembles from Serbia, Macedonia, Romania, Russia, Ukraine, Turkey, Greece, Poland, Sweden, Albania, France, Slovenia, Germany, North Cyprus, Israel, Slovakia, Portugal, Czech Republic, Hungary, Belarus, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, professional orchestras and ensembles from Bulgaria.⁴¹

Bulgaria is famous also for its annual **International Festival of Masquerade Games and mummers "Kukove-Rakovski"**. According to its status this festival is realized Friday and Saturday before the "Easter Lent" according to the Gregorian calendar - the last big celebration of winter. Traditionally organizers of the festival are Rakovski Municipality and "St. Cyril and Methodius" Rakovski community center under the patronage of the Mayor of Rakovski. Participants come from different regions of the country and the Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Romania, Greece, Slovenia, Northern Ireland. Every year Rakovski welcomes over 2000 participants. The ringing of bells and chimes, wild dancing, lavish costumes, scary masks gather each year thousands of spectators from the country and abroad to witness the unique feeling the magic of this old Bulgarian custom.

International Festival of Masquerade Games "Surva" is a celebration of traditional folk games and custom masks. From 1966 till today it is organized every year by the Municipality of Pernik. Traditionally, the festival was held in January during the last weekend, when the city is bathed in the colors of the revelers survakari and mummers. This

⁴⁰ Bansko Municipality. Traditions

(<http://bansko.bg/index.php/bg/%D0%9E%D0%B1%D1%89%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%91%D0%B0%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%BE/%D0%B1%D0%B0%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%BE-%D0%A2%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B4%D0%B8%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%B8>, 14.01.2013)

⁴¹ The festivals in Bulgaria (<http://artfestivalsbg.com/>, 15.01.2013)

custom is entirely tied to pagan beliefs in the Bulgarian lands. During the festival a competition program is organized, involving tens of thousands of mummers and masquerade.

6. THE COUNTRY AS A LAND OF BELIEVES

Bulgarian national mythology displays wealth of wide ethnic base. It works across historical ethnic territory on which to form and convincingly show a single structure, composition, conceptual strength and still exists. But at the same time it shows marked variability, which could be seen as its specific feature.⁴²

6.1 Country believes related to weather

In Bulgarian mythological system there are many beliefs associated with predicting weather. Legends associated with weather forecasting are based mainly on Orthodox religious holidays of the Bulgarians. Among the common folk beliefs with respect to time are the following:

- If the time of Epiphany (January 6) is cloudy or cold, this year will be fertile. If this day has a dense fog during the summer months will rain hail, if the wind blows - windy year will come;
- Whatever the weather on March 25th is (Annunciation) – the same would be throughout the year;
- If St. George (May 6) weather is clear and dry, then the rest of the year will be dry. If it rains the year will be fertile.
- From 24 June - Midsummer Day - time “turns” to the winter. Enyo puts his fur coat and goes to bring the winter.
- According to folk beliefs on the day of Demetrius (Oct. 26) it is expected first snow to start falling. During this day Bulgarians judge for the weather on St. George's Day and Christmas. If on this day it rains the coming year will not be fertile;
- If on the Archangel's day (8 November) the weather is clear, the winter will be mild;
- If St. Nicholas Day (December 6) is a cold day, the weather next year will be healthy and fertile;

Whatever the weather on Christmas Eve is, the same will be throughout June next year. If Christmas Eve weather is cloudy, spring crops will be good and bees will bring more honey.

⁴³

6.2 Country believes related to medicine

Bulgarian mythology abounds from beliefs related to illness and their healing. In the minds of Bulgarians diseases often have been personified and associated with the impact of any supernatural powers. Thus the smallpox is an old, ugly woman who nobody wants to make angry and do not even mention her name and called her with a good name - "mother

⁴² Georgieva, Ivanichka, Bulgarian national mythology. Sofia, 1981, p. 245

⁴³ Stareva, Lilia. Bulgarian saints and holidays. Sofia, 2003, p. 20

dear", "sweet and honey", etc. To appease her, a loaf smeared with honey is made and then it is left somewhere.⁴⁴

Bulgarian people often attribute "magical" properties to plants and animals. For example, it is believed that the oak has healing properties and therefore sick people crown the largest and oldest oak trees with red yarn and money. The sycamore tree does protect from evil and bad omens. Similar abilities even to this day are credited to garlic. One of the most honored animals is the horse. This belief comes from the ancient Bulgarians, who considered the horse a sacred animal. According to popular belief, he is immune to any evil forces and beings. When a man rides a horse he is protected from diseases.

According to Lilia Stareva in Bulgarian folk psychology the following beliefs exist:

- Whoever commits a sin is going to be ill;
- Who sleeps on his left side become ill, does not live long;
- If trees bloom in the fall, next year there will be diseases and pestilences to people;
- Who devises clothes between Petkovden and Dimitrovden will shorten his life;
- Who drinks water at night will get stomach sickness;
- On May 31, do not eat pork if you want health during the year;
- Who rolls in the first snow will be healthy till the next first snow and he will not have a headache;
- If one sews clothes, which he is dressed with, he will not be able to remember. If someone sew the garment of somebody else, the one who has the garment should keep something in his mouth - straw, thread, stick so he does not start to forget what he wants to say soon;
- If someone coughs (sneeze), then he is invited by a bad disease. If, as you sneeze, someone says "cheers", the disease will not get you. If a sick person sneezes, he will quickly recover.⁴⁵

6.3 Country specific rituals and holidays

Bulgarian holiday calendar captures Bulgarian folk traditions, pagan beliefs and Christian religious concepts. The most important holidays for Bulgarians almost entirely adhere to Orthodox church calendar. One of the most solemn religious holidays celebrated in Bulgaria is the **Nativity (Christmas)**. The day before Christmas is the day to celebrate Christmas Eve (Little Christmas). Tradition dictates before the order of the festive meals on the table, the owner of the house to set a fire in the fireplace by cut trunk of oak, elm pear tree or tree called Badnik. It must burn all night on Christmas Eve, and quench in the morning with wine. Festive table meals must be lean and an odd number. Most often prepared dishes are sarmi, stuffed peppers, dried fruit, boiled grain, banitsa with pumpkin, bread, zelnik, garlic, beans, nuts and more. According to popular belief before the family sits at the table oldest mistress goes around the house with incense to exorcise evil spirits from the home. Traditional ritual performed by the Bulgarians from midnight to sunrise is Christmas

⁴⁴ Kolev, Nikolay. Bulgarian ethnography. Sofia, 1987, 214 p.

⁴⁵ Stareva, Lilia. Bulgarian magic and prophesies , Sofia, 2007, p. 183

carolling. Men in special costumes first announce the news of Christmas and go and bless every home.

Jordan's day or Epiphany is the day the Christian world celebrates the baptism of the Son of God in the River Jordan by John the Baptist. It is generally believed that he who wants to be healthy throughout the year has to bathe in the river. After a festive celebration of Epiphany, the priest throws a cross into the water and the lads jump to catch it. It is believed that those who took the cross will be healthy throughout the year. Another ritual observed during the Epiphany is baking three ritual breads - one for home, the second for the guests, and third placed in front of the house for the people passing by.

Easter is the day the Christian world celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Preparations for the festival begin seven days earlier. The week preceding Easter is called Holy Week. Painting Easter eggs happens on Holy Thursday or Saturday. Tradition says the dyes used in the coloring to be extracted from various plants - herbs, flowers and more. For example, the red color is extracted from oregano, yellow from walnut leaves and green from nettle. Among the Bulgarian people there is a belief according to which the eggs laid on Great Thursday and painted in red dye have the power to protect people from evil eyes, diseases and spells. Therefore, the first egg is painted in red, then the grandmother draws a cross on the foreheads of children to be healthy throughout the year. The red egg is placed in front of the home icon, and stays there until next Easter. Because of the power of this egg it is often left girls' tocher or is buried in the fields to protect them from hail and for them to be fertile. However, the most popular custom practiced in the Bulgarian lands during Easter is knocking eggs. The one whose egg does not break will be strong and healthy throughout the year. Another crucial element is the ritual of the Easter bread kneading, which instill an odd number of red or white eggs. These breads are given to the most respected relatives. Such bread has to be also made for home.

Most mystical Bulgarian folk festival, leading back to the time of ancient Thracians and Slavs is **Midsummer (Enjovden)**, that Bulgarians celebrated on 24 June each year. On the same day Orthodox Christian Church celebrates the day of John the Baptist and common rituals and traditions of the two celebrations are intertwined.⁴⁶ According to folk beliefs the herbs bathed in morning dew and gathered on that day bring health throughout the year. It is believed that the night before Midsummer stars descend closest to Earth and give all the herbs healing properties. On the night of June 24 the heavens openes, the sea freezes in anticipation of the sunrise. Who meets the sun on that day will enjoy happiness. Midsummer is associated primarily with the custom of picking herbs, because it is believed that on the night of the feast they gain the greatest healing power. This effect disappears with the dawn. Since diseases are many, the collected herbs must be 77 and a half in number - for all existing illnesses and one for the disease that has no name.

May 6th is a great date in the holiday calendar of the Bulgarians. The date commemorates **St. George** - the patron of shepherds and flocks. St. George's day was declared the Day of the Bulgarian Army. St. George marks the beginning of summer and the new agricultural year. Preparing for the celebration starts a day earlier. Girls and women pick herbs from the field to be used for ritual feeding of the sheep. From these same herbs are

⁴⁶ Wikipedia. Enjovden

(<http://bg.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%95%D0%BD%D1%8C%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BD>, 16.01.2013)

twisted three crown - one for the sheep to be milked first, the second for the lamb that will be passed in the gift of St. George, and the third for the court with the milk. In the early morning of St. George's day shepherds take their flocks to pasture until sunrise. After grazing ritual milking sheep begins. First is the sheep that first gave birth. The first lamb born this year is slaughtered for the holiday. This point is perhaps the most important festival point and is performed by the master of the house, which should be festively dressed and should wear a flower. Before this ritual the lamb is symbolically fed with salt, sawdust and grass and decorated with a wreath. Salt is for satiety, sawdust for fertility and grass for good pasture. The blood from the lamb is poured into the fields to be fertile. To protect the house from evil eye and magic, eastern wall and the threshold of the house are also smeared with the blood of the sacrificial lamb. A festive table must have roast lamb, ritual bread, onions and wine.

On May 6 with a festive ceremony Bulgarian celebrating the Bulgarian Army honoring military flags and sacred flags of the Army. Traditionally on this day the Bulgarian head of state, ministers, MPs, veterans and citizens lay wreaths at the monument of the Unknown Soldier and honor the memory of the thousands of known and unknown warriors who sacrificed their lives for Bulgaria.

Important holiday of the Bulgarian folk calendar is Sunday Siropustna, also known as Maslenitsa (Butter week or Pancake week) and Forgiveness. It is celebrated seven weeks before Easter. According to popular belief on this day heaven and earth forgive each other. On this day people take forgiveness from family, friends and acquaintances for trespasses against them last year. Typical for this day are mummer masquerade parades, on which pagan rituals are performed. On Sunday Siropustna children, youth and adults wear old clothes and made specifically for the holiday mummers costumes, blacken their faces and hide them with masks and go around the streets and houses. The purpose of this "cover" is for people to not be recognized by evil spirits. This ritual is called Kukeruvane. On this day fires are lit, and their flames protect the villagers and their livestock and crops. Extremely fun ritual is "hamkane". On the ceiling of the house thread is put, at the end of which is tied a boiled egg. The aim of the game is the egg to be caught and eaten with the mouth without using your hands. This is repeated once more, this time instead of egg halva is tied at the end of the thread, after the halva is also caught and eaten the thread is ignited for the health of the entire family.

Ancient Bulgarian ritual is **Nestinarstvo** - dancing in which dancers play barefoot on coals. Traditionally they play this on the day of St. Constantine and Helena (May 21). It is believed that the fire protects people from evil demonic forces. Entering it, stepping on coals purifies the soul. During the night of 21 to 22 May the fire is ignited and then the embers are spread around. Around the fire people arrange and bring icons, the first of which is the icon of St. Constantine and Elena. In glowing embers bare fire dancers come who dance in a trance, unconscious. According to folk beliefs, the icon of the saints is that which protects them from fire. Experiencing this condition, often dancers make prophesies and communicate with their dead ancestors. This ritual lasts for several minutes. Fire dancing is inherited - old nestinar elect his successor in his dying hour. After the games all together sit at the table. Another custom associated with this feast is swinging the lads and lasses. The maiden, who is liked from a lad on this day will be a good hostess and will give birth to many strong boys.

7. THE COUNTRY AS A LAND OF TASTE

The climate in Bulgaria supposes a possibility for cultivating of different agro-cultures – grain cultures, fodder, veggies and many more. The largest part of the agro-culture is taken by the grain cultures, which in Bulgaria are wheat, corn, barley. They are most commonly used for fodder and food. The technical cultures, produced in Bulgaria, are used in the food, cosmetic and thread industry. The largest percent in this sphere is taken by the sunflower, nuts and the beetroot. The production of vegetables has its grand tradition. The most popular goods are – potatoes, tomatoes, pepper and onions. Very typical for Bulgaria are the vineyards and the fruit plantations. The vineyard sector is dedicated to dessert wine kinds, while the fruit-growing specializes in production of apples, cherries, plums and apricots. The main fodder cultures in Bulgaria are the corn and the Lucerne. Thus, concerning the plant production in the country, it is quite easy to suggest what the national cuisine looks like.

7.1 Traditional dishes



Traditional Bulgarian dishes

Source: <http://sofia-restaurants.com/images/flash.jpg>, 17.01.2013

The traditional Bulgarian cuisine is unique and of the most delicious ones in the world. It is characterized with a great variety of products (meat, veggies, fish, fruit, spices etc.). It is also famous for its typical cooking style. The most typical products in Bulgaria are the yoghurt and the white cheese. The Bulgarian national cuisine is full of different kinds of salads, meats and dough desserts, as well as specific by an ethnographic character dishes.

One of the most preferred and specific dishes for the national cuisine is “tarator”. It is made by yoghurt, sliced cucumber, dill, salt, oil and garlic. It is served with smashed walnuts.

An important part of Bulgarian cuisine is the salad. The most famous of all is “Shopska salad”. It includes tomatoes, cucumbers, served with raw or fried paper, onions, parsley and cut white cheese. Other popular salads are the Shepard’s salad, Kalugerska Salad, Dobrudzhanska salad and Reaper’s salad.

Out of the main dishes one of the most popular is Patatnik, Earthenware pan, Kapama etc.

The earthenware pan is a pan full of meat (chicken, beef, pork) and a variety of veggies – potatoes, carrots, onions, pepper, marrow, eggplant, peas and more. It is served with slight piece of parsley.

A typical Rodopi dish is the patatnik. It is made out of sliced potatoes, onions, spices. It is commonly seen that the dish is served with slices of white cheese.

The Kapama is a traditional dish for the region of Bansko, but it is made in other regions as well. The products, needed for the preparation are – pork, chicken, cabbage, rise, onions, pepper and salt. The main ingredients need to be put in different places just like a puzzle. The whole mixture is being spiced and put into a clay pot. Afterwards you fry the dish.

Amongst the traditions there are two extremely popular dishes – banitza and lutenitza. Banitza is a dough dish, made out of scrolled dough mixtures. You add cheese or curds, butter and milk inside. The pieces of dough with their inside are scrolled in the form of cylinder and are fried. This dish is made especially on celebration days. It is a family dish.

Lutenitza is extremely popular dish in the country – very common and adored. It is made of milled fried peppers, tomatoes, eggplants, carrots, onions and load of spices – salt, pepper, cumin, coriander, garlic etc. After the mixture is fried it is put in different pots and is being conserved. It is most commonly used with a slice of bread, but along with that Lutenitza is a widely used ingredient in plenty of salads.

7.2 Traditional drinks/spirits

A traditional Bulgarian non-alcoholic drink is the mytenitza. This is a secondary product, during the process of extracting butter from the yoghurt. The taste of fresh mutenitza may be defined as sweet. After it stays for a while (day or two) the taste becomes quite sour. The main difference between the mutenitza and ayryan is in the consistency and the thickness. It's best to drink it cold.

Extremely vital, tasty and refreshing is the elder juice. The elder is a plant that possesses therapeutical abilities. It is from its white colored parts that is made the traditional Bulgarian drink. The authentic recipe is: 15 leaves from elder plant are being poured with a liter of water, than you add two slices of lemon. You leave the mixture still for 24 hours and then you strain it. You add a kilo of sugar to the strained mixture and a package of lemon essence. After that the process is complete and the juice is ready. You serve it cold with a slice of lemon.

The alcoholic drinks, typical for Bulgarian land are quite traditional in their method of making and using amongst the population. These drinks are wine and rakia.

The climate, the warm summer and the cold winter create the perfect conditions for growing of different sorts of vine, and afterwards for preparing different Bulgarian wines and alcohols. The huge variety of sorts supposes the production of different sorts of wines. For Bulgaria one of the most typical wines are Mauvrud and Gymza.

The sort Gymza has a local origin. It is widely spread in Western and Northern Bulgaria. The vine produces quality material for table and dessert wines.⁴⁷ The most popular Gymza is the Vidinska and Loviko Suhindol.

The Maurud is an old local sort. It is locally spread, especially in the regions of Asenovgrad, Plovdiv, Purvomay. It is commonly spread in the South-Bulgarian winery region. The grapes are used for extracting of high quality red table and dessert wines, which

⁴⁷ Bulgariandrinks. Wine Sorts.

(<http://bulgariandrinks.com/%D0%B2%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8-%D1%81%D0%BE%D1%80%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B5-%D0%B3%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B7%D0%B4%D0%B5>, 17.01.2013r.)

get better and develop their qualities with aging.⁴⁸ High quality wines of this sort are being produced in winery cellars “Asenovgrad”, “Villa Melnik”, “Rumeliya”, “Pamidovo” and many more.

Bulgarians consider the rakia as a traditional drink, quite specific for Bulgaria. A similar claim towards the drink have the Macedonian neighbours, Slovenians, Serbians and Hungary. The difference is that in those countries Rakia is being made mainly out of grain products, alcohol and essences, but in Bulgaria it is made out of grapes and fruit. The most popular and widespread Bulgarian rakias are “Sliven’s pearl”, “Tetevenska slivova rakia”, “Karnobatska grozdova”, “Burgas 63” and “Troyanska Slivova”.

7.3 Traditional deserts

The most popular and traditional Bulgarian dessert is the rose jam. It is made from the rose flowers of a specific rose, sugar and water, which are boiled altogether. It is often served with a cup of yoghurt. The specific type of jam is made by Rosa Damascena – one of the four kinds of oleaginous roses in the world. By this kind of roses is the Kazanluk oleaginous rose, used for the preparation of the jam.

Another quite typical Bulgarian dessert is the “Rachel mad out of pumpkin”. It is made out of slices of pumpkin, which are boiled. After they stay for a couple of hours in cold water



Balsudzuk

Source:

<http://www.history.asenovgrad.org/pics/actual/178.jpg>, 17.01.2013

afterwards, they are being carefully washed and put in sugar syrup. The consistence is being boiled until it gets thick, then you add some lemon essence. This dessert can be conserved in cans and served cold.

The taste of Bulgarian balsudzuk is unique and quite unforgettable. What you need for this dessert are walnuts, sugar, grapes juice and farina. (the grapes juice is called shira). The technique of making is quite fascinating. First you need to sew the walnuts on a piece of thread. The grapes juice needs to boil and then you add the farina and a little bit of water. In this thick mixture you add the walnuts. After a while you put them away from the pot and let them cool and dry. When they are ready you repeat the procedure until you reach the size of the dessert you need. The prepared dish needs to cool for 24 hours in a windy room and afterwards to be covered in sugar. You slice it in thin cubes and you’re good to go.

7.4 Old recipes

Bulgarian cuisine traditions remain to the present day only thanks to the fact they’ve been passed through generations for hundreds of years. It is exactly through them that we can taste the flavor of Bulgarian traditional dishes, thus like our grandparents remember it. Countless recipes exist in Bulgarian tradition, but, of course, there are certain few that are

⁴⁸ There again

defined as most recognizable for the region: Rodopski kachamak, Stewed Lamb in makastirski style, Ancient Bulgarian kavarma, Eggs in Panagyurski style and Potato dge.

Rodopski Kachamak

Ingredients: 600gr. potatoes, 150gr. Of wheat flour, 150gr.of corn flour, 1 liter of water, 150gr. Of butter 200gr. Cheese.

Way of cooking: The peeled and cut in large cubes potatoes are being put in water, mixed with salt. After the water starts to boil you add the two kinds of flour inside. The mixture needs to boil for about an hour; afterwards you need to stir the mixture with a wooden stick until it all begins to look like a homogeneous mixture. With a spoon, covered in butter, you take balls of the kachamak and place them in a plate. Then you form a thin layer of hot butter and cheese that cover the potato dish and it's ready to be served.



Kachamak

Source: <http://sweet-things.bg/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/kachamak-with-cheese-300x224.jpg>, 18.01.2013

Stewed lamb in monastic style

Ingredients: 1 kg. Lamb meat, 1/2 hot pepper 2 spoons of flour, 2 spoons of gravy, 1 yolk, 1 lemon.

Way of coking: The lamb needs to be cut down in large pieces, which are covered in salt and pepper. Each piece needs to be covered in flour and fried in hot gravy. The fried pieces are being carefully placed in a pot, covered in hot water and boiled until the meat gets soft. Separately you need to smash the yolk and the lemon juice and then you add them to the dish, after previously combining them with a spoon of the boiled sauce. You need to stir the dish with a wooden spoon. You then need to boil the dish until the sauce gets thick.



Stewed lamb in monastic style

Source: http://www.zajenata.bg/images/2/big_adeffd912a41d79eb77cad9e5a551d49.jpg, 18.01.2013



Ancient Bulgarian kavarma

Source: <http://recepti.gotvach.bg/files/lib/600x350/starobalgarska-kavarma.jpg>, 18.01.2013

Ancient Bulgarian kavarma

Ingredients: 700 gr. Pork meat, 8 onions, 3 tomatoes, 3-4 red peppers, 1-2 hot peppers, 4 eggs, hot and black pepper, savory, parsley, salt, 250 gr. of butter or vegi. oil.

Way of cooking: You cut the meat in small cubes and fry it until it gets a golden skin. After it's ready, in the same grease you need to stew the onions, tomatoes, peppers. In a while you stew the

vegetables with the meat. Then you add the salt, the hot pepper, the savory and the parsley. You need to stir the whole dish. You need to also make omelettes from the eggs and put the fried dish on top of them in each portion. After once being put, you fold the omelettes and the dish is ready to serve.

Eggs in Panagyurski style

Ingredients:

- 8 eggs
- 200 gr. cheese
- 400rp. yoghurt
- 2 spoons of vinegar
- 1 spoon hot pepper
- 1 spoon of vegi.oil
- 2 garlic



Eggs in Panagyurski style

Source: http://fkusno.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/DSC_0030.jpg, 18.01.2013

Way of cooking:

You fill a pot with water up to the half and add two spoons of vinegar. Once the water boils, you remove the pot from the heat and add the eggs from a minimal height. You put the pot back on the hot-plate, and for the next 5 minutes the dish is ready. You also need to drag them with a grille spoon and position them in the plate. Then you put the cheese and cover them with the yoghurt mixed with the already cut garlic. The dish needs to be poured with the fried butter and hot pepper.

Potato wedge

Ingredients: 2kg potatoes, 2 cups of flour, 500gr. Cheese, 8 eggs, 2 cups of melted butter

Way of cooking: Potatoes have to be washed and boiled with their skin. With the flour and the water you need to make a banitza dough, leaving it to rest for half an hour. Until being hot, potatoes have to be peeled and by the time they got cooler – rasped in large pieces. Then you add the cheese and the eggs. The consistence is being stirred. The mixture is made on two separate layers. In a baking dish you put the butter and the one separate layer. On top of it you put the mixture. Right after that you cover the mixture with the second layer. The wedge needs to bake in the oven. Once the first side is ready, the whole dish needs to be turned over to have its other side baked.



Potato wedge

Source: http://recepti.gotvach.bg/files/lib/600x350/nekvi_banichki.jpg, 19.01.2013

8. MEETING HISTORY AND CULTURE IN REGIONAL MUSEUMS

8.1 Brief introduction

The idea of founding a Bulgarian museum holds its origins in the most significant and important period of Bulgarian history – the Bulgarian Renaissance. A great deal amongst the Renaissance figures like Vasil Aprilov, Lyuben Karavelov, Petko Slaveykov realized the necessity of preserving and protecting the Bulgarian habits and culture for the generations to come. As a response to this necessity in 1856 in the city of Svishtov a group of Bulgarians managed to found the first Bulgarian museum. Its prior aim was to preserve ancient handwritings, written in different languages. Thus was completed stage one in the upcoming history of Bulgarian museums.

After 1878 the ideas and goals of Bulgarian Renaissance figures face a strong support by the state. The state declares a number of laws supporting the gathering, preserving and exposing of things of history and cultural importance. By the time of Temporary Russian rule a national library and museum were founded in the city of Sofia. Thus the goal of creating a national museum had finally been completed.⁴⁹

In the end of XIX c. the National Museum had been established. Thus in time the National Ethnographic museum comes to live. They are the major and determining factor concerning the development of museum work in Bulgaria up to World War Two. The war period is characterized with the founding of number of museums on central level – Major Museum of Military History, National Painting Gallery, Museum of Church, History and Archeology.

The period 1944-1989 is characterized with the swift increase in the number of museums and the protected estates and monuments in the state, as well as with the landing of great sums on the behalf of the state, aiming to support and preserve the cultural and history heritage. The idea of Bulgarian museum has radically changed with the acceptance of Marxism ideology in every sphere of social life.⁵⁰

Quite typical for the period is the exposition of goods in close relation to the work of the Bulgarian Communist party, with Soviet Russia and the totalitarianism. Massive museum expositions are events quite regularly noticed.

The social and economy changes after 1989 show their negative impact on the culture development of Bulgaria, which cannot simply pass by the museum work. Despite that, the museums manage to overcome these obstacles, just on the contrary – they stabilize and continue their work. By the present day in Bulgaria there are over 200 museums functioning. They preserve the cultural heritage of Bulgaria for the generations to come.

8.2 Important Museums in the country

National Museum of History is one of the biggest museums on the Balkans with over 650 000 monuments of culture and an enormous archeological and history archive. The collections are the biggest treasure inside the museum. They complete and collect materials of pre-historical time up to the present day. The National Museum of History was established with the decree of the Government on the 5 May 1973. The Museum's first exposition was in 1984, celebrating 1300 years of the forming of the Bulgarian state in the building the Central

⁴⁹ Nedkov, Simeon. History of museums in Bulgaria, Sofia, 2006, 5 p.

⁵⁰ There again

Court in Sofia.⁵¹ The main museum mission is to excavate, search, preserve, gather, analyze and study documents, monuments and all other things connected to Bulgarian history. Among the most fascinating pre-historical monuments of Bulgarian culture is the Varna's halcolite necropolis, Rogozensko's Treasure, Letnishko's treasure, the marble head of Atina Palada, the bronze head of emperor Gordian and many more.



Vylchitrynsko's treasure

Source:

<http://www1.znam.bg/resources/1/3763328076.jpg>, 21.01.2013

Concerning the Medieval ages – it's the Preslav's golden treasure by 9th Century which includes 150 golden trinkets and jewelry.

Other interesting exponents of the period are the written monuments, deed of Cyril and Methodi, the laten round medallion of khan Omurtag, the steal seal of king Kaloyan and the golden seal of king Konstantin Asen. The epoch of Bulgarian Renaissance is too widely spread in the museum. The most significant exponents of that historical period are: "Riben bukvar" of doc.

Petur Beron, the seal of the first social school on Gabrovo, the first educating books like Slavyanobolgorskoe detovodstvo for small children from Neophit Bozveli etc. With the original documents and tools the revolution activities of G.S.Rakovski, L. Karavelov, Hr. Botev, V.Levski, St.Stambolov and many others were disclosed end exposed. In separate rooms are the exponents connected with the April Upspring (war). Quite interesting exponent is the original map of Bulgaria commented on the Constantinopole's conference in 1976.⁵²

National Archeology Institute with a Museum to Bulgarian Academy of Science works on the whole research process of the material and social culture of the tribes and nations, living in the lands of Bulgaria from the ancient times up to XVII. The Institute is a national centre and coordinator of all the terrain archeological excavations and research in Bulgaria. It, as well, examines their work and methodology. The archeological museum is amongst the biggest of its kind in Bulgaria and with its expositions is one of the most significant centers for popularizing the past and the history of the Bulgarian land. By its scientific and museum potential, the Institute is the biggest research and scientific institution for archeology in Southeastern Europe. It has been functioning thus by 1949 and is in a direct relation with the Values Section to the Library of Sofia 1878-1879,



Samara flag

Source:

http://www.klassa.bg/images/pictures/class_bg/img_225683.jpg, 21.01.2013

⁵¹National Museum of History. Information. (<http://www.historymuseum.org/page.php?key=information>, 21.01.2013)

⁵²Nedkov, Simeon. Museology. Museum work in Bulgaria (http://www.build.bg/bg/gallery/simeonnedkov/bg_museology_g3r5.htm, 21.01.2013r.)

reformed in 1892 into a National Museum and Bulgarian Archeology Institute in 1921. This is the first scientific institute in Bulgaria. The pre-historical exposition embraces the periods of the Paleolith, Neolith, the Halkolith, and the early and middle bronze epoch (1600 B.C.) A special place in the exposition takes few large eponomic villate collections from the caves Kozarnika, Belograd region and Temnata – Lukovit region; from the village hills Kranevo and Ezero, Novozagorki region. An important part of the exposition take the collection of early Greek villages – Chavdar, Pirdop region; earli-halkonit village Salmanovo, Shumen region, the late-halkolit village Kodzhaderman, Shumen region and Krivodol, Vratza region.

The exposition Trezor is suited for the exposing of treasures, burial inventory and single objects with extreme and significant painting and history importance, dating from the period of the late Bronze and early Iron epochs to the late antiquity. The most recognizable and interesting treasures are the world-wide famous ones: golden vessels and discs from Vylchitryn, Pleve; silver vessels for horse arming from Lukovit, Lovech; golden trinkets and silver vessels and coins from Nikolaevo, Pleven. They are bound to three different periods of Thracian history / early Iron, early Greek and Roman epochs/.

The Museum exposes a large collection of monuments, dating from the late Bronze epoch up to Medieval ages. They show the main periods of history of a vast region of Southeastern Europe. Thus the most characteristic and important aspects of the big cultures are shown: Thracians, Ancient Greeks, Romans, Byzantine, Bulgarians, Turks. A rich collection of sarcophaguses and burial monuments is exposed among them. These exponents are examples of a Rural roman burial monument. The institute exposes Bulgarian Medieval art as well. This collection shows unique monuments, dating from the First and Second Bulgarian kingdoms. Most impressive among the is the two-sided icon of the Mother of God and John the Baptist, ceramics icon of Saint Teodor from Great Preslav (X), the golden chest crest of Pliska, the technique sgraphito and may others.⁵³

National Museum of Military History – it's a state's museum, which is sponsored and supported by the Ministry of Defense. The museum searches, preserves, works and gives wide acceptance of different cultural values, connected with the national and European military history. For its existence (almost a century) it has preserved over 1 000 000 cultural values, signs and monuments of Bulgarian and European military history. The museum gives a chronological tale of the history of Bulgarian forces back from 681 up to present day. The outlook of Bulgarian military in the Medieval times, the times of war for national freedom, the Russian-Turkey war, Bularian-Serbian war. A key role in the museum takes the Balkan war (1912 0 1913), where the victory of the Bulgarian army have its recognition in the world's war history. There's a recreation of the armed forces of World War One and Two. The museum has a rich collection of spears, arrows, armors, weapons, uniforms, trophies, banners and a foreign collection of military goods.⁵⁴

National Museum of Science and Nature – it has more than hundred and twenty years of history. By far that's the oldest museum in Bulgaria and is on of the best suited and equipped

⁵³ The national nature institute is a museum supported by the Bulgarian academy of science (<http://naim.bg/bg/home/>, 21.01.2013r.)

National museum of military history (<http://www.militarymuseum.bg/Za%20nas/za%20nas.html>, 21.01.2013r.)

ones on the Balkans. It was founded in 1889 by Royal prince Ferdinand by the name of Prince's museum of natural history. For starts it was keeping Ferdinand's private collection of birds, mammals and butterflies. By the present day the museum acquires a rich collection, among which the vanished in the 90s karolina parrot, the extinct monk seals, bearded vulture, small dropla, gray and momin crane, barren snake, deutch sturgeon etc.

During the last years the expositions of the museum had enlarged with few deorams, presenting the world of the Arctic, Africa, Asia and south-American tropical forests (Jaguars, parrots Ara and tamarin apes). Along with those species the museum has a collection of white rhinos, Hymalian bears, buffaloes. On of the most interesting parts of the museum is the collection of the last remaining pure-blood aurochs, the brown bear (the biggest one in Europe), the quite rare small panda, heaven birds, tukans, the Californian condors, different kinds of pheasants, the giant African turtle, blind cave fish of America, marsh jumping fish – periophtalmus, which can move on the land as well.⁵⁵



California condor

Source: <http://www.iskamdaznam.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Immature-male-California-condors-interacting1.jpg>, 21.01.2013

Regional Ethnographic Museum – it's located in the city of Plovdiv and was founded in



Regional Ethnographic Museum - Plovdiv

Source:

<http://www.eventsplovdiv.info/files/2013/03/15/489a6d7a28.JPG>, 21.01.2013

1917, and by 1938 was moved to the Kyumdzhieva house – a monument of culture and national importance. The museum searches, gathers and preserves documents and shows movable cultural treasures, exposes them with educational and research intent. The museum is a palace of the Bulgarian tradition. The rich exposition shows the traditional culture of Thracians, the Rodopi and Middleforest land by the Renaissance period.

Through a constant exposition the agriculture and animal handling are shown as major ways of survival and economy of the locals. Traditional crafts too find their place in the museum – abadzhiistvo and gaytandzhiistvo, pottery, iron-smithery etc. The museum shows a rich collection of jewelry, church plate, trinkets, costumes, tissues and carpets, musical instruments and religious gear, as well as city culture life. The interiors of the Koprivshtenska

⁵⁵ National Museum Nature and Science (http://www.nmnh.com/index_bg.php, 21.01.2013)

room, the Rodposka room and the Plovdiv's upper room level, complete the information about the habits and culture of the locals.⁵⁶

9. UNESCO CULTURAL SITES

Boyana Church

The Boyana church is located near the capital Sofia. It is one of the most significant medieval monuments of the Bulgarian painting. Today the church is one of the most preserved and interesting architecture monuments of the feudal epoch. Poor archeology data doesn't help for the full and original reconstruction of the site. The remains show that the church had been located on the inside of a fortress, which by the time had been a crossroad between the hills of Vitosha and Lulin mountains – the south gate to the Sofia land. This church is the only remaining part of the Boyana fortress. The complex is built by three consequently established parts, the oldest of which is the church – the eastern one. It was build through X and XI centuries. There's an additional building next to it (XIII) – a church



Boyana Church

Source: <http://ivoso100.blog.bg/photos/10759/70-Bojanska%20zarkva%201.JPG>, 21.01.2013

on two floors that's incredibly well suited to the architecture style of the big church. The third part was built in the XIV c. only by stone and because of that slightly differs from the previous churches in the complex.

The importance of Boyana church is mainly due to the wonderful and ancient wall-paintings. With their specific lively and humanistic realism they were some kind of Renaissance breakthrough in its cumulative phase.

They take one of the first places in the medieval painting in Europe throughout the XIII c. The name of the artist in the Boyana church remains unknown. He's just called – the Boyana master. The paintings and images are quite vivid and realistic. The image of Christ prevails in the second church along with the traditional biblical and Evangelist themes, figures and scenes. There are portrays of the royal couple and the rulers, which are presented in their real size. The portrays of the ruler Kaloyan and his wife Desislava are the oldest portrays in Bulgarian painting. The chapel on the second floor is dedicated to Saint Pantaleymon. King Konstantin and his queen Irina are being crowned in golden vests. The Boyana wall-paintings have really high painting quality and undoubtedly are of great value for the European painting culture. They have their history importance as well. In 1979 the Boyana church was included in the List of world cultural and nature heritage.⁵⁷

The Madara horseman

The Madara horseman is an unique rock relief, made just on the façade of the rock. This is an example of medieval Bulgarian art, symbolizing the power of the Bulgarian state from

⁵⁶ Regional Ethnographic Museum - Plovdiv(<http://ethnograph.info/front/about.php>, 21.01.2013)

⁵⁷ Ministry of culture. International cooperation. Bulgarian monuments,listed in the world heritage list of UNESCO (<http://mc.government.bg/page.php?p=46&s=27&sp=32&t=33&z=34>, 21.01.2013)

its khan's period and by far is a unique one in whole of Europe. Due to its high value it is proclaimed as a monument of world's importance from UNESCO in 1979. The rock relief is located in northeastern Bulgaria, near to the village Madara (Shumen). Right next to the monument is the first Bulgarian capital – Pliska. The value of those excavated and found archeological monuments finds its origin back in the IV B.C. up to XV A.C. Thus researchers call the Madara horseman – “The Bulgarian Troy”.



Madara horseman

Source: http://4coolpics.com/gallery_photo/14/229165.html#.UkBLO39RWho, 21.01.2013

The Madara horseman is 2.6m long and 3.1m wide, cut into a vertical 23m high rock, from the VIII century. The monument is a horseman in its natural size, lion, dog and some writings in Greek, round the figure. The horseman has a specific vest, right up to his knees. With his left hand he holds the horse, and with his right one – throwing a spear into the lion, lying beneath the horse. The right foot of the horseman is located into the stirrup, and on his back it is shown that he wears a bag for quivers and a bow. On top of the spear, planted into the lion, there's a banner, and a running dog right behind the horse. It is said that the relief shows the image of khan Tervel being victorious. The ancient Bulgarian writings are in Greek and recall the events between Bulgaria and Byzantine back in the 8-9c. under the rule of Tervel, Kormisosh and Omurtag. One of the signs shows the events from 705. The Byzantine emperor Yustinian is dethroned by force and banished. He manages to escape and seeks aid from the Bulgarians. Khan Tervel, along with his troops, helps Yustinian take back his throne. As a gesture of gratitude towards the Bulgarian ruler, the Byzantine emperor gives him plenty of fortune, gifts and the title of Ceaser – tzar. Apart from that Bulgaria was given lands on the south side of Stara planina and Byzantine is obligated to pay an annual tax to the Bulgarian ruler.⁵⁸

Ivanovsky rocky churches

The Ivanovsky rocky churches are located 21 km southwest from the city of Ruse, near the village Ivanovo. They peak at 36m. above the sea level near to the vertical rock shores of the Rusenski Lom river. The churches were built in the 12th century. They form a monastery complex counting at least 20 medieval churches, chapels and cells, with more than 300 rooms. In the period between 11th and 14th century monks were living there, most commonly grammatics and literature students. Even though these churches are quite small in size they were a crossroad for quite a rich culture and religious life back then in the Second Bulgarian Kingdom. Plenty of believers were coming there for the worships, and the Bulgarian rulers were ordering the digging of new churches in the mountain. Afterwards the churches had been wall-painted. The Bulgarian patriarch Yoakim went there after leaving the capital city Turnovgrad.

⁵⁸ There again

Influenced by the nature's surroundings most of the rocky churches were demolished. The names of the ones left were long forgotten and the locals call them in their own habits, say: "The Church", "Zatrupanata", "Gods hill", or the local land "Pismata". The wall-paintings have their origin from different periods. In the church "Zatrupanata" a portray of the ruler Ivan Asen II was found. He was the founder of the church. "Church" founder was Ivan Alexander. In it a plenty of unique wall-paintings were preserved. They had the Turnovo and Constantinople's style, characterized with a dramatic visual outlook, dynamic faces and pathos in the paintings of Christ. The most significant of the rocky churches is "Mother of God". It is said that the ruler Ivan Alexander (1331-1371) is its founder. The Ivanovsky rocky churches were included in the list of worlds cultural and nature heritage back in 1979.⁵⁹



Ivanovski rocky churches

Source: http://www.atlas-s.com/images/info_new_gallery/Ivanovski%20skalni%20manastiri.jpg
21.01.2013

The Kazanlushka tomb

The Kazanlushka tomb is a Thracian arch tomb from the end of 4th and the beginning of 3rd century B.C. It was found in 1944 in the southeastern end of Kazanluk and is actually quite a spectacular monument of Thracian art from the early elinism age. The tomb is located in the southern part of a tomb hill and consists three rooms: rectangle anteroom, narrow brick corridor (dromos) and a brick tomb room with a circle plan and a ball-like arch.

In that tomb were held only two funerals – one of a man and another one of a woman. They were berried carefully in the ancient ritual, which is testified by the preserved remains found. According to the archeologists the tomb had been burn in the ancient times. In the hill signs were found two clay ascosas (flat, circle-like vessel with two handles) and a silver jug. In the anteroom was found a clay vessel – Oynohoe (a jug for wine) and some bones of a horse. In the dome room were found an amphora, clay rosettes with dry golden coverage, funeral wreaths, small parts of golden jewelry, and some fragments of local Thracian ceramics. The site's world popularity came because of the magnificent wall-writings in the corridor and the dome room – on the best preserved arts of the ancient painting from that age. The unknown artist was working in four major colors: black, red, yellow and white.



Kazanlushka tomb

Source: http://vilibg.net/attr_pics/31_1.jpg, 21.01.2013

⁵⁹ There again

The wall decoration imitates the façade of a rich building, build with marble stones ending with specific architecture details. The scenes reflect history events, connected with the life of the berried one – important Thracian ruler. In the dome room, right in the center of the major frieze, in front of the entrance, the figures of a man and a woman were painted. They were sitting around a table full of fruit and their servants are standing right along their side. The scene painted is a funeral feast with a manifest. The married royal couple was wearing laurel wreaths – a sign of an ancient hero, widely spread during the elinism ages. The wall decoration in the upper part of the dome ends with a second small frieze, which represents three chariots, pulled by two horses each. In 1979 the Kazanlushka tomb is included in the list of the world cultural and natural heritage of UNESCO.⁶⁰

The old city of Nesebur

In the old city of Nesebur, located on a small peninsula in the Black Sea, are preserved quite valuable memorials of all the ages of its millennium existence – old fortress walls from the Roman ages and Medieval times, Byzantine and ancient Bulgarian churches, ancient houses from 18 and 19 century. Loads of anchors, dragged by the sea water, express the importance of the city as a major tradesman port.

Expensive and exquisite objects had been found during certain excavations; signs, sculptures and decorations testify for the city history and establishment, for the culture institutions, for the temples. The landscape of Nesebur is changing significantly after the establishment of the Christian religion and culture. One of the most preserved temples is the earliest Christian churches called the Ancient bishopric. Byzantians along with Bulgarians were building numerous churches but up to the present day there are very few left –



The old city of Nesebur

Источник: [http://nessebar-](http://nessebar-folk.com/images/Nessebar_Pantocrator.jpg)

[folk.com/images/Nessebar_Pantocrator.jpg](http://nessebar-folk.com/images/Nessebar_Pantocrator.jpg), 21.01.2013

“The Ancient Bishopric” and a part of “Mother of God Eleusa” (these are basilicas from VI century), “St. Stephan” (XII), “St. Todor” (XIII), “Panthocrator” (XIV), “St. Ivan Neosveteni”, “St. Ivan Baptist” and others.

In 1453 Nesebur falls under Ottoman rule which results in the fact that trade and fishery become the main sources of the economy. A new architecture treasure springs – the ancient two-floor houses. They are specific with their first stone-build floor which was used for trade affairs.. It is there that ancient people kept the fish, their tools and the wine. Narrow, quite rough stairs lead to the second floor, which is with spectacular construction and has a picturesque wooden outlook and numerous windows. That’s what you call a house. The rich

⁶⁰ Official tourists portal of Bulgaria. Object: Kazanlushka tomb
(http://bulgariatravel.org/bg/object/14/Kazanlyshka_grobnica, 21.01.2013r.)

people had separated the toilet from their bathrooms back then. Houses were painted in white from the inside. From the outside the houses were covered in wood for better protection from the wind. Some wooden supporting gear was circling the stone construction on the first floor in order to support the bay-windows. Many of those houses were fully restored and pronounced as monuments of the culture. The city is declared as a city-museum and in 1983 is included in the list of world cultural and nature heritage.⁶¹

National Park “Pirin”

The Majestic Pirin mountain is located in Southwestern Bulgaria between the valley of the Struma and Mestra rivers. Between the countries Predel and Todorova lawn the National Park “Pirin” is located. Within the borders of the park a variety of 50 marble and granite peaks rising above 2500m. are located. From those rocky peaks to the valleys the mountain is furrowed by 35 lard and small circuses in which “beds” are located more than 170 glacial lakes.

The extremely various relief and the planting favor the motley wildlife. In the territory of the park are registered over 2000 invertebrates, over 200 kinds of mammals and 159 kinds of birds. The park is a unity of several park regions – “Vihren”, “Kamenitza”, ”Three rivers” and “Sinanitza”. Due to its unique bio



Edelvays

Source:

http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_XDoKzXPR0D8/TKOcEWqoLBI/AAAAAAAAABpc/veWD6kHoX_Q/s1600/еделвайс-1.jpg,

21.01.2013

diversity and the magnificent nature formations of the Pirin mountain, the government of the Bulgarian Republic has declared over 40 000 ha. of the mountain is protected territory – National Park “Pirin”. In 1983 the park is included in the program “Human and biosphere” of UNESCO.⁶²

The Rila Monastery

The Rila Monastery is located in Southwestern Bulgaria amid the picturesque nature of the Rila mountain. The Rila Monastery was formed in the 30s of X century in the place of the old ancess in the Rila mountain. During its existence the monastery had been destroyed and reconstructed countless times. Its primary founder is considered to be the hermit-monk Yoan Rilski.

The cloister is a complex of buildings for the Christian cult, for living and for economic affairs within the common area of 8800 square m. The Rila monastery is quite a separable site due to its unique architecture. The outside – 24 meter stone walls of the major buildings, which form a pentagon – give the monastery a look of an impregnable fortress. In the middle of the stone-build yard, the rough towers of the Herlyova Tower and the baroque silver domes

⁶¹ Ministry of Culture. International Cooperation. Bulgarian monuments, included in the list of world cultural and nature heritage of UNESCO. (<http://mc.government.bg/page.php?p=46&s=27&sp=32&t=33&z=34>, 21.01.2013)

⁶² Direction National Park “Pirin” (<http://www.pirin-np.com/>, 22.01.2013)

of the main church are placed. In the middle of the inner yard the oldest building in the complex is located – the impressive stone tower, build by the local feudal Sevastocrator Hreliu in 1334-1335. Directly to it a small church had been build. Later on next to the tower a bell tower had been build. In the beginning of the 19 century the main monastery church was build – “Virgin Mary’s Birth”. A generation of builders had invested their labor in the buildings, forming the monastery. They had worked restless in order to build and strengthen wall-writings, wood-carving and stone-plastic the monastery, implementing the best they could do, they managed to build a perfect monument, symbolizing the artistic skill of the Bulgarian people. In 1983 the Rila Monastery becomes a part of the world’s cultural and nature heritage of UNESCO.⁶³



Rila Monastery

Source:

http://www.dynamicatour.com/uploads/pics/Rilsi_manastir_2.jpg, 21.01.2013

Nature Reserve “Sreburna”

The Biosphere reserve “Sreburna”, located near to the city of Silistra is a part of the list of the Moisty zones of international importance, and in 1983 in the list of the Convention for preserving of the worlds cultural and nature heritage. “Sreburna” is located within 902 ha. The reserve is established in order to preserve the natural habitat of more than 140 different types of marshland birds, 40 of which make their nests only in the lake. This is a unique lake-reserve in Bulgaria, located near the village holding the same name.⁶⁴



Nature Reserve “Sreburna”

Source:

<http://www.cbctourist.eu/sites/default/files/Object%20Srebarna.jpg>, 21.01.2013

Reed is the prevailing plant, but beside it the Reserve is characteristic for the bulrush, marsh marigold, marsh rush, water lily and a number of wheat grass. These nature conditions are quite favorable for the particular nesting and existing of many floating marsh birds, among which is the shining ibis, curl-headed pelican, the mane heron, night heron, small and great white heron, partridge, marsh screech and many, many others. There are 35 kinds of mammals that live in the Reserve “Sreburna”: ondatra, blind dog, motley polecat, otter. The crimson-belly bumka, northern chesnovnitza, water snakes, marsh turtle and the green water frog are the

⁶³ Rila Monastery (http://www.rilamonastery.pmg-blg.com/Home_page_bg.htm, 22.01.2013r.)

⁶⁴ Mollov, Ivelin. Biosphere Reserve “Sreburna” Ecology, c.6
(<http://web.uni-plovdiv.bg/ecology/files/srebarna.pdf>, 22.01.2013)

representatives of some of the reptiles that live in the Reserve. Due to its extraordinarily large bio abundance and diversity, "Sreburna" becomes a part of the UNESCO heritage in 1983.

The sacred Thracian tomb

The sacred Thracian tomb is located in Southeastern Bulgaria, near to selo Sveshtari, Isperih municipality. It was found in 1982 during archeological excavations of the high Glinina hill nearby the village. It is a Thracian-Greek tom from the first half of III century B.C.

This is definitely a royal tomb, formed by a passage and three square vault arch cameras: anteroom, a side room, and tomb room, roofed with a semi-cylindrical arch. The entrance is decorated with a circle of Ionian capitals and just above them a table with a relief frieze of stylish ox heads, rosettes and garlands is located. Aside of the entrance of the room was the place where gifts and sacrifices were held. Everything that was made of expensive materials had been stolen in the ancient times. In the central tomb camera two stone beds are located; right above the rich relief decoration a scene of cult character is being portrayed: the divine ritual connecting a rich Thracian to the gods. This ritual is portrayed up the semi-circled wall under the arch of the tomb camera. Here the ruler is on a horse, followed by two squires, and



The sacred Thracian tomb

Source: <http://images.ibox.bg/2006/11/22/15179/430x277.jpg>, 21.01.2013

right in front of him is the goddess, followed by four women holding different gifts in their hands, which by that time is giving him a golden wreath. The walls of the tomb camera are formed into a colonnade. The columns are formed very near to the wall. The blocks under the arch are supported by 10 cariatidi (figures of women). The excavated tomb in Sveshtari is not isolated.

Along a two kilometers distance are preserved more than 26 hills with different sizes. The whole region is proclaimed as an archeological reserve. In 1985 during the session of the Committee of the world cultural and natural heritage, held in Paris, France, the Sveshtari tomb is included in the list of the world cultural and natural heritage.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Ministry of Culture. International Cooperation. Bulgarian monuments, included in the list of world cultural and nature heritage of UNESCO. (<http://mc.government.bg/page.php?p=46&s=27&sp=32&t=33&z=34>, 21.01.2013)



Бистришките баби

Източник: http://kids.bgtreasures.net/file_store/bistrishki_babi.jpg,
21.01.2013

The folklore group “Bistrhiskite babi”

of

UNESCO. The origin of their formation can be followed to the distant 1946. Some specialists define their skill and way of singing as a polyphony.⁶⁶ A certain part of the performers are twisters, others are “krivi buchachki” and the rest are – “pravi buchachki”. In the present group are included Dina Koleva (leader), Galina Taneva, Krema Gioreva, Gerginka Vayova, Sevda Gergova, Tzvetanka Tzenkova, Evdokiya Batlachka, Aneta Galeva and Nadezhda Pashalijska.

In 2005 the folklore group “Bistrishkite babi” became a part of the Bulgarian monuments, included in the list the world cultural heritage of

10.THE FOCAL METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS FOR GAINING AN INSIGHT INTO CULTURAL ASPECTS

The methodological tools that will be used in the context of the FOCAL project research design are: Questionnaires and Interviews. The outcomes of the research design will be disseminated through workshops allowing us to link theoretical observations with practical engagement and applications. Literature review inspired our research design and guided our research activities within FOCAL community.

10.1 Questionnaires with intense qualitative character

The questionnaires that have been designed and distributed in the context of FOCAL project aim at allowing the gathering of data on participants’ cultural knowledge. The participants are exposed to a variety of questions closely related to cultural issues (i.e cultural sites, traditional architecture, proverbs, traditional cuisine, traditional music, dances and costumes, cultural events, historical monuments etc). The sampling strategy of this survey has two strong dimensions: convenience and snowball. Convenience sampling involves ‘choosing the nearest individuals to serve as responders and continue up until a certain sample size has been obtained’ (Cohen and Manion, 2007). This convenience sample has a specific role: to identify or to bring us closer to other individuals that are qualified in participating in the study. The new participants are kindly asked to act similarly. Thereby, we can clearly talk about a ‘snowball sampling strategy’ (Cohen and Manion, 2007) that uses a small number of sample as ‘informants to identify other people that qualify for inclusion’ and so on.

⁶⁶ Official portal of Bistritsa. Music and folklore. Bistrishkite babi (<http://bistrica-bg.com/music/babi>, 22.01.2013)

While this process is taking place we are trying to balance issues regarding sex and age so that to obtain ‘a sample representative of the whole population’ following a stratified sampling approach (Cohen and Manion, 2007).

The questionnaires will provide us with quantitative and qualitative data. The combination of this type of data will allow us to understand the level of the knowledge of the participants. The data gathered can be further used for carrying out comparisons among the different target groups. We will be in position- in case needed- to see differences among seniors and youth, among males and females, among well- and less- educated people and so on.

To sum up the data that will be gathered will allow us to gain a sharpened understanding of the field that we investigate. After the conduction of the 1st step of the survey we will be in position to see weak and strong points regarding cultural knowledge and to address an answer to the question (using quantitative and qualitative evidence): ‘how well do Greeks/Bulgarian/Lithuanians know their culture’.

10.2 Interviews

Questionnaires will allow us to gain an idea of the level of knowledge of the sample on the cultural issues addressed. Given the fact that the questionnaire is not explicitly based on open questions, we can gain an understanding but we cannot go deeper in identifying unique and interesting cultural knowledge. To alleviate issues inherent in the questionnaires interviews will be conducted with seniors aiming also at bringing into focus cultural aspects of their lives that are worth passing from the one generation to the other. This will be a small-scale survey with intense qualitative character that does not aim to come up with a comprehensive list of ‘cultural secrets’ but rather with 2-5 ‘cultural gems’ that are worth gain publicity.

Interviews will be semi- structured and will have an informal conversational character. This means that questions will emerge from the immediate context and will be asked in the natural course of things; however, a predefined agenda with topics will have been set but there will be room for selection and variation in response. This approach will allow us to conduct an interview that match to individuals and circumstances. In addition this means that different information will be collected from different people with different questions.

Focus group interviews will be considered as an additional tool in cases where the participants do not feel confident in participating individually and in cases where we feel that it would be of benefit to group participants together. Literature shows (Morgan, 1988, p.12) that the ‘hallmark of focus groups is the explicit use of the group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group’. For example, if we encourage two seniors to talk about old traditional recipes, more data may be brought into focus than having one individual reflecting upon the same issue. This is also due to the fact that culture is closely related to people’s attitudes and behaviours and people may not feel confident to talk about them. Group interviews is considered ‘an attractive data gathering option when research is trying to probe those aspects of people’s behaviour’ (Punch, 2009).

Ideally, interviews should be video-recorded. However, taking into account ethical aspects of research a simple recording may take place in cases where the participant disagrees with video recording. Interviewers must hold a neutral role during the process of interviewing. The length of the interview must not be long given the fact that seniors may easily feel tired or bored or unwilling to participate.

Sampling strategy: ‘Who is a good candidate’?

Given the fact that the aim of the interview is to bring into focus cultural aspects of seniors’ life that are worth pass from the one generation to the other (in an international level), we can adopt a convenience and purposive sampling strategy. Convenience sampling involves ‘choosing the nearest individuals to serve as responders and continue up until a certain sample size has been obtained’. Purposive sampling means ‘handpicking the cases to be involved in the sample on the basis of their judgement of their typicality or possession of the particular characteristics being sought’. In this way we build up a sample that is satisfactory to our specific needs and we can start from possible participants with which the access is can be more easily achieved. (Cohen and Manion, 2009; p. 115).

10.3 Workshops

Workshops will allow us to address a practical dimension to FOCAL cultural and learning intervention as well as to disseminate the outcomes of the surveys. The outcomes of the survey will set a basis whereupon workshops and cultural contests will be planned.

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