

OTTOMAN MONUMENTS IN MACEDONIA

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GUIDE THROUGH REGIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA



-  Skopje Region
-  Polog Region
-  Southwest Region
-  Pelagonia Region
-  Vardar Region
-  Southeast Region
-  East Region
-  Northeast Region

CONTENTS

Skopje Region

p. 8-27

Skopje

Polog Region

p. 28-34

Tetovo
Gostivar

Southwest Region

p. 35-48

Debar
Kichevo
Struga
Ohrid

Pelagonia Region

p. 49-63

Bitola
Prilep
Resen

Vardar Region

p. 64-66

Veles
Negotino

Southeast Region

p. 67-72

Gevgelija
Dojran
Strumica

East Region

p. 73-77

Shtip
Kochani

Northeast Region

p. 78-86

Kratovo
Kumanovo

FOREWORD

Islamic monuments in Macedonia are spectacular buildings, which have been telling the story of the Ottoman Empire's wealth and magnificence even to this day. In the late 14th century, Macedonia was part of the Ottoman Empire, which was one of the largest empires in the history of human kind. Ottomans were present in Macedonia for 5 full centuries (until 1912) influencing the culture, religion and architecture of the entire Balkan Peninsula. The long period of contact with Turkish culture had a great impact on the mentality, language, food and many other aspects of everyday life in Macedonia, while its towns increasingly gained some oriental urban features.

Through the Ottoman profane and sacral architecture, we can directly or indirectly find out about a multitude of data related to the livelihood in this region. The greatest heritage left through the five centuries of Ottoman Empire's rule is the Ottoman Islamic architecture. During the 15th and 16th century, numerous mosques, baths, bazaars, inns, beautiful palaces and other buildings with an enchanting beauty and architectural form were built. All these buildings were erected by people who held public office in this society. Ottoman architectural school uses influences from Byzantine and Oriental architecture, as well as the architecture and artistic traditions expressed through the participation of local craftsmen. The structure and decoration of Islamic buildings shows the noticeable participation of Macedonian builders, carvers and painters, especially in the 19th century.

Monumental mosques are typical examples of the Ottoman single-domed structure with a clearly expressed desire for large space. Around some major mosques located close to the main areas or shopping centers, there were always other structures which were either directly or indirectly, were an integral part of the mosque, such as the standard facilities: türbes, madrasas, fountains, imarets, ect. Around the sacred buildings of the Islamic monumental architecture, a composition or ensemble has developed deriving from the functional needs and Islamic



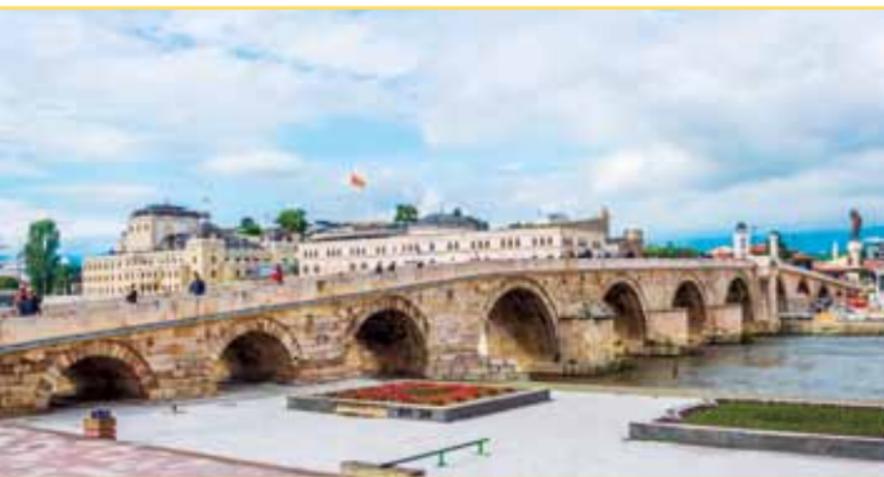
faith codes, which were purity of body and purity of spirit. As a result, the Islamic troika of inn, bath and mosque has been created, an element that took an important part in the ways of spacial construction.

Islamic buildings in Macedonia are Monuments of Culture that have left a special mark and indelible traces in the physiognomy of cities and villages, which were experiencing their cultural and economic boom at the time. Nowadays, many of them have been fitted into the new urban plans and have maintained their religious and cultural function.

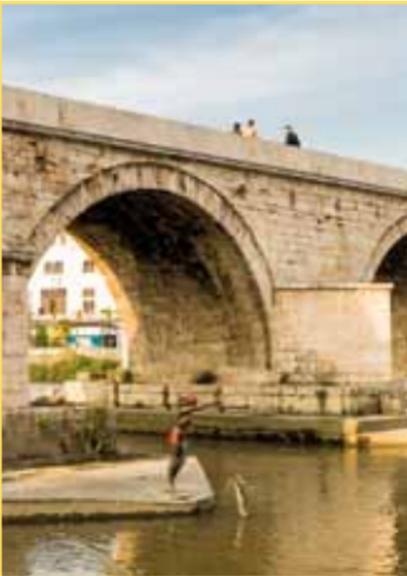
Stone Bridge - Symbol of the City Connecting Two Periods

The Turkish Bridge (Stone Bridge) in Skopje is one of the most important landmarks of the city. Located in the city center, it connects Macedonia Square and Skopje's Old Bazaar. Today, only pedestrians pass here, who trying to find the link between one and the other half of the city, tend to lose their sense of time enjoying the habits of old times. The bridge today is a symbol of the city of Skopje and is a major element on Skopje's coat of arms, which in turn is depicted on Skopje's flag in yellow and gold color.

The Turkish traveler Evliya Çelebi, who stayed in the city in 1660-61, copied the marble slab inscription placed on the bridge during its restoration. The inscription reads: "When people saw the renewal of this unprecedented bridge, praising it, they said: 'It is much more beautiful than it was before.'"



According to historical sources, the bridge was built during the reign of Sultan Mehmed II the Conqueror between 1451 and 1469. In its original form, the bridge had 13 arches, with a total length of 213.85 m. and a width of 6.33 m. It was built from travertine blocks lined with great skill and precision, each tied to another with iron clasps, fastened with cast lead, and crushed stone and mortar used inside the pillars. Some of them - such as the central pillar - ends with a decorative niche (mihrab) in their upper part. Over the centuries, the bridge has suffered a number of damages, which required specific interventions for their repair and renewal. It is known that the bridge was destroyed by the great 1555 earthquake, when four pillars were destroyed or severely damaged.



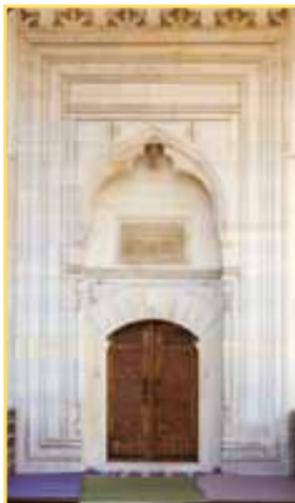
The restoration was carried out in 987 Hijrah or 1579. The renewed bridge survived the frequent gusts of the river. However, in 1817/18, during Sultan Mahmud II's reign (1808-1839), a new intervention was made, for which, according to data, 28,816 groats and 2 aspras were paid. Bridge maintenance interventions were also made later on. So, before 1885, construction works were undertaken for the restoration of arches and vaults on the north-east side, where bricks were used for the arches and stone blocks for the lower

sections of the pillars. Throughout its life, until 1909, the bridge had stone slab fences. In 1895, who knows how many times until then, the bridge found itself under the impact of strong floodwaters of the river Vardar, so in 1896 and 1897, protective walls were built on the embankment as one of the measures to regulate the river flow in this part. From a stone slab lost today, which until 1963 was on the bridge and whose inscribed wording was copied and thus preserved, we learn that in 1909, by an order of Sultan Mehmet V Resat, the bridge was extended using metal brackets carrying sidewalks on both sides of the bridge.

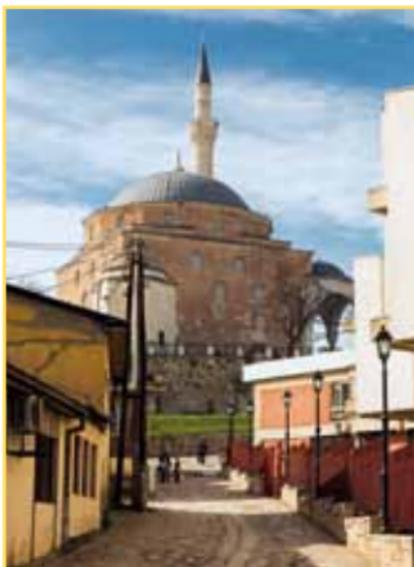
Mustafa Pasha Mosque

Mustafa Pasha Mosque is one of the most beautiful sacred Islamic structures in the Balkans with an artistic level as in Istanbul. The dominant position and monumentality of the mosque make it visible from all sides of the city.

The mosque was built in 1492 by the Skopje commander Mustafa Pasha, whose name is engraved on the plaque above the entrance. Mustafa Pasha was a vizier of Sultans Bayezid II (1481-1512) and Selim I (1512-1520) and held various public offices in the Ottoman Empire. He owned a large estate in Rumelia and four villages near Skopje.



This mosque is a typical example of Ottoman single-domed structures with a clearly expressed desire for large space. The mosque's interior is as follows: The structure of the mosque is a specific representative of the early Constantinople architecture. Its base is square and it is covered with a dome whose diameter is 16.3 m. The dome was built on squinches decorated with arabesques and whose left side contains motifs painted from the time of mosque's construction, while the right side has some



newer ones with no particular artistic value. Explorations on the east wall pendentives discovered remains of an older painting using Rumi ornaments. The decoration is performed with infinite accuracy in malakari technique, thus reaching an apparent depth of the motif characteristic of the traditional 16th century Ottoman art. The structure was built with dressed stone and two rows of bricks. Mosque entrance is through the porch, which is made of white marble, and in front of it, there are four marble columns

interconnected by semicircular arches. This entire part is covered with three small domes. The 47 m high minaret is erected north of the mosque and built of dressed limestone. Inside the mosque there is a prayer area, whose southeast part accommodates the mihrab from which the mullah reads the Koran, and right of the mihrab, there is a pulpit (minbar) from which prayers are read. The front facade portal is framed by a richly profiled rectangular frame whose top is decorated with a wreath. The whole portal, about 10 meters high, is distinguished by its grandeur and reflects the artistic achievements of marble processing. The space between the two arches contains an inscription written in Arabic, in prose, and talking about the time of construction. The front door consists of two wooden panels with a simple decoration made in low relief. The vertical axis of each panel has three different sized fields, each separated by metal studs. The top fields have relief written texts from the Koran in Arabic script, while the other parts of these wooden panels have geometric motifs interlocking with great precision and made in kundekari technique.

Today, the complex of Mustafa Pasha Mosque consists of the mosque, Mustafa Pasha Türbe where he was buried in 1519, the sarcophagus of his daughter Umi, a fountain, several grave ornaments and remains of a former imaret and madrasa. Evliya Çelebi, in his travel notes, recorded the existence of Mustafa Pasha's madrasa in Skopje.



In the courtyard of the mosque was also the Türbe (mausoleum) of Huma Shah Sultan, the wife of powerful Mustafa Pasha. It existed until the period between the two World Wars, and then it was torn down.

The Mustafa Pasha Türbe has an important place among the monuments of this kind in Macedonia. It is located by the northeast wall of Mustafa Pasha Mosque and was erected in 1519. It is a closed hexagonal mausoleum, having an opening on each side, where one opening is an entrance, while the others are windows. The outside of the Türbe is covered with white marble and pure facade forms. Near the mausoleum, there is a richly decorated sarcophagus which is assumed to be the tomb of Umi, one of Mustafa Pasha's daughters. The stone sarcophagus is filled with rich Rumi motifs' ornamentation and two inscriptions in Persian.

Clock Tower in Skopje with Its Clock Heard All over the City

Skopje Clock Tower is a six-story clock tower, the first ever on the territory of the Ottoman State. It was built between 1566 and 1573, on the hill of the former Upper Town, near present-day Flea Market, at the plateau next to Sultan Murad Mosque. The clock mechanism was brought from the clock tower in Sziget, Hungary, after its occupation by the Turks.

The appearance and purpose of the tower are mainly witnessed in the records of famous travelers. Thus, the French traveler Philippe Difren-Canet noted that:



"...in Skopje, there is a clock heard throughout the city, and it strikes the hours in a French way."

From the writings of Evliya Çelebi and Haji Kalfa, it can be seen that the construction of the clock tower in its original form was on a hexagonal base, whose upper part was built from wooden structure. After its makeover in 1904, the wooden structure was replaced, after which the building was completely built with bricks. From the bottom to the top of the tower, where the the clocks are set, there are 105 steps. According to Haji Kalfa, this clock tower was the largest among all Christian towers and the clock struck the hours day and night, while the gong was heard at a two hours' distance.

Ishak Bey (Alaca) Mosque

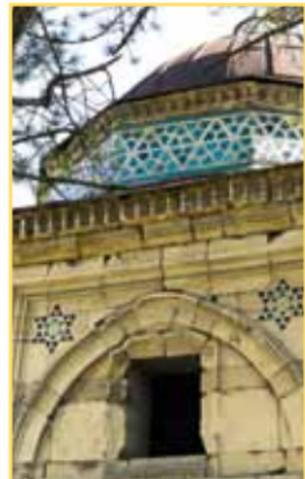
One of the oldest mosques in Skopje located near the marketplace Flea Market. It was built in 1438/39, less than two years after the construction of Sultan Murad Mosque. Its founder was Ishak Bey (Beg), a



military commander of Skopje, undoubtedly one of the greatest builders of Islamic public buildings of both profane and sacral nature in Skopje. It was restored in 1519 and after the 1963 earthquake.

By its architecture and dimensions, this mosque is a modest building and it got its name Alaca (Colorful) after its encrusted colorful ceramic tiles which embellished the mosque's facade and tambour. These tiles were destroyed during the devastating fire in 1689, when the mosque suffered massive damage. The mosque has a massive wooden door on the west side, where oriental patterns in shallow carving are made. Otherwise, Alaca Mosque was once a real architectural complex which, besides the mosque, included an inn, an imaret, a madrasa and a mausoleum. The madrasa, which "was celebrated over the centuries as one of the most famous in Rumelia" and where famous teachers lived and taught, including the most famous medieval Turkish poet Ishak Çelebi, had ten rooms (cells), and besides religion, it had studies in Oriental Languages, Islamic Law, Philosophy and Mathematics. Within this complex, Ishak Bey founded the first known library (kutuphane) in Skopje, which he bequeathed to the mosque in 1445.

Near Alaca Mosque is the türbe which is a real architectural beauty. It is a closed domed mausoleum, built in the 15th century. It has six sides and is built quite precisely from well-dressed stone. The walls end with a cornice decorated with faience tiles dominated by light blue and turquoise green colors shaped in six-legged stars. The dome covering the türbe starts up from



them. This mausoleum together with Yeni Mosque in Bitola are the only monuments in the Balkans having their faience decoration preserved. The mausoleum near Alaca Mosque was completely rebuilt after the earthquake in 1963, while the faience decoration was reconstructed in 1972 with ceramic tiles.

Daut Pasha Hamam - Masterpiece with Playful Domes

Daut Pasha Hamam is a former hammam (bathhouse) situated in the heart of Skopje, on the left bank of the river Vardar near the Stone Bridge and before the Old Bazaar entrance. This magnificent monument of the Islamic profane architecture is assumed to have been built between 1468, when Daut Pasha was appointed Rumelian beglerbeg, and 1497, a period when he was removed from the position of Grand Vizier of Rumelia. Daut Pasha occupied high positions in the Ottoman Empire, i.e. he was one of the viziers of Sultan Mehmed Fatih II (1451-1481) and Grand Vizier during the reign of Sultan Bayezid II (1481-1512).

The hammam is like the double “Chifte” hammams. By its dimensions and artistic values, it is a masterpiece of monumental Islamic secular architecture. It has an east-west direction and houses twelve rooms. Functionally, the hammam’s length is divided into two parts - male and



female. The men’s section is entered from the west side, from the street which leads from the Stone Bridge into the Bazaar, while the entrance to the women’s section was hidden and located in a side alley on the north side of the building. The tank and the firebox were shared and found on the east side. This hammam, like the others, was also built to have dressing rooms, warm rooms for bathing, gobek tasi... The facility is covered with a number of domes of various sizes that are charming with their asymmetrical but very harmonious and rhythmic disposition. A rich stalactite ornaments decoration is present in the crossings under the domes



and halvets. In some of the rooms, fragmented decoration along the walls is preserved in the form of a frieze with images of stylized flowers, made in low relief. Both large rooms had ornate fountains, while smaller rooms were used for washing and bathing. After restoring the hammam in 1948, an art gallery was accommodated within it.

Legend of the Hamam

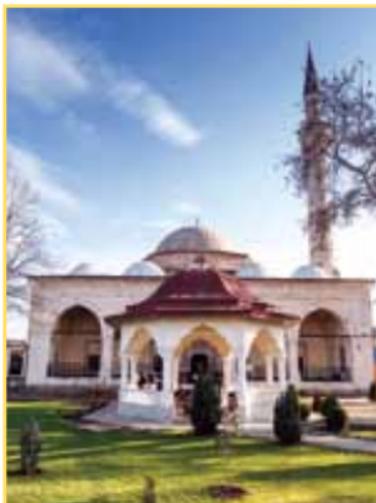
It is not known when the hammam ceased to operate as a bathhouse. The opening and operation of this hammam is tied to a legend. Daut Pasha's daughter came to visit the hammam before its opening. A big poisonous snake came out of the walls and bit her. She died and Daut Pasha ordered to close the hammam and never use it again.



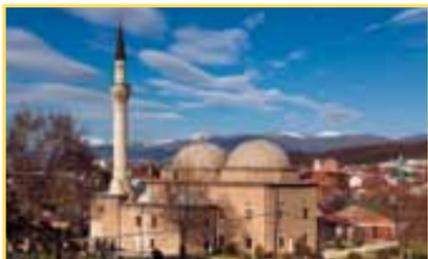
Gazi Isa Bey Mosque

Isa Bey Mosque is located north of Sultan Murad Mosque and from its stone inscription located above the entrance door, we discover that it was built in 1475-76 by Isa Bey, the third son of Ishak Bey.

The mosque is a massive building with two identical domed rooms, two side-vaulted wings and a lobby with five domes. The mosque has a lobby closed from the sides and five domes whose arches rest on 4 massive pillars. The monumental entrance is made of marble and its



two upper slabs have an imitation of twigs with flowers and leaves carved. The mosque's interior has a rich plastic decoration with diamonds and ornaments in the domed rooms. Above the front door, on both its sides, there are landscapes painted in rectangular frames. On the right front corner of the mosque, the minaret is rising. The minaret is decorated with rosettes and six-legged stars at the bottom. Interestingly, the minaret of this mosque has no foundation, but rises up from the building itself. Isa Bey Mosque occupied a wide area, where there was the cemetery and numerous tombstones.



Vilayet Inn “Ukjumat”

The vilayet inn “Ukjumat”, a former administrative building and a cultural monument in Skopje, is located in the northern part of the Old Bazaar, next to the Old Turkish Post-Office building and within a walking



distance of Mustafa Pasha Mosque. It was built in the late 19th century and it accommodated the highest vilayet government, after the headquarters of Kosovo Vilayet was moved to Skopje from Prishtina in 1888, and it remained in the city until 1912. Within this period, the Kosovo Vilayet’s printing house was also moved from the artisan school “Islahana”, and placed in especially fortified rooms of the inn. The building had suffered severe damage in the 1963 earthquake, after which it was rebuilt and serves business purposes today. The structure was built in the spirit of Islamic architecture. Its base is rectangular and it consists of a ground and first floor.

Bey Tower

Bey Tower is located in the center of Skopje, in the vestibule of the Army Hall. It was built in the late 17th and early 18th century. It is 14 meters high and has a 7,5m x 7,5m square base. Bey Tower belongs to a special kind of residential architecture that simultaneously served as a defense facility.



Because of the defensive nature, its lower zone has fewer windows and a special type of loopholes. Only the top floor has slightly protruded wooden balconies, the so called teferiches. Two fireboxes were made to heat the tower and they were located in the walls on the first and second floor. The third floor was heated using the chimneys that passed through it. The stairs leading through the tower are placed in thick stone walls whose width is 1.45m.

Skopje Bezisten

The word "bezisten" is a blend of the Persian word "bezz" meaning "cloth" and the Arabic word "stan" which means "place of sale", so the name itself explains that Skopje Bezisten was intended exclusively for cloth sale.

Skopje Bezisten is located inside the Bazaar, just above the west entrance of Suli An. There are no reliable data regarding the original appearance of the building, although it is mentioned in the writings of many travelers, including Evliya Çelebi. It was built in the 15th century, at a time



when Skopje was governed by Ishak Bey, and soon it became the center of commerce in the city, around which the Bazaar was created. Over time, it acquired a number of functions that depended on the city size and needs. It was destroyed several times throughout history, after which it was rebuilt at the turn of the 19th into the 20th century.

In terms of its architectural concept, Skopje Bezisten was similar to Brusa Bezistan in Sarajevo and bezistans in Thessaloniki, Serres etc. In its present form, the bezisten is a stone building with a rectangular shape, where the influence of Western architecture is noticed. The interior consists of a system of streets leading to the double-decker stores. It was vaulted with 6 domes on two pillars. The space around the two large pillars and four walls was divided by wooden partitions, between which shops were created, covered with wooden roofs. It has four entrances located in the center of the facades of all four sides. Partitions between the stores were easily movable and moved as necessary, thus making the selling space wider or narrower.



The Old Turkish Post Office - Cultural Monument of Skopje

The old Turkish post-office was the first telegraph building in the city of Skopje. It is a former administrative building, nestled between the Vilayet Inn "Ukjumat" and Mustafa Pasha Mosque, opposite the Kale Fortress. The building was constructed at the end of the 19th century, as evidenced by the inscription on the stone slab placed above the front door. Originally, the building was rectangular and consisted of a ground floor and a first floor, while another floor was attached later. As a consequence of the 1963 earthquake, the building was damaged and during its reconstruction, the attached floor was removed. The old Turkish post-office is a private university facility today.



Suli An

In the immediate vicinity of Chifte Hamam and Murat Pasha Mosque, at the Bazaar's heart is the former caravansary, Suli An. Suli An (inn) was built in the first half of the 15th century. Its founder was Ishak Bey, a leader and commander of Skopje region, so it was bequeathed as part of Ishak Bey's (Colorful) Mosque property. Suli An served for accommodation and stay of travelers and traders with their caravans. In the covenant of Ishak Bey, the inn is mentioned under the name of "old inn". The name "Suli" was given to it after the river Serava that flowed by its eastern side.

The total area of the inn is 2,101 m². The main entrance was located on its western side, open towards the center of the bazaar. Through the entrance on the eastern side, it was possible to go out to the river Serava. From the yard, one could enter the rooms on the ground floor and upstairs, and their number was 57. It was built in the same way as other wagon-palaces with carved stone, brick rows and layered mortar. It consists of a ground and first floor with massive walls and vaults. The ground floor was

used to keep the livestock, while travelers and traders spent the night on the floor. The porch was built on 18 pillars, and the rooms were arranged in a sequence and situated at all four sides.



During the 16th century, Suli An was converted, and the lower and upper floors were used to open shops, mostly owned by Jews. After the 1963 earthquake, it was almost completely destroyed and rebuilt again later. In the late 19th and early 20th century, it served both as a warehouse and dwelling. Suli An was entirely restored in 1972 and it now houses the Museum of the Old Bazaar, while since 1982, the Academy of Arts' Faculty of Fine Arts has been accommodated there.

Sultan Murad Mosque - Oldest Preserved Mosque in the Balkans

On a small hill in the central part of Old Skopje, the monument complex of Sultan Murad Mosque is situated - the only Sultan's legacy in Skopje. Built by Sultan Murad II in 1436-37, this mosque is known as "Hjunkjar mosque" (Turkish: hünkâr; meaning "royal, sultan's"), which would literally mean "Royal" or "Imperial" Mosque.

There are no reliable data about the original appearance of Sultan Murad Mosque, but bearing in mind the fact that this is a Sultan's legacy, it can certainly be argued that its original appearance was much more splendid. Regarding its architectural features, as one of the largest mosques in Skopje, it is among the most significant representatives of Ottoman architecture in the Balkans.

The mosque has a basilica architectural form covered by a roof on four arches. The interior is divided by three pillars on 3 naves each, over which is a flat wooden cassette ceiling. The mihrab, minbar and wooden mahfil inside the mosque date back from the first decade of the 20th century. On the northwest side, across the width of the mosque is a porch open only at the front and carried by four stone pillars with richly decorated capitals. The vertical emphasis of the building is given by the slim minaret

located on the western corner of the mosque. Built from well-cut stones, it is especially distinguished by its serene stalactite decoration. The vividness of the mosque is also complemented by its method of construction - opus cloisonne. The wall decoration in the Sultan Murad Mosque, which dates back from the 18th century, contains the characteristics of Turkish traditional decoration with lace-like plant motifs present around the windows inside the building. What is particularly interesting is the presence of



landscapes as decorative elements framed by rectangular frames. The themes used are examples of secular and religious buildings. The domed mosque with four minarets where each has three serefes and the airy protruded structures on three floors beside the mosque's courtyard, painted above the entrance to the prayer space, in the space right of the inscription, most likely refer to Suleymaniye Mosque in Istanbul. The landscape motif on the left side of the inscription, according to the typology of painted elements, refers us also to some of Istanbul neighborhoods. The mosque's mural painting belongs to different time periods, implying the use of different materials and techniques. According to the analyses of some landscape parts and bordures reflecting Western influence on landscape painting from the 19th century, it is assumed that they were added in 1912 for the visit of Sultan Resat to Skopje.

Sultan Murad Mosque monument complex consists of (in addition to Sultan Murad Mosque) Bikij Han Türbe, Ali Pasha of Dagestan's Türbe (tomb), Beyhan Sultan's tomb and a Clock Tower.

The Türbe (family tomb) of Ali Pasha of Dagestan is located by the eastern facade of Sultan Murad Mosque and it was erected in 1774. This Türbe is the type of open türbes with a dome covered with lead. The dome is carried by six strong pillars. Its base is hexagonal. It is built of dressed stone, while lead is used as a binder. The facade itself contains a shallow relief depicting a mosque with a minaret, a separate twisted minaret and two vases with flowers. There are two stone sarcophagi, where Ali Pasha of Dagestan's wife and daughter are buried.

Bikij Han's Türbe is situated on the south side of the mosque. According to the inscription above the entrance, Bikij Han's Türbe dates back from



the mid-16th century, i.e. 1556-57. This mausoleum is the type of closed türbes with a square base and arched by a dome on squinches. It is built of solid material - stone and brick laid in alternating rows, which makes the facade very vivid. Plastic decoration is present in squinches' corners in the shape of rectangles placed one on another. The interior was decorated with plant ornaments, as can be seen from the fragments preserved. Inside, there are five graves without inscriptions inside.



According to its monumentality, Bikij Han's Türbe is the largest of this type of facilities preserved in Macedonia. In addition to these significant monuments, the space around both türbes has a necropolis where a greater number of grave ornaments can be noticed.



Gazi Baba's Türbe - Gathering Place of Prophetesses

Gazi Baba's Türbe is located at the top of the hill of the same name area, in the northeast part of Skopje. Behind the pseudonym of Gazi Baba, a number of names are mentioned; however, it is accepted that this is a known figure from the 16th century named Aşık Çelebi. He is one of the first Ottoman litterateurs and poets whose real name was Mehmed Ali el Nata. He was also known as Kadi Baba, as he was appointed qadi of Skopje. He was born in Bursa in 1520 and got killed in a battle in 1572. He wrote "Biography of Poets", which he dedicated to the Sultan. In appreciation, he was appointed life qadi. Gazi Baba Türbe was much loved and frequented by people. There remained a stone slab with an old Turkish inscription "Hem Ghazi yim, hem kadi yim, hem sheikh sherif Mohammed", which means: "I am both a ghazi and a judge and I am Sheikh from Mohammed's line." There was also a guardian of the tomb, Türbe-keeper who adhered to a special ritual. Every Friday he would light up both the grave and tomb on the hill, so all this left a strong, even mystical impression among city residents. Ghazi Baba came from a noble and educated family. Since he was very connected with the city of Skopje, he was buried here. Legend has it that he'd brought his own head to the Türbe.

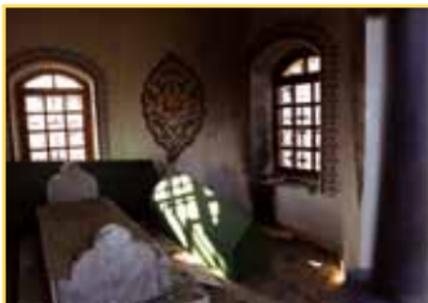


According to Legends!

Especially interesting is the fact that the tomb was visited mostly by women. It was a gathering place of prophetesses whose predictions were widely known. The mausoleum of Ghazi Baba had some strange power through time. The place was both cult and occult at the same time. How were the predictions made? There are records of some of those rituals.

Women prophesied one's fate, bad and good luck, success and failure as follows: at the end of the tomb's marble slab, a bowl and a carrying kettle full of water were placed, along with twenty to thirty pebbles. The pebbles were sprinkled with water from the kettle, and then, for each of them, one wish or purpose they should fulfill was identified. After each pebble

was given a certain role, one of the women collected all the pebbles in a pile. With a flick of her hand, they were divided in half: luck was on the side of pebbles with an even number, while doom, bad luck and failure of the wish were on the side of pebbles with an odd number. Other ways of divination and prophecy were also used.



Hussein Shah Mosque

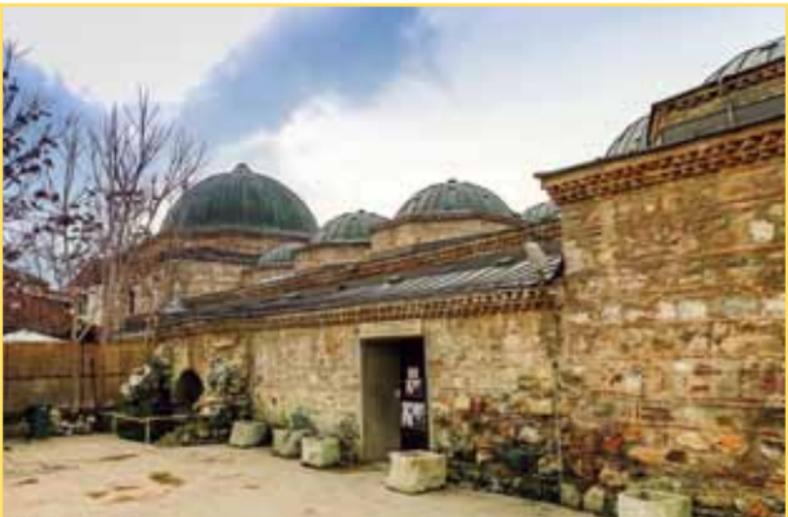
Hussein Shah Pasha Mosque is located in Saraj, twelve kilometers away from Skopje, and together with its Türbe, it was built in 1577/8 by Hussein Shah Pasha. The village got its name after the founder of the building, after which the people called it Saray, because the palace (saray) of Hussein was located there. The mosque belongs to older mosques and represents a valuable historical and architectural monument. According to some information, the madrasa was also adjacent to it. Both the mosque and Türbe had a square base and domes with a triple portico on the north side and a minaret on the northwest side. The transition from the temple to the domed space was made using squinches. The minaret is located in the western part of the mosque, constructed from cut stone. Inside the temple is the mihrab framed by a simple rectangular frame. The mosque is one of the few examples of this kind preserved on our territory, and together with the mausoleum on its southwest side, it represents a single complex. There are a number of tombstones around these facilities, among which lies the tomb of Hussein's son, Ali Bey. These buildings suffered major damage that could be seen in larger or smaller cracks on the walls, but were fully restored later.



Chifte Amam

Chifte Amam is a public bathhouse located in the center of the Bazaar, more specifically, along the stretch between the Murat Pasha Mosque and Suli An. Chifte Amam with these two facilities constitutes the only existing "Islamic three" in the area of the Bazaar and Skopje in general. It was built in the middle of the 15th century and is the second largest hammam in Skopje from that period. It was built by Isa Bey and endowed for the upkeep of his legacies in Skopje, along with the madrasa and tekke. It was first mentioned in Isa Bey Mosque's vakufnama in 1531 in honor of the plenipotentiary for its construction, Isa Bey. It is also known under the name of "Isa Bey's hammam", while the famous traveler Evliya Çelebi called it "new hammam" in his writings.

The facility is a rare example with great architectural value in the Balkans. It is a monolithic structure and during its construction, particular consideration was taken of its functional unity and external shape.



SKOPJE

Chifte Amam is of the type of dual baths, whose function in fact can be implied from its name. Externally, it is a single building, while the inside is completely separated into two parts that have separate entrances and rooms for men or women's bathing. Above the main rooms, there are two large domes, while the halvets and other premises are vaulted with a number of small domes, today covered with sheet metal. The northwest part of the hammam was intended for Jews. It was actually a separate halvet with a pool where ritual bathing was performed. The lighting is zenith-like enabled through dome openings and window openings under the domes.



During its existence, it was probably repeatedly damaged, but after the 1963 earthquake, a full conservation of this hammam was initiated. Chifte Amam is now used as an art gallery and is the home of an exhibition setting of the National Gallery of Macedonia.

Walks through the Old Bazaar are a real treat for all visitors. It is the heart and soul of the city through which the spirit of the past flows and merges with the modern lifestyle.

The Old Bazaar in Skopje is the biggest bazaar in the Balkans located outside Istanbul, and it has been part of the city for more than seven centuries. Narrow cobbled alleys where the stories of Skopje natives are woven, strung stores that sell different goods, handicraft workshops which still cherish an old craft, many restaurants, kebab restaurants, cafes, old-new tea houses where tea is served in small glasses on metal saucers. Handcrafted pieces of jewelry, filigree and silver, but also gold necklaces can be purchased at the shops. In every corner, one can smell the grill and kebabs, as well as just made coffee and sweet oriental delicacies.

Located on the east bank of the river Vardar, from the Stone Bridge to the Flea Market and Kale, the Bazaar has been the city center of commerce since the 12th century.

Skopje Bazaar rapidly developed and reached its peak during the Ottoman rule in the Balkans, in the 16th and 17th century, when it had 2,150 stores. This is proved by the numerous facilities located in the Old Bazaar such as mosques, several inns, sarays and other Turkish facilities. Although Islamic architecture is prevalent in the Bazaar, there are several churches, as well.

Great contribution to the economic development of the Bazaar and in general, to the city of Skopje has been given by Jewish traders. In the Bazaar, one can recognize the rich heritage of cultures and civilizations which have been part of its creation and identity.

Did you know about this legend?

Skopje has a mausoleum of the last Bosnian Princess.

It is a Türbe of a royal daughter or "King K'zi's Türbe", which according to one interpretation was the tomb of the last Bosnian King Stefan and Katerina Kosacha's daughter, who lived as a captive with Ghazi Isa Bey. It is located on the eastern slope of Gazi Baba area, near the Faculty of Natural Sciences. It is assumed that the tomb with a significant oriental and sacral architecture was built in the late 15th or early 16th century. Built from stone and brick on a square base were four pillars with pointed peaks and covered with a dome on four vaults. According to legend, this mausoleum was visited by both Muslims and Christians who preserved the long tradition of believing that it was about a respected royal daughter. Today, the Türbe is completely reconstructed and presents a monument of culture.

Tetovo - City under Shara or Turk Mountain

Did you know?

Regarding the Turkish origin of the name of Tetovo - Kalkandelen, which was part of the territory of Ottomans in the 14th century, there are a number of stories. As other Rumelian cities, Tetovo, as well, had a huge migration of people from Anatolia, central Turkey. Migrants from the time describe it as 'kalkan gelen' - (set-off and arrived) thus giving the city its name over time. According to another legend, the city gets its name from the term 'kalkan delen' - (shield borer) because people who migrated from Anatolia made weapons in the city.

Colorful Mosque

The Colorful Mosque located in the old part of Tetovo is considered to be one of the most interesting monuments of the Islamic sacral buildings erected in the city. Its original name was Alaca (linen, colorful cotton) and in the 19th century, it received the name Pasha Mosque after its renovator Abdurrahman Pasha, governor of Tetovo Pashalik recorded in history as the builder of the Baltepe Fortress. Data on the history of Colorful Mosque and its surrounding buildings are written on the inscriptions carved in the marble slabs placed over its entrance door. The mosque is located on the right bank of the river Pena, at the main city road. It also includes a mausoleum associated with the Bey's daughter, the hanım Hurside (originating from Anatolia, whose wish was to be buried in Tetovo) and a richly decorated stone fountain, hammam and inn. The original Colorful Mosque was built in 1495 and had the function of an Islamic convention temple. It was reconstructed from the 16th to the late 17th century, once it had burned to the ground in a big fire that raged through the city. Ornaments are the most impressive part of the current building. They are works of experienced craftsmen gathered by Abdurrahman Pasha. In addition to painting the mosque from the inside and outside, they also decorated the dervish Arabati Baba Tekke and some private houses of the Bey. Numerous colorfully painted ornaments, imagery and painting techniques used represent a rarity and outstanding work among similar Islamic religious facilities that include this mosque in the anthologies of Islamic architecture. The mosque is surrounded by a low mural wall with square perforations, lined with beautifully designed nets made of wood. Elements characteristic of the classical Ottoman architecture period are

visible in this mosque, including elements of Baroque and neoclassicism and Turkish traditional decoration. The inside is ample with landscapes presenting recognizable urban motifs of the capital Istanbul. On the east side, the mosque interior houses the mihrab in whose upper part of seven circular fields, ledjvas are inscribed with verses from the Koran and minbar. They are made of white marble with great precision and rich decorative elements in low relief. Of the artistic presentations, Mecca presentation attracts particular attention, because it is a rare, and perhaps unique example of presentation of this shrine in Southeast Europe. According to recent research, the mosque was founded by two sisters - Hurside, who is buried in the mausoleum in front of the mosque, and Mensure, who had moved from Anatolia to Tetovo. According to legend, in order to protect the vividness of the colors used in the decoration, 30,000 egg whites had been used.



Arabati Baba Tekke - Bektashi Tekke

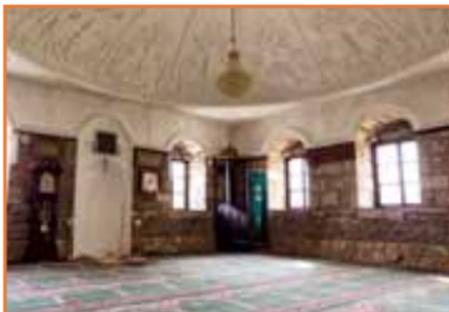
Arabati Baba is one of the most important buildings of this kind in the Balkans. It was built in the 14th century by Recep Pasha and his son Abdurahman Pasha. It is located in the western part of Tetovo near the Tetovo - Popova Shapka passenger cable car station. According to records, about 15 dervishes lived in the Tekke, which was headed by a chief, i.e. baba. Dervishes were famous as noble, peaceful and hospitable people. The tekke was called Arabati because its founder was apparently a poor man in shabby clothes called Alia, and people dressed like him were called Arabat by the Turks. Therefore, the tekke (monastery) got its name Arabat Tekke. It is worth mentioning the Arabati Tekke library of the 18th and 19th centuries, because culture and education developed in parallel with the Islamic religion there. Copying of works by intellectuals of the time with a special calligraphy was done in this library, and such works were later adorned with ornaments wrapped in leather.

The inside of the tekke is rich with facilities for the most diverse purposes. Facilities preserved today are divided into two types: buildings for religious rites (of worshipping) and accommodation of the dervishes and baba (türbe, masjit, semahane, Sheikh's house) and facilities that were used for home economics. The tekke has four entrances on each side of the world and each entrance has its own function.

The masjit (a prayer room, ibadethane) located near the northern entrance has a square base. It is composed of two parts: a place for religious rituals (harim) and a porch.



A central place in the tekke complex is given to the shadrvan (fountain), which is divided into two parts. The first part (divahane) served for relaxation and conversation, while in the center, a seven-sided marble fountain is placed, including couches around it. The



second part, semahane, was intended for religious rites. The double wooden door placed between the divahane and semahane and the one at the entrance have a combination of carvings in wood with gilding and painted decoration.

The Blue Tower or Fatima's House is also located in the complex. It was built for Recep Pasha's sick daughter and this building is preserved in its original condition. The house has one room on the ground floor and upper floor each. The ground floor was used for food preparation and it has a fireplace arched by a dome which is partially decorated with stucco decoration. The floor is richly decorated with frescoes painted by Zarze Haki (1813-1814). Vases of flowers, floral elements, and a number of ships are painted in front of a saray. Above the entrance to the upper floor, there is a lion painted, symbolizing the fourth caliph in Islam, Prophet Ali, who is actually a "protector" of the Bektashi.



Abdurrahman Pasha Kale

The kale located on top of Baltepe just above Tetovo was built in 1820 by Abdurrahman Pasha. This cultural monument represents a rare beauty of the past. Its content is quite complex. The inner part has 5 sarays, big kitchens, bathrooms, a well in the middle and 3 tunnels leading out. During the wars, it suffered major damage.



Old Turkish Amam - Bey (Isa Bey) Hammam

Bey Hammam in Tetovo dates back from the 15th century and it is an important monument of its time. From the data in the most comprehensive census book from 1453/54, it is evident that Tetovo area was governed by Isa Bey, the son of Ishak Bey and grandson of Yigit Pasha, who was Sanjak Bey of the area. It is the same Isa Bey who built Gazi Isa Bey Mosque, the caravansary Kapan An and other facilities in Skopje. He also expanded his architectural activity in the Tetovo region, handing it over to his son Mehmed Bey and in the 1463 vakfname, it can be seen that he built a masjid and imaret in the Tekke neighborhood in Tetovo, while a hammam is mentioned in the vakf properties.

It is assumed that it was the Old Amam (Hurside Hammam), which is located on the left bank of the river Pena today, opposite the Colorful Mosque, with which it forms a complex common to urban shaping of cities in the Ottoman period. It was built from roughly cut stones and brick in several rows and it belongs to the type of single baths. The Turkish Amam in Tetovo has been transformed into a spiritual treasury of arts, and today, it is a media center suitable for exhibitions, poetry readings, promotions and other minor events.



Gostivar - City of Guests

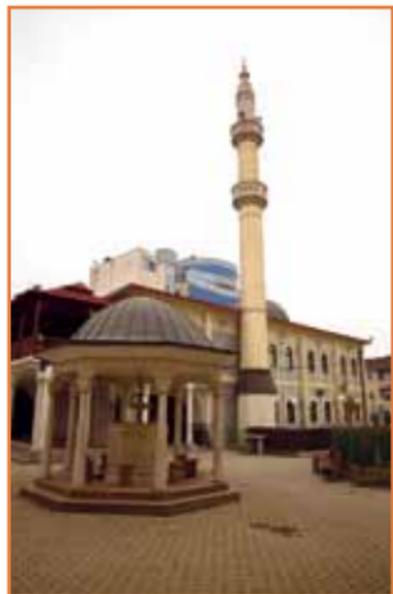
Did you know?

During the Ottoman rule, the town started to grow into an important center of Gorni Polog, known as the Upper Nahiya. In 1659, the wealthy Mehmed Pasha built a mosque amidst the settlement, while around it, he built a school and a bathhouse, and a caravan-palace and shops later on. Also, the rich Agu Bekir Bey built a mosque and a school, which were at the site of today's Clock Tower in Gostivar.

Near Gostivar, on the edge of the Polog Valley is the village of Vrutok. Famous for its spring of the river Vardar, the namesake hydro-power plant and specialized fish restaurants with California trout, today Vrutok represents a modern rural settlement with huge potential for eco-tourism. Next to the village of Vrutok is the spring of the biggest Macedonian river Vardar (388 km). Mehmet Pasha's files of 1608 preserved some data on the existence of mills in the eponymous place. The name Vrutok derives from the Vardar's spring. Islamic buildings in Vrutok include a mosque, Bektashi Tekke and Sheleri Tekke.

Gostivar through legends!

In the Middle Ages, the city was visited by many guests from all over, and in the summer days by tradition, each year a large trade gathering (fair) was held. This tradition continued even during the Ottoman Empire. Due to the high number of visits to the settlement by people from other regions, Turks often said to each other in Turkish "Gostivar" (there are guests). Back then, the town had many inns and it is assumed that "the guest-loving city" or "the city of guests" became - Gostivar.



Bey's House

The house of Daut Boletin or the so-called Bey's House in Gostivar was declared a cultural monument. Bey's House is a unique example of authentic old architecture from the 18th century and is one of the most important cultural monuments in Gostivar.



Abu Bekir Pasha's Clock Tower

The Clock Tower is one of the most remarkable and recognizable landmarks in the town of Gostivar. It is one of the three cultural and historical monuments in Gostivar and is found on the municipal coat of arms and flag. The Clock Tower is located at the heart of the city, in front of the mosque bearing the name of Saad Abu Bekir Pasha. It was built in 1728/29 by Ismail Aga, son of Haji Yusuf Aga. The year of construction and the name of the builder are written in the Ottoman-Turkish language on a stone slab placed above the entrance door. The Old Madrasa from the 17th century located within the Clock Mosque complex is an object of Macedonian cultural heritage.



Debar - Piece of Macedonian Land as a Testimony to the Origin and Life of Ataturk Family

Did you know?

Debar is located in the southeast of Debar Valley, not far from the confluence of the river Radika into the Black Drim, surrounded by the mountain ranges of Korab, Deshat and Bistra. In the 15th century (1449), with the defeat of Skanderbeg and his rebels, Debar falls under Turkish rule. Immediately after the conquest of the city, it was settled by Turkish colonists who built an urban settlement introducing their lifestyle and culture into it. Around the existing Varosh Neighborhood, as the core around which later evolved and spread other neighborhoods, they formed their own neighborhood - Hünkar. Hünkar Neighborhood is named after the Hünkar Mosque, built in 1467-68 by the ruler Sultan Mehmed II the Conqueror. Also, there were two bathhouses and a clock tower in the neighborhood.

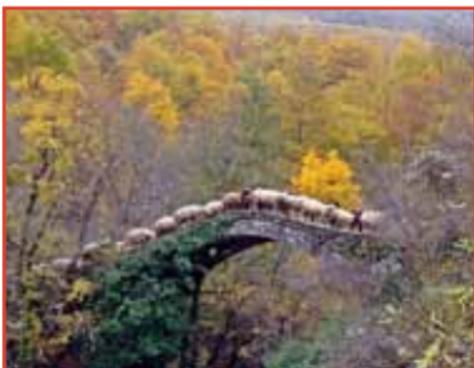
The old bath is located adjacent to Hünkar Mosque. The hammam has long been left in dilapidated condition, but despite its poor condition, stylistic and architectural values of this facility from the classical style of Islamic architecture are visible. The structure has massive walls and domes made of stone and brick in lime mortar. The hammam contains all the necessary facilities specific to its function.

Debar Mufti is one of the thirteen Muftis of the Islamic Community in Macedonia. The headquarters of this mufti are located in Debar.

Debar through legends!

Deer Leap or Deer Bridge is a stone arch bridge on Stogovo Mountain, near the village of Mogorche through Mala Reka in the Reka Region of western Macedonia. It was built in the middle of the 18th century from cut stone with just one arch according to the blueprints of Mimar Hajrudin - architect of the Old Bridge on the Neretva in Mostar and disciple of the famous architect Mimar Sinan.

According to the first legend, the bridge was built in memory of a young boy, who in order to defend the honor of his girlfriend, killed a Turkish bey. After the event, the Turks sent a strong army to catch him. Chased by the asker, the boy fled and reached the risen Garska River. At that

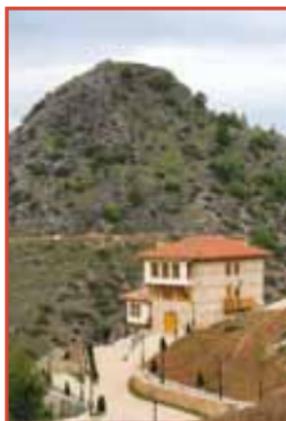


moment of boy's despair and hopelessness, fairies appeared from the forest and turned the boy into a wonderful deer that jumped over the river without any problem. Later, to commemorate the event and to thank the fairies, the villagers built the bridge.

Another legend tells a story about the Bey, who with his army tried to capture a deer that constantly ran away and did not allow them to come closer. Although he was wounded, the deer did not give in, even at the moment when the escape was almost impossible. When he found himself on the bank of the Mala River, not hesitating, he jumped on the other side of the river and died there. Astonished by his courage and persistence to survive till the end and not surrendering to the enemy, the bey ordered to build a bridge in his honor that will symbolize this fateful deer leap.

Memorial House in the Birthplace of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's Father, Ali Riza Efendi

In the village of Kodzadzik, Centar Zhupa, upon the old existing walls on the ground floor rises the Memorial House of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's father, Ali Riza Efendi, which was restored in 2014. The family of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, to the knowledge of both Macedonian and Turkish historians and archaeologists, lived in Kodzadzik in the second half of the 19th century. In the late 19th century, Ali Riza moved to Thessaloniki and married Zübeyde Hanım, who came from an old Turkish family from Langasa





near Thessaloniki. Here, their son Kemal Mustafa was born. Ali Riza, driven by the desire to maintain a relationship with his native country, sent his son to the military school in Bitola. Next to the house of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's family in Kozdazik is another

residential building called Kinship House. Together, these two buildings form a single unit, a museum complex, as evidence of the origin and life of Ataturk family on this piece of Macedonian land. The entire complex stretches on 20,000 square meters and has a memorial and exhibition segment, i.e. an area for permanent presentation of exhibits, as well as an exhibition space for temporary settings, through which visitors will learn about the life of Kemal Ataturk. There is a room of Ataturk's parents and relatives in the family house, with wax figures set in it.

Inkjar Mosque (Hünkar Mosque)

Inkjar Mosque is a Muslim shrine that is the eldest among the 7 mosques in Debar. According to the inscription placed above the entrance to the mosque, written by irregular sulus script in five lines, the mosque was built in 1467-68. The year of its restoration is also written as 1938.

Inkjar Mosque was built as a legacy of Mehmed II (1451-1481). It is located in a spacious yard with numerous older graves having grave ornaments with rich decorative finish. The temple is a building with a rectangular base measuring 12.70 x 9.38 meters and covered by a roof on four vaults. As a remnant of the authentic building is the haram - prayer room, where ancient walls and window shapes have preserved their original shape and placement. Inside is the mihrab - a niche with a modest stalactite decoration. The minbar and



mahfil were built later. The wooden ceiling was probably rebuilt during the repairs in 1941. The porch, located on the northwest side, was added through later interventions and renovations of the building. Research has established that the porch carried on ten circular pillars was probably closed during the repairs to the mosque before the Second World War, i.e. nine window openings were placed between the pillars and the whole porch was covered with the same roof of the mosque.



The slim minaret, located on the southwest side of the mosque and set on a square pedestal, dominates with its height and underlines the vertical emphasis of the mosque. The minaret body is polygonal and passes into the serefe through stalactite decoration. Although having modest architectural and decorative elements, the mosque reflects the local architecture in the second half of the 15th century dominated by clean and precise shapes.

In the courtyard of Fatih Sultan Mehmed Mosque, Shaban Baba's Türbe is also located. It is the type of open türbes with an octagonal base. The polygonal pillars forming the Türbe are interconnected by vaulted arches. The mausoleum was constructed from well processed stone squares, which indicates the importance it has, i.e. the significance of persons buried there. Two graves are located in the Türbe. From the inscription on one of them we learn that it belongs to Shaban Baba, but there is no data on when it was erected. However, according to its stylistic features, it was built in the 18th or early 19th century, a time when Kaplan Pasha's Türbe was built in Tirana, having the same style and architectural features. The existence of the tomb and the manner of building the minaret indicate the possible existence of an older cult facility in this place.

Kichevo - City of Dervish Tekkes

Did you know?

According to data included in the work named Kamus-ul Alam, which is considered to be the first Turkish encyclopedia, written by the Ottoman writer of Albanian origin Shemseddin Sami, during the Ottoman rule, in Kichevo there were five mosques, five tekkes, one secondary and one primary school, a madrasa, a clock tower and a church.

Kichevo through legends!

When Turks came to Kichevo region in the late 14th century after the death of King Marko, Kichevo township was mentioned in a written document of the second half of the 15th century. The famous Turkish traveler and geographer Hadji Kalfa visited the city in the first half of the 17th century and mentioned it using the names Firdzhova, Firchova (Firchovo), Kirchova (Kirchovo). These forms are presumed to have given rise to the toponym of Krchovo (a town in krchevina (thick forest). By its name Krchovo, the settlement was also mentioned in a firman of Sultan Selim III from 1798 like a kaza (district area) - Krchovo Kaza. The oldest confirmed structure of sacred Islamic architecture is the mosque in Bichinci dating from 1420. Also interesting is the Mosque of Sultan Bayezid, which is assumed to be a little older and originating from 1402. Among the Ottoman buildings in Kichevo, the Bala neighborhood mosque is included (possibly its name was Mehmet Han, recorded in a census defter (book) of 1564. At the foot of Kichevo Kale (Fortress), a town clock was erected, while downtown, a beautiful fountain was built and drinking water was brought.

Hayati Baba Tekke

Built in 1540, and last renovated in the late nineties, the tekke has three different türbes, of which there is data only about Sheh Ahmed Türbe built in 1585. According to legend, in the 18th century, Pir Mehmet Hayati, the protector of Hayati school came to Macedonia and during his four-month stay in Kichevo, he met the then hoca of the mosque, Ahmet Fitos. The hoca of the mosque agreed to convert into tarikat and turned the mosque into a tekke. Since then, the tekke has had 30 chiefs, of whom 6 were from

the Selimoski family. The Tekke is still active and every Thursday evening, dhikr (Mention of God) is performed in it. One of the main traditions of the Tekke is the performance of the tahajjud prayer after the daily morning prayer, while every Thursday evening, after the tarawih prayer in the Tekke, muqabala (group) reading of the Quran takes place. Iftar is organized in the Tekke. Except for iftar, especially for Qadr Night, a suhoor meal (meal before the full-day fasting) is served.



Culu Baba Tekke

Located near Union, built in 1560, it also has a berat - authorization. Religious rites are actively performed in this Tekke. There is a türbe within it, built in 1595. Türbe is a kind of tomb in which people having a more prominent position in the tekke, such as the Sheykh or dervishes, are buried. The Tekke has been renovated several times throughout its existence, and in 2012, it obtained its present appearance, while also renovating the türbe. Culu Baba Tekke was built by a father who gave a word to do something if his child was healed.



Sheh Selim Tekke

Located in the today's marketplace, it was built in 1720 when three brothers in three cities (Radovish, Kichevo and Struga) wanted to spread the tarikat across the country using the newly established tekkes. The Tekke has only one Türbe, Sheh Selim-Sheh Osman, built in 1800, now completely renovated.



Cuma (Sultan Bayezid) Mosque

The legend of the existence of St. Petka Church on site or near today's Cuma (Sultan Bayezid) Mosque is one of the most widespread and deeply rooted among Kichevo people. This place is sacred for both Orthodox people and Muslims. Where the church was located, when it was built and destroyed, when the mosque was built are the questions many people ask. Initially, an opinion prevailed that St. Petka Church existed and was destroyed by 1402, the year by which the Ottoman Empire's throne was occupied by Sultan Bayezid I Yildirim (Bayezid the Lightning), some 17 years after Kichevo had been conquered by the Ottomans in 1385. But it is possible that the mosque was built later, around 1481 to 1512, when there was another Sultan with the same name in power, namely Bayezid II. There is some likelihood that the church was destroyed later, but no later than 1512, which is entire 110 years later than previously thought. The claims that the present building of the mosque was initially a church are probably incorrect, but it is possible that the material used for the construction of the mosque had been originally built in a former church. Interestingly, the name Cuma means Friday, so in some way it is associated with St. Petka (Friday).



Struga - City of Hundred Bridges

Did you know?

While staying in Struga, the famous traveler Evliya Çelebi, in the second half of the 17th century or by the end of 1670, testifies to the large Struga fairs held twice during the year, where around 40 to 50,000 people and about a thousand traders gathered. The main trades in the town were goldsmith's, pack saddle-making, pottery etc. The area where thousands of shops and other facilities were built is called Trade-fair even today. Evliya Çelebi will write that this was one of the places where the biggest blood tax was taken. According to his testimony, in Struga was located an old wooden bridge with 12 arches and a length of about 50 meters, and at the bridge, Aga's palace was built, kept by 45 armed gavazes.

Struga through legends!

The cult place St. Petka is known from ancient times. Many legends are associated with the miraculous power of this holy place, but also some real events of recent times. Struga prison was opposite the church of St. Petka. In 1945, an innocent old and pious Albanian from the village of Veleshta was imprisoned there. The man was placed in the eastern part of the prison, from which there was a view of the cult place St. Petka. Back then, there was only a mark there. The man noticed that Struga people went to that place, crossed themselves and lit candles. He wondered why he was imprisoned and started praying to the saint to get out of prison. Every morning before sunrise, prisoners were taken to the Mal Drim to have a wash. One morning, the Veleshta man was taken for his last wash. Once he washed himself, he stood up and looked towards St. Petka. Saint Petka appeared in front of his eyes and he was covered with sunlight. The man was astounded by what he was seeing. The same day, at about 2 pm, the Veleshta man was released from prison. He took a large sum of money and returned to Struga immediately. He went to St. Petka to leave some money for this holy place. Someone boldly rebuked him because he was not Orthodox, so he left the money with a stranger who was supposed to take it to the church. After a week, there came the man from Veleshta in St. George, wanting to know if the money had been handed over to the church. He was answered "Nobody has given any money until now. It's important that you have fulfilled your promise,

the saint will take care of the other!" This man, although Muslim, was a greater believer than the person rebuking him. One should not check how people cross themselves, but if they have Lord in their hearts and if they sincerely respect His outstretched arms, the Saints.

Mustafa Çelebi Mosque

Mustafa Çelebi Mosque is one of the oldest Islamic religious buildings dating from the 16th century, a cultural monument protected by law. Today, the collapsed mosque is being restored and conserved, starting from its oldest part, which is the only one preserved.



Halveti Hayati Tekke

Halveti Tekke is located near Struga city center and it was built in the early 18th century by Hasan Baba. The five rooms forming the letter T include: a praying room with a "minaret" and balcony; a coffee room, a summer room and a reception room. The minaret has an eight-ribbed shape showing the Shah's crown while symbolizing the eight doors of paradise. This tekke is also the place where members of the Islamic faith gather to celebrate their religious holidays of Ramazan Bayram and Kurban Bayram.



The Town of Ohrid - Cultural Monument

Did you know?

The famous Turkish traveler Evliya Çelebi gives a comprehensive description of Ohrid in 1670. He describes the city as a major rich and developed trade center. He compares it with Damascus and Cairo of the time, and with other cities in the Middle East and Ottoman Empire. Ohrid had a number of beautiful big mosques. Among them, Çelebi mentions the Hagia Sophia (the Cathedral of St. Sofia), then the Ohrizade Mosque or Imperial Mosque in the old hilly part of the city, known as Imaret Mosque. The houses of the Macedonian population in the old city were beautiful and masterfully built, in a cascade one above the other and facing the lake.

Ali Pasha Mosque

Ali Pasha Mosque is situated in Ohrid Old Bazaar. According to a vakufnama dating back from 1491, which mentions a saray (palace) and waqfs belonging to Ali Pasha, we can conclude that there was also a mosque bearing his name.



According to architectural features and simplicity of form, we can confidently assume that the mosque was built in the late 15th or early 16th century. Within the the mosque complex, a madrasa was built in 1823, which does not exist today. Ali Pasha Mosque is built of stone and baked bricks and was among the first mosques built in Macedonia. The base of Ali Pasha Mosque is a rectangle measuring 15x15 meters, above which an octagonal tambour rises, while there is another twelve-sided tambour above it, vaulted with a shallow dome. The transition inside the mosque is resolved using squinches. All sides of the harim continuously lead to the only point of the dome symbolizing the unity of Allah; the fairly narrow window openings are characteristic of the local construction, which indicates that its builder was probably from Ohrid. The original porch is not preserved, but following the analogy with similar buildings from this

period, it can be assumed that it was like an open portico with three small domes (probably similar to today's porch).

The interior of the mosque is characterized by unity of space, simplicity of forms and dominance of volume. The mihrab, located on the southeast wall, has a simple form - carved into the wall, without any decorative elements and framed in a shallow-profiled frame. The minbar is made of stone and it contains the only decorative elements in the entire interior space. The upper minbar has rosettes made in shallow relief and the cypress motif, which is actually an ancient and universal image with funerary symbolism, and it can be considered a typical popular folklore motif in the late 18th and early 19th century.



The remains of the minaret are found next to the south side of the mosque. It was destroyed in 1912 and has not been renovated to date. According to its base's dimensions, this is a minaret which with its height and elegance dominated this part of the bazaar. What is particularly interesting is the fact about the existence of another minaret in the western part of the mosque. This fact was indicated by Evliya Çelebi in his "Travels", describing that there was a mosque with two minarets in Ohrid. The mosque had one minaret originally, while later, Sultan Bayezid II (1481-1512) ordered to erect another one. The possible existence of another minaret is confirmed by traces of the existence of an entrance to that part of the mosque. Ohrid citizens themselves share that there was a mosque with two minarets in Ohrid. If this is accepted, then Ali Pasha Mosque is one of the few mosques with two minarets erected in the Balkans.

Zeynel Abedin Pasha Tekke

This important tekke belonging to the Halveti order of dervishes is located near the old sycamore tree in Ohrid. After taking hilafet from the Serres Karabashi Sheikh Usain, Sheikh Mehmed Hayati went to Ohrid, where after some time, using the Sultan's firman, established the Tekke and Halveti order of dervishes. The tekke is a complex of several buildings different



in their purpose and meaning, but having an equally important role in believers' social life and needs.

The tekke mosque was probably built in the late 16th century as a legacy of Zeynel Abidin Pasha. It includes all the facilities necessary for the performance of religious rites: semahane, coffee chimney, a prayer room, a guest room. The minaret, which has preserved its entire height, originates from the 17th century. The

türbe located next to the entrance to the complex was built in two stages. Hayati Baba was buried there. It was restored in the 19th century by Sheikh Zekiri in Empire style. This restored rectangular section houses the graves of nine tekke sheikhs.



The fountain is a polygonal building attached to the west side of the türbe. It had the function of taking

ablution before the prayer and a place for relaxation and conversation of dervishes. The tekke complex is complemented by the Sheikh's family house (restored in the late 20th century), which with its ambient architectural and artistic values (carved ceilings, antiques, a library with rare books...) is an integral part of tekke's spiritual and religious life. The tekke complex also includes two groups of graveyards - one next to the mosque and the other belonging to the Sheikh's family where family members, servants and tekke donors were buried.

Suleiman Aga Clock Tower

Ohrid Clock Tower indicated the time and destinies of many Ohrid generations throughout its three centuries of existence. It was built in 1726 by Chavush Dere Suleiman Aga, located at the foot of the eastern part of Samuel's Fortress in the locality of Deboj. Chavush Dere Suleiman Aga donated it to the city, but its purpose is not known, considering that there are four loopholes on it. Because of this, it is unknown whether it was originally built as a defensive turret from Mesocastro people who were outside the city walls of Varosh or as a clock which at a certain time invited Turks to

prayer. It was closely connected with the bazaar, and it was important for the Muslim population's daily prayer five times a day in Islamic shrines. The old Clock Tower is 12 meters high, with a simple architecture. The clock is positioned on a stone tower and inside the tower, there is an inscription specifying the name of its builder, Chavush Dere Suleiman Aga. The clock in the clock tower was set on Muslim timing and this remained so until World War II, when the old mechanism was replaced with a new one, which showed the time under the new European standards. The Clock Tower construction time in 1726 coincides with the Ottoman Empire's booming period, i.e. the Tulip Era, known in history as Lale Devri.



Sinan Çelebi Türbe

At Plaoshnik, near St. Clement Church, is the mausoleum in which Sinan Çelebi is buried. The mausoleum (türbe) is rather free in terms of its architectural form, having a developed form dictated by the two graves located in it. Its base is shaped like the letter L, and it is of the open türbe type, supported by square columns at each of its corners. The left part of the türbe is smaller and Hasan Baba is buried here, while the other grave probably belongs to Sinan Çelebi's brother or perhaps his son. According to some data, the child of Dna Tashula was buried in the grave. She was Christian, a Celadin Bey's woman who had strangled her child not to accept Islam. The more spacious elongated area houses the tomb of Sinan Pasha, with a hewn tombstone holding an inscription. According to the inscription in Arabic, above which there is an ornament of a stylized leaf, Sinan Çelebi died on 19 April 1493. Today, this tombstone is kept in the Institute and Museum of Ohrid. The türbe, which is unique of its kind in Macedonia, enables an extraordinary connection with the surrounding landscape through its architecture. It is a Muslims' cult place and is especially visited on 6 May (the religious holiday H'd'rlez - St. George's Day).



Turkish Administration Building (Nowadays' Clement of Ohrid High School)

An Ottoman building - its construction began in 1908 after a photograph of a French building in Neoclassical style, and Eyüp Sabri of Ohrid was the developer. Until 1944, this building had different purposes: Turkish administration, military barracks, municipality, boarding school, etc.



Haji Durgut Mosque

Haji Durgut Mosque is the oldest mosque in Ohrid, built in 1466. Among the many legends and stories recounted on the so-called Cross Mosque or under its real name "Haji Durgut Mosque" in Ohrid, they all share in common the fact that a compromise between the two religions Christian Orthodox and Islamic had to be made in order for the facility to survive.

This cultural and historical monument standing at the intersection of two streets even today serves as a landmark for the movement of the local population, but also of guests visiting Ohrid.



Legend!

This cultural and historical monument should have been a church. But in Ottoman times, this was not permitted. Since the Ottomans lived on Macedonian territory, they decided to make some kind of agreement and put a cross on the top. That is why its popular name is Cross Mosque, say citizens of Ohrid. Older residents remember the stories of their ancestors - the Christian population wanted to build a church at the place, which since ancient times had been a "crossroad" in Ohrid. But the Turks did not allow this during their rule. They constructed a mosque at the site, but the minaret always collapsed. An old resident told them that unless they put a cross on the mosque, they would not make it. Some say that the Turks would take off the cross and throw it in the lake, but the following morning, it would stand on its old place again.

Resen like “Little Paris”

Prespa Region through Legends!

Many years ago, King Marko (the last king who ruled most of Macedonia during 1335-1395 period before the multi-century rule of Turkish Sultans) was strolling on the shores of Lake Prespa. Walking like that, he wished to see the small lake or Lake Mala (Minor) Prespa (now in Greece) and climbed a rock, but because of his weight, he left a footprint on it. Today, this place is called Marko's Foot in Dolno (Lower) Dupeni.

Niyazi Bey Saray

This is the story of an unrealized dream, an attempt to bring part of Paris in a small town in the south of Macedonia. The developer of the building, Ahmet Niyazi Bey, as a student at a military academy in Istanbul and probably a member of the Young Turk movement, wanted to make “Little Paris” in Resen; he wanted to build bridges, similar to Paris bridges on the Seine. His house was located just opposite the Saray and he wanted to make a bridge across the street so that he could more easily reach his Saray. He wanted to tear down the already existing bazaar and make a new one with streets resembling Paris streets. Driven by this dream, he also wanted to tear down the shops that had been there, but Resen merchants did not accept Niyazi Bey's proposal and in 1910, infuriated, he burned 30 stores of Resen guilds. Later, he paid for the damage, but failed with the idea to make Resen “Little Paris” because in 1912, the Turks left the city in scores.

Do you know how Ahmet started dreaming this dream? Everything is to be blamed on a postcard (photo) of a palace in Paris, which will forever change the history of Resen. Niyazi Bey gets this photograph and in 1904, starts the construction of Resen Saray



following the photo. So far, it has not been confirmed which Paris building was on the photograph. At first glance, the Saray resembles the palace at

Versailles, others compare it to the residence of the Paris mayor (former Hotel de ville de Paris). Unfortunately, the rich Resen Bey was killed in 1912 in Durres, before the palace was fully completed.

Resen Saray - a palace in the city of Resen is one of the most representative examples of buildings built in neoclassical style in Macedonia. It was built in the French Renaissance style and as a structure of high aesthetic and functional values, it is considered one of the most important examples of architecture from the early 20th century, in which there are elements of Europe's historic architectural styles. The Saray is a grandiose structure boasted by Resen people. It emphasizes the prestigious status of "the most beautiful building in Macedonia." This fascinating facility is 25 meters high, covering an indoors area of 4,800 square meters, while the interior is made with finely processed high-quality materials. The first floor accommodates the House of Culture "Dragi Tozija" and the permanent exhibition of works by the Macedonian artist Keraca Visulcheva, as well as the gallery of works by Resen ceramics colony, which is one of the ten ceramic colonies in the world under the auspices of UNESCO. Today, the second floor of this building is used as an archaeological museum.



Haji Ramadan Mosque

The mosque was built by Haji Ramadan Bey from Bitola in 1592. It has been restored a number of times and thus, its opus cloisonne form has been preserved.



Bitola - City of Consuls

Did you know?

During the Ottoman Empire, the city of Bitola, called Monastery or Toli Monastery grew into a strong commercial center, known also as the city of consuls because it had even twenty consulates from various European countries. Within the same period, the city had many schools, among which the military academy attended by the famous Turkish reformer Kemal Atatürk. During the 16th-17th century, the "oriental" shaping of the city started, which was precisely a result of the construction of Ottoman buildings and oriental building techniques and styles.

Bitola through legends!

Above the town of Bitola, near the Crooked Mill, among the vineyards of Badem-Baalari named by the Turks, there is a Turkish tomb, built up with a kind of stone, ten paces long and wide the same, while the tomb's inside is empty and grass grown. In old times, that grave had buried a Turkish girl with her forty children. That girl gave birth to forty children within twenty-four hours and all the children were male, little like chickens, and they all died. The girl also died and was buried there with her forty children. This grave was made an example and called Krk Kardash (forty children). Turks consider these forty brothers saints and have obliged some old women to light candles and cresset every Friday.

National Institution Institute and Museum / Military High School - Idadiye (Military Academy - Harabiye)

The National Institution "Institute and Museum" - Bitola is located in one of the most significant historical monuments of Bitola, i.e. in the Old Barracks. The importance and significance of this facility is not only a result of its monumentality, but also of its history, events and persons that have stayed here. This facility was built in 1848 when Bitola had its greatest development. It was built as a military high school - Idadiye.

BITOLA

In 1900, this high school became a Military Academy - Harabiye. As such it worked until 1909.

The most important period in the existence of these military barracks is closely related to the period when Cadet Mustafa Kemal Atatürk - the father of modern Turkey was educated there. Today, there is a memorial room in his honor at the museum.



Ishak Çelebi Mosque

In terms of its compactness, especially regarding its exterior and interior decorations, Ishak Çelebi Mosque takes the first place among all mosques in Bitola. It is located somewhere in the middle of the city, at the former Flea Market or Istanbul Bazaar, adjacent to the Bezisten, 30 to 40 meters away from the river Dragor. Its position is very suitable for prayers and today, it is the largest active mosque in Bitola. Ishak Mosque is a legacy of the famous qadi Ishak Çelebi. Its big backyard has several graves, which are attractive because of their subtle forms of sarcophagi. Ishak Çelebi Ibn Isa Mosque was built in 1506. Opposite the Clock Tower and the Big Bezisten, this mosque whose minaret is about 50 meters high, simply dominates the space. This mosque was only a part of the big founder's waqf, who in addition to this mosque, built a madrasa, a maktab, 105 shops, vineyards, 20 mills and many other facilities. All this property ought to be maintained by the revenue from his stores in the bazaar, and also by the revenues from other parts of his property.

Built in cloisonné technique, where stone and brick alternate, an unusual but attractive appearance was obtained of this important building. Its entrance is actually an entrance into the double closed porch of the mosque, which with its vastness only announces the size of the mosque's interior. The four pillars, resting on high stone pedestals end in identical capitals. These pillars which dominate the space are the main decorative elements in the porch. On the northwest wall of the porch is the main portal. Through this entrance, believers stepping in silence, slowly and calmly enter the prayer space. There, they are welcomed by the lavish,

richly painted decoration on which toying rays refract on the numerous polyelei playing the eternal game of light and shadows. Numerous decorative elements are present on the mihrab, mimbar and kurs. The decoration of these elements is usually geometric without disturbing the total ambience of the mosque. The play of colors and forms is reflected in every part of the mosque. The change of gray-black, blue and gold with a stronger cobalt-blue, dark green, and dark red gives a distinctive uniqueness to this mosque. Its specific looks can not be complete unless the gilded disc-shaped levha is mentioned, which was a gift from Sultan Resad V, and which is now kept with extreme care. The founder of this mosque died in Bitola and was buried in the cemetery of his endowment next to the minaret.

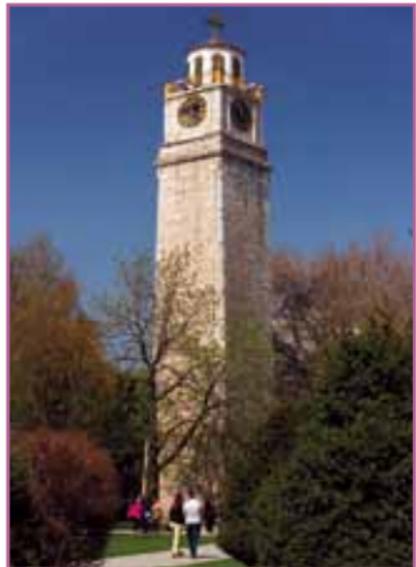


Clock Tower - Bitola

Clock Tower is one of the most recognizable landmarks and most visited locations in Bitola, with the beautifully landscaped park around it, which brings young people of the city together and is one of the most visited places by tourists. Existence of a clock tower in Bitola was mentioned even in the 17th century. It is not exactly known when it was built, and was first mentioned in 1664 in connection with Mahmud Bey.

According to legend, the tower was built when the Ottoman authorities in the city, i.e. the Turks, passed through all the surrounding villages and gathered around 60,000 eggs from which mortar was made to make it more resilient. They used the mixture combined with stone to build the tower whose solid walls stand intact even today.

Built of massive stone blocks, the tower has a square base and is about 32 meters high. There are terraces with wrought



railings at the top of the tower, while on all sides of the terraces, there are structures holding lamps and making the entire tower and its clock visible at night. The clock is located at the top of the three levels. The main and also the most decorative part of the Clock Tower is the one where the clock dials are set on all four sides each.

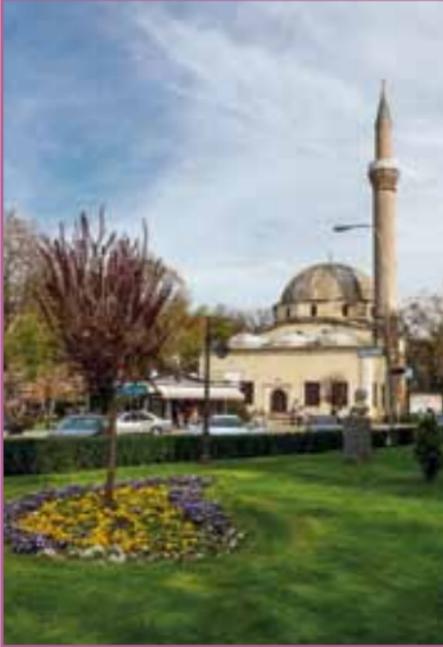
Clock Tower entrance has large marble blocks and is located on the north side, while a hundred stairs lead to its clock, i.e. to its top at approximately 32m. Each step has new information, new transformation. Those stairs lead to the top, from where the big metal bells reverberated indicating the time in the past. Until 1912, the Clock Tower indicated the time "a la turca", i.e. the hours were counted from the moment of sunset. In 1912, "a la franga" was introduced, i.e. modern indication of time.



In 1927, the first clock dial made by the German company "Konfage" was installed, but some changes were also made. The first clock dial was white with black numbers and hands, and it was smaller than the current one. This clock mechanism was replaced in 1936 when fifteen 900kg heavy bells were also placed - a token of gratitude for building the Memorial Cemetery of German soldiers killed in World War I. In 1962, the mechanism was restored, and in 1970, a keyboard was set to perform new compositions. This Clock Tower is one of the 180 towers in the world which has this type of mechanism built-in.

During the restoration in 2009, the clock mechanism was also restored, when German experts helped, too. Through the mechanism reparation, the song "There my Mother, near Bitola" was lost. It was dedicated to the national hero Taki Daskalo and ticked at the same time for decades. After changing the mechanism, only the song "Bitola, my Hometown" of Ayri Demirovski remained to be heard.

Yeni Mosque



The most impressive and perhaps most valuable building which has been standing powerfully and steadily for almost five hundred years in the center of Bitola is Yeni Mosque. The mosque, which covers the secrets of the past and hears prayers for the future was built in 1558/59 by Kadi Mahmud Efendi. It has a square base with a dome on its top, while its name in Turkish means the new mosque. Near the mosque, there is a minaret of 40m rising high up in the sky. Its massive wooden gates are the most dominant element at first glance, but when they open, we see a different view stretched out before us. The second wooden gate with shallow carved decoration will introduce us to the prayer space in the mosque. Our view will play on the blue and white

faience tiles. This unique faience decoration is made of faience tiles containing decorations made on themselves instead from themselves. Each tile complements the previous one forming a captivating floral decoration. The stone portal parts above the wooden door and calligraphic inscriptions tell their story. In its foundations, there are three Christian churches, it was once a remarkable mosque, and today, it is a contemporary gallery reflecting a different time. Only the curious can discover new truths and hear the age-old universal wishes and prayers both of Muslims and Christians embedded deep in its foundations.

Zandan Kule - Haji Mahmud Efendi Tower



Zandan (Prison) Kule is a facility located in the southwest part of Bitola, built in the 17th century. It has a very interesting structure, especially its interior. It served for private purposes and for protection against attacks. There are written sources from which it can be seen

that its owner was the mufti of Bitola in 1628/29, Haji Mahmud Efendi. He built this facility in the yard of his homestead. It could be entered only by means of a siege ladder, through the double wooden doors of oak, built at a height of 2.30m. Using wooden deck floor structures, the interior space is functionally divided into five levels. There was an underground basement for groceries, and a water well. Between the ground and first floor, there was a space of 90cm, which served as ammunition storage. The most beautiful part was the floor that served for living, with two windows having double iron bars embedded. Under the roof, there are narrow openings, i.e. loopholes for defense from attackers. Under the roof, there was a room for guards. The tower is built of ordinary stone, with a rectangular base: 5.35 x 5.60m, and it is 11m high. Later, the tower was converted into a prison by Turkish authorities, when there were revolutionary movements in Macedonia, i.e. before the Ilinden Uprising, and Macedonian revolutionaries were imprisoned there. Unless relevant information is found, we can only assume that the tower got its name after the so-called "Zindançi" or "Dark Mosque" in its immediate vicinity (a hundred meters away from the tower), or maybe because its interior is dark.

Some foreign authors mention this tower under the name of Kirka Baba. Following these data, we come to the part which borders legend. Namely, the learned founder of the tower who belonged to the Naqshbandi dervish order, having achieved full spiritual perfection, one night disappeared physically, leaving his dervish cloak "hrka" (by modifying the word, the name "Kirka" was obtained). This cloak was kept as a relic in the tower for a long time and had miraculous powers to cure various diseases. The place in the courtyard where he disappeared, next to the tower, where there was also a fountain, was considered to be his grave, so people of all religions lit candles, observing it as a cult place.

Turkish Baruthane - Bitola Barracks

Turkish Baruthane is one of the most beautiful medieval buildings in Bitola and a cultural monument of first category in Macedonia, hiding the secret symbols of Smilevski masters. It is the Turkish cephane, a fortress in the form of a cross with four unique buildings of cut stone with walls four meters high. The facility was built in 1876 during the government of Bitola governor and commander of the Turkish army Köse Ahmet Zeki Pasha. Some structures have the Ottoman Empire coat of arms carved on them, while in the north building, there is a mural of a Turkish officer on horseback painted.

Entrances of the buildings are made of cut granite. Warehouses are reinforced by counterforts that provide both ventilation and hermetic closure. Ceilings are semicircular and serve as excellent insulation from dampness. The fortress was built when the city had 30,000 Turkish soldiers. The red and white barracks were built back then (demolished over the years), as well as the Military High School (now the Institute and Museum), Officers' Home and other facilities, protected as cultural monuments nowadays. The building, which is an ultimate architectural achievement, today is a place for cultural events and tourist attraction.



Kara Daut Pasha - Bezisten

The Bezisten is one of the most impressive and oldest buildings in Bitola from the period of Ottoman rule. The Bezisten, which was the heart of the former great Bitola Bazaar, and of which only the central part is preserved today, is located in the city center near the Mosques Yeni and Ishak Çelebi, and the Clock Tower. With its numerous domes that make it look like a fortress, with three inside alleys and four big metal gates, it is one of the largest covered markets in the region. It was built in the 15th century by Rumeli Beglerbey, the Grand Vizier and famous donor Kara Daut Pasha Uzuncarsili.

Within the Bezisten, which was often extended and rebuilt in the period between its construction and until the 19th century, there were 84 shops

BITOLA



which sold textiles and luxurious fabrics. It also represented a treasury where the tax money from around the Rumelian Province was kept in specific parts before being taken to the royal treasury. Today, the Bezisten is arranged as a modern sales area with numerous shops which sell various goods. Yet, despite all of its internal transformations, the Bezisten's outer appearance stayed almost unchanged. The first written sources about it originate in the early 16th century, including the second vakafnama of Ishak Mosque's founder, Ishak Çelebi Ibni Isa, in 1508. Information on the Bezisten was also provided by the famous Venetian traveler

Lorenzo Bernardo, who, in the last two decades of the 16th century, was an envoy of his country to Istanbul, whereby in 1591, he had the opportunity to see this Bitola facility, a well-known shopping center in this part of the Balkans. Virtually, there was no traveler who passed through Bitola without mentioning it as a remarkable edifice, mostly as a place where one could buy expensive sterling silver, linen, cotton, silk, gold, exquisite goldwork, weapons etc. The Bezisten by itself would not have been what it was and what it is, if the overall architectural ensemble that existed around it was not taken into consideration: up and down the Dragor, there were hundreds of lovely shops lined, each of which constituted a separate trade fantasy world, making this part of Bitola a unique urban and architectural unit, which breathed the panting Mediterranean breath in this sunny area of many civilizations

Haji Mahmud Bey Mosque

In the lower part of Bitola, near the Dragor river, in today's market (fish market) area, surrounded by shops, is this rather large mosque. Haji Mahmud Bey Mosque was built in Seljuks' style with a base of 11.50m x

11.50m and massive walls with a thicknesses of 1.35 - 1.45 m. The minaret has a polychrome decoration, which is located on the north-western corner of the prayer room, a little behind the inside line of the porch. The minaret sits on a polygonal base and has twelve one-sided shafts made of rows of brick and stone, but it was partially destroyed in a more recent earthquake. The upper body of the minaret has the most striking feature with its zig-zag and hexagonal ceramic and plastic decorations in the traditional Seljuks' style. Minarets with such decorations are rarely found in in the Balkans' Ottoman architecture. The Madrasa "Turkler" (Muslim religious school) and the inn were part of the complex.

Haji Mahmud Bey Mosque was built by the governor of the city Haji Mahmud Bey in 1521/22. In Bitola, he was called Tomruk Aga. To maintain the religious complex of his legacy, he put a revenue of 300,000 bags of aspras and real estate of 10 shops and 10 houses. All of this property vanished in the hands of various craftsmen and today, the mosque is left with very little.



Ghazi Haydar Kadi Mosque

According to the stone tablet with an inscription written in Arabic, which is placed above the entrance, the mosque was built in 969 (1561/62), by the Bitola kadi Haydar, of whom we only know that he originated from a family of conquerors (because of the word Ghazi - conqueror as part of his name). This mosque, located in the former sheep market, near the monumental Chifte Amam - Deboj and the Old Bitola Bazaar, is actually the main building within the large waqf of its rich patron. Like other major mosques in Bitola from this period, this mosque, as well, is a single-room domed structure including an open livan porch, which was preserved only in this Bitola mosque. The base of the prayer space is almost square, and the dome, which is 19 meters high, is carried by a 12-sided tambour, which lies on ribbed squinches. What distinguishes this mosque from other mosques of this type in Bitola and Macedonia, is its unique plan, where the space is organized with two minarets (only their pedestals have been preserved nowadays).

Deboj Hammam

Chifte Amam - DEBOJ in Bitola was located within the Old Bitola Bazaar, but today, after the destruction of much of the bazaar, it is found on its border. Although there are no precise data on the year of construction of this representative facility, the monumentality of the building, its masonry and abundant decoration of stalactites, stucco decoration on the walls and numerous stars on the domes, and its architectural characteristics observed by the method of comparison with accurately dated baths from late 15-16th century, suggest that it is a facility that belongs to the golden age of Ottoman architecture.

The organization of space in this double (chifte) hammam is as follows: the female section, which is larger in size, richly decorated and separated by a wall from the male section, consists of: a fountain (large domed room with a square shape, including a six-sided lantern in the dome center and a fountain underneath - designed for a dressing room), then, a kapaluk (designed for rest), a meydan (designed for massage) and two smaller rooms, left and right of the meydan thrash hani (intended for hair removal), followed by premises belonging to the halvet (intended for bathing).

The male section consists only of: a fountain (arranged in the same manner as in the female section), and a kapaluk and halvet, which are smaller in size.

Prilep - Hero City

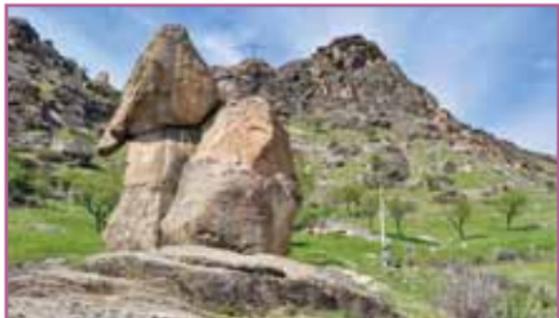
Did you know?

Prilep is a city of tobacco and marble, rich with cultural heritage and history, a national pride and open to the world - a Hero City. Describing Prilep as a city with ten neighborhoods and a thousand inhabitants, in 1660/68, Evliya Çelebi mentioned that in addition to a number of masjids and mosques of Alay Bey and Arslan Pasha, there were 200 stores, a hammam, an inn, madrasas and tekkes.



Marko's Towers - Ancient Guardian of Prilep

Marko's Towers Fortress represents the former medieval city of the legendary ruler, King Marko. The great fortress rises above Prilep, one of the oldest cities in our country, which was the capital of the medieval kingdom of Kings Volkashin and Marko and a place where the medieval era spirit can be felt. Of all mountain massifs, only the Prilep mountain range represents a special rarity of natural and scientific value. Therefore, this massif is a unique site in the Balkan Peninsula and wider, in Europe, and probably in the world. The rocks making up this castle are a real masterpiece of nature, because neither a sculptor nor a virtuoso could have sculpted the beautiful, spectacular rocks in various forms, located on elevations and small plateaus, seeming to be able to move at any moment.



Said Aga Clock Tower

A Clock Tower built in 1825/1826 rises in Prilep Old Bazaar. It was erected by Said Aga, with a height of 40 m, while when including its pillars and cone top, it reaches up to 55 m. It was renovated several times over the years and a clock was



set in 1858. At the bottom, on the opposite side of the entrance, there is a fountain. Above the front door, there is an inscription:

"The striking of the clock is not always indicating the time. The clock regrets life and time passing and says... 'Ah'..."

Çarşı (Bazaar) Mosque

Bazaar Mosque is located in the Old Bazaar in Prilep, next to the Clock Tower. It was built in 1475 by Haji Hussein. This mosque is a unique architectural work, because it is the oldest European mosque with two balconies on its minaret. But today, it is in dilapidated condition.



Kurshumli An

Downtown area holds some remains of a building with large dimensions. It is an inn (an), which was first mentioned in Evliya Çelebi's "Travels" from 1660/68. In 1927, Shulze-Jena mentions the existence of a large inn known as Kurshumli An. What is preserved today is the eastern wall of the monumental rectangular structure, partly built of cut stone and

lime mortar. Remains of 11 marble decorative holes processed in the form of rosettes are visible on it, which shows the importance that this facility had. However, there are no precise data on its builder, i.e. donor, nor on the year of its construction, but it can be assumed that it was certainly built no later than the first half of the 17th century. The inscription found above the front door does not exist today, while the data about its content are presented by Evliya Çelebi: "When Hevai asked the Holy Spirit, one chronicler had said the following: the structure shall be semi-closed." Today, the remains of this inn present an important testimony of Ottoman architecture in Prilep.



Legend of the inn!

The inn gates had two stone icons hung on a chain, coming from St. Nicholas Monastery near Chepigovo. Many times the Turks broke them and threw them away, but they would come again and hang at the same place. So wrote Marko Cepenkov in one of his legends associated with the impressive wall, a remnant of the Turkish Kurshimli An, a facility from the 16th century in the center of Prilep.

Legends from Prilep!

There is a legend that runs from Ottoman time about Mariovo's Turkish treasure. It says that two tons of gold bullion, owned by the Ottoman Bank in Bitola, were hidden near the Rasim Bey's Bridge on the Crna River in Mariovo. When Turkish army was leaving Macedonia, they loaded the gold and set off to Turkey. The road led through Mariovo. Supposedly, the general ordered his soldiers to bury the gold and record its place on a map, and then he killed all who were present. He went to Belgium and lived there. He left the map to his successors. Gold and valuable artefacts have also been sought in Prilep region through the years.

Veles - Town of Potters

Did you know?

Turkish traveler Evliya Çelebi, while passing through Veles, described the main structure of the time, i.e. the bridge on the Vardar, as a new wooden bridge with four openings, while his contemporary Haji Kalfa described it as a stone bridge. However, both were right, because one talks about the bridge in the old part of Veles, while the other talks about the bridge where the Vardar was crossed by raft.

Pottery represents the spirit of Veles. This traditional craft that has managed to survive centuries of challenge is a symbol of the city even today. In the past, pottery was practiced by poor families. Kocho Racin, one of the biggest Macedonian poets, was also a potter and he considered pottery the oldest art.

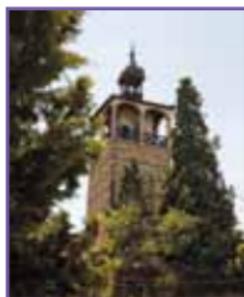
Veles and Veles people have always had advanced thought and spirit. Here, the first school in the Macedonian language, the first high school, the first theater, the first library, the first museum and the first music school were opened in the territory of Macedonia.

Stories from the city!

As an urban settlement, Veles has existed since 168 BC. Throughout history, the city frequently changed its name from Vila Zora, Titov Veles, to its today's name - Veles. In 1395, with the establishment of the Ottoman government, Turks called Veles Köprü (bridge, city of bridges), because of its bridge on the river Vardar.

Clock Tower

Specific architecture lovers' attention is attracted by the Clock Tower in Veles, which has resisted the time and ages. Built in the first half of the 16th century, the Clock Tower in the downtown area served as a watchtower for the Ottoman authorities. Towards the end of the 18th century, in the Renaissance period of Veles, the tower was converted into a town



clock. Since then, the clock tower's belfry has been a constant reminder of time for Veles citizens. Today, this stone building with an ornate top is an unavoidable symbol of Veles, present even on the coat of arms and flag of the city. The tower enables a nice view of the downtown area, while its interior, which is an expression of the ancient game of wood and stone, makes this tourist attraction even more interesting

Negotino through legends!

An interesting story is told about the monastery "St. George the Great Martyr." According to this story, in 1860, in Negotino lived a bey with his daughter. One night his daughter dreamed a strange dream. In the dream, she was making two furrows using two oxen. One furrow went up, and the other went down. At the same time, she dreamed how she was laying foundations to a monastery. The next day, she shared her dream with her father, but he did not believe it. She dreamed the same dream for three nights. She did nothing, because her father did not believe in the dream. On the fourth day, she fell sick. Then her father brought two strong oxen and advised her to do as in the dream. While making the furrow downward, she found a tablet showing a man with a spear in his hand, killing a dragon. When she was going up to make the furrow, she came across another tablet showing an image of a woman with a child in her arms. They came to the foundations of an old temple. She laid the new monastery foundations on the old church's foundations and in the construction she was helped by the Turks who owned the place where the monastery sprang. The bey's daughter healed and married a Christian. Around the monastery there are 26 natural water springs. Here, pilgrims come to drink some water and wash their eyes, believing that these waters have healing effects.

Did you know?

Negotino is mentioned in the 19th century as a Turkish homestead. In his article entirely devoted to Tikvesh entitled "Ljubljano-Paeonia" and published in the "Constantinople Gazette" on 12 February 1855, the Macedonian educator Jordan Hadzi Konstantinov - Dzinot wrote that Negotino (Tikvesh) had a beautiful church and a small school, two moshes (mosques), a madrasa, a clock and other antiques. Here, a market gathered from Veles, Shtip, Prilep, Dojran and Strumica every Thursday, and there lived some administrative officials such as ayan, kadi and mufti.

Clock Tower

In 1821, the Turkish bey Haji Tahir Aga Sinan, from Kavadarci, built a clock tower and a mosque on his farm in Negotino, and a bezisten on his Veles farm. Negotino Clock Tower has a hexagonal base, it is approximately 15 meters high and is exclusively made of stone blocks with a thickness of about one meter. Its upper part ended with a wooden structure, which housed the clock (torn down later). On the western side is the entrance made of crushed stone with a semicircular lintel. Inscriptions above the entrance of the tower, written in Arabic, can be read about its history.



Gevgelija - City of Most Hospitable People

Did you know?

According to a German traveler in 1863, Gevgelija had the appearance of a small town. However, several large silk mills which employed mainly women, developed production of agricultural and livestock products and quite developed crafts contributed to developing Gevgelija into an important commercial center. A bezisten was also built in that period. Around 1880, Gevgelija started developing as an administrative and military center, while through the construction of the Thessaloniki - Gevgelija - Skopje railway, the economic power of Gevgelija began to grow steadily. From the newly built barracks to the railway station, a cobbled street was built, which gave the city a nice, modern look (after this street it got the epithet "from station to border").

Gevgelija through legends!

Warm-spirited Gevgelija people still remember the legend of a dervish who came and did not want to leave Gevgelija because he liked the place very much. Residents did not want to have him and decided to expel him by force. Infuriated, the dervish started angrily cursing the residents, who got scared and called him back saying "gel geri" meaning "come back".

Although a legend, Gevgelija people consider this an oath to their ancestors, i.e. always to welcome those who decide to present their ideas in the city and those who are ready for new challenges and new experiences.

Hamman

The hamman in Gevgelija dates back from the 17th century, having an interior area of 90 square meters and being converted from a former city bath into an art gallery and space for art, ethnology and smaller chamber exhibitions. This unique Oriental culture building in the region was declared a cultural monument in 2003.



Muğlalı Efendi's Lodgings

In the center of Gevgelija stands a striking oriental facility, which is the public library "Goce Delchev" today, but was a former lodgings. The house, called a lodgings as well, was built in 1911-12, following Muğlalı Efendi's wish. In the architectural history of the city, Muğlalı Efendi's house is among the facilities where the choice of elements used for facade decoration moves within a specific range of recognizable "urban motifs", found and recognized in larger cities, to a reduced use of baroque and neo-classical window decoration



cornices and decorated parapets under the windows. The full beauty of decoration comes to the fore in this facility, including a developed sense of aesthetics of the facade screens, which despite their full treatment and cover with ornaments, point to a complex compositional game that gives the impression of a single, meaningful aesthetic whole.

Dojran - City of Most Beautiful Love Story

Did you know?

Dojran was a city with an amphitheater looks consisting of two parts: lower - where the local population lived, and upper, where Turkish population was located. The city was built in the style of Constantinople and Thessaloniki architecture. It had cobbled streets, clean drinking water captured from the springs above the city and piped to a number of city fountains through channels of ceramic pipes, a city bath - hammam, which served all citizens, both men and women, Christians and Muslims, three churches and three mosques, several schools (more elementary and one high school) and a shared clock tower.

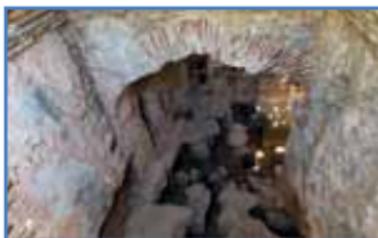
Dojran through legends!

In the space of today's Lake Dojran, a wide valley stretched with lush meadows and diverse gardens. At an elevation, there was a large well where people from the surrounding areas filled water and closed the well with nine padlocks. One day, the most beautiful girl named Dojrana left for water and was waited by her boyfriend Labin next to the well. Infatuated by his caresses, she forgot to close the ninth padlock. The well started leaking and flooded the whole valley. This created a lake that was named after the girl Dojrana. During the Ottoman rule, the legend was expanded and recorded by the people, saying: many boys were in love with Dojrana, and a Turkish pasha, unfortunately. The beautiful girl could not imagine to be married to him. He followed her every step and did not give her peace. Being in a hopeless position, and in order not to fall into his arms, she got into the lake and drowned.

Turkish Hammam

At the entrance of Dojran, the foundations and sections of the only bathhouse in the city called "Amam" are found, 130 meters away from the town beach. It is not known when this bath was built, but it worked until 1916. It consisted of several rooms, of which some were for women and others for men. There were fountains in every room. Water was carried to the bath through roof tile pipes from Dere-Bash locality, 2 km west of Dojran. Water was heated with firewood (charcoal) in a cauldron in a

separate room, where it flowed into the fountains used by the citizens. People of all nationalities and religions went to the bathhouse, and what is most interesting is the fact that for future brides there was a special ceremony in which they went for a special maiden bathing.



Clock Tower

The Clock Tower in Star Dojran is an Ottoman edifice, built by Evrenosoğlu Pasha in the 14th century, in 1372. The legend living among Dojran people says that the conquerors led by Colonel Evrenos-Bey passed across the frozen lake covered with snow without knowing it was a lake. When the soldiers entered the town, the population was astonished by how they did not drown, and also the pasha was amazed by the news that the army had passed across the frozen lake. In honor of the army having been saved from certain death and conquering Dojran, Evrenos-Bey built the Clock Tower.

The Clock Tower in Dojran is located on the hill above Dojran Lake where once the Turkish Bazaar was located, near the hammam and fountain. It was the only structure built in the so-called opus Cloisonné, but suffered damages during the Balkan Wars. It was about 10 meters high and its height dominated the area. The clock informed all citizens about the time; merchants and craftsmen knew when to open and close their shops, fishermen knew when to go fishing and certainly, Muslims knew when it was time for prayers.



Strumica through legends!

Struma's grave is a medieval or ancient tomb, located about 3 km west of the town of Strumica, near the village of Banica. This tomb today testifies to the legend of the beautiful Struma who betrayed her father for the love of one of the generals who wanted to subjugate her people. This legend says that the city was besieged by a strong Byzantine army, but until then, it had never been conquered. Then, Struma, who was in love with a Byzantine general, performed a betrayal and revealed him the secret about the unconquerable Strumica Fortress. Byzantines conquered the fortress and the father cursed his daughter - when she dies, the earth shall throw her out of her grave nine times. Legend connects the nine layers of carved limestone with the nine dumps and burials of Struma. But whether some of these legends are true or the grave has its own separate history is not known. This tomb may have also belonged to a Turkish ruler from the medieval period. This is also substantiated by archaeological research performed in 1983, when remains of graves from the Islamic period were found here. Although not yet proven, it is possible that the grave belongs to some religious leader or chief of the Islamic community.

Did you know?

In the Ottoman period, Strumica was called Ustrumdzhe by the Turkish administration. In the 17th century, Strumica became the seat of a kadiluk. At that time, Turkish travelers Hadji Kalfa (1665) and Evliya Celebi (1670) passed through Strumica and they described the



city with all of its Muslim buildings back then. In the census book of 1573, mention is made of the names of two mosques in Strumica: the Old Mosque of Sultan Murad Han, and the New Mosque. In the late 18th and early 19th century, Strumica kaza was part of the Thessaloniki Sanjak.

Feudal Tower

Feudal Tower is the only facility of this type in Strumica. Built in the Ottoman period, it served for living and defense. It is made of high-quality carved limestone with a square base and dimensions 6.9 x 9m. The tower has a basement, ground floor and three floors. Its basic ceiling is wooden, of which on the northern and eastern side of the third floor, there are wooden verandas extended.



Turkish Post-Office

The Old Turkish Post-Office is located in the old part of town near Orta Mosque. Built in the 19th century, this building operated as a Turkish post-office, which means that Strumica had a post-office and telegraph.

It is shaped with an approximate square base including a stone basement, ground floor and first floor in a mud plaster system with a characteristic vertical geometry. The floor has small protrusions only on two sides of the house, while the wide eaves with a shaped cornice strongly emphasize the roof covered with oriental tiles. Regarding the base, layout of the premises, building features and constructive structure, the departure from the tradition of folk architecture is visible. Although in terms of its stylistic and aesthetic shaping, this facility is under the influence of western architecture - cubism, still the preserved characteristic elements of the old architecture allow us to include it in the few buildings with monumental values that have shaped the architectural vision of old Strumica.



Orta Mosque

Orta Mosque is a representative and complicated complex of buildings representing a spiritual and artistic shrine of the people who lived in this region. The locality where Orta Mosque is situated today was a real treasure for researchers because numerous artefacts from the Hellenistic and Roman period, Late Antiquity and Middle Ages had been found there. The structure of the building is made of stone and it is located in the old urban core of the city of Strumica, while its remarkable dimensions testify to the spiritual tradition needs and reflects the character of sacred space and importance that it had for both Muslims and Christians. Under the foundations of the Islamic religious complex, Orta Mosque has some preserved painting, and although in fragments, it is an unquestionable confirmation of the existence of a Christian church probably of Our Lady, which speaks about the charters of the Serbian ruler Stefan Dusan and the Byzantine ruler, John Kantakouzenos. The church was burned in the 13th century, after which a big medieval necropolis sprang in this place, which was in use until the 17th century. After the arrival of the Ottomans in the Balkans, the church was converted into a mosque, called Orta (Central) Mosque in 1613/14.



From the inscription found above the entrance inscribed with nefis script in ten fields, we learn that the mosque was built by Durak Efendi. Durak Efendi Mosque is a simple provincial type of a single-domed mosque. Orta Mosque got its name after the location where it is located - between the citadel and the lower town. Its prayer space with dimensions 11.80 x 11 80 cm is vaulted by a dome carried on pendentives. Today, this facility is an archaeological site and museum.

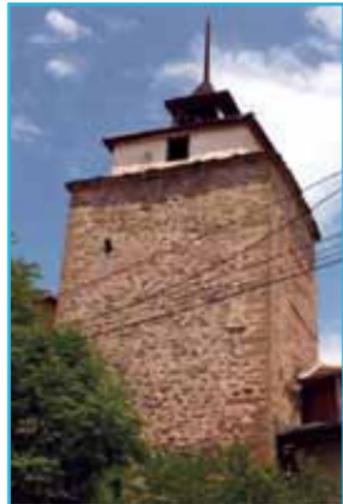
Shtip – City under the Isar

Did you know?

Isar Fortress is the main landmark of Shtip and it delights with its magnificent view of the entire city. It is located on the eponymous hill, which rises 120 meters above the confluence of the Otinja into the Bregalnica River, on the western outskirts of the city. Stone monuments originating from the 2nd to the 6th century, and remains of an early Christian basilica from the 6th century have been found on the hill. In his military campaigns against the king Samuel, the Byzantine Emperor Basil II conquered the Stipeon Fortress, and after Shtip had been conquered by the Turks, the fortress was used as their stronghold for at least two centuries. Today's appearance of the fortress originates from the 14th century. The fortress consisted of two parts: the palace (mansion) with a length of 160 meters and the largest width of up to 20 meters, and a commercial section, with a length of 250 meters and a width of 50 meters. In 2009, 30 meters of the tunnel leading from the river to the top of the Isar were discovered, thus confirming the legend that Shtip was conquered by the Ottomans through a secret tunnel under the Isar. Otherwise, in their books of travels, both Evliya Çelebi and Haji Kalfa testify that already in the 17th century, the Isar was neglected. In 1896 Shtip had eleven mosques, a madrasa, eight dervish tekkes, four churches, a synagogue and three bathhouses.

Shtip through legends!

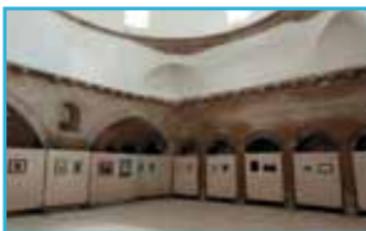
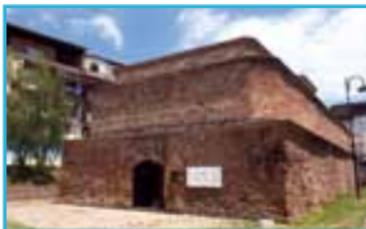
A Turkish Bey fell in love with the beautiful native of Shtip, Anka. He wanted her to become a Muslim and was very persistent. In order to get rid of him, she said she would become a Muslim, but in return, he should leave something to the city as a memorial. He should build a tower that would be the city clock. Anka thought the Bey would give up her love. However, the Turk, since he was very much in love with the beautiful Anka, built the clock tower within a very short time and took the young Shtip native with himself.



Bezisten

Downtown Shtip, on the right bank of the river Otinja, a well preserved bezisten which was an important urban center in the Ottoman period is located. It was built in the second half of the 16th century and served as the main bazaar for selling luxurious and precious goods. Although without decorations, the simple forms of this stone edifice give it a degree of monumentality. The bezisten is made of full stone, while its interior is built with dressed stone.

Externally, this type of stone was used only to build its corners, cornices and parts around the entrances. Wall panels are made of half-chiselled and crushed stone. According to its external dimensions, it represents a single space divided into three rectangular areas separated from each other by columns accepting two landmark arches each. Its interior consists of three parts, separated by pillars. The central space of the building is covered with an impressive dome supported by squinches, while its side spaces are covered with a cross-like vaults. The roof is covered with lead sheet. The Bezisten is poorly lighted. End areas are zenith-lighted, while the central part is lighted by six windows placed in the dome. Today, the Bezisten is used as an art gallery.



Kadin Ana Mosque

Kadin Ana Mosque is a Muslim shrine built in the 19th century, where even today, Islamic believers perform their worshiping. This mosque is the main religious building of the Muslim population in Shtip.

According to legend, the oldest tree in the region is growing in Shtip. It is assumed that the plane tree in the courtyard of the Shtip mosque is over 150 years old. It is more



than 25 meters high and has a trunk diameter of one meter and a half. The mosque was built in 1850, and the plane tree had been there when its foundations were laid. There was also a document about the age of the plane. Because of its impressive appearance, Shtip people tell the story that in Turkish time, the whole neighborhood around the plane tree was called Maple Neighborhood.



Bey Tower / Clock Tower

Clock Tower is a cultural monument built in the 17th century. Most people know it as the Clock Tower, and it is actually Bey Tower. History suggests that the tower was built by a Turkish Bey who lived in Shtip, but his name was not written. He made the tower to protect his family in times of crisis. The building had both loopholes and a balcony. Later, a clock mechanism was placed on the tower.



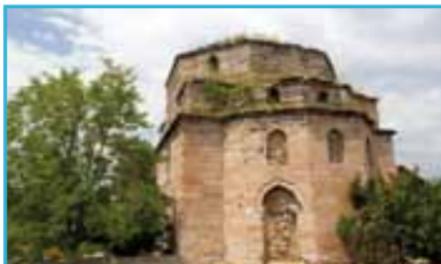
Emir Kucuk Sultan's Bridge

Emir Kucuk Sultan's Bridge, known also as Stone Bridge, is a stone arch bridge across the Bregalnica near Shtip. The bridge is located at the entrance to the city and according to data, it was built in 1672 and is among the few examples of Turkish architecture in Shtip. The bridge was named after the Sultan Kucuk Emir. During the First Balkan War, the demarcation line passed through this bridge dividing the city in Serbian and Bulgarian part. In the past, given the high water level, the bridge had a very important communication role, but today, through the reduction of water in the river Bregalnica, it has a more historical and architectural significance.



Husamedin Pasha Mosque

Evliya Çelebi said that it was artistically built with a stone minaret and covered with lead. According to its style and architectural features, we can say with high probability that Husamedin Pasha Mosque was built in the late classical phase of Ottoman architecture from the early 16th century. Next to the temple is the mausoleum of Husamedin Pasha.



Kochani - City with Three Medieval Towers

Did you know?

According to the writings of the Turkish traveler Evliya Çelebi, in the census of 1519, Kochani was a village with one Muslim and 54 Christian families and 12 unmarried Christians (Tapu defteri 169, 170). The town lies in Kochani Plain and is known for its rice and geothermal water. Kochani Valley is the largest thermal basin of high temperature waters in the Balkans.

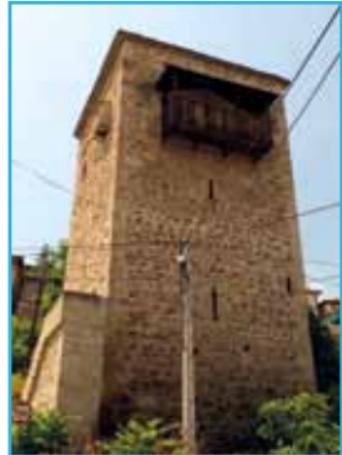
Legends about Kochani!

Long ago, a man named Kocho went to work in China and after many years decided to return to his homeland. Since in China rice was the staple food, when leaving, he decided to bring back some rice in the hope that this crop will grow in his homeland. He took a small amount of this white gold so he could easily and smoothly carry it from one kingdom to another. Upon entering the kingdom where his birthplace was located, he encountered some problems: rice was denied entry in any form. However, Kocho refused to give up the intention to introduce the rice. He thought and thought and came up with an idea in the end. He learned that geese as merchandise were not banned entry. He bought some geese, gave them the rice to eat, and then slaughtered them. After entering the place, he cleaned them and took out the rice. Thus, Kocho brought back rice from China, started to produce it, and gave a new mark and crop to this region, and after him, the place where rice started to be grown - got its name Kochani.

Bey Tower

Today, Kochani has three medieval towers, of which two are located in the city situated on both banks of the river Kocanska, while the third one is located in the village of Dolni Podlog. These medieval towers were probably built in the second half of the 17th century, when the city was under Ottoman administration. They were bey towers with an oriental architecture, which could be lived in, but actually had both a residential and defensive function. Built of massive stone walls, they remained the only signs of the past in Kochani. For years they had been affected by the ravages of time and in 1957, the National Institute for Protection of Monuments put them under protection.

Later, one of the towers was converted into a Clock Tower, which used to serve as an audible indication of passing hours. This tower is located on the right bank of the river in the downtown area, nestled between residential buildings and dominating the space with its height of 18.5 meters. Currently, the tower serves as a museum which must be visited. On the ground floor, there is a numismatic association, the first floor contains archaeological collections, while the second floor has a homeland library.



Kratovo - Town of Medieval Towers and Bridges

Did you know?

That its position indeed has conditioned its name is confirmed by the expression "k'rot", meaning forest slope. In fact, even the Turkish traveler Evliya Çelebi, when he visited Kratovo in the second half of the 17th century, recorded that the name of this toponym originated from the compound Arabic word "qirat" meaning "karat" for crater and "ova" for field.



Kratovo architecture features a typical old city Macedonian architecture. Almost all buildings have stone and wood structure, reed and mud. This method of construction allowed elasticity and firmness of buildings in the ancient Macedonian architecture style. Eaves and ceilings were adorned with decorative tablets. Verandas on almost every house are a special feature of Kratovo. Such veranda influenced the form of the house. The doors of the houses are one of the most beautiful and most elaborate details. They can be found as either single or double doors. Almost every house in Kratovo had a hammam, i.e. a bath. As a special room in the house was the fireplace used for heating the rooms or for cooking food.

Intensive communication of people in Kratovo inevitably contributed to building bridges on the Kratovo and Manceva Rivers, with the only goal to improve the town communication on both the left and right sides of these rivers. Kratovo bridges constitute a real expression of the Turkish period architecture in our country. They incorporate the centuries of construction experience of both Turkish and Slavic architecture. Those are bridges with slim lines, having a main arch, which is finely crafted with a pronounced decorative line. With the restoration of crafts and trade in the 19th century, the city needed new bridges. Some best-known bridges erected precisely in this period include: Rade's Bridge, Grovchanski Bridge, Bazaar Bridge, Jokshinski Bridge, Saray Bridge.

Kratovo through legends!

According to legend, the construction of Rada's Bridge was a behest of the mother of nine mason brothers.

"The mother of nine brothers who were from the Kratovo village Krilatica one day went out to the market in Kumanovo, but did not get there because the Kriva River had washed away Markov Bridge. She then left a behest to her sons to build one bridge wherever they go in order to spread Shopi culture, since they came from an area inhabited by Shopi and all nine had Shopi names", Kratovo people tell the story. According to legend, they started building a bridge over the Manceva River, but it constantly collapsed. Anything they would build by day would simply crash by night. To make the bridge last, they agreed that any of their wives who would bring them lunch the following day would be built into the foundations to reinforce the structure. All of them told their wives about the agreement, while only the youngest brother said nothing. The next day, the youngest wife Rada cooked some lunch and brought it to the masons. When her husband saw her, he started crying loudly. Her brothers-in-law, however, caught her and built her alive in the foundation. Rada just asked them mercifully to leave her right breast uncovered so that she could nurse her baby boy.

Grofchanski Bridge and Saray

Located between Saray Bridge and Bazaar Bridge, and linking Hajduk Bazaar downstream with the right bank of the Kratovo River, this bridge is one of the main communication routes. The bridge was built in the early 18th century by the Kratovo Grofchija family, which migrated from Asia Minor and was very rich. The bridge length is 30 meters, its width is four and its height is eight meters. If stones could speak, then probably Grofchanski Bridge would have stories to tell for many novels. It was also mentioned by the traveler Evliya Çelebi as a bridge that leads to the most beautiful hammam in the Ottoman Empire, of which only its frame pitifully peeks today. Grofchanski Bridge was named after the eponymous rich family who migrated from



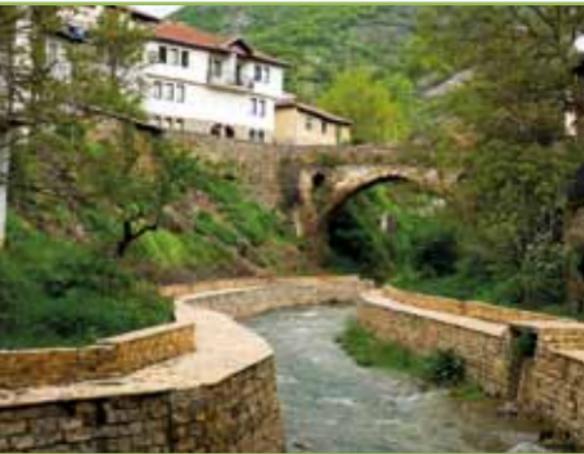
KRATOVO

Asia Minor in 1892, and in Kratovo built a grand saray (palace) which could be reached precisely through this bridge.

The rich Grofchija family's saray was built in the early 16th century. Once the family moved to Turkey for good, the saray was bought by a Kratovo merchant, who converted a part of the huge facility into an inn, while the ground-floor rooms were converted to a jail by the Turkish authorities.



Havzi Pasha Bridge – Rada's Bridge



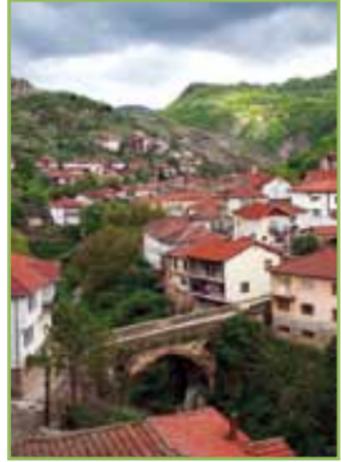
This bridge is located on the famous Manceva River and was built in 1833. The bridge was built on two tall towers, of which one is 28 and the other is 29 meters high. This bridge was built by the known Skopje nobleman Havzi Pasha. Regarding the most famous Rada's Bridge, a poignant leg-

end is told, according to which Rada was walled up alive in its foundation. The shocking story of nine mason brothers and the beautiful bride Rada still attracts a large number of domestic and foreign tourists who come to see the legendary Rada's Bridge in Kratovo.

The bridge was built and launched on 16 September 1833, while the construction management was entrusted to the then Skopje nobleman Havzi Pasha. The construction of the bridge was secured through the financial support of the city of Dubrovnik, thanks to the commitment of residents of Dubrovnik colony in Kratovo, which had 57 houses, and German Saxon miners, who restored old Kratovo mines. The bridge over the Manceva

River was needed for communication with Zletovo, Lesnovo, Shtip, Kochani and other nearby towns.

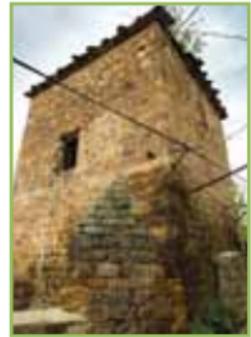
By the end of the 14th century, the famous mason Rade built a bridge, known as Rade's Bridge. On both sides there were watchtowers and toll was collected in kind - in eggs, honey, cheese, cottage cheese... However, around 1820, the bridge was destroyed by a lightning strike. Thus, the passengers remained cut off, and the commercial links with surrounding towns were



impaired, so people had to go round using Argulichki Bridge. So therefore, Ragusans and Saxons who lived in Kratovo secured funding from Dubrovnik and started the construction of the legendary Rada's Bridge directly over the ruined Rade's Bridge, from which there are remnants still standing today - recount Kratovo people, who have collected and preserved legends and traditions on Kratovo landmarks for years.

Emin Bey Tower

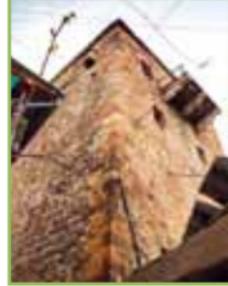
Emin Bey Tower is 12.74 meters high and its base is rectangular with a width of 6.10 meters. The door is located on its south side and made from cut stone. Remains of side wall extensions can be seen on the tower. (It can be assumed that this tower may have been merged with another facility, which was destroyed later). The same wall right of the tower entrance contains a horn in the form of a protruded pyramid which represents an independent structure. It was a



bathroom with a toilet. The tower has three floors. Floors are enclosed by a wooden structure and paved with hexagonal tiles. The door thickness is 8 cm and it is thicker than in the other towers. These doors open by turning around thick shafts supported in a stone groove, while the upper edge of the door is set in iron tubes. The stairs are quite steep and wooden, and they are made of stone only on the third floor. The third floor is 6.05 meters high with a cross vault and roof tiles. There is a fireplace, a niche, shelves and cupboards for household items.

Abedin Efendi Tower

Among the better preserved towers in Kratovo is the tower of Stevan Simic, the former Abedin Efendi Tower. It was built in 1370. The High Tower (21.80 m) was built in the late 14th century. Until 1912, the tower was owned by Abedin Efendi.



Its builders gave the tower unique and peaceful looks with a monumental appearance, both in terms of the combination of its mass and the composition of the material used and built in - stone, brick and wood. Its conservation was performed in 1968/69. On its last floor, there is one of the most beautiful rooms, decorated with stylized ornamentation in the form of lily leaves. It also has seven windows, a fireplace, cupboards, two watchtowers, a gap and a balcony protruded over stone consoles, on the south facade of the tower. Inside, it is divided into floors, of which the most beautiful is the fourth one, with a beautiful view of the city. Upper parts could be reached through the tunnel-like stone stairs located on the south wall, thus giving the impression that the visitor moves through a tunnel. The tower has a total of 69 stairs, lighted by three small openings, of which one is a watch on the north wall protected by a stone shield.

Clock Tower

Kratovo Clock Tower is located on the east corner of the square in the downtown area. Based on the style features of towers in Shtip and Kochani, Kratovo Clock Tower could be dated back in the 16th or 17th century. It is assumed that it was built in the late Middle Ages (probably in 1372), while during the Ottoman period, rich Turkish Beys lived there. Kratovo had 12 towers, of which 6 are preserved today, including the Clock Tower. Within the tower, there is a small exhibition displaying Kratovo through centuries. The tower clock has



not been operational since long ago and there is no clock mechanism inside the tower. Yet, because there was once a mechanism with a clock inside the tower, the tower got its name after it. It is built from cut stone, which was extracted from the town's surrounding area, while the roof is

made of stone slabs. The tower's inside is divided into 3 floors, of which the upper ones have one balcony each and living units. Its windows are protected by iron bars and have different sizes; in the lower part, they are narrow and elongated, while on the upper floors, they are wider.



Asan Efendi Tower

This tower was built in 1365. It was named after its last owner, Gjorgji Zlatkov. He bought this tower from Asan Efendi, after whose name it had been called back then. The base of the tower is rectangular, it is built with thick stone walls, its height is 5.90 and 6.35 meters. The tower has three floors and it can be entered through a siege ladder. Under the door sills, remains of stone beams and an extended wall used to support the ladder can be seen. The southeast wall has an incavation used as a bathroom with a toilet. Wooden stairs lead to the last top floor, which is entered through a wooden door closing horizontally. It is assumed that this tower is one of the oldest Kratovo towers.



Kumanovo through legends!

Kumanovo is the city of the jester Lad George. The character of Lad George sprung from the people, who were telling the story about him. The song "Lad George Has Died" is famous in Macedonian folk music. There are several versions of this character. According to one, the popular Lad was a real person, born in the Kumanovo village of Mlado Nagorichane in 1815 and died at age 65. He originated from a relatively rich peasant farming family. He was a big playboy and led a libertine life with his father's money, while with his cheerful spirit and sense of mockery he cheered up the villagers at weddings and other celebrations. He became known as a great lover-boy desired by girls and young brides in Kumanovo villages at that time. Supposedly, his father got him married against his will to a girl ten years his senior. In that loveless marriage George had no children, but he was young and handsome, and continued to live an easy life from one song to another, from one dance to another, wandering around the villages. Because he liked brandy and somebody else's beautiful wives, once he had passed away, people sang of him as a man who "did not die from any disease, but from madness". In honor of Lad George, a masquerade bearing his name is held in Kumanovo, and it includes primary and secondary school students masked and organized in a parade. There is a Lad George monument noticeable in the city, thus showing Kumanovo people's respect for their renowned compatriot.

Did you know?

Kumanovo became the nahiye's administrative center in the late 16th or early 17th century. The first original data about the settlement of Kumanovo are mentioned in 1519, in the travelers' notepads at the archives of Turkey in Istanbul. The most extensive and most significant data are given by Evliya Çelebi in 1660, who wrote: "The settlement of Kumanovo is situated on the territory of Skopje Sanjak and constitutes a dukedom. The city is embellished with many rivers, adorned with 600 houses, covered with roof tiles."

Mosques in Kumanovo Mufti:

Yusuf Efendi Mosque

A Muslim shrine located in the village of Lipkovo, Municipality of Lipkovo, Macedonia. The mosque was built in 1773 by the cemat of this township. It was rebuilt a number of times with villagers' self-contribution. In 1963, Skopje earthquake completely damaged the minaret and some parts of the mosque. In 1967, it was renovated and extended, and a new minaret was built.

Koca Mehmed Bey Mosque (Tabanovce)

The mosque was built in the period from 1586 to 1596. The mosque's arabesque can be seen in the mihrab (altar niche) in the interior, and the minaret's serefe with "mukarnas" stalactite decoration made in brick. Today, the mosque is threatened by further ruination due to its lack of maintenance, i.e. lack of function. The mosque was declared an important cultural heritage of Macedonia.

Halid Efendi Mosque (Slupchane)

Halid Efendi Mosque is a Muslim shrine located in the village of Slupchane, Municipality of Lipkovo, Macedonia. According to Kumanovo mufti's archival data, the mosque was built in 1415. It was built from villagers' contributions and reconstructed several times during its existence, including in 1936, 1969 and 1987, while in 1994, the entire mosque was reconstructed, including its minaret. In the same period, a marble slab called "Badr" was placed.

Tatar Sinan Bey Mosque

The mosque is one of the oldest Islamic monuments in Kumanovo, known as Eski (Old) Mosque. According to some protocol data, it was built by Tatar Sinan Bey in 1532, in the Turkish Orta-Well neighborhood, where it is also located today. The inscription on a tombstone in the mosque's courtyard states that in 1659/60, Haji Osman Suleiman was the first muteveli of this mosque. The mosque is a single-domed building with a porch on the north side, which is the main architectural feature of early Ottoman mosques and one of the most frequent types of mosques in the 16th century in the Balkans. The transition from the prayer space to the dome part was made by the so-called frieze of Turkish triangles, a quite interesting and rare transition possibility under the dome, which having an

unusually high tambour of the mosque's dome (that just like at the central dome above the porch, is circular both inside and outside), classify the mosque among the most interesting ones and also make it a unique example with such architectural solution in Macedonia from the 16th century. The mosque's interior houses the usual elements present in the prayer space - mihrab, minbar and mahfil characterized by simplicity of form.



The uniqueness of the mosque is present in the decorative low relief treatment in the second zone of outside overwindows, with floral and geometric ornaments and lintel treatment above the main entrance to the



prayer space and serefe, which speaks about a precise masterly hand and the importance given to the construction of this facility. The entire mosque (excluding its subsequent extensions) is constructed of precisely processed stone squares of yellow and brown stone from the area of Zhegligovo, and with a method rarely used in the construction of this kind of facilities in Macedonia. The minaret, which gives a vertical emphasis to the building, is located on the western side of the mosque. It is not very high and is set on a quadrangular pedestal extending to a polygonal body, featuring an elegantly made stalactite decoration under the serefe. In the courtyard, west of the mosque, a necropolis with a larger number of tombstones is found. The mosque, depending on the needs, was repeatedly renovated and extended, thus distorting its original appearance.

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