



# ARCHEODANUBE

## E-NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 3 • NOVEMBER 2021



MESSAGES FROM  
**HERCULANEUM**  
INTERVIEW WITH DR. FRANCESCO SIRANO  
DIRECTOR OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK OF  
HERCULANEUM, ITALY

**Bringing archaeological requirements together with the demands of future-oriented urban development and visitor expectations is no easy task. What is your strategy in Herculaneum for this?**

The progressive overcoming of the management logic based on the difference between inside and outside the Park is one of the main objectives of my daily work. Being the Director of the Archaeological Park is a great responsibility that you can only face with a lot of efforts, studies, evaluations, reflections, ability to make quick choices, elaboration of strategies, listening to both the team and the stresses that come from outside. In every event organised by the Park there is the attention to the surrounding area with which we try to build shared values also through good practices. For example, we have recently restored and relocated the copy of a terracotta statue of one of Xian's famous warriors, donated to the local community by the People's Republic of China and severely damaged by thugs, in the municipal garden of the modern city. I mean that we don't just pay attention to involving the territory in our events but we physically leave the Park to stretch our hand to the territory itself. All this responds to a participatory process in which the Park collaborates strongly with the local community by providing its know-how. These are not only symbolic gestures but for years also we practice dialogue between past and present to create synergy and understanding between Park, local community and municipal administration of Herculaneum.

ARCHEOCANUBE  
E-NEWSLETTER 3

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# FRANCESCO SIRANO

Francesco Sirano, archaeologist at the Italian Ministry of Heritage and Cultural Activities, is the Director of the Archaeological Park of Herculaneum since 2017. He has extensive experience in museum management and archaeological park management in the Italian Campania region, for which he has carried out important excavations, restoration projects, and enhancement of archaeological heritage. His main areas of research are Greco-Roman archaeology and the study of image and material culture.

# HERCULANEUM DIRECTOR

**In your view, what are the most important success factors for getting local citizens interested in their cultural heritage and turning them into convinced supporters of a site like Herculaneum?**

In the planning of each event, involved citizens who must feel like protagonists to appreciate how lucky they are to be born and live in a historical place of such importance, be proud of it but also aware of the delicacy of this heritage. We have abandoned the dispensational logic that experts should inform the public. Instead, we are trying a participatory, empathetic approach. In this sense I could say that the Park does not speak the language of the Academy but the Neapolitan dialect. We also use this attitude towards the audience of visitors: for example, we have an initiative "Close up yards" which is now an annual event, that allows tourists to get closer to the behind-the-scenes work of the cultural world of the Park, which must also be interpreted in its sense of job opportunities that the Park offers to its enlarged territory. Let us first talk to young people so that they take up studies that satisfy them, that they do not leave their country and work in an institution of great national importance.



**Which stakeholders are particularly important for your work and what is your strategy to involve them in Herculaneum?**

The Park has started a strategic approach to this theme also thanks to the studies on the public developed by the Packard Humanities Institute over the last twenty years. The involvement of local communities is a cornerstone of the Park's management plan. Our local community has expanded over time in a systematic way; since I started my direction of the Park I wanted that between the archaeological site and the modern city there was no break. In fact, the very conformation of ancient and modern city requires it strongly: the houses of the modern Herculeans overlook directly the ancient remains of the site. In addition to institutional stakeholders (municipal administration, the Virtual Archaeological Museum, cultural sites, voluntary associations, local and non-local economic conditions), the Park diversifies its references to a bouquet of stakeholders where young people in different age groups represent a very important element in turn divided into many segments. Moreover we have the female public, that of elderly people, the disabled, people with social reintegration problems and, of course, we also keep attention to the public of art and archaeology fans. It is an interactive process, where the comparison of strategies is continuous. Of course, it takes predisposition to interaction in the management strategy!

*Karin Drda-Kühn*



# NICE TO MEET YOU!

The first personal transnational stakeholder meeting and project meeting of the ArcheoDanube project implemented within the framework of the Danube Transnational Program was held in Vienna 11-13 October 2021, where most of the partners and stakeholders also attended and participated in the interactive sessions and workshops. 22 participants from 9 countries joined the meeting.

The meeting was a great opportunity for the partnership and the participants to learn from the history and from each other. Fantastic speakers with great professional experience were invited to give us examples how archeotourism and the protection of cultural heritage can work efficiently and successfully.

The learning process did not end on theoretical level. Participants of the meeting went on a sightseeing tour in the heart of Vienna to visit the traces of the ancient Roman city. Then participants had the opportunity to visit Carnuntum, the ancient Roman city. These guided tours helped participants and project partners to learn a lot about the presentation and preservation of the cultural heritage.

In the next phase of the project, project partners will work hard on preparing some interactive and innovative tools, which will help you learn about the history of your beloved city in an entertaining way. The yesterday-today-tomorrow tool, and the ArcheoTales app will help us to make the history alive!



"Europe has a cultural heritage of inestimable value. It is important to preserve it and make it accessible. One way to do that is through Archeo Parks, where people can experience archaeology in a tourist way. We are exploring how such parks can be realized in urban contexts in the ArcheoDanube project. We learn from each other and have a lively exchange about it ..." - the lead partner of the project highlighted the significance of archaeological parks.

How to protect the archaeological heritage in the cities? How to preserve it and present in situ? How can we bring the history and the cultural heritage closer to the citizens? The ArcheoDanube project co-financed by the EU will help us to answer these questions. The project aims to help us how to preserve the cultural heritage for the future generations in an innovative way with the help of archaeological parks and how to develop archeotourism.

## OUR FIRST PHYSICAL MEETING

VIENNA, AUSTRIA

One of the main scopes of WP1 “Framework planning” was to create a common ground of knowledge in order to enable mutual understanding, sound cooperation and shared planning tools between all project partners coming from eleven countries, not only from the EU, with very different conditions and regulations. The main output of the work package are Local Archeo Plans. The first step was to create a common methodology for collecting all necessary background information in the form of a questionnaire distributed to each partner. We were looking for information about international conventions and charters, national and regional legislations and strategies, empirical data from research and development projects, as well as specific country-related information about conservation, presentation and management conditions of archaeological sites and specifically about the city partners’ chosen pilot sites. Main definitions and requirements for archaeological parks were clarified, some good practices were highlighted, but also main problems of our pilot sites came to light. Collected data was presented in the “Baseline study”, which was then summarized into a concise Slide deck presentation.

We concentrated also on a second challenge in need of improvement in all included partner countries developing a decision-making process with an appropriate space for participation. Our partner “Association Culture & Work”, an expert in this field, prepared a guidance for the inclusion of stakeholders and helped the city partners to include all relevant actors with additional recommendations. City partners were tasked with the search for relevant stakeholders for their pilot sites, to form stable stakeholder groups and to organize meetings with them.

One of the main results of WP1 is the “Guidebook for creating Local Archeo Plans” which was made with the cooperation of all project partners identified as knowledge providers. The document should help city partners with the creation of Local Archeo Plans for their pilot sites. The Guidebook leads the reader/user through multiple stages; from assessment of their archaeological heritage and its values, formulating a feasibility study all the way to the designing and action planning of their Local Archeo Plans. The plans are created within an easy-to-use template that is part of the Guidebook. The template can be modified to suit each partner’s needs. Even though the “Guidebook for creating Local Archeo Plans” and the template was developed for the project ArcheoDanube, its wide range of topics and guidelines can be useful for users outside the project, that are interested in the creation or enhancement of archaeological parks.

To teach the city partners to use the guidebook and the template, a 2-day training course was organized by the knowledge providers. In this training course, which was conducted over Zoom, the main parts of the Guidebook were presented and discussed. On the first day the focus was on presentations, while on the second day, group sessions were organized. Training materials, prepared by the knowledge providers, were used in order to explain and elaborate most important aspects of the Guidebook.

Now city partners are in the process of preparing their Local Archeo Plans for their pilot sites: hopefully they will be successful in the planning process, laying down the foundation for a still better implementation.



## ACHIEVEMENTS IN WPT 1

1

### BASELINE STUDY

Collection of legal provisions and practices about conservation and management of archaeological sites

2

### GUIDANCE ON STAKEHOLDER INVOLVMENT

Stakeholder identification, analysis and recommendations for the establishment of stakeholder groups

3

### 10 STAKEHOLDER TEAMS ESTABLISHED

Local learning&action stakeholder teams, dedicated to the pilot archaeological sites, established

4

### 10 LOCAL STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS

Meetings organized between city partners and local stakeholder teams

5

### GUIDEBOOK FOR DESIGNING LAPS

Guidance on how to plan conservation, presentation, interpretation and promotion of archaeological sites within a Local Archeo Plan

6

### 2-DAY TRAINING COURSE

Methodology, template and content of the Local Archeo Plan explained to all city partners and tested during interactive group sessions

**FOR MORE DETAILS  
CLICK THE PICTURE**

# WORK PACKAGE T1 FRAMEWORK PLANNING

WP LEADER: INSTITUTE FOR THE PROTECTION OF  
CULTURAL HERITAGE OF SLOVENIA  
SLOVENIA

**WHAT WE  
ACHIEVED  
SO FAR  
JULY 2020-  
OCT 2021**





## ACHIEVEMENTS IN WPT2 - METHODS AND TOOLS

1

### ELABORATION OF THE STRATEGY OF IMPLEMENTATION OF ARCHAEO TOURISM

to help city-partners raise awareness about local archaeological heritage, the need to protect it, and its economical potential, using the following tools:

CATALOGUE OF GOOD PRACTICES

INFOGRAPHICS

2

### SMART TOOLS

innovative apps to help managers of archaeological parks and museums preserve valuable heritage assets, while also being able to present them in an attractive way:

YESTERDAY - TODAY - TOMORROW

ARCHEOTALES

3

### E-HANDBOOK

to assist public or private local factors in identifying and developing the best management strategies for local archaeological remains

FOR MORE DETAILS

CLICK THE PICTURE

One important output is the Strategy of the Implementation of Archaeotourism which will help the city-partners to find the best ways to raise awareness about local archaeological heritage, the need to protect it, and its potential for fostering economic growth. The first step in this endeavour was to identify good practices in enhancing, managing and promoting existing archaeological parks and monuments. All project partners participated in this activity, using a practical template to describe their findings. The result was a comprehensive catalogue of good practices from different European countries.

The next step is to produce a number of relevant infographics highlighting the main findings and conclusions of this identification process. These will be used by city-partners while designing and implementing their Local Archeo Plans as means of engaging with different stakeholders. The same findings and conclusions will inform the elaboration of the aforementioned Strategy, which will be used not only by the city-partners involved in this project, but also by other interested European municipalities. This tool and the accompanying infographics will be available from December 2021.

Another important output is the E-handbook for the management of enhancement projects in urban archaeological sites and the integration with a sustainable tourism. This tool aims to assist public authorities, local communities, project managers, developers, landowners, archaeologists, heritage conservators and other stakeholders in identifying and developing the best management strategies for local archaeological remains based on a number of important factors: heritage protection requirement, local urban development plans, support of the local community, various interests of the local stakeholders, tourism potential impact etc. The knowledge providers are currently preparing the first draft, which will be available in December 2021 for the city-partners to test during their pilot-project actions and provide feedback.

An important output concerns the preservation versus presentation issue, an obvious challenge for all archaeological parks. Our aim is to offer innovative ways of overcoming this challenge, by providing two smart tools that are able to both preserve and present valuable heritage assets, while also increasing the attractiveness of the archaeological parks.

One tool is called Yesterday - Today - Tomorrow and is designed to guide the managers of archaeological parks through the decision-making processes using a step-by-step selection of parameters: state of the site, urban context, protection requirements, available budget, tourism activity, presentation tools, personnel etc. The tool will enable the users to test different possible scenarios based on a variety of options, so different users can adapt it to their own situation.

The second tool is ArcheoTales - an app that is designed as a typical scavenger hunt, bringing archaeology to life in an informative but enjoyable way for visitors of all ages. The tool aims to extend the archaeology experience beyond the archaeological park or museum into the urban space, thus linking urban development, archaeology and tourism. The city-partners will be supported to create their own hunts based on this app and their own archaeological heritage. Three such hunts are currently developed as a test in collaboration with three city-partners from Bulgaria, Hungary and Bosnia-Herzegovina, before being implemented by other city-partners.

WHAT WE  
ACHIEVED  
SO FAR  
JAN2021-  
OCT2021

## WORK PACKAGE T2 METHODS AND TOOLS

WP LEADER: ROMANIAN ACADEMY CLUJ BRANCH,  
INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY OF ART  
ROMANIA

Objectives of the Work Package 3 is to consolidate the solutions developed in Work Package 2, and to convey specific proposals on transnational level to policymakers in order to influence policies of cultural heritage. To achieve our goals, we will carry out a number of activities until the end of the project, in cooperation with all the members of the partnership.

- Think Tank workshops: It will facilitate the strategy building process, intensive in-depth discussions between experts. It will be organised by each city, with the participation of experts from partner cities and professional expert members. The main purpose of the Think Tank workshops is to exchange, join evaluate, and transfer the knowledge about the pilots by experts and partners.
- Symposium - Connections between history and tourism: On the one hand the objective of the symposium is to sign Memorandum of cooperation among the partners, on the other hand to build new knowledge and cooperation among relevant actors. The focus of the symposiums will be to build connections between history and tourism - value of archaeological parks, the target group is "young experts".
- Demonstration and application of pilot actions: They are typically regulatory changes, small-scale investments, awareness-raising activities, reorganisation, or redirection of existing services. The interventions will focus on the following three categories:
  - Inexpensive or no-cost solutions (small-scale investments) - They will be implemented in investment work packages (I1-I6)
  - Applying project principles to guide investments being implemented in the partner cities
  - Educational, awareness, and promotion for sustainable tourism to make visibility of the cultural heritage for touristic promotion
- Short videos about archaeological site: Following the implementation of the pilot activities, each city partner will make a 3-minute video about the selected archaeological site.
- Policy proposals - common transnational proposals for the Danube strategy: Transnational programmes can play an important role in identifying problems, challenges in various fields, and facilitating the cooperation of stakeholders to address these challenges, as well as initiating policy changes on both national and transnational level using the learnings from the work of various partnerships.
- Network Consortium: In the EU, there are a lot of networks, which will increase the visibility of outputs, and partners in the projects (for example: EU heritage alliance, EAA, the best in Heritage,...). ARCHEODANUBE partnership will capitalise the achieved results by joining these networks. It integrates the consortium into different networks (touristic network, historical networks, heritage networks,... ), which have already been established and operating.
- Transnational ArcheoDANUBE Webpace: Implementation of the "Transnational ArcheoDANUBE Webpace" for the following objectives: i) Exchange of experience, ii) Knowledge sharing-website, iii) International contacts-website, iv) bringing together the relevant actors and stakeholders, v) promoting a culture of creativity and innovation, vi) providing expertise and services, vii) and supporting business development (e.g. commercial partnerships). "clustering"



### KEY OBJECTIVES IN WPT3

- 1 THINK TANK WORKSHOPS**  
The main purpose of the Think Tank workshops is to exchange, join evaluate and transfer the knowledge about the pilots by experts and partnership.
- 2 DEMONSTRATION AND APPLICATION OF PILOT ACTIONS**  
for example: regulatory changes, small-scale investments, reorganization
- 3 NETWORK CONSORTIUM**  
In EU there is a lot of networks which will increase the visibility of outputs and partners in the projects. ARCHEODANUBE partnership will capitalize the achieved results with joining these networks.
- 4 TRANSNATIONAL ARCHEODANUBE WEBSITE**  
for example for the following purposes: exchange of experience, knowledge sharing-website, bringing together the relevant actors and stakeholders, providing expertise and services

FOR MORE DETAILS  
CLICK THE PICTURE

# WORK PACKAGE T3 EDUCATION AND PILOT ACTIONS

WEST PANNON REGIONAL AND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT PUBLIC NONPROFIT LTD  
HUNGARY

WHAT WE  
ACHIEVED  
SO FAR  
JUNE 2021-  
OCT 2021



# ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AT RISK



## The ancient ruins of Temple of Cybele

One of the most interesting and significant cultural and historical landmarks in Balchik is the temple of Cybele, discovered accidentally during the construction of a hotel in 2007. It is the only temple of the Mother Goddess in the eastern part of the Balkan Peninsula, and the finds in it are equal in importance to those of the ancient complex of Pompeii. The found inscriptions and marble sculptures are the most numerous found in monuments related to the cult of Cybele. Archaeologists suggest that the temple was built in the 3rd century BC and functioned until the end of the 4th century AD, when a natural cataclysm overwhelmed it and so it managed to survive over the years.

And while the ancient complex of Pompeii in Italy welcomes thousands of tourists each year from around the world, the Temple of Cybele in Balchik has been put on hold in terms of reconstruction for 12 years and will hopefully receive the attention and care that such a unique cultural and historical landmark deserves.

Cybele is also called the Great Mother, Mother of the gods and all living things on earth, personified by the forces of nature, is the patron saint of mountains, forests and beasts. The finds, discovered in 2007 in Balchik, have been restored and preserved and are on display at the White City History Museum. These are more than ten whole or semi-preserved marble statuettes of Aphrodite, Pan, Poseidon, Dionysus, epigraphic monuments, over 200 coins, clay lamps and others. The temple itself has been declared a national cultural monument - it is state property, but on private property. Precisely for this reason, according to the director of the museum Radostina Encheva, to this day this sanctuary does not receive its well-deserved care and almost no one knows about its existence.

BATTI, within the ArcheoDanube project is reviving the interest towards the future of the Temple of Cybele and is currently gathering workgroups for developing Local Archeo Plan for the Temple in the most wanted future scenario - full restoration in a designated, state- or municipality-owned land.



# ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AT RISK

Ptuj boasts a rich cultural heritage, but unfortunately, much of this wealth is hidden from the public eye and locked in depots. The Ptuj - Ormož Regional Museum has been without premises for a permanent archaeological exhibition since 2011, which boasts the status of a collection of national importance and comprises as many as 500,000 different exhibits. We keep an archaeological collection in Ptuj, which is not only important for Ptuj, but is also extremely important for Slovenia and Europe.

In the Municipality of Ptuj, we have been striving for a long time to establish appropriate premises for the presentation of our rich archaeological collection. Due to the scale of the project, we decided to start solving the problem in phases. In the first phase, we want to set up a space for the presentation of roman, medieval, and modern stone monuments in the area of the former filling station at Muzejski trg 2b, Ptuj. The subject of the investment is the installation of an open-type archaeological depot as a functional facility that will serve for the storage, protection and processing of archaeological heritage and will be a modern exhibition center that will provide education to all categories of visitors.

In the Municipality of Ptuj, we want to implement the project to approach the presentation of outstanding cultural heritage in an innovative and professional manner, and to strengthen its connection with other sectors and areas of creativity.

**Ptuj is planning  
an urgently needed  
archaeological depot**





# ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AT RISK

During early research of Sirmium, within the Museum of Srem, archaeologists discovered the remains of an urban villa with mosaic-decorated floors. In the late 80's it was removed from its original place. Due to lack of funds, this beautiful example of Roman art and skill remained hidden until the 2000's. Although the mosaic was returned to its place, the reconstruction work was never completed.

The mosaic still hides its true beauty from the eyes of many tourists under layers of dirt and tar, interspersed with surfaces of concrete base waiting to carry the reconstructed parts.

At the same time, the surrounding area is under the influence of moisture due to rain and sewage pipes, which constantly puts the mosaic in new danger. Without the completed reconstruction of the missing parts, the edges of the mosaic can very easily break off and lead to new damage but also additional costs.

It is necessary to protect this beautiful part of the history of Sirmium, Sremska Mitrovica, but also the whole world, and to show its true beauty by reconstruction and cleaning, so that the next generations will have the opportunity to enjoy it.



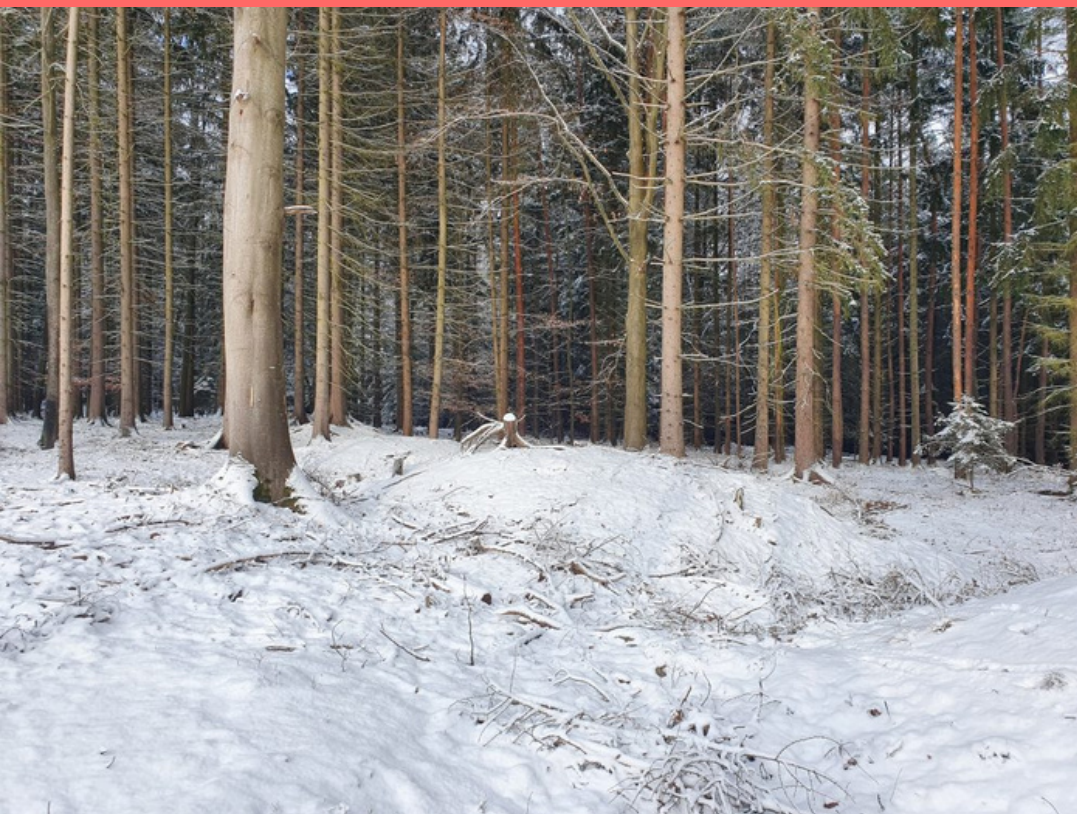
**Hidden beauty**



# ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AT RISK



## Fighting the bark beetle devastates significant archeological heritage



In southern Bohemian region Písecko there is quite a large Slavic burial ground developed in early medieval 8th and 9th century consisting of 38 burial moundscairns. It is a memory to the first Slavic colonists who settled in this region and it used to be part of former villages or fortified settlements.

Recently this region as well as the whole country fought the consequences of a bark beetle outbreak. Logging is the way to get rid of the bark beetle but the forest workers unwittingly devastated important archeological monuments which were up to now protected by the surrounding forest.

The problem is that logging the forest stricken by bark beetle outbreak is a legal duty and has to be done as quick as possible. There is no administrative procedure where the heritage protection institutions are informed about the logging in the archeological site. Usually they find out when the heritage is already irrevocably damaged. Because of logging there are occurring many new such incidents.

The National Heritage Authority therefore established a specialized working group which contacts forest management and private owners to inform them about the prevention of such risk. They also plan to develop an informational web site mapping such „invisible“ archeological heritage.

In the case of the destruction of six of these burial moundssix destroyer cairns the heritage protection agreed with the forest management that they will partly finance the archeological research. The research started in May 2021 and will take about two years. The archeologists find there remains of burials, pottery and rare iron artefacts.

Information source: [www.irozhlaz.cz](http://www.irozhlaz.cz)



# ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AT RISK



**Destruction of a prehistoric eponymous site Butmir**



In September 2016, in the area of the National Monument, the Archaeological Site of the Prehistoric Settlement in Butmir, rescue archeology was performed to determine the actual area of distribution of the archaeological potential at the site. The research aimed to prove the archaeological potential for the area where new construction is planned. According to the regulation plan, the municipality of Ilidža planned to destroy the archeological site and leave it to investors. The research was jointly conducted by a consortium consisting of the Institute of Archeology of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo, the Department of Archeology of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Ljubljana, and Arhej d.o.o. from Ljubljana. The research was conducted using several different methods, which combined machine-excavated test trenches and hand-excavated test pits. According to the overall results, it is possible to conclude that the archaeological site covers an area of 4 hectares and is positioned to the east and south about the originally defined area where the Butmir culture was once discovered. During the prospecting, it was determined that most of the site was devastated by numerous works overtime, but there are grounds for archaeological potential. The municipality of Ilidža, where this site of the same name is located, has adopted a spatial plan "Nova Ilidža 1", which includes a national monument that envisages the construction of a completely new settlement from the thermal riviera. The Commission to Preserve National Monuments of BiH considered the request of the Municipality of Ilidža to change the decision (deletion of cadastral parcels on which archaeological excavations were carried out) for the Butmir Archaeological Site, however, the archaeologist's report confirmed the presence of archaeological material in the area. Unfortunately, most of the sites were destroyed by urbanization in the previous period. Hotels, buildings, and universities were built on Butmir. The goal in the coming period is to protect this little space where archeology is located.



# ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AT RISK

The Fertőrákos Mithraeum is a temple to the Roman god Mithras at Fertőrákos in Hungary. Mithras sanctuaries flourished in the Roman Empire during the second to fourth centuries, mainly in the western provinces. These subterranean temples, or caves as the worshippers called them, were dedicated to Mithras, also worshipped as the Sun God.

The cult began to decline during the 4th century. In the Christian era the religion was forgotten and its caves were abandoned by their former guardians. The vault of the sanctuary on the bank of the River Fertő collapsed. The ruins were buried by rain and wind and overgrown by forest vegetation.

The remains of the Mithras cave were discovered independently by two young men in July 1866. It was discovered at almost the same time by Ferenc Stornó and György Malleschitz. The excavation of the Mithraeum was started by Ferenc Stornó. He found an inscribed cult image, three altar stones, two lion statues, 27 cremation graves with cremated ashes and coins, and a skeleton grave. Then he had a vault of carved limestone built over the shrine to protect it.

After the First World War, this area became a "no man's land", the sanctuary was not visited and its condition gradually deteriorated. Subsequently the Mithraeum was caught in the collision zone between the great powers during the years of the confrontation between the socialist and capitalist regimes. From 1948, the barrier of mines and the iron curtain that replaced it prevented anyone from entering. The cult image was damaged, and the cave was filled with clayey debris. Gabriella Gabrieli, an archaeologist from Sopron, carried out the revision excavation of the Mithras shrine in 1991. György Kovács, sculptor-restorer and artist, restored the cult image. The protective building is the work of Ágnes H. Vladár.

In conclusion, thanks to the dedicated archaeologists, the restoration has been completed and the archaeological site, which is now a protected monument, was saved and is open to the public.



the sanctuary in the ancient past



restoration in the late 60s

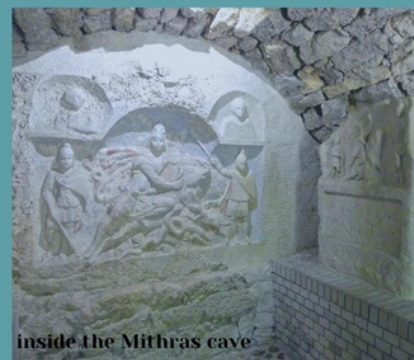


restoration in 1992



Mithraeum

## Fertőrákos Mithraeum



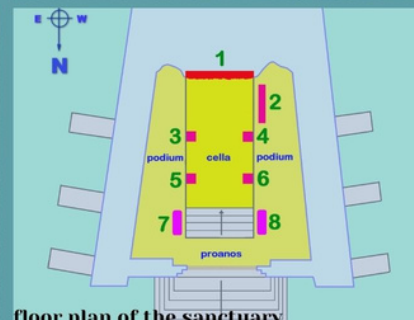
inside the Mithras cave



memorial stone



carved column remains



floor plan of the sanctuary

Discover Fertőrákos Mithraeum  
the Sanctuary of the Sun God, saved from the darkness



# ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AT RISK

Apulum (nowadays Alba Iulia) was the largest conurbation and the great cosmopolitan centre of the Roman province of Dacia founded by Emperor Trajan after the conquest of the Dacian Kingdom in 106 AD. Apulum is the generic name that includes: the fortress of the Legio XIII Gemina, the seat of the governors of Dacia (praetorium consularis), two urban centres, and two large necropolises. Apulum was an flourishing urban centre in the 2nd and 3rd c. AD. Archaeological and epigraphical evidence underline the significant impact of the military presence on the social and economic development of the city.

The development and the urban evolution of Alba Iulia through the rise and expansion of the real estate investments implicitly determined the increase of the rescue excavations in the city, that is, of the urban archaeology.

The Roman site Apulum was declared an area of national interest, respectively an area of archaeological priority, a regime that is established on a territory that includes archaeological sites whose archaeological research, protection and enhancement is of exceptional importance for our national history and culture. The preventive archaeological research carried out in 2009 and 2019 in the Domus-Thermae area led to the uncovering of a part of the Roman city, near the fortress and close to the praetorium. Were discovered: a Roman house - domus type, a part of the Roman baths (thermae), a road, and a small building consisting of two rooms. The most important discovery is the Roman domus, which occupies an area of about 2000 m<sup>2</sup> and probably belonged to the family of a local authority, being built after the second half of the 2nd century AD. The building has at least two phases of construction, it has a typical planimetry, the rooms being arranged around a courtyard with a peristyle.

Archaeological sites require an extra level of care in regards to their conservation and restoration. Archaeology, even with thorough documentation, is a destructive force. After the site has been left open, natural forces take hold of the area and begin to weaken any structures that have been built. Animals also burrow through the remnants, destroying floors, walls, and moving objects around. As walls and structures fall, they settle in different patterns and wind and water fill in the openings with dirt and dust. If the site is then left open, there is a renewal of deterioration since areas are now re-exposed to the weather. The source of most damage is weathering. Erosion through wind, rain, freeze-thaw, and evaporation are extremely common and other than covering the site entirely cannot be prevented.



After the completion of the rescue archaeological research, considering the importance of the discoveries in this area of the Roman city, it was forbidden to build the previously designed apartments. The creation of the archaeological park was delayed due to some administrative problems and the non-existence of an actual project. So, in this case, what directly affects the Roman ruins are: the exposure in the open air, the uncontrolled growth of plants whose roots affect ancient structures, the climatic conditions, radical changes in temperature and the time that elapses to the detriment of preserving this important archaeological heritage. Also, the human decision-making factor is equally important, bureaucratic problems being an impediment in the way of starting a project for an urban archaeological park in Alba Iulia.

Very sensitive to these climatic conditions are the structures made of crumbly sandstone such as walls, exterior pavements and the Roman road, but also the floors of cocciopesto (opus signinum) made of a mixture of lime, sand and crushed bricks, used especially for heating installations (hypocaustum). Currently, being a very large area (approx. 1600 m<sup>2</sup>), the Roman remains could not be covered with soil, instead they are protected with resistant geotextile material. The passage of time and climatic factors affect the structure of these monuments and their state of preservation is deteriorating more and more.



# ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AT RISK

Yatrus Fortress is part of the Roman heritage on the Danube. It is an ancient military camp from the II-III century and bears the name of the nearby river - Yantra. The fort is located 40 km west of Rousse. It was first described by Karel Shkorpil in the 19th century. The first archeological excavations of the fortress were carried out by a joint Bulgarian-German team in 1958 - by the Central Institute of Ancient History and Archeology at the Academy of Sciences of the German Democratic Republic and the Archaeological Institute with a museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Yatrus excavations stopped in 2000. Today, the fortress of Jatrus is an important part of the delineation of the boundaries of the Roman Limes in the Lower Danube, inscribed in the Tentative List of World Cultural Heritage. Despite its important scientific significance, the fortress is not socialized. There is a lack of built infrastructure, which hinders the free access to it. The fort is conquered by vegetation, which covers most of the ancient remains. Lack of control attracts illegal treasure hunters. None of the nearby museums or municipalities are in charge of its management. This has a negative impact on heritage protection, on the systematic nature of field research and on attracting tour operators and individual visitors. There is no concept for the socialization and management of the archeological site. The creation of a management plan would have a high added value both for the development of the research and for the economic condition of the region. Lack of care for Yatrus by the institutions has a negative effect on the attitude of local people towards the cultural heritage they have. They do not realize its value, do not identify with it and do not consider it a factor that could change their condition. The development of the site would attract tourists, create jobs and hotel and restaurant services would appear - but we have to care for the site!

## Yatrus

A Roman fortress with a future





# ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AT RISK

During the construction of the main road in Istrian County, the remains of a Roman patrician villa (from the 1st century BC which was used until the 6th century) were discovered. The remains are settled in Croatia, in Istrian region between the cities of Vodnjan and Pula

The works of the main road were immediately suspended and the Ministry of Culture came to analyse the discovery.

The archaeological importance of the site was categorized as "of national importance" and the site was planned to become an archeo park in the future.

After the end of the archaeological surveillance, the construction works of the road were continued without changing the original planned route. In the next months all the surrounding territory was mined to prepare the space for the new road. During these minings, a big landslide led to the destruction of two huge ancient stone tanks for olive oil storage, which were part of the production area of the Roman villa.

The works restarted without the mandatory archaeological supervision, even if, according to the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage, it is strictly prohibited. In the end no one was punished for this irresponsible behavior.

But, surviving parts of the villa are displayed near the main road and you are welcome to visit them!

## THE ROMAN VILLA



**Mining... parts of a Roman villa**



# What can we do to save our heritage at risk?

What could be sadder for a city than the loss of its cultural richness? As times are changing and urban transformations leave their mark on the appearance of Chisinau, fewer and fewer identity places remain intact and authentic. Their loss means that the specific character of the city disappears, those features which are familiar and significant for the inhabitants.

In the attempt to preserve one of such places in Chisinau, our team has started a long and extensive process of awareness raising on the cultural significance of the site "Visterniceni", which includes architectural monuments and archaeological remains. The historical, social, ecological and spiritual values of the place are important for scientific research but also for the local communities who dwell in the nearby area.

During the past decades, at first it was severely affected on certain parts by the construction of the Calea Moșilor road and by the building of the Chisinau Circus. Later, in more recent years, it is being suffocated by encroaching development which does not take into account the specifics of the place nor the need to keep the authenticity of the site. Although the site officially has the status of historic monument, it does not have an adequate protection area. It is not sufficiently researched and protected.

Under these circumstances, in order to prevent the further degradation of the archaeological and natural heritage, it is mandatory to preserve the site, to prohibit any construction works in its vicinity and to establish its protected area.



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