
DIANA BORISOVA*

REGIONAL MUSEUM OF HISTORY – DOBRICH DOBROUDJA – LAND OF OUR FORFATHERS

Rezumat: Muzeul de Istorie Dobrich este deschis din 1953 cu rolul de a collectiona, cerceta, pastra si prezenta mostenirea cultural-istorica a Dobrogei. Cu o colectia bogata de monumente praistorice pina la epoca moderna, specialisti cercetatori, expozitii originale, programe de educatie si evenimente, muzeul provoaca publicul sa regaseasca istoria trecutului lor. Muzeul are urmatoare expozitii pentru turisti – Arheologie, Casa traditionala bulgara din sec. XIX - XX, Complex etnografic Dobrich Vechi, Icoane, istoria moderna, Case memoriale “Jordan Jovkov”, “Adriana Budevaska”, Cimitir militar, Natura Dobrogeana.

The north-eastern part of the Balkan peninsula, situated south of the lower reaches of a river Danube is well-known today by the name Dobroudja. On the north this region is bordered by the west riverside till their flowing into the sea. On the east is confined of the West Black Sea coast, and on the south and west joined with the heights of Ludogorie, approximate the line, started from the mouth of the river Batova and ended to the Danube river, between the towns Silistra and Tutrakan.

The Dobroudja lands have been inhabited as early as prehistoric times. By the Archaeological complex on the Big island and on the west side of Durankulak lake are discovered settlements and necropolis, leave behind of the most ancient population which settled in this region as determined by archaeological excavations belongs to the period of the Late Neolithic, the Eneolithic, the Bronze and the Iron ages and ended to the end of The First Bulgarian Kingdom (5300 B.C. – first half of the XI. century A.D.). That's why Durankulak now is chronological standart for Dobroudja and Lower Danubian, which is nominated as “The Dobroudja Troy”. Among the research circles (scientists) Durankulak is popular also with the founded there oldest stone architecture in Continental Europe; with the biggest, completely researched prehistoric necropolis from the neolithic and eneolithic period and with the only one in Bulgaria discovered over his whole area oldbulgarian settlement with necropolis from the IX–X. century.

* Regional Museum of History Dobrich.

During the Iron Age Dobroudja was inhabited by Thracian-Gethic population, but the strategic location and the natural environment of the area attracted other ethnic groups as well: Cimmerians, Scythians, Sarmathians, Hellenes and Celts. In the Classic times on the West Black Sea coast appeared also numerous old Greek town-colonies. By the end of the I. century A.D. the Dobroudja territory was included within the Roman Empire as the province of Scythia Minor. This was a period when the infrastructure was developed and new roads, fortresses and towns were built.

At the end of the Great migration of peoples the Bulgarian tribes settled in Dobroudja and established the First Bulgarian Kingdom.

During the Byzantine rule (XI–XII. century), Late Nomadic tribes Pechenegs, Iasians, Oghuzes and Koumanians settled for a short period on the territory of the region. During XII–XIV. century, the inland of South Dobroudja was almost depopulated. Life was more intensive in the fortresses and the settlements along the Danube river and the Black Sea coast, including the valley of Batova river. At the beginning of the XIV. century these lands became the center of the Dobroudja feudal kingdom. Initially, the residence of the rulers was Karvuna, and later – the fortress Kaliakra.

At the end of the 14-th century Dobroudja fell within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire. During that time intensive demographic processes occurred in the region. The Ottoman colonization from XV–XVII century and the emigration of Bulgarian population in XVIII–XIX century imposed the co-existence of various ethnic and religious communities and groups in this area.

During the National Revival Dobroudja took part in the struggles of the Bulgarian people for new Bulgarian enlightenment, independence of the Bulgarian church and national liberation.

In 1878 these lands were liberated from the Ottoman rules. At the Berlin congress the Great powers separated the territory of Dobroudja, giving its northern part to Romania. During the next decades South Dobroudja became a coin of exchange in the relations between the two neighboring countries. In 1913–1916 and 1919–1940 the region was under Romanian rule. It was returned to Bulgaria with the Krayova Agreement from 1940.

This museum was established in 1953 with the mission to collect, investigate, maintain and present the cultural and historical heritage of Dobroudja. With our rich collections (encompassing a period from the 6-th millenium B.C. to the modern times), our researches, original exhibitions, educational programs and happenings we provoke people to study, reconsider and re-evaluate their historic past.

The Regional Museum of history in Dobrich was established in 1953. Its establishment is connected with the names of Dr. Lyubka Bobcheva, Dimo Dragnev and Margarita Dakova. In 1960 the first exhibition was opened in the building of the former casino. During the next years the classical museum structure was developed and systematic collective and research work began on the territory of the recently established district. The largest prehistoric cemetery in the world was discovered and investigated on the west bank of Durankulak Lake. Antique and medieval fortresses, settlements and cemeteries were investigated in Topola, Kamen Bryag, Kaliakra, Chirakman, Balchik, Odartsi, Kladentsi, Skala, Shabla, etc. Topographic maps of the burial mounds and cemeteries in the former Tolbuhin district were worked out. Numerous terrain expeditions and surveys were organized. As a result from these the museum funds were enriched, new exhibitions were opened, monographs and academic publications were issued.

Now the funds of the Regional Museum of History in Dobrich contain 150 000 items. These include:

- One of the richest prehistoric collections of artifacts from the archaeological complex near Durankulak (5300–4000 B.C.) in the country and on the Balkans;
- Ceramic collection from the largest Old Bulgarian ceramics production center near Topola;
- Collection of jewels from the rich Late Nomadic cemetery near Odartsi;
- One of the largest collections in Bulgaria of medieval weapons;
- A collection of icons from the National Revival in Dobroudja with the most abundant icon images of the saints Cyril and Methodius in Bulgaria;
- A collection on the “Dobroudja Problem”;
- The funds dedicated to the artists Jordan Jovkov, Anastas Petrov and Peter Dachev are the richest in Bulgaria.



These collections, as well as the museum artifacts kept at the funds of the Regional Museum of History in Dobrich form a part of the Bulgarian national treasure.

Exhibition: Archaeology of Dobroudja
(18 Konstantin Stoilov Str.)

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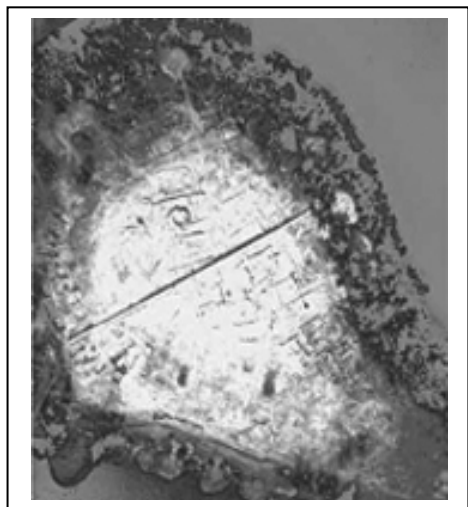
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Information

The archaeological investigations and excavations in South Dobroudja began with the establishment of the Museum of History in Dobrich in 1953. They encompass a part of the West Black Sea coast and its respective continental area. The archaeological sites date from the Late Neolithic (5 300 B.C.) till the end of the 14th century, when the Ottoman invaders to the Balkan Peninsula destroyed the Second Bulgarian Kingdom. The archaeologists have discovered remains from numerous archaeological cultures, tribes, ethnic groups, peoples and kingdoms that appeared and developed on this part of Europe for more than six millennia. The archaeological artefacts discovered provide explanations to many questions such as who were the most ancient inhabitants of Dobroudja and the Lower Danubian region during the time of the Stone and Stone-Copper ages (Neolithic and Eneolithic), what was specific for the Bronze and Iron cultures, the Thracian antiquity, the classical period and the early Byzantine age, and how the Bulgarian Kingdom was being created.

The archaeological sites already investigated or being now in the process of study, as well as some finds from South Dobroudja, successfully fill in the gap in the most ancient history of North-east Bulgaria and the Lower Danubian region. The results obtained have original exhibition value, besides their scientific importance. In this respect the Regional Museum of History – Dobrich possesses rich collections of prehistoric, antique and medieval artifacts unique for this part of Europe. They form the basis of the archaeological exhibition presenting the Archaeology of Dobroudja opened in 2002. This exhibition displays the most presentative items from the museum collections in their chronological sequence.

Prehistory



The prehistoric tell site on the Big Island in the Durankulak Lake occupies a significant place in the archaeology of the region. This place has been inhabited, with some insignificant interruptions, from the second half of the sixth millennium B.C. to the end of the First Bulgarian Kingdom (1018 A.D.). Therefore the experts consider it a model site for the regions of Dobroudja, the Lower Danube and South-East Europe.

Its cultural strata contained: remains from the first stage “Blatnitsa” of the Neolithic and Eneolithic culture Hamangia, the evolution period the

researchers have been searching for several decades; the most ancient stone architecture on continental Europe; the largest prehistoric cemetery in the world, discovered up to now.

Antiquity – 12th century b.c. – 5th century a.d.

During the Iron age the inland of the Dobroudja region was inhabited by Thracian and Gethic population, but the strategic location of the area and its natural resources attracted other ethnic groups, as well: Cimmerians, Scythians and Celts. At the same time numerous Greek polis colonies appeared along the West Black Sea coast. The museum funds keep more than 1 000 artifacts from that period, the grater part of them discovered during the excavations of the large Thracian cemetery near the villages Kragulevo and Cherna in Dobrich district.

At the end of the 1st century A.D. the territory of Dobroudja was included in the Roman Empire and became known as Scythia Minor. This was a period when the infrastructure was developed, and new roads, fortresses and towns were built. The largest fortification center from that time in Province Scythia was the Late Antique town Zaldapa localized near Abrit, Dobrich district.

Medieval period 7th – 14th century bc



At the end of the Great migration of peoples, the Bulgarian tribes settled on the territory of Dobroudja. Traces from them are discovered in the settlements and

cemeteries near the villages Topola, Durankulak, Hitovo, Bdintsi, Kassen, Cherna, etc.

The cemetery near Topola is the most representative of all with the abundance and variability of the pots and grave goods. It is related to the largest ceramic production center discovered up to now dating from the time of the First Bulgarian Kingdom. The cemetery near Odartsi is interesting with the presence of the Late Nomadic Tribes in Dobroudja. Its rich burial goods include jewels from silver, bronze, glass and bone, which makes it unique for the territory of Bulgaria.

The archaeological exhibition hall and the museum funds contain over 2 000 artifacts from the period of the Early Middle Ages.

It is supposed that during 12th – 14th century the inland of South Dobroudja was depopulated. Life survived only in the fortresses and settlements along the Danube river and the Black Sea coast, including the valley of the Batova river. At the beginning of the 14th century these lands became the center of the Dobroudja feudal kingdom. Initially the residence of its princes was Karvuna (a place not yet localized), and later the Kaliakra Fortress. The Museum of History in Dobrich keeps a part of the archaeological finds from the excavations in Kaliakra. The most interesting among them are the silver, gold and gilded ear rings and head decorations from the cemetery, and the ceramic pots from the fortress decorated by the “sgraphito” technique.

The museum funds contain the largest collection of Late Medieval weapons in Bulgaria – swords and maces from 12th to 14th century.

The traditions and lifestyle of the Bulgarians at the end of the XIX. and beginning of the XX. century (5 Alen mak Str.)

Ethnography



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Information

The Dobroudja region provides interesting opportunities for ethnographic, folklore and dialect studies. The specific history of this Bulgarian region determines the variability of ethnographic groups which co-existed for several centuries in close cultural contact. Each of them preserved its regional traditions originating from different parts of Bulgaria such as

Thrace, the Balkan mountains and North Dobroudja. In parallel, as a result from their mutual interaction, the ethnographic groups created a material and spiritual culture characteristic only for this part of Bulgaria. This determined the richness and variability of museum artifacts kept at the ethnographic museum fund (a total of 8 955 items), as well as the collected scientific archive and materials from terrain surveys from all settlements in the Dobrich region.

Ethnographic house

The Ethnographic house was built in the downtown of Dobrich in close proximity to the church “St. George” during 1860-1961 by an anonymous master from the Balkan region. The house is a typical architectural monument from the National Revival period. A century later the house was restored and made an ethnographic museum. Its interior represents the lifestyle and professional occupation of the population at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

The ground floor of the house includes the ante-chamber, which exhibits the traditional clothes of the local population; the kitchen, the bed-room and the basement, which shows original pots for preparing and conservation of food, agricultural tools and weaving means.

On the upper floor, the guest room shows the interior of the house of a rich tradesman who migrated here from the region of Kotel. The other rooms reconstruct the furnishing of the kitchen and larder. Next to them is the “chardak”, a wooden verandah which occupied an important place in family life.

Architectural and ethnographic open air museum “Old Dobrich”



The “Old Dobrich” is built in the modern down town on the place of the former market street. For a quarter of a century now the “Old Dobrich” maintains, exhibits and develops the traditional Dobroudja crafts from the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.

In the reconstructed main market street, hereditary craftsmen continue a tradition of many centuries. Using old manual technologies and original instruments, the craftsmen manufacture products in more than 30 workshops of pottery, black smith, embroidery, weaving, cooperage, homespun tailoring, goldsmith, etc. In the center of the ethnographic complex, the old clock tower from the 18th century was reconstructed, which is a symbol of the Bulgarian town from the period of the National Revival. Near it

there is the musk from the 17th century. The café, the pub and the inn are of special interest; they present the architecture, lifestyle and economics of the Old Dobrich, providing at the same time a possibility for relaxation and entertainment.

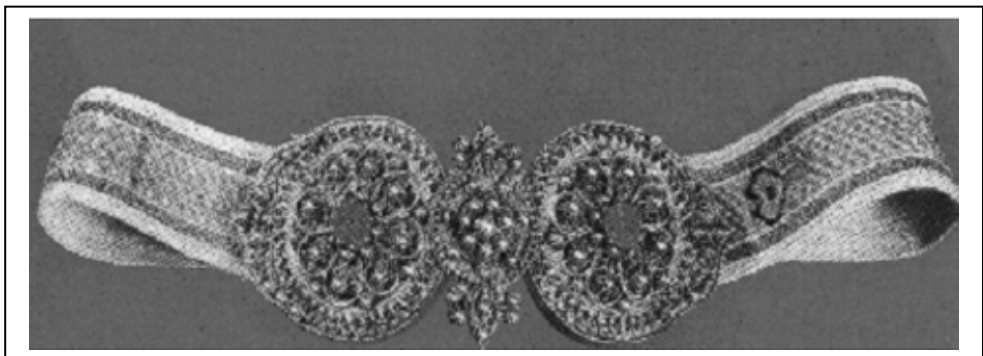
Collections



Traditional folk clothes

The traditional folk clothes kept at the Ethnographic department give an idea of the variability of clothes characteristic for the ethnographic groups on the territory of Dobroudja during 18th-20th century. The collection impressed with its size and originality, as well as with strong its syncretism resulting from the complex ethnic and cultural interactions in this region due to the settlement of large population groups from the regions of Thrace, the Balkan mountains and North Dobroudja. The male clothes belong to the type of black-style clothing. The female clothes illustrate the transitional forms towards the urban dresses.

Jewels and adornment



The traditional folk clothes were supplemented by jewels and adornments; they were not only decorations but also signified the coming of age, the marital and social status, the regional or national belonging, or were a symbol with anthropomorphic significance.

Various in purpose, manufacturing, material, form and decoration, the jewels and adornment of the ethnographic collection possess high artistic value and are an evidence for the heritability in the development of the folk culture for many centuries.



Tectonic-ethnographic open-air museum “Old Dobrich” (18 Konstantin Stoilov Str.)
Ikons from Dobroudja (14 Bulgaria Str.)

The Bulgarian lands during 15th –19th century

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Exhibition: ICONS FROM DOBROUDJA

Information

At the end of the 14th century Dobroudja was included within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire. The foreign rule continued for five centuries. During that period intensive demographic processes were going on in the region. The Ottoman Turkish colonization from 18th–19th century imposed the co-existence of various ethnic and religious communities and groups in these lands.

During the National Revival period, Dobroudja took part in the struggles of the Bulgarian people for new Bulgarian education, independence of the Bulgarian church and national liberation.

The Department “History of the Bulgarian lands during 15th–19th century” was established in 1973. Its funds contain 10 441 items which illustrate the history of Dobroudja during that period. All Christian churches, a part of the Islamic mosques and the bi-ritual sanctuaries in the region of Dobrich have been investigated and documented.

Collections

Icons from dobroudja

The collection includes 208 pieces of the National Revival iconographic art (18th–19th century). They were created by iconography masters representatives of the famous Tryavna painting school. The works of hereditary iconographers prevail; they carry the typical signature of this school: a bright palette of contrasting colours, specific themes and repertoire in accordance with the preferences of the local population, wide usage of elements from the natural

environment and everyday life, abundant use of graphic and decoration techniques. The inscriptions on the icons painted by Zacharia Tsanyuv are especially valuable with the additional information they provide on the age of the National Revival in this part of Bulgaria.

Other iconographers worth mentioning due to the important place their works have in the collection are Nedko Todorovich from Jeravna and Nikola Vassilev from Shumen, although they do not belong to the well established schools. The original master Nedko Todorovich is the author of one of the best icons representing St. George and St. Dimitar as horsemen. Nikola Vassilev is represented by several icons with his favourite images - that of the Creators of the Slavic alphabet Cyril and Methodius.

Some of the icons were probably made by local masters, for example the primitive “Christmas” and the icon “St. Dimitar Besarabovski”.

The most impressive works in the collection are “Jesus Christ” from the 17th century, “St. Pantheleimon” from the 18th century, “Jesus Christ” and “The Holly Mother” from the 18th century by an anonymous Greek iconographer, as well as the icon collection of the saints Cyril and Methodius.

The collection “Icons from Dobroudja” has been acknowledged as a part of the national icon treasure.

National revival book store

The collection presents all books distributed in Dobroudja and Dobrich during the National Revival period: clerical and secular literature, school books, periodicals and magazines. These include: “Sofronieto” by Sophronius Vrachanski, “The Fish Primer” by Peter Beron, the editions of Yuriy Venelin and Vassil Aprilov, G. S. Rakovsky and P. R. Slaveikov, Gavril Krastevich, Naiden Gerov and many others, editions of sponsors from Dobrich and many more, providing various information on the life of the people in Dobroudja during the National Revival period.

School museum



A school from the National Revival period. This is a reconstruction of the first mutual school in Dobrich from 1859.

Modern history (1 The 3th of March Str.)



Modern history

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Information

The Modern History Department was established in 1953 and was the first department in the Museum of History - Dobrich. It is situated in the City Park in the oldest museum building. The funds of the museum maintain 104 630 items. These are grouped in several collections. Especially valuable are the collections related to the Dobroudja national problem (1978-1940).

The specialists in the department are working on problems concerning the social, political and cultural life in Dobrich and the Dobroudja region from 1878 till now. During that time this territory had a changing history. In 1878 Bulgaria was liberated from the Ottoman rule. At the Berlin congress the Great Powers divided the territory of Bulgaria, giving its northern part to Romania. During the following decades South Dobroudja became a coin of exchange in the relations between the two neighboring countries. During 1913-1916 and 1919-1940 the region was under Romanian occupation. It was returned to Bulgaria with the Krayova Agreement in 1940.

The dobroudja problem (1878-1940)

The collection follows the national liberation struggles of the Bulgarian population against the Romanian occupation of North and South Dobroudja (1879-1913, 1913-1916, 1919-1940); the liberation of Dobroudja by the Bulgarian Army during the summer and autumn of 1916 and the peaceful restoration of South Dobroudja to Bulgaria in 1940. This collection and the collection dedicated to General Georgi Popov, Governor of South Dobroudja in 1940, are included in the only exhibition in Bulgaria on the Dobroudja National Problem.



City park

The City park was established in 1867 and was the second city park in Bulgaria after that in Sofia. Various plant species were grown in it, some of them not typical for the arid Dobroudja region. In 1999 the park was made a monument of the gardening art.

The old dobrich (1878-1940)

This collection presents the architecture of the town from the Liberation from Ottoman rule to the restoration of South Dobroudja to Bulgaria in 1940.



Weapons collection

It is exhibited in the Museum in the City park and includes collections of revolvers, pistols, rifles, swords, bayonets and automatic firearms.

Military cemetery - museum

The largest Memorial military cemetery in Bulgaria from the time of the First World War is situated in the north industrial zone of Dobrich. It is a unique historical monument related to a moment of Bulgarian military history known as The Dobrich Epopee. Over 3 000 soldiers died in the battle near Dobrich on 5-8 September 1916.

The citizens of Dobrich organized a



burial ceremony and began collecting money to build a Memorial Museum of Glory. In 1921 the Charnel House “St. Archangel Michael” was built, and an year later the Military Memorial was officially opened. Here are the graves of soldiers from seven nations and four religions, which makes this Memorial internationally significant

Literature and art

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Information

The Literature and Arts Department was established during the 60^s of the 20th century. Its funds keep over 19 000 items. They are divided into the following collections:

- Jordan Jovkov;
- Dora Gabe;
- Adriana Boudevska;
- Atanas Petrov;
- Peter Dachev;
- Boris Kolev;
- Modern Dobroudja artists;
- Jordan Jovkov’s Memorial Museum;
- Jordan Jovkov’s House;
- Adriana Boudevska’s House.

Collections

Jordan jovkov

Jordan Jovkov (1880-1937) is one of the greatest Bulgarian writers. Worked in the field of other fictional genres: short novel, novel and drama. Master of the short story. His short story “Ivan Belin’s Sin” is included in the world short story- anthology, collected by Thomas Man. The works of Jovkov have been translated into 40 languages all over the world.

The permanent exhibition dedicated to Jovkov in the Jordan Jovkov Memorial Museum was opened in 1980 on his 100th anniversary. This is the only literary center in Bulgaria which investigates, collects and popularizes the life and works of Jordan Jovkov.

The house of Jovkov’s wife Despina Koleva is also made a museum. The three rooms of the house re-create a typical interior of the early 20th century. The so called “Large Room” is especially interesting with the fact that on 15 December

1918 Jovkov married his wife Despina there. This is where the writer began his first post-war novel “The Harvester Man”.



Dora Gabe

Dora Gabe (1888-1983) was a Bulgarian poet and translator. She also wrote children’s literature. She is the author of the books “Violets” (1908, her debut collection of poems), “Somewhen” (1924), “The Little Boy from Dobroudja” (1927), “Earthly road” (1928), “Lunatic” (1932), “Sun, Wait!” (1967), “Abysses” (1976), “The World is a Secret” (1982), and many others.

Dora Gabe translated literature from Polish, Czech, Russian, French and Greek the works of A. Mitskevich, M. Konopnitska, S. Vispyanski, K. Tetmeier, Y. Slovatski, Yan Kasprovich, H. Senkevich, K. Chapek, Y. Ritsos, etc.

Adriana Boudevska

Adriana Boudevska (1878-1955) was a famous Bulgarian drama actress who was born in Dobrich. Her career is closely related to the beginning and development of professional theater at the end of 19th century. Adriana Boudevska worked for 25 years on the stage and gave life to over 100 drama roles, including: Ophelia in *Hamlet* and Desdemona in *Othello* by Shakespeare, Louisa in *Cabal and Love* and Amalia in *The Robbers* by Schiller, Nora in Ibsen’s *A doll’s house*, Nastasya Filipovna in Dostoevsky’s *Idiot* and Rada in *Under the Yoke* by the Bulgarian writer Ivan Vazov.

In 1976 the house of the famous drama actress was made a museum. The museum recreates the atmosphere in which the young Adriana lived in Dobrich during 1878-1893.

Anastas Petrov

Anastas Petrov was one of the pioneers of Bulgarian ballet who was born in Dobrich. From 1927, when he joint the theatrical company of the Sofia National Opera, to 1935 he was the only dancer in the Opera and the only soloist in many opera performances, as well as in the first ballet spectacles. Anastas Petrov is one of the first ballet instructors in Bulgaria. The ballet school he established survived for 17 years (from 1927 to 1944).

A museum exhibition is dedicated to him in the Memorial Museum of Jordan Jovkov. The picturesque stage costumes of the ballet dancer take the visitors back to the dawn of Bulgarian ballet.



Peter Dachev

Peter Dachev (1896-1967) was a painter, literary critic and publicist. He had four independent exhibitions in Sofia in 1924, 1929, 1948 and 1964, respectively. He was a collaborator of a number of periodicals and magazines with articles, reviews and critical studies. He is the author of a monograph on Honore Domier (1957) and on Ekaterina Savova-Nenova (1966), as

well as of the book “The Unknown Tsarigrad” (1943) which he himself illustrated.

House-museum “Jordan Jovkov” (18 Major Vekilski Str.)

House- museum “Adriana Budevskia” (56 Vasil Levski Str.)

Military cemetery (53 The 25th of September Str.)

Nature of Dobroudja (1 The 3th of March Str.)

Nature

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Information

The Nature Department was established in 1971. It deals with the natural species of the Dobroudja region and some adjacent territories. The typical landscapes for the region are the steppe, some moisture zones and forests. The zoo fauna and the flora of Dobroudja are of special interest with a view of the well-preserved biological variability of this predominantly agricultural region. The funds of the Nature department maintain more than 1 000 items: a collection of invertebrates, fishes, reptiles, birds and mammals. The department has at its disposal a laboratory of taxidermia with the conditions to prepare museum exhibits as small as bugs and as large as the largest mammals. The laboratory developed a methodology for reconstruction of old exhibits. Our department helped to organize laboratories and establish exhibitions in some foreign countries. Our exhibits have many times participated and won prices at international exhibitions.

The Nature department carries out constant monitoring on the natural reserves and protected territories Yailata, Kaliakra, Baltata and the moisture lake zones

Durankulak and Shabla. We also help to protect regions which require special regimes of protection and maintenance.



Natural and archaeological reserve Kaliakra

The reserve Kaliakra encompasses an area of 687.5 hectares. It is situated in the eastern part of South Dobroudja. This is the only reserve in Bulgaria, which includes marine aquatoria, rocky steppes and high rocky coastline which represent the original Dobroudja steppe landscape. More than 270 plant species have been registered here.

This is also the pontic route of the migrating birds. This allow to carry out observations on more than 350 bird species twice in the year. The rocky coast of the Black sea and the lakes in close proximity to the sea shore provide wintering shelter for many water birds as well.

Dry River Canyon

One of the main contributions of the department is the investigation of the Dry River Canyon. It takes its source from the plateaus to the west of the region. The canyon is incised in the Sarmathian limestones of the Dobroudja platform. At some places the canyon is 40-50 m high and between 100 and 200 m wide. Its total length is 120 km. In the ancient times the Dry River was the largest source of fresh water in the continental part of South Dobroudja.



Nowadays, the canyon is the only reserve of wild nature with concentration of a rich variability of species. 460 plant species have been registered here. 16 of them are included in the Red Book of threatened species in Bulgaria. The canyon gives shelter to a large number of threatened animal species and wide variety of birds (some 118 species). Here, Sheldrake (*Casarca ferruginea*) Egypt Vultur (*Neophrom percnopterus*), Small Spotted Eagle (*Aquila pomarina*), Owl (*Bubo bubo*), White-tailed Buzzard (*Buteo rufinus*), etc. can be met. The landscape and environment of the Dry River Canyon are the reason for it's including in the list of ornithological significant locations.

Besides its nature, the canyon is also a rich reservoir of archaeological sites (settlements, fortifications and cave dwellings) of various religious and

ethnographic communities. In this sense the Dry River canyon has not only a great scientific and museum potential, but also possibilities for development of alternative tourism.

The museum team will be glad to have you here as our visitors.

