

PATRIMONIUM BANATICUM – MULTICULTURALISM AND MULTICONFESSIONALISM IN THE BANAT REGION

Adriana RADU

The Museum of the Mountainous Banat in Reșița has been granted the “Patrimonium Banaticum – Multiculturalism and Multiconfessionalism in the Banat Region” project, under the framework of the Romania – Serbia 2004/2006 Neighbourhood Programme. The Vrșac City Museum has been the project’s crossborder partner. The project’s main aim was to promote the organisation of scientific conferences as an expression of joint actions. Under the aegis of the programme, “Archeology in the Banat region”, a three-day international scientific conference has been organised in Baile Herculane, being attended by 35 Romanian and Serbian senior experts. The programme has also envisaged the publication of a book with the title “A Banat’s Ecclesiastical Geography” and of an album entitled “Patrimonium Banaticum”. The estimated and approved budget amounted to a total of 29,892 EUR, out of which 3,100 EUR represented the Museum of the Mountainous Banat’s contribution.

The project aimed to reach a number of objectives, which have been considered so far as being marred by certain shortcomings: a. establishing cultural contacts between Serbian and Romanian researchers investigating the same historical region from a scientific and cultural point of view; b. sharing know-how and scientific knowledge related to a particular area; c. achieving better communication among specialists; d. reviewing the evolution of the region’s ecclesiastical relations and further discussing the issue of confessional evolution, ignored during several decades; e. promoting the access to scientific information of other categories besides elitist researchers, such as

young students, clergy representatives and other members of local communities; f. in what the educational implications of the project are concerned, the project aimed to create a platform for informal education, beyond any confessional, ideological, ethnical motivation and constraints.

The project’s target group consists of the Banat region museums’ researchers. Among this group, direct beneficiaries attended the aforesaid conference being held in Băile Herculane (35 participants). The project’s final beneficiaries are the Romanian and Serbian ecclesiastical both orthodox and catholic communities, members of the academia, students of the Faculty of Theology and History “Eftimie Murgu” in Reșița as well as history students of the West University in Timșoara and, on a long term perspective, other youth groups.

The scientific international “Archeology in the Banat region” conference has been organised as a response to the need for better communication between the researchers of Serbia and Romania. The Museum of the Mountainous Banat in Reșița signed in 2001 a cooperation partnership which served as a framework for undertaking joint scientific programmes. The conference that took place in Băile Herculane aimed at extending the cultural and scientific contacts to other museums in the Banat area both in Serbia and Romania and at promoting the further organisation of scientific conferences as an expression of permanent cooperation in the region. Researchers from Arad, Timșoara, Reșița, Caransebeș, Drobeta Turnu Severin, Vrșac, Pancevo, Zrenjanin, Kikinda and Pojarevec attended the conference. The works presented during the conference



panels covered, in a chronological order, a large sequence of the region's history. Interesting discussions were held during the conference last day's round table. A study trip in the Danube valley has also been organised, researchers having thus the chance to identify historical monuments in the region, visit the monastery of Vodița and the exhibitions of the Drobeta Turnu Severin Museum. The event has been covered by both written and AV press.

The project's second component (i.e. the two books written by Dr. Dumitru Țeicu) addressed the need to get acquainted with the religious monuments (irrespective of their confession) and to review the ecclesiastical developments from a former period.

"ABanat's Ecclesiastical Geography"/"Die Ekklesiastische Geographie des Mittelalterlichen Banats", a bilingual edition under the aegis of the Academical Publishing House, deals with the topic of ecclesiastical architecture between the 11th-16th century in a comprehensive manner, as well as from a confessional point of view. Presented as a glossary, the work files around two hundred mediaeval churches and sixty-nine orthodox and catholic monasteries in the Banat region. The work envisages a global confessional approach of both catholic and orthodox ecclesiastical structures. The Banat region has been from the very beginning of the 11th century a moulding area of the eastern



and latin church. The work further builds on recent approaches to this topic, on a solid scientific basis, beyond any confessional and ideological constraints.

The album "Patrimonium Banaticum", published in English, is an inventory of fifteen 11th-16th century monuments belonging to the ecclesiastical architecture of the project's concerned area. An inventory of the historical data and architectural details, along with global and inner images of the monuments, amount to a exhaustive documentation leading to a in-depth understanding of the topic.

The foreseen impact of the two works has been achieved through the presentations organised in several museums, as well as in the ecclesiastical and academical milieu, the latter being at the same time the project's beneficiaries. The books have also been offered to the museum's counterparts during international cultural exchanges.

The digital version of the work "A Banat's Ecclesiastical Geography" can be downloaded from the Museum of the Mountainous Banat website:

www.muzeulbanatuluiimontan.ro

