



REPUBLIQUE DE SERBIE
*Délégation permanente
auprès de l'UNESCO*

РЕПУБЛИКА СРБИЈА
*Стална делегација
при Унеску*

Paris, 31 January 2018

Ref. *G2-1/2018*

Dear Ms. Rössler,

I have the honor to transmit, enclosed herewith, the Report by the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia on the State of Conservation for Serbian cultural heritage "Medieval Monuments in Kosovo (Serbia)", inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in Danger.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.


Aleksandra Kovac
Chargée d'Affaires *a.i.*



Ms. Mechtild Rössler
Director
UNESCO World Heritage Centre
Paris

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REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

**INSTITUTE FOR THE PROTECTION
OF CULTURAL MONUMENTS**

**REPORT
ON THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF
MEDIEVAL MONUMENTS IN KOSOVO (SERBIA)
INSCRIBED ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST IN DANGER**

MEDIEVAL MONUMENTS IN KOSOVO, Serbia (C 724)

The Dečani Monastery

The Patriarchate of Peć Monastery

The Church of the Holy Virgin of Ljeviša

The Gračanica Monastery

Belgrade, January 2018.

The Dečani Monastery

In the Dečani Monastery no conservation-restoration works were carried out in 2017. The insight was made into its state and continuous monitoring was performed of the wall-painting, constructed buildings of the Monastery complex and themobile art material. Particular attention was paid to the effect which the controlled illumination installed in the Monastery Church of the Ascension of Jesus Christ in 2016 had on wall-painting. Negative effects have not been stated. Monitoring shall continue in the future as well.

However, the concern has been caused by the pressures faced by the Monastery brotherhood (community) and few pilgrims who succeed in visiting the Monastery. Those pressures are testified by the activity of the *League of Historians of Kosovo* “*Ali Hadri*” branch in Decan, who announced for April 26, 2017 the blockade of the access (and the only one) road to the Dečani Monastery. They opposed to the decision of the Constitutional Court of Kosovo¹ whereby the right of property of the Monastery on 24 hectares of land was confirmed and which land was formerly confiscated, and used by the companies “*Aniko*” and “*Ilirija*” from Decan. Although there never came to the announced blockade, this event represented the affirmation of the religious and ethnic intolerance dominating in Decan. The Municipal authorities have not enforced the decision of Constitutional Court of Kosovo up till now, and it is particularly alarming that the Court decision is opposed by the *League of Historians of Kosovo* “*Ali Hadri*” - the profiled vocational organization composed of the individuals holding higher education degrees, although known by its rather scientifically ungrounded and distorted interpretations of the historical events.

The Monastery is still secured on the day and night basis by powerful KFOR forces (Fig. 1).



1. Italian KFOR solders safeguarding the Dečani Monastery

¹“All references to Kosovo should be understood in the context of the UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)”

The Patriarchate of Peć Monastery

In the Patriarchate of Peć Monastery there was no conservation-restoration works carried out in 2017. Continuous monitoring was carried out of the condition of wall-paintings, constructed buildings of the Monastery complex and the mobile art material which will also continue in the future. During the insight made into the state certain moistening and the occurrence of humidity in the part of the roof structure was ascertained, thus intensified monitoring measures were undertaken in order to enable taking of adequate measures of rehabilitation of the lead roofing in the future (Fig 2).

The Monastery is still secured on the day and night basis by Kosovo police forces.



2. The Patriarchate of Peć, southwest view

The Gračanica Monastery

In the Gračanica Monastery conservation-restoration works were carried out on wall-paintings during 2017., representing the continuation of the works started in 2015. The works were carried out in: the central dome, under-dome sections, naos, western part of the southern isle with south-west small dome, in the interior narthex, northern isle and north-west church dome, as well as in the south chapel—the Prothesis (proscomidia) covering the total area of about 700 sq m. The treated parts of extremely valuable iconography from 14th century were endangered by the effect of moisture, efflorescence and intensive sedimentation of soot and atmospheric dust. Such deposits have changed the fundamental, namely initial values of painting art. Based on physical-chemical research performed, characterization of salt and determining the properties of the dark sediments the methodology of their removal has been established. Also, the declining parts of the wall-paintings of various degree of destruction have been strengthened. These exceptionally exposed units – since they are close to the observers (it concerns the bottom zones), have now been strengthened and presented in a corresponding manner. The light and bright colors, as well as the clear iconographic contents contribute to the solemn appearance of the space and suggest the dignified values to each of the visitors. All works performed and the use of adequate material, in the suitable interior

church ambience, as per all indications should ensure long lasting life to the treated surfaces of the wall painting (Fig. 3, 4).

The works were carried out by the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia, and were funded by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Serbia and the Serbian Orthodox Church.

The Monastery is still secured on the day and night basis by Kosovo police forces.



3, 4. The Prothesis (proscomidia) of Gračanica Monastery, before and after conservation works

The Church of the Holy Virgin of Ljeviša in Prizren

In the Church of the Holy Virgin of Ljeviša in Prizren no conservation-restoration works were carried out in 2017. During July, 2017., the experts of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia performed detailed research work on the Church of the Holy Virgin of Ljeviša in order to evaluate the condition of the building, wall painting and mobile art material belonging to it. It was stated that the building condition was not satisfactory, that there existed intensive capillary moisture in the walls which endangered the frescoes painting, as well as that the drainage system was not functioning. It was concluded that not all damages in the church were rehabilitated and which resulted from the 2004 March pogrom, when the church was set on fire. The list of all necessary measures to be implemented in the future period was prepared and the project documentation development for future conservation and other works was initiated.

For the purpose of as complete as possible presentation of the property inscribed on the World Heritage List, the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of

Serbia published a scientific popular monograph about the Church of the Holy Virgin of Ljeviša by the author Aleksandra Davidov-Temerinski in the Serbian, Albanian and English languages.

Also, inappropriate attitude of the local community towards the property on the World Heritage List was noticed, in terms of not allowing for the temporary toilet to be installed in front of the side entrance to the church (Fig. 5) and that throwing the garbage into the external narthex was not sanctioned, for which reason the main entrance to the church had to be completely closed by grilles and wire mesh (Fig. 6), even though neither that measure prevented this negative manifestation in full.

All these negative acts which degrade the significance of the property on the World Heritage List happen regardless of the fact that the Church of the Holy Virgin of Ljeviša is secured on day and night basis by Kosovo police forces.



5. Toilet in front of the side entrance of BogorodicaLjeviškachurch in Prizren.

6. The main entrance of the church, closed by an iron wire

Particular caution is caused by the manner in which the institutions of so-called Republic of Kosovo led by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, systematically conceal and forge the identity of the Serbian monuments of art in Kosovo and Metohija – qualifying them exclusively as medieval, Balkan or Byzantine, originated within the frame of diverse styles and influences, whereby directly contradict both the facts and the qualifications contained in the statement on their exceptional universal value confirmed by the World Heritage Committee inscribing them on the UNESCO World Cultural and Natural Heritage List. The detailed insight into the official internet presentation of the said Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (Fig. 7), as well as in the *National Strategy for Cultural Heritage 2017-2027*, adopted by the same Ministry, shows that it does not concern a couple of isolated accidental

mistakes, but about strategically planned forging of identity of both those most significant and most valuable monuments (on UNESCO List), and also those of exceptional and big significance, and also of those which recently (upon completion of 1999 war operations) were destroyed.

Parallel with the process of forging the ethnic identity of the medieval heritage in the territory of Kosovo and Metohija, also the significance of that entire class of monuments is diminished only because it belongs to the cultural history of the Serbs or, yet, individual monuments of that class are represented as Illyrian or Roman-Illyrian (whereby the Albanians are proclaimed as the descendants of the Illyrians without any grounds). All this does not lead to the processes which would result in reconciled and normalized state in which the valuable art heritages in Kosovo and Metohija (inclusive also of those on the UNESCO List), and as the result of those processes is a fact that none of the destroyed monuments of great value (Recane – Reqan by Suva Reka, Vigin Mary Odigitria and Holy Trinity in Mustutiste, Saint Marko in Korisa, etc) - which are in closest correlation with those inscribed on the List, are not renovated, and neither have their restoration been planned.

The screenshot shows the official website of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports of the Republic of Kosovo. The page is titled "Mansistir Gračanica (Prishtina)". It features a large photograph of the monastery, a map of Kosovo, and various informational sections including status, history, and social media links.

Statistika

- Vrsta zabele: Ostalo Društvo i Mitrovica: 42/1947
- Vrsta zabele: Lista Svetskog Nasleđa - UNESCO Društvo i Mitrovica: 2006
- Vrsta zabele: Specijalna Zaštita: Zona Društvo i Mitrovica: 2009
- Vrsta zabele: Pod privremenom zaštitom Društvo i Mitrovica: 2011
- Vrsta zabele: Pod privremenom zaštitom Društvo i Mitrovica: 2012-2014

Istorija

Mansistir Gračanica se nalazi na levom brijelu reke Gračanica, na jugu Prishtine. Danasnji mansistir je rekonstrukcija jedne crkve iz XIV veka, posvećen Bogorodici (Mariji), crkva koja je izgrađena na temeljima ranohrišćanske bazilike iz VI veka. Na osnovu njenog prostornog koncepta, ista pripada tipu crkava sa pet kupola iznad deluvane osnove sa krakom upisan iznutra. Ona je karakteristična po za bizantijsku arhitekturu. U spojnici, je postojala idealna odnosa sa prostornim konceptom. Postepeno izdizanje kule i kupola ka gornjim delovima kao: podela prednje strane na tri dela putem lukova. Crkva daje upečatljiv harmoniju i posebnu arhitektonsku vrednost. Najveći glavni kupole i originalni iznad njege sa sumo lukovi, izražavaju jedinstvenu osnovu krsta upisanog iznutra. Čitav božni kupole se uzdižu iznad daleko visokih vjeha, koji režu vertikalnu zgradu. Ona i nije tipična karakteristika za to vreme. Najveća pobova mansistra je izgrađena ka kraju XIV veka, gde su svi otvori na spoljašnjem natekstu zadržane i ispravne novim freskama. Mansistir je pretpao velike štete tokom kraja XVIII veka, dok je nakon Drugog Svetskog Rata zasađen od strane monarhije i od bog vremena služ kao rignova skupština. Unutrašnjost mansistra je bogata freskama. Pichnet slika iz Sidara (Majaj i Bivirije), savršeno freske u glavnoj crkvi do 1351 godine, od kojih su Gliku Veliku Prishtina, Mluduma i Cuda Prista najpoznatije. Osim iz ranijih faza XIV veka, pripada mansistra sadrži veoma poseban post-bizantijske freske XVI veka kao bogatstvo iluzna kasnijih perioda, od kojih su najvažnije ikona Kosa (Istina i Bogorodice Marije). Mansistir Gračanica je 2006 godine priučen List svetih nasleđa UNESCO, pod imenom Svetopokrajni Spomenici na Kosovu.

Ostali objekti

- Narodni arheološki muzej u Bardosku (Društvo Jugosla)
- Kula za stanzovanje - Muhamed Haxhiu
- Kula za stanzovanje - Luan Rudi
- Muzej Narodna
- Arhiva Prishtine

Iz srodjanih mreži

Trashëgimia Kulturë
 Facebook: Trashëgimia Kulturë e Kosovës
 URL: http://www.facebook.com/Piktura-me-motiva-shqiptare-17993

7. Web page of Gračanica Monastery on the official web site of so-called Republic of Kosovo's Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports