

**DANUBE RECTORS' CONFERENCE
4-6 FEBRUARY 2010
NOVI SAD**

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**CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ITS DIVERSITY –
DANUBEAN REGION DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL**

- **THE CULTURES OF THE DANUBE AREA WITHIN THE HISTORIC CONTEXT**
- **THE FUTURE OF THE CULTURE AND SPIRITUALITY IN THE DANUBE AREA**
- **TRIPLE-LEVEL SYSTEM AS A BASE OF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**
- **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES INSTEAD OF CONCLUDING REMARKS**

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ITS DIVERSITY – DANUBEAN REGION DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL



Magnum est stare in Danubii ripa...

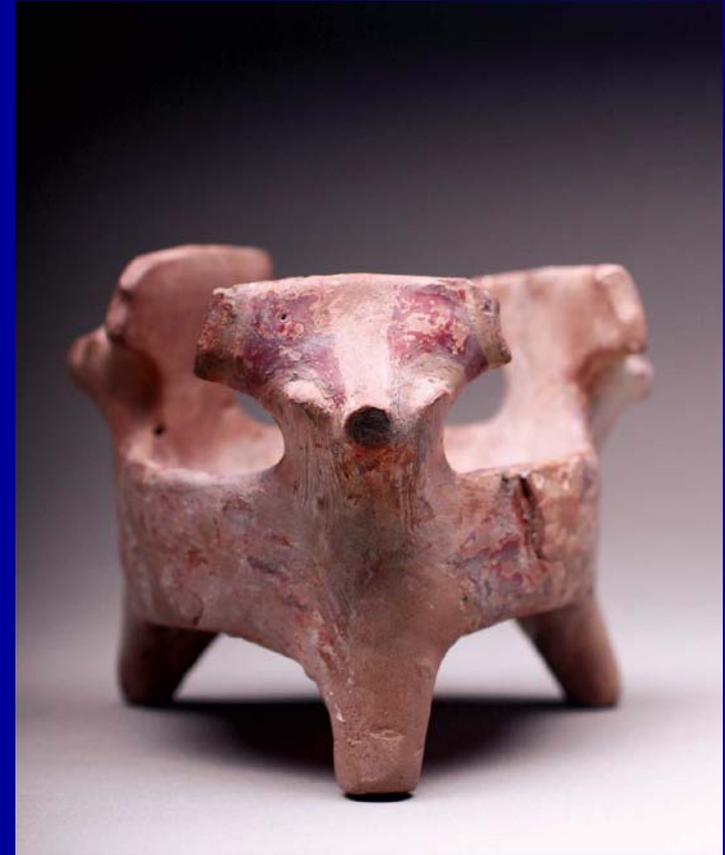
(Splendid is to stay at the Danubian waterfront...)

(Pliny the Younger to Trajan, the Emperor of Rome)

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ITS DIVERSITY – DANUBEAN REGION DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

- **Academisan Dejan Medakovic** titled a short text on the History of Arts for laymen with enlightening and indicative words regarding the theme we are discussing here;
- “The Danube passages of the Serb culture in the 18th century” delineates the correlation of the Danube River with the people and its culture;
- The Danube flow, however, is immense and relates to numerous other people and cultures too.
- Their lives and destinies have relied on the Danube since ancient times.
- It is most apparent when imagining the pattern of every day life in which activities such as hunting, fishing, irrigating fields, using the water for cooking, and navigating loaded ships, represented the pivotal events in the existence of people.
- It was thus in the Prehistory when the Lendjel, the La Tène or Halstat culture with some slight variations developed along the entire Danube flow.

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- **Yet it is much more intricate to evoke the importance of the Danube throughout history when it alternately represented a political and military hindrance or a salvation for thousands of unfortunates who saved their lives by crossing the river from one bank to the other.**
- **To determine the extent of cultural relations, the overlapping of influences and also the struggles against the imposition of cultural domination are most comprehensive and delicate.**
- **The spreading of influences, emerging as cultural frameworks in territories along the Danube, is so immense that it is sometimes accepted only with disbelief.**

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- How then to set a research framework for such subtle topics?**
- It is indisputable that the coexistence of peoples, taking place in indefinite work modeling and humanising the territory, continuously determines the surrounding landscape.**
- The morphology of the perceived space is therefore the outcome of permanent interactions between the physical reality and antropism; between nature and culture; the perception changes through time, varying from place to place and pursuing the sequence of differently manifesting societies.**
- Divers' sources: archeological, cartographic, historic, pictographic or written describe the geography, which mark each epoch across the Danube area and enable the reconstruction of the cultural configuration.**
- Even a superficial survey of the mentioned disciplines proves here that consideration of cultural and spiritual activities cannot be restricted to just one Danube area segment, for example in Serbia, but should be taken integrally, from the Danube spring all the way to its entry into the Black Sea.**

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- The reason for it seems rather plausible.**
- However strange, in the temporal continuity from prehistoric times until today the Danube area has more often acted as a coherent entity than not.**
- The ancient landscape outlived the Roman epoch, the Byzantine and Caroling period and then the Ottoman, Austrian and Austro-Hungarian empires; it passed from the archetypal phase through to the uppermost stage of man-made landscape cultivation.**
- The authentic natural context was slowly dismantled and transformed, making it now rather difficult to discern basic regional traits.**
- Human efforts resulted in a comprehensive transformation on the entire area.**
- The Danube territory became one of the most significant historic regions with the Danube impersonating a thread uniting in two ways: synchronously and diachronously.**

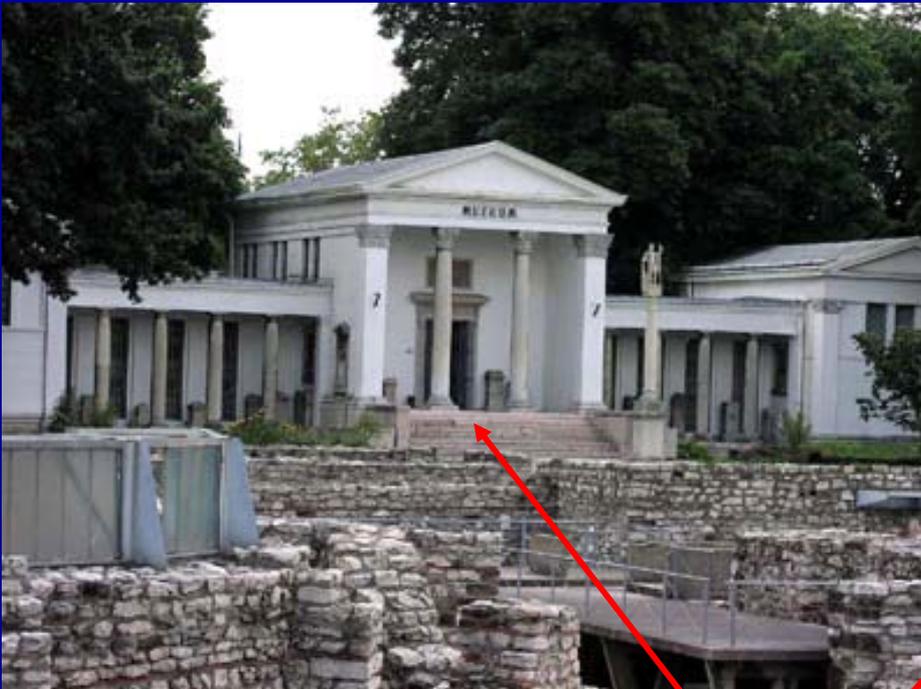
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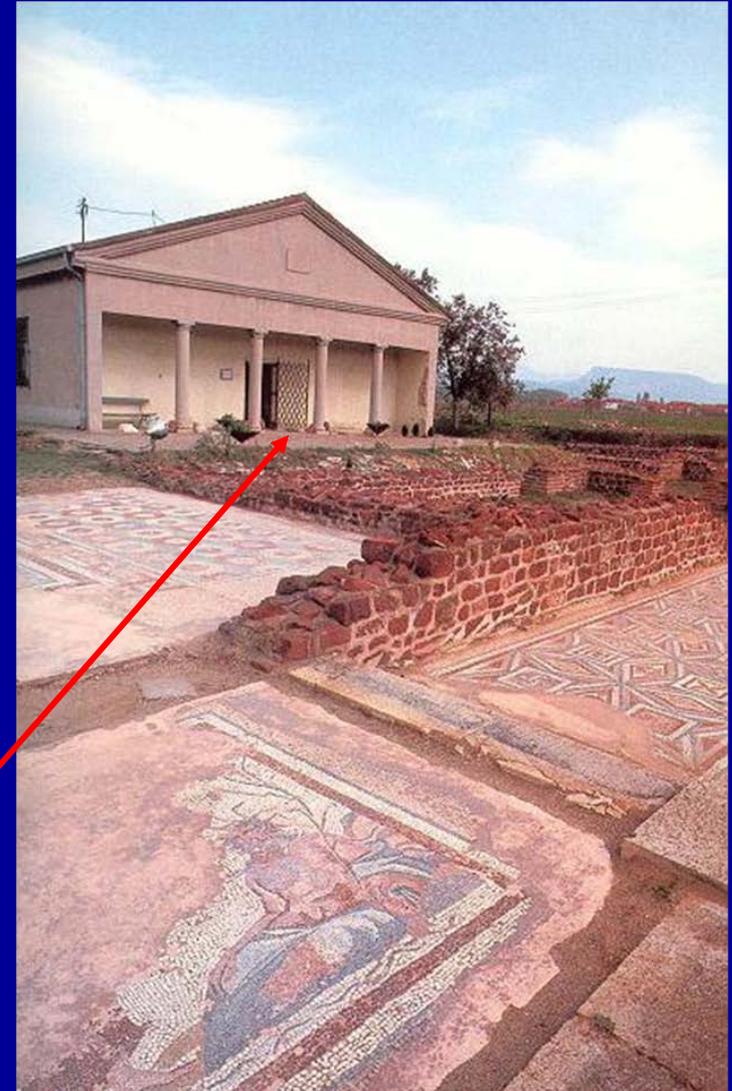
Roman heritage



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AQUINCUM (in Budapest)



MEDIANA (near Niš)

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- While passing across the Danube area it is not only the drift of miscellaneous landscapes and sites that one encounters.**
- It is a pilgrimage through time, societies, cities and areas with different traditions and habits, different phases of industrialization and urbanization.**
- A passage through the Danube area is actually a passage through the history of Europe.**
- The historic landscape of the Danube upholds a remarkable temporal and regional diversity, incorporating an array of common cultural characteristics.**
- Contemporary customs and traditions, from music and cooking to innumerable institutions are founded on the superstructure of the Danube countries' cultures in the form of idiosyncratic interpretations and appropriations by numerous ethnic groups practicing different religions, but all inhabiting the present territory of the Danube countries.**

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- "Today's" Danube area thus become the final product of an uninterrupted chain of various "yesterdays", to be firmly integrated into every day life, emerging as the most consistent *modus vivendi*.
- The singularity of this region's urban culture reaches as far back as three thousands years.
- This is rather remarkable bearing in mind that the urban development in all Danube countries was marked by continuity and changes, not to mention manifold discontinuities concerning the past, yet forcing many new beginnings.
- Even after complete standstills imposed during times of war, the Danube area returned to characteristic embedded in legible plans, which were closely related to arrangements of urban development and settlement concepts.

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MEDEVAL HERITAGE



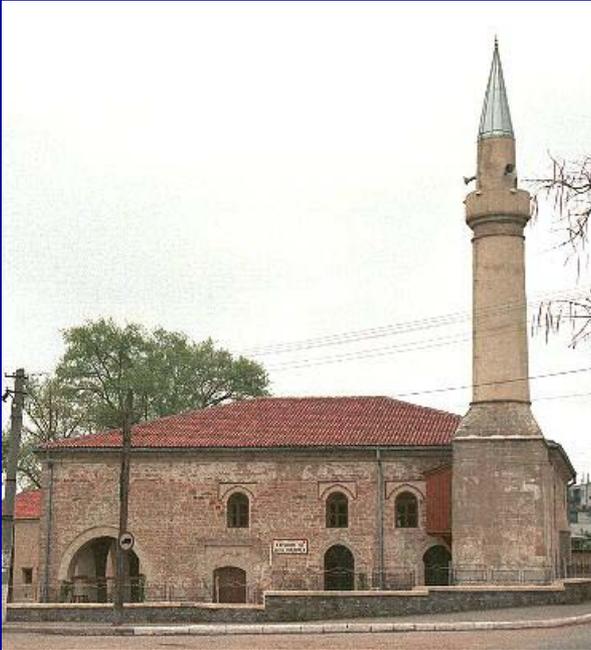
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- The spirituality, however, was never uniform in the Danube area.**
- Even under powerful, unified states with territories surpassing the boundaries of the Danube area, religions were numerous and accepted with a varying degree of tolerance.**
- The seriousness of the problem originates from opposed religions, such as Ortodox Christianity and Islam.**
- However, it should be forgotten that at the very same time and with equal devotion the Catholic fought the Hussits in Slovakia.**
- Similarly in Austria, Hungary and Romania different confessional determinants have always been the impelling force, inflaming aggressive passions.**

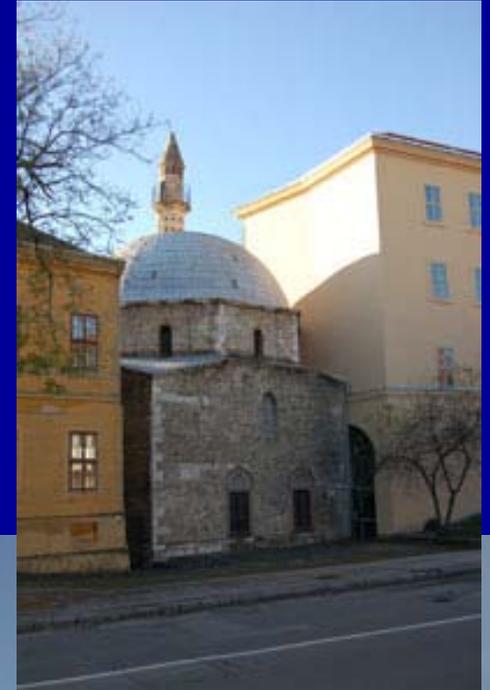
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- In spiritual terms, the Danube area along the entire Danube flow unveiled a remarkable regional uniqueness, especially in times when Western and Central Europe was defending its territories against the Ottoman expansion.**
- It was then, that all the peoples inhabiting the broad belt around the Danube were brought to fight together for the common Christian cause.**
- That was the case on other occasions, too.**
- The periodical mobilization of peoples from the Danube countries, united with a particular cause, such as national liberation, was never accomplished on a long-term basis but it was soon followed by phases of mutual exhaustion again.**
- The present civilization level prevents such a drastic turn of events.**

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OTTOMAN HERITAGE IN DANUBEAN REGION



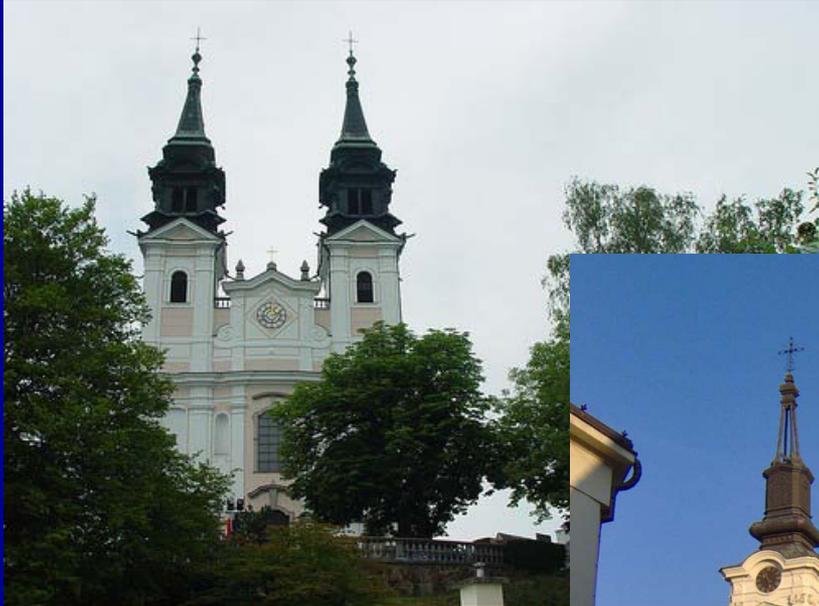
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- As regards ethnic displacements and migrations or the antipode manifested in a peaceful and harmonious coexistence, similar observations could be made.
- There is no rule and there news will be one.
- Nevertheless, it is absolutely essential to strive towards a unique cultural Danube territory. This aspiration occurred in the past too. It was previously mentioned that in certain transient periods, ever since prehistoric civilizations, the cultural domination of one of the great powers has prevailed, usurping the Danube for the expansion of its cultural influence. However, these phases were followed by times of independent profiles or loose interrelations.
- The spiritual integrity, however, is something utterly different and the displayed singularities ought to be fostered.

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ITS DIVERSITY – DANUBEAN REGION DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

- Similarities in languages, habits, anthropologic characteristics and a range of other elements are more than evident, but spiritual differences sometimes divide them seriously.
- This is, so it seems, a feature inherent to the entire Danube area, estranging it from other part of Europe.
- There are cognate problems elsewhere, intermittently realized, yet religious determinations had their continuous evolution, whereas here this topic was pushed aside.
- Marginalized or obstructed, only to emerge in a very specific expression nowadays.
- Through history, it has been ascertained that cultural influences circulated independently from religious ones and that might serve as a model to establish future interrelations across the entire Danube area.

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CATHOLIC AND ORTODOX BAROQUE CHURCHES

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WESZPREM



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THE FUTURE OF CULTURE AND SPIRITUALITY IN THE DANUBE AREA

- **History and the past are not elements which would indicate the acceleration of social developments.**
- **On the contrary, history is assembled through an accumulative development.**
- **A society which is moving forth, might include the behaviorist studies of the past so as to establish a harmonized cultural tradition, marked by new tendencies and influences.**
- **On the other hand, the new is not always dynamic, nor is the old necessarily static. The actual and on-going dynamism of progress might only be accomplished by seeking a balance from the aforementioned.**

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- What than could be suggested for the future?
- As regard culture and spirituality, the future cannot do without the past nor the present.
- Since spiritual progress cannot be unified and regionally spread, it is only logical to seek other modalities of joint actions.
- Neither is possible to collectively participate in regional cultural development, yet the culture might be jointly safeguarded, surveyed and researched more thoroughly with a deeper insight.
- Substantial, common project are the best suited for this.

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ITS DIVERSITY – DANUBEAN REGION DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

- These projects unite and explore mutual periods in regional history, foremost the Roman and the Austrian and Austro-Hungarian epochs.**
- In between these periods existed some blithe moments on temporary sovereignty of some states and peoples, which could be a theme, worthwhile analyzing by each individual country on its own.**
- In the 19th century, national revival was a common trait, yet it was manifested in distinctive ways. Led by the same crucial idea, namely the fostering of national identity, it might be discussed as a broad field of joint studies in the Danube area.**

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- Particular 20th century art movements are of an international character and worthily of special research efforts.**
- In such instances, the Danube area has been treated as one of the great, unique European regions, which offers an opportunity to examine jointly the contributions of all the Danube countries and their creative expressions, so as to produce comparative analyses and determine the value in respect to general European criteria.**
- There are, however, other forms of remarkably national determinations in the arts, namely in painting, music, and architecture, but also in literature, which all ought to be researched at the national level, whereas other regional partners should at least attain an overall understanding of these topics.**
- The present media is of such a nature that this task could be fulfilled within a relatively short time.**

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- When then are the disciplines to be continued on in the future and within which regional, general characteristics might develop?
- These are foremost archeology and amongst the arts – literature, music and painting, since they can be methodologically coordinated, yet still remain independent through idiosyncratic creative elements.
- Nevertheless, the most significant united research in the domain of culture is definitely linked to the mutual influences and overlapping of specific elements from one cultural environment or entity to another.
- For example, until recently, and because of a lack of broadness it was thought that the Byzantine influence did not spread far enough North so as to inspire Roman and Gothic architects on the territory of Hungary.
- The present research shows, however, that such an impact was probable and indeed exercised, one of the examples being the site of Dombo-Rakovac on the hillsides of Fruska gora.

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- Many other examples, not to be mentioned here, suggest the importance of comparative research efforts regarding the regional development of numerous art disciplines.
- It is evident that when involved in the process of regionalization and affirmation of the Danube area on a higher, respectively broader level, the community cannot be attained by determining general guidelines, directions, and principles of actions in certain fields of culture
- One matter which is, by its nature, logically merged with concreated working methods in the cultural domain and which is regionally applicable is education.
- In most Danube countries, it is not only regionalized but also internationalized.
- Mobility is seen as an important factor of quality education

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- As regards the character of this conference, however, the emphasis should be on the regional built environment.
- The urban arena, witnessing the history of civilization in the Danube area, represents a platform for stimulating dualism.
- The built heritage, including archeological remnants and other distinguished signs, is still the most direct and sincere beholder of history.
- Even today urban events are due to the increase of pollution, the drastic increase of traffic, speculative land use and other manifestations, creating new urban symbols and attributes.

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- How does the local communities administration relates to this?
- Which problems is the cause of it?
- It is worthily or feasible to develop a more comprehensive regional policy capable of decreasing or even stopping the rural exodus?
- In what way are the inhabitants provided with minimum of the required infrastructure?
- How is the present population affected by it?
- And most of all, what is the impact on the historical town core?
- Indeed, it is the eternal problem: the economic development counterparts the preservation of the historical environment.
- Numerous Danube area cities have learnt to control it, but there is still no impression that the conscience is aroused in respect to the impact of these changes on the entity of Central and Eastern Europe.

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- **The strategy of protection, management and sustainable exploitation of cultural heritage presents the best results, provided that they are based on the following triple-level system:**
- **Doctrine of conservation, accepted on the national level, is the first level of protecting system of cultural heritage;**
- **The second level is organization of institutions, finances, laws, education, and development of social conscience of cultural heritage;**
- **Governmental system and political modern culture, economy growth, well-being of the society, are the third level in the spatial development, concerning the cultural heritage.**

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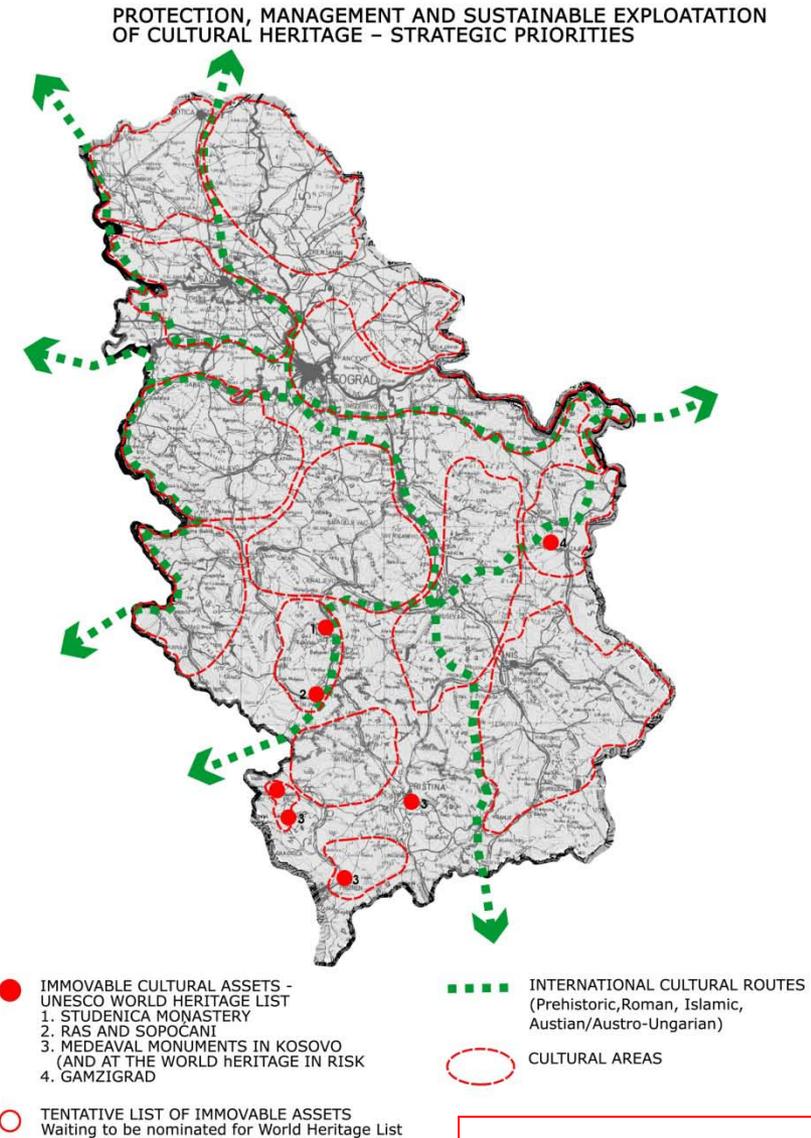
- **Priorities which the state of Serbian should accomplish, through the strategies of sustainable development in the field of cultural heritage include, first of all:**
- **CREATION of the national sustainable program, and presentation of cultural heritage, and according to that, definition of regional identity. This program should be the pillar of the cultural politics of each state;**
- **FORMATION of efficient legal and financial sustainable system for preservation, arrangement and usage of cultural heritage;**
- **DEFINING the instruments by which the efficiency of the work of protection services will improve, and ensure the organic connection to all fields of planning;**
- **DEFINING the state politics of omnipresent system of education for all social groups and levels in the domain of the cultural heritage;**
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CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ITS DIVERSITY – DANUBEAN REGION DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

- **COMPLETE** connection and coordination of protection politics, arrangement and the utility of cultural and natural heritage, especially the harmonization of all the activities in the area of cultural districts;
- **INTRODUCING** and **DEFINING** the cultural areas, which will be divided into zones with different gradients of protection and the treatment of cultural heritage;
- **INTRODUCING** and **DEFINING** the production of characterization in the cultural district, on the same way it was suggested for the natural values;
- **ON THE BASIS OF REGIONAL IDENTITY**, intra and interregional mutual cultural and civilisation achievements from the historical periods, proposition is that system of international cultural itineraries, national paths and local relations of cultural heritage should be developed;

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- In one hand, heritage has a symbolic dimension associated with its interpretation as a sacrum, but on the other, heritage has to become an economically effective potential of social community.
- Finally, Cicero's antique commentary "*Omnia monumenta sunt, quae faciunt alicuius rei recordationem*" ("everything is a monument that evokes memories of something") is the basic principle of proposed strategy.



THANK YOU!