

S A J

serbian architectural journal



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Private archive of the lawyer Tasic
Cover page of the book *Mangupluci oko Kalimegdana*
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C O N T E N T S

- 1-42 ARCHITECTURAL WORK OF ALEKSANDAR DEROKO -
BEAUTY OF EMOTIONAL CREATIVITY
Irena Kuletin Čulafić
- 43-70 PASSION FOR PAST AND FUNCTIONAL IMPERATIVE:
BELGRADE INTERWAR RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE BY ALEKSANDAR DEROKO
Milica Madanovic
- 71-96 DEVELOPING DEROKO'S THEORIES:
LOOKING FOR THE "INCUNABULA" OF BYZANTINE HOUSING
Serena Acciai
- 97-114 ALEKSANDAR DEROKO:
REBUILDING SMEDEREVO AFTER 5 JUNE 1941 EXPLOSION
Milorad Mladenović
- 115-140 LEGACY OF THE TRIAD:
ARCHITECTURE IN MEDIEVAL SERBIA BETWEEN STYLE AND
IDEOLOGY IN THE WORK OF ALEKSANDAR DEROKO
Aleksandar Ignjatović
- 141-156 ALEKSANDAR DEROKO'S WORK ON MEDIEVAL ARCHITECTURE AND
ITS RELEVANCE TODAY
Jelena Bogdanović
- 157-190 ALEKSANDAR DEROKO: BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY
Renata Jadrešin Milić
- 191-212 INTRODUCTION OF VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE STUDIES AT
THE FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE IN BELGRADE
Mirjana Roter-Blagojević, Marko Nikolić

Guest Editor: Renata Jadrešin Milić

ALEKSANDAR DEROKO



Aleksandar Deroko (1894-1988) is universally known in Serbia, but is nevertheless not often studied at either undergraduate or post-graduate level. While knowledge of Deroko and his work are essential for the historiography of the discipline, he is not often cited, and his work is not usually part of ongoing conversations about the current state of architectural history. Deroko's work is so encyclopaedic that every art and architectural historian can no doubt find a link between his or her own work and something Deroko wrote. However, although he exemplifies twentieth-century development of the discipline in Serbia in a way that few other architectural historians do, both twentieth-century literature and more recent scholarship on Serbian architectural history show little interest in the principal concerns that drove Deroko's work, whether theoretical or practical.

When Deroko passed away, there was no significant publication, conference or anthology on his work. Even today, Deroko's work has not yet been presented, or examined as a whole; it is not fully catalogued, and a more comprehensive historical and monographic evaluation has not been carried out. No extensive collection of essays or academic papers about Deroko's *oeuvre* exists.¹ The only comprehensive book on Deroko was written by Zoran M. Jovanović and published in 1991,² and the only exhibition dedicated to his work was organised in the Svetozar Marković University Library in Belgrade in 2004 as part of the Legends of Belgrade University series.³

This lack of published material and attention to Deroko could be considered a matter of circumstance; but it could also indicate the distance between Deroko and current practice. For example, the exhibition "Mapping of Identity – Architecture of Belgrade, 1919-2015" with which the Museum of Applied Art in Belgrade celebrated the Day of the Museum in 2015, did not include Deroko's architecture. While it consisted of more than 120 projects presented on panels, and as many in electronic form, not so much as one of Deroko's ten buildings in Belgrade found a place in it.

Now three decades after his death, it is the right moment to discuss his place in Serbian architectural history. His name in Serbian architecture, history and culture of twentieth century reveals a man who was an architect, a scholar, educator, artist, and a writer. He published numerous books on the history of Serbian architecture, monumental and vernacular alike, others on medieval fortified cities, memoirs, essays on the cultural history of Serbia – an immense body of work on the country’s architectural past.⁵ People who knew him attested to his multiple talents, unique and serene personality, and his captivating spirit and charisma. Colleagues, friends and contemporaries remember him as a person who enriched all areas in which he operated, as a ‘giant of whom even much richer and larger nations than ours would be proud’.⁶

This issue of SAJ was initiated as a part of an ongoing project devoted to Deroko at the University of Belgrade’s Faculty of Architecture to mark three decades after his death. The issue comprises eight biographical, analytical and speculative papers on his place in Serbian architectural history. First two papers solely focus on his architectural work, and deal with Deroko and his work as a practicing architect, addressing the fact that Deroko’s design activity has not been thoroughly examined yet.

Irena Kuletin Čulafić’s comprehensive paper opens the issue and examines his architectural accomplishments – both his built and unrealised designs – in a wider, general context of historical, social and political circumstances of the twentieth century in the country and abroad. In that way, Kuletin gives a historical and cultural contextualisation of Deroko’s rich ‘Renaissance-Baroque’ personality transported into his architecture. Authentic and carefully selected architectural details of his architecture are the central theme of the photographs Kuletin produced for this paper, acknowledging that these details illustrate Deroko’s creative syncretism and a unique, personal way of understanding Serbian vernacular, medieval sacral and modernist architecture.

In her paper, Milica Madanovic explores five residential villas that Deroko designed for his Belgrade clients, aiming to contribute to a better understanding of his architectural *oeuvre*. The original plans, not previously published archival material from the Historical Archive of Belgrade, are examined in relation to Deroko’s passion for architectural history and extensive research of Serbian vernacular buildings. The paper traces the transformation of his architectural inspiration, paying attention to theories, attitudes, and ideas that were already present in the Yugoslavian cultural milieu since the beginning of the twentieth century.

Serena Acciai's develops the argument that connects Deroko's theoretical ideas about the Byzantine house, its influence, and active use of that vernacular heritage today. Based on case studies on historical buildings in the Mediterranean and Middle East, the paper re-evaluates the impact of the Byzantine house culture in a panorama of vernacular architecture in the former Eastern Roman Empire territories. With an aim to show how this housing culture still lives and continues to evolve, Acciai uses Deroko's theories and analyses locations such as Mount Athos, Ioannina, Prizren, Ohrid, Elena, villages of Arbereshe of southern Italy as the 'incunabula' of the Byzantine house type.

In his paper, Milorad Mladenović addresses the lack of a comprehensive historical and monographic assessment of Deroko's works in Smederevo that had not been made to date. He focuses on Deroko's projects and architectural realisations during a very delicate period of the town's history, after a wartime explosion in June 1941. Mladenović shows how Deroko, as an architect, set up a number of characteristic parameters for a new vision for Smederevo that continues to leave its mark on the present-day town.

The second part of this SAJ issue deals in greater detail with Deroko's written and theoretical work. An original contribution of Aleksandar Ignjatović's paper comes from his closer look at three successive editions of the Deroko's well-known book *Monumental and Decorative Architecture in Medieval Serbia*, published in 1953, 1962 and 1985. Ignjatović reveals a series of Deroko's encounters with the Gabriel Millet's well-known tripartite subdivision of architecture of medieval Serbia into three distinct 'schools' – stylistic triad of *L'école de Rascie*, *L'école de la Serbie byzantine* and *L'école de la Morava*, that had an unexpectedly vivid afterlife in the entirely new context of socialist Yugoslavia.

Jelena Bogdanović's paper examines Deroko's understanding of medieval architecture as an art and a dynamic cultural symbol that is relevant to architectural practice. Systematisation and presentation of already known facts are brought further and new contextualised knowledge about the subject matter is provided. The scholarly influences by Pyotr Pokryshkin and Millet on Deroko's work are situated within a larger framework of studies of architectural heritage and its preservation. Bogdanović comprehensively addresses the relevance of Deroko's work on preserving medieval architectural heritage in Serbia and the former Yugoslavia today.

In my paper, I examine the understanding of the tradition and modernity in the work of professor Deroko, firstly through investigation of reasons that may stand behind the duality and contradictions that Deroko and his friend Rastko Petrović shared, aimed at portraying how their friendship influenced Deroko's theoretical ideas in architecture. Then I examine how Deroko synthesised his research work with his pedagogical work, and conclude with an attempt to systematise his theoretical positions, with a belief that his ideas were novel and comparable with similar endeavors in the region, and internationally.

Finally, the issue concludes with Mirjana Roter-Blagojević's and Marko Nikolić's paper that examines Deroko's work as an educator with a prolific and long career at the University of Belgrade's Faculty of Architecture. The paper presents in a comprehensive manner the introduction of vernacular architecture and the inclusion of Deroko's valuable personal knowledge about the vernacular architecture in the study programme. Through original illustrations of the practical assignments, the paper analyses this rich archive material – students' projects from the archives of the office for Architectural Heritage in Serbia of the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade – and for the first time presents authentic material that has never been published before.

We hope that series of investigated problems and conclusions that the authors came to in their papers for this issue of SAJ will help to redefine the usual historical stereotypes related to the interpretation of architecture of medieval Serbia and its afterlife in the new context of Yugoslavia. We also believe that Deroko and his achievements and intentions were part of the mainstream architectural discourse and discussions debated internationally, although they remained under-researched and sometimes even underappreciated within a local architectural historiography. This issue aims to make a small step in amending this by bringing Deroko to life to a much broader audience, with a desire to better evaluate Serbian architecture internationally and to make this valuable knowledge available more widely.

NOTES

- 1 Radovan Popović ed., *Deroko i drugi o njemu* (Beograd: Turistička stampa, 1984) was published in honour of Deroko's 90th birthday. It consists of short essays written by a group of his friends, colleagues, and students, all of them being very personal, and filled with warm memories and testimonies.
- 2 Zoran M. Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko* (Beograd: Republički zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture, 1991). The book includes a Bibliography of Deroko with 255 units, as well as the Catalogue – list of his 62 architectural works.
- 3 *Legende Beogradskog Univerziteta: Aleksandar Deroko 1894-1988*. Katalog izložbe (Beograd: Univerzitetska biblioteka, 2004).
- 4 Exhibition 'Mapping of Identity – Architecture of Belgrade, 1919-2015', 6 November 2015 – 31 January 2016. Museum of Applied Art, Belgrade (<http://mpu.rs/en/exhibitions/mapping-of-identity/>)
- 5 Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 101-109.
- 6 Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, Editors, 5.

ARCHITECTURAL WORK OF ALEKSANDAR DEROKO – BEAUTY OF EMOTIONAL CREATIVITY

A B S T R A C T

This paper studies significant and forgotten, but not less important, built and unrealised designs by Serbian architect Aleksandar Deroko. It seeks to achieve a continuous view in dealing with Deroko's architectural work versus the historical discontinuity of political, territorial-geographic and social circumstances. It is impossible to separate Deroko as an architect from Deroko as a scholar, researcher, historian of architecture and art, an academic professor, painter, artist, writer, chronicler of his time, protector, conservator and historiographer of Serbian cultural heritage. The main aim of this paper is to apply comprehensive research approach within which his work in the field of architectural design will be considered in a complementary and pluralistic way.

Deroko's architectural projects examined in their details and altogether represent distillate of Deroko's erudite personality, which casts shadow on relevant questions of Serbian history of architecture placement: How to understand it, observe and examine it, from Yugoslav or Serbian perspective, from the position of continuity or discontinuity, through characteristics of general or particular?

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MODERNISM
PLURALITY OF MEANING

INTRODUCTION

Today, thirty years after the death of Professor Deroko, much has been forgotten about this fascinating Belgrade architect. Carrying the artistic genes of his ancestors, his Italian surname sounds original and unusual in itself, and indeed, whatever he intended to do, Deroko did it in a completely original and authentic way. As a real polyhistor, he encompassed the most diverse knowledge of human culture. Mostly keen on observation rather than the rigid and lifeless academic expression, his works reflect Deroko's rich nature and numerous versatile interests that emerged from his Baroque-Renaissance personality.

He chose architecture as an art closest to his heart, while he called himself an *anythingarian* – all things in life were of interest to him.¹ He was a man who loved life, tavern, to enjoy himself, and appreciated real human values above academic references and dusty pages of books. He always relied on knowledge and avoided falling into clichés.

The key determinant through which we will observe the entire architectural work of Professor Deroko is his Baroque-Renaissance personality. In the theory and history of architecture and art, the term *homo universalis* is commonly associated with the Renaissance creators. Renaissance geniuses such as Michelangelo and Leonardo expressed their art and talent in many fields of human knowledge and dealt with various disciplines of art, science, technology, philosophy and culture in general. In his time Deroko was a rare example of the Renaissance *uomo universale*, but what adds to the significance of this conventional concept of the Renaissance man is his Baroque personality. In this case, Baroque should not be seen as the style and epoch that comes after the Renaissance, which makes the contrast and contradiction with the Renaissance principles of grace, order, and harmony. The concept of Baroque here refers to Deroko's emotional-psychological and aesthetic expression. He was Baroque in every way. His drawings are simply overwhelmed with dramatics, exuberance and passion, pulsating as if they were alive by making a vortex of collage and a map of his ingenius mind. This Deroko's tremulous line in drawing caricatures life and balances between irony, humor, and romance. And not only through drawings, but also in Deroko's speech, writing and architecture, this Baroque principle is associated with the Dionysian principle of passion, instincts, exaggeration, primordial, chaos and irrationality. All of this takes part in a sophisticated synergy of emotions, passion and ideas through which Deroko's ingenious works are derived.

It is important to point out that the aim of this research is not the stylistic, historical and theoretical analysis of Deroko's architectural opus and the classification in any kind of rigid theoretical frameworks such as "Serbian national style", "romantic national traditions of architecture" or "expression of Art Deco".² The main goal of this paper is to examine his architectural accomplishments in the context of the diversity and integrity of Deroko's creative personality in a wider, general context of historical, social and political circumstances in the country and abroad. Deroko was a very active figure in various spheres of cultural and social life, and although he tried to keep himself away from politics, the turbulent political circumstances in the country and the world particularly influenced and marked his professional research activity.

His greatest contribution to Serbian culture and science is reflected in his pedagogical and research work in the domain of history, protection and preservation of architectural heritage and the cultural heritage generally. Also as an architect Deroko achieved significant, but not extensive results in the field of design.³

Deroko's architectural designs are undoubtedly original in relation to a general trend in the Serbian and Yugoslav architecture. This paper will focus on the interwar period when Deroko realised most of his projects. He carried out a total of 28 projects between 1926 and 1943, and only three after the World War II, of which only the Monument to the Kosovo Heroes in Gazimestan is significant in terms of his architectural invention.

CULTURAL CLIMATE BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS - DEROKO'S MOSAIC OF "TRAVELLING TIME"

After the World War I, the world faced radical changes first on the political-geographical basis with the demise of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Ottoman Empire. Another important event was the 1917 October Revolution in Russia, which overthrew the monarchy and the emperor, establishing a communist state power. By signing the Treaty of Versailles, new independent states were formed: Czechoslovakia, Austria, Poland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. As the biggest loser of the war, Germany was required to pay high damages, it lost parts of the territory, and was in a terrible economic crisis. Italy found itself in a similar position, which due to unemployment, poverty and general dissatisfaction supported the fascist party of Benito Mussolini. All these

changes affected the shift of the spheres of interest in the Balkans, which was of great importance to the newly-formed Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, who sought to exploit the support of the victorious states of the WWI, primarily France and England. Since its founding, the union of the South Slavic nations had faced numerous political, national, religious, economic and socio-cultural problems. After the assassination of Stjepan Radić in the National Assembly, King Alexander I of Yugoslavia introduced the dictatorship in 1929. As a result, the political situation in the country became even more difficult, the separatist tendencies strengthened, which culminated in the assassination of King Alexander in Marseilles in 1934. The Kingdom of Yugoslavia changed its diplomatic course and turned to Germany and Italy in the belief that it would preserve its national integrity. However, the conflicts in the country escalated when it entered the WWII in 1941 with the breakup of the Yugoslav union of states. The period between the two world wars represented a time of great aspirations and a painful way of harmonising the new South Slavic state. On the one hand, this was the era of anticipation of a civilised and humane society through investments in science, education, arts and culture. The political pretensions of different ethnic identities of the Yugoslav union involved the overwhelming burden of conservatism pushed the newly-founded country into totalitarianism, chauvinism, and repression.

By creating the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Belgrade was turned from oriental shaped town into the capital of a newly-formed, significantly enlarged country. The country's post-war reconstruction marked two decades of intense construction of Belgrade. At the time urban development and architecture were geared towards promoting principles of the newly-established Yugoslavia. In a time dominated by pluralism in thought, politics, religion, arts and culture, architecture served as a cultural core that attempted to reconcile and synchronise the existing dichotomies. It also tried to constitute new Yugoslav affinities in order to affirm the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and to style Belgrade as a kind of "Paris of the Balkans".

The state of the new social and political reality caused the simultaneous occurrence of the most diverse phenomena in the field of art and architecture from conservative historical conceptions to advanced avant-garde currents shaped by the irrational attempts of the young Yugoslav intellectual elite to form an authentic Yugoslav idea in arts and culture. The experiences of world historical avant-garde such as Fauvism, Cubism, Futurism, Suprematism, Constructivism and Dadaism had deepened and developed in Yugoslavia, and many Yugoslav writers, artists and architects maintained intensive links, especially on the Belgrade-Zagreb-Paris route.

Ljubomir Micić launched the international cultural and arts magazine *Zenit* in Zagreb in 1921. It was a platform for Yugoslav artists, writers, poets, architects, as well as Italian futurists, protagonists of German Bauhaus, Russian constructivists, suprematists and various members of European avant-garde practices. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, El Lissitzky, Vladimir Tatlin, Alexander Archipenko, Wassily Kandinsky, Walter Gropius, László Moholy-Nagy, and Kazimir Malevich were some of the names who collaborated on this magazine.⁴

In addition to Zenithism, significant contributions were made by the Yugoslav Dadaism that was started by Dragan Aleksić in Zagreb in 1922 after he broke away from Micić and zenithists. Working in Zagreb and Belgrade, Aleksić published the Dada magazine *Dada Tank* and *Dada Jazz*, while Micić's brother Branko Ve Poljanski published the *Dada-jok* in Zagreb.

In the 1920s and 1930s, a series of avant-garde serial publications in the fields of art, craft, poetry and culture were launched in Yugoslav territories. One of the most prominent was the surrealist almanac *L'Impossible* launched in 1930, and *Nadrealizam danas i ovde (Surrealism Here and Now)* published from 1931 to 1932.⁵

Zenithism, Dadaism and Surrealism as avant-garde movements that emerged in the Yugoslav spheres signified a great cultural turning point and the climax of ideas that made direct intellectual and artistic communication with the world. The disappointment with the aftermath of the WWI were the basis of these radical movements as a product of disappointment with the false aesthetics of art that did not engage in real life processes. Therefore, the need arose in the art to act and create in a sociopolitically engaging way in the form of radical practices that would directly affect the change and unravel the established traditions, social reality and the whole system of values on which the society rested.

5

In this vibrant intellectual atmosphere of diverse thinking and cultural opening of the environment towards international flows, Deroko evolved professionally as an architect while being friends with many avant-garde poets, writers and artists. He had met many of them during studies abroad in Rome, and then during his specialisation in Paris. Deroko realised his dream of joining the Faculty of Technical Sciences in Belgrade's Mechanical-Technical Department to become an airplane designer, in the war irony of fate, becoming one of the first pilots of the Serbian army.⁶ He participated in the defense of the Serbian lines on the Thessaloniki front, survived malaria and tuberculosis, after which he recovered with the French military aid at a sanatorium in Rome. A year spent in Rome

would leave a strong mark on Deroko's personality and would be a turning point in his choice of further education and training. The magnificent power, durability and beauty of antique art, architecture and monuments enchanted Deroko for a lifetime.

In the difficult post-war years, Deroko studied civil engineering and architecture in Rome, Prague, Brno, graduating in Belgrade in 1926 and became a teaching assistant on the course of the *Byzantine and Old Serbian Architecture*. Deroko's circle of friends included his best and inseparable companion writer, poet and diplomat Rastko Petrović, Vladislav Vinaver, Milan Dedinac, Marko Ristić, Dušan Matić, Tin Ujević, Marino Tartalja, Toma Rosandić, Nikola Bešević, Rista Stijović, Rade Drainac, Ljubomir Micić, Sava Šumanović, Petar Palavičini, Milo Milunović, Jovan Bijelić, Petar and Nikola Dobrović, Miloš Crnjanski, and many others.

In addition to pedagogical work at the university and academic research work in architectural history, theory and practice, in the period leading to the beginning of the WWII Deroko became known to the general public through actively writing opinion pieces in newspapers and journals. The bulk of his articles were published in the state-owned daily newspapers *Vreme*, *Politika*, *Pokret*, *Telegram*, and journals such as *Glasnik Skopskog naučnog društva*, *Srpski književni glasnik*, *Starinar*, *Misao*, *Godišnjak Tehničkog fakulteta*, *Nova smena*, *Umetnički pregled*, *XX vek*.

From an early age Deroko had a great passion for exploring old, forgotten things of the past times. As a young boy playing in the Tašmajdan underground tunnels and fortifications around Kalemegdan, Deroko would imagine himself as a detective and investigator of the old Belgrade cobblestone.⁷ Amused by the works of pioneers of the medieval Serbian cultural heritage researchers Mihailo Valtrović, Dragutin Milutinović, Andra Stevanović, Deroko made his first steps in researching the Serbian architectural past as a student of his mentor Professor Petar Pera Popović, with whom he worked on the conservation and restoration of the monasteries Žiča, Djurdjevi Stupovi, Sopoćani and Dečani in 1925 and 1928.

During the studies, Deroko became the Secretary of the Commission for the Preservation of Historical Monuments founded by the Ministry of Religion.⁸ This commission was a significant step in expanding cultural awareness of the protection of cultural assets because at that time the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments did not exist. The Commission had begun practical and systematic work on saving and preserving old monuments.

Besides professor Pera Popović, Deroko's passionate interest in the research of Serbian medieval art and architecture was prompted by his closest friend Rastko Petrović, who, following the Serbian army retreat through Albania in 1915. Rastko was sent to Paris as a scholar of the French government where he graduated law at Sorbonne. Out of his love of art Rastko attended the lectures by famous Professor Gabriel Millet at *École des Hautes Études*. His stories and experiences from Paris served Deroko as the first reference for contemporary research studies in Byzantine art. On one of his trips from Paris to Belgrade, Rastko brought the books of Auguste Choisy, Gabriel Millet and Charles Diehl that he and Deroko read and studied with great care.⁹

Fascinated by Byzantium and the Middle Ages in their youth, Deroko and Rastko explored Serbian medieval art, architecture, rich yet forgotten heritage of stories, poems, literature, costumes, fairy tales, jewelry and other charms of the old Serbian culture. They traveled in the Serbian, Metohija, Bosnian, Montenegrin and Macedonian areas and villages, on old buses and trains as far as possible, and then rode on horses and walked to reach the abandoned monasteries.

In this poor, but happy period due to the end of the war, when the pencil and paper were a luxury, Deroko and Rastko recorded their impressions, performed measurements, drew their first sketches and made detailed written studies of the monasteries and churches, and as the pinnacle of their exciting adventures, they experienced a sublime aesthetic experiences and great spiritual ecstasies that will later be featured in Deroko's academic work and Rastko's poems and novels. At that time, nature was untouched and unspoiled by a flurry of tourists and their discarded packages and cans. As Deroko remembers, the Djurdjevi Stupovi monastery near Novi Pazar was demolished, without a roof, and the frescoes on the walls seemed to speak as the starry sky flashed above them.¹⁰

Gračanica was abandoned and only one monk lived there. The Sopoćani remains of Nemanja's capital Ras, the Patriarchate of Peć and the Visoki Dečani site, roads to monasteries in the valley of the Lim River between Bijelo Polje and Prijepolje were completely covered in ivy, and there was beautiful untouched nature and magnificent art and architecture enjoyed by the two researchers. It is then that Deroko would base his hypothesis on the progress and the artistic significance of the Serbian medieval painting of the thirteenth century (Mileševa and Sopoćani), which was much more advanced than the Serbian medieval paintings of the fourteenth century, which, until then, had been the most valued in the professional academic circles.

After graduation, Deroko received a scholarship from the French government and went to Paris to complete doctoral studies with Gabriel Millet as his mentor. However, the restless, curious spirit and the desire to get to know the bohemian life of Paris drew Deroko and Rastko to the artist's studios, the Parisian bistros and cafes where Duchamp, Picasso, Le Corbusier, Vlamenk, Chagall, Sava Šumanović, Milo Milunović, Jovan Bijelić, and many others would gather. After receiving the news that he was offered the position of assistant at the Faculty of Technical Sciences in Belgrade's Architectural Department, Deroko returned to Belgrade to take up the position and never wrote his doctorate.

After the WWI, interest in medieval art was not yet widely represented in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The public's interest in medieval art began after the Second International Congress of Byzantologists, held in Belgrade in April 1927 in the presence of King Alexander I of Yugoslavia, the Serbian Patriarch, Catholic Archbishop, numerous diplomatic and political officials and international and local experts and scientists.¹¹ After the Congress, the studies of Byzantium and the research of the Serbian and Yugoslav medieval heritage were particularly encouraged. The country began to initiate and assist the research work of experts including Deroko. He was sent to research trips to the coastal areas of the country in 1929, where he made records and sketches *in situ*, and formed the first contemporary experiences of the Yugoslav medieval architectural past.¹² The results of Deroko's research were presented in a series of articles published in *Vreme*, a daily newspaper that propagated the regime policy of Karadjordjević's royal family. We can notice the difference between Deroko's articles published before and after 1929. The articles and research that Deroko published between 1922 and 1929 were focused exclusively on the research of the Serbian medieval past,¹³ while the texts published after 1929 were directed to the study of the Serbian medieval architecture and art in the context of its cooperation in the cultural construction of the Yugoslav national identity.¹⁴

After the dictatorship was introduced increasing repressive measures were also evident in the domain of cultural policy, while the importance of scientific confirmation of the existence of a unique Yugoslav culture was increasingly stressed. Therefore Deroko's articles after 1929 acted in the function of the efforts of the ruling regime and in the spirit of the cultural policy of integral Yugoslavism.¹⁵ Deroko, a young, well-known scholar, Byzantologist and academic expert, also became an ideologue of Yugoslavism who was trying to find and scientifically prove a link in Serbian and Croatian medieval architecture that would confirm the common foundations of the old Serbian

and Croatian architecture. On his travels along the Yugoslav coast, Deroko was searching for the type of temple that represented the prenatal embryo of Yugoslav architecture. He proudly wrote of the existence of “great” Yugoslav art in the Middle Ages, where the South Slavic tribes inhabited the area from Istria to Morava and Vardar – the Croatian tribes occupied the west of Neretva, and the Serbian occupied the east of Neretva.¹⁶

As the sea tribes adopted the western Roman religion and civilisation earlier, and the Serbian tribes later adopted the Byzantine influence, on a quasi-scientific basis, without any authentic material evidence, Deroko claimed that there was evidence that still needed to be investigated, and that the actual cradle of Serbian medieval architecture should be sought in old coastal churches. Deroko based his hypothesis on the fact that the Raška School which had many Roman influences from the West, did not appear at once, but gradually evolved over time from some of the architectural forms of the coastal Croatian architecture dating before Nemanja’s constitution of the Serbian state.

Analogously to the “archaeological” connection between Serbian and Croatian medieval architecture from the period of “contamination” by Byzantine and Romanesque influences Deroko found primordial ideas in the field of ethnology that were not rooted in the Byzantine and Latin heritage, but rather on the natural “sincere” folk traditions and vernacular architecture. In the 1920s Deroko was increasingly intrigued by the study of vernacular architecture and established a thesis of a general division of the history of Yugoslav architecture into only two types: historical, which included architecture built in different styles, and traditional folk architecture, whose style had always been created by a peasant himself – a self-taught builder in tune with nature.¹⁷

As a part of the academic support in the building of the Yugoslav identity, vernacular architecture had a double significance, it in itself was a common denominator for all Yugoslav territories, but it also embodied the differences between Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Bosnians and Herzegovinians who all had their own folklore traditions. Deroko’s research work on Yugoslav vernacular architecture would continue in socialist Yugoslavia after the WWII. Therefore, in his research practice and texts the distinctiveness of various vernacular traditions would be further emphasised as an expression of special features of the regional identities and the wealth of the Yugoslav culture of unity in diversity.¹⁸

DEROKO'S PARABLES IN THE TIME OF EMERGING MODERNISM

At the time when Deroko graduated in architecture in 1926, Belgrade was still recovering from the effects of the WWI, while urbanisation and large-scale construction was in progress. In architecture, the romantic tradition of historical and eclectic styles in the spirit of academism was partially pursued. A large number of significant public and state institution buildings were built in eclectic academic styles by Russian immigrant architects. The aesthetics of Romanticism, on the other hand, was infused in the architecture of the revival of medieval Serbian-Byzantine tradition in the last decades of the nineteenth century after Serbia gained independence from the Ottoman occupation. The search for authentic national "Serbian style" was one of the most prominent preoccupations for architects in the era of the Kingdom of Serbia. However, with the post-war establishment of the new state union of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, nationalistic tendencies in architecture were primarily limited to church architecture and continued to exist as an integral part in creation of Yugoslav identity.

Modern architecture emerged after the WWI and became dominant after the WWII. Modernism in architecture was a direct derivative of contemporary European tendencies in architecture. Modernism, Expressionism, Cubism, Art Deco, Academism shaped by historicalist neo-styles and folklore tendencies blended and often changed throughout careers of prominent Serbian architects. The period between the two world wars in Serbian architecture was the time of search, the period of delusions, irrationality and great efforts to create a solid and clear architectural expression that would primarily present Belgrade as the Yugoslav capital and the modern center of the Balkans.

Serbia had a young tradition of architectural education. The Ministry of Construction's Architectural Department was established in 1881, and the Architectural Department of the Faculty of Technical Sciences set up in 1896, so the first generation of graduated architects appeared in the first decade of the twentieth century. Unfortunately, the development in the Serbian architecture was interrupted by the outbreak of the WWI. After the war, the role and the significance of architecture in building and creating the identity of Belgrade as the capital of a new large state union of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was growing. In addition to intensive construction activities, more and more attention was focused on the theoretical and aesthetic issues of architecture.¹⁹

Besides intense theoretical dilemmas about the ethical and aesthetic issues of architecture, the general public in Serbia was largely ignorant of the role of an architect who was often regarded as less important than an engineer.²⁰ The Group of Architects of Modern Direction – GAMP, founded in 1928, marked the beginning of Belgrade opening up, which was otherwise conservative. The group was founded by architects Milan Zloković, Dušan Babić, Jan Dubový and Branislav Kojić, all of whom studied architecture in European centers outside Yugoslavia. They advocated for the affirmation of modern architecture, and the group was joined by affirmed architects whose projects were beginning to experience modernist transformations such as Dragiša Brašovan and Krstić brothers. The GAMP, comprising 18 members, worked in design, organising exhibitions and publishing texts about the principles of modern architecture.²¹ After making considerable contributions to the development of the Serbian architecture, in 1934 the GAMP was dissolved and its members continued to work individually in the spirit of Modernism.

Like Zenithism, Dadaism and Surrealism in art, early Modernism in Serbian architecture was a short-lived, progressive, but insufficiently strategically organised tendency. Serbian modernism between the two world wars did not distinguish itself by a radical revolutionary attitude towards the existing academic tradition of architecture. It was characterised by a mild, conciliatory, ambivalent position that failed to achieve a striking dominance on the complex Yugoslav scene, but it provided great and significant achievements in architecture in some of the works of Milan Zloković, Momčilo Belobrk, Dragiša Brašovan, Branislav Kojić, Dušan Babić, Jan Dubový and Nikola Dobrović. These architects significantly marked the avant-garde spirit of a new, advanced vision of Yugoslav architecture between the two world wars.

Deroko was a representative of the first post-war generation of architects who graduated from the Architectural Department of the Faculty of Technical Sciences in Belgrade. Although he was in the same generation as Dušan Babić, Jan Dubový, Milan Zloković and Branislav Kojić, Deroko did not start designing in the spirit of Modernism. Considering that from the very beginning of his studies Deroko was focused on the research of medieval Serbian and Byzantine architecture, he chose Cathedral of St. Sava in Belgrade as the topic of his graduate studies. Spending time in Paris and traveling across Europe, Deroko was very much concerned with the movements and endeavors of contemporary architecture and art. The Bauhaus and Le Corbusier's principles gave him a logical and correct direction of the architecture of the new century, but he remained committed to the "archaic" and his personal vision of architecture.

Bearing in mind Deroko's extraordinary drawing and artistic talent, a sense of space and logic in architecture, the question arises: How is it that such a progressive and versatile thinker did not find his artistic and aesthetic expression in the flows of modernism when it comes to his construction practices? The answer probably lies in Deroko's highly ethical principles of understanding art and architecture itself. Deroko understood architecture in a holistic way given his primary choice to be an architect historian and researcher of medieval architecture. He tended to follow the national vernacular architectural tradition. His architecture in practice was very much in ethical unity with his theoretical attitudes and definitions. In his unique academic, research, educational, conservation, drawing, painting and construction work, Deroko did not want to disrupt the spiritual and moral harmony of his creative personality and to stand outside his vernacular and medieval parables in order to make a drastic change of his architecture towards Modernism.

Deroko's achievements represent conciliatory evidence, respect for the spirit of modernity, but at the same time, a traditional national architecture is maintained as an expression of the particularity and historical continuity. In this way, Deroko's projects form a unified whole in which there are no deviations in the aesthetic, visual, technical and conceptual sense. Deroko's architecture was balanced and always tied to a moderately modern vision of architecture that sought to maintain the course of the tradition of vernacular construction reminiscent of the historical heritage of the medieval past through modern technical achievements.

DEROKO AS AN ARCHITECT AND MASTER BUILDER

Deroko spoke very little of his architectural work, apart from writing about his topical projects in the daily newspapers. Deroko's views on his own architecture can only be discerned between the lines of his many papers and articles on general theoretical, historical and cultural issues of architecture. Deroko was most active between 1927 and 1940 when it comes to realizing his architectural projects. After the WWII, he completely devoted himself to his pedagogical work at the university, the protection of national cultural heritage and research work through writing studies and books on the Serbian and Yugoslav medieval architecture, medieval fortified cities and traditional folk architecture.²²

The body of Deroko's built projects is not large, but it is enough to pay attention to the bravurous details of the Colonel Elezović's House, the Monument to Osman Džikić, the Barlovac Chapel, the Church of Holy Transfiguration in Novo Sarajevo, student dormitory of the Orthodox Theology Faculty or beautifully carved pillars at the altar of Cathedral of St. Sava, all of which are unusual and valuable examples of authentic and original architecture.

Deroko's architectural creativity should be considered primarily in the context of his principal commitment for research in the field of history and protection of architectural heritage. Deroko's path of an architect-researcher and transmitter of historical knowledge can be traced in his practical work in the field of architecture. If we exclude student dormitory of the Orthodox Theology Faculty and the unrealised competition design for a building of the Faculty of Philosophy, we can see that Deroko did not even try to participate in major architectural competitions for public buildings and structures that were usually the most important measure of success of an architect. Deroko achieved modest results in designing individual housing architecture, while he remains best remembered for his projects of memorial and religious architecture.

Deroko's architectural opus includes a total of 28 built works and 27 projects that were never completed, of which 11 houses were constructed (5 unrealised house projects), 6 sacral buildings built (11 unrealised church projects), 9 realised monuments of memorial architecture (4 projects not implemented), and 2 implemented public function projects (7 unrealised in this area). (See Table 1)

Some of his research hypotheses, studies, typologies and categorisations played an important role in the ideological construction of the Yugoslav national and cultural identity, which had its specific characteristics in both Yugoslavia and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (later the Kingdom of Yugoslavia), as well as the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). Therefore, Deroko's entire academic research cannot be viewed only in ideological light and as a product of historical, social and political circumstances.

In projects that were of broader public interest, Deroko's theoretical research work had more impact and certainly influenced the formation of design solutions. However, Deroko appreciated the so-called "neutilitarian" architecture, which included memorial monuments. In this area of architecture, Deroko as an artist and architect had far more freedom to show his aesthetic and poetic expression in architecture. In an interview with Miloš Crnjanski, when asked to point out his main idea in architecture, Deroko said that modern architecture cannot be

a direct continuation of tradition, that studying and researching the history of architecture was what reflected and elevated the spiritual architectural culture, but that it was absurd to impose medieval architectural principles on modern life.²³

In another interview for the *Politika* daily, at the age of 80, Deroko said: ‘As an architect, I did not deal with the design, but mostly with the aesthetic side of architecture, first of all medieval, and then the so-called traditional national architecture of the old towns and villages.’²⁴ Indeed Deroko was not quite an ordinary architect-designer focused on solving technical, structural, material and practical issues in architecture; he was the author and *protomajstor* (master builder) in Michelangelo’s sense – in everything he dealt with, as well as in the design of architecture, he left a worthy and recognisable seal of personality, laced with his knowledge, elocution and erudition.

As an architect with a strong artistic drive Deroko transferred his love for painting, and in particular drawing, to the methodology of his architectural work. He developed his projects from a bunch of sketches and croquis. By designing through a drawing with the strong emotional rush, like in Surrealist collages, Deroko recorded the unconscious flow of his thoughts. Deroko’s drawings dictated a specific narrative in a conglomerate and vortex of symbols, parables, associations, rebuses, riddles, as his artistic affinity emerged for the circle of his friends, comprising Dadaists, Zenithists and Surrealists.²⁵ Deroko, as a conservative architect, united the tradition and avant-garde in his artistic impression and philosophical thought of art and architecture.

DEROKO’S HOUSES

Deroko’s architectural career began with residential architecture. He is the author of 11 built individual houses, built in the center of Belgrade and residential areas of Dedinje, Topčider and Senjak.

Colonel Elezović’s house on 20 Njegoševa Street, built in 1927, is one of his first projects. Colonel Elezović expressed his desire for decoration and architectural forms that would resemble the antique and romantic era. (Fig. 1) Respecting the wishes of his client, Deroko designed the house in the spirit of the French Renaissance castles, with a pronounced mansard roof and effective processing of the roof cornice. Because of its central position in the urban neighborhood, Colonel Elezović’s house was limited to only one street façade that became a representative backdrop of Deroko’s artistic invention. Deroko



Fig. 1. Colonel Elezović house on 20 Njegoševa Street in Belgrade, 1927 (photo: Srdja Mirković)



d

e

Colonel Elezović House is the best example of the preserved authenticity of Deroko's designer expression, with special attention to the processing of minuscule details. In the image B the interior of the entrance hall of the house transposes the impression of an ancient castle with a cassette ceiling with blind consoles on the ceiling, while special attention is paid to the polychrome treatment of the walls and the floor of the hall. The image C shows the detail above the entrance door in the form of a grotesque head of a lion that alludes to the fairytale expression of the entire house from the time of medieval and Renaissance castles. In the same spirit, there are also large arched wooden doors, on which there is a carved pilaster with stylized capitals carved in a shallow relief (image D). In the image E, a knocker on the door is another small detail that conveys the impressions from ancient times, while, around the knocker and keyhole, there is a stylized mythological motif of Ouroboros (the snake that bites its own tail) made in wrought iron, which is the symbol of eternity and infinite repetition of the cycle of life through continuous birth and dying. These are the best example of expressing Deroko's architectural parables that should not be regarded as decorative historical scenery, but as building elements of an entirely original architecture with a strong poetic seal of the author.

gives an impeccably symmetrical solution, slightly pulling outwards the central cube of the façade. On the second floor he placed a loggia above which there is medieval decoration with plant and animal motifs reminiscent of William Morris and Arts and Crafts decorations. Decorative arabesque reliefs are also present on parapets below the first floor windows, while sculptor Živojin Lukić made this poetic relief composition in line with Deroko's design. Although conditioned by the wishes of Colonel Elezović, Deroko failed to fully express his personal aesthetic principles of architecture in this project. Nevertheless, it is regarded as one of his more notable achievements for which he received an award from the Architect's Club in 1930.

In 1930s Deroko became increasingly interested in the works of national vernacular architecture, which he considered to be equally important and significant as medieval architecture he dealt with.²⁶ Deroko travelled around the country, made records and sketches and collected ethnological data on material culture and architectural tradition throughout Yugoslavia. Deroko's inspiration and fascination with the spontaneity, simplicity and beauty of the rural architecture created for centuries by the uneducated and unnamed folk builders would leave a mark in Deroko's architectural achievements, but above all in his housing projects. The first indications of these folklore tendencies were noticed in the villa of Obrad Simić on 5a Banjičkih žrtava Street, built in 1931. (Fig. 2) The villa represents a certain symbiosis of the various influences of Medieval Monastic architecture, Modernist and Folklore elements. There is an expressionistic playfulness of wall masses in the form of bay towers that alludes to the Folklore elements of the *doksat* (upstairs enclosed balcony or porch, characteristic for Islamic and Serbian vernacular architecture), but also to medieval towers. Modernist influences are present in the façade without ornaments, painted in white. The only polychronic detail is a rectangular shallow niche filled with bricks on the central highest cube in which an iron sunclock is placed. Very shallow pitched roof with mild roof eaves make it a form of transitional solution between modernist flat roof surfaces and pitched roof with *ceramida* roof tiles, related to the folklore and Mediterranean tradition of the oldest medieval monasteries on the Yugoslav coast.

In its entirety, Obrad Simić's villa emphasises the impression of massiveness that is accomplished by the rhythm of changing cubic masses. The compromise between modernism and vernacular tradition is seen in the application of two types of window apertures: large and rectangular windows in a row and small arched openings similar to monastery biforas. The house would be a typical example of Modernism, if one was to remove details such as a shallow pitched



Fig. 2. Villa of Obrad Simić on 5a Banjičkih Žrtava Street in Belgrade, 1931. (photo: Srdja Mirković)

Although the windows joinery, gutters and some fences on the terraces have been changed, the Villa of Obrad Simić retained the authenticity of the expression. In this case, Deroko devoted special attention to the design of details, such as the iron number of a home made by Deroko's design with his recognizable handwriting, and the iron sun clock in a polychrome brick niche on the central wall of the façade.

Today Deroko's house, which he designed for his father, no longer exists, but the image shows the essence of Deroko's way of thinking in designing individual residential architecture in the spirit of fusing the motif from a vernacular tradition with a simple contemporary architectural expression, without redundant ornamental details. Deroko's architecture, seen through history, archeology, ethnology and culturology, collects numerous Deroko's interests in the general context of human being and relationship with nature. It is not only Deroko as an architect that stands out, but also Deroko as a passionate collector of old weapons, locks, padlocks, keyholes and the whole corpus of folk tradition, customs and heritage.



Fig. 3. Aleksandar Deroko's family house in Topčider in Belgrade, 1936. (Aleksandar Deroko, "Estetika kuće u polju," *Umetnički pregled* 5, Feb. 1938)

roof, shallow wooden consoles beneath bay windows and a shallow eave above the window in a linear style form of the *ceramida* roof tiles. All these unobtrusive details depict Deroko's commitment to the architecture between tradition and modernity.

Following similar principles in 1937 Deroko designed a villa for lawyer Stakić on 2 Miloša Savčića Street in Dedinje. This project was more dominated by the Mediterranean spirit of construction present in a massive stone-faced tile. The Modernist façade with no ornaments was expressively treated with rough rust treatment in plaster, and the upper corner of the house was accentuated by a sculptural detail depicting St. George killing a dragon made in red terracotta. Analysing Deroko's residential architecture projects, we can see that decorations are always present in a very conservative way with respect to the logic of construction. Decorative elements in his architecture always provide symbolic meaning.

Building his own house on 3 Dr Jovana Danića Street in Topčider, Deroko freely expressed his theoretical and practical understanding of residential architecture that needed to be humane, in touch with nature and the environment, following in the footsteps of anonymous national folk builders for centuries. (Fig. 3) Deroko revived all microelements of folklore construction in the project to build his house. According to Bogdan Bogdanović, it was a kind of architectural ensemble because the house was built from finished old and rejected elements of the village and town architecture: sooty wooden beams, old gutters and amber ladders that were positioned horizontally as a fence on the porch.²⁷ Deroko's house was built completely in the spirit and in the logic of the construction of old traditional folk builders without any technical tools, with old brick masonry, intentionally curved edges of walls with a pronounced chimney on the façade with a massive chimney cap, covered with *ceramida* roof tiles.²⁸

Deroko's design approach to the folk tradition and tradition of Serbo-Byzantine medieval architecture was very different from that of Momir Korunović's and Branislav Kojić's treatment of national historical and ethno elements in architecture. A decade older than Deroko, Korunović – the ideal of the “Serbian national architect”²⁹ and as a member of the old school of architecture in his accomplishments, approached architecture in an extremely academic manner by replacing the historic eclecticism with the “Serbian Moravian” and Byzantine style, which was interpreted as a prototype model for “modern design” in the spirit of the Serbo-Byzantine style.

On the other hand, Kojić's efforts to reconcile and harmonise the ethno heritage of Serbian vernacular architecture with modernist principles, provided ambivalent and inconclusive results in those projects where he tried to synthesize Modernism and Folklorism. Oriental *divanhana*-like bay windows (Divanhana is encased balcony that in the Ottoman way of living was the most representative part of a house used as a gathering place alongside the windows), transformed into modernist non-ornamentalism, overly-emphasized roofs and prominent chimneys with rustic ends, remain an example of the hybrid and undefined direction of his architecture. Kojić's architectural opus represents a very complex and dispersive eclecticism in the general theoretical and practical comprehension of architecture. Therefore in Kojić's designs there are potable metamorphoses associated with Classical Academism, Modernism and the Serbian folklore architecture.

Like Deroko, Kojić dealt with theoretical research in vernacular architecture.³⁰ While Deroko had a poetic, sentimental and simultaneously meticulous research approach based on the collection, recording, drawing and sketching of elements of the vernacular history of architecture, Kojić had a cold and rational attitude based on statistics and rigid academic study of vernacular architecture. Kojić dealt more with the issues of urbanisation, economy and industrialisation and their influence on the relations between villages and cities, while Deroko remained a romantic seeker and a collector of the old national folklore and rural architecture, which was disappearing in the lead up to socialist industrialisation of the country.

Deroko's house on Topčider Hill confirms his creative work as the role of interpreter of proven formulas of national folk construction. Deprived of useless decorations, which was the main aesthetic characteristic of historical styles such as Renaissance, Baroque, Classicism, etc., this universal form of architecture was created on the basis of natural conditions and the basic construction logic which represented the essence and philosophical basis of architecture for Deroko. This Deroko's masterpiece literally confirmed his thought that the essence of architecture was not only in Greek temples and antiquity as the source of European architecture, nor in the magnificent structures of historical styles, but rather in the essence of primary, primordial and small forms of folk creation.³¹

Deroko transposed the entire beauty of folk construction in his projects of houses. With his talent and skills, he revived and prolonged the life of wooden beams,

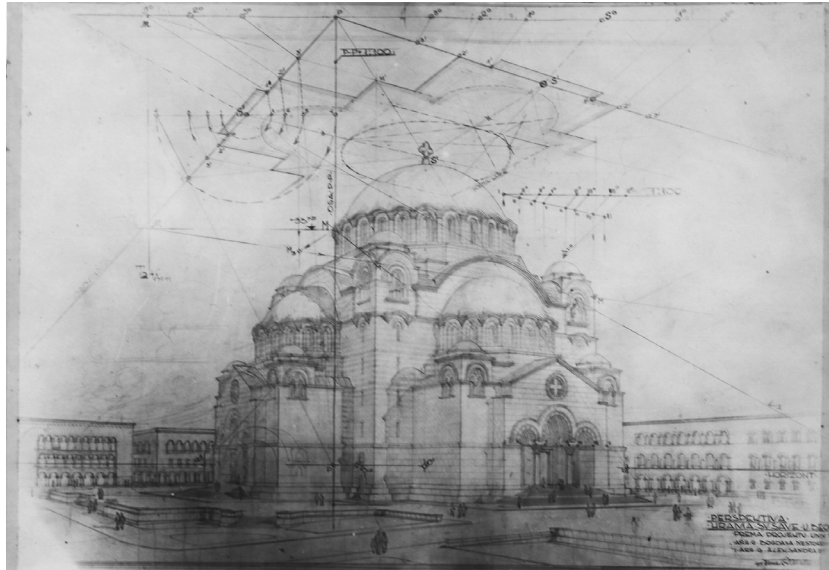
ćeramida tiled roofs and generally all elements of vernacular architecture which continued to make connection with nature, and thus the man-nature connection. He was an architect-artist with very pronounced sensibility for the symbolic and aesthetic endeavor of architecture as a discipline which, in addition to technical solutions, has a higher role that is not practical and functionalistic in nature, which was advocated by Modernists in a literal sense. The architecture which is partly art, aesthetics, philosophy and socio-humanistic discipline should transfer knowledge accumulated through the millennia of its existence and thus contribute to the preservation of tradition and its adaptation to the conditions of the modern era.

RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE

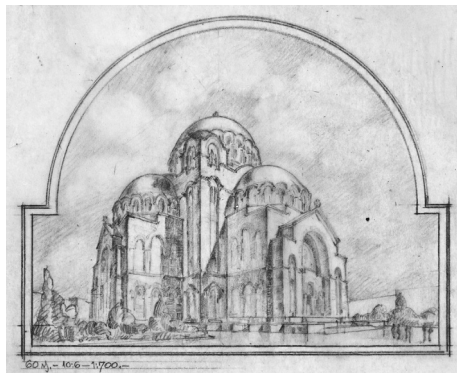
Deroko as an architect remained best remembered for his achievements in the domain of sacral architecture. The central basis of Deroko's design orientation when it comes to religious architecture was his determination to study the Byzantine and medieval Serbian architecture. As a student, he worked on the restoration and conservation with his mentor Pera Popović, professor of the Byzantine and Old Serbian architecture at the University of Belgrade and the head of the Architectural Department of the Ministry of Construction. Interested in history and history of art, Deroko studied Serbian church architecture.

His architectural opus in religious architecture includes 6 completed buildings and 11 unrealised church projects, of which the most important project was the Cathedral of St. Sava, which he worked on in cooperation with professor Bogdan Nestorović, then the Church of Holy Transfiguration in Novo Sarajevo and the church and residence in the Žiča monastery.

The idea of building the Cathedral of St. Sava was related to the independence of the Serbian state and its need for establishing its national integrity in the field of religion and culture of the free Serbian people. The first ideas about building the Cathedral of St. Sava came about at the end of the 1870s. In celebration of the 300th anniversary of the burning of the relics of Saint Sava in Vračar (municipality in Belgrade), the Association for the Building of the Cathedral of St. Sava was founded in 1895.³² The Association actively worked in the Serbian public, wrote the proclamations, encouraged the royal state administration to engage in the task of acquiring the necessary conditions, above all finances, for the construction of a monumental building, a symbol of Serbs and Serb descent, dedicated to the greatest Serbian Archbishop, Saint Sava.



a



b



c



d



e

Fig. 4.

Cathedral of St. Sava
in Belgrade, 1932.
(a and b credits: The
Museum of Science
and Technology
– Collection
Architecture; c,
d, e photo: Srdja
Mirković)

Images A and B present an imaginary axonometric view of the Cathedral of St. Sava. Image B shows one of the variants searching for the most suitable architectural solution, while the image A is the final solution, which architect Branko Pešić has followed when the construction of the cathedral resumed. Details of the capitals and parts of the pillars in the images C, D, E represent Deroko's authentic design and artistic idea and were made in its entirety before the beginning of WWII. The images were taken in December 2017, and there are scaffolds on which washing and cleaning of capitals and columns is in progress today. The image of the present-day appearance of the church is not included here because the façade is entirely deviated from Deroko's idea of coating the façade with various shades of yellowish massive ashlar in a horizontal style based on the façade of the Visoki Dečani Monastery. Instead of a warm, polychrome variant that would be obtained by stacking the ashlar shades, a cold, monochrome and rigid solution of the façade in a white smooth marble was obtained.

In 1904, on the anniversary of outbreak of the First Serbian Uprising, the board of the Association for the Building of the Cathedral launched an initiative for an architectural competition, and as one of the main conditions, it was emphasised that the cathedral should be designed in a magnificent manner in the Serbo-Byzantine style. The association noted that there were not enough competent experts in the country who could evaluate competitive decisions and decided to request the assistance from the Russian Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg. In 1905, the St. Petersburg Academy established that none of the five submitted design ideas for the cathedral fully responded to the requirements of the competition.³³

The Balkan Wars and the WWI postponed the search for the most representative Serbian cathedral. The second competition announced in 1926 also failed after the Commission for the Building of the Cathedral of St. Sava declared that none of the projects fully meet the necessary conditions. It was concluded that many designs provided very interesting and valuable solutions which especially emphasised and appreciated the effect of monumentality and the condition of building a cathedral in the Serbo-Byzantine style. The first and third prizes were not awarded, while the second prize was given to Bogdan Nestorović. Other works were purchased, including the one from Deroko, who was a young assistant professor at the time. The Association for the Building of the Cathedral demanded a magnificent monumental building that would overshadow all Orthodox cathedrals in the Balkans with its magnitude and appearance.³⁴ To that end, they began to search for the best solution which combined the most successful project designs from the competition. After extensive discussions by the church and the general public in 1932, Patriarch Varnava and the Commission for the Building of the Cathedral of St. Sava decided on the final solution, which incorporated changes by a design team comprising Nestorović and Deroko. (Fig. 4)

The controversy surrounding the construction of the Cathedral of St. Sava was the longest and most lively architectural debate conducted in the Serbian public arena through various publications, lectures and tribunes.³⁵ Many opinions were controversial, and one of the central questions was the questions of style in which the cathedral itself should be raised, whether in the twentieth century it was appropriate to build a cathedral on the model of Serbian medieval architecture or to focus on modern solutions of Modernism. Deroko was moderately involved in the debate, he did not question the choice of the Serbo-Byzantine style. He believed that since the Orthodoxy had not changed over the centuries the most probable expression of Serbian Orthodox faith in aesthetic and religious sense could only be represented by Serbian medieval church architecture.³⁶

The project design of the Cathedral of St. Sava by Nestorović and Deroko represented a compromise solution between the Church of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople and Gračanica Monastery in Kosovo, which was considered to be the ideal of the Serbian version of the Byzantine style and the ultimate symbol of Serbian medieval architecture. The design idea for the Cathedral of St. Sava embodied the values of the Byzantine and medieval Gračanica architecture, constituting the material and spiritual hints of the Byzantine and Serbian models of a church, which provided a mystical idea about the Cathedral of St. Sava and Belgrade as the “second Constantinople”, the successor and the last stronghold of Orthodoxy toward the Latin West.

The project of the Cathedral of St. Sava is an impressive monumental church with a large shallow dome, 34 meters in diameter, that dominates the entire architectural solution. The shape of the base is the Greek cross (spanning 91 meters east-west and 81 meters in the north-south direction), the ends of the cross are in a visual sense emphasised portals, there are cones in the upper parts above the lines of the cross. The cathedral has four elevation levels: a crypt and treasury below the ground level with a surface of 2,300 square meters, a church at the ground level covering 3,254 square meters, at 13 m height from the ground floor there are three side galleries spanning 1,444 square meters, and there is a 45-meter high circular gallery below the dome. The total area of the cathedral is 8,500 square meters, and the height from the ground floor to the central dome is 65 meters. Nestorović and Deroko aspired to achieve the space and integrity of the space that was supposed to be processed in the technique of the magnificent old Byzantine mosaic. It was planned that the outer lining would be in a smooth stone like at Dečani Monastery, and by alternating the horizontal rows of solid stone tassels in yellowish and gray, a harmonious rhythm on the facade would be achieved.³⁷

Deroko’s creative contribution was most prominent in the design of the cathedral’s interior and in the design of all stone decorations for façade and its fine artwork. According to Deroko’s designs, 24 marble pillars were made in Italy, and 9 gigantic column capitals and 6 consoles were sculpted by Deroko’s friend and sculptor Giuseppe Grassi. Particularly interesting are the torned columns in the apse of the temple whose capitals display Deroko’s recognisable aesthetics. Each column and capital are unique in its own way. Some capitals show a distinguishable symbol of the two-headed eagle personifying the Serbian imperial mark, while the capitals carry motifs of two doves hugging that associate with the Serbian heraldry of a two-headed eagle. Deroko’s doves on the capitals ennobles the strict and cherished heraldry of a two-headed eagle

by replacing it with a tame pair of doves whose necks are intertwined in a love game, which provides a lovely modest manner of decorative processing. Between the embraced doves, there are elegantly styled crosses, and the entire capitals are harmoniously complemented by stylised bundles and floral motifs.

The cathedral was built 12 meters in height when the German bombing of Belgrade began on 6 April 1941, and the country's entry into the WWII halted the construction. During the German occupation, the complete technical documentation was destroyed, only the original design and decorative details that Deroko buried in the basement of his house were saved which were later used as a basis for the continuation of work.

After the WWII, the issue of building a cathedral was no longer topical, even the demolition and conversion of the facility was discussed. Deroko gave several projects of the converted Cathedral of St. Sava to the Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Belgrade Radio Broadcasting Company between 1964 and 1967, however none of this was realised. The construction of the Cathedral of St. Sava continued on 14 May 1986, under the leadership of the chief architect Professor Branko Pešić.

Deroko expressed the highest freedom and his personal understanding of the sacred architecture in three churches: the Church of Saint Sava in Split, the Church of Holy Transfiguration in Novo Sarajevo and the Holy Trinity Church in Kraljevo. (Fig. 5) These three churches are based on almost identical design solutions on the basis of a free Greek cross with a wide cube, overlays of the cross are heightened by prominent portals, the space between the lines of the cross is crowned with circular cones and domes, and the external architecture of this church gives the impression of rotunda.

The competition for the Orthodox church of St. Sava in Spalato was announced in 1935. Among 15 designs Deroko submitted two project solutions and won the first and third prize, while the second prize was awarded to the Spalato architect Siciliani. Deroko praised the conditions of the announced competition that offered the freedom of artistic creation, as he pointed out: 'We are no longer forced to follow a pseudo-Byzantine or old Serbian church architecture that was actually invented by the Viennese architect Hansen which has for decades adorned our temples with its fictional and fake decor.'³⁸ Deroko characterised his first-prized design solution as an architecture in the ancient Christian oriental spirit, which directly indicated the correlation of Deroko's theoretical attitudes about the existence of a "primordial Yugoslav" masonry that linked the earliest medieval architecture of Serbian and Croatian territories.³⁹



Fig. 5a. Church of Saint Sava in Split, 1935
(credits: The Museum of Science and Technology – Collection Architecture)

By images A, B and C, I wanted to show the similarity of the architectural solutions of the churches in Split, Kraljevo and Sarajevo. These projects sublimate Deroko's idea of the modern design of a Christian medium-sized church. The central plan with an accentuated spacious dome and lower tetraconch creates a compact solution resembling a rotunda which, with its pure and harmonious appearance, suggests the uniqueness of Christianity in its religious and theological sense.



Fig. 5b. Holy Trinity Church in Kraljevo, 1939
(credits: The Museum of Science and Technology – Collection Architecture)



Fig. 5c. Church of Holy Transfiguration in Novo Sarajevo, 1939-1940.
(source: [https://sr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Црква_Светог_Преображења_\(Сарајево\)#/media/File:Crkva_Svetog_Preobraženja_Sarajevo.JPG](https://sr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Црква_Светог_Преображења_(Сарајево)#/media/File:Crkva_Svetog_Preobraženja_Sarajevo.JPG))

The established hypothesis on the connection between the sacral Serbian buildings of the prehistoric times and the oldest churches on the Croatian coast was architecturally formed by Deroko in his project of the Split Orthodox Church, reminiscent of the oldest sacred buildings such as the early Christian Mausoleum Galla Placidia in Ravenna (5th century), the Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in Ras (8-12th century), the Church of the Holy Trinity in Poljud near Split (9-11th century) and the Church of the Holy Cross in Nin (11th century). The aforementioned churches constitute the theoretical and material background of Deroko's project pointing to the connection of the East and the West, Byzantium and Rome, or Eastern Orthodox Christianity and Catholic Christianity. Deroko's compact, rotundial solution of the Split Church with a spacious unifying inner space emphasises the universality of the national, religious and ideological cultural concept of Yugoslavism in general.

Deroko's church in Split did not see the light of the day, as was the case with a similar concept conceived for the church of the Holy Trinity in Kraljevo. Only the Church of Holy Transfiguration in Novo Sarajevo was built in 1940. Deroko's inflection from the conservative flows of the design of modern Orthodox shrines into the canon of the Byzantine style, considered to be the prototype of the Serbian national style in architecture, reflected his personal relationship with sacral architecture. The spirituality, warmth and humanity of Orthodoxy were expressed through Deroko's projects of small and modest village churches, built with the lowest material assets by the formula of a practical but aesthetically striking traditional folk construction.

Despite the fact that he taught the Byzantine and Serbian medieval architecture at the university, Deroko as an architect-designer did not follow the tradition of his professors Pera Popović, Branko Tanazević and Momir Korunović, whose projects were the expression of the "most Serbian architecture" seen through the revival of the Byzantine and Moravian styles. An authentic architectural syncretism that united the old Serbian medieval architecture, early Christian influences, the primary forms of sacral architecture on the Yugoslav coast and the vernacular folklore tradition in Deroko's construction was accomplished in all his works. The following of the works were built: the Bell Tower of the St. Demetrius Church in Bitola (1930), the Eparchy residence in Niš (1935), a residence, dining room and a small Church of St. Sava in Žiža (1935-1940). The only Deroko's project that went beyond the aforementioned Deroko's guidelines in church construction is the project of the White Monastery's church, which was done in the spirit of Modernism. Working on the protection and restoration of the Žiža Monastery between 1935 and 1940, in addition to the church of Saint



Fig. 6. The student dormitory of the Orthodox Theology Faculty in Belgrade, 1939-40. (a credits: The Museum of Science and Technology – Collection Architecture; b, c, d, e, f, g photo: Srđja Mirković)

The image A shows the building of the student dormitory of the Orthodox Theology Faculty in axonometry with a pronounced expressionist expression in fine arts, which is one of the most important Deroko's characteristics in design. The selected images C, D, E, F, G show the details of the student dormitory and were taken in October 2017. These examples emphasize the importance and authenticity Deroko dedicated to the details in the façade arrangement: from robust stone to brick laying in motifs of an equal-armed cross. In the same manner as in Colonel Elezović House, here Deroko also devoted special attention to the wooden doors and modelling of the iron knobs and keys (G).

Sava, which continued Deroko's concept of compact rodondal solutions, he also designed the monastery's residence. The interesting architectural concept of the residence in Žiča points to Deroko's love for Italian Renaissance art, and the residence is unusually similar to the Palazzo Ducale in Venice, while successfully unifying the Byzantine, Romanesque and Renaissance influences.

One of Deroko's most exquisite architectural accomplishments, besides the Cathedral of St. Sava, is the student dormitory of the Orthodox Theology Faculty built in 1939-40. (Fig. 6) Deroko worked on it in collaboration with Petar Anagnosti, who was in charge of technical problems and the production of drawn axonometric representations. The student dormitory was noted as an outstanding example of modernity and modernist architecture.⁴⁰ Deroko's project of the boarding student residence certainly expresses the influence of Modernism, but at the same time emphasises the strong connection with tradition. Opinion of the public on the so-called "outstanding modernity" of the project should be interpreted in the context of the growing influence of the Serbian Orthodox Church and its aspiration to affirm the Orthodox Theology Faculty as a new modern member of the University of Belgrade. The faculty became part of the univeristy in 1920.

With this project expressing the client's desire to present the teaching of theology from the perspective of modernity and actuality, Deroko expressed himself in an inversive way that modernist formulas of architecture applied in a traditional way. Since this is a profane architecture, the logic of building with traditional materials and techniques, such as those Deroko advocated in his projects, was not suitable in this case, but the point was in the application of the most modern construction techniques. His concept of modernism in construction, the linear contours of simple rectangular masses, the flat roof and the emphasis on the horizontal modeling of the façade, was embedded in the symbols of tradition in a wider and general sense of understanding architecture that had nothing in common with the "Serbo-Byzantine style", which was still one of the directions of architecture at that time. The very notion of tradition in Deroko's entire architectural creation is to be seen from a liberal, cultural and humanistic angle. In Deroko's projects tradition is perceived as a historical period and the transfer of knowledge, skills, customs and traditions which continue and maintain the cultural continuity of one nation and its artistic expression. In this context, the most expressive traditional element is the bright red brick that coats the façade of the student dormitory. The red colour of the brick evokes the strongest feelings in man and symbolically points to the spirit and warmth of the Serbian orthodox christian religion.

The domination of red the façade is broken up by gray elements: the giant symbol of the stone cross on the central corner tower, the ground level garnished in rustic gray stones and reinforced concrete beams above the windows. Deroko's choice of the brick façade alludes to the ancient forms of Mesopotamian building and a man's connection with soil, clay, crafts and nature. The brick had become an irreplaceable part of the tradition of building construction through centuries and millennia, from Sumer to the Romans. Its significance was increasingly fading in the twentieth century. Deroko used brick in most of his buildings for accentuating and performing details such as the often-used symbol of brick cross.

When it comes to the student dormitory, the smart rhythm of bricks matching the multiplication of a Greek cross creates a geometric pattern on the façade in the fields between the windows. The connection to the tradition is manifested in the tactile and natural material of gray rustically treated stone blocks, which are covered with facade to the ground level, and also in the large symbol of the cross on the central highest cube of the building.

Deroko combined tradition and modernism in the project of theological student dormitory. The line-like constructive frame is also reflected on the façade, the sculptural ornamentation is completely eliminated, and the decoration appears as part of the façade woven or sealed into the façade surface. The student dormitory sums Deroko's compromised path in the architecture of public buildings, relying on tradition, but standing in contrast to the anachronistic tendencies of the "Serbo-Byzantine" style and associating with modernism and contemporary trends in architecture.

Besides this dormitory, in the domain of the public profane architecture, Deroko made a design project for the new building of the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, which he submitted in a competition in 1940. This project fully reflected the modernist tendencies, which could be interpreted as Deroko's opportunistic move to adapt the general characteristics of his architectural style to the requirements of the competition and the latest trends in world architecture.

MEMORIAL ARCHITECTURE

Tombs, mausoleums, tombstones from the beginning of humanity form an important field of human expression, contemplation and view on the world, life and death, society and others, as well as the relation to oneself, but above all, the relation to the metaphysical, religious and theological being that overcomes us.

Memorial architecture is a human trail in time, history, culture and civilisation. It contains the most sensitive messages, emotions, sublime thoughts and feelings that, by their materialisation in architecture, mark important points in time, trying to save them from the oblivion and preserving them throughout the culture of memory.

Deroko appreciated the artistic and symbolic possibilities offered by the memorial architecture that occupied a very important place in his architectural opus, numbering 9 monuments and memorials, which were built, and 4 unrealised projects. He started his public design work exactly with memorial architecture by creating a competition project for the Memorial Ossuary at Vido island near Corfu in 1925. The architecture of the ossuary points to universal symbols, without the influence of national features. Imagined as a large circular stone wall, it resembles the open tolos Atreus Treasury in the Mycenae.

In 1926, Deroko devised a competition project for the Memorial Chapel at Zeitenlik, followed by a project for the Memorial of Field Marchal Putnik in 1927. He was awarded the first prize for the latter, but it was not completed in line with his design. While studying in Rome, Deroko met Ivan Meštrović and highly appreciated his work, especially Meštrović's project of the Vidovdan Temple. Meštrović's influence is apparent in Deroko's project for the Monument to Field Marchal Putnik, conceived as a monumental sarcophagus set on an imposing cube-shaped stand in the form of a high staircase, at the corners of which are the four lion sculptures. At the top of the staircase plateau, a cascading building was installed with an entrance portal that resembles a temple on which this massive stone sarcophagus rests with caryatids in the spirit of Secession style.

In cooperation with his professor Pera Popović in 1928, Deroko designed a tomb chapel for the Barlovac family at the New Cemetery in Belgrade. This work combines reminiscences of different historical styles: Gothic, Romanesque, Oriental, Byzantine, and Serbian religious medieval architecture, which is especially evident in the positioning of stone blocks of the chapel. The sculptural treatment in stone is emphasised on the chapel, in the archaic romantic way, that is evident in the sculptural symbols of the four evangelists: angel, winged lion, bull and eagle, which are embedded in niches on the tambour of the chapel dome. At the New Cemetery in Belgrade, Deroko designed three more monuments: a tombstone for the Kićevac family (1934), a tomb chapel for General Nikolajević (1938) and a tombstone for the Denić family (1939). The influence of archaic pagan architecture is particularly emphasised in the first monument, while the remaining two monuments emphasise the influence



Out of all Deroko's monuments of sepulchral architecture, the tomb chapel for Officer Nikolajević (Fig. 7) was chosen, because it is a chapel rather than a tombstone, and the architectural expression manifests itself in a more elaborated and complete manner. The detail here (right) is very similar to the motives that appear on the tombstone of the Denić family, where Deroko's conciliatory and poetic relation to death is summed up through the fairytale floral and animal ornaments.



Fig. 7. The tomb chapel for Officer Nikolajević at the New Cemetery in Belgrade, 1938. (photo: Srdja Mirković)



Fig. 8. Memorial turbe for Osman Djikić in Mostar, 1934-36. (source: <http://prica-i-pjesma.blogspot.it/2017/11/osman-i-zora-aurka-mila.html>)



Fig. 9. Memorial Ossuary of the Vidovdan Heroes at Orthodox cemetery in Sarajevo, 1939. (source: <https://sarajevo.travel/assets/photos/places/original/the-chapel-of-the-vidovdan-heroes-1397393303.jpg>)

Figures 8, 9 and 10 were chosen to present Deroko's works that I considered the most significant in the domain of memorial architecture. In these images, Deroko's memorial monuments were presented as a whole, because I followed the idea of the perspective display of whole memorials which, in aesthetic and perceptual sense, act on the observer, especially when the observer approaches them from a distance, which is complemented by a special ceremonial and emotional experience that the observer has at that moment.

of the Serbian medieval church architecture and folklore traditions, represented in motifs like fairy tales – the romantic vine leaves, the doves, the arabesque and herbal ornaments. (Fig. 7)

Deroko is also behind the monument to Osman Djikić at the cemetery near the Karadžozbeg Mosque in Mostar (1934-36), which he was very proud of. (Fig. 8) Deroko as a great admirer and connoisseur of history, found inspiration in the ziggurats and calottes of the ancient civilisations of Persia and Mesopotamia. The entire monument was made in horizontal rows of bright red bricks. The monument was conceived as a walled baldachin with an egg-shaped dome. Under the baldachin there is a stone sarcophagus and two *nišans* – a Muslim shape of a tombstone. The committee of state commissioners assessed Deroko's monument as imposing, and a serious, peaceful and dignified architecture that provides far greater magnificence than any Moorish elaborate style, Modernism or Baroque pseudo-Muslim style.⁴¹ Encouraged by the wishes of the commissioners to bring national and religious-local elements into architecture, Deroko designed a monument to a great Serbian Muslim poet as a form of neutralisation of the oriental sepulcal architecture by depriving the monument of extensive decoration and the usual arabesque. He superpositioned the decoration in a symbolic-expressive sense, using extensively red colour bricks.

Of all his architectural accomplishments Deroko was most proud of the Memorial Ossuary of Vidovdan Heroes built in 1939 at the Orthodox cemetery in Sarajevo. (Fig. 9) Members of the “Young Bosnia” – Gavrilo Princip and other participants in the Sarajevo assassination on Vidovdan, 28 June 1914, in which the Austro-Hungarian Crown Prince Franc Ferdinand was killed, were buried in the ossuary.⁴²

In this spatially small, but historically significant project, Deroko was guided by his ever-present aspiration for the continuity of the tradition. In the walls of the chapel he embedded the *spolia* of the monument from the old Vrbanj cemetery, these remains of old tombstones with inscriptions on archaic Cyrillic letters provided special aesthetic and spiritual qualities to the chapel. In the architectural sense, the chapel resembles the small basic forms of the first single-naos churches with two low towers, among which the names of Gavrilo Princip and the other ten participants in the Sarajevo assassination are inscribed on the façade, while the vault of the lunette is followed by Petar Petrović Njegoš's verses from *The Mountain Wreath*: ‘Congrats to the one who lives forever, he was born for a lot!’ Above the lunette on the façade, a frequent Deroko symbol of the cross was made with red brick, which contrasts with white stone blocks of the chapel.

In the period after the WWII, Deroko was poorly engaged in design work. The only significant work that was realised in 1952-53 was a monument to the Kosovo heroes in Gazimestan. (Fig. 10) The history of building a monument to Serbian heroes killed in the Kosovo Battle of 1389 is very long. At the beginning of the twentieth century the idea of unifying the South Slavs became increasingly present. At that time one of the most eminent Croatian and Yugoslav artists Ivan Meštrović began to work on the project of the Vidovdan Temple – a memorial to the famous victims and heroes of the Kosovo Battle. From 1910 to 1919, Meštrović exhibited sculptures and a model of Vidovdan Temple at world exhibitions in Vienna, Rome, Belgrade, Venice, London, Glasgow, Bradford and Paris. The basis of the Yugoslav national style in art and architecture was created through the grandiose and imposing project of a large-scale temple with a large number of sculptures expressing the characteristic power of Meštrović's monumental heroic style and classicistic pathos. This confirmed the idea of the undisputed unity of the South Slavic tribes. The myth of the Kosovo Battle had always been a basic element of the Serbian cultural history, and it was built through Serbian folk epic poetry which sang praises to the 1389 battle between the Serbian and Ottoman armies in the Kosovo Field. The Ottoman army won, after which the Serbian medieval state gradually completely fell under the Ottoman rule, and was liberated only in the early nineteenth century. As a symbol of Serbian nationalism, the cult of Kosovo for centuries was the basis of various irrational pretensions of the Serbian state for revanchism and the return of King Dušan's and Prince Lazar's empire. The Kosovo cult involved a whole series of ideas about the particularities, speciality and extraordinary nature of the Serbian people which, by bloody death and sacrifice for the homeland, rose to the position of the winner in the kingdom of heaven thanks to the Kosovo myth narrative.

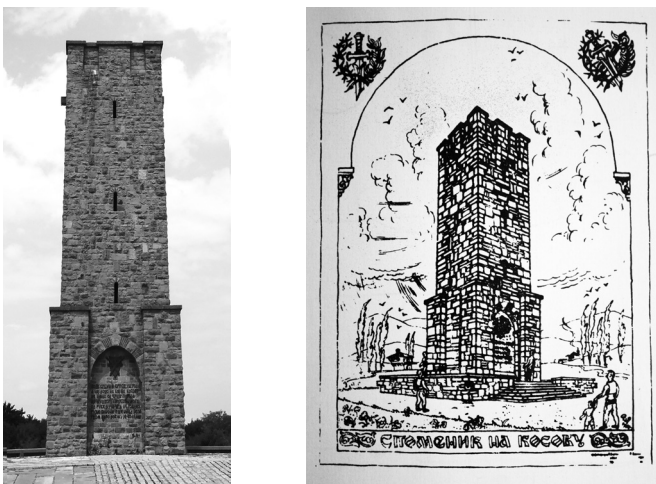


Fig. 10. Gazimestan monument, 1952-53 (Source: Left: <https://enjoypristina.wordpress.com/2012/07/25/gazimestan-tower/>; Right: Zoran M. Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, (Beograd: Republički zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture, Društvo konzervatora Srbije, 1991), 85.

In the Vidovdan Temple Meštrović achieved a unitaristic message embodied in the universally understood personification of the Kosovo Battle, according to which each of the three Yugoslav nations – Serbs, Croats and Slovenes – had their own battle in which they were defeated by the conquerors. Deroko's approach to the Kosovo issue was far more conspiratorial in terms of adapting the architectural and artistic expression to new historical, political and social circumstances in Tito's socialist Yugoslavia, in which the political and ideological influence of the Kosovo cult was significantly reduced and amortised by the communist politics of fraternity and unity.

Deroko's idea did not rely on the national romantic elements around which the Serbian nationalist ideals were united, but rather sought to balance between universal architectural features. As on the monument to Osman Djikić, Deroko performed the so-called "neutralisation" of the expected response to a given subject, deviating from the *cliché* of formal materialisation of Muslim sepulchral architecture, he applied the same principle in his architectural solution to the monument in Gazimestan.

It is shaped like a medieval 25-meter-high tower, built of rustically treated stone ashlar. The simple look of the mediaval defence tower is associated with a clear symbolism of defense that can be very widely understood in the extent of the nationalist views of Kosovo as the last bastion of Serbs to be defended until the last drop of blood, to the pacifist views of the futility of warfare and sacrifice.

Since the Gazimestan memorial complex is located not far from Gračanica – the symbol of Serbian medieval architecture and the main basis for formulating the so-called Serbian national style architecture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries – it was to be expected that Deroko's monument would bear some kind of resemblance to the Byzantine tradition. However, he deliberately avoided the emphasis on national differences, which would be obvious had he used the motives in the spirit of the Serbo-Byzantine tradition. In this way Deroko did not only circumvent the emphasis of Serbian national prototypes, but rather by choosing architectural forms, mitigated the importance of the Kosovo myth and the Kosovo cult. The only thing that is directly related to the Kosovo myth appears in the interior of the monument, where verses from the folk epic poems of the Kosovo cycle, selected by the poet Milorad Panić Surep, are written in bronze letters on the staircase platforms. The fact that the verses are inscribed inside the tower, and not on the outside, indicates Deroko's tendency to realise an image of universal neutrality, reconciliation and integrity that was conducive to new means of artistic, aesthetic and symbolic expression in 1952, which had nothing in common with Deroko's designs in the pre-war Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

Table 1.

YEAR	COMPLETED PROJECTS	UNCOMPLETED PROJECTS
1925		Competition project for National Pavilion of Kingdom of SHS at the International Exposition in Philadelphia Competition project for Memorial Ossuary at Vido island near Corfu
1926		Competition project for Memorial Chapel with Ossuary at Zeitenlik – Serbian military cemetery in Thessaloniki Diploma thesis design for the Cathedral of Saint Sava in Belgrade
1927	The house of Colonel Elezović on 20 Njegoševa Street in Belgrade The house of lawyer Simić on 25 Tuzlanska Street in Belgrade	First-prize competition project for the Field Marshall Putnik monument in Belgrade
1928		Design for a wooden church Design for a village church
1929	The house on the corner of the streets Jovanova and Dositejeva in Belgrade The house of Marinković family on 16 Suvoborska Street in Belgrade Tombstone chapel of the Barlovac family at the New Cemetery in Belgrade	
1930	The House in Vrnjačka Banja Bell Tower of the Saint Demetrius Church in Bitola	Design for a village church with two bell towers Design for a village church with one bell tower Design for a village church with one “distaff” bell tower Competition project for interior design of Saint Mark’s Church in Belgrade
1931	Villa of Obrad Simić on 5a Banjičkih žrtava Street in Belgrade	
1932	Final design for the Cathedral of Saint Sava in Belgrade (teamwork with Bogdan Nestorović) The house of Hristić family in Topčider, Belgrade	
1934	Memorial <i>turbe</i> of Osman Djikić in Mostar Tombstone for Kićevac family at the New Cemetery in Belgrade	Design for the Hristić family villa
1935	Residence of Eparchy in Niš Residence, dining room and the little Church of Saint Sava in Žiča Monastery	Design for the house of painter Milo Milunović in Senjak, Belgrade Final design for the Church of Saint Sava in Split Design for the house of the Teokarević family in Bar

1936	Aleksandar Deroko's family house in Topčider, Belgrade	
1937	Villa of lawyer Stakić on 2 Miloša Savčića Street in Dedinje, Belgrade	
1938	The tomb chapel of Officer Nikolajević at the New Cemetery in Belgrade	Design for the house in Srem
1939	The tombstone monument for the Denić family at the New Cemetery in Belgrade	Design for a church in modern style in Beli Manastir Design for the Holy Trinity Church in Kraljevo
1939 - 1940	Church of Holy Transfiguration in New Sarajevo Memorial Ossuary of Vidovdan Heroes at Orthodox cemetery in Sarajevo The Boarding student residence of the Orthodox Theology Faculty in Belgrade	
1940	The village house in Pružatovac near Mladenovac	Competition project for the building of Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade
1942	Memorial Ossuary in Smederevo	Design for the new church with crypt in Pružatovac near Mladenovac
1943	Primary school (today School "Dimitrije Davidović") in Smederevo	Design for village school with two classrooms
1944		Design for village school with four classrooms Design for village school with two classrooms
1952 - 1953	Gazimestan monument	
1958	Monument for Muhamed Zildžić	
1959		Design for the motel in Studenica
1960.		Tombstone monument for Jovan Dučić in Trebinje
1963.	Interior adaptation of the Belgrade National Museum (with associates)	
1964 - 1967		Design for the conversion of the project of Belgrade Sveti Sava Cathedral in Serbian Orthodox Church Museum
1984		Competition project for Delijska česma fountain on Knez Mihajlova Street in Belgrade

CONCLUSION

Today, thirty years after Deroko's death, and almost thirty years after the war and the break-up of Yugoslavia, evaluating and interpreting his creative opus is a very complex task. From which point of view should Deroko's architectural and design work be considered? Should it be from the standpoint of academic terminology that he created in his research work, or from the standpoint of Serbism or Yugoslavism, tradition or modernism? Without any attempt to justify Deroko's accomplishments, regardless of the time in which he lived and created, regardless of all historical, political and ideological circumstances, we can conclude that Deroko has remained the embodiment of a great creator, a brilliant mind and an enlightenment *protomajstor* (master builder).

Undoubtedly one of the most appropriate ways of understanding Deroko's architectural opus goes through the line of aesthetics and art, but above all, always keeping in mind the integrity which, as a cardinal postulate, covers all the domains of Deroko's creativity, not just the design of architecture. As a designer, he was primarily an artist, and then an architect. Deroko's drawings, paintings, sketches of projects, croquis and drawings of real life scenes, the life in which Deroko was an active participant, were in a way a deviation from responsible academic speech exposed to the public judgement. In the realm of drawing and painting Deroko was a free romantic artist, inspired by irrational visions and inexplicable wonders of life. In design, he approached the architecture from a sensitive and aesthetic side, always through free drawings, through sketches that were transformed into symbolic text and a kind of unique and ever-recognisable narration. This genuine artistic approach highlights another significant side of Deroko's creative personality through the highest spiritual need of man to articulate art in a higher philosophical dimension of architecture beyond its pragmatic and utilitarian purpose.

Regardless of the functional, technical, social, political and other demands that architecture imposes, as the architect is always a restricted artist due to all these demands, Deroko managed to find an absolutely authentic, unrepeatable and generally recognisable expression in all circumstances during his long life, whether it was in architecture, painting, written and spoken word, science or research practice. It is enough to only look at Deroko's signature, drawing or construction to recognise that it was made by him.

The Renaissance creator, erudite, and polymath realised his elaborate Baroque nature in all segments of life from the exciting night life of bistros, his acerbic writing of research studies, tireless exploration of cultural heritage, original

architectural practice, to writing books of memories of the past and quickly forgotten time of Deroko's youth. Deroko wrote his memories in a juicy, lively and expressive style. In analogy to Deroko's drawings that unite different thematic fragments on the same paper, making the type of drawn collage of thoughts. As well as the drawing, Deroko's written word buzzes from one topic to another. In this twist of Deroko's sentimental descriptions, full of archaic Old Belgrade expressions, an emotional atmosphere is created that inspires the reader to completely surrender and let down to the torrent of Deroko's playful and fearless perception of life and art with a deep aesthetic thrill.

We can conclude that Deroko's architecture, which many consider traditional, old-fashioned and conservative, was created as an expression of the national style in the spirit of Serbo-Byzantine tradition and vernacularism. Contrary to this view, Deroko's architecture can be viewed as an authentic concept of the aesthetic, emotional and perceptive way of artistic expression that is inextricably linked to numerous segments of Deroko's Baroque personality. In this concept of emotional, expressive, eclectic and rationally incompatible endeavors in architecture, an image of Deroko is created as an avant-garde creator, a rebel who did not want to bow to any style of architecture. Being restless, joyous and passionate in drawing, writing, and architecture, Deroko found a gap between tradition and modernity, in which he placed his authentic, original, and unique understanding of architecture.

NOTES

N.B.

Most of the images used in the paper are author photographs made purposely and were taken in 2017. The central theme of a significant number of these photographs is the details of Deroko's architecture. I believe that the photographs of the selected details 1C, 1D, 1E, 4C, 4D, 4E, 6C, 6D, 6E, 6F, 6G and 7-right best illustrate Deroko's creative syncretism which in a personal way encompasses Deroko's understanding of Serbian vernacular, medieval sacral and modernist architecture. Details of locks, keyholes, house numbers, specific ornamental doors, beams, dripstones, small polychrome facade details are embedded with empathic poetics and constitute the main characteristic of Deroko's highly authentic architecture. An important role of heritage and tradition is embedded in these small elements of design, and these details emphasize Deroko's most important thought that any future architecture, no matter how modern, different, and special it is, should seek to remain in continuity with tradition. This is due to the fact that, without tradition, there is no modernity, without history and sense of who we were before, we will not know who we are now or where we are going tomorrow. Most of Deroko's constructed buildings of residential architecture have suffered many changes to their original appearance to date, and for this reason I chose to photograph those houses that have largely preserved Deroko's authorial ideas.

- 1 Deroko was a professional swimmer, athlete, a pilot and defender of Belgrade in the World War I and II. He was a painter, draftsman, photographer, architect-designer, historian of art and architecture, writer and chronicler of his time. He was one of the greatest experts in restauration and protection of Serbian cultural heritage, a university professor, academician, and holder of numerous awards and recognitions.
- 2 See: Zoran Manević, *Srpska arhitektura 1900-1970* (Beograd: Muzej savremene umetnosti, 1972); Aleksandar Kadijević, *Jedan vek traženja nacionalnog stila u srpskoj arhitekturi* (Sredina XIX – sredina XX veka) (Beograd: Građevinska knjiga, 1997); Ksenija Ćirić, "Internat studenata Pravoslavnog bogoslovskeg fakulteta u Beogradu," *Nasleđe*, br. 15 (2014): 77-83.
- 3 Deroko's architectural activity of greater significance includes the project of the Cathedral of Saint Sava, which is still in progress, the Church of Holy Transfiguration in New Sarajevo, the student dormitory of the Orthodox Theology Faculty and the Monument at Gazimestan.
- 4 The international magazine *Zenit* was published in Zagreb from 1921 to 1923, and from 1923 to 1926 in Belgrade, when the pro-Communist article "Zenithism through the prism of Marxism" led to the magazine being banned. In total, 43 issues of the *Zenit* magazine were published, which involved collaboration of a large number of artists throughout Yugoslavia: Ivan Gol, Boško Tokin, Jovan Bijelić, Dušan Matić, Stanislav Vinaver, Avgust Černigoj, Eduard Stepančić, Vilko Gecan, Vera Biller, Branko Ve Poljanski, Mihajlo Petrov, Josip Seissel (Jo Klek), and many others.
- 5 The Yugoslav Surrealism was authentic creation of Yugoslav artists that collaborated with french surrealists. The most active members of Yugoslav Surrealism were: Aleksandar Vučo, Oskar Davičo, Marko Ristić, Milan Dedinac, Mladen Dimitrijević, Vane Živadinović Bor, Radojica Živanović Noe, Dušan Matić i Koča Popović.
- 6 Deroko took the exam for pilots in France on 7 November 1915 and received a French Ministry of Defense certificate. The French government awarded him with a significant order "Vieilles tuges" in 1978.
- 7 Deroko wrote autobiographical data on his childhood, youth and later life as the end of his long life was approaching, in exciting archaic language full of passion and beauty in books *A onđak je letijo jeroplan nad Beogradom* [*An' Then a Plane Flew o'er Belgrade*] (Belgrade: Narodna knjiga, 1983) and *Mangupluci oko Kalemegdana. Nova sećanja* [*Mischief around Kalimegdan: New Recollections*] (Belgrade, Opovo: Simbol, 1987).
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PASSION FOR PAST AND FUNCTIONAL IMPERATIVE: BELGRADE INTERWAR RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE BY ALEKSANDAR DEROKO

A B S T R A C T

The name and the achievements of Aleksandar Deroko shine brightly in the constellation of Serbian architectural history. Deroko actively contributed to the Serbian twentieth century architecture as a distinguished professor at the University of Belgrade, a prolific author, esteemed scholar, designer, and a highly driven heritage enthusiast. However, though recognised by his contemporaries and successors alike, Deroko's design activity has not yet been thoroughly examined.

Exploring residential buildings designed for Deroko's Belgrade clientele, this paper widens the knowledge of his architectural production. Deroko's well-known passion for architectural history and extensive research of the Serbian vernacular buildings serve as a starting point for the study of his residential structures in Belgrade. Was Deroko's design process influenced by his deep appreciation for architectural past, and by the results of his findings? Or has he only adopted the formal characteristics of historic styles and vernacular architecture in his work? If so, to what extent? Discussing five structures built in the interwar period – house of Colonel Elezović, the Rakić villa, the Simić villa, the Marinković villa, the Stakić villa and the architect's personal villa – the paper traces transformation of Deroko's architectural inspiration, from typical academic historicist eclecticism to vernacular construction.

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KEY WORDS

ALEKSANDAR DEROKO
THE HOUSE OF COLONEL ELEZOVIĆ
THE RAKIĆ VILLA
THE SIMIĆ VILLA
THE MARINKOVIĆ VILLA
THE STAKIĆ VILLA
THE DEROKO VILLA
FOLKLORISM

INTRODUCTION

Architect, scholar, University lecturer, heritage worker, painter – to list only a few of his interests – Aleksandar Deroko left an indelible mark on the Serbian twentieth century architecture.¹ His active nature, inquisitive mind, and unpretentiousness resulted in a unique charisma, adored by the students and respected by his peers. Though a number of scholars examined a few of Deroko's most important designs, the architectural production of this versatile and creative individual yet awaits a comprehensive monographic study. Deroko's lesser known buildings remain in the shadow of his other engagements – primarily his successes as an educator and a historian. Focusing on the residential structures designed between the world wars for his Belgrade clientele, this paper contributes to the study of Deroko's design activity.

To set the scenery, the paper will open with a concise consideration of Deroko's life before the World War II (WWII). The second part of the paper focuses on Folklorism – a specific style which emerged in Serbian architecture of the twentieth century. Folklorism is relevant to understanding the methodology behind the designs discussed in this paper. Though he was a productive scholar, Deroko did not write either architectural theory or discuss residential architecture per se. However, he did record his thoughts on this particular building type while analysing vernacular architecture. The third part of the paper discusses Deroko's interwar writings on the Balkan vernacular construction, which served as the main source for interpreting his designs for residential architecture of that period. Finally, the five buildings constructed in the interwar period – the apartment building for Colonel Elezović (1927), the house of Radivoje Marinković (1929), the Simić Villa (1931), the architect's summer house (1936), and the villa of Vlada Stakić (1938) – will be examined in relation to Deroko's ideas about residential architecture.

A SHORT BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: THE CIRCUMSTANCES BEHIND THE DESIGNS

Though the life path of Aleksandar Deroko was a rich tapestry, a more detailed exploration of its intricate weaving is not necessary for better understanding of the main questions discussed in this paper.² However, it is possible to identify specific circumstances which resonated in his interwar designs. First, Deroko's mechanical engineering studies at the University of Belgrade's Faculty of Technical Sciences. These early interests in construction technologies remained obvious in the entire course of his career. As a researcher of architectural

heritage, Deroko curiously explored buildings' structural qualities, construction processes, materials, etc. He was fascinated with the vernacular crafts, curiously inspecting and committedly documenting the various technical inventions of the anonymous vernacular creators.

The outbreak of the World War I (WWI) interrupted Deroko's carefree University life in Belgrade. Having fought at Thessaloniki as a fighter pilot, he was sent to recover in Italy and Austria. Deroko enrolled at the Royal Engineering School in Italy, continuing the education he started in Belgrade. However, the year in Rome proved to be a turning point in his career. During his time in the capital of Italy, Deroko discovered history of art and was captivated by the architecture of the "eternal city". Returning to Belgrade, he started studying architecture at the University of Belgrade. Deroko's interest in the history of Serbian and Balkans architecture became obvious well before his graduation in 1926. During the undergraduate studies, he published articles about the medieval architecture. In these years Deroko also worked on the study and protection of architectural heritage as part of a team led by Petar Popović, a respectable medievalist and a professor of architecture at the University of Belgrade. The numerous field trips to the most remote parts of the Balkan Peninsula allowed Deroko to experience first-hand the historic structures, influencing his personal understanding of architecture. Vojislav Korać notes that Deroko's reports were accompanied by his thoughts on the nature of architectural creation.³ Exploring medieval sacral architecture, Deroko discovered vernacular. He was instantly attracted to its functionality and adept construction – especially in timber; the longevity of lessons passed on from one generation to another; the boldness and beauty of details. Deroko diligently recorded these research trips, returning with detailed notes, carefully executed drawings, technical analyses, sketches of landscape, etc. Broadly approaching vernacular construction, he was not solely interested in the houses themselves. The curious explorer was attracted to everything related to the construction – auxiliary service buildings, tools, various everyday objects, and ornaments. Rather than studying the past in the positivistic manner of an archaeologist, Deroko strived to understand the complex circumstances influencing the essence and forms of architecture.

Finally, he was personally acquainted with the avant-garde tendencies in art and architecture in Paris. He was sent there in 1926 to study with Professor Gabriel Millet, an esteemed researcher of Byzantine art and architecture, at *École de Hautes Études*. His friend Rastko Petrović, a Serbian diplomat and poet of avant-garde inclinations, introduced him to the Parisian high society. Among others, Deroko met Guillaume Apollinaire, James Joyce, Saint-John

Perse, and he was close to the Parisian Dadaist circle. Picasso presented him with one of his paintings, and he was also introduced to Le Corbusier. However, it seems that Deroko remained unimpressed by the new tendencies in art. Zoran Manević notes that, years later, Deroko shared with his students the experience of meeting Le Corbusier in Paris: ‘Like every other architect, he would start with form, with the shape, and then cram the functions inside, no matter how they fit’.⁴ Manević also documented the recollection of another Deroko’s contemporary. According to this account, Deroko once commented that ‘Le Corbusier should have been hanged, in a timely manner, before he infected the world with the idea of the house as a machine for sleeping’.⁵

OUTLINING THE CONTEXT: FOLKLORISM

Rampant across the Europe since the nineteenth century, the Battle of Styles did not bypass the Balkans.⁶ However, the rules of warfare were slightly different in the pre-WWII Serbia. Broadly speaking, there were three main camps: the academism, the national style, and the Modern Movement.⁷ The first group consisted of architects drawing from various styles of Western architecture – from Rundobgenstil to the eclectic Beaux-Arts design principles. The “nationals” tended to look inwardly, devoted to the development of a specific national style of architecture, suitable to the local cultural and geographical context. Similarly to the first group, the proponents of Modernism were searching for an appropriate contemporary architectural expression in the lessons from foreign experiences. Though the discussions were frequent and sometimes rather heated, this classification was rather fluid – the borders between the three were often blurred. As their theoretical thought transformed and matured, respecting the wishes of their clients, or, simply, eager to experiment, the architects often moved between the camps. Deroko’s residential architecture was often discussed in the context of Folklorism, a style which bloomed a couple of decades on the Serbian twentieth-century architectural scene.⁸ Folklorism is usually related to a major topic in the Serbian architectural history – the search for national style.

However, it is necessary to add that Folklorism was national in its inspiration rather than in its intention. In its finest theoretical form, it was more regional than national. Its highest achievements, however, remained in the abstract domain of ideas. The two most significant proponents – Branislav Kojić and Deroko – developed the theoretical basis for this manner of architectural expression.⁹ They both assumed that vernacular architecture offered a way out of the conundrum of styles because it was – first and foremost – developed as a response to a functional imperative. It was produced within a specific

geographical context by anonymous builders primarily focused on its usefulness and perfected throughout the generations. Though they sometimes used vernacular decorative forms in their architectural production, both Kojić and Deroko insisted that the lessons one should take from this rich heritage were the principles. Understanding the principles would, hopefully, lead closer to a “true” architectural expression.

For the majority of architects active in the interwar period Folklorism remained attractive primarily because of its rich repertoire of forms. The main inspiration was the vernacular architectural heritage from Serbia and the Balkans. Definitions of the concept “vernacular architecture” varied. Some maintained that it entailed only village architecture, while others thought that it refers to the built heritage from the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries.¹⁰ For example, claiming that specific architectural elements were described in Serbian folk poetry, architect Djura Bajaović stressed that the style existed before the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans. He encouraged his colleagues to use the Balkans vernacular buildings as a design inspiration.¹¹ Folklorist buildings were mostly highly functional structures devoid of excess architectural ornament. The common decorative means were certain motives from vernacular architecture such as arcaded porches, arches, bay windows; and traditional materials – timber, stone, brick, roof tiles, etc. The signature architectural characteristic of the style is certainly dynamic massing of the volumes, highlighted with the contour of a traditionally shaped hip or gabled roofs.

Classified among the most prolific movements in Serbian architecture,¹² and described as ‘more innovative than Modernism because it did not blindly follow the ideas of foreign architects’,¹³ Folklorism did not achieve a great success during the phase of its historical manifestation. It did not receive a significant support by the press and remained overlooked by the broader audience. Scholars mostly agreed that the main reason behind the failure of Folklorism was its unsuitability for building types different than the single-family house. Vernacular architecture, the original source of Folklorism, meant free elevations, a garden and a backyard. These characteristics informed the conclusion that the Folklorist manner was more appropriate for the suburbia or the countryside than for the dense urban environments.

Could it be that there were other factors influencing the reserved public attitudes towards Folklorism? For example, the relatively young local urban culture? In the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century, a majority of the population was living in the countryside. When the cities began to

develop, the people migrating from the rural areas tended to fit into the new environment. It seems plausible to assume they were already accustomed to the “picturesque” shapes of vernacular architecture, and that they did not perceive them to be greatly impressive or appealing. Is it possible that as part of their newly acquired urban identity, most of the new citizens were not inclined to deliberately adopt these (former) rural forms?

Furthermore, the liberation wars fought against the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century were still fresh in memory. The urban population was probably not ready to accept the architectural forms blooming across the former borders of the Empire and widely associated with the period of foreign rule. The development of the Balkan cities was culturally more inclined towards the countries of Central and Western Europe. Maybe Folklorism failed because, in a way, it was too recent. As perceived in the collective eye, its shapes spoke about the rural and Ottoman legacies of the country which was actively creating a rather different vision for its future. Folklorism did not originate from the officially glorified Serbo-Byzantine heritage, nor was it a product of the Western high culture – as such, it did not attract a broader public support.

Finally, it might be that the reason Folklorism did not succeed was the unobtrusive manner of its protagonists. Neither Kojić nor Deroko propagated their attitudes aggressively. Furthermore, their theory remained inconsistent and unsystematic. Surely, if they developed it further it might have proven to be as influential as the more recent Critical Regionalism? A missed opportunity or a style unsuitable for architectural types other than single-family houses, Folklorism was not a match for the assertive mechanisms of the Modern Movement.

PASSION FOR PAST: DEROKO'S WRITINGS AND RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE

Interestingly enough, for a person who had so much to say about architecture – and did so quite often, as illustrated by the impressive list of his titles – Deroko did not discuss his work extensively. Zoran Jovanović, the author of the most detailed examination of the architect's life and work to date, noted that Deroko valued only ‘the dearest of his executed designs’.¹⁴ Unfortunately, Jovanović did not specify which designs Deroko held dearest. Maybe Deroko's silence about his own architectural pieces stemmed from his appreciation of the ‘anonymous folk builder’, a person he often praised in his ponderings on vernacular architecture. This was the silent protagonist of the discipline, one

who expressed his intimate architectural ideas not through words – for he might have not been able to communicate his notions as a formally educated architect – but through his craft. His name would not be remembered in history, only his work. And, alas, his work was prevalently not constructed in solid materials. Underappreciated by the general public, vernacular architecture was disappearing across the Balkans. A passionate researcher and historian of the vernacular architecture, Deroko fought to preserve it.

How did he fight to preserve vernacular architecture? Primarily through a scholarly project of research. Deroko strongly opposed the formation of an official architectural school which would, in some way, try to resurrect the vernacular construction. He maintained that artificially infusing life force into the folk architecture would be impossible, ‘for it is impossible to stop the stream of development.’¹⁵ It would be degrading to this rich architectural heritage. In a genuine historicist manner, Deroko maintained that different historical periods existed within specific sets of conditions. The dominant architectural style was an expression of those conditions and that period. ‘Different times, under different conditions, produced at least to a certain extent different style.’¹⁶ Therefore, an attempt to reproduce past architectural elements in contemporary production would be futile and anachronistic. Deroko was not a revivalist.

One could be tempted to assume that Deroko’s ideas could be grouped within the intellectual domain of the Arts and Crafts Movement, which peaked between 1880s and 1920s. Indeed, at first sight, the similarities are overwhelming.¹⁷ Similarly to the proponents of the Arts and Crafts, Deroko praised the ingeniousness of the vernacular craft. In fact, he hired craftsmen for the construction of a couple of his designs, and, to an extent, insisted on the application of the traditional tools and methods. Furthermore, he valued and used the traditional materials, and designed pieces inspired by vernacular forms. However, there were three fundamental differences between Deroko’s views and those propagated by the Arts and Crafts Movement. First of all, Deroko was against the establishment of schools, workshops, and movements. Furthermore, though he appreciated the diverse folk inventiveness, and was intimately familiar with their craft, Deroko did not oppose the industrial development. He did not side with the Modernists in their adoration of the Machine, either. He simply did not fight against the technological progress: ‘The old age was the age of the crafts... The time of the crafts has come to an end. The age of the industry begins.’¹⁸ The statement neither praises nor accuses. Stating the obvious facts, it was an impartial acceptance of the inevitable. Finally, Deroko’s architectural thought was not coloured by moralising or activist tendencies.

He did not conceive of architecture in terms of “honesty” or “truth”. He did not insist or theorise on the construction of “honest” architecture “true” to its material, structure, and function. Deroko did possess a deep appreciation for functionality of the vernacular architecture. However, he pragmatically interpreted this quality as an adept response to the human needs, rather than as an abstract, moral imperative.

This insistence upon the design functionality brought Deroko closer to the ideas of the Modern Movement. Similarly to the Modernist views, he was critical of contemporary architectural production, commenting that ‘today, we do not have any particular architectural style.’¹⁹ Furthermore, Deroko wrote against the obstinate emphasis on architectural beauty: ‘in order for a house to be beautiful, it sometimes becomes almost unusable or, at least, uncomfortable.’²⁰ Deroko praised the Modern architecture for its rejection of the abstract, futile aesthetics. On a different occasion, he described the ornament as useless.²¹ However, somewhat a Romantic in his aesthetic inclinations, he strongly opposed the famous Modernist notion of a house as a machine for living. Decades before Kenneth Frampton wrote his *Critical Regionalism*, Deroko sharply criticised the Modernist architecture.²² He objected to the uniformity of the Modernist forms and their insensitivity for the local context. In his opinion, the universal design formula championed by the Modern Movement was not appropriate for different regions of the world. The value should be placed on the geographical context of the building; the emphasis put on topography and climate.

If the answer for contemporary architecture did not lie in revivalism, a continuance on the past styles, or the solutions proposed by the Modernist circles, where, in Deroko’s opinion does it lie? More important for the particular focus of this paper – what was crucial for the design methodology of residential architecture? Truth be told, he did not offer a definite solution. His theoretical views remained scattered and required further development. However, his writing offered an insight into his way of thinking. In an article on the Balkans’ vernacular architecture, Deroko divided local architecture into two groups:

1. the official – sacral architecture characterised by strong foreign borrowings;
2. vernacular architecture – the people did not borrow, rather ‘they built in the way they could and felt like.’²³

In an attempt to explain the nature of the way in which people built, Deroko drew upon a long, sometimes conflicted tradition of architectural theory, which started with Vitruvius and reached its peak in the work of Gottfried Semper.²⁴

Deroko maintained that the most basic forms of architecture – the primitive hut, the cave and the tent – were influenced by the geographical context and the way of life. In his opinion, the clearest expression of this basic architectural logic was found in vernacular architecture.

According to Deroko, the planning aspect of design process depends on the three basic factors. Firstly, the practical living needs. Architecture, in its essence, was a human protection from the elements, animals, and other people. It was supposed to provide the most comfortable living and working environment. Hence, the way of living and working directly influenced the design layout. Construction, on the other hand, depended mostly on the available building materials. In addition to the previously discussed planning and construction, the final form of a building was influenced by the third factor – climate conditions.

In one of his earliest papers on vernacular construction, Deroko added two more sources of influences for the development of architectural shapes, which he abandoned in his later writings. However, they will be included here because, dated in 1940s, they undoubtedly informed the thinking behind his interwar architectural production. The fourth factor which influenced the shape of the vernacular architecture was ‘that which the people themselves carried within their soul.’²⁵ That is the taste of the anonymous folk craftsmen-builder. The core historicist concept of individuality and an ethnic, supranational pride resonated in the elaboration of the fourth point.²⁶ ‘The last one, the taste, [the people] brought with them during the settling of the Balkans from its ancient homeland, behind the Carpathian Mountains... They knew how to build both beautifully and distinctively... [The first Slavs] knew, or at least, felt, the art and the beautiful, though “beautiful” was not sought for the sake of itself, but resulted from the practical forms.’²⁷ Some scholars commented on the role Folklorism played in the construction of a homogenous Yugoslav national identity.²⁸ The previous quote fits perfectly into that line of interpretation. However, one must wonder about Deroko’s intention. Could it be that he did not write deliberately to contribute to the dispersion of Yugoslav national ideas, but instead primarily with the category of ethnos in mind?

Lastly, shifting from conceptualism to a more Universalist viewpoint, Deroko came close to Laugier’s efforts to define architecture ‘as the material art of construction’,²⁹ one which is self-referential. Deroko stressed that the shape and the appearance of a vernacular building depended on the way materials were fitted together. Regardless of the type of material – whether it was timber, stone, or brick – it could be laid in vertical lines. This manner of construction was

used for various types of structures – from timber chalets in the mountain to the highly developed, complex Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. Deroko then slightly changed the interpretation of the classical post and lintel structural type. He explained that the other manner of the use of the materials entailed two vertical columns which carried the gabled roof. The spaces between the vertical carriers were filled with any type of lighter material resulting in walls. Parthenon, and all of the Greek temples were built in this manner, as were the south Serbian vernacular buildings.

Deroko was somewhat contradictory in his conclusion of this theoretical piece, stating that these principles were contained within one people, one tribe, or one region since their conception. Whatever other circumstances influenced the way they built their homes, the shapes of those constructions are always primarily dependent on that essential architectural conception. All of the basic architectural principles of a people are visible in the construction of vernacular buildings.

Deroko held vernacular architecture in high esteem. He maintained that architecture primarily needed to appropriately respond to a geographical context, and insisted that vernacular construction did precisely that. However, he did not suggest that the forms and the appearance of contemporary buildings should employ the folk motives. What is implied here is that a modern architect should learn from them and adopt the lessons they were silently offering. So, what were the forms and appearances of vernacular architecture? Deroko offered a classification of vernacular types, based on the systematisation of a vast built heritage he examined during his field trips. The entire Balkan vernacular architecture was divided in two basic groups with regards to the construction method:

1. The ancient chalet, in the mountain areas;
2. “Bondruk” architecture, in the valleys.³⁰

To these two fundamental types he added smaller groups:

1. The most primitive houses, built mostly in the mountains of vegetation, most notably using tree branches and straw;
2. The Šumadija type is related to the “bondruk” type of construction, with distinctive and recognisable arched porches;
3. The stone masonry along the coast of the Adriatic Sea – the stone was used because of the lack of timber;
4. The stone masonry in the Zagorje region, the so-called Arnaut towers. The stone was used as a means of reinforcement. Timber was plentiful in this area and sometimes used for the upper storeys;

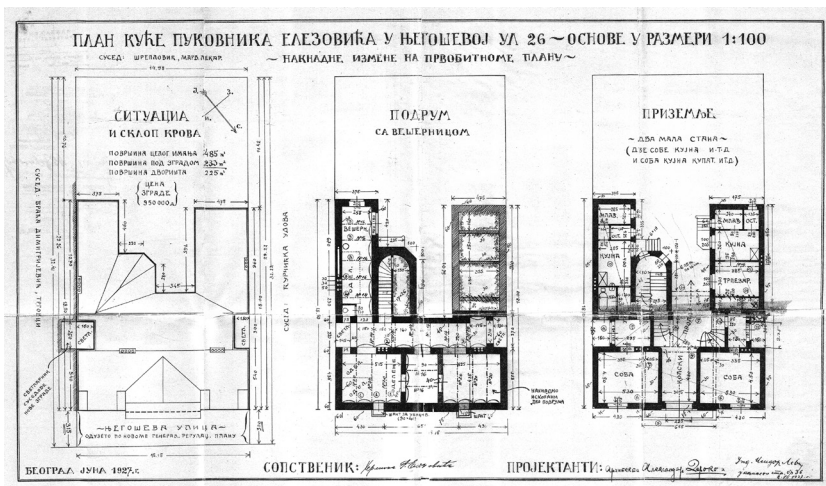
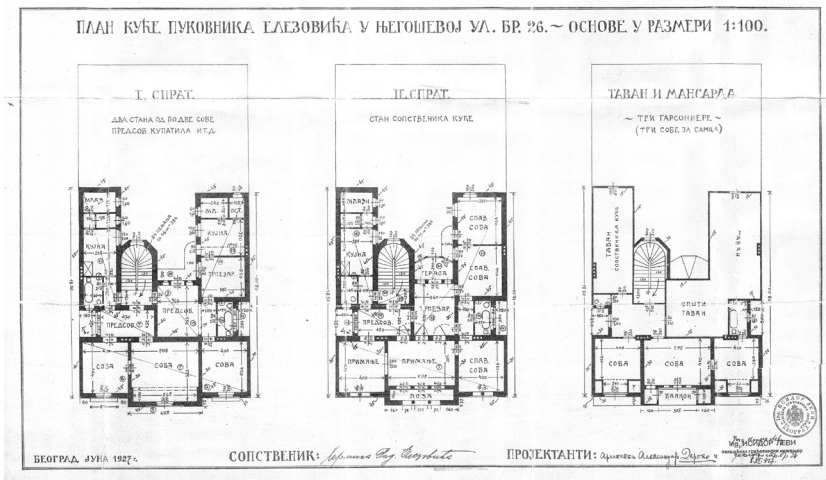


Fig. 1-2. The floor plans for the Colonel Elezović apartment building. (IAB F. XI-30-1927)

5. The German type, north of the Sava and Danube rivers, with street-facing tympanum of elaborate Baroque form and decoration.

Deroko discussed the materials and planning of different types of construction method, primarily depending on climate conditions, topography and the human way of life. He did not dwell on the style of ornaments, though he took note of them (i.e. the “German” type). He was principally interested in the functionality of designs. Throughout his writings he warned against the tendency to subordinate the functionality of planning to the beauty of a building. However, he did not dismiss the need for aesthetics in architecture. In fact, he stressed that architecture must be “spiritually” pleasing. It had to be designed in a manner satisfying for both physical and psychological human needs.³¹ A house should be oriented towards a view, and, whenever possible, come with a beautifully decorated garden. This was especially significant for villas: ‘it is a luxurious, not only practical building, but not luxurious in the sense of overwhelming amount of abstract ornament, but only if attention is paid to luxury and the usefulness of “beautiful”’.³² He deemed vernacular architecture to be beautiful, with its tall roofs, bay windows, arched porches, vivid colours, and naive baroque volutes. The carved ceilings, the wide eaves, and chimneys conveyed the folk sculptural conceptions. A wooden cross, branching like a treetop of a mounting pine, a village gravestone, a wooden carriage, pottery, furniture, etc. expressed a people’s artistic feeling alike.³³ Deroko related the beauty of vernacular ornament with functionality; in his opinion it primarily stemmed from its careful planning, cost-effectiveness and unpretentiousness.

ARCHITECTURAL HANDWRITING: DEROKO’S RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS IN BELGRADE

The first significant residential building Deroko designed for a client in Belgrade was the multi-storey apartment building for Colonel Elezović on 26 Njegoševa Street.³⁴ Constructed in the dense urban scenery of the central Belgrade, the building was set on the street regulation line, and laterally leaned on the neighbouring structures. The construction of the building started on 18 July 1927 and finished on 1 April 1928.³⁵ Officially approved by the Construction Board on 26 October 1927, minor changes were made to the original designs during the construction process. The building had a basement, a ground floor, and three storeys while the structure was reinforced concrete with walls made of bricks and mortar. Covered stone stairs, placed next to the courtyard façade were the point of vertical circulation. The symmetrical U-shaped floor plans

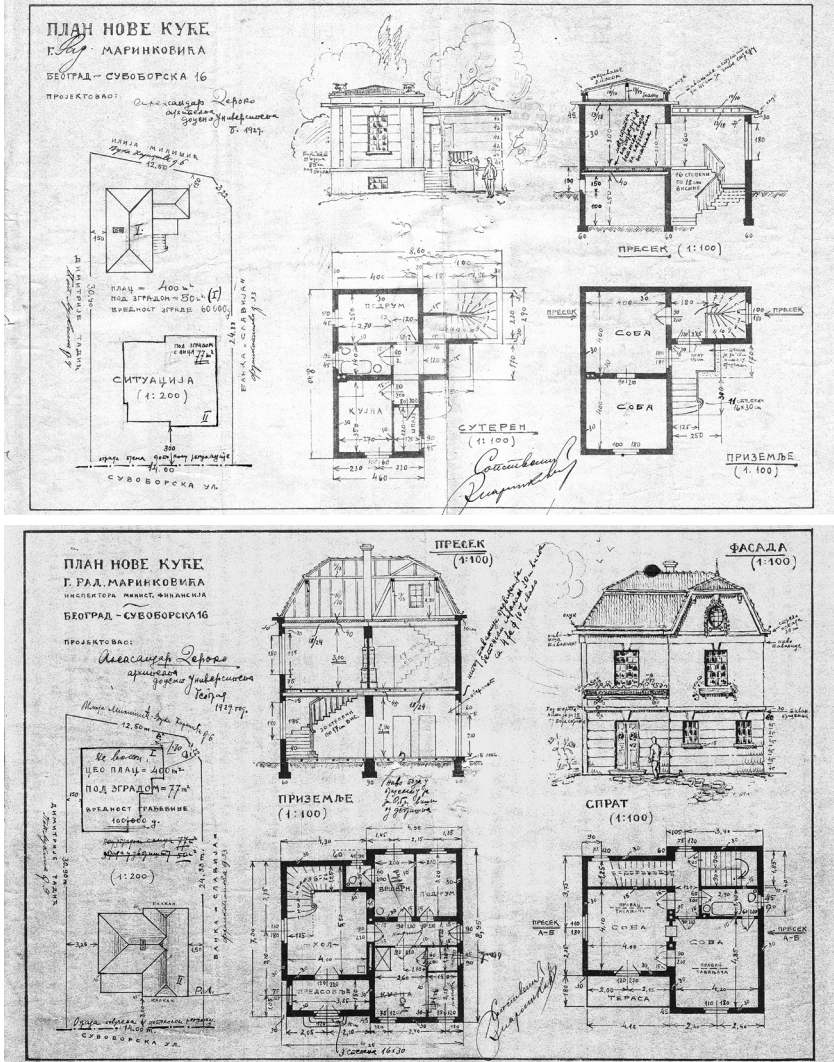


Fig. 3-4. Designs for the Marinković Villa (IAB F. VIII-14-1929)

followed a typical Beaux-Arts design layout (Figures 1, 2). A laundry room was in the basement while two smaller, one bedroom apartments for rent were placed on the ground floor. The first floor had one larger apartment in the eastern wing, and a smaller one in the western one. The *piano nobile* was elevated to the second floor, which the landlord kept entirely for himself. The spacious reception rooms were situated behind the street façade. Service rooms – a kitchen, a small pantry, and the servant’s bedroom – were in the eastern wing of the building. The dining room, the bedrooms and the bathroom were placed on the opposite side. Finally, three studios with the shared bathroom facilities, the landlord’s and general storage units, were at the last level of the building.

The façade of the building is perhaps the most commented one amongst all of Deroko’s residential achievements. Almost every scholar who wrote about his design included the Colonel Elezović’s apartment building. And rightly so. The building won him an award in 1930 for the most beautiful façade by the Architects’ Club and its patron Dušan Tomić.³⁶ As an expressive, handsome mixture of the Serbian-Byzantine style and Viennese secession, this multi-storey building was described as Deroko’s most successful piece of residential architecture. The jury noted that the arcade is ‘characterised with a simplicity of means and correctly interpreted spirit of a genuine naïveté of our ancient builders’.³⁷ Decades later, scholars agreed that Deroko did not simply copy motives from architectural history. Approaching the architectural past as a scholar and an erudite, he searched for the aesthetic lessons, the principles of the bygone ages. He incorporated these in his own design methodology. Interpreted in that way, Colonel Elezović’s building should be understood not as a compilation, but as a transposition of the medieval Serbian and Byzantine architectural spirit.³⁸

Designed three years after his graduation, upon his return from Paris, and before he started his research travels across the Balkans that would bring him closer to the lessons of the vernacular architecture, Deroko designed two buildings in the eclectic Beaux-Arts style for Radivoje Marinković, a prominent inspector at the Ministry for Finances.³⁹ Both buildings were constructed on 16 Suvoborska Street, on a rectangular, relatively small lot of land spanning 400 square meters between April and July 1929. Both were set as far as possible from the site’s borders, creating coulisses for the central garden space. The vegetation depicted in both designs can be interpreted as a hint of the importance Deroko would place on the relation between architecture and nature.

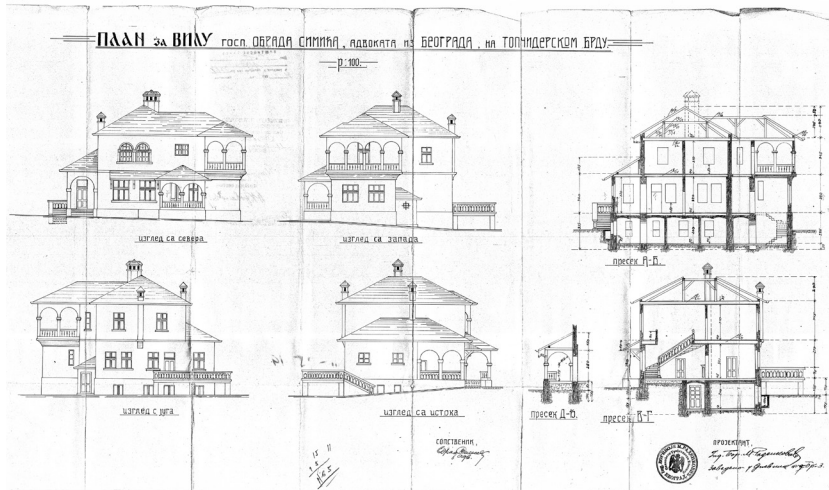


Fig. 5. Designs for the old mansion at the Simić Estate (IAB f. XII-25-1927)

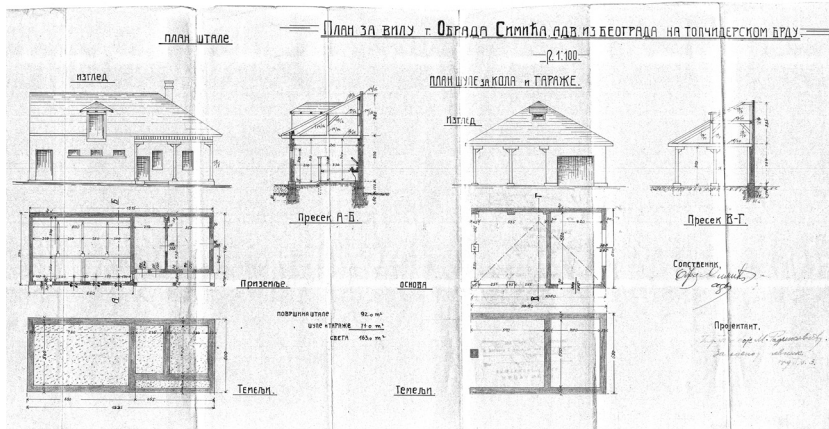


Fig. 6. The floor plans for the Colonel Elezović apartment building. (IAB F. XI-30-1927)

The house closer to the street was more spacious (77 square meters). Facing the street, the entrance led into a small vestibule (Figure 3). From there, one would proceed to a spacious foyer, with elegant stone stairs, and service rooms on the right-hand side. The two rooms, and a bathroom were on the first floor. The house had a small attic with a mansard roof. The smaller house (42.5 square meters) was placed deeper inside the lot (Figure 4). From a small porch, a visitor would step into an entrance hall with stairs leading to the basement. Two rooms were on the first floor, while the service rooms were partially underground. Both buildings were of elegant proportions, with subtle Neo-Baroque ornamentation and rusticated ground floor.

Stylistically completely different were the designs made for Obrad Simić, the famous Belgrade lawyer, in 1931.⁴⁰ Both buildings reflected Deroko's knowledge acquired during his exploration of Serbian architectural past. Deroko designed a new villa, built on the foundation of an older barn. At the same time he adapted an old garage for servants' quarters. Constructed on the foundations of the pre-existing structures, they cannot be used as an example of Deroko's site planning. The buildings were free standing, aligned, and placed deeper into the large site, behind the main villa.

The works on both buildings were executed concurrently between 25 May 1931 and 22 December 1931.⁴¹ The designs showing the concept for the older villa at the Simić estate are kept at the Historical Archives of Belgrade. Signed by the civil engineer Borivoje Radenković, the old mansion was constructed in 1927 for Ljuba Janković, a director at a bank (Figure 5).⁴² The freestanding single-storeyed structure was accompanied by a barn and a small garage. The three buildings were freestanding. The mansion's prominent characteristic were the dynamic massing and picturesque contour of hip roofs of different heights. Chimney caps, arched porches, a double arched window at the first, and a balustrade at the spacious southern terrace on the groundfloor were employed as the envelope's decorative elements. The Simić villa was an appealing architectural piece in the vernacular "bondruk" style, with playful shapes which communicated with the surrounding landscape. Placed on the same axis, behind the main building, the smaller buildings were harmoniously incorporated into the architectural syntax of the estate (Figure 6). The simple shapes of the barn and the garage with hip roofs and colonnaded porches balanced out the dynamic envelope of the villa, and complimented the back garden in an unobtrusive manner.

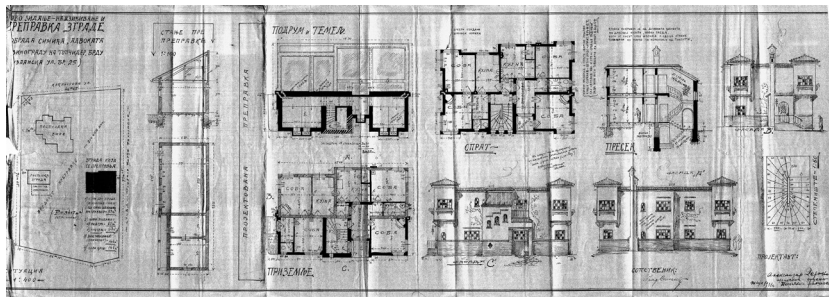


Fig. 7. The Simić Villa (Simic IAB IX-22-1931)

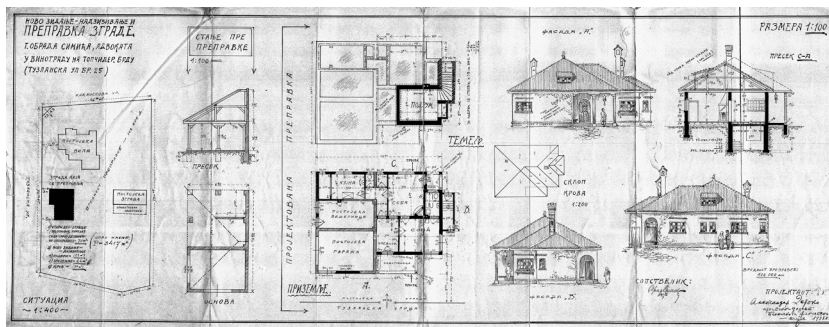


Fig. 8. Designs for the smaller house on the Simić estate (IAB IX-22-1931)

The old barn was adapted to a mansion (Figure 7). The older 83-square meter-structure was significantly enlarged. The new building had three levels – the basement (80 square meters), the ground floor (145 square meters) and the first floor (also 145 square meters). The floors were vertically connected by a stairwell placed behind the main façade. The two habitable floors had a similar layout. Each floor had two self-contained units with separate entrances. However, the units were connected through the centrally-located kitchens. Every unit had two rooms – the larger one, was presumably a living room, with a fireplace, and an individual toilet.

In terms of form, the exterior of the building did not resemble the other two structures on the estate. The original plans show dominantly horizontal massing with small rectangular corner towers. Resting on top of the decorative consoles and overhanging the ground floor, the towers were the main vertical accents of the envelope. The central segment of the main façade was picturesque, with the dynamically resolved, protruded stairwell and entrance envelope, covered with roofs of different heights. Deroko wrote the instructions for rough plaster finish of the façades, which was then to be sprayed with green colour. Climbing plants were also introduced as a decorative element of the façades. The roofs were gently titled, with recognisable vernacular chimney caps. Simple, small aperture, lack of ornamentation, massing, roof contour, and climbing vegetation, radiated the feel of vernacular architecture – a picturesque combination of the Mediterranean and *bondruk* styles.

Deroko altered the appearance of the villa during its construction. He introduced the tall central tower for the stairwell, which became the main vertical focus of the envelope. The chimneys were abandoned, and a sun clock added, which was typical for the façades of Mediterranean towns. The result was a heavier structure more closely associated with the forms of medieval ramparts than vernacular architecture. This decision should be questioned bearing in mind the forms of the other buildings built on the same type of estates. The playful vernacular forms would certainly correspond better with the built context than the stricter, more massive volumes reminiscent of a medieval fortress. Furthermore, using the small-sized openings and omitting decks or balconies, Deroko did not open his façades towards the surrounding garden.

The smaller building, constructed on the foundations of the old garage was almost doubled in size, with 63 square meters added to the old building of 70 square meters. The new building, designed for domestic workers, had a more spacious basement and a L-shaped habitable spaces (Figure 8). The house

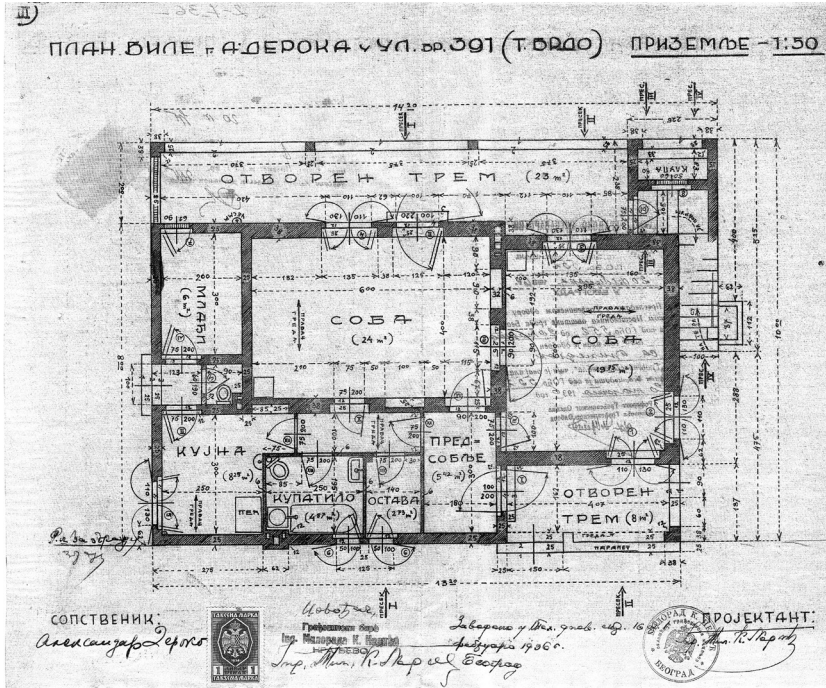


Fig. 9. Floorplan for the Deroko house (IAB f. 2-7-1936)

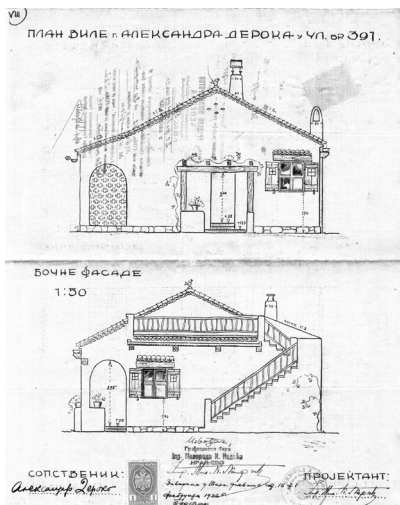


Fig. 10. Design for lateral facades of the Deroko house (IAB f. 2-7-1936)

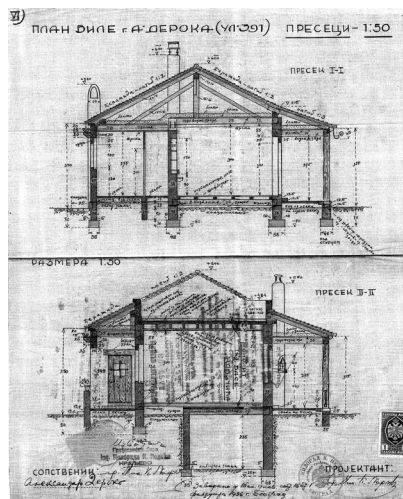


Fig. 11. Cross-section of the Deroko house (IAB f. 2-7-1936)

had two rooms, a kitchen, and a bathroom. The pre-existing garage and the laundry room were incorporated into the new layout. Deroko used the dynamic contour of the hip roofs with decorative chimneys and the columned porches to establish a connection with the older villa. On the other hand, the shape of the aperture, the rough plaster finish, sprayed with reddish-yellow colour, and the climbing plants communicated with the new villa. Heavily inspired by the forms of vernacular architecture, dynamic masses of the house would effectively serve as a bridge between the two larger structures. However, similarly to the larger structure, a lack of larger decks disabled a communication between the building's interior and the site. In his later designs, Deroko would use larger decks and balconies, attempting to create a stronger connection between the architecture and the surrounding nature.

Perhaps the most discussed Deroko's project was his own house on 3 Jovana Danića Street. The 137-square meter-building was constructed between 21 March and 2 May 1936.⁴³ According to a report from the Historical Archives of Belgrade the building's value, without the sewerage, was 80,000 dinars. The house had three access points. From the street, a modestly shaped open porch lead to a small entrance hall. From there, one could access the service spaces – a storage, a bathroom and a kitchen – on the left-hand side of the house, and to the right, a room which led to the second room (Figure 9). Both rooms opened to a spacious back porch, facing the garden. The third was the servant's entry, placed on the lateral façade. A small covered porch led to the servant's bedroom, a small toilet, and the kitchen. Directly inspired by the vernacular practice, Deroko placed the stairs outside of the house, leaning on the façade. Interestingly, the stairs – the main decorative motive of the lateral façade – led to a terrace at the attic level. However, as stated in the technical report, the attic was not to be used, and in fact, was inaccessible (Figure 10).⁴⁴ This decision is somewhat inconsistent with Deroko's insistence on functionality and cost effectiveness of architecture.

The envelope was imagined modestly, strongly inspired by the vernacular construction. All four façades open to the exterior. The two sides facing away from the street had open platforms, along their entire lengths – the shorter, lateral one a balcony, and the longer one a deck. The façades were decorated with different materials – a plinth of crushed stone, timber beams, and bricks; climbing plants; used ladders instead of balustrades; barrels for the collection of rainwater; wooden gutters, etc. It was noted that Deroko erected his summer house not only inspired by the vernacular forms, but with the use of vernacular construction process itself. Though historiography claimed that the house

was built solely with traditional tools and materials, it seems that this was a slight exaggeration. Having in mind that concrete – the so-called “monolith” by engineer Vasa Novičić – was structurally employed, and Deroko’s positive views of new techniques and materials, it might be more precise to say that the traditional construction process was indeed applied, but not at the cost of the quality and solidity of the structure (Figure 11). It was interesting that Deroko physically incorporated vernacular architecture into his new home. The house was built with materials from demolished folk buildings – timber beams, roof tiles with still attached old houseleeks, wooden gutters, ladders instead of fences – were all collected from households located across the Balkans. Whether these pieces were a medium for transposition of ideas of the “nameless folk builders” touched by the spirit of craft that Deroko valued so highly, or simply souvenirs from architect’s numerous journeys, remains open for discussion. Bogdan Bogdanović interpreted the construction of this house as an eco-artistic endeavour, an architectural assemblage, even as a product of a modern artistic simulation game.⁴⁵ It was, indeed, a genuine avant-garde experiment; so called architecture without architects.

The house of the prominent lawyer Vlada Stakić is so far the last known design made by Deroko for a residential building in Belgrade. Unfortunately, no archival material is available on the structure at the Historical Archives of Belgrade – it was a brief site visit and previously published photographs that made this discussion possible.⁴⁶ The villa was built in 1937, at the intersection of Tolstoy and Miloša Savčića streets. The photographs show that the building follows a U-shaped layout. Covered with an open gable roof, the transverse parts of the building flanked the central arched porch. The long, back part of the structure was covered with a hip roof. The villa followed the line of inspiration with the Mediterranean vernacular architecture. The foot of the building was clad with stone, and the upper sections were roughly plastered. The façades were once again devoid of any excess ornamentation and were communicating with the surrounding site area through generously-sized porches and balconies. The whiteness of the envelope was contrasted with the consoles under the mullioned windows, brick chimneys, and Deroko’s personal signature – decoration made from the roof tiles placed above the windows, applied in all of his residential designs.

The previously discussed structures illustrated the transformations of Deroko’s aesthetic inclinations in residential architecture. His Belgrade residential *oeuvre* could be divided in two phases – the academic (1920s) and the vernacular (1930s). The buildings Deroko designed during the 1920s were heavily

influenced by his formal education, informed by the educated taste of a Beaux-Arts trained architect. Capturing Deroko's fascination with the vernacular architecture, the 1930s structures, on the other hand, captured a more personal design approach. However, certain characteristics were present, in varying degrees in all of the buildings. Perhaps the most evident constant in Deroko's design methodology was his relation to ornament. Bogdan Bogdanović noted that Deroko's approach to ornament 'was neither emotional nor accidental'.⁴⁷ According to Bogdanović, Deroko analytically treated the essence of ornament, 'and dignity of this universal human language made him careful about its morphology and syntax'.⁴⁸ Indeed, though residential buildings Deroko designed varied stylistically, they reflected his mastery of ornament. The façades were characterised with high aesthetic appeal, accomplished through a skilful compilation of architectural elements and lack of excess ornamentation. The planning also revealed Deroko's attitudes toward the most important qualities of architectural design to certain extent in different structures. He did not subordinate the functionality of the floorplans to the typical Beaux-Arts demand for symmetry. Though he did not experiment with the open floor concept, Deroko also restrained himself from wasting too much space on hallways. All of the designs are characterised with logical division of spaces and overall functionality of the solutions. Deroko wrote about the importance of orientation and views for the satisfaction of human psychological needs in the early 1940s. The individual residential structures demonstrate that Deroko's methodology for the establishment of relations between the architecture and the surrounding nature developed in time, before his writing on the topic. Compared with the earliest designs for the Marinković and Simić villas, the later projects such as the one for the lawyer Stakić and for his own house, clearly show more success in opening the architecture up to the site.

CONCLUSION

Dejan Medaković notes that Deroko had a lot of respect for, and a deep emotional response to, all of the creations of the human spirit, and above all, architecture. Similarly, Deroko's writings remained a unique mixture of the scholarship, warmth and feelings, revealing the intimate artistic experience of their author.⁴⁹ Deroko did not defend or impose his architectural beliefs. His intention was not to formulate a consistent architectural theory. Accordingly, his thoughts on architecture were not expressed immediately, but as a secondary layer of Deroko's writings primarily focused on topics from the domain of history.

It is possible to condense the several main demands architecture had to meet in order to be deemed valuable from Deroko's analysis of vernacular architecture. First of all, it had to be functional. This meant that planning needed to be practically developed to satisfy human needs for comfortable living and working environment. Furthermore, the floorplan layout, construction, and architectural forms needed to correlate to the geographical context – the terrain and, above everything else, climate conditions. Deroko often wrote about the materiality of architecture. He stressed that the use of specific materials depended on their availability. Devoted to functionalism, he did not insist upon the use of traditional materials – architecture should follow the technological progress and employ the most efficient of solutions. Architecture also needed to satisfy human psychological needs. This was achieved not through the excess use of the needless and often quite expensive ornamentation. Rather, a proper orientation of the building, the opening of façades, correlation with the surrounding nature, and the maximum use of the potential of views were crucial. For Deroko, aesthetical qualities of an architectural piece originated in its functionality; he equated beauty with usefulness.

In his own residential designs Deroko managed to achieve the high standards he discussed throughout his writings to a varying degree. Similarly to his theoretical ponderings, it seems that if only he had developed his design methodology a bit further – in evolving his theory and applying it in his designs systematically – his villas might have taken a rightful place amongst the most successful achievements of Serbian architectural history. However, as was the case with his architectural theory, this most probably was not Deroko's intention. The architect was more likely focused on the production of functional spaces that would prove to be comfortable for his clients. With the exception of his own summer house, he did not use his residential projects as a testing ground for his architectural beliefs. However, their unostentatious functionality and engaging formal solutions undoubtedly contributed to the urban scenery of Belgrade and deserved the appropriate attention by scholar and the general public.

NOTES

- 1 About life and work of Aleksandar Deroko see: Zoran Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko* (Beograd: RZZZSK, 1991); Slobodan Bogunović, *Arhitektonska enciklopedija Beograda. II: Arhitekti* (Beograd: Beogradska knjiga, 2005, 750-757); Zoran Manević, *Leksikon neimara*, Beograd: Gradjevinska knjiga, 2008, 89-96; Dejan Medaković, "Aleksandar Deroko," *Sveske DIUS* 19 (1988): 3-5; Vojislav Korać, "Aleksandar Deroko – skica za portet," *Glasnik DKS* 15 (1991): 241-242; *Legende beogradskog Univerziteta: Aleksandar Deroko 1894-1988. Katalog izložbe* (Beograd: UBSM, 2008); Bogdan Bogdanović, "Aleksandar Deroko," in *Umetnici akademici 1968-1978* (Beograd: SANU, 1981), 207-213; Aleksandar Kadrijević, *Jedan vek traženja nacionalnog stila u srpskoj arhitekturi (sredina XIX – sredina XX veka)* (Beograd: GK, 2007), 300-302; Aleksandra Ilijevski, "Status i značaj gradjevina Aleksandra Deroka izvedenih u starom jezgru Beograda," *Stara gradska jezgra i istorijske urbane celine: problem i mogućnosti očuvanja i upravljanja*, (Beograd: ZZSKGB, 2013), 327-341.
- 2 A detailed biography was presented in: Zoran Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 9-19.
- 3 Korać, "Aleksandar Deroko," 241.
- 4 Manević, *Leksikon neimara*, 90.
- 5 Ibid.

- 6 A reliable introductory overview: Robin Middleton and David Watkin, *Neoclassical and 19th Century Architecture* (New York: Abrams, 1980).
- 7 On academism: Aleksandar Kadijević, *Estetika arhitekture akademizma (XIX-XX vek)* (Beograd: Gradjevinska knjiga, 2005); on national style: Aleksandar Kadijević, *Jedan vek traženja nacionalnog stila u srpskoj arhitekturi (sredina XIX – sredina XX veka)* (Beograd: Gradjevinska knjiga, 2007); on Modernism: Zoran Manević, *Srpska arhitektura 1900-1970* (Beograd: Muzej savremene umetnosti, 1972).
- 8 On Folklorism: Aleksandar Kadijević, “Folklorni smer nacionalnog stila u srpskoj međuratnoj arhitekturi,” in *Jedan vek traženja*, 321-330; Manević, *Novija srpska arhitektura 1900-1970*, 20-21; Vladana Putnik, “Folklorizam u arhitekturi Beograda (1918-1950),” in *GGB*, LVII (Beograd: Muzej grada Beograda), 175-210.
- 9 On Kojić see: Snežana Toševa, *Branislav Kojić* (Beograd: Gradjevinska knjiga, 1998).
- 10 Nadežda Pešić-Maksimović, “Stvaralaštvo arhitekata podstaknuto lucima sa moravske kuće,” in *Saopštenja XXXIV* (Beograd: RZZZSK, 2003), 403-419.
- 11 Djura Bajalović, “Ka starom srpskom stilu,” *BON* (December 1932): 769.
- 12 Ljiljana Miletić Abramović, *Arhitekture rezidencija i vila Beograda 1830-2000* (Beograd: Karić fondacija, 2002), 341.
- 13 Putnik, “Folklorizam u arhitekturi Beograda (1918-1950),” 204.
- 14 Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 63.
- 15 Aleksandar Deroko, “Folklor u arhitekturi kod nas se više ne obnavlja,” *Telegram* (21. 9. 1939): 7.
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- 17 More on A & C: Peter Davey, *Arts and Crafts Architecture* (London: Phaidon, 1995).
- 18 Aleksandar Deroko, “Naša folklorna arhitektura,” *Umetnički pregled* 3 (1940): 78-79.
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- 21 Deroko, “Naša folklorna arhitektura,” 143.
- 22 Kenneth Frampton, “Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance,” in *The Anti-Aesthetic. Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. by Hal Foster (Seattle: Bay Press 1983), 16-30.
- 23 Deroko, “Naša folklorna arhitektura,” 72.
- 24 On Gottfried Semper see: Mari Hvattum, *Gottfried Semper and the Problem of Historicism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
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- 26 For a concise, comprehensive classification of numerous historicist viewpoints see: Andrew Reynolds, “What is Historicism?,” *International Studies in the Philosophy of Science* 13/3 (1999): 275-287.
- 27 Deroko, “Naša folklorna arhitektura,” 73.
- 28 Aleksandar Ignjatović, “Između zezla i ključa: nacionalni identitet i arhitektonsko nasleđe Beograda i Srbije u XIX i prvoj polovini XX veka,” *Nasledje* 9 (2008): 54-55.
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- 30 Deroko, “Naša folklorna arhitektura,” 74.
- 31 Deroko, “Estetika kuće,” 143.
- 32 Ibid.

- 33 Aleksandar Deroko, "Folklor u arhitekturi kod nas se više ne obnavlja," 7.
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- 35 Official Statement by Aleksandar Deroko, 25 December 1928, Folder XI-30-1927, Historical Archives of Belgrade.
- 36 "Četiri nagradjene kuće u Beogradu," *Politika* (24. 1. 1930): 7.
- 37 Bogunović, *Arhitektonska enciklopedija*, 753.
- 38 Ilijevski, "Status i značaj," 332-333.
- 39 Report by the Belgrade City Construction Department, 8 April 1929, Folder VIII-14-1928, Historical Archives of Belgrade.
- 40 Obrad Simić bought the lot, with three existing buildings on 19 March 1920 for 160.000 dinars: Proof of Property Ownership, 19 March 1928, Folder IX-22-1931, Historical Archives of Belgrade.
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- 48 Bogdanović, "Aleksandar Deroko," 211.
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DEVELOPING DEROKO'S THEORIES: LOOKING FOR THE "INCUNABULA" OF BYZANTINE HOUSING

A B S T R A C T

Looking at the Byzantine palaces that have survived through centuries until today, such as the Palace of the Porphyrogenitus (Palace of Belisarius) in Istanbul, Aleksandar Deroko has underlined the essential distinction between two fundamental genres of Byzantine houses: monumental palaces made of stone and bricks and everyday houses made with a wooden structure.

For centuries, the ordinary Byzantine house was considered as a "Turkish type". Deroko maintained that this classification was erroneous, as the Ottomans actually inherited "the Byzantine house" when they conquered the vast territory of the Byzantine Empire. The Byzantine house was adopted by the Ottomans and the people under their domination, and over the centuries it spread over a broad geographical area – from Anatolia to North Africa and to the Balkans. Unsurprisingly, it did not reflect a single heritage; instead, it mirrored the various cultures that fell under its rule.

Based on Deroko's theories, one could consider locations such as Mount Athos, Ioannina, Prizren, Ohrid, Elena and even certain villages of Arbëreshë (Italo-Albanian) communities of South Italy as the "*incunabula* (the first examples, the origins) of Byzantine housing". Probably, thanks to their morphological characteristics and geographical isolation, some elements of this building type are still visible in these locations, even though they have been integrated into the local housing cultures. These buildings give subtle glimpses of the everyday Byzantine house.

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KEY WORDS

BYZANTINE HOUSE

IDENTITY

MULTIPLICATION OF KIOSKS

INCUNABULA

CULTURAL HERITAGE

INTRODUCTION

This study reevaluates the impact of the Byzantine house culture in a panorama of vernacular architecture in the former Eastern Roman Empire territories. The overarching goal is to demonstrate how this housing culture still lives and continues to evolve. I will do so by using Deroko's theories to analyze the *incunabula* of the Byzantine house type that has survived to present day.

The analysis is based on selected case studies, and shows how constitutive elements of the Byzantine houses became an integral part of many historical buildings in the Mediterranean. The methodological approach used in this study is an innovative mix of typological and historical analysis. The typological analysis¹ focuses on the formative elements of a building, whereas the historical analysis helps to contextualize them.

The Byzantine House - Background

Numerous examples of the Byzantine house can be found in most Mediterranean countries, including Turkey, Greece, Italy, Spain, and Morocco. It is not a coincidence that where the traces of the Byzantine elements are deeply rooted in the morphological layout of the city one can also find a marked presence of Ottoman civil architecture. Given the dimensions of the geographical area it has affected and the duration of its existence, the Byzantine house cannot and should not be considered as a single type of housing. In fact, over time, multiple typological variations have occurred to the Byzantine house type, which was later incorporated in the Ottoman house type.

Beginning with Italy, the heart of Roman art and architecture, we find that in the territory of this peninsula the Byzantine past can be traced in "fragments" in civil architecture. The effects of Byzantine rule on the cities of Italy, although scattered from north to south, have different vicissitudes: from an architectural point of view it is possible to observe how some typical elements of the Byzantine housing culture remain in some of these places. These are not evident traces, but architectural features that have entered very deeply into the language of the built heritage of the various Italian regions.

The historic center of Ferrara, for example, still preserves the original Byzantine *castrum*, or urban system. In the Byzantine center of Ferrara one can see the covered passageways characteristic of the Byzantine urban fabric called "*vasternia*"² (from Latin *basterna*).



Fig. 1. Palazzo della Ragione in Pomposa, 4th century. (Source: postcard, author's collection.)

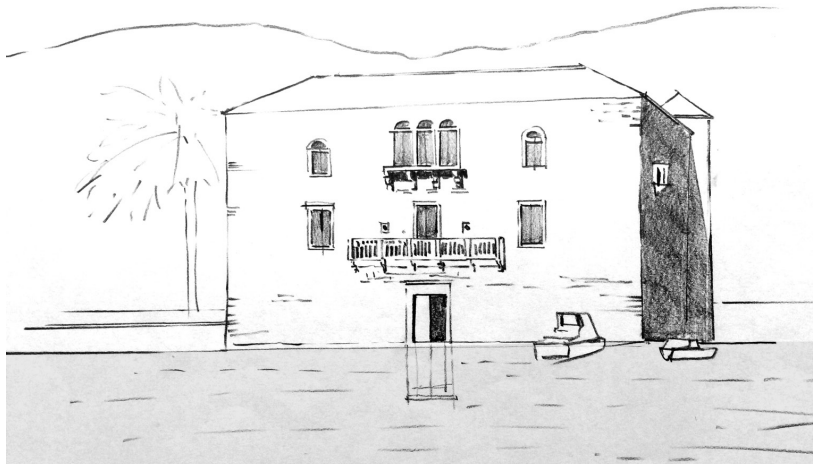


Fig. 2. Kaštel Lukšić, late 15th century (Croatia). (Source: Author's drawing.)

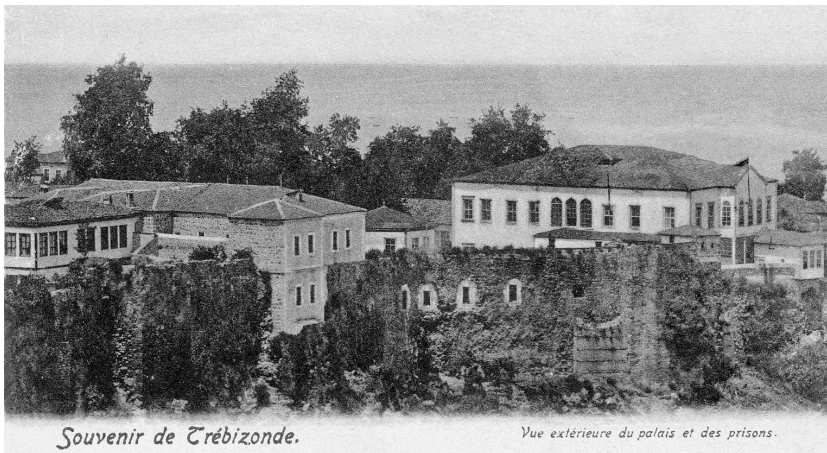


Fig. 3. The Comneni's Palace in Trabzon, 13th -14th century. (Source: postcard, author's collection.)

Another significant example is undoubtedly the Palazzo della Ragione in the Pomposa Abbey complex, also in the Ferrarese area close to the Po delta. The façade's cadence closely resembles the façades of the Fondaco dei Turchi in Venice and the many openings of all the Byzantine palaces along the shores of the Mediterranean: from the Byzantine-style façade of Kaštel Lukšić³ to Diocletian's Palace in Split, the Palace of Galerius in Thessaloniki, to the Palace of Boukoleon on the Marmara Sea, to the Comneni's Palace in Trabzon, on the Black Sea. In the ancient village of Tivoli, outside Rome, one can observe a house⁴ that is reminiscent of houses of Mystras in Greece (the most representative example of the surviving Byzantine housing) in the treatment of its façade and molding creating a unique slab. And, again one can find a house profile with first, second and third levels protruding onto the street in Venice. The ledges are made of wood and the protrusion grows with the house levels. A case in point is the Ramo Barzizza⁵, a small court on the back of the ancient Contarini's Palace on the Canal Grande.

In the Balkans, the situation is somewhat more complicated: in fact there the combination of Byzantine and Ottoman elements is different in each region. And different from Italy, the presence of Byzantine elements are much more evident in the historical civil architectural panorama.

DEROKO'S VIEW ON THE BYZANTINE HOUSE TYPE

Deroko's (1894-1988) approach to this delicate subject appears to be led by compositional thoughts that have crossed over the historical "ties" in order to analyze the problem from an unconventional point of view. His approach to the Byzantine house type is without any doubt lively and innovative. One can consider his work as a cornerstone in the understanding of the relationship between the Byzantine and the Ottoman civil architecture.

The great Deroko's intuition⁶ was to refer his theories to places that – based on their morphological characters and geographical isolation – have maintained some Byzantine elements in their domestic architecture over time.

According to the Serbian architect, the ordinary house type that for centuries was erroneously considered only as a "Turkish type" was inherited by the Ottomans when they conquered the vast territory of the Byzantine Empire. Deroko, looking at the Byzantine palaces that have survived for centuries to this day, such as the Palace of the Porphyrogenitus, underlined the essential distinction between two fundamental genres of Byzantine houses: monumental palaces made of stone and bricks, and everyday houses made of wood.

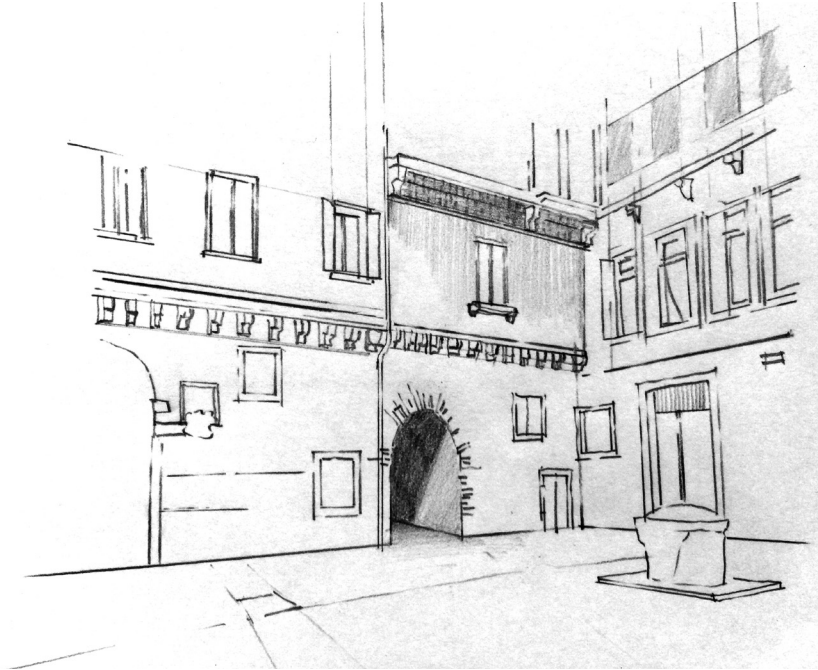


Fig. 4. Ramo Barzizza in Venice, 12th -13th century. (Source: Author's drawing.)



Fig. 5. Houses in Mystras. (Source: photographs by Francesco Collotti.)

However, he did not consider the important example of Mystras⁷, a locality in Greece that was abandoned during the nineteenth century and has been untouched ever since. There one can see the Byzantine house type as it was. A fortified town and a former municipality in Laconia, this ancient city is situated on Mount Taygetos, near ancient Sparta. The city served as the capital of the Byzantine Despotate of the Morea in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, experiencing a period of prosperity and cultural flowering.

Looking at Mystras's vestiges, in particular the house of Laskarius⁸, it is evident that both the Byzantine houses and the palaces were made of stones and bricks, and the plan was formed by a single-room space, often organized on two levels.

Deroko instead considered that the Byzantine houses were made of wood, with a ground floor or a stone basement. In fact, he described the Byzantine house as built of wood with filled panels made of clay and straw; according to him this house type was carried on by the Ottomans and by people under their domination, and spread out over a broad geographical area, from Asia Minor to North African coastal cities. Using Mount Athos architecture as an example he highlighted the essential features of the building technique used for Byzantine houses:

The essential feature are walls not in compact and solid masonry, but with wood frame, with a filling made of malleable material including clayey earth. In the Balkans and Asia Minor, the houses also differ somewhat according to the country.

The ground floor is made of walls built of rubble or dry brick, reinforced by horizontal beams. The floor is built like a cage, in wood. The wooden trellised walls are then filled with dry brick, pieces of wooden beams, all coated with clay. These floors often protrude, partially, or sometimes completely (kiosks). Roofs, with very wide awnings and gentle slopes, are covered with hollow tiles.

The interior layout always has a large central space, sort of "hall" around which are arranged the residential rooms. The kitchen, the storerooms and the servants are relegated to the ground floor.⁹

Deroko made the distinction between Byzantine houses and palaces, based on the building material; he claimed that the houses were built of wood, while the palaces were built of stone. He then used this distinction to support his claim that there were no Byzantine houses left, because of the perishability of their building materials. At first glance, this assumption could be correct, but the village of Mystras and the examples of the Byzantine houses in the Fener or Balat districts of Istanbul (as reported by General Leon De Beylé) point to the contrary.



Fig. 6. Friars' houses in Mount Athos. (Source: Deroko Aleksandar. "Deux genres d'architecture dans un monastère," *Revue des études byzantines*, tome 19, 1961, 388.

CORNELIUS GURLITT, DIE BAUKUNST KONSTANTINOPELS

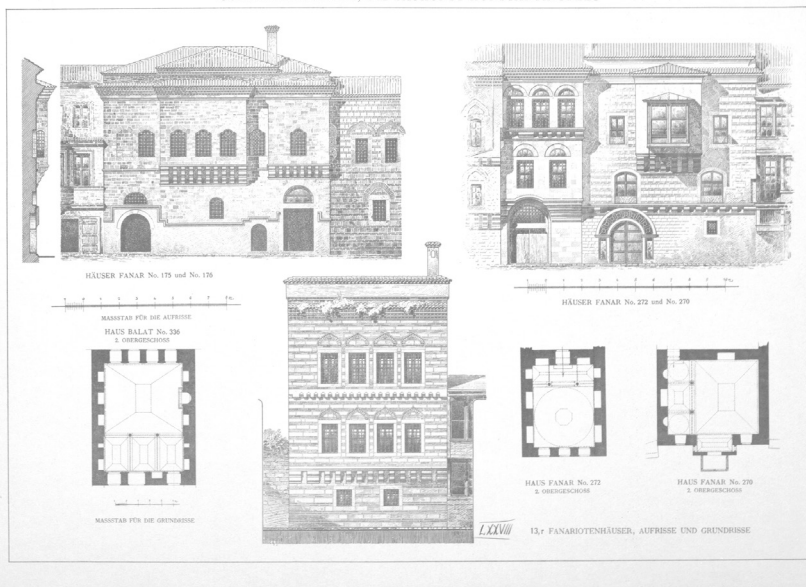


Fig. 7. Houses in the Fener district of Istanbul. (Source: Gurlitt Cornelius. *Die Baukunst Konstantinopels*. Berlin. Wasmuth, 1907.)

LITERATURE ON THE SUBJECT

The Byzantine house has been addressed not without difficulty by many scholars, architects and intellectuals. Their efforts, however, inevitably remain weak due to the absence of clear examples of how this building could have been.

General Leon De Beylé's¹⁰ studies on the subject remain fundamental. They are relevant because of their vastness and the systematic nature of the analysis he carried out. It is necessary to mention the fascinating essay by Swoboda¹¹ on the transmigration of Byzantine façades along the shores of the Mediterranean, but also the work of Sergio Bettini on Venice¹² and Ennio Concina's¹³ studies on the Byzantine city.

Tatiana Kirova¹⁴, among other scholars, asserted that the study of the Byzantine house type was problematic because of the lack of clear examples left over time. In fact, to find examples of intact Byzantine houses one needs to adopt an evolutive approach considering the scale of essential cross-cultural influences at the time and how widespread this housing type is geographically.

Deroko, as other architects of Modern architecture who worked in the Balkan and Eastern territories, dealt with the legacy of Byzantine architecture: architects such as Branislav Kojić, Nikolaos Moutsopoulos, Sedad Hakkı Eldem and Boris Čipan were interested in documenting the vernacular architecture as an expression of peoples culture and identity. Later they will use this material to reinterpret the tradition in a modern context.

Branislav Kojić (1899-1987) belonged to a generation of French-educated architects. He was a professor at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Belgrade and a regular member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

In 1940 Kojić led a study of the traditional mansion of Avzi-pacha in Bardovce¹⁵ near Skopje with his students from the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade. A young Čipan (1918-2012) was among these students, who was asked by Kojić to cooperate with him in editing his book on "village architecture"¹⁶. During his studies, Čipan came into contact with several other professors, such as Deroko, who asked him to make drawings for his book on medieval towns and fortresses in Macedonia¹⁷.

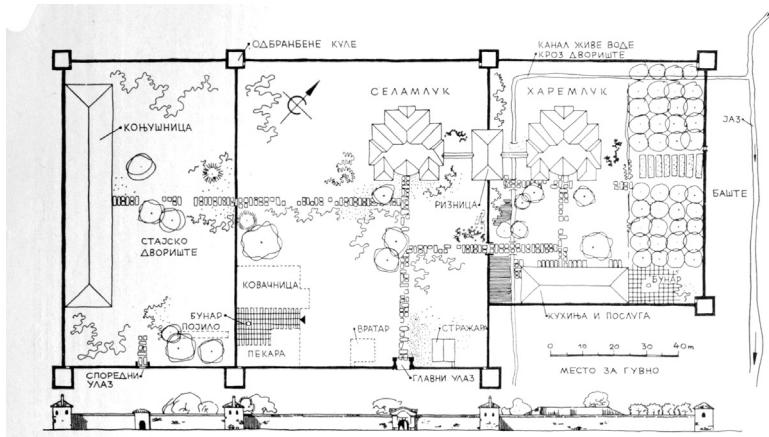


Fig. 8. Avzi-pacha mansion in Bardovce near Skopje: drawings by Boris Ćipan. (Source: Kojić Branislav. "L'habitation seigneuriale d'Avzipacha à Bardovce près de Skoplje." In *Zbornik zaštite spomenika kulture*, no. 4-5, 1954, 22.)

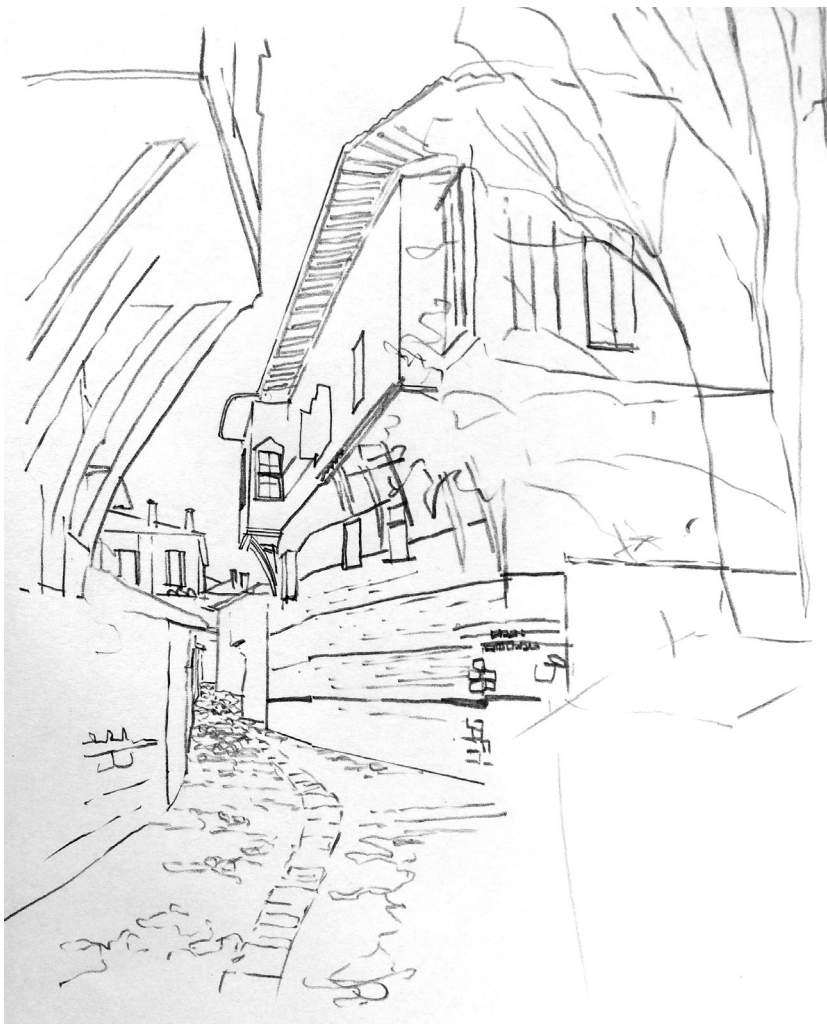


Fig. 9. Typical street in Kastoria. (Source: Author's drawing.)

Čipan was a Macedonian architect and a prominent figure of Macedonian Modern architecture after the World War II (WWII). He also tried to define the nature of ancient housing architecture of the Balkan regions: in fact, in his paper entitled *L'ancienne architecture d'immeuble à Ohrid*¹⁸ Čipan argued how the Ottomans clearly adopted the Byzantine housing tradition and continued to modify it to meet their needs.

Eldem (1908-1988)¹⁹ was the most preeminent representative of Modern architecture in Turkey and professor at the Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University in Istanbul. He dedicated a whole chapter of his trilogy on the *Turkish Ottoman house*²⁰ to the *Byzantine Influence*. He was very skeptical in respect to the theories that traced the evolution of the Byzantine house to the Ottoman house. In fact, in his first book on the Turkish house Eldem wrote:

It should not be forgotten that the term “Byzantine House” itself, in reality, is not well defined. The Byzantine Empire lasted for more than 1,000 years. In some places the period was shorter, but not less than 300 years (Syria, Serbia and Bulgaria). The Byzantine House, originating from the Roman House, occupied a period until the end of the Middle Ages and, just like the Ottoman Empire, the houses were dispersed in places greatly separated from each other in different life styles and weather conditions. Under these circumstances, just by saying “The Byzantine House” would not offer a concrete subject. Which period? Which region? Should be the subject that needs explanation in the essence of time and space. [...]

Information about the Old Empire is practically non-existent. [...]

The last palace left from the Byzantine period is the Palace of Porphyrogenitus of the twelfth century in Istanbul. The earlier ones are either in ruins or buried beneath the ground. The palaces in Trabzon, Izmit, Iznik, and Edirne are in such a state of destruction that is not possible to identify them. In Rumeli, there are some castle ruins from the period before the conquest. These are monuments left over from the Serbian, Byzantine and Athenian dukedoms. Apart from Mystras, the rest of them consist of only the tower and the curtain wall. Even if we assume that these buildings were constructed under the Byzantine influence, their ruins confirm nothing.²¹

Beyond these skeptical words Eldem also wrote that the Ottomans superimposed their “way of life” on the housing examples they found during their conquest of territories of the Byzantine Empire.

Moutsopoulos²² (1927), one of the most important intellectuals studying traditional Greek architecture and professor at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, wrote the following about the traditional settlements in Greece:

The ties of the family, the principal social cell, had a patriarchal and austere aspect. The house was the limits of the world of the majority of its inhabitants. Their life, their activity, began and ended in the house. In Greece, we usually meet the house type with a large façade typical of the rural dwellings. Over the time this stretched façade has been added, in the front side, of the portico on the ground floor. Called *hayat* this space means (in Turkish) – life – and together with the other building annexes – at the ground floor – shapes the house plan in a form similar to the “closed atrium”.

The streets of the ancient Macedonian cities and villages were paved with *caldirim*, or cobblestone. They were very narrow and they became still more so with the multiplication of kiosks, called *sahnisins*. This characteristic dates back to the Byzantine era when the streets were narrow and the *solariums*²³, or *sahnisin*, were wooden and projected on the streets.²⁴

Each of these scholars had a different point of view regarding the prevalence of the various housing cultures: this phenomenon derived from their own cultures and from what they wanted to demonstrate in their studies. However, all of them had a typological approach to this subject. These architects promoted in their respective countries the study of civil architecture as a foundation for the development of modern architecture’s awareness of the “preexistences”. One can affirm that this kind of approach was mostly tied to the study of the Ottoman house in the Balkan Peninsula: the architects that led these efforts constituted a sort of “net of knowledge”²⁵ and their collaboration is a wonderful, unexpected example of international activity of their common cultural heritage. In the historiography of architecture, this experience should be deeply studied and divulged like the CIAM’s experiences.

The international cooperation between architects had its “golden period” with the Congress Internationaux d’Architecture Moderne 1928-1959 (CIAM). Its foundation marks the determination of modernist architects to promote and polish their theories. When it comes to the vernacular architecture, the collective imagination of architects of the Modern Movement was strongly influenced by the IV CIAM meeting²⁶, as well as by the desire to consider the Greek Islands’ houses a symbol of primitive architecture, but also heralding a modern language to be pursued. Likewise the cultural heritage of the Byzantine/Ottoman house

studied by modern architects should be considered as an important field of studies because it will give an overview of modern architects' standing on the vernacular architecture along the Mediterranean Sea.

A TYPOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BYZANTINE HOUSE

With a sort of poetic license one can try to develop Deroko's theory of "continuation and persistence" of Byzantine architectural elements in the successive domestic cultures and identify those places where still today some characteristics of the houses evoke the elements forming the Byzantine house type.

In his essay²⁷ on monastic architecture, Deroko wrote that he has found well-preserved examples of this building type in several cities of the Balkans and Anatolia, such as Mount Athos, Ankara, Prizren, Ohrid, Plovdiv, Elena, and some villages of North Africa²⁸. These architectural parts and structures give glimpses of how the everyday Byzantine house appeared.

Looking at the Mount Athos housing architecture, in northeastern Greece, it is possible to observe what Deroko has described as the permanence of the characteristics of the Byzantine house. In fact, the geographical isolation of Mount Athos, and the fact that monastery housing complexes have been rebuilt every time in the same manner, have contributed to the conservation of this site.

Beyond these case studies, the Mediterranean offers a particular little known example of transmigration of the Byzantine culture and identity: this is the story of the Arbëreshë villages in the south of Italy. The Arbëreshë communities are made up of the Albanian minority that settled here in the fifteenth century. They are mostly concentrated in 16 scattered macro areas and over 100 municipalities in Sicily, Calabria, Basilicata, Puglia, Campania, Molise and Abruzzo.

There are several testimonies, documented and still accessible, about the habits and customs of these ancient Albanian minorities, but very little documentation concerning their housing type²⁹. Thanks to research based on notarial acts, it has been possible to date the arrival of the first Albanians in Italy around the second half of the fifteenth century following the death of Albania's national hero Giorgio Castriota, also known as Scanderbeg, who fought the Ottoman Turks to a standstill in the early fifteenth century. His descendants, fleeing from the Ottoman dominion, found refuge and hospitality in southern Italy thanks to an old treaty between the *condottiero* and the King of Naples.

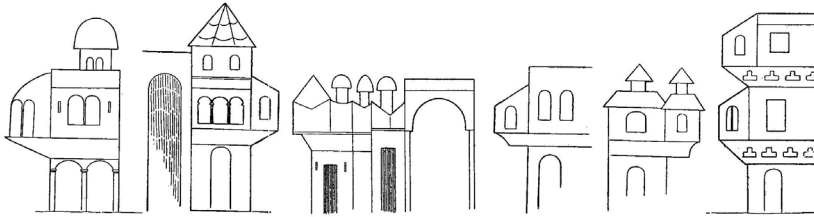


Fig. 10. Byzantine houses profiles. (Source: De Beylié Leon. *L'habitation byzantine, recherches sur l'architecture civile des Byzantins et son influence en Europe*. Grenoble. Éditeur F. Perrin, 1902-1903, 191.)



Fig. 11. Reconstruction of Byzantine district in Pergamon, around 14th century. (Source: Rheidt Klaus. "Byzantinische Wohnhäuser des 11. bis 14. Jahrhunderts in Pergamon." In *Dumbarton Oaks papers*, Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies Washington, DC, 44.1990, 201.)

It should be noted that the Albanians who chose to emigrate rather than submit to the Turkish rule, considered the exodus not as an escape, but as a transfer of civilizations: they were determined to maintain and preserve their customs and habits.

Typology in architecture has been present since ancient times, it has had great influence on the way buildings have been designed and constructed, and it is present in some of the most famous works of architecture. Although house types in architecture have only been analyzed at length since the nineteenth century, they have played an important role since much earlier. When describing the Fener and Phanariot houses in Istanbul, de Beylié claimed that the protruding levels typical of this type of building were found in Byzantine examples: his theory was based on the Manuscript of Skylitzès. In fact, in his well-known book *L'habitation byzantine*³⁰ he gives some examples of Byzantine house profiles (with projecting rooms) from the above-mentioned manuscript.

In his eloquent paper on the “Balkan house” Marinov³¹ reported that the most important scholars on the Greek vernacular house (such as Anastasios Orlandos and Faidon Koukoules) accepted that the *sachnisia* of the Northern Greek houses dated back to the Byzantine era and even from antiquity.

Concerning the topic of this paper, the typological analysis suggests that the space inside the Byzantine house, which in the first examples consisted of one or two simple cell-rooms, can be traced to the oldest examples of the Ottoman house. In the Ottoman house this kind of space is no longer only an external space, but serves to connect rooms.

The studies of Klaus Rheidt³² on the Byzantine house and that of Eldem on the Ottoman-Turkish house are essential in order to draw a comparison between the two. The comparison of these typological analysis show explicitly the analogies and common features between these housing cultures. Eldem has claimed that the oldest example of the Ottoman-Turkish house, the so-called Sultane Structure, can be traced to the Meriç river valley, near Edirne. According to him the Sultane Structure was a type of building with a raised floor, or *fewkani*, which had a pillared hall in front of it. A classic example of this type consisted of two or three rooms behind a covered gallery, called *hayat*. The house had a secondary façade, with pillars, which was the section with the *hayat* (also known as an outdoor *sofa*, or hall). The other three sides were closed in by a thick wall and the rooms got light from the back of the *hayat*.

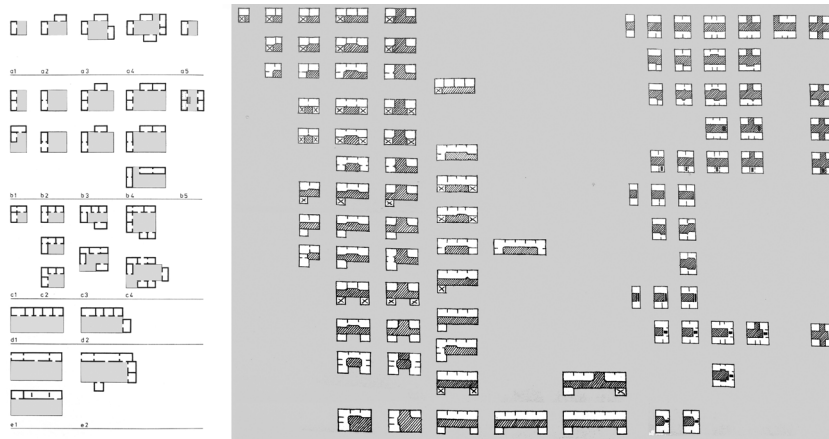


Fig. 12. Comparison between Byzantine house type (from Reith, 1990) and Ottoman house type (from Eldem, 1984). (Source: Author's picture.)

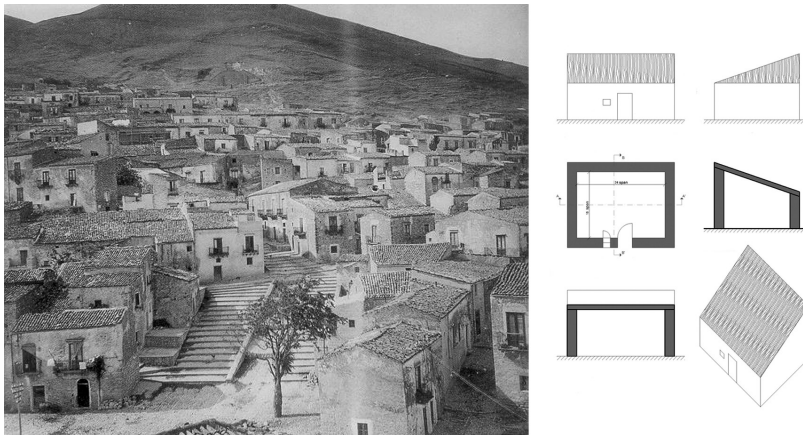


Fig. 13. Left: View of Cavallerizzo di Cerzeto (Kaverici) around 1950s. (Source: URL: <http://www.scscipasionatith.it/>.) Right: First Arbëreshë housing type, drawings by Francesca Librandi.

From Rheidt, one can see that the basic examples of the Byzantine house were quite similar to that of “Sultane Structure” described by Eldem. The main elements of the Byzantine house can therefore be summarized as comprised of: a central hall, which opens to separate rooms; the wooden balcony called *sahnisin* projecting over the street; the main reception room *iliakos*; the open hall-portico called *hayat*; and the streets of the town paved with *caldirim*. Furthermore, in the imperial palaces the reception rooms were multiple and formed a section separated from the private apartments.

CASE STUDIES

Coming from different geographical area and belonging to different architectural scales these case studies have been selected to demonstrate how some characteristics of the Byzantines houses are even now visible in many places.

Taking into consideration the more urban of these case studies, the Arbëreshë villages of Calabria, one can find that the first rudimentary housing modules *kaliva* of the Albanian refugees came about after a long use of caves called *pagliare*, originally made of straw. Successively the houses were made “*de calce e de arena*”, made by mixing chopped branches with red earth, and later using local materials more suitable for housing, such as stones. Thus, the Arbëreshë houses became known as *katojo* (shed).

The Arbëreshë communities succeeded in reproducing exclusively the town planning dispositions inherited from the Byzantines: a concentric urban development. In these settlements the more relevant concept is called *gjitonia*. The *gjitonia* was the smaller portion of the urban fabric, a microstructure consisting of a small square into which alleys (*ruhata*) converge, surrounded by buildings that have openings towards a larger *sheshi* or open space³³. This urban layout will constitute the successive concept of *Rione* (district). The first forms of urban fabric developed close to main road in these villages, longitudinally expanding and never crossed by primary roads.

The Arbëreshë house type is composed of three macro-elements: the enclosure, the dwelling and the vegetable/botanic garden. The function of the enclosure is to delimit the family environment, and therefore circumscribe the domestic life of the extended *family* (called “*fire*” as in the meaning of “hearth”³⁴).



Fig. 14. Preexisting Byzantine reservoir in the garden of Reşid Pasha yalı (mansion) on the Bosphorus, 19th century. (Source: Eldem Sedad Hakkı. *Türk Bahçeleri (Turkish Gardens)*. İstanbul Kültür Bakanlığı yayını, 1976, 80-81.)

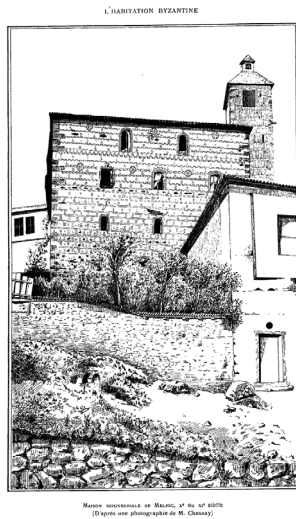


Fig. 15. Byzantine house (kula) in Melnik, 10th-11th century. (Source: De Beylié Leon. *L'habitation byzantine, recherches sur l'architecture civile des Byzantins et son influence en Europe*. Grenoble. Éditeur F. Perrin, 1902-1903, 72.)

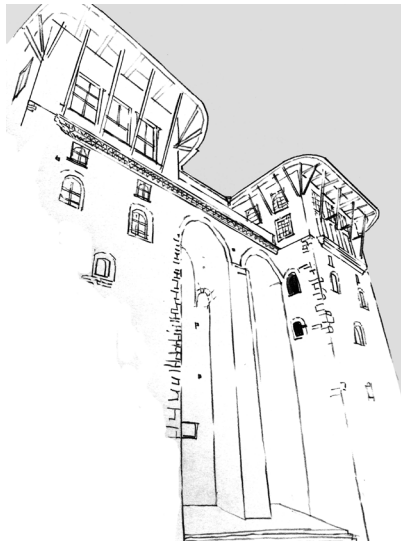


Fig. 16. House in Gjirokastër, early 19th century. (Source: Author's drawing.)

Also speaking of “etymology of places” we find a remarkable similarity between Albania and southern Italy. For instance, the city of a Gjirokastër and the small city of Castroregio contain in their names the word “kastro/castro” from Latin *castrum* literally, (castle, fortress). Both were born as protected villages with a concentric urban disposition.

Continuing with the ruins of Mystras, one can see the structure of a Byzantine city. Here it is evident that there is not a typological difference between the house and the palace: thus, the Palace of the Despots in Mystras can be viewed as a large mansion. Later the same correspondence will characterize also the Ottoman urban fabric. Moreover, comparing the plan of the Palace of the Despots with the plan of the Laskaris mansions (also in Mystras) one can notice that houses and palaces were enlarged with new housing units: this kind of compositional procedure was possible thanks to the connective space of these buildings deriving from the ancient Roman *triclinium*.

The city of Gjirokastër is an extraordinary example of where the Ottoman city meets the byzantine “*art de bâtir*”. Born in a period of turmoil, the so called City of Stone³⁵ was first mentioned in a chronicle on the uprising against the Byzantine Empire in 1336.

Here, the Balkan-Byzantine tower house (*kula*) finds its perfect union with the Ottoman house. The large stone volumes of the basements and the lower floors of the houses accommodate the cisterns³⁶ for recovery and storage of rainwater. Ottoman architecture is often found in those places where the primary urbanization (i.e. the implementation of nature) has Byzantine origins. An extraordinary example of this are the Ottoman gardens³⁷ on the Bosphorus, where the Byzantine water reservoirs and supply systems are still to be found in the garden layouts.

The Vicolo Iannelli in Cortona (western Tuscany) is a particular street of the town where the Medieval (or better Byzantine) manner determines the urban layout: a row of houses with a projecting first and second floors located in a small town very close to the so-called *Byzantine Corridor*³⁸ of Central Italy. This was the only passage connecting the two main power centers in Italy (Ravenna and Rome) within the ruins of the dismembered Western Roman Empire between the second half of the sixth century and the demise of the Lombards.



Fig. 17. Vicolo Iannelli in Cortona (Western Tuscany). (Source: Author's photograph.)

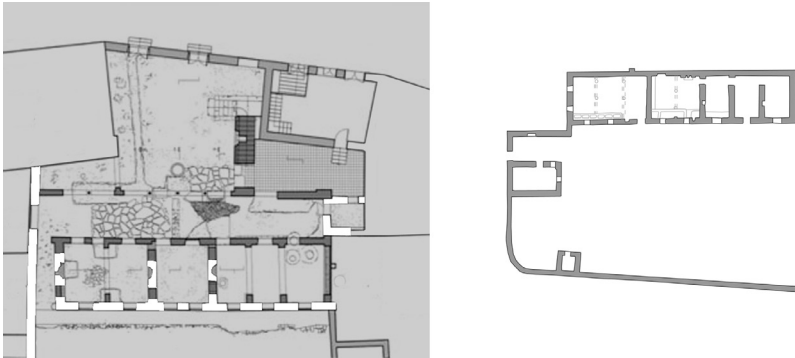


Fig. 18. Comparison between the original structures of the Benizelou's first building, early 16th century (left) and the house in Alişam 11th-14th century (from Reidt, 1990, right). (Source: Author's drawing.)

Built at the beginning of the fourteenth century these houses are considered in Italy to belong to Medieval housing architecture but perhaps a closer look at them reveals their Byzantine origins. In fact, from the exterior these small houses and streets bring to mind some Istanbul streets with the echo of Byzantium still visible.

The Benizelou Mansion, located in the Plaka district, just under the Acropolis Hill in Athens, was built on two earlier stone-built structures that were incorporated into the ground floor of the later building. Its original plan is highly similar to the Byzantine typology reported by Reidht. One can observe how the original structures of the Benizelou's first building are reminiscent of the layout of the Byzantine house (in Alişam) documented by Reidht with its rows of rooms and a wall, which determines the earliest concept of fence. These structures, as evidenced by the traces they left in the walls of the ground floor – beam sockets, cupboards, a fireplace – were relatively low tile-roofed houses with a semi-subterranean *katoi* (shed) and a fireplace on the upper floor. This layout was superimposed by the Ottoman mansion in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century. The Benizelou Mansion is an extraordinary proof of how different cultures have coexisted in the Hellenic core of Athens.

CONCLUSION

Deroko's intuitions have paved the way for the rediscovery of a common cultural heritage. The Byzantine house as predecessor of the Ottoman house is a multidisciplinary subject that would deserve a new round of studies. Currently, the experience of modern architects in documenting this particular cultural heritage is the essential step toward a contemporary awareness of how we can still learn from the vernacular tradition, in particular the housing tradition of eastern Mediterranean countries.

Working on this paper I have been able to collect examples to demonstrate how the Byzantine housing concept is a living housing culture. For instance the Arbëreshë settlements, an unstudied subject in the Mediterranean context, has been reframed and analyzed here within a broader context. I have demonstrated my primary idea that the Arbëreshë houses tell another story with respect to the Southern Italy housing tradition. The Arbëreshë refugees never faced the Ottoman domination; and the fact that their houses in Italy echoed the Byzantine housing tradition from the time they left Albania is arguably not a coincidence.

The case studies analyzed here demonstrate the existence of Byzantine elements (in house plans, urban layouts, and the decorative aspect of façades) of civil buildings from a vast geographical area. This study highlights that Byzantine traces in architecture are present also in civil buildings, and not only in religious buildings, as is commonly thought. Lastly, this current study demonstrates that the Byzantine housing culture has survived until today. This building type represents a cultural heritage with transnational meaning and a wide range of characteristics. As such, it should be properly studied from a historical, international, and cross-cultural perspective. This study is a first step in this direction.

NOTES

- N.B. I am grateful to Jelena Bogdanović, who let me know about the SAJ issue on Alekandar Deroko. I also would like to acknowledge Renata Jadrešin Milić for her invaluable help and support, as well as Atanasio Pizzi and Francesca Librandi for having shared with me the housing concepts of the Arbëreshë culture.
- 1 Typological derives from the word type (or τύπος in Greek), which means “imprint, character, figure, model”. Aldo Rossi considered this concept as one of the “principles of architecture”. See Aldo Rossi, *L’architettura della città* (Padova: Marsilio, 1966).
 - 2 Nikolaos K. Moutsopoulos, “Bref aperçu des agglomérations traditionnelles de la Grèce,” *Storia della città* 31/32 (1984): 10-32.
 - 3 Kaštel Lukšić (Croatia) was built by the aristocratic family Vitturi (probably of Venetian origins) from Trogir, at the end of the fifteenth century. It has the shape of a large fortified Renaissance palace - summer mansion surrounded by the sea in the past and today connected with the mainland.
 - 4 That is the house called ‘Byzantine house’ in via del Colle in Tivoli.
 - 5 This court takes its name from the Barzizza family who lived in the palace of this court with its main façade on the Grand Canal. Originally it was an ancient foundry house dating back to the twelfth century, owned by the Contarini family.

- 6 Aleksandar Deroko, "Deux genres d'architecture dans un monastère," *Revue des études byzantines* tome 19 (1961): 382-389.
- 7 See Nikos Georgiadis, *Mistra* (Ninth Edition), (Athens, 2006).
- 8 Ibid., 20-21.
- 9 Regarding Mount Athos and importance of this site for modern architecture by means of Le Corbusier's experience see: Jelena Bogdanović, "Le Corbusier's testimonial to Byzantine architecture on Mt. Athos," in *Institut d'études Byzantines de L'académie Serbe Des Sciences et des Arts*, 44/2 (Belgrade, 2015).
- 10 See Leon De Beylié, *L'habitation byzantine, les anciennes maisons de Constantinople*, ed. F. Perrin (Grenoble, 1902-1903).
- 11 Karl M. Swoboda, *Römische und romanische Paläste, eine architekturgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Wien, Köln, Böhlau, 1969).
- 12 Sergio Bettini, *Venezia nascita di una città* (Milano: Electa, 1988), 90. See also Francesco Collotti, "Il Progetto e l'antico nell'area Altoadriatica, Il caso dell'Arsenale di Venezia" (PhD Dissertation. Venezia. IUAV, 1990).
- 13 Ennio Concina, *La città bizantina* (Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 2003).
- 14 Tatiana K. Kirova, "Il problema della casa bizantina," in *Felix Ravenna* 4 (1971): 263-302.
- 15 See Kojić Branislav, "L'habitation seigneuriale d'Avzipacha à Bardovce près de Skoplje," *Zbornik zaštite spomenika kulture* no. 4-5 (1954): 223-242.
- 16 Čipan made all the drawings in Kojić's book. Furthermore, he graduated in 1941 from the Architectural Department of the Faculty of Technical Sciences in Belgrade in the class of prof. Kojić on the topic: "Village Settlement Center". <http://marh.mk/борис-чипан-1918-2012/>.
- 17 Aleksandar Deroko, *Srednjevekovni gradovi u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji (Medieval towns in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia)* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1950).
- 18 Boris Čipan, "L'ancienne architecture d'immeuble à Ohrid," in *Actes du XIIIe Congrès international d'études byzantines: Ochride 1016 septembre 1961* (Beograd: Comité yougoslave d'études byzantines, 1963-1964), 151. Available at: <http://www.icomos.org/publications/thessalonique1973/thessalonique1973-17.pdf>.
- 19 Serena Acciai, *Sedad Hakkı Eldem, an Aristocratic Architect and More* (Firenze: FUP Firenze University Press, 2018); see also Sibel Bozdoğan, Suha Özkan and Engin Yenil, *Sedad Eldem: Architect in Turkey (Architects in the Third World)* (Singapore, New York NY: Concept Media, 1987).
- 20 Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Türk Evi, Osmanlı Dönemi = Turkish Houses, Ottoman Period* (Istanbul: Türkiye Anıt Çevre Turizm Degerlerini Koruma Vakfı, 1984-1987), 3 vol.
- 21 Ibid., 25.
- 22 He is one of the most important intellectuals engaged in the study of traditional Greek architecture, and professor at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.
- 23 In fact, Faidon Koukoules stated that the Byzantines called the protruding volume *iliakos* – a vernacular term – coming from *helios/ilios* ("sun").
- 24 Nikolaos K. Moutsopoulos, "Bref aperçu des agglomérations traditionnelles de la Grèce," op. cit., 24.
- 25 An example of this net is the Sedad Eldem's correspondence, see: Serena Acciai, "The Ottoman-Turkish House according to Sedad Hakkı Eldem, A refined domestic culture suspended between Europe and Asia," *ABE Journal* [Online], 11 (2017). Available at: <http://abe.revues.org/3676>.

- 26 The IV CIAM was held onboard ship, the SS Patris II, which sailed from Marseille to Athens. See Gemma Belli, “IV Congrès d’Architecture Moderne: *architetti in viaggio verso il Mediterraneo*,” in *Immaginare il Mediterraneo. Architettura, Arti, Fotografia*, eds. Andrea Maglio, Fabio Mangone, Antonio Pizza (Napoli: artstudiopaparo, 2017).
- 27 Aleksandar Deroko, *Deux genres d’architecture dans un monastère*, op. cit., 384.
- 28 See Serena Acciai, ‘The Ottoman-Turkish House according to Sedad Hakki Eldem, A refined domestic culture suspended between Europe and Asia’. op. cit.
- 29 Thanks to the passion and the meticulous research done by architect Atanasio Pizzi we have been able to reconstruct the history of the Arbëreshë settlements in Calabria, during the fourteenth and fifteenth century. See <http://www.scscipasionatith.it/>.
The documentary evidence on Arbëreshë housing settlements has been possible thanks to civil engineer and architect Francesca Librandi.
- 30 Leon De Beylié, *L’habitation byzantine, recherches sur l’architecture civile des Byzantins et son influence en Europe*, ed. F. Perrin (Grenoble: 1902-1903).
- 31 Tchavdar Marinov, “The “Balkan House”: Interpretations and Symbolic Appropriations of the Ottoman-Era Vernacular Architecture in the Balkans,” in *Entangled Histories of the Balkans* (Leiden, The Netherlands: BRILL, 2017). doi: https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004337824_008.
- 32 Rheidt (1955) is a German architect and Byzantine scholar. See Klaus Rheidt, “Byzantinische Wohnhäuser des 11. bis 14. Jahrhunderts in Pergamon,” in *Dumbarton Oaks papers* (Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies Washington, DC, 44.1990), 195-204.
- 33 In the Arbëreshë culture, the *sheshi* is the outside section of the house. Its origins referred to the concept of the balcony conceived in an ample meaning. Currently, it also means a small square.
- 34 The hearth, “Fire”: the unitary fulcrum of the Arbëreshë community is the enlarged family, represented as an assembly placed all around the fireplace. The concept of *Gjitionia* was born around this “fire”: it is a spiritual dwelling that can’t stay in a small and precise place. It is also a cultural emblem that preserves the sense of belonging to the Arbëreshë community.
- 35 Ismail Kadaré, *The Fall of the Stone City* (Berat: Onufri, 2008).
- 36 Elena Mamani and Kreshnik Merxhani, “Water Cisterns In Historical Houses Gjirokaštër,” *Proceedings of the 2nd ICAUD International Conference in Architecture and Urban Design Epoka University* (Tirana, Albania, 08-10 May 2014).
- 37 Sedad Hakki Eldem, *Türk Bahçeleri (Turkish Gardens)* (Istanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayın , 1976).
- 38 Giorgio Ravegnani, *L’Italia Bizantina* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2016), 86.

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ALEKSANDAR DEROKO: REBUILDING SMEDEREVO AFTER 5 JUNE 1941 EXPLOSION

A B S T R A C T

Aleksandar Deroko had a noteworthy and decisive impact on the architectural culture of Smederevo. This paper will not treat the issue of his exceptional work on evaluating and protecting the medieval Smederevo Fortress, but rather it will focus on a very specific period during which Deroko, as an architect, set up a significant number of parameters for a new vision for Smederevo's urban culture. This vision is embodied in his projects and architectural realisations in one of the most delicate periods of the town's history, during its reconstruction that lasted a few years after a horrific wartime explosion nearly wiped Smederevo off the map, on 5 June 1941. In spite of many different ideological and political reasons, a comprehensive historical and monographic assessment of Deroko's works in Smederevo had not been made to this date. This paper will assess subjects such as Deroko's relationship with the city's historical and cultural heritage, political and ethical qualities of this relationship during a delicate period in Serbian history, and architectural and aesthetic principles that affected the way Deroko would shape his work in Smederevo and his vision for a rebuilt city. Lastly, this paper will hint at the qualifications of his work in Smederevo and its impact on the present-day town.

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Aleksandar Deroko had a noteworthy, if not a decisive impact on the architectural culture of Smederevo. This paper, however, will not treat the issue of his exceptional work on evaluating and protecting the medieval Smederevo Fortress, but rather it will focus on a very specific period during which Deroko, as an architect and a thinker, set up a significant number of parameters for a new vision for Smederevo's urban culture. This vision is embodied in his projects and architectural accomplishments in one of the most delicate periods of the town's history, during its reconstruction that lasted a few years after a horrific wartime explosion nearly wiped Smederevo off the map.

Following the incident, which took place on 5 June 1941, when an ammunition depot belonging to the German occupying forces exploded within the Smederevo Fortress, the town has often been referred to as the "Serbian Hiroshima". According to numerous reports and research on this tragic event, of which I will single out those conducted by Leontije Pavlović¹ and Nebojša Jovanović,² a definitive death toll has never been established, ranging between 1,500 and 4,000,³ while '173 buildings were heavily destroyed, another 1,269 buildings severely damaged, and none remained intact.'⁴ In his work, Jovanović quotes from the Smederevo Museum, which states: 'The commission tasked with assessing damages from the explosion concluded that of the overall number, there were only 25 undamaged buildings in Smederevo, while 1,331 buildings had varying degrees of damage and 149 were completely razed to the ground.'⁵

Although a large number of works have been dedicated to the memory of this event and its analysis, as well as to the urban design and the reconstruction of Smederevo, a comprehensive historical and monographic assessment of this chapter in Serbian history from World War II has not been made to date due to widely differing ideologies and political motives. Consequently, neither has Deroko's entire body of architectural work in the aftermath of the explosion. His biographer Zoran M. Jovanović remarked that Deroko's 'work, which should be the most reliable indicator, has not been entirely catalogued',⁶ citing a statement by Slobodan Nenadović that Deroko would 'mention and attach great importance only to his most beloved completed projects',⁷ which has also contributed to the fact that his works have not been presented and examined in full.

This paper will attempt to bring to light some important issues relating to Deroko's work in Smederevo following the 1941 explosion, which have so far mostly been mentioned in passing either within the context of attempting to determine the historical circumstances that he witnessed and was part of,⁸ or

within the context of attempting to catalogue his work.⁹ One of the topics deals with Deroko's relationship with the city's historical and cultural heritage, another to the political and ethical qualities of this relationship during a delicate period in Serbian history, and the third with the architectural and aesthetic principles that affected the way Deroko would shape his work in Smederevo, but also his vision for a rebuilt city. Lastly, this paper will hint at the qualifications of his work in Smederevo and its impact on the present-day town.

I

An important remark by Pavlović will be recorded in the annals of Smederevo,¹⁰ which explicitly explains Deroko's relationship with the town, he 'rushed and encountered a terrifying scene'.¹¹ His immediate interest must have been colossal from a professional standpoint given that the explosion destroyed a sizeable portion of the fortress' outer wall on the south, while the possibility of an archeological investigation was considerably hindered by the mountains of rubble and craters within the medieval town. Nevertheless, it would be entirely wrong to view Deroko's relationship with Smederevo strictly through the lens of protecting this extraordinary cultural monument.

In his memoirs,¹² Deroko recounts a significant event from his childhood when he visited Smederevo. Here he writes about a trip he made with his uncle Stevan Sremac¹³ with a 'simple boat' on the Danube River to Smederevo and back, particularly concentrating on the views along the riverbank and his impressions of his uncle's story about burials as they both watched a cemetery on a hill above Ritopek. Given that Deroko was investigative by nature and constantly made a record of what he saw there is no doubt that, already as a young man, he reflects on the nature-city settings of Smederevo, regarding them as the pinnacle of authenticity.

One of the most recognised Smederevo's features within the so-called trinity of its vineyards, the river, and next to the medieval fortress and the Church of the Assumption of the Mother of God perched on a hill on the western side of the outskirts of the town and whose dome can be clearly seen from the river, is the Golden Hill Villa, a one-time summer house of the Obrenović Dynasty, situated above a breathtaking vineyard on the northern hillside of Plavinac, only a few kilometers upstream from the fortress. Snežana Cvetković's monograph on this extraordinary monument also in part dedicates her research to Deroko's work in Smederevo. Her research can be seen as complementary of his work.¹⁴

Here I would like to stress the importance of this scenery so that I can confirm a belief that Deroko at a later stage, when he deliberated over the concept for Smederevo's reconstruction, certainly kept in mind its distinct and authentic character that defines the town both aesthetically and symbolically.

Prince Miloš Obrenović bought the estate covered by vineyards in Plavinac in the 1827-1829 period, which was followed by the construction of a wine cellar and a hostelry 'as a seed of an idea to build a summer palace in Smederevo'. He built a "Swiss style" summer house on the estate in 1865.¹⁵ Deroko will have the opportunity to see it as an exceptionally representative facility, whose adaptations was entrusted to a palace architect Jovan Ilkić¹⁶ in 1897 by Queen Natalija. This summer house or "summer palace" of the Obrenović Dynasty will maintain the symbolic continuity of Smederevo's role as capital city with the fortified palace built by Djuradj Branković in 1430, and even with the seat of the Ruling Council of the Serbian Uprising between 1805 and 1807.

In the context of Smederevo's comparative advantages of its particular climate and nature, vital production resources such as viticulture, fruit-growing, steelworks, and the monuments mentioned above, its close proximity to Belgrade will especially contribute to Smederevo being recognised as a major tourist and an excursion destination. These advantages will affect the development of the entire Danube riverbank along Smederevo, and the entire area, particularly along the river in Grocka, Brestovik, Orešac and Jugovo, will undergo a rapid development drive before WWII, turning them into destinations for excursions, weekend breaks and spa centres. The upper social class from Belgrade will be drawn here by the summer house of the Obrenović Dynasty and the vineyards along the Danube River, which will gradually transform Smederevo's residential areas of Jugovo and Plavinac into elite settlements, with rural houses set on vineyards replaced with villas and summer houses for the elite in the inter-war years.¹⁷ Their architecture will be defined by the inter-war eclecticism.

Smederevo's defined character will affect the city's urban planning and development considerations, even during periods of significant historical revisionism. Immediately upon WWII breaking out in the territory of [former] Yugoslavia, when the town was nearly obliterated, it was necessary to rethink and shape its new urban and architectural identity in its entirety, with Deroko's work undoubtedly being instrumental in the process. Here, he acted as an architect with an acute sensitivity for a concept, which today we can identify as a form of regionalism in architecture. Above all, he will masterfully determine

the scale of correlation between the three main features of the town to define the design and visual identity of the new town architecture: that between the heart of the town and the fortress, a distinctive urban structure marked by numerous squares in a relatively dense urban grid of the town centre, and taking into account its specific social aspects and production capacities I have already explained.

In his major work dealing with Smederevo¹⁸, Pavlović sharply criticises Deroko's approach to the reconstruction without specifically attributing responsibility for this to him. The reasons for this are evident today. Despite everything that implies criticism of Deroko, Pavlović will remark in his piece on Deroko's death, 'Deroko is the most significant and extraordinary figure who has managed to tie himself to Smederevo even after his death.'¹⁹

II

If we want to determine the ethical context of Deroko's work following the Smederevo explosion on 5 June 1941, from the outset we are faced with the possibility that his involvement can be seen as explicitly reactive, and thereafter it can be considered from two important points: a political context in which he was engaged in the post-explosion reconstruction project and through understanding the ethical and aesthetic identity which he projects through his architecture in the years of reconstruction.

It is well-known from numerous literary works that Dimitrije Ljotić, with all the required consent, was at the helm of the Extraordinary Commissariat for Smederevo's reconstruction, which was already set up in early July 1941 by the Council of Commissaries (or the so-called "commissioner administration"). The aforementioned work by Jovanović²⁰ represents the most general overview of archival materials on the activities of the Extraordinary Commissariat held by the Historical Archives in Smederevo. Here it is significant to point out that, 'Ljotić received the green light to make changes to the approved general plan of Smederevo²¹ under shortened procedure' and 'the Reconstruction Fund was set up',²² all of which implies that the Extraordinary Commissariat had no intention to only launch a reconstruction effort for the demolished town and to provide accommodation for those affected by the explosion, but also to conceive a new urban structure²³ on its ruins. To this end, and as a basis for reconstruction, an architectural bureau was formed as part of the Commissariat, which was located in the building of the Smederevo Endowment from 1 September 1941.

Mihajlo Radovanović, a professor of urbanism at the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade, was appointed as the head of the bureau. He is also one of the founders of urban planning and Deroko's colleague from the faculty.²⁴

It must be pointed out that it is not possible to explain Deroko's role in rebuilding Smederevo outside the known circumstances of his arrest and detention at the Banjica concentration camp,²⁵ where he was placed in November 1941, spending 'three difficult and uncertain weeks'. In his memoirs, Deroko sheds light on a number of important points, firstly that his name was not on 'a list of signatories obtained under duress by Ljotić's people and Jonić's "education ministry"', which would exempt him from being arrested but rather on a list of 'selected unruly intellectuals'. In his description of the list compiled after communists were denounced, Deroko stresses that 'a pretext for the list were the masons', and that it was put together with the help of a 'confidential German book'. After 'Hitler abandoned the idea of mass shooting', in Deroko's words, '[they] resorted to blackmail', after which 'half of detainees were gradually released'.²⁶

According to Jovanović, 'Smederevo's new regulation and building plan in line with the modern urban planning principles was made available to the public between 4 and 8 September 1941 at the Town Hall.' In his description of the design plan for an urban block located between the Kralja Petra street and the fortress, which envisaged 140 multi-storey buildings and 90 single-storey buildings with the capacity to house 2,600 residents, Jovanović mentions that 'some of the buildings on the block, with stylish fences, paths lined with trees and green spaces were designed by architect Aleksandar Deroko'.²⁷ All of this does not suggest that Deroko took part in devising the regulation and building plan, but it is very likely that he was familiarised with it before his detention given that university professors Mihajlo Radovanović, Svetozar Jovanović and Momir Korunović²⁸ participated in the reconstruction. However, it is possible that his involvement had been planned. We can assume that Deroko was released from the Banjica concentration camp in November 1941 so that his expertise and knowledge could be used in reconstruction activities led by the Extraordinary Commissariat. Considering that his project on the Memorial Ossuary, which he designed 'at the invitation of the Extraordinary Commissariat [...] was deliberated and adopted at a session of the Commissariat's advisory board in March 1942',²⁹ it is clear that he started working on it immediately upon his release from the concentration camp. It is difficult to imagine that Ljotić was unaware of Deroko's liberalism and freemasonry, had this been the reason for his arrest. The more probable explanation for his engagement in the Memorial

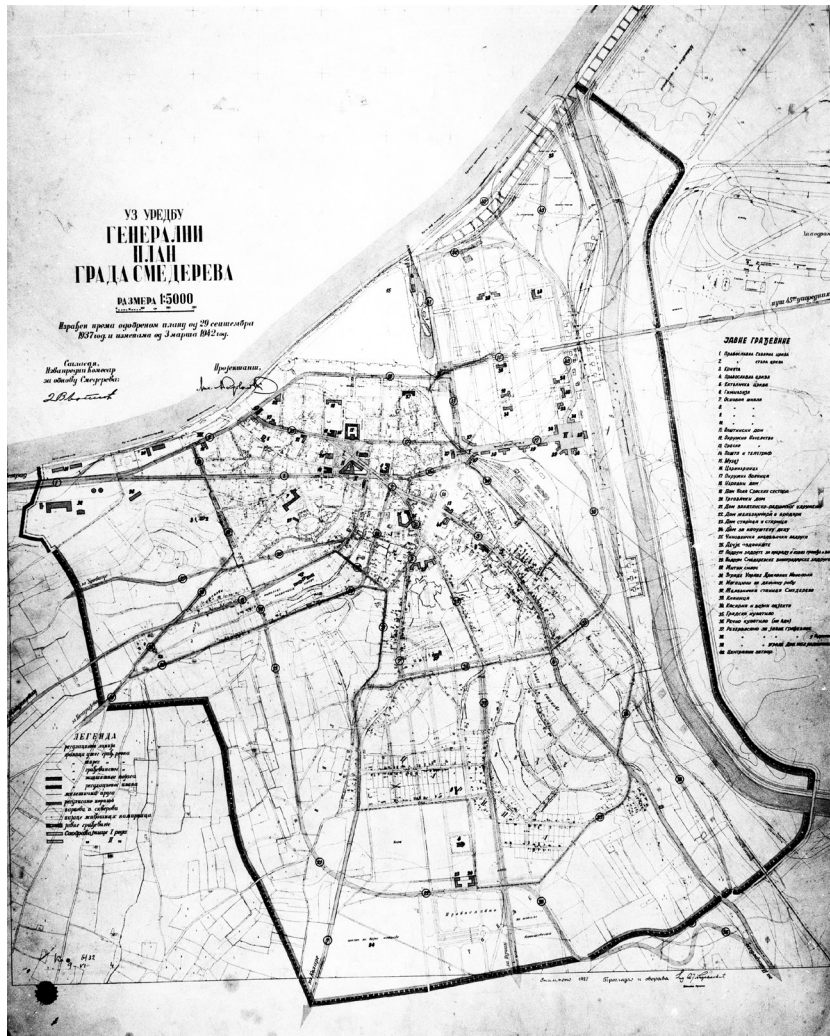


Fig. 1. Mihajlo Radovanović's general plan for Smederevo from 3 March 1942 (with a notice that it was developed based on the approved plan from 29 September 1937) shows the concept of the town renewal with a view to the rationalisation of the urban structure, especially in the area between Kralja Petra and Vuk Karadzic streets and the accessible outer wall of the Smederevo Fortress on the south, which completely abandons the existing street grid and introduces an orthogonal street layout. The plan document is being held in the Directorate for Construction, Urban Planning and Building Land of Smederevo.

Ossuary project is Deroko's previous experience in designing these type of facilities³⁰ and his knowledge of the national architecture and monuments. Starting with the Memorial Ossuary, his role would expand to cover a string of other design activities during Smederevo's reconstruction.

Deroko's work, as much as it arises from his awareness and love of national culture on the whole, and as such could have made an impression on Ljotić, cannot be interpreted as an act of reconciliation with any form of the Nazi ideology. He said way back in 1925 that 'chauvinism can only be bad for the science and critique of art, and acknowledging the truth and the affairs of others, we can rightfully be proud of what remains exclusively ours, which is by no means negligible'.³¹ This statement defines his artistic and ideological vantage point. Deroko's religious beliefs, which are also significant within this context, can be easily discerned from the voluminous descriptions in his memoirs about the travels with Rastko Petrović, which show his very rational and investigative approach to the importance of church and religion. It is not devoid of respect and love, but primarily concerned with the aesthetic phenomenon of their significance. With regard to his take on art, his inductive conversation with Moma Dimić in 1981 clearly reflects his complex attitude towards modernism, which, in turn, hints at a preference for a specific approach to the influence of folklore and the national heritage on architecture, but also to the impact that modernism has on this aesthetic concept of architecture.³² In it, for example, Deroko criticised Le Corbusier's concept of architecture as inhumane, while highlighting the 'usefulness' of dadaism or 'contributions' made by Pablo Picasso and Henry Moore. It is hard to believe that such attitudes by Deroko can conceal unbridled conservatism or nationalism, which are often attributed to his instructing parties in Smederevo's post-explosion reconstruction.

Pavlović's critique in a chapter entitled "The Status of Urbanism During the Occupation"³³ hints at where danger could lie in Deroko's aesthetic approach to Smederevo's reconstruction. He writes, without specifically attributing responsibility to him:

'Here, for example, Smederevo was envisioned as a provincial town comprising a typical centre and periphery, whose residents would work in retail, diligently till the vineyards and export wines to Germany. While under Ljotić construction work is taking place in Smederevo, all other parts of our country are being set on fire and ravaged. From mid-1941 through to the end of 1943, 115 buildings were built in Smederevo, of which 80 are multi-storey and 35 single-storey buildings. Most of them have been built in the "Serbian national style". The buildings are

made of brick and reinforced concrete, with added elements of Serbian folk architecture based on a timber-framed system (post and pan). Reminiscent of colonial rule, these type of buildings with their vibrant colours were built to divert attention from real issues and attempt to keep alive the spirit of national feeling, preventing people to look ahead. To this end, people were encouraged to look to the past, while national aspirations were reduced to provincial romanticism.³⁴

III

Casting a critical eye on Deroko's work in Smederevo today, Pavlović's qualifications appear to be obscure primarily due to their inability to qualify this architecture as an expression of *petit bourgeois* ideologies, privacy and nationalist romanticism. It is worth bearing in mind that the planned and partially built complex of the block between the Kralja Petra street and the fortress was designed in the spirit of a rational, modern town, with a strong collective and social structure. Plans designed by Mihajlo Radovanović³⁵ correspond to the modern concept of a town, combined with building rows, which form the edge with free-standing apartment buildings within a regular and rationalised urban grid of the town. Thus, these design plans go beyond the traditional model of a provincial town. Deroko's contribution to these plans mainly deals with the design process of individual facilities and urban street furniture. His interventions on Radovanović's rationalised structure add colour to the form of these facilities with elements such as oriel windows, porches and terraces, elevated attachment corners, protruding chimneys and eaves, none of which interfere with the urban grid of the town and its composition. These architectural elements are actually rationalised and simplified and repeated in different ways from one facility to another. In this manner, Deroko makes a visible distinction between them, while on the whole, they maintain a unique aesthetic experience of the new town and its specific identity. It must also be acknowledged that in time of war, due to the urgency for reconstruction and the obvious shortage of funds, Deroko does not attempt to build complex or exhibitionist structures, but still manages to add an effective playfulness to them and to provide a distinctive experience of the town.³⁶

It appears that these very circumstances worked in Deroko's favour, enabling him to strike a brilliant balance between formal modernism and distinctive and recognisable, yet functional folklore elements, and thanks to these solutions, to reach one of his creative peaks, especially in terms of his specific and, in

fact, the most representative work in architectural design before WWII.³⁷ From today's perspective, "Deroko's houses"³⁸ can be seen as classic illustrations of what we today call postmodernism in architecture. In this sense, Deroko's work comes across as an "objective anticipation".

Almost all professional publications describe his work in Smederevo strictly in terms of "folklore architecture", the "Serbian national style", "national romanticism", etc. Such generalisations do not provide deeper analysis of his architectural creations, but these constructed and preserved structures cannot only be interpreted as such, as much as these qualifications are to a greater degree acceptable. It would be most interesting to make a comparative study of Deroko's work with Frank L. Wright's organic architecture, as opposed to the comparison with Le Corbusier's "inhumane" concept. The analysis would beyond doubt point to significant similarities in their treatment of architectural composition and aesthetics. The parallels can be drawn in elements such as low-angle roofs with eaves over clear cubic geometry and a multitude of details, particularly corner windows³⁹, as well as significantly larger window openings compared to those typical of folklore architecture.

Collective housing projects designed by Deroko display features of urban architecture, with luxury period-inspired flats that have a pronounced openness and connection with the immediate environment of the town. Some of these buildings are designed with typical modern longitudinal terraces, behind which are vertically slanted walls with generously big glass openings in typical modern horizontal division sense. These type of details are absent in folklore architecture.

We can see the specific quality of Deroko's interventions within the context of Radovanović's new urban plan, which in a new way define the town centre's relationship with the fortress and the area covering the town's northwestern zone along the Despota Djurdja street in the direction of the Danube River. The plan envisages building a square in the adjacent zone of the town centre and the fortress, which has been backed with a plan to relocate Smederevo's railway station that interrupts the continuity between the main square in central Smederevo and the fortress. With this move, the city would practically and flawlessly be opened and oriented towards the fortress, as its central monument, and towards the Danube River, as its most valuable natural resource. All architectural projects implemented during Smederevo's reconstruction, and especially those that were conducted by Deroko, are led by this newly-established orientation. In this sense, "Deroko's houses" have entrances facing

Fig. 2. National state school Kralj Petar II (today Dimitrije Davidović Elementary School) is Deroko's (with architect Milenko Radovanović) most complex building to have been built during Smederevo's reconstruction in 1943.



Fig. 3. Park House in Omladinska street in Smederevo in the immediate vicinity of the Smederevo Fortress, overlooking its outer wall on the south. On the left there is the Lasta Bus Station built after WWII, and on the right the Smederevo Museum designed during the Smederevo's reconstruction as is the Hotel Jadran. The house is designed as part of the building rows of the block from 1942 orientated toward the Fortress.

the fortress, enforcing the concept of city centre gravitating towards it. A relatively small number of Deroko's facilities built within this zone actually underline this concept. However, through an analysis of their spatial planning we can discern the conceptualised urban intentions and how these facilities are precisely located with respect to this plan. Along with the orientation of entrances, this concept can be recognised in the disposition of balconies and oriel windows by which residential units within these buildings are fully adapted to face the fortress.

In his book *Istorija Smedereva u reci i slici [History of Smederevo in words and pictures]*, Pavlović unjustifiably criticises this concept, claiming that 'the buildings, which have been placed in the lower section of the town close to the fortress, are unacceptable because they block the view of the fortress'.⁴⁰ Facilities erected during Smederevo's reconstruction, in terms of their volume and height, the manner in which they were built, and particularly in terms of their design, to this day demonstrate Deroko's understanding of the importance of national heritage, its activation and its development potential within the complex treatment of a modern town. Without a shadow of doubt, he regarded Smederevo, above all else, as inextricably aesthetic and symbolic unity of the town and its most prized monument – the fortress.

* * *

Urban planning and construction of Smederevo will be areas that will develop with astonishing pace and varying quality after WWII, but it will not relate to reconstruction parameters in which Deroko took part after the 1941 explosion in Smederevo. The socialist era of construction in Smederevo is characterised by a reverse orientation and the development of urban areas further away from the fortress. This development will undermine the significance and an exceptional location of the fortress despite substantial investments in its reconstruction and maintenance, and persistent awareness that it is an irreplaceable cultural resource in Smederevo. Deroko was troubled by this and, in this sense, remained present in Smederevo until the end of his life. Regardless of this, there were insufficient practical solutions as to how urbanisation of the town should be tackled with respect to the fortress. Other vital resources, such as securing links between the city centre and the surrounding riverbank areas, would face a similar fate. Despite being a recurring topic of debates, solutions would be modest, all too often impractical and sometimes outright inadequate.

It is understandable that the rapid growth of the town after the war called for extensive construction works outside the protected zone of the Smederevo Fortress, thereby creating relatively remote and differently oriented urban centres. It is also understandable that this development embraced the architecture of socialist aestheticism. Pavlović himself observed misplaced activities in these concepts despite indirectly criticising Deroko's work.⁴¹ It seems almost incredible that critical issues in urban planning of Smederevo's centre remain unresolved even 45 years after socialism and nearly 30 years of postsocialism: primarily, the disruptive location of Smederevo's main railway and bus station, but also a cluster of inadequate facilities located in close proximity to the adjacent zone of the town centre and the fortress.⁴² The river port created in the city centre itself has made the access to the river more difficult, and with it, the link between the fortress and the river remains inadequately resolved to this day. Although it is understandable that plans for the town which has grown considerably in size cannot be consistent with the concepts and capacities defined by Radovanović during Smederevo's reconstruction between 1941 and 1943, where Deroko played a significant role in providing direction in architectural design and urban details, it can be argued that efforts should have been made to maintain its concept, modesty and quality, at least in the adjacent zone of the town centre and the fortress.

Hiding in plain sight, a keen observer will today recognise Deroko's vision for the new Smederevo in the many fragments within its centre, while those with imaginative flair can use these fragments to compose the most convincing picture of the new town built around the medieval fortress of Serbia's temporary capital in the Middle Ages.

NOTES

- 1 Leontije Pavlović, *Istorija Smedereva u reči i slici* (Smederevo: Muzej u Smederevu, 1980).
- 2 Nebojša Jovanović, *Smederevo je bilo dobro obnovljeno: Dimitrije Ljotić i delatnost Izvanrednog komesarijata 1941-1944* (Smederevo: Deni Graf, 2011).
- 3 The only certain death toll from the explosion is given on the list of names on the Memorial Ossuary in Smederevo designed by Deroko. However, it should be noted that a large number of its inhabitants, particularly those from the villages in the vicinity of Smederevo, and a large number of visitors to the city, were not buried here.
- 4 Leontije Pavlović, *Istorija Smedereva u reči i slici* (Smederevo: Muzej u Smederevu, 1980), 374.
- 5 Museum in Smederevo, Archive no. 1040/69.
- 6 Zoran M. Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko* (Beograd: Republički zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture, Društvo konzervatora Srbije, 1991), 63.
- 7 Deroko's attitude to the work on rebuilding Smederevo was influenced by two relevant issues: the fact that he often collaborated and had an unofficial role in the implementation of these projects and the specific "political context of their implementation".

- 8 The works by Pavlović and Jovanović mentioned in the above notes.
- 9 See the work of special importance: Vesna Mrkić, “Pokušaj rasvetljavanja uloge Aleksandra Deroka u obnovi Smedereva tokom Drugog svetskog rata,” *Glasnik društva konzervatora Srbije* 33 (2009): 157-163.
- 10 Leontije Pavlović, *Smederevo i Deroko* (Smederevo No. 3 and No. 4, 1997).
- 11 There is no available information about when this event exactly took place, but it can be concluded from the statement that it preceded Deroko’s involvement in the activities of the Extraordinary Commissariat for Smederevo’s reconstruction. The Commissariat itself was set up very quickly after the explosion, suggesting that Deroko visited Smederevo prior to his arrest in November. He starts working on the project to build the Memorial Ossuary upon his release from the Banjica concentration camp. Deroko’s letter to Dimitrije Ljotić dated 29 March 1942 gives an account of his work on it as in it he gives certain recommendations regarding the beginning of works on this project. The letter was published in full in the above mentioned work by Jovanović.
- 12 Aleksandar Deroko, *A ondak je letijo jeroplan nad Beogradom*, 3rd extended edn, Biblioteka Grifon (Belgrade: Narodna Knjiga, 1987), 135-136.
- 13 Stevan Sremac was a Serbian realist and comedy writer, considered one of the best truly humorous Serbian writers.
- 14 Snežana A. Cvetković, *Vila dinastije Obrenović*, 2nd revised and extended edn (Smederevo: Muzej u Smederevu, 2012). See also her other work: “DDerokove kuće / Izgradnja Smedereva u II Svetskom ratu,” *Smederevska sedmica* (6.12.2002): 16-17, and “Peti jun 1941. godine u spomeničkom nasledju Smedereva,” *Mons Aureus* 53 (2016): 131-137.
- 15 Ibid., 11.
- 16 Ibid., 70. At the request of King Milan Obrenović, Ilkić arrives from Vienna to complete renovation works on the Old Palace in Belgrade. He also designed the National Assembly, originally the House of National Representation until 1903.
- 17 To a lesser extent, areas along the Danube River in Smederevo have similar development characteristics to that of Belgrade’s Dedinje suburb.
- 18 Leontije Pavlović, *Istorija Smedereva u reči i slici* (Smederevo: Muzej u Smederevu, 1980), 374-375.
- 19 Leontije Pavlović, “Spasitelj Smederevske tvrđave (nedavno preminuli akademik ostavio u Smederevu dubok trag),” *Glas* (27.12.1988): 7.
- 20 Nebojša Jovanović, *Smederevo je bilo dobro obnovljeno: Dimitrije Ljotić i delatnost Izvanrednog komesarijata 1941-1944* (Smederevo: Deni Graf, 2011). Jovanović gives intricate details of the Extraordinary Commissariat’s activities (from the page 49).
- 21 This is the master plan from 1937 which was the basis for changes in 1942.
- 22 Nebojša Jovanović, *Smederevo je bilo dobro obnovljeno*, 51.
- 23 Ibid., 52, quoted Dimitrije Najdanović from the *Naša Borba* newspaper, 14 June 1943: ‘The catastrophe in Smederevo is a watershed moment for architectural renaissance in the country.’
- 24 Ibid., 152, giving a list of the Architectural Bureau’s members.
- 25 Sima Begović, *Profesori akademici u logoru na Banjici, zbornik radova Univerzitet u Beogradu 1838-1988* (Belgrade: Univerzitet u Beogradu, 1988), 245, 261.
- 26 Aleksandar Deroko, *A ondak je letijo jeroplan nad Beogradom*, 111-112.
- 27 Nebojša Jovanović, *Smederevo je bilo dobro obnovljeno*, 74. Please see the archival document AS-İK 90/41.
- 28 Vesna Mrkić, “Pokušaj rasvetljavanja uloge Aleksandra Deroka u obnovi Smedereva tokom Drugog svetskog rata,” 157.

- 29 Nebojša Jovanović, *Smederevo je bilo dobro obnovljeno*, 42: ‘The work on erecting the monument started with the commencement date for Milivoje Antić, a contractor from Požarevac, on 17 March 1942.’
- 30 Snežana A. Cvetković, “Peti jun 1941. godine u spomeničkom nasledju Smedereva,” *Mons Aureus* 53 (2016): 131-137: ‘Before the construction of the Memorial Ossuary with a bell tower in Smederevo, Deroko’s approach to monuments, memorials and funerary architecture was depicted in his design of a bell tower of the Church of St. Demetrius in Bitola, Macedonia (1930), the Memorial ossuary to fallen assassins in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina (1939), a competition project to build a memorial ossuary on the Greek island of Vido (1925), the memorial chapel at the Zeitenlik cemetery in Thessaloniki, Greece (1926), and a tombstone of Duke Radomir Putnik in Belgrade, Serbia (1927).’
- 31 Aleksandar Deroko, “Jedna potrebna orijentacija u našoj umetnosti,” *Pokret*, 43-46 (1925): 300-304.
- 32 Moma Dimić, “Kuće i drugi neimarski dani,” *The Gradina Journal* no. 8-9 (1981). The text was published as a supplement in Deroko’s book *A ondak je letijo jeroplan nad Beogradom*, 315.
- 33 Leontije Pavlović, *Istorija Smedereva u reči i slici*, 374-376.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Radovanović’s general plan for Smederevo from 3 March 1942 (with a notice that it was developed based on the approved plan from 29 September 1937) shows the concept of the town renewal with a view to the rationalisation of the urban structure, especially in the area between Kralja Petra and Vuk Karadžić streets and the accessible outer wall of the Smederevo Fortress on the south, which completely abandons the existing street infrastructure/grid and introduces an orthogonal street layout. The concept for a square in the adjacent zone of the town centre and its fortress is particularly significant, with Deroko articulating architecture for certain facilities in relation to it. Radovanović’s plan is filed with the Directorate for construction and urban planning in Smederevo.
- 36 This flies in the face of Pavlović’s observations in *Istorija Smedereva u reči i slici*, where he disapproves of the costly constructed facilities and the municipality’s over-indebtedness at the time of the Extraordinary Commissariat’s operations. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that “Deroko’s houses“ were truly not expensive. They were conceptualised as collective housing when Smederevo had only 11,000 inhabitants, whereas its urban population has grown five-fold by the time Pavlović addressed the issue. This development could not have been foreseen when Radovanović drafted the plan in 1942.
- 37 Deroko realised the majority of his important architectural projects before WWII, of which those that were carried out in Smederevo, particularly residential architecture, were considerably more modest. Please see the catalogisation in Zoran M. Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 110-113.
- 38 The term “Deroko’s houses“ is a colloquial expression used widely for a wide range of facilities built in Smederevo in the post-explosion period in WWII.
- 39 National state school Kralj Petar II, which is today named Dimitrije Davidović Elementary School, is Deroko’s most complex building to have been built during Smederevo’s reconstruction in 1943. The building, designed with architect Milenko Radovanović, boasts well-executed details mentioned in the text and a visual quality.
- 40 He adds that ‘apart from this, a provincial town structure has long existed further away from the fortress, which came about spontaneously,’ Leontije Pavlović, *Istorija Smedereva u reči i slici*, 375.
- 41 ‘We propose that skyscrapers be designed in the most humane manner possible, so that there would some type of connection with houses and the fortress [...] Environmental and accommodation surroundings should be more humane, attractive and warm. This type of architecture alienates one from life’s destiny,’ Леонтије Павловић, *Историја Смедерева у речи и слици*, see: Chapter “Urban Development in Socialist Era” from page 426, the section A) Reviews and Observations.

- 42 Some facilities, such as warehouses, in close proximity to the Smederevo Fortress, instead of being removed, have been converted to hypermarkets in recent years, which shows a tendency towards regression in the urban culture of the town. The construction of the new main bus station envisaged by the general plan for Smederevo, which dates back to 1985, has not begun despite the fact that preparatory works on a location in Godomin were completed in the early 1990s. Recent activities related to the construction of a dock show that there are plans to beef up Smederevo's tourism potential, which are not defined through the strategic urban planning concepts. Considering all of the above, retrospection on Deroko's activities becomes that much more significant. Godomin.

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LEGACY OF THE TRIAD: ARCHITECTURE IN MEDIEVAL SERBIA BETWEEN STYLE AND IDEOLOGY IN THE WORK OF ALEKSANDAR DEROKO

A B S T R A C T

Despite criticism that has been leveled against Gabriel Millet's well-known tripartite subdivision of architecture of medieval Serbia into three distinct 'schools', its scholarly authority still remains largely unchallenged. Yet what is believed to have stemmed from Millet's ingenious research was inextricably linked with the ideological project of Serbian national emancipation during the first decades of the twentieth century. His stylistic triad of *L'école de Rascie*, *L'école de la Serbie byzantine* and *L'école de la Morava* had an unexpectedly vivid and profound afterlife in the entirely new context of socialist Yugoslavia – in terms of both scholarship and ideological resonance. Its main proponent was Serbian architectural historian Aleksandar Deroko, whose book entitled *Monumental and Decorative Architecture in Medieval Serbia* apparently only reiterated the existing subdivision of medieval architecture by simply changing the word 'schools' into 'groups'. Nevertheless, a closer look at three successive editions of the book published in 1953, 1962 and 1985 reveals a series of Deroko's encounters with the Milletian framework, suggesting that his enterprise can be seen as instrumental to the ideological re-appropriation of medieval heritage in the context of the national question in Yugoslavia.

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There was hardly any Serbian author of the twentieth century whose work in the field of medieval architecture was so versatile as to shift from scholarly studies to suggestive drawings, from minor questions to comprehensive treatises, as that of Aleksandar Deroko's. Although he was a keen draughtsman as well as a high-spirited writer and somewhat deliberately unpretentious painter, Deroko is primarily remembered as a polyhistor of sorts.¹ However, his work was characterised by common themes and conventional interpretation. Seen from today's perspective, his profile as a medievalist is more of a systematiser and compiler than a pioneering researcher. Despite his arguable contribution to scholarship, Deroko's *Monumental and Decorative Architecture of Medieval Serbia* (*Monumentalna i dekorativna arhitektura u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji*) has been the sole monograph on the subject written since the mid-twentieth century. The book has been an educational basis not only for architecture and art history students, but also for connoisseurs of medieval culture as well as a wider readership.² Full of illustrations and photographs which outweigh the text, it has become an instrument of visual literacy in the field of Serbian medieval studies. Initially published in 1953 as a university textbook, it had two more editions (1962, 1985), both of poorer quality compared to the first edition. There were insignificant alterations in certain chapters and some minor changes, but the main body of the text remained unchanged in all three editions.³ (Fig. 1)

Despite a widespread perception that *Monumental and Decorative Architecture* is a 'still incomparable'⁴ piece of scholarship because it evidently represents an 'exceptional effort which would need a whole team of researchers to produce',⁵ the book heavily relied on the work of the French archaeologist and art historian Gabriel Millet (1867-1953). More particularly, Deroko appropriated Millet's well-known interpretive scheme by which architecture in medieval Serbia could be subdivided into *trois écoles bien distinctes*. Initially drafted in 1917 and published two years later in a monograph called *L'ancien art serbe: les églises*, Millet's scheme delineated church architecture in medieval Serbia into three 'schools' based on the criteria of typology and style: *L'école de Rascie* (The Raška School), *L'école de la Serbie byzantine* (The School of Byzantinized Serbia) and *L'école de la Morava* (The Morava School).⁶ In the following decades, this tripartite scheme acquired a status of high scholarly standard, eventually becoming a bastion of sacrosanctity among Serbian architectural historians. Nevertheless, Millet simultaneously resolved the problem of stylistic heterogeneity of architecture in medieval Serbia and left a heavy burden on the shoulders of Serbian historians who still have not seriously challenged the scheme's basic premises.⁷ Most of them have been reluctant to call into question the very idea of 'national causes in architectural studies' championed by the



Fig. 1. Book cover of *Monumental and Decorative Architecture in Medieval Serbia* (1953) by Aleksandar Deroko.

French scholar,⁸ whose work resonated the romantic idea of national spirit embodied in cultural products. More particularly, in the interwar period Millet's interpretation and its numerous ramifications became not only associated with a dubious idea of national spirit in the Middle Ages, but were impregnated with nationalist connotations.⁹

A considerable merit of Deroko's book lies in the fact that it firmly re-established and popularised Millet's theory when an older, pre-WWII historiographical tradition faced the challenge of accommodating itself to quite a new ideological milieu of socialist Yugoslavia. In the opening chapter of his book, Deroko praised Millet's work for its sheer amplitude,¹⁰ modestly omitting his own encounters with the French scholar with whom he had studied decades before, spending a semester at the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* in 1926.¹¹ There is no doubt that *Monumental and Decorative Architecture* – published inadvertently in the year of Millet's death – was a direct intellectual offshoot of *L'ancien art serbe*, still cherished by many Serbian¹² and foreign scholars.¹³ 'Owing to the combined legacy of Millet's book, followed by the one by Deroko, we can conclude that for three successive generations the notions expressed by the French scholar, as Slobodan Ćurčić has put it, 'have informed the manner of looking at and the thinking about the medieval architectural heritage of Serbia'.¹⁴ As one of Deroko's biographers emphasises, Millet's book has 'left the door ajar so that he could see the hidden treasures of Serbian art as well as the splendour of the Byzantine'.¹⁵ Nevertheless, in his introduction Deroko underlined the fact that Millet was not his sole source, praising the Russian scholar Pyotr Pokryshkin (1870-1922), among other historians, who had greatly contributed to the study of architecture in medieval Serbia.¹⁶

Contrary to Millet's interpretation raised by Serbian scholars,¹⁷ Deroko never passed judgement on the interpretive triad of the French master, apart from minor rhetorical claims published prior to *Monumental and Decorative Architecture* in 1950.¹⁸ Even after the publication of the book three years later, he continued to cast a mildly critical eye on Millet's classical enterprise but without a clear idea as to how it might be revised and improved.¹⁹ In fact, Deroko only partially modified Millet's architectural types calling them 'groups' instead of 'schools'.²⁰ He largely ignored the problem of dissimilitude between architectural style and chronology in Millet's tripartite scheme, relying almost exclusively on stylistic criteria for development of architecture despite having underlined the importance of political and economic factors in the introduction.²¹ Yet despite the flaws in Deroko's arguments, as well as a curious fact that a university textbook served as 'the standard work on the

subject also [and even] in scholarly contexts',²² the position of *Monumental and Decorative Architecture* within the social context of socialist Yugoslavia was tremendously indicative of the ideological and political roles of architectural history. Both the appropriation and modification of the original Millet's scheme, so evident in Deroko's book, far surpassed the epistemological boundaries of the contemporaneous Serbian history of architecture. Several of his deserve great attention in this respect, including *Medieval Towns and Castles in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia* (Srednjovekovni gradovi u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji, 1950), *Architectural Monuments from the Ninth to Eighteenth Century in Yugoslavia* (Spomenici arhitekture IX-XVIII veka u Jugoslaviji, 1964),²³ and *With Ancient Master Builders: Medieval Monasteries in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia* (Sa starim neimarima: Srednjovekovni manastiri u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji, 1967).²⁴ But it was his master work on medieval architecture that, if contextualised and critically examined, can reveal some of the underlying reasons for the seemingly inexplicable afterlife of the Serbian-centred interpretation in an apparently non-nationalistic milieu of new Yugoslavia. Seen through the dual prism of mainstream historiography and the central tenets of the country's official doctrine of 'brotherhood and unity' – which simultaneously advocated the Yugoslav nations' unity and diversity – Deroko's ambiguous stance towards Millet appears to be less erratic and more ideologically instrumental.

The question is whether Deroko appropriated the otherwise problematic tripartite scheme because of high regard for Millet – who remains highly praised by Serbian scholarship to this day²⁵ – or because the reasons for the unexpected afterlife of the Milletian interpretation may have been much more complex. It is hard to believe that the sole reason for Millet's survival in the new scholarly context was the mastery of his interpretation; and it certainly was not only historiographical inertia, common among Serbian architectural historians, which kept an obsolete scheme relevant half a century after it had been created. It is rather that the older, Serbian-centred Milletian tradition of interpreting medieval heritage, heralded by Millet and upheld by other post-war Serbian authors such as Đurđe Bošković (1904-1990), which was in tune with the general concern about the 'national question', the most central, neuralgic issue of the political and social life of socialist Yugoslavia. More particularly, *Monumental and Decorative Architecture* represented a sprout of the old, late nineteenth-century tradition of imagining Serbian national unity, which was reintroduced in the new context as an integral part of a much wider disputative discourse about the national question in Yugoslavia and its basic principle of federalisation.

The basic argument of this paper is that architecture in medieval Serbia, as described and systematised by Deroko, represented much more than the vestiges of a bygone era – a stance that was quite contrary to his own assessments of the need for dissociating artworks and their creators from their social and political milieu.²⁶ The point of departure is that the heritage of medieval Serbia became a knowledge-system of great ideological importance, by which architectural historians used a pre-national medieval past not only to legitimise, but also to problematise the Serbian national question in socialist Yugoslavia. One can comprehend Deroko's written endeavours in their own epistemological and political context not as mere university course books, whose scope and structure were apparently drawn from the hitherto common historical interpretations. They were, in fact, part of the 'selective reactivation' of historical and interpretive legacies on the part of Serbian elites in Yugoslavia, preoccupied with the issue of the federalisation of the state and its effect on Serbs.²⁷ It was in that sense that Deroko's reactivation of Millet's theses did not reflect scholarly conformism and historiographical inertia, but constituted part of a wider discourse of the Serbian national question in a dynamic and constantly changing political reality of socialist Yugoslavia. In the context sharply marked by an ever-increasing degree of federalisation, which caused that the country's largest nation became distributed across a number of republics and autonomous provinces, the historicisation of the unity of the Serbian nation had some important implications. To understand the ideological power of Deroko's interpretation beyond his predecessor's *L'ancien art serbe* would be equal to understanding the Serbian national question in socialist Yugoslavia without acknowledging the formative periods of Serbian nationalism.

* * *

Deroko's writings should be considered in a broader framework of heightened interest for medieval history in post-WWII Yugoslavia, which became more acute after the Imformbureau Resolution of 1948, when the establishment broke its close bonds with the Soviet Union and ventured into constructing a particularly Yugoslav master narrative. This narrative would be based on the historicization of the Yugoslav nations' 'brotherhood and unity', which historians duly projected on the deep medieval past. Over the course of the 1950s and 1960s, the country's medieval cultural heritage was critically reinterpreted along two distinct lines – one concerned with each nation's particular identity, the other with their historical encounters and interconnections.²⁸ Contrary to the integralist, pre-WWII Yugoslav idea, the new narrative insisted on separate histories and identities of all national groups in the country, which were

interpreted as being connected by common historical interests and ideals, and not necessarily by ethnic ties. One of the earliest and most typical examples of this heightened and peculiar interest in the Yugoslav Middle Ages was the great *Exhibition of Medieval Art of the Yugoslav Peoples* held in Paris in 1950. Accompanied by a catalogue written by Miroslav Krleža, the Croatian novelist and a prominent figure of the establishment, the exhibition presented the rich and diverse medieval heritage of Yugoslavia as multicultural and multi-ethnic, but also complementary in a way analogous to the cultural imagination of ‘brotherhood and unity’.

Nonetheless, the reasons for the permanent presence of the medieval past in the Yugoslav master narrative were much more complex. Firstly, the history of the Middle Ages represented a cornerstone for conceiving the Yugoslav peoples as historical subjects, their origins and evolution, as well as their mutual relationships. This included both pre-WWII constitutional nations (i.e. Serbs, Croats, Slovenes), which in the new context needed new forms of historical legitimacy, as well as newly-recognised national groups – such as Macedonians and Montenegrins, along with Bosnian Muslims, which were regarded as nations by the federal constitutions of 1946 and 1963 respectively. They all required ideologically suitable status and cultural authenticity rooted in history. Their ‘national’ pasts became integral not only to the discursive production of the shared revolutionary traditions of the Yugoslav peoples and to their mediatory identities – in terms of both politics and culture – which suited the country’s non-alignment policy in the Cold War World.²⁹ Above anything else, the historicization of the Yugoslav nations corresponded to the process of political federalisation, accomplished in the ambiguous ideological framework of ‘brotherhood and unity’, which referred simultaneously to the fundamental closeness and inherent differences between the country’s ethnic groups. It was in this discursive process that the history of South Slavs, their separation into different ethnic camps and their early medieval state formations acquired great ideological significance. Frequently cited words by Krleža about the importance of medieval history for the Yugoslav people’s self-perception is perhaps the best evidence of these ideological assets. ‘The socialist anticipation of today’, he wrote in 1949, ‘is but a correlate of a whole series of our South Slavic medieval anticipations; of the old Slavonic, Glagolitic and autocephalic battle for the equality of nations and languages; in the church hierarchies of Greco-Latin Caesaropapism and imperialism’.³⁰ On another occasion, Krleža wrote that ‘our Middle Ages, due to their ethical, political and cultural elements, anticipate the course of our future centuries’.³¹ What stood behind these thoughts was that the plurality of medieval pasts (not the idea of a single,

primordial unity of the peoples) as well as a dialectic relationship between history and the future within the temporal totality of Yugoslavs that the new, post-1948 historiography started to accomplish. A basic, trans-temporal force that linked the histories and identities of various Yugoslav peoples was believed to be cultural self-awareness, distinctive but complementary ethnic cultures, as well as a vehement resistance to ‘foreign’ influences. These were some of the principal ideas which steered the production of different medieval ‘national’ histories in post-war Yugoslavia.

Deroko’s writings on medieval architecture should be considered not only in this historiographical environment of heightened ideological awareness of the Middle Ages but also in respect of the Marxist paradigm of history, which in many ways corresponded with the theoretical and epistemological basis of the humanities in socialist Yugoslavia. Despite the fact that the orthodox, Soviet-style vulgarisation of Marxism was continually castigated in Yugoslav historiography,³² some of its basic teleological claims remained even after 1948.³³ For example, Deroko’s *Monumental and Decorative Architecture*, along with his other books on the subject, was firmly entrenched in the classical Marxist credo of the inevitability of progress in history. His interpretation of medieval architecture relied on the idea that the historical development of the society, its economic foundations and cultural production are highly interdependent. For Deroko, architecture in medieval Serbia should be seen in a dual perspective of an economic base and ideological superstructure.³⁴ ‘The economic interests of the ruling classes were opposed to those of common people’, wrote Deroko, in line with the Marxist historiography’s interest for economic force,³⁵ while the Serbian Orthodox Church represented a ‘bold weapon of the ruler [...] with whom it shared many mutual interests’.³⁶ Moreover, he grasped the basic framework of historical materialism about various forms of state having ‘their roots in the material conditions of life’.³⁷ This is best seen when Deroko touches upon South Slavs’ class differentiation, capital accumulation and increased concentration of power in the period between the sixth and ninth centuries, which were processes leading to new forms of social organisation and, eventually, modern-day nations.

Deroko’s accounts about medieval rulers having both significant material resources and ideological motives for constructing great churches fit into a wider scheme of historical materialism with its base/infrastructure thesis, which heavily influenced Yugoslav historiography at the time of the first edition of *Monumental and Decorative Architecture*.³⁸ The pioneering and most important synthetic study on medieval history in Yugoslavia entitled *A History*

of the Yugoslav peoples,³⁹ which was outlined by its multi-national editorial staff as the ‘first comprehensive effort to interpret our past on the basis of historical materialism’,⁴⁰ subsequently became a standard against which many art and architectural histories were written. Nevertheless, the effect of Marxist orthodoxy ‘on historiography proved uneven [so that] scholars of the Byzantine, medieval and Ottoman periods’, unlike historians concerned with modern history, ‘did not feel constrained in their studies to make major concessions to Marxist schemes of history’.⁴¹ Indeed, not only Deroko but also other Serbian architectural historians paid more attention to the question of form, typology and, above all, national styles than to economic and class structures that underpinned architecture. Ironically, *Monumental and Decorative Architecture* indicates ‘the supremacy of national history over the Marxist global outlook’ that distinguished mainstream historiography in socialist states.⁴²

On the other hand, Deroko’s narratives were closely tied to the predominant theoretical paradigm of Yugoslav art history, archaeology and anthropology, which conceptualised ethnic or national groups as culturally confined and distinctive. The nations were seen as more or less culturally coherent historical subjects, clearly differentiated by their distinctive cultures. However, the identification of medieval ethnic groups with the nations of contemporary Yugoslavia was more problematic and less straightforward than one may have expected. For example, while Deroko was talking about peoples in medieval Serbia, he was confidently using the ethnonyms ‘Serbs’ and ‘Croats’, while at the same time being reluctant to identify the historical communities of Macedonia and Montenegro as the antecedents of modern-day Macedonians and Montenegrins. This ambiguous policy of identity contributed to the dynamics of Deroko’s narrative, while at the same time producing anxiety about the historical foundations of the country’s ethnic groups. This was the case with the entire medieval studies in Yugoslavia, which were characterised by the negotiation of different concepts of collective identity and sharply marked by the historicisation of nations and nationalities.⁴³ More particularly, the conceptual framework of the humanities in Yugoslavia was the so-called cultural-historical method, characterised by the belief in an authentic national culture and the idea of cultural autochthony.⁴⁴ ‘The cultural-historical method’ presupposes that human societies of the past were homogenous and ‘confined in strictly limited areas, which were governed by the same cultural norms expressed in both material culture and language’.⁴⁵ For Deroko, medieval Serbs represented a culturally articulated community occupying a clearly differentiated territory. This presupposed that they were distinguished by the congruence of ethnic identity, political boundaries and cultural forms – like those of Millet’s architectural types.

In Deroko's book, Serbian historical homelands overlapped with the socialist republics of Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro, as well as parts of Croatia and the autonomous province of Kosovo, which was clearly noticeable on numerous hand-drawn maps accompanying the text. (Fig. 2) These graphic representations of national historicity created a tension between two distinctly different phases in Serbian history. As a matter of fact, this was a dichotomy between historical rights and ethno-linguistically based national sovereignty, which otherwise permeated *Monumental and Decorative Architecture* in its obligatory and conflicting references to both modern-day republics and medieval territories. Deroko's book mirrored a key ideological conundrum of socialist Yugoslavia about the legitimacy of federalisation sanctioned by a confusing and unprincipled blend of historical and ethnic criteria. The fact that the 'members of a nation were not restricted to the republic in which the nationality predominated' while, at the same time, 'each republic was considered a nation-state in the sense that is served as a rough equivalent of the homeland of the dominant nationality within its boundaries',⁴⁶ was a principal feature of the ideological context in which Deroko's written and graphic narratives operated as a critical discourse about the nation. His seemingly innocuous politics of identity, marked by the dialectic relationship between different ethnic epithets referring to both ancient and contemporary peoples, was in fact segregating Yugoslav nations according to their historical status. The simultaneous use of the different pairing of ethnonyms such as 'Serbian' / 'Slavic', 'Croatian', 'Macedonian-Slavic', 'Doclean' (but not 'Macedonian' or 'Montenegrin'), was part of a wider critical response to the federalist composition of socialist Yugoslavia and the identity of the state ethnic groups in history. Truly, Deroko's politics of identity was based on architecture as a discursive tool for challenging the foundations and limits of national and territorial sovereignty. By associating the political formation of medieval Serbia with its supposedly Serbian national character, he questioned the historical foundation of the nations living on 'someone else's' historical homelands.

Monumental and Decorative Architecture was deeply anchored in national determinism, which not only promoted the idea that the ideal habitus of a nation is a national state, but also that architecture was an expression of the 'national spirit'. This was an old, nineteenth-century concept that became prominent in the context of providing historical legitimacy for the Yugoslav federalisation. In line with this historiographical trend, Deroko appropriated Millet's idea of a single and common, Serbian national spirit permeating all three sub-national schools of medieval architecture.⁴⁷ For him, the most fundamental feature of this Serbian spirit was 'originality', a feature that had preoccupied Serbian art

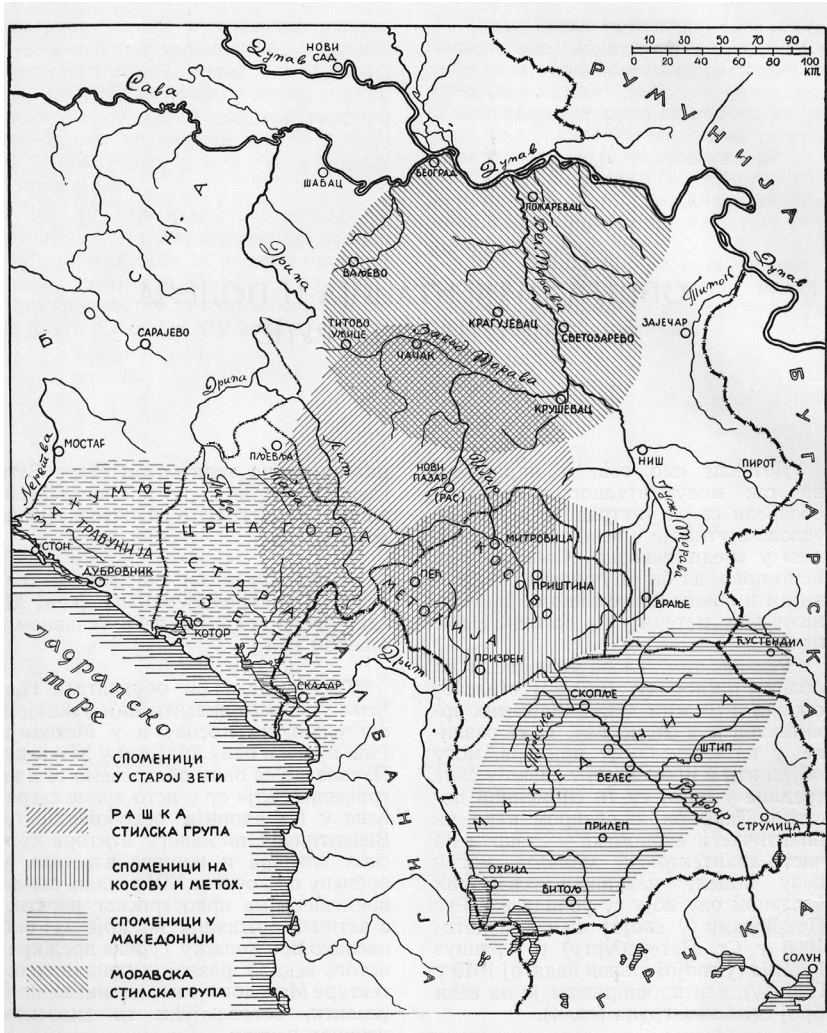


Fig. 2. A. Deroko's map showing distribution of architecture in medieval Serbia, Zeta and fourteenth-century Macedonia. (Source: Aleksandar – A. Deroko, *Monumentalna i dekorativna arhitektura u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji* (Belgrade: Naučna knjiga, 1953), 24.)

and architectural historians since the discipline's formative days in the late-nineteenth century. The question of national culture and the cult of authenticity and originality were closely tied to the interpretation of Serbian ethnogenesis as well as the historiographical mythologisation of medieval Serbia's political autochthony.⁴⁸ Like many other Serbian authors writing on architecture in medieval Serbia, Deroko praised its national character which stemmed from an autochthonous Serbian spirit, as well as the peculiarly Serbian adaptation of 'foreign influences' coming from both East and West. Actually, Deroko turned back to an older interpretive tradition based on duality of autochthonous and foreign, which sharply marked pre-war Serbian architectural history. Following in Millet's footsteps, whose greatest merit lies exactly in bolstering the myth of Serbian national authenticity in architecture, Deroko first identified the styles of church buildings in medieval Serbia as quintessentially Serbian, and interpreted them according to the dialectic of foreign influences/autochthonous values. Moreover, he distinguished the entire history of architecture in medieval Serbia as a peculiar adaptation of imported architectural elements and features, which he saw as a transformation from 'foreign' to 'indigenous'. 'Thus far we have generally examined what kind of influences were active on our ancient sacral architecture', he wrote in the introduction of his study, stressing that 'all these different forms, which had been transferred to our soil [sic!], were neither borrowed nor alien'. He concluded that 'our medieval architecture, in spite of its eclectic nature, retained a distinctive [national] spirit'.⁴⁹ More particularly, he applied an already existing theory about the tripartite influences of Byzantium, Western Europe and the 'paleo-Christian Orient' on Serbian art,⁵⁰ specifying that the latter had arrived to Serbia both directly and filtered through Byzantine influences.⁵¹

What requires attention regarding the theoretical and conceptual aspects of *Monumental and Decorative Architecture* and his other works on the subject, is not only the continuity with Milletian views, but also certain differences. Apart from routinely referring to the Marxist understanding of historical dynamics, which was naturally missing in *L'ancien art serbe*, Deroko gave credence to a purportedly demotic nature of ecclesiastical architecture in medieval Serbia. Despite church dignitaries and noblemen being responsible for the construction, he argued that medieval churches and monasteries were characterised by a distinctive 'folk spirit'. Not only did the common people build these structures, but they also contributed to their conspicuous architectural expression.⁵² He thought that medieval art and architecture had arisen from the character of the people and that this character would be comprehended as a link between society and culture. This demotic discourse on art, which originated within

pre-war historiography and its cult of national authenticity, was not uncommon in socialist Yugoslavia.⁵³ The same could be said of the interpretive pattern attempting to correlate artistic and political development, which Deroko employed while describing the interdependence of the allegedly autochthonous political life of medieval Serbia and the uniquely authentic character of its culture. This interpretation relied on a common view of medieval Serbia, seen through the lenses of an ‘indigenous basis and foundation’ for the development of society and culture. In this respect, Serbs stood in sharp contrast to some other Yugoslav nations like Slovenes or ‘Macedonian Slavs’, whose culture was undomesticated and heavily influenced by ‘adopted models that had already been developed elsewhere’.⁵⁴ And it was exactly this contrapuntal interpretation that served as a link to an older, Milletian interpretive tradition of justifying not only the authenticity, but also the superiority of Serbian medieval architecture and its eminent status regarding its neighbours. In the ideological context of the cryptic and smoldering conflict between different Yugoslav nations that had not subsided after WWII – as well as between different ways of justifying the federalist composition of the state – Deroko’s adoption of the older historical tradition was quite telling of the endurance of attitudes toward Serbian historical exceptionality. In the political context of the time, the role of historiography was simultaneously constructive and subversive because every reconsideration of the ‘original territorial division [of Yugoslavia] would open Pandora’s box’ of national enmities and territorial disputes, according to Stevan K. Pavlowich.⁵⁵

Deroko’s critical attitude to the Serbian national question is explicit in the opening remarks of *Monumental and Decorative Architecture*, where he endeavored to outline the scope of his enquiry, accommodating it to a predominant federalist paradigm of history. ‘In this book’, he explained, ‘we examine architecture in medieval Serbia, but as it was directly related to that of Old Zeta – today’s Montenegro, as well as that of Macedonia, our project will cover these [lands], insofar as they were *more closely connected* with Serbian architecture, relinquishing to Macedonia and Montenegro the entire study of architecture in *their* countries’.⁵⁶ Elsewhere in the book, he acknowledged and conceded that the ‘Skopje scientific center’ had capacity to conduct research on Macedonian architecture.⁵⁷ His account reveals a common attitude of Yugoslav art and architectural historiography towards objects of historical research. On the one hand, architecture was studied on its own terms and contextualised according to its specific historical context. On the other, there was a federalist principle of competence, superimposed by communist elites, who seriously impinged on historiography so that ‘each [Yugoslav] republic created its own national narrative of history, while avoiding meddling in other republics’ affairs’.⁵⁸ Such a dualistic framework of history, illustrated by the

above quoted remark, was inherently problematic. There were a number of research problems concerned with medieval architectural monuments in the region, which transcended and challenged federalist competence, and which could not be appropriately addressed if seen in the narrow perspectives of republican-national historiographies. Thus, the seemingly simple formula for handling matters historical according to the federalist paradigm, which could be described paraphrasing the *cuius regio, eius religio* principle, was conflictual in its very nature. Because the boundaries of the Yugoslav nations did not coincide with those of its republics, the *cuius regio, eius natio* dictum was constantly challenged by the counter-principle *cuius natio, eius regio*.⁵⁹ Consequently, the interpretation of various phenomena from the distant, pre-national past (such as medieval architecture) simultaneously had to conform to the political imperatives of federalisation and maintain historical veracity. Deroko's references to the 'concern of the others', i.e. the domain of republican competence in pursuit of a republican-national architectural history actually stemmed from the federalist paradigm which represented much more than a mere principle of territorial division of the state.

Perhaps the most conspicuous example of this interpretive dualism can be seen in Deroko's book *With Ancient Master Builders: Medieval Monasteries in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia* (1967). Here, the federalisation principle is deeply rooted not only in the book's title, but in its structure too. However, the concept of split competence was at same time compromised by excluding the Macedonian and Montenegrin heritage that the nation-centred interpretive tradition considered non-Serbian. This means that the heritage which was considered Serbian (by style, historical circumstances or the national spirit) should have been left solely to Serbian scholars. He tried to justify his breach of the federalist principle of competency, given the importance of exploring the entirety of medieval 'Serbian' architecture, which obviously did not correspond with modern political boundaries. He routinely acknowledged that since Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia 'were once united within the confines of the Serbian state',⁶⁰ this obliged modern Serbian historians to deal with these territories, implicitly entrusting their cultural heritage solely to Serbian scholars. However, he gave no explanation whatsoever for excluding a medieval heritage considered to be non-Serbian from a book allegedly discussing entire medieval architecture in Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo and Montenegro. This dual interpretive perspective, sharply marked by the simultaneous acceptance and rejection of the federalist principle of competency, engendered a tension between the condition of the past – which bespoke a cultural and ethnic unity of the 'Serbian lands'; and of the present, characterised by the republican boundaries which divided the national body and had no historical legitimacy.

The key problem of the federalist paradigm, which greatly influenced contemporaneous historiography and shed light on Deroko's works, lay in the incongruity between the ethnic boundaries of the Yugoslav peoples and the borders of the republics. This was because, '[t]he members of a nation were not restricted to the republic in which the nationality predominated but included all those of like ethnic (or national) background, whatever part of Yugoslavia they inhabited [...]'.⁶¹ Indeed, the problem was that the Serbian nation was partitioned into several constitutive republics and two autonomous provinces. The process of federalisation became more and more irrevocable, reaching its apex in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The final constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia adopted in 1974, which strengthened the sovereignty of the republics and made Yugoslavia an ethnically based 'polycentric polyarchy',⁶² further reinforced this tension and left many of the Serbian intelligentsia disgruntled. What was needed in this political context was the cultivation of a discourse that may 'offer a refuge from the worries of the world, as well as a structure for the spiritual and cultural unity of the nation', providing Serbian nationalists 'with the dream image of a nation emancipated and unified – emancipated spiritually and even politically'.⁶³ Not only did ranting pleas by some politically active writers and dissidents speak of the 'substantial and historical unity of the Serbian national culture',⁶⁴ but many other intellectuals coming from various different cultural fields – the visual arts and film, history writing and philosophy – encouraged the cultural imagination of a re-unified national body. Since each federal historiography's authority over territorial scope of research might have clashed with the territorial distribution of historical phenomena considered to be national, historians faced a weighty conundrum rooted in such a contradictory position. This inevitably presented a continual challenge and indirectly led to disputes over the conceptual foundations of the federalist paradigm. It was in this discursive field – situated in the context of a vague fusion of natural and historical rights that justified the Yugoslav federalist system – which prompted an intellectual and ideological ferment that both ascertained and challenged republican and national sovereignty and the relationship of the Yugoslav nations and nationalities to the republics.⁶⁵

The epistemological and ideological relevance of Deroko's works on medieval architecture can only be comprehended in this wider discourse on federalisation. This explains his dual perspective articulated in *Monumental and Decorative Architecture*, where he simultaneously acknowledged the federalist principle of historiographical competence (i.e. each republic is responsible for the history of *its own* territory) and the importance of a sound historical method, which explained the past in its own terms without considering current issues

(i.e. objects of historical research must be observed in their own context and consequently interpreted). Actually, he simultaneously accommodated and challenged the federalist principle of competence as a pattern of interpreting medieval past. By taking into account those architectural monuments from the neighboring Yugoslav federal units which were *more closely connected* with architectural remnants lying within the boundaries of Serbia proper,⁶⁶ he superimposed the past on the present, implicitly disregarding the competence of other federal units to deal with what he otherwise called the area of their expertise. This implied, rather tacitly, that the architectural heritage of medieval Serbia ‘naturally’ belongs to modern-day Serbs, whose historical inheritance transcended the current (but in terms of historical legitimacy quite dubious) republican borders. According to the same argument, Macedonian and Montenegrin historians were left to carry out research of limited scope, dealing only with those architectural monuments erected prior and subsequent to the Nemanjić’s rule of these territories.

In order to justify this singular framework of study, and perhaps being aware of having violated the federalist principle, Deroko explained in an almost apologetic tone that he ‘would present those Macedonian churches that had been built by the same nobleman responsible for the churches across Kosovo and Metohija, which for that sake belonged to the same historical, architectural and stylistic group’. However, he was explicit in declaring that his interpretive prerogatives ‘did not render the entire Macedonian architecture Serbian’.⁶⁷ This very sentence from the first edition of *Monumental and Decorative Architecture*, with which Deroko completed the Milletian section about the subdivision into three distinctive groups, was omitted from the second and third editions of the book. The change did not result only from the need to be economical with space, but as a presumable response to a more lenient attitude towards the federalist competence, which went hand in hand with the loosening of centralism in the 1960s and 1970s and brought vexation to the Serbs who remained dispersed in different parts of the country. This becomes clear if one compares a number of graphical representations in the first and second editions of the book, especially a map of ‘Serbian lands’ stretching across modern-day Serbia, Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro, parts of Greece, Dalmatia and Bulgaria. Deroko’s cartographic representation of what he saw as a purely Serbian territory – he did not deliberately use the term ‘medieval Serbia’ – was rendered in red and stood out among otherwise black-and-white printed pages. (Fig. 3) It lacked any indication of time or period whatsoever, suggesting an ahistorical and homogeneous ethnic character of the represented territory. Here one can again appreciate the striking contrast between the national present and past,

which produced a critical discourse on the relationship between nations and republics. Yet, the comparison of these maps in two editions of the book reveals much more than a vestige of nationalistic sentiment focused on ‘Southern Serbia’, which was how Macedonia had been traditionally called by Serbian nationalists. The maps showed two hatching patterns, composed of full and dotted lines, most likely referring to permanently and temporarily occupied ‘Serbian’ lands in the Balkans. On the map from 1953, Deroko presumably used dotted lines suggesting that Macedonia (along with large swathes of Albania and Greece) had been Serbian for a limited time only; or that Macedonia’s ethnic identity had been uncertain. In the 1962 edition, however, the hitherto dotted-line hatched areas were shaded by full lines, with Macedonia becoming an integral, inseparable part of what Deroko called the ‘Serbian lands’. (Fig. 4) Coupled with a missing sentence from the 1953 edition about the Macedonian medieval architecture not being Serbian, this graphical enlargement of the nation’s historical territory represented a visual-rhetorical assertion of the extent of the national domain. This is evident not only in his encircling of the ‘Serbian lands’, but also in his interchangeable use of various terms like the ‘architecture of Medieval Serbia’ and the ‘Serbian architecture’. It presupposed the unquestionably national historical identity over the territories once in the hands of Serbs which were now becoming more and more divorced from their original rulers’ inheritors.

Closely connected to this point is the already noted fact that Deroko’s maps referred to an unspecified period of the past, representing ‘Serbian lands’ in an uncontextualised and atemporal totality. In this way, the maps functioned as typical ‘icons of possession’,⁶⁸ which stood in sharp opposition to the political reality of Yugoslavia and symbolically corresponded to the nationalist ideal of political boundaries coinciding exactly with the ethnic ones. Not only did Deroko’s curious maps graphically constructed the national body in history, but they also showed where the national present was in relation to its past. The importance of the territorial-historical nation-mapping in contemporaneous Yugoslav historiography is perhaps best seen in the already mentioned *History of Yugoslav Peoples*, published the same year as *Monumental and Decorative Architecture*. This book had quite a few folding maps related to early and late medieval history, featuring legend categories such as ‘state boundaries’ and ‘capitals’ which were, of course, irrelevant for the political formations in medieval Europe characterised by fluid frontiers.⁶⁹ Notwithstanding the fact that the direct projection of modern political concepts on the medieval past is somewhat different from Deroko’s vague strategy of nationalising historical territories, both tactics were part of the same critical discourse, implicitly questioning the historical foundations of the Yugoslav federalist paradigm.

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There is no doubt that the relevance of Deroko's historical studies to the national imagination in post-WWII Serbia far surpassed his scholarly and artistic diligence, which is still praised by many historians and laymen. Seen in the perspective of the national question in socialist Yugoslavia and its federalist conundrum of the relationship between ethnicity and territory, *Monumental and Decorative Architecture in Medieval Serbia*, along with other Deroko's works, reveals a conspicuous ideological stream through the Serbian national narrative of the time. In the context of constantly rising ethnic nationalisms hidden beneath the rhetoric of "brotherhood and unity", the reactivation of Millet's arguable identification of architectural styles with national identities served as a potent ideological force, which offered an alternative to the current state of the nation split along the borders of the republics. Indeed, the seemingly unorthodox coexistence of different competing political ideas, in which the 'ideology of Yugoslav socialism itself became an instrument in the contention between the centralist/unitarist and decentralist/distincivist camps',⁷⁰ represents a necessary condition for understanding Deroko's narratives. On the one hand, his writings on medieval architecture responded to the predominant idea of an interrelated and harmonious history and the culture of South Slavs, who all sought to gain and protect national freedom in the past and create distinctively national cultures. On the other hand, there was an ideological pressure that the Yugoslav peoples should be clearly distinguished by different histories and identities, which heavily influenced his Milletian views on the local architectural history. The overlapping of the two interpretive models, which understandably caused certain anxiety, in fact problematised the cultural foundations of the Yugoslav federalism because it 'encouraged a closer association between nationality and territory'.⁷¹ In such a dynamic ideological environment, various intellectual endeavours like his historical works 'picked up what the political class had not dare to handle'.⁷² Hardly can one find a work of such an enduring influence in the field of architectural history which responded so keenly to the challenges that socialist Yugoslavia posed to the Serbian national question.

NOTES

- 1 On Aleksandar Deroko's life and work see: Marija Vranić-Ignjačević, *Legende Beogradskog univerziteta: Aleksandar Deroko* (Belgrade: Univerzitetska biblioteka, 2004); Zoran M. Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko* (Belgrade: Republički zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture i Društvo konzervatora Srbije, 1991).
- 2 Aleksandar A. Deroko, *Monumentalna i dekorativna arhitektura u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji* (Belgrade: Naučna knjiga, 1953¹; 1962²); Aleksandar A. Deroko, *Monumentalna i dekorativna arhitektura u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji* (Belgrade: Turistička štampa, 1985). On Deroko's influence as a pedagogue see: Branislav Milenković, "Aleksandar Deroko (1894-1988)", Marija Vranić-Ignjačević, *Legende Beogradskog univerziteta: Aleksandar Deroko* (Belgrade: Univerzitetska biblioteka, 2004), 5-7.
- 3 The book's introductory chapters have different structures in the first and second edition.
- 4 Z. Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 28.
- 5 Marija Vranić-Ignjačević, *Legende Beogradskog univerziteta: Aleksandar Deroko*, 32.
- 6 Gabriel Millet, *L'ancien art serbe: les églises* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1919).
- 7 A conspicuous case in this respect was the international conference "Niš and Byzantium" held in 2006, which was dedicated to the memory and work of the 'glorious and cult name of Gabriel

Millet', as Tsvetan Grozdanov, the then president of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts and a member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts has put it in his opening speech. See: Cvetan Grozdanov, "U slavu Gabrijela Mijea," in *Niš i Vizantija: zbornik radova* Vol. IV, ed. M. Rakocija (Niš: Grad Niš and Prosveta, 2006), 9-16. On Millet's operation see: Slobodan Ćurčić, "Architecture in Byzantium, Serbia and the Balkans Through the Lenses of Modern Historiography," in *Serbia and Byzantium. Proceedings of the International Conference Held on 15 December 2008 at the University of Cologne*, Series: Studien und Texte zur Byzantinistik Vol. 8, eds. Mabi Angar and Claudia Sode (Frankfurt am Main et al.: Peter Lang, 2013), 11-12.

8 S. Ćurčić, "Architecture in Byzantium, Serbia and the Balkans Through the Lenses of Modern Historiography," 12.

9 See more on the topic in: Aleksandar Ignjatović, *U srpsko-vizantijskom kaleidoskopu: Arhitektura, nacionalizam i imperijalna imaginacija 1878-1941* (Belgrade: Orion Art i Univerzitet u Beogradu – Arhitektonski fakultet, 2016). See also: Aleksandar Ignjatović, "Byzantium's Apt Inheritors: Serbian Historiography, Nation Building and Imperial Imagination, 1882-1941," *Slavonic and East European Review* 94/1 (2106): 57-92.

10 A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*¹, 6.

11 Z. Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 13. On Millet's work at the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* see: Dubravka Preradović, "Contribution de Gabriel Millet à l'étude de l'art Serbe," *Z' Epistēmōnikō Synédrio 'To Ágion Óros sta chrónia tēs Apeleuthērōsēs', Phoros timēs ston Gabriel Millet / 7th International Scientific Conference 'Mount Athos at the Years of Liberation'*. Conference Proceedings (Thessaloniki: Agioritikiestia, 2013), 77-82.

12 On the 'unparalleled character of Millet's classification' see: Predrag N. Dragojević, *Istorija umetnosti u Srbiji u prvoj polovini XX veka* (Unpublished PhD thesis, Univerzitet u Beogradu – Filozofski fakultet, 1996), 93.

13 See for example: Cyril Mango, *Byzantine Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1985), 176.

14 S. Ćurčić, "Architecture in Byzantium, Serbia and the Balkans through the Lenses of Modern Historiography," 16.

15 M. Vranić-Ignjačević, *Legende Beogradskog univerziteta*, 24.

16 A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*¹, 23. See the recent Serbian translation: Petar P. Pokriškin, *Pravoslavna crkvena arhitektura XII-XVIII veka u Kraljevini Srbiji* (Belgrade: Art Press, 2014 [1906]).

17 Miloje M. Vasić, *Žiža i Lazarica: studije iz srpske umetnosti srednjega veka* (Belgrade: Geca Kon, 1928); Louis Brehier, "Srpska i rumunska umetnost u srednjem veku," *Starinar* II (1923): 63-68. It is ironic that Miloje Vasić, in his review of Deroko's book, ascertained that it was an 'indispensable work for future architects and scholars': M. Vasić, "Nova knjiga o staroj umetnosti," *Republika* (29. 12. 1953). Cited after: Z. Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 28 n. 89.

18 Aleksandar Deroko, "Đ. Bošković, Srednjovekovna umetnost u Srbiji Makedoniji (crkvena arhitektura i skulptura)," *Starinar* I (1950): 280.

19 Aleksandar Deroko, *Sa starim neimarima: Srednjovekovni manastiri u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji* (Belgrade: Turistička štampa, 1967), 24-27.

20 Slobodan Ćurčić, *Architecture in the Balkans: From Diocletian to Süleyman the Magnificent* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), 9 n. 17. Ćurčić suggests that the term 'group' was probably taken from Pokriškin.

21 A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*¹, 23. Yet even in this respect, he was not consistent because he defined 'the Morava Group' not only in terms of style but also considering geographical location.

22 Videti: S. Ćurčić, "Architecture in Byzantium," 15.

23 Aleksandar Deroko, *Spomenici arhitekture IX-XVIII veka u Jugoslaviji* (Belgrade: Univerzitet u Beogradu i Građevinska knjiga, 1964).

24 A. Deroko, *Sa starim neimarima*.

- 25 See: S. Ćurčić, "Architecture in Byzantium," 16-17; Jelena Bogdanović, "Regional Developments in Late Byzantine Architecture and the Question of 'Building Schools': An Overlooked Case of the Fourteenth-Century Churches from the Region of Skopje," *Byzantinoslavica. Revue internationale des études byzantines* LXIX, 1-2 (2011): 219-266.
- 26 See: Z. Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 6.
- 27 Jasna Dragović-Soso, *'Saviours of the Nation': Serbia's Intellectual Opposition and the Revival of Nationalism* (London: Hurst & Co., 2002), 8.
- 28 Branko Petranović, *Istorija Jugoslavije 1918-1988*. Vol. 3: Socijalistička Jugoslavija 1945-1988 (Belgrade: Nolit, 1988), 319.
- 29 On this particular topic see: Nenad Makuljević, "Od umetnosti nacije do umetnosti teritorije," in *Jugoslavija u istorijskoj perspektivi*, eds. Latinka Perović et al. (Belgrade: Helsinški odbor za ljudska prava, 2017), 426.
- 30 B. Petranović, *Istorija Jugoslavije*, 327.
- 31 Miroslav Krleža, "Predgovor," in *Izložba srednjovekovne umjetnosti naroda Jugoslavije* (Zagreb: Umjetnički paviljon, 1951), 5.
- 32 B. Petranović, *Istorija Jugoslavije*, 325.
- 33 On Marxist historiography see: Q. Edward Wang and Georg G. Iggers, "Introduction," in *Marxist Historiographies: A Global Perspective*, eds. Q. Edward Wang and Georg G. Iggers (London: Routledge, 2016), 1-15.
- 34 A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*¹, 7-10.
- 35 Q. Wang and G. Iggers, "Introduction," 4.
- 36 A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*¹, 9.
- 37 See: Karl Marx, *Kritika političke ekonomije* (Zagreb: Naprijed, 1958 [1859]). Marx's *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 1859.
- 38 A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*¹, 10.
- 39 The first and second volumes of the book were published in 1953 and 1959, while the third (and the last) one has never been published due to antagonism between different members of the editorial board which consisted of numerous historians as the republics' representatives coming from all over the country, see: Ivo Banac, "Historiography of the Countries of Eastern Europe: Yugoslavia," *The American Historical Review* 97/4 (1992): 1086.
- 40 Bogo Grafenauer, Dušan Petrović, Jaroslav Šidak (eds.), *Istorija naroda Jugoslavije*. Vol. 1 – Do početka XVI veka (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1953), IX.
- 41 Pamela Ballinger, "Revisiting the History of World War II," in: *History in Exile: Memory and Identity at the Borders of the Balkans* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 106.
- 42 Ernst Breisach, *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval and Modern* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 352.
- 43 Ethnic minorities in Yugoslavia were officially recognised as nationalities only in 1959.
- 44 See: Aleksandar Palavestra, *Kulturni konteksti arheologije* (Belgrade: Univerzitet u Beogradu – Filozofski fakultet, 2011), 153-163; Zorica Kuzmanović, "Problem kulturnog identiteta u savremenoj arheološkoj praksi," *Etnoantropološki problemi*, 6/3 (2011): 596 (595-605); Monika Z. Milosavljević, *Koncept drugosti varvarstva i varvarizacije u srpskoj arheologiji* (Unpublished PhD thesis, Univerzitet u Beogradu – Filozofski fakultet, 2015), 104-105; Predrag Novaković, "Archaeology in the New Countries of Southeastern Europe: A Historical Perspective," in *Comparative Archaeologies: A Sociological View of the Science of the Past*, ed. Ludomir L. Lozny (Cham: Springer, 2011), 339-461; Predrag Novaković, *Istorija arheologije u novim zemljama Jugoistočne Evrope* (Sarajevo: Univerzitet u Sarajevu, 2014).
- 45 Staša Babić, "Arheologija i etnicitet," *Etnoantropološki problemi*, 5, 1 (2010), 138.

- 46 See: Paul Shoup, *Communism and the Yugoslav National Question* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 115-118.
- 47 A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*¹, 319.
- 48 See: Aleksandar Ignjatović, *U srpsko-vizantijskom kaleidoskopu: Arhitektura, nacionalizam i imperijalna imaginacija 1878-1941* (Belgrade: Orion Art i Univerzitet u Belgradeu-ArHITEKTONSKI fakultet, 2016), 546-602.
- 49 A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*¹, 15.
- 50 A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*¹, 12.
- 51 A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*¹, 15.
- 52 A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*¹, 8.
- 53 See for instance: B. Grafenauer, G. Ostrogorski et al., “Jugoslovenski narodi u ranofeudalno doba”, 107-302.
- 54 B. Grafenauer, G. Ostrogorski et al., “Jugoslovenski narodi u ranofeudalno doba”, 127, 130.
- 55 Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *The Improbable Survivor: Yugoslavia and its Problems 1918-1988* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1988), 89.
- 56 A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*¹, 5; A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*², 5. Emphasis is added by the author.
- 57 A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*¹, 23.
- 58 Mari-Žanin Čalić, *Istorija Jugoslavije u 20. veku* (Belgrade: Clio, 2013), 321.
- 59 See: Stefano Bianchini, “Partitions: Categories and Destinies,” in *Partitions: Reshaping States and Minds*, eds. Stefano Bianchini et al. (London: Routledge, 2005), 46.
- 60 A. Deroko, *Sa starim neimarima: Srednjovekovni manastiri u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji*, 7.
- 61 P. Shoup, *Communism and the Yugoslav National Question*, 115.
- 62 Dennison I. Rusinow, *The Yugoslav Experiment 1948-1974* (London: Hurst, 1977), 228. Cf. John R. Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History: Twice there was a country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 305-306.
- 63 S. Pavlowitch, *The Improbable Survivor*, 106-109.
- 64 Dobrica Ćosić, *Stvarno i moguće* (Rijeka: Otokar Keršovani, 1982), 120. This phrasing by the Serbian writer and academic Dobrica Ćosić appeared only in the early-1970s, see: J. Dragović-Soso, “Saviours of the Nation,” 41.
- 65 Ascertaining both natural rights of the Yugoslav peoples and historical identity of the republics, the federal constitution of 1946 provided an ambiguous policy towards national sovereignty. This conceptual conundrum was partially solved by the second Yugoslav constitution adopted in 1953, which annulled the sovereignty of the republics and introduced a new, but equally problematic concept of the nations’ sovereignty, which was further sanctioned by the 1964 federal constitution.
- 66 A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*¹, 5; A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*², 5. Emphasis is added by the author.
- 67 A. Deroko, *Monumentalna*¹, 27.
- 68 G. N. G. Clarke, “Taking Possession: The Cartouche as Cultural Text in Eighteen-Century American Maps,” *Word and Image: A Journal of Visual/Verbal Enquiry*, 4/2 (1988): 455.
- 69 See more in: Arthur Percival Newton, “The Conception of the World in the Middle Ages,” in *Travel and Travellers in the Middle Ages*, ed. Arthur Percival Newton (London: Routledge, 2004), 1-18. On the ideological roles of maps see more in: Denis Wood, with John Fels and John Krygier, *Rethinking the Power of Maps* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2002).
- 70 I. Banac, “Historiography of the Countries of Eastern Europe,” 1089.
- 71 S. Pavlowitch, *The Improbable Survivor*, 73.
- 72 S. Pavlowitch, *The Improbable Survivor*, 76. Cf. Wachtel, Andrew Baruch. *Making a Nation, Breaking a Nation: Literature and Cultural Politics in Yugoslavia* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 128-171.

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ALEKSANDAR DEROKO'S WORK ON MEDIEVAL ARCHITECTURE AND ITS RELEVANCE TODAY

A B S T R A C T

Meticulous record of more than 300 medieval structures, extensive fieldwork on numerous archeological sites, more than 100 texts and several critical books on medieval architecture mark professor Aleksandar Deroko's work on preserving medieval architectural heritage in Serbia and the former Yugoslavia. They are all aptly illustrated with his drawings and photographs. Deroko's genuine interest in medieval architecture and its preservation shaped his student days between the two world wars, a period also characterised by a clash between traditionalism and modernism in architecture. Destruction from war, public negligence of medieval heritage, the so-called "golden rush" when many hoped to uncover lost medieval treasures, and the overall lack of clear methodologies for the preservation of architectural heritage displeased young Deroko, who often publicly expressed his opinion on the urgent need for medieval structures to be saved and restored, and in particular religious architecture. Even his undergraduate thesis for his architectural degree, which focused on the Church of St. Sava in Belgrade, was inspired by medieval religious architecture and its values. This paper addresses the relevance of Deroko's work today, especially in the light of his understanding of medieval architecture as art and a dynamic cultural symbol relevant for architectural practices.

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KEY WORDS

ALEKSANDAR DEROKO
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BYZANTINE
SLAVIC ARCHITECTURE

Everyone who has studied architecture at the University of Belgrade after the World War II (WWII) is familiar with Professor Aleksandar Deroko's (1894-1988) standard textbook *Monumentalna i dekorativna arhitektura u srednjevekovnoj Srbiji (Monumental and Decorative Architecture in Medieval Serbia)*¹. The book was initially prepared for a course on Byzantine and ancient Serbian architecture, which Deroko taught since 1926, when he graduated and became a teaching assistant (Fig. 1), until his retirement as a full-time professor at the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade.² The book remains seminal work for various university courses on Byzantine and medieval architecture in Serbia and serves as undeniable evidence of his fulfilled, resourceful and highly successful academic career as a university professor and later a member of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences. Written in Serbian language with an English summary, this highly legible book is accompanied by numerous photographs and delicate linear drawings, including a memorable book cover (Fig. 2) made by professor Deroko himself. Deroko acknowledged that his book borrowed methodological approach from earlier studies in architectural heritage in Serbia, and in particular from Pyotr Pokryshkin's (1870-1922) and Gabriel Millet's (1867-1953) books on Orthodox church architecture in Serbia.³

Indeed, the beginnings of scholarly studies of architectural heritage in Serbia are tied to the studies of architecture in the Balkans just before the World War I (WWI). Done by non-native intellectuals trained in various disciplines, these early studies were largely guided by political interests of major European powers at the time as well as by geographical and socio-political boundaries of the nation states in the Balkans.⁴ In the light of these circumstances, Pokryshkin's and Millet's scholarly influence on Deroko's work can be found within a larger framework of studies in architectural heritage and its preservation across Europe, regardless of its political and social divides.⁵

The Russian architect, architectural historian and restorer, Pyotr Pokryshkin, was mostly interested in proper cataloguing and recording of architecture of the past in predominantly Eastern Orthodox Christian countries; a pioneering process which, at the time he began working on it, lagged behind a somewhat better developed studies of Western medieval architecture. Pokryshkin mostly catalogued and concerned himself with religious architecture of the Kingdom of Serbia between the twelfth and eighteenth centuries. For his book on medieval architecture, Deroko adopted this seemingly incorrect broad chronological span until the end of the seventeenth century for medieval architecture in his book on medieval architecture directly from Pokryshkin's book on the church architecture in Serbia. Yet, as Deroko himself explained, his decision can be

justified by the conservative use and perseverance of medieval architectural styles for religious architecture in Serbian territories or in their former territories even under the Ottoman rule, which lasted well beyond the medieval period.⁶ Such a methodological framework applied to a very generous chronological span, but paradoxically being very coherent in investigations of church architecture in the Balkans, continues to be used in current scholarship. Most recently, the major publication on Serbian medieval art and architecture issued for the 23rd International Congress of Byzantine Studies held in Belgrade, uses the same method to cover medieval religious art and their principles well until the end of the seventeenth century.⁷

The French archeologist and historian, Gabriel Millet, who is widely recognised as one of the major contributors to the revival of Byzantine studies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, made the most impact on Deroko (Fig. 3). Following successful completion of his undergraduate studies of architecture in Belgrade in 1926, Deroko studied with Millet at the *École des hautes études* in Paris thanks to a stipend from the French government.⁸ A pedant, Millet focused on the medieval period in accordance with major chronological divides for everything “medieval” as devised in Western thought. Yet, Millet also proposed and promoted the distinct “national schools” in the nation states of the Balkans, including Serbia, such as the “School of Raška,” the “Serbo-Byzantine school,” and the “Morava school”.⁹ As a trained and practicing architect, Deroko correctly recognised difficulties in defining these specific architectural national “schools”, which Millet offered as a working premise for studies of medieval architecture in the Balkans.¹⁰ In his texts, Deroko delicately substituted the term “schools” by “groups”, thus opting for a clever compromise



Fig. 1. Aleksandar Deroko upon graduating with a degree in architecture (archival photo)



Fig. 2. Aleksandar Deroko, a book cover of *Monumental and Decorative Architecture in Medieval Serbia*

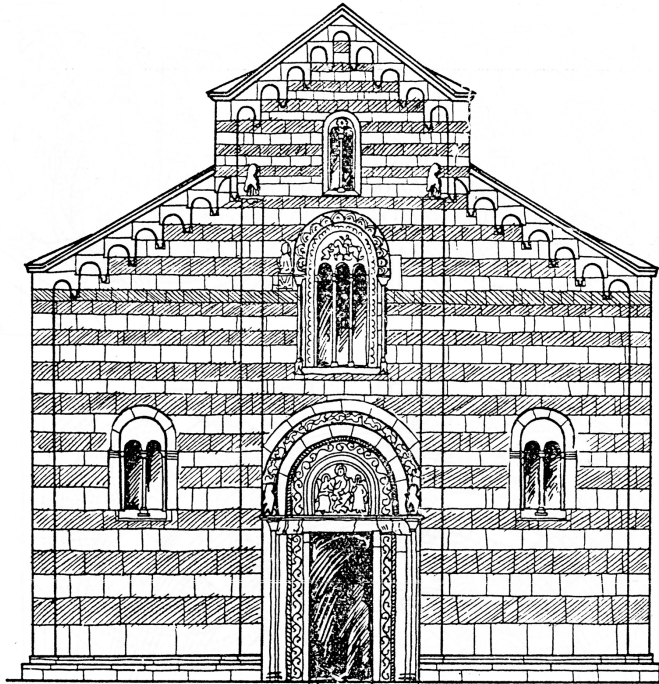


Fig. 3. Aleksandar Deroko, a drawing of Gabriel Millet, here inscribed as “St. Gabriel Millet” highlighting the respect Deroko held for Millet and his scholarship

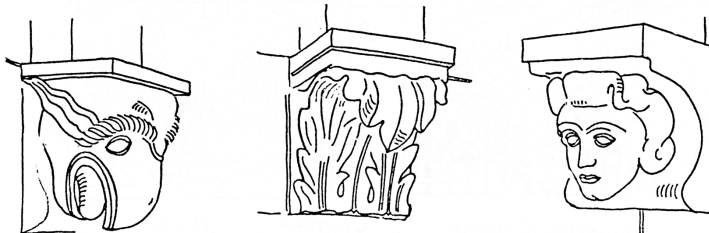
that still allowed for a wider contemporaneous intellectual discourse guided by its major proponents in the West. He explained his decision by saying that placing the architectural taxonomy into “groups” is just a methodological tool, which is definitely never absolute, accounts for fluidity of the exchange of architectural ideas and practices, and as medieval studies advance, remains open to modifications.¹¹ By doing so, Deroko also favoured preserving the selected medieval as well as monumental objects that heavily relied on medieval traditions, predominantly churches, based on their territorial and chronological distribution, rather than on their unstable nation-based stylistic classification. These churches architecturally had clearly observable stylistic features in common, and occasionally the same patronage of their donors, who often belonged to the same family or larger socio-political groups (a ruling family, the aristocracy) within the changing territories of the state of Serbia and a wider network of architectural production sponsored by the Serbs. In contrast to Millet’s Raška, Serbo-Byzantine, and Morava schools, which Millet defined as offspring of and relating to Byzantine architecture, Deroko recognised five, rather neutrally defined groups:

1. architecture in Zeta (modern Montenegro and parts of Croatia, including the related territories on the Adriatic Littoral) built roughly during the tenth and eleventh centuries;
2. architecture in Raška, medieval Kingdom of Serbia (also overlapping with the core of modern Serbia) during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries;
3. architecture in Kosovo and Metohija as well as in Macedonia as parts of medieval Serbia and sponsored by the Serbian patrons in the fourteenth century;
4. architecture in the independent Serbian principality of the Morava valley during the period of its existence (1371-1459); and
5. Serbian architecture in the former Serbian territories of Ottoman Empire, until the end of the seventeenth century.

Recently, scholars of medieval architecture in the Balkans have questioned its long-lasting but unstable historiographies largely based on national schools and their fragmented territorial claims, to which Deroko’s work belongs only to an extent given his dealings with both Pokryshkin’s and Millet’s studies.¹² At the most basic level, such historiographies definitely contribute to detailed and invaluable architectural studies in a given locale. Yet, by focusing exclusively on the architecture within the given state territory and by avoiding open analysis of the exchange of architectural ideas and practices that go well beyond the territorial and the socio-political claims, these studies of medieval architecture often remain marginalised in larger scholarly discussions. They occasionally



СЛ. 133 – ЗАПАДНА ФАСАДА ПРИПРАТЕ НА ЦРКВИ МАНАСТИРА ДЕЧАНА



СЛ. 134 – КОНСОЛЕ ИСПОД АРКАДИЦА КРОВНОГА ВЕНЦА ЦРКВЕ МАНАСТИРА ДЕЧАНА.

Fig. 4. Aleksandar Deroko, architectural drawings of the façade and details of the Christ Pantokrator Church in Dečani Monastery (from *Monumental and Decorative Architecture in Medieval Serbia*, figs. 133 and 134 on p. 96).

result in incomplete understanding of local traditions within major medieval architectural trends as well as the lack of complete appreciation of site-specific architectural heritage as common heritage of humanity.¹³

Needless to say, Deroko was well aware of these methodological issues and inconsistencies of any rigid and superficial grouping of architecture based on national, historical, geographical, and chronological premises. He wrote openly about these issues. Already in the introductory pages of his study on the monumental architecture in medieval Serbia, he emphasised that it is part of larger architectural developments, which Serbia shared with its neighbouring countries.¹⁴ He questioned its exclusive dependence on the Byzantine tradition only, and recurrently emphasised the multiple creative processes and trajectories in the articulation of unique architectural features of medieval architecture in Serbia. As a strong proponent of architecture used in scholarly discourse not merely as a subsidiary tool that supports socio-political historical narratives, Deroko highlighted the architectural criteria for devising specific architectural groups in medieval Serbia, which he neutrally numbered from one to five.¹⁵ By focusing on architectural features themselves, Deroko reinforced understanding architecture as material evidence and an inseparable part of the material culture within a wider network of its production and reception. Therefore, Deroko's study on medieval architecture in Serbia is dominated by the following criteria: architectural typology, selection of building materials, specific solutions for singular architectural elements of larger edifices (walls, roofs, floors, interior furnishing) and their decoration, predominant function of selected religious structures, be it a monastery or a parish church, in case of monumental architecture (Fig. 4).¹⁶ These criteria are complemented by meticulous architectural analysis of the role of building practices, provenance and training of the builders, which can be occasionally revealed through textual sources, but more often through built structures themselves, and through analysing specific architectural concepts of space, structural solutions, the choice of measurement units, and monumental architectural decoration.

The specific value of Deroko's work, therefore, lies in his intellectually honest and genuine approach to architecture. Many of his more than 100 texts on medieval architecture have gained attention early on and a broader international scholarly community and the general public continue to consult these works.¹⁷ Deroko's work certainly remains open to modifications and further refinement as he himself recommended, but it continues to be recognised among scholars of medieval architecture today. Deroko's selection of major buildings and their architectural features presented in his 1950s textbook on monumental architecture in medieval Serbia is included and further elaborated in a major

international authoritative text on medieval architecture in the Balkans written by Princeton University Professor Slobodan Ćurčić and published in 2010.¹⁸ The book is to date the most comprehensive work on medieval architecture in the Balkans. In his selective bibliography, Ćurčić also acknowledged Deroko's other relevant books on medieval towns and vernacular architecture in Serbia and the Balkans entitled *Srednjeevokvni gradovi u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji (Medieval Towns in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia)* and *Narodno neimarstvo (Vernacular architecture)* as still highly influential and reliable references.¹⁹

In addition to his study of monumental architecture, which is almost exclusively related to medieval religious architecture, Deroko simultaneously studied medieval towns and vernacular architecture; critical aspects of architecture that have only recently started to be given appropriate recognition and attention. Andrew Ballantyne not long ago summarised the essence of architecture, whether it is impressive in scale and its execution or not, monumental or vernacular, as being not simply the essence of buildings but rather that architecture is any building or built environment, with a significant cultural component. He wrote, 'I want to argue that "architecture" is not the same thing as "good buildings" but is the cultural aspect of any building at all', and highlighted vernacular architecture, usually omitted from grand narratives on architecture, as a case in point.²⁰ Deroko's early interest in towns and vernacular architecture was deeply rooted in his erudite understanding of architecture. As he wrote and illustrated in his works, despite being poorly preserved in the Balkans medieval castles, towns and vernacular architecture have a potential in reviving human conditions and life associated with the architecture of the past. Deroko never separated these investigations from material aspects and rigorous investigations of built architecture itself. Particularly instructing and accessible are his own



Fig. 5. Aleksandar Deroko, a linear drawing of the building of medieval town done after fourteenth-century fresco from Dečani Monastery (from *Medieval Towns in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia*, fig. 3)

linear drawings, such as those that show a building of a medieval town or a celebration within it based on the fresco paintings from the fourteenth-century monastery of Dečani (Figs. 5 and 6). He carefully supplemented these images with contemporaneous textual sources and limited archeological evidence of actual medieval towns, their public spaces and residential architecture. Along with his professorial teaching and writing about medieval architecture, Deroko balanced his prolific academic work with extensive fieldwork. He actively participated in archeological work on major sites with clear urban and architectural stratification, including the famous sixth-century Justiniana Prima (*Caričin Grad*) built by Byzantine Emperor Justinian I in his native town near today's Lebane in southern Serbia, and Smederevo, the last capital city of medieval Serbia built by despot Djurađ Branković in the fifteenth century.²¹ Deroko's long-term interest in medieval secular architecture resulted in elegantly written, generously illustrated, and widely accessible books to both scholarly and non-academic audience. In addition to *Srednjevekovni gradovi u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji* and *Narodno neimarstvo* in two volumes *Selo i Varoš (Village and Town)*, he also published *Srednjevekovni gradovi na Dunavu (Medieval Castles on the Danube)* and *Srednjevekovni grad Skoplje (Medieval Town Skoplje)*, also in French *Le Chaeteau fort médiéval de Skoplje*, the latter written in collaboration with Slobodan Nenadović and Vasa Čubrilović.²² His travels to Mt. Athos resulted in the book, *Sveta Gora (Mt. Athos)*, which was also translated into English and published as *Athos, The Holy Mountain*, as well as in two texts on the Serbian Athonite monastery Hilandar entitled *Iz materijalne prošlosti, etnografske beleške (From Cultural Past, Ethnographical Notes)* and *Konaci manastira Hilandar (Konaks of the Monastery Hilandar)*, the latter on monastic residential quarters which he co-authored with Professor Slobodan Nenadović.²³ These seminal publications considered monastic architecture to be inseparable from its vernacular aspects and cultural values.



Fig. 6. Aleksandar Deroko, a linear drawing of the public life and entertainment in medieval times done after fourteenth-century fresco from Dečani Monastery (from *Medieval Towns in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia*, fig. 9)



Fig. 7. Aleksandar Deroko, Interior of the Church of St. Sava in Belgrade, from the final exam for architectural degree.

Even if personally deeply invested in this pioneering research on medieval vernacular architecture, which can be further attested to by his popular writings and witty and polemical pieces published in newspapers and dailies, Deroko's studies are always analytical, inclusive, non-speculative, detached from political jargon, and historically relevant. For example, already in his 1950s book on medieval towns *Srednjevekovni gradovi u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji (Medieval Towns in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia)*, Deroko recognised how in predominantly agricultural medieval territories of southwestern Balkans the concept of town was most often related to any type of fortification and walled enclosure it protected, including monasteries, and that the first architecturally fully recognisable medieval towns can be actually dated only to the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.²⁴ Lately, in their sophisticated studies of Serbian medieval towns based on the nuanced theoretical concepts of *oekumene* (polity, state) analysed through the application of the spatial syntax, or detailed analysis of the state apparatus, historical and archaeological evidence of urban life, scholars largely confirmed major premises of Deroko's early investigations of towns in medieval Serbia, which, despite being referenced to in earlier historic texts, can be traced only at the end of the thirteenth and at the beginning of the fourteenth centuries.²⁵

Deroko's solid and genuine understanding of medieval architecture in Serbia goes well beyond nationalistic and self-referential trends that were often framed by the political ideologies and academic curricula of nation states in the Balkans. Deroko subtly positioned his wide-ranging work and interest in medieval architecture and its preservation in the historical moment between traditionalism and modernism; the historical moment to which he belonged and in which he actively participated. He promoted the studies and preservation of medieval architecture as being complementary rather than in opposition to modernity.²⁶ His earliest published text dating from 1922 is a magazine article on the monasteries in medieval Raška, which was then followed by 100 texts that disseminated knowledge about medieval architecture and more than 100 other texts that addressed Modernism and modernity in arts, architecture and culture.²⁷ Deroko's final exam for his architectural degree in 1926 was the design for the Cathedral of St. Sava in Belgrade.²⁸ With this design, he also participated in the competition for the conceptual design of the Church of St. Sava the same year. Deroko's project won the first monetary prize, which in 1932 secured him an opportunity to continue work on the project along with the winning architect Bogdan Nestorović. Deroko focused in particular on the church interior (Fig. 7). The competition rules that the design had to be within the Serbo-Byzantine style, whatever it meant in the early twentieth century, stirred a huge debate about traditionalism and modernism in architecture. Like

in his texts on medieval architecture in Serbia, Deroko avoided oversimplified nationalistic framework and justified his design for the domed church interior by its dominant, monumental, and spiritual qualities that endured over time and became inseparable cultural dimension of the church building that serves Christian Orthodox, Byzantine rites.²⁹

In 1927, Deroko followed and commented on the Second International Congress of Byzantine Studies held in Belgrade and published an article in *Politika*, the oldest daily in the Balkans, that put medieval artistic heritage of Serbia in focus of larger public discussions.³⁰ His relentless work on the recognition of heavily decimated medieval architectural heritage as a common good was always framed by exacting request for the accurate preservation and protection of authentic remains.³¹ Only between 1925 and 1928, then young Deroko participated in archeological and conservation work of the monasteries of Žiča, Djurdjevi Stupovi in Budmilja, Djurdjevi Stupovi near Novi Pazar, Sopoćani, and Dečani.³² War destructions, general disinterest of public in medieval architectural heritage which resulted not only in negligence but also in its further devastation during the so-called “golden rush” when many amateur archeologists and treasure hunters searched for lost medieval treasures, and above all, the lack of clear scholarly methodologies, financial resources, and legal regulations for the preservation and conservation of medieval architectural heritage during the interwar period, deeply disturbed Deroko. He raised public awareness about the urgent need for medieval architecture to be saved and restored by actively participating in study travels to hundreds of archeological locations across Serbia and abroad, by arduously writing for academic and popular journals already as a student of architecture.³³ He also actively participated in the development of the studies of Byzantine and medieval architecture at the University of Belgrade. Within scholarly and public forums, he argued in favour of the best practices that would allow not only temporary conservation of medieval architecture but also its inclusion in contemporaneous public and cultural life. Deroko especially encouraged civic solutions for sophisticated incorporation of medieval architecture into contemporaneous urban and architectural texture. Such practices, he believed, would not only make old structures accessible to the wider public and use, but also emphasise the historical and aesthetical strata of architecture as a living heritage and presence.³⁴ Yet, he recurrently made clear appeals for buildings that had been lost or severely devastated not to be reconstructed or rebuilt because limited material evidence prevents an accurate and professional historical reconstruction and presentation of architecture, which would then be presented without its original appearance and meaning.

* * *

Deroko's understanding of medieval architecture as an art form and a dynamic cultural symbol remains relevant not only for architectural historiography but also for current architectural practice. Several themes emerge as exceptionally strong throughout his work: highly sophisticated comprehension of architecture beyond a mere structure; balance between poetical and technical aspects of architecture; the recognition of beauty as an immanent quality of architectural accomplishments, including medieval and vernacular; as well as almost avant-garde understanding of monumentality as an essential concept in architecture. Namely, Deroko's broad interest in urban developments and vernacular, non-monumental architecture along with representative monumental church architecture, reveal an independent intellectual who deeply knew architecture beyond its mere definition as a "shelter", beyond a "building", which is never devoid of its complex cultural, conceptual, and aesthetic references. His architectural vocation and training balanced between *poiesis* and *techne*, between immaterial and material aspects of architecture as art-making and craftsmanship, is further reflected in the acknowledgement of medieval architecture on multiple levels. Particularly revealing is Deroko's frequent recognition of the aesthetical values of medieval architecture and sensibility of its creators. In concluding remarks of his seminal book on monumental church architecture he elucidated its structural, architectural, and artistic values as embodiment of authentic medieval culture of the people who lived in the territories of medieval Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia.³⁵ In his less known text entitled *O estetskom kriterijumu u starom našem neimarstvu (On the Aesthetic Criterion in Our Old Architecture)*, Deroko interpreted the architectural form of vernacular buildings as being articulated by the application of aesthetic criteria, in addition to the utilitarian, practical and structural considerations.³⁶ As an architect and architectural historian, Deroko drew attention to architectural beauty that goes well beyond architectural ornament and interior wall decoration. His understanding of beauty of architecture additionally includes spatial concepts and architectural articulation of the façades. Monumentality itself is understood not only as an imposing scale and memorable quality of notable buildings. In Deroko's work, monumentality is continually an essential concept in architecture, an aesthetic criterion that often evokes spirituality and immaterial aspects of architecture, as well as an effective tool that shapes collective memory of various social and architectural groups. Professor Deroko's work on medieval architecture as well as its recognition of it as an art form and a dynamic cultural symbol, therefore, remains highly relevant not only for students of medieval architecture, architectural historians and conservators, but also for architects and their practices.

NOTES

- 1 Aleksandar Deroko, *Monumentalna i dekorativna arhitektura u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji [Monumental and Decorative Architecture in Medieval Serbia]* (Belgrade: The Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1953, second edition 1962).
- 2 Zoran M. Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko* (Belgrade: Republički zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture, 1991), 12.
- 3 Petr Petrović Pokriškin, *Pravoslavnaia tserkovna arkhitektura XII-XVIII stol. Orthodox Church Architecture of the twelfth through to eighteenth centuries in the Kingdom of Serbia* (St. Petersburg: publisher not identified, 1906). See also recent critical edition, Andjelija Polikarpova, *Pravoslavna crkvena arhitektura XII-XVIII veka u Kraljevini Srbiji by P. P. Pokriškin. Orthodox Church Architecture of the 12th-18th centuries in the Kingdom of Serbia* (Belgrade: Art Press, 2014). For Millet's critical study of Serbian architecture see, Gabriel Millet, *L'ancien arte Serbe, Les Églises* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1919).
- 4 See, for example, Slobodan Ćurčić, *Architecture in the Balkans from Diocletian to Süleyman the Magnificent* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), 8-10; Slobodan Ćurčić, "Architecture in Byzantium, Serbia and the Balkans Through the Lenses of Modern Historiography," in *Serbia and Byzantium. Proceedings of the International Conference Held on 15 December 2008 at the University of Cologne*, eds. M. Angar and C. Sode (Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford, Wien: Peter Lang, 2013), 9-31; Dubravka Preradović, "Contribution de Gabriel Millet à l'étude de l'art Serbe," in *Z'Επιστημονικό Συνέδριο «Το Αγιον Όρος στα χρόνια της Απελευθέρωσης», Φορος Τιμης στον Gabriel Millet*. (Thessaloniki, 2013), 77-85; Dubravka Preradović, "Le premier voyage de Gabriel Millet en Serbie et ses résultats," in *Les Serbes à propos des Français – Les Français à propos des Serbes*, eds. J. Novaković and Lj. P. Ristić (Belgrade: University of Belgrade, 2014), 187-205; Jelena Bogdanović, "The Preservation of Architectural Heritage after World War One: Mihajlo Pupin and His Book Serbian Orthodox Church," *Zbornik Matice Srpske za Likovne Umetnosti* 43 [Matica Srpska Journal for Fine Arts] (2015): 195-210.
- 5 On the complexities of the conservation movement and its historical developments see, for example, Miles Glendinning, *The Conservation Movement. A History of Architectural Preservation Antiquity to Modernity* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), *passim* and especially "Part IV: 1945-89. Heyday of the Movement: Parallel narratives of postwar preservation," 257-414.
- 6 Deroko, *Monumentalna*, 7, 19-22.
- 7 *Sacral Art of the Serbian Lands in the Middle Ages*, eds. Dragan Vojvodić and Danica Popović, vol. 2/3 of *Byzantine Heritage and Serbian Art* (Belgrade: The Serbian National Committee of Byzantine Studies, Službeni glasnik, Institute for Byzantine Studies, The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 2016).
- 8 Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 13.
- 9 On the question of national schools of medieval architecture as formulated by Millet, see Ćurčić, *Architecture in the Balkans*, 8-10; Ćurčić, *Architecture in Byzantium, Serbia and the Balkans*, 9-31; Preradović, *Contribution*, 77-85; Preradović, *Le premier voyage de Gabriel Millet*, 187-205.
- 10 Deroko himself recorded and studied some 300 medieval structures supported by an extensive fieldwork. Information based on Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 43.
- 11 Deroko, *Monumentalna*, 19-22, esp. 22.
- 12 Ćurčić, *Architecture in the Balkans*, 8-10. See also, Jelena Bogdanović, "Medieval Religious Architecture in the Balkans" in *The Cambridge Guide to the Architecture of Christianity*, eds. R. Etlin and A.-M. Yasin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, in press, scheduled for 2019).
- 13 Ćurčić, *Architecture in the Balkans*, 8-10; Bogdanović, *The Preservation of Architectural Heritage*, 195-210; Bogdanović, *Medieval Religious Architecture in the Balkans* (in press).
- 14 Deroko, *Monumentalna*, esp. 11-22; 262-263.

- 15 Deroko, *Monumentalna*, esp. 7-22.
- 16 Deroko, *Monumentalna*, esp. 23-32.
- 17 For a detailed overview of Deroko's engagement with medieval architecture, both through field work and publications, see Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 14, 21-33.
- 18 Ćurčić, *Architecture in the Balkans*, with acknowledgment of Deroko's seminal work on 17, 837, 884, 889.
- 19 Ćurčić, *Architecture in the Balkans*, with acknowledgment of Aleksandar Deroko's books, *Srednjevekovni gradovi u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1950); Aleksandar Deroko, *Narodno neimarstvo*, vol. I (Belgrade: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1968) on 891, 893.
- 20 See, for example, a fantastic summary on the limits of architectural studies in general that recurrently avoided studies of vernacular architecture in Andrew Balantyne, *Architecture. A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 24-32, citation on 31.
- 21 Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 16.
- 22 Aleksandar Deroko, Karin Radovanović, Jan Dekker, *Srednjevekovni gradovi na Dunavu [Medieval Castles on the Danube]* (Belgrade: Turistička štampa, 1964), Aleksandar Deroko, Slobodan Nenadović, Vasa Čubrilović, *Srednjevekovni grad Skoplje* (Belgrade: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1971).
- 23 Aleksandar Deroko, *Sveta Gora* (Belgrade: Narodna knjiga, 1967, third edition 1998); Aleksandar Deroko, *Athos: The Holy Mountain* (Belgrade: Turistička štampa, 1970); Aleksandar Deroko, *Iz materijalne kulture prošlosti: etnografske beleške* (Belgrade: Naučno delo, 1963) and Aleksandar Deroko, Slobodan Nenadović, "Konaci manastira Hilandar" *Spomenik SANU CXX* (Belgrade, 1971), 17-37. For detailed listing of Deroko's texts on medieval architecture, see also Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 17, 21-33.
- 24 Deroko, *Srednjevekovni gradovi*, 9-24, esp. 10, 18-19.
- 25 *Processes of Byzantinisation and Serbian Archeology*, ed. Vesna Bikić, vol. 1/3 of *Byzantine Heritage and Serbian Art* (Belgrade: The Serbian National Committee of Byzantine Studies, Službeni glasnik, Institute for Byzantine Studies, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 2016); especially chapters by Mihailo St. Popović, "The 'Medieval Serbian Oecumene' – Fiction or Reality?" 37-44, Stanoje Bojanin and Bojana Krsmanović, "Byzantine Influence on Administration in the Time of the Nemanjić Dynasty", 45-52, and Marko Popović, "From the Roman Castel to the Serbian Medieval City", 53-66.
- 26 On the relationships between preservation and modernity across various geographies and times, see also, Mrinalini Rajagopalan, "Preservation and Modernity: Competing Perspectives, Contested Histories and the Question of Authenticity," in: *The Sage Handbook of Architectural Theory* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2012), 308-325.
- 27 Aleksandar Deroko, "Tri manastira srednjevekovnog Rasa (Three Monasteries of Medieval Ras)," *Misao X* Belgrade (1922): 1673-1686. The full bibliographical list of Deroko's published works is provided by Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 101-109.
- 28 Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 64-67.
- 29 Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 64-72, with detailed coverage on the polemics about the Cathedral of St. Sava in Belgrade and Deroko's participation within it.
- 30 Aleksandar Deroko, "Izložba naših vizantiskih umetničkih dela ("The Exhibition of our Byzantine art works")" *Politika* (April, 1927).
- 31 See, for example, Deroko, *Srednjevekovni gradovi*, 206.
- 32 Aleksandar Deroko, "Malo nekih davnih sećanja" *Sećanja konzervatora (Some Distant Memories. Memories of the Conservator)* (1982): 11-12.

- 33 See, for example, Aleksandar Deroko, "Povodom jednog S.O.S. apela još od pre dvadeset godina ("On the occasion of one S.O.S. appeal from twenty years ago")," *Misao* XII (1923): 838-842. On Deroko's meticulous record of medieval architecture and work on the development of policies for the preservation of architectural heritage in Serbia and former Yugoslavia, see also, Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 41-49.
- 34 Deroko, *Srednjevekovni gradovi*, 206.
- 35 Deroko, *Monumentalna*, esp. 262-263.
- 36 Aleksandar Deroko, "O estetskom kriterijumu u starom našem neimarstvu" [On the aesthetic criterion in our old architecture] in *XX vek* (Belgrade, 1938), 13-17.

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ALEKSANDAR DEROKO: BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY

A B S T R A C T

Although numerous writings by professor Aleksandar Deroko raise essential questions about the nature, the history, and the methodology of architecture, he never provided a systematic theory, and his assertions did not belong to any mainstream architectural discourse. However, his romantic visions of remote, medieval monasteries and their origin on one hand, and on the other, the rational and methodical approach to heritage surveying evident in both his early texts and later architectural textbooks, resulted in some very novel theoretical ideas in architecture of the twentieth century. This paper examines the understanding of the tradition and modernity in the work of professor Deroko, investigates reasons behind his duality, explores the way he synthesised his research work with his pedagogical work, and tries to systematise his theoretical ideas.

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KEY WORDS

ALEKSANDAR DEROKO (1894-1988)

RASTKO PETROVIĆ (1898-1949)

ROMANTIC VISIONS

RATIONAL LANGUAGE

THEORETICAL IDEAS

TRADITION AND MODERNITY

CONSTANCY AND CHANGE

We headed back towards Raška. In a mail coach, we passed by the Church of St. Peter itself. My friend, a poet, has for the fifth time already sketched, on an envelope of some old letter, a glaringly white “chubby” little building, on its deep-green hill above a bridge, delighted by the landscape of Novi Pazar. Cezanne’s plans bring together tones from the warm cadmium coast of Dezeva to the coldest of blue of the distant mountains of Arnautluk. He [My friend] has been “haunted by the skeleton of Stupovi” whose silhouette “as a ghost crouches” up on the high hills, far above Dezeva. I still drink in the view until the first turn, from where it can no longer be seen.

A. Deroko, 1922¹

INTRODUCTION

Professor Aleksandar Deroko’s (1894-1988) wide-ranging interests in the field of architectural history included the protection and preservation of architectural heritage, as well as thorough examination and constant research of medieval Serbian (and the former Yugoslavian) architecture, and critical application of its principles to his own architectural practice. Still, none of these appears to enjoy significant attention within the realm of current architectural interest. Few scholars adopt Deroko’s critical position and re-examination of the ideas of ‘progress’ compared with ‘cultural continuity’, the ideas of ‘spirit’ and ‘inspiration’, or ‘good taste’ in architecture, all of them considering the needs and psychology of the human being – the ordinary man – as a starting point for the work of an architect. However, what precisely constitutes Deroko’s theory is not always easy to comprehend.

Although his numerous writings, starting from the third decade of the twentieth century, raise essential questions about the nature, the history, and the methodology of architecture,² Deroko never provides a systematic theory or exposition. He rarely explicated his assertions through any particular or dominant theoretical approach. With his simple, personal and associative manner of writing and honest, but sometimes underdeveloped arguments, he was perhaps less an architectural writer than an architect who wrote. Nevertheless, he wrote one of the first textbooks about Serbian architectural history, and became the first to stress the importance of vernacular buildings often overlooked by architectural historians. His writing and conclusions were always based on first-hand observation.

This paper aims to make two primary contributions to the existing body of work on professor Deroko. Firstly, it pays an honest tribute to Deroko himself and attempts to systematise the theoretical ideas of his written work in two fields: heritage protection and preservation, and architectural history; and secondly, it determines how progressive his approach to architecture and architectural history in the twentieth century was and remains so today.

The first part of the paper explores Deroko's relationship and life-long friendship with Rastko Petrović (1898-1949), a Serbian poet, writer, diplomat, literary and art critic. The content of Petrović's novels and poems reveal a deep and sincere artistic obsession with the romantic ideas of Slavic mythology. It is my belief that this is connected with Deroko's interest and passion for visiting inaccessible Serbian monasteries. Nonetheless, Deroko's romantic idea of reaching the remote walls of the past was at the same time combined with strong rationalism and realism in terms of heritage protection, with emphasis on surveying, conservation and preservation rather than restoration or ideal reconstruction of historical objects. In this, Deroko and Petrović appear to share similar contradictions. My aim is to show how their friendship influenced Deroko's theoretical ideas in architecture.

The second part of the paper examines how Deroko synthesised his research and his pedagogical work. Deroko wrote one of the first textbooks on the history of architecture in Serbia³ and here I investigate how he approached the topic and what criteria he used. I analyse his books and the methodology he applied and try to identify the theoretical principles that underpin them.

Finally, in the third part, I systematise the theoretical principles in which he believed as an architectural historian, architect-conservator, and as an architect-designer. I hope that the reader will gain a coherent picture of the important connection which I believe exists between Deroko's romantic visions and his rational approach to heritage surveys and his writing on architectural history. My paper is the first to explore this relationship; in particular, I propose that there is no opposition, but rather integration of seemingly antagonistic, well-known ideas of the twentieth-century architectural theory, revealed while reading "between" the lines of professor Deroko.

The material I use is already available in published form and predominantly includes Deroko's own written opus. Rather than aiming to provide new facts, I hope to possibly develop new understandings, believing that despite the availability of current sources, certain critical issues in Deroko's work often

remain unnoticed, unaddressed and/or sometimes misunderstood. Thus, I can almost hear the voice of professor Deroko saying: ‘If this paper serves as an orientation, support and help for further work, then it serves its purpose.’

ROMANTIC VISIONS VS. REJECTION OF IDEAL RECONSTRUCTION

Romantic Visions Seized between Tradition and Modernity

... obsessed with the magic of the old art ...

Considering the historical circumstances in which he lived, Deroko’s long life was eventful, exceptionally prolific, rich, and free. Born on September 4, 1894 in Belgrade, he spent almost his entire life in the Serbian and former Yugoslavian capital. Deroko grew up in an educated and cultured family, experiencing at an early age how his great-uncle Jovan Djordjević (1826-1900), a Serbian man of letters, the founder of the National Theatre in Belgrade and the Serbian National Theatre in Novi Sad. He compiled and prepared a Latin-Serbian dictionary and used to receive guests at times purely to practise his Latin.⁴ Deroko graduated in 1913 and enrolled at the Faculty of Technical Sciences (later the Faculty of Architecture, the University of Belgrade). Interrupting his schooling, as one of the 1,300 corporals he participated in the World War I and became one of the first Serbian war pilots.

Serbia. The 1920s were particularly important for his biography. This decade marked the beginning of Deroko’s thirty-year long friendship with Rastko Petrović, a unique figure in Serbian literature and culture. Petrović became his great and faithful friend, interlocutor and companion who enriched Deroko’s life above all others. Deroko continued his studies of architecture and art in Rome, Prague, Brno and Belgrade, graduating from University of Belgrade in 1926. He subsequently studied briefly on a French government grant in Paris, where he was taught by Gabriel Millet (1867-1953). Here, Petrović introduced him to a wide circle of renowned artists of the time.

Petrović (1898-1949), having survived the WWI, graduated from high school in Nice at the age of 17, and studied law in France. He is considered to be one of the most important and most progressive Serbian writers in the period between the two world wars.⁵

Petrović was intrigued by stories of origin, Slavdom, its mythology and the first sources of Serbian culture and art, and his first books clearly show this obsession. He was an author with a strong Dionysian sense of life, moving



Fig. 1. Deroko's drawing of Rastko Petrović, "Eternal Traveler Rastko Petrović". (Source: Jovanović, Z. *Aleksandar Deroko*. Beograd: RZZZSK, 1991, 34.)



Fig. 2. Aleksandar Deroko and Rastko Petrović, 1920. The two friends drawing each other under the Petrova Church. (Source: Popović, R. *Deroko i drugi o njemu*. Beograd: Turistička štampa, 1984, 37.)

Fig. 3. Rastko Petrović drawing of Aleksandar Deroko, 1923. (Source: Jovanović, Z. *Aleksandar Deroko*. Beograd: RZZZSK, 1991, 39.)



between extremes – from a cheerful, sensual dissolution of the Slavic pagan paradise in *Burleska Gospodina Peruna Boga Groma* (*The Burlesque of Lord Perun, the God of Thunder*) in 1921 to the dark atmosphere of destruction, violence and death in some poems in *Otkrovenje* (*Revelation*) in 1922.⁶ *The Burlesque of Lord Perun, the God of Thunder* is a novel often recognised as one of the most ambitious and unusual literary achievements in Serbian literature.⁷ In Slavic Pagan mythology Perun is the god of thunder, the highest god of the pantheon. Petrović's novel depicts the life of the old Slavic deities in a way that is full of eroticism, love, and free love, and includes numerous allegories, anachronisms, grotesque and absurd situations. The *Burlesque* embodies the avant-garde idea of mixing genres and literary types.

In the world of old Slavs – his permanent romantic preoccupation with Serbian folklore, medieval art and literature, Petrović sought sources of Serbian autochthonous poetic reconstruction. He introduced literary innovations and broke the unity of content, time and space – his narratives are 'unsettled', jumping from one topic to another. Having been exposed to new artistic aspirations in Paris, and under the strong influence of psychoanalysis, Petrović turned from conscious to unconscious aspects of human life. He developed a poetic theory of the disintegration of linguistic structures in order to provide purely sensual content; and he was the first among Serbian writers to become interested in exotic cultures. As a result, his quest for the synthesis between modernity and tradition, and the cosmopolitan and national spirit was novel, unexplored territory and extremely brave. Consequently, Petrović was misunderstood; being equally strange to proponents of the avant-garde and to conservatives, he was seen as incomplete, fragmented, and given to highs and lows.⁸ (Fig. 1)

Deroko and Petrović met in 1919. In his autobiography Deroko recalls the encounter fondly:

We met on his return to Belgrade, after World War I and Rastko's studies in Paris. He came from Paris thrilled by the legends of ancient Slavs ... and the vision of medieval Serbian art not only in terms of architecture and fresco painting, but also of the old literature, poetry, folklore epics ... as well as everything inherited, recorded and preserved to this day with stories, fairy tales, songs, costumes, jewellery. Rastko enthusiastically studied medieval Serbian art with professor Gabriel Millet in Paris ... and he was writing *The Burlesque of Lord Perun* at that time. I was in a similar mood then. I was also obsessed with the magic of that old art ... Soon the two of us would together eagerly see and experience it all close up.⁹

The two of them travelled together throughout Serbia, visited medieval cities, churches and monasteries, firmly bonded by their common admiration for Serbian medieval art (Fig. 2), which remained one of Deroko's prime interests throughout his professional life. They travelled 'for hours through the mountains and the waters', roaming the massifs of Serbia in search of hidden monasteries. The two would meticulously document every detail of the monuments of the past. However, their interest in these edifices went beyond archaeological fascination. Believing that it was the only way to "really experience", they would always spend the nights in a monastery, or behind the walls of an old fortification.¹⁰ Deroko and Petrović would sit in the darkness of these ancient buildings for hours, silent, immersed in an ecstatic experience of the past. Looking back at these years, Deroko notes that, at that time, the two truly believed that they did not create art, but only experienced ecstasy, asserting that it was the emotion that was important, not the art itself.¹¹ The introspective contemplations of history influenced them both, leaving a specific mark on their creative work.

Medieval art and art in general came to bond Deroko and Petrović the most. They documented and drew everything regarding the monasteries, with Petrović copying complete wall frescoes. Deroko claims that Petrović used to bring full blocks of drawings and notes from each of his travels, which were later sent to Millet in Paris – precious to Millet because he had not seen half of these monasteries until his last two journeys to Serbia.¹² Deroko notes that Petrović would survey building plans minutely, with measures for each façade and detail. The frescoes, icons and architecture also interested him. Although he was punctilious in recording entire Greek texts, his study never became dry or dull; it was always enlivened by real world observation and the excitement experienced 'as an artist in the midst of a museum of too rich art'.¹³ Deroko often describes Petrović drawing with whichever pens were at hand; a pencil and watercolour crayon occasionally and a small sketchbook were always somewhere close.¹⁴ (Fig. 3)

Paris. In the second half of the 1920s, Deroko and Petrović replaced their wanderings in the isolated wilderness of Serbia with the bustling streets of Paris. Graduating from the Architectural Department at the University of Belgrade, Deroko was awarded a French national scholarship. He arrived in Paris in 1926 to study under Gabriel Millet at the *École des Hautes Études*.¹⁵ Petrović was already there to greet Deroko and introduce him to the very core of the Parisian avant-garde, discussing Surrealism, Dadaism, and other progressive concepts with Charles Despiau (1874-1946), Maurice de Vlaminck (1876-1958), Pablo

Picasso (1881-1973), and Le Corbusier (1887-1965).¹⁶ Deroko established a personal friendship with Picasso, who gave him one of his coloured lithographs as a present (Fig. 4).¹⁷ Picasso and Deroko would also exchange letters after Deroko returned home to Belgrade, which reveals that they were more than mere acquaintances (Fig. 5).

Deroko wrote at length about his time with Petrović in Paris. The two would regularly visit Parisian museums, passionately and tirelessly. It was not with a desire to see everything, but only those pieces that would excite them, since “being excited” and discovering the artist’s true intention was of the utmost importance to them.¹⁸ Recalling the memories of his dearest friend at that time, Deroko noted that while others in Paris were drawing a moustache on the Mona Lisa, Petrović preferred the great masters of the past. Although he had a deep appreciation of modern art, he preferred the paintings of Ingres. He was obviously devoted to the classic values of art, having no desire to experiment with the oddities that ruled over Fine Arts at that time.¹⁹ The same tendencies were visible in Deroko’s work.

The inspiring life in Paris came to an end when Petrović had to return to Rome, and Deroko to school for “serious work”. Deroko describes Millet’s teaching method and his list of what was necessary for students to read at the National Library. Millet used to give his students tasks to prepare for presentations about monuments of medieval art in various distant parts of the world (predominantly the Middle East) that were still insufficiently studied, and to deliver lectures on the topics. Deroko comments on his own presentation and bad French, saying that ‘using images was enough to understand each other – that was the main thing’.²⁰ The strength and importance of image in architecture and belief in the idea that the visual prevails over the verbal would mark Deroko as an architectural historian throughout his career.

Deroko continuously wrote about his friend, and his drawings found a place in Petrović’s books.²¹ While Petrović’s diplomatic service required the friendship to be conducted at a distance from the mid-1930s, his travels could have further influenced their exchange of opinions and attitudes. Although a coherent picture of the ideas that motivated them may still be open to debate, Deroko and Petrović both appear to exhibit contradictions: on the one hand, there are romantic visions about the origin; on the other hand, a very rational and methodical approach to carrying out surveys and measuring buildings, and an absence of attempts at romantic ideal reconstructions.

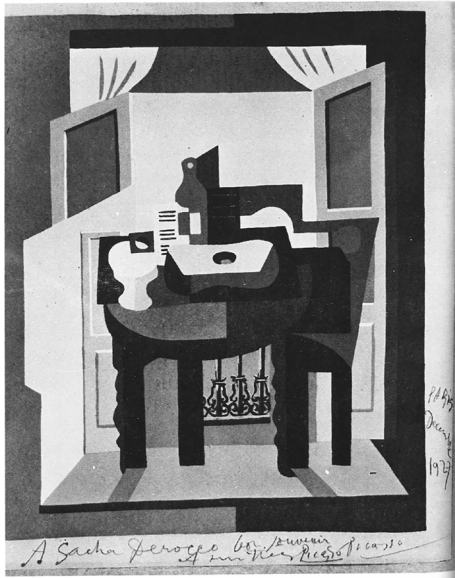


Fig. 4. Picasso's present for Deroko, lithography in color with dedication: "To Sasa Deroko, for memory and friendship, Picasso, Paris, December, 1923". (Source: Popović, R. Deroko i drugi o njemu. Beograd: Turistička stampa, 1984, 40.)

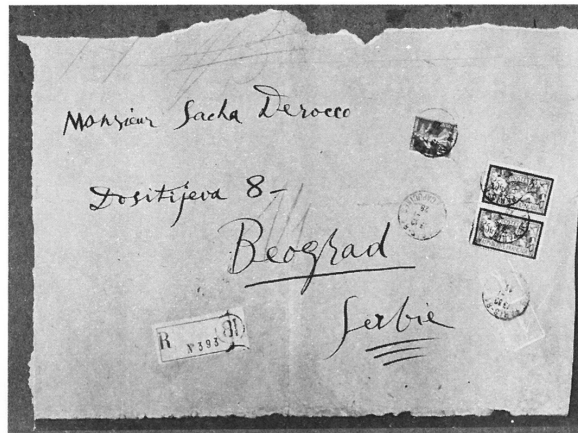
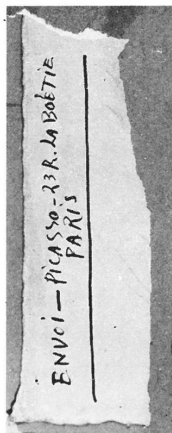


Fig. 5. Picasso's letter for Deroko. (Source: Popović, R. Deroko i drugi o njemu. Beograd: Turistička stampa, 1984, 41.)

Rational Language in the Field of Architectural Conservation and Preservation

*... what does not exist anymore
should not be reconstructed again ...*

On his return to Belgrade, Deroko started teaching the course *Byzantine and Old Serbian architecture* at the Faculty of Technical Sciences, and his academic journey to becoming a full-time professor began. He was an architectural historian directly involved in the conservation and preservation of architectural heritage. From the very beginning of his career, he completed numerous surveys, which he translated into the written word, continuously advocating and promoting heritage protection at international conferences and on committees.²² Sharing Petrović's obsession with the past, Deroko dedicated his life to heritage protection²³; contributed with his ideas to the development of theoretical methodological approach to heritage problems; raised important questions in the field of heritage preservation with regard to technical problems;²⁴ and contributed much to the education of younger generations. All the time he was completely aware of his multiple roles as an architect, university professor and a member of committees.²⁵ He had an inner urge to raise the issue of protection of the remains of Serbian medieval culture and art and everything he wrote confirms that his relationship to heritage was deeply personal.

Deroko's writings about fieldwork show that he had studied the old monuments on his travels around the country 'mostly on foot or on mountain pack-saddle horses, since there were very few real roads at that time'. The history of protection is not the subject of his writings, but rather personal memories from a time long before the existence of the Serbian institute for protection of monuments. Deroko recalls the practice at that time when confronted with challenging sites, surveys to be carried out with modest technology, without instruments, and in difficult conditions. The fieldwork experiences he describes convincingly and in such great detail, sharing practices in the field of protection that were "without any protection indeed", often carried enormous risks, and sometimes led to fatal outcomes. Sites which could only be reached in the saddle of a mountain pony, for hours over steep hills; with "no path, or even a small track leading to a monastery" were common in the field of protection in those days.²⁶ On finally arriving at a site they would not have any equipment to conduct a survey. Deroko reports:

'We should have set the scaffold vault to protect the frescoes, and the dome, and me – up there on some rickety, makeshift scaffolding trying to catch centres to tailor the templates for the curves... and I wanted to photograph at the same time as well ... At times, I lost my balance and

found myself gaping down at a chasm behind me. I was drenched in sweat and hardly managed to grab onto, I do not even know what, with those sweaty hands.’ He further recalls: ‘I didn’t keep my head, but kept my camera instead.’²⁷

Although obviously carried out with very modest apparatus, Deroko affirms that it was solid work – ‘primitive but solid’, and writes respectfully of the old experts with many examples of such work.²⁸ Experts in the field apparently did architecture, mosaics, fresco paintings, everything that was considered art and heritage.

Deroko would often criticise incompetence in dealing with heritage, which caused considerable damage.²⁹ He raises two groups of questions regarding the conservator’s approach to old monuments. The first considers basic concepts and attitudes towards relocation of heritage remains. Although aware that with this issue he was raising one of the most troubling problems for museums internationally, Deroko was obviously against their removal, emphasising that his main interest was in pieces of architecture that were parts of complete monuments on the site, rather than in moveable objects, such as free-standing sculptures and paintings.³⁰

The second group of questions is related to the basic approaches to the field of heritage, namely: is it better to carry out restoration or conservation? Deroko recalls examples of Viollet le Duc who “ruined Avignon”, as well as the Greeks who did the same with the Church of Saint Demetrius in Thessaloniki after the Great Fire. On the other hand, the Stoa of Attalos in Athens, which was also completely reconstructed may be a good example, leading Deroko to conclude that there is no single answer to all questions for all cases. Considering the situation in Serbia, he promotes conservation and reiterates that the basic attitude in assessing and deciding what to do is much more important than the scale of damage; keeping authenticity is primary.³¹ When it comes to Serbian medieval cities, Deroko is convinced that it is wrong to attempt to reconstruct completely what was destroyed:

What does not exist anymore, even if it is known exactly what it looked like, should not be reconstructed again. It is best is to preserve what still exists and protect this from further deterioration. Those medieval cities that are further away from the village, whose walls and towers still hold, should be cleaned of debris and weeds; unsafe areas should be made safe, and driveways and paths should be made in order to make those cities accessible to all.³²

Deroko's rational and methodological approach can also be detected in his advice that all necessary research and surveys should be done while doing preservation work, believing that ruins will certainly reveal other artefacts from the distant past. Deroko admits that there are always a number of doubts as to what extent something should be preserved as it was found, and what new should be added. However, his experience with 'old architecture on the ground' makes him certain about the importance of gaining 'better knowledge of the whole matter', revising 'the data by personal knowledge and remarks', and helping 'against fraudulent reconstruction'.³³ (Fig. 6)

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH TO ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

The way Deroko synthesised his research work with his pedagogical work is connected with his dual nature, both the romantic and the rational side of his personality. More than thirty years of tireless travels and research on architectural heritage enabled Deroko to become one of the founders of the history of architecture in Serbia as a modern scholarly discipline. The focus of his interest, research and publication was medieval architecture, and his work forks out in three directions: monumental architecture – churches and monasteries as the paradigm of the golden age of Serbian architecture, on one hand; cities and fortifications whose existence and characteristics he encountered during fieldwork on the other; and thirdly, vernacular architecture in which was his great interest and passion.

Deroko's best-known publication on Serbian monumental architecture is entitled *Monumentalna i dekorativna arhitektura u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji* (*Monumental and Decorative Architecture in Medieval Serbia*).³⁴ Only three books on this topic had previously been written: *L'ancien art Serbe* by Gabriel Millet in 1919, *Žiža i Lazarica* by Miloje Vasić (1869-1956) in 1928, and *Srednjovekovna umetnost u Srbiji i Makedoniji* by Djurdje Bošković (1904-1990) in 1948.³⁵ Deroko's book, first released in 1953, resulted from: 1) immediate surveys (started in the 1920s); 2) numerous research papers/studies that followed, and were published in daily newspapers, and reports; and 3) research of existing historical sources. The book was a university textbook and was mostly well received in professional circles.³⁶ It was praised for showing a clear and precise methodology and Deroko's unique place in Serbian history, architecture and art.³⁷

Secondly, Deroko's systematic study of Serbian medieval towns and fortifications resulted in Deroko's publications *Srednjevekovni gradovi u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji (Medieval Towns in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia)*,³⁸ *Srednjevekovni gradovi u Srbiji (Medieval Towns in Serbia)*,³⁹ *Srednjevekovni gradovi na Dunavu (Medieval Towns on Danube)*.⁴⁰ He emphasizes that almost all the basic data were collected or checked during his fieldwork, especially for towns that had not previously been presented.⁴¹ *Medieval towns in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia* was a unique study of medieval fortified towns and the first to combine historical data and documents with illustrations.

Thirdly, Deroko's research on traditional vernacular architecture that seemed to be a pioneering venture,⁴² resulted in his books *Folklorna arhitektura u Jugoslaviji (Vernacular Architecture in Yugoslavia)*,⁴³ and *Narodno neimarstvo* in two volumes: *Stara seoska kuća*⁴⁴ (*Vernacular Architecture I, Old Village-house*) and *Stara varoška kuća*⁴⁵ (*Vernacular Architecture II, Old Town house*). They were considered to be unique and the most complete studies on vernacular architecture in Serbia.⁴⁶ Deroko began to reveal the value of Serbian vernacular architecture early in his research and fieldwork, while noticing and immediately drawing huts and houses with hearthstones, their details, bent protrusions, wooden door locks, as well as pieces of furniture and tools. His first two books and the only pre-war publications – *Narodno neimarstvo I and II (Vernacular Architecture I and II)*,⁴⁷ are actually collections of drawings in two volumes. Both publications comprise one sheet of text and 19 sheets of “drawings” with Deroko's hand-written notes on sepia paper, with pagination in red, which elevated them from mere books to exquisite items of art. Traditional architectural skills, the secrets of carpenters, types of chimneys, porches/verandahs, windows, locks, and interiors, are depicted through the unique artistic means of Deroko's drawings. (Fig. 7)

Methodology

... according to “one certain logic” ...

Deroko offers a comparative analysis of monumental architecture of “a certain period and character”, aiming to establish a general overview that had not previously existed.⁴⁸ Text and graphics are employed more or less equally for each monument. Plans of the monuments are given schematically and are mostly to the same scale to enable the dimensions of individual monuments to be compared. Deroko points out that this is the first attempt to present plans in such a way, which he considers essential for each comparative study (Fig. 8); the photos mainly show the general appearance of the monuments, while

drawings explain stylistic features and details; maps provide guidance and comprehensive historical overview, a brief technical reminder at the end of the book defines the main technical terms used in the text, while summary and explanation of photos in both French and English languages enable foreign scholars to use the book.⁴⁹ It seems very important for Deroko to use a clear and simple terminology and to highlight the point that presented architecture does not make a unified entity, but instead comprises different branches developed under the conditions and circumstances in specific areas and at a certain time.

Following Millet's work, Deroko adheres to the known architectural classification of medieval Serbia. It seems that he wanted to broaden Millet's existing systematisation of three "schools" (that he calls "groups"). At the very beginning of his book Deroko lists five, with an obvious need to discuss subtle differences and overlaps between them.⁵⁰ However, he finally outlines the already known three – the School of Raška, the Serbo-Byzantine School, and the Morava School, as the most important and prominent. As an architectural historian, Deroko possesses clear awareness of the set methodology and the basic criteria, occasionally pointing out that whenever a certain stylistic group or specific building does not have distinguished architectural and stylistic unity, it will not be described in detail. He concentrates consistently on the overall balance of the study, where the main criteria are the architectural and stylistic significance of the building.

When moving to specific subsections dedicated to each "group", he explains the spatial and stylistic features of its buildings, following the sequence: spatial structure (typology according to floor plans), building materials, roofs, facades, interior decoration, and exterior decoration. In his conclusion of the Raška group, Deroko confirms that buildings' classifications were determined regardless of the time and place of their construction. This demonstrates that he was not interested in a chronological classification of architecture but rather in the basic architectural characteristics.⁵¹ Since his publication was made with respect to architectural rather than political development, and the second only helps to better understand the first one, Deroko testifies that he takes a look at all aspects of the area he is presenting in parallel, but always in relation to the relevant group. He presents only the most architecturally significant of these buildings, avoiding overloading the book with those that have only archaeological and historical significance.⁵²

When Deroko writes about medieval towns and fortresses, his methodology of architectural history is somewhat different from that employed for monumental architecture. He brings a general overview of medieval towns, and it seems that he aims to provide an image of those monuments not only as archaeological sites but as living environments. His intention is primarily to give an inventory of the most important monuments in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia, with a brief description of them, architectural sketches or photographic images when possible, and finally to summarise the most important historical data. As in other books, Deroko sets out (and explains) a clear initial framework to which he adheres throughout his writings.⁵³ He also gives an explanation of terms, words and expressions important for the topic, with both ancient and modern meanings.⁵⁴

Deroko treats these towns primarily as monuments of architecture, while historical, military and other moments are included in order to complement the image of life in them. Deroko believes that medieval towns provided a more outstanding testimony to the cultural achievement and artistic ability of Serbian people than did medieval monastery buildings.⁵⁵ The architectural form/shape of any part of any medieval city depends on the particular conditions that had to be met.⁵⁶ Therefore they represent a kind of document and source that help to reconstruct certain moments in the history, economics, social relations and lifestyles of Serbian ancestors.⁵⁷ (Fig. 9).

In his third group of books, Deroko wanted to comprehend the vernacular architecture of the villages and the townhouses in Serbia, again mainly from the architectural point of view.⁵⁸ An ethnographic study and display of national life and houses, a sociological study, various mutual relations and how these develop, and “inner life” of those buildings, were only a background for Deroko – a basis from which spatial development starts.⁵⁹ The main objective of his textbooks is to attempt to present a brief systematic overview of the principal and most characteristic ‘shapes and appearance’ of residential houses in the villages and towns in all corners of the former Yugoslavia. So, Deroko’s categorisation of vernacular architecture arises out of the building functions primarily – their programme, form/shape, style, and construction materials. In doing so, he pays particular attention to the skill of building and expression of aesthetic aspirations. Deroko underlines that the shapes and appearance of architecture developed and evolved over the centuries (from both the distant and recent past) always and inevitably, spontaneously and sincerely, as a reflection of the needs, purpose, function, and a rational use of building materials – and without any particular ambition for a fashionable or useless embellishment.

In doing so, affection and a sensibility for what is expressive helped in the construction of distinct and harmonious entities, while decoration was tastefully limited only to certain parts of these entities, even for household items. Deroko gives attention primarily to these architectural values, especially considering that such architecture is rapidly disappearing.⁶⁰ His immensely broad approach to vernacular buildings made him be interested not only in houses, but in everything else “subordinate” to them as well, from outbuildings of lower value, tools and other items of daily use, to the decorations in which a builder’s approach similar to modern artistic abstraction could often be seen (Fig. 10).

Deroko relies primarily on the material that still existed and could be observed, albeit no longer intact in the sites he would explore.⁶¹ Existing sources on the topic of vernacular architecture, including many old travel books abundant with data, he used only for the parts he considered relevant to building skills, careful not to lose the main idea with excessive details or “exceptions to the rule”. His goal was more to make an attempt at synthesis than to enumerate all possible examples, data and phenomena as he did with medieval towns (‘settlements’),⁶² underlining his distinct approach in accordance with the material he had available.

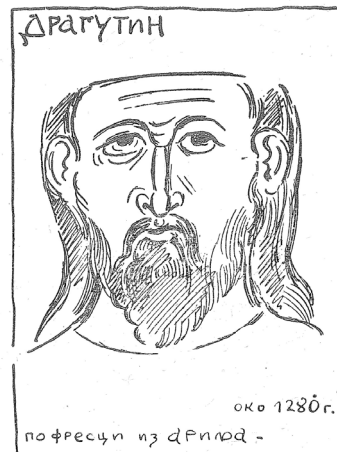
Deroko researched global architectural history as well, published in his book *Arhitektura starog veka (Architecture of Old Century)*.⁶³ This historical overview is again filled with drawings, illustrations, and theoretical positions resulting from the knowledge he obtained from fieldwork and from personal study of existing material.⁶⁴

Deroko’s methodological approach is again obvious from the very beginning: he presents more general overviews, examples of monuments themselves with their details and stylistic characteristics, and places less emphasis on over-detailed historical data (places, dates, and figures). He insisted on presenting the architectural activity of certain ethnic groups and certain historical periods that could be “architecturally” classified into distinct units. He identified/recorded the important material and social moments; circumstances resulting in the appearance and development of architectural activities; and the mutual influences and connections between civilizations. However, it is obvious that in Deroko’s approach to architectural history, exclusive division by chronology was subordinated to the division by “one certain logic”. Deroko believed in a chronological approach to architectural history only as a general framework.⁶⁵ He explained that he didn’t take one and the same rigid system for civilizations – the strict chronology of the monuments or the character of buildings and



Fig. 11. Deroko's drawing of life in medieval towns, scenes representing ploughing.
(Source: Deroko, A. *Srednjevekovni gradovi u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji*, 11, fig. 1)

175
Fig. 12. Deroko's drawing of King Dragutin, according to authentic portrait from old fresco.
(Source: Deroko, A. *Srednjevekovni gradovi u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji*, 114, fig. 99)



construction methods. The first way would be largely historical, Deroko says, while classification by the character of buildings would be disadvantageous to the extent that civilizations often constructed buildings of different character/type, giving examples of palaces in Babylon and Assyria, tombs and temples in Egypt, and temples in Greece. His approach was rather “according to one certain logic” – and it always sought to point out everything that was most important from the architectural point of view for a particular civilization he presented.

Text vs. Image

... to evoke a complete picture of reality ...

Perhaps partly coming from his early Parisian and medieval Serbian experiences with Petrović, or as a result of his dual nature – both romantic and rational, Deroko believed that architectural book illustrations have the same value as textual explanations. His books are suffused with plans, photos, façade drawings, portals, windows, and other architectural elements. His drawings are recognisable, abundant with details, and ‘designed to facilitate access to the complex contents for the readers’.⁶⁶ As a result, apart from providing arguably the most complete history of Serbian medieval architecture to date, Deroko’s publications possess unquestionable artistic value.

In the books devoted to medieval towns and fortifications, his drawings of town life depict scenes representing medieval people, warriors in battle, shepherds and peasants ploughing, playing and dancing, almost as if seen by a medieval painter of miniatures or marble carver in the suburbs of such towns. They are included to balance technical content and evoke a complete picture of reality at that time (Fig. 11). At times, sketches of people who owned the towns or were fighting for them were also included, according to authentic portraits that were featured on old frescoes⁶⁷ (Fig. 12). A variety of Deroko’s original drawings and their visual language unmistakably suggest the atmosphere of old times.

Interestingly, in all his publications about vernacular architecture, text and drawings swapped positions. Drawings now became an essential aspect of narrative and the words only an illustration of the drawings (even when he used legends or when words described the details). The aesthetic appearance of his publications was obviously of great importance for Deroko. It seems that he supervised the printing process of his books, taking care of print style, photography, drawings, and book covers: everything that influenced the graphic appearance of his books.⁶⁸

THEORETICAL IDEAS IN ARCHITECTURE:
CONSTANCY AND CHANGE

... great works of art live far beyond their own time ...

Deroko's approach to architectural history, heritage and design was forged during his wanderings in the wilderness of Serbia shared with his friend Petrović. Petrović was inspired by ancient Slavic mythology, and his romantic visions of the history influenced Deroko, as did the avant-garde Paris of the twentieth century. As a result, from Deroko's writings, certain specific theoretical ideas that seem to be located between tradition and modernity and that embrace both – constancy and change in architecture, can be deduced:

The Ideas of Progress and Cultural continuity with Universal values. Deroko strongly believes in approaching architecture with ethical values, appreciating and welcoming even the most extreme attempt in the arts in general if it is "sincere" and "honest". Even when such an approach is ephemeral, it always helps to clarify something and leads to some "progress". However, early in his writings, Deroko immediately also raises the question of whether art needs progress at all, confirming his rejection of any such need. Instead of the pursuit of progress in architecture, he believes there are simply different means of expression and different values.⁶⁹

Deroko further discusses the question of whether architecture and urbanism are art at all. He believes that there is an architecture that can be art since there are examples from prehistory onwards when architecture was not only utilitarian. However, there is also architecture that simply cannot stand as art alone, he claims. Many practical things can be aesthetically appealing, but their function is their core value. This refers especially to a house which is primarily a person's shelter and should be as comfortable as possible. Deroko believes that such a house can hardly be an artistic creation as well. He saw vernacular architecture as an archetype of functionality resulting from the real conditions of a given place:

The shape of the building is only a pure function of the building material of an area concerned, the climatic conditions and the practical needs of a man; ... this give shapes of different kind ... and finally, it crystallizes one, not sought after by the aesthetics created by itself ... of course that the taste of the unnamed master builders and their affection for various decorations, play a role, and this taste is in function of life circumstances and local characteristics. Hence, vernacular architecture is an expression of the creative capacities of particular region, and a mirror of its artistic concepts.⁷⁰

He believed that decisions about building must be determined by these natural conditions.⁷¹ Deroko thinks that the role of an architect is to provide a man with ‘at least some quiet corner in the midst of the general bustle of streets, squares, and transport nodes’.⁷² Having shown again his belief in freedom in art and his understanding of modern art, he nevertheless reminds us that in creations of architecture and urbanism common/ordinary people must live. Deroko always had in mind the relationship between architecture and the ordinary man for whom it is actually created. With a slogan ‘Freedom is great, but the risk is big!’⁷³ it seems that he rejects the modernists’ exclusive pursuit of constant progress in architecture, warning his younger colleagues against it, although modestly pointing out that he does not want to judge or criticise. By constantly drawing attention to the modesty and dignity of a monument, Deroko compares and even equates architectural features and human personal characteristics.⁷⁴ The principles of functionality, stability and timelessness associated with human existence are ever present for Deroko. He often reiterates that these universal principles of architecture are in accordance with the fundamental objectives of any significant human creation. In every major culture, they were selected as means and the guarantor of social relations, peace and stability – and are recognisable manifestations of common moral world as well.

The Ideas of “Good taste” and Monumentality. Deroko considers erecting a monument as both easy and difficult, because it is apparent recognition and a reminder of a worthy man, or a famous event. He pays due respect to the notion of monumentality in architectural history. He considers it an aesthetic criterion that can be provided by two basic conditions: first – an imposing exterior appearance, achieved by bold modelling of simple and unbroken masses; and the second – a unique interior space, formed by a harmonious, spacious, attractive and well-lit cavity.⁷⁵ However, he believes that monumentality is not in size, as:

The size can even be dangerous because it imposes itself too much, and so it can point out to the imperfections if they exist ... taste and measure should prevail ... that’s why, even when it seems easy to set up the basic concepts, it is simple and complex equally.⁷⁶

Apparently, Deroko advocates that good taste and modesty, rather than fashion, should always prevail in architecture. His recipe for good architecture would follow the scheme: successful idea – which suits the purpose/fits the function – expressed with the “right measure” and “good taste”, always respecting the logic of nature and its laws.



Fig. 13. Deroko's linear drawing – cartographic overview of vernacular buildings in various parts of former Yugoslavia (Source: Jovanović, Z. *Aleksandar Deroko*. Beograd: RZZZSK, 1991, 34.)

The Ideas of "Spirit" and "Inspiration - not an Imitation". Deroko believed in learning from the history of architecture, often stressing that heritage deserves respect. In his writings, possibly unintentionally, but still relatively often, Deroko enters into a discussion about the *Zeitgeist*. He advocates a position that:

Works of art are unavoidably related to the time in which they appear and develop. As such, they are inevitably expression of their environment and the relevant time. A monument however, always tends to last long, possibly eternally, so it must not be tied only to the taste of ephemeral current fashion. As a result, great works of art live far beyond their own time, and can stay modern at all times.⁷⁷

It seems that Deroko modestly criticizes modernism for its claim of appropriate response to contemporary culture and the rejection of everything else as a product of a different historical context.

He occasionally mentions the word "spirit" in a positive sense in his writings, presumably believing in a spiritual continuum between different historical periods because this has always been essential for vigour and inventiveness in architecture. Observations on the mutual influence of distant places and transfer of architectural elements are unavoidable in Deroko's architectural history and he often uses analogy as a method (Fig. 13). Constantly drawing attention to architectural elements travelling through space and time⁷⁸, he presents the mutual influence of building activity between nations and traditions as something natural. He notes that the many architectural forms/shapes transferred to medieval Serbia were not simply imposed by foreign master builders, and that the 'borrowed and foreign' identity of such forms/shapes did not long persist. Rather the old Serbian builders combined, reinterpreted and treated adopted elements in their own particular way. Regardless of forms/shapes and individual elements, the dominant/strongest characteristic of art is "its spirit". Deroko pays attention to the fact that what was built in medieval Serbia, while not completely original in style, still makes Serbian architectural monuments recognisable, and distinct from other sacral architectural monuments in this part of the world, sometimes even exceeding them.⁷⁹ This leads us to the conclusion that he was advocating "spirit" in architecture only in the sense of spirituality that exists regardless of its specific time.⁸⁰

That past can be recaptured only in "spirit" since it unmistakably carries the patina of antiquity and connects it with the present.⁸¹ However, at the same time, from Deroko's very first texts it is obvious that he was against the idea of mimicking historical buildings in new ones:

Less and less is being built today in the way it was built for hundreds of years. Nothing can help here, nor should it be artificially and vigorously corrected because, one time lives under one circumstances and its building style is a spontaneous expression of only those occasions and that time. A different time, whether wanting to or not, creates under different circumstances, its own, at least somewhat different style. ... There were attempts to make up and officially impose a style that would represent the epoch in question. The results did not last long.⁸²

Similar attitudes showing that Deroko does not advocate literal imitation of the past with new architecture can be found in his numerous articles.⁸³ He calls on architects to appreciate the past, underlining that ‘cultural heritage is to be kept up with’ and should serve as an inspiration, a refreshment and encouragement to a poetic idea with its naivety and deep sensibility, but not as a direct source for imitation.

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Deroko raises many questions and admits that he does not know answers, showing that the architectural profession has to deal with numerous, difficult, and at times insoluble problems⁸⁴ – a prime example of his not offering a definite solution with his architectural theory, if we can call it a theory at all. However, he certainly belongs to a group of architectural historians who, with his warm and intimate writing style, researched and presented the way architectural works were designed and built throughout history. His approach to architectural history was based on the supposition that it is possible to accumulate knowledge on the elements of good design, and that there is obviously much to learn from the way in which architectural works were shaped throughout the past. He was interested in discovering the design methods of anonymous architects, and in explaining how he believed buildings of the past were designed. He sought to identify anonymous builders’ approaches to basic concepts of function, space, form/shape, architectural details and the way they were modelled, and all the formal qualities of their buildings, along with their mutual influences and transpositions. In other words, Deroko in his writings predominantly studied and presented formal properties of architecture and tried to outline an intellectual framework for understanding how a particular building, medieval city, or vernacular house was built.

Although he does believe in a creative “spirit” in architecture of the past and present, it appears that Deroko does not in general trust the Modernist ideas of “the spirit of the time”. Similarly, he advocates the preservation of actual

historical buildings and medieval towns, but he rejects the idea of copying them in new buildings. He does not recognise innovation or pursuing “the idea of progress” in architecture as a virtue. Instead, he is interested in the pursuit of what is universal – valid for all times and, at the same time particular and specific to their own local region. In his writings, Deroko supports traditional principles of architecture, primarily related to the functionality and stability of buildings as an absolute requirement for good architecture. Although he deeply believes in constant and natural transformation in architecture, its elements and details since time immemorial, he also insists on the lasting quality of architecture that goes beyond the lifetime of its builders and believes that anonymous builders in vernacular buildings developed both – universal values and local styles. For Deroko it is important that architecture successfully meets the demands of function and construction in different political systems, cultures and geographical areas, standing the test of time as a “canon” that plays a real role in any culture and sets standards of excellence.

So, in all human creation, the attitude that equates the two – the search for authenticity and awareness of one’s roots – characterises Deroko’s thoughts. Only seemingly antagonistic, in his theoretical ideas there is actually no opposition; rather, there is a delicate but decisive balance between tradition and modernity, universality and regionalism, and constancy and change. The same as with Petrović, Deroko’s romantic visions about the origin on one side, and his rational and methodical approach to the surveying of heritage and to writing of both – his early texts and later architectural textbooks on the other, resulted in very novel, unique and unsurpassed theoretical ideas in architecture of the early twentieth century. Although not acknowledged in his own country, his ideas are still part of the mainstream architectural discourse, and are discussed and debated internationally.

NOTES

N.B.

I would like to express my gratitude to Branko Mitrović for initiating my interest in the problems presented in this paper, and for the original stimulus to write about professor Aleksandar Deroko. My gratitude also belongs to Karen Wise and Iris Arsić, whose selfless help with the written English of the paper was decisive for its final form.

- 1 Aleksandar Deroko, "Tri manastira srednjovekovnog Rasa" [Three Monasteries of Medieval Ras] *Misao X* (1922): 1,673-1,686.
- 2 Full bibliography of Deroko's published work see in: Zoran M. Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko* (Beograd: Republički zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture, 1991), 101-109.
- 3 The very first textbook was Djurdje Bošković, *Srednjovekovna umetnost u Srbiji i Makedoniji (crkvena arhitektura i skulptura)* (Beograd: Jugoslovenska knjiga, 1948). However, Deroko's textbooks were the most popular and pedagogically very appropriate; more about this later in the text.
- 4 Aleksandar Deroko, *A ondak je letijo jeroplan nad Beogradom* (Beograd: Narodna knjiga, 1983; Beograd: Dereta, 2013), 9.
- 5 Dejan Ajdačić (ed). *Rastko Petrović – Elektronska Biblioteka*, 2003; https://www.rastko.rs/knjizevnost/umetnicka/rpetrovic/index_c.html.

- 6 Jovan Deretić, “Kratka istorija srpske književnosti,” in *Rastko Petrović – Elektronska Biblioteka*, edited by Dejan Ajdačić.
- 7 Zdravko Petrović, *Kreativni haos Burleske gospodina Peruna boga groma: o konstruisanoj dekonstrukciji avangardnog romana Rastka Petrovića* (Beograd: Službeni glasnik, 2011); Predrag Petrović, *Avantgardni roman bez romana; Poetika kratkog romana srpske avant-garde* (Beograd: Institut za književnost i umetnost, 2008).
- 8 Zoran Mišić, “Rastko Petrović”, in *Rastko Petrović – Elektronska Biblioteka*, edited by Dejan Ajdačić.
- 9 Deroko, *A ondak je letijo jeroplan nad Beogradom*, 127-129.
- 10 Deroko, *A ondak je letijo jeroplan*, 153.
- 11 Deroko, *A ondak je letijo*, 154-156.
- 12 Aleksandar Deroko, *Mangupluci oko Kalimegdana* (Beograd: Dereta, 2014), 86-87.
- 13 Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 87.
- 14 Deroko, *A ondak je letijo jeroplan*, 151-157; Deroko even compares his drawings with his literature by saying that ‘many Rastko’s verses and prose are pure visual images of distinctive colour’.
- 15 Deroko, *A ondak je letijo*, 158.
- 16 Deroko, *A ondak je letijo*, 160-72.
- 17 Radovan Popović (ed), *Deroko i drugi o njemu* (Beograd: Turistička štampa, 1984), 41; It was 1927, in Picasso’s studio; he told him to watch out on his way out that a doorman does not see it, because at that time each Picasso’s sketch still belonged to gallerist Rosenberg under contract.
- 18 Deroko, *A ondak je letijo*, 159.
- 19 Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 182; Deroko, *A ondak je letijo*, 125, 152-157.
- 20 Deroko, *A ondak je letijo*, 159.
- 21 Interview with Moma Dimić, *Savremenik* 6 (1985); in: Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 231-263.
- 22 On Deroko’s role in the history of heritage protection in Serbia and his involvement in the field of the architectural heritage conservation and preservation see: Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 41-50; For the history of heritage protection in Serbia in general see: Milan Popadić, “The Preservation and Presentation of Medieval Heritage in Serbia in the 19th and 20th Centuries,” *Imagining the Past. The Reception of the Middle Ages in Serbian Art from the 18th to the 21st Century. Byzantine Heritage and Serbian Art III* (Belgrade, 2016), 211-218; Miladin Lukić, “The Functioning of the Institutes for Protection of Cultural Monuments in Serbia,” *Condition of the Cultural and Natural Heritage in the Balkan Region, Proceedings*, (Kladovo, 2006), 341-356.
- 23 Aleksandar Deroko, “Kruna i blago cara Dušana,” [The Crown and the Treasure of Emperor Dušan] *Vreme* (6 October 1932; 14 September 1932); Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 101.
- 24 Aleksandar Deroko, “Povodom jednog S.O.S. apela još od pre dvadeset godina,” [On the occasion of one S.O.S. appeal from twenty years ago] *Misao* XII (1923): 838-842; “O zaštiti starina,” [About Protection of Antiquities] *Srpski književni glasnik* XXXIII (1933): 373-380, 449-457, 533-544; “Restauracija manastira Sedmovratne Žiče privodi se kraju,” [Restoration of the Sedmovratna Žiča Monastery is Coming to an End] *Vreme* (19 August 1932); Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 94, 104.
- 25 Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 101.
- 26 Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 95, 102; To reach the Sopoćani monastery, Deroko and Popović used a carriage to the village Doljani, but further on they had to jump over the wooden fences between yards belonging to Arnaut (Ottoman term for an Albanian) and plum yards, to the disapproval of the residents.
- 27 Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 95-96.

- 28 Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 103; Deroko writes: ‘... to “rescue” and transfer the entire floor mosaic in Stobi, Strala painter dug out the ground beneath it and put under the wheels of trollies, and managed to pull everything, together with the base, as a single block’.
- 29 Deroko, “Povodom jednog S.O.S. apela još od pre dvadeset godina”; Deroko, “Kruna i blago cara Dušana”; Aleksandar Deroko, *Srednjovekovni gradovi u Srbiji, Makedoniji i Crnoj Gori* (Beograd: Prosveta, 1950), 7; Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 95, 97, 99, 100.
- 30 Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 103-106. With the example of Lepenski vir, Deroko challenges authenticity because the in situ original was gone.
- 31 Deroko, “Tri manastira srednjovekovnog Rasa”; Deroko, “Povodom jednog S.O.S. apela još od pre dvadeset godina”; Deroko, “Izdanja narodnog muzeja u Beogradu,” *Srpski književni glasnik* XXXII (1931): 67-69; Deroko, “Restauracija manastira Sedmokratne Žiče privodi se kraju”; Deroko, “Na putu za kolevku drevne države Nemanjića,” [On the Way to the Cradle of the Ancient State of Nemanjići] *Vreme* (20 July 1933); Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 103-104, 93-94.
- 32 Deroko, *Srednjovekovni gradovi u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji*, 206; ‘This would neither be an expensive nor a big job, because we have very few relatively good preserved medieval cities. Medieval cities located in the urban areas may be converted into parks after cleaning and stabilising, but nothing new should be built there. In that way, those cities would become aesthetically pleasing and attractive parts of the landscape, suitable for contemporary times, and not just uninteresting archaeological and museum objects. Even those cities of which only foundations are preserved, should be dug out, unblocked, made safe, and protected from further re-burying and overgrowing weeds. All of them should be entrusted to supervision by local national authorities to save them from further demolition. Only by these means can those old monuments be preserved, and become documents and testimonies that will bind us to the ancient past and enable us to know it better.’ Similar opinion can be found in numerous articles Deroko wrote in the 1930s.
- 33 See note 32 and Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 104-106.
- 34 Aleksandar Deroko, *Monumentalna i dekorativna arhitektura u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji. Monumental and Decorative Architecture in Medieval Serbia* (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1953; second edition 1962); later, *Narodna arhitektura – knjiga I, Spomenici arhitekture IX-XVIII veka u Jugoslaviji (National Architecture – Book I, Architectural Monuments of IX-XVIII century in Yugoslavia)*, Beograd: Građevinska knjiga, 1964; luxury edition in French, *Avec Les Maitres d’Autrefois (Monastères médiévaux en Serbie, Macédoine, Monténégro)*, (Beograd: Turistička štampa 1967).
- 35 See: Aleksandar Deroko, *Starinar* I (1950): 280 (Review of the book: Djurdje Bošković, *Srednjovekovna umetnost u Srbiji i Makedoniji (crkvena arhitektura i skulptura)*, Beograd, 1948). See also: Miloje Vasić, *Žiča i Lazarica* (Beograd: Izdavačka knjizarnica Gece Kona, 1928), VII-VIII; Foreword from November 1927 that mentions Deroko between other names who ‘actively, gladly and with self-sacrifice participated in the preparation of this work, and often in the discussion gave an incentive for new observations and new thought ... The front cover and book dedication are Mr. Aleksandar Deroko, an architect.
- 36 Jovanović, *Aleksandar Deroko*, 32, cites: M. Rogić, ‘Knjiga o arhitekturi u Jugoslaviji od IX-XVIII veka (prikaz knjige S. Nenadovića)’, Beograd: *Sveske društva istoričara* 9-10 (1980): 44-45, as the source that considered Deroko’s books as not having the breadth of Mango or Krautheimer on Byzantine art.
- 37 Vojislav Korać, *Legende Beogradskog Univerziteta*, 33-36.
- 38 Aleksandar Deroko, *Srednjovekovni gradovi u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji* (Beograd: Prosveta, 1950).
- 39 Aleksandar Deroko, *Srednjovekovni gradovi u Srbiji* (biblioteka Kolarčevog narodnog univerziteta 5), (Beograd, 1951).
- 40 Aleksandar Deroko, *Srednjovekovni gradovi na Dunavu* (Beograd, 1964).

- 41 Deroko, *Srednjevekovni gradovi u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji*, 7. For cities that were not already written about, the data were taken from relevant publications, and at the same time were revised. Deroko confirmed that he used the existing literature of the cities, although it was not cited everywhere in the text, in order to prevent it being cluttered with remarks and less clear as a result (bibliography is attached to the end of the book).
- 42 Jovan Nešković, "In memoriam, A. Deroko," *Glasnik društva konzervatora Srbije* 13 (1989): 284-287; Deroko's work on vernacular architecture compared with the study of Serbian medieval monuments that did have a certain tradition that could be followed.
- 43 Aleksandar Deroko, *Narodna arhitektura II, Folklorna arhitektura u Jugoslaviji* (Beograd: Građevinska knjiga, 1964; Beograd: Naučna knjiga, 1974).
- 44 Aleksandar Deroko, *Narodno neimarstvo I, Stara seoska kuća* (Beograd: SANU, 1968).
- 45 Aleksandar Deroko, *Narodno Neimarstvo II, Stara varoška kuća* (Beograd: SANU, 1968).
- 46 Nešković, "In memoriam, A. Deroko," 284-287.
- 47 Aleksandar Deroko, *Narodno neimarstvo I and II (Vernacular Architecture I and II)*, (Institut za narodnu umetnost Beogradskog Univerziteta, 1939, 1940).
- 48 Deroko confirms that old Serbian art has long been highly regarded, but also points at an absence of a-comprehensive general publication after Millet's book was published in 1919.
- 49 Deroko, *Monumentalna i dekorativna*, 6.
- 50 Deroko, *Narodna arhitektura I*, 25-26; *Monumentalna i dekorativna*, 23: 'We can notice immediately that the most important are four groups (out of five) in the architectural sense, but that the third and the fourth make one narrower stylistic entity as well, so the focus is finally on the three stylistic groups.'
- 51 Deroko, *Monumentalna i dekorativna*, 27: 'We have adopted this kind of grouping for easier orientation when observing the basic characteristics of the development of all architecture in medieval Serbia. Their basic forms/shapes have evolved into an original/genuine type, while the exterior treatment belongs, more or less, to Romanesque style.'
- 52 Deroko, *Monumentalna i dekorativna*, 98; Deroko, *Narodna arhitektura I, Spomenici arhitekture IX-XVIII veka u Jugoslaviji*, 90.
- 53 Deroko, *Narodna arhitektura I, Spomenici arhitekture IX-XVIII veka u Jugoslaviji*, 264.
- 54 Deroko, *Srednjevekovni gradovi u Srbiji*, 231.
- 55 Deroko, *Srednjevekovni gradovi u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji*, 5.
- 56 Deroko, *Srednjevekovni gradovi u Srbiji*, 233.
- 57 Deroko, *Srednjevekovni gradovi u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji*, 6.
- 58 Deroko, *Narodno Neimarstvo II, Stara varoška kuća*, 271-272.
- 59 Deroko, *Narodna arhitektura II, Folklorna arhitektura u Jugoslaviji*, 3.
- 60 This was a permanent concern for Deroko which he expressed in numerous early articles, starting from "Tri manastira srednjevekovnog Rasa" in 1922.
- 61 Deroko, *Narodno Neimarstvo II, Stara varoška kuća*, 271-272; However, he emphasizes that it could never be definite because it was always replaced by newer materials, mostly due to the deterioration of old houses.
- 62 Deroko, *Narodno Neimarstvo II*.
- 63 Aleksandar Deroko, *Arhitektura starog veka* (Beograd: Univerzitet u Beogradu, Naučna knjiga), 1962.
- 64 Deroko, *Arhitektura starog veka*, 292.
- 65 Deroko, *Arhitektura starog veka*, 1.

- 66 Deroko, *Narodna arhitektura I, Spomenici arhitekture IX-XVIII veka u Jugoslaviji*, 34.
- 67 Deroko, *Srednjevekovni gradovi u Srbiji, Crnoj Gori i Makedoniji*, 7.
- 68 Aleksandar Deroko, "Prikaz knjige *Narodno neimarstvo*," *Glasnik SANU XIX* (1969): 63-65; *Deroko i drugi o njemu*, 47.
- 69 Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 156-157.
- 70 Deroko, *Narodno Neimarstvo II*, 1940, I.
- 71 Aleksandar Deroko, "Estetika kuće u polju," [Aesthetics of the Country House] *Umetnički pregled 1* (1938): 142-143; Deroko, "O estetskom kriterijumu u starom našem neimarstvu," [On the aesthetic criterion in our old architecture] *XX vek* (1938): 13-17; Deroko, "Folklor u arhitekturi kod nas se više ne obnavlja," [Vernacular Architecture is not Restored Anymore] *Telegram* (21 September 1939): 7; Deroko, "Naša folklorna arhitektura," [Our Vernacular Architecture] *Umetnički pregled 3* (1940): 78-79; Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 157; Deroko is quite reserved towards modernism that uses certain chosen-in-advance elements independent of natural conditions: 'Many architects tried to compromise, to reconcile facts (Loose, Le Corbusier, Niemeyer and Wright, and many others who followed them). When it comes to utilitarian architecture and urbanism, it is difficult to reach a compromise ... townhouses are primarily for housing, trade, for supplies, for administration, etc. Streets are primarily for the circulation of people between all this'.
- 72 Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 158.
- 73 Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 163. Let them be brave, as they feel, and create the "new" and the "modern", but they risk a lot, because what they set in front of us, in concrete and stone, and we tripped over it ... does not belong to them only.
- 74 Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 164. Monument in Lunjevački gaj dedicated to the memory of the peasant, in "a modest and dignified manner to pay respect and recognise a humble and dignified man.
- 75 Deroko, "Prvi monumentalni hram Beograda," [The First Monumental Temple of Belgrade] *Srpski književni glasnik XXXVII* (1932): 630-631; Deroko, "Hram Svetoga Save," *Vreme* (6 January 1933); Deroko, *Narodna arhitektura I, Spomenici arhitekture IX-XVIII veka u Jugoslaviji*, 32.
- 76 Aleksandar Deroko, *Politika* (4 August 1974); "Kuće i drugi neimarski dani," *Gradina* 8-9 (1981); *A ondak je letijo jeroplan*, 278, 287; *Mangupluci*, 162; *Narodno Neimarstvo II*, 1940, I.
- 77 Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 162.
- 78 Deroko, "Stare naše tvrđave," [Our Old Fortresses] *Umetnički pregled 2* (1937): 39-41; Deroko, "Istok, zapad i mi," [The East, the West and Us] *Umetnički pregled 13* (1938): 396-398; Deroko, "O estetskom kriterijumu u starom našem neimarstvu"; Deroko, *Monumentalna i dekorativna*, 22, 229; Deroko, *Narodna arhitektura I, Spomenici arhitekture IX-XVIII veka u Jugoslaviji*, 70.
- 79 See the same articles as above and Deroko, *Monumentalna*, 15.
- 80 Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 155.
- 81 Some of Deroko's own built projects often incorporate old architectural elements into a new design. For example, the House on the Topčider Hill, or the Ossuary for Sarajevo assassins, Deroko himself considers it a good example, in: Aleksandar Deroko, *Politika* (4 August 1974); "Kuće i drugi neimarski dani," *Gradina* 8-9 (1981); Deroko, *A ondak je letijo*, 289; *Deroko i drugi o njemu*, 47.
- 82 Deroko, "Naš nacionalni stil u arhitekturi," [Our National Style in Architecture] *Vreme* (6 January 1941).
- 83 Deroko, "Izložba naših vizantiskih umetničkih dela," [The Exhibition of our Byzantine art works] *Politika* (12 April 1927); Deroko, "Stara naša umetnost i savremeno stvaranje," *Vreme* (1 May 1932); "Naše Starine," [Our Antiques] Interview with Miloš Crnjanski, *Vreme* (15 April 1933); Deroko, "Folklor u arhitekturi kod nas više se ne obnavlja".
- 84 Deroko, *Mangupluci*, 161.

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INTRODUCTION OF VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE STUDIES AT THE FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE IN BELGRADE

A B S T R A C T

The paper examines the work of Aleksandar Deroko at the the University of Belgrade's Faculty of Architecture and the inclusion of his rich personal knowledge about the vernacular architecture in the study programme, which he gained from long-term field research. As an assistant professor, he introduced the interpretation of vernacular architecture in the course on Byzantine and Old Serbian Architecture in 1929. After the study programme reform in 1935, a new course – named Old Serbian Architecture – was established, with one semester dedicated to the medieval monumental architecture and the second to rural and urban houses. In 1945/46 academic year, the course was renamed Vernacular Architecture and it incorporated medieval and vernacular architecture of the former Yugoslavia. Practical assignments dealt more with vernacular architecture and, through them the student's discovered the fundamental principles and methods of the vernacular construction. The goal of the studies was for students to comprehend and adopt basic traditional canons of construction and apply them to their own projects of cooperative centres, countryside schools, monasteries, etc. Through illustrations the paper will present, till now unpublished, student projects from the archives of Belgrade's the Faculty of Architecture's office for the architectural heritage of Serbia.

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INTRODUCTION

Although Aleksandar Deroko began his studies in mechanical engineering at the Faculty of Technical Sciences in Belgrade¹ as a result of his love for airplanes² the beginning of the war interrupted his education and he became a war pilot.³ Due to an illness, he was demobilised before the very end of the war in 1918 so he continued his studies first at the Royal Engineering School in Rome, and then in Prague and Brno.⁴ Upon his return to Belgrade, he chose to pursue architecture, graduating from *summa cum laude*⁵ from the Department of Architecture of the Faculty of Technical Sciences at the age of 32. The fact that he published his first paper *Tri manastira srednjovekovnog Rasa (Three Monasteries of Medieval Ras)* in 1922 in a magazine *Misao*, tells us that during his studies he already focused on research of medieval architectural heritage. The topic of his graduation thesis was *The Church of St. Sava* and it served as the basis of the work he submitted in a competition for architectural design solution of the church, which won him first place, but also for a project he did with the award runner-up Bogdan Nestorović at the later stage.⁶ It certainly influenced his admission to the position of a teaching fellow on the course of *Byzantine and Old Serbian Architecture*⁷ right after his graduation.

Professor Gabriele Millet, one of the most famous Byzantologists at that time and an extraordinary connoisseur of the Balkan medieval heritage⁸ had a particularly strong influence on Deroko and his work in the field of the history of architecture and research of architectural heritage. Deroko had one semester of a training course with Millet at *Ecole des Hautes Études*.⁹ His companionship with Parisian avant-garde artists also played a significant role, while his close friendship with writer and poet Rastko Petrović with whom he travelled the countryside, visiting churches, monasteries and settlements in the areas of Stari Ras, Skadar, Kosovo and Lim, and the Montenegrin coastline, closely familiarising himself with vernacular tradition left a profound mark on him.¹⁰ On these travels, he collected endless notes and drawings which he would use in his future books and through which he would touch the hearts of his students and readers through his distinctive drawings of dynamic lines with hand-written comments.¹¹

THE INTRODUCTION OF ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE STUDIES IN SERBIA

Period Leading Up to the World War I

Mihailo Valtrović¹², who was professor of the *Theory of Construction on Dry Land* course in 1875, the only specialised course in the field of building construction within the general programme for technical professions¹³, is

credited with establishing and enriching architectural studies at the Faculty of Technical Sciences of Belgrade College School. Those wishing to further educate themselves in the field of architecture had to study abroad, mainly at German schools in Berlin, Aachen, Munich, Karlsruhe, usually at the expense of the state. Even Valtrović himself studied schools in Germany, and included the development of buildings blueprints, civil structures and stylistic forms in his course. The graduation thesis on the Church of St. Sava in 1879, signed by Valtrović, included the design of a new building, in this case a semi-gymnasium with the use of traditional materials, stone and bricks, and in currently used Renaissance style.¹⁴ This affirms that design of academic, historical styles prevailed in the studies after the practice of central European schools of that time.

When Valtrović transferred to the Faculty of Philosophy of the Belgrade College School and founded the Department of Archaeology in 1882, where research about general and national history of art and architecture started, studies at the Faculty of Technical Sciences were taken over by Dragutin Milutinović.¹⁵ He was his friend from student years in Germany and his colleague on long-term field work on recording the remains of medieval architecture. He greatly expanded the architectural studies, with students of technical sciences graduating with a better professional skillset in general and specialised architecture, including building structures, statics, and projects of public and private buildings and the theory of styles.¹⁶ Milutinović lectured these comprehensive studies by himself and was joined by Andra Stevanović¹⁷, who was appointed for a new course on *Theory of Building Structure*¹⁸ in 1890. Studies in architecture gradually started to branch out into divisions for architecture, descriptive geometry and drawing skills.¹⁹ This, of course, was insufficient for the complete education of future architects; therefore their specialisation in the fields of perspective, construction stylistics, building design, ornamental drawing and Byzantine style²⁰ in the third and fourth year of studies was proposed but it was not implemented straight away. Nevertheless, a new law reformed the Faculty of Technical Sciences in 1897 with the introduction of three departments: the Civil Engineering, Architectural and the Mechanical-Technical departments.²¹ New specialised architectural courses were introduced based on the practice of central European schools, particularly on German higher technical schools, polytechnical schools, from which architects of that time working at the Faculty of Technical Sciences graduated from. Students received complete educational programmes necessary to start their own business in architecture with the inclusion of 11 new specialised courses, so there was no need for future generations to get additional education abroad.²² It is important to stress that *History of Art and Byzantine Style with practical assignments*²³ was included in these studies.

At the turn of the century, after Milutinović's sudden death, Stevanović, a connoisseur of vernacular architectural tradition, who researched the Byzantine-style church architecture in Kosovo,²⁴ was supposed to take over teaching of the course on *Byzantine Style with the Church Design*.²⁵ A part-time Professor Nikola Nestorović²⁶ temporarily taught the course until 1903²⁷ when Milorad Ruvidić²⁸ was appointed a professor. Valtrović and Milutinović's efforts to artistically enrich the architectural studies and research on national architectural heritage were rewarded with the inception of Department for the History of Architecture with Byzantine style.²⁹ When the Belgrade College School became the University of Belgrade in 1905, students of the Department of Architecture studied 38 courses, among them *History of Art*, *History of Architecture*, *Theory of Styles* and *Byzantine Architecture*. A graduate thesis had to be from the field of the design of public buildings and Byzantine architecture.³⁰

It is obvious that Byzantine Architecture fought its way to the studies of future architects and to obtain an equal place with neoclassical academic design. This is probably what brought about the Vienna Secession and Munich Jugend style in the design of private buildings prior to the WWI, influenced by contemporary aspiration in architecture and desire to break off with historicism and create a new age architecture in Serbia. Also, these were initial attempts to expand the use of decorative forms of medieval sacral architecture both of general Byzantine and indigenous Morava school not just in church buildings but also profane.³¹ This was the beginning of the so-called Serbo-Byzantine school, which opposed international neoclassical academic styles. Among these achievements, extremely rare in state public buildings is the district centre (Načelstvo) in Vranje erected in 1908, which stands out with richly ornamented façade reflecting medieval Morava school with a row of stone blocks and three rows of bricks. It also reflects decorative elements characteristic of the Morava school churches, such as rosettes, stylised interlaced ornaments around the windows, and the like. An engineer within the Ministry of Construction Petar Pera Popović,³² who designed it, worked at the same time on the reconstruction of the Lazarica church from the fourteenth century in Kruševac built by Prince Lazar in his capital. Along with the church of Ravanica Monastery, the second prince's endowment and the future mausoleum, it was built before the Battle of Kosovo, when the Prince was killed and Serbia became a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire.³³ They mark the beginning of emulation of the church type from the Holy Mountain and the development of a new indigenous style in church design which was different from that of Byzantine. They were models in later reconstruction of national style, and they also had a strong patriotic connotation.

Interwar period

With his work on the reconstruction of medieval churches and his dedication to applying their design elements to modern buildings, Popović drew attention to himself and proved to be the right fit for a professor to explicate the principles and forms of *Byzantine architecture*³⁴ to students after these studies were renewed in 1919. After the 1922 reform, the Architectural Department had seven sub-divisions, one of which was Architectonics, with the History of Art and Vernacular Architecture and Arts.³⁵ Students successfully transposed their knowledge of the national architectural tradition into modern designs of sacral and public buildings designed for graduate thesis,³⁶ but also in practice where elements of the medieval national tradition were introduced on the academically-based spatial structures and façade compositions through their stylistic and decorative design.

As of the 1925/26 academic year, the university students were recruited as teaching staff, and among them was Deroko who was appointed as an assistant volunteer of the *Byzantine Architecture*³⁷ course, having already cooperated with Professor Popović on a church construction.³⁸ Education at Belgrade's Faculty of Architecture with its excellent professors, combined with a professional development in Paris with Millet, and his passionate personal recording of traces of traditional building, all created a good basis for Deroko's further training when he became an Assistant Professor after 1929.³⁹ He became the Head of the Department of Byzantine Architecture in 1930, and welcomed a young associate, an architect Grigory Samoilov,⁴⁰ who became an assistant volunteer for *Byzantine Architecture* in 1932.⁴¹

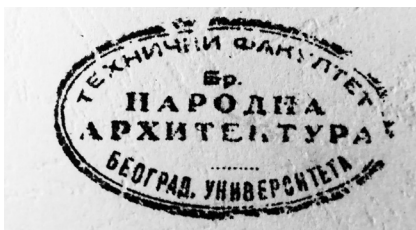


Fig. 1. The stamp for the course *Vernacular Architecture (Nardna arhitektura)* taught at the Faculty of Technical Sciences of the University of Belgrade



Fig. 2. The photo of Professor Aleksandar Deroko at the moment of retirement with his signed dedication, and his stamp – today in the teachers' office for Architectural Heritage at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade

It is significant that during the 1930s, *Byzantine Architecture* was dropped from the name of the course and this department. The Institute of Vernacular Architecture was founded and its acting director was Deroko⁴² with professors Branko Tanazević⁴³ and Branko Popović⁴⁴ as its members. After the adoption of the new Decree of the Faculty of Technical Sciences in 1935, the Department of Vernacular Architecture was introduced, and certain changes were made to the architectural studies. There was a course on *Vernacular Architecture* in VII and VIII semester, which comprised three hours of lectures and three hours of practical assignments, taught by Deroko, who was an Associate Professor at the time.⁴⁵ (Fig. 1) He can certainly be credited with making substantial improvements to studies related to the research on national architectural heritage. From that time apart from monumental medieval architecture concentrated on the study of sacral buildings, the studies of traditional vernacular architecture were also introduced in the program. This was necessary for future architects because the so-called *folklore style* was expressed in the works of architects of that time, especially by his colleague Branislav Kojić.⁴⁶

Period of the second half of the twentieth century

After the World War II, autonomous Faculty of Architecture emerged in 1948.⁴⁷ The curriculum relied on the pre-war structure of courses, but with changes made in the field of modern design it gradually oriented exclusively towards architectural design and the application of new structures and materials. During the war, its staff shrank greatly with only 10 professors and two assistants from the pre-war period. Professor Aleksandar Deroko, Assistant Professor Djurdje Bošković and a teaching fellow Milivoje Tričković⁴⁸ were in the Department of the History of Art and Architecture and they held the *History of Art* and *History of Architecture* courses according to the curriculum from 1946. The *History of Art* was taught in the second and the third year, with two hours in each semester. Deroko held the course in the first afterwar academic year of 1945-46, which was taken over by Bošković after this. The *History of Architecture* was taught throughout all four years of studies, starting with the ancient history, medieval age and modern history and vernacular architecture. The *Ancient History Architecture* was taught by Professor Bogdan Nestorović in 1945-48, along with the courses from his Department of Architectural Design, and it was taught by Deroko from 1948 to 1960. Nestorović also taught *Modern History Architecture* in the 1945/46 academic year and after it was taught by Tričković. The *Medieval Age Architecture* was taught by Bošković.⁴⁹

In addition to the above mentioned courses, Deroko, as in the prewar period, held the course on *Vernacular Architecture* which was taught in the fourth year, in the VIII semester with four hours of lectures and four hours of practical assignments, a huge teaching load.⁵⁰ The course comprised of studies of architecture from the territory of entire Yugoslavia, both medieval sacral and vernacular. There were no graduation thesis in this course as a consequence of the withdrawal of historic architecture and church buildings from design practice of that time. However, students devised projects on country schools, cooperative centres, monastery complexes, and the like, which were designed in the style of traditional architecture.⁵¹

The trend of gradual decrease in studies of history of architecture was visible in 1949 when, according to the new curriculum, these studies were extended to five years, but the *History of Architecture* was taught only in two semesters in the second and the third year, through four hours of lectures and practical assignments.⁵² This tendency was present in the curriculum from 1956 when the course was still taught in the second and third year, but only with two hours of lectures in both semesters, without practical assignments. However, a new independent course the *History of Architecture of People of FPRY* was introduced in the third year with two hours of lectures per semester and two i.e. four hours of practical assignments.⁵³

In 1958 there were minor reforms when the *History of Architecture – Ancient History, Medieval Age and Modern History* was introduced in the II semester of the second year and in the I and III semester of the third year with two-hour lectures, but a course on *History of Contemporary Architecture* with two hours of lecture was also introduced in the fourth year. The course on *Architecture of People of FPRY* was held in the last fourth year, in both semesters with two hours of lectures and practical assignments.⁵⁴ This demonstrates that, probably due to professor Deroko's enormous reputation, the studies of national architectural heritage held a significant place in the study programme and that in addition to *ex-cathedra* lectures, there were practical assignments in which students familiarised themselves through drawing with the principles and forms of traditional architecture.

Nevertheless, major reforms in the organisation of studies at the Faculty of Architecture came into force in 1963 since it was believed that the studies should meet demand, resulting in the introduction of division in education into two levels. The first cycle was general for all students and it lasted for five semesters, after which they would receive professional title Architectural

Engineer. There were lectures in general *History of Architecture – Ancient History, Medieval Age and Modern History* within these general studies. The second cycle, lasting four semesters, had two courses on architectural and structural design. With the old name, *Vernacular Architecture* was only held at the Department of Architectural Design in the final year, and only with two hours of lectures in a semester.⁵⁵ This halved the teaching load, and the withdrawal of practical assignments was irreplaceable because the students lost the possibility of familiarising themselves with the architectural tradition through practical work. Soon after, on 1 January 1965, Professor Deroko retired after 42 years of work.⁵⁶ (Fig. 2)

Soon, it turned out that the education in cycles neither met the demands of the society since the economy did not require experts with only the first cycle education, nor the wishes of students, who mainly continued their studies to the second cycle. Also, the division of experts to explicitly specialised designers and constructors did not correspond to architectural practice which required a complete professional capability of synthesising both fields. In order to overcome this, the studies were re-established in general programme lasting four years and one additional semester for graduation thesis already in 1966. The *Vernacular Architecture* was taught in the third year with only two hour *ex-cathedra* lectures, under the guidance of an Associate Professor, Slobodan Nenadović.⁵⁷ In the first semester, it consisted of studies of medieval, renaissance, baroque and Islamic architecture of Yugoslavia, while in the next semester medieval towns, rural and urban architecture were explored.⁵⁸

This programme lasted until 1969/70 when a new effort was made to modernise the studies so a board of young professors created a new curriculum, the so-called New School. It started in the 1971/72 academic year, but it was short-lived and lasted only until 1973/74.⁵⁹ The position of studies of history of national architecture in the third year did not change until the reforms in 2005, so it was taught in almost the same structure in two semesters, with two hours of the so-called monumental architecture in the winter semester and only one hour of vernacular architecture in the summer semester through *ex-cathedra* lectures. Due to political changes and the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the name of the course was changed, with the *Architecture of the Past in Yugoslavia* becoming the *History of Architecture and Settlements in Serbia and Montenegro* i.e. Serbia. The content of the course was partially condensed, although sacral medieval and vernacular architecture were still being explored in a wider context than within the state borders.⁶⁰

A large and precious collection of practical assignment sheets, which are kept in the teachers' office archives, testifies to several-decades long commitment and efforts of students to research and architectural tradition through direct work and field recording, a method nurtured by Professor Deroko and carried on by his students and successors alike.⁶¹

REVIEW OF STUDENTS' PROJECTS

A part of students' practical assignments in the *Vernacular Architecture* course has been preserved in the teachers' office at the Faculty of Architecture, where professor Deroko spent his career, and this paper reviewed the projects of 1953/54 and 1954/55 classes. There are some renowned names among them, such as: Zoran Petrović, an architect who later reached all academic ranks, from a teaching fellow to a full-time professor of the Faculty of Architecture,⁶² and during his teaching career he was also a vice-dean and a dean; Vladimir Tvrtković, an architect, later a teaching fellow and a professor of the faculty,⁶³ Mihailo Čanak.⁶⁴ The works represent projects of contemporary architectural facilities in which the principles and elements of traditional vernacular architecture were applied.

Students' design proposals consist of ground floor plans, upper floor plans, roof plans, vertical sections, layouts and axonometric previews. Students' ability to draw was particularly developed. They used graphite and colour pencils, watercolour tubes and pigment colours. The use of colours is particularly stressed in the drawings of facades and axonometric previews, which speaks about professor's desire to develop the sense for technical but also for artistic drawing in his students. It is obvious that the project of every house was placed in a context, i.e. that the houses were incorporated into their surroundings, often imaginary, but with all characteristics of a certain area for which the project was intended.

Most attachments to project concepts, which were given in a comparable scale, were placed on one sheet as it was common with construction projects of new interwar buildings, which had the scale of 1:200, plans of all floors, sections and layouts in 1:100 scale on one sheet, striving for the projects to be clear and self-explanatory. Students' desire for systematisation and the design of their works should be particularly accentuated, this being reflected in the writing of headlines, descriptions under drawings, and the like, where by the design of each individual letter, in different sizes depending on the information importance, they successfully navigated the difficulties of creating all project parts, which is nowadays greatly facilitated by the use of computers.

Within the specific topics that the students worked on, special attention should be paid to individual projects of teachers' houses, schools, cooperative centres, as well as rural and urban national committee houses. Common to most of the works is that students designed new buildings on the principles of a traditional rural house with timber framing from Pomoravlje and a rammed earth house from Vojvodina, as well as an Ottoman type town house.

In the project of ground-floor country school of student Eremić Lazar, the spatial structure is contemporary, with entrance vestibule, a hall as a central area of the building, while both on the left and right there are classrooms, and there is a small office in the extension of vestibule. A characteristic traditional feature of a typical Moravian timber framed house is a corner porch where the hall is entered. The majority of preserved works are designed in the Ottoman town house style since the designed buildings were intended for Kosovo and Metohija and central Serbia.

In two projects of teachers' houses in Kosovo and Metohija, students Milan Martić (Fig. 3) and Milan Janić (Figs. 4 and 5), followed the principles of traditional spatial organisation adapted to contemporary needs. Houses are entered from porches, where one enters a vestibule, as a central area of the house, and from there one climbs the stairs to the upper floor. Other spaces, rooms and a kitchen are centered around the vestibule. Above the ground floor porches, there are open or closed balconies and verandahs. Students used elements of tradition in their projects, which are reflected in the spatial organisation of houses, the application of a structural assembly, and the use of traditional materials. Through projects, students have adapted the traditional house to contemporary needs with the introduction of a number of different rooms according to their purpose and size, the introduction of a sanitary unit, a special part with a kitchen and a storage. In the outer design, they sought to maintain the traditional look of the house with a "bondruk" system.

In the projects of rural and urban national committee houses, the plans are more complex, but they follow the central blueprint of a town house of Ottoman type. Most often these are houses which have the ground and the upper floor, with central vestibules around which offices are centered on the ground floor, as well as utility rooms, while on the upper floor, festive halls and offices are grouped around the main vestibule. The examples are as follows: a local national committee house in a village by a student Dragojlo Kutlašić (Fig. 6), a rural national committee house by a student Nikola Nešić (Fig. 7), a rural national committee centre by a student Vladimir Tvrtković (Fig. 8), the building

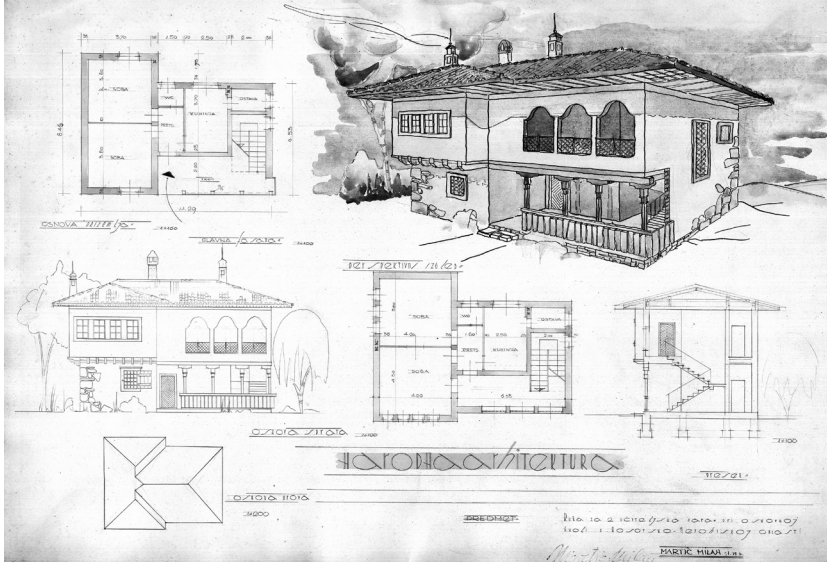


Fig. 3. Project for the teacher house in Kosmet – ground floor, first floor, vertical section, main facade and perspective view, student: Milan Martić

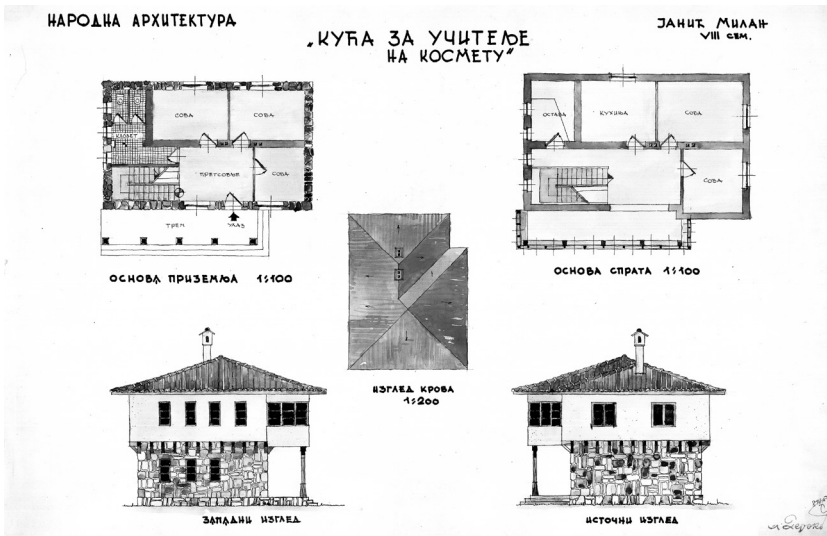


Fig. 4-5. Project for the teacher house in Kosmet – 4) ground floor, first floor, roof base and the western and east facades, 5) perspective view, student: Milan Janić



of municipal national committee by a student Milenković Dušan, the building of town national committee by a student Zoran Petrović (Fig. 9), buildings in Morava style by students Mihailo Čanak (Fig. 10), Milivoje Đukić and Jovan Zrnić (Fig. 11). In certain projects, as is the case in the project by the student Dragojlo Kutlašić, the main vestibule can have two altitudes, so at the upper floor a gallery with pillars is constructed. The obligatory architectural element is a porch on the ground floor, i.e. a balcony on the upper floor which was usually placed along the complete front façade. In some students' works, in addition to the porch, a separate sitting area, a verandah is envisaged which can be on the ground or upper floor.

Buildings inspired by Ottoman architecture have massive ground floor walls made of rustically shaped stone blocks, while the upper floor is usually jettied and is made of light skeletal timber framed construction with filling. The walls were treated with mortar on the outside, but in some parts or on the entire floor the wooden skeletal construction is visible, so it follows a contemporary principle of visibility of bearing construction on the façade. Additionally, the application of open porches with decorated wooden pillars along the ground floor, as well as balconies, verandahs and bay windows on the upper floor contributes to the traditional appearance of buildings. Deep eaves on mildly sloped roofs covered by pantile, above which richly ornamented chimnies are mounted, represent a distinct element. From precise design of these elements, it can be concluded that students possessed extraordinary knowledge of forms, tradition and value of vernacular architecture as demonstrated in their projects.

The works done in the style of Vojvodina ground rammed earth house were intended as houses for teachers. Students sought to literally observe the principles of Vojvodina rural house, related to spatial organisation, construction and design. In the project of a student Zoltan Peter (Fig. 12), a characteristic disposition of Vojvodina rural house was implemented, with narrow part of the house placed related to street line, along the sideway of a lot. The rooms of the house are longitudinally layered within one tract, with a central entrance room, a fireplace, a kitchen, and on the left and right there are other rooms, the biggest one directed toward the street as is the case with a typical rammed earth house. Along the courtyard façade, towards the courtyard, there is a long wooden canopy, as in the project of a student Janjatov Rade. In the project of a student Josip Svoboda (Fig. 13), two one-tract houses are interconnected by a canopy. One house is located along the street line, with narrow side toward the street and long side toward the courtyard, and the second house is placed parallel with it in the interior of the courtyard, with a garden, an orchard and

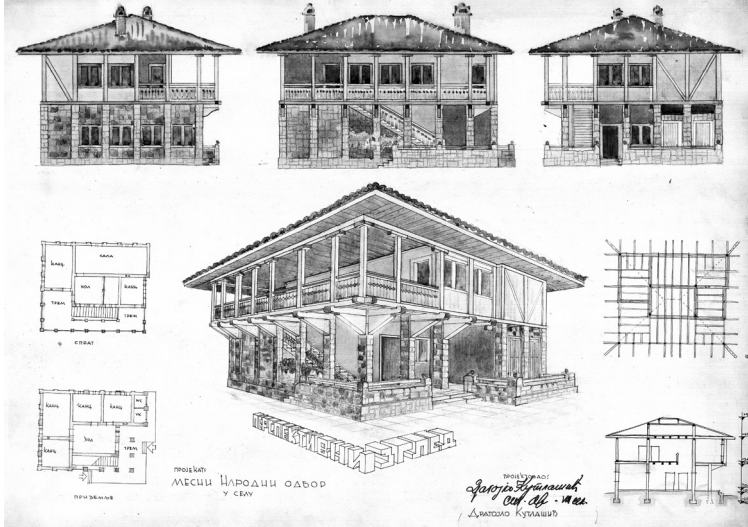


Fig. 6. Project for the local national committee house in a village – ground floor, first floor, roof base, vertical section, facades and perspective view, student: Dragojo Kutlašić

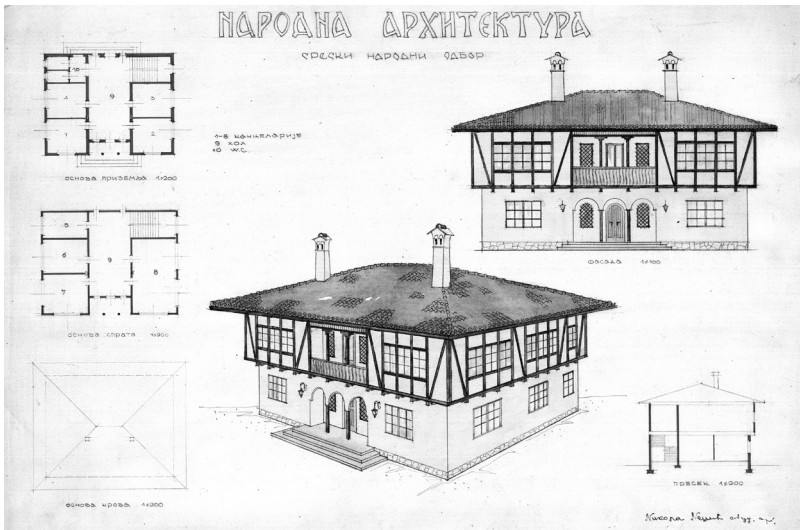


Fig. 7. Project for the rural national committee house – ground floor, first floor, roof base, vertical section, main facade and perspective view, student: Nikola Nešić



Fig. 8. Project for the rural national committee centre – ground floor, first floor, roof base, vertical section, main facade and perspective view, student: Vladimir Tvrtković

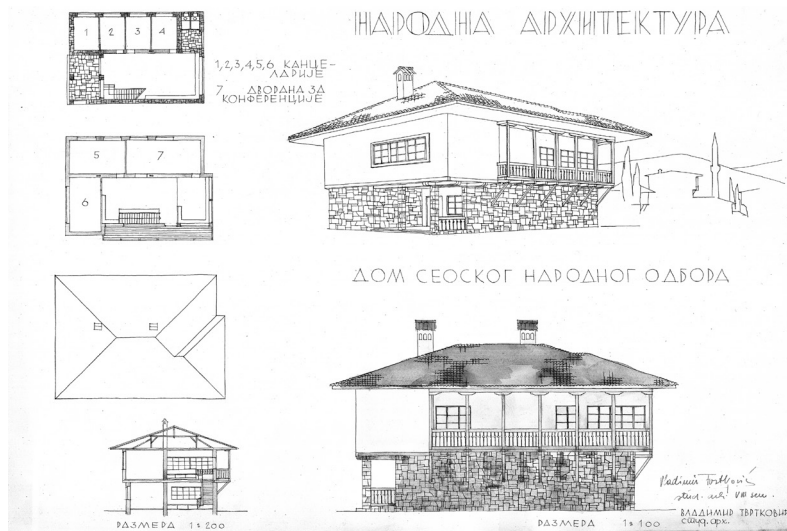


Fig. 9. Project for the building of town national committee – perspective view, student: Zoran Petrović

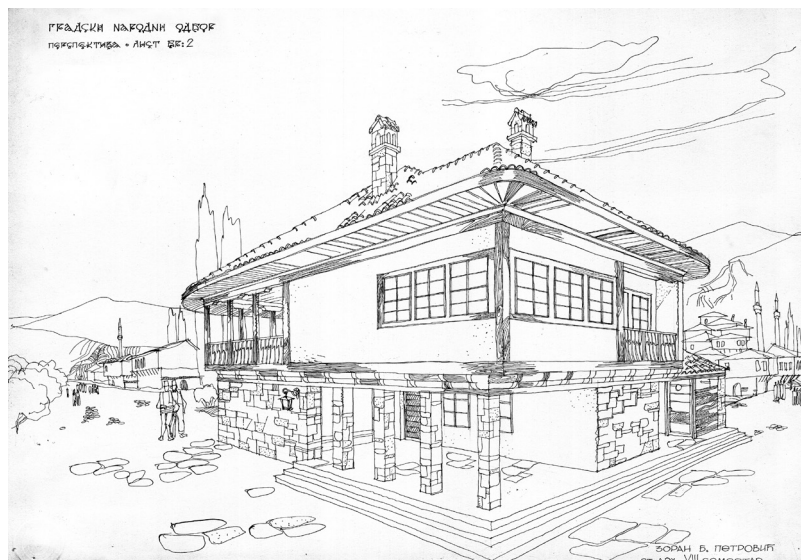


Fig. 10. Project for the building of town national committee – perspective view, student: Zoran Petrović

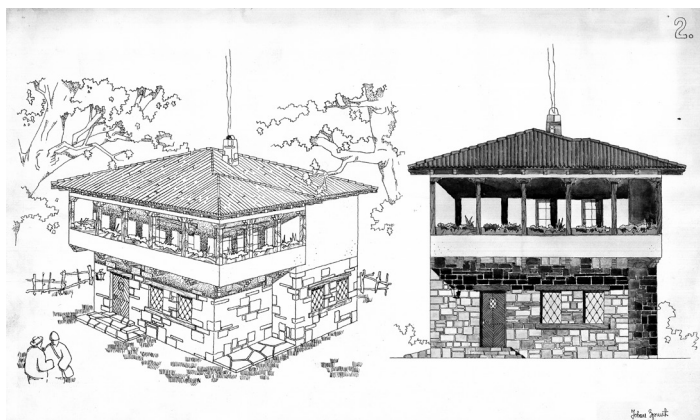


Fig. 11. Project for the building in Morava style – main facade and perspective view, student: Jovan Zrnić

a well. In the house to the street there is a large apartment with two rooms, as well as a shared kitchen with a pantry and two toilets accessible from the porch. In the second house, there are three rooms for teachers and a server, accessible directly from the porch. The walls of the houses are massive, from rammed earth, and the canopies have wooden pillars, parapets and arches. In the design of outer street facades, the principles and elements of a traditional Vojvodina house were applied. They usually have two windows and an entrance door where one directly enters the canopy and over it into the house. A triangular gable, giebl, usually decoratively embellished, with a wooden fillet, gorge and gully is emphasised, which was the case with the older type of Vojvodina house. The roofs are two sloped and covered by reed. Students paid special attention to decorative embellishments of porch, *kong*, especially pillars, arches, bolsters, struts and fence. (Fig. 14)

CONCLUSION

The presented introductory analysis of the development of studies in the field of architecture at the Belgrade College School and later on the Faculty of Technical Sciences, in the period before and after the WWI, demonstrates that the studies of the old national architecture, i.e. mainly monumental and sacral medieval architecture, were gradually introduced and applied in a balanced way in the students' projects of that time through the *Byzantine Style* course. This was an effort to create a recognisable national style in which the buildings of that time would be designed. A significant change occurred in the 1930s when traditional vernacular architecture gained its significance in the study programme mostly due to Professor Deroko. Vernacular architecture took its rightful position in research and lectures with the establishment of the Institute of Vernacular Architecture and the Department of Vernacular Architecture at the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade. This continued after the WWII, when new social relations developed, sacral architecture was not predominantly built, and the architecture of the international style became the dominant form of expression. Monumental sacral medieval architecture was still being studied, but it was not applied to students' works, which exclusively followed universal modernism of that time.

This paved the way for Professor Deroko to share with students his rich knowledge gained through long-term field research of vernacular architecture, not only through lectures, but also through work on practical assignments in which theoretical knowledge was transferred to students' projects. Through the work on particular topics related to research and design in the spirit of traditional

architecture, in the *Vernacular Architecture* course, it was demonstrated that the students' engagement in these projects enriched their education and enabled their inclusion in solving numerous problems related to the design in the spirit of traditional architecture. Through imaginatively created forms but respecting the character and tradition of vernacular architecture, students designed various contemporary facilities, such as teachers' houses, schools, rural and urban national committee houses.

The study programme of this course was geared toward the establishment of a critical attitude toward rural and urban architecture in our surroundings, to identification of character, meaning and value of this area, with the purpose of training professionals to design in the spirit of traditional architecture and forming particular national expression of our region to which pre-war folklorism aspired. It could be argued that the realised students' projects in the *Vernacular Architecture* course demonstrated that engaging students in solving these problems was very useful resulting in inventive and bold ideas, which is obvious from the review of more significant projects given through illustrations in this paper. The idea to adequately present designed buildings in connection with the surroundings, significant values and views, typical of the region of Kosovo and Metohija and central Serbia was particularly promoted.

The thing to be noted is the engagement of Professor Deroko to equally develop the skills of technical and artistic drawing, where he himself was a master, which also can be seen in the accompanying illustrations, especially in segments where layouts and axonometric views of the designed constructions were given. It is important to mention that in this paper, the reviewed students' projects will be published for the first time in professional circles and to a wider domestic and international public, as part of extremely rich documentation kept in the teachers' office for preservation of the architectural heritage at the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade. In addition to students' drawings and various publications collected by the professor, his stamp for the *Vernacular Architecture* course is stored with the office.

Unfortunately, since the reform in 1970s, the new course on the *Architecture of the Past in Yugoslavia*, taught by Professor Slobodan Nenadović, and later by Professor Jovan Nešković,⁶⁵ did not include practical assignment classes, but was delivered *ex-cathedra* only. Nevertheless, an independent research of monumental or vernacular architecture has been secured for especially gifted students to replace exams, so high quality seminar papers are still being kept in the teachers' office at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Belgrade.

NOTES

- N.B. This paper is done as a part of a research project *Modernisation of Western Balkans* (No.177009), financed by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Serbia.
- 1 His memories from the beginning of his studies published in *Visokoškolska nastava arhitekture u Srbiji 1846-1971, neobjavljeni rukopisi [Higher education of architecture in Serbia 1846-1971, unpublished manuscripts]* (Beograd: Arhitektonski fakultet, 1996), 30-31, 136.
- 2 Deroko constructed airplanes as a young man with his brother Jovan. See: M. Vranić–Ignjatović and D. Milošević eds., *Legende Beogradskog univerziteta, Aleksandar Deroko [Legends of the Belgrade University, Aleksandar Deroko]*. Catalogue of the exhibition (Beograd: Univerzitetska biblioteka, 2004), 19-21.
- 3 He joined student battalion in 1914 as one of 1,300 corporals, then university students. He was chosen to undergo pilot training, and he passed the military pilot exam in France in 1915 thus becoming one of the first Serbian pilots. M. Vranić–Ignjatović and D. Milošević eds., *Legende Beogradskog univerziteta, Aleksandar Deroko [Legends of the Belgrade University]*, 21-22.
- 4 M. Vranić–Ignjatović and D. Milošević eds., *Legende Beogradskog univerziteta, Aleksandar Deroko*, 23; S. Bogunović, *Arhitektonska enciklopedija Beograda, knj. II. [Architectural Encyclopedia of Belgrade, book II]* (Beograd: Beogradska knjiga, 2005), 750-757.

- 5 Newspapers *Vreme* published the news on architectural exams at the University of Belgrade on 12 February, 1926, reporting that out of 10 candidates only four had passed the exam. Deroko got 966 points out of 1,000. See: M. Vranić-Ignjatović and D. Milošević eds., *Legende Beogradskog univerziteta*, 23-24; S. Bogunović, *Arhitektonska enciklopedija Beograda*, 750-757.
- 6 Ibid., 756.
- 7 *Visokoškolska nastava*, 136.
- 8 M. Vranić-Ignjatović and D. Milošević eds., *Legende Beogradskog univerziteta*, 24.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Ibid., 28-30, 32.
- 11 The first two collection of drawings *Narodno neimarstvo I i II [Vernacular Architecture I and II]* were published in 1939 and 1940, each with 20 sheets as an edition of the Institute of Vernacular Art of the University of Belgrade. Ibid., 40-41.
- 12 An architect, archeologist and art historian. As a state scholarship recipient, he finished his studies of architecture in Karlsruhe. See: *Visokoškolska nastava*, 127-128.
- 13 Zoran Manević, “Beogradska arhitektonska škola [Belgrade Architectural School]” in *Univerzitet u Beogradu 1838-1988* (Beograd: Univerzitet u Beogradu, 1988), 622-624; *Visokoškolska nastava*, 19; Bogdan Nestorović, *Arhitektura Srbije u XIX veku [Serbian Architecture in the Nineteenth Century]* (Beograd: Art Press, 2006); Mirjana Roter-Blagojević, “Nastava arhitekture na visokim i visokoškolskim ustanovama,” [“Teaching Architecture at Higher and Higher Educational Institutions”] *Godišnjak grada Beograda*, XLIV (1997): 142-145; Мирјана Ротер-Благојевић, “Значај Михаила Валтровића и Драгутина С. Милутиновића за развој образовања из области архитектуре и проучавања градитељског наслеђа на Великој школи у Београду,” [“The Importance of Mihailo Valtrović and Dragutin S. Milutinović for Development of Education in the Field of Architecture and Study of Architectural Heritage at the College School in Belgrade”] in *Валтровић и Милутиновић, тумачења* (Београд: Историјски музеј Србије, Београд, 2008), 28-51.
- 14 *Visokoškolska nastava*, 19.
- 15 An engineer in the Ministry of Construction. Studied on *Bauacademie* in Berlin, in Munich, and at the Polytechnical School in Karlsruhe. See: *Visokoškolska nastava*, 128-129; Mirjana Roter-Blagojević, “Nastava arhitekture na visokim i visokoškolskim ustanovama,” 145-146.
- 16 *Visokoškolska nastava*, 19.
- 17 Studied as a state scholarship recipient at the Polytechnical School in Berlin. See: *Visokoškolska nastava*, 129.
- 18 Ibid., 19-20, 129.
- 19 Ibid., 20.
- 20 Ibid., 21.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Ibid., 22-23.
- 23 Ibid., 22.
- 24 He collected materials on the monasteries in Gračanica, Dečani and Pečka patrijaršija. See: Manević, “Beogradska arhitektonska škola,” 623.
- 25 *Visokoškolska nastava*, 23.
- 26 Educated at the Faculty of Technical Sciences in Belgrade and at the Polytechnical School in Berlin. He was an architect within the Ministry of Construction and a part-time professor at the Department of Architecture, where he taught Architectural forms and Ornamentation of all styles from 1898. See: Ibid., 23-24, 131.

- 27 Zoran Manević, “Beogradska arhitektonska škola,” 623-624.
- 28 Educated at the Faculty of Technical Sciences in Belgrade and the Polytechnical school in Berlin, an architect in the Ministry of Construction. See: *Visokoškolska nastava*, 19, 132.
- 29 Ibid., 24.
- 30 Ibid., 28-29.
- 31 Bogdan Nestorović, *Arhitektura Srbije u XIX veku*, 522-536; Aleksandar Kadijević, *Jedan vek traženja nacionalnog stila u srpskoj arhitekturi [One Century of Searching for a National Style in Serbian Architecture]* (Beograd: Građevinska knjiga, 1997); Aleksandar Ignjatović, *Jugoslovenstvo u Arhitekturi 1904-1941 [Yugoslavism in Architecture 1904-1941]* (Beograd: Gradjevinska knjiga, 2007).
- 32 Petar Popović graduated from the Faculty of Technical Sciences of the Belgrade College School in 1896 and was employed right away at the Department of Architecture in the Ministry of Construction in Belgrade. See: *Visokoškolska nastava*, 134-135; Zoran Manević, “Beogradska arhitektonska škola,” 624.
- 33 S. Ćurčić, *Architecture of the Balkans, from Diocletian to Süleyman the magnificent* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), 627-628, 675.
- 34 *Visokoškolska nastava*, 32.
- 35 Ibid., 32.
- 36 A booklet *Projekti studenata arhitekture* [Projects of students of architecture] published in 1928 as an edition of Architecture Students’ Club with 17 graduate thesis, works and school projects on St. Sava’s topic testifies the scope of architectural studies. Along with eminent architects, such as Andrej Papkov and Branko Krstić, there were future historians and conservators, Đurđe Bošković and Ivan Zdravković. See: Zoran Manević, “Beogradska arhitektonska škola,” 625.
- 37 *Visokoškolska nastava*, 33.
- 38 With Popović, Deroko constructed a church in the Letnjikovac village near Požarevac. S. Bogunović, *Arhitektonska enciklopedija Beograda*, 752.
- 39 *Visokoškolska nastava*, 136.
- 40 He was born in the Imperial Russia, after revolution around 1921 he came to the Kingdom of SCS, Yugoslavia. He graduated from the Faculty of Technical Sciences in Belgrade. See: S. Bogunović, *Arhitektonska enciklopedija Beograda*, 1071-1076.
- 41 *Visokoškolska nastava*, 33-34.
- 42 Ibid., 34.
- 43 Ibid.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 Ibid., 35-38; The seal with the name of the course is preserved in the teachers’ office for Architectural Heritage in Serbia of the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade today.
- 46 Kojić graduated in Paris in 1921 and after returning to Belgrade, he got a job at the Architectural Department of the Ministry of Construction. He was appointed a teching fellow in 1932 and as an assistant professor of Design of Corporate, Industrial and Traffic Buildings course in 1937. See: Ibid., 141-142.
- 47 Within the newly-formed Technical School which was abolished in 1954. See: Ibid., 42-43.
- 48 Ibid., 89.
- 49 The conditions with staff appointments were much better at the Department of History of Art and Architecture after 1947 when young teaching fellows Branislav Vulović, Slobodan Nenadović, Anka Stojaković were appointed and who gradually accepted the curriculum and later became long-term teachers of these courses after the departure of their predecessors. See: Ibid., 46, 88-89.

- 50 Ibid., 46.
- 51 Ibid., 91-92.
- 52 Ibid., 47.
- 53 Ibid., 48-49.
- 54 Ibid., 49.
- 55 Ibid., 49-51.
- 56 This data was personally written by Professor Deroko on a picture he gave to the Office and his heirs when he retired.
- 57 *Visokoškolska nastava*, 149. Mirjana Roter-Blagojević, “Slobodan M. Nenadović (1915-2004): In memoriam,” *Forum+*, 49 (09/2004): 138-143.
- 58 *Visokoškolska nastava*, 52, 92.
- 59 Ibid., 53-54. Folić, B., “The contribution to the research into the role of Bogdan Bogdanović in the creation of the new school of architecture in Belgrade,” *SPATIUM International Review*, No. 27 (2012): 19-25.
- 60 Nadja Kurtovic-Folic, Mirjana Roter-Blagojevic and Renata Jadresin-Milic, “Teaching of Conservation,” in *Reformae, Reforming Architectural Education in the Cards Countries, Handbook for European Higher Architectural Education Area* (Skopje, 2006), 218-223.
- 61 Dr Slobodan Nenadović, dr Jovan Nešković, dr Mirko Kovačević, dr Nadja Kurtović-Folić, dr Mirjana Roter-Blagojević and dr Marko Nikolić.
- 62 *Visokoškolska nastava*, 150.
- 63 Ibid., 150.
- 64 Graduated in 1957, he obtained MSc in 1975 and PhD in 1984, all at the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade. Since 1957 he had been employed by the Centre for Housing of the Institute for testing of materials of Republic of Serbia, and served as the director of the Institute of Architecture and Urban & Spatial Planning of Serbia from 1986 through to 1990. See the official site of the Academy of Architecture of Serbia, <http://aas.org.rs/canak-mihailo-biografija/>, 1.6.2018.
- 65 *Visokoškolska nastava*, 150. See: Mirjana Roter-Blagojević, “Jovan Nešković (1929-2006): In memoriam,” *Forum+*, 51 (09/2006): 104-111.

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ARHITEKTONSKO STVARALAŠTVO ALEKSANDRA DEROKA - LEPOTA EMOTIVNE KREATIVNOSTI

Irena Kuletin Čulafić

Rad razmatra značajne i zaboravljene, ali ne manje važne, izvedene i neizvedene projekte arhitekta Aleksandra Deroka. Nastoji se ostvarivanju kontinuiranog pogleda u razmatranju Derokovog arhitektonskog opusa nasuprot istorijskom diskontinuitetu političkih, teritorijalno-geografskih i društvenih prilika. Nemoguće je odvojiti Deroka arhitektu od Deroka naučnika, istoričara arhitekture, hroničara, zaštitara, konzervatora i istoriografa srpskog kulturnog nasleđa. Osnovni cilj rada je primena sveobuhvatnog naučnog pristupa u okviru kojeg će se Derokov rad u domenu arhitektonskog projektovanja razmotriti na komplementaran i pluralistički način, uzimajući u obzir Derokov rad na polju istorije i teorije arhitekture, zaštite i obnove kulturne baštine, pisanja o arhitekturi iz populističkog i naučnog ugla, umetnički rad na polju slikarstva, crteža, pozorišne scenografije, univerzitetski rad i rad u domenu prozne esejistike.

Derokovi projekti sagledani u svojim detaljima i celini čine destilat Derokove eruditne ličnosti, koja kao neka vrsta srpskog Šarla Dila ili Gabrijela Mijea baca svoju senku na danas aktuelno pitanje pozicije srpske istorije i teorije arhitekture. Kako je shvatiti, razmotriti i obrazložiti, iz ugla jugoslovenstva ili srpstva, sa pozicije kontinuiteta ili diskontinuiteta, kroz karakteristike opšteg ili posebnog?

KLJUČNE REČI: ARHITEKTONSKI PROJEKTI ALEKSANDRA DEROKA, ISTORIJSKO-KULTUROLOŠKI ASPEKT, ESTETIČKI ASPEKT, NARODNA ARHITEKTURA, SREDNJOVEKOVNA SRPSKA ARHITEKTURA, PLURALITET ZNAČENJA

STRAST PREMA PROŠLOSTI I IMPERATIV FUNKCIONALNOSTI: MEĐURATNA BEOGRADSKA REZIDENCIJALNA ARHITEKTURA ALEKSANDRA DEROKA

Milica Madanovic

Ime i delo Aleksandra Deroka blistaju među sazveždjem srpske istorije arhitekture. Uvaženi profesor beogradskog univerziteta, plodan pisac, naučnik, projektant i entuzijast za istorijsko nasleđe, Deroko je aktivno doprineo srpskoj arhitekturi dvadesetog veka. Međutim, iako prepoznata od strane kolega i mlađih generacija, Derokova projektantska delatnost još uvek nije podrobno istražena.

Baveći se rezidencijalnim gradjevinama projektovanim za Derokovu beogradsku klijentelu, ovaj rad proširuje korpus znanja o njegovoj arhitektonskoj praksi. Derokova poznata strast prema istoriji arhitekture i obimna istraživanja srpskog narodnog graditeljstva poslužili su kao početna tačka za istraživanje stambenih objekata koji su prema njegovim projektima podignuti u Beogradu. Da li je Derokovo projektovanje bilo pod uticajem njegovog odnosa prema arhitektonskoj prošlosti i rezultatima njegovih istraživanja? Ili je u svom delu usvojio samo formalne karakteristike istorijskih stilova i narodne arhitekture? Ukoliko je tako – u kolikoj meri? Diskutujući pet objekata podignutih u međuratnom periodu – zgradu pukovnika Elezovića, vilu Rakić, vilu Simić, vilu Marinković, vilu Stakić i ličnu vilu arhitekta – ovaj rad beleži transformacije izvora Derokove inspiracije, od tipičnog akademskog eklekticizma do narodnog graditeljstva.

KLJUČNE REČI: ALEKSANDAR DEROKO, ZGRADA PUKOVNIKA ELEZOVIĆA, VILA RAKIĆ, VILA SIMIĆ, VILA MARINKOVIĆ, VILA STAKIĆ, VILA DEROKO, FOLKLORIZAM

RAZVOJ DEROKOVE TEORIJE: U POTRAZI ZA “INCUNABULA” VIZANTIJSKIH KUĆA

Serena Acciai

Posmatrajući vizantijske palate koje su opstale vekovima sve do danas, kao što je Palata Porfirogenita (Paleologa) u Istanbulu, Aleksandar Deroko je isticao kao osnovnu razliku između dve ključne tipologije vizantijskih kuća: monumentalne palate izgrađene od kamena i opeke i svakodnevne kuće izgrađene od drveta.

Vekovima, uobičajena vizantijska kuće je smatrana “turskim tipom”. Deroko je ovo pronalazio nepravilnim, s obzirom da su Otomani nasledili vizantijsku kuću kada su osvojili veliku teritoriju Vizantijskog carstva, te usvojili vizantijsku kuću i kroz narode pod njihovom vladavinom i tokom vekova, ova tipologije se proširila velikim geografskim obuhvatom – od Anadolije do Severne Afrike i Balkana. Očekivano, to nije bilo refleksija samostalnog i jediničnog nasleđa; već brojnih kultura koje su potpale pod ovu vladavinu.

Oslanjajući se na Derokovu teoriju, primeri Svete gora, Janjine, Prizrena, Ohrida, Elene, pa čak i pojedinih Arbereških sela (*Arbëreshë*, italijanski Albanci) na jugu Italije mogu se smatrati *incunabula*-om ili uglednim vizantijske kuće. Verovatno zahvajući njihovim morfološkim karakteristikama i geografskoj izolovanosti, elementi ove tipologije još uvek su prisutni na ovim lokacijama, iako su sada već integrisane u lokalnu arhitektonsku kulturu. Ovo su primeri koje autorka koristi za prikaz svakodnevne vizantijske kuće.

KLJUČNEREČI: VIZANTIJSKAKUĆA, IDENTITET, MULTIPLIKACIJAKIOSKA(ERKERA), INCUNABULA, KULTURNO NASLEĐE

ALEKSANDAR DEROKO: OBNOVA SMEDEREVA NAKON EKSPLOZIJE 5. JUNA 1941. GODINE

Milorad Mladenović

Aleksandar Deroko izvršio je veliki i presudan uticaj na arhitektonsku kulturu Smedereva. U ovom tekstu neće biti reči o izuzetnom Derokovom delu valorizacije i zaštite srednjovekovne Smederevske tvrđave, već o veoma specifičnom periodu u kome će on kao arhitekta, postaviti jedan značajan niz parametara za novu viziju urbane kulture grada Smedereva. Ona je oličena u Derokovim projektima i arhitektonskim realizacijama u jednom od najdelikatnijih istorijskih perioda grada, u par godina njegove obnove nakon stravične ratne eksplozije kojom je grad gotovo u celini uništen 5. juna 1941. Iz veoma različitih ideoloških i političkih motiva do danas nije izvršena sveobuhvatnija istorijska i monografska valorizacija Derokovog dela u Smederevu. Ovaj tekst će naznačiti teme od kojih se jedna tiče Derokovog odnosa prema gradu specifične istorijske i kulturne baštine, druga prema određenim političkim i etičkim svojstvima tog odnosa u delikatnom istorijskim periodu, a treća prema arhitektonskim i estetičkim načelima koja su uticala na način na koji je Deroko oblikovao svoj rad u Smederevu, ali i na njegovu viziju obnovljenog grada. Na kraju, biće nagoveštena kvalifikacija dela Aleksandra Deroka u Smederevu, kao i uticaja koje to delo ima na današnji grad.

KLJUČNE REČI: ALEKSANDAR DEROKO, SMEDEREVO, EKSPLOZIJA U SMEDEREVSKOJ TVRĐAVI, OBNOVA SMEDEREVA, DEROKOVE KUĆE

NASLEĐE TRIJADE:
ARHITEKTURA SREDNJOVEKOVNE SRBIJE IZMEĐU STILA I IDEOLOGIJE
U DELU ALEKSANDRA DEROKA

Aleksandar Ignjatović

Uprkos kritikama upućivanim Gabrijelu Mijeu (Gabriel Millet) i njegovoj tripartitnoj podeli graditeljstva srednjovekovne Srbije, teza o tri distinktivne "škole" arhitekture do danas nije temeljnije preispitana. Sve ono što se smatralo da proističe iz Mijeovog originalnog istraživanja bilo je tesno povezano sa ideološkim projektom srpske nacionalne emancipacije tokom prvih decenija dvadesetog veka. Međutim, stilska trijada: *L'école de Rascie*, *L'école de la Serbie byzantine* i *L'école de la Morava* održala je svoj neočekivano snažan i dubok autoritet i u sasvim novim okolnostima u naučnom i ideološkom kontekstu socijalističke Jugoslavije. Njen je glavni zagovornik bio istoričar arhitekture Aleksandar Deroko, koji je u knjizi *Monumentalna i dekorativna arhitektura u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji* naizgled samo ponovio Mijeovu tripartitnu podelu srednjovekovne arhitekture, promenivši jedino naziv "škola" u "stilska grupa". Ipak, pažljivije čitanje sva tri izdanja Derokove monografije (iz 1953, 1962. i 1985. godine) otkriva niz Derokovih adaptacija izvorne Mijeove sheme, koje ukazuju da se njegov poduhvat može razumeti kao instrumentalan činilac u ideološkoj reaproprijaciji srednjovekovnog nasleđa u kontekstu nacionalnog pitanja u Jugoslaviji.

KLJUČNE REČI: SREDNJOVEKOVNA ARHITEKTURA, SREDNJOVEKOVNA SRBIJA, NACIONALNI IDENTITET, NACIONALIZAM, IDEOLOGIJA, POLITIKA

RAD ALEKSANDRA DEROKA NA SREDNJOVEKOVNOJ ARHITEKTURI I
NJEGOV ZNAČAJ DANAS

Jelena Bogdanović

Precizna evidencija više od 300 srednjovekovnih struktura, opsežna terenska istraživanja na brojnim arheološkim nalazištima, više od 100 tekstova i nekoliko kritičkih knjiga o srednjovekovnoj arhitekturi, koje su uglavnom ilustrovane sopstvenim crtežima i fotografijama, označavaju rad profesora Aleksandra Deroka o arhitektonskom nasleđu u Srbiji i bivšoj Jugoslaviji. Derokovo iskreno interesovanje za srednjovekovnu arhitekturu i njeno očuvanje duboko je ukorenjeno u njegovim studentskim danima između dva svetska rata, perioda koji je obeležio i sukob između tradicionalističkih i modernističkih ideja u arhitekturi. Ratna razaranja, javno zanemarivanje srednjovekovnog nasleđa, tzv. "zlatna groznica" kada su mnogi tražili izgubljena srednjovekovna blaga, i sveukupni nedostatak jasnih metodologija za očuvanje graditeljske baštine uznemirili su mladog Deroka, koji je često javno izražavao svoje mišljenje o neodložnoj potrebi da se spasi i revitalizuju srednjovekovne građevine, a posebno verska arhitektura. Čak je i njegov diplomski rad na studijama arhitekture, čija je tema bila crkva Svetog Save u Beogradu, bio inspirisan srednjovekovnom religioznom arhitekturom i njenim vrednostima. Ovaj rad se bavi relevantnošću Derokovog rada danas, a posebno u svetlu njegovog razumevanja srednjovekovne arhitekture kao umetnosti i oživljavajućeg kulturnog simbola značajnog za arhitektonsku praksu.

KLJUČNEREČI: ALEKSANDAR DEROKO, PETAR POKRIŠKIN, GABRIJEL MIJE, ISTORIOGRAFIJA, SREDNJOVEKOVNA ARHITEKTURA, METODOLOGIJA, ZAPADNA SREDNJOVEKOVNA, VIZANTIJSKA, SLOVENSKA ARHITEKTURA

ALEKSANDAR DEROKO: IZMEĐU TRADICIJE I MODERNOSTI

Renata Jadrešin Milić

Iako brojni tekstovi profesora Aleksandra Deroka pokreću suštinska pitanja o prirodi, istoriji i metodologiji arhitekture, on nikada nije dao sistematičnu teoriju arhitekture, niti su njegove tvrdnje pripadale nijednom dominantnom arhitektonskom diskursu. Međutim, njegove romantične vizije o udaljenim srednjovekovnim manastirima i njihovom poreklu sa jedne strane, i racionalni pristup snimanju nasledja prisutan u njegovim ranim tekstovima i kasnijim arhitektonskim udžbenicima sa druge, rezultirali su veoma novim teorijskim idejama u arhitekturi dvadestog veka. Ovaj rad ispituje razumevanje tradicije i modernosti u radu profesora Deroka, istražuje razloge njegove dvojnosti, način na koji je povezao svoj istraživački rad sa svojim pedagoškim radom, i pokušava da sistematizuje njegove teorijske ideje.

KLJUČNEREČI: ALEKSANDAR DEROKO, RASTKO PETROVIĆ, ROMANTIČNE VIZIJE, RACIONALNI JEZIK, TEORIJSKE IDEJE, TRADICIJA I MODERNOST, STALNOST I PROMENA

ALEKSANDAR DEROKO I ZAČETAK NASTAVE IZ NARODNE ARHITEKTURE NA ARHITEKTONSKOM FAKULTETU U BEOGRADU

Mirjana Roter-Blagojević, Marko Nikolić

U radu je sagledano delovanje Aleksandra Deroka na Arhitektonskom fakultetu Univerziteta u Beogradu vezano za prenošenje u nastavu bogatih vlastitih saznanja o tradicionalnoj arhitekturi stečenih na dugogodišnjim neposrednim istraživanjima na terenu. Od 1929. godine, kao docent, na predavanjima iz predmeta Vizantijska i stara srpska arhitektura, uvodi i tumačenje folklorne arhitekture. Nakon reforme nastave 1935. godine ustanovljen je predmet Stara srpska arhitektura, posvećen jedan semestar srednjovekovnom monumentalnom graditeljstvu, a jedan seoskim i varoškim kućama. Od školske 1945/46. godine predmet dobija naziv Narodna arhitektura i obuhvata srednjovekovnu i folklornu arhitekturu tadašnje Jugoslavije. Grafička vežbanja su se više odnosila na narodnu arhitekturu, a kroz njih su studenti otkrivali iskonske principe i metode narodnog graditeljstva. Cilj nastave je bio da studenti spoznaju i usvoje osnovne tradicionalne kanone građenja i prenesu ih u vlastite projekte zadrugnih domova, seoskih škola, manastirskih konaka i sl. Kroz ilustracije, u radu su prikazani, do sada neobjavljivani, radovi studenata koji se čuvaju u arhivi kabineta za Graditeljsko nasleđe u Srbiji, Arhitektonskog fakulteta u Beogradu.

KLJUČNEREČI: ALEKSANDAR DEROKO, TRADICIJA, NARODNA ARHITEKTURA, NASTAVA, STUDENTSKI PROJEKTI



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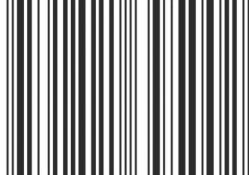
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