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Heritage as an Alternative Driver for Sustainable Development and Economic Recovery in South East Europe

## Cultural tourism in cultural corridors, itineraries, areas and cores networked

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### Abstract

Cultural Corridors are essential for the development of cultural tourism. Cultural heritage outside corridors formed powerful cores and areas in Bulgaria's territory that can work in network and wedge to European corridors. This will be implemented in full interaction, complementary actions and will be sought synergy, innovation, preservation of culture and spirituality. This concept is illustrated on the basis of several examples. Regional network of cultural tourism products integrating cultural, tourist and travel information infrastructure for cultural itineraries will create conditions for flexible regulation of tourist flows. Instead of limited number of incremental tourist destinations that overload the main cultural sites it will be offered networks of related thematic destinations. They will evenly distribute tourist flows satisfying tourist interest in full range of cultural objects and will express the cultural identity of the territories. These tourism products will be thematic, organized around certain recurrent themes related to the topics of European cultural itineraries. In this way they get clear European dimensions and will be integrated into the European network. This is the chance an anonymous object to receive European value associated with the relevant topic. It will be stimulated new ideas and tools for innovation in consumption of heritage that is a challenge in the context of local socio-economic and cultural development. In these cores and areas of cultural heritage, natural monuments, ecosystems and collections of art, traditions and crafts can be formed also tourism clusters improving local economy and supporting entrepreneurship.

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## 1. Introduction

The preserved cultural and historical heritage forms distinct cultural corridors that have been paved for centuries and millennia. These are the preserved axes of ancient cultural and economic ties that include tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the countries and peoples of Europe. These cultural corridors in recent years are seen as a cultural phenomenon that reveals the new political, economic and social opportunities for the development of the countries such as in Southeast Europe and, respectively, in each country of it

They represent a system of cultural values and historical ties created by cultural exchange and dialogue between the parties. They can also become a comprehensive cultural and tourist product, comprising both cultural values and the tourist, transport and information infrastructure. Present state of cultural heritage in South-Eastern Europe is fragmented in closed national and local systems, not considered in the existing transnational cultural corridors. In most cases these unique cultural values linked to cultural corridors, are little known in Europe, in the world, and even in the region itself. Outside the cultural corridors there are territories rich in cultural, material and spiritual values, which must also be included in a particular way in the cultural routes and corridors. Thus the European area has a chance to unite in this direction, exposure and socialization much better cultural landscape.

## 2. Terminology

According to the International Cultural Tourism Charter of ICOMOS (International Cultural Tourism Charter of ICOMOS, Mexico, 1999), cultural tourism is a type of tourism that uses as a resource the heritage - cultural and natural values of the environment, preserving the collective memory of society:

- Cultural Corridors are transcontinental and transnational historical axes of ancient cultural and economic ties, in which constantly circulate ideas, innovation and values. Cultural Corridor, unlike the cultural route should not be associated with a single deterministic target with a function or a topic.
- Cultural Corridor has many dimensions, it is multi-functional and polythematic.
- ICOMOS and its International Committee on Cultural Routes invest great efforts to define the concept of cultural route (International Charter on Cultural Routes, Quebec, 2008). Emphasis is placed on the following key features of the concept:
  - Cultural Route is a traditional way, materially determined historical track;
  - cultural route matches a certain historical purpose and function;
  - cultural itinerary includes tangible and intangible cultural phenomena;
  - Cultural Routes integrate spiritual and economic relations, environmental and cultural values into comprehensive cultural tourism systems.

With these characteristics, cultural routes creates in historical territories conditions for the application of the principle of "competitive cluster" as a basis for sustainable regional development of different sectors related to tourism.

- Cultural roads are kind of cultural heritage, which is evidence of exchange in space and time; demonstrate the role of culture in society. They are not just communication, not just "tourist product" and are a type of heritage associated with memory.

But despite common features, the two concepts should not be confused /confondre.

Cultural path that is at the heart of the cultural tourism product, reflects well the role of movement and dynamics of cultural tourism that does not respect borders and is permanently directed to various attractive targets. These values of cultural tourist routes can be deployed most complete within an integrated network of open cultural corridors / routes treated as a network by parallel and interconnected cultural tourism products.

Integration of cultural routes of different levels (local, national, regional, European, world) network creates opportunities for "open" cultural tourism, which is able to cover all levels of cultural values.

Concentration of cultural values makes historic territories an integrative field of culture and tourism. The historic area is a complete cultural medium, which encompasses single or group cultural values, cultural landscapes, historic towns, cultural routes, valuable natural environment and distinctive landscapes (European Landscape Convention, Florence - Venice, 2000). This cultural environment can not be territorially limited - its territorial range depends on the logic of the cultural and historical processes, the relevant local, national, regional or continental level

### **3. The cultural sector in Bulgaria prioritized for the economy**

The cultural sector in Bulgaria is a priority for the country's economy and has enormous potential. The European Commission supports the sector with projects aimed at developing and promoting specific types of tourism such as cultural tourism. Tourism, in turn, marks an increasingly powerful development due to increased free time, increasing life expectancy and the increasing willingness of people to entertain in the transition from civilization of labor to civilization of recreation, and increasing mobility in a globalizing world.

Without diminishing the importance of natural and recreational resources is growing the role of anthropogenic - cultural and historical resources, defining a new tourist motivation. In addition, the tourism industry has increasingly expanded its territorial range Shishmanova, M. 2005. Bulgaria's accession to the European Union has created new opportunities for the implementation of these ideas using the EU structural funds, European programs, increased opportunities for cross-border mobility and dissolution to the European cultural space.

With good cooperation, competition and connectivity between the cluster and similar clusters could be obtained and synergies. Segments of the application of products such as ecotourism with sustainable quality can be developed thanks to the development and further development of cultural, tourism events, etc. It is recognized as a vital identification, significance and development of these tourism niches in which the country has the greatest chance of success. Aforementioned types of tourism can be attributed in market niches in which to operate much like a confirmation of the destination of any building workable strategy with proactive tour operators and aggressive and pull advertising for each destination Shishmanova, M. 2006.

### **4. Trends in the development of cultural tourism**

Modern tourism knows no borders, it requires freedom of movement and choice of tourist destinations. On this basis, are formed some important trends in the development of cultural tourism:

- Integration and close economic relationship between culture and tourism is realized. Resolution (Resolution IV Conference of the Council of Europe, Helsinki, 1996) stresses that "revenue from cultural tourism can contribute significant funds for the maintenance and preservation of cultural heritage", as referred to above logic: if cultural heritage is capable of stimulating the tourism industry, the tourism in turn should assist for detection, protection and promotion of their own cultural and historical resources.
- Irreplaceable commercial value acquire the full cultural and historic packages, including cultural, tourism, transport and information infrastructures, complemented by attractive by-products and activities (festival attractions, trade, food, hunting, fishing, etc Cultural values most often integrated with natural values are in the center of this system, treated as a complete tourist product, renewing infrastructure around it that makes it attractive permanently. ([www.culture-routes.lu](http://www.culture-routes.lu)).
- The image of the village-territory-country becomes a marketable commercial product to be launched worldwide with comprehensive marketing and advertising, because it creates a favorable climate for investment and tourism. Cultural heritage is a key element of the image.

## 5. Sustainable territorial development through cultural tourism

Linking cultural roads in territorial network creates opportunities for flexible regulation of tourist flows. Tourism products built around cultural roads can be thematic, organized on the basis of certain leading topics related to the themes of European cultural routes. In this way they get a clear European dimension and can be integrated into the European network. This is a chance as one anonymous cultural object - for example Rhodope bridge to get a European value, for example related to the topic Bridges of Europe. Conditions are created to be satisfied the tourist interest in the whole range of characteristics of cultural heritage in terms of its types, layers, levels, themes and more. Revealed is an opportunity to show full cultural and tourist potential of the territory, to be activated the recently unknown cultural tourism resource Krastev, T. 2005.

## 6. A concrete example of a core and an area outside cultural corridor or route in Bulgaria

The structure includes:

- The network of cultural routes with different themes;
- The exceptional cultural and natural values of the analyzed territory;
- The area of influence of the historical territory
- The historic area includes a huge variety of topics, but two of them are integral character:
- Orthodox and monastery culture;
- Historical stratification in a real "spring" allowing "journey through the centuries" - an essential feature as a crossroads of cultures and civilizations.

A coordinated tourism management within integrated regional network of cultural tourism products will reveal the full richness of the regional cultural phenomena and would increase the competitiveness of the tourism market in the region as a whole. Fragmentation of the cultural tourism market only in local frameworks of individual countries or municipalities will have partial and incomplete effect in which the majority of cultural resources will remain unknown and inaccessible.

Instead of a limited number of incremental tourist destinations that overload the main cultural sites will be offered networks of related thematic destinations, which evenly distribute tourist flows, satisfy the tourist interest in the full range of cultural objects express the cultural identity of the territories. For areas that are outside the cultural routes and cultural corridors, can be determined a core and an area to be plugged in at the lowest level, it shall be included in cultural routes and they in turn into cultural corridors. This will cover more territory cultural basis for growth and socialization of new cultural values and natural resources.

Such a network could be implemented stepwise through the creation of some of its fragments with the active involvement of regional and local communities. On this basis should be encouraged integrated implementations of innovative cultural tourism, which activate cultural routes and cultural exchange in them, contribute to heritage conservation and sustainable regional development. This implies the creation of a network of cultural tourism products built along the road and connected by it to the European network of cultural tourism Shishmanova, M. 2005.

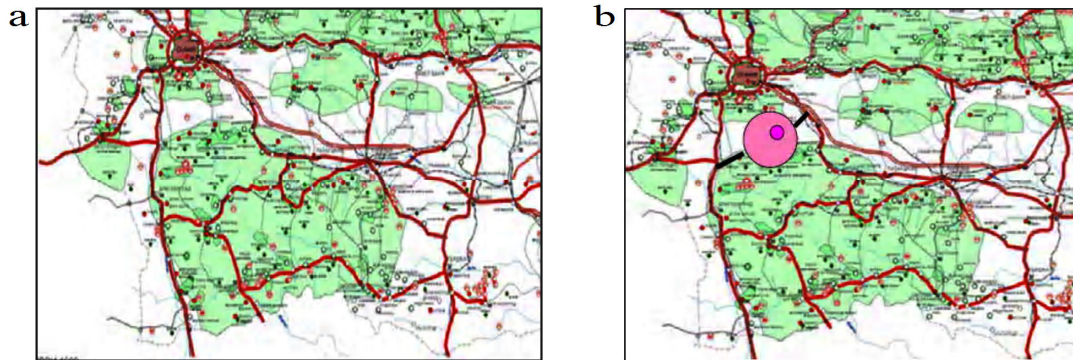


Fig. 1 (a) National scheme of cultural routes; (b) Core and areal Samokov connected to cultural routes

As an example, the present study examines the Samokov and the area around the town within the municipality. The territory of the municipality is 1303.6 km<sup>2</sup> and has 27 settlements. The location of this community is between two cultural routes (see Scheme 1 and Scheme 2). The town is a rich melting pot of cultural and historical values, architectural, spiritual - traditions, customs, rituals, art, crafts, cuisine.

### 6.1 Core Samokov

The town is one of those Bulgarian cities whose fame goes through the legends associated with the last days of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom, through the “samokovi” (big hammers), “vidni” (Saxon furnaces) and “madani” (blacksmith workshops), which fed during centuries the military power of the Ottoman Empire, in the monuments and documents relating to the work of generations.

In the field of handicrafts, trade, educational work, church struggle people from Samokov achieved significant success and led his city to a prosperous position.

Samokov is known for its traditions in education, art and culture. One of the biggest pride of Samokov from the Revival period is Samokov art school of the late 18th century. Samokov master painters, engravers, painters and carvers scar of higher art on the walls of dozens of churches and monasteries. Most prominent painters from Samokov - Zachary Zograph, Stanislav Dospevski, Ivan and Nicolas Obrazopisov are founders of secular art in Bulgaria. Masterful works of Renaissance artisans from Samokov - ceramics, wood carvings, wrought iron ornaments, local costumes are a national treasure.

In Samokov are declared and announced 120 cultural monuments, of which 7 of national importance. Of the available cultural and historical potential of greatest importance are the following sites: The Historic museum in Samokov, Sarafska House, Church “Assumption of Virgin Mary”, Church “St. Nicholas”, Beliova church, Church “Nativity of Virgin Mary”, Metropolitan Church, Maiden Monastery, Bairakli Mosque, Synagogue, Great fountain, Umbrella Fountain and more.

In the historical museum can be traced fund of about 30,000 exhibits divided into ethnographic, archaeological, artistic and iconographic, photographic and documentary collections.

Ethnographic collection dates back as early as the work of the founders of the museum as a continuously updated over the years. By textiles, costumes, jewelery and crafts shows life and livelihood of the old people from Samokov.

The archaeological collection figure mainly Thracian and late findings. The richest trove of late antique cult ceramics is located here. Objects are many pit sanctuaries found on the shore of Lake Iskar at one of low tides and dated from before the first century BC. The other exhibits are from the village of Popovyane and are dated to the 3-4 century AD.



Art collection contains icons, prints, manuscripts, documents and many pictures. covered almost all the masters of the Samokov art school. 3500 works of art store today historical museum and its art gallery.

In the town are built many architectural sites and monuments of culture.



Fig. 2. (a) The interior of the church Beliova Samokov; (b) Frescoes and icons from the church Beliova. In its present form was built to the XV-XVII century on the foundations of old Christian churches

In 1830 in Samokov was erected one of the first public clock towers in the Bulgarian lands. At the end of the 19th century clock tower leans heavily to the west and the municipal government decided tower to be torn down by the clock mechanism moves the bell tower of the Metropolitan Church. Interest for tourist exposure are the traditional holidays: Feast of Samokov - Assumption of St. Simeon of Samokov, pokladi celebrating Lent with traditional bonfires and processions, celebration of Rila 7-8 August which already has 78 years of tradition, cultural festivals Chakarovi meadows, Roma celebration of May 6 at the royal wells Iskar River.

### 1.1. Samokov area

Samokov municipality is known for its long history and over the years has accumulated a rich cultural and historical heritage. Samokov area was inhabited by Thracians involved in intensive cultural and economic ties with the busiest centers in the Upper Valley and beyond. Development of metallurgy turned the municipality into important center in the coming ages. The work of Christians from the region created the glory of the masters of jewelry. Bulgarians were appointed for master masons and they had to build new fortifications for the Ottoman army. Known and sought after, these masters and white wide-built houses of their city - Samokov, its churches with high steeples, and the rows of shops in the bazaar and prayer houses. Archaeological studies show that Samokov region with its specific physico-geographical structure has attracted large populations living mainly from mining.

#### > – Prehistoric cultures in the Samokov municipality.

The earliest archaeological materials related to the ages of the Late Neolithic and Early Eneolith. As an initial limit is determined eneolith 8-6 thousand years BC, and the final limit is determined by the emergence and development of metallurgy. This is a major feature of the Copper Age or the so called Eneolith. In villages Dragotinovo, Belchin Banya, area Losnizite, and southern shores of lake "Iskar" found numerous fragments of pottery, pieces of terrazzo, flint tools and multiple bones.

#### > – Thracian culture in the municipality of Samokov

One of the first archaeological evidence of sites and settlements in the Thracian times are found in the region of the villages Gorni Pasarel, Shishmanovo, Shiroki dol, Raiovo.

#### > – Archaeological sites and monuments from the Roman and Late Antiquity

In the mountain "Sliveto", 2 km. west of the former village of Gorni Pasarel, there are remains of a Thracian settlement, which is a large area and continues to the east and in the area "Yalovarnika". Area "Korchov most"

is located 1 km. northeast of the former s.Shishmanovo. Stone walls are revealed, pottery, iron objects, coins, etc. In the "Murtviloto" were found fragments of pottery and structural ceramics. It is quite similar to that of the place "Korchov most" indicating that the settlement from the Late Roman period (III-V century). In the "Kaldaramite" north of the village, the water of the river revealed an old paved road. Perhaps this is an old Roman road connecting the valley with "Dolnopasarelskoto" field. The existence of an ancient village situated immediately below the present village speak as clearly marked cultural layer with material from III-IV century, and many individual findings. In the "Orniche" west of the village, there are reports of coin finds. When digging found crock bronze coins minted in Augusta Trayana, Pautaliya, Filipopol, Serdika. In villages Belchin Baniya, Raiovo, Dragoshinovo, Popoviyane, Iyarlovo, Govedarzi, Dospei, Gorni Okol, Dolni Okol more late antique fortress, ceramic fragments of building ceramics and pottery, iron objects many remnants of this era.

#### > – **Cemeteries**

Cemeteries are found within seven villages in the area of Samokov. Over 20 tombs have been registered in this historic area. Around and within the mounds are found fragments of thick-and thin-walled vessels of various shapes, technique development and decoration. All are typical of ceramics from the Roman era. In the center of the base of the mound was opened fireplace.

The necropolis near the village Alino is located 2 km. southeast of the village and 1.3 km. west of the ancient settlement in the "Circassian home." It consists of seven mounds. In the cemetery there were other mounds. One of them has been excavated at the end of the last century. It derives Roman stone sarcophagus without decoration carved from stone syenite.

#### > – **Sanctuaries**

Like the cemeteries where the Thracians performed religious rituals and practices associated with the cult of the dead, the sanctuaries are places where fully materialize again through religious ritual actions presented to the public. For this purpose, like other peoples, the Thracians create special places, sanctuaries. So far were found five sanctuaries.

Roman period is associated with the actual blossoming of sanctuaries. Many sanctuaries linked to any settlement received votive gifts from durable material. These are votive tablets, various statues, reliefs, etc., Made of marble or ceramic. It is with this purpose are found in the area of Samokov votive reliefs and inscriptions dealing with various aspects of religious cults of the local population. Unfortunately the Samokov region has not yet been adequately studied and so far no studies Archeologists sanctuary. Their existence can be assumed several serendipity in different eras.

#### > – **Fortresses**

Summarizing the material on settlements and fortresses in the area of Samokov in ancient and late antique periods is striking proximity of these sites. Conclusions can be inferred about the nature of the equipment. Settlements in the ancient and late antique periods associated chronologically with the nearby forts in which it can be assumed that these objects are combined into a larger complex. Ceramic materials found in or near the castle itself is analogous to that of the settlements. The purpose of such a facility is on the premises. Most recorded settlements are related to mining and metallurgy. The majority of these objects are dated to the period of late antiquity (IV-VI century).

In Mali zari grad has disappeared the substance, but the structure is preserved. Just as with the evolution of a historic city its substance can be transformed, but to preserve the structure of its urban tissue as cultural heritage.

Samokov Belchin village is well known for its mineral waters. It became even more famous for its unique historical complex Mali thru town - restored fortress of IV-V century and the church of XVII century fortress had great importance in antiquity. Here are interbred Roman roads between today's Kyustendil, Sapareva Baniya, Samokov, Plovdiv and Sofia. 285 years of settlement within the boundaries of the Roman province of Inner Dacia Serdica with its capital at the time of the Emperor Diocletian reformer. A period of dynamic changes in economic, religious and political terms, migration in IV-VI century, called "Great Migration"

changed the political map of Europe. Period of political instability, a devastating military incursions, which requires the construction of reliable protection of the local population with a massive wall. (<http://www.carimaligrad.com>).

Of greatest interest are antique and medieval fortress "Shishmanovo kale" near the village Dospei, Alino monastery near selo Alino, monastery "St. George the Victorious" end with Govedarzi. In Borovets qualified as monuments of culture are the hunting palace of the famous Ferdinand from the early twentieth century and country some houses of the then elite.

#### › – **Crafts, manners, traditions, customs**

In recent years new events in life and local customs emerge, such as the Feast of the Rila zelnik in the village of Beli rock the festival "Rock in Rila" Beli Iskar, traditional art workshop with the participation of famous artists, the Festival of beans with festival in the village Raduil. These traditional and new festivals and events in the lifestyle, traditions and new artistic events associated with very successful tourist activity and can significantly enrich the tourist offer.

#### › **Management of a core and an area of the historical territory outside the cultural route and Cultural Corridor**

If not be connected incremental cultural sites, everything would fall apart into individual isolated point products and destinations. Should be paid attention to the following aspects of the management of these cultural objects:

- Develop mechanisms for partnership and cooperation structures for conservation and sustainable development of the core and the area, involving regional and local authorities, civil society, scientific expert potential and tourism;
- Preparation of a Strategy and Action Plan for the identification, conservation, sustainable development and the promotion of core habitat and example of Samokov;
- Providing funding for the activities included in the Action Plan;
- Opportunities for public-private partnerships, etc..
- Participation in European programs of different types and Operational program "Regions of growth".

#### › **Cultural, historical and natural areal and core Samokov - world tourism center**

Analysis of the tourism potential of Samokov Municipality shows that there are significant opportunities for the development of alternative tourism - combining cultural, rural, hobby, environmental and other specialized forms whose product attracts wealthy tourists and has a higher yield in the sector. These resources should be utilized, and the tourism industry to become a priority for the municipality as its development would help the overall development of Samokov region ([http:// www.Samokov.bg\cult.html](http://www.Samokov.bg/cult.html)).

The new local government will achieve tangible positive changes towards making the Samokov municipality in cultural and historical core and an areal, center of international cultural, alternative, festival and ski tourism.

## **7. Conclusion**

Cultural heritage outside corridors formed powerful cores and areas in Bulgaria's territory that can work in network and wedge to European corridors. This will be implemented in full interaction, complementary actions and will be sought synergy, innovation, preservation of culture and spirituality. Regional network of cultural tourism products integrating cultural, tourist and travel information infrastructure for cultural itineraries will create conditions for flexible regulation of tourist flows. Instead of limited number of incremental tourist destinations that overload the main cultural sites it will be offered networks of related thematic destinations. They will evenly distribute tourist flows satisfying tourist interest in full range of cultural objects and will express the cultural identity of the territories. These tourism products will be thematic, organized around



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