

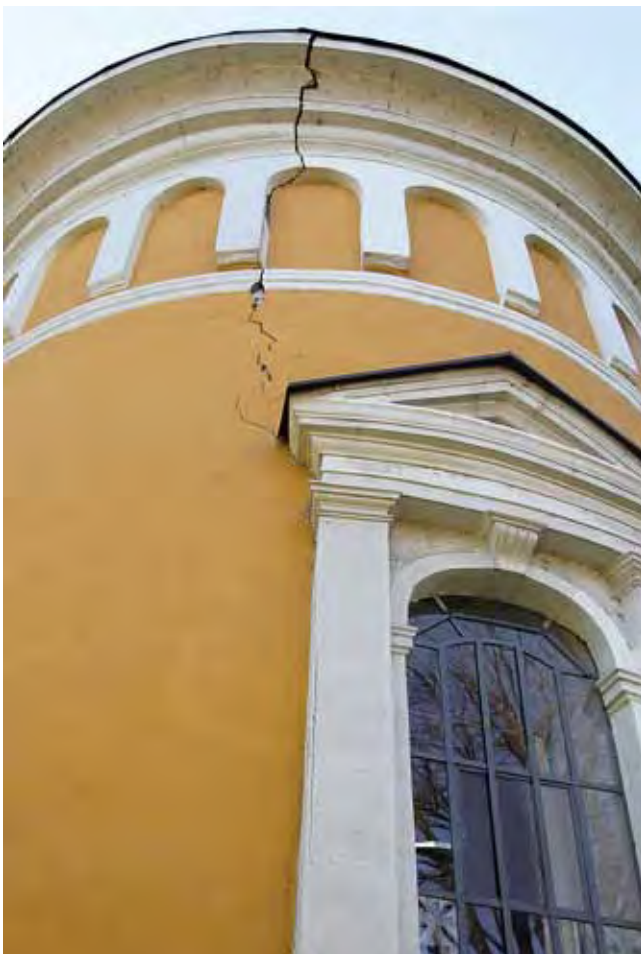
SERBIA

Endangered Heritage – The Earthquake in Kraljevo, Central Serbia

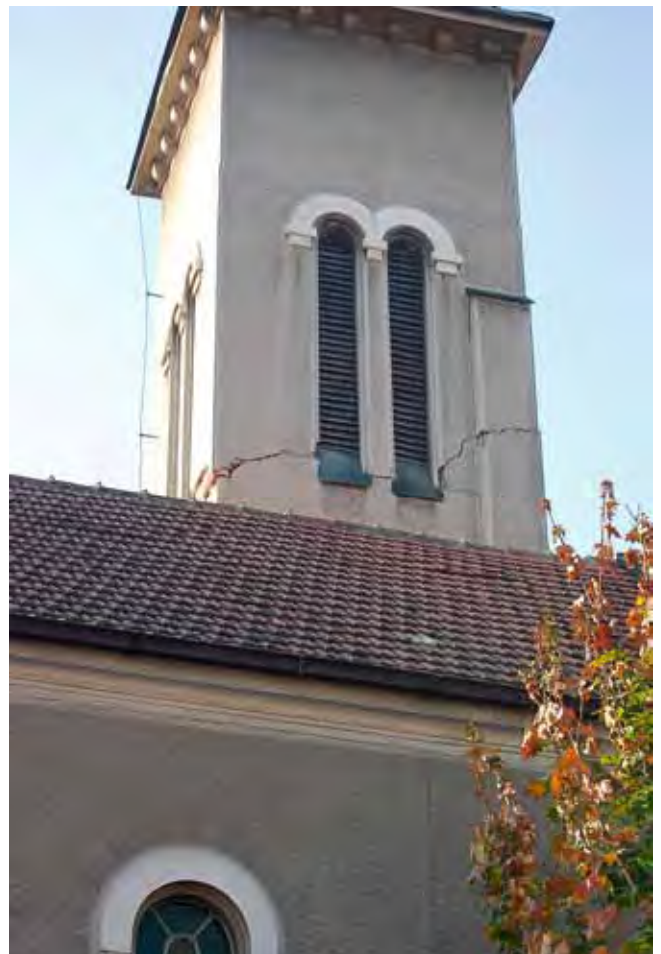
An earthquake of large destructive power hit the town of Kraljevo in the central part of Serbia and its surroundings on November 3, 2010. Beside the great damages that residential and administrative/commercial buildings suffered, the most serious damages were caused to the built cultural heritage. Fortunately, none of the cultural properties were completely devastated, but many of them suffered serious damages. Such a situation required the engagement of all available experts in the field of conservation and substantial financial support in order to consolidate and repair the buildings, and to conserve and restore their original state. During the full-day visits of the damaged properties, professionals from the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments from Kraljevo, especially a team of architects, prepared an

endangered heritage list, including a list of priority works. For this emergency situation, the National Committee of ICOMOS Serbia delegated an expert team to get an insight into the situation on-site and to prepare a preliminary report which was sent to the National Committee of ICOMOS Macedonia/Risk Preparedness Subcommittee. Their representatives, together with the Director of the Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Engineering Seismology from Skopje (Macedonia), used that report to assess the damage to the built heritage in order to offer their professional assistance. In addition, the Serbian Society of Conservators/Section of Architects made a proposal that all institutes for the protection of cultural monuments acting in Serbia should help the city of Kraljevo with development projects to rehabilitate and reconstruct selected examples of endangered valuable architectural heritage. During that action, 15 rehabilitation projects were prepared, and so far the works on seven objects/sites have been completed, with an expert supervision.

St. Trinity Church, cracks on the apse



St. Michael's Church, cracks on the tower





St. Michael's Church, cracks on the tower and on the church walls

▷ Old Bazaar in Kraljevo, one of the houses damaged during the earthquake

▷ The village of Guberevac, vernacular architecture damaged during the earthquake



On the list of the most endangered properties were the following objects: the House of the Švapčić family (the seat of the Institute in Kraljevo), the orthodox St. Trinity Church in the centre of the town, the old Hotel Paris and Hotel Yugoslavia, the catholic Church of St. Michael, Lord Vasa Residence, the building of the Historical Archives, the High Court and the Prosecution, and many buildings in the protected area of the Old Bazaar in the city centre. In the vicinity of Kraljevo heavy damage was reported at Žiča Monastery and at the Church of St. Elijah in the village of Sirča.

The teams of professionals from all over Serbia working on site had to face challenging project tasks for the rehabilitation and consolidation of different types of built heritage, which included extensive field research and documentation in archives, surveying the physical status of buildings just after the earthquake, thorough analysis of the structural elements of the ensemble, various details, and old materials which had been used with specific building techniques. All this could not be carried out without the close collaboration with university professors specialised in structural engineering, whose knowledge greatly contributed to the quality and selection of appropriate solutions for the repair

and strengthening of these specific structures. Thus the requirements for preserving the authenticity of built heritage were successfully reconciled with providing additional security structures in order to prevent any new potential damage from possible additional earthquakes.

The methodology used in the preparation of the projects duly contributed to the conservation and enhancement of the built heritage, using traditional methods for the reinforcement of structures such as only steel ties and cables, or in combination with the injection of special types of mortar. Some of the projects anticipated the application of new methods, such as using carbon fibers and canvases with epoxy resin, which is a reversible and non-devastating intervention in contemporary conservation practice. Unfortunately, these materials are new and still too expensive for the circumstances in our country, and so far projects making use of them have not yet been realized.

Financial assistance from the state administration was primarily focused on the urgent rehabilitation of residential architecture in the city and surrounding areas, which is understandable, since many families lost their homes. However, even in such a difficult situation we were able to rehabilitate a number of historic build-

ings. The disaster that struck Kraljevo opened citizens' eyes to the importance of heritage conservation as an essential element of collective identity in the period of globalisation. It also led to a kind of collegial solidarity among professionals from our country as well from the region, who together were engaged in activities to protect the cultural heritage.

ICOMOS Serbia

Niš: Part of the Main Necropolis of the Roman City of Naissus (4th/5th Centuries AD) Discovered and in Danger of Being Destroyed

During construction works for a new factory in the former textile factory "Nitex" that was bought by "Benetton", several early Christian tombs were discovered. During 22 days of rescue excavations carried out by the Cultural Heritage Preservation Institute in Niš, 43 grave units were registered (including 11 vaulted tombs and 14 constructed graves) with more than 55 individual burials.

Excavations also unearthed unique and typical pieces of jewellery and personal belongings of the population buried here, together with sepulchral objects (such as glass unguentaria) characteristic of the late Roman / early Christian periods.

The necropolis of Jagodin-mala in Niš is already known as an early Christian necropolis with more than 60 vaulted tombs (several of these tombs are painted) together with grave basilicas registered during the last 70 years. This necropolis has analogies with the more famous ones in Sopianae (Pécs, Hungary), in Serdica, etc.

During the 22-day rescue campaign only 10% (450 sq m) of the total area could be investigated and only in several separate small areas of the grounds intended for the factory construction (5 000 sq m). The rest of the area has not yet been archaeologically investigated because of the still unknown final outcome of the factory construction and the destiny of the discovered tombs.

The excavated constructed grave units are in real danger of being completely destroyed together with the rest of the unexcavated area.

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Niš, early Christian vaulted tomb



Niš, inside a vaulted tomb

Golden earrings found in one of the tombs

