

DANuRB Cultural Networking, Regional Identity Building and Development



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DANUrB Cultural Networking, Regional Identity Building and Development

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1. CULTURAL CAPITAL, NETWORKING, REGIONAL IDENTITY BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT

Being aware of the cultural richness of the locality, to realize that there are similar communities inheriting the same cultural capital from their ancestors, moreover, to nurture solidarity with them on a network basis, empowers these communities both in socio-cultural and economic sense. In the DANUrB project one of our main goals was to find common tracks, living and forgotten/or hidden remnants of cultural heritage in the DANUrB countries, which can be re- discovered and activated for regional identity and brand building, as well as local and regional community development on a network and cluster basis.

Local-cultural identity is attachment, devotedness, self-awareness and ideally, a proudness of the local culture, in its many-folded and multidimensional meaning. As culture has both tangible and intangible elements laying on three main constituting pillars: the normative pillar covering values, norms, traditions, religions of the community, the cognitive pillar covering languages, science, music, and the human made artifacts from the Roman fortresses and aqueducts to modern industrial built heritage. After the 3 year systematic socio- spatial research in the DANUrB countries we can say that sharing common historical background, legacy (e.g. Roman, Ottoman or the Hapsburg Empire) and traditions, different kinds of tangible and intangible cultural capital along the Danube, - e.g. built heritage of the Roman Empire or ancient agricultural traditions, like viniculture or fishing, tales, folk songs and traditions kept and transferred through many generations - can be a basis for local clustering as well as regional cultural networking and identity building in the long run.

We have learnt in the first 3 year DANUrB phase that many settlements in the transitory, post-socialist DANUrB countries are struggling with economic and social depression, decreasing population, dismantling societies, lost and abandoned productions facilities, infrastructure, all signalling the shrinking city (region) and peripheral position phenomenon. On the other hand, we have also realized that the Central and Lower Danube region is very rich both in natural – landscape, agricultural potential etc.– and (forgotten) cultural resources, be it tangible or intangible. Today in the era of rapid globalization, technological change, commodification and uniformization, we could say that identification with a locality, being aware of the past history, traditions, knowledge, moreover re-using the locally based knowledge and cultural heritage e.g. in cultural economy through regional networking can be an advantageous strategy for survival and even development. There are many “best or good practice” examples in the EU countries, France, Ireland, the

¹ Relying on DANUrB PPs’ Regional reports, Cultural heritage and stakeholder datasheets, DANUrB Stakeholder Research and Involvement Report, and using parts of the forthcoming DANUrB Book chapter, titled “Intangible cultural capital, arts and crafts knowledge transfer”, the author being the chief writer and editor of it.

Netherlands etc..., that local communities, with strong identity and attachment to their heritage, e.g. local food and gastronomy could turn their “peripheral backwardness” to advantageous, developmental asset, in the form of local traditional restaurants, farm inns, food festivals under a regional brand umbrella attractive to internal and external tourists and boosting their local economy.

We have realized that there are many non-used potentials in the explored DANUrB network already, therefore in the planned “DANUrB+” project we would like to make really working cooperation projects inside the Platform – but open for any “newcomer” - , as well as in other forms, to help stakeholders to take action, to make plans for stakeholders for projects worth cooperating for.

2. DANURB STAKEHOLDERS AND INSTITUTIONALIZED REGIONAL CULTURAL NETWORKING

Since the very beginning of 2017 - having started our stakeholder research - we consider local stakeholders of the communities all those participants in the DANUrB project who „have a stake”,

- who have been already engaged in culture related activities along the Danube,
- are interested in exploiting this rich regional resource in order to strengthen the local communities’ identity,
- are ready to find and use hidden socio- cultural resources for a better economic and social return of their locality,
- and are ready to build regional cooperative networks for the same purposes.

Nonetheless, besides the strictly speaking local stakeholders, the regional, so called “umbrella” stakeholders – having their centre in the given locality –, or even laying down transnational, cross-border ties between two neighbouring DANUrB countries, e.g. between Slovakia and Hungary - were as much important.

Based on the many folded and complex cultural heritage and stakeholder research - started in early 2018 in the form of datalists and sheets collecting, then continued in other qualitative research and methodology forms such as interviews, workshops etc... - we distinguished the local governments/municipalities, cultural and educational institutions, civil organizations and initiatives as the most important groups of local and regional stakeholders who could form the basis of future, institutionalized cultural economy based clustering and networking. Moreover, we asked our PP researcher and locally responsible DANUrB colleagues to collect all those stakeholders in the “Stakeholder Research and Involvement Report” who they think could be the most cooperative ones, being the “network nodes and pillars” in the medium and long-run planned DANUrB Platform and Cultural Network building (see the examples in the next section).

3. INSTITUTIONALIZED CULTURAL CLUSTERS AND NETWORKING OF LOCAL/REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN THE DANURB COUNTRIES

3.1. Museums, galleries, cultural centres, religious institutions and churches

- Museum Krems, Kunstmeile Krems Betriebsges.m.b.H. (Krems/Austria)
- Dunamúzeum (Esztergom/Hungary), Vár és Múzeum (Castle Museum, Esztergom), Keresztény Múzeum (Christian Museum, Esztergom), Balassa Múzeum (Balassa Museum, Esztergom), Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption (Basilica) (Esztergom) Dunakanyar Szob-Börzsöny Múzeum (Hungary)
- Municipality Museum (Štúrovo/Párkány), Municipality Cultural Center, Štúrovo/Párkány)
- Museum of Smederevo, Regional Institute for Protection of Cultural Monuments in Smederevo (Serbia)
- Cultural centre of Bačka Palanka municipality together with The Museum of the City of Bačka Palanka (Serbia)
- Museum of Art and Ethnography 'Marincu', House of Culture (Calafat/Romania)
- Municipal Museum of Calarasi, Local Cultural Centre „Ion Vinea”/Giurgiu, (Romania)
- Eco-Museum Research Institute (Romania)



3.2. Castles, fortresses, archaeological sites and national parks

- Komarno/Komarom fortress (Slovakia/Hungary),
- Visegrad, Esztergom castles (Hungary),
- Smederevo (Serbia),
- Golubac castles (Serbia),
- Petrovaradin fortress (Novi Sad/Serbia),
- Fortress of "Artanes"/Almus (Lom, Bulgaria)
- Noviodunum fortress (Romania),
- Lepenski Vir Open air museum (Serbia),
- Iron Gate National Park (Serbia),
- Danube Delta Biosphere Authority (Romania),



3.3. Art initiatives and NGOs

- Kaleidoszkóp (Esztergom/Hungary),
- Institute of Contemporary Art (Dunaújváros/Hungary),,
- Iron Sculptures Open Park (Dunaújváros/Hungary),
- Balassa Bálint Társaság (Bálint Balassa Society, Esztergom)

- Mestská galéria Júliusa Bartu (City Gallery Júliusa Bartu, Štúrovo/Párkány)
- Danubius Kino (Danubius Movie Theatre, Štúrovo/Párkány)

- Art Gallery “Siliva GrosuJelescu” (Giurgiu, Romania)



3.4. Fishing, shipping, water sport associations, competitions

- Komarno Shipping Company, Kajak-Kenoe clubs of Komarno (Slovakia),
- Dunaújvárosi Sporthorgász Egyesület, Paksi Sporthorgászok Egyesület (Hungary)
- Esztergom Rowing Club (Hungary)
- TJ Dunaj Canoe Association Párkány/Sturovo (Slovakia),
- Real Racing Equestrian Club, Pelican Bike Club (Romania)



3.5. Tourism, local and community development organizations, regional networking institutions

- Krems Tourismus GmbH, Tourismusverband Linz (Austria),
- Pons Danubii EGTC, “Dunamente “/Regional association for Tourism in the Danube Region (Slovakia)
- Ister-Granum EGTC (Hungary), Paksi Turizmusért Egyesület (Hungary)
- Esztergom és Térsége Turisztikai Egyesület (Esztergom and Region Tourism Development Association)
- Tourist Organisation of Bačka Palanka Municipality (Serbia)
- Tourist Info Center, Golubac (Serbia)
- South-East Regional Development Agency, Association of Tourism Patronage in the Danube Delta (Romania)



3.6. Other civil organizations interested in cultural economy based related to tangible and intangible cultural heritage (history, traditions, folklore)

- Donaufestival, IDM/ Institut für den Donaauraum und Mitteleuropa (Austria)
- Ökocsiga Egyesület (Dunaújváros/Hungary)
- Vinum Ister Granum Regional Wine Order of Knighthood (Esztergom/Hungary)
- Kiskosár (Local Food Community, Esztergom/Hungary)
- GastroBlues Festival (Paks/Hungary), Duna-menti Folklore Festival (along the Danube)
- Vinarija "Tri međe i oblak", Vinarija „Janko” (Serbia, private wineries)
- Golubac Library (Serbia),
- Tamburicafest (Novi Sad/Serbia)
- Nature Voice Association , PLIMM Calafat, GAL Calafat/Local Action Group (Romania)
- International Danube Festival in Ulm (Germany) and Tulcea (Romania)
- International Festival of the Danube Theatres (Giurgiu, Romania)
- Fish Borsch Festival (Crisan, Tulcea county/Romania)
- “Krastovden” (The day of the Cross, Silistra/Bulgaria)



- “Kukeri” (Thrakian) festivities (Bulgaria)

3.7. Educational stakeholders and institutions (primary and secondary schools, higher education, universities)

- Árpád-házi Szent Erzsébet, Óvoda, Általános iskola és Gimnázium (Esztergom/Hungary),
- Gymnazium, (Štúrovo/Párkány)
- Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Esztergom Campus, Archeology Department (Esztergom/Hungary),
- J. Selye University (Slovakia)
- Gimnazija „20. oktobar“ (High school), SSS "Radivoj Uvalić" (secondary vocational school) (Serbia)



3.8. Local entrepreneurs, companies and businesses in cultural economy

3.8.1. Directly culture, tourism or gastronomy related entrepreneurs,

- Pálinka Patika, Özicseli Hadzsi Ibrahim-dzsámi (Esztergom/Hungary)
- Thermal Bath in Štúrovo/Párkány (Slovakia)



3.8.2. Indirectly, sponsoring, supporting, initiating cultural and community building programs and projects

- Suzuki or Nauzer Kerékpárgyár (Esztergom/Hungary)



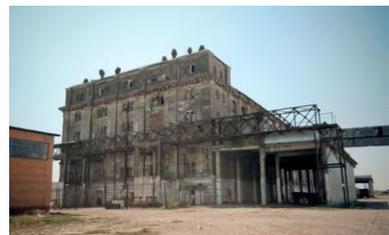
3.9. Shipyards

- Shipyard Korneuburg / Schiffswerft Korneuburg (Austria)
- Harbour, Old Shipyard - Skoda Shipyard, Slovakia
Shipyard Komarno - New Shipyard Komarno (Slovakia)
- Open-air riverboat museum in Neszmely (Hungary)
- The Radetski Steamship National Museum, Kozloduy
- Naval shipyard- Danube riverbank, Giurgiu (Romania)
- The Navigation Palace / The River Transport Station, Galati (Romania)
- The Light House of the European Commission of the Danube, The Old Light House, ECD Naval Workshops, Sulina (Romania)
- Boat landing place, Braila (Romania)



3.10. Industrial areas

- Former ammunition factory, Komarno (Slovakia)
- Coal Stowage Pier, Dorog (Hungary)
- Brick factory, Area of the former cannery, Visitors Centre of Paks Nuclear Power Plant, Paks (Hungary)
- Old industrial building at river bank in Šarengrad village, Ilok (Croatia)
- Bata – Ville, Vukovar (Croatia)
- Silo, Old Steel Factory, Smederevo (Serbia)
- South East Industrial Platform, Drobeta Turnu Severin (Romania)
- Calafat- Industrial Cannery, Sugar Factory ltd (Romania)
- Giurgiu Sugar Factory, Giurgiu Textile Factory, Chemical Platform (Romania)
- The <Danube> Mill, Oltenita (Romania)
- Violatos Mill Building, The Automated Flour Factory Valerianos&Likiardopoulos, The Romanian Rice Factory Building, The Typography Company Building, Braila (Romania)
- The Canned Fish Factory, Sulina (Romania)
- Industrial area Galati (Romania)



4. CULTURAL NETWORKING AND REGIONAL IDENTITY BUILDING BASED TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE ALONG THE DANUBE

4.1. Remnants and memories of the Roman and Ottoman Empires

In Austria, the Danube Limes represent a large part of the architectural heritage in the region, being attractive sightseeing points for tourists. Many of the remaining building structures and fortifications date back to Ancient Roman times. The Danube Limes is mostly introduced by fortification constructions, such as castles, ports, legion camps and fortified settlements with grave fields next to them in many cases. The location for the buildings has been often dictated by their military purposes. They had to be situated on strategically important points, because building, for instance a fort on a bank of the Danube made it possible to control the opposite side of the river, its lowlands, or the river crossings. However, the close disposition of these building structures to the river made them endangered and even damaged by floods, while some areas have been totally washed away. Several records of ancient road findings show a dense road network, where several highways converged. The topic of the Danube Limes is huge and still constitutes a vast opportunity for research and development for many reasons.

Various traditions, legends and festivals represent intangible cultural heritage of the region. Intangible cultural heritage is relatively well-preserved in Austria. Legends and fairy-tales (Sagen) have been collected into books and are performed on stage. Various traditional festivals are held annually. The value of traditions and handcrafts is represented on multiple Medieval Festivals, which are predominantly attended by the local population and help raising their awareness on the traditions of the region, as well as on what the life was like in the Middle Ages: how people dressed, what they ate, their daily routine was, how they produced goods.

Geographical conditions and strategic position along the Danube formed unique settlement patterns for instance on today's Slovak-Hungarian border in twin cities like Komárno-Komárom and Štúrovo (Párkány) - Esztergom. Komárno – the Northern part of the previous united city in 1896, now located in Slovakia -, being in a strategic position and of crossing trade routes - has been a fortification town since the Roman Empire, being part of the earlier mentioned Limes Romanus. Archaeological findings of Roman military camp Celemantia - Leanyvár (near Komárno, in village Iža) were found. It was part of the Limes Romanus fortification system – the only one preserved on the left side of the riverbank - and served as an extended bridgehead of legionary camp Brigetio on the confluence of the rivers Danube and Vaag. As part of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire serial site Brigetio is on the tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. After the 1526 Mohács battle - when the Turkish troops defeated Hungary and later occupied large part of the country – Komárno (Komárom) gained further strategic importance for whole Central Europe. From the 19th century extensive construction of the fortification system started, in a combination of renaissance and modern fortress.

Regarding the defeat of Turks - very important military moment for Europe - is to mention the Párkány/Parkan (Štúrovo) battle, where Prince Charles de Lorraine - general and head of the Saint League - and Polish king J. Sobiesky fought and defeated the Turkish troops in 1683. There is a place called "Valley of laments" where Turks killed 2000 soldiers and the other is called "Valley of Cry" where they murdered 1000 prisoners (women and children). As an intangible heritage of this historical event, the Slovak national writer Janko Kráľ remembered Párkány/Parkan (Štúrovo) how it stands proud through happiness or grief, during tough times of Turkish occupation.

In Serbia, we can find several examples of the Roman or Ottoman historical built cultural heritage. Golubac Fortress is under the protection of the National Institute for Protection of Cultural Heritage since 1948, with the categorization of immovable cultural property.

In 1979, the fortress was declared as the cultural monument of exceptional importance, which is the highest degree of protection. It is situated in the territory of the Djerdap/Iron Gates National Park. It was first mentioned in 1335 as a medieval Hungarian military fortification, although the exact time of their appearance is not known. Moreover, its strategic position between political and cultural circles of Byzantium, Hungary and Serbia makes difficult to determine who built it. The fortress has been the target of many conquerors and conflicts throughout the centuries.

Trajan's bridge was ancient monumental infrastructure construction on the Danube river, in the part where the river leaves Đerdap/Iron Gates. The bridge was built by order Roman emperor Traian and it was officially opened in the year 105 CE. Its designer was the greatest architect of that time, Apollodorus of Damascus. The bridge belongs to the most important masterpieces of Roman infrastructure constructions.

Therefore, it is protected even though it is in remnants today. As a memory for the next generations Traian's Table was built at the entrance in the lower part of Iron Gates Gorge, where the Danube is the narrowest and the deepest on all its flow. Both have been discovered by Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli (1658 – 1730), a great soldier explorer diplomat, engineer and polihistor scientist, who first (re) discovered and documented - in a pioneering scientific way – the wild, unknown battleground of the Carpathian basin, when the ultimate battles were fought between the Ottoman and the Hapsburg Empires.

Later we will mention his names in relations to other heritage elements, such as fishing. In 1726 he published his findings in the 6 volume “Danubius Pannonico- Mysicus”, the “Danube monograph” such a rich intangible cultural capital in itself, of which we all have to be aware and honour in this region.

In Bulgaria, today's city of Lom, known as “Artanes” by the Thracians, renamed “Almus” by the Romans who in the year 29th built here a fortress and a big station, which evolved into important port throughout the years. It was called “Almus” by the name of the nearby river which runs into Danube. Later,



Golubac Fortress (Serbia)



Tabula Traiana (Romania)



Trajan's Bridge, on a relief of Trajan's Column in Rome and on site (Serbia)



Durostorum-Silistra (Bulgaria)

it was used by the Bulgarians and the Ottoman empire. During the Ottoman rule the area was surrounded by a ground shaft with several bases and two gates. Nowadays, “Almus” is a popular tourist destination. Another historical remnant in Silistra is a famous tomb, which is among the most interesting symbols of the late-antiquity civilization and the Roman-byzantine art in the Christian world. Dating from the 4th century, located in the - then called - city of Dorostorum and in between two civilizations – Pagan and Christian - it has been influenced by both.

Final example is the Noviodunum fortress in Romania, one of the oldest Dobrogea fortresses - now almost entirely covered with land - was erected by the Romans - whose presence in the area is attested since the 1st century A.D. - , as the main station of the Danube River flotilla Classis Flavia Moesica and as the headquarters of some important military units. The Archeological site can be part of a potential Danubian Fortresses Tour, along with the other fortresses located on the Danube Banks.

4.2. Agro-industrial cultural heritage based identity and networking

4.2.1. Viniculture along the Danube

Viniculture is one of the most ancient agricultural human activity. Neolithic communities of the Fertile Crescent invented agriculture itself, by domesticating plants and animals around 10-8000 BC and using a large variety of food processing techniques. They were the first producing bread, beer - and more important for us – wine (also inventing pottery of the storage jars dated back 6000 BC). There could be more wine routes to Europe from the Middle East, through the Mediterranean Sea and through Asia Minor. As we will see in the case of Bulgaria, one of the earliest evidence of winemaking in Europe is from around 3000 BC, related to the wine god of Thracians, called Zagreus/Dionisius. Later the Hellenic people not only learnt wine making but also adopted their god as Dionysus (called Bacchus by Romans later). The ancient Greeks developed a high level of viniculture, deeply rooted into their life and spreading all over Europe wherever their traders and settlers arrived. Most of their intangible cultural heritage was adapted by the Romans, especially important for us, their reverence for wine. Viniculture expanded with the Roman conquest throughout Europe, brought to such provinces as Pannonia, or far Britain. Romans drank wine as everyday staple food and invented storage in wooden barrels. With the collapse of the Roman Empire unfortunately the Greco-Roman viniculture has declined during the “Dark Medieval Ages” until its revival in the Renaissance. In the following section we will introduce some examples of this Greco-Roman agricultural intangible heritage, having still important economic and cultural-tourist effects on the concerned DANUrB countries.

Wine represents a central cultural asset in the Austrian Wachau, vineyards covering one-fourth of the region, mainly in the north of the Danube. Wine production – along with the later mentioned apricot in the Southern part – is very important, elevating Wachau to a culinary region, called “Genussregion”, famous for their homemade products. There are more than 1.350 ha wine-growing areas, more than 100 Heurigen, and more than 200 wineries. According to the natural alcohol content, there are mainly three “Wachau” brands: the fragrant light wines called „Steinfeder”, the classic “Federspiel” and the vibrantly reserve wines are called „Emeralds” (Österreich Wein). It can be said that the wine terraces and also such elements as the apricot gardens (mentioend later) contribute to the Wachau’s sense of identity.

The Roman conquerors had a great effect on the viniculture of the Carpathian basin, in the Trans-Danubian part of Pannonia, along the Danube and around the lakes of Balaton and Fertő.

Remnants of this Greco-Roman intangible cultural heritage could be traced, both in the form of transmitting the production technology knowledge and religious honour. This heritage can be found in villages and locations around Párkány/Sturovo - once part of the Hungarian Kingdom, now belonging to Slovakia – such as the vineyards in Mužla, the best location for cultivation of grapes in Slovakia.

This Greco-Roman viticulture has been maintained and transferred through centuries to the next generations of new settling communities, like the Hungarian conquering tribes in the 9th century. These nomadic Hungarians brought additional viticultural knowledge with themselves, living near large rivers, thus knowing how to ripe the wild type of grape (*Vitis sylvestris*). However, during their long migration travel from the East to the West, they also met other civilizations and cultures, like the Turkish and Bulgarian people, with advanced level of viticulture, from whom they learnt not only the knowledge of wine production, but also inherited etimologically their word of “grape” and “wine”. In the early mediavel ages, after the Mongol (tatar) invasion (1241) foreign settlers and masters of high level viticulture came: from Germany (Bavarian) to the West (e.g Sopron and surrounding, “Kékfrankos”) or near the Danube (Baranya, Tolna) and from France and Italy to the Southern (Szerémség) and North- Eastern part of Hungary (e.g Eger, Tokaj hegyalja). After the Renaissance, wine production and trade was one of the most important income of many settlemenst as well as of the kings in Hungary, leaving their heritage even in the name of the village, referring to wine production (e.g. “Vanyarc” or “Vonyarc”). Other ethnic groups, such as the Serbian (“Rác”) people fleeing from the Turkish invasion brought their Balkan viticultural – mostly red wine - traditions as well as types of wine, e.g. “Kadarka”. Today, Hungary is famous for several wine regions and types of red and white wine many along the Danube, such as the Pannon Wine Region, created in 2008 by four wine districts: Szekszárd, Tolna, Villány and Pécs. Also the first wine tourism route has been started here: the Villány-Siklós wine route in the South Transdanubian Tourism Region in 1994.

In Serbia, in the “Fruška Gora” wine region - where climatic, pedologic and orographic conditions are favourable - viticulture and wine production are ancient traditions in which special attention is paid to breeding autochthonous grape sorts as well as to producing high- quality wines. What agriculture is for regions of Bačka, most of Banat and the flat part of Srem, viticulture is for the mountainous part of the Srem region - the industry branch that has for many years provided the population with a comfortable life and existence. The beginning of viticulture in this region is linked to the Roman Emperor Probus in the 3rd century A.D. After the downfall of the Roman Empire this region has been inhabited by many people, but grapevine cultivation is connected to Slavic and Hungarian settlers, when wines from this region started to be known as exceptional ones. As in other parts of Serbia, viticulture and wine production on Fruška Gora was occurring at estates of rich feudatories as well at church properties. Living on Fruška Gora, but also in villages in Bačka opposite of Fruška Gora, was a matter of prestige as opposed to having a vineyard, a wine cellar and wine. Based on the established facts, the development of Fruška Gora’s viticulture can be surveyed through several historical periods of progress: the beginnings of viticulture and wine production in ancient times, the medieval viticulture, the setback during Turkish rule, the prosperity in period of Austro-Hungarian regime, the period after the phylloxera fly (from the 1890s to World War I), the period between the two World Wars, the period after World War II and modern viticulture as well as viticulture from the 1990s until today. Each of these periods has its distinctiveness and attributes.

The Lower Danube plane, south from the river bank, is a cultural landscape, dominated by agriculture for millenniums characterised by the first category soils on the scale of fertile soils (Black soils). Almost all, currently known agricultural activities, define the cultural landscape in that plane, today, e.g. cereals, fruits, vegetables, vines, etc. One of the most amazing historically represented cultural landscapes is related to viticulture. Archaeological findings and historical sources state that vineyards and wine making existed here for more than 5000 years. The beginnings of viticulture and wine-making were placed by the Thracians considered to be among the best winemakers in the Antiquity.

So production of wine has been a tradition for the inhabitants on the territory of today's Bulgarian lands and the Lower Danube for many centuries. There are many artefacts, related to wine, determining the spiritual and emotional life of people, living during the times. There are wines that have survived since Thracian times (around 3000 BC.) and are still cultivated industrially and at home vineyards. The Rogozen and Vulchu Tran treasures of Thracians witness the respect and ceremonial usage of the wine. First vines were taken by Thracians from the Middle East to the territory of the present-day Bulgaria. Upon coming to the Balkan Peninsula, the Slavs and the Bulgarians continued the Thracian traditions. Following the imposition of Christianity, the cult of Dionysus was ceased, but the feast related to wine making became Christian and celebrated as Saint Trifon, as the patron saint of the vineyards and winemakers and the related ritual practices for Trifon Zarezan feast continue till today. The main ancient Thracian grape varieties, still grown and having commercial value in the today's Bulgarian Danube plain are "Gamza", "Misket", "Pamid" and "Dimyat".



Silver and Gold Phiale Depicting Hercules (Heracles) and Auge, the Rogozen Treasure / 6-4th century BC, Rogozen (Bulgaria)

4.2.2. Apricot as basis of local-regional identity and networking

The most famous agricultural product from the Wachau (Austria) is the Wachauer Marille, which is a listed original brand. With the Original Wachauer Marille seal of quality, the authenticity of the origin and the unique aroma and taste quality of the apricots are guaranteed through 220 apricot farmers. There is a Wachauer Marille association, which ensures the cultivation, preservation and protection of the Wachauer Marille. The seal of the association may only be operated by companies which undertake to produce the varieties of special quality usual in the Wachau for more than 60 years. The "Wachauer Marille" are certain apricots which grow amongst in Aggsbach-Markt, Bergern im Dunkelsteinerwald, Dürnstein, Furth, Krems, Maria Laach, Rossatz-Arnsdorf, Senftenberg, Spitz, Weißenkirchen or Emmersdorf. The Wachauer Marille is a regional typical variety of cone, pineapple and oval or rose apricots (Rosenmarillen). To find suitable locations for the production of quality apricots, a location mapping for the whole region has been conducted by the professional association for farmers. There are many products made of the apricots, for example: Marillenstrudel, Marillenknödel (dumplings with apricots) or the Marillenschnaps. Other processed products include jam, chutney, juice, liqueur and vinegar. In addition to viticulture and tourism, fruit production, particularly of apricots, is an important pillar of the regional economy.

Similarly, the area of Silistra is known in Bulgaria for the best quality apricots. Tasty and aromatic, better to eat fresh, they are also used for producing many kinds of food, e.g. jams, as

dried, compotes, cakes and pies. The widely known and appreciated product of the area is the apricot brandy (rakija). Almost every household has apricot trees and produces variety of products, but first of all – an apricot brandy. Tutrakan is famous for being the ‘capital of apricot’ and apricot brandy in Bulgaria. In an expression of appreciation for the apricot, the people of Tutrakan organize an annual celebration in its honor at the beginning of July. During the event, local producers present the new harvest collected from many apricot varieties. The old masters compete in demonstrating their delicious apricot brandy and the grandmothers present sweets, jams, fresh pastries and cakes – to pamper kids and grown-ups.

4.2.3. Fishing and shipping tradition based networking

Fishing traditions along the Danube are also thousand years old, as the first human and cultural settlements found here by scientists date back to the 6000 B.C. For instance, Lepenski Vir, a settlement from the Middle Stone Age located in the Derdap Gorge of the Danube in Serbia, is famous for the first monumental sculptures of Europe, with “fishlike” human heads, probably deities of this early Danubian civilization. Even today, in many coastal communities’ languages we can find traces of fishing terminology and technology witness to the great antiquity of this agricultural industry. Some terms have travelled with fishermen and were transmitted from one nation to the other: like the Slavic name of the fishing trap “vrša” called “varsa” in Hungarian.

In Hungary, additional to the ancient predecessors’ knowledge, fishing traditions came with the settling nomadic tribes, as one of the most important source of food production. Here we mention only one, but very famous city by the Danube. Komárom, and the surrounding settlements were well known for fishing from the 13th cent., a kind of fishing paradise according the historical chronicles and taxation rules : e.g. the serves of the castle payed their tax by fish to their master, and one fourth of the fishermen’s catch should be given the king. The Komárom fishermen were very talented and famous for many centuries, especially fishing the largest and most precious great sturgeons (“Huso huso”, 9-12 m long, 7-800 kg), called “visa” in Hungarian, which swam up the Danube from the Black Sea, through the Iron Gate, for spawning twice a year. (The earlier mentioned soldier engineer-explorer, Marsigli paid a special attention to fishing traditions (in Vol. IV.), especially to great sturgeon). There were fishing colonies, communities and fishing nests along Danube, meaning the best places for fishing where fishermen could throw their net. The first fishing guilds were established in 1696, with their own strict fishing and trading rules. These fishing communities, called “fishing bushes” with their masters, assistants and pages had special initiation, “baptism” ceremony of the youngest fishermen with the master as “godfather” and their wives as “godmother”. The Komárom fishing has flourished until the Danube control and flood protection works started in the 19th cent., when the great sturgeon disappeared from the Danube, overall the amount of fish, and therefore fishing itself has declined.

Fish soup varieties and contests in DANUrB countries

One of the most well-known - and probably easiest understandable -, very old intangible cultural heritage of various DANUrB countries is the “fish soup”, “fisherman soup” or “fish borsch”, called in various languages. For instance, in Bulgaria, there is a 3000 year old recipe for cooking fish, discovered by archaeologists: river fish wrapped in bigger leaves of rumex, or vine, seasoned with local herbs and grilled on a hot stone.

In Hungary it is called “halaszle”, a hot, spicy paprika-based river fish soup, a very characteristic dish of the Hungarian cuisine, might be the hottest (spicy hot) dishes native to the European continent. The soup is prepared both in the Danube and Tisza river regions, from mixed fish, depending on what the fishermen can catch in the river. Therefore, based on the types of the fish, and other ingredients, there are many local types and recipes. We may differentiate Szeged, Baja, Paks or Balaton style “halaszle” (fisherman soups). For instance, in Paks the fish soup is made from carp from the river and is it eaten with match shaped pasta added to the soup. On the other hand, Baja is also known for her recipe and annual fish soup contests.

While in Romania (Crisan, Tulcea county) the Fish Borsch Festival is organized annually to honor the local gastronomy and the fishermen. During the two-day festival, gastronomic competitions are organized between chef teams from the Danube Delta based on traditional recipes for cooking fish and there is a prize for the “best borsch fish”.



Many words and terms related to fishing along the Danube region are of Slavic origin, as the earlier mentioned “vrša” (fishing trap), “ost” (harpoon), “setka” (net), or even the notion of Slavs was often identified with the concept of fishermen in the old manuscripts of 11-12th cent. Fishing vessels, such as “oranica” or “kopanica” made of one piece of trunk, were already used by ancient Slavs, but still used by Serbian fishermen during the First World War. Later we will refer to legends and mythical creatures, here we mention some examples, characteristics of the Danube fishing population. One of these mythical creatures was imagined as a dwarf living in an underwater glass castle where it used its victim - drowned men and women - as its servants. They believed that fishermen should not glimpse at their own reflected face in the water, because the underwater creatures will pull their head and drown them. Moreover, sometimes they offered a certain sacrifice to the water spirit (the devil) for better luck in the hunt, saying: “I give you communion, you give me fish!” However, such a fisherman would have luck in the hunt, but would not die of natural causes - most likely drown - and then the other fishermen would say, “Give the devil his due!” They also believed that certain fish have demonic characteristics. For instance, in the Iron Gate/Đerdap area

it was believed that carp, after a certain number of years, would get wings and fly out of the water turning into a dragon. Even today in Serbia – as the Danube River Basin region is comprised of largely rural population - fishing plays an integral part in the coastal people's livelihoods and every day life. The most popular species are carp, prussian carp, chub, nase, pike, zander, bream, barbell, catfish etc. Float fishing and classic groundbait fishing are most popular. Fishing opportunities in the closest vicinity of Belgrade are numerous as well as on other locations on the Danube, such as Golubac, one of the hosting settlements of the DANUrB project.

In Romania, in the Danube Delta region, there is a good example how to revitalize fishing traditions. The creation of a traditional fishing village with traditional fishing activities was the result of a firm reaction against the disappearance of the material and immaterial elements that build the identity of the local fishing communities. The traditional Fishing Village is a theme park located in the immediate vicinity of Lake Zagen, on an area of approximately 30,000 sqm which provides the natural setting with a delta specificity. The Fishing Village is systematized with three major alleys which suggest the Danube's arms, connected by a secondary alley system, each of them having representative buildings from the localities corresponding to each Danube branch. 10 households from different areas of the delta fishery area, a multifunctional pavilion with a specific architecture, a pavilion for creative workshops and two wooden windmills contributed to the achievement of the coherent and homogeneous architectural ensemble of the fishing village.

In Bulgaria, the ancient people, who were occupying today's Danubian plane for thousands of years B.C., and left remarkable evidences of their culture, were Thracians, called Tribali, Getae and Moesi. Tutrakan area was inhabited by the remarkable Getae. Respected warriors, they were welcome to serve as the cavalry in the Roman army. The most representative old times' heritage of the area of Tutrakan is related to relationship of Getae with Romans. Local people feel strongly affiliated to the river. They always admired it, loved it, protected it and built their hopes on it. It was their limes in antiquity, their road in the middle ages and their soul at present days. Danube was, of course, the main resource for living and for gaining every day food. The only and unique fishermen's lower Danube quarter, recognized as an architectural reserve on the Bulgarian bank of Danube, is the "Ribarska Mahala of Tutrakan". Fishermen's nets, the boat workshops and the fishermen's houses bring vivid images of the past. There is a 3000 year old recipe for cooking fish, discovered by archaeologists: river fish wrapped in bigger leaves of rumex, or vine, seasoned with local herbs and grilled on a hot stone. The only ethnography museum dedicated to fishing and boat building on lower Danube is the "Danube Fishing and Boat Construction Museum", including the 100 national historical sites that preserve the material culture of the Bulgarians from the Danube fishing villages. The reputation of the Lower Danube people as skillful and agile fishermen and boat builders is legendary. Their mastership was the reason for the constantly booming town life in the Lower Danube settlements. Their boats were sold a lot outside Bulgaria, e.g. in Austria, Serbia, Romania, Hungary.

Continuing this line, we could say that shipping, boat and ship building are as ancient human – river related and generationally transferred knowledge based - activities as fishing. Both needed for fishing in the river, but generally speaking for mobility - along and crossing the Danube - for trading (economic), and – unfortunately - for military purposes as well. There are many tangible remnants of various types of ancient, medieval and modern boats, ships along the Danube in different museums, such as the abovementioned Bulgarian "Danube Fishing and Boat Construction Museum" or the Hungarian "Danube Museum" in Esztergom.

As we referred earlier to the Roman Empire cultural heritage, we have to mention their influential role here as well, just to remember the famous Traian road and bridge of the 1st cent. in the Serbia Iron Gate area. In the medieval ages of the 14-15th centuries there was a vivid and rich trade and transportation life between the German towns of Regensburg, Ulm through Buda down to Belgrad, bringing industrial products from there, and transporting agricultural products back, such as cereals, salt etc. Parallel with that the boat and shipbuilding industries flourished, with the intermittence of the long Ottoman occupation in many Danube towns. The oldest shipbuilding and shipping company (guild) was established in Bratislava – then belonging to the Hungarian Kingdom – in 1268. Due to the Ottoman threat one of the largest Danube imperial military fleet was established by the Hungarian King Mathias in the 15th cent.

Then, after the great defeat on the Ottoman Empire, Komarom (Komarno) became the main port and basis of the Hungarian fleet as well as centre of shipbuilding (although the first shipyard was built already in the 11th cent.). The new history of shipbuilding began in 1898 when a shiprepair of the MFTR (Magyar Folyam- és Tengerhajózási Részvénytársaság) was established on Elizabeth Island and then it grew to a shipyard in the early 20th century. At present, the area (in Komarno) belongs to Slovakia and used by a private owner as a harbour for small boats and warehouses. However, there is new shipyard in Komarno, opened after WW II, in 1947 of the socialist times, and becoming one of the largest enterprises in Czechoslovakia, selling most of passenger and cargo ships in the communist countries. Since transition, after the Velvet Revolution in 1989, the state-owned company became a joint stock company supplying ships mostly to Western countries.



Shipyard, Komarno (Slovakia)

Further down the Lower Danube, we could list many other great ports, harbours and shipbuilding industries. One final example is the naval industry of Galati, a branch of great tradition in the city, which provides the fleet and maritime vessels (barges, bulk carriers, tankers, oil tankers) and marine drilling platforms. Galati is known as one of the largest commercial traffic nodes in Romania, connected to the main European communication corridors along the Danube River Canal, which links the North Sea to the Black Sea.



Palace of the European Commission of the Danube, Galati (Romania)

Finally, a historical - tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the Delta Region - is the Sulina Maritime International Cemetery, a unique place in Europe and the world, where Christians of various denominations, Hebrew and Muslims, are buried together. In the past, Sulina was a large marina, a cosmopolitan city and hosted the European Danube Commission's headquarters. In 1870 it became 'Porto Franco', meaning a free port, absolved from customs duty and having a special treatment. Also, Sulina was the last harbour for dozens of foreigners who now sleep their eternal sleep in the International Maritime Cemetery.



The International Maritime Cemetery, Sulina (Romania)

4.3. Cultural networking and regional identity building based on tales, traditions, festivals and folklore along the Danube

Very important part of intangible cultural heritage are folk songs, tales and legends related to the Danube, which constitute the largest part of the unexplored heritage. Belonging to the cognitive and normative – intangible – pillar of culture, they can form a very strong tool for regional identity building through networking. Like Danube related festivals organized in chain as part of the Danube Month – and Promenade - aimed as practical and - relatively easily realized – potential outcome of the DANUrB project. There are many tales, memories, traditions in the DANUrB countries, however we can introduce only some examples of this rich treasure.

Most of the Danube related tales and legends are about various kings (e.g. “The Fish King”), queens (“The Danube Queen”) or spirits such as the rusalke or rusalki, the Slavic mythological underwater creatures of the Danube. There is an Austrian legend about the Danube Lord (Der Donaufürst), king of the water, who has a palace on the bottom of the river and a fisherman, whose daughter was taken by the Danube Lord to his palace. She is told to make a flower wreath and send it up to the water surface each time when someone drowns. The tale is being staged at festivals, such as Festival of legends and tales in Tirol (Tiroler Sagen & Märchenfestival). On the other hand many of these tales, and especially the rusalke performed as social norms for the coastal communities, e.g. prohibiting fishing on Christmas (“The Fish King”), or during other religious days, such as Pentecost. “Rusalki” have been wide spread in the Slavic mythology from Slovakia to Serbia (and even Russia), somewhere a lake- dwelling soul of a child who died unbaptized or in other places a virgin who was drowned (accidentally or purposely). These later are also called vile (vila), beautiful, charming girls, with a long “rus” (reddish) hair, singing sweet, bewitching songs to the passers-by. While villas were found throughout nature, rusalke were especially connected to the aquatic environment. According to old legends in Serbia they even came out of the water preceding the Pentecost, to get into contact with people and spend a week with them, called the Trojica/Trinity week, or the „Rusalke week”.

Many of the folk songs – e.g. the Hungarian “Wide Danube” - are about love, that the wide river separates the two lovers from each other or related to historical memories – such as the Slovakian song - remembering kidnapping of young girls during the Turkish occupation.

“Széles a Duna...”

Széles a Duna, magos a partja,

nincs olyan legény, ki átugorja.

Jancsi átugorja,

csizmáját sem sározza,

Katát általkapja,

az ám a legény!...

(Hungarian folk song)

“Ten prešporský mýtný”

Ten prešporský mýtný

prekrásnu dcéru má,

ešče krajší spíva.

Uderev jej ten hlas

dole po Dunaji,

Turkovi do brány...

(Slovakian folk song)

There is intangible, folklore heritage of Štúrovo (Párkány) and surrounding villages (Bíňa, Bruty, Pavlová, Sikenička, Kamenín, Kamenný most) related to the Ottoman Empire. It is said according to memories that the so called “short skirt” (“kurta szoknya” in Hungarian) was created, because a Turkish pasha wanted to see girls’ legs. So he ordered to shorten the original skirt. The girls were sly and they moved their skirt down the length by witch the skirt got shortened. Therefore, the skirt was worn lower and to this day, it is shorter than any other ordinary traditional costume.

There is another important heritage of this town. On trade routes, markets were organised in towns along the Danube, and such market town is Štúrovo (Párkány), organising market of St. Simon and Juda annually with 450 years of tradition. It usually lasted 8-10 days and was located in the whole town. The tradition of market preserved until today and merchants come from Romania, Ukraine, Hungary and other countries.

Other traditions and festivals are related to history, religion and/or ethnic folklore as well. Such as the Carnival Tuesday (Faschingsdienstag) celebrated all over Austria (except for Vorarlberg) in the end of February or beginning of March and has special traditions varying from one region to another. The event originates from the Roman times. Historically, the New Year started in March, and before it (contemporary time of the carnival) a big celebration with costumes, theatrical performances and rituals took place. Nowadays, it is celebrated with costumes, street parades and runs, balls, concerts and parties.

In the Hungarian cities along the Danube, various festivals and events are held with national and international importance based on the multiethnic (Hungarian, German, Serbian, Croatian, Sekler, Turkish) traditions. Today many fish soup festivals and competitions (Paks, Baja etc...) are held, as well as internationally famous folk festivals (dance, songs etc.) based on the varied and multi ethnic traditions, such as the “Folklore Festival Along the Danube”. A farewell to (or funeral of) winter tradition, called „Busojaras” in Mohacs, coming from the Balkan with the “Sokac” people fleeing from Turks in the late 17th cent. became a UNESCO Word Intangible Heritage in 2009.

The international “Tamburica fest” was found in 2008 in Deronje village (North Backa) and held from 2013 in the Petrovaradin fortress of Novi Sad (Serbia). It is a 5 day festival with unique concept and cultural mission to promote tamburitza music and present tambouritza as instrument, also to cherish tradition, cooperation and artist friendship on international level. Every year orchestras from Serbia and abroad are competing in the competition part of festival, while in non competitive selection there are appearances of well known artists accompanied by tamburitza orchestras. In the past six years more than 1500 artists have performed. A huge result of this fest that the „World Tamburitza Association” has been organized, Novi Sad hosting the main office.



„Faschingsdienstag”, Austria



„Busojaras” in Mohacs (Hungary)

Kukeri festivities in Bulgaria are a still living Thracian tradition. People wear colorful hand-made costumes and masks, which preparation may take more than a year. The Kukeri masks usually represent animals (rams, goats, bulls, chicken, etc.). Some of the masks have two faces: a good-humored face with a snub nose, and an ominous face with a hooked nose, symbolizing coexistence of Good and Bad. The colors are very important: red symbolizes fertility and sun; black - Mother Earth, white - water and light. They scare evil spirits away by dancing to secure fertility and rich harvest. Kukeri jump, jingle with the bells (they may weight 50 kg) and make jokes.



Kukeri festivities in Bulgaria

“Krastovden” is a holiday of the orthodox Christianity celebrated on the 14th September, as an annual holiday of the Bulgarian town, Silistra. “Krastovden” means “the day of the cross” and is linked to the miraculous appearance of the Holy cross that Emperor Constantine had in 312, the discovery of the cross at Golgotha by his mother Elena, and its return from Persian captivity. The Holiday of Silistra - linked to this religious roots - is also accompanied by a big agricultural fair and art festival - organized since 1861 - that lasts until the 1st October, celebrating the return of South Dobrudzha under Bulgarian rule.



“Krastovden” is a holiday of the orthodox Christianity

Finally, there is an overarching Danube traditional festivity example: the International Danube Festival is organized in Ulm - Germany, at the Danube River springs - in the even years and in the odd years in Tulcea, the place where the Danube stretches its arms to spill into the Black Sea in the Delta Region of Romania.