

## WATER PHENOMENON ON THE TERRITORY OF SUBOTICA

Olivera Dulić<sup>1</sup>

Viktorija Aladžić<sup>2</sup>

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***Summary:** This paper presents a research dealing with the phenomenon of water in the city of Subotica, namely places of memory, symbols and water marks as a key element in the public space. The subject of research in the broader context is the cultural memory of a city on its own development, which manifests itself in the memory of the individual and groups, but, more importantly, in the architecture and urban planning of the city as the material expression of social life. Through the research process, the connection between architecture, urban morphos and collective memory of the inhabitants has been confirmed. It was also found that the water element is one of the most important factors that influenced the spatial disposition of the city structure. Due to the lack of active politics, there is a doubt that this connection will be forgotten, therefore it is necessary to redefine the identity of Subotica, or to establish it simultaneously on collective memories of people, and material or non-material cultural heritage, through the process of contemporary creativity.*

***Keywords:** urban structure, city, cultural memory, water*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The rich cultural history of the city of Subotica offers diverse sources for its research through many scientific disciplines. On this basis, a series of publications were created that deal with the life and culture of this city and its surroundings. Despite these researches, many topics are still underexplored, which is why the peculiarities of this area remain unknown [1, p. 11]. The research presented in this paper deals with the phenomenon of water in the territory of the city of Subotica, namely places of memory, symbols and water marks as a key element in the public space. Regardless of the historical connection with water, today it seems that in the structure of the city there remain only pale and unclearly defined elements that point to this connection. In this sense, the subject of research in a wider context is the cultural memory of a city on its own origin that manifests in the memory of the individual and groups, but, more importantly, in the architecture and urban planning of the city as the material expression of social life. In the narrower sense, this paper gives a study of six artefacts, which, according to the authors' knowledge, are the

<sup>1</sup> Olivera Dulić, M.Arch., University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Civil Engineering Subotica, Kozaračka 2a, Subotica, Serbia, tel: +381 24 554 300, e-mail: olivera@gf.uns.ac.rs

<sup>2</sup> Viktorija Aladžić, PhD, University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Civil Engineering Subotica, Kozaračka 2a, Subotica, Serbia, tel: +381 24 554 300, e-mail: aviktorija@hotmail.com

most important remaining elements through which one can read the narrative of connection between water and the formation of the city structure.

The objective of the research presented is to determine the extent to which the phenomenon of water influenced the formation of the urban structure of the city of Subotica, which is particularly interesting from today's point of view since Subotica is a city that is not located near the river or some other water surface. On the particular case of the city of Subotica, it is assumed that the water factor, as the most important factor influencing the spatial disposition of the city structure, is neglected and forgotten by the city itself as a living organism, but also by its inhabitants.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Cultural memory

Over the past thirty years, we have witnessed an increased interest in the scientific and wider public on the topics of collective memory [2]. A new interest for the past is expressed through the "flourishing of memory" [3], which is conditioned by global social and cultural causes. Pierre Nora argues that a modern society "talks so much remembered about memory precisely because so few of it remains" [4]. Paul Connerton, on the other hand, assumes that the explanation lies in the fact that "modernity has a special problem with forgetting" [5]. In addition, the past twenty years have been marked by the research that has been studying an intensified interest in memory and recollection [6].

French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs was first to systematize the concept of collective memory. In his studies, he claimed that every memory is transmitted through a specific social group that is limited in space and time. In this sense, his greatest contribution was in establishing the connection between the concepts of the social group and collective memory [7]. The bearers of the new interest in collective memory follow the Halbwachs' designation that collective memories are established in space and in objects of memories such as calendars, names of streets, monuments and museums [2].

According to the Yugoslav sociologist Todor Kuljić, collective memory is much more complex and dynamic than individual memory, because it includes different types of preservation of the past, as well as its modifications. Its complexity is reflected in the integration of various personal pasts into one common, which allows all members of the group to recall together, hence the collective memory as a whole, is greater than the sum of its individual parts [7], [8].

As a distinct discipline, the cultural memory separated at the end of the last century, mostly because of the works of Jan Assmann and Aleida Assmann. The cultural memory explores the roles of cultural patterns of memory, the importance of memory and recollection for the formation of identity and the relation to history and the past in science and collective memory. Primary interests of this discipline are relations with the past in which collective consciousness is reflected. The culture of memory involves studying the way in which cultures, classes, and regimes transmit knowledge of the past, as it is invented, processed, used, suppressed, changed and forgotten [8]. These patterns of the processing of the past are key to understanding identity in a historical context.

According to Kuljić, it is very important to separate the *memory* – storing the contents of the past, from recollection, i.e., actualising the saved content. Recollection is always a

look at the past from the new present [8]. Then, the notion of memory is more related to the individual's relation to experience, while recollection refers to a social and cultural apparatus that stores the memory effect. Recollection can be unintentional and unconscious, while the memory is always an imaginative relationship to the past, bound to the media that transmit and store content from the past. So, through different strategies, recollections turn into cultural and social memory.

Then, Kuljić claims that "memory must first be shaped into the structure of a symbol suitable for transposition" [8, p. 11]. These symbols are places of memories that can be material and immaterial, real and mythical forms of events, books, buildings, monuments, institutions and works of art [8]. Based on this, it can be noticed that relevant authors in the field of cultural memory and collective memory agree on one fact: collective memory and recollection are always contained in material forms of culture, that is, in the architecture of streets, monuments, museums, etc. For this reason, the memory in this research is studied on the basis of studying the city as a creation of human culture. Confirmation of this thesis can be found again in Kuljić, which, quoting Walter Benjamin, points out that the city can be read as a topography of collective memory in which the buildings are symbols of memory that conceal the hidden and suppressed past [8].

## 2.2. The city, its identity and memory

The city has always been a place from which the culture of civilization radiates, a place of knowledge production, a place of freedom and diversity, a place of urbanity and a multi-ethnic and multicultural coexistence. The city is at the same time state of mind and permeation of old and new, tradition and contemporary social tendencies [9]. As such, the city is an invaluable significant civilization achievement, from the aspect of the spread of culture, almost as important as the language [10].

About the spaces in the structure of the city, streets, squares, buildings, parks, etc., there are traditions that are transmitted through generations. Sometimes these stories are related to historical events but are often recorded only in the memories of the inhabitants. Due to the nature of the society that is in the constant process of change, the city changes its appearance, some places disappear, but thanks to the stories that are being transmitted about these places, the memory of them remains. By knowing and analysing memories in one city, the individual is offered the opportunity to create an image of a place, or to get to know his identity [11].

According to Branimir Stojković, the cultural identity of the city can be defined as the self-awareness of a city (individuals and groups in it) that arises and develops depending on the criteria that this city establishes in relations with other cities [12]. Collective identity arises in the constant struggle of discourse and as such represents the current rhetorical process and continuous choosing between different narratives. Urban identity is associated with personal and collective identities, where one affects the other and vice versa. The identity of a city carries within itself the identity of its inhabitants, while at the same time urban environment reflects human needs and values. Emotional connections between people and the socio-physical environment stimulate the sense of urban identity, that is, the identification of people with the environment in which they live and work. Each city has urban identity that is more or less recognizable at the local, regional, national or international level [13].

The “spirit of a place” (lat. *genius loci*) is defined as the area of an authentic and well-founded identity [14, p. 48]. In this space, “places of memory” (fr. *leux de memoire*) [4] are formed, images containing elements of collective identities, which are important for the interpretation of the identity of the city [15]. Urban memory establishes a relationship with the past, knowing the history of the city and its society in relation to today. The experiences and information formed in collective social memory are embodied in the structure of the city. Therefore, Aldo Rossi claims that “the city is the locus of social memory” [16, p. 130].

Places of memory, recorded in the topography of a city, create a framework within which an individual establishes a relationship with a group or a society to which it belongs. They create urban memory which is an integral part of the process of determining the value system in society and the creation of collective identities. An analysis of different memory layers that remain independent from the institutional and organized promotion of certain character systems, opens a space for understanding “symbolic history” and over it the reality that remember, fabricate, or (consciously or not) forget about the episodes of the past [17].

### 2.3. The city and the presence of water

There is no permanent human settlement on Earth without some form of physical presence of water, which implies that water is the decisive factor in selecting the location for the location of the settlement [18]. Water is, as a natural condition, the subject of many analyses, and is considered a basic generator of structure, sustainability and transformation of different types of cities. So, water as a phenomenon of continuity is the most important factor for the growth and development of every inhabited place. By generating urban forms, water affects the aesthetic quality of the visual representation of the city silhouette as well as the urban matrix. It defines the course of the future development of a city depending on the form of presence. The linear or non-linear presence of water within the urban structure of a city determines a recognizable geometric form of the physical structure.

As put forward by Ranko Radović, natural conditions are the widest frame and the most important influential factor on the entire city image, where water is a special factor in the development of the physical form of the city. The connection between water and human settlements is one of the most important relationships that man has established with nature. The waters and streams record the main moves in the city, give it a shape and determine spatial development. Water for the city at the same time represents the border and compound, giving it a spatial and artistic mark [19]. Similarly, Lawrence Halprin argues that water has something, which excites the deepest roots of man’s atavistic nature. Water in the city is positive and life-giving; it is the element from which we all descend, and as such, it excites in man the most basic and deepest roots of his nature [20].

### 3. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY OF SUBOTICA

Water was a very important element in the formation of the city of Subotica, which still exists, although this is no longer obvious. It is assumed that water was the reason for the formation of the settlement, and it influenced to a large extent the formation of urban structures and morphology of the whole city. Today, reading the traces of water that has disappeared from the surface of the city in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is very difficult, although there are some features that preserve the memory of the important role of water in the formation of the original settlement.

At the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the entire area of Subotica was territorially divided into the interior and exterior. In the inner area, a settlement was developed, and around it were villages, vineyards, pastures and fields. Spontaneous settling of the population on the territory around the existing settlement took place on the hills on the east and west of the watercourse that flowed in the middle of the settlement, flowing from Kelebija Lake in the north, to Palić in the south of the settlement. Since there was no settlement plan, everyone chooses the land and built a house on the heath, and later in the city. Families, or fraternal settlements, were gradually developing on these placements. The development of family settlements in the city was like the development on the heaths [21].

By signing the Požarevac peace in 1718, the border with the Turks was moved farther south, the military border was shifted, and the original Subotica military moat was declared privileged in Prague in 1743 as the royal privileged Comorian town of St. Mary (Szent Mária) in which it was established civil authority [22]. St. Mary's inhabitants repeatedly tried to win the status of a free royal city, but due to poorly developed crafts and trade, they were denied twice, for the market to finally get the status of a free royal city in 1779 under the name Maria Theresianopolis. The cause of the underdeveloped economy was certainly the lack of a waterway that would allow the development of trade. The presence of the river influenced the faster development of the neighbouring cities of Sombor and Novi Sad, which were granted the status of a free royal city in 1748 and 1749 respectively.

A very detailed view of the watercourses, which flowed through the city centre, was given on the handwritten map [23] of the free royal city Maria Theresianopolis, created in 1778 by engineer Karl Leopold Kovács [24]. The Kovács' map gives a detailed view of the city and a multitude of data on its appearance at the moment of transition from the status of the market city to the status of the free royal city. The map shows all the plots in dark colour, with the ground floors of houses painted in red. In addition, the bark is coloured with blue, as well as watercourses [25]. On this map (Figure 1a), it is possible to notice the direction of watercourses that flowed through the city. In the northern part of the settlement, from the north, a watercourse came in Jasi bara (eng. *Jasi pond*) from the Kelebija Lake, while the other run on the southern part of this pond, merging with Vrbov potok (eng. *Willow stream*). The Vrbov potok, which also flowed from the north of the settlement to the south, runs through the centre of the city and then through the wetland of Mlaka in the south of the city, flowed into Palić Lake. In the middle of the settlement on the eastern side of the center at that time, the second watercourse Šemljek (hun. *Sámlyek*) flowed into the Vrbov potok.

Between the Gatska bara (eng. *Gaat pond*), which was created artificially, on the site where the earth was dug make bricks, and Vrbov potok, there laid the Vok. In addition to these waters, on the map, we can find the marked Rogina bara (eng. *Roga pond*) on the

eastern side of the settlement and the unmarked Ciganska bara (eng. *Gypsy pond*), which was located northwest of Rogina bara. The whole territory of the settlement was divided by a watercourse system that flowed from the north to the south, while the houses and parcels, as it is shown on the map, were located on the hills on the east and west sides of the watercourse, forming groups of irregularly arranged parcels, so it is particularly difficult to determine the existing roads and streets in the territory of the southern part of the settlement.

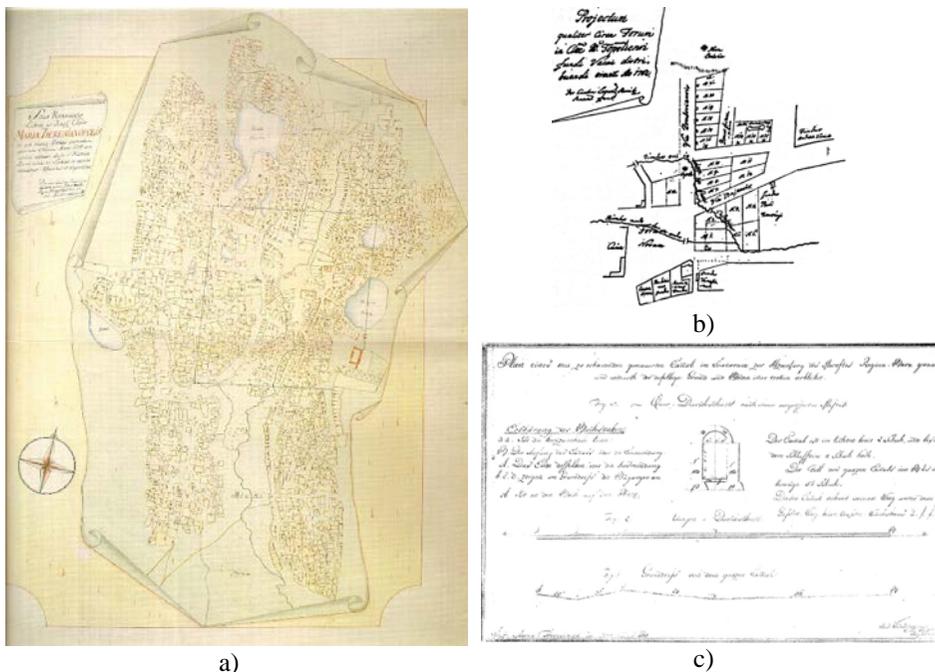


Figure 1a. The handwritten map of Maria Theresianopolis from 1778

Figure 1b. Karl Leopold Kovács' regulation plan from 1782.

Figure 1c. A project of the channel for drying Rogina bara by Wüstinger from 1810

The surveying of the city and the associated area that started with the work of the engineer Kovács, whose result was the first handwritten map, continued throughout the 19th century. The result of this effort was a large number of regulation plans for parts of the city and the whole city, which started to develop shortly after Maria Theresianopolis obtained the status of the city. Since the Vrbov potok flowed in the middle of the settlement, the first regulation plans tried to regulate related its flow and the city centre itself, or the Main Square. The oldest known regulation plan originates from 1782 (Figure 1b). It was designed by Karl Leopold Kovács, and it includes the city centre, namely the Main Square and the surrounding urban blocks. This is, at the same time, the oldest preserved hydro-regulation plan that referred to the centre of the city and the regulation of the Vrbov potok. It was then suggested that the direction of the Vrbov potok, which until then had been curving up the centre of the settlement from north to south, is to be corrected and directed by today's Strossmayer street, as it was later done. This was followed by

many other regulation plans, many of which related to regulation of the watercourse or drainage of the swamps and pools.

After that, engineer Vlašić surveyed the entire city and made a new Regulation plan, from which only a map showing the centre of the city regulated during the Vrbov potok and the regulation of the Rogina bara area has been preserved [26]. In the same year, Vlašić also made a regulation plan that concerned only the territory of Rogina Bara [27], which will, for decades, remain one of the unsolvable problems of urban planning and regulation in the city.

In April 1806, a contract was signed between the city of Subotica and engineer Kiss József, according to which the engineer obliged to perform field measurement, and then draft and plan for the construction of a canal linking the city, via Palić Lake with the river Tisa [28]. The following year, engineer Stephan Wedresch proposed the construction of a waterway between the Tisa and the Danube, citing the advantages of such a channel for Segedin, the rest of the region, and Subotica [29]. This was the beginning of efforts to solve the problem of difficult transport of goods in and out of the city. Other cities, which were located on the banks of navigable rivers, at that time were far more prosperous than Subotica.

Drying of ponds and watercourses on the territory of the city, as well as digging the canal for drainage of atmospheric waters was solved gradually, and in 1810, engineer József Wüstinger made a plan for draining Rogina bara through an underground brick channel [30]. The channel was not designed according to this project, nor could it take the water from Rogina bara, because it was filled with groundwater, and its bottom was below the level of groundwater. From 1819, another plan is preserved in the framework of hydro regulation works, a plan of bridges on Jasi bara, designed by engineer Gabrijel Vlašić [31]. In 1846, city engineer Tóth Sándor again made the regulation plan of the Rogina bara area, showing the canals that were dug up according to the Wüstinger's plan and which were supposed to take water from the pond. This regulation plan has also not been fully implemented [32]. Gatska bara and Vok were also subject to regulation. Janos Werner drew a plan for regulating the area of the Gatska bara in 1844. Plots were indicated in this plan by numbers, embankments and waterfalls [33].

The most important event for the city in the 19th century was certainly the construction of the railroad in 1869, which finally solved the problems that the citizens of Maria Theresianopolis had while fantasizing about the waterway from the Tisa to Palić. Obviously, this idea could not be realized, so the railway brought eagerly awaited relief. Until the beginning of the construction of the railway, the problem of Rogina bara was solved. In the meantime, two cadastral surveys of the city were made in 1838 and 1878, whose comparison shows that there were less and less open watercourses and ponds in the area of the city [25]. The watercourses were conducted under the ground with masonry channels, and the ponds filled up and dried. By the end of the 19th century, when Subotica was undergoing accelerated economic development thanks to the railway, there were almost no watercourses and ponds on the territory of the city. Only exceptions were the Vrbov potok, whose stream remained open in the area of today's Prvomajska street, from the corner with the street Sonja Marinković to Palić, and a very reduced part of the Jasi bara area, through which water still flows today.

#### 4. ARCHITECTURAL SYMBOLS AND THE MEMORY OF WATER IN SUBOTICA

From today's perspective, it seems that the remaining elements of Subotica's urban structure are pale and unclearly defined, and in that sense do not sufficiently indicate the essential role that water played in shaping the city. Now the directions of the former watercourses become evident only in the case of heavy rains, when the water begins to accumulate in the valley that runs through the middle of the city, running from north to south, where the Vrbov potok used to flow [25]. The elements that testify to the former presence of water in the city are of a small number and for a modern society difficult to understand.

In a narrower sense, the research was carried out through the analysis of six specific artefacts that, as different architectural symbols, are the only remaining elements for reading narratives of the connection between water and the origin of the city. As such, these artefacts represent specific memory sites, as they testify about the memory of the city, as a living organism, on its own origin and history. Although these examples are very different, the justification for their joint analysis is found in their essential characteristic, that is, in the fact that each of them exists as a symbol of the connection between the emergence of a modern city structure and the influence of the water on its formation.



*Figure 2a. The house of Dušan Radić dating from the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century*

*Figure 2b. The sculpture of St. John of Nepomuk in the niche of the house*

*Figure 2c. The sculpture of St. John of Nepomuk located on Beogradski put street*

One of the symbols of the city that undeniably represents a place of memory of the existence of watercourses in the city, or Vrbov potok, is the sculpture of St. John of Nepomuk (Figure 2b), located in the niche of the facade of the former house of Dušan Radić, a neo-Renaissance palace designed by Geza Kocka (Figure 2a). The northern boundary of the parcel on which the building was built was the stream, and the house went out to the central city area, later called the Market square [34, p. 222]. St. John of Nepomuk, or Jan Wolfin, was a priest at the court of King Vaclav IV in the Czech Republic. Since the priest did not want to give up secrets of the queen's confession, he was burned and thrown from a bridge in river Vltava. His sculpture is located on the famous Charles Bridge in Prague, and he is a protector of the Czech Republic, the city of Prague, confessors, builders of bridges, the poor and floods. The Pope Innocent XIII proclaimed him holy in 1721, after which the cult of St. John of Nepomuk begins to

expand in Central and Eastern Europe [35]. The sculptures of this saint were placed beside the rivers in order to protect the inhabitants from floods.

Sculpture of St. John of Nepomuk, located in the niche of the former house of Dušan Radić, was created in 1810 on the order of Lajos Vermes and was placed in a niche, and in 1835 it was relocated. Finally, in 1888, it was placed in today's location, thus giving a testimony of the place where Vrbov potok once flowed. This sculpture witnesses the importance of water for former residents of the city of Subotica. The specific position of the building required the setting up of this kind of memorial sculpture, whose symbolism depicts the troubles that drove the inhabitants of these areas as the natural factor of the site. Today, the meaning of this motif is largely unknown to the population, and although it is a place of recall for the emergence of a modern urban structure, the sculpture is unfairly neglected.

The second sculpture of St. John of Nepomuk is placed in a niche on today's Beogradski put street (Figure 2c). This sculpture was commissioned by Pukkel Sándor in 1870 [36, p. 40]. Like the first sculpture, this is, in its essence, a place of memory, because the statue and micro-environment forms an environment that points us to the research of factors that influenced the structure of the city. However, this sculpture has been neglected to a greater extent than the previous one. Because of the relatively unfavourable location (the immediate vicinity of one of the most frequent roads in the city), this monument does not represent a gathering place, and is visible only to the citizens who pass by. As such, this place of memory today shows the forgetting of the city and its inhabitants on the emergence of the city structure.



Figure 3. Gypsum frieze at the house in Prvomajska 44

An example of fish on tympanum of the windows in Prvomajska street no. 44 testifies about the former presence of water in that street, or Vrbov potok. Although the data on the possible existence of fish in this stream have not been found, this example illustrates the importance of water symbols for the owner of the house built in 1887 according to the design of the architect Gáli Adolf [37]. Above the gate of this building there is a plaster frieze with a series of embossed figures that are symbolically connected with water. The extreme left and right figures are fishermen with caught fish in their hands raised high above their heads. In addition, there are water beasts with a female body, horse legs, wings and a snake's tail. In the middle part of the frieze there are three figures of young men on the back of the two swans. All these decorative elements indicate the connection of this area with the watercourse that has been running here (Figure 3).

In the meeting point of a regulated stream that flowed through the direction of today's Strossmayer Street and the unregulated stream from the centre of the urban block west of the same street, the house of Sümegei Ferenc was built in the end of the 19th century (Figure 4) [34, p. 160]. A cadastral map created after the city's survey in 1838 indicates that there were no more remains of Vrbov potok on this street because the sewage system was built [34]. The irregular shape of the plot was defined by a curving stream flowing along the courtyard edges of the plot in this street. On the facade of this building, designed in 1885 by the architect Titus Mačković in a neo-Renaissance style [38], an anchor is shown in the carriages above the window on the first floor. The anchor motif again indicates the presence of water in the city. The Vrbov potok has changed its course several times, and particularly on the corner of today's Prvomajska and Maxim Gorky streets. The construction of this house confirmed the final absence of water hazard in this area, since in that period the regulation of numerous watercourses on the surface of the city was finally carried out.



Figure 4. Facade of the palace of Sümegei Ferenc

The story of Gabrić ćuprija (eng. *The Gabrić bridge*) dates from the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, through the custom that still lives today. Tradition suggested for the groom to carry the bride over the bridge in order to secure a successful marriage. Even though the bridge didn't exist for decades, the wedding procession stopped at this place in order to play this symbolic event. Due to the importance this place has for the inhabitants of the city of Subotica in the past, Gabrić ćuprija was rebuilt in 2010 (Figure 5). Although the architectural solution of the newly designed bridge is potentially debatable from the aesthetic point of view, however, the intention is to maintain a specific tradition related to this city. The place of Gabrić ćuprija is indeed a place of memory in the city. It is an artefact that connects the city structure with city customs, and as such is one of the important elements of the history of Subotica. The rebuilding of this bridge indicates that the city still needs to keep in mind the memory of its origin and its former life. Thus, Gabrić Cuprija today represents a place where the narratives of the past and the present, as well as the tradition and modern life, are permeated. Although the stream that flowed under the bridge was regulated at the end of the 19th century, more than 100 years later, this ambience preserves the memory of the importance of watercourses for the development of the city of Subotica.



Figure 5. Newly-designed Gabrić ćuprija on the place where the Vrbov potok flowed

On the south-west coast of Lake Palić, which is 7 km away from the city of Subotica, there is a place of pilgrimage of two religions: Orthodox and Roman Catholic. Because of this, this place has more names: Vodice (Serbian), Bunarić (Croatian) and Szentkut (Hungarian) - which in all languages means a small spring or well (Figure 6) [39]. The history of this place is again deeply connected with water, tradition and customs. If we disregard the religious aspect of this place, we will notice that it is, in its essence, again an artefact that connects the city of Subotica with water. Therefore, we can claim that this site is one of the places to remember the connection between water and the city.



Figure 6. A place of pilgrimage to two religions – the spring

#### 4.1. Interpretation of the cultural memory through the artefacts

The preceding discussion presented an artefact analysis based on cabinet and field research. The conducted analysis of six specific symbols should indicate the essential connection between water and morphology of Subotica, as we know it today. It can be noted that the memory of the origin of the city is kept as a fragmentary memory, the parts of which are contained in the analysed architectural symbols, starting from the micro level, or sculpture in the niche of the residential building, to the macro level, or the whole urbanistic move that indicates the importance of water. The biggest problem we have encountered in this research is the fact that the analysed artefacts are very pale and unclear in a meaningful sense. Therefore, the discovered interrupted narrative does not indicate clearly the connection between water and the city structure, although it, undoubtedly, exists. Potential active politics, which would link these artefacts, would certainly

contribute to the creation of a comprehensive picture of the history of the city of Subotica and the role of water in this development. Since architecture enables the building of a city identity, we can claim that the ability of the city to preserve the memory of its own creation depends precisely on the way that the city is presented, that is, from the presence/absence of an active policy. As emphasized in the theoretical foundations of the research, the cultural memory is not only expressed by the past, but also forms the present through the development of the existence of the individual and the collective and provides the opportunity to understand the vision of the future. From this aspect, it is possible to talk about the water phenomenon in the territory of the city of Subotica. Through fostering the culture of remembering the shaping of the city, the criteria of tradition and the formation and maintenance of identity for new generations are established.

There is a justifiable suspicion that at one point there will be a complete oblivion of the importance of water as a key location factor in the process of the city's creation. The society in the constant process of change and the city that changes its appearance lead to the possibility that these artefacts will disappear. For this reason, it is necessary to redefine the urban identity of Subotica, namely, to base it simultaneously on collective memories of people and material, or non-material cultural heritage, through the process of contemporary creativity.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The research presented in this paper was carried out as a transdisciplinary research based on the examination of architecture, culture and socio-economic development as a comprehensive system. The initial hypothesis of work, i.e. the connection between architecture and collective memory of the population, was confirmed during the research process. It was found that the memory of the factors influencing its formation was preserved in the city structure, and that these memories are actually contained in the architectural elements created during the period of the crossing of Subotica from the form of the settlement towards the shape of the city, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Also, the neglect of water factors by the modern city itself and by its inhabitants has been confirmed. In fact, this means that the lack of an active cultural policy leads to a gradual forgetting of the city's emergence process. In that sense, in the segment of the interpretation of the results, the need for redefining the city identity of Subotica is suggested. Through research, it has also been found that artefacts that preserve the memory of the abundance of water in Subotica are very different, but for that reason they are also significant. The diverse nature of artefacts, which in the context of the research represent the sites of memory, point to the deep rootedness of the water factor in the development of the city of Subotica.

Due to the centralization reflected in the post-socialist society, small towns, including in Subotica, suffer from numerous problems. Collective memory enables the formation of a city identity, the preservation of its authenticity and provides connections among the inhabitants of the city. Through the identification with the material heritage of the city, a sense of belonging would be provided and greater responsibility and engagement of the inhabitants in the local community. In this way, this research has the purpose to point out the necessity of activating memory through cultural policy, in order to construct the identity of the city of Subotica and its recognizability.

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## ФЕНОМЕН ВОДЕ НА ТЕРИТОРИЈИ ГРАДА СУБОТИЦЕ

*Резиме:* У оквиру рада приказано је истраживање које се бави феноменом воде на територији града Суботице, односно местима сећања, симболима и обележјима воде као кључног елемента у јавном простору. Предмет истраживања у ширем смислу јесте култура сећања једног града на сопствени настанак, која се манифестује у памћењу појединца и група, и у архитектури и урбанизму града као материјалном изразу друштвеног живота. Кроз истраживачки процес потврђена је повезаност архитектуре, урбаног морфоса и колективног сећања становника. Такође, утврђено је да је фактор воде један од најзначајнијих чинилаца који је утицао на просторну диспозицију градске структуре. Због недостатка активне политике јавља се сумња да ће ова повезаност бити заборављена, те се указује да је неопходно редефинисати градски идентитет Суботице, односно базирати га истовремено на колективним сећањима људи и материјалном, односно нематеријалном културном наслеђу, кроз процес савремене креативности.

**Кључне речи:** урбана структура, град, сећање, памћење, вода