

A REVIEW OF THE PAST FOLLOWING THE TRAIL ACROSS GORICA HILL

Passing through a rugged landscape covered with greenery, each corner tells a different "story" - a testimony to the intertwined past of the city. Podgorica is a city with a long history in which there are inevitable material remains from different periods of the past with the influences of many conquerors who passed through this area. This area represents one of the centers of culture in ancient times, the cradle of the Slavs of Duklja, the ancestors of today's Montenegrins. As cities and fortifications disappeared through the turbulent history of wars and natural disasters, their remains that withstand the ravages of time are considered cultural "beacons" of the world of the past. Through the pine forest, with the chirping of birds, the trail can be neither too long nor tiring. Traces of the past, the roar of rivers and the echoes of bygone centuries ennoble man; make him more humane, aware of transience and the fact that we are only a moment in eternity.



DUKLJA

On a wide and flat plateau between the mouth of the Zeta in Morača and Širalića in Zeta, four kilometers from the center of Podgorica, are the remains of the ancient city of Duklja from the 1st century AD. The city (Doclea) was named after the Illyrian tribe Dokleati, on whose territory it was built. At the end of the 1st and the beginning of the 2nd century, it experienced a rise and became a powerful economic and cultural center of the southeastern part of the Roman province of Dalmatia. In 297, Duklja, surrounded by natural water barriers and high defensive walls with towers and a moat on the northeast side, became the capital of the newly founded Roman province of Prevalis, which had trade relations with Italy, Dalmatia, Macedonia and Greece. Then it experienced a real economic boom and became a large trading center with beautiful temples, palaces, paved streets, spas (Roman public baths) and other accompanying facilities. Like a sleeping stone city, tucked away in the plain, Duklja represents a return to the distant past and ancient civilization, an eternal inspiration to various researchers and travel writers. Each of its stones, inscriptions, debris, are a testimony to a grand empire that built a city on this site based on



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ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH AT THE FOOT OF GORICA HILL

At the foot of Gorica, the hill after which the city was named is the oldest Christian place of worship in Podgorica - the Church of St. George. There is no preserved historical data on the origin of the church, which is over 1000 years old, but according to its architecture and stylistic characteristics, it belongs to the group of pre-Romanesque monuments of the 10th - 11th centuries. Surrounded by alpine pines and cypresses, the church is a "witness" of the ancient past in which every conqueror used Gorica and its hummocks as strategic points of observation. It is dedicated to Saint George, according to the tradition - a warrior and military leader in Diocletian's army, who was tortured because of his Christian faith, and then killed. "Because of his martyrdom and the miracles he performed at the time, he was canonized". Small, but strategically important for various conquerors, Gorica hill got a protector at its foot. There is symbolism in the fact that this saint, in the uniform of a soldier with a spear in his hand, was chosen as the patron saint of the church, which for a long time was the only place of worship and refuge for the Christian population in Podgorica. The ancient fragments found in the walls of the temple, brought from Duklja, speak about the age and character of the church. Unfortunately, the small church did not preserve its original appearance, because it was destroyed, rebuilt and extended several times. According to the professional



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the Roman urban concept with a paved central square - a forum with a basilica at the place where the two main streets intersected. In its vicinity were the most important city institutions, in urban, administrative and religious terms. This place held all the symbolism of Rome. The Capitol Temple - in the name of Jupiter, Juno and Minerva, the temple of the goddess Roma and the temple of Diana, greeted passers-by from it. The large baths, in the extension of the main street, were divided into two parts, for men and women, with gymnastic facilities, a library and a rest hall. Their remains best represent the magnificent ancient culture. Precious items of grave inventory found - pottery and glass vessels, pieces of jewelry, tools, weapons, glass objects...testify to human activity and crafts of that time. The stonework whose traces are still preserved on some stone reliefs and tombstones are especially impressive. One of them testifies to the establishment of the Church of St. Mary in the town itself. It is one of the oldest churches. King Svetopelek was buried and his son Svetolik was crowned in it, and it probably originates from the beginning of the 9th century.

The found early Christian tombs, as well as the medieval ones, speak of the continuity of burial ceremonies in this area, which dates back to the 4th and 5th centuries. This makes them priceless for research purposes. Nevertheless, valuable items of grave inventory were looted several times, most notably during World War II.

The glass from the 4th or 5th century, one of the most precious works of art found in Podgorica and Montenegro, is today kept in the Hermitage in St. Petersburg. Its accidental discovery is attributed to a local who in 1862 opened one of the tombs in the necropolis of Bjelovina, west of the ancient city of Duklja. It is illustrated with early Christian motifs, most likely in a local glass workshop.

At the beginning of the 7th century, the Avars and Slavs made a violent invasion and on that occasion completely devastated Duklja, after which the city never recovered. This sleeping lady revives past times and with her remains tells the story of the transience of everything - the conquerors and the conquered...

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literature, eight centuries ago it had the characteristics of the medieval Catholic churches of the Dalmatian coast, and it became Orthodox only from the time of Nemanjić dynasty. An unknown but extremely gifted painter has painted the small space of the Church of St. George with frescoes from the 16th and 17th centuries. He decorated the church with a rich repertoire of scenes of Christ's suffering, figures of sixteen prophets, scenes from the life of St. George, the Mother of God with Christ and representation of the Heavenly Liturgy. The church has an iconostasis, the work of famous painters from Đinovići created in 1881. The unusual cover of the tomb, which is located in the gate of the church, and whose origin is unknown, used to be the side of a sarcophagus made of limestone from Spuž. The inscription field was erased, and the representations of Mercury, dolphins, roosters, rosettes, garlands and waves were shown in relief. During the research of Duklja, the famous Italian archaeologist Piero Sticotti noted that there was an inscription of the Pistelić family from 1867 on the plaque. The mysterious passage that is located in the altar part is still under a veil of secrecy. It is a narrow square opening in the floor, covered with a suitable stone lid with an alcove, and an adult can pass through it. According to the legend, this underground passage leads to the corridor that leads towards Duklja. According to the second version, the passage can lead to the coast of Morača, about 800-900 meters to the west. A forest of pines and cypresses, planted in the 20th century, merged the old church with nature. And while the church in the past was the patron of the faithful, today Gorica with its unique flora represents the natural green shield of Podgorica. Attractive and rich recreational contents, close to the city center, mix the old with the new, giving the modern an unusual and extremely beautiful patina.

PARTISAN MONUMENT

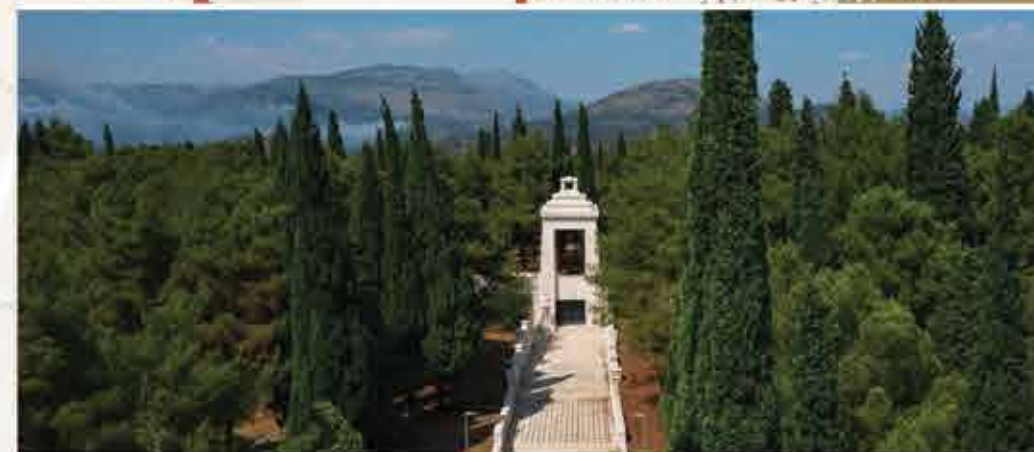
Above the St. George's Church, which for centuries has been a spatial benchmark - a building on the highest elevation in Podgorica - there is a monument to the partisan-fighter in a form of mausoleum. In post-war, socialist Titograd, the city, out of respect for the fighters and heroes of the People's Liberation War who gave their lives for the freedom of the homeland, decided to erect a monument on a hill above the city overlooking its neighborhoods and streets. The city got a monument to the memory of selfless sacrifice and libertarian values that society must not forget. Its authors, architect Vojislav Đokić and sculptor Drago Đurović, made a masterpiece at the time, a monumental memorial complex on Gorica Hill, which was ceremoniously opened on July 13, 1957, on the Day of the Uprising of the People of Montenegro against the fascist occupiers. At the time of construction and immediately thereafter, the monument

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MONUMENT TO THE FIGHTERS FROM PIPERI FALLEN IN THE LIBERATION WARS ON TRIJEBAČ HILL

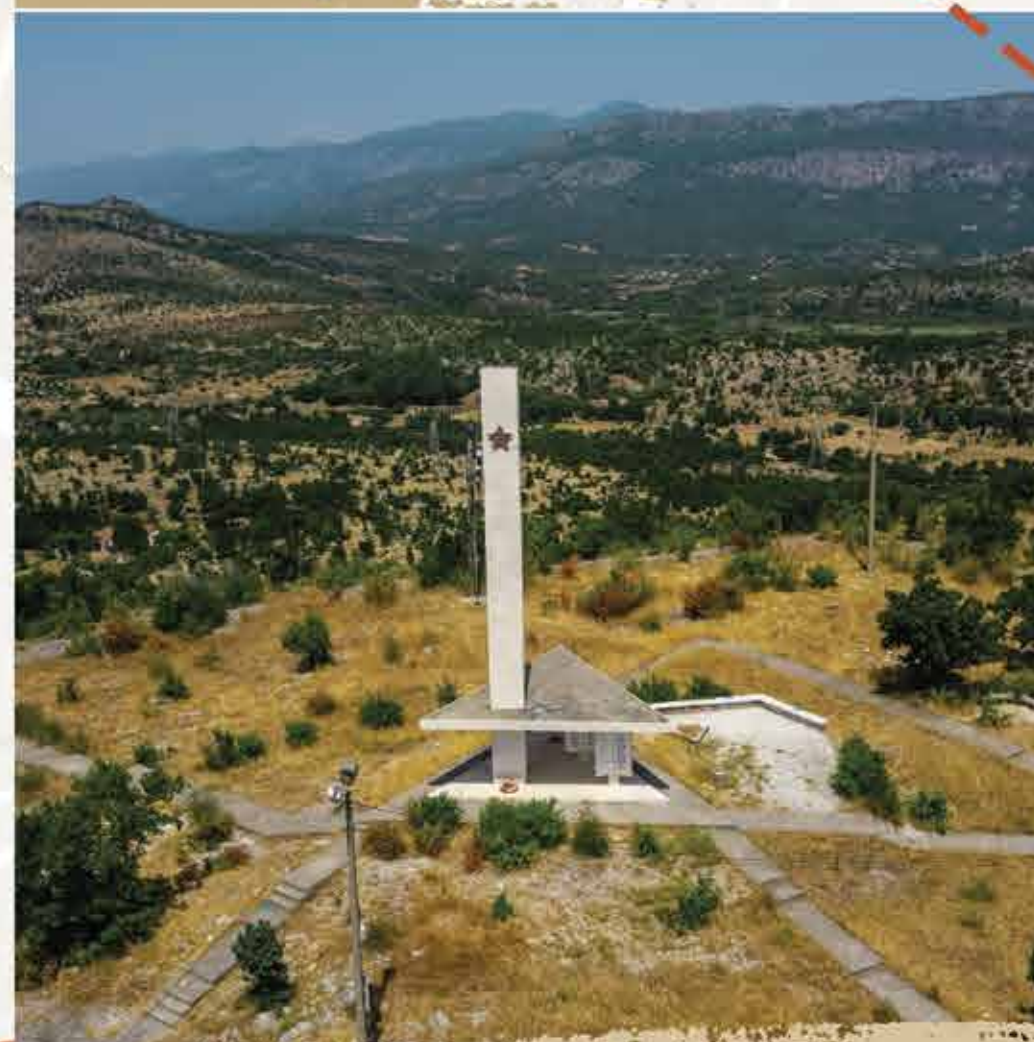
On the way to Piperi, on the hill Trijebač, there is a Monument to the fighters from Piperi fallen in the liberation wars. An access, paved road leads to it, followed by a path with alternating platforms and stairs. This monument, as well as many in Podgorica and its surroundings, is dedicated to the fallen fighters from several wars. Built on a natural hill with an extraordinary view of Morača, Gorica, Duklja and the whole of Podgorica, it is another testimony to the heroic past of the city and the state. It was built in 1967 according to the project of the architect Dragan Marković, with the funds of the families of the killed fighters from Piperi, and renovated in July 2001 with the funds provided by the Capital. 754 names of those who gave their lives for the freedom of their country are written on each side of the marble "fans". Honor, faith, and freedom formed their identification shield and obstacle to all conquerors. This is how this place and the monument on it remember even Montenegrin-Ottoman War (1876-1878), one of the most important wars in Montenegro in the 19th century. The Montenegrin army achieved many victories in it and the result of the war was the international recognition of Montenegro's independence at the Berlin Congress. During that war, Trijebač passed from hand to hand three times, until finally the Montenegrins forced the Ottoman army to withdraw. The brave fighters of Piperi inflicted such a defeat on the Dervish Pasha's army at this place that it took him more than a month to undertake any activity. However, the long and suffering past of Podgorica and its surroundings resulted with a long list of fighters fallen for the freedom of the homeland, whose names are written on the monument. Among them, the fighters from the Spanish Civil War stand out - Milun Božović and Radosav Ljumović, after whom important institutions in Podgorica were named: the People's University and the City Library.

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was visible from the city center, especially from Njegoš's Street. Due to the afforestation of the hill, this monument is not visible from the city center today, but the way the park-forest in Gorica is arranged makes it completely integrated into the natural environment of the hill and an inseparable part of Gorica. It contains the remains of 66 national heroes of the People's Liberation War (1941-1945) and two revolutionaries. The monument is also a kind of central memorial to all the sufferings in the People's Liberation War, which is evidenced by the inscriptions in the interior listing all fallen people on the territory of Montenegro. At one of the most famous locations in Podgorica, there are two "guards" - sculptural figures of "partisan-fighters", 2.5-3 m high. Stylized with elements of Montenegrin folk costume, they proudly say that in this place are buried those who "loved freedom more than life". The built access staircase leads to the world of heroes and warriors, first to the mausoleum, and then, with two side steps to the upper plateau where, protected by a roof, there is a central granite plate with the inscription "To Partisan-fighter". It consists of an ossuary, located on the ground floor, in which are the remains of national heroes, and a plateau with a central tombstone on the first floor, which offers a panoramic view of the city. The interior of the mausoleum is lined with red stone plates, on which are the names of folk heroes and revolutionaries, as well as additional information: "In the People's Liberation War from 1941 to 1945, 6,780 fighters and leaders from Montenegro fell... and 7,479 sons and daughters of the Montenegrin people were killed by fascist occupiers and domestic traitors". The sculptures, as well as the entire complex, were made of white stone, which gives the monument-mausoleum the impression of monolithicity and monumentality. This is the type of facility in which, as a rule, glorious people of the highest social reputation have been buried throughout history.

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TOURISM ORGANISATION OF PODGORICA

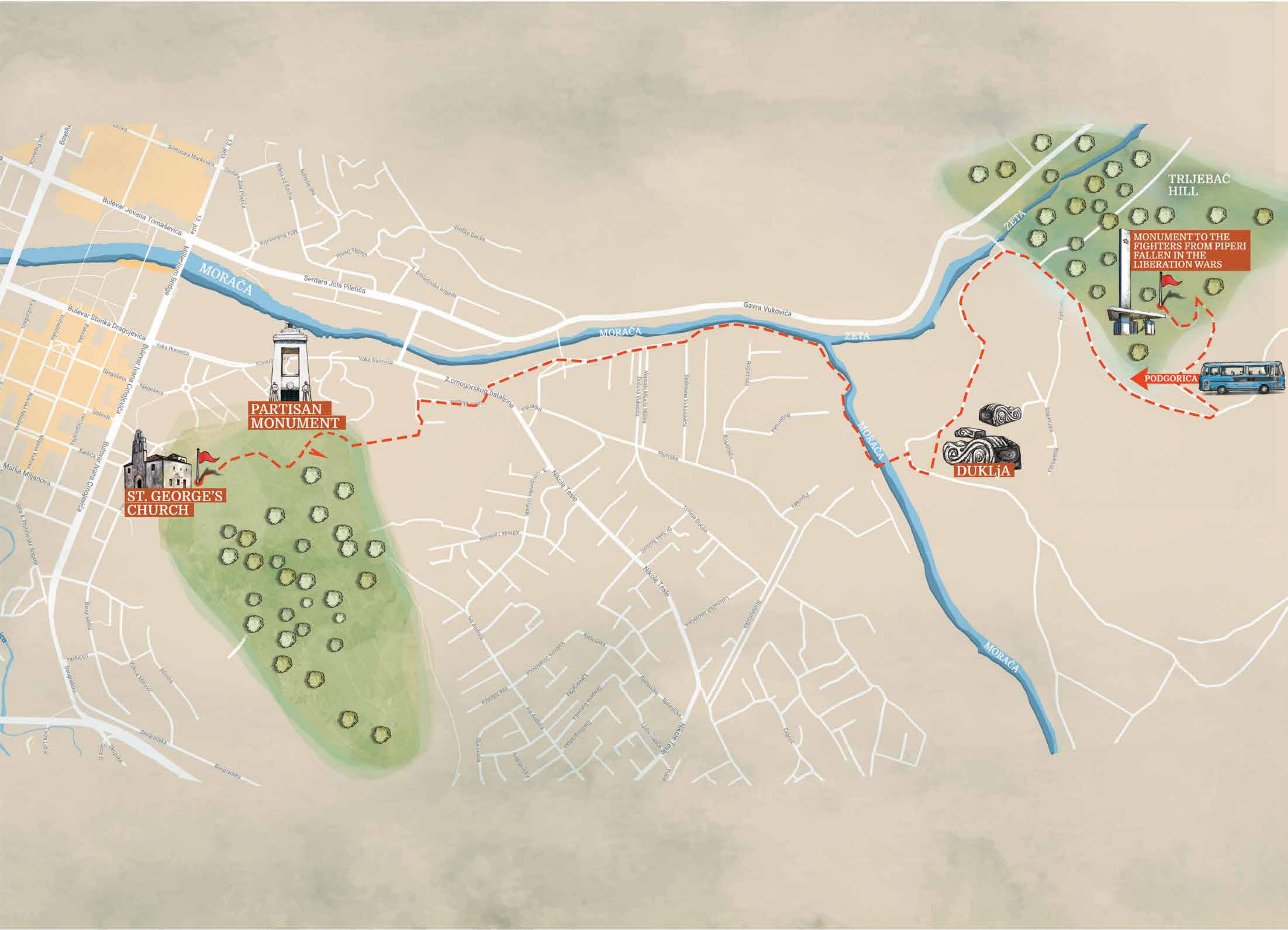
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ROUTE NAME:
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ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH AT THE FOOT OF GORIČA HILL - PARTISAN MONUMENT - DUKLJA - MONUMENT TO THE FIGHTERS FROM PIPERI FALLEN IN THE LIBERATION WARS ON TRIJEBAC HILL

CATEGORIES:
NATURE, RELIGION, CULTURE, HISTORY - MONUMENTAL HERITAGE

PATH DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM DEMANDING WALKING ROUTE (CONSULTATION WITH TOP IS RECOMMENDED)

LENGTH OF WALKING PATH: ABOUT 6 KM

LENGTH OF THE BUS LINE DUKLJA - PODGORICA: 4,5 km

DURATION: 3-4 h

