

## THE OLD ARCHITECTURE IN THE FUTURE TOWN STRUCTURE OF PLOVDIV

The problems of the interrelation between old and new architecture, between the inherited urban structures and those created now and in the future, are topical in all cities with a highly developed architectural culture. Their development reveals the impact of the centuries and millennia, the achievements of human civilization, and keeps alive the memory of the life and work of those people who had faith in the future in spite of the ravages of time. Plovdiv is just such a City.

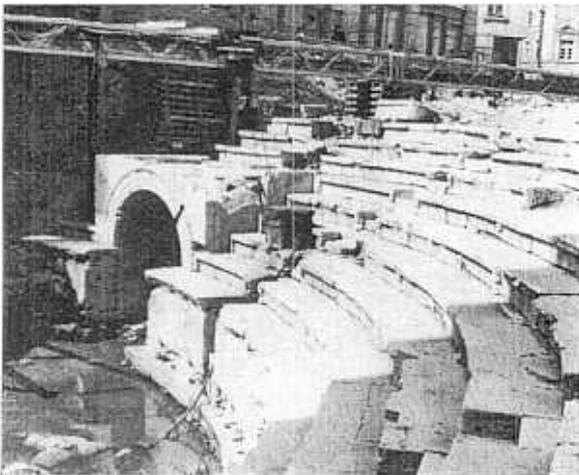
Today Plovdiv is a noble ensemble of architectural monuments and structures of a period of eight thousand years. It is a dynamically growing city, a precious stone on the chest of sunny Thrace. It is a large centre of the national economic and cultural life, of lively commercial, international and cultural contacts.

Its future, its shaping up and development tomorrow, must with particular appreciation accept the visible architectural wealth of its history, in order to bring them again to life and thus make them eternal. Within the overall framework of future Plovdiv, the rule "to adapt the old architecture to contemporary life" assumes a wider scope and significance, which is tantamount to unity and harmony between old architecture and new life, between old

and new architecture, implemented with the greatest possible functional, spatial and plastic effect. Founded on the deep roots of humanism and a respect for the fruits of man's daring and creative work, there will in future be a still greater desire, to point out its age-old architectural achievements, ever more fascinating and beautiful and to demonstrate and include them organically in the environment and against the background of the future city. Plovdiv's architectural and historic monuments date mainly from three periods. The Ancient Period is represented by ruins and fortifications, public buildings and residential areas in the Ancient City. Today they have been excavated at many points in the city, but mainly in the city centre. Here nearly every new construction project impinges the ancient level of the city lying at a not very great depth below the city's present terrain. Considerable areas of the ancient Agora have been revealed as well as the ancient Stadium and Theatre, the fortress walls and towers, parts of residential quarters consisting of remains of dwellings and household features.

We are faced with the difficult problems of lending meaning to their existence in the city's organic life and including them in its rhythm, not only with

1. Plovdiv. An ancient circus.



2. Plovdiv. A street in the old town.



the beauty which they represent and the admiration they evoke, but also through direct participation, by making them something inseparable, something long known, close to the people's hearts and needs. This is the more so where they are part of the physical layers of the architectural epoch of the city.

That is why great significance is attached to the extensive programme of archaeological excavation. Its aim is to make all the work connected with the excavation of the ancient monuments not a matter of chance, but a purposeful and conscious search to uncover the architectural monument of the ancient period. In the process of formation are projects which claim to achieve the maximum inclusion of this wealth in the area of the future systems of squares in the central part of the city. In many of them we shall be able to see a panorama of the Ancient Plovdiv.

In Plovdiv there are not only many houses but also churches and public buildings dating from the National Revival Period. This impressive architectural ensemble is already an object of admiration by lovers of old architecture. Its restored buildings and spaces, houses and streets are part of the modern city, as alive today as in the past. This architectural renewal has been extended to many new buildings and has become accessible and familiar, scattered as it is in many courtyards full of sun and romanticism, and in exquisite interiors, which have a great variety of form and colour and are exceedingly picturesque and warm.

A programme for the thorough restoration of the ensemble of Plovdiv dating from the National Revival Period, perched on the Three Hills (Trimontium), is to be completed by 1985. Included in the ensemble of the larger city in the future as a magnificent part of its eternal life, Ancient Plovdiv will be living a new life and will be always present with still greater force, wealth and splendour in the whole atmosphere of the city.

Old buildings are to be found at the foot of the Three Hills and in those parts of the city, where incipient capitalism flourished after liberation from the five centuries of Ottoman rule. Some of them, imitations of European styles from the end of the 19th century are impressive structures full of romanticism. Examples are the commercial street and a few densely built streets in the central part of the city. Many of the buildings here have been adapted to the needs of trade and cultural life, for children's institutions, dwellings, administrative needs, health services and education. Many of them will continue in future to serve the same purposes.



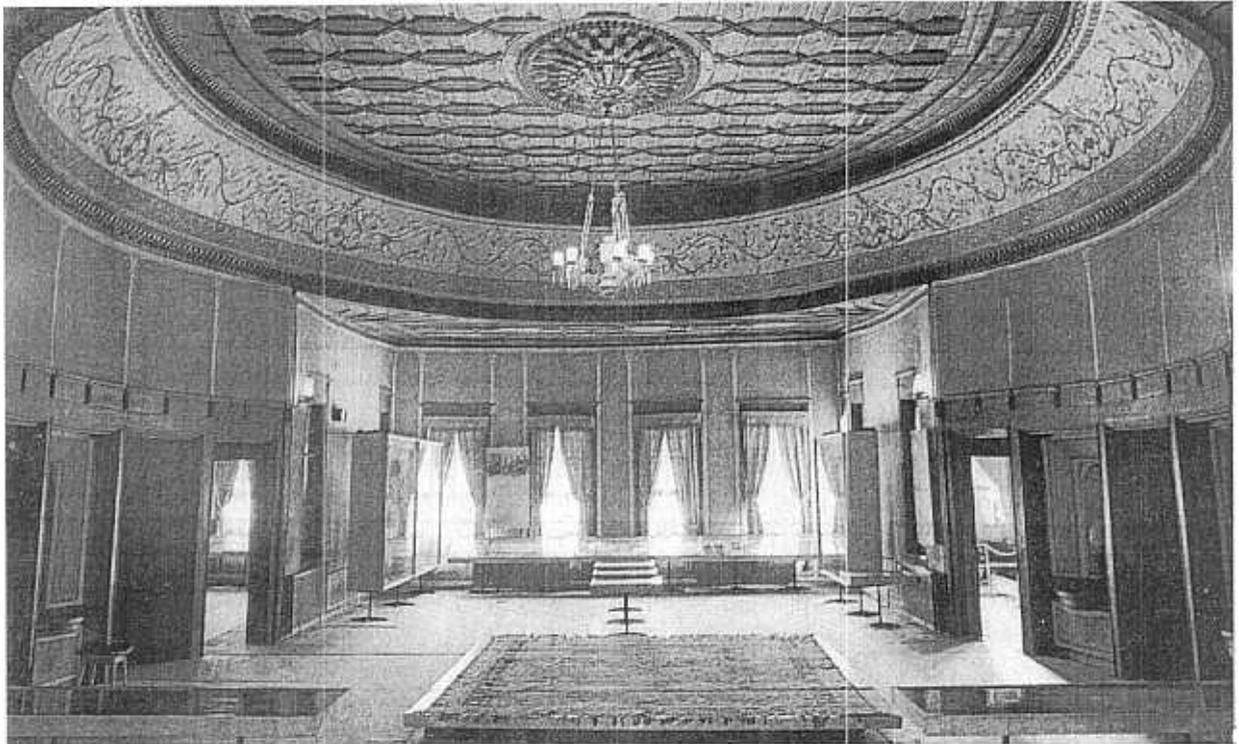
3. Plovdiv. The commercial street, a bank.

Their systematic renewal and their fresh and vivid colours introduce a particular atmosphere and diversity in the street panorama. This helps to underline their value and their active inclusion in the whole ensemble.

In future, the commercial street will become a multi-functional, cultural and commercial complex with merged and enlarged buildings adapted to their present and future use, integrated with each other by the character of the street. A traditional and favourite resort of the city's active population, it will become a modernized zone for pedestrians, which will connect the Central Square within the big International Congress and Exhibition Centre at the Maritsa River.

The diversified old architecture, the specific character of its situation in the city's organism and its presence in the panorama of the city make the problem of achieving unity between the architectural past and the architectural future of the city complex, intricate and difficult to solve.

In excavating architectural monuments and recalling them with attention and love to new life, we have only performed half of our duty.



4. Plovdiv. The ethnographic museum — interior view.

The second half consists in the ability to design the development of the city structure, of the city ensemble, and above all of the city centre, in which, amid the manifestations of modern architecture and urbanism, the beauty and significance of its archi-

tectural monuments should stand out with still greater force and vividness.

A task which is unenviable difficult. The ambition to solve it with honour constitutes our professional destiny.

Matey MATEEV, Bulgaria

## RESUME

*Plovdiv est, aujourd'hui, une ville constituée d'un ensemble harmonieux de constructions élevées au long des siècles (depuis le sixième millénaire), ainsi qu'un centre économique et culturel d'importance nationale. Son évolution et son développement futurs devront tenir compte de son riche patrimoine architectural, afin de lui insuffler une vie nouvelle et d'assurer sa pérennité.*

*Les monuments de Plovdiv appartiennent principalement à trois époques:*

*1. De l'antiquité subsistent des ruines de fortifications, d'édifices publics et de quartiers d'habitation. Ces vestiges sont aujourd'hui visibles en de nombreux points de la ville, surtout au centre. La mise au point d'un vaste programme de fouilles archéologiques serait d'un grand intérêt.*

*2. Un grand nombre de maisons, classées monument historiques, datent de la Renaissance bulgare. Le programme de restauration totale de cet ensemble se terminera en 1985.*

*3. Au pied du Trimontium et dans les quartiers où l'industrie capitaliste s'était le plus développée, on trouve de nombreuses maisons anciennes. Beaucoup ont été adaptées pour répondre aux différents besoins de la ville. Leur restauration et leur mise en valeur systématiques apportent une note romantique et pittoresque au panorama des rues.*

*1. Plovdiv. Cirque antique.*

*2. Idem. Rue dans l'ancienne ville.*

*3. Idem. La rue commerciale. Une banque.*

*4. Idem. Le musée ethnographique — intérieur.*