

## **110th Anniversary of the Archaeological Museum**

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On the 23rd of September 1892, with order N 598 of the Ministry of the Public Education the teacher in classical languages Vaclav Dobrusky was appointed director of the Public Museum. Through this first official act the already existing Department for Museum Values at the Public Library in Sofia was turned into a separate cultural institution.

The Public Museum underwent a long and complex development. The institution was a pioneer in a new area of the Bulgaria cultural life – archaeology and museums organization – and set principles and standards by adapting the traditions of the big European museums to the specific Bulgarian conditions. These principles and standards were followed by its younger followers which established the present dense national museum network. Some of these competent modern institutions are direct descendants of the Public Museum.

In 1900 the Public Museum was hosted “temporarily” by Buyuk Dzhamiya – a magnificent monument of the Ottoman architecture from the second half of the 15th century. The first museum exposition was officially opened in 1905 and the event was attended by the political and cultural elite of the country.

However, among the most essential activity of the institution was the Museum’s activity in the organizing

and the scientific management of the first archaeological investigations and excavations in Bulgaria. The churches at Trapezitsa, the palace buildings at Tsarevets, Madara, Nicopolis ad Istrum and Oescus, the prehistoric sites at Salmanovo and Kodzhadermen, the necropolises at Brezovo, Duvanlii, Mezek, etc. are just few examples of the numerous surveys carried out by the museum’s collaborators. These expeditions became methodical and practical schools for generations of Bulgarian archaeologists.

All reputable historians and archaeologist living in the 20th century worked at the Museum as directors, curators, members of editorial boards, etc.

In 1948 in accordance with the newly adopted Law on Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the Public Archaeological Museum was united with the Archaeological Institute and became Archaeological Institute and Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. From this moment on the development of the Museum is closely related to the Institute’s development.

The renovated exposition, presenting prehistoric and antique finds from the Bulgarian territories, which are to be seen in the rooms of the Museum turn it into the cultural center of the capital city that our predecessors have dreamed about.