

The Water Supply Installations at Church N 12 on the Tsarevets Hill in Veliko Tarnovo

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This paper presents a full reconstruction, new sequence and a specific date for the main water supply assemblage in the main citadel of the capital Tarnovgrad in the 13th century (Figs. 1; 2). The assemblage is situated on the south slope of the Tsarevets hill, next to the citadel defensive wall, where several springs were trapped. Initially it consisted of two catchments, three water pipes and a water reservoir, built during the 30s of the 13th century (Fig. 3). Part of the reservoir was dug into the earth, and the rest of it was hosted by a solid construction so that the whole installation held 103 m³ of drinking water (Fig. 4). Massive protective buildings were located above the catchments.

Later on the assemblage was enlarged by adding one more catchment with an water pipe and a water reservoir (Fig. 5). The new water reservoir had a storage capacity of 128 m³ but was not filled by a separate water pipe; for that reason it abutted the first one with a joint and the two reservoirs were connected by pipes (Fig. 6).

It has been calculated that 3490 m³ of water entered the water reservoirs in 24 hours. 2565 m³ of them ran through the draining pipes, and the rest - through constantly running fountains, which provided water for the population of the citadel. No public water reservoirs were con-

structed on the territory of the citadel in the 13th century because of constantly running drinking water. The water supply assemblage was integrated in the town plan of the capital and was situated between two of the citadel's main streets leading from the Main Entrance to the Southeast Gate (Fig. 5). The floor above the water reservoirs was entered from the upper street level and it was the place where the water was drawn by buckets and ropes. The public fountains were accessed from the other street, situated along the defensive wall. To the north of the water reservoirs there was a relatively small square and enough empty space around the fountains to enable free access to them.

In the late 13th or early 14th centuries due to a violent earthquake the springs ran dry and the water reservoirs were destroyed and abandoned. A small church (N 12) was built on top of the ruins of the second reservoir and in the following years a necropolis appeared in the area around it.

After the destruction of the water supply assemblage, a new installation for drinking water was constructed; it consisted of a well, dug inside the defensive tower that was situated on the bank of the Yantra river and connected to the citadel by a protected staircase (Fig. 1).