

ARCHAEOASTRONOMY AND ASTRONOMY IN CULTURE AND RELEVANT RESEARCH IN SERBIA

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Abstract. A short review of the development, meaning and significance of archaeoastronomy and astronomy in culture research has been presented. The corresponding research in Serbia has been discussed as well.

1. ARCHAEOASTRONOMY AND ASTRONOMY IN CULTURE

Archaeoastronomy has been developed (Aveni, 1986) as a result of investigations of the possible astronomical significance of architectural alignments and as a result of investigations of the astronomical significance of the Stonehenge, as well as of the investigation of astronomy and astronomical alignments in architecture in South America (Urton, 1981, 1990).

Actually in the world a considerable amount of high quality research is being generated in archaeoastronomy and ethnoastronomy. Such research is being developed in Romania and Bulgaria (see e.g. Proceedings of the first National symposium on archaeoastronomy, Tolbuchin, 1988). Aveni (1989) defined archaeoastronomy as "the study of the practice and use of astronomy among the ancient cultures of the world based upon all forms of evidence, written and unwritten". Ruggles (1991) stated that the word "ancient" can safely be removed from Aveni's definition to include ethnoastronomy in this definition.

Since 1988, when the first National symposium on archaeoastronomy has been held in Tolbuchin in Bulgaria, at least one archaeoastronomical symposium has been held in Europe each year, as e.g. in Venice 1989, (Romano and Traversari, 1991), "Current problems and future of archaeoastronomy", an annual series begun at Warszawa 1990 (Iwaniszewski, 1992), and the third "Oxford" International Symposium on Archaeoastronomy, St. Andrews, U. K., 1990 (Ruggles, 1991). The 1992 European Conference on "Current problems and future of archaeoastronomy" in Strasbourg, voted to establish an European Society for Cultural Astronomy (Société Européenne pour l'Astronomie dans la Culture - SEAC). For the Annual Meeting held in Bochum 1994, SEAC Newsletter has been established as Newsletters confined to European activities in cultural astronomy.

Currently, courses in cultural astronomy exist at Leicester University, held by Clives Ruggles since 1990 as a third year optional course within the studies on Archaeology.

Also exists the British journal of *Archaeoastronomy* as the supplement to *Journal for the History of Astronomy*.

2. RESEARCH ON ARCHAEOASTRONOMY AND ETHNOASTRONOMY OR ASTRONOMY IN CULTURE IN SERBIA

In Serbia, a number of articles and books relevant to archaeoastronomical and ethnoastronomical research has been published (Cenev, 1985; Danić, 1960; Francisty, 1985, 1986; Grujić, 1930; Harisijadis, 1976; Jagić, 1922; Janičijević, 1992; Janković, 1951, 1954, 1954/55, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1979, 1985, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1994, 1997; Jovanović, 1981; Mole, 1922; Nikolić, 1961; Novaković, 1884; Radošević, 1975; Simovljević, 1974; Slavić, 1982; Tadić, 1985, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997; Trpković, 1909; Vince *et al.* 1996). One can see that the very important role for such kind of researches had the VII National Conference of Yugoslav astronomers, held in Belgrade in 1985, on the occasion of 50th anniversary of the Astronomical Society "Rudjer Bošković", as the first topical conference on the history of astronomy. Particularly important is as well the work of Nenad Dj. Janković (1911-1997) who in a number of books and papers (Janković, 1951, 1954, 1954/55, 1957, 1985, 1989, 1994, 1997) has published the results of his research on astronomy in Serbian culture. A cornerstone is as well the paper of Vince, A., Jovanović, B., Vince, I., and Vince, O. (Vince *et al.* 1996), on Astronomical Orientations of Graves and Skeletons in Gomolava and Mokrin presented at the XI National Conference of Yugoslav Astronomers in Belgrade, in 1996, where for the first time in Serbia a team of astronomers and archaeologists made a common research on archaeoastronomy.

In order to coordinate and support the common research in archaeoastronomy and ethnoastronomy of astronomers and archaeologists as well as the other interested, a group for archaeoastronomy has been formed within the frame of the study group for interdisciplinary archaeology of the Serbian Archaeological Society and Belgrade Astronomical Observatory. The foundation of the group has been on the meeting held on Belgrade Astronomical Observatory on 12. VI 1996. Members of the group are: Milan. S. Dimitrijević, Director of the Belgrade Astronomical Observatory, president, Ištvan Vince, Scientific adviser at the Observatory and Professor of astrophysics at the Mathematical Faculty - the group for Astronomy, Živko Mikić, Professor of anthropology on the Philosophical Faculty - the group for Archaeology, president of the Study group for interdisciplinary archaeology of the Serbian Archaeological Society, Borislav Jovanović, scientific adviser at Archaeological institute, Milorad Stojić, Archaeological institute, and Andor Vince, archaeologist. On the second meeting held on 12. XI 1996., the group joined Vesna Mijatović, archaeologist.

The aim of this lecture is to inform the astronomical community on the research and organizational work in archaeoastronomy and ethnoastronomy, in favour of the coordination of such research in our country and collaboration with Romanian colleagues.

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