



# Njegoš Museum Biljarda

## Lapidarium

### Large Scale Map of Montenegro



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF MONTENEGRO





When did Njegos move from the Cetinje Monastery to Biljarda?

Although after living in the narrow and dark monastic cells he moved to The New Home, which consisted of 25 rooms, the Montenegrin Bishop used only three rooms for himself. Foreign guests already stayed in the other rooms of Biljarda during 1838. The first detailed description of the residence was given by Heinrich Stieglitz in his book "Ein Besuch auf Montenegro" in 1840. Detailed information was also left by: Wilhelm Ebel, Gustav Rasch, Eduard Grille, John Gardner Wilkinson, Kovalevsky, Giacomo Chudina, German traveller Johann Georg Kohl, Captain Oreskovic ...

Biljarda, primarily Njegos' residence, was also the residence of Prince Danilo and of Prince Nikola until 1867 when he moved to the newly built palace.

During the following decades various state institutions were placed here (Theological-Teachers School, Female Institute, later the School of Music and the Ministry of War). In addition to this, it is considered as the beginning of the first museum in Montenegro, as Njegos and his successors exhibited trophy weapons and flags in separate rooms.

The building was reconstructed several times and has received today's appearance and purpose in 1951, on the proposal of the Committee for the Celebration of the Centenary of Njegos, which was to mark 100 years since the death of Njegos.



I room - Armoury

Josip Broz Tito donated a collection of his weapons on the occasion of the opening of Njegos' museum in 1951.

In addition to this collection, there are two boards with trophy weapons, among which are also the cannons Krnjo and Zelenko that were seized in the Zabljak battle in 1835. In the smaller showcase, besides the personal decorations of Kenjo Stankov Jankovic, there is also the key to the Zabljak fortress. In this room there are also items that belonged to Sirdar Djuko Sredanovic.



II room – Billiard Room

A billiard-table, which was brought to Montenegro in 1840 from Austria, occupies the central place in this room. The Portrait of Peter II, the work of the Austrian painter Johannes Boss, represents the poet wearing his national costume and abounds in meticulously painted details. In a classic setting and refined processing his character is carried out with no idealization inherent to painters of that movement. The manners and language skills of Montenegrin bishops and princes leave a special impression on an increasingly bigger number of visitors to Montenegro. That is how their portraits are created; besides Njegos' portrait here are the portraits of Prince Danilo, Prince Nikola and the Grand Duke Mirko. Njegos' Venetian style armchair - its legs were extended by 16 cm so as to fit his stature. Here is also Njegos' testament in which, among other things, he appoints Danilo, the son of his cousin Stjepa, as his successor. The cross, placed in the glass showcase, was a gift from Njegos for the priest Lazar Popovic while the gun barrel belonged to Njegos. As evidence of the military superiority of the small number of Montenegrin warriors over the incomparably more numerous Ottoman army exhibited are also the seized Turkish flag and distorted long gun (dzeferdar) from the Salkovina battle that took place in 1840.

### III room – the Study Room

Heavy traditionalism produced Njegos' creative space. In treating rhymed historicism he precisely applied the legality of the chosen term, thus succeeding in making the Montenegrin poetry recognizable in European literature. Hence it is not surprising that his library consisted of contemporary European classics, primarily French, Italian, Russian and German. His showcases were filled with books from all fields; a not small number of books were on medicine, since he was aware of his serious illness and early physical disappearance. In "one of the rooms he used for himself", his creative space, one can see the original manuscript of *The Mountain Wreath* (*Gorski vijenac*), the manuscript of the love song *The Night More Precious Than the Century* (*Noć skuplja vijeka*) and his translation of Lamartine's *Hymn of the Night*. There is also the notebook in which he noted down all the information from his journeys, various addresses, calendar, translations ..., a golden pen, inkpot, personal items.

The weapons placed in this room are personally Njegos': a hunting rifle, a flintlock rifle, pistols (*ledenice*), a sabre in a red cover. The sabre is part of trophy firearms from the battles that took place around Cevo in 1750 and it belonged to Chehay Pasha.

The hunting rifle (with a wooden handle) is handmade, decorated with relief engraving in steel. The muzzle has three gold engraved inscriptions in Gothic (*Maias Novotny in Vien*) and in Cyrillic (*Petar Petrovic Njegos the Bishop of Montenegro and the Mountains*). Njegos received this rifle in Vienna in 1847.

Njegos' desk and armchair are also exhibited here.

There is a portrait of Pavle Petrovic, Njegos' nephew, created by an unknown author in Russia in 1842.

A portrait of Pushkin, by the Russian painter Kiprijanski, was a gift from the Russian ambassador to Yugoslavia during his visit to Njegos' museum in 1972.





#### Room IV - Bedroom

As evidence of the exceptional military skills of the Montenegrin people in this room there are also trophy weapons. Njegos' military belt (silav), the model of the first steamboat to sail the Adriatic, Njegos' oil lamp and armchair are also exhibited. Njegos' armchair preserves something invisible, inaudible, untouchable - when he was gravely ill Montenegrins carried him in this armchair on their hands from Kotor to Cetinje. He spent the last moments of his life in it.

An important place at the exhibition is given to the ecclesiastical robes with a sceptre, a gift from the Russian emperor on the occasion of Njegos' enthronement as Prince Bishop in Russia in 1833. There are also his Bishop's diploma (August 1833) and Archbishop's diploma (1842) which are made on silk, with silver and gold.

The Slovenian painter Josip Tominc, a master of portraits and religious compositions, presented the poet in Bishop's robes during his stay in Trieste in 1837. This is a recognizable work of portrait painting with an emphasis on the psychological component but also focusing on decoration and materialization.

#### Room V - Contemporaries

In this room displays a number of proclamations and learning books that were printed at the printing house in Cetinje, which Njegos brought from Russia in 1834 - The Declaration on the Proclamation of Peter I for Saint dating from 1834, the Montenegrin passport, the journal Grica (Turtledove) from 1835. The printing house stopped working during the reign of Prince Danilo Petrovic and in 1852 the printing letters were used for casting bullets. During this event Prince Danilo replied to the discontent Montenegrins that if they succeeded in saving the state there would be letters and if there was no state then they would not need any letters. Photo-reproductions on display are showing: the Cetinje Monastery where the first school only for male children from wealthier Montenegrin families was opened (1834); the Dobrska cell, monastery in Dobrsko village near Cetinje, where the second Elementary School was placed; Njegos' contemporaries - the leaders of national movements Stanko Vraz, Ivan Mazuranic, Ban Jelacic, Branko Radicevic, Ljubomir Nenadovic and others. There is also a portrait of Jeremija Gagic, the Russian Consul and Vice consul through whom Njegos held official correspondence with Russia; his personal belongings; the chair of Njegos' secretaries.





Room VI - The Statehood Room

The gubernatorial system existed in Montenegro from 1717 to 1830 when it was abolished by the Assembly leaders. After the expulsion of the gubernator Vukolaj Radonjic this title ceased to exist in Montenegro and the Archimandrite Petar Petrovic formally became the secular ruler of Montenegro. The prison at the Cetinje monastery was named Guvernadurica after the last gubernator who was imprisoned there. Njegos introduced an obligation on tax classes and brought the first state counter from Venice to Montenegro in 1836. Displayed is also the painting Njegos at the Krstac Bend by Auguste Orou from 1839 where he is with the members of the bodyguard (Perjanici) and the military police detachment (Guardia). Upon coming to power, except the abolition of the gubernatorial system, Njegos organized the Guardia (a military police detachment), the Perjanici (small units of guardsmen, i.e. bodyguards) and the Senate. There is also the Protocol on Demarcation with Austria that was signed on July 15th 1841 and the Peace Treaty with Turkey signed with Ali Pasha Rizvanbegovic from July 12th to 24th 1842 in Dubrovnik. As a reward for demarcation Njegos was awarded the Russian Medal of St. Anne of First Order.



Room VII - Senate

The Senate of Montenegro and the Mountains, the authority of central government in the old Montenegro, was established as a result of the need to reform the Senate and elevate it above tribal divisions. At first there were 16 and later on there were 14 senators. They were chosen among the most prominent individuals, without regard to tribal affiliation. The first president was Ivan Vukotic and his deputy was Mateja Vucicevic. The Senate was in charge of the judicial authority and supervision of other bodies, but its decisions were not implemented without the approval of the Bishop. Senators were permanently residing in Cetinje. This room is completed with portraits of Pero Petrovic, the Senate president, Djordjije Petrovic, the vice-president, Novica Cerovic, Lazar Prorokovic, the Njegusi captain and Njegos' uncle. The showcase displays the Law of Fatherland (Zakon otačastva) while above is the seal of the Senate. There is also the costume of a Montenegrin senator as well as silver chibouks.





Room VIII

Njegos planned to mint money and for this cause he prepared all the necessary tools, which was later found at the Cetinje Monastery, while the draft of the money he made by himself. It was to be named Perun, after the Slavic God of Thunder. In this room there is a wax print of the money. Here is also the first edition of *The Ray of the Microcosm* (Luča mirkokozma), Njegos' philosophical religious poem.

For the creation of this masterly work it was not necessary for him to go to some dark, hidden places where he would, by the shine of candles, transform his visions into immortal verses. The scenery and the smell of the mystical ambience of his stone edifice were sufficient for this. In an unbreakable connection with the microcosm is also the telescope, Plezl's work, produced in Austria in 1835. The paintings on the walls in this room, as well as in the next three, are the work of the Montenegrin academic painter Pero Pocek (1878-1963), who chose to be educated close to the Italian Queen Jelena, the daughter of King Nikola. The series *The Mountain Wreath* comprises of 38 paintings which were named by the author himself.



Rooms IX, X, XI

On display are some of the editions of Njegos' works (*The Mountain Wreath*, *The False Emperor Scepan Mali*, *The Serbian Mirror*, *The Djuricic Tower*, *The Aleksic Chardak*, *The Cetinje Hermit*, *Svobodijada*), translations of *The Mountain Wreath* into several languages as well as *The Mountain Wreath* in Braille alphabet. The sculptures exhibited were created by the Montenegrin sculptor Risto Stijovic (1894-1974) and they represent male and female characters from *The Mountain Wreath* (Batric's sister, sister-in-law of Milonjic ban, Duke Batric, Mustaj Kadija, Prince Dupioski Nikola, Vuk Mandusic, Abbot Stefan). They are cast in bronze.





## Room XII

Topla, near Herceg Novi, Njegos' school, Savina Monastery, the works of Montenegrin artist Luka Stankovic, created in 1948, show the places where Njegos stayed while acquiring his education.

There is also the handwriting of Njegos' song that was published by Sima Milutinovic Sarajlija in the Montenegrin and Herzegovinian Folk Singing Book and the correspondence between Sima Milutinovic Sarajlija and Njegos relating to the publishing of Njegos' philosophical religious poem *The Ray of the Microcosm*.

Particular attention is drawn by the testament of Petar I, in which, among other things, he declares Rade Tomov for his successor and asks Montenegrins to peacefully accept him as his Bishop, as well as the cross that belonged to Petar I. Below the board with photo-reproductions of places where Njegos stayed we can see Njegos' passport in Russian and German.

Below the photo-reproductions that show Lovcen and Njegusi, there is a chest that belonged to Njegos' mother Ivana Prorokovic. This is a piece of furniture that Montenegrin women received when they were getting married and where they deposited all their valuables. Travel writers and foreigners presented on photo-reproductions the integrity of the Montenegrin women's costume as well as the role of women in old Montenegrin families. The same map of photo-reproductions shows us the economic life of Montenegrins and the market in Kotor. Besides the portrait of Njegos, the work of the Montenegrin painter Petar Lubarda (1907-1974) created in 1947, in this room there are also two bronze sculptures, the work of the Croatian sculptor Ivan Mestrovic.







## The Room of Prince Danilo

The title of Prince (Knjaz) was the title of rulers in Montenegro from 1852 to 1910. The first Montenegrin ruler with this title was Prince Danilo Petrovic. The results of his energetic rule were: strengthening of the state apparatus, a clearly defined direction of foreign policy and improvement of the conditions and means for achieving the national liberation programme of Montenegro. He printed the Legal Code in 1855. The reforms in this Legal Code established the position of the central government as to tribal separatism. He minted the Cross for Independence, which was awarded to meritorious people, among others, to Anastas Jovanovic for art and photography; he edited the new passport; he led the Montenegrins in the famous battle at Grahovac, after which the Montenegrin borders were extended and formal independence of Montenegro was obtained, which will be confirmed later on at the Berlin Congress in 1878. Here is also a geographical map from 1859, a year after the Grahovac battle. It was created by the Czech Jan Vaclik, whom Prince Danilo met

in Shkodra and charged him with arranging the royal archives. Prince Danilo separated the spiritual from the secular power and was the first ruler of the Petrovic dynasty who acquired the right to marry. He was married to the daughter of a Trieste merchant, Darinka Kvekic, who brought Western European customs to the Montenegrin court- French language teachers, doctors, servants.... Here are also the personal belongings of Princess Darinka - coffee cups, the albums they received from Napoleon and his wife, her mirror ... They had a daughter, Olga. Prince Danilo died tragically in Kotor in 1860. Cetinje, with its petrified sorrow but beauty as well, the sad atmosphere of the evenings when women with black headscarves are sitting on footstools while men are talking about bravery, was not a nice place for a Trieste-born lady and her daughter to continue living in it. Although these and similar scenes, great stories of a small nation, were visions of romantics from Montenegro they eventually left the Montenegrin court to live in Trieste...



## Large Scale Map of Montenegro

A large scale map of Montenegro is located in the large southwest yard of the Biljarda which is bordered by a stone wall with towers on its corners. It was made in a difficult moment for the Montenegrin state, shortly before the disappearance of its independence in 1916. During the occupation of Montenegro the Austrian army, for the sake of its strategic objectives and with the help of the Montenegrin sculptor Marko Brezanin, then a prisoner, made a unique monument of its kind in Europe, which also has an aesthetic quality. The relief was made on the scale of 1: 10.000.

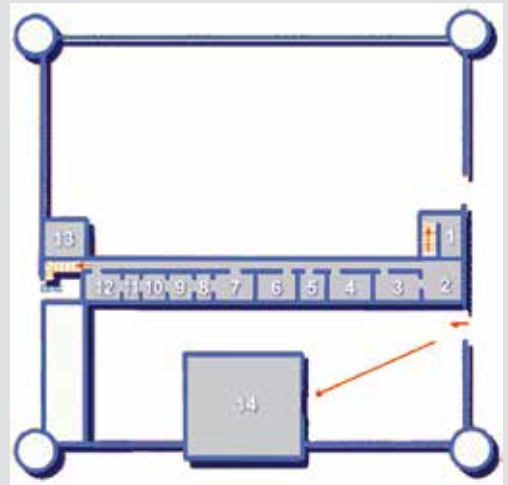
## Lapidarium

In the other, northeast yard visitors can enjoy the beauty of this stone edifice where 11 tombstones (stećci) are presented. Tombstones, coffins and plates from sites in the municipalities of Niksic and Pljevlja are finally preserved from further devastation while the specificity of carving is presented to the curious glances of many visitors.



## Biljarda

Biljarda was built in 1838 with the financial help of Russia and according to the design of the architect Jakov Ozereckovski who arrived with Njegos in Cetinje in 1837 as a respected and cherished guest. In the beginning it was called The New House or Home while two years later, after the purchase of the billiard table, it was named Biljarda.



Address: Novice Cerovića bb, Cetinje  
Tel: +382 41 230 310 | E-mail: nmcg@t-com.me  
[www.mnmuseum.org](http://www.mnmuseum.org)