

= Golubac Fortress =

The Golubac Fortress (Serbian : ?????????? or Golubaški grad , Hungarian : Galambóc vára , Bulgarian : ??????? , Romanian : Cetatea Golub?? , Turkish : Güvercinlik Kalesi) was a medieval fortified town on the south side of the Danube River , 4 km downstream from the modern @-@ day town of Golubac , Serbia . The fortress , which was most likely built during the 14th century , is split into three compounds which were built in stages . It has ten towers , most of which started square , and several of which received many @-@ sided reinforcements with the advent of firearms .

Golubac Fortress has had a tumultuous history . Prior to its construction it was the site of a Roman settlement . During the Middle Ages , it became the object of many battles , especially between the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary . It changed hands repeatedly , passing between Turks , Bulgarians , Hungarians , Serbs , and Austrians , until 1867 , when it was turned over to the Serbian Knez , Mihailo Obrenović III . Now , it is a popular tourist attraction in the region and a sightseeing point on Danube boat tours .

= = Location = =

Golubac , in the Braničevski District of north @-@ eastern Serbia and on the modern @-@ day border with Romania , marks the entrance to the Đerdap national park . It is strategically located on the embankment of the Danube River where it narrows to form the Iron Gate gorge , allowing for the regulation and taxation of traffic across and along the river . In the Middle Ages , this was done with the aid of a strong chain connected to Babakaj , a rock on the far side of the river .

= = History = =

Golubac 's early history is uncertain . Inscriptions and evidence of older defensive structures in the area show the presence of a Roman settlement , sometimes named " Columbaria , " long before the creation of Golubac . From 803 to 1018 , the area belonged to the First Bulgarian Empire , to Byzantium from then until 1193 , and the Second Bulgarian Empire until 1257 . The area remained in Bulgarian hands from then until the Ottoman conquest in the 15th century , with control of the region changing many times between Hungarians , Bulgarians and Serbs before then . It is also unclear whether the medieval fortress was built by Bulgarians , Serbs or Hungarians , or how many towers it had originally . However , an Orthodox chapel built as part of one tower shows that it , at least , was built by a local noble . There is also uncertainty about when construction started , although it is generally agreed that the majority of the fortress was built early in the 14th century .

The first known record of Golubac is in Hungarian sources from 1335 , when it was occupied by Hungarian military . Sometime between 1345 and 1355 , Serbian Tsar Stefan Dušan toured the Braničevski region , which was part of Serbia . He also visited Golubac , which was under the command of Castellan Toma , Voivode of Transylvania . After Dušan 's death , the House of Rastislalić gained influence in Braničevski , later winning independence . According to Serbian chroniclers , Knez Lazar evicted the last Rastislalić feudal lord , Radić Branković , in 1379 , then presented outlying villages to monasteries in Wallachia . By the time of the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 , Golubac was held by Serbia . It is unclear when or how it changed hands , though one source puts it later than 1382 . After the battle , the fortress was lost to Sultan Bayezid I , marking the first possession by the Ottoman Empire . In 1391 , Golubac switched hands twice . Hungarian Timișoaran Comes Péter Perényi won it , but shortly afterwards lost it again to the Turks . Later , it returned once again to the Kingdom of Hungary .

The first extended Serbian possession of Golubac began in 1403 when Sigismund , King of Hungary , ceded it as a personal fiefdom to Despot Stefan Lazarević after he became a Hungarian vassal . When the issue of Stefan 's successor came up in 1426 , he and Sigismund met in Tata to discuss it . A contract was written stating that Sigismund would accept Đurađ Branković as successor on the condition that Golubac , Belgrade , and Mača were returned to Hungary when Stefan died . After Stefan 's death in 1427 , Sigismund hurried to have the clauses of the Tata

contract fulfilled , and Belgrade and Ma?va were handed over without a problem . However , Golubac 's commander , Voivode Jeremija , demanded a compensation of 12 @,@ 000 ducats . When Sigismund refused to pay , Jeremija handed Golubac to the Turks , who turned it into the pasha 's residence .

Despite gaining Golubac , Sultan Murad II was not pleased with the increased Hungarian influence elsewhere in Serbia , so he sent his army to attack . One squad came from Golubac and targeted nearby Serbian and Hungarian settlements in the Brani?evo region . In response , ?ura? personally travelled to Golubac , promising forgiveness to Jeremija and urging him to return the fortress by any means possible . The Voivode refused , and attacked the Despot when he and his escort attempted to enter the walls . These betrayals were followed in 1428 by the Battle of Golubac .

Around April 1428 , Sigismund amassed an army of 25 @,@ 000 infantry , 6 @,@ 000 Wallachian archers led by Prince Dan II , 200 Italian artillery , and a number of Polish cavalry on the far side of the Danube , then attacked Golubac and the Turks . He also had ships attacking from the river , one of which was commanded by Cecília Rozgonyi wife of Timi?oaran Comes István Rozgonyi . Murad rushed to help the besieged Turks , arriving in late May . Sigismund , who did not wish to fight the bigger army , finalised a treaty by early June . Once part of the Hungarian army had withdrawn to the far side of the river , however , the Turkish commander Sinan Bey attacked their rear , capturing and killing those who remained , among them the Polish knight Zawisza Czarny . Sigismund was nearly caught with the rest of his army ; the intervention of Cecília Rozgonyi is solely responsible for his rescue .

During this and other fights resulting from Stefan 's death , southern and eastern Serbia , including the Monastery of Dalj?a near Golubac , suffered heavily . It was after this fighting , however , that Sigismund was first referred to as " our Emperor " , in the memoir of a Dalj?an monk , in contrast to the Turkish " pagan emperor " .

The Ottoman Empire retained control of Golubac throughout its occupation of the Serbian Despotate . After years of fighting , which resulted in the Hungarian army expelling the Ottomans from Serbia , the Peace of Szeged restored the Despotate late in the summer of 1444 . Included in the redefined territory , after much discussion , was Golubac Fortress . However , the Turks once again conquered it after the death of ?ura? Brankovi? in 1456 . In 1458 , Matthias Corvinus of Hungary regained the fortress , but lost it to Mehmed II that same year .

The years 1481 ? 82 led to more fighting between the Hungarians and Turks . During the fall of 1481 , while Golubac was held by the Ottoman Empire , Timi?oaran Comes Pál Kinizsi undertook an expedition against the Turks in the Temes area . On November 2 , 1481 , he turned his army of 32 @,@ 000 men south towards the Danube , pushing to Kru?evac . At Golubac , a thousand Turkish cavalry were killed or taken prisoner , 24 ships were sunk , and Mihalo?lu ?skender Bey , pasha of Ottoman @-@ held Smederevo and leader of the Turkish army , was beheaded at the gate by Jak?i? , one of Kinizsi 's men . The Turks were forced to retreat and leave the fortress behind . Kinizsi 's foray was only a raid , however , and shortly after he returned to Temes . The Turks , who had suffered heavily but did not lose any land , retook Golubac and quickly improved its fortifications .

Golubac was held by the Habsburg Monarchy between 1688 and 1690 and 1718 and 1739 . Serb rebels controlled it during Ko?ina Krajina in 1788 ? 91 , and again from 1804 ? 13 , during the First Serbian Uprising . Afterwards , it fell back under Ottoman control until 1867 when it , along with Kalemegdan and other towns in Serbia , was given to Knez Mihailo of Serbia .

= = = In recent years = = =

From the late 19th century into the early mid @-@ 20th century , bloodsucking flies sometimes referred to as " Golubac mosquitoes " thrived in the area . They were particularly dangerous to livestock , some years killing off entire herds of cattle . After World War I , a road was constructed that went through both of the fort 's portcullises . This road is the shortest link between Serbia and eastern parts of the Balkan peninsula . Between 1964 ? 72 , a hydroelectric dam was built in the Iron Gate gorge , significantly elevating the river 's water level . As a result , the lower edge of the

slope and corresponding parts of the fortress are now flooded .

From the beginning of the 21st century , much of the fort has been overgrown , making most of the sections higher on the hill inaccessible . During the spring of 2005 , a public project to restore the fort was started . Most of the plants were removed and certain parts , like the fountain in the moat raised in honour of knight Zawisza Czarny , were repaired . The walls , towers and stone stairs are in good condition , but the wooden floors and steps have rotted out , making most of the upper floors impassable . Golubac has also gained popularity as a tourist attraction . Two key reasons are the major road that passes through it , and its proximity to Lepenski Vir , making the two locales a touristic whole .

== Architecture ==

Golubac consists of three main compounds guarded by 10 towers and 2 portcullises , all connected by fortress walls 2 ? 3 metres thick . In front of the fortress , the forward wall (I) doubled as the outer wall of the moat , which connected to the Danube and was likely filled with water . A settlement for common people was situated in front of the wall .

As is the case with many fortresses , Golubac 's structure was modified over time . For years , there were only five towers . Later , four more were added . The towers were all built as squares , a sign of the fortress ' age , showing that battles were still fought with cold steel . Once firearms came into use , the Turks fortified the western towers with cannon ports and polygonal or cylindrical reinforcements up to two metres thick . After the Hungarian raid in 1481 , they added the final tower , complete with cannon embrasures and galleries .

=== Upper compound ===

The upper compound (A) is the oldest part of the fortress . It includes the citadel (tower 1) and the Serbian Orthodox chapel (tower 4) . Although it remains uncertain , the chapel has led many to believe that this section was built by a Serbian noble .

Later , during either Serbian or Hungarian rule , the fortress was expanded to include the rear and forward compounds .

=== Rear compound ===

The rear compound (D) is separated from the upper compound by both a wall connecting towers 2 and 4 , and a steep rock 3 ? 4 metres high . Next to tower 5 is a building (VII) which was probably used as a military barracks and for ammunition storage .

=== Forward compound ===

The forward compound was split into lower (C) and upper (B) parts by a wall linking towers 4 and 7 . The entrance (II) is in the lower part , guarded by towers 8 and 9 . Tower 8 has , in turn , been fortified with a cannon port . Opposing the entrance was a second portcullis that led to the rear compound . Along the path was a ditch 0 @.@ 5 metres wide and 0 @.@ 75 metres deep which then became a steep decline . At the outer end of the lower part , and connected to the 9th tower with a low wall , is tower 10 , which the Turks added to act as a lower artillery tower . It controlled passage along the Danube and guarded the entrance to the harbour , which was probably situated between towers 5 and 10 . There are remains connected to tower 8 which probably formed a larger whole with it , but the lower part did not otherwise contain buildings .

In the wall that separated the upper and lower parts was a gate that led to the upper part . The upper part did not have buildings , but there remains a pathway to the stairs up to gate IV , which is 2 metres off the ground , right next to tower 3 .

=== Towers ===

The first nine towers are 20 ? 25 metres high . In all ten towers , the floors and stairs inside were made of wood , while external stairs were made of stone . Half of the towers (1 , 2 , 4 , 5 , 10) have all four sides and are completely made of stone , while the other half (3 , 6 , 7 , 8 , 9) lack the side facing the interior of the fort .

Tower 1 , nicknamed " Hat Tower " (?e?ir @-@ kula) , is one of the oldest towers , and doubles as citadel and dungeon tower . It has an eight @-@ sided base with a circular spire rising from it and a square interior . The next tower to the west , tower 2 , is completely circular in shape . The third tower has a square base , with the open side facing the dungeon tower to the north . On the top floor is a terrace that overlooks the Danube and the entrance to the Iron Gate gorge . Down the slope from tower 3 is tower 4 , which also has a square base . The ground floor has a Serbian Orthodox chapel that was built into the tower , rather than being added later . The last tower along this wall , tower 5 , is the only tower to remain completely square .

The top tower along the front wall of the forward compound , tower 6 , has a square base which was reinforced with a six @-@ sided foundation . Working west , the square base of tower 7 was reinforced with a circular foundation . Tower 8 , on the upper side of the front portcullis , has an irregular , but generally square , base . It is also the shortest of the first nine towers . Guarding the other side is tower 9 , which has a square base reinforced by an eight @-@ sided foundation .

The last tower is the cannon tower . It has only one floor and is the shortest of all ten towers . It was built with an eight @-@ sided base and cannon ports to help control traffic on the Danube . Tower 10 is almost identical to the three artillery towers added to Smederevo fortress .

= = Reconstruction plan 2014 = =

The Government of the Republic of Serbia has applied to the reconstruction project fortress Blace with IPA funds of the European Union in the framework of the international project " Cultural Route - Fortresses on the Danube " .The funds were provided through these funds in the amount of 6 , 5 million.Preliminary reconstruction project fortress is by architect Marina Jovin , professional consultants on the project were Sini?a Temerin and archaeologist Dr Miomir Korac .Rebuilding will take three years .

= = Significance = =

Considering the age and location of the Golubac Fortress , it is both large and well @-@ preserved . Its placement at the head of the Iron Gate gorge allowed for easy control of river traffic . It was the last military outpost on that stretch of the Danube river , which caused it to frequently be part of the final line of defense between Hungary and the Ottoman Empire , especially during the periods when Serbia was Ottoman @-@ held . The importance of the fortress is further indicated by the attention it received from Sigismund and Murad II , rather than just fighting between locals and commanders of nearby cities . The Golubac Fortress was declared a Monument of Culture of Exceptional Importance in 1979 , and it is protected by the Republic of Serbia .