

*Biljana Crvenkovic*

*The Bahcisarajska Fountain at the Royal Court on Dedinje*

*Summary*

The Bahcisarajska fountain at the royal court of King Alexander I Karadjordjevic was created based on the design of architect Nikola Krasnov. The fountain presents the key decorative element of the Persian salon, one of the artistically most complex subterranean premises of the royal court. A necessary multidisciplinary approach was used aimed at revealing the symbolic function of the fountain within the concept of decorating this space. Encompassing previous research in the field of royal art and culture between the two wars, the policy of patronage, as well as preserved archival documentation, indications pointed towards the initial arrangement and initial purpose of the space of the Persian salon within the presentation policy of King Alexander I.

The motif for the establishment of the fountain of the royal court, as well as for the decoration of the Persian salon, the architect Nikola Krasnov found in Southern Crimea, within the complex of the Bahcisarajska Han. The fountain was created based upon the Bahcisarajska Salsabil as a model, while archival documents indicate that initially the space of the Persian salon was arranged in the spirit of the Bahcisarajska ambience.

The initial purpose of the space of the Persian salon determined also its decoration. Belonging to public and private space within the king's palace, the salon was intended for the circle of the king's closest associates and friends. This also determined the role of the Bahcisarajska Fountain within the decoration program of this ambience. The analyses of various elements of its decoration indicates that the fountain symbolically represented the source of the joy of life and eternal youth, a place for meditation available to the royal Karadjordjevic family and to a certain circle of their close associates and friends.