

SLAVA SAVOVA

Researcher • Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
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summary

Researcher, artist and architect working at the crossing between environmental history and the history of medicine. I focus on water, resource extraction and waste with current projects exploring the entanglements between nature, politics and healthcare.

work experience

Jul 2022 - now

researcher / PhD Candidate (since April 2023)

Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum.
Temporary scientific unit of Medical Anthropology

- Project: *Taming the European Leviathan: The Legacy of Post-War Medicine and the Common Good*, (ERC-2019-SyG - ERC Synergy Grant), project lead: Associate Prof. Dr. Anelia Kassabova
- Dissertation title: *Solid Structures, Aqueous Healing: Balneosanatorium Infrastructures Between Natural Resources and Medical Technologies (1950s - 1980s)*
- Supervisors: Associate Prof. Dr. Anelia Kassabova and Prof. Dr. Ulf Brunnbauer

Oct 2020 - Jul 2023

independent researcher / project lead

- Project: *Treasures underground*. Extractive industries in Devnya and Kremikovtsi
- Project: *Palaces of Health*. Thermal springs and balneotherapeutic infrastructures in southeast Bulgaria.
- Funding: "Creative Initiatives" Programs 2020 and 2021, National Culture Fund - Bulgaria

Mar 2020 - Dec 2020

architect / project co-lead

- Project: *Sofia Thermae*
- 1st place. Open call for concept for the north and east wing of the Central Mineral Bathhouse in Sofia, Bulgaria
- Sofioplan / Sofia Municipality

Jan 2017 - Sep 2018

junior architect

OMA Hong Kong

- Projects: large-scale office and retail. Concept and Schematic Phase

Oct 2014 - Apr 2015

junior architect

OMA Rotterdam

- Projects: large-scale cultural and governmental. Concept Phase

Sep 2013 - Sep 2014

intern

OMA New York

- Projects: large-scale cultural, infrastructural, residential. Concept, Schematic, Construction Documentation Phase

publications

(forthcoming) 2025

Re-Ottomanizing Modernity: Domesticating Balneology in Early to mid-20th-Century Bulgaria
Balkanistic Worlds, 2025(3)

Jun 2024

Neither nature nor Progress: Unearthing Memories and Affects on the Flowering Benches of Kremikovtsi Open-pit Mine
Mediapolis. A Journal of Cities and Culture, Dossiers, no. 2, vol. 9

feb 2022	<i>We're Almost out of Breath. We're Breathing Against all Odds</i> Seminar_BG, 25 (in Bulgarian)
conferences	(selected)
sep 2024 - oct 2024	Between Ruptures and Persistence. The Question of Dis-/Continuities in the History of Southeastern Europe. University of Rijeka, Philosophical Faculty and Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies Paper title: <i>Exotic Past, Demolished Present: The Discordant Waters of Ottoman Public Baths in 20th- and 21st-Century Bulgaria</i>
aug 2024	World Congress of Environmental History. University of Oulu Paper title: <i>Springs of Town Planning: Thermal Waters, Political Imaginaries and Hydrosocial Architectures in 20th- 21st-Century Velingrad</i>
may 2024	Heritage Agora. Communicating Dissonance. Buzludzha Project (online) Paper title: <i>Amalgamating Contemporary Pasts: Preserving the Ottoman Public Baths in 21st-Century Bulgaria</i>
may 2024	Transformations of Postwar Europe. Medicine, Bodies and Technologies. Bulgarian Academy of Sciences Paper title: <i>Gendered Waters: Undesirable Bodies / Reproductive Bodies in Bulgaria's 20th-Century Balneology</i>
may 2024	Consortium for History of Science, Technology and Medicine. "Health and the Urban Environment" working group (online) Paper title: <i>Re-Ottomanizing Modernity: Domesticating Balneology in Early to mid-20th-Century Bulgaria</i>
dec 2023	A Space for "Place" in Social Sciences. Science Po Paper title: <i>Solid Structures, Aqueous Healing: Thermal Springs, Balneosanatoria and the New Geographies of Health in 20th-Century Bulgaria</i>
oct 2023	Tensions and Intentions in Post-War Public Health in Europe. Brocher Foundation Paper title: <i>The Weaving of Traditional Healing Landscapes into Modern Healthcare Geographies: Balneology and the Conquering of the Vernacular Body in mid-20th Century</i>
jun 2023	Ecologies of Health and Disease in Eurasia: New Perspectives in the Medical-Environmental Humanities and History. University of Oslo Paper title: <i>Atlas of Health: Hydrogeological Cartography and the Weaving of Healthscapes in Postwar Bulgaria</i>
apr 2023	Residue/Reservoir: Left Behind and Left Ahead. Johns Hopkins University Paper title: <i>Discards of Healthcare: Wasting Across the Boundaries of Medical Ethics</i>
sep 2022	Annual Leviathan Project Seminar. Central European University Paper title: <i>Solid Structures, Aqueous Healing: Between Natural Resources and Manmade Technologies</i>
public talks	(selected)
feb 2025	Visiting researcher talk. Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies Presentation title: <i>Buoyant Waters: Resilience and Transience Across the Hydrothermal Landscapes in Post-Socialist Bulgaria</i>
mar 2024 - jun 2024	Re-tour: the city in focus (moderator, in Bulgarian). Sofia University Cultural Center Five talks on the topics of density and highrise; the public gardens of housing estates; Sofia's thermal baths; gentrification of the Women's market and infrastructure as a social barrier.

jan 2023	The old thermal baths - potential and perspectives. Parliament round table Presentation title: <i>Stray Waters: Mineral Springs and Forgotten Healthcare</i> (in Bulgarian)
nov 2022	Seminar 9 / Leviathan project. Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum Presentation title: <i>Palaces of Health: Taming a Natural Resource for the Common Good</i>
aug 2022	Varusha South Festival Presentation title: <i>Bath - Museum - Ruin: the Heritage of the Ottoman Baths</i> (in Bulgarian)
nov 2020 - now	Guest, guest host and guest author on Capital, Vij Magazine, Journal for Social Vision, Bulgarian National Radio, Bulgarian National Television, Radio Sofia, bTV Radio, regional television and radio programs Topics: environment, architecture, heritage preservation
publications popular	(selected) <i>The Heritage of the Thermal Baths - a (non) Common Good</i> Toest (in Bulgarian)
jul 2022	Five interviews on postwar architecture and heritage preservation with: Oliver Elser (Deutsches Architekturmuseum / #SOSBrutalism); Tobias Flessenkemper (Rheinischen Verein für Denkmalpflege und Landschaftsschutz); Dr. Karin Berkemann (moderneREGIONAL); Alexander Kleinschrodt (Werkstatt Baukultur Bonn) and Maximilian Kürten, Jonas Grahl, Robinson Michel (Die Betonisten) Toest (in Bulgarian)
education	
2009 - 2012	Bachelor of Architecture Glasgow School of Art, Mackintosh School of Architecture, Glasgow, UK
2003 - 2008	Master of Music in Choral Conducting National Academy of Music "Prof. Pancho Vladigerov", Sofia, Bulgaria
fellowships, workshops	
jan 2025 - feb 2025	visiting doctoral fellow (one month) Graduate School for East and Southeast European Studies, Universität Regensburg Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies
sep 2023	summer school Environmental History and Historical Ecology of the Dinaric Karst University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Philosophy and the European Society for Environmental History
feb 2013 - mar 2013	workshop Technoversum Berlin: The Museum of the Future (one month) academy for architectural culture, Hamburg, Germany
memberships	
since 2025	European Society for Environmental History
since 2023	Consortium for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine
since 2017	Union of the Bulgarian Journalists
exhibitions	
jan 2025 - mar 2025	Ore Solo show. Community Center "Svetlina Kremikovtsi - 1906", Kremikovtsi, Bulgaria
jul 2023 - aug 2023	Ore Solo show. KO-OP art space, Sofia, Bulgaria