

## Vassil Tenekedjiev

---

### *Was the Complex on Djanavara Hill Near Varna an Early Christian Monastery?*

On Djanavara Hill, near Varna (Ancient Odessos on the Black Sea), is located a large Early Christian site dated in the second half of the 5th to first half of the 7th century AD. It comprises a monumental church with odd architecture and a variety of courtyards, buildings and other structures around it. The complex was enlarged and reshaped several times, losing its original clear and rigid plan and becoming more and more complicated and difficult for interpretation.

The site on Djanavara Hill was discovered in the early 20th century and has been explored since then in several archaeological campaigns. Only recently though, after many seasons of excavation, the current archaeological team decided to call the site officially an Early Christian monastery. What exactly are the arguments behind this interpretation? What are the new discoveries on Djanavara Hill and what do we know about the architecture and the infrastructure of the complex? What are the special finds and the mass material found there? These interesting questions are the focus of the current presentation. It will try to answer whether the complex on Djanavara Hill was really a monastery, and will attempt to shed some light on the Early Christian monastic architecture in the Balkans.