



www.breadculture.net

## **EGYPT – THE BREAD CIVILIZATION**

Basic project information

### **Project collaborators**

Dimitrije Vujadinović, author; Srđan Jokanović, publicist; Slobodan Ivetić, director; Goran Volarević, director of photography; Dr Venice Ibrahim Shehatta Attia, expert consultant (Cairo); Sabry Zekry, theater playwright (Cairo)

### **The project is supported**

The Embassy of Egypt in Belgrade; IGCAT- International Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Arts and Tourism, Barcelona; ERICarts institute from Bonn ...

### **Goal**

The project about Bread and Egyptian civilization, in fact it is related to ancient Egypt and its historical "exoticism", but essentially these are anthropological issues that we deal with and concern all of us at any time that we lived to live and that we will to live.

The tale of bread is a story of the past, present, and future of the Man – their beliefs, hopes, pain, and joy. Bread is the product of nature and culture. Thanks to the bread, not that long ago, we turned from nomads and gatherers to farmers and growers. We began to build dwellings, villages, forts, and towns. The time of culture and civilization began, but also the time of *destructive creativity*

Bread is the symbol and metaphor testifying to the constant struggle of the man between the destructive force and the universal spirit, faced with the inevitable fate of finality. From the beginnings of civilization, bread has been the metaphor of human ethical norms (value systems). Bread is our only product that connects us with the afterlife.

### **Expected results**

- TV series (3 episodes) - Egypt civilization of bread
- Documentary - Egypt Civilization of Bread
- TV show - National Museum of Egypt
- Exhibition - Civilization of Bread
- Photomonography - The Civilization of Bread
- Feuilleton - Exciting Egypt

## Audience

As for potential viewers of the TV series and documentary, it is difficult to determine the exact number, but if we look at similar shows on YouTube, none of them has less than a million visitors! If the series is placed through History or Discovery, and it can realistically be counted on, then it is a multi-million number. The whole world, today, eats bread.

## Project phases

- First – tour of filming locations (5 days – September 2021)
- During the locations visit, filming equipment rentals and local collaborators to be contacted
- Second – filming (21 days – February 2022)
- Third - editing of recorded material (2023)
- Fourth - exhibition and publication of photo monography (2023)

## Theme

**Bread** stands at the very beginning, in the meantime, and at the end of the great Egyptian civilization!

The monumental tombs that remain secretive to this day were made by the titanic armies of hired laborers. Their wages were paid in bread and beer. Bread was the staple food and currency, and bakeries were “money mints“.

In ancient Egypt, bread production had not changed over 2500 years. The central theme of ancient Egyptian mythology relates to Osiris, the God of death and rebirth, symbolized by bread. Many customs and rituals with a symbolic role of bread that were created in Egypt survived until this day in a different form but with the same essence. The content of life of modern man does not differ much from the ancient Egyptian.

## Operating titles of theme units

Titles: *Bread Breaks the Boundaries of Time; Sons of the Nile; The Foundation of Real Power; Bakeries as Money Mints; Fear of Hunger; Bread of the Pharaohs; The Growth of Osiris; Bread of Eternity; Bread of the Sun; Bread of the Privileged; Bread of the Commoners; Bread as Cure; The End of a Great Civilization; History Lives in Small Bakeries; Bakers; Contemporary Pharaohs.*

## The representation of the theme

This important theme has been unjustly neglected by researchers. Very few mentions of the existential and symbolic importance of bread in the life and belief of ancient Egyptians have been made in historiography, literature, and media. No documentary film, TV series, or publication, has paid due attention to this subject. This key aspect of the ancient civilization, which has not lost its relevance over time, has remained completely unknown to the general public.

## Planned filming locations

- Cairo – The Museum of Egyptian Antiquities; Agricultural Museum; Cairo surroundings; The Nile; Small private bakeries
- Giza – Archaeological locality (the pyramids, bread oven, dwellings)
- Saqqara – Archaeological locality; The Imhotep Museum
- Lower Egypt - Village (domestic preparation of the “Bread of the Sun “)
- El Kharga Oasis – Archaeological locality (“City of Bakeries“)
- Agilkia Island – Temple of Isis in Philae
- El Mo`alla (Upper Egypt) – The Tomb of Ankhtifi

## Explanation

Bread is the product of nature and culture following our life from the cradle to the grave, and after death – so it was in ancient Egypt, and so it is today.

Bread has for millennia been and still today is the staple food of the people of Egypt. In contemporary Egypt, the folk name for bread in Arabic – *aysh* – has a double meaning – bread and life, a body that signifies life.

Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, used to denote bread for 4000 years, had a loaf shape



... It is probable that the common name for bread was – Ta.

Perhaps this story might look trivial for some people, yet the fate of Egyptian civilization was decided by – bread.

The millennial paths, pathways, and sideways of the relation of pharaohs, their subjects, and bread have been spread in time and space, tangible heritage and oblivion. In this long and very dynamic period dynasties changed, religious struggles occurred, wars were waged, temples and tombs were built and destroyed, and pharaohs venerated and disclaimed.

What was the basis for such a long-lasting and powerful irrigation civilization? There was only one constant whose value did not change and which everyone respected – Bread! It was the basis of the social order and the real power of the pharaohs.

The greatest fear of ancient Egyptians was not of military defeat or change of dynasties, but of hunger.

The whole world knows of the Pyramids, Tutankhamun, Ramses III, the prophecies of the pharaohs are still discussed, and new archaeological localities discovered. From the first archaeological findings, more than 200 years ago to the present day, a great number of books has been written, thousands of photographs taken, and countless films, TV shows and series filmed.

While bread, which created them all and made life possible, is still the staple food of most of humanity.