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**THE DESTRUCTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN KOSOVO, 1998-1999:
A Post-war Survey**

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background to Survey.

During and after the 1998-1999 conflict in Kosovo allegations were made by various parties concerning the destruction of cultural heritage. In general, these allegations came from the following sources: governmental organs and professional institutions in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY); the Serbian Orthodox Church; interviews with refugees from Kosovo conducted by humanitarian relief organizations and other NGOs; and media reports from the conflict zone. (see Appendix 3)

Following the end of hostilities in June 1999, it was evident that there was an urgent need to conduct an independent assessment of what had happened to cultural heritage in Kosovo during the conflict. However, amidst the human drama of the post-war return of refugees, the discoveries of mass graves and other evidence of atrocities, and the urgency of providing shelter before the onset of winter, the fate of heritage was not foremost among the concerns of the international organizations active in Kosovo. In response, the authors established the Kosovo Cultural Heritage Project in July 1999. The first task of the project was to prepare and carry out a post-war field survey in Kosovo. This survey was supported by a grant from the Packard Humanities Institute and sponsored by Harvard University.

The first two months of the survey were devoted to the compilation of a comprehensive database of all available primary and secondary sources documenting Kosovo's cultural heritage before the war and establishing advance contacts with international experts and with local sources in Kosovo. Following a briefing by the staff of the Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the authors proceeded to Kosovo and carried out field investigations and collection of documentation from local sources from 13 to 31 October, 1999.

Additional documentation was obtained in follow-up visits to Kosovo in October 2000 and March 2001 and from the UN civil administration, the Serbian Orthodox

Church authorities, the Islamic Community of Kosovo, the EU/IMG project, municipal and regional institutions and organizations and other sources.

1.2 Survey Goals and Methodology

The primary goal of the survey was to document cases of the deliberate destruction of cultural property during the 1998-1999 conflict in Kosovo and its immediate aftermath.

In the absence of overriding military necessity, the deliberate destruction of cultural property is a violation of international law and those responsible for ordering and carrying out such attacks can be prosecuted for war crimes. According to the statute of the ICTY, these crimes include the “seizure of, destruction, or willful damage done to institutions dedicated to religion, charity, and education, the arts and sciences, historic monuments, and works of art and science.”¹

This survey was not limited to properties designated as historic monuments by the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Kosovo.² While the 1954 Hague Convention requires that protected monuments be designated and marked as such, the 1977 Protocols I and II Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 use a more inclusive wording, which is also reflected in the ICTY’s statute. Furthermore, the criteria employed in listing monuments for protection by the Yugoslav authorities in Kosovo before the war had been conditioned to a considerable extent by ideological considerations.³

Thus, the survey attempted to ascertain the condition of all cultural and religious monuments in Kosovo, whether listed or not, that were alleged to have been destroyed or damaged during the 1998-1999 conflict in Kosovo, according to Yugoslav governmental and professional institutions, refugee interviews, media reports and other sources. The survey also assessed claims concerning post-war revenge attacks on cultural and religious monuments associated with Kosovo’s ethnic Serb population.

2.0 Findings

2.1 Damage to Cultural Heritage Attributed to NATO Bombing

A number of important historical and religious monuments and sites in Kosovo were alleged, by the Yugoslav authorities and others, to have been destroyed or seriously damaged by NATO air strikes, among them: the Gracanica; the Decani monastery; the Pec Orthodox Patriarchate complex; the Church of the Virgin Ljeviska and the Sinan Pasha Mosque in Prizren; the Prizren League Museum; the Hadum Mosque complex in Djakovica/Gjakova; the historic bazaars in Djakovica/Gjakova and Pec/Peja; the Catholic church of St. Anthony in Djakovica/Gjakova; and two old Ottoman bridges, Terzijski most/Ura e Terzive and Tabacki most/Ura e Tabakeve, near Djakovica/Gjakova. The historic centers of Prizren and Prishtina were also alleged to have been totally destroyed by NATO bombardment.

Of the above sites, not one was found to show any sign of damage attributable to an air attack. Some, including the Serbian Orthodox sites and several of the non-Serbian heritage sites (the Sinan Pasha Mosque, the two Ottoman bridges), were found to be completely intact.

Others were damaged or destroyed, but the damage had clearly been done from the ground up (the Prizren League Museum, the Hadum Mosque complex, the historic bazaars in Pec/Peja Djakovica/Gjakova) and not from the air. The St. Anthony's Catholic church in Gjakova had not been hit in the air strikes, but it had been taken over and turned into a military facility by the Yugoslav Army. The monuments in the historic center of Prizren were completely intact, except for the Prizren League Museum. Three old houses in the old part of Pristina had collapsed from the air blast when the post and telecommunications building was hit by a NATO missile, but the major monuments in the old town suffered no ill effects.

In the countryside, one village mosque (at Jablanica near Prizren) had its roof damaged by a NATO air strike, as confirmed by the Islamic Community. A disused Catholic church (St. Peter and Paul's in Djakovica/Gjakova) also suffered damage

from air blast during a missile strike on a nearby Yugoslav army base. No other damage to heritage sites attributable to NATO action.

2.2 Damage to Historic Civil Architecture

Attacks on historic civil architecture were concentrated on two types of targets: Ottoman-era urban centers, composed of commercial buildings and mosque complexes, and traditional residential buildings in both urban and rural areas (see map of damaged/destroyed historic civil architecture).

Three out of the four well-preserved historic urban centers in Kosovo suffered severe devastation during the spring of 1999—Pec/Peja, Djakovica/Gjakova, and Vucitrn/Vushtrri. Despite allegations by the Yugoslav authorities, it was evident from the nature of the damage that this destruction was not the result of aerial bombardment, but of fires set on the ground in individual buildings. Statements of eyewitnesses identified Serbian police, Yugoslav army troops, paramilitaries and, in some cases, Serb civilians as perpetrators of these attacks. These attacks appear to have been aimed at the destruction of buildings and cultural and religious monuments associated with Kosovo's Albanian population; each urban center was composed of a mix of Ottoman-era and 20th century buildings and in each case the modern buildings were left largely untouched or suffered only collateral damage.

The kulla is a fortified stone house indigenous to this region of the Balkans. In Kosovo, there were at least 500 kullas before the war, concentrated in the western and northern parts of the province. While urban kullas were constructed as individual buildings, in rural areas kullas were constructed in complexes of up to 15 or 20 buildings. Most kullas in Kosovo were built during the 18th and 19th centuries and were inhabited by generations of the same Albanian families. Kullas were both associated with the particular families who built and inhabited them, and were widely regarded as symbols of Albanian culture and identity. In both villages and towns, kullas were singled out for attack during 1998 and 1999. In many cases, a kulla was burned while all surrounding buildings were left unscathed. In some cases, eyewitnesses identified Serb soldiers (Kulla of Shaban Curi and Kulla of Kamer

Hasan Pavataj in Gornji Streoc/Strelc i Eperm) or Serb civilians (Kulla of Jashar Pasha, Pec/Peja) as the perpetrators of attacks on kullas. In some cases (Pec/Peja), the only kullas to survive in a town were those owned or occupied by Serb families.

The survey has 45 entries documenting damaged or destroyed kullas. Because so many kullas are located in villages and rural areas which the authors of the survey were not able to access due to bad road conditions, the survey without a doubt underreports damage to kullas in Kosovo. Comprehensive post-war surveys of kullas have recently been conducted under the auspices of UNMIK in five municipalities: Pec/Peja Decani/Deçan, Djakovica/Gjakova, Istok, and Klina. These surveys indicate that kullas in Kosovo were a prime target for attacks during 1998-1999. In the municipality of Decani/Deçan, for example, 70 out of 263 kullas were almost or totally destroyed (category V) and another 161 were significantly damaged (categories III and IV); our survey data suggest that most of this damage occurred during 1998 and 1999.

The konak is another type of traditional Ottoman-era urban residential building. Many konaks in Kosovo were identified with the prominent Albanian families who had lived in them for generations and comprised municipal or regional monuments. Like kullas, konaks were often singled out for attack by arson. In many cases, a damaged or destroyed konak was found surrounded by a context of undamaged modern buildings.

2.3 Damage to Islamic Architectural Heritage

Islamic architectural heritage in Kosovo includes mosques, tekkes (dervish lodges of the Sufi lay brotherhoods), medresas (theological schools), mektebs (schools for Qur'an readers), Islamic libraries, hamams (bath-houses), turbes (mausolea) and traditional bazaars built to support Islamic charitable organizations. All of the above building types were attacked during 1998 and 1999, with the preponderance of attacks aimed at mosques.

Kosovo Cultural Heritage Report — p.8.

According to statistics published in 1993, there were 607 mosques in Kosovo. Of these, 528 were congregational mosques (xhamia), of which 498 were in active use, and 79 smaller neighborhood mosques (masxhid), of which 70 were in active use.⁴ During 1998-1999, approximately 225 of these mosques were damaged or destroyed. Much of this damage was clearly the result of attacks directed on the mosque: explosive devices planted in the mosque or inside the minaret; artillery aimed at the minaret, or fires started in the mosque. In some cases, such attacks were accompanied by anti-Albanian or pro-Serbian graffiti written on mosque walls and inside the mihrab (prayer niche) and vandalism directed at religious scriptures (torn up, burned and desecrated Qur'ans), and mosque furnishings. In some contexts, mosques and other Islamic architectural heritage were the only buildings in a neighborhood that had been singled out for attack. In the municipality of Pec/Peja, every one of the district's 49 Islamic monuments was attacked in 1998 and 1999: 36 mosques, half of them dating from the 15th–18th centuries, two Sufi shrines (dervish lodges), an 18th-century medresa, a 15th-century hamam, all nine Qur'an-readers' schools (mekteb), and the historic archives and library of the Islamic community.

2.4 Damage to Roman Catholic Architectural Heritage

Roman Catholic architectural heritage in Kosovo includes churches, convents and friaries of the religious orders, and some rural shrines. Areas with significant Catholic population include northwestern Kosovo (Klina municipality), western Kosovo (the Has region, west and south of Djakovica/Gjakova), and southeastern Kosovo (Skopska Crna Gora/Karadak region around Vitina/Viti. There are also Catholic churches in and around Prizren, the seat of the Roman Catholic bishopric, and in most larger cities in Kosovo. Most Catholics are ethnic Albanians, along with small numbers of Croats and Roma.

Based on our fieldwork, information from local Roman Catholic clergy, and other sources, it appears that damage to Catholic churches was limited to a handful of village churches near Djakovica/Gjakova and Klina/Kline (a total of 7 churches damaged, 2 destroyed). Even in areas where there was extensive burning of Albanian houses and destruction of Islamic religious monuments (e.g. the district around Bec,

near Lake Radonjic), Catholic churches and most houses of Catholic Albanians appear to have been left unharmed.⁵

The Catholic Church of St. Anthony in Pristina and St. Anthony's Catholic Church and the adjacent Franciscan convent in Djakovica/Gjakova were occupied by Yugoslav army troops at the beginning of the NATO air war and were used as military facilities, a violation of the laws of war analogous to misuse of the Red Cross symbol. In the case of the Pristina church, a VJ anti-aircraft radar installation was mounted in the church steeple, endangering both the church and the surrounding thickly-settled residential neighborhood. In the case of the church in Djakovica, officers and troops from the nearby Yugoslav army base moved into the church, the parish house and the convent "half an hour before the NATO bombing started" according to the parish priest. The VJ troops ejected the priests and nuns and used the church buildings as a command center for the following two months.⁶

2.5 Damage to Serbian Orthodox Architectural Heritage

Serbian Orthodox architectural heritage in Kosovo included churches, monasteries and cemeteries. Many published statistics on the number of churches in Kosovo do not distinguish between extant churches and archeological sites.⁷ A recent publication of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia lists 210 Serbian Orthodox churches, monasteries and cemeteries in Kosovo as monuments and sites under legal protection.

Yugoslav authorities claimed that NATO air strikes targeted or caused damage to Orthodox churches and monasteries in air strikes during the spring of 1999. All allegations of damage inflicted on churches and monasteries in Kosovo by NATO bombing proved to be unsubstantiated. Some buildings reported to have been damaged by bombing were, in fact, completely undamaged (e.g. Pec Patriarchate, Gracanica, Visoki Decani). Some buildings reported to have been damaged by bombing were in fact found to be damaged, but the nature of this damage indicated that it could not have been inflicted by air strikes (Drsnik).

However, close to 80 Orthodox churches and monasteries were damaged or destroyed between June and October 1999, most in the weeks immediately following the cessation of hostilities in June 1999. Around 40 of these buildings were vandalized, and around 40 buildings suffered serious structural damage or were destroyed completely. The majority of these buildings were village churches, many of them built during the last 20 years. Approximately 15 dated from the medieval period. The major medieval Orthodox shrines however, have been under close guard by KFOR and have not been affected. Many of the attacks on Serbian Orthodox churches occurred in areas where Islamic architectural heritage had previously been targeted and may have been acts of retribution (e.g. Zociste/Zoqishte, Musutiste/Mushtisht, a number of communities in southeastern Kosovo). But some clusters of attacks occurred in areas where there was no corresponding wartime destruction of Islamic architectural heritage (e.g. in the areas around Klina/Kline and Urosevac/Ferizaj).

Between October 1999 and this writing, 11 additional incidents resulting in damage to Serbian Orthodox architectural heritage have been reported. Nine of these incidents involved repeat attacks on sites that had been damaged previously.

3.0 Use of Database

The database was created with FileMakerPro Version 5.0. Database entries are divided into five sections: 1) building identification; 2) building condition, including a narrative description of damage and pre- and post-war photographs when available; 3) informant statements when available; 4) bibliography; and 5) media accounts.

To search in the database, select “mode” in the menu bar (control-F) and then select “find” in the drop-down menu. A blank record will then appear. Keywords can be entered in one or more fields on the blank record. After selecting all keyword parameters, press the “find” button, which is located on the left margin of the record. All records fulfilling the search terms will then appear as numbered rolodex cards in

the upper left corner of the margin. Records can be searched by clicking on these cards or by entering card numbers below the rolodex.

Keyword searching can be done in any field, including: district name (municipality) in Serbian; town name, in Serbian or Albanian; building name, in Serbian, Albanian, or English; building use; building type; and building condition. For example, in order to find all damaged Catholic Churches in the database, specify “Catholic Church” as a keyword in “building type” and specify “damaged” as a keyword in “building condition.”

To find keywords in fields with different options, select the field and a drop-down menu will display all keyword options.

Truncated searching is allowed in all fields. For example, to find “Catholic Church of the Little Lady,” it is possible to enter only “lady” in the “building name” field. Or, if the correct spelling of a building name is unknown, a portion of the name can be used as a search parameter. For example, to find “Hamidi Mosque,” it is possible to enter only “ham” in the “building name” field. The search terms are not case-sensitive.

4.0 Biographies of Principal Investigators

Andrew Herscher, BA, MArch, Ph.D. (expected in 2002), is an architect and architectural historian. He has worked on and written about architectural heritage in Bosnia, the Czech Republic, Kosovo and Slovenia. In January 2001, he was appointed co-director of the Cultural Heritage Unit in the Department of Culture of the United Nations Administration Mission in Kosovo.

András J. Riedlmayer, BA, MA, MS, Cand. Phil., directs the Documentation Center of the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at the Fine Arts Library, Harvard University, and is a recognized expert on the cultural heritage of the Ottoman-era Balkans



Montenegro

Serbia

ALBANIA

MACEDONIA

Leposavic

Zubin Potok

Zvecan

Kosovska Mitrovica

Podujevo

Vucitrn

Istok

Srbica

Durakovac

Vitomitica

Pec

Glogovac

Obilic

Pristina

Kosovo Polje

Novo Brdo

Kosovska Kamenica

Decani

Janjevo

Junik

Mališevo

Klina

Orahovac

Stimlje

Gnjilane

Dakovica

Suva Reka

Urosevac

Vitina

ALBANIA

Prizren

Strpce

Kacanik

Skopje

Dragas

Brod



Montenegro

Serbia

ALBANIA

MACEDONIA

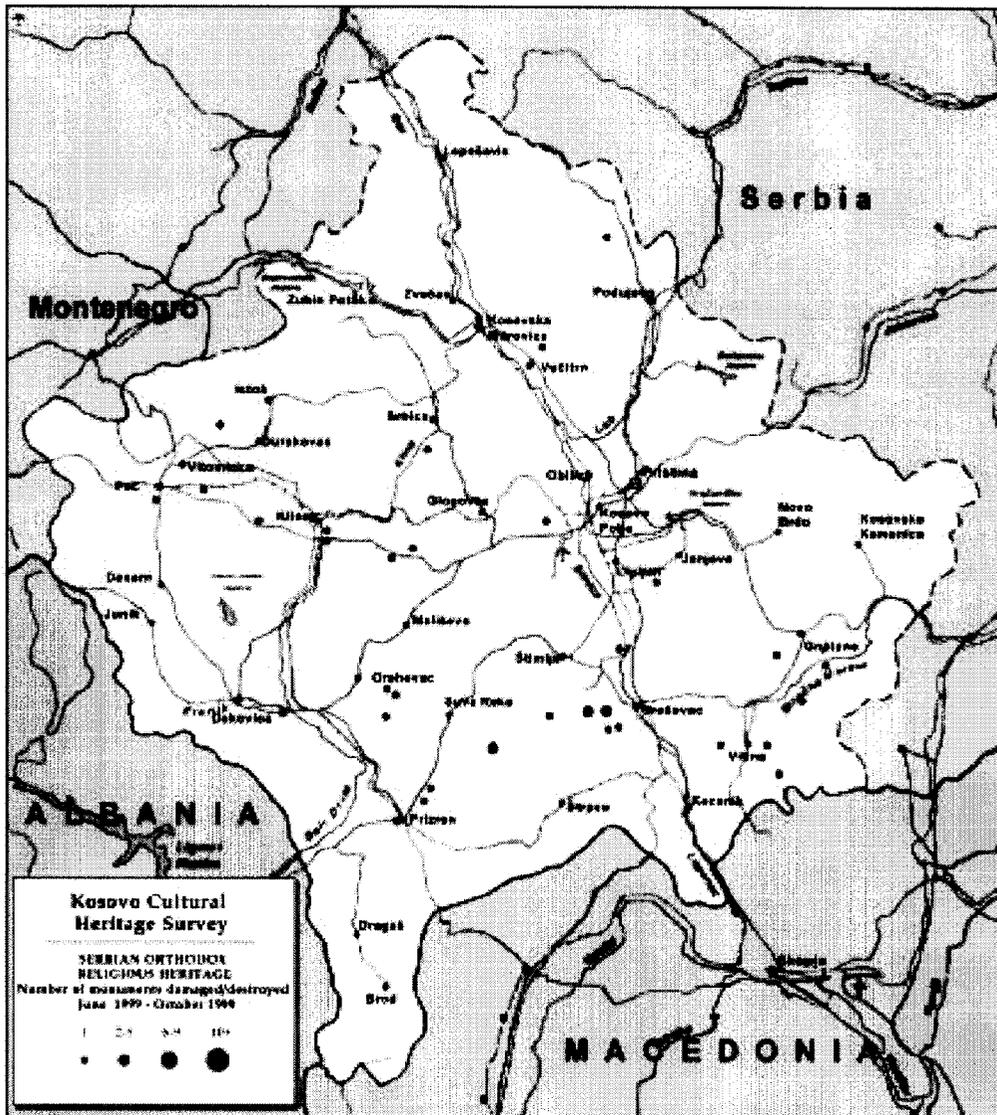
Kosovo Cultural Heritage Survey

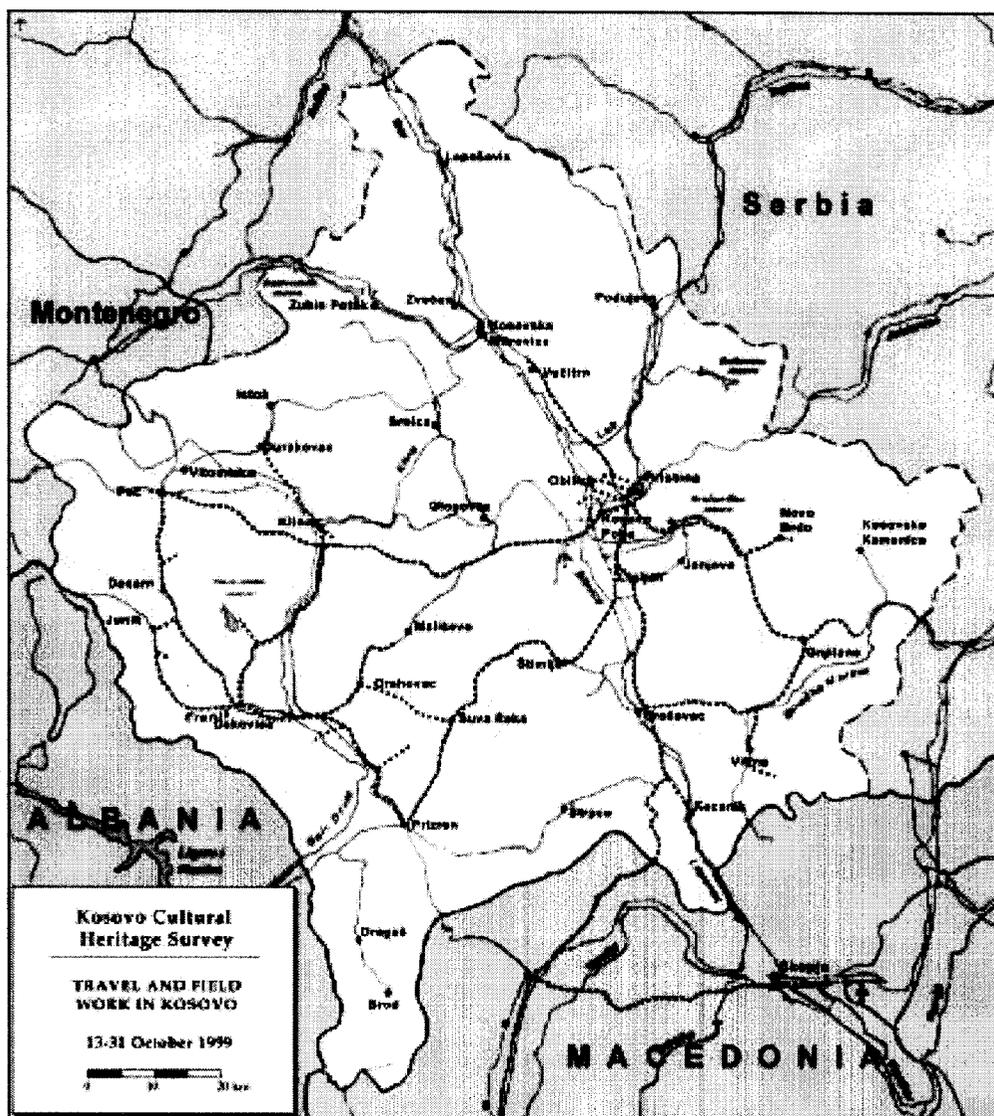
CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS HERITAGE
 Number of monuments damaged/destroyed
 March 1998 - October 1999

	1	2-5	6-9	10+
Civil	●	●	●	●
Islamic	●	●	●	●
Catholic	●	●	●	●
Orthodox	●	●	●	●



This map illustrates the distribution and damage status of cultural heritage sites in Kosovo during the conflict from March 1998 to June 1999. The sites are categorized by the number of monuments damaged or destroyed, with symbols representing 1, 2-3, 4-6, and 7+ damaged sites. The map also shows the geographical context, including neighboring countries (Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, and Macedonia) and major cities (Pristina, Gnjane, Prizren, etc.).





Appendix 2: Description and Assessment of Documentation Sources

A2.1. Field investigations by the authors (10/99, follow-up visits 10/00 and 3/01), including site visits and collection/consolidation of photographs and other documentation from local sources. The survey database, with more than 500 entries (in a simple Filemaker database format, including selected photographs and other documentation) is attached. The project’s archive of documentation on damage to cultural heritage in Kosovo, including many additional photographs, architectural plans, and other data, has been deposited at the Fine Arts Library, Harvard University.

Remarks: In the course of the initial field survey and follow-up visits we documented a total of 144 monuments and sites in person. In addition to providing us with the core entries for the database, this also allowed us to check our first-hand findings against the documentation obtained from other sources for some of the same sites in order to control its accuracy. While we covered most of the important heritage sites in Kosovo, there were some places that we were unable to visit due to security concerns at the time of our survey (Mitrovica), because of the bad state of the roads, or time constraints. This accounts for the relative underrepresentation of damaged or destroyed historic kullas in our database (45 entries). Most kullas are located in rural settings, in villages and hamlets remote from the paved roads and thus difficult to access (and not well documented in the published literature). For other categories, our survey data can be regarded as relatively complete.

A2.2. EU/IMG database (4/00) an assessment of damage to infrastructure and public buildings and facilities in Kosovo (including cultural heritage facilities), compiled 1999-2000 by the inter-governmental organization International Management Group serving as advisor to the European Commission. The study was carried out in every municipality of Kosovo by local teams, under the supervision of an international expert based in Pristina. A copy of the EU/IMG database on CD-ROM (in pdf format, readable with Acrobat Reader) is attached.

Remarks: The EU/IMG survey was focused primarily on modern infrastructure facilities (public buildings, clinics, schools, bridges, etc.) rather than heritage as such. Damage to buildings was estimated in terms of percentages, rather than specific descriptions, and the local teams didn't always share the same terms of reference—"20 percent damaged" in some cases is used to describe buildings completely gutted by fire, while in others the same percentage is used to describe a building that has been vandalized. In some cases centuries-old archaeological ruins are mistakenly catalogued as war damage (e.g. the ruined castle and medieval Catholic churches in Novo Brdo, the ancient ruins of a medieval Orthodox monastery at Mocare near Kamenica). In other cases, listed monuments that have been destroyed are not included in the database. Nevertheless, the EU/IMG database

contains a great deal of useful information, covers a lot of territory in depth and includes photographs for each site in the database.

A2.3. Islamic Community of Kosovo (KBI) (10/99, follow-up visits 10/00 and 3/01) gave us access to their archive of hundreds of photographs and other documentation on the destruction of Islamic heritage, compiled by **Prof. Sabri Bajgora**, assistant mufti of Kosovo and professor at the Faculty of Islamic Studies in Pristina. A selection of the KBI's documentation has been published in the book *Serbian Barbarities against Islamic Monuments in Kosova (February '98-June '99)*.

Remarks: The KBI's documentation focuses on monuments and institutions that are under the direct organizational control of the KBI (mosques, Islamic schools, Islamic archives and religious libraries). Its coverage is incomplete or lacking for some other kinds of Islamic monuments, such as dervish lodges (teqe), Turkish baths (hamam) and Islamic fountains (çeshma), mausolea (turbe), Sufi saints' shrines, etc. With regard to the KBI's documentation on mosques, we found no cases where damage had been claimed when none existed; in some cases the verbal descriptions of the extent of the damage seemed overstated, but in all cases there were photographs to compare. The dates given for destruction seem generally reliable, but the dates of construction have to be treated with some caution; often the date of the original foundation is used, rather than the date of construction of the current building on the site.

A2.4. Serbian Orthodox Eparchy of Raska-Prizren (10/99), extended follow-up via e-mail correspondence with Fr. Sava Janjic, with whom we exchanged photographs and other documentation concerning damage to Serbian Orthodox heritage in Kosovo. Much of the Eparchy's documentation has been published in the book *Crucified Kosovo*, also available on their website <http://www.kosovo.com/crucified/churches/>

Remarks: The Serbian Orthodox Eparchy's documentation focuses on damage to churches, monasteries and other Orthodox sites since the end of the war, including both historic sites and recently-built structures. As in the case of the KBI, the verbal

descriptions sometimes overstate the actual damage. When using documentation from external sources such as the religious authorities, we limited ourselves to those sites for which we had photographs or other independent means of verification. The dates given for destruction seem generally reliable, but the dates of construction have to be treated with some caution; often the date of the original foundation is used, rather than the date of construction of the current building on the site.

A2.5. Roman Catholic Diocese of Skopje-Prizren (10/99), we conducted interviews with Roman Catholic parish priests in Pristina/Prishtine, Klina/Kline, Djakovica/Gjakova, and Binac/Bince. There is also some information available on damage to Catholic churches in the Djakovica/Gjakova region of Kosovo on the Franciscan order's website <http://www.ofm.org/3/just/JUSkos8.html>

Remarks: Of the three major religious communities in Kosovo, the Catholics suffered the least destruction of their houses of worship; not surprisingly, they have also been least diligent in publicizing the damage. We relied on information provided by local parish priests, who generally spoke from first-hand knowledge; in the cases we were able to verify on our own, the information provided by the priests proved to be generally reliable.

A2.6. Institute for the Protection of Monuments of Kosovo (10/99, follow-up 10/00) allowed us access to their documentation (incomplete, because Institute's archive was shipped off to Serbia in June 1999); Institute staff provided useful information, incl. some architectural plans and pre-war photographs, and the director, Dr Fejaz Drançolli, accompanied us for three days of site visits in western Kosovo (Pec, Dolac, Drsnik, Decani, Junik, Nivokaz, Djakovica, Rogovo), helping us to locate sites and contacts.

Remarks: The Institute has lost much of its original documentation and is still in the planning stages for a systematic new survey of cultural heritage sites and monuments in Kosovo. The information they provided us, for both Serbian and Albanian heritage sites, was confirmed in all cases by our site visits.

A2.7. Institute for the Protection of Monuments of Djakovica/Gjakova (3/01)

Showed us their newly completed database surveying the postwar state of architectural heritage in the municipality, including sacral architecture (mosques, dervish lodges, churches) as well as civil architecture (kullas, bazaars, etc.). Entries in the database provide photographs and other information, including detailed damage assessments. Unfortunately, the CD-ROM with the copy of the database they gave us proved to be defective. We will try to obtain another copy, which will be forwarded to the Office of the Prosecutor when received.

A2.8. Department of Urban Planning Development UNMIK–JIAS Pec/Peja (3/01)

Provided us with the summary findings of their survey of *kullas* in the municipalities of Pec/Peja and Decani/Deçan, with data broken down by location and degree of damage. A copy of the summary tables is appended. The Urban Planning Department in Pec/Peja has a detailed database of the *kulla* survey, with photographs, architectural drawings and other information provided for each of the buildings surveyed.

A2.9. Mrs. Sahar Rassam (3/01), a Canadian architect who, as a consultant for UNMIK–JIAS conducted a study of postwar housing reconstruction needs, including a comprehensive survey of all *kullas*, in the municipalities of Klina/Kline and Istok/Istog. Mrs. Rassam provided us with a summary of her findings: out 59 *kullas* in these two municipalities 44 had been destroyed or damaged in the 1998-1999 conflict.

A2.10. Mr. Raif Virmiça (10/99) a private scholar in Prizren and author of five books on Kosovo's Islamic heritage, he provided us with access to his extensive personal archive of pre-war photographs of Ottoman-era architecture in Kosovo.

A2.11. Mr. Xhavit Lokaj (10/99) a paintings conservator at the Institute for the Protection of Monuments of Kosovo, he gave us access to hundreds of photographs he took July 1999 documenting the destruction of architectural heritage in northern, central and western Kosovo.

A2.12. Ms. Tody Cezar (12/00-1/01) a paintings conservator with Conservation International (Lisbon, Portugal), Ms Cezar was invited to Kosovo as independent consultant by the Department of Culture UNMIK–JIAS to assess the condition of murals in historic churches, monasteries and mosques in Kosovo; she provided us with copies of her documentation and assessment report and shared her observations of the sites visited.

A2.13. Reports by the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission

The OSCE KVM report, *Kosovo/Kosova As Seen, As Told*, includes some information regarding damage to cultural and religious heritage in Kosovo, but the information on such matters in the report is surprisingly limited and has to be treated with caution. For example, there is no information on the massive destruction of cultural heritage in the city of Vucitrn/Vushtrri, while in other cases buildings, people and other details are misidentified--e.g. the OSCE report for Djakovica refers to the March 26 murder of “the local sheikh of the Bektashi sect” and his two sons; but the local sheikh of the Bektashi dervish order, Baba Mumin Lama, is alive and well – the murdered Sheh Zenel Dervishdana and his two sons were not Bektashis, but members of the Sa’adi order of dervishes.

A2.14. Media Accounts

We made an effort to collect any specific, first-hand accounts by news reporters on the destruction of cultural heritage in media reports filed from Kosovo in 1998-1999. We discounted any reports that were of a general nature or that merely recycled second-hand information. Excerpts from first-hand media accounts are included in a separate field in our database entries for specific monuments and sites.

Appendix 3: Allegations of Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Kosovo, 1998-1999

A3.1. Reports by Yugoslav Governmental and Professional Institutions

In the spring and summer of 1999, governmental and professional institutions in Yugoslavia reported that major damage was being inflicted on historic monuments in Kosovo by NATO's aerial bombardment. These claims concentrated on damage alleged to have been inflicted on monuments associated with the Serbian Orthodox church, but also included reports of damage to some Ottoman-era civil and religious monuments.⁸ The allegations were widely publicized on the internet and circulated in the international media.⁹ On June 1, 1999, Yugoslavia's ambassador to UNESCO announced at a press conference that the old parts of the Kosovo city of Prizren and of the provincial capital, Pristina/Prishtina, had been completely destroyed by NATO bombing.¹⁰ The Yugoslav government's official account of NATO's war-time destruction of cultural heritage in Kosovo was consolidated after the war in two white books published by the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹¹ The Yugoslav government's account was then reproduced, without any attempt to independently verify its claims, by many international specialists in cultural heritage.¹² The same Yugoslav government claims respecting damage to cultural property were also reproduced in the memorandum filed with the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICTY by Prof. Michael Mandel et al. on alleged violations of international law by the governments and officials of NATO countries.¹³

A3.2. Reports by Kosovar Refugees

Eyewitness accounts by Kosovar refugees interviewed by NGOs and the media in Albania and Macedonia also included claims that cultural property was being destroyed during the war. These claims were focused on attacks by Serb forces on Islamic religious buildings. In one survey of Kosovar refugee heads of households carried out in camps in Albania and Macedonia during April and May 1999 by the NGO Physicians for Human Rights, nearly half (47 percent) of the respondents reported seeing mosques destroyed by Serb forces before they left Kosovo; the respondents reported damage at 155 specific locations.¹⁴

A3.3. Media Accounts

International media were present in Kosovo throughout the early phases of the conflict in 1998 and early 1999 and some reporters described incidents of destruction of cultural and religious heritage in their reports. Destruction of mosques was observed in several areas, especially in western Kosovo, along the road between Djakovica/Gjakova and Pec/Peja and in the area between Prizren and Orahovac/Rahovec. During the March-June 1999 NATO air war, access by independent reporters was limited and the few accounts by journalists reporting from inside Kosovo during that period contain little information on cultural heritage. Immediately after the end of the war in June 1999, Kosovo was inundated with journalists covering the entry of NATO troops and the return of refugees, and while few reports focused on heritage as such, many refer to destroyed mosques and the devastation of historic city centers. Later in the summer of 1999, the focus of reporting was on attacks against Serbian Orthodox churches by returning Albanians. While details such as the names and age of monuments are often garbled in news reports, the first-hand descriptions of damage can serve to corroborate and supplement information from other sources.

NOTES:

¹ The Tribunal's statute and its May 1999 indictment of Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic and other top Yugoslav and Serbian officials, which specifies among the charges "the destruction of non-Serbian residential areas and cultural and religious sites," can be found at <http://www.un.org/icty/index.html>.

² This institution was founded in 1952 as the Institute for the Protection and Study of Cultural Monuments in the Autonomous Province of Kosovo-Metohija. For the listed historic monuments of Kosovo, see Mileta Milic, ed., *Cultural Heritage of Kosovo and Metohija* (Belgrade: Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia, 1999).

³ By the time of the outbreak of the 1998-1999 conflict, some 210 Serbian Orthodox monuments (churches, monasteries, cemeteries) in Kosovo had been granted listed status, including 40 churches built between the 1930s and the 1990s. In contrast, only 15 of the more than 600 mosques in Kosovo were listed as historic monuments, even though more than half of these mosques date from the Ottoman era (14th-19th c.). See Milic, ed., *Cultural Heritage of Kosovo and Metohija*.

⁴ Statistics on Kosovo mosques published in *Dituria Islame*, no. 49 (May 1993).

⁵ In Binac/Bince (Vitina municipality), the Catholic priest told us that his flock had been expelled by Serbian troops, along with their Muslim neighbors, 50 of 250 houses in the parish had been burned; but the Catholic church in Binac, which sheltered 200 women, children and invalids, was left unharmed.

⁶ The National and University Library in Pristina, the main building of the Kosovo Museum, and the Archives of Kosovo in Pristina were also taken over by the VJ and used as military facilities for the duration of the NATO air war. See A. Riedlmayer, "Museums in Kosovo: A First Post-War Assessment," <http://www.bosnia.org.uk/bosrep/marjune00/museums.htm> and "Libraries and Archives in Kosovo: A Postwar Report," <http://www.bosnia.org.uk/bosrep/decfeb00/libraries.htm>.

⁷ The listing of Serbian Orthodox monuments in one standard source, Gojko Subotic, *Kosovo: Art of the Sacred Land* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1998), includes many now-ruined or absent buildings.

⁸ Among the major monuments and sites which were alleged to have been destroyed or seriously damaged by NATO air strikes were: the Gracanica monastery near Pristina/Prishtina; the Decani

monastery; the Pec Orthodox Patriarchate complex; the Church of the Virgin Ljeviska and the Sinan Pasha Mosque in Prizren; the Prizren League Museum; the Hadum Mosque complex in Djakovica/Gjakova; the historic bazaars in Djakovica/Gjakova and Pec/Peja; the Roman Catholic church of St. Anthony in Djakovica/Gjakova; and two old Ottoman bridges, Terzijski most/Ura e Terzive and Tabacki most/Ura e Tabakeve, near Djakovica/Gjakova.

⁹ See "War Damage in the Balkans," *US/ICOMOS Newsletter*, no. 2 (March-April 1999), pp. 1-3. Allegations that NATO air attacks were deliberately targeting cultural and religious heritage were given wide publicity on the internet on websites sponsored by the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Serbia: "Cultural Heritage in Yugoslavia Endangered by NATO and KLA" <http://www.yuheritage.com/>; the Ministry of Information of the Republic of Serbia: "A Large Number of Cultural Monuments in Serbia Damaged" <http://www.srbia-info.com/news/1999-06/12/12509.html>; the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs: "Bombing of Cultural Monuments" <http://www.mfa.gov.yu/bela/05.htm>; and the Serbian Orthodox Church: "Bombing of Serbian Shrines." http://www.spc.org.yu/Svetinje/svetinje_e.html.

¹⁰ Statement by Yugoslav ambassador to UNESCO Nada Popovic Perisic quoted in "Yugoslavia Appeals for UNESCO Aid to Restore War-damaged Monuments," *Agence France-Presse*, June 1, 1999.

¹¹ *NATO Crimes in Yugoslavia: Documentary Evidence*, I: 24 March-24 April 1999 (Belgrade: Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 1999) and *NATO Crimes in Yugoslavia: Documentary Evidence*, II: 25 April-10 June 1999 (Belgrade: Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 1999).

¹² See, for example, Nikos Axarlis, Spencer P.M. Harrington and Andrew L. Slayman, "Kosovo War Damage," *Archaeology* vol. 52 no. 4 (July/August 1999) and James Wiseman, "Legacy of Medieval Serbia," *Archaeology*, vol. 52 no. 5 (September/October 1999).

¹³ <http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/icty.htm>

¹⁴ Physicians for Human Rights, *War Crimes in Kosovo: A Population-Based Assessment of Human Rights Violations against Kosovar Albanians* (Boston: Physicians for Human Rights, 1999), p. 86; Physicians for Human Rights allowed us access to their raw interview data, which we used in planning our survey; we assisted PHR in editing the list of locations for consistency of spelling of geographic names.

Building Identification

Building Name mosque

Street Name

District Orahovac

Neighborhood

Town (Serbian) Celine

Town (Albanian) Celine

GPS Coordinates

Construction 20th c. (1916)

Historical Period modern

Official Status

Building Use religious

Building Type mosque

Building Setting village

Set. Relationship

Bldg. Condition completely destroyed

Occupancy

Adjacent Bldgs. in good condition

Building Condition



photo by: Sabri Bajgora (1999) showing rubble of mosque, with remains of minaret visible in center

Damage

Mosque burned down and ruins bulldozed by Serbs, according to Islamic community.

Village site of atrocity cited in Milosevic et al indictment

Surveyor

Sabri Bajgora (9/1999)
EU/IMG database (4/2000)

K0209347

Informant Statements

Informant 1 Statement

Informant 2 Statement

Informant 1 Name

Informant 2 Name

Bibliography

90209348

Media Accounts

Building Identification

Building Name Xhamia e Forteses
mosque

Street Name

District Orahovac

Neighborhood

Town (Serbian) Bela Crkva

Town (Albanian) Bellacerke

GPS Coordinates

Construction 19th-20th c.

Historical Period modern

Official Status

Building Use religious

Building Type mosque

Building Setting village

Set. Relationship

Bldg. Condition heavily damaged

Occupancy

Adjacent Bldgs.

Building Condition



photo by: Sabri Bajgora (1999)



photo by: Sabri Bajgora (1999)

Damage

Mosque damaged by shelling, minaret blown up, interior burned out.

Village site of atrocity cited in Milosevic et al indictment

(see media account below)

Surveyor

Sabri Bajgora (9/1999)
EU/IMG database (4/2000)



photo: CNN (7/99) burial procession for massacre victims
passes mosque

Informant Statements

Informant 1 Statement

Informant 2 Statement

Informant 1 Name

Informant 2 Name

Bibliography

K0209351

Media Accounts

The New York Times
June 16, 1999, Wednesday

Kosovo Landscape Lays Bare Serbs' Brutal Campaign

By JOHN KIFNER with IAN FISHER

[...] Mr. Gashi said he could not believe the Serbs' explanation that the war began merely to search out and destroy the guerrillas. Simply too much was destroyed, too many civilians killed, he said.

In Bela Crkva, where 300 families lived, nearly every house needs to be completely rebuilt. **The mosque was bombed, its 81-foot minaret crumbled in a heap in the front.** Dogs and livestock rot where they were shot. [...]

The Scotsman
July 5, 1999
Grieving Villagers to Lay to Rest 65 Victims of Massacre

By Andrew Walker In Bellacerke [**Bela Crkva**]

[...] Hardly a house has been left undamaged by the Serbs and **the mosque lies in ruins.** The village school was also damaged but men were yesterday cleaning the undamaged rooms for the people who are expected to arrive to pay their respects. [...]

For NATO **satellite photos** showing Bela Crkva before and after it was burned, see <http://www.fas.org/irp/imint/b990514l.jpg> ==> Note the **missing minaret of the mosque** in the "after" photo.

<http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9907/06/kosovo.warcrimes/>
CNN July 6, 1999

By Correspondent Nic Robertston

BELA CRKVA, Yugoslavia (CNN) -- One of seven villages listed on an international war crimes indictment against Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, Bela Crkva is the first to bury its dead since refugees returned.

The whole village, or what is left of it, turned out for the ceremony on Monday. The grieving held up a row of portraits of the dead, as others walked by in a solemn procession.

Sixty-five people lost their lives, including seven children, one of them 4 years old; and three women, one of them 60. The remainder were men.

All had tried to hide when they were shot by Serbian police forces, according to war crimes investigators who just completed their study of the dead.

Mourners, including many from neighboring villages, **filed past the shattered mosque** and up a hill to a cemetery overlooking the village. [...]

Building Identification

Building Name mosque

K0209352

Street Name

District Orahovac

Building Use religious

Neighborhood

Town (Serbian) Brestovac

Building Type mosque

Town (Albanian) Brestoc

Building Identification

Building Name mosque

K0209352

Street Name

District Orahovac

Building Use religious

Neighborhood

Town (Serbian) Brestovac

Building Type mosque

Town (Albanian) Brestoc

Building Setting village

GPS Coordinates

Construction 16th c. (1598)

Set. Relationship

Bldg. Condition almost destroyed

Historical Period Ottoman

Occupancy

Official Status

Adjacent Bldgs.

Building Condition



photo by: Sabri Bajgora (1999)

Damage

Mosque burned out completely, minaret destroyed above balcony

According to Islamic community, mosque was destroyed on March 25, 1999

Surveyor

Sabri Bajgora (9/1999)
EU/IMG database (4/2000)

Informant Statements

Informant 1 Statement

Informant 2 Statement

Informant 1 Name

Informant 2 Name

Bibliography

Media Accounts

Building Identification

Building Name Xhamia e Bajramcurrajt
mosque

K0209355

Street Name

District Orahovac

Neighborhood

Town (Serbian) Velika Krusa

Town (Albanian) Krushe e Madhe

GPS Coordinates

Construction 18th-20th c.

Historical Period Ottoman/modern

Official Status

Building Use religious

Building Type mosque

Building Setting village

Set. Relationship

Bldg. Condition heavily damaged

Occupancy

Adjacent Bldgs.

Building Condition



photo by: Sabri Bajgora (8/1999) showing hole blasted in side of mosque where minaret used to be.

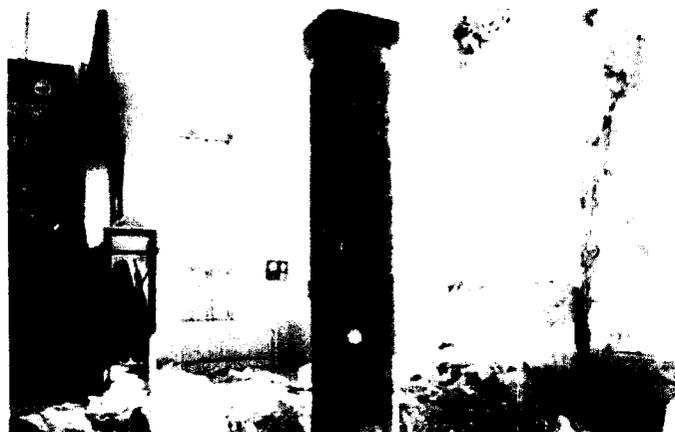


photo by: Sabri Bajgora (1999)

Damage

Minaret blown up, leaving a large hole in side wall of the mosque and structural damage. Interior of mosque vandalized and partially burned.

Village site of atrocity cited in Milosevic et al indictment

(see media reports below)

Surveyor

Sabri Bajgora (9/1999)
EU/IMG database (4/2000)

K0209356

Informant Statements

Informant 1 Statement

Members of the Group met with two members of the Sejfullau family, namely Avni and Sadik Sejfullahu from the village of Krusha e Madhe, the Commune of Rahovec. They had no news from the other members of the family. **They told us that they had seen Serb soldiers burning with benzine the mosque of the village of Krusha e Madhe.** Afterwards, numerous Serb military forces had surrounded the village and at 2:15 in the morning of the 29th of March they had shot in the direction of the village's houses, bombarding and destroying everything. The members of the family had left and walked until they reached Kukes by the 1st of April 1999.

Informant 2 Statement

Informant 1 Name

ALBANIAN HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP 3 Apr. 1999
<http://www.greekhelsinki.gr/english/reports/ahrg3-6-4-1999.ntmi>

Informant 2 Name

Bibliography

K0209357

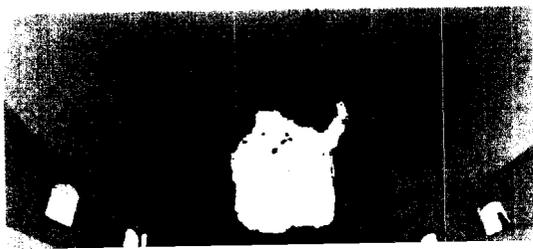
Media Accounts

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung
June 19, 1999

Im Garten von Ilir liegt ein halb verkohter
Menschenschädel

KRUSHA E MADHE, 18. Juni 1999 -- [...] Doch nicht einmal dabei ist es geblieben: Es kam zur Massenvertreibung und zum Massenmord. Ilir Duraku aus Krusha e Madhe ist nur einer von Hunderten, die dieser Tage bei der Rückkehr aus Albanien oder Mazedonien grausige Entdeckungen machen. In **Krusha e Madhe** ist so gut wie alles zerstört. Von schmucken Häusern sind nur verkohlte Ruinen geblieben. **Eine Aussenwand der Moschee ist gesprengt, das Minarett umgeknickt. In der zertrümmerten Moschee liegen Kleider und Matratzen in wildem Durcheinander,** Erinnerungsfotos und Briefe sind auf dem Boden zerstreut, drei Wiegebettchen für Säuglinge stehen herum. Die Uhr über dem Eingang ist um fünf Minuten nach vier Uhr stehengeblieben. Hier haben Flüchtlinge Schutz gesucht und mussten sich offenbar in grosser Eile davon machen. [...]

photo by: Andras Riedlmayer (10/99)



Building Identification

Building Name mosque

K0209358

Street Name

District Prizren

Building Use religious

Neighborhood

Town (Serbian) Landovica

Building Type mosque

Town (Albanian) Landovice

Building Setting village

GPS Coordinates

Construction 20th c. (1997)

Set. Relationship

Bldg. Condition heavily damaged

Historical Period modern

Occupancy

Official Status

Adjacent Bldgs.

Building Condition



photo by: Andras Riedlmayer (10/99)

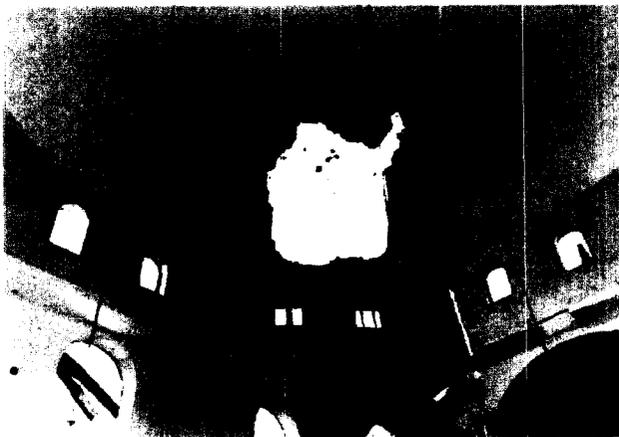


photo by: Sabri Bajgora (1999)

Damage

Large hole in dome, minaret completely destroyed.

Mosque was partially burned on March 27, 1999., minaret was mined and shelled and the central dome was damaged according to Islamic community.

Surveyor

Andras Riedlmayer (10/1999)
EU/IMG database (4/2000)

Informant Statements

Informant 1 Statement

Informant 2 Statement

Informant 1 Name

Informant 2 Name

Bibliography

Media Accounts

Building Identification

Building Name mosque

Street Name

District Srbica

Neighborhood

Town (Serbian) Cirez

Town (Albanian) Qirez

GPS Coordinates

Construction 20th c. (1995)

Historical Period modern

Official Status

Building Use religious

Building Type mosque

Building Setting village

Set. Relationship

Bldg. Condition almost destroyed

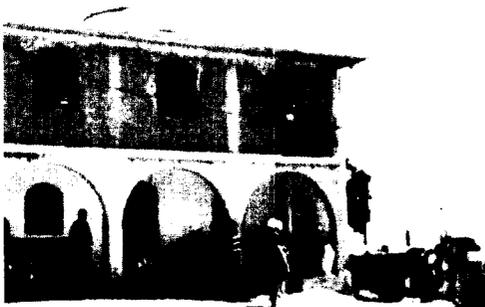
Occupancy

Adjacent Bldgs. almost destroyed

Building Condition



photo by: Sabri Bajgora (1999)



pre-war photo from Sabri Bajgora

Damage

Badly damaged by shelling; damage from Serb attacks in July 1998 and in April 1999.

Surveyor

Sabri Bajgora (9/1999)
EU/IMG database (4/2000)

Informant Statements

Informant 1 Statement

Informant 2 Statement

Informant 1 Name

Informant 2 Name

Bibliography

K-209363

Media Accounts

Building Identification

Building Name	Xhamia e Bardhe White Mosque		K0209364
Street Name	ul. Car Dusani		
District	Suva Reka	Building Use	religious
Neighborhood	Elshan	Building Type	mosque
Town (Serbian)	Suva Reka		
Town (Albanian)	Suhareke	Building Setting	
		Set. Relationship	
GPS Coordinates	N 42° 21.520 E 20° 49.672	Bldg. Condition	lightly damaged
Construction	16th c. (1520) rebuilt 20th c. (1990)	Occupancy	
Historical Period	Ottoman/Modern	Adjacent Bldgs.	in good condition
Official Status			

Building Condition

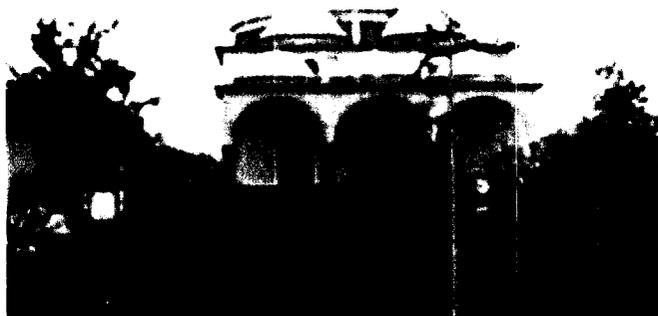
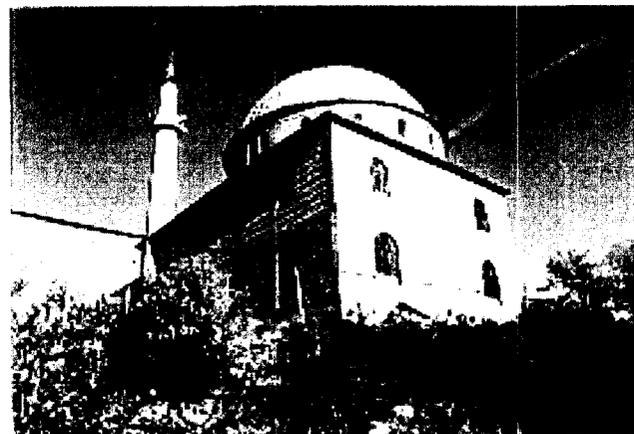


photo by: AR/AH (10/1999) entrance facade viewed from N
note damaged small dome and site of missing minaret at right.



pre-war photo from: Raif Vermica - view from SW with minaret

Damage

Explosives placed inside minaret -- minaret gone, large hole in wall of mosque at women's gallery, damage to small domes next to minaret.

Minaret blown up by Serbs on Bairam (Muslim holiday, 28 March 1999).

Minaret was the one remaining historic part of the mosque, retained when the old mosque was torn down and rebuilt in 1990.

(see informant statement & media account below)

Surveyor

András Riedlmayer
10/17/1999

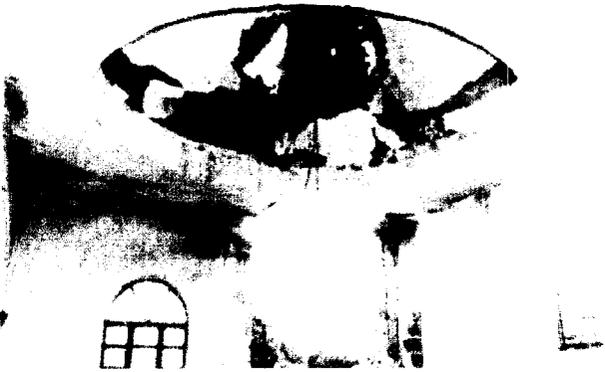


photo by: Sabri Bajgora (1999) showing damage to dome and interior



photo by: AR/AH (10/1999) stump of blown-up minaret

Informant Statements

Informant 1 Statement

March 28, 1999, on the day of the Bairam (the principal Muslim holy day), all the Albanians in town were forbidden to leave their houses. At noon, there was a huge explosion which blew up the minaret of the White Mosque and damaged the mosque.

He lives 200m from the mosque and was in his house (there was a curfew.)

Informant 2 Statement

Informant 1 Name

Imer Fetin
Fshoti Peqan
Suhareke

Informant 2 Name

Bibliography

Cukic, Dragan. 1971. *Kosovo: znamenitosti i lepote*. (Pristina: Turisticki savez Kosova): p.155

K0209366

Virmica, Raif. 1999. *Kosova'da Osmanli mimari eserleri* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı): p.p. 384-386, photo p. 746.

Media Accounts

ABC Television
July 8, 1999
Nightline:
Kosovo - Searching for Reconciliation

[...] DAVE MARASH: (voice over) By the time Serb forces withdrew it was true, Pec would never be the same again. And other towns like **Suva Reka** would never be the same again. The minaret was 35 meters high. Imam Rehmen Pacarizi proudly told me. You could see it from all over Suva Reka. **The Serbs set their explosives to send the minaret falling through the mosque's domed roof.**

Over the period his flock was in exile, Pacarizi says,
REHMEN PACARIZI: **Approximately 10 mosques in the Suva Reka district have been destroyed, minarets and interiors as well.**

DAVE MARASH: (voice-over) In Kosovo's relentlessly Newtonian moral universe, each evil action creates an equal and opposite reaction. On a hillside just outside **Suva Reka**, Albanians struck back, **destroying the working and living areas of Holy Trinity Monastery [at Musutiste] and damaging its chapel and magnificent altar screen.**

Building Identification

Building Name	Ibar mosque Xhamia e Ibrit Bridge Mosque Hadzi Kirdza mosque		
Street Name			
District	Mitrovica	Building Use	religious
Neighborhood		Building Type	mosque
Town (Serbian)	Kosovska Mitrovica	Building Setting	
Town (Albanian)	Mitrovica	Set. Relationship	
GPS Coordinates		Bldg. Condition	completely destroyed
Construction	18-19th c.	Occupancy	
Historical Period	Ottoman	Adjacent Bldgs.	
Official Status			

Building Condition



photo by: Sabri Bajgora (1999)



pre-war photo from: *Avrupa'da Osmanli mimari eserleri*

Damage

Mosque and the adjoining shops owned by Islamic Community burned down and bulldozed by Serbs in May 1999. Site completely razed.

Surveyor

Sabri Bajgora (9/1999)
Andras Riedlmayer (3/2001)

Informant Statements

Informant 1 Statement

Informant 2 Statement

Informant 1 Name

Informant 2 Name

Bibliography

Ayverdi, Ekrem Hakkı. 1981. *Avrupa'da Osmanlı*

Bibliography

Ayverdi, Ekrem Hakkı. 1981. *Avrupa'da Osmanlı mimârî eserleri, III. cild 2. kitap: Yugoslavya: Kosova - Makedonya - Sırbistan - Slovenya - Voyvodina* (Istanbul: Istanbul Fetih Cemiyeti): p.111, pl.1104

K0209369

Media Accounts

Tages-Anzeiger
14 Jul. 1999

"Ein Fluss trennt die Albaner und die Serben,"

Von Thomas Schmid, **Kosovska Mitrovica**

[...] **"Wer hat die Moschee bei der Brücke bis auf die Grundmauern zerstört?"**, will ein Journalist wissen. "Wissen Sie, was im Kloster Devic passiert ist?", fragt die gebildete Nonne zurück. Dort habe die UÇK serbische Nonnen bedroht, möglicherweise zum Entkleiden gezwungen. Musste deshalb die Moschee zerstört werden? Oliver Ivanovic, der so etwas wie der Führer der Serben von Mitrovica ist und neben der Nonne Platz genommen hat, **meint, die alte Moschee sei möglicherweise zusammengebrochen, als die Nato das Hauptquartier der Polizei bombte. Dieses liegt 200 Meter vom muslimischen Gotteshaus entfernt. Die Gebäude dazwischen stehen alle noch.** [...]

The Guardian (London) July 21, 1999

Deep hatred conquers courage in divided town; Kosovo: After the war Crossing a bridge can be an act of bravery

Chris Bird in Mitrovica

[...] On the Serb side there is little sign of the war. Brown tape still crisscrosses some of the murky shop windows, a leftover precaution against the Nato air bombardment. **All that remains of a centuries-old Ottoman mosque on the northern side of the bridge is a pile of rubble.** [...]

Los Angeles Times, June 22, 1999

Hatred Splits a Kosovo Town Into Wrathful Riverbanks
By MARK FINEMAN, Times Staff Writer

[...] **The destruction of the south side of town included one of Kosovo's oldest mosques--the centers of the ethnic Albanians' Islamic faith. The ancient structure that local Albanians called the Mosque of the Bridge once stood like a citadel on the southern bank of the Ibar. On Monday, there was nothing but rubble. Local residents said the mosque had been looted and defaced, burned and finally bulldozed.** On the northern bank of the river, some Serbs wept and others shouted as they watched fellow Serbs straggle across the bridge. There was unanimity in denial that any local members of their community were responsible for the destruction. [...]

Building Identification

Building Name Qarshi e vjeter
Carshia e vjeter
old bazaar historic district
Stara Carsija

Street Name

District Djakovica

Neighborhood

Town (Serbian) Djakovica

Town (Albanian) Gjakova

GPS Coordinates

Construction 16-20th c.

Historical Period Ottoman era; restored in 1970s

Official Status listed monument

Building Use commercial

Building Type bazaar

Building Setting historic city core

Set. Relationship coherence

Bldg. Condition heavily damaged

Occupancy vacant

Adjacent Bldgs. heavily damaged

Building Condition



pre-war photo by: Institute for the Protection of Monuments (1998)



Photo: Petrit Domi, 4/1/1999 taken surreptitiously during burning of bazaar

Damage

Nearly all the shops in the historic market burned out, in a wide area covering several city blocks surrounding the Hadum Mosque.

Destruction covers the entirety of historic bazaar area designated for protection, with exception of a row of shops along the even-numbered side of Abedin Torbesh Street (the part near the bridge).
Building interiors burned out to rooflines

Roofs collapsed, dividing walls between shops mostly intact. In many cases with the original roof tiles still lined up along tops of walls undisturbed. No signs of the blast damage that would have been expected if the bazaar had really been hit by air strikes.

Yugoslav authorities have claimed that the damage to the bazaar and the Hadum mosque were caused by NATO strikes.

Rubble was cleared during the summer from most burned-out interiors, but as of 10/99 there had been no reconstruction as yet within core market area.

NOTE: photo of Djakovica bazaar being burned taken secretly by local resident Petrit Domi on 4/1/1999. Domi has addl. photos showing bodies of murdered people lying in front burning shops of bazaar.

Surveyor

Andras Riedlmayer 10/26/1999



photo by: Xhavit Lokaj, 7/1999 (showing returning residents looking for salvageable items)



pre-war photo of bazaar (taken from minaret of Hadum mosque): *Architecture traditionnelle des pays balkaniques*

Informant Statements

Informant 1 Statement

Informant was listening to radio and heard Serbian evening newscast at 8 PM on March 24th say that the city centers of Belgrade, Novi Sad, Pristina, and Djakovica had been bombed by NATO.

He said he was amazed, since he lives in the center of town and at that point had heard no planes or explosions in the vicinity. Later, the Yugoslav army base at the edge of town was hit by an air strike, but not the town center.

Then, after midnight Serbian police and civilians came on foot and in cars, set the Hadum Mosque and the surrounding old bazaar area on fire and started killing people. The fires burned through the next several days.

Informant 2 Statement

Informants said market area torched by Serb police and military on night of March 24-25, 1999 following NATO airstrikes

Informant 1 Name

Xhavit Bashe
rr. Ismail Qemali 122
Gjakova

Informant 2 Name

Bibliography

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Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Kosovo, 1998-1999 by Andrew Herscher and András Riedlmayer
traditionelle des pays balkaniques (Athens: Melissa): p. 209 (photo)

K0209372

Ayverdi, Ekrem Hakk^¾. 1981. *Avrupa'da Osmanl^¾ mimârî eserleri, III. cild 2. kitap: Yugoslavya: Kosova - Makedonya - S^¾rbistan - Slovenya - Voyvodina* (Istanbul: Istanbul Fetih Cemiyeti): p.31, pl.1517 (photo)

Cukic, Dragan. 1971. *Kosovo: znamenitosti i lepote*. (Pristina: Turisticki savez Kosova): p.319 (photo)

Maletic, Mihailo, ed. 1973. *Kosovo nekad i danas. Kosova dikur e sot*. (Belgrade: Borba, Radna jedinica "Ekonomska politika"): p.301, p.605 top (photos)

Morina, Tefik. 1974. "Ruga e zhvillimit dhe perspektiva e muzeut të Kosovës." *Glasnik Muzeja Kosova i Metohije* 12: p.247 (photo)
[Ger. summary: "Entwicklungsweg und Perspektive der Museen auf Kosovo"]

Media Accounts

<http://www.alb-net.com/kcc/shasivari.htm>
New York Times
July 11, 1999

PHOTO ESSAY

Death on Mazllum Shasivari Street - A Catalogue of Serbian Destruction

Text by CHRIS STEPHEN
Photographs by FRED R. CONRAD
<A detailed photo essay, based on eyewitness interviews of the destruction and killing in the Djakovica bazaar, keyed to locations marked on large panoramic photos of the bazaar>

EXCERPT:

The streets of Gjakova, a city of 80,000 in southwest Kosovo, were already deserted at 8 p.m. on March 24, when NATO bombs smashed into Serb military installations on the edge of town. Afterward, the town lapsed once more into silence. Around midnight, residents saw about 50 Serbs in military dress, each carrying a five-liter gasoline can, walking toward Old Town, a neighborhood surrounding the city's 16th-century mosque. At 1:15 A.M., flames appeared from the rooftops of Old Town. Gjakova's ordeal had begun. [...]

Satellite photo of the Djakovica bazaar burning released 3/30/99 by US Dept. of Defense and posted on its website:
<http://www.defenselink.mil/photos/Mar1999/990330-O-0000M-002.jpg>

Building Identification

Building Name	Hadum Mosque Xhamia e Hadumit Mosque of Hadum Suleiman Aga		Building Use	religious
Street Name				
District	Djakovica	Building Type	mosque	
Neighborhood				
Town (Serbian)	Djakovica	Building Setting	historic city core	
Town (Albanian)	Gjakova	Set. Relationship	positive discordance	
GPS Coordinates	N 42° 22.795 E 20° 25.655		Bldg. Condition	heavily damaged
Construction	16th c. (1594-1595) 1001 AH		Occupancy	
Historical Period	Ottoman		Adjacent Bldgs.	heavily damaged
Official Status	listed monument			

Building Condition

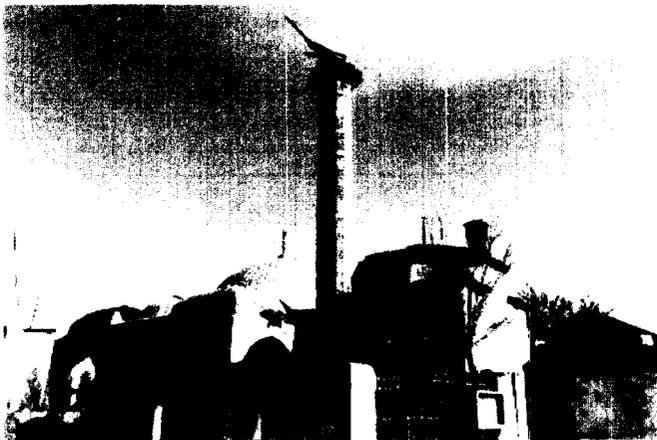


photo by: Sabri Bajgora (1999) showing decapitated minaret, burned front porch, surviving front facade of library at right.



photo by: Sabri Bajgora (1999) close-up of remaining part of portico, showing melted lead roof, fire-scarred walls, rubble

Damage

Large wooden extended portico in front of mosque (added in 18th c.) burned down completely, the lead on roof of burned-down portico and on the three small domes covering front arcade of the mosque melted in fire.

Massive wooden door of mosque badly charred, soot marks emanating from semi-circular window above entrance door. Extensive damage to 18th-c. mural paintings covering walls and interior of domes.

Minaret decapitated, top portion above balcony of minaret shot away, interior stairwell of minaret filled with rubble.

Much of the rubble of the fallen minaret appears to have crashed on top of the adjacent library building, leading to the collapse of its rear wall and roof. Stonework from the minaret still visible inside the burned-out shell of the library.

18th-c. Quran school facing library has perimeter walls still standing to ca. 1.5m-2m above foundation but rest of building completely destroyed by fire.

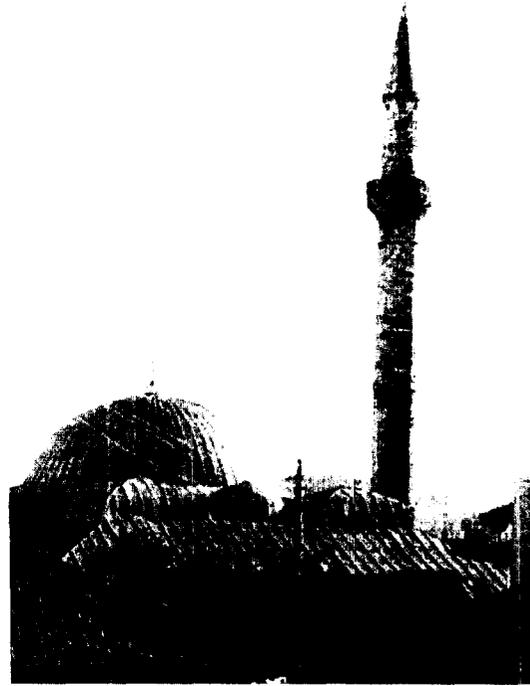
Surveyor

Andrew Herscher
10/26/1999

K0209374



photo by: Andrés Riedlmayer (10/1999) fire-scarred base of the minaret, rubble of burned portico, burned-out library



pre-war photo, with minaret and extended mosque portico. J. Bajraktari, *Gjakova me rrethinë* (Pishtina, 1998), p. 316,

Informant Statements

Informant 1 Statement

On first night of NATO bombing [Mar. 24]. Serb radio announced the NATO bombing of Belgrade, Novi Sad, Pristina, and Dakovica in its 8 P.M. newscast. The informant said he was amazed, since he lives in market area and heard no bombs nearby. After midnight, he heard cars and Serbs started setting the old market and mosque ablaze.

An incendiary device was thrown at door of mosque, but only the wooden extension to the portico and the exterior of door and other woodwork was burned. The interior of the mosque did not catch on fire, even though an incendiary projectile was fired through the opening above doorway. The reason is that a few months earlier elderly members of the congregation had complained of cold drafts coming into the mosque through the opening and a thick wooden board had been mounted just inside the opening to keep the cold air out. That board caught on fire and burned - one can see the soot marks above the door - but it kept the incendiary missile from burning the interior of the mosque.

The library and the Quran school next to the mosque were burned at the same time.

The mosque's minaret was decapitated later, with a shoulder-launched missile, on May 8, 1999.

Informant 1 Name

Khahit Bashe
Ismail Qemajli 122
Gjakova

Informant 2 Statement

Informant 2 Name

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Media Accounts

<http://www.alb-net.com/kcc/shasivari.htm>

New York Times
July 11, 1999

PHOTO ESSAY
Death on Mazllum Shasivari Street - A
Catalogue of Serbian Destruction

Text by CHRIS STEPHEN
Photographs by FRED R. CONRAD
<A detailed photo essay, based on eyewitness interviews of the destruction and killing in the Djakovica bazaar, keyed to locations marked on large panoramic photos of the bazaar>

EXCERPT:

The streets of Gjakova, a city of 80,000 in southwest Kosovo, were already deserted at 8 p.m. on March 24, when NATO bombs smashed into Serb military installations on the edge of town. Afterward, the town lapsed once more into silence. **Around midnight, residents saw about 50 Serbs in military dress, each carrying a five-liter gasoline can, walking toward Old Town, a neighborhood surrounding the city's 16th-century mosque. At 1:15 A.M., flames appeared from the rooftops of Old Town. Gjakova's ordeal had begun. [...]**

Satellite photo showing the Djakovica bazaar and the Hadum mosque complex being burned down, released 3/30/99 by US Dept. of Defense and posted on its website:
<http://www.defenselink.mil/photos/Mar1999/990330-O-0000M-002.jpg>

Building Identification

Building Name	Library of Hadum Suleiman Efendi		
Street Name			
District	Djakovica	Building Use	religious
Neighborhood		Building Type	Islamic library
Town (Serbian)	Djakovica	Building Setting	city
Town (Albanian)	Gjakova	Set. Relationship	
GPS Coordinates		Bldg. Condition	heavily damaged
Construction	16th c. (1733)	Occupancy	
Historical Period	Ottoman	Adjacent Bldgs.	
Official Status			

Building Condition

Damage

Completely burned with loss of entire manuscript collection and Islamic archive.

(see informant statements below)

Surveyor

Andras Riedlmayer (10/1999)





photo by: AR/AH (10/1999) charred walls at side entrance of library



photo by: Sabri Bajgora (1999) - view from rear, showing collapsed rear wall, burned-out interior

Informant Statements

Informant 1 Statement

Serbs set fire to library during first night of NATO bombing in March 1999 and the building burned with all the books inside it.

On May 8, 1999, when Serb soldiers shot off the top of the minaret of the Hadum mosque, the minaret fell on top of the library building and the back wall collapsed.

Informant 2 Statement

Before the war, the library of Hadum Sulejman Efendi held ca. 200 manuscripts and 1,300 rare books in Ottoman Turkish, Arabic and Aljamiado (Albanian in Arabic script), as well as the regional archives of the Islamic Community (KBI) with records going back to the 17th century. Among the unique items held by the library was a manuscript of the Albanian *Mevlud* (poem in praise of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad) by Hafiz Ali-Riza Ulqinaku (1855-1913).

41209377

Informant 1 Name

Xhahit Bashe
Ismail Qemajli 122
Gjakova

Informant 2 Name

Prof. Nehat Krasniqi
Keeper of Rare Books and Manuscripts
National and University Library, Prishtina

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Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Kosovo, 1998-1999 by Andrew Herscher and András Riedlmayer

mimârî eserleri, III. cild 2. kitap: Yugoslavya: Kosova – Makedonya – Sırbistan – Slovenya – Vojvodina
(Istanbul: Istanbul Fetih Cemiyeti): p.92, plates (plans, ext. photo)

4209378

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Media Accounts

Building Identification

Building Name Mosque of Kei Hasan Aga
Xhamia e Hasan Ages

Street Name

District Djakovica

Neighborhood

Town (Serbian) Rogovo

Town (Albanian) Rogove i Hasit

GPS Coordinates N 42° 49.331 E 020° 57.916

Construction 16th c. (1530-1531)

Historical Period Ottoman

Official Status listed monument

Building Use religious

Building Type mosque

Building Setting village

Set. Relationship positive discordance

Bldg. Condition heavily damaged

Occupancy

Adjacent Bldgs. in good condition

Building Condition



photo by: AR/AH (10/1999)



pre-war photo from: Raif Virmica (1997)

Damage

Minaret blown up with charges placed inside stairs, completely destroyed; falling minaret damaged the main dome of the mosque and smashed a large section of the portico roof; exterior walls and dome cracked in several places but remain standing.

(see photo & informant's statement below)

Attack on mosque took place 3 April 1999, according to village residents.

Village site of 29 January 1999 MUP operation, in which 24 Albanians were killed.

Surveyor

Andrew Herscher
10/17/1999

K0209380



photo by: AR/AH (10/1999) showing stump of blown-up minaret, damaged dome and cracked walls

Informant Statements

Informant 1 Statement

Eyewitness who saw Serbs blow up the mosque on 3 April 1999 is living in nearby village, according to storekeeper who lives across from mosque entrance.

Informant 1 Name

storekeeper of shop directly facing mosque entrance.

Informant 2 Statement

Informant 2 Name

Bibliography

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Pasic, Amir. 1990. *Islamic Art in Yugoslavia* (Mostar: A. Pasic): iii.2.7b (plan, section)

K0209381

Media Accounts

Building Identification

Building Name mosque

K0209382

Street Name

District Gnjilane

Neighborhood

Town (Serbian) Vlastica

Town (Albanian) Llashtice

GPS Coordinates

Construction 19th c. (1836)

Historical Period modern

Official Status

Building Use religious

Building Type mosque

Building Setting village

Set. Relationship

Bldg. Condition heavily damaged

Occupancy

Adjacent Bldgs. lightly damaged

Building Condition



photo by: Sabri Bajgora (8/1999) burned interior of mosque

Damage

Exterior of mosque appears intact, but interior and minaret completely burned out.

Documentation examined at offices of Islamic Community of Kosovo by AR (10/99).

Village site of atrocity by Serb forces, spring 1999

(see media account below)

Surveyor

Sabri Bajgora (9/1999)
EU/IMG database (4/2000)



photo by: Sabri Bajgora (8/1999) exterior of mosque intact, interior burned

Informant Statements

Informant 1 Statement

Informant 2 Statement

K0209383

Informant 1 Name

Informant 2 Name

Bibliography

X0209384

Media Accounts

<http://washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A38149-1999Dec9.html>

"Up Against the Wall," by Washington Post correspondent David Finkel reporting from Vlastica

[EXCERPTS]: "... the burned out **mosque** with skeletons of blistered birds that had been nesting in the minaret. Then comes the **school**--the classrooms ransacked, the files of student records destroyed, the **library** of 14,000 books burned, and one of the teachers lost to the violence, ..."

Building Identification

Building Name Mosque

K0209385

Street Name

District Kacanik

Neighborhood

Town (Serbian) Kotlina

Town (Albanian) Kotline

GPS Coordinates

Construction 18th c.

Historical Period Ottoman

Official Status

Building Use religious

Building Type mosque

Building Setting village

Set. Relationship coherence

Bldg. Condition lightly damaged

Occupancy

Adjacent Bldgs.

Building Condition

Damage

Interior of mosque damaged by vandalism during 1999 war.

(photo in EU/IMG database)

Surveyor

EU/IMG database (4/2000)

Informant Statements

Informant 1 Statement

Informant 2 Statement

Informant 1 Name

Informant 2 Name

Bibliography

40259387

Media Accounts

K0209388

Building Identification

Building Name mosque

Street Name

District Kacanik

Neighborhood

Town (Serbian) Ivaja

Town (Albanian) Ivaje

GPS Coordinates

Construction 20th c. (1932)

Historical Period Ottoman

Official Status

Building Use religious

Building Type mosque

Building Setting village

Set. Relationship

Bldg. Condition almost destroyed

Occupancy

Adjacent Bldgs.

Building Condition

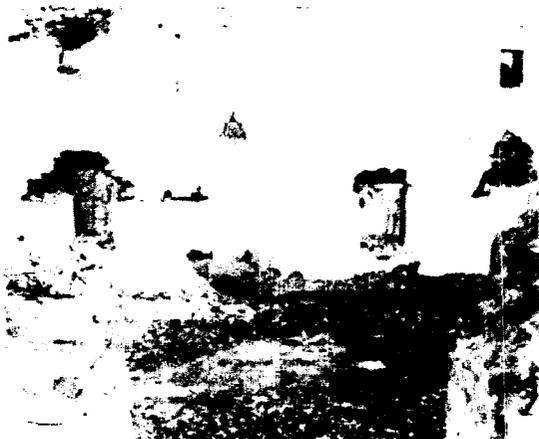


photo by: Sabri Bajgora (1999) showing gutted interior with prayer niche (mihrab)

Damage

Completely burned out, only perimeter walls remain. Shot up at close range and burned by Serb forces March 10, 1999, before the start of the air war.

(see media report below)

Surveyor

Sabri Bajgora (9/1999)
EU/IMG database (4/2000)

Informant Statements

Informant 1 Statement

Informant 2 Statement

Informant 1 Name

Informant 2 Name

Bibliography

Media Accounts

Reuters
Wednesday 10 March 1999

Serb Forces Leave Kosovo Village Smoking Ruin

IVAJA, Serbia (Reuters) - Serb forces have bombarded and swept through the Kosovo village of Ivaja, leaving most of the houses smoldering ruins and forcing its inhabitants to flee, international monitors and reporters said Wednesday.

Reporters found the body of a man in civilian clothes who appeared to have been shot at close range and met a blood-caked 84-year-old man who said he was beaten with rifle butts by Serb soldiers searching for separatist ethnic Albanian rebels.

The house that had been used as the local headquarters of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) brigade was burned out and **the interior of the mosque devastated. The mosque's exterior had been sprayed with bullets.**

``The fighting started yesterday. The VJ and MUP (Serb forces) tried to clear the area of KLA and you can see it was successful," said international truce monitor Otto Bischof who was inspecting the ruins of the village.

``They beat me with rifles and asked me if I knew anyone from the KLA," said Ramadan Muljoki, the only survivor still in the village. ``They asked me if my son was in the KLA and I said no and they beat me again."

Some 400 inhabitants of Ivaja were rounded up by Serb forces Tuesday after fleeing their homes. The men were separated out and taken away to check if they were affiliated to the KLA, an incident that cease-fire verifiers called very worrying.

The Times (London) reported Thursday 11 March 1999, that "eighty percent of the village [of **Ivaja**] was little more than rubble, any surviving houses destroyed by flame. **The mosque had been raked with anti-aircraft fire and vandalized.** Crucially, the village's registration office, repository of the birth certificates and identity papers needed by Albanians to exist as Yugoslav citizens [or cross the border into Macedonia] had been ransacked."

Building Identification

Building Name	Market Mosque and market complex Xhamia e Carshisë Tash Xhamia			
Street Name				
District	Vucitrn	Building Use	religious	
Neighborhood				
Town (Serbian)	Vucitrn	Building Type	mosque, shops	
Town (Albanian)	Vushtrri	Building Setting	city	
GPS Coordinates	N 42° 49.338 E 20° 57.919		Set. Relationship	
Construction	15th c. restored 19th c. (1878)		Bldg. Condition	completely destroyed
Historical Period	Ottoman	Occupancy		
Official Status			Adjacent Bldgs.	lightly damaged

Building Condition



photo by: Xhavit Lokaj (7/1999) - note modern bldg. (yellow, left of center) also visible on pre-war photo of mosque



photo by: AR/AH (10/1999) - rubble of mosque with intact modern buildings fronting bulldozed site

Damage

The mosque and the surrounding 40-50 shops in the old town center completely obliterated, site appears to have been cleared with heavy machinery.

Only scattered piles of rubble and the leveled stone foundations of the minaret and ablution fountain remain.

Knocked-down wooden utility pole, with wires still attached, lying on ground next to foundation of minaret with the wooden pole scorched and partly burned (apparently when the mosque was burned down).

Modern blocks of flats surrounding the site left untouched.

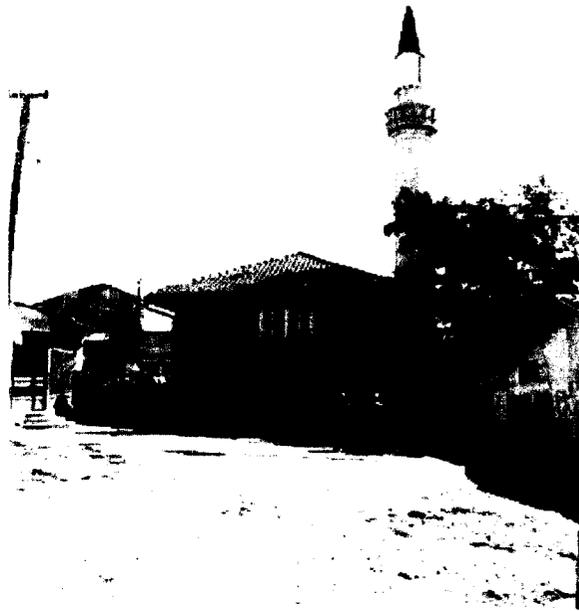
(see informant statements & media reports below)

Surveyor

Andrew Herscher
10/16/1999



pre-war photo by: Raif Virmica (1997) - taken from position uphill and behind the mosque, showing market shops



pre-war photo by: Raif Virmica (1997) - taken from the downhill end of the site, showing front facade of mosque

Informant Statements

Informant 1 Statement

March 26, 1999 at ca. 18:00h mosque and market shops burned with gasoline, subsequently knocked down with bulldozer

Informant 1 Name

Abdullah Mulaku, town archivist
Vucitrn
tel. 028-71053

Informant 2 Statement

K0209392

"Two days after the start of the NATO bombing, Serb paramilitaries burned down the mosque and looted and burned more than 50 shops of Albanian craftsmen in the old market around the mosque.

The paramilitaries wore masks and were led by a Serb politician, the local boss of Arkan's political party.

They bulldozed the entire site [of the burned mosque and bazaar shops] that Sunday [March 28].

My house is the one across the street. They burned it down after they burned the mosque. My family name is Mejzini [son of the muezzin].

My father and his father were muezzins; they called the people of this town to prayer from that mosque. Now it's all gone. I'm leaving this town and not coming back. There's nothing left for me here."

Informant 2 Name

Mehmet Mejzini, owner of ruined building across the street from the mosque; was leaving town to live with relatives in Pristina

Bibliography

Ayverdi, Ekrem Hakkı. 1981. *Avrupa'da Osmanlı mimârî eserleri, III. cild 2. kitap: Yugoslavya: Kosova - Makedonya - Sırbistan - Slovenya - Voyvodina* (Istanbul: Istanbul Fetih Cemiyeti): p.310, pl.1480-1482 (ext. and int. photos)

K0209393

Media Accounts

Financial Times (London) 21 June 1999
Kosovars claim Serbs tried to wipe out their history: Guy Dinmore hears the testimony of survivors of an alleged massacre by Yugoslav paramilitaries in **Vucitrn**:

Flattened rubble and the stump of a marble minaret are all that remain of the 300-year-old Qarshis mosque in this northern Kosovo town, just a small part of the wasteland left behind by the last Serb forces that pulled out of the province yesterday.

The bulldozer used to level the mosque and surrounding buildings stands abandoned next to the scar of bricks and stone in the heart of Vucitrn, a town founded by the Romans that grew prosperous under the rule of the Ottoman empire. The Serbs used explosives to topple the minarets of two other mosques nearby. "They tried to wipe out our Moslem history," said Abdullah Muliaku, an elderly ethnic Albanian, who in faltering French described himself as the keeper of historic archives. He said Serb forces destroyed the three mosques on March 27, three days after Nato launched its air offensive.

Much of Vucitrn, once a town of 12,000 people, lies in blackened ruins. Behind the high walls that line muddy lanes, house after house has been gutted by fire. [...]

"You can erase buildings but you cannot destroy a people," said Mr Muliaku. It appears, however, that the Serb paramilitaries tried to do just that in Vucitrn, as in so many other dark corners of Kosovo now being exposed. The worst single massacre in Vucitrn occurred on May 22 when, according to survivors, Samadregja Street was sealed off and 70 men were herded into several courtyards.

Financial Times 21 June 1999 (continued)

Ajmonda Ferati, 33, described how men were separated from women, including her brother, uncle and cousin. Outside in the lane, masked paramilitaries robbed the women of their money and jewellery, while screams could be heard from behind the walls. All that is now left are bloodstains on the grass and paths, a pair of dentures in the mud.

Faton Kutllovci said he jumped from an upstairs window as he heard the paramilitaries approach and hid beside the house. His brother, Bedri, was too late and presumed shot. Survivors have listed the names of all 70 victims but found only one body. An old woman said she saw the Serbs, helped by gypsies, drag the corpses away. No one yet knows where.

On the edge of Vucitrn is the Moslem cemetery with about 100 fresh graves. Most were dug by gypsies and marked with simple sticks bearing the names of the dead, but none are the missing 69 men. Mr Muliaku said they were other inhabitants of Vucitrn, found hiding in their homes and killed by paramilitaries.

The villages in the fertile valley around Vucitrn tell the same story - torched farms, the rotting carcasses of livestock, the mass graves of humans. The few Serb settlements are also deserted and smoke billows from houses torched by their occupants as they fled with the retreating forces. Ethnic Albanians, their own homes ruined, looted what they could. [...]