

# **War damage to the cultural heritage in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina**

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## **REPORT ON A FACT-FINDING MISSION**

**30 May - 22 June 1994**

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## **A. INTRODUCTION**

From 30 May to 22 June 1994 the consultant carried out a mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia in close cooperation with the ECMM (European Community Monitoring Mission).

One purpose of the mission was to visit regions to which no international organisation specialising in cultural heritage had yet had access: Central Bosnia and the United Nations Protection Areas (UNPA) North and South in Croatia. Mostar and Sarajevo were briefly visited, mainly in order to meet with heritage authorities and to acquire information on the scope of action for the cultural heritage of the European Union administration in Mostar and the United Nations Office of the Special Coordinator for Sarajevo, but also, in the case of Mostar, to examine areas of the town that the consultant had not seen in March.

A second major purpose of the mission was to introduce the monitoring system and checklist for cultural heritage to the ECMM teams (it should be pointed out that since the mission in March 1994 the ECMM has made monitoring of cultural heritage a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and new monitors are instructed in this when they join the ECMM). To this end the consultant was accompanied by members of the Humanitarian Section, who explained the system to the monitors, as well as to local religious, political and heritage authorities, who were invited to resort to the ECMM monitoring mission to gather information on the heritage.

Needless to say, the mission would not have been possible without the ECMM: many of the places seen were dangerous - whatever the impression created by the Western medias, the war continues in Central Bosnia - and access throughout much of the area was difficult and sometimes complicated because of the attitudes of political and military authorities. The consultant sincerely thanks the whole ECMM organisation, but especially the Greek Presidency, the Humanitarian Section, and the teams in the field for their friendly assistance.

He also wishes to thank those cultural heritage authorities in Zagreb and Mostar who provided lists of heritage for monitoring purposes.

## **B. THE SITUATION OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN CENTRAL BOSNIA**

## **Bosnian Heritage: towns and villages; mosques and churches**

As one goes north from Herzegovina the structure of towns changes - compactness gives way to looseness: Bosnian towns straggle along valley roads, frequently beneath an Ottoman fortress, houses and other buildings are interspersed with gardens, and residential districts, some of them a century or more old, are located in clumps on hillsides. In larger places there is greater density where the Austrians have built systematically. Such centres as exist have often been badly damaged by post-World War II building, sometimes seriously out of scale with the surrounding tissue.

Villages consist of the same loose structure, often totally without centres; moreover, in the village there are houses and farm buildings and a church or mosque, and virtually no other kind of building.

The stone of the Adriatic world gives way to cobbling, and wood and earth for older buildings, whether houses or mosques - though there are very few of these mosques left; stone is reserved for mainly for the larger Ottoman mosques, and later for the Austrian buildings. Accordingly, the vernacular Bosnian heritage is very fragile - many large town houses have survived, the smaller rural houses disappear steadily as their owners become wealthy enough to build a large house with hollow brick or cement blocks.

Central Bosnia is overwhelmingly rural, with small and medium-size towns - Sarajevo is an exception to Bosnia. Towns such as Tuzla and Zenica are the fruit of post-war socialism, towns of only moderate size that were force-fed by industrial ambitions, and also ruined by them. But even they are exceptions. One is conscious, despite the war, of the self-sufficiency and vigour of rural and small town Bosnia - much rebuilding before the conflict, but with few signs of abandon, unlike the Adriatic world.

The image of pre-war integration of ethnic groups in Bosnia often presented in Western Europe must be nuanced. In towns - where the populations were the most mixed - there are often separate residential districts. The 19th- or 20th-century Catholic and Orthodox churches are rather peripheral, and they are usually closer to each other than they are to mosques. In the countryside Moslem villages alternate with Croatian or Serbian villages, and there are large areas where there are only Moslem villages. Around Vitez there are recently created Moslem villages, which shows the persistence of divisions, at least in terms of residence.

There are new mosques everywhere, especially in the country, constructed mainly from the 1970s onward. These are often impressive buildings - copies of Ottoman mosques with domes, domed porches and very tall minarets. It is said that these were constructed

mainly with the money of local Bosnians, often emigrant workers. Often this rebuilding led to the abandon of older mosques. Moreover, all mosques, including historic mosques, are tended lovingly, they are often improved, sometimes to such an extent that they are a little hard to identify (addition of minarets, replacement of wooden porches by concrete ones, disappearance of interior frescoes, wood and mud walls bricked in, wooden minarets replaced by sheet metal). They are clearly living buildings, and the sign of genuine devoutness on the part of rural and small town Moslems. Urban Moslems maintain that this religiosity has grown only with the war, and while there is some truth in this statement, the very fact of so much new building and rebuilding and maintenance implies that the attitude of the rural and small town population to its religion was characterised by great attachment. This attitude must be strongly kept in mind with regard to the fate of all sacral heritage (see below).

The Christian sacral heritage presents a different face. In the first place in many places older Catholic and especially Orthodox churches suffered from neglect. However, there was also significant building of new Orthodox churches before the war - some of them marked on the exterior with the famous four "s" (Only Unity will save the Serbs), and with specific architectural reference to historic Balkan Orthodox churches, and not to the banal neo-baroque styles that both Catholic and Orthodox sacral buildings featured before World War I, or the "modernism" of Catholic churches in Herzegovina or the concrete bunker Franciscan monastery in Tuzla. Many of these buildings were still in an unfinished state when the war broke out.

In other words there was clearly a cultural revival in rural and small town Moslem Bosnia, matched by a later Orthodox revival.

This report gives special attention to the fate of sacral buildings, whether old or new, because it is evident that both are central rallying points of the reviving cultural identity of rural and small town Bosnians: this was especially the case for the Moslems, and because of this, these buildings became privileged targets for the BSA (Bosnian Serbian Army) and the HVO (Croatian Defence Organisation).

### **Towns and villages on BSA fronts**

On account of the difficulty of access for international organisations, and the indifference of the international press to heritage questions, the only information on the frontline areas came from local sources, which tended to give a uniform catastrophic vision. It was imperative to acquire some idea of the situation of these areas from direct observation, which inevitably runs the risk of superficiality on account of the problems encountered in some areas and on the time available. The places are listed in the order in which they were visited. Nearly all of them were shelled sometime during the period of the consultant's mission, usually several times, and in a few cases, many times.

**Konjic** (pre-war district population of the 43,636 - these figures include villages in the district): Konjic is a very hybrid town, with much new building in the west centre; a Moslem district ("Stari Grad", meaning "Old Town") contains a few old Bosnian houses, banal new housing, some apartments, and six mosques, most of some of them built of porous sedra stone from the Neretva valley. Its main street contains a number of Austrian-period buildings, including a Franciscan monastery (1895). Konjic has suffered considerably from BSA shelling since the beginning of the war (a number of buildings burned out): it is on one of the convoy routes to central Bosnia and the BSA positions are extremely close to the east end of the town.

Konjic provides a striking case of deliberate mosque targeting. The Ottoman-period Carsijska mosque has two bad tank cannon impacts on the minaret, whose stability is now in danger, not to mention small arms impacts on the north facade. The nearby cemetery contains the beautiful late 19th-century tomb of Dervis Pasa Cengic, commander of the region, which was not damaged. Further to the east is the Tekiye mosque (17th century), isolated, and highly visible to the BSA: there are two impacts on the minaret, perhaps from 50mm anti-aircraft cannon, and three big impacts on the river side and others on the north facade. The dome is pierced in two spots and the building is unusable. Inside "Stari Grad" are the Prkansjka mosque, the most recently built mosque, hit in the base of the minaret by a similar projectile, and the older Vardacka mosque, which has lost the top of the minaret, probably from tank fire, with another impact in the roof (since repaired). Local people said that this damage had taken place in May and July 1992. The recently restored Reprovacka mosque, on the opposite bank of the Neretva, has suffered small arms fire on the facades and one shell impact on the roof.

The Orthodox church, restored just before the war, has shrapnel impacts on the west and south facades, and the interior was badly vandalised, but not burned. The iconostasis is damaged and the icons have disappeared. Service books and liturgical items were burned in front of the church door. This damage took place at the beginning of the war according to local Moslems, who claim that the church was used as a weapons storehouse by Serbs. The nearby priest's house (Austrian period) was burned out.

The roof of the Franciscan church was hit by three shells (it has been summarily repaired), along with the east wall (one hit at base of window apertures). There has been a lot of seepage in interior walls and in the roof, and there are fissures along the first two arches of the nave that may have been caused by shelling, but these may have existed before the war. The eastern monastery building too has been hit on the cornice and roof of the eastern end, and is being repaired.

**Travnik** (pre-war district population of 70,402): Travnik is one of the treasures of Bosnia-Herzegovina, with an extremely rich Ottoman heritage (mosques, fortress, turbe), old Bosnian houses as well as a strong Austrian building heritage in the town centre. Despite sporadic terror shelling from BSA, there is fortunately little damage to the town. The BSA did not have direct visibility, which has protected such exposed structures as mosques.

The 19th-century Orthodox church suffered minor damage from small shells; it was closed, and said to be untouched by vandalism in the interior by the secretary of the municipality. The consultant asked the ECMM to monitor this.

The 19th-century Catholic church was untouched and in service. There has been ethnic cleansing of the Croatian population, but no burning. Perhaps the most problematic building is the Austrian Gymnasium, neglected before the war, and now occupied by refugees, resulting in internal degradation.

**Zavidovici** (pre-war district population of 57,153): most of the interesting heritage (sacral and Austrian civil buildings) is located on the west bank of the Bosna; newer development is on the east bank. The town, under BiH control, suffered mainly from bombardment from the BSA, but also from the HVO in 1993. There is intermittent shelling from BSA, which is four kilometres away. Damage is scattered, with the worst in the area of the hospital and the east bank, with more military damage in the southwestern outskirts on the old confrontation line between ABiH (Armija of Bosnia-Herzegovina) and the BSA.

The town mosque (brick, with a concrete minaret) has been hit in the minaret, perhaps by a tank round coming from HVO positions, with another shot on the window from the same direction. None of the surrounding houses have been hit, which implies deliberate targeting.

St. Joseph's Catholic Church (1904), which was close to the confrontation line on the northwest, has a little shrapnel damage on the belfry and on the east side from a Serbian shell. The priest has remained and the church is in service.

The nearby brick Orthodox church, in a very poor state of maintenance before the war, has small arms damage to its front facade, and was hit by shrapnel; windows are also broken. There is no Orthodox priest, but the consultant could see through a window that the interior is clean and the iconostasis intact.

**Zepce**: see next section

**Tesanj** (pre-war district population of 43,390): Tesanj is one of the most beautiful small towns of Bosnia, untypical because its centre of Austrian and Bosnian buildings has not been destroyed by post-World War II town planning, but typical in its interplay of private gardens, green spaces around mosques and churches, and its drawn-out form along the valley of the Tesanjka, with clumps of houses on the hills. A Turkish clock tower and fortress overlook it, and there are several mosques that are classified historic monuments.

The town was in the centre of a pocket that was cut off from the main BiH territory in 1993, caught between BSA and HVO forces. The southern end, the most modern, shows

damage from shelling, when the BSA had direct visibility on the town, but there is only superficial damage to the centre. In the centre only the historic Dibekhana mosque has shrapnel damage to the front facade and on the north wall (from January 1994). The Ferhadija mosque (1560) was untouched, though slight damage to the tomb of the founder may have been caused by a shell fragment. Other visible mosques on the north outskirts of the town were said to have been damaged but since repaired and in service.

The Roman Catholic church, whose priest has left, has a little shrapnel damage to the facade, but the interior is intact - in other words undisturbed in an overwhelmingly Moslem town.

The recent (1960) central plan Orthodox church has a little damage to the roof from shell fragments, but the monitors noted that its interior has not been touched.

**Maglaj** (pre-war district population of 43,294): With the exception of the old Moslem district on the east bank of the Bosna River, this town is seems less interesting from a heritage point of view. Like Tesanj, it was long cut off, and it has been subjected to steady bombardment, continuing to undergo sporadic shelling and sniping. It is the key to completely isolating Tesanj and accordingly it is one of the worst hit towns seen, with damage of varying extent visible on most buildings on the west bank, even if there seem to be relatively few burned out or destroyed buildings.

The consultant could not cross the river to visit the great stone Kalavun Jusuf-Pasina (or "lead") mosque (16th century), but could see that the pinnacle of the minaret had been shot off, and that there might also be some damage to the porch.

The roof of the Orthodox Church of St. Basil (1886) is completely destroyed, and there is shelling damage to the steeple. If local people could agree that this damage occurred in 1992, the causes of the burning are not clear, and it is highly possible that it was done by the ubiquitous "uncontrollable elements", in this case Moslems. This isolated structure is highly visible to the BSA on the east bank slopes, and it does not seem likely that they would subject it to continuous shelling with incendiaries.

**Maglaj area:** Celajici: many houses damaged by artillery on old confrontation line with BSA; Lijesnica: recent mosque in field on edge of village hit by numerous projectiles (tank, anti-aircraft), though not destroyed; the roof was even repaired. Local people attributed this damage to both BSA and HVO; the adjoining village was also damaged by shelling but not badly; scattered farms and houses in Osve area on route to Tesanj were burned out.

**Kladanj** (pre-war district population of 16,028): the centre of this town was badly damaged by post-war town planning (4 of the 7 mosques were torn down, another burned, another demolished by the Moslem community to make way for a new mosque), but the Austrian presence is strong (town hall, school, walling of river banks,

pseudo-Moorish shops), and there are traditional Bosnian houses behind the Hadji Balibec mosque (1545), . This building, made of sedra and siga stone, is untouched by projectiles. The town centre shows scattered damage of varying gravity, the worse impacts being attributed to Luna ground-to-ground missiles.

The roof of the unfinished Catholic church was damaged by BSA shelling.

The recently built Orthodox church (1986) was vandalised, most of the new icons being removed by unknown parties, but the interior was cleaned at the order of the mayor. There is slight damage to the facade by a few small impacts and the windows are broken.

**Tuzla** (pre-war district population of 131,861): Tuzla suffered earlier in the war from bombardment, especially from terror shooting, with artillery using shrapnel, and there is scattered damage throughout this large town. However, the BSA does not have direct visibility, and war damage to the much neglected historic centre (mainly Austrian period) seems much less than for other towns visited. Among the mosques only the Gazi-Turalibeg (or Polska) mosque (1572) shows slight damage from shrapnel, and the some of the windows of the Jalska mosque (1600) are broken.

There are a few small impacts on the facade of the Orthodox Church of the Assumption of the Virgin (1886) and to the verandah of the officiating priest's house, perhaps from "uncontrollable elements". The Orthodox Bishop's residence (20th-century neo-classical) has two artillery or mortar impacts on the roof and cornice, and smaller impacts on the street facade. The mayor of Tuzla informed the ECMM that neither the collections of the Bishop nor the interior of the Cathedral have been disturbed: the ECMM will monitor this.

However, the worst problems faced by the historic heritage of Tuzla are not the consequences of war damage (see below).

**Tuzla area** (southeast): Caklovici: a largely Serbian suburb, which was burned out in reprisal, though it is claimed by local people that there was fighting here; Spreca river valley (the BSA holds the hills to the south that overlook the valley, and the area is subject to sporadic shelling and sniping): Kalesija (pre-war population of 43,795): new town completely abandoned, with substantial artillery damage (the consultant asked the mayor of the area to pick up the archives in the town hall dating from the Communist period); Dubica: on the old front lines, many houses burned out, the late 19th century Orthodox church has two rocket impacts on the belfry and the roof was burned out (May-June 1992), but it is not clear whether this was due to military action or Moslem reprisal - the icons were removed from iconostasis; Prjnavor: new unfinished mosque with minaret cut either by air-to-ground or ground-to-ground missile (the minaret was "kicked" out by the explosion, with the cherefa lying near the base of the minaret) in May 1992, the concrete dome has a large hole made by artillery, the village has burning damage; Miljanovici: new mosque with impact on dome, piercing hit on minaret, cannon impact on wall above mihrab (March 1993), and the surrounding houses were



damaged by artillery; Gornji Rainci: unfinished domed mosque with broken windows and splinter damage to dome; Donji Rainci: new mosque (1989) hit by several artillery projectiles (including four or five impacts on the dome), this mosque is far from houses and presents another case of deliberate mosque targeting; the old mosque with minaret through the roof, which is abandoned, is hidden on the northern slope behind the new building; the two new mosques of Tojsica are untouched, perhaps because of topography, and the old Alik mosque, which is being renovated for museum purposes, was also spared, though being more visible from the hill of Vis.

The consultant did not have time to visit Gornji Tuzla, a remarkable ensemble of mosques and Turkish-period houses, which is endangered by its proximity to the front lines.

**Gracanica** (59,050 inhabitants in the district before the war): The heritage interest of Gracanica lies in its several mosques, medresa and Turkish period clock-tower, and the pedestrian-zone main street, which retains a number of Austrian buildings, including some Art Nouveau, poorly maintained. The town hall, also in poor condition, is a typical example of pseudo-Moorish Austrian architecture. There were clearly difficulties in taking care of the heritage before the war: for example the only old (and somewhat dilapidated) Bosnian house in the town centre, though a classified monument, will probably be torn down by its owner, and the municipality can impose nothing other than a vague promise that the new building will be in a similar style.

The town has been bombarded steadily since the beginning of the war. Despite this it is hidden from the BSA by the topography. Moreover, its urban structure is loose, except for the centre street, and many projectiles fall in gardens. The town centre seems relatively unscathed. The Ahmed Pasa mosque (1593) shows only a little damage from splinters. The Osman Kapetan medresa (1800) has a little damage to the facade from splinters. The other three mosques in the town or immediately vicinity have suffered mainly only minor surface damage, and in one case the roof has been repaired.

The 19th-century Catholic church has a few broken windows and bullet holes in the facade; the interior is intact though neglected, but church services are assured by a priest from Tuzla (the parish priest has left).

The 19th-century Orthodox church (restored in 1921) was hit in the roof in December 1993, but has not received even a temporary cover, the reason being that the priest has left with the key. The door does not seem to have been forced and the iconostasis is visible from the apse windows. Since the Eparch of Tuzla too has left it is extremely difficult to gain access to the church to examine its interior.

**Gradacac** (56,378 population in district before the war, the town itself contained 12,500 people and now has 7,000): This town has suffered greatly from post-war building in its main street, but has several old mosques, a number of Austrian-period buildings, Moslem districts with old Bosnian houses and the Turkish fortress with the famous Hussein Kaptan tower house.

Since the beginning of the war Gradacac lies in a strategically important zone - at the western end of the Posavinian corridor, and it has been bombarded steadily. There is considerable damage to houses and other buildings in the centre, some of which has been attributed by local people to airplanes and ground-to-ground missiles, though it can be wondered if this destruction has not been caused by reprisals against Serbs; there are pockets of other bad damage throughout the town. Gradacac is higher than the areas to the north, and once again topography has prevented visual sighting on some buildings, and the scattered nature of the urban tissue has also lessened the destruction, but Gradacac is undeniably one of the worst damaged towns seen by the consultant in Bosnia.

The Hussein Kaptan mosque - the last domed mosque built in Bosnia during the Ottoman period (1827) has been hit twice in the minaret (the cherefa is broken in once place), probably by tank cannon. The small 19th-century building that served as a library and the building for ablutions, all part of the ensemble, have also been damaged. The Reuf-Bey Gradiscevic mosque (19th century) was hit twice in the roof (since repaired), and the consultant saw a very recent artillery impact in the earth ten metres from the mosque. The Svirac mosque has a shell impact on the porch with damage from splinters, while the nearby early 19th-century wooden Bey Gradiscevic house, a listed monument, has a bit of shrapnel damage (however, it seems to have a more serious stability problem). The small Bukvara mosque (an example of a much modified wood and earth wall structure with wooden minaret sitting on the roof beams) received a large projectile in the street facade.

The Hussein Tower house (used as a restaurant before the war) (1824) in the fortress, on account of its high profile, has obviously been a favourite target for the BSA artillery, with large impacts on the north and east facades, but the building is still far being in a critical state. There is less damage to the two other large buildings in the complex, and the town museum was evacuated. The clock tower has been hit in the top (this is minor damage), but the stone gates of the fortress were spared, and their wooden roofs have suffered only from insufficient maintenance. It should be pointed out that although the tower-house does not seem to have been occupied by soldiers, they are present elsewhere in the fortress.

St. Mark's Catholic Church (1888) has been damaged by artillery, and has undergone a little looting inside; the Orthodox Church of the Prophet Elijah (1887) suffered more serious shelling damage to the roof and the steeple, and was badly vandalised inside (fire set in the entrance and in the loft over the door, icons badly damaged, frescoes painted over and liturgical items thrown about).

**Gradacac area** (villages behind or on frontlines to the east) : these provide striking examples of mosque targeting by the BSA: Donji Mionica, recent mosque has shrapnel impacts on the brick minaret and the windows are broken; Mionica 2: recent brick mosque with cement minaret has tank impacts in wall and minaret cut by artillery, the village is badly damaged, and is only a few hundred metres from BSA positions; Mionica 1, modern mosque with brick minaret, which is cut above the cherefa with a large impact below and other impacts (including a tank impact that passed through the outer and interior walls) and shrapnel damage; however, the roof of the mosque had

been repaired by the local people - this village is badly damaged by artillery; Krcevina: the minaret of this recent mosque was brought down through the roof by artillery in June 1993, and there are impacts on the north facade (one of which has gone through the other wall); villages southwest of Gradacac (Zelinska river valley, at the end of which are heights occupied by the BSA): Zelinja Donja: shrapnel impacts on east wall of recent mosque, and several houses damaged by artillery; Zelinja Srednja: recent mosque (1978) was hit in roof (and since repaired), has shrapnel damage on facades and impact on base of minaret, and there are two impacts in the mosque yard - this village contains the oldest school in Gradacac district (Austrian building from 1914), which was also hit in the roof; houses in the village have been damaged from shelling, which continues sporadically.

**Olovo** (pre-war district population of 16,901): The centre of this town underwent much change after World War II, with the main elements of heritage being the Moslem residential district ("Stari Grad") on the south slope of the town, the much modified stone town mosque, the Franciscan pilgrimage church and the Orthodox church.

Olovo is strategically important, being at the entrance of the Krivaja river valley, a few kilometres from the only useable road linking Tuzla to the rest of central Bosnia. Consequently, like Gradacac, it is one of the worst damaged towns on the front with the BSA, and is continuously undergoing bombardment: its eastern end, of which the consultant could get only a short glimpse, is genuinely reminiscent of Vukovar, but there is damage nearly everywhere else, with only the district right beneath the Orthodox church being spared.

The consultant visited the mosque, upon which BSA had enjoyed direct visibility. Local people claimed that the mosque had been targeted on 1 February 1993: three powerful projectiles pierced the north facade, another pierced the southeast facade, and there were other hits in the roof (since partially repaired), and the brick minaret was damaged by shrapnel. Given that the immediate surroundings were little damaged, it is a clear case of deliberate mosque shooting.

Two hundred metres above the mosque is the Franciscan Sanctuary and Pilgrimage Church of Our Lady (1930-71), the only completed part of an ambitious project to reconstruct a monastery on the site of the Franciscan monastery that burned in 1704. It is remarkable that the church, which was fully within view of the BSA, received no damage, and it may be a sign of the respect shown by the Serbian commander, a local man, to this well known pilgrimage site.

The Orthodox church was not inspected, and will be seen by the ECMM.

**Bugojno**: see next section

**Conclusion for towns and villages on BSA fronts**

The worst damage to Bosnian towns and villages has occurred to those places that are of strategic importance to BSA - Gradacac and the villages to the east, Konjic, Olovo and Maglaj. It is especially in the first two areas that cultural/sacral heritage has suffered the most. However, generally speaking monumental heritage has suffered rather less than feared. The report of the Federal Institute for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage, cut off from the rest of central Bosnia, understandably contains exaggerations about the situation in Travnik, Tuzla and Gradacac. Topography has protected much heritage (notably in Travnik and Tesanj), and artillery must be used in a more determined manner in order to level buildings. It would appear that the BSA resorts mainly to wasteful terror-shooting, with deliberate, if somewhat inconsistent targeting on mosques in order to send a political message to the Moslem population.

Yet this should not be taken by the West European reader to mean that the damage to these Bosnian towns is insignificant: taken globally it is enormous, but few historic buildings are beyond repair; however, their condition will worsen if they are not attended to, or if they are forgotten in international aid devoted to a few privileged sites, or if the war continues. The situation for damaged vernacular heritage, especially the more fragile buildings of cobbling and wood and mud structures is probably more serious, for they are likely to be pulled down, and the stock of traditional buildings will inevitably diminish because of the war.

### **The situation of cultural heritage in the pockets**

By "pockets" the consultant means those areas that were affected mainly by fighting between the HVO and ABiH and by ethnic cleansing carried out by each of them from the summer of 1993 until the ceasefire of February 1994. Usually the damage by conventional weaponry to these areas is less serious than to the towns and areas mentioned above - the armament of the HVO and the ABiH is nowhere near as powerful as that at the disposal of the BSA. Damage from burning and dynamiting - the primary arms of ethnic cleansing - is generally more devastating.

**Bugojno** (pre-war district population of 46,863): This town, close to the dividing line between Herzegovina and Bosnia, has suffered far more from ethnic cleansing than from shelling from the BSA: in 1993 most of the Croatian population was driven out and many houses were burned. The modern Catholic church suffered some vandalism (broken windows) but the consultant could not stop to inspect it or visit the town (being part of an ECMM convoy). Most buildings on the main street are protected by wood in anticipation of BSA bombardment. The ECMM will monitor the Catholic and Orthodox churches.

**Villages on road to Gornji Vakuf:** much firing damage from ethnic cleansing by both sides and from fighting on confrontation lines.

**Gornji Vakuf** (pre-war district population of 25,130): although shelled by the BSA in 1992, the worst military damage to the town was caused by the fighting between the HVO and ABiH in 1993, and mainly by the HVO. There was resort to home-made weapons such as drums full of explosives ("Livno bombs"), which destroyed entire houses on the northern edge of the town. The centre was badly damaged by military means - and the western end is now abandoned by the Croatian population - but the larger Moslem area to the east presents very extensive damage, and it is difficult to find a building that was not hit. The vernacular architecture of the Moslem district is perhaps the most interesting heritage feature to the town, which underwent chaotic building after World War II, and it has been seriously damaged in the fighting. The new districts in the northeast (Moslem) and northwest of the town were entirely burned out, but the consultant could not determine if the northwestern area was Moslem or Croat.

One recently built mosque sustained small-arms damage to the minaret, roofs and facades, and the mosque further to the east has a concrete minaret damaged by small artillery projectiles. After the mission the consultant learned that the imam wishes to dynamite this minaret but the consultant recommended to the ECMM that an UNPROFOR engineer inspect the mosque and discuss the matter with the imam before taking dramatic action.

**Prozor** (pre-war district population of 16,601): This town is denser along the main road than most. The HVO savagely cleansed the town (burned Moslem houses or shops alternating with unburnt Croat buildings) along with the newer Moslem outskirts on road to Gornji Vakuf. The mosque appears structurally intact, but the situation was too tense for an attempt to see the interior of the building. The Ottoman clock-tower seems untouched as well.

**Vitez pocket area:** Much was made, especially in the Croatian media, of ABiH bombardments on this area, but after visiting the pocket, it is clear that the HVO was responsible for the worst damage.

**Inside the pocket** (HVO controlled area): **Vitez** (pre-war district population of 27,728): This primarily Croatian town contains a tiny Moslem pocket ("Stari Vitez") that has a number of traditional houses. It is this area that suffered the most damage, especially at the east end (truck bomb). The very fine old mosque (sedra stone and stone from a Roman bridge) suffered two impacts from HVO anti-aircraft cannon on the more recent brick minaret. In the west end of the town the 19th-century Catholic church has impacts on the north cornice and the south roof, probably from ABiH lines, but this area of the town is little damaged.

**Ahmici:** This is a recently built mainly Moslem village east of Vitez, site of an HVO-perpetrated massacre in April 1993; the village was burned out, and the new mosque was dynamited, with the minaret falling on the roof - this building can be considered as destroyed.

**Grbavica** (?), near UNPROFOR (British Battalion): recent Moslem village almost totally torched; the roof of the new mosque was burned out in April 1993 and in May 1994 the minaret was dynamited.

**Busovaca** (pre-war district population of 18,883): What seems to be the much modified stone Varos mosque was burned in 1993, then the more recent brick minaret was dynamited in May 1994, crushing tombstones in its fall; however, the building is probably salvageable. St. Anthony's Catholic church (1884) is totally intact, as is the Orthodox church (1882), which is opened for prayers once a week, even though not no religious service is assured by a priest. The town was ethnically cleansed of Moslems, but there was much less burning of houses than elsewhere.

**On the edge and outside the pocket** (ABiH-controlled): The depth of the confrontation line between HVO and ABiH is variable, from a few hundred metres in some places to nearly a kilometre in others, and in these areas there is much damage from burning and military means (mortars, anti-aircraft cannon, but little artillery or tank cannons).

**Dolac:** The area was ethnically cleansed of Croats, with some burning in Donji Dolac; the handsome double-spire late 19th-century Catholic church in Gornji Dolac had its roof pierced by shells, but was repaired; the windows were broken and the interior, which could only be seen through a window, the building being locked, was vandalised (the high altar appears to have suffered badly); the priest's house (Austrian-period) nearby was also vandalised, however there was no burning to either building.

**Guca Gora:** The civil and military BiH authorities in Travnik permitted the consultant to visit this site. The village, which contained many traditional farm houses and buildings, was taken from the HVO, perhaps by mujahedeen soldiers, and it was ethnically cleansed of Croats, with a lot of burning. Two weeks later the ABiH occupied the Franciscan Monastery, which it still occupies.

This ensemble was rebuilt from 1856 to 1900 (the church is in the neo-Romanesque style). The consultant could not visit the interior of the church and the monastery buildings, but he could see that the exterior and grounds had suffered only insignificant

damage. The library is not particularly important - the fire in 1945 destroyed the old holdings - but it is still in the monastery. Other items of value (paintings, liturgical items, etc.) were evacuated to Travnik, where they are safeguarded by the local authorities. The ECMM will monitor these collections, with a Catholic priest and a local heritage expert, and hopefully will be able to have access to the interior of the buildings. Although it will be seen to be contrary to the Hague Convention, in the consultant's opinion the least bad solution under present circumstances is that ABiH remain in the ensemble until the return of the Franciscans can be assured, along with the stationing of an adequate police guard.

**Kacuni**: recent mosque with superficial damage to roof, and broken windows (firing from HVO positions); modern Catholic church of St. Anthony, interior vandalised (altar painting slashed, statue of Mary knocked over), windows broken.

**Kruscica**: unfinished new mosque hit in facade, perhaps by recoilless cannon (HVO); roof was also damaged but fixed; an example of deliberate mosque shooting, since the houses in this largely traditional village seem to have suffered little from shelling.

**Fojnica** (pre-war population district population of 16,227): This town was savagely cleansed of its Croatian population by local ABiH in 1993, with much burning of houses.

Above the town is the Franciscan Monastery (rebuilt starting in 1863). The architectural ensemble, with its neo-Renaissance church, is in poor condition, especially the church; it is much less important for the cultural heritage of Bosnia-Herzegovina than its treasury, library, and archives. On 13 November 1993 two Franciscan priests were murdered, but the Franciscans remained in the monastery, precisely out of fear for the fate of the establishment and its contents if they fled. There was some small arms fire on the monastery, but no other damage. The monastery presently has a BiH police guard.

**Villages on the road from Fojnica to Kiseljak**: east of Fojnica is Nadbare, with its intact mosque, but some burned houses, from ethnic cleansing by both sides; afterwards is mainly Croat Silo, largely burned out along with its recent Catholic church; then comes Lug, and a modern mosque with a badly damaged roof. The confrontation line follows and then come the outskirts of Kiseljak, announced by a heavily damaged mosque with a dynamited minaret.

**Kiseljak** (pre-war population of 24,081): This is a kind of HVO pendant to Fojnica, because it was ethnically cleansed of its Moslem inhabitants. The consultant could not visit the town because of the omnipresence of uncontrollable elements, but it did not

seem that there was much burning. The recently built mosque was vandalised and perhaps burned; the minaret was dynamited.

**Vares** (pre-war district population of 22,114): Although shelled intermittently by the BSA, the town's population suffered most from the ethnic cleansing of 1993, initiated by HVO forces from Kiseljak. This culminated in the massacre of Moslem villagers in nearby Stupni Do, and then in counter-ethnic cleansing by ABiH. The most damage, from burning, but also from fighting, is on the southern outskirts. However, the old town, with its traditional Bosnian houses, is intact.

The late 19th-century Catholic church of St. Michael's has damage to the roof from recent shelling as well as a mortar impact at the foot of one of the towers. Yet the priest has remained and assures regular services.

Nearby is a small recently built Orthodox church (with the motto "Only Unity will Save the Serbs" on the window grills). Windows have been broken, probably by stones, but the interior, including the iconostasis, is intact; the building is locked. The Orthodox priest's house has been vandalised, but not burned.

**Zepce** (pre-war district population of 22,840): perhaps one of the least interesting towns in terms of heritage, it contains many small houses, some built of cobbling, and it contained above all three important mosques. The Moslem population underwent severe ethnic cleansing in 1993 (the new districts on the south were burned out, and there is was much burning and dynamiting in the central and east area). Although standing, the much modified Ferhad Pasa mosque clearly suffered from explosives set at the base of its walls and maybe from burning, and the Ali Bey and Prijecka mosques were dynamited. Given the tense situation in the town it was not possible to visit the dynamited mosques (one of which was very briefly observed from the ECMM vehicle).

The Catholic church of St. Anthony (20th century) has a little shrapnel damage on the exterior, but is intact and in service.

The consultant could not visit the Orthodox church, but was told by the ECMM that it had been a little vandalised, but spared worse damage because of the HVO/BSA collaboration in the area before February 1994. Although it would appear that most of the damage came from ethnic cleansing in the summer of 1993, the town is presently threatened by BSA artillery.

**Zepce area** (west): The village of **Novi Seher** (half Croat, half Moslem) was largely burned out by the retreating BSA in February 1994; the Catholic church may have been vandalised, but it could not be visited (HVO presence); two Moslem cemeteries were visible but no mosques; villages in the **Domislica** area were also said by the ECMM to have been burned out in April 1994, by retreating BSA or by advancing HVO or by



both, with execution of civilians visible; (south): brick Catholic church (at Gornji Golubinja?), burned out by ABiH during the winter of 1993-94

### **Conclusion for the situation of the cultural heritage in the pockets**

From the towns and villages seen, it is clear that the most serious damage was to mosques - committed by HVO elements - and to houses, by both HVO and ABiH. There are, to be sure, a number of cases of burning of churches by ABiH units, but no cases of dynamiting. Along with the mosques, the worst damaged cultural heritage were the traditional houses, as was noted in the conclusions to the preceding section. However, there are other losses in the churches and mosques and in the houses of priests and imams - moveable heritage in its widest sense, from paintings to Christian parish and Moslem community archives. Gornji Vakuf stands out as the one town that suffered the most from military action, on a level with the worst damaged towns on the BSA front lines.

### **The attitude of Moslem Bosnians to Christian sacral heritage**

In the area between Gradacac and Tuzla the consultant came across Orthodox churches in villages whose Serbian inhabitants had largely left. In one case (Preville), there had been fighting, and it seems that some Serbs' houses had been burned; in other cases (Srnice Donje, Spionica) the inhabitants have steadily departed. In the case of two unfinished open churches (two of which carried the Serbian motto) and the handsome 20th century stone church in Spionica, there seemed to be hardly any damage from vandalism.

In the two preceding sections there are numerous cases of minor vandalism of Orthodox and Catholic churches, cases of destructive vandalism of Orthodox churches in badly bombarded towns, and cases of burning in the pocket areas. Yet there are no cases of total destruction. Certainly Guca Gora monastery was occupied, Fojnica was clearly threatened, but the great Franciscan monastery of Kraljevo Sutjeska (also visited by the consultant) has never been disturbed. This is a far cry from the fates of several monastic establishments at the hands of the Serbs and of Zitomislic, dynamited by HVO elements. The consultant's survey is by no means exhaustive, and he has asked the ECMM to monitor a series of Catholic churches in the Konjic area and elsewhere.

However, there was clearly relative forbearance on the part of BiH authorities, political and military, and from soldiers and policemen towards Christian sacral heritage.

The consultant suggests that this forbearance is a reflection of the respect of a traditional Moslem rural and small town population for religious establishments in general. After having been unfairly vituperated by a Moslem refugee soldier for showing more interest in the vandalised Catholic church at Dolac than in the dynamited mosques down the road, the consultant was told, "This is God's house, and we will not destroy it". This is the sign of a devout society; it cannot be regarded as fundamentalism.

## **C. MOSTAR, SARAJEVO, TUZLA**

### **Mostar**

#### ***Update on damage***

The visit to the west bank pocket confirmed earlier fears - bad damage to the three mosques (the minaret of the Tabacica mosque is in danger of falling down), the Austrian buildings, the tannery and the mahalla districts. There was particularly serious damage to the Austrian-period buildings on the intersection of the Bulevar and the street to the trestle bridge, provoked by a truck bomb sent by the HVO during the battle. Moreover, on 19 April the Balinovac mosque on the west bank, dynamited in 1993, was bulldozed, with the possibility of damage to graves. The historic ensemble of Mostar is the worst damaged heritage in the areas of Bosnia-Herzegovina seen by the consultant.

The villages north of Mostar in the Bijelo Polje area present a spectacle of terrible devastation: hundreds of houses have been burned out. It is likely that much of this damage dates from 1992. The ECMM informed the consultant that the stone Orthodox church at Bogodol had been dynamited, probably by HVO elements, in 1992, as well as the mosque at Vitina, near Ljubuski.

#### ***Situation of the Institutes***

There are presently two institutes for the protection of cultural monuments in Mostar, one for each bank, as well as two reconstruction departments. This situation is the reflection of the political division of the town, and unity will be achieved only when, politically speaking, there is only one Mostar. Until then the cooperation will prove difficult.

While there is a general penury of qualified restoration architects, there is more archaeological and historical expertise on the west bank, which is also where most of the photographic and historical documentation is, but there seem to be more experienced architects (if not specialists) on the east bank. Accordingly, it is clearly to

the advantage of both parties to work together. Moreover, the international community will obviously not accede to the same requests emanating from both sides, such as for a photographic laboratory, which both institutes have asked for.

However, it should be pointed out that the consultant spoke with both banks before the conclusion of the agreement between the mayors of Mostar at Brussels on 10 June, and the situation may have improved since.

Both banks agreed on several points - the necessity of the permanent presence of international organisations such as Unesco and the Council of Europe on the spot, the refusal to see projects and such initiatives as symposia launched from the outside by specialists without the agreement and active participation of Mostar authorities and professionals, and on leaving reconstruction of Stari Most to a much later period.

### ***Damage evaluations and material needs***

While terminating this report the consultant received from the east bank institute a damage map and evaluations of the condition of most historic buildings in the town that he had asked for in March. These are approximate evaluations and not technical documents, but are of great utility in presenting to the outside world an idea of the condition of the historic town of Mostar.

The east bank institute did not yet have estimates of needs in emergency materials for covering and stabilising buildings, though it was hoped that the German organisation THW (Technisches Hilfswerk) would supply such materials.

### ***The European Union administration***

The consultant met the advance party, led by a former EC monitor with a thorough knowledge of the area because of his long experience there, Sir Martin Garrod. This party included an architect, Luis Suares, who is perfectly aware of the importance of the architectural heritage, and has worked hard on "bridge-building" and advising both banks regarding the heritage, among the other problems relating to town planning and housing. The consultant and Mr Suares met together with the institutes of both banks.

However, at the moment of writing the EU's definitive attitude to the question did not seem to be fixed, nor did the consultant know of the results of the joint Unesco/Council of Europe (Committee on Cultural Heritage) mission and their discussions with the advance party.

### ***Other international initiatives***

Concerning the cultural heritage an interesting outside project comes from the Spanish organisation Ingenieros y Arquitectos sin Fronteras, which proposes to send young professionals to help notably with damage evaluations and emergency measures.

The priority for international associations is clearly with these activities, and not with imagining fullblown restoration projects, which reflect incomprehension of the condition of Mostar.

## **Sarajevo**

### ***Remarks on damage to the Old Town***

Coming to Sarajevo after seeing Mostar and Central Bosnia, the consultant was genuinely surprised to see that most of the mosques were little damaged, including the minarets, despite the fact that these were excellent targets for visual sighting by the BSA; generally there was less damage than expected in the historic district. These remarks must be understood within the specific context of the situation of the built heritage: the consultant agrees totally with the description of the city presented by Mr Roger Shrimplin in the Third Information Report.

### ***Zemaljski Museum***

The museum building and its collections are in the bad condition described by Dr. Wenzel in the summer of 1993, and have received no covering (see below) or aid since, except a parcel of chemical products from Dr. Wenzel. The Director, Mr Imamovic drew attention to the iron age oak boat from Donja Dolina, considered to be the first priority in the collection itself, which has suffered greatly from the atmospheric conditions in the building.

The museum has no way of phoning outside of Sarajevo (the communications system is slowly being put back into order by the UN Office of the Special Coordinator for

Sarajevo), and has lost all contact with the hundreds of museums with which it exchanged publications before the war.

Moreover, it had had no information on the whereabouts of the 33 metal items from its collections sent to the Swiss Landesmuseum in 1991 for the exhibition "Gold der Helvetier". The Director of this museum has since informed the consultant that the items are in safe keeping and will be returned to the Zemaljski Museum when it wishes. The Swiss Landesmuseum has been able to collect a considerable sum of money for the Zemaljski Museum. This information has been forwarded to Sarajevo via the ECMM. This shows the potential of the ECMM monitoring exercise in the cultural field.

### ***The Federal Institute for the Protection of the Cultural and Natural Heritage of Bosnia-Herzegovina***

The Director of the Institute has been changed (the new Director is an architect, Mr Hamidovic), some of the staff have also left and have been replaced by young architects, and the Institute itself seems to be moving in the direction of becoming a department of the Ministry of Culture.

The consultant met the deputy-director, Mr Farhad Mulabegovic, and many of the staff. Their situation resembles that of the east bank professionals in Mostar, or their colleagues in the Zemaljski Museum - a total lack of funding for publications, supplies and equipment for work, including photography facilities. Their library is in Serb-controlled territory. They desperately need outside publications and contacts with foreign colleagues.

They have prepared a methodology for damage evaluations, based on the Croatian methodology sent to the Institute by the consultant, but have worked principally on preparing an exhaustive list of Bosnian-Herzegovinian heritage. They shortly hope to dispatch several architects to Mostar and to Tuzla to help their colleagues there.

### ***The Town Institute for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage of Sarajevo***

This institute, which is directly under the control of the Municipality of Sarajevo, is responsible for preparing damage evaluations of heritage in Sarajevo, and has done this for twenty buildings. The consultant could not meet the director, who is ill. The functioning staff of four people is confronted by a gigantic task.

### ***The UN Office of the Special Coordinator for Sarajevo and Cultural Heritage***

The consultant could not meet Mr Rousselot, Director of Operations, due to transport clearance delays and subsequent conflicts of schedules, but was able to procure a copy of "Restoring Life to Sarajevo, An Action Plan for the Restoration of Essential Services to the City of Sarajevo", and speak with Major Gaetan Royer, architect and assistant to the Special Coordinator.

The cultural heritage appears in the Action Plan as part of "Transitional Needs", following "Urgent Needs", in the form of "provisional repairs to historic buildings in danger of collapse - \$2,000,000" and parks for \$3,000,000. The cultural heritage also is split between the two (of seven) action groups of the Special Coordinator's Office, engineering and town planning.

The fact that this plan treats cultural heritage as a "soft" subject is not too surprising given the obvious priorities set for projects - survival, number of beneficiaries, local employment. However, Unesco has opened an office in Sarajevo, in the same building as the Office of the Special Coordinator, and will address heritage questions in conjunction with the Office, which can to a degree, aid Unesco with technical evaluations.

The funding for at least some of the projects that Unesco will coordinate will come from donors to whom the Office of the Special Coordinator has submitted project proposals. These project proposals can be presented to the Office by associations and organisations outside of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which will transmit them to the donors.

When the consultant learned how the system worked he asked Bosnia-Herzegovina Heritage Rescue to submit a project for the covering of the Zemaljski Museum roof and windows in time for the donor's conference in New York on 29 June, which it did on the basis of an earlier project proposal drawn up last year.

This system is flexible and extensible, but it will have to be supplemented by direct financial aid from foreign governments, and on the operational side by coordination of projects by Unesco in close cooperation with the national and local heritage institutes.

### **Tuzla**

#### ***A sinking historic centre***

The historic centre of Tuzla is threatened more by neglect and by the salt mines on which it stands than by the BSA artillery. The phenomenon of sinking is visible in the large vertical cracks on the facades of buildings, the threatened detachment of the building fronts, shifting road beds and side-walks and in the attempts at shoring. The porch of the late Ottoman Avusturya mosque may be sinking, and the minaret of the Poljska mosque is leaning 20 cm at its base. This phenomenon is not new, and probably accounts for the neglect of the historic town and the relative lack of post-war building in the very centre, as well as for the destruction of the finest Austrian-period buildings of the town, to a total of 172,794 sq. metres (Gymnasium, Medresa, Hotel Bristol, etc.).

The solution of picking up individual buildings with hydraulic cranes and setting them back on a concrete base has been tried with the much restored Dzindic mosque, outside of the 19th-century historic centre, but this mosque finds itself alone, since the entire Moslem residential district around it was destroyed when mines were opened in this area. The Orthodox church too was stabilised by this treatment. The problem is the degree to which the whole historic centre can be subjected to such a technique.

### ***Institute for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage***

This institute has existed for only ten years, which may provide a partial explanation for the poor condition of the cultural heritage throughout much of the region: it has not had much time to make its mark on local decision-makers. With a tiny staff of five specialists it was able to complete an inventory for five of the districts of the area, and its work elsewhere was interrupted by the war. Its staff has since diminished by two; but the remaining team has managed to safeguard their documentation. Neither they nor the regional museum (see below) have a photographic laboratory.

Although it is under the direct responsibility of the Ministry of Culture, the institute has functioned in total autarchy since the beginning of the war, and under its Director, Mijo Frankevic, it has managed to complete a damage survey of Tuzla, using its own methodology. The Institute enjoys excellent cooperation with the local Islamic Community Association, whose Secretary, Enes Zaimovic, pointed out the common work carried out against a local municipal department of town planning that is not credited with much concern for cultural heritage.

### ***The History Museum of Eastern Bosnia-Herzegovina***

This fifty-year old institution, with 50,000 items in its archaeological, ethnographical, natural history, historical and fine arts collections, is one of the most important museums in the country. Due to the sinking of the town it has moved 16 times since its creation; the stabilisation and the restoration of its final home, the Austrian-period post office, was approaching completion when the war broke out, and the collection is kept

in conditions that are at high risk in terms of artillery/fire/theft threats, including for the first and second category objects. Moreover, the textiles and other objects are in dire need of conservation attention.

Before the war there were 14 employees, 8 of them conservators; at the present time there are only 5, including 2 conservators. There have been no contacts with the 76 corresponding institutions from before the war, and no interest shown by the international cultural community. Mr Nikola Panjevic, the Director, wrote last year to the most important international governmental and non-governmental organisations, asking for assistance, but did not receive a reply.

### ***Conclusion for cultural heritage institutes and museums in cities***

On account of the war the local government and international organisations put culture on a low priority level. Neither Unesco nor the Council of Europe will be able to substitute for the much-needed professional contacts that the heritage institutes and museums need. It is presently possible to visit Mostar, Sarajevo and Tuzla for strictly professional reasons under reasonably safe conditions or at least forward letters through the ECMM.

These professionals must be one of the priorities in planning for restoring and reconstructing the cultural heritage. However, at the present time there must not only be projects for emergency protection of buildings and other heritage; there must equally be emergency projects for these specialists simply to permit them to work - material aid and the possibility for them to assume most of the work in the undertaking of emergency work on their heritage. In Sarajevo especially the consultant felt that the best remedy for an all pervading climate of depression was this possibility to work.

### **D. THE SITUATION OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN CROATIA: UNPA SOUTH (KNIN AREA) AND UNPA NORTH (KORDUN, PETRINJA AREAS)**

The consultant continued the project began in March of gaining access to United Nations Protection Areas. In these areas most of the heritage that is damaged is Croatian, but the consultant also refers to Orthodox buildings and to other damaged heritage of importance to the Serbs in this region.

#### **The northern mountain Krajina area**



Turanj to Plitvice National Park: Turanj (small town with vernacular heritage of interest): badly damaged by fighting, being on the confrontation line, abandoned; Hrvatski Blagaj: many houses burned out, hill chapel without roof and damaged by blast; Slunj: part of old mill building destroyed, probably by blast; Baroque Catholic church of the Holy Trinity without roof or pinnacle, probably burned out; Ostarski Slanovi: most houses burned, dynamited, damaged by military action; Rakovica: same fate to houses as the preceding village, Catholic church of St. Helen the Crusader (first half of 19th century) without roof or pinnacle, probably burned out; Grabovac-Plitvice: most houses burned out. It is not clear if only Croatian property was damaged in the area, but in most cases this was probably the case..

### **The heritage in the Knin area**

Despite the impression left by some recent Croatian literature, the Knin area is one of the richest heritage regions in Croatia - there is a wealth of archaeological sites, some of them Roman, there are the traces of the Venetians (the fortress of Knin) and the Ottoman Empire; the vernacular heritage includes a large number of old stone buildings - farms and mills, "Old Croatian period" churches and necropolises, and stone Orthodox and Catholic monasteries and churches going back to the 16th century and often earlier. These are set in the plains and rolling valleys at the foot of the steeply rising Velebit range and Dinaric Alps.

### **Knin**

Knin was ethnically cleansed of Croats, but there is virtually no visible damage, except to two Catholic churches - St. Anthony (1863), burned in 1993, and the Franciscan Monastery and St. James (1912), which was vandalised. The archives of the Monastery were evacuated to the Knin Krajina Museum, but during the mission a part of the Monastery library was discovered in St. James and three volumes (inventory numbers 1553, 1969, 2385) were turned over to the ECMM Regional Centre Knin with instructions to give these to the director of the museum, Mr Budimir, and request that he evacuate the rest of the books, which are in bad condition (scattered about, some burning damage), to the museum.

### **The museums in the area**

**Benkovac Local History Museum** (5,000 ethnographical and archaeological items)

The ECMM had visited this museum before the arrival of the consultant. They reported that it was functioning normally, and were told that the entire collection was present. Icons had been brought in from the Orthodox churches of Islam Grcki, Kasic and

Benkovac; they had been sent to Belgrade for exhibition (q.v. 5th Information Report) but returned to the museum.

**Obrovac Local History Museum** (more than 500 ethnographical and contemporary history items)

The ECMM had visited this museum before the arrival of the consultant. They reported that the entire collection was in Obrovac, with the exception of a few items and many photo reproductions and negatives in Zadar, blocked there since the beginning of the war. The director of the museum, Mrs Sava Ljubicic, told them that many textile items had not received conservation treatment in the preceding three years. The museum is open for visits of school children.

**Knin Krajina Museum** (2,320 ethnographical, archaeological, and contemporary history items)

The consultant was shown the museum, contained in the Knin fortress. The ethnographical collection has been opened in new quarters, but the work on the building that will house the archaeological collection was stopped on account of the war. The World War II resistance collection is in storage.

The staff of the museum consists of the director, Mr Budimir, another archaeologist and an ethnologist, a trainee conservator and three other staff.

In addition to the archives of the Franciscan Monastery, the director brought in other collections from the area: part of the archaeological display was salvaged from Plitvice.

However, the most important items came from the Drnis Krajina Museum (408 objects). This museum was occupied by the Federal Army and according to the ECMM the town, close to the front lines, was badly damaged by shelling by both sides, which explains the necessity of the evacuation. The director brought in the library and ethnographical exhibits of the Museum; above all he was able to salvage part of the permanent collection of 25 sculptures and 7 paintings of the great 20th-century Croatian artist, Ivan Mestrovic.

The consultant identified and photographed the following pieces from this collection: bronze and plaster casts - Head of a Girl with Hair plaited around her Head (two sculptures), Crazy Mile, Gregory of Nin, Study of a Hand, Nicola Adzija, Moses, Kneeling Figure of a Woman, Kings of Rumania, Torchbearers, Head of a Woman with Scarf, Marko Nakic, Monstrance, Petar Mestrovic, Self-portrait; photographic blow up: Dositej Obradovic medal; painting: Boy and Girl in the Kolo (which should be kept in better atmospheric conditions than is presently the case).

Mr Budimir identified seven paintings and studies that he could not find in Drnis, and which he presumes were stolen: Ivan Mestrovic's Mother, The Sisters of Ivan Mestrovic: Bira, Manda and Danica, Shepherd (with Bagpipes, Dog and Sheep), Crazy

Mile, Two Mourning Women, Women from the Dalmatian Hinterland, Study of a Woman. Mr Budimir reported these missing objects to the police.

The director noted that the bronze relief of St. Roch, made for the municipality of Drnis, was still probably there, along with "Our Lady of the Rosary" (plaster); other casts contained in the inventory of Drnis museum were said to be in the Mestrovic mausoleum at Otavice, structurally intact but in a heavily mined area (ECMM source). It was not clear where the Dositej Obradovic medal was.

Although the consultant saw various other objects said to have been brought from the Drnis museum, he asked ECMM to check them and inquire as to the whereabouts of the remaining collections (Adzija memorial collection, paintings of Petar Bibic and other local artists, archaeological and World War II items that may have been brought to the Knin Krajina Museum).

## **Churches and villages**

**Benkovac District:** Lisane, Bulic: burned out Croatian villages; Donji Lepuri: Catholic church of St. Martin (12th-15th century) dynamited (ECMM source); Rastevic: a lot of dynamiting of Croatian houses, but many buildings spared; Perusic: stone Catholic church of Our Lady (11th-15th century) dynamited, and totally reduced to rubble (after the Croatian attack on Maslenica in early 1993 according to Mr Dusan Badza, Deputy Foreign Minister of the local Serb government). Some graves have been damaged. The village has not been burned, and contains Serbian refugees; this village also contains the ruins of an Ottoman fortress that may not be on the Croatian register of cultural heritage; Korlat: Catholic church of the Assumption (13th-18th century) dynamited with only a bit of wall standing (ECMM); Kula Atlagic: Catholic church of St. Peter (12th-13th century), dynamited (ECMM); Islam Grcki, Kasic: Serbian villages badly damaged by Croatian and Serbian tanks and artillery and by burning during the Croatian attack in the Maslenica area in early 1993; the old Orthodox chapel in Islam Grcki seems only to have limited damage, but could not be approached because the area is heavily mined. The 17th-century house of Stoyan Jankovic, presently owned by the writer Vladan Desnica was burned out, by the Croats according to Mr Badza, but it was not possible to draw any conclusions from the state of the building. The stone Orthodox church in Kasic was hit, clearly by Croatian cannons (impacts from northwest), in the belfry and upper west facade near the belfry; UNCIVPOL informed the consultant that the church had been used as a hospital for Serbian soldiers; Smilcic: Orthodox church damaged on roof, probably by a mortar, in April 1993 according to Mr Badza, but not repaired since.

## **Knin District**

**Biskupija ruins:** In the past there have been rumours, repeated notably in "Cultural Heritage of Croatia in the War 1991-92", Zagreb 1993, p. 79, about the bulldozing of five pre-romanesque churches of Biskupija, the birthplace of the Croatian state, in order to make way for an airfield. These rumours do not seem credible because the topography of the site hardly lends itself to building an airfield. The consultant visited

two of the famous ruins (at Stupovi and Crkvina), which are untouched. Mr Budimir indicated that the ruins at Katica Bajami, and another small pre-Romanesque church had been recovered after archaeological investigation; another of the ruined churches was pointed out to be in a clump of woods on a hillock at Lopuska Glavica. The ECMM will visit these other sites.

At **Crkvina** is the Catholic Church of Our Lady, built on the plans of Mestrovic (1938) on the spot where the Croatian king Zvonimir perished in 1089. The door was forced open (and though pulled back is easy to enter), the frescoes of Klajkovic have been badly defaced, and there has been a little small arms fire on the ceiling and interior walls. The windows have also been broken.

**Kijevo:** This was a large Croatian village, entirely burned out, and Catholic church was dynamited, with only rubble left. This destruction was said by local Serbs to have taken place in 1991.

**Cetina:** The impressive ruin of this 9th century church (tower and walls standing) is intact and untouched; however, it is possible that the new Orthodox graves have encroached on the gravesites around the church.

### **Obrovac District**

**Obrovac:** The Catholic church of St. Joseph was burned out (ECMM), with only the walls standing; Mr Badza says that this incident was a reprisal following the attack on Maslenica, and that the local authorities had tried, without success, to protect the church from extremists.

### **Kordun and Petrinja area**

The consultant discovered a great deal of damage, indeed devastation in this area, principally to Catholic sacral buildings and Croatian villages:

**Kamensko:** This Croatian village was completely burned out. The Pauline Monastery and Virgin Mary Church (1684) sustained some damage from shelling - the worst being the blowing out of much of the roof of the church, which means that the brick vaulting has absorbed much water since 1991. Moreover, the pinnacle of the church has come down through the roof and been caught in the organ loft. The rich and recently restored Baroque interior has been wrecked - altars, pulpit, etc., and it seems that much of the

ceiling and wall frescoes may have been shot off with small arms fire. The archives of the parish were scattered about and the priest's residence vandalised. Fortunately the more important statues were removed before the war. An ethnographical depot of the Karlovac Museum was located in the School, where it has been badly damaged by a tank round, vandalism, and rain. The consultant asked the Society for Serbian Culture in Topusko to evacuate these items.

**Vukmanic:** There was some burning and dynamiting here, and the Catholic church of St. Anthony (1798) was opened (the consultant did not visit it). This and the Ribar Museum will be monitored by the ECMM.

**Topusko:** There was ethnic cleansing on the outskirts. The steeple of the Baroque church was recently dynamited, and there has been some public pressure to destroy the rest because this dangerous and roofless ruin (with fissured walls) is opposite the school. The Society for Serbian Culture informed the consultant that in September 1991, shortly before their withdrawal the Croatian police dynamited the listed Zgrada Zavnoh building, and the three buildings of the Old Hospital, also listed, which had served as venues for meetings between Croats and Serbs in 1944 to discuss the constitution of the future state. These sites have since been bull-dozed and planted with grass.

**Glina:** On the west outskirts there is damage from burning; a Catholic church in the town near the park is roofless and has had its bell-tower dynamited, and about two-thirds of the building is left; there is a great deal of burning along the northeast road and outskirts.

**Prekopa, Marinbrod, Grabaje:** burned out villages.

**Gora:** This village has been totally burned, with a number of vernacular wooden buildings that are destroyed to their stone foundations; The Catholic Church of the Assumption (mainly 19th century) has had its bell-tower dynamited and is roofless.

**Zupic, Novi Seliste:** burned out villages.

**Petrinja:** This pretty Baroque and 19th-century town has undergone thorough and violent ethnic cleansing, much like towns in Bosnia-Herzegovina: burned houses and

shops of Croats alternate with untouched buildings of Serbs. This is one of the worst towns for this kind of damage that the consultant has seen. According to the chaplain of the UNPROFOR Danish Battalion, Mr Nielson, two Catholic churches, one of them Saint Catherine (19th century), have been totally destroyed, and Holy Trinity (1832) and St. Roch (17th and 18th centuries) have sustained "75%" destruction. On account on the local situation the consultant could not visit these buildings.

**Kostajnica:** According to the chaplain the Catholic churches of St. Nicholas, St. Anthony and Saint Anne are totally destroyed.

### **Conclusions on the situation of cultural heritage in UNPAs North and South**

In the Knin area the consultant saw a number of examples of Catholic heritage and Croatian villages, and was given enough reliable information by the ECMM to reach a provisional conclusion - that this heritage has been very badly damaged indeed, with a strong predilection for total destruction by explosives by the Serbs for the churches. It can be feared that there are few churches that have not been substantially damaged or completely destroyed in the area. For the villages, some of them new, but some of them containing typical stone houses of the Adriatic coast, a different picture will emerge, some of them burned out early in the war, others only emptied when the local authorities realised that they had to have space for refugees.

The ECMM will gradually survey the areas under the authority of Knin, with the lists provided by the Croatian cultural authorities. The picture will become nuanced when the frontline areas are included, especially those near Drnis, because some damage will found to have been caused by the Croatian army.

By and large the targets are Croats with their sacral heritage; ethnically neutral vernacular and archaeological sites are left alone - with the possible exception of Bribir, claimed by the Croats to shelter Serbian artillery. The historic sites of the Old Croatian period seem not to have been disturbed, perhaps partly because they are ruins in Serb-populated areas; even the Mestrovic church, in such an area, has been relatively spared.

It should be recognised that Mr Budimir, in the absence of a local organisation for the protection of cultural heritage, has done a great deal to protect the heritage of the Croatian people in the Krajina.

As in the Knin area, Croats were subjected to intensive cultural and ethnic cleansing in Kordun and Petrinja. The lack of monument authorities in the area has been a hindrance in helping those cultural objects that can be salvaged.

## **E. ECMM MONITORING AND INFORMATION-GATHERING**

In addition to the information noted above, the ECMM has carried out further cultural monitoring activities:

### **Bosnia-Herzegovina**

**Livno:** Early in the morning of 25 April the Curcinca mosque was dynamited in Livno, with substantial damage to the minaret and roof. The ECMM was immediately in contact with local authorities about this incident, and was informed later (1 June) by the Minister of Internal Affairs of Herceg Bosna that the offenders were soldiers and that this extremist group was under control.

**Drvetine:** The ECMM was informed by UNPROFOR that a Catholic church was burned in this largely Moslem village on 8 May.

### **Croatia**

**Jasenovac:** In response to a specific request from the consultant and the Museum Documentation Centre the ECMM visited the museum-memorial of Jasenovac (WWII concentration camp) (17 May). The grounds of the camp and the memorial are undamaged, but the museum has suffered a little damage to walls and roof, but interior furnishings have been removed to an unknown location, along with the library and exhibition items (except for the wall-sized photographs). Sanitary equipment has been removed and there is no electricity. The ECMM will inquire as to the whereabouts of the library and exhibits.

**Daruvar:** The ECMM and MDC visited the Orthodox monastery of Pakra (18th century) in UNPA sector West (22 May). The monastery was abandoned during the war, the entrance walled up, but the building was later broken into. The condition of the icons is extremely poor, and they require attention. The ECMM will liaise with the Orthodox church regarding eventual removal and stabilisation of the condition of the icons by Croatian cultural authorities. The monastery was filmed on video.

**Pakrac**: The ECMM has also been in contact with the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Zagreb with respect to examination of the Eparch's library, evacuated by the Croatian cultural authorities.

**Smiljan**: The ECMM was unable to visit the Nikola Tesla museum, which is occupied by Croatian army; the location of the collection is unknown (6 June).

## **Serbia**

**Belgrade**: The ECMM reported the dynamiting of the entrance of the Franciscan church in Subotica on 1 June.

## **F. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS**

Although certain towns in Central Bosnia have sustained important, if usually not irremediable damage to the heritage through bombardment, the worst destruction has been caused by the simpler means of ethnic and cultural cleansing - dynamiting and burning. The same can be said for the areas seen by the consultant in Croatia. This corresponds to the findings of earlier reports, which have dealt with the district of Dubrovnik, Herzegovina, Sarajevo, and Western and Eastern Slavonia. The fates of the historic towns of Mostar and Vukovar are dramatic exceptions to the rule, since they were wrecked mainly by artillery.

The overall picture is clear, but there are large zones about which little is known - many towns and villages in the UNPAs, in Central Bosnia, and the 70% of Bosnian territory controlled by the BSA.

The overall picture is also grim: the amount of damage is enormous, and there is the effect of neglect; there is the problem, especially obvious in Central Bosnia, of surviving Catholic and Orthodox heritage in areas where there are now few Croats and Serbs - if the people cannot return their churches will become dead buildings; local cultural authorities are overwhelmed by the work they face, they are sometimes disorganised and without the material means to work; emergency materials and technical assistance are not forthcoming, even in areas to which there is relatively easy access; finally, if the war continues in Bosnia-Herzegovina or starts up again in Croatian territory, the damage will continue to accumulate, and it is to be feared that if territory is reconquered, the spectacle that the invading forces discover will provoke exceedingly violent behaviour against people and heritage alike.



The bright spots in this picture are the will of local people to repair damaged buildings, especially sacral, the forbearance of authorities here and there, especially Moslem, the activities of the UN and the EU in Sarajevo and Mostar, seconded by Unesco and the Council of Europe for cultural heritage, and the adoption of cultural heritage monitoring by the ECMM, which should open the way to further aid and strengthen cooperation among Moslems, Croats and Serbs.

It should also be mentioned that the ECMM has translated the second half of the 5th Information Report for distribution in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and that it has already distributed many copies of the whole report throughout the region.

## **G. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) The UN and Unesco should publicise their efforts on behalf of Sarajevo and make it clear to potential donors, and to associations and organisations how to use the project/fund-raising mechanism set up.
- 2) International organisations such as Icom and Icomos should encourage their members to establish professional contacts with their colleagues in the area. Icom and Icomos have national committees in Croatia; these should be set up in Bosnia-Herzegovina as well.
- 3) The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe should continue to organise coordination meetings with governmental and non-governmental organisations in order to involve these organisations further in the area.
- 4) The consultant reiterates the recommendations in the 5th Information Report (Cooperation with the ECMM), especially those regarding extension of cooperation into other domains.

(Paris 26 June 1994)