

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

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1. Report on a fact-finding mission in December 1994 to Zagreb and in February 1995 to Belgrade, Novi Sad and Vukovar by Hans-Christoph von Imhoff, consultant expert

Objective: The aim of the mission was to investigate the general situation of museums in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) as also the condition of the collections taken from the museums of Vukovar.

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Signs and abbreviations used in the report

- ° Evidence deposited
 - * Photographic record made by the consultant expert (both available on request from the secretariat of the Committee on Culture and Education in Strasbourg)
 - BFA - Bauer Collection and Fine Arts Gallery (Vukovar)
 - Icom - International Council of Museums
 - IPB - Institute for the Protection of the Historical and Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Serbia (Belgrade)
 - IPNS - Provincial Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Vojvodina (Novi Sad)
 - IPV - Municipal Institute for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Values (Vukovar)
 - MDC - Museum Documentation Centre (Zagreb)
 - UNPA - United Nations Protection Area
 - VMM - Vukovar Municipal Museum
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A. Introduction

1 - The Committee on Culture and Education of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe had asked the International Council of Museums (Icom), an NGO with Unesco, to name a consultant, experienced in assessing conditions of moveable cultural heritage objects and collections to follow up - in greater detail with regard to the state and situation of the collections of the Vukovar museums - Dr Colin Kaiser's fact-finding mission of March 1994, reproduced in the Parliamentary Assembly's Fifth Information Report on war damage to the cultural heritage in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina (Doc 7070). The author of the present report, conservator-restorer, member of Icom and the Icom Conservation Committee, accepted to act as consultant expert for this follow-up fact-finding mission. He pointed out however the difficulties for one person with no knowledge of the Serbo-Croat to provide sufficient and reasonably reliable on-site information on this very extensive subject in only ten days, the limit imposed for both parts of the mission including travel.

2 - There was another purpose to the mission: the consultant was to report in general terms on the situation of museums in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), their activities, problems and needs in the curatorial and conservation field, part of it provoked by the lack of money due to the war activities in which the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) was involved in recent years and by the embargo imposed upon it by the United Nations to force

it to close the border between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina with respect to all goods except foodstuffs, medical supplies and clothing for essential humanitarian needs. The consultant was unable for lack of time to go on to Montenegro, so he will be only reporting on aspects of the situation of museums in the Republic of Serbia.

3 - Both purposes were related due to the fact that parts of the Vukovar museum collections had been transferred to various museums in the Republic of Serbia. Circumstances made it impossible to attempt a more systematic approach than simply collecting as much information as possible, first in Belgrade with some of the most important museum representatives and then in the particular museums holding Vukovar objects, mainly in Novi Sad. Comparison with the account presented by Icom in the Fifth Information Report (cited above) on "War damage to museums, galleries and collections in the Republic of Croatia" is in this context not of interest, as its scope is different and as there are no war-damaged museums on the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

4 - The fate and the complex and rather desperate situation of the Vukovar museum, its different collections in general, and what happened to them, the accusations made by Croatian authorities for breaking Art. 4 of the international Hague Convention from 1954, has been described in some detail recently by Dr Kaiser (as cited above).

5 - The consultant was given full support from the authorities in Zagreb and Belgrade. He would like to thank Dr Branka Šulc, Director of the Museum Documentation Centre (MDC) in Zagreb for the coordination of his meetings in Croatia. He would like to thank Mr Marco Omcikus, Head of the Department of Protection and Documentation of the Belgrade Institute for the Protection of the Historical and Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Serbia, who coordinated his meetings in Belgrade, Novi Sad and Vukovar. He would ask both to forward his thanks to all the colleagues they had arranged for him to meet. He also is grateful to the Secretary of the Committee on Culture and Education, Christopher Grayson, for his assistance in finalising the text of this report.

As for the persons encountered see the list in Appendix 1.

Time schedule

First part of the mission on 5-7 December 1994

Time spent in Zagreb: 48 hours - 2 nights

Second part of the mission on 6-12 February 1995

Time spent in Belgrade: 82 hours - 4 nights

Time spent in Novi Sad: 46 hours - 2 nights

Time spent in Vukovar: 7 hours

Time spent on inland travel: 9 hours

B. The general situation of museums and museum professionals in the Republic of Serbia

6 - The consultant met the directors, and some of the curators, of the following museums and institutes

Belgrade

- Institute for the Protection of the Historical and Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Serbia
- Academy of Science and Arts, its Gallery and of the Museum of Technology
- Ethnographical Museum
- National Museum
- Serbian History Museum
- Museum of Modern Art (the previous director)

Novi Sad

- Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Vojvodina
- Museum of Vojvodina
- City Museum of Novi Sad
- Archive of Vojvodina
- Gallery of Matica Srpska

These meetings took place mainly in relaxed situations, though on occasion more formal, always allowing for discussion and exchange. See further Appendix 1.

7 - All museums and institutions in Belgrade and Novi Sad are open to the public and seem operational on regular hours. They are apparently well visited - as everywhere they are of different attraction, according to the place and their animators: the Gallery of the Serbian Academy of Science and Art in Belgrade, right in the centre of the old town, on Knez Michajlova, with exhibits on inventors, religious and profane art, beats all records in town - around 100,000 visitors a year. Special exhibitions within the permanent exhibits of these institutions are organised as well. The first guidebook for many years of "Museums and Galleries in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia" was published in 1993 in black and white. It gives short administrative, technical and collection-related information on the individual museums. To judge from its technical quality (paper, reproductions, etc) and the lay-out, funding for this type of publication seems scarce at present and not considered to be of prime importance.

8 - In discussions about responsibility for the situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and about politics, about the bombing and the aggression of Vukovar, the Bosnian Serbs, about ethnic cleansing by rape and dislocation, about violations of other people's territories, rights and properties, the killings of civilians, children and women, the formula to stay off limits and not be involved and this way not responsible, consequently free of guilt, seems to be: "the others did it". If the question who these "others" might be is pressed, "they" are identified as paramilitary troops, bandits or warlords, rarely as Croats and then only in the context of destroyed Serbian Orthodox churches in the Krajina. During his travel in Serbia and Vukovar the consultant never heard from any Serbian citizen or Krajina subject that these "others" were identified as of Serbian origin or as Yugoslav military, i.e. as members of their own population. One version, recorded in a report to Unesco in 1994 and shown to the consultant by Mr Omcikus^o, is that the Croats used church towers and other historical monuments as defence points and therefore forced the Federal Army to shoot at them.

9 - The embargo on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) is a topic that comes up during every formal or informal, official or private conversation. The complaint about its consequences for professional life is voiced, with anger, with indignation or just with deep regret. To be cut off from the long standing international professional relations, from colleagues working elsewhere on the same topic, to be cut off also from the international exchange between institutions of professional literature and specialists, and of being kept out of international or European programmes of exhibitions or research such as the European Bronze Age project, at the same time being unable to afford travel to foreign countries in order to keep up-to-date, see museums, exhibitions, colleagues, to use specialised libraries - all this constitutes a very heavily felt burden. Those involved do not seem to understand the reason for it all. In the capital of the province of Vojvodina, Novi Sad, the embargo seems to be considered less of an issue.

10 - The lack of finances, the low income levels of less than one tenth of the average western income, while prices are equal to those in Western Europe, leads to enormous difficulties in survival and to suffering both on private and professional levels. Virtually no imports, but only nationally and locally produced goods are on the shelves, and in small quantities, be it food or other consumer goods. Everything is scarce or expensive - and not only fuel, luxury goods, foreign wines and strong alcohols or synthetics. Astounding enough is the fact that quite up-to-date personal computers are visible in the museums and even in some restoration studios, sometimes with an impressive range of hardware. Winword 3.1 is on most screens.

11 - The consultant was given the great tour of the Institute for the Protection of the Historical and Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Serbia, which heads the 14 provincial branch institutes, whose names may be somewhat different, as the one in Novi Sad (Institute of the protection of cultural monuments), but which are bound to submit their projects for approval to the IPB, at least in conservation matters. It issues monographs on historic sites, ethnographic topics, conservation ventures etc, in Serbian, printed in cyrillic lettering, or in French or English.

12 - Nicely located in the older part of Belgrade the IPB contains a rather comprehensive scientific library with a librarian, offices for curatorial staff and conservation studios* with, in its annexe, a suite of small rooms set up as natural science labs. All conservation facilities are equipped to a reasonable standard, but not to the level and not as up-to-date as the people working there would like them to be. The visit of these studios provided an impression of how conservation-restoration is done, not only in this institute but throughout the country: the consultant was able to see three other prominent conservation premises, those of the National Museum in Belgrade* and two others in Novi Sad (of the IPNS and of the Matica Srpska Gallery*) and can state that in general the equipment and the conservation methods used are of the same type (wax bath, glue facings, integrating retouching, elaborated methods of technological documentation - pencils, typewriters and computers are in use).

13 - This is quite probably due to fact that the Head of Conservation in the IPB, Professor Zvonimir Zekovic*, is at the same time professor of the Faculty of Art at the Academy in Belgrade and in this function the person who directs the training of conservator-restorers for the whole republic, with an output 3 to 4 a year. It consists of a 4-year course, 2 years of which are generalities and 2 years specialisation in conservation of paintings, wall-paintings and sculptured works of art. Vice-Minister of Culture Begenisic, stated during the meeting with the consultant (see par. 21), that there is great lack of conservator-restorers and that they are very concerned about training more, but that they are lacking people

capable to do so. In his function at the IPB, Professor Zekovic is also the person to decide on the treatment proposals submitted for approval from the provincial institutes. Despite this stringent supervision there is nevertheless a notable difference in the quality of execution, achievement of treatment and documentation of conservation/restoration projects at the different locations, quite probably depending on the demands of the local head of conservation.

14 - The two museums and both the protection institutes visited in Serbia by the consultant have their own conservation facilities, with several conservator-restorers (C-Rs) that the consultant saw working there:

Belgrade

- IPB in house 7 C-Rs (paintings only), 1 conservation scientist
- National Museum 23 C-Rs (paintings, polychromes, metal, archaeology, textiles,)

Novi Sad

- IPNS at least 3 C-Rs (paintings)
- Galleria Matica Srpska at least 4 C-Rs (paintings).

The figure estimated by Prof Zekovic for the number of conservator-restorers working on wall-paintings, icons and similar objects for the protection institutes and museums amounts to 230. Conservator-restorers working for private customers only are not included. This is a surprisingly high number and helps to explain how Serbia has been able in the few years since war began to conserve and restore hundreds of Serbian Orthodox icons (technically mostly panel paintings) from areas outside the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), and still continues to do so. They are being brought in from those parts of Dalmatia, which during the war were taken by Serb-led forces on Croatian territory and now are declared the Republic of Serbian Krajina. This is the information the consultant was given when he was shown those icons at their treatment locations: he saw some splendid ones out of some 200 at IPB's conservation premises* and another 200 or so at the National Museum, all of which had supposedly been brought in from these locations. This confirmed the indications given to Mr Buchenaki (Unesco) when he visited Belgrade and Vukovar in February 1992^o.

15 - In the same Serbian Orthodox context the consultant also saw three dismantled iconostasis at the Galleria Matica Srpska in Novi Sad, moved from three churches in Vukovar or its close surroundings. Two had been conserved/restored there and were the subject of special exhibitions (the ones from Nukole and Vukovar in 1993 and from Dalj in 1994), each with a colour catalogue^o. Another is in the final stages of conservation. He was also shown five professionally dismantled and stored iconostasis from the same eastern Slavonian area (from Opatovac, Bobota, Marinci, Koprivna and Dalj)*, stored at the Serbian Orthodox Patriarch's splendid residential palace* in Srcmeki Karlovci near Novi Sad, awaiting conservation. There is an astounding amount of Serbian Orthodox church items, particularly Iconostasis, from "Serbian Krajina" areas in Serbian conservation studios.

16 - The consultant was told by Father Petar Lukic, the Principal of the Belgrade Serbian Orthodox Cathedral, and by people from IPB that all the contents of Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries, and also all individual Serbian icons, are the property of the Serbian Orthodox Church. So theoretically no Serbian Orthodox icon can ever be for sale. From the present activities of these

conservation studios, it must be concluded that there is a very close collaboration of Serbian state institutes with the Serbian Orthodox Church. Apparently the Church holds excellent archives in the Museum* of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Belgrade, founded in 1854, including an inventory of the Church's art property. In the new Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Museum Guide Book (see above para 7) its additional function is described as follows: "Handling and preservation of church treasures on the whole territory of the Serbian Church". An attempt was made to arrange a visit there but when the consultant and his hosts showed up, regrettably slightly late, nobody was there to receive them.

17 - Comparison between the general situation of museums in Croatia and in the Republic of Serbia.

The situation of conservation-restoration and conservator-restorers seen by the consultant in Belgrade and Novi Sad shows a marked difference to that in the Republic of Croatia, where there is no formal training available and an immense lack of qualified conservation personnel at all levels. Only some 65 people with good or at least some knowledge in conservation are available in all of the Republic of Croatia, all specialities and levels included. There is another difference between both countries: there is no destruction on the territory of the Republic of Serbia and nothing in the least comparable to what many towns, villages and sites on Croatian territory have undergone. This manpower is simply not sufficient for the recuperation of the country's cultural heritage. To remedy the situation, foreign aid will be needed.

18 - National Yugoslav Committee of Icom. The consultant met in Belgrade members of a committee that is seeking Icom recognition as the Yugoslav National Committee. The key figures are Prof Dr Irina Subotic (National Museum, Belgrade) and Prof Dr Aleksander Despic (Director of the Serb Academy of Science and Art and of the Museum of Science and Technology, Belgrade). The group has translated the Icom Code of Professional Ethics into Serbian and circulated it to other professional organisations within the country. The consultant upon his return from Belgrade advised the Secretary General of Icom, Ms Elisabeth des Portes, of the situation and she responded by pointing out, in a letter of 7 March 1995 to the group in Belgrade, that there was no obstacle in principle to the committee being recognised as the National Yugoslav Icom Committee as long as their status correspond with Icom's Internal Rules for National Committees and other minor formalities are being observed. Both sides are working towards finalising Icom membership proceedings in time for the General Conference of Icom in July 1995 in Norway.

C. The Vukovar museum collections

19 - There was some information provided by the Croatian authorities to Icom Paris in support of the request for a fact-finding mission - these inventory lists proved of some help as an introduction to the problem. Additional material was provided to the consultant before his departure. A first contact and experience with former Yugoslavia had taken place when the consultant was working as conservation expert for ARCH from November 93 to January 94 in the context of that foundation's activities to help Croatia and in particular Dubrovnik save their material cultural heritage. Particularly helpful were the reports written by Dr Colin Kaiser and others and published as Information Reports on war to the cultural heritage in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Previous personal contact with Dr Kaiser, Barbara Roberts, Dr Anthea Brook, Dr Marian Wenzel and others proved of additional help. The consultant's experience with surveys and assessment of conservation requirement throughout Canada in 1973, in the Swiss museum context in 1989 and in Dubrovnik in 1993 was invaluable.

C. (1) Information provided in Zagreb

20 - An important part of the mission was to report on the present state of the museums of Vukovar and their collections. The Croatian town of Vukovar, following hostilities in August 1991, is at present under occupation by the so-called Republic of Serbian Krajina (UNPA East). So the first part of this fact-finding mission served to gather information at the Croatian national Museum Documentation Centre (MDC) in Zagreb about the Vukovar Municipal Museum (VMM) and its collections. The VMM has four different branches: the museum's main exhibition building with the library and the administration, the Eltz Castle^{*}, the History Museum^{*}, the Ladoslav Ruzicka Memorial Museum^{*} and particularly the Bauer Collection and Fine Arts Gallery^{*}. This particular collection, of around 1650 items, is the centre of the controversy about the VMM collections, their fate and their partial dispersal in Serbia. Rumours and speculation about their partial or total destruction, looting or theft regularly animate the national and international press.

21 - During his interesting two-day visit in Zagreb the consultant was accompanied by MDC-Director, Dr Branka Šulc and by Mr Damodar Frlan, President of Icom Croatia. He was given an extensive tour of the MDC, where copies of all correspondence, documents, special publications etc. on the subject of Vukovar and relevant to his mission were made available to him. He met two vice-Ministers of Culture as representatives of the Croatian Authorities, Mr Seadeta Midzic and Mr Igor Zidic, and was received by the deputy mayor of Zagreb, Mr Bozo Biskupic, founder of the post-occupation Contemporary Art Museum of Vukovar. He met the director of the Vukovar Municipal Museum in Exile, Ms Rusa Maric. To his great pleasure and due to Dr Šulc's personal intervention, the consultant was also able to meet Dr Antun Bauer and his wife, Dr Antonija Bauer, the famous art collectors. Dr Bauer, now 85 years of age, is the founder of the Museum Documentation Centre in Zagreb, the founder of the Museology study programme at the University of Zagreb and of many other important ventures, and more particularly still: he is the man together with his wife built up the famous Bauer Collection of 19th and 20th-century Croatian art, part of which he gave to his home town Vukovar in several donations since 1948.

22 - A round-table on the second day in Zagreb allowed for meeting many personalities, whose input provided valuable information for the consultant's mission. Details of this meeting are given in the minutes^o taken by MDC personnel upon request of the consultant and translated into English. This four-hour meeting with 15 specialists, who mainly spoke in Croatian, was very informative but also rather straining. During the course of this meeting the consultant was introduced to the functioning of the MDC, to the State Administration for the Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage, to the history of Vukovar, its site and lay out, to its architectural and historical treasures, to the VMM and its collections and buildings.

23 - The question was raised of whether the consultant should carry with him a set of photocopies, produced in 1975 in Zagreb, of the Vukovar Museum Inventory Books. The sheer weight and size of these meant that this was impracticable as well as being too complicated for what was only a brief mission. The consultant did however take with him the illustrated partial catalogue^o of the Bauer Collection at Vukovar (218 exhibits listed, with no inventory numbers mentioned, approximately 100 reproductions), as well as a partial inventory with photographs of items of the Vukovar Franciscan Convent treasure and a disk containing a copy of that part of the inventory of the Bauer Collection in Vukovar, that had already been computerised, and the computerised inventories of the treasure of the Catholic Franciscan Monastery and of the Serbian Orthodox Church of St Nicola. The consultant appreciated the fact that the structuring terminology therein had been

translated into English in order to facilitate his access to the files. This PC-Inventory (on ISIS) had started as a pilot project for computer inventorisation by the MDC in 1994. It is only in writing with no images, such as photographs⁹. It proved of less help than expected due to another factor: a great part of the Bauer Collection therein seems not yet to have been allocated individual inventory numbers (see para 39).

C. (2) Information and access provided in Belgrade, Novi Sad, and Vukovar

24 - The programme set up by the Serbian authorities provided interesting encounters for the consultant. He was given the occasion of meeting representatives from the Yugoslav Foreign Office and was received by several representatives of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Serbia, vice-ministers of culture. One of them, Vice-Minister of Culture Begenišić made the remark, that "the restitution of Vukovar Museum objects will be part of what is negotiated once the war will be over". This formulation apparently alludes to unresolved problems/questions between Croatia and Serbia dating back to the Second World War, about the restitution, etc. of cultural heritage objects. In addition there are differing opinions on the application of the Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954). Croatia is accusing the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) of violating Art. 4 by having removed museum objects from Vukovar onto its territory in Novi Sad (Hague Convention, Art 4.3. "They shall refrain from requisitioning movable cultural property ..."). The Serbian authorities argue that in the situation in December 1991 they had to act immediately and place the objects in a safe place, according to Art. 5.2. of the same Convention, which states that "should the competent national authorities be unable to take such measures, the occupying power shall, as far as possible, and in close co-operation with such authorities, take the most necessary measures of preservation". A letter exists¹⁰, dated 19 December 1991, authorising Serbia and the protection institutes to act so as "to relocate mobile cultural property on a temporary basis and adequately store and protect it in the Republic of Serbia". Despite the conditional in Vice Minister Begenišić's statement, it is at least an indication that a settlement, though still to be made, might in fact be possible. The question for the moment remains open.

25 - In a recent interview, broadcast on Thursday 7 March 1995 by Radio Free Europe, the director of the IPNS, Mr Vapa made the following statements (from parts of the interview that was made available to the consultant as a translated transcript by the journalist Ms Maja Razovic, Munich, who set up the broadcast):

- *The objects from the Bauer Collection are being classified (supposedly meaning inventoried). 90 % of the material has already been classified. In a few months time the whole catalogue will be finished.*
- *Listed art objects are being kept in temporary custody. They will be kept in museums and institutes for the protection of cultural heritage as a special inventory labelled as Vukovar heritage until we reach the moment when they can be returned to Vukovar. In the meantime the objects cannot be used, publicised or exhibited without special permission given by the Serbian Ministry of Culture.*
- *I would like to stress that when we started to evacuate the collections - the objects were not classified according to their nationality. We were trying to save all that was left, all that was not stolen or destroyed.*
- *[When Radio Free Europe asked whether Croatia was interested in getting them back, he replied] We had no contact with the Croatian side so far. But if that happens, we as professionals are interested in our Serbian material from the Zagreb diocese, the Pakrac library, our Serbian Orthodox churches*

- especially the Pakrac library, icons from our churches --- we are not interested in the Bauer Collection.

Both Vice Minister Begenisic and Director Vapa seem to have the same intention: negotiations at some future date, based on the principle of ethnic separation. Orthodox objects from Krajina areas are already being assembled in considerable numbers on Serbian territory for conservation treatment.

Mr Omcikus has commented publicly on the question of return on two occasions: *"I do not know about any particular plans of dealing with it but only of initial intention of bringing it back on site when peace in Croatia takes place for good"* (letter replying to Mr Baumel on 26 August 1992, see Doc 6756 Appendix B) and *"They [the Croats] equally failed to appreciate our firm assurances that all the salvaged museum material would be returned to Vukovar once the conditions for that were created. And I underline - to Vukovar, and not to the side which exercises no actual control over that region"* (article in NIN of 10 March 1995).

C. (3) The collections of the Vukovar Municipal Museum (VMM) that have been moved from Vukovar: observations on the present locations and the condition of the objects

26 - On 8 February 1995 the consultant had for the first time access to displaced VMM objects deposited at the **Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade** (and apparently the only VMM objects in Belgrade). He was assisted by the museum's director, Mr Mihar Mihic, and all relevant staff. The 35 objects from the VMM Cultural History Collection were checked in the storage area, piece by piece, against transport lists^o, copies of which had been provided by Mr Omcikus (IPB). These lists carry the museum reception number 869/1-3. The sheets are signed and dated "10.12.1991", one with the internal 869/3 is signed and dated "17.12.1991". These particular objects had been transported to Belgrade by Dr Maslovacic Dusan personally in his private car. The reason for this is not known to the consultant.

27 - **Comment on the Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade.** The 35 VMM objects in the Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade are in a suitable environment, professionally kept and carefully handled. They are stored in cupboards and chests of drawers, free of dust, carefully wrapped in clean white cotton or tissue-paper. They seemed to have been cleaned and conserved.

For detailed description see [Appendix 2.I](#).

28 - On 9 February 1995 the consultant had access to the displaced VMM objects held by the **City Museum of Novi Sad**^{*}. Assisted by its director, Mr Siljegovic, by his archaeological curator, Radoven Bunardric^{*}, by Mr Omcikus (IPB) and by the art historian from the provincial Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Vojvodina (IPNS), Dejan Radovavic^{*}, he was shown two rooms^{*} on the ground floor^{*} of the museum. These rooms contain all the VMM objects that this museum has in custody. He was given 2 floppy disks (5¼" and readable on an Apple II PC only) which should contain the inventory the City Museum made of the archaeological collection deposited in it. At present no possibility has been found to read and make printouts of these disks; the consultant was assured that paper copies could be sent by the IPNS if requested.

29 - It is mostly archaeological material, which is stored there on wooden shelving^{*}, larger objects in the open^{*}, smaller items contained in 722 specifically numbered and labelled, mostly identical, grey cardboard boxes^{*} approximately 15 cm high by 25 by 40 cm. The VMM objects have been rearranged and repacked in

these boxes in Novi Sad, as the original containers* were either crushed* or burned or considered inadequate as they were open. There are still some original VMM containers, open crates* normally used for the transport of fruit and vegetables, used already on site by the archaeologists, kept with the VMM objects inside* as they had been stored in the VMM*, one in good shape*, one crushed*. Most of the new boxes contain several objects, often even several hundred items as for example ceramic potsherds from defined sites, assembled in plastic bags* inside the boxes*. Also in storage are, open* or in the boxes*, some objects from the cultural history department of the VMM. Some of them are just what is left after they had been in a very hot fire, for example partially melted glass and metal objects*, agglomerated with all sorts of material from other objects*, they are documents to war damage rather than museum items of historical interest.

30 - In addition there is a gothic(?) metal chest* with that part of its numismatic collection*, that apparently had already been in there before August 1991. It was said to contain 5,000 items. This container had been sealed* while still in Vukovar by the acting director of the now renamed Museum of the City of Vukovar, Ms Olivera Rokvic, prior to its transport to Novi Sad. The consultant removed the seal* to be able to open, photograph and take a general look at the contents. He then resealed the chest.

31 - The following 16 original inventory books were seen by the consultant:

- 5 inventory books of the numismatic collection, 2 of which concern the Bauer numismatic collection*
- 3 inventory books of the archaeological collection (nos 1,3,4)*
- 1 inventory book of the archaeological collection(no 2*) seen in Vukovar in the museum
- 3 inventory books of the cultural history collection*
- 2 entry books and 2 inventory books of the BFA*

For the VMM objects stored in the City Museum in Novi Sad no transport lists were shown or handed over to the consultant, although he understands that they exist and that army trucks were made available for the transport. He was told that a list had been made of the contents of every box and copies could be made available to him. It was considered useless however to request at this stage copies as no checking would have been possible in the time he had and assurances were given that they would be provided on request from the museum's archaeological curator Bunardric. Listings of the non-archaeological objects would also be supplied upon request by Mr Omcikus. No list had been made of the coins in the metal chest as the seal had not been broken from its arrival from Vukovar until that day.

32 - During the whole of his stay at the City Museum of Novi Sad the consultant was constantly being "documented" with a still camera and video* by a museum photographer, recording every move the consultant made. He was told that the same photographer had documented in a series of 3 000 b/w photographs the situation in and around the VMM after the fighting and how objects were found right there and then, under the direction of the archaeological curator Bunardric together with the crew that evacuated the objects from Vukovar in 1991/1992 to Serbia. The consultant saw a few of these photographs while in the storage area. It was agreed with Mr Bunardric that more time would be made available to look at them either later that day, or on site in Vukovar two days later, or in Novi Sad in the evening after returning from Vukovar. Unfortunately none of these proved possible because of lack of time the same day and during the day of the visit to Vukovar. This visit ended with an unfortunate 2½-hour wait in Vukovar for the only police officer authorised to countersign the consultant's visa to return into Serbia. It was then

also too late for the meeting the consultant had requested with Mr Vapa, Director of the IPNS, in order to wrap up the fact-finding mission in Novi Sad.

33 - **Comment on the City Museum in Novi Sad.** The thousands of VMM objects and items, mainly archaeological ceramic fragments, deposited in the museum are in a suitable environment, well organised into well-used space, apparently correctly recorded, kept professionally and handled carefully . They are stored on open shelving, mostly in cardboard boxes with consecutive numbering and, in the case of the archaeological finds, with labelling as from what dig and site the content comes.

Some preventive conservation action might be suggested: in order to keep the most sensitive of the unpacked objects free of dust and out of danger of accidental breakage or similar, at least the wooden sculptures and the paper objects (inventory books, archaeological drawings, etc) there should be put in cupboards or similar sheltering.

For detailed description see [Appendix 2.II.](#)

34 - Also on 9 February 1995 the consultant was welcomed at the **Museum of Vojvodina* in Novi Sad** by the co-director, Mr Mladenko Kumovic*, together with Mr Omcikus* (IPB), Mr Dejan Radovavic* (IPNS), Mr Siljegovic and Radoven Bunardric* (City Museum), and given an introduction to the situation of the Museum of Vojvodina and later on a tour of the recently renewed installation of the permanent exhibition. He was informed of where the Bauer Collection and Fine Arts Gallery objects from Vukovar were held in this museum and about the efforts made by the museum to take proper care of this famous collection. An art historian, Ms Nada Stanic*, formerly a teacher in Vukovar, is working full-time at the museum on the registration of the VMM objects (in particular those from the Bauer Collection and Fine Arts Gallery) and on the Franciscan material. These are placed in the basement of the new building* of the museum (and are described below in paras 35-39). The Franciscan and Cultural History Department objects are in the attic of the main building (see paras 40-41).

35 - In the late afternoon the same day, 9 February 1995, the consultant had access to the paintings taken from the Bauer Collection and Fine Arts Gallery (BFA). Three transport lists were produced^o, totalling 760 objects (228+320+212). They are dated "12.12.91", "27.12.1991" and "9.1.1992" and list the individual objects, mainly framed pictures from the BFA, but also objects of the Cultural History Department of the VMM and objects from the Franciscan Monastery in Vukovar, with a running number from 1 to x per list. "VKKH" inventory numbers, "Bauer" numbers or "FSV BB" numbers are included in the lists wherever they could be identified and were readable.

36 - The BFA paintings are stored in the basement, a large concrete open hall with wall separations*, where an earlier exhibition on recent political history is still mounted, though closed to the public. The total surface is about 250 m². The BFA paintings are leant against the wall in packages of up to 15 paintings each*. Each pile has a number and a list with running numbers 1 to x attached close to it*. These piles are made up of those paintings already registered and inventoried by Nada Stanic. They total 29 piles (numbered A1 to A3, I A to XV A and I B to IX B) with altogether 456 pictures. 85 pictures are listed for conservation, but it is not clear if they are part of the 456. The "Bauer" numbers could not be checked against the MDC inventory as Bauer inventory numbers do not figure there (see also para 23) nor in the Bauer catalogue from 1989^o. Therefore, as there were no corresponding numbers, it was not possible to cross-check this inventory with the BFA-paintings now in Novi Sad.

37 - Instead the consultant counted piles, paintings per pile, spot-checked the denomination of individual paintings against the indications on the attached list*, the number in the pile* against the number on the list* - everything was correct. In addition there are some piles of paintings, not yet inventoried with no lists attached to them*, and piles of empty frames* mostly having held art on paper, which has now been put into folders, 7 as yet* and fully registered. There are also some sculptures*, mainly religious subjects, some quite probably from the Franciscan Monastery, not yet inventoried in Novi Sad, but not figuring in the partial Franciscan inventory the consultant had brought from Zagreb. In addition there was also there a large aluminium crate* with paper artwork* (drawings and graphic art). Ms Stanic estimates approximately 1,300 pieces - but checking in greater detail by digging into the container would have been far too dangerous for the artwork. These prints and drawings are said to be also part of the BFA collections.

38 - The consultant was shown and given sample copies of the inventory cards for these BFA items and other VMM objects°, some blank and some filled-in°, the new inventory books° * started by Nada Stanic with her latest registration, the new inventory photographs made on 6x9 b/w film*. He also saw 4 inventory and entry books relating to the BFA. Interestingly Ms Stanic was apparently not aware of the presence/existence of the 3 original inventory books of the VMM cultural history collection kept until that day at the City Museum of Novi Sad. The consultant suggested their transfer to the Museum of Vojvodina to facilitate Ms Stanic's work. The suggestion was accepted and put into action the same day.

39 - **Comment on the building and the location within the Museum of Vojvodina, where the objects from the Bauer Collection and Fine Arts Gallery are being stored.** The several hundred paintings and works of art on paper are being given careful curatorial attention. Their physical handling seems to be correct and done carefully.

It does not however seem quite understandable to the consultant, why so many pieces of artwork on paper have been removed from their frames* and put in folders*, as:

1. appropriate frames would have been the best protection available
2. such frames might have been the ones the artist had conceived for that particular object and as such was itself part of the art object
3. framing has always been a tedious and expensive activity - to take art out of frames means throwing money and protection away.

There may be reasons for doing this of which the consultant is not aware. But in any case these frames should if at all possible be properly kept* together with all their cardboard backings, because they are part of the framing (even if not any more used) and because of the technological, historic or artistic information they might provide. Frames and boards are to be carefully stored and labelled as to which object they held.

The protection from light, excessive heat and humidity seems quite acceptable, as the basement is kept at a rather low temperature. It is suggested that:

- some very slow ventilation is used to protect the collection from fungi and other biological attack
- all objects are removed from the floor and stored at least 15 cm above ground level to prevent the risk of flood damage
- the green plastic foam used at present is no substitute

- if the piles of paintings are to stay as they were in February 1995 during the consultant's visit, sufficiently big cardboard or chipboard sheeting or other light, flat and rigid material should soon be interposed between all the paintings to protect them from accidental damage
- even more satisfactory would be the construction of an appropriate storage system, such as hanging on moveable grid-walls or storing in appropriate cupboards or in adaptable transport containers or packing crates (each containing several paintings)
- works of art on paper should be interleaved, if possible with acid-free tissue-paper, and as soon as feasible be put in appropriate mounts made of museum cardboard, and then be stored in appropriate boxes in metal chests of drawers
- dust-proof containers should be made available for sculptures (cupboards).

For a detailed description see [Appendix 2.III.](#)

40 - On 10 February 1995 the consultant was shown the 17 boxes* and one wooden crate of the VMM objects of the Cultural History Department which are kept in the same Museum of Vojvodina, but in a storage area under the roof in the main building, locked away in sealed cupboards*. According to the new inventory book, written by Ms Stanic^o, the 17 boxes hold 194 objects. Spot-checking the consultant saw pieces of Meissen porcelain* and pewter* - packed and protected with balls of crushed newspaper as protection in the cardboard boxes*. All objects are also registered on an inventory card with a photograph attached to each of them (see further para 63).

The wooden crate* seemed to contain 17 or 18 precious metal objects* from the Franciscan treasure, the contents of which are dealt with the same way as the objects from the VMM: inventory card, photograph, packing in crushed paper*. There are inventory cards for 17 or 18 objects*, mainly silver-gilt liturgical vessels*, 8 of which could be identified in the Franciscan inventory the consultant had taken along from Zagreb.

41 - Comment on the building and the location within the main building of the Museum of Vojvodina where objects from the VMM cultural history department and the Franciscan Monastery are stored. The objects are well kept as long as they do not have to be moved or unpacked. Climatic conditions are satisfactory, registration procedures seem correct. There is no real need to change things at present, if they are not touched.

In case these objects are to be handled more frequently, more professional packing is recommended. As the objects are now packed in the boxes, any dislocation could produce damage - crushed paper is not a sufficient protection during dislocation for heavy metal objects, stored some on top of each other in the boxes - the liturgical vessels and plates in particular are very much at risk to scratching etc. The alternative solution would be to unpack them and keep them on the shelves within the cupboards - but only, if the responsible administration judges security to be sufficient. This does not solve the packing problem as such, but could prevent some damage and would make checking much easier. Touch with cotton gloves only!

For detailed description see [Appendix 2.IV.](#)

42 - On 9 February 1995 the consultant was welcomed at the **Archives of Vojvodina in Novi Sad** by Mr Mitar Krejic, representing the director and in order to arrange for a meeting the following day to see the VMM archival material. On 10 February the Director of the Archives, Mr Paul Stanojevic received the consultant

with Mr Omcikus and Mr Radovanovic and showed the transport list of VMM archival material^o. Control was apparently difficult in the case of the Vukovar archival material as Croatian archives in general had never conformed to the former Yugoslav regulation for the submission of annual reports on provincial archival activities to the Central State Yugoslav Archives in Belgrade. This made it difficult for the archivists from Novi Sad to gain an idea of the situation in Vukovar prior to the 1991 war. The material from Vukovar was the part of the archive that had been kept in the VMM, as it dates to historical periods, the earliest apparently dating from 1756, the most recent from 1954. The consultant was told that the non-VMM deposited material of the Vukovar Archives is now deposited in Osijek. He was then shown the location of the VMM material in the cupboard in the office of the chief of the conservation department, Mr Bogdan Kovacevic.

43 - Comment on the location within the building of the Vojvodina Archives where archival material from VMM is stored (in the same building as the Museum of Vojvodina). The material seems to be properly handled. It is stored in clean, appropriate archive cardboard folder-boxes*, locked away in a cupboard one on top of each other. No intervention required at present.

See detailed description in [Appendix 2.V.](#)

C. (4) The former Vukovar Municipal Museum, the condition of buildings and objects there on 11 February 1995

44 - On the very last day of the mission, 11 February 1995, the first part of the morning was used to travel to Vukovar by car, accompanied by Mr Omcikus (IPB), Mr Radovanovic (IPNS), Mr Bunardric (City Museum of Novi Sad). The border crossing from the Republic of Serbia over the river Danube to the Republic of Serbian Krajina - in UNPA-East - took some time as the consultant's visa had to be established. Upon arrival in Vukovar no police station was found to confirm the consultant's presence at Vukovar, so this was postponed but much time was as a result lost on the return journey.

45 - Continuing to the former Vukovar Municipal Museum, now renamed The Museum of the City of Vukovar, the party was welcomed by the present director of the museum, Ms Olivera Rokvic* (who had taken a two-hour leave from hospital to be able to meet the consultant), and members of her staff, conservator Mr Dejan Sokolovic and archaeologist Mr Jouan Koldin, as well as by the director of the Municipal Institute for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Values in Vukovar, Mr Velimir Cerinovic and a member of his staff, an art historian and Latin-teacher in town, Mr Milan Balic.

46 - From this meeting the consultant learnt more of what had happened in the period from June 1991 to January 1992 to supplement what he had learned in Zagreb and what had been indicated in Dr Kaiser's report (Doc 7070 paras 55-68). At that point Ms Rokvic, who has an archaeological background, had been the VMM librarian. According to her, packing of archaeological material on exhibit was started in July 1991 to make space for the Croatian military. In early August she was not allowed into the building except briefly on the morning of 24 August when hostilities started. She was then asked to return for one day only on 15 September to pack archival material from Vucedol. The same material was still at the same place, when she returned at the end of the year after the fighting had ceased. According to Ms Rokvic material might still have been moved out of Vukovar in October 1991 and only the objects on exhibit had been packed. The archaeological material was apparently not packed at all. The VMM library was moved out of Vukovar to a private house but was now back in Eltz Castle apparently virtually

intact. Still according to Ms Rokvic, the City Archive material never left and was preserved. The consultant was later shown the rooms where the material is kept now*.

47 - Ms Rokvic believed that most of the cultural history collection had gone up in flames. She did not believe that significant pieces of furniture had been stored in the nearby village of Dalj (which contrasts with what she stated to Dr Kaiser: see Doc 7070 para 63). The parts of the library concerning the Workers Movement, the Communist Party and the Second World War had also burned down. The Ethnographic library had survived although all objects had been burned. The numismatic collection is said to be intact except for pieces stolen in 1989 and the collection of new coins, which had melted. Additional objects had been brought to the museum from private collections for security reasons and were being stored there now*. The consultant was unable for lack of time to check any of these statements.

48 - The consultant asked Ms Rokvic about the statements made in the report^o by the former director of the VMM, Ms Zdenka Buljan, to the Croatian authorities, dated Nasice, July 1992. Had VMM objects been deposited for protection just before the war in private homes? Are there lists of these deposits? The answers to these questions were not clear as considerable animosity seems to exist between the present and former directors. But the consultant must record persistent allusion to VMM objects being now in private hands. Had a list of these deposits survived? Mrs Rokvic clearly replied with the statement that no such lists had been found.

49 - The consultant was then shown another of the original inventory books of the VMM archaeological collection, carrying the number 2* and the new inventory sheets*, similar in lay-out to the old inventory book's pages and looked after by archaeologist Dejan Sokolovic*. With very little routine he is registering objects which only came into the museum after the war, as of 1992. The consultant was then given a tour of the ground-floor premises that had been cleaned out and restored to serve as offices etc. In the central part, east of the entry gate*, there is the room for collections from outside, the archaeologist's office, a room in which the City Archives material is piled on the floor, a modest exhibition room* with a very modest exhibition of some artifacts and some posters/photographs*, and the room where the library is temporarily set up*. The library is not arranged for normal use; there is no perceptible organisation of the books*; they are mixed in with miscellaneous objects from the Franciscan Monastery (some paintings*, a crucifix*, books* and part of the library catalogue*).

50 - The tour continued in the Eltz Castle ground-floor from the re-roofed* part to the part with emergency roofing* to the areas open to the sky*. Lots of rubble has not yet been removed*. There are no signs of previous fire in this ground-floor area; this is much more perceptible on the first floor*. Bullet holes in the walls*, no windows left*, blasted-out holes in the walls*, unusable staircases*, rubble in the basement, rubble on the first floor*. In some parts of the east wing of the building above where the library is now situated, some 70 cm of brick rubble is on the floor*; it was explained to the consultant that this had been left there for the protection of the library. There are burnt out and torn museum objects*, piles of vegetable crates* with archaeological artifacts, leftovers* and sherds, moss and plants growing in most of the open air space*. The consultant was also shown newly acquired historical objects, deposited in the middle of this chaos*, blue street-name signs in Latin writing from Vukovar prior to the war*, which had been exchanged in some streets for blue signs in Cyrillic script* (with an apparently different denomination of the related street). It was proudly pointed out that the museum continues to collect the artifacts that constitute history in Vukovar. The

second floor of the building is no longer existent or even accessible as there are no intact ceilings on the first floor any more*.

51 - It was difficult for the consultant, despite his lack of first-hand experience of war conditions, to conceive that this museum space could have served for Croatian military defense purposes. There was so much rubble and no traces of weapons or of any other abandoned military equipment. The Croatian defenders had not won the war in Vukovar and would not have had the time or reason to disguise their previous presence. This was just as obvious on the first floor as in the basement, where one bricked-up by the Croats window was pointed out as supposed proof of Croatian defence installations*. The consultant did not see the north wing of Eltz Castle from the inside, but only from a distance and from the outside*. It had housed the Agricultural Institute and the basement served as hospital during the fighting and bombing. North of that wing was where the hail cannons had been located by the Croats and had caused such annoyance to the attacking forces. It was pictured in the Paris Vukovar Exhibition Catalogue^o as proof of Croatian aggressivity. One of these cannons is now kept together with the VMM objects in the City Museum of Novi Sad*.

52 - Walking from the museum towards the old town centre, the consultant was struck by the desolation. No house has a roof left, or windows or ceilings*. On the main street very few buildings have been renovated* and there are very few people about. The Laroslav Ruzicka Memorial Museum* consists only of vertical walls, with plants and bushes growing in the inside*. The same is true of the large L-shaped History Museum, an Austrian building* similar in style to the Museum of Vojvodina, across the small river joining the Danube a few yards further down; burnt out floors, the roof and windows gone, the yellow ochre paint red where the flames came out of the windows*; all the rubble is still inside, metres high*.

53 - The Orthodox Church of St Nicola* looks still as it did in the cover photograph of the catalogue of the Serbian Vukovar Exhibition in Paris in 1991 and which was conceived and printed in Novi Sad. Some old rusty metal scaffolding* in the open inside may be helping prevent collapse. No traces of any recent intervention could be perceived by the visiting consultant.*

54 - At the back of that same street block which contains the History Museum was situated the early 20th century bank building which housed the Bauer Collection and Fine Arts Gallery. This building does not exist any more - no trace is left, the earth has been bulldozed apparently only recently*. Opposite the museum site other houses have obviously also been flattened and rolled. A study of the town plan will confirm the impression. According to Mr Cerimovic (IPV), the condition of these buildings was then considered irremediably bad, . Only in this small area of the town were buildings seen to be completely flattened.

Some houses are marked with a bar code that the consultant understood as follows:

- buildings with one red vertical bar are considered of *lesser**
- those with two yellow vertical bars of *higher**
- those with three green vertical bars of *considerable* capacity of reconstruction*.

55 - A visit was made to the site* of the former open air museum of Vucedol. The consultant saw only tall grass* and bushes and vineyards on a plateau above the Danube. The area was pointed out to him by the archaeologist Bunardric as being

the famous and important site of Vucedol, but there was nothing to see and no signposts to the fact. The neglect shown to this site must be stopped.

56 - The Franciscan Monastery* was the last cultural ruin the consultant visited that day. It is a total shambles; all the roofs are gone, but the church ceiling remains and is pierced with relatively few mortar holes*. There is no protection whatsoever on the inside or outside of the building*. Uninhabited, under complete neglect*, rubble all over the place*, plants growing everywhere, broken statuary*, no protection over the convent building's roof, where the partially remaining wooden roof structure* would make it relatively easy to do so. Access to the hiding site for the Bauer Collection and the treasure of the Franciscan Brothers is difficult, down a staircase* to underground vaulted cellars*. It could only be flash photographed*, but not inspected for lack of lighting.

57 - **Comments on the situation in Vukovar.** There is evidence of considerable neglect of valuable historic building substance - for example no rubble has been removed

- from the History Museum
- from the Rudizcka House
- or from the Franciscan Convent
- and only some from Eltz Castle and from all the buildings belonging to that site, and this four years after the fighting has stopped

but from the Bauer Collection and Fine Arts Gallery every bit of masonry is gone; immediate intervention is necessary to save the heavily damaged building structures rotting and soon crumbling; what is necessary is

- provisional roofing
- rubble and debris clean out
- covering of window openings
- enclosing the respective properties.

58 - The term "war archaeology" is well understood by the authorities in Novi Sad. There is much need of it in Vukovar. It was not known what is hidden under the rubble - but it has to be sorted. The same is valid for all the burnt, bent, rusted remains of VMM objects on top of the rubble*. They have to be treated as museum objects again (registered and photographed). Decisions on conservation treatment can wait.

The collections in the Eltz Castle museum building, the library, the town archives and the archaeological material mentioned in paras 48-52, as well as outside collections should be handled and protected as carefully and professionally as possible.

The museum staff should be given training and assistance in

- basic museum procedures
- upkeep and maintenance of damaged museum buildings
- the conception of exhibitions, collections, storage systems
- the care of objects

One might imagine that the renaming of a museum (the former Vukovar Municipal Museum is now called the Museum of the City of Vukovar) and the provision of a sizeable staff (6½ positions in all, of which 2½ curatorial, 2 security, 2

housekeepers) might indicate an intention to achieve something. But not much seems to have yet happened. The museum staff should be given a programme of what they are to achieve and of how to keep the museum alive.

D. How much is left?

59 - It is not yet possible to put forward definitive numbers on how much of the VMM collections has survived. Nor is it possible either to state what exactly has been lost.

60 - There were several handicaps which explain this statement:

- the time available for the fact-finding mission was limited and only preliminary conclusions can be attempted
- the documentation made available by the Croats and by the Serbs was incompatible and did not enable immediate on-site cross-checking
- the consultant was not himself familiar with the Croatian or Serbian.

61 - **The size of the original VMM collections.** Upon request the consultant had obtained from the MDC in Zagreb a list^o of the total number of objects in each of the VMM collections. The numbers given in the following table are of objects included in the inventories copied from Vukovar to Zagreb in 1974 or 1976 (column 2), of further objects not inventoried (column 3) and of the resulting totals (column 4).

Collection	objects on inv	non-inv	total
Archaeological	2,117	757	2,874
Numismatic	5,859	4,200	10,059
Cultural History	3,175	1,804	4,979
Labour Movement	1,166	0	1,166
New History Doc	641	0	641
Socialistic Dev	1,062	0	1,062
Recent History	1,401	0	1,401
Ethnographic	1,375	42	1,417
Vukovariensa print	515	0	515
Ruzicka Memorial	250	2	250
History Museum	4,053	217	4,270
Bauer Collection and Fine Arts Gallery	687	913	1,600
Grand Total	22,301	7,933	30,234

It is also stated in the MDC list that archaeological activity between 1984 and 1990, especially in Vucedol, had generated "over 30,000 new archaeological items".

62 - **Inventories.** Another complication concerns inventories (and object entry books). There are certain discrepancies:

- for the BFA the two entry books total 1,618 objects, whereas 1,600 are indicated by the MDC

- the MDC indicate 3 archaeological inventory books, the consultant has seen four.
- the same with the numismatic inventories, 4 seem to be indicated by the MDC, but there are in fact 5. The consultant has seen* altogether 16 pre-1991 inventory and entry books: 4 vols on archaeology, 5 vols on numismatics, 3 vols on cultural history, 4 vols of the BFA collection, but that is all. He has seen nothing relating to the other VMM collections. In this situation the consultant is unable to make any statement as to how many of those volumes there had been in all and how many were gone.

63 - **Transport lists.** The consultant on the first day of his arrival in Belgrade was given photocopies of 4 transport lists for the evacuation of material from Vukovar. The originals had been signed by history curators, archaeologists, documentalists, representing National Museums and the respective republican, provincial or municipal Institutes of Protection etc. They are rubber-stamped by the many military authorities then in Vukovar. The consultant was also given a disk with all this information copied onto it.

The photocopied lists are of receipt dockets and all apparently deal with the evacuation of VMM objects to Serbia and are all dated between 12 December 1991 and 21 January 1992. They mention:

- 190 archival objects - deposited at the State Archives of Vojvodina in Novi Sad^o
- 35 objects of the cultural history collection - deposited in the Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade^o
- 320 mainly pictures and mainly from the Bauer collection - deposited in the Museum of Vojvodina in Novi Sad^o
- 228 pictures from the Bauer collection - deposited in the Museum of Vojvodina in Novi Sad^o
- 212 pictures mainly from the Bauer collection - deposited in the Museum of Vojvodina in Novi Sad^o
- 214 cultural history and technology objects (packed in 17 boxes) - deposited in the Museum of Vojvodina in Novi Sad^o — (a discrepancy was discovered on drafting the report between the 194 objects inventoried by Ms Stanic and the 214 on the transit lists and could not yet be verified)
- 51 sculptures from the Bauer collection - apparently in the museums of Novi Sad^o

Total 1250 objects.

64 - **What has survived?** The existence of these 1250 transported items has been verified in general by the consultant, though lack of time prevented verification of each individual object. Approximately 760 are pictures: paintings, graphic art, watercolours on different supports, mostly apparently from the Bauer Collection.

There are also approximately 1300 pieces of artwork on paper in the aluminium chest in the Museum of Vojvodina (para 37). These are apparently also from the Bauer Collection; they have not been checked.

There are also 722 cardboard boxes packed with archaeological objects. Although the number of archaeological objects transferred to Novi Sad is on record, the consultant has not yet been able to access the disks provided (above para 28). Most of the VMM archaeological material comes from the Vucedol site and was only

excavated in the 1980s. According to MDC Zagreb the site numbers have not yet been entered into the inventory books. It remains to be seen therefore how far this might affect the estimate of overall loss. More needs to be known about the registration system used.

The rubble in Vukovar may contain further items. In particular the archaeological remains in Eltz Castle (Vukovar) have also to be sorted (above paras 50 and 58).

Some further furniture items are said to have survived (museum objects or museum office furniture?). They are at present stored in nearby Dalj where they were seen by Dr Colin Kaiser (Doc 7070 para 63 and see also para 47 above).

Ms Rokvic said that just prior to the war there was an exhibition of Vukovar Municipal Museum Treasures in Zagreb from which several exhibits had not been returned to Vukovar, including the well-known dove-shaped vessel which figured on the cover page of the catalogue of the 1988 "Vucedol" exhibition in Zagreb.

A further addition to the number of surviving objects is the content of the "Vukovar 1991" exhibition at the Yugoslav Cultural Centre in Paris in 1992. The text for this exhibition was written by Radomar Bunardric*, the archaeologist at the City Museum of Novi Sad. The objects are still in Paris in the treasury of the Residence of the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)^o.

The 16 liturgical metal vessels from the Franciscan Monastery, packed into a wooden box in the Museum of Vojvodina at Novi Sad, are not in principle from the VMM.

65 - What proportion has therefore survived? An attempt could be made to express the loss of objects in percentage terms by comparing what has been checked as surviving with the pre-1991 situation. But both bases for this calculation (total of collections and total surviving) are too uncertain for it to be of any interest. For example it is not known to the consultant if the VMM city archival material* he saw in Vukovar figures in the VMM inventories; or to what extent books in the present VMM library* are considered as VMM artifacts and therefore figure in the inventories; or how many coins and medals are in the chest in Novi Sad; or how many of the 30,000 archaeological items from Vucedol were transferred to Novi Sad etc.

E. Recommendations

The comments made at the end of each VMM object holding site can in part be considered as recommendations (see paras 27, 33, 39, 41, 43 and 57), but their specificity makes it seem more sensible to consider them in the context of each museum in question.

More general recommendations are:

RECOMMENDATION 1

The Belgrade authorities should be asked to press those responsible in Vukovar to

- immediately stop any further demolition of museum buildings or other built heritage of the old town in Vukovar

- stop neglecting the VMM buildings, the Vucedol site, the Franciscan Monastery, the Church of St Nicola and other precious and usable architecture on site
- carry out minimal intervention in these buildings including the removal of all rubble (but this must be under the closest supervision), emergency roofing, covering of wall tops and prevention of internal plant growth
- make the necessary material and specialists available to this end.

RECOMMENDATION 2

An encounter of specialists from the countries concerned should be organised on foreign ground under the auspices of an international body, such as the Council of Europe, to discuss collaboration and exchange of information.

A study group could be set up to examine the feasibility of such an encounter and eventually prepare what is suggested in Recommendation 3.

The consultant would note in this context that

- he has already been asked by the Serbian authorities to transmit copies of the transport lists they had given him to the Croatian specialists
- he has already left a copy of the disk the MDC had given to him with the Serbian specialists.

(See also Mr Omcikus' comment in his article in NIN of 2 March 1995)

RECOMMENDATION 3

A working party should be constituted, if possible of local museum professionals

- from Zagreb: of one or more of the curators who actually have been at work in the Vukovar Municipal Museum before 1991 and know the collections well
- from Belgrade and Novi Sad: of one or more of those, who have been occupied since 1991 with transport and documentation of the objects transferred from Vukovar
- from Vukovar: past and present museum directors.

All should work under the guidance of a small team of foreign professional specialists, preferably nominated by Icom, and with independent linguistic competence.

Should this prove to be impossible, outside professionals might have to be called to take on both the work of the guiding team and of the working party

The mission should be well prepared with sufficient financial backing in order that the working party has sufficient time to:

- check thoroughly all information available regarding Vukovar cultural heritage objects from museums, churches, convents and excavation sites in Vukovar and elsewhere
- go through all the necessary registering of existing VMM objects in Novi Sad, etc., item by item

by means of

- the appropriate PC hard- and software
- illustrated inventories, as complete as possible, such as partially exist already at MDC in Zagreb: working documents-photocopied, not necessarily luxury editions with original photographs - for fast visual pre-identification (important) and other relevant information
- free and uncomplicated entry to all the different territories and easy access to all relevant localities

to achieve:

- the reconstitution of the complete inventories of collections of the VMM, etc. prior to the outbreak of the hostilities, as precisely as possible
- the retrieval of parts of the collection that have not yet been checked (Dalj and other places), registered or rediscovered
- a precise account of what actually has been lost by war, through destruction or theft in its different forms.

RECOMMENDATION 4

A carefully researched chronology should be constituted of every VMM related event during 1991/92 (up to the war, during the war and in the months after it).

RECOMMENDATION 5

A detailed, and as far as possible illustrated, inventory should be made of the objects in the different departments of the VMM on the basis of the existing data in Zagreb and the original inventory books, and in a way that will serve the proposed survey more efficiently. The provenance of this information should be specified.

An attempt should be made to find out what has been added to the collections since the inventories were copied in 1974/1976.

RECOMMENDATION 6

A systematic collection of photographs of VMM objects in situ should be put together from archives, catalogues, books, newspaper cuttings and private sources and circulated generally in order to facilitate the reconstitution of the VMM collections and permanent exhibitions.

F. EVIDENCE [◊](#)(a more detailed listing is available)

- Copies of disks (3 Serbian and 1 Croatian), containing official correspondence, transport lists, inventories, sample printout of MDC "Bauer" inventory
- Colour photographs - 363 composed in a commented album
- Transport lists
- Copies of pages of recent inventory books, established in Novi Sad
- Ms Buljan's report (para 48)
- MDC list of VMM objects (para 61)
- Blank inventory cards used in the museum of Vojvodina for registering objects from Vukovar
- Copies of samples of the same inventory cards filled in in Novi Sad.
- Publications include the following:
- "Zbirka Bauer/Bauer Collection" Catalogue of the exhibition at the Museum Gallery Centre in Zagreb (February - April 1989)

- Catalogues of the Matica Srpska Gallery: "Ikonostasis of the S Nicola Church in Vukovar (Novi Sad 1993) and "Ikonostase de la Chapelle de la Dormition de la Vierge, sur les "bonnes eaux", près de Dalj" (Novi Sad 1994)
- "Vukovar 1991" catalogue of the 1992 Paris exhibition
- "Vucedol" catalogue of the 1988 Zagreb exhibition
- R Bunardric / B Ivanovic "Vukovar: the cultural genocide of the Serbian Nation" (Novi Sad, no date)
- Documents:
 1. Letter dated 19 December 1991 from Prof Pero Matic, Prime Minister of the Serbian Region of Slavonia, Baranja and Western Srem, to the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Serbia authorising their "Crisis Headquarters", the IPB and the IPNS, "to relocate mobile cultural property on a temporary basis and adequately store and protect it in the Republic of Serbia".
 2. Minutes of the meeting at MDC in Zagreb

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - List of People encountered during the Fact Finding Mission

(The more important contact addresses are indicated)

1A. ZAGREB

Professor Dr Antun BAUER and Dr Antunia BAUER, Collectors— Krajijska 23, 41 000 Zagreb, Croatia

Mr Bozo BISKUPIC, Deputy Mayor of Zagreb — Hôtel de Ville, 41 000 Zagreb, Croatia

Ms Maja CVITAS, Computer specialist, Museum Documentation Centre (MDC)

Mr Damodar FRLAN, Director of the Ethnographic Museum, President of Croatian National Icom Committee — Mazuranicev trg 14, 41 000 Zagreb/Croatia, Tel + 385 (41) 44 40 11 / 44 98 86/ 44 98 95 - Fax + 385 (41) 44 40 11

Ms Ana GRAVRAS-DELIC, Computer specialist, MDC

Mr Zelimir LASZLO, Conservator counsellor, MDC

Ms Ruza MARIC, Director of the Vukovar Museum in Exile — Medej Mimara

Mr Ferdinand MEDER, Director, State administration of the protection of natural and cultural heritage

Mr Dino MILINOVIC, Secretary General of the Croatian Commission for collaboration with Unesco — Trg Burze 6 — 41000 Zagreb

Ms Seadeta MIDZIC, Vice-Minister of Culture, The Government of the Republic of Croatia

Ms Bianka PERCINIC-KAVUR, Head of the Department for movable heritage, MDC

Father Ivan PERKOVIC, St Francis Monastery, Vukovar

Ms Ranka WURTH-SATACEVIC, consultant expert, State administration of the protection of natural and cultural heritage

Ms Branka SULC, Director of the Museum Documentation Centre — Mesnicka 5, 41 000 Zagreb, Croatia. Tel + 385 (41) 42 65 34; FAX + 385 (41) 43 08 51

Father Dobroslov SALAJ, St Francis Monastery, Vukovar

Ms Visnja ZGAGA, museum consultant

Mr Igor ZIDIC, Deputy Minister of Culture of Croatia

1 B. BELGRADE

Mr Radomir BEGENESIC, Deputy Minister of Culture, Republic of Serbia — Nemanjina 11, YU - 11 000 Belgrade. Tel (381.11) 64 41 79; Fax (381.11) 68 38 54

Professor Dr Aleksandar DESPIC, Director of the Museum of Science and Technology, Director of the Academy of Science and Art of the Republic of Serbia, President of the FRY National Icom Committee — Knez Michailova 35, YU - 11 000 Belgrade. Tel (381.11) 63 40 55; Fax (381.11) 63 87 92.

Mr Jovan DESPOTOVIC, art historian, "Vreme Umetosti" (Magazine "time of art")

Ms Gordona DOBRIC, art historian, Secretary to the Association of Art Historians of Serbia

Mr Jevta JEVTOMIC, Director of the National Museum — Trg Republike 1a, YU - 11 000 Belgrade. Tel (381.11) 34 28 78/62 11 60. Fax (381.11) 62 77 21.

Ms Verica KOZOMARA, Advisor in the Ministry of Culture, The Government of the Republic of Serbia

Father Petar L. LUKIC, Principal, Serbian Orthodox Cathedral, 3 Kneza Sime Markovica, YU - 11 000 Belgrade. Tel (381.11) 63 66 84; Fax (381.11) 63 85 66

Mr Mitar MIHIC, Director of the Ethnographic Museum (and staff) — Akademski trg 13, YU - 11 000 Belgrade. Tel (381.11) 62 99 51; Fax (381.11) 62 12 84

Mr Mileta MILIC, Deputy Director of the Institute for the Protection of the Historic and Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Serbia — Bozidara Adzije 11, YU - 11 000 Belgrade. Tel (381.11) 45 47 86; Fax (381.11) 44 98 46.

Mr Marco OMCIKUS, Head of the Department for Protection and Documentation, Institute for the Protection of the Historic and Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Serbia — Bozidara Adzije 11, 11 000 Belgrade. Tel + 381 (11) 45 47 86 - Fax + 381 (11) 444 98 46

Mr Jovan PANTIC, Chief conservator-restorer, National Museum

Ms Jelenka PETKOVIC, Curator, Museum of Science and Technology

Mr Dragan RISTIC, Counsellor, Federal Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Ms Jasmina ROGANOVIC, Senior counsellor, Federal Administration for International Scientific, Educational, Cultural and Technical Cooperation, Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Dr Irina SUBOTIC, Curator of the National Museum, Vice President of the National Icom Committee — 11 000 Belgrade. Tel + 381 (11) 34 28 78

Dr Gojko SUBOTIC, Scientific counsellor, Institute of Byzantology, Academy of Science and Art of the Republic of Serbia

Mr Borislav SURDIC, Curator, Historical Museum of Serbia, Secretary of the Serbian Museum Society — Nemanjina 24, YU - 11 000 Belgrade. Fax (381.11) 64 69 84.

Professor Dr Miroslav TIMOTIJEVIC, President of the Association of Art Historians in Serbia, Faculty of Philosophy Belgrade University

Ms Bojana VALCIC-SIMIC, Assistant Minister of Culture, The government of the Republic of Serbia

Mr Zvonimir ZEKOVIC, Head of the department for conservation and restoration, Institute for the Protection of Historic and Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade Academy, Faculty of art - Training of conservator-restores

1C. NOVI SAD

Mr Vladimir BOGDANOVIC, Chief conservator, Matica Srpska Gallery

Mr Radovan BUNARDRIC, Archaeologist, City Museum

Ms Leposava SELMIC, Director of the Matica Srpska Gallery — Trg Galerija 1, YU - 21 000 Novi Sad. Tel (381.21) 24 1555

Mr Bogdan KOVACEVIC, Head of the conservation department, Provincial Institute for the Protection of Cultural, Monuments of Vojvodina

Mr Mitar KREJIC, Archivist, Archives of Vojvodina

Mr Mladenko KUMOVIC, Co-Director of the Museum of Vojvodina — Dunavska 35-37, YU - 21 000. Tel (381.21) 26 555

Mr Dejan RADOVANOVIC, art historian, Provincial Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Vojvodina — Strosmajerova 22, YU 21 000 Novi Sad Tel. (381.21) 43 25 76/43 12 11; Fax (381.21) 43 11 98.

Mr SILJGOVIC, Director of the City Museum of Novi Sad — Patrijarha Rajacica 16. YU 21 000 Sremski Karlovci. Tel (381.21) 43 31 45/43 36 13

Ms Nada STANIC, Curator of Vukovar Municipal Museum objects, Museum of Vojvodina, Novi Sad

Mr Pavle STANOJEVIC, Director of the Archives of Vojvodina — Dunavska 35, YU - 21 000 Novi Sad. Tel (381.21) 35 21 244

Mr Zoran VAPA, Director of the Provincial Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Vojvodina — Strosmajerova 22, YU 21 000 Novi Sad Tel. (381.21) 43 25 76/43 12 11; Fax (381.21) 43 11 98.

Father VASILIJJE, Bishop, Serbian Orthodox Church of Sremski Karlovci,

Ms Dragojla ZIVANOV, Curator of the Matica Srpska Gallery

1D. VUKOVAR

Mr Milan BALIC, art historian, Municipal Institute for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Values

Mr Velimir CERIMOVIC, Director, Municipal Institute for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Values — Vukovar. Tel (381.210) 51 326

Mr Jouan KOLEDIN, archaeologist, Museum of the City of Vukovar

Ms Olivera ROKVIC, Director, Museum of the City of Vukovar — Elcov Dvorac, Vukovar. Tel (381.210) 51 396

Mr Dejan SOKOLOVIC, Conservator, Museum of the City of Vukovar

Appendix 2 - Systematic description of museums holding VMM objects

I. Description of the building and the location within the Ethnographic Museum Belgrade, where VMM objects are being stored (see paras 26-27)

Time spent in the building: 1 hour

Time spent being introduced to staff and organisation: 40 minutes

Time spent on surveying the objects in store: 20 minutes

Building: 7-floor stone building in down-town Belgrade

Floor: 5th, accessible by elevator

Premises: museum storage area, divided into rooms, connected with doors

Reserved for Vukovar objects only: no

Cohabitation with other objects: yes, with the museum's own objects in store

Container for storage of objects: cupboards, chests of drawers

Number of objects: 35

Category/ies - types of objects: textiles, ecclesiastical and lay garments, flags, manuscripts, luxury goods, pipe fragments and other

Documentation prior to August 1991: Inventory books of the VMM cultural history collection

Documentation since November 1991: Listing for transport

Inventoried by the host institute: no enquiry made by the consultant

Photographic documentation by the host institute: as above

Documentary photographs made by the consultant: yes, partially, 7 c/photographs

Original inventory numbers visible: on some objects

Damage to VMM objects subsequent to 24 August 1991 and their removal: no information was requested

VMM building of origin: apparently main building, Eltz Castle

Condition of objects: clean, partly broken

Conservation measures / restoration treatment provided since removal from Vukovar: apparently some cautious cleaning and conservation seems to have taken place; no information was requested by the consultant

Treatment needed/proposed: no intervention necessary at this stage

Special environmental protection: same as for the museum's own objects

Physical protection: wrapped in or protected by tissue paper within container

Security: same as for the museum's own objects

Accessibility: no public access

Condition of building: apparently well maintained

Cleanness of site: clean

II. Description of the building and the location within the City Museum in Novi Sad, where VMM objects are being stored (see paras 28-33)

Time spent in the building: 1 hour

Time spent being introduced to staff and organisation: none

Time spent on surveying the objects in store: 1 hour

Building: Baroque fortification with solid thick stone walls on the hill over the river just outside Novi Sad

Floor: ground floor

Premises: museum storage, separate rooms, walls white-wash, parquet flooring

Reserved for Vukovar objects only: yes

Cohabitation with other objects: no

Container for storage of objects: new 4-tier open wooden shelving

Number of objects:

- 722 numbered cardboard boxes of mainly archaeological material*
- a few dozen restored ceramic pots*, broken again during the war
- a chest with hundreds of numismatic items*
- 9 Catholic objects (7 wooden polychrome sculptures, 1 painting, 1 piece of furniture)*
- some dozen objects from the cultural history collection, citizenship documents*, weapons*, helmets, in very varying conditions
- a blown-up gothic(?) metal chest
- the hail cannon, which operated close to the Danube north of the wing of the Eltz Castle, where the Agricultural Institute had been situated

Category/ies - types of objects: archaeological ceramic material, wooden polychrome sculptures, metal artifacts, manuscripts, weapons, inventory books and other

Documentation prior to August 1991 Inventory books of the VMM cultural history collection

Documentation since November 1991: Listings, unseen

Inventoried by the host institute: yes, see above (para 32)

Photographic documentation by the host institute: no information was requested

Documentary photographs made by the consultant: yes, 77 c/photographs

Original inventory numbers visible: yes, on some objects

Damage to VMM objects subsequent to 24 August 1991 and their removal: pulverisation and breaks (ceramics), bursts through blasting (metal), melting (glass, metal, paint), burning, discoloration, disfiguration

VMM building of origin: apparently main building, Eltz Castle

Condition of objects: partly broken

Conservation measures / restoration treatment provided since removal from Vukovar: apparently some superficial dusting, no conservation seems to have taken place; no information was requested by the consultant

Treatment needed/proposed: needs in-depth survey, no intervention necessary at this stage

Special environmental protection: same as for the museum's own objects

Physical protection: no particular protection, uncovered

Security: same as for the museum's own objects, locked away

Accessability: no public access, only with special permission of the Serbian Ministry of Culture in Belgrade (according to interview with Mr Vapa (IPNS) see para 25)

Condition of building: apparently well-maintained, very stable temperature and humidity, little dust

Cleanness of site: clean

III. Description of the building and the location within the Museum of Vojvodina, where the objects from the Bauer Collection and Fine Arts Gallery are being stored (see paras34-39)

Time spent in the building: 4½ hours (3 visits)

Time spent being introduced to staff and situation: 1½ hours

Time spent on surveying the objects in store: 3 hours

Building:

- 3-floor concrete building in downtown Novi Sad, built in the late 1960s as Historic Museum and only in 1992 united with the next door Museum of Vojvodina under that same name

- the main museum building is a typical 18th century stone building, built by the Austrians, later adapted to serve as museum

Floor: BFA collection is situated in the basement of the new building, accessible by elevator

Premises: disaffected, but unchanged museum exhibition area, closed to the public, divided into smaller open room units

Reserved for Vukovar objects only: no

Cohabitation with other objects: yes, with the former permanent history exhibition of the museum made up of its own objects*

Container for storage of objects: none for paintings* and sculpture*; unframed artwork on paper put into cardboard folders*

Number of objects:

- 456 paintings registered by Ms Stanic:
 1. listings A 1-3 29 paintings to conserve and restore
 2. listings I A-XV A 199 paintings
 3. listings I B-IX B 228 paintings
- 109 pieces of artwork on paper registered by Ms Stanic:
 1. listings folder 1-7 109 art on paper

2. alu-container 1300 (approximation)
 - 28 unregistered sculptures (counted)
 - a number of as yet unregistered pictures

Category/ies - types of objects: Paintings, prints, drawings, serigraphs

Documentation prior to August 1991: VMM entry books

Documentation since November 1991: transport lists partially inventoried (see para 38)

Inventoried by the host institute: yes

Photographic documentation by the host institute: yes

Documentary photographs made by the consultant: yes, 65 c/photograph

Original inventory numbers visible: VMM Labels on the back

Damage to VMM objects subsequent to 24 August 1991 and their removal: no information was requested by the consultant

VMM building of origin: Bauer Collection and Fine Arts Gallery

Condition of objects: Generally acceptable, if the necessary care is taken and more suitable protection given (cupboards, hanging walls, packing crates conceived as storage units or similar), so that condition can be kept stable.

Conservation measures / restoration treatment provided since removal from Vukovar: apparently dust removal, but no communications on the subject received and no specific questions asked by the consultant

Treatment needed/proposed: 85 specifically listed paintings are due for conservation, mostly because of recent damage, but not at all in every case. The others will need some maintenance measures in the future, such as stretching, surface grime removal etc - but there is no immediate risk.

Special environmental protection: same as for the museum's own objects

Physical protection: on the paintings clean cotton sheets keep the dust off, sculptures unprotected

Security: same as for the museum's own objects

Accessibility: no public access

Condition of building: apparently appropriate maintenance

Cleanness of site: clean

IV. Description of the building and the location within the main building of the Museum of Vojvodina where objects from the VMM Cultural History Department and the Franciscan Monastery are stored (see paras 34, 40-41)

Time spent in the building: ½ hour

Time spent being introduced to staff and organisation: none

Time spent on surveying the objects in store: ½ hour

Building: 2-floor stone building in downtown Novi Sad

Floor: attic, rooms built into the high roof

Premises: museum storage area, single room with locked door

Reserved for Vukovar objects only: yes

Cohabitation with other objects: no

Container for storage of objects: wooden cupboards

Number of objects:

- 194 VMM objects (or 214, see para 63)
- 17 or 18 from the Franciscan treasure

Category/ies - types of objects:

- VMM: porcelain, pewter etc
- Franciscan: metal chalices etc

Documentation prior to August 1991: Inventory books of the VMM cultural history collection

Documentation since November 1991: Listing for Transport, Novi Sad inventory and cards

Inventoried by the host institute: yes

Photographic documentation by the host institute: yes, 9x6, b/w

Documentary photographs made by the consultant: yes, 9 c/photographs

Original inventory numbers visible: no time for checking

Damage to VMM objects subsequent to 24 August 1991 and their removal: no information was requested

VMM building of origin: apparently main building, Eltz Castle

Condition of objects: not checked individually

Conservation measures / restoration treatment provided since removal from Vukovar: some cautious dusting seems to have taken place; no information requested by the consultant

Treatment needed/proposed: no intervention necessary at this stage

Special environmental protection: same as for the museum's own objects

Physical protection: boxes stuffed with crushed paper, individual objects not individually wrapped

Security: sealed* and locked cupboards in a locked room, building security as for own collection and permanent exhibition

Accessibility: no public access

Condition of building: apparently well-maintained

Cleanliness of site: clean

V. Description of the location within the building of the Vojvodina Archives where archival material from VMM is stored (in the same building as the Museum of Vojvodina) (see paras 42-43)

Time spent in the building: 30 minutes

Time spent being introduced to staff and organisation: 10 minutes

Time spent on surveying the objects in store: 20 minutes

Building: 2-floor stone building in downtown Novi Sad

Floor: second floor

Premises: chief conservator's office, under lock and key

Reserved for Vukovar objects only: no

Cohabitation with other objects: other archival material and office furnishings

Container for storage of objects: locked cupboard, for VMM material only

Number of objects: 190 VMM archival items

Category/ies - types of objects: archival material - A 3 and A 4 paper items

Documentation prior to August 1991: unknown to the consultant

Documentation since November 1991: listing for transport, dated "24.XII.1991" [o](#) and report dated " 28. XII. 1991" [o](#) , all in Cyrillic script, stamped in Belgrade "21.01.1992"

Inventoried by the host institute: unknown to the consultant

Photographic documentation by the host institute: unknown to the consultant

Documentary photographs made by the consultant: yes, 3 c/photographs

Original inventory numbers visible: no time for checking

Damage to VMM objects subsequent to 24 August 1991 and their removal: during armed intervention seals had been torn or cut off

VMM building of origin: apparently originally stored in the basement of Eltz Castle, this material came "from a private source in Vukovar"

Condition of objects: clean and apparently stable

Conservation measures / restoration treatment provided since removal from Vukovar: cautious dusting and cleaning has taken place

Treatment needed/proposed: no intervention necessary at this state

Special environmental protection: as for the Archive's own objects

Physical protection: locked cupboards

Security: locked cupboards in chief conservator's office as for own collection

Accessibility: no public access

Condition of Building: apparently kept under good maintenance

Cleanliness of site: clean

2 Update on the situation of the cultural heritage and international cooperation in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina

by Dr Colin Kaiser, consultant expert

(16 March 1995)

1. General Situation

Since the 6th Information Report (June 1994), the military situation has changed: the Croatian-Serbian frontlines in Croatia have been mainly inactive, though there has been sporadic shelling in the Zupanje region by Bosnian Serbian forces. There was much fighting on the Bosnian fronts in the autumn, with activity falling off in December, partly because of winter, but mainly because of the ceasefire. However, military activity has not ceased in the Bihac area. The Croatian media draw attention to continuous bombardments in the Livno-Kupres area and the Orasje and Usora areas in the north (i.e. lines manned by Croatian troops). The Western media have generally shown little interest in the fighting, except in Bihac, and increasing inaccuracy in press reports is worrisome, also for the cultural heritage, because some international circles seem to regard the situation even in Bosnia as practically post-war, and ripe for reconstruction activities.

Regarding the cultural heritage the international community is certainly more present in zones that have been affected by the war, but this presence is still more symbolic than effective. Enterprising businessmen and art dealers have shown

more imagination than governments, and even in the few areas where the international community is implanted in strength there is a mushrooming of expensive foreign consultancies. Not all cultural NGOs have been as active as they might have been, and some NGOs and religious organisations such as the Catholic Caritas, whose primary interest was strictly speaking more humanitarian, are touching upon the cultural heritage. Generally there is an impression of chaos, unbalanced interest from area to area, determined partly by market factors, and by ongoing destruction and deterioration of damaged buildings. In Croatia near peace conditions and the strength of the heritage administration permits a more coherent response to the international community than in Bosnia, where the war is a priority; here institutions are weak and the professional staff disappear steadily through emigration, or the necessity to find some other activity in order to survive.

2. European Community Monitor Mission (ECMM)

Everything should be done to encourage the ECMM to continue its monitoring of the cultural heritage, because it is the only such initiative in the field.

Since my mission for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in June 1994 which enabled the institution of on site monitoring of the cultural heritage (see 6th Information Report Doc 7133), the ECMM has continued the exercise in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and has included this field in its weekly reports. It has suffered however from severe demands on its personnel by the international community and because of the worsening humanitarian situation in some areas (notably in the Bihac pocket, beginning with the fall of the Abdic state). The result has been that the ECMM has sometimes been forced to cut back on cultural heritage monitoring. ECMM set up a database, and in January 1995 it issued its first consolidated report; it will issue a second in late March or early April. ECMM has also translated into Serbo-Croatian part of the 5th and all of the 6th Information Report.

From the numerous contacts I have had with ECMM monitors during subsequent missions to Mostar for Unesco in September-October 1994 and January-February 1995, it is clear that the monitors believe that outside stimulus - in the form of joint missions with experts sent out by the Parliamentary Assembly, Unesco or other international organisations - would be essential for keeping up the monitoring process. The ECMM should for example be able to assure access to such towns as Banja Luka and Trebinje in Bosnian Serbian zones, which have not yet been investigated since the fighting.

The Museum Documentation Centre of Zagreb cooperates with the monitors and is a positive Croatian input for encouraging their activity. Generally speaking in Croatia and in Bosnia religious authorities have been equally cooperative. It is easy for the ECMM to monitor heritage such as churches, mosques, cemeteries and museums, but they require documentation for other types of heritage, and only Croatian and Bosnian specialists can ultimately provide adequate and complete material of this sort.

Information gathered (July 1994-February 1995)

In this section the following types of cases are not referred to: monitoring involving requests about evacuation of moveable cultural heritage for risk reasons because of the value of the objects concerned, cases reported to the monitors but not inspected by them, and various that are already known (notably Croatian churches in unoccupied and occupied areas).

A. Weekly Reports

Croatia

- Pauline Monastery at Kamensko (Karlovac): ECMM could find (13 August 1994) no information to substantiate the claim that the library had been recently burned on the spot (I had already seen that it was no longer in place in June 1994).
- Glina (Topusko): the Serbian mayor of Glina justified destruction of the ruins of the Catholic church "for security reasons".
- Jasenovac (Vincovci): ECMM discovered that the Catholic church (in a Serbian-controlled zone) had suffered further damage since the previous visit - "the tower and part of the roof have been blown up".
- Kasic (Knin): monitors visited Orthodox cemetery (18 February 1995) repaired following Croatian attack in the area in 1993.
- Orahovica Orthodox monastery (in unoccupied Slavonia): establishment visited regularly (most recently on 14 January 1995).

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Bugojno (Travnik): Moslem authorities demolished resistance memorial built on site of a Moslem cemetery destroyed by Communist authorities after World War II "This action is now emotionally splitting the population of the town", however it would appear that Moslems strongly oppose this action - report of 3 March 1995)
- Cazin (Bihac): ECMM is currently investigating reports from the Mayor of Cazin of the destruction of 3 mosques and bad damage to 5 others.
- Franciscan Monastery at Guca Gora (Travnik): About 50% of the library had been destroyed or lost during the period the monastery was occupied by mujadeens in 1993, but ABiH managed to save part of it (21 September 1994); the monastery was evacuated by ABiH in early July, after my visit with ECMM in June 1994, and the ABiH proved guards for the Franciscan priests who returned (16 July 1994).
- Maglaj and Novi Seher (Travnik): ECMM, UNPROFOR, Croatian police and a Moslem delegation visited (26 January 1995) mosques, masjids and cemeteries - "all mosques and masjids had been destroyed", but the cemeteries were in "relatively good condition" (the consultant has asked for further details); this visit took place in an area controlled by the HVO; reports of 2 and 5 December indicated that ECMM had been given by local imams lists of 16 mosques and masjids in the Maglaj district, of which 10 had been completely destroyed, 4 damaged, and 2 functioning and 29 mosques and 3 masjids in the Tesanj district damaged (of which 8 were functioning)
- Podhum (Mostar): the ruins of the badly damaged mosque at Podhum were blown up 23 June 1994 (5 July 1994)

- Sokolac, Zavalje (Bihac), visited after Serbian pull-out (14 February 1995): Catholic church suffered shelling damage from BSA and was fired, altar and cross "systematically destroyed" and ossuary thrown about; in Sokolac the mosque was "pulled down in three sections by controlled explosions". The monitoring report notes that "the BSA had left Zavalje in a hurry, but in Sokolac the BSA troops had taken the time to destroy each and every house".
- Toscanica (Mostar): the village of Toscanica is "completely destroyed", along with some of the tombstones in the Moslem cemetery (27 February 1995).

B. December 1994 Database

The database includes information that is not always mentioned in the weekly bulletin.

In the Tuzla area the ECMM monitored mosques in Humci Donji (light damage), Humci Gornji (light damage), Kikaci (light damage), Zivinice (no damage), Banovici (light damage); the church of St. Juraj in Morancani (South Tuzla)(no damage apparently), the Catholic church of St. John the Baptist and the Catholic chapel of St. Anthony in Zivin (no damage in either case). Light damage was found to a mosque in Staric, near Kladanj. The monitors also examined sacral buildings in Zenica, and discovered light damage to the Glavna Gradska mosque, none to the Obdenista, Jaliya, old Jaliya, and Zevicanke mosques, and none to the former synagogue.

In Croatia the ECMM monitored some heritage in the Topusko area (UNPA North, especially at Kostajnica, where it found that the Catholic Church of St. Anthony of the Franciscan Monastery had been dynamited, along with the Catholic Church of St. Anne. Monitoring has continued in the southern Krajina, where other Catholic sacral buildings were found to have been destroyed (church at Rodalijce dynamited). The Orthodox Church of St. Anne near Donji Vrijeska had also suffered damage from small rockets and mortars, and another Orthodox church at Golubic was found to be heavily damaged and unusable without major rebuilding.

C. Stolac

While working for Unesco in Mostar, I was able to carry out one monitoring mission with ECMM in Stolac, in Herzegovina. This town, notable for its traditional Turkish (Ottoman period and later) housing, suffered from periodic bombardment from Bosnian Serbian forces (several Catholic churches were damaged, and the local museum burned during the reoccupation by HVO forces in 1992), but the worst damage took place in the autumn of 1993 when the Moslem population (the majority of the town's inhabitants) were forced out by Herzegovinian Croatian forces: the four mosques and the hamam were dynamited, along with the old houses in the centre (the ruins have since bulldozed), and there was much burning throughout the town. However, many of the houses can be repaired, but it is to be wondered if the Moslem inhabitants will return.

Conclusions on ECMM Monitoring

The monitors have clearly identified the dangers faced by heritage, especially sacral, if fighting continues: the behaviour of Bosnian Serbian forces in the Bihac area has shown no particular positive change (Cazin, Zavalje, Sokolac); the abandon of territory, either voluntary or forced, risks being accompanied by something that resembles a scorched earth policy.

The monitoring reports point to a second phenomenon, where damaged heritage risks being destroyed on the basis of the danger it poses to the public: in essence this means completing cultural/ethnic cleansing. However, it can also reflect the desire to wipe away the signs of the war and the suffering it has caused. This attitude can be encountered in Mostar.

The most positive thing about the monitoring is the effect the monitoring itself has on local situations - which require obviously cooperation on the part of the local authorities. See the forbearance of the Armija about Guca Gora and my description of the behaviour of Bosnian forces in the 6th Information Report (Doc 7133 pp 15-16).

3. Croatia

Institutions

In Croatia the former Ministry of Culture has been divided into three separate sectors - culture, education and the National Institute for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage (natural heritage is an addition), thus assuring, theoretically, greater autonomy for the heritage sector. The director is Dr Meder, and co-director Mr Bralic (from the former office for natural heritage). All heritage institutes, including the formerly independent Institute for the Restoration of Dubrovnik, have been brought under its jurisdiction.

International Cooperation

It would appear that there are not many developments in this area: Croatia continues to work with older partners, and few new ones have emerged. The Bavarian State Office for Protection of Cultural Heritage has supported the programme for restoration of moveable heritage at the Chateau of Ludberg, the Austrian office for the Danubian provinces has assisted in the organisation of a studio for moveable heritage at Osijek, Arch runs a similar programme at Dubrovnik. The World Heritage Centre of Unesco, with the assistance of the Croatian National Commission for Unesco, will be setting up a centre in Dubrovnik to carry on with the action plan. Unesco has also made available financial assistance for the Croatian Archives, and pilot projects in Cilipi, Osijek and Vukovar. Vernacular heritage has been the object of several large Swiss Disaster Relief operations, especially in the region of Dubrovnik (Osojnik, Brgat Gornji), and there have also been a number of more modest French and Scandinavian initiatives for rural architecture here as well. Italian humanitarian organisations have been active in Pakrac, especially for housing (this was an area of Slavonia with a significant, if not large, Italian rural population).

However, it appears that there are a certain number of individual restoration/repair projects, especially for churches, supported often by Croatian and Croatian diaspora funding.

Generally speaking international technical assistance has been disappointingly scarce, with respect to built heritage and to museums, though traditional contacts between Croatian and foreign museums are slowly being reactivated.

Mention should be made here of the recent mission of Mr von Imhoff to Zagreb and Belgrade to examine the condition of the collections of the Vukovar museums. This mission was organised by the Committee on Culture and Education of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe with the assistance of the International Council on Museums (ICOM).

4. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Institutions

In a country where the system of protection of cultural heritage was weak before the war, the splitting into two republics (each with their own cultural authorities), the isolation of Sarajevo from the rest of the federation, the decentralisation of political power (and the consequent swallowing of heritage authorities by town administrations), and the departure of specialists have contributed to produce an extremely bleak situation. Moreover, the level of destruction in some regions is very high, and the indifference of political authorities to monuments, museums and archives is omnipresent: for them the war is the priority.

The situation is a potentially dangerous one for the future, because the professional cultural sector may not be able to influence or resist the political establishments, let alone international initiatives (governmental or private) for reconstruction that have significant budgets at their disposal.

International cooperation

Unesco set up an office in Sarajevo in the autumn of 1994, and has financed emergency repairs for the Academy of Fine Arts and the Music Academy, as well as providing funding to the Bosnia Herzegovina Heritage Rescue Foundation for chemical products for the Zemaljske Museum. The office has also been instrumental in organising protection works on the museum with the Soros Foundation and the firm Intertec, which should begin soon, if conditions permit. The Programme of General Information of Unesco is coordinating the numerous European initiatives for the reconstitution of the National Library collection, and working closely with the International Council on Archives (and the consultant), it sent an expert to Mostar for the Archives of Herzegovina, and to Sarajevo for the National Archives and film archives of the Kinotek and the Television.

Unesco also intends to set up an antenna in Mostar to help organise the protection programme and later a restoration programme, and also to provide a base for fact-finding on cultural heritage in Bosnia (thus implementing the resolution of the Executive Board of Unesco of October 1994). The consultant has been on mission in Mostar twice for Unesco.

One of the most positive developments is the initiative of the University of Florence to establish a training centre for architectural restoration and town-planning in Mostar. The funding for the first stage of the centre has been found, but the financial and technical support of the Division of Cultural Heritage of the Council of Europe would clearly be welcome. Unesco will also be supporting the centre. The significance of the initiative is that it can make a long term contribution to the heritage of Mostar and the region, and that it will help retain young professionals of Mostar East and Mostar West on the spot.

It should be mentioned that Unesco and the Cultural Heritage Division of the Council of Europe are working on a programme of joint-seminars in Sarajevo and Mostar (criteria for intervention on built heritage, town-planning problems, etc.)

The situation of cultural heritage in Mostar

In Mostar the condition of the cultural heritage has steadily and often dramatically deteriorated since the end of the second battle (February 1994)(for example, the

collapse of the damaged minaret of the Tabacica mosque in August 1994). Unesco has worked with the European Union Administration in Mostar, which has a small budget for protection of historic buildings (DM 2,000,000 in 1994-95), but the reordering of priorities by Mostar East reconstruction authorities has contributed to delaying work. Fortunately the EUAM can intervene on heritage in other ways (many of the schools were built during the Austro-Hungarian Empire). BHHR is exploring with the Swedish government the possibility of intervening on several Ottoman-period houses, and the NGO Warchild is planning to renovate the Austrian-period Elementary School in Luka Mahala, and turn it into a music school. However, in neither case is funding yet available.

It has proven difficult to get the offices for the protection of cultural monuments of Mostar West and Mostar East to work together in situ.

Considering the media coverage that Mostar has had in the past, the international attention to monuments is much less than could be expected, and were the EUAM not present it could be wondered if there would be any protection activity at all.

In January 1995 the Bosnian Environmental Technologies Association (BETA) of Sarajevo presented a project for preventive measures, hydrodynamic research, and reinforcement of the foundations of the Old Bridge. Even if the reconstruction of the bridge must wait, it is necessary to carry out these works now in order to prevent further deterioration of the useable vestiges. Although the project is Sarajevan, the funding for the project - even the DM 423,000 for preventive, monitoring and protection works - will probably have to be international, as will the funding of the following stages of work. The universal significance of the bridge clearly requires the involvement of Unesco, but other international partners must surely be envisaged for funding and technical assistance.

4. General conclusion: increased commitment and presence of international organisations

The conclusion cannot be much different from the conclusions of earlier reports. There is a continuing need for governmental and non-governmental organisations to become involved in the field and to work together. The immediate future is far from certain; what is certain however is the continuing deterioration of an already badly damaged part of the European cultural heritage. There is a strong need to prepare now for action, and to intervene where possible.

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