

CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS OF OTTOMAN ARCHITECTURE IN SOUTHERN AND EASTERN SERBIA

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Abstract. *The paper presents buildings from the period of Ottoman domination in southern and eastern Serbia. The paper first presents the architectural analysis of the buildings in question. The historical context of their construction, their original function and the social role they had when they were created are also considered. A special emphasis was placed on the analysis of the current state of preservation of these buildings, their new functions and the role they play in society today.*

Key words: *Islamic architecture, mosque, hammam, conservation, preservation, heritage*

1. INTRODUCTION

With the arrival of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans, numerous changes began to take place. Apart from the inevitable and very pronounced socio-political and economic changes, changes in the architectural and urban design of cities were unavoidable. Cities that were primarily predominantly inhabited by the Slavic population began to take on an oriental appearance with greater or lesser intensity. Intensive construction of facilities such as mosques, madrasas, hammams, caravanserais began.

Later, after the liberation from the Turkish rule, the population tried to restore the Serbian spirit to the cities. These buildings, the legacies of Ottoman architecture, which were created during the period when these areas were under the Turkish rule, were exposed to the rage of destruction of the newly liberated people (Fig. 1). The demolition of mosques and other Turkish buildings began immediately. Some of the buildings were completely destroyed, some were maintained to a minimum. Hence, there is only one preserved mosque in Belgrade [1], two mosques in Niš with partial remains of the third

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one [2]. Buildings of Islamic architecture, due to abandonment and war destruction, and also due to lack of interest in them, have completely fallen into oblivion.

This paper gives an overview of the current state of the buildings of Islamic architecture from the period of the Ottoman rule.

In the territorial sense, the area of southern and eastern Serbia was considered, which in terms of jurisdiction over cultural monuments is covered by the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments Niš [3]. Religious buildings, fortifications and military buildings, as well as public buildings were analyzed. Residential architecture was not the subject of this paper.

2. HISTORICAL CONDITIONS

The Ottoman rule in the Balkans lasted from the 14th to the 20th century. Some parts of the Balkans were under the Ottoman rule continuously, while for other parts this was not the case. After the defeat in the Battle of Maritsa in 1371, and later in the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, Serbia fell under the Turkish rule. The year 1459 and the fall of Smederevo is considered the final conquest of the entire Serbian territory by the Ottomans.

Serbia gained liberation and complete independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1878, as well as a new territorial expansion to the area of today's southeastern Serbia [4], and after the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913, and a new territorial expansion of Serbia, the Turkish administration ceased. This ends the period of the Turkish rule in the history of Serbia.

During this very long period of rule on the territory of Serbia, a large number of monuments of Islamic architecture was built, both religious and profane [2]. The towns got a completely oriental look. In the works of the travel writers of that time, one can find descriptions of towns dominated by mosques, madrasas and so on.



Fig. 1 Niš 1878 (left) and 1900 (right) [5]

3. ARCHITECTURAL OBJECTS

When the Ottoman Turks came to these parts, they already had a centuries-old tradition of building fortifications and urban settlements. The Ottomans brought with them the ready-made principles of building small and large settlements – provincial towns (kasaba) and regional towns (sehir). The basic principle of forming the settlement was its division into a craft and trade part – business district (carsi) and housing units - mahallah. The entire economic activity took place in the business district, almost all public buildings (hans, caravanserais, bezistans, hammams, madrasas, clock towers, imarets), as well as sacral buildings (mosques, mescits, turbes, cemeteries) were located there. Upon their arrival in

this area, the Ottomans created conditions for the development of existing squares and towns, and for the establishment of new settlements, smaller towns and larger sehirs. The existing settlements changed rapidly, taking on the character of oriental settlements divided into a carsi and mahalas [6]. The architectural program was unique in various areas of the Islamic State. The following buildings were built: religious buildings (mosque, masjid), hammams, caravanserais, hans, bazaars, bezistans, tekyehs, turbes.

In construction, mainly two types of materials were used - hewn stone for public buildings and brick for private buildings. Buildings made of hewn stone are better preserved. Their massive dimensions were directly related to their purpose, and as public buildings, the construction of which was financed by the state, they were the basis of urban development of every environment [7 according to 8]. There was also the use of wood, mostly in residential architecture.

In the area of southeastern Serbia, there are several buildings dating from this period which are under protection [3 and 9]. In addition, some of these buildings have been registered as an immovable cultural heritage, but have not been declared yet (Table 1). The buildings of Pasha's konaks in Vranje, Radul Beg's konak in Zaječar, the building of the Turkish Embassy in Niš, and the Skull Tower are also protected.

Among the remains of buildings of this period that can be found on the territory of the Niš Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments are the tekyeh in Medveđa, the mosque in Biljača, the Turkish customs building in Davidovac, the remains of the hammam in Prokuplje, the Turkish tower in Klisura, the remains of the mosque in Šumatovačka Street in Niš, the remains of the Gurgusovac tower in Knjaževac, then the old powder magazine and underground passage in Knjaževac, as well as the remains of the Turkish tekyeh in Zgrade in Kuršumlja.

Table 1 Confirmed immovable cultural property

no	Name of the immovable cultural property	Place	Decision on proclamation for immovable cultural property	Category	Decision for category	Note
1.	The Fortress of Niš	Niš, Crveni Krst municipality	Decision of the Institute for the Protection and Scientific Study of Cultural Monuments Serbia no. 671, May 6, 1948	of big importance	Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia no. 14/79	Hammam, arsenal, Bali Bey's mosque, mezulana
2.	The Fetislam fortress	Kladovo municipality	Decision of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments Serbia no. 1767/1, October 27, 1964	of big importance	Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia no. 14/79	/
3.	Pirot fortress	Pirot	Decision of the Institute for the Protection and Scientific Study of Cultural Monuments Serbia no. 115/53, February 16, 1953	of big importance	Official Gazette of the Socialistic Republic of Serbia no. 14/79	the Pirot fortress is a Serbian medieval fortress, but parts of the rampart of a lower town were built in the Turkish period
4.	Islam aga mosque	Niš	Decision of the Institute for the Protection and Scientific Study of Cultural Monuments Serbia no. 913/54, November 9, 1954	/	/	/

no	Name of the immovable cultural property	Place	Decision on proclamation for immovable cultural property	Category	Decision for category	Note
5.	Ibrahim bey's mosque	Preševo municipality	Decision of the Republic of Serbia no 633-9866/2013 November 22, 2013	/	/	/
6.	Hammam	Vranje municipality	Decision of the Institute for the Protection and Scientific Study of Cultural Monuments Serbia no. 1057, June 29, 1948	of big importance	Official Gazette of the Socialistic Republic of Serbia no. 14/79	/
7.	Old spa bath	Sokobanja	Decision of Sokobanja municipality no. 011-62/83-01, December 14, 1983	/	/	/
8.	Old bath in Niška banja	Niška banja	Decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia no. 633-6872/2001-17, July 17, 2001	/	/	has layers from Roman, Turkish and new period
9.	Hammam in Brestovačka banja	Brestovačka banja	Decision of the Institute for the Protection and Scientific Study of Cultural Monuments Serbia no. 1301/49, July 22, 1949	/	/	/
10.	Old prison	Boljevac	Decision of Boljevac municipality no. 633-492/80-07, May 15, 1980	/	/	/
11.	Turkish tower, old building	Vlasotince municipality	June 14, 2005	/	/	/
12.	White bridge	Vranje municipality	Decision of the Institute for the Protection and Scientific Study of Cultural Monuments Serbia no. 1085, June 29, 1948	/	/	/
13.	Beg's bridge near Staničenje	Pirot municipality	Decision of Pirot municipality 02 no. 020/41-92, April 13, 1992	/	/	/
14.	Osman beg's fountain in Podgorac	Boljevac municipality	Decision of Boljevac municipality no. 633-488/80-07, May 15, 1980	/	/	/
15.	Đerenka fountain	Vranje municipality	Decision of the Institute for the Protection and Scientific Study of Cultural Monuments Serbia no. 184, February 2, 1949	/	/	/
16.	Complex of old fountains in Vidrovac	Negotin municipality	Decision of Negotin municipality no. 633-10/80-III, June 18, 1980	/	/	/

3.1. Mosques

Architecture and religion have always been very closely connected. Buildings of sacral architecture have a special value for religious people, they represent a place of prayer and a sacred place [10]. The beginnings of Islamic art are largely associated with mosques. A mosque is a basic expression of Islamic culture. The unity of the sacral and profane phenomenon has been achieved in a mosque, because the space of the mosque is simultaneously used for performing prayers and for social gatherings of believers [6].

In the documents from the period of the Turkish rule, it can be concluded about a large number of mosques in the cities in Serbia, the southeast part of the country as well. There were about twenty mosques in Niš during the Turkish rule; there were ten of them in the Fortress, one mosque in Beograd mala, the Arabaji mosque from 1725, and eight of them on the left bank of the Nišava river [11]. Today there are two mosques in Niš, and the remains of the third one are visible.

After the liberation from the Turks, there were eight mosques in Leskovac, some of which were demolished immediately after the liberation in 1877. The mosques which survived the liberation are the Carsi mosque, the Clock mosque and the mosque of Sultan Bayezid II, the one that was demolished due to dilapidation in 1942 [12]. There were two such buildings in Pirot, none of which has been preserved to this day.

There are several mosques in Preševo, of more recent date, given the large number of inhabitants of the Muslim religion. There is only one such building in this city from the period of Ottoman rule.

The mosques that have remained to this day as witnesses of some past times speak in favour of the fact that the architect gave priority to functionality and spatial planning, while the decoration was put in the background.

3.1.1. *Bali Bey's mosque in the Niš fortress*

The mosque is located in the central part of the Niš fortress. As a part of the entire Fortress, it was declared a cultural property in 1948. It was built between 1521-1523 and it was the endowment of Bali Bey. There is information that along the north wall of the mosque, at the entrance porch, there used to be a library [11]. The minaret was added in the 17th century. It has a square base with a mihrab facing Mecca. It is vaulted with a semi-calotte. At the entrance, a two-domed porch with four arches and three pillars has been renovated. To the right of the entrance there was a minaret, which was demolished over time, and today there are only its remains [13]. It was built of stone and brick. The bricks appear in horizontal and vertical rows, framing the hewn walls. The walls were reinforced with wooden trusses, which had the role of ring beams. Broken brick arches are above the window openings. The roof covering is roof tiles.

The Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments Niš, performed conservation works on the mosque during 1972, as well as between 1976 and 1978. The works were carried out on the renovation of the central domed area, with a complete reconstruction of the collapsed northwest porch, and partially the minaret.

The building is in good condition now. The main current problem with the physical structure of the building is moisture, due to which damage to bricks, stone and mortar is visible. Also, there is a certain degree of biodegradation in the form of mold that occurs inside the building. In addition, on the roof, due to difficult accessibility and irregular cleaning, there is a large layer of biological material from which wild plants grow. [2]

Now this building has the purpose of an exhibition gallery, the so-called "Salon 77". It is safe and accessible to visitors.

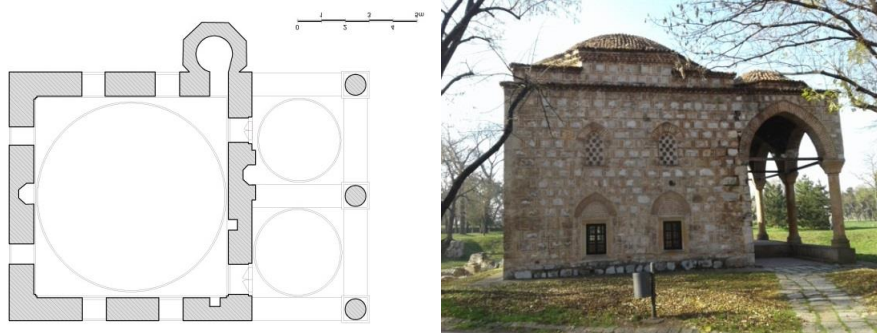


Fig. 2 Floor plan (left) and photo (right) of Bali Bey's mosque in the Niš fortress. Drawing A.M.Petronijević according [5], Photo A.M. Petronijević

3.1.2. Islam Aga Mosque in Milojka Lešjanina Street in Niš

It was built in the very center of the city. It is the only fully preserved mosque in Niš. It was restored in 1870 on the remains of the old one, built around 1720. The masjid of Hajji Musli-hudin was first built on this place, and it was transformed into a mosque by adding a minaret around 1720. In the middle of the 18th century, he renovated it, and added a school next to it - the mekteb of Yahya Pasha. Between 1782 and 1804, it was extended by the Niš defterdar Abdurahman. The current mosque is the endowment of Islam Aga Hadrević [11].

This mosque is the last public Turkish architectural structure built in Niš. It is a rectangular building, with a flat wooden ceiling and a gallery on pillars. From this gallery you can reach the circular stairway of the minaret. It has a hip roof covered with roof tiles. The main entrance used to be from the street. It does not have significant architectural values. Its walls are made of untreated stone, so they are plastered. It is a typical example of the buildings from the period of the sudden Turkish economic and military decline.

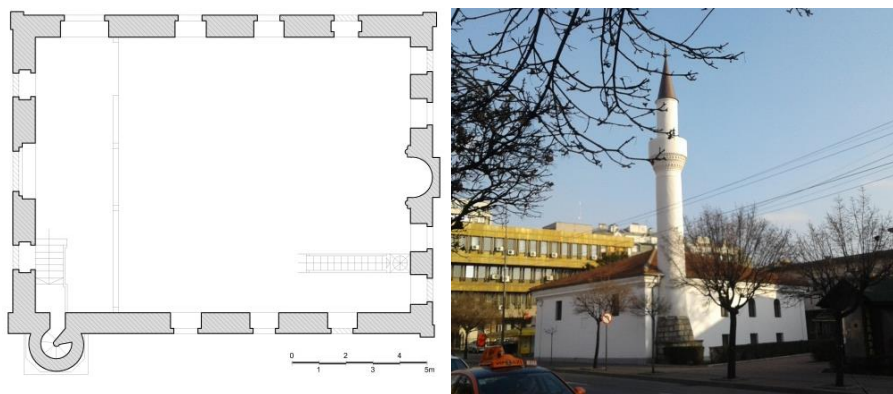


Fig. 3 Floor plan (left) and photo (right) of Islam Aga Mosque. Drawing A.M.Petronijević according [5], Photo A.M. Petronijević

In March 2004, in response to riots in Kosovo, the mosque was set on fire and suffered significant damage. It was then completely restored. As the only Islamic place of worship that has retained its purpose, it is often the target of nationalist and religiously intolerant graffiti[2]. Today it is used by the Islamic community of Niš.

3.1.3. Ibrahim Pasha's mosque in Preševo

It is located in the center of Preševo. According to the inscription on the marble slab above the entrance to the mosque, the mosque was built in 1805 by Ibrahim Pasha Ginoli, originally from Shkoder. It is a two-storey building. The base is rectangular, measuring 18.5/11 meters. It was built of stone, then plastered and painted white. The mihrab and minbar are along the south wall, facing Mecca. Internal, wooden stairs lead to the first floor with a gallery. Along the west facade is a slender spear-shaped stone minaret. Along the south facade, towards the street, a stone fountain was built in 1878, with an arched niche and a carved text - tarih. Within the complex of Ibrahim Pasha's mosque, there is a tekyeh and a cemetery in the same yard. The mosque has been renovated several times. The entrance was added after the Second World War [5]. The building has been renovated and is in good condition.

3.2. Hammams

Hammams are baths that originated in the east. In the Islamic religion, bathing had, in addition to its hygienic role, also a ritual significance. Hammams were very important as places for socialization. The hammams could be double, which means that there were a completely separate program of rooms for men and women. In the case of only one program of rooms, men and women bathed on different days.

In addition to bathing, hammams have other hygiene facilities. They also include rooms for relaxation, dining rooms, meeting rooms, and in that way they were places where people spent time, ran a business, had fun. The basic rooms that make up the hammam are: *shadirvan*, *halvati*, *kapaluk*, *hazna* and *culhan*. *Shadirvan* was the largest room where people waited their turn for bathing. People talked there, came into contact with each other, which was a tradition since the ancient Roman baths. *Halvati* were rooms where people bathed. In these rooms were tubs and stone benches for lying and steaming. There were *meydans* with sofas, stone beds for sweating and *kurnas* from which water for pouring was taken [14]. *Kapaluk* were rooms for rest after bathing, necessary as a person after bathing, still warm, should not go out immediately, especially in winter. These rooms were also used for massage. Behind it, there were technical facilities for water heating and they consisted of a *hazna*, a water tank, a *culhan* - firebox for water heating and a terrace for raising water in order to direct it with a natural fall. The heating in the hammams was that of Roman hypocausts, with warm air circulating between double walls and under the floors [15]. Hammams were most often built in a combination of stone and brick. Most hammams have a dome over the central part or the entire building is covered by a system of domes and vaults. Lighting often came through round (in some cases star-shaped) openings in the dome

3.2.1. Hamam in Vranje

The hammam in Vranje was built at the end of the 17th century. It basically consists of three parts: a large dressing room, a cross-shaped bathing area and a narrow room with water tanks. The dressing rooms are covered with a hip roof and roof tiles. The *halvat* is covered

with five domes with glass oculi that light the interior. The central dome is slightly larger, while those in the corners of the cross are somewhat smaller. It is built of hewn stone and brick. The first renovation of the hammam was done in 1954-1955 by the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of SR Serbia. Renovation and conservation-restoration works were carried out in 1983, 2002 and 2009, and today it is in good condition but not available to visitors. Indoor installation and furniture no longer exist [16, 17].

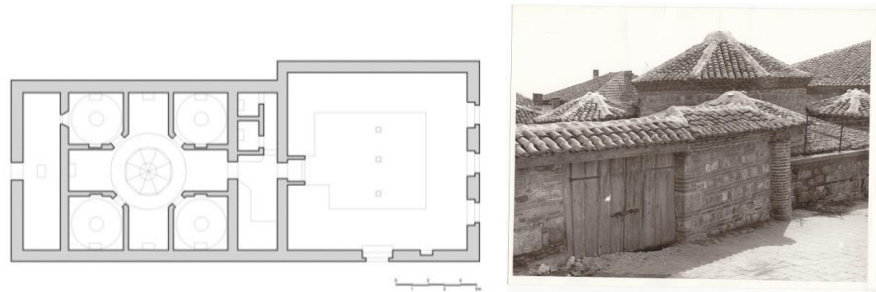


Fig. 4 Floor plan (left) and photo (right) of Hammam in Vranje. Drawing A.M.Petronijević according to [1], photo [9]

3.2.2. Hammam in the Fortress of Niš

There used to be four hammams in Niš [18]. Today only one of them is preserved. It is located at the entrance plateau of the Niš Fortress, next to the Stambol Gate. It was built in the 15th century and it was the endowment of Mehmed bey [19].

The shadirvan, from which one entered the dressing room, has not been preserved. Then there is the meydan, which was connected with the *halvat* - a part for bathing divided into two parts. At the end of this series of rooms are the hazna and the culhan. Over the massive transverse walls and pendentives, there is the under-dome area. The hammam was supplied with water from Nišava, which was purified in a reservoir [11]. Unclean water was returned to Nišava through a special canal. One part of the purified water was heated, and the other cold was used for bathing. The hammam was built with brick and stone. Restoration and conservation works were carried out on the hammam from 1973 to 1975 [20]. For many years, it functioned as a restaurant. Today it operates as the Nishville Jazz Museum. It has had this purpose since 2017, when it was officially opened at the time of the traditional 35th Nishville Jazz Festival ("Nišvil 2018").

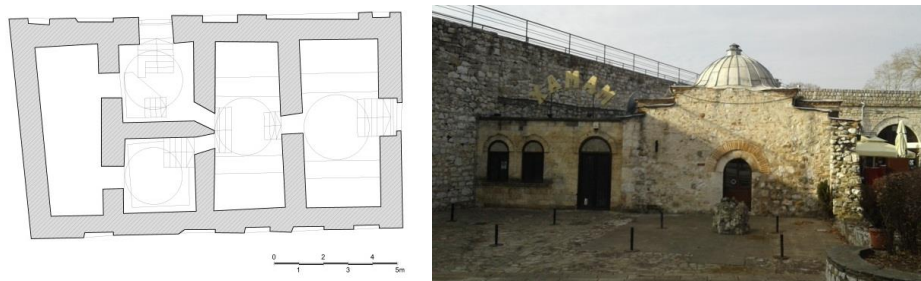


Fig. 5 Floor plan (left) and photo (right) of Hamam in Niš. Drawing A.M.Petronijević according to [20], photo A. M. Petronijević

3.2.3. Hammam in Sokobanja

It is located in the center of the park in Sokobanja. It dates from the 15th century. It is based in the oldest part of the spa bath from the Roman period. During the 17th and 18th centuries, it passed into the hands of the Austrians twice. The Austrian General Schmetaus said that the spa was very popular among the Turks from all parts of the empire while it was under the Turkish rule [9].

The old part consists of two spacious functional units, with rooms for women and men. The area of the women's pool is vaulted centrally with a hemispherical vault. The area of the men's pool is vaulted with a hemispherical, domed construction above the square base, with lighting openings that also occur in the women's pool.

It was renovated for the first time in 1834 during the reign of Prince Miloš Obrenović. In 1880 it was expanded. Rehabilitation and conservation - restoration works have been performed on several occasions. The most extensive works were performed during 2004 and 2005. The last rehabilitation works were performed in 2011. Today, the hammam functions as a "Wellness Center" [16].

3.2.3. Hamam in Brestovačka Banja

It is believed that it originates from the Turkish period, and that Prince Miloš also used it during his stays in the spa. This hammam is small in size, 5.5/5.9 meters. It is semicircularly arched and has niches in the corners, and nine openings in the dome through which light enters. The main light comes through a window on the north side. Inside it has a round swimming pool which is 1.10 m deep, 2.60 m in diameter [21]. The hammam was repaired, but not completely. It is expected that the building will operate as an exhibition gallery.

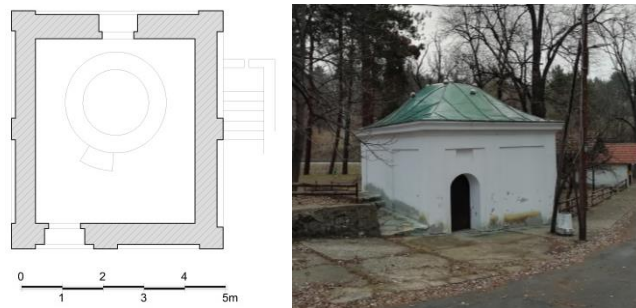


Fig. 6 Floor plan (left) and photo (right) of Hammam in Brestovačka Banja drawing A.M.Petronijević according to [22], photo [9]

3.2.4. Niška Banja bathroom

It is located in the central area of the spa, in the park, on a slight elevation above the New Bath and at the foot of the hill. The building was renovated in 1934 on the remains of a Turkish male and female bath, erected above the Roman catchment of the main spring. It is a ground floor building, with an elongated rectangular base, the dimensions of which follow the configuration of the terrain cascading. The octagonal pool number 3 and the rectangular pool number 4 have a central place, next to which there are changing rooms, surgeries, ancillary rooms and a sanitary block, while the inhalation hall is located in the northeastern part of the building. It is composed in an eclectic style [9].

3.3. Military facilities

3.3.1. The old prison in Boljevac

The old prison in Boljevac was erected as a prison building, so it does not have significant architectural values. It was built after 1860. During the Timok rebellion, in 1883, it served to imprison the rebels from the Boljevac area.

It is a rectangular building with a hip roof. It is made of brick. The building was reconstructed and serves as a museum. As such, it was opened in 1983, on the centenary of the Timok rebellion. The museum has a permanent exhibition that follows the events and people of the 1880s and 1890s, the period immediately before, during and after the Rebellion [9].

3.3.2. Cebhane - gunpowder magazine in the Niš fortress

Inside the walls of the Fortress are gunpowder magazines, Turkish buildings that were used to store gunpowder, ammunition and weapons. There are four of them in total, all of approximately the same size. They are located along the northern rampart, and lean against it with one side. The gunpowder magazines were built between 1720 and 1723, at the time of the construction of the Fortress. These are ground floor, rectangular buildings. They have hip roofs with tiles. In a constructive sense, all four gunpowder magazines were built on the same principle. The double walls are about 1 m thick, and form a protective corridor around the central room, where ammunition and gunpowder were stored. The central room, semi-arched, was entered through narrow corridors, also semi-arched. The purpose of the corridors was to protect soldiers, as a defensive area in case of an attack. Narrow openings on the walls - loopholes, were places for soldiers from which in case of an attack, they could shoot and defend the building. The massive exterior and interior walls of the gunpowder magazine were built in lime mortar from easily accessible material - crushed stone of various size, river pebbles, crushed limestone and hewn sandstone blocks of poor quality. The space between the two faces of the wall was filled with rubble. The corners of the gunpowder magazine as well as the doorjambes were built of larger hewn blocks - sandstones. The roof cornice is made of brick and plastered, the gunpowder magazine has a hip roof, the roof is covered with tiles, and the space between the vault and the roof covering is filled with rubble [23, 24].

"Gunpowder magazine no. 4" is by its external dimensions the largest one. The net area of the central room is about 50 m², and the hallway that surrounds it is 48 m². During 2012 and 2013, conservation and restoration works were performed on it [25]. Its new purpose is an exhibition gallery and a "Museum of Gunpowder and Medieval Weapons".

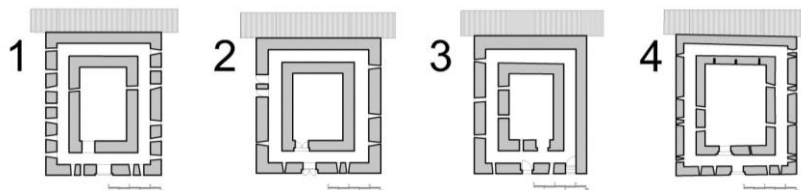


Fig. 7 Gunpowder magazine no 1, 2, 3, 4 drawing A.M.Petronijević according to [5], Photo A.M.Petronijević.



Fig. 8 Gunpowder magazine no 2 (left) and no 4 (right), Photo A.M.Petronijević.

3.3.3. *Mezulana / a smithy in the Niš Fortress*

The smithy building is in one of five gunpowder magazines. It is located in the eastern part of the Fortress, next to one of the current main communications. It was built between 1720 and 1723. The building contains two almost identical rooms, which do not have mutual connection, but each one has a separate entrance from the outside, the eastern side. They were probably built in two phases. The walls are massive, made of crushed stone. The corners, doorjambes and lintels are made of sandstone and brick. It has a simple loft cornice. The hip roof is covered with tiles. The interior is vaulted with a semi-circular vault.

In the 1970s it was used as a smithy of the construction department of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments Niš, hence its name [11].

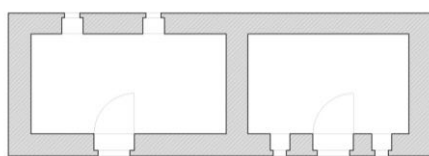


Fig. 9 Floor plan (left) and photo (right) of Mezulana. Drawing A.M.Petronijević according [5], Photo A.M. Petronijević

3.3.4. *Arsenal in the Niš Fortress*

To the right of the Stambol Gate is the building of the arsenal (depot, warehouse of cannons and war material). It housed cannons, gunpowder, cannon balls and other military material. It is a ground floor building with a large arched entrance, with a massive double door. To the left and right of the entrance are niches, three on each side, the same height and dimensions as the entrance area, each with an area of about 10 m². At the back of the arsenal, to the east, there are two small entrances with arched doors and exit staircases. The arsenal occupies an area of about 300 m², with eight wooden pillars inside. There are narrow openings in the walls - loopholes, high above the ground. Along the walls inside the arsenal, there were guard posts, at the height of the loopholes, used in the event of an attack [11]. The walls are massive, built of stone. The vaults and cornices are made of bricks. The hip roof is covered with tiles.

The arsenal was built, according to the inscription on the plaque at the front door, in 1857, on the site of the former old tophane - a house for cannons. Conservation work was carried out in 1972, when it was renovated, and since then it has been used as a gallery for exhibiting paintings. A souvenir shop is located in the niche near the entrance.



Fig. 10 Floor plan (left) and photo (right) of Arsenal. Drawing A.M.Petronijević according [5], Photo A.M. Petronijević

3.3.5. Turkish prison in the Fortress of Niš

The building of the Turkish prison has also been preserved in the fortress. It is located in the eastern part of the Fortress, next to administrative and military buildings, between Pasha gate and Vidin gate.

The first information about it was recorded by Felix Kanitz in 1864. He stated that a new prison was built in the fortress at that time, at the request of the then commander of Niš, Midhat Pasha. Based on that, it can be concluded that the current building was erected between 1861 and 1864. A Turkish source from 1873 also mentions this prison. It is stated that it was built of brick and stone, with seven rooms on the ground floor and ten on the first floor. Of the ground-floor rooms, five were intended for prisoners and two for prison guards, while on the first floor eight rooms were for prisoners and two for patients. After the liberation of Niš from the Turks, the prison was surrounded by a high wall and renovated, becoming the first Niš penitentiary within Serbia [11]. During the First World War, the prison was taken over by the Bulgarian occupiers. After the First World War, it was used as a military prison. It is in very bad condition now

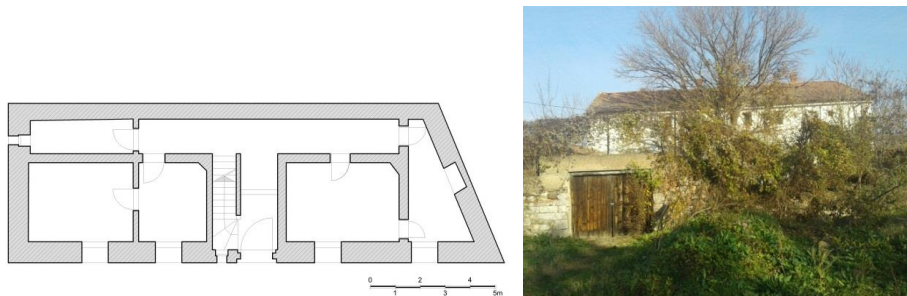


Fig. 11 Floor plan (left) and photo (right) of Turkish prison. Drawing A.M.Petronijević according [5], Photo A.M. Petronijević

3.3.6. Turkish tower in Vlasotince

It is located in the center of Vlasotince. It was built in the second half of the 18th century for the needs of the Turkish municipality of "Ućutmata". It was an administrative building, and as a security for local trade routes. It has a symmetrical base with a staircase in the middle and side polygonal towers with loopholes. The walls are massive, made of crushed stone, while the partition walls are in a wooden skeleton with infill. The walls are plastered and painted on the outside and inside. The hip roof is covered with tiles. [26]. A mudir, a scribe and seven seymens lived in it. Today it is the building of the Museum.

Apart from the described buildings, several fountains from the period of Turkish domination have been preserved (Osman Bey's fountain in Podgorac, Boljevac municipality, the Stone fountain "Đerenka" in Vranje), and several stone bridges (White Bridge in Vranje, Beg's Bridge near Staničenje, Pirot municipality).

4. REFLECTIONS

The Turks ruled for centuries in the Balkans, and thus in Serbia as well. Bringing their culture, religion, customs, they also brought elements of their architecture. During their rule in this area, the Turks built numerous buildings characteristic of their culture and religion. At the heyday of Ottoman rule, Serbian cities were full of these facilities.

With the weakening of the power of the Ottoman Empire, the appearance of the cities began to change. After the end of the Ottoman rule, the cities underwent an architectural transformation. There was no more room for mosques on the new face of the city. Enthusiastic people tried to give back the old look to their cities as soon as possible, demolishing buildings that reminded them of the period of slavery, and building new ones for which they sought inspiration in European cities. The demolition was carried out both in the desire to modernize the cities, and to catch up the previously liberated parts of the country [1]. The number of buildings of Islamic architecture dropped drastically in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. The systematic demolition of mosques was pronounced, but so was the disregard for the remaining buildings. The number of mosques in major Balkan cities had fallen by 95% since the peak of the Ottoman Empire [10].

When we look at the number and condition of buildings of Islamic architecture on the territory of southern and eastern Serbia, which is described above, it can be concluded that a very small number of buildings have been preserved in this area as well.

Out of three preserved mosques in the researched area, one is being used as an exhibition space, while the two remaining, mosque in Preševo and in the Milojka Lešjanina street in Niš, retain their original use. Most of the buildings from the period of Turkish domination have been preserved in Niš, on the territory of its Fortress. The arsenal, gunpowder magazines, the smithy and the hammam are located within the walls of the fortress, and they witness the old historical period. Today they are a gallery, a museum, and an exhibition space.

Even 5 hammams survived in the investigated area - out of 13 preserved in the entire territory of Serbia [16]. The hammam of Niš has worked as a restaurant for years, and in the last few years as a jazz museum. Regardless of the fact that it is the only building of this type in Niš, the fact that it is positioned in a very attractive place in the city, at the very entrance to the Fortress, there were no possibilities for its exploitation with the original function. The hammam in Brestovačka Banja will work as an exhibition gallery

when the rehabilitation works are completed. Hamam in Soko Banja has retained its original function to some extent. The proximity of thermal springs, as well as the spa environment opened to health tourism have created the principle of sustainability of the bathing function of this facility. It is also commendable that the bathroom in Soko Banja, in addition to its function, also retained its architectural form. Although in good condition, the hammam in Vranje is unfortunately inaccessible to the public.

Military facilities have also undergone a certain level of changes, and today they are mainly buildings in the service of cultural institutions. Niš Arsenal is a gallery, with souvenir shops in its niches. One of the gunpowder magazines is intended for a museum of gunpowder and medieval weapons. Today, the Turkish Tower in Vlasotince is a museum building.

After the period of systematic demolition of buildings has passed, and after the passions have calmed down a bit, there comes a period in which this heritage is protected. Although there are few of these facilities, most of them have been preserved or revitalized and still have a certain function today. Only a few buildings from this period retained their primary function. Most of the preserved ones have the purpose of cultural institutions. There are also those who are left to decay.

Cultural monuments are valued differently, depending on the governing structures. With the change of policy, the attitude towards certain monuments also changes. Representation and equal treatment of cultural monuments of all periods is necessary for the society. The period of Turkish occupation is part of the history and culture of the Serbian people. Whether they are a symbol of victory or defeat of our people, they are part of our past and they should have the same treatment as other cultural heritage, regardless of the period they testify.

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PRILOG PROUČAVANJU JAVNIH OBJEKATA OSMANSKE ARHITEKTURE NA PROSTORU JUŽNE I ISTOČNE SRBIJE

U radu su predstavljene objekti iz perioda osmanske dominacije na prostoru južne i istočne Srbije. U radu je data najpre arhitektonska analiza predmetnih objekata. Razmatran je istorijski kontekst njihove izgradnje, njihova izvorna funkcija i društvena uloga koju su imali u vremenu u kome su nastali. Poseban akcenat je stavljen na analizu trenutnog stanja očuvanosti ovih objekata, njihove nove funkcije i uloge koju danas imaju u društvu.

Ključne reči: *islamska arhitektura, džamija, hamam, konzervacija, očuvanje, nasleđe*