

### **Site and remnants of the architectural ensemble of Aladža Mosque in Foča**

Country or territory:  
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Name of organisation  
compiling the information:  
Commission to Preserve National  
Monuments

Contact name:  
Mirela Mulaluć Handan

Email address:  
mirela@aneks8ko.com.ba



Name and address of bulding(s) or site: SITE AND REMNANTS OF THE  
ARCHITECTURAL ENSEMBLE OF ALADŽA  
MOSQUE IN FOČA, Srbije

Inventory reference number(s): Provisional List of National Monuments No.:211

Ensemble type(s): Monumental ensemble consisting of remains of a  
mosque, fountain, wall fountain, graveyard and  
*turbe* (mausoleum).

Building type(s): Religious, Mosque

Main date(s): Date of construction 1550.

Current use(s): not in use

#### Significance:

The Hasan-pasha mosque (Aladža or Šarena – coloured – mosque) was built in 1550-51 (957 AH). By the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the mosque had already acquired the name Aladža, for its rich painted and carved decoration (*alaca* means coloured). In 1588, Ali Čelebija is referred to as the *hatib* of the Aladža mosque. The founder of the Aladža mosque, Hasan, son of Jusuf Sinanuddin, was the supervisor of all the imperial lands in Bosnia and Herzegovina, from which he got the nickname Nazir (inspector). He died in Buda as *defterdar* (Minister of Finance) of the city.

The Aladža mosque, symbol of the town, is located on the right bank of the Čehotine river. At the time of its construction, the mosque was distinctive in its architecture, its structural proportions, and its geometrical and floral decoration, evidence that Hasan Nazir did not stint his wealth when he decided to build a mosque of unique beauty. The master-builder Ramadan had built 21 mosques before the Aladža. The foundations are 10.15 m (33 cubits) long and 13.75 m (25 cubits) wide. The walls are 110 cm thick. The 36 m tall, slender, quadrangular minaret stood out for the virtuosity of construction. Each field of the pedestal of the minaret was carved with fine motifs in the Arab style, each one different.

The inscription above the entrance door of the mosque, incised on a stone plaque measuring 90 x 50 cm, formulated in three elliptical fields, is a masterpiece of calligraphy.

The skills with which the decoration was executed on the stone surfaces of the *mihrab*, *mimber* and *mahfil*, the portal and the capitals of the portico, is also evidence of the superb craftsmanship of the stonemason. The *mihrab* was very imposing and of unusual size for

mosques in this country, with a height of 6.07 m and a width of 2.64 m. The *mimber* in the mosque was equally handsome and created with the same artistic skills. The finest Islamic wall paintings in Bosnia were those of the Aladža mosque.

At the same time as the mosque, the *turbe* of Hasan Nazir's son was built in the mosque harem. To the north of the mosque portico, *šadrvan*, a fountain was erected for *abdest*, ritual ablutions.

The large burial ground (14,000 sq. m.) north of the Aladža mosque had a large number of tombstones, ranging from ordinary stone blocks, dating from the 15th century, the transitional period from the *stećak* tombstone, to *nišan* tombstones.

Categories of significance:

Of outstanding national importance

Categories of ownership or interest:

Of national interest.

Documentation and bibliographic references:

Documentation

Commission to Preserve National Monuments

Technical documentation - condition before destruction - Institute for Monuments of the Federal Ministry for Culture and Sport.

Condition:

Extent of war or associated damage

Destroyed

During the 1992-1995 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Aladža mosque was completely destroyed. Fragments of the mosque were looted. Near the harem of Aladža mosque, a garbage dump is placed today.

Risk:

- The site of this architectural ensemble is at risk of rapid deterioration due to failure to implement minimum clearing and protection measures.
- The remnants of the destroyed monument are exposed to further deterioration.
- Rehabilitation of the monument could be misused for political reasons such as obstruction to the implementation of Annex 8 of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina – provision of conditions for return process.

Condition risk:

Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric, solution agreed but not implemented.

Technical assessment and costings:

A Project for the preliminary consolidation, clearance, protection and conservation of the remains is to be prepared.

The National Monument shall be reconstructed in its original form, on its original site, with the use of identical or similar material and authentic methods of construction, on the basis of

information on its previous form.

Prior to the start of rehabilitation works on the ensemble of the mosque, the surface layers of soil shall be removed to uncover the original foundation walls, and the original sections of the foundations and walls shall be repaired and consolidated.

All fragments of the destroyed building that are recovered either on site or in other places to which they were taken after the demolition of the building, shall be collected, registered, photographed and reintegrated into the reconstructed building by the method of anastylosis, with the use of traditional mortar and traditional building techniques. Until they are thus reintegrated, all the fragments recovered shall be properly preserved.

Parts that are missing, for which documentation on their original form and condition is available, shall be made by the method of repristination, using the same type of material they were originally made of.

Fragments that are too badly damaged to be rebuilt into the structure shall be appropriately conserved and displayed as part of the ensemble of the mosque buildings. All usable material recovered from the walls of the mosque shall be built into the mosque.

All the elements of the mosque ensemble, including the vegetation, walls, fountain and *turbe*, shall be rehabilitated in accordance to the existing graphic and photographic documentation, forming an integral part of the Decision of the Commission.

Costing proposals for projects and rehabilitation works have not been done.

Ownership:

Religious denomination - Islamic community of BiH

Occupation:

Not occupied

Management:

The provisions relating to the protection and rehabilitation measures set forth by the Law on the Implementation of the Decisions of the Commission to Preserve National Monuments, established pursuant to Annex 8 of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official Gazette of Republika Srpska no. 9/02) shall apply to the National Monument.

In accordance to the Law, the Government of the Republika Srpska shall be responsible for ensuring the legal, scientific, technical, administrative and financial measures necessary to protect, conserve, present and rehabilitate the National Monument.

Further, the Government of the Republika Srpska, the Ministry responsible for town planning of the Republika Srpska, the heritage protection authority of the Republika Srpska, and the Municipal Authorities in charge of urban planning and land registry affairs, shall be notified by the Decision issued by the Commission to carry out the measures stipulated above (Technical assessment and costing). Authorized Municipal Court shall be notified for the purposes of registration in the Land Register.

Summary:

Owing to its architecture, structural proportions, and geometrical and floral decoration Aladža mosque was one of the most important mosques in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Regional

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Plan for BiH to 2000 classified the Aladža mosque as category I – object of national importance.

The priority level of intervention is *high*.

NOTE:

Condition  
Destroyed

Condition risk  
Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric, solution agreed but not begun.

Criteria employed for the Priority Intervention List:

- The monuments are designated as national monuments,
- They represent a rare or unique example of a typology, chronology or style
- They were damaged/destroyed during the 1992-1995 war in BiH or they were endangered by the post war conditions (illegal constructions, lack of funding for restoration and maintenance, inexpert reconstruction,) and are exposed to further deterioration,
- Their restoration will encourage the return process in BiH,
- Their restoration will support development of the region.

Sign. and date:

Mirela Mulaluć Handan  
10.03.2004