

The old town of Bar

Country or territory:
MONTENEGRO

Name of organisation
compiling the information:
Ministry of Culture

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Name and address of building(s) or site: THE OLD TOWN OF BAR

Inventory reference number(s): 118

Type of building(s): Urban ensemble

Main date(s): 15 century AD

Current use(s): Cultural tourism site

Significance:

In historical sources, the Old Town of Bar was mentioned for the first time in the 10th century under the name of Antibareos but it is assumed that a settlement existed on that location even earlier, and that Prokopije mentioned it as the rebuilt Roman *castrum* in the 6th century. The King of Duklja, Mihailo, was crowned in Bar. Starting from the 12th century until the late 14th century, the city belonged to the Nemanjic dynasty, and later on to the Balsic dynasty, the rulers of Zeta. In 1571, Bar was conquered by the Turks and it remained under their occupation until 1878, when it was liberated by Montenegrins. The residential architecture of Old Bar includes features characterised by late Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque combined with oriental elements. The town is girdled with ramparts, which protect an area of 4000 sq m where residential, public and sacral buildings of different periods have been identified. The Old Town of Bar was destroyed many times over the centuries. The majority of buildings is ruined, except the clock tower, the customs building, the church and the hammam, which were restored after the earthquake in 1979.

Category of significance:

Of international importance

Category of ownership or interest:

The most significant part of the cultural heritage of Old Bar belongs to Venetian and Turkish cultures.

Documentation and bibliographic references:

Documentation

Decision for the Inclusion in the Central Registry of Protected Cultural Monuments of Montenegro. Following documentation available: Ramparts – Old Bar, Old Town – Space for Stage, Museum, object 194, Aqueduct, object 173, Hammam, object 77, the Clock Tower, Old Bar, objects 2-4, 136, 147, 201-202, 199, 55, 85, Mosque of Skanjevici, Church of St Veneranda, Church of St. Nikola, Church of St. Katarina, the main project for conservation and restoration, Urban plan for Stari Bar, General Urban Plan of Bar.

Bibliography

1. Boskovic, Dj.; *Old Bar*, Beograd, 1962.
2. Mijovic, P., Kovacevic, M.; *Towns and fortifications in Montenegro*, Belgrade – Ulcinj, 1975.
3. Markovic, Cedomir, Vujcic, Rajko; *Cultural Monuments of Montenegro*, Novi Sad, 1997.

Condition:

Very bad - Structural deterioration and instability, severe building deterioration caused by the earthquake in 1979.

Risk:

The town's heritage architecture is not adequately protected. There is also high risk of earthquakes. During the earthquake in 1979, the Old Town of Bar was significantly damaged. The complete restoration was not performed, the heritage buildings are severely deteriorated. The management does not correspond to the needs that a cultural monument of first category deserves.

Condition risk:

Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of one part of the objects, which are in a very bad condition. Agreed solutions on revitalisation of Old Bar and its future purpose do not exist.

Technical assessment and costing:

Technical assessments are partly done, but cost assessments have not been prepared.

Ownership:

Both private and State ownership. One part of the sacral objects belongs to the religious confessions.

Management:

The Centre for Culture of Bar is responsible for the management of the Old Town.

Summary:

The Old Town was severely damaged in the earthquake of 1979, restoration was not carried out completely and the state of conservation of heritage buildings seriously deteriorated.

The most significant part of the cultural heritage of Old Bar belongs to Venetian and Turkish cultures. Heritage buildings belong to private owners, the State or various religious confessions.

Based on the significance of the Old Town of Bar for the cultural heritage of Montenegro, and the very bad present condition of heritage buildings, as well as a very high risk of further deterioration, the Old Bar is evaluated as a *high* potential priority level.

Sign. and date:

Lidija Ljesar
February 2004