

Kulla of Mazrekaj family in Dranoc

A Management Plan For A Sustainable Cultural Tourism Development

Jeta Limani

Architect
Cultural Heritage without Borders, Sweden
Republic of Kosova
jeta.limani@chwb.org; jeta.limani@gmail.com

Abstract

Amid the many highlights of heritage in Kosova, Kulla of Mazrekaj family, in Dranoc village, has the potential to develop into a good example of cultural tourism in the region. In a situation when institutional and legal protection for valuable heritage sites is lacking, the attention is turned towards alternative ways of ensuring this protection and preservation.

This can be achieved through long-term awareness campaigns and activities, aimed at the level of local communities and children: making them understand that they are the best caretakers of the values of their common heritage. Yet, any preservation activity that is combined with cultural tourism must be managed on strict principles that respect the values of the heritage site, yet provide the utmost possibilities of cherishing and enjoying the experience they offer. This offer of cultural tourism must be presented as a part of a wider network and context, especially in circumstances that prevail in Kosova and Balkan, as the only guarantee of success.

As a result of this approach, we can make sure that in years to come, the community and people will be able to distinguish the values and take care of them, understanding that they too can be used to sustain their economies. We will also ensure that the best that a community can offer is identified and made available as a part of the experience for the outside visitor and tourist. This experience of enjoyment and learning would be based on universal standards and principles and presented as a part of a wider national and regional network.

In this way, we make sure that at least some efforts are being undertaken to preserve and develop cultural heritage site, ensuring the economic sustainability of the community, along the way.

Introduction

“Tourism+ Culture + Heritage = Sustainable Economies”¹

¹ National Trust for Historic Preservation, Denver, Colorado,
<http://www.culturalheritagetourism.org/aboutUs.htm>

Management of cultural heritage sites has long presented a challenge for national and international institutions in charge of preserving and protecting them. Further more, management of heritage that involves solutions leading to promotion of the sites and their economical sustainability is a developing concept that greatly depends on institutional capability to embrace new approaches to the issue.

Practices in many other countries have given prime examples of combining cultural heritage potentials with tourism-oriented activities. Initiatives and running-projects in the in UK (Bristol, Bath, Salisbury, Portsmouth, Brighton, York, Canterbury and Dover), in USA (US National Trust networking, Denver, Colorado), Australia (Heritage Tourism network, Canberra), also show that cultural and rural tourism does not necessarily target only middle-class customers, but rather captures the interest of the high-end clientele.



The complexity of finding the right balance between cultural tourism and preservation of heritage becomes even more evident when placed in Kosova's context. Prevailing old-fashioned approach from the institutions to the concept of preservation of cultural heritage and underdeveloped tourism policies make it almost impossible for these two fields to merge with the aim of creating sustainable economies and develop the community.

The Kulla of Mazrekaj Family, in Dranoc village in west of Kosova, has been serving as a venue for different cultural and tourism activities, since its restoration by CHwB in 2004. Celebration of European Heritage Days in Kosova, Seminars on different topics, as well as Bed & Breakfast services offered on these occasions, have proven that this Kulla, as well as the whole historical compound of Dranoc village, has the potential to develop cultural tourism. Development of this type of tourism would also lead to economical development of the community.



Celebrations of EHD 2004 while Kulla was still being restored

Also, when planed appropriately, as a part of a wider cultural and tourism offer within Kosova and the Balkan region, Kulla of Mazrekaj family could become a key element in developing economically sustainable communities.

The management plan that will be produced within this planning process could be used as a stepping-stone for all parties concerned towards implementing similar approaches for other monuments in Kosova.

Background

Republic of Kosova, even though the youngest country in the world has an abundance of multicultural and rich heritage.

With the earliest traces found from the Bronze Age, Kosova accounts in its rich heritage findings from the Illyrian and Roman period, whereas its most valuable monuments date back to the Byzantine and Ottoman periods. Among antique cities (Ulpiana, Vicianum), Byzantine and Orthodox churches and monasteries (Church of Ljevishka, Decan Monastery), Ottoman Mosques, Hammams and Bazaars (Mehmet Pasha Mosque, Gazi Mehmed Pasha Hammam), thrived the building culture of the common people – the residential dwelling.

Employing building techniques influenced by those of the conquering empires (Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian), with the local

materials, conditions and knowledge, local craftsmen and builders developed local varieties of typical dwellings, whose existence can even be tracked all over Balkans. Such are the elaborate Ottoman influenced ‘citizen’ type of houses, as well as simpler versions of adobe and stone houses, found in variations all over Balkans and Kosova.

Kullas in Kosova

The distinctive point of the vernacular architecture in Kosova are the *Kulla* type of dwellings. *Kullas*, also referred to as the *Albanian Kulla* as they were exclusively built by the ethnic Albanian population in Kosova, are considered to be the only building types in Kosova that have not been influenced by outside styles.² However, variations of *Kulla* type of dwelling, as well as stone houses, have been built also in Montenegro, Macedonia and Turkey.

Kullas, which in Albanian means ‘tower’, first started to be built at the end of the 17th century, a time which was marked by insecurity, turmoil and continuous fighting. They have been built predominantly in the Western part of Kosova, in the villages and towns of Dukagjini region. Most of the remaining *kullas* date back to the 18th and 19th century, with quite a few being built in the 20th century as well.

During the 1998-1999 war in Kosova, more than 500 *kullas*³ in Dukagjini region were systematically targeted by the Serb forces, with over 80 % of them being destroyed, burned or damaged during this period. The remaining *kullas* have suffered from neglect of their owners.⁴

Kulla’s core function has been to provide shelter and security for the families that lived in them. These functions are the reason behind *kulla*’s compact structure, its level of fortification, small window openings, shooting holes and its placement within the yard plan.

In general, *kullas* have three storeys – a ground floor and two floors, but they occasionally appear in four storey versions. The ground floor has been exclusively used as barn for cattle; the first floor comprised of intimate family quarters – bedrooms or *qilerë* – while the second floor has a wooden or stone gallery – *divanhane* – with the Gathering Room of Men – *Oda e Burrave*. In all cases, *Oda* was accessed separately from the family quarters.⁵

The gallery on the top floor – *divanhane* – is constructed of either wood or stone, and this difference is also used as a base for division of typology of *kulla*.

The position of the *kulla* within the yard of the complex itself is such as to ensure control and surveillance conditions over the adjoining street and the rest of the landscape – in case of fighting – but also to provide privacy for the family members. The ensemble of a single *kulla* usually consists of the entrance, *pozllom* – the sheltered but open space that was used partly as a horse stable and partly as a summer kitchen, and the *kulla* itself.

Kullas in towns are usually built as standalone structures, while in villages they are more commonly found as a part of a larger ensemble of *kullas* and stone houses, usually grouped based on the family clan they belonged to.

² Prof. Fejaz Drancolli, “Kulla Shqiptare”

³ A. Herscher, A. Heymowski “Monuments and Crime”

⁴ Sahar Rassam, “Kulla: A Traditional Albanian House Type in Kosovo”

⁵ Extensive study on the characteristics of *kulla* has been conducted by art historian Prof. Fejaz Drancolli.



Kulla of Kuklec family, Isniq village



Kulla of Demukaj family, burnt during the war



Kulla of Gockaj family, built in town of Peja

Kulla of Mazrekaj Family, Dranoc

Kulla of Mazrekaj family, in Dranoc village, was built in the 19th century, and it was restored in 2004 by Cultural Heritage without Borders (CHwB). Hate Mazrekaj currently owns it, even though CHwB has a 10-year free lease agreement with the owner. Following its restoration, a Maintenance Plan for the *Kulla* was prepared by Arch. Dukagjin Kastrati, who also led its restoration.

In 2005, the Kulla of Mazrekaj family was put in use for social and cultural activities. It initially hosted events organized as a part of European Heritage Days (EHD) in Kosovo for three years in a row. Later, CHwB refurbished the *kulla* as to provide modest Bed & Breakfast services, and it soon became a popular weekend destination for many internationals working in Kosovo.

During EHD 2006, CHwB launched a pilot project for Bed & Breakfast (B&B) in the Kulla e Mazrekajve and other *kullas* and stone houses in the historical zone of Dranoc. It proved to be a successful venture, but which requires enormous and continuous commitment in order to keep it to an acceptable level.

By the end of 2006 and during the first half of 2007, CHwB solicited the assistance of Serge Doucette, who worked on elaborating the concept of B&B, and which resulted in development of a Regulation for B&B Association and Village Development Council. Even though existing, these concepts have never been implemented as intended.

In 2007, Kulla of Mazrekaj family, served as a venue for a series of workshops, organized by Elizabeth Gowing. The workshops treated different topics, ranging from wine to Kanun (old Albanian code of social conduct) to yoga practices.⁶ They were held on weekends and attracted many interested participants, despite relatively (by local standards) high participation fees.

As of March 2008, Kulla of Mazrekaj family has been temporarily closed for public, while it awaits a management and concept overhaul, subject to this paper.

Geography

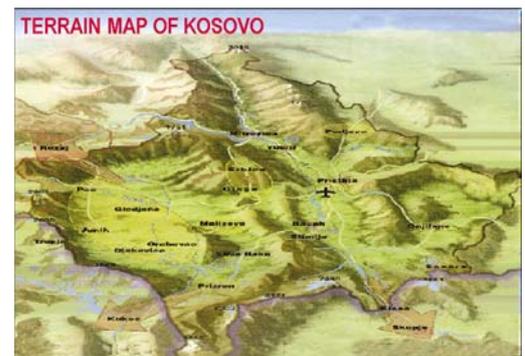
Kosovo has an area of 10,887 square kilometres and an estimated population of more than two million. The largest cities are Prishtina, the capital, with an estimated 600,000 inhabitants, Prizren in the southwest with a population of 165,000, Pejë in the west with 154,000, and Mitrovica in the north with 110,000. Five other towns have populations in excess of 97,000⁷.

Kosovo has two plains: the Kosova Plain that covers the eastern part of the country, and the Dukagjini Plain in the western part. Dranoc village is situated in between towns of Peja and Gjakova, in Dukagjini Plain, with very good road infrastructure connecting it to both towns. It is also very close to the town of Deçan, known for the World Heritage Site of Deçan Monastery, which is located in this region. Dranoc is some 40 kilometres away from town of Prizren, which is known for its cultural and religious diversity.

Some 191 houses, housing about 1000 inhabitants, populate the hilly slopes of the village. The village boasts with vast green pastures, woods and water



On-site art camp for children, Kulla of Mazrekaj family



⁶ <http://www.myspace.com/dranockulla>

⁷ Data from Kosovo Independent Commission for Mines and Minerals

streams, creating an idyllic rural setting, among the highest mountain range in Kosova.

Climate

The climate in Kosovo is continental, with warm summers and cold and snowy winters. Given its small size, climate variations between the two plains in Kosova are minimal, but in general temperatures are a couple of degrees higher in the Dukagjini Plain.

Summers in Dranoc provide perfect setting for hiking, trekking, bicycling, even horse riding.

Winters, yet, can be fully cherished by those seeking an escape into snowy-isolation close to the nature.



Architecture of Kulla of Mazrekaj family

Dranoc is one of the few villages in Kosova whose architectural pattern in its historic core has remained relatively intact. The historic core is comprised of ensembles of *kullas* and stone houses, each with their own yard and auxiliary buildings, surrounded by high walls.⁸

Kulla of Mazrekaj Family is located in a large yard on the hilltop of the historical core of Dranoc village. The yard is composed of a couple of other auxiliary buildings:

1. *Pozllom* which is connected with the main entrance to the yard and it served as an outdoor stable and partly as a summer kitchen, and
2. A group of toilets that were introduced after restoration in 2004.

The Kulla itself has a square plan of approximately 10x10m. The ground floor has been traditionally used as a stable for cattle and it was only accessed from the ground level. After restoration it has been converted into a conference hall and gallery.

The second floor, which was traditionally accessed from outside through a flight of stairs, was used as private quarters of the family. After restoration, the floor has been converted into modern equipped bedrooms, a kitchen and a bathroom. This floor can also be accessed from the ground floor through steel and wood stairs, placed as a part of 2004 restoration project.

The third floor, Oda, traditionally was used as the Gathering Room of Men. These were the premises where men of the family and village gather and where women were not allowed. Nowadays, the room is open for all and is often used for meetings or as a sleeping room for guests, yet with its entire original interior intact.



Entrance staircase to Oda

⁸ Dranoc Preservation and Development Plan, 2005

Based on different interviews with villagers of Dranoc⁹, the Kulla of Mazrekaj family was built in three phases:

Phase I – The ensemble initially had only the *pozllom* part with the kitchen – *shtepia e zjarrit* – in its front. The kitchen was used exclusively by women of the family for preparing food. The remaining part of *pozllom* was used as a stable.

Phase II – A small house with a kitchen and two bedrooms – *qilerë* – is built on the northern part of the yard, and the family moves out of *pozllom*. After this, *pozllom* is exclusively used as a stable.

Phase III – *The kulla*, as we know it, is built, while the small house maintains its function.

Construction

This Kulla, as the majority of this type of buildings, has a compact form. The base is almost square, 10x10 metres, with stonewalls measuring about 80 centimetres in width. The floor construction is entirely made of wooden timber and pillars, which transmit the loads to the bearing stonewalls and foundations, covered with wooden slabs. Wood is also used for the division walls within the kulla, as well as for the roof constructions.

Materials¹⁰

Stone – is a dominating material in the Kulla, even though much more visible on the exterior than in the interior. The stones of window and door cornices are chiselled elaborately, while the wall stones are round shaped.

Mortar – lime mortar has been used as a binder for stones as well as for covering the interior walls.

Wood – is extensively used in Kulla, be it as a constructive element (timbers, pillars, roof construction), or functional and decorative. In the interior, wooden elements are used for constructing division walls, floors, door and window frames, stairs, fences, and cupboards. Chestnut, pine and beech are most commonly used.

Values of Kulla of Mazrekaj

Kullas have undeniable historical, social, architectural, functional and landscape values, merely for the fact that they present a clear image of the social and economical circumstances of the Albanian society of the region in the last three centuries. Unlike the stone houses, kullas were usually built by wealthier families.

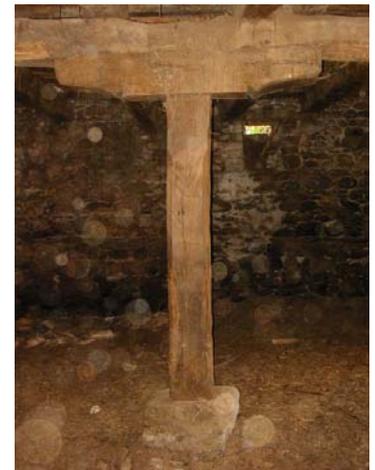
Historical values of kullas in general are linked to the historical events and circumstances, which caused this type of buildings to emerge. The Dukagjin region historically has been known as a stronghold of Albanian resistance, with fighting frequently breaking out, especially in mountainous areas.

Functional values of kullas are closely linked with the historical ones, since its layout plan is very much organized around three key functions:

1. Defence and protection (fortified walls with shooting holes in the façades facing the street, tall fencing walls in yard)



Stone facade



Wooden pillar on the ground floor



Frenjji – shooting holes

⁹ Maintenance Plan for Kulla of Mazrekaj, Architect Dukagjin Kastrati

¹⁰ Based on information from Maintenance Programme for Kulla of Mazrekaj

2. Residential and utilitarian (with an ensemble of premises used for the daily lives of the family members)
3. Institutional (the *Oda* – Gathering Room of Men, has long been an institution regulation social codes of conducts and settling feuds between individuals and families)

Social values arise from the role of *Oda* in regulating the social and moral codes of the society, and serving as an assembly place for heads of different families of the village and the region. Also, the functional division of the kulla floors provides an insight into the rules of the family life of Albanians: women and children not being allowed to mingle with men outside the family, and where the family hierarchy is strongly respected.

The **landscape** values of kullas rest with the fact that they shape up and seal the setting of traditional villages in Dukagjin region.

The Kulla of Mazrekaj family, however, does not have any significant historical values, though it maintains functional, social and landscape values found on other kullas.

The setting of the *kulla* within the ensemble of other *kullas* in the historic core of Dranoc village, as well as within the context of its own yard provide additional values that are no longer found in other villages in Kosovo.

Kulla of Mazrekaj family also has **authenticity** values, since more than 80% of original elements, such are: stairs, fireplaces, timbers and pillars, have been preserved during the restoration.

In addition, this Kulla has current **economical** values, as it has great potential for transforming into an exclusive B&B, supported by services from local community, which would generate large income for the site.

Problems

Any attempt to manage the heritage resources in Dranoc village, and of Kulla of Mazrekaj family in particular, should address the following problems:

Problem 1: Dranoc, as one of the few preserved villages, needs to be protected from further degradation of the environment, which is inevitable given the current development trends in Kosova. In a situation when legal protection by the responsible authorities is lacking, how could this protection and preservation be ensured?

Problem 2: Experience in the past three years has shown that Kulla of Mazrekaj family has the potential of harbouring activities that promote and encourage cultural tourism aimed at preserving the values of the building and site itself. These activities require substantial resources and multisectoral planning, involving the local community, authorities and visitors. How could these resources be identified, coordinated, planned and promoted effectively?

Problem 3: Defining management guidelines for an isolated case, such would be the Kulla of Mazrekaj family, with the aim of identifying activities and services that would bring economic sustainability for the buildings itself, could potentially become a model for management of heritage in Kosova. Yet, the biggest challenge is how could individual cases become a part of a wider context?



Historic core of Dranoc with Kullas



Landscape

Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: Raising the awareness of the local community on values of cultural heritage and actions they can undertake in order to preserve, enhance and promote it can be very effective when legal and implementation mechanisms are lacking.

Hypothesis 2: A management plan that identifies values and resources of the heritage site, activities, services, personnel and budget aimed at preserving and enhancing these values, should be developed with the intention of promoting the site and creating sufficient financial income to maintain it.

Hypothesis 3: Cultural tourism packages and regional networks, advertised also as a part of heritage promotion campaign, will bring individual cases into a wider context.

Method

This paper seeks to define specific components of a Management Plan for Kulla of Mazrekaj family in Dranoc, which could be used as a Pilot Project for creating a B&B offer involving historically valuable buildings and Tourist Guide Points for the rest of Kosova. The aims of this Pilot Project are:

1. Encourage preservation of the historic buildings by raising awareness and proving that financial sustainability can be achieved in combination of heritage, community-based services and promotion
2. Generate income to support maintenance of the Kulla and other restoration interventions in the historic core of Dranoc
3. Create networking possibilities for similar initiatives inside Kosova and in the region of Balkans

Problem 1 – Hypothesis 1 – Aim 1

Local community all over Kosova, in general, has a low level of awareness about the values of historic and heritage buildings. As in most developing countries, these values have long been sacrificed in name of building a new future (destruction of historical parts of towns during the Communism period) or even simpler economic survival for the families who owned these valuable buildings. Institutions in the last 50 years have taken a very rigid and technical approach to preserving values of cultural heritage, with little or almost no involvement of the community. Further more, protected and restored buildings had no purpose or function, other than becoming museums or galleries, which rarely attracted the attention of the community.

In order to tackle this problem, the principle of the **community being the true owner of heritage and its best caretaker** should be maintained. This approach will decrease the reliability on state institutions, which are not functioning properly, while the community itself will take on more responsibility for non-intrusive preservation of the heritage fund.

Awareness about heritage values can include anything from a simple talk to inhabitants to mass-propagated advertisements on national level. However, experience on the field has shown that problems are best resolved on grass-root level, with concrete and viable examples serving as the best tool for 'conversion'. Suggested activities include:



Talking with community elders

- Gathering of different social groups within the community to participate in activities aimed at showcasing preservation of these values;
- Passing of hands-on experience and knowledge to local community through small-scale restoration projects; and,
- Education of schoolchildren about common values and sense of ownership through week-long on-site art programmes



View of the hall in bedroom floor

Problem 2 – Hypothesis 2 – Aim 2

Sustainability in both financial and activity aspect can be achieved only through time-bound management planning. This is usually presented in form of a Management Plan for a Site¹¹, a template of which is given in Appendix 1. However, it must be underlined, that a Management Plan is a living document, which is always revised and adjusted based on current developments in the site.

In order to develop a Management Plan for Kulla of Mazrekaj family in Dranoc, it is essential to:

- Identify factors that influence management,
- Identify operational objectives and options to manage these objectives,
- Identify possible uses for the site and their management options,
- Identify services for the selected use,
- Develop activity schedule, and
- Develop a rough budget line for the foreseen activities.

Problem 3 – Hypothesis 3 – Aim 3

One of the biggest downsides of developing cultural tourism and preserving heritage is lack of its promotion on local and regional scale.

This promotion could be enhanced through several steps that include:

- Identification of local counterparts – buildings with similar values and initiatives/services – on Kosova level,
- Identification of local and regional landmarks for visitors (Dranoc – Kosova – Balkans),
- Identification connection and access possibilities,
- ‘Wrapping and packing’ of these offers, and
- Wide-range advertisement



Bedroom

Results

1. Raising the awareness of community about heritage values and

CHwB, in cooperation with other governmental and non-governmental counterparts, for nearly four years has organized activities that directly promote the values of heritage and tradition, particularly in Kulla of Mazrekaj.

European Heritage Days in Kosova have continuously underpinned the importance of preserving the *kullas* and have shown that they are an unexploited tourism potential. As a result, another kulla in the neighbouring village of Junik (Kulla of Rame Maraj) has been restored by its owner and in surprisingly scholastic fashion. The owner intends to open a traditional restaurant in the kulla. In order to support this activity, CHwB has assisted with developing orientation signs and a sightseeing route to Junik village, this kulla and other landmarks.

¹¹ Management Guidelines for World Heritage Sites, B.M. Feilden and J.Jokilehto

In addition, **workshops and seminars** organized in autumn 2007 by E. Gowning have raised the awareness of a different community group: people from cities and internationals. Even though seminars did not deal with preservation topics directly, the setting and ambience of the venue have had a positive effect on participants and public audience (the events were extensively covered by media). As a result, the society's pressure on institutions to pay more attention to preservation of rural landscape values has increased.

A restoration camp has been held in autumn 2007, involving local community and pupils. The roof of an adjoining *kulla* to the one of Mazrekaj family has been repaired, with finance from CHwB and local companies. Consequently, CHwB intends to donate 5000 euros (part of which are income from B&B activities) to the local community for an emergency restoration of a *kulla* in historic zone, using volunteers from the community. Another restoration camp with local community and volunteers will be organized in summer 2008.

Starting in summer 2007, CHwB with a local NGO, has been developing the concept of on-site art-camps for schoolchildren and students. The camps consist of visits to the different sites in village, lectures on heritage and culture values and workshops in which participants express their vision and understanding of heritage through art forms.



Lectures by prof. Edi Shukriu on cultural heritage and archaeology, as a part of the workshop with pupils

2. Management Plan for Kulla of Mazrekaj family in Dranoc

Following elements have been identified during the research work for this project and they will be included in the Management Plan

Factors that influence management

Ownership – The *kulla* is privately owned but has a ten-year lease by CHwB, which will end in 2014.

CHwB capacities – Given its developing profile, CHwB no longer has the capacity to manage on the ground the operation of *Kulla* to a desired level. Experience so far has shown that one caretaker is not sufficient to keep the standard of the services, cleanliness, supplies and even pricing for activities. Thus, we have concluded that the most optimal way to manage the *kulla* is to sublet it to a third party, experienced in the field and with connections, in order to facilitate the transition into a more open market. CHwB will retain its right to control the level of intervention in order to adjust the building and site to its new use.

Capacities and interest of local companies to venture in the project - Kosovo is a small market, with only few companies that are developed to a point where they can afford to invest in a project like this.

Targeted visitors and clientele groups

Kulla will never be a place of luxury. Basic to mid-range comfort can be guaranteed for those seeking to experience rural life. Even though small in space, basic amenities are available.

Additional activities offered

Other than gastronomy and B&B, other services must be offered in order to attract the foreign and local visitors. One should be able to explore the nature with the help of a local guide, participate in traditional activities of food making, weaving, cattle tending, etc.

Operational objectives and options to manage these objectives

Operational objective is to ensure that the Kulla remains open and active, generating sufficient income to support its maintenance and funds for restoration interventions in other kullas.

Kulla should be put back in function as soon as possible, latest by the beginning June 2008.

Objective Management Options

A. Develop a community-run project in which a local NGO would be in charge of keeping up and running the current B&B service, provide additional services for the visitors – trekking, tours, demonstration of traditional crafts, etc. The money generated through these activities would be used for contributing a fixed fee in the Maintenance and restoration Fund for the *kullas*, paying income to the involved community members for services (fixed or sales/service ratio) and development of new services and offers.

CHwB would oversee that the standard of the services offered is good and that the activities in the *Kulla* and in the zone do not present a risk to their values.

Disadvantages: Community sometimes has problems to create a working and strict structure. Having a community-based daily management does not necessarily ensure continuously high level of service and offer.

B. Sublet the Kulla of Mazrekaj family to a company already dealing with tourism activities and operating within the umbrella of KOTAS (Kosova Tourism Association). The company would pay a fixed rent for the first two years and then profit percentage to CHwB, as a part of the rental deal. The company would invest in adapting the Kulla for its future use, with interventions made in agreement with CHwB guidelines for respecting the values of the site. The chosen company would include the Kulla offer – B&B and restaurant - to its already existing offer, ensuring that its connections and clientele promote the venue faster than usually.

Disadvantages: The lease agreement between CHwB and Hate Mazrekaj expires in year 2014. Anyone willing to invest in prior adaptation of the premises for a larger-scale project would need to have guarantee that investments will not be in vain.

Possible use

Following discussions with stakeholders, CHwB has decided that it would be most optimal to maintain the current use of the Kulla. However, it insists in increasing the standard and type of services offered within the Kulla, as well as widen the spectrum of service offered in Dranoc itself.

However, the focus of offer would be shifted from B&B to gastronomic traditional restaurant with B&B service. To support the increasing demand for B&B services, implied by improved gastronomic activity and promotion, several other kullas and stone houses in the historic zone of Dranoc have been identified.

A rendered map with these buildings, and photos has been given in Appendix 3.

Services for the selected use

Within the range of gastronomic experience and B&B services, in summer time, the Kulla and its yard could be used for organizing weddings in traditional style. The yard, with appropriate refurbishment, would provide an idyllic setting for this important event in lives of so many people.

Outside these summer activities (which usually happen during the weekends), the Kulla and its network would provide:

- Tourist information
- Guided tours to the neighbouring towns
- Guided trekking tours
- Bicycling
- Horse riding



For those seeking for adventure of the lost-rural life, the network could offer spending a week or two living the farm life.

Activity schedule

The following activities should take place in order for the Kulla to be operational by June 2008:

1. Select the company that will take over implementation of the project
2. Define the basic guidelines and conditions, on which the company would operate and develop services
3. Adaptation work of the facility to accommodate an adequate kitchen, refurbish the kulla and yard with specially designed furniture (approved by CHwB)
4. Identify families – community contacts that will facilitate the different activities (demonstration of traditional cooking, guiding, riding, trekking, etc)
5. Ensure that identified B&B facilities are up to a required standard (quality of beds, linens, toilets, food service, fire-protection, etc)
6. Prepare promotional material (leaflets, brochures, website and advertisement) that include information about services offered, as well as general information about the region
7. Create promotional network through KOTAS (distribute leaflets to hotels, cafes, airport, and bus stations)

Following the first season of operation (end September 2008) a review of activities, services and conditions must be completed.

Budget line for the foreseen activities

Conditions for financing the project are as follows:

The implementing company:

- Agrees to pay a fixed rent to CHwB for the first two years in value of 300 euros per month (an average rent for gastronomic restaurant is about 800-1000 euros a month). Following the first two years, and a subsequent evaluation, the rent would be increased to 7% of the company profit.
- Agrees to invest a certain amount of money in adapting the premises to facilitate its initial work. Further enhancement of the site and offered service will be done in stages and in agreement with CHwB.
- Agrees to engage local community in providing identified services, either on fixed fee or income percentage basis.
- Agrees to facilitate cultural activities when asked so by CHwB.

Cultural Heritage without Borders:

- Agrees to take over the responsibility for carrying out the maintenance of the Kulla.
- Agrees to invest rent money from the Kulla in supporting restoration projects within the historic zone of Dranoc village.
- Promote the cultural activities in the Kulla on institutional level.

3. Cultural tourism promotion package

When the programme for this paper was presented in October 2007, in Lund, Sweden, the idea was to develop a concept of a tourism package that would be offered to tourists visiting Kosova. The project of adapting one of the buildings in Emin Gjiku ensemble in Prishtina, presented by Rozafa Basha, seemed to be the right possibility to put together this package.

The Emin Gjiku building, owned by Museum of Kosova, would be adapted to offer B&B services in the historical zone of Prishtina (ref. R. Basha paper), while another house with similar potentials would be identified in Prizren.

Kosova Tourism Association (KOTAS), an umbrella organisation for tourism companies and initiatives in Kosovo, could serve as a facilitator to the project for promotion of this tourist package. However, Bed & Breakfast Association of Kosova would be the coordinating body, dealing with practical matters, such as reservations, visitor relations, etc.

The reason why Prishtina, Prizren and Dranoc were chosen, among others, is the fact that they create a triangle of tourist points from which all of Kosova and the neighbouring regions are easily covered.

Once the projects have been stepped up from individual to national level initiatives, cooperation with regional countries could begin. In the first phase cultural tourism networking could be developed with Montenegro, Albania and Macedonia through the South-East European (SEE) Heritage¹².

Local and regional landmarks

Dranoc – is conveniently situated in the middle of Dukagjini Plain, with very good connections to three of its surrounding towns, Peja, Gjakova, and Deçan. Through Gjakova, Dranoc connects to Prizren, while through Decan and Peja it connects to capital of Kosova, Prishtina. Dranoc is also close to villages of Junik and Isniq, which are renowned for their historical cores with kullas.

Each of these towns and villages have monuments and sites worth visiting of their own:

Gjakova – has one of the most beautiful *Qarshia* - market streets from the Ottoman period and one of the oldest mosques in Kosova – the Hadum Mosque. Both were destroyed and burned by Serb forces during the 1999 war, but since have been reconstructed and rebuilt. Gjakova is also home to one of the biggest Catholic communities in Kosova – counting around 10% percent of the Albanian population, and houses the largest catholic cathedral in Kosova.

Peja – is also known for its market street and mosques, yet its proximity to Rugova Gorge (natural reservation), Drini i Bardhe River



Emin Gjiku ensemble, in Prishtina



Gjakova market street

¹² SEE Heritage Information: <http://www.chwb.org/bih/news.php?id=19>

spring and the Peja Patriarchy, the seat of the Orthodox Church, make it a place worthwhile visiting.

Deçan – a former lake summer-resort is famous for its kullas, its mountainous landscape and Deçan Monastery – Kosova's UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Prizren – is Kosova's cultural capital, showing a plethora of cultural and historical heritage, dashed with hints of Islam, Orthodox and Catholic influences, with prevailing Ottoman, Byzantine and Austro-Hungarian architecture. Home to the biggest melting pot of cultures and ethnicities in Kosova, it is a town that will marvel every visitor.

Junik and Isniq – boast with their still-preserved heritage fund of kullas and wonderful pristine nature. In addition, Junik is the first base for trekkers and mountain climbers who aim to conquer the highest peak in Kosova – Mount Gjeravica at 2656 m above sea level.

Meanwhile, towns and sites on the Kosova Plain include industrial town of Mitrovica (with its Museum of Minerals), Vushtrri (with one of the oldest bridges and public baths in Kosova), Prishtina (country's capital, reflecting the communism boom, 90's depression and wild development of the 21st century, and nearby archaeological site of Ulpiane and Gračanica Monastery), Ferizaj (first railstation in Kosova and rapidly developing trade town), and Gjilan (home to Kosova's once-thriving tobacco industry).

In between the two plains, visitors can be offered the possibility to have an insight into the last war as well as pay tribute to Kosova's most recent past and one of the biggest sacrifices in history – the visit to family complex of Adem Jashari.

On the regional note, any of these three points provide good start line for visits to neighbouring countries – Dranoc is close enough to Montenegro and has a less treaded track to Albania, Prizren provides a gateway to Macedonia and an even shorter path to Albania, while Prishtina is key to passing to Serbia.

Transport connection and accessibility

At the present, Prishtina has one of the most frequented airports in the Balkans, with some 8000 flights and one million passengers in a year¹³. In addition, it is about 2 hours away from the Skopje Airport, which is another access point for interested parties.

Bus connections within Kosova are quite developed, with buses leaving to major towns almost every 15-30 minutes. International bus routes include Skopje (about 6 times a day), Montenegro (2 times a day, more frequently in summer), Albania (once a day, more frequently in summer), Serbia (once a day), Germany, Italy and Turkey.

Road infrastructure leaves much to be desired, but a good car minimizes the 'bumpy-ride' effect. On the plus side, Kosova is a small country, with no more than 100 km from one corner to the other, so how many bumps can one expect in such a stretch?

'Wrapping and packing' of tourism offers

In cultural tourism, as in other branches of tourism, presentation of the offer is the key to grabbing the visitor/tourists' attention. With so many things to display, Kosova is a heaven for anyone who bothers to scratch the surface. However, to help in the start-up, the two following packages could be created:



Prizren



Mitrovica

¹³ According to UNMIK authorities, Media Conference transcript dated 1st March 2007

1. Kosova for beginners (visit to Prishtina, Dranoc and Prizren), with sightseeing of the major landmarks surrounding these stops. It would provide the visitor with the impression of an ex-communist society in transition, with a rough and turbulent past, as well as the footprints of some of World's greatest civilizations.

2. Kosova goes natural – a Dranoc based package with trekking, climbing, offers to the Albanian Alps and highest peak in Kosova, trekking, skiing and rafting in Rugova Gorge and Drini i Bardhe River (in northwest) and in Brezovica and Prevalc (in southwest).

Advertisement and Promotion

The packages would be promoted mainly through websites, and newspapers. A special website for the network would be created.

Other websites for advertising include:

Cultural Heritage without Borders - www.chwb.org/kosovo

Visit Kosova - www.visitkosova.org

Ministry of Culture - www.mkrs-ks.org.

Conclusions

In retrospect to points made in this paper, one can conclude that preservation and development of heritage, alongside provision of economic sustainability of the community involved, can be ensured through the simplest of resources and activities.

The basic form of awareness – on grass-root level, with real people and by real people, can make the biggest of impacts. Things will not improve in a week, but through years attitude towards heritage values and sense of belonging will change. People will realise that, at the bottom line, they are the creators, caretakers and sole heirs to the common cultural wealth.

Further more, even the simplest expressions of life and culture, such are kullas and rural settings, can be very inviting to someone who longs to experience the authenticity of a life that is rapidly disappearing. Yet, the venture behind this simple offer is far from simple: it requires multisectoral planning, with participatory approach from all identified stakeholders, open for new possibilities and flexible to the new demands in preserving the values of the site.

Finally, the experience cannot be complete if it is not presented in the context of its surrounding. The maxim “No man is an island” can well be applied in the heritage context: no site/monument is an island, it functions in its surrounding, as a part of an invisible network of other sites and monuments featuring other values and made by other cultures and people. The more intricate this network is, the more intertwined the ties linking these gems of heritage are, the richer are the people that identify themselves with universal values. One's true value and meaning is evident only in the broad image of the region and conditions in which it was created.

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- [3] “Kulla: A Traditional Albanian House Type in Kosovo”, Sahar Rassam,
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http://www.icomos.org/tourism_charter.html, November 1976
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Appendix 1

ANNUAL MANAGEMENT PLAN TEMPLATE¹⁴

For {resource name or project designation}

Of {site name} for {period}

Preface

- Status and context of the site

Part 1: Description of the Site

1.1 General information

- Location, summary description, tenure
- Maps, charts, photographs

1.2 Cultural information

- Anthropological, ethnographic, archaeological, historical, art historical, architectural, technological, scientific

1.3. Environmental information

- Climate, hydrology, geology, geomorphology, seismology, soils, man-made hazards

1.4 Interests

- Land use and resource history
- Public and private history, ownership pattern
- Economic interests, including tourism

1.5 Appendices to Part 1

- List of references for Part 1
- List of Amendments to Part 1

Part 2: Evaluation and Objectives

2.1 Conservation status of the site

- World Heritage Site Status, historic status
- Indication of potentially damaging operations or threats
- Resource definition and boundary

2.2 Evaluation of site features and potentials

- Cultural values relate to the original historical material and archaeological potential of the site (authenticity of materials, workmanship, design and setting)
- Cultural values associated with the site (universal significance, memorial, legendary and sentimental values, relative art value, uniqueness)
- Contemporary economic values and use value

2.3 Identification and confirmation of important features

- Ideal management objectives
- Factors influencing management
- Operational objectives and management options
- Conservation Management options
- Use management options
- Study and research options
- Education and interpretation options

2.4 Appendices to Part 2

- List of references to Part 2
- List of amendment to Part 2

Part 3: Prescription for Overall Site Management

3.1 Projects

- Project identification, title, classification

¹⁴ Management Guidelines for World Heritage Sites, B.M. Feilden and J.Jokilehto

- Project register
- Project descriptions

3.2 Work schedule

- Annual work plan
- Relationship of the annual plan to the medium- and long-term plans

3.3 Costs and staging works

3.4 Appendices to Part 3

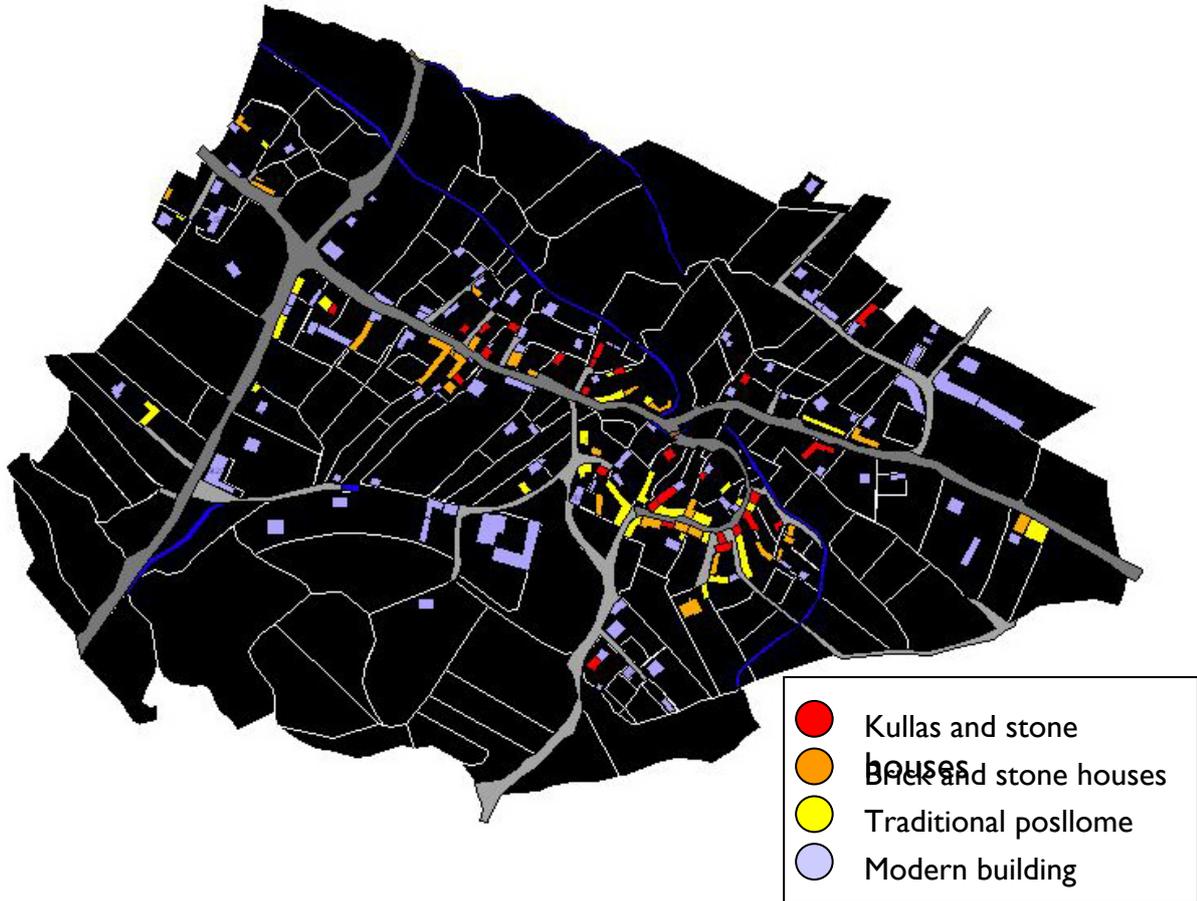
- References to Part 3
- List of amendments to Part 3

Bibliography

- Selected bibliography and register of unpublished material
- General bibliography
- Amendments to bibliography

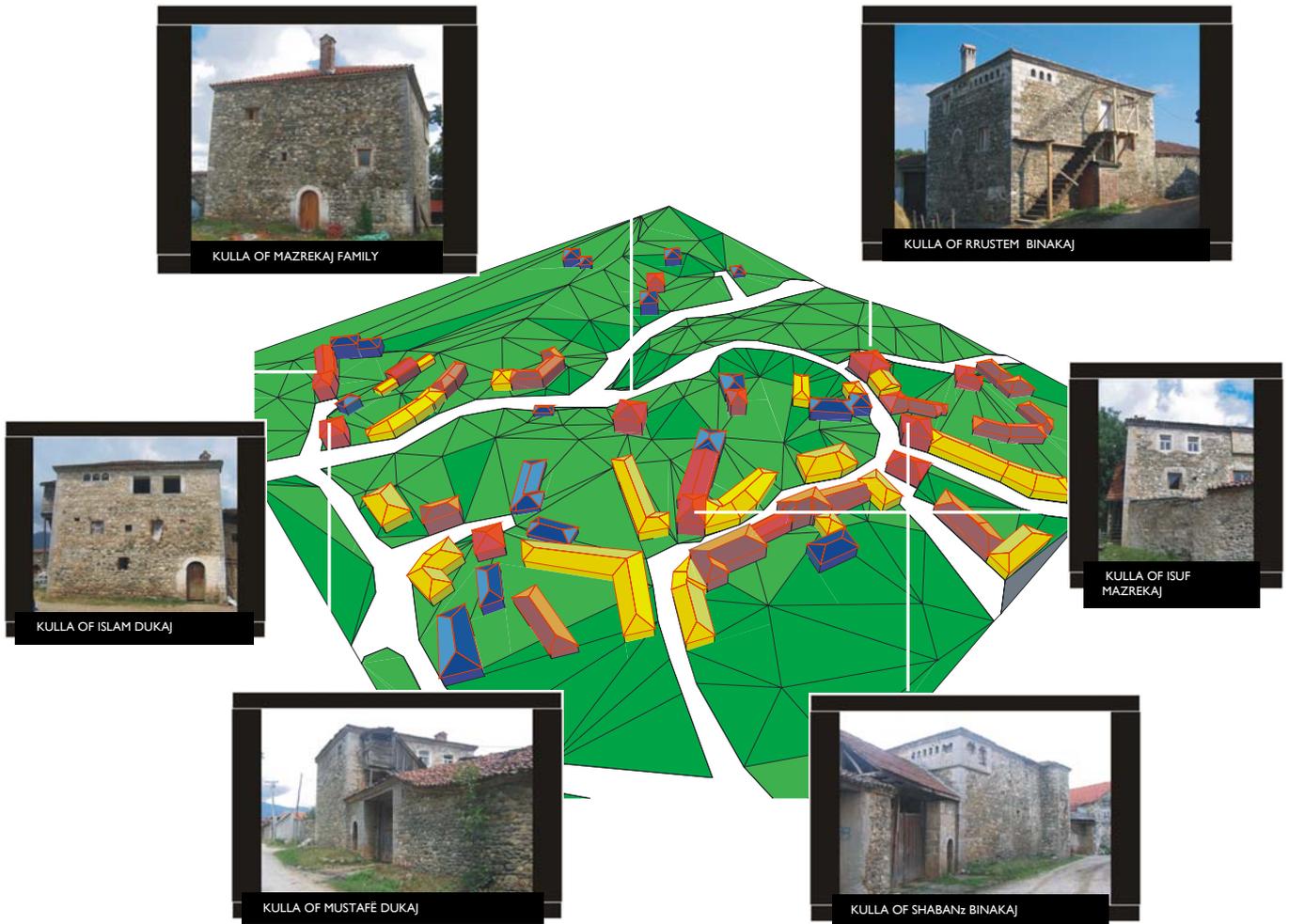
Appendix 2

BUILDING PATTERN IN DRANOC VILLAGE



Appendix 3

KULLAS IN THE HISTORIC CENTRE OF DRANOC AND POSSIBLE B&B FACILITIES



Appendix 4

STONE HOUSES IN THE HISTORIC CENTRE OF DRANOC



Appendix 5

ACTIVITY PLAN

Activity	Timeline for 2008				
	March	April	May	June	July
1. Select the implementation company					
2. Define the basic guidelines and conditions					
3. Commence adaptation work of the facility					
4. Identify families – community contacts to facilitate the different activities					
5. Ensure that identified B&B facilities are up to a required standard					
6. Prepare promotional material					
7. Create promotional network through					

Appendix 6

PRELIMINARY BUDGET LINE UNTIL JUNE 2008

Activity	Budget until July 2008 (euro)				
	March	April	May	June	July
1. Select the implementation company					
2. Define the basic guidelines and conditions	1500				
3. Adaptation work of the facility		5000	5000		
4. Identify families – community contacts to facilitate the different activities		1000	1000	1000	1000
5. Ensure that identified B&B facilities are up to a required standard			3000		3000
6. Prepare promotional material			1500		
7. Create promotional network through			400	400	400
Total in months	1500	6000	10900	1400	4400
TOTAL	24.200,00				

Appendix 7

CONNECTION ROUTES TO BETWEEN DRANOC,
PRISHTINA AND PRIZREN AND OTHER PARTS OF KOSOVA
AND REGION

-  Connection between Prishtina –Dranoc-Prizren
-  Connection between the landmarks
-  Access from outside Kosova
-  Prishtina Airport
-  Gjakova Airport (currently used by the military)

