

'Prizren - Towards a healthy city'



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1. Abstract

The aim of this paper work it will not be to present any of the world metropolises, nor any contemporary city, but to present an old and small town, which is located in a most new state in the Europe and World, in the Republic of Kosovo. We will see everyday life in Prizren /Kosovo.

Architecturally old town, with high value on cultural and architectural heritage, it is urban place were perfectly communicate, develop and merge old with the new. The town as an urban area has change over the time, there has been movement, various interventions which changes have developed and led the city at a city as beautiful, as well as healthy. There were created and developed healthy and successfully urban spaces, as a result of incorporating and combining the best of the old and the new by creating a small and beautiful living urban spaces.

The city that will be presented and introduces in this paper is Prizren, which is located in Kosovo. Kosovo state in Southeastern Europe, which declared Independence from Serbia in February 2008 as the Republic of Kosovo. Prizren is the second largest city in Kosovo, after the capital Pristina. Has about 200,000 inhabitants and lies in the south-western part of Kosovo. Include an area of 640 km² out of 10, 908 m² as have the whole Republic of Kosovo, or 5.94% of the territory of Kosovo.

Toward a healthy town Prizren was heading as a result of some changes and as a part of these changes is also the start and continuation of the process of privatization of Socialy Owned Enterprices (SOEs), with special emphasis on the SOE's concentrated in the different parts of the town and also in Industrial Zone in Prizren. As a result of this process is the total extinction of activities once developed industrial and other sectors, which have been influential in changing the destination of an urban areas as a whole.

What will be presented in this paper is, how even in an old and small city , but with the high architectural value can be preserved and maintained the old, by creating and developing an new, good, healthy and beautiful town, by making small and old town of Prizren , as healthy, beautiful, touristic and cultural place. Town where everybody would like to spent the rest of their life.

Prizren, it's not the town as a perfect one, and as in the most of the places, there are a lot of irregularities, a discontent, a lot of complains. But, among all these, It will be presented a real town of Prizren from the different perspective – a positive one, and we will all see our everyday and healthy life in a most beautiful town in Kosovo and Ballkans.

Key words: Museum city, healthy town, Plan, PAK – Privatisation Agency of Kosovo, SOE – Socialy Owned Enterprice, multiethnic, cultural heritage, tolerance .

2. Prizren- short history of the town

As Kosovo's cultural capital, with many summertime festivals and the prettiest city centre of the country, Prizren has what it takes to make an interesting destination for local and foreign visitors, tourists, travelers and business travelers. A city that has seen many different people and rulers come and go, a city that has seen destruction and restoration many times over, a city that has survived and overcome adversity, a city that is now looking firmly into the future.

It is said that Prizren is the "Museum city" or the city of sources and of beauties. More than 65 immobile memorials and over 600 mobile historical and cultural memories are under the protection of the state. Prizren is one of the oldest cities that have a long and rich history. Throughout time, important cultural and historical monuments of inestimable value were built. Prizren is a city where two cultures and three great religions met throughout the history. Landmarks such as Castle of Prizren (V century), the church of St. Friday (XI century), Gazi Mehmet Pasha's Hammam (XV century), the mosque of Sinan Pasha (1615) represent inheritance with historical value for Prizren and entire region.

Prizren is located on the in southern part of Kosovo. The municipality has a border with Albania and the Republic of Macedonia. Theranda was the name of the city during the Roman period and it is mentioned in Ptolemy's Geography in the 2nd Century A.D., while Prizrendia at the Bizantine period. Prizren was always at the crossroads of important trade routes from the Adriatic coast into the Balkans. In the past Prizren area connected the road "Via de Zenta" between Lissum (Lezha, Albania) and Naissum (Nish, Serbia) and one of the oldest streets "Road Egnatia" has passed over the city of Prizren and united East and West.

According to the historical records, its biggest economic and industrial development this city (Prizen) had during XIV and XIX centuries, which was known as a strong commercial center, nursery and crafts, as well as culture and art. Prizren was originally founded as a commercial city that was more in a function of local urban and rural residents. During XIX century, Prizren was developed on the basis of craft productions. In Prizren, many crafts were developed which provided products even for the European markets, as gold and silver jewelry, guns and other metal products, dairy products, wool products, cereals etc. Products that were exported from the Prizren region were to: Europe, in particular Austria, Venice, Sofia, Adriano- polis, Thessaloniki, etc.

The city has a population of around 178,000 (2011 census preliminary results), mostly Albanians. Other ethnicities living in Prizren are: Turkish, Bosnians, Serbs, Roma, etc. It is of surface of 640 km² (5.94%

of the territory of Kosovo) and is consisted of 74 Cadastral Zones, with the average height of 412 to 500 meters, while in the mountainous (Sharri peak) exceeds 2,000 m.

The citizens of Prizren have saved a very rich cultural heritage. They are proud to reflect diversity and tradition up to today.

3. Prizren – ‘Museum city’

It is said that Prizren is the “Museum city” or the city of sources and of beauties. More than 65 immobile memorials and over 600 mobile historical and cultural memories are under the protection of the state.

Prizren is one of the oldest cities that have a long and rich history. Throughout time, important cultural and historical monuments of inestimable value were built. The Fort, standing uphill, above the town, the Monastery of Saint Friday, the Saint Spas (Salvation), the Mihael Gabriels Head of Angels Monastery, the Church of Helpful Lady, the Turkish Bath, the Mehmet Pasha’s Mosque, the Mosque of Sinan Pasha, the Old Stone Bridge, are only a tiny part of the cultural heritage of Prizren. Let’s see just a couple of them and that see our beauties of everyday life in Prizren.

3.1 Prizren Fortress (Kalaja)

Strategically dominating the town, the deep Lumbardhi valley and the Dukagjini plains, the ancient fortress has been a place for defence and refuge since prehistoric times. On top of the 500-metre high Cvilen hill immediately southeast of the centre, the fortress was significantly expanded and strengthened in Byzantine and Ottoman times and was still exclusively used as a fortress until 1912. It fell in disrepair since, with no remaining structures and deteriorating walls that are currently being consolidated. A gravel path leads from the highest point of the fortress to the Lumbardhi valley.



Figure 1: Kalaja – Castle

4.2 Gazi Mehmet Pasha - Turkish Bath

According to most accounts, this glorious, early-Ottoman Turkish bathhouse located in the center of Prizren city near the Kukli Mehmed Bey's mosque and Emin Pasha's mosque was built at the behest of Gazi Mehmet Pasha, Sanjak Bey of Iskenderiye (Shkodra) in about 1563 until 1574. Combining elements of both Oriental and local architectural styles, the building was made from rubble stones and hydraulic



Figure 2: Gazi Mehmet Pasha - Hamami

lime with plastered internal wall surfaces. Unusual for a hamam in the Prizren region, the building was designed to accommodate both men and women at the same time (ordinarily, the two sexes would bathe in the same hamam at different times), and the individual entrances, changing and bathing areas along with much of the original extraordinary design can still be seen. The hamam served as a public bath until 1927/44 and became an integrated part of social and cultural life.

After 2000 the cold part of the hamam serves as a gallery. Today, the hamam is under restoration – covered by UNESCO.

4.3 Sinan Pasha Mosque

With its strength, compactness, gracefulness and elegance, the Sinan Pasha Mosque represents a rarity in Islamic art. It is one of the most important monuments from the Ottoman Empire in this territory. Sofi Sinan Pasha started construction of the mosque in either 1600 or 1608. It was built with walls over 2 m thick, the dome is 14.5 meters in height, polygonal minaret is 43.5 meters in height, and the mosque contains 64 windows and lot of ornaments. The mosque covers roughly 14 m (46 ft) by 14 m (46 ft) and is square in shape. It has one large dome and another smaller half-dome that covers the mihrab, which is painted and has a stalactite hood.



Figure 3: Sinan Pasha Mosque

The mosque is delicately decorated with geometrical designs, still life paintings and curtains. A lengthy restoration project that ended in 2010 saw the building completely renovated. The mosque is very rich in

ornaments of many colors and shapes. The interior of the mosque is decorated by arabesques and other decorations of flora and fauna in the baroque style.

4.4 The League of Prizren

On 10 June 1878, delegates from all over Albania assembled in Prizren to work out a common political platform to counter the Treaty of San Stefano and the resolutions of the Congress of Berlin, which had ignored the Albanian wish for self-determination. The League of Prizren, Alb. Lidhja e Prizrenit, no doubt initially had the tacit support of the Ottoman government. Among the most prominent participants

of the League of Prizren were Abdyl bey Frashëri, Sulejman Vokshi and Ymer Prizreni. The original venue of the League

of Prizren is commemorated by a small museum, which has now been rebuilt, after being razed to the ground by Serb forces during the Kosova War on 27 March 1999.



Figure 4:Prizren League

3.5 Holy Archangels Monastery

Built between 1343 and 1352 as a burial site for the Serbian emperor Stefan Uros IV Dusan, just outside the city on the main road into the Sharri Mountains National Park, 2.2 km in the south-east of Prizren, there is a holy site of immense importance to the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Holy Archangels Monastery. The complex, which ranges over

6,500 m², includes two churches, the main one is dedicated to the Holy Archangels (where Dushan's tomb lied), and the second one is dedicated to St.Nicholas, both built in theRascian architectural style, although, like the Visoki Decani monastery, regarding time of the construction, and some architectural elements, it may belong to the Vardar architectural style.



Figure 5:Holy Arhangel Monastery

3.6 Holy Virgin of Ljeviš Church

Bogorodica Ljeviska Church was built as the cathedral church in the old part of Prizren by Nemanjic Family. Remains of the older church buildings dating probably from the 9th-10th century are under the foundations of the present church of the Holy Virgin. But there are assumptions that this church

is built on the foundations of pagan temple dedicated to Illyrian goddess of birth and fertility, and later on II-III century as Roman temple. This building had the features of Byzantine provincial architecture. It is assumed that the Bishopric mentioned in a charter by the Byzantine Emperor Basil II in 1018, was situated in this church /monastery/. Many of the frescoes were destroyed during the centuries of Turkish

occupation respectively 1445 when the church was converted into a mosque and the walls covered over with plaster and slaked lime on 1856 when minaret was build whereas destroyed on 1923.



Figure 6: Holy Virgin of Ljevis Church

3.7 Cathedral of the Lady of Perpetual Succour

Cathedral of the Lady of Perpetual Succour is located in the southwest of the urban center of Prizren and was built in 1870 by Archbishop Bucciarelli. Urban provisions are very favorable, considering that this building is in an area of urban sprawl of the city of Prizren; located near the Shadërvan center, near the connection of the two parts of the city (near the bridge), in its vicinity are also other sacral building such are: Orthodox

Church of St. George, of St. Nicholas, and the mosque Ali Myderriz Efendi. The cathedral is built of stone.



Figure 7: Cathedral of Lady of Perpetual

3.8 Archaeological Museum & Clock Tower (Sahat Kulla)

Once functioning as a Turkish bathhouse and built by Ahmet Shemsedin Bey in 1498 although possibly dating to back before this time, Prizren's recently renovated Archaeological Museum first opened its doors in 1975. Now fully renovated in one of the loveliest interiors in Prizren, the museum holds over 800 items of archaeological interest from antiquity to the 19th century, discovered in Prizren, Dragash, Rahovec and Suhareka. A fascinating insight

into the history of the region, the building also features a clock tower built towards the end of the 19th century with Baroque elements by Eshref Pasha. Originally the tower contained a chiming clock which was removed in 1912. The view of the city and surrounding mountains from the observation post at the top is well worth the struggle to get up there.



Figure 8: Museum & Clock tower

3.9 Church of St. Saviour

Located at the dominant part of the old town, on the way to the castle, the Church of St Saviour was built around 1330 and in 1348 was given as a gift to the nearby monastery of Holy Archangels. The Vlach community in Prizren, which had the right to use this little church from the second half of the 18th century, built, in 1836, high walls of a future shrine which was never completed and the church of St. Spasa thus



Figure 9: St. Saviour Church

became only a part of its northern nave. The medieval church is of small dimensions, with the foundation in the shape of the shortened cross with octangular dome and the apse three-sided from outside. It was decoratively built with neat alternate layers of limestone and brick and with ceramoplastic ornaments.

What was presented above, are the beauties inherited from the past that are part of the old town. In this respect, I would like to continue with the new part of the town, area/zone that was passed through the important and radical changes, which led the town toward more healthy and clean environment.

4.0 Prizren - Industrial town – Period of transformations between 1947 – 1999-2003

4.1 Transformation into an environmental and healthy town

Prizren has passed through the development and the changes of the different sectors. In the town new residential areas have been developed. As a result of the development of industry and tertiary its outskirts, population migration from the rural areas started to take place.

In the post war period, immediately after 1945, the modest constructions of industrial capacities took place in the inner part of the town. The first hand craft industries were built and started to function- as so called : “Handy craft cooperatives”. Development of industry brought the re-location of old industry from the inner city and location of new development in the western and northern suburbs of the city.

In September of 1947 the first craft cooperative starts with its industrial activities of shoe production- called ‘Buducnost’ (the Future), has been extended and transferred to the shoe production factory in 1960, called ‘Komuna’ Prizren. Later on, the shoe factory has been relocated to the northern suburb of the town.



Figure 10: Industrial facilities

The modest construction of all these industrial capacities in the first period post-war period, identified as slower development period (immediately after 1945) were facilitated inside the city. However, during the further developments, new industrial capabilities were slightly relocated to the western part of the town, suburb of Prizren. In this period, some of the old industrial buildings were relocated from the central part into the industrial part of the town.

Relocation of existing and location of new industries not only steered the development of Industrial Zone, but also the development of the new part of the town, with new zoning that occurred of various industrial capacities to the northern part of the town – suburb of Prizren.

In this new urban zone of Prizren there were built 15 factories of different sectors of development, which were in a full working time until 90's.

The Industries in the Industrial Zone (as in all over Kosovo) have been confronted with the obstacles of internal and external nature, such as: development slacks as of 1990, International blockages of 1990, caused damages during the war period, old technology, lack of raw material in local markets (fruits, vegetables, dairy products, gold, silver, copper, zinc, etc). Those were the irreparable damages based on the almost dead economy since 90's and further. As a result of the performed analyses by the government, then - in the name of protection of big fortune of the Socially Owned Enterprises (SOE's) as well as development of the economy in Kosovo, in general it was decided that the Privatisation Agency of Kosovo (PAK) to be established, responsible for sale of social property/factories and all other properties.

Therefore, it has started a sale of big industrial facilities and other properties. No conditions were put, if the sold facilities have to remain industrial still. The sale is done without conditions to the new buyers.

Impact of the privatization process mainly is in the reactivation of the small and medium enterprises, which activity had a huge role in development of the change of use of land.

Looking from the aspect environmental site, convert of the huge factories into the hypermarkets, trade centers, warehouses, universities etc, somehow lead the town toward a healthy town and healthier environment. Analyses done after the privatization of industrial facilities, leads toward following results:

- No more hard industrial machinery, nor hard industrial transporters;
- Stops the consumption smoke from industrial chimneys, as a stop of activities of large industrial plants;
- No consumption of a coal as a main raw material at the large industrial plants in Prizren;
- There is no more: Oxides of carbon and nitrogen, sulfur, halogens and heavy materials as the main polluters, with dust generated from waste management ;
- No industrial waste – Example: From 1990 until 2003 many substances in different aggregate forms remained a long time without being used in facilities, warehouses and industrial units. Over time some of these substances have expired or are degraded by changing their composition and substances with high risk. Activities for reducing the risk from these substances have so far been made in some enterprises, mainly relying on donations and activities of KFOR and KPC. As a result of industrial production, interruption of production and other activities encountered many dangerous substances.
- Stops heavy consumption of electricity
- Therefore, stop environmental pollution

As a result of these radical changes, what we have now in our town and what we are experiencing every day is:

- Clean environment, cleaned from the dust, industrial waste and pollutions;
- The town breathes with cleaner air ;
- More greenery, vitalize;
- More lives, more happiness in this area is now ;

The reason why I say this is because the above mentioned Industrial facilities, warehouses etc, are converted into:

- 280 residential buildings,
- Colleges, Universities (UBT, IP Prizreni, FAMA)

- Trade Centers – hyper markets
- Recreation centers
- Food production units,
- Warehouses, etc.

As we see, the current facilities and the development of existing activities in this area has oriented the life in the town of Prizren in the other direction.

What we have today in this part of town and we did not have in a previous time is:

- Free time locations – family locations;
- Recreation facilities for kids and elders ;
- More green areas, parks, playing fields, etc.

5. Other locations that shows Prizren as a healthy town

Among the old part of the town, additional biggest zone – industrial zone, we will briefly walk through other areas of Prizren, which possesses the capacity to move to a city as healthy, as well as the pleasant place :

5.1 City park



Figure 11: City park Prizren



5.2 Complex Marash – green and recreation park

Marash Complex located in the eastern part of Prizren; He presents a pleasing symbiosis of natural and architectural heritage. Complex Marash creates continuity between the Albanian League of Prizren and Prizren Fortress and continues with beautiful gorge



Figure 13: Marashi tree - 400 years old

Lumëbardhit. 400 year old plane trees, two meters wide, is the only example of its kind and the Balkans (See Fig.13). In this complex of monumental value presented traditional and oriental architecture of Prizren ,

where you can still see Maksut Pasha Mosque, which dates from 1833, the Mausoleum of Saadi order, the object of restoring the mill of Pintolli, which times the latter being used as a restaurant cheesecake and some traditional houses urbane. From Marashi can continue walking upstream of the river, while now the path which runs for several miles for a pleasant walk along the river or ride the bike. Walking from the center of the town, through the old town toward a Complex of Marashi, the road that laeds there is beside the river Lumbardhi, all green parts and full of natyral beuties, see Figure 14 and 15 !



Figure 12: Marashi complex



Figure 144: Center of town



Figure 155: Toward a Marashi Complex

6. What other makes a small town of Prizren, as a most pleasant town, cleaned and in top of everything healthy town

If one of the conditions for a town to be healthy is to be tolerant and multiethnic, than this is Prizren. The estimated population of the municipality is about 240,000 inhabitants, comprising both, the town itself, and its 76 villages (177,781 inhabitants, in town only). In addition to the majority Kosovo Albanian population, it is home to large communities of Kosovo Bosnians (16,896), Kosovo Turks (9,000 - excluding the Kosovo Turkish population living in the Pilot Municipal Unit of Mamuşa/Mamushë/Mamuša), and of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians (5,800). There is also a relatively small number of Kosovo Serbs (237), who live mainly in the villages and a smaller number of them, in the town of Prizren (30 individuals only).

Table1: Demographics Prizren town only

Demographics													
Year	Albanians	%	Bosnians	%	Serbs	%	Turks	%	Roma	%	Others	%	Total
2011	145,718	81.97	16,896	9.5	237	0.13	9,091	5.1	2,899	1.63	2940	1.65	177,781

Source: Kosovo Statistical Office

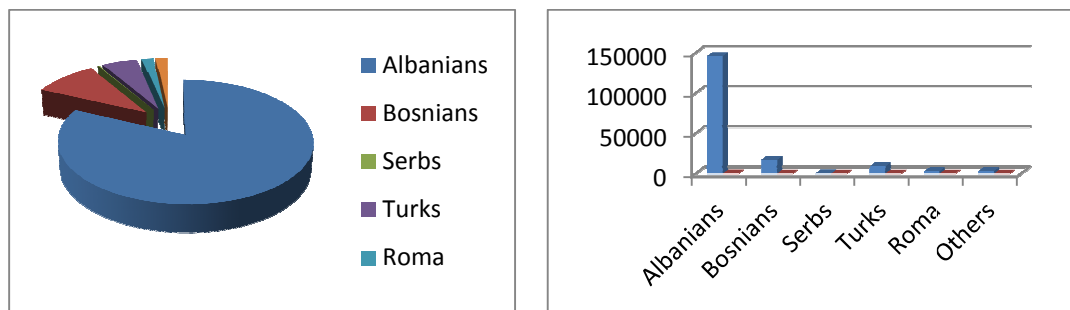


Figure 166: Demographics Prizren town only

As we see Prizren is inhabited by Albanians, Turkish, Gorani, Roman, Bosnian and Serbian. In the mosaic of religious ethnic of the citizens of Prizren dominates the Islamic faith, and there are present also Catholicism, Orthodoxy and other faiths. Prizren has a substantial number of mosques, Orthodox churches, Catholic churches, tombs and mausoleums, which together create grandeur and harmony of religious architecture in Prizren. In this city there are no national divisions, since communication among people is done in community languages, Albanian, Turkish and Bosnian language.

Therefore , the city of Prizren is recognized as a unique place in Balkans for its cultural heritage values, civilization and various religions.

Given the favorable geographic position, the harmonious merge of its cultures during the history, and enviable number of monuments from all the historical periods, the city of Prizren holds righteously the epithet of the ‘Museum City,’ and ranges as one of most beautiful cities of Kosovo. Situated along the Sharr Mountains, which were declared as a National Park, on both sides of the Lumbardhi River and on the junction of important trade routes between east and west, the city of Prizren has been recognized throughout its history as an extraordinary important cultural, economic and diplomatic center.

7. Events - Entertainments

Prizren is welcoming lot of festivals on the sector of film, art , music etc. The event that makes a Prizren as a most pleasant town during the month August is ‘ Dokufest’ – short film documentary festival. It is large-



Figure 17: Castle cinema

scale cultural event, but also as a successful and driving force in the fields of culture, education and activism for sound cultural policies and alternative education system in Kosovo. It is a new experience in Cinema: As well as Prizren's historic indoor cinema there is a second cinema built by the festival. There are also two huge cinemas erected every year especially for the festival.

Castle Cinema Is built on a platform on the mountain top castle above Prizren City.

River Cinema - Is built on a platform directly over the river that flows through Prizren so cinema goers sit above the flowing water.



Figure 18: River cinema

Clean roads, no smoke, no vehicles and free movements for pedestrians, naturally drink water...

This is Prizren!



Figure19: Clean and pleasant roads - 'kalderem' roads...

Conclusion

What has been presented above is Prizren from the positive looking perspective. All over the world there are cities that are announced as a most healthy city, ecological city, pleasant city to live...etc. Looking from the positive perspective of view, thus characteristics can be and are found also in this small town.

What is presented above, does not say that 'here everything is working in a best possible way'. No, we have a lot of irregularities, negative effects in constructions, discontents and we express them to the respective institutions but not in this paper work. But, beside all discontents there are a lot of good parts that make us proud with our beautiful town and these are presented.

It is said and I will repeat again, that Prizren is the "Museum city" or the city of sources and of beauties.

Prizren is one of the oldest cities that have a long and rich history. Throughout time, important cultural and historical monuments of inestimable value were built.

Prizren is a city where two cultures and three great religions met throughout the history. Landmarks such as Castle of Prizren (V century), the church of St. Friday (XI century), Gazi Mehmet Pasha's Hammam (XV century), the mosque of Sinan Pasha (1615) represent inheritance with historical value for Prizren and entire region.

From the other side, as a result of rapid development of economy and industry in Prizren and in Kosovo after 1960's are resulting with the construction of huge giant factories, with an enormous capacities of production and employment. As an example: only two large factories, promoters of economic and industrial development of the city of Prizren (SOE Printeksi and Supralloni IFS) at the peak of its development have counted about 6,000 employees and located in area of about 30 Ha (30000 m²). The recovery of these giants that were already dead for years as of 90's, it was impossible and unimaginable for the circumstances of economic development of the post-war era of 1999.

Privatization of the Socially Owned Enterprises (SOE's) precisely, privatization of the Industrial giants of 60, 70 and 80's transformed those enterprises into a small and medium non industrial enterprise, in which the economic development of Prizren and Kosovo wide will be supported, in general. Such a transformation is the result of the changes on the different stages and periods of times through which has passed economic development of Prizren and Kosovo, in years.

These transformation/ changes, ultimately determine the development of the area towards the development of light industry and toward the development, enforcement and promotion of non industrial enterprises, which leads the town toward a healthy town.

As a result our small but beautiful town has following awards:

- Year 2013 - In the list of the most wonderful countries in the world announced by MSN-of for 2013, the town of Prizren, located in the 9th place among the most beautiful in the world. "The river flows under the bridge Lumbardhi 500-year-old stone town of Prizren in Kosovo".
- Year 2014 – World' best outdoor cinemas to watch films under the stars: "Festivalgoer's at DokuFest in the Balkan city of Prizren watch a film with the magical view of the sparkling lit-upcitybelow.

There is a proverb in Prizren, which says: 'whoever comes ones in Prizren, certainly will be back again'.

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