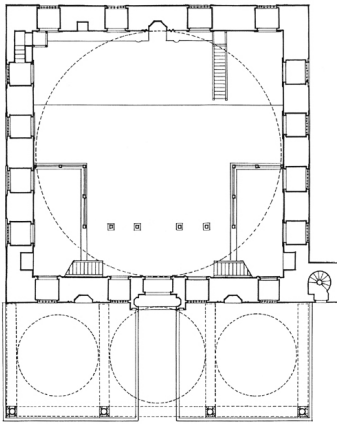
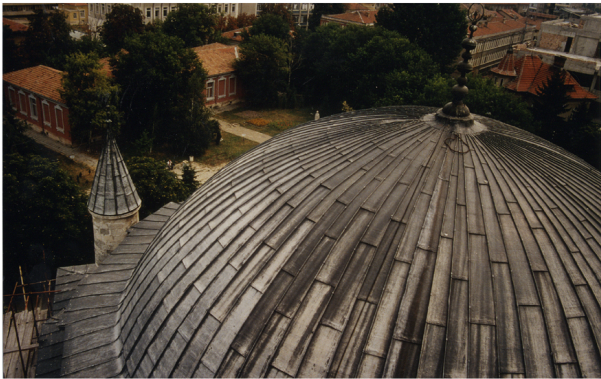


Restoration of the Ibrahim Pasha Mosque

Razgrad, Bulgaria	
Architect	Nikola Mouschanov Yambol, Bulgaria
Costs	not available
Programme	Restoration



Razgrad, (Deli Orman), Mosque of Ibrahim Pasha, 1616, showing the completely new lead covering of the building (situation 1992)

From the late 14th century through 1878, the country now known as Bulgaria was part of the Ottoman Empire, and mosques, schools, baths, and other public and administrative buildings were built throughout the land. In 1878, a Christian regime under Russian influence came into power, and more than half of the Muslim population emigrated. During this period, many of the Ottoman buildings were destroyed and all were neglected; the destruction was more systematically and forcefully carried out by the Communist regime who gained power in 1944. It is only due to the continuing efforts of a few enlightened Bulgarians that some of the Ottoman works could be saved, protected, and sometimes restored. One such individual was Nikola Mouschanov, born in 1927.

Professor Mouschanov studied architecture at the Technical University of Sofia and then worked at the National Institute for Historical Monuments in Sofia until 1956. Throughout this period, he struggled to study and catalogue the remaining Ottoman buildings, and undertook when possible to help see them restored.

Another example of Professor Mouschanov's efforts can be seen in the town of Razgrad, where the early 17th century Mosque of Ibrahim Pasha has also been restored. Other, important projects have been undertaken in Plovdiv, Dupnica, Kavarna, Sofia, Tatar Pazdzrik, and Samokov.

Building Type	071
1995 Award Cycle	1753.BUL



Restoration of Ibrahim Pasha Mosque, Razgrad, Bulgaria



Introduction

The Ibrahim Pasha Mosque is located in the town of Razgrad, which is situated in the Ludogorie Hills that separate the Balkan Range from the flatter terrain of the Danube Plain. It is about 300 kilometres North-East of Sofia and 50 kilometres from the Romanian border. The town sprawls along the banks of the Bell Lom River. Its main square is totally dominated by the imposing mass of the Ibrahim Pasha Mosque. This striking and monumental building was commissioned in 1614, (AH 1206 is inscribed above the entrance) by the Turkish governor Ibrahim Pasha.

Razgrad lies NorthEast of Sophia, approximately 260 km from the nation's capital



The 17th century mosque was commissioned by the Turkish governor, Ibrahim Pasha



During the 1980s, the Ibrahim Pasha Mosque was vandalised by the youth of the town of Razgrad. They broke the windows and smashed the minaret. As the building was in poor condition, this act of vandalism galvanised the authorities to restore the mosque. The city authorities were in the process of revitalising their town square and did not want an eyesore at its northern end. The Mouschanovs were commissioned to design an appropriate restoration. Between 1968 and 1969 they drew up detailed plans and elevations of the building, including a historically accurate reconstruction of the original stone portico that had once framed the entrance, based on evidence uncovered during their excavation of the site.





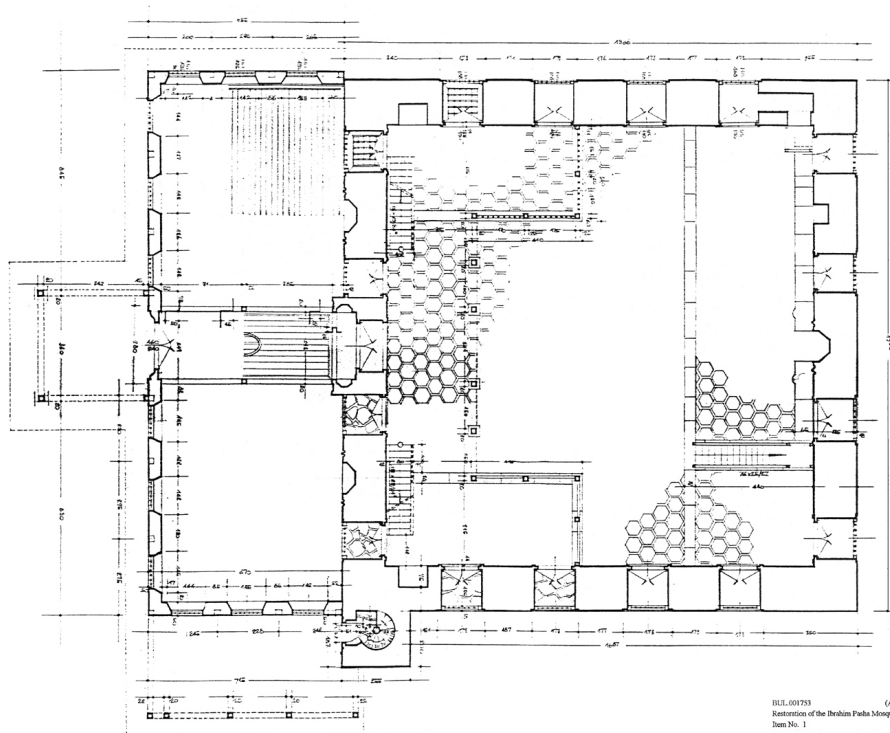
Work commenced on the mosque in 1971. The leaking roof was restored and a lead roof was installed over the domes. The lead techniques of the craftsmen of Razgrad were not as good as those of Jambol, the lead strips being too thin and unlike the original Ottoman roof. This work (which has not lasted well) was supervised by a local architect named Karayeney. The minaret was not restored and is in very poor shape; there are many cracks in its northern section, which presumably allow rainwater to seep into the interior of the main walls of the mosque, which now support vegetation. The external walls and facades were not restored either. There are leaks and damp patches visible on all four facades; the South facade is in the best condition. The North one is in the worst state, with gaps appearing where the portico was once fixed to the building, showing rotting beams and gaping holes, where water definitely seeps through.





The interior was restored: The upper windows were replaced with pierced stone friezes, which are still intact. The same cannot be said for the windows and doors of the ground floor, which have all been broken, since vandals are still very active in this town. The floor is strewn with broken glass and the windows have not been boarded up so vandals continue to enter and do more damage, as do the pigeons nesting inside. Large swastikas are painted everywhere. The upper walls and the large central dome of the mosque have been replastered and repainted in vibrant colours in exact imitation of the original designs. The painter Grigor Grigerov is from the Academy of Fine Arts in Sofia. The walls are not quite finished and there is no sign of any work in progress. The wooden gallery, similar to that of the Eski Camii in Jambol, is in very poor shape.

Work continued intermittently on this mosque from 1971 to 1989 when it finally came to a total halt because of a lack of funds. The building is locked up and virtually abandoned. The scaffolding is still up in the interior of the mosque, but is rusting. Mr. Ivanov thinks they may need between 3 and 4 million leva to complete the project, but it is unlikely they will receive it.



IBR_001753 (A)
Restoration of the Ibrahim Pasha Mosque
Item No. 1