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SO-CALLED 'GARRBAGGE PIT'

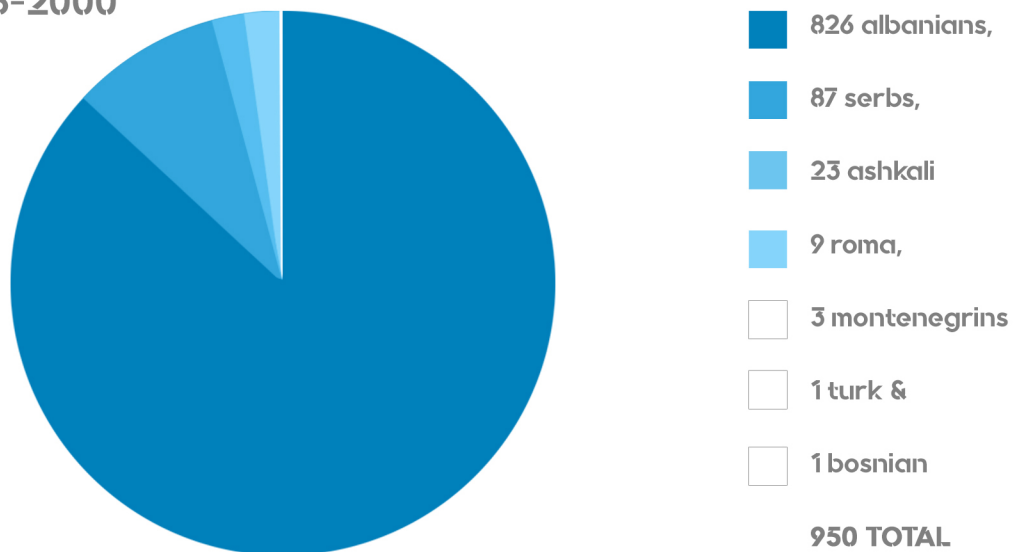
RAHOVEC/ORAHOVAC

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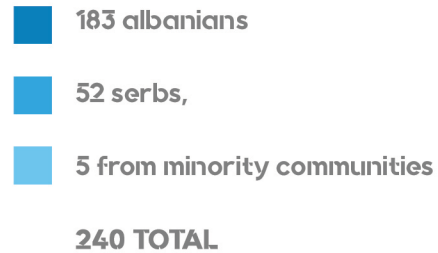
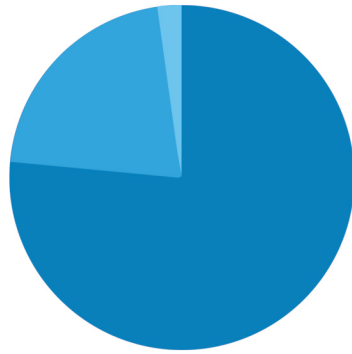
The municipality of Rahovec/Orahovac is one of the regions in Kosovo mostly affected by the war in 1998-1999. During the 90s, about 60,000 inhabitants lived there, with an Albanian majority of over 90%. During the period 1998-2000, 950 people lost their lives and/or went missing in this municipality. Of them, 826 were Albanians, 87 Serbs, 23 Ashkali, 9 Roma, 3 Montenegrins, 1 Turk and 1 Bosnian.

1998-2000

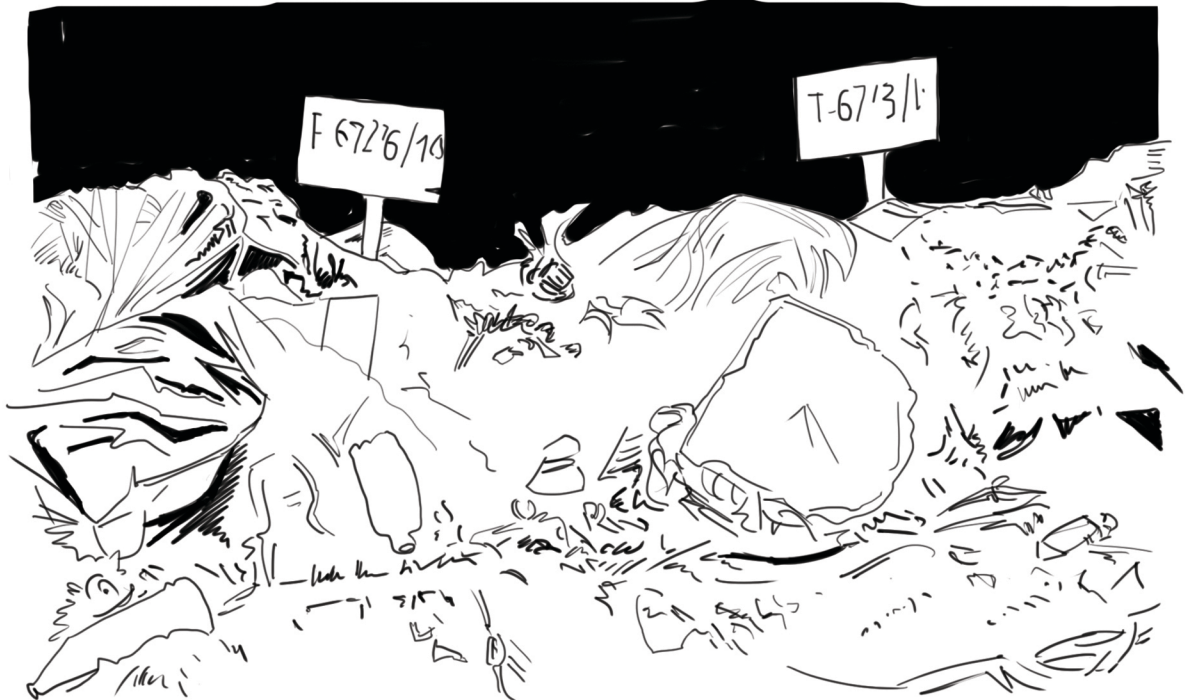


The municipality of Rahovec/Orahovac was also characterized by a large number of victims in 1998. During this period, 240 people were killed and/or disappeared in this municipality. Of which, 183 Albanians, 52 Serbs, 4 Roma and 1 Montenegrin.

1998



The largest number of victims were unarmed civilians, namely 186 civilians, who were executed in different places and circumstances and their bodies were subsequently buried in different locations either by their relatives, when this was possible, or by the relevant municipal institutions of that time. The largest number of victims who were buried by municipal structures, was done in the so-called "Gropa për Bërlllog" [Garbage Pit].





The Garbage Pit was located immediately behind the Muslim cemetery of the city of Rahovec/Orahovac and was a space in which various types of wastes were dumped for a long time and had turned into an illegal dump site. During 1998, bodies of Albanians who were executed by Serbian forces were buried in this place.

On July 17, 1998, the Kosovo Liberation Army forces entered Rahovec/Orahovac and fighting between them and the Serbian armed forces began. In the evening of July 18, 1998, Serbian Special Police Forces of the Prizren Station arrived in the town of Rahovec/Orahovac. Early in the morning of the next day, on July 19, special police forces started to enter the houses of Albanian residents - raiding them, looking for weapons, shooting in all directions, throwing hand grenades into the basements, looting them and setting the houses on fire. On the other side, members of the 549th Motorized Brigade bombarded the city from the direction of Landovicë/Landovica and Rogovë/Rogovo villages.



The special police action lasted until July 22, 1998 when they regained control of the city whereby 79 Albanian civilians from the city of Rahovec/Orahovac were executed in their homes, on the street, in the workplace and similar places. After the executions, police forces ordered the municipal structures to take the bodies of victims and bury them in the place called "Garbage Pit". Victims were buried individually one by one and in a number of these graves wooden boards with names of victims or an identification number were placed. However due to the continuous digging with an excavator, these identification boards were mixed with the garbage that was located there. Thus, these cemeteries resembled more to a space dedicated for dumping garbage than a burial site.

The then spokesman of the Serbian police, Colonel Bozhidar Fillic, in an interview with the CNN, in August 1998, had denied that the space was a place for dumping waste, implying that someone had made a mess of the place afterwards and had also emphasized that the bodies were buried there because of the proximity to the Muslim cemetery. On the other hand, Colonel Fillic said that the victims buried in that space were 'terrorists' who had been killed during the fighting and were not civilian victims as alluded by the Kosovo Albanians. But such a thing was refuted in August 1998 when some of the identification wood boards containing names of civilians were discovered, such as the case of Sabrije Mullabazi, who was a 90-year-old woman executed in her yard and then buried in the Garbage Pit.



The bodies of the victims buried in this space were identified and reburied in different time periods. A group of them were identified immediately after the end of the war, in October 1999, while a number of other victims were identified and reburied during 2005-2007. All the bodies identified in this space were reburied in the Muslim cemetery of the city of Rahovec/Orahovac.

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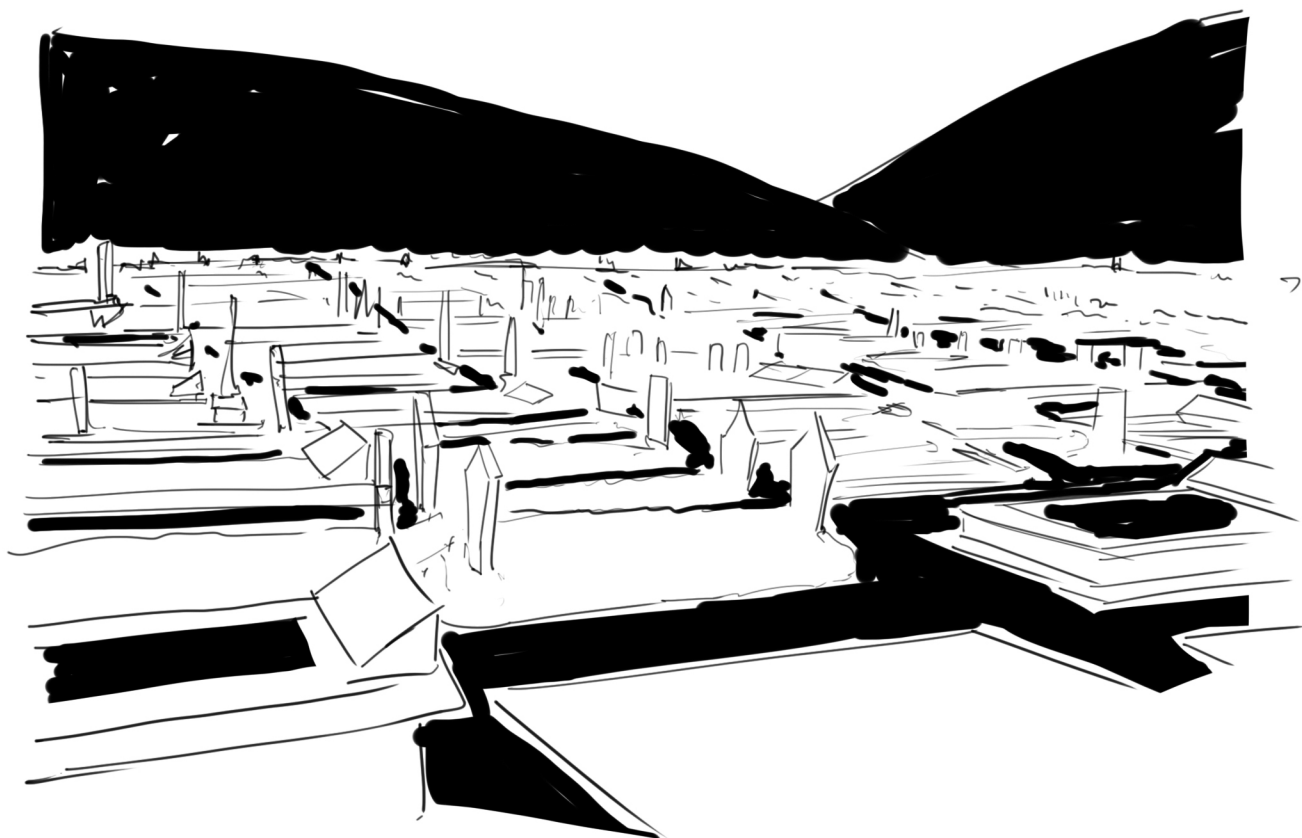
WHAT WAS IT?

The Garbage Pit was a space near the Muslim cemetery of the city of Rahovec /Orahovac in which waste of different categories was dumped by the residents of the area before and during the 1998-1999 war period.

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WHAT IS IT NOW?

After the end of the war, no more waste was thrown in the Garbage Pit, and it was transformed into a dignified place for a cemetery. So, after the exhumation of bodies that were buried there in 1998, the space of Garbage Pit became a part of the Muslim cemetery of the city of Rahovec/Orahovac. Until now, there is no marking in that space that shows that it was a location where the bodies of Albanian civilians executed in 1998 were buried in a non-dignified manner in a place where garbage was continuously dumped.



SO-CALLED 'GARBAGE PIT' MAP

