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KURSHUM HAN AS PART OF PLOVDIV MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT POLITICS IN 1908–1912

(Summary)

The inn Kurshum Han, monument of Ottoman architecture in Plovdiv, was built in the middle of the 15th century. It was one of the largest caravanserais on the Balkan Peninsula. In 1908-1912, Plovdiv municipal government decided to convert it into covered market. It was located in the central part of the city, where large-scale public works and modernization activities were planned. The first step was the expropriation of the building for urgent municipal needs, i.e., for covered market. Parts of Kurshum Han were owned by merchants, bankers, religious and craft organizations. According to Art. 67 and Art. 68 of the Constitution, compulsory assignment of property was possible with fair and advance payment to private owners. The interested parties did not reach an agreement and the property issues were decided in the court. The Plovdiv Municipal Council committed lots of violations in the application of the Regulations for the architectural competition for market hall. The failure of the initiative was due to the fact that Kurshum Han was not a priority in the municipal policy. Another reason was the insufficient financial resources of the municipality. On top of that, the amount set for reconstruction, minimal as it was, was not used for the purpose. In October 1914, the city mayor appointed a municipal commission, which decided that the construction of market hall in Kurshum Han would cost huge sums that the municipality did not have. Moreover, the procedure for the expropriation of the inn was resumed in 1919–1921. In 1923 part of the building was demolished. The Chirpan earthquake of 1928 caused significant damage to

the building and in 1930 it was completely demolished by decision of the municipal authorities. In 1938, on the vacated terrain, a market hall was built.