

The Old Bridge in Mostar Bosnia Herzegovina



During the Bosnian war in the early 1990s the Stari Most or Old Bridge was on the front line in the fighting between the Croats (Roman Catholic Christians) and Bosnian Muslims. Serbians (Orthodox Christians) were also besieging Mostar at that time.

The Stari Most, Mostar's spectacular 16th-century stone bridge and one of Bosnia-Herzegovina's greatest architectural treasures, collapsed in November 1993 in a barrage of Croatian shells. It was a moment Bosnians, particularly those under siege in east Mostar, had prayed would never happen.

For at least 25,000 Bosnians trapped on the city's east side the collapse was a disaster - a tremendous blow to morale and a strategic victory for the Croats.

The bridge was the only access to a source of drinking water which people retrieved by scurrying across at night under threat of sniper fire. It was also the main route to the places where the front line crossed into west 'Croatian' Mostar.

As Robbie Burns in his poem "*Man was made to mourn*" writes:

***"Many and sharp the num'rous ills
Inwoven with our frame!
More pointed still we make ourselves,
Regret, remorse, and shame!
And man, whose heav'n-erected face
The smiles of love adorn, -
Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn!"***