

from Balincë/Balince with her family, and his daughter Sofije from Banjë/Banja with her sons Xhafer and Arsen, her in-laws and two cousins. Elvane, the wife of Ilaz Shala [Sofije's husband's cousin] also found shelter in Jakup's house.

Towards the end of July, local residents and refugees alike left the village for three days, for fear of the Serb forces passing through the village. After that, they did not leave the village until 26 August 1998.

On the afternoon of 26 August 1998, Yugoslav Army troops came from the direction of Malishevë/Mališevo and stationed themselves in the vineyards owned by the *Miruša* company, near the main road linking Senik and nearby Bellanicë/Belanica. The locals and refugees, seized with panic, fled to the wood above Senik, bordering the village of Kleçkë/Klečka [Lipjan/Lipljan municipality], and took shelter at three locations: *Male te Mirzet*, *Ara e Bajramit/Bajramova njiva (Bajram's Field)* and *Lugu i Ahut/Bukova dolina (Valley of the Beeches)*.

The next day, **27 August 1998**, at around 12:00h, Serb forces entered Kleçkë/Klečka. At about 16:00h, they opened fire from Kleçkë/Klečka at the people sheltering in the wood [Senik], first with automatic weapons and afterwards from tanks. Shells were landing in the midst of people. The shrapnel killed Zade, Jakup's daughter Halime, Elvane and her little daughter Valentine, the little Xhafer whom Sofija was holding in her arms, Hyre and her three-year-old grandson Altin, and the young Sevdije, who had come from Banjë/Banja with her family earlier that day. Over 50 people were severely wounded as a result of the shelling.

During the shelling, the survivors dragged the bodies of the killed women and children deeper into the wood. They wrapped the body of the little Xhafer in a blanket and placed it in a cradle, next to the other bodies. In the evening, after the attack had stopped, Hyre's son and two of his cousins brought Hyre's and Altin's bodies into his house in the village. The other bodies remained at the scene for two more days, because of Serb forces that were torching tractor-trailers loaded with food

and other belongings left behind by the people. On 29 August 1998, local villagers, accompanied by representatives of several international organisations, carried the bodies of Zade, Halime, Elvane, Valentine and Sevdije to the village. Only the body of little Xhafer could not be found at the place where they had left him. Zade, Elvane, Sevdije, Halime and Valentine were buried the next day by their families in the wood near *Male te Mirzet* in Senik, in the presence of representatives of the ICRC, OSCE, *Medecins sans frontières* and village residents. Hyre and Altin were buried on 1 September 1998 by Hyre's son Hajrullah in their family graveyard in Senik.

After the war, on 30 March 2000, the Karaqica family transferred Zade's mortal remains to the cemetery in Balincë/Balince. On 23 August 2001, the Halitajs transferred Halime's mortal remains to the cemetery in Senik. Later that month, the mortal remains of Elvane and Valentine were transferred to the cemetery in Banjë/Banja. The Shala family is still searching for the remains of little Xhafer. He is listed on the ICRC list of missing persons under BLG-803923-01.

Sources: statement of J.H, HLC-3562; statement of Š.S, HLC-3563; statement of R.H, HLC-3566; statement of J.Z, HLC-3567; statement of J.Z, HLC-3568; statement of L.S, HLC-15140; statement of S.S, HLC-15170; statement of S.K, HLC-16016; statement of B.K, HLC-33478; statement of N.H, HLC-34651; statement of H.R, HLC-34650; ICRC, *Persons missing..*, HLC-9795; KMDLNJ, *Buletini*, no. 9, october-december 1998, 122, HLC-23857; J. Osmani, *Krimet..*, I, 536.

Vezire (Hajdin Suka) Zulfaj

(born 7/07/1954, Albanian woman from Senik, Malishevë/Mališevo municipality, housewife, five children)

Kujtim (Rifat) Morina

(born 15/03/1986, Albanian from Astrazup/Ostrozub, Malishevë/Mališevo municipality, primary school student)

In July 1998, Kujtim fled Astrazup/Ostrozub with his mother Sevdije, brothers and grandmother and went to his uncle Smajl Zulfaj and his wife Vezire in Senik. Kujtim's father