



Map 2: Administrative view of Bathore. The area is divided in to an "urban" and a "rural" area. The numbers indicate the seven quarters of Bathore which existed before the "urban" area was integrated in the municipality of Kamza.

The Quarters and the Homeland

Like in northern Albania, the social organisation in Bathore consists of two aspects: kinship and local relations, i.e., *fis* and quarter (*lagje*). While in the north the *fis* is closely tied to its quarter and village – usually the *fis* stood at the beginning of the development of a quarter or village –, the *fis* in Bathore are spread over various quarters.

Bathore is divided into a so-called "rural" and an "urban" area. The difference between the two, however, is hardly noticeable: both areas look more or less alike, being comprised of numerous individual houses on small plots of land. Until recently, the two areas of Bathore were considered as one and divided into seven quarters (*lagje*). Each of these officially elected their head of the quarter (*kryeplak*). All of Bathore was considered by the administration as a village (*fshat*). The status of the urban area has changed and this part of Bathore has recently been attached to the municipality of Kamza. The administrative units of the "quarters," which are only used for settlements with village status, were dissolved. The current situation of Bathore is that one part is still called the "village Bathore" and the other part should officially be called Kamza, because it now belongs to this municipality. However, the people are still used to thinking in terms of the whole village of Bathore with its seven quarters and the heads of the quarters, even if the four quarters of the urban part do not exist anymore (Map 2).

If you ask the people of Bathore what the most important form of organisation was, they mention the *fis* or the quarter. At first I had planned to explore the importance of the *fis* as opposed to the quarter. But since in half of Bathore, namely, the urban area, where the quarters are officially nonexistent, the people continue to refer to this organisational dimension, the quarter cannot be viewed as simply an administrative level of organisation. However, only very few of the interviews for this study were conducted in the urban area and I mostly talked to people from the rural area who still belonged to the established quarters; thus I believe that the development of a stronger quarter organisation as the result of the dissolution of the traditional *fis*-based network of social relations, can still be postulated. The results of the interviews, however, indicated that the distinction between kinship and locality (the quarters) is as complex as the division between kinship and locality in the north. While in rural northern Albania a family's ties to the land and the village are multilayered and strong, in Bathore they appear to be just as complex but much weaker and more loosely structured. The basic idea of organisation exists, but it serves only as a guideline for action only in some instances, sometimes it exists as a mere model without everyday relevance.

All of my interview partners were well aware of the fact that on the one hand there exists an official administrative organisation in Bathore with elected representatives, who officially meet at some time in some place, and that on the other