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Questo volume è stato realizzato con il contributo del Dipartimento di Architettura - Università G. D'Annunzio Chieti-Pescara

ISBN 978-88-6242-382-3

Prima edizione italiana dicembre 2019

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Progetto grafico: Stefania Guosso

LetteraVentidue Edizioni Srl
Via Luigi Spagna, 50P
96100 Siracusa, Italy

www.letteraventidue.com

a cura di
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SAR AJE VO

AN ACCOUNT OF A CITY

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Nicola Minasi

*Ambassador of Italy to
Bosnia and Herzegovina*

It is often said that cities are like books, that can be read and explored to find specific messages unique to their place and time. The visitor, as well as the inhabitant, are therefore involved in a continuous dialogue with the surroundings, in an explicit or subconscious way, which contributes to create that special “character” specific to each city, making it a living body, a City with a capital letter. In the case of Sarajevo this relation between space and people is especially strong, since many buildings and objects have been clearly built as crucial political statements. The City Hall, for example, was created by Austro-Hungary to testify to the willingness to integrate muslim heritage in the new political order brought by Vienna, while later buildings, from the Museum of History (initially Museum of the Revolution) to the Olympic centre of Skenderija were meant to mark the development of Sarajevo and its relation with the rest of the world. At the same time, all this landmarks and the character itself of the city have morphed into new meanings through the siege in 1992-1995, to acquire yet new nuances in the post-war and reconstruction period. This special relation between space, people and meaning is an ongoing process in Sarajevo, often lived by the main actors with full knowledge of its importance, which brings involves social, political and economic outcomes. It is a lively dynamic, that

only an expert look can capture and explain effectively. For this reason I am very happy that "Sarajevo. An account of a City", is seeing the light to contribute to the knowledge and appreciation of this unique process. It is not just the result of affection for the city and Bosnia Herzegovina, but also the outcome of a long process of interaction among the Authors with local players and institutions, as well as intense academic exchanges, which have been mutually enriching. I am especially proud that this result has been possible thanks to the University of Pescara, on the other side of the Adriatic Sea, marking once more the special relation that binds Bosnia Herzegovina and Italy. This is a link that has become stronger since the years of the war, but its roots are much older and deeper, when one considers that the first Consulate General of Italy was opened in Sarajevo in 1863, when Bosnia Herzegovina was still under the Ottoman Empire. This bond is strongly rooted also in artistic ties and is as alive as ever. Indeed, not only has Italy given an outstanding support for the opening of the Ars Aevi collection and to the rebirth of the National Museum of Bosnia Herzegovina, but it has also marked its contribution with considerable events in the social and cultural world, linking some of the landmarks of Sarajevo to the Italian presence in the arts. In June 2017, for example, Michelangelo Pistoletto came to Sara-

jevo upon invitation of the Embassy of Italy to create his "Third Paradise" with 500 students from all of Bosnia Herzegovina, including all communities and traditions. The realization of this symbol of peace and reconciliation in the heart of Sarajevo, in Skenderija square, was a special moment, lived with genuine awareness by all participants, leaving an important mark of hope and determination in the City. Then again, in 2018 Maestro Pistoletto decided to permanently donate his "Multireligious and Secular Place of Meditation" to the Museum of History in Sarajevo. Thanks to Pistoletto and to Italy, a work of art devoted to peace, coexistence and reconciliation now rests at the core of the City, spreading its message to all who come to it. One more message added to the many that Sarajevo gives to its people and visitors and one which is meant to stimulate new ideas, actions and courage



Friday June 2, 2017
The Third Paradise in Sarajevo.

The Third Paradise is the third phase of humanity, which is realized in the balanced connection between artificial and natural. The Third Paradise is the great myth that leads everyone to assume personal responsibility in the global vision. The Third Paradise is a symbol for the community of social empowerment and rebirth that Michelangelo Pistoletto gives to the city of Sarajevo.



Vedad Islambegović

*Past President of
Association of Architects
in Bosnia and Herzegovina*

This book originates from a series of trips, conversations and workshops done in Pescara, Sarajevo, and many other cities of the Balkans. In many ways it follows up the spirit of the book "Crossing Sightlines", and reflects ongoing exchange of ideas between architects and universities in Italy and Balkans. As apparent in this book, convergent stories and similar attitudes emerge easily, despite seemingly obvious divergence between the two regions. As we all know too well, architecture does not arise in vacuum, and in many ways it represents a by product of wider social processes running in the background of each design making act. Therefore, in order to understand architecture and urban development in Bosnia and Herzegovina, one should be aware of specific socio-economic and political context present in this country. Although physical destruction from the war is hardly visible nowadays, the society in Bosnia and Herzegovina is still struggling to recover from unfortunate events that took place in 1990. Frankly speaking, Bosnia and Herzegovina is highly de-regulated, politically and economically unstable spot in Europe. How does

this relate to architecture? Well, failing economy and deregulation concerning spatial planning have been affecting architectural production as much as all other aspects of development. In an effort to work and survive in such conditions, architects in Bosnia and Herzegovina lost much of their professional cohesion. In other words, by abandoning the idea of professional community they became less able to articulate their common interests. This experience is probably the most important lesson that architects from other European countries could learn from Bosnia and Herzegovina. The message is simple: if professional Chambers and Associations don't work well, architects should fix and regenerate them. If you let them fail, our past experience might become yours in the future. However, much has been learned in last three decades and certain things started to take positive direction during last few years. Younger generations of architects have rediscovered importance of collaboration and solidarity, and started to regenerate and to reinvent institutions of professional community with lot of success. Although reality cannot be changed overnight, it is almost ob-

vious that good things are coming, and maybe some future books made in collaboration between Bosnian and Italian architects will be writing about it.



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Lorenzo Pignatti

*Professor at Dipartimento
di Architettura -
Università G. D'Annunzio,
Pescara*

This book originates from a long series of cultural and research activities carried on by the University G. d'Annunzio, Department of Architecture – Pescara, Italy - in several cities of the Adriatic and Balkan Region. We have organized and co-organized design workshops, conferences and seminars in Izmir in 2008, in Durrës in 2009, in Rijeka in 2010, in Zagreb in 2011, in Split in 2014 and, finally, in Sarajevo in 2016, 2017 and 2018. Through these initiatives, we have established relationships and collaborated with the Universities in Ljubljana, Belgrade, Zagreb, Split, Sarajevo, Patras, Thessaloniki, Izmir, Istanbul and Athens. In all these occasions foreign and Italian students and professors have worked together verifying, from time to time, how the contemporary processes of transformation of these cities must be conceived coherently in relationship with their own contexts, both physical, cultural and social. This was an immeasurable opportunity for us to get to know all these cities and understand, through experiences of architectural design and urban planning, their own peculiarities.

Our journey through the Adriatic and Balkan Region was extensive and compelling, but certainly when we arrived in Sarajevo our amazement could not have been greater. In the midst of the soft and narrow furrow cut by the Mil-

jacka River, is a place where religions, ethnic backgrounds, cultures, languages and traditions have coexisted for centuries, side by side, commonly and peacefully. Sarajevo is a small Istanbul, or better yet a small Jerusalem in the heart of the Balkans, not far from "our" Europe, or more precisely inside today's Europe. The first evening in Sarajevo we climbed the bastion of the Zuta Tabija. Here we enjoyed a view of the entire city, whose foreground is dominated by the white stele of Muslim tombs and the background is dotted with the minarets of the Islamic mosques and the bell towers of the city's Christian churches. Almost as if in a dream, the mullah's call to prayers invaded the natural bowl that describes the form of the city and our minds; we became aware of being somewhere else, in a different and very powerful place.

We learned to understand the city and how it grew in successive phases, built one beside the other, and not one atop the other. The first is the Ottoman city (neither Roman, nor Venetian, as we had become accustomed), with the area of the market, the Baščaršija, constructed around a sequence of closed courtyards that form a dense and irregular urban pattern reminiscent of a small Istanbul; the second city is the nineteenth century of the Austro-Hungarian period, with its symmetries and regular grid of streets, reminiscent of a small Vienna.

This was followed by the modern and socialist city, imagined by visionary architects who proposed a modernist city modelled after le Corbusier's ideas. We thus learned how the city itself speaks of co-existence, as it grew in horizontal sequences and not in vertical stratifications, by which the new city covers and conceals the old one.

But in Sarajevo we also observed evidence of the dramatic recent fighting; not only through still damaged buildings and numerous urban voids created by bombs, but above all in the hearts and minds of people, unable and unwilling to forget.

In Sarajevo we were drawn into the enthusiasm and charismatic strength of Enver Hadziomerspahić, who, during the bombings of the Serbian assault of the 1990s, imagined that Sarajevo could be reborn only through art and testify how culture can trigger urban re-generation. We thus learned about "cultural resistance", a new term for us, accustomed to uniting the adjective "cultural" with such others as programme, initiative, function, etc., but never with a term that implies "resistance" to some horrible act.

We thus learned that the power of culture can resist to war. This was a great lesson for us.





Stefania Gruosso

Research fellow at
Dipartimento di
Architettura -
Università G. D'Annunzio,
Pescara

"Sarajevo an account of a city" is the result of the collaboration between

the curators and the authors: architects, artists, photographers, art experts, diplomats, sociologists and students, each of whom has generously agreed in sharing their own personal experiences of life, by working or studying in this extraordinary city and contributing to the definition of a story that combines the present but also looks towards the future.

Geographically, Sarajevo is located between East and West, a condition that has made it a *place of grafting*, where overlapping cultural elements have always been superimposed to the pre-existing ones. The cultural mix and the consequent urban stratification, have in fact been a peculiar condition of this city, and even more so today when Sarajevo is looking for a new diversified and inclusive identity.

This book is presented as the reflection of what is the true soul of this welcoming city where people from every corner of the globe have come for centuries and have been always accepted; this continuous meeting of different individuals has allowed the city to learn, and sometimes incorporate, new and different things. This is the reason why this publication does not aspire to a univocal narrative but rather to a set of diversified story, which presents different degrees of knowledge of the city and that

combines the *insiders*, those who have lived or still live the subjective and everyday experience of Sarajevo, with the *outsiders*, those who have instead arrived in Sarajevo for shorter periods of time and for different reasons. This volume represents the collective effort of a group of individuals who wish to give voice to a city that has been forgotten for too long, through the narration of a diversity of experiences, points of view, perspectives and cognitive strategies, all of them united by a special ethical relationship towards this magic word, Sarajevo.

The book is divided into five thematic sessions, each of which follows a distinctive aspect of the city.

1) Bosnia Herzegovina

Geometry of Time - Geometry of Space
by Claudia Zini

The book, before entering into the history of the city, opens with a broader look at Bosnia and Herzegovina, a nation at the center of the complex "Balkan tangle", which has always been a borderland, a land of crossings and conquests that have continuously moved and altered the geographical boundaries of this country. A complex story, told through the works of Lana Čmajčanin who uses historical maps and cartographies as a tool to narrate and reflect on the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina in her work.

2) City and architecture

Sarajevo by Kanita-Ita Fočak
The City: Contaminations, Identities, Contradictions by Stefania Grusso
Sarajevo: Architecture and the City. 1930-1960 by Lorenzo Pignatti
Architectural and urban practice in BiH: Rebooting the communities by Elša Turkušić Jurić

The first focus addresses the city and its architecture since in Sarajevo, more than in other contexts, the cultural mix and the overlapping of influences, are clearly visible through an urban stratification made by very different elements among themselves, that having survived over time, operate as a visual and experiential story of the city. Today's Sarajevo is here narrated, whose skyline highlights the mingling of cathedrals, mosques and synagogues that stand out next to each other in the city center. A historical excursus then leads to the understanding of the urban development of the city which was first Ottoman, then Austro-Hungarian and socialist. And then the Sarajevo of the first decades of the XXth century, a period marked by a great cultural ferment in which the city moved the first steps towards modernity. The past joins the present with the narration of the contemporary experiences of a new generation of architects who, in a moment of transition such as that of the post-conflict in which urgency was needed to

rebuild, tries to make space for itself through new architectural practices for the revitalization of the communities.

3) City and shared spaces

War, Culture and Resistance: The Case of Ars Aevi by Lejla Odobasić
Novo A faith between history, memory and narration by Giuseppe Trentadue

In this chapter, Sarajevo is described as an inclusive, multi-ethnic and multi-religious city, a city where different faiths and ethnic groups found themselves, still today, sharing spaces. Sarajevo has been called the "Jerusalem of the Balkans", a paradigm of coexistence and sharing, summarized by the monument "All Men Multicultural" present in the curtain of this section. The work, produced in multiple copies, has, in Sarajevo, the most significant place for the meaning it expresses: the faceless man who tries to close the earth together with the doves that represent the different continents is a tribute to multiculturalism. Which city other than Sarajevo has been a victim of its aspiration to universal coexistence? Sarajevo is the place shared by the four most important religious faiths as well as a fragile territory composed by a multitude of cantons and divided into the two entities of which Bosnia-Herzegovina is constituted. Despite the complex condition, faith plays here a primary role for the ability to tell the city and those who live it through the beauty of everyday gestures, humanity, the will to rise again. And together with the strength of faith there is that of culture, considered an element of resistance against the nationalist attempt of homogenization,

in a process that sees cultural institutions as witnesses of the will to reaffirm the concept of coexistence. The story of the project for the Ars Aevi Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art in Sarajevo, is the emblem of the desire to promote Bosnian unity in its multi-cultural nature.

4) City and memory

Ideology and the City: The Socialist Landscape of Sarajevo by Emina Zejnilović
Legacies of Sarajevo. 1984 Winter Olympic Games by Erna Husukić
Sarajevo under target by Danilo Crivella
Tito in war, Sarajevo, 1992-1993 by Milomir Kovačević

A look at the past to better understand the present. Every contemporary city is the fruit of its past, of how much this has left marks in the memory and of how the city wants to keep it alive in the present. Sarajevo, the result of a series of invasions, destructive wars and reconstructions, is now experiencing a period of transition in which the city is strongly influenced by its past, especially the recent one. This chapter deals with three crucial events that the city experienced in the last century: the great urban transformations of the socialist regime, Sarajevo during the 84th Winter Olympic Games and their legacy, to finish with the story of the conflict of the Nineties, which saw the city and its inhabitants victims of a violent war.

5) City in transition

Survive(d). Sarajevo as a Manifesto by Camillo Frattari

Monument to time by Federico di Lallo
"You have a duty if you are in Sarajevo"
Young adults in Sarajevo by Arianna Piacentini

Ivo Andrić describes Sarajevo as "*a city that, at the same time, transforms itself, agonizes and is reborn*".

In the years following the siege, Sarajevo is faced with the need to re-start, experiencing the difficulty of defining a real reconstruction policy, while some of the city's symbolic buildings rise again, large urban areas especially in the hills around the city, remain in the condition of ruins. In Sarajevo, it is easily identifiable the city before and after the conflict. Emblematic is the case of the structures inherited by the 84th Winter Olympics that, from a symbol of an event where Sarajevo had reaffirmed its role, have become, due to the destruction of the conflict of the 90s, a monument of its own time. Sarajevo today is a city in transition engaged in the redefinition of a new identity, that, if from one hand tries to untie itself from the memory of the war, from the other feels the need to narrate and overcome its own history, claiming its right to legitimize its identity also through a painful past. This is certainly determined by the fact that the siege took place in a historical moment that is easier to be remembered, rather than past events. The memory of the siege is still very vivid and this is why living in Sarajevo today, especially for the generation of young adults who was born or lived their childhood during the

war, is not easy. The difficulties of this transitional moment push people both towards the abandonment of this place and to remain and commit themselves to it, in order to become protagonists of an era of change in a city that, although complex, remains unique.

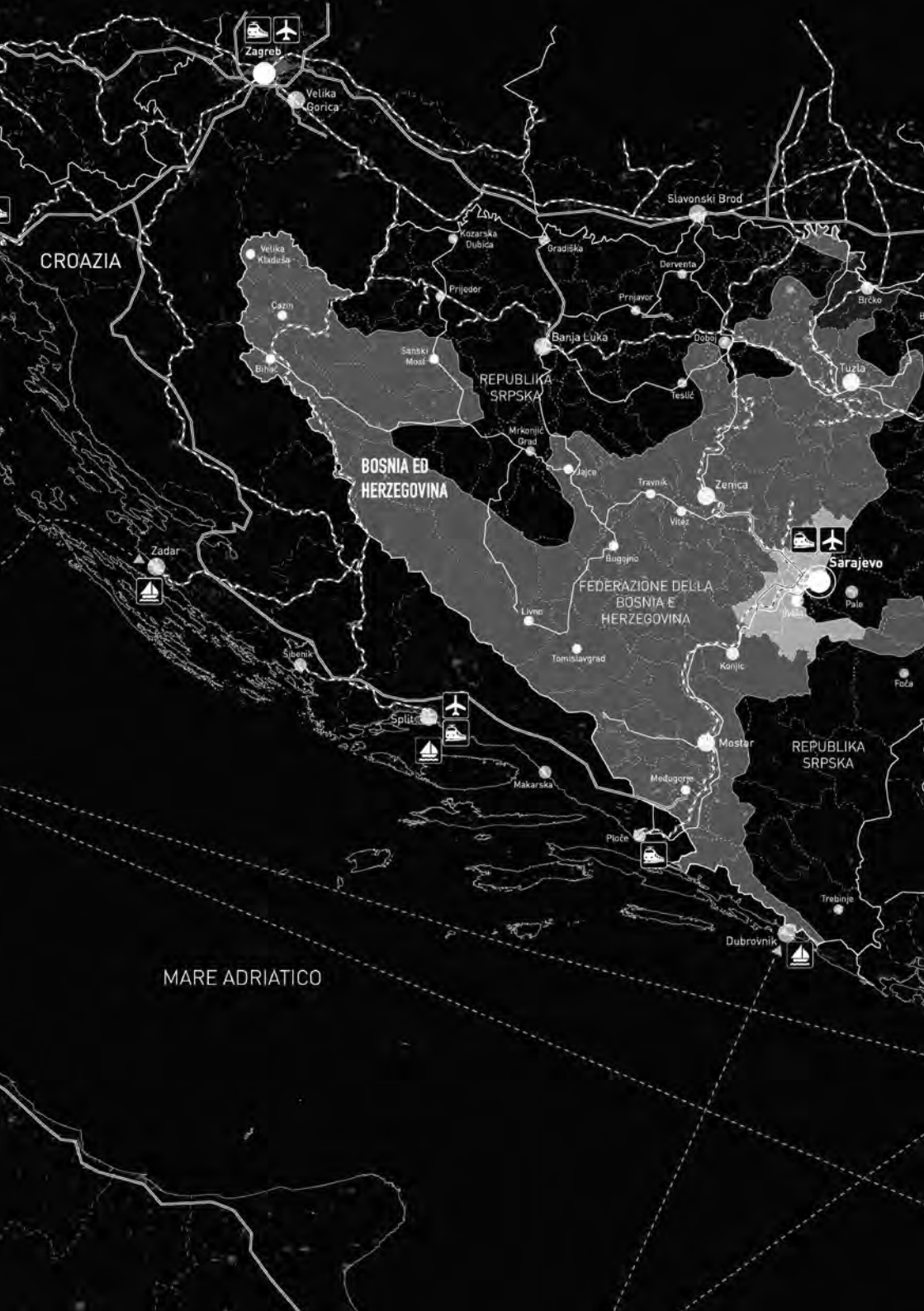
6) The city and its icons

Description cards done by students.

This last part, which sees a group of students both from the Department of Architecture of the University G. D'Annunzio and from Burch University as authors, consists of a sort of catalog composed by a series of cards presenting some of the most iconographic monuments of Sarajevo. These are buildings of different periods, each of which is a symbol of its own time. The cards are arranged in chronological order starting with a typical example of an Ottoman house, the Svrzo House, and ending with the War Childhood Museum, opened in January 2017. Architecture becomes a tool that allows us to understand the city, as well as use this last session as a small guide that leads the visitor to a vivid knowledge of Sarajevo.







CROAZIA

BOSNIA ED
HERZEGOVINA

REPUBLIKA
SRPSKA

FEDERAZIONE DELLA
BOSNIA E
HERZEGOVINA

REPUBLIKA
SRPSKA

MARE ADRIATICO



BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA



Claudia Zini

is an Italian art historian and curator, focusing her professional interests primarily on artistic positions that engage with war memories and identity in post-conflict societies such as former Yugoslavia. She has been the curator of Bosnia and Herzegovina Pavilion at the 58th Biennale Arte of Venice 2019 together with Anja Bogojević, Amila Puzić.

Lana Čmajčanin
Project Blank Maps:
Geographical Indication II
HD Video animation, Stereophonic sound.
Video still

In the spring of 2018, I spent a few days in the town of Goražde, interviewing people who had strenuously defended their city during the 1992-95 Bosnian war. In April 1993 Goražde was made into a United Nation Safe Area in which the UN was supposed to deter attacks on the civilian population. At the end of the war, it was the only city in eastern Bosnia that had not fallen into the hands of the enemy. One evening my friends and I met with one of the commanders who had defended Goražde, a blue-eyed war veteran with a gentle look, who took us to the terrace of one of the many cafes on the banks of the Drina, perhaps the most famous and beloved river in Bosnia. *"Today the Drina has the colour of the snow melting on the mountains,"* he told us. *"You have to come back during the summer when its water becomes crystal clear, and you can count the stones on the riverbed".* Our friend explained how the city had

Geometry of Time
Geometry of Space



been surrounded and then besieged and how the front line, in those four years of war, had been continuously moved through the woods and hills surrounding the city. The river Drina, he told, had always been the natural border between Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, contested since ancient times. During history, many battles had been fought to seize the river. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, borders, demarcation lines, and maps dominate the everyday life of millions of people since centuries. During the last war, many Bosnian cities were besieged, the most famous was

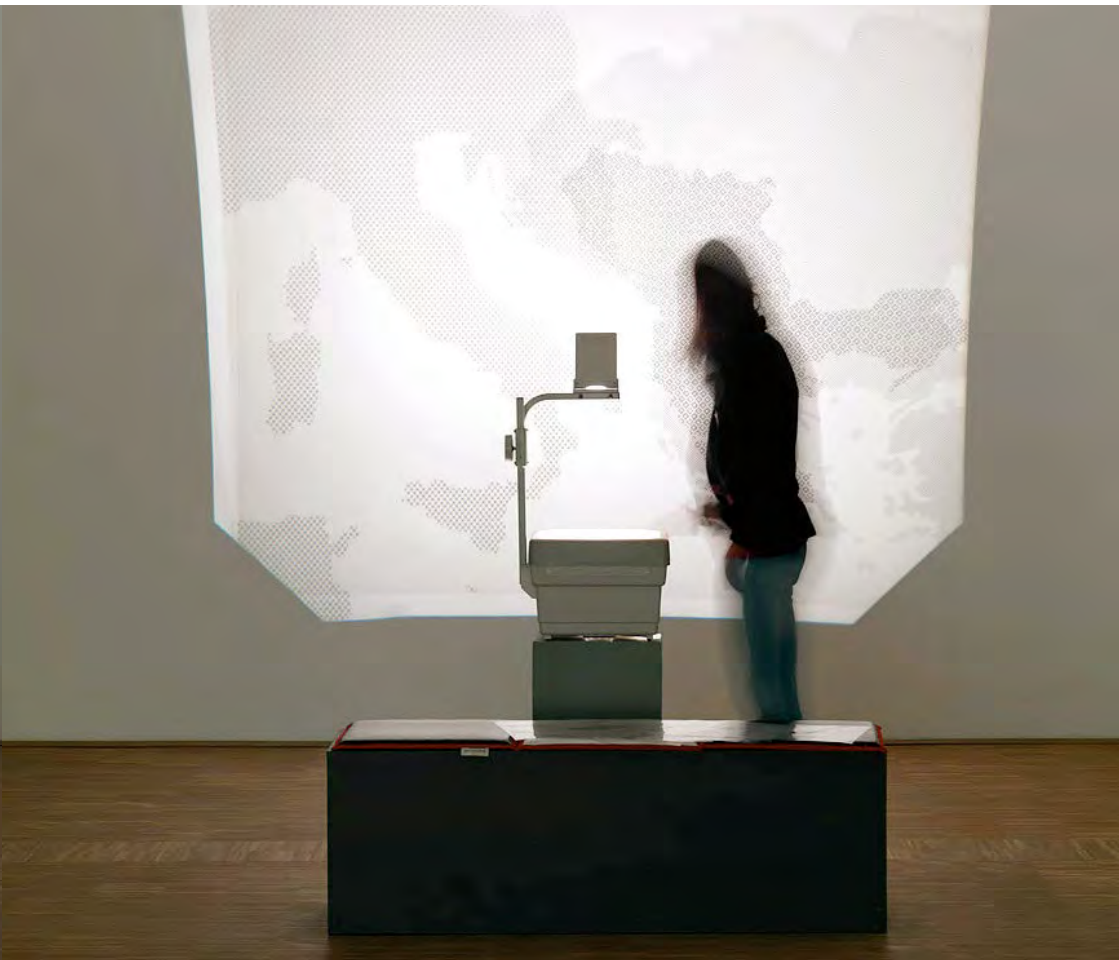
the capital Sarajevo. The new borders were arbitrarily drawn on maps, and the peace agreements signed in Dayton in 1995 left the country torn between two different entities, the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Federation, mainly Muslim and Catholic, and the Serbian Republic, with an Orthodox majority, separated by the Inter-Entity Boundary Line. This small country located at the heart of the Balkans has always been a borderland, where different empires, from the Ottomans to the Austro-Hungarians, have succeeded and left behind customs and traditions, but also legends, myths

Photo by Matevž Paternoster. © MGM/L



Lana Čmajčanin
Project Blank Maps: Blank Maps
Interactive installation
Installation view - Tobačna 001,
Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana MGML

and prejudices. After 1995, when international curators began to visit Sarajevo, artists started to gain visibility, but at the same time, old stereotypical approaches to the Balkans resurfaced. In the words of some foreign experts, the Balkan region became again a hostile land inhabited by people speaking a difficult language and cursed with violence. As Maria Todorova claimed, the Balkans were again often described as the 'other' of Europe even if, during forty years under the Austro-Hungarian empire, Sarajevo had been turned into a Western-oriented city¹. As an



art historian and curator, I have been working with artists from the region for the past ten years. I met Sarajevo artist **Lana Čmajčanin** in 2009 during an art colony promoted by the collective Tac.ka on Kozara, a Bosnian mountain bounded by four rivers, the Sava to the north, the Vrbas to the east, the Sana to the south, and the Una to the west, and famous because it was the scene of one of the most ferocious battles of the Second World War and part of the Yugoslav National Liberation War, and Partisan resistance after the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was invaded by German and Italian troops in 1941. That summer, artists had gathered to create an

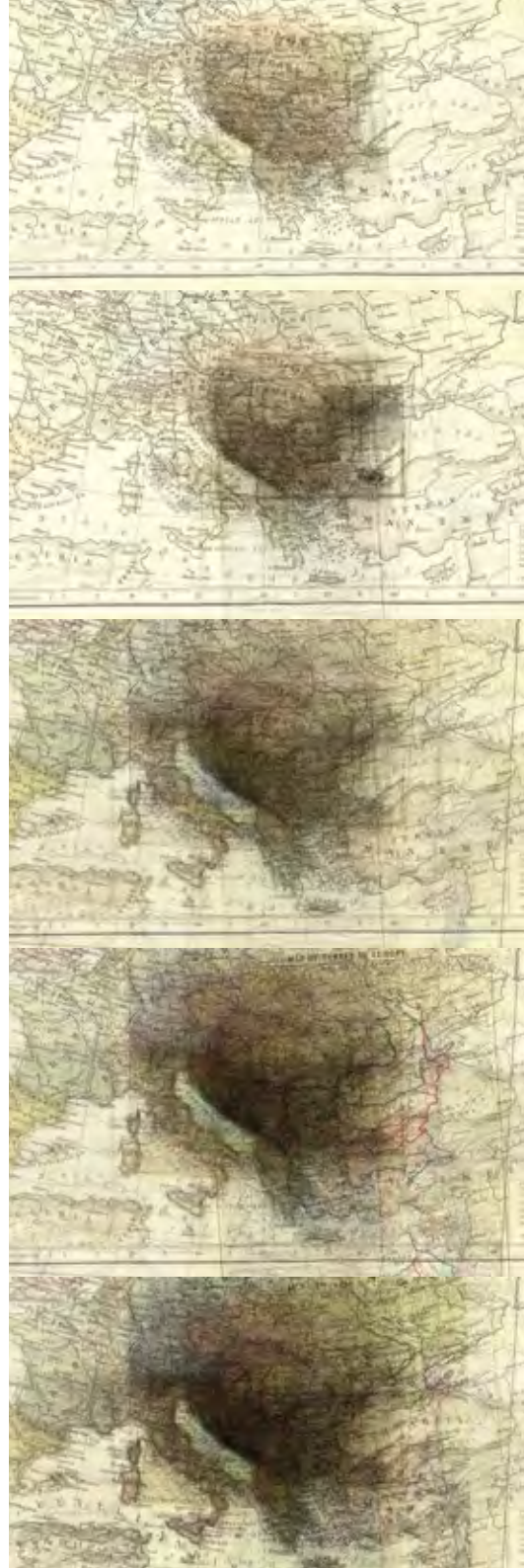
art workshop in nature. It was fascinating for me to see artists from different parts of the country - Sarajevo, Trebinje, Prijedor - united in the name of art and culture, just over ten years after the end of the war, regardless ethnicity or religion. Lana Čmajčanin refers to the cartography traditions in many of her artwork to give us the opportunity to reflect on the history of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which for centuries has been dominated by foreign powers, first the Ottoman Empire, then the Austro-Hungarian Empire, followed by the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and forty years of socialism during the Yugoslavia of Tito, but also on the fate of its citizens. In

1. Donia, J., R. (2006) *Sarajevo. A biography*, Hurst & Company: London, pp. 60.



Photo by EnginŞengün © Pera Museum

her video work **Geometry of Time** (2014) the artist uses thirty-five historical maps representing her home country and continuously overlapping to show the shifting borders since the time of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. In the video **"changed borders of Bosnia-Herzegovina, sedimented through history, can be recognize as blackened zones that make each future intervention futile, whereas they make the reflection on the country's territorial integrity almost impossible"**, and the artist also denounces the fact that the Bosnian history was always written without consulting



This page: Lana Čmajčanin
Project Blank Maps: Geometry of Time
HD Video animation, Stereophonic sound
Video stills
Opposite page: Lana Čmajčanin
Project Blank Maps: 551.35 –
Geometry of time
Installation View - Pera Museum, Istanbul

the country and its inhabitants. In **Geographical Indication** (2016) the artist sacrifices her own body which becomes the land where borders, lines and points are marked, literally drawn on her skin, by foreign politics. She indeed experiences first-hand the consequences brought about by the international geopolitical scenario when Bosnia gained independence in 1992, for the first time since the Kingdom of Bosnia fell in 1463. Despite the European Union and the United States recognized the new-born country as independent and it was also admitted into the United Nations, a bloody war exploded and forced more than half of its inhabitants to emigrate abroad. The

Below left: Lana Čmajčanin
 Project Blank Maps: Geographical Indication
 Lambda digital print on Kodak Endura
 paper mounted behind Plexiglass
 Installation view at
 Kunstraum Niederoesterreich, Vienna.
Below right: Lana Čmajčanin
 Project Blank Maps: Modular Geography
 Installation View - SIZ Gallery, Rijeka
 Photo by Elvis Krstulović.



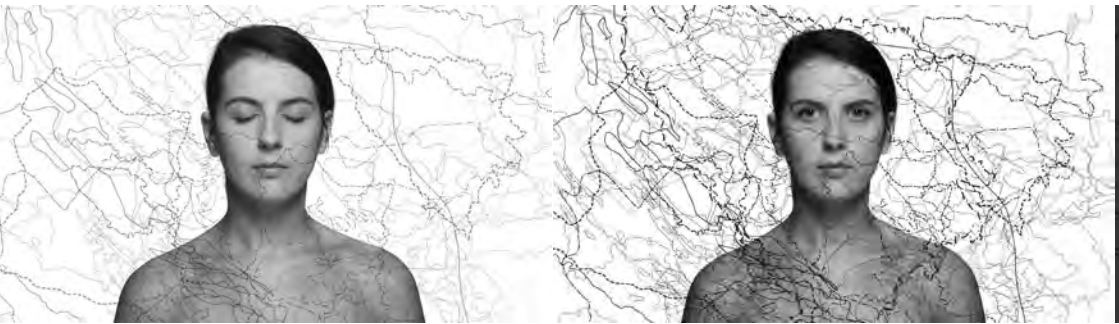
Photo by Lorenz Seidler © eSeL.at



Photo by Elvis Krstulović

“The work Geographical Indication problematizes and illuminates omnipresent structural and bureaucratic violence based on pre-existing ethnic, racial, national stereotypes and identity categories. Borders as a thread of identification are imprinted on the skin like permanent inscriptions of geopolitics onto the bodies elucidating a historical flow of power over life and death. The boundary system creates a variety of types of economic and social barriers; stoking the generalization and simplification that have led to the creation of stereotypes and establishes the image, narrative, and the notion of otherness. It is the system of oppression imposed by the political, nationalistic, and ethnoreligious power structures.”

Bosnian diaspora is not over yet, and today thousands of young people leave the country to look for work in Europe. Lana Čmajčanin has left Sarajevo to develop her artistic career in Vienna, the old capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, where she has been fighting against bureaucracy and felt racism and prejudice on her own skin. Fascism is, unfortunately, resurrecting in Europe these days, demonstrating how boundaries and lines of demarcation have still an impact in defining our identity and shaping the world around us, and Lana's works force us to look at the contrasting images of her country which is urgently holding up a mirror to Europe, to its present and to its future.



Lana Čmajčanin
Project Blank Maps: Geographical Indication II
HD Video animation, Stereophonic sound
Video stills







CITY and
ARCHITECTURE

Kanita-Ita Fočak

was born in Split, Croatia, is an architect and a scholar of the urban development of Sarajevo. In 2016 she was nominated Cavaliere della Repubblica by the Italian government for her cultural mediation during the Althea peace mission.

Map of Sarajevo, 1918. Courtesy of Sarajevo Historical Archives

The view from the Yellow Fortress, one of the medieval fortifications that made up the defensive wall of the old town, gives an immediate impression of the kaleidoscopic character of Sarajevo, which is built lengthwise along a large valley delimited by tall mountains. The minarets of mosques rise up alongside the belfries of churches, and in their midst we see synagogues and the cupola of the Serbian Orthodox cathedral. All around on the hills, the unrestrained expansion of a myriad of small houses with pitched roofs contrasts with a more contemporary skyline made up of modern skyscrapers and numerous shopping malls. Sarajevo is an extraordinary city for being multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multicentric. There are so many terms with the prefix multi I could use to describe it that I'll define it a "multiple city". The multiple essence of Sarajevo in the heart of the Balkans is due largely to its strategic



SARAJEVO

Naklada J. Studničke i dr. Sarajevo

Gradska četvrti

Zeljeznica

Sarajevo

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position, which has made it a place of transit, encounter and clashes. The city was occupied by the Ottoman Empire and the Habsburg Empire. It was attacked during World War I, which was instigated precisely here when Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated, and again during World War II. From 1992 to 1995, Sarajevo was ravaged development here. A few hundred metres further, the city's appearance suddenly changes. The minute Oriental-looking houses make way for the majestic European architecture of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Habsburg family wished to transform Sarajevo into a

copy of their beloved capital, adapting designs that had been studied for Vienna, to the extent that some streets give the distinct impression of being in the Austrian capital. A succession of styles follows. Amid the Habsburgian facades are inserts of modernism such as the building by Reuf Kadić on the corner of Ferhadija (the continuation of Saracaj) and Čemaluša. Kadić and his brother Muhamed also designed one of Sarajevo's most intriguing residential complexes, the Džidžikovac, built in the late 1940s when a generation of European-educated architects returned to the city bearing the influence of the



great European masters of modernism. I have been living in a small apartment in the Džidžikovac for a few years now. It is a mere 24 square metres in size, but the large windows break the boundary between indoors and out, multiplying the perception of space. I love this district, where large green areas separate one housing complex from the next, offering privacy for every by the horrible Bosnian War against Bosnian culture and identity. This tumultuous and troubled past has been chequered by falls and destruction, recovery and reconstruction. Expanses of white obelisks, the Muslim gravestones, speckle the

Opposite page: the main piazza of the Baščaršija district, packed with small, specialised shops. In the foreground stands the Sebilj fountain.

This page: the buildings along the River Miljacka date back to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, when the main inspiration was Vienna.





Above: the courtyard of The Gazi Husrev-beg Mosque built in the center of Baščaršija during the Ottoman Empire.

Below: the twist tower built in the 2008 from Bosnian News Company Avaz in the vicinity of Sarajevo railway Station.

Further down: a view of Marjin Dvor that is composed from four buildings. From the left to the right: Alta shopping Mall, the Twin towers, Saint Joseph Church and a residential building from Austro-Hungarian period.



landscape in the hills. Pockmarks from grenades still disfigure the facades of the buildings, and mortar shells have left craters in the asphalt, now patched with red resin and called “Sarajevo roses” as the symbol of an indelible past. But the most interesting aspect of the city resides in its will to bounce back from the trauma, its tendency to rebirth. Sarajevo today is a lively, ever-busy city marked by suffering yet expressing *joie de vivre*. A short itinerary cannot but depart from the **Baščaršija**, the old and fascinating Ottoman district, a treasure chest like a trip back in time. The urban layout is still original, a compact agglomeration of labyrinthine streets lined with small, specialised shops selling handmade wares. The feeling is reminiscent of typically Turkish settings. Walking down Sarači, part of the main pedestrian axis of the city, you pass the 16th-century mosque of Gazi Husrev-Beg, the Ottoman warrior who once ruled Sarajevo, a great promoter of urban apartment. Communal terraces allow inhabitants to enjoy panoramic views of the city, including clear sight of the **Marijin Dvor district**, where most modern and contemporary construction is concentrated, such as the **twin World Trade Towers**, the former **Parliament** and the **Avaz Twist Tower** (2006-08). This is Sarajevo: a city whose uniqueness does not reside in single parts or special elements, but in their relation to one another. So it is no surprise that despite six existing bridges over the River Miljacka, a new one was inaugurated in 2012 called **Festina Lente** (Latin for “make haste slowly”). It is a pedestrian bridge with an unusual upward looping in the

middle of the ribbon-like trajectory. It connects two entirely different banks: on one side lies an important place of culture, the Academy of Fine Arts with its impressive facade; on the other lies a shabby tenement. The concept for the bridge, created by three students of the Academy of Fine Arts, aspires to be at once an element of connection and a meeting place. A bench in the middle allows walkers to rest above the river. I think this project is a good synthesis of Sarajevo’s character: a city that connects and favours encounters.

The Festina Lente footbridge designed by students from the neighbouring Academy of Fine Arts is the winning entry of a competition held in 2007



Stefania Grusso

Stefania Grusso is an architect and research fellow at Dipartimento di Architettura, Pescara. She has been engaged in research into the Adriatic-Balkan macro-region for some years, exploring themes linking cities, architecture and culture.

In an era that pays little attention to difficult histories and minor cities, Sarajevo, capital of the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina, has been cast by the wayside. Sarajevo or Сарајево in Cyrillic, is both geographically and culturally a city in the middle. This condition has made it a space of encounters and clashes and home to different cultures, ideologies and religions. It is a place of wars and destruction, but also of reconstructions and reactions to countless events that, over time, have tested the mettle of the very soul, identity and physical space of the city. Despite everything, Sarajevo is now one of the of the most beautiful examples of a city in transition and a resilient city. A unique city. It is not what one would expect. Hospitality and tolerance have allowed for a circulation of ideas and people that have earned it the moniker of the "centre of the world". A place where East meets West, where the market economy



**The City:
Contaminations
Identities
Contradictions**



meets communism, where Islamic culture mixes with Orthodox and Catholic culture, where modern towers and minarets stand against the same sky. This innate propensity toward pluralism – in this case the acceptance of diversity – has allowed the city to enjoy an unparalleled cultural wealth and to assert an identity that is the fruit of so many contaminations: **an identity defined by multiplicity**. The theme of identity has always been delicate and widely discussed when speaking about Sarajevo, or more in general the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1993, during the 55th Art Biennale in Venice, the Bosnian artist Mladen Miljanović explored this theme in a video clip-titled *"Sweet Harmony of the Absurd"*. The piece was created in collaboration with members of the Banja Luka Philharmonic, and each maestro was invited to perform simultaneously his or her preferred song, without any coordination with the others. The melodies were different, however, they generated a sweet absurd harmony that expressed the heterogeneity and dynamism of the Country Sarajevo represents. These diverse contaminations also explain the layering of the city. We are accustomed to cities whose memory is stored in its layers, each with its own historic-morphological identity. Over time they have overlapped one another, almost becoming confused or dissolving entirely from view. In Sarajevo, these layers have been organised over the centuries, one beside the other, without mixing and thus without overpowering and

cancelling previous periods in history. The result is a sort of visual narrative of past and present. Each layer is a physical trace, a distinct image. Each layer mirrors a different way of creating and inhabiting the city that has evolved over centuries. The contemporary panorama is in fact defined by an incredible progression of urban spaces, each with its own colours, scents and materials. Walking through Sarajevo is a unique experience that offers the impression of crossing not one, but many cities. History unfolds before our eyes in its architecture and symbols. Studying a map of the current city, it is easy to

Urban contamination

Below: the ruins of an old caravansera within the gardens of the contemporary Hotel Europe.

Opposite page left: top, buildings along the Miljacka River in Marijin Dvor where traditional houses are dominated by the contemporary architecture of the Parliament and the shopping center below, view of River Miljacka where is visible the contaposition of the contraposition of the contemporary Festina Lente footbridge and the austro-hungarian urban block.

Opposite page right: a view of the city from the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina. in wich is visible the historical urban layering.



1. www.balcanicaucaso.org/aree/Bosnia-Erzegovina/Il-giardino-bosniaco-delle-delizie-136551



identify this sequence of urban spaces and comprehend how demographic, social and political events have affected the capital. Beginning in the eastern-most part, and moving west, we can distinguish the passage from the ancient Ottoman centre, comprised of small shops, to the Austro-Hungarian constructions, progressively substituted by the squarish geometries of post-war blocks and ending with shopping centres, tall towers and reflections of current trends. The Ottomans founded the city in the mid-fifteenth century. They named it Sarajevo, a Slavic con-



was more than a centre of trade and labour; it became the cultural and social fulcrum of the city. The university was founded, followed by a library, schools and a series of public projects such as fountains, public baths and a soup kitchen. In addition, the government built mosques, convents, a synagogue and the clock tower. Sarajevo already began to earn a position as one of the more important cities in Eastern Europe for craftsmanship, arts and culture. The



traction of the Turkish words 'Saray', court, and 'ovasi', field. The city was home at the time to some 25,000 people and already showed the signs of a cosmopolitan settlement. The first nucleus to be founded was the Baščaršija, derived from 'bas', a Turkish word that literally means 'head' or 'principal', and čaršija', Turkish for 'market'; this Turkish-styled centre of trade soon confirmed its role as a hub of traffic moving east and west from Istanbul, and southward. Under the government of Gazi Husrev-Beg, a crucial figure in the history of Sarajevo, the Baščaršija



Ottoman city structure remained intact over time and to this day consists of a labyrinth of narrow streets dedicated to different trades, such as the street of goldsmiths, tinsmiths or copper smiths. The neighbourhood survives as the place where Sarajevo expresses the fullness of its identity and history, as well as its ability to adapt to modernity without self-destructing. The period of Ottoman rule introduced the division between the Čaršija and the Mahalas, respectively the commercial and residential parts of the city. The word Mahala derives from the Turkish 'mahalle', to welcome, though it is used in Balkan terminology to refer to a neighbourhood. The Mahalas are traditional Ottoman districts constructed in Sarajevo following the topography of the hilly terrain, with narrow streets and a system of public spaces dimensioned at the human scale. The Mahalas are the symbol of the tolerance described

by the Bosnian author and philosopher Dževad Karahasan:

“Moving away from the Čaršija, all of the sarajlijerecoil from human universality and return to their own cultures. Each mahala lives the closed existence of the culture that statistically prevails within it. Thus, for example, Bjelave is a markedly Jewish mahala where, as a consequence, daily life is completely tied to the specificity of Jewish culture. To the same degree life in Latinluk conforms to Catholicism, while in Vratnik we approach Islamic cultures and in Taslihan Orthodox cultures”.

Sarajevo continued to exist in this form until 1878, the year the Austro-Hungarian Empire arrived, bringing the influence of a more European style. Under the Hapsburg family, the population of Sarajevo doubled to approximately 50,000 inhabitants. The city grew significantly and expanded westward. The new government introduced



Opposite page: top, the main public space of the Baščaršija district, packed with small, specialised shops, centre, one of the most famous street of the Baščaršija Zlatarska known as Goldsmith's St. because of the presence of the numerous goldsmiths.

Below: in the Baščaršija, the street with copper and tin merchants is one of the streets dedicated entirely to ancient crafts that have remained intact.

This page: view of the city from the Mahala area.

extensive urban planning works that completely changed how the city was designed and inhabited. The urban fabric was organised by a grid of large courtyards with ground floor spaces



dedicated to commercial activities, with flats on upper levels. The intentions were to update the city to European standards. A “new centre” inspired by Vienna rose up alongside the Ottoman čaršija. The banks of the Miljacka were soon fronted by a series of monumental structures, inspired by the style of the Secession, examples of which include the Main Post Office and the Palace of Justice. The construction of new public buildings was used by the Empire to demonstrate and affirm its dominion. In the field of architecture, the neo-gothic and neo-renaissance styles were contaminated by local stylistic trends, to create what became known as the Moorish Style. The most beautiful example is certainly the National and University Library, now the Town Hall, or Vijećnica. The building dominates

the banks of the Miljacka and stands above the lower constructions of the Baščaršija with its picturesque striped façade. The Library was soon accompanied by other cultural buildings, such as the National Theatre and the National Gallery of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Hapsburg period also introduced a series of productive facilities: factories, tobacco farms, breweries, hydroelectric and thermo-electric power plants. Sarajevo received its first tram in 1885, before many other European cities. Between the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, a movement of architects and engineers introduced a new, eclectic style: the bosanski slog, the Bosnian Style. This style was born of a reaction to the impositions made by the Austro-Hungarians to build in the European style in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The **bosanski slog** was a fusion of the modern style and Bosnian vernacular architecture. The Austro-Hungarians ruled Sarajevo for approximately



40 years, until the event that shook the foundations of Europe. In June of 1914 an assassin took the life of the young heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Franz Ferdinand. He was killed together with his wife Sofia during a visit to Sarajevo. Their killing set in motion the monstrous mechanism that triggered the First World War. From this moment onward, Sarajevo would face the violence of two world wars. Little was built between the two wars. Soon after the Second World War, the city was free though destroyed and impoverished. It was forced to confront the problem of reconstruction together with an economic and social crisis. There was a preference for simple and utilitarian architecture, using economic materials. In some cases the ruins produced by the war were recycled as building materials, often a source of structural problems in new constructions. Construction began in new districts and the architectural panorama was enriched by inter-

esting new projects, expressly inspired by Bauhaus principles of functionalism and rationalism. All of this was possible thanks to the return to Sarajevo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina in general, of a group of architects educated in the most important European schools of architecture, including Vienna, Prague or Paris. Thanks to this group, and their desire to bring innovation to their homeland, the influence of the great masters of the European Modern Movement spread to Sarajevo. The city opened a faculty of architecture, and the number of architects grew. This was also the beginning of a season of architectural competitions. In 1950 Juraj Niedhardt, who had worked in the offices of Peter Behrens and Le Corbusier, won the competition to plan the Marijn Dvor and design the Parliament Tower. A competition also led to the construction of the Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, now the Museum of the Revolution: a large box resting on

Opposite page and this page: The Austro-Hungarian Sarajevo. During the Austro-Hungarian rule the principal inspiration for Sarajevo's physical transformation was Vienna. In Sarajevo the Viennese trends were copied on a more modest scale and applied to hundreds of buildings.



an almost entirely glazed base, which appears to float atop a white stone podium. This museum, with its typically Miesian structure, is today one of the city's most important icons. Beginning in the early 1960s, when Bosnia and Herzegovina became the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Sarajevo experienced an exponential growth and an economic and demographic boom that exceeded the availability of housing. The hills around the city, from one side of the river to the other, were covered with a relentless expansion of unauthorised constructions. Sarajevo is currently home to some 30,000 illegal constructions. To remedy this growth of the informal city, a typical urban reaction in times of crisis, peripheral areas were occupied by newly built districts, such as Ciglane and Alipascino. These "residential colonies" were organised by a geometric order defined by large streets and open spaces. Built to house the masses of the working class, these districts are the expression of the gigantism of the Socialist period, which proposed a system of blocks and super-blocks disseminated across open territories. Architects such as Juraj Niedhardt or the Kadić brothers, refused the diktats of the Socialist regime and designed a number of buildings marked by the unmistakable style of the Modern Movement. One of the most beautiful examples is undoubtedly that in the Džidžikovac neighbourhood, by the Kadić brothers, whose design follows the natural slope of the hillside. The regime also brought an important impulse to the construction of spaces of shopping and culture. Examples include the Skenderija Culture and Sport

Centre, a structure whose composition is a clear reference to the work of Le Corbusier, the College of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, whose domes harken back to Ottoman architecture, and the RTV Building, home to the radio and television of Bosnia and Herzegovina, an imposing and typically functionalist building with a preponderant use of concrete. A number of religious buildings were converted into cultural facilities, including The Academy of Fine Arts, which occupies the spaces of the former Evangelical Church. The moment of maximum growth came in the early 1980s as the city prepared to host the 1984 Winter Olympic Games, a grand event that drew attention not only to Sarajevo, but was also used to re-launch a new image for the country. New structures were built



in the city, such as the Olympic Complex Zetra, however, it was above all the mountains around Sarajevo that hosted new services and facilities for the Olympics. While the 1980s were a flourishing period, the city soon fell victim to an atrocious war. Beginning in 1992 the Bosnian capital would suffer the longest and most ferocious siege in the history of the twentieth century. Sarajevo burned for 1,325 days, until 1995. The conflict spared no one and nothing and viciously attacked the most important public buildings and cultural spaces. The true intent of this war was to destroy the very identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Snipers took up positions in the mountains and relentlessly bombarded homes soon lost their windows. Despite everything, the city continued to live; schools remained

open, theatres organised events and performances, there were exhibitions and concerts and cinemas continued to operate. Sarajevo responded to the violence of war with “cultural resistance”. As the city was bombed, Enver Hadžiomerspahić developed the “ARS AEVI” project with the intention of creating a museum of contemporary art that would push away the image of Sarajevo as a city of war, to re-launch it as a city of contemporary art.

Sarajevo resisted the latest in a string of wars and got back on his feet. The post-conflict years were marked by a strong desire for normalcy, typical of dramatic events. Today Sarajevo is a city that continues to exist in tension between past and present, between memory and the desire to rebuild a new identity. It is a city in transition

Opposite page: Alipašino settlement, composed by standardized building blocks, built during 1974– 1979. The complex responds to functional and brutalist styles of residential architecture.

Below: Ciglane Neighborhood, a residential complex formed of multifamily attached dwelling units built during 1978-1989. It is composed by standardized building blocks, characterized by facades made of red color bricks and terraces. The entire neighborhood was designed and constructed during Socialistic Period.



and for this reason a fragile city. This is what led Sarajevo, at a time in history dominated by globalisation, to give in to the temptation of resembling other cities, and to begin a series of urban transformations that are the fruit of foreign pressures that end up dominating the city and pushing it toward the principles of standardisation. Recent urban developments are the result of the overwhelming pressures of urban profit that have lined the Sarajevo's principal arteries with a string of shopping centres and flashy architecture in strident contrast with the rest of the city. Masked by the intention to promote a new identity and create a new centrality, they conceal the final aim of obtaining maximum profit through the spectacularisation of architecture and the global market. These shopping centres are flanked by towers. The most recent is the Avaz Twist Tower, completed in 2006. This 142-metre high tower rises up not far from the twin towers, constructed by Ivan Straus in 1986. It is surprising to observe how quickly spaces can be transformed by the attempt to reclaim the city's pride and reaffirm its identity. However, Sarajevo had no need for these constructions to relaunch its image in the global era. Sarajevo must not give in to the compromises of the hyper-generic city because it has so much else in which to invest. Sarajevo is a dual city, as fragile as it is resistant. The resistant part of Sarajevo is that which does not seek the elements it needs to stand tall elsewhere, but finds them in itself, in its multifaceted culture and in the sense of community that have always constituted the city's strength. These are the elements



Above: the interior space of the Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Below: the interior space of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

of its rebirth over the past centuries. The only mechanism to be stimulated to help re-launch the city is that focused on culture, a new urban vision able to link cultural systems, large projects and small initiatives. The hard system of this new vision undoubtedly consists of a CULTURAL TRIAD, a trio of strategic cultural nodes linked together to present a synthetic vision of the history of Sarajevo: The Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina: the oldest cultural and scientific institution in the country, conceived by the Ottomans and built during the period of Austro-Hungarian reign. The Historical Museum: a symbol of the Socialist period in Bosnia and Herzegovina. New Ars Aevi: the new Ars Aevi Museum, designed by Renzo Piano, destined to become the symbol of a new and more global identity for the city. This triad is linked, by the river, to the polycentric system of museums and art galleries partially structured by the Ottoman and Hapsburgian nuclei of the city. The War Childhood Museum, an independent museum opened in 2017 in the city centre, is dedicated to the trauma suffered by those who grew up during the terrible years of the conflict of the 1990s. It represents a continuation of the project to narrate the history of the city through its museums. Over the past ten years, Sarajevo has played a leading role in numerous cultural events. Each year, since 2007, at the end of August, the city plays host to the Festival of Cinema, the largest event of its kind in the Balkans, which attracts some 100,000 spectators. Since 2008 the city also hosts the "Days of Architecture", an annual festival alternating lectures, exhibitions and events linked

to architecture and design. Since 2014 Sarajevo is also home to the Warm Festival, promoted by the Warm Foundation, which works with themes of conflict in the contemporary world. Its events bring together journalists, artists, historians, researchers and activists to speak about war through their experience. At a time when culture and creativity as tools of renewal have become a must, and when the ambition to become a cultural and creative city has become a syndrome, it is possible to state that Sarajevo, contrary to other cities that unjustly lay claim to this title, finds its true nature in Charles Landry's definition of the city of creativity:

"The city of creativity has different qualities. It goes with and against the branded experience. It subverts the readily accepted. It tests convention. It seeks to be its own author of experience ... the city of creativity wants to shape its own spaces. It relaxes into ambiguity, uncertainty and unpredictability. It is ready to adapt. ... The more creative city also attends to the quintessentially ordinary (though increasingly extraordinary): affordable housing ... The creative city needs the spark of the alternative; the sense of place, of non-branded space..."

This is Sarajevo, a city that subverts what is blindly accepted elsewhere, that writes its own destiny. A phoenix-like city that reacted to and benefited from the possibilities offered by change to invest in the new, without suffocating tradition. A city that has always found the strength in being different and which continues to invest in this strength.

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After 450 years of Ottoman domination and a period of administration under the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1878 – 1918), the city of Sarajevo approached the twentieth century with the spirit of a modern city and a progressive society aligned with western Mitteleuropean culture. Its Ottoman past remained evident in the structure of the ancient city, comprised of the *Baščaršija* (commercial city) and the hillside *Mahala* (residential city); at the same, at the dawn of the twentieth century Sarajevo was one of the Balkan cities demonstrating the greatest influence of a western culture, with its elegant fin de siècle architecture lining Ferhadija Street and

¹This article is the result of many visits done to Sarajevo with faculty and students of the Dipartimento di Architettura – Università G. d’Annunzio Pescara and the encounter with numerous persons that presented to me the city and its architecture, including Ita Fočak, Lejla Odobasić, Vedad Islambegović and ElšaTurkušić. A portion of this essay has already been published in “Modernità dei Balcani - da Le Corbusier a Tito” (Lettera Ventidue 2019).



**Architecture and
the City
1930-1960¹**



public institutions of the Miljčka River. The city's Austro-Hungarian interventions were directed primarily toward the design of open spaces and public buildings (museums, theatres, churches, synagogues, ministries and other government buildings)², with residences for wealthy Austrian families at the feet of the hills between Džidžikovac and Koševo. The First World War ended with the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, soon to become the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Bosnia was divided into four provinces (Banovinas) and Sarajevo named the capital of the Drina Banovina. Independence had arrived after centuries of foreign occupation.

Early Modernism 1930-1940

The 1930s marked the beginnings of a period of cultural ferment in Sarajevo and the first steps toward modern architecture, with a series of small building projects, for the most part inside the existing city.

Similar to other cities in Yugoslavia, in Sarajevo eclectic and neo-renaissance influences or, in particular, the neo-Moorish influences of the

Vijecnića, were replaced by the work of architects who, having studied abroad, introduced an early phase of modernisation. Two of the leading architects from this period were the Kadić brothers. Hailing from an Ottoman family living in Sarajevo and educated in Prague, they can be considered the principal promoters of modern architecture in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Photographs depicting Rauf Kadić³ in Sarajevo in the late 1920s show us a figure clearly inspired by western society. Rauf Kadić soon began working within the Vakuf⁴ structure. Of approximately 60 projects completed across Bosnia between 1926 and 1934, the majority in Sarajevo, three are of particular importance: the first, a small building from 1939 on the slopes of the Bistrik quarter, with large strip windows and corner loggias reminiscent of European experiences and, in particular, the work of Gropius. The other two buildings, for offices and flats (Vakuf Hovadza Kemaludin), are located very close to one another along Sarajevo's main Ferhadija Street; one is a corner building, completed in 1939, with a slightly projecting volume along the

Rauf Kadić during the Twenties



2. Public buildings include the Palace of the Regional Government, the Town Hall (Vijecnića), the Post Office, the National Theatre, the Evangelical Church (now the Fine Arts Academy), the Palace of Justice and the National Museum – these last four built by the Viennese architect Karl Parzik – together with a series of churches, synagogues and other public and government buildings.

3. E. Kadić: *Rauf Kadić, and the beginning of modern architecture in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Bemust, Sarajevo, 2010.

4. The Vakuf, which also means church, is the Islamic system by which different benefactors construct buildings or other works for the benefit the community.

street front that recalls the volumes of traditional Bosnian homes. A manifest modernism is denounced by simple surfaces, strip windows and a green ceramic tile cladding that separates it from its decorated fin de siècle neighbours. Modernity is further expressed in large corner windows that dematerialise its position and introduce a lightness hitherto unknown to the city. The other is a larger project on an adjacent lot for a linear four storey office block and a twelve storey residential tower. The building plays a very important role along Ferhadija Street for its position at the point where the road bends slightly, placing the tower on axis with the visual cone of the street where it provides a very effective modern perspectival backdrop. The project was begun in 1939 and in all likelihood can be considered Reuf Kadić's most important work in Sarajevo from this period. Unfortunately, construction was interrupted by the war and the work completed afterward did not respect the original design. This is true above all of the tower, lowered and significantly modified by the addition of a series of projecting balconies that negate the verticality of what was originally a very simple stereometric form. Perhaps Reuf Kadić's most familiar building is that designed for the Pension Fund (1941-42 – Hamze Hume 2), positioned along the main axis of the city's modern development, now Marshal Tito Boulevard, near the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina designed by Josip Vancašin in 1881. Kadić's design confirms the characteristics of his previous works: corner solutions with curved and glazed loggias, a continuous



Reuf Kadić, Building in Bistrik (1939)



Reuf Kadić, Buildings on Ferhadija Street (1939-1946)



Reuf Kadić, Pension Fund Building (1941-42)

horizontal band at the lower level and an articulated upper volume with large strip windows, projecting planes and ceramic tile cladding. While the other buildings along Ferhadija Street exist in an urban setting, with only the main façade visible, the Pension Fund building is visible in three dimensions as a volume that reflects the complexity of its position within the city and it still represent an important visual role within the city. The Kadić brothers were accompanied by other architects whose work confirms the interest in early modernism in Sarajevo during the Thirties.

Helen Baldesar, who graduated in Prague in 1921 and worked between Sarajevo and Split, was awarded the competition to design the Red Cross headquarters (Kranjceviceva 2) close to Kadić's Pension Fund building, which was heavily damaged during the siege of Sarajevo; the architect **Milan Zloković**, author of one of the first modernist projects with his own home in Belgrade, built the Central Headquarters of the Bank of Bosnia and Herzegovina (originally home to the Mortgage Bank - Maršala Tito 23), a more austere building that tends toward a more classical modernism, though still far from the eclecticism of this period.

Also worthy of mention is another building by Reuf Kadić that, while differing from the others described, displays a clear relation to the Ottoman residential architecture of such interest to Charles-Édouard Jeanneret (the future Le Corbusier) during his Voyage d'Orient in 1911, the Kopčić House (1939) on Basagić Street. It is an architecture



of simple means based on a reinterpretation of the traditional Bosnian home and evidence of just how important traditional architect was to Kadić's work. The house is a simple volume with a "free" volume on the first floor in white plaster featuring large horizontal windows and projecting over the street, raised on pilotis and separated from the street by a wall finished in local stone. The house is a true example of a different way of imagining modernism; a "cultured" position from which the reinterpretation of the vernacular and the re-use of local architectural elements became one of the founding principles of modern architecture in Sarajevo.

This cultural thread also includes two other important figures in Sarajevo, Dušan Grabrijan and Juraj Neidhardt, both of whom moved to the city in the 1930s after studying and working abroad. Grabrijan had studied with Jože Plečnik in Ljubljana and lived for a short period of time in Paris. He moved

Opposite page: Reuf Kadić, Kopčić house (1939).

This page: Juraj Neidhardt, Sky Chalet in Trebević (1947).



to Sarajevo in 1930, where he began teaching at the State Technical Institute, gaining notoriety as a theoretician and scholar of vernacular architecture and traditional Bosnian homes. Grabrijan convinced his friend and architect Juraj Neidhardt, a pupil of Behrens who had spent four years with Le Corbusier in Rue des Sevres, to move to Sarajevo in 1939, the year of the construction of Kopčić House.

A sort of continuation of the experience of the Kopčić House, is represented by one of Neidhardt's earliest post-war works: a sky chalet at Trebević, just above Sarajevo, completed in 1947 and later destroyed by fire. Similar to Kadić's project, Neidhardt's displays a synthesis between local traditions and a purist conception of architecture, imagined in continuity with nature. Both created a home that "floats" on a void, set above simple elements belonging to the external landscape: natural for Neidhardt and urban for Kadić. The

house at Trebević featured a very simple structural system with a wood frame and pilotis, a stone ground floor and a low and horizontal upper volume with wood clad walls, all clear references to traditional Bosnian constructions. At the same time, it simultaneously confirmed the horizontal and simple forms and structural lightness of the modernist approach.

The Post-War Period 1945-1960

The history of post-war urbanism in Sarajevo is linked primarily to expansion outside the bounds of nineteenth century and Austro-Hungarian city, into an area known as Marijin Dvor. It is also linked to the same figures just described: Reuf Kadić, and above all Dušan Grabrijan and Juraj Neidhardt. Their analyses and interpretations of the city were collected in the book *Architecture of Bosnia and the Way To Modernity*, published in 1957 and featuring a preface by none other than Le Corbusier. In this one of



This page

Above: D. Grabrijan and Juraj Neidhardt, urban gate towards the Baščaršija

On the right side above: Grabrijan and Juraj Neidhardt, Plan of the Baščaršija with all functions

On the right side below: Elements of Tradition. From D. Grabrijan and Juraj Neidhardt, "Architecture of Bosnia and the Way Towards Modernity"



Opposite page

Above: Juraj Neidhardt, urban proposal for Marijin Dvor.

Below: Juraj Neidhardt. Sketch and Model of the competition for the People's Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Juraj Neidhardt. Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



a kind publication, now practically impossible to find, the authors present an attentive interpretative analysis of the historic city of Sarajevo based on a study of Ottoman architectural traditions and the Bosnian oriental house. The book analyses the public part of the city, the Baščaršija, by studying its compact urban fabric, surveying and drawing its large monumental and religious complexes and exploring the diversity of typology and uses.

For the residential city, the Malhala, constructed on the hills ringing the city, Grabrijan and Neidhardt studied the

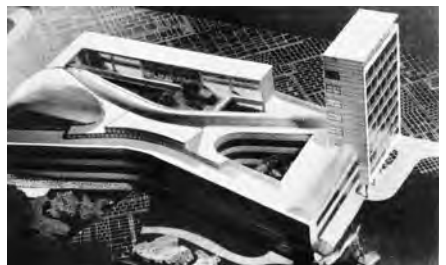
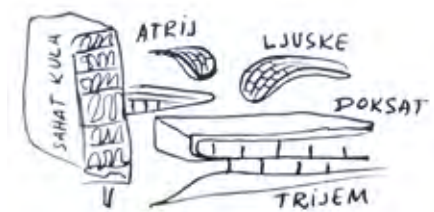
traditional residential typology and emphasised the rationality of its construction and the simplicity of its architectural elements. They showed an appreciation for the rules of its internal layout of functions (served and servant spaces) and those regulating its expansion.

The work of Grabrijan and Neidhardt was principally linked to the desire to establish continuity between past and present, between tradition and modernity, and to extract lessons from Bosnian oriental architecture that could be transferred to contemporary design. Similar to Le Corbusier, all perceived



the modernity of the Balkan home, of its architectural elements and the quality of the organic structure of the city; they proposed an interpretation of this in order to create a true modern and local architectural language that could relate itself to the the ideals of the socialist identity pursued by J.B.Tito in the same years.

It was only when Grabrijan and Neidhardt addressed the future expansions of Sarajevo at Marijin Dvor that they proposed a totally modern city. Here buildings were freely organised in a natural setting with large landscaped areas cut by a central road that extended Marshal Tito Boulevard toward the west, flanked by tall, variously oriented blade-like buildings and lower edifices creating more protected public spaces at ground level. The lower buildings were all topped by cupola-like elements that recall traditional Ottoman architecture, though the urban scenario is predominantly modern.





This proposal, that comes after years of studies and investigations made for the same area, is definitely one of the most advanced propositions of contemporary urban planning. However the architecture that was here suggested by Neidhardt always shows an attention to the tradition, to the material and to the ancient architectural elements that are reinterpreted.

Neidhardt never managed to fully complete this project, though his general guidelines would be maintained in the future expansion. At Marijin Dvor Neidhardt constructed a number of important buildings, starting with the building for the **People's Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina** (with D. Celić - (Competition 1955 - Constructed between 1974 and 1982). The project consists of a tall, blade-like building, similar to others proposed for the area, and a low construction that creates an enclosed public urban space.

The original project contained a series of references to traditional Bosnian architecture (the tower, the portico, the courtyard, domes, etc.) reinterpreted in a modern way and assembled in a free composition. The final result has lost some of the historic references found in the early design, though it maintained the same general composition of volumes. In a comparison less audacious than it may seem, the building very closely resembles the composition of volumes of the UN Building in New York from 1950, originally designed by Neidhardt's master Le Corbusier and later entrusted to Oscar Niemeyer. In addition to the People's Assembly, Neidhardt completed two other buildings in Marijin Dvor, the **Faculty of Philosophy and the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences** (Zmaja od Bosne 34); the first, very close to the People's Assembly, is a low building comprised of different volumes organised around



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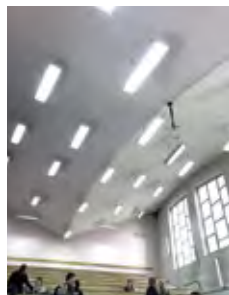
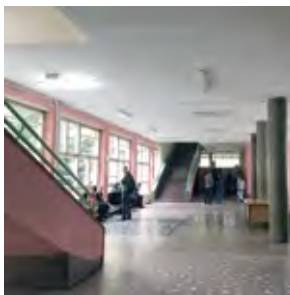
Juraj Neidhardt, Faculty of Mathematics, model.

Above and on the right:

Juraj Neidhardt residential buildings along Dakovica street (now Alpašina street)

Below:

Juraj Neidhardt, Internal courtyard and internal views of faculty buildings



a central space. The lower part is finished with a very evident rusticated stone base that recalls the materials of the old city. The second building features a first volume of classrooms parallel to the street, covered by a roof topped by a series of vaulted copper clad volumes reminiscent of the roofs of the Ottoman city, which stand out as objects of interest in this newer context. The classrooms inside these vaulted spaces feature a particularly effective layout and lighting that filters in from the sides.

Neidhardt also completed two residential buildings along Dakovica street (now Alipašina 11, 13, 15 and 17) in 1958. Standing near the base of the hills, they display a particular approach to the topography of the site. The linear comb-like buildings are set perpendicular to the contour lines and covered by a roof with a constant height. The treatment of the buildings is very precise: a strong rusticated base, façades with loggias and large windows and the use of materials, colours and details coherent with this natural setting. While clearly modernist, the buildings have been conceived in relation to the topography and to the materiality of the city; their modernity is contextualized.

A small fragment of the Ville Radiuse is built on the hill just above Veliki Park. This area already contained residential buildings from the Austrian period, but it was extended in the post war period following the model of a green-city with new buildings placed within this hilly green context, creating large open spaces and terraces. At the foot of the



Kadić brothers, Residential complex at Džidžikovac during construction (courtesy Iva Fočak).



Kadić brothers, Residential buildings in Džidžikovac (1954).



Andrija Člčin Šain, Housing complex at Džidžikovac (1953).

hills, just after the traditional Austrian urban fabric, is located a residential complex built by **Milovoj Peterčić** in 1954 that recalls the buildings just mentioned designed by Neidhardt as far as architectural typology, disposition of the buildings, materials, colors are concerned.

Further up on the hill, there is an interesting ensemble realised in the Džidžikovac quarter by the **Kadić brothers**, a national monument of Bosnia and Herzegovina since 2008. Here they built a series of intelligently proportioned linear buildings, set parallel to one another and designed to respond to the topography, featuring large windows facing south and toward the city, balconies connecting different buildings and end walls with terraced porticoes. Right above this project, at the corner between Džidžikovac e Čekaluša streets, is located a refined intervention by Andrija Člčin Šain in 1953 which integrates tradition and modernity in a small residential complex that is organized around an existing mosque. The project follows the topography of the hill with two low buildings organized at different levels,

cantilevered over a stone wall (like in the old Bosnian houses) and a vertical building that completes the site and adjusts itself to the height of adjacent buildings.

Other post-war buildings worthy of mention include the Sarajevo railway station, in part suggestive of Socialist Realism. The building (Put Zivota 2) was designed after the war by a group of architects from Czechoslovakia. Following the separation between Tito and Stalin in 1948, they returned home and left the building unfinished. The project was later taken up and completed in 1952 by **Bogdan Stojković** and **Dusan Smiljanić**. The building has



Šipad building (1956).



Sarajevo Train Station (1948-1952).

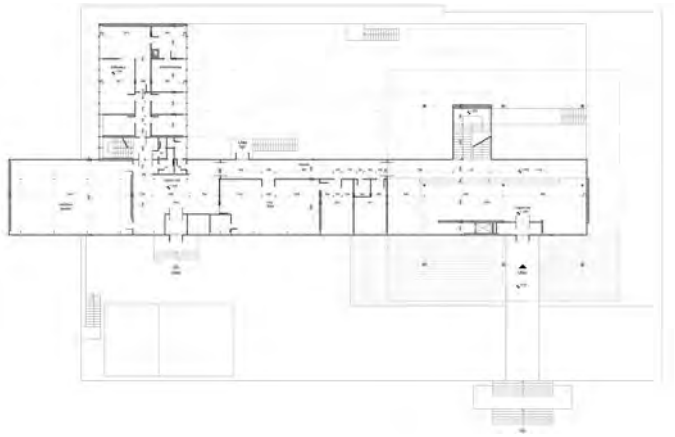
a large glass façade that corresponds to an interesting vaulted interior space that is the main hall of the station.

Also of interest is a 1956 residential and office complex for Šipad Headquarters (Maršala Tito 11, 13 and 15), a company producing wood construction materials. The building is composed of a tall, blade-like residential wing and a lower volume of offices supported by "V"-shaped steel columns, whose crown is mediated by a horizontal canopy. Another example of an office building in an urban area is the UPI Bank Building designed by Zivorad Janković in 1962 (Branilaca Sarajeva 20). Constructed on the plaza of the National Theatre, its simple curvilinear forms and articulated façade

define primary and secondary elements. Finally a last building designed by the Kadić brothers is a residential building on Branilaca Sarajeva Street, a building that demonstrates its own modernity through very simple means. However, perhaps the most modernist and internationalist project, almost a design by Mies van der Rohe transplanted to Bosnia, is the small Museum of the Revolution, now the Historic Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The building is situated along the main urban axis (Zmaja od Bosne 5) near the National Austro-Hungarian Museum, designed by Karl Parzikin 1913. The building is the result of a 1958 competition won by the group of architects from Zagreb comprised of B. Magaš, E. Šmidihenand R. Horvat. It offers unmistakable evidence of the modernist architecture being built in Yugoslavia at the time, with clear references to western architecture. The structure consists of a raised podium and a series of articulated volumes set around a long internal courtyard delimited by large glass and steel surfaces. A cubic volume finished in white plaster floats above and projects out over the entrance to create a contrast with the transparency of the lower part, bringing a level of monumentality and modernity to the entire complex. These conditions make it one of the buildings that more than many others transmits an image of a modern post-war Yugoslavia: it can be compared to the famous Yugoslavian pavilion at Expo 58 in Brussels, designed by Vjenceslav Richter, whose idea of an object capable of representing a synthesis between art and architecture earned him international recognition.



B.Magaš, E.Šmidihen, R.Horvat, Museum of Revolution (1958-63).

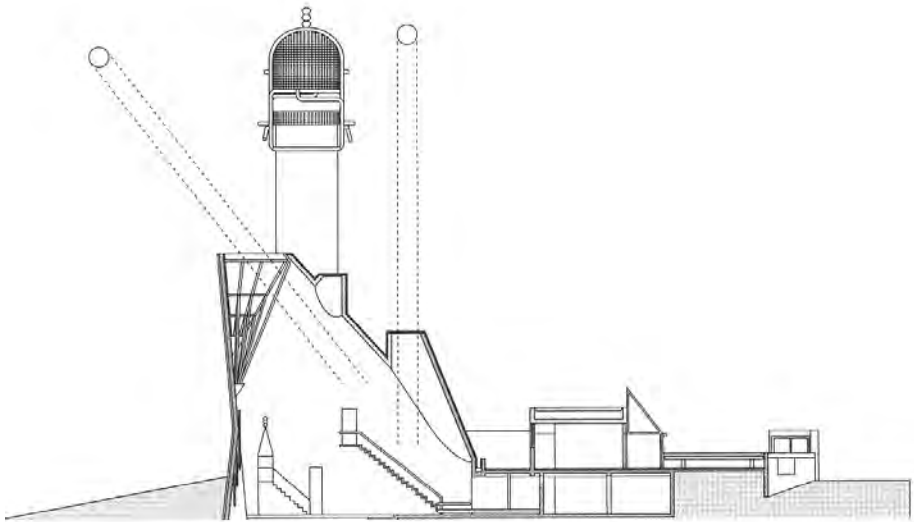


Not far from Sarajevo, in Visoko, there is a unique project for a mosque built around ten years after the buildings we have been discussing, the white mosque of Šerefudin, realized in 1969 by Zlatko Uglejen, student and friend with Neidhardt and architect that has had a rather important cultural and academic role in Sarajevo in those years. The building is very particular and represents one of the most sophisticated attempts to create a relationship between tradition and modernity, an issue that in Sarajevo seems to be the main theme of the post-war period. The mosque

incorporates the elements of traditional architecture, as the domes covered in metal, creating an external configuration that is both articulated and layered. The internal space is very sacred and has a very strong plastic character obtained through a section that is very well articulated. Light enters from a series of canon lumieres from the ceiling that carve out the surface creating large tridimensionalocula. The building has been awarded in 1983 from the Aga Khan Foundation as one of the most prestigious contemporary mosques

Zlatko Uglejen,
Mosque of Šerefudin
in Visoko (1980).







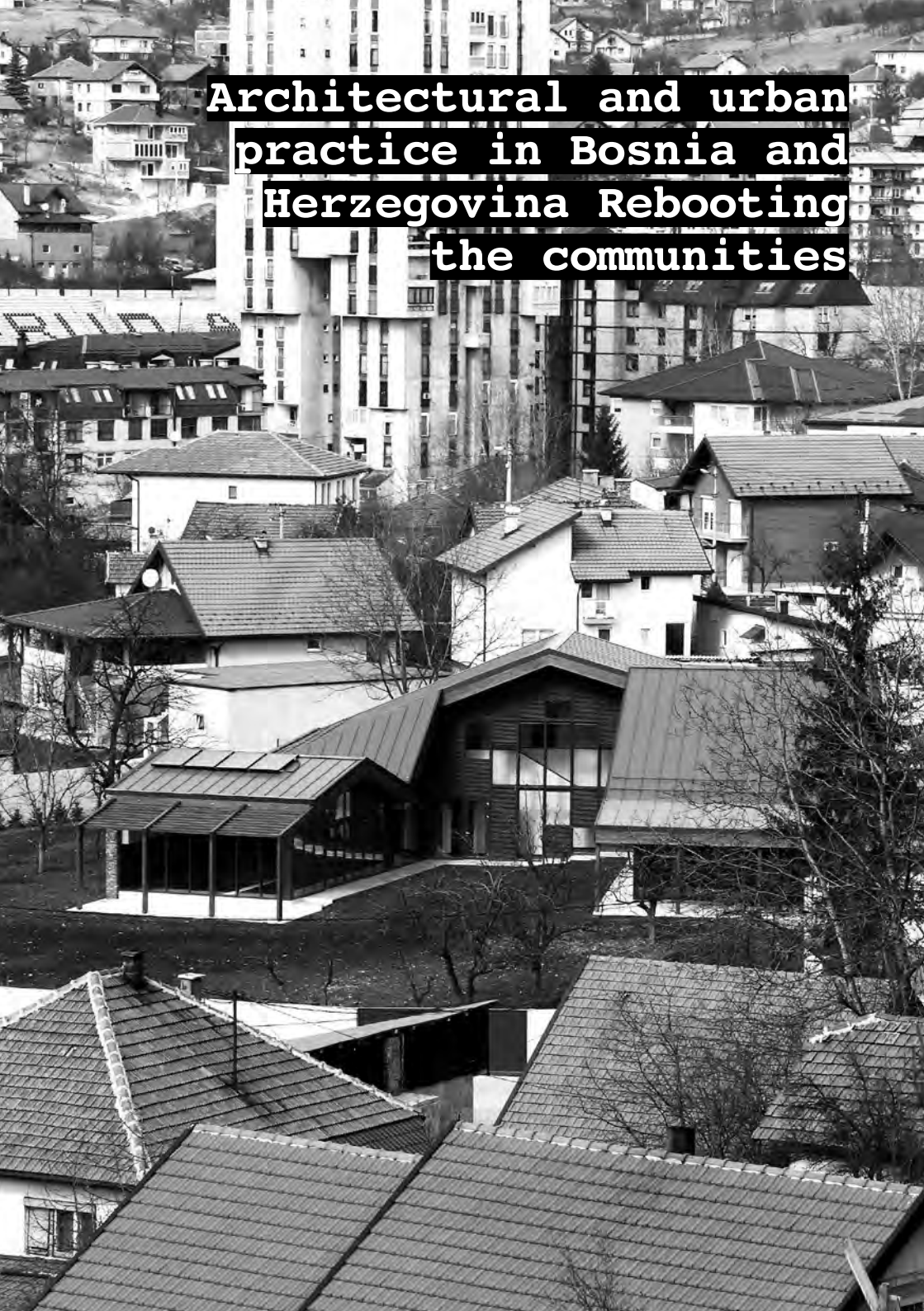
Elša Turkušić Jurić

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Everyday conditions for action in the BiH society are challenging and unpredictable, difficult and constricting. Young designers must struggle for much longer to get opportunities, particularly if they reject corruption and banalisation of their profession from the outset. Even architectural bureaus of considerable experience and reputation are always anew forced to question their views and principles, both aesthetical and ethical ones. The transitional period which BiH has found itself in following the dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1990s has brought fast changes without a clearly defined strategy of sustainable development. The new societal reality has been shaped by the transition from a centralised market directed by state authorities towards the neoliberal capitalist model. This transition is evident in profit-driven diktat of foreign investments, in a coupling of local entrepreneurs and ruling political elites,



**Architectural and urban
practice in Bosnia and
Herzegovina Rebooting
the communities**



in the transformation of the state/social assets into private ones, in uncontrolled exploitation of economic resources and natural environment, in weakening of the influence of urban and spatial planning bodies, which are still failing to serve as adequate intermediaries between the public and private good.

Public and private domain

The City of Sarajevo is the best example of the impact of these intense changes (on the micro level) that are commingled with larger but equally fast transnational processes (macro level) that are driven by the interests of the global markets. As the national capital and the capital of the largest canton, it is a seat of a large and complex administrative apparatus. This exposes Sarajevo to strong pressures of developers driven by particular and commercial interests, which are frequently at odds with its spatial capacity, morphological features and citizens' interests.

Examples of thoughtfully conceived and designed new city landmarks, such as the building of the Imporantne Centre in Marijin Dvor area, by the Nonstop architectural studio, also constitutes a shift in the terms of introduction of a novel building typology. This contemporary architectural hybrid is achieved by the harmony between the variety of content it offers (apartments, a hotel, business premises, a shopping centre, an underground garage) and the characteristics of the surrounding central city area. This means that the building's design concept is based on the principle of compression of spatial elements the authors derived, both

chronologically and contextually, from the surrounding urban morphology: a 19th century city block, free-standing, stick-shaped forms of a modernistic city and a variety of green spaces. The structure's shapes, split into eight volumes with variegated façades, retains the integrity of form and a specific visual identity.

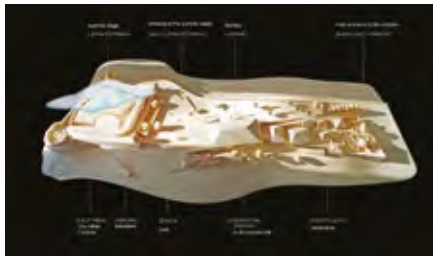
Sarajevo is a condensed city situated in a valley with topographically limited capacity for further growth. Neglect of public, open and green spaces and their increasingly frequent transformation into housing land plots is beginning to turn Sarajevo into a city with high density of construction and population. And in just such cities city authorities need to make proper public spaces a priority. The recently redesign of the stone staircase on Pruščakova street constitutes a true "urban refreshment". By combinging modern



Photo by Sandro Lendler

technology (sound and light) and urban furniture, the designers from the Firma architectural studio sought to transform this utilitarian public space into a new meeting place of choice.

The absence of motivation of both city and cantonal authorities to proceed with the implementation of an exceptional design of a culture and recreation complex at the archeological site of the **Bijela tabija (White Fortress)** medieval fortress is very disheartening and worrisome. The project's designers Zlatko Ugljen and Nina Ugljen Ademović skillfully revived a prominent



Bijela tabija, model.



Above and on the left:
Importanne Center
On the right:
Firma architectural studio,
Staircase on Pruščakova
street.



Photo by Ifran Redžović

vantage point situated in the heart of Sarajevo's historical core. The project's idea was based on the visual demilitarisation of the complex and on outstanding flexibility in exploitation of open, enclosed and semi-enclosed spaces throughout the course of the year. The authors reinterpret existing values of the site's context through complex programmatic and spatial arrangements, using simple, but variation-rich forms to offer new values. The project channels creative sensibility into carefully considered methodological pattern of integration of the new and the old.

Even globally, sociologists, urban anthropologists and urban planners increasingly sound warnings against creeping banishment of public spaces from everyday urban living, and against domination of the private over public. In parallel, this trend leads to the loss of privacy and the essence of personal existence. Although private housing construction (both collective and individual) is predominant in BiH, alongside commercial and catering buildings, quality solutions for spatial and functional arrangements of such housing are very rare. The current state of the society is best illustrated by Poljine and Nahorovo, two suburban areas of Sarajevo, with they widely different arrangements for residential living. These residential areas lack distinct character, and can best be described as a mix of high-style villas and nondescript or pseudo-folkloristic structures build along the „do-it-yourself“ principles. This is not just aesthetic and formal variety and heterogeneity, but also a collision of differences in social status and lifestyle.



Filter, NHRV House. Photo by FILTER

Through its **NHRV House** residential building, at the intersection of these two residential areas, the young architectural bureau FILTER tests the actual boundaries of manoeuvring space. To enhance the quality of existing style of habitation, they do not limit themselves just to implementation of functional and dynamic residential space through rational exploitation of local potential (south-looking insolation, good vistas, availability of greenery). Architects discover an open manner of communication with the totality of the context in the reduction of formal expression and materialisation, and in the symbolism of the archetypal form of a house. The content is grouped in two modestly sized volumes positioned to compose spatial sequences through a series of

AhaKnap, Villa "M", Kakani.
Photo by: Anida Krečo



open, semi-enclosed and enclosed spaces. The recently completed **Residential Villa "M"** by the Bosnian-Norwegian AhaKnap Bureau in Kakanj also discards any flirtation with luxury or tradition. The structure's introverted and dynamic character has been achieved by materialisation (open-closed principle) and its U-shape layout. This allowed for greater privacy, more intensive luminance of the fluid internal space and its direct connection to the (atrium-type) courtyard. Accentuated polyline contours of the roof constitute a formal typological unity with neighbouring structures.

Authenticity and critical revalorisation of our heritage

The culture of our globalised age exhibits considerable carelessness for tradition and heritage. On the one hand, this creates a risk of copying or invention of traditional patterns and values, while, on the other, it increased the likelihood that they will increasingly be consigned to neglect.

The architectural heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina had suffered quite extensive damage or even total obliteration in the last war. Therefore, the last two decades saw many projects of restoration and reconstruction of buildings. Many of these buildings or complexes are of considerable historical, architectural and also symbolic value, such as the recently restored City Hall of Sarajevo (formerly the National Library), or the world-renowned Old Bridge in Mostar. The professional challenge and the hardest task in these kind of projects has been to preserve the structure's authenticity to

the greatest extent possible – by using original elements found on the ground, after years of searching, and by fitting them into a mosaic of the reconstructed building, which posed both statistical and formally-aesthetic challenges. It is exactly this approach that set the reconstruction and anastylosis of the **Ferhat-Pasha's Mosque** (16th century) in Banja Luka, conducted by architect Muhamed Hamidović for 13 years, apart among numerous methodologically similar major and complex projects that have been carried out.

The attitude towards heritage is crucial, because any society that lacks a vision of its past will find it increasingly difficult to define its vision of the future. As in most countries in the Balkans, some segments of the past are idealised and romanticised. In the meantime, immediate construction and cultural heritage of former Yugoslavia is rejected, although it was progressive and modern, as evident from numerous structures it produced. Unfortunately, nowadays this is only occasionally raised at round tables or academic conferences, but no building or a complex from that period has been adequately protected from further deterioration or devastation. It is for this reason that the recently published book **"(Un)Forgotten Town – Mostar's Hurgalya"**, about the well-known Partisan Memorial Cemetery, designed by architect Bogdan Bogdanović, has to be mentioned. Also, the book is worth attention, because in it young authors Marko Barišić, Alisa Burzić and Aida Murtić examine the contemporary discourse about a monument as heritage, through diverse



NHRV House



Residential Villa "M"



"House of Collector V. Jarko"



Photo by FILTER



Photo by Anida Krečo



Photo by Igor Knežević

narratives. The book's value is in opening the discussion about the possibilities for saving and keeping this monument through revitalisation of its role as the living and vital part of the city - a core element of its urban identity.

Rebooting and vitality of communities

The spirit of reconstruction is reemerging throughout the BiH society, with all of its complexity that demands redefinition of many segments. It is intriguing to examine what could be the role of architecture in rebooting and ensuring sustainability of local communities in peripheral and rural areas, far from power centres and market turmoil.

In the picturesque Herzegovinian landscape, in the village of Dubrave near the town of Stolac, Zlatko Ugljen designed the local gallery "House of Collector V. Jarko". In the author's words, this micro-agglomeration constitutes "a reminiscence of the traditional rural household in this region". A composition of open and enclosed spaces, in alternating sequences, rests on the principles of fragmentation and „anarchy“, which embody the metaphor of changeability and inconstance of human settlements. The structure fulfills its role as a culture centre, the venue for constant meetings and get-togethers for local residents of all ages.

Even in a completely different project of the Plehan Religious and Cultural Centre, Zlatko Ugljen, with coauthor Nina Ugljen Ademović, advocates a contextual dialogue which transcends physical filling out of the existing gentle natural landscape through combination of sacral and lay content (St. Mark's Church, the chapel, parish office, cultural centre with the muse-

um and gallery; gardens, a sports field and monastery are still under construction). This agglomeration is situated on raised ground, on the site of a destroyed church and monastery, and it became a landmark that harmoniously merges with the gentle landscape. Its spatial rhetoric implies through a dynamic composition of simple geometric volumes, through metaphors of archaic or traditional forms and a subtle interplay of light and shadow. With this architectural design, the authors examine its potential to offer certain modalities of activities that might regenerate the landscape and life in the local commu-



Zlatko Ugljen, Religious and Cultural Centre, Parish office. Photo by Zlatko Ugljen, Muhamed Dropić

nic style. However, what proved to be the greatest achievement of the project was the persistence of the architect, a local builder and of the villagers of all ages in all segments of the creative and building process. A synergy of the architect's idea, local conditions, experience and desire, has been transmuted into the synergy of the nature and man, of creativity and utility, of the personal and the communal. The architects sought to achieve, as the ultimate goal, a strengthening and liberation of the joy and exaltation that arise from the human ability to feel (things such as natural phenomena, communi-

nity, both in spiritual and cultural terms (as the current population for the most part immigrated during the wars that accompanied the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia).

When designing the mosque in the Village of Ostojići, on Mt. Bjelašnica, the architectural office studio Zec developed an example of preservation of the vitality of a rural settlement through spatial manifestation of community. A modest wooden structure, oval in layout, constituted a modern reinterpretation of the local vernacular architecture of the Di-



Zlatko Ugljen, Religious and Cultural Centre, Exterior view of St. Marko's Church. Photo by Zlatko Ugljen, Muhamed Dropić

ty etc.), which is under threat of fading away in the routines of the contemporary everyday life.

Architectural community

If redefinition is the topic, this naturally involves professional organisations, such as the architects' association, which had lost its cultural and professional autonomy. This organization has only recently begun to experience a revival, mostly due to young enthusiasts that stepped forward to bring about change, led by the association's president, Vedad Islambegović. Rebooting the architectural community has not

come about only because of the need to increase openness and transparency of the processes and investments in the construction sector, but also because it became evident that a platform for exchange of ideas and critical thinking was urgently needed. In this way, the Association of Architects in BiH has become a true cultural medium and a service for architects and for all citizens who struggle to achieve their “right to the city”, which it failed to be in the past two decades. For the time being, the association is on the right track to restore the social position and cultural relevance to the architectural profession.

Below and on the right:
studio Zec, mosque Ostojici.
Photo by Sandro Lendler



Photo by Sandro Lendler





CITY
and
SHARED
PLACES

Photo by Alessandra Olianias

Lejla Odobašić Novo

is a professor, at the International Burch University in Sarajevo, where she teaches architectural design as well as architectural history and theory. She is also a licenced architect by the Ontario Association of Architects in Canada.

In many ways Sarajevo has become a synonym with war and siege as a result of its terrible faith during the early 1990's. In contemporary discourse on war and architecture there is a great deal of emphasis put on the relationship between violence and culture (Graham, 2008; Bevan, 2006; Knuth 2006; Sorkin 2002; Reidlmayer 1995). During a conflict, it is most often that the cultural building, which represent a history and identity of a certain people, come under attack. These buildings are seen as the symbols of a particular society as they preserve the continuity of a physical history. Violence, by contrast, tends to be located outside of the domain of culture and defined as a phenomenon that lacks, is inimical to, or destroys that culture. Discourse on wartime destruction can be categorized in accordance to destruction's targets as "the city", "cultural heritage", or "architecture".

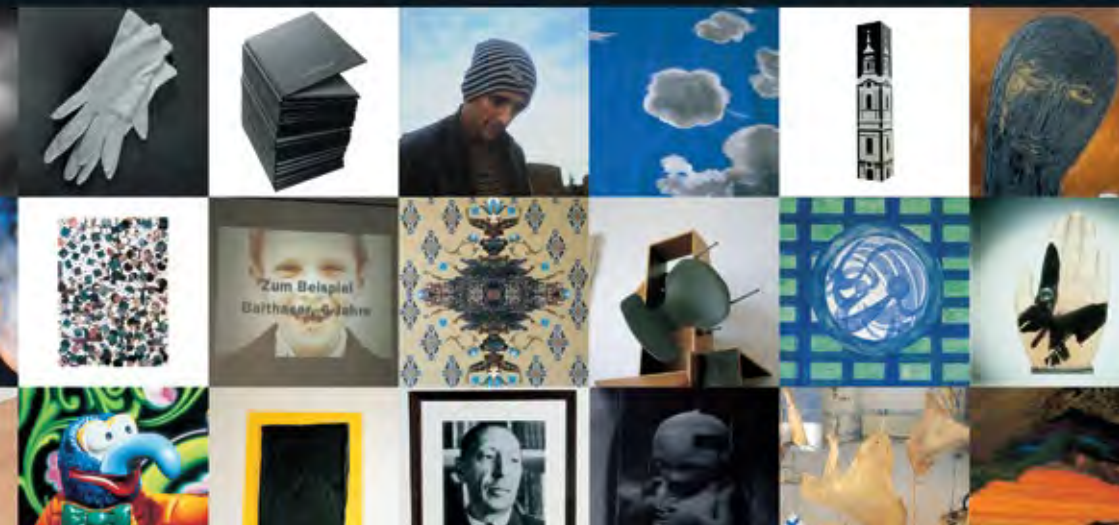




War, Culture and
Resistance:
The Case of Ars Aevi

ARS AEVI COLLECTION

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART SARAJEVO



This phenomena of cultural destruction during the four-year siege of Sarajevo played a crucial role in the attempts of destroying the city. However, in the case of Sarajevo, the cultural institutions and events did not merely become targets in the systematic destruction and violence of the city but at the same time they served a counter-purpose: they became crucial elements for the survival of the Sarajevans spirit. Cultural institutions and events that took place at the theatres, concert venues, makeshift libraries and galleries, became a means of resisting the siege, of 'living' and "thriving" despite it. Local writers, artists, actors, painters, musicians and film directors banded together at an early stage of the siege to produce works to sustain morale among the residents. One of the most impressive and enduring projects that was born during the siege but continues to resonate today is the Museum of Contemporary Art, also known as Ars Aevi.

Ars Aevi is not an ordinary museum, during his interview with the author in



Photo Courtesy of Ars Aevi Museum

April 2016, its founder **Enver Hadžiomerspahić**, describes the museum first and foremost as an ethical project. Before envisioning Ars Aevi, Hadžiomerspahić had curated cultural programs at the city's Hall of Youth, directed the opening and closing ceremonies of the 1984 Winter Olympics, and worked to organize the first Yugoslav

This page

Above: Ars Aevi Logo

On the right: Enver Hadžiomerspahić, director and founder of the Ars Aevi Museum

Photo Credit: Ars Aevi Museum.



Documenta art biennales of 1987 and 1989. The 1991 show was cancelled as war descended and the dissolution of Yugoslavia occurred. Then, in 1992, as Sarajevo lay besieged, Hadžiomerspahić saw his beloved Olympics museum burn. At his typewriter, he wrote the founding concept of Ars Aevi:

"Sarajevo invites the most significant artists of the world to contribute their works to form their collection of the future Museum of Contemporary Art in Sarajevo".

To write such words at a time of siege when people's sense of possibility was controlled by the prospect of death was, according to Hadžiomerspahić, insane. Despite the insanity of the idea at the time, he managed to get support by the senior figures including the then-Mayor of Sarajevo, Muhamed Kreševljaković. In 1993, in the midst of the siege, Enver left Sarajevo to promote Ars Aevi at the Venice Biennale.

From that point on, the Ars Aevi narrative became a network of map pins and "nuclei", as city-by-city, founding exhibitions and collections were formed. The first was in Milan in 1994, and the first artist to contribute was **Michelangelo Pistoletto**. Hadžiomerspahić and his family then developed the idea of inviting directors of contemporary art centres to choose ten prestigious artists for the future museum's collection. Each was instructed not to invite more than two from their own country. In this way, collections gathered in **Prato, Ljubljana, Venice** and then **Vienna**, featuring works by artists such as **Janis Kounellis** and **Anish Kapoor**.

After the siege, in 1999, these collections were united in Sarajevo. Istanbul and Podgorica later came on board, and Hadžiomerspahić says there are plans to create further collections with **Belgrade, Zagreb** and other cities. Perhaps upending expectations, he believes that the museum's location has not hindered its success, but helped it; "Had I spent two decades working on creating this in London or Berlin or New York or Moscow I don't think I would have achieved anything", he states. Why? Because Ars Aevi is primarily "a project of an ethical relationship of the artists of the world towards that magical word Sarajevo."

During the siege, when a group of intellectuals in Sarajevo launched an initiative for an international cultural project to be called Ars Aevi, the concept and strategy were quickly adopted by the Executive Board of the City of Sarajevo and the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Gradually building a network of friends and supporters, Ars Aevi has grown into a unique example of international cooperation between artistic and cultural institutions, cities and regional administrations and artists and intellectuals from all over the world. Representatives of the City of Sarajevo, Sarajevo Canton, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina have all recognized Ars Aevi as a major development project.

During the war, Ars Aevi was a project of resistance, a way of peacefully

fighting the violence with the idea of culture and art. Post-war the objective of Ars Aevi is to create an International Multicultural Center and Museum of Contemporary World Art in Sarajevo, a city in which for centuries differences between East and West have met in mutual respect and love. In the cultural environment of Sarajevo and with its international orientation, the Ars Aevi Center and Museum is envisioned as a permanent and visible symbol of the hope that instead of separating, it seeks differences which can stimulate us to find beauty and value in diversity. The Ars Aevi Museum is conceptualized as a center of international dialogue, meetings and cultural exchange. A highly ambitious artistic and cultural project, Ars Aevi is of potentially great significance for the development of not only Bosnia and Herzegovina but also Southeast Europe.

After the war, the collection of Ars Aevi returned to Sarajevo, and was housed by the Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina while awaiting the construction of the building. This "temporary" arrangement lasted for four years, until the Historical Museum forced to close the collection to the public due to the lack of government support in form of funds. The collection was then held in awful conditions until it was transferred to its current location at the Skenderija Sports and Cultural Center in 2007. Also, a temporary solution, this space was named the **Art Depot** for Ars Aevi where the collection could be opened to the public but unfortunately due to space constraints not in an adequate manner.

Nevertheless, this was a step forward, a new home for the artworks had been found, and the officials promised more significant financial backing for the museum. Since then a series of financial difficulties and setbacks have been overcome by the persistence of the Ars Aevi team but unfortunately the new building is still in the waiting. Nothing seems to impress the local officials enough to commit funds to the project; not the fact that the collection was under UNESCO's patronage, or that Mr. Hadžiomerspahić was in the meantime knighted in Italy and France, or that UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador **Renzo Piano** gifted the museum's design because the collection in his opinion was "an expression of collective international will." Famous names in the art world, accolades from the outside and foreign dignitaries came and went. Promises were made, but never kept. The collection has been found and,



the local authorities assigned a plot of land in the city centre, next to the Historical Museum, to accommodate the future museum building. The location is optimal as it groups Ars Aevi with the existing museum institutions. The renowned architect Renzo Piano, donated the designed for the museum. The project was presented to the public several times. The concept is an open center, a connective tissue between the University Campus on one side the opposite side of the river Miljacka on the other side.

The project seemed to poses all elements that would guarantee its success, however, in 2012 the support of the municipality ended and all work on the construction was halted. The government's misunderstanding of the great importance of this project begun in 2010, when the most attractive location of University campus was assigned to the U.S. Embassy. The Embassy was

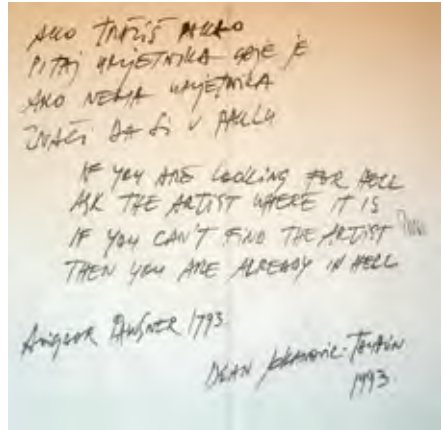


Photo by Sandro Lendler

Opposite page: Juan Muñoz L'Appreso (1998), part of the Milan Collection at the Ars Aevi Museum

Above: Front entrance of the Ars Aevi Depot, 'If you are looking for hell, ask the artist where it is. If you don't find the artist, you are already in hell.'

by Avigdoor Pawsner

Below: Skenderija Cultural and Sports Centre, temporary location of the Ars Aevi Museum known as the Ars Aevi Depot.





Photo by courtesy of Ars Aevi Museum

This page

Above: Future site of the Ars Aevi museum with Historical Museum to the left.

Below: Pedestrian bridge designed and erected by Renzo Piano in front of the Ars Aevi site.

Opposite page:

Riverside Miljacka view.

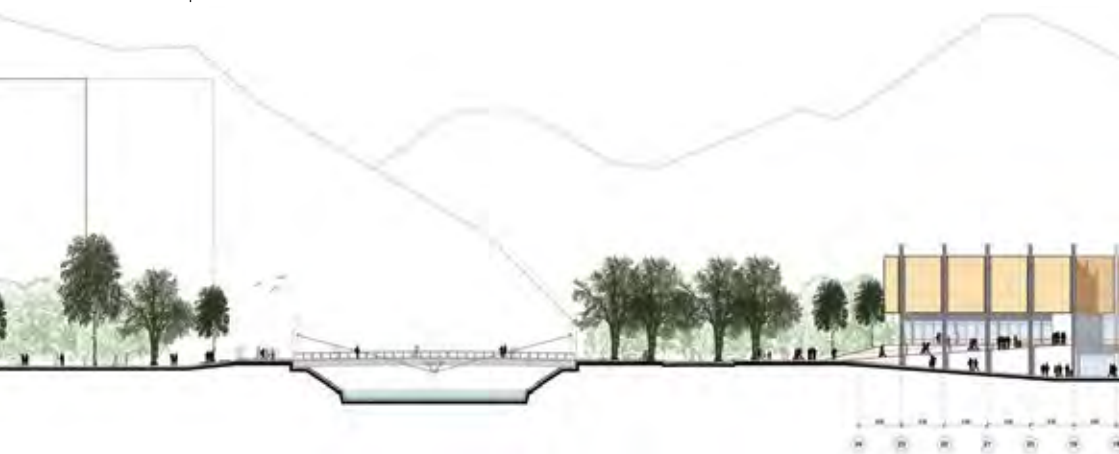


Photo Courtesy of Ars Aevi Museum

built on the opposite principles from what Piano had in plan for Ars Aevi. The embassy was constructed as a closed-off facility undermining the idea of connectivity. The embassy became a physical metaphor for the U.S. stance in relation to the culture and education in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The construction of the museum Ars Aevi started in 2002, with the building of the Renzo Piano pedestrian bridge over the river Miljacka. Much like the other public institutions, in 2002 the project remained without the financial support of the authorities, so that the



management was force to close the collection to the public until 2015. Despite all the difficulties in the realization of the actual building and the continuity of its operation, In 2018 hundred years after the end of WorldWar I, Ars Aevi is in the process for **candidature** for the **Nobel Peace Prize**.

We can find reasons for the failure of the museum Ars Aevi thus far in the following sentence of Alexander Adamovic: *“ARS AEVI is the institution found as a symbol of repression, to be turned into an instrument of criticism of the art system, and the world in which all major divisions become reality”*. (Adamovic 2001). The current state of shortcomings of the Ars Aevi project is a clear testament to the divisions as the on-going reality of Bosnia and Herzegovina and culture as one of its major targets. What then could be the appropriate model for reversing this affect? Could culture once again be used as a counter attack weapon in the fight for Bosnia’s future?



Giuseppe Trentadue

has been ordained catholic priest on July, 2005. After completing his studies in Canon Law at the Pontificia Università Lateranense in Rome, Giuseppe has obtained his Phd in ecumenical theology. Since 2011 he is a member of the Diplomatic Service at the Holy See. He served at the Apostolic Nunciature in Haiti and in Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro, Principality of Monaco. Since February 2018 he has been placed at the Apostolic Nunciature in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.

In Sarajevo history stops before a memory is able to tell and be told, free like truth and true like anything that, if forgotten, risks of being betrayed.

And the city welcomes you, humble and discrete, accepting the answers you believe you have found – perhaps read among the pages of a history written always too far away or hastily. Answers that, soon, will reveal themselves to be inadequate before the questions She keeps and protects.

Sarajevo – with her faded borders and boundaries, like her days' colours, where past and roots seem to wait for you at every street corner – asks you to patiently and respectfully welcome the beauty, the responsibility and the weight of her everyday life's stories. Stories that, slowly, become also your own stories. Sarajevo invites you to read and listen among the echoes and gestures of prayer – signs of a humanity that doesn't surrender before divisive logics,



Opel

A faith between history, memory and narration

24.12.2015



claimsor sterile and formal tolerance. The city's soul flows slowly like the Miljacka's water; looks at you from its bell towers, minarets and domes, making faith what it should be: a space cutting the sky's borders letting surface its colours and contrasts, asking you to look up and meet your brother's eyes looking for what you think you have found already. Sarajevo's soul flows among the hugs of those who greet each other like if it's always the first or the last time. It flows among the cafes, which become audience, protectors and an accomplice of stories in which time seems to slow down or to have stopped. It flows among flowerbeds and gardens, obstinate in blooming again and again, without any fear of a snow that might soon come back. It

flows among "the roses" which mark Sarajevo's ground and are trampled by a generation which doesn't know the scent of torn innocence.

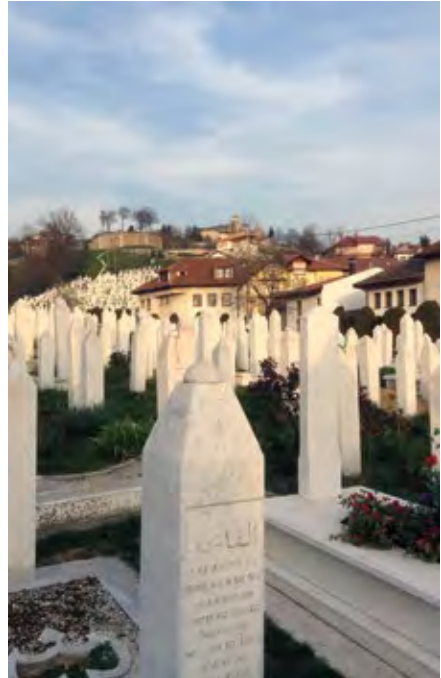
It is an always-besieged soul, by its mountains and memories. And by a history it wants to get rid of or, at least, understand the meaning behind those wanting to trace new borders – be these identitarian, religious, ethnic or linguistic, and both on the streets and in people's hearts. Yet, borders revealing the ghosts of their limitations. It is a soul besieged by all those resting in that same land, by them loved and defended, resembling a hug able to warn and teach. Sarajevo, where memory teaches time that the past is often not enough in explaining and understanding, lives of its many

This page:

The Martyrs' Memorial Cemetery Kovači in Stari Grad, Sarajevo, is the main cemetery for soldiers from the Bosnian Army who were killed during the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina (April 1992 - December 1995) by the Army of Republika Srpska.

Opposite page:

The Eternal Flame designed by architect Juraj Neidhardt as a memorial to the military and civilian victims of the Second World War in Sarajevo has been lit on 6 April 1946. Since that moment the flame went out only once during the siege of Sarajevo.



feasts and holidays - made of sweets and invitations. Holidays able to go beyond what the "official religions" do not know, can't or do not want to recognize. Holidays where the pray greets you by saying the name of God. Sarajevo's faith has the same colour of the blood flowing in the veins of all the brothers and sisters, cousins and friends, neighbours and childhood's memories, which will never be divided by any limited idea of religion and false politics, and in the name of a fear sold at high price. Of the faith, the true one, Sarajevo has the ability of telling what makes the heart fall in love and blanch the official history; it has the strength of waiting the darkest days and the longest winters; it has the stubbornness of giving a value, not an

explanation, to any sacrifice – even those seeming the most sad, useless and incomprehensible.

Of the faith it has the beauty, simple and extraordinary, of the everyday life's gestures' liturgy able to cross the thresholds of temples and worship places, celebrating life by reaching bodies and hearts, and by borrowing religion the eyes of friendship and shared time.

Of the faith, this city has the strength to raise again, the desire not to surrender, to turn sieges into hugs and every memory in grateful remembrance. It preserves a mystery of which no one will ever be master or defender, but which allows anyone to recognize it through sincere meetings.

Of the faith of all those who have



Photo by Alessandra Olinas

loved, lived, remembered, defended and regretted her, Sarajevo has preserved the beauty and the will of witnessing her – understanding that any word, pronounced by any mouth or heart, can become a prayer. It has learnt to look in the eyes of those who suffered and yet came back to love; it has understood that on the good people’s faces, sadness only looks like deep tiredness.

Of the faith, Sarajevo has known its most humane aspect – that of trust, many times betrayed and wounded, but never lost. The city has declined in many ways its beauty, its way of believing, seeking, forgetting and looking at its future.

In Sarajevo, old family pictures ruined by the time remind you that, the true faith, has never divided or scared anyone – allowing you, always and despite everything, to recognize as a friend or brother anyone who greets you from the window while going to work, or sitting next to you.

You can’t understand the faith if you stop to listen to it among the scores of its music and watch it among the steps of its dances; if you do not see it among the scents of its coffees and taste it among the flavours of its desserts. A faith that continues to live, despite everything and everyone, among those uphill roads, between those corners where different eras intersect, chase and greet each other; where often the reason has given up or is tired of believing, and where religion has stopped pronouncing and teaching the words revealing the truest hope.

And like faith, Sarajevo runs the risk of not being understood, of living only



by feelings and emotions imprisoning memories. It runs the risk of being forgotten, remaining stuck between the pages of a book. It risks losing trust, enthusiasm and its young eyes. But, in spite of everything, Sarajevo will always fall asleep in the evening and wake up in the morning, telling what it was, what it is, and what it wants to be. And any attempt to deprive it of this vocation will soon become a one more scar that, however, it will not be able to damage its austere and dignified beauty.



Opposite page:
The Gazi Husrev-beg Mosque

Below to the right:
Interior view of the the Jewish Museum or Museum of the Jews of Bosnia and Herzegovina housed in the oldest synagogue, built in 1581.

Below to the left: Interior space of the Cathedral Church of the Nativity, the largest Serbian Orthodox church and the Cathedral of Jesus's Sacred Heart.







CITY
and
MEMORY

Photo by Alessandra Olinas

Emina Zejnilović

is a Professor and Head of Department of Architecture at International Burch University in Sarajevo, where she has been a faculty member since 2012. Emina's researches architecture as a social product, exploring topics of impact of culture on architectural design in broadest sense, with particular focus on the Balkan region.

Theory presents contradictory approaches to the definition of ideology, relating it to both positive and pragmatic, as well as false and negative set of values, forms, beliefs, and representations, which are common to members of a social group, political parties, state institutions or social classes (Šuvaković, 2014). Discussing culture or politics within Balkan context is never a straightforward topic. But at the same time it appears quite appropriate, for many of what the Balkan cities and societies are today has been determined by positive, negative, or even phantasmatic constructions of ideological, social, and political values and meanings.

Sarajevo in particular, has been represented as the incarnation of the complex, multicultural image of the Balkans by its inhabitants and by the world (Lory, 2013) (Zejnilović E., Husukić E., 2018). It has been a meeting point



Ideology and the City: The Socialist Landscape of Sarajevo



of Christianity-the Bosnian Church, Catholicism, Orthodoxy, Islam, and Judaism (Mahmutcehajic, 2003; Torsti, 2004; Kotzen & Garcia, 2014). Subsequently the architectural history of the city is in fact a history of ideological and political ideas manifested through physical realm. (Zejnilović E., Husukić E., 2018)

Positioned in a valley, its linear configuration has been primarily developed through three regimes - lying side by side, sequentially, along a strong east-west linear spine; the Ottoman core and Habsburg centre, the socialist massive developments and recent post-socialist extensions. The Ottoman coherent urban core with tight built fabric is organized around the commerce, souk, mosques, medresa, and residential "mahalas" on the surrounding hills. The Austro-Hungarian heritage follows, with its orientalist city hall, its public squares, early gothic style Cathedral, residential blocks, public and cultural buildings. Architectural developments during the period of Kingdom of Yugoslavia are not visible in the city as a distinct layer, but are incorporated within the existing urban morphology. On the other hand, architecture of the post WWII socialist regime is presented through massive industrialization and urbanization, triggered by the increase in population, which on the state level grew by 70.7% during the period of 43 years, from 1948-1991. (Tanovic, et al. 2014). Subsequently, urban morphology of the city changed with significant increase in residential stock, construction of numerous public and administrative buildings, public spaces,

and finally massive infrastructure development within the organization of the 1984 Olympic Games hosted in Sarajevo. (Zejnilović E., Husukić E., 2018)

Period after the WWII was the time of transformation from constitutional monarchy of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia into a communistic state, the decline of agricultural population and strengthening of the new industrial society. The new regime introduced a new federal establishment, a social system based on the doctrines of collectivistic societies. The main principle of 'Brotherhood and Unity' also had the task to legitimize the leading role of the Communist Party in the Yugoslav society. (Zejnilović E., Husukić E., 2018) The official identity was thus based on the supremacy of collective interests over individual ones. As Mrduljas and Kulić (2012) claim, "the rise of urban and industrial society and the empowering of the urban proletariat were considered necessary preconditions for the building of socialism and were conditioned by both ideological and pragmatic objectives".

Historically, we can identify three periods in which Yugoslav politics and ideology were constituted: the period after WWII, when Yugoslav politics was under dominant Soviet influence, or radical communism (Antesević, 2012). In 1948 Yugoslav politics went through an ideological split with Stalin's Russia, turning towards economic reforms, decentralization and liberalization. Such a political and social model of

communism was unique. Historians and scholars argue that, this period after 1948 and the break between Tito and Stalin was a turning point in Yugoslavian architecture and art (Babic, 2013). What followed was the transitional phase that lasted until the 1960s when Yugoslavia's unique political identity was based on constant balancing between East and West. And finally the period of pronounced yugo-slavic socialism which was oriented towards its own potentials and economic possibilities (Antesevic, 2012).

Zejnilović and Husukić (2018) state that in the formation of needed authentic communist discourse, architecture was used as a political instrument to depict the ideology of the ruling party. The fact that military barracks were positioned in the centre of Sarajevo, testifies to the state's attitude towards demonstrating the power of the ruling party. As a member of the "Independent Alliance", the governmental elites that carried out

the "modernisations" (Mrduljaš & Kulić, 2012) opted for visual expression that promoted global architectural trends, which happened to coincide with the socialist doctrine, in particularly referring to minimalist approach to visual language and absence of symbolic decoration. It combined communist ideology with Western aesthetic and technological influences. The relationship between architecture and ideology was evident in many aspects of the architectural discourse: from the debate on "official" architectural style, suitable for the developing new socialist society, to the attempt of connecting traditional national heritage and modern architecture (Mrduljaš and Kulić, 2012). Architecture in socialist Yugoslavia, and BiH as well, thus operated within a complex framework of shifting political and cultural paradigms whose contrasts highlight the meanings that post-World War II modernism assumed on a global scale (Kulić, 2009).

Residential Area Cengic Vila, Sarajevo
Socialist Architecture



Zejinlović and Husukić (2018) state that Yugoslav design in general was developing in two directions, or “between” architecture: one related to the global modern trends and the other to the inner contrasts that fundamentally marked the architectural and social history of the region (Mrduljaš & Kulić 2012). Reduction of differences was the ‘inner’ concept, which was used to conceptualize living and architecture of the socialistic public housing. (Figure below) The notion of the socialist idea of equivalence was embedded within Yugoslav culture, particularly in Bosnia as the ethnically most diverse republic within the Federation, as “a set of positive and pragmatic beliefs, values, forms of behaviours, and acting’s” Suvaković (2014). At this point in history, architecture was predominantly a tool that was to strengthen, impose and secure the political ideology of the

system in the culture. Modern architecture in socialist Yugoslavia after the split from the Eastern Block in 1939, was instrumental in reinforcing Yugoslavia’s new image of reformed communist country (Kulić, 2009). The grid organization of two dimensional treated residential buildings, the absence of colour or embellishment, a minimalistic, uniform and very strict visual appearance was the face of the city. Residential architecture used its aesthetic as a “strategy to participate in the organisation of individual and collective human life” (Suvaković, 2014). It was ‘the principle of class rather than identity’ that was given the priority, believing that “a just social order would resolve any nationalist issues relating to the different ethnic groups” (Robinson et al., 2001). (Zejinlović E., Husukić E., 2018)

It is considered that in comparison to



Photo by [www. /inside-sarajevo.com](http://www.inside-sarajevo.com)

other socialist countries of the Eastern Bloc architectural developments in Yugoslavia were flexible in reference to the official ideology, showing “strong willingness and inclination towards experimenting with new and different residential patterns” (Antesevic, 2012). Subsequently, architects were free to offer design solutions that were up-to-date with the global modern trends. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, architectural achievements during 1970s and 1980s were named “the Architectural Circle of Sarajevo” (Straus, 1987), or the time of full architectural maturity, when the results of local architects were more experimental in comparison to traditional construction approach. Some of the most valuable work of 20th century architecture in Sarajevo was done in that period. In 1969 **culture and sports center Skenderija** was constructed. The concrete form of horizontally



Above: “Sarajka”, “shopping houses”
 Opposite page: an aerial view of Skenderija Culture and Sports Center. The spacious composition reflects the influence of the late Le Corbusier Style.
 Below: view of Skenderija today.

elongated building volume organized around a wide central square, together with the complex functional content of the building make it a unique example of Sarajevo’s architectural history. Skenderija was also one of the locations extensively used during the 1984 Olympic Games. Socialist period was also marked by the construction of



specific building typologies such as the “shopping houses” – department stores, and “homes of culture” – cultural centers. In 1975, department store “Sarajka” was constructed in central location of Sarajevo, which was very much similar to the other regional buildings of the same typology. But what made Sarajka the new symbol of the city was the brave dynamic form of a massive blue cubic volume, and the interplay of planes that broke the bulkiness of the structure. One of the finest examples of local socialist architecture achievements are the very Mies-like Museum of Revolution, or the RTV building – a typical representative of Yugoslav Brutalism. Late 70s and early 80s were also marked with the construction of larger scale public buildings, experimentation with glass, such as the railway station, twin towers administrative building, the assembly building, the parliament building, Sarajevo airport and many others. Architecture of the time had an expressive individual note, but was in fact a combination of global architectural trends and affirmation of the landscape of regional values, primarily focusing on egalitarianism and social equality. Zejnilović and Husukić (2018) argue that with further developments of residential architecture in Sarajevo, the ones on large scale in Sarajevo valley triggered by the winter Olympic Games in 1984, and some individual bold post-modernist attempts such as the Canary building in the city centre, it seemed like the process of modernizing residential architecture and society was on a progressive track. But, as it



happened many times in the history of the region before, the 1990s war created a disruption which prevented the establishment of continuity, and with it the process of modernisation (Mrduljaš & Kulić, 2012). Nevertheless, architectural results of almost half a century form a positive image of the creative efforts and achievements of Bosnian architecture at the time. Socialist architectural

heritage is a distinct layer of cities urban morphology, and a testimony of a socio-cultural, political but also architectural era, phantasmatic or real, that the locals define as “better times” and remember with great reminiscence.



Opposite page
Above: RTV buiilding
Below: the office blocks of two high-rise “twin towers”

This page
Above: the Historical Musum of BiH, Museum of Revolution
Below: Canary building

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Erna Husukić

is professor at the International Burch University, Sarajevo, BiH. Erna's research interests revolved around contemporary urban milieu and urban studies with a particular interest on urban transformations, city regeneration and urban memory. Her current research work is focused on marginal spaces, urban ruins and cultural dimensions of globalization.

The idea to organize the Winter Olympic Games in Sarajevo emerged in the mid-1970s, in the heads of Bosnian and Herzegovinian Party leaders (Burić, 2015). Namely, the idea was reaction on the turbulent period of Yugoslavia from the late 1970s and early 1980s in the political, economic and social realm, in which country was exposed to enormous foreign debt, inflation and a substantial decline in living standards in the immediate years after Josip Broz Tito's death in 1980. Given these challenges, there were growing, international, but more importantly, regional concerns and skepticism about capability of one amateur city, like Sarajevo was in that time, to host the Olympics.

Yugoslavia's Olympic experience brought to the fore internal economic and political controversies, republican rivalries, suspicion of corruption and financial malfeasance, accusations of



8 February 1984, the opening ceremony of the XIV Winter Olympic Games, at Sarajevo's Koševo Stadium

**Legacies of
Sarajevo
1984 Winter
Olympic Games**





nationalism, fascism, and “anti-communism”, and exasperation with the federal system (Pedrotty, 2010). Although by the mid-1950s Sarajevo had modest winter sport facilities they were attracting regional rather than international tourists. In comparison with the Republic Slovenia which had already built its identity in Yugoslavia as exclusive winter touristic resort, Bosnia and Sarajevo tourist facilities, on and around the mountains, such as hotels, restaurants, cafes, ski shops and other supportive infrastructure, were quite undeveloped. But despite domestic skepticism who questioned the wisdom of large investments in Games in the midst of economic crisis, information-propaganda campaigns led by the Sarajevo Olympic Organizing Committee was persistently launched Tito’s ideals of “brotherhood and unity” promoting Games as sense of collective Yugoslav pride.

From other side, turbulences that occurred on international political scene caused by the Cold War, deeply affected the Olympic movement. Divisions that have arisen thrown into the shadow everything for which Olympics were advocated. After the boycott of the 1976 Summer Olympics in Montreal by mostly African countries, the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow were boycotted by the USA and four years later, the Soviets responded by not attending the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles (Jovanovic, 2017). Looking for the neutral ground to host 1984 Winter Olympics, the International Olympic Committee recognized symbolic potential of Sarajevo, and Yugoslavia, for the jeopardized Olympic movement, which endured two boycotts in the 1980s. This understanding of the Yugoslavia as embodiment of universal values in another wise fractured Cold War world, boost

to present Yugoslavia as ideal setting for Olympic triumph and as country whose Tito's non-aligned Yugoslavia peace policy goes in line with Olympic philosophy.

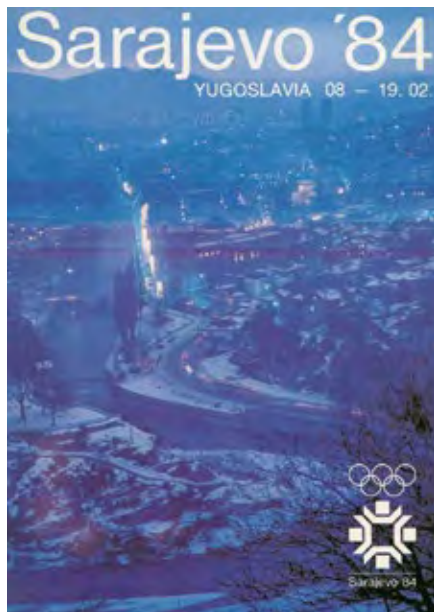
In that context, the Socialist Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the country that during the Yugoslav socialist period was commonly referred as "Yugoslavia on a smaller scale" because its central geographic position in the Yugoslavia and being the place that had associated with the National War of Liberation during World War II, was first choice to host 1984 Winter Olympics. Consequently, it is possible to argue that mediated image of biggest and capital city Sarajevo as peaceful ground, comprised of multi-ethnic diversity but not being dominated by any single nationality, a city that is grievously shaped ground by its histories that stands somewhere in-between the "East" and the "West", is with the right proclaimed to have symbolic role in the 1984 Winter Olympic Games.

At the same time, 1984 Sarajevo Olympic Winter Games are seen a salvation moment for the international Olympic movement in the midst of a difficult decade but also for domestic crisis and economic stabilization and recovery of Yugoslavia.

On 18 May 1978 the International Olympic Committee decided to give honorary role to undeveloped city of Sarajevo to host the 1984 Winter Olympic Games over obviously developed cities competitors Sapporo (Japan) and Goteborg (Sweden).

Olympic era 1978 - 1984

At that moment in time, financial support of Sarajevo 1984 Winter Olympic Games was too much already depended on the success of the operation. Moreover, Sarajevo Olympic Organizing Committee through the early 1980s was faced with a turbulent period in which domestic and foreign politics threatened the Games. In particular, inter-republican rivalries and separatist attitude of some republics, were strikingly evident in the debates over planning, organizing and financing the Games that was the reason why accord on Olympic financing was not established until 1983. Although, considerable contributions from Yugoslav federal government and

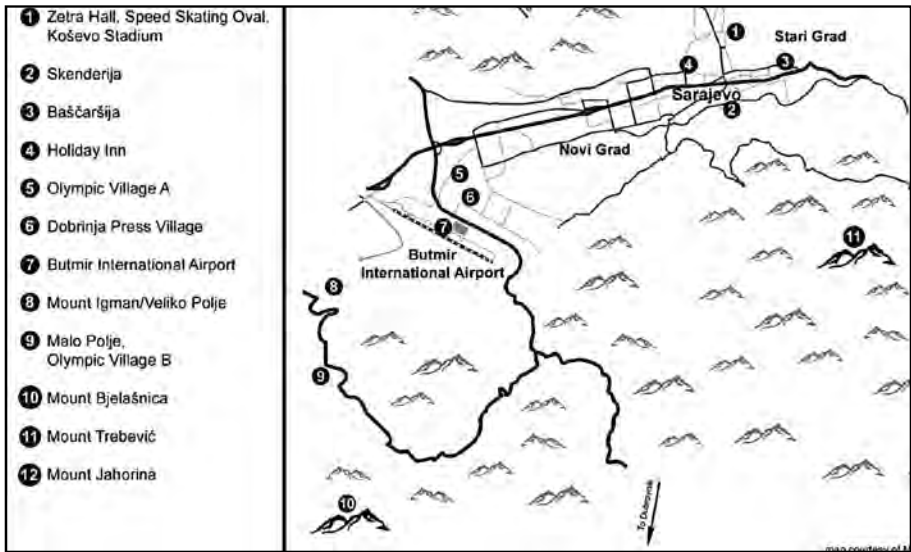


Opposite page
More than 100.000 texts on the XIV OWG were published in Yugoslavia and abroad
This page: top, XIV Olympic Winter Games Sarajevo Yugoslavia.

the republican and provincial governments as well from Sarajevo itself was provided, the experience of the Olympic financing demonstrated, according to President of the Sarajevo Organizing Committee Branko Mikulić, a crucial turning point in Yugoslav political and economic history.

Nevertheless, the Games gave unique opportunity to Sarajevo, Bosnia, and Yugoslavia to reshape city profile by using potential of previously unused natural resources, to increase industrial and food production, and to improve transportation—all while generating the foreign currency income. Additionally, closeness of mountains that surrounds Sarajevo, Bokovik, Romaniija, Trebević, Jahorina, Igman and Bjelašnica gave exclusive possibility to plan and organize all Olympic facilities and venues in the radius of only 22 km.

To prepare best possible conditions for the holding the greatest winter sporting event of the world – the Olympic Games, city development was perceived as exceptional operation with support of hundreds of organizers, architects, builders, technicians and experts in various fields. Transformation of Sarajevo into Olympic and sporting – recreational center was planned in the spirit of economic stabilization, in that all new Olympic constructions were designed for various uses in the post-Olympic period. In that purpose, the Development Planning Institute of the Sarajevo on April 1979 adopted **the Spatial Plan of a Special Area for the Needs of the XIV Winter Olympic Games Sarajevo 1984** that included: wider area of planning, existing conditions, meteorological conditions, valorization of spaces – possibilities of winter and summer recreation, factors that influence the possibility of using, conception



of tourism and recreation development, infrastructure systems, transportation – city area, land use, details for Olympic venues and schemes of different phases of realizations. In addition, there were adopted the regulatory plans of mountains Igman, Bjelšnica and Jahorina, urbanistic plan of cultural and sport center Skenderija and changes in the regulatory plan of sport complex Zetra.

Olympic movement in Sarajevo significantly contributed to urban development of city and affected to the multi-faceted representation and reconstruction of city identity. The built heritage of Sarajevo was enhanced by construction of new venues and facilities. To accommodate members of the International Olympic Committee, **hotel Holiday Inn** (Figure below) was designed by architect **Ivan Štraus** in 1983 on the west side of the city center, Marijin Dvor neighborhood. With its cube structure and striking yellow-brown façade, this



Opposite page
map of 1984 Sarajevo Winter Olympic sites (source: Vuic, 2015).

This page
Above: The the ignition of the Olympic Cauldron Sarajevo, Yugoslavia 1984 Winter Olympic Games

Below: Hotel Holiday Inn in Marijin Dvor designed by architect Ivan Štraus in 1983.

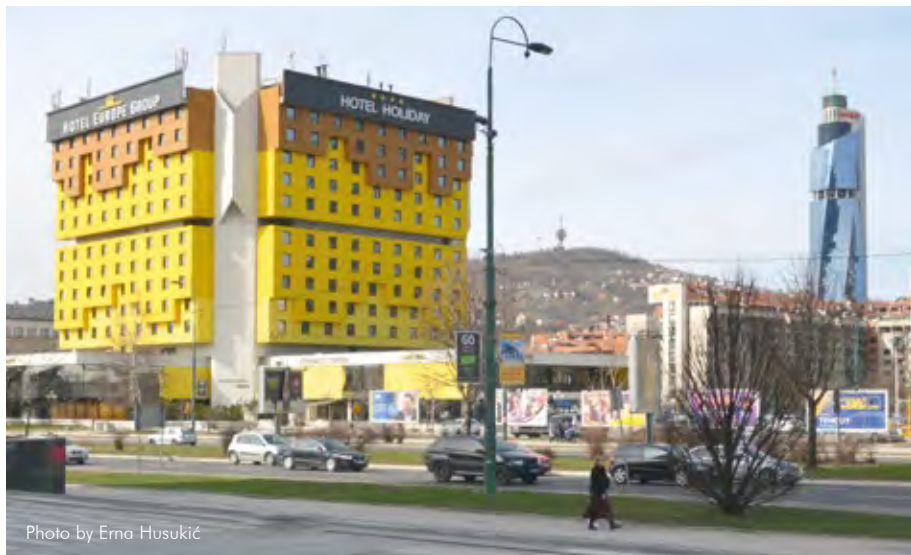


Photo by Erna Husukić

hotel immediately became the most controversial building in the city. As the architect explained, the concept of the hotel was to “paraphrase” in a modern way the spatial organizational scheme of the Sarajevo’s Morića Han from the 17th century, and in the visual sense it is surprising with the yellow color of the aluminum facade cladding (Donia, 2006).

Other accommodation facilities were built exclusively for elite guests of the Olympics on the slopes of mountain Igmanat Stojčevac (known as residential complex of Josip Broz Tito), for sport-people and foreign journalists was built the Olympic Village at Dobrinja at western outskirts of the city, and for judges and organizers was built the Olympic Village at Mojmiilo close to Dobrinja. To meet the needs of sport facilities, Zetra Olympic Hall, ice stadium with lanes for fast ice-skating was designed by architects Lidumil

Alikalfić, Dušan Đapa and constructor Osman Morankić in the city center near existing structures around the Koševo Sports Centre in 1983.

Moreover, the preparation of the Olympics initiated many renovation and restoration projects of Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian buildings and facades such as renovation of hotels in the city center (Bristol, Zagreb) and cultural objects (Austro-Hungarian villa Mandić designed by the architect Karl Paržikin the city center has been restored in 1984 and became the Sarajevo Olympic Museum, galleries and Sarajevo National Theater).

New ski centers on mountains Bjelašnica, Jahorina and Igman, bobsleigh track on Trebević mountain were built. Bobsleigh track on mountain Trebević was built for the first time in history from the three parts and the skaters were the most

Mojmiilo Olympic Village



modern, to that extent that they could go hand by hand with today standards of construction.

City's infrastructure (RTV building, telecommunications, transportation - more than 50km of "Olympic traffic arteries", extension of Airport) has been highly improved. Furthermore, modernization project "Project for the Protection of Human (Sarajevo's) Environment" that already started in 1962 was finished in the preparation period for the Olympic Games. The urban renewal project was based on environmental improvements introducing new heating system by natural gas that reduced air pollution especially during winter months but also improvements of sewage and water supply systems. As the outcome of the Olympics was thousands of new apartments (2850) for Sarajevans at the Olympic Villages Mojimilo and Dobrinja that became public housing complexes at the conclusions of the Games. The

infrastructural projects relating to the Games brought not only new sports facilities (Zetra, Skenderija, stadia) and hotels to the city, but also improvement of the public transportation. In comparison with other cities that host mega-events like the Olympics, story of Sarajevo is rather different. It could be said that in terms of investment in re-building city image and long-term economic growth it was done more than it was anticipated. Most of the buildings designed for the Olympics have been gracefully fused into the city landscape. 1984 Sarajevo Winter Olympic Games as a big world sport event is considered as remarkable success that promoted Yugoslavia as personification of both, domestic and international Olympism of universal values and brotherhood.

Thirty - four years later

Only eight years after the Olympics, Sarajevo was home to the longest siege of a capital city in the history of modern



Photo by Erna Husukić

warfare, which lasted from April 1992 to February 1996. The dreams of Sarajevans on prosperous future in rising city with a glittering glow that left the Olympics were turned into a nightmare in which Sarajevo become war zone. Olympic flame was replaced by War flame and massive destruction, that took away everything that city was symbolizing, instantly turning ideals on brotherhood and unity into discord and conflict. "Ice skating was replaced by dragging water containers on ice and instead of biathlon, other sport disciplines developed, such as running from sniper fire or hiding from shell fire or fire extinguishing. War times brought different "skills" – Sarajevo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, was consumed by the epidemic of nationalism which had no room for aesthetics of the Olympics or high achievement." (Burić, 2015,p.83) The cityscape of Sarajevo suffered many lasting damages. The Zetra Olympic Hall was destroyed to its foundations

in 1992. Although, it was renovated in 1999 by the donation of the International Olympic Committee today is functioning with great difficulties and under the level of maintenance. One part of the Olympic Sports Complex - Koševo Stadium, well-known area of spectacular opening ceremony, during the War becomes site of mass graveyard. In the twenty-first century, former sites of the Olympic Games on mountains Trebević, Igman, Bjelašnica and Jahorina are full of abandoned and crumbling structures portraying two-fold message.

While the problems around the future of Olympic facilities in post-Games period is not something new, since many cities nowadays experiencing similar problems, ambiguity of post-Olympic legacy in Sarajevo gave another dimension to this problem. All Olympic facilities today are under jurisdiction of ZOI'84 agency (acronym of Winter Olympic Games



'84 – Zimske Olimpijske Igre '84). The management of the Olympic legacy is characterized by slow pace and inadequate organization because of chronic deficiencies of Bosnian administrative and political system, and existing debts. In fact, there is reasonable argument that the lack of systematic planning resulted in partial or not properly addressed utilization of the Olympic facilities. Additionally, decaying infrastructure of Sarajevo 1984 Winter Olympic Games is still waiting for better tomorrow, to be adequately maintained or to be repaired. Nevertheless, as Edin Numankadić, Director of the Sarajevo Olympic Museum in Sarajevo, claims it is really sad that "Sarajevo is known for only three things...the assassination of Franz Ferdinand and the start of World War I, the siege of Sarajevo and ethnic war, and the 1984 Olympics. Only one of those things was something positive." Indeed, according to Vuic (2015, p.63) for most former Yugoslavs and Bosnians, the 1984 Winter Olympics are a symbol and the apotheosis of an earlier, idealized period in which Yugoslavia still existed and Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks got along.

Relying on power of Olympics which transcendent the political, racial, ethnic and linguistic boundaries, seeking to re-born sense of interconnectedness in Sarajevo, in 2002 the Olympic Committee of Bosnia and Herzegovina submitted a brave, yet unsuccessful bid for the 2010 Winter Olympics. Faced with poverty, high rate of unemployment, a divided political system, one country divided in two autonomous entities (Federation of Bosnia and



This page: Overgrown ruins of the bobsleigh track on Trebević mountain (source: Erna Husukić, 2017)

Opposite page: top, Next to the Olympic Sports Complex - Koševo Stadium and in front of the Zetra Olympic Hall, a soccer field was turned during the siege of Sarajevo into a graveyard because of lack of places where victims of the War could have been buried (source: Erna Husukić, 2018)

Herzegovina and Republika Srpska) and one district (Brčko District) had no chance. However, persistence to bring Olympics back "home" resulted that the 2019 Winter European Youth Olympic Festival (EYOF) will take place in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the Olympic host city Sarajevo and East Sarajevo.

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is a graduate from the Department of Architecture in Pescara with a design thesis on the re-generation of an abandoned site in Marijin Dvor in Sarajevo.

Undoubtedly, in every history book, Sarajevo is outlined as the exact place where on 28th July 1914, with the Austro-Hungarian Empire declaring war on Serbia as a result of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, the World War I begun. Although this event bonds the city to the first world conflict, ascribing it merely to the Great War would be reductive. Indeed, the independence excitement behind the attack to the Archduke made by the Bosnian Serb nationalist Gavrilo Princip, embodied the discontent of the Yugoslav populations; a feeling still prevailing even after the First War ended. After the War, which determined the end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in 1929 Sarajevo became part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, established by King Alexander I and merging the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs with the Kingdom of Serbia. After the World War II and with the defini-



Photo by Alessandra Olianias

Sarajevo Under Target

WASN'T IT ENOUGH ?
WASN'T IT

Sarajevska

Sarajevska

cafe bar PINK HOUDI



tive abolishment of the monarchy, the city became the capital of the Socialist Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina within the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia lead by Marshal Tito. Since its institution, the government of the former Yugoslavia was strictly controlling the nationalistic feelings of Yugoslav populations, afraid of internal disorder with the consequent collapse of the Kingdom. However, after Tito's death, in 1980, the containment policy was hard to carry on. The independence uprisings became even more serious than before the World Wars, sharpened also by the economic gap among the single nations forming the Kingdom. Thus, after Slovenia and Croatia, on 15th October 1991 the Bosnian parliament passed a "Memorandum on the Sovereignty of Bosnia-Herzegovina" without involving Serbs representatives. From that moment on, the tension between Bosnians and Bosnian Serbs started rising. After an independence referendum, called by Bosnian parliament and strongly opposed by Serbs representatives, on 3rd March 1992 the independence of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina was formally declared by the parliament, receiving international recognition on the following 6th April. The tension between Bosnian and Bosnian Serbs flew into a real conflict. On 5th April 1992, Serbs paramilitaries attacked the Police Academy of Sarajevo, the strategic controlling spot in Vraca, in the high part of the city. That was the start of what is considered the most lasting siege of the war modern history, which went on until the 29th February 1996,

the date of the battle during which the Yugoslav People's Army (YPA) and the Army of Republika Srpska had to finally give up the attempt of defeating the Bosnian newborn government. During the months before the war, the YPA forces started deploying on the hills surrounding the city: that's the moment all the artillery and the other essential equipment for the siege were gathered. On April 1992, Bosnian government formally asked to the Yugoslav government to pull back its contingent, but Milošević agreed to withdraw only non-Bosnian soldiers. On 2nd May 1992, Sarajevo was completely isolated by Bosnian Serbs forces. The main roads leading to the city were blocked, food and medical supplies were cut. After few failures in assaulting the city by the armored vehicle of the YPA, the besiegers shelled Sarajevo from at least two hundred bunkers in the hills. From September 1993, reports mark that all the buildings of the city were damaged and 35.000 of them completely destroyed. Among the most significant ones the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the National Library, which entirely burned together with thousands of books beyond repair. On the paving, a line containing an inscription "SARAJEVO MEETING OF CULTURES" marks the border between the western and the eastern part of the city and the entrance to Bascarija, the ottoman city. Right there, the biggest massacre of the siege was carried out – known as one of the Markale Massacres – on 5th February 1994, when 68 civilians died and 200 got injured. In response to the massacre, the United Nations dictated an ultima-

tum to the Serbs forces requiring them to pull back the heavy weapons to a certain point, otherwise they would be subject to air assault. Serbs finally gave in closely to the deadline, bombing decreased and the siege of the city looked like getting closer to an end. In 1995, after a second Markale massacre, with a result of 37 deaths and 90 people injured, international forces started critically opposing the besiegers. When the Serbs launched a raid against a UN weapons shelter, NATO jet planes attacked the munitions warehouses of the Serbs and other strategic military goals starting the so called Operation Deliberate Force. Clashes on the field intensified with the intervention of Bosnian and Croatian forces. Afterwards, Serbs were losing ground in Sarajevo area. Heating, war and electricity could be resumed in the city. A ceasefire

agreement was achieved on October 1995, later that year the Dayton Agreement was signed in order to restore peace. A stabilization and back to normality period followed, even though the Bosnian government could declare the end of the siege of Sarajevo only on 29 February 1996

This page: FAMA Map, by Suada Kapić. The map of the siege of Sarajevo by S. Kapić, one of the strongest maps of the XXth century indicates the position of snipers and how to avoid them, the secret passages and the areas more dangerous. The delicacy of line and colour and hand drawing give the map the feel of a medieval picture.



Milomir Kovačević

was brought up in Sarajevo where he finished his education and started his career as a photographer. He soon became the most famous photographer of Sarajevo. During the war in Sarajevo, he took over 30,000 pictures. In 1995 Milomir Kovacević moved to Paris. For his work Milomir Kovecević received numerous awards.

I was born and grew up in Tito's era. For me and my generation, Tito represented a symbol of peace and cohabitation of all people of Yugoslavia. Tito's pictures were an essential part of everyday life: in schools, municipal buildings, grocery shops, public places... Even after his death they remained a part of people's lives who saw in Tito a guarantee for Yugoslavia and peace. With the rise to power of nationalist parties, a new history was born manifesting itself in the destruction of Tito's pictures in public places. Regardless of these changes, Tito's pictures had been present in Sarajevo at the beginning of war. The army, which guarded Tito during his reign, has now been destroying his pictures. Nevertheless, those pictures remained as silent witnesses of a tragedy. Some of them have been completely destroyed, while others survived defying the evil. Most of them, however, were transformed into new pictures.



**Tito in war,
Sarajevo,
1992–1993**



«Tito in War»,
black and white photography, gelatin silver print
on baryté paper, 58x41 cm, 1992



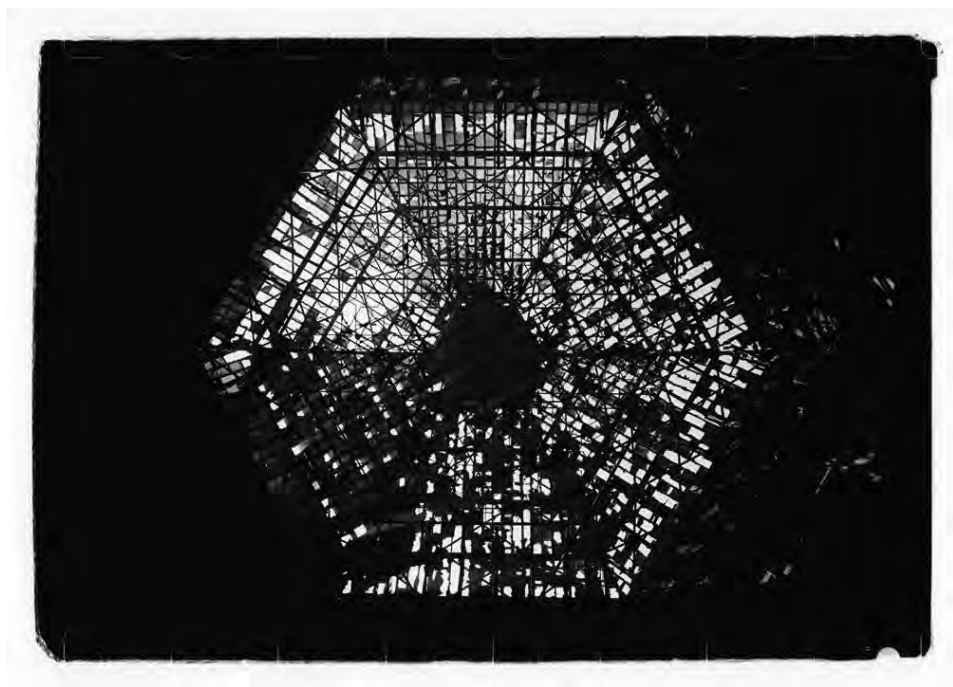


Tito in War, black and white photography, gelatin
silver print on baryté paper, 58x41 cm, 1992



«Vijecnica», National Library of Bosnia & Herzegovina, black and white photograph, gelatin silver print on baryté paper, 53x35cm, 1992

Sarajevo, August 26, 1992. Like every morning, I went out to get some news in the street. There was no electricity, no television, no radio to have information on the events. We could listen shots everywhere in the city. I had known that «Vijecnica», the National Library, was on fire. That building was the object of my first series of photographs, a sort of end-of-course duty... I had decided to go and see it, despite the risks that we had started to know, at the fifth month of this war. I crossed «Princip» bridge – named after the person that killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand during the famous «killing of Sarajevo», considered as the beginning of WWI – to try to avoid both shot and bullets. We tried all strategies that we could. There were no people on the roads, neither along the shores of the Miljacka, just some traces of blood a bit everywhere and an atmosphere heavy and disturbing. I was a bit afraid, even if we had started to get used to it. But the desire of «seeing» and take photographs was even stronger. I had seen it from far away; its facade had not lost anything of its beauty but a thick and abundant smoke was escaping from the building. I cautiously approached it. I crossed by another bridge and found myself in front of the main entrance. There were already a lot of rubble, embers and ashes. The narrow corridor was completely smoky and I could guess some flames on the other side. It stank of smoke, burnt, ash, tar ... I cautiously advanced and entered the central hall, under the collapsed canopy. I was stunned. The light that fell through the wounds of the dome transfigured the place. A yellow and red stained glass had remained intact and gave a touch of colour to this black and grey universe of disfigured columns, blackened paintings and plasters deformed by the heat and the flames. I was not as amazed by this unreal and magical universe. It was like in a movie set, an eclipse of the sun, an aurora borealis, a supernatural phenomenon. I forgot everything I had left outside - war, blood, fear, destruction ... I was in a sort of trance. I started taking pictures. I ascended painfully upstairs by an almost non-existent staircase, in places still red by ember and from which small volute of smoke were coming out. I only had two films. It went very fast. It was like a dream. I quickly became aware of the situation. I had to go away, not hang around anymore on the spot. When I left, I started to have pain in my feet and I saw that my shoes were burned to the soles of my feet. It was a paradoxical morning, sad and wonderful of miracles and desolation. It remained engraved in my memory and in my heart and I remember every moment, image, pain, colour, light, smell, heat and even details that I did not perceive on the spot.





«Vijecnica», National Library of Bosnia & Herzegovina, black and white photography, gelatin silver print on baryté paper, 53x35cm, 1992





CITY in
TRANSITION

Photo by Alessandra Olianias

Camillo Frattari

is a graduate and PhD holder from the Università G. D'Annunzio, Pescara, Italy. His research is centred on the phenomena of transition of cities and human settlements.

Sarajevo a unique city on the planet!

Sarajevo lives the post-cataclysm!

Sarajevo is science fiction!

Sarajevo makes Mad Max 5 possible!

Sarajevo can teach you how to survive the post cataclysm!

Sarajevo the city of the future!

Sarajevo builds a new civilization on the ruins of the old one!

Sarajevo teaches!

Sarajevo gives you instructions on how to survive!

Sarajevo Survival Guide, FAMA, 1993

The city is more than a collection of streets, buildings, public squares and monuments. It is a space we identify with, in which we establish relations and adopt or develop a way of life. When everyday life is upset by a traumatic event, the city takes on a new form and a new identity. This is why it is impossible to understand contemporary



**Survive(d).
Sarajevo as a
Manifesto**



Sarajevo without first confronting the dramatic experience of the siege that lasted from 1992 to 1996.

Urbicide / The destruction of the city can be viewed as a collateral effect of military actions, or as a deliberate strategy of **urban cleansing**. Every typology of building, infrastructure or space was violently attacked during the war. It was an act of violence against architecture and against its inhabitants. The exhibition **"Warchitecture. Urbicide Sarajevo"** organised in 1993 by the association of architects, exposed this aspect in a series of spatial and photographic representations documenting the damage suffered by buildings, grouped together according to their historic-cultural context (Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, modern and contemporary). The exhibition combined two neologisms: on the one hand the term "Urbicide", employed during the 1960s to refer to urban renewal projects in American cities. In Sarajevo it assumed the deeper meaning of an act of extreme violence; on the other hand, the term **"warchitecture"**, a new concept expressing the bond between architecture and war.

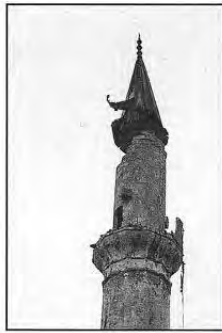
The construction of architecture has always been associated with civilisation, the representation of context, the creation of new meanings and the interpretation of its forms; however, the same categories can also be used to analyse and interpret destruction. Destruction conceals an attempt to remove part or all of a culture. In Sarajevo this generated a reaction that took the form of a **culture of survival**.

Survival / The siege radically disturbed



life in the city and for its inhabitants, subjected to a lengthy and extenuating trauma of human and urban proportions. The destruction of public buildings, the scarcity of energy and supplies, the impossibility to move freely through the streets, are just some of the reasons that forced people to change how they lived, and to adapt to an entirely different city.

The **Sarajevo Survival Guide**, produced in 1993 by FAMA, employs the dramatic humour of a tourist guidebook to tell the story of how the city's inhabitants lived (and died) in such an apocalyptic urban scenario, tenaciously seeking to "maintain a normal life and exercise their creativity". Lifestyles changed, together with the spaces of the city. That which remained standing was forced to adapt to new needs, to change its appearance. Homes were modified: windows lost their glass panes; interiors were



Opposite page: Map of destruction from "Warchitecture: Urbicide Sarajevo".

This page
Above: cover of "Warchitecture: Urbicide Sarajevo", Asocijacija arhitekta DAS-SABIH, 1994.

Below: destruction of a mosque from "Warchitecture: Urbicide Sarajevo".

readapted in response to potential sources of danger; basements were converted into communal shelters. Parks disappeared as firewood, zoos gradually lost their animals to target practice; all the same, many activities persisted in unusual places and ways, such as schools and universities that continued to offer lessons in stairwells



and apartments. Films, books, journals, radio programmes, exhibitions and performances were produced under the most unimaginable conditions. The city under siege defended itself through culture. This is how it survived.

Manifesto / Contemporary Sarajevo remains a city-manifesto of survival because it seeks to build a new identity that simultaneously includes a return to a pre-traumatic condition (real or ideal) and the overcoming of a traumatic event, shunning mechanisms that remove memory. Sarajevo's manifesto is founded on 5 principles: rejecting ideology, rebuilding what war destroyed, leaving the ruins of what war has constructed, showing scars and building a future without a past.

Rejecting Ideologies / The reconstruction of a city requires that meaning be assigned to its ruins, to its voids, to what is to be rebuilt; it requires a vision. In 1993 **Lebbeus Woods** arrived in Sarajevo to present his book "**War and Architecture**". He witnessed the city's smoking buildings with his own eyes. In his writings and drawings he sought to give meaning to this destruction. He associated the radicalism of ideologies that exploited the war to destroy multiculturalism with the principles of reconstruction. While the a-critical reconstruction of the buildings and urban fabric of the past represented a potential conflict with the needs of contemporary society, on the other hand the rhetoric of the **tabula rasa** would have been a violent act of urban renewal and a removal of memory. In the

vision proposed by LW, buildings destroyed by war became an opportunity to construct new spatial forms that integrated history, without celebrating it, and accepting their condition as a ruin to build new forms of ideas and spaces. This gave form to new typologies of spaces that he named "**Injections**", "**Scabs**" and "**Scars**". They were related to the existing as free, undefined and adaptable spaces. The projects of LW, while representing an immediately available resource, remained on paper, however, the intention to refute the ideologies of an a-critical reconstruction and the tabula rasa materialised in another form. There is no ideology for the reconstruction of Sarajevo because it is impossible to give any meaning to the destruction.

Rebuilding What War Destroyed

The deliberate intention to attack the deepest meaning of the city is evident in the total destruction of its symbols. Targets included principal political, cultural and religious buildings and spaces



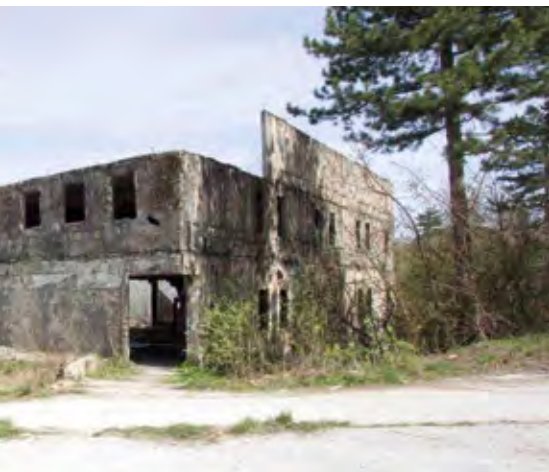
of gathering. For three days in August of 1992, soldiers shot fire bombs and canons at the National and University Library, destroying the building and reducing 90% of its books to ashes.

In 2014, twenty-two years later, the Moorish building was restored to life. Destroying these buildings was an attempt to destroy the very identity and culture of a population. This is why they must be rebuilt "where they were as they were".

Leaving the Ruins of What War Has Constructed

While the symbols of the city are reconstructed, the hills ringing it are dotted with the ruins of constructions occupied or erected by the military. The remains of buildings occupied as military outposts are anti-monuments that celebrate the defeat of the besieging army. The structures of the Olympic village and shelters dotting the hillsides are the true ruins of the city of Sarajevo, destined to exist in solitude and abandonment.

Showing Scars / The siege mutated



Opposite page: A post siege ruin on the hills of Sarajevo.

This page: from top to down, SCAR construction, Lebbeus Woods, War and architecture, Pamphlet Architecture, no. 15, New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1993. Lebbeus Woods, Reconstruction design of the Electrical Management Building, Sarajevo, 1994.



the bodies and memories of the city, which extend beyond the events involving individual buildings. There are modifications to the urban fabric that cannot be removed, but must demonstrate the strength of a renaissance, without forgetting the tragedy of death. While the relationship with buildings is mediated by the ideology of reconstruction, collective memory is constructed as a landscape of urban scars. The need to bury so many victims and the difficulties in moving inside and outside the city transformed every open space into a possible site of burial. This is the case of entire parks that were transformed into cemeteries and the numerous tombs found in open areas throughout the city. While the urban fabric was disturbed by cemeteries, public space was pockmarked by mortar shells. Craters left by fatal mortar strikes have been covered by a red resin. For their form they were called as "Sarajevo Roses". Walking through the streets of Sarajevo means crossing a landscape of collective memory made of silent sculptures and red signs.

Building a Future Without a Past

New buildings constructed in Sarajevo describe a contemporary world detached from the city's historic and cultural context. Contemporary Sarajevo has rediscovered the strongest expression of its architecture in the fascination of consumerism. In 1975, during the Socialist period, one of the most important symbols of progress was constructed in the city: the "Unima" shopping centre, commonly known as the "Sarajka". This shopping centre stands in October Square,

midway between the Baščaršija and the new expansion of Sarajevo. It became one of the most attractive spaces in the city, where children came to play on Sarajevo's only mechanical lifts. Destroyed during the siege, the Sarajka was substituted by the BBI Centre, whose success encouraged the construction of other shopping centres, such as the Alta, the Importanne and the Sarajevo City Centre, all within a close distance from one another. Other than changing the city skyline with their self-referential forms, this proliferation of shopping centres brought commercial activities outside the city centre and increased vehicular traffic, attracted by large parking lots. The fascinating with shopping brings the city of Sarajevo "on par" with other contemporary metropolises, where this activity is a tourist attraction in its own right. The shopping centre also becomes a symbol of the rebirth of the city, in opposition to the scarcity of goods and resources that characterised the period of the siege.



Photo by Zavod za izgradnju grada Sarajeva, Forum Novi Sad, 1982.

Opposite page: Sarajevo Roses. Craters left by fatal mortar strikes covered by a red resin.

This page

Above: Unima Shopping Center.

Below: BBI Center, the substitute of Unima Shopping Center opened in 2009.

The new buildings in the city do not seek a cultural dialogue with the past, but are projected toward the myths of the future (whether we like it or not).



Federico di Lallo

is a graduate and PhD holder from the University G. d'Annunzio, Pescara, Italy. His research has explored issues related to the dynamics of abandonment and regeneration in urban contexts.

The permanent exhibition at the Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo include "15 Godina Jima Marshalla / 15 Years by Jim Marshall". This exhibition is the result, unimagined even by the artist, of the itinerant photographic research **Sarajevo: then and now.**

—The author himself tells us how, after moving to Sarajevo in 1995 following a difficult period in Mostar, he decided to cross the city on foot, day after day, to measure at street level what had so surprised him when he first saw Mount Igman: the contrast between Sarajevo city – under siege and brutally tortured – and natural Sarajevo, whose breath-taking mountains served as a frame – apparently intact and unusually calm – to an inhuman and savagely hostile scenario. His work is a touching sequence of photographic pairs: on one side is a series of images from 1996, when the signs of the siege were still open wounds, emanat-



Monument on time



ing noise, destruction and death. The second group depicts episodes from a similar tour conducted by the author along this itinerary in 2011 (15 years later): the same urban subjects from the original sequence were captured in their renewed architectural condition, animated by living hope, no longer behind barriers and finally joyously occupied by families and children. This pairing of photographs is a visual translation of the **before and after** of a territory that despite having found a renewed vitality, continues to display the evident traces of five years of war; traces that continue to exist in a sort of suspended state to the present day. In its Aristotelian interpretation, the con-

cept of time innately contains a unique essential condition whose most comforting explanation lies in its simplicity: **time is the measure of change.** The charged condition of this notion is that if nothing changes, nothing moves and nothing is altered nor offers any experience, meaning that time does not pass. The time that has passed between two moments, the before and the after, gives us the value of **movement**; the response to the question of **"how long?"** that quantitatively describes the temporal horizon in which change occurs. Aristotle adhered to the Greek notion of becoming that contemplates the **eternity of change**, visualising it as a cyclical sequence of events that are periodically regenerated **ad infinitum**, in an endless loop. The notion of

Sarajevo Olympic Bobsleigh and Luge Tracks.
Photo by the author



becoming, and thus of time, is consequently bookended by the two limits of reference of the before and the after: two moments that determine the beginning and end of an event-occurrence. Time does not exist here. What exists is only the static nature of the place in which change has yet to occur, or has already occurred. Space and place are perceived thanks to the movement of bodies, which is the measure of time. In dialectical opposition to Aristotle, we find the notion proposed by Newton. He claimed the existence of an apparent time that coincides with that described by the Greek philosopher, and an absolute time that flows independently of objects and events. In other words, **a time that passes even when nothing changes.** Similarly,

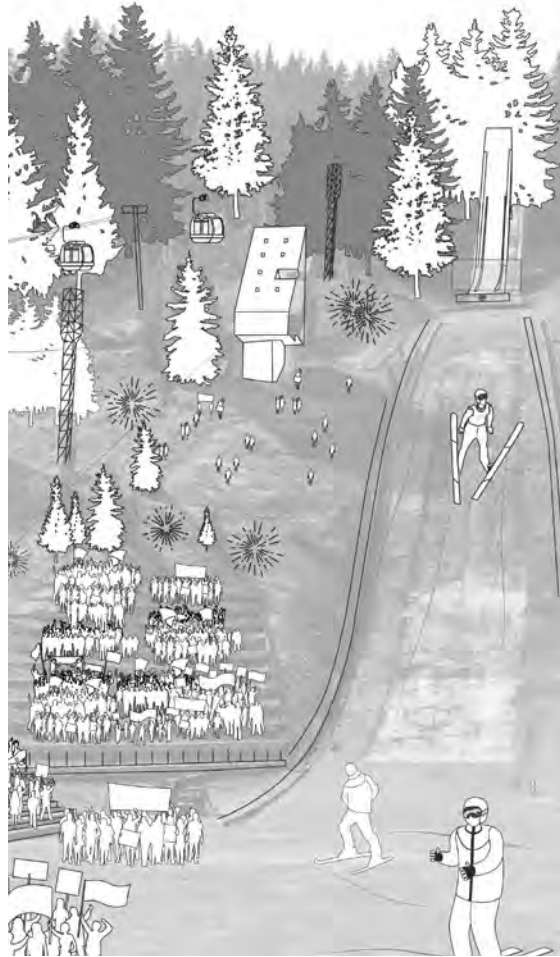
space can also be interpreted in two ways: one banal and coinciding with the space described by Aristotle and intended as a limit for objects; the other, absolute, which continues to exist even when stripped of the objects that populate it. This is most likely the sensation felt by visitors to Sarajevo: **that of a double time and a double space.** The time and space of the before and the after (the war), and the time and space of the meantime (the duration of the siege, still so easy to perceive). **A double time and a double space that continue to exist,** despite advancing at different speeds. The time of the before is a fleeting impression, and that of the after a frenetic necessity.

Sports podium built for the XIV Winter Olympics, 1984.
Photo by the author



ty; the time of the meantime is a memory that flows so slowly as to be almost immobile. The space of the before is an image in movement and the space of the after is a rhythmic return; the space of the meantime is the frame of a condition of stasis. The duration of events in the time and space of the meantime is so slow that it cannot but give way to the pressing needs of present-day Sarajevo. However, the charge carried by memories of the past, of the meantime that flows so slowly, cannot be concealed beneath the cover of renewal: this is why Sarajevo has two spaces and two times that run parallel to one another. They reciprocally recall, and in some cases overlap one another. While the first **(the present)** continues to advance rapidly in the shadow of the other **(the past)**, the other continues to exist in silence and concealment, yet it is always present in the first. The two limits within which time manifests itself, the before and the after, make it possible to describe the changes brought about by an event, the before, which concludes in the new condition of the after. It coincides with the moment dedicated to observation: the **hic et nunc** that makes it possible to evaluate space and its objects as they are and as they present themselves; in other words, the moment when the temporal and spatial duality of the city is flattened into a unique temporal reference perceived by the user. The interval between these two moments is the tangible manifestation of actions, of relations and superfetations that, as responses to the event of the before, determine the conditions of the after. When the impact of actions, relations and superfetations is

negative, it is probable that the event of the before was also negative. With equal probability, this concomitance of situations determines only one possibility for the space of the after: a condition that does not correspond to the needs of users that creates a dissociation (from the before) and, as a result, a total or partial loss of identity. Urban space that has experienced a similar dynamic is unused space.



The XIV Olympic Winter Games in Sarajevo.

The Before. The After

On 7 February 1984 more than thirty thousand people, some volunteers, were at work in Sarajevo. With dedication and organisational precision they prepared for the opening of the **XIV Olympic Winter Games**. Snowfall was the true hero of these Olympics:

This page: Ski jumps for the Winter Olympic Games, 1984.
Photo by the author



Photo by the author

it was not having overcome the difficulties in obtaining approvals from the media and government required to host the Games in a country where snowfall was the least of anyone's worries; the approvals arrived almost without a hiccup, while a lack of snow looked ready to spoil the party, right up to the last minute. However, a few hours prior to the start of the Games, the snow fell so heavily that measures had to be taken to ensure the competitions could actually take place. There was little difficulty in organising local efforts. Besides, this was only the latest of the organisational urgencies faced by the city: aside from the new facilities and hospitality

structures, much of the government funding was used for urban planning works, architectural restorations and enhancements of natural areas. It is standard practice for Olympic host cities to use this opportunity to re-launch different areas; however, Sarajevo approached the Games as a true urban renaissance, focused on showing up anyone who considered it inferior to its Japanese or Swedish rivals. At the time, Sarajevo was the pride and joy of all of Bosnia and Herzegovina and a reflection of the rapid development it was enjoying. On the morning of 8 February, the city was enthusiastically involved, with everything in order and actively attended: it was the beginning of an Olympics of records, and the first to be hosted by a Communist state.

Receptive structure in ruins.
Photo by the author



Yugoslavian pride was at its highest: the greatest success was that of having united five nations that differed in culture, language and religion in the pursuit of a common objective. A mere eight years later, Sarajevo was devastated by a war that produced the longest siege of the twentieth century. This event had a symbolic and significant impact on the sports infrastructures built for the Olympics, which had become monuments. Though of an ambivalent nature. The city had recognised them and the world had celebrated them as the symbols of the rebirth of a territory ignored for far too long, making them celebrative monuments. Their disuse immediately after the Games had charged them with additional memory as the evocations of historic event,

making them monuments to time. Yet the war had its own game to play. The only way to cross Mt. Trebević, peppered with anti-personnel mines, was to fend one's way along the three-kilometre long bobsled course, at least until it too had been bombed. Things remained like this until the same fate befell the hotels and Olympic villages, now military outposts, and all of the facilities constructed on **Mounts Igman and Trebević** (military strongholds). With its relentless attacks, the war produced a new monumental condition for these works of **architecture**: they became monuments to history atop **Monuments to time.**

Ski track on Mountain Igman.
Photo by the author




Arianna Piacentini

obtained her PhD in Sociology and Methodology of Social Research at the University of Milan in 2018. Since 2012, Dr. Piacentini is researching post-Yugoslav and post-conflict divided societies, with a particular focus on Bosnia Herzegovina and Macedonia. She has been Research Fellow at the CAS SEE University of Rijeka, and she is currently Post-Doc Researcher at the Institute for Comparative Federalism at EURAC Research, Bolzano (Italy)

If you are a young person in Sarajevo, your life is probably not easy.

You might have been born in the war time, spent your childhood in a beautiful yet besieged city; while, if you have been lucky enough, the war is “only” the most characterizing event of your parents’, relatives’, friends’ life. You might face social discriminations based on your own personal name; yes – because your name may reveal something about your ethno-religious origins. But it’s likely you will also face institutional discrimination; yes – because the state of Bosnia Herzegovina is grounded on three ethnic constituent peoples and, if you don’t belong to any of them, well... you are not really represented in the state institutions. You might be tired of “war discourses”, you might want to get rid of that past and move forward; yet, that past is in a multitude of ways constantly reminded to you, in-directly shaping your present and future. You

A photograph of a cityscape at sunset. The sky is a warm, golden yellow, with the sun low on the horizon. In the foreground, a tall utility pole stands on the left, with numerous power lines crisscrossing the sky. The silhouettes of buildings are visible against the bright sky, including a prominent mosque with a tall, slender minaret and a large dome. The overall mood is contemplative and evocative.

**"You have a duty if
you are a Sarajevan"
Young adults in
Sarajevo**

might want to study, work hard, set up a family and live a “normal life”; yet, you might find out that, although not impossible, without “the right connections” life is not always easy. You might want to be active for the good of your society, maybe engage into politics fighting for the rights of all the Bosnian Herzegovinian citizens; yet, you might find out how difficult is to win over the nationalist parties, as well as finding the needed economical and popular support. Then you might want to leave your country, a country you believe to be too corrupted and fragmented to guarantee you a normal and decent future; yet, you might find out that, out there, there’s no place like Sarajevo¹.

Below: “Sarajevo Meeting of Cultures” is the message of an inlaid marker on Ferhadija street. This is the spot where two dominant cultures that once shaped Sarajevo merge. In this point is clearly visible the passage from the Ottoman and Islamic city to the Austro-Hungarian and Christian city.



If Bosnia Herzegovina was nicknamed “Little Yugoslavia”, then Sarajevo was its symbolical reality. “Sarajevo meeting of cultures” – you can read it written on the ground in *ulica Ferhadija*, one of the major streets in the center of Sarajevo. Sarajevo was (and to some extents still is) a city highly mixed from an ethno-religious point of view, and both the secular character of the religious faiths and its inhabitants permitted a very peaceful living together. For this reason, Sarajevo was the symbol of the Bosnian groups’ coexistence, the place in which any people, group, religion and identity was respected, and where this respect for the differences allowed for the building of truly positive inter-group relations. However, and perhaps exactly because of its symbolical meaning, Sarajevo went through the longest siege of the modern history, from April 1992 until the end of 1995. Violence shaped new and different forms of inter- and intra-group solidarity, visible both at macro, Bosnian, level and at the micro, Sarajevo, one. Accordingly, beside her positive legacy, Sarajevo carries with her also the heritage of the siege – so the inhabitants not only have developed particular forms of inter-group solidarity, but also of discrimination. Generally those who remained in the city during the siege, to defend her, are considered “loyal” while, those who left or decided to join “the other side” are generally considered “traitors” (of Sarajevo, more than traitors of BiH). Nevertheless, most Sarajevans still proudly

¹ The arguments and reflections exposed in this chapter are based on empirical material collected in Sarajevo among young people born from 1985 and 1995, in the years 2013-2018.

try to keep high “the reputation” of their city, attempting to respect and preserve the so-called **komšilik** – a Turkish word denoting **“good neighbouring relations”**. This is the reason why, despite the many social, political and institutional obstacles citizens have to face on a daily bases, being a Sarajevan is a responsibility.

Sarajevo is the best part of interethnic relation because we are actually the most mixed part of the entire country. In Sarajevo you can't see that much nationalism because here there are Serbs, Bošnjaks, Croats, so there are not much problems, hate speeches and nationalism.
(Female, age 28, August 2016, Sarajevo)

Youngsters and young adults from Sarajevo, as most Sarajevans more in general, have a special attachment towards their city, always described with positive words. Sarajevo, for them, is a city with a beautiful soul and a sad and complicated past; it's a woman welcoming anyone with open arms. As a boy once told me:

You have a duty if you are a Sarajevan, and especially if your parents - grown up here - remember the history and told to you about it. You have the duty to maintain a certain kind of normality, you can't exclude people just because their name is different
(Male, age 25, October 2013, Sarajevo)

This means that, although institutions and politics point on another direction – the one of ethnic categorization and nationalism - people can and must

counteract those tendencies. It means, as mentioned before, **“to keep high the reputation of Sarajevo”**, which has always been one of tolerance, coexistence and appreciation for the difference. For this reason, many of the youth I met and talked with in the years spent in Sarajevo, were identifying themselves exclusively as **“Sarajevan”**, avoiding any ethnonational and/or ethno-territorial form of identification.

I belong to “others”. I'm not a constituent people of this country but it's ok if this implies not to pick side. (Female, age 27, November 2016, Sarajevo)

This “alternative” identification does not only symbolize attachment towards the city: more precisely, it does towards what the city means. The **“Sarajevan” identity is, indeed, a cosmopolitan identity** that doesn't deny the existence of ethnonational groups and identities, rather, it includes all of them. And like the “cosmopolitan idea” circulating in the anti-nationalist discourses in the 1990s, the Sarajevan identities meant to be in opposition to hegemonizing nationalisms and ethnonational/ethno-territorial divisions, taking the distance from identity's politicization and individuals' categorization. Nevertheless, nationalism is a strong force all over the country, and both social and institutional discriminations are an everyday life's problem. The country of BiH is deeply fragmented along ethno-territorial lines; corruption is widespread; ethnic-clientelism and employment procedures too often go hand in hand; unemployment rates are considerably high and particularly

among the youth; and resources are overall not sufficient in guaranteeing and providing the citizens, and especially the younger generations, with a 'normal future' – as they often define it. The institutional malfunctioning and the general chaos characterizing the Bosnian politics have progressively led many young people to believe that BiH 'is not offering us anything'. Many of them feel they have been pushed by the state itself to detach themselves from the political life of their country, and many other brilliant minds opted for leaving Bosnia Herzegovina once for all. Nevertheless, there are also those who believe in the positive potential of "the normal people" – once again, a term used by the youth themselves. Especially in Sarajevo (as well as in other major Bosnian urban centres), many youth have decided either to be engaged into politics, supporting and be active in multi-ethnic non-nationalist political parties, or take an active role in the civic society. In both the two cases, the youngsters I met were moved by a sense of social responsibility and solidarity "without ethnic borders" – a responsibility (according to some even "a duty") typical of the citizens of multi-ethnic/religious realities, in which the difference is understood as a richness to be preserved rather than an obstacle to be eliminated. A responsibility, or a duty, many youngsters from Sarajevo believe to be the right way to remember and honour their country's and city's past – a past characterized by tolerance and cooperation among citizens, rather than one of violence and antagonism between politicized and ethnicized masses.





Photo by Alessandra Oltanas



Photo by Stefania Grusso



Photo by Stefania Grusso

Opposite page and this page: different scenes from Sarajevo, a city, "without ethnic borders"



Photo by Alessandra Oltanas



Photo by Alessandra Oltanas





CITY
and
ICONS

Photo by Alessandra Olianias

Maura Mantelli

PhD candidate at the Università G.
d'Annunzio, Pescara, Italy

PESCARA 0 km



The image is still the one from 1984, the old railway yards are no longer there but one could still read its lines that surround the new tracks and the station. Eleven hectares of concrete do surround us, since the railway deck is our point of arrival, an urban centre from which one could depart or arrive, a never-ending surface of automobiles. The image is not of a station as an extraordinary double-fronted building: it does not have a monumental façade. When we enter it, we cannot find an iconic building in steel and glass where trains and buses await to leave. The stations, or staniča (in Bosnian language) are an important piece of our modern history, they have represented great stories, escapes, journeys of hope, goodbyes between lovers, they have been the stages of dramatic farewells. Today, the urban voids that do represent them, characterize this amazing photographic itinerary as a study of their absence. The stations that we have

Travel Caption ° 1285,8km
Pescara Bologna Zagreb
Sarajevo

BOLOGNA 365,9 km




ZAGABRIA 876,7 km



SARAJEVO 1285,8 km

crossed: Pescara, Bologna, Ljubljana, Zagreb and Sarajevo could paradoxically have been described with exactly the same words for each of them. These places, today called non-places, historically have been the symbols of movement, have revealed themselves in this journey as spaces that do not



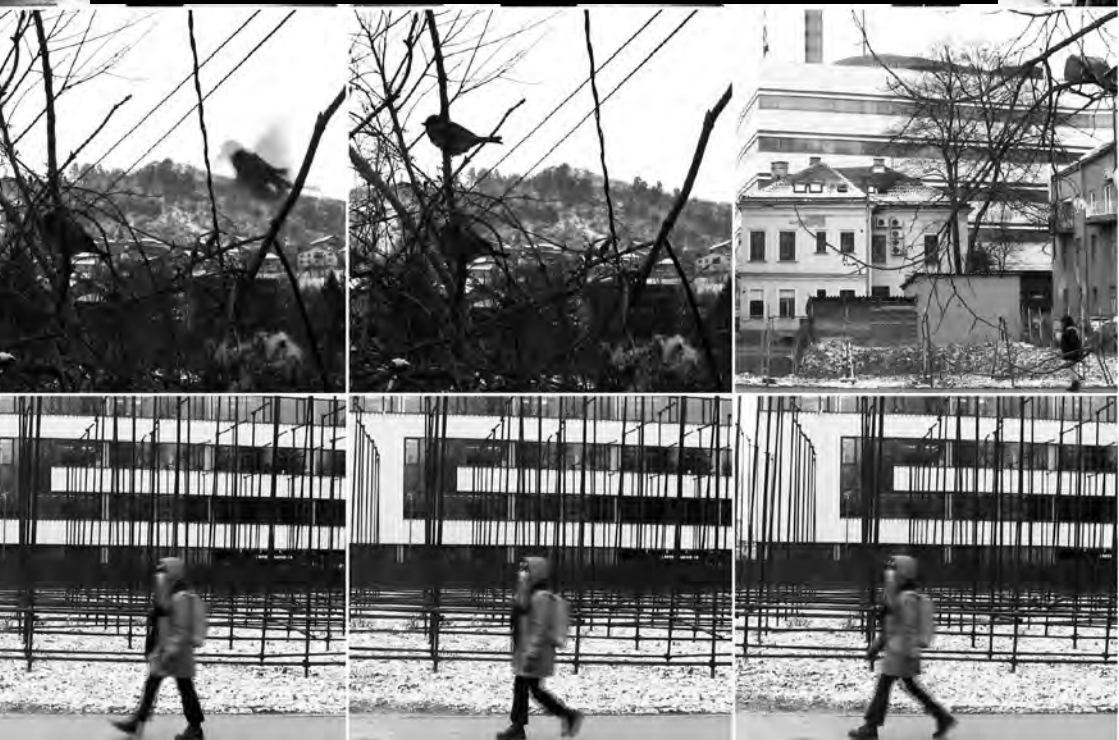


have any identity or specific architectural peculiarities. Non-places are the nodes and the networks of a world without boundaries and, from a structural point of view, they look the same in every part of the globe, as cited by Marc Augé. For us, the entrance gates to these cities have always been the stations; however in the narrative that we have presented here, there is no evidence of them. Out of these fragments emerges a narrative that begins in the Eighties, since

from that time culture has become an always more relevant component of strategies of urban re-generation and development of numerous cities, mostly in Europe. During the last decades, the studies and the debate on the relationships between cities, territory, culture, creativity and economy has intensified itself and, in particular, new theories have recently developed on the creative city, the creative class, on cultural districts and on the economy generated by them.

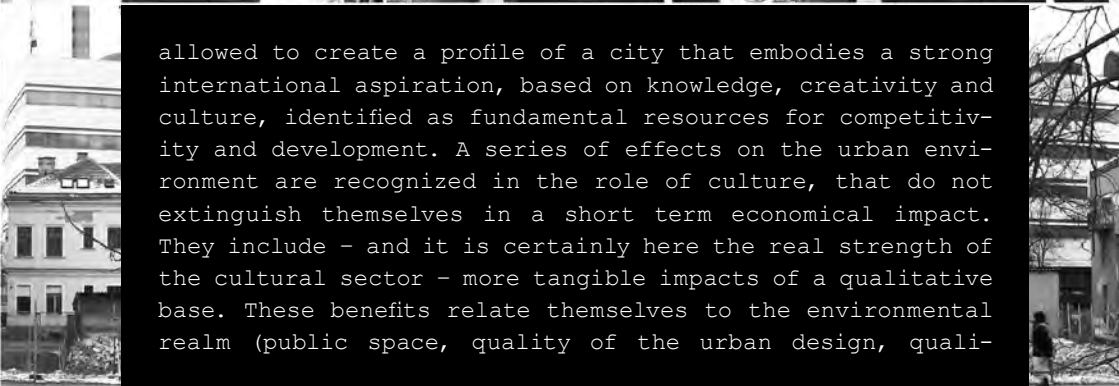


Numerous cities are trying to become themselves, by feeding a growing interest in hosting cultural events and fostering the development of cultural districts. Sarajevo has made culture from necessity to virtue, has founded its success on a process of social coexistence and on an urban policy based on a set of integrated projects, generated through a strong level of public participation. You can feel this as soon as you pass the threshold of the station. The totality of these strategic plans of the metropolitan area, that still nowadays allow a stratified reading of time within the city, have





allowed to create a profile of a city that embodies a strong international aspiration, based on knowledge, creativity and culture, identified as fundamental resources for competitiveness and development. A series of effects on the urban environment are recognized in the role of culture, that do not extinguish themselves in a short term economical impact. They include - and it is certainly here the real strength of the cultural sector - more tangible impacts of a qualitative base. These benefits relate themselves to the environmental realm (public space, quality of the urban design, quali-







ty of life), to the social realm (cohesion and inclusion, level of participation to cultural activities, welfare) as well as to the cultural realm (identity and the cultural urban heritage, the cultural governance). Architecture has always been influenced by the evolution of economical and





social phenomena that have occurred during the years, developing urban models, innovation, growth, re-use and re-cycle. We could certainly include Sarajevo within an urban model that incorporates culture. The important role that creativity and culture have had during the last period within projects of urban re-generation has allowed to reach there noticeable experiences of development. Within this scenario, the role of networks is fundamental, since they are able to connect actors of different contexts together with the ability of collaboration, generating a net of cross



Text | Travel | Caption
Maura Mantelli

Photo | Video
Marco Corona

Travellers
Maura Costantino
Marco Corona
Maura Mantelli
Lorenzo Morelli
Ilde Manuela Paolucci
Erica Scalcione

relationships between all the productive-cultural nodes of the urban centre. The creative networks could be then considered not only as a research theme but mostly a modus operandi. Out of all of these fragments, the story that we have experienced becomes a secondary issue, as well as the stratigraphy of the city, its characteristics, its symbols, its points of strength and its icons and becomes also a secondary issue the beauty where beautiful has become relative concept, since what is missing is actually the departing point, the entrance.



RTV H



house

Historical museum of BiH

Mikser House

War Childhood Museum

UNIS Towers

Skenderija CSC

Parliament of BiH

Svrzo's house

Vijećnica

SVRZO'S HOUSE

📍 Glodina 8, Sarajevo | 43.8624,18.4293

What could possibly be told about a traditional Ottoman house situated a few meters away from the centre of Sarajevo, Bosnia? Well, its timid appearance and its simplicity may trick the eye, but it has a lot to reveal.

Svrzo's house is located on the upper-class quarter of Ćurcica brijeg, very close to the Carsija, the centre of economic, social and cultural life of Sarajevo. It is a great example of the oriental-bosniac architecture and the way of life during the past two centuries. One can identify the house from its oriel wooden windows and its massive walls, high enough to block the view to strangers, but yet it never interrupts the sight of the street to the neighbours. The whole façade is simple and austere with a heavy contrast between the white walls and the dark wooden frames and doors. Getting through the main gate, there's an open space, the "men's courtyard". The exterior of the house is composed of simple cubes, rich in plastic treatment with solid and empty rhythms, giving a false impression about its dimension. The white walls, the stone and the wood give a gentle and clean appearance. What gives most character to the façade are the balconies. A series of arches, supported by subtle wooden columns, with craved motifs in the ending. The house is organised in two levels, while men and women lived in different areas. The area attached to the street is dedicated to men, whose duty was to protect their family, women, neighbours and even servants. They could watch the street from the oriel window and be alarmed in time. Women lived further in the house. Most rooms in Svrzo's house, except the kitchen on the ground floor, would often serve different functions. The same room was used as a dining room, sitting room and bedroom. A sequence of windows with curtains offering a significant amount of light. The entrance wall would be covered by a wooden structure, comprising shelves and cupboards for bedding, a washroom and a stove, which was used to heat the room, but also to warm the water for the wash room. A low circular table would usually be positioned in the centre. In the corridors there were "abdesthana", which is a special wash basin for the ritual ablution. Also, there were different fountains in the courtyards. It's obvious from the abdesthana, fountains, washrooms that hygiene held an important place in their way of life. Every corner of the house demonstrates modesty, family intimacy, order and the harmony of the motifs and colours, illustrating the beauty of life in the ambience of the Bosnian home. A simple visit can teach that artistry may lay in.



Aliki Papageorgiou

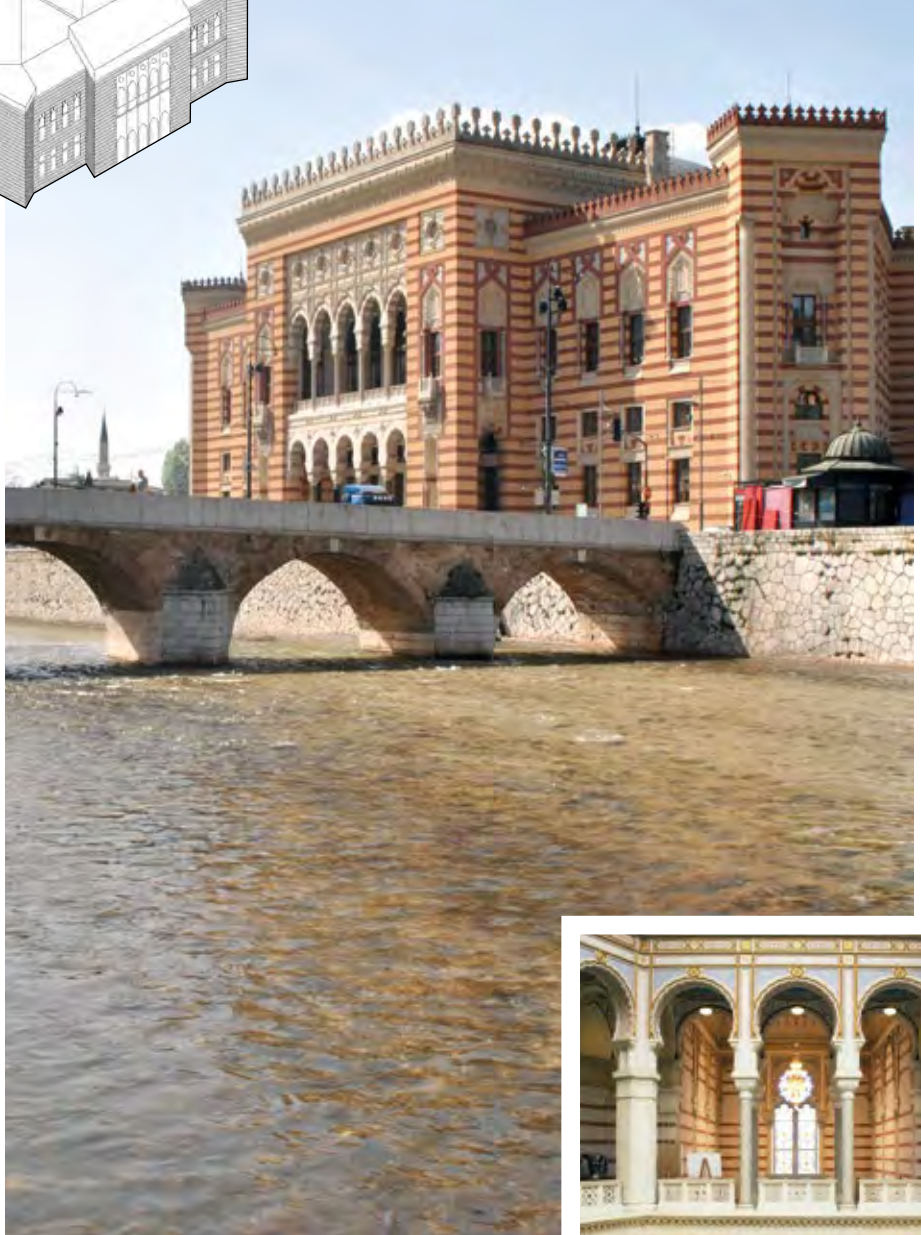
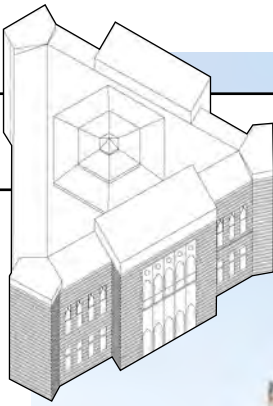


VIJEĆNICA

📍 Obala Kulina bana, Sarajevo | 43.8624,18.4293

Looking at Sarajevo from above, the line of the Miljacka river clearly stands out, cutting the city in two. Its numerous bridges resemble a timeline and evoke the contrasting historical seasons that characterized the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina: from the Ottoman period, to the Austro-Hungarian rule and the House of Savoy, to the building upswing during Tito's socialist era that led the city through its growth and expansion and to being nominated capital of the Olympic Games. Each of these epochs is traceable at first glance by the dense, compact texture of the Ottoman houses, the large Austro-Hungarian courtyards and the modernist architecture of the socialist era. An oversize structure towers above the small, cramped buildings of Bascarsija, the Ottoman district: the Vijećnica. The Vijećnica has been through a complicated history, having hosted both the National Library and the City Hall. Nevertheless it was, and still remains, an important landmark of the city. The original project by Alexander Wittek was initiated at the end of the nineteenth century and later concluded by Iveković. The Vijećnica stands out from the urban texture for its almost Euclidean architecture, and its typically Moorish red and ochre horizontal bands characterize the landscape. The war in Sarajevo did not spare The Vijećnica. In 1992 the building was intentionally bombed in an attack on the Bosnian culture aimed at eradicating the common memory of the country. Countless books and manuscripts were destroyed – 90% of the collection was lost in one of the largest fires to ever happen to a library worldwide. The rebuilding project revolved around the one thing the war had tried to eradicate – culture. In 1996, thanks to the help of the Republic of Austria and the European Commission, this important cultural landmark was rebuilt and repurposed. In 1992 Vedran Smajlović, a musician from Sarajevo, played his violoncello among the ruins of the recently destroyed library. The meaningful performance shed a light on the climate of despair, desolation, hate and fear that characterized Sarajevo after the war. Even though the Vijećnica now hosts the City Hall, it still functions as a cultural venue by hosting numerous events such as the Balkan Photo Festival and the selection for the Balkan Photo Award that took place in 2017. Similarly to the legend of the Arabian phoenix, the Vijećnica was reborn from its ashes and was transformed from a National Library to a polyfunctional cultural hall. Today, it stands as a reference point for the city of Sarajevo.

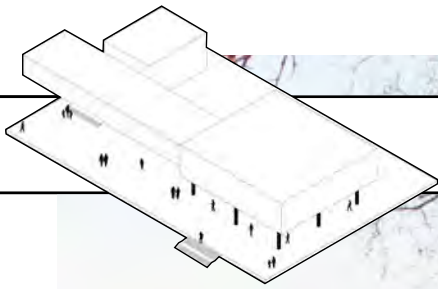
Andrea Di Cinzio



HISTORICAL MUSEUM BiH

📍 Glođina 8, Zmaja od Bosne 5, Sarajevo | 43.8624,18.4293

On the shores of the Miljacka river in the Marin Dvor district, stands an International Style building hosting the Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Formerly known as the "Museum of the Revolution", it was renamed in 1993. The building was designed by architects Boris Magaš, Edo Šmidihien e Radovan Horvat in 1959, and was used to feature a collection of memorabilia from the Revolution. The structure is part of a larger museum area that reunites the most relevant exhibitions in town. The museum premises belong to different epochs and clash from an architectural viewpoint, but match in their drive to acknowledge and promote the culture of the country – often forgotten or neglected. The renovated Ars Aevi museum building will be expanded in a nearby lot of land. The museum is an example of the International Style in architecture. Constructed of stark materials, its plain volumes and clear lines come across as rather monumental. The entrance is characterised by a large staircase made of stone leading to a pedestal that elevates the museum exhibits from the ground. The first thing one notices at the entrance is the large glass surface that constitutes the first exhibit area. What catches the eye, however, is the upstairs volume characterising the building – a large white parallelepiped that outlines the structure. Reopened in 2012, the museum hosts many works that narrate everyday life in Bosnia and Herzegovina with a focus on the people that lived through the main changes of the country. Works vary from Ottoman artefacts to Austro-Hungarian works, but the most evoking section is certainly the one narrating the siege following the Yugoslavian period and its phases. What strikes the visitor after a tour of the museum is the strong impact it evokes compared to its limited means – consisting solely in panels and everyday objects, the exhibits convey an immersive experience and manage to deliver an accurate outlining of an often unfortunate history such as that of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Lorenzo Morelli

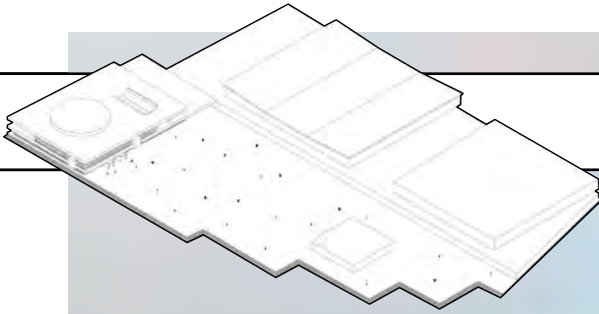


SKENDERIJA CSC

📍 Terezija BB, Sarajevo | 43.855256, 18.414036

Skenderija Cultural and Sport Center is one of the best example of late 60's architecture of Yugoslavia. The name of the area, Skenderija, means "Skender's place" and come from the Bosnian bey -leaders or rulers of various sized areas in the Ottoman Empire-Sandžak-beg Skender-paša, who first built in that area, and his son Mustafa Bey Skenderpašić who realized the first domed mosque in BiH, in between 15th and 16th century. The new Cultural and Sport Center was officially opened by Josip Broz Tito in 1969. The complex, that now covers an area of about 38.000 m², was designed by Živorad Janković with the collaboration of Halid Muhasilović. The quality of their work was clear when they won the "Yugoslav National Award Borba" for the best architectural design in Yugoslavia. The late Le Corbusier brutalistic style clearly appears influencing both shapes and material, but with a recognizable personal language of the two architects. The entire complex of buildings is linked to the other side of the river by two bridges: a larger one, called Skenderija Most, and a smaller steel footbridge known to Sarajevans as Eiffel's Bridge, supposedly designed by the famous engineer. Standing on a spacious plateau square, which hides a shopping mall below, the main build for sport competitions and concerts rises its concrete pillars-arms to the visitors: the load-bearing pillars of the structure in fact, placed on the two short sides, are oblique and so create an angle with the ground floor roof-plate. The two most appreciated clubs of Yugoslavia before the Bosnian War, were both located inside the second building placed on the left of the square: a concrete box with load-bearing pillars digged by horizontal windows running on all facades. The ground floor looks like a unique plate that connect together the two buildings, and from where the entrance are underlined by a serious of hollow concrete cubes. When Sarajevo received the assignment to host the 1984 Winter Olympic Games Skenderija was getting retouched and expanded with a new Ice Hall. The ground floor is extended and from that appears a closed concrete box. In 1992 the war in BiH started during which Skenderija was destroyed. After a period of abandonment, in 1999 the City-Government of Sarajevo decided to rebuild and use this centre as exhibition hall to arise again the economy of the City ravaged by the war. The complex got back all its function, even if with little less of its former glamour as the main building is used for competitions and music events, and a Contemporary Art Collection known as ARS Aevi temporary fills the spaces of old clubs.

Rita Riberatoscioli

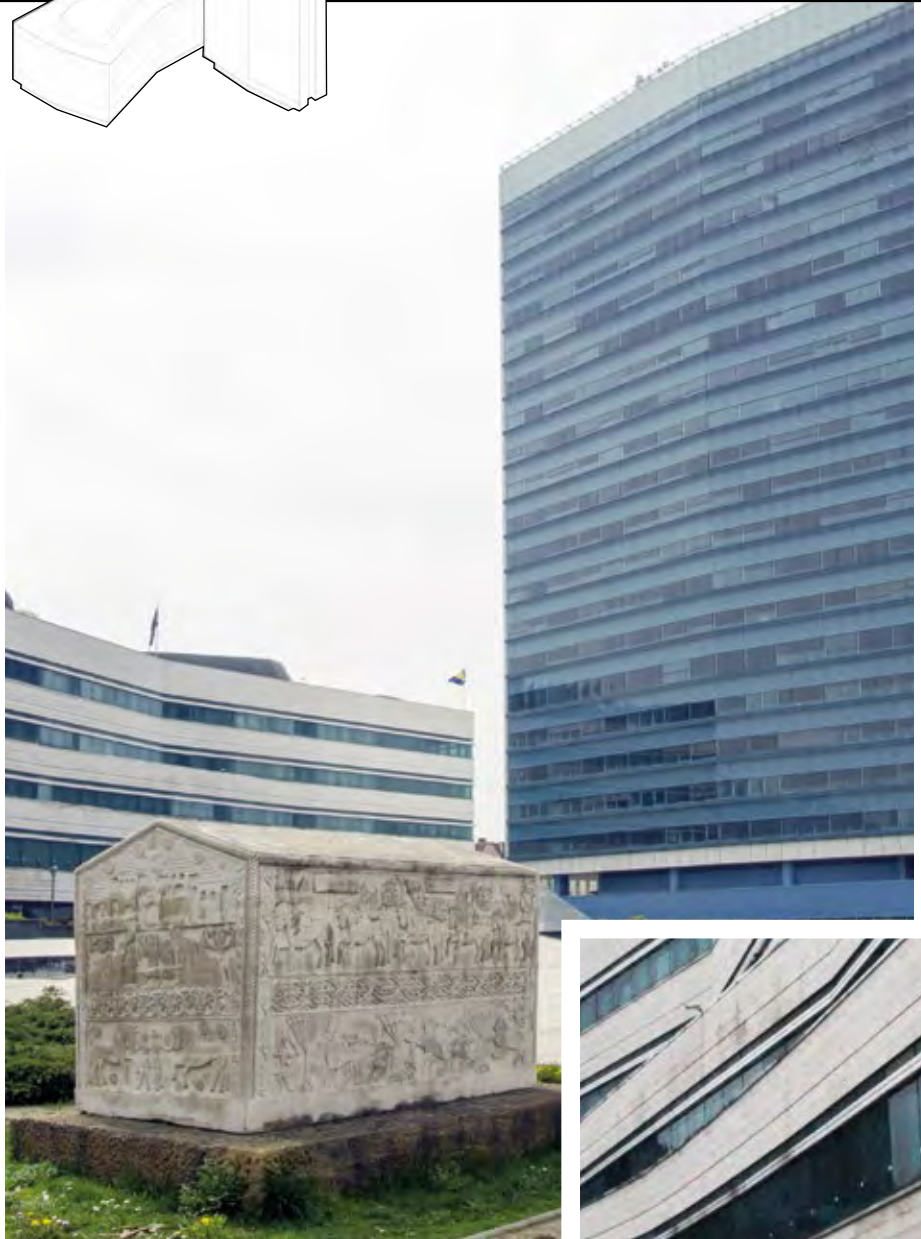
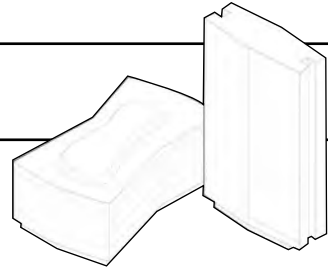


BiH PARLIAMENT

📍 Trg Bosne i Hercegovine 1, Sarajevo | 43.8624,18.4293

Looking at the layering of its architectural heritage, it is clear how the people who lived in Sarajevo have left their mark on the city. The ancient Ottoman district makes way for the Austro-Hungarian side of town as they both leave room for the Yugoslavian influenced neighbourhoods. The district of Marin Dvor was built in the 1960s and became the largest and most relevant district of Sarajevo by the 1970s. Among its many landmarks, the most outstanding is the Parliament building, which stands at the entrance from the Austro-Hungarian district. The building did not have an easy time. In 1945, soon after the end of World War II, the plan was to design a building that would have reunited the agency and apparatus the government, given that no other structure had been able to meet the requirements. Juraj Neidhart was an architect, professor and former pupil of Le Corbusier. He designed the building and the adjacent square to embody the spirit and the role of the country after WWII. His project was chosen in 1954, however, the construction works saw many setbacks and did not start until 28 years later, ending in 1982. At the time of its construction, the building was one of a kind in Sarajevo. The compound hosts three separate elements: the horizontal building, the tower and the square. It is an example of Neidhart's modernist architecture, but above all, it represents modernism and its influence on the large-scale urban development projects that characterize many cities to this day. The structure speaks to the efficiency of construction and the solidity of materials – functionality determines the way space is organized, and the materials bear a fundamental role in the outcome of the project. While the upper part of the tower is made of glass and white stone, the ground floor and the base are surfaced with black granite, giving the illusion that the buildings are hovering over the ground. Besides the architectural importance of the Parliament building, it is imperative to reflect on its symbolic relevance for the complex history of Bosnia and Herzegovina. During the siege in Sarajevo, the building became emblematic of a moment in time when the very existence of Bosnian was being denied. It is not surprising how the pictures portraying the Parliament in flames are among the most exemplifying images of the conflict. The building has since been restored with the help of an external aid program and is fully functioning. After years of war and decay, the city has been given back one of its most distinctive and strongest symbols.

Lorenzo Morelli



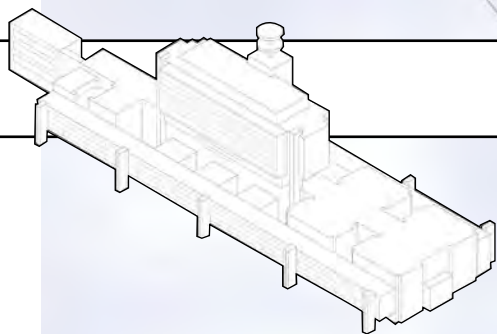
RTV HOUSE

📍 Bulevar Meše Selimovića 12, Sarajevo | 43° 50' 52.63" N, 18° 21' 12.9" E

Alipašino polje is an urban settlement built in 1970s in post modernistic architectural manner. Pure geometrical elements made in concrete are present on external appearance of residential building complex as ornamentation.

Buildings are assembled in one urban organization around many green areas and public places. Within that context RTV House is placed on a longitudinal site between Miljacka river and main street. Authors of this very complex task were Milan Kušan and Branko Bulić that won two very important awards – republican “Borbina Award” and traditional “6th April Award” of city Sarajevo.*1. Success of project lies in complexity of functions and very specific technical characteristics. According to that, the building is divided within three functional ensembles – spaces where radio and TV programs are produced, energy and service spaces and spaces of administration. The linearity of the site is dictating row organization of this functional division. This architectural ensemble is one of the best examples of brutalistic architecture in former Yugoslavia. Monumental appearance of concrete as main aesthetic visual characteristic shaped cuboid playful disposition of building. Monolithic materialization creates heavy and dominant composition of basic spatial volumes. The total number of stories above ground is 17 while the number of characteristic levels is 8. Ground floor is organized in playfully, but symmetrical, solid-void composition where voids are inner gardens that enrich quality of interior space. On the ground level organized in linear manner is placed guest rooms for makeup and wardrobe that are connected with the main studios. Studios are placed in the underground levels. Around studios are supporting entresols and on the main underground level are the technical spaces for staff, spaces for scenography and art crafts. Total number of underground stories is 5 - with 3 entresols, one main underground level, level with atomic shelter and level with tunnel installations connected with “Energy building”. “Energy building” is a separated building where all technical spaces are placed. The main building is supplied with gas, electricity, water and heating and they are connected with underground tunnels. Building has its own gas station, as well, for supplying TV vehicles. Due to this organization the main building was supplied during the last war with all needs and in the atomic shelter were war studios. RTV House was opened for Sarajevo Winter Olympic Games 1984 or we can say that Sarajevo city was rewarded for Olympics with this very authentic project. Today spaces of RTV House uses three televisions – BHT, FTV and TV SA.

Šefko Hadžić

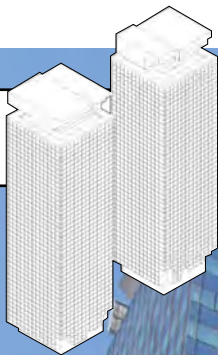




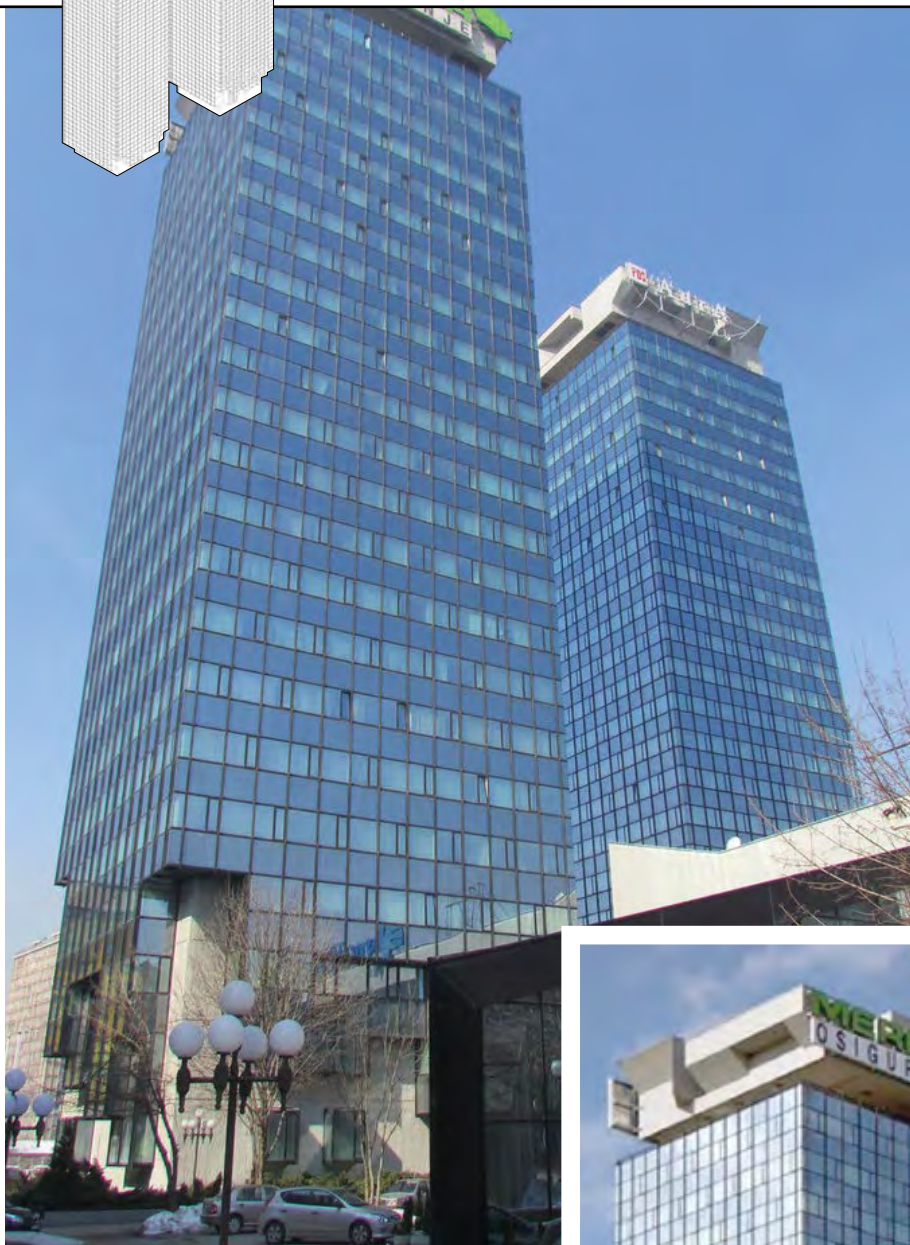
UNIS Towers

📍 Fra Anđela Zvizdovića 1, Sarajevo | 43.856870, 18.406181

The UNIS Towers are a symbol of modern Sarajevo, certainly of the specific and positive period that goes from the time Sarajevo held the Winter Olympics (1984) and the Siege of Sarajevo (1992-95). They were constructed in 1986. The towers were built in Marijin Dvor, a district of Sarajevo that developed during the second post-war period as a modernist city and included very significant buildings, starting from the new Train Station by B. Stojkov and D. Smiljanić (1948-52), the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina designed by Neidhardt (1955-80), two university buildings always designed by Neidhardt and one of the major landmarks of Yugoslavian modernism, the Museum of Revolution (1958-63, now Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina) designed by B. Magaš, E. Smidihen and R. Horvat (1958-63). Within this urban scenario Sarajevo continued to express its modernity also during the Seventies and Eighties. The two towers are significant not only for their specific architectural quality but as landmarks of modernity in a city, Sarajevo, that has always been striving for a contemporary image. This is probably the reason why they were heavily damaged by bombing during the Siege and their image in fire (together with the flames from the Parliament building) became the icons of the war. The UNIS Towers were designed by Ivan Štraus, one of the most interesting and active architect, writer and academic of the post-war period. Štraus was born in Kremna in 1928, raised in Banja Luka and graduated at the Technical University of Sarajevo in 1958. He died in Sarajevo in August 2018. Štraus has also designed other significant buildings in Sarajevo, such as the BiH Electric Power Building (Elektroprivreda-1978) and the Holiday inn Hotel (1983), two other iconic buildings of the city. These works show a very interesting interpretation of the architecture of the time, both oriented towards a personal investigation as well as a discrete inclination towards post-modern architecture. Štraus was also one of the few architects in Yugoslavia that was concerned in understanding the development of modern architecture in its country. Starting from "New Architecture in Bosnia and Herzegovina" published in 1977, he continued with many other publications, including "Architecture of Yugoslavia 1945-1995" (1998) and other works until 2010. This aspect gives to Štraus a prominent position in the entire Yugoslavia as the only that was able to disseminate the character of the architecture of its country during the post-war period.



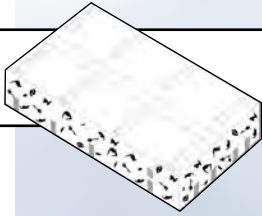
Ottavia Cellesi
Alessia Perez



MIKSER HOUSE

📍 Kolodvorska 12, Sarajevo | 43.8624,18.4293

We all deserve a chance, an occasion which can turn the situation upside-down. The Mikser house is born for this purpose, a seed planted in an arid soil, in a place still heavily marked from a recent war. The will to evade, to escape from stereotypes, from museums that too often brings memories of atrocities, and visitors convinced that there is a war still carried on; but the will to react, to be up to date with the new global trends is prevailing on everything. The first MIKSER house is born in Belgrade, in the once it was the industrial area of Savamala, one of the most promising neighbours of the town, a warehouse transformed with an ingenious creativity in a multi-disciplinary platform which encourages the economical development of the same region, and the country too; it establishes a connection between global contemporary trends and local traditions. Not only does it showcase a experience a great number of cultural activities, such as showrooms, conferences, concerts, workshops, festivals, theatre and educational programs; but also it gathers together the best regional designers and they products in just one place. It's a shelter from an oppressive reality, transforming an abandoned part of the town in new energy, encouraging economical development, linking different activities together and promoting local talents with a new function, and new features; such phenomena is called "retrofitting", which means inserting new technologies in an retro like environment, in such a way to create an empathy and familiarity for the user. The MIKSER house is located in an almost lost place, hidden between old factories' buildings, once you find it a new world comes to life, it eclipses all the surroundings, and for a moment it feels like being in a new dimension, where Sarajevo is up to date with the rest of the world, keeping its independence, but fertile soil for a new cultural rebirth of the country. However not all chances are exploited for the best, not everyone trusts the future, the MIKSER house is now on standby, waiting for a new regeneration, hopefully strongest and bravest.
(MIKSER House in Sarajevo is unfortunately no longer existing).



Maura Costantino

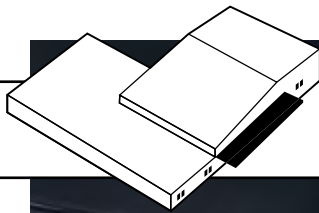


WAR CHILDHOOD MUSEUM

📍 30-32, Logavina, Sarajevo | 43.8624,18.4293

When you are walking down the streets of Sarajevo looking at the city and listening to the words of the guides, one can notice a certain type of poster-advertisements or, better, information about various war museums. The theme is still vivid in everyone's memory. One poster, different from the others, captures the attention. It is simple, with neither special photos nor phrases. In the middle, on a white background, two silhouettes, a boy and a girl, holding a balloon. Below them, there is only the sign "War Childhood Museum" and some information about it. However, in their hands there is not a floating balloon. There is a giant grenade. The War Childhood Museum is a unique place. The founder, the writer Jasminko Halilović, who has already written books such as "Sarajevo Way" and "Sarajevo – My City, a Place to Meet", had a first-hand experience of the 1992-1995 war. In June 2010, he decided to gather testimonies about children who had experienced that war. Therefore, he launched a call on the Internet. Anyone who wished to take part to the project had to briefly answer just one question: "What was a war childhood for you?". Soon, Halilović received more than 1,500 testimonies from all over the world. The "Children of Sarajevo" have grown up and have built a new life, even in other countries, but they have not forgotten. Each answer became a piece of the mosaic that was trying to tell the story of an entire generation. From the paper to the museum. In 2017, they inaugurated the current permanent exhibition. The exhibition hall amazes you for its simplicity. There are 50 normal objects, with anything special, and by their side there are 50 stories, donated together with the objects, by some of those "Children of Sarajevo". You read one story after the other and then you focus on the object. Moving forward, you do not notice anymore what is around you. It does not seem to be in a museum, but it is more like a sort of limbo where the only thing you can do is let these people speak while you keep still and silently listen. It is as if those objects were yours and you were living in those stories. And you experience fear because you have always listened to the word war but never, until that moment, you paused and thought about how possible it is to become a victim of those wars. You feel sad, because you know that there will always be someone who lives these kinds of stories. Walking out of the exhibition hall, you find one last installation: "The Beginning". It is another swing, similar to the first one, but this keeps swinging, without stopping. Just like the life of a child who grew up during a war. Just like the life of a city like Sarajevo.





Ilda Paolucci





Italian Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Nicola Minasi, with Claudia Zini, Founder and Director of Kuma International and studenti from the Dipartimento di Architettura - Università "G. d'Annunzio", Pescara, in Sarajevo. Summer 2019