

Heterotopy Sarajevo. Urban Space as Stage and Representation

The subject of this dissertation is strategies and tactics in the production of identity of contemporary Sarajevo. The changes are related to the shift in the location of the city on both local and European geopolitical and imaginary maps after the war in former Yugoslavia. The continuing process of identity formation is sketched against a background of changing representations of spaces – that play an important historical role in a narrative about Sarajevo as its symbols, such as Vijećnica, hotel Holiday Inn, places of memory (park Vraca), as well as representational spaces produced in a framework of cultural performances, by media, film, art, social movements or tourism. In the first part of this work: *Sarajevo palimpsest – geohistories*, different layers of historical Sarajevo's spatial tissue are presented and analysed, as the result of a particular location of the city – "inbetween" the West and the East. As such the city constitutes a "contact zone" between two civilisations – mirroring features of both and simultaneously producing its own unique identity that transcends qualities of both. Particular representations of the city are mentioned, among them: Sarajevo as a multi-religious as an Ottoman city, an Austro-Hungarian semi-colony, as a symbol of the first world war resistance against fascism or as an Olympic city representing space of the former Yugoslavia. In the second part, *Dystopia Sarajevo – the siege of the city (1992–1995)*, the siege viewed as the process of dismantling existing imaginations and narratives about the city is analysed. Sarajevo is presented as the space of the Other, a victim of turbofacist ideology, which developed during the latter stages of Yugoslavia by particular nationalist parties. This ideology deployed historical myths and symbols, in order to stigmatise the Other in nationalistic political narratives. Simultaneously, the period of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina coincided with an important processes which was occurring in Europe at the time. The fall of the Iron Curtain, and the reintegration of a divided Europe. The conflict in Bosnia, which was largely depicted by western media as the siege of Sarajevo was perceived from this angle act as a fun-house mirror of the processes occurring between former eastern and western sides of the Cold War. From both perspectives, Sarajevo was considered as the unwanted Other. *Urbicide* of the city that resulted in the dissolution of the city's identity is presented against the fate of buildings-heterotopies of Sarajevo and representational spaces of the war-city as the stage of trauma (among all international media spectacles and theatre productions). *Urbicide* of Sarajevo purged the city of its rich ethno-cultural qualities, leaving it in a liminal limbo. The third part of this dissertation, *Aftermath of War*, explores contemporary top-down and bottom-up strategies and tactics of reconstruction of identity of Sarajevo's urban space and the formation of contemporary local as well as European narration of

the city. After 1995, after end of the war, Sarajevo still functions as neo-colony of the East and the West in geopolitical terms,. This two sided function is present in urban space in the processes of Europeanisation and Islamisation within the city. On the imaginary map, postwar narratives about Sarajevo are based on the memory and experience of trauma as the stigma which is left after the war. With regards to that, firstly, the utopian project of reconstruction of Sarajevo, introduced by Lebbeus Woods, is presented. In Woods' vision, The signs and symbols of physical Trauma that urban space had suffered are included in the reconstruction of the material city and consequently postwar identity of the space. Performative use of the city's buildings as well as changes that occur with time and usage, initiate the process of social and urban healing. Secondly, the local representations of space and representational spaces of implementation of discourse about trauma are analysed. Finally, the events of the international anniversary of the first world war in 2014, hosted by Sarajevo, is taken as a case study This reflects the new European narrative which is introduced Sarajevo as a symbol of the beginning and the end of the European century of wars serves as the space for evacuation of European memory of the trauma of wars, genocides and a symbology of a new beginning.

Europe as a utopia is possible only by exclusion and negation of its own history. The imperfection of spaces such as Sarajevo, that function as liminal spaces of the Other, of unwanted memories and faults, let Europe create the illusion of realized utopia. From other hand, Sarajevo serves as a *blind field* of Europe, that suggests that Europe itself is a camouflaged space of heterotopy. With regards to this Sarajevo is not only an unwanted and a marginal Other but paradoxically – a space that is more real than Europe itself.

I consider urban space as both the mirror and performative space that reflects and acts along changing political and social movements. Reflection can be found in the representative layers of urban space, but also in production of new urban practices and cultural performances. In this research I use methodological tools provided by Henri Lefebvre, Michel Foucault and Edwarda Soja. In my understanding of heterotopy I deploy Edward Soja's understanding. Scientist perceived heterotopy as geohistorical other space. The main feature of such spaces is the revolutionary potential they contain, it is there where the crucial historical, cultural and political changes make the biggest impact.