

Making and Remaking Sarajevo's Image

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Introduction

At the 2002 Sanremo Festival (a popular music contest held each February in Italy since 1951 and telecast nationally and internationally by the state broadcaster), Italian pop singer Enrico Ruggeri performed a song entitled "Primavera Sarajevo" (Sarajevo Springtime). He did not win, but his song (a silly piece whose lyrics describe an unlikely balalaika playing in the streets of a city torn by a "feud," where a "black" river runs between Christian crosses and Muslim minarets)[1] became a radio hit, selling tens of thousands of albums.

At the same time (spring 2002), two exhibitions centring on Sarajevo were held in Milan: the first, held at the Corso Como 10 Gallery, was devoted to a collection of pictures of the war, while the second, organised in the Palazzo Arengario under the sponsorship of Milan University's Faculty of Architecture and the Commune of Milan, related to the Sarajevo Biennale of young artists. This second exhibition presented a plan for an "artistic path" across the city of Sarajevo: young artists could select a site along the route for exhibiting their work, thereby extending the Biennale's events to less central parts of Sarajevo and "reinventing," through art, the neglected parts of the town. The aim was to present Sarajevo as "a center for art and culture within the Mediterranean, as well as... a gateway between East and West" (from the exhibition leaflet).

To mark the tenth anniversary of the beginning of the siege, in April 2002 a meeting was organised at the Anteo cinema in Milan. Enrico Ruggeri performed his new hit and the Bosnian-directed (but internationally-produced) movie *No Man's Land* was screened before a large audience. Meanwhile short articles about Sarajevo's artists and young designers kept popping up in Italian fashion magazines.

Enrico Ruggeri was not the first pop singer to dedicate a song to Sarajevo – many better known artists, such as Pavarotti and U2's Bono, had previously dedicated songs and concerts to the city. And the 2002 exhibitions in Milan were just two in a long series of similar events held in various European and American cities. Unlike many others, however, they were staged several years after the end of the war as part of a process of constructing, and re-constructing, an image of the city that shows an enduring appeal.

These songs, performances and exhibitions have presented many different interpretations of Sarajevo, sometimes re-mixing similar ingredients, sometimes highlighting opposite sides of the same reality. The orientaling vision of Sarajevo offered by Western travellers since the nineteenth century has been intertwined, since 1914, with the city's reputation as a tragic place, the "originator of the apocalypse." Its multiculturalism has been variously read as "moral pollution" and "harmonic urban civilisation." The vision of multi-ethnicity as a source of "inextinguishable hatreds" established after World War II was overturned by the Tito regime, when multi-ethnic Sarajevo was held up as the perfect example of "modern Yugoslavia." Such a representation of Sarajevo was celebrated worldwide at the 1984 Winter Olympics, only to be substituted in the nineties by a tragic icon of a city-martyr once more torn apart by ethnic violence and/or of a cosmopolitan center of art and creativity.

Often reverberating from the outside in, as well as vice-versa, Sarajevo's image-creation process has been influenced through time by different cultural attitudes, political interests and historical

myths – the fascination of the city being variously fuelled by geopolitical ambitions, humanitarian solidarity and the morbid curiosity of tourists. Concern and solidarity with victims are sometimes mixed with commercial interests in a sometimes “politically incorrect” process of commodifying the drama. This mixture of elements is keeping Sarajevo’s allure alive, but this allure is hardly matched by a comparable interest in political events or by any real concern about Bosnia’s current situation. Sarajevo is still not a place where real people live; it is just an image, and one that is quite fashionable at the moment.

A curious blending of East and West

The external construction of Sarajevo’s image is not a by-product of the nineties. It dates as far back as the reports of nineteenth-century travellers to Bosnia, who, to arouse the curiosity of their Western readers, tended to describe the city as a magical place of churches and minarets. But they also described the region as a “backward, stagnant land lagging far behind the European West” (Hadžiselimović, 1997) in order to express their own sense of cultural superiority. To the first British travellers[2] – such as John Gardner Wilkinson, Andrew Archibald Paton and Captain Edmund Spencer[3] – who arrived in Bosnia in the first half of the century, “European Turkey” was mostly a subject of geopolitical interest; thus, their accounts are full of information about the local military situation, with detailed descriptions of roads, villages, religious attitudes and dress.

A broader range of reasons motivated later travellers. Georgina Mackenzie and Adelina Irby[4] arrived in Sarajevo in the 1860s and, planning to enlighten the local Christian populations, founded a school for Orthodox girls there in 1869. James Creagh and Arthur J. Evans went to Bosnia in the 1870s, at the time of the local insurrections against the Turkish domination.[5] The accounts of these travellers are, therefore, richer and more animated. Also, the discovery of oppressed Christians inspired a new form of solidarity with the local people. Their moralistic stance notwithstanding, we find no change in their cultural attitude: they remain “proudly conscious of [their] superiority of birth, breeding and civilisation” (as Adelina Irby describes herself), while the Bosnians are considered nothing more than “semi-barbarians.”[6] In general, Bosnia is portrayed as “a strange culture, oriental, exotic and fascinating,” a part of the “near East” where everything is different from what a “European” would normally expect (Hadžiselimović, 1997).

The basis for a multiple set of stereotypes was thus founded, initiating a process of “narrative colonisation” (Goldsworthy, 1998) that was to shape many future interpretations, no less from the inside than the outside, of Sarajevo – a “narrative colonisation” based on a discourse of separation between “proper Europe” and those parts of the continent kept in a situation of cultural backwardness by the Ottoman legacy (Todorova, 1997).

After 1878, when Austria was granted power to administer Bosnia under the Treaty of Berlin, a network of communications connecting Sarajevo with the Adriatic coast and the rest of Europe was established – the city center was reshaped, modern hotels were opened, and increasing numbers of visitors began coming to the city. But despite Western-style development and the various attempts at making Sarajevo more “European” (the first hotel, built in 1882, was named “Europe”), the city still appeared very much “oriental.”[7] To the many Western European and American “tourists,” journalists and scholars[8] who went to Bosnia in those years, the region was part of “savage Europe,” while its capital “swarmed with strange nationalities” (de Widt, 1908), its “streets were gay with turbans” (Davis Natt, 1897), and its “picturesque old-time life” (McKenzie, 1912)[9] was the main attraction. At best, Sarajevo was to their eyes “a curious blending of East and West”; as Emily Greene Balch[10] remarked, it was a city where it was possible to observe “the signs of active progress; order and safety, religious tolerance, business activity... Yet the East is not less

present. The closely veiled figures on the street... the muezzin calling the prayer... all speak of the Turk and the orient" (1908, 5–22).

An ill-fated place

The “signs of active progress” imprinted by the Austrian “civilizing mission” were not enough to impress the local nationalists[11] or to make the Habsburgs’ presence more tolerable. Quite the opposite was true. Sarajevo, which in three decades of Austrian domination had seen the Muslim population fall from 70 per cent (1879) to just 36 per cent (1910)[12] (Petrovič and Tepič, 1991), rapidly became the center of anti-Austrian resistance. In 1908, the same year as Greene Balch’s visit to Bosnia, the country was directly annexed by the Austrian empire, a move that stirred great resentment in Serbia and in many other corners of Europe. In 1914 the Bosnian Serb Gavrilo Princip, acting under orders from a Serbian terrorist organization (the Black Hand), shot the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria in Sarajevo, triggering the outbreak of World War I.

By this stage, Sarajevo had acquired a sinister charm in the Western popular imagination,[13] becoming renowned as the place where “the great crime of the Balkans” had been committed (Todorova, 1997, 119). But it did not become notorious on its own: it was turned into a global powder keg, a place irrelevant in itself but capable of threatening the rest of the world.

It is an intolerable affront to human and political nature that these wretched and unhappy little countries in the Balkan Peninsula can, and do, have quarrels that cause world wars. Some hundred and fifty thousand young Americans died because of an event in 1914 in a mud-cake primitive village, Sarajevo. Loathsome and almost obscene snarls in Balkan politics, hardly intelligible to a Western reader, are still vital to the peace of Europe, and perhaps to the world. (Gunther, 1940, 437)[14]

The “echo of a pistol-shot”[15] would resound in Sarajevo’s image-creation for some time, reverberating around its “white minarets twisted up like sugar” (ibid.) together with the muezzin’s voice (and later, perhaps, with Enrico Ruggeri’s fanciful balalaika). Even Rebecca West (writing in 1937) could not avoid quoting the episode when describing the city:

‘Look,’ I said, ‘the river at Sarajevo runs red. That I think a bit too much. The pathetic fallacy really ought not to play with such painful matters.’

‘Yes, it is as blatant as a propagandist poster,’ said my husband. We were standing on the bridge over which the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife would have driven on the morning of June the twenty-eight, 1914, if they had not been shot by a Bosnian named Gavrilo Princip, just as their car was turning off the embankment. (297)

But Sarajevo remained, in Rebecca’s eyes, mainly the place where “East meets West.” A few lines later, she underlines the contrast made by the costumes worn by the people and the people themselves: “Far less oriental in aspect than, say, the Latins.” This contrast makes Sarajevo look like “a fancy dress-ball... [a place of] immense luxury... of unwavering dedication to pleasure” (idem). She has the good taste to add “This air is, strictly speaking, a deception, since Sarajevo is stuffed with poverty of a most denuded kind.”

A multicultural town

While the Islamic presence in Bosnia (and in Sarajevo in particular) was just an orientalizing fancy among Western visitors, between the two wars it was to become a matter of serious relevance among southern Slav nationalists. An important theory that provided a “scientific” basis for a distinction of “national” characters on the basis of religious affiliation and morphological landscapes was formulated by the eminent Serbian geographer Jovan Cvijić. In the aftermath of World War I, to formulate a proper description of the many components of the future state of the southern Slavs,[16] he devoted a large monograph to describing the Balkan Peninsula, its population and its cultural diversity (the book, titled *La péninsule balkanique*, was published in 1918 in French for the benefit of European readers and only later, in 1926, in Serbo-Croatian). In describing the regional “psycho-geographical profiles,” Cvijić praised the regenerating power of the Serbian tribes in the mountain regions (“Là se sont conservés et élaborés des principes de haute moralité et des traditions nationales profondes,” 1918, 50), describing the Muslim population, mostly settled in the flatlands and in towns, as an inferior and servile class: “Je crois avoir souvent remarqué une tendance très nette... à la soumission... Une des principales tâches de l’Etat yougoslave sera de les instruire” (1918, 555). While praising the military qualities of the Dinaric populations, “who retreated in the mountain fortress before the Turkish invaders,” and denigrating, by contrast, “the *raya* mentality and moral mimicry” of the groups living in the lowlands, who remained in contact with the Turks (Živković, 1997), he was not only demarcating a new ethnic divide, but also a symbolic landscape in which the ethnic purity of the mountains[17] was opposed to the “cultural pollution” of the cities.[18]

Such ethno-geographical types “percolated down from scientific discourse... to become emblems of national identity for some and terms of abuse for others” (ibid.). While they were immediately embraced by Serbian nationalism, which celebrated the fierceness and heroism of the Dinaric population, they were used in a negative sense in much anti-Serbian literature, later becoming common in many Croatian (and later Bosnian) nationalistic narratives,[19] in which the Dinaric populations began to be depicted as violent, brutish highlanders, while the inhabitants of the plains and the main cities were praised for their peaceful attitude and multicultural education (Živković, 1997).

The first to re-interpret this stereotyping was Croatian sociologist Dinko Tomasić. In his paper “The Tribal Culture and its Contemporary Remains” (1936), printed in a Croatian journal and later in a 1948 American text, Tomasić reiterated Jovan Cvijić’s ethno-geographical profiles but in the opposite sense, stating that the Dinaric tribal social organization generated bands of warriors and conquerors of urban centers, while people living in the plains and in multicultural towns, such as Sarajevo, were peaceful and enjoyed harmonious interpersonal relations (Živković, 1997). Tomasić was rather optimistic: before the end of World War II, the dramatic wave of the Ustaša’s horrors shook Bosnia and the inter-ethnic fighting of the partisan war demonstrated that multi-ethnic coexistence is not always a recipe for peace and harmony. By then Bosnia could easily have been described as “a country of hatred,” as it was by the future Nobel Prize winner Ivo Andrić in the tale “A Letter from 1920.”[20]

As early as the birth of Tito’s Yugoslavia, memories of the recent carnage were hidden behind the “brotherhood and unity” discourse of national unity, and Sarajevo was re-invented as a “multicultural paradise.” Indeed it was held up as the symbol of the cultural “blending” of modern Yugoslavia. The city was also “re-imagined” by the rest of the world along these lines. We, therefore, find an Italian tourist guidebook from the early seventies describing the “happy fusion of architectural styles” that characterises the city (TCI, 1971) and a *National Geographic* article from the same period going even further, making Sarajevo the metonymic landscape of Yugoslavia, which it described as the “young and kaleidoscopic nation,” and stating:

Here, at the center, Yugoslavia came together for me. Here I saw East and West meet and mingle as nowhere else. In Bosnia-Herzegovina descendants of the original Serbs and Croats – some of them Moslems, some Roman Catholic, others Orthodox – make common cause as Yugoslavs. (*National Geographic*, 1970)

Notwithstanding, the city had lost some of its charm. While even during the communist period Croatian seaside destinations successfully attracted visitors from abroad and the capitals of the main republics maintained their popularity as cultural and political centers, Sarajevo strove to maintain a regional role. The quiet periphery of a periphery, where teenagers had to listen to Italian pop music to learn how to play rock and roll (as shown in Kusturica's 1981 *Do You Remember Dolly Bell*), the city had to build up its tourist image with reminders of the past (such as Gavrilo Princip's footsteps set in a footpath) or promises for the future (which was partly successfully done with the 1984 Olympics).

The city and the barbarians

In the nineties, Sarajevo was back in the global arena. As noted by Geroid O'Tuathail (1996), only Sarajevo's tragedy, with its "cinematic" qualities, succeeded in attracting the attention of the US public opinion (and government) towards a war that otherwise risked remaining just "a distant quagmire." The transformation of Bosnia from a small regional war into a global crisis, and of Sarajevo into its "strategic sign" was made possible by the international media. Thanks to the reports of journalists such as Christiane Amanpour and Misha Glenny, the accounts of local intellectuals and foreign observers, and the wide photo and documentary coverage, the drama of Sarajevo appeared every day in everyone's living room, with daily broadcasts of dangerous dashes through Snipers Alley. Once again, the city became world famous as a place of tragedy – but not only for that.

During the war, Sarajevo's image-creation was not limited to the CNN effect. The suffering of the city – which partly overshadowed the devastation of many other Bosnian towns and villages – attracted the attention of many international intellectuals and artists. Sarajevo started featuring in movies (from the Italian *Il Carniere* to the American *Welcome to Sarajevo*), TV mini-series (*Christmas in Sarajevo*) and documentaries. It became the subject of performances, pop concerts and music compositions. It turned itself into the theater of a vast range of artistic events, partly organised by international artists – such as conductor Zubin Mehta and writer Susan Sontag – and partly by the people of Sarajevo, who apparently decided to fight destruction with creativity.

The city's cultural life, which before the war had been animated by people such as Kusturica, Kenović and Goran Bregović, during the war became more diversified than ever. Periodicals continued to appear, the Winter Festival of the Arts continued, theater flourished and art exhibitions became in themselves a form of resistance (Iordanova, 2001). It was as if the city had decided to respond to the "armed, toothless and ill-washed primitives" on the hills (as the Sarajevo architect Ivan Straus described the Serbian fighters besieging the town) by becoming more of a "city" (in the sense of *civitas*) than ever.

This self-representation of Sarajevo was blatantly in debt to the "cultural types" identified by Cvijić and Tomasić (which was revived in the early nineties by some Croatian publications, which explained the Serbian aggression against Croatia as an aggression of the power-hungry mountain peoples against the cosmopolitan towns, Bougarel, 1999). The contrast between civilized towns and barbarous countryside was also cultivated by Bosnian intellectuals (see for instance the publication *Mostar '92 – Urbicid*, Coward, forthcoming), the destruction of cities being conceptualized through the new notion of "urbicide" – that is, deliberately "killing the urban" because of its distinguishing

feature of urbanity and heterogeneity. It also became a staple of Muslim nationalism, whose crystallisation went hand in hand with the emergence of analyses interpreting this war as a confrontation between the “urban civilization” of the Muslims and the “barbarous and tribal mind” of the Serbs.

From this perspective, Sarajevo was not just a city under siege. It became *the* city under siege – a symbol of tolerance and culture under attack by violence and ignorance. For this reason, international grants started flooding into the city. As Iordanova (2001) suggests, if Sarajevo was not a focal point for cultural events before the war, it definitely became a cosmopolitan place because of it.

Post-war images

As Iordanova remarks (2001, 235), during the war “the suffering of the city was systematically recreated in all conceivable art forms.” But it also featured in a large variety of other media.[21] FAMA, a group of independent Sarajevo artists and intellectuals that was extremely active during the siege, even published a “tourist guidebook” that described Sarajevo’s means of survival to potential foreign visitors. Published in English in 1993, the book, entitled *Sarajevo Survival Guide*, presents many aspect of living – and surviving – under siege, from the dishes that can be eaten in town (“Garden snails: After the rain, in the park or in the garden find snails, wash them and cook... Serve with rice,” 23) to its typical souvenirs (“The most desired are the shrapnel, which can be found everywhere: on the sidewalk, on the streets, balconies, apartments. Bullets are popular, but have a somewhat lower price,” 38). Black humor was apparently one of the ways Sarajevo survived. Immediately after the war, used ammunition became a very popular souvenir of Sarajevo: engraved with flowers or other patterns, or transformed into pencils or into other useful objects, they were sold in the gift shops of the Bašcaršija (the old Muslim market) together with photo albums portraying the dilapidated landscape of the bombed city and postcards of Snipers Alley or other example of Sarajevo’s more spectacular devastations.

Postcards of the bombed city are still on sale, together with images of the many white cemeteries dotting the city landscape. But new postcards showing snaps of normal life and resurrection are also available. While “Mission Impossible” tours are still advertised to war tourists interested in seeing the places made famous in the siege (such as the tunnel to get out from the city, the airport, and the house of Karadžić), the “red roses,” that is, the red rubber marks that fill the artillery craters left at the sites of Sarajevo’s worst massacres, are fading away. The city landscape, after being destroyed by mortars and bombs, is now being rebuilt. But it is not going to be the same as before the war, not only because of the graveyards and the difficulties of restoring historical buildings and normal houses, but also because the war has left new inner images of the city and attracted new interest from outside.

Social memories tend to be selective, or are selectively re-built, and post-war Sarajevo is becoming more Muslim and less multi-ethnic than before. While the main road in the city center is still devoted to Tito, other symbols of Yugoslav and Serb heritage have been forcibly wiped away. Gavrilo Princip, celebrated as a national hero in Yugoslav ethno-history but now considered a Serb terrorist, has been erased from the city map: during the war, the engraving of his footsteps have been destroyed and, after the war, the re-building of Sarajevo promoted by the emergent Bosnian nationalism has renamed, along with many others, the street formerly dedicated to him (Robinson et al., 2001); even the famous Principov Most (that is, the bridge of the 1914 assassination) has been renamed with its original name of Latin Bridge (with only a little plaque to remind of the episode). In the Bašcaršija, a *nationalni restoran* has been opened with a Muslim menu. A splendid book illustrated with beautiful old postcards and entitled *Forgotten Sarajevo* was published in 1999 by

Miroslav Prstojević, one of the members of the FAMA group, but it mainly contains oriental images from the past. Meanwhile the city landscape is becoming dotted with new mosques, built with help from Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern countries.

But the international allure of the city is still based on its multicultural-artistic-theatrical image. Although with less intensity than immediately after the war, money keeps pouring into “cosmopolitan” Sarajevo to finance the arts, museums and festivals.[22] Sarajevo’s image is being created and created again – to remember, to encourage moral reflection, to show solidarity, and, sometimes, simply to exploit tragedy for commercial gain. In the meantime, no foreign investments are getting to the shattered economy of Bosnia, which is still being kept alive by a system of aid and funding.

Endnotes

[1] For the complete lyrics, see www.musicadentro.it/primavera_sarajevo.htm

[2] The very first travellers to the area left Great Britain as early as the sixteenth century (Hadžiselimović, 1997) together with ambassadors and envoys from other parts of Europe. The Venetian Caterino Zeno went to Bosnia in 1550 and may have described Sarajevo like this: “The city is spread among the hills on both sides; it is full of gardens and well kept orchards. It is a city of merchants and is inhabited by Turks, Christian Serbs and citizens of Dubrovnik. The houses are built of wood, stone and earth. There are many mosques and caravan sites. It has a little fortress built on top of a hill. The city consists of 10,000 houses, each of which has a garden and rooms with panoramic views. The gardens are as beautiful as those in Padua” (cited by Prstojević, 1999, 335). Impetus was given to acquiring real knowledge about the place towards the mid–nineteenth century by the revival of the Eastern Question. The first Italian consul to Bosnia was Cesare Durando, who visited Sarajevo in 1863 and later described his visit in a very detailed and insightful report (Petrović and Tepič, 1991).

[3] John Gardner Wilkinson published *Dalmatia and Montenegro; with a Journey to Mostar in Herzegovina* in 1848. Andrew Archibald Paton wrote *Highlands and Islands of the Adriatic* in 1849. Captain Edmund Spencer published *Travels to European Turkey* in 1850. All three are all cited in Hadžiselimović, 1997.

[4] In 1867 the two women published *Travels in the Slavonic Provinces of Turkey-in-Europe* (Todorova, 1997, p. 97).

[5] James Creagh is author of *Over the Borders of Christendom and Eslamiah* (1876) and Arthur J. Evans of *Illyrian Letters* (1877). Both are cited in Hadžiselimović, 1997.

[6] Todorova, 1997, 98.

[7] In a paper entitled “American Travelers in Bosnia, 1897–1941,” Hadžiselimović, 1999, states that “Significantly, the words “East,” “Near East” or “Orient” appear in the title of several articles and frequently occur in almost every text. Some titles have other Eastern references, like a comparison of Sarajevo with Damascus: the Bosnian capital is called the Damascus of the North or the West, as it often has been by many other European travelers. Furthermore, quite a few travelers read more “Orient” into Bosnia than the country’s reality probably warranted, thus Orientalizing the land... and archaizing the present.”

[8] In 1894, for instance, Sarajevo hosted an international Congress of Anthropologists and Archaeologists, an account of which is provided by Robert Munro's *Rambles and Studies in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Dalmatia*, 1895.

[9] Harry de Widt is the English author of *Through Savage Europe: Being the Narrative of a Journey Undertaken as Special Correspondent of the Westminster Gazette throughout the Balkan State and European Russia* (T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1912). He is cited in Todorova, 1997. Phoebe Davis Natt, a journalist, was one of the first Americans to write a travel account about Bosnia. Kenneth McKenzie was another American scholar at Yale University. Both are cited in Hadžiselimović, 1999.

[10] She was later to become a Nobel Peace Prize winner.

[11] The first serious manifestation of anti-Austrian resistance was the uprising of 1882. The rebels were mostly Serbs, but many Muslims participated as well (Babuna, 1999). Obviously they were driven by different objectives: the role of Serbia in instigating the Bosnian Serbs' nationalistic movement was quite open, while the Muslim opposition was stirred mostly by the pan-Islamic drives of the Ottoman Court.

[12] Many Muslims left Bosnia for economic reasons, migrating to different parts of the Ottoman Empire. Meanwhile many newcomers settled in Sarajevo. In 1895 there were almost eleven thousand foreigners in Sarajevo – that is, 28 per cent of its population – (Babuna, 1999), making it a truly cosmopolitan city.

[13] “The idea of the Balkans as a threat to the European status quo was established well before the assassination... of 1914, which itself endowed references to Sarajevo with resonances of Armageddon” (Goldsworthy, 1998).

[14] J. Gunther, *Inside Europe* (Harper, New York, 1940), cited in Todorova, 1997, 119. Todorova also comments, “It is ironic to read the paragraph about the mud-caked primitive village in the light of today's eulogies about the multicultural paradise of the beautiful cosmopolitan city of Sarajevo destroyed in the 1990s. Following Gunther's logic, it must have become this wonderful city under the barbarous rule first of the independent South Slav monarchy and especially under the Yugoslav communism, while it had been a loathsome village under the Western enlightened rule of the Habsburgs.” I would add that while Gunther's definition of Sarajevo as a “mud-caked primitive village” does not foreshadow the nineties' image of the city as a glamorous cultural capital, it is only because it is anticipating an opposing representation of Bosnia, which has been shaped in the United States over the same period – that is, of a “sink hole,” as President Clinton defined it (O'Tuathail, 1996), which could easily be turned into a dangerous quagmire for the American troops.

[15] The lines “A village, like an instinct left to rust / Composed around the echo of a pistol-shot” is from a poem written by Lawrence Durrell in 1951 (L. Durrell, “Sarajevo,” in *Collected Poems 1931–1974*, London: J.A. Brigham, 1985), cited in Goldsworthy, 1998, 99.

[16] Cvijić was later consulted as an expert at the Paris Peace Conference and was therefore directly involved in the creation of the future Yugoslavia (Živković, 1997).

[17] While Cvijić was the first Balkan geographer to theorise the “psycho-geographic characters” of the Balkan people, the contrast between the “mountain people of the Balkans” and the inhabitants of the “urban areas” was nothing new, it having been present in a similar vein of Western imagery

since the beginning of the nineteenth century. As early as 1813, Byron, in his *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, had celebrated the tribal villagers as pure and unpolluted, while the cities were "debased" by the Ottoman "shackles of four centuries" (Goldsworthy, 1998, 23). In general, "The genuine article, the mountain peoples of the Balkans, the 'martial races'... seemed more attractive as a poetic subject than the more prosperous inhabitants of the lowlands" (ibid.). Such romantic stereotyping of the Balkan peoples led to attributing them with wildness, in the case of the Albanians, and belligerence, in the case of the Serbs. A similar romantic vision of the Balkan mountain peoples' bravery and purity was present in later travellers' accounts. The fascination with the region expressed in Edith Durham's *High Albania* (1909) is famous, as is her well-known sentence, spoken to an Albanian schoolmaster who had been trying to explain her the darker side of existence in the mountains, "Of course, you are a degenerate from the plains" (Hodgkinson, 2001, V).

[18] As stated by Short (1991, 41) the vision of "the city as the setting for a [more] civilized life" and the celebration of its cosmopolitan qualities has a long history in the Western mind, having its roots in the classical world, where the city states emerged as the unit of social and political organization; the same vision can lead traditionalists to see the big city as a "rootless place, unconnected to the stability of the nation" and radicals to think of it as "the incubator for creative thought" (43).

[19] As is demonstrated by "the recent fancy in Croatia for the sociologist Dinko Tomasić" (Bougarel, 1999).

[20] Only known only to Andrić connoisseurs until the nineties, the tale has since become extremely popular and is constantly quoted by everyone wanting to demonstrate that in Bosnia ethnic hatreds could be resolved only through "the territorial division of the country into ethnic enclaves" (Campbell, 1999).

[21] This flood of image creation was produced by insiders as well as outsiders. Some local artists – such as Ademir Kenović – insisted that only representations produced by insiders could be considered legitimate, since "the story should be told by the people who are living it" (Iordanova, 2001, 247). This would not, however, guarantee "objectivity," since the inhabitants of Sarajevo could be deeply influenced by the "narrative colonisation" of their own city from outside.

[22] Twenty million euros is the forecast budget for the building of a museum of contemporary art in Sarajevo as a part of the "Ars Aevi" project. The artworks to be exhibited have been donated to the city by various European foundations. The museum itself has been designed by Italian architect and Unesco ambassador Renzo Piano. The aim is to give Sarajevo a powerful cultural industry, comparable to Bilbao's, which revolves around the Guggenheim Museum (*Corriere della Sera*, June 23, 2002).

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