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Sarajevo: divided or redoubled?

Regulations, representations and practices across the boundary

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Introduction

The first time I visited Sarajevo I was travelling through Balkans during my summer holidays in 2009. I was arriving by bus from Montenegro and when we reached the station the first feeling I got was a sort of puzzlement: every sign was written in Cyrillic script; at that time I could not speak the local language and people around didn't seem so communicative in English. We were trying to figure out how to reach the city center but as far as we understood there were no public transportation leaving from the station. That sounded very bizarre to me, but indeed we had to walk with our backpacks for about 100 meters until we reached a trolleybus terminal that finally took us to the center. Tired from the journey and carefully focused on finding my way without mistakes I didn't pay that much of attention to the element that within one year would become my research topic: the presence of an invisible boundary that I'd just crossed.

As it will be further explained in chapter 1, Dayton peace agreement signed in 1995 institutionalized the internal division of the Bosnian state in two administrative entities: the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Republika Srpska. The inter-entity boundary line (IEBL) also crosses the area of the capital city so that the old town centre and the neighboring districts are part of the Federation, while East Sarajevo (Istočno Sarajevo) represents a separated municipality raised on a peripheral suburb and now included in Republika Srpska. The boundary has a purely administrative nature, it is not marked by any physical element of separation and is not militarized; as such, it can be freely crossed from both sides. On the other hand, the immaterial division entails a series of consequences and implications that this dissertation discusses in the aim at providing relevant enlightenments also appropriate for other contexts.

As Todorova (1997) accurately argued, *the Balkans* are often stereotyped by western European discourses as savage places where violence, atavist hatreds and political instability prevail. Refusing such an interpretation, the underlying assumption of this dissertation is that western and south-eastern Europe share similar characteristics and dilemmas. As such, problematic issues affecting Bosnian society should not be conceived as simple internal problems, but rather as aspects of crucial relevance that could potentially occur in many other contexts.

Indeed, national and religious affiliation still represents a central discursive justification in claims for territorial sovereignty and identity recognition within the

public sphere; moreover, issues and dilemmas related to minorities' integration represent a crucial issue often recurring within the western European political debate.

Within such a scenario, the analysis of Clifford Geertz about local and global worlds (1999) has not lost its relevance. The paradox stressed by the author lies in the fact that the growing global economy and communications is accompanied and counterbalanced by a large diffusion of cultural differences and divisions. As such, national and religious conflicts still play a crucial role in contemporary world. Thus, the author insists on the paradigm of difference and heterogeneity, where differences in national, religious and linguistic terms intertwine and manifest across the board. Therefore traditional conceptual categories such as country, nation and state are seriously challenged by the fragmentation and heterogeneity of collective identities that create a "world in pieces".

As argued by Fox and Miller-Idriss (2008) issues and claims related to national – and nationalistic – claims are far from being overcome by the new global scenario.

Contrary to the predictions of some, neither the proliferation of supranational forms of governance, the ascendancy of free market principles of global capitalism, nor expanding flows of transnational migration have unseated the nation state as the dominant form of political organization in the world today. From violent secessionist movements in the former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union to a growing backlash against immigration and multiculturalism in Europe and North America, nationalism and its xenophobic correlates continue to flourish in – and adapt to – a changing world (Fox, Miller-Idriss, 2008: 4).

Western societies are profoundly interested by phenomena of progressive diffusion of heterogeneity but traditional models of integration – from assimilation to multiculturalism - have not proved adequate enough to face the new challenges of the global society; therefore it appears quite urgent to investigate new forms of inter-group coexistence. In the light of the progressive inclusion of East European countries within European Union, discourses on Europeanness should reconsider the intrinsic meaning of European citizenship taking into account the peculiarity of the Western Balkan context (Apuzzo, 2005).

On the other hand, barriers and spatial partitions introduced to deal with inter-group tensions and violence represent a poor resolving strategy entailing deep and long-lasting consequences in terms of social encounter and exchange. Therefore, other solutions dealing with these issues should be investigated in order to provide new enlightenments applicable to different contexts.

This dissertation aims at providing a contribution in this sense, adopting an analytical perspective that privileges the city as a crucial standpoint. Indeed, the tradition of urban studies, from Chicago School onwards has largely discussed the relevance of urban context in analyzing social phenomena.

Contributions from urban sociology have studied the city from a multiplicity of perspectives, focusing from time to time on different aspects of urban systems; some approaches insisted on the functional characteristics conceptualizing the city as an integrated organism; others highlighted and investigated its dysfunctions and paradoxes.

From Chicago School onwards, urban ecology have conceived the city as the linchpin and – at the same time - the final result of a progressive and mutual process of adaptation between human beings and environment (Mingione, 1988).

The organization and integration of the city' functions has represented the main focus of urban economy, mainly interested in investigating the internal relations among its single parts. The city is analyzed as a complex organism, conceived as a relational space primary characterized by activities of production and distribution of income (Camagni, 1998).

On the other hand, the social implications of urban systems' configurations have led scholars to focus on a wide list of dilemmas, such as spatial segregation¹, conflicting claims to public spaces and problematic relations among local residents and immigrants' communities settled in the city.

In the new political and economical setting, some scholars have argued that cities have lost their heritage as places of social exchange and encounter (Petrillo, 2000). Phenomena of economical globalization and international migrations have called attention to processes of political and ideological radicalization as well as diffusion of new forms of inequalities, bringing on the foreground their consequences at urban scale (Sassen, 2010).

The advent and spread of economical globalization processes have call into question the potential and validity of analyses focused on urban scale, leading scholars to investigate the extent to which cities are still able to play a relevant role within the new configuration. Despite the progressive relevance of dynamics taking place at

¹ Studies on spatial segregation developed along two main directions: within the American academic context prevailed the interest toward ethnic segregation, that primarily focused on processes of immigration and issues regarding migrant's integration in socio-economical terms; being characterized by less radical phenomena of ethnic segregation, the European context has stimulated studies privileging the socio-professional segregation, stressing the relation between residential distribution and social class (Preteceille, 2001).

international level, cities' political and economic influence appears still able to face the overwhelming importance of global processes (Les Galès, 2002).

In the light of the progressive erosion of states' sovereignty, cities have been conceptualized as new independent actors of the global arena, described as complex social systems able to insert their economical, political, cultural, symbolical and physical dimension in networks of global extent (Gottman, Muscarà, 1991; Sassen, 1999; 2000; 2012). Cities have progressively connected one another constituting worldwide linkages, combining local and regional interests with international trends. In parallel with globalizing processes, they have autonomously established their own networks of economical, political and cultural relations at national, international and intercontinental level² (Gottman, Muscarà, 1991). As places of production and capital accumulation, cities can become either the scene of extreme social inequalities or represent a bulwark against the destructive effects of market (Bagnasco, Les Galès, 2001).

Within the global political and economical scenario the sociological reflection has sometimes privileged the relevance of new forms of virtual connection, leaving in the background the persistence of spatial manifestation of social division. In this perspective, it has been argued that society has turned from space of places to space of flows (Castells, 1989) putting on the foreground the role of information technology in shaping new forms of interaction. Moreover, the progressive erosion of nation-states' sovereignty, in parallel with the project of European Union as a united political and economical actor on the global arena, could suggest that borders and intra-state boundaries are progressively losing their political relevance. Nevertheless the idea of a "borderless world" appears far from being realized, as new forms of separation are constantly emerging at different scale (Kolossoff, 2005; Newman, 2005; 2006a).

At urban level, the diffusion of phenomena entailing different kind of physical separation – from ghettos to gated communities – suggest that processes of bordering and division are far from being overtaken in our globalized world.

As such, cities still represent crucial standpoints in the analysis of social phenomena, especially if we are interested in catching dynamics of mutual influence between space

² The conceptualization of cities as actors of the global arena entails a wide debate that puts in the foreground the different characteristics of the American and European contexts. In particular, the theorization of global cities proposed by Sassen (1999; 2000; 2012) has been contested by the analytical perspective of Bagnasco and Les Galés (2001) who stressed the specificity of European urban contexts in comparison with American metropolises.

and society. In particular, the case of divided cities put on the foreground a list of dilemmas to which the sociological debate has accorded large attention.

Divided cities are not just extreme exception of inter-group violence, but rather crucial examples where condition characterizing most urban contexts manifest in more radical forms. Indeed, problems that arise from such contexts mainly concern spatial segregation, recognition of different national and religious groups in the city and peaceful coexistence among them. If we consider black ghettos in American cities, or riots in Parisian banlieues, the dilemmas to be faced seem quite similar.

In this sense the field of urban studies specifically devoted to divided cities has stressed the potential of space management strategies in affecting – either positively or negatively – the development of inter-group conflict and the path towards reconciliation. As such, urban arenas become places where tensions can be either mitigated or fostered through the shaping and control of urban space (Bollens, 2007). Thus, the resolving potential of space planning and management lies in the way it possibly addresses dilemmas of inter-group strife, since interventions implemented at local scale could face the spatial, social-psychological and organizational challenges of living together in a more appropriate way than state-level negotiations. (Yftachel, 1995; Dovey, 1999; Bollens, 1998a; 1998b; 2000; 2001; 2009; Stanley, 2003; Pullan et al., 2007; Anderson, 2008; Calame, Charlesworth, 2009).

Moreover, dynamics and processes occurring at urban level are consistently linked with phenomena taking place at wider scale thus intervening on urban space entails effects also at wider level in terms of conflicts' management. Therefore “the city's potential rests not only on being a ‘victim’ where suffering is sometimes most concentrated, but also being a ‘protagonist’ where conflict is often most intense” (Anderson, 2008: 3).

Beside the role played by space management, partitioned urban contexts allow us to reflect upon the mutual influence between physical and social reality, conceiving the boundary as a socio-spatial category. On the one hand, boundaries represent social constructs as the significance attributed to them in symbolic and political terms is always flexible and changeable. As such, their meanings can be always negotiated, challenged and redefined by different discourses and practices of social interaction. On the other hand, spatial separations affect social reality intervening in processes of identity construction and providing the basis for processes of *othering* (Newman, 2006b). Indeed, boundaries provide a solid basis to decline a sense of belonging in

spatial terms fostering processes of intra-group identification and inter-group distinction.

All this considered Sarajevo represents a stimulating research context that allows shedding light on dynamics potentially retraceable also in other social environments. As such, the most relevant aspect lies in the immaterial and latent division that, nevertheless, permeates every aspects of social reality. In this sense the absence of physical elements of separation very common in divided cities such as Nicosia or Belfast, allow to catch the context' similarities with most western European cities, where conflicts occurring at urban scale manifest in less violence feature, but entail equally deep social cleavages.

Thus, the main objective of this dissertation is investigating the generative power of division and its consequences both in spatial and social terms. On the other hand, I aim at pointing out the extent to which the logic of separation is challenged and contested.

Such general research interest is declined along two main investigative directions conceiving, on the one hand, spatial planning regulation and, on the other hand, daily practices of space use and social interaction taking place across the boundary.

In the first case the focus of the analysis concerns the role of planning regulation and space management in shaping the divided urban space, as well as discursive strategies and representations of spatial and social reality entailed by such normative frame. As such, planning regulations are analyzed in the light of the implicit values and interpretations they produce, in order to point out their effect on reality. Thus, it will be discussed the extent to which the divisive power of the separation is either reproduced or challenged by regulations and interventions on urban space.

From a complementary analytical perspective this dissertation deals with issues related to daily spatial practices as well as representations of the situation elaborated by inhabitants of both sides. As such, the analysis focuses on narratives about the boundary and the separation, as well as processes of identity construction and sense of belonging declined in spatial terms. On the one hand, the research aims at pointing out the extent to which the spatial division affects individuals' identification in collective terms; on the other hand, it intends to discuss the way in which daily practices of interaction either reinforce or challenge the political and symbolical relevance of the boundary.

The dissertation is articulated in six chapters. The first one introduces the research context retracing the most salient events from the foundation of Sarajevo until its post-war spatial partition. Such preliminary overview appears crucial to discuss how diverging reconstructions of historical circumstances still entail contested interpretations of past events. The second chapter gives account of the main theoretical contributions upon which I elaborated the conceptual tools to carry out my research. Methodological issues are discussed in chapter 3 in which I clarify my research questions as well as the techniques I implied in collecting and analyzing data. The empirical findings of my work are presented in the last three chapters of this dissertation.

Chapter 1

The research context

Sarajevo before and after the partition

Approaching Sarajevo we immediately find ourselves in a sort of magic atmosphere, the city is small, surrounded by hills and it gives the feeling of a place rich of history despite its limited extension. Walking parallel to the Miljacka river, urban landscape and its changing architectural style show the traces of the empires and regimes that had administered the region throughout the time; taking a walk from Sebilj, the wooden fountain of the old town square, and heading westward following the main street allow us to retrace the steps from the Ottoman period to the socialist era. The way in which mosques, churches and synagogues fit gently into the cityscape tells us more than a history book about the time when Sarajevo was known worldwide as the Balkan's Jerusalem. People from different faith and languages, coming from different parts of the world have lived together for centuries making Sarajevo what Karahasan (2012) describes as the center of the world:

Sarajevo became soon the metaphor of the world. [...] About a century after its foundation, the City gathered people of every monotheistic religion [...]. It became a microcosm, the center of the world [...] including in itself the whole world (Karahasan, 2012:15, my translation)

Nevertheless, the city doesn't tell us only about its peaceful multicultural environment: the riddled buildings outside the center recall the tragic conflict occurred in the nineties and the siege that lasted almost four years. This terrible event and the consequent media resonance contributed to obscure the memory of what the city used to represent in the previous past: today Sarajevo is frequently remembered for having been the scene of incomprehensible atrocities, but very seldom recalled as the melting pot of different communities.

Such a partial portrait provides in my opinion a misleading picture of the context and entails a superficial approach to its complexity. On the contrary, both the previous and the latest historical contingencies must be taken into account as well as their contested

interpretations. Therefore a brief historical introduction appears essential to ground the research questions linked to this work.

Due to the religious and national heterogeneity of the Bosnian context the issue of a comprehensive Bosnian identity has always been controversial. Contrasting perspectives have always involved different narrations and historical interpretations in order to validate or deny the specificity of Bosnia - Herzegovina and its people. The recognition of common roots remains a contested topic and the historical evidence of a peculiar Bosnian identity is still questioned and sometimes exploited. Therefore it appears of crucial relevance retracing the salient events from the origin of the Bosnian state. Rather than providing a descriptive historical overview, this introduction aims at pointing out how past events have always been interpreted and represented to corroborate or invalidate opposing narrations about people and territory. It is not my purpose to providing an uncontested historical truth, but rather to highlight how the complexity of the context and the events occurred throughout centuries have always produced contrasting interpretations that have not yet reached a shared vision.

1.1. Foundation of the city and Ottoman rule

Sarajevo was founded by authorities of the Ottoman Empire in the mid-fifteenth century. The name of the city results from a Slavic contraction of the Turkish words *saraj* (court) and *ovaši* (field), referring to the fields expanding west of the administrative buildings of the government. The city arose and developed along the banks of the Miljacka river, on a flat valley surrounded by several mountains: Igman and Bjelašnica south-western, Trebević and Jahorina south-eastern, Romanija eastern and other hills northern.



Satellite view of Sarajevo

Peoples from different origins and traditions had inhabited Sarajevo valley long before the arrival of Ottomans, contributing to generate a rich environment of religious heterogeneity and syncretism. Romans conquered the area previously inhabited by Illyrians in the III cent. BC; their administration lasted until VII cent. AD, when South Slavs reached and occupied the region. Historical documents prove the existence of a medieval Bosnian state autonomously administered until the Ottoman conquest and such reference represents a crucial element involved in the contemporary discourse about Bosnian nation and its origin (Malcom, 2000).

Through centuries polytheistic worships made space for different Christian churches - such as the independent Bosnian Church, the Serbian Orthodox Church, and the Catholic Church - leading Slavs to combine their traditional pagan practices with a new Christian faith. The most known expression of such religious syncretism is represented by the Bogumilism (Faber, 1996)

After the establishing of Ottoman rule conversions to Islam became quite common among inhabitants of Sarajevo since social position and political status were strictly related to religious affiliation (Faber, 1996; Donia, 2006).

In addition to Orthodox, Catholics and Muslims, in the mid-sixteenth century a Sephardic Jewish community from Spain settled in the city finding refuge from persecution; widely known is the *Haggada*, an extreme valuable sacred book donated by the community to the city and currently conserved in the National Museum³. The Orthodox church of Varoš, the Catholic one of Latinluk and the Jewish temple were built within a short distance, sharing the space of the city centre with several mosques and reflecting the peculiar balance through which religious communities used to coexist. As such, by the seventeenth century Sarajevo became known as the “Balkans’ Jerusalem” (*Ibidem*).

According to the traditional pattern of the Ottoman cities Sarajevo’s urban structure reflected the principle of spatial separation between commercial and residential zones. With its shops and houses of worship for different faiths *Baščaršija*, the town center, represented the social, cultural and spiritual life of the city. On the other hand, the residential zone was articulated in small neighborhoods called *mahale* (sing. *mahala*) usually consisting in less than fifty dwellings, a house of worship, an Islamic school called *mekteb* and a public fountain (Cipollini, 2006).

³ The book has acquired a crucial symbolical meaning as inhabitants managed to save it from the fire when Sarajevo National Library was completely destroyed 1992; thus it represents one of the main symbols of the city’s multicultural environment (Cipollini, 2006).

During the Ottoman period the *Baščaršija* became the focal point of common life in Sarajevo, where people of different faiths and classes could mix together creating a relaxed atmosphere of peaceful coexistence (Donia, 2006). On the contrary, *mahale* were the expression of a discreet and quite environment inhabited by members of the same religious community⁴. Neighborly relations among residents of the same *mahala* were considered so desirable and important that such good manners, usually indicated by the word *komšiluk*, became a fundamental aspect of urban identity of the city (Cipollini, 2006).



Sebilj fountain, Baščaršija



Postcard representing the typical feature of a *mahala*

⁴ Latinluk is the name of the mahala originally inhabited by Catholics – from the word ‘Latin’ meaning here in a certain sense ‘western’, while Bjelave and Velika Avlija were traditionally populated by Sephardic Jews escaped from Spain due to the expulsion of mid-sixteenth century.

Under the Ottoman rule Sarajevo experienced from time to time waves of prosperity, political unrest, repression and political reforms; the irrevocable decline of the Empire coincided with the rebellion of Christian peasants of Herzegovina against their Muslim landlords in 1875. Taking advantage of the spreading revolts in rural areas and counting on Russia's support, Serbia and Montenegro declared war on the Ottoman Empire, definitely defeated in 1878 (Donia, 2006).

European powers that took part at the Congress of Berlin from the 13th of June until the 13th of July 1878 eventually signed the Treaty of Berlin, recognizing Austro-Hungarian Empire as the new ruler of Bosnia-Herzegovina, but allowing the sultan to keep *de jure* sovereignty over the region. On July 29 Austro-Hungarian troops entered Bosnia-Herzegovina while in Sarajevo an armed resistance was being arranged. Although some Sarajevans accepted the ongoing transfer of power, most people perceived Hasburg monarchy as a threat that would definitely extinguish any hope for Bosnian autonomy. On August 19 Austro-Hungarian troops overcame the local armed resistance and the Empire took complete control over the region (Donia, 2006).

1.2. Austro-Hungarian period and First World War

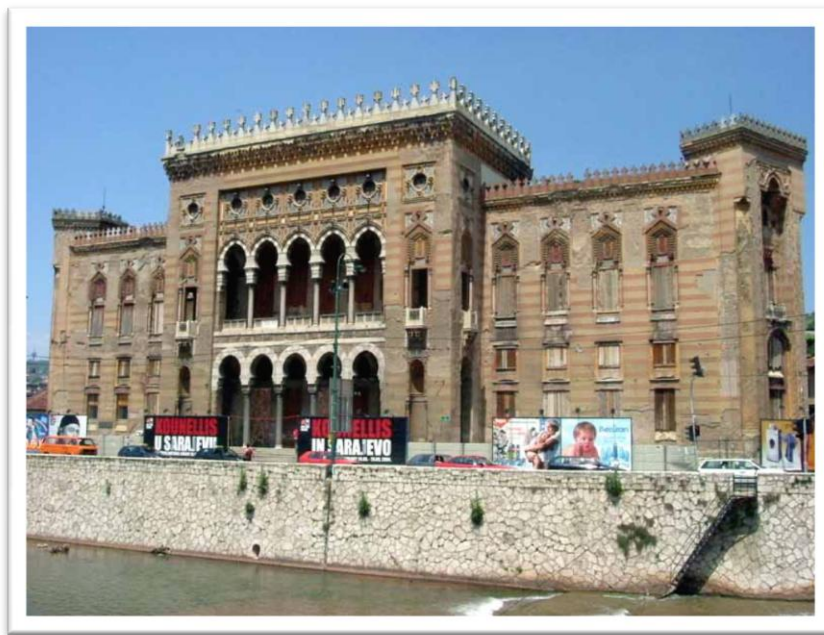
1.2.1. Sarajevo under the Hasburgic Empire

Under the forty years of Austro-Hungarian rule the city experienced demographic growth, industrialization and infrastructural development. Great attention and large investments were addressed to the city in the aim of making Sarajevo equal to the main Western capitals. Under Hasburg rule Sarajevo kept its traditional heterogeneity and its population enriched as the Jewish community of Ashkenazim settled in the city coming from elsewhere in the monarchy (Donia, 2006).

The political project of the Empire sought to promote a multi-confessional Bosnian nationalism, locally called *bošnjaštvo*, in order to face the risk of nationalist waves and territorial claims from Croatia and Serbia. Empire's official proved tolerance and support towards all Bosnian religious communities, seeing in their spiritual leaders effective allies against the threat of secular nationalism. The monarchy's recognition and support of Bosnian religious communities was made visible through the rearrangement of urban public space, thus houses of worship and educational institutions of all confessions were built in proximity to one another (*Ibidem*).

Moreover the city further developed west of *Baščaršija*, leaving unaltered the Ottoman core. In order to celebrate the new administrative power many public buildings were erected according to the standards of Austro-Hungarian architecture, providing the urban landscape with a modern feature recalling the Viennese model. The national theatre, the main post office, the national museum and the hotel Europe⁵ are the most representative buildings of such style; on the other hand the City Hall (*Vijećnica*), built in the same period, reflected the aesthetic principles of neo-Orientalism⁶(*Ibidem*).

The urban renewal and the extensive edification of public buildings contributed to put Sarajevo at the same level of the main European capital cities (Cipollini, 2006). In Donia's words "by the turn of the century, Sarajevo manifested a unique diversity that affirmed the city's capacity to blend Western influences with Eastern traditions and local culture" (Donia, 2006: 92).



The building of Vijećnica

The monarchy implemented relevant interventions in the education field as well. In order to create a local educated elite who could share the imperial vision, the administration began to open public and multi-confessional schools promoting secular education. On the other hand, parochial schools of all confessions remained in service

⁵ After its destruction during the war, the building has been reconstructed abandoning its traditional feature and following architectural principles of contemporary style.

⁶ Neo-Orientalism, or pseudo-Moorish style, refers to decorative motives that synthesize and simplify Islamic architectural decorations; during the Hasburg era it was intentionally employed to foster a sense of local identity among Muslim population (Donia, 2006).

and, in some cases, were provided with new structures. The monarchy was considerably successful in raising the educational level, even if the results consistently differed along gender and confessional lines⁷ (Donia, 2006).

Nevertheless, the Empire substantially failed in affirming a secular and public education system; moreover, instead of forming loyal supporters of the monarchy, such institutions ended up in inspiring revolutionary intellectuals that eventually would become the harshest critics of the regime (*Ibidem*).

1.2.2. Regime opposition and First World War

Between 1880 and 1890 small groups of Bosnians opposing the regime began to organize themselves provoking the firm regime's repression; despite the government's attempts to prevent protests, Serb and Muslim movements for autonomy became widely supported by the first decade of the twentieth century. On the other hand, among Croatian and Serb nationalists of the neighboring states started to circulate the idea of a "Great Croatia" and a "Great Serbia" which, in both cases, would entail the territorial inclusion of Bosnia – Herzegovina (Donia, 2006).

On the 5th of October 1908 the Hasburg emperor officially declared the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina that since then had been under the nominal sovereignty of the sultan. Although the transition occurred without violent opposition, feelings of resentment at Hasburg rule got deeper and deeper and nationalist ideologies started circulating among students and political activists. Croats and Serbs respectively looked either to Croatia or Serbia as the center of a future South Slav polity, while Muslims did not suggest any alternative, but sporadically supported one view or another. Despite the ideological mismatch, the majority of Bosnian students proved supportive and cooperating in promoting Yugoslavism and sharing the hope for an autonomous South Slav state (Donia, 2006).

The rising political tensions reached the break point the 28th of June 1914 when the heir apparent to Hasburg Empire Archduke Franz Ferdinand was shot dead with his wife Sophie during an official visit in Sarajevo. The killing occurred nearby the Latin bridge and was committed by Gavrilo Princip, a young student close to Serb nationalist

⁷ There were more literate boys than girls; Rate of literate persons decreased from Catholics, Serbs and Muslims (Donia, 2006)

movement⁸. The episode was firmly condemned by those Sarajevans who supported Archduke Franz Ferdinand in the hope of creating a South Slav polity within the monarchy; hence the assassination aroused feelings of anger and resentment among most Croats and Muslims and led to a series of violent attacks against Serbian shops and properties in the city (Donia, 2006).

Within a geopolitical scenario characterized by precarious international balance the event inevitably led to the situation's collapse: one month later the Habsburgic empire declared war against Serbia and the following involvement of big powers in the conflict rapidly led to the First World War. As I will further discuss, such episode represents a crucial example of political manipulation of historical events as its interpretation has radically changed throughout time.

During the war battles never took place in Sarajevo but a large portion of male population reached the front joining either the Habsburg or the Serbian army. In the meantime the monarchy carried out a firm repression imposing the dissolution of all political parties, banning several Serb-oriented societies and expelling about 4000 residents of Serbia and Montenegro. Sarajevo city council was also dissolved and for the whole duration of the war the city was governed by an appointed trustee. By December 1918 the Habsburg Empire was definitely defeated and the war came to an end.

Beside Bosnia – Herzegovina, the Austro-Hungarian control also included geographical areas corresponding to the current territory of Slovenia and Croatia; on the other hand, the Serbian territory constituted an autonomous kingdom including Macedonia, Kosovo and Sandžak – a former Ottoman district. After centuries of domination, the defeat of the empire provided the chance to realize the idea of an autonomous South-Slav state; therefore Bosnia – Herzegovina was included in the new-born kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Banac, 1984; Bianchini, Dogo, 1998).

⁸ In the same day the Archduke survived to a previous attack, where bombs were thrown at his car without hitting it. The responsible, Nedjeljko Čabrinović, was arrested during his flight. The students involved in the attack were active in previous protests and actions, but Donia (2006) states that there is no evidence that the killing was directly organized by a member of the National Unit, the secret society of Serb extreme nationalists.

1.3. From royal Yugoslavia to Socialist regime

1.3.1. The new Yugoslavian Kingdom

The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was constituted as a constitutional monarchy bringing together the kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro and the former Hasburg territories of Slovenia, Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Vojvodina and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Under the new rule of Karadjordjević dynasty, Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana became the major centers of the kingdom; the royal regime carried out many centralizing measures and transferred to Belgrade several functions and institutions⁹. On the other hand Sarajevo, that during Hasburgic Empire had experienced prosperity and dynamic growth, progressively lost its relevance as a cultural and economic centre (Donia, 2006).

Contrasting historical reconstructions of this period still produce controversial interpretations: on the one hand the autocratic centralism promoted by the new rulers and the project of a Great Serbia are interpreted as components of a single process, as in the analysis of Wachtel (1998); on the other hand, Donia (2006) argues that these two aspects should be considered separately. According to his historical reconstruction Great Serb nationalists supported the centralizing measures undertaken, but some of such measures grated on Serbs as well as on Croats and Muslims. Although Great Serb hegemony and autocratic centralization were promoted by the same political actors, the regime undertook many centralizing measures that did nothing to advance Serb nationalism¹⁰.

Political life in Sarajevo saw the formation of postwar political parties: on the one hand in the city emerged three national parties representing the Serbs, the Croats and the Bosnian Muslims, on the other hand the Communist and the Democratic parties suggested a supra-national view hoping for the birth of a transcendent Yugoslav identity.

⁹ Historically the autocratic centralism promoted by the new rulers and the project of a Great Serbia are seen as a single thing, but Donia (2006) argues that these two aspects should be considered separately. Undoubtedly Great Serb nationalists supported the centralizing measures undertaken, but some of such measures grated on Serbs as well as on Croats and Muslims. Although Great Serb hegemony and autocratic centralization were promoted by the same political actors, the regime undertook many centralizing measures that did nothing to advance Serb nationalism.

¹⁰ For a deeper analysis see also Banac (1984), Bianchini and Dogo (1998).

After December 1920 the regime undertook a wave of repressive and centralizing measures in order to consolidate its authority in Sarajevo. The Regional Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina was abolished and the city lost its role of administrative center. The Communist party was banned and pro-communist publications and demonstrations were outlawed. In Donia's interpretations such repressive initiatives contributed to disenfranchised over a quarter of the 1920 electorate, allowing the national parties to dominate the city's electoral landscape for the following twenty years (Donia, 2006: 149).

1.3.2. German occupation and Resistance

The outbreak of the Second World War led to the German conquest of the South-Slav kingdom; Axis attacked Yugoslavia in 1941, bombing Sarajevo and Belgrade on 6th of April. The territory was then invaded by German, Italian, Hungarian and Bulgarian forces and soon the royal family decided to flee, finding refuge in London. After the escape of King Petar II and his entourage the royal army gave up the fight allowing German troops to take complete control of the country (Donia, 2006).

In order to govern Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina Germans decided to appoint a group of Croat fascists called *Ustaša* (tr. rebels). The group was ideologically inspired by nationalist and nazi thoughts and believed Croats to be part of a superior Aryan race; its members upheld the idea of an independent Croatian state that necessarily included Bosnia-Herzegovina as a territory inhabited by Croats of three different religions. On the one hand *Ustaša* idealized Bosnian Muslims as the purest of Croats, on the other hand they portrayed Serbs as the worst enemies and oppressors of the Croat people; moreover they showed open intolerance towards Jews, Roma and Communists (*Ibidem*).

After taking power *Ustaša* promulgated several discriminatory laws seeking to identify, imprison and kill members of the least tolerated groups, especially Jews. Violence and intimidations against Serbs were also widespread and daily perpetrated. Between 1941 and 1942 Germans and *Ustaša* carried out the final and brutal extermination of the Jewish community in Sarajevo, while in rural villages hundreds of Serbs had already been slaughtered (*Ibidem*).

The growing revulsion against German and Italian occupation combined with the repugnance towards *Ustaša*'s atrocities allowed both the Partisan and the *Četnik* movement to emerge and strengthen in Bosnia-Herzegovina; although such movements

shared the same feeling of resentment towards the occupiers and their local collaborators, they deeply differed in ideology and war aims. Partisans originated by the Communist party (KP) and defended the idea of a supra-national Yugoslav identity, while Chetniks had served in the royal army and followed the principles of the Serb nationalist ideology.

The Chetnik movement was initiated after the Yugoslav surrender by a small group of Serb officers ideologically and tactically inspired by the guerrilla bands that fought in previous Serbia's wars. As a necessary step towards the constitution of "Great Serbia", Chetniks promoted the expulsion of all non-Serbs and addressed brutal violence towards Muslim inhabitants of rural areas, especially in eastern Bosnia and in the Sandžak region of Serbia and Montenegro. Moreover, Partisans represented the worst enemies in ideological terms therefore, despite the initial hostility towards the Axis forces, Četniks ended up in collaborating more and more closely with Germans and *Ustaša* to fight against the resistance movement (Donia, 2006).

Chetniks and Partisans constantly competed throughout the war to recruit new members among Serb peasants but none of them gained complete control over the rural areas surrounding Sarajevo. On the other hand, Chetniks' Great Serb nationalism was substantially rejected by Serb Sarajevans who firmly condemned the atrocities carried out against Bosnian Muslims and showed greater support for the supra-national Partisan ideology (*Ibidem*).

The Partisan movement was led by Josip Broz "Tito", the General Secretary of the KP of Yugoslavia and Sarajevo soon became the strategic center of the armed resistance in rural areas. The strong link between the Communist Party in the city and the Partisan forces in the surroundings made possible to overtake the urban-rural divide, involving in the movement people from different nationalities under the slogan "Brotherhood and Unity".

The party's success lay in transcending the sectarian cleavages that the Ustasha and Germans had sought so eagerly to exploit and in transforming common life into unified resistance. To the KP and the Partisans, diversity was not an end in itself but rather a means to achieve the unity of all peoples for the purpose of resisting the fascist occupiers and liberating the land (Donia, 2006: 202).

The occupation authorities in Sarajevo carried out a cruel repression that reached its peak in spring 1945, when many members of the resistance were arrested, tortured and brutally killed. On the other hand, Partisans constantly reacted with large-scale operations and frontal attacks that eventually led German forces to reformulate their strategic plans¹¹.

Abandoning the initial intention to defend Sarajevo at all costs, Hitler agreed to withdraw troops from the city in case of a strong offensive. The 4th of April 1945 Partisan units approached Sarajevo coordinating with the KP intelligence, while small strike groups, previously trained and deployed, successfully defended several key buildings against German sabotage (Donia, 2006).

1.3.3. The new socialist regime

The end of the German occupation led to the birth of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (*Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija*, SFRJ) composed by six federal states: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia¹².

In Sarajevo the first Partisan unit arrived the 5th of April 1945 and the 6th officially became the city's liberation day; for the following weeks several meetings, congresses and performances were organized to celebrate the city's liberation. As Donia points out "the KP moved quickly to channel the popular enthusiasm into a mass movement [...] exploiting the fervor in order to built a new socialist order" (Donia, 2006: 206).

The party took the first step in this direction providing the city with a new memorial culture: many streets were renamed celebrating Marshal Tito, the Partisans and heroic fighters who opposed the Hasburgic Empire. The commemoration of Gavrilo Princip, who killed Hasburg Archduke Franz Ferdinand, represents an interesting example of the socialist effort to change the city's memorial culture. While under German occupation the memory of the young Serb was intentionally obscured and his commemorative plaque was symbolically removed from the Latin bridge, the socialist regime recalled

¹¹ In March 1945 agents of the KP intelligence managed to steal from German headquarters the master plan for the defense of Sarajevo; the document contained a map of more than one hundred key installations plus the details of the armed forces mobilized in their defense. Such an action compelled the Germans to change their plans recognizing the risk of an imminent communist uprising in the city (Donia, 2006).

¹² The creation of the Yugoslav republic was foreseen by the two previous assemblies of AVNOJ (*Antifašističko vijeće narodnog oslobodjenja Jugoslavije*) and ZAVNOBIH (*Zemaljsko Antifašističko vijeće narodnog oslobodjenja Bosne i Hercegovine*) (Donia, 2006).

the assassination as a liberation act and inaugurated a new commemorative tablet (Donia, 2006).

The slogan “Brotherhood and Unity” was constantly invoked to engage people in new forms of public life regardless their nationality and faith. Many initiatives were undertaken seeking to promote the regime’s ideal of unity. Newspapers and magazines promoting socialist principles were institutionalized in order to provide an alternative to mononational periodicals. Moreover, the regime fostered the formation of organizations and associations of different kind that excluded any selection on a religious or national basis; the success of such unions contributed to put faith and national identity in the background and encouraged a new form of common life among Sarajevans (Donia, 2006).

Nevertheless the regime adopted a tolerant attitude towards those groups that were not considered a threat for the stability of the power: religious communities were free to celebrate their rituals, even if building new houses of worship was forbidden throughout the socialist period; religious communities were allowed to keep their traditions and their main religious holidays were recognized (*Ibidem*). From the beginning the communist élite treated carefully the national question of the new-born federation, addressing great attention to the representative mechanisms through which the different groups could express their particular interests¹³ (Sekulić, 2002).

One of the most urgent challenges the regime had to face was the economic disaster left after the war. In April 1947 the federal assembly elaborated a five-year plan to be adopted in each of the six republics of the Yugoslav federation, but only one year later the break of the bond between Yugoslavia and Soviet Union arose serious obstructions to the realization of the project.

In 1948, indeed, the Yugoslav KP experienced a period of political uncertainty due to the ongoing power struggle between Tito and the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin. Tito constantly proved his unwillingness to play the role of a Soviet marionette and the breaking point was reached when the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform) decided to expel Yugoslavia from the organization. Yugoslav KP members had no option but to choose between loyalty to Tito and Stalin and between 1948 and 1951 the socialist regime carried out a nationwide campaign to purge the party, sending

¹³ Nevertheless the approach to the national question that the regime maintained throughout years proved eventually failing, leading the way to nationalist extremism. The argument will be discussed in the following paragraph.

suspected Stalin sympathizers to the prison camp of Goli Otok, a small island of the Dalmatian coast (Donia, 2006).

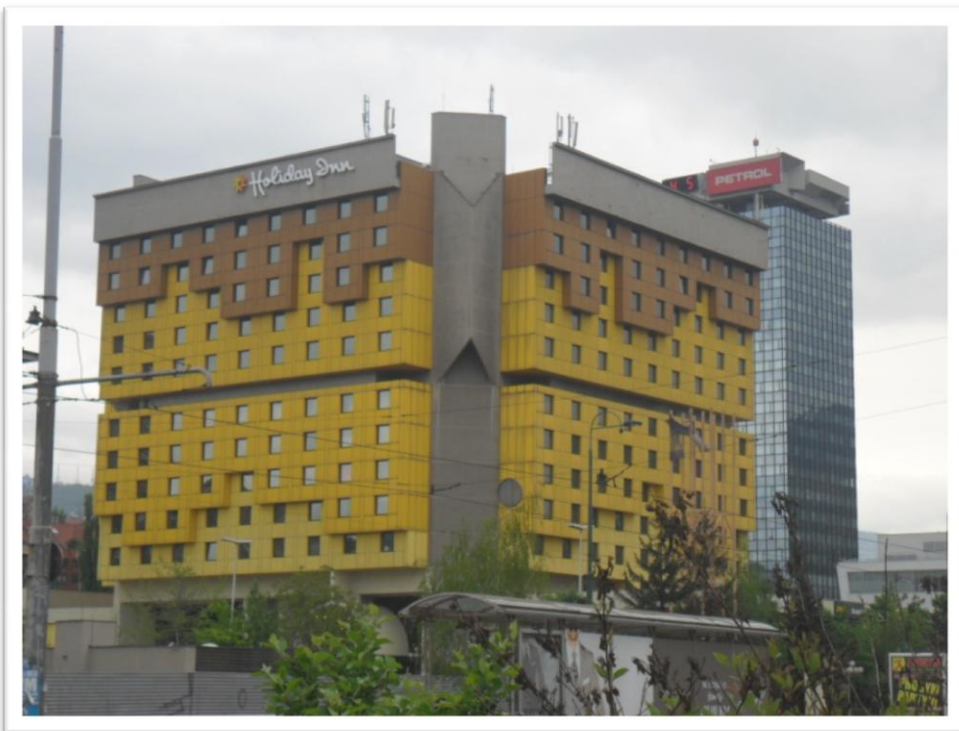
The irreparable split between the two leaders coincided with the interruption of all the economic relations between Yugoslavia and the other Cominform countries, but despite of such a blow to Yugoslavia's foreign trade, most of the goals included in the five-year plan were reached only one year later than expected. In opposition with the Soviet centralism, Tito opted for the economic strategy of self-management: enterprises were no longer owned by the state, but managed by elected workers' council and considered as a sort of social property (Donia, 2006).

By 1953 impressive results were obtained in the development of infrastructures, communications, and heavy industry; on the other hand the forced collectivization of rural farms proved extremely negative for peasants. In Sarajevo many new factories were opened, the transportation system was considerably ameliorated and several housing projects were undertaken to face the needs of the inhabitants. After many refugees permanently settled in Sarajevo as an aftermath of the war, the rapid economic expansion provoked a further process of urban drift from the rural surroundings, compelling the city council to find proper housing solutions (*Ibidem*).

The city further developed westward: new residential districts were built and public transportation improved providing the inhabitants with easy access to shops, educational institutions and public spaces for leisure activities. Furthermore, the repetitive architectural structure of the buildings reflected the socialist ideal of equality among workers of all professions (*Ibidem*). Nevertheless, the huge response to the housing demand didn't coincide with a well-balanced improvement of the quality of life. Activities and services available in the new suburban neighborhoods were not comparable to the ones offered nearby the city center; moreover the lack of green areas and open spaces made many residential districts just dormitory suburbs with very low standards of living conditions (Cipollini, 2006).



Residential area in Alipašino Polje



Holiday Inn Hotel

1.4. Uprising nationalism and dissolution of Yugoslavia

1.4.1. Socialist decline

The economic boom of the fifties and first sixties gradually slowed down in the subsequent decade, laying the foundations of the irreversible decline that the regime would suffer after Tito's death in 1980 (Bianchini, 1993; Dizdarević, 2001). Parallel with the economic decline, the national question in Bosnia-Herzegovina became a troublesome issue and emerged as a potential divisive force. Bosnian Muslims, having repeatedly rejected to identify themselves as Croats or Serbs, were officially recognized in the census of 1971 as a distinctive national group fostering the debate about the complexity of Bosnia's national composition. Some academics and policy makers became promoter of the specificity of the Bosnian republic, while others argued that such particularities should remain in the background in behalf of the cross idea of Yugoslavism (Donia, 2006).

The complexity of such a scenario still remains one of the most controversial and crucial aspects in the analysis of the dissolution of Yugoslavia. As Sekulić (2002) argues the national question remained somehow frozen until socialists' leadership was beyond dispute; indeed the political decline of the regime brought to the surface those social conflicts that had been concealed and repressed in previous decades. On the other hand, the national question in Yugoslavia can't be reduced to the idea that groups with different cultural and historical roots managed to live together only under compulsion as such interpretation doesn't acknowledge the traditional multinational feature of the Balkan region and doesn't take into account the delicate economic and political scenario of the Eighties¹⁴.

Under Tito's leadership periodical press and universities nourished the debate without excessive restraint, but after 1980 nationalists turned out to be a serious threat for the weakening power of the socialist political élite. Throughout the eighties antinationalist repression became increasingly harsh and in Sarajevo many political exponents and intellectuals were prosecuted and imprisoned (*Ibidem*).

With the exception of Slovenia, none of the other federal republics had a mononational composition. Serbs inhabited Croatian regions and together with Croats

¹⁴ For a deeper analysis of such controversial issues see for example Bianchini (1993), Rumiz, (1996), Dizdarevic (2001), Sekulić (2002), Dell'Agnese, Squarcina (2002).

were also recognized as constitutive peoples of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Muslims were settled not only in the Bosnian territory, but also in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia; finally, these last two republics hosted a significant minority of Albanians. In such a miscellaneous context the regime was perfectly aware about the potential menace of nationalist discourses, but its repressive strategy eventually proved counterproductive. Moreover the regime failed in promoting Yugoslavism as a comprehensive collective identity: the socialist ideals of brotherhood and unity were reductively pursued gaining complete control over the social and cultural spheres, without any further attempt to foster a supranational identity¹⁵ (Sekulić, 2002).

The path to the irreversible regime's decline was temporarily interrupted when Sarajevo was appointed to host the 14th Winter Olympic Games in 1984. A new enthusiastic feeling arose among citizens and due to the unexpected event living standards tangibly improved: the city was provided with new structures and facilities and for the next few years Sarajevans could enjoy the benefits of the consequent wave of tourists (Donia, 2006).



Opening ceremony of the Olympic game - 1984

Winter Olympic Games left an indelible mark in Sarajevans' memory, who still recall that moment as a glorious period for the city; nevertheless, the good consequences

¹⁵ The formation of an authentic Yugoslav nation was considered by the socialist elite as an attempt to assimilate and erase cultural diversities. Scholars pointed out the lack of academic and theoretical studies transcending the national boundaries (Bianchini, 1993) and the incapability of finding a valid cultural synthesis between national particularism and socialist Yugoslav universalism (Petrović, 1972 in Sekulić, 2002).

of that lovely time didn't manage to arrest the economic and political crisis flooding the whole Yugoslav federation.

In 1989 the regime made its last effort to invert the tendency carrying out a series of economic measures that provoked drastic consequences. The “shock therapy” produced a slowdown of inflation, but on the other hand left enterprises without cash flow and provoked a widespread discontent among unpaid workers. Under the influence of Serb president Slobodan Milošević, who openly opposed the economic reform, republics of Serbia and Montenegro begun to print uncontrolled amount of banknotes¹⁶. Such expedient to face the financing shortage rapidly let to a new escalation of the inflation rate; illegal commercial activities spread everywhere and the progressive erosion of the government's regulatory power proved irreparable (Donia, 2006).

With communism collapsing in the Soviet Union and eastern European countries, Yugoslavia undertook its path towards democracy in 1990, authorizing the first multiparty elections in all the six federal republics. The socialist political élite faced an internal debate that eventually led to an adjustment of the reference ideology and a radical transformation of the party conceiving such change as the only strategy to remain active part of the political scenario. In parallel, in Serbia and Montenegro political personalities once affiliated to the socialist regime renovated their image converting to the nationalist cause. In Serbia the most committed supporter of Serb nationalism was Slobodan Milošević who previously had been one of the main leaders of the Serbian Communist League. In front of the rising demand for democratic changes, some members of the old political élite proposed a new ideology oriented towards ethnonational values; however the political principles were still based on communist authoritarianism and collectivism¹⁷ (Sekulić, 2002).

In Bosnia-Herzegovina socialists entered the lists proposing a social-democratic orientation; among the renamed political parties Social-democrats and Reformists represented the main alternatives. On the other hand, the most determinate opponents of the socialist regime - turned even harsher by the previous wave of repression – organized in nationalist parties gathering widespread consensus and support. The political expression of particular national interests saw the formation of three parties: the Party of Democratic Action (SDA, *Stranka Demokratske Akcije*) led by the dissident

¹⁶ Donia (2006) argues that the monetary policy adopted by Serbia and Montenegro was most likely orchestrated by Milošević to favor his political entourage and the officers of the Yugoslav People's Army who were the first beneficiaries of the federal financing.

¹⁷ In Serbia, as in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the socialist élite changed the name into the Serb Socialist Party (Sekulić, 2002)

Alija Izetbegović; the Croat Democratic Union (HDZ, *Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica*) taking direct instructions from the Croat leader Franjo Tuđman; Serb Democratic Party (SDS, *Srpska Demokratska Stranka*) recognizing the leadership to Radovan Karadžić, directly linked with nationalist political leaders in Belgrade (Donia, 2006).

The elections' results accorded an overwhelming victory to the three nationalist parties both in Sarajevo and within the majority of Bosnian municipalities. The political leaders initially adopted a cooperative approach, presenting themselves not as rivals but as counterparts joining their forces to oppose social democrats and reformists; however, the political setting would rapidly change and within one year the public debate would become extremely harsh.

1.4.2. Uprising nationalism

Bosnia was the only republic where the renovated communist party resulted completely defeated by elections, but despite the encouraging results obtained in other republics, the Yugoslav political scenario was soon overwhelmed by nationalist extremism. The economic decline and unbalance among the six republics turned out to be a crucial factor in this sense¹⁸. As the Yugoslav Constitution of 1974 was quite unclear in defining the final subject of sovereignty, the erosion of the regime's leadership allowed the rising nationalists élites to exploit such vagueness and endorse contrasting interpretations of the document (Sekulić, 2002).

Retracing the steps of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, Sekulić identifies in the regime's political system the weak points and contradictions that eventually allowed divisive nationalist forces to raise and discusses some crucial aspects that profoundly affected the fate of the Yugoslav federation. According to her argument, the historical and cultural basis shared by the south Slavs contradicted the idea of Yugoslavia as an artificial state; nonetheless the scarce development of an inclusive Yugoslav identity eventually led to the failure of the project. Moreover, the lack of democracy and individual rights of the socialist system prepared the ground for aggressive nationalist campaign.

¹⁸ Bosnia-Herzegovina heavily suffered by economic backwardness – with Montenegro and Macedonia – while Slovenia and Croatia represented the richest republics; Serbia presented deep internal differences since included very developed regions as Vojvodina but also Kosovo that was the poorest region of the federation.

Since the childhood the individual was automatically introduced in mass socio-political organizations and had almost no chance to conduct an autonomous existence detached from the paths created and controlled by the regime. Social and political rights were only recognized to individuals as members of a group - such as national communities, minorities and the working class - while political liberties were almost nonexistent and allowance towards private property were drastically restricted. From the second half of the Seventies the regime granted progressive autonomy to the republics, but continued to ignore the demand of individual rights, missing a great chance to foster the democratization process (Sekulić, 2002).

Nationalist élites throughout Yugoslavia took great advantage by the widespread discontent and gained large consensus; political discourses started stressing the cultural and religious differences among peoples of Yugoslavia putting in the background the economic imbalance among republics and between urban and rural contexts. Religion was wisely exploited by political élites becoming the pillar of nationalist ideology: cultural and linguistic differences were often overstated in the attempt to cover up common roots, but religion appeared the most effective aspect in this sense. In the light of their religious affiliation to Catholicism, Croat nationalists distanced themselves from the cultural heritage of the Balkan region, highlighting their cultural affinity to the western European world. In the same way Serb and Montenegrin nationalists defended their bond with the Orthodox Russian context, while Bosniaks distinguished themselves retracing their cultural roots in the Islamic world (*Ibidem*). The nationalist thought and its consequent territorial claims crept in as the result of an intentional and rational process wisely orchestrated by the strict collaboration among political élites, intellectuals and media (Rumiz, 1996; Sekulić, 2002; Dell'Agnesse, Squarcina, 2002).

Tensions and aggressiveness rapidly pervaded the political scenario throughout the federation. Milošević and the pro-Serb leader of Montenegro firmly supported the unity of Yugoslavia¹⁹, while Croatia and Slovenia sought to become independent states. Bosnia-Herzegovina was subjected to territorial claims both from Croats and Serbs, due to its tripartite national composition. Bosnian Serb nationalists of SDS opposed any idea of an independent Bosnian republic for they insisted that Serb people should live together; on the other hand, Bosnian Croats of HNZ supported the nationalist idea of

¹⁹ Yugoslavism and Serb nationalism were ambiguously intertwined: Milošević and his entourage declared firm opposition towards any instance of autonomy, but contemporarily sustained the ideal of Great Serbia aiming at gathering under a unique polity the Serb people spread in the Yugoslav territory (Sekulić, 2002).

annexing Bosnia to Croatia. Finally Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks)²⁰ of SDA looked in favor of autonomy and strongly dissented the possibility to split its territory between the neighboring countries (Brubacker, 1996).

On the 23rd of December 1990 Slovenian parliament indicted a referendum and the majority of voters opted for independence; the same occurred in Croatia on the 19th of April 1991 and in response the Serb minority settled in the Croat region of Krajina self proclaimed the autonomy of the territory. The 25th of June 1991 both Slovenian and Croat parliament declared independence; in the first case the secession from Yugoslav federation was achieved relatively peacefully²¹, while Croatia became the scene of a violent conflict²².

Political tension was rising in Bosnia-Herzegovina as well. As their Serb counterparts, Bosnian Serb nationalists encompassed the idea that Yugoslavia's dissolution should be avoided by any means; on the other hand, in case of secession, the party sought to consolidate a distinct Serb political entity within the Bosnian territory. The SDS strategy progressively shifted towards separatism: asking for larger regional autonomy, Bosnian Serb nationalists sought to gain complete control over the regions of Bosnia-Herzegovina mainly populated by their own national group. However, SDS exponents publicly denied to pursue secessionist goals and supported their claims denouncing the regions' economic backwardness and blaming the centralist power of Sarajevo (Donia, 2006).

After a successful campaign for regional single-party control, SDS progressively created parallel municipal institutions and a separate assembly of Serb people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. On the 9th of January 1992 the Bosnian Serb Assembly officially proclaimed the Republic of Serb People of Bosnia-Herzegovina; the municipality of

²⁰ Although from 1974 onwards the national group was officially recognized as Muslims, its members progressively adopted the denomination "Bosniak" as it was no connoted in religious terms and considered more appropriate to express the group's national identity (Banac, 1984).

²¹ The national composition of Slovenia was highly homogeneous and nationalist élites of the other republics had not much interest in gaining control over that territory. Moreover the Slovenian independence was politically sustained by Germany, Austria and the Vatican state. After the proclamation of autonomy the Federal army overtook an armed offensive in the attempt to keep the power, but soon the peace agreement signed the 8th of July 1991 definitely recognized the new independent state (Pirjevec, 2001).

²² Between 1991 and 1992 Croatia violently fought for independence against JNA troops. The majority of Bosnian Serbs joined the federal army to fight against the secessionist state, while many Bosnian Croat and Bosniak reservists declined to serve the JNA (Donia, 2006). After Bosnia was recognized an independent state, Croat nationalists raised pretences over the Bosnian territory of Herzegovina and other Bosnian city mainly populated by Bosnian Croats largely inhabited by Bosnian Croats; between 1992 and 1994 Croatia involved in another brutal conflict that took place in the Bosnian territory. For a detailed description of the events see Pirjevec (2001).

Pale, only 10km far from Sarajevo, was designed as its capital and in the following days municipal police placed check-points along the way, keeping in the background activities and traffic taking place in the area. In this atmosphere of growing tension SDS was not the only party operating behind the scenes: feeling the threat of a possible armed conflict SDA and HNZ secretly undertook a military preparation gathering weapons and recruiting volunteers to form paramilitary forces (Donia, 2006).

1.4.3. The breakout of war and the siege of Sarajevo

The 1st of April 1992 the Bosnian Parliament called a referendum for independence and, despite the majority of Bosnian Serbs boycotted the initiative not going to the polls, the rest of the population largely voted for autonomy. The Parliament officially proclaimed independence the 5th of April 1992 and the recognition from International Community followed the day after. At the same time Bosnian Serb members of the official Yugoslav army and paramilitary forces begun to attack rural villages inhabited by non-Serb people. Reports of incursions started to circulate spreading concern for a forthcoming conflict; nevertheless people in Sarajevo didn't realize the gravity of the circumstances until the very last moment and the breakout of war in the city caught Sarajevans unaware. The 6th of April during a peace demonstration taking place in the neighborhood of Vrbanja, Suada Dilberović, a Croat student living in Sarajevo, was shot dead by JNA officers who intervened to hold back the parade; only two days later people gathered again expressing abhorrence for the episode, but the response of Yugoslav army was even harsher. When the crowd approached the Holiday Inn hotel - used by SDS members as their headquarter thanks to the owner's compliance - gunmen shot from the building killing six people and wounding many others; the same day JNA units assaulted the city with mortar shells and grenades. Although Serb forces had already attacked and killed several people in rural villages such as Bijelina, the 6th of April is conventionally remembered as the start of the Bosnian war and Suada Dilberović is commemorated as the first victim of the siege of Sarajevo (Donia, 2006).

When the conflict begun the Yugoslav Army (JNA) was the only official force, but soon Bosnian Serbs converged in the Serb Republic Army (VRS – *Vojska Republike Srpske*) while the counterpart formed the Republic Army of Bosnia - Herzegovina (ARBiH - *Armija Republike Bosne i Hercegovine*). As many other aspects, the internal composition of the People's Yugoslav Army fighting in Bosnia (JNA) is still a

controversial issue. Several historians affirm that, since the top positions of the organization were occupied by Serbs, the whole institution eventually turned out to favor the Serb nationalist cause. After the breakout of war in Bosnia, the Bosnian Parliament ordered that all non-Bosnian members of the army should be withdrawn from the country, but the real effect of such imposition remain unclear. According to Piriavec (2001) many Serbs continued to fight in the Bosnian territory thanks to false identity documents; on the other hand, diverging interpretations validate the version of Serb general Radinović, according to whom no Serb military forces (Lofranco, 2008).

Parallel with the constitution of national army, the different groups benefited from illegal arms trade and formed paramilitary organizations that occupied different areas of the Bosnian territory. In several occasions both official and illegal armed units deliberately attacked rural villages and killed civilians, repeatedly breaking the international humanitarian law²³. Beyond the formal condemnation of such atrocities, the intervention of the International Community proved insufficient and sometimes even counterproductive. United Nations established in Sarajevo UNPROFOR (United Nations Protection Force) in order to guarantee humanitarian aid to civil population, but the unit had no allowance to militarily intervene against VRS. Despite the understanding of the situation by UN, single states proved unwilling to address resources to resolve it; moreover, reported cases of corruption within the international organization directly favored the Bosnian Serb side²⁴.

Throughout the war Sarajevo became sadly known due to the siege that lasted 1395 days. Bosnian Serb units kept control over the city occupying the surrounding hills and some neighborhoods, such as Grbavica, forcing the civil population to live under terrible conditions and deprivation. Encircled by Bosnian Serb units from the mountains, the city and its population became the hostage through which VRS maintained an advantageous position in negotiating with International Community. Aiming at preserving the basic conditions for delivering humanitarian aid to civilians, UN recognized several concessions to the besieging nationalists allowing them to enforce their siege apparatus (Donia, 2006).

Beyond the extreme deprivation suffered by Sarajevans under the siege, the city became a military target itself, not only for its strategic relevance, but especially for the

²³ Cf. Rastello (1998).

²⁴ Brendan Simms titled *Unfinest hour: Britain and the destruction of Bosnia*, New York, 20020, Penguin Books, in which are reported episodes of complicity and spying that involved British commanders and troops of UNPROFOR.

richness of its collective memory profoundly abhorred by Serb nationalist supporters. The Balkan's Jerusalem had been the symbol of peaceful groups' coexistence for centuries and such a reality appeared absolutely unacceptable to those seeking religious and national homogenization of all territories. The nationalist project revealed its most brutal side through operations of ethnic cleansing and ethnic rape perpetrated as specific war strategies²⁵; similarly the devastation of the city was not led by a blind violence but rather by the conscious attempt to erase the city's cultural memory. Monuments, squares, libraries and houses of worship were destroyed because of their semantic and aesthetic value. Between 1992 and 1995 11541 civilians died under the siege and the city became a victim itself so that the attack against Sarajevo has been defined as "urbicide". Places representing a common past of coexistence were meant to be systematically destroyed in the attempt to erase the urban identity in which many Sarajevans recognized themselves (Mazzucchelli, 2010).

The tension between the urban and the rural dimension has been present since the foundation of the city, but the nationalist discourse intentionally exploited it until its violent burst (*Ibidem*). As noted by Cipollini (2006), during the first period of the Ottoman rule many local orthodox communities settled in the surrounding areas of the city, keeping very little contact with the urban life of Sarajevo and such isolation was reinterpreted by the nationalistic discourse as a choice of freedom consciously made by peasant warriors refusing corruption of urban life.

The most resounding attack against the urban world was the destruction of the National Library (*Vijećnica*) and the consequent loss of a hundreds of books of extreme worth²⁶. In its fury against buildings of such a symbolical value the siege of Sarajevo highlighted a cultural opposition rather than a religious or national one: destroying the city, the rural world sought to destroy urbanity, conceived as a corruptive and impure life style (Karahasan, 1993; Iveković, 1995; Rumiz, 2000; Donia, 2006; Mazzucchelli, 2010).

²⁵ Cf. Richter, Bacchi (2003).

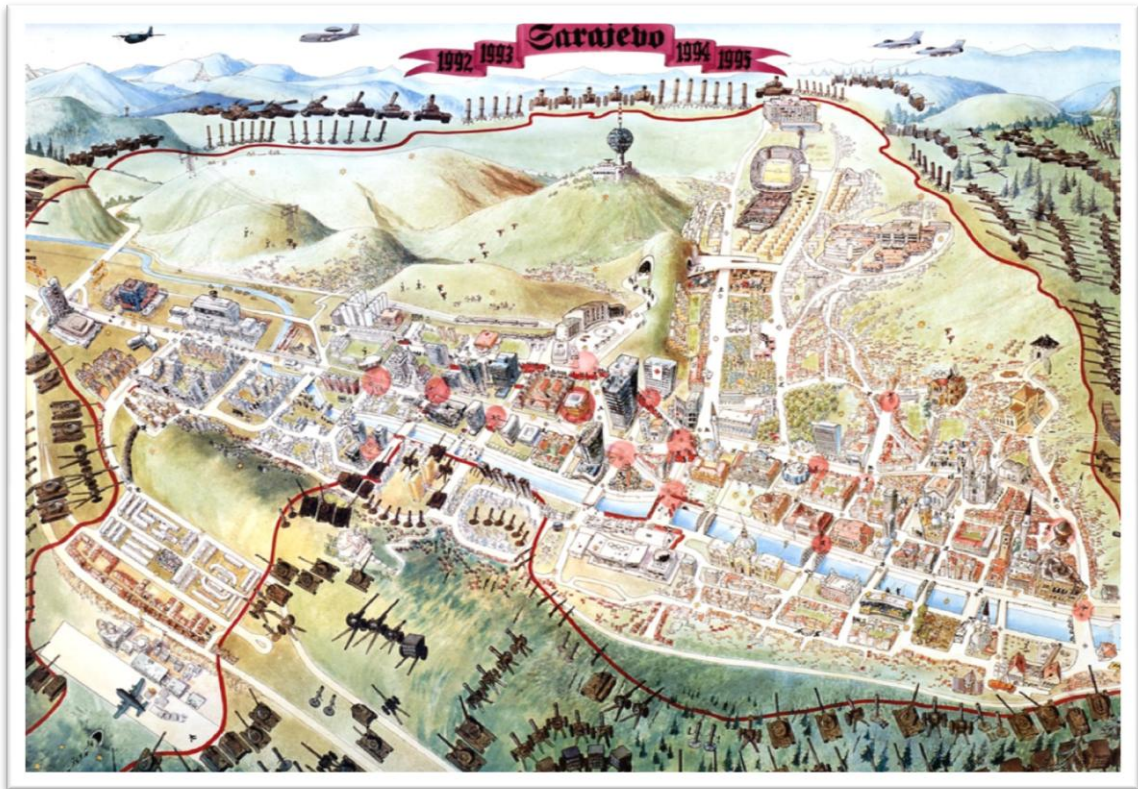
²⁶ As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, *Haggada*, the sacred text brought from Spain by the Sephardic Jews, was instead saved from the fire by Sarajevans, becoming a symbol of the religious and cultural coexistence.



Vijećnica attacked by Serbian shelling, 1995

Psychological strain and physical deprivation didn't prevent Sarajevans from keeping their dignity and finding strategies not to succumb under the attack. People made great efforts to maintain routines and rhythms of everyday life as response and defense against the violence and brutality oppressing them. The perseverance in establishing normality under those tragic conditions represented a recurrent strategy to cope with the war. Many Sarajevans kept going to work without any certainty about being paid and every day teachers went to school to take classes, facing long and dangerous paths; cultural event continued to take place in sheltered and hidden locations and the printing of the daily newspaper *Oslobođenje* didn't miss a single day throughout the siege (Maček, 2000).

The constant fear for one's life could be counteracted by ignoring the dangers, creating a distance by joking, and inventing personal magic routines. In their struggle to uphold pre-war norms of subsistence Sarajevans demonstrated an immense creativity in their 'imitation of life' (Maček, 2000: 3)



“Sarajevo survival map” produced by independent media company FAMA

1.5. Conflict resolution and political reorganization of Bosnia-Herzegovina

The end of the war in Bosnia coincided with the peace agreement signed in Dayton, Ohio, USA, in November 1995 by the president of the three republics interested by the conflict: Alija Izetbegović for Bosnia, Slobodan Milošević for Serbia and Franjo Tuđman for Croatia²⁷.

The international accord ratified the Washington agreement signed in 1994, institutionalizing the internal line of division that Bosnian Serb nationalists had self-declared during the war and recognizing two different institutional entities within the state territory. With some spatial adjustments the Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL) divided the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina from Republika Srpska, two autonomous administrative entities provided with separated constitution. The agreement also recognized the spatial unit of Brčko as an autonomous district directly put under the state sovereignty.

²⁷ For a detailed retracement of historical events see Pirjevec (1999).

Among its several dispositions the agreement contains the official Constitution of BiH²⁸. According to the principles of a multinational legal order, state accords the same citizenship rights to Bosniaks, Bosnian Serbs as well as Bosnian Croats recognizing them as the three constitutive peoples (Jokay, 2001). As such, the political and institutional reorganization reflects a constitutional principle that fosters the link between the national factor and organization of local government (Woelk, 2008).

The constitution of BiH contains all the dispositions to regulate the lower institutional levels but in fact delegates most of the responsibilities to the entities that autonomously regulate their functions according to separated constitutions. Therefore the central power appears very weak central power (Jokay, 2001).

The territory of Federation is further organized in ten sub-entity administrative units named Cantons, provided with further ministries. Each canton is provided with ministries that deals with a multiplicity of issues, from spatial planning, to education. In addition, homologous ministries exist at entity and state level, making the Bosnia institutional organization incredibly bureaucratized and inefficient (Jokay, 2001). In the Federation the entity itself can devolve a large extent of power to the cantons that can autonomously organize their functions and services.

At lower institutional level each entity is organized in cities (*grad*) and municipalities. There are only four cities in BiH: Mostar and Sarajevo in the Federation and Banja Luka and Istocno Sarajevo in RS.

The debate upon controversies of Dayton peace agreement still represents an animated discussion as, according to some analyses, the main goals declared in the documents remained largely unattended. Among the complicated dilemmas involved by the post-war scenario, one of the main delicate and urgent issues concerned the provision of opportune condition for return to displaced people forced to leave their home places by operations of ethnic cleansing. On the other hand the urgency to stop the war combined with the strife to find acceptable compromises for all the conflicting parts led to a hasty final solution that has been largely contested. As such, the main discussed Dayton paradox lies in the fact that instead of creating conditions to restore a

²⁸ The official version of Bosnian constitution is exclusively English as the document has never been translated into the local language.

multinational state the institutionalization of territorial separation provided the basis to reinforce stabilize national divisions²⁹.

Within such a scenario two examples are worth to mention to stress the extent to which national affiliation permeates each aspect of individuals' daily life.

The first example conceives the organization of Bosnian educational system, commonly known as "two schools under one roof" as to indicate the possibility for students to choose different curricula according to nationality. Thus, behind the principles of identity maintenance children at school are taught different historical and geographical notions that selectively emphasize the image of Bosnia, Croatia or Serbia; similarly grammar teaching exclusively stresses either the Bosnian, Croatian or Serbian variations of the local language. Such a segregated educational system represents one of most powerful tools to reproduce social cleavage along national lines (Pašalić Kreso, 2008; Sekulić, 2009). A further example consists in the organization of public health system, similarly organized along national principles. As such, the access to structures and services for people of different nationality is not prohibited in absolute terms but rather prevented by many additional bureaucratic obstacles (Apuzzo, 2005).

1.5.1. Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo

The boundary line institutionalized by Dayton agreement peripherally crosses the area of Sarajevo so that as a consequence of the post-war agreement the city was split into two autonomous local administrations. Sarajevo is part of the Federation and includes the old town center as well as the largest territorial extension of the former city; Istočno Sarajevo is part of the Republika and emerged from a suburban neighborhood.

After the IEBL was drawn some districts and suburbs of the city controlled by Bosnian Serb troops during the war became part of the Federation. Within a short time Bosnian Serb inhabitants of those areas became the target of a double attack: while Bosniak gangs occasionally harassed them expressing their resentment, Bosnian Serb nationalists begun to destroy their properties in the attempt to force them to abandon Sarajevo. Such attacks went in parallel with a massive Serb nationalist propaganda that pictured Sarajevo as an unsafe place for Bosnian Serbs and incisively promoted their

²⁹ The discussion of such aspect goes beyond the aims of this introduction. For a deeper discussion of such aspects see Kumar (1997), Jokay (2001), Divertito, Leone (2005), Woelk, (2008), Bollens (2009) among others.

resettlement within the new born Republika Srpska. Therefore Bosnian Serbs progressively left Sarajevo moving to the new city of Istočno Sarajevo as well as in surrounding municipalities (Sekulic, 2002; Bollens, 2007; Mazzucchelli, 2010).

At the same time people escaping from ethnically cleansed territories and seeking shelter in Sarajevo during the war rarely returned to their home villages definitely settling in the city. Such processes led to a strong homogenization of the population in national terms: nowadays Sarajevo is constituted for about 80% by Bosniaks and for 12% by Bosnian Serbs while before the war the ratio was 50% and 30%; on the other hand, Istočno Sarajevo is mainly populated by Bosnian Serbs (Bollens, 2007)³⁰.

The territorial partition has brought significant consequences on the institutional level as well, since the two cities are separately managed and different city councils autonomously deal with issues, services and responsibilities.

Sarajevo represents the administrative center for each institutional level – city, canton, entity, state – and represents the location of several international institutions. On the other hand, to Istočno Sarajevo is not accorded the same extent of responsibilities since the entity administrative center is located in the city of Banja Luka.

The city of Sarajevo (Grad Sarajevo) is composed by four municipalities: Stari Grad, Centar, Novo Sarajevo and Novi Grad; the city of Istočno Sarajevo (Grad Istočno Sarajevo) is composed by seven municipalities: Istočni Stari Grad, Istočno Novo Sarajevo, Istočna Ilidža, Rogatica, Pale, Sokolac, and Trnovo. In both cases few responsibilities are given to the institutional level of the cities, while most of duties concerning the provision of facilities and urban services are managed and organized at the lower level of municipalities (općine) . Therefore not just the two cities have their own major and assembly, but every municipality in both Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo represents a further institutional level with specific duties and responsibilities (Jokay, 2001).

This historical overview allowed to discuss the complexity of the research context highlighting some controversial issues that still remain contested. After such fundamental introduction the following chapter discuss in detail the contents of my research work.

³⁰ Exact data on the current population are not available since the last official census dates back to 1991. After a failed attempt in 2011, a new census will be carried out by October 2013.

Chapter 2
Theoretical framework

**Divided cities:
Sociological implications of spatial partitions**

The theoretical basis upon which I carried out my work provides the conceptual tools to understand and interpret the phenomenon of divided cities. The contributions are discussed to stress the link between social and spatial reality insisting on the peculiar configuration that such relation can assume in partitioned urban contexts. Assuming that social phenomena can't be approached without considering their spatial dimension, I point out how functional and relational implications entailed by the internal division of a city can be approached stressing the reciprocal influence between spatial features and social relations. Conceptualizations and reflections from sociology, urban planning and human and political geography provided me the theoretical basis to discuss such bidirectional relation in the light of the specific issues and dilemmas I consider.

The introductory discussion is dedicated to the contributions from classic sociologists - Simmel in particular - whose conceptualization of space most effectively highlighted the idea of a mutual influence between social relations and spatial configurations.

Then, since the category of divided city is often defined and used in ambiguous terms, I clarify its meaning drawing on the most relevant contributions that specifically aimed at providing a conceptualization in this sense.

Successively I discuss the extent to which the mutual relation between spatial and social dimension manifests in partitioned urban system specifically focusing on three aspects: urban planning and management as a spatial manifestation of power relations; urban architecture as a complex of political and symbolical elements; spatial boundaries as social constructs simultaneously able to affect social reality. Such theoretical nodes represent the conceptual tools that I implied in developing my analysis.

2. 1. Socio-spatial reality as a combination of mutual influences

According to different authors (Saunders, 1988; Mandich, 1996; Petrillo, 2001), the sociological interest towards the spatial category can be retraced since the classical contributions of Marx, Weber and Durkheim. To different extent their analyses of social phenomena included space and cities as a crucial condition for the development of social processes proper of industrial societies, such as class struggle or social solidarity (Saunders, 1988). Within their historical analyses of the transition from feudalism to capitalism in Western Europe, the interest towards the city is expressed in different terms. As Petrillo points out (2001), the contribution of Weber has been commonly acknowledged for the association between the city and the developing of market economy. Nevertheless, the author discusses in detail how such interpretation reductively recognizes the enlightenments provided by Weber's thought (*Ibidem*). Saunders (1988) discusses how Durkheim highlighted the role of medieval cities in tearing the bond with traditional morality and in developing the division of labor. On the other hand, the author highlights the contribution of Marx and Engels as they compared the juxtaposition between urban and rural world to the antithesis between the capitalist and the feudal mode of production (*Ibidem*).

According to Saunders (1988) in these analyses the city represents the condition for such phenomena to happen rather than the central research focus. Therefore the provided contribution in developing urban studies lies in the general theoretical and methodological enlightenments, rather than in specific theorization and conceptualization of the city. Although such studies can't be considered completely a-spatial, they should be conceived as "non spatial" since the explanation of phenomena taken into account are based on mutation of society in global terms without considering the specificity of any city or other forms of settlement (Mandich, 1996).

Among classic sociologists Simmel is the one who provided the most enlightening conceptual tools for my work. Stressing the relevance of the spatial category in understanding social phenomena, his contribution provides a valuable suggestion to introduce space within the sociological reflection.

In his general thought Simmel recognizes and stresses the spatial dimension of social forms developing the idea of a mutual influence between physical and social space (Cavalli, 1998). The most inspiring enlightenments of Simmel's thought can be found in

the chapter *Space and spatial order of society*, included in his large opus “Sociology” (1908).

Drawing from Kant’s thought and his concept of universal categories of intellect, Simmel defines space as a logical and perceptive *a priori* category: space, such as time, is an intuition through which subjects can experience the sensible world. In Simmel’s words space is a “soul activity” (Simmel, 1998: 524, my translation) through which subjects gather together single sensible experiences within a united and coherent vision (*Ibidem*). Despite this idea of *a priori* categories reflects the direct influence of Kant’s thought, in his conceptualization Simmel substitutes the status of universal factor invulnerable to time flow with the idea of the concept of a product of an historical-evolutional process (Cavalli, 1998). As a logical and perceptive category space can be considered as *a way* to make experience rather than something *of which* we have experience (Mandich, 1996).

The interest of Simmel towards spatial configurations lies in the fact that social interaction corresponds to a process of spatial filling: as soon as two subjects get involved in some form of mutual action, space between them is filled and animated; people give meaning to space through their interaction and simultaneously space allows such interaction to happen:

Reciprocal action ensures that space, before empty and void, becomes something for us, and [...] space makes [reciprocal action] possible (Simmel, 1998: 525, my translation).

Simmel conceives the world in terms of contrast between opposing categories and such interpretative approach also emerges in his spatial analysis (Cavalli, 1998). Space assumes simultaneously the ambivalent status of condition and symbol of social relation and its double nature is clearly reflected by the conceptualization of the *stranger*, as he simultaneously represents the spatial configuration of detachment and fixation, proximity and distance (Simmel, 1908). Space is a condition for social relations as it poses limit and restriction to it and contributes to shape social forms; on the other hand, space involves creativity and social construction assuming a sociological meaning and becoming a symbol of social relation (Mandich, 1996).

In Simmel’s thought, space doesn’t represent an element of sociological explication itself; rather it is a precondition through which sociological phenomena take form. Not

space itself, but its different and specific spatial configurations acquire relevance as they reflect particular forms of relations among subjects. (*Ibidem*)

The interest of Simmel towards space lies in the intention to enlighten the role of spatial configurations in shaping different forms of association and in affecting their development in sociological terms. On the other hand, conceiving the spatial dimension as able to influence forms of social relation doesn't reflect a spatial determinism; on the contrary - and simultaneously - Simmel shares the idea of space as a social construct, recognizing that in particular circumstances social forms are able to influence and determine spatial configurations. While space and its configurations are able to shape the forms of social relation, simultaneously such forms of associations exert an influence over space, contributing to shape its spatial arrangements. In some cases the first directions of the relations appears more significant, in others is the second one that prevails; nevertheless, the two directions are never completely divisible:

While the sociological interest was so far connected to phenomena only from the point when the effect of a particular spatial configuration intervened, in other cases the element that is sociologically important lies in the previous process, in the influence experienced by spatial configurations of a group coming from their sociological configurations and forces. In the following examples, this direction of the connection - despite not being completely separable from the other one – as well as the latter was not from the former – will prove predominant. (Simmel, 1998: 584, my translation)

In his spatial analysis, Simmel deals also with the city as a particular socio-spatial configuration and with the concept of boundary, providing interesting enlightenments that will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Further suggestions come from Anthony Giddens. As Mandich (1996) points out, the relevance of spatial category in Giddens' thought is not universally recognized; nevertheless the significance of his contribution can be retraced in the general idea that the comprehension of social phenomena is necessarily linked with a time-space reference. Indeed, the primary aim of sociology lies in investigating the reproduction of social practices through space and time; therefore it is not possible to grasp social reality without considering its specific reference in time and spatial terms (Mandich, 1996). As such, Giddens' theorization reflects the idea social phenomena should be analyzed in combination with their time-spatial aspects.

In Giddens' thought space entails an explicative value and represents a relevant and original point of view, rather than the building criterion for specific objects (Mandich, 1996). Space and time are not simply *conditions* for the existence of social practices, but are among their constitutive characteristic and, being part of the functioning of social mechanisms, are a *mode* of existence. Space exists only thanks to the presence of the elements that compose it and produces effects on reality depending on the nature of such elements, but at the same time it doesn't directly depend on them. Moreover, space is not detached from social reality, but rather is a product of society, thus it represents a relative and culturally variable category, rather than an objective one (*Ibidem*).

In his elaboration of the concept of *Presence availability*, Giddens (1984) stresses the possibility provided by space, thanks to proximity, to put actors in relation. Not only proximity is important, but general conditions that allow the social interaction to occur. Local is interpreted as the medium for face-to-face relations and interactions; his conceptualization reflects the analogy with Goffman's *frame* (1974), that allow actors to share a common definition of the situation, and Simmel's idea of *between* (1908) that expresses the idea of an empty space filled by the start of a social interaction.

Giddens' conceptualization of space deserves a further emphasis since it contributed to partially overtake the long-lasting incompatibility between sociological and geographic disciplines. As pointed out by Newman (2006b), sociology and geography have included the spatial category in the analysis on social phenomena from radically different perspectives, suggesting incompatible interpretations for a long time. Space has often been conceived as totally influenced by social reality or, on the contrary, able to exert a direct influence on social relations – as in the case of the spatial determinist theorizations of human geography, dating back to XX century (*Ibidem*).

Mandich (1996) discusses how the structuration theory of Giddens and the suggestions coming from the time-geography perspective provided some conceptual tools that helped in building a more compatible approach. As such, the common elements shared by these interpretations provide significant enlightenments to conceptualize the category of space:

- a) Spatial objects lose analytical relevance and more attention is accorded to spatial processes and spatial forms;
- b) Space assumes an explicatory value since social phenomena can't be analyzed without being spatially and temporally contextualized;

- c) Space is not an external category excluded from society, it has a social nature and is always relative and culturally variable;
- d) Space and time are two indissoluble dimensions.

Space represents something relative and culturally variable and spatial and social reality reciprocally influence each other. Social relations always manifest through particular spatial forms, but at the same time the physical environment affects social interaction. Within this perspective, the city represents a crucial standpoint to catch and investigate such mutual link and the case of divided cities provided significant suggestions in this terms.

2.2. Divided cities: an attempt of conceptualization

Within the broad field of urban studies, the term ‘divided city’ is differently used in relation with phenomena generally ascribable to spatial separation. Scholars often refer to divided cities attributing a multiplicity of meanings to the term and such ambiguity can represent a limit in methodological terms (Allegra, Casaglia; 2010). Marcuse (1993) talks about divided cities in relation to the problem of segregation discussing the spatial and economical feature of different urban contexts. Fainstein, Gordon and Harloe (1992) compare the cities of London and New York investigating how the progressive socio-economic polarization carries spatial consequences in terms of residential segregation. Similarly, Marcuse and Van Kempen (2002) analyze the new forms of spatial division and segregation – from ghettos to gated communities - linking them to the spreading social inequalities of contemporary cities. Retracing the history of divided cities, Nightingale (2012) shows how urban division has been employed throughout history as a tool to reinforce political and economic inequality, arguing that urban segregation has to be considered as a worldwide phenomenon.

Beside spatial segregation there are further characteristics to be taken into account in defining a divided city. As such, a divided city is conceived as an urban system where spatial partitions have been politically institutionalized and often marked by physical artifacts, such as check-points or walls. In some cases the partition originates from interstate conflicts without involving issues of local territorial claims³¹; nevertheless, in most cases the division is introduced as an emergency solution to address the problem of

³¹ It is the case of Berlin. Cf. Anderson (2008) later in the text.

persistent violence among different communities living in the city. As the groups involved in the strife often define themselves on the basis of different religious, national or linguistic affiliation, the parallel between divided cities and the so-called “ethno-national” conflicts is almost automatic. Several examples can be made in this sense: the peace line of Belfast was progressively erected to separate Catholics from Protestants; the buffer zone in Nicosia has been dividing Turkish and Greek Cypriots for fifty years; from 1948 to 1967 the Green Line of Jerusalem has split the Israeli and the Palestinian population.

The fact that divided cities are associated with what has been defined as ethno-national and religious conflict, doesn't imply the recognition of religious and national affiliation as an uncontested and objective reason for fight, but rather an element that can be easily exploited to foster the opposition and hide different kinds of interests at stake. As we discussed in the first chapter, the Yugoslavian wars of the Nineties are not to be considered conflicts among people simply unable to live peacefully together, but rather the consequence of a deep economical and political crisis.

Similarly, given the religious connotation of Irish “troubles” between Catholics and Protestants in Belfast, we should not forget the disadvantaged socio-economic position of people involved in the conflict and the role that social policies have played in fostering frustration in the lower class neighborhoods (Calame, Charlesworth, 2009).

Thus, divided cities have not to be considered as the result of impossible living together among groups, but rather contexts where different kinds of frustrations and injustices have catalyzed in the national and religious opposition. As Calame and Charlesworth (2009) point out, it “appears likely that religious affiliation provided a convenient vehicle for struggles tied to sovereignty, political influence, territory, property, and opportunity” (*Ibidem*, :148). Therefore, rather than endemic violence among communities, conflicts in cities should be attributed to the erosion of the urban contract with a particular attention towards the rivalries that led to violence.

Within this framework the most significant attempts to provide a conceptual systematization of this phenomenon are the ones of Kliot and Mansfield (1999), Anderson (2008) and Calame and Charlesworth (2009).

Kliot and Mansfield (1999) articulate their discussion combining two different approaches of geopolitical research. Adopting a structural-functionalist perspective, they investigate the structure and functions of different cases of spatial partitions,

insisting on functional aspects such as spatial planning and natural resources management. In this perspective the emphasis on the *permeability* of the separation appears a relevant analytical tool in order to investigate the level of cross-boundary interaction in functional terms. On the other hand, the authors focus on political processes such as integration and disintegration of states, wars and struggles for power, in order to retrace and analyze the steps that led to the final division of the cities.

Moreover the authors draw a distinction between the concept of states' partition and division. Partition refers to an existing political geographic entity divided into two or more separate entities on the basis of the national, religious or linguistic differences of its population. On the contrary, divided countries are culturally and nationally homogeneous and their population shares a common historical tradition, but the cleavages manifest along ideological lines. While partition is the result of internal identitarian clashes, divisions often result from great powers' external imposition, usually as an outcome of the end of a war.

Such a combined analytical perspective aims at providing a general model to give account of the path towards cities partitions; the proposed pattern is articulated in six stages. 1. Pre-partition and division stage: the city works as a unit; 2. Partition/division: the separation is fostered by an inter-communal conflict or war in which external state can be also involved; 3. Initial stage: military operations intensify and the border is fortified due to the harshening hostilities between groups; 4. Middle-term stage: inter-group violence decreases and the situation stabilizes; 5. Re-approachment: different forms of institutional or economical cooperation can take place and the border is opened allowing people to cross it; 6. Unification: the city turns to be a unique system.

The model is empirically tested on the cases of Berlin, Jerusalem and Nicosia. The authors conclude arguing that despite the initial distinction between partitioned and divided cities results scarcely relevant, several other examples of divided cities – such as Sarajevo and Belfast – prove the general applicability of the model.

The second contribution here discussed comes from James Anderson (2008) who aims at providing a conceptualization of divided cities that takes into account both studies on cities and ones on nationalism, pointing out the literature's gap. On the one hand, urban studies usually ignore issues related to nationalism and divided cities, bringing at the centre of the analysis forms of spatial segregation based on class or "ethnic" cleavages; on the other hand, studies on nationalism and related conflicts

generally ignore the urban dimension “neglecting the ‘urban level’ and the sometimes pivotal, symbolic and strategic role of cities in ethno-national struggles” (Anderson, 2008: 5).

Even if every divided city has its own peculiarity, general and confused conceptualizations can be avoided by identifying some common origins and causal processes that allow to elaborate a general categorization of what the author defines “ethno - nationally divided cities” (Anderson, 2008: 1). The author aims at providing a historically-informed framework that gives account of the geographical-historical circumstances and conditions of the birth and development of ethno-national divisions

The author draws a distinction between different kind of divided cities recalling somehow the one proposed by Kliot and Mansfield (1999). State-divided cities are defined by Anderson (2008) as cities divided by interstate conflicts – such as Berlin - that lack any conflict over rival claims to national territory among different communities. On the contrary, ethnically-divided cities are cases of deep national division usually expressed through high levels of spatial segregation, but without any national contestation over state borders; examples of such cities are London, Los Angeles and New York. In this perspective Anderson proposes a continuum where these two examples are put at the extremes and discusses how ethno-national divided cities can be placed in the middle as such cases share some feature with both the extremes and combine the problems of both ends.

Similarly to the contribution of Kliot and Mansfield (1999), Calame and Charlesworth (2009) discuss some key elements shared by all divided cities throughout the world. The richness of this contribution lies primarily in the fact that the analysis proposed by the authors show how focusing on divided cities can shed light on dynamics potentially occurring also in contexts not characterized by such a level of violence.

The authors isolate a series of previous circumstances that led to partition in each of the case studies³², defining a common pattern of shift from coexistence to division. Beside the specificity of each context, the development of events in the analyzed cities before partition can be considered as a ringing bell for problems that could potentially occur in many other contexts characterized by national and religious mixture. This

³² Cities taken into consideration are Beirut, Belfast, Jerusalem, Johannesburg and Nicosia.

contribution provides a basis to recognize and properly address such problems in order to avoid territorial partition and its consequent long-term disadvantages.

The authors highlight common patterns that can be found in different partitioned cities; in particular the research focuses the attention on the causes that have brought to the extreme solution of physical separation and the consequences that such a solution has on population, considering that in most cases what is conceived as a temporary but necessary option, actually becomes a permanent condition.

Any city could be located on a continuum that runs from perfect urban integration to complete separation, but what is more significant is that any city, given the preliminary circumstances, could skip from a more or less integrated condition to an extreme situation of division. That's why divided cities are relevant case studies in order to exacerbate the causes that could lead to a partition, that is to say the mistakes to be avoided. Extremes cases are significant because cause-effects dynamics are accelerated and can be observed in a reasonable period of time, which it wouldn't be possible in more moderated situations.

The whole contribution aims at identifying those common developing patterns in order to describe the general phenomenon of divided city. The conditions under which partitions typically occur might also appear in divergent cultural environments; therefore the recognition of some particular circumstances could provide crucial enlightenments to avoid past errors and face the problem more successfully.

Analyzing the five case studies the authors discuss a series of argument that can be considered valid for any case of divided city. Firstly, they stress the erosion and breakdown of urban contract as a crucial step leading to crisis and violence. The way in which policy address the issues of different communities living in the city is with no doubt crucial, but according to them it doesn't represent the only factor playing a role in the violence outbreak. In each context analyzed narrations on past rivalries and historical grievances have been strategically exploited to spread mutual distrust, suspicions and frustration. In this sense "Historic, local, political and foreign influences converged to create what appeared to outside observers to be an intractable stalemate between rival ethnic communities" (Calame, Charlesworth, 2009: 152)

According to the authors the path towards partition undertakes a standard sequence in urban development. These elements don't necessarily occur in each case; nevertheless they represent "reliable indicators of a propensity toward physical

segregation for ethnically divide societies under stress while undergoing a major social transition” (Calame, Charlesworth, 2009: 206).

The first step is a progressive *politicization of ethnicity* that turns out to play a primary role in determining political affiliation. When feelings of threat and fear begin to spread among members of a specific group it, such community is likely to undertake a progressive process of *clustering* in ethnically homogeneous groups; this voluntary spatial segregation becomes a strategy to seek protection and security. The third step toward partition is a process of *political up-scaling* so that contrasts occurring at urban scale reflect broader political issues; ethnic groups in the city are involved in the struggle not in defense of some direct and personal interest, but rather in the light of wider claims concerning national identity and sovereignty. Once violence has burst, urban space becomes a political territory contended along battle lines such as roads, rivers and historic quarters starting a process of progressive *boundary etching*. Subsequently, informal and invisible lines become official and physical: the boundary *concretizes* into an impermeable threshold, neighboring groups are physically separated and their enclaves turn out to be isolated and dysfunctional. The following step is connected to the power vacuum and the weakness of authorities characterizing such situations: external political administrations usually intervene to bring back stability but their intervention often translates into a *consolidation* of the separation. Once the boundary is institutionalized, the city becomes permanently segregated while the duplication of infrastructures, institutions and commercial activities leads to retrograde and inefficient urban development. Even though physical barriers and urban partitions can represent a temporary solution to violence among groups, they prove hardly sustainable on the long run so that in some cases, as in Mostar and Beirut, they can be eventually removed. Nevertheless, the authors warn that *unification* doesn't necessarily mean integration, since “social and physical scars that remain are slow to fade” (*Ibidem*: 222); people traumatized by violence and intimidation rarely chose to relocate in urban areas where they could not formerly access, perpetrating a voluntary process of segregation³³.

³³ It is exactly the phenomenon occurring across the boundary in Sarajevo and many other Bosnian areas, where policies to encourage minority returns proved scarcely successful: many inhabitants have obtained their properties back, but instead of relocating in those areas ethnically homogeneous they chose to sell it to the current occupiers (cf. Chapter 1).

Beside the empirical findings discussed, the authors resolutely criticize the resolving potential of spatial partitions, stressing their long-term negative consequences on society:

Total separation makes bigotry automatic, functional division habitual and deepening misunderstanding likely. Walls are both a panacea and a poison for societies where intergroup violence is common but over time is their toxicity that tends to prevail in social relations (Calame, Charlesworth, 2009: 13).

Moreover, they openly contest the role of international community in encouraging and fostering a serious process of long-lasting reconciliation:

Being eager for quick and economical progress, third party interveners have a tendency to address the symptoms alone, living the creation of a long term solution to the next wave of mediation, a wave that often never materializes (Calame, Charlesworth, 2009: 226)

The contributions discussed so far stress the idea that divided cities are not to be considered dysfunctional exceptions within a universe of perfectly integrated and unproblematic urban systems. Despite their peculiarity, it would be misleading considering such urban contexts as isolated negative exceptions; the high level of violence and the preponderance of national and religious issues – which often result from an intentional political exploitation – should not obscure the fact that these urban contexts often shows the same political, economical and social problems as the majority of contemporary cities. Not just divided cities, but cities in general have to deal with issues of national and religious minorities, spatial segregation and social inequalities, coexistence and balance among groups. As Calame and Charlesworth (2009) pointed out, the specific circumstances that led divided cities to partition could potentially occur in any other urban context so that analysis specifically dedicated to these peculiar cases perfectly fit within the wider reasoning on cities and the social problems related to them.

Furthermore, since conflicts originating at wider level often intensify in urban contexts, cities represent privileged lens through which to analyze conflict dynamics and investigating possible resolution strategies. This perspective moves from the rejection of a state-centric perspective that accords a primary importance to nation-

states' politics and minimize the role of cities in influencing societal change (Bollens, 2007).

According to Scott Bollens, who carried out several researches on divided cities, the potential of analyses at urban scale lies in the fact that in urban contexts characterized by intergroup tensions and violence, urban policy can affect either positively or negatively the path towards reconciliation; moreover, the way in which problems of intergroup coexistence are addressed at urban level are able to impact social and political processes taking place at wider scale. Cities provide the opportunity to live in proximity, thus in urban contexts where different groups or communities are involved in some kind of struggle, the city brings the antagonistic sides closer together, leading them to confront one another spatially and functionally. Cities are “social and cultural centers and platforms for political expression, and potential centers of grievance and mobilization.” (Bollens, 2000: 34). Therefore, cities represent crucial laboratories where different strategies seeking inter-group reconciliation may be attempted and evaluated (Bollens, 2007).

Cities themselves can assume the status of military and symbolic battlegrounds, becoming flashpoints for violence between groups seeking sovereignty, autonomy or independence. Depending on the context, they intertwine with broader struggles to different extent. As in the case of Jerusalem, the city can be the focal point of an unresolved nationalistic conflict. In other cases, such as Belfast, rather than a primary cause of conflict, the city becomes a platform for the expression of conflicting sovereignty claims or for tensions related to intergroup relations. In post-conflict urban contexts like Sarajevo, Mostar, Beirut and Nicosia, the cessation of hostilities brings on the foreground the issue of achieving sustainable coexistence through a proper management of the urban context (Bollens, 1998; 2000).

The recurrent argument emerging from Bollens' analyses states that territorial partitions provide a short-term and precarious solution in stopping intergroup violence, but at the same time they prevent a progressive path towards reconciliations since they entail huge costs in terms of social interaction. The alternative to be preferred is instead the one seeking social mixture, shared sovereignty and the management of inter-group tensions through mutual exchange rather than separation.

The whole contribution of Bollens provides significant enlightenments in the processes of conflict management and pacification since urban management of politically turbulent cities may provide either positive or negative examples to be taken

into account in negotiations occurring at regional and national level. In this perspective, compromises reached at urban scale could possibly spread out and foster processes of pacification also at wider level. In Bollens' word:

To the extent that a city is a flashpoint, it can act as a major and independent obstruction to the success of larger regional and national peace processes. Yet, the same features of urban closeness and interdependency may lead local political leaders and elites to engage in workable ethnic compromises not politically possible at a larger geographic scale. (Bollens, 2000: 7)

Rather than a physical container which passively reflects larger societal process, a city is an active social and political agent capable of moving a society toward either disruptive unrest or ethnic accommodation. (Bollens, 2000: 19)

Tensions and violence among religious and national groups occurring at urban level provide an important microcosm of intergroup dynamics at more encompassing geographic scales; therefore the city provides the opportunity to investigate the proper strategies of conflict management that can positively affect reconciliation processes taking place at national and even international scale.

2.3. Approaching the study of divided cities

The phenomenon of divided cities brings to the foreground different kinds of dilemmas that can be associated with broader sociological issues. As anticipated at the beginning of this chapter, the theoretical reflection I propose is guided by the assumption of a mutual relation of influence involving spatial and social reality. In this perspective the theoretical nodes I discuss provide the conceptual tools to approach and interpret the phenomena of divided cities. The discussion is articulated in three main points, each of them pointing out some crucial issues widely debated within the sociological reflection.

The first aspect I discuss draws on the idea that space is conceivable as the expression of power struggles, an interest at stake that leads different groups to compete for its control. In this perspective, the organization and management of urban systems should not be conceived as a neutral mix of technical prescriptions, but rather a normative frame always influenced by political purposes. As such, the configuration

and organization of urban systems represent the concrete manifestation and result of power relations and, simultaneously, an influencing factor able to shape and affect social interaction. In this perspective, the dimension of power assumes a crucial role; nevertheless its influence can be challenged and contested through strategies and practices that similarly concur to reshape urban space.

The second aspect I discuss gives account of this double nature of spatial configurations, focusing on the symbolical dimension of cities. On the one hand, architecture and elements of urban landscape can be read as a complex of symbols through which political power selectively celebrate a specific cultural heritage. On the other hand, the same symbols can be renegotiated through discourses and practices of interaction so that public places, streets and buildings can be provided with new symbolical meanings that differ from the ones imposed by the constitutive power.

Finally, the circular link between space and social reality and dilemmas raised by territorial partitions are discussed by focusing on boundaries as a socio-spatial category. The concept of limit, drawn on Simmel's thought, is involved in the light of its spatial and social implications arguing that boundaries can be conceived as social construct, but at the same time are able to shape the different forms of interaction and affect social reality.

2.3.1. Space management as expression of power relations

The partition of a city involves contentious issues related to the managing of space and the reorganization of its functions and services. Moreover, the conflicting interests and claims upon which the different groups struggle bring in the foreground the link between space organization and power relations. The organization - or reconfiguration - of any urban system is never a neutral process and divided cities provide crucial evidence in this sense. In the light of the normative power they entail, planning processes and urban policies are not to be considered simple technical prescriptions, rather the affirmation of specific political strategies. Therefore urban space can be interpreted as a particular configuration of power relations that becomes even more evident in contexts characterized by inter-group competition and violence. Space is not an immutable and objective category, rather it can be manipulated, controlled and contended. Therefore its ultimate configuration and organization results from power

struggles and negotiations among several political, economical and social actors bearer of competing interests and oriented towards different goals.

Many contributions from urban studies have stressed the political character of urban planning specifically referring to divided cities, but in more general terms such a conceptualization of space has been largely discussed by the neo-Marxist approach, significantly represented by the contributions of Manuel Castells, Henri Lefebvre and David Harvey. According to this perspective, space is conceived as the expression of power struggle and an object itself of competing and conflicting interests. Within the social and economical relations proper of capitalism space becomes an interest at stake and spatial configurations are presented as the result of conflict dynamics and power relations (Bagnasco, Les Galès, 2001).

Castells (1972; 1975) conceptualizes space as a material product, a social form through which society expresses itself in its specificity and historical configuration. In particular the author insists on three dimensions intertwining in shaping its social organization: the economical, the political-institutional and the ideological system. In Castells' view the economical system spatially manifests through relations of production, consumption and exchange; economic organization of space as well as territorial subdivision represent the spatial expression of power relations entailed in the political-institutional system; finally, the ideological system provides space with a series of marks that contribute to drive ideological meanings through spatial forms (Mandich, 1996).

Rather than being a given and immutable element, the spatial category is placed at the center of opposing strategies and conflicts (Castells, 1975). Similarly, the city represents the social product resulting from conflicting social interests and values: urban social change origins from the opposition between the action of dominant interests that have been institutionalized and the grassroots resistance and challenge to such domination (Castells, 1983). Cities are described as “living systems, made, transformed and experienced by people” (Castells, 1983: xv) where interaction between space and society contributes to produce and manage urban forms and functions.

Because society is structured around conflicting position which define alternative values and interests, so the production of space and cities will be, too. Urban structures will always be the expression of some institutionalized domination, and urban crises will be

the result of a challenge coming from new actors in history and society (Castells, 1983: xvi).

Lefebvre's thought recalls the conceptualization of the city as an interest at stake where power relations and social control can be questioned and challenged. Interpreting the progressive decline of urban life as a consequence of socio-economic relations proper of capitalism, the author elaborates the concept of *right to the city* as the right for every citizen to take active part in urban life and be involved in collective processes of urban transformation (Lefebvre, 1974). In Lefebvre's thought space is conceived as a social product through which power can exert its domination and control strategies; on the other hand space represents a crucial issue at stake upon which social struggles take place (Molotch, 1993; Mandich, 1996; Mela, 2006).

Discussing the link between the spatial and social dimension Harvey (1989) suggests a categorization of spatial forms and processes according to the particular connection they have with social practices. The author distinguishes three different practices toward space: *appropriation* refers to the physical presence of people and objects and to the different use that can be made of it; *control* refers to the power relations that manifest through a specific organization and production of space; *production* refers to the creation of new systems of space use – such as communications and transports - and new typologies of representation – such as cartography and planning.

One of the contributions that adopted and developed a similar conceptualization of urban space comes from Dovey (1999) who discussed how urban architecture reflects and reproduces the existing power relations. As the silent background of everyday life, space could be erroneously taken for granted and conceived as a neutral environment; on the contrary, its latent nature constitutes the basis upon which the leading power self-reproduces and exerts control. Therefore architecture and urban design are deeply connected to the political sphere and physical spaces become concrete demonstrations of power relations and control strategies. As such, the structures and representations of space always entail and hide a practice of power (*Ibidem*). The primary attention that Dovey accords to power and its reproducing mechanisms leaves on the background the idea that urban space is also the reflection of alternative strategies and practices through which power is challenged and contested. Nevertheless, the relevance of his contribution lies in conceiving the socio-spatial relation as mutual and reciprocal: urban

space and its built elements are the result of specific forms of interaction and, on the other hand, they take active part in shaping social relations.

These contributions allow us to point out the political implications of regulations and urban interventions and discuss in detail the role of space management in divided cities. Scholars specifically devoted to such field of studies have largely investigated the role of planning strategies and space organization as a political tool of conflict management; indeed, partitioned urban contexts prove to be particularly appropriate to unfold the political strategies entailed by spatial planning.

Rather than being a neutral body of technical prescriptions, spatial regulations always reflect a political interpretation of the situation. Within urban contexts characterized by recurring episodes of inter-group violence town planning represents a key political tool of control. Crucial issues such as residential segregation as well as urban service delivery can be faced adopting different strategies and pursuing different political goals; as such, space management represents an essential device to address problems concerning coexistence and tensions among different group within the city.

Many authors have discussed the use of urban planning interventions as a strategy of control over the population insisting on the bond between urban architecture and political sphere.

Within this field of research, many contributions have particularly focused on the Israeli-Palestinian context. Yiftachel (2006; 2010) discussed strategies of space management in Israel pointing out the link with intentional military strategies, referring to the state using the term *ethnocracy*. Similarly, Weizman (2007) and Pullan (et al., 2007) have largely investigated the link between infrastructures and strategies of control focusing on Jerusalem and the separation between the Israeli and Palestinian side.

One of the richest contribution in this sense comes from Scott Bollens, who deeply investigated the role of urban planning in undermining or fostering religious and national conflicts occurring in contested cities³⁴ (Bollens, 1998a; 1998b; 2000; 2001; 2002; 2007; 2009; 2010; 2012). Bollens largely discusses how urban design and management can either unburden or deepen existing intergroup cleavages: land use, housing, economic development, urban services and citizens' inclusion in policymaking

³⁴ Within the definition of contested cities are included both divided cities, where the partition is institutionalized and physically marked, and socially polarized cities, where religious and national affiliation combine with territorial claims and rejection of political sovereignty without leading to spatial separation. Divided cities included in Bollens' analyses are Jerusalem, Belfast, Beirut, Nicosia, Sarajevo, Mostar and Johannesburg; polarized cities are Barcelona and Bilbao.

processes are key issues able to affect relations and coexistence among different religious and national groups (Bollens, 2000; 2007; 2010).

Depending on strategies adopted by urban policy, living conditions of different communities in the city can be either promoted or worsened, balancing through different criteria their political and economical significance and their recognition in identitarian terms (Bollens, 2000). Urban policies always reflect a governance strategy that concretizes in different ways to deal with the presence of conflicting groups in the city³⁵. In this perspective the author discusses four specific dimension of urban policy. The first dimension concerns land control and management since territorial policies can arbitrarily manipulate the administrative boundaries and affect the spatial distribution of groups in the city. The second aspect has to do with the distribution of economic benefits and costs over the city: in this case different allocation of urban services may affect the accessibility to such services for communities due to their spatial distribution. The third dimension concerns the access to urban policymaking for national and religious groups' representatives: depending on their inclusion in the process the city government pattern can clearly be shaped in different ways. The last aspect concerns the maintenance of group identity since planning actions can interfere with important forms of cultural expression. The building of new religious and cultural institutions, for instance, simultaneously deals with urban service delivery and group identity recognition and can't be reduced to objective distributive criteria (*Ibidem*).

On the one hand, the consideration of spatial planning as a tool to exert political power and control provides a valuable perspective for my analysis; on the other hand,

³⁵ (1) A *neutral* urban strategy refers to residents as individuals and ignores their affiliation to a specific ethnic group: In this perspective urban planning interventions are elaborated taking exclusively into account individual needs, while resources and services are delivered ignoring issues of national and religious identity and power inequalities. Through such a perspective territorial issues and problems are defined as value-free and depoliticized.

(2) A *partisan* strategy is strictly connected to values, issues and claims risen up by a specific ethnic group and reflects an ethnonationalist governing ideology: land use planning is organized in order to enhance the power of the dominant group and keep the opposite one in a subordinated position. This practice of dominance can be either explicit or latent since discriminatory intents can be declared or hidden under apparently objective and rational goals.

(3) An *equity* strategy deals with the presence of conflicting groups in a different way. In this case imbalances and inequalities among them are taken into account by the urban agenda not to be perpetuated, but to be decreased. Urban interventions are planned conceiving identity issues and specific ethnic groups' needs.

(4) A *resolver* strategy aims at finding solutions for the ongoing conflicts in the city instead of simply managing them. Conflict resolution is pursued concentrating the attention on structural changes that may empower subordinate groups and create the good conditions for a pacific coexistence among ethnic groups (Bollens, 2000).

such relation should not obscure the fact that power can be also challenged and contested. In this sense, the spatial configuration of a city is not only the result of normative prescriptions, but also the product of different kind of practices and social interactions able to redefine the physical spatial configurations as well as the meanings attributed to them.

2.3.2. The political and symbolical dimension of urban architecture

Expression of power is reflected not only through spatial planning, but also emerges from elements of urban architecture since monuments, streets and squares always express a strategy to celebrate, or deny, collective memories and identities (Dell’Agnese, 2004; Mazzucchelli, 2010). On the other hand, the meaning attributed to places can change throughout time, being challenged, negotiated and reinterpreted through social practices and interactions of everyday life (Mela, 2006). As such, the reshaping of urban aesthetic and its different interpretations throughout time can be interpreted as an expression of the mutual relation of influence between spatial and social dimension.

The feature of urban space can be read as a mix of symbolical elements that constitute and promote the city’s political and cultural heritage; the collective memory of a city is always linked to its places and can be symbolically celebrated through the shaping of urban architecture, reinforcing the citizens’ sense of belonging. The strong link between urban symbolism and processes of identity construction lies in the fact that the latter are always spatially situated and reflected through symbolical elements of urban architecture. A city is not just a specific form of social organization on territory, but also a complex of symbols collected throughout time and expressed both through physical structures - such as squares, streets and monuments - and practices, ceremonies and rituals of daily life (Mela, 2006). In this perspective practices of everyday life, such as food consumption, can be also read as processes of identity maintenance and reconfirmation (Palmer, 1998).

The symbolical dimension of urban architecture can be particularly manifested in capital cities, where it reflects the attempt to promote and consolidate a shared national identity (Wagenaar, 2001). Governmental buildings, museums, squares and even streets’ names are never neutral, but rather express the self-celebration of political power. Through urban architecture power not only celebrates itself, but also elaborates

its strategy to foster a shared sense of belonging among its citizens; as such, urban public space represents the most appropriate place where people sharing the same interpretative codes can foster their common collective identity (Dell’Agnese, 2004).

For such a purpose the city’s symbolical dimension can be shaped in different ways: physical elements of urban space can be put in the foreground or hidden, either celebrating or denying specific identity elements. In this sense physical space is always the reflection of an intentional and selective process of identity celebration. Single urban artifacts can be built in sumptuous and ceremonial features, furiously destroyed, or simply ignored, becoming unseen elements of the landscape (*Ibidem*).

Political attempts to rewrite the historical events are realized through operations of restyling and redefinition of public spaces’ aesthetic. The memory of a city, its past and tradition, can be celebrated but also erased or reinvented through interventions on urban space; thus political and ideological strategies implicit in operations of urban space shaping can celebrate but also neglect collective memories (Mazzucchelli, 2010). Therefore urban and architectural transformation can be interpreted as attempts to redefine the urban symbolical patrimony (Bourdin, 1984 in Mela, 2006). The city represents the place where the manipulation of collective memory is most strongly carried out. Political redrawing of cities manifest not only through the construction of celebrative monuments, but also through the transformation or elimination of specific representative places in order to affirm a new historical identity (Mela, 2006).

Such a selective celebration or erosion of collective memory can reach tragic manifestation as cities can be not only reshaped, but completely destroyed in the light of what they represent. In this perspective, the destruction of Sarajevo and many other former Yugoslav cities reflected the fury against the values and principles expressed through urban symbolism (Mazzucchelli, 2010). Such furious attack has been defined as “urbicide”³⁶ to indicate how the city can become a target of military operations in the light of its symbolical value, rather than its strategic importance. Indeed the destruction of Sarajevo intentionally targeted those buildings and places that symbolically reflected the traditional heterogeneity of the city. Through the destruction of houses of worship of different faiths it was pursued the aim of erasing the traditional multicultural character of the society, where different communities were used to live in proximity; similarly, the attack against the national library represented a symbolic attack against the

³⁶ The term became popular after architect and former mayor of Belgrade Bogdan Bogdanovic used it to stress one of the most distinctive characters of the Yugoslav wars (Mazzucchelli, 2010).

heterogenic cultural heritage of the city. Such a huge destruction of the intellectual and artistic patrimony represented a deliberate attempt to deprive the city of its collective memory through the drastic reshaping of urban landscape (Dell’Agnese, Squarcina, 2002). As such, a siege or other forms of military operations against the city can be interpreted as an attack against the identitarian, cultural and social values of the city and its spatial manifestations (Mazzucchelli, 2012).

Nevertheless, power is never completely able to manipulate historical memory, as the latter has to be conceived as a process of constant evolution and negotiations (Mazzucchelli, 2010). On the one hand, the city represents a *space of memory* that reflects a self-celebration of power and the selective affirmation of collective identities; on the other hand, its symbolical dimension is flexible and changeable, as meanings and representations are recurrently negotiated and redefined through spatial and social practices of everyday life (Mazzucchelli, 2010). Culture, politics and subjectivities are elements that constantly intertwine in shaping and reshaping urban landscape, in both material and symbolical terms (Dell’Agnese, 2004). Indeed, the sorting out of urban symbolical elements throughout time is not just a spontaneous and natural process of accumulation; on the contrary, the social construction of places’ symbolism often entails conflicting interpretations and visions (Mela, 2006). Different audiences are able to negotiate different interpretations of the past and elaborate different interpretations related to the same places, buildings and ruins (Dell’Agnese, 2004).

The relation between the city’s symbolic dimension and the social identity is mutual and reciprocal. Urban symbolism intertwines with social life and daily experiences of the city’s inhabitants, contributing to shape identities at individual and collective level. On the other hand, symbolical meanings can be reproduced but also negotiated and redefined through social interaction. Thus social identity emerges from material and non-material urban elements - buildings, folklore, etc. - but rather than being passively acquired it is actively adopted through constant processes of negotiation and interpretation (Mela, 2006).

Divided cities allow us to clearly catch the symbolical expression of collective identities through urban architecture and artifacts. Within such contexts the identitarian connotation accorded to space, often declined in national or religious terms, becomes a tool to further strengthen individuals’ sense of belonging. When a city is partitioned due to inter-group struggles and violence, social division is always physically expressed and manifested. The contraposition of different identitarian groups and the strong impact

that a boundary exerts on the spatialization of such opposition emerges in all its evidence through urban architecture. Moreover new lines of division intertwine with processes of social interactions and identity construction contributing to shape a new urban landscape.

2.3.3. The double nature of spatial boundaries

Divided cities bring in the foreground the debate about the social impact of boundaries. Partitions of cities entail consequences in functional as well as relational terms affecting social relations and processes of identity construction. In functional terms the demarcation, delimitation and ultimate location of boundaries contribute to the benefit of some groups at the expenses of others. Moreover, preventing social encounter and exchange they foster the process of “othering” as they provide a solid basis to narratives that foster a sense of belonging in spatial terms (Newman, 2006b). On the other hand, their symbolical relevance can be challenged, strengthened or undermined by different discursive strategies as well as new spatial practices. Furthermore alternative interpretations can emerge from both new political discourses and bottom-up practices of daily social interaction.

As such, spatial boundaries reflect the mutual linkage between space and social reality being simultaneously a product of social relation and a factor able to impact social reality. As social constructs, the meaning attributed to them in symbolical and political terms is always flexible and changeable.

The boundary as a social construct

In reasoning upon boundary, Simmel’s spatial analysis provides enlightenments that appear still valuable. In his conceptualization of *limit* - the second fundamental attribute of space - the boundary is conceived as a social fact spatially shaped, rather than a spatial fact. Similarly to space, defined as a soul activity, the boundary represents the spatial manifestation of psychic processes of delimitation. Simmel stresses the social nature of spatial delimitations: boundaries are not unquestionable and absolute; rather they are subjective (Simmel, 1908).

Similarly, Bourdieu (1979) conceives the boundary as a practical anticipation of distinction, arguing that physical space reflects and reproduces distinctions and divisions peculiar to social space.

In Simmel's view, the spatial boundary represents the crystallization of delimiting processes that occur at psychic level (Mandich, 1996). Being characterized by continuity, space doesn't include an absolute and unquestionable border; on the contrary, the limit is always subjectively fixed: rather than natural, boundaries are discretionary. Some elements of the landscape may facilitate the boundary drawing, nevertheless political boundaries are more effective than natural ones as they allow forms of repulsion and resistance and have to do with defensive and offensive dynamics (Simmel, 1908).

The meaning provided by a boundary can be elaborated and fixed only through processes of transition, as the separation is never a natural process. Limitation is firstly a psychic and sociological event and its spatialization provides mutual relations with more concreteness, clearness and sometimes rigidity. Thus, boundaries contribute to define and give sense to reality, but they become significant only through processes of institutionalization (Cella, 2006). Therefore consequences of distinction are made objective only thanks to the sense and meaning accorded to the separation (Cella, 2006).

As Donnan and Wilson (1998; 1999) suggest adopting a constructivist perspective, the construction of boundaries consist in an arbitrary process based on cultural conventions. Thus, the meaning and relevance attributed to spatial boundaries can change throughout time since the social and symbolical boundaries that define and distinguish a group are flexible and unstable. A community is symbolically constructed upon meanings negotiated and shared by all its members, but cultural tracts celebrated and highlighted to draw the distinction can change throughout time (Barth, 1969 in Cella, 2006). Geographical narratives about boundaries are always employed to stress the connection between land and nation, but the symbolical meaning attributed to them are changeable since the same spatial element can assume different relevance depending on the prevailing discourse (Kostovicova, 2004).

In this perspective quite recent contributions from political geography insisted on the spatial manifestation of nationalism conceptualizing the boundary as a socio-spatial category. Geographers have not called into question the relevance of borders as political and physical lines of separation and their crucial role in shaping national and religious conflicts and in re-configuring the world political map. Nevertheless border studies have

progressively accorded more attention to the bordering process itself, rather than exclusively focusing on hard geographical boundaries (Newman, 2006b).

In this perspective spatial boundaries are conceived as a social construct in order to stress the link between space and symbolic narratives on nationhood. (Newman, Paasi, 1998; Pringle, Yiftachel, 1999; Paasi, 1999; Newman, 2005; 2006c; Kostovicova, 2004; Kolossov, 2005). Territory constitutes an important component of our individual, group and national identities, not simply because state territories are delimited by fixed boundaries but because territory has a symbolic dimension which determines the attachment and affiliation to particular spaces and places (Newman, 2005). Territory, in the sense of a social and political construct, in one of the dimensions constituting the social (Bagnasco, 2002).

Processes of construction and maintenance of national identity are fostered by spatial narratives on the homeland so that the neutral space becomes a territory connoted in identitarian terms (Kostovicova, 2004). Homeland territories become special places constituting the core of the self-determination experience, presented as locations of historical and mythical events in the nations' history and provided with exclusive significance (Newman, 2005). Thus, boundaries play a crucial role since “‘Placing’ the nation in its territory, physically and symbolically, is inseparable from the process of the ‘bounding’ of the nation” (Kostovicova, 2004: 270).

In this sense a boundary allows to provide a spatial frame to the social process of “othering”. Nevertheless, narratives on nationhood and territory are changeable throughout time, showing how the political and social meaning of spatial boundaries can be either emphasized or minimized (Kostovicova, 2004). Negotiations and redefinitions of spatial separations can be either elaborated by political discourses, or emerge from bottom-up representations and new production of meanings³⁷.

Effects of boundaries on social reality

The contribution of Simmel (1908) provides the basis to catch the double nature of spatial boundaries as the author stresses both the social nature of spatial separations, and the influence they exert on social relations. This second aspect emerges from the idea that the spatial delimitation of a social group contributes in defining its internal interaction. In this perspective the boundary is compared to a picture frame that gives

³⁷ The recent movement “Occupy the Buffer zone” in Cyprus is a significant example of this last case.

internal coherence to all the elements included in the pictures and distinguishes them from what is outside. Similarly, the relation among the elements that constitute the society acquires its spatial expression through the boundary that defines it (*Ibidem*). By delimiting the space, the social action acquires significance; in this sense boundaries represent a strong reinforcing principle of reality and through their simple existence, they give unity and coherence to what they include (Cella, 2006).

Simmel's metaphor recalls Goffman's conceptualization of *frame* (Dal Lago, 1994). Through his *frame analysis* Goffman (1974) similarly insists on the spatialization of social interaction pointing out how social actions take always place in a specific context spatially defined. Within such *frame* individuals elaborate a particular definition of the situation that allows them to interact on the basis of shared representations and interpretations. Reality is delimited in order to accord a common sense to it and the boundary concurs in giving meaning to what it includes (*Ibidem*).

The limit becomes an essential element in processes of identity construction in collective terms as it provides the criterion through which people can identify themselves with the other members of their group, distinguishing themselves from the others.

The spatial configuration that we define as a limit represents a sociological function. In this sense the boundary is able to affect the process of construction of collective identity: boundaries have implications on the stability of collective identities as they reinforce the awareness of each group of its own specificity and distinction (Cella, 2006).

Instead of being simple markers of consistent divisions and distinctions, boundaries have a generative power. Therefore territorial boundaries have to be considered the spatial expression of symbolical and social distinctions and separation. The sociological categorization of borders is expressed through a series of binary distinctions which constitute a clear line of separation between two distinct entities, or opposites: *us-them*, *self-other*, *included-excluded*, *inside-outside* (Newman, 2006b).

Boundaries provide the chance to distinguish through separation and both their conceptualization and practical implications have to do with processes of recognition and social construction. Boundaries allow individuals and groups to recognize themselves in opposition with the 'others' becoming individual and collective subjects; within such dynamic processes of recognition and social construction reciprocally foster each other (Cella, 2006).

As Donnan and Wilson (1999) argue symbolical boundaries are equally real than the physical marked ones, as they bring real and tangible consequences. Beyond their materiality, boundaries foster the sense of belonging through which individuals feel part of a community: not only operations of territorial delimitation foster the process of construction and reinforcement of collective identities, but also mental mechanisms of distinction developed by the community's members; thus, immaterial processes occurring at psychological level entail important consequences in social terms (Cella, 2006).

“The ‘here–there’ and ‘us–them’ cut-off points are not always played out through the construction of physical and visible walls and fences. They may be as invisible as they are tangible and, equally, as perceived as they are real” (Newman, 2006b: 177)

Borders are not confined to the realm of inter-state divisions, nor do they have to be physical and geographical constructs. Many of the borders which order our lives are invisible to the human eye but they nevertheless impact strongly on our daily life practices. They determine the extent to which we are included, or excluded, from membership in groups, they reflect the existence of inter-group and inter-societal difference with the ‘us’ and the ‘here’ being located inside the border while the ‘other’ and the ‘there’ is everything beyond the border” (Newman, 2006b: 172)

A crucial consequence of boundaries on collective identity construction has to do with mechanisms of removal and covering of shared memories and past. Partitions allow separating groups that used to live together and constantly interact; moreover they allow the insiders to build and maintain their collective identities removing and hiding memories shared with the excluded portion of the population and sometimes denying the process of exclusion itself (Cella, 2006).

Borders constitute functional barriers as they prevent *us* from crossing from 'here' to 'there'. Thus, the other side of the border becomes partially invisible and unknown, something of which we are partially and often inaccurately aware. As such, places beyond the border are considered threatening and made invisible (Newman, 2006b).

The ignorance of the unknown but stereotyped “other” behind urban partitions is a core ingredient for future conflict, and its toxic effects on the social atmosphere of the city

should be weighted in relation to the short-term benefits of division (Calame, Charlesworth, 2009: 7)

Borders play a crucial role as *impactor* rather than simply *impacted*. As such, it is the process of bordering - rather than the course of the line per se – that allows a better understanding of how boundaries affect the nature of interaction, cooperation as well as conflict between peoples (Newman, 2006b).

In conclusion, the literature here discussed provides the theoretical basis and the conceptual tools to approach and interpret the phenomenon of divided cities. The chapter dealt with issues widely debated within the sociological reflection and in the broad field of urban studies, assuming as a guiding principle a mutual relation of influence between space and social reality.

The spatial dimension is here conceived not just as the physical frame within which social action occurs and can be observed and analyzed, but rather as an active factor that affects social interaction and, at the same time, is subjected to its influence in a sort of circular relation. Dilemmas raised by the partition of a city have been discussed by referring to theoretical contributions focused on different aspects.

By pointing out how space can be the object of contention and manipulation, urban planning and management can be interpreted as a tool of political control. Moreover I stressed how the political and symbolical dimension of a city manifests through element of urban architecture: the construction, rebuilding and even destruction of monuments, squares and streets represent tools to foster a sense of belonging through the celebration - or denial – of collective memories and identities. On the other hand, symbolic meanings are not passively acquired, but can be challenged, negotiated and redefined through daily practices of social interaction. Finally, I insisted on the mutual relation of influence between social and spatial reality pointing out how spatial boundaries are the result of – and simultaneously affect - discursive strategies and processes of social interaction and identity construction.

Therefore divided cities should not be considered as extreme dysfunctional exceptions, but rather particular examples where processes and phenomena characterizing the majority of urban systems take place in more radical forms. Dilemmas and problems needed to be faced in such contexts concern issues widely discussed within urban studies and sociology; thus further theoretical and empirical

contributions specifically focused on divided cities would definitely enrich the debate at wider level.

Chapter 3

Research design and experience

Analyzing space management and social interactions across the boundary

In the light of the spatial division of Sarajevo, the lack of physical elements of separation motivated my research interest as it drove me to reflect upon the generative power of division beside the materiality of its spatial manifestation. As many analyses have pointed out (cf. Chapter 2), the absence of material barriers doesn't represent a sufficient element to foster cooperation, exchange and social encounter in post-conflict urban contexts. As such, boundaries don't need concreteness in order to exert their influence; moreover social practices and representations simultaneously affect spatial configurations and symbolical meanings attributed to them. Thus my research primary aims at investigating the extent to which such mutual relation manifests within the spatial partitioned context of Sarajevo. In particular dilemmas entailed by separation are discussed in order to unfold dynamics, practices and discourses that contribute to either challenge or reproduce the divisive power of the boundary.

The research presents a double analytical focus insisting on regulations, practices and spatial manifestations of space management as well as daily practices of interaction and space use within the partitioned space. On the one hand I investigate the extent to which the divisive logic is either fostered or challenged through planning regulations, pointing out the implicit representations and definitions of spatial and social reality produced by norms and prescription. On the other hand I intend to discuss the extent to which daily practices and discourses of inhabitants living across the boundary are affected by spatial separation and simultaneously contribute to redefine the meaning attributed to it. As an additional enrichment to the analysis I look at the material feature of urban context in order to catch symbolical manifestations of division through elements of urban setting. By looking at spatial management of the partitioned city I wonder whether it would be appropriate to conceive the two sides as distinct and autonomous urban systems; similarly I aim at investigating the extent to which spatial and relational practices on a daily basis reflect – or contradict - the existence of two parallel and detached social contexts.

3.1. Research questions and techniques

In order to carry out my analysis I translated the general issues mentioned above into research questions grouped under three main dimensions: spatial planning regulations, symbolical manifestation of division within material urban space, spatial practices and discourses in everyday life. The case study research was carried out employing an ethnographic method. During my fieldwork I combined different qualitative techniques, not only interviewing selected informants, but also observing and joining people in their individual or collective practices, following the principles of the ethnographic research widely illustrated by the literature (Geertz, 1973; Hammersley, Atkinson, 1992; Augè, 1993; Coffey, 1999; Brewer, 2000; Miles et al. 2000; Colombo, 2001; Ritchie, Lewis, 2003; O'Relley, 2005; Gobo, 2008; Osti, 2010).

3.1.1. Urban planning of divided space

The focus on norms and regulative prescriptions aimed at catching assumptions, interpretations and representations of spatial reality produced from both sides of the boundary in order to point out the extent to which the divisive power of the separation was either challenged or reproduced.

The first aspect conceived the normative organization of the planning process according particular relevance to the way in which planning regulation dealt with the issue of spatial partition and the eventual presence of significant alternatives challenging the divisive logic. To carry out this part of the research I focused on specific aspects that guided my data collection seeking to indentify the institutional actors involved in the process as well as their specific responsibilities. Moreover I intended to shed light on the level of autonomy accorded to each institutional level, focusing in particular to the municipality level. Finally I wondered whether the main normative frame allowed the opportunity to implement joint projects across the boundary.

Local administrators and professionals involved in the town planning process³⁸ can express different attitudes towards the separation elaborating their own interpretations

³⁸ While I'm perfectly aware of the fact that not only institutional actors intervene in processes of decision making, a deeper analysis in this sense would go beyond the main aims of this research. Moreover, different kinds of impediments would prevent me from carrying out an exhaustive analysis: the over-bureaucratized organization of the whole process would require an excessive amount of time in order to collect sufficient information and identify all the intertwining actors; furthermore my knowledge of the local language would prove insufficient to achieve an appropriate level of observation.

and definitions on the situation, therefore I wondered which kind of explanations, justifications and interpretations they elaborated with reference to the partition. In the light of their different role and responsibilities within the planning process, I also intended to verify their involvement in possible forms of inter-boundary collaboration.

Finally, I specifically looked at the most relevant planning documentation in order to highlight the perceived goals as well as the strategies to be adopted seeking to point out the way in which the separation was conceived and faced. In particular I wondered which kind of discursive strategies and justifications were involved in both cases to give account of the spatial partition.

In this case my data consisted in normative documents and interviews with selected personnel of planning offices at different institutional levels. Primarily I focused my background research on the organization of the town planning process. The existing literature and the information collected thanks to key informants during the first period of my fieldwork allowed me to identify the different steps that regulated the whole process of urban planning.

In the light of the post-conflict reorganization of Bosnia-Herzegovina in territorial and institutional terms, the initial reference was represented by the Constitution of the Bosnian state contained in Dayton peace agreement (Annex 4). At a lower institutional level I took into account the normative documentation that specifically concerned dispositions and prescriptions in terms of space planning and management, selecting a combination of material regarding the competences and responsibilities at various levels. Through my preliminary research I indentified the list of actors to interview at different institutional levels (cf. Methodological appendix).

The collection of documents and conduction of interviews was supported by many unrecorded conversations and my direct observation and experience. Living in the city, using its services, moving from one place to another - including crossing the boundary - allowed me to directly experience space and its partition.

Normative documents have been analyzed implying a thematic analysis (Ritchie, Spencer, 2002; Saldaña, 2009) through which I identified the different themes emerging from both texts; therefore I discussed them in order to point out the intrinsic logic approaching the spatial division.

3.1.2. Manifestations of division in everyday life

The second analytical focus of my research aimed at investigating the dimension of everyday life in a divided city. In particular I was interested in catching the extent to which the divisive power was daily reproduced through practices and discourses of inhabitants as well as through the visible shape of urban space. As discussed in chapter 2, the complex of urban architecture can be read as a political and symbolical landscape that selectively celebrates, denies or redefined collective memories and identities. As such, the spatial manifestation of division through tangible elements represents a crucial factor intertwining in processes of identity construction and maintenance (cf. Chapter 2). The visual impact of the context' physical shape represents a fundamental component in order to investigating representations and discursive strategies produced by inhabitants of both sides; thus the symbolical manifestation of division through visible spatial elements represented a constant object of my direct observation. Similarly, I looked at daily practices of consumption as potential tools to reproduce division (cf. Chapter 2).

Moreover I accorded particular relevance to practices and representations produced by people living across the boundary. On the one hand I wanted to explore the extent to which the territorial partition affected social interaction between inhabitants of the two sides; on the other hand I wondered how social relations and daily spatial practices contributed to redefine the impact of the boundary and renegotiate its divisive power.

Within this research dimension I focused on three specific themes. I firstly focused on spatial practices and crossing experience in order to investigate the extent to which the separation affected people's space use on a daily basis. Therefore I wondered whether and for which purposes inhabitants from both sides crossed the boundary insisting on justifications and interpretations produced to give account of their daily practices.

Considering the post-conflict re-configuration of space and the residential segregation occurred after Dayton (cf. Chapter 1) I sought to investigate the sense of belonging connected to places among inhabitants on both sides of the boundary. Since Istočno Sarajevo developed as an urban complex only in the recent years and considering that part of its residents have settled there only after the war, I found particularly interesting investigating whether inhabitants held some kind of bonds with people and places in Sarajevo. Moreover I wanted to investigate how people conceived

the other side of the boundary focusing on the representations and narrations they produced.

Finally I intended to shed light on the process of identity construction investigating the extent to which such process was influenced by the spatial separation. Considering the delicate issue of national or religious affiliation I intentionally never asked direct questions in this sense as I thought they could be misinterpreted as an implicit acceptance of such categorization. On the contrary, I kept my questions general enough to allow my interviewees to spontaneously define themselves, trying not to influence their answers as far as I could.

During my fieldwork I combined direct and participant observation with in-depth interviews that accorded my interlocutors a large autonomy in articulating their answers. The nine months of fieldwork allowed me to unfolding different manifestations of division as to some extent the separation directly affected my daily life as well. Being included in a tangible environment allowed me to observing the shape of urban space directly perceiving the visual impact of crossing the boundary. Furthermore by joining people in their common habits I could grasp the extent to which division constantly emerged in daily life practices.

The methodological choice to carrying out in-depth interviews allowed me to catch the spontaneous associations of my interviewees as it let them free to express themselves. The questions I elaborated provided me the guide to conduct the interviews, but in several cases the issues I wanted to discuss were spontaneously raised by my interlocutors' answers; thus each interview developed without a pre-defined structure.

In regard to participant observation, in some circumstances my limited knowledge of the language prevented me from understanding whole dialogues and situations in which I was involved; nevertheless I could often count on translations and explanations by local friends.

In selecting people for interviews I gave account of different aspects. Regardless of their birthplace I chose people living both in Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo intentionally excluding municipalities and neighborhoods excessively distant from the centre and from the boundary. Considering their remote position, most of these areas can be conceived as rural villages therefore their isolation from the urban system would make irrelevant discussing issues of spatial practices and crossing experiences. Thus I

assumed that the selection of their inhabitants would not provide significant enlightenments.

In my selection I included both people who regularly crossed the boundary and people who rarely or never did so; moreover I focused on individuals between 20 and 45 years. Such choice was based on the fact that in investigating the reproducing power of divisions, my interest primarily focused on younger generations. Dealing with the issue of partition I accorded more relevance to narrations, interpretations and definitions of people potentially included in the near future's society in the aim of providing suggestions and enlightenments about possible forthcoming situations. Moreover, I included in my selection both people who had a direct experience of the siege with others who had not lived in the city during the war.

Since my research aims didn't involve a comparison with the pre-conflict situation I defined my selection criteria being aware that my choice would necessarily excluded the oldest segment of the population constituted by people holding stronger memories of the city before the war. Furthermore due to the deep demographical and residential changes occurred during and after the war (cf. Chapter 1) selecting people who were living in the city before the conflict would prove extremely complicated.

In reaching my interviewees I mostly employed a snow-ball technique. During my first period of fieldwork I managed to meet people who came from various contexts and had no connections among themselves. Starting from these links I was introduced to a wider range of people and by the end of my fieldwork I collected eighteen recorded interviews and a large amount of field notes (cf. Methodological appendix).

The analysis of my data was carried out employing techniques of thematic and interpretative analysis (Potter, 1996; Hall, 1997; Denzin, 2002; Antaki, Billig, Edwards and Potter, 2003; Riessman, 2008; Saldaña, 2009).

3.2. The field experience

My work on the field lasted from May 2011 until January 2012, then in May 2012 I came back only for twenty days in order to finish my data collection.

As a foreseeable process of the ethnographic research, I had to redefine some of my initial questions and assumptions since my permanence on the field, the obstacles I had to face and the progressive knowledge I gained provided me for new challenging causes for reflection. While reducing the attention accorded to some aspects of the context, I

bestowed more relevance to other elements initially left in the background, confirming the process described by Cardano (1997) as an irregular flow of decisions dealing with the changing events that take place in the field.

This fieldwork has been my first research experience in Sarajevo and it took me a while before reaching what I considered a good level of self-confidence. Throughout the nine months of my stay I had to face some difficulties which - at different stages of my research - had to do either with the access on the field or with data collection.

3.2.1. The access

When I arrived in Sarajevo I could already count on few contacts provided by my co-supervisor³⁹. For the first two weeks I stayed by an old lady, Ziba, who was renting a room in her apartment in the neighborhood of Grbavica⁴⁰. Despite she used to talk only in her language and my vocabulary was hardly sufficient to ask for a glass of water and say thanks, somehow we managed to have long conversations during our morning Bosnian coffee; eventually she introduced me to some younger members of her family to whom I could communicate more easily. This encounter turned to be particularly fruitful since allowed me to get in contact with several local people who proved extremely welcoming and offered me help and support for my work. Moreover, beyond my research interests and aims, the experiences and memories that these people decided to share with me represented an invaluable enrichment.

Thanks to another contact that I got before my departure, when I left Ziba's apartment I moved to a flat that I shared with other foreigner students. My new settlement gave me the chance to meet a lot of people since my flat mates had lived in the city for more than one year and introduced me to their friends and acquaintances. On the other hand, people who I started to hang out with were not locals, but came from other countries in Europe so I soon discovered what it meant being an "international" in Sarajevo.

Since the end of the conflict, several foreigners, mostly employed by UN and EU offices or NGOs, have settled in the Sarajevo, making the international presence a customary characteristic of the city. Nevertheless the relation between this segment of the population and the local inhabitants is not always translated into complete

³⁹ I refer to Tatjana Sekulić, who works in the University of Milano-Bicocca but was born in Sarajevo.

⁴⁰ Note about the neighbourhood: position and historical relevance during the conflict

integration (Stefansson, 2006; Coles, 2006). From my own experience on the field I noticed how sometimes these two groups of the resident population seemed like parallel and detached universes. Internationals in Sarajevo are easily recognizable not only because of the language they speak but also, for example, due their different dressing style; moreover there are places in the city such as restaurants or pubs typically known as places for internationals. In this sense, internationals are easily identifiable and often appear as a tangent group of people that difficultly mix with locals⁴¹.

As an Italian I often experienced the appreciation of local people - especially older ones – since they associated my origin country to pleasant memories from the pre-war period: many of them told me about the time when they used to come to Italy to spend time on holidays or to buy fashion products unavailable on the Yugoslav market. Moreover locals who experienced the siege enthusiastically told me about the large participation of Italians in humanitarian operations taking the chance to remember all the nice people they met during those years (Field note, 13.07.2011).

Despite the usual sympathy I encountered as Italian my status of academic researcher was not always a good presentation. When introducing myself as a researcher in social sciences some locals took for granted the fact that, like many other foreigner colleagues, my work focused on the war period, fostering in their mind the idea that I was somehow speculating on other people's tragedies and suffering. Few times the single information of my status of sociologist carrying out a research in Sarajevo provoked reactions like: "Oh, so you came in Sarajevo to study us, isn't it?", "So you are also studying the war period, right?" My effort to explain in deeper terms my research interests gave often good results and beside few cases in which I encountered some resistance and hostility⁴² I could count on very supportive and collaborative people.

Throughout time I realized that I should pay attention also during my spare time if I wanted to avoid being recognized as an Italian hanging out just with internationals. I started to avoid going out with too many people at the same time, especially if all of them where foreigners, because I realized that it prevented me from knowing local people, something that actually turned out to be really easy when going out with not

⁴¹ I have to admit that I personally felt embarrassed sometimes by seeing the attitude of some internationals, and I developed myself a feeling of aversion towards diplomats and NGO employees that, beyond their formal involvement in various kind of development programs, showed a paternalistic attitude or, in worse cases, an arrogant behavior typical of well-paid people approaching an underdeveloped context with a sense of superiority.

⁴² In such cases the people I was put in contact with didn't openly refused to be interviewed, but were not collaborative at all so I finally gave up my efforts to arrange a meeting.

more than one or two friends (Field note, 22.06.2011). My efforts proved successful and day by day I managed to get in touch with people that eventually helped me a lot in carrying on my work.

If on the one hand I had to find the good strategies to get in touch with people in the city and gain their trust, on the other hand during my stay I constantly had to deal with the difficulties in reaching people for interviews in institutional offices.

Any attempt to contact offices' personnel by phone or e-mail irremediably failed and soon, moved from the sensation of wasting my time, I radically changed my strategy. Having reached a sufficient level of the local language and feeling sufficiently self-confident I started to show up at the offices' receptions and surprisingly my attempts proved immediately successful.

I noticed that my status of young female researcher made people much willing to help me and my efforts to express myself in the local language were openly appreciated. Sometimes people showed sincerely impressed by my research interests in the light of the complexity I had to deal with and didn't hesitate in offering me their support (Field note, 15.10.2011). My experience confirmed the relevance of factors such as gender and age in facilitating the access to the field (Colombo, 2001).

In some cases reaching the people I wanted to interview had been more complicated and I succeeded only thanks to my local friends who translated for me reference letters and offered to repeatedly accompany me in the same offices keep asking for an appointment⁴³.

Unfortunately in some cases my efforts proved not enough and in the end I had to give up. That was the case of the European Agency SERDA: despite the initial openness I encountered, people who I met provided me for large material but never found the time for an interview.

3.2.2. Data collection

One of the natural obstacles of my fieldwork was represented by the language. At the beginning I could not speak at all and, despite most people in Sarajevo have great

⁴³ In particular that was the case of the Planning Institute of Canton Sarajevo where I had to go several times before I managed to interview the employees of the office. In this case there were some bureaucratic steps to be taken in order to obtain an appointment. Another case refers to the offices in Istočno Sarajevo where I always went accompanied by a precious contact, Dušan Sehovac, who kept the contacts with the offices' secretary for me and arranged all the meetings.

knowledge of English, I was really intentioned to learn the local language. I started to take classes and made an effort not to speak English even if I could; day by day I reached a basic knowledge of the language that allowed me to handle daily life conversations.

I never managed to gain a sufficient knowledge to autonomously conduct interviews in the local language; nevertheless I've already described how my efforts positively impressed my interlocutors proving them my sincere interest and passion. This aspect undoubtedly contributed to establish a trust-based relation which is essential to conduct ethnographic research.

Depending on the situation I conducted interviews either in English, especially in the case of interviews with inhabitants, or in the local language supported by some local friends who came with me to translate.

In most cases the interviews conducted in the local language were those with institutional actors since the topic was quite specific and answering my questions people often involved technical and professional terms to give account of the planning process. In that case they could express much better in their native language and the simultaneous translation of my friends allowed me to follow the conversation and, in case, ask for further explanation; moreover, recording on tape my interviews allowed me to play them back and make clear every passage of the conversation.

Another critical aspect of my fieldwork consisted in dealing with the constant reference to war memories and experiences that emerged both during interviews and informal conversations. Indeed, Also interviewees who had no direct experiences of the war because of their age or because they left the country were unavoidably connected to it due to the experiences and narrations of their family members. The stories I got to know and the riddled buildings I used to see every day aroused in me feelings of desolation and frustration, reminding me about violence and people's suffering each day of my fieldwork (Field note 10.05.2011; Field note, 02.09.2011; Field note 20.01.2012).

As a researcher I had deal with feelings of sympathy and sadness always making an effort to maintain the fair detachment with my interviewees (Elias, 1988). Moreover, I had to find the proper strategies to keep control over the development of my interviews: in case of my interlocutor lost the focus of the conversation recalling past events and circumstances, I had to stick to my research questions without being indelicate or interrupting his/her talking. I learnt how to keep an emotional distance in case my

interviewee came up with his/her personal story and I had to learn how to dissimulate my sympathy during the interviews as showing myself too emotional would compromise my status of researcher.

Nevertheless I sometimes felt pretty uncomfortable in realizing that some questions conceived as absolutely neutral from my point of view, actually led the interviewee to talk about delicate and sensible experiences.

I am very satisfied with B.'s interview. [...] Nevertheless I really had to struggle to hide my discomfort when he told me about his brother's death. I had no idea about that and the fact that he told me about this episode just because I asked him about the places where he has lived so far caught me completely unprepared (Field note 15.09.2011).

The empirical results emerged from this research work are discussed in the three following chapters.

Spatial regulations and interventions

The decoupling of urban system

In this chapter I shall give account of the extent to which the power of separation is exerted and reconfirmed by regulations on space management. Looking at the way in which urban planning deals with the territorial separation allows to unfold representations and definitions of social and spatial reality produced by normative discourse catching the spatial consequences of norms and regulations.

As pointed out in chapter 2, several contributions from planning studies have highlighted the political role of space management, stressing the relevance of power relations in spatial configuration of urban contexts. As such, normative prescriptions lying behind planning interventions are never neutral, but rather involve discursive strategies that produce different definitions and representations of reality. Therefore, the shape and organization of urban space always result from specific interpretations and definition of the situation⁴⁴.

Within such perspective I aim at pointing out how the power of separation is deeply fostered and reconfirmed through regulations and interventions of space management while interventions and initiatives suggesting an alternative approach to the situation result quite scarce and ineffective. Empirical evidence is provided in order to discuss the extent to which spatial organization and functioning reflects the existence of two autonomous and separated urban systems.

The first part of the chapter illustrates the functioning and organization of the planning process, the interpretation of the situation provided by the actors involved as well as the spatial effects of planning regulations in functional terms. Moreover, the scarce and unsuccessful initiatives aiming at involving both sides in joint planning projects and interventions is stressed to further highlight the generative power of separation. Thus I argue that reality is always defined and conceived neglecting the counterpart to large extent. Such a non-recognition is further expressed by discourses

⁴⁴ On the other hand, norms and regulations are not passively and neutrally accepted and put in practice; their translation in practical terms can lead to different results and their general definitions and interpretations can be also challenged and renegotiated. Nevertheless, the main focus of this chapter conceives the representations and definitions of reality emerging from the regulatory process and their tangible effects on space.

and representations produced by local administrators and professionals at different institutional level.

In the second part I give account of the results emerged from the analysis of planning normative documents discussing representations and definition of spatial and social reality through which the logic of separation is strengthened and renovated. As such, discursive strategies adopted in both cases confirm and strengthen the representation of Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo as separated cities openly defined as independent actors within the international contexts.

In conclusion the empirical findings discussed in this chapter suggest that Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo are more appropriately conceivable as two separated urban systems than the opposite sides of a divided city.

4.1. Planning separately

4.1.1. The planning process

The normative frame regulating planning activities results deeply affected by the institutional reorganization of the whole country. As pointed out in the first chapter, the Bosnian central power appears rather weak, while the majority of functions and responsibilities is accorded to the two entities and spatial planning is not an exception (Jokay, 2001).

Despite the legislative framework of Dayton agreement leaves possible space for inter-entity cooperation initiatives, horizontal cooperation between homologous institutional actors across the boundary appears almost inexistent. Therefore I will discuss how norms and regulations regarding spatial planning become political tools of non recognition and neglect of the spatial and social reality across the boundary.

Entities represent the leading administrative level where normative documents are produced but responsibilities can be eventually devolved to lower hierarchical level. That happens in the case of Federation, where the ten cantons are put in charge of issuing the main spatial plan that represents the normative frame to which any other planning document needs to account for.

The strong top-down approach is common in both contexts and the main regulatory document is represented by the spatial plan (*Prostorni plan*) issued by the planning institute at canton or entity level. The offices in charge of producing normative planning

documentation are the New Planning Institute of Republika Srpska⁴⁵, located in the city of Banja Luka, and the Office for Development Planning of Canton Sarajevo, placed in Sarajevo. The general mission and objectives of the plan are discussed within an appointed assembly at entity – or canton – level, and then a final version of the document is submitted to the Planning Institute that develops the spatial plan in its details.

The directions included in the spatial plan are mandatory and concern the whole portion of space – canton or entity; at lower institutional levels planning offices are in charge of developing more detailed and specific documents for single municipalities, following the general prescriptions and goals established by the spatial plan⁴⁶ (Interview n.8, Office for Development Planning of Canton Sarajevo; interview n.5, Grad Istočno Sarajevo).

The interdependence of the plans is strictly hierarchical and many interlocutors have pointed out how the strong top-down approach of the whole process leaves no space for initiative at lower institutional level. As such, municipalities turn out to be passive executors of top-down prescriptions and result scarcely able to affect higher institutional levels. Moreover, municipalities' closeness to local community appears not adequately recognized as a crucial resource. Therefore, many local administrators expressed the wish of a larger autonomy.

The main thing we complain about is that we have no decisional autonomy; we just have to follow directions and prescriptions coming from higher institutional levels. Considering the amount of people working in this office I reckon that under different conditions and with less constraints, we would be able to have a stronger and more active impact over the municipal area and bring large advantages to the citizens we interact with everyday, but unfortunately we are not allowed to take any decision, everything we may or not allow must be first approved by higher institutional levels. Since we are not directly responsible for making plans and someone else does that, the quality of such plans doesn't depend on our work at all and we don't have any. We are professionals and architects but we have no autonomy (Interview n.1, Općina Stari Grad, Sarajevo)

⁴⁵ By the time of my fieldwork the office was the Planning Institute of RS, but since 2012 it has been reorganized in the New Planning Institute.

⁴⁶ In hierarchical order, development plan is the second most important document after the spatial plan; then follow a regulatory plan, specific urban projects and partial plans, the lower the institutional level, the more detailed the plan (Interview n.3, Općina Istočna Ilidza)

I believe that we need a decentralization of the government because I think that to deal with question regarding citizens, local institutions represent the most appropriate level to understand their needs. Moreover, municipalities should have more autonomy and control with regards to natural resources since people of the region know best how to use and manage such resources rather than the central power. I believe that the strengthening of local communities would result in a better administration of the whole territory and in a further development and reinforcement of Republika Srpska (Interview n.5, Grad Istočno Sarajevo)

Lower institutional levels are involved in the general planning process with different extent of responsibilities. The intermediate institutional level of city (*Grad*) represents the mediating actor between municipalities and canton or entity as it monitors the correct implementation of detailed plan at municipality level, verifying the conformity of specific documents with the general normative frame. Beside allowing or denying eventual adjustments at municipal level, the city level is not in charge of producing specific planning documentation. Under the city's supervision, municipalities are in charge of elaborating their specific regulations (Interview n.9, Grad Sarajevo; Interview n.5, Grad Istočno Sarajevo).

Municipalities are accountable for any initiatives and interventions to the canton/entity institutional level and can act only under their approval. As such, they develop specific regulatory plans exclusively upon the general prescriptions issued by higher hierarchical levels (Interview n.1, Općina Stari Grad, Sarajevo). The documents are submitted to the higher institutional level to verify their conformity and in case of conflict they are modified in the light of the higher level norms before the final approval (Interview n.2, Općina Istočni Novi Grad, Istočno Sarajevo).

The process foresees space for public discussion for inhabitants of single neighborhoods through the periodic gathering of assemblies called *mjesne zajednice* (local communities), where residents have the chance to express their specific needs to municipal representatives. Before the definitive approval of the spatial plan, the opening of such public debate aims at collecting possible suggestions and claims that residents can discuss in conjunction with planning professionals. The public debate is opened through calls for participation announced on the official gazette and municipalities play a mediating role between upper institutional levels and inhabitants. General comments and remarks of participants are translated into technically defined proposal by professionals involved and then submitted to the municipal assembly for evaluation;

suggestions approved by the assembly are eventually sent to the Planning Institute to be included in the final version of spatial plan.

According to the administrator of municipality of Istočni Novi Grad, public discussion of the plan within the local communities' assemblies represent a fundamental step of the whole development process of planning and a crucial opportunity to foster public participation and guarantee transparency (Interview n.2, Općina Istočni Novi Grad). Nevertheless, previous analyses have pointed how the attempts to include civil society in the planning process appear scarcely effective, as the initiatives' promotion difficultly reaches a significant amount of people (Zajazi, Vidmar, Mohor, 2009). Indeed, the scarce results of residents' inclusion in the planning process has been especially stressed by professionals and administrators operating at municipal level, who pointed out that the formal commitment to public participation and transparency is not followed by adequate initiatives to inform inhabitants (Interview n.7, Općina Novo Sarajevo; Interview n.3, Općina Istočna Ilidža).

Despite the rooted top-down approach, the legislation is rather flexible in according responsibilities to specific institutional levels so functions and duties can be devolved to lower hierarchical level (Jokay, 2001). Within such a scenario, several interlocutors pointed out how overlapping responsibilities contribute to create confusion and inefficiencies.

Responsibilities accorded to grad and to single municipalities often intertwine and this often causes confusions and unclarity with regard to who is in charge to carry out the specific functions, especially when it's needed to deal with utility companies, such as water, electricity, and so on. Who has the responsibility to do what (Interview n.5, Grad Istočno Sarajevo)

Moreover, as upper hierarchical levels sometimes devolve the task to realize plans and interventions without providing the necessary funding, local administrations need to face further economical burdens (Interview n.1, Općina Stari Grad, Sarajevo). Therefore the over bureaucratization of the whole process and the intertwining responsibilities of different institutional levels make procedures and decision making process extremely slow and inefficient. Moreover, despite the legislation provides the opportunity to modify the plan according to bottom-up suggestions, interviewees explained to me that such a possibility appears rather complicated to realize.

It's really difficult to bring changes on the actual situation, especially in regard with infrastructure planning. Procedures are complicated and there are a lot of institutional levels to take into account. (Interview n.4, Općina Centar, Sarajevo)

One year ago there has been the attempt to propose a new spatial plan, but in the end the procedures had been too complicated and slow so the idea of issuing a new plan has failed. There are complicated and long procedures to follow in order to put in practice planning regulations. It's complicated to actually introduce changes on the plans a new one. There should be some smooth path in order to introduce changes in the original plan. (Interview n.3, Općina Istočna Ilidža)

Beside such complaints, administrators and professionals from both sides showed scarce concern about the issue of separation, expressing a general acceptance the self-referential approach of spatial planning and management. As such, representations provided by my interlocutors generally accorded an unquestionable status to spatial separation.

Prostorni plan in Federation and Prostorni plan in RS, each part works on its own plan and is independent. Since we are the same country we should have a common spatial plan and hopefully we will have it in the future, but for now we still have to think separately for each entity (Interview n.1, Općina Stari Grad, Sarajevo)

Well, Sarajevo, Sarajevo...that's not Sarajevo, it's just a suburb of Sarajevo, so urban development it's not affected by this separation at all. They are doing everything by themselves so it really doesn't affect the city of Sarajevo at all (Interview n.7, Općina Novo Sarajevo)

With regards of issuing spatial plans there is no communication or negotiation between the two administrations because each of them is responsible for its own part. [My question: Do you think that such a situation affect urban development to some extent?] It does in the sense that everything is managed separately, infrastructures and so on, but I wouldn't say that this represents a problem (Interview n.2, Općina Istočni Novi Grad).

Such a scenario proves how the strong divisive logic entailed by tools of spatial management deeply influence the interpretation of the situations of local administrators,

who appear unable to bring the separation into question and, taking it for granted confirm a reciprocal neglect of the administrative and spatial reality across the boundary.

[My question: Would it be possible to involve Istočno Sarajevo in some joint projects?] Well, it would be possible...why not? It's really near, it's almost like another part of the city, it would be good to look at the whole area in general and not like "this part is yours, this part is mine, I don't care about the development of your part", it would be positive to include every parts in the projects. [...] But in reality I think that this situation doesn't really affect citizens living across the boundary: we kind of learnt to live like that so I would say that their life is their life. It's like having two cities, but it's fine (Interview n.4, Općina Centar, Sarajevo)

[The separation] is not a problem, it is not more difficult to live with the separation: each part has its own city and organization, we are not affected by them and we don't affect them (Interview n.10, Općina Istočni Stari Grad)

Maybe it would be better to be united so that every area could be dedicated to some services, like in any other city: there is the place for industries, the place for the university, etc. etc. but nowadays everything is separated so that they have their own industries, university and so on. Of course this double supply it would not be so necessary but it's like that (Interview n.7, Općina Novo Sarajevo)

Maybe it would be better if we could have a common and general view of the context and the problems, but I don't know...We've already learnt to live this way so I don't think there's any need to work together, to plan together (Interview n.4, Općina Centar, Sarajevo)

The general acceptance of the separation represents the most common discourse that contributes to foster a reciprocal non-recognition of the counterpart.

4.1.2. Infrastructures and communication: the boundary's impermeability

Effects of norms and regulations manifest also through the concrete shaping and functioning of urban space reproducing a strong divisive power that fosters a reciprocal closure and proves rather difficult to be challenged and overtaken.

In functional terms the two contexts appear completely separated therefore conceivable as separated urban systems. Infrastructures and connections are separately managed and organized, while joint projects result scarcely effective. Recalling the idea from Kliot and Mansfield (1999), the boundary can be described as completely impermeable.

The self-referential logic and the relative dysfunctional consequences are significantly expressed by the issue of inter-state transports and communication. Despite both sides equally stress the urgency of developing and reinforcing infrastructures and connection network, inter-entity collaboration has not led to successful results so far. As a crucial example of failing joint initiative, the responsible of office of urbanism of Grad Sarajevo highlighted the difficulties of realizing the highway within the Bosnian territory. As she explained to me, the problem is first of all political, as for realizing the infrastructure the two entities should reach an agreement upon the sharing of costs, an agreement that seems far from being achieved.

For example, there is the issue of highway: we don't have it. There cannot be just one entity put in charge of realizing it, there's a plan for the highway but nobody seems really interested in realizing it: it would cost a lot of money and it would mean that institution and offices of both entities should negotiate and reach an agreement, which is something not very likely in the short run. It is necessary, one of the basic things we should realize, but nobody really takes care of it. And as long as both entities have their own spatial plans and are able to realize infrastructures and services within their own territory, all the planning issues that involves wider cooperation are left in the background and at the moment it doesn't seem that the situation will change soon (Interview n. 9, Grad Sarajevo).

Considering the existence of two separated international bus stations, the selective organization of inter-state connection represents another revealing element through which separation manifests. Busses run from Istočno Sarajevo to Belgrade seven times per day, each day of the week, while from Sarajevo there is only one bus during the day, running only three days a week. Croatian main cities – Zagreb, Split, and Dubrovnik - are daily connected with Sarajevo bus station, while from Istočno Sarajevo there are no connections at all. With regards to internal connections it is particularly significant the fact that Istočno Sarajevo station exclusively serves destinations within Republika Srpska.

Local public transports represent a further significant example as the two sides completely lack direct connections. Bus companies are separately managed and the past projects of providing a shared service have eventually failed. The last attempt in this sense, dating back to 2007, was part of the activities of Sarajevo Economic Region Development Agency (SERDA)⁴⁷.

The project was presented as an intervention of crucial importance and it had been already elaborated in its details, but it has never been realized. Despite my several attempts to investigate in deeper detail the circumstances and reasons to such failure, I did not manage to gather significant information directly from SERDA's professionals. The only vague explanation was provided to me by the mayor of Istočno Sarajevo:

Both canton and grad Istočno Sarajevo are respectively in charge of organizing their own transport system and they have different companies with their own budget. There was an idea that eventually failed 5 or 6 years ago to extend the trolley bus line to Istočno Sarajevo and that would have provide sure advantages to citizens, but unfortunately the project failed. The problem for not realizing it was simply political, administrations did not achieve an agreement. In this moment I cannot explain the details and the reasons for such a bad communication, but at least the good point is that we started to talk about that. There were also difficulties related to the power and responsibilities division, considering that companies from both sides should have financed the project: the redistribution of costs and benefits would have been very complicated. There was a power struggle, there are ways to make a business plan, but in this case it was not pursued through the appropriate strategies. (Interview n.5, Grad Istočno Sarajevo)

Despite the absence of physical barriers and material separation, infrastructures as well as service delivery and resources management are separately developed and organized. Different companies operate across the boundary while new infrastructural constructions are carried out without any particular joint initiative. After the war the administration started to build new infrastructures *ex novo* carrying out separated projects from the beginning. In several cases, spatial plan of the Federation was taken into consideration in order to organically extend the new infrastructures – such as waste water system – but such activities were carried out autonomously without any particular need to cooperate. In many cases Istočno Sarajevo planned and developed its own

⁴⁷ The agency has been established within the general program of European integration of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Its role will be further discussed later in the text.

infrastructures by simply referring to those already existing in Canton Sarajevo, but local administrations across the boundary didn't need to cooperate anyhow (Interview n.5, Grad Istočno Sarajevo).

4.2. Creating two cities

In this paragraph I shall go into further detail with regard of planning documentation, discussing the discursive strategies that in both cases contribute to foster and reproduce a divisive logic through which each side is represented and promoted as an autonomous spatial unit.

Representations and discourses produced in this sense stress the promotion of local context emphasizing the city's potential in economical terms. Within such general frame different elements are defined as crucial tools to attract foreign investments. Cultural identity, environmental protection and technological development are conceived as fundamental aspects that should be valorized in order to promote the image of the city at international level, fulfilling European standards in the light of a future integration. Thus, Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo make strong effort to promote their own image of the city, simultaneously ignoring the counterpart as a potential partner. That emerges in evident terms through the definitions and declinations of goals contained in the documents of both sides.

The promotion of local context based on economical attractiveness represents the main discourse in both cases. General goals of development and economic growth are translated and articulated using a constant reference with other countries simultaneously neglecting the reality across the boundary. Both discourses are justified by the fulfillment of European standards in the perspective of a future integration.

Sarajevo should be promoted as a crucial business center of South-East Europe in order to attract a growing extent of foreign investments. [...] As the capital city, Sarajevo should develop as a dynamic economic context [...]. A crucial goal to be pursued is represented by the achievement of European levels of GNP (Spatial plan of Canton Sarajevo: 47-50).

A strong emphasis is put on the development of communication network linking Sarajevo to cities worldwide. Moreover, discourses producing an image of Sarajevo as

an international capital city are articulated insisting on the development of new cultural, educational and scientific institutions in order to attract foreign professionals.

The same discursive strategy is retraceable in the case of Istočno Sarajevo and properly reassumed by the explanation of the responsible of planning office of Grad Istočno Sarajevo:

Last year the local administration of city institutionalized a special agency for development of Istočno Sarajevo and this is personally a really important thing. The function of the agency is trying to synchronize the activities of the grad and the municipalities in order to suggest an appealing image of the city of Istočno Sarajevo and draw investments and present the potential of the city for future investments. For the strategic development of the city it is needed a recognition of the city and it is necessary to promote the image of a close community within the city; moreover the efforts go in the direction of attract an intellectual elite in the city that can join the University of Istočno Sarajevo (Interview n.5, Grad Istočno Sarajevo).

In both cases the attractive potential of the city is further stressed representing tourism as a crucial economical activity able to generate employment, income growing, promotion and strengthening of national identity, improvement of quality of life. As such, initiatives should be planned in order to promote both cultural and naturalistic tourism within a competitive approach that promotes the specificity and the attractiveness of the context. A strong accent is put on the cultural and historical patrimony of the city, especially in the case of Sarajevo, as well as on natural environment and landscape, particularly suitable for winter leisure time activities. As such, the promotion of tourism is defined as a crucial goal in both cases; nevertheless discourses remain permeated by an excluding perspective from which the context across the boundary is never mentioned.

Such discursive strategies significantly differ from the representation provided by the European agency SERDA that aims at promoting the local context as a unit:

Sarajevo Macro Region is an economic region, which will, through sustainable economic development, provide better quality and more prosperous life for all of its citizens and it will be an example of dynamic development region in all aspects of business, educational, cultural and sports life. The Sarajevo Macro Region will be the leader in the process of

integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the European Union (SERDA official website, http://www.serda.ba/default_eng.asp).

Despite such encouraging presentation, activities of the agency have not proved particularly successful in promoting an alternative representation of the context as a whole spatial unit. Indeed, the majority of projects actually realized involved municipalities of a single entity, while cross-boundary initiatives have been eventually dropped. Beside the example of local public transport previously discussed, another significant case conceives the realization of a joint spatial plan of the whole region. As reported by the official web-site, the development of a unique urban plan was presented as a crucial contribution for the optimization of resources' use and a more balanced economic and social development of the whole region. In real terms, none of my interlocutors could provide any additional information or documentation about the actual realization of the project.

In this perspective, the scarce results of the agency's activities represent a further confirmation of the reproducing potential of the separation.

Another significant example is represented by the Network of Associations of Local Administrations of South-Eastern Europe (NALAS). The network was created in 2001 after the first Forum of Cities and Regions of South-East Europe held in Skopje and after having functioned as an informal organization with regular meetings it became an officially registered association in July 2005. Considering local self-government as a key issue, the association aims at promoting decentralization processes, fostering cooperation of central governments with international organizations. Thus, specific themes such as local finances, urban planning, and institutional development are discussed through projects and activities organized by specific task forces. Within such context Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo are included as separated cities as the two entities are treated as independent and autonomous institutional units. As such, each city is singularly involved in different projects and initiatives (Interview n.6, NALAS, Istočno Sarajevo).

4.2.1. Cities as international cultural and innovation centers

Both plans express a strong intention to promote the city as a center for cultural and innovation promotion. While this aspect is strongly emphasized in both cases, the

reference to the counterpart as a possible partner for collaboration or knowledge circulation is completely absent.

In the case of Sarajevo, particular relevance is accorded to the scientific sector as a tool to foster technological development in accordance with European standards. As such, Sarajevo should achieve a crucial relevance as a European capital with a strong basis of young instructed professionals. As the documents states, science should become the basis of national richness based on technological excellence as a leading principle of new economy. Particular emphasis is accorded to technology as the basis of economical development that represents the most important goal. Moreover life-long learning based on knowledge and technology is presented as the fundamental tool to foster and promote individuals' potential and skills.

The same emphasis emerges from the plans of Istočno Sarajevo, especially in relation with the development of the university institution. The attempt goes in the direction of developing a network of experts and organization both at local and international level to gather knowledge and contribute to develop Istočno Sarajevo as a cultural and innovation centre. Similarly, technology is stressed as a tool to connect experts and professionals who can contribute to the regional development of the city. In this aim, activities and partnerships among university institutions are presented as particularly crucial.

Such aspect has been particularly stressed by my interviewees:

The university is a very important institution that already has seventeen departments. The goal is to attract students from the surroundings that live in smaller towns. The agency works in the direction of setting up infrastructures, networks and attractions that can foster the gathering of an intellectual elite to be set in Istočno Sarajevo, constituted also by intellectuals coming from abroad⁴⁸; we truly believe that the results of such effort could significantly enrich the community, contributing to the development of the area and, finally, to make Istočno Sarajevo one of the main centers of Republika Srpska (Interview n.5, Grad Istočno Sarajevo)

A further element deserving particular attention in the case of Istočno Sarajevo is the emphasis accorded to Serbian identity as a fundamental aspect of the local cultural heritage. The creation of the city is represented as a crucial political achievement while

⁴⁸ Indeed, Istočno Sarajevo University has just signed a bilateral agreement with university of Milano-Bicocca and I personally attended the meetings both in Milan and in Istočno Sarajevo.

space is openly connoted in national terms, referring to the territory of Republika Srpska as the main spatial unit. Therefore much emphasis is accorded to the promotion of local community's well-being and the preservation of the territory's natural resources. Moreover the document openly states a political intention to guarantee and maintain the city's integrity fostering its internal cohesion and preventing its fusion with Sarajevo.

Istočno Sarajevo represents a shelter for Serbian people, a safe place that has been defended and maintained throughout the hardest times. Therefore, its origin should not be forgotten and its symbols and values should be protected from oblivion (Spatial plan of Republika Srpska: 7)

Throughout the document it is widely remarked that the city's representation as a crucial center for Serbian identity and culture has been often left in the background. Thus, new effort should be addressed in promoting the identitarian context's peculiarity not to forget the roots of the local community and its land. In order to catch the emphasis accorded to such aspect two different initiatives included in the spatial plan are worth mentioning.

The first one is titled "*The Serbian shelter*" and foresees the realization of a museum to retrace the steps of the creation of Republika Srpska. The place is meant to celebrate historical places within Istočno Sarajevo recalling significant steps of the creation of the city; maps, documents and visual material should be realized in order to emphasize the city's cultural heritage. The project entails a double purpose defined in terms of "internal city marketing" – to promote and foster the national identity of the local community and the sense of belonging towards the city of Istočno Sarajevo – and "external city marketing" – aiming at promoting the cultural heritage of the city among incoming tourists.

A complementary project foresees the organization of different commemorative events to celebrate anniversaries historically significant for the creation and development of Republika Srpska. Such occasions are presented as important opportunity for inhabitants of Istočno Sarajevo to retrace the steps through which the city – and the entity – was created, celebrating crucial personalities and events associated to Serbian history and promoting the image of Istočno Sarajevo as a crucial center of Serb origin.

In less nationalist terms, the representation of Istočno Sarajevo as a spatial context bearer of peculiar historical references recurred also during my interviews:

The path started with a very small amount of resources, at the beginning Istočno Sarajevo was just an area covered by fields and abandoned military buildings, and in specific, this part of the city that started to be developed was chosen by former inhabitants of Sarajevo who moved here and decided to stay here, setting up institutions and start the path towards the development of this city (Interview n.5, Grad Istočno Sarajevo)

Such discursive strategies clearly reflect the representation of Istočno Sarajevo as a spatial and social context culturally and historically linked with Serbia. As it will be discussed in the following chapter, such strong nationalist approach is largely manifested through the symbolical connotation of urban architecture and landscape.

4.3. Conclusions

The main conclusion emerging from the contents here discussed suggests that Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo could be more appropriately conceived as separated cities rather than the two sides of a divided urban system. The underlying logic of the planning process reflects a rooted approach of reciprocal denial: on the one hand, such logic emerges from the planning regulative framework as well as from representations of interviewed actors; on the other hand, the normative self-referential approach spatially concretizes in the separation of functional organization of the two spatial contexts. As such, urban systems don't share any infrastructures and joint planning initiatives result largely unsuccessful.

In both cases discursive strategies fostering the promotion of local context provide exclusive spatial representations where each side of the boundary is conceived as a single and autonomous city. As such, both Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo are discursively pictured as peculiar social, economical and cultural environments provided with a crucial attractive potential.

In particular it is the characterizing feature of Istočno Sarajevo that allows to better catch the basis of such argument. Indeed, after the boundary was institutionalized many circumstances intertwined contributing to transform this peripheral and underdeveloped suburban area into an autonomous urban system. As already pointed out, the general

lack of infrastructures combined with the post-war urgency of reconstruction operations led the new born local administration to put great effort in restoring and developing services and connections. Within the changed political and institutional scenario such initiatives were autonomously carried out and progressively led to a separated urban development. Moreover, the relevance accorded to Serbian identity as a crucial peculiarity of the social environment contributes to further connote the context as a separated social and spatial unit.

In conclusion, discourses and representations involved by the planning normative frame foster a vicious circle that reproduces functional, organizational and infrastructural division, crystallizing a situation that doesn't entail visible political tensions and declared mutual distrust, but rather manifests through less visible forms of reciprocal non recognition.

As it will be discussed in chapter 5 and 6, the generative power of division can be further acknowledged by looking at the connotation of urban landscape in symbolical terms as well as at representations and spatial practices produced by inhabitants of both sides.

Chapter 5

Urban ethnography

Experiencing division through space and practices

The contents here presented give account of some crucial aspects already discussed in chapter 2 and linked with processes of identity construction: on the one hand, the shape of urban architecture is conceived as a bearer of political and symbolical meanings able to foster a common sense of belonging; on the other hand, daily practices of consumption can be conceived as less evident, but equally significant tools of distinction and identity maintenance. In this specific context, I aim at pointing out the extent to which the particular shape of urban architecture and some typical practices of consumption contribute to strengthen the divisive power of the boundary.

As I've already pointed out, processes of identity construction and maintenance are always based on excluding strategies that foster intra-group cohesion and inter-group contraposition. On the one hand, the deep division of the two cities is directly observable by looking at their architecture and at the different symbolic connotation of urban space. On the other hand, such contrasting symbolism is not reflected only through physical elements of urban space but also through the shaping of daily practices of consumption, especially in relation with food. Thus, the division is expressed through elements that symbolically celebrate a single religious and national group, implicitly neglecting the other.

Furthermore I argue that such a selective process has resulted in the erosion of a past collective memory, clearly expressed through the reshaping of urban space; similarly, some specific consumption practices that were previously part of a common tradition today represent an exclusive prerogative of one side and can be interpreted as a reciprocal negation of the counterpart.

During my fieldwork I could directly perceive the visual impact of the divided space while I progressively became familiar with a series of differentiated practices; as such, my ethnographic experience represented a crucial enrichment to the data I collected through documents and interviews. Therefore the first aim of this chapter is sharing with the reader my direct and personal experience of the field, presenting a picture of the context as much tangible as possible. Furthermore, the contents here discussed are

enriched by some visual material collected during my fieldwork in order to provide a deeper understanding of the issues discussed.

The empirical findings presented here constitute a further basis to my final argument that privileges the conception of Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo as two separated cities rather than the opposite side of a divided urban system. Indeed, as in the case of urban development and regulation, the shape of urban landscape as well as traditional consumption practices confirm the existence of two separated social contexts that have reciprocally erased every elements of their common past, undertaking a self-referenced path towards future development.

5.1. Urban architecture

Despite the division is not physically delimited, there are a lot marks within urban landscape that connote space in different identitarian terms; thus the absence of walls or check-points doesn't make the crossing experience less significant. Across the boundary the different use of marks such as alphabet and colors in road signs is not a simple aesthetic choice, but implicitly and selectively strengthens an identitarian connotation that simultaneously excludes the counterpart.

As I will discuss below, such exclusive identitarian celebration insists on different characterizing elements: on the one hand, Sarajevo is becoming progressively connoted in Islamic terms, while the peculiar feature of Istočno Sarajevo is the constant reference to Serbian identity. Such contrasting symbolic connotation of urban space is differently accepted within the two contexts: on the one hand, the celebration of Serbian identity remains uncontested as it implicitly legitimizes the existence of Istočno Sarajevo itself; on the other hand, the progressive connotation of Sarajevo in Islamic terms has fostered a deep political debate upon the city's religious radicalization due to the growing influence of Saudi Arabia.

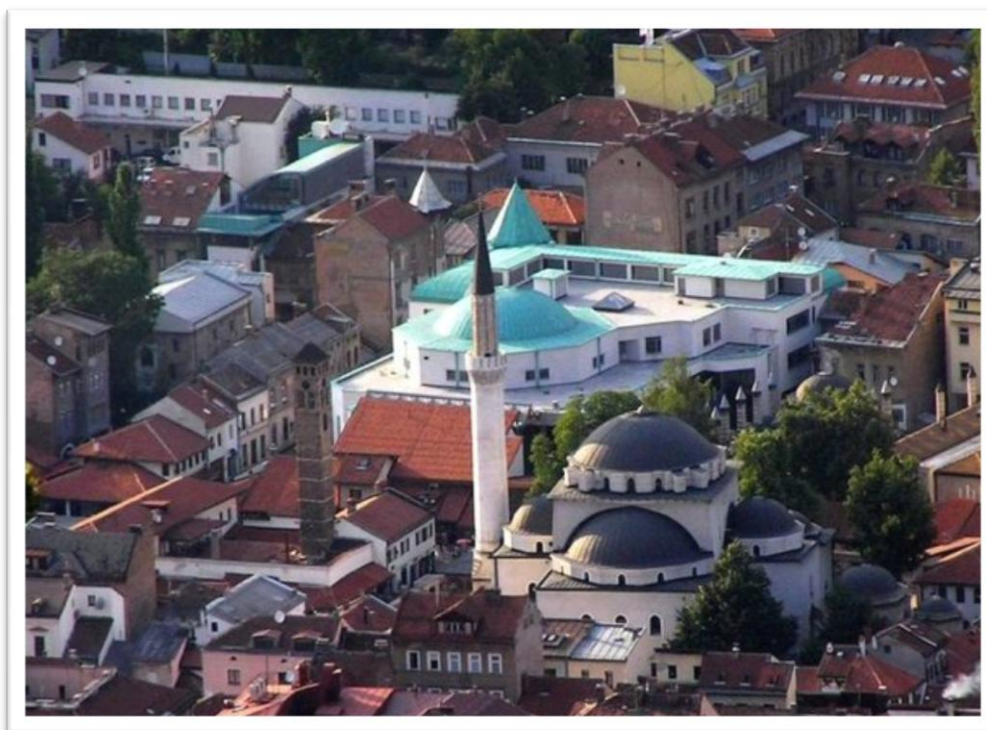
The image of Sarajevo as a cultural melting pot seems to have inexorably faded while the diffusion of some peculiar elements of Islamic culture and identity has contributed to gradually connote the city in mono-religious terms. Different circumstances and events have contributed to such change, in particular, the growing incidence of Bosniak population as a demographic aftermath of the war (cf. Chapter 1) and the strengthening of economical and cultural ties with Islamic countries, in

particular Saudi Arabia, that played a consistent role in financing both the construction of new mosques and the restoration of the damaged ones (Akšamija, 2010).

The construction of new houses of worship is peculiar to the post-war period due to the fact that throughout socialist era such urban intervention was not allowed (cf. Chapter 1). Moreover, the growing number of mosques in the city is clearly connected to the altered demographic scenario.

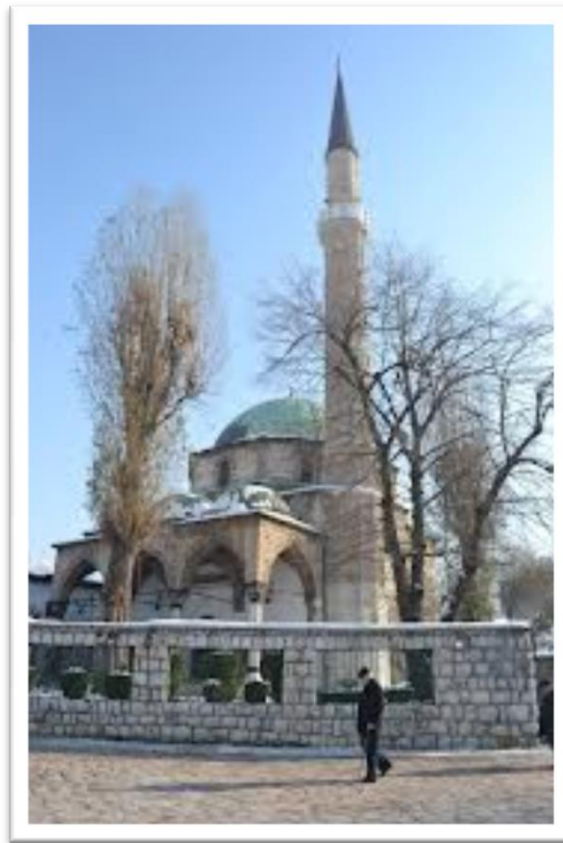
The visual impact of urban landscape's change strongly emerges through the comparison between the aesthetic of the town centre and the new mosques built in the western neighborhoods of the city, in particular Otoka and Alipašino Polje.

Despite their destruction during the war, the old town center and the adjacent Austro Hungarian part have not been structurally altered by the following interventions of reconstruction. Restorative measures of mosques and other historical buildings were carried out following the principle of reproducing the pre-war feature⁴⁹ (Mazzucchelli, 2010). Therefore, walking within Baščaršija, the Ottoman core of the city, or along Ferhadija, the main Hasburgic promenade, the numerous mosques that fill the space smoothly fit within the urban landscape, reflecting the discreet architectural principles of Ottoman tradition.



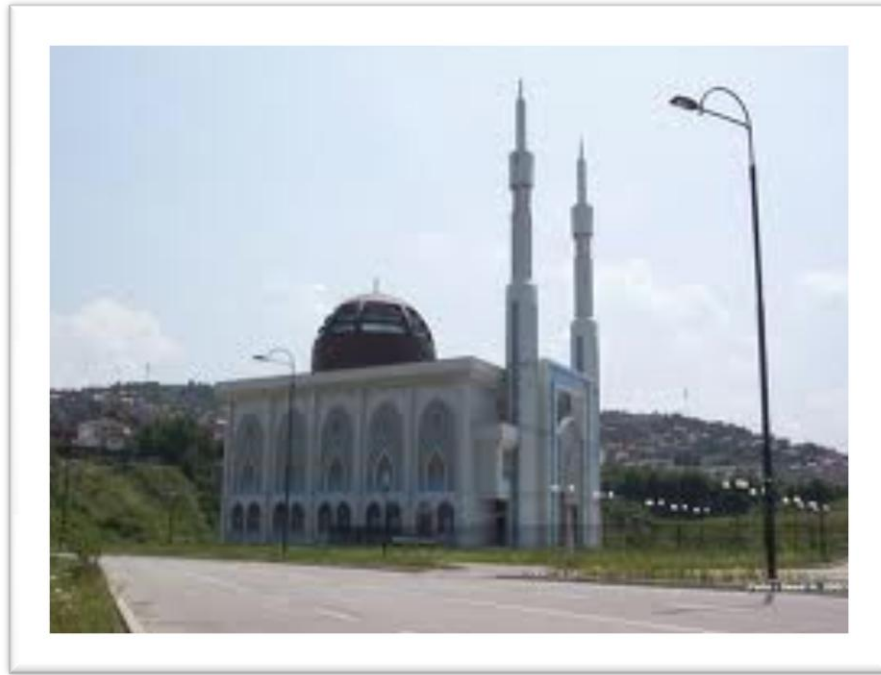
Gazi Husrev-beg Mosque, Baščaršija

⁴⁹ Despite the intention of a stylistically accurate restoration, in several cases urban interventions didn't follow the traditional aesthetic parameters, providing a reinterpretation, rather than a reproduction, of the original style (Mazzucchelli, 2010).



Mosque in Baščaršija

On the other hand, the changed feature of the city's landscape is particularly visible in Novo Sarajevo and Novi Grad, the western area of the city developed under the socialist period. The new mosques dominate the view with their spatial extension and high minarets reproducing the architectural feature of Middle-East mosques (Akšamija, 2010). Architect Muahmed Hamidović, dean of Sarajevo's faculty of architecture, has argued that the recent construction of such mosques clashes with Islamic building principles that Bosnia inherited from the Ottoman tradition (Lofranco, 2008). As such, the new mosques are built in much more sumptuous and majestic features and are spatially set in the higher level of the city to be visible from several standpoints. This trend represents another difference with the Ottoman tradition that privileged buildings gently and discretely integrated within the whole urban landscape (Akšamija, 2010).



Istiqlal Mosque, Otoka neighborhood

The diffusion of such mosques is the most visible and direct reflection of the growing importance of Saudi Arabia as an international actor intertwining with the city cultural life. As an example, before the war there were no Islamic centers in Bosnia, while ever since three of them have been instituted with the direct funding of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that placed the biggest one in Sarajevo (Akšamija, 2010).

As it emerged from several informal conversations, such new trend has not been embraced by all Sarajevans; within the city's political debate many criticisms have been fostered against the excessive celebration of an exclusive collective identity that doesn't represent the whole population. Indeed such a spreading tendency represents a crucial political issue as many inhabitants hardly accept the progressive connotation of Sarajevo's urban identity in mono-religious terms. On the one hand criticisms come from observant muslims who don't feel represented by the new religious tendency and its imposed architectural principles; on the other hand, non muslim population claim for the past multicultural urban identity where religion belonged to a more private sphere.

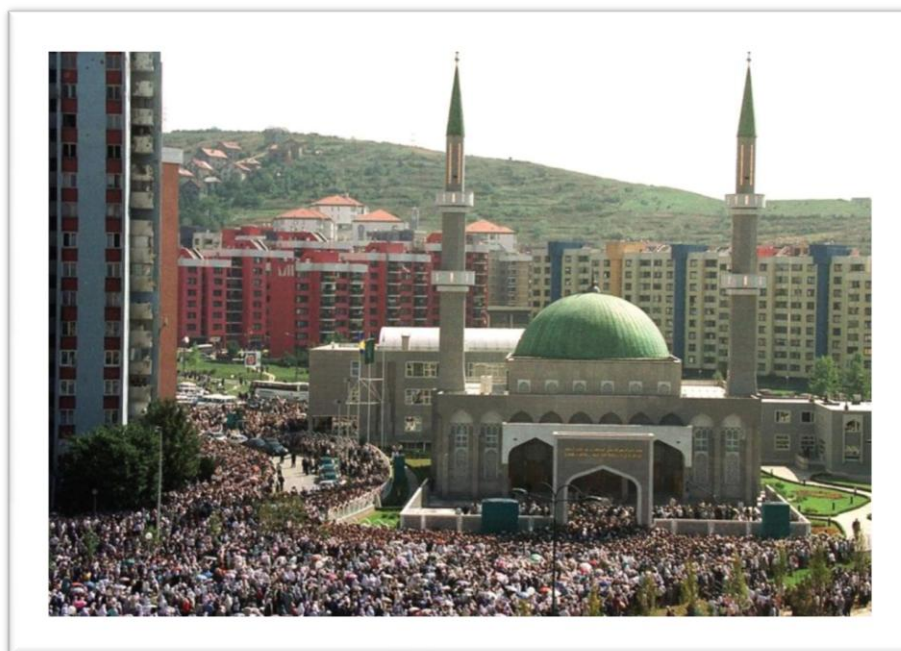
As Akšamija (2010) reported, in many occasions the construction of a new mosque was followed by polemics and criticism, largely carried out by mass media, especially newspapers. The building of new houses of worship has been often interpreted as a political issue and the main concern was represented by the progressive intensification

of Islam in Bosnia as a further example of territorial demarcation in ethno-national terms, perpetrated by architectural means⁵⁰ (*Ibidem*).

Among my interlocutors, the complaint about the exclusive Islamic identity of Sarajevo was often argued referring to the construction of King Fahd mosque, in the neighborhood of Alipašino Polje.

The King Fahd mosque is the largest mosque of former Yugoslavia's countries and was built in 2000 together with the adjacent Cultural Centre, presented as an initiative to assist the Bosnian people in the preservation of their identity through culture and education as well as through the establishment of a cultural link between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Akšamija, 2010). Indeed, the monumental feature of this huge construction is a clear reflection of a pan-Islamic vision in Bosnia that has provoked harsh criticisms among Sarajevans.

In several conversations I had with locals, King Fahd mosque was often at the center of a strong complaint: the inappropriateness of its architecture symbolically reflected in spatial terms the intrusiveness of ideological influences from Islamic countries on Sarajevo's religious and cultural life (Field note, 15.09.2011).



King Fahd mosque, Alipašino Polje neighborhood

⁵⁰ One significant example is the one reported by Akšamija (2010) related to the construction of a new mosque on Merhemić Square within the neighborhood of Ciglane in 2008. After the announcement of its construction, over six hundred people signed a petition against it and newspapers have fostered a harsh political debate. The mosque was built anyway.

In general terms, such criticism brings together radically different expressions of Bosnian society: observant Muslims sustain a less drastic interpretation of religion and claim for the integrity's maintenance of local Islamic tradition; laic population supports a secular vision of Bosnia and regret the less religiously connoted identity of pre-war Sarajevo; Serb and Croat nationalists defend territorial claims expressing their concerns through a general Islamophobic propaganda⁵¹. Though the latter are scarcely influential in Sarajevo, the voice of devoted Muslims and laics is much more widespread in the city.

Beside the different definitions and representations of the situation, a recurrent argument linked to such complaints has to do with the growing presence of Wehabis, a religious group preaching a much more radical interpretation of Islam in comparison with the Bosnian tradition inherited from the Ottoman era⁵². In these terms, concerns over the construction of new mosques find a basis in the appearance of Wahabism associated with them. Beyond the locals' concern, the King Fahd mosque has often been negatively portrayed by both Bosnian and foreign media as a recruiting center for radical Islamists, Al-Qaeda followers and potential terrorists⁵³.

The clash between Wehabism and traditional Bosnian Islam is manifested not only through the different architectural principles of mosques, but also through different ritual practices and dress codes⁵⁴. Indeed the followers of this religious order are immediately recognizable in the city, since men always grow a long beard while women are allowed to show in public only if completely covered; such forms of total veiling - such as the *niqab* - are rather new to Sarajevo and Bosnia in general.

As such, the growing presence of Wehabis represents an interesting manifestation of the changing urban identity of the city that can be caught not only by looking at the

⁵¹ This is not the case of Sarajevo, but such interpretation is particularly rooted in rural areas. In more than one occasion people told me to have Bosnian-Croat friends living in small villages of Herzegovina, or Bosnian-Serb ones living in eastern Bosnian towns who have never visited Sarajevo as they portray it as a dangerous city with a growing presence of *Mujahedeens*.

⁵² Such currents have been taking visible root in BH since the 1990s war, as an aftermath of the arrival of foreign Muslim combatants, who settled in Bosnia after fighting in defense of Bosnian Muslims during the 1992-95 war; moreover, the post-war period saw the involvement of Saudi Arabia in humanitarian aid operations for Bosnia (Akšamija, 2010)

⁵³ See for example "Balkan Mujahedeens: Fundamentalist Islam Finds Fertile Ground in Bosnia", *Der Spiegel*, 09.11.2007 (<http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/balkan-mujahedeens-fundamentalist-islam-finds-fertile-ground-in-bosnia-a-516214.html>)

⁵⁴ Religious practices and rituals differ from the traditional Bosnian Islam, for example, in the position of legs during the ceremonies and in a much more radical gender differentiation. There are reported episodes in which such differences became the reason for violent arguments between Wehabis and followers of the local religious tradition the (Akšamija, 2010)

reshaping of urban landscape, but also through the increasing visibility of this religious group.

It is not an aim of this dissertation investigating the ideological influence of such communities over the local cultural and religious life⁵⁵; nor it is my intention to discuss their presumed – and often superficially argued - link with Islamic extremist organizations; what it needs to be stressed is rather the extent to which the growing presence of this community represents an interesting tangible change in the connotation of Sarajevo's urban identity that can be observable by simply walking within the city.

Such new characterizing feature acquires a further visual impact in the light of the fact that once the boundary with Istočno Sarajevo has been crossed, any reference to the Islamic tradition drastically disappears and within the city there are no indicators of muslims' presence. As I will further discuss in the next chapter, the progressive connotation of Sarajevo in Islamic terms is often involved as a discursive strategy by inhabitants of Istočno Sarajevo to stress their different identity connotation. In some cases, the specific reference to Wehabi community is implied to express concern upon the overall growing religious fanaticism in Sarajevo from which they want to distance themselves.

Indeed, the new built Orthodox Church that dominates a semi-rural landscape immediately suggests the different distinctive feature of the context.



New built orthodox church in Istočno Sarajevo

⁵⁵ As argued by Akšamija (2010) the increasing number of veiled women in Bosnia's public space has not necessarily to do exclusively with the ideological influence of Saudi Arabia, but also with the overall phenomenon of increased religious prominence in post - communist societies.

Beyond the mono-religious connotation of urban landscape, I will further discuss other significant examples that show how the redefinition of collective identities across the boundary has systematically dismissed the counterpart.

In post-conflict Sarajevo a significant effort to reshape the collective memory in mononational terms manifested through a massive initiative of streets renaming. The operation was carried out by a specific administrative commission appointed by the new established government of the canton Sarajevo. The commission was composed by 15 members including artists, writers and historians living in the city and mainly Bosniaks (Robinson, Engelsoft, Pobric, 2001). The commission's activity resulted in the removal of Cyrillic scripts from every road signs, the renaming of places celebrating Serb personalities or historical events associated with Serbia and the elimination of any other symbol that could be associated with the war-time enemy. As a result, several streets were named after personalities and events associated with Sarajevo and Bosnia-Herzegovina, with a consistent preference towards Bosniak group (*Ibidem*).

The most significant example in this sense is the renaming of the bridge celebrating Gavrilo Princip, the assassinator of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914 and previously celebrated as a liberator (cf. chapter 1). Reinterpreted as a Bosnian-Serb nationalist rather than a brave Yugoslav opponent of Hasburgic Empire, his memory was obscured and the bridge's name turned back to "Latin bridge" in connection with the mahalla's denomination "Latinluk" (Lofranco, 2008; Mazzucchelli, 2010).

References to the socialist period as well as to partisan heroes also were excluded from the city's historical memory; thus, for example, the commemorative plaques and streets dedicated to Valter Peric - the Serb antifascist combatant of World War II – quickly disappeared (Mazzucchelli, 2010).

Similarly, new names connected with Bosniak identity were chosen for Belgrade street (*Beogradska ulica*), Lijenin street (*Lenjinova ulica*), Brotherhood and Unity street (*ulica Bratsvo i Jedinstvo*) (Lofranco, 2008).

As one of my interlocutors told me, several streets' names of her neighborhood – Grbavica – were substituted with Bosniak names that were unfamiliar to her (Field note, 06.11.2011). The vast operation of streets renaming in Grbavica acquires further significance considering that the neighborhood was occupied by Serbian troops during the war; therefore the effort to reshape the collective memory proved particularly urgent

Among signs used in a selective and excluding way alphabet appears the most evident one and reflects a reciprocal effort to celebrate the group's identity through the negation of the other.

Indeed in Bosnia both latin and cyrillic scripts are officially recognized and allowed, but while throughout the Federation latin script is conventionally used as the official alphabet, cyrillic script is adopted throughout Republika Srpska⁵⁶ as a sign of Serbian heritage. With the exception of the signs positioned along the boundary, written in both alphabets, each part of the country exclusively employs just one of them. In the case of Istočno Sarajevo – and Republika Srpska in general – the symbolic reference to the Serbian imaginary assumes a radical connotation since in Serbia, despite the official adoption of cyrillic script, road signs are always displayed in both alphabets.

Therefore, the use of alphabet becomes a clear tool of identity maintenance fostered through the intentional negation of the counterpart.



“Autobuska stanica Istočno Sarajevo”

Bus station of Lukavica, Istočno Sarajevo

⁵⁶ During the Yugoslav period both scripts were accepted and taught at school.

Such a reciprocal contraposition can be caught not only by looking at streets signs, but also at house numbers that are displayed on backgrounds of different colors: green in Sarajevo and blue in Istočno Sarajevo. Such a choice is not simply an aesthetic matter, but entails in both cases an intentional symbolic allusion. On the one hand, green recalls the Islamic imagery as it is conventionally used in representations of the official religious symbol, the half moon⁵⁷. On the other hand, blue is the same color used for street signs in Istočno Sarajevo as the one used in Serbia.

Once again, simple material elements are provided with a strong symbolic meaning that entails the selective celebration of collective identities declined in religious and national terms.



House number in Sarajevo - "Bosnian Parliament square"



House number in Istočno Sarajevo – "King Alexander Square"
(on the other side of the street)

⁵⁷ Green holds a crucial meaning within the Islamic religion as it represents heaven.

Other examples concerning Istočno Sarajevo reflect the strong effort in maintaining and promoting the Serb identity of the population. Stressing the symbolic bond between people and land such efforts aim at fostering the internal cohesion of the national community, highlighting the importance of the IEBL as a fundamental boundary and providing a basis to further legitimize Republika Srpska's territorial sovereignty.

The first example in this sense can be retraced in the dispute about the original name of the city. Dayton agreement originally recognized the new created municipality with the name *Srpsko Sarajevo*, (tr. Serbian Sarajevo) but the following decision of Bosnian Constitutional Court (sentence n.44/01, 27th of February 2004) imposed the removal of the adjective "Serbian" considering it an acceptable nationalist provocation. Being compelled to adopt a name with a more neutral connotation, the city was renamed Istočno Sarajevo.

Another strong and resolute effort to consolidate and promote the Serbian identity concretizes in urban landscape through the use of Serbian flags.

In my several visits to institutional offices for interviews I had many chances to spot Serbian flags hanging both in internal rooms and outside the buildings. Moreover, their clear symbolic meaning acquired further relevance as I'd never seen Bosnian state's flags hanging sideways. Unfortunately in many cases it was not possible for me to take pictures as due to the formal context to which I had access, I often concluded that such an act would seem inappropriate.

Another significant example in this sense was provided by the widespread promotion of Republika Srpska's 20th anniversary. Even if the official ceremony was held in Banja Luka as the entity's administrative center, in Istočno Sarajevo I could spot several placards advertizing the event. While political complaints about the ceremony were spreading throughout Bosnia⁵⁸, Istočno Sarajevo was proudly promoting its Serbian identity.

⁵⁸ "Bosnia's Republika Srpska Marks 20th Anniversary", Balkan Insight, 9th January 2012 <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/republika-srpska-marks-20th-anniversary>



“9 January 2012 - Twenty years of Republika Srpska”

The examples discussed above illustrate the extent to which the configuration and reshape of urban architecture and aesthetic always reflect a selective celebration of the collective memory (Dell’Agnese, 2004; Mela, 2006; Wagenaar, 2001; Mazzucchelli, 2010).

On the one hand, the reshaping of Sarajevo’s urban feature combines the growing celebration of Muslim identity with the progressive cancellation of the Serb component of collective memory, contributing to demolish the traditional multicultural identity of the city. On the other hand, Istočno Sarajevo incisively promotes the exclusive celebration of Serbian identity, similarly ignoring the perspective of a multi-national and multi-religious milieu.

Political efforts to reshape collective memories through the reconfiguration of urban aesthetic are not passively received by people, as the construction of a collective identity is a process where top-down and bottom-up practices always intertwine (Palmer, 1998, Mela, 2006; Fox, Miller-Idriss, 2008).

In the following paragraph I give account of the latter aspect, pointing out how, in this particular case, daily life practices further reinforce a parallel and opposite construction of collective identities that live small room to forms of expression of the counterpart.

5.2. Daily practices

As I've already discussed, identity can be constructed, maintained and renegotiated also in everyday life. In particular, the constitution and the expression of national differences emerge also through daily practices of consumption. In this sense people's habits assume a crucial relevance as tools of national distinction and identity maintenance. In other words, the nation can be conceived as something to be "consumed" (Fox, Miller-Idriss, 2008) through practice that can be interpreted as "flags of identity" (Palmer, 1998: 12).

Since rituals and practices relating to food consumption are often used to define and maintain boundaries of identity (Palmer, 1998), I argue that the connotation of Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo in exclusive and opposing terms further emerges through the practices of daily life discussed below. In this perspective, the progressive loss of Bosnian traditional heterogeneity can be acknowledged also by looking at the extent to which in both sides practices of consumption have been selectively eliminated.

The first example in this sense discusses the consumption of *Bosanska kava* (tr. Bosnian coffee) as a fundamental component of Bosnian identity. Inherited by the Ottoman tradition and also known as Turkish coffee, this beverage can be considered as a symbol of the country and an essential aspect of its tradition. The crowded cafés of Baščaršija are often populated by locals more than tourists as inviting people for coffee can be considered one of the most common customs in Sarajevo.

More than a practice of consumption, drinking coffee together represents a fundamental moment of social interaction. Bosnian coffee is not drinkable in few minutes, like Italian "espresso", since people have to wait for the coffee powder to deposit on the cup's bottom before drinking⁵⁹. Thus, while waiting, people talk and interact, and when the coffee is finished another one can be prepared. Indeed, locals indicates with three different names the moment in which the coffee is drunk: the welcoming coffee, when a guest arrives, the chatting coffee, consumed during the meeting, and the farewell coffee, the last one before the guest lives. In brief, "going for coffee" has always represented a crucial and irrefutable moment of social exchange.

⁵⁹ A related practice is represented by the fortune telling by "reading" the coffee dregs of the empty cup.

The traditional coffee set to prepare and serve Bosnian coffee is a fundamental element to keep in the kitchen as well as the most characteristic souvenir that tourists take home as a symbol of Bosnian tradition.



Traditional coffee set



Shop in Baščaršija selling coffee sets

Despite the emphasis accorded to such practice as a Bosnian tradition, Turkish coffee represents a widespread product throughout former Yugoslav countries in general. Thus, I was particularly surprised in finding out its scarce diffusion in Istočno Sarajevo. While the general habit of drinking coffee kept its relevance as a social practice, people

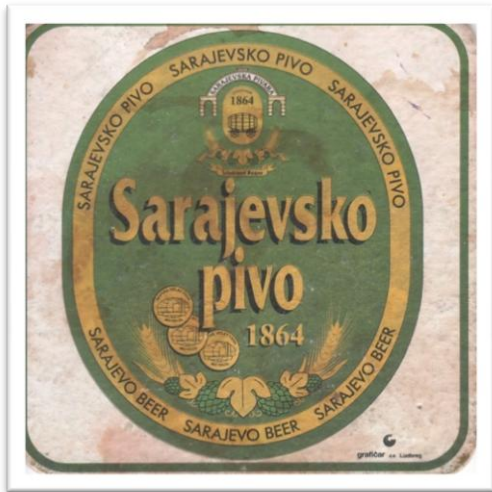
usually consumed a common variety of soluble coffee; moreover the traditional coffee set, sold almost everywhere in Sarajevo, resulted definitely unavailable. This example highlights how the radical attempt to maintain a Serbian identity manifests through the refusal of the Ottoman heritage and its connected traditions.

On the other hand, similar examples can be found also in Sarajevo and the most significant one is related to meat consumption. Unlike in former times, in the city has become almost impossible to find pork meat either in butcheries and supermarkets; not even restaurants offering a more international menu ever include pork dishes among their choices. Such a change can be interpreted as a progressive connotation of the city in Islamic terms since observant muslims are not allowed to consume such meat. On the other hand, for the rest of the inhabitants the only chance to get it is going to Istočno Sarajevo, where it can be easily bought.

In this perspective, the new identitarian connotation of Sarajevo implies the refusal of any expression of cultural diversity, denying the city's former cultural heterogeneity

The last example in this sense has to do with alcohol consumption. Notwithstanding the growing muslim population of Sarajevo, alcohol is served and sold almost everywhere, with the exception of traditional *ćevabdžinica* and *buredžinica* (small typical restaurants that serve traditional food called *ćevapi* and *pita*). Thus, the general practice of alcohol consumption doesn't represent a significant tool of distinction between inhabitants of Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo. Nevertheless, during my stay I could notice an interesting differentiating factor related to beer's brands.

Beer is widely spread throughout Bosnia – and former Yugoslav countries in general – and it's very common for any city to produce a local brand of beer named after the city itself. Therefore, within few other choices, the most common beer sold in Sarajevo is *Sarajevsko* (tr. Sarajevan). Such brand is as common in Sarajevo as unavailable across the boundary. On the other hand, the most widespread beer in Istočno Sarajevo is a very popular Serbian one, *Jelen* (tr. Deer) that is almost impossible to find in Sarajevo.



Istočno Sarajevo: umbrella advertising the Serbian beer “Jelen”

The examples discussed above show how strategies of identity maintenance can be acknowledged also by looking at daily practices of consumption. As pointed out by Fox and Miller-Idriss (2008) to some extent styles of eating are an expression of national identity not only within a particular community, but also with reference to the outsiders. As such, food represents a “badge of identity” (*Ibidem*: 550) as much as more obvious symbols of national belonging.

As I've pointed out, traditional consumption practices widely diffused on one side drastically disappear across the boundary reflecting the radical refusal of the identitarian counterpart.

Thus, as in the case of urban space reconfiguration, the selective celebration of collective identities declined in religious and national terms is achieved through a mutual denial of the elements testifying a shared past and a common tradition: the complex and heterogenic Yugoslav identity has been progressively concealed and replaced with mono-national and mono-religious specificities that oppose and neglect each other.

**Spatial practices, representations and sense of belonging
across the boundary**

In this chapter I discuss the extent to which the divisive power of the boundary affects and is simultaneously reproduced by people's spatial and social practices on a daily basis.

Discussing the results of my interviews and ethnographic research I argue that, despite spatial practices reflect a noticeable level of permeability, the boundary crossing doesn't provide itself evidence of interaction and social bonds between the inhabitants of the two sides. On the contrary, what emerges from the contexts is a rooted division that doesn't manifest through open resentment towards the counterpart on the other side of the boundary, but rather through indifference expressed by a separated, self-referred sense of belonging.

My empirical findings are presented and discussed in three paragraphs. In the first part I discuss how people experience the separation giving account of their spatial practices and narratives. In particular, I point out how the vanishing of emotional stress related to the crossing experience doesn't reflect a renovated social encounter and exchange, but rather a mutual attitude of indifference toward the counterpart. In this perspective the presence of the boundary doesn't prevent people from going on the other side, but its divisive power manifests through the lack of interactions and social bonds between people living in the two sides.

Successively I discuss the extent to which national and religious affiliation is involved in the process of self-definition and distinction. In these terms, not just nationality, but rather nationalism is involved in people's discursive strategies in order to draw a group separation that negatively connotes and stereotypes the counterpart across the boundary. Such a dynamic appears much more common among inhabitants of Sarajevo.

Finally, I discuss how the different way in which people across the boundary experience space on a daily basis contributes to foster a separated sense of belonging. Furthermore, I point out how practices and production of meanings provided my interlocutors equally define urbanity in positive terms, highlighting the extent to which

inhabitants of both sides reproduce a sort of urban life-style. Furthermore, I argue that the power of the separation can be acknowledged by looking at such different spatialization of daily practices through which people across the boundary develop and foster a different and separated sense of belonging and cohesion.

In the light of such evidence, I conclude that Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo are conceived and experienced as separated cities by inhabitants themselves. Therefore the empirical findings here discussed confirm the main argument of the whole dissertation.

6.1. From anxiety to indifference: spatial narratives and crossing experience

Border narratives reflect the diverse experiences and meanings which borders have for the individual. Through narratives, we perceive the borders which surround us, which we have to cross on a daily basis or are prevented from crossing because we do not belong to *the other side* (Newman, 2006).

During my fieldwork, narrations about boundary crossing often emerged both during interviews and unrecorded conversations. Combining the experiences and narratives related to the immediate post-war period with those referring to the present situation, it emerges that for many people the separation and its spatial demarcation have lost most of the past emotional burden.

After Dayton agreement was signed, international forces (IFOR) took control over the new institutionalized line. Despite the end of the war, episodes of violence didn't immediately stop and from time to time news reported reciprocal offensive actions carried out by armed gangs still active in the area. Moreover, Bosnian Serbs remained in Sarajevo became the target of a double harassment, since Bosniak groups openly addressed to them their resentment, while the most extreme supporters of Serb nationalism deliberately attacked them and their properties in order to force their resettlement in the new institutionalized territory of Republika Srpska (Dušan Sehovac, DISS, *Democratic Initiative of Sarajevo Serbs*, unrecorded conversation).

In such a strained atmosphere, the overwhelming emotional burden lasted in people's mind for long. While the war had come to an end, the distressed civilian population on both sides of the boundary had to deal with their reciprocal feelings of resentment.

Honestly at the beginning, during the war, I hated them. I hated everyone during the war. At the beginning you could not see the other part; you could only see what it was

happening to you. You can't see the other people and how they live. I knew only that we were being attacked, my mom died during the war, I had friends who died during the war... And from my perspective I could not see that the same things were happening to the other people as well. We were the good side and they were the bad side (K., Istočno Sarajevo)

Episodes of violence slowly decreased, the situation progressively stabilized and civilians were enabled to cross the boundary in safety. Moreover, soon after the war the international community started several programs to foster the process of reconciliation and in Sarajevo many NGOs promoted activities including inhabitants of both sides of the new boundary. Nevertheless, only few people could initially deal with the emotional stress aroused by crossing that line. As many of my interlocutors told me, such an experience entailed a double source of strain: on the one hand, people going *on the other side* often perceived a general feeling of diffidence aroused by their presence; on the other hand, they had to face the moral judgment of those blaming them for going in the former enemy territory.

The experience told me by a Bosnian Serb interviewee who started working for an NGO in Sarajevo is particularly enlightening in this sense

So I started to work there but I had problems on both sides when I started. With my people because to go there you have to pass the street where the border is and people can see that you're crossing that street. So if you cross the street, everyone knows that you've crossed the border. So people hated me. And then, there they know that I'm not part of their people: you know, just by saying my name they know that I'm not Muslim and that was the hardest part for me, maybe even harder than the war itself. At war, you know, you are on one side and you are with your people. But then, when war ended it was even harder. Some people spoke ill on me because I was going to work with them (V., Istočno Sarajevo)

Feelings of mutual distrust and resentment had lasted long after the war, progressively vanishing but not disappearing. Even when individuals could move across the two sides of the boundary without any risk, for many of them the recognizable origin of their names and surnames continued to represent a serious deterrent. Most people were concerned about the likelihood of being recognized as members of the

national counterpart by simply introducing themselves, especially Bosnian Serbs who used to live in Sarajevo (Field note, 17.10.2011).

Eighteen years after the end of the war, the situation is rather different from the one recalled by my interlocutors. For many people of both sides the crossing experience has become a usual practice and feelings of discomfort connected to being *on the other side* have progressively vanished since the post-war time.

To different extent, people from both sides cross the boundary quite regularly and the psychological strain described above seems to have vanished. Both during interviews and unrecorded conversations my informants always minimized the emotional burden connected to the spatial division of Sarajevo; rather than awkwardness, the most widespread representation involves a general discourse of indifference. Both people who experienced the war and the ones who did not underline how the boundary itself doesn't particularly affect them nowadays, pointing out that its crossing doesn't entail any kind of emotional stress. Some interlocutors highlighted the fact that they don't even realize when they pass the line as they never pay attention to the road sign. Of course, the discomfort in talking about sensitive topics during a recorded interview probably led interviewees to foster and exaggerate the attitude of indifference declared in their answers in the attempt to appear politically correct.

I don't feel any problem and I would say that it's the same for people that I know. When you go to the airport, and I go there every day because of my job, you have to cross the boundary and you are in Istočno Sarajevo, sometimes I stop to take coffee there but it's nothing, if you ask me or any of my colleagues (N., Sarajevo).

I think it's invisible, it doesn't mean anything. If we had some kind of wall that separates us it would be different, but since there is not I think there isn't any issue about it (O., Istočno Sarajevo)

People may think there is a border between Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo, but for me there is just one sign on the road, it's just a sign (V., Istočno Sarajevo)

In particular, narrations referring to different time periods further show the diminishing affection of the experience of going *on the other side*.

The first time I went there I was 22 and I was going to Belgrade for the first time so I had to catch the bus in Lukavica. Even if there were no walls you could feel the tension, there were no material division but indeed there was, I have to say that I was scared, well, not scared but I felt uncomfortable. [...] It was strong because you could still see all the damaged buildings and the traces of the war, you could really feel what happened. [...] Now I have to say that I don't see this separation anymore, I mean, the division is still there but I don't pay attention to it anymore (S., Sarajevo).

I was here and I remember how it was soon after the war. Even if you could go on the other side, people felt uncomfortable and would not do so. I did not do it myself. Now it's different and I would say that it doesn't affect me anymore, when I cross the boundary I almost don't see it, I don't know if it is because I got used to it or what, but it's just like that now (V., Istočno Sarajevo).

As I will further discuss, people from both sides cross the boundary to different extent, some of them do it on a daily basis, others cross it only in rare occasions, other never do so. Beyond such different habits, the crossing experience has become a quite usual practice mainly related to utility reasons; as such it has completely lost its emotional burden for people living on both sides and daily spatial practices are much less conditioned by the separation.

On the other hand, the unproblematic circulation of people doesn't imply a renovated social exchange and encounter as the divisive power still affects inhabitants in less noticeable ways. Indeed, the diminishing of mutual distrust and bitterness doesn't reflect the achievement of a definitive reconciliation and social mixture, but rather an indifferent acceptance of the status quo where the counterpart is neither openly refused nor included, but rather ignored. Therefore, such a scenario entails a less visible but long-lasting and radical social division.

In terms of daily spatial practices, for Sarajevo's inhabitants the main reason to go on the other side is the availability of cheaper products, but beside short visits to buy daily consumption goods people cross the boundary quite rarely. Moreover, such habit appears more common among residents of neighborhoods such as Dobrinja and Alipašino Polje, located in proximity to the line of separation while for inhabitants living farther such practice appears less convenient (Field note, 16.10.2011).

On the other hand, economical activities and NGOs as well as UN and EU agencies located in Sarajevo provide job opportunities also for residents of Istočno Sarajevo who come to the city on a daily basis (Slaviša Čeranić, SERDA agency, unrecorded conversation).

In addition, Sarajevo's cultural offer represents a further element of attraction for people living on the other side, especially for younger ones. Nevertheless, spending leisure time in Sarajevo doesn't represent a usual custom but rather an exceptional practice related to special events, such as big concerts or the occurring of the summer film festival. The affluence of younger people from Istočno Sarajevo is further discouraged by some practical reasons. Firstly, the absence of public transport connecting the two sides (cf. Chapter 4) represents a crucial obstacle in this sense; considering that reaching the central area of Sarajevo takes approximately one hour people rarely opt for this solution. Such inefficiency becomes further affecting considering that the possession of a private means of transportation is not largely diffused among younger generations. Finally, a factor that further prevents young people from regularly crossing of the boundary concerns the existence of a parallel university in Istočno Sarajevo; indeed for several students the services' proximity and the increasing provision of opportunities for leisure time activities contribute to reduce the interest towards Sarajevo (Field note, 15.05.2012).

Thus, the crossing experience has progressively lost its emotional burden for inhabitants of both sides so that their spatial practices result scarcely affected by the territorial separation and much more justified by practical utilities and advantages. Nevertheless, the crossing practice itself doesn't directly imply the regeneration of social encounter and exchange among residents of the opposite sides. Even if feelings of discomfort in going *on the other side* have vanished, they have been replaced by a general and reciprocal attitude of indifference towards the counterpart; as such, the boundary is crossed to satisfy specific needs in the most convenient way while social interaction remains scarce and superficial.

According to Dušan Sehovac (DISS, *Democratic Initiative of Sarajevo Serbs*), the post-war demographic alteration of Sarajevo still affects the social context since very few people have maintained their social connections and friendship relations across the boundary: the majority of Bosnian Serbs who moved to Istočno Sarajevo after the war have built new relations progressively losing social bonds with their former home place;

on the other hand, people in Sarajevo have almost no connection at all with their neighbors on the other side of the boundary (Field note, 28.11.2011).

Representations and interpretations provided by interlocutors on both sides largely confirmed such a scenario. As such, the divisive power of the boundary is reproduced and fostered in more subtle but equally deep terms, preventing a real social encounter, fostering indifference towards the counterpart and reflecting the existence of two separated communities that have built a separated sense of belonging.

As I discuss below, an interesting aspect to be highlighted lies in the fact that such parallel sense of cohesion appears scarcely fostered by discourses on national and religious affiliation, but rather strengthened by the opposition between urban and rural world.

6.2. The discourse of nationality

Religion and nationality remain key elements in processes of self-definition; indeed, despite I intentionally avoided any direct question in this sense during my interviews and occasional conversations (cf. Chapter 3), such identitarian components were often spontaneously discussed by my interlocutors in particular among inhabitants of Sarajevo.

Nevertheless, national and religious affiliation is often minimized as a characterizing aspect of people's collective identity and it is rather involved in discursive strategies that stereotype the counterpart. Such a dynamic commonly emerges among residents of Sarajevo: minimizing the relevance of nationality they simultaneously stress their revulsion towards nationalism that implicitly becomes the key element upon which they distinguish themselves from the counterpart.

I don't know but I think that this boundary it's not natural, but maybe for people in Istočno it is something to be proud of, so that they can say "Yes, now we have our part and we can be happy". I don't know, I think so..." (B., Sarajevo).

It is not a natural boundary. We have our small country, Bosnia, with our geographical and historical boundaries, and now it seems like some territorial partitions of Africa, with artificial borders, you know? And why would you do that? (S., Sarajevo).

There is no any reason to be divided, no economical or political, no reason except this nationality issue, of course. And it's even more stupid when you think that because of the separation of health system people have to drive hundreds kilometers to be cured instead of crossing the boundary (A., Sarajevo).

There is no reason. Oh, well, there is a reason if you think that you have your place, your territory...ok. Now they are happy because they have it, or whatever, but for me it's just stupid (M., Sarajevo).

These examples highlight a discursive strategy through which the refusal of the nationalist perspective is engaged by people as a tool to distinguish themselves from the people on the other side who are simultaneously represented in negative terms. As such, the identity connotation in religious and national terms is always represented as something existing but that should left on the background.

Moreover, the celebration of Serbian identity expressed by urban symbolism in Istočno Sarajevo (cf. Chapter 5) provides a further element to label its inhabitants in negative terms, stressing the visual impact of urban space strongly connoted in national terms.

In particular, during the interviews the issue of cyrillic alphabet often emerged as an example of a deliberate attempt to draw a line of distinction by the counterpart. As I've already discussed, the use of cyrillic was formerly part of a common tradition, while today such an exclusive use is interpreted by people in Sarajevo as an excluding strategy to celebrate the separation of Istočno Sarajevo and Republika Srpska.

When you go there you really have the feeling of being somewhere else. First of all you notice it because everything is written in Cyrillic, you have this noticeable border. Time ago we used to have cyrillic as well, I have no problem I reading that, I don't even notice if I switch from one alphabet to another. When I was at school we used to study both alphabets, we had classes in Latin and classes in Cyrillic and still now most of people here can read it without problems [...]. Anyway it's not the official alphabet anymore so when you cross the border and everything is in Cyrillic you really notice it (B., Sarajevo).

On my way to Belgrade I went to Lukavica station to catch the bus. You could still see all those Serbian flags and signs written in Cyrillic everywhere, so that made me feel really uncomfortable because you know the strong meaning of this, these are such strong symbols (L., Sarajevo).

Now when you see a sign written in Cyrillic you know that you are in Republika Srpska, but for me it's stupid because in the past we used Cyrillic as well [...]. Both Cyrillic and Latin scripts are part of Bosnia's history [...]. Now most people here in Sarajevo hate Cyrillic because it means Serbia (M., Sarajevo).

As discussed in the previous chapter, operations of selective celebration or denial of specific collective identities have been carried out by both administrations. Moreover, the conventional use of a double alphabet has disappeared from both sides of the boundary. Nevertheless, the comments reported above clearly show how such a denial of shared culture and tradition is used as a discursive tactic to negatively picture only the counterpart. Such an interpretation contributes to spread a sense of detachment and extraneousness towards inhabitants of the other side.

On the other hand, narratives and representations provided by inhabitants of Istočno Sarajevo involve the national and religious discourse to a lesser extent. When mentioned, Serbian identity is always recalled in moderate terms, sometimes presented as a characteristic for self-definition, but carefully articulated avoiding any possible nationalist hint.

I'm a Serb, yes, so I have my religion, my identity as anybody else. But it's not the most important thing if I meet someone, I mean, if I talk to you I don't care who you are and what you are in this sense (V., Istočno Sarajevo).

Of course there are people here that maybe could say different things, maybe they are proud of Istočno Sarajevo and Republika Srpska, but for me it doesn't really matter. I live here and I'm a Serb, but it is not something that makes the difference for me (K., Istočno Sarajevo).

Therefore, the proud celebration of Serbian identity appears to be a dynamic strongly fostered by top-down approaches (cf. Chapter 4) but much less supported by inhabitants of Istočno Sarajevo. Moreover, in comparison with Sarajevo, also discursive strategies stereotyping the counterpart resulted much less common. As such, religious and national affiliation seems to intertwine only to a moderate extent in the process of group definition and distinction.

Nevertheless there are other significant elements implied as a tool of reciprocal difference that contribute to foster the divisive power of the boundary. As I discuss in the following paragraph, the separation between inhabitants across the boundary can be acknowledged by looking at the way in which they reproduce a parallel urban identity developing a separated sense of belonging.

6.3. Daily life and sense of belonging

Identity can be expressed not only through discursive strategies but also through spatial practices (Massey, 1993), therefore the spatialization of everyday life assumes a crucial relevance in people's negotiation and production of symbolical and identitarian meanings. As I will discuss, such elements appear more relevant than national and religious affiliation in deepening the division between inhabitants of the two sides.

While in the first paragraph I specifically focused on the crossing experience pointing out the changed symbolical meaning accorded to the boundary, here I discuss how spatial and relational practices carried out on a daily basis foster a reciprocal sense of extraneousness between inhabitants of the two sides. As argued below, the way in which people experience space and negotiate a collective sense of belonging reflects a deep detachment towards *the other side*.

6.3.1. Sarajevo: refusing the rural

The interviews, unrecorded conversations and spare time spent with people provide evidence that for inhabitants of Sarajevo going on the other side is not so usual. For the majority of my interlocutors the place across the boundary represents nothing interesting, with very little to do. The discourse underlying this practice is common for all my interviewees: Istočno Sarajevo has nothing more to offer than Sarajevo. Both in occasional conversation and during interviews people gave account of the place describing it as countryside, a rural area, a village that, instead, struggles to seem a city without success. The only reason for people to go there is the chance to buy cheaper goods in shopping malls and markets, but apart from that Sarajevans express sense of extraneousness and unfamiliarity with the places across the boundary. People don't have a deep experience of the place, unless for short moments, and seem not to be interested in it.

Indeed, in several occasions the explanation of my research interests aroused in people in Sarajevo surprised and puzzled reactions as for them Istočno Sarajevo had nothing special to offer and I would hardly find something interesting there. Some of them could hardly get the point of investigating such division as - many of them argued - the boundary was just the separation line between two cities (Field note, 03.06.2011; Field note, 22.09.2011; Field note, 04.10.2011). The frequency of such comments and reactions among my interlocutors confirms the lack of connection of Sarajevo's inhabitants with the area across the boundary; sometimes such a declared extraneousness was expressed in very explicit terms, highlighting how indifference slightly translates into resentment.

Just to be clear, when I say 'Sarajevo' I mean this Sarajevo, this is Sarajevo for me, that is just a part of Dobrinja for me, it's not a city, it's nothing (S., Sarajevo).

The other part is commonly conceived as country side, and the fact that is not part of the city anymore is not such an issue for inhabitants. Descriptions and representations of the other side provide a picture where Istočno Sarajevo is just a rural area that, instead, pretends to become a city and in vain struggles to build an artificial urban identity.

Istocno was part of Sarajevo, it was actually a suburban area and nobody used to go there because there was nothing. People used to pass by on their way to Jahorina or other destinations for holiday or something like that. It wasn't really a place where you would go, it was a suburb or even a rural area I would say and even if now they say it's a city, for me it remains a village (L., Sarajevo).

I have to say that Istocno is not a city; Sarajevo is a city, but not Istočno because it doesn't have what makes a city *a city*. If you go there you will see just 20 years old buildings, there's no an old town centre, there's nothing going on there, nothing. (S., Sarajevo).

I cannot say that Istočno Sarajevo is a real city because it's not. In the city you can do many things and so many people come in Sarajevo because it's bigger and you really have something to do here, more than in Istočno Sarajevo (N., Sarajevo).

We also make some jokes about Istočno Sarajevo, because it is a place which is so close but so far away at the same time. Really, it's a different place. [...] and people here don't

really have any need to go there. There was nothing there before, it was just countryside, even in Lukavica there was nothing, it was just a small place. People used to go there just to spend the week-end outside the city (B., Sarajevo).

Istočno Sarajevo is much smaller than Sarajevo, I can't say that it is a town, I would rather say that it's a sort of village next to Sarajevo. It's always been like that even when it was part of Sarajevo. Sarajevo is the capital city, everything is here and that remains a small town (M., Sarajevo).

Such discourses stress the use of urban-rural divide as a tool of differentiation: the spatial separation becomes a social *limit* (Simmel, 1908) through which inhabitants of Sarajevo distinguish themselves from the rural world. Sarajevo is constantly represented as the "real" city through discursive strategies that stress urbanity as a desirable value. On the other hand, Istočno Sarajevo is conceived as an anonymous and uninteresting place, striving to be perceived as a new city but that still remains a village. In my interlocutors' narrations the creation of parallel institutions is often interpreted as an attempt to show off such artificial urban identity.

Before the war Istočno wasn't even a city, but now more people live there and they have built a lot of buildings. They have their institutions, their offices and also a new university. But for me, considering the number of population I don't see the necessity of building a new university, we already have it here in Sarajevo. Students are not that many so it doesn't make much sense unless you want to show that you have your city, with your services and things like that. They pretend to be a city but it is still a village for me (S., Sarajevo).

Such representations and discursive practices highlight the extent to which the divisive power of the boundary is constantly reinforced. Relational bonds with people living on the other side are almost inexistent, as Istočno Sarajevo is generally excluded from the *frame* (Goffman, 1974) within which social and spatial practices take place. As such, the boundary exerts its sociological function of distinction (Cella, 2006) and spatial separation becomes a tool of in-group recognition and out-group contraposition.

6.3.2. Istočno Sarajevo: reproducing the urban lifestyle

Spatial and relational practices carried out on a daily basis show the extent to which Istočno Sarajevo has been progressively redefined as the home place. This aspect appears particularly relevant since a large portion of the inhabitants was formerly living in Sarajevo. As I will argue, for them the new settlement coincided with the rebuilding of a new sense of belonging and a progressive detachment from their birthplace.

Inhabitants' daily interaction and discursive practices contribute to provide the context with a strong identitarian connotation that fosters a new sense of belonging. As such, Istočno Sarajevo is represented and experienced by its inhabitants as a city itself, rather than the eastern sides of a divided urban system; as I will show below people produce and negotiate new meanings through the re-spatialization of daily practices typical of urban life-style.

In the last ten years, Istočno Sarajevo has been provided with a growing supply of services and structures, such as schools and university, a hospital and a new sport centre currently under construction. Thus, the opportunity to enjoy proximity has limited the inhabitants' necessity to go to Sarajevo for basic needs or leisure time activities. Indeed, without giving the impression of a real city, but rather of a suburban area still developing, and without having any historical location that fosters the aesthetic value of the place, Istočno Sarajevo offers all the services and structures that individuals could need on a daily basis.

Despite the suburban feature of the environment and the absence of a proper old town centre, its central area offers bars and restaurants as well as clubs; their spatial proximity gives the impression of being in a quite populated place and the place reproduces a sort of urban atmosphere, where people enjoy their leisure time meeting friends. People walking down the streets or sitting in bars and restaurants contribute to provide space with a specific meaning: through their daily social interaction inhabitants negotiate and elaborate a collective representation of that specific spatial context as the *centre of a city* (Field note, 14.05.2012).

Istočno Sarajevo is also provided with a university and many students spend most of their time without ever going in Sarajevo. The central area is located only few minutes' walk from the institution so it is quite usual to join friends in some bar after lesson. The university also offers a dormitory for students providing further occasions to socialize

and spend time together. In students' daily life Sarajevo doesn't represent a particular attractive place.

In Sarajevo I don't know anyone and if I want to go out I don't know the places. Here there are always my friends around, it is a small place but I like it, for example you can always meet someone from your university (S., Istočno Sarajevo).

We have pubs and clubs here also. There is no point to go to Sarajevo. I never go. It's not because I don't want to go, but I have my friends here so it is better (L., Istočno Sarajevo).

Among adults, similarly emerges a representation of Istočno Sarajevo as the home place. Even people who have a job in Sarajevo usually experience the city as their simple working place, and at the end of the day they *come home*. They rarely maintain relational connections and social bonds are quite scarce across the boundary.

Sarajevo is the capital city, it has cultural events, it is connected with all the other parts of the world [...]. In Sarajevo you can go to cinema, theatre, to concerts. I work there and I go everyday but then it's nice to come home in Istočno because is a quite place and you have everything you need (D., Istočno Sarajevo).

I go to Sarajevo everyday during the week because of my work, but during my spare time I prefer to stay home. I don't have many friends there, because I only go for my job, so during the week-end I usually stay with my family and friends in Istočno (V., Istočno Sarajevo).

The progressive provision of services and structures in Istočno Sarajevo has influenced the residents' experience of space, encouraging new spatial practices and fostering a life style typical of urban environments rather than rural or sub-urban contexts. Through daily social interaction inhabitants have rebuilt a new sense of belonging, simultaneously developing an emotional detachment towards the other side of the boundary (Field note, 18.05.2012). Going to Sarajevo is usually conceived as a practice related to particular necessities, rather than a periodic occasion to spend leisure time. Istočno Sarajevo has progressively acquired a proper status of city for its

inhabitants; therefore discourses of urban-rural divide produced by residents of the other side appear radically contradicted.

I don't like Sarajevo that much. It is too chaotic for me so I never go, unless I really have to. Here you have everything you need, for you and your family: schools, sport centers, and so on (J., Istočno Sarajevo).

The detachment expressed by people born in Sarajevo and resettled on the other side of the boundary further confirms such interpretation. Sarajevo is commonly represented and described as a place where to go mainly for utility purposes while the emotional tie with it is often minimized (Field note, 26.09.2011).

In this sense, discursive strategies of former inhabitants of Sarajevo highlight how the new context is represented and redefined as the new urban place. The emphasis involved in stressing such new sense of belonging goes in parallel with a progressive emotional distance towards Sarajevo, which is often represented in quite anonymous and detached terms.

I was born in Sarajevo but since I moved here I go there very rarely. My family lives here, my kids go to school here, I have my job. I like it here, I almost never go to Sarajevo [...]. I've never thought of moving back, it would not make sense for me (M., Istočno Sarajevo).

Sarajevo it's ok, it has a lot to offer. But here it's ok as well. Ten years earlier this place was not a town but now it's developing more and more. Maybe is not like Sarajevo, but it's becoming more efficient for people living here and for me it's a nice place (O., Istočno Sarajevo).

I was born in Sarajevo but I was pretty young when we moved so I don't remember much. Sometimes I go with my friends if there is some special event, like a concert or something like that, but I don't go that often so I don't have any favorite place (S., Istočno Sarajevo).

As such representations show, Istočno Sarajevo is conceivable as an autonomous city not only in institutional and functional terms (cf. Chapter 4). The way in which people experience places and attach collective meanings to them contributes to foster a new

sense of belonging that makes Istočno Sarajevo a *city* for its inhabitants – including the ones who were born in Sarajevo - and reflects a progressive detachment from the other side of the boundary.

Moreover, urbanity is generally represented as a desirable value and a tool of distinction by inhabitants of both sides; on the other hand, people experience and perform their urban life-style in different spatial contexts fostering a reciprocal sense of extraneousness and detachment.

Like Sarajevo, Istočno Sarajevo represents the new and separated *frame* (Goffman, 1974) both in spatial and social terms within which people negotiate and elaborate their representations and interpretation of reality.

6.4. Conclusions

The empirical findings discussed in this chapter proved how the presence of the boundary has progressively lost its emotional burden for inhabitants of both sides. On the other hand, the fact that the crossing experience has become a much more common practice doesn't directly imply a renovated social exchange among individuals. Rather, the divisive power of the separation is now exerted through less visible but equally affective dynamics that foster a mutual feeling of extraneousness and detachment between residents of Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo.

While identitarian components related to national and religious affiliation are partially involved as a tool of self-definition and distinction, the most significant element in this sense is represented by discursive strategies and practices that stress an urban-rural divide. Spatial practices and representations prove that urbanity is conceived as a desirable value by residents of both sides; nevertheless the different spatialization of daily practices and the different production of meanings elaborated by the inhabitants reflect a parallel dynamic in which people across the boundary develop their own sense of belonging and cohesion simultaneously neglecting the counterpart.

On the one hand, people in Sarajevo compare the other side to a rural village where they go very rarely and only for utility reasons. They don't have any relational connection across the boundary and that place is excluded from what they conceive as their city. On the other hand, Istočno Sarajevo reflects the creation *ex novo* of a new community, provided with a new spatial reference within which daily activities are carried out, social bonds are strengthened and a new linkage with home is fostered.

Sarajevo is then conceived as another city and has lost its emotional tie also for people who were born there.

While Istočno Sarajevo has functionally developed as a separated urban system, its inhabitants have progressively redefined and negotiated a new sense of belonging and cohesion. In parallel, people in Sarajevo have assisted to such process with indifference and detachment, employing the separation as a spatial reference to celebrate their urban identity in opposition with the counterpart's rural character.

As such, it is possible to argue that the territorial separation resulted in the creation of two cities, rather than the existence of a divided one. Indeed, Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo represent two separated urban systems not only from an institutional, functional and structural perspective, but primary in people's representations.

Within such a scenario, the risk of new episode of violence or social and political strain is probably lower than in other divided cities; nevertheless the worst implication of such situation lies in the profound, and probably definitive, transformation of the context in a doubled and parallel social environment where people have progressively learnt to ignore each other even when sharing the same space.

Conclusions

Focusing on the context of Sarajevo this dissertation discussed different implications and dilemmas entailed by the city's spatial and institutional partition. The main research questions that guided my analysis concerned the extent to which the divisive power of such separation was either reproduced or challenged by different discourses, interpretations and representations.

Assuming that spatial and social dimensions are always involved in a reciprocal relation of influence I investigated the manifestations of such double linkage by looking at different aspects. The declination of my research questions developed along two complementary lines of analysis: on the one hand I investigated in which terms planning regulations dealt with the issue of separation; on the other hand I looked at daily practices of social interaction and space use. Empirical findings provide evidence of the strong generative power of separation from both analytical perspectives. As such, the power of separation is expressed and reproduced not through an open contestation of the counterpart, but rather through a constant non recognition of reality across the boundary. These empirical findings suggest that Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo could be appropriately conceived as two different cities since the territorial partition resulted in the creation of two separated urban systems not only in institutional and functional terms, but also in people's representations.

In Chapter 4 I focused on spatial planning regulations discussing the extent to which the divisive logic was reproduced and scarcely contested. In discussing the planning process of both sides I pointed out how the self-referential logic contributed to foster and reproduce inter-entity divisions; moreover I argued how the divisive and self-centered logic was constantly reproduced by representations produced by local administrators and professionals.

In functional terms the two systems result separated as their infrastructures and services are autonomously managed; recalling the conceptualization of Kliot and Mansfield (1999) the boundary proves highly impermeable. The generative power of separation in this sense can be further acknowledged by looking at the unsuccessful attempts to carry out joint infrastructural projects.

Discursive strategies and justifications entailed in planning documentation confirm the representation of spatial units as autonomous and separated promoting the specificity of the two local environments and simultaneously neglecting the social and

spatial context across the boundary. Both places are defined as separated spatial realities and represented as independent actors within the international economical and political scene. Such an approach is particularly evident in the case of Istočno Sarajevo where a strong national identity is fostered and celebrated as the crucial cultural peculiarity of a spatially delimited environment.

In chapter 5 I discussed the extent to which the division manifests through physical artifacts of urban architecture as well as through daily practices of consumption symbolically conceivable as tools of national expression. Beside the absence of physical elements of separation, several interventions of urban space reshaping can be interpreted as an intentional and reciprocal denial of a past collective memory that fosters a mutual negation of the counterpart. Similarly the disappearance of specific consumption practices previously part of a common tradition further reflects the division making the separation immediately perceivable.

In chapter 6 I specifically focused on the dimension of everyday life interaction. Spatial narratives and practices highlight that the symbolic relevance accorded to the boundary has been renegotiated throughout time; nevertheless different and less visible dynamics intertwine in reproducing the division. Although crossing the boundary is not represented as a stressing emotional experience that doesn't consequently imply the restoring of social interaction and exchange between the inhabitants of the two sides. On the contrary, what emerges from the contexts is a rooted division that doesn't manifest through open hostility towards the counterpart but rather through mutual non recognition expressed by a separated and self-referred sense of belonging. The different spatialization of daily practices and the contrasting representations elaborated by the inhabitants reflect a parallel dynamic in which people across the boundary develop their own sense of belonging and cohesion simultaneously neglecting the counterpart. As such, Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo are represented and experienced as separated cities by inhabitants themselves.

Drawing on these empirical findings it is possible to give account of the mutual relation of influence between space and social reality (cf. Chapter 2).

On the one hand, the analysis shows how the presence of the boundary affects social reality to different extents. The functional configuration of the two spatial contexts contributed to shape in different ways daily practices of space use. Not just the boundary, which is commonly crossed without concern, but the autonomous

development of the two sides has progressively fostered diverging spatial experiences. In particular the growing provision of services in Istočno Sarajevo has allowed inhabitants to enjoy proximity shifting the main reference from Sarajevo to the new spatial context. Furthermore spatial separation proved to affect processes of identity construction since the presence of the boundary contributes to foster different sense of belonging also declined in spatial terms. Especially among inhabitants of Sarajevo representations of the other side are affected by its material feature: Istočno Sarajevo is negatively pictured as a village rather than a city; moreover its perceivable celebration of Serbian identity becomes a tool to further stereotype the counterpart. As such, the boundary becomes the spatial reference to differentiate from *the others*.

On the other hand, social processes manifest their influence over space in different ways. Planning regulations and their implicit representations of reality have tangible effects on space; indeed they physically result into two separated spatial configurations autonomously organized and functioning without sharing any infrastructure or service. Similarly the political efforts to celebrate - or deny – specific national and religious identities contributed to physically shape urban space in different features across the boundary. Finally, in the specific case of Istočno Sarajevo daily spatial practices as well as representations produced by inhabitants provide space with the connotation of home place; as such, people carry out practices peculiar of an urban lifestyle experiencing the context as a proper city. Daily practices of interaction contribute to shape the spatial context and its public spaces in *urban* terms. Therefore, from a peripheral suburb Istočno Sarajevo is transformed into a proper city by practices of interaction and spatial experiences of its inhabitants.

The empirical results here discussed prove that the reciprocal influence between the spatial and social dimension contributes to reinforce the generative power of separation. Beside the concrete dysfunctions that such a situation implies, the great loss entailed in the city's partition concerns the vanishing of the traditional social mixture that once made Sarajevo the "Balkans' Jerusalem".

Going beyond a purely nostalgic sentiment widely spread among older Sarajevans, the social encounter with *the other* represents a crucial component to contrast possible nationalist deviations and new expressions of violence. As widely discussed, collective identities declined in religious and national terms are delicate categories easily exploitable for political purposes; moreover the presence of nationalist parties as well as

radical religious organizations remains a critical issue that can affect to different extent the future configuration of Bosnian political and social scenario. The new configuration of Sarajevo's socio-spatial reality suggests that strategies to foster reconciliation and social cohesion should be deeply reconsidered. Moreover, the spatial category should be taken into serious consideration as a crucial element intertwining with social dynamics.

Such empirical results warn against the long-lasting effects of separation as well as the generative power of division. The negative consequences of separation have been often discussed by focusing on case studies connoted by more evident elements of separation, such as Nicosia, Belfast, and Jerusalem. For such purposes these cities could be considered as more appropriate research contexts than Sarajevo, less characterized by inter-group tensions, political turmoil and physical manifestation of division. Rather than shedding light on what happens when a city is partitioned, the empirical results discussed in this dissertation could provide significant enlightenments in showing what happens when a partitioned city is reunified.

By looking at Sarajevo, the lesson we can learn is that the absence of physical elements of separation is not sufficient to restore social encounter and exchange. In general terms territorial separation imposed as solutions to inter-group violence entail long-lasting consequences much harder to remove than physical barriers. Beside the contribution provided within the specific studies on divided cities, the empirical evidence here discussed can provide significant enlightenments also for other contexts.

In conclusion the results discussed within this dissertation confirm the interpretation suggested by Bollens (2007). According to the author the new post-war reconfiguration is likely to reinforce centrifugal forces and separate futures; moreover "The misplacing of the city in the state's new political geography foregoes a major opportunity for Sarajevo to constitute a multicultural center in an otherwise fragmenting state" (*Ibidem*: 84).

After six years the author's remarks prove still appropriate as the scenario seems not to have changed that much. Therefore it appears even more urgent to investigate new strategies and find alternatives that allow the city to act as a bearer and promoter of future societal transformations. Within the vast literature specifically focused on Sarajevo a quite limited amount of researches bring in the foreground its spatial partition as a crucial aspect of the context. Therefore the contribution provided with this

dissertation aims at enriching the debate in the hope that such crucial issues will be further discussed and unfolded by new analyses.

How the city is constructed and reconstructed will play a key role in whether the larger region and nation will bear witness to a sustainable and productive peace or an unstable and prolonged period of uncertainty that is not war but is not peace either (Bollens, 2007: 87)

Methodological appendix

1. List of interviewees

1.1. Local administrators and professionals

1. Mirsada Smajić, office of Urbanism, Općina Stari Grad Sarajevo, Sarajevo (12.07.2011)
2. Gorjana Piljak, office of Territorial Planning, Transport and Public Services, Općina Istočno Novo Sarajevo, Istočno Sarajevo (16.09.2011)
3. Branislav Todorović, office of Territorial Planning, Transport and Public Services, Općina Istočna Ilidža, Istočno Sarajevo (08.10.2011)
4. Alma Sadović, office of Urbanism, Općina Centar, Sarajevo (22.10.2011)
5. Miroslav Lučić, office of Territorial Planning, Transport and Public Services, Grad Istočno Sarajevo (01.11.2011)
6. Biljana Marković, representative of Istočno Sarajevo within the NALAS network, interview (17.12.2011)
7. Nermana Oručević, Općina Novo Sarajevo (10.01.2012)
8. Stanislava Marinović, Office for Development Planning of Canton Sarajevo (12.01.2012)
9. Amira Dedović, Grad Sarajevo (14.05.2012)
10. Snježana Milinković, office of Urbanism, office of Territorial Planning, Transport and Public Services, Općina Istočni Stari Grad (18.05.2012)

1.2. Inhabitants

Sarajevo

B.	Male	Age 30	15.09.2011
N.	Male	Age 35	18.10.2011
A.	Female	Age 22	24.10.2011
N.	Female	Age 26	25.10.2011
L.	Female	Age 23	26.10.2011
M.	Male	Age 38	09.01.2012
D.	Male	Age 43	16.05.2012
L.	Female	Age 32	17.05.2012
S.	Female	Age 28	20.05.2012

Istočno Sarajevo

K.	Female	Age 42	01.10.2011
J.	Female	Age 35	05.10.2011
D.	Male	Age 27	14.12.2011
L.	Male	Age 23	03.11.2011
D.	Male	Age 33	07.11.2011
M.	Female	Age 28	10.12.2011
O.	Male	Age 31	19.05.2012
S.	Female	Age 24	21.05.2012
V.	Female	Age 39	21.05.2012

2. Topic guide for interviews

2.1. Local administrators and professionals

General information

1. Name and role in the municipality/city
2. How long have you been holding this role for?
3. What are your main occupations and responsibilities?
4. What are the duties of this office/department?

Urban planning and funding

5. How does the town planning process work at municipality/city/(canton)/entity level? What are the duties and responsibilities of every institutional level? Are there regulation plans to be taken into account?
6. Which actors take part in planning (public administration, private investors and companies, international community, etc.):
 - City infrastructures (road, etc.)
 - Urban services and facilities (water, gas, electricity, rubbish collection)
 - Public transport
 - Building reconstruction
 - Construction of new building (both for private and public use)
7. In which way and through which channels do this different actors communicate and negotiate decisions?
8. How does the financial system work? What are the sources of City/municipality budget? (local and foreigner investors, international community, donations, money collected through taxation, etc.)? Which percentage of that is devoted to town planning projects?

Personal description of the situation

9. According to your professional experience what are the strong and weak points of the organization and functioning of urban services and infrastructures in the city?
10. Is there any circumstance that carries some specific obstacles (lack of financing, over bureaucratized system, etc.)?
11. What kind of needs express the population in the city? How do you cope with that?
12. In which way do people express their need to the municipality administration? Is there any channel through which citizens can give suggestions or express specific request regarding town planning?
13. Considering that town planning in Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo is managed by different administrations, do you think that this separation affect the urban development somehow?
14. Do you think that this situation involve any advantages or disadvantages for the citizens living in the two cities?
15. According to your professional experience what could it be done to overtake these disadvantages? What are the possible solutions?

Relation between the two administrations

16. Does it exist any common project between Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo regarding town planning?
17. Are there any infrastructures shared by the two cities?
18. How would you describe the relation between the two cities' administrations?
19. Additional comments

2.2. Inhabitants

General information

1. Introducing myself
2. Gender, age, occupation, education level
3. Where do you live? For how long? Whom do you live with?
4. Were you born in Sarajevo? If not, how long have you lived here for? Where were you born?

Past and memories

1. May you describe briefly all the places you've lived in during your life course (place and duration)? In which part of the city centre/suburbs of Sarajevo have you lived before?
2. Can you tell me something about your favourite places in the city, places that have a special meaning for you?
3. Did you have the same favourite places in the past?

Daily practices of use of space

4. Let's talk about your daily life: could you describe what you do during the day/week and where are the places where you usually spend your time?
 - Where do you go to work/study?
 - Where do you go shopping (food, clothes, etc.)?
 - Where do you spend your spare time (sport, hanging out, cultural activities, etc.)?
5. How do you move within the city? Do you have your own means of transportation? Do you use public transports?
6. Are there parts of Sarajevo/Istočno Sarajevo (city where the interviewee lives) where you don't go at all? Why?
7. Does it ever happen to you to go to Sarajevo/Istočno Sarajevo? For what reasons? How often?
8. If you never go to Sarajevo/Istočno Sarajevo, can you explain me why?

9. Do you have friends or relatives who live in Sarajevo/Istočno Sarajevo? How often do you see them?
10. Would you say that your family/friends here in Sarajevo/Istočno Sarajevo have the same habits as you? Can you explain?
11. Considering that Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo are two autonomous cities, do you see any particular advantage or disadvantage in this situation?

Division and identity

12. How would you describe Sarajevo and Istočno Sarajevo? Do you feel or notice any difference between the two cities? Can you explain me that?
13. Was the situation different before?
14. Does the presence of the boundary affect you personally somehow?
15. Do you think it affects the citizens in general?
16. Additional comments

3. Consulted documents

Spatial plan of Canton Sarajevo (*Prostorni Plan Kantona Sarajeva*)

Spatial plan of Republika Srpska (*Prostorni Plan Republike Srpske*)

Dayton Peace Agreement, Annex 4

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