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BRANDING THE ETHNICALLY DIVIDED CITY: BETWEEN METAPHORS AND SOCIAL REALITIES

Abstract

The post-war ethnically divided cities are often subjects of highly political attempts to glorify their pre-division and pre-war pasts, both in the scholarship and in the common thinking. In this paper I write that this "idealisation" of the past of an ethnically divided city is problematic as it does not include the understanding that the ethnically divided cities are – like all the other cities – to some extent "normal" places where people work, shop and pray. They are not loci of "ideal" versions of ethnic cohabitation or ethnic divisions, but they are places where ethnic cohabitation is, like elsewhere, happening somewhere between the extreme ends of the scale. I base my study on a research conducted in the ethnically divided city of Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Keywords: ethnically divided cities, metaphors, representational images, Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Introduction

Since the beginnings of the thinking about cities and until today, cities are seen as global or globalizing, or as part of global networks and global flows of information, goods and people. Unlike the villages, cities are seen as offering much more opportunities to the various ethnic "others". As a result, the ethnic spatial segregation in cities – even though it has a long history – is seen as a problem or an anomaly both in the common thinking and in the scholarly works. Thus, Jerusalem, Nicosia, Beirut, Mostar, Sarajevo and numerous other cities across the world that for decades and more are divided on east and west, or north and south, are often subjects of metaphoric qualifications and mystifications in both scholarly studies and in the common thinking.

One of those metaphoric qualifications and mystifications is the often extreme celebration of their pre-division past. This paper will focus on

this in particular and will discuss the case of the ethnically divided city of Mostar in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Mostar, for example, has often been described as a microcosm of Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, both in the scholarship, as Bose concludes (Bose 2002: 98), as well as in the local press and literature (eg. Maslo 2001). The Bosnian cities and Mostar in particular were especially viewed as pluralistic concentrations of ethnic and religious difference since their populations typically included multiple large minorities and lacked a true majority. What is more, statements that cities like Mostar were predominantly destroyed after the war particularly because they embodied the visual image of the ethnic and religious diversity before the war are quite common. For Radovic, moreover, places like Sarajevo and Mostar "were attacked and destroyed because they were cities, because they embodied the pluralist, cosmopolitan, inclusive culture that ridiculed the narrow particularism and xenophobia of nationalistic exclusiveness." (Radovic 1997, quoted in Makas 2007: 172), and for Bogdanovic the events in Bosnia are "the ritual murder of the city", and for him the destruction was an attack on the very concept of cities because "Sarajevo and Jerusalem are not exceptional cities; rather they are the very embodiment of the ideal." (Bogdanovic 1994, quoted in Makas 2007: 172, see also Coward 2002, Charlesworth 2006: 99-113). Among the many sites, the Old Bridge in Mostar has served as most exposed metaphor of the Mostarian ethnic diversity (for more see Coward 2002, Makas 2007, Kemeri 1995, Vladic 1997, for example of local press and literature see Serdarevic 2003a,b, Humo 2004, Pekovic 2006, for more on the Old Town see Bilanovic 2004, Katz 1997, Kreshevljakovic 1991). Kemeri for example argues that "the aim of such a barbaric act as the deliberate destruction of a unique cultural monument was the unequivocal destruction of a symbol of the presence of Muslims in Herzegovina and a brutal attempt to change the fundamental identity of the town" (Kemeri 1995: 470).

Indeed, part of this is true: in the pre-war and pre-division times Mostar has been quite ethnically mixed. Before the last Yugoslav war, and mainly during the decades of Yugoslavia (1943-1992), there were indeed only mixed housing zones on both sides of Mostar. According to the last pre-war census in 1991, of the approximately 126,000 people who lived in the city and its suburbs, approximately 35 percent declared themselves as Bosnian Croat, 34 percent as Bosnian Muslims, and 20 percent declared themselves as Bosnian Serbs. The remaining 11 percent chose to identify themselves as "Yugoslav". The data of that census also show

that of the six republics that constituted the Yugoslav federation, Bosnia-Herzegovina was by far the most multiethnic. According to the data, 43,7 percent of the Bosnian population declared themselves as Muslims, 31,4 percent as Bosnian Serbs, 17,3 percent declared themselves as Croats and 5,5 percent declared themselves as "Yugoslav", a supranational category favoured by mostly younger and educated citizens of the former Yugoslavia (Bose 2007). The numbers in Mostar were slightly different, as the entire twentieth century was a time of steadily increasing urban growth in Mostar, the city's population had doubled at the beginning of the twentieth century, then doubled again by the 1950s, and then continued to increase until the war (Bollens 2003). The numbers show that none of the three peoples living in Mostar before its division were a majority in the city (nor in the country). Within Yugoslavia, Mostar also had statistically higher percentages of intermarriage and larger self-identification as Yugoslav (rather than Serb, Croat, or Muslim). Throughout history, too, Mostar and Bosnia-Herzegovina were the border regions of many political and ideological divisions in Europe. The territory was the border between Byzantium and Rome, between the Eastern and Western Christianity, later in history it was the border region between the Christian Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Muslim Ottoman Empire, and it is one of the very few territories in the Balkan Peninsula which were under the rule of both empires. Within Yugoslavia, Bosnia-Herzegovina was the federal state located between the Catholic Slovenia and Croatia and the Orthodox Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. The proximity of buildings reflecting different religious and other traditions in Mostar physically and visually reinforced the idea of the city being multicultural.

And yet, in this paper I argue that this "idealisation" of the past of an ethnically divided city is problematic on many levels. One of them is that that kind of idealisation does not include the understanding that the ethnically mixed and the ethnically divided cities are – like all the other cities – places where people work, shop, pray and worship. They are not loci of "ideal" versions of ethnic cohabitation or ethnic divisions, rather they are places where ethnic cohabitation is also, like in other cities, happening somewhere between the extreme ends of the scale.

In this paper I, thus, look at local and international accounts published in media and scholarly efforts both in pre-war and post-was Mostar in order to begin to understand the question about the extent to which we can talk about ideally mixed cities. Indeed, the metaphoric qualifications vastly present in media that I outlined at the beginning are constructed in

a special context in which the city was struggling to redefine itself during the many turbulent events in the years after the wars, and as such they are highly political. And yet, they dominated the media in times when scholars of various disciplines and academic backgrounds, as well as journalists and other writers, were trying to deconstruct the history of the ethnic relations in the city and were pointing at various specific aspects of the urban change that did not really fit in the overall story of Mostar as an "ideally mixed city in the past". Thus, in this paper I will give space to those studies. In this paper I want to bring together the "smaller" accounts about the ethnically mixed pre-war Mostar. I will not cover all periods and all aspects of the ethnic relations in the past of Mostar, due to the temporal and spatial limitations of this study.

I will, thus, look at two interlinked processes: (1) the ethnic relations in the city and (2) the urban design and urban logic of the city before the 1990. In terms of methodology, I use only secondary sources: historical accounts, mainly local, but also international, both scholarly and journalistic, which focus on specific aspects of the ethnic relations and urban logics in the city before the war.

In that respect, the goal of the paper is to point to the need to rethink the tendency towards such metaphoric qualifications of the city both in the common thinking as well as in the scholarly and professional responses to the ethnically divided city. The aim is, thus, not to deconstruct the politically constructed narrative of Mostar as a "microcosm of Yugoslavia", but rather to point to the understanding that these dualistic images like "pre-war ideally mixed" city and "post-war firmly divided" city are overlooking many social processes that are happening across and beyond these dichotomies and they offer a limited image of the ethnic relations and urban design in the city. In terms of the organisation of the paper, I will first give an account on the context in which the division of the city happened. Then, in the second and third sections I will separately address the questions of the ethnic relations within the city and the urban design and urban logic in the city before the 1990s.

Dividing a city: the context

The Bosnian war began in April 1992 and ended with the signing of the Dayton Agreement in December 1995. It was characterized by extreme violations of the international humanitarian law. It is particularly mystified

in the studies not only because it happened in post-World War II Europe in the midst of wide international surveillance, but also because it was a war of door-to-door neighbours who share a grand portion of history, language, territory, culture. The seclusion of every former Yugoslav country from Yugoslavia was followed by violent conflicts and warfares, but this one was particularly problematic as Bosnia-Herzegovina is a land of three ethno-national groups: Bosnian Serbs (Orthodox), Bosnian Croats (Catholics) and Bosniacs (Muslims) and none of them was a majority in the country.

Mostar was one of the most heavily damaged cities during the Bosnian war. Thousands people were killed and almost everything in the central areas was ruined. During the war the historic center of the city, including the famous Old Bridge and most of the mosques, churches and representative sites were reduced to ruins. Many people left the city and the country and the demographic structure of the city changed a lot. The city first came under attack by the Serbian army after the republic declared its independence from Yugoslavia. In that first siege of Mostar, the later opponents, Bosniacs and Croats, in a joint venture defended the city against the Serb forces. The second part of the war started in May 1993 when Croatia declared a war on Bosnia. Then the two allies became enemies who turned their guns to one another. Families were forcibly evicted from their homes overnight and were enforced to move to their side of the city. A frontline between the two military forces and civilians was formed in the middle of the city – that was the beginning of the divided city, as that same line later became an administrative border between east/Bosniac/Muslim and west/Croat/Catholic Mostar.

The administrative division of the city was established during the post-war reconstruction processes. The Washington Agreement of March 1994 ended the armed conflict between the Bosniac and Croat armed forces after which a complex project of political and administrative rule was implemented in the already divided city. The Council of Europe formally decided in May 1994 to carry out a major Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) joint action. The challenge was to develop new strategies of conflict management and resolution, the result of which was the formation of the European Union Administration of Mostar (EUAM). The EUAM was also envisaged by the Washington Agreement (for more see Yarwood 1999). The EUAM team started working in difficult conditions including destroyed residential and representative sites, collapsed local and regional economy, as well as sporadic shelling and local violent

conflicts. Their goals included the creation of a reconstruction of the buildings and infrastructure, freedom of movement across the front line, unified police force as well as new urban planning and housing matters particularly in relation to the establishment of conditions suitable for the return of refugees and displaced persons, as well as the restoration of the public services such as electricity and water (Yarwood 1999:7). However, as many argued, the final result of the EUAM mandate was a de facto partition of the city (see Bollens 2007, 2008 for more). In 1996, at the end of the EUAM's mandate, Interim Statute of the city was reached according to which seven municipal districts were formed within the city, three with a Croat majority in the west and three with a Bosniac majority in the east and one smaller jointly controlled Central Zone. Each of the sides and the central administration established their own separate urban planning institutions and proceeded to restore and develop the city simultaneously, but in isolation from one another (for more see Bollens 2007, 2008). The three municipal districts on each side had separate city administrations, as well as a separate mayor until 2004.

The city was, thus, divided during and after the Bosnian wars on a Bosniac-dominated east and Croat-dominated west part of the city. The year for which there are reliable statistics is 1998 when 99,5% of Mostar Croats lived in the west side of the city, and 89% of the Bosniacs lived in the east side (Bollens 2007). Since then there are no mixed neighborhoods on any side, even though since 2004 there is no administrative border and some city dwellers are returning to their pre-war residence. The people that are returning to their pre-war place of residence or the people that just choose to live on the other side are still very few.

The partition line that in the post-war times separates the municipal districts with a Croat majority and the municipal districts with a Bosniac majority is the same line that was formed in May 1993 when the Bosniac and Croat army pointed their guns at each other after the joint battles against the Serb forces. From that moment, only limited movements were allowed across the line. Massive crossings were happening in that spring of 1993 when all Muslim citizens departed in a forced or voluntary way from the west to the east side of the city. When this process was completed, only occasional crossings, most of which westwards, were happening for reasons of consumption of food or seeing relatives and all of them could be accomplished only in the short periods of relative peace. The separating of the housing zones was completed in several phases. The two ethno-religious groups were living only in mixed housing zones until

the war. The first mass migrations from one side to the other happened during the war when families were forcibly evicted from their homes overnight and were enforced to move to their side of the city. After the war, many people sold their property to city dwellers from the other side and bought a property on "their" side of the city. According to Bose, in the immediate post-war times only thirty-five Croat city dwellers were living on the Bosniac side (Bose 2007).

The partition line as such is a composition of several streets that run north-south in the middle of the city. The longest of them that separates in the central parts of the city is the Bulevar Narodne Revolucije, or just the *Bulevar* (boulevard) as locals call it. It runs roughly north-south parallel to the Neretva River. The full length of the line begins at the base of the Hum Hill and runs north along the *Bulevar* coinciding with its length, and then it turns a bit eastward and follows Santiceva Street northward. The entire length of the border was militarized throughout the whole war and there were checkpoints at several spots where the movement of the city dwellers from one side to the other was controlled and administered. The checkpoints were removed when the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina was formed (March 1994); at that time the crossings became officially allowed, but yet, very rare at the beginning.

The implemented changes included, as well, establishing a "Central Zone". The idea of the team of planners was to create a zone which would be the basis for a future unification of the city and which would support the planning of joint urban spaces and institutions. The aim was to use planning and urbanism that would contribute to bridging the ethnic divisions. It was thus planned that the "Central Zone" should to be administered by an ethnically balanced city council and administration. It was planned as a place of neutral planning strategies and it consists of a common strip of land along the partition line that was created in the war-time (Makas 2007, Bollens 2007, 2008).

The size and the borders of the Central Zone together with the plans about what should or should not be part of it were vastly debated by all sides included (see Wimmen 2004, Makas 2007). As the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and united Mostar were an inconvenience to the Croat community on the whole, the Central Zone was altogether an unwanted solution for them and they propagated no Central Zone at all and instead only a confirmation of the war-time border between the two sides (Makas 2007). The final solution was an intermediate one, which largely displeased the Croat community (see Makas 2007). It also provoked

violent protests and riots of the Croat ultranationalists on February 7, 1996, after which the car of the president of the EUAM mandate, Hans Koschink, was sprayed with gunshots (Udovički 2000: 283). This final suggestion included a "Central Zone" that is not as big as the Bosniac community suggested, but one that is only half size of the one wanted which includes also sites that are significant for the two communities equally (see Makas 2007). There were many controversies in the processes of the rebuilding of the city too: it happened in a situation in which economic and religious actors from the two sides were using architecture and monumentality to achieve the separation in the city (Wimmen 2004, Makas 2007, see also Bollens 2007, 2008). Bollens further argues that urbanism and urban governance in post-war Mostar have been the primary means by which war profiteers have reinforced ethnic divisions; "war by means other than overt fighting has been carried out in Mostar for 10 years after the open hostilities of 1992–1994" (Bollens 2007:247).

The Interim Statute from 1996, created as a temporary solution only, governed the city until 2004 when a new Statute was implemented. Supervised by the Office of the High Representative (OHR) this time, the new Statute united the two city administrations. This decision was hardly suggested by the city dwellers themselves; it was, much like all other urban planning and policy work initiatives a resolution suggested and implemented by the international planning committees. A new commission of Mostar was formed for these reasons and a new mediator was elected in the attempts to reunify the city and reorganize the local governance. This process, as well, was followed by local riots, protests, public insults, durable negotiations and major disagreements between the two sides.

Thus, to what degree the city "reunified" is very hard to assess. The people, for example, that are returning to their pre-war place of residence or the people that just choose to live on the other side are still a few individual cases. There is no official statistics on this matter, yet it is common among the city dwellers today to think that there are more returnees from East to West (more Bosniacs return to or chose to live in West Mostar). The demographic structure of the city has significantly changed in the post-war times too. Many refugees to other countries did not return to Mostar after the war, and many people from the surrounding or more distant villages and cities moved to Mostar after the war. According to this last official census in 1991, 4.3 million people were living in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and by the estimates in 2001 there were only 3.5 million (Babic 2001). Today there are city dwellers that cross the border

that physically divides the city and actively use both sides, yet there are also many that do not cross the border at all. The barriers of cooperation in economic terms emerged after the war, too. Interethnic economic cooperation and trade decreased in the immediate years after the war as the ethnic politicians on both sides imposed illegal taxes and obstructed the repair of telephone lines and the operation of cargo traffic (Udovicki 2000). The companies became "ethnic" and the employees of the other ethnic groups were expelled from work. The limited research on the post-war city shows that for some the life in the divided post-war city is not easy. Kukic, for example, conducted a research among the students in the university in west/Croat Mostar in which he concluded that the political situation, the insecurity, the fear of the revival of the war tensions, and the conviction that Croats in Mostar cannot expect to live in a democratic society where all the nations and religions can live in equity and peace makes these students possible emigrants in other countries. The results of his research further show that a majority of the students stated that they would leave the city if it was possible (Kukic 2006).

This peculiar context, in which the division of the city happened, gave space to many forms of representing of the pre-war past as the "ideal" times of the city. And yet, as many have argued, the urban logics in the city before the war were not as "ideal". In the two sections that follow, I look at local and international accounts published in media and scholarly efforts both in pre-war and post-war Mostar in order to question the extent to which we can talk about ideally mixed cities. In the section that follows I look at the different urban logics in the city, and in the one after that I look at the ethnic relations within the city.

The "mixed" city in history: different urban logics

The studies on the different urban logics within the city suggest that Mostar was not always as "mixed" as in the decades of Yugoslavia and throughout the twentieth century. The different urban logics within the city – the Muslim Ottoman and the Christian Austro-Hungarian urban logic – were relatively divided much before the last Yugoslav wars.

The historians, for example, mostly agree that the Ottoman conquest of Bosnia, which started in 1463 and was completed in 1483, brought Islam into the kingdom of Bosnia (Banac 1993, Donia and Fine 1994, Malcolm 1994 and Velikonja 2003). The Islamization happened to a

larger extent there in comparison to the other neighboring regions as the kingdom of Bosnia was by that time religiously divided and there was no single dominating church in the region (for more see also Fine 1975). Since the 13th century the Bosnian Church was dominant on the land of today's Bosnia-Herzegovin – which was probably a mix of Catholic Church organizations and neo-Manichean doctrine, as Banac (1993) argues, and it was a weak and inconsistent church that lacked priests and infrastructure. Malcolm argues that on the territory of Bosnia proper there were two Churches: the Bosnian Church and the Catholic Church (Malcolm 1994:57), and that neither was exclusively supported by the state policy nor had a proper territorial system of parish churches and priests. Thus, many villages were out of reach of both. Thus, Donia and Fine (1994) argue that the term "conversion" is inappropriate and the phenomena that occurred in Bosnia-Herzegovina was "acceptance" (in Ramet 2005:245). The heretical reputation of the Bosnian Church, as Banac puts it, was overstated by the Christian neighbors of Bosnia which resulted in interventionist crusades particularly from Catholic Hungary-Croatia (1993:130). As Banac further argues, before the Ottoman conquest the Catholic Church from the west of Bosnia was stronger than the Orthodox from the east as they were the only possible source of aid against the Turks, yet, in today's eastern Bosnia the Orthodox Church continued its agency. However, as historians argue, much like in the whole Empire Ottomans did not try to bring Islam to the conquered territories by force nor did they expel the non-Muslim population, even though they assumed and practiced superiority of Islam over the other monotheistic religions by giving various privileges to the converted population (see for example Malcolm1994). Thus, the acceptance of Islam proceeded slowly and gradually. Malcolm (1994), for example, offers the analyses of the ottoman "defters", or tax-registers, which recorded property ownership and the classified people by religion and suggests, that the process by which Bosnia gained a majority population of Muslims lasted approximately 150 years, took many generations and was slow only at start (Malcolm1994:53).

The city, in opposition to the village, played an important role in the processes of Islamisation. Velokonja (2003) writes that the Bosnian nobility converted to Islam in order to keep their property and privilege positions, while the peasants did that in order to avoid the taxes that were mandatory for Christians. Islam, thus, was associated with the upper class and to accept Islam meant to be willing to belong to the dominant class (Ramet 2005:245). The cities and towns were, thus, more quickly Islamicized,

because of the better infrastructure that the Ottomans built in the cities, mainly by providing mosques in the residential areas and the pre-existing shortage of Christian churches (Ramet 2005). Thus, starting from these early Islamisation times, many cities in Bosnia-Herzegovina became predominantly Muslim. The more Catholic towns were Islamicized later, due their resistance (Malcolm1994: 67), yet, they were also Islamicized at the end. Consequently, the towns that were more important for the Ottoman administration and served as seats of the local administrative units were more quickly transformed. Sarajevo, for example, developed only after the Islamization of its population and the Ottoman conquest. Over the decades it slowly became the biggest and most important Muslim city in the region. Today's center of the city, the location of the the most representative sites that tourists see and take to stand for the whole, was built in the first decades of Ottoman Sarajevo. Its population was almost entirely Muslim and it grew in a big city by becoming important market center and by attracting people from the surrounding villages. By the end of the 16th century there were also a number of Christians and Jews, yet, out of ninety-three *mahalas* (quarters) only two were Christian (Malcolm1994:68). With a majority of Muslim population, adequate infrastructure and quick development, it became a big urban center of that time which population enjoyed good urban life, less taxes and many privileges, as Malcolm argues.

Mostar was a predominantly Muslim city at the first years of the settlement. Soon after conquering the medieval Bosnian Kingdom in the 1460's, the Ottomans declared the site of today's Mostar as the seat of one of their new administrative districts. At that time, there was no settlement, only a wooden bridge spanning the Neretva River. Besides the Old Bridge, they included numerous monumental architectural structures in today's Mostar's historical center such as mosques, baths, residential houses. The first medresa (Muslim school) was build before 1570 (see Hasandedic 2000, 2005). Hodzic writes that out of seventeen *mahala*, fifteen were Muslim in the 16th century (Hodzic 2000). Other historical data show that all mayors in the period of the Austro-Hungarian occupation (1878-1918) were Muslims (see for example Miletic 1997). Scholars write that the built environment was also predominantly Muslim in those times. Cirkovic, for example, argues that in all cities in Bosnia-Herzegovina the Ottoman imprint is the oldest part of the town (Cirkovic 1987). She writes that that is an outcome of a discontinuity of the urban life between the late antiquity and the medieval times in the Balkan Peninsula, as shown

by the archeological analyses of the ruins of the old pre-medieval cities. Thus, she adds, in the early seventh century when the Slavic peoples inhabited the peninsula not even one single case of survival of urban life from the late antiquity could be found.

Yet, the more Islamic image of the city changed during the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Mostar (1878-1918). Scholars mostly described it as a period of economic and cultural upsurge which changed not only the urban design, but also the way of living in the city: banks and publishing houses were built then including the famous Mostar gymnasium (see Celebic 1985, Peez 2002 [1891], Vego 2006a, b), as well as a major bridge (Tito bridge) which now links the largest square on the east side with the other side of the city (see Hasandedic 2005). This urban change included a different model of urban planning too: for the first time in history the planning principles included streets, squares, blocks as planned urban forms, in opposition to the unplanned expansion of the city before that (see Celebic 1985, Vego 2006a,b). The new urban concept meant that squares were connected into a unity and created a new form – the town promenade (Vego 2006). The fronts of the buildings, mainly the representative buildings, were arranged in a line which created new uses of the space. This principle of "linear" urban design, as the local architect Vego writes, was purposely used in the planning of the western part of Mostar in the building of the new circle square with a round traffic circle (today's Rondo Square), a square comprised of many promenades Vego (2006a,b). Some of the interventions in the city done by the Austro-Hungarian administration were directed to the well-being of the Austro-Hungarian soldiers: Miletic (1996), for example, argues that like the new plumbing system was first initiated to make the stay of the Austro-Hungarian soldiers and officials more pleasant (Miletic 1996:93). During this time the first bikes appeared in the city; the first public bath was built too.

These two dominant urban logics in Mostar, namely the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian one, are also partly divided along today's division line in Mostar, too. The Austro-Hungarian architecture and urban logic can be found in both sides of the city, and the Ottoman architecture and urban design are almost fully included in the east/Muslim part of the city. Thus, these divisions of architectural styles as well contribute to the image of the divided city in the local press and literature. Some of the data on these matters can be found in the travel notes of the Austrian soldiers who worked in Mostar that time (see for example Michel 2006 [1908], Peez

2002 [1891]). While for the earlier decades of the 19th century the notes of the British travellers serve as source of data for today's researchers (for more see Hadziselimovic 1989), the data from the diaries and published works of the Austro-Hungarian travellers and soldiers tell a lot about the on-going fast urban change at that time. In his book written in 1891 that was inspired by his short visit to Mostar during Austro-Hungarian times, the writer Carl Peez, for example, describes the east side of the city (today's Bosniac Mostar) as the home of the past and the present and the West Mostar as the section of the city where "the future lies" (Peez 2002 [1891]: 17), meaning that, as he adds, that is the side of the city where many new buildings and institutions can be built unlike the other one which is already dominated by Ottoman imprint. Peez writes that by the middle of the 19th century today's west side of the city (Croat Mostar) was only a suburb and the city was located mainly on the east side.

These accounts on the different urban logics throughout history point to the understanding that even though there were only mixed housing zones on both sides of Mostar, throughout history Mostar was not always as "mixed" as in the decades prior to the division. The following section will focus on the ethnic relations within the city in the same context.

The ethnic relations in the pre-war times: not so "ideal" either

Historians say that throughout history there were also various periods of conflicts besides the periods of peaceful living (see for example Velikonja 2003). Kamberovic, for example, writes that the three peoples in Mostar had relatively good relations by the middle of the 19th century (Kamberovic 1997). Brkic writes about the relationships between the students in the Mostar gymnasium at the beginning of the 20th century (Brkic 1969). He writes that the students from all three ethno-religious groups were studying in mixed classrooms and as religious practices were mandatory for all of students, the Catholics were going to the church on Sundays and the Muslim students were going jointly to a mosque on Fridays. Miletic and Cubela, on the other hand, write that the associations of musicians created in the 1880s were not joint but divided on a Serbian one and a Croatian one (see Miletic and Cubela 1979). One more example is the account of Serdarevic who writes about the use of the beaches of the river in Mostar. In a study in which he is mapping the Mostarian families and the parts of the river that they occupied one can understand that all three

ethno-religious groups had an equal access to the river beaches (Serdarevic 2007). In a wider Bosnian context, scholars have also studied whether the houses of Christians and Muslims throughout the county, as well as in Mostar, differed or not. Researchers have different claims on this. While some, as Bukarski (2005) has researched, claim that no difference in the design of houses can be noticed through centuries, others argue that, for example, only the Muslim houses had *chardaci* (local types of balconies) (Filipovic 1930 in Bukarski 2005:121), or that often in the history the Christian houses had only one floor and they were usually smaller than the Muslim houses, as that design would make them less visible and, thus, less known to the Ottoman tax-collectors who imposed different tax rates to the Muslim households (Filipovic 1951 in Bukarski 2005: 121).

The ethno-religious groups that lived in Mostar before the war had also different legal status within Yugoslavia, among which is the right of the Bosniacs (Muslims) to declare themselves as a separate *narod* (peoples, nation) in Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav historiography laid its principle stress upon socio-economic developments, like class struggle, feudal institutions and revolutionary movements (Vucinich 1955) and the questions of ethnicity and nationalism were raised only gradually (for more see Redzic 2000:61-87; Kurtovic 1975). In Yugoslavia there was a clear distinction between the six constituent peoples (*narodi*) of the Yugoslav federation – Serbs, Croats, Muslims, Macedonians, Montenegrins and Slovenes – and the minorities living in the country (*nacionalnosti*). Yet, the Muslims got an equal status with the other five constituent peoples a bit later in history. The name "Muslim" (Musliman, with a capital "M") has been used to designate the Slavic-speaking Muslims of Bosnia since the end of the 19th century (Bougarel at al 2007: 1). Yet, it became their official national name only in 1968. In 1993, the Bosniac Assembly declared "Bosniac" (Bosnjak) to be the new national name and in 1995, "Bosniac" was introduced in the new Bosnian Constitution. The initial position was that the problem would solve itself as Muslims will just continue to identify themselves with Serbs or Croats (Malcolm1994). At the first post WWII congress it was stated that: "Bosnia cannot be divided between Serbia and Croatia, not only because Serbs and Croats live mixed together on the whole territory, but also because the territory is inhabited by Muslims who have not yet decided on their national identity" (Hoepken 1989:194, quoted in Malcolm 1994); this "decision" meant that they still haven't decided whether they are Croats or Serbs. This is visible in the national censuses

in the decades after World War II. In the first Yugoslav national census in 1948, for example, the Muslims could choose between three options: Muslim Serbs, Muslim Croats or "Muslims, nationally undeclared". This changed several times in the next censuses when finally in 1963 the new Preamble of the Bosnian constitution recognized that "Serbs, Croats and Muslims allied in the past by a common life" and in 1965 the Bosnian League of Communists listed people as Serbs, Croats or Muslims (Malcolm 1994: 199). Yet, the Muslims were recognized as a separate nation within Bosnia-Herzegovina finally at the census in 1971, when they could declare themselves as "Muslims, in terms of a nation". This kind of Bosnian Muslim socialist nationhood caused various peculiarities and somewhat bizarre situations in which, for example, one could be a Muslim by nationality and Jehovah's Witness by religion, which was, for example, present in the Bosnian town of Zavidovici (Banac 1994).

These many accounts thus show that throughout history there were various periods of conflicts as well as peaceful living. But what is more important, they point to the idea that these dualistic images of the re-war "mixed" city – pre-war ideally mixed city and post-war firmly divided city – are overlooking many social processes that are happening across and beyond these dichotomies and they offer one-sided image of the ethnic relations in one city.

Conclusion

The city of Mostar, in Bosnia-Herzegovina – or more precisely its pre-1991 past – has often been described as a microcosm of Yugoslavia, both in the scholarship as Bose concludes (Bose 2002: 98), as well as in the local press and literature (eg. Maslo 2001). It is also often argued, both in media and in the scholarly accounts, that cities like Mostar were destroyed after the war particularly because they embodied the visual image of the ethnic and religious diversity before the war. Among the many examples is the one of the Old Bridge in Mostar – the bridge has served as most exposed and highly politicized metaphor of the pre-war Mostarian ethnic diversity and post-war ethnic divisions.

In this paper I looked at the local and international historical accounts, both scholarly and journalistic, which focus on two interlinked aspects of ethnic cohabitation in cities: first, the ethnic relations and second, the different urban logics within the city before the Yugoslav wars. Before the

wars there were only mixed housing zones on both sides of Mostar. And yet, the various studies on the ethnic relations and demographic structure of the city show that throughout history the city was not always as "mixed" as in the years before the war. Regarding the ethnic relations, these studies also show that throughout history there were various periods of peaceful living as well as various periods of conflicts. In terms of the urban logic, they pointed to the understanding that the two different urban logics within the city, the Muslim Ottoman and the Christian Austro-Hungarian one, were divided much before the ethnic division of the city in the post-war times. The conclusion is, thus, once again, that the many representational images of the history of the city that include the "romantic" notion that Mostar was always a peacefully "mixed" city should remain what they are – just metaphors – and their misuse for political and other purposes must be questioned.

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