

Mothership Vienna

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Sažetak Ovaj esej je dio serije tekstova koje su napisali bivši studenti Arhitektonskog fakulteta u Sarajevu — danas rasuti širom svijeta i neformalno čineći bosansku arhitektonsku dijasporu. Autori eseja su arhitektonski par Dalila i Semir Zubčević, koji svaki slijedi svoj profesionalni put u Beču. Esaj predstavlja ličnu i reflektivnu analizu ukorijenjenu u prostoru, sjećanju i historiji. Beč zauzima jedinstveno mjesto u urbanoj naraciji Sarajeva, čineći ga prikladnom pozornicom za njihova razmišljanja. Odrasli su i obrazovali se u Sarajevu tokom perioda relativne linearnosti — kada se historija predstavljala kao jednosmjerni put, a arhitektura je imala priznatu, gotovo tehnokratsku ulogu u društvu. Nisu učeni da propituju svijet oko sebe. Međutim, nakon preseljenja u Beč, upravo u vrijeme kada je Austrija ulazila u novo evropsko poglavlje nakon pada Željezne zavjese, suočili su se s poznatom urbanom matricom, samo u mnogo većem mjerilu. Trenutak spoznaje došao je neočekivano: sjedili su u jednoj ljetnoj bašti u Bečkoj šumi, pod stablima šljiva s bijelo okrečenim stablima, plastičnim stolnjacima (mušmama) i emajliranom pepeljarom ispred njih — elementima dobro poznatim iz našeg bosanskog odrastanja. Taj trenutak potaknuo je dublje preispitivanje kulturnog identiteta i arhitektonskog naslijeđa. Jesu li te sličnosti bile slučajne, ili su to bili tragovi složenije, zajedničke historije? To iskustvo ih je natjeralo da istražu dublje, da preispituju svoje razumijevanje naslijeđa — ne kao linearnog, izolovanog narativa, već kao slojevitog i međusobno povezanog.

Ključne riječi arhitektonska dijaspora; lična analiza; urbana naracija; kulturni identitet; arhitektonsko naslijeđe.

Abstract This paper completes a series of essays written by former students of the Sarajevo Architectural Faculty — now dispersed globally and informally forming a Bosnian architectural diaspora. Authored by architect couple Dalila and Semir Zubčević, each of whom is pursuing their own professional path in Vienna, this essay offers a reflective and personal exploration rooted in place, memory, and history. Vienna holds a unique significance in Sarajevo's urban narrative, making it a fitting stage for the couple's reflections. Both grew up and were educated in Sarajevo during a time of relative linearity — when history was presented as a singular path, architecture held a respected, almost technocratic role in society, and the world around them was not supposed to be questioned. But after relocating to Vienna, just as Austria was stepping into a new European chapter following the fall of the Iron Curtain, they encountered a familiar urban pattern — only on a much grander scale. Their moment of realization came unexpectedly: seated together in an open-air inn in the Vienna Woods, under plum trees with whitewashed trunks, plastic tablecloths, and an enamel ashtray before them — elements eerily familiar from their Bosnian upbringing — evoked a deeper questioning of their cultural identity and architectural heritage. Were these similarities coincidental, or were they traces of a more intricate, shared history? This experience compelled them to dig deeper, to reframe their own understanding of heritage — not as a linear, isolated narrative, but as a layered and interconnected one.

Keywords architectural diaspora; personal exploration; urban narrative; cultural identity; architectural heritage.

1 Uvod

Ovaj esej je duboko lični i refleksivan prikaz naših života i profesionalnih puteva. Odabrali smo da grad Beč postavimo u središte naše naracije iz više razloga: proveli smo većinu života ovdje, osnovali porodicu u ovom gradu, a Beč je igrao ključnu ulogu i u urbanoj historiji našeg rodnog grada. Naša priča se isprepliće kroz razne teme, tvoreći šaroliki mozaik misli i asocijacija. Nadamo se da će budući čitaoci — kao i naši prijatelji i kolege — uživati u ovom nekonvencionalnom pristupu pripovijedanju.

1 Intro

This essay is a deeply personal and reflective account of our lives and professional journeys. We chose to place the city of Vienna at the heart of our narrative for several reasons: we have spent most of our lives here, started our family in this city, and Vienna has played a pivotal role in the urban history of our hometown of Sarajevo. Our story weaves through a variety of themes, forming a colourful *pot-pourri* of thoughts and associations. We hope that future readers — as well as our friends and colleagues — will enjoy this unorthodox approach to storytelling.

2 Odrastanje

Odrastanje u Sarajevu šezdesetih i sedamdesetih godina bilo je poput vožnje rolerkosterom. Iz godine u godinu grad se ubrzano razvijao, stambeni kompleksi i kvalitetne javne i komercijalne zgrade nicala su nevjerovatnim tempom. Bilo je prirodno biti očaran tim novim, modernim okruženjem i povjerovati u ideju "vječne vatre" — dovoljno da nas inspiriše da postanemo arhitekti.

Urbanistička historija koju smo učili bila je jednostavna: grad je osnovan u vrijeme Osmanskog carstva, potom je doživio preporod pod austrijskom okupacijom, preživio međuratni period i bio oslobođen 1945. godine kako bi nakon toga vječno rastao i napredovao.

Upisali smo arhitektonski fakultet, uživajući u pogodnostima tehnokratskog društva — besplatno obrazovanje, državno finansiran fakultet koji je igrao značajnu ulogu u zajednici, pristup naučnim istraživanjima, velikim građevinskim projektima i međunarodnim postdiplomskim programima. Sarajevska arhitektonska scena tada je djelovala kao san.

Oboje smo studirali tokom osamdesetih. Tito je umro i kula od karata se počela rušiti, ali Sarajevo je tada doživljavalo jedan od svojih historijskih vrhunaca. Bila je to decenija ikoničnih zgrada i događaja, a neki lokalni arhitekti postali su, po prvi put, javno poznate ličnosti. Ekonomski smo bili izrazito siromašni, ali kulturno izuzetno bogati. Koga je bilo briga što zarađuješ tek simbolično ako ti svjetske zvijezde dolaze na kućni prag?

Osamdesete su vjerovatno bile i vrhunac napora da se stvori novi, pomalo mistični bosanski kulturni identitet. Nije važno da li je to bilo planski ili spontano, pojavila se nova, fuzionirana forma muzike, narativa, umjetnosti i filma, koja je kombinovala srednjovjekovne simbole proslavljene — ali historijski osporavane — bogumilske prošlosti, romantične bosanske pejzaže i arhaične jezičke izraze. Ova kulturna estetika bila je sveprisutna.

Možda najpoznatiji primjer toga bio je rok-album *Modra rijeka* iz 1978. godine, koji je okupio pjesnika Maka Dizdara, bend Indexi, slikara Mersada Berbera, grafičkog dizajnera Dragana S. Stefanovića, glumca Fabijana Šovagovića i mnoge druge u jednom jedinstvenom, kulturnom umjetničkom djelu. Bili smo ponosni što smo Bosanci i mogli smo uživati u umjetnosti bez prelaska partijskih linija.

Na arhitektonskoj sceni započela je ideološka borba između starije generacije privržene internacionalnom stilu i srednje generacije arhitekata koja je prihvatila postmodernizam, te najmlađih, opčinjenih dekonstruktivizmom. Bilo je lako uključiti se i postati dio živopisne kulturne arene u gradu. Vjerovali smo u moć umjetnosti kao sigurnog puta za jačanje samopouzdanja tek rađajućeg kulturnog identiteta i obogaćivanja društva.

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Međutim, naša poimanja smo počeli da preispitujemo na samome početku našeg života u Beču, kada smo se, kao mladi par, jednog dana zatekli u bašti ljetne gostionice smještenoj u bečkoj šumi. Okruženi šljivama s okrećenim stablima, sjedeći za stolom prekrivenim plastičnim stolnjakom i emajliranom pepeljarom, ispred bijele gostionice s tipičnim zelenim kapcima, prepoznali smo arhetipski bosanski ambijent.

2 Upbringing

Growing up in Sarajevo in the 1960s and 1970s felt like a roller-coaster ride. Year after year, the city expanded, with housing projects and high-quality public and commercial buildings flourishing across the landscape. It was natural to be captivated by the sleek, new environment and to believe in the idea of an "eternal flame" — enough to inspire the decision to become an architect.

The urban history we were taught was straightforward: the city was founded under the Ottoman Empire, then reinvigorated under Austro-Hungarian occupation, survived the interwar period, and was liberated in 1945 to grow and prosper thereafter.

So, we enrolled in architecture school, enjoying the perks of a technocratic society — free education, a state-funded faculty that played a significant role in the community, and access to scientific research, grand building projects, and international post-graduate programs. Sarajevo's architectural scene felt like a dream.

We both studied during the 1980s. Tito had died and the Yugoslav house of cards began to tumble, but the city of Sarajevo enjoyed one of its historical peaks. It was a decade of iconic buildings and events, and some of the local architects became, for the first time ever, publicly known figures. We were, economically-speaking, tremendously poor and culturally extremely rich at the same time. Who cares whether you are earning just a nickel when you're meeting global celebrities at your doorstep?

The '80s were probably also a highlight in the convulsive attempt to create a blurry, mystical kind of new Bosnian cultural identity. Whether orchestrated or not, a newly blended expression of music, narrative, art, and film emerged, featuring medieval symbols of a glorified — but historically contested — Bogomil past, romanticized Bosnian landscapes, and archaic language expressions. This cultural aesthetic was omnipresent.

Perhaps the most prominent example was the 1978 rock album *Modra Rijeka*, which brought together poet Mak Dizdar, cult rock band Indexi, painter Mersad Berber, graphic designer Dragan S. Stefanović, actor Fabijan Šovagović, and many others in a single, iconic work of art. We were all very proud to be Bosnian and could enjoy art without crossing party lines.

The architectural scene witnessed the start of an ideological struggle between older generations devoted to the international style and middle-aged newcomers embracing post-modernism, followed by a younger generation mesmerised by deconstructivism. It was easy to engage with and become part of a vivid cultural arena in the city. We believed in the power of art as a sure path to strengthening the self-esteem of a Bosnian cultural identity that was still wishing to be born, all the while enriching society.

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However, our world-view began to crack at the very beginning of our lives in Vienna when, as a young couple, we found ourselves in an open-air inn nestled in the Vienna Woods. Surrounded by plum trees with whitewashed trunks, sitting at a table covered with a plastic tablecloth and an enamel ashtray, in front of a white inn with typical green shutters, we recognized an archetypal Bosnian setting.



Počeli smo se pitati da li je naše kulturno naslijeđe složenije i višeslojno više nego što smo ranije mislili. Da li je moguće da je naše arhitektonsko naslijeđe isprepleteno sa širim, izmiješanim uticajima? Naša voljena zemlja bila je razorena strašnim ratom, i postajalo je sve očiglednije da su geopolitičke sile premoćne da bi im se suprotstavilo ili pobjeglo od njih.

Za nas je život u Beču — centru carstva koje je nekada vladalo našom domovinom — pokrenuo proces shvatanja koliki je zaista bio uticaj tih minulih godina. Gotovo svakodnevno smo nailazili na riječi, manire ili obrasce razmišljanja za koje smo ranije vjerovali da su bosanski, da bismo shvatili da su zapravo porijeklom iz Austro-Ugarske.

Književno remek-djelo Stefana Zweiga *Svijet od juče* (Zweig, 1943) bilo je snažan podsjetnik na svijet koji su naši djedovi i bake poznavali. Pomoglo nam je da shvatimo koliko nas naše zajedničko naslijeđe i obrazovanje povezuju s okruženjem u kojem smo izgradili svoj novi dom. Naslijeđe društvenih običaja kojima su nas učili, zajedno s bezbroj sati provedenih vježbajući klavir, odjednom je dobilo smisao.

Postepeno smo naučili i više o skorijoj prošlosti Austrije i koliko je težak bio proces preoblikovanja nacionalnog identiteta nakon pada monarhije. I Austrija je, kao i mi, bila rastrzana građanskim ratom i prošla kroz komplikovan proces izgradnje nacije, prije i poslije Drugog svjetskog rata. Iako austrijsko prisustvo u Bosni danas izgleda kao daleka historija, često nailazimo na zajedničke artefakte u kolektivnom pamćenju.

Kao što svi znamo, "pogled izvana" ima posebnu vrijednost. Uživali smo u debatama s austrijskim prijateljima i uranjali u brojne publikacije o Bosni. Dva naročito uticajna djela bila su knjiga britanske historičarke Mary Sparks — *The Development of Austro-Hungarian Sarajevo, 1878-1918: An Urban History* (Sparks, 2014) — i nekoliko izdanja proizašlih iz ERC projekta *Islamska arhitektura i orijentalizirajući stil u habsburškoj Bosni, 1878-1918* austrijskog historičara Maximiliana Hartmutha (Hartmuth, 2024).

Sparks s gotovo hirurškom preciznošću analizira svaki aspekt izgradnje grada koji je pokrenulo Austrijsko carstvo nakon Berlinskog kongresa 1878. godine. Hartmuthovo istraživanje fokusira se na intenzivne arhitektonske aktivnosti Dvojne monarhije u islamskoj arhitekturi — poglavlje koje su lokalni arhitektonski historičari gotovo u potpunosti zanemarili.

Sada, s određenim odmakom od previranja 20. stoljeća, shvatili smo da četrdeset godina austrijske vladavine i četrdeset pet godina socijalističke Jugoslavije, sa svim naporima da se stvori poseban bosanski kulturni identitet, nisu u potpunosti uspjeli. Ono što ostaje jeste osjećaj da smo dio šire, povezane regije — Srednje i Jugoistočne Evrope — povezane duboko isprepletenim kulturnim naslijeđem.

Svoje živote provodimo između Beča, Rovinja i Sarajeva, i s neprekinutim entuzijazmom uživamo u kulturnim vezama koje ova regija dijeli.

4 Mladi bosanski arhitekti u Beču

Početkom 1990-ih smo se našli među malom enklavom mladih bosanskih arhitekata u Beču. Gotovo odmah, u interakciji s austrijskim kolegama, primijetili smo koliko lako možemo držati korak s poslom — i da često imamo šire znanje o historiji arhitekture, kako prošloj tako i savremenoj. Bili smo u svojim dvadesetim godinama, a

We began to question whether our cultural heritage was more complex and multi-layered than we had initially thought. Could our architectural inheritance be intertwined with broader, more blended influences? Our beloved country was being torn apart by a horrific war, and it was becoming obvious that geopolitical forces were something both too powerful to confront or escape from.

For us, living in Vienna — the center of the Empire that once ruled over our homeland — sparked a process of understanding just how enormous the impact of our past had been. Almost every day, we encountered words, manners, or ways of thinking that we had previously believed were Bosnian, only to realize they had originated in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Stefan Zweig's literary masterpiece *The World of Yesterday* (Zweig, 1943) served as a powerful reminder of the world our grandparents once knew. It helped us understand how deeply our shared heritage and education connect us to the environment where we built our new home. The legacy of social customs we were taught, along with the countless hours spent practicing the piano, suddenly made perfect sense.

Gradually, we also learned more about Austria's recent past and how difficult the process of reshaping national identity had been after the fall of the monarchy. Austria, too, was torn by civil war and went through a complicated journey of nation-building before and after the Second World War. Though Austria's presence in Bosnia now seems like distant history, we often stumble upon shared artifacts in our collective memory.

As we all know, "the view from outside" is particularly important. We enjoyed debates with our Austrian friends and immersed ourselves in numerous publications about Bosnia. Two especially influential bodies of works include English historian Mary Sparks' *The Development of Austro-Hungarian Sarajevo, 1878-1918: An Urban History* (Sparks, 2014) and several projects stemming from the ERC project *Islamic Architecture and Orientalizing Style in Habsburg Bosnia, 1878-1918* by Austrian historian Maximilian Hartmuth (Hartmuth, 2024). Sparks analyses, with almost surgical precision, every aspect of city-building initiated by the Austrian Empire after the Congress of Berlin in 1878. Hartmuth's work focuses on the prolific architectural activity of the Dual Monarchy — a chapter that local architectural historians have almost completely neglected.

Now, with some distance from the turmoil of the 20th century, we've come to understand that forty years of Austrian rule and forty-five years of socialist Yugoslavia, with all their efforts to forge a distinct Bosnian cultural identity, had only partially succeeded. What remains is a sense that we are part of a broader, cohesive region — Central and South-Eastern Europe — linked by a deeply interwoven cultural heritage.

We spend our lives between Vienna, Rovinj, and Sarajevo, and we take joyful pleasure in the cultural bonds that this region shares.

4 Young Bosnian Architects in Vienna

At the start of the 1990s, we found ourselves among a small enclave of young Bosnian architects in Vienna. Almost immediately, in interactions with our Austrian colleagues, we noticed how easily we could keep up with the pace of the work — and that often our knowledge of architectural history, both past and present, was broader. We were in



jedna od čestih tema nakon naših burnih derneka bila je da li je naše obrazovanje kod kuće zapravo bilo prilično dobro. Složili smo se da je, u zemlji Otta Wagnera i Adolfa Loosa, bilo teže osporiti domaću veličinu i tragati za nečim novim. U Sarajevu su se prve značajne zgrade koje su projektovale lokalni arhitekti počele pojavljivati tek neposredno prije Drugog svjetskog rata. Zaključili smo da smo, samim tim što dolazimo iz male zemlje, bili otvoreniji i radoznaliji od naših austrijskih vršnjaka.

Što se tiče tehničkih vještina, naše diplome su bile priznate kao ekvivalentne onima s Tehničkog univerziteta u Beču — i to s pravom. Zahtjevan tempo naše arhitektonske škole proizveo je visoko efikasnu radnu snagu naviknutu na stroge rokove i precizan rad. To su još uvijek bila vremena ručnog crtanja, iako je kompjuterski potpomognut dizajn počeo preuzimati primat sredinom 1990-ih.

Još jedna velika promjena bila je prilagodba na arhitektonske biroe u Austriji koji su manje veličine. Mnogi od nas su radili u Sarajevu, u dobro organiziranim uredima, s hijerarhijskim strukturama i projektantima svih struka pod jednim krovom. Luksuz razgovora o konceptu uz kafu sa statičarom ili inženjerom instalacija bio je normalan dio svakodnevnice u firmama s preko stotinu zaposlenih. Prilagoditi se malim austrijskim biroima — često fokusiranim na jednog arhitektu — bio je izazov. No, s vremenom smo stekli samopouzdanje i počeli napredovati.

Jedna prilično jedinstvena austrijska tradicija — koja potiče još iz doba carevine — jeste da akademske titule postaju dio vašeg zvaničnog imena. Tako se na našim ličnim kartama i pasošima ispred imena pojavljuje "Dipl. Ing." (ili jednostavno "DI"). Postoje čak i zakoni koji regulišu koje titule idu prije, a koje poslije imena. Metaforički rečeno, godine provedene na Arhitektonskom fakultetu u Sarajevu pretočene su u slog koji je našem svakodnevnom životu dao neočekivanu vrijednost.

Vikendom nam je bilo uobičajeno organizirati studijska putovanja po Beču, obilaziti historijske i savremene arhitektonske znamenitosti. Bitan trenutak bila je izložba

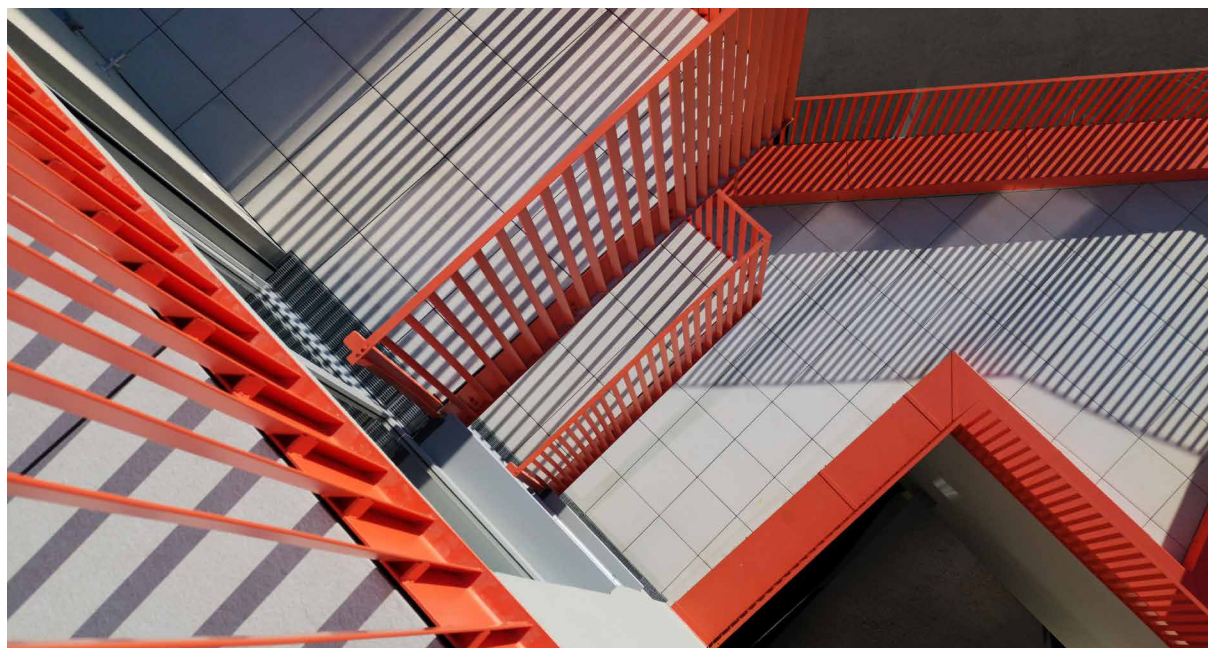
our twenties, and one topic we frequently returned to after our wild parties was whether our education back home had actually been quite good. We agreed that, in the land of Otto Wagner and Adolf Loos, it was harder to challenge home-grown greatness and seek the new. In Sarajevo, the first notable buildings designed by local architects only began appearing just before the Second World War. So, we concluded that, by default, we were more open and curious — coming from a small country — than our Austrian peers.

As for our technical skills, our diplomas were recognized as equivalent to those awarded by the Technical University of Vienna — and rightfully so. The demanding pace of our architectural school had produced a highly efficient workforce accustomed to tight schedules and precise work. These were still the days of manual drafting, though computer-aided design began to take over by the mid-1990s.

Another big change was adjusting to the smaller-scale architectural practices in Austria. Many of us had worked in Sarajevo, in bottom-up organized offices with hierarchical structures and all specialists under one roof. The luxury of discussing a concept over coffee with a structural or services engineer was a normal part of life in companies with over a hundred staff members. Adapting to small Austrian practices — often centered around a single architect — was a challenge. But over time, we gained confidence and started to rise through the ranks.

A rather unique Austrian tradition — dating back to imperial times — is that academic titles are part of your official name. So in our IDs and passports, "Dipl.-Ing." (or simply "DI", short for "graduate engineer") appears before our names. There are even laws regulating which titles go before or after the name. Metaphorically, our years at Sarajevo's architecture faculty were alchemized into a syllable that added unexpected value to our daily lives.

On weekends, it was common for us to take study trips around Vienna, visiting historical or contemporary architectural landmarks. A pivotal moment in this respect was the 1989 exhibition *New Housing in Vienna*,



Ilustracija 1 Stambeni objekat EHK106 u Beču, projekat studija AT13. Izvor: Roman Boensch, 2020.

Figure 1 Housing EHK106 in Vienna by AT13. Source: Roman Boensch, 2020.



Ilustracija 2 Stambeni objekat u Altmannsdorferstrasse u Beču, projekat studija AT13. Izvor: Paul Sebesta, 2022.

Figure 2 Housing project in Altmannsdorferstrasse in Vienna by AT13. Source: Paul Sebesta, 2022.

Nova stanogradnja u Beču iz 1989. godine, koju su kurirali Gustav Peichl i Dietmar Steiner, a koja je održana u čuvenoj Austrijskoj kući u Sarajevu. Katalog izložbe postao je odlična početna tačka za naša istraživanja. Hodočašće u Werkbundsiedlung u Jagdschlossgasse bilo je obavezno.

Ove posjete pomogle su nam ne samo da razumijemo grad, već i duboku povezanost između stambene politike i lokalne politike. Izuzimajući period nacizma, Beč je gotovo neprekidno bio pod upravom Socijaldemokratske partije — što je vjerovatno i glavni razlog zašto se grad stalno rangira kao "najpoželjniji za život" na svijetu.

I možda, na naše iznenađenje, pronalazimo trenutak u historiji arhitekture kada Sarajevo nadmašuje Beč u kvalitetu dizajna. Period nakon Drugog svjetskog rata, sve do 1955. godine, bio je izuzetno težak za Beč. Veliki dijelovi grada su bili uništeni, a grad podijeljen na zone pod savezničkom okupacijom. Građevinska aktivnost bila je gotovo isključivo ograničena na obnovu porušenih kuća i izgradnju socijalnog stanovanja. Ti tzv. "Gemeindebauten" građeni su izuzetno jeftino — obično su to bile jednostavne zgrade s malterisanim opečnim zidovima, malim prozorima i kosim krovovima.

U isto vrijeme se, u Sarajevu — glavnom gradu nove Socijalističke Republike Bosne i Hercegovine — pojavljuje talas dinamične izgradnje. Nastaju nova stambena naselja poput Grbavice, a arhitektonska remek-djela stvaraju arhitekti poput Andrije Čičin-Šaina, Juraja Neidhardta i drugih. Nivo ambicije u dizajnu, kvalitet izrade i materijala, te bogatstvo ideja u tim projektima nadmašuju skromnu arhitekturu Beča iz istog perioda.

Kasnije smo upoznali neke bečke kolege koji su se prisjećali kako su planeri iz Sarajeva posjetili čuvenu Stadthalle, koju je dizajnirao Roland Rainer, a otvorena

curated by Gustav Peichl and Dietmar Steiner and held at the iconic Austrian House in Sarajevo, the exhibition catalogue of which became a great starting point for our later explorations of Vienna. Indeed, a pilgrimage to the Werkbundsiedlung in Jagdschlossgasse was a must.

These visits helped us understand not only the city but also the deep connection between housing policy and local politics. With the exception of the Nazi era, Vienna has been governed by the Socialist Party almost continuously — and this is arguably the main reason why the city is consistently ranked as the "most livable city" in the world.

And perhaps to our surprise, we find a moment in architectural history when Sarajevo surpasses Vienna in design excellence. The period following World War II, up until 1955, was extremely difficult for the city of Vienna. Large parts of the city had been destroyed, and it was divided into Allied-occupation zones. Virtually all construction activity was limited to rebuilding bombed-out houses and some public housing projects. These so-called "Gemeindebauten" were built in an extremely low-cost manner, typically consisting of plastered brick walls, small windows, and pitched roofs.

At the same time, in Sarajevo — the capital of the new socialist republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina — a wave of dynamic building activity emerged. New residential areas like Grbavica were developed, and architectural gems were created by designers such as Andrija Čičin-Šain, Juraj Neidhardt, and others. The level of design ambition, the quality of craftsmanship and materials, and the richness of ideas found in these projects were unmatched by the modest architecture of Vienna from the same period.

Later on, we met some Viennese colleagues who recalled how planners from Sarajevo had visited the famous



Ilustracija 3 Ville Verde u Beču, projekat studija AWZT. Izvor: Lisi Specht, 2009.

Figure 3 Ville Verde project in Vienna by AWZT. Source: Lisi Specht, 2009.

je 1958. godine. Ova dvorana je poslužila kao uzor za Sportsko-kulturni centar "Skenderija", izgrađen 1969. godine, kojeg su projektovali Živorad Janković, Halid Muhasilović i Ognjeslav Malkin. Beč je tada ponovo stekao međunarodni utjecaj i počeo se ubrzano razvijati, da bi 1970-ih postao i treće sjedište Ujedinjenih nacija.

Stadthalle, designed by Roland Rainer and opened in 1958. This venue served as a template for Sarajevo's Skenderija sports and cultural center, built in 1969 and designed by Živorad Janković, Halid Muhasilović, and Ognjeslav Malkin. Vienna had regained its international momentum and began to develop rapidly, eventually becoming the third headquarters of the United Nations in the 1970s.

5 Ja, arhitekta

U prvih deset godina naših karijera u Beču oboje smo se, prvenstveno, fokusirali na socijalno stanovanje. Tema je bila usko povezana s vrstom projektantskog rada koji nam je bio poznat iz Sarajeva, a bilo je fascinantno doživjeti kako nastaju velika stambena naselja u Beču. To je bilo formativno razdoblje u historiji bečkog stanovanja, jer je sredinom 1990-ih došlo do preokreta u procesu donošenja odluka i dodjele projekata. Umjesto direktnih narudžbi i tradicionalnih arhitektonskih konkursa uvedena su tzv. takmičenja investitora (*Bauträgerwettbewerbe*) — sistem u kojem su se investitori, zajedno s interdisciplinarnim timovima stručnjaka, takmičili za projekte. Odluke su se donosile prema sistemu od četiri kriterija: arhitektura, socijalna i ekološka održivost, te ekonomija.

Preko noći, fokus diskusije pomjerio se s dizajna fasade na energetske koncepte i odnose u susjedstvu. To je bilo u vrijeme kada zaštita klime još nije bila sveprisutna tema, a zahvaljujući vizionarskom razvoju socijalnog stanovanja, Beč je danas globalni lider u ovom sektoru — što je ukratko opisano u članku *Zamislite raj za podstanare (Imagine a Renters' Utopia)*, objavljenom u *The New York Times Magazine* u maju 2023 (Badger, 2023).

5 I, Architect

In the first ten years of our careers in Vienna, both of us focused primarily on social housing. The topic was closely related to the kind of planning work we were familiar with from our time in Sarajevo, and it was fascinating to witness how large-scale housing developments were emerging in Vienna. It was a formative period in the history of Viennese housing, as the mid-1990s marked a turning point in decision-making and project allocation processes. Instead of direct commissions and traditional architectural competitions, so-called *developer competitions (Bauträgerwettbewerbe)* were established — a system in which investors, together with interdisciplinary teams of experts, competed for building sites. Decisions were made based on a four-pillar criteria system: architecture, social and ecological sustainability, and economics.

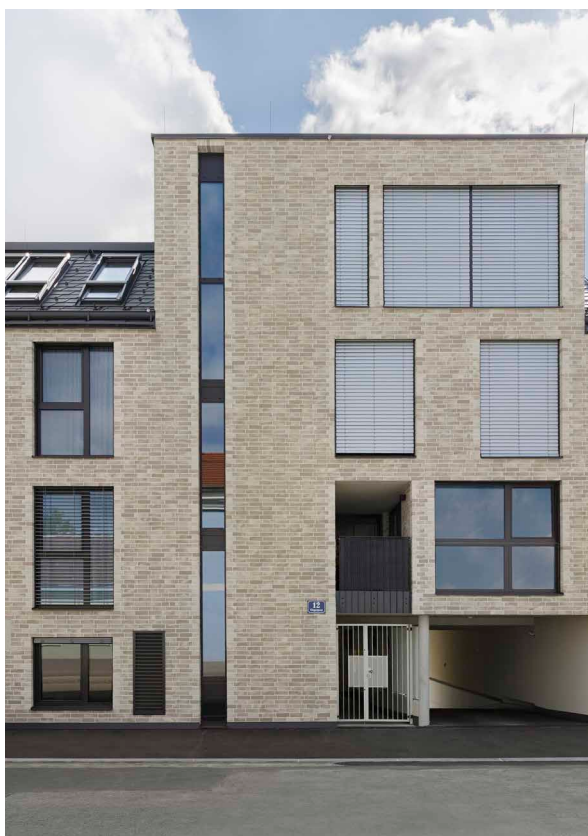
Overnight, the focus of discussion shifted from façade design to energy concepts and neighbourhood relationships. This was at a time when climate protection had not yet entered the mainstream, and thanks to the forward-thinking development of social housing, Vienna is now a global leader in this sector — a position briefly outlined in the article *Imagine a Renters' Utopia*, published in *The New York Times Magazine* in May 2023 (Badger, 2023).





Ilustracija 4 Eurogate projekat u Beču, AWZT. Izvor: Beyer, 2005.

Figure 4 Eurogate project in Vienna by AWZT. Source: Beyer, 2005.



Ilustracija 5 Stambeni objekat u Klugergasse u Beču, projekat studija AT13. Izvor: Paul Sebesta, 2024.

Figure 5 Klugergasse Housing project in Vienna by AT13. Source: Paul Sebesta, 2024.



Ilustracija 6 Stan u potkrovlju u Beču, projekat studija AT13. Source: Enes Daniskan, 2010.

Figure 6 Loft in Vienna by AT13. Source: Enes Daniskan, 2010.

1 DOM i ARHITEKT bile su istaknute arhitektonske firme sa sjedištem u Sarajevu, koje su djelovale kao državne organizacije do kraja 1990-ih godina, nakon čega su privatizovane.

1 DOM and ARHITEKT were prominent architectural firms based in Sarajevo, which operated as state-owned organizations until the late 1990s, after which they were privatized.

Dizajn stambenog prostora imao je veliku vrijednost u našem arhitektonskom obrazovanju. Dalila, kao predstavnik investitora, i Semir, kao planer, unijeli smo iskustva iz studija i rada u firmama ARHITEKT i DOM¹ u svoju svakodnevnu praksu. Funkcionalni i otvoreni tlocrt, koji smo učili, tada još nije bio široko poznat u Beču. Ono što je za nas bilo novo bile su različite zajedničke prostorije u kojima se mogu razvijati strukture susjedstva. Također nam je bilo važno posmatrati ove nove trendove u širem evropskom kontekstu, što nas je vodilo na stručna putovanja u zemlje poput Nizozemske, Španije, Njemačke i Danske. Nakon deset godina, oboje smo doprinijeli stvaranju nekoliko hiljada stambenih jedinica.

Semir je imao priliku da u DOM-u radi na projektima urbanističkog planiranja u Sarajevu, Kotoru, Prištini i Doboju, što je probudilo strast prema urbanizmu. U tom smislu, kreativno bavljenje zonama urbanog širenja u Beču bilo je dobrodošao izazov. Početkom 2000-ih pobijedili smo na nekoliko urbanističkih konkursa, a najznačajniji je bio projekat nove gradske četvrti oko Glavne željezničke stanice u Beču — veliko urbano razvojno područje koje se gradi već više od 15 godina.

Dalila je osnovala vlastiti arhitektonski ured — put koji je zahtijevao ogromnu ambiciju i hrabrost. Izgraditi sve od nule bio je ogroman uspjeh, uključujući osiguranje stalnog toka projekata, obuku i vođenje osoblja. Često smo razgovarali o tome koliko smo malo naučili na fakultetu o poslovnoj strani vođenja firme, i koliko je taj jaz u obrazovanju bio značajan. S druge strane, vjerovanje da će te predan rad i zasluge približiti ciljevima, bilo je jedno od vrijednosti koje smo ponijeli iz (već davno prošlog) socijalističkog radnog morala.

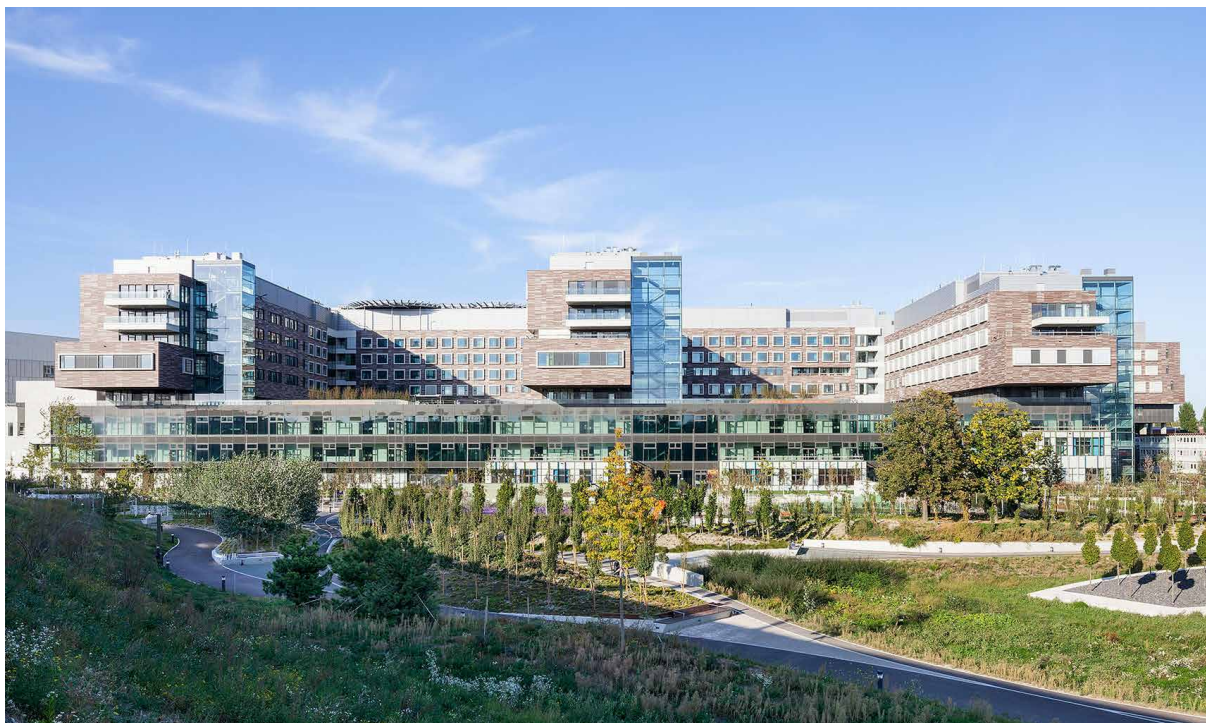
U posljednjim godinama, ja sam se uglavnom fokusirao na projektovanje zdravstvenih objekata. Ponovno smo kroz pobjede na konkursima došli u priliku da radimo na

Housing design was highly valued in our architectural education. Both of us – Dalila from the investor's side and Semir from the planning side – brought experiences from our studies and from working at ARHITEKT and DOM into our everyday practice. The functional and open floor plan design that we had learned was not yet widely known in Vienna at the time. What was new to us were the various communal spaces where neighbourhood structures could grow and develop. It was also important to view these new trends in a broader European context, which led us to take professional excursions to countries like the Netherlands, Spain, Germany, and Denmark. After a decade, we had both contributed to the creation of several thousand housing units.

Semir had the opportunity at DOM to work on urban planning projects in Sarajevo, Kotor, Pristina, and Doboj, which sparked a passion for urban development. In that sense, engaging creatively with urban expansion areas in Vienna was a welcome endeavour. In the early 2000s, we won several urban planning competitions, most notably the new central station district in Vienna — a vast urban development area that has been under construction for more than 15 years.

Dalila founded her own architecture office — a journey that required immense ambition and courage. Building everything from scratch was a tremendous achievement, including securing a steady stream of projects, training and managing staff. We often discussed how little we learned in architecture school about the business side of running a firm, and how significant that gap in our education was. On the other hand, the belief that hard work and merit would bring you closer to your goals was one of the values we carried with us from the (already bygone) socialist work ethic.

In recent years, Semir has mainly focused on healthcare design. Once again, it was through winning competitions that we came to work on ground-breaking hospital projects.



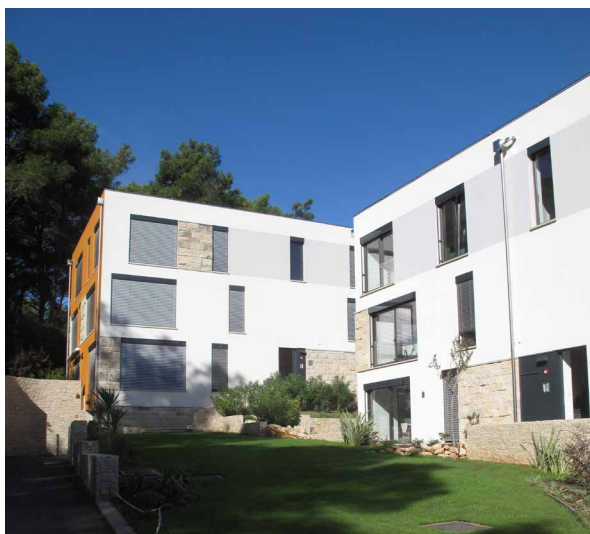
Ilustracija 7 Klinika Floridsdorf u Beču, projekat studija AWZT. Izvor: Health Team KHN – Rupert Steiner, 2019.

Figure 7 Klinik Floridsdorf project in Vienna by AWZT. Source: Health Team KHN – Rupert Steiner, 2019.

inovativnim projektima velikih bolnica. Ovaj posao je na sasvim drugom nivou — kompleksan i zahtjevan, i traži učenje potpuno novih stručnih oblasti. Arhitektura bolnica se u posljednjim godinama značajno promijenila. U tom smislu sjećanja na arhitekta, projektanta bolnica iz Bosne, i dalje su živa, mada ne postoji prava linija kontinuiteta s tim ranijim projektima.

6 Histerreich

Srednjovjekovni njemački naziv za habsburški dio Istre bio je, između ostalog, nešto o čemu nismo znali kada smo sredinom 1990-ih tražili kuću za odmor u Istri. Od 14. stoljeća sjeveroistočni dio Istre s glavnim gradom Pazinom (*Mitterburg*) bio je kontinuirano pod vlašću Habsburgovaca, a oko 120 godina — do kraja Prvog svjetskog rata — čitava Istra je bila krunska zemlja Austro-Ugarske. Ljudi uvijek prvo pomisle na more, pa možda na Mletačku republiku, ali rijetko na činjenicu da utjecaj Austro-Ugarske u Istri nije ništa manji nego u našoj domovini. Mnoge prepoznatljive arhitektonske strukture ili gradske četvrti — baš kao i u Sarajevu — djelo su carskih i kraljevskih (K.u.K.) arhitekata. Čak i među našim prijateljima u Beču mnoge porodice imaju pretke koji su bili usko povezani s Istrom.



Ilustracija 8 Stambeni objekti i hotel Arupinum u Rovinju, studio ERTA. Izvor: ERTA, 2013.

Figure 8 Arupinum Housing and Hotel in Rovinj by ERTA. Source: ERTA, 2013.

Nakon nekoliko sretnih godina odmora otvorili smo mali arhitektonski studio u Rovinju. S entuzijazmom i ambicijom, odlučili smo našu profesiju pretvoriti i u hobi. To je bila — a i ostala — prilika da nešto stvaramo zajedno. Rovinj je vrlo dinamičan grad koji se tokom posljednjih decenija razvio iz uspavanog jadranskog gradića u turističku atrakciju. Iskušenje da damo svoj mali doprinos bilo je jednostavno preveliko.

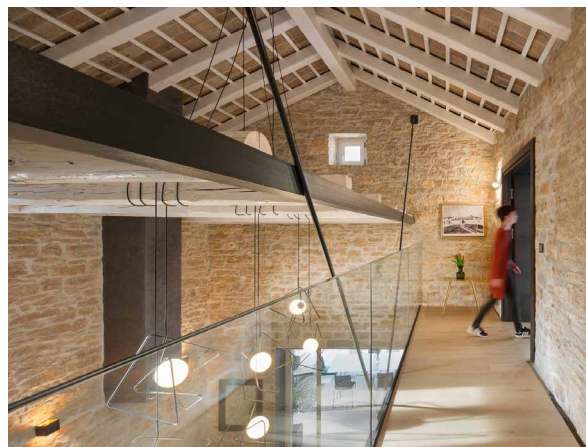
U međuvremenu smo realizovali brojne građevinske projekte, vođeni snažnom željom da pronađemo pravi balans između tradicionalnih građevinskih metoda i materijala, te savremene arhitekture i tehnologije. Neposredni kontakt s majstorima i prirodnim materijalima je zabavan, drži nas prizemljenima u digitalnom dobu i daje osjećaj da smo poput arhaičnih *Baumeistera*.

This kind of work operates on an entirely different level — complex and demanding, requiring one to learn whole new fields of expertise. Moreover, hospital architecture has changed significantly in recent years. In that sense, memories of hospital architects from Bosnia remain vivid, even though there are no real lines of continuity to those earlier projects.

6 Histerreich

The medieval German name for the Habsburg part of Istria was Histerreich — and among other names of the era, was something we didn't know when we were looking for a vacation home in Istria in the mid-1990s. Since the 14th century, the northeastern part of Istria — with its capital Pazin (known as *Mitterburg*) — had been under continuous Habsburg rule. And for about 120 years, until the end of World War I, the whole of Istria was a crown land of the Austrian Empire. People tend to associate Istria with the sea, or perhaps with the Venetian Republic — but rarely with the fact that Habsburg influence in the region was just as strong as in our own homeland. Many defining architectural structures or city districts in Istria — just like in Sarajevo — were designed by Imperial and Royal (K.u.K.) architects. Indeed, there are families even among our Viennese friends whose ancestors had a close connection with Istria.

After a few happy vacation years, we opened a small architecture studio in Rovinj. With enthusiasm and ambition, we decided to turn our profession into our hobby as well. It was — and still is — an opportunity to create something together. Rovinj is a very dynamic town that, over the past decade, has developed from being a sleepy little Adriatic town into a tourist hotspot. The temptation to make our own small contribution was simply too great.



Ilustracija 9 Villa P u Krmedu, studio ERTA. Izvor: Koridor 27, 2022.

Figure 9 Villa P in Krmed by ERTA. Source: Koridor 27, 2022.

In the meantime, we have completed numerous construction projects, driven by the overwhelming intention to find the right balance between traditional building methods and materials, and contemporary architecture and technology. The immediate "hands-on" contact with craftsmen and natural building materials is fun, keeps us grounded in the digital age, and makes us feel like archaic *Baumeister*.

7 Arhitektonsko obrazovanje: Tri želje za zlatnu ribicu

Današnji svijet prolazi kroz globalne promjene nezapamćenih razmjera: društveno-ekološke krize, promjenu geopolitičke ravnoteže između Globalnog sjevera i juga, te potpunu tranziciju iz analognog u digitalno doba. U našem malom svijetu arhitekture legitimno je postaviti pitanje: da li naše škole pružaju znanja neophodna za odgovorno i efikasno projektovanje i građenje? Ne tvrdimo da imamo rješenje za ovo ogromno i složeno pitanje, ali želimo podijeliti tri lične želje — oblikovane vlastitim iskustvom i vjerovatnim potrebama arhitektonске škole koju smo pohađali.

7.1 Prva želja: Učite arhitekturu ne samo kao umjetnost ili tehničku vještinu, već kao ogledalo društva

Izgrađeno okruženje mnogo više odražava političku stvarnost nego što to mi arhitekti često želimo priznati. Ideologija Benjamina Kállaya ili nastojanja socijalističkog režima da izgradi novu naciju bili su među glavnim pokretačima stvaranja tzv. bosanskog stila (*bosanskog sloga*), kao i nedefinisanog bosanskog miješanja srednjovjekovnih elemenata i savremenih simbola predstavljenih kroz dominantnu kulturu u drugoj polovini 20. stoljeća. Mnoga objavljena djela historičara slijedila su političke narative i zaslužuju reviziju.

Melanholičan pogled koji mnogi od nas imaju — iracionalni ideal jedinstvenosti Sarajeva — treba kritički razgraditi i podvrgnuti analizi zasnovanoj na dokazima. Tek tada možemo početi odgovarati na pitanja poput: Zašto je upravo Sebilj — drvena česma u osmanskome stilu nadahnutom fantazijom, koju je prvobitno dizajnirao austrijski arhitekta Alexander Wittek — postao najprepoznatljiviji simbol našeg rodnog grada, toliko da je kasnije čak repliciran i na dalekim mjestima poput St. Louisa u saveznoj američkoj državi Missouri? Gdje su bili njegovi arhitektonski savremenici 1941. godine kada je Isidor Reiss, jedan od najistaknutijih arhitekata u gradu, odveden i ubijen u koncentracionom logoru Jasenovac? Kako to da je tzv. "Nova klasa", opisana u knjizi Milovana Đilasa *Nova klasa: Analiza komunističkog sistema* (Đilas, 1957), baš odabrala najljepše južne padine grada za svoje luksuzne rezidencije?

Kako stječemo neophodnu vremensku distancu u odnosu na 20. stoljeće, došlo je vrijeme da nanovo napišemo neka poglavlja naše arhitektonске baštine i historije.

7.2 Druga želja: Pripremite buduće arhitekte za upravljanje arhitektonskim uredom u sve složenijem i globalizovanijem svijetu

Poslovni modeli su se promijenili, a naša profesija je postala složenija i podložnija rizicima. Danas nam je potrebno više infrastrukture — hardvera, softvera i ostalih resursa — nego ikada prije, a naš proizvod je sve ranjiviji u globalno konkurentnom okruženju. Partnerstva su sve češća, a multidisciplinarna priroda našeg rada se širi. Hibridna radna okruženja sada integrišu stručnjake iz mnogih oblasti.

Identitet profesije se već promijenio: investitori danas vide arhitektu kao rješavača svih problema, koordinatora

7 Architectural Education: Three Wishes for the Goldfish

Today's world is undergoing changes on an unprecedented scale: socio-environmental crises, a shifting geopolitical balance between the Global North and South, and a total transition from the analog to the digital age. In our small world of architecture, it is legitimate to ask whether our schools are providing the knowledge required for responsible and effective design and construction. We do not pretend to have a solution for this vast and complex issue, but we would like to share three personal wishes — shaped by our own experience and the likely needs of the architectural school we attended.

7.1 First wish: Teach architecture not only as an art or technical skill but as a mirror of society

The built environment is far more a reflection of political realities than we as architects often care to admit. The guiding ideology of Benjámín Kállay or the nation-building efforts of the Socialist regime were among the driving forces behind the creation of the so-called Bosnian Style (*Slog*), as well as the undefined Bosnian mélange of medieval elements and freely mixed contemporary symbols presented as mainstream culture in the latter half of the 20th century. A lot of historical literature has followed political narratives and deserves revision.

The melancholic view many of us hold — the irrational ideal of Sarajevo's uniqueness — should be critically dismantled and subjected to evidence-based analysis. Only then can we begin to answer questions such as: Why is it that the Sebilj — a wooden fountain in a fantasy-inspired Ottoman style originally designed by Austrian architect Alexander Wittek — became the most iconic symbol of our home city, and was later even replicated in distant places like St. Louis, Missouri? Where were the architectural peers of Isidor Reiss, one of Sarajevo's most prominent architects, in 1941 when he was abducted and killed in Jasenovac concentration camp? How is it that members of the so-called "New Class," as described in Milovan Đilas' *The New Class: An Analysis of the Communist System* (Đilas, 1957), chose the most beautiful southern city slopes for their luxurious residences?

As we have gained necessary historical distance from the 20th century, the time has come to rewrite some chapters of our architectural heritage and history.

7.2 Second wish: Prepare future architects to manage their practices in an increasingly complex and globalized world

Business models have changed, and our profession has become more complex and risk-laden. We now require more infrastructure — hardware, software, and resources — than ever before, and our output is increasingly fragile in a globally competitive environment. Partnerships are more common, and the multidisciplinary nature of our work is expanding. Hybrid working environments now integrate professionals from many fields.

The identity of the profession has already shifted: stakeholders now see the architect as a problem solver, coordinator, and conductor of a diverse project team.

i dirigenta raznolikog projektnog tima. Uredske rutine zahtijevaju veliku pažnju na koordinaciju terminskih planova, pravne ugovore i druge administrativne zadatke. Ključna odgovornost arhitektonskog obrazovanja jeste da identifikuje puteve kroz koje nove generacije studenata mogu steći znanja i vještine potrebne za suočavanje s budućim izazovima.

7.3 Treća želja: Preispitajte i redefinišite ulogu arhitekata i urbanista u 21. stoljeću

Godinama smo obučavani da težimo dizajniranju savršene zgrade — remek-djela koje će nas uzdići u panteon slavnih arhitekata. Danas, suočeni s ogromnim ekološkim otiskom građevinske industrije, pred nama je drugačiji, hitniji izazov: pomoći spasiti planetu. Arhitektonsko obrazovanje mora se usmjeriti ka ekološkom, okolišnom i sociološkom znanju. Arhitekta više nije usamljeni umjetnik u potrazi za savršeno proporcionalnim pročeljem, već član interdisciplinarnog tima koji traži najodrživija urbana i arhitektonska rješenja.

Kvalitet izgrađenog okruženja danas se mjeri njegovim punim životnim ciklusom i utjecajem na društvo. Dio glamura povezanog s titulom "star arhitekta" možda blijedi, ali prilika da se stvore bolja okruženja i doprinese općem dobru nije ništa manje vrijedna.

Office routines demand extensive attention to time management, legal contracts, and administrative tasks. It is a critical responsibility of architectural education to identify paths through which new generations of students can gain the knowledge and skills needed to meet these future challenges.

7.3 Third wish: Rethink and redefine the role of architects and urban designers in the 21st century

For years, we were trained to aspire to design the perfect building — a masterpiece that would elevate us into the pantheon of "star architects". Today, as we confront the immense ecological footprint of the construction industry, we face a different, more urgent challenge: to help save the planet. Architectural education must pivot toward environmental, ecological, and sociological knowledge. The architect is no longer a solitary artist in search of the perfectly proportioned elevation but a member of an interdisciplinary team seeking the most sustainable urban and architectural solutions.

The quality of the built environment is now measured by its full life cycle and its impact on society. Some of the glamour associated with being a "star architect" may be fading, but the opportunity to create better environments and contribute to the common good is no less rewarding.

8 Epilog

Da li bismo opet postali arhitekti? Istina je, radni dani su dugi, koncept *work-life balance* djeluje kao daleki san, a primanja su — u najboljem slučaju — prosječna. Za nekoliko godina moći ćete jednostavno reći svom mobilnom telefonu kakvu kuću želite, i ona će biti isprojektirana.

Ali zadovoljstvo oblikovanja prostora i utjecaja na živote ljudi? To je nešto što tehnologija ne može zamijeniti.

Dakle, odgovor je: da — vjerovatno!

8 Outro

Would we do it again? It is true, the hours are long, the concept of a work-life balance feels like a distant dream, and the earnings — at best — are mediocre. In a few years, you might be able to simply tell your voice assistant what kind of house you want and it'll be done.

But the satisfaction of shaping spaces and impacting people's lives — that's something technology can't replace.

So, the answer is: yes — probably.

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