



**bogdan
bogdanović
/ ukleti neimar
the doomed
architect**

**gliptoteka hazu
medvedgradska 2 • zagreb**

‘ovu knjigu sam morao da napišem... zar sam mogao da je ne napišem?’ / I had to write this book... did I have any other choice?’

—mrtvozice. mentalne zamke staljinizma. zagreb: august cesarec, 1988.



arhitektura kao primijenjena antropologija / sonja lebos

Poziv Austrijskog kulturnog foruma u Zagrebu da za izložbu u Zagrebu priredim postojeći materijal iz bečkog Arhitektonskog centra kojeg je pripremio Ivan Ristić, veliki poznavatelj nasljeđa Bogdana Bodanovića, prihvatila sam s velikim oduševljenjem i dubokim uzbuđenjem. Naslov izložbe je preuzet iz Bogdanovićevo vlastitog prihvaćanja Ledouxovog epiteta *maudit*, kojeg je usvojio 1990ih. Prihvaćanje da bude *architecte maudit* formuliralo je sintagmu šireg opsega značenja – ‘ukleti neimar’, koja je opet prevedena kao *the doomed architect*.

Dok pripremam izložbu i pišem ovaj tekst moj cilj nije ni u potpunosti rasvijetliti, kako je to Friedrich Achleitner napisao, ‘fenomen Bogdan Bogdanović’, niti pokazati njegov rad u njegovom neizmjernom opsegu. Moja ambicija sadržana je u tome da rad Bogdana Bogdanovića prije svega približim mlađim generacijama i ukažem na njegovu uočljivu povijesnost, a time i politički značaj. BB je bio izvanredan arhitekt, pejzažni arhitekt, umjetnik, pisac, sveučilišni profesor, urbanolog i političar. Moja zahvalnost je velika – BB je bio jedan od prvih koji je označio gabarite polja rada na koje mnogi od nas danas referiraju kao na polje vlastite suvremene prakse: polje urbanologije.

Rad Bogdana Bogdanovića upozнала sam 1988,⁰¹ nakon što je njegova knjiga *Mrtvouzice* bila objavljena u Zagrebu. Bilo je to čudno razoblje, *interregnum* – nakon što se ugasila

01

Ponovo sam se povezala s Bogdanovićeve memorijalnim kompleksima započimajući projekt *Mnemosyne* – *Kazalište sjećanja* u 2009. godini. Radi se o projektu koji je proizašao iz ideiranja pojmova *teatra* i teorije na način na koji počivaju u starogrčkim korijenima *theā* i *oros*, sa značenjem *gledati* i *vidjeti*.
<http://www.theatreofmemories.org/>



karizmatična dominacija koja je desetljećima bila uvodila ugodu utopijske bezbrižnosti, *dok* su feudalni ratni vladari još uvijek čekali u zasjedi i izdavali naredbe svojim vazalima, *prije* nego što će te naredbe poštati zapovjedi da se ubija, siluje i pali kako bi se formirala fiktivna srodstva utemeljena na bezbrojnim krvavim paktovima. *Prije* no što su došla vremena koja BB opisuje kao užasna, kada su ‘snovi (bili) legitimna, a možda i jedina samoodbrana’.⁰²



Seoska škola za filozofiju arhitekture u Malom Popoviću, večernja sesija / Village school for the philosophy of architecture in Mali Popović, evening session, 1979.

02
Bogdanović, 2009.

03
Danas kada se vraćam mislima unazad, razmišljam kako je čudno da nitko nije našao za shodno da mojoj generaciji govori o radu Bogdana Bogdanovića – a bila sam učenica Odjela za dizajn i unutrašnju arhitekturu Škole primijenjenih umjetnosti u Zagrebu, 1981–85, a kasnije i studentica arhitekture na zagrebačkom Sveučilištu, 1985–88.

04
Kao što sam naučila od dragog prijatelja i kolege iz Južne Amerike, intelektualci su ljudi koji se osjećaju odgovornim za društvo u kojem žive te djeluju prema tom osjećaju.

Već tada, 1988. godine,⁰³ bilo je jasno da BB zauzima poziciju *intelektualca*,⁰⁴ iako nitko osim onih koji su isti planirali nije mogao predvidjeti nadolazeći užas, što je tada postala rijetka pozicija za ljude njegove generacije u regiji koja je danas poznata kao bivša Jugoslavija ili Jugoistočna Evropa. Upravo zbog toga, nakon gotovo četvrt stoljeća, želim započeti ovu malu, izložbi pripadajuću publikaciju s Bogdanom Bogdanovićem kao intelektualcem koji je zauzeo politički stav kada je to učinila tek nekolicina, u vremenima kada su mladi ljudi to očajnički trebali, neki mladi ljudi koji su potom bili lukavo zavedeni *znakovljem*⁰⁵ mržnje. Naslov ovog teksta⁰⁶ ukazuje na smjernice koje slijedim dok čitam njegovo djelo, pokušavajući držati na umu *njegova* čitanja Loosa sažeta u izrazu kako arhitektura uvijek može biti ispričana, a koncentrirajući se na intenzitet komunikacije koji je BB stvorio između naizgled vrlo različitih disciplina – arhitekture i antropologije – intenzitet koji je konstruiran na kapacitetu obje da djeluju koristeći snagu *deskriptivnog*.

Činim to zbog Mnemosyne, zbog budućih ‘pretraga u njeno ime’, kao što je to BB stavio na početku svoje knjige *Mrtvouzice*.

Svojim političkim stavom BB se dotaknuo ogromnog ponora koji je postojao i postoji između teorija i diskursa proizvedenih od društva i o društvu i ekstremno lako osvojive društvene i političke stvarnosti koja proizlazi iz ljudskih akcija. Ili nedostatka tih akcija – što jednačim s problemom prešutnog prihvaćanja.

05
Namjerno kažem *znakovlje*, a ne simboli, poštujući razliku koju je učinio Cassirer, baš kao što je to poštivao i Bogdanović.

06
Izraz koji je Bogdan Bogdanović upotrijebio u intervjuu datom Zoranu Miloviću, objavljenom u magazinu *Start* 1988. godine

07
Bogdanović upotrebljava pojam *politija* (eng. *polity*, njem. *Gemeinwesen*), iako je to van uobičajenog leksika, a umjesto riječi *policy* koja također vuče korijen iz istog izvora, najčešće se, opet, koristi riječ *politika* (eng. *politics*) ili ponekad *odredba*, *pravilnik* ili slično.

Svojom je knjigom *Mrtvouzice* BB jasno pokazao društvu u kojem je živio, a bio je jedan od prvih koji je to učinio, da su *jezik* i *lingvistika* esencijalna oruđa političke antropologije. Kao što je to sâm objasnio, BB je poznavao rad Lévy-Bruhla još od vremena prije Drugog svjetskog rata, a pišući *Mrtvouzice* osjetio se ponukanim da preispita pojam ‘primitivnog’. Bogdanović je također demonstrirao ono što je kasnije tijekom stravičnog rata u 1990ima postalo još prisutnije, a to je da javne i privatne (pri)povijesti koegzistiraju (ali često ne miroljubivo) u svakom društvu. Upozoravao je na neizbježnu opasnost: trenutak u kojem je politička moć postala tako centralizirana da se povijesna svijest većine građanstva jednostavno raspala. Erozija relativno progresivne i moderne socijalističke države bila je u svojoj posljednjoj fazi, a i danas je teško vjerovati da je bio jedini koji je to sve vidio i rijetko dovoljno hrabar da to isto stavi na papir.

Kao čovjek *sensu lato* dobro upoznat s drevnim kulturama i društvima, a i kao pedantan etimolog, BB je bio svjestan da je riječ *polis* u korijenu riječi *politija* i *politika*.⁰⁷ Ukazao je na činjenicu da je analiza političke funkcije jednako neophodna kao i analiza političke akcije. Iscrtao je liniju i secirao asimetriju društvenih odnosa u državi koje je bio građanin. Nije mogao znati, ali je osjećao, da moć koja će uskoro biti uvedena biti pretežno ona koja se temelji na prisili, koja traži *suglasnost* pod svaku cijenu.

Dok je uspoređivao državu u kojoj je živio s Lévy-Bruhlovim opisima tzv. *primitivnih društava*, BB je verificirao činjenicu da je dobrohotna moć, ona koja čini dobro većini, obično u srži društva, dok prijeteća moć oštaje razasuta, djelujući poput vješticearenja. Brisanje političkih funkcija koje su bile postojale u prethodnim desetljećima sa lica zemlje, kao i brisanje društvenih uloga koje su se pojavile s modernizacijom, omogućilo je centraliziranom državnom sistemu (ili, preciznije, i djelomično centraliziranim republičkim sistemima) da se udruže sa segmentiranim sistemima klanova. Država je bila spremna za raspad, odnosno – za kasapljenje. Naknadni efekt je bio sličan onome koji se dogodio u većini post-kolonijalnih i *post-konfliktnih* zemalja širom svijeta – Jugoistočna regija Evrope je uskoro svjedočila raznim oblicima *pseudo-tradicionalizma*, u formama daleko zajedljivijim no što je to Hobsbawm ikad mogao pretpostaviti.

Nakon perioda ratne destrukcije kakvu Evropa nije vidjela od Drugog svjetskog rata i počinjenih neizrecivih surovosti koje se do danas nisu kaznile, pseudo-tradicionalizam je poprimio novu formu prostornih osvajanja – u poslijeratnom periodu nedostatak urbanog planiranja donio je drugu civilizacijsku cezuru, kojoj i danas padamo kao šutljive žrtve. Problem prešutnog prihvaćanja, suglasja pod svaku cijenu, jednostavno uporno oštavlja svoj trag. Društvene uloge koje su svoju pojavnost mogle zahvaliti periodu



**‘Tek dovršeni tumuli
(vestački brezuljci) Spomen-
grobља u Sremskoj
Mitrovici, a odmah
zatim i grupa kenotafa
u makedonskom gradu
Prilepu, otvarali su put
jednoj novoj antropologiji
sećanja’ / ‘Just finished
tumuli (artificial hummocks)
of Memorial cemetery in
Sremska Mitrovica, and
right afterwards the
group of cenotaphs in the
Macedonian town Prilep,
opened up a path towards
a new anthropology of
remembrance.’**

Spomen-groblje u
Sremskoj Mitrovici /
Memorial Cemetery in
Sremska Mitrovica •
1959–1960.

Kenotafi za pale
borce protiv fašizma
u Prilepu / Cenotaphs
for the fallen
members of the
resistance against
fascism in Prilep • 1961.



socijalističke modernizacije nisu se ponovno ukazale u formi u kojoj su bile izgubljene, već pervertirane. Baš kao i u zapadnoj Njemačkoj nakon Drugog svjetskog rata, preplavljujuća ideologija *ekonomskog progressa* odzvanja u svakom uhu.

BB je postavio svoje epohalno pitanje o razvoju grada i njegovog okružja još u ranim 1970im: da li je moguće da još uvijek imamo to jedno jedino ime – *grad* – za potpuno izdiferencirane entitete poput suvremenog Tokija i drevne Smirne? Nakon što je bio izgubio bitku za Novu školu na Arhitektonskom fakultetu u Beogradu, borio se protiv mogućih scenarija dezintegracije grada svojom školom u Malom Popoviću. Šansa koju su mladi ljudi na taj način dobili, šansa da re-imaginiraju grad, bila je jedna vrsta iznimnog pedagoškog pothvata, baš kao što su brojne transformacije raznih krajolika oblikovale neusporediva memorijalna područja, sijući sjeme umjetnosti pejzažnog oblikovanja čak i prije no što je Robert Smithson iskovaio sintagmu *land-art*.⁰⁸ Kada samo i zavirimo u Bogdanovićeve temeljite elaborate etruščanske kulture,⁰⁹ lako ćemo shvatiti da je njegov *environmentalism* od

do tada nepoznate kvalitete koja sadrži *longue durée* multidimensionalnost. Kao što je Ivan Ristić istaknuo u svojoj doktorskoj dizertaciji, Bogdanović ‘se izuzetno isticao u nadrealističkoj egzegezi klasičnog *curriculi*.’

Upoznati se s fenomenom Bogdan Bogdanović životni je zadatak kojeg pružimam sa zahvalnošću u svojim daljnjim istraživanjima u područjima urbanologije, politike pamćenja i umjetnosti komemoracija. Ne mogu drugačije nego privesiti kraju ovaj mali uvodni tekst riječima Friedricha Achleitnera, koji je neizmjereno kompetentniji od mene u bavljenju nazvanim fenomenom: ‘memorijalna područja Bogdana Bogdanovića su *loci* jedne urbane kulture, ...ona su uvijek bila izvedena iz topografije i krajolika da bi bila transformirana u mješta promišljanja, prisjećanja i kontemplacije.’¹⁰

Generirajući pejzaže kao aktere urbane civilizacije, Bogdanović nam je ostavljao ogromno transnacionalno nasljeđe širom tadašnjeg suverenog političkog entiteta, danas regije Jugoistočne Evrope. Nasljeđe koje evropska društva tek trebaju naučiti poznavati i cijeniti. ¶

08

Kolega Ivan Ristić i moja malenkost došli smo do poredbe Bogdanović-Smithson nezavisno jedno od drugog. Ipak je važno reći da je ono što je kod mene još uvijek tek naznačena poredba, Ivan je pomnije elaborirao u svojoj doktorskoj dizertaciji, str. 86 – 89.

09

Bogdanović, 1976.

10

Achleitner, 2009. S njemačkog prevedeno od strane autorice.

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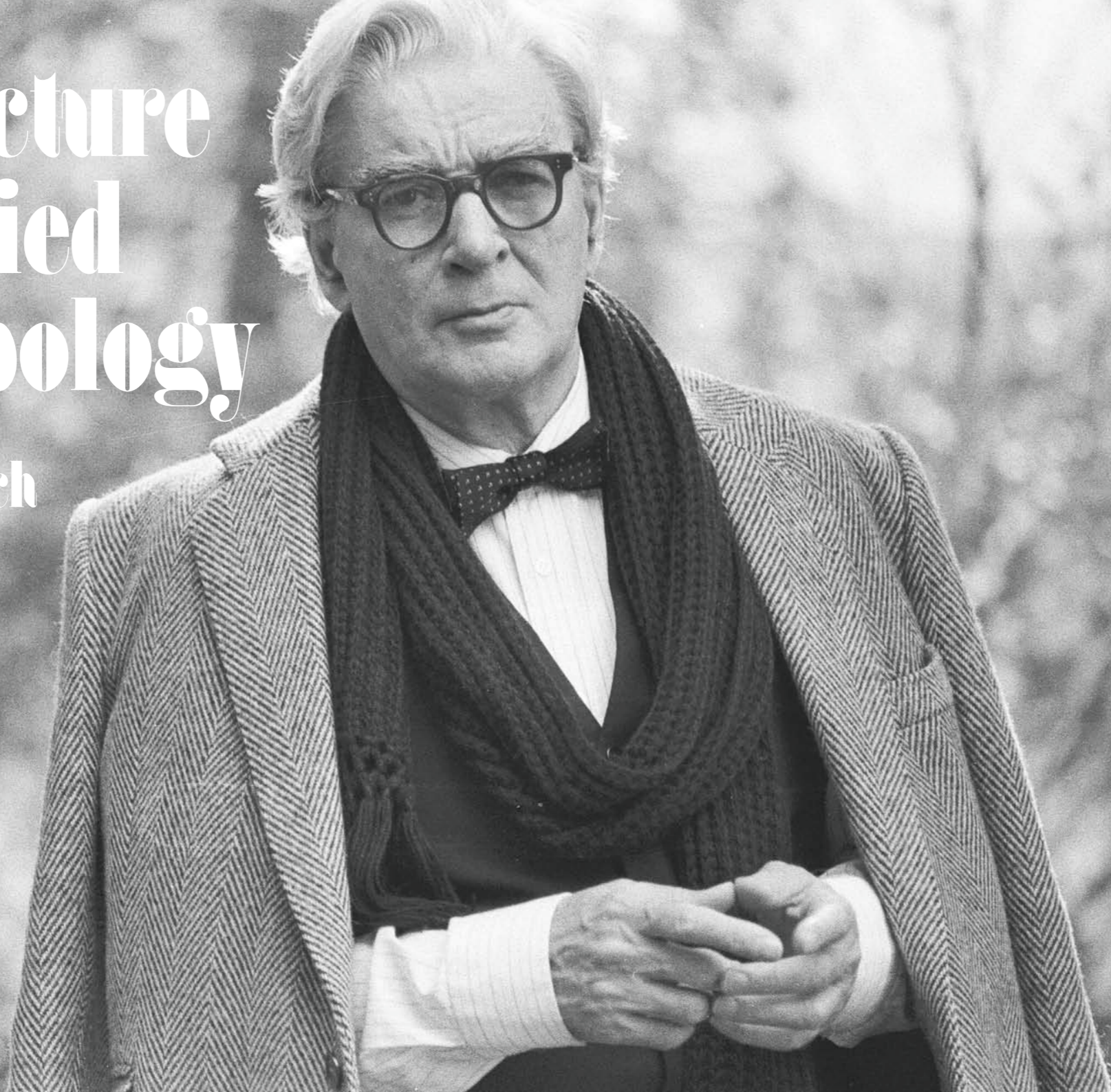


Spomen-područje Jasenovac / Jasenovac Memorial Site • 1959–1966.

polis / metropolis / megalopolis / nekropolis

architecture as applied anthropology

sonja
lebosch



The invitation that came from the Austrian Cultural Forum in Zagreb to adapt the existing material from the Architekturzentrum Wien as chosen and prepared by the great connoisseur of Bogdan Bogdanović's legacy Ivan Ristić for an exhibition in Zagreb, was an opportunity that I took with the greatest joy and profound excitement. The title of the exhibition is taken from Bogdanović's own acceptance of Ledoux's epithet *maudit*, that he adopted in the 1990s. So the acceptance of being *l'architecte maudit* formulated the translation with a broader scope of meanings – *ukleti neimar*, which was then transcribed as *the doomed architect*.

My aim while preparing the exhibition as well writing this text is neither to elucidate completely, as Friedrich Achleitner wrote, the 'Bogdanović phenomenon', nor to show his work in its immense entirety. My ambition is to give an opportunity primarily to the younger generations to get acquainted with Bogdanović's work and to point to his conspicuously historical, and therefore political, relevance. BB was an outstanding architect, landscape architect, artist, writer, educationist, urbanologist and politician. My gratitude to him is boundless – he was one of the first to designate the field of work that many of us today refer to as to the field of our own contemporary practice: urbanology.

I got acquainted with Bogdanović's work in 1988,⁰¹ after his book *Mrtvouzice*⁰²

01

I reconnected to Bogdanović's memorial sites when starting the project *Mnemosyne – Theatre of Memories* in 2009, a project emerging from the ideation of both *theatre* and *theory* as resting in Greek roots *theā* and *oros* meaning *viewing* and *seeing*.
<http://www.theatreofmemories.org/>

02

Could be loosely translated as *Deathtraps*.

03

Bogdanović, 2009.

Translated from Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian language by the author.

04

When I think back, I find it strange that nobody had ever mentioned his work to my generation in the school curriculum – and I was a pupil of Zagreb School of Applied Arts, Department for Architecture and Design, 1981–1985, and later also a student of architecture at the University of Zagreb, 1985–1988.

05

As I learned from a dear colleague and friend from South America, intellectuals are the people who feel responsible for the society they live in

had been published in Zagreb. It was the time of *interregnum* – after the charismatic domination that for decades had been introducing utopian fervour ceased, while feudal warlords were still waiting in the ambush, giving silent orders to their vassals, before those orders became commands to kill, rape or burn and fictitious kinships established by innumerable blood pacts. Before the times that BB describes as horrible came, when ‘dreams (were) the legitimate, if not the only self-defense.’⁰³

Already then, in 1988,⁰⁴ it was clear that Bogdanović was taking a position of an *intellectual*,⁰⁵ though nobody but those who planned it could have foreseen the upcoming horror, which became a rare position for the people of his generation in the region that is now known as former Yugoslavia, or South Eastern Europe (SEE). Therefore I would like to start this small publication that accompanies the exhibition in Zagreb in 2012, almost a quarter of a century later, with Bogdan Bogdanović as an intellectual who took a political stand when just few people did, in the times when that stand was desperately needed by many young people who soon were cunningly seduced by the *signage*⁰⁶ of hatred. The title of this text⁰⁷ refers to the path that I am taking up in my readings of his work, while trying to keep in mind *his* readings of Loos encapsulated in the expression that ‘architecture can be always retold in words’,⁰⁸ concentrating myself on the intensity of communication that BB built



Spomen-područje Jasenovac / Jasenovac Memorial Site • 1959–1966.

‘Vodeni čvor u koji se, na relativno malom prostoru, uplicu tri reke – Sava, Una, Strug – podseća na zmijsko gnezdo...’

inbetween these two disciplines – architecture and anthropology – intensity construed on the capacity of both to work with the power of *descriptive*.

For the sake of Mnemosyne, and for the future remembrance, as BB put it at the beginning of *Mrtvouzice*.

With his political stand, Bogdanović tackled that immense hiatus that existed and exists between the theories and discourses produced by and about the society and an extremely conquerable social and political reality that comes as a result of people’s actions. Or lack of them – tantamount to the problem of acquiescence.

With his book *Mrtvouzice*, BB showed clearly to the society that he lived in, and he was one of the first to do so, that *language* and *linguistics* were and are essential tools of political anthropology. As he explained, he knew the work of Lévy-Bruhl from the times before WWII, and while writing *Mrtvouzice* he felt drawn to the reexamination of the notion of ‘primitive’. Bogdanović also demonstrated, what later would become even more horridly present in the 1990s Balkan wars, that public and private (hi)stories coexisted and coexist in every society. He was warning against the imminent danger: the moment when the political power became so centralized that the historical consciousness of most of the citizenry fell apart. The erosion of a relatively progressive and modern socialist state was in its latest phase, and even now it is difficult to believe that he was the only one to see it

and they act upon that feeling.

06

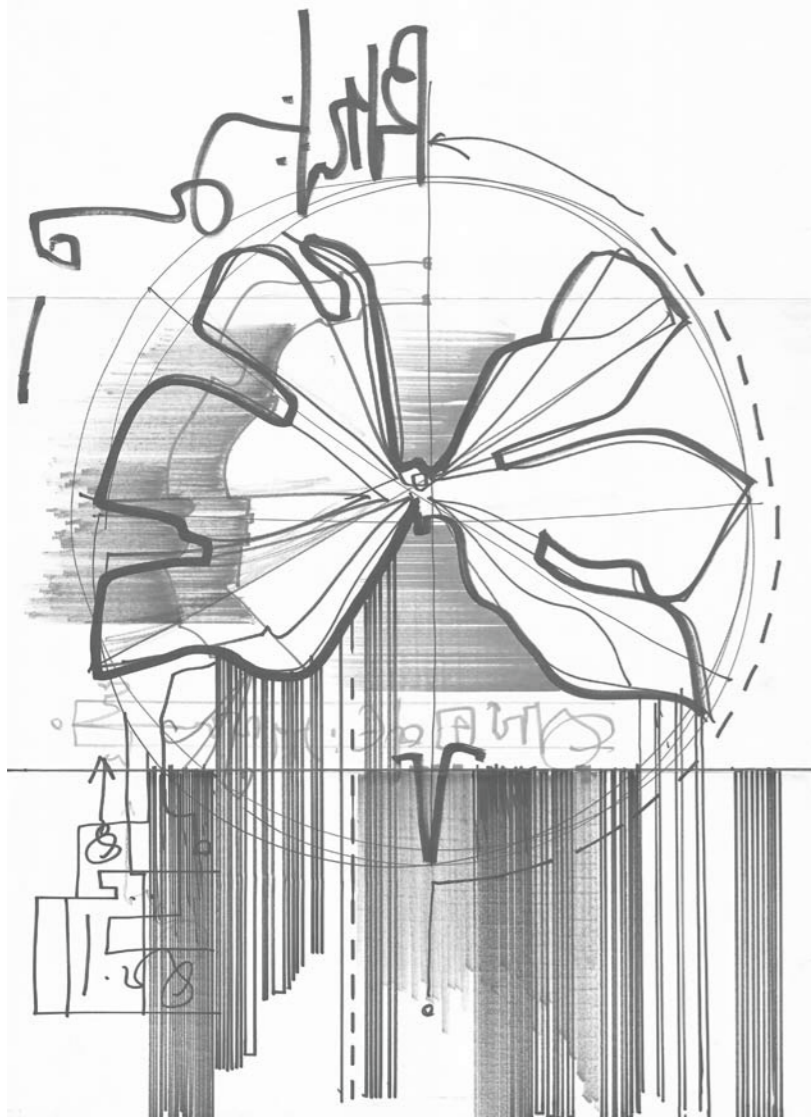
I deliberately say *signage*, and not *symbols*, while respecting the distinction that Cassirer made, just like Bogdanović respected it as well.

07

Bogdan Bogdanović used that expression in an interview conducted by Zoran Milović, published in *Start* magazine in 1988. Translated from Croatian-Bosnian-Serbian language by the author.

08

Bogdanović, 2011. Translated from Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian by the author.



Spomen-područje
Jasenovac
/ Jasenovac
Memorial Site •
1959–1966.
Diagram, oko /
about 1980

**‘Meni su se riječi
i forme... uvijek
isprepletale.’ / ‘For me,
words & forms... have
always intertwined.’**

coming and brave enough to put it down on paper the way he did.

As a man *sensu lato* knowledgeable about ancient cultures and societies, and as a meticulous etymologist, BB was aware that the word *polis* gave root to the words *polity*, *policy* and *politics*. He pointed out that the analysis of the political function is as indispensable as the analysis of the political action. He drew a datum and dissected the dissymmetry of the social relations in the state he was a citizen of. He could not know, but he felt, that the power soon to be ushered would be predominantly one of coercion, one that would require *consent* no matter what.

While comparing what was going on in the state he lived in with the descriptions of Lévy-Bruhl’s *primitive societies*, Bogdanović verified the fact that beneficent power usually sits at the core of the society, while the threatening power remains dispersed, acting like witchcraft. The effacement of the political functions as had been known in the previous decades, as well as the effacement of the most social roles that emerged with modernization, enabled the centralized state system (and semi-centralized systems of some republics) to merge with the segmentary clan system. The state was ready to be dismembered, or rather – butchered. The after effect was similar to those exorcised in the most of the post-colonial and *post-conflict* countries around the world – the SEE region was soon to be witnessing diverse forms of *pseudo-traditionalism*, in forms much more

cantankerous than Hobsbawm could ever assume.

After the period of war destruction of a kind that Europe had not seen since WWII and unspeakable atrocities which have mostly been granted impunity, that pseudo-traditionalism took over the form of spatial conquest of another kind – in the aftermath of the war the lack of urban planning brought up another civilisational caesura, the one that we are still the silent victims of. The problem of acquiescence just keeps on lingering. The social roles that emerged in the period of socialist modernization did not reappear in the shape they had when they were lost, but perverted, and just like in the postwar Germany, the overwhelming ideology of the *economic progress* was in everybody’s ear.

BB posed his epochal question about the development of the city and its environment already in the early 1970s: is it possible that we still have one name – *the city* – for extremely differentiated entities like contemporary Tokyo and ancient Smyrna? He fought against the plausible scenarios of disintegration of the city with his school in Mali Popović, after the struggle for the New School at the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade had been lost. The chance that was given to the young people to re-imagine the idea of the city was a unique pedagogical undertaking, just like his numerous transformations of various landscapes across the country had been forming unequalled memorial sites while seeding the art of landscaping of a new kind

even before the syntagm *land-art* was coined by Robert Smithson.⁰⁹ When one only peeks into his thoroughgoing elaborations of the Etruscan culture,¹⁰ it is easy to comprehend that Bogdanović’s *environmentalism* is of an unprecedented quality that contains the *longue durée* multidimensionality. As Ivan Ristić pointed out in his doctoral thesis, Bogdanović ‘excelled as a surrealist exegete of the classical curriculum’.

Getting to know the ‘Bogdanović phenomenon’ is a life time task that I am thankfully accepting while investigating further in urbanology, politics of remembrance and arts of commemoration. I cannot but bring to an end this small introductory text with the words of Friedrich Achleitner, who is immeasurably more competent than me to tackle the named phenomenon:

‘Bogdan Bogdanović’s memorial sites are *loci* of an urban culture, ...they had always been developed out of the topography and landscape that then were transformed into the sites of thinking, recalling and contemplation.’¹¹

With generating landscapes as agents of urban civilizations, Bogdanović left an enormous transnational legacy all over the SEE region. Legacy that the European societies still have to learn to know and respect. ¶

TRANSLATION: SONJA LEBOŠ

REVISION: ALEKSANDAR KONO HUT

09

Ivan Ristić and myself came to the point of comparison Bogdanović-Smithson independently. It is important to note, though, that Ivan elaborated it thoroughly in his PhD thesis, p. 86–89.

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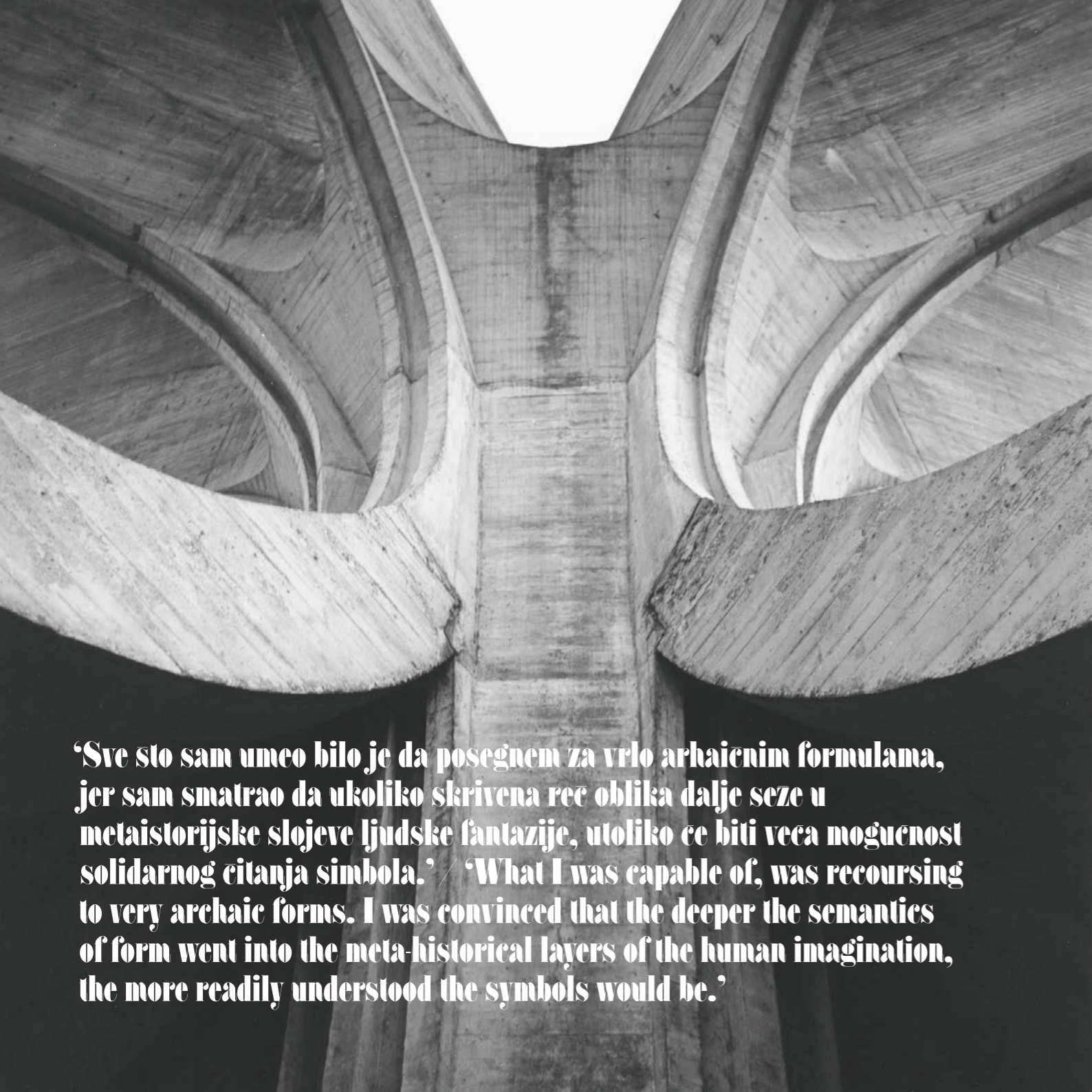
Bogdanović, 1976. Translated from Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian by the author.

11

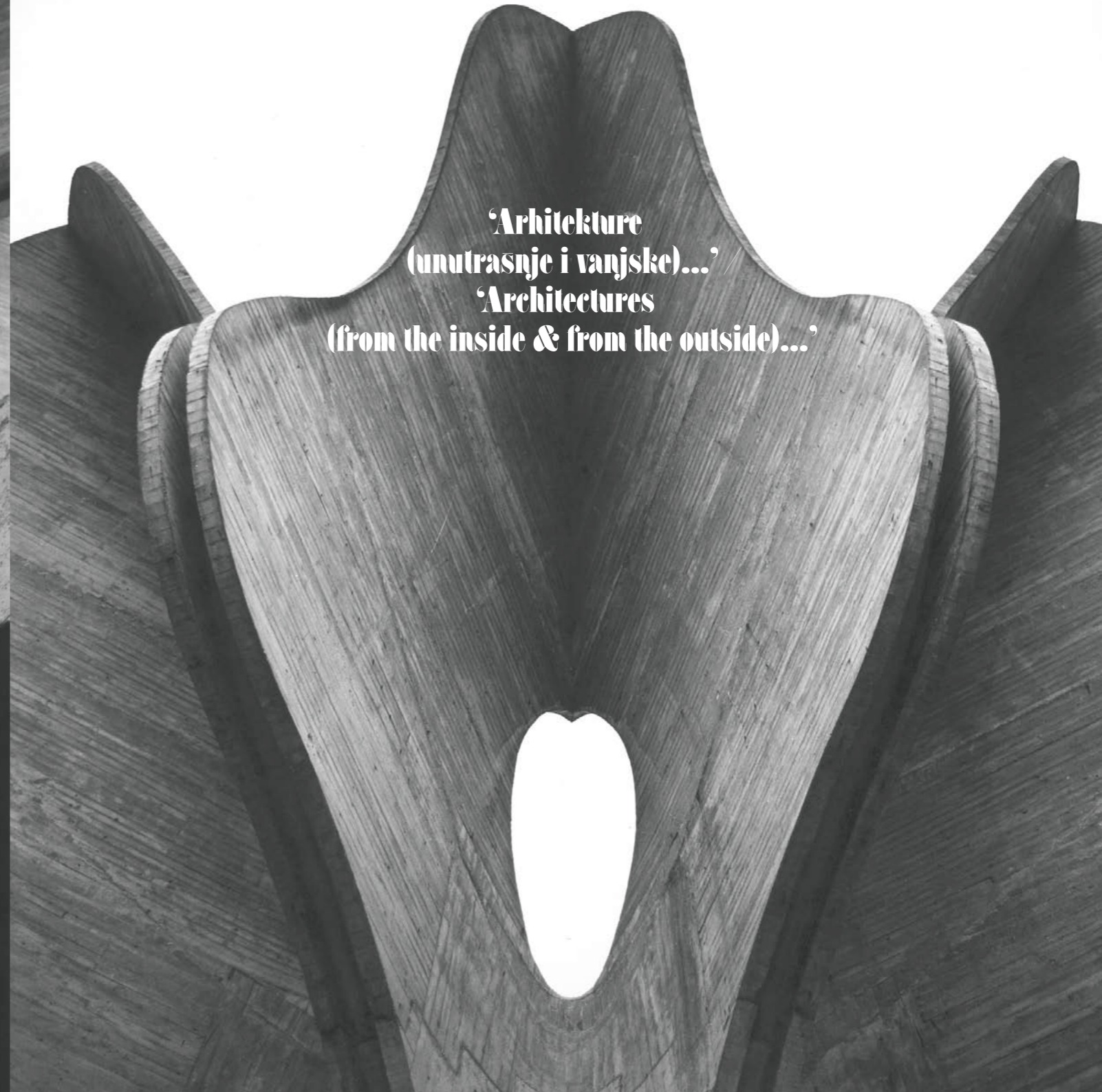
Achleitner, 2009. Translated from German by the author.

STR. / PG. 18–19

Spomen-područje
Jasenovac
/ Jasenovac
Memorial Site •
1959–1966.



‘Sve što sam umeo bilo je da posegnem za vrlo arhaičnim formulama, jer sam smatrao da ukoliko skrivena reč oblika dalje seže u metaistorijske slojeve ljudske fantazije, utoliko će biti veća mogućnost solidarnog čitanja simbola.’ / ‘What I was capable of, was recouring to very archaic forms. I was convinced that the deeper the semantics of form went into the meta-historical layers of the human imagination, the more readily understood the symbols would be.’



**‘Arhitekture
(unutrasnje i vanjske)...’
‘Architectures
(from the inside & from the outside)...’**



bogdan bogdanović/ gradovi su bica

Kenotafi
žrtvama fašizma
u Travniku /
Cenotaphs for
the victims of
fascism in Travnik
• 1971–1975.

umjesto biografije

GRIMMER: Kad bi vas, gospodine Bogdanoviću, htjeli predstaviti, došli bismo u priličnu dilemu jer vi imate četiri biografije – arhitekt, likovni umjetnik, književnik, političar. Postoji li za vas određena hijerarhija u tome pogledu?

BOGDANOVIĆ: Ja sam to uvijek osjećao kao cjelinu. Moja je ličnost bila kompozitna, pa se to sve moglo uskladiti. Često sam razmišljao o hijerarhiji. Kao prvo sam arhitekt, pomalo i pisac, pomalo i crtač i vrlo malo političar. Ali to malo bilo je žestoko. No, politika mi se nije sviđala, bio sam političar jer je u ono vrijeme bila takva situacija da sam smatrao da to moram biti. Reagirao sam prema svom temperamentu, a prema tome su onda došle i kontrareakcije.

Već u djetinjstvu Bogdan Bogdanović ušao je u svijet umjetnosti u kući svoga oca, čuvenog književnog kritičara i kazališnog ravnatelja Milana Bogdanovića. Tu je već kao sedmogodišnjak upoznao Miroslava Krležu. Pripadnost krugu beogradskih nadrealista oko Marka Ristića zauvijek je odredila njegovu osobnu poetiku u sva tri paralelna medija kojima se iskazuje – spomeničkoj arhitekturi, crtežu i literaturi. U svom životu Bogdanović ni u umjetnosti ni u politici nije tražio lagan put, već se uvijek kretao protiv struje.

RAZGOVARALA U BEČU VERA GRIMMER,
29. SVIBNJA 2006. GODINE

GRIMMER: Kao profesor urbanizma zauzimali ste se za druge kvalitete, a ne za pragmatični, “korisni” urbanizam. Suprotstavili ste se urbanizmu kvantitete. Međutim, faktori koji su odredili vaš profesionalni put sigurno su ponešto složeniji.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Dao sam se birati za asistenta na Katedri za urbanizam jer je u trenutku kad sam diplomirao arhitektura u Jugoslaviji bila jadna, radilo se samo sa dva tipa prozora, tako da se u tu siromašnu, tobože funkcionalističku arhitekturu nisu mogle uklopiti moje prethodne fantazije. Počeo sam studirati prije rata, a na arhitekturu sam otišao iz jednog nadrealističkog miljea. Napravio sam čak i neki program i naslovio ga, parafrazirajući Corbusiera: “Vers une architecture surrealiste”. Htio sam praviti nadrealističku arhitekturu, ali to je podrazumijevalo klijente koji bi to

htjeli, kao što je to, na primjer, bio slučaj s kućom za Tristana Tzaru. Za vrijeme rata zabavljao sam se s Markom Ristićem tako da sam tobože za njega projektirao jednu sumanutu kuću, gdje se iz gornjeg kata moglo klizati u donji, prepunu nekih iznenađenja. Da je bilo moguće, ja bih tako radio arhitekturu. U mome krugu svi smo bili nadrealisti i ljevičari, ali kad je došlo naše lijevo društvo, vidjeli smo da od takvih nadrealističkih egzibicija nema ništa. U očajanju sam se odlučio za urbanizam jer je to donekle ipak i neka znanstvena disciplina.

Ali preokret u mom životu bio je kad sam dobio natječaj za Spomenik židovskim žrtvama u Beogradu. Najedanput mi se otvorio čitav novi svijet simbola, usporednih značenja. Tada počinje taj moj način mišljenja "na katove". Ja sam moderni arhitekt, ali mogu misliti i na nemoderan način. Moje prve kuće na Avali kraj Beograda s početka 50-ih godina bile su pune reminiscencija. Moj prijatelj je bio inženjer na Hidro-tehničkom institutu, pa su te kuće bile namijenjene njihovim zaposlenicima. Te bi kuće mogle biti i na Mediteranu, no kad sam ih gradio, nisam mislio da će izgledati mediteranski. Građene su na starinski način, potpuno od kamena. Te su kuće bile nadrealističke i nisu naišle na odobravanje struke, budući da su svi bili moderni da ne može modernije. Oni su se tada jedva odlijepili od socijalističkog realizma, a onda dolazi netko tko opet radi takvo nešto. No nisu shvatili nadrealističku podlogu.

GRIMMER: Nadrealizam je subverzivno prisutan već stoljećima – od Hieronimusa Boscha ili čudesnih komora manirizma, pa do Bretonovog pokreta. On je malo potisnut, ali možda je danas vrijeme kada on opet dolazi na površinu, kada ponovo ljude zanima jer u totalno reguliranom vremenu globalizacije, profita opet postoji potreba za nekom anarhijom.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Ja bih volio da se to vaše predviđanje ostvari. Doduše, sad je već manje-više svejedno, ali i nije. Ja sam uvijek smatrao da nadrealizam vuče duboke korijene iz povijesti, povijesti umjetnosti, povijesti civilizacije. Pretpostavljam da se pravi ondašnji nadrealisti ne bi ljutili. Nadrealizam je nastavak romantizma.

GRIMMER: Bretonovski nadrealizam bio je još obogaćen i kontekstom razvoja psihoanalize.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Primite to kao sasvim arbitrarnu igru riječi – ali i psihoanaliza je vukla svoje korijene iz romantizma. Možda je apsurdno to što sam rekao, ali čini mi se tako.

GRIMMER: Za to sigurno imate argumente.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Prodirati u donje slojeve, duboko, uzmite samo romantičarsku literaturu, pa nadrealizam – frejdizam je nastao iz toga stanja duha ...

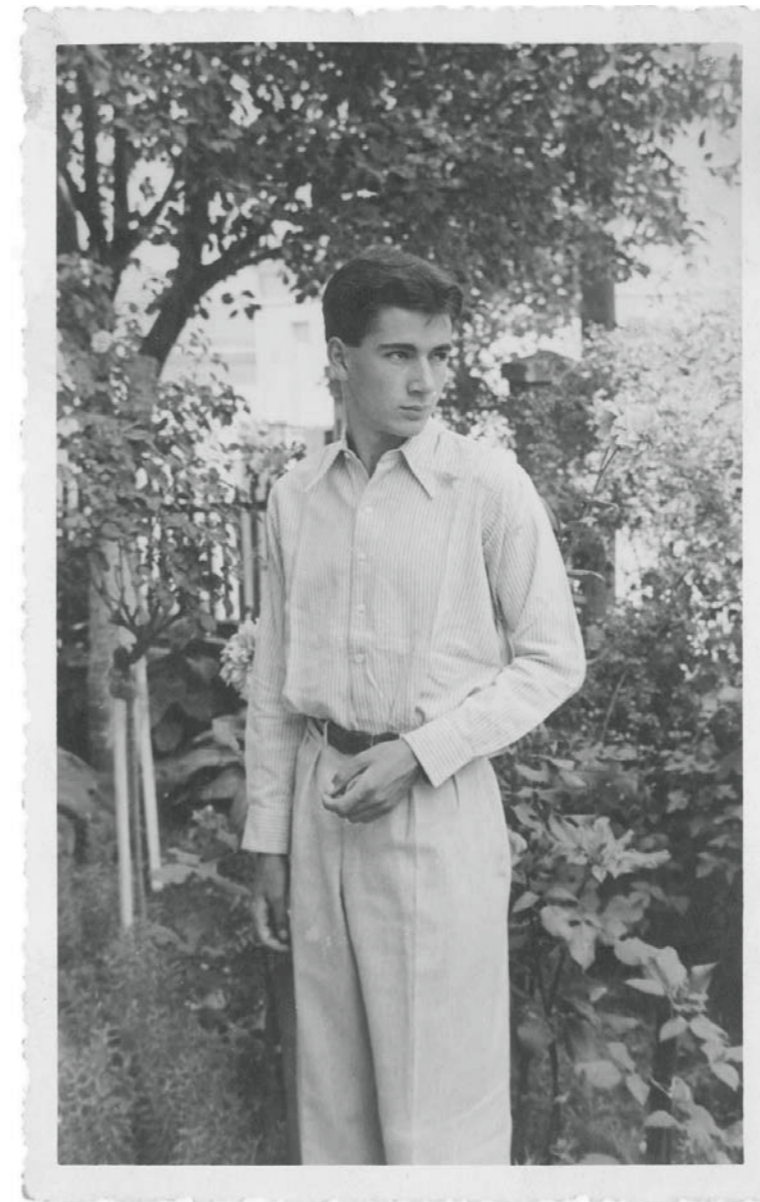
GRIMMER: Možda je nastao iz bolesti vremena.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Da, iz bolesti vremena je Freud izvlačio tu svoju špekulaciju koja je divna špekulacija; koliko je pomogla nesretnicima, to je sad drugo pitanje. Ali kao špekulacija je bila divna.

GRIMMER: Možda bi bilo zanimljivo nešto saznati iz vašega iskustva s nadrealističkim krugom.

BOGDANOVIĆ: O onom trenutku kad me primaju u nadrealističko društvo ne može se govoriti bez presjeka kroz ondašnju moralno-literarnu situaciju u Jugoslaviji. Nadrealizam je bio beogradski, ali je bio neodvojiv od Krleže. Krleža nije volio nadrealizam, ali nije smio to priznati. Nadrealisti su ga obožavali, a i on se jako dobro slagao s njima. Zbog te svoje faze i druženja s nadrealistima došao je na crni spisak Partije; mislim da mu to nikad poslije nije bilo oprosteno, to je uvijek prešućivano. To je bio jedan krug – to vrijedi za onu grupu nadrealista koji su bili bretonovci, a to su bili Marko Ristić, Dušan Matić, Aleksandar Vučo. Ali bila je i druga nadrealistička grupa – oni nisu bili bretonovci, nego su, bogami, bili aragonovci, a aragonovci su bili staljinisti. I sad, iz ove beogradske nadrealističke grupe su poslije izašli i vrlo dobri generali revolucije – Koča Popović i drugi.

Točno rečeno, mislim da je Popović bio potajni bretonovac. Takva stajališta Partija je tek tolerirala. Ali on je apsolutno ošao nadrealist, do posljednjeg daha. Kad sam bio gradonačelnik, sreo sam ga u jednoj situaciji kad je bio proskribiran. Uputio sam mu poziv da dođe na dodjelu nekih plaketa i on se pojavio sav preplašen. Morate znati da sam ja kao gradonačelnik pravio razne egzibicije jer sam imao iza sebe Ivana Stambolića. Vidio sam da je čovjek došao, pa nikako da sjedne, pa hoće u prvi red, pa neće... A onda ja ustanem, cijela sala zašuti, onda ja dođem do njega:



“Kočo, dođite, sjednite sa mnom”. “O, pa vrlo rado.” Ja ga dovedem i sjednem s njim, a onda nastane jedna duboka tišina i zatim pljesak Koči Popoviću.

GRIMMER: Vaši crteži tih fantazijskih bića koja su katkada bića i kuće istodobno na neki način podsjećaju na onirička bića Maxa Ernsta.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Pa, pogodili ste, Max Ernst je moj svetac. Ne Picasso, Picasso je moćan, ali ovaj mi je bio bliži.

GRIMMER: Ako krenemo na područje vaših spomenika, recimo i kod Ernsta postoje te skulpture, na primjer skulptura “Capricorn”, koje su od betona i imaju neke metalne aplikacije.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Mislim da je u onome što sam ja radio kao graditelj, u tim spomeničkim objektima koje sam radio moralo biti Ernsta. Čak da ja i ne primijetim. Ja sam uvijek smatrao legitimnim da ono što razumijem i osjećam u svojoj preradi, obradi i iskoristim.

GRIMMER: Važna tema kod vas je grad kao takav, *urbs* koji vrlo sveobuhvatno vidite, za koji smatrate da ga treba spoznati svim osjetilima. Sjećam se onoga lijepog teksta u kojem pišete o Bologni kao gradu iz čijih dubokih dvorišta dopire svježina, o Veneciji kao o već pomalo ocvaloj dami, sa karminom na usnama. To je opet asocijativna strana stvari.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Pa hipostazirao sam gradove, bili su za mene bića; kao takvi su me i privlačili. Pričati takve priče – uvijek su me smatrali malo ćaknutim. Vrlo brzo sam shvatio da je urbanizam pun mafijaških,

političkih klopki da se soplećete o podzemne interese. Gledao sam da budem što dalje od svega toga, tako da sam poslije, kako sam vodio taj urbanizam, došao u situaciju da me biraju za docenta. Onda sam preokrenuo naziv predmeta – ne Urbanizam nego Urbanologija. Tu sam bio slobodan, slobodno razmišljanje o gradu, bez praktičnog urbanizma. A praktični urbanizam je, htjeli, ne htjeli, mračan posao, to je politika, to se itekako osjećalo i u socijalizmu.

GRIMMER: Kako ste za vrijeme pedagoške djelatnosti tretirali studente – kao sudionike u jednoj ravnopravnoj diskusiji ili je to bilo *ex cathedra*.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Katedra nikada nije bila. U životu dvaput isto predavanje nisam održao, a profesori nose sa sobom skripte, čitaju iz njih. Ja sam improvizirao. Moja predavanja su izgledala kao i ovaj razgovor. Vrlo brzo sam na užas svojih kolega prešao i davati ocjene. Tko je nešto čuo od mene, čuo je, da li će moći nešto od mene iskoristiti ja ne znam, ali da ja dajem recepte što raditi i misliti – neću. Osim toga, urbanologija – to je poslastica, tko hoće nešto vidjeti i čuti, može shvatiti. Možda neće moći primijeniti, tj. sigurno neće moći. Uvijek sam bio epicentar nediscipline, trudio sam se da budem zanimljiv.

GRIMMER: U tom smislu spominjete i “filozofske” šetnje sa studentima po raznim zakucima grada.

BOGDANOVIĆ: To je bilo veliko zadovoljstvo meni, koji sam Beograđanin, to otkrivanje grada, a studentima pogotovo. To su bile

generacije koje su dolazile izvana. To zavlacenje u podrume, penjanje na tavane, razgovori sa raznim “oriđinalima” po bifeima. O svemu i svačemu se pričalo, samo se pazilo da ne bude politike.

GRIMMER: U knjizi *Zaludna mistrija* – knjizi o bratstvu uzaludnih i tragičnih graditelja Paladija, Borrominija, Piranesija, Gaudija – govorite o pojmu unutarnje arhitekture.

BOGDANOVIĆ: *Zaludna mistrija*, to je kapitalna knjiga, a dovela je i do komplikacija. Govorilo se: “Što on to piše, on treba predavati kako se grade gradovi, kako se grade socijalistički gradovi”. Pojam unutarnje arhitekture mišljen je ironično. Ja se podsmjehujem malo rječniku svoje struke u tom pojmovnom ciklusu, pa kažem što je unutarnja arhitektura. Unutarnja arhitektura je u meni, koliko sam ja sebe napravio i koliko sam nekome uspio pomoći da napravi sebe, itd. U tom pojmovnom ciklusu riječ unutarnja arhitektura dobiva ezoterično značenje.

GRIMMER: Dotakli smo već vaše veliko područje – spomeničku gradnju. Ako se uzme u obzir vrijeme u kojemu ste to radili i ako se prisjetimo tih raznoraznih spomeničkih kompleksa i skulptura iz tog vremena, onda je vaš rad nešto što je dijametralno suprotno. Vi ništa stvarali djela koja izazivaju respekt, možda čak i strah, nego su to uvijek neka kraljevstva u koja se ulazi, kroz koja se prolazi, u kojima se može provesti i čitav dan.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Da, to je to. Ali to ne mogu ne povezati sa nadrealizmom, na kraju krajeva.

E sad, kako su se uopće ti spomenici mogli raditi i zašto su se radili, zašto sam ja dobivao narudžbe? U jednom vremenu, kad smo već sasvim raščistili sa Rusima, u spomeničkoj arhitekturi je još uvijek sovjetski model bio pesnica, energija, budućnost, itd. I onda dolazi jedan zamračeni “matoriji” momak, počinje raditi nešto sasvim drugačije, neku koreografiju, neki balet. A partijski vrh je prištajao na sve što ja radim samo da se pobjegne od sovjetskog modela. A nije se bilo lako odlijepiti, nije bilo lako. Veliki majstori se nisu od toga mogli odlijepiti. A onda je tu bilo još nešto – sad ne vjerujem da je to utjecalo na narudžbe – ja nisam te spomenike naplaćivao. Ja sam striktno pokrивao svoje troškove koje sam imao. Morao sam imati svoj automobil, morao sam na silna putovanja, ponešto sam trebao da pomognem studentima koji su mi pomagali, materijal, to sam točno zaračunavao. Inače pravog honorara zapravo nije bilo. Ja bih njima plaćao da mogu raditi to što sam radio... Jednom mi je u Beču prišla jedna ne baš sasvim mlada osoba i kaže: “Ja sam iz Mostara, ne znam kako da vam kažem, mene su mama i tata napravili na vašem spomeniku”. Ja sam to shvatio kao veliki kompliment. Onda sam se sjetio da su to radili i po Grčkoj i da je to antički događaj.

GRIMMER: Imate poseban odnos prema antici. U vašim varijantama kapitela susreću se antika i nadrealizam, ako se tako može reći.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Cijela ta serija kapitela je nastala tako što sam ja samo obrnuo volute naopako

i onda je krenuo jedan sasvim nov sistem, jedna nova estetika. Njih ima jako mnogo. U knjizi *Knjiga kapitela* ih ima stotinu.

GRIMMER: Antika vam je filozofski i po cijelom svom kulturološkom kompleksu vrlo bliska.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Sve mi je blisko – vidite da se ne uštručavam pokrašti Dalmaciju i prenijeti je usred Beograda [kuće na Avali iz 1952., op. a.].

GRIMMER: Ipak, postoje li neka imena, periodi koji su vas osobito odredili.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Kad se u ranoj mladosti inficirate nadrealizmom, onda to mora ići ovako kako je išlo, nema onda više vraćanja na klasično stupnjevanje ideja.

GRIMMER: U tom vašem sveobuhvatnom pristupu gradu, nehijerarhijskom pristupu gradu i pojedinim arhitektonskim elementima koji ga čine vi možete i u jednome objektu, u jednoj arhitekturi iščitati i grad kao takav, kao na primjeru Karlove crkve u Beču.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Da, to me jako obuzimalo; Karlova crkva mi je jedan od repera, a znate tko je mene upoznao s tom crkvom – Krleža. On mi je rekao da je to genijalno i da to moram vidjeti. Mislim da mi je dao tu početnu ideju, da ja tu nešto tražim, da cijelu zgradu shvatim kao metaforu. Sabire čitavo ljudsko poimanje arhitekture. Zna, u životu je tako da vam ponekad netko nešto kaže usput, a poslije to ispadne jako važno. Ja sam Krležu vodio da vidi židovski spomenik. Mislim da je bio malo začuđen jer je stalno govorio: “Čudno, bizarno, bizarno, bizarno...”

GRIMMER: U čemu je za njega bila ta bizarnost?

BOGDANOVIĆ: On je bio bizaran. Meni je bilo dovoljno što sam vidio da ga nije ostavilo ravnodušnim. U onom jadnom i bijednom Beogradu, u socrealističkoj arhitekturi, u praznini i nevolji, kako je sve to izgledalo, čak mi je i riječ “bizarno” zvučala kao čitava simfonija.

GRIMMER: Do toga spomenika ste došli natječajem.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Dobio sam poziv za taj natječaj. To je dugačka priča. Vratio sam se iz rata; ratovao sam kratko, ali sam uspio biti proštrijeljen ovdje, kroz lijevi kuk. Ratovao sam istinski, istinski sam i dobio što mi treba. Bio sam pozvan na natječaj i nije me to tko zna kako oduševilo. Jer sam još uvijek mislio da ću ipak raditi pravu arhitekturu, nikad nisam ni pomišljao da ću napraviti neki spomenik. Vrijeme je prolazilo i baš mi ništa nije padalo na pamet. I sretnem jednoga nadobudnog kolegu koji me preporučio za natječaj, pa mi on kaže: “Čujem da ti radiš”, a ja neću priznati da ne radim. “U čemu je ideja?” Ja počinjem lagati: “Znaš, židovsko groblje, pa ona aleja koja ide, pa se stvara jedna vrsta perspektive. A onda odjednom”, ja sad samo da bih ipak nešto rekao kažem “ide antiperspektiva” i odmah mu kažem: “Zdravo, moram ići”. “Što ti je”, veli on. A ja odem to nacrtati. I to mi je bila najveća pouka u životu – da su u arhitekturi prave ideje često verbalne; mislim da je Loos govorio da se dobra arhitektura može ispričati. Onda za mene počinje novi svijet. Odjedanput, kad sam shvatio da to može tako, počeo sam tražiti

što je kabala, što je židovska mistika i tu sam već shvatio da postoji jedan čudesan svijet koji još nisam dodirnuo. Od tog trenutka kad se ta perspektiva i antiperspektiva rodila iz jedne igre riječi, krenuo sam i vrlo brzo napravio projekt.

GRIMMER: Da li bogatstvo riječi može generirati i bogatstvo forme?

BOGDANOVIĆ: Apsolutno, apsolutno. Meni su se riječi i forme u arhitekturi uvijek isprepletale. Ja sam vrlo često na crtežima ispisivao nešto, nepoznatim jezikom, nepoznatim znacima.

GRIMMER: Odakle su dolazili? Iz podsvijesti?

BOGDANOVIĆ: Potpuno makinalno, ali da li mi je u tom trenutku nešto značilo, ne znam. Vjerojatno.

GRIMMER: Može se reći da ste se u posljednje vrijeme više orijentirali na pisanje.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Zapravo nikad nisam prestajao pisati. Stvar je u ovome – moj otac je bio književni kritičar, majka je isto bila profesor književnosti. Oni su bili u takvoj panici da ja na krenem među pisce, jer su pisce poznavali. Plašili su se da me to ne povuče da ne ostanem bez profesije. Moj ulazak u arhitektonsko pisanje je bilo jedna rubrika u *Borbi* koja se zvala “Mali urbanizam”. Pisana je ironično, za inat velikim urbanizmima, to je bio podtekst. Veliki urbaniisti su pisali redakciji da to stvara zabunu kod ljudi: “Bogdanović, to su neke njegove ideje, mi moramo graditi socijalističke

gradove...”. A ja sam pisao o svemu i svačemu, pisao sam o fasadama, bog zna kakve sam poeme pravio na trulim fasadama, o krovovima, o podrumima, o pticama.

GRIMMER: Da li biste mogli nešto reći o dijelu vašeg života poslije Beograda. Što u vašem profesionalnom i umjetničkom životu znači period od 90-ih godina kada ste došli u Beč?

BOGDANOVIĆ: Tu negdje pred 90-te i 90-ih živjeli smo u velikom strahu. Stambolićeva kćerka je bila ubijena, a i Stambolić je bio predviđen za ubojstvo, što se na kraju i dogodilo. Premda je on bio veliki optimist, bio je ovdje i uvjeravao me: “Ajde, vrati se u Beograd, nemoj se bojati”. Totalno nije bio svjestan; to je velika tragedija i strašna priča. To je kruna ludila i užasa. Mislim, cijela ta priča, kako je sve to izvedeno, prosto, ne volim pričati o tome, ne volim se prisjećati. Život u Beču mi je korigirao jednu veliku zabludu, a to je da ja bez Beograda ne postojim. To je tako lijepo demantirano, znate. Poslije sam često razmišljao što bi bilo da sam se otkacio ranije; ne znam što bi bilo. Po Europi spomenike sigurno ne bih radio. Biroi su biro, naš posao ima i lijepe strane, ali i teške, mučne i tragične strane... ¶

IZVORNO OBJAVLJENO U ČASOPISU ZA ARHITEKTURU I KULTURU »ORIS« VIII – 41 – 06



bogdan bogdanović / cities are beings

Stambene kuće
Instituta za
hidrotehniku
'Jaroslav Černi', Avala,
Beograd / Apartment
houses for the
Hydrotechnical
Institute 'Jaroslav
Černi', Avala,
Belgrade • 1952–1954.

instead a biography

GRIMMER: If we were to introduce you, we would find ourselves in quite a quandary because you have four biographies – you are an architect, visual artist, writer, politician. Do you have a hierarchy in that sense?

BOGDANOVIĆ: I have always thought of it as a whole. My personality was composite so everything could be harmonized. I have often thought about hierarchy. First of all, I am an architect, somewhat a writer, somewhat an artist and very little a politician. But that very little was intense. However, I did not like the politics, I was a politician because of the situation at that time, I simply felt I should be one. I reacted according to my temperament, the counter reactions soon followed.

From the earliest age, Bogdan Bogdanović entered the world of art in the house of his father, the famous literary critic and theatre director Milan Bogdanović, where he met Miroslav Krleža at the age of seven. The circle of Belgrade surrealist around Marko Ristić decisively determined his personal style in three media – monument architecture, drawing and literature. In his artistic as well political life, Bogdanović never went the easy way, but always swam against the current...

INTERVIEWED BY VERA GRIMMER
IN VIENNA, MAY 29, 2006

GRIMMER: As a professor of urbanism you stood up for other qualities, not pragmatic, “useful” urbanism. You stood up against the urbanism of quantity. However, the factors that determined your professional path are certainly much more complex.

BOGDANOVIĆ: I applied to be an assistant lecturer at the Chair of Urbanism because at the time when I graduated, architecture in Yugoslavia was poor, with only two types of windows, so my previous fantasies could not have fitted into this poor, ostensibly functional architecture. My studies began before the war, I went to study architecture from a surrealist milieu. I even made a program and titled it *Vers une architecture surealiste*, paraphrasing Corbusier. I wanted to create surrealist architecture, and that had to involve willing clients, such as the case with the house for Tristan Tzara. During the

war, I had fun with Marko Ristić by ostensibly designing a silly house for him, where you could slide from the upper floor to the lower one, full of surprises. If it were possible, that is how I would have made architecture. In my circle, we were all surrealists and left-oriented, and when our leftist society arrived, we saw that surrealist exhibitions were not going to happen. In despair, I decided to go for urbanism because it was in a way a scientific discipline.

But the radical change in my life occurred when I won the competition for the monument to Jewish victims in Belgrade. All of a sudden, a new world of symbols and comparative meanings opened. That is when I started to think in strata terms. I am a modern architect, but I can also think in a non-contemporary way. My first houses on Avala near Belgrade from the early 50s were full of reminiscence. My friend was an engineer at the Hydro-technical Institute, so these houses were intended for their employees. They could have easily been somewhere in the Mediterranean, but I did not think they would look Mediterranean when I built them. They were built in the old fashioned way, completely made of stone. The houses were surreal, but were not widely approved of in my profession, since everybody was so modern, modern to the bone. They barely managed to detach from social realism, and then somebody comes along to do the same thing again. But they did not understand the surrealist basis.

GRIMMER: Surrealism has been subversively present for many centuries now – from Hieronimus Bosch or the amazing chambers of Mannerism, all the way to Breton’s movement. It is a little bit suppressed, but today is perhaps the time when it is resurfacing again, when people are again interested in it, because in the totally regulated time of globalization and profit, there is again a need for certain anarchy.

BOGDANOVIĆ: I would like to see your prediction come true. However, it does not matter now, but then again it does. I have always thought that surrealism draws deep roots from history, history of art, history of civilization. I suppose that the true surrealists of that time would not mind. Surrealism is a continuation of romanticism.

GRIMMER: Bretonian surrealism was also enriched in the context of the development of psychoanalysis.

BOGDANOVIĆ: You should accept this as an arbitrary play of words, but psychoanalysis draws its roots from romanticism. Perhaps it is absurd for me to say that, but it seems to be so.

GRIMMER: Surely you can argue this.

BOGDANOVIĆ: To penetrate the lower layers, deep down, just take romanticist literature and surrealism – Freudianism came out of this spiritual state.

GRIMMER: Perhaps it came to be from the illness of time.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Yes, from the illness of time Freud drew his great speculation. It is a completely different matter how much it

helped the unfortunate. But it was great as a speculation.

GRIMMER: Perhaps it would be interesting to find out something from your experience with the surrealist circle.

BOGDANOVIĆ: You cannot speak of the moment I was accepted into the surrealist society without giving an overview of the moral and literary situation in Yugoslavia at that time. Surrealism was from Belgrade, but inseparable from Krleža. Krleža did not like surrealism, but wasn’t allowed to admit it. They adored him, and he had a very good relationship with them. Due to this phase and his associating with the surrealists, he made it onto the Communist Party’s black list, I think he was never forgiven for this, but this was always suppressed. There was a circle of Bretonian surrealists around Marko Ristić, Dušan Matić and Aleksandar Vučo, and there was another surrealist group that was not Bretonian, but Aragonian, who were Stalinist. From the Belgrade surrealist group later emerged excellent generals in the revolution – Koča Popović and others.

To be precise, I think Popović was a secret Bretonian. The Party merely tolerated such views. But he remained a surrealist to the bone, to the last breath. When I was mayor, I met him in a situation when he was proscribed. I invited him to a medal awards ceremony, and he showed up all panicking. You have to know that I as mayor pulled various stunts because I had Ivan Stambolić

to watch my back. I saw that he showed up, was reluctant to sit down, looking to sit in the front row, then giving up... I stood up and the whole conference hall went silent. I came to him and asked him to sit by me. “I’d love that,” he said. We sat down, the silence grew deeper, and then there was a round of applause for Koča Popović.

GRIMMER: Your drawings of these fantastic creatures – creatures and houses at the same time, in a way they remind me of oneiric creatures of Max Ernst.

BOGDANOVIĆ: You guessed it right, Max Ernst is my idol. Not Picasso, Picasso is powerful, but Ernst was much closer to me.

GRIMMER: If we look at your monuments, for example, Ernst also has such sculptures, for example the sculpture *Capricorn*, made of concrete with metal applications.

BOGDANOVIĆ: I think there was something Ernst-like in the things I made as a constructor, in those monumental structures, without me even noticing it. I always thought it legitimate to use the things I understand and feel in my processing.

GRIMMER: One of the topics important to you is the city as such, the *urbs* you see very comprehensively, that you think should be comprehended with all senses. I remember the nice text in which you write about Bologna as a city from whose deep backyards comes freshness, about Venice as a lady past its prime with lipstick on. That again is the associative side of things.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Well, I hypostasized cities, they were beings for me, and as such they attracted me. Everybody thought I was a little bit wacky for telling such stories. Very soon I realized that urbanism is full of mafia and political traps, that you stumble over the interests of the underground. I always tried to distance myself from all that in running this urbanism, I was in the situation where I was elected as assistant professor. I then changed the title of the course – not Urbanism but Urbanology. I was free to think about the city without practical urbanism. And practical urbanism is a dark affair, whether you like it or not, it is politics. It was greatly felt in socialism as well.

GRIMMER: How did you treat your students during your pedagogical years? Did you treat them as equals in discussion, or was it all *ex cathedra*?

BOGDANOVIĆ: It was never *ex cathedra*. I never held the same lecture twice. Professors always carry scripts around with them, read from them. I improvised. My lectures were just like this interview. Very soon I stopped grading my students, to the horror of my colleagues. Whoever heard something from me, heard it. Now, were they able to use something from me, I don't know, but I did not want to give recipes what to do and think. Besides, urbanology is a treat. Anyone who wants to see and hear something, can. Perhaps they will not be able to apply it, that is, they certainly will not. I was always the epicentre of indiscipline, I always tried to be interesting.

GRIMMER: In that sense you mention “philosophical”



Partizanska akro-nekropola u Mostaru /
Partisan acro-necropolis in Mostar • 1959–1965.

‘Partizanska nekropola je bila Mostar u malom, replika grada na Neretvi, njegov idealni dijagram.’

walks with your students through different hidden corners of the city.

BOGDANOVIĆ: That was a great pleasure for me, as a citizen of Belgrade, and especially for the students, this discovery of the city. Those were the generations that came from outside. This crawling into cellars, climbing onto attics, discussions with various “original types” in bars. Many topics were discussed, we just took care not to discuss politics.

GRIMMER: In the book *Zaludna mistrija* – the book on the brotherhood of futile and tragic constructors – Palladio, Borromini, Piranesi, Gaudi, you speak about the notion of internal architecture.

BOGDANOVIĆ: *Zaludna mistrija*, it is a capital book, and it brought too many complications. They said, “What is he writing, he should be teaching how to build cities, how to build socialist towns.” The notion of internal architecture was thought of ironically. I am mocking a little the vocabulary of my trade in that definition cycle so let me say what internal architecture is. Internal architecture is in me, how much I made myself and how much I helped someone to make themselves etc. In that notional cycle, the word internal architecture has an esoteric meaning.

GRIMMER: We have already discussed another great field of yours, monument construction. If we take into account the time you made it in, and if we recall the various monumental complexes and sculpture of that time, then your work is something that is diametrically opposite. You did not create works that command

‘Partisan necropolis was a model of Mostar, the city on the river Neretva, its ideal diagram.’

respect or even fear, these were always kingdoms you enter, you go through, and spend the entire day in.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Yes, that is it. In the end, they cannot but to connect it to surrealism. How was it even possible for these monuments to be made, why were these monuments even being made, why did I receive orders? At a certain moment, when we had already been completely through with the Russians, monumental architecture was still dominated by the Soviet model – fist, energy, the future etc. And then comes a darker older guy who starts to do things differently, with choreography, ballet. And the head of the Party agreed to everything I did, just to break loose from the Soviet model. It was not easy. The grand masters could not break loose from it. And then there was something else... I do not believe now that it affected orders, I did not charge any money for the monuments. I strictly covered my costs. I had to have a car because of all the travelling, I needed something to support the students who were helping me, to buy the material, I charged correctly. There were no real fees. I would have paid them to do what I was doing... Once I was approached in Vienna by a not so young person who told me, “I come from Mostar. I don’t know how to tell you, but I was conceived on one of your monuments.” I received that as a great compliment. I recalled that similar things were done in Greece, making it an ancient event.

GRIMMER: You have a special relation with

ancient times. Your capitals combine antiquity with surrealism, if I can put it that way.

BOGDANOVIĆ: This whole series of capitals was created by me turning the volutes upside down, creating a completely new system, a new aesthetics. There are a lot of them. The *Book of Capitals* has hundreds of them.

GRIMMER: Antiquity seems very close to you, in philosophical terms and in its entire cultural complex.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Everything was close to me – you saw that I did not hesitate to steal from Dalmatia and transfer it to the center of Belgrade (houses on Avala, 1952).

GRIMMER: Are there any names or periods that defined you specifically?

BOGDANOVIĆ: When you are bitten by the surrealism bug early in your youth, then it had to go like it went with me, there was no return to the classic grading of ideas.

GRIMMER: In your comprehensive and non-hierarchical approach to the city and certain architectural elements that make it, you can read an entire city from only one building, like for example from the St. Charles Church in Vienna.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Yes, I was completely overwhelmed by it, the St. Charles Church is one of my landmarks, and you know who introduced me to that church – Krleža. He told me it was brilliant and that I should see it. I think it was him who gave me this initial idea to start exploring, to consider the entire building as a metaphor. It epitomizes the



Memorijalni park za žrtve fašizma u Vukovaru / Memorial Park for the victims of fascism in Vukovar • 1978–1980.

entire human notion of architecture. You know, it is very important that once in a while somebody tells you something incidentally that later turns out to be quite important. I took Krleža to see a Jewish monument. I think he was a little bit amazed, because he kept saying, “Weird, bizarre, bizarre, bizarre...”.

GRIMMER: Why was it bizarre to him?

BOGDANOVIĆ: He was bizarre. I was pleased that he was not left indifferent by it. In the poor and miserable socialist architecture of Belgrade, in the emptiness and trouble, as it seemed to me then, even the word “bizarre” sounded like a symphony.

GRIMMER: You won the competition for that monument.

BOGDANOVIĆ: I was invited to that competition. It is a long story. I came back from the war. I was in combat very briefly but I managed to get myself shot through the left hip. I was really in combat, and I truly got what I needed. I was invited, but I was not very much pleased by it because I thought I was going to do some real architecture, I never thought I would be doing a monument. Time went by and not a single idea crossed my mind. I met the eager colleague who recommended me for the competition. He said, “I hear you are working,” and I was reluctant to admit I was not. When he asked what my idea was, I started lying, “You know, the Jewish cemetery and the tree-lined boulevard creates a certain perspective as it goes along,” and then I said, “followed by



Spomenik palim borcima – Čuvarima slobode na Klisu kraj Splita / Monument for the fallen members of antifascist resistance, Guardians of Freedom, on Klis near Split • 1982–1987. • Razmontiran 1996. godine / Dismantled in 1996.

anti-perspective”. At that moment I just said, “Bye, I have to leave now”. He was puzzled. And I went home and put it to paper. And I think this was the greatest moral in my life that in architecture actual ideas are often very much verbal, I think that Loos said that good architecture can be explained with words. A whole new world opened to me after that. All of a sudden, when I realized that it can be done, I began exploring Kabbalah, Jewish mysticism, and then I realized that there is another amazing world I have not touched yet. From the moment when this perspective and anti-perspective was born from a play of words, I started and very quickly completed the project.

GRIMMER: Can richness of words generate richness of form?

BOGDANOVIĆ: Absolutely. I would be lying if I said that I always whisper something to myself when I am drawing. But perhaps I am not lying. For me, words and forms always overlap in architecture. Very often I wrote things on my drawings in unknown languages, unknown symbols.

GRIMMER: Where did this come from? The subconscious?

BOGDANOVIĆ: Completely automatically, but I do not know whether it meant something to me at that moment, probably it did.

GRIMMER: Lately you have been much more oriented to writing.

BOGDANOVIĆ: Basically, I never stopped writing. The thing is that my father was a literary critic and my mother a professor of literature. They were in such a panic, they were concerned that I could become a writer because they knew a lot of them. They were concerned that I would get drawn into it and lose my job. My entry into architectural writing was in a section of *Borba* called “Little urbanism”. It was written ironically, to spite big urbanism, that was its subtext. Big urbanists wrote letters to the editors that it greatly confused people. “Bogdanović has his ideas, but we have to build socialist towns...” And I wrote about many things, I wrote about façades, wrote God knows what kinds of poems about deteriorating façades, roofs, basements, birds...

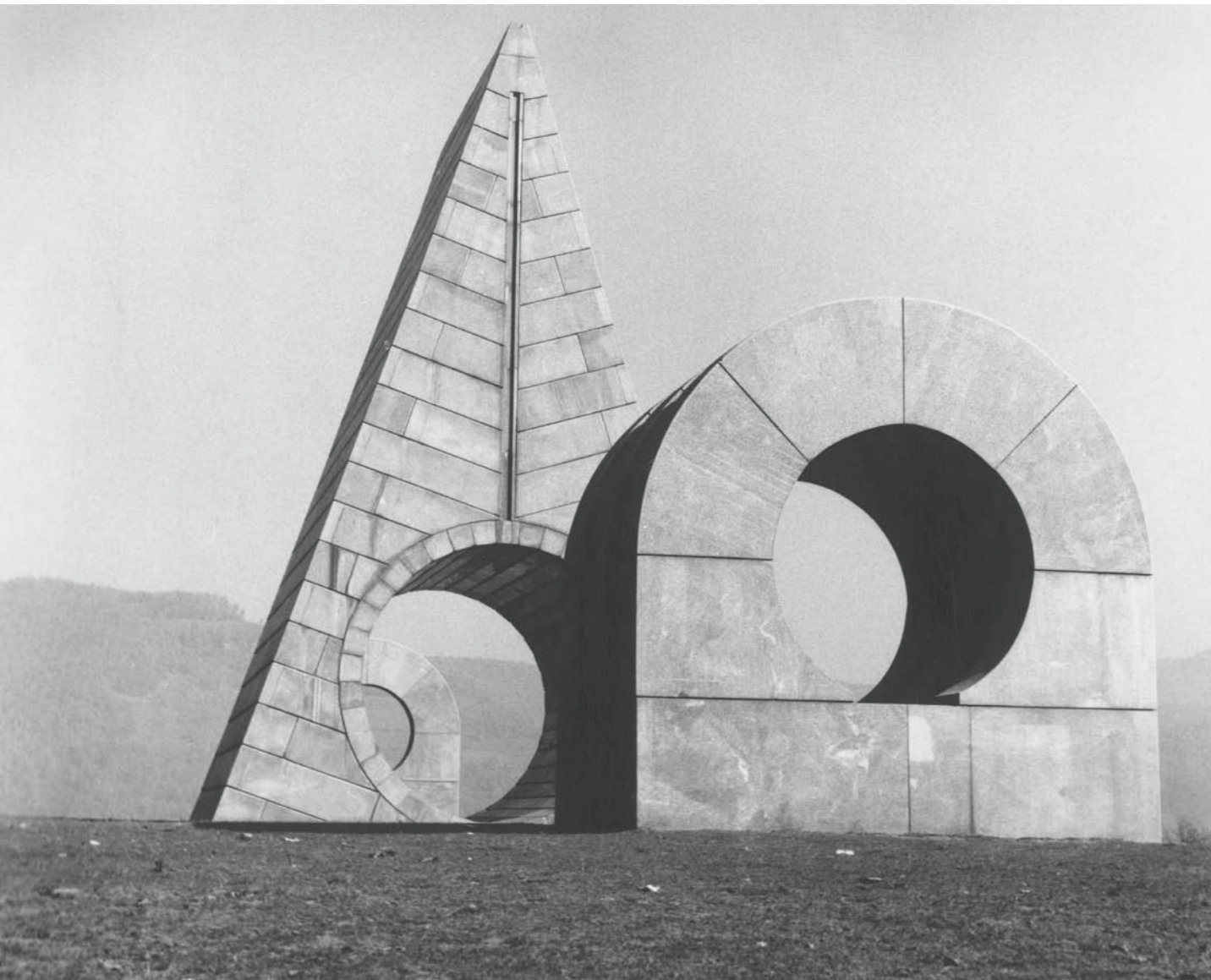
GRIMMER: Can you say something about your life after Belgrade? What did your coming to Vienna in the 1990s mean in a professional and artistic sense?

BOGDANOVIĆ: We were living in great fear around the 1990s. Stambolić’s daughter was murdered, and Stambolić’s murder was also plotted, and eventually it happened. He was a great optimist though, he used to come here trying to persuade me to return to Belgrade, without fear. He was totally unaware of the situation, it is a great tragedy and a horrific story.

That is the height of madness and horror. I mean, the way this entire story turned out, how simple, I really do not like talking about it and recalling it. Living in Vienna corrected a great delusion in my life, and that is that I cannot exist without Belgrade. That idea was so nicely rejected, you know. Later I often thought what would have happened if I had gone crazy earlier. I cannot tell. I surely would not have been building monuments around Europe. Offices are offices, our job has its nice sides, but also darker, painful and tragic sides. ¶

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Popina kod Trstenika
Ratnički mauzolej / Warrior's
Mausoleum • 1979–1981.



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arhitekture u Malom Popoviću
/ Village School for Philosophy
of Architecture in Mali Popović

bogdan bogdanović
ukleti neimar / the doomed architect

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