

The Urban Landscape of Sarajevo

Recovering Trebević Mountain



View from Trebević mountain to the Sarajevo valley

“‘Landscape’ means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.

...(This convention) concerns landscapes that might be considered outstanding as well as everyday or degraded landscapes...

....Each Party undertakes (measures) to increase awareness among the civil society, private organisations, and public authorities of the value of landscapes, their role and changes to them...”

European Landscape Convention, Florence, 2000

Background

Sarajevo is possibly one of the few cities in Europe where city and landscape are almost symbiotic. The mountains surrounding this urbanised valley are omnipresent and strongly shape the cities' morphology. Sarajevo is easily readable by its topography: Starting from the medieval nucleus, the former provincial capital of the Ottoman Empire, embraced by a soft arc of hills with the former fortress rock at the eastern end. Moving to the west, where the valley gets wider, the urban extension of the Austro-Hungarian period continues and transforms slowly into the linear urban landscape of the second half of the 20th century when the city was part of the socialist republic of Yugoslavia.

The loss of state-controlled planning after Bosnian independence and the fall of socialism led to uncontrolled sprawl development in particular on the hill slopes surrounding the linear urban fabric. The topography is thus both a blessing and a curse: the natural limits force uncontrolled urban development onto the slopes which is a highly unsustainable process from various aspects.



Trebević mountain seen from Ciglane settlement in the city centre

The Site: Trebević Mountain

Trebević is Sarajevo's landmark mountain. With its height of around 1600 metres the hill is visible from almost everywhere in the city. It directly faces the old town central market, the historical and cultural core of Sarajevo. The potential of this vicinity has been used for quite a long period. While the Ottoman rulers regarded the mountain primarily as a wood resource the Austrian government, after taking over the power at the end of the 19th century, started a reforestation programme. A system of pathways and roads was built as well as an observatory and even a mountain hotel.



Panoramic restaurant Vidikovac in the 1970's and Trebević cable car after inauguration in 1959

<http://sarajevo.co.ba/pustena-u-saobracaj-uspinjaca-sarajevo-Trebević>

<https://kathermackey326.wordpress.com>

Sarajevo saw important urban developments in its role as provincial capital in a young socialist republic. A cable car connecting the city centre with Trebević Mountain was installed as early as 1959. The cable car led half way on the mountain where also a panoramic restaurant, nicely embedded into the landscape, was built. Based on this infrastructure, exploring the landscape and nature of Trebević Mountain became a common and regular experience for almost

every citizen. The public awareness of Trebević culminated with the 1984 Winter Olympics when the cable car brought hundreds of international guests to the hill where a part of the games was organised. Some infrastructure elements of this time, in particular the famous bob sleigh, are still existing, yet in a miserable condition.



Remnants of the Olympic bob sleigh

The hill had its darkest time during the Bosnian civil war from 1992 to 1995 and the siege of Sarajevo during which the topography of the city played again a crucial role. Shelling of the city was practically organised from Trebević hill and the adjacent mountain chains which turned the mental image of this landscape upside down. The connectivity to the hill got lost when the cable car was destroyed. But more importantly, the hill was absolutely inaccessible because of landmines placed at the former front lines. This prevented any attempt for recovering the site during the first post-war decade. Today, the hill is crossed by the frontier separating the two Bosnian entities which is both an administrative and a political challenge. Mine fields have recently been declared as cleared which is of course the basis for any future oriented activities. In 2014 the part of the hill belonging to the canton of Sarajevo was declared as protected area.



Panoramic restaurant Vidikovac today after its destruction during civil war

Topics the site evokes

1 Landscape and nature protection

Trebević has unique qualities as a habitat for flora and fauna. Different landscape units can be identified following the transition from city to nature: peri-urban gardens and orchards, pastures, meadows, woodlands, gloves, rocks. A rural landscape with traditional agricultural patterns extends at the other side of the hilltop beyond the entity boundary. Landscape fragmentation is still low. From this perspective, concepts are needed that:

- ...secure and enhance the natural foundations, in particular water, soil, flora and fauna
- ...integrate aspects of landscape and nature protection into other sectors with competing interests, in particular recreation and tourism, forestry, agriculture, infrastructure development and urban planning
- ...find innovative ways of boosting small-scale local economy with activities related to landscape and nature protection

2 Recreation, leisure and tourism

Trebević looks back at hundred years of tourism and recreation activities. But this tradition was forced to stop all at once with the civil war. Now, 20 years after, with the minefields being cleared, the time has come to reconnect to the pre-war connotation of this mountain. Concepts are needed that:

- ...identify the potential of this area for recreation and tourism and define which activities are possible and desirable
- ...design connectivity in this field between the town, the mountain and its rural hinterland
- ...identify what would be the spatial consequences of those activities
- ...outline a sustainable concept by integrating adjacent, partly competing, sectors

3 Architecture, infrastructure, heritage and landscape

Adding architecture or infrastructure elements to a site as exposed as Trebević is a challenge. Sensitive design approaches are required based on a profound contextual and topographic understanding. If Trebević will regain its function as a local recreation area, new functions will need to be integrated. This could be either a redevelopment of the former, now ruined, elements (like the observatory, the bob sleigh or the panoramic restaurant) or the integration of totally new elements.

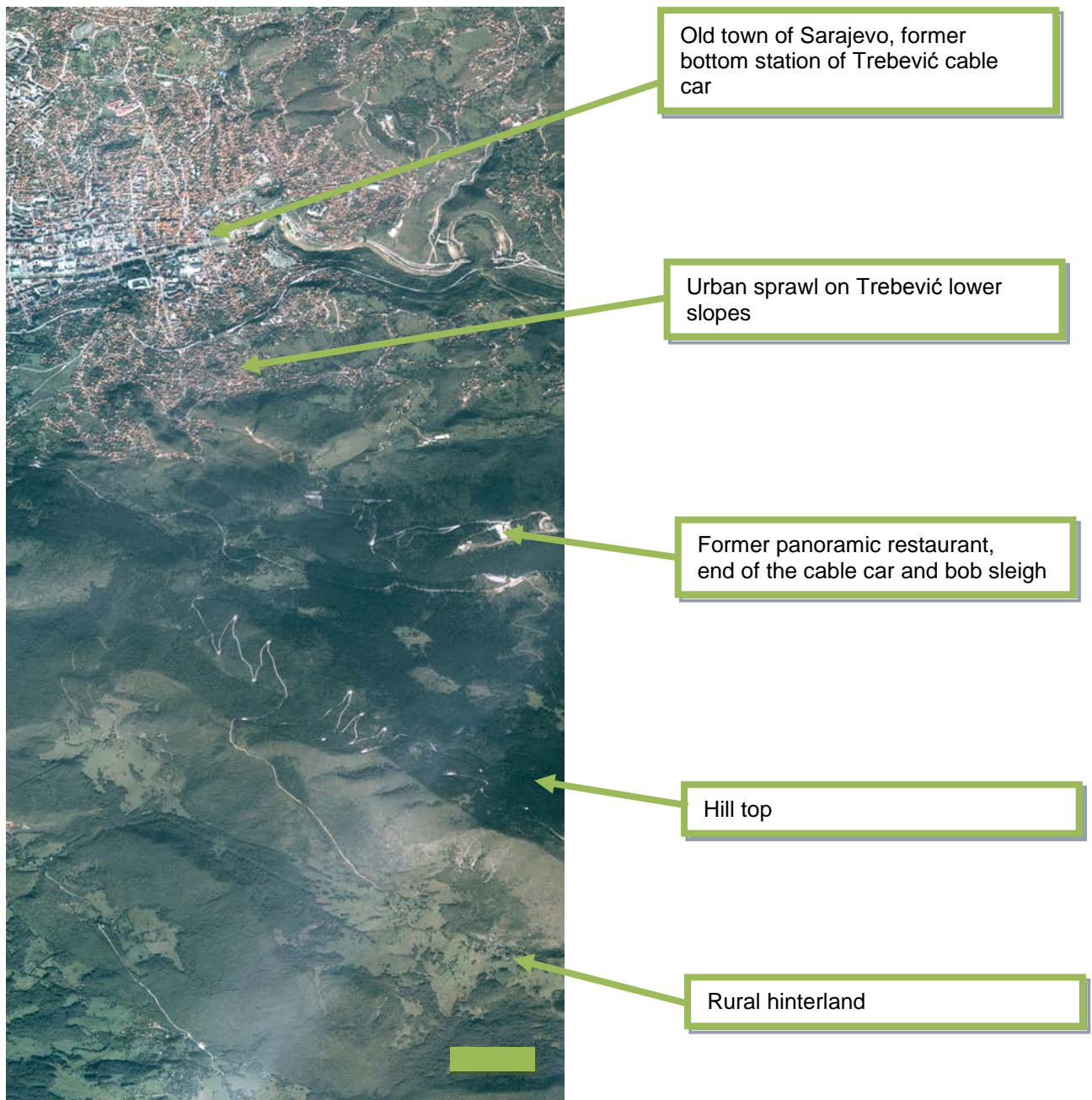
In any case, concepts are needed that:

- ...consider the positioning of architecture in relation to the landscape context of the site and the entire city
- ...consider the dialogue of architecture with a natural environment and the transition between both
- ...link local architectural interventions consistently to a general concept
- ...are sustainable

4 Governance, cooperation and reconciliation

Trebević has been a landscape unit since the Devonian period. As a legacy of the recent civil war the mountain is now divided into two different entities with different planning instruments and governance practices. Can Trebević become again a unifying element of which many people can profit, on both sides of the entity division line? From this perspective, concepts are needed that:

-envision an innovative governance model for the entire area of Trebević mountain
-identify the potentials of such an approach for the local economy and sustainable regional development



Project Phases + Outputs

1 Preparation Phase: 20.05. – 22.05.2015, 2 ECTS

The working groups will be mixed between the institutions and the groups will already be formed in advance to the site visit.

Readings

A number of preparatory and accompanying readings will be made available via the ILIAS website.

Thematic Analysis

This activity will start as a collaborative desk research and continue on site. Each working group will analyse a specific theme/feature. This information will be brought together on the third workshop day in the form of a plenary presentation. Analytical data will be shared afterwards.

The following 10 themes will be distributed among the teams:

1. The wider context: landscape units, peri-urban patterns and transition zones
2. Land use change in the last 100 years, history of the area: are there any traditions or historic events/images that could have a role in the planning?
3. The built environment – typologies and tendencies, incl. monuments, legal framework + current policy objectives
4. Traffic infrastructure and patterns of movement, (status quo and plans)
5. Water bodies + water system
6. Biotopes – flora, fauna + natural monuments, trees, local climate
7. Agriculture, gardens + meadows
8. People + behaviour patterns, quality of life and socioeconomic data
9. Industrial uses + technical infrastructure
10. Visual appearance: landmarks, structures, patterns, topography, borders, connections and limits

In addition, the individual, subjective perception – the sense of place – should feed into the analysis and become part of this output. During this analytical phase, drawings, images, videos, topographical maps and GIS data are to be used in an integrated way. Drivers-Response models can be used for presenting analysis findings.

2 Core Phase on Site: 25.05. – 07.06.2015, 6 ECTS

Output 1: Landscape Assessment and Analysis of Driving Forces

The thematic analysis started during the online phase will be continued and refined on the basis of site observations. A group presentation will be held by mid of the first workshop week.

Output 2: Building a guiding concept

After bringing together the different analysis themes each group will decide on a focus theme and work on a guiding concept for Trebevic mountain as a whole. The ideas will be presented in an interim plenary at the end of week one.

Output 3: Translation to the site and visualisation

During the second week each group will be free to design their own work programme in accordance with the guiding concept identified. Three levels of specification can be distinguished: strategic, territorial or site specific. Practically, groups may decide to focus on one of them or use mixed approaches depending on the constellation of interests and the detailing area selected. All projects need to include a sustainability model in which aspects of governance, finance and participation are outlined.

3 Documentation Phase: 08.06. – 31.07.2015, 2 ECTS

Reworking and refining of project outputs for the printed documentation.

Repository link with project data:

https://ilias.hfwu.de/goto.php?target=cat_11208&client_id=hfwu

Username: *IP-Periphery*

Password: *Bucharest_2013*

