

ANA ACESKA

Dissertation working title: “Metamorphoses of the square (plaza) in a divided city: the case of Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina”

The pivots of Aceska’s research are the changes of the everyday practices of “boundary-making” in the use of public space in the city of Mostar (Bosnia-Herzegovina) that took place after the ethnic wars in 1992-95, when the town experienced a transition from a territory of urban cohabitation to a post-war divided city. The foci are the two central squares on the two sides of the city: Rondo Square (West/Croat/Catholic Mostar) and Musala Square (East/Bosniak/Muslim Mostar), while the period of concern is Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav Mostar. “Boundary” implies that city dwellers and analysts alike perceive the actors, practices and meanings of one territory of influence (such as the sitting areas of Croat teenagers in front Zrinjski Park in Rodno Square) as different from the actors, practices and meanings of another territory that lies outside of the first. The project is based on a 15-month field research conducted in the city of Mostar from April 2007 to June 2008 and the main research question is defined as follows: How do city dwellers in their everyday practices make use of public space and the built environment in the processes of “boundary making” in post-war times?