

Research Article

TWO EXAMPLES OF CONTEMPORARY MOSQUES IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA BY ARCHITECT AHMET HADROVIC

* Ahmet Hadrovic

Faculty of Architecture, University of Sarajevo, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Received 21th August 2021; Accepted 24th September 2021; Published online 31th October 2021

ABSTRACT

The author had his first encounter with the design task of the mosque in 1986, when he was visited by a group of people (the building committee of the mosque in Solun on the Krivaja river) to design the mosque. For the author, winning the first prize at the All-Yugoslav Architectural Competition for the Islamic Center project in Rijeka, Republic of Croatia (1991), meant entering the world of architecture, in the former Bosnia and Herzegovina and the former Yugoslavia. Regardless of the fact that the war in Croatia (1991-1995) and in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995) fundamentally changed the socio-political situation, this award opened the door to all later mosque projects done by the author. Working on the All-Yugoslav architectural competition for the project of the Islamic Center in Rijeka (1991), the author met all the important mosques in Sarajevo, Mostar and Banja Luka and the Sherefudin (White) mosque in Visoko, which was rebuilt (1980) on the site of the old mosque (1447). The projects of most mosques were done by the author (as winning solutions) through the institution of a call for tenders. Apart from the fact that the mosques presented here are "modern" (built in 1999 and 2006), they reflect the modern moment of life in Bosnia and Herzegovina: the contents of the mosque and the spatial solution (the mosque is not only a "place of worship" but a place of worship and place of complex social life), construction, materialization, overall design and design of certain traditional elements of the mosque (dome, minaret, mihrab, mimmer...). Mosques have acquired the character of a true genius loci of a more or less wider city area, and according to some manifestations.

Keywords: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Breza, Novi Travnik, contemporary mosque.

INTRODUCTION

From the beginning of human existence, religion follows man as a more or less ordered system of beliefs and practical actions with which he determines his place in the world (in space). In its many forms¹, the common feature of all religions is man's belief that outside of him, beyond his powers, there is something stronger than him, something that governs segments of his life, segments of his natural and social environment, and the entire universe [11, 12, 13]. Although religion (belief) can be "carried within itself" in such a way that no one from the outside has insight into it, over time, various ways of its formal manifestation have been established, including the construction of special buildings for this purpose [15, 16, 17, 18]. Over time, these buildings (temples) became symbols of individual religions, larger or smaller social communities and even entire cultural, artistic and historical epochs. Some of them today are masterpieces of architecture (or culture in general) that had a huge impact on the architecture of temples of peoples and cultures that came later, as well as the influence of architecture in general: Kaba in Mecca (Saudi Arabia), Stonehenge (England, around 2200 pK), Ziggurat in Ur-Namm (former Mesopotamia, c. 2113-2096 pK), Temple in Karnak (Egypt, 20th din., 12th century pK), Temple of Queen Hatshepsut (Egypt, 18th din., C. 1500 BC), several temples on the Acropolis in Athens (second half of the 5th century BC), the Maya pyramid in Tikal (Guatemala, 4th century BC), the Pantheon in Rome (120-128), the Basilica of the Nativity Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem (333), Hagia Sophia in Istanbul (532-537), Hripsime in Ejmiatsin (Armenia, 618), Bete Giyorgis (St. George's Church) in Lalibela (Ethiopia, 12-13th century), Dome of the Rock Mosque,

Jerusalem (691), Borobudur Temple in Java (Indonesia, 780-850), Grand Mosque in Cordoba (Spain, 785), Angkor Temple in Cambodia (802), Great Mosque in Samar and (Iraq, 852), Tyagaraja Temple in Tiruvurur (India, 11th century), Sviatoyi Sofiyi Cathedral in Kiev (Ukraine, 1037), Sofia Cathedral in Novgorod (Russia, 1045-1052), Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris (12. century), Stave Church in Borgund (Norway, 1150), Cathedral of Amiens (France, 1220), Cathedral of Cologne (Kölner Dom, Germany, 1322), Temple of St. Basil in Moscow (1555-1560), Basilica of Saint Peter in Rome (1593-1626), Mosque of Sultan Selim II in Edirne (Jedren, Turkey, 1568-1574) ... Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a consequence of its geopolitical position, was at the crossroads of human and socio-historical trends, where practically all major world cultures have left their traces [7]. Along with other traces of architecture, traces of temples from different historical epochs have been more or less preserved here. Roman veterans brought to this area (from the 3rd century to 78 BC) the belief (respect) of Roman deities (Jupiter, Juno, Fortuna ...) as well as respect for the ancient Persian deity Sun-Mitros [1]. The remains of the mitreum, temples in the part of Mitros, were found in Potoci near Mostar, in Lisicici near Konjic and in Konjic itself. The first traces of Christianity in Bosnia and Herzegovina date from the 4th century: oratories in Vidoštak near Stolac and Borac near Vitina, and early Christian churches in Mogorjelo, Zitomislci, Tasovcici near Capljina, Varvara near Prozor and Lisicici near Konjic. We should also mention the visible remains of the late antique basilica on Crkvina (archeological area) in Breza (6th century), the late antique basilica in Cim (archeological area), Mostar (5-6th century), the late antique basilica in Oborci (archeological area) near Donji Vakuf (5-6 centuries) ... After the collapse of the Western Roman Empire (476), the Eastern Goths (493) invaded Bosnia, led by Theodoric. They remained here until 535, until the Byzantine invasion. During the twenty-year war between Byzantium and the Goths, the Slavs invaded Bosnia on two occasions (around 548 and 551-553). Around 598, the Avars also invaded and practically

¹The general systematization of religion recognizes its two main types: primitive religions and world religions. Primitive religions include animism and supernaturalism, and world religions include theisms and systems of abstract beliefs. Theisms include Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism, while abstract beliefs include Taoism and Buddhism.

devastated Bosnia. Architectural objects whose remains (as archeological areas) have been preserved to this day can be dated: Late Antique Basilica on Crkvina in Breza (6th century), Late Antique Basilica in Cim, Mostar (5-6th century), Late Antique Basilica in Oborci near Donji Vakuf (5-6 centuries) ... In the period from 1154 to 1163, Bosnia was ruled by the first known ban of Bosnia-Borič [4, 5]. Since then, along with Christians, Bogumils have been mentioned, whose religion, tradition and cultural heritage will especially distinguish Bosnia and, we would say, trace its identity [4, 5]. The Bogumils were labeled as heretics by both the Eastern and Western Christian churches, and as such were subjected to constant pressure and frequent physical persecution and executions. Despite everything, they showed amazing vitality and perseverance in their belief. Their mass, voluntary, acceptance of Islam with the arrival of the Ottoman administration on the territory of today's Bosnia and Herzegovina, is a phenomenon that should be considered as a key fact in illuminating and understanding the later history of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to this day [3, 5]. Popes: Gregory VII (1015-1085), Inacencius III (1160 or 1161-1216), Honorius III (1150-1227), Gregory IX (1145 or before 1170-1241) and Innocentius IV (1195-1254) have been waging wars against the Bogomils continuously. The arrival of the Franciscans in Bosnia in 1235 should also be viewed in this light: to ... "help the dark-skinned bishop to suppress the patherian heresy" [4, 5]. Among the most famous religious buildings of medieval Bosnia are:

- Churches: Coronation and burial church of Bosnian kings (archeological area of Mile), Arnautovići near Visoko (13th-14th centuries), Church of the Mother of God in Olovo (14th century), Church of St. George in Sopotnica near Gorazde (15th century), Church of St. Ivo in Podmilačje (before 1461), Church of St. Peter and Paul, with a cemetery, judges' chairs, a courtyard and a wall in Ošanići (before 1505), the Old Church of Vareš (Small Church dedicated to St. Michael) in Vareš (16th century),
- Catholic monasteries: Around 1385, 35 monasteries were built on the territory of today's Bosnia and Herzegovina, four of which were in part of Bosnia (Franciscan monasteries in Visoko, Lašva, Kraljeva Sutjeska and Olovo). The most famous part of Herzegovina is the Franciscan monastery Gorica, Livno (14th century),
- Orthodox monasteries: Manastir Moštanica, near Bosanska Dubica (1113), Manastir Dobričevo near Bileća (1232), Manastir Sase (1242), Manastir Tavna near Bijeljina (13th century), Manastir Zavala near Trebinje (13th century), Dobrun Monastery near Visegrad (1383), Gomionica Monastery (15th century), Rmanj Monastery in Martin Brod (1440), Zitomislići Monastery near Capljina (15th century).

With the capture of the royal city of Jajce in 1463, the Ottomans became the new masters of the area of today's Bosnia and Herzegovina [6, 7]. It is not without significance to point out that the Ottomans found almost completely Bogumil Bosnia, about which V. Klaić writes in the History of Bosnia: ... "After the death of King Stjepan Dabisa (1395), dark days arose in Bosnia for the Catholic Church. The throne struggles and incursions of the Turks made the patorian faith feel strange and almost prevailed in their country..." [1]. Most Bogomils accepted Islam as their religion. From the 15th century until today, four main religions have existed in Bosnia and Herzegovina: "Western Christianity" (mainly Catholicism and to a lesser extent Protestantism), "Eastern Christianity" (Orthodoxy), Islam and Judaism. There was a period of exceptional life harmony of people of different religious affiliations, but also a period of discord (generated by political influences from outside, outside Bosnia and Herzegovina), such as the period of the 1992-1995 war [3].

CITY MOSQUE IN BREZA

At the time of design and now, near the end of its construction, the City Mosque in Breza is the largest mosque in Bosnia and Herzegovina [10]. At the time of designing, the author was convinced that it was only the wishes of the client, however, the construction of this mosque was completed. Until the war (1992-1995), Breza was known as a mining town in which the "social elite" (directors, professors, doctors) were made up of outsiders, while the local population (regardless of ethnicity) was made up of the working class establishment and peasants" [8]. After the war (1992-1995), the indigenous population of Breza entered the social stage. It soon became clear that Breza already had a large number of domestic intellectuals of various profiles who had obtained university degrees even before 1992. Having become a social entity in full capacity, the population of Breza has been mass-educated since 1995 and shows a lavish talent for business. Breza is a small town in Bosnia and Herzegovina, about twenty kilometers from Sarajevo and about nine kilometers from Visoko. The mosque is located in the city center, near the municipal building, post office, police, central square with a clock tower and a memorial park (Geographic coordinates: 44°01'12.99"N, 18°15'38.44"E, Elevation: 500 m Source: Google Earth). Next to the mosque is a spacious mosque courtyard (harem). The project of the external arrangement of the mosque envisages the preservation of the existing trees in the existing park, which will be located in the area of the mosque after the fencing of the harem.

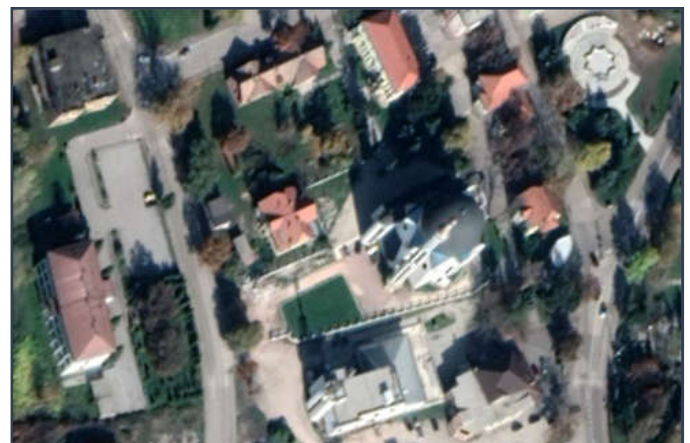


Figure 1. The location of the mosque
Source: Google Earth (Accessed: 06/10/2021)

The mosque is developed through four levels (basement, ground floor, 1st floor and 2nd floor). Although all levels are well connected vertically (so that, if necessary, they can function as a single prayer space), they can function quite separately.

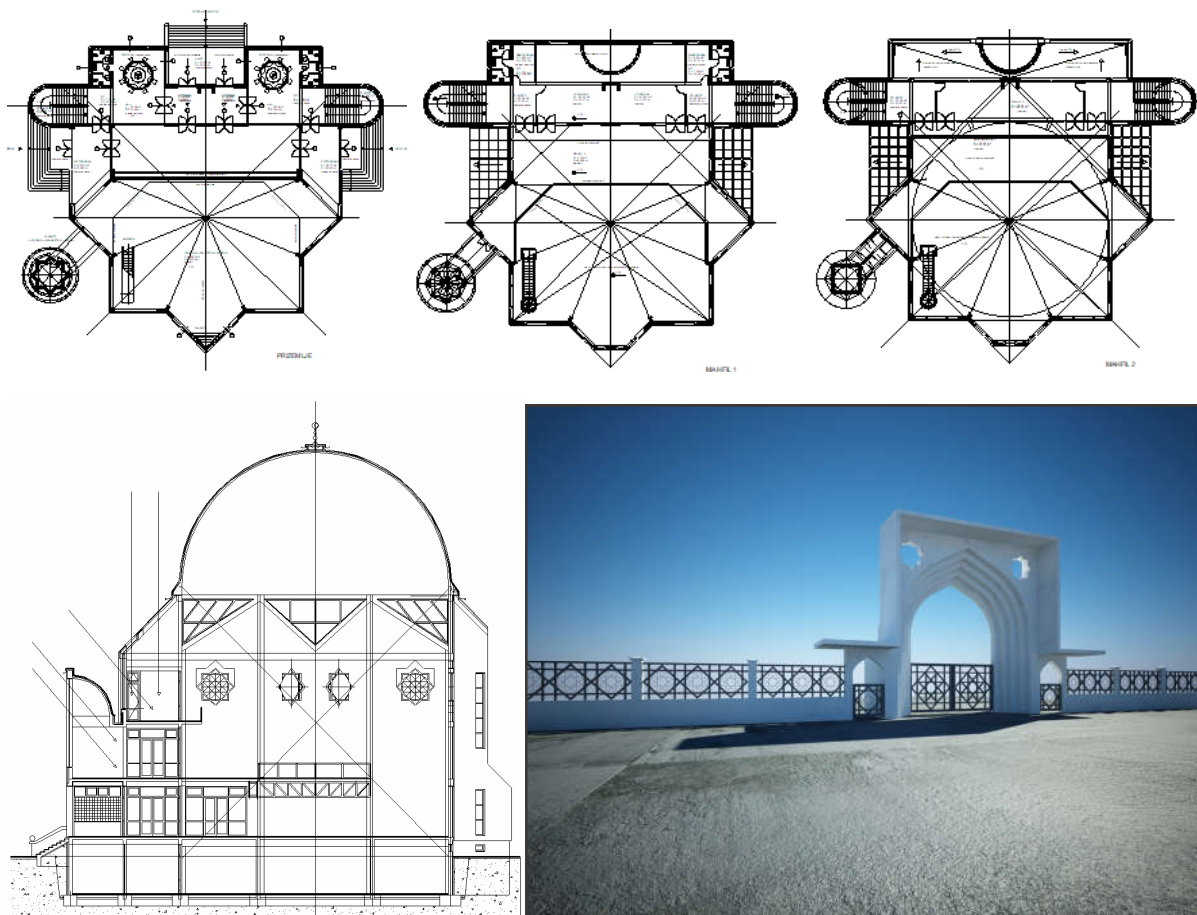


Figure 2. layers, the longitudinal section of the mosque and the entrance gate to the harem of the mosque

Source: Author

At the ground floor level, there is a central entrance, in the axis of the mosque, and two side entrances (similar to the disposition of the large Ottoman mosques in Istanbul: Ahmediyya, Suleimaniya...) [14]. An entrance hall with two abdesthanas (for men and women), designed as decorative fountains, is oriented at the entrances. The central prayer space is completely open, without pillars. There are toilets in the care of the abdesthan, for both men and women. Next to one of the side entrances, there is an office (information desk and cash register) of the local branch of the Islamic Community. The access hall of the mosque with two staircases, on opposite sides of the building, is connected vertically with the basement, first and second floor. The disposition of the basement almost completely follows the disposition of the ground floor, which means that its use value, as a prayer space, is high. According to the needs, the basement can function as a separate floor, with access from the building or from the outside. In the space under one of the stairs, at the basement level, there is a central heating substation. On the first floor there is a spacious gallery (mahfil) as a prayer space, and two large classrooms for religious instruction, language courses, information technology courses... from this floor there is access to the minaret, over the access bridge. On the level of the second floor, there is a gallery (second mahfil) for performing prayers, the premises of the local Majlis of the Islamic Community, a cafe-kitchen and a cafeteria space. There are toilets on each of the floors. The author of the project City Mosque in Breza only realized during the construction of this mosque that it is an expression of the sudden release of enormous compressed strength and self-awareness of the inhabitants of Breza¹. He visited in detail the wider area of the municipalities of Breza and Vares, got to know the natural resources, landscapes, people and rich cultural heritage. Numerous sites with necropolises of stecak tombstones (regularly accompanied by copious springs of drinking water), old cemeteries of „El Fatih's martyrs“¹ and modest turbets testify to the typical mentality of Bosniaks as „patient, humble and persistent people“. Since it was the central, City Mosque in Breza, the first mosque in the inner city of Breza, the author opted for an extremely simple, unique and symbolic form - a spatially developed regular eight-pointed star [9].

This huge star is vaulted with a reinforced concrete dome spanning 20 m in such a way that the base ring of the dome rests on the inner peaks of the eight-pointed star; in doing so, the arms of the star are obliquely cut at their apex, from the base of the dome outwards, thus forming triangles in the roof. These triangles are materialized as metal-glass curtains, „heavenly windows“, through which the interior of the mosque receives abundant natural light and through which interior lighting emerges from the mosque at night.

The central entrance portal of the mosque (which falls into the axis of the existing access street) is accentuated by a form reminiscent of a ceremonial arch, a triumphal arch. Two side entrances were given as much to ensure fire safety as for practical and functional reasons, to ensure the propulsiveness of the faithful during mass prayers and religious ceremonies in the mosque.



Figure 3. Entrance hall with abdesthan (fountain) and toilets for men (left) and women (right)
Source: Author



Figure 4. View of the entrance hall with the abdesthan (fountain) from the main prayer area (left) and one of the two staircases symmetrically placed in relation to the main axis (direction of the mare) of the mosque (right)
Source: Author



Figure 5. Mihrab and member
Source: Author



Figure 6. Mimbir and mahfil (left) and mihrab and mimbir-view from mahfil (right)
Source: Author



Figure 7. View of the lower and upper mahfil from the mihrab ant
Source: Author



Figure 8. View of the mosque from the northwest (left) and from the southwest (right)
Source: Author



Figure 9. Photos by drone camera from the northwest
Source: Vladimir Obradovic (drone video: 07/25/2017)

ISLAMIC CENTER IN NOVI TRAVNIK

Novi Travnik, as its name suggests, is a town not far from Travnik, the old vizier town of Bosnia and Herzegovina in central Bosnia and Herzegovina, which emerged after World War II as a settlement that developed around a strong military industry complex of the former SFRY. In about fifty years from its inception until today, the city has gained a sweeping physical volume, but without those contents that have their own memory, their own *genius loci*, which have been built and acquired for hundreds of years [10]. Multiethnic in terms of its population, Novi Travnik was considered a typical socialist city that, as such, welcomed the war (1992-1995). During the tour of Novi Travnik before the project was made, the local authorities offered the Author a number of possible locations for the construction of an Islamic center, pointing out all their pros and cons. The author opted for the city center itself (geographical coordinates: 44°10'03.91"N, 17°39'04.99"E, Elevation: 519 m. Source: Google Earth) for the reason that there was already a city market, a large supermarket and shops, in short, that the location had the memory of the city center. In addition, this location was physically the closest to the already mentioned industrial complex, the „Bratstvo” factory.



Figure 10. The location of the Islamic Center
 Source: Google Earth (Accessed: 06/10/2021)

After the end of the war (1992-1995), the city authorities commissioned an Islamic center project² with a very ambitious project task. In addition to the mosque as a traditional temple in Islam, the project task envisaged a number of other facilities: mekteb (rooms for conducting elementary religious instruction), a large number of business facilities, a multipurpose hall, offices and a number of service areas to serve the main facilities of the Islamic center³. The

²It is interesting that there are Orthodox and Catholic churches in the very center of Breza, although Serbs (Orthodox) and Croats (Catholics) were ethnic „minorities” in relation to Bosniaks (Muslims)..

³The people remember that the old necropolises and many individual graves were the graves of the fallen soldiers of the Ottoman Sultan El Fatih (Mehmed II the Conqueror); these necropolises are respected by the local population as holy places by making annual solemn dowa (prayers) on them.

Islamic center also includes a kindergarten designed by the author as a separate building, with a special approach outside the mosque.

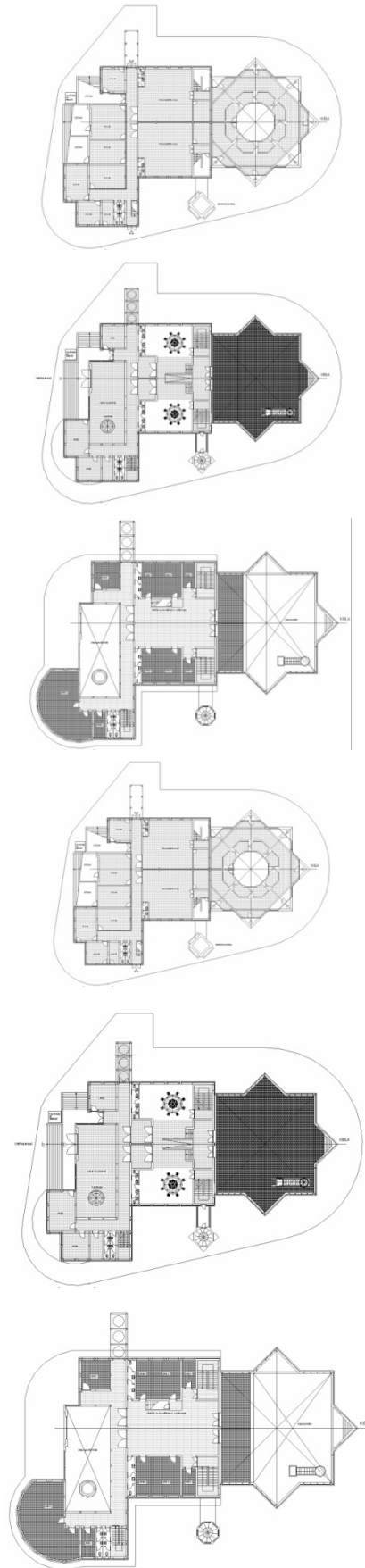


Figure 11. Islamic Center in Novi Travnik: ground floor base (left), 1st floor base (middle), 2nd floor base (right)
 Source: Author



Figure 12. The entrance hall of the Islamic Center (left and middle) and the access portal to the main prayer area of the mosque (right)
Source: Author



Figure 13. Mihrab and member
Source: Author

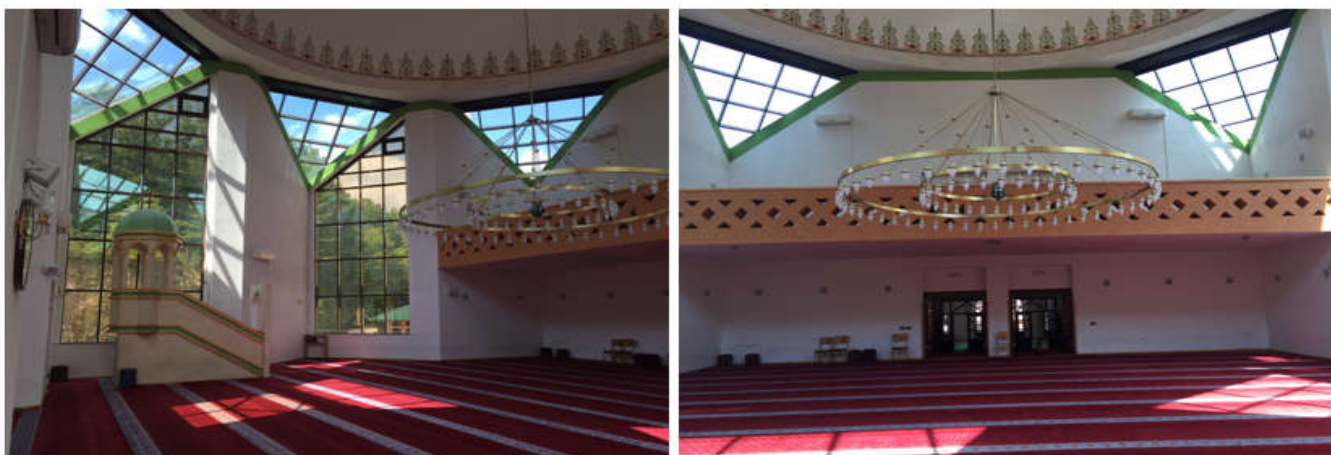


Figure 14. Minber and mahfil
Source: Author



Figure 15. Cafe-pastry shop with summer garden (view from the access staircase, left) and kindergarten (right)
Source: Author

Since the project task foresaw a massive physical structure, the author initially decided on a visible architectural and design emphasis of the mosque building in relation to all other contents of the Islamic center: the mosque building to perform as a simple volume, and all other contents in forms that will be associated with traditional profane architecture. In solving the horizontal plan of the functional group of other contents, the author used the already proven effect of a huge, covered, inner courtyard (not only as communications but as a multipurpose space), which was also used by European architects in designing similar buildings in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the Austro-Hungarian rule (1878-1918)⁴. The inner courtyard, enriched with a fountain, seemed to be a convenient way (architectural sequence) that bound the profane contents of the Islamic center, on the one hand, and its mosque, on the other, into a single functional and architectural whole. For the basis of the central object, the mosque, the author decided on the shape of a regular eight-pointed star, therefore, on the shape of a strong symbolism; At the same time, the main prayer space of the mosque is on the first floor (similar to the Colorful Mosque in Travnik. On the ground floor, below the main prayer space, business premises are organized within a regular octagon). emphasize entrances to business premises). The rather bold use of the metal-glass wall-curtain in the materialization of the volume (based on a regular eight-pointed star) arose from the Author's intention that the main prayer space be well lit with natural light, that the architectural-aesthetic effects of the mosque's „spatial star“ at night mosques lit) be strong, and that the new mosque is experienced by the observer as a contemporary, sophisticated building. The minaret is conceived as an „arabesque that develops from the image, vertically into a spatial vertical“. The base of the minaret is designed as a sebilj (richer version of the public fountain). In this way, in addition to the effect of light, the minaret is complemented by the symbolism of water as a source of life.



Figure 16. View of the Islamic Center from the southeast
Source: Author



Figure 17. Photos of the Islamic Center by drone camera
Source: Vladimir Obradovic (drone video: 07/26/2017)

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion of this paper, we cite the excerpt from the review by Academician Prof. dr. Resid Hafizovic for the book „Moj pristup projektiranju dzamija“ („My approach to the design of mosques“) whose author - the author of this paper:

...“The complete content analogy between the mosque and the man only comes to the fore when the crown physiognomy of the mosque space is analyzed and the ‘space’ of man’s inner being. The mosque space is designed with a minaret, mihrab, mimbber and kursa, and man’s inner being with the spiritual heart (fuād), the soul (nafs), the contemplative mind (‘aql) and the creative imagination (khiyāl). What is a minaret for a mosque, like the vertical that connects Heaven and Earth, transient and eternal, it is the contemplative mind for man’s microcosmic temple, that ‘interprets the prophet ‘in him who helps him to unmistakably draw the line of distinguishing truth from lies, illusion from reality, the beautiful from the ugly, the just from the

⁴Novi Travnik, like many other cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Mostar, Gornji Vakuf - Uskoplje, Dobo...) after the 1992-1995 war was mentally (and even administratively) ethnically divided. After 1995, Croats (Catholics) built a church of large dimensions in („their“) Novi Travnik.

⁵In fact, even earlier (during the Ottoman Empire) the construction of each mosque was accompanied by the institution of a waqf (endowment) from whose income the functioning of the mosque was ensured (as physical structures and as institutions). In addition, in Travnik there is the famous „Sarena dzamija-Colorful Mosque“ (Sulejmanija, 16th century) which, in addition to the usual types of Ottoman mosques, has a business space on the ground floor, while on its floor is a prayer space.

⁶... Karel Pařik on the project of the Sharia-Judicial School (now the Faculty of Islamic Sciences) in Sarajevo (1877-1889) and Ciril Ivekovic on the project of the madrasa in Travnik (1892), for example.

unjust etc. What is the mihrab for the mosque, it is the spiritual heart in man, the only 'place' in man's microcosmic temple worthy that the Presence of God is 'hidden' in him. What is a pulpit for a mosque, it is a soul for a man, that inviolable 'ruler' of the whole of the microcosmic kingdom, which listens to the messages of the holy call from the minaret and the quiet whisper from the mihrab, in order to beautify itself and realized in which direction the 'nuch's ship' of the human person should be directed in its lifelong navigation through space and time of man's earthly years. Finally, what is the rush for a mosque, it is the 'creative imagination' in the human microcosm, the organ of the supersensible cognition that helps man to transcend, at least for a moment, the boundaries and limits of cosmic time and space, to 'walk' between worlds and interprets the symbolic architecture of the language of the philosophy of all existence, all the more so because that language is always mysterious to the lower worlds and enigmatic, while towards the higher worlds from the mystery of the symbol it develops into a pure Reality which alone is⁴⁵...

REFERENCES

1. Basler, Đ. (1966), Kulturna istorija Bosne i Hercegovine od najstarijih vremena do početka turske vladavine, "Veselin Masleša", Sarajevo
2. Basler, Đ. (1972), Arhitektura kasnoantičkog doba u Bosni i Hercegovini, "Veselin Masleša", Sarajevo
3. Malcolm, N. (2011), Bosna, kratka povijest, Buybook, Biblioteka Memorija, Sarajevo
4. Klaić, V. (1990), Povijest Bosne, fototip izdanja iz 1882. god., Svjetlost, Sarajevo
5. Imamović, M. (1997), Historija Bošnjaka, Bošnjačka zajednica kulture Preporod, Sarajevo
6. Pasic, A. (1994), Islamic Architecture in Bosnia and Hercegovina, IRCICA, Istanbul
7. Redžić, H. (1983), Studije o islamskoj arhitektonskoj baštini, Veselin Masleša, Sarajevo
8. Hadrović, A. (2007), Defining Architectural Space on the Model of the Oriental Style City House in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Macedonia, Booksurge, LLC, North Charleston, SC, USA
9. Hadrović, A. (2009), Structural Systems in Architecture, Booksurge, LLC, North Charleston, SC, USA
10. Hadrović, A. (2017), Moj pristup projektiranju džamija, Arhitektonski fakultet Univerziteta u Sarajevu
11. Oto-Dorn, K. (1971), Islamska umetnost, Biblioteka „Umetnost u svetu“, Bratstvo jedinstvo, Novi Sad
12. Alić, H. S. (1976), Arapsko-islamska filozofija; definicija i značaj u istoriji, Orijentalni institut u Sarajevu, POF XXIV/1974., Sarajevo
13. Grozdanić, Dr S. (1976), Uvod u arapsko-islamsku estetiku, Orijentalni institut u Sarajevu, POF XXIV/1974., Sarajevo
14. Grabar, O. and others (2007), Islam. Art and Architecture, the American University in Cairo Press
15. Frishman, M., Khan, H. U. (1994), The Mosque: History, Architectural Development & Regional Diversity, Thames & Hudson, London
16. Mustafa, S. (2015), Baghdad University Design (Baghdad University Mosque by Walter Gropius), South Dakota State University, Department of Architecture
17. Uluhanli, L. (2017), Mosques: Splendors of Islam, Rizzoli; Illustrated edition
18. O'Kane, B. (2019), Mosques: The 100 Most Iconic Islamic Houses of Worship, Assouline, New York.

⁴⁵Academician Prof. dr. Resid Hafizovic, excerpt from the book review:
Hadrović, A. (2017), Moj pristup projektiranju džamija, Arhitektonski fakultet Univerziteta u Sarajevu (My approach to designing mosques, Faculty of Architecture in Sarajevo (p. ii)).