

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS IN THE BALKANIAN TOWNS

SVETLOSTI I SENKE GRADOVA BALKANA

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The old Balkanian towns were made in accordance with the human measures and, with the reflection on some water surface and the hilly scene behind them

PREFACE

According to the archeological excavations, the first settlements at the territory of Balkan peninsula – existed already in the Neolithic era – five thousand years B.C. In region of the village Vinča, near Belgrade, lies the biggest prehistorical settlement on this area.

Ever since, Balkan was interesting and attractive location for the people to live on it. First of all, its soil is singularly rich and fruitful and plentifully watered. Next, the earliest settlers had no difficulty in choosing the right place for their settlement. They found a place that was wonderfully protected from every foe. It happened very seldom that the cities were damaged by the earthquakes, or by the fires but, unfortunately, mostly – they were destroyed by the conquerors in wars. Till nowadays, the war destruction are worse than any natural disaster the world know.

TOWNS ON THE HILLY BALKAN PENINSULA

Sometimes, only ruins could be found on the place of the previous town. Other times, even the ruins were expired. The descriptions by the ancient travellers were of a great value for the identification of the buildings and the life of the people.

It is well known that this peninsula has got plenty of valleys and mountains, but the most of all, there are the hills, nice looking hills.

Mostly, Balkanian towns have been located in the valleys, by the river, lake or sea. Primarily, they were installed on the lowest levels accompanying the water flows. Later on, as they were growing, they were climbing up the hills. So, the scene of the city center by the river with the hills of its background, is very usual. From the fine arts point of view, it makes very amusing stage effects.

From early times, Balkan peninsula became a great commercial and cultural cross-road. It's better to say – a station at the historical crossroads.

In the recent centuries, Balkanian towns have had the characteristic shape and style of living. Their streets, markets, squares and buildings – have been made according to the specific Balkanian style of living. Everything is a subject to its function.

Balkanian towns are not big. But, their architectural heritage pays full attention. The house and the town are made in accordance with the human measures. That's why the Balkanian architecture has won the international reputation. It pays attention to the relationship between the building and its surrounding.

Wellknown, or unknown old master of building craft, new how to make the town on the best possible way. The Balkanian towns have their GENIUS LOCI, the most important quality of each town. There is one old builder's sentence: "Never destroy a building, before you are quite sure that you have something much better on your mind". That is the experience. But, after all wars and destructions sometimes-the town planning freshmen destroy the existing buildings and towns to build the new ones, which are made without any sensitive architectural style.

LIGHTS IN THE URBAN SCENE OF A TOWN AND ITS NATURAL BACKGROUND

The scenery in Balkan varies greatly. In the small towns, in particular, we can find traces of yesterday, in certain details, if nowhere else.

We have to be proud on our cultural and architectural heritage and we wish to show it by day and by night. How to show a building, a part of a town, or a town as a whole? – First of all, the maintenance has to be properly done by the qualified people. Besides, a careful choice of the illuminance is important. Every building and detail – needs the related external illuminance. Our professional task is to think about each facade, roof and chimney!

Also, under the consideration have to be city centers and buildings along the road, as much as a town surroundings that can be seen from the city.

Lighting of a street as a whole, has to be supported by the external light of the interesting details and the peaks of the buildings because, it happens that the highest levels of the stylish building are the most interesting parts. The details require lighting projectors and lamps. Of course, the needs are different from one building to the other and from place to place.

What about the natural background? – Different kinds of lights and colors of illuminance are useful. Smooth, but strong enough, lighting in the cascades is welcome for the surrounding horizons. That's how lights and shadows make extremely impressive scene on a large scale.

What the town scenery is like during the sunset, moonlight and sun rise? Does artificial illuminance has to be the same through all these hours? – Hilly background and the illuminance are the main actors all the time. Natural hilly background was given, by chance or by happiness, to the Balkanian towns, but the illuminance is our creative work and our task.

Team of architects, electrical and lighting experts take part in the illuminance of a town.

Many towns, all over the world, look better by night, than under the daylight though, they don't have the beautiful background as the Balkanian towns have. That gives an idea to do our best to improve the great part of our towns. Balkanian towns pay attention under the daylight and it is necessary to take great care of them to get a nice scenery at night. Illuminated town and its lovely hilly background, would make an extraordinary scenery between the imagination and the reality.

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