

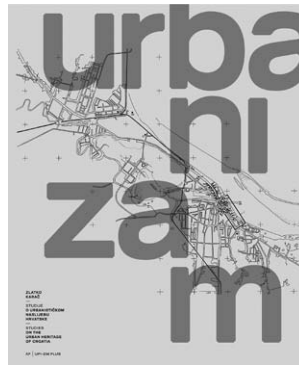


DRAGAN DAMJANOVIĆ

URBANISM STUDIES ON THE URBAN HERITAGE OF CROATIA

URBANIZAM
STUDIJE O URBANISTIČKOM NASLIJEĐU
HRVATSKE

ZLATKO KARAČ



Faculty of Architecture, University of Zagreb,
and UPI-2M Plus, Zagreb, 2022
Manualia Universitatis studiorum Zagrabiensis

436 pages with illustrations, notes and bibliography
[29/24 cm, black and white print, hardcover]

Reviewers: Mladen Obad Šćitaroci, Zlatko Juric

Editor: Alen Žunic

Proofreading: Mirjana Ostojja

Layout: Ida Gluić

Front cover: Nedjeljko Špoljar

Printing: ITG doo, Zagreb

ISBN 978-953-7703-295

CIP 001045744 [National University Library, Zagreb]

After a series of representative editions published in the last five years, on Islamic architecture and art and the architecture of synagogues in Croatia, as well as on the Chapel of Our Lady of the Oak Tree in Vukovar, in which he summarized his decades-long research on the key segments of Croatian architectural heritage from the Middle Ages to the present day, in June of this year, Prof. Zlatko Karač collected and published a part of his numerous studies on the urban heritage of Croatia. The book of representative size and hardcover, published by the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb and the publishing house UPI-2M Plus, was reviewed by academician Mladen Obad Šćitaroci and Prof. Zlatko Juric.

The texts published within the *Studies* are divided into two large chapters – the first is composed of peer-reviewed articles, studies, debates and essays, and summaries, while the second consists of various presentations (reviews, criticisms and book reviews, introductions and headlines, presentations of exhibitions, memories and diverse other texts). Within each of these large units, the texts are arranged according to the chronological-thematic principle.

The texts published in this book first of all testify to the changes in the interests of Zlatko Karač from the time of his studies at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Zagreb, when the first articles were written, until today. It is noticeable that in the early stages of his career, during the 1980s and 1990s, he mostly focused on topics from the early episodes of the history of urban planning in Croatia – he researched the famous prehistoric site Vučedol, the urban development of ancient Osijek/Mursa and Vis/Issa, ancient and medieval heritage of Ilok, traces of Byzantine urbanism in Croatia, medieval fortresses of Đakovo and Zagreb, medieval planned cities in Croatia, urban planning and communal provisions in the statute of Mošćenica and other similar topics. It is equally evident that the first decades of his research activities were strongly marked by topics on the area where he spent his childhood. In addition to the already highlighted topics that touch the wider area of eastern and central

Slavonia and Srijem, Zlatko Karač, at the same time investigated the oldest layers of the heritage of his native Vukovar, medieval and Ottoman. Later, he turned to more contemporary topics from the heritage of Vukovar, especially after the suffering of this city in the war of 1991. From the beginning of the new millennium, after having worked on the large exhibition project of the Museum of Arts and Crafts Historicism in Croatia, studies from the urban (and architectural) heritage of Croatia in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries have been dominating his research.

In that period, texts dedicated to the urban development of settlements and planned and newly founded industrial cities in Croatia in the 19th and 20th centuries, the urban environment of Croatian synagogues and numerous other texts were created. These texts included a number of topics in the Croatian history of architecture, first of all *Bataville*, i.e. today's Borovo Naselje near Vukovar, a key example of a newly founded industrial city whose project was created in the offices of the Bata's company in Zlín, in Czechoslovakia in the 1930s, as well as Ubli on Lastovo, an outstanding example of an industrial settlement established as part of the projects of interwar fascist Italy aimed at improving economically backward areas. The article about Ubli is a testament to the scale of Zlatko Karač's perspective – the text opens with an analysis of the oldest layers of the settlement's history, prehistoric, ancient and medieval, before talking about the creation of the current fishing village between 1933 and 1936. When analyzing the settlement, he pays attention to the general urban plan of the place and individual buildings in it, comparing it with other planned industrial cities built by the Kingdom of Italy in the areas that would be a part of Croatia after the Second World War, i.e. Yugoslavia, Raša and Podlabin.

Working on reconstruction projects in Vukovar during and after the Homeland War, Karač has begun his work on the creation of reconstruction models, i.e. conservation and related studies that would remain an important segment of his scientific and professional activity to this day, so it is understandable

that he included a part of these studies in the book on urbanism. From this group of texts, one article stands out. It is his work on the restoration of the historic urban nucleus of Zagreb after the 2020 earthquake. This article will undoubtedly be a key text for any future research of this topic, especially in terms of analyzing the problems faced by architects and art historians when defining the first steps in reconstruction. The group of *conservation* texts published in the book also includes a work on the heritage of Stupnik villages, and a work on the rural heritage of Istria. Finally, the book also contains biographies of key professors from the Zagreb Faculty of Architecture from the second half of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century, Bruno Milic and academician Branko Kincl, which provide detailed descriptions and analyses of their work.

Regardless of the period or topics they deal with, all of Karač's texts are characterised by exceptional meticulousness. In the footnotes, references are made to countless units not only from professional literature (domestic and foreign), but also from the daily and popular press, and therefore they can serve as a starting point for further research. All texts are characterized by a systematic analysis of the subject of interest, which goes from general to individual, attempts at authorial attribution (if necessary), and chronological definition of the work. Valorization issues are often included in the works too. The function of buildings and typology are his starting point in the structuring of the text, which is followed by contextualization with historical events and other similar works on the territory of Croatia and the wider area to which Croatia, politically or culturally, belonged.

It can, therefore, be concluded that this book provides the pinnacle of the many decades of Zlatko Karač's work at the Department of Urban Planning, Spatial Planning and Landscape Architecture of the Zagreb Faculty of Architecture. It is a piece of work which shall undoubtedly represent indispensable literature for anyone interested in the history of urbanism in Croatia.