

The bridges of my mind

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THE BRIDGES OF MY MIND

My generation was brought up on the myth of the bridge. We overestimated its significance and its power – we always preferred the title of the French translation of Ivo Andrić's most famous novel, *Il y a un pont sur Drina*, to the rather dry English one, *The Bridge over the Drina*. The last series of wars in the Balkans, however, have demonstrated quite persuasively that bridges can perish both literally and metaphorically. And when a soldier killed the Old Bridge in Mostar, many of us felt that much more had crumbled into the Neretva than just a few stones from the 16th century. But, at least the event rid us of an illusion.

Now we know that, for a bridge to be a bridge, two sides are needed. And when both sides retreat, there is nothing to be built between them. No degree of force can make up for the lack of a voluntary coming together.

Somewhere in my mind I continue to build bridges. But now I am aware that the bridges I am building are just my ways of getting around bad experiences and disappointments. I expected from the old bridges to help me to master space. The new bridges of my mind are helping me to master time. And that makes all the difference.

Amir Muzur