Dževad Karahasan
The Shadows of Cities - Essays

Originally written in Bosnian language

Dževad Karahasan, born in Duvno/Yugoslavia in 1953, is an author, playwright and essayist. The Siege of Sarajevo was the subject of the diary *Exodus from a City* (1993), translated into ten languages, of the essay collection entitled *The Book of Gardens* (2004) and of his novels *The Rink of Shahrijar* (1997) and *Sara and Serafina* (2000). His works also include the novel *The Nocturnal Council* (2006), *Reports from a Dark World* (2010), a collection of stories, as well as *The Shadows of Cities* (2010), a collection of essays. His work has been distinguished with numerous awards.

Karahasan lives in Graz and

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About

Karahasan’s poetry of the »storied city« tells about a literature now more at home in the multilingual, asynchronous and multi-dimensional city than ever before in the modern era.

The great Bosnian writer and essayist Dževad Karahasan, rooted in the literary traditions of antiquity and of the Islamic and Christian world, has an understanding of the craft of writing that is out of step with the times. The architecture of his novel, its multifaceted time structure, its linguistic polyphony owes itself to an aesthetic experience of the city. The contrast of public and private spaces, the encounter, even confrontation with the unusual creates tensions that are developed throughout the narrative. Sarajevo stands as a testament to this finding in poetics, a city, which, as Karahasan demonstrates in Ivo Andric’s work, compels refined, perspective-rich writing to reconcile the different cultural traditions and religious practices that exist side-by-side in one place. »One could almost get the idea that Sarajevo is a city that was born to offer the narrative a native land.«
»Readers let Dževad Karahasan take them by the hand with great pleasure. The Bosnian novelist and essayist, who grew up with the Quran, well-versed in Goethe and Georg Büchner, appears as a welcome pilot amidst the perils of West-East misunderstandings.«

Ilma Rakusa, NZZ