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SPECIAL REPORT. SARAJEVO:
TRAPPED IN ITS PAST, BUT ALIVE
CONTRIBUTIONS. INSIDE ISLAM'S 'SECRET GARDEN'
ART. SANA'A, THE ARAB VENICE NEEDING SAVING



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Both Muslims and Christians prize their places of prayer,
as oases where they meet the All Merciful God
on the journey to eternal life, and where they meet
their brothers and sisters in the bond of religion.

JOHN PAUL II

Speech at Damascus in the Omayyad Mosque, 6 May 2001



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The world media system tired immediately of the protests in Sarajevo, Tuzla and other cities in Bosnia Herzegovina and relegated them to its umbra. And yet there, in that land wounded by a civil war still fresh in the collective memory, things are happening and one can see the reaction of a civil society that still believes in the possibility of a recovery that is not just economic. And makes that healthy 'demand' to be able to plan a future. 82

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A project promoted by the Veneto Institute of Cultural Heritage has not only made it possible to restore two of Yemen's historic mosques but has also fostered the creation of a team of hundreds of young people professionally trained in restoration and the protection of their cultural heritage. Something that the country needs.

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Generative, therefore Free

MAURO MAGATTI

ALTHOUGH IT IS HARD TO PROVIDE AN UNEQUIVOCAL EXPLANATION for the protests that have been agitating the world's squares for a few years now (and those in Southern Europe and North Africa, in particular), it may at least be said that they have two elements in common. On the one hand, technology, which is helping to determine the shape these demonstrations are taking. Twitter, Facebook and the internet in general are, in fact, instruments used primarily by young people and they permit new forms of aggregation: people no longer have an absolute need (or, rather, they have a more limited need) to meet physically in order to organize a common course of action or get ideas circulating. The second element is the historical moment: we are living in an era in which organized conflict relating to class has disappeared. This fact can be seen quite clearly in the West but one can pick up signals of it in the Arab world as well. Thus, today, the protest tends to be a protest between generations, to have generic objectives and to be reminiscent (in some of its features) of revolts and insurrections, which basically have as their object the toppling of a class or ruling system that is associated with some form of tyranny or para-tyranny.

Beyond these common elements, however, a comparison of events in Southern Europe with those in North Africa appears problematic because the two situations are very different, just as the nature and objectives of all these protest movements appear to be different. Certainly, in North Africa, alongside a longing for freedom that is regularly re-activated as soon as there is any improvement in living conditions, there is at work a demand for access to affluence that paradoxically risks being challenged by, precisely, the progress democracy is making. This should not be surprising, since there is certainly a link between market economies and democracy, but managing to synchronise the forces has always been an extremely complex matter. So much so that the lack of synchronicity sometimes seems to prevail over integration, just as is occurring in North Africa. The protest in Southern Europe is presenting different features,