

## ON OBCHODNA STREET

You can hear the bell of the tram  
Even before to see the first sunlight reflected on leaves  
Or to hear any bird song

Between Pressburg and Bratislava  
Stands a street where to buy pizza, sushi and kebab  
Swedish clothes and french cosmetics

A river flows  
Its tributaries are called Corgon, Zlatý Bažant or Smädný Mních  
Under the paving stones

Short renovated facades  
A few floors but lots of colours  
Already vanishing

Where to sit?  
No public bench to rest for a while  
You have to keep moving

The white castle  
Upon St Michael's Gate  
And yet in your pockets

I am looking for Schöndorf  
A small faubourg lost in the vineyards  
I hope to see it in winter

Walking down Obchodna  
From Middle Age Downtown to these Modernist buildings  
Just through time and space

27% for food and drinks,  
13% in services, 10% for electronics, 27% to feel pretty  
5% to feel intelligent, 3% to feel healed

Havelská, P., Marko, I., Sidorová, M. Obchodná ulica, Bratislava. Socio-ekonomický výskum.  
Marko&Placemakers, Londýn, 2015.

No old shop  
On the old commerces street  
Every century got its own needs

## OBCHODNA STREET

The first time when I traveled Obchodná street I did not realize that it was one of the most important streets of the city center. By its esthetics and its compositions I did not perceive it as a main street of the downtown. The street is dynamic, there is always a lot of people (day and night) but the development does not please me. The urban development and the organization of the street did not correspond to the importance of the street. I could pass by this street every day but I do not prefer to borrow it because I do not like it. There is a lot of people and it is always necessary to pay attention on the tramway. In addition to that the esthetics of the street is very little highlighted.

The flooring is not prestigious and does not give the feeling to be in a main street. At the beginning of the street we identified a clear difference between the flooring of the historic center and that of the street Obchodná. The color of the ground and the tiled floor allow to identify that it is a pedestrian street but do not give it a specific identity.

Furthermore, there is no trees and vegetation in this street (except on the corner of the Postova Street). I think that it is a real lack. Sometimes the street is wider but nothing structures the space and gives it a rhythm. This street is not very long but it proposes no spatial harmony because it is monotonous and without peculiarity in its design.

It is a pedestrian street where the streetcar monopolizes the central space with its rails and its cables. The pedestrians can walk just on both sides of the road. This pedestrian street is very busy but the pedestrians can circulate that on pavements. Despite variation in largueur of the street terraces are little exploited and the street furniture does not structure the space. The public space is little valued and is not organized.

The architecture is too heterogeneous, the styles are very different. Certain buildings are recent, others are ruined, some are older. The floors are extremely varied : some are just ground floor while others have six floors. There is a lot of advertising in the street. All these posters do not emphasize shops. It is a street which is not homogeneous because it is too ill-assorted.

I don't like Obchodná street but I am satisfied to have to work above because I am persuaded that it has a great deal of potential. It is at the heart of the city and it is its who makes the link between the city center and the historic center.

# Obchodná Street

Studio I – Urban Design

Obchodná is a pedestrian street in the centre of Bratislava, just outside the Historic Centre, that seems to be very lively. It is kind of a connection between the oldest part of town with the most recent development of the city. Most of its buildings seem to consist of housing on the top and commerce on the ground floor.



One of the first noticeable aspects of this street is the fact that the buildings are not very harmonious. There seems to be a conflict of times in which these buildings were built as there can be seen some sort of classical kind of buildings as well as some more recent, 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings, and even some modern ones.



But this divergence is not only visible by the age of the buildings, but also by the irregularities in the floor numbers and their heights, their colours, the use of ornaments for the decoration of the façades and the materials used to coat the building structures. Everything just seems very unbalanced.

Along the street there are crossings with other streets and spaces that could be useful to increase the utility of the public space.



For instance, the major crossing is the one with Poštová Street, which is another pedestrian street where the Banco Casino is located. This seems like a wonderful opportunity to create a “square like” space that would reinforce the views on both streets, making them work together.

Poštová Street has a lot of trees that create a dark path and hide the buildings around, making them unnoticeable. Unlike Obchodná Street that has no trees and could use some to create a little bit of shade for the summer sun.



There can also be found some “secret” passages in a lot of buildings that lead people towards other spaces such as more restaurants and bars and maybe even other streets on the other side of the blocks. This is very interesting because it’s a very subtle way to make other connections and interactions with the street, except these passages aren’t all very well noticed, which is almost as if they don’t even exist to someone who is not familiar with them.

Teacher: Katarina Smatanova  
Student: Rafael Martins, Portugal

# Obchodná Street

Studio I – Urban Design



There are also a few lots that are not built that could help to the homogeneity of the street's façades, as well as some empty corners that are not adding anything interesting to the public space. All of these places should be taken care of so that they would be of more use.

One of the most beautiful things about this street is the view. Bratislava's Castle is in the exact direction in which the street is oriented, which makes it the perfect frame for the Castle. Yet all these issues seem to harm the view, taking away some of its magic.



Eventhough it is a pedestrian street, there seems to be no room for everyone to walk around neither comfortably nor safely. This is due to the people riding bikes that don't have a proper band of circulation, which makes a very unpleasant situation for people walking by foot that need to dodge.



Along with the people and the cyclists, there are also two tram stops in the street, "Poštová" and "Vysoká", which include about three tram lines that connect this area of Bratislava with many other parts of the capital. Consequently, the street becomes a central place for people to move around within the city, which means that even more people come here, making the street very crowded from time to time.



Generally speaking, Obchodná Street feels like a very busy street in which can be seen a lot of life happening everywhere. There are lots of types of marketing in almost every building, such as coffee shops, restaurants and bars, many clothing shops with different price ranges and also information posts for every other issue.



Although the street is so close to the Historic Centre of Bratislava, Obchodná's commerce is much cheaper, and thus, it is more likely to be a part of the "everyday life" of the local population. As a result, it seems that there are different types of people using this street besides tourists, such as students, elders, children with their families, etc.

Unlike the City Centre, during the evening Obchodná Street becomes a little bit more quiet, but there is still night life happening. The bars are open and many people come here to have a few drinks. The environment is pleasant even with the drunkish people walking around.

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In conclusion, Obchodná Street has a few points in question concerning the way it is planned within the urbanistic matter as well as its architectural views of the surrounding buildings. Nevertheless, it is easy to understand that this street is quite crowded and plays an important role in the plan of the city.



Teacher: Katarina Smatanova  
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## OBHODNA STREET

It starts at quite heavy traffic roads crossing spot. Next it goes slightly up to the hill where castle is (I like the perspective of the street). There's no crowd but it's alive, pavement is enough wide and pedestrians are able to use railways path also. I'm not doing it cause trams are going very often. It wasn't obvious if it is still old town part or just new one. It appeared to be way to city center.

### PEOPLE

They are not in hurry, some of them are slowly walking, going to restaurants or waiting for the trams. I noticed mostly young students or young adults and elderly women. (more women than men). Here is not so popular to sit on street in front of cafe. I think that people just are going through this street, even food which you can buy is fast-food, take and go. While sitting in cafe and watching area, nothing special happened. It's not meeting place, there's no one standing and dancing, singing, resting after run. Buy and go, eat and go, wait for the train and ride. Go to the pub, drink beer and search for club. This place have potential, big group is coming, but no one tries to stop them to stay longer.

### STREET CLIMAT

What I take care of or what is important for me is first condignation facade, those which you see first cause it's on eye height level. I noticed that each entrance to building is different, what gives the unique character to street. Thanks to often opened gateways, street isn't closed, we know how to pass through and go inside. I felt that a lot of things is happening on this street in one time. You feel that prices of food are not high, there's far less English inscriptions than in

old town area.

I have found accidentally book with photographs of Lubo Stacho, and I understood that fact that street is divided into small shops gives character. Even if I don't like logotype of kebap pocer 'pascho', it's part of history of this place. It reflects the position in human needs of current times.

I took only few photos of entrances and windows in this area. There's no need to take more if somebody were doing it professionally for 30 years...

### IN GOOD OR BAD TASTE?

After walking backwards and forwards through the street I felt that there is messy. I like diversity of facades, fact that new shops are changing the view of the street is good. I liked the old unrepaired gates, even colorful facades are ok. What bothers me are logotypes and adverts of shops and restaurants. Some of them are in bad taste. In one way when you see not well prepared menu with reddish photos of food you know that's cheap but in the other hand eating in this surroundings doesn't give you satisfaction. This is problem of many polish town also, lack of planned places for logotypes and shops owners flexibility generates problems of cluttered streets view. Just offer few minutes I have noticed buildings height diversity. Most of them have two and three floors. Often ground floor facade is other than rest of the building. Cause of this can be fact that higher are residential floors or owner just doesn't care of renovation higher parts of building. I still haven't decide if it's good that area is little messy, what happened after implementing some 'decoration' rules?

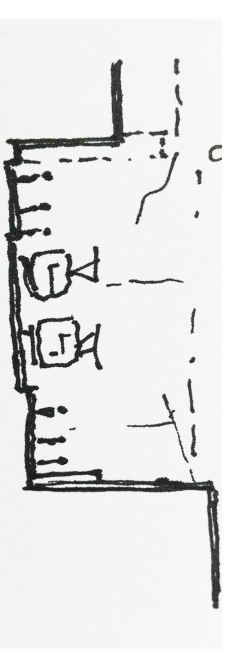
## WHAT'S UP IN THE NIGHT?

In first I have to underline that Obhodna in regular, working day and Obhodna in weekend are two different streets. In Monday after 11PM, pub where we were sitting was closing in other place owner let us sit till midnight. Then it's not worth for them to work in night in normal, not free of work. It means that tourists aren't the main source of income. Cost of beer ~ 1-1.3€. That's half the price competing to old town pubs.

From Friday till Sunday each pub and fast-food place is full. Street is much more crowded, like during mon-fri rush hours. Mostly young people, students are partying on the street, drinking at the street. (Police don't react). Area is highly occupied because is cheap, it's not 'hipster' one (apart from quite new place book store and cd's place. Easy to notice foreigner groups.

### WHAT ARE SAINC NON-ARCHITECTURE PEPOPLE

- I don't like it there's mess.
- I don't care. Regular street.
- How much for the beer?



# BRATISLAVA OBHODNA STREET

Michele Tagliaferri 84826

Obchodna was one of the first streets i remember having walked through the virtual eyes of google's street view little blue man. I did that to have an idea of how the the city would be before to actually get here.

Since those first frames i could understand that this road could have been a good benchmark for my future trips around Bratislava. Because of all its colors and lights, i thought, this street will not go unnoticed in my head, for a second time. If i get lost in that city, i will just bum around searching for this road to orient and find my way to home.

Now that i'm in here i am actually acting the part of that little blue google man, saying that first feeling i had was partly true. Obchodna Street is definetely one of the most attractive and characteristic paths of Bratislava. Perhaps for its geographical convenience, nightlife, or simply passing through to get to the old city, i think this street is the one in which i passed most time during two weeks, statistically.

Along this route the feeling i have is to go through a long uneven corridor without a real beginning and no end, and with few windows in the middle, to look outside. The viewer's attention is captured almost exclusively, and through different senses, from the most different types of business set on the ground floor of the buildings, on the two sides facing the roadway. Above, beyond the over-illuminated facades, building's fronts draw a wacky rhythm made of various heights, styles and colors, which reinforce once more the multi-ethnic and outside-of-time character of this place.

But on the inside, this is a world full of life, made by motions of different directions and trajectories. The flows of people and machineries come one after the other at different intensities, without stopping, from early morning until late at night. Hundreds of people flock regularly around the two tram stops, which runs along the road in its full length: Vysoka and Postova could represent, not just symbolically, the beginning and end of Obchodna.

But where the tracks turn into other directions, the magic is lost.

Now you have to choose : old town center or outskirts.

The dinstinction between the parts is immediate : on southwest S.Michele Gate marks the entrance in the old town, with its restaurants, nightclubs and souvenir shops. Here tourists throng the narrow and stoned-paved streets, looking for historical buildings, museums and monuments. This is certainly the prittiest and most organized part of Bratislava.

On the other side, in nort-east direction, cars bacome again the main actors, distances are wider, and buildings change their appearance and become containers for offices and lecture halls; in a dance between new and old, between glass, iron, and stone facades.

Even if the trams' flow don't cause any problem of congestion to this street throughout its length, the road section often changes its width and it offers sidewalk of different size on both sides, to ensure safety and fluidity for pedestrian. However, for the most part it is not equipped with any urban furniture or break areas, that make it a little monotonous while you walk through it. Other than that, sometimes you can see some openings leading to some inner courts, behind building's facades, where some open-air market are organized giving opportunities for social life and activities.

Walking towards the old town, the visual connection with the castle in the background is strong enough to suggest you are on the good way. But not the same thing happens on the opposite side, where at the end of the street you find yourself drastically lost in a different dimension, made by asphalt and traffic lights, without any specific visual reference to follow and more than one directions to choose.

Every floor area in Obchodna is stone-paved, which give it the importance of an historical road, but there is no space for any kind of vegetation. The only place where you can find some tree lines is the intersection with Postova street. This might actually be the focal point of this road, it consists of a wider space where two important pedestrian paths meet, with a greater amount of people coming from every direction.

But here again, there are no benches, gardens, signs or attractions that could give more interest to this place, leaving it remain just a transition zone.

At the end of the day i think that Obchodna street has lot of good potentiality in order to have better development in the future and could be a useful case study for a urban design intervention.

In this young constantly changing environment of Bratislava, where old and new blend together, this corridor of life and actions still must find the right way to its own identity.



# OBCHODNA

BRATISLAVA - SEPTEMBER 2016 - NOA SCHUMACHER



At first glance, Obchodna street is distinguished by the lack of homogeneity. The fronts of buildings follow without any logical sequence. The height differences and the multitude of architectural styles complicate the reading of the street. It's hard to attribute an architectural or historical period to this street. The only common thread, it's the tertiary activities all along the ground floor. The animation and attractiveness of Obchodna is entirely due to its many shops, restaurants and bars.

People stop, look the store front, take time to enter, make few purchases and continue their way. Except for a few coffee or restaurant terraces, this street is powerless of furniture. It's impossible to sit quietly, laze and open a book. The atmosphere prevailing encourages to be all time in movement.

This feeling of having to cross the street is reinforcing by the perspective and the convergence in a vanishing point on the castle when you walk in direction of the historical center. This view is highlighted by the tram rails line on the ground and the tram cables on the sky. In some the pedestrians are lead by this lines which determine the way.

The presence of too many sign is suffocating. The eye cannot be fixed on a point of interest. The colors, fonts and different logos hide the appearance of buildings. Below this make up, we found many passing. Obchodna life doesn't stop at the front of buildings. It must venture with curiosity through the buildings to discover the other side of the street.

There is a place in this street where the influence of the movement is less present: the tram station. There, people stop, they wait. But again, there is any public equipment. The only distinction between the stop and the rest of the street is a step and a yellow marking. People are immobile but they do not seem to pay attention to the environment. The lack of sit does not make the wait a pleasant moment.

It's a large and open street; the presence of many people has no impact. We do not feel an impression of crushing in this street as in some big shopping street. The sobriety and the deficiency of vegetation increase this feeling of openness. Nevertheless, an adding of vegetation and/or some public equipment would make the street more attractive and create the desire to linger.

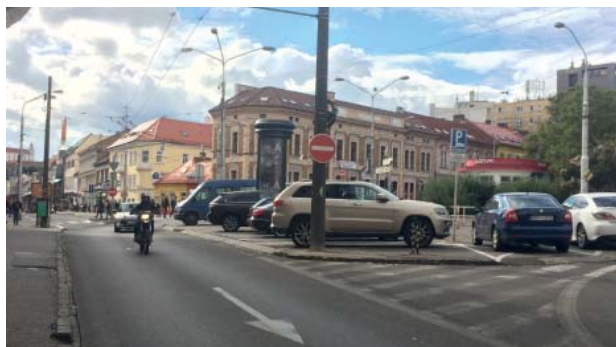
Despite the lack of space to install, this street is still very much alive. At night, it is nice to go for a drink in one of the many bars. The late hours, the agitation and the walkers' movements give way to discussions on the sides of the street. The atmosphere is quieter and you hear talking and laughing.

# Impression of Obchodna Street

Bénédicte Quintiens

Obchodna Street was the very first street I have walked through when I arrived in Bratislava. The taxi was bringing me from the station to this street and was telling me that it was the biggest shopping street of the city. Therefore I already had a certain image of the street. But when I arrived, it was not what I expected it to be. It was true that there were a few big shops like H&M and CCC, but it didn't appear to me like a big shopping street like I am used to them in Belgium. But even if the street itself didn't have the best first impression, the view that Obchodna Street has on the castle of Bratislava makes up for it.

In my opinion Obchodna Street looks more like a street that is starting to become a shopping street. It reminds me to lots of streets in my region in the smaller villages. A true shopping street for me has more big clothing shops. Now it is more a mixture of different kind of programs in the buildings. There are restaurants, pubs, little alleys to go to other pubs, hostels, supermarkets, etc. There are a few bigger stores but most of them are rather smaller shops. It does depend where you are in the street. The part of the street that is closest to Mickiewiczova Street feels more like a big shopping street. This is because in this part, there are a few bigger shops that have a very modern look with for example big windows. The architecture of the street is very diverse. There are buildings that are renovated and are an added value to Obchodna Street. Both very modern buildings and historical buildings. Others give a rather dirty impression to the street and are not very interesting in terms of architecture.



It's clear that there has already been made some changes to the street. For example making this street free of car traffic. I think this is a big advantage to the street and for all the dealers of the shops and restaurants. The only unfortunate thing is that from the Mickiewiczova Street, the view to the Obchodna Street is not optimal and you don't see that it's a car free street from a distance. There are parked cars and traffic that is allowed at the end of Obchodna Street that holds back an attractive view. I think the connection with this street has still some opportunities and that there are better solutions.

The tram that is the only traffic that goes through the street, demands a lot of space. There are often a lot of people waiting for the tram, which makes the circulation a little bit more difficult at these places. However, it seems that there are many people who use the public transportation to come to this place and it is easy to reach with this public transportation. The way the tram has been built, without any difference in level between the tram and the sidewalk, ensures that the street feels bigger.

One thing I think that the street misses, are benches or other things to make this street a more pleasant street. A shopping street is a street where people can spend a few hours and it's always good to keep people in this street a bit longer. It's also more comfortable for people if there is a place to sit. But I think the street is maybe just a little bit too small to provide this.



I also noticed that the atmosphere is different in the day and the night. In the day there is more a circulation through the street, whereas in the night lots of people stand in groups on the street. In the night there are many bars and durum places open. This is a good thing for a street who wants to be a street for the nightlife, but if it's really the intention to make a shopping street out of this, then I think all those bars and durum places aren't an advantage for the street during the day.

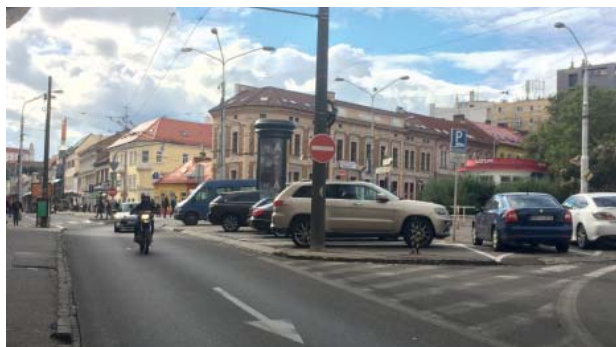
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## Urban design Tiberghien Florence

I had the impression when i walked in Obchodna street of a lot of thing very different. A sort of medley of lot activities : restaurant, shopping, hostel, kebab. Moreever this activities juxtaposition bring to life the street, with a succesion of time part. Any times in a day, there is a lot of hustle and bustle with different people at different time bring out the importance of this street in Bratislava.

I love this ambiance and the idea of a real life in this street. I know i can pass a lot of time in this street, but in reality it's just for go somewhere : in a bar, for eat, for make shopping. I never went in this street just for her special caracter, just as can go in the center of bratislava or along the riverbank for drink somthing with a good view. If i go in this street it's only for the prices and her very good location. So i think this street have a lot of attractive feature but don't use and show case it. Currently it's a cross street with crowd , nothing feel like siting down or pass long time. There is nothing for people who want to sit down, and for the moment i think the lack of hierarchy in the jumble of this street renforce with a lot of advertisement doesn't want to give this feeling. Indeed i have the feeling of dirty street, accentuated with a grey coating and the tram noise.

Also lot of restaurant couldn't put outside seating area with the largest of the street and the Tram. That why a lot of restaurant have terrace in recess of the street, constitute little peacefull space, without noise and crowd. When i walk in this street with attention, i can saw a lot of passage and it's like a surprise. As if the street is a succession of surprise and mysterious pathway sometimes good surprise and sometime more ugly. But for me, this type of space as much important as the street, but aren't highlight we forget it in the jumble of the street.

Urban morphology of the street form part of this jumble. The street appaer long with her front window and facade very different, and also heighten by the landmark form by the castlle. However Obchodna street is cross by little space or main street like Postova. But the node for go in the city center and join this others distict of Bratislava prevent the link with the rest of the town. For me the most problem with obchodna street insn't the street herself but the jonction with the rest of the city. Hurbanovo namestie is like a interuption between the center and Obchodna. It's realy not the same scale and break the ambiance of the city center very quiet. May be in Obchodna street there is a lot of thing to do for improve the activities of shopping and customer, but for me the real problem is the lack of link between the district of Bratislava. There is a strange medley between pedestraint street like in the center or Obchodna street and the place given to a car. It's a strange feeling i had for this node but also for the rest of Bratislava because the historical center is very nice and quiet but withdraw on himself.