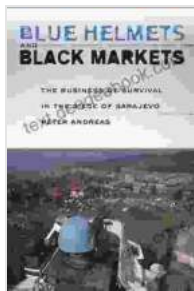


The Business of Survival: The Siege of Sarajevo and the Struggle for Economic Life

: A City Under Siege

The siege of Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, lasted from April 5, 1992, to February 29, 1996, a grueling span of 1,425 days. As the Yugoslav Wars raged, Sarajevo found itself trapped in a relentless cycle of shelling, sniper fire, and humanitarian crisis. Amidst the turmoil, however, the people of Sarajevo demonstrated extraordinary resilience and innovation, adapting to the harsh conditions and finding ways to sustain themselves and their city.



Blue Helmets and Black Markets: The Business of Survival in the Siege of Sarajevo by Peter Andreas

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 1420 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 226 pages



This article explores the business strategies, ingenuity, and resilience of Sarajevo's citizens during the siege. It examines how they managed to maintain economic activity, create new industries, and survive amidst the horrors of war.

Adaptive Businesses: Pivot and Innovation

With traditional industries disrupted and infrastructure destroyed, the citizens of Sarajevo had to adapt their businesses to the wartime conditions. Many businesses pivoted their operations to meet the urgent needs of the besieged city.

For example, the Igman Metal Factory, once a producer of refrigerators, shifted to manufacturing stoves and other essential household items. The Sarajevska Pivara, a brewery, began producing non-alcoholic beverages to meet the demand for clean drinking water.

Other businesses embraced innovation to create new industries. For instance, due to the lack of available medical supplies, a group of local engineers established a workshop to repair and manufacture medical devices.

The Rise of the Black Market and Smuggling

As the siege intensified, the supply of essential goods dwindled. The official distribution system became increasingly unreliable, leading to the rise of a thriving black market.

Smugglers risked their lives to bring goods into the city, primarily via the dangerous Sarajevo Airport tunnel. These goods, often obtained from neighboring countries, included food, medicine, and fuel.

The black market became a lifeline for Sarajevo's residents, yet it also fueled inflation and corruption. Smuggling networks also played a role in the illicit arms trade, exacerbating the conflict.

Humanitarian Aid and the NGO Sector

The international community provided substantial humanitarian aid to Sarajevo during the siege. The United Nations, the International Red Cross, and numerous NGOs worked tirelessly to deliver food, medicine, and other essential supplies to the city's population.

Humanitarian aid played a crucial role in mitigating the suffering of the people of Sarajevo. However, its distribution was often hampered by political interference and corruption.

Despite these challenges, the NGO sector became a vital part of the city's economic and social fabric. NGOs provided assistance with food, shelter, medical care, and education.

Community Resilience and Informal Economy

Beyond formal businesses and humanitarian aid, the people of Sarajevo relied heavily on community resilience and the informal economy to survive the siege.

Barter became a common means of exchange. Residents traded goods, services, and knowledge to meet their needs. Community gardens were established, providing a source of fresh produce.

The informal economy, often overlooked, played a substantial role in sustaining the city. It included small-scale businesses, street vendors, and various forms of self-employment.

The Legacy of Economic Survival

The siege of Sarajevo profoundly impacted the economic and social fabric of the city. The resilience and ingenuity of its citizens became a symbol of hope and determination.

After the war, Sarajevo faced significant challenges in rebuilding its economy. However, the lessons learned during the siege guided the city's recovery efforts.

Today, Sarajevo is a vibrant and resilient city. The business strategies, innovation, and community spirit forged during the siege continue to shape its economic and social development.

: A Testament to Human Endurance

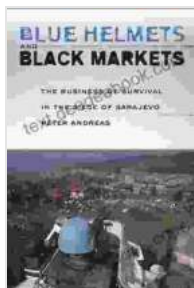
The siege of Sarajevo was a dark chapter in human history. Yet, amidst the horrors of war, the people of Sarajevo demonstrated an extraordinary ability to endure, adapt, and survive.

Their business strategies, ingenuity, and resilience serve as a testament to the indomitable spirit of humanity. The story of the siege of Sarajevo teaches us that even in the darkest of times, human creativity, adaptability, and community can prevail.





Sarajevan entrepreneurs sell goods in the black market.



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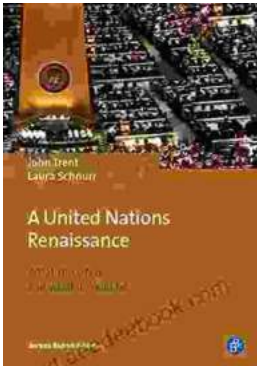
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