MIT/AKPIA Postdoctoral Fellowship, 2017/2018
End-of-tenure report on the research
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PREFACE

Being a postdoctoral fellow at AKPIA/MIT program marked the turning point in my young
academic career. To be fair, even before I occupied the postdoctoral office in AKPIA premises
right under the famous MIT dome, I had significant doctoral and postdoctoral experience and a
pleasure of working at some of the best universities and with some of the leading scholars in the
field of architecture. But it is this tenure at MIT Department of Architecture, and working
closely alongside professors Nasser Rabbat and James Wescoat, that changed fundamentally the
way I think about academia and my place in it. Our numerous casual and official conversations
in and around the office were so inspiring and often even mind-boggling, that I soon developed
a habit of coming to work early and leaving late just to catch the slightest opportunity for a brief
exchange of ideas and opinions. The intellectual atmosphere created by professors and students
alike allowed me to thrive professionally, which two years and one postdoc fellowship later led
to an appointment as an Assistant Professor at Delft University of Technology. The lessons
learned during the AKPIA/MIT fellowship about academic excellence, honesty and conduct will
stay with me for a long time, and for that I will be forever grateful to professors Rabbat and
Wescoat who gave me this life-changing opportunity.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES, METHODOLOGIES AND OUTCOMES

The twentieth century has witnessed destruction of the built environment and heritage in
armed conflicts on an unprecedented scale, inasmuch that acts of violence against cities have
become intrinsic parts of both state-building and modernity-building apparatus.[2] The
destruction of architecture, one could argue, is old as architecture itself due to the innate
characteristic of buildings to provide existence in a place, create meaning and propel socio-
economic status. Complete erasure of cities, although difficult to achieve, has been attempted,
repeated and even romanticized throughout the history.[3] But, as argued by Phillip Misselwitz
and Eyal Weizman, modern destruction of built environment carries something distinctively

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[1] Assistant Professor, TU Delft Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment.
[2] Lucia Allais, *Designs of destruction: the making of monuments in the twentieth Century* (Chicago: The
University of Chicago Press, 2018).
[3] Lawrence J. Vale and Thomas J. Campanella, eds., *The Resilient City: How modern cities recover from
disaster* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

characteristic for our era.[4] Especially in past few decades, with the development of high-precision and long-distance weaponry systems, calculated targeting of architecture became the hallmark of contemporary wars. This new kind of warfare puts the emphasis on target-selection process, adding new layers to the myriad of possible readings of built environment.

> 'Across a war-torn world rode Elric, his crimson eyes burning with a fierce anger at the sights of wanton destruction he witnessed. Although he had himself lived by his sword for many years and had committed acts of murder, robbery and *urbicide*, he disliked the senselessness of wars such as this, of men who killed one another for only the vaguest of reasons.'[5]

In response to this phenomena, the emerging field of studies on urban conflicts and urban destruction re-popularized the concept of *'urbicide' – the destruction of a city or its character*.[6] First written down in 1963 in premonitory fashion by Michael Moorcock, urbicide entered architectural vocabulary through writings of Wolf von Eckardt, Ada Louise Huxtable and Marshall Berman, who all used it to criticize aggressive urban development of American cities.[7] But it is the vast destruction of cities such as Sarajevo and Mostar during the Bosnian war (1991-1995) that gave the term the connotation in which it is predominantly used today. Writings of Bogdan Bogdanović, but especially two timely publications— *Mostar '92: Urbicid* (1992) and *Warchitectre: Urbicide Sarajevo* (1994)—instigated new theories on urbicide as more-or-less calculated destruction of built environment in war-like acts of violence.[8]

Since then, in an avalanche of texts, the understanding of urbicide became increasingly flexible, encompassing a wide range of damaging actions directed against the built environment. The field is shaped by Robert Bevan's notion on destruction of memory, Andrew Herscher's theories on the creative entanglement of violence and cultural production, and Francesco Mazzucchelli's study on semiotic value of places in times of destruction and

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[4] Phillip Misselwitz and Eyal Weizman, 'Military operations as urban planning,' in *Territories,* ed. Anselm Franke (Berlin: KW Institute for Contemporary Art, 2003), pp. 272-275.

[5] First recorded mentioning of the term *urbicide*, Michael Moorcock, 'Dead God's Homecoming,' in *ELRIC The Stealer of Souls* (New York: Del Rey Books, 2008), pp. 226-227. First published in *Science Fantasy*, no.59 (June 1963). Author's emphasis.

[6] Oxford English Dictionary (available online at: https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/urbicide).

[7] Wolf von Eckardt, 'New York's Trade Center - World's tallest fiasco', *Harper's magazine* (May Edition, 1966); Ada Louise Huxtable, 'Lessons in Urbicide,' *The New York Times,* 22 December 1968, p. D33; Marshall Berman, 'Among the ruins,' *New Internationalist*, 178 (December 1987).

[8] Bogdan Bogdanović, 'Assassino della città,' *Spazio e Società*, 64 (1994), pp.72-75; Željko Jurić, Vladimir Kolopić, Ivanka Ribarević-Nikolić, and Krešimir Šego, *Mostar'92 –Urbicid* (Mostar: Hrvatsko vijeće obrane općine Mostar, 1992); Association of Architects DAS-SABIH Sarajevo, *Warchitecture: Urbicide Sarajevo* (Paris: Ministere de l'Equipement, des Transports et du Tourisme, Direction de l'Architecture et de l'Urbanisme, 1994).

reconstruction.[9] Attempts to systemize urbicidal discourses focused primarily on political motives for urban destruction, two pivotal books in that regard being Stephen Graham's *Cities, War and Terrorism: Towards an Urban Geopolitics* (2004) and Martin Coward's *Urbicide – The Politics of Urban Destruction* (2008).[10] Graham gave both historic and contemporary overview of all damaging actions against cities, hinting where potential perils may lie in the near future. Coward, on the other hand, was more systematic in designing his classification and definitions, using Heidegger's concepts of *Dasein* and *Mitsein* to conclude that urbicide is destruction of built environment that constitutes the possibility of 'being-with-others in the World'—theory that has been proven in the process of ethnic, religious and cultural homogenization of territory during the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s.

The argument I wish to put forward in my research, however, is that the destruction of built environment in wars is only rarely the final act of urbicide. To date, scarce attention has been dedicated to the systematic examination of post-conflict urban reconstructions in transition societies that often are more sophisticated and more comprehensive forms of killing of the cities.[11] The word 'transition' is a straightforward association to the specific set of processes that characterize political, economic and cultural transition from socialist to capitalist society, that is, from centrally planned economy to a market economy. Although borrowed from economy sciences, the term is widely accepted and already rooted in the interdisciplinary studies of post-socialist transformation of the former Eastern Bloc. It is my stance that those damaging processes directly contribute to the further deterioration of architecture already damaged in violent conflicts, producing a specific kind of '*transition urbicide*'[12].

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[9] Robert Bevan, *The Destruction of Memory: Architecture at War* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007); Andrew Herscher, *Violence Taking Place: The Architecture of the Kosovo Conflict* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010); Francesco Mazzucchelli, *Urbicidio: lI senso dei luoghi tra distruzioni e ricostruzioni nella ex Jugoslavia* (Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2010).

[10] Martin Coward, *Urbicide – The Politics of Urban Destruction* (London: Routledge, 2008); Stephen Graham, *Cities, War and Terrorism: Towards an Urban Geopolitics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004).

[11] See, for example, Anders Åslund, *Building Capitalism: The Transformation of the Former Soviet Bloc* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[12] The usage of the term 'urbicide' in Balkan context is very charged and, admittedly, it can gain some unwanted connotations. I already mentioned that its scholarly and popular usage over the years became universal and, unavoidably, vague, so much so that it became an alert word whenever there's some unfavourable action against built environment. In the local context, however, the term is being predominantly used to describe calculated destruction of architecture of others (mostly religious or heritage buildings, but also large number of private homes) that accompanied ethnic cleansing and 'balkanization' of the territory—the trademark of Yugoslav wars of the 1990s. When it comes to the 1999 NATO bombing, the destruction of built environment did have some elements of urbicide (as for example, destruction of city's character through symbolic targeting of governmental buildings in Belgrade), but I am not referring to it as urbicide *per se*. My definition of urbicide expands to include the variety of detrimental actions in post-war reconstruction of damaged buildings in Yugoslavia. Since these actions stem from the complex processes of post-socialist transition, they are something that all of the

In these intense processes of post-conflict reconstruction, the city is often drastically redefined and recalibrated to fit new political, social and economic realities. The distinctive symptoms of this process—contested ownership, private takeover of communal resources and unbridled investment plans—reflect in the urban sphere through appropriation of public spaces, erasure of historical architectural styles or even failure to produce (re)construction at all. In addition, in conflicted and divisive societies, post-war reconstruction is interpreted as a continuation of the conflict by other means that is equally detrimental to urban fabric.[13] Failing to understand and address these phenomena may lead to irreparable devastation of architecture that has already been severely damaged in an act of calculated violence.

What recommended me for the Aga Khan fellowship, I like to believe, is my passionate interest in the study of urban conflicts, which is perfectly aligned with a multi-year research project *"Ethics of Intervention: Architecture of Refugees and Reconstruction in the Middle East"* conducted at the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at MIT. As stated in the project manifesto, this research seeks to:

> "…develop an *ethical yet practical and dynamic framework* for the handling of the short and long term aims of refugee relief, heritage conservation, and reconstruction. It endeavors to *re-inject the humanistic principles of inclusiveness, understanding, sensitivity, and empathy into the discourse* developing around the idea of humanitarian relief and all projects aimed at alleviating the plight of victims of armed conflicts in the Middle East today. It seeks to propose ways to *give voice to the real stakeholders, the victims of the conflicts,* including the refugees and displaced people as well as the people still residing in the areas that have been most affected by the conflicts."[14]

This ethical and humanistic approach to urban reconstruction following violent conflicts, and giving voice to multiple actors involved in the process, resonates well with my own approach to researching postwar reconstruction of cities in former Yugoslav damaged in a decade-long conflict.

Complex investigation into modalities in which violence and war influence the transformation of cities requires new methods of documenting and cross-referencing multiple architectural sources and histories. Taking into account the vast array of actors—architects, city

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countries of former Yugoslavia have in common. Hence conflating all former Yugoslav republics in this research happens in reference to the post-war reconstruction processes, not the nature of destruction.

[13] Emily G. Makaš, 'Rebuilding Mostar: International and Local Visions of a Contested City and Its Heritage', in *On Location: Heritage Cities and Sites,* ed. D. Fairchild Ruggles (New York: Springer Verlag, 2012), pp.151-168.

[14] https://akpia.mit.edu/program-research (my emphasis).

planners, private investors, institutes for protection of cultural heritage, government departments, mass-media—across different time layers—before, during, and after the conflict—generates various perspectives for academic research. Interdisciplinary sources (such as architectural and urban projects, zoning and protection laws, corporate internal documentation, newspaper articles, TV video material) that would enable the investigation of the transition urbicide processes are not documented in 'standard' archives due to novelty of those processes (for many buildings damaged in 1990s it is still an ongoing development), non-existent archival regulations and lack of an unifying archival system. Creating a reference model that would expose interconnections and power hierarchy between different actors involved in post-war reconstruction has the potential to identify abstract schemes, procedural steps and dynamic networks that are guiding the reconstruction of ex-Yugoslav cities. The goal of this research, therefore, is to inspire an investigation into hidden power loops that are contributing to the destruction of Yugoslav modernist heritage. Because it is unfinished and ongoing process, special emphasis should be given to the temporal dimension of these connections that are in the state of constant dynamical flux, and their evolution and re-articulation through time.

> "*Histoire croisée* aims to utilize the intercrossing of perspectives and shifts in points of view in order to study specific knowledge effects. Starting from the divergences among various possible viewpoints, by bringing out their differences and the way in which, historically, they emerge, often in an interdependent manner, *histoire croisée* makes it possible to recompose these elements. The reflexivity to which it leads is not empty formalism, but is rather a relational field that generates meaning."[15]

This methodology proposes constructing a *histoire croisée* of the multiple actors that are involved in post-war reconstruction processes. Advantages of this approach are multiple: first, it gives the chance to look at identified problem with many different sets of eyes, not only the ones of an architect or architectural historian. Perils of a single-story can be multiple, and although personal biases are hard to eliminate completely, observing the playfield on a relational level indeed did generate new meanings that correspond more accurately to the realpolitik happening 'on the ground.' Secondly, overlaying different actors' roles and decision-making procedures reveals surprising level of interdependence, sometimes in unexpected places, but also shows how architect are marginalized and excluded from any kind of executive power. Finally, this approach also offers a solid tool to re-examine architectural research

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[15] Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, 'Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity,' *History and Theory*, 45.1 (2006), pp. 30-50.

scenarios that can be applied to war and post-war contexts, as currently existing methodology does not offer adequate approaches.[16]

The one-year tenure at MIT helped me to simultaneously develop my research in four parallel paths, all of which I will elaborate here in more details: *public lecture(s)*, *teaching*, *grant preparation*, and *published work*.

Public lecture: Between the Hammer and the Anvil: Transition Architecture of Postwar Ex-Yugoslavia[17]

Socialist Yugoslavia was built on a maxim of 'brotherhood and unity.' It was a home to six republics, three major religions, one official and many unofficial languages, myriad of local cultures and ethnicities. On a global political scene, Yugoslavia managed to carve itself a special niche between Western and Eastern Blocks as a founder of the Non-Aligned movement, and arguably, an unofficial leader of the Third World. In distancing itself from the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia rejected socialist realism as an official architectural style and embraced the postulates of modernism as desired mode of architectural production.[18] This led to creation of unusual hybrid architecture, capitalist in form, and socialist in nature, where architects had unlimited creative freedom, and they used it to be the driving force in social, cultural and aesthetic transformation of the country. Socialist architecture got international acclamation from both sides of the spectrum, and it served as a platform for cultural exchange in the process of building the Non-Aligned movement.[19] It mimicked the globalist aspirations of the Yugoslav Communist Party, but at the same time, managed to attract global attention for its playfulness and originality.[20]

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[16] I am taking as a point of reference David Wang and Linda N. Groat, *Architectural Research Methods* (New Jersey: Willey, 2013).

[17] Lecture held on May 7, 2018. AKPIA@MIT Spring 2018 Lecture Series.

[18] Vladimir Kulić, 'Land of the in-between: Modern architecture and the state in socialist Yugoslavia, 1945-1965' (PhD Dissertation, Faculty of the Graduate School of The University of Texas at Austin, 2009).

[19] Dubravka Sekulić, *Constructing Non-alignment: the Case of Energoprojekt* (Belgrade: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016).

[20] Yugoslav modern architecture also had its critics. Especially aggressive urban planning has been criticized for its culturally insensitive 'anti-regional' character, and many scholars traced back the beginning of the process of territorial, cultural and ethnic homogenization—so called 'balkanization'—to the early stages of post-Second World war modernization of the country (See, for example, Andrew Herscher, *Violence Taking Place*). Admittedly, a huge part of the process of modernization was destruction of vernacular architecture, as well as semantic and formal transformation of traditional architectural forms and their adaptation for progressive, socialist values and standards. In numerous interviews I had with architects of the time, they defended noble intentions behind sometimes violent processes, but undoubtedly those provoked a reaction, if not immediately, then certainly as an afterthought.

At the end of the Cold war, while walls across the Europe were falling down, Yugoslavia started building walls of its own.[21] Rise of nationalism and calculated destruction of architecture and culture 'of others' was the main characteristic of all Yugoslav wars and skirmishes that spanned from 1991 to 2004 (Fig. 1). The aim of this destruction was to erase evidence of multicultural cohabitation that flourished in this region for centuries and permanently break up ties among its people. During and after Yugoslav wars, socialist architecture was stigmatized both as a symbol of oppression of the centralized communist government and as an unwanted reminder of a shared past. It was targeted alongside the cultural and religious monuments, although its destruction went under the radar for several reasons: its cultural and architectural value was neither recognized nor protected by institutions, its abstract forms eluded any commonly accepted definition and understanding, and hence, its cultural influence inside the confines of Yugoslavia never went outside of the narrow circles of urban and intellectual elites. Nature of destruction of socialist architecture in Bosnian and Croatian wars from 1991 to 1995 had every characteristic of, in words of Bogdan Bogdanović, 'wanton destruction of primitive, anti-urban and hence uncivilized minds.'[22] On the other hand, in 1999, NATO alliance marked modern socialist architecture as a standard-bearer of Serbia's statehood, and exercised its precise destruction as a clear demonstration of power and a mode of pressure on Milošević's totalitarian regime.[23]

Figure 1. Warchitecture: Urbicide Sarajevo, 1994.

In both those instances, the end of armed conflicts meant the definite end of socialism in Yugoslavia's successor countries and the beginning of the long process of economic, political and cultural transition into nominally democratic and liberal capitalist societies. Despite new political realities on the ground that kept reigniting newly established divisions, one shared feature that is common and still persists among all ex-Yugoslav republics is deflection from the shared socialist architectural and cultural heritage. In some instances, its mistreatment is being used for reinvention of post-socialist nationalist identities, while in others, crony privatization of public properties serves as a short-term injection of capital into porous economies, that often

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[21] Sabina P. Ramet, *Balkan Babel: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia from the Death of Tito to the Fall of Milosevic* (Westview Press, 2002); Carole Rogel, *The Breakup of Yugoslavia and Its Aftermath*, revised edition (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2004).

[22] Bogdan Bogdanović, *Tri ratne knjige* (en. Three War Books) (Novi Sad: Mediterran Publishing, 2008).

[23] Bojan Dimitrijević and Jovica Draganić, *Vazdušni rat nad Srbijom 1999. godine* (en. Air War over Serbia in 1999) (Beograd: Medija centar Odbrana, 2013). Although this war was different in nature from wars in Bosnia and Croatia (1991-1995), much smaller in scale of destruction and number of victims, it had similar long-term consequences for the society and socialist architectural heritage, so much so that some comparisons have already been made (see, for example, Nikolina Bobić, *Balkanization and Global Politics: Remaking Cities and Architecture* [London: Routledge, 2019]).

directly leads to kleptocracy. While these processes in reconstruction of separate cases have been investigated to some extent, so far, the comparative analysis has eluded global academic attention.[24]

After the democratic uprising in Serbia in 2000 which formally ended socialism in former Yugoslavia, the damaged modernist buildings fell into a vortex of ideological and semantic battles, hasty privatizations as instant solution for neoliberal economy, media-filtered placement of information and the deeply polarized public opinion—all of which caused for some buildings to remain in ruinous state up until today. Contemporary Yugoslav architecture and its institutions blended into these destructive processes and lost the power to be the driving force in post-war transformation of the society.[25] In the case of Bosnia and Croatia, malpractices related to reconstruction of damaged socialist architectural heritage reflect all the difficulties of a post-state-controlled economy, struggling to make this transition and find its way in a neo-liberal, capitalist and globalized world. In retrospective, the violent conflict was just a trigger for continuous devastation of unwanted architectural heritage, whose maltreatment after the war even became a way for recreating national identity.[26]

Yet, interdisciplinary studies that would focus on post-war reconstruction in the entire former Yugoslavia, let alone the ones that would combine diverse architectural sources and documents, are notably lacking. Majority of scholarly papers on the topic are local reactions to bombing or surveys of attacked architecture written during or immediately after the war.[27] More recently, sporadic critical texts that focus on rare reconstruction proposals have been published, but a comprehensive study of architectural production in post-socialist Yugoslavia is still missing.[28] They all fail to ask deeper questions about the links between architectural design,

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[24] For Bosnian case, see, for example, Mirjana Ristić, *Architecture, Urban Space and War: The Destruction and Reconstruction of Sarajevo* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

[25] Like it was, for example, in post-war socialist Yugoslavia. See Nikola Dobrović, *Urbanizam kroz vekove. Deo 1: Jugoslavija* (Beograd: Naučna knjiga, 1950).

[26] I explain this at grater length in my doctoral dissertation, Aleksandar Staničić, *Architecture born in violence: Creative dilemma in post-urbicidal reconstructions. Experiences of Belgrade in the aftermath of 1999 War* (Milan: Politecnico di Milano, 2014).

[27] The destruction of Bosnian and Kosovar cities is elaborated in detail in Andras Riedlmayer, '"Killing Memory: The Targeting of Bosnia's Cultural Heritage," Testimony Presented at a Hearing of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, U.S. Congress, April 4, 1995,' (Community of Bosnia Foundation, 1995) and Andrew Herscher, *Violence Taking Place*. The destruction of Serbian cities in 1999 is documented in Spasoje Krunić and Miloš Perović, *Beograd 1999. Rušenje arhitektonske kulture,* exhibition catalogue (Beograd: Skupština grada Beograda, 1999), and Anonym, 'Arhitektura Beograda stradala u "vazdušnoj kampanji" NATO snaga', *Nasleđe,* No. 2 (1999), pp. 213-221. For timely reactions to NATO bombing, see Srđan Jovanović Weiss, 'NATO as Architectural Critic', *Cabinet,* No. 1, (2000), and Vladimir Kulić, 'Architectural Guide to the ruins of Belgrade', *CTheory* (1999).

[28] See, for example, Lea David, "Mediating International and Domestic Demands. Mnemonic Battles Surrounding the Monument to the Fallen of the Wars of the 1990s in Belgrade," *Nationalities Papers 42*, no.

violence and geopolitics, or to make a comparative analysis with ongoing reconstruction of Bosnian and Croatian cities, with which Serbia shares political and cultural background, but not the nature of conflict.[29]

Apart from several pioneering, ambitious attempts that came soon after the conflict, when hopes were still high in positive outcomes of reconstruction (for example, Lebbeus Woods's proposal for the reconstruction of *Elektroprivreda* building is Sarajevo, or the 'New Gates of Belgrade' competition), efforts to rebuild damaged buildings soon slipped away from the hands of architects.[30] As the time went by, different power players started to line up for their fair share of influence, so that this idealist, scholarly approach to reconstruction soon got substituted with opportunism, as it will be shown, without any oversight. Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs building in Belgrade, for instance, was sold in 2003 to Israeli investor *AFI Europe* who waited for more than ten years for the change of the General plan that would allow more favourable urban parameters. Waiting certainly paid off, as at the end city officials changed the whole section of urban regulations to meet the demands of investors (Fig. 2).

Figure 2. *Belgrade Skyline*, AFI Group, Israel, 2017. Architect: Ami Moore.

Something similar is happening with Hotel Yugoslavia, one of the first modernist buildings erected in the new socialist utopia called New Belgrade. Targeted by NATO in an attempt to execute Milošević's closest allies, soon after the war it was sold to Kempinski Hotels who commissioned professor of the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade, Goran Vojvodić, to produce a reconstruction and extension proposal. Vojvodić suggested a vertical elevation as a counter-balance to the strong horizontality of the original building, but the project halted because of the regulation that limited the height of buildings, whose purpose was to protect views on the old city center from New Belgrade. However, when those regulations were

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4 (2014), pp. 655-673; Gruia Bădescu, "'Achieved without Ambiguity?' Memorializing Victimhood in Belgrade after the 1999 NATO Bombing," *Südosteuropa 64*, no.4 (2016), pp. 500-519.

[29] One notable exception is Francesco Mazzucchelli's (*Urbicidio: lI senso dei luoghi tra distruzioni e ricostruzioni nella ex Jugoslavia)* research on semiology of urban destruction and reconstruction in former Yugoslavia. But, although Mazzucchelli's work constitutes an excellent example of the comparative approach, it only offers a cursory and incomplete survey because it does not deal with the economic, social and political forces in urban planning that significantly overweight the semiotic ones.

[30] For the *Elektroprivreda* building, see Armina Pilav, 'Ivan Štraus: War Diary and Design Intentions of an Architect in Post-war Sarajevo' in *War Diaries: Design After the Destruction of Art and Architecture*, edited by Elisa Dainese and Aleksandar Staničić (University of Virginia Press, forthcoming). For the 'New Gates of Belgrade' competition, see Aleksandar Staničić, 'Awkward encounters: Architecture Competition as a "Conflict Zone"', conference paper presented at the 'Spaces of Conflict' symposium, College of Architecture and Environmental Design, Kent State University, October 25, 2019.

scrapped because of the notorious Belgrade Waterfront project, all obstacles were removed to create not one but two towers (Fig. 3).[31] Vojvodić declined to participate in these actions so he was removed from the project. Author of the latest proposal is unknown, as in most of similar cases.

Figure 3. Hotel *Jugoslavija*, Belgrade, the second iteration of the reconstruction proposal, 2014. Author unknown.
Figure 4. *Belgrade Waterfront* development, 2015-present. Investor: Eagle Hills, Abu Dhabi. Author unknown.

But maybe the most striking example of political and architectural alchemy comes from the building that was built as the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, today *Ušće Business Center* (Fig. 5). In a staggering transformation, the building was first turned into a central economic hub of Milošević's regime for which it was bombed by NATO, and after the war, in 2001, it was sold to another foreign investor, MPC Holding. Today, it is home to the Alpe Adria Bank headquarters, infamous for its role in a corruption scandal that shook Balkan region just couple of years ago.[32] Its ongoing architectural transformation has all the elements of a melodrama: out-of-context reconstruction proposal of a foreign design studio, staged architectural competition, changes of architects and master plans to accommodate significant increase of urban parameters, a lawsuit that is still underway. It is fair to say that liberation of market and entering the global scene caught local architects off guard and ill-prepared for international competition. But also, one could claim that the playfield was not levelled, since the rules of the game apparently did not apply to foreign and domestic investors. Effort to attract fresh capital from abroad led to a political and economic alchemy called 'investor's urbanism,' in which master plans and planning laws were in subordinate position to ready-made design solutions brought from the outside.

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[31] All that is happening around Belgrade Waterfront became the synonym for the current state of Serbian architecture. There is a fierce debate in Serbian society today about the feasibility of the whole endeavor; its scale reveals the ambition of the authorities to out shadow even the New Belgrade, although its realization started without serious economic, transportation or environmental study. Developers in Zagreb are mimicking the same trend with the 'Zagreb Manhattan' project, bound to start in 2020. Researchers today point out that blind acceptance of this, pejoratively dubbed 'Dubai architecture' by local residents, without any critical filter, is a clear sign of 'auto-colonialism.' In case of Belgrade, for this development to happen, whole set of national and planning laws had to be scrapped, and its implementation comprised significant amount of violence in form of illegal destruction and forcible eviction of legal residents (Fig. 4).

[32] Vladimir Kulić, 'Refashioning the CK: Transitory Meanings of Belgrade's Tallest Building', Serbia on Prague Quadriennal 2007, exhibition catalogue, 11th International Exhibition of Scenogrpahy and Theater Architecture, Prague, 2007 (Belgrade: YUSTAT, 2007), n.p.

Figure 5. *Ušće* Tower (former Central Committee Building), preliminary design, 2001. Author: HOK International LTD, London.

In multiple instances, the presence of foreign investors and the international community has many characteristics of a neo-colonial project. In Bosnia, one-side initiatives of countries such as Turkey reveal the fight for influence over their former colonies, while freshly forged connections with Saudi Arabia and USA (on Bosniak side) and Russia (on Serbian side) show signs of post-colonial practices, namely, boosting collaboration with countries that are perceived as ideological nemesis of the opponent to galvanize nationalistic and anti-Yugoslav feelings. There are many such instances in reconstruction of religious buildings and monuments, but if we stick to the contemporary architecture, examples that stand out are the International University of Sarajevo and the International Burch University (Fig. 6). They are both Turkish built and funded, and host a significant number of Turkish students. Maybe the most extreme case is Hotel 'Ruža' in Mostar, today part of the Marriott Hotels chain, whose reconstruction was so out of proportion in Mostar's Old City that even UNESCO had to intervene (Fig. 7). The architectural language of these buildings resembles the one present in the countries that funded them, and it being different from the local architectural traditions, it slowly erases the distinct legacy of Yugoslav modernism.

Figure 6. International University of Sarajevo, 2010. Investor: Turkish International Co-operation and Development Agency (TIKA).
Figure 7. Former Hotel Ruža, today Mostar Marriott Hotel, 2005-present.

Similarly, post-war reconstruction initiatives in Yugoslavia led by important international players such as UNESCO, although promoted as an act of community healing, served predominantly for self-acclamation and led to creation of particular forms of symbolic violence.[33] The sheer presence of some high-profile international institutions and officials had damaging impact on the ground. If we take the city of Priština as the most representative example of this phenomena, we'll see that harsh economic stratification of city neighbourhoods caused by high demands for elite housing directly led to creation of international sub-city within the city of Priština.[34] What left behind the international presence in the city were abandoned buildings and oversized houses mostly constructed illegally, hence without

[33] Emily G. Makaš, 'Rebuilding Mostar'.
[34] Kai Vöckler, *Prishtina is Everywhere – Turbo Urbanism: the Aftermath of a Crisis* (Archis, Amsterdam, 2008).

aesthetic input or professional guidance of architects. Such practices led to a social segregation between the local and the international community, but also among the local population.[35]

The central issue in the economic transition from socialism to capitalism is, of course, the question of ownership of communal goods. The entire industry and service sector in socialist Yugoslavia were built on cooperative grounds, embedded with strong regional character, and formally owned by people who worked in them. After the crash of common market, sanctions and closing of borders, many of those cooperatives collapsed dragging down with them local economies. Ownership over the property of bankrupt firms was transferred to local government entities who saw fast privatization as the easiest solution to surging economic crisis. However, new owners would usually have different ideas. First, they would sell all movable equipment to cover the expenses of privatization, and then they would use the high value of the land to build luxury apartments and commercial buildings, often way above allowed urban parameters. The most interesting examples, architecturally speaking, come from Croatian sea shore; large hotel chains such as Haludovo were completely devastated by new owners who are conditioning new construction by putting limitations on public access (Fig. 8). It was not uncommon that investors were conditioning new construction by putting limitations on public access, a feature that all former Yugoslav republics share.[36]

Figure 8. Haludovo Palace Hotel, Malinska, current state after privatization.

On the other hand, reconstruction of cultural heritage, religious buildings and vernacular architecture in all post-Yugoslav countries had a side effect—enforcement of nationalism and reinvention of post-socialist identities. But nowhere is that more evident, and at the same time controversial, than in instances where new nationalistic symbols were put next to, and sometimes even tried to override, modern architectural heritage. In a series of nationalist outbursts, Serbian government recently announced that hundred-and-twenty meters high flagpole carrying Serbian flag will be built in the Peace and Friendship Park, former symbol of Yugoslav globalist aspirations where many world leaders from the Cold War era planted trees

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[35] Arta Jakupi, 'The Effect of the International Community Presence in the Urban Development of Post Conflict City. Case Study: Kosova.' (PhD Dissertation, Bauhaus University Weimar, 2012). https://e-pub.uni-weimar.de/opus4/frontdoor/deliver/index/docId/1831/file/Arta+JAKUPI-+The+Effect+of+the+International+Community+Presence+on+Urban+Development+of+Post+Conflict+City_pdfa.pdf.

[36] A warm recommendation for architecture buffs interested in this topic is mini-series *Slumbering Concrete* (hr. 'Betonski spavači') directed by Maroje Mrduljaš and produced by Croatian Radio-Television (available online at: https://www.hrt.hr/509950/neovisni-proizvodaci-audiovizualnih-djela/betonski-spavaci-2-sezona-nedovrsene-modernizacije).

of friendship.[37] In addition, Serbia is nowadays trying more and more to anchor its post-socialist identity to pre-Ottoman era by creating new memorials dedicated to its mediaeval rulers. In 2016 it was announced that the Yugoslav General Staff Building (*Generalštab*), heavily damaged by NATO on two occasions, will be transformed into 'Museum of Medieval Serbia,' and that the monument dedicated to Stefan Nemanja, the founder of medieval Nemanjić dynasty, would be erected in front of it.[38] After harsh public debate and opposition from architects' guild, decision has been made in 2018 to relocate the monument just couple of hundreds of meters away to Savski Square, right next to the Monument to the Fallen of the Wars of the 1990s. For that occasion, Savski Square will be dressed in 'traditional' architectural style (Fig. 9), pushing those practices to the extreme, and mimicking the Macedonian scenario from *Skopje 2014* project.

Figure 9. Design proposal for the monument to Stefan Nemanja, Serbian Mediaeval ruler, at Savski Square in Belgrade, 2018.

In similar fashion, memorialization of past wars in Yugoslavia is a mixture of victimization, defiance and denial, and letting temporal solutions become permanent. Spatial manifestation of mnemonic practices ranges from memorials being marginalized and neglected, to memorial installations being weaponized for political purposes.[39] For example, in Serbia, Avala Tower and Radio-Television of Serbia (RTS) memorial in Aberdareva Street in Belgrade, both targeted in war against Milošević's 'propaganda machine,' showcase a textbook example of a state-controlled media making decisive influence on public opinion, and even navigating the reconstruction process.[40] Restoring the silhouette of Avala Tower, 200-meters high TV transmitter on eponymous mountain on outskirts of Belgrade, was pushed by RTS as a question of national pride, attracting 'one million small donations' from Serbia and abroad. On the other hand, transforming ruins of RTS building—where sixteen civilians lost their lives—into a memorial was advocated by victims' families who also played a huge role in defining architectural competition brief. This and many other examples show that veterans organizations, victims' families and various NGOs, supported by state-sponsored media, play a huge role in deciding the fate of damaged socialist architecture.

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[37] Vladimir Kulić, 'New Belgrade and Socialist Yugoslavia's Three Globalisations,' *International Journal for History, Culture and Modernity*, 2.2 (2014), pp.125–153.

[38] Bartul Čović, 'Kataklizma modernizma: Nemanjići u Generalštabu', *Bilten*, 29 March 2017, https://www.bilten.org/?p=17634.

[39] For discussion on political perils of creating affective memorials, and how this practice has been used as a weapon in post-war Yugoslavia, see Andrea Jelić and Aleksandar Staničić, 'The memory in bodily and architectural making: Reflections from embodied cognitive science,' in *Affective architectures: More-than-representational approaches to heritage,* eds. J. Micieli-Voutsinas and A.M. Person (London: Routledge, 2020).

[40] For more on this, see Aleksandar Staničić, 'Media propaganda vs. public dialogue: spatial memorialization of conflict in Belgrade after 1999 NATO bombing', *Journal of Architecture* (forthcoming).

Architects participate in these processes mostly involuntary because poor economic situation does not allow fully independent professional practice, but also because they are not part of political processes. Argument could be made that this has become a global problem, but in former Yugoslavia there are some factors that are worsening the situation. For example, after the Second World war, there were only three architectural schools that produced several hundred architects annually (Yugoslavia had 23 million inhabitants in 1990). At this moment, Serbia alone has five faculties of architecture that together produce over 1000 architects per year. When this number is combined with the illegal construction that is blooming (Serbia currently has over 2 million illegal buildings) one starts to comprehend why architects became dispensable workforce, and why are they forced to accept all kinds of inappropriate commissions. In socialist Yugoslavia, architects were carriers of not only urban, but social and cultural development, while today they became redundant, unessential component of a city-building. The entire decision-making process, from urban planning to architectural design, is in the hands of investors, without any effective professional or scholarly critique. What we are witnessing is the collapse of institutional systems of control, and it is happening on both local and regional levels. What all ex-Yugoslav republics have in common is the hybrid mixture of globalization, corruption and nationalism, demographic changes that cause ruralisation and radicalization of cities, suspension of planning laws and master plans, and finally, marginalization of architectural guild and its social and humanistic agenda.

I would like to propose that at least partial solution to these problems can be return to the inclusive-model of decision making.[41] Architectural competitions, for example, are a confirmation that, when given a chance, architecture is perfectly capable of engaging into social dialogue and offering answers that are socially and culturally responsible. Alternative seems inevitably pessimistic, as this transition from one extreme to another is happening in front of our eyes, there is a risk that the whole Balkan region will become a polygon for experimentation in unhinged, neoliberal capitalism. This plea gains particular weight in the light of the destruction that is currently happening in conflict regions around the world, particularly in the Middle East, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and others. Since international investors and large corporations are already lining up to jump in on the ground as soon as wars are over, it is a duty of academics to warn that blind acceptance of questionable capital without control or critical reflection can cause permanent consequences on built environment. There is a need to re-inject the humanistic principles of inclusiveness, understanding, sensitivity, and empathy into the discourse developing around the idea of urban reconstruction and humanitarian relief. The goal of this research is to probe the ethical engagement of professionals and stakeholders in

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[41] Aleksandar Staničić and Ana Perić, 'Participatory planning as a mode for rebuilding social tolerance in post-war context', *International Journal of Disaster Risk Science* (forthcoming).

post-war reconstructions, and draw them into critical dialogue with local and regional ethical frames.

Teaching: *(Re)constructing memory*

On the basis of this shared interest in postwar reconstruction of cities, in Spring semester of 2018 professor Nasser Rabbat kindly invited me to co-teach a course together on "(Re)constructing memory".[42] As stated in the course syllabus, "the class [was] not about reconstruction as a defined architectural intervention as much as an investigation into the historical, political, and theoretical processes through which the discourses on destruction, restoration, and/or reconstruction have evolved since the notions of collective memory and heritage or patrimony became parts of the conceptual apparatus of both the nation-state and architecture". The class itself consisted of three integral parts: 1) a review of the formative literature on the concepts of ruins, violence, destruction, heritage, conservation, monument, and collective memory and how national identities shape and are shaped by these factors; 2) the analysis and critique of some of the pivotal projects in the history of conservation and reconstruction after the Second World War and how the profession of architecture tackled them; and 3) focus on the current debates around the reconstruction of the Middle Eastern cities devastated by recent wars, especially Iraq and Syria, while advocating a robust and dynamic ethics of intervention that are informed by the context of the region. During the course students developed their own projects on the intersection between fiction and scientific writing, that both engaged the literature and explored specific examples, areas, or approaches close to their heart.

Grant preparation: *Urban Destruction and Reconstruction: Aleppo in comparative context*

One of the main objectives during my tenure at the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at MIT was to develop a grant proposal for a two-years humanities research project on the historical geography, architectural morphology, and ethics of urban destruction and reconstruction, focusing on the pivotal case study of Aleppo, Syria. The group recognized that in the past few decades we have witnessed destruction of the built environment and heritage in armed conflicts on an unprecedented scale. This destruction has had a horrendous record with the city of Aleppo being at the center of media attention. However, many other heavily affected cities like Mosul, Raqqa, Ta'iz, and San'aa, as well as myriad smaller settlements, have experienced scarce media attention. This horrifying destruction have generated a surge of academic research on urban conflicts, although the material related to war and post-war changes of urban morphology remained scattered among many actors and circulated without

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[42] https://architecture.mit.edu/subject/spring-2018-4616

rigorous critical analysis. On the practitioner side of things, this alarming situation has induced numerous international organizations and professionals to propose plans to rebuild destroyed cities and rehabilitate and preserve their heritage. But in the intense competition for post-conflict reconstruction, cities are often drastically redefined and recalibrated to fit new or imposed political, social, cultural, and economic schemes. These processes of perspectival adjustment and reconceptualization need to be identified, fleshed out, and critiqued if reconstruction is to proceed on an ethical basis.

The program would have consisted of two integral components: one documentary and educational, comprising gathering, processing and storing of research material in a dedicated digital archive; and the second analytical and interpretive, comprising a series of three symposia on the history, architecture, and ethics of urban conflicts/resilience, and a number of related publications on this theme. A major contribution of the project would have been synthesizing ongoing research efforts in this emerging discipline by establishing a new section of the MIT *Archnet* database. We envisioned that this digital archive would present essays that launch the project, share scholarly resources prepared by the interest group of scholars, synthesize symposia presentations and discussions, and present a concluding essay on the project findings. The shared scholarly resources would have included annotated research bibliographies analyzed through a matrix of scholarly criteria, such as theoretical creativity, academic impact, disciplinary relevance, geographical reach, potential for implementation, etc. This effort would have been amplified by organizing three symposia and publishing their major findings in a research volume. Results of the project would have been available to scholars and practitioners through the *Archnet* digital platform, a series of publications including an edited volume, and shared syllabi.

We believed this project could have brought a larger body of architectural historical and theoretical scholarship to bear upon contemporary problems of urban destruction and reconstruction. One of its goals was to probe the philosophical foundations of contemporary international humanitarian ethics, and draw them into critical dialogue with local and regional ethical frames, with the aim of generating alternative ethical positions that would bring local and international perspectives together. In addition to scholarly impact, the project would have sought collaboration with organizations engaged with reconstruction in the Middle East, both international and local, while the availability of its output in multiple languages would have secured broad readership. Our primary objective was to reinterpret the engagement of scholars, architects, and conservation professionals with violent transformation of urban morphology within the broader framework of urban geopolitics and postwar recovery of Syrian (and other) cities in a comparative context. The project sought to build a new architectural knowledge needed for post-conflict reconstruction of urban environments, which is a pioneering approach in architectural research, theory and practice. Another objective was to develop a new architectural research ethos that can be helpful in war and post-war contexts. We envisioned

that these resources should ultimately yield informed design strategies for rebuilding urban zones not just in Aleppo, but in other post-conflict cities.

Although we didn't succeed in submitting the grant proposal before the end of my fellowship, the whole endeavor provided a valuable experience on how the grant writing process works in the context of US academia, which will certainly come in handy when the next opportunity for collaboration arises.

Publication record:

During the fellowship I worked on several publications on the role of architectural design in humanitarian and ethical responses to wartime destruction of cities and its consequences, whose brief synopses are listed below.

1. Book manuscript: *War Diaries: Design After the Destruction of Art and Architecture*, co-edited with Elisa Dainese (University of Virginia Press, 2021). Supported by the Graham Foundation grant.
   http://www.grahamfoundation.org/grantees/5950-war-diaries-design-after-the-destruction-of-art-and-architecture

In recent decades, the development of high-precision weaponry systems and the instant flow of information has redefined the notion of urban warfare as a local phenomenon with global effects in an increasingly interconnected world. The annihilation of Aleppo and the broadcasted demolitions of Palmyra demonstrate the accelerating politicization of the destruction process and the rising weaponization of architecture. *War Diaries* looks at complex postwar settings to illuminate design responses to urban warfare and violence against art and architecture. The focus is on world regions where planners, architects and artists are involved in concrete initiatives on the ground. The question at stake, is how professionals have conducted and accomplished investigations, renewal and redevelopment of attacked sites. Examining the role of these specialists, the book illuminates the approaches and attitudes towards destruction that designers have used to remediate the effects of violence against cities and cultural heritage.

2. Journal Article: "(Re)building Spaces of Tolerance: A 'Symbiotic Model' for the Post-War City Regeneration," Spaces of Tolerance, Special issue of *Architecture and Culture*, Vol. 7 / 1 (2019): pp. 113–128, DOI:10.1080/20507828.2018.1556374 (with Milan Šijaković)
   https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/20507828.2018.1556374

Crossovers seldom occur in academic research on social tolerance and post-war urban

reconstruction. Social scientists often call for a deeper analysis of the impact of spatial context on intergroup tolerance thresholds, but repairing social relations alongside damaged buildings is rarely the focus of post-disaster resilience design. This article bridges these two areas of study by proposing a pioneering regeneration model, that is, a "symbiotic model" for choosing the most socially and environmentally sustainable approach for site-specific post-conflict city regeneration. More precisely, it demonstrates that the concepts of commensalism, mutualism and parasitism, taken from biology, clearly define the spectrum of the relationships between the existing city tissue and new intervention in post-conflict city regeneration. It is argued that this model (re)builds places of social and political tolerance through (1) the meaningful interaction between social groups; (2) sustainable environmental and economic development; and (3) stratification of symbolic readings in the spatial, collective memorialization of conflict.

3. Journal Article: "Media propaganda vs public dialogue: the spatial memorialisation of conflict in Belgrade after the 1999 NATO bombing", *The Journal of Architecture* (2021): pp. 1-23. https://doi.org/10.1080/13602365.2021.1897645

Two events marked the turn of the millennium in what remained of former Socialist Yugoslavia: the NATO bombing of Serbia, and to a smaller extent Montenegro, in 1999 and the fall of Slobodan Milošević's regime in 2000. This was the infamous epilogue of the turbulent 1990s, a decade of successive violent conflicts that torn the federal state apart, destroyed its heterogeneous culture, divided its territory along ethnic borders, and definitively rejected socialism to embrace an unhinged variant of neoliberal capitalism. Serbia played a complex role in those events, both as an aggressor accused and convicted for war crimes, and as the target of an asymmetric conflict with NATO that led to the separation of its southern province of Kosovo, and left deep scars in its urban environment. The effort to reconstruct these damaged buildings, therefore, poses deeper questions about understanding the past, facing unpleasant truths, and setting the course for an uncertain future. This article will illuminate those multifarious processes by examining the role of media propaganda and public dialogue in the reconstruction of two structures in Belgrade that were damaged during the 1999 NATO bombing. Both buildings, the Avala Tower and the television headquarters on Aberdareva Street, were in use by the Radio Television of Serbia (RTS). In a fragmented society that is still struggling to make sense of these difficult issues, I argue that state-controlled media has a decisive influence on steering public debate, creating the false image of social consensus, and weighing in on architectural design, while downplaying the role of architects.

4. Book chapter: "The memory in the bodily and architectural making: Reflections from embodied cognitive science," in *Affective Architectures: More-than-representational Geographies of Heritage,* edited by Jacque Micieli-Voutsinas and Angela M. Person

This chapter explores how, following a recent experiential and embodied turn in architecture, a new field of research inspired by embodied cognitive science has started illuminating brain and bodily mechanisms behind architecture's ability to affect our perception, emotions, memory, and imagination—and in extension, how design strategies like 'affective architecture' can be effective in creating meaningful and memorable places. The aim is threefold. Starting from the enactive-embodied cognition perspective, we propose that the fundamental pre-condition of memory- and meaning-making in memorial architecture resides in the embodied and affective experiences of spatial settings. Secondly, memorial spaces and architectural heritage are intrinsically connected to the sense of individual and social self through our embodied responsiveness to architectural cues and spatial affordances, where the latter are understood as materialization of the sociocultural patterns, practices, and meanings. Thirdly, we underline the changeability of the politics of affect and embodiment in architectural design, and consequently the architects' role and limits in creating affective heritage. Therefore, the embodied experience of architecture is conceptualized as an open-ended playground, whose power of triggering emotional responses is both a source of understanding the scripted, designed narrative as well as a place for reinvention and flexibility of heritage architecture in the fast-changing times.

5. Book chapter: "Refugee shelters done differently: Humanist architecture of Socialist Yugoslavia," in *Making Home(s) in Displacement: Critical Reflections on a Spatial Practice,* edited by Luce Beeckmans, Alessandra Gola, Ashika Singh and Hilde Heynen (Leuven University Press, 2021).

This chapter explores the peculiar architecture of refugee shelters in Socialist Yugoslavia, focusing particularly on the Refugee Center in Banja Koviljača designed by renowned Serbian and Yugoslav architect Mihajlo Mitrović in 1964. Since this initiative coincided with the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement, architect saw in this challenge an opportunity to create "representative" architecture that would serve as the catalyst of transcultural exchange among friendly nations. The paper shows how Yugoslav modern architecture—undoubtedly backed by Yugoslav globalist aspirations, which also included the exportation of "soft" socialism across its borders—bridged different worlds, redefined the concepts of local and global architectural heritage, and erased the boundaries between European and non-European architectural traditions. Finally, the chapter depicts the radicalization of political climate in post-Socialist Yugoslavia, brought by the years of internal conflicts, that culminated in open animosity towards foreign people in need in the most recent refugee crisis—Refugee Center in

Banja Koviljača being at the brinks of it.

6. Book chapter: "(Re)constructing memory (as violence)", in *Reconstruction as Violence in Syria,* edited by Nasser Rabbat and Deen Sharp (with Andrea Jelić, AUC Press, forthcoming).

The "affective" turn in the design of contemporary heritage and memory sites emphasizes the role of affect, emotions, and embodied cognition in (re)construction of memory. However—and as the eponymous course taught at MIT in 2018 by Nasser Rabbat and myself demonstrated— reconstructing memory is above all a creative process, full of inconsistencies, personal biases, and with an uncertain outcome. In this chapter we propose that architects' and heritage institutions' insisting on (re)creation of powerful emotions as a tool for representing historical events can lead down a treacherous path, because it often leads not to reconciliation, but to deepening of wounds and continuation of social divides. More importantly, it can be hijacked by malicious politics of war and used for inciting the violence across cultures and generations. Instead, we argue for the open-endedness in designing of places of memory that would contextualize historic events, enable non-judgmental open dialogue, and set the base for re-finding common values that we all share as humans.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The main argument of the research I developed during the AKPIA fellowship is that the post-war reconstruction in post-socialist Yugoslavia is destroying the inclusive, modern and regional character of Yugoslav cities, producing a unique type of 'transition' urbicide. Its overall objective was to explain architectural engagements with violent transformation of urban morphology within the broader framework of urban geopolitics and post-war recovery in post-socialist societies. Through architecture, conflict and cross-referencing data from multiple sources, the project investigates urban space as a battleground for various displays of power and influence among multiple actors—state institutions, private capital and citizens—in the complex context of post-war, transitional society. Furthermore, it seeks to build unique architectural knowledge needed for post-conflict reconstruction of urban environments. The post-war urban and social transformation of Yugoslavia, taken here as an example, can serve as a harbinger for expected reconstructions of active conflict zones, particularly in contested, transition societies. The research was designed with the aim to engage the wide spectrum of actors, many of whom were witnesses or active participants in both destruction and reconstruction processes, by constructing their *histoire croisée.* As such, it is a welcome

contribution to emerging studies of urban conflicts on a global scale, and most necessary contribution to the academic discourse on a local intellectual scene.

Furthermore, the goal of this work was to develop a new research protocols for management and interpretation of the big collections of architectural documents, creating in the process the interdisciplinary research guidelines for investigation of cities in war and post-war contexts. Through architecture, conflict and cross-referencing of multiple sources, this research investigates urban space as a battleground for various displays of power and influence among multiple co-creators in the complex context of post-war, transitional society. It is my hope that this work will inspire new research strategies for architectural historiography of post-conflict cities and offer new set of guidelines for impending urban reconstructions in active conflict zones that will shape the research of war and post-war transformation of cities in the coming years.