Reconstruction as Violence

THE CASE OF ALEPPO

FRIDAY MAY 10 & SATURDAY MAY 11, 2019 IN MIT ROOM 6-120

This two-day symposium seeks to address the following questions: How do violence and conflict not only destroy but constitute, design, and organize the built environments and infrastructure? How do we understand the urbanization of warfare in relation to urban theory and reconstruction practices? Finally, participants will be asked to consider the recent warfare in the Middle East, with a special focus on Aleppo, in relation to the built environment and the extent to which reconstruction processes can be weaponized. Organized by Nasser Rabbat and Deen Sharp.

FRIDAY MAY 10 2:30 PM - 5:00 PM
OPENING REMARKS
Hashim Sarkis
MIT
INTRODUCTION
Nasser Rabbat
MIT
SESSION I
URBANIZATION AND DESTRUCTION
MODERATOR: Allison Cuneo, MIT
Infrastructural Urbicide
Steven Graham
University of Newcastle
(Re)Constructing Memory (as Violence)
Aleksandar Stanisic
TU Delft
Rethinking Urban Reconstruction through Informal Settlements, a Syrian Historical Perspective
Valerie Clerc
IRD France

SATURDAY MAY 11 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM
SESSION II
THE CASE OF ALEPPO
MODERATOR: Nasser Rabbat, MIT
Survivor Cities: Cultural Heritage in Context and in Contest
Heghnar Watenpaugh
University of California Davis
Aleppo, Patterns of Damage: Beyond Winning the War
Laura Kurgan
Columbia University
The Ambiguities of Syria’s Reconstruction
Frederick Deknatel
World Politics Review
Towards an Ethical Framework for Reconstructing Aleppo
Rim Lababidi
University College London

SATURDAY MAY 11 2:30 PM - 6:00 PM
SESSION III
RECONSTRUCTION AS VIOLENCE
MODERATOR: Delia Wendel, MIT
Planning as Re-Orientiation: Baalbek and Tripoli, c. 1952
Lucia Althais
Princeton University
Territorialities of Sovereignty: Deconstructing the Spatial Correlates of Conflict
Diane Davis
Harvard University
Concrete Conflict
Deen Sharp
MIT
The Role of Postwar Reconstruction in the Ability of Societies to Recover: Reflection on Modern Experiences
Sultan Barakat
Doha Institute for Graduate Studies
Culturescaping the Post-Conflict Environment: The Spatial Politics of “Peace”
Andrew Herscher
University of Michigan

CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY
Deen Sharp
MIT

Photo by Sergey Ponomarev
An election campaign poster for President Bashar al-Asad displayed on a ruined shopping mall in the Khalidiya district of Homs, shortly after Government forces regained control of the area. Built just before the war, the mall had never opened for business.