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CITIES AND DESTROYING „OTHERNESS"

MIASTA I NISZCZENIE „INNOŚCI"

ABSTRACT: The aim of this article is to show that cities are very often attacked because of their 'otherness'. 'The other' may be understood here as the other religion, other ethnicity, other culture, other political views or other people. This is closely related to the idea of diversity, heterogeneity, pluralism and density as essential features of contemporary cities. The author examines theories explaining motives for destroying cities, such as those treating destruction of cities as part of genocide or the theory of urbicide. Finally, the author proposes looking at the destruction of cities through the lens of destroying 'the other' and possibilities of a community. The research methods used include desk research and formal-legal analysis. The formal-legal analysis focuses on the jurisprudence of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and the desk research – on the relevant literature at the intersection of urban studies and international studies.

KEY WORDS: cities, 'the other', urbicide, genocide

ABSTRAKT: Celem artykułu jest pokazanie, że miasta są bardzo często atakowane ze względu na swoją cechę „inności". Przez „innego" można rozumieć inną religię, inną etniczność, inną kulturę, inne poglądy polityczne lub inne osoby, co jest ściśle związane z ideą różnorodności, heterogeniczności, pluralizmu i gęstości jako istotnych cech współczesnych miast. Autorka analizuje teorie wyjaśniające motywy niszczenia miast, takie jak te traktujące niszczenie miast jako część ludobójstwa lub jak odrębna teoria miastobójstwa. Wreszcie autorka proponuje spojrzenie na niszczenie miast przez pryzmat niszczenia „innego" i możliwości wspólnoty. Wykorzystywane metody badawcze to analiza treści oraz analiza formalno-prawna. Analiza formalno-prawna koncentruje się na orzecznictwie Międzynarodowego Trybunału Karnego do spraw Zbrodni w b. Jugosławii, a analiza treści na relewantnej literaturze z pogranicza studiów miejskich i studiów międzynarodowych.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: miasta, inny/inność, miastobójstwo, ludobójstwo

Introduction and methodology

Cities and wars have intertwined with each other in many ways throughout the recorded human history. As centres of wealth and power, cities were sometimes the initiators of conflicts (as in the case of Greek *polis* waging epic wars against one another) or, which occurred more often – became the objects of conquest, best when captured

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intact as much as possible. In response to such threats, cities were fortified and implemented other measures against rapid attacks and prolonged sieges, employed qualified engineers and military architects; the medieval and early modern cities became fortresses that could serve as a refuge for the population of the neighbouring areas in case of a military conflict (Palmieri 2021).

However, the evolution of artillery ultimately rendered those complex protective structures useless, and in the 19th century, cities began to dismantle the limiting fortifications; for example, Geneva decided in 1849 to remove the 14th-century walls around the city centre. The trend that began with the Industrial Revolution and has been escalating ever since, is the transformation of cities into purely civilian space. It has been going on in tandem with the growing industrial and economic potential of cities, attracting migrants from rural areas and abroad (Palmieri 2021). Yet while fortresses may be all but gone, cities still are targeted by military operations as political, economic, communication and educational centres, as well as homes to the majority of enemy's population. The development of warfare has also brought new ways that can be used to destroy cities whenever capture is not an option. Carthage was razed by Romans with fire and salt; Coventry, Dresden and Guernica were destroyed by aerial bombs, and Hiroshima and Nagasaki were annihilated by nuclear explosions. Many conflicts also involved prolonged urban fighting with the aim to capture or recapture the particular city one street after another, as it happened, e.g. in Nanjing, Stalingrad and Berlin, and more recently in Sarajevo, Grozny and Aleppo (Palmieri 2021; Mourby 2015). Aleppo, one of the oldest human settlements with records of continuous habitation and the largest Syrian city in the pre-war years (with the population estimated at over two million), has become today a vivid illustration of a 'deliberate attempt to kill a city or portions of it in modern times' (Spencer 2019). The massive bombings combined with large-scale urban fighting have ravaged the city; besides uncounted casualties, it is estimated that more than 120,000 residents sought refuge elsewhere, close to 36,000 thousand structures got destroyed, and the overall damage to the city reached $7.8 bn (Spencer 2019). Today one can add to the list the destroyed cities in Ukraine such as Mariupol, Kharkov or Irpien.

To belligerent factions, cities often seem to represent threat and attraction at the same time. Besides obvious strategic or tactical advantages of capturing an enemy's settlement, cities can also be a mental symbol of the 'other', a space where the divergent culture of the opponents is manifested most vividly. This may be a factor behind numerous cases of enemy cities being looted, destroyed or even razed to the ground, as such destruction most efficiently removes the presence of the offending culture and religion of the 'other' (Palmieri 2021). Taking this into account, the aim of this article is to show that cities are very often attacked because of this characteristic of 'otherness'. 'The other' may be understood as the other religion, other ethnicity, other culture, other political views or other people, which is closely related to the idea of diversity, heterogeneity, pluralism and density as essential features of contemporary cities. The author examines theories explaining motives for destroying cities, such as those treating the destruction

as being part of genocide or the very distinct theory of urbicide itself. Finally, the author proposes looking at the destruction of cities through the lens of destroying 'the other' and possibilities which a community holds.

The research methods used include desk research and formal-legal analysis. The formal-legal analysis focuses on the jurisprudence of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, while the desk research relies on the relevant literature at the intersection of urban studies and international studies.

Destruction of cities

This section explores some examples of destruction of cities' fabric based on the caselaw of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and relevant literature. The case of the former Yugoslavia was chosen due to its best documented character and the availability and accessibility of relevant materials. Moreover, the former Yugoslavia case was its inter-ethnic armed conflicts and depicting 'the other' serves well the arguments pursued in this article. While Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches were attacked during the conflict in Bosnia, the temples that suffered the most were mosques, attacked by Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats. A typical pattern would involve targeted shelling of such non-strategic target during the initial attack on a town, followed by blowing up the damaged building during or at the end of the occupation of the town (in some places even the rubble was carted away). The end result was ethnic/religious cleansing of the urban landscape and environment: the monuments of multicultural history were being replaced by parking lots or meadows (Coward 2002, 31; Coward 2009, 8).

While temples were the most prominent symbols of cultural heritage, the urban fabric cleansing had other targets as well. The buildings and spaces designed for collective meetings – not only museums and libraries but also markets and cafes – were assaulted relentlessly as well (Coward 2002, 31). This was confirmed by the ICTY jurisprudence. In the *Strugar case* (2005) the Trial Chamber noted that the buildings damaged during the assault on Dubrovnik included palaces, churches, monasteries, a mosque and a synagogue as well as public places, shops and residential buildings. The damage of the latter was felt particularly acutely by the local population, whose homes, businesses and means of getting necessities were severely restricted or destroyed (para. 320).

The buildings targeted during the attack on Sarajevo included markets, blocks of flats and tenement houses, offices and the main post office. The *Stari Grad* (the Old Town) in Mostar was under a continuous artillery attack by HVO forces (the official military formation of the Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia) from the start of the ethnic cleansing in 1992. The action of removing the traces of shared cultural heritage included whole villages being burned to the ground or blown up with explosives (Coward 2002, 31). The bridges over the Neretva were not just damaged but reduced to rubble, the *Stari Most* in Mostar being destroyed as the last of them during a day-long artillery shelling by Bosnian Croats. The Mostar Bridge, spanning the river and enabling com-

munication and trade between the two halves of the town, was a particular symbol of the four-centuries-long coexistence, characteristic of the Bosnian society, as well as a clear example of destruction of a historical record and a collective memory element (Coward 2009, 6).

The exceptional character as well as the historical and symbolic value of the Mostar Bridge was recognized by the ICTY Trial Chamber in *Prlic case* (2013). The bridge was important to the residents of Mostar as well as to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the entire Balkan region. It was also a symbolic connection between the local communities, coexisting despite religious differences. The ICTY Chamber observed, however, that the bridge held particular value for the Muslim community in Bosnia and Herzegovina (para. 1282). By a majority decision, the Chamber found the destruction of the Old Bridge in the town of Mostar by the armed forces of the Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia was a wanton destruction of cities, towns or villages, or devastation not justified by military necessity, recognised by Article 3 of the ICTY Statute as a crime (para. 1587).

Another example is the *Brdanin case* (2004), where the ICTY Trial Chamber held that during the relevant period, rural and urban settlements where the majority of population were Bosnian Muslims or Bosnian Croats were shelled by Bosnian Serb forces, which resulted in extensive damage to houses and businesses. This was followed by the Bosnian Serb forces looting and burning the places belonging to other nationalities. The goal of such attacks, as was found by the Trial Chamber, was to spread terror, destroy property and force non-Serb residents to abandon their houses and businesses and flee the area permanently (para. 600). As demonstrated by the evidence, such destruction did not constitute a military necessity and was deliberate destruction and devastation of the property of Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Muslims, committed intentionally, with full awareness of the likelihood of the outcome and disregard of the results (para. 639). The Chamber's findings included heavy damage (up to complete destruction) of 17 mosques and 2 Catholic churches in Prijedor by Serb forces in the period of May to December 1992 (para. 1896). The Chamber recalled its earlier findings regarding complete or partial destruction or heavy damage of a number of mosques, Catholic churches, other sacred sites and cultural monuments in Bratunac, Bosanski Novi, Foča, Ključ, Novi Grad, Prijedor, Rogatica, Sanski Most, Sokolac and Zvornik. The Chamber found the aforementioned actions of the Serb Forces to be intentional and aimed at destruction of these objects, as confirmed by the nature and extent of the damage sustained by these buildings, and by the manner of their destruction. To exemplify, the evidence demonstrated that during the burning of the mosques in Foča, the Bosnian Serb fire brigades were present but did not intervene. In many cases, the destruction of mosques was completed with the use of explosives, the site was levelled and turned, e.g. into a car park or a garbage dumpsite (para. 2552). According to the Chamber's findings, the destruction of these religious and cultural objects cannot be justified by military necessity. In the case of Foča, the accused parties raised an argument that some of the mosques had been repurposed for military use; however, the Chamber found the presented evidence unreliable and noted lack of any other indications of the

purported military use of those mosques. The Chamber also highlighted the discriminatory intent against Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Muslims that was visible in such wanton destruction of public and private property (including places of great historical, cultural and religious value). The Chamber also observed that in a number of cases adjacent premises were spared – there were notes identifying them as the property of Bosnian Serbs that were not to be burned; these buildings were also actively protected by Bosnian Serb fire brigades while the neighboring houses of Bosnian Muslims were being destroyed (paras. 2554-2557).

In Sarajevo, the Bosnian Serb artillery attacks destroyed the National Library and the Oriental Institute. One of the landmarks of the Siege of Sarajevo were the citizens' attempts to save the books from the burning collections (Coward 2009, 7). According to András Riedlmayer (1996, 41), during the war in Bosnia the most grievous loss besides civil casualties was the purposeful, systematic destruction of monuments of culture, with the tally including the destruction of about 1,200 mosques, more than 150 Catholic churches, 15 Orthodox churches, 4 synagogues and over a 1,000 of other historical buildings and structures were destroyed or sustained significant damage during the years 1992-1995.[1]

Theories related to the destruction of cities

Urbicide

Originally, the concept of 'urbicide' appeared with reference to the processes initiated in the 1950s in American cities. Aggressive redevelopment led to demolition of old residential quarters, which destroyed or damaged urban social structures (Coward 2009, 35-36). During the Yugoslav Wars the term was adopted by politicians, academics and journalists to describe intentional destruction of urban communities, often inhabited by specific ethnic groups. The damage to the living spaces as well as social and economic

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[1] For more detailed information on the destruction of cities and their architecture see the following ICTY cases: *Blaskić case* (Trial Chamber 2000) – paragraphs 7-8, 11-14, 148-149, 156, 183, 185, 218, 220, 225, 227-228, 234-235, 357, 361, 365-366, 380, 384-385, 499-500, 510-511, 623, 626, 662; *Brdanin case* (Trial Chamber 2004) – paragraphs 600, 602-605, 608-609, 612, 614, 618-619, 622, 624, 627-628, 631-632, 635, 637, 639, 642-658, 1022, 1024, 1050; *Jokić case* (Trial Chamber 2004) – paragraph 67 (old town of Dubrovnik); *Karadzić case* (Trial Chamber 2016) – paragraphs 781-783, 857, 862, 924-927, 1030-1031, 1067, 1069, 1355-1359, 1453, 1887, 1889-1896, 2028-2031, 2548, 2552, 2554-2559; *Kordić and Cerkez case* (Trial Chamber 2001) – paragraphs 511, 520, 805-807; *Kordić and Cerkez case* (Appeals Chamber 2004) – paragraph 85; *Krajiśnik case* (Trial Chamber 2006) – paragraphs 306, 309, 318, 320, 336, 341, 409, 428, 435, 447, 467, 472, 507, 521, 536, 540, 564-565, 591, 593, 620-621, 631, 652-653, 672, 684-685, 689, 696, 836-840; *Mladić case* (Trial Chamber 2017) – paragraphs 460-461, 466, 573, 575, 693, 702-703, 789, 841, 844, 851-852, 922, 927-928, 1336, 1355, 1376-1377, 1528, 1645, 1668-1669, 1808; *Prlic case* (Trial Chamber 2013) – paragraphs 788-789, 1282, 1292-93, 1544, 1548, 1557, 1567-68, 1590, 1608-10; *Sainović case* (Trial Chamber 2009) – paragraphs 144, 549, 710, 795, 1166, 1232; *Stakić case* (Trial Chamber 2003) – paragraphs 276-277, 282, 287, 298-299, 304; *Strugar case* (Trial Chamber 2005) – paragraphs 20-21, 295, 310, 317-320, 327 – available online: https://www.icty.org/en/cases.

systems was combined with attempts to obliterate the multi-ethnic cultural heritage of these territories (see also: Golan 2020, 195).

Drawing upon Marshall Berman (1987), Stephen Graham introduced the notion of 'urbicide' to represent the violent, systematic targeting of cities. In a book edited by Graham (2006, 25) the concept of 'urbicide' is the main point of reference and is defined as: 'the deliberate denial, or killing, of the city' that is juxtaposed to other concepts such as genocide or ethnic cleansing. The word itself is of Latin origin. The root 'urbi-' is derived from *urbs*, meaning a 'fully developed city' with specific building patterns that differentiate it from smaller settlements, and from the corresponding adjectives of *urbanus/urbicus*, meaning 'of the city', but also 'civilized', or 'sophisticated', both suggesting the experience of living in a center of comfort and culture. The suffix '-cide' denotes 'killing' or 'slaying'. Together they mean 'killing of a city/of what is the urban', but also destruction of a specific way of life (Coward 2002, 33). Thus, urbicide suggests destruction of a city in its material and immaterial aspects.

According to Martin Coward (2002, 37), what urbicide entails is purposeful, planned destruction of urbanity for its own sake through obliteration of buildings and the entire urban fabric (where 'urbanity' is defined as 'an existential condition of plurality or heterogeneity' – Coward 2009, 15). Buildings have to be destroyed as they carry the possibility of urbanity and thus the possibility of heterogeneity. Coward (2009, 14) adds that the concept of urbicide is the best way to explain that specific form of violence which is intentional destruction of a built environment. Another meaning connoted by 'urbicide' is the destruction of the possibility of being with others, of forming and living as a community. It can be said in the same vein that buildings are constitutive of such heterogeneity for they are also constitutive of shared spaces – and not only of spaces that are formally designated as 'public' (Coward 2006, 428), but also of all areas where humans meet, act and thus create transient or durable networks and relations. Therefore buildings are not mere structures added to a static world; the activity of building generates structures which in turn generate relations, constituting the world in its dynamic aspect. If a bridge is built, both banks of the river are brought into a relation, and with this, relations are established between/among the settlements on the two banks, interconnecting their economies, transport infrastructure and other elements (Coward 2006, 429).

The weight of the word 'urbicide' is used to emphasize the fact that destruction of urban spaces is a primary political dynamics, not something incidental. Nevertheless, in the discourse 'urbicide' is also an attempt to highlight that such attacks against urban environments are systematic in nature and that violence of this kind has particularly deleterious results. The notion of "urbicide" points to urban destruction in its variety of cases and forms as actually a single phenomenon (Coward 2009, 38).

Jo Beall (2006, 112) argues, however, that the ethnic cleansings that took place in the former Yugoslavia do not actually constitute cases of urbicide as they did not target urban fabric specifically, aiming rather to preserve the built environments as resources for the winning side.

Part of genocide

The notion of genocide itself derives from the combination of the Greek word *genos* meaning race or tribe and Latin word *occidere* meaning to kill, to destroy into *genocidum* (genocide in English, *génocide* in French). Raphael Lemkin (1946, 227) is considered the author of the term genocide (Dobrowolska-Polak 2008, 1). He defined genocide as 'the crime of destroying national, racial or religious groups' and pointed to the necessary element of genocide, namely a coordinated plan of different actions aimed at the destruction of the groups as such (Lemkin 1945, p. 39). In his opinion genocide

> (…) does not necessarily signify mass killings although it may mean that. More often it refers to a coordinated plan aimed at destruction of the essential foundations of the life of national groups so that these groups wither and die like plants that have suffered a blight. The end may be accomplished by the forced disintegration of political and social institutions, of the culture of the people, of their language, their national feelings and their religion. It may be accomplished by wiping out all basis of personal security, liberty, health and dignity. When these means fail the machine gun can always be utilized as a last resort. Genocide is directed against a national group as an entity and the attack on individuals is only secondary to the annihilation of the national group to which they belong (Lemkin 1945, 39).

It was Lemkin who drew attention to the fact that the crime of genocide targets not only individuals but the whole human groups to which an individual belongs.

As Raphael Lemkin noted in his *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, (1944, 80 in footnote 3), one of the earliest recorded cases that can be argued to be regarded as genocide is the conclusion of the Punic Wars. The Romans targeted Carthage as a city itself, and were not satisfied with killing or displacing inhabitants; after breaching the city defenses, the population was slaughtered, the city looted and razed to the ground, which then (as the sources say) was ploughed over and salted to prevent rebuilding of the community in this space (Coward 2009, 8).

The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide was adopted on 10 December 1948 and entered into force on 12 January 1951. In accordance with Article 2 of the Genocide Convention, genocide means

> any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Genocide Convention restricted the scope of acts included in the definition of genocide compared to the definition proposed by Lemkin only to the physical and biological destruction. Destruction of a language or culture was omitted. This makes it difficult if not impossible to apply the legal concept of genocide to the destruction of cities understood as destroying buildings and the whole urban fabric per se without treating killing people as its inherent part.

The question is – can cities be killed? Such killing would necessarily involve permanent destruction of a city's vital components or criteria that make them specifically

cities (social organization, population of a certain size etc.). Spencer argues that a city would be dead if its residents were killed, permanently expelled or reduced to a fraction of the former number, or if the physical terrain was rendered uninhabitable so that it could not sustain the previous population. A city would ultimately die if flows or inputs vital to maintaining its existence (e.g. the major water or food sources) or function (e.g. trade routes or mines) were removed or significantly altered, leading to slow depopulation. However, even a destruction or severe damage of physical structures of a city does not mean death if the core features that make that city a great location for civilization (e.g. transportation systems, waterways or natural resources) survive – and as long as the population is able and willing to return (Spencer 2018).

It is important to note that there is no requirement under the Convention that a perpetrator of genocide achieve his/her aims or that the group attacked actually suffer total or partial destruction. Rather, the crime is completed when certain enumerated acts are committed against group members with the special intent to destroy (Nersessian 2003-2004, 298-299). What matters is this special intent (the so-called *dolus specialis*) and commission of one of the genocidal acts.

Contrary to what was discussed in the section on urbicide, Martin Shaw (2004, 141) argues that the cases when urban populations are targeted are not different from other types of violence. Campaigns against ethnic groups have targeted both urban and rural populations. Drawing on this, one can speculate in general about categories and definitions of political violence and the latter's relation to war. Like other established –*cide* terms (such as 'ethnocide' or 'politicide'), urbicide is one of the forms of genocide, not a separate phenomenon. In the same vein, destruction of a culture shared by a community actually means destruction of a national group: with culture, individual persons lose also the sense and possibility of belonging to a specific group. Hence destruction of a culture should be considered as an integral element of genocide rather than a distinct form of atrocity. Thus, the destruction of the Mostar Bridge is an event that can serve as a sample case of genocide against the Muslims in Bosnia. In the context of widespread destruction of cultural buildings such as mosques in Banja Luka, Mostar and Sarajevo to name but a few, the destruction of the *Stari Most* can be perceived as part of an organized attempt to destroy or damage what differs the Bosnian Muslims from the other ethnic/national groups living in this territory, i.e. their shared culture (Coward 2009, 25).

Genocide is often linked to the concept of ethnic cleansing or cultural genocide – a narration often adopted by accounts of cultural heritage destruction. The goal of ethnic cleansing can be defined as an endeavor to reshape the country into one or more states that are ethnically pure. To this aim, ethnic heterogeneity in a given territory has to be violently erased and replaced by imposed homogeneity. In the context of this violent erasure, perceived as the main war goal, attacks on cultural heritage are perceived as destruction of what needs to be obliterated to achieve the ultimate aim – a state with pure ethnic identity (Coward 2009, 24).

Destruction of 'the other' – eliminating the heterogeneity, density and community

Considering the seven or eight millennia of the history of urban settlements, cities have been targeted directly or indirectly (i.e. through attacks on their support systems) during most conflicts (Graham 2004, 2). Hewitt argues that the narratives concerning wars – real, fictionalized and fictional, from Homer and the Bible to today's media – show that the main fuel for one group attacking another has always been the constructed dichotomy of 'us' and 'them/the others/the enemy', with a strong emphasis laid on ownership and/or attachment to specific territories (Hewitt 1983, 258). Graham adds that in the dialectic of conflict, homeland is idealized and sentimentalized, while the land and people of the opposing side are dehumanized or even demonized. What is necessary to create and sustain political violence is the binary vision of the world with clear polar opposites of good-and-evil and chasms between ethnicities, political affiliations, religions, territories, and identities, the white 'us' and black 'them' (Graham 2004, 8).

Both preparation for war and its consequences impact urban spaces, especially their geography. Hewitt (1983, 258) notes the direct reciprocity between cities and war: the former are the definitive human places, the ultimate constructs of collective life, while the latter is the ultimate conscious act of collective violence that leads to destruction of places.

However, a fundamental issue in Bosnia was that of shared/common space, necessary for communities to exist and be recognized as such. If a shared space is destroyed through destruction of urban fabric, the possibility of sharing it is lost as well. The destruction of the Mostar Bridge illustrates the key problematic question of what constitutes a community. Without a shared space and without possibility to share it, a community cannot exist; a polis cannot form itself and we cannot experience the urban and the political. What can be drawn from the rubble of Bosnian cities is the question as to how 'we' (however broadly or narrowly defined) are to live as a community and what factors are crucial for a group to live together in this way Coward 2002, 32).

The notion of heterogeneity of a population within a certain space is crucial for the concept of urbanity/the urban, and it is a feature that together with size and density clearly set urbanism as a unique mode of life (Coward 2002, 34). In urban environment, sharing spaces, which thus become heterogeneous, is essential. In case of destruction of urban spaces, this heterogeneous spatiality is at risk. Furthermore, as politics is based on antagonistic relations of difference and identity, removing the conditions that make heterogeneity possible eliminates the conditions of the possibility of politics itself – without heterogeneity, differences do not exist and there are no relations of difference and identity (Coward 2002, 37). There can be no 'other' necessary for the heterogeneity and plurality.

For example, by blowing up the *Stari Most* in Mostar, the Croats erased the last element of a single though plural entity that had been formed by two settlements on the opposing banks of the Neretva – the reminder of the times when Mostar was an

ethnically mixed city. The military importance of the bridge notwithstanding, destruction of this structure was supposed to turn the city into two separate, homogenous enclaves, creating the conditions in which the Bosnian Croats would see and represent themselves as separate from the Bosnian Muslims (Coward 2009, 2). It was also a vivid demonstration of how identity is erased from a territory during an ethnic cleansing (Coward 2009, 5). In the context of wiping out the memory and identity of 'the other', the ICTY Trial Chamber in the *Plavsić case* (2003) held that out of 37 municipalities the Indictment mentioned, 29 had been locations of sacred sites and other cultural monuments which had been destroyed during the war – over 100 mosques, 7 Catholic churches, 2 *mektebs* (Islamic primary schools) and other objects of cultural, historical and regional importance, including the medieval buildings in Foca, Visegrad and Zvornik. One of the examples cited by the prosecutors was the 'wanton destruction' of the Alid'a mosque in Foca, erected in 1550, considered a pearl of religious architecture in the Balkans. The destruction was followed by renaming of towns, which symbolically erased remains of the past even further. Indeed, '[e]verything that in any way was reminiscent of the past, was destroyed' (para. 44).

Similarly, in the *Krajisnik case* (2006) the Trial Chamber found that the Serb forces destroyed or significantly damaged over 200 monuments of culture (mainly mosques and some Catholic churches) in 26 municipalities, including Bosanska Krupa, Bosanski Novi, Bosanski Petrovac, Bratunac, Brčko, Čelinac, Foča, Ilijaš, Kalinovik, Novi Grad, Prijedor, Rogatica, Sanski Most or Višegrad (para. 836). The Chamber found the above cases of destruction to be intentional and wanton; after being blown up with explosives, the ruined buildings were often razed to the ground with heavy machinery (para. 837). The Chamber also found these acts to be discriminatory and targeting specifically religious symbols of other ethnic groups – the destroyed objects had belonged to Muslim or in some cases to Croats. The cited examples included the Hasanbegova mosque in Sanski Most, which was demolished completely, while the cemetery was turned into a parking lot. During the burning of the Brčko mosque, the soldiers were heard to express satisfaction and to stop firemen from intervening. According to the findings of the Chamber, the goal of destroying mosques by the Serb forces was to erase traces of Muslim religion and culture (para. 838).

As mentioned, another target of attacks in Bosnia were museums, libraries, archives and other cultural institutions focused on preserving the past. The purpose was to destroy works of art, books and other documents that could serve as evidence of the common heritage once shared in Bosnia by people of different ethnicities and religions. During the ethnic cleansing campaign, communal records of over 800 Bosnian Muslim and Bosnian Croat communities, including parish books and land use/property ownership registers, were burned by Bosnian Serb forces (Riedlmeyer 1996, 38). Here, 'the other' is differentiated from the attacker/oppressor by ethnicity and religion (Bosnian Muslims and Catholic Bosnian Croats). As Riedlmeyer writes, undoubtedly, the immediate goal of destroying institutions and records of a targeted community is intimidation and driving the population out of the area, but the long-term goal is to

remove the evidence – whether made of stone, on canvas or paper – that the place was once inhabited by generations of non-Serbs. Fire, dynamite and bulldozers were to remove any grounds for the claims of the people dispossessed and expelled by nationalist forces (Riedlmayer 1996, 38). Here, 'the other' are all non-Serbs and all the buildings and belongings associated with them that have to be destroyed.

The core of Graham's (2004) analysis in *Cities, War and Terrorism* is political violence used against and in urban settlements, approached as an intentional attempt to prevent 'the other' community from enjoying the benefits of life in a city. Similarly, Coward (2009, 12) argues that the very possibility of community is attacked by intentional destruction of prominent elements of built environment, such as the Mostar Bridge. What community represents is plurality, the experience of being with others that are clearly 'not-us'. Such being-with-others lies at the heart of 'the political': if something (a question, an event or an issue) is seen as political, it concerns or involves the 'negotiation of the problematic of being-with-others. The political is thus that which concerns the problematic of being-with-others' (Coward 2009, 12). Thus political violence means using violence to impact the nature of being-with-others at a specific location – so destroying buildings of 'the other' is an essentially political form of violence. According to Coward (2009, 12), an individual can exist only in a community, and the foundation of the possibility of community are structures that make possible or ensure the future of that community. Such a possibility (durability), provided by built structures, creates a frame within which members of this community are born, live and die (or join it/ leave). As evidenced in the statement that 'the bridge is all of us', the 'I'/'you'/'(s)he'/'it' is possible only within the framework of 'us'. The community of 'us' is not founded on a contract, whether explicit or implicit, but on what makes this particular community durable – a function which the Old Bridge fulfilled in Mostar before November 1993.

According to Coward and rightly so, destruction of the *Stari Most* was a radical challenge to the existence of individual residents of Mostar as members of a specific, pluralist community. The loss of the bridge created two separate communities and turned the inhabitants into people who are Muslim/Croat first, and Mostari or Bosnian second. In this way, destruction of a man-made structure means destruction of the possibility of a community within which different modes of existence were possible. The attack on the community was aimed at changing the identity of individuals – from those who exist in a pluralist environment into those considering homogeneity as a norm (Coward 2009, 12). Thus, destroying material foundations of a community, and with them – the community itself and the identities that exist within it – is a prerequisite to creating distinct communities with pure/homogenous identities (Coward 2009, 18).

It is commonly construed that if heterogeneity (i.e. a condition necessary to accommodate 'the other') is to occur, there must be subjects or groups that demonstrate dissimilarities which can be easily attributed to biological, cultural or social factors predating the coexistence of those subjects or groups. An example of such thinking can be the perception of ethnic differences as a clear sign of dissimilarity of two or more groups. Thus, many accounts consider ethnicity to be a social and cultural difference

that existed before such groups began to coexist in given circumstances. Following this line of thinking, Serbs have always been Serbs, even when they have been coexisting with Bosnian Muslims or Croats (Coward 2006, 433).

Conclusions

In the wartime context, all the concepts of urbicide, genocide and destroying 'the other' are connected and all of them are linked to organized, methodical extermination of civilians, where a religious, political or ethnic group is a target (Golan 2020, 196). Martin Coward (2009, 53) sums up that urbicide involves intentional destruction of the conditions prerequisite of possibility of heterogeneity, which is a specifically 'urban' quality of existence. The logic behind urbicide comprises a number of events that together form a distinct pattern of destruction, where heterogeneity is destroyed in and through destroying buildings. Urbicide is neither limited to 'the urban' understood as synonymous with 'the city', nor does it valorize such understanding. Furthermore, while urbicide is intertwined with genocide, it is distinct from it: they use the same logic of destruction but have separate targets. This logic involves two stages: heterogeneity must be destroyed first for homogeneity to be installed. The relation of genocide and urbicide does not exclude in any way their coexistence in particular conflicts (Coward 2006, 427). On the other hand, Shaw (2004) sees urbicide as a form of genocide, especially taking into account the circumstance that the term is also applied to describe violence against cities that has ethno-nationalist motives or aims to destroy a culture (see also: Spencer 2019).

In all the approaches the concept of destroying 'the other' is discernible. It was also clearly recognized in the jurisprudence of the ICTY. It may be regarded as part of urbicide and genocide but also a concept on its own. The notions of heterogeneity and plurality implicitly assume being 'together-with-others' and being able to create a pluralistic community. If this 'other' is destroyed there can be no plural and heterogeneous urban community and the possibility of 'being-with-others' is wiped out. Plurality and diversity as inherent features of cities are a heritage that must continue. Destroying 'the other' equals destroying this richness. Taking into account this richness, further directions of research should be indicated such as development of recommendations for the municipal policy in this area indulging special protection of cultural assets through their digitization and international cooperation in this regard.

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