

CHAPTER 7

The ‘Not-Quite’ and Tuzla’s Invisible Buildings

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A middle-aged man from the neighbourhood of Irac, on the western side of Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereinafter ‘Bosnia’), gave the following paradoxical response to an interview question about his city:

Question: What abandoned or empty buildings do you notice in your neighbourhood?

Answer: That’s a difficult question – I don’t see anything. Everything is OK. I guess. I have no idea ... Nothing.

Question: Do you notice abandoned buildings when you walk around the city?

Answer: Yes. There definitely are – how could I not notice? I’m understanding it as only in Irac, but there are also some down there, but there aren’t any abandoned ones ... There are a few abandoned houses, while I’m imagining them. I have no idea. There are some in Irac but there’s nothing terrible. Two, three buildings and that entire swimming pool up there ... that’s what I notice. (Interviewee 17, 2018)¹

Counter to the survey of abandoned buildings I conducted the previous summer, none of the seventeen interview participants identified any in their own neighbourhoods. Instead, they either identified them in the city at large or noticed neighbourhood abandonment only obliquely, as demonstrated in the above quote. Hell and Schönle observe the duality of ruins as being both seen and unseen, and ‘the ruin’s dialectic between absence and presence,

fragment and whole, is also one between visible and the invisible' (2010: 7); however, their characterization is that of the invisible past (or future) as embodied in the visible present of the ruins. In my findings, the present is also rendered invisible to the observer; past, present and future, though embodied by the abandoned buildings, remain unarticulated.

The invisible omnipresence of empty buildings speaks to conceptions of identity and space, as well as the lived everyday. In this chapter, I investigate the unconscious affectual mode in which both abandoned buildings and the city's constructed identity exist – affect here indicating 'intensities of feeling that influence behaviour' (Müller 2015: 409). Following Thrift, the cognitive unconscious shapes automatic comprehension at the moment of an affective encounter, meaning that 'every moment is processed as a prior intent, style or tone which arises from perception-in-movement' (2007: 63). Yet the experience of embodiment also includes a corporeal vulnerability that encompasses 'passivity, suffering, fatigue ... weariness and plain exhaustion, a sense of insignificance and even sheer indifference to the world ... In other words, bodies can and do become overwhelmed' (Thrift 2007: 242). Thus, the body, confronted with 'the unchosen and unforeseen [that] exceed the ability of the body to contain or absorb', might resist the need to draw meaning from an affective moment, producing a 'reluctance to engage' (Thrift 2007: 242).

In my interviews, the affective encounter with abandoned neighbourhood buildings remains unarticulated, unprocessed and unrepresented. Interviewees, reluctant to engage, (unconsciously) sidestep, qualify or wholly ignore abandoned buildings in their own neighbourhood, while simultaneously recognizing abandoned buildings across the city.² I consider these responses in the context of Tuzla's constructed identity – one that emerges as not quite postsocialist and not quite postconflict.

Tuzla's identity, I argue, is a particular condition in which the relationships between past and future (industrial socialism/postsocialism and conflict/postconflict) are in tension, and in which residents must navigate competing collective identities of the neighbourhood and the city. While the difference between neighbourhood and city is well researched in sociology and environmental psychology, a more-than-representational approach can offer a symbiotic perspective. Empty buildings, physical objects produced by the not-quite's processes and (non)progressions, are, in my interviews, also empty of meaning. However, as components of the built landscape networked into the city's physical blocks and local histories of use, empty buildings have an inherent affect; this affect may be of their own generation or, as I argue is the case in Tuzla, may be reflective of a broader affectual context.

In this chapter, I present the not-quite across two realms of articulation: at the city level through official heritage narratives and at the neighbourhood

level though interview responses. In the former, the city's self-narrative of continuity through the postsocialist and postconflict periods is in tension with the physical presence of abandoned buildings. In the latter, the affect of empty buildings remains largely unregistered in neighbourhoods. Finally, when interviewees perform identities through interview responses, competing articulations of the not-quite struggle for signification, prompting varying personal registers of noticing abandoned buildings.

In the following sections, I first discuss more-than-representational landscapes and describe my research methods, followed by a brief historical overview. I then elaborate on the not-quite and its presence in Tuzla. Finally, I discuss how interviewees display competing collective identities of city and neighbourhood under the not-quite.

Studying Ruins

Empty buildings exist as concrete objects in the world – as things – so they are not necessarily abandoned (or vacant) in the complete sense of the word, but only by their removal from networks of practice. Thus:

Their meanings may become hollowed out but may still retain a presence as enigmatic signifiers ... Or they may find new uses in other networks. Or they may linger on as denaturalized reminders of past events and practices, purposely memorialized in various ways or simply present as ruins, as melancholy rem(a)inders. In other words, things can have a potent afterlife. (Thrift 2007: 8–9)

This afterlife is my point of departure. The ruin in the current literature is a dialectic existing via the convergence of nature/history, nature/culture, pleasure/disgust and the utopian past/the dystopian future (or vice versa). Contemporary studies on ruins uncover the depths of human existence in particularly compelling ways; however, these accounts theorize the ruin's meaning(s) and its representation as an object of significance. Meanwhile, a more-than-representational approach asks not about its meaning, but about the affective context in which the ruin is networked.

Macpherson (2010: 3) characterizes nonrepresentational landscape theory emphasizing the human body and landscape as 'dynamic and dependent entities that can be usefully thought through together'. The landscape affects the body – its feelings, thoughts, and actions – while the body simultaneously affects the landscape, either directly through actions or indirectly through narratives. These affections do not necessarily exist consciously, therefore approaches that move beyond representation 'help us to recognize that we are not simply rational actors in an inert landscape, but rather we are always in the process of formation with the landscape' (2010: 8). By viewing everyday bodily encounters with abandoned buildings as an ongoing process

rather than a unique point of signification, we can set aside singular narratives of any particular building and instead investigate the broader scope of relationships between bodies and landscapes.

To look at this broader picture, I randomly sampled residents from three Tuzla neighbourhoods to capture variations in responses from those who more frequently and less frequently encounter abandoned buildings.³ To ensure a diverse set of respondents, I conducted semi-structured interviews with three males and three females per neighbourhood, which further broke down into age categories of one young (eighteen to thirty-four), middle-aged (thirty-five to fifty-four) and elderly (fifty-five and over) interviewee per gender. Participants were stopped in coffee shops or near building entrances and asked to participate in an interview about their neighbourhood. Interviews were conducted in public spaces, cafés or, when invited, in the interviewee's home, and lasted from twelve to fifty-six minutes. Each interview comprised thirty-five questions across four topics – basic demographics, perceptions of neighbourhood buildings, perceptions of neighbourhood community and participation in political activities. I did not ask about specific buildings, but had respondents name buildings themselves so that their salience was not artificially imposed during the interview.

The interviewees were selected from neighbourhoods with varying levels of relative dilapidation – low, medium and high. In order to determine these levels, I consulted an on-the-ground survey of buildings I conducted in the previous year, which used GPS coordinates to mark buildings on a map. Subjectively, I recorded the visual level of dilapidation, building size and an overall appearance on a scale from one to five. Objectively, I recorded the presence or absence of ongoing renovations, for-sale/rent signs, the state of the windows (broken, boarded), and the presence of graffiti, rubbish and overgrowth (vegetation). Combined, these characteristics created an indicator of the overall level of dilapidation for each building that, when connected to the map, provided a visual representation of decline across Tuzla.

However, the data showed no obvious visual trends, so I combined individual locations into neighbourhood clusters with a 500 m radius, approximating the distance a person would travel by foot within one neighbourhood. Clusters with greater scores showed neighbourhoods with greater dilapidation. The results showed the commercialized centre with the most dilapidation, and residential eastern neighbourhoods with the least.

From these, I selected three locations with greater, average and lesser dilapidation from which to interview eighteen residents (six each). Though the neighbourhood with the greatest level of dilapidation is the downtown core, its literal and conceptual centrality to the city distinguishes it from other neighbourhoods. Therefore, I instead selected Slatina and Centar (neighbourhoods near the core) as those with above-average levels of dilapi-

dition. I also selected Bulevar and Stupine on the east side (below-average dilapidation), and Irac and Batva on the west side (average dilapidation).

The methods applied allow for a range of personal and locational characteristics— age, gender and experience with dilapidation. Unfortunately, failed technology prevented Interviewee 12's responses from being included, resulting in seventeen viable interviews. The small number of interviews, rather than providing statistically conclusive findings, allows for a glimpse into everyday experiences and provides guidance for future research.

Tuzla, Bosnia

Located in the northeast of Bosnia, Tuzla was brought into the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1878 following several centuries of Ottoman rule. The Austro-Hungarians ultimately brought industrial, imperial capitalism to the city through mining and chemical production activities. This rapid modernization caused massive demographic changes; the population initially increased by 140% between 1879 and 1910 before the Second World War devastated local industrial progress and reduced population growth (Selimović and Hadžić 2007: 197). Thus, the newly created socialist Yugoslav state invested heavily in rebuilding destroyed infrastructure and educating industrial workers to buttress the labour force (2007: 177). The programmes succeeded; by 1961, 44.1% of employed Tuzla residents worked in industry and mining, leading to further urban expansion (2007: 192).

The emphasis on industrial production was a hallmark of the Yugoslav market socialist economic model under Josip Broz Tito, the country's President and ideological leader. Tito's socialism was independent of both Soviet-style communism and Western capitalism, and combined 'socialist ideals and policies at home with openness to the capital needs of the world economy' (Woodward 2003: 74). Under this system, workers' employment status came to dominate 'the identities, economic interests, social status, and political loyalty of Yugoslav citizens' (2003: 76).

However, industry also brought with it environmental consequences. Between 1957 and 2003, mining caused Tuzla to sink by 12 metres, damaging water, sewage and traffic line systems, and having 'dramatic effects on the buildings of Tuzla (including damages and collapses) leading to the evacuation of parts of the city ... [with] a net balance of 835 buildings lost from 1965 to 2005' (Mancini et al 2009: 387). Furthermore, labour migration to Western and Central Europe led to urban depopulation.

In 1965, Yugoslavia's liberalizing economic reforms yielded projections for unemployment increases in manual labour and petty farming. To offset these increases, the country opened relationships with Western Europe, en-

couraging labour migration and remittances in furtherance of development. At the height of the migration period in the 1970s, Carl-Ulrik Schierup (1995: 286) found that almost 1.5 million Yugoslavs worked abroad, with an unanticipatedly large number of skilled labour and highly educated citizens comprising that workforce. Host countries quickly repatriated unskilled labourers and favoured integration of the highly educated, leading to a Yugoslav brain and skill drain. Compounding this problem, local elites were disinclined to implement reintegration policies, instead using patronage networks to fill open positions.

This migration, spurred by internal policies, overcrowding and high municipal unemployment, burdened Yugoslav national and local economies. The global oil and financial crises of the 1970s and 1980s, and the subsequent austerity policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, worsened already poor economic conditions. The economy floundered under an uneven distribution of regional economic development, unemployment, large debts and reliance on foreign aid (Pleština 1992; Singleton and Carter 1982; Woodward 1995). There is no single explanation for the break-up of Yugoslavia and the ensuing conflict, but the fragility of the political economic system and a series of external and internal shocks were key.⁴

The Bosnian war began in April 1992 following successive independence referendums from component Yugoslav republics. In Bosnia, the country's three dominant ethnic groups (Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks [Bosnian Muslims]) were co-opted by nationalist elites with ethnically motivated territorial claims. The Bosnian Serb army, supported by rump Yugoslavia, attempted to consolidate Serb-only enclaves through ethnic cleansing, rape, siege and genocide; nationalist Bosnian Croat and Bosniak forces used similar tactics, if less systematically.

The most infamous incident occurred in July 1995 at a United Nations (UN) safe zone in Srebrenica, when Bosnian Serb forces committed genocide by killing over 8,000 Bosniak men and boys. Just before the incident occurred, over 15,000 men fled the area, including members of the Bosnian Army, intending to reach Bosnian government territory near a second safe zone in Tuzla. The column, subject to multiple attacks by Serb forces, reached Tuzla after five days and six nights with only 3,000 survivors.

Tuzla itself remained relatively peaceful, and scholars argue that consolidation of an ethnically mixed workers identity underlay the city's resistance to pervasive ethnic nationalism (Armakolas 2011, 2015; Calori 2015; Jansen 2016; Weiss 2002). With around 130,000 residents in 1991, Tuzla claimed the highest proportion of self-defined Yugoslavs (21%) and the highest percentage of mixed marriages in Bosnia; before the conflict, 48% identified as Bosniak, 16% as Croat and 15% as Serb (Jansen 2016: 196). This identity had

real political results – during the first multiparty elections in 1990 and the subsequent 1996 elections, Tuzla was the only municipality in Bosnia where non-nationalist, multiethnic parties won a decisive majority.

However, Tuzla did not escape unscathed. The city was subject to attacks from Serb soldiers in the surrounding hills, including blocks on humanitarian aid and the shelling of Tuzla's UN-controlled airport. Today, two major wartime catastrophes are still referenced – the 15 May 1992 Yugoslav People's Column Incident and the 25 May 1995 shelling of the city centre by the Bosnian Serb Army. This second incident, termed the Tuzla (or *Kapija*) Massacre, was the city's single most disruptive event, killing over seventy-one civilians and wounding at least 150 others, mainly youths, who had gathered at the main square (*kapija*). The site of the shelling was memorialized with a plaque, and the victims were buried together, regardless of religious affiliation, in the Slana Banja memorial complex north of the city centre.

Even though Tuzla's wartime mayor, Selim Bešliagić, lauded Tuzla's ability to remain undivided, approximately 10,000 of Tuzla's 20,000 Serb residents had left before the start of the war. As the conflict dragged on, the remaining Serbs also began to evacuate, citing a belief that Tuzla would be dominated by nationalist Bosniaks and would become unwelcoming to their families. Despite a distaste for Serb nationalism, they expressed growing cultural pressures and safety concerns following the influx of over 250,000 Bosniak refugees. The war left Tuzla depopulated and more ethnically homogeneous with effects that have lasted to the present day; according to the first postconflict census conducted in 2013, nearly 53% of Tuzla's 81,000 residents were born outside the city; furthermore, 73% identified as Bosniak, while only 3% identified as Serb.

Across the country, demographic changes are enshrined in the Dayton Accords, which ended the war in late 1995 and divided the country into a Bosniak-Croat Federation and a Serb Republic. Though halting the violence, the Accords are criticized for legitimizing ethnic cleansing and encouraging the relocation of minority ethnic groups. In 1996, Bešliagić foreshadowed the ensuing difficulty of maintaining Tuzla's prewar levels of multiculturalism in a polarized country: 'If there is no multi-ethnic Bosnia-Herzegovina, Tuzla itself will not be able to bear the burden of multi-ethnicity' (McKinsey 1996).

The war's death toll reached approximately 100,000 throughout Bosnia, though accounts vary. Over 412,000 housing units (one-third of the housing stock) were damaged or destroyed, with issues of property reclamation and compensation remaining today. Industrial production, already affected by the preceding economic crises, all but halted. Eventually, cumulative demographic and economic effects, combined with destruction and the theft

of industrial equipment, 'left Bosnian industry in 1996 operating at as little as 10 percent of its pre-war capacity' (European Stability Initiative 2014: 13).

Such cumulative stressors are reflected by Schierup, and the difficulty of distinguishing between political and economic migration, as 'people flee, not only because of outright ethnic cleansing, but because of politically induced mass impoverishment and existential insecurity' (1995: 288). Years later, catastrophic floods hit Southeastern Europe in May 2014, affecting over a million Bosnian citizens and again engendering massive economic losses – estimated at US\$2.7 billion or 15% of Bosnian GDP (World Bank Group 2017).

The combined effects of subsidence, economic crises, conflict, emigration and environmental disaster have left numerous abandoned and unused buildings in their wake. Meanwhile, poverty, corruption, unemployment, and lack of capacity and political will work against efforts to carry out physical renovations or settle ownership disputes. In short, Tuzla's empty buildings are abandoned not just physically, but through government neglect and indifference as well.

The Not-Quite

In many cases, and certainly in Tuzla, the so-called postsocialist era aligns with a so-called postindustrial era. Due to the historical period in which socialism emerged and socialism's emphasis on building a proletariat class, socialist cities grew via the processes of industrialization. By the end of the 1980s, growing global capitalism spurred the collapse of socialism and incited deindustrialization more broadly; former centres of industry (Western and postsocialist) found themselves gradually all at once on the periphery.

The prefix post has been critiqued in postcolonial literature (McClintock 1992), as well as in postcommunist studies, for collapsing differences and assuming the inexorable progression of a global (capitalist) modernity. Meanwhile, 'postindustrial' has come to encompass a range of outcomes, from a thriving service economy to the physically degraded landscape of a once industrial city. Traditionally, deindustrialization literature places the deindustrialized landscape in the context of forces of movement; as the economy changes or advances towards a (certain) postindustrial future, it undergoes a process of deindustrializing, moving from one state to another. However, removing the assumption of forward continuity, it helps to define the deindustrial as a spatial environment rather than a temporal process, which speaks to the idea of the not-quite: no longer industrial, but somehow not quite postindustrial either.

The concept parallels postsocialism's processes of marketization, democratization, state building and nation building. Scholars have largely focused on a presumed postsocialist transition (sometimes transformation), diagnosing problems with corruption, failed democratization, weak civic participation or immobilizing nostalgia. Despite references to a rupture, or break, beginning with 1989 and the fall of the Berlin Wall, the general literature assumes path-dependent continuity and investigates deviations from an assumed ideal.

Bosnia's Postconflict Not-Quite

Bosnia has been criticized for its slow progress towards state building, with blame largely assigned to the postconflict and postsocialist transitions. The Dayton Accords, which function as the country's constitution, created a highly complex and decentralized bureaucracy, dividing Bosnia into two entities (the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska) and a self-governing administrative unit (the Brčko District). The Federation further comprises ten administrative cantons, while municipality governments exist in both entities. The country's three constituent peoples (Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs) elect one president per group to form a rotating three-member presidency serving a four-year term; candidates and voters must declare only one of these three ethnicities, despite the country's history of mixed marriages. The inherent exclusion of nonconstituent peoples (for example, Roma and Jewish minorities) led the European Court of Human Rights in 2009 to find Bosnia's Constitution in violation of the European Convention on Human Rights. Further, the Dayton-mandated Office of the High Representative (OHR) gives the UN-appointed High Representative power to adopt binding decisions and remove public officials from office. The OHR has been condemned for lacking a legal basis, discouraging responsive local governments and violating sovereign democratic processes.

Finally, the postsocialist Bosnian state must contend with a postconflict one in which entrenched ethnic divisions and layers of bureaucracy suffocate efforts for political reforms. As such, the state is largely absent from everyday life, and identity politics fill the gaps. Kurtović and Hromadžić describe the current regime that Bosnians have:

come to know and experience as an alienated center of power. This regime engenders a state that is an 'empty container' – a vessel which holds up too little and fails to recognize, provide, and nurture pan and non-ethnic identifications, histories, and economic solidarities. (2017: 278)

Similarly, Andrew Gilbert (2006), in discussing truth-telling efforts with historians in Sarajevo, highlights the complications of Bosnia's co-existing postsocialist/postconflict status. Though such efforts should provide 'for a definitive break with state socialism and for democratic transition to be suc-

cessful, one [historian] replied: “But we are not in transition at all – nothing is moving!” (2006: 14). Gilbert argues that memories of state socialism and its abuses are distanced by the war’s immediacy, especially via an articulation of nationalist politics:

The periodization of recent history for the people of Bosnia – bracketing off of state socialism from the present – is in part fixed by the total event of the war and its materiality: the empty hulks of factories (fallen idle or destroyed by the war, gutted by war profiteers), the massive demographic dislocations, the rubble of entire villages and neighbourhoods, the minefields, the mass graves. (2006: 17)

Of course, some of these ‘empty hulks of factories’ are the products not only of the war, but also of the failed Yugoslav economy and lack of present political capacity. Jansen (2015) offers a symbiotic look at citizen–state relations under the absence of a state-sponsored service provision. Through interviews with residents in the Sarajevo neighbourhood of Dobrinja, he diagnoses Bosnia with what he calls ‘Daytonitis’. Under this affliction, the conditions of everyday life interfere with citizens’ ability to lead what they believe to be ‘normal lives’ in which expected services are routinely provided and people can afford daily necessities. This dream of a normal life evokes not only promises of Western capitalism, but also, and perhaps more so, recollections of socialist Yugoslavia. With the failed delivery of capitalism and loss of socialism, residents have found themselves stuck waiting for this normal life in what Jansen terms ‘the Meantime’. In short, Bosnia’s geopolitical location on Europe’s semi-periphery and its temporal location post-Dayton ‘defied any solid qualification as “postwar” and engendered the concern that ‘in this postsocialist and postwar constellation ... the state did not sufficiently exist yet and did not sufficiently exist anymore’ (2015: 154).

Jansen’s ‘Meantime’ has a ring of the not-quite, but there are subtle differences between them. Jansen uses the concept of yearning, a word full of affect, to describe desire for a functioning government, but the Meantime itself is not an affect so much as a state of being. According to Jansen, the Meantime is located at a particular spatiotemporal moment, ‘not simply [evoking] topography (“BiH”) but also a historical conjuncture (“Dayton”)', thereby locking the Meantime into a specific iteration of space–time (2015: 19). This contrasts with the not-quite, which is not held to the Bosnian post-socialist/postconflict moment; instead, it may refer to a not-quite ‘post’ at any spatiotemporal location. Though Tuzla certainly presents a unique constellation of the not-quite, which I argue has framed interviewee responses, the underlying forces of globalization and liberalization increasingly affect communities worldwide.

In Tuzla, the postconflict not-quite is articulated differently than in Sarajevo, where international attention has compelled discussion of the con-

flict. Tuzla's conflict narrative emphasizes normality and unity through the conflict, resisting investigation into the war's effects. The city is therefore not-quite postconflict on two dimensions: on the one hand, the Meantime constraints of post-Dayton statehood lock Tuzla into the same not-quite as Bosnia more generally, while on the other hand, the narrative avoids the airing of past traumas, rejecting wholesale acceptance of the postconflict moment.

Jansen also describes citizens' affectual investment in Bosnian statehood, indicating the charged relationship that exists between the state and its subjects. Rather than identifying a particular affectual relationship and set of actions, the not-quite is the context in which competing iterations of its affects are performed. Here, Müller's more-than-representational approach is particularly compelling, where affect is described as:

Intensities of feeling that influence behaviour ... First, [affect is] something that *works in and through the body* and bodily experience. Second, affect *drives action* and produces visible conduct ... [Furthermore] affect is distributed and *exceeds the subject*. For it to come into existence, the human body must be entangled in a whole set of relations. Affect thus means the capacity to affect manifold others and, in turn, to be affected by manifold others. Last and most contentious, affect is said to be *precognitive, preconscious, and irrational*. It is untainted by measured reflection and discursive symbolization. (2015: 409–10, emphasis in the original)

While the Meantime, with its yearnings, affectual investments and performances of an everyday life, can certainly be approached from a more-than-representational framework, the not-quite exists in a layer above the Meantime – in effect, the not-quite is an affect under which the Meantime, or any set of citizen state relations, is produced.

Heritage and the Not-Quite

The Meantime's focus on the state emphasizes the interconnectedness of politics and affect. Müller (2015: 418) calls for consideration of political affects, suggesting that 'exploring how the representational is tied up with the more-than-representational is critical'. With abandoned buildings, the relationships connecting affect, registration, signification and identity narratives – or between representational and nonrepresentational elements – are crucial.

Investigating heritage, an enshrined social narrative that seeks to make sense of the past, helps pull all these pieces together. The more-than-representational study of heritage is rich with potential; attention shifts from the meaning of the heritage object or narrative itself toward affects and practices, constructions and performances of identity, and relationships between bodies (human and otherwise). Waterton (2014), summarizing Thrift, highlights the importance of embodied memory and affectual relations. When

a visitor encounters a heritage site, the site itself harbours an affect that, depending on the visitor's own history, may or may not call forth embodied memories. The memories may be personal, related to the individual socio-political standing of the visitor (for example, gender, race or class), or they may be more generic, engineered by a greater political context. In this way, heritage can be manipulated via identity politics to communicate 'shared values and cohesion – sites that speak to, and on behalf of, the nation' and hold the power to validate or reject national narratives (Waterton 2014: 830).

Tuzla's heritage environment seems to fully embrace all aspects of the past, an exception to Gilbert's (2006) observation that Bosnian heritage focuses on the war at the expense of Yugoslav legacies. Postconflict political elites in the city 'were able to confidently formulate their own approach to cultural heritage ... maintaining a positive outlook towards the Socialist era legacy' (Armakolas 2015: 227). Heritage markers in Tuzla emphasize continuity of practices, incorporating the past (socialist and presocialist) into a present that is narratively no different from the past. The Slana Banja complex stands as an example of this. It began construction in 1958 and reflected operative Yugoslav values: the partisan struggle, the 'glorious revolution', and physical activity, emphasizing 'the "warrior-worker-sportsman"' as the three inter-connected and cherished dimensions of the "socialist man" (Armakolas 2015: 232). While a postconflict renovation added monuments to an independent Bosnia, the socialist focus did not fade. In 2001, Tuzla Mayor Jasmin Imamović added the Avenue of Heroes featuring busts, both preserved and newly commissioned, of key partisan and socialist figures.

The narrative of continuity sanctioned by Tuzla's heritage environment stems from a system that resists the periodization Gilbert identifies as 'bracketing'. However, both Tuzla's continuity and Gilbert's bracketing speak to an absent heritage narrative that would first acknowledge the socialist past and second mark its difference from the present. Trapped between past and present, both contribute to the affect of the not-quite. In the following analysis, I show how this affect is perpetuated in Tuzla, as interviewees' absence of a coherent narrative explaining abandoned buildings across the city, along with the denial of their neighbourhood presence, disallows collective acknowledgement of past heritage and present conditions.

Empty Buildings?

Wartime Tuzla's resistance to ethnic nationalism underscored a dogmatic attempt to maintain normalcy throughout the conflict. Selim Bešliagić, the city's anti-nationalist mayor, built a narrative around this normalcy, boasting in 1995 that:

Crime statistics were no higher in Tuzla under difficult wartime conditions than they were in the years before the war. Our interethnic relations throughout the war have been good ... [And] the number of interethnic marriages during the war was as high as in the prewar period. (Alispahić 1998: 246)

The lack of reliable data makes such claims difficult to disprove, incentivizing political leaders to stress their successes. The wartime Mayor of Sarajevo, Tarik Kuposović, spoke similar praises of the capital; at a commemoration marking 1,000 days under siege, his address to visiting dignitaries proclaimed that Sarajevo ‘has been for half a millennium a true meeting place of nations, religions, cultures and customs’ (Bosno 1995). Bešliagić, however, distinguished Tuzla’s experience from that of other Bosnian cities:

I’m not saying that everything is ideal, but when ... you remember three and a half years of widespread interethnic hatred, you have to acknowledge that Tuzla is different. I am not saying that Sarajevo and Zenica have no feeling for interethnic cooperation. But there politics have prevented it from flowering. (Alispahić 1998: 494)

Later, during a 1997 speech at the Tuzla City Council, he more explicitly remarked that ‘much has changed, especially in political thinking. *But Tuzla has not changed*’ (Alispahić 1998: 299–300, emphasis added). The difference between Sarajevo and Tuzla’s multiethnic narratives is their endurance; while Tuzla is still considered exceptional in its solidarity, Sarajevo is now studied as one of the world’s divided cities.

Tuzla’s official publications reflect this unified identity, despite the demographic trend towards greater homogenization. The Tuzla Canton’s tourist brochure begins the Tuzla city article by claiming ‘if you ask any Bosnian which city in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the most open, most tolerant, and most relaxed, you will surely get the same answer – Tuzla’ (Tuzlanski Kanton). And a subsection on the city’s website under the label Antifascist Tradition boasts of a critical eye towards ethnic nationalism:

The story of Tuzla is timeless and supranational. In all the critical moments of Europe, the Balkans, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the citizens of Tuzla took things ‘with a grain of salt’ [‘Cum grano salis’]. (Antifašistička tradicija n.d.)

Europe’s ‘critical moments’ take centre stage in Tuzla’s self-narrative, an allusion to both the Second World War and the war of the 1990s, while the self-referential ‘grain of salt’ hints at industry, anti-fascism and anti-nationalism. The website further calls on Tuzla citizens to defend ‘against human rights violations with the protection of human rights, against hatred with love, against nationalism with anti-nationalism, against fascism with anti-fascism, and against division with communal life’, echoing Bešliagić, who in 1995 declared: ‘We combat division with togetherness. We oppose fascism with antifascism. We resist violations of human rights and freedom with their protection. In a word we fight Evil with Good’ (Alispahić 1998: 247).

Tuzla resisted nationalism at the polls too as the only Bosnian city to elect non-nationalist parties in 1990 and 1996. Armakolas (2011) attributes Tuzla's resistance of fractional nationalism to high levels of civic and associational life, though the reality of wartime Tuzla was more complicated. For example, Armakolas (2011) found reports of municipal-sponsored anti-Serb activity in the early years of the war. Similarly, Jansen (2016) documents a conversation with Tuzla residents in which nationalist divisions and resentment *do* appear. And certainly, the state politics of nationalism *must* affect the city, given the country's informal and ethnicized bureaucracy.

But the story of a unified Tuzla is so strong that it obscures memory of past conflict, even to the extent of deflecting academic inquiries – excluding those that valorize Tuzla's unity. Notably, quantifiable and/or specific instances of shelling damage to industry remain elusive, with the memorial landscape reflecting a lack of narrative diversity. The Slana Banja complex, mentioned earlier, situates memorials to the Second World War Partisans, Yugoslav heroes and the 1990s side by side. Even the memorial cemetery from the 25 May 1995 shelling strengthens an anti-nationalist narrative as the victims were buried together, regardless of ethnicity, in defiance of national religious authorities (Armakolas 2015: 236).

The construction and maintenance of Tuzla's multicultural identity largely emerged from the narrative of Yugoslav solidarity. This too is embodied in the memorial landscape; the monument to the 1920 Husino miner rebellion, erected in 1954, valorizes 7,000 miners who went on strike against the post-First World War Kingdom of Yugoslavia (Horvatinčić 2014). While Tito used similar icons of the worker-turned-revolutionary to encourage a unified Yugoslav identity, it was co-opted during the 1990s to validate wartime tactics. In Tuzla, the struggle against an exploitative authoritarian state was linked narratively to defence against attacking (nationalist) Serb forces.

The Husino rebellion was again borrowed in February 2014 when disgruntled workers from the Dita chemical factory protested against the withholding of wages, pensions and other social benefits. Bosnian-language media outlets referred to the protests as 'a new Husino rebellion' and drew upon the city's self-proclaimed revolutionary spirit. The protests spread, resulting in the burning of the Sodaso building, which had housed the headquarters of the Sodaso salt mining company and the cantonal government. The protests were adopted around the country, eventually inspiring the Bosnian *plenums*, citizen forums mobilized around shared demands for political and economic reforms. The Sodaso building remained abandoned during my visit in the summer of 2018, though the municipal government announced renovation plans.

Taken together, the official narrative of Tuzla is one that combines several identities – industrialism, revolution, anti-fascism, socialism, anti-

nationalism, and multiculturalism – into a continuous master narrative defining Tuzla’s spirit. Doing so resists attempts to separate the past from the present, despite the multitude of changes and transitions/transformational processes faced by contemporary Tuzla, contributing to the affectual not-quite.

Tuzla’s Identity and Abandoned Buildings

Abandoned buildings and factories in Tuzla belong to many narratives – industrial heritage, socialist heritage, conflict (directly or indirectly via emigration), capital flight or recent protest. Without a unifying narrative, their affects are registered by citizens on an individual basis. Müller reminds us of the varying social contexts guiding the registration of affects as emotion: ‘A political speech can affect a person, but whether it incites joy, hate, or pride has much to do with whether this person is male or female, white or black, belongs to the minority or the majority ethnicity, and so on’ (2015: 412).

The diversity of my interviewees allows for an exploration of affect across these differences in background (in residency, gender, age, educational attainment, income and employment status). Still, each neighbourhood displayed specific trends in resident demographics, hinting at unique neighbourhood identities. Interviewees in the west tended to have lower average incomes, but generally lived in Tuzla five years longer than average, and reported the highest levels of neighbourhood social interactions.⁵ Meanwhile, eastern residents have lived in Tuzla about four years fewer than average, but had higher overall incomes and higher satisfaction with their neighbourhood in general. This reflects residents’ reports (and my own perception) that the eastern neighbourhoods were newer and better kept than the western ones (Figures 7.1 and 7.2 depict the visual differences between east and west neighbourhoods, respectively). Finally, the centre neighbourhoods (with the most dilapidation) had the highest levels of schooling and the lowest reported level of neighbourhood social interactions.

When discussing abandoned buildings around the city, most interviewees identified at least one location. However, large structures were usually not singled out, nor did many people name specific buildings; none identified the Sodaso building burned in the protests. Instead, responses largely identified offices that were not currently in use, scattered abandoned houses or buildings that were likely under demolition. Interviewee 6 (2018) even answered that the only abandoned buildings he noticed were those currently being built. Furthermore, in response to questions about neighbourhood life, interviewees hinted that buildings are abandoned in an indirect sense. Though people do live in them, their facades and interiors are not maintained by property owners, and three of the interviewees referenced a recent incident where falling facade struck and killed a local woman.



Figure 7.1. View of apartment buildings (east), Tuzla, Bosnia. © A. Lawnicki



Figure 7.2. View of apartment buildings (west), Tuzla, Bosnia. © A. Lawnicki

However, Interviewee 7 (2018), did specify buildings. When asked about buildings around the city (opposed to those in his neighbourhood), he replied:

That I notice, and that I have noticed and that I am noticing. I notice in the centre there are many dilapidated buildings near the Kabilov Bakery – I don't know what they are, if they're renovated. The music school is in such a state – I don't know if they've done anything with it yet. I notice plenty of these abandoned places that empty up – they are waiting, I don't know, for some better time.

He experiences, registers and signifies the empty buildings as 'waiting ... for some better time', a direct iteration of Jansen's Meantime and indicative of the not-quite.

Under this affective not-quite, abandoned buildings are explained by a multiplicity of narratives, which interviewees readily offered. Those who had trouble identifying specific buildings were not asked to elaborate, but those who answered affirmatively engaged economic and political dimensions. Some responses to the question 'In your opinion, why are these buildings abandoned?' are listed below:

Interviewee 5 (2018): There are many who leave in search of work [*odlaze trbuhom za kruhom*] because they do not have the means to live. Not us pensioners ... where would we go when we're already up in our years? The youth mainly leave because there isn't ... everyone wants to have their own job – something to live off of and such. People don't have anything to live off of – they must leave [*napuštati*].

Interviewee 7 (2018): If they are abandoned due to soil subsidence – then it's normal that people abandoned the building.

Interviewee 10 (2018): I think that they are too damaged for any investments in them to pay off ... So it's probably easier and more cost-effective for them to build new ones with new construction – to build higher quality ones.

Interviewee 13 (2018): I think that it's because of unresolved property/legal relations [*imovinsko-pravni odnosi*]. With some new privateers [*privatnicima*] – wartime, and with the state – there are unresolved relations in half of these places. And there are some state-owned firms that failed under Yugoslavia ... [And] because of the lack of creativity on the part of the people who regulate the structure of the city to adapt to the needs of citizens, rather than constantly building these new structures [*hale*], which are cheaper ... where it's obvious that some money is laundered, that the numbers shown are greater than their total cost.⁶

Interviewee 17 (2018): Well I don't know – because people aren't ready to invest in that infrastructure. Second – people leave ... And because of property/legal relations ... no one knows what is whose. Every child knows about that in Tuzla. Is it the municipality's, the jeweller's, my mother's ...? I think there's plenty that's unresolved.

Interviewee 18 (2018): Most of those buildings are those that were abandoned after the war ... Actually in the war. They were abandoned during wartime proceedings. That ... or elderly people lived there and then died. The children are abroad and whatnot.

Interviewee 13's comment is particularly illustrative. It captures first the transition from socialism to capitalism ('new private owners'), second the post-conflict state ('wartime'), and third deindustrialization ('firms that failed'). Furthermore, he references these processes' interconnectedness – not just wartime profiteers, but also profiteers 'with the state' – signalling corruption during privatization and unequal access to resources engendered by the war. Other interviewees offer less comprehensive responses; though they are likely to be true, they do not capture the full potential for abandoned buildings in the city. And even Interviewee 13 left out one explanation – subsidence.

A unified master narrative for why abandoned buildings exist cannot be constructed without destroying the current narrative of continuity. If they are abandoned because of conflict, ethnic unity is challenged; if they are abandoned due to subsidence, pride in Tuzla's salt mines is challenged; if they are abandoned due to failed industry, worker solidarity is challenged. As a result, the affect of the not-quite continues to be supported. The buildings are not-quite abandoned because presumably someone, somewhere owns them, but also not-quite not abandoned because no one has done anything about them.

Invisible Neighbourhood Buildings

Though the sample is too small for statistical conclusions, there was one trend – an identified difference between the west and east neighbourhoods (discussed previously). This does not directly reflect dilapidation, as it was the centre neighbourhoods that had the highest proliferation of abandoned buildings. Still, responses indicated dissatisfaction with neighbourhood quality in the centre and the west, and overall satisfaction in the east, where residents tended to describe neighbourhood quality as better than the others, both in terms of infrastructure and social life.

The previous section discussed buildings only in the context of the city because not a single interviewee, regardless of environmental perceptions, directly identified empty or abandoned buildings in their own neighbourhood. Meanwhile, all but one (Interviewee 8 (2018)) affirmed their existence in Tuzla as a whole. However, four interviewees (two each from the west and the centre) indirectly identified abandoned buildings. Interviewee 17 (2018), quoted in the introduction, only discussed abandoned buildings in his neighbourhood after considering the entire city. Meanwhile, Inter-

viewees 3 (2018) and 4 (2018) attached qualifiers to the word *building*. Interviewee 3 said that no buildings were abandoned as such, but an apartment with unresolved inheritance issues has been there ‘for several decades. God knows what’s inside. But from the outside door you can see that something isn’t right’. Interviewee 4 qualified the word *building* by reporting that no residential properties were abandoned, except maybe ‘some small old houses that had collapsed and where it wasn’t possible to live’ due to dangerous conditions, but ‘any others, no’. Finally, Interviewee 5 (2018) hesitated with the word ‘abandoned’: ‘They’re not really abandoned, but there are several little surrounding buildings where there haven’t been shops or businesses ... and that’s all abandoned.’

These interviewees all equivocate abandoned/not abandoned, but otherwise share few other characteristics. Interviewees 3, 4 and 5 are in the fifty-five and over age bracket, but Interviewee 17 is not. Interviewees 4 and 17 are generally positive about their neighbourhoods, while Interviewee 3 remains neutral and Interviewee 5 has many grievances. Therefore, in order to gain an insight into their responses, we must move beyond demographics and consider deeper relationships they have with their neighbourhood.

The affectual relationship with the neighbourhood already has a term: place attachment – or an affective bond between a person and a place. Place attachment involves precognitive affect and conscious processes of signification, as well as performances of identity, and fits nicely within a more-than-representational framework (Lewicka 2012). Without delving too much into this literature, affective relationships between interviewees and their neighbourhoods may drive them to perform neighbourhood identity during the interview. In the case of Interviewee 5, abandoned buildings fit more easily into her neighbourhood narrative than others. She says the neighbourhood is declining, dangerous and alienating. She describes poor neighbourly relations, comments on building degradation, criticizes the lack of adequate lighting and laments the fact that she has nowhere else to go. When asked whether the neighbourhood has changed, she responds: ‘This is now, for me, the twilight zone.’ Yet she is hesitant to directly label the buildings as abandoned and displays strong positive associations as well. She reveals that her father was president of the housing council in her building.⁷ When asked about whether she goes to church, she takes the opportunity to proclaim anti-nationalist sentiment: ‘I love and appreciate equally the mosque, the church, and any other place of worship.’ Though nostalgic, she shows pride in her socialist heritage and anti-nationalism, identities that are embedded in the city’s master narrative.

Interviewee 5 similarly exhibits low levels of social cohesion (the closeness of interactions with neighbours) that appear to mediate overall neigh-

bourhood narratives, though not perceptions of abandoned buildings. Those with greater social ties seem to see their neighbourhood in a better light. For example, Interviewees 4 (2018) and 11 (2018) are very similar demographically; Interviewee 4 is older, but both are males, have median incomes and have lived in Slatina (in the centre) for twenty-six years. But when asked to describe neighbourly relations, Interviewee 4 describes strong social ties, while Interviewee 11 describes neighbourly relations as 'alienation, in a word. Everyone is concerned with themselves and that's it. So there is no neighbourly contact'. They also show a correlating bifurcation in their neighbourhood descriptions:

Interviewee 4: I would say that here in this part it's a somewhat more densely populated space. We have a greater number of buildings and greater rates of occupancy, that's why here it's a bit livelier in comparison to others.

Interviewee 11: It's a little more depressing relative to other neighbourhoods. It's gloomy here [*Malo vlada veći mrak*]. It's much sadder than all the other neighbourhoods. Other neighbourhoods are brighter, here we have fewer lights and the city cares less about this neighbourhood. There is much less concern for Slatina than for other neighbourhoods.

Here, social cohesion seems to have a relationship with perceptions and interpretations of the physical environment. Social ties may therefore be reinforcing or even creating affective bonds with the neighbourhood. Yet social cohesion does not seem to be related to perceptions of abandoned buildings. Interviewees 4 (positive affective bonds with his neighbourhood) and 5 (negative affective bonds) both indirectly identified buildings in their neighbourhoods. Meanwhile, Interviewee 11 (negative affectual bonds) did not notice neighbourhood abandoned buildings, even indirectly.

Therefore, under the not-quite, it is not the registration of abandoned buildings that appears to fit with personal narratives, but their signification. Whereas Interviewee 5 attributes abandoned buildings to poverty and dire economic standing (a negative attribution), Interviewee 4 blames only subsidence (a neutral attribution). Meanwhile, Interviewees 11 and 17 (with negative and positive affectual bonds, respectively) both blame unresolved property ownership – the vagueness of the term making room for a variety of emotional registers.

The not-quite also functions in the east neighbourhoods, despite low levels of decline. Interviewee 7 (2018) describes his neighbourhood as full of nightlife, cafés and people. Most notably, he considers it to be 'definitely a European neighbourhood by all standards' and identifies more strongly with his neighbourhood than with the city. Later, he reveals his position as president of an association of building administrators (*predsjednik ulaza i predsjednik etažnih vlasnika*).⁸ The contradictions between the city's

not-quite, abandoned buildings and his own neighbourhood identity are glaring. By identifying with a European centre, beyond Tuzla's affective not-quite, he situates the neighbourhood definitively after industry, socialism and conflict.

Therefore, while both the neighbourhood and city exist under the not-quite, neighbourhood narratives may support or contradict the city's master narrative of continuity. Given the variety of responses, how interviewees choose to reconcile abandoned buildings with these competing narratives might depend on individual experiences and personality factors – the differing social contexts Müller reminds us of.

Conclusion

The city exists under the affective not-quite, retaining dogmatic adherence to a narrative of continuity, but residents have formed their own neighbourhood narratives based on personal knowledge and histories. In many cases, abandoned buildings do not fit with these self-generated neighbourhood narratives and so their presence is either equivocated or shuffled outward to the city. In the realm of the city, the cause of their abandonment, and therefore attributed meaning, depends on personal experience rather than any unifying narrative. The physically empty buildings emerge as similarly hollow of any grand meaning.

Given interviewees' equivocation and denial of neighbourhood abandoned buildings, the more-than-representational approach taken above opens the door for a different layer of questions. By considering not what abandoned buildings represent, but rather how those representations come to be made, we may deconstruct the social and political narratives supporting collective and individual identities. Thrift's characterization of the body's 'reluctance to engage' emerges in response to the multiplicity of competing and conflicting narratives surrounding Tuzla's abandoned buildings. When the buildings are at a relative distance, registration and even signification may occur. But when the building is in the interviewee's own backyard, the narratives become so complicated and entangled that the overwhelmed body renders it invisible.

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Notes

1. All translations from Bosnian are my own.
2. I corrected for potential miscoding and conferred with my research assistant and transcriber, native Bosnian speakers, to ensure translations were interpreted as intended. I acknowledge other explanations, such as those based on sociology (neighborhood effects), psychology or other more-than-representational approaches. However, these might inform and enhance rather than compete with my discussion of identity/affect relations.
3. A special thanks to Selma Kešetović for her assistance in conducting the interviews, and Alen Kerić for transcribing them.
4. Including the death of Tito in 1980, increasingly stringent IMF constraints, global financial crises, the collapse of the Eastern Bloc and loss of its markets, and Western deprioritization of Yugoslavia.
5. Income corresponds to the following answers: 'I can afford ... 1. Expensive things (for example, an apartment or car); 2. Durable goods (for example, a television, refrigerator) but not very expensive things; 3. All types of food, hygiene products and clothing I want, but durable goods are too expensive for me; 4. All types of food and hygiene products I want, but not much more than that; 5. I cannot afford all types of food and hygiene products that I would like to purchase every month.' West neighbourhoods averaged 2.33 on a subjective income scale (average of 3.06); east neighbourhoods reported 3.67.
6. Translation note: *hale* connotes shoddy, warehouse-like structures.
7. In Yugoslavia, housing councils served to coordinate the needs of residents in a building.
8. Translation note: an elected representative for a housing unit serving as liaison to the *mjesna zajednica* (literally, local community), the smallest unit of municipal government (akin to a neighbourhood city council). Both are socialist holdovers.

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Interviews

- Interviewee 1. Male, twenty-one years old, residing in east neighbourhood; secondary education; unemployed; income level 2. Interviewed on 4 July 2018, Tuzla.
- Interviewee 2. Female, twenty-nine years old, residing in centre neighbourhood; secondary education; self-employed; income level 2. Interviewed on 4 July 2018, Tuzla.
- Interviewee 3. Female, fifty-nine years old, residing in centre neighbourhood; secondary education; unofficially employed; income level 3. Interviewed on 4 July 2018, Tuzla.

- Interviewee 4. Elderly male, unknown age, residing in centre neighbourhood; secondary education; pensioner; income level 3. Interviewed on 4 July 2018, Tuzla.
- Interviewee 5. Female, sixty-two years old, residing in west neighbourhood; secondary education; pensioner; income level 5. Interviewed on 4 July 2018, Tuzla.
- Interviewee 6. Male, twenty years old, residing in west neighbourhood; secondary school education; student; income level 3. Interviewed on 6 July 2018, Tuzla.
- Interviewee 7. Male, thirty-eight years old, residing in east neighbourhood; primary education; officially employed; income level 2. Interviewed on 6 July 2018, Tuzla.
- Interviewee 8. Female, sixty-four years old, residing in east neighbourhood; university education; pensioner; income level 2. Interviewed on 11 July 2018, Tuzla.
- Interviewee 9. Female, twenty-one years old, residing in west neighbourhood; secondary education; unemployed; income level 3. Interviewed on 11 July 2018, Tuzla.
- Interviewee 10. Female, thirty years old, residing in east neighbourhood; secondary education; unemployed; income level 5. Interviewed on 11 July 2018, Tuzla.
- Interviewee 11. Male, forty-five years old, residing in centre neighbourhood; university education; officially employed; income level 3. Interviewed on 12 July 2018, Tuzla.
- Interviewee 12. Male, unknown age, residing in centre neighbourhood; unknown education; unknown employment; income level 3. Interviewed on 14 July 2018, Tuzla.
- Interviewee 13. Female, thirty-three years old, residing in centre neighbourhood; university education; unemployed; income level unknown. Interviewed on 14 July 2018, Tuzla.
- Interviewee 14. Female, fifty-three years old, residing in west neighbourhood; university education; officially unemployed; income level 3. Interviewed on 14 July 2018, Tuzla.
- Interviewee 15. Male, fifty-eight years old, residing in west neighbourhood; primary education; self-employed; income level 3. Interviewed on 14 July 2018, Tuzla.
- Interviewee 16. Female, thirty-eight years old, residing in east neighbourhood; secondary education; unofficially employed; income level 2. Interviewed on 15 July 2018, Tuzla.
- Interviewee 17. Male, forty-one years old, residing in west neighbourhood; secondary education; unemployed; income level 5. Interviewed on 15 July 2018, Tuzla.
- Interviewee 18. Male, fifty-nine years old, residing in east neighbourhood; university education; unemployed; income level 1. Interviewed on 16 July 2018, Tuzla.