

[Call for Abstracts: War Diaries: Ecologies of Post-war Reconstructions](#)

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Call for Papers

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December 20, 2022 to March 1, 2023

Subject Fields:

Architecture and Architectural History, Humanities, Urban Design and Planning, Digital Humanities, Environmental History / Studies

Call for Abstracts: *War Diaries: Ecologies of Post-war Reconstructions*

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The destruction of buildings and artifacts has shaped not only the physical attributes of the built environment but also societies, cultures, and entire civilizations across the globe—arguably, with zeal equal to their creative production. Modern-day annihilations of Aleppo and Homs, in Syria, and more recently Mariupol, Volnovakha, and many other towns, in Ukraine, illustrate the weaponization of art and architecture and connect it with a growing number of physical assaults and aggressions against entire populations, their cultural heritage, and spatial landmarks. The need to understand how cities, environments, and societies can recover efficiently and sustainably from such violence is dire.

When it comes to the impact of postwar reconstructions, however, existing research focuses mostly on specific and isolated fields, such as urbicide, military urbanism, semiotics of destruction, displacement and migrations, war economies, memorial studies, etc. In the first volume of ***War Diaries***, subtitled ***Design after the Destruction of Art and Architecture*** and published in 2022 by the University of Virginia Press (<https://www.upress.virginia.edu/title/5408/>), we focused on the role of artistic and architectural design and the field work of designers in the context of postwar reconstruction. Discussions following the publication of the book challenged ongoing debates on post-war rebuilding. They focused on the broader ecological impact of reconstruction and the interrelation between physical, social, and economic settings during recovery and renewal.

To address the gap, this call explores the rarely considered but complex ecologies and ecological entanglements emerging after violence and destruction. Ecological intricacies are understood as both richness and diversity of postwar reconstruction approaches, and include investigations on the environmental impact of human actions and the socio-spatial predicament in which different actors operate during recovery. More specifically, in the edited volume that will result

from this call, we want to broaden the picture of postwar reconstruction and link the multiple settings and approaches in which rebuilding after violence operates. Future authors of ***War Diaries: Ecologies of Post-war Reconstructions*** are invited to investigate complex systems involving design recovery after the war and how they simultaneously address diverse factors, scales, milieus, and resources. The emphasis goes on the relational quality of reconstruction which connects environmental, social, and/or technological settings. Understood in its entirety, the book will consider the built environment as a canvas of various power-plays as well as the arena in which relationships combine to translate into complex postwar realities. Our long-term goal with this project is to test existing and create new urban development scenarios able to recover post-conflict contexts.

Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- the relation between **environment, territory, and community**, including the complexity of landscapes of destruction and extraction, border tensions in territory formations, and the entanglement of ecologies of resistance;
- the intricacies between **social, environmental, and economic milieus**, including the frictions between professional expertise and forms of (re)construction labor, the linkages between the environmental inequality of rebuilding and social tolerance, and the crisis emerging from the clash of ecological processes of renewal and (geo)political histories;
- the connection between **body and environment**, the violent confrontation of embodied knowledge and damaged landscapes, the biopolitics of recovery, the emergence of ecological tensions in recovered interiors;
- the predicament of **technology and media**, their limitations, potential, and broader impact in conducting, researching and designing post-war ecologies of reconstruction.

DATES AND SUBMISSION DETAILS:

Submission opens: December 15, 2022.

Submission deadline: March 1, 2023.

Pre-selection: March 15, 2023.

Tentative Workshop date: April 2023

We would like to invite authors to submit extended abstracts (between 500 and 1000 words). Proposals should be submitted no later than March 1, 2023, via the following email addresses: elisa.dainese@design.gatech.edu and A.Stanicic@tudelft.nl . By March 15, 2023, the co-editors will

inform the authors if their proposal is selected.

After abstracts are selected, authors will be invited to participate in an extended conversation on the book project which will set the base for a publication on ecologies of postwar reconstruction. This will be the third event that the authors have organized to promote the topic: the first event was in The Netherlands, at Delft Institute of Technology (June 20, 2022), the second event took place in Atlanta (USA), at the Georgia Institute of Technology (September 23, 2022).

Authors will be asked to prepare a 5 to 10-minute presentation on the main ideas of their proposal. Presentations will be followed by a group brainstorming session in which we will define more precisely the outline of the book. During the workshop, we will actively engage our authors in a conversation on the book project. We will also discuss a timeframe for publication of the entire manuscript. The modality of the meeting will be hybrid (virtual on zoom and in person; location *tbd*). Authors will work on the final papers for publication after the event and according to the feedback received.

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