

Constructing the “City of international solidarity”: Non-aligned internationalism, the United Nations and visions of development, modernism and solidarity, 1955-1975

Abstract:

This article embeds the United Nations (UN) plan to reconstruct the city of Skopje after the 1963 earthquake in a broader story about decolonisation, visions of post-war modernisation, Yugoslavia’s global role as a leader of the non-aligned world and the collaboration and tensions between developed and developing countries at the UN regarding economic development and technical assistance. With Warsaw’s Chief architect Adolf Ciborowski at the helm as project manager of the Skopje Urban Plan Project, the development plan for the city was arguably unlike any other operation of its kind undertaken by the United Nations Special Fund (later the UNDP). Drawing upon material from multiple archives, this article seeks to enlarge the scope of “socialist internationalism” and address what I call “internationalist constellations”, in order to account for the interconnectedness and cross-fertilisation between liberal and socialist internationalisms and the role of non-aligned internationalism therein.

Keywords: non-alignment, Yugoslavia, United Nations, Skopje, development, modernism

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“The exhibition *Solidarity, an Unfinished Project?* [...] highlights the importance of asking ourselves if it is still possible to believe that somewhere within us lies a utopian spark worth preserving; a spark necessary not only for great changes but sometimes needed in order to persevere and to continue to defend the abandoned or forgotten idea of solidarity.” *Museum of Contemporary Art, Skopje*, October 2014.

The exhibition that opened in October 2014 at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Skopje was conceived as a tribute to the numerous international artists who contributed their works to the collection of the newly established Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art after the 1963 Skopje earthquake, including Pablo Picasso, Victor Vasarely and Alexander Calder. Both the Museum’s collection and the Museum itself were products of an unrivalled exercise in UN-coordinated relief and trans-bloc international collaboration. While most of the collection was composed of West European and American art, the building was a gift from the communist Polish government, designed by the well-known group of Polish architects known as the “Warsaw Tigers”.¹ Some of the most prominent initial gestures of solidarity in the aftermath of the 1963 Skopje earthquake, that left one of the eight regional Yugoslav capital cities almost completely destroyed, included: the 120-bed hospital dispatched in 24 United States Air Force C-130s under orders from President Kennedy the day after the earthquake; the battalion of Soviet military engineers; the British, Polish and

¹ Jerzy Mokrzyński, Eugeniusz Wierzbicki and Waclaw Klyzewski. See: Boris Petkovski, *Museum of Contemporary Art – Skopje, 1964-1976* (Skopje: Dossier MoCA, 2001); *Tigers: The Architecture of Jerzy Mokrzyński, Eugeniusz Wierzbicki and Waclaw Klyzewski* (Skopje: Embassy of the Republic of Poland, 2014).

Japanese experts in urban planning and reconstruction; and one of the richest collections of contemporary art in Southern Europe. In the aftermath of the earthquake Yugoslav President Josip Broz Tito declared that Skopje would become a symbol of Yugoslav and international solidarity. A United Nations General Assembly resolution from October 1963 noted “with satisfaction that the spirit of international solidarity demonstrated on this occasion has transformed the reconstruction of Skopje into a real symbol of friendship and brotherhood among peoples.”² The trope of international solidarity marked the decade of the 1960s and persisted both officially and unofficially as a prominent marker of global and urban citizenship. It shaped public discourse in the former socialist world and the former Yugoslavia and it was globally disseminated through international organisations and taken on by West European governments.

This case provides a unique venue for contextualising post-WW2 internationalism at the intersection of liberal and socialist conceptions of internationalism. The socialist federation’s vision of international cooperation was conditioned by a unique Yugoslav self-imposed *bipolar neutralism*; that is, an imperative to strike an almost perfect balance between the state socialist East and the industrialised West.³ On the one hand, this was underpinned by a genuine desire to combine “the best of both worlds”, and by an anxiety to appear neutral

² “Measures in connexion with the earthquake at Skoplje, Yugoslavia”, General Assembly, accessed 28 December 2018, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/185/57/IMG/NR018557.pdf?OpenElement>

³ See: Sandra Bott, Jussi M. Hanhimaki, Janick Schaufelbuehl, Marco Wyss, eds. *Neutrality and Neutralism in the Global Cold War: Between or Within the Blocs?* (London/New York: Routledge, 2016). On contemporary debates and reflections on the notion of “neutralism”, see: Peter Lyon, “Neutrality and the Emergence of the Concept of Neutralism”, *The Review of Politics* 22/02 (1960): 255-268.

and live up to the ideal of active neutrality, on the other. This article embeds what has been referred to as “the first major international collaborative exercise of such magnitude” into a broader story about decolonisation, visions of post-war modernisation, Yugoslavia’s global role as a leader of the non-aligned world and the alliances and tensions between developed and developing countries at the UN.⁴ With Warsaw’s Chief architect Adolf Ciborowski at the helm as project manager of the Skopje Urban Plan Project (the Plan), it was arguably unlike any other operation of its kind undertaken by the United Nations Special Fund (later the UN Development Programme). The choice of experts (from the capitalist West, the socialist East and Japan) mirrored Yugoslavia’s and many of the developing world nations’ visions of hybrid modernity, where Western concepts and idioms of technological achievement, planning and construction could be translated and adapted to local contexts and fed into a form of post-colonial, post-revolutionary nationalism. By integrating and resorting to experts, initiatives and technologies from both sides of the Cold War divide, the Yugoslavs were also actively constructing their own post-war legitimacy, both at home and abroad, against voices which often blamed them for either being too pro-Western and hence betraying socialist ideals, or indeed too pro-Soviet and therefore only declaratively non-aligned. Although it needs to be acknowledged that all of these geographical and geopolitical markers - “East”, “West”, “North” and “South” - are indeed “metageographical constructs”⁵ and do not reflect the true complexity and diversity of the regions they usually stand for, they are used here to

⁴ Kenneth Watts, *Outwards from Home: A Planner’s Odyssey*, as cited in: Robert Home, “Reconstructing Skopje, Macedonia, after the 1963 earthquake: The Master plan forty years on”, *Papers in Land Management No. 7* (Cambridge & Chelmsford: Anglia Ruskin University), 20.

⁵ Martin W. Lewis and Kären Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press).

denote the self-positioning of the actors themselves and the categories and discursive frameworks they operated in. In that sense, this essay also seeks to reassess Cold War metageography and decentre the liberal/illiberal binary. It traces overlooked capitalist-socialist alliances and shared values and argues that scholars of internationalism and of the Cold War should question these metageographical frameworks and any easy assumption that the “West” is coincident with liberalism and the “East” with illiberalism.

The reconstruction and planning of the city of Skopje represent a powerful embodiment of developmental modernism, which as Rosemary Wakeman persuasively argues, was produced and managed by Western experts in alliance with local political and planning elites.⁶ Skopje was indeed the product of a post-war “golden age of new towns”.⁷ But, at the same time, like Plymouth, for instance, it embodied a bold, optimistic vision of the post-war welfare state. However, Skopje was unique in that its planning and its construction in the modernist idiom was implemented and endorsed by the United Nations - unlike Brasilia or Chandigarh, for example. In the latter case, Jawaharlal Nehru personally engaged in the initiative for the construction of a new city in Indian Punjab after Partition that was to embody his own vision of “Indian modernity.”⁸ By contrast, Skopje was an exercise in

⁶ Rosemary Wakeman, *Practicing Utopia: An Intellectual History of the New Town Movement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016). See also: Martino Stierli and Vladimir Kulić, eds. *Toward a Concrete Utopia: Architecture in Yugoslavia, 1948–1980* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2018).

⁷ Wakeman, *Practicing Utopia*, 1.

⁸ Nihal Perera, “Contesting visions: hybridity, liminality and authorship of the Chandigarh plan”, *Planning Perspectives* 19/2 (2004): 175-199; Annapurna Shaw, “Town Planning in Postcolonial India, 1947-1965: Chandigarh Re-Examined”, *Urban Geography* 30/8 (2009): 857-878.

developmental multilateralism. Different national traditions in building, design and planning came into conversation through the concepts of modernism and through the global networks of experts who sought to implement them. Eventually, the Skopje project strengthened and enhanced the role of international organisations in the dissemination of planning, construction and development ideas.

In what follows I seek to enlarge the scope of what has been termed and widely studied within the framework of “socialist internationalism”, and for that matter also expand an existing typology of “internationalisms”, whether conservative, liberal or socialist, by introducing a new framework for the analysis of international cooperation beyond the two blocs.⁹ It examines what I refer to as “internationalist constellations”; that is, the interconnectedness and cross-fertilisation between liberal and socialist internationalisms, with non-aligned internationalism forming one of those constellations. More specifically, it analyses the dynamics of a technological and developmental internationalist constellation and its overlap with a cultural internationalist constellation in art and architecture. These two different but complementary examples capture well trans-bloc/trans-ideological and trans-national convergences under the auspices of the UN. The former had its origins in the interwar “cults of technocracy and internationalism” and it embodied a post-war version of the interwar technocratic internationalism that comprised expert networks and a repertoire of technocratic thinking co-produced by the League of Nations and the International Labour Organisation.¹⁰ The existence of a technological and developmental internationalist

⁹ Carsten Holbraad, *Internationalism and Nationalism in European Political Thought* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

¹⁰ Jo-Anne Pemberton, “New worlds for old: the League of Nations in the age of electricity,” *Review of International Studies* 28 (2002): 311–336. See also: Johan Schot and Vincent Legendijk, “Technocratic Internationalism in the Interwar Years: Building Europe on

constellation will be demonstrated through the example of the physical rebuilding of the city, along with its establishment as a centre for seismic research and engineering. In addition, this article will interrogate the cultural internationalist constellation that embodied the highly networked art world (painters, sculptors, architects) of the global North and the modernist paradigm in art and architecture, as analysed through the architectural vision for the new city and the example of the above-mentioned Museum of Contemporary Art.

Studying Yugoslavia and writing the non-aligned world back into histories of internationalism can add crucial new insights regarding the overlapping intersections of varieties of internationalisms (socialist and liberal in this case). The broader implications of this particular “constellation” reach beyond the simple confluence of different forms of expertise in the case of Skopje: at its core were shared ideas about the importance of international solidarity beyond ideological divides, a belief in the benefits of investing in sustainable development and technological progress for the benefit of all, and a commitment to a “welfare-state modernism”.¹¹ Unique by virtue of the sheer magnitude of the reconstruction effort and the long-term development plan, as well as the involvement of multiple local and international actors from across the Cold War divide, the case of Skopje is a testament to the short-lived post-war convergence of liberal and socialist internationalisms, one that engendered a temporary global consensus around the primacy of modernism, welfare, solidarity and development.

Motorways and Electricity Networks,” *Journal of Modern European History* 6/2 (2008): 196–217; Wolfram Kaiser and Johan Schot, *Writing the Rules for Europe: Experts, Cartels, and International Organizations* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 21-48.

¹¹ Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (John Hopkins University Press, 2004), 17.

I begin by situating socialist Yugoslavia within the UN system and the new geopolitical order at the onset of decolonisation and the establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). I then chart the debates around development and the establishment of a Special Fund within the UN, which came to play a central role in the reconstruction and the development plan for the Yugoslav city. The last section of the article analyses the specific processes, networks and dynamics involved in the reconstruction, planning and development of Skopje, with the UN as an agent of a vision of developmental modernism defined by a fundamental belief in the benefits of international cooperation, technological progress and solidarity.

Yugoslavia, the UN system and the birth of non-aligned multilateralism

“Skopje, however, was a city that was once beautiful with minarets and domes, with new towers and small skyscrapers. It was a successful city, booming ahead with new factories, a huge electric steel manufacturing plant, as well as parks, beautiful neighbourhoods, and promenades. It was a growing city, full of energy, looking to the future, and then the earthquake dealt a staggering blow. Will it recover from the blow, and if so, how? [...] How to rebuild anew?”

Maurice Rotival, *Report on Skopje*, May 1964

The disastrous earthquake that struck Skopje on 26 July 1963 destroyed 80% of all public buildings including hospitals, schools, theatres and the city’s railway station. Around 1,200 people were killed, 3,500 were injured and the majority of the city’s population was

left homeless.¹² Less than one fifth of dwellings escaped damage. A cable from UN Secretary-General U Thant to President Tito from July 1963 stressed that the United Nations “stands ready to offer every assistance within its resources” and that he had requested organisations within the UN system “to consider urgently the assistance which might be provided.”¹³ An impressive number of governments responded to these appeals by the UN and by the Yugoslav government for aid and assistance to a city, whose sudden, almost complete destruction appeared reminiscent of WW2 images of aerial bombardment and urban devastation, still fresh in many minds at the time. Parallels were drawn with Coventry and Warsaw and it was noted that in five seconds “Nature almost matched in Skopje the degree of physical havoc that it had taken all the military might of Nazi Germany five long years to wreak on Warsaw.”¹⁴ Another excerpt from Maurice Rotival’s report, the renowned French planner who was appointed under the UN Programme of Technical Assistance, offers a poignant example of this: “For a European, such a scene is familiar, for there have been two wars in which hundreds of cities have been hammered down with more thoroughness than by an earthquake. But it was not the same. It was the result of war and the people knew about it

¹² Archive of the City of Skopje (hereafter ACS), 6.79 Фонд замагање и обнова на град Скопје (1963-1977) [Fund for the help and reconstruction of Skopje (1963-1977)], box 2, “Izveštaj o zemljotresu u Skoplju i preduzetim merama za ublažavanje posledica, Beograd, Savezno Izvršno Veće, 31 avgusta 1963. godine“, 3.

¹³ United Nations Archives (hereafter UNA), *Secretary-General U Thant*, S-0884-0024-02 (Various countries - correspondence re natural disasters, 1962-1971), “United Nations Press Service, Cable from Secretary-General U Thant to President Tito of Yugoslavia”, 26 July 1963.

¹⁴ *Skopje Resurgent: The Story of a United Nations Special Fund Town Planning Project* (New York: United Nations, 1970), 37.

and understood the price that had to be paid for victory.”¹⁵ This conditioned the type of technical assistance required and the Liverpool firm Moran and Long which had acquired expertise in the repair of blitzed buildings during the Battle of Britain was commissioned by the UN to conduct the first comprehensive study.¹⁶

President Tito lauded “the manifestation of human solidarity which has come to expression on this occasion in the great family of nations.”¹⁷ The enthusiastic and rather unprecedented response, was, I argue, directly related to Yugoslavia’s increasing visibility on the global stage. It represented above all a pragmatic act for the big powers, destabilising the homogeneity of the other bloc by endorsing the new policy of non-alignment. Moreover, in the aftermath of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis that had brought the world to the brink of a nuclear disaster, the Non-Aligned Movement’s calls for nuclear disarmament struck chords and seemed to offer a viable alternative. It is safe to conclude that the political capital Yugoslavia had accrued internationally from the beginning of the 1950s influenced the geopolitical prestige and positive publicity it enjoyed around the time of the earthquake and in the following two decades. This was complemented by the social and cultural capital

¹⁵ UNA, *UN Registry (1954-1983)/Technical Assistance*, S-0175-2221-04, 322/1 YUGO (240-3) (UN Technical Assistance Mission in Yugoslavia, Earthquake Reconstruction Programme-Skoplje), “Report on Skopje Prepared for the Government of Yugoslavia by Maurice E. H. Rotival, 26 May 1964.”

See also: Carola Hein, “Maurice Rotival: French planning on a world-scale,” *Planning Perspectives* 17/3 (2002): 247-265.

¹⁶ *Skopje Resurgent*, 87.

¹⁷ UNA, *Secretary-General U Thant*, S-0884-0024-02, “His Excellency U Thant Secretary General (telegram from Josip Broz Tito),” 7 August 1963.

accumulated through the inter-personal networks of Yugoslav diplomats and experts within the UN system.

The UN's dramatic enlargement in the 1960s transformed it into an unprecedented forum for publicity, encounter and debate for newly independent countries. Unlike most of its non-aligned partners, socialist Yugoslavia was one of the founding members of the United Nations and an original signatory of the UN Charter at the United Nations Conference on International Organization (UNCIO) in San Francisco in May-June 1945, where the Yugoslav delegation headed by the foreign minister Ivan Šubašić had stressed the "close interdependency of the world" and the importance of international solidarity in safeguarding peace.¹⁸ The speech by Šubašić presaged some of the core principles of Yugoslav non-alignment and the ethos of active neutrality and peaceful coexistence, at a time when Yugoslavia was still formally part of the Soviet alliance:

"The solidarity among the United Nations can only be maintained through the recognition and the application of the principle of sovereign equality of all the members – small and large alike – of the future international organization [...] Yugoslavia is a signatory of the Declaration of the United Nations and she looks upon all the statements of the major allies – from the Atlantic Charter to the agreements of Moscow and the Crimea – as pillars of a new and better world. Her

¹⁸ Jadranka Jovanović, *Jugoslavija u Organizaciji Ujedinjenih Nacija (1945-1953.)* (Beograd: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 1985), 16.

See also: Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned World* (Princeton University Press, 1970); Leo Mates, *Nonalignment: Theory and Current Policy* (Belgrade/New York: Institute of International Politics and Economics/Oceana Publications, 1972); Edvard Kardelj, *Istorijski koreni nesvrstavanja* (Beograd: Komunist, 1975); Tvrtko Jakovina, *Treća strana hladnog rata* (Zagreb: Fraktura, 2011).

peoples believe that *organized international solidarity* (emphasis added) can and will succeed if based on the principles of peace, justice and security.”¹⁹

Although Šubašić’s diplomatic career was short and he resigned from his post in October 1945, most of the principles he underlined in his speech would remain and continue to underpin Yugoslav foreign relations until the country’s dissolution in 1991. The centrality of the UN for the Yugoslav elites and its role in the shaping of their worldviews and policies at home cannot be overemphasised, not least because a commitment to the principles of the UN Charter was spelled out in the Yugoslav federal Constitution. The Constitution stated that in its international relations Yugoslavia adhered to the principles of the Charter, fulfilled its international commitments, and actively participated in the work of the international organisations to which it was affiliated.²⁰ These ideas continued to inform Yugoslav foreign policy and the country’s role in its subsequent engagements with the developing world. More importantly, driven by an impetus to transform the United Nations “from a Euro-American into a universal organization”, through the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 developing countries (G77) Yugoslavia and its neutral allies managed to increase the visibility

¹⁹ UNA, *San Francisco Conference-Country Files*, S-0596-0008-0004 (Files by country: Yugoslavia), “United Nations Conference on International Organisation (For the Press), Address by Dr. Ivan Subasic, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia and Chairman of the Yugoslav Delegation”, 2 May, 1945.

²⁰ “Main Principles”, Part VII, *The Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia* (Belgrade, 1963).

The 1963 Yugoslav federal Constitution was hailed at the time as “an outstanding piece of juristic work” and “one of the most original and interesting documents in modern constitutional history”. See: Ivo Lapenna, “The Yugoslav Constitution of 1963,” *International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 18/2 (1969): 469-471.

of the “global South” across the UN system.²¹ Not only was the NAM meant to provide voice and exposure for “the voiceless ones in the world”²², in the words of President Ahmed Sukarno of Indonesia, it also enabled them to act collectively regarding issues such as development and global inequality. As Odde Arne Westad has illustratively pointed out, “[l]ecturing the superpowers on the conduct of international relations was a powerful sign that the Third World was coming of age.”²³

In an interview for a Japanese newspaper in 1951, Josip Broz Tito emphasised the centrality of the UN system for safeguarding world peace, stating that “We have always maintained that the best way of preserving peace is through the United Nations. That is why we should preserve the unity of the United Nations as the institution for solving of international problems. All post-war problems which still need to be solved could be more or less adequately settled only through the United Nations system or one of its organs.”²⁴ It was precisely during this period of the early 1950s that Yugoslavia began to discover new allies and a way of reinventing its role at global level after the 1948 split with the Soviet Union. In 1950-1951 both Yugoslavia and India sat on the UN Security Council (SC) as non-permanent

²¹ Ranko Petković, *Non-Aligned Yugoslavia and the Contemporary World: the foreign policy of Yugoslavia: 1945-1985* (Belgrade/Zagreb: Međunarodna politika/Školska knjiga, 1986), 337.

²² Christopher J. Lee, “Between a Moment and an Era: the Origins and Afterlives of Bandung”, in *Making a World after Empire: the Bandung Moment and Its Political Afterlives*, ed. Christopher J. Lee (Ohio University Press, 2010), 5.

²³ Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 107.

²⁴ Josip Broz Tito, *Jugoslavija u borbi za nezavisnost i nesvrstanost* (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1977), 27.

elected members, overlapping with Egypt's own Security Council mandate in 1949-1950.²⁵ This was the period during which the Yugoslav delegation developed meaningful dialogue and cooperation with India's and Egypt's representatives at the UN: India's foremost jurist and permanent representative to the UN from 1949-1952, Sir Benegal Narsing Rau; and Mahmoud Fawzi, a senior Egyptian diplomat and foreign minister under Nasser.²⁶ These early encounters drew the Yugoslav diplomats' attention to the questions raised by former colonies and gradually shaped Yugoslavia's engagement with the global South and its increasingly positive image abroad. More importantly still, a regular and close coordination between UN Secretary-General U Thant and the Yugoslav government persisted from 1961 until 1971. U Thant's first official trip to Yugoslavia as Secretary-General, in May 1963, was actually his third. His first visit was during U Nu's official visit to Belgrade in 1954 and the second as part of the Burmese delegation at the first Non-Aligned Summit in Belgrade in 1961. During his official visit to Yugoslavia in August 1970, Thant stated that in his conversation with President Tito they found that "some of the items before the [NAM] Lusaka conference happen to be identical with items before the twenty-fifth General

²⁵ Yugoslavia had three further mandates in the SC: in 1956, 1972 – 1973, and 1988 – 1989.

For a complete list of countries which have been elected members of the SC, see:

<http://www.un.org/en/sc/members/elected.asp>

²⁶ Pedersen specifically cites the example of Yugoslav diplomats to reinforce his argument about the importance of the role of individual representatives at the UN: "the ability and friendly attitude of Yugoslav diplomats in the United Nations, to cite one example, have undoubtedly influenced the views of many other delegates about Yugoslavia." Richard F. Pedersen, "National Representation in the United Nations," *International Organization* 15 (1961): 256-266.

Assembly session.”²⁷ On this occasion, while visiting Skopje and reviewing the progress of various UNDP projects, Thant was presented with honorary citizenship for his extraordinary personal contribution “to the establishment of international actions of solidarity for assistance to the City and the citizens of Skopje”.²⁸

Yugoslavia’s non-aligned foreign policy course was coupled with important domestic considerations, namely, domestic stability.²⁹ Pioneering coexistence at a global level mirrored a Yugoslav-specific preoccupation with national and religious coexistence domestically. Tito himself openly underlined the fact that the core principles of non-alignment (including independence, sovereignty and equitable international cooperation) underpinned the Yugoslav interwar revolutionary movement and the WW2 antifascist struggle. As he declared:

“The basic principles of Yugoslavia’s internal setup overlap with the principles we pursue in our international relations [...] And those are the same principles we pursue in our foreign policy. In brief, self-management at home and non-alignment in international relations form the whole of Yugoslav independent politics.”³⁰

²⁷ UNA, *Secretary-General U Thant*, S-0883-0026-16 (Trip to Yugoslavia and Ethiopia, 27 August - 3 September 1970, press releases), “United Nations Press Services, Press Release SG/T/332, Secretary-General Hold Talks With President Tito of Yugoslavia”, 31 August 1970.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned World* (Princeton University Press, 1970), 72.

³⁰ Pero Damjanović, et al., eds. *Josip Broz Tito: autobiografska kazivanja (drugi tom)* (Beograd: Narodna knjiga, 1982), 109.

Yugoslavia's exceptional visibility and active engagement on the international stage throughout the 1950s and the 1960s was a critical context for the UN's response to Skopje's earthquake, as well as the response of individual countries. It also contributed to an emerging international consensus on development and visions of postcolonial modernisation. Both state-led and individual initiatives and engagements contributed to the proliferation of this multilateral constellation where small and medium-sized states like Yugoslavia could play active roles. A number of Yugoslav experts at different levels of the UN contributed to the consolidation of this multilateral constellation, not least because the position of the UN Economic Commission for Europe's Executive Secretary from 1960 to 1982 was held by two Yugoslavs: Vladimir Velebit (1960-1967) and Janez Stanovnik (1968-1982). In addition to the official level and state diplomatic engagement, there were individual experts such as architect Ernest Weissmann, who headed the UN Centre for Housing, Building and Planning and who was appointed Chairman of the International Board of Consultants for the reconstruction of Skopje (originally "Consultative Group"). Indeed, Weissmann's Yugoslav citizenship helped facilitate the inclusion of planners from across the Iron Curtain in UN planning missions and also helped in lifting suspicions among elites in the developing world that UN planners were instruments of one of the two blocs.³¹

³¹ Stephen V. Ward, "Transnational planners in a postcolonial world," in *Crossing Borders: International Exchange and Planning Practices*, eds. Patsy Healey and Robert Upton (Routledge, 2010), 53.

New visions: paradigm shift and the “golden age” of development cooperation in the 1960s

Given the extent of the post-earthquake damage of the city of Skopje, seismological and geological studies had to precede the preparation of the new Urban Plan. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) seismology experts Nicholas Ambrasey and Jean Despeyroux were against moving the city away from its present location, particularly since the city’s underground infrastructure did not suffer any damage. In the words of Sudhir Sen, the resident representative of the UN Technical Assistance Board and Director of the Special Fund programmes in Yugoslavia, the city plan was meant to be based “on the most modern scientific achievements in the field of seismology”.³² Upon Sen’s suggestion, Ernest Weissmann visited Skopje in August 1963 and he prepared a report which recommended firstly, an emergency programme and secondly, long-term reconstruction and development. Weissmann was a student of the modernist architect Le Corbusier, and according to him, the “obvious aim of planning [was] to control man’s environment for the benefit of the people. And when I say the people – I mean the people, not the planners. And when I say benefit, I mean the achievement of a better life for the many...”³³ Weissmann was

³² UNA, *UN Registry (1954-1983)/Technical Assistance*, S-0175-2221-04, 322/1 YUGO (240-3), “International solidarity is also reflected in concrete and considerable assistance; Interview with Mr. Sudhir Sen, Representative of TAB and Director of Special Fund programmes in Yugoslavia.”

³³ As cited in Eric Paul Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928-1960* (Cambridge: MIT press, 2000), 144. On Weissmann’s role, see also: Ines Tolić, “Ernest Weissmann’s ‘World City’”: The Reconstruction of Skopje within the Cold War Context, *Southeastern Europe* 41/2 (2017): 171-199.

in support of an international team of experts and recommended to the Director for Special Fund activities that “the Yugoslavs should have the benefit of wider advice in the planning of the city than is possible from one firm of consultants.”³⁴ Weissmann was also the Chair of the International Board of Consultants on Skopje whose report from March 1964 recommended the establishment of an Institute for Engineering Seismology and Urban Planning and the preparation of a physical plan of the wider region as a multiple purpose project (irrigation, electric power, and water supply). This clearly resonated with the long-term, sustainable development paradigm which the UN, the Special Fund and the Yugoslav state shared in terms of vision and priority. The Board also recommended an international town planning and architectural competition for the city centre, to be organised with the help of the UN and under the supervision of the Board and the Yugoslav Association of Architects and Urbanists. The whole project was deemed to be “a lesson in the application of modern science, engineering and physical planning.”³⁵ More importantly, however, Skopje was to provide a blueprint for other parts of the globe with high seismicity, especially in the developing world, so that “the lessons learned here be applied elsewhere.”³⁶

The UN Special Fund, which came to play a central role in Skopje’s reconstruction, was a compromise solution following the long “struggle over SUNFED”– the Special UN

³⁴ UNA, *UN Registry (1954-1983)/Technical Assistance*, S-0175-2221-04, 322/1 YUGO (240-3), “Ernest Weissmann to Mr. A. Goldschmidt, Director for Special Fund Activities, 26 October 1963,” 2.

Some of the members of the Board included: Nicholas Ambrasey (UK), Adolf Ciborowski (Poland), Sergei Medvedev (USSR), Martin Meyerson (USA) and Alois Zatopek (Czechoslovakia).

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

Fund for Economic Development, which was mainly opposed by the USA, the UK and Canada. However, “Washington’s distinctly negative stance towards SUNFED” was not upheld by other Western European states such as France and the Netherlands, for instance.³⁷ Yugoslav diplomats at the UN enthusiastically reported to Belgrade that Denmark, Norway and Sweden supported the establishment of SUNFED and an increasing number of industrial nations showed understanding for the demands of the developing world.³⁸ This particular internationalist constellation around the establishment of a special UN fund for economic development was predicated upon a particular understanding of (under) development and domestic and global (in) equality. Hence, Sir Hans Singer, the respected UN developmental economist, who was well-known for the “Prebisch-Singer thesis” on the declining terms of trade for developing countries and who pioneered the idea of low-interest loans for developing countries and worked on the establishment of SUNFED, was attacked by American conservatives and the McCarthy press as a socialist. However, this does not imply that US public opinion unequivocally endorsed this view or that there was a widely shared consensus. Again, there were shifting constellations that embodied hybrid visions of internationalism. Since initial debates made the setting up of SUNFED conditional upon world disarmament, opposing voices picked up on the seeming absurdity of this claim. The *New York Times* editorial from 1 February 1957 echoed those views which in the Cold War

³⁷ Helge Ole Bergesen and Leiv Lunde, *Dinosaurs or Dynamos: The United Nations and the World Bank at the Turn of the Century* (London: Earthscan, 2004); Weiss et al. *UN Voices*, 202 ; D. John Shaw, *Sir Hans Singer: The Life and Work of a Development Economist* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 87.

³⁸ Diplomatic Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Serbia (hereafter DAMFA), PA UN (1963) 521-524, box 145, “Izveštaj sa III zasedanja komiteta za SUNFED održanog od 5 do 13 septembra 1963 godine”; “Telegram V. Popović, Njujork, 13.XI.1963, SIP-u”.

context could be easily stigmatised as socialist: “We are not poor in money or generosity. Why should we be so poor in faith, courage and compassion that we must wait for general disarmament before we join our UN neighbours to do some helpful things that politics and other reasons keep us from doing unilaterally?”³⁹ Since consensus on SUNFED could not be reached, on 14 December 1957, the General Assembly unanimously decided to establish a special fund for technical assistance instead of a capital development fund. The United Nations Special Fund was officially inaugurated on 1 January 1959. Hence, a new internationalist constellation that formed around decolonisation, universal membership at the UN, and the Kennedy administration’s responsiveness to proposals about a development decade, underpinned what Robert Cox, a scholar and long-time UN officer at the International Labour Organisation (ILO) termed “a shift in the dominant ideology to developmentalism”.⁴⁰

Although dependent on individual state policies, development agendas in the post-war period reflected various geopolitical entanglements and evolved in response to the debates channelled through the various bodies of the UN. These “transnational development regimes”⁴¹ arguably “illustrated the linkage between forms of decolonization and Cold War

³⁹ Shaw, *Sir Hans Singer*, 87.

⁴⁰ Thomas G. Weiss et al. *UN Voices: the Struggle for Development and Social Justice* (Indiana University Press, 2005), 188. See also: Frederic Cooper and Randall Packard, eds. *International Development and the Social Sciences* (University of California Press, 1997); John Toye and Richard Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy: Trade, Finance, and Development* (Indiana University Press, 2004).

⁴¹ Subir Sinha, “Lineages of the Developmentalist State: Transnationality and Village India, 1900-1965,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 50/1 (2008): 57-90.

rivalries.”⁴² Indeed, competing capitalist and socialist visions of development for the newly independent states reflected very pragmatic goals about defining spheres of interest. For instance, Soviet experts expressed concerns that “capitalist “aid” to tropical Africa [...] aims to push these countries on the capitalist path of development” and that “political independence has still not brought radical changes in the pattern of economic relations between these countries and foreign capital.”⁴³ At the same time, foreign aid for post-colonial and under-developed countries was indeed regarded as an instrument of foreign policy and “a weapon of the cold war”.⁴⁴ The 1963 Clay Committee Report on the United States’ foreign aid policy stated, for example, that “we live in a world in which poverty, sickness and turmoil are rife and where a relentless Communist imperialism manipulates this misery to subvert men and nations from freedom’s cause. A foreign aid programme is one instrument among many which we and other developed countries adequately can afford and vigorously must use in the defence and advancement of free world interests.”⁴⁵ In the view of the Yugoslav elite, aid was supposed to be largely unconditional, as “international assistance can contribute to historical progress only if it is given without military or political conditions”.⁴⁶ Moreover, Yugoslavia was one of the sponsors of the 1952 Resolution on “Financing of economic development of under-developed countries” which called for the establishment of a special

⁴² Martin Thomas, *Fight or Flight: Britain, France and Their Roads from Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 369.

⁴³ “The USSR and the Developing Countries: A Discussion in Moscow,” *The Mizan Newsletter* 6, No.10 (November 1964): 10-11.

⁴⁴ *British Aid: Survey and Comment* (London: Overseas Development Institute, 1963), 13.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ “The Ljubljana Programme,” *The Quarterly Bulletin of the International Society for Socialist Studies* 5 (March 1959): 11.

fund for grants-in-aid and low interest, long-term loans to under-developed countries.⁴⁷ This in turn paved the way for the establishment of the Special Fund and the UNDP into which it was merged in 1965 - amalgamated with EPTA, the UN Expanded program for technical assistance.

As I have argued, the UN Special Fund was regarded as a transient compromise in the bargaining and the debate between donor and recipient countries over the establishment of an international capital development fund.⁴⁸ At the same time, however, there was a hope that the Special Fund would represent a stepping stone for SUNFED. Although both the Special Fund and the International Development Association (affiliated with the World Bank) established in September 1960 were regarded as results of a compromise and “weak substitutes”, the Special Fund unlocked resources that advanced skill and expertise formation and promoted development.⁴⁹ For instance, prior to 1963, three Special Fund projects had been approved for Yugoslavia: a project operated by the ILO (USD 1,044,000) to help the Federal Institute of Productivity establish and expand eleven centres for the training of vocational instructors; a project operated by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) (USD 1,037,100) for a pilot land reclamation scheme in the lower Neretva river valley; and a project operated by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (USD 546,400) to set

⁴⁷ “Resolution 520 (VI) of 12 January 1952,” General Assembly, accessed 28 December, 2017, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/067/75/IMG/NR006775.pdf?OpenElement>.

⁴⁸ Ronald A. Manzer, “The United Nations Special Fund,” *International Organisation* 18/4 (1964): 766-789.

⁴⁹ Stephen Buzdugan and Anthony Payne, *The Long Battle for Global Governance* (London: Routledge, 2016), 47.

up research facilities with the Institute for application of nuclear research in agriculture, forestry and veterinary sciences.⁵⁰

A conviction that only cooperation across ideological and national boundaries could foster sustainable development and right the wrongs of colonialism and of the pre-WW2 order defined the engagements of the Yugoslav elite and expert community at the UN. However, this belief was shared across the socialist and the non-socialist worlds and propelled the establishment of numerous UN bodies and initiatives, not least the Special Fund, which came to play a key role in what was arguably the first major international collaborative effort to prepare a development plan for a sizeable city, in the words of British planner Kenneth Watts.⁵¹

“Skopje Resurgent”

In December 1962, to mark the twentieth anniversary of the United Nations, the UN General Assembly proposed 1965 be declared International Cooperation Year.⁵² The idea was conceptualised around a rather vague belief that more intensive cooperation across national boundaries would facilitate the settlement of major international problems and would lead to

⁵⁰ UNA, *Secretary-General U Thant*, S-0883-0003-06 (Trip to Europe, 1-11 May 1963 – Yugoslavia), “Yugoslavia: Programme of Technical Co-operation”, 2-3.

⁵¹ Watts, *Outwards from Home: A Planner’s Odyssey*, as cited in: Robert Home, “Reconstructing Skopje”.

⁵² “Resolution 1844 (XVII) from 19 December 1962,” General Assembly, accessed 28 December, 2017, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/193/52/IMG/NR019352.pdf?OpenElement>.

a better appreciation of the common interests of mankind.⁵³ It was around this time, in 1962-63, that the city councils of Skopje and Bradford started negotiating a twinning agreement. Indeed, the International Cooperation Year (ICY) framework gave an impetus to this form of trans-European and East-West collaboration.⁵⁴ In the aftermath of the 1963 earthquake that hit Skopje, a team of students from the Bradford Institute of Technology (later the University of Bradford), assisted in the reconstruction efforts and helped cement long-term cooperation between the two universities and the two cities, owing much to the personal engagement of historian and geographer Fred Singleton, the Chairman of the newly-established Research Unit in Yugoslav Studies in 1965. Interestingly, despite the utopian sounding language of the International Cooperation Year resolutions, it was taken up by Western European – in this case British – elites, whose enthusiasm matched that of their partners in socialist Yugoslavia. HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh was the Patron and Prime Minister Harold Wilson one of the sponsors of the ICY.⁵⁵ His message on this occasion demonstrates that there was a shared belief in a better future made possible by technological advancement, multilateralism through the UN and a somewhat utopian notion of a human brotherhood: “In the twentieth year of the United Nations Organisation the advance of all branches of science and

⁵³ “Resolution 1907 (XVIII) from 21 November 1963,” General Assembly, accessed 28

December, 2017, [https://documents-dds-](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/185/82/IMG/NR018582.pdf?OpenElement)

[ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/185/82/IMG/NR018582.pdf?OpenElement](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/185/82/IMG/NR018582.pdf?OpenElement).

⁵⁴ On the role of the ICY in encouraging US involvement in the global “Smallpox Eradication Program” (SEP), see: Erez Manela, “A Pox on Your Narrative: Writing Disease Control Into Cold War History”, *Diplomatic History* 34/2 (2010), 299-323.

⁵⁵ West Yorkshire Archive Service (Bradford), BBD1/7/T11789, Twinning of Bradford with Skopje, 1960-65, “Wayland Young, Chairman of Bradford Borough Council, 11th January 1965.”

technology holds out a bright prospect for all mankind [...] International Co-Operation Year provides an opportunity for everyone to make a personal contribution to world understanding. Here is a chance to make a bonfire of prejudice and to re-affirm the brotherhood of men”.⁵⁶

One aspect in particular relates to the type of aid and assistance that was offered to Skopje by socialist and capitalist donor countries, and this reveals an existing international “social” consensus, a shared set of values that transcended Cold War divides. This was the investment of socialist and Western governments in institutions that embody social justice and the welfare state as a testament of sorts to a still existing post-war consensus around “welfare-state modernism”.⁵⁷ This consensus is evident in the material help provided by the USA and the UK for the building of two high schools (including one for students of Albanian origin); a modern primary school named “Heinrich Pestalozzi” gifted by the Swiss government; a state of the art chemistry high school “Maria Sklodowska Curie” from the Polish government; a modern maternity hospital from the Czechoslovak trade union federation; a children’s pulmonary hospital from the Norwegian government and the Swedish Red Cross; and a policlinic called “Bucharest” from the Romanian government. In addition to these, theatres, concert halls, and whole residential areas (such as the “Dexion” neighbourhood named after the British company which provided building frame materials, the “Taftalidze” settlement consisting of prefabs from Finland, Norway, Czechoslovakia, France, Mexico, Italy, Poland and Switzerland), were financially supported by both socialist

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

The ICY was meant to encourage an extension of twinning activities, as town twinning was envisaged as one of “the most effective ways of establishing lasting links of friendship” and was officially endorsed by the UN in 1967 through an ECOSOC resolution on “Town twinning as a means of international co-operation.”

⁵⁷ Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future*, 17.

and Western governments and came to embody the spirit of international solidarity referred to in the original UN resolution. However, on the ground, in the initial stages of the housing program there were major challenges regarding the completion of the new residential neighbourhoods and the proper timing of the different phases, as the prompt response in the delivery of prefabricated housing often meant that residents had to move into residential areas lacking basic infrastructure such as water supply, canalisation, road access or grocery stores.⁵⁸

For Yugoslav officials the most pressing issue was the shortage of experts in seismological engineering. In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, Yugoslav officials stated that the best institution to train domestic experts would be the International Institute for Seismology in Tokyo.⁵⁹ Yet, the priority would be, in their view, to commence working on an initiative for the establishment of a domestic Seismological Institute which would have a Yugoslav, but also regional (Mediterranean) character and scope.⁶⁰ This reasoning was very much in line with the concept of “(collective) self-reliance” which became one of the core developmental principles pioneered by the NAM and the G77. The international consultative board which had been jointly appointed by the UN and the Yugoslav Government to support national and international reconstruction efforts also recommended the establishment of the “Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Engineering Seismology” at the University of

⁵⁸ ACS, 6.79 *Фонд за помагање и обнова на град Скопје (1963-1977)*, 06.0079.0003.0077/0530-0538, “Информација за состојбата и некои проблеми на објектите добиени од помошта”, Скопје, 24.06.1964”.

⁵⁹ ACS, 6.79 *Фонд за помагање и обнова на град Скопје (1963-1977)*, box 2, “Savezni Zavod za medjunarodnu tehničku saradnju, Program tehničke pomoći Skoplju, Beograd, 24 avgust, 1963,” 3.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.

Skopje. It was founded in 1965 with the assistance of both the UNDP and UNESCO. The first post-graduate study program began that same year and this was one of the first comprehensive courses in earthquake engineering in Europe. The visiting lecturers, who hailed from all over the world - Japan, the USA, the USSR, the UK, India, Czechoslovakia, Romania, New Zealand, Canada, and Denmark - mirrored the country's self-imposed imperative to appear neutral and true to its non-aligned identity.

On 29 September 1965, at a ceremony held at the Institute for Urban Development and Architecture, the Mayor of Skopje was presented with the Basic Urban Plan – the product of the work of over 150 experts, most from the Polish “Polservis” who drew up the social survey, the regional and general plans, and from Athens-based “Doxiadis Associates” who worked on housing, transport and infrastructure in collaboration with domestic Yugoslav teams.⁶¹ Both Polservis and Doxiadis had Baghdad's master plan as part of their portfolio, albeit in different political contexts.⁶² While Adolf Ciborowski as Warsaw's head architect between 1954 and 1964 was the public face of the international repute and prestige Polish urban planning enjoyed stemming from the international endorsement of the reconstruction of Poland after WW2, Constantinos Doxiadis was well known among American and international development circles, not least as the administrator of Marshall Plan aid to

⁶¹ Labelled “The Citizen's Voice”, the Social Survey was an unprecedented task of interviewing around 4000 families on their attitudes towards their existing living conditions and their needs and aspirations for the new housing prospects brought by the implementation of the new Master Plan. See: *Skopje Resurgent*.

⁶² Łukasz Stanek, “Miastoprojekt goes abroad: the transfer of architectural labour from socialist Poland to Iraq (1958–1989),” *The Journal of Architecture* 22/4 (2017): 786-811; Panayiota Pyla, “Back to the Future: Doxiadis's Plans for Baghdad,” *Journal of Planning History* 7/1 (2008), 3-19.

Greece. The Skopje master plan was celebrated as the visionary product of an international collective effort, embodying the best of scientific and technological progress and transnational solidarity. In the words of the Mayor Blagoj Popov, “Drawn up in excellent cooperation with the United Nations and several organisations – the Plan represents the product of one of the most outstanding examples of international solidarity...”⁶³ Not surprisingly, however, a process of intense collaboration in multi-national teams was meant to produce a number of challenges, not least conflicting professional assessments stemming from the experts’ diverse national professional traditions and training. Moreover, the entire project in all its complexity had to fit the specific, complex legal and political structures of socialist Macedonia and Yugoslavia. Hence, the fact that in spite of that “the system worked, and the plan was largely achieved on the ground”,⁶⁴ further accentuates the importance of the political and the social context of the time – domestically, this was the central role played by the state, and internationally, the particular brand of post-war technocratic internationalism with a mission to re-make the world.

A separate international competition was launched for the urban design of the city centre. An international jury headed by Weissmann awarded the project of renowned Japanese architect Kenzo Tange and a project of two Yugoslav/Croatian planners – Radovan Mišćević and Fedor Vencler. Nevertheless, different aspects and recommendations from all of the eight submitted entries were eventually incorporated in the urban plan.⁶⁵ The city’s master plan and urban development over the next two decades became a testament to the “developmental modernism” and the internationalist modernist paradigm in urban design,

⁶³ Ivan Toševski, ed. *Your Aid To Skopje* (Skopje: Skopje City Assembly, 1965).

⁶⁴ Home, “Reconstructing Skopje”, 11.

⁶⁵ Kenzo Tange, Maurice Rotival, Van den Broek & Bakema, Luigi Piccinato, and four Yugoslav teams from Skopje, Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana.

stemming from the International Congress of Modern Architecture (CIAM), not least because the key figures involved in the Skopje project through the UN, including Weissmann, Meyerson, Tange, Doxiadis, and Bakema, were associated with CIAM at various stages in their careers.⁶⁶ Martin Meyerson, the American member of the International Board of Consultants on Skopje, had met Kenzo Tange in 1951 through the CIAM network, which was also where Meyerson met Ernest Weissmann. Meyerson was also part of the Doxiadis' Delos Symposia.⁶⁷ Both of them were also involved in the UN-sponsored project of the Bandung School of Regional and City Planning in the late 1950s.⁶⁸ Tange, well-connected internationally through CIAM and a close friend of Constantinos Doxiadis, represented the generational shift and the shift away from the consensus around the Functional City prescribed by the 1933 Athens Charter. By the early 1960s, Tange had achieved international acclaim for combining traditional Japanese motifs and modernist elements and wielded

⁶⁶ The Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne (CIAM) was founded in Switzerland in 1928 with a mandate to advance modernism and internationalism in architecture. Jaap Bakema was the secretary of CIAM in 1955 and went on to prepare the tenth CIAM congress with other future Team 10 members. See: Lukasz Stanek, ed. *Team 10 East: Revisionist Architecture in Real Existing Modernism* (Warsaw: Museum of Modern Art, 2014).

⁶⁷ Ellen Shoshkes, "Martin Meyerson and Jaqueline Tyrwhitt and the Global Exchange of Planning Ideas," *Journal of Planning History* 9/2 (2010): 75-94; Lefteris Theodosis, "Victory over Chaos? Constantinos A. Doxiadis and Ekistics 1945-1975" (PhD diss., Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, 2016).

⁶⁸ See: William A. Doebele Jr., "Education for Planning in Developing Countries: The Bandung School of Regional and City Planning," *The Town Planning Review* 33/2 (1962): 95-114.

significant influence over the young Metabolist movement.⁶⁹ His 1960 proposal for Tokyo Bay gained international attention and triggered discussions on city planning, but was also criticised for its monumentality and technological determinism, something that would be also held against him by critics of Skopje's overly brutalist architectural heritage.⁷⁰ Tange saw Yugoslavia's socialist political system as an advantage and thought that public land ownership in this case was on his side.⁷¹

Yugoslavia's experience with the Special Fund and the UNDP around the Skopje earthquake cemented a long history of cooperation and circulation of knowledge and expertise. In 1970, the country's voluntary contribution to the UNDP amounted to USD 750,000 and it had 172 experts serving abroad.⁷² The technical assistance component between

⁶⁹ Hyunjung Cho & Chunghoon Shin, "Metabolism and Cold War Architecture," *Journal of Architecture* 19/5 (2014): 623-644.

⁷⁰ Meike Schalk, "The Architecture of Metabolism: Inventing a Culture of Resilience," *Arts* 3 (2014): 279-297; Kevin Nute, *Place, Time, and Being in Japanese Architecture* (London: Routledge, 2004); Rozita Dimova, "Elusive centres of a Balkan city: Skopje between undesirable and reluctant heritage", *International Journal of Heritage Studies* (2018) DOI: [10.1080/13527258.2018.1482473](https://doi.org/10.1080/13527258.2018.1482473); Mirjana Lozanovska & Igor Martek, "Skopje Resurgent: the international confusions of post-earthquake planning, 1963–1967", *Planning Perspectives* (2018), DOI: [10.1080/02665433.2018.1423636](https://doi.org/10.1080/02665433.2018.1423636).

⁷¹ Zhongjie Lin, *Kenzo Tange and the Metabolist Movement: Urban Utopias of Modern Japan* (London/New York: Routledge, 2010), 193.

⁷² Approximately USD 4,800,000 in today's value based on available online inflation calculators.

1950 and 1970 was estimated to be USD 11 million at the time.⁷³ UN officials were especially keen to make sure the expertise they invested in was used in other countries and diffused in a long-term and sustainable fashion. Hence, the UNDP emphasised that three senior experts who were engaged in the reconstruction of Skopje were recruited by the UN to take part in the UN task force for the reconstruction of ravaged areas in Peru in the aftermath of the Ancash earthquake in May 1970.⁷⁴ The presence of the UNDP continued throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s with another programme for postgraduate training for national and international civil engineers, architects, geophysicists and physicists in the field of earthquake engineering, financed under the UNDP's Technical Assistance Component from 1977 to 1983. Under the formula of technical co-operation between developing countries (TCDC), which along with ECDC (economic cooperation among developing countries) formed the core of NAM's and G77's policy of collective self-reliance, the Institute worked together with the UNDP to promote understanding and teaching of engineering seismology in other developing countries in the region.⁷⁵ The immediate objectives of the project were to contribute to this end by opening its present training course to participants from countries in

⁷³ UNA, *Secretary-General U Thant*, S-0883-0026-12 (Trip to Yugoslavia and Ethiopia, 27 August-3 September 1970 - Yugoslavia, 28-31 August 1970), "UNDP program in Yugoslavia," no date.

⁷⁴ UNA, *Secretary-General U Thant*, S-0883-0026-12, "Skopje: the city of international solidarity," no date.

⁷⁵ "International Post-Graduate Training at the Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Engineering Seismology, Skopje: Project Findings and Recommendations," UNESCO/UNDP, 1984, 1, accessed 28 December, 2017, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0006/000623/062356eo.pdf>.

the region including Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Bulgaria, Greece, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Libya, Morocco, Portugal, Romania, Tunisia and Turkey.⁷⁶

The UN's framework, direction and support was crucial to the international constellation of technical assistance and development. A trans-Atlantic dimension was added in 1972 when the Institute, in cooperation with the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena (until 1975) and the US Geological Survey in Menlo Park (until 1979) undertook a project on the "Installation of a strong motion instrument network on the territory of Yugoslavia". This formed one of the largest strong-motion accelerograph and seismoscope networks in Europe at the time.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ There was an additional ten-week course on aseismic design and building construction, organised each year for candidates from all developing countries in the world; selected candidates had their travel and all local expenses covered.

⁷⁷ Mustafa Özder Erdik, Mehmet Çelebi, Vladimir Mihailov, Nurdan Apaydin, eds., *Strong Motion Instrumentation for Civil Engineering Structures* (Springer Science + Business Media, 2001), 277; V. Mihailov, "Strong motion instrument network in Yugoslavia," Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur, accessed 28 December, 2017, http://www.iitk.ac.in/nicee/wcee/article/6_vol3_2937.pdf

I. UNDP Program		
I.I. Special Fund Component (5 projects)	UNDP Contribution \$	Government Contribution \$
- Skopje Urban Plan (1965)	1,475,400	3,372,200
- Training Centre for Building Construction Personnel (1965), ILO as Executing Agency	485,600	661,000
- Studies on the Regulation and Control of the Vardar River (1966)	1,479,300	4,623,000
- Survey of the Seismicity of the Balkan Region (Regional with HQ in Skopje) (1970)	765,000	1,100,000
- Integrated development of the Vardar/Axios River Basin (Yugoslavia/Greece)	1,240,000	1,900,000
I.II. TA Component (contingency funds 1963-70)	\$728,000	
I.III. WFP Post-Earthquake Emergency Assistance	\$1,700,000	
II. Funds Committed by the Yugoslav Government for the Reconstruction of Skopje	\$480,000,000	
III. Foreign Loans and Grants for the Reconstruction of Skopje (USA, UK, France, USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, GDR)	\$96,000,000	

Figure 1. Source: United Nations Archive, *Secretary-General U Thant*, S-0883-0026-12, “Skopje: the city of international solidarity.”

UNESCO also played a major role from the very beginning. It was crucial in the formation and subsistence of the cultural internationalist constellation that formed around the establishment of the Skopje Museum of Contemporary Art. In the aftermath of the earthquake, the International Association of Art (IAA/AIAP) resolved to invite its members to donate their works of art to the future Museum in Skopje.⁷⁸ The origins of IAA/AIAP can be traced to the Third General UNESCO Conference held in Beirut in 1948, although the Association itself was established in 1954 at the initiative of UNESCO. The response was overwhelmingly positive and by the beginning of the 1970s the Museum had a collection of around 2000 pieces of art, with Pablo Picasso's "Head of a woman" being the most prominent and most valuable donation. Although the new building designed by the Polish "Tigers" and Warsaw's General Construction Design Bureau was not finished until 1970, the first exhibition of the donated works of art took place in 1965 and was titled the "Solidarity meeting"/"Rencontre de solidarité". The fact that the special catalogue was printed in three languages (Macedonian, English and Russian) is yet another manifestation of the bipolar neutrality that underpinned Yugoslav non-aligned internationalism and the majority of internationalist constellations in which the Yugoslav elites were circulating and actively constructing.

Writing in 1970, British artist, critic and historian of art and culture Kennet Coutts-Smith underlined "solidarity" and "cultural aid" as the core of this internationalist constellation of the world of modern art. More importantly, he located in the Museum and its role a "cultural nexus" that transcended political and cultural boundaries:

"One interesting way in which this "solidarity" has operated in the art world can be seen in Skopje, Yugoslavia. After the disastrous earthquake of 1963 people throughout the world responded with medical and material aid. The international

⁷⁸ Petkovski, *Museum of Contemporary Art – Skopje*, 27.

art world also reacted, denoting “cultural aid” and painters and sculptors from many different countries gave works of art to rebuild the museum. The result of this is that Skopje now possesses one of the best collections of modern art in South Europe. The remarkable thing is that a certain “spirit of solidarity” has been kept alive largely due to the efforts of the Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Boris Petkovski, whereby this museum has acted as a cultural nexus transcending political and cultural barriers and permitting art to operate genuinely outside of the national and promotional complex...”⁷⁹

Institutional precedent was as fundamental to the existence of that “cultural nexus” as the non-aligned framework. Socialist Yugoslavia had a large number of galleries and museums of modern art, and many of its architects, museum curators and artists went on state-funded study visits abroad, mostly in Western Europe and the USA. The first director of the Museum, Boris Petkovski spent a year in France and pointed to the New National Gallery in Berlin (designed by Mies van der Rohe) which opened in 1968 as his inspiration for the Macedonian Museum. As early as 1952, the National Gallery in Skopje, which was the Museum’s predecessor, hosted an exhibition of French modern art, which was followed by exhibitions of “100 years Dutch painting” (1953), of Henry Moore (1955), Modern Italian art (1956), Modern Polish art (1957) and Modern American art (1961), the latter in collaboration with the Guggenheim.⁸⁰

It was the shared paradigm of (high) modernism and an endorsement of non-alignment as a model of trans-bloc cooperation that allowed for the convergence of artists,

⁷⁹ Kenneth Coutts Smith, *The Dream of Icarus* (London: Hutchinson, 1970).

⁸⁰ See: Želimir Košćević, “Henry Moore’s Exhibition in Yugoslavia, 1955”, *British Art Studies*, accessed 28 December, 2017, <http://www.britishartstudies.ac.uk/issues/issue-index/issue-3/moore-belgrade>.

curators, architects, planners and state officials from across the Cold War divide in this internationalist constellation sustained by the United Nations and by a temporary global consensus around international cooperation and solidarity. Although unique by virtue of the scope of international involvement, Skopje was really a product of its age, one of several post-war examples of cities of the welfare state which embodied a particular, optimistic vision for a new world where progress was a given; with “streets open to everybody [...] its buildings communal and its plan ordered [...] designed for an equally ordered society which had been given the opportunity to devote itself to education, work and culture”, to borrow from a description of the *Plan for Plymouth*.⁸¹

Conclusion

The early 1960s represent a rather unique period in Cold War history, marked by fundamental shifts in an inherited global status quo, whether we think of decolonisation, the acceleration of the nuclear arms race, the enlargement of the UN, or the rise of the global South as a “third force” through non-alignment. This article has sought to contribute to the deconstruction of existing typologies of internationalism and to demonstrate the fluidity of visions, networks and shifting convergences across ideological boundaries in this same Cold War period. It has shown the influence of a developmental and technological constellation of internationalism stemming from interwar technocratic internationalism and comprising expert networks and bodies of expert knowledge co-produced by international organisations, and at work in the humanitarian response to the Macedonian earthquake. Building on these continuities and pre-WW2 networks, various internationalist constellations formed under the auspices of the United Nations and with the support of governments whose commitment to

⁸¹ Jeremy Gould, *Plymouth: Vision of a modern city* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2010), 63.

the principles of the UN reflected their own positioning in the global Cold War. These internationalist constellations were not confined to the binary typologies of liberal and socialist internationalism which are often used to characterise this period. Instead, visions of international cooperation and equitable development were tied to principles such as solidarity and “self-reliance”. It can also be said that the internationalist constellations formed around these questions at the same time mobilised powerful ideas about sovereignty and international status and prestige. Modernity rooted in Western concepts about technological and scientific progress merged with local and national cultural tropes and traditions.

Yugoslavia’s exceptional visibility and active engagement internationally throughout the 1950s and the 1960s determined the response of the UN, as well as that of individual countries to Skopje’s post-earthquake reconstruction. However, this was also due to a newly emerging international consensus on development and visions of post-war and postcolonial modernisation. A shared vision for the expansion and perfection of the welfare state lay at the heart of these trans-national encounters. The experts and bodies of knowledge they brought with them from the developed West and the state socialist East mirrored visions of hybrid modernity common in Yugoslavia and in the developing world. Indeed, Western concepts of technological achievement, planning and construction were easily translated and adapted to local, national contexts. Conversely, as we see in other essays in this issue, the project of the rebuilding and the redevelopment of Skopje fits into a longer list of post-war urban projects designed to embody an almost utopian social order through the “dreamscapes of the architectural avant-garde”.⁸² Technological advancement was meant to enable the realisation of urban visions that were underpinned by optimism, egalitarianism and (architectural) modernism. Hence, the Skopje Museum of Contemporary Art could be presented not only as a symbol of Polish-Yugoslav cooperation and a “sign of a better future”, but also as “a

⁸² Wakeman, *Practicing Utopia*, 3.

monument to the technical capacities and abilities of Polish architecture”.⁸³ The entire project of reconstruction and planning, including the establishment of the entirely new discipline of seismic engineering, ultimately became a monument to the UN’s Cold War development and technical assistance agenda and Yugoslavia’s pursuit of socialist modernism and (inter) national prestige through non-aligned internationalism, self-reliance and a somewhat utopian neutrality.

⁸³ *Tigers – the architecture of Jerzy Mokrzyński, Eugeniusz Wierzbicki and Waclaw Kłyzewski* (Skopje: Embassy of the Republic of Poland, 2014).

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