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RESEARCH ARTICLE



## The Role of University in Heritage Research and Practice: Siberian Context

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### ABSTRACT

The risk of losing identity and historical values seems indispensable as attributes of the explosive growth of modern cities. However, along with the disappearance of each piece of heritage, citizens tend to lose memories and “identical” feelings, which make the place special and unique. The role of universities and architects in the heritage process of the modern city can be more significant: there are many successful examples around the world, which clearly demonstrate that the group of researchers from the Siberian Federal University made an attempt to compensate both for the lack of connection between the university and the city, and the lack of comprehensive approaches to the heritage process in Krasnoyarsk, Siberia. For the experimental design research, the part of the Military camp, the degrading place with a bright history in Krasnoyarsk, was selected. Thorough research and examination are required to extract the values of the place. For the experiment, students conducted a deep analysis of historical facts, values, narratives, habits, and beliefs before developing their project proposals. The paper questions the role of the university and architects in the heritage process of modern Siberian city, experimenting with the particular precedent in Krasnoyarsk and suggests the methods of participation in sustaining identity and providing continuity in historical environments.

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Architecture; spatial agency; heritage process; the role of a university; Siberian heritage; human component; the role of architects; design research

## Introduction

The processes of sterile and pragmatic transformation and fragmentation of urban environments seem indispensable as attributes of the explosive growth of modern cities. Today, the prevailing processes of globalization and universalization, along with the domination of commercial interests over human values risk resulting in depersonalization, sterilization, and facelessness of the cities, which may lead to devaluation of urban locations, and alienation of relations between the city and people in many places around the world, and Siberian cities are no exclusion. During this process, heritage assets and whole historical regions change their appearance: important layers of urban culture are being lost. The process seems irreversible. Along with the disappearance of each piece of heritage, citizens lose memories and identical feelings with their potential to make the living space special and unique.

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At the same time, identity is a vital attribute of places, on the country level and personal level, being “an essential, cognitive, socialized, phenomenological or psychic phenomenon that governs human action” (Benwell and Stokoe 2006). For Castells, identity is “the process by which social actors build their meaning according to cultural attributes” (Castells 2010). Harvey said, “Deeper understanding of the historically contingent and embedded nature of heritage allows us to go beyond treating heritage simply as a set of problems to be solved and enables us to engage with debates about the production of identity, power and authority throughout society” (Harvey 2010). Thus, the problem is broader than the separate houses or even ensembles, which are the major ordinary concern of Russian system of heritage protection: “Places remember, and they do it through their monuments, architectural style of their buildings, inscriptions on walls, etc” (Hayden 1995). The article shifts the focus from the separate buildings to the whole areas with such necessary attributes as communities, memories, narratives, landscapes, and values.

The holistic approach to the development of “difficult” heritage, which has significant controversies in the attached values and associated memories, is not sufficiently described in Russian literature, nor in practice. The issues of management of cultural and historical heritage require an approach, which should be based not only on the methods of preservation but also on the principles of its sustainable development, incorporating into the rhythm of modern life (Hampton 2005; Mısırlısoy and Günçe 2016; Pereira Roders and Van Oers 2014; Roders and Oers 2011; Rodwell 2014). This issue is important for heritage development in general, but perhaps even more relevant for “difficult” heritage, which is not listed in registers of monumental care, but bears significant values and cultural memories of the cities, impossible to forget.

Today culture is becoming a strategic domain of the economy, being able to attract investment, initiate the creation of new jobs, and develop urban environments. Rodwell argues: “architectural conservation will continue to under-achieve until such time as it not only integrates with but also becomes a driving force in, sustainable development” (Rodwell 2014). The traditional approaches to the conservation, study, and formation of the urban environment of Russian cities (mechanical functional zoning, regulated distribution of density, and the number of storey of buildings, hierarchical construction of service infrastructure, simple landscaping, simplified attitude to historical values, etc.) can not cover the entire spectrum of phenomena, which is taking place in modern conditions. Today’s intensive processes could not be described by traditional parameters, which makes it necessary to consider new approaches to urban development, based on other methodological principles, which involve other actors and professionals.

Additionally, the gap between academia and practice is one of the major concerns of many researchers and professionals around the world. The biggest university of Krasnoyarsk, Siberian Federal University, according to the opinions of authorities and local researchers, seems to exist in isolation from major problems and conflicts of the city. The School of Architecture of Siberian Federal University got used to collaborating with architectural practices through the supervision of design projects, led by successful architectural bureaus. Despite the fact that measures are being taken to compensate for the gap in Krasnoyarsk or reduce it, the gap is still significant. However, many practices around the world achieved tangible results in solving the same problem. For example, the book “Spatial Agency” by N. Awan, T. Schneider and J. Till provide a wide variety of

alternative tools and precedents of “doing architecture”(Awan, Schneider, and Till 2011). The idea of design research (RIBA n.d., 1998), which includes also thorough preliminary studies before actual design, spreads rapidly around the world, penetrating not merely the academic environment, but also supporting the architectural practice (Groat and Wang 2013). Universities tend to include innovative spatial practices in research and education through various workshops and project studio methods. For instance, the Sapienza University of Rome organizes interdisciplinary workshops, dedicated to urban fabrics and heritage analysis, for the future integration of the results into architectural practice. The Live Projects in Sheffield are a pioneering educational initiative, introduced by the School of Architecture at the University of Sheffield:

The Live Projects also get the students out of the ivory tower of academia and into the real world. Live Projects establish an awareness of the social responsibility of the architect. The aim is to produce work of exceptional quality that empowers clients and students alike. The benefits, however, are not solely of educational value. As pieces of work in their own right the Live Projects provide valuable tools, ideas and built designs to community clients that would otherwise be unable to obtain them. These products very often continue to have a life and be of use long after the end of the Live Project. (<http://live-works.org/>)

Students work with projects, which are real, and include communications with clients from a wide range of “local community groups, charities, health organizations and regional authorities”, aiming at solving social and spatial problems of the cities. The program largely inspired this research. Thus, it seems necessary to enrich the spectrum of possible connections between research and practice in Russia generally and Krasnoyarsk in particular.

Thus, the authors of this research believe that the problems of losing city identity, the lack of comprehensive approaches to the development of historic areas in Siberia, the lack of connection between the city and university, and the lack of preliminary design research for urban developments could be potentially solved together through the creation of a kind of “spatial agency”, responsible for the design research, on the base of the university. The following experiment tests the hypothesis, relying on the existing theories and achievements in the field.

## Research Questions and Sub-Questions

How can we define the potential role of the university (starting from the Architectural faculty) in the heritage process in Krasnoyarsk, Siberia?

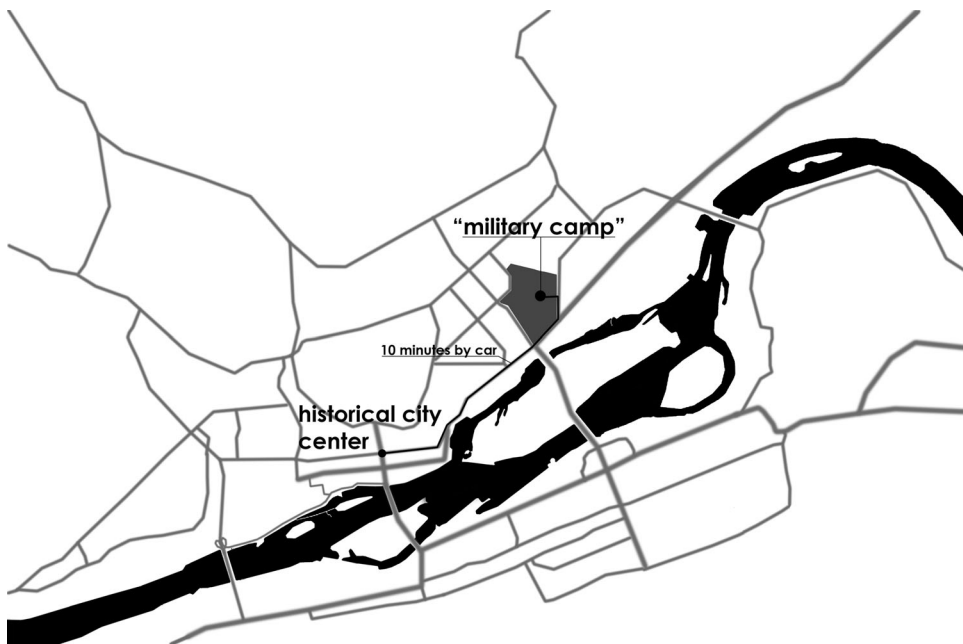
Is it possible to change heritage practice in Siberia, enriching it through the introduction of preliminary holistic design research, which encompass the whole fabric with all tangible and intangible aspects? Could the university become responsible for this research? What methods could be used to retrieve memories from the city and provide sustainability and continuity in historical environments? How can we activate and test changes in the historical environment, avoiding negative impacts at the same time?

## Research Context

Krasnoyarsk is one of the largest historical cities in Siberia (1.15 million people in 2021), located on both sides of the Yenisei River, on the Trans-Siberian Railway. It was

founded in 1628 as a wooden fortress and currently is one of the most important educational, cultural, and industrial centers of Eastern Siberia. In the numerous list of monuments of historical and cultural heritage, that risks disappearing in Krasnoyarsk, a special place is occupied by the territory of the former “Military camp” on Malinovskogo street. The old Military camp, which is located in the Soviet district of Krasnoyarsk, is skirted by Krasnodarskaia street from the North-East, and Armeiskaia street from the North (Figure 1). The whole area of the former Military camp is 150 hectares big and, consequently, a place of huge interest for developers. Only 45 hectares of area is landscaped and built up. The part of the area is already occupied by actively developing modern high-rise buildings. For research and design work, a part of the Military camp along Malinovskogo street, which, together with the adjacent courtyards, occupies 15 hectares, was chosen. The area is represented by two-story and three-story historical barracks made of red brick, which are now used as multifamily houses (Figure 2). On the North-East side there are still the buildings of the cadet corps and the so-called Mariinskaya Gimnasia. With the loss of its basic functions and being officially opened (territory was previously closed for military purposes), space hasn’t, in fact, evolved and adapted to modern realities, continuing to exist in oblivion. The modern condition of building structures requires immediate reparation and support.

This is a unique fragment of the historical environment, a phenomenon that arose in a number of Siberian cities in the first years of the XX century (Russian Empire), which is now surrounded and gradually getting suppressed by modern urban development. Historians claim that epoch-making events took place here, and the barracks of the military unit still remember them, being built at the very beginning of the previous century as residential houses for “white” officers with their families. The history of the Military camp describes



**Figure 1.** The location of former Military camp.



**Figure 2.** The photograph of historical buildings of former Military camp.

the history of Krasnoyarsk, Siberia, and Russia, and the fate of its inhabitants: more than 100 years of history, and more than 5,000 human destinies. Even today the buildings are quite comfortable, providing spatial flats for the owners, with high ceilings and fireplaces in each apartment. However, these buildings have no official status as valuable historical monuments. More than 15 historical buildings are in danger of demolition. At the same time, the architectural historians of the city are sure that these buildings, being preserved in almost unchanged condition, form an architectural ensemble that clearly reflects the epoch (Figures 3 and 4). People continue to live in a former Military camp, know their neighbors, appreciate the quality of old traditions and narratives, and form the neighborhood. However, a year ago, information, related to the possible demolition of old barracks started to appear in architectural circles and, modestly, in news. The new masterplan of the city completely ignores the Military camp, suggesting the development of high-rise buildings on the territory. The worth-mentioning fact is that the problem of the possibility of demolition of the military camp was brought to the team of researchers by the student, who made the report, in which she described the uniqueness of the place in danger. It must be said that the researchers were not aware of it before.

### **Theoretical Context**

The long history of architectural conservation provides the methods, with the help of which historical buildings could be introduced into cultural continuity. The world experience of solving such problems provides examples of approaches, which are based on the transformation of historical territories and historical and cultural landscapes through the definition of their socially significant cultural content (Davis 2011; Drury and McPherson 2008; Waterton and Watson 2015).





**Figure 3.** The photograph of historical building of former Military camp.

Historical environment is sensitive and fragile. Therefore, every intervention is of significant risk for local traditions, architecture and community. At the same time, according to one of the basic ideas of urban morphology, development is significant for every city and territory to stay alive and avoid gradual decay, on condition of discontinuity and keeping traditions. (Caniggia and Maffei 2001)

Thus, instead of radical permanent solutions, which are usual for conventional urban practitioners, more iterative and delicate methods of development should be used or invented. Urban research interventions (Belova and Schofield 2022) could be seen as a tool to restore the broken links between the city and its inhabitants. The practice of interventions came to urban research from contemporary actionist and participatory art and largely inherits its principles. J.Rendell argues: “new research shows refurbishment has less social and environmental cost than demolition”. “Intervention” involves works with the existing environment in the form of provocation of this environment and its inhabitants and provides tools for obtaining and collecting data for potential research and practice. The reaction of the environment and the inhabitants is recorded and analyzed. Thus, any spatial alteration, which is planned to be permanent, could appear temporarily first to test its necessity and correct the primary idea. The method has a potential in research design for conservation, being an efficient tool for sense – and memory – retrieval, and community engagement.



**Figure 4.** The photograph of historical building of former Military camp: a window.

In the modern practice of urban transformation, the methodology of “participatory design” is often used. The involving methods are gradually penetrating the conservation and heritage management practices (Murzyn-Kupisz and Działek 2013; Shackel 2011; Harvey 2010; Townshend and Pendlebury 1999; etc). L. Smith made a significant contribution to heritage studies: “important to a range of groups for defining their identity, a sense of community and belonging, and a sense of place”(Smith 2004) Smith defines ““heritage work”, being in place, renewing memories and associations, sharing experiences [...] to cement present and future social and familial relationships”. For Smith heritage is “a process of engagement, an act of communication and an act of making meaning in and for the present”. Waterton and Watson argue: “Heritage is a version of the past received through objects and display, representations and engagements, spectacular locations and events, memories and commemorations, and the preparation of places for cultural purposes and consumption.”(Waterton and Watson 2015) M. C. Truscott cites the World Heritage Convention: “to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance” (Truscott 2013). The participatory approaches contribute to the sense of belonging, which is a necessary component for the city to function properly. The founder of the International Association of environmental researchers and socially-oriented design, G. Sanoff, describing the practices of public participation in the formation of the environment of large and small cities, says that the possibility of change



depends on the willingness of participants to recognize the value of the proposed solutions and participate in their implementation (Sanoff 2000). Empirically, a factor contributing to the success of solutions developed by co-participating is the phenomenon of collective intelligence. When people combine their intellectual efforts to solve a common problem (instead of suppressing each other's initiatives to preserve and demonstrate their own status and pride), they are more capable of producing a collective social product. Public participation is based on the fundamental democratic principle that citizens who are influenced by a decision must be able to influence it, thereby becoming more responsible. Creating the conditions for people to be able to defend their environmental requirements and understand the technical and aesthetic judgments of experts requires changes in the mentality of both ordinary citizens and professionals. Sanoff emphasized the key principles of participation, which became the key principles for the authors of research (Sanoff 2000). Searching for the key principles for the sustainable development of the historical territory, it is worth observing DIY (Do-It-Yourself) and DIT (Do-It-Together) practices with their impacts and potential applicability. Today the terms "pop-up urbanism", "DIY," and "DIT" practices, etc. are widely recognized and supported by numerous theories and gain practical implementations (Lefebvre 1991).

Thus, this paper argues that it is necessary to find local approaches to management and sustainable development of the territory of "difficult" heritage (using the Krasnoyarsk Military camp as a case study), which will be based on participatory meaning-retrieval, taking into account interests of inhabitants, public organizations, communities, and local governments.

## Methodology

The main method of research is experimentation within the "intersubjective" paradigm by Groat and Wang: "the world is known, intersubjectively, through sociocultural engagement [...] situated in the larger social or historical context" (Groat and Wang 2013). The group of researchers – three teachers and five inspired students of Siberian Federal University – conducted a research experiment in 2019–2020, aiming at testing the ability of students in the research group to retrieve and collect all the necessary information with the aim of analyzing data, informing citizens about the historical place in danger of demolition, possibly reducing the risk, and producing practice-oriented research, which should be communicated to the city practitioners and authorities, informing real projects and practices. Researchers established the two-part methodology of research design, which should have been continued by the set of spatial practices: schools, festivals, and interventions on the territory. The first part included desk studies and field studies. The second part included the scenario of the development of the territory. The desk study included the following methods: historical analysis, media and newspapers analysis, maps analysis, morphological analysis, archival searches, literature reviews, statistical analysis, anthropological analysis, stakeholders analysis, and numerous consultations with experts. The field studies included interviews, questionnaires, and inventories on the territory.

The basic principles and key concepts, ideas, and beliefs for the methodology of heritage research were formulated before the experiment. First, the preliminary design research for the development of heritage areas was led by the research group in the

university, partnering with other necessary organizations. The authors aimed to add to the spectrum of approaches with the aim of getting students “out of ivory town of academia” into reality, contributing to the real heritage process, design research, and practice. Second, the research design included the methods of participation and gentle meaning retrieval. Third, a more holistic approach to research design is required: the research shifted the focus from the separate buildings to the whole heritage areas with such necessary attributes as communities, memories, narratives, landscapes, etc. Next, the research program was iterative and included the set of necessary experiments and interventions. Finally, the results of the research had to be communicated to the design practices and authorities to inform real projects and practices, the result of which, in turn, could inform further research.

## Research

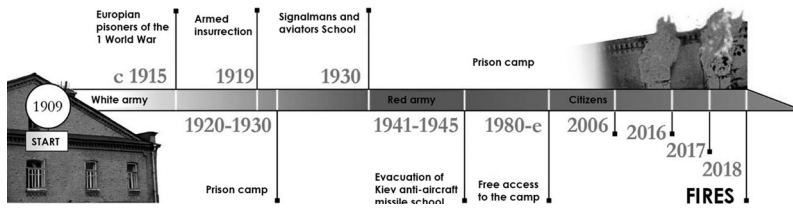
### *Primary Desk Study: Remote Data Collection*

Firstly, the historical analysis was conducted by students, and the rich history of the place, embodied in maps, photographs, stories, and publications, was found:

“Historically, the entire area on Malinovskogo street was connected with the military history of Krasnoyarsk and Siberia. Since the beginning of 1874, the Russian government made a decision to place military camps across the country. One of them was the Krasnoyarsk Military camp with more than 100 hectares of land, located four kilometers away from the city borders. During the First world war, it housed captives of war: Germans, Slovaks, Italians, Romanians and soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian troops. According to the instructions of Admiral Kolchak in 1919, six infantry divisions were formed in Siberia (Omsk, Irkutsk and Krasnoyarsk). Krasnoyarsk rifle regiment was stationed in an existing Military camp. Some of the brick buildings, mostly three-storey, became the officers’ apartments, two-storey – soldiers’ barracks. In the 1930s, there were a school of aviators and a base of signalers on the territory of the camp. During the WW II, the anti-aircraft missile school was evacuated here. Gradually, during the second part of the last century, military troops were relocated, and the camp became a place of peaceful but closed life of the military people and their families. In the 1980s the area has become open, so that it is now possible to get into the former Military camp without any restrictions. Today the place is not affiliated with the army anymore, ordinary citizens started to buy apartments in the former Military camp, know their neighbors, appreciate the quality of old traditions and narratives, and form the neighborhood. Thus, the place is strongly associated with quite controversial meanings, which are at the same time impossible to forget (Figure 5). (students’ research report)

The study examined not only the military stages of the development of the Military camp, but also historical facts, indirectly linked with the Military camp, but important for the culture of the whole city. For example, the foreign prisoners of war made a significant contribution to cultural life.

The Krasnoyarsk state scientific library reports that there were talented musicians among prisoners of war: soloists of the Vienna and Berlin operas who managed to preserve their instruments despite the vicissitudes of war. In Krasnoyarsk, they contributed to the orchestra of P. I. Ivanov-Radkevich. Captured Austrians, who worked on the preparation of firewood, gave the idea of creating a famous national park near the city called “Stolby”, now an important identical part of the city image. After that, the Krasnoyarsk authorities managed to stop the logging and extraction of stone around the place, and in 1925 the well-known national



**Figure 5.** The timeline of history of former Military camp.

park “Stolby” was created. Prisoners of war were free to organize several artels of artisans: they made clothes, shoes, watches, rings, wood crafts and then sold it to the ordinary citizens. (students’ research report)

Thus, all the above demonstrated that the place obtains a high level of historical significance for the whole city, which makes it impossible to demolish. During the first part, students managed to collect important historical data, analyzing it from the point of view of an architect.

### **On-Site Inventories, Interviews, and Questionnaires**

The research team conducted an on-site “Community Mapping” to revive and capture main actors, collective memory, habits, and traditions. To retrieve a “meaning” in the life of the Military camp, it seemed appropriate to find out what kind of inhabitants represented the place, what life they lived, and what values followed. The following questions appeared. Do the local people form a community? If yes, is it possible to preserve the existing community or micro-communities? What attributes best describe the atmosphere of a place? How residents measure “comfortable – uncomfortable”, “necessary – unnecessary”, “acceptable – not acceptable”, etc. Physical borders and “imaginary” borders (perceived by people) of different areas and the whole neighborhood can differ:

According to my initial observations, I have a key research question: do residents want to interact with people? I built a conversation with the locals around this question. Life in a Military town resembles a village in every sense: people know their neighbors and do not understand how it can be otherwise, they arrange picnics on a Saturday right in the yard, and pay attention to outsiders. (K. Yakimenko, a member of the research group)

Russian sociologist P.V. Ivanov, who assisted the research team, commented on the result of students’ social analyses, interviews, and inventories:

The most interesting thing here is not even architecture and history, but a special way of life, which was formed by the locals. In Russian sociology, there are a number of studies on the so-called “distributed way of life”, a common characteristic of small Russian cities and villages. Distributed lifestyle implies that, in addition to the actual housing, an apartment or a private house, the life of people is distributed among a number of locations. These are garages, cellars, storerooms, basements, fishing houses, vegetable gardens, sheds, chicken coops, dovecotes, etc. These are not necessarily private spaces, some of them can be shared. However these spaces are definitely not public. Thus, the Military camp is dominated by a distributed way of life. Brick houses are surrounded by the rows of garages, street storerooms. Residents say that at one time they organized gardens, but with the spread of drug sales, it became difficult to protect the safety of gardens. A self-made square consists of a homemade swing, a homemade bench, a handmade sandbox, and edible plants – hawthorn,

and currants. The distributed way of life leaves a very special imprint on the behavior of the inhabitants of The Military camp. They are remarkably easy-going. In order to talk to them, you don't have to explain who you are and what you do. They are easy to invite to their apartment (and no, don't take off your shoes), you can be said: "I'll leave my bag at home and show you old former food stores!", and lead across the town to look at an unusual building. In fact, the yards and alleys of the Military camp are akin to a common corridor in a communal apartment for its residents. (research report)

It was also important to identify the causes of discomfort and conflicts.

In the first approximation, it was possible to divide causes into two groups. The first group of reasons was associated with historically valuable, but old and sometimes dangerous houses. Indeed, serious efforts were needed to repair, revitalize and regenerate them. The second group of causes of discomfort was associated with a low level of space arrangement. In-depth examinations allowed to record several positions. The first group was associated with drunk strangers and drug-dealers. Residents of one of the houses removed the permanent benches from yard to prevent alcohol parties, the source of noise and inadequate behavior, which served as a negative example to children walking around. Residents saw the problem in the alcohol store located nearby. The second group of reasons was related to vandalism. Some people (both children and adults) threw litter, broke or carried away landscaping elements, pulled flowers, broke tree branches, pulled poorly holding bricks from historic houses. The general reason was that the yards between houses were relatively big, therefore not fully controlled visually. In a situation in which the visibility of yard spaces was lost, the security was reduced. The outdated lighting system did not contribute to the comfort of moving around the territory and staying in the yards in the evening. This caused also untidiness and destruction of the elements of the surrounding space. Residents were also talking about large roughly cut trees, mostly spontaneously growing shrubs (companies who managed the territory didn't care, while residents couldn't fully control the situation). Residents claimed the unkempt territory, the issue of arrangement of children's playgrounds, sports sites, recreation and communication spaces. At the same time, children walking here were open to interaction and tried to somehow improve their territory. For example, they could create a springboard for a Bicycle from the ground with bare hands. The territory, unkempt by the officials, provoked the creativity of locals. (students' research report)

Apart from all that, it turned out that a part of the residents mostly tend to enjoy life in a Military camp (some even purposefully moved to the camp recently, despite the threat of demolition), and another part wanted to move. They knew each other well, communicated with neighbors, spent time in the yards, and grew plants. All this was particularly rare in modern Krasnoyarsk. Residents were quite sociable, and had a desire to interact with strangers, on condition of the preservation of their personal space. They felt responsible for the condition of "their" place. Residents provided valuable opinions, narratives, and reviews. They were keen on telling the stories. Much of their memories allowed them to clarify some events, details of the use of certain areas of the territories, and uncover the unknown pages of the history of the Military camp.

Inventory is a process of assessment of the urban environment means the study of artifacts, historical layers of existence, and individual fragments. This is the method of fixing tangible and intangible values, the assessment of the living environment. During the inventory, researchers found the following data.

The first impression the researchers had was the number of elements of self-made site-improvements. Residents were actively engaged in landscaping. Many were keen on

gardening, planting flowers. During the winter period the windows of houses turned into greenhouses for seedlings, full of greenery. The overall territory was unusually clean and full of greenery. It was possible to see forest birds singing in spring. Residents cleaned the walls from pasted ads, swept the yards and actively used them for multiple purposes: from drying clothes to barbecues. Residents used all the opportunities for socializing. All the facts mentioned above signified the dominant hospitality and kindness of the locals, the existence of strong communities who preserved local traditions, remember histories." (students' research report)

A detailed survey of the territory and buildings allowed us to find a lot of material evidence, and identify mental and physical phenomena that characterize the attitude of residents toward the environment. The territory of the Military camp should reveal its potential to reinforce a collective community pride in the professional history of inhabitants and to keep the memories of former military life valued and alive while preserving the architectural heritage. The participatory regeneration of this territory could possibly contribute to the preservation of the spatial planning and architectural-artistic qualities of the ensemble of the Military camp. The tasks should include the following issues: support for the existing planning and compositional characteristics of the environment, intensification of the use of territory and space, restoration and quality of the environment, ensuring the comfort of life processes, respect for artifacts – buildings and their details, established communities, the atmosphere of good neighborliness, traditions, and the spirit of the place.

### **Program: The First DIY Events**

The study of the history of the Military camp raised the question of the motives and meanings of transformation in the territory. According to the results of the research work, semantic guidelines were proposed by students: "freedom", "fire", "place", "children", and "connection of times". All themes are closely connected with history. Next, each student proposed the program or scenario of spatial development and the first interventions, aiming to reveal the potential and identity of the place.

As the main social group for my project, I took children and adolescents aged 8–14 years. In the course of reflection, a key research question was revealed – "How do children assess the comfort of their district and what do they want to own there?" (Figure 6). Based on this question, I selected a number of research methods that can be carried out: interviews in the yard, a thematic class hour at school, the creation of a "barrack of stories" by joint efforts with the children of the Military camp. (V. Redko, student)

I have prepared several interventions that can be carried out on the territory of the camp almost immediately: from the city farm to the hearth where neighbors can gather and have dinner or discuss something urgent. And judging by the numerous bonfires, barbecue area will appeal to the residents of the Military camp. (S. Ogorodnikov, student)

In the summer of 1957 scarlet flags flashed over many yards of the military camp. (Pioneers from school №5 express themselves in such a way.) Modern residents are invited to hang out red flags at the entrances to their homes, as a sign that they do not want to leave. Another option – "floating Windows", printed on the board, as on a computer screen, attached to the facades of houses, with the meaning: "The cleanup of a Military camp. Do you really want to permanently delete these files?" (Figure 7). (A. Grass, student)





**Figure 6.** Associative “portraits” of place made by students.

### ***First Intervention (“Subbotnik”)***

Traditional city clean-ups (so-called “subbotnik”, the Soviet term) in Russia are no longer just garbage collection, they are becoming a tool for involving people and a way to talk about important problems and projects. It was decided to use the “subbotnik” as an intervention for further studying of the place, for testing the space for openness, the possibility of interventions and modifications, and the degree of readiness of residents to participate, along with the reaction to historical memories. Thus, the purpose of this “intervention” was the collection of social information and testing of the socio-cultural environment. So, in the spring of 2019, the research group conducted a “historic subbotnik” in the Military camp. The researchers posed the following questions. First, is it possible to intervene in the established way of life of the Military camp from the outside, and how will the residents accept this intervention? Will they help or participate in the event organized by non-residents? How will the reference to the history of the place be perceived, what emotions will it cause?

The all-Russian Society for the Protection of historical and Cultural Monuments helped to prepare a historical “subbotnik” with the theatre of a military procession, an orchestra, and a soldier’s porridge (Figure 8). However, the first surprise for the researchers who came to the place was that the residents had already cleaned their territory the day before. There was the only space behind the square, which remained uncleaned, and on which the researchers focused their attention. Residents actively participated. The



**Figure 7.** Action: "Do you want to delete this rich cultural memory?".



**Figure 8.** Action: Historical "subbotnik" and orchestra.



**Figure 9.** Action: Historical “subbotnik” in the atmosphere of former Military camp.

military procession and orchestra also attracted a large number of residents who gladly participated, watched, and told stories. The military camp made an impression of a friendly village with hospitable inhabitants (Figure 9).

## Discussion

Thus, according to the collected data, the Military camp is a unique space with a rich history, local narratives, and traditions, its specific environmental culture, an established community, a special distributed way of life, and increased care and responsibility of residents in relation to their space, which extends far beyond the apartments. All the revealed facts signified the dominated hospitality and kindness of the locals, the existence of strong communities with the distributed lifestyle spread within their prevailing semi-private space. Locals preserved traditions, remember histories, tell stories and form a neighborhood. A detailed survey of the territory and buildings allowed us to find a lot of material evidence, and identify the attitude of residents toward their environment, which should be translated into architectural projects. The territory of the Military camp should release its potential to reinforce a collective community pride, the professional history of inhabitants, to keep the memories of former Military life valued and alive while preserving architectural heritage. The elements of “difficult” heritage should be reinterpreted in future projects, and existing causes of discomfort should be solved architecturally. The participatory regeneration of this territory, based on morphological studies of urban form could possibly contribute to the preservation of the cultural qualities of the ensemble of the former Military camp. Architects should take into account the following issues: reinforcement of the existing planning and architectural characteristics



of the environment, preservation of the existing lifestyle and the balance of public/private spaces, restoration of quality of the environment, ensuring the comfort of life processes, respect for artifacts – buildings and their details and territorial values, established communities, traditions, and the spirit of the place to contribute to the development and preservation of an atmosphere of good-neighborliness, openness, and interaction. A student also identified the existing urban voids – the abandoned places where new cultural and commercial functions can be introduced while preserving the existing symbiosis of social and urban form. Such precedents as this place are not very common in the city today. Therefore, any program of development of the place should assume the preservation of the unique cultural layers, through gradual iterative changes and the involvement of residents in the project processes. All the above students took into account their final projects of place development. The unique distributed way of life of the city reminded the model of eco-museum, described by Davis (Davis 2011). Searching for a comprehensive approach to the management of such live historical places, it is worth looking at the “eco-museum” model, which is practically implemented in many places around the world. Davis argues: “it places an emphasis on intangible aspects of cultural heritage, such as collective memory, identity and belonging: “museum as place”. It recognizes that cultural landscapes reflect the uniqueness of localities and prioritizes community participation”(Davis 2010). Davis proposes the primary attributes of the eco-museum: conservation, interpretation, and management of heritage sites within the landscape. Being developed for and with people, the model has the potential to become a solution for the multilayered problem, which is tested on multiple cases around the world (Ecomuseu do Quarteirão do Matadouro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Hirano Cho, Osaka, Japan Ecomuseo della Canapa, Carmagnola, Italy, etc.) (Davis 2010). The dream of regeneration of local identity or sustainable social and economic development of heritage areas, especially the poor, could gain a tangible, democratic tool. The phenomenon is widely researched and tested, for instance, by French and French-Canadian museologists, who included the memories of the people into the concept. A group of European institutions created the “European Network of Ecomuseums”, which defines the ecomuseum as “a dynamic way in which communities preserve, interpret, and manage their heritage for sustainable development. An Ecomuseum is based on a community agreement”(Corsane et al. 2007; Davis 2010). The bearers of tradition and information (dialects, stories, music, arts and crafts, dresses, etc) in the ecomuseum are local people, they also define, cherish, and interpret the territory with its size and distinctive features, define what they value, how they imagine their “sense of place”. The landscapes embody histories and the ways in which people used the land. “This kind of heritage work is called in situ conservation and interpretation. The heritage will be conserved and interpreted in its own situational context and it will not be moved to a special building or a museum.” (Davis 2010) The approach could be considered a key model for the further development of the Military camp in Krasnoyarsk.

## Results

First, the research experiment started the processes of urban development of the territory: the results of the research were published and communicated to practitioners and authorities of the city. The latest news in Krasnoyarsk claimed: “KRASNOYARSK, September 30.



**Figure 10.** Artistic sculpture curated by Bertrand Gosselin in the atmosphere of former Military camp.

/TASS./ The historical center will be created in Krasnoyarsk on Malinovskogo street, where the houses built in the 1900-1910-ies and known as “Kolchak barracks” are located. For the memory of all generations, these Kolchak barracks will not only be preserved but also ennobled. Something like a cultural and historical place will be created there, such concepts are being developed. /TASS was informed by the Deputy Minister of construction of the region Yevgeny Ganchukov/.” (<https://tass.ru/obschestvo/6943168>) Thus, it is safe to say that the group of researchers played an important role in informing citizens and authorities, raising problems, and provoking the appearance of more socially-oriented approaches. Apart from that, all the above means that the idea of the necessity of cultural polycentrism (Belova and Petrochenko 2019) is being applied in practice.

Additionally, the experiment continued in multiple spatial practices in the city and inspired groups of artists and researchers to continue activities in the Military camp. For example, to continue the research, representatives of the research group (so-called “Architectural Community”) in Krasnoyarsk won the grant Prokhorov Fund to conduct the School of Research Interventions, and the Military camp became one of the locations of the school. The school was successfully conducted in August 2019. Second, the project inspired a team of French artisans who continued to attract attention to the place. Thanks to the activities of researchers, part of the Biennale “Negotiators” in Krasnoyarsk was dedicated to the participatory installation in the Military town (<http://mira1.ru/news/2636>). The author of this paper inspired a French artist and curator of the Krasnoyarsk Biennale, Bertrand Gosselin (France):

“Arches, Stairs on Malinovskogo street – a Military camp in the arts”. Groups of artists “1984” and “ARTEL” together with the inhabitants of the Military camp erected a social structure in the middle of the place for 7 days. In the yard of the Military camp, between houses 12 and 14



on the Malinowskogo street, the “arch-camp” with a ladder and a platform for meetings was built for tea parties and socializing (a spatial inversion – the inner corridor, stairwell and a hallway, inverted in the yard). Artists wanted to make the yard a place of communication, dialogue. The sculpture was the result of this dialogue. The tea house where tea was brewed would run continuously throughout the process, as art was brewed in life (Figure 10). The artists worked on the footstep after the School of Urban Interventions organized by the team of the Architectural Community and VOPIK. Previously, they discussed with the residents of the Military camp the future of their yard and district, holding a number of meetings and events.” (Bertrand Gosselin)

## Conclusion

This paper demonstrated the importance of the role of the university in pre-project research, especially for “difficult” heritage places. After an in-depth study, the students no longer offered to resettle the former barracks or to clean up the territory, or organize a sterile cultural center-museum in beautiful brick houses (a Disneyland devoid of meaning). On the contrary, the most important historical meanings have been identified and processed into a system of guidelines for territory, which should form the basis of regeneration, and resulted in comprehensive projects for students. All the above proves the efficiency of the experiment and its broad effect. Firstly, the experiment proved that the university could be included in the heritage process through the introduction of preliminary holistic design research and initial interventions. Secondly, the research group collected all the important information, which otherwise couldn’t be possible due to the lack of other resources for such studies in the city. The basic principles and key concepts, ideas, and beliefs, selected for the methodology of heritage research, have the potential to inform similar practices and will definitely be integrated into the official program of Siberian Federal University, the Institute of Architecture and Design. This could potentially reduce the gap between the academy and the city, contributing to the real heritage process, design research, and practice. It seems possible to change heritage practice in Siberia, enriching it through the introduction of preliminary holistic design research, which encompasses the whole fabric with all tangible and intangible aspects. The set of methods was proposed to retrieve memories from the city and provide sustainability and continuity: particularly, the two-part methodology of research design, which should be continued by the set of spatial practices: schools, festivals, and interventions on the territory. The first part should include desk studies and field studies. The second part should include the scenario of the development of the territory. The desk study includes the following methods: historical analysis, media and newspaper analysis, maps analysis, archival searches, literature reviews, statistical analysis, anthropological analysis, stakeholder analysis, and consultations with experts. The field studies include interviews, questionnaires, and inventories on the territory.

Territories of historical heritage are an integral part of the urban environment of Siberian cities, which cannot be simply erased or ignored. It is important to inform and involve students and architects, potential developers, consultants, and investors in the full complexity of this problem. However, in a situation of limited resources, it is important to choose the right strategy, from which all interested parties can benefit. The approach helps to design the development of a “difficult” heritage more precisely and subtly,

rethinking conflicting values and balancing them for integration into future projects, avoiding the Disneyland effect, and preserving the integrity of people and their environment. The function of architecture and architects in a heritage process could be also seen in the empowering, informing, and promotion of the best social practices and models on the way toward sustainable development. The role of the architect-researcher and the university, in this case, could be suggested in conducting the preliminary design research to form the database for the architects-practitioners and propose the complex strategies of development. The idea should be further tested and developed.

The transformation of the former military camp into a cultural core, remembering and interpreting historical values and events, may have an important symbolic meaning. The approach should be based on the joint transformation of the social and physical form of the place, existing in harmonious unity.

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