

Tapija and the Politics of Communal Care

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines contemporary movements, processes, and experiences of neoliberal dispossession with the growing economic dependency on tourism in Pula, Croatia. Centring on the local phenomenon of *tapija*, a phrase that describes feelings of melancholy and boredom as being ingrained in the fabric of the city. This dissertation examines the question of “what does *tapija* as a feeling do,” to see how uses of the idea and feeling retain a complex and nuanced range of inertia as much as indifference. This dissertation at heart argues and traces how *tapija*’s multiple and at times contradictory appearances, uses, and meanings recast the phrase as not wholly apathetic or inactive in all its iterations. Akin to Ann Cvetkovich’s examinations of depression as a public feeling, this examination of *tapija* as a multifold sensation is not looking to gloss over bad feelings, but to instead ask “how it might be possible to tarry with the negative as part of daily practice, cultural production, and political activism” (2012, 3).

This dissertation reflects on how Pula’s growing touristification in terms of tourist aesthetics, spatialization, land and project development, simultaneously mirrors processes of deterritorialization. Here, tourism appears as one of many factors that act as an injurious force in Pula, causing local dispossession of a sense of place, livelihood, and stable living conditions. In line with Laurence Ralph’s (2014) concept of social injury, injury here acknowledges that the wounds and effects of great social change do not necessarily leave bodily traces or manifest physically on residents. Instead, aspects like city space, heritage, facades, and infrastructure are sites of such dispossession.

As this dissertation assesses, the use and feeling of *tapija* reflects individual and collective reconciling and responses to growing socio-economic pressures that the tourist industry as a post-Fordist and post-Socialist era mark in Pula. Here, uses, slips, and even the challenging of *tapija* offer glances of concerns and care for the collective, where *tapija* offers

informal, spontaneous, and momentary spaces to maneuver and present an otherwise to injurious forces and realities. Turning to examples such as complaint, small talk, graffiti, and walking paths, this dissertation highlights ways in which locals inscribe and re-inscribe a sense of connection and concern for place.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HDZ..... Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica, or Croatian Democratic Union

HRK..... Kuna, the currency in Croatia prior to the Euro

IDS Istarski Demokratski Sabor, or Istrian Democratic Assembly

JNA..... Jugoslavenska Narodna Armija, or The Yugoslav People's Army

SDP..... Socijal Demokratska Partija, or Social Democratic Party of Istra

NOTES ON TRANSLATION

List of Key Phrases and Translated Terms:

The Boulevard, or “Bulevar”– A nickname for Arsenalska Street, or “Ulica Arsenalska,” in Pula. Uljanik’s main entrance is on Arsenalska Street.

Istrijanstvo – In English translates to “Istrianness.” A well-researched concept, the notion of Istrijanstvo relates to Istria’s strong sense of regional identity. Istrian identity formation is seen as embodying ethnic tolerance, multiculturalism, and multinational pluralism, amongst other qualities (see the works of Ashbrook 2011; Ballinger 2003;2004; Beović 2013; Stefanović 2018; Cocco 2010; Schäuble 2014).

Puležani – The phrasing of Puležani (or Puležanka, Puležan and Puležani to note gender and number of people), reflects a local understanding and view of self. In comparison to standard Croatian, where residents of Pula would be called “Puljanin” and “Puljani,” Puležani is an Italianization of the phrasing.

ROJC – The Karlo Rojc Cultural Centre, formerly the largest JNA barracks in Pula.

Tapija – Has origins as a loanword from the Turkish phrase for deed, or a legal bond, *tapija* is a local Pula phenomenon articulated as a noun, verb, and adjective in everyday speech and often takes on meanings of boredom, stillness, and melancholy.

Uljanik – The Uljanik Shipyard. Initially established in 1856 as the “K.u.K. See-Arsenal,” was a symbol of the prosperity of both Austro-Hungarian and Yugoslav’s industrial sector. The shipyard closed in 2019 due to bankruptcy.

1. INTRODUCTION

“In a city with too much history, many have left their mark of time, a mark still visible in every crevice, every building and at every step, and it is part of the vision of the ancestors who built it, creating a new life in it. And here we are, we have reached the year 2022, and the vision of Pula has become the biggest stumbling block. [It is] as if we are not stuck in time, but some (in)visible hands are persistently pulling us back.”¹

Helena Mostarkić Gobbo (2022b)

Settling in Pula meant facing the heat and lack of air flow. Despite its coastal positioning, the idea that an August night will bring some or any relief from the heat of the day is quickly lost. Beads of sweat nearly instantaneously form on me as I step out from my Airbnb. I am immediately in the city's centre. While historical sites are mere steps away from me: the last remaining Venetian insignia and church, Medusa's head masterfully sculpted on an Austro-Hungarian era building, the forum where you can find Augustus' temple – there is no chance I can stop to admire. I am quickly led by the pace of the crowd surrounding me. Sections of the narrow street of Sergeii blocked off for café-goers and restaurant patrons creates a mechanical and restricted movement like they are guiding fish downstream. Though, unlike a metaphorical stream, this cobble stone road is filled with pedestrians going both directions. Disjointed connections, no pedestrian group shares a rhythm and pace. I feel rushed within the still heat and pressured to look at my feet. A desperate attempt to get out, I am forced to understand and match the footwork needed in this dance.

¹ Translated from: “U gradu prebogate povijesti mnogi su u njoj ostavili svoj pečat vremena, pečat još uvijek vidljiv u svakoj pukotini, svakoj građevini i na svakom koraku, a dio je vizije predaka koji su je gradili stvarajući u njoj neki novi život. I, evo nas, stigli smo do 2022. godine, a vizija Pule postala je najveći kamen spoticanja. Kao da smo ne zapeli u vremenu, već nas neke (ne)vidljive ruke uporno vuku unatrag.”

Attuning to the shoes and bodies of others, I notice many matching the flow of those directly in front of them, and some who do not notice or care for the maintenance of any flow at all. A group of six in front of me walk shoulder to shoulder. They span the entire width of Sergeii. When the six stop, or slow down to laugh or point, so does everyone else walking in that direction. With the consistent need to squeeze through these groups I find myself in a patterned movement. I wait for my chance to pass, but just as I get through, and find a sense of relief, it is lost as I meet yet another group enforcing their pace.

Night after night until the middle of September, this became my routine: staying with the crowd for as long as possible. Unlike the daytime when there are no crowds in Sergeii and only a mere couple or two to pass, nights felt unbearably packed. I hoped in learning to maneuver the crowds, I would in turn discover a secret element of what it meant to be a Pula resident.

It was only during tours or walks with locals that it was explained to me that these crowds mostly consisted of tourists, and not many residents. Aside from it being easy to identify tourists as they were seemingly too dressed up, were continuously stopping, and even sported stereotypical garb of socks and sandals, my local guides explained that majority of Pulans knew to avoid the city centre during the summer months. For locals, the reality of living in Pula meant that the historic city centre was not considered manageable nor for local use during the peak tourist season. While a drink in the central forum, or maybe purchasing some fish at the market were some exceptions, most locals avoided the narrow central streets surrounded by the ancient walls. Taking longer paths to reach their destinations was a means to avoid what was described as the need to “*voziti slalom*” [slalom skiing] where walking through one’s own city required maneuvering to avoid the mass numbers of tourists who would visit Pula’s city centre in the summer months.

As the largest city in Istria, the western most peninsula region of Croatia, Pula's diverse and unique history is a selling point to interested tourists. In addition to being the perfect location for a "sun and beach" vacation, Pula offers many experiences, including, heritage tourism, ecological tourism, gastrotourism, and adventure tourism. By the summer of 2019, a record number of visitors were choosing Pula as a vacation destination (Dagostin 2020). As a result, with a population of just over 52,000 in 2021, Pula's population is seen to double during the summer months causing intensification and overuse of local infrastructure.

Pulans describe the radiating forces of tourist season in terms of a local phenomenon of "*tapija*" (pronounced tahpeeya). As Andrea Matošević describes, *tapija* is "endemic to and a specific phenomenon of Pula" as it embodies a "spirit, rhythm, or certain possibility of the city's quality of life" (2021, 3). Despite origins as a loanword from the Turkish phrase for deed, or a legal bond, *tapija* is articulated as a noun, verb, and adjective in everyday speech and often takes on meanings of boredom and stillness for Puležani, or Pulans.² Tanja Petrović explains the presence of *tapija* as an urban mood is often related to Pula's geographic peripherality and a particular economy of time that manifests as a "Mediterranean melancholy" (2021, 13).

Among its many uses and meanings, *tapija* accounts for a circular quality of time where Pula and its inhabitants are at the whims of tourist economic activity. The extreme waves of Pula's urban rhythm from the almost unbearable fast pace of tourist season in the four summer months, to a sense that the city empties during the remaining part of the year, means locals must find their bearings during erratic temporal upheavals. Such temporal and economic conditions are moreover seen to permeate through Pula's cityscape, where, for example, once significant

² The phrasing of *Puležani* (or *Puležanka*, *Puležan* and *Puležani* to note gender and number of people), reflects a local understanding and view of self. In comparison to standard Croatian, where residents of Pula would be called "Puljanin" and "Puljani," *Puležani* is an Italianization of the phrasing.

local spaces such as Korzo,³ a main street in Pula's city centre first developed under the Austro-Hungarian empire as a central meeting space for coffee and drinks in Pula, is now left empty for eight months of the year.

In addition to altering notions of sociality, public spaces, and temporality, the rise of uninhabited homes left for short-term tourist rental has further instantiated a rhythm of life and “state-of-things” based on tourist cycles. Here, the rise of apartmentization,⁴ what Jasenka Kranjčević and Sanja Hajdinjak refer to as the “usurpation” of costal space for uncontrolled housing development, echoes new rental norms in Pula that favour short-term rentals, or vacation rentals, for the ability to earn more profit over shorter periods (2019, 395). As a result, year-long or long-term rentals have become nearly impossible to find in the city, where locals with children, pets, or who are students are left most marginalized.

By the summer of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns had greatly impacted the number of visitors and tourist revenue in Pula. As local artist Petra Tadić perceptively notes, the COVID-19 lockdowns saw the feeling of *tapija* spread globally (Angeleski 2021a). By winter and spring 2021, the months leading up to me visiting the field, my interlocutors often cited fears of a progressive and entire slowdown of Pula. Particularly, locals described a worry in *tapija* being a lasting condition, continuing into yet another summer season and leaving Pula to be desolate for an entire calendar year. Alas, my maneuvering of the city centre in the summer of 2021 came to signify and mark a return to a particular sense of normalcy: the return of the tourist industry's economy, ecology, and milieu. In contrast to the closure, isolation, and lockdowns the pandemic had brought, the return of tourist season had

³ Korzo is also known as Giardini.

⁴ As Jasenka Kranjčević and Sanja Hajdinjak note, *apartmanizacija* does not have a direct English translation, though apartmentization has been raised when referring to specific tourism urbanization patterns in the former Yugoslav countries (2019, 395).

invigorated the city for the season, once again. Tourists retreated to Pula in droves, with the number of tourists visiting the city reaching nearly replicating those of the year prior to the pandemic. Yet, this time around, more locals were now working and reliant on the tourist industry.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on tourism in Pula felt especially heightened considering the major industrial and economic shifts occurring in the years leading up to 2020. In the year prior to the lockdowns, a significant piece of Pula's economic, social, and urban life had been lost. Initially established in 1856 as the "K.u.K. See-Arsenal," the Uljanik shipyard closed in 2019 due to bankruptcy after years of attempted loans, restructuring, and job losses. Although only one of many once prosperous industries in Pula employing over 8,000 residents, Uljanik presented a similar trajectory to many businesses within the city: thriving during the Yugoslav era and in turn influencing city development, living standards, and social well-being, to struggling transition from socialist governing and industrial economy. Until recently, Pula was a relevant industrial centre with its historic textile and manufacturing industries. Austro-Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Croatia all maintained important military "corps" in Pula. The loss of such industry has reflected in a lack of economic diversification and focus on the tourist industry as an answer to its economic problems (*cf.* Falski 2019).

Among several factors for the decline in Pula's economic diversity are the processes of Croatia's democratization following the dissolution of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, slow privatization processes, and their accession into the European Union (EU) in 2013. These pivotal events saw decades long attempts to maintain and support industry once entirely owned by the public, but ultimately unable to aid and support industry that once upheld the city. Simultaneously, the historic and locally meaningful legacies of the military in Pula and industries

such as Uljanik become at odds with privatization and redevelopment plans. In the contemporary, former military sites (which occupy 20% of Pula) as well as waning industrial sites like Uljanik, face uncertain futures in either being left barricaded and unattended, or repurposed. Such sites are under threat or have been suspiciously obtained by private companies, national projects, and business tycoons, for the purpose of transforming these once city-building sites into locations of tourist driven profit including development of hotels, vacation homes, or golf courses.

In conversations and interviews, the phrase “mono-industry” was used to describe the new era and influence of tourism in Pula. Beyond just economic implications, the colloquializing of “mono-industry” reflects the ways the now-limited presence of industry affected aspects like living conditions and lifestyle, family dynamics, city infrastructure, and heritage. Under such conditions, *tapija* comes to account for the localized feelings, descriptions, and acknowledgement of the ways tourism materializes “into practically all pores of life” (Matošević 2021, x). In this framing, feelings of *tapija* structure Pula’s past, where military thrived, as the “glory days” – something long gone; a nostalgia or loss of a time when Pula prospered and felt like a “real city.”⁵

On a local level, residents are left to manage and deal-with this sense of nostalgia and neglect. In a newspaper article by Helena Mostarkić Gobbo (2022b), of which the opening quote of the chapter is from, the author frames Pula’s transition from “a working-class and military town into one of Croatia’s tourist centres,” and asks: when will the development of city focus on

⁵ This section is working with Petrović (2021), who cites Matošević (2021, 51) when mentioning the feeling of when Pula was a “real city,” a key aspect of *tapija* in Pula. This phrasing was extremely common to hear while conducting fieldwork, and often was associated with the lack of economic diversity and dependency on tourism as a mono-industry in contemporary Pula.

making the citizens “better off”?⁶ Mostarkić Gobbo’s question recognizes the financial and governmental focus on tourism, where investment into public good such “lighting in their street, sewerage, more parking spaces, more parks for children, some new kindergartens, repairing potholes on the Boulevard”⁷ have been neglected for decades.

With the title of Mostarkić Gobbo’s (2022b) article asking “who is stopping the development of Pula? [Tko koči razvoj Pule?],” the author argues it is the residents who must enliven the city, insisting that a city is made not by its buildings, but its citizens. The author continues by urging for a collective fight against Pula’s “most-favourite *tapija*” [“većini omiljene *tapija*”]. Despite questioning the lack of investment in public good, Mostarkić Gobbo situates the battle or managing of a tourist driven economy as one based in local apathy. Mostarkić Gobbo’s argument follows a common complaint within Pula: *tapija* as symptomatic of a public unwilling to do anything or make a change.⁸ Such complaints, moreover, situate *tapija* as something that must be fought, cured, and eradicated.

This dissertation is interested in the sensation of *tapija*⁹ Mostarkić Gobbo describes. This discussion recognizes the role of territoriality and the deterritorialization of Pula in its development as a modern tourist destination. In this way, this dissertation reflects on the touristification of Pula, and how such processes to develop tourism in Pula simultaneously mirror processes of deterritorialization. Here, tourism appears as a neoliberal force in Pula – one of

⁶ Full translated quote: “Iz radničkog i vojnog grada, Pula se posljednjih desetljeća prometnula u jedno od turističkih središta Hrvatske. U toj su priči neki elementi, koji bi se morali iskoristiti kao adut, postali uteg. Razvoj grada je nužan, ali vizije o tome kakav grad bi Pula mogla, pa i trebala postati, morale bi stremiti samo jednome: da građanima bude bolje. I tu je priča završena.”

⁷ Translated from: “Oni žele javnu rasvjetu u svojoj ulici, kanalizaciju, više parkirnih mjesta, više parkova za djecu, poneki novi vrtić, popravljjanje rupa na Bulevaru.”

⁸ It should be noted that this argument takes inspiration from Tanja Petrović’s work (2021), where the author makes a similar critique to the approach and lens of Pula+2020 application. Petrović’s discussion is more thoroughly laid out in chapters 3 and 4 of this dissertation.

⁹ As an editing note, *tapija* will no longer be italicized in this dissertation.

many factors that act as an injurious force, causing the Puležani to face a *slow* dispossession. In line with Laurence Ralph's (2014) concept of social injury, injury here acknowledges that the wounds and effects of great social change do not necessarily leave bodily traces or manifest physically on residents. Instead, aspects like city space, heritage, facades, and infrastructure are sites of such dispossession.

Yet, rather than viewing *tapija* as a symptom of the contemporary state-of-things that must be cured, and suggest who is responsible, I want to stay with the feeling, or the trouble. This position recognizes that with further attention, *tapija* as a sensation, description, and act, bares the almost imperceptible force of neoliberal capitalism and the textures of the slowly dispossessive, rubbing up and appearing in the ordinary day to day. Here, *tapija* can be seen as not just symptomatic of larger socio-economic forces, but in substantial ways, personifies the dispossessive. While Pula continues to change, expand, and shift with decades long processes of socialist transition, industrial failure, and growing touristic pressures, *tapija* largely acknowledges a sense that such change is not occurring for the residents nor by residents, but at their expense, inciting a sense that the city no longer feels as if it is for locals. The colloquial adaption of *tapija* in turn marks the contemporary as a particular moment of time where modernizing projects involving city space, its history, and its temporality affectively generate a sense of uncertainty and disconnection for residents.

In staying with the question of "what does *tapija* as a feeling do," this dissertation aims to de-pathologize *tapija* as a wholly negative feeling, to see instead how its uses retain a complex and nuanced range of inertia as much as indifference. *Tapija*'s multiple and at times contradictory appearances, uses, and meanings recast the phrase as not wholly apathetic nor inactive in all its iterations. Akin to Ann Cvetkovich's examinations of depression as a public

feeling, this examination of tapija as a multifold sensation is not looking to gloss over bad feelings, but to instead ask “how it might be possible to tarry with the negative as part of daily practice, cultural production, and political activism” (2012, 3).

A central aim of this dissertation is to provide an archive of tapija. This archival work is a means to acknowledge the ways in which tapija as a sensation is located-in and integrated-into the topology of Puležani everyday life. Here, moments, sensations, experiences that appear in the minor or micro level, what may not appear related or on the same wavelength, come to meet or connect in the ways they articulate new relations with the macro (*cf.* Cvetkovich 2012, 12). Under such a lens, sensations, or shared feelings of tapija are evident in aspects like small talk, complaint, graffiti, storytelling, and even socially understood “impossibilities” of the rental market or building care evidence new and necessary modes of living on despite injurious and dispossessive conditions. More specifically, such reading reminds us that persistence and radical ways of living do not necessarily need to be revelatory nor eliminate negative feelings, and, instead, can include withdrawal or new forms of sociality (Cvetkovich 2012, 6).

Parallel to the work of Ann Cvetkovich (2003; 2012) and Lauren Berlant (2012) this dissertation works through a recognition of the elusive ways capitalism works as a framework for violence, beyond a visible form. This project looks to contribute to larger discussions of the everyday effects of neoliberalism as a global condition. Thus, this dissertation is interested in not necessarily assessing tourism as a negative or positive force, but instead to how tourism as a neoliberal force gets into the lives of Puležans, where this dissertation gives light to the nuances beyond a dichotomous framing.

1.1. THE SLOWNESS OF DISPOSSESSION (SLOW DEATH)

Gorana's dishwasher signified the progress of her apartment renovation. Gorana explained that the dishwasher was seen as unnecessary, or luxury item in Pula, a description that stood out to me as it was the only appliance and feature Gorana had chosen to upgrade in her dated, bright yellow kitchen. Among the new modern flooring, windows, doors, paint, and furniture Gorana was bringing into the rest of her apartment, the new appliance sat for months in the middle of her kitchen. Modern floor tile was installed throughout the apartment within two weeks, the windows, and doors replaced before my arrival in Pula, and the walls of the main hallway, kitchen, and living room were all painted within a few weeks. Yet, despite nearly all other facets of the renovation having been completed with a two and half month time frame, the dishwasher sat uninstalled and in the open for the entire duration of my time in the field.

Every few days Gorana and I would meet over coffee, wine, or dinner in her kitchen, where the progress of the workers renovating the apartment was clarified and discussed in detail. Our conversations turned naturally to the topic, whether an update that never came to fruition, or frustration that she was dancing around the dishwasher while cooking daily in the kitchen. It was Gorana's son-in-law who was leading the project, which, for Gorana brought a sense of security that the project would in fact be completed at some point – a factor that Gorana clarified could not otherwise be guaranteed in Pula.

"The dance" became a metaphor Gorana gradually extended to describe not just her movement around the appliance, but the renovation process and eventually, her broader experience of getting anything done in Pula. The dance denoted that one could not expect a speedy renovation in Pula, and if you pushed too hard, or rushed the steps, the dance or renovation would stop entirely. Workers and suppliers would feel alienated, strained, and often not return.

Gorana explained a particular rhythm to renovations in Pula that reflected the general experience of the rhythm of daily life in Pula. In the case of the Gorana's home renovation, understanding the rhythm was a part of setting realistic expectations of the project, and ultimately finishing the project. Gorana came to explain that this was a necessary approach to life in Pula, where numerous aspects of city infrastructure sat neglected and needing improvement, noting potholes, building facades, and kindergartens as examples. Like the dishwasher's installation, she explained, one had to learn when and how often to ask for service: somethings would never be done, and others, with time, could change.

Gorana's view of the dishwasher and the ways such a minor appliance reflected larger issues with the approach to improving the city, exemplifies, albeit a rather optimistic or positive acceptance of *tapija*. Her positive view of *tapija* was rarely matched when speaking to other locals, and perhaps this was due in part to Gorana only recently returning to Pula after over a decade living in the U.K.. Nonetheless, Gorana's fresh take on *tapija*, came as a new way to view and understand the feeling, where her "dance" reflects a navigating of *tapija* and the widely linked feeling of impossibility.

While portraying to me a positive understanding of *tapija*, Gorana's description nevertheless emerged with and from complaint about the state-of-things. Specifically, Gorana's complaints and maneuvering echoed, on a minor level, a sense of the impossibility of change that so many Puležani had attached to the feeling of *tapija*. While I am interested in the role of and relationship between complaint and *tapija*, and take this up further in Chapter 2, it is important to preface how such discussion relates to notions of hope. Gorana's coming to terms with, or acceptance of *tapija* as a background condition notably was not met with apathy, nor a complete revolt of the system – recognizing neither would get her what she needed. Instead, the case of

Gorana's dishwasher came to exemplify the space between inaction and action, placation and disruption. Here, Gorana's complaints, acceptance, and maneuvering recognize and work with the impossibility of change in that it is not about nor interested in revolting or changing system at hand for locals. Tapija here permeates and is something people "live-with." Gorana's use of the phrase acknowledges a feeling of impossibility but does not an entirely succumb or feel apathetic to dispossessive norms.

In this understanding, tapija, as both a feeling and descriptive term to describe the-state-of-things, recognizes the necessity of accepting or living with a particular form of social injury in that locals cannot expect change or new opportunities. This point amplifies Andrea Matošević's description of tapija as reflecting a "wider crisis of the subject," where tapija is seen as a critical attitude that recognizes an inherent belief "that states, processes and situations cannot change" (2021, 92). Here the anxious belief that the state-of-things cannot change appears similar to the effects of what Susan Buck-Morss (1992) calls technique of anaesthetics. Working with Walter Benjamin ([1935] 2007)) to acknowledge processes of desensitizing and alienation, Susan Buck-Morss's argues that shock has "become the norm" under the capitalist dreamworld. Here, feelings and sensations become numb through feeling "too much." Tapija in this sense presents a description of the effects and processes of a techniques of anesthetics and numbing of dispossessive conditions.

Under these numbing conditions, what is read and taken up as a "major" crisis or event is limited. As literature on crisis highlights, major events are made visible and knowable through the framing of crisis (Janet Roitman 2013; Daniel Knight 2015; Charles Stewart 2017). Crisis here is a "transcendental placeholder" of a state of emergency, an empty signifier without positive content itself. While crisis is always asserted after the fact and seems self-evident, akin

to shock, crisis is not a decisive moment but a chronic condition that is not locked into time (Roitman 2013, 9-10). Crisis in this case helps to situate *tapija* as feeling that is not caused by one central event, but rather the production of a continuous and growing immersion into neoliberal conditions where crisis becomes the norm.

Within the context of Pula, notable crisis events over the past three decades reiterate a sense of temporal whiplash, from the demise of socialism, the Homeland War, to the loss of Fordist industry, socio-economic conditions have drastically altered daily life for Puležani and Croatians alike. Yet, despite being able to name particular events, the lingering effects of the experiences and their outfall on the minor level are not as obvious. Chronic crisis mode as evidence by the colloquialization of *tapija* to describe the lack of investment in city infrastructure and public good in turn casts the contemporary moment as an uncanny present, where, as Rebecca Bryant notes, a sense of present-ness related to futures that cannot be anticipated or imagined (2016, 20). The present is unperceivable as it is caught between the past and future as “the past is not in its expected place” (working with Stewart 2017, 130).

Here, the everyday forces of *tapija* reflects and identifies a wider crisis becomes a means to mark and describe the current temporal moment. Despite experiencing massive shifts and crisis events, *tapija* expresses a crisis in being subjected to the uncanny present. In this, *tapija* reflects a feeling similar to “stuckedness,” a characteristic of enduring late liberalism. Coined by Ghassan Hage (2009), the Bourdieuan concept of “stuckedness,” or not moving well enough or at all, demonstrates the complexity and interrelation of the feelings of hope and hopelessness. As Hage (2009) argues, such socioeconomic conditions demonstrate social immobility as coinciding with existential immobility. Stuckedness in crisis becomes an “endurance test” for those willing

to stick through and those calling for change, where those who wait are marked as good citizens (Hage 2009, 27; also see Khosravi 2018).

Turning to the temporal holders, markers, and pace of *tapija*, I am interested in viewing how such concepts work to mark a process of *slow dispossession* within Pula. My framing of slow dispossession is adapted from Lauren Berlant's (2011) "slow death," Othon Alexandrakis's (2016) "slow trauma." Berlant's "slow death" reflects the condition of being worn out by the activity of reproducing life. In applying Berlant's lens, slow death is seen to be injurious as it is embedded and perpetuated in socialized attachments interwoven in the experience of normal life in Pula. Akin to Hage, Berlant recognizes that injury exists in life in an impasse from which people cannot move forward or live within a desirable or manageable sense of time. For Berlant, endurance presents as a feature of living within the neoliberal biopolitics of Pula and in turn recasts taxonomy, subjectivity, and life-making.

For Alexandrakis, enduring slow trauma recognizes that despite the sense that one is not living in the "throws" of event or crisis, they may live "with the effects of trauma, in crisis normativities or crisis ordinaries" (2016, 36-37). Here slow trauma reflects discussions of endurance to recognize the supportive relationships formed within relations of power (Ibid 34-35). Working from this, slow dispossession helps to place changing notions of normalcy experienced by Pula's residents as reflecting temporal, physical, and economic shifts.

Berlant and Alexandrakis's works emphasize how the slowness of dispossession adapts a subtle form of crisis – the way it weaves into the everyday and exists somewhere between the banal and a state of exception. Akin to Berlant's slow death and Cvetkovich's (2012) discussion of depression as a phenomenological and sensory impasse, slow dispossession does not suggest to a complete "stuckedness" by the contemporary moment. Instead, Puležani endurance through

slow dispossession highlights Jarrett Zigon's (2018) argument that being-in-the-world consists of continuous temporal shifts and slips, where hope cannot easily be conceived as passive or active, or in the hopes of a better future. Like Cvetkovich's examination of trauma (2003), *tapija* comes to name and "transform the abstract and pervasive power of capitalism into something that can be felt [...]" (Cvetkovich 2003, 42).

In looking to crisis in such a way, this dissertation reflects the view of interlocutors that such processes of touristification are not unique to Pula and can be seen throughout coastal Mediterranean towns. This dissertation looks to the elements and feelings associated with *tapija* to examine how feelings of stuckedness do not inherently mean stillness. Instead, as this dissertation will exemplify, attachments to place, history, and community allows a "flirtation with the good life" (Berlant 2011, 48).

1.2. ATTACHMENTS AMONG IMPOSSIBILITY

By the time I had entered the field in August 2021, I had grown aware that I was in the midst of a shift in local politics. While conducting fieldwork from afar in the months leading up to the election, I followed the city mayoral elections race, where the front-running Istrian political party, the IDS, or the Istrian Democratic Assembly (Istarski Demokratski Sabor), looked to be continuing its dominance in the region. Despite other parties such as *Možemo*, SDP (the Social Democratic Party of Istra, or *Socijal Demokratska Partija*), and even the HDZ (the Croatian Democratic Union, or *Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica*), participating in the electoral race, the 30-year governance of the IDS in Istria and Pula – both in regional and city mayoral

elections – generated a wide-held assumption that the party’s dominance would remain status quo.¹⁰

Yet, in June 2021, for the first time in three decades, Pula’s mayoral election saw residents vote the IDS party out, and opt instead for an independent mayoral nominee, Filip Zoričić. The presence and success of a non-affiliated city mayor came to signal changing connections and ties to Istria’s regional narrative, where nostalgia and/or regional imagination no longer had unwavering power and loyalty. Within weeks of the elections, Puležans began citing immediate changes Zoričić brought in. Interview after interview locals noted that Zoričić’s decision to mast a pride flag on city hall during pride month as symbolic of the new era of politics in Pula (see Glas Istre 2021). Being the first elected official to hang the pride flag on city hall, came to, at least initially, suggest a break from politics-as-usual and the dated interests of local politicians.

Many Puležani, or Pulans, moreover, cited the historical vote as representing a desire for change and resistance to enduring political mismanagement at both the city and regional levels. The issues mentioned included the lack of transparency and support over the closure of the Uljanik shipyard (once owned then aided by the national and regional government), mismanagement of provincial and city funds, lack of investment into local needs and infrastructure, privatization of public land for tourism, and IDS involvement and control of the media, generated a growing lack of trust in the IDS. Residents stated in the past decade or so, expecting mismanagement was the norm, noting a popular saying in Pula and Istria: “it was better to be corrupted by your own kind, versus another.” The common phrase reflects how

¹⁰ When I later entered the field, residents and newspapers alike began to expose how local media favoured IDS coverage during this election. This is something I contextualize and address in Chapter 3, but I feel it is important to acknowledge here how the bias may have influenced mine as well as locals’ perceptions at the time.

voting for the IDS was seen as strategic in the past, due in part to the IDS maintaining and focusing on Istrian discourses and interests in comparison to the other political parties such as HDZ, which were not seen to represent the Istrian perspectives.

This view of the IDS has widely been accounted for within academia. For example, the works of Danijela Beović (2013), Sandi Blagonić (2009), and John Ashbrook (2011) account for the historic role and presence of the IDS party in producing and perpetuating representations of “Istrianness” or “Istrianity.” More precisely, the IDS’s initiation and presence in Istria politically came to represent the promotion of a particular regionalism, or a sense of “*Istrijanstvo*,” or “Istrianness,” a unique sense of regional identity that emphasizes notions of multiculturalism and tolerance as innate Istrian characteristics. The role of IDS in promoting a sense of regional autonomy separate from national politics can be traced to their formation in 1990, where the IDS came as a direct response to HDZ’s emphasis on the Croatian national question during the 1980s. With the presidential election of HDZ leader, Franjo Tuđman in 1989, “true” democracy in Croatia was challenged by de facto one-party rule and corruption through nepotism (Goldstein 1999). Tuđman promoted Croatia’s transformation into an exclusivist monoethnic state, making clear that Istrian multi-national and pluri-national values were now outside of the dominant discourse (Cocco 2010; Ballinger 2003, Stefanović 2018). In comparison, in the past three decades, the IDS has focused on forwarding political narratives based on territory rather than groupness, promoting a distinctive regional polity that does not mandate a dominant ethnic membership.

Beyond HDZ and Tuđman, Istrian multiculturalism is often connected to key historic events that occurred in the region, including the anti-fascist movement in Istria during and post-World War II. After the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the start of WWI, and

Istria's annexation to Italy under the Treaty of Rapallo in 1920, Italy's rule over Istria at this time actively attempted to eradicate Croatian language and culture.¹¹ By the 1940s, anti-fascist sentiment was growing and destabilizing Italian stronghold in the region and culminated by 1943 when Italy had surrendered in World War II, sparking a partisan liberation movement and legacy in Istria. Following the Paris Peace Treaty of 1947, where Istria would be annexed to Yugoslavia and prompt many ethnic Italians to leave Istria with the Istrian-Dalmatian Exodus. Under the socialist leadership of Josip Broz Tito, a sense of unity based on multinationalism was promoted, recognizing Yugoslavia as a nation of no nationality other than Yugoslav. As Anita Sujoldžić (2009) acknowledges, socialist notions of "brotherhood and unity" promoted and allowed for ease in migration within the region, where all the ethnicities had equal, full Yugoslav citizenship. Notions of a united Yugoslavia flourished within Istria due in part to its prosperous industry and large military base that brought in many migrants from other Yugoslav regions.

By the 1990s, the Wars of Secession saw Croatia's independence and an economic transition to open market. While the war itself did not come to occur or directly affect Istria since the region was a non-militarized zone, Istria became a site of refuge and residence for former-Yugoslav immigrants and national minorities (Beović 2013, 30-32). As Sujoldžić discusses, many refugees from Croatia and Bosnia and Hercegovina chose to stay permanently in Istria due in part to the region's ability to reconcile "various cultural influences" (2009, 1339). Istria's peripheral positioning as a borderland space is seen to have encouraged a sense of distinction and self-determination in contrast to broader identity politics occurring in post-War Croatia.¹²

¹¹ The processes of eradicating Croatian culture were particularly evident in the Italian government's banning of the Croatian language and enforcement of the Italianization of Croatian names.

¹² Despite a sense of tolerance attached to *Istrijanstvo*, it is important to account for the limits to such characterizations as a multicultural and accepting identity. Pam Ballinger (2003; 2004) notes that within claims of self-determination, ethnic mixing becomes a site of contestation as migrant populations in Istria remain outsiders to the "authentic [European] Istrianita" (2004, 42-44). For Ballinger, while *Istrijanstvo* hinges on a notion of

In turning back to Zorčić's election, we can see how the historical legacy, value, and attachment to Istrian values and characterizations politically and socially highlight the peculiarity and importance of the city-level shift from IDS power. In line with Susan Buck-Morss's (1992) techniques of anaesthetics that describes the blocking or numbing of reality and sensory experience, the election marked a momentary break from the "numbing" to IDS's political control where reports or examples of the party's corruption, mismanagement, and censorship were no longer crisis-events. In this, the Zoričić's election encouraged a sense that "some other winds were blowing in Pula and that people could hardly wait for the change in which they had high hopes" (Mostarkić Gobbo 2022b).¹³

The election of an independent candidate was perceived as a break from a temporal experience of *tapija*, akin to what Rebecca Bryant (2016) describes as a "critical threshold" in the *uncanny present*. In keeping with Bryant's terminology, the dominance of the IDS established a politics-as-usual reiterated notions of *tapija*, or that nothing could change, where the present is unperceivable as it is caught between the past and future. The present "hovers between past and future," forcing people to endure a "burden of gathering the past and projecting it into the unknown future" (Ibid 24).

"convivenza," an Italian phrase which stresses an idea of hybridity (or mixture), tolerance, and bilingualism, exhibiting the "authentic" Istrian characteristics correspond to a "European" identity. The "authentic" Istrian identity utilizes notions of modernity defined by a sense of tolerance as a "true" European quality.

Ballinger's discussion, moreover, highlights that despite claims to "European" regional identity, Istria remains a place betwixt and in between Europe and the Balkans. As the works of Danijela Beović (2013), Pamela Ballinger (2003; 2004), and John Ashbrook (2011) argue, representations of *Istrijanstvo*, are portrayed by scholars in terms that actively distinguish Istrian from Croatian identity and the Balkans more broadly. Here, ideas of the uniqueness of Istria's regional identity are asserted through historical legacy and narratives regarding Roman and Italian influence within the region. The portrayal of the distinctive histories of Istria and Croatia proper work to emphasize not just the "natural formation" of a regional identity, but the necessity of supporting and protecting these distinct qualities. Such notions reflect readings of the Yugoslav Wars of Secession in terms of ethnic division and hostility, a tension that has often been generalized as innate "Balkan" qualities (Todorova 1997; Bakić-Hayden 1995; Baker 2015). Here, ideas of Istria's history as reflecting innate qualities of tolerance and multi-ethnic identity reproduce a modern and "European" character (Orlić 2008).

¹³ Translated from: "Čuli smo da u Puli pušu neki drugi vjetrovi i da su ljudi jedva dočekali promjenu u koju su polagali velike nad."

For many the political conditions prior to the 2021 election, and even a couple of years into Zoričić's mayorship (as many of the same complaints over mismanagement continued), demonstrate the presence and grasp of *tapija* in Pula: the effects and evidence of a cruel optimism (see Mostarkić Gobbo 2022b). Yet, at the same time, one could make the argument that the sensation of *tapija* was a key cultural force that helped to prevent, even for a moment, the continuation of political status-quo. Within these unfolding electoral events, I am particularly interested in how the dynamics, elements, and contradiction of *tapija* are embedded, maneuvered, and mobilized.

Central to Zoričić's election was the altering attachment from regional politics and identity to a city based one, where new mayor came to reflect a localized need that by 2021 had largely detached from the regionalist perspective. Of interest here is how a sense and notion of *tapija* works to distinguish the city from the rest of the region. For example, one of Andrea Matošević's informants, identified as B.K., epitomizes this internalized distinction when stating: "Pula is not Istria, that is a Pulan phrase, the city boundary is on Veli vrh [a hill by Pula], even in suburbia there is no *tapija*! In Muntić [a town near Pula] there is no *tapija*! *Tapija* is here, in the walls of the city!" (2021, 21). B.K. describes the geographic positioning of Pula to state its peripherality as creating a divide, and more than this, this divide separates Pula's phenomenon of *tapija* and the experience of the rest of the region. Matošević extends the explanation of B.K.'s quote to acknowledge that these articulated differences between Pula and Istria appeared during the years when Istria/Istrianness was being promoted and constructed in opposition to rigid nationalist discourses. Thus, for Matošević, while *tapija* "denotes an insufficiency and a lack; it is also the source of positive, affirmative identifications [...]" (2021, 21).

While locals such as Zoran Angeleski (2021b) have written against the notion that *tapija* is purely a Puležani experience in that “stagnation” (učmlosti) and “boredom” (dosade) exists in other towns in Istria as well, I am not interested in taking such a literal approach to B.K.’s perspective. Instead, turning to Matošević’s argument for how such conceptions articulate positive identifications and attachments is particularly productive. In this, B.K.’s quote emphasizes an attachment to a specifically *Puležani* experience, revealing the hope and endurance in such attachments. This relationship between *tapija* and Puležani experience epitomizes Berlant’s cruel optimism: *tapija* as signifying the good life once had and hope it may return to Pula.

While the perspective of Angeleski and other Puležans, who view *tapija* as a way for “very lazy” (vrlo lijene) people to shift responsibility is quite a common complaint, this perspective does not account for what generates from *tapija*’s collective meaning and use. Particularly, *tapija* evidences an act of cultural poesis in that the concept can provide both a blanket explanation of the failure or doom of local Puležan politics, and at the same time, maintains potential as a collectivizing force in uniting locals over shared disappointment. In line with how Cvetkovich describes melancholy’s negativity as potentially productive in its correction of a naïve politics of hope, local attachment to *tapija* and being Puležani can too be a means to disrupt and even slow down politics as usual to tend to or see what feelings might be (2012, 117).

1.3. ECOLOGIES OF CARE

Walking me through one of the cultural organizations at ROJC, a unique multi-purpose cultural centre in Pula, Marijana’s presence felt caring and unassuming as she showed me

significant pieces of the group's library and artwork collection. A retired Puležani woman in her late 70s, Marijana had a clear desire to share her knowledge and joy for the space, keenly explaining where each book and handmade art piece were from, who gifted it, when, and why.

I had heard numerous things about this particular association at ROJC prior to joining them that day. The organization was infamous for cooking and sharing the native dishes of their homeland with other groups at ROJC. Though no food was being made during this visit, members of the organization prodded me with snacks and liquor instead. I had felt an immediate ease in the space. After Marijana's tours of the space, I and the 10 group members who showed up that day sat around a large meeting table. The sound of a Turkish soap opera provided us background sound while we shared and rotated wine and liqueur bottles around the table. The organization's demographic was made up entirely of women over the age of 60 apart from the head of the group who was in her 40s. Sitting there, I felt I was at a table with the matriarchs of my family.

Conversations weaved between pop culture and social events like the newly released film, *Toma*, and important upcoming events I should not miss, to more tactical and explicit discussions of the role of the organization and meetings space in the women's lives. The women's life stories and current circumstances differed: some married with kids nearby or in other countries, some facing retirement single. Despite these differences, each woman stressed the necessity of meeting at ROJC two times a week: it was their only time for socializing and a means to combat the overburdening experience of *tapija* that retirement, the COVID-19 lockdowns, and life in Pula brought.

The head of the organization insisted I interview Marijana in particular. Marijana, unlike the other members was not from the country in which the organization was based on. Instead,

Marijana was advertised to me as a “true” Istrijanka [Istrian woman] who came to the organization for friendship. Later that week, Marijana and I met at a local coffee shop as per her request.

The day of, Marijana was running behind and met me at the cafe in a slight haste. She had settled within a few minutes, though I could not help but sense a difference in her energy in comparison to the other night at ROJC. After sharing our greetings and quick descriptions of our days so far, I began the interview. As quickly as we started, the interview seemed to just as quickly go off track. It became difficult to keep Marijana focused on the question or topic at hand, and this seemed to be the pattern for much of the question-and-answer dynamic. Asking questions such as, in her opinion, what does it mean to be ‘truly’ Istrian for example, swiftly turned into a single sided discussion on the mismanagement and disorder of local politicians, and in her opinion, particularly evidenced under the COVID-19 lockdowns. I felt lost on how to handle the situation, especially as the conversation incessantly turned back to highly contested and off-topics opinions of the pandemic in the moment. Any effort to patiently steer conversation back to the original prompt or question failed almost instantly.

Over a half an hour in, I had given up on guiding the conversation entirely. Perhaps out of belief that the interview was an utter failure, I abandoned all expectations and gave into what felt like a complaint session. Sitting with Marijana’s train of thought and focusing on what she was in fact trying to share with me in the seemingly circular conversation, I realized that in efforts to effectively conduct the interview, I had forgotten to sit and listen with empathy. Marijana was, in reality, fervently describing a sense of growing alienation and *tapija*. No family to take care of her, support her, or confide in, the conditions of Marijana’s self-described lowly pension weighed heavily on her. Within her points on the mismanagement of COVID-19

responses, and the control of lockdown, Marijana was expressing the emotional impact of being cut off from one of her primary sources of care: her community and friends at ROJC. Pula was not like it once was – the government no longer cared for the elderly or its inhabitants.

Our interview ended after an hour. Marijana had then invited me to join her and her friends at the open-air market just a street away. Standing around a fruit stall, I recognized her friends from the other night at ROJC. They seemed to be immediately immersed in their own dynamic, arguing over when the fruit they were taking from the stall, which operated by one of the friends, and when the fruit would be paid for. As their conversation began to inflate and take on slightly bickering tones, one of Marijana's friends turns to me and says, "Marijana is a bull force."

My time with Marijana felt like a crash course on nervous ethnography akin to Kathleen Stewart's (1991; 1996; 2011; 2007) "contaminated critique." Adapting Eve Sedgwick's (1997) "weak theory," Stewart looks to move beyond academic habits of critique and suspicious writing to, instead, attune to the intensities and textures of ordinary affects. Stewart purposes an approach of "atmospheric attunement" as means to pay attention to complex and emergent happenings that assemble into "something that feels like something" for locals (2011, 445). Akin to Stewart's work, Marijana's central conversation came to enact and take part in a political dialogue and cultural poetics, demonstrating how her contested views and ways of life are immersed in the "matter of things." In this, what "matters" does so not "because of how they are represented but because they have qualities, rhythms, forces, relations, and movements" (Ibid). Stewart reminds ethnographers that storytelling stands as a mimetic mode of cultural production and critique, where rather than matters of truth or falsity, stories reveal ways, ideals, and

fundamental attachments. For Marijana, these attachments include ROJC, friendship, and having a city that reflects Puležani needs.

In applying a lens of nervous ethnography to my experience with Marijana, I am reminded Stewart's emphasis of the generative power and abilities such attachments have, and how they can affectively reorganize older forms of sociality and power. Particularly, the role of small talk, storytelling, gossip, and complaint as a means of expressing and even acting on *tapija*, evidence acts of cultural poesis where "somethings" become instantiated (Stewart 2003, 2). Marijana's description, attachments, and memories of a Pula that once cared about its inhabitants flags a network of implications, entanglements, and changes that have and continue to effect local experience. The messiness of life external to ROJC in this reality gave rise to stronger connections with ROJC and the community organization. Marijana's story sits as a reminder of the ways in which *tapija* appears, engage, and intersect with forms of social care.

Marijana's story thus emphasizes a central interest for this dissertation: exploring how *tapija* is felt and experienced intra-connectedly. This examination hinges on and instantiates connection and involvement explicitly and implicitly. As I more thoroughly outline in Chapter 1, and what Marijana's story exemplifies, local attachments and expressions of *tapija* through storytelling and complaint inadvertently defy what Émile Durkheim (1960) labels *anomie*, or the state of disintegration due to social change. Here, with the force of neoliberal agenda and time evident particularly through the growing presence of tourism as a mono-industry, Pula's residents face growing pressures of social and economic change. In contrast to Durkheim's *anomie*, these modes of being-in-world present a means to undermine the experience of tourism and political mismanagement on locals. Akin to Cvetkovich's (2012) study of depression as a public feeling, where such feeling creates withdrawal but also create new forms of sociality, I am

interested in how *tapija* and the frustration or discomfort with Pula's status quo are dealt with socially. While *tapija* as a neoliberal feeling of stuckedness is situated as an individual sensation, this dissertation speaks to instances where *tapija* is shared with and carried by the community.

This approach is in part inspired by Carla Hustak and Natasha Myers's (2012) work on plant ecology and thinking about involvement as an attempt to move away from theories of "unilateral adaption." In critiquing neo-Darwinian theories on orchid/bee relations as unilateral and asymmetric, Hustak and Myers's work highlights the importance of readings that "amplifies accounts of the creative, improvisational, and fleeting practices" (2012, 77). Hustak and Myers instead view these encounters as active, where both species move with and are moved by each other, instead of static, blind, and reactive automations. An involvement lens, per Hustak and Myers, allows for attunement to the ways *tapija* as a public feeling and oral tradition emerges from involvement and affective entanglement with community.

Particularly, in attuning to informal, subtle entanglements, undoing, and playfulness this dissertation asserts that such methods of involvement, attunement, and generative relationality help formulate and conceptualize social connection and public feelings as valuable examples and forms of care. Here, for example, walking paths, guided tours, and obstructed routines in Pula offer moments to recognize affective entanglements and relationships beyond acceptance or lack of acceptance of processes of touristification, but embodied, kinesthetic, and affective modes of engagement. Intensities including stunted relation to place, offer modes and opportunities to maneuver and reformulate involvement.

Thus, this dissertation brings attention to forms of social care within context of late-stage capitalism and the growing prevalence of the precarious global citizen. In part, this discussion of care work despite growing individualization, insecurity, and de-collectivization highlights Anne

Allison's (2013) work on precarity in Japan. Allison's (2017; 2013) work on the feeling of hopelessness and being futureless for Japanese Youth, speaks to the ways stuckness permeates due to the failure of state in generating hope, leaving life stuck in "the immediacy of now." Allison's tracing of methods of community building and producing a sense of belonging acknowledges local attempts to imagine a particular kind of future that ends a sense of stuckness and prevents a bad death or dying alone. Such analysis investigates and highlights how moments and acts of communal care can help processes of reterritorialization.

This focus, moreover, emphasizes attention on the complex ways such species involve themselves in each other's lives. For Hustak and Myers these encounters are not just conditioned by "calculating economy [...] but also by an affective ecology shaped by pleasure, play, and experimental propositions" (2012, 77-78). Within the context of Pula's intensifying touristification, the presence and affect of care presents alternative modes to calculating the transition to an economy of tourism and an open market that aim to maximize profits. Following Maria Puig de La Bellacasa's thinking, in attending to, addressing, and exposing forms of care, the intent is "is not to debunk and dismantle them, nor is it to undermine the reality of matters of fact [...] [but] instead, to exhibit the concerns that attach and hold together matters of fact is to enrich and affirm reality by contributing further articulation" (2017, 39).

Parallel to Lisa Stevenson's examination of care and the entanglement of life and death for the Inuit, care here is not necessarily about "good intentions, positive outcomes, or sentimental responses to suffering," but a nuanced discourse of care that accounts for feelings of ambivalence and also the messiness of attempts at care (2014, 3). In similar manner, this dissertation leaves the mess and nuances of care recognizing that simultaneous to public feelings of *tapija*, there are also coexisting complaints on the overuse of *tapija*, or the contradictory

engagement with dispossessive systems. In trying not to draw neat lines of analysis, I am ultimately aiming to adapt what an ethnographic method that “remains suggestive rather than to be fully decoded” (Stevenson 2014, 13).

In this, attention is brought to how care works within heterogeneous timelines: relying, clinging to, anticipating, and unsettled in relation to connections with the past, present, and future (Cook and Trundle 2020). Akin to the work of Vincent Duclos and Tomás Sánchez Criado, I am interested in viewing ecologies of care as unstable, semi-porous, and world-creating (2019, 155). Ecologies of support, to continue with Duclos and Sánchez Criado, are not necessarily innately protective, do not merely sustain, but pass through bodies, inspire movement, and can foster potential (Ibid). Yet, within this discussion I want to extend Zigon’s (2018) argument that hope cannot be inherently tied to ideas of a better future to account for elements of care.

Particularly insightful when considering the elements and ecologies of care that feelings of *tapija* engages with, are how these forms of care go beyond clinical forms of care that work through an anaesthetic approach to remove pain and suffering (Buck-Morss 1992; see Evans 2021). Instead, a therapeutic worldview provided through collective care permits spaces and voice to not just discuss the pain but become re-sensitized. As becomes evident in the sights and locations where *tapija* and complaints of *tapija* manifest in Pula, for example through gossip, storytelling, graffiti, or vandalism, is how these acts generate collective moments of feeling and response. Akin to Meredith Evans’s (2021) analysis of musical therapy and Janelle Taylor’s (2008) autoethnographic discussion of caring for her mother living with Alzheimer’s, the focus is on mutual care and exchange of intimacy rather than curing or solving the issue.

In talking to the importance of exchange and collective care further, this work adapts Kathleen Stewart's (1996) acknowledgement that while power dynamics and the ways in which attachments can be cruel akin to Berlant, Stewart argues the use of attachments in cultural acts can also affectively reorganize older forms of sociality and power. Akin to Emanuela Guano's (2017) tour guide informants, how Puležans engage with city space, memory, and narratives are acts of poesis, or worlding. Guano describes local guides as "flaneurs" or producers of culture, as informants' agency exists beyond objective resistance.

While local organizations and artists such have continually challenged political desire to privatize, demilitarize, and deindustrialize Pula's land and claim rights to the city and plans for its future, I am interested in exploring processes of communal connection, retaliation, gossip, and maneuvering in the seemingly mundane and every day. In examples such as the work and presence of Pula's graffiti artists, processes of witnessing and identifying injury come to encourage communal acknowledgement and disruption.

Such analysis accounts for the works of Massumi (2002) and Manning (2016), where Massumi notes that rather than creating stagnation, positions of in-betweenness or uncertainty produce potential and maneuverability. In parallel to Massumi's multiple potentials in the virtual, Manning notes the way in which the minor gesture threatens the existing order of things in its capacity to actualize the not-yet. Endurance in such contexts reflects an understanding that while late liberalism can police potential and produce eventfulness, akin to the work of Bergson (1957), Brian Massumi (2002; 2010; Zournazi 2002c), Manning (2016), and Alphonso Lingis in Zournazi (2002a), potential and hope also act and appear as quasi-events that remain emergent, open, and transformative, developing a desire and hope in, the otherwise.

Therefore, this dissertation assesses how elements of maneuvering and hope, maneuvering hope, and the hope of maneuvering within this context appears in community and connection, rather than a belief in fully eradicating neoliberal social injury. In the case, this dissertation witnesses and speaks to the effects and field of relation around Pula's touristification, where methods of adaption or urban identity, altering connections ties to space, and changing notions of a possible future, indicate a maneuvering "in the meantime" (Jansen 2015). Here, rituals and rhythms are expected to change over again, and disruptions never wholly alter or halt that which dispossess. Akin to Berlant (2011), perhaps rather than hope, optimistic attachment through communal connection appears as an investment to one's own life, making life bearable. As such, this dissertation recognizes its findings as based in the incomplete, still being processed sensations, feelings, and the uncomfortable.

1.4. FIELDWORK PRACTICES AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

To explore Pula's cityscape, my research focused on conducting long-term ethnographic fieldwork through participating and observing public city centres and private spaces, self-mapping activities, and interviews that include life histories and storytelling. Yet, while beginning to plan fieldwork methods and approach as early as January 2020, the unforeseen rise and eventual status of Covid-19 as a pandemic, evidently challenged and restructured any research or travel plans. In January 2021, my initial plans focused on two research steps: step one consisted of conducting research-from-afar until I was able to enter the field and begin step two, in-person observations and data collection.

From January to April 2021, my research focused on online data collection through local newspapers, social media groups, pages, and accounts, in addition to processes of mapping. I

looked to learn aspects of Pula's topography and urban and spatial planning, in terms of local businesses, historic sites, and neighbourhoods. This initial stage of research served as a valuable and more intense period of familiarization and fieldwork preparation prior to ethics approval. What I would later realize in speaking to locals online and later in-person, was how this stage of research became fundamental approach to understanding and relating to interlocutors.

Particularly, the processes of deeper familiarization through daily readings of sources like local newspaper, *Glas Istre*, became a means to not just identify some local trends, happenings, values, and ways of thinking, but more importantly became topics that allowed deeper conversations and trust with locals. As this section will address, this initial period allowed me to witness and begin to engage with notions, feelings, and the influence of *tapija*.

Upon my initial ethics approval in May 2021, I began interviewing and conducting mapping exercises with interlocutors from afar due to health and safety protocols surrounding Covid-19. By August 2022, after reapplying for in-person ethics, I entered the field. In all, I conducted 22 initial semi-structured interviews, in addition to multiple follow-up interviews with a couple of these interlocutors. Most interlocutors were with young adults between the ages of 18-70. In addition to numerous conversations with locals, I conducted:

- 8 guided tours of Pula done both from afar and in-person,
- 3 interviews with tour guides,
- 4 interviews with historians and academics from the region,
- 2 interviews with bureaucratic figures,
- 1 group interview with 2 retirees of Pula's industry,
- 1 interview with a Puležani repatriate,
- 6 interviews with local organizations,
- Group interviews with a local organization,
- 4 interviews with local minority organization members,
- 1 interview with a documentary filmmaker.

In order to contact and develop a list of willing research participants, in the early stages of conducting fieldwork from afar I focused on contacting tour guides who had listed their services

on Airbnb “Experiences.” I set up virtual city tours and interviews with willing tour guides over Zoom, seeing this initial communication as a means to build online rapport with locals who both live-in Pula and work in the tourist industry. I utilized these participants to create a snowball effect to connect to other potential interlocutors, which included other tour guides, historians, filmmakers, academics, and public servants. In addition to the tour guides, I cold called and emailed local groups and organizations oriented towards national minority populations in Pula for interviews and further contacts with mixed success. I also turned to methods of recruiting participants after visiting key locations such as museums and the ROJC cultural centre. These became key contacts for further word-of-mouth connections, for example to other organizations who use ROJC’s site. In the case of Gorana, who was mentioned earlier in the chapter, I was connected to her through a mutual friend of my parents.

While I conducted both fieldwork-from-afar as well as and in-person, I began by utilizing guided tours and tour guides as a way of engaging with the city and locals. As noted earlier, tours, whether formal with other paying patrons or informal tours of the city with locals became a central tool in mapping Pula. Mapping in this context considered aspects such as key locations in terms of value, pride, or necessity for both residents and tourists alike. In a way guided tours continued during my time with continuous walks and exploring of the city through the eyes of my informants. Here, note taking and mapping key locations often focused on tourist locations and sites of pride. Upon further getting to know my tour guides on a personal level, whether in our first meeting or after several tours together, I would learn more mundane or even nuanced elements of Pula’s urban history and daily life.

In the process of mapping, and what became a task to record, were the ways in which the relationship between tourism and temporality and space became evident. While tourism as both

source of congestion in the city and major source of work was not the only force influencing temporality and experiences of the cityscape, it was an opening to understanding the flow, rhythm, and disruptions of the city to its inhabitants. The feeling of gradual loss of the city centre, the nostalgia for a time when the city felt socially and economically prosperous, the seasonal use and access of the city centre to locals and tourists, among other factors flagged a temporal underpinning to experiences in the city that were important to recognize. Over time, this introduction to Pula's rhythm allowed for attention and discussions about the changing state of things, as well as narratives or idealized notions of what Pula is or ought to be.

Attuning to the rhythms of my field site and interlocutors moreover hinged on an ethnographic approach that examines and accounts for the senses. Sensory ethnography looks to sensory experience as integral to human social relations (Pink 2015), viewing interlocutors as embodied multisensory beings (Culhane 2016) ultimately looks to senses as evidencing everyday life practice: what is shared with others to enable researchers to understand practices, perspectives, and place (Pink 2010). Within the context of Pula, sensory attunement supplemented what Sarah Pink notes as the diverse ways of knowing and being in the world and are therefore vital to ethnography. The intensity of sounds, bodily heat, tensions, and forced awareness that crowded tourist season brought to Pula. The unnerving contrast of winter months, when Pula's city centre was hushed brought ill ease in its juxtaposition. Even the visible signs of industry's presence in the city through large cranes and stone walls, but a sense of eery silence that consumed these areas. As Pandian and Mclean suggest, sensorial moments shed light on attachments, implications, vagueness, and narrative presence that allow for new alignments, or the otherwise for interlocutors (2017, 17 thinking with Deleuze and Guattari 2018 [1987]).

In examining the interaction between urban landscape, tourism, and identity in Pula, I was interested in exploring affective encounters within cityscapes. Kathleen Stewart describes “worlding,” the initiate dwelling in space that “bears, gestures, gestates, worlds,” where things matter “because they have qualities, rhythms, forces, relations, and movements” (2011, 445). Anderson and Harrison (2010) expand Stewart’s worlding to further explain the concept, stating, “worlds” are “not formed in the mind before they are lived in, rather we come to know and enact a world from inhabiting it, from becoming attuned to its differences, positions and juxtapositions, from a training of our senses, dispositions and expectations and from being able to initiate, imitate and elaborate skilled lines of action” (2010: 9; *Cf.* Berberich et. al., 2013, 315).

Thus, akin to the work of Hemangini Gupta and Kaveri Medappa (2020) on affective landscape, I am inspired to examine and reiterate Mitchell’s (1994) question to ask, *what does Pula’s cityscape do*; “how [does it work] as a cultural practice ... [that] circulates as a medium of exchange, a site of visual appropriation, a focus for the formation of identity” (Mitchell 1994, 1–2). Moreover, I ask, how do these sites come to affectively produce, play with, or be entangled with new economic models and memories and even nostalgia?

To better attune to the landscape, I attempted to map my interlocutor’s personal relationships with such spaces through aspects like their daily routes, experiences, movement, memories, and eventual outcomes like what products were purchased. I put forth the ways in which interlocutors are actively engaging and shaping such spaces and temporalities (*cf.* Deleuze 2018 [1987], 205). Following the complex lines of daily life in these locations looks to prompt questions akin to Gilles Deleuze’s (2018 [1987], 203):

“What are your lines? What map are you in the process of making or rearranging? [...] Are you cracking up? Are you going to crack up? Are you deterritorializing? What lines are you severing, and which are you extending or resuming?”

Akin to Cristina Moretti's ethnographic approach in *Milanese Encounters* (2015), mapping city spaces according to interlocutor and personal experience becomes a means to bridge uses of public spaces. Through this analytical tool, public spaces can "easily become a way to distinguish between people assumed to be entitled to the city and people who do not 'really' belong there," with the "stories, memories, daily journeys, and active appropriation of spaces, less-privileged inhabitants seek to redefine their roles and relationships to the city" (Moretti 2015, 6). With this understanding, the discussion of tourism in Pula underlines a critical aspect that this dissertation will focus on how space within this setting is thought, lived, imagined through and with time.

Recognizing my own positioning as an ethnographer in the space alongside my informants provides insight into how inhabitants negotiate with existing urban inequalities and conflicts at a time when neoliberal, post-conflict, and post-socialist shifts are reorganizing social and spatial relations (*cf.* Moretti 2015). Such methodology permits connection between temporality and space, where "entanglements which seemed to have an autonomous resonance through their lingering, residues..." confront particular kinds of bodily knowledge (Ibid, working with Navaro-Yashin 2012; also see Irving 2018, 3). Here, like Stef Jansen's work on temporality in Sarajevo in *Yearning in the Meantime*, public spaces such as city transportation and bus stops demonstrate articulations of the urban self-positioning (2015, 67-68). Through participation, observations of daily routes and routines on city buses, Jansen's approach accounts for the tension between inadequate city transportation and inhabitants' complaints and entitlement to "normal lives."

In walking with the guides, I let myself be a tourist, and be in awe of the history – the ancient ruins, the discrepancies between where the past laid and the positioning of contemporary

builds. As I explore more thoroughly in Chapter 4, walking through Pula felt like weaving through layers of history. Tour guides and locals alike took active notes temporally negotiating these layers: the routes first used centuries ago today act as Pula's central road; businesses that opened for the navy and military personnel sit as housing today. My informants came to trace the ways stories of what once existed continued in daily life. Such methodology highlights Emanuela Guano's (2015) discussion of tour guides in Genoa. Building on Florida's (2012) notion of 'the creative class,' Guano argues tour guides build the city through a bottom-up approach through use of their cultural capital.¹⁴

In this mode of engagement, walking and being within the city space provides a means to explore immediate and imagined realities. My approach views walking as an ethnographically valuable method that allows insight to "the social and the symbolic within the immediate day-to-day activities that bind practice and representation, doing, thinking and talking, and to show that everything takes place, in one way or the other, on the move" (Ingold and Vergunst 2008 3). As an adaptive and embodied practice, I turn to walking as a mean to attune to and weave elements and stories of Pula I experienced, shared, and overheard.

Akin to the work of Springgay and Truman, I am interested in walking as a methodology that accounts for broader "ethico-political engagement" and situated realities of history and power to account for the intensities, engagement, and forces like tourism, post-Fordism, transitions to capitalism in Pula (2017, 30). This approach views walking beyond languages of embodiment that are largely in terms the "individual and sensuous accounts of bodies in space [...]" (Ibid).

¹⁴ See also Susan Hill (2017) on the labor of bricolage in imagining and re-valuing a socialist past in the case of Budapest.

While my approaches to conducting fieldwork intentionally engaged and attuned to sensory experience, I agree with Andrew Irving's note that within walking tours, the perceptions and reality of cities are not constituted immediately by the senses, but rather a past that no longer exists (2016, 5). Similarly, to the works of Andrew Irving (2016), and James Evans and Phil Jones (2011; 2012) this attention speaks to how more than biographies or place as bounded and static, walking interviews acknowledge place as dynamic and "interpenetrated by connections to other social and economic worlds" (Evans and Jones 2012, 2320). Following official and unofficial, formal and informal tours of the city with locals allowed for attunement to the slippages of standardized tourist or historic narratives. In these instances, *tapija* as the desires, nostalgia, refashioning of the vanishing past, the loss and the allegories of loss, show itself as deeply entrenched into daily feelings and new tourist representations of the past.

Brian Massumi views walking as "controlled falling," where walking is not an escape from unavoidable and continuous constraints but involves and maneuvers the constraints (In Zournazi 2002b, 218) Here, akin to gravitational pull-on bodies in motion, walking requires finding balance, where one goes into the fall and regains balance (Ibid). Nadine Ryan ties Massumi's (Ibid; 2002) recognition of indeterminacy as impelling an openness to movement, to Kathleen Stewart's consideration of the "ordinary as forces, points of contact, encounter and impact, potentials, connections, and disjuncture" (Ryan 2018, 23 working with Stewart 2007, 4). In Ryan's terms, walking under such lens is "something ordinary that entices 'shifting assemblages'" (Ibid). These affective intensities or ordinary encounters conjured through walking are the emotional setting for conditions to potentialize and realize *some things*.

The informal intimacies that emerged through walks and tours acknowledged Pula as a site where history is not imagined "as a straight line of progress," but a place which continues to

be weighted by economic booms and busts, migration and return, destabilizations and displacement (*cf.* Stewart 1996, 15). Tourist narratives and histories slipped and morphed with each retelling in implicit and sometimes explicit ways. Tours became sites and examples of Charles Stewart's notion of historicity as a manner in which "person operating under the constraints of social ideologies make sense of the past while anticipating the future" (Eric Hirsch and Charles Stewart 2005, 262; Stewart 2016).

The points of contact offered through tours and their scripts, moreover, presented as a means to understand how locals order and navigate the past and present. In walking, mapping, and following such informal intimacies, Pula was a site where history was not imagined "as a straight line of progress," but a place that continues to be weighted by economic booms and busts, migration and return, destabilizations, and displacement (*cf.* Stewart 1996, 15). In both formal and informal tours, guides who attempted to explain significant history, stories, or identify important locations in the city inherently, staggered and stumbled in their inability to account for all of Pula's overwhelming history. At times stories felt oversimplified and romanticized, yet, nonetheless, maintained value in sharing uncomplicated local sentiments and attachments. In leaving this messiness, methodologies of walking and tracing did not look to attend to all of what was deemed valuable history. Instead, I approached the sense of overwhelmingness, to ask: how does one care for all this history? What history is valued and why? What history is overlooked?

This methodological approach highlights Charles Stewart's notion of historicity as a manner in which "person operating under the constraints of social ideologies make sense of the past while anticipating the future" (Eric Hirsch and Charles Stewart 2005, 262; Stewart 2016). As traces of history are embodied, or, as Kathleen Stewart notes, intertwined "into powerful

effects that remember things in such a way that ‘history’ digs itself into the present and people [can’t] help but recall it” (1996, 111). Here, walking as a method allowed for an attuning to history through traces. This research thus recognizes time as heterogeneous, where memory and dreams alike “absorb concern to become the body’s coping method” (HadžiMuhamedović 2018, 26 working with Antze and Lambek 1996).

In a similar way, secondary sources such as newspapers, blog posts, and social media posts from Instagram and Facebook, formulate particular knowing of the field site. What started as a method of pre-emptive research of my field site, and then later, a tool for conducting research from-afar due to COVID-19, became a critical source in understanding local sentiments, values, and challenges. Everyday topics and histories were reflected in articles – for example, the day after I wandered around the Barracks, an article providing a brief history appeared. Columns such as “Gradska Štorija,” or “City Stories,” often came to reflect narratives overheard and shared in mundane conversations. Comparably, local media, Facebook groups, and Instagram pages dedicated to keeping recent and distant history within memory thrive with thousands of local readers and followers. Whether from discussions of trash up-keep or feelings of *tapija*, these stories and particular authors publicly voice and speak to much of the daily feelings, complaints, and senses of living in Pula.

Here, the media, and newspapers in particular, became a means to notice and track local attachments and values. I would often catch that stories, articles, and commentary were referenced, and even at times coincidentally locals would reiterate the exact wording of articles published a day or two later. I felt in the midst of the stories and narratives told of Pula, where at points stories or narratives felt ridged, or well-constructed in so much that it was difficult to see any other way or opinion.

Under these conditions, attachments to places, stories, textures, memories, worked as resources of my interlocutor's implicit "sensing." Storytelling demonstrates the layered encounters with time as it maintains meanings and affective residues of these knowledge systems and experiences (HadžiMuhamedović 2018, 23). Sensing through storytelling evidence how people engage with history and manage daily life in Pula, recognizing history's role and networks as perpetually open to revision (Jackson 2017, 47). In conducting research that utilizes an approach to history and trace as taken from a subject, this project moves away from viewing history as "already objectified" to an approach that allows for critique through interlocutors' bodies and modes of engagement (cf. HadžiMuhamedović 2018, 25). As Angela Garcia notes, these sites, histories, and "constellation of scenes and narrations that accompany them" are embedded in elements of storytelling that appear in evidence like life-history retelling and letter writing (2016, 587). In both retelling and the residual elements of lived experiences, the complex felt and lived realities are materialized, remembered, or forgotten (Ibid 588).

The use and dependency in some ways on local news as an access point to ethnographic, personal, and historic details sheds light on the discussion of media corruption. As Chapter 3, the chapter explores graffiti trends in Pula, largely deals with, growing feelings over evidence of political involvement in the management of Istria's oldest newspaper, *Glas Istre* [translated to "Voice of Istria"]. Despite its Partisan roots, the favouring of IDS stories and perspectives, and firing of editors and journalists over attempts to question the monopolization and clientelism created growing distrust in the local paper.

Yet, even with this distrust in *Glas Istre*, it is one of the main newspapers cited in this dissertation. The use of these articles here recognizes the complexity in the ways which such sources have manipulated its closeness to Puležan and Istrian values and interests. The fine lines

between how articles about infrastructure like road conditions or city garbage can play within attempts to cast the IDS as the better political party are tricky. Such engagement with media reflects embedded and global issues to media that require any reader to critically consume and is not wholly reflective of Pula specifically.

One of the main ways I bypassed reiterating narratives that favoured a side was to look to articles that followed the lines of thinking presented by residents and interlocutors. In recognizing the theme of rumour, gossip, and complaint as key factors in local small talk, the articles came to expand upon the breakages and unexplained in mundane statements. Akin to Stewart's (1991) "contaminated critique," I sat with the ways these stories revealed ways, ideals, and fundamental attachments. In this case, narrativizations became important beyond whether they were a matter of truth or falsity.

Nervous ethnography presented an approach that accounted and followed comment sections both on the newspaper websites and other social media platforms to further situate the articles. Comment sections or article responses prevented universalizing such sentiments. In the same way, such approach looked to recognize and leave-in the contaminated, including bias perspectives and narratives. Specifically, acknowledging allegations of media manipulation and corruption, these sources became important artifacts to follow and trace narrativization attempts and logic. In following local news, I focused not on whether sources like *Glas Istre*, and journalists carried bias, but what these sources aimed to create, assert, and maintain. In such cases, the favouring of the IDS, for example, exemplified the desire to maintain the "status quo" and moreover situate the growing gap of distrust in simply voting for what was known.

1.5. CHAPTER BREAKDOWN

The chapter that follows turns to complaints and sense of *tapija* regarding infrastructures as a tool to follow the traces, evidence, and emergence of slow dispossession and topological alteration in Pula. This chapter acknowledges and works with Othon Alexandrakis's description of dispossession as "[disturbing] topography at the level of topology" (2016, 36). Complaint, whether a common, overly used narrative or not, exists as a reflection and reference to experiences within larger economic, social, and regional processes that come to slowly dispossess. Discourse surrounding feelings of losing moral ground or corrupted morals of local officials are at the forefront of complaints by residents who desire and sense a loss of bureaucratic attempts to "do good" and act responsibly. It is in this sense that this chapter looks to highlight complaint as a form of social care and connection. This section will address the growing distrust in the political party, IDS (Istarski Demokratski Sabor, or Istrian Democratic Assembly), which for years was central to the promotion of regional character. Central here are conversations regarding the support of residents and a sense of 'making do,' or the management of injury through social connection.

The third chapter examines contemporary issues of building care where it becomes evident that such issues mark a conjuncture between past, present, and future. Specifically, in examining Pula's facades, this chapter highlights the lingering presence of historical architecture and ownership that continue to effect, exist, and speak within present and future notions of support and resolution. In examining the state-of-being in relation to Pula's exterior and facades, this chapter will review key historical policy and moments that effect contemporary notions of ownership and responsibility of care in Pula. This chapter surveys policy and ideologies surrounding housing under socialist Yugoslavia, the effects of post-socialist privatization, as well as contemporary revitalization projects in Pula, "Dolcevita" and "Tisuću Fasada" (a thousand

facades), to highlight growing sentiments and key features of *tapija*: the impossibility of care and the impossibility of improvement.

Chapter 4, “Monitoring and Walls: Graffiti as Therapeutic,” returns to discussions of Pula’s facades, to this time reflect on the use of political graffiti on these valuable media. Focusing on two case studies, the anti-Calucem graffiti and the critical stencils by the Pulan Banksy, I argue that the graffiti presents narratives of witnessing or observing corruption and mismanagement of the city to challenge the status quo in Pula. This chapter positions contemporary forms of critique in recognizing a lengthy and important history of graffiti in Pula and Istria, more broadly. These graffiti trends function as therapeutic through the monitoring and critique of normalized forms of deterritorialization. In attending to the role of witnessing, where public walls are used as mediums forms of re-sensitizing the public, I am arguing that local graffiti artists evidence a means to re-establish care for communal values, place, and Pula’s residents to reimagine everyday realities.

In contextualizing the importance of industrial and military history and presence to Pula’s residents, Chapter 5 expands this discussion to examine some efforts to manage this history and heritage in Pula. Utilizing and centring on methodological tools of walking and media analysis, this chapter explores the limitations, nuances, and complexities of showcasing Pula’s industrial and military history within tourist practices. In this context, while Pula’s industrial and military presence acts as a source of pride and economic opportunity, this chapter follows the ways in which stunted walking patterns and habits come to reveal disruptions, challenges, and neglect of industrial heritage and local necessities.

The final chapter looks to the increasing disparity amongst access to rent and property ownership in Pula. This chapter picks up on some of the discussions regarding housing

distribution during privatization processes of the 1990s, to attend to the ways the dependency on tourism in the region has exacerbated issues of housing accessibility. While some who have inherited properties post-transition or those who were able to buy multiple properties in the recent decades, are able to profit and create relatively steady income through tourist-based property rentals, this is not the case for all. In Pula's market, prosperity models hinge on an "entrepreneurial spirit" where locals can get "lucky" through become landlords in the short-term tourist rental economy. Comparatively, being unlucky as this chapter explores, the rental market in Pula has become increasingly impossible due to the price and profits of renting for tourist purposes.

Ultimately, this introductory chapter begins to trace out concepts and feelings of *tapija* that appear and intensify with the loss of industry and economic dependency on tourism within Pula, Croatia. In doing so, this introduction acknowledges the affective, temporal, and topological processes of dispossession. The subsequent chapters will present further cases and deeper investigations into the sensations, intensities, and temporal whiplashing and halting that are results or intertwined with processes of deterritorialization. The next chapter in particular considers the elements of care that appear in complaint and social acknowledgement of infrastructural neglect.

2. TOPOLOGIES OF COMPLAINT: THE MANAGEMENT OF PARKING, ROADS, AND PULA'S CITYSCAPE

“And so, for 10 years, from season to season, donkeys wait for the grass to grow, for Kolodvorska Street to turn into a pleasant street to live in during the tourist season.”¹⁵

(*Glas Istre* 2022b)

Pula's parking lots are sites of myths and folklore. Their unorthodox coming-about, or stories of parking lots that nearly came to be but, in the end, could not and did not come to fruition haunts the local cityscape. Many of the contemporary parking lots in the urban core came about inadvertently as a result of World War II bombings in the city centre. Despite the devastation to housing and centuries-old church sites nearby, the newly open space allowed for needed city infrastructure like parking and city parks. At the same time, these parking lots end up sitting next to other consequences of the bombings: unearthed ancient archaeological sites like the “The Punishment of Dirce” mosaic (See *Figure 2-1*). Once a floor mosaic in the living room of a Roman house, the depiction of Dirce being tied to an enraged bull now sits beside a large parking lot, caged by metal bars two metres below street level.

Stories surrounding parking lots account for tales of plans for their construction, the closeness to a solution, and the eventual construction halting as more ancient ruins are found in that location. In the case of a plan to build a parking lot behind the former knitwear factory, upon digging, an archaeological site believed to be a worshipping site for the ancient Airisti was uncovered which put a stop to any further development. Instead of a parking lot, there is now a

¹⁵ Translated from “I tako već 10 godina iz sezone u sezonu, čekaj magare da trava naraste, da se Kolodvorska ulica, tijekom turističke sezone pretvori u ulicu ugodnu za življenje.”

seemingly open field next to the old city centre with ancient ruins that sit on display for tourists, passersby, and those circling the area looking for parking (See *Figure 2-2*).

Thus, the cycle continues: bids and project claims for the development of parking lots and garages come and go (Glas Istre 2022a; Regional Express 2023b). In the case of a parking lot by Pula's football stadium that was first discussed in 2011, the project has remained at a standstill until 2023 due to land ownership disputes (Regional express 2023a). Efforts to build lots outside the city centre follow city governing strategies and attempts to incentivize tourists and visitors to park outside the city and bus to the core (Gregorović 2022f; Istra24 2022a; Pula Parking). Yet, such ideas remain idealized plans by the city that either lack fruition or adoption by enough visitors.

This chapter focuses-on and deems complaints regarding Pula's infrastructure as ethnographically valuable. Particularly, I am interested in the momentary spaces of connection complaints create through refocusing and recentering public discussions. Here, even just for a moment, the act of complaining moves attention away from the hegemonic project and perspective that Pula's infrastructure and its improvement should follow tourist pressures and nourish tourist capacities, to instead, conversations on the standards and quality of life for those who must live in Pula year-round.



Figure 2-1, The mosaic of the Punishment of Dirce, covered next to a parking lot in the city centre. Picture taken by Lea Alilović, August 17, 2021.



Figure 2-2, The open field behind the former knitwear factory. Initially excavated with the intent to build a parking lot. Picture taken by Lea Alilović, August 15, 2021.

Numerous news media articles point to Pula's parking conditions as a "burning problem in Pula [...]", (Glas Istre 2022a) and "one of the most important topics around which spears [koplja] are constantly broken" (Slijepčević 2023).¹⁶ With over 50,000 cars flooding Pula's streets during the summer tourist season, parking issues are intensified and unavoidable (national.hr). Within the city centre, droves of tourist cars easily identifiable by their foreign plates block, halt, and disobey signage and parking rules, giving rise to traffic chaos on the roads (Strahinja 2020b; Gregorović 2022d, 2022e, 2022f, 2022g; Glas Istre 2022a). Changing tempos of tourist season in turn place pressure on the city's already limited parking availability (Strahinja 2019).

Even with tourists' overuse of such infrastructure, locals cite a simultaneous fear of not being able to offer tourists parking spots during excursions (Gregorović 2022g) or with accommodation (Rosanda 2022b). For residents who rent out their space to tourists, the inability to promise or offer tourists parking incites fear in locals that visitors will "give up and find another option" (Ibid).

In the midst of the 2022 tourist season, Pula's city government responded to local complaints and an increase in traffic with an overhaul of the parking system. Notable changes included increasing prices in some locations by three-fold and establishing "holders only" subscription-based parking spots (Gregorović 2022a and 2022d). Alongside these changes new zones categorized by colours red, yellow, and green zones divided the city by rates, schedules, and busyness. For locals, the increased price from 4 HRK to 20 HRK per hour in the city centre was seen as a "blow to those employed by artisans at the market and fish market, as well as by

¹⁶ Translated from: "Parkiranje u Puli je oduvijek jedna od najvažnijih tema oko koje se stalno lome koplja."

other employers in the city centre” (Gregovorić 2022h).¹⁷ In the context of Pula’s city centre, finding central locations after 9 am continues to feel like “winning the lottery” (Ibid).

Locals turned to online avenues to complain about the recent changes, where discussions of parking focused on themes of mismanagement and disconnect between city officials and local needs. In one Facebook comment left on *Glas Istre*’s page, a Puležan describes the changes to parking in relation to the election of the new city mayor, where “[t]he new management... the new rule of law” reflects Pula becoming a “city [...] for tourists [...] [where locals] walk with a stomach cramp because we no longer have our city.”¹⁸ Others describe the dissonance between local needs and political projects, asking “[d]oes anyone in charge in the city know how many people from Pula come to work every day in the city centre by car and have no other alternatives!?”¹⁹ The commenter continues, noting that “[p]arking prices have increased on the level of Helsinki or Copenhagen, major European metropolises. “Is the centre of Pula the centre of Helsinki!?”²⁰ Such comment highlights that despite being one of the least expensive Croatian coastal towns to visit, parking fees are one of the most expensive in the country (Gregovorić 2022h compares Pula’s parking prices to Croatia’s capital city, Zagreb).

Complaints regarding urban development, planning, and infrastructural care often hinge and cite disconnection from a sense of place. Locals note that “[o]nce the centre of Pula was the centre, now it’s a difficult periphery [...].” The same commenter resumes to state, “[t]hat’s why I have to say our city government is incompetent and greedy and destroying downtown life day by

¹⁷ Translated from: “Nove skuplje satnice parkinga predstavljaju udar i na one koji su zaposleni kod obrtnika na tržnici i ribarnici, ali i kod drugih poslodavaca u centru grada.”

¹⁸ Translated from: “Nova uprava... nova pravila... Grad je za turiste... a mi hodamo sa grčem u želucu jer nemamo više svoj grad....”

¹⁹ Translated from: “Da li netko od odgovornih u gradu zna podatak koliko Puležana svakodnevno dolazi na posao u centar grada automobilom te nemaju druge alternative!?”

²⁰ Translated from: “Cijene parkinga su povećane na razinu Helsinkija ili Kopenhagena, velikih europskih metropola. Je li centar Pule centar Helsinkija!?”

day.”²¹ Themes of ostracization and mishandling of public funds continue. Another commenter states:

“The test for the citizens of Pula is as follows, whether the budget will spend money on building infrastructure for muddy jobs or for the needs of all citizens. Come on, mayor, before you need hotels, build gas installations, optical lines, footsteps and other communal infrastructure [...].”²²

Public good appears in contrast to tourist development and goals:

“We dream big, and the roads are full of holes and dangerous manholes, we don’t have enough trash bins, no parking, not enough gynecologists... I have nothing against hotels, nor tourism, but one incident can jeopardize the entire tourist season (an example of a pandemic, war, crisis...), tourism couldn’t save Greece, let alone us. [...] Everything is needed, even a hotel, but the priority should be the people who live there, not renters and guests. When it’s great for us, it’ll be even better for every guest.”²³

Such comments highlight valuable insight on the common beliefs and politics on the condition, investment, and care of public infrastructure in Pula, and Istria more broadly, and the expectations for city and regional governing systems. More specifically, these complaints centre on the effects of the increasing dependence on tourist presence in the city, where despite the general population of cities like Pula decreasing in the past decade, local electricity grids, transportation, water and sewage systems, and communication and internet lines continue to be overused and overloaded (Grakalić 2021; Bogunović 2021, Bilić 2018).

²¹ Translated from “Nekad je centar Pule bija centar, sad je teška periferija. Ja konkretno niman ča iskati u centru a pogotovo po cijeni parkinga [...]. Zato moren reći da su naše gradske vlasti nesposobne i pohlepne te uništavaju život centra iz dana u dan...”

²² Translated from: “Test za građane Pule je slijedeći, hoće li nasjesti da proračun potroši novce za izgradnju infrastrukture za mutne poslove ili za potrebe svih građana. Ajde lijepo gradonačelnice, prije potreba hotela, napravite plinske instalacije, optičke linije, nogostupe i ostalu komunalnu infrastrukturu, pa onda za 50 godina nakon što gospoda uplate sve za za građevinsku onda im počnite lagano pripremati sve za izgradnju hotela i filmskog grada.”

²³ Translated from: “Sanjamo veliko, a ceste pune rupa i opasnih šahtova, nemamo ni koševa za smeće dovoljno, ni parkinga, nit dovoljno ginekologa... Nemam nista protiv hotela, ni turizma, ali jedan incident moze ugroziti cijelu turisticku sezonu (primjer pandemije rat kriza...), turizam nije mogao spasiti ni Grčku, kamoli nas. Ovo je post nekog tipa kojem se zamjerio Mozemo, tip niti ne zivi u Puli, a kao zna sto bi pulezanima trebalo. Trebalo bi svašta, pa i hotel, ali prioritet trebaju bit ljudi koji tu zive a ne iznajmljivači i gosti. Kad nama bude super, bit ce i svakom gostu jos bolje.”

Central to discussions on infrastructural complaint in Pula, is the acknowledging that such complaints hinge-on and reflect feelings of *tapija*. In this context, what Andrea Matošević (2021) identifies as *tapija* in terms of Raymond William's (2001) "structure of feeling" as based on forms of boredom, lameness, and futility that is seen as specific to Pula becomes evident in the role of public complaint regarding public funding and failing infrastructure. Specifically, complaints surrounding aspects of daily life, like local governing and infrastructure (electricity, plumping, potholes, daycare, parking, condition of buildings such as housing, etc.), add to Matošević's examination recognizing how such practices of boredom, mundaneness, and complaint, come to shape and interact with experiences in the city. The ascribed lack of public funding or focus on communal issues that go beyond parking to include road conditions, trash, gas and power line installation, public services such as kindergartens and doctors, emphasize disconnection and friction between public interests and local needs.

Beyond solely accounting for the signs of *tapija*, or notions of disconnection and melancholy intensified by tourism in Pula, I am interested in exploring what the role of communicating *tapija* through complaint does. As discussed in detail in the introductory chapter, notions of *tapija* are inherently tied to feelings that nothing will change in Pula. While many locals see complaints regarding sensations of *tapija* as a form of apathy and inaction, this chapter approaches such complaints recognizing the ways communicating complaint can offer important spaces of connection and an otherwise.

In particular, I argue that an implicit effect of complaint is that it helps prevent the breakdown of social bonds, or what Émile Durkheim (1960) labeled "anomie." These conversations offer connection and an alternative to conditions of anomie, where the frustration or discomfort with Pula's status quo that would be otherwise carried individually, is shared with

the community. This chapter emphasises how a consequence of local complaint and a sense of *tapija* are its roles in helping to establish and maintain social ties through a marked and shared sense of morality and etiquette that exists in friction to, and the outskirts of, the dominant and idealized economic and temporal agenda of tourism. Specifically, I argue that *tapija* offers a means and make-shift space to maneuver aspects such as “tourist time,” or the sped-up pace of everyday life as a result of the intensification of tourist presence and economy.

Whether through asserting alternative temporalities or offering communal space and connection, skepticism and criticism of the status quo present a contrasting notion of how life in Pula ought to be lived and experienced. Akin to the work of Daniel Knight, we see that despite “the past [appearing] distant in linear time,” residents of Pula bring the historical forward in attempts to explain contemporary circumstances (2017, 28; *cf.* 2015). The past here asserts a language of morality in terms of a sense of what was lost and the future of Pula’s urban landscape. The discourse surrounding feelings of losing moral ground or corrupted morals of local officials are at the forefront of complaints by residents who desire and sense a loss of bureaucratic attempts to “do good” and act responsibly. In this way, attuning to *tapija* and complaint demonstrate local methods of managing injury or socio-economic wounds. Injury here recognizes residents are not at a moment or experience of severe crisis, but, as outlined in the introduction, appear as a slow dispossession, where changing notions of normalcy experienced by Pula’s residents are both temporal and material.

Central to such discussions is the recognition of the role of *tapija* according to Matošević (2021) as an “unrecorded feeling” that is expressed orally and in informal conversations. In this context, complaints about infrastructure and urban design, especially those archived on social media and in local news, appear as important ethnographic resources. The cited and uncited

presence of *tapija* through complaint came to signal a particular experience in the field where complaint transitioned from being a simple matter of small talk and conversation to tracing and outlining a means of coping-with the state-of-things in Pula. Akin to Kathleen Stewart's (1996) writing process of re-membering and retelling moments unrecorded in fieldwork, *tapija* through complaint during my time in Pula appeared in the gaps and seams of conversation. I noticed that while sitting down with Puležans whether for an interview or casual coffee, discussions often turned to the limitations or success of certain movements, politicians, city plans, and tourist season. Statements, remarks, and judgments over the state-of-things were quick, and often off-topic but consistently raised. Utilizing Stewart's contaminated critique in the field and as a writing practice in turn was a reminder that these moments of incongruity were not something to be "set straight," but encounters with *permeabilities* and *vulnerabilities*, *self-possession* and *dispersal* (1996, 9).

Articulations of *tapija* and its sensations, the felt yet unspoken, within informal and formal spaces came to exemplify valuable moments of hesitation to alienating and dispossessing processes. Here, online and in-print media sources provided an "other" space to not just to complain but offer social connection, a pace that differs from tourist time, and space within an increasingly dispossessed city. In this context, complaint, whether a common, overly used narrative or not, exists as a reflection and reference to experiences within larger economic, social, and regional processes that slowly dispossess. Despite what some locals might limit to simply a culture of complaint, these complaints hold weight in their signalling of neoliberal dispossession. Recognition of the feeling and expression of *tapija* within these meetings with the Puležani both frames and presents an approach to understanding such measurement or dissatisfaction within its cultural context.

Fundamental to this research is the recognition of the contemporary network between space, temporality, and a sense of belonging – a topology of complaint and *tapija*. A recognition of such landscape attunes to how the social interacts with space, and moreover, how topological order produces “distinct conditions of possibility” (McLaughlin-Alcock 2020, 695-696; Harvey 2012). Possibility and potential in this study inherently recognizes that residents’ engagement with space is not a one-way relationship, but one that is in conjunction, developing, affecting, and making urban space in particular ways. In mapping affective and physical examples of deterritorialization in Pula, this research considers Brian Massumi’s claim that topology is not about space, but about seeing experience as spatial (2002, 181; *cf.* Tucker and Smith 2014, 177). Here, dispossession through processes of touristification, apartmentization, and hotelization of public space are seen to merge, influence, and rework notions of identity and connection in Pula. This assessment recognizes and is interested in how Pula’s *slow* dispossession affects, is built in, and is intertwined with the city’s topology. Akin to the work of Othon Alexandrakis, this dispossession is seen to “[disturb] topography at the level of topology” (2016, 36). In other words, the structure of living in Pula and “the surface along which individuals apply meaning to the world” are altered, ultimately challenging and changing “an individual’s sense” and experience (Ibid).

This chapter is structured as follows: I first situate *tapija* as a contemporary feeling to then explore how space and access to space in the city are talked about. Here, my focus on complaints and the temporality of parking in Pula reflect the management of multiple temporalities, including the tense temporal forces of hegemonic and economic driven pace of tourist time and the dead-like pace of off-season. In attuning to the presence and management of different temporalities, this discussion begins to open the recognition of care despite feelings that

nothing will ever change. In this context, I examine how complaint offers a temporal glitch in the extreme paces of tourism, and in turn provides moments and potential of an otherwise.

I will then situate *tapija* as a historical feeling, where the phrase's changing meaning and presence in the city marks a change in topographical relations to city space. While *tapija* once referred to Pula's liveliness and the ability to "just hang out" in the city, as Matošević (2021) notes, the term has changed in meaning to connote a sense of boredom and the absence of things to do in Pula. In this way, the shifting definition of *tapija* situates conversations of infrastructural complaint in highlighting how changes to Pula's cityscape reflects growing disconnection to the space itself. Contemporary synonyms for *tapija* as a phrase relating to situated slowness, lacking urban space, and infrastructural issues emphasize the common experience of changing relationships to space and place.

This chapter will conclude with situating this growing distrust within the context of local political responses to complaints and infrastructure. As urban spaces for socialization in Pula are seen to be dwindling, this chapter explores the expressions of *tapija* in third or informal spaces. In this context, the turn to online platforms to express perpetually missing or poor infrastructure and distrust over systems in place evidence new measures of community and space-making. Of particular importance to this discussion is the role of communal complaints about infrastructure and the present sentiment of the misuse of public funds to deal with circumstances despite a belief that things will not change. At the forefront, this section will address the growing distrust in the political party, IDS (Istarski Demokratski Sabor, or Istrian Democratic Assembly), which for years was central to the promotion of regional character.



Figure 2-3, A garage labelled in the Barracks. Photo taken by Lea Alilović, November 19, 2021.

2.1. CONSIDERING THE RHYTHM OF PARKING

In our preliminary online interviews in the spring of 2021, Nadija expressed her desire to go above and beyond as a tour guide. Despite the director of the required course for Pula's tour guides having suggested a particular version of what a good host should look like, Nadija explained to me that she was not sold on his definition. Instead, Nadija wanted to establish her

own meaning through her practice. Nadija continued stating that this was exactly what happened: with each tour she got better at understanding and getting a sense of her patrons. How she read their cues, and when she asked questions and learned their preferences, whether it was to stay longer at a certain stop or to explore another location outside the pre-set tour stops. Nadija explained that this “sense” for clients could not be taught, and instead had to come from first-hand experience.

“I can give you an example” Nadija prefaced.

“I once had a booked tour from AirBnB [where] I met a woman with her son and daughter at Tito’s Park. I sensed she was stressed out. Her daughter was saying, ‘Mom, it’s ok, it’s ok. We’re starting with the tour. Not now.’ I felt bad, because how could she have a good time when feeling that way? The problem was – they were in Pula for the first time, and they parked in the wrong place, and she [the mom] was worried what would happen after two hours. Would she get a ticket? I felt the only right decision was to go to their car and show her where to park. And she was so grateful for that. To me, that was normal, you’d think anyone would do that. After that everything completely changed – She was so happy. We were so happy. The feeling we had for the next two hours was so great. I’m sure if she was worried, we wouldn’t have that – she wouldn’t have had such a good time.”

Nadija’s example surprised me. I could not quite place the importance of a parking spot within the role of a tour guide. I expected to hear stories of uncovering interests and hobbies, and these being quickly incorporated into the tour. I ask Nadija, “is parking in Pula that terrible?” She explained by situating parking within the current political events. She noted, with the city elections ongoing at the time, one topic all officials agreed upon and spoke about were issues surrounding parking. More than this, conditions for parking and roads reflected larger infrastructure issues of railway and industry that continued to be neglected and left for ruin in the city.

My conversation with Nadija brought my attention to a major area of complaint in Pula. Despite not driving a car for most of my time in-the-field, problems with parking and the

inability to find parking spots were so abundant in Pula, they came to even affect me. Walking through the central street circling the old city walls on any evening meant having to monitor car lineups and in-progress U-turns by cars waiting for spots to open in the close but limited central parking lots. Outside the city centre, around the Austro-Hungarian and Yugoslav buildings and homes, pedestrians were forced to walk in the streets as sidewalks were occupied by residents' cars. Even as a pedestrian, it was clear parked cars were lucky to come across their spots.

In this context, despite it being illegal to park on sidewalks in Pula – many residents feel it is their only option. For pedestrians forced to walk on the roads, local traffic police are blamed for not handing out enough fines.²⁴ Yet, as Zvezdan Strahinja (2020a) reports, with the fact that many shared residential buildings do not have designated spots or permits for parking, residents with cars are forced to manage and deal with on their own. As Strahinja's informant explains, with the lack of available permits for street parking, residents are forced to accept and expect to pay parking fines. Strahinja's informant describes this dilemma:

“In the last month, I received three fines from the traffic wardens for illegal parking in Županska street, and this morning I got a fourth one. 300 HRK each! Once my car was [towed by parking officials]. I know that I am in violation, but when I come home from [a] shift, there are no free spots.”²⁵

As a response, locals affected by parking violations due to parking on sidewalks and a general lack of parking spots made their complaints public by creating a petition and collecting signatures. In “complaining to the local board” over the “suffering” caused by traffic police, Strahinja's informant emphasizes the importance of parking spots, and the daily effects parking

²⁴ Full quote from *Glas Istre* September 25th, 2022: “Do I have to walk on the road next to the sidewalk because of parked cars?? When will the traffic police start doing their job?” Translated from: “Zar pored nogostupa zbog parkiranih automobila moram hodati po cesti?? Kad će prometna policija početi raditi svoj posao?”

²⁵ Translated from: “U posljednjih mjesec dana dobila sam od prometnih redara tri kazne za nepropisno parkiranje u Županskoj ulici, a evo jutros sam našla i četvrtu. Svaka po 300 kuna! Jednom mi je auto odnio i pauk. Znam da sam u prekršaju, ali kada dođem kući iz smjene, ne postoji slobodno mjesto.”

issues produce (Ibid). The emotion and feelings that accompany these complaints – what becomes viewed as another facet of *tapija* in Pula – signal the mismanagement of the city and the undesirable state-of-things.

While such issues of parking can and often lead to complaints and skepticism over city funding and management of resources, where even one of Strahinja's (2020a) informants comes to question the role of earnings among ticketing street parkers and the lack of changes to the city – a topic that will be later discussed, of value here is a discussion of how parking is largely affected by the tourist season. For one, issues of parking directly affect the ability to host or rent out homes to tourists. As an informant in Strahinja's (2020a) article raises when asking, "how are residents supposed to be able to rent out their units to tourists without designated parking spots?"²⁶ Yet, regardless of residents hosting tourists or not, parking issues are known to intensify exponentially during tourist season. Ultimately this growth in pressure and necessity puts Pula's insufficient infrastructure on display.

The pressure on insufficient infrastructure during the peak of tourist season is particularly evident in the cases of those with permit parking in the city centre. With limited public parking in the first place, many residents with permits are finding foreign-platted cars occupying permit zones. As Paulo Gregorović (2022b) describes after a day of observing parking spots in Pula's core, despite "permit-only" signs, "foreigners have noticed where they can park completely free of charge and are using it en masse" due to ignorance of the parking rules and/or lack of worry over parking tickets.

The disjuncture Gregorović describes between locals paying for parking permits only to have tourists illegally take these spots in turn describes a significant feature of the rhythm of

²⁶ Paraphrased from: "[...] how can they keep tourists if they don't have parking spaces? [... kako smiju držati turiste ako nemaju parkirnih mjesta]" Strahinja's (2020a).

daily life in Pula during the tourist season. Here, daily life is affected by aspects such as parking and space, and is, moreover, marked and orchestrated largely by the ebbs and flows of tourism. During peak season, parking issues and traffic are exaggerated due to large crowds of tourists looking for spots, or even the smallest movements or hesitations by tourists walking or driving around the city (see Gregorović 2022a). As Robert Rauch (2021a) relays in his *Glas Istre* piece, “the problem” of parking in the city appears even in mundane moments where tourists slow down, pause, and drive around looking for parking, creating congestion and stasis in the flow of things in Pula.²⁷

While issues surrounding parking are multifold, Rauch’s statement points to a central element regarding complaint that sees issues of cityscape and temporality intimately linked. Rauch’s statement follows a common thread among the Puležani regarding how tourism affects how city space and time operate. In this, the tourist season adds a layer of complexity to infrastructure already seen-as-subpar. During peak season, these issues become almost unmanageable. As Andrea Matošević notes, aspects like weather and nature are seen to shape and regulate the rhythm of city life in that “[...] tourism almost entirely depends on natural rhythms and the weather” (2021, 36). In cases like Gregorović’s (2022b) observation of parking on a rainy day in Pula, the infrastructural issues intensify.

For Matošević, *tapija* is inextricably linked to the dysregulated temporal waves, as the feeling of *tapija* acknowledges a circular quality of time in Pula in its relation to economic activity, in particular tourism (2021, 35-36). In this, Matošević provides insight into the effort required for inhabitants to maintain this rhythm or be able to adjust between “bouts of intense

²⁷ This is taken from the full quote: “The problem, Biteri continues, is that in the summer there is a lot of traffic on the roads due to parking. People are looking for a parking space, so they slow down, look around and don't know where to go.” Translated from: “Problem je, nastavlja Biteri, i to što se ljeti zbog parkinga stvara gužva na cestama. Ljudi traže parkirno mjesto pa usporavaju, osvrću se i ne znaju kuda bi.”

effort and idleness” (Ibid 36). Here, effort also accounts for completing mundane and daily tasks amid such intensities. Under these terms, feelings of *tapija* evidence the financialization of daily life under the tourist economy and experience. *Tapija* accounts for and names the “feeling of work” essential to run daily chores during the tourist season, where the ability to move through the city and stores, for example, become much more time-consuming.

Beyond acknowledging a tourist rhythm, I am interested in what articles like Robert Rauch and Paulo Gregorović’s offer by flagging and speaking to a common complaint amongst the Puležani back to the public. Particularly, I am arguing in highlighting the specifics of the ways Pula’s urban rhythm follows the extremities of tourism, these articles offer descriptions of moments of pause, stuttering, and trembling amongst the forceful and hegemonic pace. These journalists come to offer a momentary space to bear witness to the overwhelming and unsustainable pace of tourist season during summer months, and moreover acknowledge the deep contrast to winter season where the city empties, and completely slow down: inaction mixed with a tortured ambivalence about the good and bad of tourism. Such articles emphasize that urban rhythm here is marked not just in relation to increased work and labour opportunities, but by the presence of tourists in the city itself.

Puležani accounts in news articles, online comments and posts, as well as daily small talk and gossip, in turn offer maneuverability amongst the micro-level or “minor” events of crisis and dispossession that appear through the rhythm and demand of tourist season (working with Manning 2016). At the local level the effects of tourism’s rhythms produce and/or reinscribe *tapija* as a particular temporal alienation that accounts for contradictory feelings of slowness and boredom in the off-season and a sense of no “down”-time, or that time is not theirs in peak-season. These accounts render rhythms of tourism as abrasive to and contrasting a functional or

manageable daily tempo for Puležans. In this, local complaint stutters around a sense of injury in the attempt to keep up with the hegemonic, or dominant capitalist time. Everyday life and basic day-to-day acts like errands are greatly affected by uneven tourist tempos.

The recognition of the multiple and fractious temporalities offered through news articles, gossip, and online posts moreover underscores what Matošević states as the “wider crisis of the subject” that *tapija* connotes (2021, 92). Here, *tapija* is seen as a critical attitude that recognizes an inherent belief “that states, processes and situations cannot change” (Ibid). The repetition of *tapija* and the feeling of being stuck in the boredom and futility of the city signals *tapija* and complaint as “an attempt to compensate” for a sense that change will not come (Ibid). In the case of parking, despite the local government’s overhaul measures in 2022, Gregorović’s accounts emphasize the power of tourist pace and tourist practices, as foreigners “don’t care about following the rules in the city where they are vacationing” (2022d)²⁸.

On one hand, the lack of belief that these temporal waves will and can change can be argued to evidence a sense of endurance akin to Lauren Berlant’s (2011) understanding, where endurance is seen as a sign of slow death, or the condition of being worn down by the on-going act of living under capitalism. In using Berlant’s lens, the Puležan belief that things cannot improve can demonstrate how slow death is embedded and perpetuated in social attachments and interwoven in the experience of living-on or having a normal life in Pula. In this understanding, injury exists in life in an impasse from which the good life fantasy unravels, and people recognize that they cannot move forward or live within a desirable or manageable sense of time.

Yet, in paying attention to language and methods of communication surrounding these temporal extremes, another lens can better attune to all possibilities and movements that occur

²⁸ Translated from: “[...] the most obvious example is how they don't care about following the rules in the city where they are vacationing.”

when life feels at an impasse. Particularly, the role of publishing and publicizing public complaint and a sense of *tapija* can also be seen as undermining the notion that Puležani uncertainty equates to a life at a complete impasse. Instead, these articulations offer minor modes of disruption or engagement that go beyond acceptance of the status quo. My linking recognizes the role of what Erin Manning (2016) describes as “speculative pragmatism,” or the minor perception that exists before cultural intelligibility, where complaint show another worlding or unfolding relations beyond those indebted to normative and hierarchical behaviour, priorities, and temporalities.

The positioning of *tapija* as a distinctly social and shared feeling that has existed through different socio-economic systems in turn flags the opportunities for other engagements, for better or worse, that are maybe generative or maladaptive, but always worlding as locals strive to give voice to and create relations through. In this, the continued use of *tapija* to reference everyday aspects such as parking and discussions of parking is not necessarily a tool of managing or controlling the everyday, but an enabling force that affirms the stumbling, the trembling, and is the enduring force of care in one’s surroundings and the state-of-things.

Carla Hustak and Natasha Myers’s (2012) discussion on involvement further helps to understand *tapija*, instantiated here as complaint about infrastructure, as an active improvisational, playful, and fleeting method of engaging where locals are moved by and move along with these infrastructures. Akin to Maria Puig de La Bellacasa’s reconsidering of Bruno Latour’s “matters of care,” care is an “affective state, a material vital doing, and an ethico-political obligation” that is marked by relations (2017, 42). Puig de La Bellacasa recognizes that critique and critical approaches play a role in assembling and instantiating concern, care, and care-for (Ibid 39). In these terms, care is an “affectively charged sensibility characterized by

worry, attentiveness, and thoughtfulness” that is “[m]ore than a state of mind or an analytic frame, [...] but is active: it is a practice, an enactment, a doing” (Martin et. al. 2015, 629). Reading complaint under such terms highlights that while some may perceive complaint as apathetic, or a reflection of a lack of action, instead, apathy is seen as an involvement in an otherwise, an evident force of criticism and thus an active doing. Here, criticism presents as a form of care, a force, and a doing based in engagement, involvement, and entanglement.

Matošević’s work opens room for analysis and discussion on the ways in which *tapija* can express feelings, affective intensities, and experience of place in Pula. In this, friction between temporalities evident in Pula’s cityscape demonstrates macro and micro-level expressions of slow dispossession and how *tapija* as a quasi-event offers a means to maneuver. In the next section, I will dive deeper into complaints regarding infrastructure in Pula by first highlighting elements of moral language and discourse behind *tapija* and its relation to Pula’s cityscape. It is here that it will become clearer how *tapija* and complaint as topologies come to affect topographic readings of the cityscape.

2.2. PULA’S SOCIAL TIME AND URBAN TISSUE

While *tapija* is considered a historical feeling with generational experiences, Matošević (2021) and my Puležani interlocutors note the formation and stark rise of *tapija* during the 1990s. Specifically, the 1990s and the years that followed in Pula saw a change in the definition of *tapija* as a result of the Yugoslav Wars of secession, Croatia and Istria’s recovery in the 2000s, loss of industry as part of the post-Fordist experience in Pula and the growth of the tourist industry in the 2010s.

Of value here, is how these major social events and changes are seen to relate to a believed disjuncture between Pula's past and contemporary expressions of the cityscape, infrastructure, and city spirit. Ideas of "what was" work here as historical memory that motivates notions of what Pula ought to be like, whether in terms of pace, rhythm, or space. Matošević (2021) provides an essential exploration of this division between Pula's past rhythms and the present in relation to city space. The author identifies how *tapija*'s meaning shifted from the 70s and 80s where "what to do" referred to *possibility* and *openness*, to its contemporary meaning, where with the turn to tourism as Pula's mono-industry, *tapija* reflects an attitude that "nothing can be done," and even more so incite feelings of communal care (Matošević 2021, 33).

Akin to the prior section where parking highlights friction between Pula's multiple temporalities signalled a tourist time and slow dispossession, in this section I pay further attention to events and sensations that have contributed to a changing sense of place. Particularly, this section examines the relationship between infrastructure and cityscape and the ways moral language marks the rise of *tapija* through the divestment of public good over time.

One of the most significant physical sites that reflects this change is the area or street known as Korzo²⁹. Korzo – a nickname for an area technically called Giardini – is a main street in Pula's city centre first developed under the Austro-Hungarian empire as a central meeting space for coffee and drinks in Pula. Matošević's interlocutors describe Pula during the 1970s and 80s as lively, where city space, like Korzo, was used as "the best channel of communication" (2021, 32). During this time, Korzo was described as seasonless, a place where residents gathered "at their own points and positions at known times, winter, summer, [it was] always the

²⁹ Korzo more broadly is identified as a promenade. Vesna Vučinić-Nešković and Jelena Miloradović (2006) have examined "corso" (*korzo*) within the context of Serbia as a "total social phenomenon" in that Korzo relates to both the space and the social activities that take places there like walking, standing, and chatting (Cf. Low 2016).

same” (Interlocutor, N.H. see Matošević 2021, 30). For Matošević, *tapija* in such understanding signals its endowment of a “different social phenomenology” based on time. In the case of the Pula in the 70s and 80s, *tapija* was a “marker of the spirit of the city” and notions of “superiority” in being Puležan (2021, 35).

The story of Korzo and its emptying or de-popularization by the 1990s emphasizes the contemporary absence of residents in public spaces or the street. In Matošević’s analysis of Korzo, the anthropologist turns to Henri Lefebvre’s notion of “social time,” emphasizing the importance of spontaneity in public space. Here, social time appears as rhythmic attempts to separate from the unrhythmic, measured time where the state maintains monopoly (Ibid 32-33). Through social time, “the rhythm of people who take up that space, is once again linked to the space” (Matošević 2021, 33 working with Lefebvre 2004).

In terms of a discussion of infrastructure and complaint, the discussion and timeline of *tapija* in Korzo highlights a crucial change in the relationship to space for the Puležani. The emptying of public space is just one facet that marks the weight of political and economic change in the past decades. In working with Mojca Piškor (2011), Matošević notes the importance of public meeting spaces or streets in the urban imaginary, for the ability to mark possibility. Notions of “doing nothing” or “hanging out” in this case can be viewed as meaningful and active in that they are “socially useful and disciplined activities” (Matošević 2021, 33 working with Piškor 2011). Through attention to *tapija*, a feeling that at one point accounted for the joy in activities like hanging out, Matošević’s work marks the loss of social time and ultimately the spontaneity and possibility of urban space. Such discussions about the change in use and relation to public and urban space are telling of broader issues of infrastructure, where residents are left feeling the city is no longer maintained or made for residents. This point was emphasized when

speaking to my interlocutor, Laura. We met in a smoky bar Laura had picked near the city's open market and a couple of blocks away from Korzo. She spent a lot of our interview time talking about how grateful she was to have had the experience of living somewhere other than Pula and Croatia. She explained how difficult it was to return to Pula after four or five years of being abroad. In part, this return was due to her personal growth over time, the friends who remained in Pula having different lives after she came back, but largely a painful questioning of what kind of life satisfaction Pula could provide.

Laura went on to explain: "I had this frustration when returning to Pula – like it's winter, where is everyone?" She corrects herself to say maybe this was in part due to returning home to live with her parents. Comparatively, "[if] you have your own flat, you have people over. It's connected to age. When you're 30, you're not going to clubs, or at least not in Pula. You go to concerts." I let Laura continue. "I think it's frustration that comes from people who don't know what it is they need to satisfy. Now we have the 'Dođi u Grad' ["come into town"] thing—" She cuts herself off to say, "sorry I hate the new mayor," which seemingly answers who the "they" is that is not satisfying. She follows with a brief explanation of what she believes is the thought process of the new city mayor and her analysis of the situation at hand:

“‘Ah we need the city centre full!’ – If people had an organic need to come, they would come. It's not going to develop a habit to come every weekend to drink. It's like this forced idea that in the 70s/80s people were always out. Well, they didn't have Netflix and the internet.”

Laura's comparison between generations follows a similar discussion described in Matošević's (2021) text. Matošević notes the turn to Netflix and other services one can experience at home that reflect global shifts of consuming popular culture from home. In the context of Pula, this global shift highlights a change in the definition of *tapija* to what is now seen as the contemporary feelings attached to the phrase – “nothing ever happens” (2021, 31).

For Laura, this is only a part of the picture. She continues to explain a disjuncture between those governing the city and the residents:

“They also don’t see the economic aspect. It’s expensive to go out. Here [the bar we are sitting in] a beer is 18 HRK, which is not bad, but if I wanted a gin and tonic, one gin and tonic is 50-60 HRK. If I buy it, I’m out of money for the next week. I’m not young enough to go drinking in the park anymore.”

Laura’s discussion is underlined by the role of Pula’s economy in notions of space, place, and temporality of the city. In large part, the changing definition of *tapija* underscores the growing forces of neoliberal and tourist influences in the city. Central areas in Pula that once encouraged congregation through drinking, meeting up, or just “hanging out,” as Laura discusses, have been phased out due in large part to economic inaccessibility.

The absence of people in central urban spaces that were once places of socializing reflects the inability to economically participate, which in turn highlights the larger theme and effects of dispossession or access to public space. Laura mentions “*Dodi u Grad*,” a local government initiative translating to “come to the city” evidently aiming to bring residents to the city centre in October and November (or off-peak season). Her brief reference simultaneously notes the project as an inherent failure in her eyes. Specifically, while the local government looks to address a gap and is in turn acknowledging a problem of residents not utilizing central urban space during the off-season, it neglects overarching issues of accessibility that exist beyond seasonal tourist shifts. Such programs promote the dominant neoliberal temporality of tourist season to go beyond these four or so months. As a result, these occasions do not truly aid the promotion of natural or spontaneous use of the space aside from planned and expensive events.

Despite planned events or attempts to bring locals to the city centre like “*Dodi u Grad*,” Laura’s complaint emphasizes these spaces as no longer maintaining a sense of normalcy. The emptying of Pula’s city centre illustrates the relationship between topology and Pula’s

topography, where residents' engagement with space is not a one-way relationship, but one that is in conjunction, developing, effecting, and making urban space in particular ways. Here, and as Matošević highlights through the claim of the circularity and repetition of *tapija*, its continuation generates *tapija* as a “phenomenon that has been strongly grafted onto Pula’s urban tissue” (2021, 39, working with Agamben 1993). In this sense, complaints over boredom, a lack of support, and the state-of-things manifest into not just the relationships locals have to the cityscape but furthermore seep into the city’s topography, structural tissue, and materiality.

In attending to temporal shifts due in part to the dependency on tourism in Pula, as well as the social, political, and economic changes of the 1990s in Croatia, I am highlighting the ways in which both micro and macro events have altered the rhythm of day-to-day life in Pula that in turn shifted daily life from a sense of what was once, in hindsight, considered “normalcy” to chaotic, and not normal, as the “normal” becomes associated with a sense of longing: loss and desire. In addition to the social and political shifts with Yugoslavia’s demise and Pula’s loss of industry and Fordist production, the growth and dependency on seasonal tourism has led to a sense of time being segmented between peak and off-peak season. These temporal shifts in turn generate a sense of a lack of normalcy, where managing daily life within such extremes feels impossible. Within this context, the loss of social time and change in the definition of *tapija* reflects a changing connection of space and place for the Puležani. The past in this context acts as a reference point of “normal” or normal time, where urban planning, the cityscape, and infrastructure were attuned to the lives and needs of citizens. This nostalgia now for the future that is just like the past but lost. Complaint here reflects a desire to resurrect this past in the late-capitalist world of strange newer attachments, where complaints do not necessarily resolve anything yet become the attachments that people rely on for optimism and hope.

Such discussions help to situate the role of complaint regarding Pula's infrastructure as deeply embedded into experiences of living in the city. On one hand, local complaint over the accessibility of city space helps identify feelings of the dispossession of city space. Even more than this, the events which have seen the proliferation of *tapija* to a feeling grafted onto the urban tissue defines a shift from having a social space to one informal space, where small talk and complaint offer makeshift and fleeting moments of exchange. In other words, the shift and growth of feelings of dispossession not just reflect a sense of *tapija*, but more importantly signal a significant shift in the importance and role of informal moments and spaces of small talk and complaint.

As it was first important to delineate the sense of time and loss that underlines relations to Pula's space and place, the next section will discuss the role of third spaces such as online forums and comment sections in prompting and/or permitting complaint and moral language about Pula's state of things.

2.3. STREETS OF IRREPARABLE MANHOLES AND OTHER COMPLAINTS

“In recent decades, Pula has turned from a working-class and military town into one of Croatia's tourist centres [...]. The development of the city is necessary, but visions of what kind of city Pula could and should become should only aim for one thing: to make the citizens better off. And that's where the story ends.”³⁰

Helena Mostarkić Gobbo (2022b)

While complaint over infrastructure relates to the rhythm of peak tourist season, the consistency of these issues situates infrastructural issues as seasonless. The dynamic between issues faced more intensely during seasons of tourism, and the feeling of being “left with” these

³⁰ Translated from: “Iz radničkog i vojnog grada, Pula se posljednjih desetljeća prometnula u jedno od turističkih središta Hrvatske... Razvoj grada je nužan, ali vizije o tome kakav grad bi Pula mogla, pa i trebala postati, morale bi stremiti samo jednome: da građanima bude bolje. I tu je priča završena.”

issues year-round highlights issues with feelings and expectations surrounding “deserved” or even livable conditions. In highlighting infrastructural complaints, I look to explore ways that such vocabulary and wording play with, form, and attempt to maneuver a feeling of dispossession of the city.

Within conversations, the presence of *tapija* was uneven, imperceptible, and untimely. While at times interviews presented the opportunity for detailed explanations, when pushing residents to expand, the moments of complaint as examples of *tapija*, passed or altered. In this, I found articles within *Glas Istre* and comments responding to these articles were documented articulations of these complaints. Unmistakably, local news plays a particularly important role displaying and thus understanding *tapija* and provides valuable access to complaints.

In an interview excerpt from Matošević’s *Almost, but Not Quite Bored in Pula*, interlocutor, B.B., expresses their opinion on the contemporary use and meaning of “*tapija*” in Pula. B.B. is quoted as stating, “the concept of *tapija* precludes any form of fulfilment – because then it stops being *tapija*. The goal of *tapija* is not a change for the better, but a consolidation of the current state of affairs” (2021, 38). B.B. acknowledges that for themselves and other residents, the focus on *tapija* is not in presenting or putting forth any change to the-state-of-things, but in expressing and sharing one’s feelings. In the case of infrastructure and city planning, this notion of *tapija* allows for community within moments or experiences of precarity and austerity. The expression of these complaints on platforms like Facebook and even print media ultimately becomes a means to create and unify with a larger audience. In this sense, these platforms become a means to address and express what Matošević and his interlocutors note as the city’s predisposition to *tapija*, or what locals classify as “the city’s spirit” (see Matošević 2021, 3).

Within the past year, projects orchestrated by the city of Pula have aimed to improve aspects of infrastructure like road conditions and parking availability. Mirjana Vermezović Ivanović in *Glas Istre* has written about the numerous projects including those that target problems with Pula's roads like potholes and manhole covering, as well as constructing sidewalks, walls, storm drainage, and public lighting. Vermezović Ivanović's work is furthermore helpful here beyond the outlining of construction and infrastructural conditions, but also in both reflecting local perceptions and being a point of congregation for those who see the lack of or limited conditions as elements of Pula's state-of-things. In this section, I outline the types of complaints and notions of *tapija* that appear in such contexts and meeting points. This explanation will be valuable to the later examination of feelings and expressions of frustration, complaints, and *tapija*.

In the piece titled “Renewal of the pavement lane” Vermezović Ivanović (2022a) provides detail on previous road work as well as future projects. A seemingly straightforward article where Vermezović Ivanović goes through the individual projects, their timing, and some budget information, would come to stir up an engagement online. Commenters following the *Glas Istre* Facebook page where the newspaper article was re-posted, responded with a range of critiques and skepticism, from scathing remarks to satire. Some comments question the aims of the projects themselves, asking, “Can someone explain to me why a million manholes in the road and not on the sidewalk? On some streets 100 to 200 meters long, there are 20 to 30 manholes. Please, an expert answer.”³¹ Another commenter points out the common pattern of repairs by

³¹ Translated from: “Da li mi neko može objasniti zašto milijun šahtova na cesti a ne na trotoaru? Na nekim ulicama u dužini 100,200 metara nastrano je 20,30 šahtova. Molim nekog stručnjaka za odgovor.”

simply stating, “the street of irreparable manholes.”³² One of the more piercing comments satirically posited, “[if] they put everything in order, how would the godfathers get jobs? [...],” the godfathers here allude to and accuse the city of clientelism.³³

Complaint taps into a common point of frustration within Pula: government spending and corruption. Following the sharing of Vermezović Ivanović’s article, “Hazard on the road” (2022b), on *Glas Istre*’s Facebook page, the report on the renovation of the central street, ‘Boulevard’³⁴ had many similar accusations against local government. Comments ranged from “I’m really interested in how long it will last,”³⁵ to “Will they finally... solve [the road issue] with a guarantee? For 50 years they have not succeeded. Maybe it will work now?”³⁶ The phrasing of maybe it “will work now” is seemingly a sarcastic and pointed reflection that like in the past, the issue with roads is likely far from resolved. The same commenter from Vermezović Ivanović’s article comments again, now further explaining what is meant by the road of “irreparable manholes.” The commenter critiques the spending, directly stating, “Oh my, how much did we spend on that, government? In order to remain the boulevard of irreparable manholes.”³⁷

Specifically, as these examples highlight, the use of online and print media as platforms of complaint work in similar ways to the “networks of telling, retellings, displacements, remembering,” Kathleen Stewart speaks to in the 1996 text, *A Space on the Side of the Road: Cultural Poetics in an “Other” America*. Stories and excerpts of complaint in Pula, maintain a similar movement and engagement to those in Stewart’s “Other America,” where they stand as

³² Translated from: “Ulica nepopravljivih šahtova.”

³³ Translated from: “Kada bi sve sredili, kako bi kumovi dobijali poslove? Ovako laganini svako toliko...pitajte pa ce vam objasniti. U Gradu.”

³⁴ Boulevard is a nickname for a busy road in Pula that partly outlines the Uljanik shipyard.

³⁵ Translated from, “Baš me interesira do kada će trajati.”

³⁶ Translated from “Da li ce napokon sahtove rijesiti sa garancijom.vec 50 godina nisu uspjeli.mozda sad upali?”

³⁷ Translated from “Ajme koliko vlasti smo za to potrošili. Da bi ostao i dalje bulevar nepopravljivih šahtova”

allegories of cultural processes (1996, 7). Of emphasis here is not necessarily the truthfulness of these statements but situating them in a cultural politic. As is evident in the case of *tapija*, aspects such as storytelling and gossip help in noting how attachments in memory and imaginings come to formulate a world “uncontained” (Cf. Stewart 1996 and 2008).

More precisely, Stewart’s work on cultural poesis considers how “narrativizing social and moral orders makes text not just an object of knowledge but the very place where social code is continually dissolved and reconstructed” (1996, 38). Stewart points to how the process of ordering and mediating narratives or stories becomes a means to order worldview. Here, Stewart helps clarify what complaint does in these contexts. Specifically, complaint allows for particular scrutiny of the status quo in the management and conditions of Pula’s urban space. This scrutiny parallels and highlights Michel Foucault’s view of critique as “...not a matter of saying that things are not right as they are. It is a matter of pointing out on what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought the practices we accept rest” (Foucault 1988, 154). Foucault’s messaging here parallels and emphasizes Matošević’s interlocuter, B.B.’s, view of *tapija*: it is not a matter of changing or identifying of the truth or reality of infrastructure within the city, but the dismantling of this as the way things have to be.

As the comments from *Glas Istre*’s Facebook allude, a sense of hope and trust in governing and public funding are lacking. As one of the most predominant areas of complaint, government spending and even corruption signal a language of morality based on a belief and cultural politics that the Puležani are not getting what they deserve and are entitled to. In the introductory chapter of this dissertation, I noted the role of the IDS political party in shaping regional identity politics. But what becomes evident in people’s complaints, is the increasing distrust in IDS (Istarski Demokratski Sabor, or Istrian Democratic Assembly) governing, and

how this ultimately led to the election of new mayor of Pula, Filip Zoričić, who remained unaffiliated with any political party.

The prevalence and custom of complaints of corruption and distrust become evident even within newspaper articles outlining council meetings and petitions surrounding this issue of parking and road conditions. In an article by Roberto Rauch (2021a), the author mentions that a central street in Pula's old town Kandlerova, was projected to be repaired by 2017. The commonness of corruption is emphasized in the 2021 article that references an interview with Mirzo Čolić, a councillor in Pula. Čolić explains that despite an updated deadline and budget to fix such streets, even he as a councillor "[...] is skeptical" if the deadline will be met as "it would not be the first time that the project 'disappears' from the budget during the rebalancing" (Ibid).

Similar to online examples of complaints and feelings of *tapija*, during one of our meetups, my conversation with interlocutor Ana outlined her thoughts on local government and their connection to the state of things in Pula. Before an interruption from a museum visitor, Ana's conversation about Pula feeling like a ghost town after peak tourist season and its connection to the loss of industry and the effects on local businesses and employees is cut off to answer the guest's question. In coming back to the recorded conversation, Ana starts up again, but this time, speaking about corruption:

"When it comes to politics, I do not know, it's weird, with corruption and nepotism. Logically you know these are bad things. But these are things you are so surrounded by and so use to. You can make jokes about them, you can sigh over it, but you don't feel like there is anything you can really do about it. I think that's why people are so happy we have a different mayor now. We aren't 100% confident in it, because it is hard to be confident in someone who just shows up after so many years of *the* same. But I think just the change matters so much to people. That's why people chose this literal political nobody."

Ana speaks in a stream of consciousness. She struggles to get started. She pauses to think of the words that feel right: corruption, then nepotism. At the end of this initial point, she tries to

explain why Zoričić won, “...because of the IDS thing.” The “IDS thing” remains unclear and not directly connected. What follows reads as Ana’s view of ‘the IDS thing’ as a history of neglect to the region, and mostly Pula.

She continues by referring to *the state of things* noticed when walking around the city. She notes, yes, this is in part to the loss of industry, but she continues to introduce a carveout: money allocation and revenue from the evidently prosperous tourist industry. While I further address Ana’s questioning of the condition and state of the city in the following chapter, of interest here is the discussion of the intersection between complaint and its relation to infrastructure. Particularly, the presence of skepticism in Ana’s connecting lacking infrastructure to city funding. Ana explains:

“For instance, there is some construction in the neighbourhood I live in - the suburbs of Pula – they’re putting new asphalt and putting in a sidewalk for the first time ever! And o.k., that part of Pula used to be very rural - my Grandma had cows there 15-20 years ago. So, from that point of view, it’s clear. But there have been so many new buildings and new apartment complexes for tourists and all that, and the fact that we still didn’t have sidewalks [...] The year is 2021! That’s why they are putting down new asphalt because the road is poorly made and bumpy, like when it rains you get huge puddles. It’s ridiculous. It’s the seemingly small, but infrastructural things that go through the random areas in town – it’s not just my area – it’s everywhere. There’s this sense we’ve been cheated of better standards or better conditions that we ought to have seeing of how much money we make as a region due to tourism. There’s a wide-held assumption that the mayor for the last ten years was using drugs and most of the leadership of the party were doing drugs and spending money on drugs instead of allocating it properly. People make jokes about it, and maybe it’s a thing you have to make jokes about it. But Pula’s problems with this are incomparable to bigger cities like Zagreb. [...] There was a lot of corruption and a lot of nepotism, and it’s just a thing you have to get used to, this person is in power and this is how they run things, what else can you do? I hate to say it is a part of our culture but under Yugoslavia a lot of people [operated this way].”

In Ana’s description, faulty infrastructure and local funding in Pula incite growing feelings of distrust and disappointment in local government action. The acceptance of a status quo that involves these feelings are eventually challenged by a dramatic shift in the local political sphere,

where Pula's residents voted for a non-affiliated party member as a means to challenge and no longer passively accept such status quo.

As the introductory chapter notes, one of the main proponents of notions of *Istrijanstvo* and being Puležani, is the history and role of the regional centre-left political party, the IDS. The change in the ruling politics as Ana notes exposes skepticism and desire for a change from the IDS-status-quo. This major shift in trust and hope in politics are evident in local skepticism and complaints toward a former symbol of Pula's regional uniqueness, the IDS party, encouraged residents to vote for the first time in 30 years against the historically hopeful party. Despite there not being an intention to alter or revolt against the status quo as Matošević's interlocutor notes, we see the power of moral language in community building and maintenance in the ways it reverberates. What may be seemingly passive forms of complaint – the phrases on reserve, repeated, perhaps unoriginal – in this instant, manifests as an act of disruption of the status quo.

While corruption is in itself a dense topic, and it is not this dissertation's aim to assess the validity or evidence of such claims, I am interested in the lives of such complaints. Complaints within Pula appeared at times so well-rehearsed that they became viewed as common facts and knowledge. This was evident in the repetitive comments online by the same users or even others – the same complaints told in the same or nearly the same language on any and every relevant post. The appearance of the standardized language of complaint about the state-of-things in Pula became so prominent within fieldwork, there were often instances where an interviewee would repeat portions of a newspaper article published nearly verbatim a day or two earlier and, in some cases, news articles that were yet to be published.

Similar to how Daniel Knight and Charles Stewart (2016) describe austerity, complaint over the status quo begins to challenge accepted notions of what is “acceptable.” Specifically, Knight and Stewart note:

“Austerity, then, is not just an economically constrained static circumstance; its particularity for social analysis lies in the dynamics of reversal and the ongoing responses to it. How do individuals, and societies, cope with losing their assumed standard of living, their trappings of social status, and their day-to-day structure of life...Austerity throws the issue of human dignity into high relief as people set about deciding on the new minimum requirements for an acceptable life” (2016, 2).

In viewing how funding as a political and economic factor affects the conditions and topography of Pula’s cityscape, complaint more broadly present a means of activation or an otherwise. More precisely, the role of complaint as a communal and shared presence is an adaption to the slow disconnection or dispossession. Evidently, and as mentioned earlier, complaint among the Puležani maintains an expectation that things may not change but acts as a means to cope with the state-of-things within the community. Akin to Ana’s earlier quote, “[y]ou can make jokes about [it], you can sigh over it, but you don’t feel like there is anything you can really do about it.”

With this, I return to the question of what do complaint and tapija do here? At the very core, tapija, complaints about tapija, and complaint and a sense of tapija over infrastructure, pick at and unfold a pressure point of contemporary austerity measures that inform a lack of acceptable living conditions. Seeing complaint as a form of socialized and common critique, Judith Butler (2002) and Michel Foucault’s (1997) respective notions of critique are helpful to recognize critique as a means “for a future or a truth that it will not know nor happen to be, it oversees a domain it would not want to police and is unable to regulate” (Butler working with Foucault, 2002). Working with Butler (2002), Othon Alexadrakis notes that Butler’s emphasis

on how the presence of critique encourages de-subjugation presents a lens to view the ways in which “subjects may form themselves in ways that yield critical agency from normative violences to which they are subjected” (2022, 22). For Alexadrankis, this lens permits an acknowledgement of the ways interlocutors engage in critique beyond the “normative ‘ways of knowing’” (Ibid).

This understanding of critique existing without and beyond a knowable future, and as a break from standardized ways of knowing moreover emphasize a central point of this chapter, one that Maria de La Ballacasa aptly summarizes: “ethicality in the making resides in messy, muddled, concrete situations in which an obligation of care becomes at stake” (2017, 166). The role of care plays in complaint and *tapija* cannot be taken for granted. To continue with de La Ballacasa, care is a “continuous experience” that neither puts our individual selves at centre nor others before us, but, instead, “[c]are is embedded in the practices that maintain webs of relationality and is always happening in between” (ibid). In this, recognizing and attending to the complaints and narratives of corruption that surround infrastructure and government funding as demonstrating critique, in turn, demonstrates an alternative means of thinking and approach to city issues than the status quo, and more than this, instantiate modes of collective care.

2.4. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Nearing the year anniversary of the election of the non-affiliated Pula Mayor, Zoričić, Helena Mostarkić Gobbo (2022b) wrote the *Glas Istre* piece, “Who is blocking the development of Pula?” [Tko koči razvoj Pule?] weighing memories of what Pula once was to her, growing dilapidation, and local government. A realist, Mostarkić Gobbo notes that after only a year, it would be impossible for any mayor to correct “what has been neglected, destroyed or neglected

for decades” (Ibid).³⁸ Mostarkić Gobbo notes that for many residents, local politics may not even matter, they just “want public lighting in their street, sewerage, more parking spaces, more parks for children, some new kindergartens, repairing potholes on the Boulevard”³⁹

The piece finishes with Mostarkić Gobbo stating: “No, I don't see Pula only as my memories show it. I just know what it could become. It could be a city where some happy people will live. I am only afraid that this idealistic vision will most likely remain only among these written lines of words”⁴⁰ (Ibid). Mostarkić Gobbo’s concluding statement comes to reflect a feeling that citizens are left to deal with the effects of mismanagement. Their future, whether idealized or not, is being dealt with in the present.

Mostarkić Gobbo’s piece marks any movement or changes to the city with a reminder of how the future of Pula’s residents is presently being shaped. For example, after years of frustration with the limited parking availability, in the spring of 2022, the city of Pula implemented new rules, zones, and increased prices to manage the prolonged issue. These plans included resident-only parking within the old city parameters.⁴¹ The regulations look to manage the proliferation of issues surrounding personal parking peaks during tourist seasons but also to deal with the changing and removal of parking spaces over the years.⁴² Despite paying for parking spots, locals are finding their spots taken by visitors and foreigners. The hope is that by increasing prices and creating specified zones for parking, the city will encourage “tourists to not enter the city centre in their cars and thus create crowds and chaos in the centre, but to park

³⁸ Translated from: “[...] ono što je zapušteno, uništavano ili zanemarivano desetljećima.”

³⁹ Translated from: “Oni žele javnu rasvjetu u svojoj ulici, kanalizaciju, više parkirnih mjesta, više parkova za djecu, poneki novi vrtić, popravljanje rupa na Bulevaru.”

⁴⁰ Translated from: “Ne, ne vidim Pulu samo onako kako mi je predočavaju uspomene. Jednostavno znam kakva bi mogla postati. Mogla bi biti grad u kojemu će živjeti neki sretni ljudi. Bojim se samo da će i ta idealistička vizija najvjerojatnije ostati samo među ovim napisanim redovima riječi.”

⁴¹ See Gregorović 2022a and 2022d.

⁴² See Bilić 2019

outside the centre” (Sean Soldatić, an HDZ party member speaking on the new regulations in Pula, quoted in Gregorović 2022d). Despite the new rules and signage, the summer of 2022 still saw plenty of issues regarding parking as a result of foreigners ignoring signs and guidelines as to where they should and can park.

There have been discussions to implement parking models used in other major tourist cities in Croatia, including Dubrovnik and Rovinj, to completely block off parking in the cities’ cores to foreign drivers. Roberto Rauch (2021a) notes that when this was suggested to Pula, the residents of the Old Town were “dissatisfied” [nezadovoljni].⁴³ Interlocutors have pointed to how such suggested solutions, where the city centre could be divided as is seen in other Croatian cities, incite fear over a lost connection to these spaces. In one particular conversation, Tomas, an interlocutor who lives and works near the city centre, compared Pula’s parking situation and future to Rovinj’s, another Istrian coastal city and tourist destination, where local parking laws were helping to produce a city only for tourists. For Tomas, the decision of officials in Rovinj to prohibit local and tourist parking in the old city centre except for parking garages reflects the moment where Rovinj’s government no longer saw its residents as having claims or belonging to its central space. Rovinj’s recent adjustments to parking laws, infrastructure, and topology reflected a plausible and likely direction for Pula’s future – one that Tomas was concerned with and frightened for.

These examples of both active and proposed plans on how to improve the city and ideally make it more liveable for its residents exists in a disjuncture between public desire and necessity. As a concluding thought I want to recognize Nigel Thrift’s discussion of the city as an object which has “temporal extension into the future” (2008, 201). Thrift connects this to urban

⁴³ Full quote: “Na tribini smo predložili model koji se koristi u Dubrovniku, gdje je povijesna jezgra rezervirana za stanare, dok ostali parkiraju izvan centra ili u parkirnim kućama. Stanari Starog grada su nezadovoljni.”

vulnerability, or the myriad of processes that appear at different rates and speeds to produce moving, or altering cities. In this sense, cities can experience and recover from trauma and have multiple periods of temporal return. Thrift's claim here recognizes that cities are based on activities of repair and maintenance where systematic replacement of place occurs continually. In turn, while Thrift reminds us that cities are adaptable, changing, etc., within the context of Pula, the question becomes what kind of change and for whom?

In exploring public feelings of *tapija* and its appearance as a critique and within small talk, I have looked to how such mediums operate as forms to maneuver threats of topological change in Pula. More specifically, critique and complaint offer means to undo status quo based in local's inherent relation and involvement with these infrastructures. In taking on ideas of care and involvement as per Puig de La Bellacasa (2017) and Hustak and Myers (2012), I argue that public complaint and feelings of *tapija* demonstrate not just local concern with Pula's changing topology, but the ways residents and such features are entangled and connected.

This question furthermore guides us into the next chapter, which asks who has access to revitalization projects and what do revitalization projects entail and consist of? This chapter expands on discussions of altering understandings of Pula's cityscape to recognize the ways that *tapija* accounts for feelings on the impossibility of care for Pula's aesthetics. In looking to housing facades, the next chapter traces the role of historical processes that influence housing conditions and the normalizations of tourist aesthetic sensibilities through Pula's facades.



Figure 3-1. A building close to Pula's city centre. Though the home maintains some of its earlier architectural features, such as the shutters and molding around the roof and windows, much of the home's stucco facade has fallen off, revealing the structural bricks underneath. The building features a warning sign to pedestrians to watch out for falling pieces.

3. THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF CARE: AESTHETIC SENSIBILITY SURROUNDING PULA'S FACADES

“Oh, the facades of our Pula! Who left them like that? Was it Austria, Italy, Yugoslavia or Croatia? No one to point a finger at.”⁴⁴

Bojan Žižović (2019)

On a late august afternoon, I found myself weaving through narrow streets and sidewalks in the neighbourhood surrounding Pula's amphitheatre. Only a street or two over from the original Roman city walls, streams of tourists marked the straight path from these two historic sites. This was becoming a routine. I would walk the same hills and cross the same intersections almost daily to meet with Ana, a summer student working the front desk of a local museum. The museum, an ode to local city history, sat in the strategic cross-path between the amphitheatre and the city walls. Inside the museum, Ana and I would often sit and talk for hours over coffee and pastries, only pausing for museum patrons and coffee refills. Initially beginning as semi-structured interviews, Ana's excitement to share her experience growing up in Pula and now attending university outside the city animated our conversations.

Ana often described a tension between what options and life would be available to her in Pula in contrast to the larger city she studied in, after she finished her university career. Ana's complaints about Pula were habitually softened by reminders that the city did, indeed, offer a lot: her family was here, the people were kind and accepting, and the way of life differed from other places in Croatia. Yet, these portrayals underlined Ana's belief that Pula was not living up to its

⁴⁴ Bojan Žižović, “Gorka li je Dolcevida? [Is Dolcevida bitter?]]” in *Glas Istre* (2019). Quote translated from: “O, fasade naše pulske! Tko li ih tako zapusti? Je li zato kriva Austrija, Italija, Jugoslavija ili Hrvatska? Nitko prstom da uperi.”

potential. While grateful to live in Croatia and Pula in particular, she was cognisant of what aspects of the city needed improvement.

Perched behind the museum's information desk, Ana extended her gaze to the windows saying that – as a tourist walking through Pula – it was a shame how many dilapidated buildings you would see. “They have no reason to be as bad of condition as they're in,” she added. “Pula has the potential to be a tourist hub like Venice.”

Ana began to trace her rationale for the conditions of building exteriors, and ultimately what distinguished Pula from spaces like Venice. She listed aspects like the 2008 recession, and the role of COVID-19 Pandemic as factors that forced the closures of struggling local businesses. Yet, she focused on the role of tourism in the city for a bit longer: “There's so much tourism,” Ana prefaced before continuing to say, “if money was allocated properly, there wouldn't be so many visible problems.”

Ana's complaint and questioning of city spending was not a new conversation to me. As I noted in the prior chapter, questioning the role of the former IDS leadership in both regional and city politics was often linked to concerns with the city's infrastructure. However, this was my first time hearing a local complain about the conditions of facades. While I had, in some ways, noticed the conditions of buildings around the city, I had simply assumed that this is just what a city that was over two thousand years old looked like.

What started as a conversation on Pula's tourist industry quickly turned attention to an evident gap in the city's building conditions and the systems of support surrounding facades. It was after Ana's mention of the facades that I decided to walk through the city centre instead of heading home. As I moved deeper into the city's core, the buildings became older. From Yugoslav-built apartments to Austro-Hungarian structures, it became evident that majority of the

buildings had been renovated or had well-maintained exteriors were government owned. The recently renovated buildings with new windows and freshly painted exteriors were scattered sparsely throughout the old town, emphasizing the conflicting conditions and state of decay of the untouched buildings. These other buildings – homes, restaurants, and store fronts – largely featured *graffiti/tags, rust coloured or stained exteriors, faded paint, patchy or crumbling stucco, exposed bricks or metal supports, chunks of facade missing or fallen off, and warnings signs of falling pieces bolted on the buildings*. Moving past the layers of early Roman sites and Austro-Hungarian builds felt as though the city was being swallowed by eras of neglect left for residents to care for and manage.

Ana's description pinpointed an agitating fault line in the narratives surrounding Pula's facades. Ana viewed and valued facades from a tourist and visitor perspective, which as this chapter outlines, reflects a dominant narrative on Pula's aesthetics perpetuated by local city government. As this chapter argues, the belief that Pula's facades ought to be revitalized, pristine, and well-manicured for the betterment of the city and its tourist industry reflects aesthetics of modernity that can be traced through municipal and regional-level projects and initiatives such as "Dolcevida." I argue that in promoting a modern sensibility, these tourist driven aesthetics become a project and tactic of erasing local experiences, like the impossibility to care or afford homes in Pula's historic city centre, from public spaces.

Established in 2009, the Dolcevida initiative seeks to revitalize and modernize growingly decaying properties in the city centre through reimbursing exterior renovations in specified "protection zones" (See *Figure 3-2*). In financially assisting those who own the centrally located residential and/or commercial spaces, the project embraces and enhances historical features

recognizing that the city's core is predominately Austro-Hungarian era multi-storied and multi-unit builds.

By the end of 2021, only 43 buildings within the protected zones were revitalized with the aid of the Dolce Vita program, prompting the question: why was the program's reach so limited? This chapter explores this question through a lens of aesthetics and anaesthetics, recognizing the differing approaches and perspectives on aesthetic sensibility between the residents and such revitalization programs. As this chapter investigates, further attention to the sensibilities surrounding projects like Dolce Vita highlight changing aesthetics of building ownership and design meant to instantiate a new tourist capitalism. This chapter thus expands on notions of *tapija* and dispossession in exploring how the tourist economy dominates life in the making through a sense of the economic "impossibility" to meet these aesthetic sensibilities and expectations.

In line with aesthetic philosophy, I recognize aesthetics as the distribution of the sensible akin to Jacques Rancière (2006). Here, following Rancière's thinking, while aesthetics like the rest of the social world is maintained by established and reestablished dominant structures of feelings, it also has potential to expose conflicts and redistribute the sensible. Reading the context of Pula's facades, I argue that on the local level, the acceptance of aging building conditions demonstrates this redistribution, where the romanticization of decaying facades portrays the presence of a different aesthetics sensibility – another mode of existence beyond dominant modernization norms and desires. In more explicit terms, with the impossibility of care or access to municipal projects like Dolce Vita, which promote modern aesthetic sensibility, locals have turned to romanticizing decay, and thus favouring a diverging aesthetic that embraces the impossibility of improvement.

Over the past two decades Pula's local newspaper, *Glas Istre*, has spoken about the issue of facade care in numerous articles, noting it is not a question of if one or another decrepit facade will fall on passersby, but when.⁴⁵ Recognizing public discussion and level of critique of government intervention, these articles question the response and support of local politicians. Such articles and public discussions begin to reveal, not just feelings of frustration towards the conditions of Pula's facades, but feelings of impossibility attached to their improvement as well. One particularly poignant article by Roberto Rauch (2021b) details the "vicious circle of Pula's facades" [začaranog kruga pulskih fasada]. This cycle acknowledges that despite multiple stakeholders' involvements, including co-funding projects like "Dolcevida," the repair of falling stucco on busy pedestrian streets remains too costly, resulting in little improvement. Instead, a sign on the exterior wall cautioning pedestrians of falling stucco acts as a cover up of the issue: tenants cannot afford changes, so a warning to passerbyers should suffice (See *Figure 3-1*).

While programs like Dolcevida address a citywide issue of facades in need of re-investment and attention, this chapter examines the issue of affordability of such renovations that inhibit the transmission and success of the programs. This chapter argues that the disturbing inability to deal with building exteriors and renovations and the refocused efforts of a tourist based neoliberal agenda to redirect control and aesthetics of property speak to the temporal and aesthetic forces of change that merge into the social lives of those who live in these buildings. In doing so, this chapter highlights how the sense of failure attached to contemporary revitalization projects normalizes the belief about the impossibility of improvement among Puležani. Within broader themes of this dissertation, this impossibility is a feature and symptom of *tapija*. Here,

⁴⁵ In the article from October 5, 2021, Helena Mostarkić Gobbo asks, "If only a part of the facade from one of Pula's buildings ends up on the head of one of the inhabitants of Pula, it is a question not of the day but of the hour, who will be to blame?" ["Ako samo djelić fasade s neke od pulskih zgrada nekim slučajem završi na glavi nekoga od stanovnika Pule, a to je pitanje ne dana, nego sata, tko će biti kriv?"]

the sense of the impossibility to care for building conditions emphasizes feelings that things cannot and would not improve, where locals attempt to make do “with the way things are” but nonetheless fall short in improving their living and city conditions. In highlighting the presence of *tapija* in feelings of the impossibility of care, this chapter etches the slow dispossession of livable and inhabitable housing through the growing financial inaccessibility of renovation. Thus, while programs such as *Dolcevita* look to “re-invest” into Pula’s aesthetics, the financialization of renovations perpetuate and intensify the divide between spaces, where livable spaces become slowly unlivable.

Moreover, in examining historic and contemporary aesthetic approaches in Pula, framing the disconnection between modernization and revitalization projects in Pula and local affordability in terms of aesthetics and anaesthetics provides a means to explore this growing tension and divide between government and residents. As I will explain, revitalization projects like *Dolcevita* present an anaesthetic sensibility and approach where the values surrounding Pula’s architectural beauty and normalization of “modern” aesthetics blocks and erases the lived reality of facade conditions and care (working with Buck-Morss 1992). With further attention, local acceptance of impossibility redistributes the sensible in presenting an alternative and subversion of such anaesthetics. Here, residents’ acceptance of crumbling facades generates a means to cope with the widespread impossibility of facade care and inaccessibility of city plans and projects.

I trace and outline discussions of the politics of aesthetics within Pula predominantly through a historiographic approach. Aiming to avoid a determinist argument, I explore Pula’s history in terms of architecture, urban planning, and ownership policies and laws, emphasizing the enduring historical legacies that locals and municipal projects alike continue to deal-with.

Working through historic regimes and transitions, including Austro-Hungarian Rules followed by Italian, then Yugoslavia, this chapter acknowledges, akin to Mrazek (2002) and Brian Larkin (2013), that aesthetic orders are not neutral. In addition to how such regimes influence materiality and design of such infrastructures through creating a sense of modernity (*cf.* Larkin 2013, 337), I am interested in how these legacies of aesthetic orders influence notions of care for Pula's aging cityscape.

To speak to a notion of the changing aesthetics of building ownership and design, this chapter will first discuss how Pula's history comes to inform, linger over, and clarify issues of property management, care, and aesthetics for inhabitants. Here I address the role of historical processes affecting housing conditions and aesthetics in Pula. Exploring the relationship between past and present ownership models, I contextualize property ownership in Pula by first recognizing key historical events such as the nationalization of public housing and property during the socialist era, and the eventual privatization of these elements with the dissolution of Yugoslavia. In attuning to the tumultuous and changing roles of ownership, legal history and legacies surrounding home and property ownership in the region, I, in turn, highlight the complex relationship between homes, aesthetics, and care.

Ultimately, in examining the impact of changing ownership laws and policies on not just building care, but community understanding of support, this chapter explores how new tourist aesthetics impact notions and a sense of future within Pula. In this analysis, issues of care do not just mark past mismanagement but highlight how notions of the impossibility of care come to directly affect ideas of the future for inhabitants. Here, fear reflects imagined futures that see how issues of economic and housing disparity may grow through worsening living conditions,

impossibility of property care or improvement, and potentially, a turn to a foreign dominated housing market.



Figure 3-2, "Scope of the protected cultural and historical core," or the priority zones. First priority zone in red, and the second priority zone in blue (Grad Pula n.d.).

3.1. LOCAL PROJECTS AND THE MANAGEMENT OF HISTORICAL LEGACIES

Regionally and locally, issues with facades have received growing attention in the last decade or so. Since 2009, two major city projects, Dolcevida and Tisuću Fasada (“a thousand facades”),⁴⁶ were developed to support locals in financing facade renovations, in addition to, the cost of new roofing, project documentation, equipment, energy efficiency, and the repairing or recreation of historical detailing and trim.⁴⁷ Through the support of multiple stakeholders aside from the city of Pula and the region of Istria, including city-run tourist boards, and the EU, the projects aim to invite inhabitants to remodel through a reimbursement system.

As mentioned earlier, the programs have divided the city into two primary zones deemed to be area of the protected cultural-historical entities. As of 2022, villas in Zone 1, Pula’s historic core, will be reimbursed up to 80% of the first 100,000 HRK spent by Dolcevida (approx. \$19,000 CAD), with an addition of 70,000 HRK (approx. \$13,400 CAD) for additional projects.⁴⁸ As of the same year, those outside the central zones, Dolcevida’s financial aid is still available, but only with approval by an “expert committee” that the home is eligible and meets criteria, including that the building exterior maintains decay or damage and is valuable to the preservation of the historical and architectural identity of the city (Petrović 2023).

As of 2021, only 67 buildings have been renovated by Dolcevida (Mostarkić Gobbo 2021b). With a budget of 3.7 million HRK in 2022, Dolcevida had the potential to aid up to 37 homes in one year. It therefore is worthwhile to understand why the project has not worked in the

⁴⁶ It should be noted that Tisuću Fasada was introduced in 2011 as a remarketed version Dolcevida project with namely the same aims and means. As of 2022, local government has reinstated Dolcevida as the primary project of focus.

⁴⁷ It is interesting to note that when it comes to facades, the projects specifically provide funding for exterior walls that are street facing, often leaving majority of the building exterior untouched.

⁴⁸ Prior to 2022, when most of the articles about Tisuću Fasada and Dolcevida cited in this Chapter were written, price matching of up to 50% of the first 100 thousand Kuna spent. As of 2022, Dolcevida’s overall budget has been increased to 3.7 million HRK.

past. Of interest here is the way in which these projects look to appeal to inhabitants and how they are enacted. As this section explains, with further examination, a gap appears between the aim of improving and modernizing Pula's aesthetic quality, and the lived realities and feelings of locals. Here, despite the sentiment to improve the quality of life of the city's inhabitants, these projects neglect feelings of the "impossibility" to care for the condition of facades. In reflecting on local city planning and care projects such as Dolcevita and Tisuću Fasada, this section will go on to demonstrate elements of the maneuvering required in facade care.

At the core, these projects look to "[improve] the quality of life of ... citizens and the attractiveness of the city as a tourist destination" (Grad Pula n.d.). To do this, the projects plan to "define and highlight the urban identity" of the 3000-year-old city. Here, the particular focus becomes on Pula's "historic core and other characteristic areas of the city such as residential areas with numerous Austro-Hungarian villas and other valuable segments of the urban matrix of the city, such as the industrial and military areas of the 19th and first half of the 20th century" (Petrović 2012).⁴⁹

In revitalizing "unregulated facades" [neuređenim pročeljima], these historic sites are shifted into their next stage of idealized material existence: the era of tourism (Zrnić Terlević 2012). To further develop and maintain tourism through city aesthetics, these projects present and delineate priority zones within the city where particular neighbourhoods have been identified as ones of value for project attention. The initial and highest priority zone entails Pula's main tourist areas: the buildings near the old city walls and around its historic market. In recent years, the priority protection zone borders have been adjusted, even developing a second zone in 2021

⁴⁹ Translated from "[...] urbani identitet grada, posebice povijesne jezgre i ostalih karakterističnih područja grada poput rezidencijalnih predjela s brojnim austro-ugarskim vilama te ostalih vrijednih segmenata urbane matrice grada, kao što su industrijska i vojna područja iz 19. i prve polovine 20. stoljeća."

that is of lesser priority to the first. This second zone looks to protect and help preserve buildings “outside the boundaries of the [City’s] protected cultural and historical ensemble” (Mostarkić Gobbo 2021b; *Cf.* Grad Pula). The inclusion of this new area means further attention to shared Yugoslav and Austro-Hungarian era residences in areas like Veruda, a neighbourhood by the seacoast that was developed intently during the Yugoslav era (Zrinić Terlević 2012; *Cf.* Nina Ujčić 2021).

While inhabitants may also value and share an aim to preserve their city, this chapter explores the friction between lived experience and projects like Dolcevita and Tisuću Fasada, including how this tension is reflected in aesthetic sensibilities. In doing so, this chapter sheds light on how inhabitants cope, not being able to meet needs or expectation of such city projects. The perspectives of Puležans depict an understanding of building conditions as heterogenous and rhizomatic, where buildings are not only in a state of change and being made and re-made continuously, but are also holding, displaying, and echoing the past.

3.2. *MANAGING “EUROPEAN” HERITAGE*

In 2012, during early renditions of Pula’s revitalization plans, Dolcevita was temporarily remarketed as a project titled “A Thousand Facades,” or Tisuću Facada. Building off Dolcevita, Tisuću Facada looked to compete for European Union funding, recognizing external funding may be “the only chance” to revitalize Pula’s facades without depending on building owners and “effectively support the development of economic activities” in Pula (Zrinić Terlević 2012, quoting then Deputy Mayor of Pula, Fabrizio Radin).⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Full quote: “We are aware that it is not possible to effectively support the development of economic activities such as trade, catering and tourism in an environment with unfinished facades, said in August 2012 the then Deputy Mayor of Pula Fabrizio Radin” [Svjesni smo, naime, da nije moguće učinkovito poduprijeti razvoj gospodarskih

A central action item produced by the Tisacu Facada project for EU consideration, was the cataloguing of 500 houses in Pula that were in need of facade revitalization. The catalogues were vital for numerous reasons. In addition to systematically archiving building ownership, construction date, descriptions, and approximate costs for revitalization, the catalogue also identified and itemized key historical characteristics and architecture that were “valuable segments of [Pula’s] urban matrix” (Petrović 2012).⁵¹ Of these identified sites and key features, the catalogue placed emphasis on the amount of Austro-Hungarian era buildings that needed attention.

In tracing the relevant historiography of Dolcevita’s priority zones, I am highlighting the key context surrounding valuable aesthetic qualities in Pula’s revitalization movements, as well as critical understandings of property inheritance that continues to affect facade and building care in the contemporary. In terms of discussions on a politics of aesthetics Pula’s facades and their care, Pula’s history of rule and regimes can be seen to be fitfully emergent and an agitating presence that frames narratives about deteriorating conditions of building facades. This chapter’s attention to different regimes emphasizes inherited issues of ownership and responsibility of care over building conditions that ultimately impede or clash with the (an)aesthetics of Dolcevita.

While Pula’s city centre can be dated back and still maintains archeological features linked to antiquity with the Histri and later Roman Empire who settled in Pula due to its strategic coastal inlet positioning and freshwater access, much of the core’s contemporary infrastructure

djelatnosti poput trgovine, ugostiteljstva i turizma u sredini s neuređenim pročeljima, istaknuo je u kolovozu 2012. godine tadašnji dogradonačelnik Pule Fabrizio Radin].

⁵¹ Full quote: “It is a project called ‘1,000 facades’ which aims to, through the renovation of city facades, define and highlight the urban identity of the city, especially the historic core and other characteristic areas of the city such as residential areas with numerous Austro-Hungarian villas and other valuable segments of the urban matrix” [Rijec je o projektu pod nazivom “1.000 fasada” kojemu je cilj da, kroz obnovu gradskih pročelja, definira i istakne urbani identitet grada, posebice povijesne jezgre i ostalih karakterističnih područja grada poput rezidencijalnih predjela s brojnim austro-ugarskim vilama te ostalih vrijednih segmenata urbane matrice grada].

and architecture date back to the era of the Austro-Hungarian regime. Prior to Austro-Hungarian presence in Pula, the Venetian presence for nearly three centuries notably decimated the region through infectious diseases and squandering a sense of urbanity that been established by prior regimes. This fact is particularly evident in terms of population but also in terms of infrastructure, where the population in 1850, or at the end of Venetian rule, was 590 with only 214 remaining houses that were in dilapidated condition. By 1910 – the final years of the Austro-Hungarian empire in Pula – there was a population of 42,000 and 7,346 available houses, including 74 iconic villas (Dukovski 2011; Radolović 2017; Slacki 2019).

This stark difference in the development of Pula under the Austro-Hungarian Empire reflected a “Golden Era” in Pula, where the new regime brought life back to the city through investment in industry and military in the city. In building a shipbuilding arsenal, reinvigorating Pula’s fortification system, and asserting Pula as Austro-Hungarian Empire’s main naval port, labour in turn was brought in and increased the overall population dramatically. Following industrialization, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy made great strides in Istria’s urbanization. Rural to city migration was supported by the regime’s planning and investing in Pula’s urban development through building healthcare systems, institutions such as schools, transportation like the railway and tram, and housing for industry labour and the navy, amongst other expansions.

In speaking about the influence and impact of Austro-Hungarian urban and infrastructural development, this section speaks to the role of aesthetics through heritage, character, and materiality are attached the central Dolce Vita zones. Taking inspiration from Brian Larkin’s (2013) review of infrastructure, I look to consider how a poetics of infrastructure helps address the way that the political works through the desire and possibility of infrastructure and aesthetics.

Specifically, Larkin's work helps to acknowledge valuable narratives and social facts reiterated in infrastructure and city aesthetics, where the poetics of infrastructure helps establish a "collective fantasy of [Pula] society" (Larkin 2013 working with Benjamin 1999). Larkin's piece emphasizes the role of the political in infrastructure as providing a tool to condition how residents apprehend what is modern and progressive. In the case of Pula, focus on specific architectural and infrastructural features offers a means to display what has been deemed valuable history or maybe deemed of historical value. This reading recognizes efforts to revitalize and emphasize Austro-Hungarian history in Pula as not a-political, but as a key tool to position the city within the tourist industry creating a motivated tourist aesthetic for sensing the historical, the value of period history and its historical value.

This discussion can be further explained in conjunction to the piece "Austro-Hungarian heritage and tourism discourses in Pula, Croatia" by Anja Iveković Martinis and Anita Sujoldžić (2021). The authors speak to the connection between modern infrastructure and aesthetics and the Austro-Hungarian regime in their analysis of the ways in which Pula's local tourist board's website utilizes the Austro-Hungarian history of the city. Iveković Martinis and Sujoldžić provide valuable discussion of how Pula's tourist board situates and valorizes Austro-Hungarian architecture through a discourse analysis of the website. While the authors note that the tourist board's approach to history emphasizes the multitude and variety of sites and history evident in Pula, more attention inherently lies on Pula's ancient Roman heritage. With this said, there are still numerous examples of the Austro-Hungarian presence in the city in terms of German language influence, industry, and infrastructural developments where such development stress the monarchy's influence through modernization and helping Pula acquire true "European" qualities. Iveković Martinis and Sujoldžić aptly recognize that despite Yugoslavia similarly

promoting cultural diversity, development, and supranational identity, references to this era are largely avoided in tourist discourse.

Such analysis underscores how Austro-Hungarian history and heritage in Pula offers a tool to portray valuable Central or even Western European qualities. Iveković Martinis and Sujoldžić's work sheds light on the transformation of Austro-Hungarian history in contemporary to ultimately "position Pula as belonging to a 'multicultural,' 'cosmopolitan' European sphere" (2021, 15). In this way, attention to artifacts and sensibilities that take on an aesthetic of this era can help to perpetuate valuable tourist and political narratives.

What I am trying to elaborate on here is how the politics of aesthetics surrounding Austro-Hungarian's artifacts and products, including Austro-Hungarian villas, architecture, and design provides one perspective on the aesthetic sensibilities of these sites. The turn to incentivize these heritage sites as evidence of Pula's "modern" "European" qualities can be seen to be perpetuated by initiatives like Dolcevita, which enforce a neo-liberal agenda through restoring the locations into pristine artifacts of the pasts despite locals not being able to afford it.

I argue that an intrinsic aspect of the Dolcevita program are the politics and techniques of anaesthetics that normalize and enforce a "clean" aesthetic and portrayal of Pula's heritage as an aesthetic norm. In thinking through the municipal program with the lens of Susan Buck-Morss's (1992) techniques of aesthetics, the Dolcevita appears to promote a particular modern sensibility that assumes a collective reality of affordability and the desirability of renovation. This fantasy, or what Walter Benjamin would call a "phantasmagoria," in turn distracts from the growing income disparity, inability to afford liveable housing conditions, and despair over dispossession. While renovation in general helps maintain and improve living conditions and an overall state of daily life in Pula, my argument focuses on the promotion of a sensibility that does not align with

the means of residents. The processes of investing in Pula's facades evidence the condition for the financialization of everyday life and history in Pula under capitalism, where programs like DolceVita signal the privatization of the social, historical, and material. The phantasmagoric in this sense appears as an economy of distraction; the willingness to look at improvement or modernization as a positive, when the conditions for daily life in Pula are far more complicated and troubling. As will be further elaborated, residents' perspective on the "impossibility" of caring for facade condition turns to valorizing crumbling, barely functioning facades, where building materials like copper framing are visible to the public.

In looking at the ways in which history is not only traced in the present but informs and is active in contemporary infrastructural and aesthetic materiality, a central endeavour of this chapter is to define key points and ongoing legacies in contemporary Puležan and Croatian history. Particularly, central this discussion is recognizing the role of Yugoslav nationalization and the eventual processes of denationalizing as major events and forces within homeownership, as well customs and ideologies surrounding the home. Such historiography becomes essential in situating the subsequent discussion of how ideals surrounding the home and limitations to its care from the Yugoslav era linger in present and effect future possibilities of maneuverability. In this sense, the role of building preservation and restoration, specifically that of residential buildings, evidence historical legacies of management and support.

3.3. YUGOSLAVIA AND SOCIALIST VIEWS ON HOUSING

In speaking to aesthetic legacies, and, moreover, the ongoing influence of historical approaches to infrastructure within Pula, the Yugoslav "middle" or "third-way" is essential to examine. The Third-Way presented new forms of socialist and modern design that specifically

looked to agitate certain Soviet as well as Western regulators and notions of modernity (See Videkani 2020). This section traces the transformative aesthetic put forth by Yugoslavia, to moreover acknowledge how such aesthetics and ideology were built into the cityscape in terms of architecture, infrastructures, design, legal and economic systems.

Prior to discussing Yugoslav aesthetic and ideology and how these qualities endure through aspects such as infrastructure and property ownership, it is valuable to contextualize that within the region of Istria, Yugoslav notions of ownership and property hinged on properties seized from homes that once belonged to ethnic Italians. Istria's landscapes were heavily altered and impacted as a result of the physical destruction and political transformation World War II and the eventual transition to socialism with the region's accession into Yugoslavia. Under the fascist regime of Italy from 1922 to 1943, Istria in particular faced heavy devastation due to WWII bombing as well as Allied occupation that left the region recovering from damage for decades. Social and physical damages with Istria includes the exile of ethnic Italian Istrians (also identified as the *Esuli*) that marked a particular transition to socialism that differed from Croatia proper.⁵² Specifically, following the "Treaty of Peace" between Italy and Allies in 1947, the majority of Istria was incorporated into Yugoslavia. With this, the partitioning of the Julian March region, or the border zone between Italy, Slovenia, and Croatia, saw 32,000 of Pula's inhabitants – what is believed to be Pula's entire Italian population – leaving *en masse* from 1943 to 1956 (Ballinger 2003, 89).⁵³

⁵² Other movements of exile occurred that are not mentioned here. These migratory movements reflected political and policy changes of this era. An efficient summary by Darko Dukovski can be found here: <https://www.istrapedia.hr/hr/natuknice/4054/povijest-istre-od-sredine-xx-st-do-raspada-jugosla>.

⁵³ Authors such as Pamela Ballinger's (2003; 2006) provide detailed discussions of the impact and historical legacy of the exile of Istrians during this time on memory, identity, and belonging.

Ballinger (2003) recounts the “heavy-handed” measures of the socialist initiatives her Italian informants faced, noting that from 1948 to 1954, confiscation of land and home, particularly that of Italians, as well as forced voting and creation of socialist cooperatives took place.⁵⁴ Esuli exile was seen to be a response to not only the annexation of Istria from the Italians, but as well, the socialist politics under Yugoslavia, as the road to socialism was seen to be led by peasant anti-fascists.⁵⁵ As a result, the damages from WWII, including destruction to housing, in turn permitted the foundation for implementing official socialist rhetoric.

This foundation is particularly evident recognizing that from 1948-1953, Yugoslavia faced major shifts in urbanization patterns as its urban population grew by over 21% (Matijević Barčot and Grgić 2021, 52). A particular factor in the rural to urban migration was the role of industrialization. As Sanja Matijević Barčot and Ana Grgić (2021) note, damage resulting from WWII damages in turn caused massive housing shortages within Yugoslavia, where unrealized “promises to resolve the ‘housing issue’ soon became an inevitable part of the new socialist official rhetoric” (Ibid).

By 1945, a large portion of private housing was nationalized. What becomes of particular interest to the discussion of ownership in contemporary Pula, is how the “housing issue” was dealt with in Yugoslavia, and moreover how these processes reflect continued notions and issues of housing. Within Sanja Matijević Barčot and Ana Grgić’s (2021) examination of the implications of socialist ideology on housing in post-war Croatia, the authors delineate some of the ideological approaches to housing under Yugoslavia rule. While the infamous Tito-Stalin

⁵⁴ Esuli exiles’ claims to these properties would flair after Yugoslavia’s break up in 1991. Ballinger notes one of the flair ups being incited by the refugees fleeing Yugoslavia’s break-up seizing properties of ethnic Italians who fled or had their properties nationalized from 1945 and 1954 (2006, 163).

⁵⁵ This is comparable to the exiled Esuli from Dalmatia and Zadar, though as Luciano Monzali (2016) notes, the particularities of Dalmatia’s history and regionalism emphasizes differences in experiences between the two annexed regions.

split would go on to inspire Yugoslavia's "Third Way," as well as participation in the Non-Alignment Movement, Matijević Barčot and Grgić (2021) note the effects on architecture and housing management. Specifically underpinning this movement was Yugoslavia's intention to distinguish themselves from the Soviets, including, in approaches to housing projects.

Positioned as a new kind of socialist state, truer to Marxism, the Third Way marked a new approach to international relations and internal regulation. A particular aim for the new approach permitted and depended on an open market, ideally allowing industry to flourish. The implementation of the Third Way in 1949, attempted to promote an alternative method to private property where the state would be a big proponent of development. Key to such processes were state promoted ideologies such as self-management, which was an intended strategy to empower workers and manage wages. Tito's move towards self-management broke from Soviet centralizing methods through local institutions like municipalities, regional bodies, and individual workplaces, gaining more decision-making power and autonomy. Ultimately, through such support, the self-management model allowed for a quick development of the country, evidently improving the living conditions of the population during the 1950s (Knežević and Miletić 2018, 16).

Within this context, as Pamela Ballinger notes, self-management rested on the principle of social property (2006, 160). In theory, social property belonged to the entire society, but in actuality, socialist enterprises held rights to socially owned assets, where workers' councils gave employees a role in decision making. In this setting, the decentralizing of workplaces under the method of self-management saw a new income-sharing system introduced in 1958, where wage distribution was based on "results of work" and not the work itself (Unkovski-Korica 2015, 28-29). To have the building and management of local housing orchestrated at the local level,

employees paid monthly housing contributions to the state companies' "collective consumption Fund" (Bežovan 2018, 150). From here, workers' council and housing commission were responsible for the distribution of these funds for the purposes of public flat rental, loans to buy flats, loans for building detached houses in designated areas, and loans to improve standard of living in an existing unit (Ibid).

Ultimately, while the success of self-management was hindered due to growing debt and inflation from the 1960's onwards, the initial phase of self-management evidence key ideological underpinnings that have had lasting effects on Yugoslavia and Croatia's housing management. Housing projects not only acted as a key site for expressing socialist culture, but also as a central pillar of the socialist project in the state's obligation to take care of housing conditions of workers. As Matijević Barčot and Grgić note, with each further amendment of the constitution, citizens' right to housing was enhanced (2021, 52). Here, owning an apartment was seen as a basic human right reflected in the "housing for all" policy.

Although Yugoslavia took "a different path to socialism," many of the principles of housing were similar to other socialist countries in promoting and maintaining socialist sensibilities (Spevec and Klempić Bogadi 2009, 457). In this context, housing policies were based in state control which would organize, build, and allocate public housing. Socialist housing followed a Marxist materialist approach, where material objects are not "divorced from social relations" (Humphrey 2005, 39). In Yugoslavia, this approach was reflected in the development of the theoretical approach of "comprehensive functionalism" by Croatian architect, Andrija Mohorovičić. This approach, which rejected soviet socialist realism and relied on western modernist models of design, looked to add the "humane social layers" to reflect socialist

aspirations by including aspects of local histories, regional morphologies, psychological, cultural, and political aspects (Matijević Barčot and Grgić 2021, 52).

Yugoslavian architecture became an important site to distribute and display socialist ideologies. Đorđe Alfirević and Sanja Simonović Alfirević (2015) identify how Yugoslav desire for a new form of socialist modernism that would allow for a humane and pragmatic approach was experimental and thus distinguished Yugoslavia's housing architecture from other socialist states. A central area in which this experimentation appeared was in the form of residential patterns. Housing complexes became a locale to redefine neighbourhoods as the core of socialist society, where society lives in "harmony, equality, and order" (Alfirević and Simonović Alfirević 2015, 5). One key example of this is the popularity of the "Double-Tract" residential unit as a characteristic example of Yugoslav multi-family residences. While maintaining a set of two units differing in shape and function, the "Double-Tract" provided a solution to space limitation, reduced privacy, and would permit common vertical communication, as well as communal spaces through atriums, common staircases and lifts, and interspaces between tracts.

In terms of the construction and distribution of public housing, state enterprises, organizations, and institutions financed the homes that were allocated to employees of publicly owned companies, including the Uljanik shipyard and local hydro company, HEP- Elektroistra Pula, according to priority waiting lists. Those with access to public housing had a lifetime tenancy right that could be inherited by a household member. Moreover, occupants paid very low rent regardless of apartment location,⁵⁶ which ultimately was used for building maintenance and construction of new dwellings but often insufficient in even covering basic repair costs.

⁵⁶ Per Svirčić Gotovac (2020, 156), in 1987, rent accounted for only 2% of tenants' consumption.

It is important to note that despite the marked utopian socialist ideals regarding housing, the reality of these projects saw unequal distribution of housing, as well as housing injustice and shortage (*cf.* Spevec and Klempić Bogadi 2009; Knežević and Miletić 2018). For example, Rory Archer highlights the disparities between classes in the allocation of socially owned flats in Yugoslavia, as blue-collar workers were far less likely to receive publicly owned flats, while white-collar and skilled workers were favoured in the processes (2018, 142). Under socialist sensibilities, renting socially owned flats was more prestigious and economically advantageous. As Archer notes, without sufficient socially owned housing for its workers, workplaces offered credits to facilitate the construction of privately owned, individual houses. Moreover, despite state efforts and consistent construction of socialized buildings, private ownership still dominated total constructions (*cf.* Spevec and Klempić Bogadi 2009; Archer 2018; Svirčić Gotovac 2020). These issues furthermore reached a pinnacle during the 1980s, ultimately reflecting the overall economy of Yugoslavia at the time.

These discrepancies moreover highlight contemporary issues surrounding renting and rental properties that are further elaborated in Chapter 6 of this dissertation. Here I discuss facades and the tracing of property ownership and responsibility, it is important to flag the limitations of “housing for all” projects and ideologies. As Kathrine Verdery (2003) states, socialism is a system based on values, both ethical and material. It is important to acknowledge how the systems of values are enduring forces that are traceable, lingering, and inherited in the present. In considering Croatia’s contemporary aesthetics and infrastructural condition, of particular value here is a recognition of who the owning-class and, as the next section covers, how the transition to an open-market effected their property ownership. In tracing the economic transition to an open-market and how exactly this occurred in Croatia, this following section

traces the impending gaps in care for infrastructure that were written and established under this transition. As becomes clear, these numerous issues surrounding privatization highlight the particular demographics that may be most affected and susceptible to dispossessive forces, and further, how particular aesthetic sensibilities intensify division and divestment.

3.4. ONGOING LEGACIES OF POST-SOCIALIST TRANSITION AND PRIVATIZATION

A major shift in property ownership and property law was the withdrawal of the state from housing provision and the rapid privatization of public housing stock following Croatia's independence in the 1990s. Critical to contemporary care, preservation, and aesthetics of buildings in Croatian cities like Pula is a recognition of changes to property ownership under transition and within contemporary Croatian policy. Specifically, reviewing privatization processes will highlight the uneven distribution of denationalized goods, and furthermore, begin to underpin the challenges open market democracy brought. This conversation in turn sheds light on why the modernization of Pula's aesthetics is particularly impossible for homeowners in Pula's city centre, and, furthermore, reveals how these modernization projects present techniques of anaesthetics as they remove signs of lived reality and growing dispossession.

As Pam Ballinger (2006) identifies, the examination of post-socialist transition, or "transitology"⁵⁷ of the Croatian context has largely differed from other Eastern European countries in the overemphasis on ethnonationalism in the region. Ultimately, with focus on ethnic tensions in the dissolution and Wars of Yugoslav Succession, little attention has been paid

⁵⁷ Transitology here reflects the scientific approach to producing the most effective engineering of transition towards democracy and a market economy. It should be noted that such studies have largely been problematized because of the how they focus on and force neat and linear progression of transition. See such works as, Brandtsadter (2007), Červinkova 2012 Kolanović (2019), Kurtović and Sargsyan (2019), Müller (2019), and Verdery (1999) for more discussion on this.

to privatization processes. Ballinger further states that this is partly a consequence of the slow privatization processes of first Croatian president, Franjo Tuđman (2006, 160) as well as his preferential treatment of ethnic Croats.

Croatia quickly developed privatization processes, with denationalizing laws being introduced as early as the late 1980s (Bartlett 2003). Within these processes, focus remained on privatizing public companies. William Bartlett's (2003) work highlights the contested nature of Croatia's privatization approaches. Particularly, despite push back from multiple opposing parties, Croatia's HDZ (Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica, or the Croatian Democratic Union) went forth with a plan to have socially owned enterprises transform to joint stocks that would be sold, and not given away.

With such plans in place, in April 1991, the implementation of laws like the "Law on Transformation of Socially Owned Assets," saw the introduction of the national "Privatization Agency" which assessed asset value and approved firm privatization plans. The "Development Fund" was also established at this time, which had the aim of taking proceeds from sold privatization shares. Those unable to meet privatization deadlines were taken over by the Development Fund. Further, an example of state involvement in the economy was evident in the Development Fund's advisory board, which according to Bartlett, opened the way to have the ruling HDZ party represented among the supervisors (2003, 94). By 1993, with pressure from the World Bank, changes were made to Croatia's privatization laws and processes, including the reshaping of the privatization agency as the "Croatian Privatization Fund."

Ultimately, despite shifts in approaches, privatization of nationalized assets remained uneven. A major side effect of such distribution practice was the creation of what William Bartlett (2008) calls, a new class of "tycoons." Such policies saw the favouring of well-

connected tycoon capitalists, often HDZ members, in the distribution of properties. Ultimately, as Bartlett points out, this transition method gave little interest to long-term restructuring or investment, instead focusing on short-term profit making resulting in uncompetitive industries, soaring unemployment, incoming inequality, and economic difficulties.

In terms of housing, initial processes of privatization began with the Croatian Constitution of 1990. The new foundation saw the removal of the institute of social ownership through the repurchase and denationalization of socially owned flats. War time privatization, moreover, saw the Croatian state provide the opportunity for individuals occupying houses or apartments to buy these properties at very low rates, with the price discounted up to 70% of the property value. As Anđelina Svirčić Gotovac (2020) notes, the state had left the housing sector almost completely to the market. As a result, there was increasing insecurity surrounding home ownership, and the housing sector more generally, whether in terms of financialization or marginal renting options. Issues with ownership moreover compounded with the 2008 global financial crisis along with Croatia's accession into the EU in 2013 due to growing unemployment and limited flexibility of work (Svirčić Gotovac 2020, 155).

Despite the increase in home ownership after transition, where, as Dubravka Spevec and Sanja Klempić Bogadi (2009) note, many residents took advantage of low prices leaving nearly 83% of Croatian housing stock as private or co-owned by 2001, housing and maintenance costs created a financial burden for many. The economic burden following housing privatization in turn reflects a feeling of the “impossibility” to care for these once cheap homes. Sasha Tsenkova's (2009) discussion of multi-apartment ownership in existing legislation as being largely based on historical interpretations, emphasizes the fact that much of the contemporary

limitations of building management are seen to be enduring effects of socialist transition and war.

Such discussions moreover highlight the legacies of co-ownership in the contemporary. Under such terms, building co-ownership and co-management within revitalization and “re-investment” projects such as Dolcevitа are particularly difficult areas to traverse. Specifically, any engagement in renovations within shared buildings rests in a communal determination of ownership, responsibility, and financial obligation between units. To apply for the co-financing, an application must be submitted by the building manager, or for those without one, the co-ownership representative. Co-ownership recognizes that while condominium ownership is based on the absolute ownership of a unit, costs for other common elements and building care is divided amongst tenants. Similar to assigning an external or third-party property management, co-ownership must be contractually and legally recognized.

Though these local revitalization projects are not stand-alone examples of the necessity for co-ownership agreements, the implicit tie and dependency on historically inherited tenant-run management by programs like Dolcevitа and broader housing policy in Croatia, cannot be neglected. Beyond the Dolcevitа program, it is important to recognize Tsenkova’s argument that what may begin as individual or building-wide issues of poor technical conditions, social and economic difficulties of residents, overcrowding, poverty, and deterioration of housing quality, ultimately form as phenomena that feed into the impoverishment and a “cycle of decline” for neighbourhoods (2009, 149).

This section has outlined the ways in which Croatia’s socialist transition has shaped and influenced gaps in housing ownership and care, and how, in turn, these processes leave particular demographics more susceptible to impoverishment and “cycles of [neighbourhood] decline.” The

following sections situate the ways in which modernization and re-investment projects further perpetuate this divide. Ultimately, while this section and the last have largely discussed historical traces of the precarity within Croatia's housing sector, the next section will further situate the Dolcevit program within contemporary experience and aesthetic sensibilities. Such discussion emphasizes the limitations of (an)aesthetic approaches to revitalization as they do not contextualize and account for lived experiences of the impossibility of care for homeowners in Pula's city centre. Instead, this aesthetics embodies and materializes the pressures and affects of the financialization of daily life and touristification processes under capitalism in Pula as the notion or guise of collective development is done through private hands and ownership. As this chapter further explores, in contrast to modernization programs like Dolcevit, the prevalence of a local counter aesthetics that romanticizes and admires features of dilapidation evidence a sense of communal care based in shared understanding of the impossibility of housing maintenance and the state-of-things in Pula.



Figure 3-3, The building on the left. One of the matching buildings Gorana and I stopped in front of. Taken by Lea Alilović in October 2021.



Figure 3-4, The building on the right. Taken by Lea Alilović in September 2022.

3.5. PULA'S CHARM AND IMPOSSIBILITY

By November, a few months into my time in Pula, I had developed a custom of joining Gorana on her errand runs and long walks around the city. Gorana's desire to show me the Pula she knew and loved evolved into more frequent tours around the city where her experiences moving away from Pula in her late 30s for work and love, living abroad, and finally retiring and returning to the city she grew up in, were shared.

After two decades in London, England, Gorana's return to Pula only a few months before was long anticipated. The initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic peak had left Gorana completely exhausted by London's lifestyle and isolation. Our conversations often turned back to the difference between London and Pula, where aside from the familiarity of Pula to Gorana, she

yearned for Pula's slow pace. She often characterized this slowness with the ease of living, where being by the sea was also met with a sense of community and daily comradery with other residents.

Weaving through Pula and its hilly landscape often left us taking short breaks along the quiet roadsides. On this particular day, we stopped in a residential area near the neighbourhood of Montezaro. We came across a pair of matching buildings: the building on the right was in the middle of renovations with large garbage containers in its peripheries. While obviously in a state of repair with a few missing windows, the building on the right had newly stuccoed and painted facade, with new windows and shutters (See *Figure 3-4*). The fine detailing around its windows, doors, and roof renovated and in pristine state felt to me as though it was without a trace of a past life.

The building on the right sat in stark contrast to the building on the left. In the right's newly renovated state, the left's dilapidated exterior was emphasized. Mishappen, faded, and disjointed window shutters, with varying shades of blues and browns, were framed by peeling stucco and visible stones and building blocks (*Figure 3-3*).

Standing across the pair of buildings, Gorana followed my gaze, examining the scene ahead of us. "This is why Pula is so special, you can stop anywhere and look around and ask, 'in what other part of the world would you be able to see buildings like this?' Buildings right next to each other all from different periods and histories. Some Venetian, Austro-Hungarian..." Gorana retorted. Though a rhetorical question, my mind quickly recognized that with some further thought both Gorana and I could think of a handful of cities across the globe that shared similar neighbourhoods constructed from buildings of multiple eras and regimes. But this was not Gorana's point.

Wondering how she would respond, I shared with Gorana that some informants I spoke with felt a sense of shame over the conditions and state of Pula's buildings. I explained how these informants noted that most of the buildings in Pula sat like the building to the right of us: rough, beat up, and in bad shape. To them, there was a sense that Pula was not living up to its potential nor preserving its history. Gorana was quick to respond: "That's part of Pula's charm." She continued to explain how she found it beautiful that the, in some cases, centuries old stone was exposed from under the chipping stucco. To her, the visibility of the stones in turn meant a visibility of the age and history of the city. The uneven or missing facade these buildings made visible had gone through the different regimes, wars, and tenants, among other vast experiences. Gorana expressed a view that re-stuccoing was a measure of building up or on-top of these histories, in turn hiding the entangled legacies and experiences of those living within these properties. In focusing and admiring facades in states of ongoing ruination, aesthetic sensibilities like Gorana's refused to submit to the development ethos and the values of progressive privatization and financial control of life in Pula.

Changing focus, Gorana began outlining the complex processes of care that inhibited renovation processes or the improvement of facades, in turn addressing and delineating the increasing financialization and privatization of the social, material, and historic in Pula. She explained the difficulty in having tenants within the building come together to pay for renovations. As most of the properties did not have property managers due in part to tenants inheriting their units during socialist transitions, many building residents did not agree on responsibility or maintenance. On top of this, Gorana explained, paying for stucco repairs often entailed a joint mortgage between tenants, where in the case for her building, there was a 10-year

mortgage between tenants where they paid 100 HRK extra in order to finance facade repairs. She explained this did not include any renovation for windows and other exterior details.

Yet, Gorana's experience was a privileged one. For many other residents who did not have property managers, could not form a consensus with their neighbours, and/or could not afford to pay for the renovations or go in debt, these methods of modernizations were largely inaccessible. A later informant labeled this sentiment as the "impossibility" of care, where seemingly, the majority of Pula's inhabitants could not afford to improve their building exteriors. This impossibility accounts for the fact that although building facades need to be maintained at least "every 15 to 20 years" to manage repairs, cracks, and other defects that occur over time, the "hundreds of thousands of euros" price tag attached remained out of reach for residents (Ban 2024). As a result, over the course of one and two centuries, majority of Pula's facades have never been renovated, begging the question of at what point locals will be able to afford these processes?

In 2024, Barbara Ban investigated Dolce Vita's program for the newspaper *Jutarnji List*, gaining further insight into the realistic cost and duration of these revitalization projects. Ban's account highlights that for those who may be able to afford some renovation or co-finance, there are numerous complications and expenses that reiterate a sense of impossibility. For example, Ban notes that not only is paperwork regarding revitalization and co-financing key heritage sites meticulous and time consuming, and renovations themselves take on average 6 months, but the cost of such projects also quickly adds up considering the complicated process of "[restoring] Austro-Hungarian building with many details and wall paintings." With a lack of qualified or licenced workforce, especially those skilled in restoring ornate historic features, it is difficult to not only hire contractors but to produce estimates or transparency over the cost of each

renovation. On top of this, Ban's interlocutors note that often investigations or property surveys are not done due to financing limitations, and even companies involved in renovation face limited profitability due to the complex nature of the jobs (Ibid).

Within this context, it is important to recognize that while aging exteriors raised feelings of nostalgia and gratitude for residents like Gorana, this perspective did not necessarily mean a lack of desire to preserve or maintain these buildings. Gorana's example highlights the nuance of the decision-making process and methods of coping locals utilize. While Gorana adopted and described notions of decay as an aesthetic sensibility akin to those afflicted by impossibility, where renovation could "hide" and "cover-up history" and, moreover, erase the coexisting tension and process of for smooth forms of cleaned-up architecture and lure of the tourist industry, she nonetheless helped co-finance her own building's re-stuccoing. The seemingly contradictory mindset and set of actions, characterized Gorana's positioning in Pula: retired after working for over two decades in the U.K., Gorana maintained a certain financial privilege in being able to afford renovation.

Nonetheless, I see Gorana's perspective as empathizing with the reality of living in Pula and the impossibility of facade care. Gorana's example highlights that despite a desire by both the city and its residents, for the city and its buildings to endure, the inaccessibility of renovations under these terms creates a sharp divide in understanding what futures are possible in Pula. Gorana recognized what was possible for her, was not accessible to most others. Particularly, anaesthetic interventions that embrace decay represent a way to manage a feeling of forced conditions that exist outside municipal expectations.

While the experience of buildings in need of repair may not have been unique to Pula, the example of Dolcevita highlights a disjuncture between aesthetic sensibilities and lived

experience. Particularly, with the impossibility of renovation and of housing for some as a shared condition, there is also a simultaneous acceptance of the state-of-things among Pula's inhabitants. More than explaining the system, its slowness, and impossible expectations, Gorana's insight shed light on how local owners deal with the particularities of ownership in Pula. The dance or maneuvering around ownership is moreover reflective of a distinction between narratives of the city, what it should do, and in this context, how it should look.

Despite the condition and expectation of building exteriors, apartments and individual units were seen to locals as something rhizomatic, or as holding multiple, unfixed possibilities (*cf.* Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 6-7). For example, informants echoed the notion that apartment interiors were often renovated or well-maintained. Gorana and other homeowners clarified such points in expressing the care and pride locals had in their home, regardless of how the exterior looked. Evidently, for some, an aesthetics of decay in Pula presents another form of communal care that was not possible through *Dolcevita*. While such programs presented, or rather, advertised communal care through personal finalization, where debt for facade beautification was positioned as serving the greater good of the community, local perceptions and responses accepted and embraced the impossibility of facade care. As Gorana described, there was little judgement between neighbours and friends on the condition of buildings. Instead, locals had a sense of empathy for each other recognizing the circumstance as just "the way things are."⁵⁸ The "impossibility" of external building care and home ownership thus reflects the inability to meet a governing or dominant ideal that informants may long for but manage without.

Sitting with Gorana's initial statement about the feeling of awe in living amongst Pula's historical architecture, I felt I got a closer sense of what she meant: No building –whether

⁵⁸ It should be clarified that this does not imply the non-existence of gossiping or judgement of neighbours and their properties, but it was largely emphasized that when it comes solely to facades, often little judgement was given.

Roman, Venetian, or Austro-Hungarian –was in a pristine state, but each demonstrated the city’s eclectic history. They shared a common condition of being in a liminal state, something between pristine and ruin. These buildings demonstrated an eternal state of being in flux, undone in both their unraveling and continuously changing condition.

Within impossible conditions that prevent attending to infrastructural care, local aesthetics of decay focused on the bright side: the indeterminate status of facades allows for a space that keeps history alive and open in daily living, like in making visible old construction materials and methods. Thus, the valuing of an aging aesthetic accounts for the ways in which an “impossibility of care” is actually an impossibility to care in a specific manner. Locals demonstrated methods of facade care and concern beyond the discourse and aesthetics advertised in municipal programs like Dolcevita, focusing instead on relationality and shared experience under capitalist interests.

Ultimately, in speaking to issues of ownership and preservation in Pula, Gorana’s story reveals the ways in which locals mitigate the pressure and refuse to abide by dominant aesthetics. Gorana’s portrayal here demonstrates how local aesthetics redistributes the sensible in countering the valuing and hegemony of modernization and, furthermore, instantiates and materializes another, local aesthetic sensibility that is rooted in a shared experience of living with the state-of-things in Pula. Thus, this section has looked to contextualize local responses to impossibilities, or the stunting of progress by historical and capitalist forces in Pula, by examining and understanding the nuanced gap between the acceptance of the state of things by Pula’s inhabitants and municipal responses and programs.

3.6. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Within the context of Pula, the aesthetics of revitalization comes to reflect nuanced tension between the economic inaccessibility of renovation and the dependency of city improvement plans on residents to renovate. In a submission to the series *Gradska Štorija*, or “City Stories,” in *Glas Istre*, Pula author Bojan Žižović (2019) playfully personifies the issue at hand, probing: “Oh, Dolcevito! Oh, how bitter is that sweet life of yours. Oh, why are so few facades embracing you?”⁵⁹ The author continues by aptly observing: “...[W]hat do you do when tenants can’t, when it’s clear they don’t have the money?”⁶⁰

As of 2021, only 67 buildings have been renovated through *Tisuću Fasada* and *Dolcevita*. The local government is keen to detail that of these projects, 43 are within the protected cultural and historical ensemble and 24 outside the protection zone (Mostarkić Gobbo 2021b). Within the particularities of Pula’s city planning, these figures highlight drastic issues with the accessibility of co-founding facade and exterior renovation. As mentioned, the priority zones target central tourist locations, where buildings and residences are largely used for business and renting to tourists. While focus on tourist locations is to be expected, and act as a means to address concerns like that of the previously mentioned interlocutor Ana, these services re-emphasize the idea for inhabitants who do not live or own centrally, that they are left to manage for themselves.

At the same time, issues of inaccessibility include those within the priority zones as well. In the same 2019 article, Žižović describes the common positioning of those within *Dolcevita*’s priority zone:

“[It’s] the fact that they are in the [city] centre [in] a building with few tenants [...] [and] the fact that the tenants in the old town are often of lower property status. They are the ones who [have to] pay most of the construction costs. Because their

⁵⁹ Translated from “O, Dolcevito! O, gorak li je taj tvoj slatki život. O, zašto tako malo fasada tebe prigrli?”

⁶⁰ Translated from “[...] što učiniti kada stanari to ne mogu, kad je jasno da oni nemaju taj novac?”

apartments and buildings have been declared a cultural asset, which significantly increases the cost of the whole story.”⁶¹

Žižović’s claim reaffirms Sasha Tsenkova (2009) and Dubravka Spevec and Sanja Klempić Bogadi’s (2009) respective discussions on how issues to the distribution of assets during transition are exacerbated in the present. Limited new affordable housing construction, an affordability gap between housing prices and average income, and a rather poorly developed rental housing market maintained the rather low mobility of population, in particular low-income households (*Cf.* Spevec and Klempić Bogadi 2009). The legacies of these conditions moreover threaten neighbourhoods with “cycles of decline” that begin as individual or building-wide issues of poor technical conditions, social and economic difficulties of residents, overcrowding, poverty, and deterioration of housing quality, ultimately form as phenomena that feed into the impoverishment of neighbourhoods (Tsenkova 2009, 149).

Whether such decline is already beginning in Pula or forebodes potential futures, Tsenkova and Spevec and Klempić Bogadi’s discussions towards the limitations to co-ownership provides a critical macro-level discussion of the limitations of depending on such property management. With this, projects such Dolcevitā and Tisuću Fasada are seen to be part of larger issue of property management, inherited from ineffective transition policy.

Puležans see the reality of inaccessible home renovation play out time and again. Within the poignant piece published in the same local newspaper, Robert Rauch breaks down the typical storyline of the project for those who, even with assistance, are unable to pay to renovate the homes they own. In 2021, Rauch’s May 5th article depicts the facade of a central building falling

⁶¹ Translated from “[...] Sigurno i u tome što su u centru zgrade s malo stanara, sa svega nekoliko stanova po ulazu. Zatim i u činjenici da su stanari u starom gradu nerijetko slabijeg imovinskog statusa. A upravo su oni ti koji bi trebali platiti veći dio građevinskih troškova. Jer njihovi su stanovi pa time i zgrade, koje su, pak, proglašene kulturnim dobrom, što znatno poskupljuje cijelu priču.”

on to the sidewalks, narrowly missing pedestrians. While scaffolding was quickly put up to begin processes for repair, they were removed within a week with little work done. Despite papers to begin renovation under the Dolce Vita project in place, tenants could not pay for the project. Rauch outlines that with expected costs of seven to eight hundred thousand HRK where scaffold rental alone marks several thousand Kuna a month, split amongst a dozen tenants is unfeasible. Žižović (2019) echoes this experience by noting the future of projects like Dolce Vita will amount to a cycle of only the same people and homes having access to co-financing.

Gorana's story of splitting a mortgage amongst the other tenants in her building comes to exemplify a significant issue and point of tension regarding the projects' accessibility and the state-of-things in Pula. Ownership becomes a contested site for inhabitants utilizing such projects in Pula as their lived experience cannot fit neatly within such development ethos and progressive privatization processes. Particularly, any engagement in renovations for those within shared buildings rests in the determination of ownership, responsibility, and evidently, cost division. To apply for the co-financing, an application must be submitted by the building manager, or for those without one, the co-ownership representative. Co-ownership recognizes that while condominium ownership is based on the absolute ownership of a unit, costs for other common elements and building care is divided amongst tenants. Similar to assigning an external or third-party property management, co-ownership must be contractually and legally recognized. It is important to note that akin to Gorana's case, applications in Pula are often submitted through co-ownership agreement as most buildings are not externally managed. Thus, while residents may want to opt into or act to protect and care for their properties and residences, and thus preserve and ensure a future for and with these sites, the impossibility of dominant aesthetic norms leaves many residents to look to other ways of enacting futures.

Ultimately, recognizing the techniques of anaesthetics evident in city-sponsored modernization and renovation aesthetics and norms, this discussion simultaneously speaks to the emerging and felt threat that this aesthetics instantiates. In tracing the historical links to housing ownership, particularly, who was likely to own property under socialist times and inherit property during the era of economic transition, I highlight not just the demographics targeted in projects like Dolcevixita, but who and what experience these modern aesthetic projects neglect and erase.

The inaccessibility of such programs aimed to regenerate furthermore emphasize the difference between neoliberal aim and projects and lived experience. Questions over the feasibility and long-term effects of this divide in accessibility echoes amongst residents. Despite the ability to manage expectations through an acceptance of the way things are by inhabitants, the ability to endure such conditions in the long-term has been labelled as daunting. Here, uncertainty in what future is available to inhabitants signals a fear, that issues of economic and housing disparity that will worsen overtime making homeownership completely unmanageable. Recognizing trends within cities similarly growing dependent on tourism, Puležani note that a dominance of foreign ownership is not only growing but a potential threat. These fears are further reflective on how the impending increase on the cost of living, the impossibility of homeownership, and the limits of and dependency on mono-industry will affect local well-being. These processes and their effect on Puležani futures sit in contrast to the history of these spaces and the city, where rent was once minimal, and properties once inherited for a small fee.

Highlighting how aesthetics of modernity erase and reinforce impossible conditions of facade care, this chapter traces how such processes are deeply entwined with decades-long political, economic, and social legacies social legacies, and moreover, gesture to incipient

designs for the future. With the intensification of such processes under aesthetic projects like Dolceville, materiality in this context acts an allegory and literal sign of a tourist state and the financialization of life under capitalist time. These on-going processes foreshadow a future when local and historical owners of these homes can no longer afford the homes entirely and present the rhetorical question of who will care for these properties and how will care be instantiated, desired, and structured in the future.

At the same time, while impossibility fosters affects of despair and unspoken affinities, as Gorana's story speaks to, the social relations and connections asserted through the romanticization of aesthetics of decay and maintenance of interior spaces indexes the multiple ways facades can convey a sense of care. These processes furthermore echo the trend of a sense of loss of external and social-third spaces in Pula and the turn to utilizing private and personal space, discussed in Chapter 2. As with the infrastructural examples mentioned in Chapter 2, aesthetics of facades, as well as their care, reiterate a sense that Pula's streets are become increasingly oriented towards tourists, and moreover highlight the growing role of informal as well as private spaces in regenerating sociality and community within this context.

Evidently, this chapter highlights the divide in meaning and importance of the conversation surrounding building conditions and aesthetics. For those who buy-in or implement the modernist project, the aesthetics of building exteriors is both a representational tool for the ideal city, as well as a medium for the project. Yet, for many of those occupying these spaces, the questions that arise from building care and the future of these sites, and ultimately, the future of the city, highly differ. In this, Dolceville and Tisuću Fasada are neoliberal endeavours aimed at propelling tourism and its industry rather than the common good and living conditions of the inhabitants, emphasizing the question of: for whom is the city's revitalization and what is this

revitalization made of? The next chapter extends discussions of Pula's facades to examine how central city walls have become sites of critical local graffiti.

4. MONITORING AND WALLS: ACCOUNTING FOR GRAFFITI AS COMMUNAL CARE

Chapter 3's discussion on Pula's facades in turn brought an awareness of not only the texture, conditions, and design of buildings, but the multiple meanings walls and building exteriors could hold. As mentioned in the earlier chapter, my conversation with Ana incited a new view of city walls where I was encouraged to linger in sites normally taken for granted. While in the prior chapter I analyzed how facades become a medium to buy-into modern anaesthetics, this chapter will focus on how the presence of graffiti in these public spaces shed light on other stories and narratives where facades act as a central medium. Particularly, I previously spoke to the role of historical processes affecting house and housing conditions and the sense of failure of contemporary development projects as normalizing a rationale among Puležani of the impossibility of improvement. This chapter similarly fields affects of despair and tapija through assessing practices that utilize facades to not only create a possibility for political voice but also publicly communicate communal concerns.

Within Pula, graffiti exists within an ecosystem of numerous forms and styles, including tagging, football club memorabilia, murals, stencil work, as well as, anarchist, pro-Yugoslav or pro-Tito, and neofascist or Ustaše pieces. Street art in the name of Pula's local soccer club represent some of the most evident and eye-catching work in Pula, where walls within the city display crisp dedications to the team, their establishment date, and local mottos and chants.

By observing these works and lingering in these sites, I unknowingly began participating in graffitography as I photographed graffiti on Pula's facades to collect visual data. Recognizing the local as ever-changing, with graffiti being covered by other tags, intentionally buffed or cleaned up, or simply deteriorating over time, I felt the urge to record and ask locals questions.

While my informants spoke of many different forms and examples of graffiti and street art in Pula, most Puležani spoke about sites of commissioned pieces that would be categorized as “street art” rather than graffiti. Informants noted the ways in which Pula, unexpectedly to me, was a space that embraced and encouraged artist expressions on its walls. Examples like the mural of Herman Potočnik located in the tourist-popular city centre (see *Figure 4-1*) or the robot-painted murals such as the whale painted on the side of an apartment building in Pula’s Veruda neighbourhood and the rendering of Picasso’s “The Rape of the Sabine Women” mural in the Stoja neighbourhood, were eagerly referenced by locals.⁶² The mural of Engineer and Astro-theorist Potočnik marked pride in Pula’s historic residents, while the robot-art referred to Pula’s aptitude toward new and modern forms of public art.

With further conversations came details about a series of stencil pieces that gained notoriety in the city ten years prior. The author, or authors, eventually became known as “the Pulan Banksy” because of their use of stencils to display political messages that exposed and critiqued local media, politicians, and businessmen. For over a decade, graffiti by Pula’s Banksy marked an attempt to share concern and distrust with business-as-usual in Pula and moreover came to inspire future artists, including a series of graffiti that targeted Calucem Ltd., a local and historic cement company. The anonymous anti-Calucem graffiti gained notoriety in Pula through their repetitive “throw up” and tagging graffiti techniques that aimed at and criticized the local business. The tags specifically critiqued the Calucem’s persistent sound and environmental pollution. In contrast to the often-cited street art pieces, the anti-Calucem and the Pulan Banksy utilized the medium of public walls to display controversial topics.

⁶² For more information on these pieces, look to Kivi (2020).

In this chapter I explore the graffiti works by the Pula Banksy and anti-Calucem artists, unpacking the ways their pieces stimulate awareness and monitoring among Pula's residents of dispossessive processes occurring in the city. In targeting trust in local politics and business-as-usual, the graffiti pieces not only represent critical contemporary socio-economic conflicts of change, but the artworks act as generative instances and attempts to re-form the shifting fields of power and meaning of the Pula cityscape.

Within this context, I am interested in viewing these graffiti trends through a lens of therapeutic and community care where these pieces evidence representations and performances of collectivizing concern. I argue the repetitive and spectral presence of these pieces over everyday life in Pula are an attempt to occupy a space of disruption, reconnection, and reconsideration. In this context, "successful" disruptions can unite audiences and observers through adapting or attuning to public values. Moreover, in addressing and arguing for evidence of a therapeutic worldview through these graffiti examples, I am not interested necessarily in biomedical models of care, or therapeutic interventions that require evidence of measurable effects or "treatment" (Cf. Evans 2021, 6). Rather, graffiti becomes a tool and tactic to not just acknowledge a witnessing and critique of harmful processes of power, but a means to enact and showcase collective care and orientation as a form of "treatment," or response.

Implicit to such discussions is recognition of how graffiti operates to create a sense of "event" within context where dispossession is increasingly perceived as the norm. Akin to Veena Das's work in *Life and Words* (2009), rather than disrupting the ordinary, I am interested in how these graffiti trends in Pula become a means to render violence noticeable, not ordinary. Examining the violent consequences of India's partition on Punjabi families and how they have become embedded into daily social and cultural life, Das's examination evidence how

institutional and state-sponsored renderings of “the ordinary” can impede on a sense of eventfulness. In focusing on how this sense of ordinariness is disrupted, Das brings attention to the act of witnessing the normalized yet criminal societal rule and the fragmented ways these experiences are shared. Within the context of Pula, attuning to art’s therapeutic value of graffiti recognizes attempts to collectively monitor, witness, and critique local dispossession by politics-as-usual, and moreover register the ordinary as eventful.

In particular, these two graffiti artists disrupt the ordinary through informal methods of community care in their animating of experiences and quality of life under dispossessive powers. Parallel to Anne Allison’s discussion of Japan, the dispossessive present in Pula hinges on a dynamic of decollectivization, securitization, and reindividualization of the collective and highlights the biopolitical dimension of contemporary global neoliberalism (Allison 2013, 128 working with Abeles 2010). The graffiti artists’ highlighting of dispossessive processes follows what Susan Buck-Morss (1992) interprets as the politicizing art: an invigoration and restoration of a sensitive perception to the world. As in the example of graffiti by Pula’s Banksy, revealing, reiterating, and emphasizing local political examples of corruption, clientelism, and media censorship produce active witnesses. Here, the roles of witnessing and complaining are evident through the displays of critical narratives and discourses portrayed in graffiti. In addition to acknowledging one’s observing of corruption, akin to earlier chapters that discussed the role of complaint as tools to subvert the status quo, I argue here that through the use-of and being at the edge-of public discourse, graffiti undermines and makes evident injurious processes like monopolization of public land for private business, clientelism, media censorship, and processes of individualization of the collective in Pula.

Moreover, the focus on the two examples of anti-Calucem and Pula Banksy graffiti continue the previous chapters' discussions of slow dispossession and notions of *tapija*, where the city, its living conditions, accessibility, and support, continue to feel disjointed from local contemporary needs, memories, and imagined futures with the growing dependency on tourism as the city's primary industry. In the attempts to reassert claims to walls and central city space, graffitied critiques offer a form of care work through reterritorializing a sense of place. Specifically, informal tactics of care and therapeutics offer "treatment" for dispossession in re-establishing care for communal values, place, and Pula's residents. The lens of communal care, moreover, offers insight to the moments, gaps, and experiences of care for social well-being that exists outside of the registered event-making. This approach moves beyond dichotomous framing of action and inaction to look for moments of social connection and reminders of residents as "social beings." In this process, the work of graffiti artists evidences an attempt to maintain a sense of space and place through art and, furthermore, promote a sense of an otherwise to capitalism individualization and invite a reimagining of everyday reality.

To ground this argument, this chapter will borrow from the works of Mitja Velikonja (2017; 2020), Tanja Petrović (2021), and Eric Ušić (2016a), recognizing their thorough and foundational discussions of graffiti in Istria and the former Yugoslavia. Particularly, these authors provide critical historical examination and contextualization of graffiti in the region, done through the surveying of hundreds of pieces. Due to limited time in the field, this chapter, in contrast, will focus on two examples of ongoing graffiti in Pula, and thus is not provide a survey of all forms of graffiti, tagging, or street art evident in the city. Evidently, this discussion is not intended to be a thorough source for documenting graffiti and pieces within Croatia proper,

but, instead, is interested in the particular appearance and pattern of two graffiti styles in Pula in order to speak to processes of community care that appear in Pula's graffiti.



Figure 4-1, A mural of Herman Potočnik on Kandlerova Street, in Pula's city centre. Photo taken by Lea Alilović, August 25, 2021.



Figure 4-2, A typical Pulan tag. Remnants of a piece starting with “die fascist cubs” [Fašistički okotu umri]. Photo taken by Lea Alilović, September 14, 2022.

4.1. SITUATING GRAFFITI IN PULA

Graffiti presents a particularly interesting form of complaint and use of public space of value in discussions of slow dispossession in Pula. To set up discussions of graffiti in Pula – the forms evident in the city, the historical legacy and importance of the medium, and later, the contemporary examples – I will first define and situate graffiti. It should be noted that this chapter does not provide an extensive summary or discussion of the medium of graffiti itself.

Graffiti ranges in definitions and forms but reflects “forms of visual communication that occur publicly on surfaces built and natural landscapes” (Alexandrakis et al., 2022). These forms can appear as tags (see *Figure 4-2*), throw-ups, posters (paste-ups), stencils, and street art (see *Figure 4-1*).⁶³ As noted by Alexandrakis et al. (2022), while street art as a sub-genre of graffiti maintains many aesthetic similarities to graffiti, it employs a greater variety of media and stylistic capacities as a result. Furthermore, street art’s use of public space can differ from graffiti in that it evidently extends the experience of art to public spaces, and thus can interrupt the urban sensory experience (Alexandrakis et al. 2022 citing Sweeney 2011). Though alike in challenging one’s experience of urban space, there is an aspect here where street art in terms of murals, stencils, etc. can be procured by mainstream or dominant society and institutions.

In comparison, for authors such as Mitja Velikonja, graffiti maintains a “transient, destructible, illegal” basis, where these expressions are “critical of the ruling order of things” (2017, 325). To expand, Velikonja notes that the framing of “vandalism” demonstrates the point of view of dominant discourses and institutions. In this sense, graffiti is always engaging with its

⁶³ Under these changes to urban space and life, graffiti as Pan notes, creates visibility in illegitimate ways. In the context of the West, graffiti began as a discursive space for different social actors. As Pan notes though this space began as highly “rebellious” in its illegality, graffiti reached the realm of popular culture through commercialization evident through the work and styles of famous artists Keith Haring, Basquiat, and Banksy (Ibid 6).

environment. For many authors discussing the relationship between graffiti and its environment, Walter Benjamin's discussion of "aura" becomes of focus in its tying of a "direct relationship between the human body and the body of the built environment" (Pan 2015, 7). Graffiti here depends on public space as it does not occur in an empty or homogenous environment, space, or material (Ibid 8). In this way, graffiti artists are "flâneurs at large who render both their writing and the city as auratic" (Ibid; see also Velikonja 2020, 43). To continue Lu Pan's discussion, this relationship to space celebrates the "humour and disorder" of daily life that in turn "disturbs numbness and the predominant order of things" (Ibid 7). For Pan, this alters both people and space in how graffiti inspires "unyielding individuals to change a location of indifference and numbness into an electrified space of differences" (Ibid).

Graffiti is argued to have begun around WW2 with the engraving of "Kilroy was Here" in US cities and saw its proliferation by the 60s and 70s with the "rapid suburbanization, decay of downtown areas, increase in unemployment rates, tension from the cold war, and racial conflicts" (Pan 2015, 5-6). Within the context of Istria and Pula more specifically, graffiti's presence and growth occurred under slightly different contexts than those of the West. For example, the work of Eric Ušić notes the historical use and significance of graffiti in the region of Istria, particularly with the "quality and quantity" of post-WW2 graffiti. For Ušić, the remanent of graffiti from this era in Istria's history deeply relate to "[...] Istria's political and cultural (auto)biography" (Ušić interviewed in Damečević 2019). Specifically, Ušić notes that the graffiti not only reflects Istria's history, but "they are visualizations and expressions of particular historical ruptures, processes and events that radically shaped Istria's political, social, and cultural life" (Ibid).

In Ušić's (2018) piece, "Istrian graffiti in World War II – Meanings and Experiences," the author elaborates on the impact and work of partisan graffiti in attending to the perception and depiction of graffiti in official reports. In order to situate the illegal war-time act of graffiti, Ušić challenges depictions and categorizations of political slogans by authors and newspapers as "slogans-in-general," or political slogans as "utterances in general," to instead view "slogans-as-graffiti" (2016, 43). In recognizing slogans-as-graffiti, Ušić looks to acknowledge the multitude of occasions, inscription, and materialization of slogans on a variety of surfaces, media, and material (Ibid). This distinction becomes important in following the historical significance of graffiti in Istria as often accounts from their period either simply reported the occurrence of graffiti or labelled it as propaganda rather than as a symbolic weapon for the anti-fascist movement. In assessing different accounts of graffiti, including the People's Liberation Committee (NOO), local newspapers, and local subjects, Ušić argues partisan graffiti during, and post-WWII Istria was not only communicative but a performative act underpinned by emancipative military and political goals.

Furthermore, as Mitja Velikonja (2020; 2017) discusses, graffiti played and continues to play a role in marking the context and response to the post-socialist transition in the former-Yugoslav region. The post-socialist transition or the democratic revolutions of the '80s and '90s in some ways deepened divides between East and Western Europe, where the sudden transition to "democracy" and a free market could be seen to produce internal conflict, violence, and oppression (Velikonja 2020, 57 working with Wolff 1994 and Ghodsee 2017). Within the context of the former Yugoslavia, social ideologies were replaced with neoliberalism and ethnonationalism as underpinning economic and social ideologies. In 1989, Yugoslavia was identified by American economist, Jeffrey Sachs as the first country to undergo "shock therapy"

intending to initiate a quicker transition to a democratic free market state. Such approaches to “fixing the Yugoslav problem” worked on notions of a “rescuing” or “mythology of salvation” which worked to nullify history prior to 1989 and insert a new public identity and discourse through ethnic or political community (Velikonja 2020, 61-62 working with Tismăneanu 1998 and Verdery 1996). As Katherine Verdery states, “exposure to the rigours of primitive capitalism has made several people in the region think twice about their rejection of socialism and their embrace of ‘the market’” (1996: 10). With this, residents of former Yugoslavia were left with,

“[...] social turmoil (pauperization, unemployment, mass emigration, a narrowing of the middle class, a dismantling of the welfare state, exploitation, dispossession and other consequences of turbo-capitalism, [...] and on the other hand a shameless prosperity of oligarchies), political turbulences (a domination of nationalist, even nativist parties, systemic corruption, clientelism), national exclusions (different forms of ethnic cleansing, from military and bureaucratic ones to silent assimilation), cultural regressions (retraditionalization, repatriarchalization, and reclericalization of society), and demographic declines (more than a 100,000 dead in the wars, refugees, brain drain)” (Velikonja 2020, 58-60).

As Velikonja notes, one of the results of the post-socialist transition was a sense of rampant disappointment (Ibid). Within the context of former-Yugoslav states, this sense of disappointment continued for 30 years since the country’s dissolution. In Velikonja’s work, the author identifies three main responses to feelings of disappointment after transition: one, resignation (as made evident with mass migration), nostalgia (evident with Yugonostalgia in personal, political, pop-cultural, commercial, etc., forms), and lastly, resistance to dominant ideologies through social uprisings, strikes, factory occupations, alternative initiatives, etc. (see Velikonja 2020, 63; Razsa 2015; Razsa and Kurnik 2012; Kurtović and Hromadžić 2017). While graffiti can be a method of expressing each of the three responses as disappointment, Velikonja’s (2020) research examines the specific combination of all three with attention to the continued and rampant presence of pro-Yugoslavia references within contemporary graffiti and street art

subculture. For Velikonja, while these expressions can be seen as methods of evaluating or managing histories, they more accurately can be seen as a deeply held critique of contemporary “post-Yugoslav ethno-nationalist, and neo-liberal here-and-now” (2020, 76).

Furthermore, graffiti has played a role in site-making in the post-socialist setting. Tanja Petrović’s piece, “Heritage of Liminality: Remnants of the Military in the Istrian City of Pula in the Aftermath of Yugoslav Socialism,” accounts for the historic legacy and effect of liminality in Pula as a result of industrial and military presence and facilities in the city (2021). While Petrović’s discussion of the historic industry, contemporary deindustrialization, and changing relationship to space will be central to the sections that follow, the ways in which the author accounts for how graffiti within the remnants of these industrial and military spaces reflects local ties to working-class culture and history, should be acknowledged here. Particularly, Petrović points to sites such as ROJC (as mentioned earlier, a former JNA barrack and technical school and contemporary cultural centre,) as not only being closely tied to notions of Pula’s multicultural and working-class tradition by residents but expressing this materially with graffiti portrait of former Uljanik worker, Branko Črnac Tusta.

Aside from the role of graffiti depicting working-class culture, ROJC is a particularly valuable site for understanding how public or street art, murals, tagging, and graffiti in Pula, are actively utilized as a means of place-making within a former military or government building. In 2004, ROJC established an 8-year-long project called “Krojčberg” where they called upon graffiti artists from around Croatia to “change the visual identity of the barracks to a more suitable place for cultural creativity” (ROJC 2011). Beginning with shared spaces like staircases, corridors, and its courtyard, Krojčberg utilized street art as an urban intervention aimed to promote a sense of communal space with potential in the future (See Regional Express 2009). As

evident in *Figure 4-3*, these terms of place-making are written in the language of locals, who, by graffiti and public art, embrace the history and impact of industries like the military in Pula but in a way that is uniquely their own. In this, rather than pristine walls, which in a former military school like ROJC, would have appeared as cold and hospital-like, graffiti was used to rupture and radically share Istria's subcultural experience and views.

The 2019 piece titled "Katarina" by Andrew Hodges, written for a series focused on Pula titled "Unwanted Histories," speaks similarly to the presence and afterlife of former military sites in Pula in focusing on Katarina, a former military complex on the far north side of Pula's bay. Despite being developed infrastructurally, Hodges speaks to the abandonment of the military site and concession of the territory to Croatia tycoon, Danko Končar, for a proposed luxury marina and hotels. For Hodges, Katarina's history and present circumstances reflect a particular belief in Pula's "inorganic" development as a city. Such ideology promotes a focus on tourism through the notion that "Pula needs [to be pushed] out [of] a rut of its own creating" (Hodges 2019a). Yet, despite such economic proposals for Katarina, Hodges argues that methods of occupying Katarina through graffiti, bicycle rides, dog walks, and even stealing, act as a "counter-reaction" by Puležani residents. Particularly, Hodges (2019a) turns to an example of graffiti in Katarina where "Pula" is written and crossed out, and below it is written, "Končarevo" or "Končar's." Hodges's attention to this piece in Katarina calls on the nuanced adaptation of this space, where despite efforts to "inorganically" change its use and purpose, locals resist and continue to define this space themselves.

Hodges and Petrović's discussions moreover emphasize the link between industry, labour, and graffiti, as the authors showcase examples of contemporary graffiti in Pula touch on memory or loss of industry and economic stability. These trends emphasize the maintained value

of these memories to Pula's collective, a factor relevant to the cases of Pula's Banksy and the anti-Calucem graffiti taken up in the next sections.

This section first defines and explores different modes of graffiti, to ultimately exemplify the nuanced and multifold ways in which graffiti appears in Pula as a generative power to bring a therapeutic force to bare. Through examples like Istrian graffiti during World War II as well as in the years following the post-socialist transition, we see the historically important role of graffiti within the region. Furthermore, the works of Hodges (2019a) and Petrović (2021) demonstrate contemporary examples of Puležani utilizing graffiti as a means to resist proposed development plans and in turn, place-make. As this section begins to recognize the ways in which graffiti responds to feelings or notions of displacement and injurious development, we uncover the role of slow dispossession and graffiti as a therapeutic response within these examples. In the subsequent section, I will further elaborate and address slow dispossession and graffiti as therapeutic through two specific case studies, Pula's Banksy and graffiti targeting Pula's cement plant, Calucem Ltd.



Figure 4-4, A stencilled piece by an anonymous graffiti artist colloquially known as Pula Banksy. The piece has Zoran Angeleski featured in black with a fist in the air, and the faces of the Istrian Prefect, Ivan Jakovčić, the mayor of Pula, Boris Miletić, and the owner of Glas Istre, Albert Faggian, below him. The text reads, "truth will have the last word!"

4.2. THE PULAN BANKSY

Since October 2006, a series of stencilled graffiti pieces directly targeting Pula's politicians, business tycoons, and newspapers have appeared throughout the city. The first piece stated "Nino Putine" or "Nino Putin," with a headshot of the Istrian Prefect for 20 years running, Ivan Jakovčić. The stencil referenced Jakovčić by the diminutive name "Nino," and evidently compared Jakovčić to Vladimir Putin. The original piece appeared during a political crisis where Jakovčić was exposed as being behind the firing of several *Glas Istre* journalists and editors. In later renditions of the same stencil, the years "2006-2010" were included below the headshot of Jakovčić. The years marked the continued association between Jakovčić and *Glas Istre*.

The artist(s) behind the stencils would become known as "The Pulan Banksy," referencing the anonymous street artist known for their stencil technique and dark humour and satirical statements. Like Othon Alexandrakis's (2016) informants Aris and Tassos using the Alitico style of graffiti that similarly uses stencils, tags, and witty captions, the "cleaner look" of the style helps it stand out and open its audience to regular people (2016, 289). For the Pulan Banksy artists, the clean lines and easily reproducible nature of the graffiti are reflective of a critical element of their messaging and purpose. In an interview with Silvana Fable (2010), the artists behind the stencil explain their main goal as "[...] to warn of undemocratic networking of government, capital and the media to the detriment of citizens"⁶⁴ (Fable 2010). The graffiti group continues by explaining that rather than being viewed as art, these pieces are solely political in their eyes. They further state that in marking the walls with statements that arise in conversations with other Puležans, any sense of ownership or authorship of the graffiti expressions is removed, and, instead, emphasizes the communal ownership or rights to the graffiti itself.

⁶⁴ Translated from: "Naš osnovni cilj jest upozoriti na nedemokratsku umreženost vlasti, kapitala i medija na štetu građana."

In the years since 2006, pieces by the Pula Banksy continued to appear in the most frequented areas of Pula including Uljanik's Walls and the historic city centre, where the artists strategically utilized city spaces populated by both tourists and residents alike to spread their message.⁶⁵ In this section, I will explore how the example of graffiti produced by the Pula Banksy, its appearance and effect in Pula, utilizes forms of representation and language to challenge deterritorializing forces such as local media, politicians, and business tycoons. I will first identify and contextualize key pieces by the Pula Banksy graffiti artists as a means of speaking to feelings of crisis and dispossession. From here I will explain how through utilizing its public and social nature, the Pula Banksy street art has helped to define a sense of "event-ness" and crisis of increasingly normalized forms of corruption and clientelism in Pula.

While some of the group's graffiti tackled broader issues from the imprisonment of local musicians to George W. Bush, in the events that followed 2006, the work of Pula's Banksy largely presented and focused on perpetuating a form of "guerilla warfare"⁶⁶ against the Istrian Prefect and those within his network, including, business tycoons, and newspaper agencies. As mentioned, the 2006 graffiti piece "Nino Putin" looked to sensitize locals to the networks of corruption surrounding Jakovčić and his role in local media. Five editors and two journalists were fired from *Glas Istre* in 2006 following an inquiry into a loan for 30 million HRK from the president of the newspaper's management and majority owner, Željko Žmak, to a hotel company (DW 2006). As one of the dismissed editors' states, with Jakovčić's IDS political party being the only majority party on the Istrian peninsula, there was fear this firing meant "Ivan Jakovčić

⁶⁵ For example, as Fable (2010) notes, "[The graffiti is] found in the most frequent places, in the busiest street Sergijevaca in Pula, on the buildings around the market, on the building of the Employment Bureau and, if related to *Glas Istre*, on their building on Riva."

⁶⁶ Borrowing from Fable's (2010) article title, "Political Graffiti: Urban guerrillas against the prefect Jakovčić [Politički Graffiti: Urbana gerila protiv župana Jakovčića.]"

[would get what he] has wanted for years: his [own] newsletter”⁶⁷ (Ibid). While an investigation later concluded that “there is no reasonable doubt that they committed a criminal offence” related to the dismissal of the *Glas Istre* employees, the incident nonetheless sparked a sense of public uncertainty in local politics (Porestina 2006).

The 2006 piece was seen to incite a bubbling up of local attempts to hold Istrian politicians and newspapers responsible. In the years following, Pula’s Banksy continued to target Jakovčić through graffiti. In April 2010, during a time of increased discussion of the privatization of the Uljanik Shipyard, another graffiti image of Jakovčić appeared at the entrance of the shipyard, this time with the Uljanik emblem and a caption written in Italian, “Voglio la fabbrica, voglio la terra” (“We want factories, we want land”) (Fable 2010). A little later Jakovčić was again the subject of another piece near Uljanik, with the caption “No Nino, no golf,” referring to Jakovčić’s plans for furthering tourism in the city with the creation of golf courses (See Fable 2010).

The appearance of anti-golf course graffiti specifically relates to the “Brijuni Riviera Project,” a development plan by the Brijuni Riviera Company looking to transform 24 km of publicly owned land, including earlier mentioned Katarina, as well as other areas like Muzil. While the next chapter will further address these development plans, it is important to preface here that the Brijuni Riviera Project has received a lot of criticism not just for the lack of transparency in development plans and negotiations, but, further, for fear over how these projects shape the future of Pula. As Ana Kandare Šoljaga (2011) notes, many locals fear that the decision to privatize public land for commercial and touristic purposes (rather than for local use) “[...] means the enrichment of individuals, while local people will be servants.” Regarding

⁶⁷ Translated from: ““Pitam se, znači, jesmo li od danas dobili ono što Ivan Jakovčić godinama želi - svoj bilten.””

graffiti by the Pulan Banksy, these proposals and negotiations became a continuous topic expressed through graffiti. Significant here is how these pieces came to reflect growing tension between proposed city development, and local desires including, industrial futures.

A key reflection of this relationship between Anti-Brijuni Riviera and Anti-Golf graffiti came in 2011 and 2012. During a City Council meeting on July 27, 2011, discussing finalized plans and contracts for the Brijuni Riviera development project, a member of a civic initiative “Volim Pulu,” or *I Love Pula*, spoke out and criticized the council for forged minutes. The criticism followed consecutive council meetings where the project was unexpectedly raised (not on the docket), refusing to include objects about the projects in the contract, and illegally convened meetings (Istarski 2011). The critical Volim Pulu attendee turned out to be *Glas Istre* journalist, Zoran Angeleski. In the days that followed the meeting, Angeleski was illegally dismissed by his employer *Glas Istre*, as he “did not present himself at the session of the City Council of the City of Pula on July 27, 2011, as a representative of the trading company *Glas Istre* newspaper” (Net.hr 2011).

As one article states, Angeleski’s comments came at a decisive moment:

“After ten years in which the government systematically rejects every argument, openly avoids public debates and discussions, it is obvious that the people, institutions of civil society, as well as professional associations, are deprived of any possibility of influencing the processes and decisions by which the ruling caste shapes the long-term fate of the area and its population, guided by the desire to gain further political power and profit” (Istarski 2011).⁶⁸

The appearance of anti-Brijuni Riviera Project stencils by the Pulan Banksy in turn reflects an observing and witnessing of the illicit planning and negotiations mentioned above. These pieces,

⁶⁸ Translated from: “Nakon deset godina u kojima vlast sustavno odbija svaki argument, otvoreno izbjegava javne rasprave i diskusije, očito je da su narod, institucije civilnog društva, kao i stručne udruge, lišeni svake mogućnosti utjecaja na procese i odluke kojima vladajuća kasta dugoročno kroji sudbinu prostora i njegovog stanovništva, rukovodeći se željom za stjecanjem daljnje političke moći i profita.”

moreover, in their identification of corruption, register and express crisis to and on behalf of residents.

Akin to Das's (2009) discussion of state-renderings of the "ordinary," when speaking of "event" here, I am particularly interested in how graffiti challenges what Elizabeth Povinelli notes as "the matrix of intelligibility," what is deemed eventful, or how who is narrated and who is doing the narrating coincides with conceptions of a potential future, whereby potentiality and hope for some can never be "a future" (2011, 27-28). Graffiti in these cases disrupts the status quo by calling out and naming perceived injustices that otherwise were not registered as "crises" as they appear as "event-less."

In this way, graffiti by Pula Banksy appears as a form of care and the therapeutic comparable to Chloe Ahmann's (2018) work on the industrialized town of Curtis Bay, Maryland, where Ahmann notes residents utilize a strategy for event-making by altering injurious rhythms of political and corporate conditioning. Ahmann's attunement to how gradual imperceptible conditions of distress do not necessarily lead to the weakening of victims, but also illicit deliberate and creative formulations of urgency emphasize processes of incrementality, or slowing down, as well as "bursts" of temporal insanity as methods of enacted political strategy. Like Curtis Bay residents, the graffiti of Pula's Banksy plays with time and space to weaken municipal powers through small successive victories that hinge on visibility, witnessing, and monitoring. The "moral punctuation" of the graffiti pieces, like the Curtis Bay strategies, explicitly mark time and events, demanding a response (*cf.* Ahmann 2018, 160). Within Pula's context, graffiti's marked morality provides an otherwise for locals in speaking to witnessed dispossession, in comparison, these processes are often met by municipal urgency to cover up pieces as quickly as possible, in turn limiting visibility, witnesses, and recognition.

The act of registering or identifying crisis here is further evident in the numerous pieces by the graffiti artists challenging local leaders and business plans and placing Angeleski as a hero for his representation of resistance and potential of an otherwise. By late August 2011, *Figure 4-4* appeared. The stencilled piece includes an image of Angeleski holding his fist up as well as the portraits of three men: the Istrian Prefect, Ivan Jakovčič, the mayor of Pula, Boris Miletić, and the owner of *Glas Istre*, Albert Faggian. The text on the stencil reads, “truth will have the last word!” As an anonymous blog post notes, the text alludes to the lack of transparency regarding the Brijuni Riviera project (Walls of Rojc 2011).

Taking up the Pula Banksy piece, the anonymous article posted on the ROJC’s blog further situates the significance of this stencil within Pula’s setting. While discussing the earlier mentioned project of Krojčberg, the author from ROJC comes to describe the Angeleski stencil as reflecting the history of graffiti in Pula where the “city has long been aware of the wall as a training ground for the development and expression of free thinking and creativity” (Ibid). Identifying the uses of graffiti during Italian rule from 1945-47 as well as in the 90s, the author argues the contemporary appearance of these stencils in Pula “testifies to the power of graffiti to involve all those who are able to see it in the desired problem”⁶⁹ (Ibid).

Aside from the stencils being seen to reflect an important history and feature of Puležan culture as per the ROJC article, this era of graffiti worked alongside and even initiated local organizations and resistance movements. By September 2011, local organizations like Volim Pulu published the “truth will have the last word” stencil in their independent newspaper called *Otvoreni Muzil* (“Open Muzil”). The image is used alongside an article by Predrad Lucić describing the dissonance between political narratives surrounding the Brijuni Riviera project

⁶⁹ Translated from: “Pula tako i ovom prilikom svjedoči moći grafita da u željeni problem uključi sve one koji su ga kadri ugledati.”

and the reality of the project through the dismissal of Zoran Angeleski. Despite claims for the project to be the “bearer development of Istria and the Republic of Croatia” that is “socially responsible towards the society as a whole,” those spearheading the project continually neglected and dismissed any criticisms of the project. Playing on words, Lucić describes Angeleski as becoming the symbolic “nothing” that will come in the way of Jakovčić’s plans for Istria’s tourist development. Lucić asserts the treatment of Angeleski will soon be the norm for all employees and owners within the area taken over by the Brijuni Riviera project. The *Otvoreni Muzil* publication finishes with a note that those in power will not pay the price for their treatment or effects, but instead, it will be the community that is forced to deal with the consequences. Lucić emphasizes this with the note that the project should instead be titled the “Brijuni diktatura,” or “Brijuni Dictatorship.”



Figure 4-5, *Okupacija Končarismusa*, or “Occupation of Končar the highest.” Unknown source, photo received from an interlocutor.

The feeling of all-consuming power is later taken up in the February 2012 stencil stating “Okupacija Končarisimusa,” or “Occupation of Končar the highest,” with an eery rendering of Brijuni Riviera investor, Danko Končar (see *Figure 4-5*). An anonymous post on ROJC’s blog helps to situate the “Occupation by Končar the highest” piece in stating that it “condenses into just one word in one notion of bloody rich association [asocijativnosti]. Occupation”

(Anonymous 2012).⁷⁰ The post continues by naming the value of such graffiti expressions in Pula:

“[...] If we look back at the increasingly dangerous deviations and extremely harmful actions of the authorities that we have been witnessing for at least the last ten years. When they attack and wipe out the entire media, when they wipe out huge coastal expanses as if they were their private property, not public goods on which the future of many generations depends, why not also graffiti, the heralds of the evil we live and will live. Or [will we] fight against them? Or will everything remain in opportunistic silence? [...] Such a political-artistic staging of the truth, but also of the future, would not exist without the author living the pain and injustice inflicted by minor and major occupiers. But there is also an almost childlike joy because of this bitter, caricatured but true satire, with which the author ridicules uncontrolled force and power. Before the eyes of the whole congregation. Although symbolically, and on a political level, it is a just execution. Without resorting to cold weapons. Let alone for fiery ones. There is enough fire here.”⁷¹

With growing distrust in regional media, the anonymous blog author notes that the graffiti appears at a crucial time. For the writer, the anonymity of the street artists reflects the shared lived experience of living under these conditions, though nevertheless resisting the oppressive forces faced with a “childlike joy.” The playful ridicule evident in the graffiti in turn reflects a

⁷⁰ Translated from: “[...] sabiva u tek jednu riječ, u jedan pojam krvavo bogate asocijativnosti. Okupacija.”

⁷¹ Translated from: “[...] ako se osvrnemo na sve opasnija zastranjenja i iznimno štetne postupke vlasti kojima svjedočimo bar posljednjih desetak godina. Kad napadaju i brišu čitave medije, kad brišu silna priobalna prostranstva kao da su njihove privatne prćije, a ne javna dobra o kojima ovisi budućnost mnogih generacija, zašto ne bi i grafite, te vjesnike zla koje živimo i koje ćemo tek živjeti. Ili se ipak protiv njih boriti? Ili će ipak sve ostati na oportunoj šutnji [...] Takvog političko-umjetničkog uprizorenja istine, ali i budućnosti, ne bi bilo bez autorskog življenja muke i nepravde koju nanose manji i veći okupatori. No, tu je i gotovo dječja radost zbog te gorke, karikirane ali istinite satire, kojom autor ismijava nekontroliranu silu i moć. Pred očima sve svjetine. Premda simbolički, i na političkoj ravni, pravednička je to egzekucija. Bez da se poteglo za hladnim oružjem. A kamoli za vatrenim. Dovoljno je ovdje vatre.”

fight without tangible weapons, yet still maintaining a fierce and driven message. The blog thus presents a reflection of how the Pula Banksy offers a sense of potential and motivation for the public.

Evidently, public responses to street art here –whether local organizations or the general public – demonstrate a resource for hope and connectedness despite overwhelming distrust in governing systems and media outlets. In this, street art is seen to be therapeutic tool in establishing a sense of eventfulness and language that inspires, drives, and symbolizes local frustration, outcry, and resistance to corruption and clientelism.

Within this discussion, the role of the public is critical to the art created by the Pula Banksy. As mentioned earlier, the very messaging of the graffiti group is seen to be an amalgamation or expression of conversations had by Pulažani. The artist explains:

“[...] authorship is irrelevant in this form of expression, most of the ideas and messages are created through the conversations [with] people from Pula, through [the] humour in cafes, on the street, and they are actually part of the popular or folk culture of the city. [...] [The] graffiti originated from the public [...] with [the graffiti’s] position in the city, they are also public, and by no means personal. Therefore, charging for them would be equal to privatization” (Fable 2010).⁷²

The tension between public art and privatization where the ability to share Pulažani sentiment without monetary benefit appears as a conspicuous critique of the very subjects of the graffiti. While the critique of these forms of privatization or corruption is evidently a theme driving the political graffiti, the statement by the artists further instantiates the foundational role of the social element of these graffiti pieces. In noting the inspiration behind the pieces – the conversations, humour, and café culture in Pula – the authors refer to values and qualities believed to be

⁷² Translated from: “[...] autorstvo je u ovakvom obliku izražavanja nebitno, većina je ideja i poruka nastala kroz razgovore ljudi iz Pule, kroz humor u kavanama, na ulici, te su one zapravo dio popularne ili narodne kulture grada. [...] Ti grafiti su nastali iz javnog, ali su i svojim položajem u gradu oni također javni, a nikako ne osobni. Stoga bi njihovo naplaćivanje bilo ravno privatizaciji.”

uniquely Puležani. In this way, we see how the role of critique and discomfort that was discussed in prior chapters in terms of *tapija*, small talk, and complaint, as something that appears and is uniquely to the area, appear again with graffiti. It is with these qualities, traits, and ways of speaking that the Pula Banksy addresses contemporary local issues. In these terms, the artist addresses the language of the graffiti as evidencing and forging collective values to destabilize deterritorializing ways of life.

The use of “Puležani” values and qualities, further develops the role of care and therapy not just in terms of collective crisis recognition, but in a sense of unity despite crisis. The graffiti artist describes the art and public identity as allowing a “collective unity” that comes to reflect a sense of “harmony and brotherhood” (Fable 2010). For the Pula Banksy, this exists in opposition to the subjects of the pieces, where “for these public figures, [they – the citizens –] are just voters, the numbers they collect every four years” (Fable 2010). Graffiti in these cases allows for recognition that “in these moments of crisis, it is anonymous people, groups, and collectives that are coming to the fore... The history of revolutions is the history of anonymous people!” (Fable 2010).

Evidently, the example of the Pula Banksy graffiti in Pula presents an example of collective value and voice contesting deterritorialization. As discussed, the use of graffiti to identify events and crises within everyday work as a powerful tool for those on the edges of public and hegemonic discourse. Graffiti presents a tactic to publicly critique dispossessive processes, and furthermore unite residents over shared concern and care for the city. In the next section, I will discuss the contemporary example of anti-Calucem graffiti in Pula. While maintaining similar aims to identify communal issues, in this case, the effects local industry has on living conditions, anti-Calucem graffiti struggles to claim a collective voice.

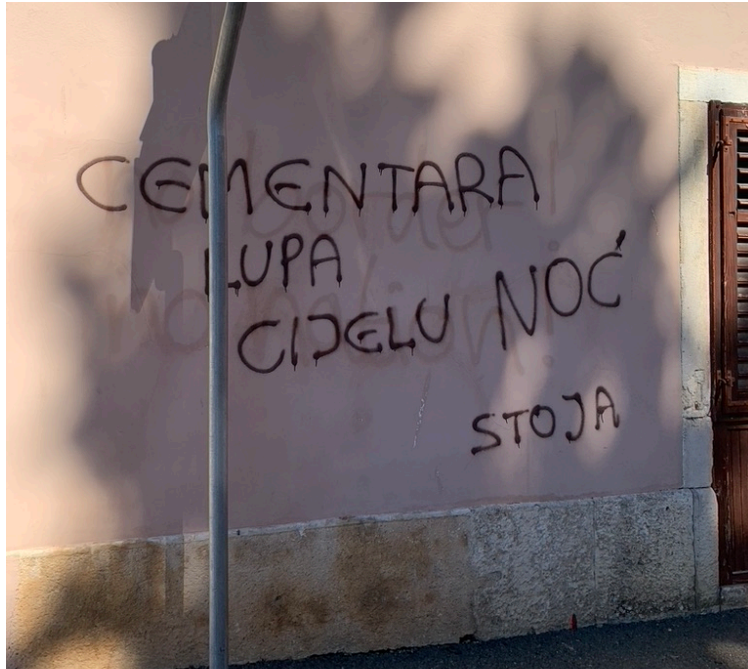


Figure 4-6, “[The Cement company] bangs/pounds the whole night - Stoja.” This piece was written on a building beside Dante Alighieri square in Pula’s old city. The photo was taken by Lea Alilovic on September 11, 2022.



Figure 4-7, Stoja residents pass by graffiti stating “[The Cement Company] doesn’t let us sleep.” Image taken by Manuel Angelini found in Petrović (2022a).



Figure 4-8, “The Cement [Company] doesn’t let us sleep. What should we do? I propose a protest. Stoja” written on a garage beside Pula’s former Barracks. The photo was taken by Lea Alilović, on November 19, 2021.

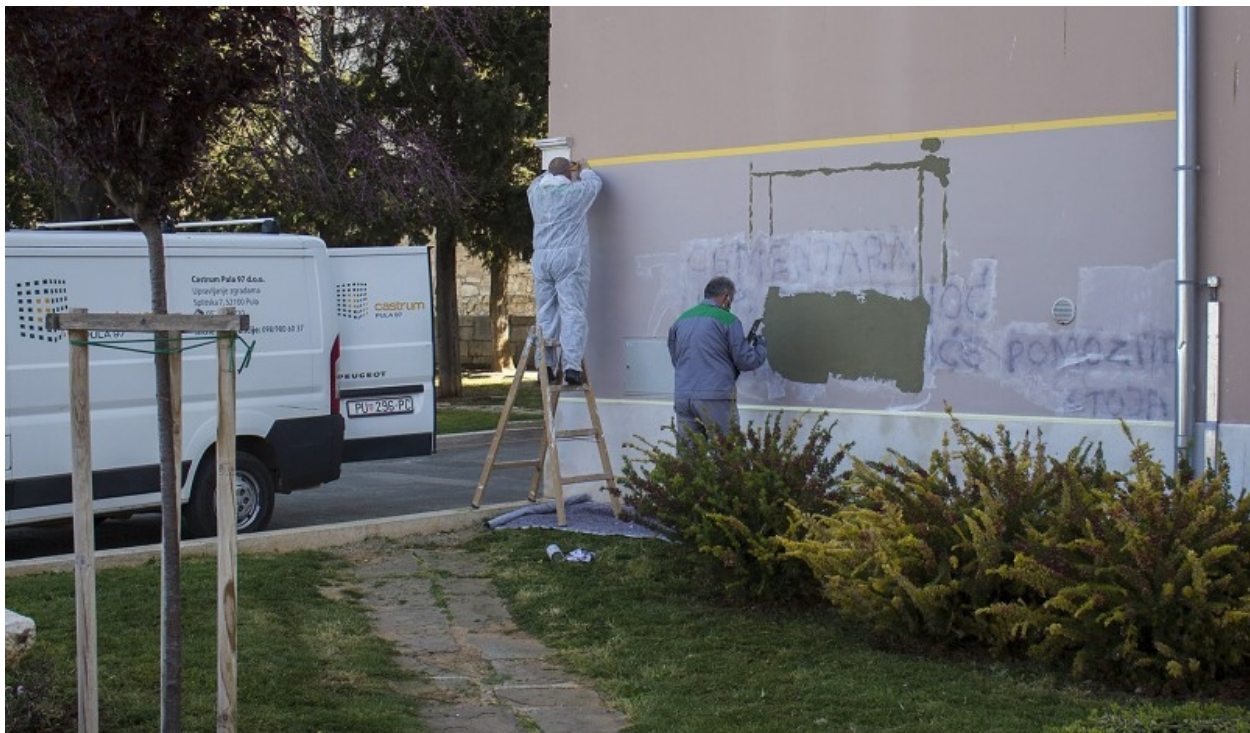


Figure 4-9, The phrase, “the cement plant is pounding all night. Mayor, help. Stoja” is being cleaned up. Photo from Regional Express, published April 15, 2020.

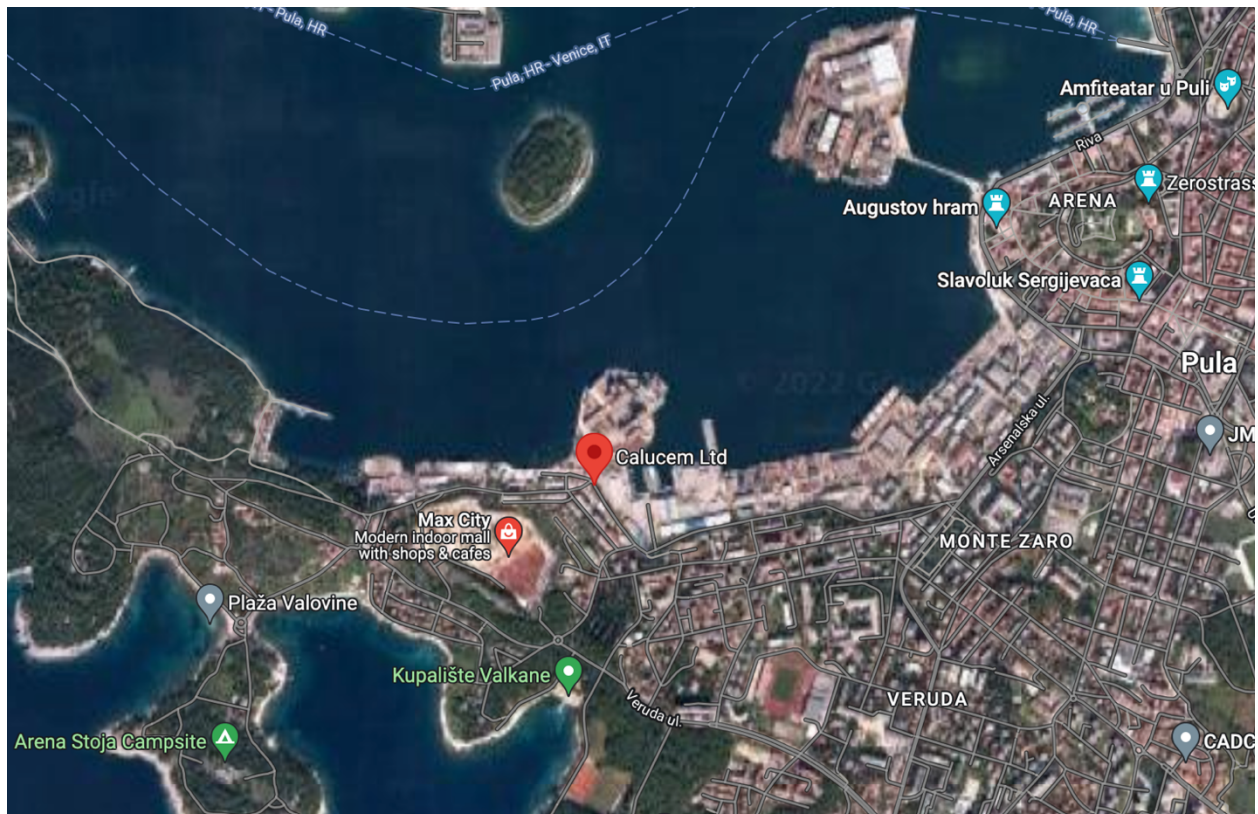


Figure 4-10, Satellite map of Pula's Stoja neighbourhood. The map highlights the presence of Pula's oldest industries along its coastal inlet. For reference, Calucem's main entrance is only 2 km from the Arch of the Sergii, one of the main entrances to Pula's old city.

4.3. STOJA VS. CALUCEM LTD.

Sitting on the Sveti Petar peninsula on Pula's coastal inlet, also known as the neighbourhood of Stoja, the cement company, Calucem Ltd. occupies prime positioning within Pula's landscape. What is now one of the most desirable beach neighbourhoods (epitomized by the construction of a new state-of-the-art shopping mall, "Max City"), Stoja's north coastline used to be home to Navy barracks and warehouses, as well as the city's biggest industry, the Uljanik shipbuilding company. Evidently, Stoja comes to represent much of the changing relationship between city space and industry in Pula.⁷³

⁷³ While not as old as the Uljanik shipyard (a product of the Austro-Hungarian Empire's rule of Istria), Calucem was established in 1925 by the Kingdom of Italy. As noted by Milan Pavlović (2020), the development of the Cement company followed and was an attempt to recover the industry after World War I. The Italian government brought in engineer, Emilio Stock to develop cement production in the area after his success in other Croatian cities. This plan furthermore developed and diversified the area around Pula's coastline from solely military-based industry (Pavlović

Since April 2020, graffiti critiquing Pula's cement plant has appeared throughout the city. First reported in Pula's city centre, repetitive messages bringing to attention the noise made by the factory have been plastered on old and new facades alike. In its initial renderings, the graffiti aimed at the cement company occupied key geographical positioning within the city. Yet, as Mirjana Vermezović Ivanović notes, originally posted during COVID-19 lockdowns and off-peak tourist season, "There [weren't] many passers-by, so few [noticed] it on the wall of a closed sports shoe store" (2020b).⁷⁴

The messaging itself follows a similar and repetitive framing: "The cement [plant] is pounding all night [Cementara lupa cijelu noć]" and "The cement [plant] doesn't let us sleep [Cementara nam ne da spavat]," all ending with the signature, "Stoja" (See *Figure 4-6* and *Figure 4-7*). While the graffiti artist(s) behind the pieces remain anonymous, the signature itself flags an effort to create a united front among residents of Pula's Stoja neighbourhood.

Although most of the tags simply state the neighbourhood's troubles, some pieces address a direct audience. For example, in *Figure 4-8* we see the anonymous artist call on residents of the neighbourhood, stating "The Cement [Company] doesn't let us sleep. What should we do? I propose a protest. Stoja [Cementara nam ne da spavat. Što ćemo? Predlažem prosvjed]." In another case, and as noted in a *Regional Express* article from April 15, 2020, the artists plead for the mayor's involvement: "The cement plant is pounding all night. Mayor, help. Stoja. [Cementara lupa cijelu noć. Gradonačelnice pomozite. Stoja]." In an article for *Glas Istre*,

2020). Until 1997, the company produced calcium aluminate cement and Portland cement, with the addition of white Portland cement in 1932 (Ibid). Since 1997, the factory has only been producing special calcium aluminate cement (Ibid). This is of particular note when recognizing that as of 2020, Calucem is the world's largest producer of calcium aluminate. The 2020 article posted in *Regional Express* (April 11th) notes the company as "...the second largest producer and supplier of calcium aluminate cement in the world. [...što je čini drugim najvećim proizvođačem i dobavljačem kalcij aluminatnog cementa u svijetu.]".

⁷⁴ Translated from: "Prolaznika nema previše pa ga malo tko uočava na zidu zatvorene prodavaonice sportske obuće."

Mirjana Vermezović Ivanović notes how such graffiti pieces counter typical forms of complaint (2020b). While usual forms of complaint see residents going to the forum, or city hall, calling on the mayor's help with the cement company issue, the Stoja tags usually do not address anyone – instead they “only warn of the fact that it is pounding all night [...]” (Ibid).⁷⁵

The tagged phrases assert a feeling of the graffiti artist living, observing, or witnessing conditions in Pula. Though Vermezović Ivanović (2020b) claims the graffiti appears as a seemingly passive form of complaint, comparing the work to the case of the Pula Banksy helps argue that such graffiti is an active force that requires attention and an attending to crisis. In this way, the presentation of an ominous voice through tags on the walls offers an interesting example of monitoring and critique by means of graffiti.

In this section I explore the example of anti-Calucem graffiti and how the graffiti trend presents a similar attempt as Pula's Banksy to bring attention to issues of slow dispossession and deterritorialization. Yet, in the case of anti-Calucem graffiti, local artists attempt to call-out the practices of one Pula's remaining industries. In comparison to the previous Pula Banksy case study, the use of deindustrializing narrative within the anti-Calucem, challenges many residents' sympathy for those living in Stoja. I argue the anti-Calucem graffiti presents a nuanced discussion of what is deemed valuable communal care efforts in Pula. While the anti-Calucem graffiti similarly attempts to reflect collectivity and shared Puležani values through presenting communal care and the therapeutic, the case of anti-Calucem graffiti demonstrates the limits of social care and areas of conflict in questioning local industry and its effects on residents.

⁷⁵ Taken from: “And while the residents of Stoja called for help from the mayor at the Forum, here they do not address anyone, but only warn of the fact that it is banging all night [...] [I dok su stanovnici Stoje na Forumu zazivali pomoć gradonačelnika, ovdje se ne obraćaju nikome, nego samo upozoravaju na činjenicu da lupa cijelu noć [...].”

Despite the “Stoja” signature, many residents of Stoja and other neighbourhoods in Pula do not agree with the method nor the messaging against the cement company. In a response to an article by *Regional Express* (2020b) reporting the appearance of a new piece on a shoe store’s exterior wall, a couple of readers left their feedback on Facebook, stating “sramota” (shame) or “kreteni” (idiots). Others expand on the frustration with the method of utilizing graffiti feeling the city is being destroyed. In these comments, the authors acknowledge the damage done to the walls that were reconstructed by residents, in some cases even citing the EU and Dolcevita programs. As one comment states, “People are still paying for the reconstruction of the facades on some buildings on Stoja, and these dummies beautifully arranged [the facade] as soon as they were finished. More damage is done by the one who writes it than by the one against which it crushes.”⁷⁶

For others, frustration over the graffiti relates to the way these phrases neglect the importance of one of Istria’s remaining industries: “It’s good as long as it bangs”⁷⁷ and, sarcastically, “let’s kill [the cement company] and Glassmaker, Uljanik is no more, than the industry in Pula is dead and we depend on volunteers who will come here [...]”⁷⁸

This line of thinking follows Tanja Petrović’s discussion in the text, “Heritage of Liminality” (2021). Petrović’s article takes up the city’s bid for the title of European Cultural Capital in 2020, where the application hinges on promoting the demilitarization and deindustrialization of Pula’s coastline to re-brand the city’s unwanted industrial and military history. The application, prepared by the team Pula+2020, places emphasis on repurposing this

⁷⁶ Translated from: “Ljudi još uvijek otplaćuju obnovu fasada po nekim zgradama na Stoji, a ovi tupani su im ih ovako krasno uredili čim su bile završene. Veću štetu radi taj što to piše, nego to protiv čega drobi.”

⁷⁷ Translated from: “Dobro dok lupa.”

⁷⁸ Translated from: “Ubijmo Cementaru i Staklaru, Uljanika vise ni, onda je industrija u Puli mrtva i ovisimo o dobrovoljcima, koji ce doci ovdje [...]”.

land, where the appearance of walls like that of the shipyard, Uljanik, “block citizens of Pula from seeing the sea from most vantage points in the city centre – let alone drink a cup of coffee on a promenade like in other smaller cities by the sea” (Pula+2020, 2016 cited in Petrović 2021, 12). For Petrović, the discourse presented in the application neglects the local significance of these industrial complexes, which, until recently, employed thousands of residents. As Petrović states, drinking coffee with a view “[...] is certainly not very high on the wish list of all those who lost their jobs in Uljanik in 2018 and 2019. It is a privilege for tourists rather than locals struggling for basic existence” (2021, 12).

In Petrović’s example, the beautification and repurposing of former industrial sites are tied to a loss of income security and a middle-class life that such industry provides. These feelings are echoed in responses to the anti-Calucem graffiti, where retrospective comparisons of future imaginings emphasize a sense of fear, what has been lost, and what is desired by residents. While the anti-Calucem graffiti similarly attempts to establish an event framework through witnessing, monitoring, and critiquing the environmental degradation caused by the cement company, communal, or collective, care and concern are not reached.

Moreover, in analyzing how the Pula+2020 bid homogenizes and advocates a particular history under tourist endeavours, Petrović’s poignant discussion emphasizes the value such industries continue to have within the community, despite the present rapid deindustrialization in Pula. Such applications deem *tapija* as a socially passive mentality that must be eliminated with the help of such programs, in turn, as Petrović notes, producing an othering ideology in deeming these sites and histories as something that must be remade and reconstructed (see 2021, 13-14). Though the cases of anti-Calucem graffiti do not intentionally discredit Pula’s tie to industrial and working-class identity and values, it becomes clear that, for some, the cement company’s

smoke and dust provide signs of hope for the economic wellbeing of the city itself and its labourers.

The context of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns for the initial anti-Calucem graffiti sighting further emphasizes notions of changing communal relationship to industry. Mirjana Vermezović Ivanović's (2020c) piece on the appearance of a new piece in the old city centre aimed at the Cement Company compares Calucem to an active and working Uljanik – which received no complaints or graffiti, nor made noise throughout the night that would not let people sleep even with windows closed.⁷⁹ Yet, it should be noted that Vermezović Ivanović's commentary is selective in its portrayal. Particularly, as taken up by Andrea Matošević in "Sounds of Deindustrialization [Zvuk Deindustrijalizacije]" (2020b), Uljanik's mechanical sounds were ubiquitous to any street one stood in Pula (2020b, 26). These sounds, moreover, mediated daily life for the Puležani, including encouraging feelings of employability, progress, and modernity. In comparison, with Uljanik's closure, the silence signalled terror, abandonment, and deindustrialization.

Despite producing noise pollution and managing production during years of global and national economic crises, historically, sites such as Uljanik have remained successful in the eyes of Pula's residents because of the company's contributions to the well-being of its workers (Brunnbauer and Hodges 2019; see also Wegenschimmel 2020). As Ulf Brunnbauer and Andrew Hodges (2019) explain, the popular sentiment that Uljanik "fed the city" was not in terms of wages but accounted for the shipyard's support for workers needs outside of work hours and space, including in providing housing opportunities, the development of leisurely spaces like the

⁷⁹ Taken from: "Dok je Uljanik radio, nije bilo grafiterskih pritužbi građana ne buku koju je proizvodio cijelu noć i od koje se katkad nije moglo zaspati ni uz zatvorene prozore. Nakon propasti Arsenala, jedini proizvođač buke i prašine u zaljevu je Calucem, koji na istom mjestu radi od 1925. godine."

soccer stadium as well as the legendary Uljanik Rock Club. By the 2010s, Uljanik's failure was tied to feelings of growing distance between management and labour, and increased feelings of corruption and crony capitalism (Ibid 875). Evidently, criticism and concern for Calucem are not just related to environmental impacts, but also, social impact.

These conversations on the role of industrial loss in Pula parallel a similar phenomenon discussed in Andrea Muehlebach's (2011) work on "moral neoliberal" citizenship formation in Italy, where local affective voluntary labour presented a tactic to remedy the collective relational crisis. Particularly, in Muehlebach's piece, the bottom-up approach to citizenship building that hinged on notions of social belonging traced to Fordist-Keynesian sensibilities, are now a haunting reminder of a time of industry and publicly funded social services in Italy. Despite the paradox of affective labour, Muehlebach highlights how labour sets a stage for a nostalgic scene of social usefulness and public utility. Muehlebach's work is a reminder of the enduring power of post-Fordist (in addition to socialist) sentiment. Particularly, the failure of anti-Calucem's graffiti to produce generative and therapeutic artwork akin to the Pula's Banksy rests in the work's inability to acknowledge the legacies forged when industry and social well-being were intertwined. Such discussion, moreover, highlights the limitation of the anti-Calucem graffiti in producing a sense of community in that the artwork misses critical affective intensities that are enmeshed in Pula's community maintenance. Here, care for Pula's contemporary and future economy and industry surpass fears of environmental destruction and futures.

Vermezović Ivanović's (2020) article points to a difference in contemporary industry and historic operations. Uljanik's sound was tolerable and even appreciated because of its signalling of community prosperity. In comparison, the sound and environmental pollution of Calucem witnessed and critiqued by the anti-Calucem graffiti operates now in an undefined space,

signalling both a hope for industry during crisis, and an era where industry is increasingly distinct and separate from Pula's community. With this, Vermezović Ivanović (2020c) sheds light on how, despite its lengthy existence in Pula, Calucem's presence has shifted in recent years.⁸⁰ Specifically, when the cement company had "invested in filters, which significantly reduced the layer of dust that littered apartments and cars in this neighbourhood in the 90s."⁸¹ Vermezović Ivanović positions this historical occurrence in contrast to contemporary claims and investments in Calucem's care for the neighbourhood.

In recent years, Calucem has put tremendous effort in managing a public image of community care and environmental concern, publishing paid for articles in the local paper describing how the company "[...] is focused on creating a positive work environment, and by investing in environmentally conscious production, Calucem positively impacts the market and accompanies its key customers in their facilities around the world."⁸² An article published by Regional Express on April 11, 2020, states that with the investment of 3 million Euros into the factory, the "world-renowned cement company, has made a significant contribution to solving noise and dust problems in Pula as well as on the entire Istrian peninsula."⁸³ Despite these apparent efforts, the first recorded graffiti targeting the cement company happened only a few days after Calucem's investment to reduce noise and dust (See Vermezović Ivanović 2020c).

⁸⁰ Since 1993, the company's ownership has changed multiple times, beginning with a change to primary ownership by the German group, Heidelberg Zement, then a takeover in 2002 by the investment company, Mid Europa Partners, to eventually be sold to Argus Capital Partners in 2010, and then again in 2016 to a private equity group, Ambienta SGR fund (Grbac 2013; Calucem n.d.).

⁸¹ Translated from: "Cementara je, pamte stanovnici Stoje, i ranije ulagala u filtere, čime je značajno smanjen sloj prašine koji je 90-ih zasipao stanove i automobile u ovom kvartu."

⁸² Translated from, "Calucem je fokusiran na stvaranje pozitivnog radnog okruženja, a ulaganjem u ekološki osviještenu proizvodnju Calucem pozitivno utječe na tržište i prati svoje ključne kupce u njihovim postrojenjima diljem svijeta."

⁸³ Translated from: "Calucem, svjetski poznata tvrtka za proizvodnju cementa, značajno je pridonijela rješavanju problema buke i prašine u Puli kao i na cijelom istarskom poluotoku."

Unlike in the past, the anti-Calucem graffiti's critiques flag a sense of disbelief in contemporary filtration efforts and failure to ease residents' minds.

Vermezović Ivanović's article flags both an awareness and dilemma amongst the Puležani. The author aptly summarizes the dissonance between industry and environmental ruin, stating:

“[Calucem], on the other hand, employs 162 workers and exports to more than 60 countries. It makes noise and dust, but Coronavirus does not harm it. Pula is left with an awkward dilemma: the last industry in the port and its side effects or a clean, unsullied bay [...]”⁸⁴

While some may believe industry – its revenue, history, and employment opportunity – is more valuable to the city, others may not hold any strong opinion at all. For the former group, the presence and continuation of graffiti throughout Pula speaks for residents who do not believe the pros of industry outweigh its effects. Along these lines, we see that the graffiti's message struggles to unify audiences over notions of the values and aims of Pula. While tourism had returned to normal and even increased in the summers that followed, Vermezović Ivanović's statement nonetheless holds weight in reinstating the issues for its Puležani readers; does industry mean more than environmental pollution?

The anti-Calucem graffiti and Puležani response to the tags reflect Vermezović Ivanović's aptly stated question. Locals who recognize the effects of this lack of attention are utilizing their own means to challenge and raise awareness of the issue. As I argue, through a sense of monitoring and highlighting the crisis of environmental dispossession, the graffiti artists behind the anti-Calucem tags are attending primarily to deteriorating conditions and environmental damage as a result of Calucem's multiple changing of hands.

⁸⁴ Translated from: “Cementara, s druge strane, zapošljava 162 radnika i izvozi u više od 60 zemalja. Ona proizvodi buku i praši, ali joj koronavirus ne škodi. Puli ostaje nezgodna dilema: posljednja industrija u luci i njene nuspojave ili čist, neokaljan zaljev.”

Evidently, while anti-Calucem graffiti attempts to signal and unite Puležani over a sense of panic and fear due in part to contemporary injury and environmental degradation, the economic risks and uncertainty of industrial change is perceived to be a far worse and scarier future. Particularly, while anti-Calucem graffiti aims to perform a similar expression of communal care and therapeutic expression akin to the work of Pula Banksy, challenging normalized daily injury and dispossession, anti-Calucem neglects crucial communal attachments with Pula's historic labour force. Here, Calucem, like Uljanik, demonstrates how industrial development under socialism was seen as economically benefiting the city, and more importantly, how ongoing legacies of industry revolve around memories of an enduring and secure labour force.

In concluding this section, it becomes interesting to consider rumours and discussions of Calucem's land being sold for future tourism development. Many have speculated that an impending end to the contract on the concession for the prime seaside location of the cement company, could mean that the Sveti Petar peninsula location eventually relocates. As Danijela Bašić-Palković (2019) reports, despite the owners of the plant "not [hiding] their aspirations for tourism to develop on [the] attractive land," the company has denied these claims, citing the contract extending to 2033. Nonetheless, as Danijela Bašić-Palković (2019) notes, future plans to develop the area create prerequisite for the bay to be cleaned and become environmentally friendly. This suggestion supposes that further development of the tourist industry could be the answer to issues regarding claims of Calucem's noise and environmental pollution.

4.4. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The graffiti work of the Pulan Banksy slowed down after the events of 2012. In the years that followed, the work of Pulan Banksy remained in conversation through gallery presentations like that of Slaven Tolj in 2013. In 2021, the saga of *Glas Istre* dismissals continued, when four were dismissed for publicly opposing and critiquing the newspaper's support of the IDS party. During city mayoral elections, the editor-in-chief of the newspaper was accused of biased reporting in favour of the IDS party. Despite a continuation of the central theme and target in the Pulan Banksy's graffiti work, no street art tied to the group appeared during this time.

For years, no new work by the group appeared. In September 2022 a stencil of the current mayor of Pula, Filip Zoričić, with the text "Pula to je kraj [Pula it's the end]" appeared throughout the city. Though the stencil has not been confirmed to be the work of the Pulan Banksy, the influence is clear. The text on the new stencil appears to be a reference to a song by the iconic Pulan band, KUD Idijoti. In the song "Pula," the band sings a line, "Pula, to je raj" or translated, "Pula, it's heaven." As the *Istra24* (2022b) notes, the phrase "Pula, it's heaven" is often sarcastically used by locals.

The *Istra24* (2022b) article continues to contextualize the stencil's appearance as happening days after the local high school, where Zoričić was once the principal, was graffitied with the phrase, "Ti si jedan od onih kako vitar puše. Populist. F. Z." ("You are one of those who blow the whistle. Populist. F. Z."). The criticisms and calls of populism directed at Zoričić display distrust in the new, non-politically affiliated Mayor. While in the past Pula's Banksy's work mostly spoke to IDS politics and endeavours in the city, recent graffiti signals a continued lack of trust and imaginings of a future. Here, contemporary graffiti evidences the continuation of the political use and messaging of graffiti in Pula. We see that facades across Pula have acted

as a critical medium in the expression of feelings of crisis, corruption, and distrust of local politics and industry.

In concluding this chapter, I want to turn back to the earlier discussion on the history and significance of graffiti in Pula and Istria. At the beginning of this chapter, I turned to examples of the role of graffiti as a means to warn locals during the Italian occupation of Istria during WWII, as well as its symbolism in expressing frustration and disappointment in the years that followed post-socialist transition. I further situated these historical uses with the Pulan examples of Katarina and ROJC discussed by Hodges (2019a) and Petrović (2021) to contextualize the utilization of graffiti in the contemporary to portray city values and memories of industry. This discussion instantiates the claim of the importance of contemporary graffiti in the expression of social injury and desire for community or shared experience.

The examples of the graffiti artists comprising the Pula Banksy and the anti-Calucem groups reflect the ongoing claims of dispossession through graffiti in Pula, and moreover an attempt to rematerialize feelings of care over community values and well-being. The works of Pula's Banksy presents a case that has inspired and worked in tandem with social movements and resistance against corruption. In the case of the anti-Calucem graffiti, while the artists similarly utilize critique and monitoring of dispossession through unsustainable industry, the piece cannot agree to issues of care that concern Pula's residents and community. In this, the anti-Calucem art remains only a symbolic representation of socio-economic tension as it does not necessarily generate any shifts to the powers causing social injury, nor illicit action by locals.

As this chapter teases through elements of Pula's industrial history, the following chapter expands on this discussion. Looking to the ways in which Pula's tourist narratives and

productions engage with industrial and military history, the next chapter further situates a contemporary tension over what kind of future Pula should have, industrial or tourist.



Figure 5-1, Divided tomb stones and column repurposed for Pula's old city walls. Photo taken by Lea Alilović, August 17, 2021.

5. WALKING AND REMEMBERING THROUGH THE REMNANTS: MANAGING HERITAGE AND TOURISTIC FUTURES IN PULA

It seems that every tour in Pula begins in front of the amphitheatre. You will most likely be told the age, height, width, and the multiple uses of the arena over the last two thousand years. Maybe your tour guide will tell you some interesting facts about the site: the life of the warriors who fought years ago, the speeches held there during Fascist Italian rule, that it is the only three story Roman-era amphitheatre still intact, the amazing concerts and film festivals that take place there, and maybe even the attempts to power wash the stone stopping after only cleaning a 3-meter-high portion of the amphitheatre.

While trying to listen attentively to the tour guides you will probably find yourself zoning out at times, most likely looking at the amphitheatre in amazement. For its age, its central location, its history, you can agree, the amphitheatre is a wonder. Your eyes will gaze through the columns and arches and may eventually rest near its foundation to find the remains of the original stone road to Pula's city centre used by the Histri and Romans. With the cracking and dwindling of the contemporary road you find yourself standing on, it as if the modern, paved road is slowly giving in to the Roman road below, signifying the entangled connection between the different layers and building up of history over time. The notion of clean layers disappears to instead reveal a natural undoing of modern infrastructure, the endurance of the ancient.

From here, the tour will take you to the next stop, the fountain in Tito's Park. There you will learn that as early as the Illyrians, Pula's location was seen as strategic and pivotal because of its water source and the natural land barriers around the city's port. This fact outlines the early desire to occupy the area by different regimes, and how deep the naval history is to the city.

Most tours will take you to view the historic city walls and the Twin Gates, which frame the entrance of the Archeological Museum. At the Twin Gates, you will be reminded that only one of the twelve arches or gates are visible now, with only one being fully intact. You may follow the remnants for the wall for a short duration. The guide might point out that the stones in the section of the wall are not the original stones and have been reconfigured in recent years. You will suddenly notice the use of tomb stones and divided columns scattered and mixed in with stones (see *Figure 5-1*). Half listening to the history of the old city walls given by your tour guide, your attention will turn to a Yugoslav era office building across the street that was constructed around an exhumed Octagonal Mausoleum from the 1st century. It becomes clear, prior to even entering the old city centre, that Pula's history is overwhelming and feels as though it is coming out at the seams.

Following the outline of the old city walls you will make your way to the contemporary main entrance to the city, the one remaining Golden Arch, or Triumphal Arch of the Sergi. The arch is grand and eye catching. The names of the Lucius family are engraved, as well as ornamental cupids, garlands, bucrania, and bulls that come to signify the story of the mother who commissioned the once series of arches for her sons who had perished in war. The area surrounding the arch is known as Korzo mentioned in Chapter 2, something you would be unlikely to hear on a tour. Instead, you will hear of the street as Giardini, and how the Austro-Hungarian Empire developed the area to match their Central European urban design rather than the Mediterranean style evident elsewhere in the city.

With my participation in multiple tours and guided walks around Pula, I began developing walking and “deep hanging” as methodological tools (Little 2020; Ingold and

Vergunst 2008).⁸⁵ Occupying and lingering in these spaces became a means to expose and explore how these spaces host informal intimacies as discussed in portrayals like Hromadžić's (2017) "bathroom ethnography" and HadžiMuhamedović's (2018) "kafa i cigara" (coffee and a cigarette). Tourist sites, city centres, walking trails, and sites of work were all sites where "the narrative space, seize the conversation and allow it to endure its extensions and rhythm [that]... licensed long silences and sudden punctuations. And journeys" (HadžiMuhamedović 2018, 23).

Many guides had explained to me that they attempt to curate and tailor their tours to the interests of their clients. The active memory work and sense of overwhelming history act as a resource for tour guides, especially considering how tourist and identity narratives centre on Pula as being rich in culture and cultural productions (*cf.* Matošević 2021, 26). Such recognition reflects Manuela Guano's (2017) argument for Genoa's tour guides as the "creative class," where, as flaneurs, tour guides are active in the production of city identity and narrative. Akin to Guano's informants, despite needing certification that include courses and an examination conducted by the City of Pula to become a tour guide, guides often rely on hours of their own research and experience to formulate their portrayals.

Yet, after following a handful of tours, each seemed to cover nearly the same stops; my energy was dropping, and my excitement was dwindling. Though each tour presented varied approaches to the same information and sites, each guide with their own style, participants with their own questions that elicited the same or new conversations – the repetitiveness of the tours weighed down on my curiosity with an almost formulaic approach to the city. They made clear what went "along the grain:" the "force field" of political authority on cultural heritage that

⁸⁵ See also Geertz's (1973) concept of "thick description."

appeared in tourism descriptive vocabulary; what was shared with confidence, repeated, perfected (Stoler 2009, 53).

By my third week in Pula, I had participated in the first of many tours with Tomas. He had a unique energy for a tour guide: muted and calm, but still inarguably friendly and kind. Having been in a mountain biking accident a year prior that had severely affected his back, Tomas was forced to leave his work as an adventure tour guide and pivot instead to walking tours. I could not picture Tomas, with his seemingly gentle personality, guiding and motivating others and himself, biking or kayaking through treacherous terrains as an adventure guide, but I came to learn this unpredictability and dynamism reflected Tomas's character.

Unsurprising for a tour during an early afternoon in August, there was sweltering heat and unrelenting sun during our tour. While the tour began with the typical spots through the city – the amphitheatre, Tito's Park –Tomas's tour veered from the standard script having us head to the forum instead of tracing the old city walls. Within these few minutes, Tomas's style of guiding began to reveal itself. Becoming more comfortable after the first few stops, Tomas encouraged back and forth conversation and questions to reveal more about his clients and seemed to almost immediately adapt the tour for a more personal and local understandings of the sites visited. Like my initial impression of him, Tomas's tours often presented a relaxed, going-with the flow style that surprisingly fostered a unique wandering through and subtle unraveling of the city through walking.

Before the forum, we stopped in a grassy area behind the contemporary art museum, near the mural of Herman Potočnik discussed in Chapter 4. Along with explaining who Potočnik was, Tomas explains that the current museum was a site of a former Austro-Hungarian barracks, which later turned into a tobacco factory under Italian occupation, and then, during the Yugoslav

era, “Arena,” a knitwear factory (also known as Olga Ban or “Arena Modne Trikotaže”).⁸⁶ In front of us was a partially unearthed archaeological dig. Sitting within an oddly open green field within the city centre, the ruins are intentionally left open for walking and exploring with only a small plaque by the sidewalk to mark the site.

Tomas explained that in 2005, this area behind what was then Arena knitwear, was dug up in favour of a parking lot. Upon digging, the site was first revealed to be a 15th century Benedictine Monastery known as St. Theodor’s Quarter, then with further excavation the site was further identified as having been a Roman home and bath house. The most recent discovery situated the site as a Hellenistic cult worshipping site, or Hercules’ Sanctuary, for the ancient Hiristi.⁸⁷ The theme of parking lots and archeological findings becomes more obvious to us when we reach the site of “The Punishment of Dirce” mosaic, oddly situated right beside a contemporary parking lot. Here, Tomas digs: “It’s a Croatian thing for an important area to be less than one meter away from cars. They couldn’t just build a sidewalk.”

Making a stop at St. Maria Formosa Church, a church ruin from the 6th century, we continue to follow Flaciusova Street, which follows the shoreline, and outlines the old city. We wind up at Dante’s square just over an hour into the tour. Tomas expands on the obvious: the square’s name evidently refers to the Italian poet, Dante Alighieri, who referred to Pula in his famous work *the Divine Comedy*.⁸⁸ The square was later reconstructed by the Italians during the 1930s, where the fountain appeared as homage to both Dante and the soldiers lost in World War I.

⁸⁶See Marsetič (2016), Maksić (2016), and Matošević and Maksić (2018) for more on the former industries that occupied this site.

⁸⁷See Alka Starac’s blog piece “Hercules’ Sanctuary in the Quarter of St Theodore, Pula.”

⁸⁸The exact reference to Pula being: “Sì come a Pola, presso del Carnaro, ch’Italia chiude e i suoi termini bagna” or “As Pola, along the Quarnero, that marks the end of Italy and bathes its boundaries.”

Within Pula's old city centre Dante's square takes on an unassuming position. The square sits near the edge of the old city limits, with three of its four surrounding streets for walking-only. On its south side, a street permissible for driving maintained a surprising calmness, where waiters from the restaurant across the street moved like ants delivering plates of foods to patrons seated in the square.

A grand fountain at its centre is surrounded by a short fence and small, well-kept flower beds. A few wooden benches surround the fence, questionably facing away from the fountain itself – a design detail I was puzzled by each time I passed. The sound of the fountain can be heard day and night, a background hum that is both relaxing and creates a sense that you are elsewhere regardless of time of day. The sense of physical transportation is also aided by sounds of constant bird chirping and calls played over speakers. Not being fond or knowledgeable about birds, it often felt like the city had decided to play rainforest sounds in the square to elevate the atmosphere created there. I would later learn that the city installed a falcon call over speakers in an attempt to deter starlings, magpies, and pigeons from taking over the square.⁸⁹

While the fountain depicts Dante's "nine circles of hell" with the strategic application of nine defining lines, breaks, and materials, Tomas notes "it's clear the fountain was created by the fascists. You can tell by its design: the simplistic design, the clean lines, materials like black marble used [...]." Although I know very little about 20th century Italian architecture and design, it was clear that the fountain and other features of the square maintains a design unparalleled in the rest of the city. Tomas continues, "the fountain sits in irony as being a fascist monument in anti-fascist city." While the names of the soldiers written in metallic black letters on the tub of

⁸⁹Clarified after reading Gregorović (2022a) and Vermezović Ivanović (2021)

the fountain were later removed with Istria's liberation, the square remains a remnant of the complex history of the city (*Cf.* Labin Art Express XXI. 2018, 63).

With Tomas' assistance, Dante's square stood out as an amalgamation of Pula's history: in addition to the square's name and fountain, existed a strikingly modern and futuristic design post office, "The Palace of the Post Office" adjacent to the fountain (In Croatian, "Palača pošte," and Italian, "Palazzo delle Poste") built in a during Italy's reign, the Church of Our Lady of Mercy – a rebuild dating to the Venetian era, a sight line of Uljanik's walls, the first public school Dante Alighieri, "Škole Dante Alighieri" (today the Centre School, or "Škola Centar"), in addition the contemporary cafés, bars, and some of the best restaurants in the city. In the present, the square is regarded and cared for with the idea that it exists as "a kind of living room in the city" (Pavlović 2021) – a continuation of the legacy Robert Slacki's (2019) depicts as dating as early of 1854, where the theatre in Dante's Square was an integral source of enrichment and entertainment for those in Pula.⁹⁰ Revitalization projects of Dante's Fountain, as well as the reconstruction of other city sites, have sought to, as the former Mayor of Pula and current Istrian Prefect Boris Miletić describes, "bring the past of this city closer to our fellow citizens, Istrians and tourists, and activate the huge potential of cultural heritage and revive the old town even more strongly" (Pavlović 2021).⁹¹

Stepping over an oddly situated metal trench plate near the Centre School, Tomas flags these as the remains of another archaeological excavation that uncovered and confirmed a portion of the old-Roman city walls. Despite the discovery, the artifact was left, covered with

⁹⁰Paraphrased and translated from: "Sve aktivnosti provest ćemo zajedno sa sugrađanima i strukom kako bi ova tradicionalna mjesta okupljanja Puležanki i Puležana, svojevrtni dnevni boravak grada, bio primjereno dotjeran."

⁹¹Paraphrased and translated from: "Njime želimo sugrađanima, Istrijanima i turistima približiti prošlost ovoga grada i aktivirati ogroman potencijal kulturne baštine te još snažnije oživjeti starogradsku jezgru, kaže gradonačelnik Pule Boris Miletić."

dirt, and enclosed by the metal plates. The uneven ground was a subtle reminder of the overwhelming history of the square itself. Unknown to us at the time, was that there would soon be a further unearthing in Dante's square.

This chapter explores the side effects, "dealings-with", and overwhelming sense of history in Pula. As the example of Dante's square begins to reveal, the historical patterns, moments, and experiences which influence present and future relations to space and notions of Pula's cityscape. Here, tour guides such as Tomas play active roles in engaging and sharing this nonlinear history. Tomas's tour offers more than just guides "explaining" buildings and streets. Akin to Andrew Irving's guided walk of New York City with his HIV+ interlocutor, walking as an ethnographic method permits a glimpse of internal representations of experience, expressions, and memory that are nevertheless emergent from embodied and empirical reality (2016,12). Similarly, James Evans and Phil Jones (2011; 2012) speak to how more than biographies or place as bounded and static, walking interviews acknowledge place as dynamic and "interpenetrated by connections to other social and economic worlds" (2012, 2320).

My frequent coffees with Tomas in Dante's square physically and temporally paralleled the eventual closure, fencing, and demolishing of a former Yugoslav-era building that faced the square. The inconspicuous and decaying site was set to be replaced by a mix-use residential and commercial construction. By the end of my time in the field, the construction halted prompting the swirling of rumours and stories over the archeologic unearthing that caused the delay. In early 2022, it became known that upon excavation, the site maintained Roman ruins including remains of living spaces or public rooms with mosaic tile flooring (Begić 2022; Vermezović Ivanović 2020a and 2020b). Despite the massive archaeological find, the site was covered up and paved over for a private parking lot to be built in place of it (*Cf.* Mohorović 2023).

In observing and walking through Pula, it became evident that despite the urban fabric transforming overtime, “the ancient urban foundation maintains continuity until the 19th century. The ancient grid of streets is also included in today’s structure of the city” (Ujčić 2021, 13). Like the archeological and geographical view on stratigraphy where sediment is seen to be arranged by layers, meaning that soil, debris, artifacts, are laid down on top of each other over time, at street level. The adjacency of the roads, where the modern road is seen to follow the same path set out centuries ago, and the past’s role in the present.

It was also the moments or evidence of this immense history seeping into the streets and daily lives in Pula that interrupt the finite narratives told through tourism. In reality, the inability of tours to account for the entire history of these sites came to fitfully merge in the present. Guided tours came to indicate the slippages of time. The contemporary and historical restoration or maintenance of sites which came to undo the orderliness of storytelling. Stratified layers of dense history, the city’s evolving life that transforms and twists forms, become visible with some attention. Tour scripts, the slippages, and unplanned sharing offers insight to ways locals have different, less consistent, grittier, and messier relations and impressions of their city.

I am interested in the ways Puležans are not just performing or reiterating tourist narratives but the ways such tours demonstrate how the city is imagined and engaged with. Despite these tour scripts at times being oversimplified or romanticized versions and visions of the city, this chapter explores the way tours maintain sentiments that many Puležans hold dear and uncomplicated by the contemporary state-of-things in Pula, including factors such as limited support, economy, infrastructure, and future. Tours become a means to trace historical remnants and debris as they evidence a layered history of the city that is felt beyond the tours and tourist practices for locals of the city. Here, like Ann Stoler’s (2009) reading “along the archival grain,”

attention is paid to the textured, uneven, and nonlinear attempts at storytelling that suggest Puležani attempts to manage and deal with the lingering past (*cf.* Alilović 2021).

Here, the walking interview method is critical to observe and understand how place, its meaning and use, changes overtime. Here, interlocutors' attachments to aspects like city space, memories, and stories, demonstrate the layered encounters with time as it maintains meanings, or even a lack thereof, and affective residues of these knowledge systems and experiences (HadžiMuhamedović 2018). These stories, myths, and historical events, moreover, illustrate how people engage with history and manage daily life in Pula, recognizing history's role and networks as perpetually open to revision (Jackson 2017, 47).

As Pula's tourist industry in part aims to revitalize and reinvent public space and image, walking presents a means for locals to deal with memories that once made-up daily experience and environment: emotionally active sites that elicit remembering and relations to the past, including accounts of post-Fordist and deindustrialized understandings, impact, and affect in Pula (*cf.* Irving 2016). As an adaptive and embodied practice, walking tours offer textured experiences of engaging with the landscape of ordinary encounters that Kathleen Stewart (2008) might call active and not-yet-identified social and political formations and attachments. Here, walking provides critical methodological insight to how locals experience and relate to such spaces, beyond and with standard tourist discourse and portrayals.

With and through walking I am interested in exploring how local actors navigate tourisification that, among other forces, appear to change or are threatening to change Pula's cityscape. In turning to tourist narratives produced and perpetuated by locals, I examine local attempts to reconcile with the history of labour and Fordist industrialization, with new forms of economic structuring in neoliberal, post-Fordist terms in Pula. Particularly, I focus on how local

memory manages and integrates labour history, where nostalgic looking-back trace a period of full employment, a decent tax base, socialist modern living, and Fordist industrialization. This discussion considers the works of Andrew Hodges (2019a; 2019b; 2020; Ulf Brunnbauer and Andrew Hodges 2019), Andrea Matošević (2018; 2020a; 2020b; 2021; Maksić and Matošević 2018), Tanja Petrovic (2021), and projects such as “Unwanted Heritage: Remembering and Forgetting Industry in Istria,” who have written extensively on the limited feature of industrial past in Pula’s touristic promotion and narrative (Brunnbauer and Duda, n.d.).

This reckoning of past, and present forms and modes of neoliberal political-economic organization intensifies public feelings compounded and identified as *tapija*. *Tapija* appears as the affective intensity and sensing of feeling in the “middle” of things according to Deleuze and Guattari (2018 [1987], 25), or the durative, the non-linear temporal process of the present in Bergson’s terms (1991 [1896]). At the same time, as Tanja Petrović’s (2021) work highlights, tourist production looks to eradicate *tapija*, whereby these very processes further instantiate a sense of *tapija* as loss and boredom in Pula. Slippages of tourist narrative in guided tours: managing, retelling, recasting in implicit and sometimes explicit ways. This chapter thus looks to the emotions or affects guiding and involved in tourism as affective intensities or ordinary encounters, or, as Kathleen Stewart (2007) describes, the emotional setting for conditions to potentialize and realize something.

This approach to history recognizes the subjective and unstable, an approach that moves away from viewing history as “already objectified” to allow for engagement and understanding through interlocutors’ bodies and modes of engagement (*cf.* HadžiMuhamedović 2018, 25). In this mode of engagement, walking and being within the city itself provided a means to explore the “web of bodies... and daily performances” of the immediate and imagined realities (Moretti

2017, 93-95). As Angela Garcia notes, these sites, histories, and “constellation of scenes and narrations that accompany them” are embedded in elements of storytelling that appear in evidence like life-history retelling and letter writing (2016, 587). In both retelling and the residual elements of lived experiences, complex felt and lived realities are materialized, remembered, or forgotten (Ibid 588; See also Irving 2016).

Utilizing and considering methods of walking through the city as an adaptive and embodied practice (*Cf.* Ingold and Vergunst 2008), I weave elements and stories of Pula I experienced, shared, and overheard. This methodology, and this chapter, values and utilizes a “contaminated” approach to ethnographic collection and retelling, where stories at times remain partial, subjective, and contradictory (*Cf.* Stewart 1991). In this way, my methods of mapping and following informal intimacies through walks and tours, acknowledges Pula as a site where history is not imagined “as a straight line of progress,” but a place which continues to be weighted by economic booms and busts, migration and return, destabilizations and displacement (*cf.* Stewart 1996, 15). This method highlights Charles Stewart’s notion of historicity as a manner in which “person operating under the constraints of social ideologies make sense of the past while anticipating the future” (Eric Hirsch and Charles Stewart 2005, 262; Stewart 2016). As traces of history are embodied, or, as Kathleen Stewart notes, intertwined “into powerful effects that remember things in such a way that ‘history’ digs itself into the present and people [can’t] help but recall it” (1996, 111). In attuning to history through traces, this research thus looks to recognize time as heterogeneous, where memory and dreams alike “absorb concern to become the body’s coping method” (HadžiMuhamedović 2018, 26 working with Antze and Lambek 1996).

The vignettes of guided tours and my experience with tourism shared in this chapter are thus reflective of heterogenous time where Puležani residents are managing simultaneous temporalities help to furthermore situate space and place as something continuously undergoing change. This engagement with history moreover permits an exploration of the friction between memory and remembering, in turn challenging reflexes to paint Former-Yugoslav remembering as simply “Yugonostalgia.” Within academia, nostalgia for socialist past is seen as a sign of moral weakness and inability to progress with transitions to the open market (See Petrović 2017). Although, as Mitja Velikonja notes, Yugonostalgia has taken on new meanings becoming more consumerist, aestheticized, popularized, and politicized; the ideology nonetheless continues as a form of resistance against neoliberalism and ethno-nationalism (2017, 10). Such discussions call attention to affective narratives of loss and the future of Pula, where industrial and military loss comes to “industry bitterly correspond[ing] with the general deterioration of living standards, health, social and economic security to which citizens are being exposed in the last twenty-five years” (Petrović 2017, 15).

In the pages that follow, I explore the benefits and limits to walking as a methodology to ultimately explore the development, influence, and dominance of tourist discourse in terms of urban space. Focusing on Pula’s military and industrial past, this chapter will outline how forces such as redevelopment, privatization, deindustrialization, and demilitarization have impacted local use and connection to urban space and how they are narrated. Ultimately, such discussion will help to identify the ways in which locals come to understand and make use of locally valuable sites.

5.1. THE BOXER AND PULA’S FORTRESSES

Walking through a cold, unlit hallway, I could barely see ahead of me. I was told after a few minutes of walking that we would come across a stairwell leading us up to the roof of one of Pula's many fortresses.

We had left the unkept fortress once already; after a short walk through an initial hallway that managed to get some light from nearby windows, we had left the fortress with the belief that there was not much else to see. Even then I felt uneasy, wondering what the rules were regarding walking through these abandoned sites. The entrance was open, and windows were glassless gaps in the wall. There was clearly very little attempt to keep people out.

My guide, Mateja, had warned me there were bats along the ceiling of the dark hallways further into the fortress. After hearing about the bats, my initial reluctance and then out-right refusal to go through any of the unlit spaces surprised Mateja, and her reaction in turn surprised me. Was walking through this fort really not that big of a deal? Mateja's lack of fear filled me with confusion. I was torn on whether to keep going with her or turn back, like my gut instinct was telling me to do.

After a few minutes of standing outside the fortress, a barely visible building made of stone and covered with overgrown plants and shrubs, we began to walk away. That was when we crossed paths with a family of four and their pet dog seemingly walking in the direction of the fort. Mateja quickly greeted them in Croatian and asked if they were heading inside the building, when the mother said, "yes, me and my son will be." Speaking now in English, Mateja turns to me and asks, "If they go with us through the fort, would you be willing to go in?" I was caught off guard. For one, Mateja's quick solution to get me in the fort contrasted my lingering fear from our initial walk-through. At the same time, the quickness of her question showed a desperation I was curious about. I glanced at the mother and her son. The son was around 10

years old and stood there with no hesitation or fear about walking through the building. I thought to myself, if he could do it, so could I – maybe it would be a valuable fieldwork experience. I agreed to go in with them.

Mateja, the mom, the son, and I, lingering behind, headed in. The family dog, a boxer who had been off leash, followed us in staying conveniently by my side. The family had seemed fine with the dog joining us, and I was instantly relieved to have, what felt like, some protection.

Walking in, I focused on the stone-tile flooring covered in dirt and debris, the smell of dank moistness, and the steadily overwhelming sensation of cold air causing me to breakout in goosebumps. Moving further down the hall, the stones became less visible leaving only the sound and feeling of the debris and leaves under my shoes and the dog beside me as a reminder of where I was and what I was doing. My anxiety started to rise; *when would we see this doorway?* A few minutes in we were steadily losing sight of the fortress's entrance, which until this point had been the only source of light we had besides our phones.

Mateja had stayed focused on the mother and son. Committed to small talk, Mateja asked questions like how often they came to this forest and fortress for walks. With the attention off of me, I turned to the increasing awareness of the temperature drop and the movement of my feet. Everything in front of me was in darkness and completely hidden from view. The flashlights on four phones made little difference.

A softly lit doorway suggested we had found our next adventure: walking up a steep spiral incline which would lead us up to the roof of the fort. The floor was slippery smooth stone, below our feet, its sleekness likely formed likely after years of walking and moving things along it. The steepness created a level of difficulty for all of us walking up– sliding between our steps encouraged us to find any uneven stone or points in the wall to prop us up or help with our

balance. The dog, in contrast, moved effortlessly, squeezing past us to get ahead. With the movement of the steps and the sun appearing and growing stronger, our bodies warmed up.

The Fort's roof came as a surprise, covered in grass and shrubs, there was no indication that we were standing on a roof. The grassy areas indicated the continuous movement of people with clear lines of passage. Grass and dog droppings denoted that the area was not as abandoned as the forts condition may have initially signaled. Between trees we had a chance to look out over an unfamiliar view. Facing North East, the San Daniele Fort's view overlooked a dynamic landscape of lush green and yellow farmlands, a contrasting airport and an active mine. I hesitated in the moment over an impending feeling of apathy; after everything, the view felt anticlimactic.

I first met Mateja a few weeks into conducting fieldwork, when a new tour and tour guide had appeared on AirBnb experiences. The tour was listed uniquely as an "Austro-Hungarian and Roman tour of Pula." While most tours dealt specifically with these eras of Pula's past, it was a rarity to see a tour title market and focus on the Austro-Hungarian era.

I had met Mateja two hours before sunset on an early September evening at the typical meeting spot: The Amphitheatre. She stood out to me immediately as she wore skirt suit set and stockings on another night where Pula's dead heat chokingly lingered. It was always a bit exciting to meet a guide in person. Growing accustomed to visualizing only their profile picture during online messaging, the eventual meet up comes as a sort of Russian roulette over what features were really there and which stood out. In meeting Mateja, I grew conscious of this secret game I had been playing; her pettiness and youthful appearance were unexpected. This

recognition also came to potentially explain why Mateja had decided on the suit in nearly 40 Celsius weather.

The tour featured many of the same spots as other tours, though Mateja's energy and attempts to create a unique experience for me was evident. From the amphitheatre we went to the old walls, the twin gates, and unique to this tour, the Zero Strasse tunnels which then took us inside the Kaštel fortress. We arrived much earlier than sunset.

She had shared aspects not mentioned to me by any other guide, like the villas surrounding the Kaštel Fortress in the city centre, once built for navy men, had become major brothels during this time. On a whim, Mateja even walked me through Veterans Community Centre (Dom Hrvatskih Branitelja) – an ornate remnant of the Austro-Hungarian era – as a means to discuss the importance of Pula's annual book fair that took place there. After attending nearly seven versions of essentially the same tour, Mateja's slight disruption of the status quo for tours felt like a needed break and revitalized my curiosity towards Pula's cityscape.

In her mid-thirties, Mateja was new to the tourist industry only getting her certification as a tour guide in Pula the summer before. Working a day job as a receptionist, Mateja had a desire for something more. Her friends had encouraged her to become a tour guide because of her love for working with others and her curiosity for local history. Mateja's story comes to reflect many of those who become guides in Pula. Many juggled being a guide with other day jobs, understandably seeing tourism as a proliferating economy in Pula that could help them make liveable wage or even spending money.

In comparison to Mateja's initial tour of the city centre, the tour of Šijanska forest felt a bit underdeveloped. Although there were surprisingly quite a few notable sites to explore in the forest 2-km from the city centre, including the Šandalja Caves, which have an exciting history as

home to the remains of Homo Erectus (noted to be the oldest human remains found in Croatia and one of the oldest in Europe), the distance between the sites and the aesthetic experience presented challenges to keeping tour patrons interested. The distance between stops, as well as a lack of seemingly “eye-catching” aspects of the cave, left the site to feel unassuming and “unimpressive,” as one online source also reports (Showcaves n.d.).

After complimenting Mateja on her unique tour of Pula’s city centre, she offered to take me on a second tour of Šijanska forest and the San Daniele Fort, a tour she was still developing and thus not yet publicly available. Mateja expressed her desire to show all the facets of Pula – this new tour looked to show a side of Pula’s historic fortifications system not often shown to tourists but commonplace for locals.

Mateja’s approach and desire to show these hidden fortifications was reflective of the fact that during its 2000-year-old history, Pula maintained a large fortification system. The presence of military or navy bases in the city can be connected to as far back as the Roman Empire’s ruling of Pula, where the city was picked not just for its fresh water source, but its strategic naval positioning. Flourishing under the Austro-Hungarian empire, Pula became the main military port for the monarchy and its forces were “comparable in importance with the world’s largest naval bases,” with 27 fortifications built in Pula through the years, and 60 batteries and strong points (Tatić n.d.). Moreover, Pula’s historic military has had tremendous effects on residents and city development. This included aspects like urban transformation, employment, housing, and massive impacts on population including, demographics and migration to the region. Today, Pula’s tourist board refers to the dominant presence of fortifications as “a reminder of [Pula’s] glory days [...]” (Ibid). Such phrasing highlights the tourist board’s stance on Pula’s military

past: a feature that has had tremendous influence on the city, its urban identity, and “urban spirit” – but one which remains in the past (*Cf.* Petrović 2021, Matošević 2021).

Exploring Pula’s fortresses had remained high on my to-do list while in the field. In conversations with locals, I heard stories of their fun times exploring these abandoned sites – how the abandoned sites came to show signs of a “true” Pula. The anthropological instinct to questioned what made the site “real” and others not, reinforced my desire to see at least one of these sites. Andrew Hodges’s (2019a) article on Katarina, the abandoned military complex in the Northern part of Pula’s coastal inlet, further drove my curiosity and desire to see these sites for myself. Utilizing walking as a research method, Hodges helps readers explore the abandoned former military base in Pula, taking time to note contemporary and historical debris of rickety bridges and old military boots sitting in piles. Similar to San Daniele, despite their dilapidated state and closure to the public, former military sites such as Katarina remain active in Pula through their daily use by locals as walking and cycling paths, location for music festivals, and a place to hold summer barbecues.

While sites such as San Daniele continued to be used during the Yugoslav period, and even into contemporary Croatia, the abandonment of these sites since the early 2000s has left them in betwixt and in-between in the contemporary. In the article, “Heritage of Liminality: Remnants of the Military in the Istrian City of Pula in the Aftermath of Yugoslav Socialism,” Tanja Petrović (2021) speaks to how the military in Pula has influenced a feeling of ambiguity in terms of urban space. Specifically, the extensive presence of the military in the city, in terms of infrastructure and the social through aspects like barracks, military bases, hospital, training schools, as well as the sheer number of soldiers in the city created a division between locals and military personnel. While the secrecy and separateness of the military made other residents feel

that the city was and was not their own, Petrović argues the necessity of acknowledging how the JNA army and the Puležani “mutually shaped” Pula’s urban and social life. For soldiers, city life offered an escape to real life, for ‘regular’ Puležani residents, the military helped shape and was closely related to its multicultural identity and working-class traditions. In this way, Petrović’s discussion helps to suss out the particularities of Pula’s military presence through recognition that its liminal position is not necessarily negative or something to be fixed but exemplifies the dynamic relationship and negotiation between Pula’s community and the military.

Organizations such as the History and Maritime Museum of Istria, and their off-shoot project, the Pula Fort Centre, have looked to provide more information on Pula’s fortifications to tourists, though much of this discussion is removed from local narrative, remembering, and continued use of these sites. Such programs aim to “activate the huge potential of cultural heritage and through investment in sustainable use of cultural assets” in a way that will benefit all residents and foster sustainable economy and tourism (Croatia Week 2021). Here, sites such as the Kaštel Fortress (the Venitian Fort in the city centre, which also houses the History and Maritime Museum of Istria) and ZeroStrasse tunnels models examples of how former military sites should function and be remembered. As I discuss shortly, such programs and remembering of Pula’s military peak emphasize a particular valuing of these historical sites as they come to utilize such history as a resource, and something continuously being made.

Comparatively, and important to conversations on the military’s impact on urban space, authors such as Petrović (2021) and Hodges (2019a) highlight how the military’s withdrawal from the city had effects on notions of attachment and access to city space. As dealt with in Hodges’s (2019a) article for the *Unwanted Heritage Project*, abandoned military sites throughout the city face uncertain futures in either being left barricaded and unattended, or in cases of

valuable locations, being developed into tourist complexes. In Hodges's work, the author speaks to the concession of Katarina's land by the Croatian government to Croatian tycoon, Danko Končar's company Kermas Vod Cetiri, in order to build a luxury marina and hotel complex. Katarina's redevelopment plans come to mark a patterned approach to dealing with Pula's military presence that marginalizes industrial history and presence in the city, and, moreover, spaces oriented and dedicated to civilian life.

Redevelopment plans are further elaborated on by Petrović (2021), who focuses on Pula's bid for the title of European Cultural Capital for the year of 2020, an application presented in 2016 by the team "Pula+2020." Petrović critiques the framing of demilitarization as a way to solve the growing "disconnectedness and disempowerment" of local residents. Within such projects, Pula's urban growth and development is seen to be largely "inorganic," and stunted by the historic presence and dominance of the military and industry (Petrović works with Hodges 2019 here). Groups such as Pula+2020 advocate for a push for tourist development, as a response to Pula's social and economic rut and limitations.

Such revitalization movements follow state and local government plans to make such spaces "useful." As Petrović argues, the contemporary mundane or everyday uses of these sites by residents within these applications is framed as symptomatic of *tapija*, a sense that nothing is happening or going on in Pula, and, ultimately as something that needs to be removed or treated. The discourse Petrović critiques evidently neglects how such projects can create a sense of alienation and dispossession of everyday tasks and space. As Petrović notes, *tapija* comes to reflect a particular "economy of time" (2021, 13). While *tapija* is a historic feeling associated with life in Pula, contemporary conditions of post-Fordism, deindustrialization, and privatization have encouraged *tapija*'s presence "into practically all pores of life" (Matošević 2021, x).

Evidently, the framing of Pula's military past as the "glory days," and as something long gone, neglects to account for feelings of nostalgia or a sense of loss of a time when Pula thrived and felt like a "real city."⁹²

One of the main proponents of the plans to redevelop Pula's former military bases, including Katarina, and other sites such as, Muzil, Štijan, and Fažana, is the Brijuni Riviera Company. Established in 2003, the company's website described its mission as follows:

"[it is] a leading company that initiates development processes, uses the potential of the domicile population and space for the development of new income-generating activities, creates new jobs, all through the model of building rights without the sale of land."⁹³

A key aspect not often discussed publicly is that although the Brijuni Riviera Company presents as private company that manages government real estate, 67% of the company is actually owned by the government of Croatia, and 33% by county of Istria (Kuljiš 2019; Jerin 2016). Despite much of these former military zones being State-owned land that would only be up for concession after 100 years, the government instead looked to concede or sell public land for tourism through the Brijuni Riviera Company. As over one fifth of Pula's land being a site of the former military, such projects pose incredible threats of the dispossession of military legacies and urban space, a fact that has upset many locals of Pula and left them demanding for concession to public needs including housing, public parks, and leisure space, rather than tourism.

Despite recognition that the coastline set for redevelopment has, "for primarily historical reasons, [...] had a special status in recent history," little of the company's plans have looked to

⁹² This section is working with Petrović (2021), who cites Matošević (2021, 51) when mentioning the feeling of when Pula was a "real city," a key aspect of *tapija* in Pula. This phrasing was extremely common to hear while conducting fieldwork, and often was associated with the lack of economic diversity and dependency on tourism as a mono-industry in contemporary Pula.

⁹³ Translated from: *vodeće trgovačko društvo koje pokreće razvojne procese, koristi potencijale domicilnog stanovništva i prostora za razvoj novih dohodovnih djelatnosti, otvara nova radna mjesta, sve putem modela prava građenja bez prodaje zemljišta*. From the about or "o nama" section of the Brijuni Rivijera website.

foster or incorporate this “recent history.”⁹⁴ For example, focusing on the case of the Muzil Peninsula, a former military base that operated until 2007, the Brijuni Riviera plans look to transform the site into “a high-quality urban zone with multi-purpose facilities,” including, several hotels, a golf course, two marinas and a sports port, a balloon airfield, a residential area and public facilities.⁹⁵ The plans to develop Muzil as an elite tourist destination, where the former military zone will house hotels with no less than 4-star quality, would in turn create the largest tourist complex in Croatia (Falski 2019, 142). In addition to its central positioning, Muzil also maintains 20% of Pula’s geographic space, the Brijuni Riviera project presents a massive restructuring to city space.

Regarding the fortification that currently remains in ruins and barricaded from the public in Muzil, the company looks to construct a hotel with 550 beds, 280 parking spaces, a tourist resort with 250 beds, and an 18-hole golf course. Another fort situated in Muzil, the Maria Luisa Fortress, will be repurposed into a naval museum, with another hotel containing 750 beds and parking for 200 planned for this part of the peninsula.⁹⁶ Little has been publicized regarding the plans for the naval museum, or how it will differ from the naval museum in Kaštel.

Beyond considering the minimal space dedicated to military history, these revitalization plans reflect a future in Pula that minimizes public or community use and neglects local voices. Maciej Falski summarizes the contentious definitions of usefulness and notions of the city as a community, in the article, “Who has the right to decide? Pula and the problem of demilitarized urban zone” (2019). Falski’s article highlights the divide between decision makers, the political elite, and locals on discussions of Pula’s touristification, stating the community was “not [seen]

⁹⁴See Bruijuni Rivijera’s (n.d.) “Razvojni Program.”

⁹⁵See Bruijuni Rivijera’s (n.d.) “Muzil.”

⁹⁶See Bruijuni Rivijera (n.d.) “Muzil.”

as a partner endowed with a real agency but a passive recipient of ideas and decisions made by politicians” (2019, 145). Here, attempts by politicians and business tycoons alike to advertise Muzil’s development as appealing tourists’ desire for sustainable tourism, neglected to account for the “usefulness” of vast golf courses and hotels to the local community. As Falski notes, the advertisement’s focus on how such development would add a “high environmental quality” to Muzil, does not account for developments to the land being “man-made” and intended to create “economically active space” (Ibid 141). More particularly, Brijuni Riviera’s emphasis on establishing “no-less than 4-star” hotels and amenities is a marketing and public relations tactic targeting residents. In positing the exclusivity and higher-economic tourists, Brijuni Riviera highlights the project as benefiting the city’s economic and public well-being. Such portrayals and aims of touristification projects emphasize Falski’s claim of tourism as an answer to all economic problems, including the loss of diverse industry.

By 2009, collective civilian movements “Volim Pulu” (I love Pula), and later, “Otvoreni Muzil” (Open Muzil), targeted issues of democracy in Muzil’s planning. The collectives argued for the necessity in community participation in planning, where thus far the county has ignored the need and voice of the community. Aside from asking for means to participate in forums such as public debates, panels, and open discussions, “Otvoreni Muzil” looked to further the conversation of democratic uses of space in demanding an “open Muzil.” Under these demands, the fenced space of Muzil would no longer be separate from Pula proper, where all walls, fences, and separators would be taken down. As Falski notes, the desire for an open Muzil mirrors notion of “freedom, community, and togetherness,” often associated with democracy, but even more, “common responsibility” (Ibid 140).

While by 2023, the movements of “Volim Pulu” and “Otvoreni Muzil” have not largely altered development plans, their presence and pressure against bulldozing development practices in Pula’s former military zones have given major attention to political transparency. In an analysis of comparable civil initiatives in Croatia that follow similar patterns of state repression, role of media, and attitude toward authority, Alma Midžić (2015) argues that even if Volim Pulu did not meet their goals, they were still successful. Specifically, Midžić notes that such organizations were not interested in participating in the existing political system and have moreover developed and modelled creative practices that go in line with radical democratic potential (2015, 39).

In returning to my experience with Mateja, I am urged to see Mateja’s tour of the Šijanska forest as offering a unique opportunity to explore what to her was her daily hiking and running path through an important prehistoric and historic park. Whether these former military sites are impressive or eye-catching, experiences such as Mateja’s tour highlight not just examples of everyday life in Pula, but also methods of place making outside or alongside of Pula’s normative tourist discourse. Amongst the remnants of the military past left unattended and in ruins, guides and residents like Mateja form new meanings and continue old ones in spite of looming threats and plans by political and economic actors by walking and moving through these areas.

Walking in this context as a method and an art, as both ethnographic and local, both standard and uniquely personal, enhance sense making, flourishing, and potentiality that far exceeds any realized and reactive projects. Here, sites of ruins are materially crucial to the making of generative possibilities of livability in Pula. In this, Mateja’s tour unintentionally demonstrates valuable insight towards the management of uncertain urban and touristic futures.

Such findings moreover reiterate discussions evident in the works of Andrew Hodges (2019a) and Tanja Petrović (2021) who argue that Pula's abandoned military space continues to be used, imagined, and connected to in ways beyond development discourses.

Tours or opportunities to experience spaces like Mateja's tour of the Šijanska Forest, or other sites like Katarina or Muzil, provide unique and important access to local understandings, particularly valuable under the threat that these memories, experiences, and physical locations could be phased out, demolished, or erased. Such use of space presents potentials beyond the given ultimatum of having a fifth of Pula, a site that contains communal and personal history, either sit in barricades or in ruin, or repurposed for tourist projects of hotels, golf courses, and parking lots. Evidently, the later plan ultimately occludes the potential to repurpose such space with local memory and values in mind.

5.2. *INDUSTRIAL MEMORY AND THE FUTURE OF FLUID WALLS*

“After the silence that followed the shameful shutdown of Uljanik, the symbol of working-class Pula, after the tacit acceptance of tourism as ‘salvation,’ if nothing else, that myth is, fortunately, dying out. The mirror is rightly cruel to us who want to accept [it]”⁹⁷

Zoran Angeleski (2021a).

While preliminary fieldwork plans hinged on participating in walking tours, by the time I was able to begin planning for research, the COVID-19 virus had become recognized as a global pandemic. Evidently, among the many pressing issues the pandemic brought, I was left with the question of what research during a pandemic would look like. In spring 2021, almost a year after the pandemic was declared in Canada, I began conducting research from afar. While majority of

⁹⁷Translated from: “Nakon šutnje koja je popratila sramotno gašenje Uljanika, simbola radničke Pule, nakon prešutnog prihvaćanja turizma kao 'spasa', ako ništa drugo, taj je mit, srećom, na izdisaju. Ogledalo nam je s pravom okrutno. Tko želi to prihvatiti.”

my research from afar depended on a handful of tour guides to show me the city through Zoom interviews, I attempted to extend these tours by tracing and researching local museums, tour stops, and heritage sites online.

With the slowing down of tourism in 2020 due to the COVID-19 virus, the impending months leading into the summer of 2021 treated the upcoming tourist season with slight excitement and nervousness as to whether business could return to normal. Among the businesses affected and stricken by this anticipation, was the Memo Museum – an experiential based museum operating since 2018 that provided a rare glimpse of life in Pula from 1950 to 1980. The Memo Museum, also known as “The Museum of Good Times,” utilized local donations as a means to portray the experience of a family of four living in Pula. The space is divided into three areas: the street, a city square, and a home. Among displays of black-and-white televisions, roller-skates and old-school computers, the museum’s main attraction is the Zastava 750, or a Fico, a car prominent and nostalgic to many living during the Yugoslav era. Like the other items on display, patrons were able to not only touch, but sit in the car.

Upon daily reading of local newspapers in an effort to conduct any possible fieldwork-from-afar during the lockdown, my first learning of Memo was prompted by an article by Vanessa Begić (2020) where the journalist calls on residents to donate material to the museum. The museum had spiked my interest from afar. For one it was a rare sighting of a tourist destination oriented towards discussing life during the Yugoslav era. While Croatian cities like Zagreb had tours and touristic experiences that explored industrial history, this topic was often left as a footnote in tourist experiences in Pula, a point that was instantiated upon entering the field.

By August, when I was finally able to enter the field, Memo was one of the first places I visited and developed into a site I frequented after befriending Ana, who worked at the museum. As described in Chapter 3, I would often meet Ana at Memo, where I would sit with her behind the museum's front entrance desk. Our interviews or chats often interrupted by her greeting or answering patrons' questions. Eventually, I knew these rehearsed greeting by heart and the usual questions asked by patrons "Dobro došli do Memo – Gdje možete doživjeti život u Puli od 50-ih do 80-ih godina prošlog stoljeća," or "Welcome to Memo Museum – where you can experience life in Pula between the 1950s and 1980s," along with a note that the museum is immersive and a brief description of the items available.

From my first time hearing the greeting to the dozens of times after it, the phrasing nagged at me. After a few visits, I finally asked Ana, "why is this period never described as the era when Pula was under Yugoslavia, and thus socialist?" Not having much to say, Ana passively noted these were just the years that the museum had come to represent. Her brief response felt ill-fitting considering the nuanced topic. Perhaps Ana was not the one to answer for her museum's script, but nonetheless, I remained attentive to the mentioning and approaches to the Yugoslav era in tourist discourse.

Even with the lack of naming or labelling its focal period as socialist, Memo nevertheless maintained a unique and valuable role in Pula by highlighting the impacts of this era to tourists. In collecting over 200 items from residents, the museum truly did maintain a sense of what life looked like during the 50s to 80s in Pula. Even more than this, the museum was one of the only widely accessible tourist locales to learn and explore the impact and prosperity of industry in Pula during the Yugoslav era. For example, among the household items of the museum sat a worn-in blue boiler suit with Uljanik embroidered on it, and as well, a sewing desk with an

“Arena” Flag on the wall over top— both an homage to the businesses that once employed the “mothers and fathers” of Pula’s family.

As noted by Matošević (2021) in their preface, Pula’s modern history is inseparable from the Uljanik shipyard. First established in 1856 as the “K.u.K. See-Arsenal,” the shipyard was active until the declaration of its bankruptcy in 2019. The city’s demographic, cultural, sport, and infrastructural development is closely tied to the shipyard. In its prime, the company employed over 8,000 people, and in its final days, it still employed around 3,000.

Despite the sheer size and impact that industry had in central locations in Pula, as mentioned earlier, industry and the socialist era was minimally discussed within tourist experiences.⁹⁸ While guided tours showcased Roman and Austro-Hungarian history and features in the city, major sites of production like Uljanik, were relegated to quick references at certain stops. For example, at Kaštel, the fortress situated atop the hill in the city centre, of which provided a rare glimpse of a substantial portion of the city Uljanik’s lot held. In this context, Memo offered an insight into something widely inaccessible in Pula’s tourist narrative.

With local newspapers reporting daily on the bankruptcy, closure, and remaining operations of Uljanik – walking tours and tourists narratives seemed to conversely approach with silence. I utilized one-on-one guided tours as moments to ask about these gaps within the tours and to further learn about Uljanik. Yet quite quickly these questions began to feel like I was poking and prodding locals. This was epitomized during my initial tour with Mateja, who in response to my question, described the pain of having to watch her brother, whom she had been exceptionally close to, lose his job at Uljanik and relocate to North America for work in his area of specialization. Mateja’s response evidenced a vulnerability in its emotion, and in turn felt as

⁹⁸Iveković Martinis and Sujoldžić (2021) also speak to this trend.

though I passed the comfortable barrier between guide and client. With only two years passing since the closure, the loss of the industry staple still felt too recent for many Puležani. The closure of Uljanik remained heavy on the residents of Pula, many of whom had been directly affected by the closures, as they or their family members, brothers, fathers, uncles, grandfather, had lost their jobs in the process. The closure as a sensitive topic in turn echoes some of the difficulties of summarizing the issue at hand to tour clients who likely know very little about the company or its value to the community.

In focusing on Pula's industry and the example of Uljanik, this section speaks to some of the complications and potential of a walking methodology. Within the context of Pula's walking tours, this section follows changes or "stunting" of local walking conditions and altered paths due to post-Fordist and post-Socialist transitions. Particularly, I am interested in the entrenchment of new forms of economic structuring in a neoliberal post-Fordist way in embodied practices like walking. These new modes present tourism as a way to think about life as emergent and a novel imaginary in the making of prosperity. Yet, these very processes are seen to disperse futures and embed daily experiences with a sense of *tapija*, or feelings of loss and disconnection. Under such conditions, Puležan subjectivity and engagement with space is oriented towards self-autonomy and more inchoate futures.

Mateja's gesture to Uljanik subtly hints at and traces absence, change, and the affective landscape of industrial sites. She and other informants shared stories of marathons and music festivals that took place within Uljanik only a few years ago. The stories footnote walking paths that once engaged and involved industry, now altered, and relegated to its outskirts, outside of its walls. In exploring examples of recent loss of industry such as Arena Knitwear or Uljanik shipyard, this section highlights the complexity of narrating, sharing, and showcasing quickly

evolving sites. In the contemporary, industrial past and its community involvement remains largely inaccessible to both tourists and locals alike, but, nevertheless, linger in the minds of Pula's residents.

Aside from Arena and Uljanik, Pula was known as an “industrial centre” to Austro-Hungarian, Yugoslav, and Croatian administrations as it was once home to multiple industries, including, a mill, glass, food processing, tobacco, and coal mining, among others. For Puležani, urban identity has long been tied to working-class culture and character in part to the long history of such industry as Arena and Uljanik. In the present, with the once thriving business now closed due to bankruptcy, many residents remember this industrial past as reflecting a time when Pula “was a real city” – one that cared and supported its residents. More than this – remembering Pula's industrial past sits in contrast to the promises of tourism and touristic futures. Residents of Pula, and employees of Uljanik in particular, felt a sense of pride in the skilled labour required, high foreign capital, stable employment, and local value the shipyard offered (*cf.* Brunnbauer and Hodges 2019). In contrast, tourism and its futures for Pula's residents indexes something else. While like the imagined futures under diverse and complex industries, the future under tourism presents economic opportunities and foreign capital, this future does not guarantee a sense of stability to daily life. This contrast, moreover, accentuated how Pula's as “a real city,” was a thing of the past – where *tapija* was now a normalized, persistent, and prominent in the conditions of daily life in Pula.

As a *Glas Istre* headline describes, Uljanik was a “shipyard that [fed] the Town” (“Brodogradalište koje hrani grad,” article cited in Brunnbauer and Hodges 2019). While Pula had a diverse set of successful industries during the 20th century, Uljanik was the main economic resource for both Pula and Istria's economy, and, more than this, provided vital infrastructure and

resources for the city. The shipyard maintained a diachronic relationship to the city. While residents provided labour, knowledge, and even later, stock purchases, Uljanik helped to build the community through sports facilities, Bunarina, Fratarski Otok, the hospital arsenal, three canteens (like the famous Uljanik Rock Club), and among other projects, over 3000 Apartments, including the bachelor hotel, Novi Dom, and the Stari Dom (Wegenschimmel 2020).

Unlike Memo's portrayals, Ulf Brunnbauer and Andrew Hodges argue that notions of Uljanik's success and failure were rooted in the socialist experience, their interlocutor even describing it as "one of the last oases of socialism" (2019, 874). During its heyday, success was measured in terms of the firm's ability and mission to provide welfare and contribute to community. Although the intricacies of Uljanik's bankruptcy is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is important to situate here in the years of Uljanik's production, the company withstood multiple economic and structural crises through the years.⁹⁹ Uljanik managed to endure changing constitutions and multiple restructurings under Yugoslavia, a liquidity crisis in the 1980s, and the years of Croatia's independence and introduction to open market and joint stocks. By 2017, the Croatian state, who was a guarantor of 90% of Uljanik's debt at this point, had limited maneuverability as a result of the EU state's aid rules (Wegenschimmel 2020). In 2018, strikes commenced after stretches where Uljanik's worker were left unpaid.

As Brunnbauer and Hodges's discussion highlights, Uljanik was only considered a "failure" to Puležans when it no longer supported the community, not because of its inability to pay its employees. Here, in contrast to memories of social support under Yugoslav policies and companies, the true sense of "failure" came with growing feelings of corruption and crony capitalism in the late 2000s and 2010s.

⁹⁹Brunnbauer and Hodges (2019) as well as Wegenschimmel (2020) further outline Uljanik collapse.

Despite occluding the influence of Yugoslav era socio-economic policy on industrial success in Pula, the Memo Museum nonetheless is traversing largely unparalleled and undiscussed terrain in showcasing Pula's industrial past. Specifically, as the "Unwanted Heritage" project by the Leibniz-Institute for East and Southeast European Studies (IOS) looks to tackle, Istria's industrial past is rarely reflected in dominant narratives. Describing the project's manifesto, Ulf Brunnbauer and Igor Duda note that despite marginal appearance of industrial history in tourist narratives, this history remains in the memories of "ordinary" people. Here, the decline in manufacturing jobs creates a feeling of the threat of Pula's touristification, where similar to discussions of demilitarization, industrial areas also face an ultimatum where either they are repurposed for tourism or left derelict. This was further evident by 2019, where for many Pulažani, Uljanik's bankruptcy felt like tourism had won in Pula. As tourism 'wins' locals face a sense of loss – anecdotally summarized as *tapija* – reflecting feelings of panic and insurmountable crisis through economic restructuring and liberal subject making that utilize a new historicity and temporality.

In addition to the vital memory Uljanik holds for many Pulažani, the former shipyard's geographic location presents a further layer of stress and threat of proposed touristic futures. Like much of Pula's costal land that has not already been privatized, Uljanik's former homebase remains in a critical location on a coastline near the city centre. While in earlier years the shipyard's central location was strategic and influenced city planning in terms of streetcar routes, the establishment of a railway connecting Pula to the rest of Istria, among other aspects, with its closure this land remains desirable to developers and city officials.

Uljanik's barricaded walls around its compound have become a well discussed metaphor regarding the city's history and close ties to the company, and its impending future. For example,

in surveying the history of the company, Peter Wegenschimmel (2020) speaks to how the initial construction of the wall intended to clearly demarcate space between the company and local environment. Yet, as Wegenschimmel outlines, despite the intention to define space, for majority of Uljanik's existence these boundaries between the company and community were blurred and were fluid. Here, simultaneous to the shipyard's influence and role in the community and its development evidently blurred, and there was a sense that Pula "was brought" to the shipyard through employment, as well as, local concerts, festivals, family days, and marathon races held on its grounds.

The fluid relationship between an active Uljanik and the community is explored through sound by Matošević (2018). In exploring the soundscape of Uljanik before and after bankruptcy, Matošević comes to similarly acknowledge the intent and role of the wall of separating Uljanik's world from that of Pula proper. Here, the idea of the wall creates a sense of an "invisible life" behind Uljanik's walls, unknown to those unemployed. Yet, sounds of the shipyard's production became ubiquitous to life in Pula, in turn reiterating a notion of a fluid boundary between city and industry. As Matošević argues, industrial sounds have a cultural impact and mediate awareness and ideas of the shipyard itself. Noise comes to mean increased income and employability.

By the 2000s, the fluidity between city and company were reduced and a sense that boundaries were being reinstated, setting conditions for a tourist state and liberal subject making. Wegenschimmel (2020) cites examples such as the selling of assets like Fratarski Otok and the football stadium in 2017 as signifying the company's loss of its "multifunctional" role in Pula and in turn re-establishing a "wall" between city, state, and company. In Uljanik's post-bankruptcy period, the company's walls felt like a specter for the contemporary division and a

product of the EU's stipulation and need to divide state and enterprises (*cf.* Wegenschimmel 2020). For Matošević (2018), the shipyard's closure and the silencing of its production signifies reduced income and loss as a city without production.

In discussing the previously mentioned Pula+2020 bid, Tanja Petrović questions the framing and understanding of urban space as the leading factor to “disconnected and disempowered” citizens (2021, 12). Picking up on a particular quote where the bid suggests Uljanik's walls limits one's experience of the city centre as they block views of the seacoast, Petrović situates the narrativizing of Pula's militarized and industrial zones as hindering a natural city growth and development. Here, the application argues demilitarization and deindustrializing are central remedies to *tapija* as such sites need “a radically new start, reorganization, re-branding, and reprogramming” (Ibid 11). As Petrović aptly remarks, Uljanik's walls may prevent coffee with a view, but having a job in the first place is far more important to locals. Evidently, for Petrović, Uljanik's walls come to signal the means to which thousands of Pula's residents were able to afford basic needs including coffee.

More than just a conversation about coffee with a view, Petrović's questioning of the imagined tourist and proposed repurposing of industrial space highlights tension between transitioning economic aims and projects. In line with Marilyn Ivy's (1995) notion of “vanishing” culture in Japan, contemporary tourist projects and futures are presented and normalized as replacements to diverse industry and its memory on living conditions. Even more, simultaneous to the threat of physical erasure through repurposing or bulldozing these sites, is the threat of these sites slowly decaying due to a lack of attention or preservation. If these sites are not chosen for redevelopment, they face uncertain and unmitigated futures.

In an article reporting on an exhibition of a documentary film, “Uljanik in Pula,” Zoran Angeleski situates this sense of uncertainty by utilizing the symbol of Uljanik’s wall once again:

“The project documents the exit of workers from Uljanik to the city in order to remain recorded in the memory of its citizens, so that along with that mark on the street and in the lives of many people, it also receives its image in the mirror, ‘a reflection without which it is difficult to clearly see who and what we are, today and here.’ [...] After the almost forgotten Berlin wall, ours, the Uljanik wall, also falls before our eyes. New winds are coming which, it seems, are hard to stop without a wall. But that’s why we have the City.”¹⁰⁰

The comparison of Uljanik’s wall to the falling of the Berlin wall comes to signify the magnitude of the wall’s local importance. Uljanik’s walls, a construction project that came to demarcate the political and economic, has in turn come to mark a political change and economic transition. As Angeleski’s quote highlights, local attempts to commemorate and remember Uljanik comes at a time of uncertainty over the city’s future.

These feelings of insecurity an unknown future, moreover, reflect wider processes and effects of deindustrialization in Pula. In speaking to the legacy and closure of Pula’s Arena knitwear factory, Maksić and Matošević’s (2018) work emphasizes the impact of deindustrialization in Pula, and furthermore, the sense of change this loss brings. In place of Arena, now sits the House of Istrian olive oil as well as several pubs and cafes, all of which fall under the tertiary industry. As Maksić and Matošević argue, these sites have altered from former locations of production, to “exclusively [...] places of consumption” (2018, 107). The focus and encouraging of Pula’s deindustrialization to follow such equation in turn has had “impact on what has been already inscribed in the fabric of everyday life” (Ibid). Specifically, Maksić and

¹⁰⁰Translated from: “Projekt dokumentira izlazak radnika Uljanika u grad kako bi ostao zabilježen u memoriji njegovih građana, da uz onaj trag na ulici i u životima mnogih ljudi dobije i svoju sliku u ogledalu, 'odraz bez kojeg je teško jasno vidjeti tko smo i što smo, danas i ovdje'. [...] Nakon onog skoro već zaboravljenoga Berlinskog, pada nam pred očima i naš, Uljanikov zid. Stižu novi vjetrovi koje je, izgleda tako, bez zida teško zaustaviti. No, zato imamo Grad.”

Matošević speak to how these processes effect everyday life primarily through labour, where the new focus and basis on seasonal work informs new socialization patterns, migration, new value system, and new identification systems in Pula. In Maksić and Matošević's terms, the loss of economic diversity that once characterized and informed Puležani identity, comes to in turn reflect a loss of stable, secure, and skilled labour.

Turning again to Ivy's (1995) work on vanishing "culture" in Japan under destabilizing modernity, or capitalist structuring of contemporary tourist projects and futures helps to further situate Arena's tourist replacement as reflecting on larger processes of loss and imaginings of a post-Fordist future. The objectification of particular cultural values and products like olive oil or Roman history sit as consumable forms of pleasure, that in parallel to Ivy's discussion, denies the loss or absence in its very recognition (*cf.* 1995, 10-11). Here replacement and its disavowal note the loss of a cultural site, economic stability, diverse labour opportunities, amongst other factors. The new post-Fordist, tourist fantasy in this context denies the loss of these elements once provided by Arena and other Pulan industries, to instead replace them with temporary, unstable, and unskilful jobs under the guise of comparable and equal options.

While narratives and notions of the future of Pula's industrial past stir up feelings of insecurity, this attempt to manage or speak to industrial memory comes to reflect active and ongoing attempts to remember. As discussed with the multiple tour guides who spoke on the direct relations to the shipyard, this example emphasized that one of the central aspects of remembering Pula's industrial past is its emotional and affective connections to the community. Yet this complex affective experience and response highlights how tours implicitly involve a "contaminated approach" to discourse, history, and tourist narrative (working with Stewart

1991). Comparatively, while the Memo Museum opens some opportunity to learning about Uljanik's presence, it still situates a rather sterile, yet, constructed story within the past tense.

Akin to Kathleen Stewart, these processes of dispossession and future-making are akin to atmospheric affect where forces are “not context but a force field in which people find themselves” and moreover “it is not an effect of other forces but a lived affect – a capacity to affect and to be affected” (2011, 452). With this lens, stunted walking paths nevertheless present modes to attune to public feelings of *tapija* that appear and are navigated in the everyday and ordinary as bodily modes of knowing and relating (Stewart 2007). These altering paths present moments of potential to explore, to share, and self-narrate what lingers as unspeakable and even hidden.

Here, despite the requirements of tour guides to successfully undergo courses and examinations to become a guide in Pula, walking tours demonstrate margins for maneuverability, that instantiate breakage or an otherwise to these narratives through engagement and storytelling. Akin to Andrew Irving's (2016) walking methodology, personal experiences, histories, and understandings are weaved into walking tours, grounding perspective in lived experience. Bodily engagement and movement in these instances evidence not only interaction with heritage but how history has been shaped, engaged with, and adapted over time. In this context of Pula's industrial memory and feelings of nostalgia, tours and walking itself offers embodied and continued connection to sites as a potentializing force despite loss, economic restructuring, and tourist futures.

5.3. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

In concluding a chapter on Pula's industrial and military past, I, like many others who have discussed the topic, am drawn to the example of ROJC.¹⁰¹ The Karlo Rojc Cultural Centre, or ROJC for short, sits just outside of Pula's city centre on the outskirts of the Montezaro hill and neighbourhood. The cultural centre occupies the largest former JNA (Jugoslavenska Narodna Armija or The Yugoslav People's Army) barracks in Pula. Following the wars of secession, ROJC was left deserted and in disrepair. Initially, the building had helped home refugees from the Homeland War. In the years that followed, squatters had stayed and occupied the building. The former barracks had become a desolate site for drug use and raves. Interestingly, these are the foundations to the contemporary community centre. Starting as a place where metal music bands and fans congregated and organized shows, by the early 2000s the building's space was slowly repurposed for meeting spaces for local organizations.

In the present, ROJC houses over 100 community-based organizations, including cultural centres, art spaces, dance and theatre spaces, and gaming clubs. A rarity in Pula, ROJC exists outside tourist endeavours and motivations – something that in its grassroots was created to meet the needs of citizens, today continues this mission. In the present, ROJC has established an alliance to help manage the aging building and organizations including tackling infrastructure issues such as communal space, ignored bathrooms, and missing lights.

ROJC has become a notable site in Pula among academics and journalists alike not just for its community driven initiatives, but as an example of the how locals manage military legacies. As Petrović describes the memory of the JNA is still prominent with ROJC, where “traces of the JNA are still visible: soldiers' names, names of the places they were from, and the numbers of their classes, scratched on the walls during long hours on duty, can still be seen there

¹⁰¹See Hodges 2019b, Petrović 2021.

today under layers of paint” (2021, 15). Rather than a memorial site to past industry, ROJC’s space comes to exemplify an almost inherent and unalterable link to its military past. Aside from the soldiers’ names, the barrack’s design sits as undeniable evidence of its past purpose: wide, long, and dimly lit hallways, the tall ceilings, the patterned and symmetrical positioning of doorways, the cold and almost sterile design of the space. Current use of space looks to embrace this history rather than erase. Graffiti and renovations attempt to create some sense of community, including meeting rooms for the alliance, organizations, and the public to use. Evidently, despite military architecture which as many a part of ROJC described as not being built for interaction, the alliance and organizations involved at ROJC have successfully created an open space for the community.

The presence and history of ROJC demonstrates a unique response to the question of how to manage industrial and military legacies within Pula’s tourist-driven present. Speaking with a former president of ROJC’s alliance, I had played with almost hypothetical question of “why is it not surprising that residents of Pula had established such a successful alternative community space,” landing instead on “how did Pula create this alternative space?”

Elena responded by citing the “creative energy that comes from chaos... With struggle and chaos, you need to be creative, and need to participate to make it better. The city government doesn’t have money, and they don’t know what a cultural centre needs. But we know. With the help of other city centres in Croatia and Europe we learned how to claim rights to the city and public good. [This space] belongs to all of us – we want to make the decision. We didn’t know what to do with it, but we had highly motivated people to learn how to manage. [...] the lack of structure allowed us to make our own structure – collaboratively.”

ROJC’s space comes to symbolize a collective fight for local needs against the limitations of Pula’s industrial and military preservation. Elena describes that to create ROJC, the collective had to make the integral and inherent claim of having rights to the city. Here, the notion that military heritage and space that once had major impact on Pula’s social, economic, and urban

setting, is believed to belong to all Puležani. Interestingly, while Elena's aims are to bring rights "to the city and public good," her language is coded in post-Fordist themes and ideology of autonomy and change.

Architect Emil Jurcan (2012) notes, ROJC works as a successful example of informal, self-organized, and cooperative transformation of public/military space that counters Pula's rigid approach to urban planning that divides the city into zones of use. In contrast to plans in areas like Katarina that occupy space as a means to develop "material production," Jurcan notes sites such as ROJC exemplify the production of "intangible" social activities (2012, 98-99). To continue, as Jurcan states, despite both Katarina and ROJC being public entities, which should service residents, in the case of Katarina, the state and city officials alike operate as private owners continuing the neoliberal mission (Ibid 99).

Evidently, sites such as ROJC are able to provide something immeasurable to the Puležan community in its existence beyond tourist needs and discourse. As one of the sole spaces in Pula that showcases, develops, and fosters community initiative, ROJC exists for Puležani amongst a context that increasingly looks to serve other financially beneficial developments.

With that said, my first introduction to ROJC was through Nadija's (discussed in the Chapter 2) personalized walking tour of Pula and perhaps suggesting the line between new post-Fordist tourist state and community initiatives are not as divided. Attempting to show Pula "her way," ROJC was the final stop of the tour, allowing tour participants to see local initiatives and adapting military spaces firsthand. Aside from Nadija's active attempt to integrate local sites and community within her tours, ROJC's organizations offers tourists locally created performances, films, and art within its walls and throughout the city centre.

As this chapter ponders, the ability or inability to walk through local history and heritage sheds light on local attachments to place and memory. Here, what were once secret and completely separate military bases, now act as hopeful sites of leisure, sociality, and community-building through acts of walking, barbequing, and performing in these spaces. The potential for sites like San Daniele, Muzil, and Katarina to further foster local community and needs directly deals with historical legacies of local military success and identity that continues to be rooted in Pula's urban spirit. Through the examples of Tomas, Mateja, and Nadija, walking presents a means to open a potential beyond or in addition to contemporary economic structuring and pressures. While as tour guides present post-Fordist notions of autonomy, individual growth, and change based in their entrepreneurial tour guide roles, space is opened through walking to think about changing and desired notions of space and place.

In this, the restricted movement through sites of former industry emphasized these locations as affective landscapes that incited feelings of fear with the loss of their inarguable connection to building the city and Puležani identity. Walking interviews became a means for insight to how interlocutors were still looking for the words and reckoning with the fate of industry as in the past. The inability to occupy sites like Uljanik may be manageable in the present as a memory as the wound remains open, but ongoing threats that sites of deep communal connection may remain inaccessible or repurposed for foreigners etches an irreversible loss. Such discussion contributes to scholarship in its assessment of the MEMO museum and other markers of memory making concerning Pula's past are an important contrast to the oft cited and decontextualized understanding of Yugonostalgia.

Both the industrial and military examples are dealing with sites that in their prime, maintained both separation and deep connection with the community. With threats of

redevelopment for tourism, these sites now face new futures of division from the community. While these locations will largely only be available to locals for employment similar to industry and military, these sites provide little support or interest in local needs. Here, as discussed by Maksić, Matosevic, Petrovic, Hodges, among others, labour dynamics are also altered as the dependency on tourism no longer requires the skills once required. Employees under service work are paid less, are much more easily replaceable, and only work during tourist season, leaving many precarious during the other eight months of the year.

The next chapter turns once again centres on post-Fordist socioeconomics through an examination of luck and being unlucky in Pula's rental market. More specifically, as this chapter begins to trace walking as an embodied experience that becomes sites, expressions, and even dealing-withs for the entanglements of capitalism, affect, and labour, the next chapter expands on notions of and dealings-with post-socialist transition to the post-Fordist and neoliberal economic models.

6. HAVING LUCK OR A LACK OF IT: ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT IN PULA'S RENTAL MARKET

It was the beginning of September, and I was walking down one of the largest intersections in Pula. There were traffic lights, multiple lanes, and many entrances and exits that exceeds the standard four-way stop I was used to in Pula. I had a growing feeling that I had somehow exited Pula completely. Cars were whizzing by honking and lights signalling – all requiring pedestrians and drivers alike to quickly adapt to the tempo. This intersection felt alien – its innate chaos, a functioning yet disorganized flow that existed in steep contrast to Pula's calm, usually one-way streets or single-lane roads within the city.

I had walked the outskirts of this intersection and some of its connecting streets before. Its hectic atmosphere signals its central location only 100 meters from the open-air market and Pula's city centre. While one road just east of the market runs North and South of the city, in turn outlining the perimeters of the city centre, there are two sets of converging roads running east to west stationed with local office buildings, businesses, and industries. The placement and presence of these buildings add to the sense of being somewhere other-than Pula. The multiple intersecting roads seem to mark a divided line between the date of architecture: on the west side are buildings from the Austro-Hungarian era, and on the East, more contemporary the architecture of the 1960s and 70s.

The intersection seemingly divided the city into quadrants of north, south, east, and west, where almost every direction has a diverging road going nearly the same way as another one. Trying to find my bearing, the road I needed to take seemed like the most concealed of these diverging roads. After I crossed multiple roads and passed some understandable angry car honking, I begun travelling down the obscure road. A few minutes in, the sidewalk I was on

ended, forcing me to walk along the side of the road as cars passed by. By this point, I was no longer walking near commercial nor residential buildings. I was beside an open field with hidden houses, sparsely laid out. After fifteen minutes of traveling down this road, I had reached my destination marked by a short stone wall, a long gravel driveway, and a black, friendly cat I was warned about.

I was meeting Marko and his wife, Anka, for the first time at their home. My trek had a purpose: I was there to view Marko and Anka's adjacent rental suite, where I was hoping to stay while conducting fieldwork in Pula. Marko was retired, and Anka, though near retirement, was still working at a local grain mill. The couple was in their late-60s and explained that in the past ten to fifteen years they had managed to save some money to renovate and build an extension to their home that would function as rental property. The unit they were showing me was a detached unit that was solely rented out to tourists, and thus mostly occupied during the summer months. They also had another rental unit that was attached to their home. That unit was larger, having multiple bedrooms, and was not renovated nor as modern as the first unit they showed me – it sat in a similar state and style as their own home. They explained that this unit was originally aimed for their children to live in, but instead, for the past few years has been occupied by a local family with children.

Anka decides to immediately take me on a tour of the detached tourist-rental unit. The unit was currently being rented out for the month by a German couple who drove to Pula for a beach vacation. It comprised of two rooms: a bedroom and kitchen, and was about 300 square feet with all new appliances and features. While seemingly on the smaller side, since it was just me, the unit felt good enough.

Yet, despite the size and cleanliness, I was stuck on the trek I had just made to reach the unit. For the few weeks I had been in Pula at that point, the city felt small and largely walkable – reaching Marko and Anka’s home felt like a reality check I was not ready to settle on. While the unit seemingly was a good rental option, I spent the rest of my time with Marko and Anka that day unsure if this would be the best place for me. My internal debate largely rested on the recognition that finding a reasonably priced rental unit for four months outside the tourist season in Pula was becoming increasingly difficult. I had otherwise not received any leads on possible housing.

I had been connected to Marko and Anka by a distant family friend in Pula. Though at the time I had only personally known them for a week, this distant acquaintance would soon enough become my dear friend, Gorana. Despite never meeting me before, Gorana had eagerly helped me find a place to stay in Pula. With a bit of reflection, it was clear at this point Gorana was incredibly generous and kind, truly going out of her way to help me, someone she barely knew. I mention Gorana’s role in connecting me to Marko and Anka due in part to the way this interaction prompted the end of their friendship. On one hand, in attempting to help Marko and Anka’s business, Gorana was placed in a tricky position. After I shared my concern over location and price with Gorana, she agreed with me. She noted that Marko and Anka were otherwise not expecting to rent this unit in the off-peak months, and moreover priced the unit too high by offering me their rate that was typical for summer months. Gorana felt they may have been trying to take advantage of me as an outsider, or tourist. Moreover, when I later shared with Marko and Anka that I would not be renting their unit, the news put a strain on their relationship with Gorana. Marko and Anka in part blamed Gorana for a lack of loyalty in not encouraging or pressuring me to go through with the rental. They have not yet mended their friendship.

It is worthwhile to make clear I do not blame Marko and Anka for establishing a price for their rental property they saw fit. In the end, its location and price simply did not work for me. Rather, this experience leading to the end of a friendship between them and Gorana came to emphasize particular values and expectations around tourists and tourism in Pula. One of these expectations being loyalty in bringing potential customers, but moreover, the expectation of how potential renters will be serviced – this seemingly being the area where their breakdown occurred. Specifically, even if I went through local word of mouth and friends, for Marko and Anka, I was just another tourist who would be hosted to in the same way as is now customary through services like AirBnb and Booking.com.

Anka and Marko's approach and expectation surrounding their rental property relates to Tom Hoy (2018) describes as "airspace," where technology-driven advancements with the development of platforms like Google, Uber, Airbnb, and Facebook make life more efficient and organized. Despite speaking to them in Croatian, having mutual friends, and renting outside of the tourist season, for Anka and Marko I was still what Hoy (2018) would call a "user of experience," a customer within the airspace system where aspects like tourist practices have inevitably become standardized with the proliferation of platforms like Airbnb, Booking.com, and Vrbo. In return for paying full-tourist price on their rental unit, Marko and Anka would offer on the clock service that has come to be expected under these services, even offering morning coffees with them in their garden. Moreover, most, if not all clients using online reservation platforms do not experience physical walk-throughs or decision-making processes that engage with the landlords.

Yet, beyond the technology-driven shift dominating Pula's rental market, I am interested in how such contemporary markets and the proliferation of tourism affects the long-term rental

market in Pula. While tourism and bed rentals have existed for decades in Pula, the proliferation of individualized rental markets is reflective of wider neoliberal adaptations of tourism and tourist accommodations. These changes have a deep impact on rental availability and accessibility in Pula for both tourists and inhabitants alike.

In Pula, the housing and rental problem largely revolves around the divide between tourist season and the remaining eight off-peak months. These processes, referred to in Croatian scholarship as “*apartmanizacija*,” or apartmentization, emphasize the experience of many former-Yugoslav coastal towns that bring in droves of tourists during the summer. As Jasenka Kranjčević and Sanja Hajdinjak describe, apartmentization reflects the usurpation of Croatian coastal space through the construction of privately-owned summer accommodation (2019, 395). In Pula, where populations are expected to nearly double to over 100,000 during these months, an opportunity is created for many locals to sublet their units. Some locals, like my tour guide Tomas who I will discuss in further detail in a later section, even shared how they and other Puležani residents camp out on a nearby island for the summer in order to earn extra income from vacation rentals.

This chapter speaks to the impacts of proliferating short-term rentals as a part of a “sharing economy.” Academics from mostly geography and urban planning have led discussions regarding the global impact of short-rental economies on communities in terms of processes of gentrification (López-Gay et. al., 2021; Tejedor 2020), on residential housing market and affordability (Yrigoy 2019), the rise of “corporate hosts” (Cocola-Grant et. al., 2021), and urban planning (Gurran and Phibbs 2017). This chapter looks to the impacts and discussion of short-term rentals on urban infrastructure as a necessary and needed conversation within anthropology. In exploring of the altering expectations and prevalence of tourist accommodations in Pula, this

chapter in turn demonstrates how such processes impact housing availability for long-term residents and tenants. While there is a growing number of tourist accommodations available in Pula, only a few can benefit from the systems, where, as of 2022, there were 2,896 renters in Pula, who owned a total of 13,349 beds and 3,930 auxiliary beds (Petrović 2022b). The drive for investment for profit in turn emphasizes major returns for only a select few “lucky” residents and leaves the “unlucky” to manage at the margins.

For residents who are dependent on renting apartments and homes the present feels uncanny as processes of apartmentization have led to widescale customs of eight-month rental agreements, leaving many unhoused during the summer. These processes are furthered with the rising presence of foreign or expat property ownership in the city, where Pula has seen the demand for housing increase, and the cost of property and rent rise multifold in the city. The growing competition with tourist rental pricing and impossibility of ownership has left many locals challenged by the increasing cost of living in Pula.

This chapter discusses the disjuncture of “luck” between Pula’s landlords and local tenants. Central to such conversation are the ways in which Pula’s short and long-term rental market are often described in terms of luck: those who are lucky enough to own multiples and rent them out, and those without luck who are unable to profit from the tourist rental market and moreover, who cannot personally secure stable housing within this system. Exploring the experiences of Viktorija, Laura, and Tomas, I highlight the nuances of Pula’s apartmentization, and how locals have come to deal-with housing uncertainty.

These discussions acknowledge key historical processes and events that have led to apartmentization in Pula and Croatia more broadly, including post-socialist transition, open market development to tourism, and Croatia’s accession into the EU, where we begin to see an

adoption of a prosperity model that opts into post-Fordist and capitalist individualist and entrepreneurial pressures and processes. In examining these felt forces, this chapter highlights the ways in which such prosperity models work to eradicate a sense of *tapija* on the individual level through profit and success in the tourist market, and yet, simultaneously, foster and exacerbate a sense that nothing can improve for those who cannot opt-in to such entrepreneurial endeavours like property ownership and hosting. Under the register of the entrepreneurial prosperity model, luck in Pula's rental market does not appear to exist on a mobile scale but as something near to and close to being fixed and static as changing one's luck feels "impossible."

Through the exploration of local's experiences as landlords, the role of growing uncertainty and speculation overtourism as a given roadmap to city and national socio-economic success becomes clear (*cf.* Bryant and Knight 2019, 79). Those able to adopt an entrepreneurial spirit in not only owning property rented to tourists, but using this property as a means of capital accumulation comes to represent the presence of the Marxian notion of the bourgeoisie class. In Pula's context, the potency and "luck" of entrepreneurial spirit reflects an ease for some to transition to capitalist markets and modes in one's ownership of rental prosperities, ability to leverage this self-owned material, and accumulate capital. As luck is a comment on prosperity, it sits in tension with *tapija*, or who lacks luck and where one's unluckiness cannot change. In this, luck as an idiom moves beyond accounting for just good fortune but moves deeper into the forces of life in the making in a late-liberal tourist experience and economy.

In the first half of this chapter, I explore processes of renting properties in Pula by focusing on the story of Viktorija. Partly luck and business savvy, Viktorija's mushrooming home comes to depict the growth and development of multigenerational family homes as a means for a family to survive from tourist rentals. Viktorija's story comes to reflect a somewhat

common form of renting for Puležani homeowners turned landlords where the experience of Viktorija's family comes to personify the changing state of city scape, urban property, and tourism in Pula. Even more, this section speaks to the complexity of platforms like Vrbo, Airbnb, and Booking.com, where they provide locals opportunity to benefit and earn from tourism, but simultaneously have major effects on the urban landscape and cost of living.

The subsequent section contrasts Viktorija's story of inherited rental property in speaking to the experience of looking for long-term rentals in Pula. Unlike the luck of inheriting family property and tourist business, for many Puležans renting, "luck" is an idiom for "the search" of finding landlords who rent for 12 months a year. In this context, while the entrepreneurial spirit references a particular type of luck through financial prosperity in the rental market, for those renting, luck indexes an ability to continue living in reasonable accommodations within the city. Tracing Pula's local long-term rental market, I situate how the challenges of finding housing in Pula, which are directly related to processes of apartmentization, unfortunately disproportionately affect students, families, and pet owners. The lack of luck for renters in this context emphasizes that luck is more than just having good fortune or not, but the forces of neoliberal tourist economy that challenge opportunity and connection.

From here, I turn to Tomas's experience renting to locals and tourists alike for the last decade to explore and examine local incentives and rational for property rental. While on one hand accounting for the allure of the entrepreneurial spirit and narrative, this conversation also highlights the limited gap of maneuverability of luck, where those who are "lucky" enough to own and thus be able to rent out their space may also choose to opt-out of the prosperity narrative.

6.1. THE CASE OF VIKTORIJA'S MUSHROOMING HOUSE

I had come to know Viktorija first as a treasurer of one of the organizations that held a space in ROJC (Karlo Rojc Cultural Centre). Every Friday the organization held a meet-up where Viktorija would explain the plan for that meeting and introduce me to any new members joining that week. As I consistently had trouble finding the organization's room in the maze of ROJC's hallways, Viktorija kindly walked me to the room and back to ROJC's entrance each week. Initially, my focus when attending these meetings was to learn more about the organization itself and ROJC, but the journey to the organization's room and back had created an opportunity to learn more about Viktorija. The walks up the main stairs to the third-floor hallway, and from what I remember being two left turns to make it to the one stairwell that reaches the fifth floor—the floor of the organization – eventually came to mark a time of decompressing over our week. Some weeks would follow Viktorija's experience managing her rental property, including current guests, their requests questions, and even lateness. I think part of the reason I never really learned the route to the organization's room was because I became increasingly focused on our conversations than the path we were taking.

By November, with the tourist season finally winding down in Pula, Viktorija and I were able to have our first interview. Despite the cooler weather, we sat outside with our coffee and tea in the back courtyard of a kafana in the neighbourhood of Veruda – a halfway point between the two of us.

In explaining how her parents and grandparents got involved with tourism and renting to tourists, Viktorija noted that it started with her maternal grandparents. Her introduction to the family history of tourist rental began with a character assessment of her grandfather, and how her grandparents gained land to build private property under the Yugoslav period.

“My grandfather was a ‘stand-up guy’ – [he] did everything by the rules. During Yugoslav times, you’d get an apartment. If you were working and had a family – you’d get an apartment. It wasn’t yours – you didn’t own it, but you’re just living in it until you built your own house or bought your own apartment.”

She explained that the process of receiving land from firms followed Yugoslav policy of “društveno vlasništvo, or public ownership, where state owned land would be given to companies that were state made them guardians of that land. If it was land that could be built on, firms would give out that land.”

Viktorija continued:

“In socialist times, it was all about workers’ rights. Make the middle class more potent. Give them options to have homes and work. Our parents’ parents didn’t really have to worry a lot. There’s this quote – when everyone is equally miserable, they’re happier than when you have a large divide between rich and poor. I think, here, during Yugoslav times, people were equally miserable. They had a feeling they had stuff. They weren’t rich. Even though for a while there they were rich. They were treated equally. They had an opportunity to advance. My grandpa wasn’t a part of the communist party. When he started working for them, he didn’t have an education. While he was working, he finished his education. That’s something that’s not an option now.”

By the late 1960s, Viktorija’s grandfather, who worked for HEP- Elektroistra Pula, was able to buy land for a cheaper price through his firm. The firm had land in Stoja, a now popular tourist rental location, which, earlier, had been a home to a slaughterhouse and stone quarry. At this time, Stoja was not a popular place to live and was an area that struggled with infrastructural issues like electricity and warm water.

Viktorija states that her grandparents had initially intended to only build a single-family home on the land given, “but they decided they were going to invest, make two apartments, and rent one.” She paused for moment before continuing, “I don’t know why they decided to do that. I think their first motivation was to provide one more apartment for the children to live in in the

future with their family [...]. When your children return home from college, they can live there. And while it was empty, they decided to rent it.”

Viktorija’s story makes evident a pattern regarding the role of the home in maintaining and keeping the family close. Viktorija explained that her parents quickly married after her dad was called by the army. Once he returned, they lived together in the unit prebuilt for them in Viktorija’s grandparents’ home. Having one older brother, Viktorija noted that when she was born nine years later, her arrival put stress on the limited space available in the inherited apartment.

“At one point, once I arrived [...] [my grandparents] said that the apartment is too small: ‘There’s four of you and three of us.’ At that point my uncle was still living with them, and so [my family] made a switch. We went up to the larger apartment, and they went down. So, for years I’ve been sleeping in my childhood room, and my brother in my uncle’s. And now, I’m getting married, and my dad is moving down into the original apartment they were living in – and I’m going up – or he’s leaving the middle floor with the largest apartment for me. It’s nice to see the house stay in the family. I was talking to friends in the UK, and for them - it’s a tradition where you’re basically kicked out... you’re not getting kicked out, your parents are helping you move out of their place when you’re 18. But you’re not coming back. Almost never. You move on with your life and try not to return. In the Balkans – at least in Croatia – it’s normal to live with your parents until your 35 or older. My uncle never left. He sort of made a separate apartment for himself – built on to the house – but he never really left. He was still having lunch with my grandma until her death. And she died when she was 91, so that was a long time. And she was still washing his clothes and everything – which is kind of weird – he was a grown up.”

Viktorija described a growing and shifting family dynamic, and a house that had come to mirror these changes. On one hand we see the home reflecting typical “Croatian” notions of family, aspects like how close family members should be and how long they should live at home, but more than just notions attached, the house is described as a mushroom-like organism that is able to adapt and grow from its original form and purpose.¹⁰² Following Viktorija’s story, the

¹⁰² Alexandrakis (2022) references a similar process of expanding homes for growing families as “architectural mitosis.”

additions made by her uncle, and keeping in mind there were still units being rented, I looked to clarify the number of units: “So, at first there were two units – but now it sounds like more? Are there more than two now?”

“Oh, we have five. At first it started with two. It was a house that just had a ground floor, with a smaller apartment and garage, with a garden around the house. And on the second floor there was a bigger apartment. That is where we were living [when I was growing up] and am living in now. It has 3 bedrooms, living room, kitchen, bathroom, and storage space. Then in 2006, my parents actually got some money from selling some land, so they decided to put up another floor. So, we have another floor with two apartments on top. Downstairs – basically my uncle built on the side of the house adding on two extra rooms. [What was] the garage is now his living room. He separated his bedroom that was his old bedroom from the rest of the [older] apartment.”

Viktorija’s mushrooming home comes to reflect a home evolving to meet the needs of family under different social and economic contexts. As discussed in Chapter 3, the redevelopment of Pulan land for housing through company-distributed land reflect some of the major processes of urbanization Pula has gone through since World War 2. With the Esuli exile after WW2, Istria’s population and area was largely cleared out, leaving national and local governments to focus on efforts to rebuild population, life, and economy in the region.

Unlike other socialist states, Yugoslavia’s “housing for all” policy encouraged individuals to privately construct homes to ease issues of housing shortages away from the state. As Rory Archer (2018) points out, private property during this time was largely associated with the working class, rather than white collar employees and managers who often lived in the more prestigious socially owned flats. With the aid of state-owned companies who financed the construction of housing, like that in the case of Viktorija’s grandparents, property for private construction was allocated to employees based on priority waiting lists (Spevec and Klempić Bogadi 2009).

Important to note here are the ways in which home life and home building was attached to particular values of Yugoslav socialism. Similar to discussions of architectural designs and co-ownership under Yugoslavia discussed in Chapter 3, home life and structure was a key aspect of reproducing or instantiating the “language register of Yugoslav socialism *and* patriarchal customs” (Archer 2018, 142). These values consider the right to a home as a social entitlement, and more than this the “patriarchal desire for a family house” (Ibid). More than rights to housing, Viktorija’s description of the adapting house highlights particular understandings of the politics of care and role of the family in contemporary Croatia and the ways kinship was valued in Yugoslav policy. In the construction of the home itself, we see the role of family, and the home as intergenerational, and in the contemporary, as an opportunity for intergenerational economic revenue and profit.

Moreover, Viktorija’s home demonstrates how the role of tourist rental is not a new phenomenon, but, rather, has existed for decades and has hinged on Yugoslav ideology and policy. This point helps to recognize the role of private property within socialist Yugoslavia and how companies supported urbanization and even “vikendicas” or vacation homes. As discussed by Karin Taylor (2010), *vikendica*, or “Kuća za odmor” (house for rest), began to appear in the 1960s, and proliferated by Yugoslavia’s coast by the 1980s. The vacation homes maintained diverse styles, but importantly, came to reflect many social and cultural distinctions that permeated Yugoslav society. Here, the “blurred lines” of private ownership, where socialist Yugoslavia never got away from it, instead permitting it for personal use, signals some of the contradictory values. On one hand, *vikendicas* signified values of leisurely time, but on the other, they were also products of social inequality, spatial segregation, and personal enrichment (*cf.* Taylor 2010).

In recognizing the linkage between unequal access to leisurely time and housing under Yugoslav policy, moreover, hints at how these gaps have been exacerbated in the years following and how they appear as key factors in having “luck” and an entrepreneurial spirit under Pula’s growing tourist economy. For example, Viktorija’s life history interview outlines how she and her family once benefited from Yugoslav policies and ideologies and extended this advantage to the contemporary economic market. Here, Viktorija is lucky not only in inheriting prosperity but in also inheriting a well-developed system and understanding of renting, or hosting, and making a living from tourists. In this, Viktorija’s inheritance does not fit neatly as a serendipitous chance, but as will be further discussed, one in which know-how of the system bolsters success.

As I will expand on shortly, with the transition from socialism, the loss of the right to housing and to paid vacation, the purpose and use of these secondary, or vacation homes alter. More specifically, as Yugoslav tourism centred on developing and fostering domestic holidays, the transition from market socialism to an open market simultaneously saw a change in focus to foreign visitors.

In explaining her shifting home, Viktorija, began to account for the ways in which renting had altered in recent decades in part due to the role of online platforms and the proliferation of individualized rentals. Particularly, the increasingly diverging experience of renting between Viktorija and her family’s showcases altering expectations and stresses with growing availability and ease of short-term tourist accommodations. In describing her contemporary experience renting to foreign tourists predominantly from the U.K., Germany, and other European countries, Viktorija’s story emphasizes that despite benefiting from having inherited property, growing stress over contemporary expectations for labour and tourist service introduced a gap and public

feelings like *tapija* over the acceptance of tourism as an indisputable answer for Croatia and Istria's economic prosperity.

Growing increasingly curious about the role of Airbnb's and short-term rentals in the city, I shifted my conversation with Viktorija. Stumbling a bit, I presented an oversimplified questioning about whether the growth of individual renting was due to a lack of formal accommodations like hotels. Viktorija was quick to clarify that this was not in fact the case – neighbourhoods like Verudela in Pula have many hotels. She explains,

“Pula had tourism since always – during Yugoslav times they had really strict rules about city planning. A lot of the city had been knocked down because of the second World War. We had bombardments from 1944 until the end of the war. We were bombarded by the English and the Americans. A lot of the old stuff was knocked down – this is one of the examples [gesturing to the house our bar we are sitting in is attached to]. These houses in Stoja and Veruda are Austrian built. So, from before the first World War. Stoja – for example - had a lot of those and they were all knocked down in the bombardment. In the Yugoslav era, they started rebuilding, and they had really strict rules. What they were trying to do was push tourism and tourism complexes out of the city centre. So, to make the city some place to live in, and make self-sufficient tourist enclaves sort of connected to the city but not really. In Pula – that's Verudela, where if I'm correct, there's more than six hotels I'd say. They have nice beaches, are really put together, they have tennis courts. And it's still close to the city. If you want to walk to the city, it's about a half an hour, and there's busses to connect you to the rest of the city. In the city itself – during Yugoslav times – there's only one or two hotels allowed to be in the city centre: the Riviera, and one that was knocked down on the *riva*.”

Evidently, Viktorija decided to answer the question of available accommodation by turning to a discussion of Pula's tourist history and urban development. While seemingly not a direct answer to a question of if there are enough formal accommodations and whether or not this is part of the burden residents put on themselves when renting their own properties, Viktorija made clear: yes, there are enough hotels, and not only this, the lack of visibility of these hotels in the city centre was purposeful.

Viktorija's response surprised me. Until this point, I had otherwise not considered the lack of hotels or formal accommodation in the city centre as something that was intentionally planned. I responded, "In some sense this is very smart because they're distributing use of space in the city and not just depending on the city centre." She agreed, "they were trying to conserve the [city centre] – they were trying to conserve the soul of the place."

So far in speaking with and getting to know Viktorija, she had never referenced a sense of *tapija*, or complaint over losing a sense of 'place' that many others have tied to Pula's growing economic dependency on tourism. Thus, Viktorija's tie to an idea of "soul," caught me. While Viktorija speaks in past tense – that at one point "they," seemingly the city, regional, and federal government and urban planners – placed focus and value in creating space for inhabitants and tourists alike, this spatial design still exists in the present. Unsure if she does in fact notice a break between the past and present, and even more, can explain this gap, I tried to prod her statement further. I began with, "it seems that at this point, the context is a bit different. Even if tourism existed here for so long, in the past 10, 15 even 20 years, tourism has become such a dominant industry..."

Viktorija was quick to follow-up, unintentionally cutting-off my attempts to connect "soul" and the contemporary tourist economy. She interjected, saying: "well, I would say this: We started – I myself and my family start renting –." She stopped and corrected herself, "that would be a lie." She continued,

"Our house was built in 1968, and our grandparents would rent their downstairs apartment in the summer months. This was before my parents were married and they moved into that apartment. Basically, we started in 1968. Our neighbour continued having tourists – they also building their house from I think 1969 or '70 – and they had tourists all the while. And we built another floor on the house. We only had tourists from late May to September, but now – it goes from first of April until November. That's really different. That's something that I would say started in 2016."

“What happened in 2016? Why was there an evident change in tourism around this time?” I asked.

“I think it’s mostly because we became under the European Union. We have more connections, it’s easier to come here. And, I would also say the development of Airbnb, its presence here. Before it, people didn’t travel as much. And it’s the development of the internet. You weren’t traveling as much. You had to use a travel agent. That’s how my parents travelled in 2015. Now you don’t need that. Now you think ‘I want to go to Tokyo,’ you read and watch videos online, and go on Airbnb, and now don’t need a travel agent. The internet is on your phone at all times, you can’t get lost, you can plan it at any time. Before, travelling took skill. You had to get books and do research for a few months – like looking at a city map, where to rent something, where to go, where it’s safe. In 2019, for Pula, we got a lot more Airlines that opened up lines to Pula, and 2019 year was a record year for us. A lot of people said in 2019, Uljanik might be bankrupt, but let’s take the little money we had and invest it – build something in Pula. Even with [the Corona Virus] last year – it was still a good investment because we got 100 percent occupancy for our legal stays in Pula in July and August [2021].”

Viktorija accounts for the multiple factors that have further developed and created dependency on tourism in Pula, including Croatia’s accession in the European Union (EU) and increased international flights into Pula’s local airport. In many ways, both developments have allowed the peninsula region, historically felt to be cut off from Europe proper, to be included into larger processes of globalization and travel trends. Particularly, with Croatia joining the EU, platforms like Booking.com and AirBnb became available in the region. As Petrovic (2022c) attests, since Croatia’s admittance, outside of the 2020 and 2021 pandemic years, the number of renters and beds has grown every year.

In discussing what has aided tourism in Pula, Viktorija was surprisingly quick to follow with the statement: “The trend of AirBnb is also an issue.” She substantiated her first major critique of tourism with an initial anecdote: “These are not just unused spaces. Even before – a friend of mine, her family would move in with her aunt to rent out their apartment in the summer. It was easier to rent before Airbnb.”

Viktorija continued, explaining that before her mother died in 2016, she ran the apartments.

“It was definitely easier then. You definitely didn’t have to pay as much attention to the guests before Airbnb. You have to make sure they’re happy, know how to run things, that they have toilet paper. If you have more than one apartment, you have to make sure other guests are bothering each other. Before it was ‘this is your apartment’ but now it’s a full-time job. [...] [Our season started] in April, hopefully next year [it will be] in March because in 2019, it was March. You’re excited to see people. But by November, I find it difficult to smile. There always bring up issues like toilet being clogged but you just smile and say, ‘that’s ok’ – but you want to say ‘oh, fuck.’ You have to be happy for them and nothing can be a problem. [...] When you work with people, versus when you work an eight to four job where you can frown on weekends, for people like me you don’t have this. I always have to be available. I’m not complaining, I love my job. But by November, I can’t do it with the same energy that I had in the beginning of the season.”

The demand of tourist season for independent or smaller renters comes at a cost, as Viktorija described. Changes in rental processes in the last decade or so have come to require hosts to be on-call at all hours of the day. Evidently, in comparison to hotels and formal accommodations that maintain multiple employees, smaller renters, or hosts, like Viktorija must rely only on themselves and a select few for help.

Viktorija, moreover, spoke to the presence of *tapija* and skepticism among those renting or apart of Pula’s tourist industry. While some locals may see complaints about tourism as simply pessimism, where there is always too little or too many tourists (*cf.* Mostarkić Gobbo 2021a), Viktorija’s experiences accounts for the toll and the affective experience of being a host and being obligated to meet tourists’ needs. With shifting expectations of what local accommodations and landlords should be like, boundaries between service work are limited, as more people look to rent from independent locals. In this way, growing notions of *tapija* arising from hosts comes to reflect the lack of control, division, and ultimately the exacerbated tourist rentals, touristification and apartmentization. Thus, while being lucky in participating in Pula’s

tourist industry and rental market, this description of the pressures of hosting evidence the limitations and effect of the entrepreneurial prosperity model and a tourist driven economy.

The history and contemporary realities of Viktorija's rental property thus validates the intensified shifts in local tourist management approaches in Pula. On one hand, Viktorija's family home adjusts to fit the needs of the family, including their recognition and ties to tourist revenue. The growing house reflects the long history of tourism and Pula, Yugoslav policy and approach to tourism and private housing, and more than this, the role and value of family in the region. In this way, we see an element of luck in Viktorija's tale through generational involvement in tourism, and at the same time, see how contemporary tourist processes benefit but also severally challenge those involved because of increased normalization of shared ambiguously defined spaces of difference (lacking boundaries) between tourists and renters, as well as a growing demand for accommodation. Evidently, for those on the side of renting, having a vacation or rental property is more than just good fortune, economic profit, and revenue. While ultimately feeling and having a sense of luck in having property to host tourists, Viktorija's experience emphasizes how "luck" adds up. Here, luck with its advantages also has its negatives effects in fostering and immersing in characteristically depersonalizing and deterritorializing pursuits of neoliberalism.

With that said, Viktorija and her family's experience of the relationship between tourism and property only accounts for one side and experience. For many Puležani, especially those who do not own property, Viktorija's experience and inheritance of housing and an income property is not relatable and, accounts for a sort of "luck" in inheriting the tools to proposer and succeed in the tourist industry. While Viktorija's story demonstrates the effects of touristification on even those who are lucky, the case of the mushrooming house begins to unravel emerging trends of a

growing housing issue in Pula where the rental market has shifted to focus on tourists rather than inhabitants. In the next section, I will further discuss the ways in which the growth of informal or private accommodations has come to affect the housing market for locals in Pula.

6.2. THE RENTAL MARKET AS A LOTTERY

Pula, like many other coastal cities in the EU has seen an exponential growth of rentals, particularly tourist rentals through online platforms like AirBnb and Booking.com. What has been labeled as “the Dutch disease” by locals, produces “an excessive orientation to one economic branch or resource” (Bogunović 2022). Under such conditions, tourism has become what locals call aptly describe as a “mono-industry” in Pula. As Bogunović (2022) notes, the rise of AirBnb is seen to cause emigration of the population, explosive growth of real estate prices, which thus become unaffordable to locals, and transformed city centres that primarily focus on tourism. As will be discussed, aside from a baseline legal obligation to identify, claim, and pay a fee for short-term property rentals with the state, little has been done nationally to control short-term rentals that have been exacerbated in recent years with online accessibility.

In Pula and other Istrian cities like Umag and Labin, have experienced diminishing populations, where statistics point to ten percent of their population being lost in ten years (Ibid). As Bogunović (2022) compares, the trend of population loss sits in contradiction to the number of permanent uninhabited properties (i.e., vacation homes occupied for only a portion of the year) increasing by 25 percent in ten years. One reason for the growth of vacation properties comes to reflect increasing foreign ownership since Croatia joined the EU. While foreign and expat ownership is on the rise, a topic increasingly valuable to examine, this chapter is solely

interested in the role of local landlords as a means to consider local understanding and relations of *tapija*.

The growth of tourism and tourist accommodations places pressure on numerous aspects of life in Pula. As noted in Chapter 2, such dependency on tourism has created uneven and unsustainable effects on infrastructure. Development plans, whether for hotels, vacation homes, or tourist driven activities like golf courses, reflect overdependence and overuse of coastal land that has tremendous environmental impacts. According to members of the Croatian Academy of Architectural Arts and Sciences, architects Andrija Mutnjaković, Nikola Bašić and Jerko Rošin consider Croatia's space as endangered... “[contributing] to the current considerations of the complex problems of managing the coastal and inland space of Croatia” (Glas Istre 2023b). In comparison to tourism and urban development practices under Yugoslavia in the 1960s, where elements such as accommodation were planned based on space permitted, the architects claim contemporary space is “dramatically desolated and devalued” (Ibid).

While all aspects of touristification and apartmentization should be studied, this section focuses on the impacts of these processes on local residential or long-term rentals. As of 2022, there are 52,000 inhabitants in Pula and 43,000 tourist beds demonstrating not just the growth, but dominance of private, short-term rentals held by “smaller renters,” or landlords (Petrović 2022c).

The role of altering demography highlights growing worry, uncertainty, and overall change to the rental market. Particularly, one broader trend in Pula and Istria alike, is the growth of new residential construction by companies and locals alike and a loss of population. As of 2020, 11% of all new residential construction in Croatia occurs in Istria (Grakalić 2021). In Istria in 2020, a year heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, 1,433 building permits were

given, 120 more than 2019 (Ibid). We see that this growth does not slowdown in 2021, as 12,500 new apartments were registered (both residential and non-residential) (Glas Istre 2023a). These numbers show that despite cities like Pula losing 5,000 inhabitants in recent year (2011 – 2021), over 113,000 new apartments have been built in Istria (Ibid).¹⁰³ As *Glas Istre* (2023a) notes, simultaneous to the difficulty in keep construction growth at capacity, is the fact that such a problem is reflective of a broader issue real in estate business and over-tourism. With over-tourism, issues such as a growing number of unregistered properties/accommodations, mostly by foreign owners, remain unsupervised by the state.

As of 2019 data, 5,000, or 10% of Pula's residents were in the market for apartment rental (Hrvatska Danas).¹⁰⁴ Despite a growing number of residential constructions, most of these properties are not available to residents. Instead, Puležani residents must undergo rigorous searches for rental property, often around the schedule of tourist season where for example finding housing during summer months is difficult. Under these circumstances, finding a long-term rental in Pula has come to feel like “a real lottery” (Mohorović 2022). As Doria Mohorović (2022) notes, the impossibility of finding long-term tenancy is escalated by increasing real estate prices and a limited supply of apartments on the market.

As this section will further outline, there seems to be little support or strategy by the city to deal with the limited accessibility of rental properties and growing cost of living in Pula. Locals are left to deal with conditions that exclude particular renters including families with small children, students, and pet owners. While the burden of finding a rental is occurring throughout Istria and Croatia proper, Pula's costal positioning emphasizes this inaccessibility.

¹⁰³ Per Mostarkić Gobbo's article (2022a), Pula's Mayor Filip Zorčić in part blames the loss of inhabitants on a lack of jobs or well-paying jobs, stating many young and middle-aged people are leaving for work. Zorčić also notes the demographic trends are “čudne” or strange due to the simultaneous increase in births in Pula's hospital.

¹⁰⁴ Based on 2019 data accumulated through Facebook groups.

This is moreover reflected in the fact that within just one-year, rental prices in Pula have jumped by 10 percent (Mohorović 2022 cites Njuškalo, the largest Croatian advertisement firm).

One article by Petrović (2019) highlights not just the “impossible mission” to find long-term rentals in Pula, but the burden held by renters characterized by the formation of a Facebook group called “Rental apartments throughout the year.” Within two years, the group that was created in 2017, amassed 5,000 members – one tenth of Pula’s population, and grew rapidly after Petrović’s investigation. The group and its members share the struggle of locals and especially those “blacklisted” from the rental market if they have children or own a dog. As Petrović’s (2019) informant states, locals are “in despair because rents for long-term rental skyrocket right before tourist season [but] salaries are always the same.” The local interlocutor states, “in the past, 300 euros per month was the maximum but now asking for 500 euros for two-bedroom 60 square meter space” (Ibid).

Petrović’s article presents numerous examples of hindering factors such as price, renter or tenant prejudice, the duration of apartment searches, which on average take months, and the immediacy of apartment rentals that are often rented within 30 minutes to an hour. Doria Mohorović’s (2022) interviewees note this situation is not ideal, and that some people have been looking for apartments for over six months. They share:

“We visited more than twenty apartments in the last few months in the area of several Pula neighborhoods, and we didn’t find anything that suited us. Either the condition is that the apartments are only rented until June due to tourists, or the price of the monthly rent is higher than 4,000 HRK, which is crazy.”

More than this, tenants are often moving into “very bad apartments” or suboptimal units, where issues like “These are basement, damp apartments, basements, rotten parquet floors, soil and moisture are felt, spaces converted into an apartment from a garage [...]” (Milović 2022). In

other cases, potential tenants are surprised to find landlords placing as many beds as possible in a unit, where these landlords are not actually renting unit but beds in these cases.

Such inaccessibility has alerted to the fact that residents are being phased out of central locations due to real estate prices and maintenance cost. In an interview with Breda Bizjak, from the “Society of architects of Istria,” Bizjak notes that such processes are happening throughout the EU. In locations where tourism is popular, residents are being willingly pushed to outskirts of the city “in order to cede their properties for tourist purposes is increasing [...]” (Milović 2022).

Aside from those blacklisted with animals and children, the sense of impossibility regarding finding a place to rent throughout the year comes to also effect students in particular. For students, finding long-term housing or rentals that last until the end of exam season is a particular issue. A common understanding among those renting is that they will be expected to move out by June, before the wave of tourists arrive. As Mohorović (2022) points out, while it may seem that leaving for the summer may suit students, since they usually return home for the summer and return in the fall, it is important to mention they are often forced to leave before the spring semester has ended. Keeping in mind that tourist season is beginning earlier and earlier, it is apt to wonder how the expanding tourist season will affect student rental conditions.

In my interview with Laura, who I mentioned in Chapter 2 regarding feelings of *tapija* in Pula, the issue of housing availability arose and hit a nerve for my informant. As mentioned earlier, in the year or two prior to our interview, Laura had returned to Pula after completing graduate school abroad. Our conversation turned from feelings of *tapija*, to the practical ability of living in Pula as a young adult.

Laura states,

“It’s the empty flat. Or it’s a flat they can live 1st of October to June, because they’ll come in the summer. I don’t know what’s the solution because the prices

are just going higher and higher. It's normal across Croatia. 3,000 HRK as average price. Who earns that much to be able to pay that?"

She notes that most young adults are living with their parents at this point.

"When I was renting a flat last year. It was the second flat I found; I was lucky because I sent a message right when it posted. It was 2,200 HRK, and 50-52 square meters. It was really nice – well not really nice, but for that price fine. It had a terrace and was above the university. The guy was super nice. He told me, the day I arrived – 24 hours after posting it – that he had 40 calls. This kind of flat, all year, for such a low amount of money. You have a living room, a kitchen, a terrace – it was insane. Then he told me, after I said I had to think about it that there was another couple saw it and offered [the landlord] more money because they wanted it. And the guy said no – can you imagine that? Not many people would do that. The guy said no, and said he was waiting for my answer. It's such a rare case because I know people who are moving around all the time. Especially students. And we want to build the university. We always want want want, but we don't have the basic infrastructure to support these plans."

Laura's discussion of her moment of luck in the rental market begins to shift in accounting for the larger processes which make it difficult for her and other renters in the city. Her issues with the management of Pula's infrastructure, this discussion, and her points on which I expand on in Chapter 2, circles back to the issue of housing availability and its connection to tourism.

"Most of the tourist money goes into private hands. You can't on the local level to restrain Airbnb until it's done at a national level. Barcelona started to implement restrictions. It can't be done on Pula's level because it's private, you can't forbid someone to turn their flat into an Airbnb. It would incite fear communism is coming back. This happens in Zagreb, and all coastal towns. The prices are sky rocketing, people don't have places to live anymore. They don't even have places to buy anymore. No one is selling. They're just turning their flat into Airbnb, why sell it? But the housing crisis is global – it will have to be solved globally. [...] In Croatia there's always 'oh if it's not really mine' [when you're renting]. You don't have the security because it's not yours. You can't get comfortable. You need your own property. But it's risky to buy now. With inflation, job market. But it's only security someone can have. "This is mine. No one can kick me out."

Laura connects the issue of housing in Pula as evidence of a larger, global crisis regarding access to housing. In this line of thinking, the perception that the housing issue can only be fixed at the

governmental level, including regional, federal, and even supranational (the EU) levels, answers in part who is fearful of the return of communism: those who own rental properties, or the “private hands” as Laura identifies. Tomas, an informant whose experience in the rental market I speak to in more detail shortly, shared a similar sentiment in regard to the lack of property tax in Croatia, establishing a fee could help regulate markets and the monopolization of properties. Like Laura, Tomas notes that no politician would assert such a tax, as it would be an automatic loss in any election.

Such statements acknowledge the presence of a larger, spectral fear that socializing or moderating earnings from private accommodations will represent a turn to a Yugoslav past. Like Brian Massumi’s “affective fact,” even if the threat of a socialist revival never materializes, its affects are felt and in turn, made palpable and so made real (2010, 54). Within Croatia’s current market, where the entrepreneurial spirit as an economic model rooted in individual prosperity is encouraged and situated as a central mode of living for those who are lucky and work hard enough to seize it, the specter of socialist revival through taxing appears as a rival and threat to this narrative. Yet rather than overtly challenging the prosperity model, the affective presence of this threat helps to perpetuate the narrative of open market affluence. Here, a notion of perseverance through individual work ethic, prosperity, and getting “lucky” under capitalist success models, what would otherwise be taken away under socialism, are situated as the best and only way to maintain and even improve Pula and Croatia more broadly.

In Laura’s portrayal, the running divide between limited housing availability and growing tourist accommodation appear in terms of a socialist/communist policies and free-trade notions of capitalist expansion. While an emerging issue over the accessibility of Pula’s housing and rental market emphasizes the need for monitoring, accountability, and regulation for the best

interests of residents, the very notion of this need sits in paradox and as a threat to the flourishing tourist market. Keeping in mind contemporary criticisms against academic studies like “transitology” or the focus on a “post” socialism, where such frameworks assert a neat, linear progression of transition to towards democracy and a market economy (Müller 2019), authors such as Maša Kolanović (2019) and Larisa Kurtović and Nelli Sargsyan (2019) argue that there is never a sudden or complete emptying and replacement of social phenomenon. As Martin Müller (2019) notes, social change should be noted not as a transition from one order to another, but as transformation, or the rearrangement, reconfiguration, and recombination.

Müller states the social and economic change of opening markets yields new interweaving of the multiple social logics that “form a modern society.” In these circumstances, the active presence of past ideologies and economies does not fit neatly as nostalgia for past modes. Rather, akin to Avery Gordon’s notion that the specter or ghostly notifies us that “what has been concealed is very much alive and present, interfering precisely with those always incomplete forms of containment and repression ceaselessly directed toward us” (1997, xvi). Here, the socialist past haunts in the very fact its policies and ideologies feel so distant and in deep contrast to contemporary markets and the prevalence of growing housing, labour, and economic insecurity.

Like Charles Piot’s (2010) description of divisive future imaginings in Togo in *Nostalgia for the Future*, the emphasis on individuality in Pula’s modern markets not only presents a deep contrast to historic (or in Piot’s case “traditional”) life and values, but presents as a personal development model portrayed as for the common good. This is present in Laura’s matter-of-factness in describing the capitalist expansion where entrepreneurialism is the only improvement and viable economic model. In Laura’s portrayal, the role of an entrepreneurial spirit in

producing success and economic security is critical. Capitalist economies like tourism pose as the solution on how to receive these features once again such as housing where even those who only have one property or unit are looking to cash-in to the tourist market.

However, not everyone is “lucky” enough to have a property or two to rent or develop their own luck through the entrepreneurial spirit. Laura’s discussion begins to uncover what is informing the logic and (bio)politics of the prosperity model of success and moreover the divide in this experience: the monopolizing of central and costal housing for tourism for some is the opting-in to capitalist entrepreneurial spirit, or how some locals make their own luck, for others marks increasingly inaccessible and dispossessed cityscape.

While I take up the trend of trying to rent to tourists at any cost – including displacing oneself and family for the summer months – in more detail in the next section, here, I outline the tension, divide, and growing paralysis between local best interest and entrepreneurial gusto. Here, the desire to make Pula liveable again or be able to have and afford a life in the city touches on *tapija* in recognizing the deficiency of prosperity models in improving accessibility and livability. Longing for qualities of the past (not necessarily a longing for the past), a time when these features of living and its conditions were seen as inherent to the system itself contrasts contemporary circumstances, where these aspects are believed to not exist. Conversely, capitalist modes such as the tourist industry pose as the solution on how to create and develop features, like housing and annual vacations, once again. Here, notions of “luck” not only mark prosperity, but in turn, mark those who were able to opt-in, maneuver, and ultimately profit off the new open market.

These conditions, moreover, clarify that despite being posed an achievable and mobile status, attaining luck through participating in the short-term rental market, an entrepreneurial

endeavour, is plausible only through very limited terms and conditions. In this, entrepreneurial pursuit as a capitalist mode hinges on the scarcity of goods and limited access to these means of production. Laura's example further elaborates this phenomenon in that it emphasizes that rather than luck being a scale, luck as an idiom indexes multiple understandings. For example, Laura's "luck" as a renter only appears at the grace of a landlord who chooses their own entrepreneurial perimeters by renting to the first visitor and not the one bidding the highest price. In the scheme of Pula's rental market, Laura's "luck" is not really luck at all in that it only achieves the bare minimum, housing or a roof over one's head, and not economic profit and prosperity.

In Chapters 4 and 5, which highlight the role of graffiti and heritage management respectively, I addressed the complex network of corporate and governmental influence on the transformation and dependency on tourism in Pula and Istria more broadly. Within this context, it would be unsurprising to note that Istrian Prefect, Boris Miletić, has sided with big hotel investors like the Brijuni Riviera Company, and publicly turned attention to small renters for the growing accommodation issue (Frank 2022; Petrović 2022b). Yet, while simultaneously acknowledging the weighty influence of corporate tourism, Laura points to the role of the individual in the housing accessibility crisis. This is to say, with the rise of multi-apartment homes built on sites of former family homes in Istria, where the ratio of beds to residents is 10:1, there is an evident rise of budding entrepreneurial spirit that should be examined (Bogunović 2022).

6.3. LUCK AND THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

My conversations and tours with Tomas, the tour guide discussed in the previous chapter's introduction, inevitability turned to conversations about tourist rentals and property

ownership in Pula. One of the main reasons for this was the fact that Tomas and I would always meet up during the times he returned to the “mainland,” or the Pula city centre, after camping on Fratarski, a popular island for locals about 20 minutes away. Tomas would camp on the island for the entire tourist season as a means to rent out his property positioned just steps from the city core. He often returned between renters, when his apartment was free, or for guided tours and social outings. It was always clear if I was meeting him just as he arrived from camping because he was even more mellow than usual.

I heard from others that Tomas’s temporary move to Fratarski to earn money through tourist rentals was a common tactic for some Puležani. Similar to Viktorija’s friend whose family moved in with her other family to rent out their home for the summer, many locals were eager to do what they could to practice their entrepreneurialism and earn profits from the local tourist market.

Our conversation on this particular day came to a similar point as my discussion with Viktorija: are there enough formal tourist accommodations in Pula? In Tomas’s opinion, “[Pula has] a lot of Airbnb’s because [it doesn’t] have hotels.” Tomas’s positioning within conversations of renting through such online platforms seems particularly unique, as he not only makes a living through renting, but also in selling guided tours as “experiences” on the same platforms. Sitting across from Tomas, I begin to think that he, like many other Puležans, has been able to develop an entrepreneurial spirit and business through such platforms. I ask if this is the case, does he think that AirBnb allows people to move from solely having an investment property to becoming business owners?

Tomas explains that he was able to buy his apartment just over seven years ago, when prices in Pula were still affordable. He reports, “the price of property seven years ago was 1,400

euros per square meter now it's around 2,000.— That's 50% in a few years.” At that time, many of his friends and family did not believe his aims to get in the tourist rental market were plausible, stating that “many people told me I'm not going to earn anything because [my apartment] is not central or by the beach.” Yet, despite the warnings, he notes that upon putting his apartment on Airbnb, he got lucky – it was immediately booked for the whole summer. In addition to renting on Airbnb, Tomas is able to rent to Pula's residents and students in the eight remaining months of the year. He admits the difficulty of finding an apartment to rent in the city: yet, having one tenant for only eight months worked “perfectly” for him.

His perspective again reminds me of my earlier question, I note: “It seems like many local renters have more power now, in the sense that they have the ability to earn their own money, even with Airbnb. They get to put up their property. They get to manage.”

Tomas responds:

“That's kind of how [they] made a new caste in Pula. Istrians from the villages, that came to live in Pula. Most Yugoslavians had their own property. And for example, if your parents lived 30 kms from the city, they'd have a lot of land there, which at the time was worth nothing. And then one flat here, because their parents would have a flat. Then when your grandparents die, and you inherit their land and house, you'd have a lot. And you're parents flat in the city – then you're rich. If your salary is 100 Euros per month, which is 10,000 a year. If you have two flats, you can earn 15,000. If you have some land in Liznjan, that's 1,000 square meters, which is now for building a house. That's 300,000 Euros. You're rich. That changed the local Istrians a lot. Most of the people that came to Pula in the 50s or after, are either from the villages – Istrians from Inland or surrounding areas or are people from all around Yugoslavia. Either you worked for the military or work for a firm – you'd get a flat not to live, but to own. My mother got a flat to own because she worked for Brijuni. That was there's. If you're fortunate enough that you had grandparents with flats and your parents – they die, that's three flats. All of a sudden, you're rich. It sounds awful, but it's the way it works. But most of the people did not buy their flats in Yugoslavia. They would get them from the government. Then when we became independent, the flats would stay with you. [...] I had a few friends that a few thousand square meters of land, which was worth nothing during the war, that sold it for half a million Euros or more later on. Those things change everything. That's how again the prices move up, and

tourism and everything, and now Pula is one of the most expensive places in Croatia.”

Tomas’s response sticks out to me. Its morbidity – the ease with which he talks about death to highlight the simplicity of inheriting and profiting from multiple properties feels awkward, but it also signals his level of comfort in identifying a pattern. This conversation is hypothetical and exaggerated to some degree but speaks to the advantages some Puležans and even Croatians, more broadly, have. More than solely speaking to the advantages of those who inherit properties through the Yugoslav system and relatives, Tomas’s concern settles in a recognition that this luck has had a major impact on the cost of living and owning in Pula.

The conversation quickly turns to the post-War context again. This time Tomas connects the proliferation of apartment sales for cheap in Pula during and after the Homeland War of the 90s. Tomas’s turn in discussion shifts to recognize that many Puležani desperately sold off their once Yugoslav era apartments in tough times. For Tomas, this era in Pula’s real estate market had major impacts: one being the almost bottoming out of real estate prices nearly 30 years ago, and two, how this led many of those who owned property since then, to make major profits.

By this point in my fieldwork, I noticed a pattern of skepticism and sense of *tapija* when having conversations with Puležan regarding the evident growth of the cost of living, tourism, and profits for property owners. During many such conversations people mentioned that such growth is not sustainable and that at the very least they fear Pula will not be accessible to the very people who make it special. I follow up Tomas’s note that Pula is one of the most expensive places to live in Croatia, asking, “Do you think there is a ceiling for this growth in Pula?”

Tomas’s response catches me off guard in that it is to the point and data driven in a way that I wonder how he truly determined these numbers and years. He states:

“The ceiling in the next five to 10 years is 50% more. And then going back to [the prices] we have now. Once we build a few hotels, and we kind of reach the top for what is possible in Pula, and of course, we will build more and more places and prices will go for 2-300,000 Euros.”

Unlike others I have spoken with, Tomas’s matter of factness aided by the turn to facts and figures maintains a sense of rationalized calmness when assessing the future of Pula’s tourism and real estate market. His composure rests in the statistics presented: growth in Pula can be maintained for the next decade. In this focus, Tomas’s perspective on the further development of tourism in the city does not inherently or necessarily illicit worry.

I pause after hearing his response. His confidence in the facts and details he has raised almost obscures that he has in fact answered my question: there is a ceiling for Pula’s growth. For Tomas, population and prices will grow, though in contrast to earlier moments in our conversation, Tomas has stopped considering the impact these prices and change will have on locals. I push back and ask, “maybe there’s room to construct, but what about other aspects like infrastructure?”

Tomas responds quickly:

“If there’s a place that can grow. It’s Pula. I don’t know if the regional government knows that or know how to do that. But there’s definitely space. Remember, the Austrians wanted to build a city of a million in Pula. And they had the blueprints already. There’s space. I think 100,000 is what the city should have – that would be perfect. And that’s the idea of the new Mayor. That’s what he just said, that in 10 years, there will be 100,000. Places double in population here.”

Tomas shows his belief in the development and in the system at present. Despite my attempt to bring attention to aspects that may complicate the process of the city’s growth, Tomas relies on historical truths to simply state Pula’s development to 100,000 inhabitants was possible.

Our conversation that day continues as Tomas follows up his belief that Pula could easily maintain double its population in a decade by stating that apartments that remain empty for eight months of the year impede this growth. Tomas comes to suggest property tax be an answer to

this problem, but instantly notes its impossibility saying, “in Croatia, if the President started that tax, they’d lose the next election.” Ultimately, Tomas argues:

“Even if the tourist office takes 10% off of what you earn. [I wouldn’t] even tax everyone, but the ones that are only using [apartments] for part of the year. Then you use that money to build other properties by the government, that would lower prices. Some big cities in Europe have done that – like Vienna.”

In the days and weeks after my interview with Tomas, I was a bit bewildered at his responses. It was clear Tomas enjoyed theorizing solutions and futures in Pula, though at times it felt oversimplistic and that they slightly romanticize the impacts of tourism. In some moments his responses felt contradictory, in that, for example, he held strong opinions about unequal access to housing due to inheritance but remained lax about how the rental market impacted the students who were renting from him or what it would truly look like for Pula to reach a population of 100,000. On one hand it could not be ignored that Tomas benefited from the system he was describing and had adopted the entrepreneurial spirit himself. On another hand, Tomas’s response had largely differed from what I had otherwise heard and in turn encouraged me to hold the complexities and contradictions as a valuable, divergent perspective on the complexities of living under these changing conditions in Pula. Perhaps Tomas was describing a future that entrepreneurs wanted to see and were working towards.

Tomas and I kept in touch in the months that followed my return home from fieldwork, and so, when I returned to the field for a quick visit the following summer, I reached out to Tomas to meet for coffee. Life had seemingly changed quite a bit for Tomas just eight months after last seeing him. He was no longer involved with tourism, neither doing guided tours nor renting out his apartment. Instead, Tomas was living in his central apartment all year and

working as a real estate agent in a central agency in the city. We were now meeting during his lunch break among the crowded Arch of the Sergii.

After sharing life and work updates, I turned the conversation to thank Tomas once again for his help the summer before, noting how his perspective on the future of tourism and the city in general had given me a lot to think about. Tomas's humbly said, "no problem," but continued to honestly explain that he had forgotten what exactly he shared the summer before. In reminding him that he had believed Pula's population could and should double to 100,000 inhabitants, as the city was capable, Tomas looked back at me with shock. "I don't remember saying that, and I definitely don't agree with that now" he replied.

With his new job and staying in the city during the summer, Tomas explained, he "didn't experience [Pula] like this before." The city was almost unbearable with the amount of car and foot traffic. I had not connected earlier that Tomas's earlier stay at Fraterski Island during the summer might have impacted his understanding of tourism in the city. In some ways, I had assumed that this temporary move was a form of recognition of the efforts it took for residents to appease the tourist market in Pula.

Tomas notes that working in real estate had opened him up to the dynamics of tourism in the city he otherwise had not known or noticed. Primarily, Tomas stated that the job had allowed him to see "the greed" involved in Pula's peak tourist season. He cites that out of his 13 colleagues, he is the only one living in the city centre. Despite this, Tomas notes that many of the other realtors he works with are either renting or selling an apartment they owned in the city centre. He grounds this behaviour in noting that such monopoly of the real estate markets signals the fact that many residents are no longer able to afford living in the city centre. In a similar vein to the point he made last year, Tomas insists "there's a lot of space [in Pula]. Enough for 100,000

Puležani, but the city needs to be reoriented. Having places empty for eight months a year is bullshit.”

For Tomas in 2022, those who owned multiple properties and the growing presence of seasonally vacant apartments was part of a larger problem: the city was no longer for its residents. The city was being “built for the masses” and in turn “losing its identity.” He notes that he himself was now developing an annoyance towards tourists he had not had in prior years – something that he had attached to what it must be like to live in other Istrian tourist towns like Rovinj. Yet, Tomas did not just blame the sheer presence of tourists for feelings of deterritorialization; for him it was evident even in the labour hired during the summer months. He explains with the example of our current waiter. “You may not have noticed, but he has an accent. He is not from Istria.” Upon the waiter returning to our table, Tomas asks him if he is from around here to which the waiter replies that no, he is from Serbia. While his family is still in Serbia, he has been living and working in Pula for the past two or three months. When the waiter leaves, Tomas states, having waiters from another country is not inherently wrong, but these positions so close to tourists “are no longer representing the Puležani.” While Tomas’s statement could be seen as reflective of perspective throughout Croatia that has some racial overtones given that there is an increase in racialized migrant labour, I got the sense that this was not where Tomas was coming from.

Tomas’s new perspective takes on an element of cynicism – something I was used to hearing about among others but was still surprised to hear from him. Our conversation continues with Tomas acknowledging the role of foreign property ownership and its impact on housing costs. He explains: “you are now not able to find a house in Pula for less than 500,000 Euros, and by the city centre around one million now.” Despite the new pessimism coded as a deep sense of

tapija where things in Pula cannot and will not improve, Tomas returns to another point he had made a year earlier: “There’s a new class in Pula – whether from luck, taking advantage, getting into real estate early – owning multiple properties means you have an advantage.”

The roll of luck is an evident theme in Tomas’s view of Pula’s real estate market. The luck of inheriting property. The luck of inheriting multiple income properties like Viktorija. The luck of getting into property ownership early like Tomas. Even the luck of finding an apartment to rent all year. For many Puležans like Tomas, you either have it or you do not. Evidently, luck varies and appears on a scale of sorts: perhaps the least lucky being having a year-long lease and the most being owning multiple properties in a tourist town. Recognizing the element of luck here moreover sheds light on why it is easier for Tomas to account for the luck of the “new class” in Pula, but not recognize how he too holds a sense of “luck” in being able to purchase property and rent out his property.

In this, Tomas defines “luck:” owning and taking part in the new capitalist model, the tourist and the real estate market. Even more than this, having an “advantage” or being prosperous sits in deep contrast to tapija: the condition of lacking and not expecting any options. Akin to discussions in prior chapters, this lingering feeling of tapija constitutes a sense of growing lack of luck, where, in addition to a lack of accessible housing, being unlucky relates to what labour or education is valued and available in contemporary Pula, what homes can be cared for, and what projects are invested in.

In part, Tomas’s notion of defining a “new class” identifies the entrepreneurial class as a substantial reason for this where the focus on the individual has become the norm. In researching the impacts of tourism on long term rental in Pula, I recognized a few local journalists identify and diagnose the “tourism addiction syndrome” (*Cf.* Glas Istre 2023b quoting Bašić). As one

article puts it: “[the] public has been sensitized to the topic. It is as if no one wants to hear it [...] the power of money is too tempting [...]” (Ibid).¹⁰⁵

Laura’s earlier discussion followed a similar thread, where her emphasis on the impossibility of altering the dispossession of tourist industry due in part to a lack of willingness at the governmental level. Yet, Tomas’s example reflects some of the nuances of the role and management of tourism accommodation. On one hand, Tomas’s perspective demonstrates how easy it is for many who opt into the “entrepreneurial spirit” as a capitalist prosperity model rooted in individualism, to resist making a change in the real estate market, and, in turn, demonstrate symptoms of the “tourism addiction syndrome.” In this, Tomas serves as an example of the ways in which locals, especially landlords, buy-into Croatia’s view and approach to tourism as an answer to its economic problem (*Cf.* Falski 2019). At the very least, choosing to rent out his apartment during the summer and camp out on Fratarski island contributes to Pula’s apartmentization. Though his apartment does not sit empty for eight months of the year, the ability to leave for the summer and rent to tourists contributes to loss of local occupancy in central locations.

On the other hand, despite Tomas’s slow and at times apathetic approach to recognizing the limits and nuances of luck, his new cynicism signals a gap in believing, accepting, and investing in tourism as an answer. Labeling a sense of greed and a new caste of those who can buy multiple properties to keep uninhabited for much of the year demonstrates a change in Tomas from opting into the pragmatic new economic model and relations. In his prior thinking, Tomas bought into and learned the system where tourism was solely seen for its economic viability and options. Tomas was only able to attune to the intensifying sense of *tapija*, or

¹⁰⁵ Translated from: “[...] koliko je javnost senzibilizirana za tu temu. Kao da to o čemu govore nitko ne želi čuti ili možda ne razumije ili je moć novca prezamamna, a one koji se trebaju odseliti nije više briga” (Glas Istre 2023b).

dispossession and displacement, when his routine changes and comes to occupy central city space. It is not as he remembers. The proliferation of the entrepreneurial spirit has altered the space.

In Tomas's case, what once was a pragmatic model of success, reveals to be, in Franco Berardi's (2009) terms, a form of post-Fordist cognitive labour. Berardi notes a change to Marx's conception of physical labour, where a value was defined in regards to the organization of time of such labour. Instead as a virtual class, the cognitive class is not tied to place, linear growth nor salary, and cannot be quantified or standardized. Berardi's cognitive labour moreover extends Michel Foucault's (2010) concept of biopolitical governmentality and Giorgio Agamben's (1995) bare life, to account for the ways that contemporary regimes of biopolitics and neoliberalism depend on and operate through cognitive labour. Despite the lack of factory work in Pula's contemporary context, bodies are still rationalized and supported to adhere to productivity and rationalized systems like that of the entrepreneurial spirit (*Cf.* Chakrabarti 2023). These rationalized systems evidently emphasize the individualization of capitalism, and in the case of Pula's tourism the individualization of entrepreneurialism and luck.

This line of thinking moreover emphasizes the ways in which *tapija* and a lack of luck describe and account for the financialization of daily living and survival, and how these practices manifest as physically felt pressures and processes of dispossession. Here being lucky through having an entrepreneurial spirit and pursuing individual gain is in stark contrast to the socialized benefits of industry described in Chapter 5, present just mere years ago. While Pula's former industries like Uljanik once "fed the city," provided housing, and fostered community through social programs, under the contemporary economic system these features are individualized and regarded as result of "luck" and hard work.

Even more, the conditions of Pula's local and long-term rental market, its inaccessibility, and juxtaposition to obtaining the entrepreneurial spirit moreover prompts the question of what are the consequences of these rationalizing and pragmatic economic models of success? What are Puležans left with? Where do those unable to embrace the entrepreneurial spirit, or those without luck, go? Here the divide between lucky and unlucky, based on the immateriality of labour and the production of an affective economy, is seen to be a product of the tourist experience. The new tourist city and experience through the entrepreneurial spirit, informs a notion of what deems a life worth living. Such discussion follows Foucault and Agamben's respective discussions of biopolitical power and governmentality as introducing a means to circumscribe man to the national economic time, or the dominant capitalist ordering of time, where those failing to abide runs the risk of becoming bare life. In these terms, inaccessibility, unaffordability, and eventual displacement mark the effects of the biopolitical model and its logics that determine the difference between bare life and prosperity, being unlucky and lucky.

Tomas always seemed like a reflective and honest person to me, which in turn motivated me to account for the differences his original opinion had to many others I spoke with. Rather than an issue of reliability or trustworthiness of the informant, Tomas's initial 2021 interview reflected someone who was able to learn the system and benefit from tourism. Yet, by 2022, in having to stay in the city, Tomas's views began to change, opening up space to acknowledge the uncanniness of the present. Uncanniness here exists in both the objective and subjective. Tomas sat on the edge of having "luck," as someone in between classes and privilege here cuts across these old hierarchical relationship forms. On one hand he owned an apartment and was a landlord, thus allowing him to earn a living wage that, to many in Pula, feels like a luxury. At the same time, having suffered severe and ongoing health issues in recent years, rental allowed for

an income and security in a time of personal crisis. He was not as lucky as those who owned multiple properties in Pula but was nonetheless lucky.

Evidently, Tomas's perspective highlights the complexity of the issue of local renters, where many profit from the apartmentization and touristification of Pula. While there are shared concerns or at least recognition of the concerns of non-property owners, or single homeowners, the lure of extra income is unfortunately strong and can prevent necessary changes to renting or ownership to occur.

6.4. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

In an article by Borka Petrović (2022b), the journalist interviews Lorena John, a representative of the Family Accommodation Association of the County of Istria. The interview centres on John's claim that "small renters are not to blame for over-tourism" and instead "[they] are the ones on whom Istrian tourism rests, who contribute to the Istrian economy, who create jobs and raise the Istrian standard of living, and not hoteliers who take all their earnings out of the country."¹⁰⁶ The interviewee continues to state, "what is currently happening in Istria is the fault of the government, which has been changing spatial plans for years and handily issuing permits to investors for buildings bought by foreigners, converted into apartments and now hosting 'friends and relatives' in them, paying nothing to anyone" (Ibid).¹⁰⁷ The affluent foreigner who owns properties in Pula is able to build surplus value based, in part, to ownership and accumulate their capital unmitigated by the state and at the expense of locals.

¹⁰⁶ Translated from: "Mi smo ti na kojima počiva istarski turizam, koji pridonosimo istarskom gospodarstvu, koji otvaramo radna mjesta i podižemo istarski standard življenja, a ne hotelijeri koji svu zaradu iznose van države" [...]."

¹⁰⁷ Translated from: "[...] što se trenutno događa Istri, kriva upravo vlast koja je godinama mijenjala prostorne planove i šakom i kapom izdavala dozvole investitorima za zgrade koje su pokupovali stranci, prenamijenili ih u apartmane te sada u njima ugošćuju "prijatelje i rodbinu" ne plaćajući nikome ništa."

John dismantles the notion that small landlords “earn too much” (“previše zarađujemo”) by stating that they are required to pay a flat fee as their earnings do not exceed 300,000 HRK.

Further, it is explained that these earnings go into aspects such as:

“[...] compensation to foreign platforms and the associated VAT, flat tax, flat tourist tax, tourist membership fee, cleaning services, maintenance services, overhead costs, costs of small inventory, and unforeseen costs as well as VAT on all mentioned costs (not including depreciation equipment and furniture, nor real estate depreciation) (...).”¹⁰⁸

John reiterates the terms of the new affective economy and the role of the entrepreneurial spirit in Pula,

“It is true that people in Istria were actually forced to find an additional source of income, and many see an opportunity in tourism. But most of us don't have luxury vacation villas with swimming pools, but rather an apartment that was built in our own house or a property that was received as an inheritance [...] Where would we be if we didn't have that income from the apartment – we use it to educate our children, buy things, pay utilities... And yes, it's certainly easier for us than those who don't have that kind of income. But behind it is continuous work and investment, because every year the guest is looking for some kind of added value.”¹⁰⁹

Akin to my interview with Viktorija, John's message highlights the strife and aim of small renters: they are taxed for earnings, must pay fees to maintain their properties, and ultimately, like renters, are too looking to provide for family during times of economic change in Pula. In this, the limits of the entrepreneurial spirit are etched. Even with the embracing of individualism and personal development, economic security for one's family is not guaranteed.

¹⁰⁸ Translated from: “Od tih primitaka većina iznajmljivača plaća naknadu inozemnim platformama i pripadajući PDV, paušalni porez, paušalnu turističku pristojbu, turističku članarinu, usluge čišćenja, usluge održavanja, režijske troškove, troškove sitnog inventara, te nepredviđene troškove kao i PDV na sve navedene troškove (ne uključujući amortizaciju opreme i namještaja, niti amortizaciju nekretnine) [...]”

¹⁰⁹ Translated from: “Istina je da su ljudi u Istri zapravo bili prisiljeni pronaći si dodatan izvor prihoda i tu mnogi vide priliku upravo u turizmu. No većina od nas nema luksuzne vile za odmor s bazenima već se radi o jednom apartmanu koji je napravljen u vlastitoj kući ili nekretnini koja je dobivena kao nasljedstvo [...] Gdje bi bili da nemamo tih prihoda od apartmana - njime školujemo djecu, kupujemo, plaćamo režije.... I da, sigurno nam je lakše nego onima koji takav prihod nemaju. No, iza njega stoji i kontinuirani rad i ulaganje jer gost svake godine traži nekakvu dodanu vrijednost.”

This chapter has predominantly focused on local and relatively smaller earning landlords. I should make abundantly clear that my intention is not to blame or heavily criticize small renters for opting-in to new and dominant models of prosperity. Instead, this chapter looks to trace the networks of Pula's tourist accommodations in Pula that are often simplified as determined by "luck," and furthermore, how conditions of "luck" can spark questions, speculation, and critique over tourism as a form of socio-economic salvation. In this, the political and economic positioning of tourism as a means to answer Croatia's problems aims to mitigate the growing presence and intensity of *tapija*, yet in its pressure to individualize and financialize aspects of daily life, reinforce and perpetuate feelings of dispossession, deterritorialization, and loss of care for community well-being.

John's interview in turn is a reminder of the web of actors involved in contemporary housing climate in Pula, and the question of the 'fit' of Pula's prosperity models. Similar to Tomas, Lorena John also places blame on foreign property owners in Pula. While local landlords are lucky, they are not as lucky as foreign owners who do not contribute to Pula in the same way locals do. The entrepreneurial spirit must be stronger to those not burdened by the same past. Ultimately, John remains skeptical of the ease and accessibility of foreign luck when noting the issue of rental and accommodation sits with the Croatian government's lack of taxing foreign property owners.

While this chapter has not engaged wholly with government resolutions to the housing issue in Pula, instead focusing on local experience and concerns, it should be noted that municipally, there have been further discussions and plans made to address Pula's housing issue. In 2022, Pula's mayor introduced the "Program for Socially Encouraged Housing Construction," which intends to "enable" citizens to solve their housing needs and improve housing quality

through public funds and the possibility of buying on more affordable terms than what is currently marketed (Gradonacelnik 2022). The plan includes the construction of a new five story apartment in a central location, as well as an option to co-finance 50% of interest for approved housing loans up to 18,000 HRK (Ibid). For many Puležani, the plan brings hope – not just in having tangible housing opportunities, but in the fact that more attention is being paid to the growing housing crisis. Some others maintain a sense of *tapija*, believing the program presents as a public relations stunt, skeptical if anything will be built and more broadly, if change will occur.

Nationally, there have been further attempts to regulate short term accommodations. Specifically, in other Croatian cities, local municipalities have increased the fare rate per bed paid by apartment renters. For example, in Split this fee increased from 40 Euros to 200 Euros per bed, paid in lump sum annually (Glas Istre 2023b). While it was hoped and expected that would continue to other cities in Croatia, including Pula, this did not happen. This further emphasizes the lack of regulation, and desire to regulate, the proliferation of tourist accommodation and its increasingly displacement of locals. Instead, the choice not to increase taxes in cities such as Pula echoes the fact that “private accommodation is extremely important to [the country], it makes up more than half of the total accommodation capacity in Croatia” (Glas Istre 2023b). Authorities in turn instantiate their dependence on the tourist economic model.

Ultimately, in taking up the stories of Viktorija, Laura, and Tomas, each portrait lends to the complexity of Pula’s tourist and real estate market. Viktorija’s mushrooming house sheds light on the role of Yugoslav self-management, private property, and rights to vacation in producing an enduring tourist culture in Pula. Despite the ways in which Yugoslav planned for a sustainable and manageable development of tourism in the region, Viktorija’s interview accounts

for the growth and dependence of the tourist market in Pula since Croatia's independence. Here, we see Viktorija's experience with the increasing pressure on renters to meet the demands created by online short-term rental platforms such as AirBnb as a reflection of overall change and growth of skepticism over the culture of tourism in Pula.

Simultaneous to tourism becoming a "mono-industry" for Pula, processes of apartmentization and touristification evidently impact access to the real estate market in the city. Laura comes to speak to this shift in culture more specifically, relaying how the rise of tourist accommodation in Pula has, in turn, created a sense of a "mission" of finding a place to rent in Pula. Under a context where nearly 10% of Pula's residents are looking for long-term stay, renting for 12 months of the year has become an impossible feat, especially for students, families, and pet owners. In contrast to the experience of the 'lucky' entrepreneurs like Viktorija, local renters unable to profit from tourist property rentals face what is seen as being unlucky or a sense of *tapija*, where one's conditions are not expected to improve.

Tomas – a Puležan who has rented to both tourists and residents alike – speaks to the complexity of labelling and identifying Pula's real estate crisis. Tomas speaks for other residents who feel it is a twist of fate that determines whether you will be a lucky Puležan who owns a property or two, but at the same time, how this luck can blind the ways you benefit and uphold the proliferation of tourism in Pula. In this Tomas exemplifies a nuanced understanding of Pula's landlord entrepreneur and the effects of such prosperity measures.

7. CONCLUSION

Standing in front of Kaštel, a fortress built on the hill in the centre of Pula's old town, we overlook the costal inlet that Uljanik occupied. In our direct eyeline, an art installation of permanent crane fixtures decorates the coastline, commemorating the historic ship building industry. After a few moments of gazing at the coastline, Tomas turns to me and states: "you know there's a plan to build a multimillion-dollar cruise ship dock here."

The tales of Pula's cruise ship future had a ghost-like presence in Pula.¹¹⁰ The threat of the dock weaved in and out of stories, alternating between different versions of truth, where the deal was done, or was simply being discussed between businesses and government. The plans affected numerous aspects of Puležani life including creating a looming fear of an insurmountable tourist presence and the reuse and potential destruction of part of the historic shipyard. Although others were not so bothered, for example, my tour guide Mateja felt intrigued in having ships return to the city.

Early exposure and introductions to the spectral presence of cruise ships largely warned me of the ways in which locals Puležans were facing changing concerns and feelings that made sense of a "Puležani future" feel impossible to imagine for some. The months of fieldwork from afar, whether through methods of interviewing locals or reading newspapers, had been recentered upon entering the field and noticing the ways in which locals shifted through temporalities in just a few sentences. Pride over a sense of history, Istria's distinct character, the sense of mounting dispossession in the present, and a questioning of what Pula's future would look like. The past and future felt like they were often held in contradiction, rather than intricately intertwined, feeding and informing each other. The past was described in terms of hope, potential, and joy, while the

¹¹⁰ Sarah Yusuf (2021) speaks to the haunting presence and phenomenon of cruise ship tourism in the Dominican Republic.

future, brought up feelings of worry, uncertainty, and disconnection. The present was treated not as something of “making-do,” but living on one’s own terms in this contradiction, despite increasing awareness that those in power, whether politicians or business/industry owners, continued to invest self-servingly.

Upon entering the field in August 2021, the election of Filip Zoričić for many was a sign of hope: an unaffiliated politician could challenge the increasingly normalized methods of clientelism and corruption by those holding excessively long terms. Immediate changes to the cabinet and city hall officials marked the speediness of change. The inclusion of a pride flag in front of city hall in July 2021, weeks after Zoričić’s election, came to epitomize the fresh air and change Puležans desperately wanted. Yet, as Helena Mostarkić Gobbo (2022b) aptly discusses in an article I first mentioned in the introduction of this dissertation, the assumption that one person can change years of mismanagement in only a year or two is quite naïve. More of the same continues, some events and deals feeling like a step further into *tapija* and neoliberal and dispossessive futures.

In the year that has passed since I last entered the field, discussions have turned to the creation of a luxury hotel along Pula’s Sea facing coastline, Lungomare. The hotel with the proposed name “Hotel Valkane,” which was originally supposed to have 80 beds, was designed for a capacity of 360 beds, seven above-ground and two underground floors, and 32 swimming pools. The hotel would take away the Valkane Sports and Recreation Centre, a large portion of the Lungomare forest, and key public coastline. For many of the residents, the announcement of further hotels being built along Pula’s coastline presents mixed emotions. Organizations such as Zelena Istra (“Green Istria”),¹¹¹ have protested the use of coastal land for hotels, claiming

¹¹¹ Zelena Istra is an affiliate organization to Volim Pulu mentioned in Chapter 4 and 5.

environmental impact and over-tourism. In Tomas's view, the promise that these hotels will be "luxury hotels" presents hope for Pula's inevitable tourist future believing they can bring less tourists for more profit. This thinking reflects a larger desire to have "Croatia [cease] to be a destination for mass cheap tourism and profiles itself as a top destination that attracts tourists with higher spending power" (Glas Istre 2022c).

The hotel plans include the building of ancillary facilities for sports, recreation, catering, trade and medical purposes, areas such as swimming pools, tennis courts, etc., in addition to new roads and roundabouts to accommodate increased traffic in the area. As Rosanda (2022a) notes, hotels on Lungomare are both "unsuitable and unsustainable for this location" due to the increased pressures on road infrastructure, traffic, and the amount of deforestation that would be needed. Even more, Rosanda (2022a) claims the hotel would bring "disturbing views" to the Lungomare coastlines and effect the "harmonized rhythm of walkers, swimmers and recreation cohesion with this space." In addition to space cohesion, concerns are raised over the hotel's impact on the local water supply system. As Duhaček (2022) notes, this concern reflects the fact that in addition to the hotel utilizing local water supplies, over the past few summers, water reductions for residents and farmers had been enforced throughout Istria.

As local environmental organization, Zelena Istra, discusses, the development of Valkane Hotel poses questions regarding the "Law on Maritime Property and Sea Ports" [Pomorskom Dobru i Morskim Lukama], which maintains all beaches as public (Udruga Zelena Istra 2022). Particularly, as the Valkane area historically has been a central beach location for locals, the hotel brings the threat of the concession of Lungomare's public beaches for private use. According to Zelena Istra (2022), recent changes to the Maritime law include the ability of concession of organized beaches as a standard form of maritime property management and

addition of new distinctive categories of beaches (i.e., “hotel beach” and “camping beach”), leading many to interpret these processes as the initiating of privatized beaches.¹¹² The organization refers to Rijeka’s, a nearby Istrian coastal city, “Hilton Costabella” hotel as a similar example where beaches have become private, and only citizens/residents paying for hotel services may use the beaches, stressing a fear that Lungomare coastline will become an “elitist or privatized zone” (Ibid; see also Juričić Bukarica 2021).

The concerns regarding the privatization of land continue with the forest that currently surrounds the Valkane Sports and Recreation Centre in Valkane. Particularly, in 2022, questions over the legality of the forest’s seizure by Hotel Valkane D.o.o. were questioned, as “the documentation surrounding the Lungomare land shed light that privatization occurred “in a very strange way” (Duhaček 2022). While the land as social property should have belonged to the City, a review of Hotel Valkane D.o.o.’s documents exposed that the land was owned by Calucem (the cement factory discussed in Chapter 4) – despite their operations on the other side of Pula’s peninsula (see *Figure 4-10*). To add to the strangeness, as per Duhaček (2022) Serbian tycoon, Dragan Šolak, who is behind the companies that want to build the Valkane Hotel on Lungomare, has support from and a relationship with Stevan Muidža, the owner of the Dutch company, Istra Cement.¹¹³

The issue of Lungomare parallels the challenges and threats of Pula’s demilitarized areas being revitalized as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. As Duhaček (2022) summarizes, the “story” of Lungomare “is a paradigmatic example of the conflict of different economic and social interests and ideas about the future development of Pula.” Akin to Falski’s (2019) article “Who Has the Right to Decide?” taken up in these chapters, Lungomare’s future was placed in the

¹¹² This is from a direct post from Zelena Istra’s Facebook page

¹¹³ See also Dražen Majić’s (2022) article.

hands of residents through a referendum. However, once again, locals have accused Pula's media as well as politicians backing the hotel as purposely not publicizing nor discussing the impending vote. With the strict referendum rules in Istria, including that at least half registered voters must show up for the referendums results to be taken seriously, the importance of public knowledge was essential in having a credible and valuable vote. Thus, when the 9,716 voters showed up to the referendum (less than 1/5th of Pula's population), this was "not enough to prevent the construction of [the hotel]" (Burba 2022).

The referendum protocols faced great criticism, and incited local cynicism towards democracy in Pula and Istria more broadly. Criticism included claims that both previous and the current city government have actively ignored residents' "numerous and loud" opinions on Lungomare's future (Ibid). Despite the right of the "public to participate in decision-making on issues that have a direct impact on the quality of their lives" (Ibid), locals are routinely uninformed and excluded from decision making processes. In turn, residents "feel powerless while their neighbourhoods are clearly going through dramatic transformations" (Duhaček 2022). As Duhaček (2022) aptly notes, residents are asking investors: "if you believe that the truth is on your side, why are you afraid of the voice of citizens?"

In turning to the events surrounding Hotel Valkane's development at the end of this dissertation, the lack of consideration, potential corruption, hushed media, and local outcry do not necessarily come as a surprise and are not unique to the hotel's development. Rather, they are the continuation of now decades long forms of integrating into a capitalist economy and neoliberal sociopolitical model. This dissertation has traced such examples of the slowness of dispossession for Puležans, where slowness marks a sense of chronic crisis deeply emmeshed with the loss of economic and industrial diversity and subsequent over dependency on tourism,

touristification of city space, infrastructure, and funding. I argue here that public feelings such as *tapija*, evident and produced in the complaints, coffee culture, walking, graffiti, and even protests of local citizens, help and work to instantiate dispossession as perceivable, felt, and meaningful. It is in turning to the social, something is ‘done with’ and ‘done through’ the feelings of dispossession, and moreover demonstrate and reinforce of a sense of community and communal care.

I have examined what intensifies *tapija* and the social connections and care that structure it, including how it manifests and is perpetuated in aspects such as small talk, public space, infrastructural repairs, as well as housing access and renovation. In this way, this dissertation accounts and archives that while *tapija* is a feeling similar to a stuckedness, it does not inherently mean or reflect a lack of action. In asking the question of “what does *tapija* as a feeling do,” this dissertation highlights *tapija*’s complex and nuanced range of inertia as much as ambivalence. *Tapija*’s multiple and at times contradictory appearances, uses, and meanings recast the phrase as not wholly apathetic or inactive in all its iterations. Instead, for example, acts such as complaint are seen as intimately linked with communal care and concern.

This dissertation has centered on *tapija* to address contemporary experiences of neoliberal dispossession with Pula’s growing economic dependency on tourism. Examples such as exposure on public complaint and lacking infrastructural repair parallels claims of clientelism and growing distrust in political care for public good. Attention to graffiti practices in Pula exemplify civic attempts to highlight public witnessing and critique Pula’s secretive monopolization of coastal property for tourist development. Pula’s short-term and long-term rental markets moreover highlights the growing divide between those who can and do opt-in to Pula’s touristification as part of a now normalized capitalist and neoliberal prosperity model.

Tourism is a neoliberal force in Pula – one of many factors that are injurious, causing Puležans to face dispossession. Thinking with Laurence Ralph’s (2014) concept of social injury, injury here acknowledges that the wounds and effects of great social change do not necessarily leave bodily traces or manifest physically on residents. Akin to Ralph’s analysis of social injury, attention to the methods of “activation” his Inglewood interlocutors pursue, adapt, and follow furthermore evidence the ways in which daily assaults on life are not reducible to despair and inaction. In Pula, aspects like city space, heritage, facades, and infrastructure are sites of such dispossession. In assembling, tracing, and reading through experiences of *tapija*, this dissertation presents an archiving of feelings akin to Cvetkovich (2003), as a means to acknowledge the ways in which *tapija* as a sensation is located-in and integrated-into the topology of Puležani everyday life.

Tapija becomes a way to attune to networks of collective care and concern. This dissertation looks to forms of care going beyond clinical methods and lenses that work through an anaesthetic to remove pain and suffering (Buck-Morss 1992; see Evans 2021). Instead, a therapeutic worldview evident through collective care provides space and voice to not just discuss the pain but become re-sensitized through spontaneous socialites and attachments. I adapt Cvetkovich’s (2012) study of depression as a public feeling to account for the fact that while such feelings can at times create withdrawal, they can also encourage new forms of sociality. Here, I am interested in how *tapija* and the frustration or discomfort with Pula’s status quo is carried individually and otherwise shared with the community. Through graffiti, complaint, coffee, walking, and facade care, *tapija* is instantiated and a tool to maneuver socially, reinforcing a sense of communal concern and care that conversely is at odds with capitalist individualism and financialization.

7.1. TOPOLOGIES OF TOURISTIFICATION

In examining the ways in which the ebbs and flows of mass tourism in Pula have come to affect day to day life and connection to place, this dissertation has highlighted the impacts of tourism influence the relationship between Pula's topology and topography. This relationship goes beyond recognizing topographic or physical features, to account for the topological or social arrangements of space define how space is mapped, conceptualized, and experienced by locals. Massumi recognizes topology as being about the "space of experience," and not necessarily about the process of cognitively mapping locale (2002, 18; *cf.* Tucker and Smith 2014, 177). Here, dispossession through processes of touristification, apartmentization and hotelization of public space are seen to merge, influence, and rework notions of identity and connection in Pula. This assessment recognizes and is interested in how Pula's *slow* dispossession affects, are built in, and are intertwined with the city's topology.

In Matošević's (2021) perspective, *tapija* is integrated into Pula's urban tissue: the structure of feeling and being, living, and experiencing the city inflicted with the connective tissue of *tapija*. Akin to the work of Othon Alexandrakis, this dispossession is seen to "[disturb] topography at the level of topology" (2016, 36). In other words, the structure of living in Pula and "the surface along which individuals apply meaning to the world" are altered, ultimately challenging, and changing "an individual's sense" (Ibid). The flesh and materiality of the city both signify a sense of loss – the changing notions and connections to *tapija* where nothing happens anymore, and at once stills offers a source to connect, share concerns with, and care about. Colin McLaughlin-Alcock (2020) and Penelope Harvey (2012) speak to how topological orders produce "distinct conditions of possibility" (McLaughlin-Alcock 2020, 695-696). Such

discussion emphasizes Harvey's (2012) use and understanding of idioms of topology and topography. In particular, Harvey recognizes the continual movements between topology and topography that marks difference, ambiguity, and plasticity, state-space nonetheless mobilizes particular understandings and narratives. Thus, this dissertation argues that feelings and a sense of being stuck do not necessarily equate to stillness nor to a complete undoing of oppressive systems of power. Instead, this dissertation acknowledges modes of care in ways that actualize a topology of care in Pula. Here, acts of complaint, graffiti, and walking evidence methods of reterritorialization through social connections and care.

Examples of graffiti such as Pula's Banksy and the Anti-Calucem throw-ups, directly address politicians, businesses, and local newspapers. The graffiti works to garner attention to impeding social issues, and thus cannot simply be labeled a passive form of complaint and resistance, but, instead, an active force that requires attention and an attending to crisis. As with the example of graffiti by Pula's Banksy, revealing, reiterating, and emphasizing local political examples of corruption, clientelism, and media censorship produce active witnesses. In this context, successful graffiti is one that is generative. In the case of Pula's Banksy, such graffiti operates as therapeutic artwork in that it attunes to and acknowledges the legacies forged when industry and social well-being were intertwined. The displaying of complaints in public spaces plays an evident role in subverting dominant or silenced narratives and thus demonstrates an undermining of the injurious forces in Pula. I argue here that artists aim to maintain a sense of space and place through art and moreover invite a reimagining of everyday reality.

Topological plasticity by way of a walking methodology and a contaminated approach trace and attune to Pula's heritage and tourist narratives, industrial and military memory, and feelings of nostalgia within the city. Accounting for the ethnographic encounters walking

provided, I examine the feelings of dispossession, *tapija*, and a sense of place that arose through walking. The spectrum of walking, whether flourishing or stunted, speaks to the ways locals engage, experience, historicize, and understand city space. Bodily engagement and movement in these instances evidence not only interaction with heritage but how locals shape, engage with, and adapt history over time. In this context of Pula's industrial memory and feelings of nostalgia, tours and walking itself offers embodied and continued connections to sites as a potentializing force despite loss, economic restructuring, and tourist futures. Nonetheless, walking tours demonstrate margins of maneuverability that instantiate breakage or an otherwise, to these narratives through engagement and storytelling. Altering paths present moments of potential to explore, to share, and self-narrate what lingers and at times remains hidden.

Moreover, modernization projects speak to the role materiality, aesthetic, and heritage play in notions of care for Pula's aging cityscape. I approach city initiatives that aim to bring "unregulated facades" into their next stage of material existence as perpetuating an anaesthetics sensibility akin to Susan Buck-Morss (1992). Here, city led projects are seen to numb and block the sensorial and lived reality of facade conditions and care. Building on Larkin (2013), speaks to the valuable narratives and social facts reiterated in infrastructure and city aesthetics, where the poetics of infrastructure helps establish a "collective fantasy of society." Here, collective fantasies graze through the entanglement of historical legacies within Pula's cityscape to pick and choose which heritage discourse is valuable. In these instances, facades are mediums to emphasize Roman and Austro-Hungarian legacies as they display "true European" character and ignore Yugoslav heritage that continue to be implicated in local building management and restoration.

By 2023, local news is reporting on Dolceville's growth in recent years, specifically noting how the revitalization project is rapidly expanding its reach and aid in Pula's city centre. Such articles note that with this momentum, the project is projecting to finally meet the milestone of 100 revitalizing facades by 2025. Dolceville's growing success since I left the field could signify adaptations to the program, where the city may have improved application processes including ease of application and project accessibility to target audiences, but I am unconvinced that the delayed but recent success of Dolceville is entirely a result of the program itself. I am urged to pause and critically read such articles and apply a lens that recognizes a central topic and theme of this dissertation: impossibility under (transitioning) capitalist markets. In conflating discussions on Pula's property ownership (Chapter 3) and those with the rental market (discussed in Chapter 6), impossibility marks increasing inaccessibility and dispossession of city space. In terms of Dolceville's audience, impossibility reflects a particular burden for long time owners that cannot be easily treated within a year or two, prompting a question of how are these renovations suddenly affordable? This shift in affordability and Dolceville's recent success might, instead, reflect a passing along to a new stage or degree of late neoliberal dispossession in Pula. In this new stage, locals must reckon and acknowledge the inability and impossibility to care and must move to the next phase of dispossession: moving away from the historic and tourist driven priority zones of Pula.

At heart here, is the consideration of how dispossession has and continues to alter Pula's space: what is left in ruins, what is modernized, what becomes a part of tourist narrative and what does not, idle space with a future of development, space used as a medium to express the witnessing of change, frustration, and concern, space becoming increasingly unaffordable and

impossible to care for. This dissertation in turn emphasizes how topological understandings, relationships, and imaginings of space are being greatly altered, felt, and dealt with.

7.2. CONCERN, CARE, AND THE COLLECTIVE

Throughout writing this dissertation, I was particularly cautious about describing social care over-zealously and situate care as an act of explicit agency. My fear of oversimplifying the links between care and *tapija* reflect and come from an awareness that within Pula, *tapija* marked a contentious point. While maintaining both a sense of urban identity that was unique, special, and a sign of Pula's superiority, *tapija* also marks an internal tension where many locals who I spoke with and interviewed feel the concept represents apathy and a decision to not try to change things. In this sense, while many, even a majority of Puležans connect to notions of *tapija*, the deployment of the phrase maintains its own local politics.

Yet, the role and presence of *tapija*, whether as a complaint, small talk, gossip, storytelling, or graffiti, describes and reinforces a notion that a sense of impossibility is not the only or final mode of life in Pula. Rather, locals continue to find possibilities and a means to maneuver. Thus, a central aim of this dissertation is to address and give light to not just internal debate over whether or not *tapija* is an excuse for the lazy, but to also speak to feelings of overwhelm in keeping up and maneuvering tourist tempo and sense of loss of a life known that are features of the impossibility of daily life. What does overwhelm look like and tell us? What are the historic and enduring conditions that frame, enforce, or emphasize impossibility? What does *tapija* as a feeling do for Puležans?

On one hand, ethnographically attuning to how locals play and engage with space, I observe and attend to instantiations of collective care for Pula's cityscape. For example, graffiti

speaks and attends to social injury. Graffiti in this discussion demonstrates concern for place and the collective through making public and visible harm caused by government and businesses including local media, historic companies, and business tycoons. Here, artists' attempt to reassert a claim to walls and central city space through graffitied critiques offer a form of care work through reterritorializing a sense of place. Paying attention to informal tactics of care and therapeutics, "treatment" for dispossession attempts to re-establish care for communal values, place, and Pula's residents. This lens offers insight to the moments, gaps, and experiences of care for social well-being that exist outside of the registered event-making.

Following tour guides, I explore how locals engage with and use space as a tool and method of eliciting, engaging, and echoing collective care as a structure that may be felt. In this discussion, walking is a means of kinetic attunement and engagement with space that parallels Hustak and Myers's (2012) notion of "involve[ment]." Hustak and Myers's involvement considers encounters between plants and insects as active and "involve[ing]" each in one another's lives." In the context of topological relations, Hustak and Myers's notion of "involve[ment]" helps to recognize that both place and residents are in play and being moved by each other, rather than static, blind, and reactive automations. Adopting this notion of relatedness, I argue that practices and processes of walking in Pula offer potential of play, pleasure, and experimentation for Pula's residents that in turn evoke engagement, concern, and care with place.

In a different vein, I consider some of the complications of care, where interlocutors acknowledge notions of "impossibility" to care for or to participate in city revitalization projects and the rental market. In Chapter 3, I explore how contemporary revitalization projects normalize beliefs and a sense of the impossibility to improve the condition of Pula's cityscape

among the Puležani. Care appears here as both the inability to fully care for the city's heritage housing and one's facade conditions, as well as the way collective and shared understanding of the impossibility of facade care and low expectations for residents to renovate. In response, locals romanticization of ruins appears as an acceptance of crumbling facades and a means to cope with the impossibility and inaccessibility. This chapter in turn examines how new tourist aesthetics impact notions and a sense of future within Pula. In this analysis, issues of care do not just mark past mismanagement but highlight how notions of the impossibility of care come to directly affect ideas of the future for inhabitants. Here, fear reflects imagined futures that see how issues of economic and housing disparity may grow through worsening living conditions, impossibility of property care or improvement, and potentially, a turn to a foreign dominated housing market.

The exploration of Pula's rental market and the growing presence of "luck" as a prosperity model emphasizes processes of individualization and personal success under capitalist and neoliberal forms. The focus on individual prosperity in turn threatens, or neglects, collective concerns, leaving those who are "unlucky" struggling to find places for long term rent in the city. As luck is a comment on prosperity, it sits in tension with *tapija*, or what is "unlucky" and where one's unluckiness cannot change. This lingering feeling of *tapija* constitutes a sense of growing unluckiness, where, in addition to a lack of accessible housing, being unlucky relates to what labour or education is valued, what work opportunities are available, what homes are cared for, and what projects are invested in.

In this way, I highlight individual and collective responses to growing socio-economic pressures that the tourist industry in the post-Fordist and post-Socialist era in Pula mark. Following Maria Puig de La Bellacasa (2017), Lisa Stevenson (2014), and Stewart (1991) such

discussion highlights the aim of this dissertation to not decontaminate nor decode, but instead, leave the messy relations of care.

As I emphasize, care involves, is challenged by, and correlates to feelings of *tapija*, where growing sense of alienation, nostalgia, and melancholy exacerbated by capitalist pressures are complexly involved in processes of care. On one hand, *tapija* and care come to exemplify what Lauren Berlant (2011) calls “cruel optimism,” I instead consider Kathleen Stewart’s (1996) argument that the use of attachments in cultural acts can also affectively reorganize older forms of sociality and power. Akin to Puig de La Bellacasa (2017) and Martin et. al. (2015), this dissertation considers care as an “affectively charged sensibility” that considers and is characterized by feelings such as “worry, attentiveness, and thoughtfulness” (2015, 629).

7.3. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Local responses to development propositions will always vary in general and in the Pula case specifically. While many are on the side of Zelena Istra, presenting caution and worry over the ecological and social effects of such developments, others including Tomas and Mateja rationalize exclusivity to economic elites and Pula’s tourist development as potentially benefiting Puležans. These varied responses reflect wide-ranging beliefs about what Pula’s future should look like: the realists who recognize tourism is here and opt-into the capitalist prosperity model, the nostalgic group who are facing temporal whiplash and who worry about the impending future, and even the moralists who fight for a voice and decision-making ability.

In thinking through *tapija*, this dissertation presents a discussion of the nuanced tensions that are focal to creating entangled, complex, ambiguous and emergent structure of feeling that pivots around hope and waiting. This project furthermore looks to contribute to larger

discussions of the everyday effects of neoliberalism as a global condition that underwrite such an emergent structure of feeling. Following the definitions of *tapija* stated by Matošević (2021) and Petrović (2021), *tapija* is not necessarily about considering a better future, but a presentness characterized by feelings of melancholy, alienation, and that things will not change. The notion of presentness here accounts for the fact that despite not expecting or believing things will change, elements of care play with, are ingrained with, at the surface of *tapija* creating an otherwise to a present and future of solely capitalist individualism. Endurance in Pula's late neoliberal context appears in the minor (Manning 2016) or quasi-events (Povinelli 2011) of graffiti, small talk, complaint, and walking that demonstrate a feeling of life lived under constraint to be nonetheless, emergent, open, and transformative. This dissertation thus witnesses and speaks to the effects and field of relation and maneuvering around Pula's touristification. Here, rituals and rhythms are expected to change over again, and disruptions never wholly alter or halt that which dispossess or eradicating neoliberal social injury.

The lens of care and attachments further emphasizes this dissertation's contributions to experiences of Puležan identity and *Istrijanstvo*. Much of the literature on Istria and Pula have contributed and focused on discussions on Istria's regionalism as challenging stereotypical readings of ethno-nationalist identities in former-Yugoslav states, as Istrian identity instead emphasized qualities of tolerance and multiculturalism (Ashbrook 2005; 2010; 2011, Ballinger 2003; 2004, Beović 2013, Cocco 2010, Stefanović 2018). Among such literature Istria was as an essential ground for studying self-identification in that it demonstrated local responses to top-down narratives of collective and social identity that rely on regimes of power and ideologies from above (Beović 2013). Thus, this dissertation also contributes to literature that recognizes Pula and Istria as a non-static place, where new values, beliefs, and sociality are constantly being

formed and negotiated. This work identifies the shifting understandings, roles, and presence of urban identity among dispossessive processes.

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