• Paper / Proposal Title:
The reconstruction of Al Nuri Mosque in Mosul. Strategies and tools for reinventing the meaning of places

• Author(s) Name:
Tommaso Lolli

• University or Company Affiliation:
Università di Roma – La Sapienza

• Abstract (300 words):
The paper reflects on issues deriving from the recent UNESCO competition aimed to the reconstruction of the Al Nuri Mosque, the main mosque in the city of Mosul in Iraq, of which some design proposals will be presented. The theme is not considered in an exclusively responsive manner, but inquires how, in cases of voluntary urban mutilation on such a huge scale, architecture must acquire the ability to abstract from the specific case issues that rise to the themes of the urban and civil identity of the buildings, their identification role, and their representative values; but also how to convey these aspects within the project for the new through formal, figurative and settlement-related solutions.

The opportunity provided by the competition was therefore not considered to be exhausted in the presentation of a precise solution for the the specific case, but rather interpreted as an opportunity to articulate a methodological approach to the reconstruction of highly symbolic buildings through experimental and demonstrative practices, which find in the level of typological definition the best compromise between specific exhaustiveness and the capability of being generalised. The main reference for this level of definition comes from the concept of the project-program introduced by Carlo Aymonino, described as a design tool that possesses within itself a planning dimension, which is not limited to the functional data, but also to the planimetric and
volumetric ones, being able to be considered a sort of prototype-manifesto of a precise design intention.

The exposition of the phases in which the design process was articulated (the study of permanence, both physical and immaterial in their meaning of ruins and absences, the hierarchy of full and empty spaces, the study of urban patterns, etc...) will be, in the conclusions, the occasion for an evaluation of the result not only as a design outcome but also as a methodological path.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

**Tommaso Lolli**, after high school and a temporary career at the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Bologna, enrolled in the Faculty of Architecture at Politecnico di Milano, graduating in 2017 with top marks with a thesis on the renovation of the Eni Children's Summer Camp in Borca di Cadore designed by architect Edoardo Gellner. After graduation he worked for two years as a design architect at an architectural firm, where he mainly focused on the design of museums (buildings and installations), open spaces and private houses. In the meantime, he takes the qualification to practice at the University of Florence. In 2019 he enters the PhD course DRACo (Architecture and Construction) at the Department of Architecture and Design of the University of Rome - La sapienza, with a research project on reconstruction, aimed to study the relationship between new interventions and built environment, inhabitant population and urban identity, building and urban morphology and construction-related symbolic issues. He is assistant/tutor in Final Design Studio in Politecnico di Milano and occasionally works as freelance architect.