

## **Urban fragments and heritage connectivity: The case of the pedestrian *Butchers' Bridge* on Ljubljana river**

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### **Abstract**

The *Butchers' Bridge* in Ljubljana has been first envisaged nearly a hundred years ago by the Slovenian master architect Jože Plečnik. However, his idea and model never saw the realization though it was supposed to round up his other iconic work on and around the river Ljubljana, particularly the *Triple bridge* and the *Open market* which to date remains one of the most popular meeting points of the inhabitants of Ljubljana as well as the tourist hub.

The *Butchers' Bridge* finally materialized only in 2010 among heated discussion on Plečnik's heritage, new modern bridge architecture and the uses of art on the bridge. The pedestrian bridge connects Plečnik's colonnade with the embankment on the other side, yet many pedestrians choose not to cross it and walk only up to the monumental sculptures, representing Adam and Eve, Prometheus and the Satyr. The sculptures were created by an intriguing contemporary sculptor Jakov Brdar whose work often carry controversial public responses. Other pedestrians, following the contemporary fashion, place love padlocks on smaller statues also created by Brdar, or on the railings, the practice that contributed to the unofficial designation of the bridge as a *Love bridge*.

Based on ethnographic methodological approach, combining participant observation with visual analysis, the paper tackles the urban fragments on the bridge drawing on Benjamin's clusters of *objects* (bridge, colonnade, sculptures, statues), *topics* (art, tourism, heritage), *figures* (the stroller, the tourist, the lover), *authors* (Plečnik, Brdar, Kobe). The selected urban fragments are to be mapped within a framework of heritage connectivity in a sense of the multiple heritage points as they present themselves in material, narrative and imaginary.