

## Editorial

### “Urbanity in Motion”

Alenka Fikfak<sup>1,\*</sup> and Cristian Suau<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Architecture, Zoisova 12, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

<sup>2</sup>University of Strathclyde, Department of Architecture, James Weir Building, 75 Montrose Street, G11XJ, Glasgow, Scotland, United Kingdom

#### INTRODUCTION

Motion is an act or process of changing place. Migration too. According to the State of World Migration report [1] made by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the current movement of people is becoming even more significant as a result of continued globalization and economic liberalization. Smith [2] treats globalization not as an accomplished fact, but as an unfinished project of social and political practice. With 214 million people now living outside their countries of origin [1], international migration has the potential to be a decisive force for future developments. This phenomenon of massive people’s mobility is physically transforming both the urban and rural landscapes by creating diffuse, frictional and transitional habitats. The fact is that poverty is now growing faster in urban than rural areas (UN-FPA). More than 828 million people [3] live in urban slums, which are typically overcrowded; polluted and dangerous; and lack basic services such as potable water and sanitation.

There are new facts that define today’s way of life. More than 3.4 million people die each year from water, sanitation, and hygiene-related causes. Nearly all deaths, 99 percent, occur in the developing world [4]. Of the 60 million people added to the world’s towns and cities every year, most move to informal settlements (i.e. slums) with no sanitation facilities [5].

Economists, sociologists and urban planners have pointed out that urban forms have often been driven by Neoliberal forces [6] with a stark increase in regional and global dissimilarities [7], growing environmental problems [8], displacement of rural communities, expansion of slums, informal employment and the dismantling of socio-environmental protections [9, 10]. How do these spatial dynamics operate and interplay between international, regional and urban borders, diffuse landscapes, infrastructural voids and migratory flows? How do the incessant trade, energy transfer and migratory movements affect the urbanity of today’s cities and the interconnectivity between urban and rural, formal and informal, dense and vast lands in various scales?

\*Address correspondence to this author at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Architecture, Zoisova 12, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia; Tel: + 386 (0)1 2000775; E-mail: alenka.fikfak@fa.uni-lj.si

#### WHY THIS SPECIAL ISSUE ON URBAN AND DEMOGRAPHY STUDIES?

The issue ‘Urbanity in Motion’ explores the transformability of motional built environments, which are manifested in discontinuous and asymmetric urban development of formal vs. informal systems. It offers both transdisciplinary and multi-scalar Approaches that investigate non-conventional and complex urban configurations, which are the results of vectors or lines of force established by the primacy of soft and hard infrastructures, mostly defined as detached, disconnected or isolated urban voids. The primal question is to survey and catapult for emergent and radical ideas, visions and spatial capacities of border conditions in motional spaces such informalised settlements (shantytowns or refugee camps) and its migratory causes, controls and constraints: shelter, safety, basic infrastructure and services; to mitigate manned and natural risks or disasters and thus implement active urbanity.

#### AIMS AND SCOPES

The aim of this Special Issue called ‘Urbanity in Motion’ is to critically review, select and celebrate high-quality, novel and original transdisciplinary manuscripts related to the fields of humanities and social sciences such as urbanism, sociology, geography, landscape and architecture. It aims to provide a theoretical and empirical framework for analyzing the complex dynamics of the built environment: transformation, mobility, transition and interconnectivity between urban and rural, formal and informal, dense and vast existing and future habitats. The selected contributors have reflected in at least one of the following themes:

##### A. Transformation

It reflects on transnational, regional and urban spatial dynamics of integration or separation and also understands the processes of border-crossing spatial features in relation to transnational, regional and urban integration processes, which might question the development of hybrid, recovery or limitless dynamics of the built environment at territorial scale. How can we perceive the transmission of trans-urbanism ideas into transformable informalized territories?

Can we still understand the built environment as a typology of urban forms? Are there any systematic mechanisms that can enable a participatory planning agenda in motional urban conditions regarding ethnic and cultural diversity? How can we define the every-day changing/flexible/transformatory dynamics, which can be seen as a duality in variable patterns and sequences (un-settlements of migrants, transmigrants, immigrants, and refugees across nation-states)

### **B. Mobility: Trans-connectivity of Nodes and Networks**

Urban corridors consist of multimodal land-transportation infrastructures (i.e.: check points, transportation gaps and transport roads). What is the situation of flows and mobility in/between cities as a result of new networks and land-transport corridors (e.g. pan-European, national, regional, macro-regional, and cross-border ones)? What are the impacts of transported infrastructure on informalized territories and their urban or/and rural structures? Do network-structures and nodes – the logistic and communications hubs- have any influence on translocality? What are the new typologies of urban transport between centrality, periphery and transport? Which role has the today's transportation on tourism? How is the migratory factor (people's mobility) be observed in terms of urban impact: expansion or shrinkage?

### **C. Transition: Urbanism as a Motional Locus**

Certain transitional spaces have emerged, which provide a direct and continuous link between the local and the global. Are the future urban trends changing from spatial organizations to single locations in transition? How these types of new motional urban spaces are (dis)connected with the growth of urban informality? Can we see the common sequence between localism and globality? Or between business districts, export-processing zones, corporate headquarters and key-financial elements as result of networks in transition?

### **D. Interconnectivity and Wellbeing: Smart Communities, Local Networks and E-cities**

How can we understand the duality between global/local urban economies and the production of urbanizations, which are affecting by illicit occupancy, brownfields, no-man lands, slums or migration settlements? How those informalized urban systems mutate, resist or perish at urban, regional and territorial scales? What are the social networks and human basic needs in settlements in motion?

## **OVERVIEW OF PAPERS**

Minas Bakalchev and co-authors Violeta Bakalchev and Saša Tasić analyze the phenomenon of the city as a collective memory created at a point in time and over time the concept is the factor that permanently reconstructs the image of the city. The visual manifestation, with the composition of "non-visual" conditions, can be described as indiscernible, repressed, forgotten, imperceptible, inarticulate like noises or margins that have to be overpowered, deleted. But they exist – as different forces and traces of ideas about the city.

They are a field to explore, and find, understand and explore the potential of the forgotten spaces as a motion toward essential images of space. The exemplary case of the city of Skopje has been studied in depth.

A discussion based on studying the trends that can be readable as models of behavior in a contemporary city is presented in the paper by Sanja Gašparović, Lea Petrović Krajnik, and Tamara Hladki. By questioning the urban dynamics, the authors introduce the idea of multimodal nodes as a potential for dynamic multilevel interconnectivity and sustainable development. The trends of urban space dynamics are presented through two specific points of convergence – Gare do Oriente and Parque das Nações in Lisbon and a planned multimodal node Sesvete in Zagreb. These new models of dynamics can gradually become local (re)generators or catalysts with a large impact on the surrounding areas while achieving multidimensional interconnectivity of urban space.

Višnja Kukoč explores in her manuscript the operating urban elements for cities in transition from socialism to capitalism. The case study was conducted in the city of Split, specifically in an urbanisation called 'Split 3'. The aim was to establish the mode of operating in contemporary conditions of urban planning and reconstructing small cities of up to 300,000 inhabitants by learning from local good practices. In the conclusion, the author suggests common elements and dimensions and proposed them as references of operation in modern urban planning and reconstruction of small towns of up to 300,000 inhabitants.

In their paper, Saja Kosanović, Linda Hildebrand, Gordana Stević and Alenka Fikfak underpin the resilience of inland urban areas to disasters occurred due to extreme precipitations. Some of the past human mistakes with catastrophic consequences, give overview of future climate change expectations in terms of extreme precipitation occurrence, considers possible negative implications on urban population, built environment and functions, and defines resilient urban criteria. The paper reflects on the situation in Obrenovac, a municipality within metropolitan area of Belgrade (Serbia). The final part of this paper introduces recovery strategies on achieving flood-resilient cities.

Agnė Ivanauskaitė examines the quality of living environment through the issue of a public or private matter. The development of quality of life in the built environment deals with a conflict between publicity and privacy. Ivanauskaitė discusses modern-day issues and different opinions about publicity – privacy, from a viewpoint of creating quality living environment. The author accentuates the significance of community and role of individual in forming a quality living environment in the production of contemporary urbanity.

The article written by Liljana Jankovič Grobelšek underscores the problem of public spaces and private spaces, which are open to the public realm. From spatial and urban planning viewpoints, the key antidote is to have a public space network of high and intense scopes and qualities. The development of networks of private spaces open to the public in Slovenian cities was never planned but driven by owners' profit motivations. The findings in this study reveal that

private spaces open to the public could invigorate, improve and enhance the city's public space network to a greater extent.

The study presented in the paper by Anja Jutraž and Tadeja Zupančič is focused on how we can influence urban mobility through public participation. This article focuses on exploring the role of users on the level of urban mobility. The final part of this article offers guidelines for future development of methods and tools for public engagement, especially concerning the 'Terf' virtual world.

Christiane Sörensen and Wiltrud Simbürger in their joint paper interrogate and compare two paradigmatic zones of edge condition in the cities of Berlin and Jerusalem in terms of social, urban and political alterations: on one hand an area around the former Luisenstädtischer Kanal, which was part of the Berlin Wall, and the Musrara neighborhood in Jerusalem where the previous 1967 border with Jordan ran through. This paper reviews on the main outcomes of the Berliner case study.

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