

Editorial

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“You can dial an associate on the phone and talk to him. But you cannot run into him on the phone; the chance encounter in a restaurant, on a street, only happens where there is physical presence. You do not need to go to a concert hall to hear the concert. But there is a joy and a purpose to being physically present in a place with other people who are like-minded, at least in that they too want to be present in that place for whatever is going on... For all these reasons, I think that city life is a failed experiment that we will never give up on.” [1]

These sentences summarizing science fiction short stories about the future city were written almost a half-century ago. Now, at the beginning of year 2021, we have similar feelings and ideas, we wish for the recovery. And as an important part of this challenge, we could and should rethink contemporary urban concepts and adopt a more critical approach to the last 50 years of the architectural and urban mass/space production.

The Department of Urban Planning and Design at the Faculty of Architecture at the Budapest University of Technology and Economics (Hungary) initiated the DOCONF, a bi-annual doctoral conference series in 2015. [2] The DOCONF provide a comparative overview of current doctoral urban topics and research methods in architecture and urbanism, but with a clear focus on the metamorphosis of the “inherited” built and natural environment of the post-socialist cities. The title “Facing Post-Socialist Urban Heritage” reflects our similar physical and social context, but at the same time, by its conferences and open access publications, the DOCONF intend to communicate our knowledge towards larger international public. [3]

In Central and Eastern Europe, academic communities in architecture are small, and most of the resources and publications are in the local languages. I think that to exist, be visible, and to develop, various types of transnational cooperation such as workshops, conferences, courses, publications, etc. are of crucial importance. The DOCONF idea was born following a successful workshop series on the housing estates, with students and teachers from TUs from Prague, Bratislava, Budapest and Gliwice. [4]

Starting in 2021, ALFA journal of the Faculty of Architecture and Design STU intends to undertake an important new role in this internationalization process by publishing papers solely in English. And I hope that well-communicated applied research in design, architecture, and urbanism will facilitate discovering new ways towards recovered, liveable and likable future city.

REFERENCES:

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