

## Summaries

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### **ASSESSING THE URBAN DESIGN QUALITIES OF THE URBAN STREET: A CASE STUDY OF SYLHET, BANGLADESH**

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*Keywords: urbanization, mobility, urban design qualities, walking preferences, Zindabazar*

The growing tendency of reckless urbanization in many cities of Bangladesh has upstretched force on an urban street, one of the features of urban structure which ties many areas and scope to move to another portion of the city. Historically, walking is celebrated as the major mode of transportation, cheapest as well, particularly in this agriculture-based region. The practice of walking ensures the development of mental health, and social interaction and promotes sustainable public mobility. But the pressure of urbanization forces the walking environment in the street to perish. Research shows that walking preferences vary among pedestrians. Along with other factors, the urban design qualities of the street significantly stimulate the walking tendency in the street. Urban features like land use, circulation, connection, human scale, landmark, vista, street façade, and other factors may help generate urban design qualities of a particular area. In Sylhet, a city in north-eastern Bangladesh, the urban development process follows top-down approaches, and the reaction and perception of the pedestrians are less recognized. Here, the pedestrian has an option for walking but not a place for social interaction, health benefits, and little priority is given to walkers. The major streets of Sylhet have recently been widened and ornamented with various street fixtures but the question arises: does this progress placate the urban design qualities incorporated with the walking trend? Mostly, interferences aim to solve a current problem like the traffic congestion or lack of space for pedestrians. Research on urban streets or walkability focuses on a quantitative approach where problem-solving is the main agenda but the perception of users and qualities of the street remain unnoticed. In addition, a significant research gap is quite evident which is described on the urban design qualities of the street in Sylhet. Therefore, the purpose of our research is to identify the urban design quality of a major commercial street in Sylhet. The research attempts to identify the qualities which have been explored by Ewin and Handy in 2009. Eight qualities such as enclosure, legibility, human scale, transparency, complexity, coherence, linkage, and imageability are examined by a comprehensive questionnaire survey. A particular group of students from the architecture department, who are familiar with urban design, understand the terms of the urban design qualities, and are also acquainted with the case study area, used the Likert scale to measure the quality of the street. This research identified a subtle significance of urban design qualities on user preferences for walking in the commercial street of Sylhet. Most of the qualities are absent and not considered during street development. Although, there are a lot of opportunities that exist in the present urban fabric to increase the urban design qualities. This study can provide a potential method to identify other street qualities in Sylhet and also can contribute to making

the pedestrian ways a place rather than only an option for transportation. The research was focused on a particular area that does not explain the overall quality of Sylhet city.

## **ON THE INCOMPLETENESS OF MUTATION: INTRODUCTION TO PRETORIA REGIONALISM**

**Cornelius van der Westhuizen**

*Keywords: South Africa, Pretoria Regionalism, vernacular architecture, modernist architecture*

This article introduces an often-overlooked southern African city to the global urbanism and architectural discourse. The focus is thus on the architectural heritage of Pretoria, the administrative capital city of South Africa, and the author further investigates and broadly documents the Pretoria Regionalist style. This contextually inspired interpretation of the Modernist Movement is put under the spotlight and the historical events and circumstances that formed this stylistic mutation are analysed and documented in broad strokes. An abridged timeline of historical events, which places the founding of Pretoria into context after the great exodus (1830 – 1840) of the Afrikaans-Dutch speaking people from the Cape Colony (est. 1652), and documents the original urban planning and development, provides an overview of the architectural influences from Europe and the African landscape, and subsequently introduces the term the Third Vernacular used to describe the locally inspired mutation of the Modernist style in the academic architectural discourse. This paper briefly describes and introduces the terms such as the Zero Vernacular, the First Vernacular, and the Second Vernacular, in respect of the timeline of architectural and urban development in South Africa. Each of these terms is associated with a different historical period – and by extension, a unique architectural style, and narrative characteristics of that specific period – in the history of the country. In addition to its introductory role for a new professional audience that may be unfamiliar with the South African architectural works, this paper also explores the various academic writings that cover the built environs of Pretoria. It is there that the term the Third Vernacular has been defined by Roger C Fisher, and discussed at length in the compendium, *Architecture of the Transvaal*. The Third Vernacular references and describes in detail the most significant architectural design style that underpinned, and that specifically dominated the Modernist period in Pretoria. In this definition, the influences of the social and cultural, as well as the natural landscape, contribute to the understanding of the phenomenology of this style's characteristics. Subsequently, the unique identifying built elements that are universal in the architecture are also further documented and illustrated through the study of some iconic built structures. The contextually specific projects that were identified are discussed as examples of the artistic and cultural expressions of the architects that created them. Moreover, it is worth noting that these projects also display a level of master builder craftsmanship and understanding of the construction materials – all of which reflect the landscapes of Pretoria. Another significant area of focus in this article involves the various uses of brickwork and artwork in the creation of architectural sculpture. This regional appropriate style is not only a reflection and interpretation of the surrounding landscape, but it also expresses the lack of materials and industry in the South African Republic, in contrast to Europe where they were more widely available during the same period. Thus, in support of the new technical terminology, eight seminal architectural projects are listed, analysed and described within the context of the Third Vernacular (or the Pretoria Regionalist style). These projects have been selected for their unique interpretation of the Pretoria Regionalist style and represent a significant period in the history of the city and its context. This paper also identifies the architects that were central to the development of the architectural discipline in Pretoria and South Africa. Reference is made to the influence of Le Corbusier on the Transvaal architects, the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM), and the involvement of the South African architects in the global discourse. Consequently, this paper focuses on the works of Norman Eaton (1902 – 1966), one of the most significant Pretoria architects of the South African Modernist time, whose built works most eloquently exhibit the cultural aspirations of the city. Furthermore, additional reference is also made to the design and theoretical influ-

ences from South America, namely Brazil and the Brazilian Modernists, after the Second World War and the cross-Atlantic exchanges that further developed the architectural language of the Pretoria Regionalist style. The chronological timeline of projects discussed and illustrated in this paper analyses the mutation of the various international influences, at both the civic and residential scale. This timeline gives an insight into the growth of the city from its fine-grain urbanism before the Second World War into a modernist capital dominated by tall buildings. Thus, the city and its urban structure and the architectural projects are analysed, and the transformation from a Calvinistic styled communion gathering place into a metropolis of the African continent. It is through these various lenses of culture and Afrikaner society and history that the architecture is introduced and placed into context, within the city, and within its historical framework.

## **BAŤOVANY – (RE)VISIONS OF A MODERN TOWN: SEARCHING FOR IDENTITY**

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*Keywords: Baťa architecture, linear town, industrial town, identity, Jiří Voženílek*

The town of Partizánske, formerly known as Baťovany and built according to the design of the urban development (zoning) plan of architect Jiří Voženílek (1909 - 1986) from 1938, represents a unique urban-architectural achievement not only in the context of Czechoslovak functionalist architecture, but also with regard to the emergence of modern European cities in the first half of the 20th century. Its original Baťa image with the remarkable idea of a linear industrial town and a number of structural and building innovations in the field of architecture, such as modular construction, prefabrication, brick design, unique construction system, etc., co-create the town's identity even after so many years and its original urban, architectural and historical value is still apparent. If we do not protect these values, the town will gradually lose its identity. In this respect, the key aspect is the re-identification or (re)vision of the historical, architectural-urban, industrial and cultural values of the original industrial town concept and the subsequent confrontation of this model with the current demands of the town residents as a way to rediscover the disappearing identity with an emphasis on preserving and maintaining the exceptional values of Baťa architecture and urbanism. The formation of Baťovany is linked with architect Jiří Voženílek (1909–1986), a graduate of the Faculty of Architecture at the Czech Technical University in Prague. On 20 April 1937, he started working for the Baťa joint-stock company in Zlín. He gradually worked his way up, becoming a renowned architect and urban planner with successful projects even outside of former Czechoslovakia. Voženílek's works of urban planning reflected the uniqueness of Baťa architecture. His Urban Development Plan was designed in 1939 – 1943 according to the principles of an ideal industrial town. Modifications to the original urban development plan followed a short time later. Both the emerging development of the town in years 1941 to 1947 and the construction in the 1960s followed the principles of Voženílek's concept. The biggest changes took place in the period of 1960 - 1990. Socialist neighbourhoods no longer respected the original urban development plan, as did the high-rise residential building in the centre of the main square. Partizánske (Baťovany), is an example of one of the few ideal industrial cities of the world, and can still project its unmistakable identity and character of the Baťa area, despite the inappropriate interventions made at the turn of the 21st century. This observation is made primarily by various specialists and other professionals, however, the attitude of the residents to this academic perception of the identity of the town is somewhat mixed. Current urban concepts and regulations do not contribute to the preservation of the town's identity, nor do they lead to sustainable town concepts of the future. Baťa identity consists of the following phenomena, which are still apparent in the image of the town of Partizánske: the unique history of the town connected with the world-famous Baťa joint-stock company, exceptional urbanism, including the square with the dominant church by Karfík, the architecture of the industrial complex and the construction module of industrial buildings 6.15 x 6.15 m, Baťa residential architecture and also the inhabitants of the town who perceive this identity as their cultural heritage. Červená Street serves as an illustrative example of how the identity of Partizánske can be worked with in the present. The street is located in a part of town where – even without cultural heritage protection – the original single-family houses have (at least partially) kept their unplastered brick facades, including the materials used and the spatial structure of the objects. What contributed

to this was the fact that this location has retained a collective awareness of its uniqueness and the need to preserve its identity. What tools can the residents and the municipality use when renovating and extending the buildings so that the town's unique character is preserved? New information and research show us effective ways to approach the protection of cultural heritage which will allow the public and professionals to preserve the identity of the town and the place. To this day, Partizánske has not adopted any concept of functional territory or object-focused monument protection of Baťa heritage. As to the possible solutions regarding monument protection and preservation, restoration or reconstruction of the original Baťa architecture, there is a lack of open communication between the Monuments Board, experts - historians, architects and urban planners, town councils, civic associations and town residents. In this context, our research also focuses on cooperation with the inhabitants of the town and introduces them to possible solutions for the preservation of the unique architectural, urban and cultural heritage. Public participation (mental maps) and a manual to Baťa architecture in Partizánske could also help, which could facilitate the way to achieve the protection of a unique phenomenon. Without any protection for the objects and areas relevant to the town's Baťa heritage, the town's identity will gradually disappear, and we will lose unique architectural and urbanistic values, which - as cultural heritage - are of European or even global importance.

## **ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

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*Keywords: social sciences, education, engagement, design process*

Interdisciplinary thinking is an unavoidable part of the design process for a creative architect. At a time of increased socio-ecological requirements, we cannot simply consider permanent spaces and architectural objects to be the result of a creative process, but rather to be the products binding together a myriad of contextual relationships and responding to socio-psychological, ecological, economic and other challenges. The user becomes the subject in the forefront of permanent architecture and eventually defines and rates the "user friendliness" and the "value" of a building, thus becoming its primary critic. The future of architectural and design-led education therefore lies in the interdisciplinarity of education. Complementary subjects, particularly social sciences, are often missing from the curriculum. Linking academic research to social sciences is a lesser part of the research practice. Social sciences in the context of architectural research thoroughly analyse the needs and preferences of users. It is envisaged that architecture students working in conjunction with a practitioner in the field of social sciences and using sociological research methods will be capable of creating proposals which optimally respond to an assignment blending with the architectural and sociological research. New approaches towards studio work are focused on methods and tools guiding the evolution and evaluation of design from the point of view of material innovation, longevity and analysis of expenditure. The participatory approach to the methodology of teaching studio work is an important method aimed at the process of integrated design in architecture. It offers students a cultural background on user needs and more realistic limitations which contribute to a more complex proposal. There are several means of running co-creation training opportunities in education. If circumstances allow it, real-life participation - investor's representatives, users, local authorities, social institutions, local community groups, etc all participate in the process. The initial stage consists of a site visit and different presentations and assessments; the following steps are selective and usually consist of defining user priorities and establishing design strategies. Lectures by invited experts in other scientific disciplines, briefing and workshops could be complementary components of the process. Prototypes developed by students are then subject to peer review, transparent discussions with the represented parties, in a single or two-phase approach. An example of the effort to establish a complex approach to architecture is the use of participatory design based on the cooperation of several parties, usually investors, designers and users. The term first appeared in the 1960s and its understanding has gradually evolved ever since. Whether architects, designers or engineers are designing a new space or revitalising an existing one, current and future users will be ideally involved in the process. Past users are best placed to interpret priority needs, social

interactions and routines due to a greater level of familiarity and can therefore be instrumental in establishing the elements that are likely to improve the quality of future usage. While case studies of co-creation methods used in an architectural context are increasing, the use of these methods lies primarily in the front-end of the design process. Participatory co-creation methods are being utilized by architectural schools to understand students' views on space configuration and possibilities for design. Applying various co-creation methods is accompanied by a number of related occurrences drifting into the field of sociology, psychology and other scientific disciplines. The participatory approach is closely related to the understanding of the mutual relationships between professional design proposals and real user requirements. The process therefore underlines "assertiveness in designing", enables the ability to communicate assertively and the tolerance to different opinions or differences in general. According to the study "A theory for integrating knowledge in architectural design education", it is crucial to initiate and inspire educational institutions and future designers towards a more complex approach to the design process. Considering the proposal as a purely functional and aesthetic spatial object or a product of one's own creative ambition is not sufficient. An outlook on the creation process, reduced to this way of thinking, leads to a diminished quality of the final product as well as the quality of education, which loses touch with a broad range of relevant requirements. The participatory design team becomes a community of people who communicate and share common and diverse opinions, thus creating a form of social interaction, the experiencing of which is crucial for the development of healthy individuals and well-rounded experts. The lack of sufficient social interaction often results in the inability to accept the most natural difference of opinion, a lowered threshold or outright refusal to accept diversity in all shapes and forms. This can be observed in the creative process through the absence of user-focused and need-focused proposals in the first instance.

## **STAR STATUS AUTHENTIC DESIGN**

**Martin Baláž**

*Keywords: design, philosophy, thinking, star, status, society, education*

"Design Thinking" is one of the methodologies currently used in education. It is not an exclusive property of designers and in combination with artificial intelligence we can see new horizons; but, does standard "Design Thinking" have sufficient tools for society? What is the essence of "Design Thinking", what is the role and duty of a designer and how is the designer's work changing? Life is dynamic, open in movement and for this reason we are currently facing a new type of creative process. Thus, we must go deeper and work with the design intellect of a product, a movement, space and time, a new art of interdisciplinary experience—open sphere thinking, synergic strategy and independent artistic research. Design morphs the lifestyle based on authentic motivation in societal action in favour of sustainability, ecology and health, offering the possibility of educating the society. We need design that motivates the user to take self-reflection and inspires morphing of the current functioning of society. The Star Status Philosophy tells the story of a star does not stand still, but is moving, it changes the angle of view, advances into the unknown, takes risk, wonders what is coming. It is a star that is curious what it will be like and never follows the outlined way, connects to form new compositions with other stars in constellations and, through its new connections, it always creates a new composition, a new context, via non-linear operations. The new structure and proportions of star constellations identify the new interests of society, important essence of education and training, innovative design strategies and methodologies. The Open Sphere Strategy uses an intellectual action composition in the designer's mental space, representing the movement of the designer's or observer's status around an open-sphere orbit line in real space-time and allows a permanent change of view. While morphing this status in the mind, a designer morphs the then actual composition into a new composition form. The result is a real design action and interdisciplinary fusion and finally, a real new design for a new lifestyle. We verified the developed Open Sphere design strategy based on the Star Status Philosophy with the expected outcome being a design with truly authentic essence. The process will further be subjected to experimentation, harmonization of composition and construction in an effort to achieve balance and a new atmosphere to produce a

new design for the new lifestyle and emerging target group. The authentic design essence comes as a result of an alternative form of design and supports the intellectual evolution of design in the post-pandemic era, as a new art of interdisciplinarity, the basic layers of which are constituted by the Synergic Design Strategy. A new important part of the role of designers lies in sustainability, circularity, aesthetics and inclusion. For a designer, as a star in a star status constellation, it is essential to create connections, constellations and new composition with other stars in the society. The [theoretical] basis for design is the Star Status Philosophy, Open Sphere Strategy, Authentic Design Essence layers and the goal is to create a so-called Star Status Skills Demonstrator to stimulate the imagination of the designer. The benefit will be the improved perception through intellect, via abstraction to connectivity, compatibility and atmosphere to motivation. The intention is to anticipate the needs of a new lifestyle and strive to work with the emerging society's needs, imagination, atmosphere, intellect and philosophy. The aim is to create an alternative form of design, harmoniously combining the continuity of the visual culture and philosophy of the future society. The benefit will be the opportunity to use components of the intellect and offer space for interaction, collaboration, identification and communication. Using the Star Status Design Philosophy in the design studio Baláž at the Institute of Design, Faculty of Architecture and Design, Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava, Slovakia, allows focusing on complex defined topics for the new lifestyle of the post-postmodern epoch. The studio builds on the independent intellectual research and development concept with the Star Status Philosophy, Open Sphere Strategy and Authentic Design Essence, as parts of the education method used. All topics are about defining the interest(s) of a new society, internally called "Interest solving", leading to a new lifestyle, as opposed to the stagnant view of post-postmodern society of today. The fusion of Action Centric Independent artistic research & development is an important part of design process in the studio. The Star Status Philosophy creates a flexible system for action-centric design process. The Star Status design philosophy will contribute to the application of alternative forms in education, with an impact on further creative performance or change of thinking and/or perception and will thus shape designers' assumptions. Exploring and connecting different perspectives is the foundation of the Star Status Philosophy, which changes the predefined links for flexibility and provides an opportunity to develop new design practices for unpredictable reality, as part of a designer's intellectual role focused on action with the spirit of avant-garde thinking, as opposed to optimization. The result is the action and interdisciplinary fusion, and perception interacts with thinking to gain knowledge.