

## Editorial 2/2023

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Building bridges between past and future is the common thread that connects the articles in the present issue of Architecture Papers of the Faculty of Architecture and Design STU (ALFA). The research approaches span from retrospective to future-oriented ones, as they cover the respect for inherited artefacts, identification of their significance and values, and repositioning them into contemporary life; re-questioning of the modern patterns and tackling their negative outcomes by inventive ways.

The wide range of topics analyzed in this issue reflects the environmental concerns that the 21st century people face because of the turmoil brought by modern progress and the break from traditional and sustainable lifestyles. In the 20th century, the values and aspirations of modern societies were changing at an extreme rate. The balanced inherent evolution following the traditional patterns was transformed by the trust for applied science and technology as an engine for development. The built environment was experiencing the growth of a gap between living tradition and progressive modernity that dismissed the self-regulating and self-reproducing systems of traditional cultures and settled modern town-planning principles. As Stefano Bianca states in his paper *Historic cities in the 21st century: core values for a globalizing world* (2010): “In a way, the organic integrity of living cultural traditions was disrupted and its demise gave rise to two equally unviable spectres: that of a fossilized heritage, and that of a utopian brave new world. As a result, the divide between nostalgic ‘conservation’ and futuristic ‘development’ concepts emerged, singling them out as two diametrically opposed approaches”. At the extreme point of drawing apart of two approaches, the narrow-minded protection of the material heritage of built environment significant for its historic and aesthetic values (‘old’ and ‘beautiful’) was implemented by freezing its fabric; the large-scale development in towns and cities threatened historic legacy by destruction, deterioration, and neglect on urban planning level; on architectural level, the modernist attitudes manifested as the preference for contemporary design and new materiality instead of adaptability of the existing building stock.

During the last decades, contemporary societies have made many efforts to stabilize the side effects of progress and unprecedented changes that go far beyond humankind's activities. The main direction is expressed by sustainability principles and sustainable development goals. Recent initiatives like Baukultur (2018), and New European Bauhaus (2020) call to revise and update the ways of creating a high-quality built environment; they hint to be aware of the past while searching for solutions to the unknown Anthropocene future. Among major goals, these ideological movements aim to balance the abovementioned extremes between progressive modernity and traditional patterns.

How to preserve historical buildings that feature cultural significance and adapt them to the needs of contemporary society, is the conceptual question examined by Kamila Gołębek, Marek Gosztyła, and Agata Mikrut-Kusy in the article *Rzeszow Castle: History and Contemporaneity - proposal for a new interior adaptation*. It focuses on the strategy that brings the disciplines of architecture and conservation together—adaptive reuse, as a way to introduce new functions driven by the respect for cultural significance of an architectural object. The authors deepen into the history, architectural value, and the current state of Rzeszow Castle, analyzing the latest trends in conservation and reuse concepts. Theoretic considerations rely on the research-based new functional program and modern interior design solutions.

The article *Transdisciplinary collaboration in architecture: Integrating microalgae biotechnologies for human and beyond-human perspectives* by Veronika Miškovičová and Jiří Masojídek is a piece of ground-breaking research that brings creative disciplines, microbiology, and technologies together. The authors investigate the potential application of microalgae biotechnologies in architecture and design, like small-scale objects, living systems on building exteriors, and urban and rural scenarios. The article overviews interdisciplinary projects and research that involve microbiology, architecture, and design, and hypothesizes various experimental scenarios.

The inconsistent urban development of towns, widespread in former socialist countries, that results in underutilized abandoned urban areas, concurrently featuring significant potential for urban renewal, is the research subject in the article *The typology of terrain vague and emergence mechanisms in post-communist, post-industrial small and medium-sized towns in Slovakia: Case study of Humenné, Strážske and Vranov and Topľou* by Romana Hajduková and Alžbeta Sopirová. The authors analyze terrain vague, as they call such territories, in three small and medium-sized towns in Slovakia: Humenné, Strážske, and Vranov and Topľou. The typology of the causes that led to the emergence of terrain vague and distinctive patterns identified would serve as a basis for future revitalization strategies.

Marek Lüley goes deeper into the topic of the changeability of architecture in a conceptual way, seeing the continuance of usage and maintenance of an architectural object as a non-linear process. In his captivating article *Ephemeral occupancies: Non-linear approach to adaptable architecture* he claims that adaptability as a strategy to prolong convenient responsive usage of architecture, is one of the answers to sustainability. The author discusses adaptability in diverse ways, from the basic understanding of flexibility to comprehended polyvalence, and its application—as non-linear strategies such as narrative, feed-back, and interpretation, with a deeper focus on one of the proposed strategies called ephemeral occupancies.

Lívia Búliková in her article *Innovations in sacral architecture: The resettlement churches of Emil Belluš* searches for the key approach to understanding the background and design of sacred buildings and acknowledging its impact on future. She chooses to deepen into sacral architectural objects as the outcomes of specific historical, political situations, and social policy, and as the innovative achievements in spatial concepts, morphology, and the use of new constructions, materials, and building technologies. Her approach is revealed in the case studies of two evangelical churches in Nesvady and Senec, designed by outstanding Slovak architect Emil Belluš and built in the 1950s.

The potential of personal influence on the development of a city is disclosed by an example of impactful activities by construction entrepreneur Rudolf Frič in the article *Contribution of Rudolf Frič to the social architecture of interwar Czechoslovakia* by Matúš Kiaček. Frič's contribution to urban development and social welfare of interwar Bratislava is evident in the expansion of social housing that stabilized urban structure and urbanized the outer city, and the improvement of housing conditions for citizens. The study focuses on works designed or constructed by Frič that accelerated modernization of Bratislava metropolis: projects of housing cooperatives, private rental blocks, and examples of city social housing.

Thought-provoking articles contribute to recurring topics of adaptability and responsible use of urban, architectural, and interior spaces, in tracing past innovations, and searching for progressive approaches that contribute to strategies toward a sustainable and balanced future. Enjoy your reading!