

Editorial

Bohumil Kováč

The articles in our ALFA scientific journal (Architecture Papers of the Faculty of Architecture and Design STU) cover a variety of topics, reflecting on the broad scale of interests in architecture and urbanism as a discipline. Surely, the scope of science much widely exceeds the competencies of architectural and urban planning practice, which is the recipient of results. Interdisciplinary approaches are becoming natural to solving every scientific topic, as well as any architectural or urban planning task. The same is valid for design, a discipline also embraced by the Faculty of Architecture and Design. Today we consider it natural for the field of design to address topics which, until recently, have been the domain of other fields and vice versa. Such “side views” are enriching for any discipline.

The same is also true for the article titled *Plasticity of public space: Framework for spontaneous user-driven transformation* by Juraj Horňák elaborating on the public space adaptability to the changing conditions associated with ecology/green architecture, ever growing requirements for diverse social use, increasing aesthetic and safety criteria, and the universal design of such places. Plasticity of space is a concept under which the author sees a broader context, including space flexibility, material and immaterial plasticity, and others. Jan Gehl defines public space as the space between buildings. By their completeness they appear to be relatively static, but the urban fabric they create is constantly in motion. The most changeable part of buildings is their interior. If public space is at times also referred to as a “city interior”, it is precisely the component most dynamic in the urban structure. The case study of 2025 Bratislava's Front Garden Championship illustrates the bottom-up appropriation of space with the support of institutions. Obviously, such a policy is not desirable or welcome in all public spaces. Primary public urban spaces should be created on a professional basis through competition of tenders, which neither excludes the public from participating, nor from suggesting the flexibility of use. Even a space designed in this way can allow for creativity in its use. Considering the legal aspect, it must be clear in all situations—also when applying the theory of “free space”—who is responsible for the safety of the space, after all, copyright will also apply.

The need for interdisciplinary approach is underlined by Pavel Beták in his article *Functional micro-region and its cultural potential: Skalica, Slovakia*. The study is also noteworthy for the fact that the term “micro-region” is a novel spatial dimension in land use planning in Slovakia. It is expected that the practice will happily embrace this tool, if territories need to address issues being of interest to several municipalities. However, this is not a term new to urban planning. In his “Settlement structures” (1978), Professor Rudolf Šteis already denoted a micro-region as a “mezzo structure” between the regional and settlement structures. The author highlights the need to see this term not only as setting territorial boundaries, but also with regard to its cultural or economic contexts. He selected the Skalica micro-region in Slovakia for his case study, a region he characterises as a geographically and functionally coherent area. The “coherence” will be a key term for the policy delineating micro-regions. It will be important that these micro-regions are not established as a result of political division of the territory, but will reflect the actual living needs of their inhabitants and the whole country. That is why similar research into this topic is of great significance, because land use planning still suffers from ambiguity about all the factors defining or constituting such micro-regions. These should be natural regions and not politically defined districts, as it is evident from Beták's study.

The appearance of settlements is a result of long-term process, mostly the planned ones. However, a war (or a natural disaster) can destroy the efforts of entire human generations in an exceptionally short time, sometimes counting only seconds. Ab-

durrahman Mohamed in his paper *Minimal adaptive conservation for saving urban memory in conflict areas: Gaza, Palestine* addresses the issue of cultural heritage protection in these areas. He claims community to be the primary carrier of cultural dignity and urban memory. The author mentions Sarajevo, but in connection with the war in Ukraine, towns in this area were destroyed twice in the last 100 years—during World War II and now. In areas of ongoing war conflicts, the effort to conserve physical cultural heritage is often futile. This was also the case of the Al-Alami house in Gaza, Palestine. Albeit the author sadly states that the destruction of the building caused death and silenced a great heritage site, yet it can stay alive in people's memory and its spirit can revive in a new form or in a copy of the original look, as is the case of the Frauenkirche church in Dresden, Germany. The article further emphasises that also the domain of architecture and urban planning considers peace the most critical value. In this context, we cannot refrain from commenting the situation when Slovakia blocks electricity supplies for war-destroyed Ukrainian towns and cities necessary for their survival in retaliation for being afraid of petrol shortage for our cars.

Michal Križo in his article *Turning environmental design simulation algorithms into parametric objects: Experimental study of BIM-compatible dynamic blocks* addresses the dynamics of development in another area of architecture—in the field of concept design and project elaboration. He introduces to us digital software tools, which design studios use not only in 3D modelling and documentation of architectural design concepts, but also to accommodate the ever increasing legislation requirements on energy efficiency of both buildings and urban structures.

Wishing you an enjoyable reading experience.