
Fifth Conference of the Portuguese-language Network of Urban Morphology, Guimarães, Portugal, 15–16 July 2016.

This Fifth PNUM Conference was organized by the University of Minho and co-ordinated by Jorge Correia and Miguel Bandeira. Its theme was ‘The spaces of urban morphology in research, teaching and practice’. There were nine sub-themes: History of urban form; Patrimonial inheritances and urban regeneration; Theory of urban morphology; From city to territory; Didactic practices and experiments; Methods and techniques; Agents and transformation processes; From plan to project; and Public space and recent transformations. The proceedings have been published as an e-book (<http://193.136.14.37/Atas%20PNUM%202016.pdf>).

The first keynote address was given by Renato Leão Rego (State University of Maringá, Brazil) on ‘The new cities of the Transamazônica and urban morphology’. In analysing urban-rural planning in Brazil in the 1970s with the implementation of ‘agrovilas’ along the ‘Transamazônica’ federal highway, he questioned a supposed analogy between this and projects for new cities in the northern part of Paraná state, in the south of Brazil. In analysing the project in detail, Rego pointed out that one of the reasons for its failure was the attempt to depart from the logic of the North Brazilian way of life being related to a river by the introduction of a road. He drew attention to the isolation of the region and the difficulties for settlers. In addition to conveying knowledge about an unusual urban-rural reality, Rego’s address allowed us to experience an urban morphology exercise, drawing on the work of Conzen and Kropf, covering several geographical scales.

The other keynote address, by Teresa Valsassina Heitor (Instituto Superior Técnico, Portugal),

focused on two aspects. The first concerned the concepts of the city according to Ascher. The second, directed especially at teachers and students, concerned the reading of contemporary urban form. Heitor pointed out the importance of including examination of the landscape, layout, exterior spaces, built space, uses, metabolism, and performance, referring to a series of authors well-known in urban morphology. Based on the demonstrated contemporary urban complexity, she pointed out the need for the scale of approach to be local and global, referring to Moudon. In discussing didactic possibilities for teaching urban form, she presented simulations of reality through digital games that were especially attractive for young students.

There was a stimulating study visit on foot within Guimarães, guided by Maria Manuel Oliveira (University of Minho). As author and co-ordinator of the requalification project developed by the University of Minho Studies Centre of the Architectural School, Oliveira shared with participants the details of the project and its exquisite execution. Studies of the urban form of the project area were highlighted as fundamental to the foundation of several decisions on projects.

Building on the achievements of this conference, the Sixth PNUM Conference will be held at the Federal University of Espírito Santo in Vitória, Brazil 24–5 August 2017 (<http://pnum2017.wixsite.com/pnum2017>).

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ISUF President's Report, 2015/16

ISUF enjoys very good health and continues to grow steadily. As in the past few years, its success rests mainly on four components: the conferences, the journal *Urban Morphology*, the regional networks and the task forces.

The conference in Rome was a great success. The proceedings are available online. The conference in Nanjing (reported in the previous issue of *Urban Morphology*) was similarly successful, and ISUF is greatly indebted to Wowo Ding and her colleagues for their organizational acumen and hospitality. We look forward to our next conference in Valencia, the arrangements for which by Vicente Colomer and his colleagues are already well advanced.

Urban Morphology has completed its twentieth volume, and is one of the most popular periodicals concerned with the study of urban form. The increase in the number of regional networks is testimony to the international spread of urban morphology. There is strong support for them from academics and increasing involvement by practising urban planners. Though not formally an ISUF Network, the Urban Morphology Research Group based in the University of Birmingham is perhaps one of the most important urban morphological networks. The absence of French or German ISUF networks is surprising in light of the significant contributions of those two countries to the early development of urban morphology.

The Progress Report of the Advisory Committee on the Future Development of ISUF indicates the need for further developments. The report is optimistic, embracing a wide variety of disciplinary approaches and schools of thought. It draws attention to the need to capitalize on the energy of younger members as key founder members retire. The prominence of the Conzenian school is evident, reflecting the fact that this has so far been the most active. This dynamism needs to be extended more widely, keeping in sight opportunities to build further on theoretical and methodological frameworks that bridge the different disciplines and approaches. Some members will recall the experiment a few years ago in which a comparative study of work on Alnwick and Como was undertaken: this, and its implications, has perhaps not been sufficiently discussed.

Last but not least, it is a great pleasure to extend our grateful thanks to Michael Barke for his exemplary financial management of ISUF. We are delighted that he has agreed to take on a further 4-year term as Treasurer of ISUF.

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First Conference of the Hispanic International Seminar on Urban Form, Toledo, Spain, 15–16 September 2016

One year after its foundation, the Hispanic International Seminar on Urban Form (ISUF-H) celebrated its first conference on 15–16 September 2016. The event was held at the city campus of the Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha (UCLM) located in the heart of the UNESCO World Heritage historic city of Toledo. This initial meeting was organized by UCLM's ISUF-H founding members and was chaired by Eloy Solís and Borja Ruiz-Apilánez (Chairman and Secretary-General of ISUF-H).

The day before the conference, the Spanish-Language Association held its first general assembly. This was followed by a lecture by Fernando de Terán, who was named an honorary member of ISUF-H. De Terán is emeritus professor in urban planning at Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM) and current director of the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando.

The main purpose of the conference was to consider the current state of Hispanic research on urban morphology and to share the interests of the Association's members, other urban form researchers, and those involved in the management of cities. The conference was therefore intended to embrace as many contributions as possible from different regions and disciplines, being entitled 'Forma urbana: pasado, presente y perspectiva' ('Urban form: past, present and future perspectives').

A total of 127 abstracts were submitted, of which 92 were accepted following the peer-review process. The 71 contributions were presented in parallel sessions, each of which included three (or four) presentations. Most authors were from Spain, but there were contributions from Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Peru. Of the seventeen Spanish autonomous communities, eleven were represented at the conference.

Contributions covered eight different themes: nineteen on 'History of urban form'; twelve on 'Sustainability and urban form'; ten on 'Urban planning and management'; nine on 'Human activity and urban form'; seven on 'Urban morphology elements' and 'Urban landscape and heritage'; four on 'Theory and methodology'; and three on 'Interdisciplinary approaches'.

In addition to the parallel sessions, each day started and finished with a 2-hour plenary session. The first session comprised presentations on 'Urban design in the Spanish-speaking Americas' by ISUF-H President Vicente Colomer (Universidad Politécnica de Valencia), and 'Urban form in post-capitalism cities' by Horacio Capel (Universidad de Barcelona). The second session included presentations on 'Cities and borders in the 16th and 17th centuries' by Alicia Cámara (Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia), and 'Reasons for regularity in good city form' by Joan Busquets (Harvard University). The third session comprised presentations on 'Urban form and relational spaces: plan and projects' by Francesc Magrinyà (Universidad Politécnica de Cataluña), and 'Landscape and places: formal affinities in the urban narratives' by Juan Luis de las Rivas (Universidad de Valladolid). The fourth session, included presentations on 'The Vallecas eco-boulevard 1995–2015: a case of the failure of planning and architecture' by Ramón López de Lucio (UPM), and 'Urban form and social inequality in Spanish cities' by Jesús Leal (Universidad Complutense).

The eight key speakers represented a wide range of disciplines, including architecture, urban design, planning, geography, history, civil engineering, and sociology. ISUF-H was founded to serve as a forum for interdisciplinary debate and exchange of knowledge. The diversity of fields and approaches to urban morphology present in these plenary sessions was key to demonstrating this intention. The conference proceedings (in Spanish with English abstracts) are being prepared by UCLM Press for publication online. A link to the publication will be available on the conference webpage (<http://eventos.uclm.es/go/ISUFH2016FORMAURBANA>), where further information is available.

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