

Historic Urban Landscape Forum, London, UK, 21–22 March 2017

The Historic Urban Landscape Forum (HUL Forum) was an international networking initiative. It was conceived and organized by the UCL Bartlett School of Architecture and the UCL Institute for Sustainable Heritage under the patronage of UNESCO. Funded by the Bartlett Faculty for the Built Environment, it took place on 21–22 March 2017 at the Bartlett School of Architecture. It brought together 77 participants with various backgrounds who engage in heritage research and practice in relation to historic urban landscapes: academic researchers, policy-makers, practitioners, and national and international stakeholders.

The aim of this initiative was to provide an opportunity for dialogue and reflection on heritage practice, founded on the proposition that to develop new sustainable approaches to urban conservation there is a need to appreciate the historic city in relation to urbanity as a process. HUL Forum takes its name from the *2011 Historic Urban Landscape Recommendation* by UNESCO – an approach to urban conservation that aspires to consider the urban landscape in terms of evolving systems and processes. As such, it has great relevance to urban morphology and offers the prospect of future interaction with the field. The Forum fostered a debate on the rhetoric and application methods of the *Recommendation*, taking a critical approach to existing governance and administrative mechanisms at international, national and local levels.

The core of the programme was four sessions of invited talks with contributions from leading and young academics and researchers on four themes: theorizing the historic urban landscape; implementing the HUL Approach; digitizing the historic urban landscape; and disciplinary fragmentation and situated practice. The organizers,

Garyfalia Palaiologou and Kalliopi Fouseki, led a workshop on the HUL recommendation tools. The highlights were Francesco Bandarin's public lecture on 'Advancing HUL' and a panel discussion on 'Views from practice and the way forward' by Rodney Harrison (UCL Institute of Archaeology), Helen Maclagan (UK National Commission for UNESCO), Matt Thompson (Historic England) and Mike Turner (Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design). There was also an exhibition of Bartlett School of Architecture Master's student projects on the historical environments of Venice and London, and a poster session with contributions from eight countries.

The various topics discussed included sustainable development in historic cities; human geography, ecology and perception; urban morphology and planning; the World Heritage nomination process; national and international mechanisms of urban heritage management and practice; and finally, the relevance and future of the UNESCO Historic Urban Landscape Approach. The proceedings and further information are available online at the Forum website (<http://hulforum.org/>). The Forum was very well received by the participants. It ended with enthusiastic commitments to work towards establishing HUL Forums as annual networking activities for the wider community of GO-HUL (Global Observatory on the Historic Urban Landscape (<https://go-hul.com/>)) and others interested in urban heritage research and practice.

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Historical cities and contemporary design: Third ISUF Italia Conference, Rome, Italy, 23–24 February 2017

Organized by the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Rome, the Third ISUF Italia Conference hosted 75 participants, more than 40 coming from outside Italy. There were welcoming addresses by Anna Maria Giovenale (Dean of the Faculty), Orazio Carpenzano (Director of the Department of Architecture and Design) and Giuseppe Strappa (President of ISUF Italia). The themes of the Conference were introduced by Paolo Carlotti and Anna Irene Del Monaco (joint

chairs of the conference), including brief consideration of the architectural approach to urban morphology in Italy. In the first plenary session, Pierre Larochelle (Laval University) provided 'A cognitive approach to problems relating to the design of architectural projects in historical cities'.

The papers were organized in three parallel sessions:

- Theory: new and old methodologies for contemporary design in the historical city (16 papers);

- Reading: tools and analysis of urban fabric (37 papers);
- Design: urban space and contemporary design (23 papers).

Despite their recurrent problems, European cities can be considered historically as centres of innovation, and places of economic, political and cultural transformation. Practically all the papers presented evidence of a balance of interests in theories and methods applied to historical and contemporary cities and there was significant representation of case studies and design issues from Italy, elsewhere in Europe, and Asia.

In the closing plenary session, the President of ISUF, Giancarlo Cataldi offered 'Self-critical reflections on urban morphology'. He discussed how ISUF international conferences and regional networks have provided opportunities to refresh, rejuvenate, rethink and reflect on the lessons offered by the Roman school of urban morphology and other remarkable international schools of urban morphology. Challenging case studies from newly emerging urban contexts are offering interesting opportunities to test theories and design tools.

Two final contributions were by Vitor Oliveira (Portuguese-language Network of Urban Morphology) and Vicente Colomer Sendra (Hispanic International Network on Urban Form). They provided perspectives on how ISUF Regional Networks and work in Valencia were contributing

to interventions in historical centres. However, although in parts of Europe there is evidence of contributions to historical urban landscapes that are well-founded in research, in other cultural contexts, for example in America, Asia and Africa, there is a varied growing need to develop methodologies to manage, design and protect both historical settlements and natural environments. Contemporary historical settlements are urban organisms whose survival, transformation and management requires complex design actions that take advantage of survey and analysis that integrate different knowledge components relating to past urban identity.

Several sessions underlined the need for much wider understanding of the fundamentals of urban morphology by architects and planners. They needed tools for better understand of the dynamic process of the urban fabric, especially within historical cities. Conclusions and suggestions were summarized by Paolo Carlotti (University of Rome) and Marco Maretto (University of Parma). They drew attention to the potential offered by the creation of a Mediterranean Network for addressing an architectural design role for urban morphology.

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Report on the Serbian Network of Urban Morphology

The Serbian Network of Urban Morphology (SNUM) emerged in 2015, during the 22nd ISUF conference in Rome (Niković and Đokić, 2015). However, for some time there had been a growing interest in urban morphology in Serbia. For example, *Formes urbaines* (Castex *et al.*, 1977) was translated into Serbian in 1989, 15 years before it was translated into English for a much wider audience, and it continues to be one of the most cited books in the Serbian literature on architecture and urbanism.

During May 2017, several events took place that were very important for the future development of the Network. The Faculty of Architecture in the University of Belgrade invited Ivor Samuels and Olga Vitale Samuels to give lectures in two courses in the current architectural curricula that are headed by professors who are directly involved in the work of the Network, namely Vladan Đokić's compulsory course on 'Town Morphology' and

Mirjana Roter-Blagojević's elective course on 'Contemporary principles of architectural heritage preservation'. In addition to students, the audience included other Faculty members and invited professionals who contributed to the discussions. There was also a meeting of SNUM at which the consolidation of knowledge on urban form in Serbia was discussed. The recent contributions directly related to the urban morphological discourse within ISUF were especially mentioned (for example, Đokić, 2009).

On 11 and 12 May, the Fourth International Conference on Preservation and Improvement of Historic Towns was held in Sremski Karlovci, a small historic town in Serbia. This annual event, initiated by the Provincial Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments and the Municipality of Sremski Karlovci, is now partnered with the Institute of Architecture and Urban and Spatial Planning of Serbia and Belgrade University Faculty

of Architecture. Originating as a conference primarily concerned with conservation, it has now broadened its scope to include heritage management and planning. Moreover, the updating of approaches to urban conservation, which necessitates connecting with urban planning, has identified the importance of urban morphology as a comprehensive theory. In last year's conference the Conzenian concepts of town-plan analysis were presented in relation to the morphological framework of historical towns (Niković and Manić, 2017). This year one of the keynote speakers was Ivor Samuels, who discussed typomorphology in Anglophone countries. A morphological contribution was also made by Eva Lovra, of the Slovak Academy of Science Institute of Construction and Architecture. Referring to the Conzenian concept of morphological region, she has investigated urban tissue typology in the former Austro-Hungary (1867–1918), part of which belongs to present-day Serbia. In addition, there were contributions that dealt with various levels of urban form – such as the research by Anna Pecze (Szent Istvan University, Budapest) on main streets as the most significant morphological element in Vojvodina's twin-towns.

Report on the Polish Network of Urban Morphology

Interest in urban morphology in Poland has for many years been led by geographers from Łódź. In particular Marek Koter and Mariusz Kulesza have developed and applied M. R. G. Conzen's methodology.

The interest of Polish architects and urban planners in urban form was related not least to the major reconstruction that took place following the devastation of the Second World War. A primary concern was the rebuilding of historical complexes, including destroyed town centres, and the building of new housing estates. This helped to stimulate interest in research on urban form in the social and historical context of Poland, which was in due course developed further by, for example, Małgorzata Hanzl in Łódź and Anna Agata Kantarek in Krakow, both of whom were based in architecture departments.

The ISUF conference in Porto in 2014 was a catalyst of a wider community of interest in urban morphology. In 2015 ISUF members from other countries were able to spend time teaching and researching at Cracow University of Technology (CUT). Ivor Samuels from the Urban Morphology Research Group in the University of Birmingham

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held seminars and ran design projects in March and December 2015 and Ana Nikovic from Belgrade, who was instrumental in setting up the Serbian Network of Urban Morphology, participated in a seminar on the impact of the deregulation of planning. They both also contributed to the 2nd International Krakow Seminar on Urban Spaces in December 2015. A Workshop on Architecture and Urban Morphology was held in CUT, on the theme of Water and the City, to which Marco Maretto, from Parma, contributed. This involved students from CUT and Parma. The results of the workshop were presented in Parma in July 2016. By this time a monograph had been published in Polish containing a chapter on 'Morphology and typology of urban form' (Kantarek, 2015).

A major development was the official launch in May 2016 of the Section on Urban Morphology of the Commission on Urban Planning and Architecture, of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Cracow Branch. The Section has 20 members and its activity is mainly concentrated on discussions about directions for research in urban morphology. A seminar to mark the launch was held on the relationship to the Conzenian tradition of

historico-geographical work within the Polish School of Urban Morphology. Marek Koter, Magdalena Deptuła, and Tomasz Figlus, from the Faculty of Geographical Sciences of Łódź University, were the main speakers. In December 2016 two seminars were held with professors from CUT in which their professional relations to urban morphology were discussed. Among the presentations were those by Aleksander Böhm, Wojciech Kosiński, Andrzej Kadłuczka, and Ewa Węclawowicz-Gyurkovich.

Teaching of urban morphology takes place in the University of Łódź in the Historical Geography and Cultural Heritage programme and in Łódź University of Technology in the Division of Urban Structures, Institute of Architecture and Town Planning. In CUT, lectures on urban morphology and the urban morphology of housing estates and urban housing environments have been incorporated into postgraduate programmes. In addition, there is a faculty seminar on urban form. In 2016/2017 a full course on urban morphology is

being offered for students taking the postgraduate degree in land management. It consists of lectures and project work on sectors of Krakow that are outside the extensively studied medieval area.

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