

MOBILISING THE PERIPHERY

#governance #the just city #inclusion & diversity #affordable
housing #economic cycles #settlement form #cultural context
#participation #planning instruments #model projects

A collaborative project focussing on the development of the urban periphery, aiming at stimulating an exchange of ideas, discussing new solutions and contributing new insights to the understanding of evolving global urbanisation patterns

2015 - 2018

with ANCB Partner

Schindler Transit Management Group

INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

Urban peripheries - such as informal cities, barrios and suburbs - are typically perceived to present only great challenges. With the project *Mobilising the Periphery*, ANCB and the Schindler Transit Management Group set out to stimulate new ways of thinking, to question the given pre-conditions of current development and to initiate a discourse on urban realities at the periphery. The aim of the project was to cross-connect new approaches and insights within a wide network of urban practitioners and researchers, and to archive and share best-practice examples with a global audience, thus creating a new public community for urban peripheries worldwide.

The subject was explored and interpreted from a range of perspectives prevalent in cities today, including examples of physical periphery – on the edge of the city (ghettos, suburbs, segregated housing estates), unregulated periphery – outside of the formal masterplan (slums, barrios, informal cities), and social periphery – on the margins of society (homeless, disabled, elderly, ethnic minorities).

EVENTS

Focus Europe: From Fragmented Periphery to Metropolitan Region

Symposium and Workshop: **27 - 28 April 2018**

The periphery in Europe can be defined by socio-economic conditions, with the reasons for those conditions often to be found in the surrounding urban setting: political negligence of specific quarters, little or no access to mobility and limited access to resources and knowledge. Within the past decade many European municipalities have attempted to remedy problems on their urban fringes through new urban planning responses. The final symposium in this series invited reflection on these attempts, under the guiding question “how to turn the challenges of integration and cultural diversity into enrichment for the city of the future?”

Focus Latin America: From Segregation to Integrated Urban Landscape

Symposium and Workshop: **27 - 28 January 2017**

In the context of a highly urbanised region, significant social and physical inequalities challenge urban planning and governance and contribute to the emergence of a peri-urban landscape, characterised by distinct and expansive low-density peripheries. This fourth symposium focused on broad-ranging, innovative urban research and practice responses to this peri-urban condition.

Focus Sub-Saharan Africa: Informality and Urban Pattern

Symposium and Workshop: **1 - 2 July 2016**

From the perspective of Sub-Saharan African cities, where any coordinated provision of basic utilities and services cannot keep pace with the population growth, this third symposium focused on the consequent condition of informality and its associated urban patterns.

Focus China: The New Habitat

Symposium and Workshop: **27 - 28 November 2015**

In the context of high demands for affordable housing, for additional forms of food production, for the reduction of long commuting distances – simply for a compact city organised in clusters of high functionality and with resilient impact – this symposium focused on new strategies for a hybrid new habitat.

4 Types / 4 Cases

Symposium and Workshop: **6 June 2015**

To commence the project, participants from urban research and practice in Europe, Asia, South America and Sub-Saharan Africa shared their work and positions on the issues of informality, upgrading, top-down-planning and segregation in the on-going process of urbanisation in the respective case-study areas. Pressing issues in representative peripheries in these four urban regions were discussed in depth in order to set and sharpen research questions for this project.

DOCUMENTATION

- Videos recording documenting the public debates
- Publication: ANCB Edition #5 Mobilising the Periphery. Incubator for Urban Innovation

BACKGROUND

The project employed four cases to exemplify each of four types of periphery – Informality (Sub-Saharan Africa), Upgrading (Latin America), Top-Down-Planning (China) and Segregation (Western Europe). Close examination of these on-the-ground case studies facilitated the identification of exemplary policy models and instruments, the debate on the contribution of design and planning, the awareness of the potential of formal and informal power and the illustration of the risks and dangers of segregation.

As a collaboration, the project provided an opportunity for Schindler to apply its technical knowledge to improving urban conditions in the overlooked urban periphery, by learning and discussing their conditions, systems and potentials. This keeps Schindler at the forefront of urban developments, while also giving academic research and best urban practice exposure to the applied realm of industry.

Part of the ANCB Theme

IDENTITY IN PLACE: Reconnecting Built Form with Societal Diversity

Across the earth, places have evolved to be remarkably distinct from each other, even when their geography and climate are similar. Culture is the manmade factor that expresses this difference, most tangibly in the built environment. Carried by the spatial practices of a society – be these daily activities or significant events – culture requires supporting spaces for these practices, which reciprocally reshape the form and evolve the functionality of the supporting spaces, thus expressing shared identity.

Despite the importance of culture to how all places look and are experienced, it tends not to be a critical tool in urban design and planning, and is rather used merely as a lens with which to discern past heritage, if at all. This is lost potential, especially in the present-day era of rapid urbanisation and movement: when there is often little time to grow an identity through shared meaning, as entire cities can emerge in just a few years; where urban dwellers increasingly move, live and work between multiple cities, calling the idea of a local society into question; where large portions of societies migrate to distant and culturally different places, escaping environmental, political or economic disasters that also destroy cherished urban fabrics, and where local public spaces increasingly serve as satellite arenas for international politics.

This theme looks to culture to explore how built form and spatial typologies might assist the expression of identity. Can architecture and urban planning any longer express the multi-layer identity of present-day cities? Can the methods and tools of urban practice catch up with an ever-evolving understanding of culture, to broaden and revise the spectrum of housing, workspace, public and open space typologies in line with how societies need and use space today? Or, are other concepts required to illuminate the connections between people and where and how they live? How should the reconstruction of lost built fabric and the identification of heritage be approached?

PARTICIPANTS

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