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6th INTERNATIONAL
ACADEMIC CONFERENCE ON
PLACES AND TECHNOLOGIES

PLACES AND TECHNOLOGIES 2019

THE 6th INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC CONFERENCE ON
PLACES AND TECHNOLOGIES

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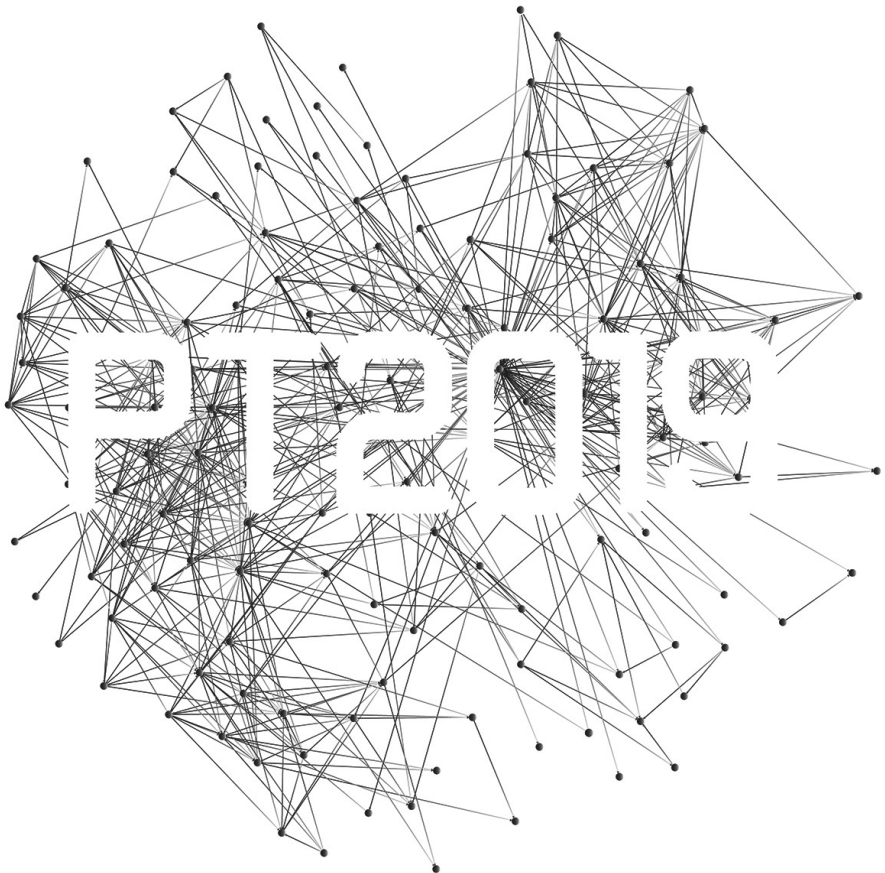
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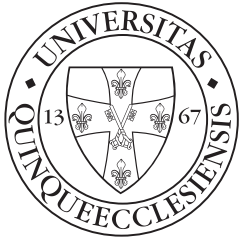
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PLACES AND TECHNOLOGIES 2019

**KEEPING UP WITH TECHNOLOGIES TO TURN BUILT HERITAGE INTO
THE PLACES OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

**CONFERENCE PROCEEDING OF THE 6th INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLENARY LECTURE**44**

| | |
|--|-----------|
| HERITAGE AND TECHNOLOGY - GENERATING A SENSE OF PLACE | 45 |
| | |
| Demeter Nóra, BA UC B, MYU, DLA UP | |
| FORM AND ENERGY: INNOVATIONS IN METAL BUILDING | |
| FAÇADES | 53 |
| Hachul, Helmut | |
| ASSESSMENT AND REHABILITATION OF HERITAGE STRUCTURES | |
| HELPED BY COMBINED NON-DESTRUCTIVE TESTS | 64 |
| Orbán Zoltán; Török Brigitta; Dormány András | |
| SEARCHING THE RIGHT DISTANCE BETWEEN THE OBJECTIVITY | |
| OF THE HISTORY AND THE NEED OF THE CONTEMPORARY | 72 |
| Stella, Antonello | |

PAPER**89**

| | |
|---|------------|
| HUMAN MIGRATION CRISIS | 90 |
| Alwani, Omar; Borsos Ágnes | |
| THE MULTIPLEX TYPOLOGIES OF SHRINKING CITIES | 100 |
| Antonić, Branislav; Djukić, Aleksandra; Lojanica, Vladimir | |
| MONASTERY CRKVINA AND MONASTERY TVRDOŠ, TREBINJE, | |
| FEDERATION BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - COMPLEX | |
| RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT | 109 |
| Arsić, Petar | |
| COLLECTIVE REUSE – CO-HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS IN THE | |
| SERVICE OF PRESERVATION THE BUILT HERITAGE | 117 |
| Babos Annamária | |
| TEENAGERS' PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACES: | |
| EXPERIENCES FROM A LIVING LAB IN LISBON, PORTUGAL | 124 |
| Solipa Batista, Joana; Menezes, Marluci; Smaniotto Costa, Carlos; Almeida, Inês | |
| THE PERCEPTION OF PUBLIC SPACE: IMAGES AND | |
| REPRESENTATIONS OF STREET FURNITURE | 132 |
| Ben Dhaou, Ons; Vasváry-Nádor Norbert | |
| THE DESIGN CONCEPT OF A PRE-FABRICATED APARTMENT | |
| BUILDING | 138 |
| Borsos Ágnes; Kokas Balázs | |

| | |
|---|------------|
| PROTECTION AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT OF ANCIENT VILLAGES FROM A SUSTAINABLE PERSPECTIVE - HOUGOU ANCIENT VILLAGE AS AN EXAMPLE | 146 |
| Cao Hui | |
| POP(O)S OF SHOPPING CENTRE - A NEW APPROACH TOWARDS URBAN DESIGN..... | 154 |
| Cvetković, Marija; Radić, Tamara | |
| TRANSCRIPTION OF FORMER ARCHITECTURE | 163 |
| Zinoski, Mihajlo; Dimitrievski, Tome | |
| THE LOCAL LEVEL OF GOVERNANCE IN THE EUROPEAN PROCESS OF ENERGY TRANSFORMATION: CHALLENGES AND EMPOWERMENT CHANCES IN BULGARIA..... | 171 |
| Dimitrova, Elena; Tasheva – Petrova, Milena; Burov, Angel; Mutafchiiska, Irina | |
| URBAN GROWTH PATTERNS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE: A COMPARISON OF LATE 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN SUBURBAN PATTERNS TO THOSE OF LATE 19TH CENTURY CENTRAL EUROPEAN URBAN FABRIC..... | 180 |
| Dougherty, James, AICP, CNU-A, ASAI | |
| ENERGY CONSUMPTION INDICATORS DUE TO APPLIANCES USED IN RESIDENTIAL BUILDING, A CASE STUDY NEW MINIA, EGYPT | 188 |
| Elhadad, Sara; Baranyai Bálint; Gyergyák János; Kistelegdi István | |
| MANAGEMENT APPROACH FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN OF EXISTING NEW CITIES IN THE DIFFERENT REGIONS OF EGYPT (COMPARATIVE STUDY)..... | 194 |
| Elhadad, Sara; Baranyai Bálint; Gyergyák János; Kistelegdi István | |
| INVESTMENT LOCATIONS MAPING: KIKINDA CITY CASE STUDY | 202 |
| Furundžić, Danilo S.; Furundžić, Božidar S.; Borko Lj, Drašković | |
| “VISIBLE” AND “INVISIBLE” TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE INCLUSION OF VULNERABLE USERS AND THE ENHANCEMENT OF MINOR ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE | 211 |
| Finucci, Fabrizio; Baratta, Adolfo F. L.; Calcagnini, Laura; Magarò, Antonio | |
| DETAIL ASSEMBLAGES..... | 219 |
| Gourdoukis, Dimitris | |
| CONVERTIBLE UMBRELLA PT2016..... | 227 |
| Halada Miklós | |

| | |
|--|------------|
| BUILT HERITAGE PROTECTION STRATEGY OF GUANGZHOU HISTORIC DISTRICT BASED ON PUBLIC SPACE UPDATE | 235 |
| He Honghao | |
| THE FRENCH LEGACY IN ALGERIA : THE ARCHITECTURE OF A SHARED IDENTITY, THE CASE OF THE KASBAH: ALGIERS, AND THE COLONIAL CHECK BOARD: BISKRA | 244 |
| Hiba, Barbara; Molnár Tamás | |
| COMPLEX REHABILITATION OF BUILDINGS BUILT WITH INDUSTRIALIZED TECHNOLOGY | 253 |
| Horkai András; Kiss Gyula | |
| PRESERVING ARCHAEOLOGICAL ELEMENTS IN URBAN HERITAGE DYNAMIC STREET - THE MAKING OF PUBLIC STREET OPEN MUSEUM - CASE STUDY: THE STRAIGHT STREET OF THE ANCIENT CITY OF DAMASCUS | 261 |
| Ibrahim, Sonia | |
| FLUIDITY OF CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT AND THE POST-INDUSTRIAL PHASE OF THE FIRST INDUSTRIAL ZONE IN BELGRADE | 271 |
| Jerković-Babović, Bojana; Fotirić, Nebojša | |
| SEARCHING FOR THE CODE OF NEW BELGRADE'S OPEN SPACE: CASE STUDY OF BLOCK 37 | 279 |
| Jovanović, Predrag; Vuković, Tamara; Mitrović, Biserka | |
| HUNGARIAN ENERGY+ CUBE | 287 |
| Kondor Tamás; Kósa Balázs; Baranyai Bálint; Kistelegdi István; Juhász Hajnalka; Szigony János; Zrena Zoltán | |
| ACTIVITY BASED-MODELLING AS BASIS FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT POLICIES | 293 |
| Jurak, Julijan; Šimunović, Ljupko; Radulović, Božo; Sikirić, Matija | |
| THE ARCHITECT'S DESIGN IN THE RURAL STIMULATES THE VITALITY OF RURAL— XIAMUTANG CHILDREN'S LIBRARY..... | 299 |
| Kang Xue; Medvegy Gabriella | |
| THE TRANSFORMATION OF URBAN FORM BETWEEN MODERNITY AND TRADITION, WITH REFERENCE TO ERBIL CITY | 307 |
| Khoshnaw, Rebaz | |
| NEW FORMS OF TOWNSCAPE REGULATION IN HUNGARY | 315 |
| Füleky Zsolt; Kolossa József | |

| | |
|--|------------|
| THE ISSUE OF PRESERVATION OF TRADITIONAL RAMMED EARTH HOUSES: CURRENT PRACTICE OF PRESENTATION IN SERBIA AND REGION..... | 322 |
| Kontić Ana; Lukić, Nevena | |
| APPLICATION OF MULTI-CRITERIA ANALYSIS IN THE PROCESS OF ENERGY RENEWAL OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS..... | 331 |
| Krstić-Furundžić, Aleksandra; Kosić, Tatjana | |
| SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOWN CENTER OF VISEGRÁD..... | 340 |
| Kovács-Andor Krisztián; Tamás Anna Mária | |
| SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS OF EDUCATIONAL BUILDINGS | 345 |
| Kovács Péter; Kósa Balázs; Molnár Tamás | |
| ASPECTS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE AND NATURE FOR BETTER PLACES IN FUTURE | 353 |
| Furundžić, Nikola Z.; Furundžić, Dijana P.; Krstić-Furundžić, Aleksandra | |
| URBAN REGENERATION OF OPEN PUBLIC SPACES AS A TOOL FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF CULTURAL TOURISM: THE EXAMPLE OF THE HISTORIC CORE OF SMEDEREVO | 361 |
| Lazarević, Milica; Djukić, Aleksandra; Antonić, Branislav | |
| THE STATUS QUO OF HERITAGE BUILDING PROTECTION IN CONTEMPORARY CHINA | 371 |
| Liu Sha Sha; Kovács-Andor Krisztián | |
| RESIDENTIAL DESIGN PATTERNS UNDER HUTONG CULTRE..... | 379 |
| Lu Chang | |
| THE CONTRIBUTION OF INTERMODAL TRANSPORT NODES TO THE VITALITY OF PUBLIC SPACE | 386 |
| Madzhirski, Vasil | |
| POST-DISASTER URBAN PLANNING STRATEGIES DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW | 395 |
| Maiteh, Shaha Mazen; Zoltán Erzsébet Szeréna | |
| FLOATING BUILDINGS AS NEW CONCEPT OF RESIDENCE IN BELGRADE FOR FUTURE SOCIAL REQUIREMENTS | 402 |
| Jacovic Maksimovic, Tijana | |
| VALORISATION AND REVITALIZATION OF HERITAGE ALONGSIDE DANUBE RIVER: CASE STUDY OF SMEDEREVO CASTLE | 410 |
| Vanista Lazarevic, Eva; Komatina, Dragan; Maric, Jelena; Vucur, Aleksandar | |

| | |
|---|------------|
| PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES AND DESIGN METHODOLOGIES FOR IMPROVING LIVEABILITY: A COMBINATION USED IN SOME HISTORICAL DISTRICTS IN ROME | 420 |
| Martincigh, Lucia; Di Guida, Marina | |
| ANALYSING THE HOSPITAL PATIENT ROOM THROUGH SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS..... | 429 |
| Marx, Fernanda | |
| CEBU PROVINCIAL CAPITOL: BALANCING URBAN CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS..... | 437 |
| Menjares, Neil Andrew Uy; Solis, Carmencita Mahinay | |
| INCLUSIVE AND DEMOCRATIC METHODS FOR THE APPRAISAL AND THE EVALUATION OF URBAN INFRASTRUCTURES..... | 446 |
| Miccoli, Saverio; Finucci, Fabrizio; Murro, Rocco | |
| THE INFLUENCE OF AN ELECTRONIC PAYMENT SYSTEM ON PASSENGER COMFORT IN VEHICLES OF URBAN PUBLIC PASSENGER TRANSPORT | 455 |
| Milenković, Ivana; Pitka, Pavle; Simeunović, Milan; Miličić, Milica; Savković, Tatjana | |
| SENTIMENT ANALYSIS OF TWITTER DATA OF HISTORICAL SITES | 463 |
| Raspopovic Milic, Miroslava; Banovic, Katarina; Vukmirovic, Milena | |
| UPGRADING URBAN MOBILITY: THE APPLICABILITY OF CYCLING APPS IN BANJALUKA | 472 |
| Milaković, Mladen; Stupar, Aleksandra | |
| DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR BETTER OPEN SPACES AT UNIVERSITIES, DESIGN APPROACHES FOR UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS | 479 |
| Paári Péter; Gyergyák János; Sebestyén Péter | |
| THE IMPORTANCE OF STRATEGY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMANE CITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY – SYNERGIC ACTION FOR LOCAL IDENTITY IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT: CASE OF NIKSIC (MONTENEGRO) | 488 |
| Perović, Svetlana K. | |
| CONCEPTUALIZING AN ACTIVE LEARNING TAXONOMY IN AN ARCHITECTURAL COURSE FOCUSED ON EVALUATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE EFFECTS | 495 |
| Pesic, Nikola | |
| MECHATRONICS IN ARCHITECTURE: DESIGN RESEARCH METHODOLOGY | 507 |
| Petrović, Milica; Stojanović, Djordje | |

| | |
|--|------------|
| ANALYSIS OF THE WAITING TIME OF PASSENGERS ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN THE PERIOD MORNING PEAK HOURS..... | 516 |
| Radivojević, Dejan; Simeunović, Milan; Pitka, Pavle; Lazarević, Milan | |
| THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPACE QUALITY OF ADDICTION CENTRES AND PATIENT BEHAVIOUR..... | 524 |
| Sadoud, Nesma; Zoltán Erzsébet Szeréna | |
| HISTORICAL PRELUDES OF PARAMETRIC DESIGN TECHNIQUES | 533 |
| Sárközi Réka; Iványi Péter; Széll Attila Béla | |
| TEXTILE MEMBRANE STRUCTURES IN REFURBISHMENT OF BUILT HERITAGE | 538 |
| Savanović, Dijana; Krstić-Furundžić, Aleksandra; Josifovski, Andrej | |
| REBUILDING RURAL PUBLIC SPACE BY VERNACULAR AND ART METHOD IN CHONGQING CHINA..... | 547 |
| Shi Yongting | |
| IDENTIFYING PRIORITY INDICATORS FOR REUSE OF INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS USING AHP METHOD - CASE STUDY OF ELECTRONIC INDUSTRY IN NIS, SERBIA | 555 |
| Stanojević, Ana; Jevremović, Ljiljana; Milošević, Mimica; Turnšek, Branko AJ; Milošević, Dušan | |
| ENERGETIC RETROFIT OF THE TRADITIONAL APARTMENT HOUSES | 564 |
| Sugár Viktória | |
| „UNITY IN THE MULTITUDE” | 572 |
| Šutović, Anastasija | |
| PARAMETRIC CURTAIN WALLS | 578 |
| Katalin Szommer; Sárközi Réka | |
| ALTERNATIVE COMMUNITY – PROMOTOR OR INHIBITOR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT | 582 |
| Temeljotov Salaj, Alenka; Leuraers, Cato; van Dooren, Amber; Bjørberg, Svein | |
| THE EFFECTS OF THE POPULATION DECLINE ON THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT POSSIBILITIES FOR SMALL SETTLEMENTS – A CASE STUDY OF BARANYA COUNTY IN HUNGARY..... | 591 |
| Tőke Máté | |
| URBAN PARTICIPATION AS A TOOL ALL OVER THE WORLD | 598 |
| Tommasoli, Lavinia; Luciani, Francesca Romana | |
| EXPLORING THE SYMBOLISMS AND TECHNIQUES OF DAYLIGHT MANAGEMENT IN HISTORIC GREEK CONSTRUCTIONS | 605 |
| Tsikaloudaki, Katerina; Tsoka, Stella; Theodosiou, Theodore; Tsirigoti, Dimitra | |

| | |
|---|------------|
| TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS FOR COVERING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN ORDER TO PRESENT MOSAICS IN SITU – CASE STUDIES | 613 |
| Ugrinović, Aleksandra; Krstić-Furundžić, Aleksandra | |
| THE RECONSTRUCTION OF TRADITIONAL PITCHED ROOF IN MOUNTAINOUS BUILDING | 621 |
| Wu Mengyang; Bachmann Bálint | |
| RETURN TO THE LOCALISM – TWO PROJECTS BASED ON LOCAL TRADITIONS | 628 |
| Zhang Qian; Hutter Ákos | |
| MEIXIAO VILLAGE YONGXING TOWN HAIKOU CITY PROTECTIVE RECONSTRUCTION DESIGN | 635 |
| Zhao Liangyu; Kertész András Tibor | |
| RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN URBAN REHABILITATION OF BUILT HERITAGE AND LOCAL INHABITANTS, CASE STUDY ON CHONGQING ROAD, TIANJIN | 644 |
| Zhao Tianyu; Gyergyák János | |
| LIVEABLE, MODULAR AND FLEXIBLE – NEW WAYS OF UPDATING AND UPGRADING POST WORLD WAR HOUSING ESTATES | 652 |
| Zoltán Erzsébet Szeréna; Gyergyák János | |

URBAN REGENERATION OF OPEN PUBLIC SPACES AS A TOOL FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF CULTURAL TOURISM: THE EXAMPLE OF THE HISTORIC CORE OF SMEDEREVO

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ABSTRACT

The position of the Serbian city of Smederevo on the Danube River, the second longest river and an important waterway in Europe, offers exceptional benefits for tourism, which is considered as an important sector for local economic prospects. Smederevo also owns significant cultural heritage, such as a preserved medieval Smederevo Fortress. Rich heritage, as well as local culture and tradition, can be the drivers to attract new visitors, who already travel along the Danube.

There are certain obstacles for the development of cultural tourism in Smederevo, too. First of all, cultural heritage is scattered along the historical core of the city with numerous open public spaces. The current state of these spaces is characterised by poor equipment and connections, occupancy by parked cars, lack of adequate maintenance, and reduced security. This is particularly visible along the Danube River, which represents a great limitation for the entire city. The consequence of these deficiencies is the diminished use of these spaces and the small number of tourists despite significant potential.

In accordance with the previous problem, there is a need for the urban regeneration of the open public spaces of Smederevo, eventually achieving a double goal: their functional and physical regeneration, as well as connecting these spaces into a unique network. This is also the goal of this paper – to propose appropriate ways of the functional and physical improvement of open public spaces in the historic core of Smederevo by researching urban regeneration options. The expected results are the identified models of open public spaces of the city whose content and

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appearance positively influence the intensity of social interaction. As such, these spaces can significantly improve the cultural-tourist offer of this Danube town.

Keywords: open public spaces, urban regeneration, Smederevo

INTRODUCTION- URBAN REGENERATION, CULTURE AND TOURISM

Urban regeneration is considered as one of the most common approaches in a general urban development today. It primarily relates to the revival of cities and historic neighbourhoods that face periods of decay. In the context of urban heritage, the concept of regeneration represents a comprehensive definition of the practice of restoration and conservation (Ismail et al., 2016). For instance, Eva Vaništa Lazarević (2003, p. 41) defines urban regeneration as “Connecting the modern way of life with the past (...) experience shows that regeneration works well with modern, active methods of protection that include interpolation and reconstruction”. She explains the importance of architectural heritage, highlighting recommendations given by the UNESCO for protection and reconstruction. She also explains the importance not only of preserving the heritage, but also of its integration into everyday life and modern society (Lazarević, 2003).

This kind of regeneration, which includes the restoration of cultural heritage, which is mostly part of urban areas, greatly contributes to the development of cultural tourism and plays a major role in local economic development (Eiweida & Okazawa, 2018). The most important thing for such spaces is their networking, including the regeneration of open public spaces as a place for human interaction and a ground for various cultural events (Ismail et al., 2016). “Culture urban regeneration is assumed to contribute urban economy, conservation and promotion of urban heritage, redevelopment of city centres, revival of former industrial zones and waterfront sites” (Uysal, 2011, p. 390).

Therefore, this paper deals with the issue of the content and functional structure of these spaces. What are those spaces? What are the man’s needs and activities? In what ways are they satisfied with the physical structure of the space and how does the quality of this physical environment affect the performance of the same activities? Therefore, the research will focus on the relation between open public spaces and society, more precisely, the structure of the space and the activities it poses, and vice versa, but also the importance of urban regeneration in the context of the appropriate use of cultural heritage around them to fuel cultural tourism. Open public spaces represent “a part of the city structure that is characterized by a defined, adequate and organized relationship between the open space and the buildings surrounding it” (Đokić, 2004, p. 36). These open spaces are important spatial elements, but they also represent the “heart” of a city. They become places with their content. In psychological and symbolic meaning, they are intended for various activities and social interaction (Đokić, 2004). These are places of a meeting and events (Gel, 2016). These are places that are accessible and inclusive and that provide psychological comfort to everyone (Carmona et al, 2003). The use of these spaces speaks about the nature of activities in a city, and gives an image of the way of life of the inhabitants of that city, their culture (Bajec, 2009). Additionally, they are also an important segment in the assessment of the quality of life of a community. Open public spaces are not only functional but also social phenomena. They represent spaces that are accessible to everyone, places of urban life. They should encourage communication and social interaction, and in every possible way bring life to the city and contribute to the development of cultural tourism.

The issue of communication and social interaction is especially important for cities that have

the potential to become a tourist destination due to rich cultural heritage. An example is the City of Smederevo in Serbia. In accordance with the mentioned problems, there is a need for urban regeneration of open public spaces of Smederevo. This would result in the functional and physical regeneration of these spaces, as well as their connection to a unique network. That is the reason why the aim of this paper is to find the appropriate ways of the functional and physical improvement of open public spaces in the historic core of Smederevo by researching urban regeneration. Expected results are recognized models of open public spaces of the city that with their content and appearance positively influence the intensity of social interaction and as such can significantly improve the cultural and tourist offer of this Danube city.

METHODOLOGY

The research work was carried out using the case-study method on the example of the city of Smederevo. It includes comprehensive techniques and tools, such as spatial syntax, swot analysis, surveys, and user survey on the mentioned polygon - 10 questions in the survey are derived by the use of city image theory of K. Lynch.

CASE STUDY - THE CITY OF SMEDEREVO

Smederevo is located in the central part of the Republic of Serbia. It is 46 km away from Serbian capital, Belgrade. The territory of the city belongs to the Danube and Lower Morava Regions. It extends directly in front of the mouth of the Great Morava River in the Danube. (Smederevo City, n.d.) "The basic potential of the city of Smederevo is precisely its extremely favourable geo-traffic location between the two European corridors - land X - highway and water - VII – Danube" (Grad Smederevo, n.d.). This position of the city of Smederevo (Fig. 1) allows excellent connection with road, river and rail traffic.



Figure 1: The position of Smederevo in relation to Europe and Serbia (author: M. Lazarević).



Figure 2: The Danube River - Corridor VII, in the front of Smederevo Fortress (author: B. Antičić)

On the other hand, it is important to highlight the long history of the city of Smederevo. At the intersection of the east and west, Smederevo, as the capital of the late medieval Serbia, has always been the centre of important historical events and struggles. The first mention of Smederevo was recorded in 11th century (Pavlović, 1980). What is the consequence of such a long and tumultuous history is the absence of continuity in the development of the city of Smederevo. Discontinuity can be viewed from the aspect of autonomy and spatial-physical aspects (Đokić, 2004). Thus, the city of Smederevo, as well as its open public spaces, had quite different stages of development, changing its entire structure and function. Beginning with "despotate", and to this day, Smederevo has gone through many different epochs with all its

phases, which brought important events with them and influenced Smederevo to be what is today- a city of cultural heritage. In this context, it is important to mention Smederevo Fortress, as the oldest and the most significant historic monument in Smederevo (Fig. 3). The significance of this monument is that as a cultural monument from the 15th century it represents a great potential for the development of cultural tourism. We are witnesses of many examples of good practice where such and similar monuments become important tourist attractions that significantly influenced the image of cities. In the 19th century, the city quay was built. In the 20th century, the city centre was reconstructed and the present-day Republic Square with the pedestrian zone – Kralja Petra I Street (Pavlović, 1980) (Fig. 4). The temple of St. George church from 1851/55 is the most important thing for forming this square. It had urban characteristics that appeared for the first time in Serbia.



Figure 3: Unsettled open space in the front of Smederevo Fortress (author: M. Lazarević);



Figure 4: Republic Square, the main open public space in Smederevo (author: B. AntoniĆ).

Thanks to the preserved urban core, rich cultural heritage, numerous open green spaces and its position on the Danube, Smederevo has been recognized as a city with great potential for the development of cultural tourism within open public spaces. Also, it is important to note that a large number of cultural events are held in Smederevo, which have the potential to evolve into manifestations of European character, which can positively affect the image of the city. In addition to the mentioned events, Smederevo is recognizable because of viticulture and fishing, and due to its long history, it has a number of traditional crafts, which, unfortunately, are not sufficiently promoted (Miletić, n.d.).

Nevertheless, significant problems have been identified, both at the social and spatial level. Some of them are the physical structure of individual open spaces, the content, the current purpose of some space, their occupancy with passive traffic (Fig. 3), low vitality, lack of adequate equipment and reduced security, but also the constant conversion of such areas into construction. The consequence of these shortcomings is the reduced use of these spaces. Therefore, there is a necessity for their regeneration, and, eventually, the exploitation of this great potential of the city.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Comparative analysis

For the analysis of open public spaces, a comparative analysis was used, “that is, a comparative analysis that involves the analysis of the development of an element and its identification in a context” (Đokić, 2004, p. 3). This method of research is characteristic because it contains triple principle in representation of open public spaces. It refers to the typology, the identity of space

and its relationship with time. The principles of this method are the following:

The principle of morphogenesis- refers to a series of transformations of space through different historical processes (Đokić, 2004). One of the most important elements in the process of development of the city centre of Smederevo is Smederevo Fortress. Space within the walls of the fortress, represents an important open public space. It is often the area of cultural and sport events, performances, and concerts (Smederevo Castle, n.d.). The Smederevo fortress with its position “on the right bank of the Danube, at the mouth of the river Jezava to the Danube, which conditioned the triangular base of the fort” (NIHP, n.d.), has a great influence on the further spatial development of the city of Smederevo. We can notice that the triangular basis is something that repeats in the regulation of the city core, and some important spatial elements, such as the Republic Square, are expressed in the triangular basis.

The fortress is also one of the candidates for UNESCO (Radovanović, n.d.), which would significantly contribute both to the revival of the fortress and to the development of the cultural offer of the city. However, there are significant obstacles that prevent the fortress from being placed on this list. What a monument of culture of this importance requires is the open space in the immediate vicinity of the walls, which is not the case here, and brings us to the next element - the railway. The construction of the railway at the end of the 19th century meant progress for the development of the city, but the position of the railway line only had negative effects on the structure of the city core. First, the positioning of the railway line directly along the walls of the Smederevo fortress left great consequences on the fortress itself (Pavlović, 1980). The railway disables the connection of the fortress with the central zone of the city and the Danube (Fig 5). It disrupts the security of this area, and completely prevents the formation of an ambience of open space that should exist in this zone.



Figure 5: Railway between the fortress, the Danube quay and the main city square (author: M. Lazarević)

The classification principle- refers to the design characteristics, position, size, and other personal structures, but also to the functional characteristics of the space (Đokić, 2004).

Identity Principle- this principle tends to show the specificity of a site. This applies to its users, because the city is unique precisely because of society and needs to be adapted to their needs. It is therefore important to explore society through the economic status of the inhabitants, their characteristics, religion, culture, etc. (Đokić, 2004). The analysis will refer to statistical estimates of the inhabitants of the city of Smederevo. It is said that the city area, which is the scope of this research work, has 62,805 inhabitants. “The age structure of the population of Smederevo indicates that it can become a category of demographically young population. The average age of the population is 38.5 years” (SORS, 2017).

The comparative analysis is finalised in the typology of open public spaces (Fig. 6).

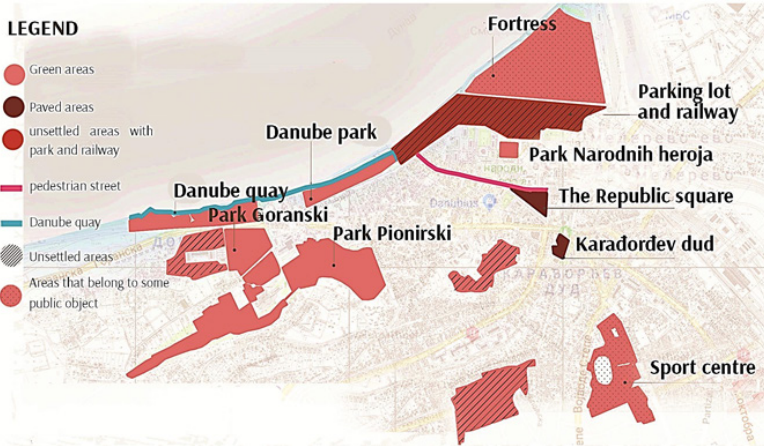


Figure 6: Typology of open public spaces in central Smederevo (author: M. Lazarević)

Space syntax

Spatial syntax should show the relationship between the number of people in a given space and the use of that space. It is strictly a quantitative approach, based on precise statistical data and usable for urban planning and design, transport, social interaction, and spatial economics (Đukić et al, 2017).

By measuring this, in co-operation with students of the first year of the master study Integral Urbanism of the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade, the use of open public spaces was measured accurately, as well as their relation, according to the number of people who were moving in a given space within a certain time frame. The measurement was carried out in March 2018, due to bad weather, which should be taken into account. The analysis is based on the choice of users' movements in the selected area- the historic city core of Smederevo. User movement is represented by schematic maps through straight lines with a colour scale, where the intensity of colour illustrates the intensity of use (Fig. 7).

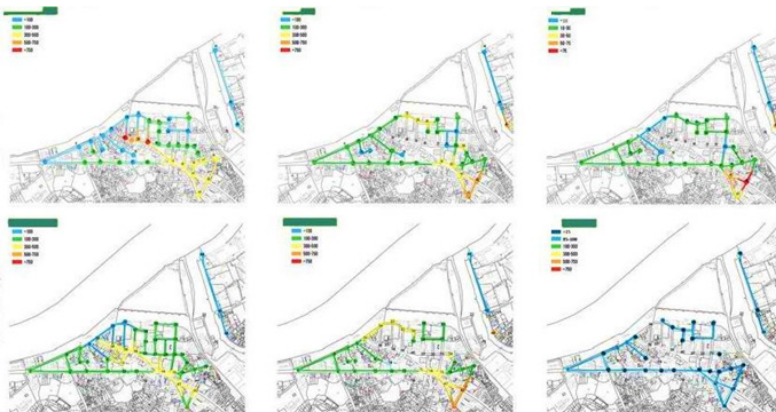


Figure 7: Space syntax in the historic core of Smederevo – measurements of pedestrians (left), cyclists (centre) and vehicles (right) in rush hours – 3 pm (upper) and in the evening – 6 pm (lower) (Authors: students of the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade).

Survey with questionnaire

A questionnaire was done by customisation of the principles of City image theory, created by Kevin Lynch, well-known American urban planner. This theory describes that a city image in the eyes of an observer is formed by five physical forms as its elements which are paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks (Lynch, 1960).

The city image theory was used to form a survey with an accompanying 10-question questionnaire. The survey was conducted on a sample of 70 respondents, in cooperation with students of the first year of Master study Integrative Urbanism at the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade. Its results show what the biggest issues in the city core are in terms of movement and security, and what the most recognizable element is. Users see the railway as the biggest obstacle in moving, and consider that the area around the fortress, Jezava and the port is the least secure. They also see the fortress as the greatest potential of Smederevo because of its recognisability and significance for the city. Moreover, information is provided on the areas that they use depending on the weather conditions – summer/winter. The city quay and the Danube Park are used in good weather, while in winter the Republic Square is the main place for activity for citizens of Smederevo.

SWOT Analysis

“The SWOT model is a classic strategic analysis tool for strategic management, first proposed by Ken Andrews in 1971. The strengths and weaknesses of a system are determined by internal elements, whereas external forces dictate opportunities and threats” (Mobaraki, 2014). Swot analysis was carried out as a comparative analysis of all open spaces within the old core of Smederevo (Fig. 8), in order to identify individual elements important for the development of cultural tourism in this city and to see the areas that have the greatest potential for further development.

| STRENGTHS | | WEAKNESSES | |
|----------------------|---|---|---|
| 1 | Flexibility Easy transformation Good places for sitting - priority look, sun, people Open field of view | Poor accessibility and connectivity with the surroundings - limited by the railway and the street of the first order Poorly equipped with additional content Poor wind, precipitation an sun protection | 1 |
| 2 | Flexibility Good places for sitting - priority look, sun, people Open field of view Equipped with additional content | Poor accessibility and connectivity with the surroundings - limited by the railway and the street of the first order | 2 |
| 3 | Flexibility and easy transformation - large free green area | Poor accessibility and connectivity with the surroundings - limited by the railway and the street of the first order Without additional content Poor wind, precipitation an sun protection | 3 |
| 4 | Position - among the three most important elements of Smederevo - fortress, Danube and the Republic Square | Railway- poor accessibility and insecurity Lack of greenery Parking function and two commercial hall buildings on area Proximity to the fortress - restrictions in the protection zone | 4 |
| 5 | Position - among the three most important elements of Smederevo - fortress, Danube and the Republic Square Good places for sitting - priority look, sun, people | Without additional content Poor wind, precipitation an sun protection | 5 |
| 6 | Flexibility Easy transformation Good places for sitting - priority look, sun, people Open field of view | Poorly equipped with additional content Poor wind, precipitation an sun protection | 6 |
| 7 | Lots of greenery | Poorly equipped with additional content Unsettled area | 7 |
| 8 | Good places for sitting - priority look, sun, people Open field of view Equipped with additional content | Poor accessibility and connectivity with the surroundings - limited by the railway and the street of the first order | 8 |
| 1 | Openness to the river - potential for tourism development Development of recreational activities | Openness to the river - a threat of bad weather or floods Exit on the railway line and the first-class street - the threat of accidents Danger of seasonal use | 1 |
| 2 | Development of recreational activities | Openness to the river - a threat of bad weather or floods Exit on the railway line and the street of the first order - the threat of accidents Danger of seasonal use | 2 |
| 3 | Chance for the development of cultural tourism - Organization of different manifestations - Promoting history and culture | Exit on the railway line and the street of the first order - the threat of accidents Proximity to the railway - threat of destruction of the fort | 3 |
| 4 | Openness to the river and next to the fortress - the potential for the development of cultural tourism A chance to become an element of a communication network Large area - the potential for developing a large flexible area | Exit on the railway line and the street of the first order - the threat of accidents Openness to the river - a threat of bad weather or floods | 4 |
| 5 | Position in the historic core of the city - promotion of history and culture | Danger of seasonal use | 5 |
| 6 | Important objects form a square - chance for the development of cultural tourism Free large area provides the opportunity to organize various events | | 6 |
| 7 | Development of recreational activities Large area - the potential for developing a large flexible area | Danger of seasonal use | 7 |
| 8 | Development of recreational activities | Openness to the river - a threat of bad weather or floods Exit on the railway line and the first-class street - the threat of accidents Danger of seasonal use | 8 |
| OPPORTUNITIES | | THREATS | |

Figure 8: The SWOT analysis of the main open public spaces in Smederevo (author: M. Lazarević). Notice: 1 – The Danube Quay; 2 – The Danube park; 3 – Smederevo Fortress; 4 – Area next to fortress (parking lot and railway); 5 – Narodnih heroja Park; 6 – The Republic Square; 7 – Pionirski Park; 8 – Goranski Park (see: Figure 6)

DISCUSSIONS OF RESULTS

The analysis is focused on recognising urban space as a specific framework, and the network of relationships and processes that pertain to the recognised area with other similar elements or urban benchmarks. It can be concluded that the location and a space that has the potential to become a quality open public space, but is currently completely unsettled, even reduce the value of the elements that form it, is the space around the fort. This space, which represents the space between the fortress, the quay and the city centre, instead of forming their interconnected relationship, completely interrupts this connection with its physical structure, both physically and visually. The railway represents the biggest problem, due to the consequences and the harmful impact it has on the fortress. Its position in some way surrounds the fortress and presents a physical barrier to accessibility and the formation of its secure connection with the centre and the quay. This space also presents the biggest potential for new activities and facilities in prospective cultural tourism sector due to this exceptional location.

CONCLUSIONS

The example of Smederevo can be emphasised as important because of the problems concerning the very environment of an important element of cultural heritage, and also because of its position. Many European cities have similar problems and characteristics that can be presented as a result of many historic processes in this area. Therefore, the significance of this paper is reflected in the emphasis on the importance of cities like Smederevo and the importance of urban regeneration in this context, as well as the consideration of the possibility of developing and activating abandoned open public spaces and heritage with the introduction of culturally and economically sustainable content, such as tourism, culture, recreation, trade, etc., through reviewing their structure and type, as well as understanding their environment and the modern needs of the users themselves. In this way, a new type of modern public space would be realized which would contribute to achieving one of the goals of every strategy of the city branding, which is its promotion as a cultural tourism site, which has both cultural and economic value.

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