

Izbirni predmet / Elective Subject: Teorija in praksa urbanosti / Theory and practice in urbanity
Študijski program: Univerzitetni študijski program urbanizem (UŠU)
Nocilec predmeta / Lecturer: prof. dr. Tadej Glažar
Izvajalca predmeta /
In cooperation with (course provider): prof. dr. Darko Radović, prof. dr. Davisi Boontharm
Študijsko leto / study year: 2023/24
Izvajanje v obliki intenzivnega dela /
Subjet as intensive study work: Oktober, November 2023
Omejeno število študentov /
Limited number of students: max 30
Št. Kreditnih točk / No. of credit points: 5 ECTS

Predmet se bo izvajal **v angleškem jeziku**, izberejo ga lahko tudi Erasmus študentje in študentje EMŠA kot izbirni predmet skupine B (z vlogo na KŠZ v potrditev).

Theory and Practice of Urbanity Towards Radical realism

Darko Radović



Davisi Boontharm



An outline

“When one speaks about the city, one speaks about **something else**”.
(Guattari, in CERFI)

TPU@ULAF2023 builds upon an original methodology established within *Theory and Practice of Urbanity* framework, refined through implementation since late 1990s in diverse urban contexts (ranging from Melbourne, Tokyo, Singapore, Milano to Florence). An overarching aim of TPU is to identify, capture and define the ways to (re)generate **urban authenticity and identity**. In order to reach that aim, TPU workshops create an atmosphere of **critical + creative, action-orientated thinking + making**.

The aim of TPU is to: (1) **advance both theory and practice in urbanism and architecture** by insisting on critical interrogation of globalisation; (2) place + time-specific discussions + action at **the nexus between environmental and cultural sustainability** across scales + (3) inspiration + work in recognition of non-equivalence, **(im)possibility of translation** in cross-cultural urbanism.

In TPU, **students are partners** in critical thinking and making of *the urban*. Ideally, TPU numbers are limited (to 8-24 students).



TPU@ POLIMI 2017, @Firenze 2019, 2022

II

TPU workshops are structured as simultaneously **precise and flexible**. While precision of their framework ensures basic quality of outcomes, the flexibility seeks, encourages and cherishes distractions, surprising discoveries, critical moments of insight, creativity and innovation. TPU is designed in hope that its own repositioning, **radical redefinition** of original plans may emerge.

DB+DR's multiple roles in all of that are those of facilitators, provocateurs, and of the informed "other". Their primary aim is not to teach, but to help create an atmosphere of socio-cultural (self)discovery by all participants, to encourage **radical intellectual excursions** that weave the fabric of an actual Workshop. TPU format consist of class, workshop and fieldwork components, in all of which diverse methods of inquiry and action (ex-cathedra lectures, impromptu exhibitions, discussions, guest- and ad hoc snap-lectures, fieldwork *dérive* exercises, thinking-making workshops, peer-review sessions, individual and small group presentations etc.) intertwine. Opening TPU sessions are input-heavy and intensive, designed to **bring theory (to practitioners) and practice (to theorists)**, and to provide for an efficient, comprehensive and inspirational start ... gradually giving way to other voices within the class, through variously extensive, choreographed sessions – aiming towards the crowning jam-session of creativity. Systematic fieldwork sessions, with individual and group co-immersions into spaces and practices of *the Other* (both afar, and in immediate, "familiar" situations), and follow-up discussions are managed towards **radical questioning** and, the hope is, some truly **radical requalifications** in what the participants (co+re organisers included!) know and usually do.

III

TPU fundamentally depends on active participants, starting from the very first discussion/**brainstorming** session, which tables all issues proposed for investigation. That is the first step in **dialectisation of interests** brought forward by the participants with diverse knowledges introduced through TPU lectures, impromptu exhibitions and guest lectures. This ensures that the class addresses locally defined issues but does not remain limited to the themes defined by the local experts and interests only. Ideally, the **participants** will bring in a broad a variety of topics to explore. The (creative) dissonance between directness of issues and a **deliberate obliqueness of TPU** delivery (which is the reason of inclusion of, for instance, the Far East in the process) creates *écart*, that critical gap from which useful **provocations, inspiration and findings** might emerge. TPU puts critical emphasis on **immersion** into real urban situations. That is why in Ljubljana we deal with Ljubljana, even when talking Bangkok, Florence, Milano, Mostar, Tokyo. Our tools for outdoor inquiry are based on the practices of *dérive* and *détournement* (*Internationale Situationniste*, Debord, 1959). The requirement for the participants in their drifts is to not only seek, but to find the best ways to communicate their findings back to TPU – **without reduction**. That poses a set of questions related to **notation** and **(re)presentation**, and inaugurates TPU discussion-thinking-making sessions, where the participants encounter provocative (and enjoyable) **thinking-through-making exercises**, which create bridges between theoretical investigations and their practical needs. Introductory exercises are based on practices of mapping which are, despite our emphasis on innovation, familiar to the participants. TPU equally encourage the most subjective responses and the latest in what technology can provide. The follow-up sets of exercises aim to destabilize disciplinary self-confidence by seeking transgressions into, first, identified physical realities, and then into the future – the realm of planning and design. Those need to stay "secret", as TPU workshops count on surprise.



EEG testing, University of Florence, March 2020



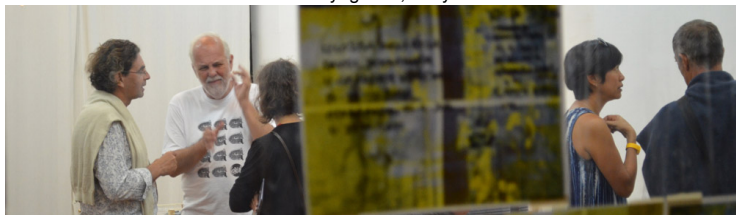
representation of *the urban* (one of the examples)



fieldwork Jiyugaoka, Tokyo June 2015



DB's TPU *impromptu* exhibition, University of Florence, March 2019



discussions, discussions ...

IV

This flyer is deliberately – **dense**. That reflects our hope to communicate, at least to hint at **intense** character of TPU programme. If you have any questions, **please contact darko@core.place or davisi@core.place**. TPU fundamentally is about – communication.