

# PRIX DE ISTANBUL. DIACHRONIC MORPHOLOGY OF THE EVER CHANGING URBAN FORM

ALESSANDRO CAMIZ  
ÖZYEGİN UNIVERSITY

“鑿戶牖以為室，當其無，有室之用”<sup>1</sup>

(Lao Tzu: 11)

The second issue of the journal collects the papers that were selected as candidates to the *Prix de Istanbul* by the scientific committee of the eighth AACCP (Architecture, Archaeology and Contemporary City Planning) symposium *Cities in evolution: diachronic transformations of urban and rural settlements*, that was organized by the Dynamic Research on Urban Morphology-DRUM laboratory, and held online at Özyeğin University, Istanbul, Turkey from April 26<sup>th</sup> to May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021. AACCP (Architecture, Archaeology and Contemporary City Planning) is a multidisciplinary and progressive network, which has gathered together researchers, experts and practitioners from various fields to discuss topics related to urban development and city planning since 2014. One of the main aims of the network is to promote collaboration between different actors and increase understanding of the profitable co-existence of the past, present and future in urban environments. During the seven days of the symposium, we hosted eight keynote lectures, and one hundred and twenty sessions, divided in twenty five

Communication: Alessandro Camiz E-mail: [alessandro.camiz@ozyegin.edu.tr](mailto:alessandro.camiz@ozyegin.edu.tr)  
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thematic sessions. During the symposium we also hosted three live guided tours, one live archaeo-gastronomy event, one workshop, two discussion panels and one roundtable. All together four hundred and thirty four delegates took part in the event. All the abstracts were double peer reviewed by the symposium’s scientific committee prior to acceptance. The provenance of the 120 registered authors is illustrated in figure 4. The book of abstracts (Camiz, Ceylanlı, Önsel Atala, and Özkuvancı, 2021) was published a few days before the symposium, while the four volumes of the symposium proceedings, after a second round of double peer review by the scientific committee are currently being edited and soon will be published as well. Following the decision of Özyeğin University’s rector Prof. Dr. Esra Gençtürk to establish a Best AACCP 2021 paper award of one thousand euro, a Prix de Istanbul independent award committee was nominated including: Aslihan Ünlü, Özyeğin University, Turkey; Ayşe Sema Kubat, Istanbul Technical University, Turkey; Pia Englund, Senior Landscape Architect, TENGBO, Sweden; Marco Trisciuglio, Politecnico of Torino, Italy; Wowo Ding, Nanjing University, China; Giuseppe Strappa, Sapienza, University of Rome, Italy.

<sup>1</sup> “Carve doors and windows to make a room: thanks to their void there is the use of the room” (Latini, 2020:11).

Fig. 1 Nicolas de Fer, *Veue de Constantinople*, from: *Les forces de l’ Europe, ou description des principales villes avec leurs fortifications*, (Pieter Mortier: Amsterdam) 1695, 8, 23.



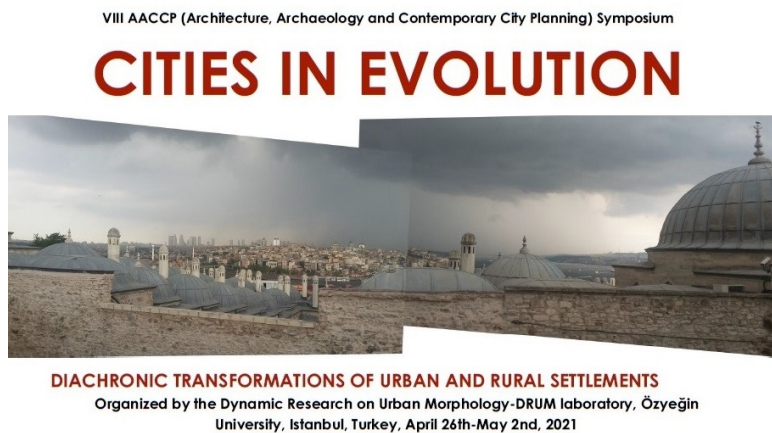
We then asked to the symposium scientific committee while evaluating the submitted full papers to select the best ones. The Conference scientific coordinators defined the following criteria for the prize committee to assign the award: significance of the paper within Architecture, Archaeology or Contemporary City Planning; originality, paper should not have been already published elsewhere; quality of the theoretical contribution and of the scientific research; use of appropriate methodological rigor, evident innovative findings; clarity of writing and appropriate referencing. The selected papers were then passed to the award committee for the evaluation. After reading them they decided to whom assign the prize. The *Prix de Istanbul*, best AACCP 2021 paper award of one thousand euro was assigned by the Prize committee to Emma Sabatelli, Antonella Roma, Maria Pia Tridente and Matteo Ieva in recognition of the paper entitled *Requalification of the Historical Fabric of Alberobello*. The Prize committee decided to assign honourable mentions to three other papers: Bruna di Palma and Marianna Sergio, for the paper entitled, *Unveiled Ruins. Exhibition Narrative and Open*

Fig. 2 Martin Ebert, Stave church, Borgund, watercolor, 2020.





*Prospects for the Archaeological Museum of Paestum; Özge Özkuvanci and Alessandro Camiz for the paper entitled Adstratum and Substratum: the Typological Process of the Patio-House in Caesaraugusta (Zaragoza); and to Chiara Ravagnan, Maria Paz Abad Gonzalez and Jiu Ambani in recognition of the paper entitled A regeneration for Eastern Rome: a Sustainable Path to Connect, Enhance Identity and Build a Resilient City.* We decided then to dedicate the second issue of *Forma Civitatis* to all the papers that were selected by the Symposium scientific committee as candidates for the Prix de Istanbul. We asked the authors to submit their papers again on the journal website, and after a second round of peer reviews by the journal's editorial board, they are now finally published. We should here mention that the symposium was organised during the Covid-19 lockdown phase, and it does prove in our opinion, that it is indeed possible to organise successful online conferences provided that the level of interaction therein is adequate to replace a face to face event. For this we designed a Distributed Virtual Conference Environment (DVCE), providing diversified immersive tools to allow different forms of interaction between the participants (fig. 5).



*Fig. 3 Conference banner. VIII AACCP (Architecture, Archaeology and Contemporary City Planning) symposium Cities in evolution: diachronic transformations of urban and rural settlements, at Özyeğin University. Istanbul, Turkey April 26<sup>th</sup> - May 2nd, 2021.*



*Fig. 4 Participant's country word cloud. VIII AACCP (Architecture, Archaeology and Contemporary City Planning) symposium Cities in evolution: diachronic transformations of urban and rural settlements, at Özyeğin University. Istanbul, Turkey April 26<sup>th</sup> - May 2nd, 2021.*

**The ever changing urban form**

Most of the recent research on Urban Form, or Urban morphology which has become a trendy name in the last two decades (Araújo de Oliveira, 2022), focuses on the analysis and description of the urban artefact as it is. Numeric parameters, social uses, user’s space perception, as well as classification of the built forms, are nowadays among the most popular approaches in the study of the built environment. There is nothing wrong with these lines of research, they are actually very useful as long as they can provide insight in the past (history and archaeology) or even better provide guidance for the future (design and planning). Somehow this issue of Forma Civitatis collects papers which, even though cover different arguments and belong to different research fields, are characterised by a set of common themes which do slightly differ from the mainstream research in urban morphology. We could define these as a diachronic morphology, which is not interested in the form as it is, but rather in its processual

Fig. 5 Distributed Virtual Conference Environment (DVCE) key plan. VIII AACCP (Architecture, Archaeology and Contemporary City Planning) symposium Cities in evolution: diachronic transformations of urban and rural settlements, at Özyeğin University, Istanbul, Turkey April 26<sup>th</sup> - May 2nd, 2021.

Fig. 6 Prix de Istanbul Award.

evolution, where this ever changing spatial configuration, is the key to the understanding of the city as an artefact. Cities and urban tissues are not the product of one person or one time, they are rather the result of a continuous set of collective *modifications*. Starting from the *primitive landscape*, or the morphological configuration of the territory prior to the human settlement, the set of signs, material transformations and built forms that throughout centuries overlapped one on top of the other, are the framework producing the urban form as it is now. Even the *primitive landscape* is not static, within the geological times it did change, and it is slowly changing even nowadays. The recent dramatic seismic sequence that took place in Turkey in the last days, shows clearly that even the landscape changes. Within this diachronic morphology it is possible to resolve the permanent contradiction that in most academic and professional environments juxtaposes history and design. Contemporary design is often considered to be against the past, proposing therefore an alternative modern vision, better than the ancient one. The long and ongoing *querelle* between modernism and

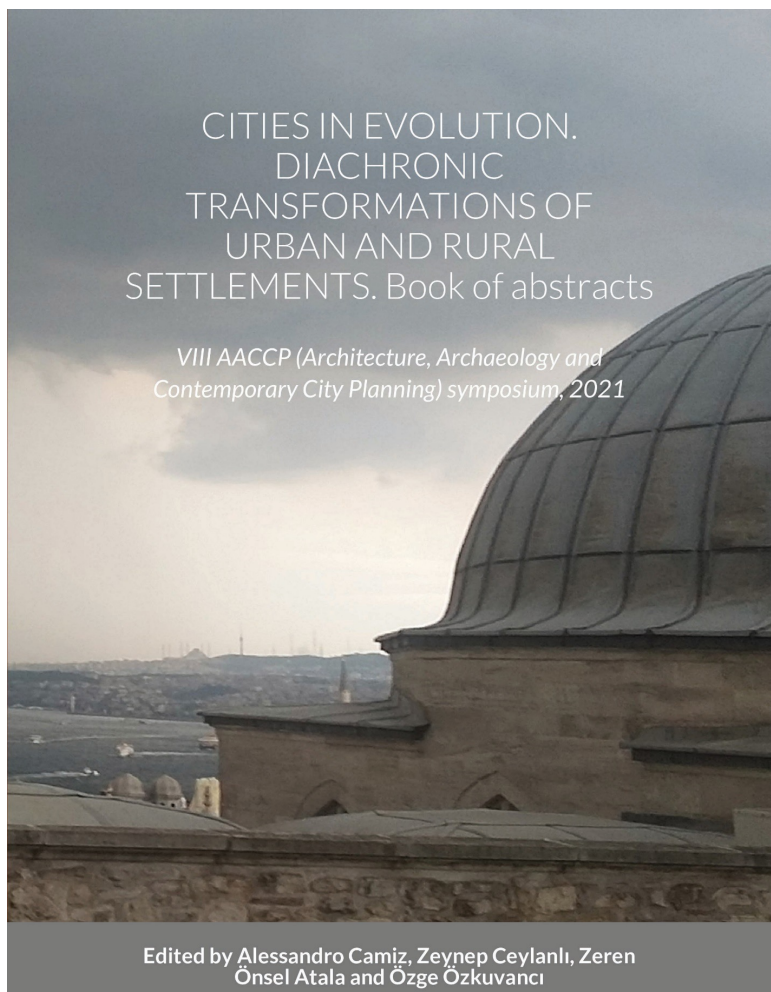


Fig. 7 Book cover. Camiz, A.; Ceylanlı, Z.; Önsel Atala, Z.; Özkuvancı, Ö (eds.) (2021) *Cities in evolution: diachronic transformations of urban and rural settlements. Book of abstracts, VIII AACCP (Architecture, Archaeology and Contemporary City Planning) symposium, (Özyeğin University. Istanbul, April 26th- May 2nd, 2021), DRUM Press, Istanbul.*

postmodernism, between contemporary and vernacular architecture rotates around this contradiction (Al-Hammadi and Grchev, 2023). If we conceive instead the design and planning process as a consequence of the understanding of the diachronic evolution of the built environment (Carlotti and Del Monaco, 2019), and the survey is indeed a fundamental component of this understanding (Columbu, Sitzia and Verdiani, 2015) perhaps we could design architectures for the future of our cities as living organisms, rather than objects devoid of meaning and form relationships with the context (Ebert, 2020). Therefore if we learn how to individuate the ongoing process of a built environment, it is much easier to plan or design its future in a conformal way. *Forma Civitatis* as a journal intends to move on in this direction, shedding light on the diachronic transformation of cities, understanding the past in order to better design and plan the future (Ieva and Scardigno, 2020).

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VIII AACCP (Architecture, Archaeology and Contemporary City Planning) symposium *Cities in evolution: diachronic transformations of urban and rural settlements*, at Özyeğin University. Istanbul, Turkey April 26<sup>th</sup> - May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021.

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