Beniamino Polimeni
Dr Beniamino Polimeni is a Senior Lecturer in Architecture at the University of Hertfordshire. His research interests have developed out of ten years of international experience in teaching and practice which have informed his multidisciplinary approach combining vernacularar architecture, heritage conservation and the influence of migration on the traditional and modern built environment.

Michael Toler
Dr Michael A. Toler has been the Archnet Content (archnet.org) Manager since September 2012. Prior to that he served as the program Director for the Al Musharaka Initiative of the National Institute for Technology and Liberal Education. He has published and lectured extensively on digital pedagogy and scholarship, as well as the literature, history, cinema, music, and cyberspace of the Maghreb, and the Middle East more widely.

Cities and architecture in the context of global migration

Since the origins of human society, communities have dealt with migration issues as established settlements grappled with how to deal with new arrivals. As societies became larger and more complex and human movement became easier, mass migration has become a global issue that correlates with broad and rapid economic, social, political, and technological transformation. The result is that more people live outside their native communities than at any other time in history. The number of migrants is estimated to be over three hundred million worldwide.

Approximately two-thirds of this number migrate for economic reasons, with the rest being the result of forced displacement induced by either conflict or disaster, both of which are increasing in frequency due to human activity [1]. Of the nearly approximately 100 million forcibly displaced, more than 52 million were internally displaced within their country's borders [2]. The

issues arising from these phenomena pose a particular challenge in architecture, urban planning and related fields.

Overwhelmingly, large urban areas are the focal point of mass migration. Cities centralise the economic, educational, and cultural opportunities that attract migrants. Cities also provide concentrated services and communities. The arrival of migrants in these settings often has a transformative effect on cities' demographic, cultural, political and economic characteristics. In response to these changes, the planners of future cities should consider how different communities will shape the current urban environment, incorporating different languages and cultural perspectives in the public sphere and exploring strategies to foster diversity and social inclusion simultaneously.

Cities can best integrate new arrivals when architecture and planning pursue policies of inclu-

sion that also make allowances for the distinct identities of migrant communities. Among the examples of inclusive integration strategies are participatory design, multicultural activities, and involvement of migrant communities in the preservation of the historic built environment. Such actions transfer knowledge and skills from one community to another. They also minimise barriers to social integration.

Although migrants living in rural areas and working in agriculture represent a relatively small group compared to migrants in cities, they have a fundamental role in sustaining certain types of products that require a constant supply of temporary workers. In addition, small towns are becoming safe spaces for migrant workers, setting in motion the revitalisation of historical places and abandoned structures.

These and other compelling themes are presented in this issue of Disegnare Con which collects papers relating to migration and the built environment with a particular focus on spatial analysis and visualisations.

For instance, the work presented by Baya Belmessaoud analyses the relations between migration and spatial equity. Using spatial syntax and urban imageability as defined by Kevin A. Lynch The Image of the City (1960), the paper develops a helpful framework for interventions that could minimise social and cultural inequities.
Ezgi Tuncer and Zeynep Eren Benlisoy also investigate spatial inequalities in reference to migrant women working in Istanbul. The authors use visual resources to map gender inequality and to demonstrate how urban policies might best respond to the phenomenon.
In "The Blue Funk in the Fish-Tank: A study on French banlieue riots," Didem Yavuz Velipaşaoğlu describes the implications of migration and social exclusion in the suburbs of French cities, traditionally home to large immigrant populations. From this analysis, the author proposes scenarios through which different groups could participate and thus become invested in future planning actions.

Fig. 1 - As this 1966 photo of Qashqa'i migration in Firuzabad, Iran, illustrates, migration is a traditional element of many cultures. Today, however, it is a truly global phenomenon in unprecedented numbers. Marie-Thérèse Ullens de Schooten, Photographer. Courtesy of the Fine Arts Library, Harvard University, Link: https://www.archnet.org/authorities/1910?media_content_id=143173
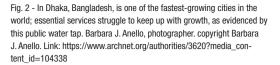
The dialogue among different groups involved in the processes of participatory care of the city is developed in the work of Laura Baratin, Francesca Gasparetto, and Veronica Tronconi. In this investigation, examples of public street art in Pesaro have been analysed to understand their potential in reinforcing social cohesion and preserving contemporary urban heritage.
Migration tends to be from rural communities to urban areas, but the movement to rural areas could have a fundamental role in sustaining specific economies and preventing depopulation.

This topic is thoroughly described by Camilla Sette and Bernardino Romano, who propose a set of tools and methods to classify minor centres or villages in the inner mountain areas from which they propose an intervention to recover the functional roles of those areas.
Migration, whether permanent or temporary, has long been a survival strategy for people who live in disaster-prone areas, both those seeking to escape before disaster strikes and those whose lives have been devastated by the impact of such events. This causes radical transformations in the
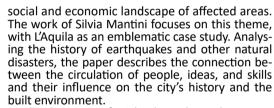
Fig. 2 - In Dhaka, Bangladesh, is one of the fastest-growing cities in the world; essential services struggle to keep up with growth, as evidenced by this public water tap. Barbara J. Anello, photographer. copyright Barbara J. Anello. Link: https://www.archnet.org/authorities/3620?media_content_id=104338

Fig. 3 - The Makoko Floating School in the Lagoon of Lagos, Nigeria, is a prototype for sustainable construction to benefit communities threatened by frequent flooding. Aga Khan Trust for Culture / Dev Tv. Courtesy of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Link: https://www.archnet.org/sites/15149?media_content_id=108713

social and economic landscape of affected areas. The work of Silvia Mantini focuses on this theme, with L'Aquila as an emblematic case study. Analysing the history of earthquakes and other natural disasters, the paper describes the connection between the circulation of people, ideas, and skills and their influence on the city's history and the built environment.

Finally, the paper of Michael A. Toler and Beniamino Polimeni focuses on the work of the French architect Michel Écochard with particular reference to two projects responding to mass migration: the planning solutions designed for migrants from rural areas to Casablanca, and the planning strategy proposed to address the problem of refugees coming to Pakistan due to the partition of British India.

All the pieces of research mentioned are characterised by a relevant set of graphic materials and broadly used resources such as maps, historical pictures, and data visualisation exploring some of the questions that architects and urban planners must understand if they are to produce innovative responses to the challenge of large-scale migration.

Fig. 4 - Located in the world's fastest-growing city, Delhi's Nizam-ud-Din Auliya Shrine Complex is a popular pilgrimage site. Christian Richters, photographer. Courtesy of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Link: https://www.archnet.org/sites/1580?media_content_id=112434

NOTE

[1] While in the past large-scale disasters could have been classified as either natural disasters such as earthquakes, drought, and hurricanes or human-induced such as industrial or nuclear accidents, it is now clear that human activity either causes or increases the severity of most disasters.

[2] UNHCR. 2021. "Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2021." UNHCR. https://www.unhcr.org/62a9d1494/global-trends-report-2021.

[3] https://unhabitat.org/urban-october

Therefore, this issue of DISEGNARE CON represents the first step to future investigations in which academics from different backgrounds can raise awareness of migration's architectural and cultural aspects through various visual languages used as analytical and communication tools.

It is particularly relevant that this collection of essays is published during the month of October. Since 1986 the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) has designated October as 'Urban October,' 31 days intended to "raise awareness, promote participation, generate knowledge and engage the international community towards…promoting a better urban future." [3]. We believe that the contributions published in this issue of DISEGNARE CON are relevant contributions to the debate over what a "better urban future" could be.