

A new approach to teaching architectural and urban design: Reformulation of city spaces with virtual tools and long-distance influences

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The spatial interventions in city heritage areas today require careful consideration of many issues. Solutions require a deep understanding of social, cultural, economic, architectural, historical, and more that make up the fabric of cities. Sometimes, more than just knowledge and design skills, what is required is to anticipate, to compromise a vision of possible memories and future recollections. The paper presents a teaching method elaborated and tested during an international student design workshop in Tel Aviv (Israel) and Cracow (Poland). The workshop aimed to approach a design as a form of anticipation that does not necessarily reflect a realistic building proposal but instead rejoices in the juxtaposition of the familiar with the remote, a presence with the virtual. A further workshop aimed to experience the design process with contemporary tools of observation and representation. Through a carefully planned city-exploration workshop, participants were directed toward self-discovery of remote city's spaces and fabric. Significant areas of the selected cities were analysed; the outcomes were presented using differentiated visual methods.

The value and novelty of the above-described teaching method correspond to the complexity and multilayered factors conditioning the process of shaping a city space regarding social and cultural issues. It supplements traditional teaching methods with new technologies that encourage and support such an approach to design.

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