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KARACHI'S PLANNING
THE TRUTH BEHIND THE FACADE

Faculty of Architecture/Engagement:

URBAN CULTURES

Introduced by Asiya Sadiq

GOING PUBLIC Lecture Series Nr. #27

Online lecture:
Thursday 1st April 2021
17:00 - 18:30

KU LEUVEN

The GOING PUBLIC program of the Faculty of Architecture is a series of lectures, exhibitions and publications organized throughout the year highlighting certain themes and topics that are important within each of the 4+1 Engagements: Urban Cultures, Mediating Tactics, Craftsmanship, Legacy and The Brussels Way.

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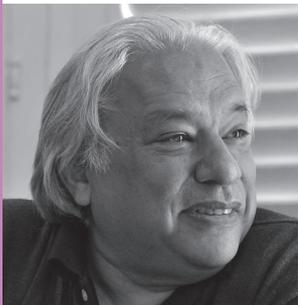


“I will not do projects that will irreparably damage the ecology and environment of the area in which they are located; I will not do projects that increase poverty, dislocate people and destroy the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of communities that live in the city; I will not do projects that destroy multi-class public space and violate building bylaws and zoning regulations; and I will always object to insensitive projects that do all this, provided I can offer viable alternatives.”

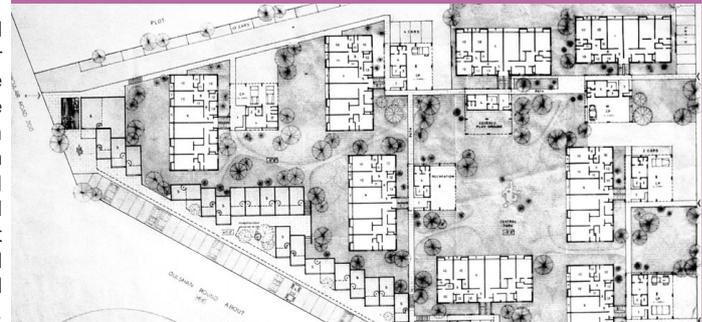
-Arif Hasan’s pledge



“ ‘Public space’ has recently become a buzzword in the world of urban planning. The term has also filtered into Pakistan although there have been individuals and organisations who have worked, against great odds, on the issue for decades without employing the term.”



Arif Hasan is a Pakistani architect and planner, activist, teacher, social researcher and writer. He studied architecture at the Oxford Polytechnic, worked in Europe in architect’s offices, and on his return to Karachi in 1968, established an independent practice which slowly evolved into dealing with national and international urban planning and development issues. He has taught at Pakistani and European universities and lectured widely both in the North and the South.



*“ One, planning has to respect the ecology of the region in which the city is located. [...]
Two, land use has to be determined on the basis of social and environmental considerations and not on land value alone. [...]
Three, development must cater to the needs of the majority. [...]
And four, the tangible and intangible cultural assets and heritage of the city have to be protected. “*



M. A. Jinnah Road (Part II)

LECTURE #27

Karachi, like many other cities in the South, has a Strategic Development Plan and previously many Master Plans. However, the manner in which the city is planned and grows has very little to do with these plans. It's physical form is determined by a nexus between politicians, bureaucrats, international financial institutions, builders and developers, and an unregulated money market. Added to this is the neoliberal institutional set up that has emerged from the ruins of the welfare state model. The lecture will dwell upon the actors and factors that make this development happen and its COVID related repercussions.

KARACHI STUDIO

Tutor – Asiya Sadiq

Engagement – Urban Cultures

Related to the lecture of Arif Hasan is the Karachi design studio offered within the faculty of architecture at KU Leuven. This studio focuses on challenges of social and physical inequities faced by public architecture and related open space design in fast transforming contexts. This studio addresses the urban challenges, intricacies, complexities, and contextual realities of designing in a hyper transforming city like Karachi, a megapolis of 25 million. Karachi is a typical case of dualities triggered by formal design failures and informal design responsiveness which need recognition, recording and assimilation into the future designs of the city. There is a planned exhibition on the Brussels campus, stay tuned for more information!



“Public architecture and related open spaces are situated within the larger context of the city and the city is a living organism, within which all architecture, urban design, public open spaces and networks become integrated via formal and informal public engagement and an understanding of collective problem solving, finding innovative ways to reclaim and reimagine contemporary cities.”

*-Asiya Sadiq and Christophe Polack,
(The Rising Tide Exhibition Catalogue, Curated
Naiza Khan, 2010, Artists Statement)*

