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ABU DHABI



Transport & Urban Form in the Gulf Cities

Tuesday 9th April 2019
From 6:30pm to 8:00pm

Amphitheater Richelieu
Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi
Al Reem Island, Abu Dhabi

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Sorbonne Conference

Rationale:

Often associated with the hypermodernity of architectural icons, cities in the United Arab Emirates are also well known for their congestion issues and their groundbreaking public transport infrastructure.

The urban development of the UAE, triggered around the same time as the first exportation of hydrocarbons, benefited from an increase in automobile sales. The rapid development of road infrastructure occurred during this time and today, investments are pursued to ensure improved mobility across the country. However, a change in the paradigm of the road transportation-centered model occurred in the early 2000's. Dubai invested substantially in a modern and state of the art public transportation network. Consequently few changes were noticed: (i) transformation of urban and social practices, (ii) coordination of urban projects regulations, and introduction of the Transport Impact Study, and (iii) the perception of public transport mobility. The mobility turn along with the urban policies turn in the UAE became "the beacon of the Middle East" (Elsheshtawy, 2010), which sparked changes in the Gulf region.

The round table will interrogate the role of transport and urban policies in the making of a sustainable urban form.

You are kindly invited to join a round-table on Transport & Urban Form in the Gulf Cities by the Urban Planning and Development graduate programme of Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi.

6:30pm to 6:40pm

Introduction to transport and urban form in the Gulf cities by Pr. Dr. Xavier Desjardins, Director of the Master in Urban Planning and Development at Sorbonne Université.

6:40pm to 6:55pm

Peter Schwinger, Transport Consultant
Disrupting car dependency in GCC cities – the case of Abu Dhabi

Abu Dhabi has a progressive vision to introduce large-scale public transport. Will it overcome its dependency on a private car based transportation system and subsequent urban form and design? Is there disconnect between vision and action?

6:55pm to 7:10pm

Dr. Apostolos Kyriazis, Abu Dhabi University
Abu Dhabi and the risk of losing urban cohesion

The dominance of automobiles streamlined Abu Dhabi's rapid growth and consolidated post-modernist aesthetics of urban morphology. But if the transition is too fast for the city to learn from its mistakes, how can we avoid the risk of public transport segregation and urban scattering?

7:10pm to 7:25pm

Dr. Clémence Montagne, L'École de Design Nantes Atlantique
User-centric urban design for a transit-friendly city?

What are the impacts of new public transport infrastructure on a city? Everything is organised around mobility for cars at a time when the growth of individual mobility causes nuisances, traffic jams as well as a limit on the fluidity of the city. Is there already transport-oriented development in Dubai? How are the principles of user-centric urban design applied to urban mobility in Dubai and Abu Dhabi?

7:25pm to 8:00pm

Discussion with the audience, moderated by Pr. Dr. Xavier Desjardins.