

## Glancing into Future Cities—City Futures

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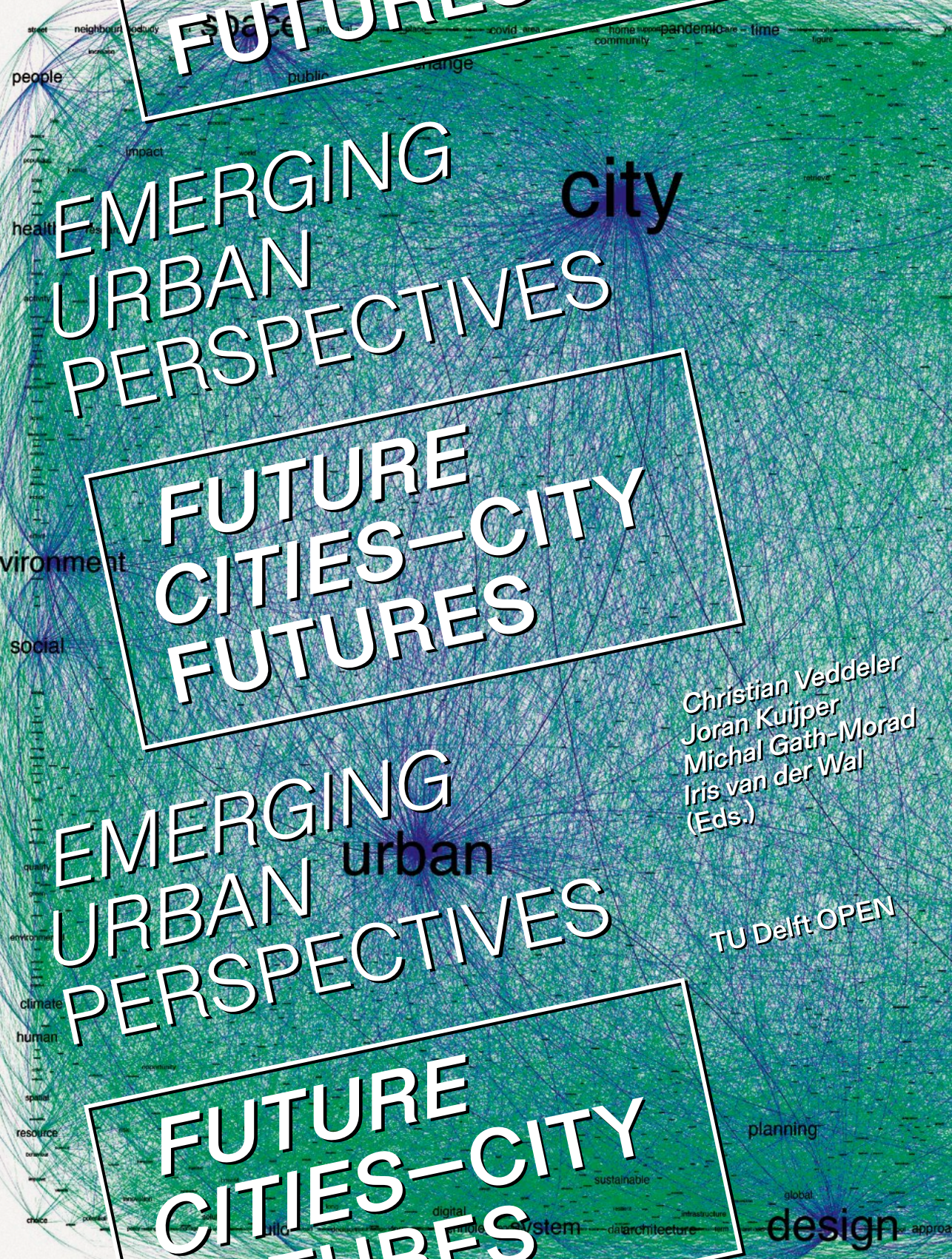
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Future Cities—City Futures  
Emerging Urban Perspectives

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# *Preface—Glancing into Future Cities—City Futures*

*Roberto Cavallo*

A few weeks ago, during an information meeting at the Faculty of Architecture, Delft University of Technology, a group of master students asked me what we mean by City of the Future, which is also the name of a multidisciplinary graduation laboratory we offer to students of various master tracks. My response to them was that from my point of view, City of the Future can't be simply a byword for futuristic depictions of the city. This isn't to say that portraying the future is not an interesting matter, but to me the main concern is, above all, transitioning the city of today and its inhabitants toward the future. I'm talking about cities in which development and transformation must be intertwined with equable and simultaneous consideration for economic, ecological, and social aspects. To achieve this, the ambitions of the city and strategic approaches are required to include people's prospects. Next, and especially because our society is confronted with ever-increasing complexity, to tackle the challenges of today and the future, we are expected to bring together professionals and academics of different disciplines and engage with various institutions and citizens (Cavallo & Lucente, 2019).

← Stad van de Toekomst/  
City of the Future Biennale  
Session on September 21st,  
2018, Architecture Biennale  
Venice (photograph by Jutta  
Hinterleitner).



Bearing in mind these issues, we embarked on the Stad van de Toekomst/City of the Future design research project. Initiated by the Royal Institute of Dutch Architects and the Delft Deltas, Infrastructures & Mobility Initiatives, the project foresaw the collaboration with the Dutch Ministries of Infrastructure and Water Management and Internal Affairs, the Delta Metropolis Association, and the five largest cities in the country: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht, and Eindhoven. Each city designated a 1 × 1 km transformation area to be analyzed, researched, and designed by two interdisciplinary teams of architects, city planners, urbanists, engineers, sociologists, geographers, and visionaries: in total ten teams of professionals (Berkers et al., 2019). Besides participating as researchers, we immediately decided to join the initiative with educational activities allowing students of various master tracks to team up and work jointly on the same locations, establishing an interplay with the professionals. This has been a very fruitful experience for the students and for us too: a remarkable way of interplaying research and design (Harteveld & Cavallo, 2019). In the meantime, the book Stad van de Toekomst/City of the Future has been published, and the project has become a prime example to follow and has attracted attention and praise throughout academic, professional, and institutional networks.

I was therefore delighted when the Helmut Hentrich Foundation approached me expressing interest in this topic. In fact, the main purposes of the Helmut Hentrich Foundation, such as supporting talent, broadening architects' horizons, linking research and practice, and boosting interdisciplinary approaches, are very much in line with the key subjects addressed by Stad van de Toekomst/City of the Future. And it is by following this common thread that the research collaboration under the name of Future Cities—City Futures has started. Looking at the results accomplished by the Future Cities—City Futures research and brought about in this volume, I'm thrilled to see that the messages

enclosed in our contribution to Stad van de Toekomst/City of the Future have spread fruitfully at the international level and been embraced by several scholars and colleagues. Without any doubt, many aspects addressed by the Dutch experience are further developed and elaborated in this book in extremely interesting dimensions, in turn creating new opportunities to reflect on urban environments' futures.

*Roberto Cavallo is Associate Professor, Chair of the group of Architectural Design Crossovers, Head of Section Theory & Territories, Department of Architecture, Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, Delft University of Technology*

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