Reimagining Planning Education Through the Urban Chronotope: A Pedagogical Experiment in Studio Learning

Recent shifts in planning education have increasingly prioritized problem-solving and technical efficiency, while the theoretical foundations that once supported innovative thinking have struggled to generate new conceptual frameworks. This situation has gradually weakened creativity within planning pedagogy. Over time, the constraints experienced in educational settings become amplified in professional practice, limiting the discipline's capacity to renew itself and respond to emerging urban challenges. As a result, studio courses—traditionally the core spaces for experimentation in planning education—now face the urgent need to adopt innovative pedagogical programs that foster critical, imaginative, and exploratory thinking.

In response to this need, the TEDU City Planning Studio introduced an alternative approach through the development of the **urban chronotope**, offering students a distinct way of conceptualizing and engaging with urban complexity. The concept of the chronotope, originally articulated by Mikhail Bakhtin, refers to the intrinsic interconnectedness of temporal and spatial dimensions. In its simplest terms, chronotopes can be understood as narratives of space–time settings, where a *topos*—a place, figure, or condition—embodies *chronos*, the layers of time.

Applied to urban studies and planning, the chronotope highlights that urban places cannot be understood solely through their physical morphology; they are equally shaped by accumulated temporal traces, historical experiences, and cultural practices. A street, a square, or a riverfront carries multiple layers of meaning formed through past uses and transformations. Approaching urban space chronotopically encourages students to recognize the coexistence of these time-layers and to construct design ideas that reinterpret, challenge, or project them into alternative futures. This paper discusses the structure, implementation, and outcomes of the urban chronotope method as an innovative studio pedagogy. It argues that such temporal-spatial thinking fosters deeper critical reflection, enriches creativity, and offers a renewed pathway for re-imagining planning education.