

Re-Cycling Porte Ouest

A Design Approach for Envisioning a Circular Transition of Post-industrial Site.

Dr. Cecilia Furlan

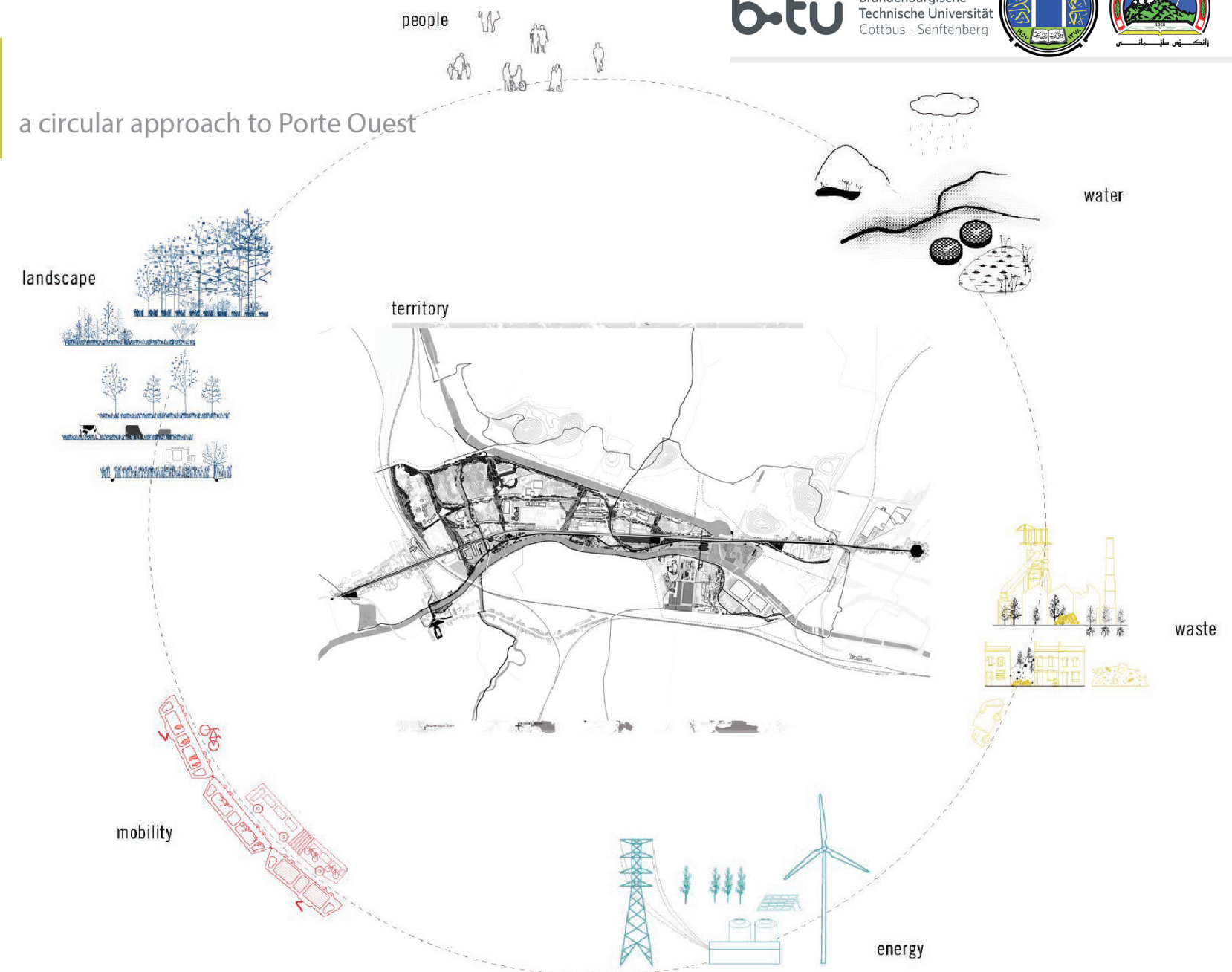
In the frame of **Rehabilitation of Urban Heritage in the Cities of Iraq** Project funded by the DAAD, part of activities between the Middle East Cooperation Unit in Brandenburg University of Technology (BTU), The University Baghdad, and the University of Sulaimani, we are pleased to invite you to the second online lecture.

About the Lecture: Located in Charleroi (BE), the Porte Ouest project was developed under the European15 design competition framework.

The European15 competition demanded innovative reflections on productivity, territorial metabolisms, and circular economy as a possible response for the future of a post-industrial site in Charleroi (BE). Going beyond the 20th-century approach on land and resources based on the idea of use, consume and dispose of, the concept of circular over the linear economy, regeneration over abandonment or dismantling over demolition, reconnection over isolation represents the new lens to rethink the future of Porte Ouest. However, what is circularity in the built environment? How can circularity contribute to urban resilience in terms of economy, society, and environment?

In order to address these questions, the Porte Ouest project starts from criticism towards the outdated image of Le Pays Noir, with which Charleroi is usually associated with. With the decline of the coal-based industries, Charleroi entered a period of deep economic, cultural and territorial transformations. But before it could recover from this recession, the region was already feeling the impact of the next one. 'Le Pays Noir,' as the once prosperous coal region was called, is now associated with negative connotations like waste, entropy, and unproductiveness. Now, fifty years after the industrial decline, pioneering vegetation is reclaiming industrial relicts and abandoned sites, composing a new landscape figure, which has emerged from the shadows of the past.

Porte Ouest Project aims to move beyond the existing paradigms of urban 'renewal' and 'sustainability' and alternatively wants to introduce the concept of circularity to territorial dynamics.



Dr. Arch. Cecilia Furlan is a research fellow at the UAntwerpen (BE) and TU Delft (NL). She holds advanced degrees in Architecture and Urbanism from IUAV (IT) and a joint Ph.D. in Urbanism and Engineering from IUAV (IT) and KU Leuven (BE). Cecilia's interest focuses on urban design and urban planning strategies towards sustainability and circularity. In particular, on sustainable urban development under conditions of resource scarcity. She believes that cities can do more with less, working towards sustainable growth.

Over the past years, she worked and taught in different architecture and urbanism schools across Europe, a visiting researcher at UC Louvain, USI Antwerp, and won the AESOP Young Investigator Training Program Award. In 2019, she was selected as one of the winners of the EUROPLAN15 design competition with a project that integrates circularity systemic interventions with territorial design ones. Lastly, in 2020, she was selected, by the British Academy and the Royal Netherlands Academy, as one of the 15 best early career researchers to present in London during the Symposium Anthropocene.

