PLANEXT: NEW IDEAS AND PERSPECTIVES ON PLANNING

Feras Hammami
University of Gothenburg, Sweden

This volume marks an important stage in *plaNext*. It publishes original works following an open call, as the special-issue inaugural volume was dedicated to selected contributions from the 8th AESOP-YA annual conference. With the growing interest in *plaNext*, we see a bright future as a leading open access journal in planning and other related fields. Thanks to the generous contribution of AESOP, all articles are openly available at AESOP's digital platform, InPlanning, and authors do not pay any article processing fee. In this respect, we envision *plaNext* as an effort by the young academic community of AESOP to help free the dissemination of knowledge from any unjust global academic system.

plaNext seeks to provide early academic researchers and practitioners with a critical forum for dialogues about the scope and meaning of "planning", and thus influence evolving planning debates. The motivation is to explicitly open up trans-disciplinary and international dialogues about what "planning studies" is and how it could be understood and developed when engaged with other fields of inquiry. These dialogues are expected to will help us initiate and frame several debates, lending recognition, form and direction to a range of theoretical explorations and methodological innovations in the field. We hope to engage in these debates practitioners, academics and policymakers, as well as members of the diverse communities that connect, often very actively, with planning. With such an open and trans-disciplinary approach, we will try to establish a sound theoretical sense of where the field of planning is going, which draws on the insights of disciplines as diverse as urban and regional studies, geography, heritage studies, sociology, cultural studies, anthropology, political science, architecture, art, art history, and tourism studies.

Given the diverse and international range of contributors and readers that *plaNext* boasts, the published contributions are expected to critically engage with the discourses, thoughts and debates that have dominated policy and thinking on planning for so long. With the growing interest in challenging the theory-practice (and –action) divides and the Western-centric conception of planning, *plaNext* aspires to create an accessible space for scholars, practitioners and activists from inside and outside Europe in exploring what these challenges mean. Through enabling young academics to engage in dialogues of this sort, *plaNext* will draw on its broader international audience, and create a more inclusive

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international community that self-reflexively explores the field of planning through different perspectives.

We have witnessed during the past years a growing number of studies, many of which are ethnographic in nature, that have examined the consequences of different approaches to planning, inspired by a range of social and cultural debates, promoting attention to identity and memory, as well as artistic and cultural expressions. These studies and debates are part of a significant shift in planning debates, marked by an increasing concern to unpack the political and the complex relationships of power that shape a range of dominant assumptions and ideas about the meaning and practices of planning. As the already diverse range of disciplines engaged with planning increases, and as the focus of analysis begins to consider not only practice, but also the effects of those practices, the rapid growing demands of contemporary societies requires new approaches to planning, or re-theorising it focusing on new ideas, approaches and thoughts drawn from different disciplines and by the multiple generations of academics, practitioners and activists. We see the pages of *plaNext* as an alternative space for young academics to critically engage with these debates. The first volume of *plaNext*, Cities that Talk, came in response to the contemporary phenomena of urban protests and resistances, including everyday life insurgencies, protests, riots and urban social movements, that call for re-thinking the future development of cities, challenging the traditional planning systems.

The second volume is another important step in this endeavour. As an open call, it received a broad response with original contributions from the different parts of the world. While most were planning schools- based, the contributions also came from the fields of heritage, sociology, geography, and art, raising new critical questions to planning debates. In the first paper, *Miriam Tedeschi* dwells on the works of Deleuze and Spinoza to theorise an ethical approach to urban planning that can be used to explain the role of information and power in contemporary cities. In the following paper, *Geoff Boeing* draws lessons from Barcelona's urban design and transportation systems to critically reflect on the urban form, transit accessibility, and planning and design decisions in Honolulu.

This inspiring international journey continues through the challenging paper by *Annelies Van de Ven*. Annelies visits Baghdad to demonstrate the significance of open space within the historical fabric of the city and the self-identification of its population through heritage and historical narratives of public space. Then, *Elena Greco* offers a different perspective on historic cities by unfolding the historical development of the concepts 'historic centre' and 'urban landscape' in the Italian and French debates during the post war decades.

The two following papers take us to a different inspiring topic. *Jessica Doyle* provides a stimulating paper that shows how immigrant entrepreneurs often start businesses largely

outside the existing local economic-development infrastructure. Her study shows that the difficulty of obtaining information and credit is a well-documented problem; that the immigrant entrepreneurs themselves move to solve this problem by soliciting information from existing social networks or community organizations; and that these resources are not necessarily available to all nascent immigrant entrepreneurs, and indeed may be harder to reach in less dense suburban environments. Following these ideas of resilience outside the official planning processes, *Deepika Andavarapu* and *Mahyar Arefi* use Holling's Adaptive Cycle model to explore how the residents of Pedda Jalaraipeta slum in Visakhapatnam, India, use their social capital (bonding, bridging and linkages) to survive and recover from disasters.

The final paper in this volume is co-authored by *Galya Vladova* and *Joerg Knieling*. The authors explore the debate about macro-regionalisation of the European territorial cooperation to assess the prospects for projection of the macro-regional idea upon the Black Sea area. Finally, *Basak Tanulku* provides an inspiring review of Naik Deepa and Trent Oldfield book, entitled Critical Cities Volume 3: Ideas, Knowledge and Agitation from Emerging Urbanists.

Looking to the future, *plaNext* warmly welcomes contributions willing to critically re-theorise and re-engage with planning theory and practices. We encourage papers that present reflexive conversation and theoretical analysis as well as case studies and practice-based reports. *plaNext* is regularly published twice a year. One volume is dedicated for selected papers from the annual conference of AESOP-YA, and one follows an open call. We wish to continue the development of themed volumes, which can be published when the publication process allows. We will also encourage contributions in the form of short reports, around 2,000 words, giving accounts of casework that can help academics to reflect on their theoretical analysis. *plaNext* will also continue to reserve a section for book reviews, around 2,000 word, that can engage the readers of *plaNext* not only with planning debates, but also with other new and innovative materials, from areas/disciplines not usually covered in discussions of planning. The Editorial Board, including Feras Hammami (Editor in Chief), Nadia Caruso, Lauren Ugur, Simone Tulumello and Ender Peker, manage all *plaNext* volumes. However, we will continue welcoming all comments and suggestions from AESOP members that can help us strengthen our open access journal.

This Editorial is a great opportunity to thank our invaluable authors, readers, reviewers and guest editors as well as AESOP and InPlanning for their invaluable support.