

EDITORIAL

We are pleased to present the second issue of *Transactions of the Association of the European Schools of Planning*, the open-access, double-blind peer-reviewed journal of AESOP.

In keeping with the journal's aim, this issue brings together a variety of reflective and research papers, associated with AESOP events and activities.

This issue again opens with a commissioned piece – a conceptual essay from Willem Salet, who explores the concept of transition and change from the vantage point of anthropology and cultural sociology drawing on seminal works by Arnold van Gennep in 'The Rites of Passage' (1908), Victor Turner's liminality (1967, 1977) and Bourdieu's work on institutions (1991). Defining transition as a pattern of cultural change of social order, Salet emphasises the need for a cultural understanding of place in planning studies, and for a perspective that focuses on cultural relationships in the intersection of institutions and purposive strategies of action.

Following Salet's article, the issue comprises five articles which are derived from the papers nominated for the Best Congress Paper award at the annual AESOP Congress held in Lisbon in July 2017. The papers mirror the diversity of cultures and approaches to planning, as well as planning research and education in Europe and beyond. Read in conjunction with Salet's essay – they demonstrate vividly the engagement of planning and planners in invoking change, steering transition, as well as the important role of local cultures, and socio-cultural understandings in interpreting place and providing solutions to problems.

In their article based on a Danish case study, Anne Tietjen and Gertrud Jørgensen use actor-network theory, and examine how assemblages of people and things can help formulate place-based strategic urban and landscape design interventions that can successfully counter (and thus bring change to) rural decline and be sustained by new actions and new actors.

In the second contribution, Simone Tulumello, Ana Catarina Ferreira, Alessandro Colombo, Caterina Francesca Di Giovanni, and Marco Allegra adopt a genealogical perspective to analysing housing policies in Portugal. Criticising the limited capacity of taxonomic and linear approaches to describe planning and housing systems that undergo processes of change, they illustrate the potential of genealogical research, which considers national and local cultures that are central to the shaping of policy.

Erblin Berisha, Natasa Colic, Giancarlo Cotella, and Zorica Nedović-Budić provide a contribution to filling the gap within existing studies that examine the nature and characteristics of spatial planning in the Western Balkan Region. They show that the Western Balkan Region has complex, diverse and path-dependent spatial planning systems due to the transition from socialist/communist regimes, and consequent challenges in adjusting to the market economy and complying to EU requirements.

Presenting their research on Suzhou, a Chinese historic city, Joon Sik Kim and Yi-Wen Wang demonstrate how data from social media can help to explore the identity of a city's tourist destinations. Developing a framework for analysing the contents of social media, the authors discuss how the analysis of digital data can provide a better understanding of tourists' perceptions and experiences, and consequently improve tourism planning.

Finally, in an article on planning education, Lukas Gilliard, Fabian Wenner, Gal Biran Belahuski, Elisabeth Nagl, Anna Rodewald, Fabian Schmid, Maximilian Stechele, Michael Zettl, Michael Bentlage, and Alain Thierstein argue that despite the multidisciplinary nature of urban planning, challenges remain in the development of

teaching approaches that combine different sub-disciplinary knowledge, particularly for students of different disciplinary backgrounds. They report on the experience of two studio courses on planning issues in Germany, and highlight the importance of providing students with a relational understanding, and the need to develop multi-methodological planning approaches across disciplinary boundaries.

We thank all the authors who contributed a paper to this issue, and especially our reviewers for their support of the journal. We hope you enjoy reading this issue of Transactions.

Kind regards

Ela Babalik-Sutcliffe, Andrea Frank, Nikos Karadimitriou, and Olivier Sykes

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