

EDITORIAL

In summer 2017 during the Annual AESOP Congress in Lisbon we were delighted and proud to present the inaugural issue of *Transactions of the Association of the European School*. Starting this journal took the editorial team on an enjoyable (ad)venture where we discussed format innovations, approaches, and procedures that would be suited to encapsulating the very inclusive, open-minded and nurturing character of the AESOP community while also measuring up to academic standards and scrutiny. It was a venture that was co-created by a mixed gendered team of complementary strengths, experiences, and competencies – as one would expect from a functional team.

The papers in this issue of the journal again embrace the diversity of planning cultures in Europe and beyond. They address themes ranging from transport to open space planning. Interdisciplinarity, qualitative and quantitative analytical approaches, design and strategy, and research and education are all covered in varying depth and breadth. (Post-)modern planning is diverse, and requires flexibility and openness to change; in our complex world the future is not predetermined but shaped and evolving.

This fourth issue is a good example of this diversity; with a geographical focus spanning from Mexico, Portugal to Russia and Italy, it explores planning approaches (resilience-based planning) as well as knowledge management issues and social behaviours.

In particular, this issue includes six contributions and, continuing with a tradition established in the inaugural issue, opens with an invited essay by Simin Davoudi. This essay takes us on a journey of reflections to the imagined historical and cultural regions of Europe, the 'Europe of the regions' and what spatial demarcation into regions may mean politically and in planning terms as they are rescaled and thus re-imagined over time.

This timely and provocative essay is followed by five articles. First, Elena Gilcher and Gerhard Steinebach's contribution looks at issues of knowledge management and effective systematic sharing mechanisms from pilot projects in planning. They conclude that comparable structures and information sharing enhance accessibility of information and foster the reuse of existing knowledge.

The second article by Vishnu Baburajan and João de Abreu e Silva explores the influence of land use characteristics, and information and communication technologies (including social media) on the choice of locations for social activities based on a cohort study of university students.

Third, Adriana Galderisi and Giada Limongi present a case study of the Basilicata region (Italy) illustrating initiatives around resilience-based planning approaches which aim to enhance the capacity of small villages to cope with intertwined threats such as earthquakes, landslides, and linked hazards.

The fourth contribution by Emma Regina Morales explores the proliferation of middle-class gated communities in Mexico in the context of global polarization. In a discussion of macro-economic policies and micro-level practices she seeks to identify future risks and challenges arising from the normalization of exclusionary places.

The fifth and final article by Anna Kharkina examines the strategies of heritage-making in the late Russian Empire which were simultaneously supported by different civil society groups and cultural enthusiasts.

Not only for this issue, but for all the published issues as well as those in progress, we need to acknowledge the hard work of the volunteer article reviewers as without them we could not succeed in publishing a quality

journal. A wide range of AESOP conference papers has been submitted to the journal, furthering AESOP's mission to promote excellence in research. Critical reports from the Excellence in Teaching Prize winners and nominees have found an outlet in the journal too. In addition, the journal has also attracted a number of independent submissions. In its initial years, *Transactions* has received a total of 75 papers. We would like to thank all those contributors.

In the past year, the *Transactions* journal webpage had 14.215 visitors; 8094 were 'unique visitors' (first time visitors). During that period, there have been 16.597 downloads from the journal's webpage, some downloading complete issues, and some downloading individual papers. This interest in, and support for, this AESOP publication is exciting and indicative that this project is worth continuing.

Two and a half years after publishing the inaugural issue, the test and startup phase of the journal is coming to a close. There is of course much room for the journal to evolve further. At this stage however, the editorial team is looking to hand over to a new editorial lead to take the journal to the next stage. The editor(s) will inherit a good number of contributions in the pipeline (i.e. papers that are under review or revision) as well as two special themed issues which are being guest-edited and nearing completion over the next few months.

It has been a privilege and honour to partake in the development of this new voice of AESOP.

Kind regards

Ela Babalik, Andrea I. Frank, Nikos Karadimitriou, and Olivier Sykes