

EDITORIAL

This issue of Transactions of AESOP brings together papers that address key contemporary planning themes and agendas with a particular emphasis on appreciating the importance of time and space in shaping the substantive matters planning addresses and the manner in which it responds to these.

The first paper by Kai Böhme addresses the temporal dimension of planning thought and action. It argues that future-orientated thinking needs to be strengthened in planning and policy making to respond to the risk of 'presentism'. It explores the notion of the 'tragedy of the time horizon' which draws attention to the negative effects of short-term thinking as regards planning goals relating to the environment, economic stability, and social equity. The paper argues that the resultant neglect of long-term consequences requires greater 'future literacy' and fostering of the capacity to imagine, read, and use the future, both at the individual and societal levels. This, it is argued, will aid with the navigation of uncertainty, strategic decision-making, innovation, enhancing social resilience, and promoting sustainable development. It is suggested that there is a need for a collective effort to improve future literacy skills, foster imagination and creativity, and overcome the challenges of 'the tyranny of now'. Envisioning positive futures, the paper concludes, is crucial for inspiring hope, collaboration, and informed decision-making, particularly in a rapidly changing world.

The second paper by Basak Akarsu, Imge Akcakaya Waite, and Cansu Ozmen develops a novel insight into Hannah Arendt's socio-political theories in order to explore the socio-spatial exclusion of the vulnerable in society. It utilises Arendt's classification of the terms 'communal' and 'irrelevant' as a pair of opposing concepts in which the state of 'vulnerability' is associated with being deemed to be 'irrelevant' within society. The paper addresses the exclusionary qualities of public spaces by focusing on the complex relationships observed between these concepts in Turkey through a content analysis of national satire magazines and YouTube channels that reflect on various states and perceptions of vulnerability in Turkish society and culture. The paper argues that space is only democratic to the extent that different social groups can use it equally and fairly without feeling, or being assumed to be, 'communal' or 'irrelevant'. Therefore, in the practice of urban democracy, communities must realise the socio-spatial inclusion of their vulnerable members that are deemed irrelevant and enhance vulnerable individuals' urban rights.

The third paper by Pelin Işık, Christa Reicher, and Ceren Sezer conceives of public spaces as the 'sensory system' of urban life and sees them as being crucial for interconnecting individuals, ideas, and cultures within the fabric of cities. The paper provides a fresh interpretation of public spaces by examining people's activities from a new perspective. By applying play theory to public space analysis, the study uncovers spontaneous and unplanned activities and the novel relationships which exist between users and their environments. Focussing on the city of Aachen as a place of play, the paper develops urban design tools that take into account users' leisure time activities. By recognizing the unique relationships that play can create between individuals and their surroundings in terms of perceptions, intentions, actions, and uses of space, the paper encourages a fresh perspective on urban design tools. Its findings offer a new design approach for creating public spaces that are more participative, inclusive, and user-centred.

The fourth paper from Klaas Veenma, Wim Leendertse and Jos Arts explores infrastructure planning from the perspective of ‘certification’, arguing that attempts by decision makers to strive for more certainty can in fact produce the opposite effect with impacts on planning and project timescales. The planning of three infrastructure projects in the Netherlands – a road upgrade, an airport runway redevelopment, and a river bypass– is explored over a period of 20 years. This reveals that while decision makers continuously strive for ‘certification’ by deploying authority-based instruments, this can generate a reaction of ‘decertification’ from project opponents. Yet when decision makers adopt an adaptive approach to create room for uncertainties, other actors often demand less uncertainty, driving decision makers back to their first predilection for ‘certification’. To overcome this continuous loop, the paper argues that an arena and institutional setting should be created in which actors from different advocacy coalitions are involved in open dialogue to better balance the perceived uncertainties of all stakeholders.

The final paper from Marta De Marchi and Maria Chiara Tosi explores the nexus between public health, food systems and city region governance. It conceptualises food as a territorial system that is closely linked to public health, social equity, and land policies. It notes how eating habits are at the root of both the incidence of cardiovascular disease and the phenomenon of malnutrition. Food often entails social inequity and is acquiring, ever greater relevance in the tools of territorial governance. Informed by this context, the paper reports on the [Cities2030](#) project which is being developed and financed by the European Horizon 2020 programme. This envisages the involvement of all interest groups and actors within the food system arena through the creation of Urban Policy and Living Labs. The paper reports on the work of the Università Iuav di Venezia (Iuav - University of Venice) which is involved in the development of two labs in the Veneto region in the city of Vicenza and in the Venice lagoon.

Collectively the papers provide a timely reminder that planning as an activity has both a temporal and spatial dimension. It is enmeshed in temporal and spatial processes with material effects and must be cognisant of different temporal and spatial scales as it seeks to shape territories which maximise human flourishing within safe environmental limits. We would like to thank all the authors and reviewers who have contributed to this issue of the Journal.

The Editors of [Transactions](#) are also delighted to be able to announce that the journal has been accepted for listing by [Scopus](#). In reviewing the Journal’s application and approving it for indexing, the [Scopus Content Selection & Advisory Board \(CSAB\)](#) noted that “The journal consistently includes articles that are academically sound and relevant to an international academic or professional audience in the field”. The Scopus listing means that articles published in Transactions are now indexed and searchable in Scopus which is excellent news for the Journal and its past and future authors!

We would also remind readers that the journal is open to submissions from all those who would like to share their research in the planning discipline. Submission to the journal is now through the new dedicated [Transactions of AESOP Open Journal Systems \(OJS\) website](#).

Dr. Olivier Sykes

Editor in Chief of Transactions of AESOP
Liverpool, October 2023