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Editorial

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Editorial

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One of the key goals of the 2016 UN Habitat *New Urban Agenda* is to achieve a fairer share of the prosperity brought by urbanisation. For this to happen, urban design, planning, and spatial and economic policies need to find ways to create opportunities in the current socio-political and economic environment for socially minded and innovative entrepreneurs. The double themed issue of *Urban Design and Planning*, of which this is Part 1, brings together a collection of papers around the theme *Urban Design for an Inclusive Economy*.

As early as 1989, David Harvey highlighted the trend of '[...] local governmental powers to try and attract external sources of funding, new direct investments or new employment sources' (Harvey, 1989). Subsequently, the topic of 'entrepreneurial cities' was discussed in the context of neoliberal approaches of governments to shift the responsibilities for the public realm to a small number of private actors (Hall and Hubbard, 1998), which often were limited to trans-national corporations. The plea of the New Urban Agenda for a more inclusive economy underlines that, after almost three decades, the situation has not much improved.

In December 2017, the International Forum on Urbanism organised its tenth international conference, titled *The Entrepreneurial City* at the School of Architecture of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. At the end of the conference, a selection of best papers was made. Some are reworked for *Urban Design and Planning*, supplemented by reactions to a call for papers in the journal.

The current issue presents four papers. The first investigates as relevant cases three different neighbourhoods in Beijing, PR China (Zhu, 2018), the second refers to Singapore (Zhang, 2018), and the two others deal with much smaller cities in the West: Stockholm in Sweden (Danenberg *et al.*, 2018) and Reading in the United Kingdom (Lobo, 2018). The first two focus on the scale of large neighbourhoods, in Beijing called suburbs, in Singapore new towns or local communities, that would in the West be recognised as urban districts or quarters. The third paper is on the scale of main streets with commerce along them; the fourth on the scale of a mural on a single building – be it a large mural.

'In China, since the economic reform and especially after the Mass Entrepreneurship and Innovation rolled out in 2014,

there has been an increase in entrepreneurial activities in planned innovative parks and urban residential neighbourhoods. This [first] paper studies the entrepreneurial social spaces produced by adaptive commercial activities, and its impact on spatial publicness' (Zhu and Lu, 2018: p. 231). In the context of Chinese social and political structures 'the contradictions between housing policies and private interests [...] are negotiated among entrepreneurs and residents in public' (Zhu and Lu, 2018: p. 231). The case studies of three neighbourhoods in Beijing, chosen for experimentation with this new approach, show that these are more effective in attracting new private enterprises than designated mixed-use urban areas. The paper concludes that this indicates a clear role for urban designers 'to avoid the construction of neighbourhoods with statistical mixed functions but fixed usage for each place' (Zhu and Lu, 2018: p. 231).

Singapore sometimes seems halfway between the East and West. It's amazing economic success has relied heavily on top-down planning that has proven very effective, but may be reaching its limits. To avoid that, here too experiments are set up with what is called the sharing economy, which is 'growing rapidly and in the meantime scepticism emerges questioning its alleged benefits with respect to inclusiveness, such as providing equal access, encouraging participation and building social connection' (Zhang and Chen, 2018: p. 247). 'This paper examines the inclusiveness of the sharing economy [...]. It then proposes a model of a more inclusive sharing economy that comprises hybrid sharing platforms and integrates collaborative consumption and co-production in a local community. Following this, the model is translated into a neighbourhood prototype [...]' (Zhang and Chen, 2018: p. 247). The designs for this resulted from a Master of Architecture design studio in the Department of Architecture of the School of Design and Environment, National University of Singapore.

The next paper 'explores evidence that entrepreneurial opportunities for migrants and other lower-income populations can be expanded in part through increasing the presence of fine-grained scales of plots and plates along main streets, as part of a systematic urban design strategy' (Danenberg *et al.*, 2018: p. 258). This, of course, is not depending only on urban design, as rearrangement of shopping spaces to enlarge or diminish the size of individual commercial units can, and often does, happen within a single building, which would be the field of

architecture rather than urban design. It becomes part of urban design strategies, however, when the urban plan includes rules and regulations that limit such changes, actually completely in line with one of the conclusions of the Beijing paper in this issue (Zhu and Lu, 2018), even if the evidence this time comes from the main streets of Sweden's capital Stockholm with its completely different political context. There are after all some universal rules to our disciplines.

The issue's final paper stresses the social importance and cultural meaning of a large mural, and ultimately its effect on social coherence and local identity of the Afro-Caribbean community in the town of Reading, United Kingdom. The paper describes 'the public spat between the local council and a particular bidder' for the building that the mural is on, this bidder meaning to keep the mural, and thus largely the building, ensuring anew a function catering to the Afro-Caribbean community. The council, however, sees the chance to get a higher price for the building from a more conventional developer who would destroy the building, not even keeping the wall with the mural. This is where, and 'when history, identity and economics clash', the subtitle of the paper (Lobo, 2018).

The second issue on *Urban Design for an Inclusive Economy* will bring another three papers on the theme, again covering different scales of urbanism.

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