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Editorial: Planning and Critical Entrepreneurship

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Planning and entrepreneurship – New paths to follow?

Revisiting the relation between planning and entrepreneurship is a needed focus in planning education, yet not an unambiguous task to address. The 11th Conference of AESOP Young Academics Network followed the theme “Planning and Entrepreneurship”. It was hosted by the Chair of Urban Development at *Technische Universität München* in Germany. In April 2017, it brought together over 50 participants from 17 countries who presented 46 papers on the subject matter. Sometimes explicitly, at times more implicitly, young international planning scholars sought to review benefits and potential pitfalls of introducing the study of diverse forms of entrepreneurship and related concepts to contemporary planning debates, in theory and praxis, as well as at their interface. The conference embraced a “wide definition of entrepreneurship” (AESOP YA Online, 2016), encompassing the range from commercial entrepreneurship to civil initiatives that “are sometimes filling the void that planning leaves” (ibid.). It simultaneously promoted the notion that both businesses and publics take a sceptical stance towards technocratic planning and government interventions. This scepticism, apparently, “has brought the discipline into crisis, from which it has not yet fully recovered” (ibid.). The following questions accompanied the event: How can planning support innovative activities? How can planners react to technological start-ups moving into the realms of planning, architecture, and geo-localised data? Can (or should) planners themselves become entrepreneurs? (cf. AESOP Online, 2017).

Bringing debates on entrepreneurship to planning communities in Europe and beyond is not necessarily a happy marriage and bears certain ambiguities (Gilliard et al., 2017). More market-friendly scholars claim that the planning discipline needs to adapt to changing academic and regional landscapes of power. In their view, as much as universities have undergone an ‘entrepreneurial turn’, so have metropolitan regions been subjected to entrepreneurial governance. In order to engage with such a changed context, planning, too, is in need of a similar entrepreneurial shift (ibid.). Their calls for needed updates and revisions of planning education, theory and praxis are timely and resonate well with the new velocity, fluctuating interests and the chronopolitics of changing patterns of urban and regional development. A downside of such claims drawing causalities between various sub-phenomena of wider structural transformations and arguments of inherent necessity is that

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they may be blind to profound political causes and manifest social impacts these changes have emerged from or may bring about.

Entrepreneurial Cities and Entrepreneurial Governance – 30 Years of Debate

Debates on the entrepreneurial city date back beyond the recent decade of planning thought on entrepreneurialism. They have culminated at the end of the past millennium when Hall & Hubbard (1998) coined the term ‘entrepreneurial city’, thus carving a new mantra for business-friendly planning agencies.

Urban entrepreneurialism (...) is a far-reaching ideology for urban management characterised by three central elements: competition between cities to attract increasingly mobile sources of capital investment; the powerful influence of market ideologies over the trajectory and substance of urban development; and a side-lining of distributional politics in favour of growth and wealth generation. Yet it is also more than this. (MacFarlane, 2012, p. 2811, referring to MacLeod and Jones 2011, p. 2444)

Decades earlier Harvey (1989) had critically captured the shift from managerialism to entrepreneurialism in urban governance in the United States and the United Kingdom. While having identified an “antiurban bias in studies of macro-economic and macro-social change” (ibid., p. 3f), he, on the contrary, considered the urban focus as essential for understanding the political-economic dynamics of an uneven development of space. From this perspective, entrepreneurialism, which had been promoted since the 1970s, e.g. through decentralization strategies by central governments to open up avenues for city authorities, can be interpreted as an instrument for alleviating tensions resulting from the erosion of public budgets and tax revenues and hence challenges the position of central governments to continue securing “a better future for their populations” (ibid., p.4).

[T]here seems to be a general consensus emerging throughout the advanced capitalist world that positive benefits are to be had by cities taking an entrepreneurial stance to economic development. What is remarkable that this consensus seems to hold across national boundaries and even across political parties and ideologies. (Harvey, 1989, p. 4)

Harvey (ibid.) reminds that the calls for (more) entrepreneurialism emerged against the backdrop of fiscal austerity, rising unemployment rates, deindustrialization, declining powers of the nation state, the lack of state control over money flows, and a growing neoconservative political climate. By identifying the Oil Price Shock in 1973 and the related social crisis and economic recession as triggers of the entrepreneurial turn, Harvey interprets entrepreneurial urban governance as a reaction to shock, crisis and recession.¹ A parallel can be drawn to 2017. The year in which the conference of the AESOP Young Academics Network took place marked almost a decade after the world financial crisis of 2008. During this decade labour markets have structurally eroded with severe effects on urban populations, affecting cities both in the global South and in the global North (Bayat, 2013; Madanipour *et al.*, 2014). In succession, the same decade was struck by a global rise of urban social movements in 2011, – “the year of dreaming dangerously” (Žižek, 2012) – the so-called “refugee crisis” in 2015, and, 2016 – “the year of unleashing” (Kurbjuweit, 2016), when xenophobia, new authoritarianism and right-wing backlashes gained visible ground in different world regions.

¹ Foucault (2008), however, identifies the post-WWII period of occupied Germany in the late 1940 and early 1950s as the phase in which neoliberal governmentality and thereby individual entrepreneurialism become cemented as part of institutionalized policy making.

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For Harvey (1989), the “objectified qualities of the urban are chronically unstable” (p. 6). This finding, in our view, poses a central challenge to the field of planning as an action sphere which promotes the settling of structures and routines, rather than their unsettlement. Therefore, planning theory and praxis, in order to more productively grasp the changing nature of the urban (and the regional) need to constantly reinvent and update themselves. Without a doubt, debates on entrepreneurship are identified as a promising means of bringing innovation, disruption and unsettlement into the seemingly settled field of planning. Planning scholars embracing the concept of entrepreneurship hope it may reinvent the field and thus strengthen it.

Entrepreneurial Civil Society and Entrepreneurial Citizens?

The paradigm of entrepreneurship is approached with caution by proponents of public planning, state regulation and control of the markets. They warn that it may turn out as too business-friendly thus threatening to weaken the resources and roles, the reach and responsibilities of public planning bodies. A critical stance towards entrepreneurial approaches as weakening public planning emerges in the context of New Localism in Britain (Davoudi & Madanipour, 2015), or in the debates on the post-political condition of planning and governance arrangements in urban and territorial development (Metzger & Oosterlynck, 2015). Research on planning approaches centred on civil society is particularly concerned about the potential shortcomings of the new neoliberal ‘empowerment’ of civic entrepreneurs and the stimulation of an entrepreneurial civil society: Van Dyck (2012), for instance, argues that “tensions arise between the expansion of the urban neoliberal agenda” and “the potential for new forms of collective action” (p. 117). Her analysis depicted how civil society organizations originally evolving from social movements became “increasingly tied to mechanisms of resource allocation in the struggle to survive through their involvement in entrepreneurial planning. The contradictory logics driving social entrepreneurship resulted in continuous internal tensions between economic efficiency and the objectives of social change.” (ibid., p. 130).

It is widely argued in planning that social entrepreneurship offers potential for incorporating broad socio-economic objectives into the delivery of urban spatial policy (Gilliard *et al.*, 2017). However, such an endeavour also entails certain drawbacks, including the risk of instrumentalization of community-based organisations for neoliberal forms of ‘empowerment’ when “civil society groups take the entrepreneurial turn” (Van Dyck, 2011, p. 117). In this sense, a development of new and changed planning instruments and methods under the banner of entrepreneurial governance might not deliver on the promise to build the capacity of communities and publics. Just on the contrary, it may merely confirm entrepreneurial planning as a set of spatial policies or strategies which are embedded in wider forms of neoliberal governmentality (Tasan-Kok & Baeten, 2012; Davoudi, 2018; Gunder *et al.*, 2018).

Respectively, particularly research on localism has shown that although entrepreneurial policies may be

portrayed as an emancipatory process of self-government, in practice it is conditional and calculative and works by utilizing the self-governing potentials of ‘the local’ to align their goals to neoliberal values of free market, enterprise and self-reliance. The locals are freed to ‘become entrepreneurs of themselves’ (...) yet within the framework of ‘the national’ governmental priorities such as deficit reductions, competitiveness and growth (Davoudi & Madanipour, 2015, p. 20, quoting Rose *et al.*, 2009, p. 11).

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Allen *et al.* (2014) have emphasized a shift in debates which contrast the good, hard-working and future oriented, individualistic citizen as 'entrepreneurial neoliberal citizen' with a "feckless, lazy and undeserving" citizen who is medially and politically rendered as the product of a bloated welfare system (*ibid.*), an antithesis, a neoliberal non-citizen. Such discursive framings are easily mobilized by right-wing media and politics as evidence of the broken state, in this case, of 'Broken Britain' (*cf. ibid.*, p. 3). The reproductive capacity and caring labour of those 'neoliberal non-citizens' are rendered within the same discourse as "idleness and a drain on national resources" (*ibid.*, p. 3). This thread is commonly deployed in contemporary medial and political debates. A more sociocultural-scientific reading of the entrepreneurial shift in planning would raise serious concerns about social, cultural, political and economic framings that might result from debates which render planners and citizens as entrepreneurs, as these might be employed as discriminative practices of othering, thus exacerbating social fragmentation and political polarization. In addition, a "sustained normative criticism of neoliberalism" might unravel further cracks in entrepreneurial planning approaches, such as shortcomings of cost-benefit analysis, or the inherent social Darwinism underlying self-organization (Davoudi & Madanipour, 2015, p. 23f).

Entrepreneurial Subjectivities and Neoliberal Governmentality

The spreading of entrepreneurial thinking in planning – if necessary at all – calls for a re-politicisation of debates on entrepreneurship. This process may start with the question: "Who is entrepreneurial and about what?" (Harvey, 1989, p. 6) It would require from planning educators to critically revise the conceptual repertoire of studying entrepreneurship. Two ways seem feasible in this regard: (1) rediscovering the critical study of the entrepreneurial subject in wider social theory, particularly in governmentality analysis; and (2) cross-disciplinary advancements between the fields of planning theory and praxis, and the newly emerging (self)reflexive and (self)critical debates in the fields of studying economics and entrepreneurship.

On the wider level of social theory and planning thought, the prime suspect theorist for critically engaging with entrepreneurship is Michel Foucault (2008) and his notion of the "entrepreneur of the self" (Dilts, 2011). The role of the individualised 'enterprise of the self' in neoliberal governmentality

is ideally depicted as the site of all innovation, constant change, continual adaptation to variations in market demand, the search for excellence, and 'zero defects'. The subject is therewith enjoined to conform internally to this image by constant self-work or self-improvement. His or her own expert, own employer, own inventor, and own entrepreneur: neoliberal rationality encourages the ego to act to strengthen itself so as to survive competition. All its activities must be compared with a form of production, an investment, and a cost calculation (Daradot & Laval, 2014).

Neoliberal governmentality sets as its key objective the self-exploitation of self-optimizing competitive and individual subjects who enter a fierce competition with one another. The working subjects must constantly strive to be as efficient as possible, appear to be totally involved in his or her work, perfect himself or herself by lifelong learning, and to accept an ever-greater flexibility (*cf. ibid.*, 2013, 263). As their own expertise, employability, inventiveness and entrepreneurship are constantly assessed against forms of investment profitability and cost-effectiveness, the individual subjects adopt rationality, which "encourages the ego to act to strengthen itself so as to survive competition" (Daradot & Laval, 2013, p. 263).

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A genealogical account, which considers planning as a form of governmentality centred on the spatial management of a population (Huxley, 2002), critically registers the regimes of planning truths at work in framing planning as entrepreneurial: These may become employed through the figure of the “*homo oeconomicus* – a subject of governmental rationality serving as a grid of intelligibility between the government and the governed” (Dilts, 2011, p. 130, original emphasis). Many entrepreneurial governance and planning approaches replace “*homo oeconomicus* as a partner of exchange” with “*homo oeconomicus* as entrepreneur of himself [or herself]” (Foucault, 2008, p. 226, own insertion). In this view the subject assumes own responsibility for own capitalist growth, own production, and own source of earnings (ibid.).

A Foucauldian understanding of truth claims in planning would entail self-conscious thinking about both the production of the regime of truth, as well as its enactment in and through planning procedures and planners’ practices and discourses (Dilts, 2011; Huxley, 2002). The nourishing of counter discourses in the planning debate would then be an important feature of fostering the collective capacity of planners and citizens. “[I]f the competitive neoliberal market economy demands particular kinds of entrepreneurial, future-oriented, self-sufficient and individualistic selves” (Allen *et al.*, 2014, p. 4), then a planning tradition which would highlight “a desire for modes of caring and common forms of social and common economic relations” (ibid., p. 4) could be considered as an emerging and utterly needed counter project. Such a project would fall in line of Foucault’s idea of counter conduct, defined as a form of movements which resist “direction by others” through defining and enacting for each “a different form” to conduct oneself (Foucault, 2009, p. 259). In addition, two aspects are central when using governmentality analysis as a critical social theory approach for advancing research on planning and entrepreneurialism: First, to acknowledge Foucault’s late focus on a shift from ‘entrepreneur of the self’ to an ethics of ‘care of the self’ (Dilts, 2011), and secondly, to recover his continuous emphasis of ‘critique’ (Foucault, 2007).

As regards the ‘care of the self’, Dilts (2011) identifies in Foucault’s late work a sympathetic turn towards ethics, an “ultimately critical response to the emergence of neo-liberal subjectivity, governmentality, and biopower” (p. 132). By promoting the “care of the self” Foucault is in fact deeply interested in the space opened up by neo-liberal subjectivity, which ultimately negates sovereign subjectivity (ibid., p. 143):

[B]ecause all practices are experienced as choices, and therefore are already taken as practices of freedom, neoliberals never take account that this is the moment where they are a part of an ethical project. By insisting that actors are rational because they are responsive, they sacrifice any possibility of being **critical** (Dilts, 2011, p. 145, original emphasis).

To be critical means to reactivate and renovate a critical attitude which strives to untie the subject from the neoliberal loop and encourage proliferation of counter conducts (Pelegri, 2017). These counter conducts may “entail the invention of a new ethical subject, which is not to be constituted as an entrepreneur of the self nor will it promote competitive sociability as the only form of coexistence, delegitimizing neoliberal competition and business-subjectivity” (ibid.).

Focusing on Foucauldian analytics of neoliberal governmentality and entrepreneurial subjects is but one possible social theory route to promote a constructive dissent among planning practitioners and theorists; many others may follow or already exist.

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Towards Studying Public Space, Foundational Economy and Critical Entrepreneurship

Another, a more hands-on approach to rethinking the concept of entrepreneurship and ambivalences of its use in planning is to establish cross-disciplinary dialogues with the fields of public space research, foundational economy approaches and critical entrepreneurship studies. While planning thought is usually quick in adopting traditions and breakthroughs from other fields of thought, the recent rise of critical entrepreneurship studies and new approaches to the foundational economy might also change the direction of innovative cross-fertilization: How can ethical and political positionality in planning, for instance, concerning planners' roles in democracy, solidarity and protection of the common good, inform studies on undergoing transitions of entrepreneurship and wider economics?

An insight into OECD's policy discourse on planning and entrepreneurship allows, in a second step, for critical inspection of these recent debates. In a "Territorial Reviews Report" on "Competitive Cities: A New Entrepreneurial Paradigm in Spatial Development", the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2007) states that

the essence of urban entrepreneurialism is to apply innovative thinking to policy planning in a strategic way (...). Such attitude is an essential property not only of competitive private enterprises in the global market, but also of competitive cities in inter-city competition on a global scale. Urban entrepreneurialism should manifest itself in identifying and building up unique local assets, in harnessing 'old policy tools' with totally new perspectives, and in mobilising the collective potential of all the actors in the local economy by motivating and empowering them. The question that a policy planner employing an entrepreneurial approach should always ask himself is just how entrepreneurial his approach is in this sense (OECD, 2007, p. 7).

Largely disregarding the critique of entrepreneurial planning as part of neoliberal governmentality, OECD reiterates the affirmative debate on inter-urban competition, free global markets, disruption and unsettlement through the entrepreneurial approach as well as the mobilisation of an entrepreneurial civil society. Yet on a more subtle level of understanding, the quote also reveals the need for developing further analytical perspectives to study entrepreneurship. Three perspectives will thus be introduced

- The first perspective revisits the role and relevance of local public space in entrepreneurial approaches to planning and urban governance;
- The second prospect deploys a critique of governance frameworks, invites for everyday-theorizing across multiple-scales and actors, and establishes bridges to current innovations in considering economy and everyday life, i.e. the foundational economy debate.
- The third vista stresses the reinterpretation of alternative forms of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship that lie at the heart of post-colonial debates, both in critical entrepreneurship studies as well as in post-colonial planning theory.

Recent Role and Relevance of Public Space in Entrepreneurial Planning Approaches

As Harvey insisted already in 1989, entrepreneurialism focuses much more closely on the political economy of place rather than of territory (cf. *ibid.*, 1989, p. 7). In this context, governance is introduced as a restructuring mechanism with an "emphasis on the production of a good local business climate" (*ibid.*, p. 11) by luring "highly mobile and flexible production, financial and consumption flows into its space" (*ibid.*, p. 11). The intention behind this political-economic decentralization has been an activation of locally productive potential across

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multiple facets, in the range from commoning practices, solidary uses and socially reproductive relations of care in lived space to the entrepreneurial place-making strategies for the redesign and aestheticisation of public spaces. These processes include but are not restricted to spatial practices of activists, artists, associations, on the one hand, and place-making units of global competitive firms (Knierbein *et al.*, 2018) and public space design strategies of investors' philanthropic foundations promoting their concept of 'benevolent urbanism' (Athanassiou, 2020, forthcoming), on the other.

The main conceptual challenge is to unravel the twisted change in meaning of the concept of public space within the entrepreneurial planning paradigm. By the turn of the millennium, public space had been conceptually recovered in planning theory and praxis "as a critique of the neoliberal phase in urban development" (Madanipour, 2019, p. 45). Two decades later, it has been widely adopted by stakeholders operating within neoliberal governmentality:

This adoption, subsequently, is at odds with the needs for the provision and maintenance of accessible public spaces (...). As public authorities have embraced a more entrepreneurial character and approach, the concept and character of the public space have also changed. The rhetoric of the public space as a space of interaction has remained, but it has become increasingly an instrument of attraction, at the service of unequally distributed economic interests (Madanipour, 2019, p. 45).

Harvey (cf. 1989, p. 12) also noted that urban entrepreneurialism contributes to increasing disparities in wealth and income and displays a tendency towards strong social polarization manifested in an increasing number of people living in precarious and poverty conditions. It is particularly significant, that the shift towards entrepreneurial governance has altered the concept of public space rendering it less inclusive. At the same time the social life which constitutes public space has become – if we focus for a moment on more general tendencies – more encapsulated, individualized and fragmented. This notion justifies a theoretical and political need for a conceptual shift in the opposite direction, centred on a struggle for common, collective and public affairs. In this context, MacFarlane (2012) prompts that "part of the success of entrepreneurial strategies lies in their capacity to capture not just economic trajectories but highly selective interpretations of the active social" (p. 2797). The pressure that entrepreneurial governance exerts on public space can be considered as one of the main originators of increasing patterns of de-solidarisation for and among more vulnerable groups in urban life, and more generally among different social strata in urban societies. These are eventually expressed through (violent) disavowals and political antagonisms in public space (Wilson & Swyngedouw, 2015), besides groups' own claims and objectives that lead to silent or loud forms of stated dissent. Another no less important fact is, as Harvey (1989) notes, that "urban entrepreneurialism (as opposed to the much more faceless bureaucratic managerialism) here meshes with a search for local identity and, as such, opens up a range of mechanisms for social control." (p. 14).

'Top-Down', 'Bottom-Up' or Simply: 'Upside-Down'? Everyday Economies and Everyday-theorizing

The shift to urban entrepreneurialism needs to be analysed as regards various spatial and institutional scales. This idea had been addressed by the conference subtitle "Planning and Public Policy at the Intersection of Top-down and Bottom-up Action" (AESOP YA Online, 2016). This framing exemplifies decades of scholarly efforts in urban studies and planning that use governance as an analytical framework for complex spatial development processes as regards their multi-actor and multi-scalar dimensions. While analytical governance concepts have helped planning scholars to address complexity through a solid structure and commonly

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shared idea, the notion of governance as an affirmative part of neoliberal governmentality has been widely disregarded in planning research that work with analytical governance frameworks. Inherent to considering collaborations among different agents of spatial praxis – for instance professionals, politicians, activists, educators, laypersons – as either ‘top-down’ or ‘bottom-up’ reproduces a certain understanding of the social world, its places and spatial practices.

Civil society is often hurriedly placed at the micro-institutional level (grassroots metaphor), city governments at the institutional meso-level of the urban or regional, and global firms usually at the macro-level of planetary urbanization. Simultaneously an appreciation of lived space and everyday-theorising remains largely ignored by planning theorists (except for e.g. Friedman 2012, who, however, does not render the economic from an everyday perspective). Endeavours to (re)politicise the scrutiny of social planning action as an intermingling of micro-, meso- and macroscales and tendencies at the levels of everyday life and lived space are still widely unrealized in the realm of planning theory and praxis, and in the productive niches between these fields. Pløger (2018) in this respect, has called for planning to overcome its institutionalism and to discover its connection with everyday life and the political:

Planning not only has to work with its institutionalism and mode of conversation, but (...) its mode of procedural decisions. To make contest and strife productive, planning might need a ‘wandering planner’ (...); that is, a planner that listens to and knows the ‘street voice’. It needs a planner that is allowed to work with agonism as a discussant within people’s everyday lives and as an ‘editorial’ organizer of dialogues on everyday life questions, sense of place, aesthetics, design, art, feelings and desires contesting planning (Pløger 2018, p. 273).

But is the focus on planning and everyday life not too far-fetched when considering the potentials and possible pitfalls of entrepreneurial thinking? Drawing on recent publications on the ‘Foundational Economy’, the answer would be: Not at all! The concept of the foundational economy relates to the “mundane production of everyday necessities” or “that part of the economy that creates and distributes goods and services consumed by all (regardless of income and status) because they support everyday life” (Bentham et. al., 2013, p. 7). Also framed as addressing the infrastructure of everyday life (Foundational Economy Collective 2018), it comes as no surprise that the edited volume has been reviewed from different perspectives as ground-breaking and thought-provoking work inviting “new horizons for social, economic and political renewal with their provocative and yet practical proposals for reconstructing everyday economies” (Peck, 2018) and as “a compelling counter project against neoliberalism, restoring collective foundations of everyday life” (Streek, 2018).

Moreover, potential analytical innovations can be put forward by a debate on planning and the foundational economy, helping to revisit the set analytical standards and to activate thinking in the niches between given spheres, scales and structural frames of action. It may allow the planning community to come up with new models of envisioning social action and spatial praxis beyond the static and hegemonic opposition of ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ through rethinking the everyday dimension of the economy, and dynamic interferences between different institutional spheres, individual and collective actors as well as different scaling processes. In this vein, the role of the state in the aftermath of the world economic crisis of 2008 also needs to be cautiously reconsidered, as “states effectively socialized the massive amounts of private debt created in the financial system and even nationalized faltering financial institutions” (Plank, 2020, forthcoming). As Nölke & May (2019, referred to by Plank, 2020, forthcoming) have stated, “the return of public ownership per se, does not necessarily indicate a trajectory towards progressive and emancipatory change. It simply indicates a return

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to more organized forms of capitalism (Nölke & May, 2019), as opposed to unfettered global restructuring (Bayat, 2013). Unfettered global restructuring has produced social hardship, precarity and has brought populations into new patterns of informalization on top of already existing social divides and poverty.

These populations, however, develop strategies of mass everyday resistance which also challenge Western social movement theory as they are usually carried out in a silent manner which Bayat (2013) has identified as the “silent encroachment of the ordinary”. Thus, rather than thinking institutional spheres as static and in a fixed hierarchic setting resting on two binary directions (‘top-down’, ‘bottom-up’), a shift towards the foundational economy, silent encroachment of the ordinary, and other ways of thinking planners’ roles in strengthening everyday economies and societies is an invitation to turn this mainstream ways of governance inspired thinking in planning ‘upside-down’: To think about space, social and entrepreneurial relations it in a more dynamic, circular and rhythmic way. Thereby, a (critique of) everyday life and lived space on a level of scientific theory, analysis and policy can be re-activated. In this scheme, neither civil society, nor the state, nor the markets are automatically inferior or superior, but the hegemonic relations need to be constantly addressed when starting to develop and use ‘other’ framings.

Critical Entrepreneurship Studies

A third route to take to renew planners’ engagement with economic thinking is to establish cross-disciplinary dialogues between planning and the relatively young scientific field of ‘critical entrepreneurship studies’. As Essers *et al.* (2017,) indicate, “entrepreneurship research has become increasingly more hospitable towards alternative theoretical influences and methodological procedures” (p. 1). The mainstream of entrepreneurship research focuses on entrepreneurship as a rather market- based phenomenon or as a special form of conduct which triggers accumulation and venture creation that causes economic growth (*ibid.*). Against the grain of such functionalist approaches to the study of entrepreneurship, critical entrepreneurship studies break with this tradition in so far as it aims at overcoming the inherent disciplinary parochialism that seeks to understand entrepreneurship “as a ‘desirable’ economic activity, perceived unquestioningly as positive” (*ibid.*, p. 1). This is needed, because an overtly optimistic and affirmative reading of entrepreneurship runs the risk of obscuring important questions about

who can sensibly be considered an entrepreneur and who cannot (...); how entrepreneurship works ideologically to conceal the true state of reality (...) or to make people do things they would not otherwise do (...), or how entrepreneurship fuels inequality and perpetuates unequal relations of power (Essers *et al.*, 2017, p. 1).

Therefore, critical entrepreneurship studies promote critical narratives which pay attention to and acknowledge diverse examples of other forms of entrepreneurship; in other words, approach entrepreneurship by using a pluralism of critical perspectives. By this they contrast somewhat exclusive and hegemonic research traditions on entrepreneurship with empirical evidence that shed a light on different forms and objectives of being and becoming an entrepreneur (*cf. ibid.*). In that sense, critical entrepreneurship studies “assume a proactive stance in seeking to position entrepreneurship as an activity, behaviour or process which can be linked to new ethical and political possibilities” (*ibid.*, p. 2), for instance, when “entrepreneurship is re-conceptualised as a social change activity that moves against the grain of orthodoxy in order to realise spaces of freedom and otherness” (*ibid.*). Critical entrepreneurship studies also

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explore how political and socio- cultural factors influence entrepreneurial processes, identities and activities, and have sought to extend entrepreneurship research horizons by highlighting new critiques and contexts that challenge existing orthodoxies (Essers et al., 2017, p. 2).

Similar to the field of planning theory, also entrepreneurship studies have faced the advent of cultural studies approaches that promote renewed feminist theorizations and bring about post-colonial critique by triggering de-colonizing and equitable research practices. These approaches should not be erroneously coined as mere themes, for they bring about new foundational agendas, claims and goals viewed in terms of theory and politics of science. In the field of critical entrepreneurship and economic studies, research on complexity and multi-scalar approaches (- not new for planners at all -) in economic thinking may promote a de-centred and varied economy which opens up space for a fuller version of inclusive citizenship (Cumbers, 2012). Such a version is necessarily respectful of minority rights, retrieves inspirations from theorization from the urban, regional, global peripheries, critically reconsiders economic and entrepreneurial centre-periphery relations, expands forms of participatory and redistributive economic practices, and caters to the needs of open and inclusive local communities (Rahman, 2017; Plank, 2020, forthcoming).

Post-colonial aspects of entrepreneurship studies challenge “how entrepreneurship research is largely bound by Western organisational discourses” (Essers *et al.*, 2017, p. 3) with the purpose “to call into question the hegemonic performativity of conventional discourse about heroic (white male) styles of leadership in entrepreneurship” (*ibid.*, p.3). In this respect, it seems particularly interesting to look at the work of so-called policy entrepreneurs (Kingdon, 1995) who in the field of (global) urban policy purposefully look for new paths and mobilize other actors for their case. Usually, these show up as discursive elites, behave like doyens to place their topics and creative new discursive agendas (cf. Güntner, 2007, p. 50). UN Habitat Resilience Unit is one of these policy entrepreneurs. Mitrenova (2017), in this respect, has empirically shown and conceptually challenged how planning and policy discourse on UN Habitat’s Urban Resilience Schemes, in their key strategic policy documents, deploy exactly the above mentioned Western organisational and entrepreneurial discourses, both in textual form as well as by their choice of images: In these policy documents, economic leadership is rendered as a male, white and individual form of successful entrepreneurship, whereas social vulnerability is represented through mostly female, non-white, weak-state-based collective forms of self-organization, and related precarity. In respect to the post-colonial critique of such debates, new forms of leadership need to be studied that reveal other ways in which routines can become settled and leadership can be enacted culturally through participation and inclusivity, as opposed to unilateral command, central management and hierarchical control (cf. Essers *et al.*, 2017, p. 3f). Leadership, in very spatial tropes, can also include a key idea of creating ‘spaces of belonging’ while critically analysing how and to what extent co-creation of entrepreneurial action strengthens or weakens the respective neighbourhood (cf. *ibid.*). Essers *et al.* (2017, original emphasis) stress that researchers ideally use “various feminist lenses” to explore and explain “how gender and *entrepreneurship* come together to generate different experiences of entrepreneurship” (p. 5). These provoke an understanding of how non-male forms of gender have been excluded from the dominant entrepreneurial discourse, how women are often assigned with deficit and lack as entrepreneurial subject beings but also how women’s and queer experiences of business ownership are altering contemporary conceptions of entrepreneurship (*ibid.*). In this sense “feminist theory has emerged as a convincing theoretical critique to expose the limiting gendered bias within the current entrepreneurial project” (*ibid.*, p. 5, referring to Calas *et al.*, 2009).

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Further strands in critical entrepreneurship studies seek to understand how traditional entrepreneurship studies deepen divides based on “an archetype of the white, Christian entrepreneur – which marginalises ‘Other’ ethnic entrepreneurs” (ibid., p. 4). Research on ethnic entrepreneurship in planning and urban studies has also produced challenging empirical insights: In his research on Romanian migrant communities in Brussels, Meeus (2017, p. 91) has shown that the “discursive construction of migrants as entrepreneurs” in developmentalist approaches contributed to viewing returning migrants “as risk-taking subjects” whom “states and development institutions (...) increasingly imagine (...) as ideal ‘development’ partners” as they may “embed and extent competitive market rationalities into everyday social relations and institutions” of their original countries upon return. This image of returned citizens who have re-educated themselves through experiences abroad has important de-politicising consequences (Meeus, 2017, p. 91, referring to Mullings, 2012, p. 407). While the concept of ethnic entrepreneurship thus needs to be analysed by paying attention to its inherent ambivalences, it may also bring about empirical evidence of innovative search for new solidarities (Meeus, 2017). In this type of research, it is of key relevance to learn how other entrepreneurs construct their entrepreneurial identities in relation to their particular identities, and how this challenges public discourses about certain minorities (Essers *et al.*, 2017). Scholars in this tradition also problematise prevailing tendencies to view entrepreneurship as an unfettered route to social mobility for ethnic minority and immigrant groups. They argue that the conceptualisation of ethnic minority entrepreneurship needs to recognise the diverse economic and social relationships in which firms are embedded (cf. ibid., p. 4f).

Also, particularly when analysing different forms of entrepreneurship which form part of neoliberal governmentality, the importance of (informal) small business ownership, an economic activity often seen as ‘marginalised’ and less ‘real’ entrepreneurially in mainstream entrepreneurship literature, must not be overlooked (cf. ibid., p. 4, MacFarlane, 2012). MacFarlane (2012), in this respect, has pointed to a niche in urban entrepreneurship studies, as informal poverty and the entrepreneurship of the urban disenfranchised has been largely absent, which stands in stark contradiction to empirical evidence (cf. p. 2798).

While informal settlements remain predominantly and stubbornly understood by states and international institutions as outcast spaces of the modern capitalist city, or as simply a cheap labour force, they are also increasingly viewed as an immense set of untapped markets and potential capitalist subjects (MacFarlane, 2012, p. 2798).

As formal entrepreneurial activity imposed by forms of entrepreneurial planning can contribute to legitimising the exploitation and marginalization of informal entrepreneurship of disenfranchised groups by “continuing to colonise their discourses, identities and daily lives” (Essers *et al.*, 2017, p. 4), planning scholars need to question “this neoliberal practice in order to further decolonise and expose its exploitative nature. By decolonising, they seek two things: first, to reconstruct entrepreneurship as an emancipatory creative activity that builds solidarity among all communities; and second, an entrepreneurship that redistributes economic power and helps communities on a sustainable path” (ibid., p. 3). Seen from another side, Aiwa Ongg has emphasized that “techniques and models of entrepreneurialism extend to all manner of groups and spaces, including NGOs, activists, workers’ organisations and aesthetic/cultural production, many of which are co-opted because they fit with the technologies of a broadly entrepreneurial script for the future”. This insemination on an ubiquitous entrepreneurialism has been coined by Ananya Roy as a neoliberal populism that celebrates poor people’s agency and entrepreneurship (MacFarlane, 2012, p. 2798, referring to Ongg, 2011 and to Roy, 2010).

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Critical entrepreneurship studies thus re-evaluate which forms of entrepreneurship contribute to democratic, collective and common purposes from a feminist and worlded stance in theorizing, and discuss new ideas of entrepreneurship particularly as regards forms of entrepreneurship in disenfranchised communities with a focus on counter-conduct of the urban subaltern. It engages with their ongoing struggles, lives and experiences and asks how new forms of entrepreneurship work towards social equity and more cooperative forms of democracy-making.

Fresh Ideas on Entrepreneurship and Pluralist Approaches to (Self-)Critique

While working through new potential fields with the aim to revisit the concept of entrepreneurship, in other words to twist and turn it in order to make it meaningful for an informed and reflexive public and civic planning community, more questions, ambivalences and doubts have been raised. For those readers looking for solutions, a first hint points to the fact that these cannot be global and easy-to-fix entrepreneurial strategies, but need to be much more place- and society-specific entrepreneurial visions, relational and nuanced in nature. The foremost suggestion for researchers is to start from the assumption, that there is no good or bad entrepreneurship per se, but rather we need to start from acknowledging an array of ambiguous, ambivalent and constantly altering forms of entrepreneurship. A central question here is to what extent entrepreneurs employ a reflexive and (self)critical approach to potential shortcomings and aporias in entrepreneurship debates themselves (critical entrepreneurship), and to what extent their chosen form of entrepreneurial activity may also serve more collective, democratic, inclusive and solidary goals. For this new spectrum of entrepreneurial action, we need pluralist approaches to theories, methods and evaluation. We also need a clear research ethics that first deconstructs exclusive, non-democratic or chauvinist notions of entrepreneurship. As a second step, it is of key relevance to question which regimes of truth are invested in entrepreneurial planning's organisation of space and the related territorial management of the population. This is about finding alternative ways to frame counter conduct, not just on the level of spatial praxis, but also as regards the way we approach planning research and research ethics when discussing planning and entrepreneurship, particularly in relation to everyday life and lived space.

As follows, the contributions to this PlaNext special issue on "Planning and Critical Entrepreneurship" (Vol. 7) will in very different ways reveal to what extent the authors and entrepreneurs and their strategies are (self)critical and reflexive of the wider socio-spatial context. Invoking on the multiple meanings of the original French verb *entreprendre*, its differentiated linguistic meanings - and likewise our young scholarly authors - invite you to take action, to try and persuade someone, to dabble at something, to taste something, to tempt someone or to simply dare the impossible.

Contributions in this volume embrace a wider set of concepts, among them:

- Part I. Social Entrepreneurship and Disruptive Disciplinary Thinking;
- Part II. Planning Innovation, Evaluation and Technology;
- Part III. Adaptive Governance and Reflexive Policy Design;
- Part IV. Environmental Justice, Social Responsibility and the Built Environment;

The first **Part I. Social Entrepreneurship and Disciplinary Thinking** features two articles on social entrepreneurship and planning education and on new tactical forms of planning and architecture: Hefetz and Kallus present their contribution on "**Educating planners as social entrepreneurs**", while Guadalupi catches "**Glimpses of A New Profession Within Tactical Urbanism**".

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Shelly Hefetz and **Rachel Kallus** approach social entrepreneurs as individuals or groups of individuals looking for effective ways to create social change in, with and for different communities. Entrepreneurs may have social or more altruistic motives, yet at the same time they can also promote their own social agendas, values and goals. The authors state that NGOs challenge planners to become social entrepreneurs, and use different relevant frameworks to work, that is, public participation (unilateral vs. radical-collaborative) and community-based pedagogy (community engagement, learning by doing, guided reflection, university community partnership). To educate planners on how to work effectively with communities, more experiential forms of teaching should be combined with planning theory and praxis, as the empirical results of the study raise questions about the rather theoretical nature of community planning courses in Israel that are said to lack hands-on involvement with the field, and engagement with real communities. This also means acknowledging that planning research as well as planning education is a political act, and even more so in highly divided societies.

Camilla Guadalupi describes, in her article, how architectural and planning professions have undergone internal transitions in times of crisis, recession and high unemployment. While exploring new labour market opportunities, they experiment with self-initiated projects, new forms of financing and alternative organizational structures. Their tactics tend to promote incremental adaptation in a pragmatic, opportunistic and rhizomatic way. Flexibility in (political) positionality is seen by these tactical entrepreneurs as autonomy. As crossbench practitioners, they use disruptive practices, employ agonistic modes of participation and invent new spatial practices to unsettle the established planning standards. They develop transgressive practices that break rules and regulations of commissioned projects, open design processes to users and thereby 'hack' the routines of the institutionalized profession. This creation of new expert authority is interpreted as a political process which bears emancipatory expressions. While architect-entrepreneurs address the precarisation of social conditions of their work, they expose the inherent contradictions of the profit-driven logic of the institutional framing which works as an oppressive form of governmentality.

In the **Part II. Planning Innovation, Evaluation and Technology**, Luque Martín and Izquierdo-Cubero foster an "**Understanding [of] the added value of rooting geotechnologies in planning practice**", whereas Ragozino introduces social-return on investment schemes for improving the assessment of the "**Social Impact Evaluation in Culture-led Regeneration Processes**".

Irene Luque Martín and **Jorge Izquierdo-Cubero** ask how technology-based planning support systems (PSS) can be used for realizing context-specific and relational planning interactions? Using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, they analyse 'urban vitality' rates of an old city centre, the 'Intramural' in Jerez de la Frontera (Spain). Are the old buildings un(der)occupied or rather (badly or well) used? On a fine-grained empirical level, a data-mix combines statistical geo-data and data on water provision. As urban decline cannot simply be captured through decaying physical housing stock, PSS can help to decipher use patterns, demographic changes, and emphasize still existing activity in particular housing units. By means of an urban diagnostic document and a public participation process, awareness is created among the residents and policy makers. The innovative use of existing planning technologies fostered a shift in public policy, away from sustaining resource-intensive suburbanization towards the sustainable recovery of the old city centre with and by its residents.

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Stefania Ragozino debates how the social impact of social enterprises can be evaluated in urban cultural regeneration. She modifies the social return on investments evaluation scheme by integrating analytical factors from debates on complex cultural landscapes relating to cultural heritage debates. Cultural heritage discourses range from democratization and emancipation to commodification, commercialisation, and risks associated with lobbyism. That is why they need to be better integrated into public planning policies and practices. An evaluation of social enterprises adapted to spatial and planning research objectives can play a role in finding an effective way to pursue these ends, because hybrid organisations such as social enterprises link or mediate between conflictual actors, actively engage the local community, and change urban and social priorities. Social enterprises may improve planners' focus on the conditions of daily life and urban experience, and enhance stronger connections to places. By linking complexity, multifactorial analysis, place-specificity and community-orientation, the chosen approach may help to integrate equitable planning considerations into cultural regeneration processes.

In **Part III. Adaptive Governance and Reflexive Policy Design**, Chang asks “**How Urban Planning Practices contribute to Adaptive Capacity Building for Economic Resilience**”, whereas Bruck poses the question of “**How to Plan for Transformative Change in light of New Mobility Technologies**”.

Robin. A. Chang analyses processes of adaptive capacity building as regards temporary uses. With the focus on temporary uses in Bremen (Germany), a city particularly struck by socio-economic decline, social processes are examined that mirror paradigmatic shifts in planning which no longer strictly dichotomize the formal and informal. Temporary users who build up organizational capacities and learn how to engage in urban governance become increasingly entrepreneurial. This offers new innovative potential as they fill important gaps in urban development, yet also carries risks of an increased social and economic vulnerability due to users' temporary, and unsettled status. The author's focus rests on experimentation and wider indicators of social learning and collective action. For the case when temporary uses serve as a catalyst for strengthening collective action based on a common social interest, it is the social capacity for economic development which contributes additional dimensions to entrepreneurship, for instance, by widening and opening decision-making towards more explorative forms of democracy.

Emilia M. Bruck introduces real world laboratories² to test reflexive planning theories in the field of new mobility technologies. Discursive parallels between activist and social movements' ways of developing space, and the second-order reflexivity approach in transition studies can be identified: Reflexivity is used to generate critical knowledge and dialogue in open-ended processes by recognizing non-linear, cyclical temporalities in urban development. A focus on emergence is heralded as a capacity to address the unforeseen, continued social learning,

² The real-world laboratory may come across as a step forward in terms of speed and innovativeness in science-production as it involves flat hierarchies and entrepreneurial spirit when doing research. It does, however, not go without a fierce critique of rendering complex social problems (in one of the richest regions in Germany) as easily solvable, without tackling the deeper structural constraints that planners usually need to address in dialogue with politicians and across different policy fields. While reflexive planning strategies can enable the adoption of various perspectives, they also aim at balancing multiple truths. Questions remain whether these hybrid approaches tend to depoliticize democratic decision making and blur the difference between factual knowledge and morally justified action, which calls for further empirical research in the critical tradition of planning theory. Also, what is considered as 'real world', at last, is to be defined by those who habit the space and will result in a very nuanced and differentiated picture of 'real worlds', which are surely not a 'laboratory', understood as a site for experimentation with the civil society. Rather, joint explorations need to clearly articulate researchers' positionality and research ethics when dealing with hopes and raising expectations of local populations.

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and agency's transformative potential. This transition in urban development is grasped by analysing living labs in Stuttgart (Germany): new collaborative forms of research between universities, businesses and civil society. The wake of new mobility technology calls for more reflexive and careful policy making. When public planning encounters immersive technology strategies, planners are invited to speed up dealing with the velocity and transitional character of these new innovative entrepreneurial strategies introduced by highly innovative yet often socially unaware market players.

In **Part IV. Environmental Justice, Social Responsibility and the Built Environment**, an analysis of sprawl in US cities is offered by Tsoulou in a contribution titled "**Investigating Links Among Urban Sprawl and Environmental Justice Indicators in US Territories**". Rhomberg searches for theoretical foundations of "**Social Responsibility for Architects in a Global Construction Practice**".

Ionna Tsoulou develops new ways of quantitative enquiry to study urban sprawl in the United States. She argues that there is a missing data and research link between debates on environmental justice and research on socially vulnerable populations when it comes to the study of the built environment across US cities. Starting from the finding that there is an uncertainty in terms of what sprawl really means and what would be the best way to measure it, the phenomenon is then limited by addressing a particular form of dysfunctional urban growth which is real, measurable and has measurable consequences for people. Tsoulou illustrates that the study of sprawl needs to be more closely aligned with the indicators of assessing environmental (in)justice in the built environment. Need for further empirical research has been identified, particularly at the micro-level. Further research should not only issue concern of reducing sprawl in general, but also reduce those specific features of suburbanization that put particularly socially vulnerable population groups at an environmental risk.

In the last article, professional ethics of transnational work relations in architecture are discussed by **Clarissa Rhomberg**. Starting from the idea that entrepreneurship is aligned not just with economic leadership, but also with social and environmental responsibility, Rhomberg focuses on working conditions on global construction sites and asks how ethical professional engagement with good professional worker-protection standards can be inseminated into (transnational) production chains of architectural projects. By conceptualising the role and nature of (ideally) socially responsible architects and architecture firms in the context of rapidly growing global construction markets, an imperative to reflect on the responsibilities and duties of globally practising architects and firms is formulated, calling for a global code of conduct and fair construction (self)regulation. At the same time, planning and architecture education need to promote a lived culture of fair building and provide ethics and human rights courses to embed social principles of justice and inclusiveness into architectural practice.

Contributions to this special issue will likely not provide answers to the initially posed question if planning practitioners and theorists should or should not take new routes towards an entrepreneurial paradigm in planning. Aforementioned contributions hint to the fact that there is already an entrepreneurial culture inseminating planning cultures, which often carries with it the liberal desire to diminish and abolish public planning and state regulation in favour of self-regulated markets. However, with the collapse of neoliberalism and the world financial crisis of 2008 and a successive decade of emerging new authoritarianism and political backlashes towards new nationalistic enclosure and socio-political polarization (Hou & Knierbein, 2017), it is clear that strong public planning bodies are needed more than ever, particularly once we rediscover and revisit planning's potential contribution to democracy-making. Also, further research in specific place-based contexts needs to unravel to what extent

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entrepreneurial discourses contribute to wider democratic agendas promoting a new balance between equality and liberty, or rather add to a growing climate of social de-solidarisation and political polarisation. At the same time, planning needs to find ways to innovate from within by catching inspirations from democratic practice, public space, and civic struggle on the one hand, and also by promoting approaches to entrepreneurship and planning that first start to de- and reconstruct the very concept of entrepreneurship. We have shown three routes for planning analysis that may help to come up with narratives about other forms of entrepreneurship: (1) public space research; (2) foundational economy approaches, and (3) critical entrepreneurship studies. Therefore, and as conference organizers have suggested, a radical widening of the concept of entrepreneurship through the lens of critical entrepreneurship studies and new approaches to connect economy and everyday life, i.e. foundational economy debates, might offer a first way to de-colonize, world and diversify our notion of entrepreneurship as to include non-western, non-white and non-male versions of entrepreneurship and innovation as equal forms of entrepreneurial habitus. Also, the role of religion in framing biases on entrepreneurship in planning needs to be studied and pluralised. Finally, this is also a call for place-based and contextualised case studies in planning research that try to address entrepreneurship through approaches of everyday-theorising in which 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' approaches become unsettled and torn 'upside-down', in favour of a more dynamic understanding of how processes of scaling and different institutional spheres act upon the making of lived space and everyday life.

The way we discuss innovation should promote studies about open innovation that is radically open and transparent especially for the public in all stages of the innovation process. We need to sideline this debate with concepts to social, civic and public innovation which public planners can make use of to achieve wider collective, common and democratic goals, rather than simply taking over business' friendly jargon and business economics' rationality to disrupt settled routines. Central questions here are: "How should planning and public policy react to these developments, should they confront, embrace or even become part of them? How can planners become more responsive and flexible while still being accountable, just and democratic?" (Gilliard *et al.*, 2017, p. 96). It is time for changed planning theories and practices on new critical entrepreneurship. The AESOP Young Academics community, PlaNext as an Open-Access Journal, as well as public universities promoting free choice of research themes, collective learning cultures and equal and free access to higher education are particularly suitable fora to further explore these trends, and their inherent ambivalences.

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