

Editorial

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In this edition of *Urban Design and Planning* (Edition 3, Vol. 171) we have a fascinating selection of papers touching on diverse themes in urban design and planning. There is a wide reach in this edition, from a great paper focusing on recent planning and design in historical (and future) perspective, on 'Residential districts of soviet modernism: history and prospects for further development' (Eremeeva and Venatovskaya, 2018) to the very case study-based 'Eco-metropolis planning conditioned by the growth ideology: the case of Greater Copenhagen' (Xue, 2018).

If you are reading this editorial you will probably be hoping to look at the papers themselves as soon as possible. One of the very good things about *Urban Design and Planning* is that the journal publishes its most recent articles 'Ahead of Print' on its Virtual Library homepage (<https://www.icevirtuallibrary.com/toc/jurdp/current>). This allows the community quicker access to fresh content and is good for our authors too. So please check this out.

Of course no editorial can hope to grapple with such a wealth of research material in any great depth but its worth noting some interesting urban design and planning points emerging from two very different papers within this edition. First up, I make a few remarks below about Prof François Racine's fascinating paper, 'Planned built environments and city transformation: urban design in Montreal, 1956–2015' (Racine, 2018) and then provide a very short introduction to Omid Vernoo's excellent 'A psycholinguistic approach towards anthropological urban theories' (Vernoo, 2018).

François Racine deals in his Montreal focused paper with what he rightly identifies as a gap in research on Canadian urban design and urbanism. Focusing particularly on three examples in Montreal's vibrant island city, Prof Racine uses this broad sweep over 'representative urban projects over the past six decades' to 'illustrate the different design strategies adopted, to understand how urban design ideology/ideas have evolved over time and how they have influenced the transformation of the spatial organisation, form, and aesthetics of the city' (Racine, 2018: p. 99).

A theoretically and methodologically interesting aspect of this ambitious and very well realised work is the development of a 'typomorphological framework to study and understand the physical-spatial mode of organisation of planned built environments and to study their relationship to urban form' (Racine, 2018: p. 99). Morphologically based and influenced methodological approaches stemming from the work of great Italian morphologists such as Caniggia, Maffei and Conzen, remain rather underexposed in my view despite their strengths. It is particularly pleasing therefore to see these theoretical frames so well explained and then employed

methodologically to structure work in this research context. I am hopeful that this morphologically informed approach will prove something of a model for work by some other scholars in future.

Prof Racine takes us through a number of relevant framing constructs related to typomorphology and sketches the context for us (invoking a perhaps Latour influenced notion of the urban laboratory). He then nicely situates the specific case studies in spatial, morphological, urban design and planning practice terms. These are a functionalist social housing project, the mixed use *quartier Angus*, and the *Faubourg Québec*, which is a renewal project being retrofitted into Montreal's street grid.

Racine uses his typomorphological frame to underpin the analysis through three extensive site discussions. He concludes that the 'research shows the influence of schools of thought that affected the relationship between the three planned built environments and the urban morphology of Montreal' (Racine, 2018: p. 109). In each case the discussion and analysis is underpinned by excellent visual material including diagrams, tables – and for the three sites – figure grounds, photographs, maps and plans showing land use change over time – to enrich and support the text.

Of particular interest to me as a scholar who works on planned settlements are the findings that show how garden city inspired 'closes' have influenced the 'cultural urbanism' based design (Racine references Choay, 1979, here) of the *quartier Angus*. (Racine, 2018: p. 109). As Racine notes, here 'designers sought an antidote to the typical individualism of low-density housing of North American suburbs. The incorporation of this reference in the urban fabric creates a distinctive environment attractive for families.' (Racine, 2018: p. 109). Also of interest in relation to the case of the *Faubourg Québec* is the adaptive development of the city block to allow a hybrid form to emerge through the process of designed change and renewal.

Finally, Prof Racine makes some fascinating points about aspects of morphological continuity and discontinuity evident from these examples. One of the most intriguing conclusions is that morphology based on the 'inherited city' is tending to re-emerge more strongly that approaches based on modernist functional design (Racine, 2018: p. 110). With long term urban form and heritage value taken increasingly strongly into account, Racine argues that 'the role of the architects, landscape architects, urban planners and designers will be to pursue the aim of reconnecting planned urban environments to the evolution of the urban form, by promptly addressing the major issue of contemporary urban design, that is sustainable development' (Racine, 2018: p. 110).

Turning to 'A psycholinguistic approach towards anthropological urban theories', one of the pleasures of Omid Vernoo's paper is its critical reflections on a somewhat under-researched area and set of connections in urban design and planning (Vernoo, 2018). Through his reflective theory-rich approach, Vernoo asks us to look hard at some rather 'taken for granted' assumptions about how we think about, describe and analyse place. Vernoo starts by pointing out that 'Human analogising has been addressed by philosophers, architects and urbanists, ever since Ancient Greece for portraying the physical arrangement of the city. Such analogising, through the development of life sciences, has been broadened and the city began to be metaphorically conceived as a living organism. In this process, 'organic metaphors' have played a fundamental role as cognitive devices for transferring human concepts to urban theories.' (Vernoo, 2018: p. 112).

As Vernoo points out, the metaphorical comparison between the body and the city has been both a very long term one in urbanism terms and a basis for justifying projects historically and in contemporary urban design and planning practice. As knowledge grew this metaphor shifted from spiritual to more biologically anatomical. However, as Vernoo argues, we just don't know that much about what the effect of all this human analogising has been on urbanism. Given that gap, the paper 'addresses the psycholinguistic aspects of human analogising in urbanism; that is, through the lens of the science of metaphor.' (Vernoo, 2018: p. 112).

Vernoo undertakes the task both through an excellent review of literature in this area – helping explain how both urban metaphors and analogies work – and then exploring this critically through two anthropological urban theories. One relates to the work of Charles-Édouard Jeanneret, otherwise known as Le Corbusier, and the other is through the work of the Japanese architect Kenzo Tange. Le Corbusier, Vernoo argues, can clearly be seen to make a formal connection between urbanism and biology through his writing on cities: he 'recurrently drew on biological metaphors to justify his ideas', with various parts the brains (skyscrapers), lungs (suburbs and open spaces), vessels (streets) and vital organs (offices and institutions etc) making up the city (Vernoo, 2018: p. 113). Tange, similarly, made these body-city connections. He saw the communications systems of the city as analogous to the nervous system of the body and 'conceive(d) growing cities as organisms, which cannot be subject to any fixed planning tool such as a master plan' (Vernoo, 2018: p. 113).

Vernoo then introduces the science of metaphor and explains four principles as to how metaphors are produced: metaphorical similarity, metaphorical entailment, the highlighting and hiding feature of metaphors, and the partial nature of metaphorical structuring (Vernoo, 2018: p. 114). These are used as a theoretical framework to analyse metaphorical approaches to conceptualising cities, and start to explore the implications for intervening as planners and designers in actual places. Vernoo in fact concludes by suggesting that rather than getting too concerned about whether the city is an organism, 'it would be more useful for readers to critically think

about the impacts and consequences of this metaphorical comparison. This paper introduces a 'roadmap' whereby approaching such comparison makes it possible' (Vernoo, 2018: p. 116).

All the papers in this edition are very well worth a read and I commend them to you. I also want to draw your attention to a couple of current initiatives related to *Urban Design and Planning*. I am very pleased to note that we have a Themed Issue Call for Papers out at the moment relating to Urban Design for an Inclusive Economy (<https://www.icevirtuallibrary.com/pb-assets/Call%20for%20Papers/Urban%20design%20for%20an%20inclusive%20economy%20-%20edited.pdf>). As we note in the Call, 'this themed issue explores relationships between urban form and economic opportunities. We invite papers that address how such relationships can be measured and (re-)designed to help create a more inclusive economy with opportunities for businesses, by individual people or collectives, across different scales. Such investigations may include for instance the study of urban areas with formal as well as informal business clusters, arrival districts and migrant entrepreneurs, and areas attracting innovative start-ups and social enterprises. In addition to proposals for academic papers, related urban design projects can also be submitted.' If you would like further details or to submit a paper, please do use the link above to get in touch with the Themed Issue Editors: Associate Professor Hendrik Tieben and Professor Henco Bekkering. Details can also be obtained from Abiola Lawal (abiola.lawal@icepublishing.com) at the journal office.

Before concluding, I would also like to alert interested academic readers to our search for new editorial panel members. We are currently seeking new members, and we would invite readers with suitable qualifications to send their CV to the journal office in application. We will be very happy to discuss this with you should you be interested and can provide detailed information about the journal and the role of editorial panel member on request. So please do contact Abiola Lawal (abiola.lawal@icepublishing.com) in the first instance for more information or speak to me (s.parham@herts.ac.uk) directly as panel chair. I can say from working on the Journal's editorial panel that it is a rewarding and enriching experience!

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