



Searching for Alternatives: What is a Way Out of the Impasse in Planning and Planning Practice?

Seçenekleri Arayış: Planlamanın ve Planlama Pratiğinin Çıkmazından Çıkış Yolu Nedir?

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ABSTRACT

In the current era, there is an increasing disappointment related to planning practice, about the neoliberal agenda that led to increased inequality, democratic deficit, and the exclusion of disadvantaged groups for the benefit of groups with power in the decision-making mechanisms. The current debates emphasise the rise of neoliberal governmentality brought an impasse in planning. That said, this paper address one major question: How does literature respond to the impasse of the existing planning process and planning practice? The literature review summarises the two strands of response: struggle for democratic politics and decision-making and search for effective and practical alternatives while improving the existing status and conditions of planning. Reviewing different proposals, the paper argues that what is needed is a resilient politics of planning that follows a heuristic approach and looks for the possible considering local dynamics that include social, political, and spatial relations and struggles instead of planning based on abstract and generalised principles. The last part of the paper is devoted to the main principles in building planning both responsive and reactive to the existing conditions.

Keywords: Communicative planning; conflict; democracy; neoliberal agenda; planning.

Öz

İçinde yaşadığımız dönemde planlama ve planlama pratiği ile ilgili düş kırıklıkları ve kaygılar neoliberal ekonomik gündemin yol açtığı artan eşitsizlikler, demokrasideki eksiklikler ve dezavantajlı grupların karar süreçlerinden bazı güç gruplarının çıkarları doğrultusunda dışlanması gibi olumsuzluklar nedeniyle artmaktadır. Güncel tartışmalar, neoliberal yönetişimin planlamayı bir çıkmaza sürüklediğini vurgulamaktadır. Bu çerçevede bu makale, önemli bir soruya odaklanmaktadır. Planlamanın ve planlama pratiğinin bugün yaşadığı çıkmazın üstesinden gelebilmek için mevcut yazısında hangi tartışmalar ve öneriler geliştirilmektedir? Konu ile ilgili yazının irdelenmesi iki farklı yönelimi işaret etmektedir: demokratik politikanın ve karar süreçlerinin gerçekleşmesi için mücadele etmek veya planlamanın mevcut konum ve koşullarını iyileştirek etkin ve uygulanabilecek seçenekleri araştırmak. Farklı önerilerin irdelenmesi, genel ve gerçeklikten soyutlanmış yaklaşım yerine değişen koşullara dayanıklı ve uyum sağlayabilecek bir planlama yaklaşımının gereklili olduğunu gösterirken, bu yaklaşımın deneyimel bir ele alışla ve sosyal, siyasal ve mekânsal ilişkileri ve çatışmaları dikkate alarak mümkün olabileceği iddia edilmektedir. Makalenin son bölümünden, mevcut koşullara duyarlı ve tepkili bir planlama yaklaşımının ana ilkelerine odaklanmıştır.

Anahtar sözcükler: İletişimsel planlama; çatışma; demokrasi; neoliberal gündem; planlama.

Introduction: Recent Criticisms of Contemporary Planning

While the relations between planning and the regulatory regimes have changed considerably in time, the 2000s emerged as one of the most difficult periods for planning and planners. The most dominant criticisms raised by planning scholars revolve around discussions on the impact of neoliberalism on the practice of planning, though recently uncertainties brought by the changes in the regulatory regime and technological issues, such as digitalisation and automation also agitated the established approaches and norms concerning existing planning and planning practice.

As the above debates underline, first, there is increasing disappointment among planning scholars related to planning practice, about the neoliberal agenda that led to increased inequality, democratic deficit, and the exclusion of disadvantaged groups for the benefit of groups with power in the decision-making mechanisms. Second, the increasingly eclectic character of the existing planning systems, insincerity of the decision-makers promoting their planning projects by using several popular concepts that want to appeal to the interest of the public and participatory processes used to downgrade the reactions of the public has increased the discontent in planning practice. All of them triggered the increasing opposition to the planning process and plans in many countries, which has become a means of voicing disapproval to the ongoing changes in cities, neoliberal urbanisation strategies, the large-scale projects of both the central and local governments, as well as the current politics and ideologies that are shaped by existing governments.

In this regard, (post-modern) planning is accused of its antipathy to spatial determinism. The critics underline that what is proper in urban planning has left postmodern planners admiring complexity but not necessarily advocating it. As McGreevy (2018) suggested design and management of urban subsystems to the demands, choices, and purposes of giant corporations, "a situation more likely to deliver modernist mechanical order than postmodern complexity". Moreover, the different studies brought critiques of the notion of consensus, communicative rationality, and planning. They claim that planning supports the neoliberal agenda, methods used in contemporary planning practices being far from communication on an equal basis and the fuzziness of the concepts used in planning and practice.

In this paper, I attempt to review the criticisms as sources of discontent in planning and planning practices and the proposals introduced in the recent literature to tackle the current impasse in planning and governance. Following the review of the recent debates, I deliver the

principles on how to enact "Resilient Politics of Planning." In conclusion, I discuss how far it is possible to introduce resilient politics of planning and to what extent this new approach necessitates the change in our mindset.

Increasing Discontent and Reactions

It is possible to summarise the sources of increasing discontent connected to planning and the planning practices under the four headings.

First, the discontent connected to policies and planning practice emphasises the dominance of neoliberalism, highlighting that *neoliberalism is an ideology*. Gunder (2010) claims that planning is inherently ideological, which constitutes our chosen and dominant norms and value systems. Urban, regional, or spatial planning is specifically about making choices about how we use land (Cowell and Owens, 2006) that is shaped not only by regulations but also norms and values redefined by the neoliberalist agenda (Campell, 2006).

As many scholars suggest since the 1980s onward, neoliberalism has not only been a set of policies but also as an ideology it organises a particular way of seeing and oriented action. Žižek (1999) argues the hegemonic role of capitalism and neoliberal ideology, similarly, Purcell (2009: 142) declares that the logic of neoliberalism under globalisation 'has come increasingly to occupy a hegemonic position in urban policy'. According to them, neoliberalism provided the basis for discourses on planning and urban development that legitimise and justify certain actions while making alternative possibilities unthinkable. Besides the theoretical debates, interesting studies focus on how planning practice has been legitimised using ideological discourses. An interesting study explores the dominant discourse that validated the proliferation of suburban gated communities in the Metropolitan Region of Curitiba, in Brazil. The deconstruction of the discourse of policymakers reveals the content and structural properties that combine environmental concerns and neoliberal principles are used to turn potentially controversial practices into desirable outcomes (Zanotto, 2020). It is possible to detect the manifestation of different ideologies combined with the neoliberalist approach, as observed in several projects in Istanbul (Çamlıca Camii, Kanal İstanbul, etc.)

Some so-called planning reforms also reflect neoliberal ideology. Davoudi, Galland, and Stead (2019) discuss *ideologically motivated planning reforms* and provide illustrative examples of 'ideology in action from Britain, Denmark, and the Netherlands. They show that the change is legitimised through forms of rhetorical persuasion; various combinations of rhetorical appeals to logic, character, emotion, and identity are often simultaneously at work to naturalise contested planning reforms.

Another example is the recent and ongoing planning reforms in England and their relationship with housing development (Inch and Shepherd, 2020), which drew attention to planning as a space where ideological struggle occurs within the frame of a broader, contingent cultural hegemony. Klink and Denaldi (2016) provide an evaluation of Brazilian urban reform and argue that representations grounded in collaborative planning and neo-institutional property theory are of little help in providing insights into the somewhat disappointing progress of 'really existing' Brazilian urban reform. The authors argue that better plans, planning processes, and redistributive land-market instruments frequently fail to produce better cities.

Second, *rising authoritarian populism* in many countries and its implications on planning regulations and practice is another source of discontent. Increasing concerns on rising authoritarian populism are discussed in the literature, especially the literature on cities from the Global South. Authoritarian populism is defined as an anti-elitist, anti-pluralist policy excluding several social groups while it includes only part of the population (Sager, 2020). Interestingly, authoritarian populism is an ideology that can fuse with various other ideologies and especially amalgamations of populism and neoliberalism pose new challenges to participatory planning as Sager (2020) suggested. Joint pressure from neoliberalism and authoritarian populism can alter the planning of liberal democracies in an autocratic direction and can result in the loss of welfare policies, equity goals, growth restrictions, and other public interventions, which were once the issues associated with spatial planning. Turkey is one of the best examples of authoritarian populism Eraydin and Taşan-Kok (2014: 111) argued that in some countries, including Turkey neoliberal urban policies and practices are used to legitimise the enhancement of authoritarian governance. They argue that authoritarian governments use urban areas not only as a growth machine but also as grounds for a socio-political transformation project.

The third debate is connected to *asymmetrical power relations*, which work in favor of affluent groups and groups close to decision-makers. As Rydin (2010) claimed power is operationalised through regulatory practice. The regulatory practice in a neoliberal context is often not sensitive enough to local communities' concerns but the interests of the affluent groups. Some studies exemplify the asymmetrical power relations, such as Marotta and Cummings (2019), who focus on the desire for power to control by introducing a case study on the redevelopment of a subsection of Portland's (USA) Pearl District neighborhood. Ataöv et al. (2019) provide a closer look at two large-scale participatory planning processes moderated in two Turkish provinces, Adiyaman and Bursa,

both of which are UNESCO World Heritage Sites and discuss how power relations shape the planning process. They argue the difficulty in changing asymmetrical power relations and claim that when active citizenship cannot transform asymmetrical power structures but enhances rhetorically adversarial arguments, it becomes difficult to achieve mutuality in participation and action.

Fourthly, *the loss of political* received increasing concerns and its implications on the planning process and practice is widely discussed. The political, in general, refer to existing political bargaining and the dynamic processes of democratic action. Political theorists such as Mouffe (2000: 101) define the political as "the dimension of antagonism that is inherent in human relations, and antagonism that can take many forms and emerge in different types of social relations". This definition, introduced by political scientists, is useful for assessing the problems in contemporary planning practice and its outcomes but fails to contribute to the search for new solutions and alternatives in planning. To overcome this drawback, several studies have attempted to discuss planning concerning the political, drawing on wider debates about political community and democratic life (Healey, 2016). Here the core of the argument is the loss of opportunities for democratic action in the planning process.

Is There a Way Out? Democratic Politics and Conflict

Reviewing the literature, it is possible to define two main strands of thinking, which discuss the possible ways to deal with the existing problems connected to planning and practice, namely, the critical views offering relatively radical suggestions and the ones searching for effective and practical alternatives.

It is possible to group the so-called radical suggestions including politics and conflict under four headings. First, *agonistic conflict*, which rejects liberal notions of consensus, has been discussed extensively in the planning literature in the last decade. There is an increased interest in agonistic conflict, especially that initiated by Mouffe (1993 & 2005) and Rancière (1998 & 2001) that brought new approaches within the framework of agonistic planning (Swyngedouw, 2009 & 2010, Purcell, 2007 & 2016; Hillier, 2002 & 2003; Ploger, 2004). Agonism is defined as a disagreement over political meanings and actions, in which each party accepts the legitimacy of the other to have an opinion. Mouffe (1993 & 2005) argues that to make democracy viable, there is a need for adversaries to be engaged in agonistic conflict. This means that one can disagree but cannot deny the right of the other to hold their own opinion (McClaymont, 2011). Building shared values and principles is defined as critical in reducing antagonism and in the hegemony of

power, although according to many scholars, there is no shared principle that can allow collective expectations to be formulated for the future, as any agreement will silence some and not others, and any decision will favor some over others (Hillier, 2002; McGuirk, 2001; Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger, 1998; Purcell, 2009).

In planning theory, the concept of agonism has recently been used as an alternative to the consensual communicative deliberative approach. The main idea behind the agonistic planning approach is that the post-political era can create a need to reestablish political debate and more democratic processes and for the institutionalisation of the political in planning. According to Hillier (2003), the idea of agonistic debate offers a way out of the trap of consensus since the agonistic approach accepts the legitimacy of an opposing view, unlike in consensus approaches, where the aim is to dissolve differences of opinion. Huq (2020) defines insurgent planning, which is a way of planning in agonism and discusses that insurgent and radical planning can challenge structural injustices and marginalisation. However, there are also criticisms of agonistic conflict. According to Roskamm (2015), Mouffe's proposed agonistic pluralism has an internal and fundamental flaw and that advocated *taming of antagonism into agonism* is neither possible nor necessary.

Second, connected to the arguments concerning the need for agonistic conflict, there are increasing calls to *institutionalise urbanised insurgencies* and creative protests into the planning process, namely, urban social movements. Urbanised insurgencies, including those giving voice to the disempowered and discontented regarding the existing urban change, have become crucial when considering their potential role in the politicisation of the urban landscape in different ways (Dikeç & Swyngedouw, 2017; Swyngedouw, 2014; Davidson & Iveson, 2015). The urban insurgencies seen in the past few years are a symptom of the return of the political, and recent experiences in many cities have shown that the potential still exists to open up new spaces in any given order of planning procedure and within the mechanisms of decision-making, with the help of institutionalised and non-institutionalised insurgencies (Özdemir & Eraydin, 2017). However, the response of the wider political authority – the state – to these movements may not always be accommodating and convivial (Eraydin & Taşan-Kok, 2014). In this regard, in political systems in which authoritarian acts overrule local democracy, there is a need for new maneuvers among these detached sites of protest to forge an institutional transformation in planning. As we have elaborated elsewhere (Eraydin & Taşan-Kok, 2014), protests can be challenging when any opposition is suppressed by the political forces of power

through physical action, although this form of suppression may create new potentials for learning how to reorganise social actions and mobilise opposition through different channels.

Third, *the revitalisation of the political* is defined as a new way of valuing development control-planning practices in a democratic society, such as agonistic political engagement. Using Chantal Mouffe's conception of the political, McClymont (2011) claims that collaborative and consensus-seeking approaches are not of higher value than conflicts over site-specific development. According to her for democracy to exist, legitimate arenas for the expression of different opinions are needed, without resolution and agreement being the endpoint of discussion. Examples are drawn from how meanings assigned to planning policy and the built environment can be part of the revitalisation of the political. According to Grange (2017), planning is an area of renewed political interest in Sweden. She argues that we are currently witnessing the ongoing politicisation of planning, but of a form that aims at making planners loyal to the current neoliberal politics. Politicisation can occur in different forms. Özdemir (2021) argues rationality can become a substantive issue that politicised planning when it is put forward as an alternative to authoritarian market logic. She discusses how rationality attains a politicising role due to its strong relationship with power by evaluating actions of professional organisations in Turkey. Drawing on Michel Foucault's work on the concept of parrhesia, which means *fearless speech*, there is a need for planners to develop a critical ethos and shoulder the necessary role of resistance to politics.

Lastly, *anarchism* is also defined as an alternative way of conceptualising spaces for radical politics Newman (2011). He introduces a distinctly post-anarchist conception of political space based around the project of autonomy and the re-situation of the political space outside the state. This will have direct consequences for an alternative conception of planning practice and theory.

Is There a Way Out? Searching for Effective and Practical Alternatives

In addition to the systemic change proposals, recently there are attempts to improve the existing planning processes and practice and to introduce more effective and practical alternatives highlighting several issues connected to collaboration, participation, and compromise but also democratic experiments and re-institutionalisation.

Introducing innovation in public bureaucracies and managing *collaborative practices* can decrease potential tensions between these tasks and the institutional logic of public bureaucracies. That said, pervasive and positive notions, policies, and politics need to be deconstructed.

It is critical to define potential areas of tension between stakeholders. As stated by Özdemir & Taşan-Kok (2019), the consensus in planning may indeed be desirable, depending on certain issues and conditions because it is a context-dependent process, and planning and planners can facilitate consensus by taking an adaptive, proactive, and more human stance (Taşan-Kok & Oranje, 2017) and clarifying the possible outcomes of different alternatives. Different interest groups can fight for alternative solutions since a politically legitimate decision can be made based on differentiated alternatives. This makes us think about 'social innovation', which can lead to the opening of platforms for negotiation from where democratic politics can function. Unfortunately, this can only be achieved if those in power can be convinced, either voluntarily or involuntarily, to make room for social innovation in practice. In this context, Agger and Sørensen (2018) discuss tensions are experienced by frontline planners who involve in face-to-face interaction with citizens while managing collaborative innovation processes within urban regeneration projects in Copenhagen. Bragaglia (2020) defines social innovation as a magic concept for policymakers. Although social may have profound repercussions on how decision-makers are reshaping urban governance, it is still difficult to embrace innovative solutions to planning practice. Boelens and de Roo (2016) claim that techno and sociocratic approaches remain dominant conceptions for much teaching and practice in Europe and elsewhere due to the fragmented nature of innovative contributions of the past 20 or 30 years.

The way to overcome problems concerning *participation* is also studied by different scholars. The critical literature on participation warns that a focus on consensus evades the political in planning by preventing citizens from confronting and challenging the prevailing discourse and orthodoxy on the way the urban ought to be constituted. These critiques raise important questions about the efficacy of participatory planning and its political formation (Legacy, 2017) and raise the question of how to overcome the failures of citizen participation. Slaev et al. (2019) claim that in public participation, the functioning of rules faces greater obstacles than in other forms of democracy. Thus, the professionalism of planners and public administrators is particularly important in formulating these rules. It is even more important when the challenges of establishing rules are major or insuperable. In this regard, examining citizens' motivation and intention to participate in urban planning processes and preparedness for compromises are important (Lia et al., 2020).

Legacy (2017) explores the different ways in which participation manifests from the *politicising participatory moments in planning* by examining a case study in

Melbourne, Australia. According to her decisions to engage the citizenry in prescribed ways induce other manifestations and formations of citizen's participation through politics and these manifestations garner a pervasive and influential trajectory to reshape participatory planning. Alternatively, Fox-Rogers and Murphy (2014) argue that the research emphasis to date has been focused on the operation of power within the formal structures that constitute the planning system. As a result, relatively little attention has been attributed to the informal strategies or tactics that can be used by powerful actors to further their interests. Their findings suggest that much more cognizance of the structural relations that govern how power is distributed in society is required and that 'light touch' approaches that focus exclusively on participation and deliberation need to be replaced with more radical solutions that look toward the redistribution of economic power between stakeholders.

Integrating democratic practices is another way to tackle the existing problems the planning process and practice face. Inch (2015) asks the question "What is required of the citizen to make planning more democratic?" He discusses democratising planning in theory and practice by distinguishing between deliberative and agonistic conceptions of communicative planning and through examples from Scotland. Based on his findings, he suggests that while ordinary citizens' experiences draw attention to the strengths and weaknesses of deliberative and agonistic accounts, they also highlight hidden costs associated with participation that present significant challenges of shaping a more democratic form of planning. In this regard, democratic experimentation may be useful to decide the way to follow. Nyseth and Pløger (2004) define the concept of democratic experiment with planning as a more open, transparent, and inclusive process, and it represented a break with institutionalised practices.

The role of institutions and the need for a new institutional setup are also important issues discussed extensively in the literature. Among them, *public without the State* is the concept introduced by Purcell (2016), who argues that planning should develop a robust conception of what we should do without the state since the State is a necessarily oligarchical arrangement that prevents us from achieving real democracy. However, there are counter views on autonomy as Bruzzone discusses there are moral limits of autonomous democracy applied to planning. He claims that autonomous democratic control in planning is morally superior is something problematic, although decision-making in planning that is not exercised autonomously and democratically is unacceptable. Moreover, according to him, autonomous democracy will lead to the morally best outcomes is not fully justified by the case study he has been handled.

All of the above-mentioned debates underline the importance of planning processes and practice often depends upon governance itself in given places and times. The effects of the theory upon practice depend upon institutional circumstances, must address how to be more effective and to prevent unintended outcomes. Moreover, as Chan and Protzen (2018) argue that if planners compromise, then this compromise ought to be an ethical one.

The Resilient Politics of Planning

As the summary of the debates on the current literature suggests that there is an urgent need to face the problems of planning and especially planning practice, that is enabling the resilient politics of planning.

How can we define resilient politics of planning? First, the resilient politics of planning needs to accept that there is the multiplicity of urbanism that constitute the contemporary world system and each one of them is the outcome of the interaction of local dynamics, which include social, political, and cultural life and spatial relations that bring about different experiences. Although the global economic imperatives and the strategies enabling cities to enter global networks are imperative still local dynamics are important. The variety of experiences, on the one hand, is similar but on the other hand, different makes us rethink the politics of planning and instead of concentrating on global imperatives, which are certainly important, defining the existing opportunities and dynamics are essential.

The discussion on resilient politics of planning claims that if we can follow a heuristic approach and look for the possible instead of the ideal, then it may be possible to identify alternatives open to planning. Increasing uncertainties connected to changes in technologies, production systems, and their implication on social, economic, and spatial structures and relations necessitates resilient politics of planning. Barry et al. (2018) highlight that recent political developments in many parts of the world seem likely to exacerbate rather than ameliorate the planetary-scale challenges of social polarisation, inequality and environmental change societies face. That means planning theory and practice might respond to the deeply unsettling times we live in. Here the question is "how far space—conceptual and practical—exists for better planning?" as addressed by Campbell, Tait, and Watkins (2014) and "how can be able to introduce resilient politics of planning?"

I want to introduce several issues that are the core for building resilient politics of planning.

Initiating a Realpolitik of Social Justice

Understanding the inequitable outcomes of the urban policies and planning processes, the most important

question connected to resilient politics of planning is a democratic agenda and inclusive and equitable approach to bring the social justice issues into practice. In other words, there is a need for the "realpolitik of social justice." But how can we be in pursuit of social justice?

The meaning of the term *justice* in urban planning has changed substantially since the 1970s, which has been imperative in the search for new alternatives (Campbell, 2006). Justice in the context of urban planning addresses issues related to distributive justice, as well as Rawls' theory (1971), based on his conception of equality in primary, natural and social goods. Justice in planning means equal rights and fairness. Recent planning literature on justice also underlines a shift from defining justice as the 'distribution of spatial goods' to the 'capability approach' developed by Sen (Basta, 2016). According to Basta (2016: p.207), this shift means "from justice in planning toward planning for justice." The capability approach requires a value to be assigned to what individuals can do (or capable of) as an alternative.

Uitermark and Nicholls (2017) define the prerequisites of social justice: Recognition of marginalised communities as fully equal and capable of engaging as full citizens, understanding their true interests and strong leadership and vision of justice, in addition to the use of substantive knowledge to steer movements toward more just societies. That said, planners should become conscious that they must introduce innovative practices and struggle to change the existing rules and regulations that restrict their challenges. Özdemir and Eraydin (2017) exemplify how activist planners' innovative practices can be important in bringing social justice into the planning process parallel to Fainstein (2010), who associates justice with concepts of diversity, democracy, and equity, and arriving at just outcomes.

Searching for Inclusive and Equitable Planning Outcomes

Understanding the real possibilities for inclusive and equitable planning outcomes in the context of globalisation and entrepreneurial governance is a critical task for urban and planning theory. Shatkin (2011) argues that we should begin with understanding the dynamics of power in globalising cities and the ways that planners interact with decision-makers in power and try shaping urbanism in response to entrenched spatial relations. In this regard, questions about how people make claims to urban space within, and outside existing legal and planning frameworks are important and the ways that planners respond to these claims and how far they are ready for new democratic experiments.

Being Open to and Providing Room for Criticisms and Reactions

For building a resilient planning policy, first, the existing system should be open to criticisms and provide room for

criticisms and reactions. It should be more flexible, and more open to unusual ideas and notions coming from the local communities. In this regard, institutions providing room for reactions and free speech are vital. Instead of defining institutions as meta-structures of regulatory regimes, a new perspective is needed in which institutions should be understood within a relational perspective. The sociological institutionalist approach, as defined by Healey (2018), emphasises a dynamic, relational view of institutional formation. I claim that a revitalisation of institutions of local democracy is possible and that there are opportunities at a local and community level for urbanites to become more active in urban issues and the outcomes of planning. This understanding is connected to attempts at re-institutionalisation when strengthening the capacities of self-expression and self-organisation in people who are excluded from urban decision-making. Obviously, this definition of political concerning planning reflects a search for the possible, unideal.

In this regard, criticisms and evaluations of the current state of planning concerning the political are indicative. That said, there is a need to redefine the political concerning planning as channels that enable decisions necessary for sustaining the viability of society within legitimised processes. To bring solutions to the problems of planning and planning practice should define the principles that defend democratic processes and are sensitive to the inequalities and exclusions in a society.

Support for Self-Organisation, and Building the Adaptive Capacity of Disadvantaged Groups

Self-organising civil societies and self-organisation are claimed to be instrumental in dealing with changes imposed in different forms (Eraydin & Taşan-Kok, 2013). As Ostrom (1990) argues, building 'self-organisation capacity' requires a shift in the value system and can be important in instituting self-regulation potential concerning planning. Transformative and self-organisational capacities are also needed to reach the expected end state. In contemporary cities, there are several (disadvantaged) groups that can take an active part in the self-organisation of spaces through bottom-up initiatives and other forms of social involvement. These groups do not necessarily have access to capital accumulation channels, nor are they able to benefit from the investment decisions of global capital formations or political power through entrepreneurial intentions, but they may have the capacity for self-organisation, usually through fragmented channels of bottom-up involvement and active citizenship. However, political-economic neoliberalism, which is based, on the whole, on opportunity-led development, entrepreneurialism, and financialisation, brings with it unprecedented and unpredictable situations that are difficult both to foresee and control.

Innovative Solutions Initiated Below, By Residents, NGOs, Private Society and Local Politicians

More sustainable, equitable, inclusive local societies can only be approached by new public policies based on openness toward the bottom, the citizens, and NGOs. Changes can come from the people themselves, backed by innovative third sector organisations, NGOs, and even by private societies. At this point, local politics are also critical and be influential in coming with social innovation. Bifulco and Dodaro (2019) introduce an empirical study on Milan's city, which clarifies relationships between social innovation, politics, and the political. They argue that social innovation, conceived as a redefinition of governance deeply affecting relations between the state, the market, and society, means not less politics but different politics.

Integrating Innovative Practices/Opportunities Provided By New Technologies Into Planning

Today new technologies provide opportunities for new practices that will be imperative also in planning and planning practice. There are also urban innovations that can help redesign-planning practice. Top Ten Urban Innovations defined by the Global Agenda Council on the Future of Cities (2015) are defining the use of digital technologies in different fields, such as (digitally) re-programmable spaces and the sharing city by releasing spare capacity of cities. The infrastructure services that are controlled digital technologies such as the Internet of pipes, infrastructure for social integration and co-generating, co-heating, co-cooling, and technologies connected to transportation and mobility-on-demand will not only change planning practices but also some principles of planning toward more responsive to changes occurring in urban technologies.

Adaptive Planning – New Inventions, New Institutions

Not only technologies, but new institutions, which respond to changing conditions are important. The recent experience of Nordic countries regarding the shifts in planning systems is illustrative. As Schmitt and Lucas (2019) showed spatial planning across the Nordic countries has changed through shifts within and outside the formal spatial planning systems. However, there are considerable differences among the Nordic model, and different trajectories of change, most of which can be defined as a pragmatic shift in the planning systems. At this point, it is important to get *benefits from and giving respect to public norms*. Existing critiques on planning imply that it is possible to make a better alternative by changing the planning approach and using public norms that strongly differ from goal-specific or problem-solving aspirations. As Salet (in this issue) discuss public norms provide a normative antenna of the public in its permanent search to value 'what one might expect from another'

providing reliability in uncertain situations, justifying what is ‘appropriate’ to do rather than performing outcome-oriented planning processes.

Conclusive Remarks

How do we have to tackle the impasse in planning and governance? There are two opposing views to encounter the problems of planning theory, planning processes, and planning practice.

First, according to several scholars (e.g. Dikeç and Swyngedouw, 2017), there is an urgent need to rethink urban politics and urban political theory in ways much more sensitive to the city as a site in which the nurturing of political subjectification, the mediating of political encounters, the staging of interruptions and the experimental production of new forms of democratisation. According to this strand of thinking, the time has come to make a radical reconsideration of the relationship between the public and the government. In this context, planners should understand their options in affirmative action and seek to bridge the deep divisions in society.

Second, there are proposals to improve the existing planning systems and practices. The upgrading of the mechanisms concerning participation and collaborative practices, introducing democratic processes by re-institutionalisation of the planning processes are the key issues discussed within this context.

Is there a way to combine the two strands of thinking about the future of planning and introduce real and resilient planning and planning practice? Although it is difficult to answer this question concisely, this paper suggests there is benefit from such an attempt by defining certain principles integrating agonistic attitude and local dynamics. What I think though is being cognizant that there are only imperfect strategies, we must search for the *realpolitik* of planning. This position can be justified since today the cities planners face a “power representation dilemma, due to the credentials, knowledge, and skills of intellectuals (like urban planners) make them into powerful agents of social justice, but at the same time can put them in a position of power concerning the very communities they represent and serve (Uitermark and Nicholls, 2017). Alternatively, the power they gain due to their position is significantly restricted because of the dominance of market-oriented policies imposed by the neoliberal agenda.

There are still three issues important in searching for the real and resilient politics of planning. First, as underlined by Campbell (2006), the planning community must rediscover its *ethical voice and its confidence in the idea of planning*, which necessitates a long time and a large number of deliberate efforts. Second, to rethink and revitalise the concept of *public interest*, which has long

been used as a concept to justify planning activity but abandoned by academia in recent decades. However, as Sager (2020) argues what constitutes the public interest is unavoidably undertaken from within a shared tradition of and moral reasoning. Third, the *theory-practice gap* is a big challenge in achieving real politics of planning.

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