Rethinking Disciplinary Boundaries
Editorial

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Architecture, planning, and design have long developed in proximity, yet often in isolation. While each field brings its own logics, languages, and epistemologies, the challenges facing the built environment today, such as climate transformation, socio-spatial inequality, technological saturation, and global urbanization, reveal the limitations of siloed thinking. The demand is clear: to cultivate deeper interrelationships across domains that have too often been positioned apart.

The concept of interrelationship is not a call for disciplinary fusion but for meaningful dialogue. It recognizes the reciprocal shaping of space, society, and systems. Architecture gives form to intention and identity; planning governs temporal and spatial distribution; design, in its broadest sense, connects aesthetics, usability, and adaptability. Yet none of these practices occur in a vacuum. As Lefebvre (1991) asserted, space is socially produced; thus, it is always a product of intersecting forces that are material, regulatory, symbolic, and political.

Today's spatial practitioners confront problems that are increasingly networked and non-linear. Urban resilience, for example, requires both design sensitivity to place and architectural form and planning foresight grounded in systems thinking and long-term governance (Ahern, 2011). Questions of justice in the built environment cannot be addressed solely through zoning reforms or formal typologies but must attend to affective, everyday, and infrastructural dimensions (Soja, 2010; Rawes, 2013). Even sustainability, long treated as a design problem or a planning goal, increasingly demands integrated frameworks that bridge ecological thresholds, spatial equity, and material agency (Roggema, 2012).

This interrelationship is also methodological. Interdisciplinary research that combines qualitative, quantitative, and speculative approaches is gaining ground. For instance, critical spatial practices (Rendell, 2006) challenge the neutrality of design and planning, insisting instead on reflexivity, participation, and embeddedness. Digital tools, ranging from GIS to urban simulations, now inform both architectural and planning decisions, enabling new forms of cross-scalar analysis. At the same time, theories of assemblage (DeLanda, 2016) and actor-network (Latour, 2005) invite scholars and practitioners to trace spatial configurations not as fixed outcomes but as evolving, relational ecologies.

The implications extend beyond theory and technique. They touch on pedagogy, professional identity, and institutional structures. How might we educate spatial thinkers who are capable of navigating between scales and systems, without losing sight of material specificity or political consequence? What kind of collaborations become possible and necessary when architecture, planning, and design are positioned not hierarchically but relationally? How can academic journals foster a platform that sustains both disciplinary rigor and transdisciplinary experimentation?

These questions point to a broader epistemological shift: from disciplinary sovereignty to shared stewardship of space. As we move further into an era shaped by planetary pressures and spatial uncertainties, the interrelationship of architecture, planning, and design becomes not just a conceptual tool but a working necessity.

Let us then approach the spaces we study, inhabit, and imagine, not through isolated lenses, but through a mode of relational thinking that embraces complexity, invites pluralism, and foregrounds the interdependencies at the heart of spatial practice.

Enjoy our summer issue!

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