The second issue of JOSS Volume 7 continues the focused investigation into socio-cultural relations to space in focus already in the previous issue, extending the theme to span the full volume. And, I am glad to say, it continues to span scales between cities and buildings, between everyday and high culture, between specifically syntax research and a wider set of methods and theories, and—not least—new and returning authors to the journal. This issue, together with its predecessor, addresses questions that in different ways understand and define the concept of ‘spatial cultures’, giving it a wide formulation. Perhaps it is in place to briefly repeat, or at least paraphrase, how the call for papers was developed.

The aim of the theme for this issue and the last, which together form a single volume, has been to raise questions on the cultural specificity in the formation of space, but also ways through which culture takes form and shape, and how culture affects relations to spatial formations. In addition, it has intended to acknowledge and raise questions on how different cultures have different spatial traditions seen in the way various building types are formed, what types there are, and how they are aggregated in settlements—different cultures invest in space differently, be it with regard to what is manifested, or to what extent society is manifested through built form. Finally, there are architectural forms more deliberately or explicitly meant to hold, communicate or exhibit cultural production—such as museums, libraries, cinemas, culture houses, and similar buildings, or public spaces of art or cultural events.

The definition of culture in the call was widely formulated, and I believe that as we conclude the volume with issue 7(2) we can see that this has proved beneficial. We have papers discussing the process of type formation, of social stratification and identity of places, of particularities in exhibitions of performative arts, of relations between private and public in shaping public culture—and in this issue continuing with papers on space in literature, the rhythm and culture of waiting spaces, the emergence of spatial subcultures, and on the spatial aesthetics of the Rolex Learning Centre by SAANA. The volume is then rounded off with our first paper in our new format “JOSS Extended”—a format intended to allow different types of articles to the regular articles, and include more diverse styles of writing as well as longer (or shorter) papers, while adhering to academic standards and double-blind peer review quality processes. As it happens, this comes in the form of a longer article by John Peponis, holding a personal, explorative tone in exploring concepts of spatial configuration and identity formation, in a sense tying the volume together with Peponis’ voice both starting and ending the volume.

However, I am also happy to say that while the volume is coming to an end with this issue, the theme does not. We already have submissions that continue to address the theme, and we hope to continue to receive more. The intent of the themes as we work with them is not to conclude or give full account of any specific area, but to focus issues on ‘matters of concern’, as Latour (2005) once put it, and both to show how they extend back in history, and to grow continuing discourse. So it is appropriate to say that, while Volume 8 will move on to the theme of models and measures, we are by no means ‘done’ with spatial cultures and I hope and
believe the work presented in this volume—and that to come in future issues—will challenge and inspire future submissions.

The volume begins with Frederico de Holanda’s *Urban Fissures*, which is a study of Brasilia and the spatial cultures therein. Holanda is careful to stress the plural of *cultures*, to address how different individuals, classes, and groups have different modes of appropriating the physical fabric of the city. Holanda introduces the ideas of ‘architectural syntax’ and ‘body syntax’. The former, as a way to include configurations both of space and of volumes as a dual unit (volumes, walls, floors as a means to produce space, the ends; Coutinho, 1970), and the latter as a means to discuss encounters and avoidances as emerging from a system of static or moving bodies in time. Following, Holanda introduces architectural and body *semantics*, here specifically meant to discuss how social memories, labels, historical values and symbolic importance is embedded in architecture and cities while not necessarily ‘there’—that is, while *syntax* is concerned with allowances and limitations set by configurations, *semantic* depends on particular cultural codes. Holanda argues that to understand the spatial (sub)cultures of Brasilia, as emerging in the spatial ‘fissures’ of the city, we must know more regarding the semantics, and how semantics operate in relation to syntax—or, how intangible, social and individual knowledges and practices make use of and relates to tangible, material configurations. The paper demonstrates how a long engagement with the research material, theoretically and conceptually as well as with the empirical case, can provide insights in providing qualitative knowledge and personal understanding following changes and developments over time.

Following, Hannes Frykholm’s *Staging the Intermission* explores temporality and rhythms in the city through a focused study of a specific stage of waiting—the foyer of Casa da Música in the pause between two acts. It ties back both theoretically and topically to Kärrholm’s article in 7(1) in addressing transitional spaces and thresholds, to Peponis’ (2012) and Psarra’s (2009) work on purview interfaces and narratives, and like Palaiologou et al’s (2016) article in the previous issue it involves Lefebvre’s conceptualisations of space and society (although using *The Production of Space* (1991) and *Rhythmanalysis* (2004) respectively). Frykholm extends the specific discussion of the foyer as waiting space (sometimes) into a wider theoretical address of waiting spaces, niches, and in-between spaces before concluding with a discussion on the intermission as a stage. In a sense, niches in Frykholm’s article can be seen as parallels to fissures in Holanda’s, but they also have parallels in the articles that follow. The article is a decidedly qualitative, discursive contribution addressing and analysing architecture and its relation to social phenomena and activity, combining an analysis of spatial situation including configurational concerns with questions of time, (spatial and temporal) sequence, and embeddedness of events in both.¹ In an indirect manner this ties the the following article in that both relate to Hanson’s (1976) early work on time and space in fiction.

Following Frykholm’s article, Simon Demetriou investigates literary spaces in *Re*)configuring Crusoe’s Habitation: an application of space syntax theory on Robinson Crusoe. Demetriou here looks at how the habitation of Robinson Crusoe is described in Defoe’s novel (Defoe and Crowley, 1995), and how this description changes over the course of the story. This change, argues Demetriou, is both spatial (in that the habitation grows and changes configuration) and symbolic (in that different terms are used to refer to it). But the change is furthermore related to Crusoe’s relation to the environment, and subsequently, his relation to the other inhabitants of the island—arguing that syntactic theory, specifically, enriches the understanding of Crusoe’s later
habitations specifically in the way it shows positioning in a configuration changes the configuration itself. Demetriou concludes with a discussion of Crusoe’s habitation as Heterotopia (Foucault and Miskowiev, 1986), relating this concept directly to its syntactic configuration. In a sense, the paper reminds of early work of Julienne Hanson (1976), but also of Sam Griffiths (2015) and Kerstin Sailer (2015) in making use of fictional space in novels or films as sites of investigation.

In the fourth article, *Spatial and social patterns of an urban interior – The Architecture of SANAA*, Marcela Aragüez and Sophia Psarra investigates SAANA’s Rolex learning center. The building, they claim, challenges space syntax methodology in having a geometry that does not easily respond to the ways in which space is analysed in the field, and push to investigate both how such architecture can be analysed with syntax methods such as VGA and axial analysis, as well as relate these developments to observed practices of visitors. Central to the discussion is, in addition to the challenging geometries, the disjunctions of visibility and permeability—a disjunction important in syntax, not least since Hanson’s *Decoding Homes and Houses* (1998)—showing how specific disjunctions seem to relate to particular forms of occupation. Arguably, there are links here between Frykholm’s discussion of ‘niches’, Holanda’s fissures, and some of the findings of Aragüez and Psarra such as that in areas “with lower levels of movement rates coincide with those that have disjointed levels of visibility and permeability […] more informal activities were observed, such as sleeping and playing games” (p.210). In the concluding discussion, they ask if this could suggest a broader phenomenon of disjunctive relations between permeable and visible patterns to be catalysts for personal and improvised practices.

In the concluding article of the issue, John Peponis’ *On the pedagogical function of the city: a morphology of adolescence in Athens, 1967-1973* is both a personal reflection and a theoretical piece on the becoming of self-in-society in relation to the city as a pedagogical artefact. For Peponis, this goes not only through direct or symbolic means, but in structuring practices and relations through how “spatial morphology of the physical environment is explored, perceived, mapped, and made one’s own through sustained patterns of behaviour.” (p.220) In this reflection, personal memories—which range from family and friends, to landscapes, to the political presence and oppression of the Junta—form the material basis of the theoretical reasoning to follow, which goes through the topics of ‘geography’, ‘society’, ‘social networks’, and ‘search space’ to land in ‘spatial codes and pedagogies’ before a concluding postscript, which expands on the notion of ‘open search’ as a fundamental piece of the pedagogical function of the city. Peponis here notes how while such a concept necessitates an understanding of space, spatial structure, distributions of land uses and many other factors, it cannot be understood fully without also including intents and social relations. The city, as a physical structure and arrangement of land uses and programmes, “does not, on its own, generate its motivations and thus its affective and intellectual orientation. The underlying motivations of our search were first seeded in the network of homes, where the experiences of preceding generations […] were translated into parenthood.” (p.249) Peponis’ paper here shares some of the qualities of Holanda’s in the way they make use of knowledge built up over time that clearly has been undergoing consideration, challenge, and exploration in the minds of the authors for some years.

Such a brief recap of course does not give justice to the richness of the material in this issue of JOSS. A richness that, I am happy to see, comes not only in content but also in style and voice of the articles. A polysemy that at the same time shows the breadth of the overall topic of spatial cultures, and how such a breadth still remains interlinked by
touching on similar queries from different angles, where the specific terminology differences are not matters of style but, I argue, matters of concern: they illustrate how rich the challenges are, and how important it is to continue to further develop our understanding thereof. Together with the contributions in JOSS 7(1) and other recent publications including Griffiths and von Lünen’s (2016) book Spatial Cultures, I believe we see an impressive discursive field with a wide range of possible, relevant, and important challenges and approaches, where the contributions in the volume provide a rich material that forms a substantial beginning rather than a summative conclusion to the discourse. This, of course, is said with the caveat that clearly important contributions have been made to this field of inquiry from the beginnings of syntax research. As editor, I could not be more pleased with such an outcome, and I look forward to continue receiving and publishing research in this area—all while we continue with thematically focusing on models and measures in Volume 8, and as of yet loosely formulated refining the ‘social’ in Volume 9.

To conclude, I would like to thank our anonymous reviewers for their contributions both in ensuring the journal’s quality standards, and in providing critical and constructive feedback to authors to improve submissions. Without this work, the journal could not exist. I would also like to thank the editorial team in discussing and shaping the ideas of changing the thematic rhythm of the journal, consolidating the contribution formats, and developing more firmly the idea that became introduced as ‘JOSS Extended’. Finally, I would like to thank our copy editor Tom Bolton for fantastic and quick work with the material once we moved to the editing stage.

References
Hanson, J. (1998), Decoding Homes and Houses, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.


