

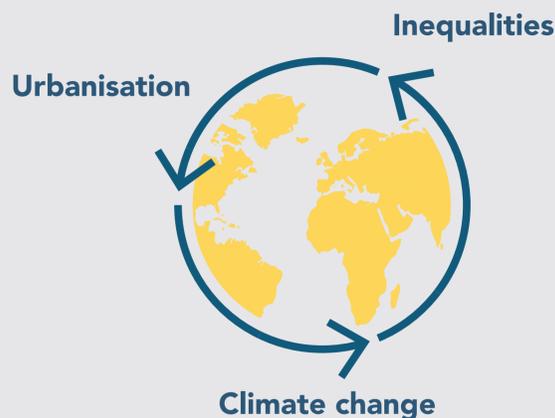
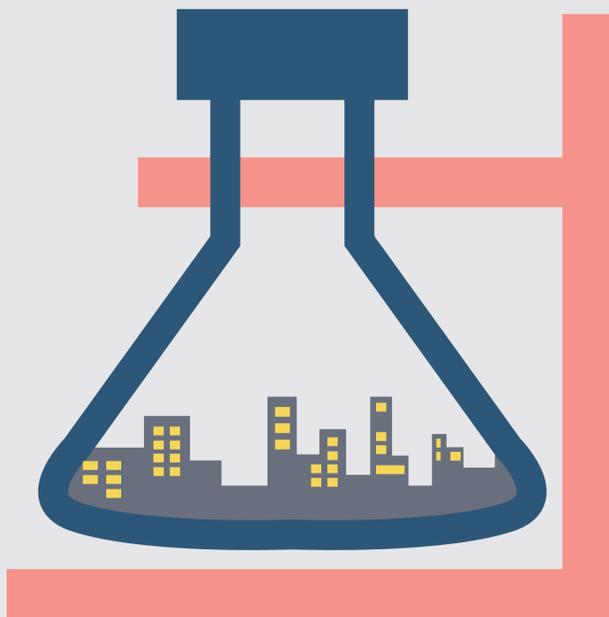
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Social Anthropology

Locating 'the human' in the urban laboratory of the future

Urban Labs: experimenting to find solutions



Copenhagen as early example

'From the outset, Copenhagen was the lab where basic knowledge was collected, and where new ideas could later be tested. Copenhagen was the first city in the world where urban life was systematically examined, and these studied, conducted continuously over 40 years, have been instrumental for the tremendous development that both urban spaces and urban life have undergone in Copenhagen. Copenhagen has demonstrated ways to improve quality of life in the city.'

— Jan Gehl (2016)

The Danish Pavilion 2016: 'Danish humanism'



la Biennale di Venezia

130 projects by 60 offices

Thinking the human

- Genealogy of 'the human' and people-centred thinking in Danish architecture e.g. the role of the welfare state and communal action, urban life studies, shared values, education, 'welfare architecture'
- Future: finding solutions that work for 'the many' by 'the many'

↳ How incorporated into design practice?

Realising the human

'Humanism could (or should) broadly be defined as a restless search for variation and experimentation in the name of freedom of expression. Or, more specifically, in search of solutions to pressing problems and dilemmas that have not yet been addressed or solved.'

— The curators of the Danish pavilion B. Broman Jensen and K. Lindhardt Weiss (2016)

Some general thoughts: practising 'the human' in urban futures

Who/what is 'the human'?



- Clients?
- Users?
- Benefits for wider community or society?
- The world?
- Specific methodologies?

How is 'the human' incorporated in design?

- **Presumed:** backdrop & unreflexive application of standards, metrics
- **Prescribing:** a priori, instructive
- **Performing:** responding to ideas of 'culture' or 'history', acting out client's wishes
- **Projecting:** shared experiences and projection of own humanity
- **Participating:** specific methodologies, observations, including 'users'
- **Prototyping:** iterative and responsive process, broad notion of 'the human'
- ...?

Being reflexive



- Most important not to take 'the human' for granted
- What do we want it to mean?
- Are approaches and methodologies appropriate?

