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PUBLICATIONS

NOTES AND NEWS

NEW MEMBERS
The editorial machine has been hard at work once again to ensure that the second Bulletin of the year reaches you as you have come to expect, in the early days of August. As I observe it from the sidelines, publication takes place with a smoothness and efficiency I can but admire, and the end product, given the resources we have at our disposal, is worthy of the effort. The Bulletin has made great strides over the years and is now an effective cement to our international network. An important barrier of confidence has been broken: so many of you are now providing copy and submitting extensive reviews that the academic and professional quality is bound to increase.

To take up this point of our human resources, the Editor, while welcoming copy at all times, would nonetheless request contributors to pay particular regard to the proper citing of references. Citations to published works should give titles in full, the name of the publisher, place of publication, date and page numbers. A good deal of editorial and secretarial time can be saved if contributors would follow the standard practices we have come to adopt.

Perhaps inevitably a UK bias in the papers, notes of meetings and book reviews has been apparent over the years in the contents of the Bulletin. This is a feature we wish to avoid in the interests of the internationalism we seek to foster. May I remind members that for North America at least there is an Assistant Editor, Professor Donald Krueckseberg: do make full use of him as a collecting point for your material. If such additional appointments are successful in generating copy, we could extend the system to other parts of the world.

With this issue of the Bulletin we bring you an updated membership list. Do let us know if we are not mailing you correctly.

Regrettably there are still some who have not paid their membership subscription for 1983. If this applies to you, then you will find enclosed a membership renewal form, which I hope you will return with your cheque or Bankers’ Order. If we do not hear from you then I regret to say I shall be
obliged to delete your name from the membership list and you will not receive the December number. If your Bulletin does not enclose such a membership renewal form, then this is confirmation that you are in fact a fully paid-up member.

This is the time to consider the membership of the PHG Executive Committee. In the last issue I invited members to offer themselves for election or re-election, and the following situation has arisen:

The term of office for the following UK members of the Executive comes to an end in August:

Dr M. Cuthbert, Department of Town and Country Planning, Heriot-Watt University
Dr S.M. Gaskell, Assistant Principal, City of Liverpool College of Higher Education
Dr M. Hebbert, Department of Geography, London School of Economics
Dr R.J.P. Kain, Department of Geography, University of Exeter.

Dr Cuthbert and Dr Gaskell are not standing again.

The following offer themselves for membership:

Dr G. Gordon, Department of Geography, University of Strathclyde.
Mr J.C. Hancock, College of St Paul and St Mary, Cheltenham.

As a result, the required number of four UK members has been achieved with no recourse to ballot. I declare Dr Gordon, Mr Hancock, Dr Hebbert and Dr Kain elected to the Executive for the period 1983-5.

With regard to non-UK members, terms of office for the following come to an end in August:

Dr M.J. Bannon, Department of Regional and Urban Planning, University College Dublin.
Professor Eugenie Birch, Graduate Programme in Urban Planning, Hunter College, New York.

Professor B.A. Brownell, Department of Urban Studies, University of Alabama.
Mrs Christiane Collins, Adam L. Gimmel Library, Parsons School of Design, New York.
Miss Joan E. Draper, History of Architecture and Art Department, University of Illinois.
Professor D. Hulchanski, Centre for Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto.

Joan Draper is not standing again.

The following offer themselves for membership:

Professor A.F.J. Artibise, Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg.
Professor C. Silver, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Virginia Commonwealth University.

Consequently, seven non-UK members are standing for six places on the Executive: Professor Artibise, Dr Bannon, Professor Birch, Professor Brownell, Mrs Collins, Professor Hulchanski and Professor Silver. A ballot of all PHG members (i.e. UK and non-UK) now takes place and a voting form is enclosed.

These forms should be received by me not later than Friday 30 September 1983, at which date the votes will be counted. The new Executive will come into being at once, though the results will not be announced to Group members before the December Bulletin.

Gordon E. Cherry
MEETINGS & CONFERENCES

Land Policy: Problems and Alternatives

Focussing on the future rather than the past, a conference on this theme was held at the Oxford Polytechnic in March 1983. Comprising plenary and workshop sessions, a selection of the papers given will be published by the organisers, the Department of Town Planning, Oxford Polytechnic, and the School for Advanced Urban Studies, Bristol University.

Utopias Unlimited

Arranged by Peter Alexander and Roger Gill on behalf of the Colston Research Society, this three day symposium on utopias at the University of Bristol in April 1983 brought together 45 invited participants from a broad spectrum of the humanities and social sciences. The 17 papers given were pre-circulated, allowing the emphasis to be placed on discussion. Most of these papers, and hence the related discussions, were concerned with the philosophical and sociological aspects of utopia, but three papers specifically discussed the relationship between utopianism and urban planning.

In his paper 'Utopia in three dimensions', Robert Fishman (Rutgers University) provided a comparative analysis between three utopian city plans from very different historical periods - Filarete's Sforzinda, Ledoux's Chaux, and Le Corbusier's Ville Radieuse. He traced the threads of continuity between them in their emphasis on geometric urban forms, their totality of vision, and their naive (and dangerous) appeal for rich patrons to come forward with the necessary funds. In practical terms, however, the true significance of these schemes lay in their component parts, which others could copy or modify, rather than in their totality.

Roger Gill (Bristol University) added the useful distinction between the 'ideal' and the 'utopian' in his paper 'In England's green and pleasant land', in which an 'ideal plan' is an instrument for reform within a given society and locality whereas a 'utopian plan' presupposes fundamental change. On this basis, he proceeded to discuss the genesis of the ideas embodied in plans for London since 1940. These plans were seen as the culmination of a peculiarly British movement stretching back into the early nineteenth century, in which the ideal was continually nourished by the utopian.

The general consensus as to the importance of utopianism for urban planning was further reinforced by Peter Hall's paper 'The necessity of utopian thought' (although presented in his absence). After surveying planning utopias of the last 100 years under three headings - physical planning, populist and socio-economic - Hall concluded that utopias in planning can only be effective if underpinned by a strong grasp of the existing socio-economic framework.

The papers and proceedings of the symposium are to be published by the Colston Society in the near future.

JOHN R. GOLD
Oxford Polytechnic

Planning 1930-1960. A personified debate

Urban and architectural historians have tended to look to the phases of the development of welfare capitalism in the nineteenth and especially early twentieth centuries - the heroic moments of modernism - for the roots of the urban planning policies of the post Second World War period. Recently, however, their attention has started to turn to the late 1930s and early 1940s. This period has been largely overlooked, dismissed in fact as a hiatus of regressive anti-modernism of an entirely different nature from the periods immediately before and after. The Planning History seminar, 'Town Planning 1930-
Vreewijk, specifically the street plans which respected regularity while allowing for variety and the human scale. He drew a parallel between the Delftse School’s balance of regular and irregular forms and the design of the Vreewijk Factory by Brinkman and van der Vlugt, traditionally presented as the prototypical Nieuwe Bouwen product.

Although recent history has tended to stress the importance of the modernist influence in the reconstruction of Rotterdam, both the Core and the Working Committee of Supervisors in Rotterdam selected an equal number of representatives from both the Delftse School and the Nieuwe Bouwen groups. Was Professor van Embden hinting that there is a trace of Vreewijk in Rotterdam? Certainly, his ‘personified’ approach points towards very stimulating questions for future researchers to answer.

Alexander Tzonis, Professor of Design Methodology at the Technische Hochschule Delft, presented another central figure of the period 1930-1940, providing a very illuminating and, because of its autobiographical character, unique perspective on the issue. This key personality in the reconstruction planning of Rotterdam recounted his career as a planner, and hence the use of the word ‘personified’ in the title. This was a novelty at a time when meetings had tended to be based on theoretical themes.

The presentation by S.J. van Embden, Professor at the Technische Hochschule Delft, in 1969, provided a biography of Doxiadis, which is authorised and supported by Mrs Emma Doxiadis, will appear in 1985, ten years after Doxiadis’ death. Doxiadis completed his architectural education in Athens and received his doctorate in Stadtebau, Berlin, in 1936. He entered the newly-formed Ministry of the Capital, in charge of the planning of Athens during the Metaxas dictatorship. During the German occupation he was active in an underground resistance group, among whose tasks was to draw up reconstruction plans for Greece, one of the most devastated countries of Europe. After the war, he became leading planner as Minister of Reconstruction and administrator of the Marshall Plan Aid. By the early 1950s, he moved quickly into the private sector where he became a planning consultant to the great multi-national development organisations and agencies: the World Bank, the Ford Foundation, the American ‘Point Four’ Program for the development of the Middle East, the United Nations. His patrons also included the governments of a very large number of developing nations. By 1969, Doxiadis and his office had submitted plans for India, Pakistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Iran among others. The culmination was his design for the new capital of Pakistan, Islamabad. By the end of his career, there were plans for all continents, including a regional plan for the Greater Detroit region, national plans for China and many multi-national plans for the Rio Plate Basin in South America and a prospective autoroute linking Turkey to Vietnam.

Doxiadis stressed the consistency of Doxiadis’ career, both as a planner and as a writer of the notion of ‘total planning’, which had links with the Stadtebau education. The speaker might dwell at greater length on the relation of Doxiadis’ theory of Ekistics to the concept of an ideology-free, supra-political science of planning, which was also gaining currency during the 1930s, when he was a student in Germany.

Remi Roger Baudou, a young historian in the research team of Professor Vayssiere at the Institut d’Urbanisme in Paris, provided a biography of a planner rather than a personality. The Vichy Government’s comprehensive economic plan, the Charte d’Urbanisme, was resurrected totally intact after the war and adopted by Raoul Dautry, the administrator of the Marshall Plan in France. The speaker’s thesis, that post-war planning in France owes more to the Vichy government’s plan than to the Plan Marquet of 1935, is intriguing, but needed additional proof.

Professor Richard Plunz of Columbia University is the editor of a recent collection of the writings of Serge Chermayeff, whose career straddles the period 1930 to 1960. Focused more on his architectural theories than on planning ideas, Professor Plunz investigated an area of American architectural history that has been generally ignored. Chermayeff’s concern for functionalism and social accountability was true to the spirit of the 1930s, ‘40s and ‘50s. It was embodied in such groups as the American Society of Planners and Architects, the National Council for Soviet-American Friendship, the American CIAM, and the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists and Technicians, in which Chermayeff played a leading role. The irony is that, by remaining faithful to these ideals of functionalism and social accountability, Chermayeff was forced (like Berthold Lubetkin) to withdraw from practice, and turn his reformist efforts entirely to the fields of writing and teaching in the 1960s.

Finally, Professor Gerhard Fehl of the Technische Hochschule of Aachen presented the thesis that Nazi architecture was characterised not so much by stylistic features as by the planning policies behind it. In a series of slides, he compared buildings from the pre-1937 period with those of the later period to demonstrate the stylistic continuity between the two periods. The distinction between the two periods was the presence of a ‘comprehensive rationality’ on the part of the State, which brought together a coherent cultural programme. A provocative assertion. Professor Fehl raises the question of the autonomy of architectural style from ideological content.

What became clear from the conference was the extent to which some of the most characteristically post-war features of urban planning have connections with the late 1930s and early 1940s – connections which have been disavowed by many. The comparative and ‘personified’ approach used by Professor Smets in organising the programme proved a highly successful device for bringing out relationships that might otherwise have been overlooked. One only regrets that the seminar (lasting one day) was too short for discussion between the participants and with the audience.
Workshop on Cross-National Research Projects

A one-day workshop on the design and implementation of cross-national research projects was held at the Department of Town and Regional Planning at Sheffield University in May 1983. Taking the form of a small group seminar composed of those who had, or were hoping, to pursue such research, the purpose of the workshop was to explore the problems of undertaking comparative research. Each participant was given a copy of the four papers which evoked a lively response from participants. Particularly striking was the repeated parallel that was drawn between cross-national studies - studies over space - and planning history research - studies over time.

Ian Masser opened the workshop with a paper that looked at the methodological basis for comparative studies. In attempting to define the special character of comparative research he addressed himself first to the question of defining the unit of study. The first point was whether one could satisfactorily deal with nations as the object of a case study. The point was later taken up in David Massey's paper and the argument developed that it might be preferable not to consider comparative research in terms of national units, but rather in terms of regions or possibly even individual cities. The second point was the need to find, and the difficulty of finding, an explicit area of comparison. For Masser, however, the distinctive element in comparative planning studies was the relationship between the specific problem and its institutional and administrative context. Distinctive styles of planning were associated with a number of contextual variables which could not be ignored in cross-national research, and in developing this argument, the work of Friedmann and the contingency theorists in management studies was important. Furthermore, David Masser felt there was more to be gained from case studies than case surveys, and looked to a model of research strategy in which teams in each country with the necessary inside knowledge worked on case studies within an agreed theoretical framework that could then be evaluated.

Dick Williams followed with a paper that stressed some of the practical difficulties of conducting comparative research studies. He identified, firstly, three objectives for such research: to improve practice; to deepen the theoretical understanding of the planning process, which would also have a value in teaching; and to develop a common understanding as a basis for the supranational application of planning measures, as for example in the EEC. In respect of the last of these he stressed a point that was echoed by others, that very often one would be looking at the administrative and control systems rather than at the planning systems of the countries in the study. His paper then continued with a discussion of the need for cultural penetration, and a working knowledge of the language and ways of the study, and posed the question of whether it was better to go for case studies which were as similar as possible or to look at contrasts. He proposed a more reasonable degree of contrast in cases, if only because it was too easy to lose sight of similarities in cross-national research. It was far more important to have a sharp focus on procedure or the outline of policy.

The afternoon's papers, by David Masser and Tony Sutcliffe, had a more obvious, historical bias. David Masser, for example, started by looking at both spatial and temporal foci for comparative research. The spatial focus in his view were largely European, but there were two important perspectives. In North America and in European Colonial relationships. That, however, left a large question about non-European traditions, particularly for example in the Turkish Empire which would perhaps repay exploration. The temporal focus was identified as being within the period 1800–1939 with the core of interest from the 1860s onwards. The period in which Britain, France, Germany and Italy were moving towards planning. The period after 1939 was, however, too close to be considered as history. Many aspects of both historical work on the emergence of modern town planning and cross-national studies were very much in their infancy, with contributions so far conferences and specifically comparative approaches to certain topics. There was certainly scope to make use of existing works on the methodology and as a means of drawing together researchers with similar interests. But development would be in firstly, developing the idea of the appropriate context, whether national, provincial or city; secondly, in the exploration and evaluation of concepts of planning and therefore in not seeking a single definitive form; and thirdly, in defining the characteristics of planning styles whether in terms of objectives or planning instruments. The development of material could then possibly follow three courses: i) the examination of the 'model of national leaps' with respect either to objectives or instruments; ii) developing local and national planning histories to provide data for comparative studies; and iii) formulating frameworks for comparative planning.

Tony Sutcliffe began by putting the growth of cross-national studies itself in a historical context. The key factors that had encouraged such studies in the 19th century had been the growth of sociopolitical study. The management of nation states and the proliferation of international organisations. Although from the end of the 19th century onwards, attention had progressively shifted away from Britain to the newer industrial countries, and Britain's basis for participation in the European network had become weak, it was nevertheless true that Britain had made a disproportionately large contribution to knowledge in the comparative studies field. Within that field of knowledge, however, historical studies had not been prominent until they had begun to adopt the methodology of the social sciences. It was this combination that would lead to historical comparative research having promotional or even a political role. An example of a study over both space and time which would perhaps repay exploration was the comparative investigation of Pittsburgh and Sheffield. Both towns had been dependent on the steel industry which had levelled off after 1920 while Sheffield's decline had been slowed because of the continual demand for special steels into which production had been channelled. Pittsburgh had rehabilitated rapidly since the Second World War. The way in which it had dealt with decline might offer important lessons to Sheffield which was only now experiencing rapid decline in the steel industry. A different kind of study might be the one that looked at the abnormal condition rather than the typical one, as for example in a comparison of the post-war reconstructions in France and England which would attempt to explain why such very different results had been produced from the same, traumatic, circumstance.

Thus the workshop had covered a wide variety of problems relating to comparative studies. The discussion that ensued confirmed the speakers' shared optimism for the value of such studies but also served to emphasise some of the very real difficulties. Such difficulties ranged from the definition of the common problem, particularly if more than one team is involved, to practical considerations as how, if at all, it might be possible to brief research assistants. It was generally agreed that the topic needed further discussion and a further workshop in the autumn, possibly in Birmingham, was proposed, with the possibility of a larger scale conference to take place in 1984. The papers from this present workshop are to be published as a working paper.

PHILIP BOOTH
University of Sheffield

It was with some foreboding that this reviewer approached a municipal history which opened with a mayoral commendation and concluded with an invocation of the civil duty of Progradiamus. However, despite the restrictions of the format, here is a good representation of the genre. As a survey of the development of an individual town it contains much useful information which is carefully presented and coherently organised.

The authors sensibly decided to concentrate on the recent history of Ellesmere Port. They have not included the pre-industrial part of the town to Neston. The past 200 years are characterised by four stages of economic influence: the opening of the Manchester Ship Canal in 1894 and its associated industrial growth; the change in the industrial base of the town between the wars and the consolidation of civic consciousness; the post-war boom and change in social structure of the community.

Initially, Ellesmere Port was of only minor importance to the canal traffic and it was not until the 1840s, with the increase in resident population, that the canal terminal began to emerge as an independent community. Then both the canal company and the landowner, the Duke of Westminster, adopted a paternalistic attitude to the population's welfare. The settlement, however, was less important for the future character of the town than its local advantages which were fully realised in the 1880s when the 28 feet wide waterway of the Manchester Ship Canal replaced the Mersey river frontage with its narrow and shifting channels. Waterfronts have a powerful pull for certain industries and Ellesmere Port attracted sheet metal, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals, cement and flour-milling, as well as ship and engine repairing. It was this which brought about an early twentieth-century boom and one of the fastest growing industrial centres in Cheshire and Merseyside and the North-West. Industrial maturity was not achieved without problems and, by the 1920s and '30s, the incipient decline of the sheet metal and engineering industries was becoming apparent. Yet despite relatively high post-First World War unemployment, Ellesmere Port weathered the storms of the early '30s much better than many heavy industrial areas. Both the Manchester Ship Canal Company and the Urban District Council were effective in diversifying the industrial base of the town, bringing in oil storage and refining and paper-milling. During the Second World War, Ellesmere Port grew in importance as a petrol chemistry and petrochemicals complex. Such buoyancy in a generally depressed economic region attracted population overspill in the 1950s and '60s. In the process the town left behind much of its 'frontier image', achieving urban status in both a political and social sense.

In charting this development, the authors have concentrated on industry as a major strand in the history of the town. Such a detailed account for one of the modern 'burghs' is somewhat narrowly based, with its considerable reliance on official records and reports. The consequences of economic and political change for the citizens of Ellesmere Port tend to be treated incidentally. This is not a social history of the town, or indeed an urban history in any qualitative sense. It is inadequate in terms of topographical detail, and provides little sense of place or of community. Notwithstanding these limitations, the authors have given us a rich source for the history of a very particular kind of town. They have placed a work of local commitment within a critical framework of regional significance and historical knowledge.

MARTIN GASKELL
City of Liverpool College of Higher Education

George Gordon & Brian Dicks (editors) (1983) **Scottish Urban History.** University Press, Aberdeen. 281 pp. £14.00. ISBN 0 810 018562 3 (h). Compiling ten essays in roughly chronological order of coverage, this book contains something for everyone interested in Scottish urban history. Planter and geographers are very well served: R.C. Rodger in particular adds an interesting and much-needed chapter to the early history of Scottish town planning, with a discerning look at the roles of the Dean of Guild Courts and Town Councils. Social structure, class tensions, urban housing and transport receive expert and, in some cases, very detailed treatment for the 19th and 20th centuries, with essays by J. Butt, G. Gordon, J. R. Hume, A. A. MacIver, and J. G. Robb. For the pre-industrial phase of the early 18th century the first half of the 18th century, T. M. Devine's fine essay sets the record straight with regard to the supposedly conservative Scottish merchant and business classes.

The themes of urban congestion and the pressures of modern urban life are emphasised in Butt's essay at the end of the book, and contrast markedly with the rather bare pre-urban landscape scanned hopefully by Dicks in his opening essay. As a whole, the book serves the reader well before this volume appears to have gone to press.

The coverage is also deficient in its tendency to concentrate on empirical illustrations to the exclusion of theoretical and, in some instances, analytical discussion. We are promised in the introduction that the later chapters will 'focus upon the cities...as laboratories for the investigation of social and...
economic processes'. Except for the chapters by Maclaren and Hume, they largely comprise descriptive material of a familiar kind.

The essays by Robb and Gordon are dominated by traditional factorial ecology, identifying which social groups were located in which parts of a city, and describing these areas with the aid of a small-hatched map. But their explanation of the survival of the area's social diversity is confined to unsubstantiated allusions to its geographical position and the 18th-century Edinburgh model of 'close residential association between diverse social elements'.

Gordon relates the 'explanations of urban structure' of the Chicago School to the status areas of early 20th-century Edinburgh. Using valuation maps, he describes the composition of these areas in detail, and rejects Burgess's concentric model in favour of Hoyt's sectoral one. Any attempt to explain the survival of the area's social diversity is again confined to the last paragraph, where he merely observes that 'the spatial structure remains the product of thousands of separate local decisions — which are guided by external factors'.

Hume explores the nature of the relationship between transport and towns, and he makes many valuable points, especially in discussing industrial and commercial location. However, his analysis of the effect of transport on less sure ground, and depends on such generalisations as 'It may be coincidental', but it hardly seems likely, that the 1870s saw house-building in the city on an unprecedented scale.

Butt's traditional 'sanitary' analysis of the 20th-century 'housing problem' and its partial 'solution' is largely supported by reverent quotations from housing reformers' writings and the findings of the Royal Commission of 1917. Some explanation of changing perceptions of ideas of 'fitness' and housing 'quality' would have been more helpful. There is no evidence to support such statements as 'there was nothing to match the advanced designs of post-1919 Corporation housing on well-planned estates', 'the city possessed too many small houses' and 'overcrowding provides the potential for reliance'. By his own admission, the author's conclusion is banal, namely that 'housing policy improved the general position of civic communities, but massive pockets of deprivation survived throughout the period'.

Although housing is the dominant theme in most of the essays, the book somehow fails to convey the special qualities of the built environment in Scotland. It does not live up to the expectations aroused by the old photograph on the dust jacket. This is not a mere antiquarian quibble; an important and distinctly un-English aspect of Scottish urban history has been left out. The architecture and social history of the tenement, multi-storied housing has been at once the most obvious and profound difference between the two countries since at least the 16th century. Whilst the effects of the tenement tradition have been described at length in this book and others, nowhere do we find the reasons for this difference in urban life-style. The full explanation of this pattern of social and physical detail has been left out.

The book provides a counterbalance to any assumption that more of the history of planning for Glasgow has been compressed into the period since the Clyde Valley Plan of 1946, than could have occurred in all the earlier life of the City. The regional planning of the West of Scotland, and the strategic economic development to support Glasgow, did not begin with East Kilbride. Cumbernauld, Irvine and Grangemouth were located in the 1960s. By his Inference that its modern planning has been 'far more destructive, dispersing its people, scattering industry and destroying old communities. Whichever the insensitivities and stupidities of public planning, Gibb neglects both his own account of the overcrowding and intolerable conditions prevalent up to the 1960s and, also, the work of Henderson and others who have shown that physical planning little affected industrial change in the City.

While dedicating his book to the people and City of Glasgow, Gibb's strengths come from the traditional, physical and descriptive school of urban geography. Few Glaswegian faces appear amongst the crowded, physical details of his history. Nor is there sufficient differentiation amongst the groups which comprise his all-embracing assembly of 'modern planners': the highway engineers, Directors of Housing, politicians, sanitary inspectors, professional planners and others. Each group may be further divided and, in its own separate influence — often in opposition to some or all of the others.

Brit is h will need to respond to a comprehensive account. Its comprehensiveness is limited and its scope as a history of the period is suspect should not. However, detor those readers who are fascinated by the swings and roundabouts of public and private housing policies and who enjoy looking at a wide range of clearly reproduced examples. This well-designed Italian book is extremely well illustrated.

The volume fits into the adventurous Saggi & Documenti series directed by the distinguished architectural historian Georges Teyssot. It provides an interpretation of the 'eclecticism' and 'realism' found in English domestic architecture between 1890 and 1940. As well as a general foreword, the editor, Calabi of the Architecture Institute of Venice, contributes a useful 55-page essay and gazetteer on mass housing design in the Thirties. The examples are drawn almost exclusively from the London area, and include public housing schemes such as the GLC Ossulton Estate (1926-36), the LCC White City (1935-39), as well as the better known Modern Movement speculative apartment blocks, like Lawn Road flats (1933-34), Hampstead by Wells Coates, and Highpoints I and II (1933-35, 1938) at Highgate by Lubeikin and Tecton.

This book itself opens with an outline essay by Gordon E. Cherry on the politics of the house in Great Britain between 1890-1939. He describes the relevant Acts and reports which contribute to changes in policy and design against a background of ever increasing urbanisation. This is followed by a strangely placed essay on Patrick Geddes by Alessandra Ponte, and an odd- titled piece by Guido Zucchini which might be loosely translated into English as 'From the heroic phase to standardisation: the first fruits of domestic architecture'. This latter essay examines in some detail the Utopian work in the English Garden Cities and Suburbs from about 1900 until the Great War in terms of capitalist endeavours 'Utopia and Pragmatism', a further essay by Antonio Manno. is a heavily weighted and academic Marxist polemic directed at Tony' traditionalism in relation to residential development in the London area. It is a remarkably naive contribution that shows little sympathy to English idealism, inspired self-help amateurism or an understanding of the rural romanticism that went into the visionary city-gardening of the turn of the century.

The final section of the book is made up of a series of individual contributions - mainly culled from previous writings by British authors - on large-scale public housing schemes in Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester that were produced as a result of the recommendations of Tudor Walters' Report.

That no other book covers such a wide area of housing in the UK should not be used as an argument for the adoption as an excuse to put it into the English language. Its main usefulness should rather be in influencing an English author and publisher to widen the basis of the subject, and to show more concern for continuity and history (eliminating the polemics) in order to produce a much needed history of British domestic architecture of the period in question.

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This short paperback (in a very attractive cover) is part of the popular series 'Politics Today'. The blurb describes it as 'a sound and stimulating introduction for students of planning and environmental studies and of central and Local Government'. In the author's own words, the discipline of planning is no longer exclusively 'place based': it is increasingly people based, and shares common ground with urban social policy. Political understanding is now becoming part of a planner's equipment. Conversely, planning as an arm of government demands the attention of practitioners and students of politics. On the face of it, integrating the two fields should not be too difficult. There is a wealth of monographic writing, in which Professor Cherry's own contributions occupy a central place. He quotes Harold Newby on the debate over environmentalism and the countryside, describing it as 'in reality a deeply political one, revealing issues which are the very stuff of politics'. Few would dissent and many authors have made similar points in circumscribed studies. But to cover the last eighty years as a whole is to push right up to conceptual and methodological frontiers. Professor Cherry's mastery of planning history is unimpeachable. A project of this kind also calls for a grasp of politics in Britain during some ten decades, including recent ones that are still in the historical melting pot.

The first two chapters, which cover the history of planning up to 1939, are disappointing. Politics before 1939 are not much more than a checklist with conventional landmarks ticked off in sequence. The planning foreground is rich enough, but not well arranged. Some of the detail is superfluous in a book of this size, and does not make an impact. The historian is sometimes uncritical. What Joseph Chamberlain believed (p.9) and what he said are not necessarily the same thing! Despite a dazzling wealth of references and even long verbatim quotations, no page references are provided for those who might wish to follow up, making a poor example for students. In short, the pre-war historical background is a...
stage-prop which does not effectively communicate the bygone imperatives of politics, and how they interacted with the ideas and institutions of planning. The post-war chapters manage to cover all the main issues, but not sharply enough to serve as a first guide. A relation between politics and planning is asserted rather than demonstrated (e.g. p. 109), and there is no real sense of what politics might consist of, either in theory or as an actual historical process. The foreground is taken up largely by planning and its vicissitudes. As the book approaches the present day, it gains in power and conviction. The recent emergence of community groups is presented with the verve of an eyewitness. It is almost as if the author is glad to leave behind the certitudes of post-war practice, and to join that chorus of debunkers that has done so much to invigorate the subject. The last two chapters abandon history all together and probe the future. As a record of recent thinking, planning and its vicissitudes, these chapters have a documentary value. Professor Cherry is the closest to Nature that we breathe—no full employment and rising wealth. But in recent years politics are increasingly governed by a sense of relative decline, and lately by absolute decline. The crisis of planning is merely part of a slump of confidence in society’s experts and leaders. The book betrays unwaranted optimism about the crisis (‘the regional economies are still dominated by declining basic industries’ ... much more will have to be done in order to make local economic environments capable of adapting to local economic circumstances’; emphasis added, p. 100). However, the desire for more trust and better understanding within and between the public and private sectors (pp. 134–5) is laudable, but of little bearing on the realities of economic and political strife. There is an implicit confidence that business will continue more or less as usual. But de-industrialisation is a harsher climate than expansion and growth, and provides little scope for rational creativity. Instead, clashes of interest are likely to predominate. It is acknowledged that ‘the tide of town-planning is running in its favour then town planning can be very successful, but it is unlikely to be so without them.’ (p. 149). But economic retrenchment only impinges on the text as an inconvenience. It has dominated politics for the last ten years. It is the political air that we breathe—no matter that social scientists have never been more competent to highlight the virtues of the city. However, the waning of confidence in the future of the city, criticism of the capitalist basis of the industrial system, and concern over the economic decline of agriculture and the process of disintegration of rural society, encouraged the view that a movement on the ‘progress’ wards, towards greater simplification, would be preferable to a course of development which portended social catastrophe.

THE THESIS


In this treatment of the obverse of the anti-urbanism and anti-industrialism emphasis is placed on the positive aspects embodied in the calls to return to nature and the land. In the book *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit*, M. J. Wiener has analysed the antipathy of the social and intellectual elite to an industrial culture. It will be of interest to readers of PHB in that it suggests how the desire to live closer to Nature was a more important factor in the development of the ‘town-planning’ concept than is often thought.

In a variety of contexts and periods, the concept of ‘Nature’ has been used to criticise existing society and as a guide to the planning of a perfect society. Adherents of Nature have been most numerous in times of social crisis. During the period of Britain’s rapid industrialisation and urbanisation, ‘back to the land’ notions flourished. They were less marked as confidence in the industrial future built up in the mid-nineteenth century. The deficiencies of country-lif e were frequently used to highlight the virtues of the city. However, the waning of confidence in the future of the city, criticism of the capitalist basis of the industrial system, and concern over the economic decline of agriculture and the process of disintegration of rural society, encouraged the view that a movement on the ‘progress’ wards, towards greater simplification, would be preferable to a course of development which portended social catastrophe.

The thesis includes a review of the historical treatment of the campaign to empower local authorities to buy land compulsorily to let as allotments and smallholdings. It is argued that ‘Back to the Land’ was devised largely in an attempt to counter, and divert, support from land nationalisation and single tax ideas. This restates the view expressed by such historians as Peter Fraser, in his study of Chamberlain, and challenges the recent interpretations of Denis Judd and Richard Jay, who have seen the campaign primarily in terms of Chamberlain’s conflict with the Liberal Party leadership. A detailed account is given of the Socialist response to the campaign.

‘Back to Nature’ embraced a wide variety of attitudes, notions, and aspirations. Generally it referred to the desire to live close to Nature and to make social organisation more simple and ‘natural’. The pessimism that surrounded consideration of the city and an industrial future was paralleled by a revived sympathy for Nature, especially amongst radical and socialist critics of society. The role of Nature as the ‘grand alternative’ to all that is man-made has been explored by Basil Willey in his studies of nineteenth-century thought. The contribution of the ‘simple life’ has figured in accounts of the period’s community experiments. Edward Carpenter’s revolt against ‘Victorianism’ and his feeling for Nature, together with William Morris’s concern for the physical environment, are well-known. ‘Back to Nature’ with in the movement has figured in accounts of the period’s community experiments. Edward Carpenter’s revolt against ‘Victorianism’ and his feeling for Nature, together with William Morris’s concern for the physical environment, are well-known. ‘Back to Nature’ with in the movement has figured in accounts of the period’s community experiments. Edward Carpenter’s revolt against ‘Victorianism’ and his feeling for Nature, together with William Morris’s concern for the physical environment, are well-known. ‘Back to Nature’ with in the movement has figured in accounts of the period’s community experiments. Edward Carpenter’s revolt against ‘Victorianism’ and his feeling for Nature, together with William Morris’s concern for the physical environment, are well-known. 'Back to Nature' can also be discerned in the Socialist movement through the period. Environmental concerns were a powerful motive and sustaining force in the early years of the revival. Prince Kropotkin’s work points to the two aspects of a range of ideas often represented as futile and backward-looking. The Clarion suggests that simple life ideas had popular expression and appeal. The demise of 'Back to Nature' within the movement is explained by reference to the declining vigour of the Clarion movement, the growth of reformism, and parliamentary socialism. Fragmentation was illustrated by the campaigns for vegetarianism and the liberalization of sexual relations. Ray mond Williams contends in *The Country and the City* (London, 1973) that Socialists of the period had broken with the traditionally held ambition to re-unite
The thesis examines the conservative response to the urban and rural crises as far as it related to efforts to restore contact between Nature and the working class as a means of social control. The realisation of the middle classes that the morality and physical condition of the working classes was deteriorating and that the traditional instruments of social control were falling has been analysed in the work of G. Stedman Jones and Stephen Yeo. The concept of social control is applied in an analysis of the efforts of the Commons Preservation Society and Kyrle Society to preserve and provide open spaces for the urban poor. The Open Space movement is related to the natural history writers who urged the social and moral benefits to be gained by nature study. Socialist attitudes to this work are covered, with particular reference to William Morris. There is a chapter in the thesis on efforts to disperse the urban residuum to farm colonies and industrial villages. The underlying conservative intentions are illustrated by reference to Henry Solly and Charles Booth, the farm-colony experiments at Hadleigh and Stanthwaite, Bournville and Port Sunlight.

The decline of ‘Back to Nature’ as a revolutionary concept accelerated in the decade before the First World War. The concerns that had given it vigour now seemed less pressing. There was greater confidence that problems were better understood and that remedies or palliatives were becoming available. Open-air activities had improved the quality of life for many working people and had tended to blunt anti-urban tendencies within the labour movement. The solution to social problems seemed to lie within the arena of political activity and outside the realm of ideas. The New Liberalism and earnest discussion of property in land owed something to ‘Back to Nature’, some of the elements of which are identified as ‘romantic residues’ in A. Offer’s study. Property and Politics 1870-1914: Landownership, Law and Ideology and urban development in England (Cambridge, 1981). The more significant of the notions of ‘Back to Nature’ found their expression, albeit in a diluted form, in the suburban movement. Garden City Association, the town planning concept, and even in the 1909 Town Planning Act, it was the town-planning movement that helped to give ‘Back to Nature’ its historical significance.

**PUBLICATIONS**


If it is the fate of great original thinkers to be misunderstood, then Ebenezer Howard was one. Almost everyone seems to have got him wrong. Howard was less interested in physical forms than in social processes: Garden Cities were the instruments of a new socio-economic order. In setting the record straight, the article draws particular attention to the title of Howard’s book, when first published (Tomorrow: a peaceful path to real reform), and to the diagram which set out his total vision and which was omitted from the book, as re-issued four years later in 1902. The article identifies those factors in his life which played an important part in the shaping of his ideas on Garden Cities, and particularly the years spent in the United States. It concludes by assessing the role of Howard and such figures as Frederic Osborn in turning ideas into reality.


Geoffrey Gullatt died in 1975, and the essays in this commemorative volume focus on the two principal themes in his research, namely industrial geography and the landscape. The first essay is based on part of his uncompleted thesis and reconstructs the geography of manufacturing in Coventry in 1970. Others include:

Edward Lewis. ‘The developing pattern of manufacturing industry in the western Home Counties between 1900 and 1945’. Assesses the full regional impact of the economic processes at work in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire in the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries, as highlighted by the emergence of Aylesbury as a printing centre, the modernisation of the furniture industry of High Wycombe, the development of a car industry at Oxford and Abingdon, and the rise of a manufacturing and processing complex at Slough.

Michael Wise. ‘An early experiment in suburban development: the Ideal Village, Birmingham’. Draws attention to the morphology and development of a Birmingham suburb whose developers in the early twenty-first century, like Cadbury at Bournville, saw their housing schemes as a way of meeting certain social objectives.


The civic commercial elites that dominated western Canadian urban development between 1870 and 1914 practised a policy of municipal boosterism. During the subsequent period of slower growth, civic elites identified with regional, national, or even international corporations, and were far more concerned with large-scale issues than with particular communities. The consequences for western city-building were profound.


In a European and American context, the paper traces the historical development of separate, permanent ports for commercial shipping and recreational boating, and its implications for the understanding of contemporary cities.
urban growth.


An account of the fortunes of the individual pressure groups illustrates how environmental problems were perceived in late nineteenth century Britain, and how an intertwining structure of people and organisations evolved. In a general appraisal of their objectives, methods and level of impact, the author discusses why the various societies did not pool their resources to amalgamate into a single environmental structure.


The clash between the forces of renewal and preservation in the oldest part of the city of Avignon illuminates one important facet of French urban history in the 20th century. In the same way as the preservation of the old form of the Balance made the transition between the old and new more palatable for many groups in Avignon, the safeguarding of old town centres and quarters, as envisaged under the Loi Malaux, facilitated the socio-economic transformation of post-war France.


In a case study of the Edgbaston suburb of Birmingham, the author cites the range of historical data that can be used to form the basis of an analysis of a well-to-do elite suburb in the mid-nineteenth century, and thereby provide an insight into the emergence of a class that was to dominate communities and national life for a century or more.

**NOTES AND NEWS**

**On the Move**

Dr Alan F. J. Artibise, previously Professor of History in the University of Victoria, became Director of the Institute of Urban Studies at the University of Winnipeg on 1st July 1983. Founded in 1969 as an academic research centre and an innovative, action-oriented community resource, the full address of the Institute is 515 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2E9.

Professor J. Barry Cullingworth has taken up an appointment at the University of Delaware, USA, as Unidel Professor of Urban Affairs and Public Policy. Within this remit his specific focus is likely to be on comparative Anglo/American/Canadian policy, and the starting point will be land use planning, but it is unlikely to rest there. His full address is College of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware 19711, USA.

Professor David Hulchanski takes up an appointment as Assistant Professor in the School of Community and Regional Planning, University of British Columbia, 6333 Memorial Road, Vancouver, Canada V6T 1W5. Professor Hulchanski's main teaching responsibilities will involve the areas of urban planning history, and housing and land use policy.

**Urban History Review**

In its twelfth year of publication, the Review will now be published by the Institute of Urban Studies at the University of Winnipeg. The nomination of editors and members of the editorial advisory board will be made by the Canadian Urban History Association, founded in 1983 with the object of promoting urban history. For membership enquiries, application should be made to John H. Taylor, History Department, Carleton University. The Editor-in-Chief of Urban History Review is Alan F. J. Artibise, the new Director of the Institute of Urban Studies. The Review publishes articles, research notes, conference reports, 'notes and comments', and book reviews from all disciplines, including history, geography, planning, architecture, economics, sociology, and political science.

**The 'U.S.' Planning History Group**

At the annual conference of the Organization of American Historians in Cincinnati, on 8 April 1983, thirty members gathered for a luncheon sponsored by the Planning History Group, an informal unit of the Organization. Blaine Brownell of the University of Alabama gave a brief history of the Group, and read a letter of greeting from Anthony Sutcliffe of the International Planning History Group, the United Kingdom. It was announced that Donald Krueckeburg, of Rutgers, would serve as the corresponding coordinator between this group and the organisation in the United Kingdom. In response to the question, "Should this group seek a more formal relationship with the International Planning History Group?", it was decided to remain in the current informal relationship, at least for the coming year. A forthcoming journal, *The Planning History Review*, will be edited by the International Group, was announced and the submission of manuscripts was solicited. Following these brief remarks the group heard a paper on American suburbanisation by Ken Jackson of Columbia University, that was well received and generated considerable discussion. Participants included representatives from eighteen colleges and universities, and from the Chicago Historical Society.

**NEW MEMBERS**

**United Kingdom**

Ms Norma Burnett, Department of Town and Country Planning, Bristol Polytechnic, St. Matthias Site, Oldbury Court Road, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 2JP.

Mr T. C. Tarrant, Hulme Hall, Oxford Place, Victoria Park, Manchester M14 5RR.

Mr A. H. Thomas, 34 Maltland Street, Cardiff CF4 3JU.

**Overseas**

Ms Patricia Stach, 234 W. New England Avenue, Worthington, Ohio 43085, U.S.A.

Professor S. K. Troen, Department of History, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva, Israel 84 120.

**LAURENCE C. GERCKENS**

Department of City and Regional Planning
Ohio State University

**European Reconstruction Planning**

Dr Norio Ishimaru of the Faculty of Engineering, Hiroshima University, Shintani Higashihiroshima-shi, 724, Japan, is studying postwar reconstruction planning in Japan (see *Work in Progress*).

He has written to say how much he would be grateful to receive relevant material on European Reconstruction Planning. Reprints and references to relevant literature would be very welcome.
WORK IN PROGRESS

Supplement 2

In this second supplement to 'Work in Progress' (PHB 4(3). 1982 and 5(1), 1983), a distinction is again drawn between recent publications and activities (A), and work in progress (B).

Professor Dr. Arnold R. Alman, Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Wisconsin, Madison WI 53706, U.S.A.


A4 Recently developed and currently co-edit Landscape Journal, published by the University of Wisconsin Press.

B1 Continue research on company town planning, especially in the Lake Superior region of the U.S.A.

Dr Gerhard Fehl and Dr Juan Rodriguez-Lores, Lehrstuhl Planungstheorie, RWTH Aachen, Schinkelstrasse 1, D-5100 Aachen, West Germany.


B1 Research on the Planning and Construction of the modern German city in the 19th century: three case-studies on public urban development control, private urban enterprise and public infrastructure; funded by Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft; since autumn 1982.

B2 Research on site planning concepts from 1850 to 1930: (a) the 'open development concept' as a reform movement around 1870; paper for a forthcoming conference in Bad Homburg; (b) the 'terrace-development within the Garden City Movement in Germany between 1910-1930'.

Dr Norio Ishimaru. Faculty of Engineering, Hiroshima University, Shitami Higashihiroshim-shi, 724 Japan.


B1 Studies on reconstruction planning in War-damaged cities in Japan, and Europe.

Professor Kenneth T. Jackson, 610 Fayerweather Hall, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, U.S.A.

B1 I have recently begun a research project on the impact of the United States government on the pattern of urban growth. In particular, I will be focusing on expenditures by the defense department: by water, mass transit, and highway programs: by the Federal Housing Administration and the Veterans Administration; and by social welfare agencies. I would be interested in learning of similar inquiries which focus on any industrial nation.

Dr Mervyn Miller, 11 Silver Street, Ashwell, Baldock, Herts SG7 5QJ.


ARTICLES

Lord Redcliffe-Maud – A Memoir

John Maud, who died in November 1982 [1], had a highly distinguished career in the public service. But he began his working life in 1929 as a junior research fellow at University College, Oxford, teaching politics for the new-tangled Modern Greats degree. He became a full Fellow and Dean of University in 1932. Local government was his special interest and was the subject of his first book, which appeared during this period. After the war it was revised by Sammy Finer, and was still in use in the late 1950s [2]. While at Oxford, Maud was closely associated with Violet Butler and Barnett House, which was at this period an embryo social administration department of the University. He was involved with the pioneering, inter-disciplinary survey of Oxford Social Services which Barnett House undertook in the 1930s, the results of which were published in two books in 1938 and 1940.

As a local government specialist it was entirely appropriate that he should become one of the University representatives on the Oxford City Council. He was a member of the Council for six years. This was a medieval and highly undemocratic hangover (not abolished until 1972), which allowed the University to elect its own councillors and alderman to the City Council. It did, however, give those dons who taught subjects related to government, and who did not wish to face the rigours of a democratic election and reveal their party inclination, a unique opportunity to understand the nature of the governmental process and politics generally. An extraordinarily distinguished stream of what we would now call social scientists took advantage of this privilege, including Lord Jowett, T. H. Green, Michael Sadler, H. A. L. Fisher, Lord Lindsay, Kenneth Wheare and many, many others. The impact of this experience on their own academic work is a feature in the sociology of knowledge in the social sciences of this country which is still, surprisingly, awaiting its narrator.

In the mid-thirties, Maud was invited out to South Africa to write the history of Johannesburg which was published in 1938 [3]. He was to return to South Africa many years later in somewhat grander circumstances but, soon after his first visit, he was appointed to the Mastership of Birkbeck College.
London University, when still in his thirties. These were the days when the
College contained such public figures as J.D. Bernal and Cyril Joad. But
Maud did not stay long at Birbeck for, at the outbreak of war, he, like so
many social scientists, was drafted into the Civil Service. Here he seems to
have found his true métier for, unlike so many of his academic peers, he
remained in the service after the end of hostilities, reaching Permanent
Secretary status at the Department of Education, from 1945 to 1952, and
Fuel and Power from 1952 to 1959. While in the Civil Service, Maud was
closely associated with the creation of UNRRA and UNESCO. The latter
activity reflected his abiding interest in the arts. Needless to say he was
also closely involved in the setting up of the Arts Council.

When Macmillan was Prime Minister in 1959, remembering perhaps the days
when they were comrades-in-arms during the famous 1938 anti appeasement
bye-election at Oxford on behalf of Sandy Lindsay against Quintin Hogg, he
plucked Maud from the home Civil Service and appointed him High
Commissioner to South Africa, where he remained until 1963 achieving a
reputation as one of the most liberal holders of that office. On his return to
this country, he was elected Master of his old College, and became an ideal
choice in the same year to chair a committee on management in local
government jointly sponsored by the two major local authority associations,
the Committee on Management in Local Government. It was at this time that
I first met him and I shall always remember his entry into the Seminar Room
of Nuffield College, where the committee had invited a group of young
academics to discuss research. I was then an Assistant Lecturer at L.S.E.
Dressed in an immaculate suit, a 1930s triesty worn at a slightly rakish angle,
kid gloves and rolled umbrella, he gave hints of a faintly 1930s world of
moderate but relaxed affluence and high politics which was then beyond my
experience. He immediately took command of the proceedings and within
five minutes had us all eating out of his hand. For he was an immensely
likeable man whose charm was almost palpable. He also combined these
attributes with a shrewd understanding of human character, and, more
important still, an unbelievable patience. These qualities were to prove so
essential when Dick Crossman, after much trawling, appointed him to chair
the Royal Commission on Local Government before he had completed his
labours as Chairman of the Management Committee. This was in 1966; I
came to know him much better when the Royal Commission made me


responsble for their research.

He was the first major public figure I have known at all closely. There can
seldom have been someone of his eminence who had less pomposity and
less self-importance, and was more congenial and approachable. He could
be extremely funny and was a mimic of professional standards. I watched
him with increasing bafflement across the Commission's polished mahogany
table at Gwydyr House day after day, leaning forward, slightly bird-like—
giving the same eager and ardent attention to inanities, as well as
profundities, as he steered a sometimes difficult set of colleagues towards
their conclusions. I often wondered how anyone could be so unruffled, so
agreeable, even to his most tiresome colleagues, and always unfailingly
courteous. The report of the Management Committee came out in 1967 [4].
The Royal Commission was still in being and its report came out two years
later [5]. Over the six years from 1963 to 1969, he must have expended a
prodigious amount of energy. While the Royal Commission was still
deliberating he was made a peer, Lord Redcliffe-Maud, thereby confounding
generations of future students of local government who would need to make a
clear distinction between the almost coterminous Maud Committee and the
Redcliffe-Maud Commission.

He had the unusual experience of having his Commission's report accepted
by the government on the day of its publication, but within a year a new
Conservative Government was installed. They had attacked the Redcliffe-
Maud Report and had formulated their own ideas about local government
reorganisation which they implemented in the 1972 Act. This might have
been a bitter blow for most, especially as the Conservative government also
set up their own committee on local government management which in its
report contrived to ignore his committee's report. But Maud's monumental
optimism was not to be so easily put down, and he always saw the 1972 Act
as being derived mainly from his Commission's report. He remained in
demand by government throughout the 1970s and chaired, amongst other
things, a committee which enquired into local government corruption. In
1981 he published his memoirs, *Experiences of an Optimist* [6]. It is aptly
titled and his unflagging equanimity and good humour shine through every
page.
In some respects his death marks the end of a very special era in British public life for he was one of the last of the great liberal Establishment which had its formative years in the 1930s and came to power during the war. In their separate ways, they were the largely unacknowledged architects of the present Welfare State, for they helped lay down its foundations in the late 1940s. As yet another part of those foundations is dismantled, we do not perhaps need to be reminded that we are unlikely to see his like again.

L. J. SHARPE  

References


Research on the Belgian Reconstruction after World War I

In relation to its overall area and number of inhabitants, Belgium suffered more destruction from the First World War than any other country. The frontier region, with its medieval settlements (e.g. Ypres. Nieuport. Dixmude. Furnes), was annihilated. Many inland towns (such as Aarschot, Dendermonde, Dinant, Louvalin, Lier, Vise) were severely damaged by arson or artillery fire, while others witnessed incidental bombardments (e.g. Antwerp, Malines, Namur) or continuous wreckage by residing troops (e.g. Brussels, Monsille). The local delegation from the International Union of Local

Routiers).

The war damage, combined with the inactivity of the building sector during the occupation, left Belgium with an enormous housing shortage. Around one-fifth of the building stock had been erased. A large part of industry had been demolished. Road connections, commercial infrastructure and collective services were badly disrupted, and many historical monuments or sites were irreparably mutilated. A huge planning task awaited both government officials and practitioners.

Nevertheless, until recently, serious studies on the postwar reconstruction have not been undertaken. Most of the existing literature was largely polemic, and dated from the period itself. A few contributions tried to review the endeavour [1], but interest soon waned. The events seemed categorised as a time which brought nothing but a haphazard compilation of neo-styles. It was considered a lost chance, not really worth going into. Attention was drawn to the more invigorating experiments with garden districts and modernist housing lay-outs [2]. The urban scene was abandoned and left to the ill fate of those who 'are still at the ABC of their town planning education' [3].

Historical interest took a long time to reconsider this modernist judgement. It was inspired to do so by the new appeal of the civic image built up by the reconstruction venture. It fits into a more widely spread re-evaluation of planning history, and research into the origins of modern practice.

The Belgian reconstruction conforms extremely well to this perspective. It took place at the breaking point between civic design and town planning. The legal and institutional framework, in which it was rooted, related back to the alignment plan and associated building ordinance. The (progressive) professionals, however, claimed the acceptance of a general development plan, to regulate land prices by the use of differential zoning. Opposing views were thus being taken by the two consultative bodies that advised most municipal authorities. The Royal Commission of Monuments and Sites, exploiting its perogative of 1912 to decide upon the outlook of any construction in the vicinity of monumental buildings, usually sought to create visual entities. The local delegation from the International Union of Local
Authorities, which had been founded in Ghent at the 1913 International Town Planning Congress, was tempted, however, to fight any decision that did not conform to proposals on a city-wide context.

Comprehensive redevelopment plans never really gained much Influence. Soon after the February 1915 Conference of the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association on the Reconstruction of Belgium, the Belgian Government in exile had passed a law requiring devastated cities to draw up such plans. They had to be approved by Royal Decree, and conditions were laid down for a government subsidy. After the war the law was never enforced. Some municipalities devised a general plan, but it seldom went beyond an overall prescription of alignments. In cases where indications on land-use were inserted, the municipalities were among the first to depart from them.

The reconstruction process was led by practical considerations: it was an opportunity to do away with bottle-necks and slums, and replace them with an overall enlargement of existing streets. Old schemes for civic beautification, slum clearance or traffic re-arrangement, which had proved too costly, could now be implemented. Continuity appeared to be the guiding principle, especially when the value of war indemnities proved to be based on an estimated cost for replacing what had been destroyed.

In the absence of well-defined governmental policies on matters other than war-damage repayments, real decision-making usually shifted to the local level. Many municipal committees had outspoken views on a number of important issues. Made up of leading citizens, assisted by local artists and architects, mostly related to the Royal Commission of Monuments and Sites, they worked out an Idealised vision of their city, based on late nineteenth-century principles of civic design. With the utmost concern for the preservation of an authentic core, and with very definite ideas of perception, enclosure, unity and scale, they went back to a more historicist image than had ever existed before. Through innumerable meetings, design competitions, discussions with recognised authorities, full-scale models in hardboard and cloth, and many other efforts, they tried to resurrect the idealised representation of old-fashioned Flanders at the world exhibitions of, for example, Brussels (1910) and Ghent (1913).

In such a way, the reconstruction period contributes to an understanding of the role of the ‘Art Public’, and the design principles of this important movement at the turn of the century. It fulfills the ambition of a dying class of social reformers, closely connected with an elite of scholarly-trained designers, and creates an overall environment according to what is considered to be ‘good taste’: a flamboyant vision, which leaves no place for public housing and throws up a barrier against the rising tide of social consciousness by seeking refuge in nostalgia.

The opposition between central town and extension area becomes increasingly apparent. In the latter, new settlements are being conceived, to ‘create the material environment for a new social order’ [4], as R. Verwilghen, the forerunner of a ‘scientific reconstruction’, put it. They are heavily indebted to the inspiration which Verwilghen and others [5] encountered during their wartime exile in France, England and the Netherlands. They started as experimental groups of workers’ housing, built by the Office for devastated areas to meet the shortage of dwellings in the frontier region and acquire the know-how for the vast housing campaign initiated by the creation in 1919 of the State-subsidised National Society for low-rent Housing. [6] Clearly influenced by Unwin’s Town Planning in Practice, they led the way to a whole tradition of garden districts, and to some of the finest examples of Belgian twentieth-century planning [6].

To trace back the roots of this modernist achievement and confront them with the historicist re-interpretation of the city, a comprehensive research programme has been started. It began three years ago, with a programme of Masters’ theses in Architecture, Planning and Art History at the Leuven University, which concentrated on case-studies of reconstructed towns. On the basis of this work, the Credit Communal de Belgique, a bank which has recently shown a clear interest in Belgian contemporary urban history [7], agreed to finance a large exhibition on the subject in 1984.

It will highlight the most significant reconstruction examples and try to distinguish the broader contextual framework of general planning theories and re-occurring social patterns from local particularities. Studies are being undertaken on: the impact of the legislative and Institutional structure on
spatial (and formal) development: the approaches advocated by consultative bodies, informal groups, congresses and publications dealing with the Belgian reconstruction (during and after the war) in England, Holland and France; on the influence and theoretical stand of the Royal Commission of Monuments and Sites; the origins and impact of the many design competitions that were held in the reconstruction period; the policy of barracks and semi-permanent housing: the role of provisional solutions and experimental schemes in the development of guidelines and design principles for the public housing sector; innovations made in the redistribution of agricultural land and the lay-out of farmhouses, and on the detailed comparison of facades before and after the destruction. and the origin of a reconstruction typology.

A special double-issue of the Dutch architectural magazine Wonen – TA/BK has been brought out on the subject [8]. It contains an introduction which stresses the importance of the topic, and articles covering the debate initiated by the restoration of Ypres’ Cloth Hall (by H. Slynen), the background and priorities of the Leuven reconstruction (by P. Uyttenhove), and the different housing experiments at Roulers (by M. Smets and J. Maes).

In view of the ongoing research, and the international interest which the ‘clinical’ Belgian case awoke at the time, any help in identifying bibliographical and archival references will be greatly appreciated.

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American Planners and the Changing City Center

My purpose in examining this topic is two-fold. As an urban historian, I have been particularly concerned with the effects of planning on the character of twentieth-century city life. The body of critical, historical studies of American city planning has burgeoned in recent years and has added further fuel to what Robert Fishman described as the ‘anti-planning’ argument. We still lack sufficient evidence to determine whether lingering urban ills should be attributed to the legacy of rational planning or, as we assumed traditionally, to America’s failure to plan its cities. The task of appraisal falls squarely upon the shoulders of planning historians [1].

In recent years American planners have broadened their code of professional responsibility to encompass a host of social as well as physical reform concerns. Perhaps the most noteworthy addition, and an outgrowth of the ‘advocacy’ planning movement of the 1960s, has been an explicit statement of planning’s responsibility to work towards the eradication of social inequities. Yet there is still an absence in planning theory of alternative models of the kind of urban environment that planning can and should produce. This is especially the case with the theory behind center city development. What follows is a critical look at the thrust of center city planning theory as a basis for a new direction for future action [2].
Notwithstanding the changing character of American cities, planners have adhered to a model of center city development that has remained relatively constant over the century. A key assumption of the model is that improvement requires a continuous rebuilding process in order to enhance the area's principal economic functions. By stressing a rebuilding process, planning has accelerated change in the shape and substance of the center city and has stimulated what many regard as the natural proclivities of the market place. Elimination of non-productive functions was as much a reflection of the theory and practice of city planning as it was the consequence of economic forces. It is to the efforts of city planners that we must look to explain, at least in part. the devastating social dislocation engendered by the transformation. The current malaise besetting many center cities may be attributed to the dominant planning model, which in turn was derived from a narrowly construed theoretical base.

Any attempt to analyse center city planning theory runs headlong into a formidable definitional barrier: namely, what do we mean by the center city and how is it defined by planners? The prevailing tendency among geographers is to equate the center city with the central business district and those areas immediately adjacent to it. By implication, this definition assumes that the only legitimate functions of the center city are those reflected by current and future needs of the central business district [3].

This functional definition of the center city has exerted a powerful influence over the way planners devised schemes for center city improvement since 1900. As the following assessment will attempt to show, center city planning sought principally to clarify spatially and functionally the productive functions, and placed only marginal importance on social functions. The emergence of a neighborhood planning movement in the 1920s made some attempt to retain a residential base in the core city but only in the context of a major rebuilding process that gave preference to the need of the central business district. Not until very recently has the idea of neighborhood planning come to be associated with "conservation" of residential functions and pursued as an alternative to orthodox center city planning. Whether it becomes the basis for a more effective planning strategy for the center city of the future is contingent on how we assess the legacy of the pre-conservation era and its impact on the changing American city. That is the intent of the remainder of this paper.

Decentralisation and the CBD

Since the institutionalisation of planning as a profession in 1917, America's city planners have sought legitimacy through an image of practicality and eschewed the role of idealists and theoreticians. Although Daniel Burnham's famous exhortation to 'make no little plans' was not voiced until 1912, as early as the First National Conference on City Planning and Congestion in 1909 the nascent planning professional had begun already to lay the groundwork for the more modest. and more saleable. 'City Practical'. Nevertheless, planners still premised their allegedly more practical proposals for city improvement on a conceptual base that owed much to the influence of Burnham's grandiose planning approach. This showed itself most clearly in the way planners confronted the myriad ills of the center city over the ensuing decades [4].

Reduced to its most elementary components, the approach taken toward center city improvement contained two key ingredients: decentralization of the city's population (and in particular the seemingly immobile urban masses): and more marked centralisation and segregation of economic and civic functions through an enlarged and more explicitly differentiated central business district and adjacent civic center. As evidenced in Burnham's early plans for Chicago, Cleveland and San Francisco. It was the civic center - which included 'those structures, public and private, of monumental character relating to matters literary, musical, aesthetic, expositional, professional or religious' - that, in his opinion, was 'the real being of the city proper'. Of secondary importance were the city center's economic and residential functions although in the case of the former, he did recommend that planners ensure unlimited space for expansion. In reshaping Burnham's 'City Beautiful' ideal into an agenda for the City Practical, planners merely raised the needs of the productive sector to first priority and redefined the function of the civic center as an 'anchor' for a more fully developed central business district [5].

It must be emphasised that in all but the largest cities in the early 1900s the
central business district remained undifferentiated from other city functions. The dilemma confronting planners was to protect established residential neighborhoods from invasion by incompatible uses while at the same time catering to the expansionist tendencies of CBD. The combined impact of mass transit and the automobile resolved the dilemma in favor of decentralisation of residential functions to provide ample space for business centralisation. In most American cities serious efforts at planning began when the modern central city was still in its formative stages and thereby contributed substantially to its distinctive evolution [6].

Although technological innovations in transportation fueled the seemingly natural tendency of urban residents to drift to the fringe, another rationale for planned residential decentralisation was supplied by the housing reform movement. With few exceptions, housing reformers viewed residential decentralisation as the only effective solution to the ills of the urban poor. Benjamin Marsh's campaign for more vigorous city planning in the early twentieth century revolved around the concept of residential decentralisation to rid the center city of its festering slums. Inspired by both Ebenezer Howard's Garden City scheme and German zoning, housing reformers like Marsh believed that center city congestion should be relieved by the systematic resettlement of the working and middle classes into small neighborhood clusters along the urban fringe and greater protection of still viable inner city neighborhoods through carefully devised zoning laws [7].

Yet even those planners untouched by the spirit of reform recognised the efficacy of residential decentralisation of the urban masses. Robert A. Pope saw in decentralisation of workers' homes a means of 'lessening class strain, of ameliorating the struggle between labor and capital' and a way to promote 'industrial efficiency'. Town planner John Nolen agreed with Pope's assessment and urged industrialists to include housing for workers as part of plant expansion on suburban sites. Moreover, as planner James Ford contended, industrial decentralisation accompanied by residential decentralisation would produce a more contented and efficient labor force less prone to unionisation and subsequent conflict with capital. By stressing the industrial efficiency rather than the reform rationale for residential decentralisation, planners attempted to appeal to the preferences of potential clients [8].

While the number of planned industrial/residential complexes that dotted the urban fringes by the 1920s was rather sizable, these actions alone by no means induced the desired level of population decentralisation. While one segment of the housing reform movement - referred to by historian John Bauman as 'communitarians' - continued to press for deconcentration through dispersal of center city residents into planned satellite cities, the planning mainstream opted instead for slum clearance devoid of any systematic resettlement proposals. It was this latter approach that provided the basis for the urban public housing movement that began in the late 1930s and which, in turn, facilitated the removal of residential neighborhoods that stood in the way of CBD expansion [9].

Emphasis on residential decentralisation in the theory and practice of urban planners was complemented by an equally fervent drive for centralisation of urban economic functions. Almost every comprehensive city plan contained proposals aimed at strengthening the non-residential functions of the core city. Zoning was used to increase space for key commercial functions. Street improvements and expressway construction improved access between the expanding periphery and the city's core. The removal of low-income inner city neighborhoods was regarded not only as a necessary prerequisite to CBD expansion, but as an end in itself [10].

The Civic Center

Most plans included that symbol of center city transformation, the civic center. Although advanced during the heyday of the City Beautiful as an 'extraordinary vision', the idea of a civic center remained one of the more consistently postulated cornerstones of center city improvement [11].

Discussion of the civic center idea remained a prominent item on the agenda of the city planning commission in Richmond, Virginia, throughout the 1930s. More importantly, Richmond's first master plan, produced by Harland Bartholomew during the early 1940s, contained a separate and detailed proposal for a civic center to encompass approximately 23 blocks north of the Broad Street commercial corridor. Although deferred until an expressway had been built, the city was busily drawing up plans for the civic center by
the mid 1980s. Construction was well underway in the late 1960s [12].

To build the civic center on the site proposed by Bartholomew required the virtual dismantling of the city's black community in Jackson Ward. Local planners boasted that the civic center proposal promised not only to supply an anchor for the commercial functions of the core but removal of the blighting influence of a low-income neighborhood. Although Jackson Ward residents successfully blocked an attempt in 1963, it was not long after that the city began gradually and systematically to purchase the land. Although city planners sought to reverse the trend in the mid-1970s relatively little of the neighborhood was left to save by that time [13].

A strikingly similar pattern of civic center development occurred throughout the Sunbelt. 'The uniform environment of high-rise offices, convention centers, sports arenas, and girdling freeways (was) an expression of shared values among urban leaders in our boom-time cities', Cari Abbott noted. In larger perspective, 'the central business core of most Sunbelt cities (was) a concrete dream of the 1950s realised in the 1960s and 1970s by private speculators and government agencies tapping public funds for one downtown project after another [14].

Neighborhood Planning

From the planners' perspective, the widespread legitimation of the civic center concept coincided with the view that center city improvement required fullscale spatial and functional restructuring and that the planners' role was to hasten change. This penchant for restructuring also carried over into the way that planners sought to treats the residential component of the center city. Although neighborhood planning came to represent a counterbalance to the rebuilding ethic so pervasive among planners. It implied a rather selective form of conservation in its earliest formulations.

The earliest advocates of neighborhood preservation emerged from the settlement house movement in the late nineteenth century [15]. The most strident supporters of neighborhood preservation came from the predominantly middle class neighborhood improvement and protective associations that sprang up as early as the 1880s and had become a potent force in local politics by the early 1900s. Nearly fifty separate middle class neighborhood associations flourished in Baltimore alone in the early 1900s. Richmond, Louisville, St. Louis, Chicago, Memphis and Atlanta also passed ordinances to safeguard the social integrity of center city neighborhoods. As Arnold concluded, they rejected a citywide perspective in favor of a more parochial neighborhood philosophy that sought to minimize the potential for change [16].

The idea that neighborhood planning in the center city should serve to resurrect middle class dominance influenced the efforts of professional planners, and was particularly evident in Clarence Perry's seminal contribution to planning theory, the neighborhood unit plan. Formulated in the 1920s as part of a master plan for the New York City region. It became the schema for such grand residential planning ventures as Radburn, New Jersey. Quite simply, Perry's model supplied the rationale and the methodology for slum clearance and a massive restructuring of the spatial configuration of the center city [17].

Perry's abiding concern was to adapt city neighborhoods to the automobile age. While convinced that the required expressways were 'cutting up residential areas' and a potential 'destroyer of neighborhood life'. Perry recognized that the automobile also supplied a powerful rationale for restructuring the center city [18]. Drawing upon the experience of New York City in the 1920s, where numerous high rise apartments sprang up to provide city residences for the wealthy. Perry propagated his urban version of the neighborhood unit plan. This 'Five Block Plan' included all the features present in the suburban rendition of the neighborhood unit plan: residential space for one thousand families; recreation space; provision of neighborhood facilities such as local shops, a school and a gymnasium; and separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic [19].

The twin pillars of the neighborhood unit plan were its ability to refashion the physical structure of center city residential areas while at the same time enhancing their social cohesiveness. More than anything. Perry's model sought to insulate city residents from the disruptive influence of interaction with incompatible social groups. Citing extensive sociological inquiry into urban neighborhood life, Perry contended that a homogeneous residential
environment provided a necessary counterpoint to the overwhelming diversity of modern city life. As such, the neighborhood unit plan reinforced the exclusionist tendencies inherent in prevailing notions of sound, and properly planned city neighborhoods.

What Perry failed to acknowledge was the degree to which his approach foreshadowed major dislocations in the social fabric of the center city. As Alan Richman and F. Stuart Chapin, Jr. observed, "Perry's formulation encouraged the formation of neighborhoods of similar racial, ethnic and class backgrounds which, as is widely evident today .... unwittingly came to be exclusionary.

There was, however, nothing unwitting about Perry's desire to reconstruct the social fabric of the center city. Exclusion was the goal, not the byproduct, of the neighborhood unit plan. It was to remain an enduring facet of future efforts at neighborhood planning by other professionals. To effect the neighborhood unit plan required no less than a comprehensive refashioning of the center city [20].

Conservation

Even before the Housing Act of 1949 which endowed cities with the fiscal means to experiment, some planners were already at work devising alternatives. During the 1930s, Harland Bartholomew, in conjunction with the National Association of Real Estate Boards, formulated a model 'Neighborhood Improvement Act' that called for a combination of clearance and conservation to combat inner city blight. The model assumed that the entire city would be divided into neighborhood planning areas for the purposes of setting an agenda for action. Bartholomew encouraged an incremental approach to neighborhood improvement - through extensive rehabilitation, only spot clearance and enlargement of open space only through re-use of already vacant parcels - rather than the grandiose rebuilding strategy implied by the Perry model. While the basic framework of the Neighborhood Improvement Act became a cornerstone of the urban renewal program initiated by the 1949 Housing Act, Bartholomew's 'incremental approach', concentrating on various measures for conservation, did not become a dominant planning motif until the 1960s. Perry's 'comprehensive' rebuilding formula held a tight grip on the imagination of center city planners [21].

Only in the 1960s was this orthodoxy strongly challenged. The extensive studies of Jane Jacobs, Herbert Gans, Gerald Suttles and Marc Fried, to name only the most prominent, not only gave a fuller portrait of center city neighborhoods but supplied a long overdue rationale for vigorous efforts at conservation. The revisionists' writings served to re-orient the basic thrust of neighborhood planning to conservation. Ultimately, however, it was the onerous public costs associated with the Perry strategy, as much as the critique, that gave credence to conservation of the existing residential fabric of the center city [22].

Indeed, it can be argued that the shift in center city planning strategy to an emphasis on conservation even in the commercial sector was inspired more by economic realities than by planning rationales. The need to attract reinvestment in deteriorated residential and commercial facilities supplied a powerful justification for conservation. A more careful examination of the costs of conservation versus new construction revealed the advantages of the former approach. The politicising of poor neighborhoods, especially following implementation of the Community Development Block Grant program in 1975, supplied a broader constituency favoring preservation and improvement of a strong residential function in the center city. Planners were forced to take conservation seriously [23].

Although Perry's prescription for neighborhood restructuring has been superseded by a greater emphasis on neighborhood preservation and repair, its assumptions regarding the physical integrity and social homogeneity of neighborhoods still exerts a powerful influence on center city planning. Middle class neighborhood protective and improvement associations abound still, both in the city centers and in the suburbs, and reinforce the exclusionist practices that have characterised twentieth-century neighborhood development [24].

The role of planners as advocates of change in the structure of the center city needs reassessing. Whether conservation becomes the cardinal principle of center city planning could depend upon whether planners can carve
out their own niche, or whether they continue to pursue center city improvements largely in accordance with the dictates of only the most powerful and influential members of the urban community (25). Whilst neighborhood conservation may be only a passing phase in planned responses to urban development, it could constitute the seemingly elusive answer to the continuous and increasingly serious plight of the changing American city. Given the uneven and, in some instances, disastrous results of seventy years of vigorous redevelopment in center cities, experiments in conservation are certainly warranted (26).

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History of Physical Planning in the Netherlands

The occasion for writing this review of planning history research is the pending establishment of an Association for the History of Physical Planning in the Netherlands. It is not clear what the disciplinary status of this newcomer will be, and it is therefore an appropriate time for discussing its object, approach, the various viewpoints represented, and organisational framework. In what follows, I shall base myself on the presupposition that it is the traditional disciplinary approach which will form the biggest stumbling block, particularly if the differences in the questions asked and the methods used by the adherents of the various disciplines remain implicit.

A multi-disciplinary approach offers the best perspective for the planning historian. If there is an awareness of the various approaches possible, without exaggerating the differences and under-estimating the similarities. Discussions about ‘the material object’ and ‘the theoretical object’ of planning history are doomed to turn into efforts to impose a profile on the discipline based on personal preferences. On the other hand, to negate the differences leads to confusion and a consensus which is more apparent than real. It is both unnecessary and undesirable to project the history of physical planning as a new discipline. In his announcement of the establishment of the Centre for the History of Urban Planning and Design in Belgium, Marcel Smets writes of a shift from an idealistic to a materialistic approach [1]. Our Belgian confrères have chosen an approach which aims to explain the physical, morphological appearance of the environment as it is shaped by human intervention. Through this integrative approach, the disciplinary boundaries are transgressed. In my opinion, this approach is too limited. The product of physical planning, its physical-morphological appearance, forms only part of the potential area for study.

Of equal interest are the plans which have never been realised, and an explanation of the undesirable by-products of planning [2]. The planning process, too, from the initial steps up to and including the implementation of plans, demands the attention of historical researchers. Planning concepts, the rise and differentiation of professional planners, the development of programmes for training physical planners, the influence of changing
techniques—these are all topics which must form part of the study of the
history of physical planning. This area of study should be boldly conceived
because physical planning itself is a complicated form of social action.
Above all, there is the need to cover the whole field from different
viewpoints. I wish to expand on three themes in the history of physical
planning.

Delimiting the area of study

Those disciplines which have paid attention to the history of physical planning
provide us with the most fruitful starting points for further study. There are
many diverse approaches to be found in the disparate disciplines of social
geography, the history of arts, economic and social history, urban and
regional planning, architecture and housing.

At the risk of ending up in a theoretical minefield, I suggest that the existing
literature reflects three approaches to the study of the history of physical
planning. One comprises the study of the historical dimensions of the
problem of the spatial distribution of social and economic phenomena.
Another is the study of the historical aspects of urban design within urban
planning. The third approach deals with the study of the history of physical
planning in terms of policy-making. Studies of the history of legislation,
planning methodology, and planning theory, as well as of the professional-
isation of planning and planning education, form part of this third approach.
The borderlines between each approach are not clear cut, but rather reflect
different emphases. The explanatory, or independent, variables within one
approach are regarded as dependant variables within another.

The historical-geographic approach

Central to the first approach is the study of the distribution of social and
economic phenomena in the past. It may focus on such disparate topics as:
industrial location, settlement patterns, types of agricultural land use,
town or city roads, and the distribution of different ethnic and racial groups.
The first question to be posed in this sort of study is ‘What is the pattern of
distribution at a certain point in time?’ After this, changes in the pattern of
distribution over time are studied. The next question calls for an explanation
of the spatial patterns observed, and the changes taking place. This may
consist of searching for spatial correlations between patterns of distribution of
different phenomena. A large number of such studies may be found in The
Netherlands. under the various headings of historical geography, social geo-
graphy, social history, economic history and urban history. In these,
planning measures are cited as explanatory variables.

These historical-geographic studies are characterised by a deterministic
approach, whereby linear relationship is posited between the development of
a distribution pattern and the intervention of the planner. According to this
view, strong increase of the population in a town or city leads almost auto-
matically to its spatial growth. Hardly any reference is made to aspects of
planning policy, and the decision whether to implement an expansion plan.
Physical planning is mentioned as only one of a range of possible
explanations for the distribution and structure of the phenomena under study.
The historical-geographic approach can be applied on a local, regional,
national and supra-national level.

The design-oriented approach

Design forms the centre-piece of the next approach. Its starting point takes
the form of a question ‘Which design concepts form the basis of a certain
(three-dimensional) urban design or plan?’ Various scales come to mind: a
block of flats, neighbourhood, town or region. Traditional studies in the
history of architecture rarely go further than describing and interpreting
various aspects of style. In the last decade this has changed. Archi-
tectural historians have become increasingly interested in the socio-economic
context of planning and the position of design in the planning process, as
well as in the phenomenon of professionalisation. Bosma has formulated a
number of questions, which illustrate the position of architectural historians
vis-a-vis physical planning [3].

The modern architectural historian sets out to find the conditions under
which architects in a given period develop new ideas. He tries to relate the
meaning of design to its social context. Design is no longer perceived as
an autonomous activity. Its products are no longer seen as merely a work of
art. An architectural or urban design scheme represents an attempt to help
resolve social and economic problems. In so doing, the designer must take account of technical, organisational, physical and social factors. Bosma claims that these factors must not be relegated to the status of preconditions, but must be seen as forming part of the problem.

The design-orientated approach has its roots in the history of art and of architecture. Adherents are only interested in certain aspects of physical planning – physical design. Other aspects are regarded as forming part of the explanatory variable.

The institutional approach

The third approach emphasises, in a broad sense, the development of the institutionalisation of physical planning. A reconstruction of the development of the rules of physical planning has been a traditional object of study for theorists, urban and regional planners, and urban designers, well versed in legal and administrative aspects. The aim of these traditional studies, based on surveys, is usually to arrive at proposals advocating changes in the legal basis of planning. Since the mid-1960s, urban and regional planners have also shown a growing concern for the history of the planning process [4].

This concern has been triggered off by the introduction of new planning methods, such as the ‘Werkproces ruimtelijke ordening Nederland (WERON)’ (Working process for physical planning in The Netherlands). The methods demand very detailed information on the planning process and the procedures used. The aim is to intervene continuously in physical development, using whatever knowledge about procedures and the effects of planning is available. A large number of studies is underway, concerning the actual development of planning processes at various levels of government in The Netherlands. Mainly case studies, this form of research will play a part in the future development of historical research, as well as physical planning. This new form of research can perhaps best be typified by the questions asked about the actors – both persons and institutions – and their decisions, namely, ‘Who are these actors? What is their influence, and how do they influence each other?’ A plan or design scheme is no more than a decision taken in principle, concerning a large number of interventions which are closely interrelated. The question is then posed, ‘To what extent has the plan really influenced the implementation of decisions?’ It is always important to investigate the extent to which the results of physical planning reflect the intentions as laid down in the plan.

Studies concerned in the tradition of the institutional approach are mostly characterised by a voluntaristic approach to physical planning. It is assumed that the decision-maker, whether an institution or a person, has a certain amount of freedom for manoeuvre. It is because of this that it is important to obtain detailed information concerning the organisational, social and political context in which important decisions in the area of physical planning are being taken.

Roots

The three approaches to the history of physical planning can be related to three academic traditions in the area of physical planning in The Netherlands (5). Since the Second World War, there has been a growing division of labour between the various governmental bodies. Three independent departments have been responsible for design, research and the legal aspects of planning. The three specialisms are also reflected in the professionalisation of physical planning. The Dutch Institute for Physical Planning and Housing has sections for planning research and for planning lawyers. The designers belong mainly to the Dutch Union of Architects, and the Dutch Union of Urban Designers. The distinction also exists in town-planning education. Recent attempts to change this have failed.

Conclusions

The history of physical planning in The Netherlands is a topic of growing interest. This conclusion can be supported by pointing to the establishment of the Association for the History of Physical Planning in The Netherlands: the Working Group for the Preservation and Management of Historically Valuable Archives in the Area of Planning, Urban Design and Housing. Ed Taverne and Franziska Bolleray have been appointed to chairs in the history of urban planning at Groningen and Delft respectively. There is a rapidly growing stream of publications, and increasing attention is paid
to historical topics in courses on planning at Amsterdam and on urban design at Delft. The history of physical planning cannot yet be regarded as a new discipline. There is no unity of approach. There are instead three streams, each with a counterpart in the academic literature on planning. We must not exclude, however, the possibility that the efforts to integrate the design-, the research- and legally-orientated approaches into one body of theory will eventually lead to a more integrated historical discipline.

Meanwhile, it is necessary to make explicit the differences in the approaches, taken from various disciplines. This will avoid the danger of any consensus emerging, which is more apparent than real, and of confusion of various concepts. In the meantime, we can strive towards a new conceptual frame of reference based on our common interest and on similarities in the research methods used.

The Association for the History of Physical Planning in The Netherlands provides a home for at least three schools of thought and to many disciplines. Its activities will be directed as much towards similarities in approach and method, as to rendering the differences explicit. This puts an onus on those taking part in the coming discussions to make their own position as clear as possible. It also demands tolerance towards the position of others. There will always be a need to relate internal discussions to those taking place elsewhere in the academic planning world. This is not a plea for the unthinking acceptance of existing schisms. It is instead a call for historians to contribute a better understanding of the approaches currently in use. Seen in this light, the development of a common frame of reference within the history of physical planning can contribute in an important way towards the development of the academic literature in the field of planning in general.

To my mind, this poses an important challenge to our Association at the present time [6].

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