The origins of the Cambridge Green Belt
Anthony J. Cooper

National differences in urban green spaces: France, the Netherlands, Britain and America, 1600-1800
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I was honoured to be invited by John Muller to give the Gordon Cherry Memorial Lecture at the fifth symposium of the Planning History Study Group in South Africa this Easter. As a former research student of Gordon’s at the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, then a colleague of his in the School of Geography at the University of Birmingham, this was a welcome invitation both personally and professionally.

The theme of the gathering, “Town and Crown”, reflected one of Gordon’s many interests. Not only was he twice elected Dean of his Faculty, but - as Chairman of the Bourneville Village Trust - he had a keen appreciation for the social and economic impacts of a growing community of staff and students on the areas surrounding the campus. My own paper reflected a long-term interest in the physical interaction of universities and urban form-processes of growth, accretion and colonisation.

I think Gordon would have approved! The conference organisers, particularly Linda Brockett, and the host department, at Stellenbosch, are to be congratulated on a small but extremely lively gathering. It was unusual that discussion was spontaneous and lengthy, and it is a pity that conference proceedings can only rarely give a flavour of this essential part of the meeting. (This conference is reported on pages 40-42 of this issue.)

This issue carries two substantial papers that continue my attempt to explore the wider aspects of planning history. Anthony Cooper discusses the origins of the Cambridge Green Belt, a mainstream planning concern, while Henry Lawrence looks at an under-researched issue, the development of urban green spaces in city layouts, 1600-1850. Future issues should contain papers on New Zealand suburban development, a review of Vladimir Semyonov’s influence, a view of campus development in Bloomsbury, and Peter Hall’s Gordon Cherry Memorial Lecture, being delivered at the Sydney conference.

Meanwhile, the effort to maintain and improve the quality of papers carried in Planning History goes on. Now, the bulk of submissions are refereed by at least one person. I am grateful to the friends and colleagues locally and in the UK who have undertaken the bulk of this refereeing so far, and done so speedily and effectively. The Editorial Board will also find requests coming their way. I hope that this will improve quality; while, at the same time, I have no wish to change the overall character and content structure of Planning History. It should be a means for relatively rapid and slightly less formal communication than a major academic refereed journal - and we can report on work in progress, interim findings, and form a ‘user-friendly’ channel into publication for new researchers.

I have been preparing an index for the second decade of Planning History, and in the course of this work the development of the journal becomes evident. Papers are becoming longer and more substantive. But we are losing some of the shorter, topical, practical contributions - for example discussing data sources, current applications and practise, and so on. These would still be very welcome.

I have seen, in another academic body, a journal launched with the same sort of aims as those of Planning History: re-invent itself as a substantive refereed journal, changing format and size, losing the more light-hearted and ephemeral content (the institution had to launch a ‘newsletter’ to carry them). The journal is no longer read with interest from cover to cover but, in the view of several friends in this discipline, it is received, the contents page read, and shelved. A sad fate, and a lesson as we seek to develop Planning History.

Again, in looking through back issues, it appears that much of our content consists of examples and case studies. I would like to encourage substantive papers which move away from this, in two directions - first, considering the nature of planning history as a sub-discipline and, secondly, how to teach planning history - how to embrace a new generation of IPHS members?

These remarks develop from one of the last of Gordon’s letters to me. He wrote: “It is alleged that planning history enters heeby into planning education, and this weakness contributes to a generally historical stance in planning programmes.” I suggest that we would like to take this as one of Gordon’s last challenges to us. What are the views of IPHS members who actually have to teach planning history? And, for those in practise, what is its relevance?

8th INTERNATIONAL PLANNING HISTORY CONFERENCE

‘TAKING STOCK: THE TWENTIETH CENTURY PLANNING EXPERIENCE’

An end-of-the-millennium exploration of the legacies and lessons of a century of urban planning.

Sydney, Australia, 15-18 July 1998

There is still (just) time to book for the IPHS Conference.

The conference is a forum for the intersection of historical and contemporary planning and urban discourses. An eclectic mix of papers is envisaged.

Keynote speakers

The major keynote address will be given by Peter Hall (University of London), one of the world’s foremost authorities on urban planning and planning history, and author of Cities of tomorrow: an intellectual history of urban planning and design in the twentieth century (second edition, 1996).

Several other leading urbanists have also accepted invitations to present major addresses, including Leonie Sandwich (Melbourne), Patrick Troy (Canberra), Michael Barry (Melbourne) and Liu Thai Ker (Singapore).

Information

More detailed information on travel arrangements, accommodation and program details is available at the conference Internet homepage at:


Also see Planning History vol. 19 nos. 2/3 for full details.

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Vision and reality: social aspects of architecture and urban planning in the Modern Movement

Fifth International DOCOMOMO Conference, Stockholm, September 16-18, 1998

Papers are expected to cover:

• how the ideals of freedom and social prosperity may be discerned in 20th century architecture and urban planning;

• how social ideals prosper, given the variations in political and socio-economic systems – the free market economy / socialist planned economy / mixed economy?

• how modernist ideals have been influenced by differences in cultural values, building traditions and climate;

• analysis of the successes and failures of social ambition in modern architecture and urban planning;

• lessons from history which may inform the efforts of architects, planners and politicians to contribute in union to the aspirations of freedom and social harmony.

Conference sessions include: Registers (particularly the World Heritage List), Education, Technology, Urbanism and landscape, and Conservation of sites, buildings and interiors. The conference language is English.

The fees are $US 350 (DOCOMOMO members) or $US 400 (non-members), with a 5% surcharge for registration after June 1. This fee does not include accommodation or evening meals. There are additional study tours after the main conference.

A conference highlight promises to be the great fancy dress dinner party: participants are invited to perform your favourite modernist building, bringing an easy folding dress to the dinner party - putting on it as part of the performance...
The European city and global industrialisation.

Prizes for best conformity between dress and building, best dress-dancing function etc.

Contact: CONCINA

The conference is divided into three types of sessions: eight major sessions (accommodating 10 papers each), ranging from 'port cities' and 'the city and the senses' to 'shaping urban identity in late medieval Europe'; 19 specialist sessions (5 papers each), from 'European spa towns' to 'problems and policies of preservation in contemporary towns'; and two round table discussions with the opportunity for 5-minute papers. The opening lecture will be by Professor Ennio Concina (University of Venice) on 'Renaissance Venice: urban structure and institutions', and the concluding lecture by Professor Herman van der Wee (University of Leuven) on 'The European city and global industrialisation'.

The conference languages are English and French. The registration fee is US$ 100 (before 1 March 1998) and US$ 130 afterwards, covering participation, papers etc. Accommodation and meals will be extra.

Further details from the conference organiser, Donatella Calabi, Dipartimento di Storia dell'architettura, IUAV, San Polo 2554, 30125 Venice (Fax: +39 41 715449).

It is hoped that this exhibition will tour to Brescia and Madrid in 1999.


City in Europe places and institutions


The conference will address all aspects of the public sphere including citizenship, voluntary associations, community as a context for public discourse and civic behaviour, and philanthropy. Interested authors are encouraged to contact Professor Harold Carter (UK) or any member who knows their current address, please contact Dr David Massey (address on back cover).

Alvar Aalto: urban visions

Museum of Finnish Architecture Exhibition, 10 June - 13 September 1998

A survey of Aalto's buildings and projects in an urban perspective. Aalto's work is usually seen as a metaphor for nature, but he frequently created an urban setting regardless of the context of his buildings, even amidst trees and rocks. Conversely, he also added a feeling of nature to the city centre. The exhibition examines Aalto's changing urban conceptions through his designs and writings. On display are drawings, photographs and models. The works are grouped under the themes of: (a) master plans; (b) residential areas; (c) administration and cultural centres; (d) campus areas; (e) fitting buildings into an existing urban milieu, and (f) towns for the dead (cemeteries).

The University Press of New England

The Press announces a new interdisciplinary book series on 'civil society: historical and contemporary perspectives'. The series will address all aspects of the public sphere including citizenship, voluntary associations, community as a context for public discourse and civic behaviour, and philanthropy. Interested authors are encouraged to contact Professor Harold Carter (UK) or any member who knows their current address, please contact Dr David Massey (address on back cover).

Alvar Aalto: Sterius housing for Malkinmies project, Helsinki (right); administration and cultural centre, Seiniäjoki (below)
"With the object lesson provided by the City of Oxford before its eyes, the future of Cambridge, the only true 'university town' left in England, was now a matter of moment to the nation." 1

Introduction

Forty-four years ago, an experiment was launched rare in the history of planning. For the purpose of protecting the character of Cambridge as 'predominantly a university town', the first county development plan placed severe restrictions on the growth of both the population and the physical extent of the new city and effectively banned the introduction of new industry. That policy eventually led to the formal establishment of a Green Belt drawn tightly around the city's built-up area, a process which began with Cambridge's built-up area, a process which began with commerce were relaxed in the town, left in England, was now a matter of moment to the nation.

The Cambridge Preservation Society

The Society was founded in 1928, mainly at the instigation of Henry Castrie Hughes, a local architect, with the support of the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University and the Mayor of Cambridge and with, it seems, the encouragement of the Ministry of Health, this last in the shape of Mr. Lord Mayor George Pepler, then the Minister's Chief Town Planning Inspector. It was founded to foster public opinion towards the preservation of the beauties of Cambridge and its neighbourhood, and to co-operate with the County and Local Authorities, and others, for this purpose. The main preoccupation of the Society was, however, to prevent the indiscriminate spread of Cambridge into the surrounding countryside by way of 'ribbon development' and the introduction of mass production industry to the town, a fate which had befallen Oxford in the shape of the Morris motor works at Cowley.

Land acquisitions and 'sterilisation'

The instigators of the Society had put their faith in planning. Their initial aim was to persuade Cambridge Borough Council to join in the preparation of a joint town planning scheme. However, soon after the Society was formed, it embarked on a programme of purchases of open farmland to the west of Cambridge around the villages of Coton and Madingley, places cherished by the dons as they can be reached easily on foot from the centre of the city. This change of direction was partly a result of the fact that the Borough Council soon resolved to join in the preparation of the joint town planning scheme. The main reasons were, however, the appearance of the first signs near those villages of indiscriminate building development and the encouragement and financial support of Professor G.M. Trevelyan. Grants were also secured from the newly formed Pilgrim Trust, possibly because of close connections between Trevelyan and Stanley Baldwin, who was connected with the trust and by 1927 was the chairman of its Trustees. The Society may also have soon realised that any Town Planning Scheme under the 1925 Act was unlikely to be fully approved and binding for several years, so as it proved, as the scheme did not reach the stage of public inquiry until 1939 (see below).

The Society attempted to arrange for the Cambridge colleges to pool the development values of their extensive land holdings on the outskirts of Cambridge to reduce competition between them to exploit those lands for development. This failed, possibly because a proposed ring road for Cambridge would have opened up those lands for development. It also resorted to selective 'sterilisation' of land close to the town, i.e. the purchase of development rights by way of covenants from landowners not to build on their lands. This was achieved in the case of the Granchester Meadows, the fields which line the west bank of the River Cam between the town and the village of Granchester. The extent of these land acquisitions and 'sterilisation' is shown in Fig. 2.

The Davidge Report of 1934

The Society did not, however, neglect planning. It was represented on the Joint Town Planning Committee and, as such, played an active part in the preparation of
The Cambridge Preservation Society's land acquisitions, etc. by 1932.

Source: CPS 1932 Annual Report.

Fig. 2. The Cambridge Preservation Society's land acquisitions, etc. by 1932.

The planning story

The Cambridge Regional Planning Report of 1934, usually called the 'Davidge Report' after Mr W.R. Davidge, FRIBA, its author, the pioneer town planner who had been invited by the county Joint Town Planning Committee in 1928 to act as its consultant and to write the report.

The Davidge Report was a 'Regional Plan', distinct from the Joint Town Planning Scheme referred to above. As such, it reported on the state of the county and made various recommendations to its constituent local authorities. Although the report covered the whole country, this area was relatively small. Until 1964, when it was combined with the county to the north then known as the Isle of Ely, the county was dominated by Cambridge, its only town. It consisted of Cambridge, the present District of South Cambridgeshire and the southern half of the present District of East Cambridgeshire.

The report proposed a chain of reservations...which would, in effect, keep a generally open belt of country encircling Cambridge. The report listed the sites to be included in those reservations and, in doing so, demonstrated the influence of the Society on the report. Madingley Hill, to the west of Cambridge, and the Grantham Meadows were mentioned, coupled with a description of the Society's work to preserve them. Of later significance, the Gog Mogog Hills, to the north east of Cambridge, are also included. All of the main features of the landscape in the immediate vicinity of Cambridge were included (Fig. 3).

Although Davidge was known to favour open or green belts, his report contains unmistakable evidence of the influence of the Society on his recommendations. Moreover, just under a third of the full Joint Town Planning Committee which commissioned the report was connected with the Society. The Society also paid for the printing and publication of the report.

The 'Save the Gogs!' Campaign

By the mid 1930s, the Society was coming round to the idea that Cambridge should be protected by a formal green belt, a planning concept which had recently emerged from the activities of the London County Council. At that time, the Society launched a campaign to 'Save the Gogs', the Gog Mogog Hills just south east of Cambridge, which arguably constitute the best landscape in the immediate vicinity of the city. Its intention was to raise sufficient funds to enable the Gogs to be sterilised, thus preventing their being built upon. This campaign was pursued up to the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 and included public meetings and a fundraising London dinner presided over by the Duke of Gloucester, a brother of the King. Although only a fraction of the estimated amount needed to 'sterilise' the Gogs was raised, it seems that the campaign inhibited at least one would-be developer from building in the area. The fund raised was eventually used by the Society in 1954 to purchase the Wandsworth Estate on the summit of the Gogs, which is now managed by the Society as a nature reserve to which the public has access for quiet enjoyment.

The Cambridge and District Town Planning Scheme, 1936-39

The Society was consulted at every stage in the preparation of the Cambridge and District Town Planning Scheme, a formal and consensual land zoning exercise limited to the fringe of undeveloped land around Cambridge. This was because the scheme originated in 1928, when such schemes were normally confined to land "in course of development or likely to be developed." Although, by virtue of Section 21 of the Housing Act 1923 or by the Town and Country Planning Act 1932, it could have embraced the built-up area, the planners apparently decided that it should not do so.

The authors of the Town Planning Scheme clearly intended that the spread of Cambridge should be restricted. They did not, however, have the power to stipulate a green belt for this purpose. They resorted instead to zoning the open country within the proposed ring road as residential but at artificially low densities, typically four houses to the acre. The concept of the 'Rural Zone' was, however, proposed not long before the public inquiry into the scheme, which was held in March 1939. The Society was quick to suggest that use should be made of this
new category of zone instead of low-density residential zoning or by marking outlying land as 'Undetermined.' Although the Second World War broke out before the Minister's inspector could report on the scheme, his draft report, written after consultation with the Society, shows that he was minded to propose the widespread use of Rural Zones around Cambridge.

The pre-Second World War Town Planning Scheme, although never formally approved, was treated as having been approved as modified as the result of the public inquiry. This led many to believe that Cambridge enjoyed a green belt long before any plan provided for one.

Dykes Bower and his 'Review' of Cambridge

In 1943, during the Second World War, the newly-formed Ministry of Town and Country Planning established a regional office in Trinity College, Cambridge. It was to this office that the church architect, Stephen Dykes Bower, FRIBA, was sent. Although he seems to have had no planning experience, Dykes Bower was given the job of 'reviewing' the planning of Cambridge. It appears that the object of this task was to persuade a reluctant Borough Council, as it then was, to produce a town planning scheme for the town itself.

Dykes Bower produced his 'review' of Cambridge by early 1944. It contains far-reaching and detailed proposals, but never reached the light of day, being treated as 'secret.' This may have been a result of the manner in which Dykes Bower set about his task and, in particular, the way in which he was briefed by his superior, Mr K.S. Doddi, the Ministry inspector who had presided over the 1939 public inquiry. That inquiry had been marked by bitter antagonism between the Borough Council and Cambridge University, the former asserting the right to control university development whilst the latter wanted a free hand. As a result, Dykes Bower was very selective in those whom he consulted, avoiding contacts which he considered might be 'impartial.' Thus he consulted none of the college bursars, the very people who usually had the final say in the development of any college land.

Dykes Bower did, however, establish a close relationship with the Society. He may have been encouraged to do this by Doddi. In any case, as a 'Tory' and a convinced traditionalist, he would have had a close affinity with Trevelyan, by then Master of Trinity College, and Alan Ramsay, the Chairman of the Society and Master of Magdalene College. Two architects in the Society, Henry Hughes and Mr J. Macgregor, of the University School of Architecture, were apparently closely consulted. It seems that the Society was regarded as an impartial body with a foot in both camps, that of the borough council and that of the University. The Ministry, possibly on Dykes Bower's advice, chose the Society as its instrument by which it would seek to persuade all sides in the town to accept its proposals. The 'review' contains an eloquent plea for 'co-operation in planning' addressed principally to the colleges and the University, which is followed by a section in which the Society is singled out for praise and which recommended that the Society should be 'fully involved in the planning process.'

In the event, this scheme failed. This may have been due to conflicts of interest. Trevelyan was deputied by the Society to call the parties together, but he would have tended to put the interests of his college and those of the university first at meetings with the borough council. With the concurrence of the Ministry the Society planned to publish the 'review,' but this was deferred, probably on the advice of Trevelyan who, by then, was involved in the first attempts at planning University development.

The 'review' did, however, receive wide circulation within the Ministry of Town and Country Planning where, it seems, it was highly regarded. However, the Ministry's copies seem to have been lost through enemy action, and no copy survives in the Public Record Office. At least two copies have survived; one in the hands of the Society and the other in the hands of Dykes Bower's Trustees.

The Holford Report

There is a striking similarity between Dykes Bower's 'review' of 1943 and the Holford Report, published seven years later in 1950. In view of the proposals of the Holford Report for the containment of Cambridge, it is instructive to compare them with those of Dykes Bower's 'review.' Both Dykes Bower's 'review' and the Holford Report tried to dispose of the idea that Cambridge was 'the only true 'university town' left in England,' pointing out that commerce and industry had already taken the lead in expanding employment in the town. The Holford Report also pointed out the growth in jobs in central and local government. However, both recognised a unique character in Cambridge and recommended that the interests of the university should be pre-eminent.

Both the Dykes Bower 'review' and the Holford Report identify the growth of the town as the main threat to the character of Cambridge. On population, the Dykes Bower 'review' pointed out that the population of the town at the time was about 80,000 and that, taking in the neighbouring settlements, this could expand to 100,000. It weighed the pros and cons of allowing the population of Cambridge to exceed that total, and concluded that 'it would not be desirable that the total population of Cambridge, including the satellite villages, should exceed 100,000.' The Holford Report recommended:

'that the [Town and Country Planning]
Committee should try to reduce the rate at which Cambridge is growing and to reach a stable population at some level not much in excess of the present figures. We suggest 100,000 as the ultimate ceiling for the Borough - to be reached as slowly as possible - and 120,000 or 125,000 for the larger area of Urban Cambridge. We believe that if this could be done the present character and fine qualities of Cambridge could be retained.64

The Dykes Bower 'review' addressed the need, described as 'one of the main planning aims of Cambridge', for 'abstention from building' to preserve the 'close approach of the country' on the west side of the town, precisely the area of most concern to the Society. The 'review' recommended that the urbanised villages close to Cambridge65 should be brought into the borough and developed as satellite communities, properly provided with shops and other facilities. This would, according to the 'review', have drawn off housing development; and if 'the open country which at present separates [those villages], though only just separates them from Cambridge' was preserved 'before it is too late', a 'form of green belt' would have been created round Cambridge. The 'review' also recommended against the building of the western section of the proposed ring road, again a matter of primary concern to the Society.

The policy of containment was recommended by the Holford Report in language which recalls that of Dykes Bower's earlier 'review'. The report set a boundary to building development, closely drawn around the built-up area, shown in Figure 4. It did not, however, recommend a green belt for Cambridge as such,66 neither did it set an outer boundary to the area in which further building was to be restricted. It is possible that its authors assumed that the boundary of 'Urban Cambridge' would be the outer boundary, but they did not say so.

The Holford Report was restricted to 'Urban Cambridge', possibly because the original intention was to produce a development plan for Cambridge only.67

However, when the draft Development Plan was published in 1952, it covered the whole (ie original) county. It aimed to preserve Cambridge as 'predominantly a university town'68 and its population was to be stabilised once it reached 100,000. This was to be achieved by specifying low densities of population, strict controls on the introduction of new industry and the development of the nearby villages. The principle of Holford's boundary to building development was adopted as all land specifically zoned was largely kept within it, on the basis that the existing uses of undesignated land were 'intended to remain for the most part undisturbed'.69 The draft plan, however, deferred any decision on the belt of land around Cambridge and the villages within it; villages which were to become known as the 'necklace villages'.

The public inquiry into the draft development plan was held late in 1952 and lasted over six weeks. It was marked by much rancour, mainly between counsel for the University and the County Council respectively. Attention was focused on Holford's proposals for roads and additional shopping facilities in the centre of Cambridge, all of which were opposed by the University. As a result, the proposals for the containment of the city slipped through without adequate discussion.70

The draft development plan was not approved by the full County Council, which had simply resolved to forward it to the Minister. Only the Council's Town and Country Planning Committee had approved the draft, but appropriate power had been delegated to it by the Council. This was reported to the public inquiry.71

The City Council later, and unsuccessfully, applied to the High Court under Section 11 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 for the development plan to be quashed on the grounds that the County Council had not approved it.72 About one-third of the members of the Town and Country Planning Committee were active members of the Society, including its chairman and the chairman and vice-chairman of the council itself.

Fig. 4 The containment of Cambridge, 1950-55
Source: The Holford Report and First Cambridgeshire Development Plan

\[ \text{Fig. 4: The containment of Cambridge, 1950-55} \]

\[ \text{Source: The Holford Report and First Cambridgeshire Development Plan} \]
The establishment of the Green Belt

The 'necklace villages' were dealt with by Town Map No. 2 of the County Development Plan, approved in 1957. This set the final seal on the proposals first put forward by the Dykes Bower review. It made clear that the intention was that:

"the villages shall remain physically separate communities (except where they have already coalesced) and therefore development outside the areas proposed will be strictly limited." 51

The recommendations of the Davidge Report were also finally approved by designating many of the areas it had identified as 'areas of great landscape value', including the Gog Magog Hills, the line of the River Cam and the area around the village of Madingley.

Official encouragement of green belts in 1955 gave the county council the chance to designate a formal green belt for Cambridge. To preserve the 'special character' of Cambridge as a 'University City', all undesignated land forming parts of Town Maps Nos 1 (Cambridge) and 2 (the 'necklace villages') were designated at the first quinquennial review of the development plan as a green belt. In doing so, the County Council paid particular tribute to the work of the Society. 31 The rectilinear area so designated, shown in Figure 3, although approximating to Holford's 'Urban Cambridge', was clearly not satisfactory, as the outer boundary followed no natural or local authority boundaries. After at least two further attempts, the Cambridge Green Belt was finally designated in the Cambridge Green Belt Local Plan, approved in 1992. 33 Its extent is shown in Figure 5.

Conclusions

Thus a green belt was established for Cambridge. A study of the history of the planning of the city since the 1920s shows that this was largely a result of the persistence of the Cambridge Preservation Society. Although it was dedicated to 'the preservation of the beauties of Cambridge and its neighbourhood' ('beauties' was later changed to 'amenities' when a formal constitution was adopted), and worked to protect the surrounding countryside and its villages from indiscriminate housing development, it came to see the establishment of a green belt as a means to this end. The efforts of the Society, outlined above, were decisive in achieving this; even though, of course, the green belt was eventually established to preserve the 'special character' of Cambridge rather than the countryside which surrounds the city. That countryside is preserved simply as the setting for the city, considered essential to maintain that 'character'. Whilst the fate of Oxford, with a large automotive plant established on its doorstep, haunted most people in Cambridge, only the Society seems to have campaigned to preserve the countryside as such.

NOTES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to express his appreciation for the encouragement and supervision of Professor Dennis Hardy of Middlesex University, and to thank the Cambridge Preservation Society for allowing him access to its papers.

   2. The status of a city was conferred on Cambridge in 1951.
They are now being followed by large firms which will increase the pressure on the countryside.

It is currently estimated that there is a need to accommodate 4.4 million more households by 2016 (Department of the Environment, Household Grid Reference: Where Shall We Live, London: HMSO, 1996).

Cambridge University contributed to the cost of retaining the country by donating £1,100 to the cause.


In PRO HLC/480.


S.E. Dykes Bower (1903-94) was a notable church architect, a 'Tory' and a 'flawed Gothic genius' (K. Powell, Sunday Telegraph, December 17 1985). After working on Cambridge local planning and Town and Country Planning gave him the job of making a 'special study of the place of the cathedral cities in possible planning proposals'. He left the Ministry in February 1946.

As evidenced by Dykes Bower's letter to the Secretary of the Society, dated February 1 1944, by which he sent a copy of his 'review'.

The M11 motorway follows approximately the line it would have taken. The fact that it skirts Grantchester to the south-west is probably a result of the efforts of the Society regarding the proposed ring road.

In addition to representatives of the local authorities, this committee also included representatives of Cambridge University and of the county Rural Community Council.


Regional Plans were usually 'broad brush' and well presented but were, in effect, sets of non-binding recommendations for the coordination of the formal 'Town Planning Schemes' of the time (see S.V. Ward, Planning and Urban Change, London: Paul Chapman, 1994, p. 70).

Davidge Report, op. cit., p. 61. This 'chain of reservations' is described as a 'green belt round Cambridge' in the list of the Contents of the report.

See his Regional Plan for Hertfordshire, Hertfordshire County Council, 1927.

A comparison of the plans used to illustrate the report with plans known to have been prepared by Henry Hughes indicates that he could have prepared some of the former.

The origin of the London Green Belt can be traced back much further, but it was in the early 1930s, following the publication in 1933 of Sir Raymond Unwin's Second Report to the Greater London Regional Planning Committee, that the London County Council began to encourage the purchase of open land around London for the purpose of establishing it (see D. Thomas, London's Green Belt, London: Faber, 1970).

As no workable method had then been devised to compensate land owners whose rights to develop their land were taken away or restricted by a town planning scheme, local planning authorities were effectively prevented from imposing planning restrictions against the will of the land owners concerned.

Cherry, op. cit., p. 69.

Just under 10 to the hectare. 'Overzoning' was a characteristic of pre-Second World War planning schemes. Pre-empted claims for compensation from the land owners but provided for many more houses than could possibly be required. According to Dudley Stamp, if all the land zoned as residential in the pre-Second World War Cambridge town planning scheme had been taken up for housing, it could have increased the population of Cambridge from 75,000 to 175,000. I.D. Stamp, 'The future of Cambridge', Geographical Magazine, vol. 16, 1945, p. 197.

'Rural Zones' were proposed by the Ministry of Health as the result of the work of the Town and Country Planning Advisory Committee in 1937.


In PRO HLC/180.


S.E. Dykes Bower (1903-94) was a notable church architect, a 'Tory' and a 'flawed Gothic genius' (K. Powell, Sunday Telegraph, December 17 1985). After working on Cambridge local planning and Town and Country Planning gave him the job of making a 'special study of the place of the cathedral cities in possible planning proposals'. He left the Ministry in February 1946.

As evidenced by Dykes Bower's letter to the Secretary of the Society, dated February 1 1944, by which he sent a copy of his 'review'.
In April 1945 he reported in confidence to the Society’s Council of Management that he had attended, on behalf of the university, an inconclusive conference with the Borough Council on the future planning of Cambridge. There is no hint in that report that Dykes Bower’s ‘review’ was discussed at that meeting or, indeed, that it was known to the parties: the Society’s Minute Book, April 26 1945.

In Dykes Bower’s papers is a letter to him from Virginia Wimper (?) of the Ministry of Town and Country Planning dated April 26 1944: ‘I must write and say how very interesting and convincing your Cambridge report was. It came to me very late, with the comments of the high-ups already on it, and they all seem to feel the same ...’ Holford could have seen a copy at the time as he was then a senior member of the staff of the Ministry. If not, his attention could well have been drawn to it by the Society or by Leith Waide, the County Planning Officer, who had been a colleague of Dykes Bower at the Ministry.

The Trustees’ copy is in a Departmental folder, having apparently been removed by Dykes Bower when he left the Ministry in 1946. In addition to these two surviving copies, Dudley Stamp was permitted to make unattributed use of the ‘review’ as the basis of a 1945 paper: Stamp, op. cit.
National Differences in Urban Green Spaces: France, the Netherlands, Britain and America, 1600-1800

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Introduction

Ornamental vegetation is an important element of urban form, expressing cultural-historical traditions by using garden aesthetics to reveal environmental and social ideals. This is seen best in the spatial forms created by plants or provided for them in the urban landscape. Cultural traditions have been recognized in urban landscapes in the design and function of built environments and the spatial and social patterns of open spaces, but they have gone mostly unrecognized in the uses of plants. One reason may be that many of the landscape forms that incorporate plants were developed first on the urban fringe, itself a neglected aspect of planning history and urban geography, and were only later incorporated into the heart of cities following urban expansion.

This paper considers the uses of urban ornamental vegetation in four distinct national cultural traditions, the French, the Dutch, the British, and the American, and how urban form was planned and developed to accommodate these traditions. These overall national differences derived from many subsidiary differences in architectural and landscape tastes, urban infrastructure and technology, class structure, property laws, and political processes. In each of them the use of ornamental vegetation reflects the taste and power of the dominant cultural elite, and that taste was partially cosmopolitan and international in character. Nevertheless, there are distinct national differences as each cultural group interprets urban landscape ideals in the context of forms used within its own society, both physical and social. This paper uses (over) simplified sketches of the most important elements in the ways each culture used ornamental vegetation in cities to express environmental aesthetics and to make social statements about city life and the divisions between public and private realms in city life.

Background: Medieval urban traditions and Renaissance innovations

Most European cities in the medieval period contained vegetation in only a limited array of settings: planted in private gardens enclosed from public view and in a few church yards or associated market squares, or growing adventitiously along city walls and waterways. Beginning with the Renaissance, first in Italy in the fifteenth century and elsewhere in Europe in the sixteenth century, some private gardens were made much larger and began to use alleys of trees in their spatial structuring. The alleys of trees came to dominate the spatial composition of large gardens and, by the end of the sixteenth century, they were being planted outside garden walls in other landscape settings. From these were drawn some of the most important urban landscape forms incorporating trees and other vegetation. At the same time, urban form was being shaped by new planning and design innovations and processes, including geometric street patterns, regularized squares and new types of fortifications. Despite a cosmopolitan sharing of ideas, regional and national differences became apparent in the development of many of the new landscapes forms. The most distinctive of these were found in France, the Netherlands and Britain, and later in the colonies in North America that would become the United States.

The French Tradition

The first new urban landscapes to develop in a distinctive national style were in France, most notably in Paris, but soon after in other cities throughout the kingdom. The conceptual model for the new French urban landscape appears to be the garden, the 'French' formal garden. Though they derived directly from the Italian Renaissance gardens, French gardens made more liberal use of alleys of trees in their design. They were also adapted for new recreational pastimes such as putt putt, bowling and archery, often outside the garden walls. Beginning in the late-sixteenth century, alleys were planted alongside the walls of Paris specifically for putt putt. Soon thereafter another variant, the cours, a tree-lined carriage promenade, came to Paris: the first was the Cours de la Reine, an enclosed alley alongside the Seine, open only by invitation of the Queen, Marie de Medici. Other uses of isolated alleys were among the approach roads to the city, such as the Avenue des Tuileries and atop the decommissioned city walls, what have come to be known as the Grandes Boulevards, both begun in the 1670s (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. A section of John Rocque's 1754 plan of Paris shows the western edge of the city with part of the Grandes Boulevards at upper right, the Avenue des Champs Elysées on the left and the Jardin des Tuileries on the right (reproduced by permission of Historic Urban Plans, Inc., Ithaca, New York 14853).
incorporated public plantings in the new settings.

The social and political order of the newly-independent Netherlands was also different. There was much less aristocratic power in general, and royal power in particular. The cities were almost all self-governing, ruled by bourgeois elites, although the political franchise was severely restricted until the end of the eighteenth century. Indeed, the Netherlands was the first national bourgeois state, and in the urban landscape, ornamental vegetation reflected middle-class values and traditions of individualism on the one hand, and of civic cooperation on the other.

This is seen best in the expansions of Amsterdam. Maps and town views of the mid-sixteenth century show no trees along the town canals. Then, in the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries, Amsterdam was enlarged, and the new canals and many of the older canals were planted extensively with trees. In some Dutch towns, old canals surrounded by new urban expansions were infilled to form streets and, in a few towns, these streets were planted with rows of trees, the first truly tree-lined streets in Europe. Leiden, Utrecht and Haarlem each had at least one such tree-lined street by the middle decades of the seventeenth century (Fig. 2).

The location of the Dutch tree-lined canals was interior rather than peripheral. The uses were also different from that of French allées. Trees were used not to create recreational spaces as much as to provide visual amenity, a pleasant setting within which urban life took place. And the trees were planted by individual householders acting in response to civic regulations arrived at by group processes, which, though not yet democratic, were at least not autocratic.

The Dutch Tradition

In the Low Countries, a very different urban landscape tradition evolved, based on independent towns carefully built in and around waterways for the most part. Though the cities of the southern Netherlands were traumatized by the Habsburg wars in the sixteenth century and failed to grow much in the seventeenth century, in the northern Netherlands independence from the Habsburgs led to a period of rapid growth, especially in Holland and Zeeland. Many towns expanded rapidly and developed innovative ways of dealing with urban living, some of which create a pattern of limited public access to newly-created open spaces that was more restrictive than that found even in pre-revolutionary France. And, in British landscape aesthetics, there was a sharp dichotomy between city and country, with a strong anti-urban bias in environmental ideals. The ideal urban landscape form derives from a rural elite ideal based on the manor house in a park (although the conceptions of both manor house and park did change markedly). It was expressed explicitly in the eighteenth-century ideal of rural art; the country in the city.

Two distinct forms developed to express these social and aesthetic patterns in the urban landscape. The first was the residential square. From the late 1680s to the early 1800s, these private residential enclaves were built to provide the imagery of a rural park for people who had to reside in town despite their predilections for country life. Most of the early squares in London were laid out as centerpieces of speculative real estate developments inhabited by rural aristocrats who needed a town house in the capital for the winter social season. The earliest were modelled on squares of Italy and France, and were simply open spaces without planting; but, by the early-eighteenth century, new squares were planted with lawn or trees and shrubbery.

By the end of the eighteenth century, most had become leafy little parks. It is important to note that these were originally private parks, available only to the tenants of the private estates that surrounded them, as many of them remain today. Indeed, many of them were built on former common lands and the estate owners needed special acts of Parliament to restrict rights of access. The developments that included squares served as a form of town planning and, though limited somewhat by local government regulations, were one of the main creators of urban landscapes in many British towns for over two centuries (Fig. 3).
The second distinctively British urban landscape form to incorporate vegetation into the urban landscape is the large city park. These originally derived from the royal parks such as St. James’s, the Green Park and Hyde Park these were located near London, became surrounded by urban growth and have since been converted to public use. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries these parks were walled, and admission was usually limited to well-dressed gentlemen and ladies. Unlike continental gardens, British parks were mostly open and grassy with groups of trees and nearly natural waterways. As the naturalistic English garden styles developed in the eighteenth century, the royal parks were renovated to look more natural and less formal.8 These forms were best expressed in London, but there was at least a handful of squares and a park or two in most towns of any size in the kingdom by the end of the eighteenth century. The larger towns such as Bristol, Dublin and Edinburgh had more, of course, but also important were the resort towns, particularly the spas, such as Tunbridge Wells, Bath and Cheltenham, where some of the innovations in form took place.9 Perhaps the most complete urban landscape built of squares, circuses and crescents was in Edinburgh’s New Town, begun with James Craig’s plan in 1767, thought most of it was built in the first half of the nineteenth century. Edinburgh’s New Town rather self-consciously imitated English forms and tastes in an era when Scotland was seen as North Britain rather than an autonomous country within a united kingdom, though it meant adapting English forms to the Scottish system of property rights.10

Fig. 3. Hancock’s 1799 plan of Bath shows the Circus (yet unplanted), the Royal Crescent, St. James’s Square and part of Camden Place, all recently constructed on the north and west edges of the town (reproduced by permission of Historic Urban Plans, Inc., Ithaca, New York 14853.)

Residential squares and large parks had some common characteristics. They had peripheral locations, although the squares were not so much at the edge of the city as they were in the center of new developments that were themselves at the edge of the city. Both served primarily a passive role, as symbols of nos in urbe, rather than as an active recreational one; although the large parks were used for a wide variety of sports and other active pursuits. Finally, their ownership was distinctly autocratic, either in the hands of an estate landlord or of the monarch. However, the autocracy was less tempered by noblesse oblige than in the French urban landscape – though the royal parks were generally open to at least the well-dressed public, the residential squares were never opened to any but the surrounding residents.

The American Tradition
In the New World, European traditions found a new set of conditions. One of the most important of these was the relatively small size of most towns until the late eighteenth century. Another was their lack of constraint by walls and moats, with only a few exceptions. A third was a general freedom from the more restrictive social structures of the old world, especially the widespread availability of fee simple ownership. More of the towns were self-governing, and class distinctions were much weaker; especially in what would become the United States where there were no hereditary titles of any consequence.11

The freedon from tradition and constraint led to a major difference from the old world, a much lower spatial density and a much greater size of individual lots. In most English and Dutch colonial towns, houses were separated from each other by small gardens with trees and shrubs. Residential gardens around houses were usually lost in the older parts of the larger towns as density increased over time, but one element of the low-density residential landscape did survive in many towns as they grew larger: this was the planting of trees in the street in front of individual houses. This is seen in New Haven and New York late in the seventeenth century, and in many other towns by the middle of the eighteenth century. Settees have been encouraged by civic authorities, but tolerated by them - up to a point - for there were ordinances banning trees on streets less than 40 feet wide in New York by the end of the eighteenth century. American tree-lined streets were different from French boulevards and even from Dutch tree-lined canals. They were much less regular and uniform, and householders planted trees. Streets were characterized by an almost random pattern of planting, and species were mixed, chosen by individuals rather than ordained by civic authorities.12

Another distinctly American urban landscape form was the small public park, different from the British residential square or the large royal park and different from French or Spanish plazas. The most important of these publicly-accessible gardens and parks derived from civic commons lands. In New England, many of them were small and centrally located. Elsewhere they were initially located at the edges of towns, intended as a reserve of property to be sold for future building sites to accommodate urban growth; but used in the interim for temporary livestock holding, fuelwood collecting, militia training and for recreational purposes. Parts of these commons were converted into parks, and as they were surrounded by urban expansion, their relative location became more central. Boston’s Commons and New York’s City Hall Park are prominent examples. Other public parks were made from open spaces associated with public buildings and military facilities.13

Unlike the European forms, American street trees and small parks were located in many different parts of towns. Trees could be planted on any street, even Broadway in New York and Market Street in Philadelphia. Parks tended to be initially on the periphery of towns, but were soon surrounded by urban growth and became part of the interior urban landscape. They were also open to public access, though their ownership differed. Street trees were the responsibility of individual property owners while parks were civic property. In the street tree and small public park can be seen an American
urban environmental ideal based on the model of the arcadian village. It shared an anti-urban bias with the British tradition from which it sprang, but it was a republican not an aristocratic social ideal, more akin to the Dutch social model than the British.

Epilogue

The national differences noted above were never absolute, and forms developed in one area were often imitated in other areas, often reflecting tides in cosmopolitan tastes. Especially after the turn of the nineteenth century there was more widespread sharing of forms and uses, and by the second half of that century there emerged an international urban landscape aesthetic that incorporated elements of British and American forms but was based mostly on French models. It was inspired by the reconstruction of Paris under Napoleon III in the 1850s, including tree-lined boulevards, large peripheral parks and small public square-gardens. By the end of the century it had become part of the Beaux Arts canon of urban planning and design and was used throughout the sphere of European cultural influence: Chicago, Buenos Aires, New Delhi and Manila were reshaped using forms descended from the models developed in separate countries between 1600 and 1800.

NOTES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This is a revised version of a paper first presented at the Fourth International Seminar on Urban Form (Birmingham, 18-21 July 1997).

1. By 'British' I mean the various nations of the United Kingdom as it existed in the eighteenth century; including England, Wales, Scotland and then-colonial Ireland. Especially important non-English cities included Edinburgh and Dublin. By 'American' I mean primarily the United States, although many of the urban forms and uses of vegetation were similar in Canada. A good discussion of distinctly Canadian forms is found in G.A. Stelter, The Classical Ideal: cultural and urban form in eighteenth-century Britain and America, Journal of Urban History, vol. 10, 1984, pp. 351-382.


9. M. Giroud, The English Town,
In 1935, the Swiss architect Maurice Braillard drafted a Master Plan for Geneva that was to serve as a major reference and guide for the urbanisation of the surrounding area. This plan has often compared with the experience of the construction of public housing during the years of social democracy in Germany between 1920 and 1930. It is surprising that the similarities between this plan and metropolitan projects dating from the beginning of the century have not previously been studied.

An interesting comparison can be made with Otto Wagner’s 1911 book Die Groszstadt or with the metropolitan ideals depicted by Karl Scheffer in Die Architektur der Grosstädte (1913). Let alone the famous Ville Contemporaine de 3 millions d’habitants by Le Corbusier (1922) and its counterpart La Ville Verticale by Ludwig Hilberseimer (1922). In all of these descriptive plans, the metropolis is characterised largely by a concentration of strong economic and industrial forces recognised as the expression of the new...
Great importance is also given to the development of mass public transport and provision for the automobile; essential to the increasing necessity of communications, speed and mobility.

Maurice Brillard may well have known about these projects, for their similarities with the 1935 Master Plan are extremely evident. The Plan was conceived as a new city structure that also included a central business district dominated by office skyscrapers and surrounded by residential areas, of high-rise slab blocks separated by green spaces, laid out according to a geometric plan, and adapted to the existing topography. As Scheffer had already suggested, only certain historic zones of the town were to be preserved. The new metropolis drawn by Brillard used this tabula rasa approach in order to design the industrial zones and to outline the new road networks and transport corridors serving the contemporary needs of movement and speed.

Even if it is clear from the nature of the metropolitan problem that the principal task was one of planning, rather than the designing of individual buildings, for Brillard, the spirit of the modern metropolis was not limited to the planning of the city of the future. It also concerned a number of architectural projects that attempted to express the dynamics of metropolitan life. Some of these projects are part of the 1935 Master Plan, and are characterised by a new urban scale, accentuated by the use of high-rise buildings and by an organisation of multi-level streets.

In the example of the proposed replanning of the Terreaux-du-Temple, which dates from October 1927, a tower of 19 storeys completes a long building that would contain a multitude of activities, including cinemas, a hotel, a swimming pool, shops, offices, and housing. The vertical dimension of the tower deals with the scale of the territory, while the rest of the project denotes the different circulation networks either by creating a road passage at street level or, in order to separate pedestrians from cars, by creating a pavement at mezzanine level.

Similar plans were adopted by successive projects for the right bank district of St Gervais. Slums were to be removed, to make way for a central business district with skyscrapers connected by pedestrian bridges, also situated at mezzanine level. The monumental character of Brillard’s proposals is only surpassed by the proposal drafted by Le Corbusier, who placed, in the same area of Geneva, three glass skyscrapers arranged around inner gardens, identical to his Plan Voisin of Paris.\footnote{11}
All of these examples show Maurice Braillard's evident fascination for the metropolis, and are certainly the consequence of his triple interests in aesthetic, economic and social issues. In 1931, referring to his skyscrapers of St Gervais, Braillard wrote that 'in order to facilitate the financial operation certain sites shall be reserved for tall constructions. This in turn will permit a very effective decorative part that will complete the silhouette of Geneva'. 

Braillard seems, therefore, to share Behrens' point of view that a city, developed horizontally, demands the use of compact vertical masses. But the real problem was economic and social, rather than aesthetic. The purpose, above all, was to fashion a new image for Geneva, which would position the city favourably in competition with other European capitals. Favoured by exceptional conditions of accessibility, salubrity and modern equipment, Braillard's 1935 Master Plan had to fight for the economic resurgence of a city suffering from financial difficulties and, little known to date, an unemployment crisis.

None of these projects were realised. All those who dreampt of a metropolitan Geneva were never given the opportunity to admire the dynamic forces of the monumental skyscrapers of the new city. After the Second World War, the arrival of a new generation of architects and the international opening of Geneva, amongst other factors, inspired new ideas for the urbanisation of the agglomeration; notably with the introduction of new French, English and American models. During this period, architects definitely abandoned the illusion of planning the city as a whole, instead concentrating their attention on particular projects for parts of
the town, such as districts or neighbourhood units.
One has to wait until the 1960s for Geneva's planners again to try to affirm this as a major city and metropolis. But that is another story.

NOTES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The original paper was translated by Luiza d'Orey.

4. O. Wagner, Die Grossstadt, Vienne, 1911.
7. L. Hüberseimer, Grossstadt Architektur, Stuttgart: Julius Hoffmann, 1927.
8. Larsson, op. cit.
10. The motif of the street cutting through a big building, and thus indicating a new scale of construction, was one of the most typical elements of the iconography of the metropolis in the 1920s: Larsson, op. cit.

RESEARCH

The creation and transformation of inter-war suburbia in Birmingham

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Much of our knowledge of the four million houses built in England and Wales between the two world wars comes from studies of south-east England. This research, which considers suburban growth in Birmingham, suggests that generalisations based upon the findings of such studies are misleading.

By using building applications and development control documents, the history of suburban areas in Birmingham, from 1918 to 1996, is traced. The roles played by various groups, notably architects and developers, are considered for the inter-war period, and the role played by the middle class in exerting housing demand is questioned. For the post-war years, attention shifts to the transformation process, where planners and householders are seen to have played major roles in shaping suburban townsapes.

The development of suburbs is linked to changes in town planning, with a view to determining how paradigm shifts have influenced their built form. It is suggested that more recent shifts, notably the shift from modern to postmodern forms of planning, have had a limited impact. Local constraints - particularly the morphological frame - have exerted the greatest influence on the form of townscape change. Local factors, in an era of globalization, remain a key determinant of built forms.

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Imported versus exported urbanism

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A project is under way to explore the complex nature of modern urbanism from the nineteenth century to the present. Much has been written in the past couple of decades on the transfer of concepts of city-building, city planning and architecture from the ‘centre’ to the ‘periphery’. This endeavour shifts the spotlight from the importers of ideas to the importers. It posits that local actors (elite and non-elite, autochthonous and settlers, majority and minority) often played active roles in helping to shape the selection, adaptation and realization of urban planning ideas, seeking to partake in the global modernization project and to address their own concerns and ambitions.

Consequently, we will examine how modern urban intervention techniques and concepts that had been developed in some Western (chiefly European) countries in the past two centuries were then introduced within those countries, into other Western countries, and into non-Western countries - in both non-colonial and colonial settings. By considering distinct topics in different geographical and historical contexts, the aim is to study the process by which urbanistic principles emerge and evolve away from their sources.

Changes in urban form, architecture, spaces, physical patterns, functions, and so on, will be shown to be generated by forces both local and national/global. This would broaden the discussion of how transfers of ideas and techniques take place, in this case focusing on the activities and actors that shape built environments. The project aims to strengthen this line of questioning, while defining a set of important queries for future scholarly investigations concerning the relation of the locals to foreign urban planners and planning principles. It would help to redress the neglect of the local element in much of the literature.

In order to examine all these matters, an undertaking in two parts has been proposed. First, a seminar, with close to thirty participants (most of whom have been identified), is being planned for late 1998 in Beirut (Lebanon). The papers presented at this seminar and their synthesis would then form the basis for an edited book, whose publication is targeted for late 1999.

Ultimately, joint research along this novel vein is foreseen. For a number of reasons, the seminar and book will focus on the Middle East (broadly defined). Nevertheless, they will also include several countries outside that region in order to ensure some broader applicability for the arguments made here.

This is an activity of UMRAN: Forum for Research on the Built Environment in the Middle East, and of the International Planning History Society. It was launched at a 1996 meeting of IPHS, and many of the participants are IPHS members. It is sponsored so far by the Center for Behavioral Research (CBR) at the American University of Beirut, the Centre d’études et de recherches sur le Moyen-Orient contemporain (CERMOC), and the International Planning History Society. The program was established at a 1996 meeting of IPHS, and many of the participants are IPHS members. It is sponsored so far by the Center for Behavioral Research (CBR) at the American University of Beirut, the Centre d’études et de recherches sur l’urbanisation du Monde Arabe (URBAMA). The full program statement will be published in the next issue of Planning History.

To learn more about this project, contact Joe Nast (as above) or Mercedes Volait at (33-1) 45.66.80.18 (phone & fax).
The Sessions
Like all previous conferences, the Seattle conference was multi-themed. Over 100 papers were presented, in 39 sessions, almost all arranged to run in five simultaneous tracks. A single reporter can, therefore, give no more than an inadequate flavour of what was on offer. The sessions combined the familiar and the novel; though a number of dominant themes can be identified, some sessions being related to more than one. Thus several considered either particular planners or planning movements. There were two sessions on the City Beautiful, a session on progressive planners (specifically Stein and Ackerman), a session on the Olmsted family and one also on the most revered planner-basher on the North American continent, Jane Jacobs.

Rather more sessions were organised around specific aspects of planning such as zoning and regulation (two sessions), infrastructure and transportation (four sessions), urban renewal, preservation, the arts and community renewal, retail planning, combating growth and sprawl (two sessions).

In addition, two sessions dealt with professionalism and one with the relationships of planners and public. Also very prominent were social and economic themes, such as urban economic decline, race and ethnicity, especially in relation to particular places. In some cases, the focus was the planned urban environment itself. In others, the context was a discussion about planning within a particular regional or national context. Thus the western USA received attention in several sessions. There were also sessions focusing mainly on other countries, especially Canada, parts of Europe and South America. Finally, there were a few sessions themed principally around a particular period of time or a major theme in urban change, such as suburbanisation.

It is no disrespect to other sessions to say that the real interest arises when controversies begin to emerge, or when the sessions are structured around controversies. One that particularly caught my attention, not least because of its salience for the city that was around us, was the session on the highway and the city. The central question was why exactly why urban freeways began to go out of fashion. How much was it the result of a shift of thinking within the urban elite (as was argued by William Isell in relation to San Francisco)? Or how much was it a victory of genuine community activism, as was argued by Robert Fishman and, more implicitly, by Jane Holtz Kay? Another example, this time of a session explicitly structured around a controversy, was that organised by Richard Harris. This re-examined North American suburbanisation and challenged the conventional notion that it should be understood exclusively as a middle-class residential-led phenomenon which then gradually became a mass phenomenon (a view associated, ironically, with Robert Fishman, who thus managed to figure in two controversies). Harris argued rather for seeing suburbanisation as an essentially heterodox phenomenon, with its more working-class forms needing to be understood in different terms to those of the middle class.

The Plenary Addresses
These two sessions, both well attended, certainly deserved being planned (three sessions), gender, and community planning.

Many of the other sessions focused on planning in relation to particular places. In some cases, the focus was the planned environments themselves. In others, the context was a discussion about planning within a particular regional or national context. Thus the western USA received attention in several sessions. There were also sessions focusing mainly on other countries, especially Canada, parts of Europe and South America. Finally, there were a few sessions themed principally around a particular period of time or a major theme in urban change, such as suburbanisation.

The current President of the Urban History Association, was more concerned with reviewing and suggesting a gap to current urban history practice in the United States. Entitled 'City and Region: The Missing Dimension in the U.S.', his address argued that American historians were neglecting to look at cities within a regional context. In this, he compared the United States unfavourably with much of Europe and Australia, where urban historians have been more attuned to regionalism.

The Bus Tours
The final events of the conference, on the Sunday morning before we dispersed, returned us specifically to the location of the conference itself. The great shame of these bus tours is that, because they are at the end, they come to be seen as optional addresses, rather than being integral parts of the programme, and are often poorly attended. However, for the overseas visitor, they offer another opportunity to learn more about the place. In particular, there was the continuing query as to whether Seattle really lived up to its reputation as a city that was pointing the way to the future. Three nights of listening to the continual rumble of traffic on Interstate 5 had not convinced many of us that the city was finding a new relationship with nature.

In fact, both of the available tours seemed set to provide further insights on this question. The East Side tour took us across Lake Washington and into Kirkland, the largest of the suburban districts, and was shown with clear attempts to demolish what had been a very low-density downtown area. Our last stop was an impressive new park being created adjacent to the downtown area of Bellevue. Overall, therefore, this last visit was not addressed and partly answered some of the questions which had been hanging since the start of the conference. There was, as always, much rich fare that was of more general significance to take away from the conference proper, of course, and slotted at leisure. But, speaking personally, it was gaining a sense of how Seattle was changing and acquiring its environmental reputation.
that had the most immediate impact. Much is now beginning to happen, in growth management and transit, that may well change the way that the metropolitan area as a whole grows and functions. Seattle remains some way from the solutions used in Portland and San Francisco, where freeways have been removed (or not replaced when they were destroyed by earthquake). But it is clearly a city to watch.

'Town and Gown': Fifth Planning History Symposium of the Planning History Study Group (South Africa), University of Stellenbosch, April 1998

Fana Sibholengane

It is 8.30am on April 6, 1998. It is cool and quiet; a climate of tranquillity if one comes from Johannesburg, a change of season if from Britain and, certainly, an experience of a different environment if from Australia. This is the start of the fifth Symposium of the South African Planning History Study Group, hosted by the University of Stellenbosch. The Symposium drew attendance from various parts of the country, including the universities of Witwatersrand, Cape Town, Pretoria, Stellenbosch, and from private practice; and guest speakers from different parts of the world. This year, the guests were Peter Larkham, editor of Planning History (UCE, Birmingham, UK); Don Newman (University of Western Australia) and Murray Coleman (University of the Nations - Australia).

Altogether, although the attendance was relatively small - about 30 - it had an international mix of academics and practitioners to turn the symposium into a productive engine of international engagement. The invited papers were represented by Oxford, in Murray Coleman's paper; the modern universities by Wits, Cape Town and Natal; the apartheid universities by Orange Free State and Bophuthatswana; the colonial white apartheid university of Rhodes; the colonial African university of Swaziland; while Haemarekona (Potchef Campus) stood for a new university.

The presentations

The organiser of the symposium, Linda Brettick (Wits), admirably arranged the papers according to their thematic coverage. The first session, setting the scene, began on a high note with the papers by Peter Larkham, Bill Carter and Walter Peters. Peter Larkham's paper was advertised as the 'Gordon Cherry Memorial Paper' (appropriate, from a former student and university colleague of his) and was on the general theme of 'the university and the city', focusing on the range of UK experience. Bill Carter, an architect in private practice, discussed 'the effect of apartheid thinking on the design of tertiary institutions in the 1970s', and Walter Peters (Natal) discussed 'the application and transformation of Jefferson's UVA concept in South African universities'.

These papers were, in essence, capturing the 'Town and Gown' theme of the symposium by examining the influences, strategies and institutions in the planning of universities; but the main emphasis was on architectural design and planning.

The second session contained two papers focusing on the University of Swaziland and the University of Seattle. These offered a wealth of contrasts given the different cultural origins and historical backgrounds of the two institutions. Discussion of all five papers brought the role of the private sector to the fore. Universities appear inevitably to have to conform to the needs of the community because of the shift towards a 'market economy' - and, therefore, 'market university'. Yet it is apparent that this shift will be a painful transition for most universities.

The third paper session consisted of a paper on the University of Western Australia and a virtuosic presentation from the Chair of the Planning History Group, John Muller, on the University of the Witwatersrand. Both largely Modernist universities, located in the orthodoxy culture of British education, they echoed the discussions of the first papers and illustrated the history and politics of design, space and expansion of such institutions.

Session four contained presentations on the universities of the former Bophuthatswana (now North-West University) and Bloemfontein (Orange Free State). The captivating and insightful presentations demonstrated with varying degrees that the apartheid university grew under crisis control rather than control of crises. The inconsistent, haphazard and crisis-dominated nature of these universities was evident from their location, architectural design, land use pattern and planning. Discussion focused on the issue of form and function. Do the designs and shapes of buildings affect university performances? Responses were varied, but tended to suggest so.

On the second day, the symposium focused on 'the old and the (fairly) new'. Presentations ranged from a historical perspective to the University in the 1600s to the Universities of Cape Town, Rhodes and Stellenbosch. This provided a broad view of university designs, from the gothic to the eclectic, the classical to the modern. The session was followed by a tour of Stellenbosch, visiting its oldest (1710) to newest buildings, and exploring the growth of the town and of the university within the town. A video on the historical development of the town was a fitting end to the morning session.

The last session was broadly based, including discussion of a satellite campus of Pretoria University, a training town for a railway company, and the impact of one university's Department of Town and Regional Planning on community development. This reinforced the importance of linkages between universities and communities - the extent and nature of which may well determine the health and survival of the university.

Discussions

Broadly speaking, the discussions ranged from architecture, planning and urban design. They gave considerable insight into gothic, classical, neo-classical and modern universities. Both largely Modernist universities, located in the orthodoxy culture of British education, they echoed the discussions of the first papers and illustrated the history and politics of design, space and expansion of such institutions.

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The various threads of argument on the physical development of universities totally ignored the African university; but there was an untiring effort to compare and contrast with
European universities. There was no mention of an African university in the discussion of architecture and design except for the forced comparison of Ndebele drawing art with the University of Botswana. (I found it difficult to believe that a Batswana university, led by a dictatorial President Mangope, could adopt and apply a custom art of another ethnic group, the minority Ndebele, to decorate its buildings.) This omission highlighted the very euro-centric nature of academia and, to a great extent, the orthodoxy perspective that prevails in many schools of planning, particularly in South Africa. To say that this is a colonial mentality is too harsh. But one cannot help wondering why South African universities yearn so much to associate their development with European universities, when they share a similar history of problems spatially, culturally and institutionally within the framework of African education. There is a tendency to analyze and interpret South African realities in European terms, as if solutions to South African problems lie only in Europe (the Cape Town Olympic bid is an example). Perhaps it would be more fruitful to compare South African universities with other African universities, as Basil Birk hinted in his concluding remarks at the symposium. After all, universities have a long and honourable history in Africa, from the University of Qarawlyne (Fes, Morocco, founded AD 859) and the University of Al Azhar (Cairo, founded AD 972).

Lastly, it could be suggested that, in order to have a greater impact upon society, planning history needs to take a step forwards. It should move beyond the routine of recording the historical flow of events towards developing policies that can influence the future. In particular, what is often absent from conferences of this sort is adequate recording of the discussion, rather than of the papers themselves. It is the discussions that are rich and spontaneous and fruitful. It is the discussions that are rich as participatory interpret the papers and draw conclusions based on wide experiences. And the discussions at this symposium were unusually spontaneous and fruitful.

**SYMPOSIUM PROGRAMME**

**TOWN & GOWN**

THE PLANNING HISTORY OF UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES AND UNIVERSITY TOWNS

**APRIL 6 AND APRIL 7 1998 UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH**
history of Canadas.

In order to trace that transfer and to reconstruct those episodes, the research combines four types of urban discourse: the legal, political and administrative texts; the urban literature; the travel chronicles and general descriptions; and technical literature about urbanism. The interlacement of such a catalogue of specialized and non-specialized sources can be said to be an innovation of the book.

(from author)


Well known for his columns in The New Yorker and his visionary political and ecological ideas, Lewis Mumford is regarded as the foremost urban critic of this century. Providing both historical and theoretical perspectives, the author traces the development of Mumford’s thought on regional planning focusing on his pioneering concept of an ecologically based region – and shows how he attempted to turn his ideas into reality through the Regional Planning Association of America. The work’s concluding section al values the cultural heritage for all regions and large interested communities in their wake.


This is a classic work on French garden cities, but has been relatively little known, and apparently used in several subsequent works without always receiving full credit! For these reasons, Ville Recherche Diffusion are now offering copies for sale at 155 F. Contact: Ecole d’Architecture de Nanterre, rue Massenet, 92040 Nanterre, France.

(Thanks to Rob Freestone and Armand Azzolino, other titles taken from publishers’ catalogues and the trade press. Contributions for this section are very welcome!)


In 1997 the Association of Conservation Officers reformulated itself as the Institute of Historic Building Conservation with the aspiration to stand alongside the other professional institutes such as the RITI and the RIBA. The next few years will be crucial in seeing whether it can establish the credibility of that ambition but the decision radically to broaden its base can be recognised as a defining moment in the remarkable growth of the influence of the conservation movement over the last twenty or thirty years. Whereas in 1975 it could still be dismissed as a minority group who drag by a few large and interested community in their wake,

1999 had become ‘fundamental’ to the Government’s policies for environmental stewardship that there should be effective procedures in place and the historic environment.

This astonishing shift in cultural perception is placed in its historical context and lucidly described by John Delafont in his very readable and dryly humorous book. As a former civil servant with nearly 40 years’ service at the DoE and its predecessor bodies and whose posts included Secretary to the Advisory Committee on Listing and Principal Private Secretary to five cabinet ministers, he is well placed to write the detailed history of the political and policy changes in attitudes to conservation from a central government perspective. He uses his inside knowledge to telling effect and over the course of his text provides a wealth of fresh information about the impetus behind successful Acts and policy documents. The tone is set by the choice of the former MaPPin and Webb building at No 5 Poultry as the cover illustration and the author’s enduring confession that it was solely in the interests of alienation that he used the word preservation rather than conservation in his title. In a climate increasingly driven by sustainability, the distinction is crucial. Using a chronological framework, the book is divided into four parts and each chapter is further divided into short sections which make for easy reading and convenient reference. Part I deals with the origins of the movement and its cultural background, leading from the first Ancient Monuments Act of 1867, with its schedule of 68 unamended monuments through the early Planning Acts up to the outbreak of World War II. Part 2 covers the post-war development of the mechanism for listing buildings which by 1959 had resulted in a statutory list of 73,310 entries, and the introduction of the concept of conservation areas as a result of the Civic Amenities Act of 1967. It concludes with a chapter on European Architectural Heritage Year in 1975 and the story is taken up to 1945 in Part 4. Churches are covered separately in Part 3 and there are final chapters on sustainable conservation and the 1966 consultation document, Protecting Our Heritage, which provides the author with an opportunity to air his personal reflections on the scope and purpose of conservation and the resources that it commands. He puts the case for the need for a fundamental review of conservation policy and its objectives which he thoughtfully and balanced way even though he slightly exaggerates the statistics to bolster his contention that the argument for necessary renewal and innovation is losing out to what he describes as ‘the triumph of the conservation cause’. The recent computerisation of the statutory list has surprisingly revealed that it contains less than 400,000 entries which makes his statement that there are over 500,000 listed buildings unlikely, even though some groups of buildings are subsumed within a single entry. Similarly, according to the most recent English Heritage Monitor, 8,952 conservation areas had been designated by the end of 1996 and not over ‘9,000’ as Delafont believes or, indeed, the 10,000 plus which an earlier note of this book published in this journal suggested.

These revised figures do not of themselves invalidate his argument but they do introduce a note of caution into the debate.

It is very helpful to have all the relevant legislation and the associated policy documents analysed in a single volume and placed in its historical context. The author and the publishers deserve the highest praise for presenting the information in such an accessible and enjoyable form. The illustrations have been carefully chosen and complement the lucid prose.

Drawing on parliamentary debates and departmental archives, Delafont explains in a varied range of the system evolved and in the process rescues the contributions of a number of unnamed individuals to place alongside the more familiar figures such as Sir John Lubbock, Duncan Sandy and Lord


This is a cautionary tale on the writing of planning history.

The author critiques two recent award-winning planning history articles and finds that both contain exclusion, contradiction, and experimentation mistakes.

The first article reviews planning in colonial South Carolina and the second discusses planning and the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). The author argues that the first article excluded any consideration of the colonial impact on Native Americans and the second failed to address racism in the TVA. He also contends that both histories failed to adequately explain apparent contradictions. Finally, the author critiques the authors' treatments of planning as experimental because, in both cases, planning had lasting societal effects. He concludes with a discussion of how pervasive these mistakes are in planning history.


The production of space in postwar UK towns, whether bomb-damaged or not, was characterised by a series of authoritative planning reports, vividly illustrated by perspective drawings and maps. In this paper aspects of the imagery and production of these documents are discussed. They depict strikingly modernist urban landscapes, albeit sometimes clothed in familiar architectural style or materials. These are a symbol of control, particularly in the rise of the new, modernist, paradigm in planning thought. They present idealised sanitised visions of streets, public spaces, and buildings in which the users are little represented. However, the majority of these documents, although influential, were never carried out in this drastic fashion. These images thus represent a microcosm of changing attitudes in architecture, planning and urban design at a key point in time; and strong links can be drawn to current perspectives on the representation and production of urban space.


This is an extended obituary. Gordon Stephenson was former Lever Professor of Civic Design in the University of Liverpool, and died in March 1997 aged 88. As an architect and planner he was a key figure in the practice of town planning and urban design for more than a half a century, first in Britain during the war years, and later in Canada and Australia. His influence on architecture and planning in all three countries has been significant, beneficial and soundly based, yet it is frequently underestimated.


An undated buckled amendment provided a half-hearted start in the first planning legislation in 1930. Then, in 1932, in legislation which did not even contain the word 'planning' in its title, came a remarkable section. Here, for the first time, planning law refers to architectural as well as historic interest. There is reference to localities and areas rather than just to individual buildings. This section, which saw amendments, was not debated and in later years it engendered no official guidance from the Ministry.

The strange origin of this branch of planning law in the housing legislation of 1923 is explained in this paper. It was the product of concern about the preservation of Oxford on the part of a few influential graduates of that University. In more detail, this episode of law reform is a clear lesson in the influence of All Souls in the early 1920s. It is also a reminder of the power of lawyers as creators of new law. Lawyers were never mere instruments for turning the ideas of their clients into legislation; they had ideas of their own and could act decisively in the preparation of a clause, as they did on this occasion.

(Adapted from the paper's introduction and conclusion; see also Ains' review of John Delatons, 1997 book.)

(Contributions for this section are under particular of English Language abstracts from journals published in other languages.)
NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The prime aim of Planning History is to increase awareness of developments and ideas in planning history in all parts of the world. In pursuit of this, contributions (in English) are invited from members and non-members of the International Planning History Society alike, for any section of Planning History. Non-native English speakers should not be concerned if their English is not perfect. The Editor will be happy to help improve its readability and comprehension, but unfortunately neither he nor the Society can undertake translations.

Contributors should supply one copy of their text, clearly printed, in double spacing and with generous margins. Do not supply copy already in column format. A disk copy is also encouraged, which should be in Word Perfect or Word for PC if possible. Illustrations should be clear black and white photographs with good contrast (it is rarely possible to print illustrations from colour transparencies or photocopies) or good quality line drawings. Contributors are responsible for securing any necessary copyright permissions to reproduce illustrations, and to ensure adequate acknowledgement. Captions should be printed doublespaced on a separate page.

ARTICLES

These should be in the range of 2,000 - 3,000 words. They may be on any topic within the general remit of the IPhS and may well reflect work in progress. Articles should normally be referenced with superscript numbers and endnotes. Refer to recent issues for guidance on referencing and text style.

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

Other types of contribution are also very welcome. Research reports should not be of more than 2,000 words. They need not be referenced, but any relevant publications should be listed at the end, in the standard format. Illustrations, where provided, should conform to the above notes. Similar short pieces on important source materials, aspects of planning history practice (e.g. conservation) are also encouraged.

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