

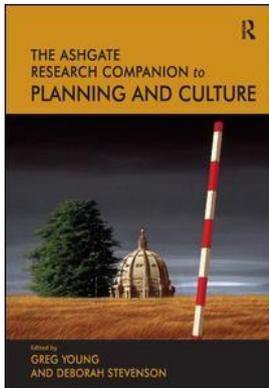
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### **A Cultural History of Modern Urban Planning**

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Stephen V. Ward

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# A Cultural History of Modern Urban Planning

Stephen V. Ward

## Introduction

Few planning historians have explicitly labelled their work as *cultural* history. Yet most have in recent years tried to reveal the attitudes, values and goals which have moulded planning (Ward, Freestone and Silver 2011). They have explored the social and cultural milieu within which planning ideas were conceived and elaborated and the wider political and business networks that empowered them. Planning has also been seen as a cultural form in its own right, with distinct national, regional and local characteristics. Yet it has also reflected larger international patterns of dominance and deference in the cultural and other spheres.

This chapter uses existing planning historical writing to emphasize this cultural strand. It distils work already presented in other writings by the present author (Ward 2012, 2010a, 2010b, 2005, 2002 and 1992) where the reader will find full bibliographic information. (Only research not hitherto cited appears here.) This account is organized on broadly chronological lines, examining first the emergence of what is generally termed 'modern urban planning' during the later nineteenth century. Highlighted are the various national cultural roots of this new form of planning. All grew from broadly liberal reform movements though differently within each country. However, the chapter will show how these national movements soon also became part of an international movement, sharing technical knowledge and, to a large extent, attitudes, values and goals.

Urban planning then evolved as an international movement but with different national expressions. (See also Greed, Chapter 5, this volume.) Later conceptual and practical changes are noted and the increased role of planning during the long post-1945 boom. An important cultural theme was how knowledge and practice spread across the world. I emphasize particularly the role of imperialism and later post-colonial international agencies. In doing this the chapter will consider the tensions which arose when essentially Western practices shifted into sharply different cultural contexts. Here the extent of local political consent was typically much lower (especially under

colonialism) than in the countries where planning had originated. Relatedly, I will also show how the professionalization and technicalization of planning partially detached it from its liberal reformist roots. This allowed it to be deployed in more authoritarian contexts, for example in totalitarian states.

The chapter also shows how, in spreading, what were originally Western practices have become more truly global. Originally the main innovatory countries were Germany, Britain, France and the United States. Since then, however, innovation has occurred across a much wider range of Western countries, to some extent the Communist world and, more recently, in other continents.

## The Emergence of a Modern Urban Planning Culture

Many past civilizations had ordered the physical arrangement of their towns and cities, especially when they formed new settlements. Much pre-modern planning was the work of kings, princes, prelates, aristocrats or oligarchies, each powerful enough to define the urban order. From the late eighteenth century, however, this began to change quite rapidly. In Europe and North America, the combined effects of rapid economic growth and a dramatic increase in the number and size of cities created the broad pre-conditions for a 'modern' form of urban planning.

Modern urban planning embraced the city as a dynamic and capitalistic centre of production, distribution, consumption and reproduction. The new approach embraced the emergent technologies of the industrial era so that cities might function effectively as economic and social entities. It also sought variously to harness, tame, marginalize or even supplant the increasingly dynamic land markets of the capitalist city. Crucially important to these growing aspirations for the city was the growing political ascendancy of liberalism.

Modern planning marked a distinct shift from the laying out of fortifications and grand urban spaces or avenues typical of pre-industrial planning. The need for an urban symbolism that represented the modern city remained, often remembering urban forms of earlier eras. But more distinctively modern were newer functional priorities, concerned with formalizing land use, infrastructure, efficient circulation and, increasingly, promoting social welfare. To respond to these aspects, new ideas, techniques, policies and instruments were developed.

The shift took place in piecemeal fashion during the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, especially within France, Germany, Britain and the United States. In each (and soon also other countries) the bases of distinct national planning cultures appeared, albeit with many common features. Literature specifically about planning began to get published and circulated. Formative examples of the new planning were widely reported and visited. Discursive events including lectures, exhibitions, conferences and, in some countries, planning competitions, helped widen and deepen knowledge.

Such changes were nourished by the appearance of national and local organizations which became settings for knowledge exchange and debate. Everywhere, these organizations mirrored the dual nature of urban planning as both a movement for reform *and* an activity requiring expert knowledge and professional skill. This shift

from a reformist to a technical and professional focus was critically important. It allowed planning to become a relatively 'neutral' practice increasingly detached from its reformist origins. In turn this meant that it could be reattached to other, less progressive values, for example in the service of more authoritarian regimes. Even within liberal democratic countries, the 'mystification' of planning's essentially political roots within a culture of professional expertise sometimes allowed it to become an insensitive, even brutal instrument of an avowedly progressive state.

Another important cultural consequence of professionalization was that it cast the 'planner' much more into a 'masculine' mould (Meller 2007, see also Greed, Chapter 5, this volume). In its original more reformist incarnation, much activism was voluntarist, charitable and philanthropic in nature. In some countries at least, these arenas provided rich opportunities for feminine endeavour. Figures such as Octavia Hill or Henrietta Barnett in Britain or Jane Addams, Florence Kelley and Mary Simkhovitch in the United States, played central roles in the formative years. However, professionalization, especially based around the specific 'parent professions' of planning, that is, architecture, engineering, surveying, marginalized these kinds of roles. Later, of course, initially from the 1930s, it became easier for women to pursue professional, official careers. In such roles some individual women came to wield great power and influence, albeit conforming to a 'masculine' template of the planner which had by then become established.

Collectively, however, reformist and professional organizations gave a framework within which emergent planning networks could grow. Planning historians have frequently stressed the individual 'inventors' of the new ideas of planning. Without a wider movement, however, any individual's ideas were likely to be ignored. The remarkable Barcelona engineer, Ildefons Cerdà was a telling case. In 1859 he had authored an astonishingly advanced plan for Barcelona and in 1867 added the first theoretical exposition of modern urban planning principles. Yet he was a lone figure, unpopular in his home city and without network organizations to circulate his ideas. As such they were simply forgotten and played almost no part in the formation of modern urban planning in later decades.

## Emergent National Cultures of Planning

Most commentators see Germany as the country with the first recognizable planning movement. Key professional and reformist organizations appeared in the 1870s. Most prominent were the *Verband deutscher Architekten- und Ingenieurvereine* (Confederation of German Associations of Architects and Engineers) established in 1871 and the *Deutscher Verein für öffentliche Gesundheitspflege* (German Association for the Promotion of Public Health) founded two years later. The former brought together the two key professions that fostered the emergent expertise of urban planning. The second combined a political and social reformist membership with municipal officials.

It was mainly in such settings that new principles were rehearsed, defined and reproduced, establishing a reformist and professional discourse of urban planning. The *Verband* published important studies on planning matters which began to shape theory and practice. Its members were actively involved in the growing number of

competitions to plan urban extensions which further refined practice and informed theory. Also encouraged were education and training to develop and reproduce the new skills, starting with the world's first urban planning course at Aachen in 1880. All these developments were encouraged by an expanding German language literature on planning, increasingly labelled from around 1890 as *Städtebau* (town building). Distinctively German contributions to practice were land use and density zoning and land readjustment, the re-parcelling of land ownerships to facilitate orderly planning and provision of public land for streets, open spaces and so on.

The same broad tendencies were evident elsewhere, though manifest in different ways. In France, the Musée Social (literally Social Museum), established in 1894, was the principal reformist organization where new ideas and possibilities were rehearsed. It shared with the German movement a predominantly liberal reformist character, with progressive industrialists and professionals in prominent roles. In a predominantly Catholic country, many were also Protestants originating from those (at that time lost) parts of France, Alsace and Lorraine, that had most affinity with Germany.

Quite distinct from German *Städtebau*, however, was the strong French conviction that the new professional activity, around 1910 labelled as *urbanisme* (urbanism), was pre-eminently a branch of architecture, an exercise in grand design. The early work of another Alsatian protestant, Baron Haussmann, had left a powerful legacy. As prefect of Paris between 1853 and 1870, he had transformed the city under the Second Empire. Despite Haussmann's concerns with functional matters of drains and circulation it was a firmly architectural vision of the new Paris that he had created which dominated French thinking about how the modern city should be planned. Thus when a specific professional body for urban planning was created, in 1911, it was the Société Française des Architectes-Urbanistes. Although the architectural prefix was soon dropped, the underlying assumption remained.

Different again was Britain. The social and economic backgrounds of those reformers behind the early planning movement were similar to their equivalents in Germany and France. In contrast to France's protestant reformers, however, pioneers of British planning came disproportionately from non-conformist faiths, particularly Quakers, Congregationalists, Unitarians or others whose beliefs was not mediated through the established or Catholic churches. More so than in either Germany or France, British urban reformers emphasized social welfare, especially social housing and the ideal of community within an urbanized society. These and other concerns came together in the main British contribution to planning thought and action, the garden city, unveiled by Ebenezer Howard in 1898. It quickly formed the basis for a vigorous pressure group, the Garden City Association. Another strand, albeit with longer term rather than immediate impact, was the conception of planning as an expression of regional culture, pioneered by the inspirational figure of Patrick Geddes.

The professional side also differed from both France and Germany. The late nineteenth century strength of British local government institutions had given major importance to engineers and surveyors in the burgeoning municipal bureaucracies. As yet, the architectural profession had no comparable institutional position. Notwithstanding key contributions of individuals such as Raymond Unwin, architects were less dominant in forming modern planning culture in Britain than in France or Germany. Britain was also unusual in that the foundations of a separate profession of

'town planning' (from 1905 the preferred English label) appeared at a very early stage, in 1914, when the Town Planning Institute was founded.

The last of the innovative national cultures was that of the United States. In contrast to Europe, a boosterist ethic pervaded emergent American debates about planning. 'City planning' (as Americans termed the new activity from around 1909) was more actively shaped by mainstream business values than were European planning movements. Initially such interests supported the 'City Beautiful' movement which proposed grand parks, avenues and civic centres with major, classically inspired public buildings and other adornments. These mainly favoured the urban elites but also became a way of attracting business investment.

More consciously liberal reformers, representing the more socially progressive edge of bourgeois opinion, were also important. A group of largely New York social reformers, including prominent members of that and other cities' liberal Jewish elites founded the Committee on Congestion of Population in 1907. This articulated a social welfare agenda for the embryonic American city planning movement. Yet, until a revival of social progressivist sentiments in the 1920s and 1930s, this remained a lesser theme. As American business elites recognized the limitations of the City Beautiful they adopted, not a social welfare model, but one that emphasized the efficient and functional city. It was concerned with circulation systems, comprehensive zoning to allow the expansion of business and more economical and orderly residential growth. From a very early stage it also began to adopt the quantitative methods of increasingly scientific business management to make plans. The new thinking was heralded by the great 1909 plan for Chicago, directly sponsored by the city's business community. Though having many City Beautiful elements, it was also a highly functional plan of a city being shaped directly to service business interests.

In professional terms, the United States had more in common with Britain than with either France or Germany. Although the City Beautiful movement leaned heavily on the French *Beaux Arts* tradition of grand design, this was moderated by strong engineering and landscaping inputs. All these professional elements (and others including public administration and community development) were embraced in an integrative professional body, the American City Planning Institute, founded in 1917.

By 1920 therefore, each of the major countries most associated with the new field had established distinctive planning cultures. The networks, institutions, values and knowledge that framed these cultures had given each a rudimentary template on which planning in those countries could be (and was) subsequently reproduced. Even today, many distinctive national elements of planning directly reflect aspects that appeared at this time.

## Internationalizing Planning Culture

Yet, only in the very earliest stages could the formation of planning cultures be understood solely in autonomous national terms. (See also Watson, Chapter 7, this volume.) The later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also saw widening possibilities for international travel. Major technological changes in transport and

communications hugely eased movement of people and knowledge. Before 1914 travel formalities were also minimal over many parts of the world.

The various national movements for modern urban planning benefited greatly from this. The international mobility of planning knowledge broadened and deepened the repertoire of ideas and practices available to individual countries. New thinking could be learnt, copied, adapted, hybridized or synthesized with distinctively national approaches. Key texts were translated into other languages. A small but increasing number of planners worked in countries other than their own. Discursive planning events such as conferences, exhibitions, competitions and so on increasingly transcended national boundaries. These and more deliberate fact-finding visits and study tours became staple activities of this increasingly internationalized planning culture.

The result was that the leaders of the new national movements could interact with their equivalents elsewhere. A wider group of political and other opinion formers could read about and see what was happening in other countries and make comparisons with their own cities. As early as 1867, the Exposition Universelle in Paris attracted many international visitors (the new Thomas Cook business arranged the travel of 10,000 from Britain alone) who saw Haussmann's transforming city.

By the early twentieth century several planning-related organizations appeared that were avowedly international. The Permanent International Association of Road Congresses was formed in 1909. The International Union of Local Authorities and, most important, the International Garden Cities and Town Planning Association followed in 1913. These organizations, the latter renamed as the International Federation of Housing and Town Planning (IFHTP), were increasingly significant after the First World War. Their annual conferences, held in various locations, were key events where national approaches and innovations could be inspected and discussed. Initially mainly European, their membership and range broadened. For example the 1938 IFHTP conference was held in Mexico City.

A new international architectural organization very important for planning appeared in 1928. This was the CIAM (Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne) founded in Switzerland. Within a few years it was attracting 'modernists' from German, French, Dutch, Spanish, Czech language groups. During the 1930s it widened to encompass British and later American members, along with the Nordic countries and some other parts of the Slavonic world. Its mission was to develop self-consciously 'modern' forms of architecture and planning based firmly on rational, functional principles. Though representing *avant garde* approaches in its early years, its ultimate impact on the mainstream of post-1945 architecture and planning in many countries was huge.

This trend to internationalization greatly strengthened the young national planning cultures. Thus British industrialists, reformers and professionals looked admiringly on German innovations in the urban sphere, while their German equivalents reciprocated. The Deutsche Gartenstadtgesellschaft in 1902 became the first foreign association to adopt Howard's garden city vision. Britain's first town planning legislation, in 1909, was effectively a synthesis of garden city principles with German town extension and zoning. Despite French enmity towards Germany after 1870, they learnt of Germanic efforts through displaced reformers from Alsace and Lorraine. Switzerland and Belgium also became intermediate areas where some indirect interchange occurred. The Anglo-French Entente Cordiale spawned a planning equivalent as French reformers created a Gallic movement for the *cité-jardin* in 1903.

Meanwhile many American reformers and professionals crossed the Atlantic to learn the latest European thinking, including British innovations in social housing or the garden city, German zoning techniques or French grand design. In turn the 1909 Chicago Plan impressed Europeans with its scale, vision and technique. There was also a more general European wonderment at the vast and highly complex buildings that were appearing in the biggest American cities.

## Internationalization and New National Planning Cultures

These international interchanges had an even bigger impact elsewhere. Across Europe and increasingly beyond grew an eager trade in planning knowledge that intensified after 1918. Exogenous ideas and practices, often from multiple sources, were combined and merged with domestic approaches. Direct copyism sometimes occurred but more typically there was conscious or unconscious adaptation, involving hybridization or synthesis. In some cases, this mobility amounted to a process of reinvention with received knowledge being deployed in ways that masked exotic origins.

This largely voluntary proliferation increasingly spanned the globe, including Latin America and self-governing territories of European colonialism such as Australia or Canada. Space, however, allows consideration of only two, somewhat different, examples of how distinct new national planning cultures emerged. The Netherlands was a small country that, virtually alongside the 'big four', established a highly distinctive national planning culture, while remaining open to external influence. Linguistic affinities perhaps made it inevitable that Germanic innovations were initially dominant, not least in the Dutch neologism for urban planning, *stedebouw*, which appeared around 1900. Yet British ideas about the garden city and social housing were also much in evidence.

No external influences were, however, sufficient to shape a planning culture which also drew on strong national traditions. The longstanding Dutch imperative of managing water within the national territory was central. Nowhere was this more evident than in the ambitious Zuider Zee project begun after 1918 to create new polder areas and a large freshwater lake in what was formerly sea. By the interwar years, there was a strong Dutch movement for modern planning widely acknowledged for its innovation. The 1935 Amsterdam Plan expressed a scientific and modernistic approach to planning that anticipated wider post-1945 trends.

Perhaps the most interesting non-European planning culture based substantially on international contact was Japan. Following the Meiji restoration of 1868, the country underwent radical modernization. Western practices and innovations were carefully examined and, to varying extents, adopted and adapted. No one exemplar country was exclusively favoured with the result that the Japanese officials and professionals encountered all the main Western planning ideas at an early stage in their development.

German practices were most favoured in the formation of *toshi keikaku* (as planning was termed from 1913). The Prussian legal code had been the template for the new Japanese legal system and this precedent also shaped the planning system. This comprised various measures specific to Tokyo (especially following the 1923 earthquake) and a national planning act of 1919. This was not direct copying, however,

and Japanese practice was in some respects more radical than German templates, for example in land readjustment. Partly because of misunderstanding, Japanese legislators adopted a draft measure that had proved too radical in Germany. Nevertheless the fit proved appropriate, arguably because it echoed certain traditional Japanese practices. Land readjustment has subsequently become a highly distinctive feature of Japan's planning culture. (See also Newman and Thornley, Chapter 4, this volume.)

Another Western idea with an early and enduring appeal for the Japanese was the garden city. At a time when the country was rapidly industrializing and urbanizing with very cramped accommodation, the image of a city of gardens, *den en toshi*, was a powerful one. Initially it shaped the creation of affluent commuter settlements by the railway companies.

## Planning as a Practice of Empire

The Japanese leadership had embraced modernization to insulate the country from Western colonialism. Yet the latter became another powerful vehicle accelerating the global spread of Western modern planning, albeit in ways less controllable by receiving countries than the examples so far examined. Imperial experiments were also one of the principal test-beds for modern Western-style urban planning. The advantage was that planners were less compromised by citizen rights, vested interests or other governmental concerns than within the 'mother countries'.

Imperialist motives for turning to planning varied. In part, certainly, there was a simple need for spaces for governance and spacious residential districts for colonial elites. But imperial planning was also about more systematic exploitation of colonial resources through improved physical infrastructure. This same concern drew colonial administrations into health and welfare, to combat both economic disruptions caused by disease and, especially after 1945, the proliferation of informal housing on the edges of cities. At a symbolic level, planning also helped promote the notion of imperialism as a benevolent force. The widely-accepted progressive self-image of urban planning could help portray imperialism as an enlightened project of modernization.

A striking example was in the French world. The new imperial protectorate of Morocco, conceived very much as a model for a new, more progressive form of empire, became the first French territory to adopt planning as a state function from 1912. Six years before equivalent action in France itself, the Moroccan planning law of 1913 launched a national programme of *urbanisme*. Over the following years this template was widely applied, with variations, throughout the French Empire.

The British also used their own town planning from a very early stage in various colonial territories. Most notable were their efforts in India which included planning the new imperial capital at New Delhi from 1911 and measures to facilitate the renewal of Bombay (1898) and Calcutta (1912). By 1939 a growing number of British imperial possessions, including Malaya, Northern Rhodesia, Nigeria, Transjordan and Trinidad, had British-style planning powers. Broadly similar tendencies were evident in the Dutch Empire in the present Indonesia and the Japanese Empire in Taiwan, Korea and Manchuria. Germany and Italy also used planning in their own short-lived

colonial empires. Even the (supposedly anti-colonial) United States deployed it in the Philippines.

Despite sometimes impressive physical results, colonial planning showed clearly how a progressive notion could be deployed as part of a process of external dominance. Colonial territories lacked mature civil societies with developed and articulate institutions which could impede the insensitive colonial imposition of urban planning. Indigenous land rights and customary usages were extinguished in the pursuit of a Western notion of order. Alien building types and functional land uses could be imposed, removing the diversity and richness of traditional cities or marginalizing them compared to grand new colonial districts. In extreme circumstances, colonized peoples might violently contest planning's subversion of their own valued places. More usually, they gradually changed the intended meanings of imperially planned spaces by the way they used them.

The actual technical process was usually led by professionals from the colonial power, and in earlier periods completely dominated by them. A handful of indigenous planners were trained before the end of colonial control in most empires. Usually this occurred either within the imperial 'mother country' or, more rarely, within the colonial territories themselves but following a template that was set by the colonial power. What was conspicuously lacking was the indigenous, more culturally appropriate approach to planning equivalent to the selectivity and synthesis which occurred within Western countries. A few individual colonial planners, most notably Patrick Geddes in India and Thomas Karsten in the Dutch East Indies, sought more sensitive approaches. These did not, however, prevent the emergent indigenous planning cultures of late colonialism showing excessive deference to external knowledge and expertise.

## Planning in Authoritarian and Totalitarian Contexts

The wider diffusion of planning also took it to other settings with governments much less liberal or democratic than in its European and American heartlands. Even Germany, with a modern planning tradition which had largely emerged as part of a socially progressive trend of liberalization, moved sharply to the right in the 1930s. As in colonial contexts, the German planning movement began to serve ends quite different to those dominant before the First World War or in the years immediately afterwards. Many Jewish planners or those with left-wing views (often seen as synonymous with avowedly modernist approaches) found themselves unwelcome or facing persecution. Many emigrated, helping diversify the planning cultures of other countries including Britain, the United States, Mexico, Turkey, the future Israel and elsewhere.

The easy interchanges that a more liberally minded German planning movement had enjoyed with other mainstream planning traditions became more uncomfortable. Yet they did not cease and Hitler's *autobahn* programme attracted widespread admiration. However, the autonomous organizations and institutions which had comprised the planning movement were increasingly brought under state control or supplanted. International agencies were viewed with suspicion unless they could be Nazified. In 1938 control of the International Federation of Housing and Town Planning began to shift to Germany with the assumption of office by a Nazi President. Early German

wartime successes completed this process so that it became a propaganda vehicle to promote Hitler's 'New Order' for Europe. A new democratic organization had to be reconstructed with American backing in the later war years.

Other European countries experienced similar fates, swelling the numbers of exiled drifters. Some with left-wing sympathies looked, at least for a time, to the Soviet Union. Although its collapse has now made it easy to overlook, it was the most important new planning culture to emerge after 1914. It exerted widespread influence amongst many Western planners from the 1930s to the 1950s and had a more direct quasi-imperial impact on its post-war satellites and more distant communist nations. Yet it too relied for a time on foreign examples. Even before the Revolution, Russian reformers had been attracted to transformative urban planning models, above all the garden city. Howard's book was translated into Russian in 1911. Some early Soviet planners continued to admire it as resolving the essential unevenness of capitalist spatial development, between urban and rural society.

Other proposed solutions were more radical though it was not until the first Five Year Plan (to achieve industrialization) in 1928 that settled Soviet urban planning policies appeared. These accepted that mass urbanization was necessary to facilitate large scale industrialization. However, Soviet planners sought to limit concentrated growth and mitigate its effects by decentralized urban forms. In these early years, there was considerable reliance on Western technology and planning expertise. Major new industrial plants used American technology, hiring its architects and engineers to plan entire workers' towns. European planners were also recruited, most famously in 1930 the largely German group led by former Frankfurt planner Ernst May.

Some Western urban planners admired Soviet commitment to planning in all areas of life. The acute problems of uneven development in all Western countries during the 1930s fostered strong interest in national and regional planning. Yet the Soviet Union appeared far bolder than elsewhere in how it tackled these matters. This boldness was also apparent at urban level, reflecting the complete absence of private land ownership and an apparently single-minded Soviet commitment to address the major needs of a rapidly urbanizing society. These included large scale housing construction within planned *microrayons* (neighbourhoods), major investments in transportation and other infrastructure and so on. The 1935 Moscow Plan was a showpiece, rated by authoritative external observers as the most advanced and comprehensive big city plan anywhere in the world.

The defining feature of Soviet urban planning culture was not primarily its substantive content, but that it was framed entirely by the state and Communist Party. It was infused, far more than was yet true of Western planning cultures, with a belief in 'scientific' knowledge and expertise. Though the Communist system was not completely monolithic, civil society was far less developed than in democratic societies. There were no equivalents of independent reformist bodies, pressure groups or professions that had shaped Western planning movements. This meant that disputes or debates about urban planning actions were kept within prescribed limits. Opportunities for real political contestation over planning matters such as might occur in democratic societies were absent.

Initially at least, many prominent Western observers regarded these aspects as less significant than the apparent material benefits and technical qualities of Soviet achievements. They admired the extensive state propaganda used to promote popular

commitment to planning, yearning for something similar in their own countries. Approved of also were the Soviet commitment to intensive training of planners and especially the popular and political respect accorded to them. In the 1930s and 1940s many planners in Western countries genuinely felt that their own countries would be improved if they emulated Soviet planning.

## Planning, Reconstruction and Modernization after 1945

In many respects, planning in all Western countries, especially within Europe, did move in this direction in the 1940s and 1950s. Though it nowhere matched the totality of the Soviet approach, planning everywhere acquired important new powers and responsibilities. In part this was a response to the pressing needs for reconstruction of cities. Yet it was also a delayed response to perceived shortcomings during the interwar years – the lack of real direction or control over urban growth; the degradation of rural areas; the persistence of large slum areas, the failure to provide for new transportation modes; and the decay of regions in the 1930s depression. The relative importance of these issues varied in different countries. The experience of an already heavily urbanized country such as Britain differed significantly from those with bigger proportions of their populations still dependent on agriculture such as France or Italy.

Everywhere in the West, the expertise of urban planning widened significantly from its original physical design focus, acquiring dimensions grounded within social science, economics and geography. There had been many earlier hints of this in the approaches advocated by Patrick Geddes (and his slightly later French equivalent, Marcel Poète). They were expressed more tangibly in plans such as that for Amsterdam in 1935 or in President Roosevelt's 'New Deal' in the United States, especially the great regional development project for the Tennessee Valley.

Now, however, such approaches became more typical, with planners involved in questions of employment and social welfare. A stark example of this shift came in France where in the late 1940s a new term for planning, *l'aménagement du territoire*, took precedence. Compared to *urbanisme*, it signified a broader geographical approach, more social science-based and more closely linked with the wider economic planning and large scale public investment programmes pursued by successive post-war French governments. The shift was less dramatic elsewhere, evident more in a widening of planning's disciplinary basis.

The physical design core expertise of planning also shifted throughout the West and many other parts of the non-communist world, embracing ever more confidently the ideals of modernism that had been rehearsed by CIAM. Cities were to be designed much more on functionalist lines, with less emphasis on traditional artistic approaches or architectural adornment. New highway systems were to be inserted into cities, facilitating freer vehicle movements. These primary networks became also ways of demarcating cities into different functional zones or neighbourhoods, presuming rather fixed and predictable ways of using cities.

Increasingly from the later 1950s and especially in the 1960s and 1970s, this general trend was reinforced by serious attempts to change urban and regional planning into an increasingly quantitative science. Beginning with land use transportation modelling

in the United States, other quantitative or quasi-quantitative methodologies were deployed. Numerical values were, sometimes dubiously, assigned to landscapes and places and inserted into planning equations to give a supposedly rational basis for reaching one answer or several options for political choice. Meanwhile the process of making choices about planning was itself beginning to be opened up to more popular participation. By the later 1960s there were widespread pressures across the West for governance to become more accountable and citizens to be given a more active voice. Again, though, planners viewed this as a further stage within the scientific planning process. It was seen as a way of creating a direct interface between rational planning methodology and public choice, uninterrupted by the 'irrational' unpredictability and vested interests of politics.

Cumulatively, these various shifts strengthened the notion of the professional planner as a neutral expert, well equipped with the new methodologies to help society find the 'right' answers. It can be seen as the zenith of the early trend to make planning an expert professional activity rather than a movement for social and political reform. Such was the degree of planning's incorporation within state bureaucracies after 1945, however, that it created a profoundly different conception of professional activity. The residual notion of an autonomous expert using knowledge and experience to give advice to an identifiable client had declining relevance. The truth was that planners were now mainly state functionaries serving the interests of the government agencies who employed them. In some countries, for example France, there was little attempt to disguise this. In Britain and many other countries, however, the planning profession effectively struck a 'corporatist bargain', surrendering its autonomy in return for an enhanced ability to shape what happened.

## Planning in a Post-Colonial World

The wider reformulation of the world order after 1945 had huge impacts for planning. The colonial empires, if they had not collapsed already, were never going to be the same again. Often reluctantly, colonial powers recognized that indigenous desires for independence were unstoppable. Most newly independent states began on the principle of promoting their own nationals into the main political and professional roles. Yet the reality was that most lacked the technical capacity their ambitious projects to develop their countries required. There were some moves to create an organizational and training basis to build that capacity, sometimes through new planning schools but more often involving overseas training. There was also a need, certainly in the first years of independent rule, to continue to rely on foreign planning expertise.

Yet, instead of the one dimensional experience of receiving planning expertise and policy from the imperial motherland which had characterized most colonial territories, a more complex pattern appeared. The new superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, became significant players in the post-colonial world. Either directly or through surrogates they both sought to use planning and development initiatives to strengthen their influence in newly independent countries. For their part, the former imperial powers often tried (not always successfully) to maintain the old links. Many

smaller countries also began to give planning and related technical assistance to former colonial territories.

For their part, the leaders of newly independent states recognized that they had more power under this system than under colonialism. To a large extent it was possible to choose donor countries from which they received technical assistance or to which they sent their own would-be planners for training. They could switch allegiances over time (often reflecting political regime changes), choose aid providers without a history of colonialism or deliberately avoid giving one country a monopoly. The result was a fascinating patchwork. It was possible to find American and Swiss planners playing important planning roles in 1950s India. Meanwhile a Greek planner planned the new capital of Pakistan and British planners worked in what became Bangladesh (then East Pakistan). Soviet planners worked in Vietnam and, for a time, Indonesia where there were also Danish and British planners at work. Subsequently the initial breach with the Dutch was healed so that they became major providers. In 1960s Tanzania, Canadian planners produced key plans for Dar-es-Salaam while East Germans worked in Zanzibar. In other parts of the continent, there were planners at work from South Africa, Greece and Hungary as well as former colonial powers.

Nor was the pattern a simple accumulation of bilateral aid patterns. The United Nations Organisation soon became an important force accelerating planning's wider global diffusion. A small UN planning office was established in 1951 and eventually became UN Habitat. In the early years, it directly undertook some planning roles itself but generally promoted international contacts, orchestrated the work of other international agencies, gave advice to post-colonial and developing nations about selecting foreign planners and generally promoted what it saw as good practice. It also tried to encourage local capacity building.

Culturally fascinating and important in spreading planning knowledge though these interactions were, the appropriateness of the results was often questionable. Although the stark unevenness of power between colonizer and colonized had gone, a high degree of external dependence remained. Numbers of indigenous planners rose only slowly. Most also emerged from their usually foreign planning schools excessively deferential to Western or Communist approaches. Indigenous political or professional elites might be able to challenge the proposals of foreign planners but citizen involvement was largely absent. Moreover the planning cultures of these countries remained underdeveloped, often lacking relatively autonomous reformist, pressure group and professional networks. Neither were many post-colonial governments willing to encourage the countervailing voices that could come from a more vigorous civil society.

For various reasons a few post-colonial countries quickly achieved greater affluence so that the external models seemed more relevant. But for most the presumption that they would quickly correspond to a Western or Soviet path of development was naïve. As early as the 1950s, a few more experienced and sensitive trans-national planners began to see a need for different approaches more appropriate to undeveloped post-colonial societies. They began to suggest approaches that harnessed local efforts more effectively and did not depend so much on such an expert approach. The first signs involved a shift to 'site and services' approaches to housing provision. These presaged the appearance of more radical schemes of community-based upgrading of informal settlements. Instead of highly 'scientific' plan-making with high data needs, a more

pragmatic form of 'action planning' appeared, more closely matched to the limitations of indigenous technical capacity.

More generally there has been growing emphasis on local capacity building. Interestingly this has included the formation of knowledge networks and organizations that depend far less on external orchestration and are based within the post-colonial developing world rather than being primarily organizations of the affluent world. However, these have been a very recent phenomenon. The possibilities of such networking have improved dramatically with recent innovations in information technology and communications.

## Modern Planning in the Post Modern World

The crisis of relevance of 'modern urban planning' which manifested itself in the post-colonial world was the earliest and most acute manifestation of a wider phenomenon. By the 1970s, even in its affluent heartlands the results of modern planning were increasingly seen as having failed to fulfil the hopes which had attended their conception. Across the West (and in more muted form even within the Soviet bloc), there were more signs of resistance. Opposition to major urban highways schemes and redevelopment projects had been growing steadily during the 1960s, especially so in North America but became increasingly common in Europe and other parts of the affluent world.

Citizens were becoming less inclined to defer to planners' expertise. They wanted planners who were more humble and less convinced of the certainties of their methodologies and the 'answers' that followed from these. They became more protective of the cities that had grown up before planners had even appeared. Historic buildings and districts and the more general texture and morphology of historic cities were increasingly valued. By the late twentieth century there was a widespread reaction against the planned functional 'compartmentalization' of cities.

Close on the heels of this popular questioning came an erosion of other certainties which had underpinned modern urban planning in its heartlands. Shifts in the world economy produced decline in the older industrial regions of Europe and North America. Cities with formerly secure niches in their national economies, now found themselves losing investment and population. The fall of Communism within Eastern Europe countries had similar results as their state-supported economies also collapsed. From the perspective of urban planners, these changes upended many assumptions on which they had based their plans. New efforts that marginalized many of planning's traditional concerns were now made to find new sources of wealth.

Planners in the United States came from a planning culture which was historically more attuned to place competition and boosterism and returned to this with a certain familiarity. But for European cities it marked a bigger change. City marketing and various strategies and instruments to privilege business became common. (See also, Nyseth, Chapter 19, this volume.) So too did the forming of very close relationships with private developers, in various forms of public-private partnerships. There were also unprecedented public investments in culture, usually reflecting multiple intentions to generate a new economy of consumption and increase the general attractiveness of the city for investment.

The third major element of change in the late twentieth century was more encouraging for planning in that it resembled in some ways the ideas of planning that had crystallized a century earlier. This was the emergence of a new commitment to sustainable forms of development. This grew from the environmental movement which had taken more active forms since the 1970s and the international development movement which recognized the need to facilitate growth while minimizing environmental damage. During the 1980s and 1990s a new global discourse of sustainable development emerged, especially so in the wake of the 1992 Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro.

It marked a partial rejection of one of the main foundations of modern planning and indeed modernism generally, the belief in the almost infinite possibilities of human progress fuelled by science and technology. Yet it also stressed themes that echoed some traditional elements of modern planning, such as the promotion of community and the need to balance pressures for growth against those to protect and conserve nature. There were also echoes of the faith in a new terminology to solve public problems. In the 1890s it was *Städtebau*, town planning, *urbanisme*, city planning and so on which seemed to offer the peaceful, reformist way to create a better world. A century on, the new discourses of sustainability, seeking 'compact cities', 'new urbanism' and 'smart growth', appeared to carry comparable hopes. It remains to be seen whether they can be fulfilled to a greater extent than were those of the original movement for modern urban planning.

## Conclusions

This chapter has suggested something of the various cultural dimensions of urban planning history. It has emphasized the social milieux from which planning emerged, initially as a series of local and national responses to the common phenomenon of the large modern city. Yet the predominantly liberal, progressive outlook that characterized the early national movements soon drew them into international contact. From a very early stage, an international planning movement was created which both softened tendencies for overtly nationalistic expressions of planning and created a means for rapid diffusion of planning knowledge.

However, even as it became a flagship for liberal internationalist sentiments, the universal process of professionalization began to weaken the connections between planning and the reformist impulses from whence it came. Increasingly it became an expert activity, conceptualized more in technical and eventually quasi-scientific terms. As such it became potentially more detachable from the political and social values of its founders. Alongside this, the twentieth century also saw a substantial incorporation of planning as an instrument of the state and of governance.

These two processes, of professionalization and state incorporation, have been critical to understanding how planning could have become a practice deeply embedded within less than liberal political systems. From a very early stage planning became a tool first of colonialist and then of other varieties of authoritarian and totalitarian states. Even within the liberal West, professionalism and incorporation also underpinned the belief which became widespread from around the middle of the twentieth century that applying modern planning expertise was itself a good thing almost regardless of

what it actually did. The truth has been that the extent of the perfectibility of planning expertise has been limited. In many demonstrable ways planners have made cultural assumptions about the way people wanted to live that were often dubious at the time and have not responded well to changed social aspirations and economic realities.

The reactions and deeper changes of recent decades have diminished popular and political faith in the kind of planning that grew up over much of the twentieth century. Shorn of its ambitious hopes of social progress, planning continues as an embedded bureaucratic function of the state, rather modestly intermediating between competing interests, usually in favour of the most powerful. A trite way to end would be to suggest some kind of cultural renewal of the planning movement, reinvigorating its reformist roots and putting professional expertise and state incorporation into their proper, subsidiary places. Instead I leave it to the reader to decide whether it will be possible or desirable to reinvent a kind of planning that might regain the near universal prominence it enjoyed during the long post-1945 boom. Sadly, the reality is that the 'peaceful path to real reform' (as Howard termed it in 1898) remains as elusive as ever.

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