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Collaborative Planning

Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies

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1 Traditions of Planning Thought

The origins of planning

Every field of endeavour has its history of ideas and practices and its traditions of debate. These act as a store of experience, of myths, metaphors and arguments, which those within the field can draw upon in developing their own contributions, either through what they do, or through reflecting on the field. This 'store' provides advice, proverbs, recipes and techniques for understanding and acting, and inspiration – ideas to play with and develop. It may also act as a foil, against which critiques are developed and new ways of thinking brought forward. Thus, such a store provides intellectual resources. But it may also act as a constraint on intellectual innovation, by locking perceptions and understandings into particular moulds which are difficult to discard. The planning tradition itself has generally been 'trapped' inside a modernist instrumental rationalism for many years, and is only now beginning to escape.

This chapter reviews the traditions of planning thought, focusing on their development in a European and American context. The objective is firstly, to identify those elements of the tradition which provide resources upon which a transformation of planning thought can build; secondly, to introduce the new communicative planning theory as a foundation for a form of collaborative planning; and thirdly, to emphasise what needs to be discarded if the transformation is to be effective.

The planning tradition is a curious one, built up through a mixture of evangelism, formal institutional practice, scientific knowledge and, increasingly, academic development. It represents a continual effort to interrelate conceptions of the qualities and social dynamics of places with notions of the social processes

of 'shaping places' through the articulation and implementation of policies. As John Friedmann has repeatedly pointed out, it oscillates in its emphases between a radical, transformative intention, and a role in maintaining the way cities function and governance works (Friedmann, 1973, 1987). This leads to an ambiguous relation to the social context of planning work. Planners in Europe in the 1940s and 1950s saw themselves as being at the forefront of a transforming effort, building the welfare states which would deliver a reasonable quality of life to the majority of citizens, after the horrendous experiences of war and of the economic depression before it. They were at the vanguard of a transforming effort (Boyer, 1983; Davies, 1972; Ravetz, 1980). Their successors, in contrast, often feel themselves operating within a complex and often uncomfortable, political and economic context, within which room for transformative manoeuvre seems slight.

Cities have been planned in one way or another, in the broadest sense of the management of organisation of space, of land and property rights and the provision of urban services, for as long as they have existed. Students of planning are still sometimes taught a history of urban form, from the Greeks and Romans, through European city-states, to the present industrial and post-industrial metropolis (Mumford, 1961). This emphasizes planning as the management of a product, the physical shape and form, the morphology and spatial organisation of the urban region.

However, the culture of planning as it has evolved in the past century is rooted in a much broader philosophical and social transformation, the intellectual sea change which we now label in the history of Western thought as the 'Enlightenment' (Hall and Gieben, 1992). Towards the end of the eighteenth century, a whole body of ideas seemed to develop together, in science, philosophy and economics. This body of thought emphasised the value of scientific knowledge, empirical inquiry and acting in the world to improve it, a deliberate opposition to religious dogma and monarchical attitudes, upheld by a religious preoccupation with the inner life (Sennet, 1991). Enlightenment thinkers argued for the importance of individuals, as knowing subjects with rights and responsibilities, as against power through the 'divine right' of kings and barons. They stressed the value of an open environment for business and commerce, as opposed to the

political management of the empires and city-states of Europe at the time. Contemporary western conceptions of democracy, based on the individual franchise, the rights of individuals to pursue their lives and livelihoods, and the primacy of profit-seeking, self-interested economic organisation were significantly shaped in this period (Hall and Gieben, 1992). Out of this climate of thought, and the marriage of science and individual freedom to industry and commerce, came the great surge of invention and expansion known as the Industrial Revolution. It also witnessed the rise of democratic states, displacing autocratic states across western societies, though there were intermittent periods of totalitarian regimes. It is this intellectual movement which these days we refer to as the project of *modernity* (see Chapter 2).

The complexity of the political and economic processes which resulted, with their mixture of positive advances in terms of wealth generation and the spread of benefits combined with gross social inequalities, systematic exclusions (of class, gender, ethnicity and race), environmental pollution and periodic collapse in market processes, led to a growing interest in the *management* of the social-spatial relations unfolding within states and cities. Faced by these dynamic and contradictory forces, arguments began to build up in favour of *planning* the trajectory of the future, rather than being perpetually vulnerable to the volatility of markets, or to the power of the big capitalist companies. The key resource for this project of planning was seen as scientific knowledge and instrumental rationality. Scientific knowledge could provide an objective basis for identifying present problems and predicting future possibilities. Instrumental rationality focused on relating *means* (how to do things) to *ends* (what could be achieved), in logical and systematic ways. Impartial reason could be used as the measure of just actions (Young, 1990). In this way, the irrationalities of market processes and of political dictatorships could be replaced with a new rationality, planning as the 'rational mastery of the irrational', as Karl Mannheim put it (Mannheim, 1940).

The systematic planning of economies, of cities and of neighbourhoods thus became a growing preoccupation of national and local governments faced with the burgeoning problems generated by dynamic and often volatile economic and political conditions. It offered a 'transformative mechanism' with which to change and maintain a new, more efficient and effective order to

the management of urban regions and to economic management generally

Three planning traditions

The culture of spatial planning as it has arrived in our times has been woven together out of three strands of thought which have grown up in the context of this inheritance. The first is that of *economic planning*, which aims to manage the productive forces of nations and regions. It is this form of planning which Mannheim had primarily in mind, linked to social policies which together would form the framework of a 'welfare state'. The second strand is that of the management of the *physical development* of towns which promotes health, economy, convenience and beauty in urban settings (Abercrombie, 1933; Keeble, 1952; Adams, 1994). The third is the management of *public administration* and *policy analysis*, which aims to achieve both effectiveness and efficiency in meeting explicit goals set for public agencies.

Economic planning

The tradition of economic planning is a vivid expression of the materialist and rationalist conception of a planned social order. The processes of production and distribution had to be planned to ensure efficient production and continuing growth, and, for some protagonists of economic planning, a fair distribution of the benefits of growth. It was preoccupied with both the economic failures of capitalistic market processes and their social costs.

The interest in *economic planning* arose in part from a general critique of the processes of industrial capitalism. Karl Marx mounted a devastating attack on the social costs of industrial development driven by the striving of capitalist entrepreneurs to maximise profits in competitive markets by exploiting people's labour and destroying resources (Giddens, 1987; Kitching, 1988). His analysis of capitalist processes of production, distribution and exchange was immensely powerful because it combined empirical perception with intellectual coherence, and was informed by a deeply humanitarian concern with the recovery of human dignity,

which he saw attacked and degraded by the 'production processes he observed in nineteenth-century England (Kitching, 1988). His answer, articulated as a political programme in the *Communist Manifesto*, was to replace the marketplace and the processes of production driven by capitalistic competition with a governance system which was run by the people. Initially, and in order to break the power of capitalists on governance, Marx argued that the forces representing labour should engage in 'class struggle' with the objective of taking control of the state. Ultimately, the state too should wither away, leaving economic activity and governance to be managed by local communities.

Marx's political strategy underpinned the communist political movement, which gained enormous leverage in the early part of the twentieth century as labour movements across the world struggled to improve working conditions. But where communist regimes or socialist regimes, inspired by similar ideas of class struggle, came to power, they tended to reinforce the state, and the original Marxist idea of withering away was forgotten. In the economic arena, capitalist production processes were replaced with centralised planning and programming by the state, with individual enterprises driven by centrally-established production targets rather than the drive for profitability. Economic activity was typically seen to consist of a number of production sectors, usually based on a conventional division between primary, secondary and tertiary, or service industries. Co-ordination in space was subordinated to relatively independent development programmes of the different national ministries, representing economic sectors. In theory, production targets were to be informed by scientific research and technical understanding. In practice, building up an adequate knowledge base at the centre proved enduringly difficult and the logic of effective and efficient production quickly got replaced by a 'politics of meeting targets'. Further, such a concentration of economic and political power at the apex of a national system not only encouraged forms of governance unresponsive to people's needs. It also provided many opportunities for corrupt practice (Bicanic, 1967). As a result, centralised 'command and control' planning was increasingly discredited, from the point of view of economic efficiency, democratic practice and social welfare. Those who criticise planning still often have this model of planning in mind.

The communist model was not the only one which proposed replacing capitalistic economic organisation. Many writers who saw problems in large scale organisation outlined proposals for 'alternative' lifestyles, characterised by forms of self-governance. These have at various times been taken up by those working within the town planning tradition (Hall, 1988). For instance, Ebenezer Howard, famous for his development of the idea of the *Garden City*, was strongly influenced by such ideas (Beevers, 1988). These ideas challenged the notion of state management and bureaucratic organisation as likely to compromise the freedom of individuals and communities to determine the conditions of their own existence. What they were searching for were ways of interacting among small groups with respect to those matters in which individuals had shared concerns. The influential planning theorist, John Friedmann (1973), describes his own intellectual odyssey from a view of planning as improving public management using the techniques of instrumental rationality, to an emphasis on collective management through interaction among small scale communities, mixing urban and rural economic and social life, a strategy of *agropolitan development*. This kind of 'bottom up' economic planning represented a challenge both to capitalist societies and communist ones, and remains an important strand of thought in planning today. It has many links to the 'new' radical environmental movements which are searching for different and more environmentally sustainable ways of organising economic life (Beatley, 1994; Goodin, 1992).

Meanwhile, the problems of economic organisation also came to pre-occupy the advocates of capitalist production processes and market societies. The problems here arose from the repeated experience of periodic *market failures*. The ideal of the marketplace is that it provides a mechanism for the continual readjustment of production in relation to consumers' preferences and ability to pay. It is efficient in that it encourages innovative production methods, to reduce costs and introduce new and better products, and it in theory maximises welfare, being driven by consumer demand. And all this happens without the need for complex bureaucracy and the politics which go with state management. However, this marketplace balancing act can get upset for all sorts of reasons (Harrison, 1977; Harvey, 1987). Sometimes markets can be dominated by the producers, in a situation of

monopoly or oligopoly. Or there may be too few transactions and too little knowledge available about them. People may come to the marketplace with very different capacities to pay. Market processes will tend to exacerbate these inequalities. Consumers may decide not to purchase and producers not to invest in new equipment or expand production because there is too much uncertainty to predict future expenditure patterns. Or there may be problems in the supply and maintenance of goods and services that everyone benefits from but which are very costly for any one person to supply. Some of these problems are short term, and are 'cleared' over time. But others are more deep-seated and can lead to a general slump in economic activity. By the middle of the twentieth century, there had been several such 'depressions'. The experience of these fostered ideas which suggested that economies could be 'managed' to avoid market failure.

The most influential ideas at this time were those of John Maynard Keynes, who argued that economies slumped because of a crisis in consumer demand. If people did not have the resources to buy goods, and/or they did not have the confidence in their longer term future to be prepared to invest in purchases, then production would sag. His solution, widely adopted in western economic management in the 1950s and 1960s, was to stimulate demand (Gamble, 1988; Thornley, 1991). A key element in his solution was the maintenance of 'full employment', a term meaning unemployment levels of 2 to 4%, regarded by economists as representing necessary labor turnover, flexibility and availability. Such policies were buttressed by social welfare policies to assist people to acquire education, to maintain health, and to get housing. The welfare states established in the post-Second World War period in many European countries served to keep the costs of labour low for companies, while enabling reasonable wages. (They also provided benefits to workers, and could be viewed as a strategy to fend off the more radical demands which some workers' groups were advocating at the time.) These wages could then be ploughed back into the marketplace to stimulate production of consumer goods, and hence economic activity generally. In many countries, and notably Britain, the US and Australia, subsidies were provided to encourage people to purchase housing, generating the expansion of a residential development industry (see Ball, 1983).

Although rarely called planning, these demand promotion strategies created what came to be known as a 'mixed economy', with economic policy – planning by another name – being driven by a mixture of economic analysis of market conditions and political sensitivity to electoral consequences. As with the centrally planned economies, the 'economy' was conceptualised in terms of sectors of production. This approach provided a governance regime which seemed to have advantages for the kinds of companies and capital accumulation strategies which operated on 'Fordist' production lines (Harvey, 1989a; Boyer, 1991; Amin (ed.), 1994).

However, by the 1970s, these demand-stimulation strategies seemed to have run out of steam. An increasingly interrelated global economy enabled those countries with cheaper labour costs to undercut the high wage economies. Consumer demand, and its accompanying demand for state spending, was growing energetically, creating conditions of rising inflation. At the same time, new technology was reducing the demand for, and therefore the power of, labour. Meanwhile, as companies sought to cut costs to be more competitive, questions were raised about the scale of tax demands needed to support the various demand-stimulation strategies, and about the various regulations on working conditions which had built up over the years to protect labour. The Keynesian strategy seemed to have ground to a halt in 'stagflation' – a situation of economic slow-down combined with rising inflation. This reaction provided fertile ground for the reappearance of liberal ideas about economic organisation. By this time, state intervention itself was seen as the problem. Articulated by the neo-liberal political movements, especially in the US and Britain, new economic strategies focused on the supply side of the economy, and the reduction of constraints on adaptation and innovation (Gamble, 1988). A major objective was to reduce the role of bureaucracy and politics in the management of the economy, and to 'unfetter' business from the burdens imposed upon it by the regulatory environment built up through the welfare state. Economic planning, and spatial and environmental planning, were considered one such burden, and a particular target during the period of the neo-liberal Thatcher administration in Britain in the 1980s.

Britain under the Conservative Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, became the arena for the wholesale introduction of

these ideas. Through strategies of privatisation and deregulation, companies and market processes generally were to be freed up, to cut costs and to innovate in the globalising marketplace (Gamble, 1988; Thornley, 1991). The role of government was restricted to the management of the money supply to squeeze inflation out of national economies and to hold exchange rates at competitive positions in the international market place. Any government programmes which created 'blockages' to supply-side activity were to be reduced or removed. This included 'bureaucratic' regulations, such as land use controls, and the concentration of the ownership of development land in public hands in cities. The adverse social and environmental consequences of such a strategy were presented as necessary costs of transition to a more soundly-based economy, which would generate the wealth to put them right in due course. Planning, or co-ordinated economic management of the economy, in this context, was seen not just as unnecessary, but as counterproductive to the project of the recovery of a growth dynamic through market processes.

This neo-liberal strategy has had enormous influence across the world at the end of this century. It offers a way to transform governance to make it more relevant to the dynamics of contemporary economies. Its pro-active elements promote entrepreneurial rather than regulatory styles in governance (Harvey, 1989a; Healey, Khakee, Motte and Needham, 1996). It suggested an end of planning, and the return of the market as the key organising principle of economic life. Yet this strategy is also running into problems. Flexible labour markets create impoverished and insecure workers, unable or afraid to spend on consumption. Individualistic competitive firm behaviour undermines the delicate relations between firms which encourage knowledge flow and creative innovation. Attention is now turning to the institutional preconditions for economic growth (see Chapter 5). The deregulation impetus itself has changed into a project of regulatory reform, changing the target and process of regulation (Vickers, 1991; Thompson *et al.*, 1991). This rediscovery of the institutional preconditions for market 'health' and 'vitality' has awakened interest once again in strategies which might foster economic *development*. Further, the increasing concern with environmental quality has created a climate within which there is more rather than less demand for the regulation of economic activity.

So planning and the strategic management of urban region change are once again being discussed with regard to the management of economies. The causes and forms of this are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

Underpinning the approaches are different social theories – of class struggle for the Marxists; of communitarian self-management for the anarchists; and of individualism for the Keynesians and neo-liberals. Despite their different emphases, however, the debates and practices of economic management have shared some common characteristics. Their focus has been on the material well-being of consumers and the generation of profits for producers. Their practices have drawn on the vocabulary of neo-classical economics, even in Eastern European economies, with its metaphors of utility-maximising, rational individuals making trade-off between their preferences. Through the science of economics, policy programmes can be developed objectively, without the need to test ideas out with the different interested parties. Governance becomes a technocratic exercise in economic management. All these assumptions are challenged by contemporary institutionalist analysis and the communicative approach now emerging in planning theory.

The debates on economic management provide a context for the discussion of the physical development of towns and cities, and the management of spatial change in urban regions, and hence for any exercise in spatial and environmental planning. But the connection between these two arenas has been persistently neglected. Economic analysis has focused on economic sectors, and has tended to neglect how economic activities occur in space and time. As a result, it has paid little attention to the co-existence of different economic activities in shared space, except at the level of the micro-analysis of labour market dynamics, or the agglomeration economies and diseconomies of particular clusters of economic activities. It was left to the field of regional economic analysis and regional location geography to articulate these connections through the elaboration of location models for urban regions. Drawing on principles developed by Von Thunen and Isard, urban region spatial organisation came to be understood as being generated by the regional economic base. This in turn created a service economy and distributed activities across space through trade-offs between transport costs and land and property

values (Evans, 1985). These ideas were developed in the spatial planning field conceptually by Chadwick (1971) and McLoughlin (1969) in Britain, and more practically by Chapin (1965) in the US. They focused on the analysis and modelling of urban systems. It is the assumptions and findings of these models which have been comprehensively challenged in the fields of regional economic analysis and regional geography in recent years, contributing to the reintroduction of space, place and the institutional capacity of localities into both micro and macro economic analysis (Massey and Meegan, 1982; Harvey, 1982; Scott and Roweis, 1977). A critical contemporary challenge is to link these new understandings of the spatiality of economic process to the principles and practices of physical development planning.

Physical development planning

Whereas the economic planning tradition has been dominated by economists and political philosophers, the arena of physical development planning was shaped for many years by engineers and architects, and by utopian images of what cities could be like. Utopian dreams of urban form, and architects to build them, have been around since long before the Enlightenment. What modernity and industrial urbanisation brought with them was a more material and functional concern with the qualities of city development. These influences led to practical interest in building regulation and in the strategic regulation of the location of development. Land use zoning was introduced, aimed to prevent the pollution of residential neighbourhoods by dirty industry, and to limit development location to enable adequate services to be provided. Ways of providing infrastructure and measures for land assembly, to allow land pooling among owners, or the purchase by the state of sites needed for public projects, were also introduced in early planning systems. Urban master plans, layout plans for 'greenfield' subdivision and projects for the reorganisation of the urban fabric became part of the management of the physical development process in many places from the late nineteenth century (Ward, 1994; Sutcliffe, 1981).

This of course implied affecting the structure of land and property rights and the interests of land and property owners. However, until the 1970s, and even later, there was little discus-

sion of the nature of the development process and land and property markets in debates on physical development planning (see Healey and Barrett (eds), 1985; Adams, 1994). These were relegated to an arena of 'planning practice', concerned primarily with tools (Lichfield and Darin-Drabkin, 1980). The tools available were usually presented by the physical development planners as inadequate for the task in hand. The tradition of physical development planning instead tended to focus on broad policy objectives, and on the 'ideal city'. In their Utopian dreams, the most influential thinkers in the tradition harked back to the pre-Enlightenment days. They were largely disinterested in an analysis of the *processes* of physical development unfolding before them (see Hall, 1995 on Abercrombie). Instead, the idea of modernity entered into their discourse through ways of thinking about the shape and form of cities and the qualities of neighbourhood organisation. Cities were seen as an amalgam of economic, cultural and household activities. The challenge was to find a way of organising activities which was functionally efficient, convenient to all those involved, and aesthetically pleasing as well. The objective was to promote and accommodate modern life, as both a project in economic progress and an opportunity to provide good living conditions for urban populations (Healey and Shaw, 1994). The aim was to build a functionally rational city for economic and social life (Boyer, 1983). There were vigorous debates on how this could be done, which reflected different attitudes to the nature of urbanity, the proper relation between people and nature, and how far to welcome new building technologies and motorised transport. In these debates, the 'British' tradition was often contrasted with the continental, the former celebrating a nostalgia for an urban form in a rural setting, and a life in balance with the natural order, as expressed in Howard's ideas for a social garden city; the latter emphasising the tradition of high density apartment life, as encapsulated in Le Corbusier's *Ville Radieuse* (Hall, 1988; Ward, 1994).

As a result of these influences, planning theory became in the mid-twentieth century a discussion about urban form. This generated some of the most powerful urban spatial organising ideas of the century (Keeble, 1952; Hall, 1988). The dominant idea in the British tradition has been the conception of the urban region as centripetal, focused on a city core, with a hierarchy of district and

subcentres developed in an urban form which spreads out with radial routes, interlinked by concentric ringroads, and contained by a green belt to give a clearly defined urban edge. This image is particularly associated with the work of the great English planner of the first part of the twentieth century, Patrick Abercrombie (see Figure 1.1). These spatial organising ideas not only provided a vocabulary of urban spatial forms. The spatial plans for particular cities have in many instances provided enduring and popular principles in local debates on the development of particular cities, for example Burnham's plan for Chicago, Abercrombie's for London and Stephenson's for Perth. Such plans have had effects by *framing* how key players in urban regions have thought about place and location (Rein and Schon, 1993; Faludi, 1996; Healey, Khakee, Motte and Needham, 1996). This is currently recognised by politicians and planners in many places in Europe, in efforts to recast spatial planning policies and practices (see the example of Lyons in Chapter 3). The significance of these spatial organising ideas will be discussed further in Chapter 8. But by the late 1960s, the physical development tradition came to be heavily criticised, in part for the arrogant confidence of the planners who promoted it (Boyer, 1983; Davies, 1972; Ravetz, 1980), but also for the lack of any social scientific understanding of the dynamics of urban region change which the planning ideas set out to manage (Hall, 1995; McLoughlin, 1992).

In some countries, the tradition of planning as urban form dominates planning thought and practice to this day, for example in Italy. Elsewhere, the tradition has been relegated to questions of the design of neighbourhoods, or major projects, or urban design. Through this tradition, ideas about architectural style, and particularly the debate about modern and post-modern style, have infiltrated into planning discourse – the latter challenging the functionalism of the modernist pre-occupation with the spatial order of the city. Postmodern thinking has also challenged rationalist conceptions of the social science of city management (Boyer, 1983; Moore Milroy, 1991). The urban form tradition has nevertheless kept active an aesthetic consciousness within urban planning, repeatedly sidelined in more utilitarian planning traditions, such as the British. Even in Britain, however, physical development planning incorporated concepts of stewardship of the environment, which have salience in the light of contemporary

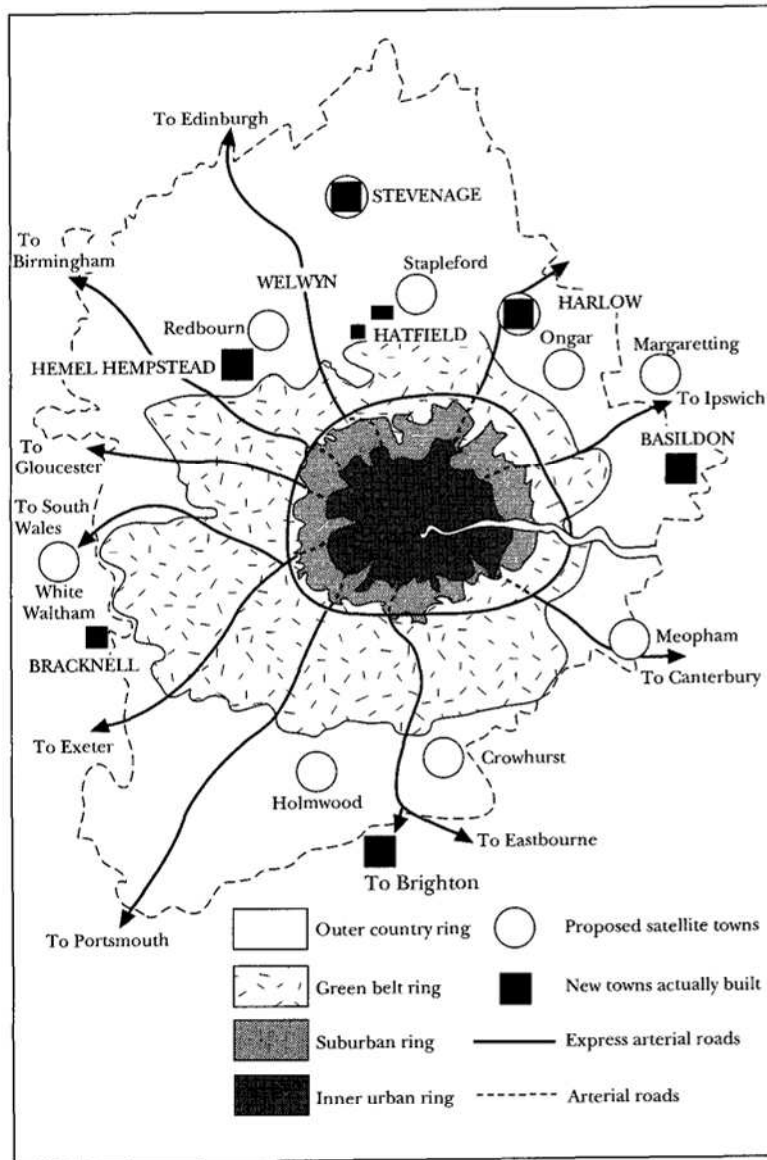


Figure 1.1 Patrick Abercrombie's plan for Greater London
Source: Wannop (1995).

concerns about environmental sustainability (see Chapter 6). Thus, despite its rationalising and modernist origins, the physical development planning tradition embodies a critique of materialist rationalism.

In countries where the architectural tradition has been dominant, research interest has focused on the study of the social relations of building form, in the search for principles of urban form through which to connect social process with physical form, as in the study of urban morphology (for example, in Italy). However, the primary focus of urban morphology has been on understanding the built form product and how to manipulate it (Madani Pour, 1990). A more social scientific tradition of spatial planning has developed in Britain and other Northern European countries which focuses on urban form and spatial organisation as a product of the dynamics of social forces. It is associated in particular with the movement of geographers into the planning field. Initially, as noted in discussing the economic planning tradition, their contribution was to bring regional economic analysis to bear on thinking about urban strategy and spatial arrangement. They also provided a more rigorous understanding of the relationship between objectives of economic growth and quality of life, and how to manage the social processes through which these could be achieved. Such analysis had the effect of replacing discussions on idealised city form with an analysis of conditions and a prediction of *trends* which had to be accommodated, particularly in relation to accommodating the demands for better housing and for mass car ownership and use. Yet geographical analyses of the 1960s and 1970s neglected the dynamics of land and property development processes, nor was it common to recognise trends as expressions of 'market processes'. In more sophisticated analyses, the different dimensions of urban regions were integrated through the use of the urban systems models mentioned earlier, drawing on neo-classical forms of regional economic analysis and location theory. These were driven by the search for equilibrium relationships in urban region dynamics (Lee, 1973; Cowling and Steeley, 1973).

Such *trend planning* provided implicit support to the Keynesian demand management strategies being pursued at the level of the national economy. However, it became clear, as the stagnation of the 1970s set in, that trends could easily change. Many urban regions found their local economics undermined by the company

restructuring occurring in the face of international competition (Massey and Meegan, 1982). This led to more interest being taken in how to create the conditions within which local economies could flourish rather than decline.

The increasing instability of many local economies also created problems for the process of land and property development, particularly where increasing reliance was put on private initiative, as governments began to cut back public expenditure programmes in response to their macroeconomic difficulties. This encouraged more attention to the mechanics of the property development process. Meanwhile, planners had been responding to both the increasing popular concern over environmental quality and the protection of nature, and to the realisation that welfare state policies had not eradicated poverty in the city, nor were they sensitive to the increasingly evident social diversity of urban life. By the 1980s, therefore, the physical development planning tradition was moving away from its utopian and aesthetic roots towards a form of policy analysis focused on the practical management of the dynamics of social, economic and environmental change in urban regions. Much of this tradition will be drawn upon in Part II of this book. What makes this tradition more than just a social science of urban region change is its integration with the tradition of policy analysis.

Policy analysis and planning

The science of policy analysis is of American origin, and grew out of a search for ways of making public administration more efficient and effective. In Britain, central and increasingly local government were transformed from the late nineteenth century by the development of an administrative class at national level, with substantial capability, good pay and a commitment to a service ethic. Local government was increasingly professionalised, challenging local politics with formalised expertise (Laffin, 1986; Rhodes, 1988). On the European continent, administration was formally governed by legal rules, developed from the Napoleonic code, which gave authority to administrative action. Both systems helped to constrain the play of political power games and to limit the subversion of administrative systems to private and political party objectives, except in places such as Southern Italy, where

the administrative rules were typically bypassed or surrounded with powerful alternative practices.

In the US, however, local administrations were much more open to the whims of local politics. Many US studies of local politics describe alliances within which local politicians collude with local development interests to promote speculative land profits. Logan and Molotch (1987) argued that US local governance was dominated by property development and investment interest – a *rentier* politics. Stone (1989) develops the analysis of such alliances further to examine more enduring relations between local government and business. In their discussion of local politics, Lauria and Whelan (1995) refer to such alliances as *urban regimes*. Or local government could be driven by simple political objectives of maximising electoral advantage. This was described in a famous case study of Chicago, where decisions on the location of low cost housing were made entirely with electoral advantage in mind (Meyerson and Banfield, 1955). This led to pressure to make public administration more efficient and less corrupt (Friedmann 1973). The ideal local government balanced the demands of a pluralistic polity through technical analysis and management. Policy analysis offered rational techniques for this purpose. The core of the approach developed in the 1960s focused on identifying objectives, and developing and implementing appropriate means to achieve them. Its principles drew on Herbert Simon's ideas of management by objectives, rather than by setting legal rules for administrators to follow. This approach offered flexibility to address the particularity of decision circumstances while constraining corruption by clear accountability of actions to policy criteria. The decision model was the foundation for what became known as the *rational planning process*.

The resultant debates on planning as a policy process have been enormously influential, structuring the American planning tradition, and providing a point of reference for any planning culture open to American influence. They built on the pioneering experience in regional economic development of the Tennessee Valley Authority in the 1930s, and drew on ideas about efficient business management. Models for public planning and management were developed, based on the rational relation of means to ends (Friedmann, 1973, 1987). By 'rational' in this context was meant both a form of deductive logic, and the use of

instrumental reason as a form of argument, drawing upon scientific analysis. As Davidoff and Reiner (1962) stress in their articulation of the approach as a 'choice theory of planning', a strict separation of fact from value was to be maintained. Values were seen as originating within the political process, and were provided by the 'clients' of the technicians of the policy process. Policy analysis work was seen to take place in a defined 'action space', cut out from the political and institutional context in which goals were articulated (Faludi, 1973). The planner as policy analyst was a specialist in helping clients articulate their goals, and translating these into alternative strategies to maximise, or at least 'satisfice', the achievement of these goals, through careful analysis and systematic evaluation.

This approach is discussed in more detail in Chapter 8. In the US in particular, it stimulated an explosion of work on the 'science' of decision-making, with much discussion on the forms the rational planning process could take and on the kinds of urban systems models which were needed to underpin analyses of the consequences of alternative actions. The model itself was challenged by those who argued that it was idealistic, with unrealistic expectations of the political willingness to stick to rational planning processes, and of the conceptual and empirical knowledge capacity to understand situations sufficiently to be able to identify and evaluate all possible alternatives. The most famous challenge was that by Charles Lindblom, who argued for an alternative approach of 'disjointed incrementalism' – approaching problems in small steps rather than big steps towards grand goals (Braybrook and Lindblom, 1963). Later he argued for a more negotiative approach, a form of 'partisan mutual adjustment' (Lindblom, 1965). Lindblom's ideas in this respect are an innovative precursor of the current discussion of interactive approaches to developing planning strategies.

Lindblom's arguments still propose a planning process dominated by the techniques of instrumental rationality (Sager, 1994). His approach looked rather like a sort of 'market adjustment' within the public sector, produced by a form of technical analysis which drew on microeconomics rather than management theory. Other American contributions to the debate on policy processes in the later 1960s raised more fundamental questions. These focused on questions of value. In the early post-war period, there

was a powerful 'mood' in political debate that issues of value were no longer controversial. The West had chosen the capitalist path to peace and prosperity. Citizens were assumed to share broadly common interests, while arguing over the details of pluralistic interest conflicts (see discussion in Chapter 7). The planner or policy analyst was thus merely a technician of means committed to the values of scientifically-based and rationally-deduced policy choices, but neutral as regards ends. Davidoff and Reiner, writing in 1962, implied that this was indeed the case. But by the end of the 1960s, and linked to the reanalysis of poverty in American cities at this time, Paul Davidoff himself had come to a different view. In a famous paper, 'Advocacy and pluralism in planning' (Davidoff, 1965), he argued that it was impossible for the planner to be entirely value-free as regards ends, since planners as people had values. Implicitly, he acknowledged that these values divided people. In particular, the interests of poorer people in inner-city neighbourhoods were not the same as those of local business interests. He sought a way of planning which opened up the value diversity among the plurality of interests within a political community. In this context, he argued that planners should not stay value-neutral, given that they too had substantive values, values about ends. They should instead become value-conscious, declare their values and make themselves available to clients who wished to pursue such values. This approach had a powerful influence on American planning practice and thought in the early 1970s. The example from Boston quoted in Chapter 2 is taken from an example of advocacy planning inspired by Paul Davidoff.

Around the same time, the sociologist-planner Herbert Gans was arguing that planners had a moral responsibility to argue in favour of improving conditions for the disadvantaged. He argued, as Davidoff and Reiner had done, that planners needed to be aware of a double client, an employer, or 'customer' for the planner's services, and, more broadly, the citizens affected by the 'direct' client's proposals (Gans, 1969). Both Gans and Davidoff and Reiner were responding to the increasing political and popular interest in local environmental questions, and to the resultant pressure for more active citizen involvement in planning strategies and their implementation. In both the US and Britain, this led to ideas about the procedures for citizen participation in the planning process. This in turn generated critiques which

challenged the pluralistic conception of local politics, presenting it instead as a power game, in which elites held on to power which citizens struggled to gain access to. This is encapsulated in Sherry Arnstein's *Ladder of Citizen Participation* (1969), with its metaphoric reference to the 1968 student protests in France.

Both Davidoff and Gans assumed a pluralistic polity as idealised in dominant US political thinking at the time. They also con-

tinued to advocate the techniques of rational scientific analysis. Their objective was to shift the approach to fit the pluralistic context better. In seeking to fit the planning model to the 'action space' of the institutional context, they thus shifted away from earlier conceptions of the transformative power of planning. For the urban designer planners, and for the early advocates of the rational planning process, planning approaches were in the vanguard of the transformation of cities, and the transformation of the management of local governance. Davidoff and Gans, in contrast, saw planning as a tool which citizens could use in extracting a more democratic pluralist polity from the clutches of dominant elites.

During the 1970s in the US and in Western Europe, the discussion of appropriate planning process models moved on from this position to question both the model of a pluralistic polity itself and the value of techniques based on scientific knowledge and means-oriented or 'instrumental' rationality. The first was most strongly developed in Europe, and drew on Marxist-inspired theories to analyse the structural bases for the unequal distribution of power (Castells, 1977). The second challenge reached planning from several directions and reflected a much broader questioning of the role of science and instrumental reason in Western thought generally. An early paper by Rittel and Webber (1973) argued for a more interactive and enabling approach to planning since facts and values were intertwined in people's consciousness. Others, interested in how policies influenced subsequent events, in how they were 'implemented', showed that policies were continually being reinterpreted by those involved in carrying them forward (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984). British analysis argued that this negotiation and interpretation was an inherent dimension of policy work as practised. As a result, policies – that is goals, values and direction – were as likely to be articulated through the ongoing flow of events, decision and actions, as in formal exercises in policy-making (Barrett and Fudge, 1981a). The former were described as a 'bottom-up' view of how policies were made, to be contrasted with 'top-down' formal exercises. This work explicitly emphasised the interactive nature of 'doing planning work', and looked towards social exchange theory for inspiration. These developments are discussed in more detail in Chapters 7 and 8.

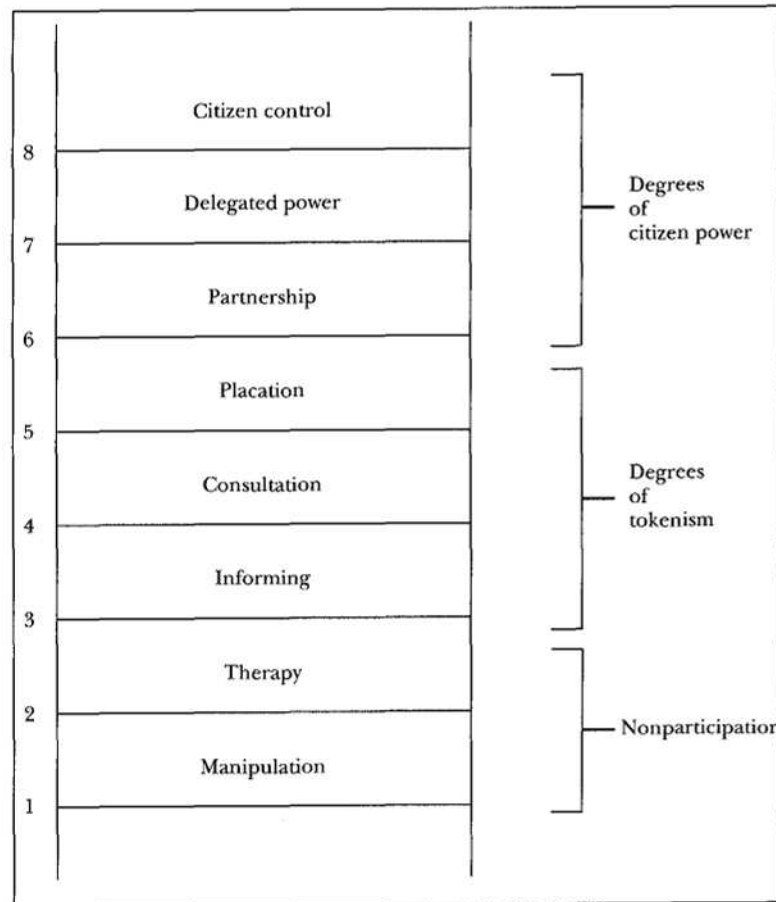


Figure 1.2 Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation
Source: Arnstein, 1969, p. 216.

The interpretive, communicative turn in planning theory

All these traditions, as they have evolved, provide pointers to the development of institutionalist analysis and communicative approaches. The economic planning tradition, as it has evolved in both national economic management and local economic development, incorporates an increasing appreciation of the institutional preconditions for economic health. The physical development planning tradition has moved both to recognise the social processes underpinning spatial organisation and urban form, and the range and complexity of the demands for local environmental management generated by interconnecting social, economic and biospheric processes. The policy analysis tradition is seeking both to escape from its predominant emphasis on instrumental reason and scientific knowledge to incorporate greater understanding of how people come to have the ways of thinking and ways of valuing that they do, and how policy development and policy implementation processes can be made more interactive. But these directions were not unchallenged. A new reassertion of market liberal notions of governance was also emerging in parallel with these. The current period is above all one of tension between these two rapidly developing approaches in public policy.

Neo-liberal theorisation involves a reassertion of instrumental rationality, but in a narrow form grounded in microeconomics. The neo-liberal turn in public policy in Britain was promoted by the growing influence of economists in the public policy arena. This in effect abandoned the idea of policy formulation as a technical task, and concentrated instead on policy evaluation, both before policies were put into place, and in assessing their performance over time. This has generated a body of technique and evaluation criteria now used extensively by government agencies, particularly where neo-liberal policy interests predominate. It deliberately eschews a co-ordinative role with respect to public policy, leaving any necessary co-ordination to voluntaristic action, through the dynamics of market processes and community self-help. These ideas provide a foil against which the communicative approach developed in this book is developed.

The second direction shifts the conceptual ground firmly into a phenomenological interpretation of the relationship of knowl-

edge to action. It builds on the realisation that knowledge and value do not merely have objective existence in the external world, to be 'discovered' by scientific inquiry. They are, rather, actively constituted through social, interactive processes (Berger and Luckman, 1967; Latour, 1987; Shotter, 1993). Public policy, and hence planning, are thus social processes through which ways of thinkings, ways of valuing and ways of acting are actively constructed by participants.

This recognition is part of a broad wave of reflection on identity (ways of being – ontology) and the bases of knowledge (ways of knowing – epistemology) which is influencing western thought in general these days. This intellectual wave has been building up in the planning theory field since the 1970s. It is now labelled argumentative, communicative or interpretive planning theory. It has many different strands, but the key emphases are as follows:

- a recognition that all forms of knowledge are socially constructed; and that the knowledge of science and the techniques of experts are not as different from 'practical reasoning' as the instrumental rationalists had claimed;
- a recognition that the development and communication of knowledge and reasoning take many forms, from rational systematic analysis, to storytelling, and expressive statements, in words, pictures or sound;
- a recognition, as a result, of the social context within which individuals form interests; individuals thus do not arrive at their 'preferences' independently, but learn about their views in social contexts and through interaction;
- a recognition that, in contemporary life, people have diverse interests and expectations, and that relations of power have the potential to oppress and dominate not merely through the distribution of material resources, but through the finegrain of taken-for-granted assumptions and practices;
- a realisation that public policies which are concerned with managing co-existence in shared spaces which seek to be efficient, effective and accountable to all those with a 'stake' in a place need to draw upon, and spread ownership of, the above range of knowledge and reasoning;

- a realisation that this leads away from competitive interest bargaining towards collaborative consensus-building and that, through such consensus-building practices, organising ideas can be developed and shared which have the capacity to endure, to co-ordinate actions by different agents, and to transform ways of organising and ways of knowing in significant ways, in other words, to build cultures;
- a realisation that, in this way, planning work is both embedded in its context of social relations through its day to day practices, and has a capacity to challenge and change these relations through the approach to these practices; context and practice are not therefore separated but socially constituted together.

This summary draws upon ideas developed by a number of contemporary planning theorists, notably Bengt Flyvberg, John Forester, John Friedmann, Charlie Hoch, Judy Innes, and Tore Sager. However, the planning theorists developing a communicative approach have given little attention in their work to the changing understanding of urban region dynamics evolving in regional economic analysis, urban geography and urban sociology (Lauria and Whelan, 1995). This too emphasises the active social processes through which everyday life and economic activity are accomplished. Intellectually, there are close links between the two emerging bodies of thought, grounded in the recognition of the social construction of meaning and the social embeddedness of ways of thinking and acting. A major objective of this book is to bring these two strands together and thus overcome the persistent tendency in planning thought and practice to separate the understanding of urban and regional change from the processes of governance through which political communities can collectively address their common dilemmas about what is happening to their neighbourhoods. The next chapter develops this challenge in theoretical terms.