The Historical Background of Urban and Regional E-Planning

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The 5th edition of this classical text on the history of urban and regional planning is published when new e-tools and online applications for urban planning, associated with the widespread use of information and communication technologies by citizens and governments, offer new opportunities for radical change in the way urban and regional planning is practiced, namely changes in the role citizens can play in the different stages of the planning process. The book is an introduction to the history of planning, written in an accessible style, for students of applied geography and of urban and regional planning, and provides a well structured perspective of the development of urban and regional problems, planning philosophies, techniques and legislation, since the Industrial Revolution throughout the entire twentieth century up to the end of the first decade of 2000's. Despite being mainly focused on the British experience, the book offers in some points an international overview and a comparative perspective of these processes, offering useful references for the interpretation of key events in the history of urban and regional planning in other developed countries, namely in continental Western Europe and in the USA after 1945.

The book has 9 chapters, covering two main periods: before and after World War II. The first chapter ('Planning, planners and plans') is an introduction to the book and offers a synthetic analysis of the concept and objectives of 'planning', and its application to urban and regional areas. The following chapters cover two distinct periods. The period before 1945 is examined in chapter 2 ('The origins: urban growth from 1800 to 1940') and in chapter 3 ('The seer: pioneer

thinkers in urban planning, from 1880 to 1945'). While chapter 2 is focused on the process of urban development in the period 1880-1945 and on the initial responses, chapter 3 addresses the ideas that supported these initial solutions and which were later responsible to a large extent for what urban planning is today. The evidence provided is focused on the Anglo-American tradition (e.g., Howard; Unwin and Parker; Perry, Stein and Tripp; Geddes and Abercrombie; Wright) and on the European tradition (e.g., Soria y Mata; Garnier and May; Le Corbusier). In chapter 4 ('The creation of the postwar planning machine, from 1940 to 1952'), the authors show how regional planning emerged from the recognition by most planners of that time that the planning of a city requires planning on a larger spatial scale than that of the traditional city. Important in that process was the Barlow Commission report at the end of the 1930s, and the following reports and decisions (e.g., Scott and Uthwatt; Abercrombie and Reith; Dower and Hobhouse). The key planning acts of this period are also examined and discussed in this chapter (e.g., the 1945 Distribution of Industry Act; the 1946 New Towns Act and the 1952 Town Development Act; the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act; the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act), highlighting two of the main characteristics of the 1947 planning system, as it is known: the strong negative powers of control that were given to the new local planning authorities; and the emphasis put on the regional scale ('urban region') as the appropriate scale for urban planning.

The next two chapters deal with the period post World War II, one focused on the national/ regional level and the other on the local/urban scale. In chapter 5 ('National/regional planning from 1945 to 2010') the book offers an overview of regional policy and regional change in the period 1945-80, policy changes between 1960-80, and the great urban policy reversal of the 1980s. This is followed in chapter 5 ('Planning for cities and city regions from 1945 to 2010') by an analysis of the planning process of cit-

ies in the post-war period up to the end of the first decade of the 2000's. The reform of local government, the new regional structure, planning for growth, and the city-region planning in the period 1965-72 are some of the issues examined and discussed in this chapter. The inner-city problem in the late 1970's, the urban policy under Thatcher in the 1980's (e.g., enterprises zones; urban development corporations; inner-city housing), the revival of planning in the 1990s, and the planning reforms in the 2000's are some of the key themes addressed in this chapter.

The next two chapters provide an overview of the planning history post 1945 outside the British context, in Western continental Europe and in the United States. The first of the two chapters ('Planning in Western Europe since 1945') offers a comparative view of planning in European countries with a particular focus on the following cases: France; Germany; Italy; Scandinavia; The Netherlands; and the European Spatial Planning Perspective. This is complemented on the following chapter ('Planning in the United States since 1945') by an overview of planning history post 1945, with a special focus on the following issues: economic development problems and instruments for economic development; metropolitan growth and change; new urbanism and smart growth.

This journey on the history of urban and regional planning in Britain, in some other European countries and in the USA is complemented by an overview of the planning process in chapter 9 ('The planning process'). Among other topics, the chapter discusses the following issues: systems planning versus master planning; goals, objectives and targets; forecasting, modeling and plan design; plan design and plan evaluation; implementing the plan; new planning paradigms; and spatial strategic coordination.

In sum, the book offers a concise, updated and rigorous perspective of the history of urban and regional planning, from the late nineteenth century up to the end of the first decade of the

twentieth-first century, which will certainly prove useful for all those that work in the field of e-planning, as the previous editions of the book did for past generations of planning students and scholars. Nonetheless, the book does not explore or examine the changes in the practice of urban planning as a result of the widespread use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in urban and regional planning, the Urban and Regional E-Planning paradigm. The article published by Richard Klosterman[1], in the first issue of the International Journal of E-Planning Research (IJEPR), reviewing forty years of efforts to use advanced ICT in planning research and practice, provides an overall view of the history of e-Planning, that future editions of this classical text on the history of Planning must consider.

ENDNOTES

[1] Richard E. Klosterman (2012). *E-Planning: Retrospect and Prospect*. International Journal of E-Planning Research, 1 (1): 1-4.

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