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Towns and sustainable development

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Editorial

Towns and sustainable development

Viewpoints

Urban rehabilitation

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Vignettes 1 and 2: Landscape park in North Duisburg, architect P. Latz, lighting by J. Park, photo by W. J. Hannapel
Vignette 3: Zollverein coke works in Essen, architect R. Keller, lighting by J. Spears, photo by W. J. Hannapel
Below: Children in a park in Denmark by S. Cordier

Cities: our common future

Council of Europe

Europe has become highly urbanised in recent decades: two out of three Europeans now live in towns, which account for only 1% of the continent's surface area. Big cities often witness excessive and wasteful consumption of water, energy and other resources. With a lack of appropriate infrastructure and technology, these cities suffer from widespread pollution of air and water, even contamination of soil and food. In many European cities, the absence of well co-ordinated urban and regional planning contributes to economic and social deprivation, loss of community and other negative urban trends.

Changes accompanying urban growth frequently involve the destruction of distinctive built and natural elements, eradicating the physical expression of former indigenous ways of life that are very much part of the settlement culture. Most of Europe's cities are facing a similar dilemma: how to develop without destroying the architectural and urban heritage? Many cities have paid a high price for modernisation and development in the name of progress.

It is generally acknowledged that towns are living systems, bringing together the resident population and the built environment in a coherent manner. The main question is how we organise conurbations, how we govern cities to keep them as places we can live in. The vision of "sustainable cities" is gaining more and more ground with local government institutions, planners and architects, but also with the citizens who, in their daily lives, will make the adjustments required for a sustainable lifestyle.

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe contributes to the sustainability movement with texts and recommendations, including the European Urban Charter, aimed at helping local authorities develop individual measures to achieve sustainable development within cities. Public participation is vital, as the inhabitants are those best acquainted with the problems of the environment surrounding them.

The future of humanity will be shaped largely by urban conditions. The quality of life for generations to come will depend on whether or not governments find ways of coping with accelerating urban growth, and whether or not local authorities succeed in combating pollution, limiting car traffic, and securing basic health and social needs.

Town planning is an excellent tool for improving the urban environment. The ecological management of urban areas requires careful attention to the location and form of development of different types so as to minimise the need for motorised transport and to protect valuable natural and built environment, cleaning up dilapidated areas, pursuing a green-space policy and replacing inadequate infrastructure.

The rehabilitation and regeneration of historic centres is increasingly recognised as an efficient tool for urban development, synthesising cultural values with economic opportunities. City administrations are now facing a stage of development where conservation of the urban heritage – and its integration into wider development opportunities – is becoming a major challenge. It is likely to increase in importance, with a growing recognition of the need to preserve and strengthen the structures and edifices upon which whole societies and lifestyles have been built. The cultural identity of cities is an essential element in helping present and future generations retain their natural and built patrimony, as well as helping to build better and sustainable, people-centred towns for the future.

Keith Whitmore
Chairman of the Committee on Sustainable Development of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe
Council of Europe

Focus on cities

F. Dor

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Sustainable development is one of the major components of territorial development policy at both European level and in a number of countries.

When formulating the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), the EU's Council of Ministers for Regional/Spatial Planning, meeting in Leipzig in 1994, agreed on the objective of balanced, polycentric, sustainable, spatial development of the European Union. The ESDP itself, adopted at Potsdam in May 1999, makes provision for this through a number of different policies.

In Hanover in September 2000, the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning defined the "Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent". Finally, in 2002, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recommended that these guiding principles be used as a "reference document for regional/spatial planning and development measures".

We could list more decisions of this nature. At the heart of them all is the city, driving regional or global economic growth, hosting top-level exchanges and confrontations, providing and consuming a range of products, from culture to energy…

On another level, numerous activities, ranging from local to continent-wide, have been launched. Agenda 21 covers a wide range, which will make it possible to implement the broad principles.

A multiplicity of initiatives

Let us consider the city from the point of view of sustainable development and the many activities that are undertaken in its name. The question that needs to be asked is which activities are structural. The proliferation of initiatives is encouraging and must be allowed to continue, but it must be accompanied by an identification of strong points, because they are what structure a policy and give it a meaning beyond a mere collection of activities, however positive these may be.

Let's begin with the weak points. All planners are familiar with this expression: agricultural land faced with urbanisation, residents faced with offices in city centres, pedestrians or cyclists faced with cars. The aim is not only to protect them, but to base policy on these functions, because this is the way to achieving sustainable cities.

Sustainable cities from the angle of the city-dweller, the pedestrian, the cyclist. That might appear to be of minor interest.

Building sustainable cities

City-dwellers generate a series of demands, both tangible and intangible: first, the wherewithal to feed and house themselves and, secondly, the need for education, training, culture and somewhere to meet. To give them priority in cities is to build sustainable cities, hence the "citizens' city", built by all those who inhabit it (every social class, including the excluded and the middle classes). City-dwellers in the generic sense become the pivot of the sustainable city. There is no-one other than the citizens themselves to take charge of the future of their cities, to make them more pleasant to live in, a source of greater freedom and independence that meets the objectives of sustainability.

These city-dwellers are constantly on the move; the market, too, generates traffic. It has been said over and over again: congestion paralyses traffic, and that often includes public transport; noise and immobility lead to an exodus from the city. Making way for pedestrians, cyclists and overground public transport automatically creates another public space. When we build a road, let us begin by designing the pavement, then the cycle track, followed by a bus lane and then the car lanes – an excellent exercise, quite the reverse of what is too often current practice.

Finally, and principally, there is the heritage that the city constitutes, as yet not touched upon. Naturally, there is the heritage that is classified as such, but what there is above all is the city as it has been planned: a general road network open to multiple uses, lines of buildings, breathing spaces such as parks, squares, open spaces without buildings, a homogenous pattern broken by a few public buildings, neighbourhoods. This city, inherited from the past and which, in much of Europe, was built before the 1950s, we now call compact. It is a heritage in that it is open to numerous as yet unidentified social or economic uses, it is our insurance for the future. Today, through day-to-day urban planning, it has its founding principles: social co-existence, functional versatility, density, centrality, orderly lines, continuity, balanced proportions, fewer private cars and limitation of their use, etc. A heritage painstakingly improved over time – chance may be a factor for change – and sufficiently robust to be used by generations to come.

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The revised European Urban Charter

The European Urban Charter was adopted by the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) in 1992.
Ten years later, the Bureau of the CLRAE decided to organise a conference to test the validity of the charter and to consider what changes needed to be made, in the light of the rapid evolution of society over recent years.
Held in Sofia in May 2002, the conference paved the way for an update of the charter, currently being carried out by a group of consultants under the authority of the CLRAE Committee on Sustainable Development and specifically, its rapporteur for the charter, Mr. Pinto (Portugal).
The CLRAE attaches considerable importance to this updating, considering that the reinforcement of the quality of urban life is a key to civic stability; and that arresting urban decline and improving the social and built urban environment can be factors in reducing violence and conflict in society.
The charter certainly remains a valuable reference and comprehensive guide for local authority urban policies but the group feels that a restructuring of the charter into five main areas of concern is a necessary first step. These are: economic aspects of the town; ecology and environment; the social dimension; the physical aspects; and the governance of a town.

Illustration: J. Antoniou

The first edition of the European Urban Charter

More emphasis

Furthermore, the group has identified a number of trends which need to be given more emphasis:
- the impact of the European Union Single Market, trends towards globalisation, and demographic movement on urban policies;
- the impact of increasing co-operation and networking of major cities in Europe;
- employment policies, particularly the strengthening of vocational and training programmes to give a closer coincidence and match between employment opportunities and people's skills;
- the need to deal more effectively with social exclusion and to tackle the inequalities in society;
- the need to reinforce the notion of responsibilities and duties, alongside urban rights, as already identified in the charter and, to this effect, to take into account the CLRAE's existing *Guide on Duties and Rights of Citizens*;
- the need to reconcile decentralisation and local democracy in major urban areas with coherent and effective overall management;
- stronger support for local authorities in ensuring that their responsibilities, as defined by the constitution and legislation, should be matched by corresponding financial resources;
- the impact of new information technology and direct methods of citizen participation as part of policies for good, transparent governance and accountability, and for the improvement of citizens' lives;
- more discussion of the merits of different methods used in the provision by local authorities of public utilities, of gas, electricity, water, etc.;
- the notion of sustainable development and a stronger desire among citizens for a better quality of environment;
- new approaches to urban security and dealing with different forms of violence, taking into account the CLRAE's *Manual on Local Authority Policies for Crime Prevention*;
- improvement of social dialogue; strengthening partnerships between communities, citizen and ethnic groups, NGOs, and giving more emphasis to a multicultural society as an asset.

For more visibility

Concerning more visibility and information about a revised charter, the group is considering a number of suggestions:
- periodic review conferences on the charter, for example every five years, accompanied in the interval by national seminars proposed by cities and relevant national bodies or agencies;
- the development of a number of pilot projects for selected chapters of the charter;
- co-operation with other international governmental and non-governmental organisations in disseminating information about the charter;
- encouragement of the inclusion, by towns and municipalities in Europe, of the principles of the charter into their everyday policies.
- the possibility of the preparation of periodic national reports, along the lines of those done for local and regional democracy, on the application of the charter in member countries, with the assistance and co-operation of relevant professional and municipal associations.

The group will hold two more meetings, after which a revised draft will be presented to the spring 2004 meeting of the CLRAE Committee on Sustainable Development and subsequently for adoption by the plenary session of the CLRAE, in May 2004.

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Ways to sustainable urban sprawl?

The European Union (EU) Expert Group on the Urban Environment identifies urban sprawl as a major barrier to local and EU sustainable development: "Urban sprawl reinforces the need to travel and increases dependence upon private motorised transport, leading ... to increased traffic congestion, energy consumption and polluting emissions. ... Internationally and within the EU there is widespread agreement on the need to develop integrated strategies to tackle urban sprawl, involving all levels of government".

The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) addresses soil and land use as important areas in which local action impacts on natural resources. The aim is to overcome barriers to sustainable development. One activity is the EU-funded project Urbs Pandens (Urban Sprawl: European Patterns, Environmental Degradation and Sustainable Development). The project is working towards an integrated impact assessment of instruments and infrastructure measures on urban sprawl in Europe. It aims to develop a policy guide addressing different aspects of sprawl, to assist with EU policy formulation and combating non-sustainable sprawl at the local level. Urbs Pandens focuses on seven regions as case studies (Athens, Leipzig, Ljubljana, Liverpool, Stockholm, Vienna and Warsaw) and is headed by the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research. The project will be completed by the end of 2004.

"Urban sprawl" increasingly diminishes the quality of life and impacts on the environment, the social structure and the economy. An ICLEI study within Urbs Pandens names criteria for a policy approach to more sustainable sprawl patterns. It is based on an investigation of examples of European good practice that displayed, despite the diversity of European countries, certain mechanisms from which a policy approach might be derived.

Look across the border

Good policy often suffers from problem relocation, that is, solving problems in one area only to relocate the pressures elsewhere. A common phenomenon is the construction of a model area only to find the complete opposite situation a few yards down the road. The same holds true concerning tourism, in all its complexity, but on a larger scale. Mainly in southern Europe, new developments are being built every year to accommodate a growing number of tourists from the North, leading to increasing sprawl pressures on popular tourist destinations. This means that a certain degree of transregional or even transnational umbrella regulation is essential.

Be pro-active before it's too late

Regions that identified (potential) problems early on managed to have fewer problems to deal with later (Randstad, Haarlem, Amsterdam, Brasov). Good timing, collective action and monitoring are important factors.

M. Gunther/Bios

Well-conceived sewage treatment works purify urban waste water

Find the nucleus of interrelated sprawl mechanisms

This is essential to fight against sprawl and in the design of appropriate policies. One prominent example is in Greece where migration and sprawl are linked, as small rural villages provide the nucleus of the influx of people into the city and then into the suburbs.

Get legislative support

Legislative support plays an important role in getting a firm grip on sprawl. What is implied here is not so much legal measures restricting sprawl per se, but rather the support that the right legislative framework can give to national or regional initiatives. Up till now, legislative policy measures have mostly been used when authorities declared their sprawl situation an emergency or "first priority". Prominent examples can be found in the USA (the so-called "urban growth boundaries"). Ireland and Norway in their respective retail development guidelines are European examples. Ireland introduced a limit of 3 000 square metres of net retail floor-space in supermarkets in an attempt to halt sprawling hypermarket development. There are also numerous examples of this in Germany and Benelux countries.

Optimum formation of project structure

This involves both determining the right size and composition of a project. Do we need a small entity or a broader partnership formation? What should the responsibility structure look like? An example is provided by the region of the Ruhr, in Germany – an ambitious regeneration plan. With "Change without expansion" as its motto, the initiative took on a previous coal and steel mining area with excessive urban sprawl with the aim of changing its future. The IBA-Emscherpark, as it is known (see pages 28-29) involved more than 120 innovative projects and challenged the traditional structure of regeneration. It appears revolutionary due to its independent organisation.

Foster a non-sprawl culture

Finally, there is great scope for generally promoting a non-sprawl culture. Increased awareness through education and dissemination, advertising and marketing will boost the effect of an

instrument-based policy. Cities today can easily become fortresses of non-participative citizens, people who do not think twice about the consequences of their actions. Therefore, it is important to raise awareness of the results of citizens' choices. Examples can be found in the Benelux countries where increased awareness has had an effect on sprawl.
There obviously is no one single instrument for combating sprawl. A policy approach towards more sustainable patterns of sprawl needs to be brought in gradually. It has to identify the right balance and timing between pro-active policies and re-active regeneration projects, and between legislative, administrative and educational policy engines. Finally, it needs to engage citizens, authorities and markets in a process of reinvention of urban living in a Europe beyond sprawl.

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G. Martin/Bios

The Neretva delta in Croatia

The NGO-Towns Grouping

The international non-governmental organisations accredited by the Council of Europe meet periodically within the NGO-Towns Group to promote sustainable urban development. They are also represented on the various committees of the Council of Europe, particularly on the Committee on Sustainable Development of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe.
Since it was set up in 1913 by Ebenezer Howard, the founder of "garden cities", the International Federation for Housing and Planning (IFHP), which co-ordinates this group, has been seeking to demonstrate the concept of sustainable development, even before it was clearly formulated at the end of the last century by the United Nations.
The concept, which underpins discussion at the world conferences and standing working committees of the IFHP, is not restricted to the notion of protecting the environment. It means preserving – and creating – high-quality urban surroundings for today and for future generations.
This process can only succeed if it includes the following – taken from the excellent definition of urban art given during the Robert Auzelle Seminar:
– quality of architecture;
– quality of social life;
– respect for the environment.
The importance of the notion of "heritage" in urban development can then be appreciated, provided that its meaning is not restricted to preserving or safeguarding ancient monuments.
It is the continuing and complex relationship between a site (whether built, planted or natural) and history (ancient or recent) that is the source of heritage, and hence of social linkage.
Within one French city stands a tree of liberty planted in 1793 by the Committee of Public Safety. This tree, which one day must die, is alone worth any number of jewels of the built heritage which lend their soul to the centre of this city.
But what about the suburbs that display so much ugliness and disorder? Surely it is there that we should – as the Deputy Mayor of Rome put it at a recent IFHP conference – search for and bring out heritage values that will create social linkage?

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Some relevant websites:
www.arturbain.fr;
www.cofhuat.org;
www.coe.int;
www.ifhp.org;
www.unece.org

The city as heritage

Human beings never tire of thinking up some new way of looking at towns and cities, at their appearance, at what is in them and at what would be ideal. The idea of building a city in the sky was recently mooted. Is that a goal for humanity, one may wonder? What for? Perhaps for a "new" heritage? Or rather for a new dream? The slow city has been invented (in the sense of slow food, with the aim of recovering history and identity by recognising once again the value of former attributes), historic towns have been allowed to grow into metropolises, and bold plans have been drawn up for cities. Questions have been asked such as "What has become of Brasilia?" in search of an answer as to whether that city has met the expectations of its promoters (the father of Brasilia, the Brazilian architect Oskar Niemeyer, built a city "in the image of his country, exuberant, sinuous and utopian"). Scenarios have been thought up in which every shape will be a symbol of something which comes about, or is intended to come about, in the city. Already there have been suggestions for green cities, human rights cities, linear cities and thematic cities. Cities have been allowed to become museums, and they have been rebuilt ever higher and bigger, sometimes with a loss of proportion, of the human dimension, thereby raising a whole host of questions about the meaning of the city.

The ideal city

In humanity's constant quest for the ideal city, the perfect city, utopian or perfect models have been proposed such as the futurist city and the high-tech city. Any number of projects have been built, designed, dreamt up and drawn. But what has been their fate, and where have we now got to in reality? Does the city have to collapse before we truly consider what has happened to it and use all the resources available to us to make it come alive and achieve respect? And match our dreams? Can the city be saved?

And what kind of city do we want today for tomorrow? What does the city mean to the society of today? What is our ideal city? A city in which you can trespass on the flower beds? A virtual city, or a city in which you can put your graffiti on the walls to affirm your personality? A city in which you can decide your own future and find the inspiration you need to build a tomorrow? What is the deep meaning to be given to it? Obviously we need to try to find an answer.

Cities still excite interest; they are "objects of observation" and an argument for the development of society and for shared living. Cities can be likened to a driving force that must make a place, an area or a district more habitable so that human beings are happier and produce wealth, well-being and culture. There is the word: culture. It can be shown that cities are "containers of culture" by making a journey, which is open to all citizens, from the past, via the present, to the future, running through the entire cultural evolution of the "city as object". Values need to be determined, meaning given to elements of the city, its importance identified, and outstanding sites highlighted. The vision and the history behind the birth and development of a city must also be traced, and features revealed, and the values implicit in this may then be retained, amended or transformed. This analysis of society and this understanding of an area lead to a social perception of the kind of place we wish to live in, and to the realisation that the whole of the city is our "heritage", regardless of whether it is large, small, historic, metropolitan, old or new.

Heritage?

Why heritage? When we pass a town hall our attention is attracted to the structure, to a building which stands for something (power, democracy, local autonomy and so on). When we cross a square, we think of it as a meeting place, a place of socialisation and discussion. We could ponder this theme for ever. In every building, every place, in fact, something both real and symbolic is hidden, something which belongs to the history of society: history, civilisation, democracy and the expression of art. All of this goes to make up our heritage, the elements of our inheritance. We may also wonder why some buildings are so outstanding that people go to look at them. Many things follow if "heritage" is perceived in this light: the shape of the city, the layout of roads and buildings, the contradictions, beauty and ugliness, respect for the landscape, pathways, etc.

If the heritage is to be acknowledged in this way, it is sensible to continue researching the city as an object, by looking at culture (and cultural policy), not forgetting that the values of cities are also enriched by the fact that their citizens

have rights, obligations, priorities and principles.

In order not to "lose this heritage", it is necessary to consider the reasons behind the development of cities (which is often unprogrammed and aimless), dictated and governed by arguments which in themselves cannot be shared, such as economics, finance and profit. It is essential to understand the reasons which have changed the face, the image of cities.

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Spatial planning, landscape and urban areas

J. Litchman

Sunset on the town

On 30 January 2002, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted Recommendation Rec (2002) 1 to member states on the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent (GPSSDEC-CEMAT).

The Guiding Principles are intended to highlight the local and regional dimension of human rights and democracy. The aim is to identify spatial planning measures enabling the populations of all Council of Europe member states to achieve an acceptable standard of living. This represents a fundamental prerequisite for the implementation of the Council of Europe's social cohesion strategy and for the stabilisation of democratic structures in the municipalities and regions of Europe. One section concerns "urban areas" and another "encouraging development generated by urban functions and improving the relationship between the town and the countryside".

The Ljubljana Declaration on the territorial dimension of sustainable development, adopted on 17 September 2003 by the ministers responsible for regional planning of the member states of the Council of Europe at the 13th Session of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT), notably considers that to adequately manage the major challenges for sustainable spatial development of the European continent, relevant policies must be further improved in order to support the balanced polycentric development of the European continent and the formation of functional urban regions, including networks of small and medium-sized towns and of rural settlements.

The European Landscape Convention (Florence, 20 October 2000) underlines the importance of landscape in urban areas for the quality of life of people everywhere.

The spatial development approach is therefore an essential method of achieving the sustainable development objective.

Extract from the GPSSDEC-CEMAT

"2. Urban areas

51. In order to achieve the objective of polycentric development of the European settlement structure, further measures, in addition to strengthening economic potential, are proposed for achieving sustainable development in towns and cities. These include:

- *developing strategies adapted to the local context and aimed at overcoming the effects of economic restructuring;*
- *controlling the expansion of urban areas (urban sprawl): limiting trends towards suburbanisation by increasing the supply of building land in towns and cities, activation of gap sites and use of space-saving building methods, developing building land near traffic nodes and railway stations, promoting inner urban development, raising the quality of living and housing conditions in urban areas, which includes the conservation of existing ecosystems and the creation of new green areas and biotopes;*
- *regenerating deprived neighbourhoods and producing a mix of activities and social groups within the urban structure, particularly in cities where areas of social exclusion are developing;*
- *carefully managing the urban ecosystem, particularly with regard to open and green spaces, water, energy, waste and noise;*
- *developing effective, but at the same time environmentally-friendly public transport designed to contribute to sustainable mobility;*
- *establishing planning bodies across local authority boundaries between individual towns and communes to co-ordinate the planning and implementation of measures;*
- *conserving and enhancing the cultural heritage;*
- *developing networks of towns.*

52. The towns and cities in the new member states face special challenges, such as how to finance the construction of dwellings and how to maintain and improve the housing stock, especially reconstruction and the adjustment to new needs (increased car ownership, demand for architectural quality and increasing energy efficiency). New trends towards suburbanisation and segregation resulting from the backlog demand for home ownership can be countered by increasing the supply of building land in the agglomerations."

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A European network for the urban landscape?

While all towns and cities tend to be viewed first and foremost as places combining high densities of buildings with significant concentrations of human beings, upon closer consideration it becomes clear that those parts of urban areas containing no buildings are just as important to the towns and cities as are the buildings themselves. Indeed, as far as the lives of their human residents are concerned, they may even be more important. Thus, although the urban landscape may at first glance be largely invisible to the untrained eye, it is the green and open spaces of our towns and cities that form the matrix which holds them together and gives them their structure and identity. The urban landscape provides places of recreation and communication, as well as being a carrier of meaning and a guarantor of the environmental health of the city as well as of the quality of life of its citizens.

Parks and gardens

Parks and gardens have, of course, long been recognised as an important component of the environment of European cities: the Enlightenment resulted in the opening up of aristocratic parks to the wider public, and later – in the wake of the industrial revolution – the new urban bourgeoisie created its own new municipal parks as symbols of their own power and values and for the edification of the working classes. Parks, however, only represent a small part of the total sum of urban open space. As well as the traditional green spaces, sports grounds and cemeteries, riverbanks and railway embankments, pedestrian streets and even abandoned industrial sites and former areas of agricultural land can all contribute significantly to making our towns and cities more attractive and healthier places in which to live, work and invest. But the full potential of the urban landscape can only be realised when one considers the open space resource in its totality, the overall significance of which is greater than the sum of its individual components.

NHPA/Sunset

Certain birds have got used to the urban life. The kestrel feeds on birds, rodents and insects captured in town

The new European Landscape Convention elaborated in the framework of the Council of Europe represents a landmark in acknowledging the importance of the urban landscape as a whole. In most European cities, however, the integrated planning, design and management of the urban landscape is something which rarely, if at all, takes place in practice. Instead, the responsibility for this varied, complex and extensive resource is usually split between many separate municipal departments. Another problem is the frequent political failure to recognise the urban landscape as an important issue in its own right and to find the necessary resources for and approaches to its co-ordinated planning, design and management. This is not to say that there have not been many attempts to take an overall view of the urban landscape at different times across the continent. These range from John Claudius Loudon's 1826 concept for a series of green rings for London, through Vienna's 1905 plan for a woodland and meadow belt around the city, to the development of Stockholm's parkway system of the 1940s and 1950s or the successful efforts to regenerate Barcelona during the 1980s and 1990s using the urban landscape as a key motor.

Common problems and potentials of the urban landscape

What has been missing until recently, however, has been the realisation that the problems and the potentials of the urban landscape are common to all Europe's towns and cities. Following the European Commission's Green Paper on the urban environment, various European Union funded research projects involving sharing experience between relatively small groups of municipalities and university departments have been carried out. More recently still, a thematic network in landscape architecture, the LE:NOTRE project (Landscape Education: New Opportunities for Teaching and Research in Europe), has been funded within the framework of the Erasmus programme, bringing together some 100 universities across the whole of Europe involved in teaching and research in landscape planning, design and management, in a strongly internet-based network for international communication and the exchange of information in the field.

All these projects are, however, drawing to a close, just at the time when the advent of the European Landscape Convention, with its emphasis on the need to share experience, both internationally and between academia and practice, is about to come into force. As a result there is a strong risk that the expertise gained through these projects will be lost and the contacts made between academia and practice will disappear unless action is taken. What is clearly needed is a new alliance for the urban landscape at the European level, a strong network which builds on what has gone before and brings together theory and practice across the continent.

The establishment of a new network of European municipalities and universities, with the aim of implementing the European Landscape Convention within the urban environment, can bring significant benefit to both parties. The LE:NOTRE project provides a working model for a broad European network relating to professional education in the landscape field. While this currently has the main purpose of linking universities, its expansion to integrate Europe's main municipal authorities responsible for the planning, design and management of the urban landscape would be a logical and decisive step towards the realisation of the goals of the European Landscape Convention within our towns and cities, which are home to some 80 % of the continent's population.

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A new era in city development in Kosovo

Kosovo's planning system has undergone a radical change in the past two years. The new Spatial Planning Law (drafted with the assistance of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), approved by the Kosovo Assembly on 3 July 2003 and promulgated by the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on 10 September 2003 in Pristina, Kosovo) and the practices in municipal planning departments are focusing on involving citizens in setting goals for development and deciding on local development priorities. The planning approach is today oriented towards strategic planning and genuine public participation in all phases of spatial development.

Municipal self-governance

Since mid-1999, when the conflict ended, Kosovo has taken halting but definite steps towards democratisation. The first municipal elections were held in October 2000 as stipulated by the Security Council Resolution 1244. These were followed by the issuance of Unmik Regulation 2000/45 on Self-Government of Municipalities in Kosovo and the establishment of provisional institutions of self-government (PISGs), which today carry the mantle of development decision making.

Municipalities today are well into their second term after the municipal elections in October 2002, and there is increased awareness of the importance of these electoral processes across all segments of society and government. The very existence of these institutions, and the fact that they are democratically elected and functional, is an important sign of progress in the aftermath of the conflict. The municipal institutions are, however, still fragile and ill-equipped, and need to be strengthened so that they can function effectively as the level of governance closest to the people.

Urban challenges

Illegal and irregular constructions have boomed in the past three years. This phenomenon is not new, as cities and towns during the past decades did not have spatial plans that could provide regulated space for new residential, commercial and industrial areas. Kosovo, like many other places in the Balkans, is therefore confronted with a legal and physical challenge to regulate chaotic development along the main roads and in the city periphery.

Building cities and towns fit to live in requires the involvement of all citizens. There is a tendency to overemphasise conditions for economic growth and forget that apart from the effectiveness of urban infrastructure and services, cities are also places of culture, social life and education; places for leisure and sport where generations learn and socialise together. There is a distinct need to involve all citizens when setting the development agendas in the towns and cities – in Kosovo too.

Inclusive planning principles

Breaking with conventional practices, the process of preparing the new Spatial Planning Law involved the organisation of five public meetings which gave important direction to the content of the law. Good governance is a leading principle in the new law. It incorporates democratic procedures for setting goals for future development plans as well as ensuring the participation of all citizens, men and women, in the decision-making processes. It provides a planning system which is fully compatible with similar practices in western European countries. The law is part of a larger framework of laws currently undergoing fundamental reviews in support of the new democratic institutions and the introduction of an open market economy.

With a rapid population increase (an estimated 40 % of the present population is under 18 years) within a relatively small territory, inclusive and strategic spatial planning is considered important as a tool for the economic use of scarce resources for public and private capital investments and because it provides a spatial perspective for future growth of all sectors in an integrated co-ordinated manner.

The "Framework for Participatory and Strategic Planning" prepared by UN-HABITAT is now applied by municipal multi-disciplinary planning teams in most of the thirty municipalities. Application of the framework contributes not only to making planning more inclusive, but also to making participatory decisions more informed and strategic. As such, it offers a higher chance of implementation.

Together with the Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning, Mr Ethem Çeku, UN-HABITAT emphasises the need for building local capacity as the engine for sustaining the new planning practices and gains. A major training programme is ensuring that municipal planners gain the necessary knowledge and experience with the new planning system and procedures.

Council of Europe

Pristina

Present achievements in the municipalities

With the promulgation of the new law, most municipal administrations are now well into the planning process which earlier was done by planning institutes directed from Belgrade. Some 30 % of the municipalities are currently preparing for the first public consultations on the basis of the consolidated urban profile, while others are still struggling to gather relevant data in a place where the previous census dates back to the beginning of the 1980s.

Once the municipal and urban development plans are completed within eighteen months, urban planners will engage in preparing the detailed regulatory plans.

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The French city of tomorrow

My brief, in writing about the French city of tomorrow for a European magazine devoted to the subject of cities and heritage, was to take a national and a European, past and future perspective, all under the watchword of sustainable development. I shall try to demonstrate briefly that this telescoping of time and space, far from being purely academic, lies at the very heart of planning policy. Before considering European or French cities, we should recall that sustainable urban development presents a global challenge; urbanisation is a worldwide phenomenon. This statement is often poorly received by the public, alarmed by the concentration of settlements in vast conurbations and the attendant threat of social and environmental instability. While acknowledging the existence of such a threat, and the need for public policies to manage urbanisation, it is worth remembering that, throughout the ages (and historical circumstances permitting), people have realised it is to their advantage to combine their efforts in order to create together economic, social and cultural prosperity and take decisions for the common good. Urbanisation and civilisation go hand-in-hand. The town-country divide, moreover, has lost much of its meaning, in developed countries at least, as rural communities have numerous and frequent links with the city, whether it be the nearest centre or the regional or national capital. Of course, that does not mean we should not debate the kind of cities we want. About ten years ago, INRETS (Institut national de recherche sur les transports et leur sécurité), the French national institute for transport and transport safety research, carried out a remarkable forward study on urban mobility for DATAR, (Délégation à l'aménagement du territoire et à l'action régionale), the state spatial and regional planning organisation. The study identified three city models, which differed in terms of their spatial form, socio-economic functioning, governance and, finally, their founding values: the Californian model, the Saint-Simonian model and the Rhine model.

Marge/Sunset

Strasbourg

Philosophical and ethical foundations

Talking about sustainable development in an urban context may appear trite, to say the least. Some people scoff at the use of "buzzwords" like sustainability, equity, diversity, urbanism, not to mention the polycentrism so beloved of the European Spatial Development Perspective. I do not dispute the need to examine these notions with a critical eye. However, we need not just to think critically, but also to identify some collective meaning. Faced with a variety of ideological tangents – economistic liberalism, eco-fundamentalism, withdrawal into our own identity – we need philosophical and ethical foundations of the kind proposed by the likes of J. Habermas or J. Rawls. The latter, in his book *A Theory of Justice* (1971) advocated equity within and between the generations as a means, not of defining the common good (the ideal city) as such, but of articulating a process of collective deliberation, in a bid to reconcile the goals of wealth production, social solidarity and preservation of our common heritage, which may conflict in the short term, but are mutually beneficial in the longer term. Those who see our space as more than just a blank canvas on which economic processes are played out, that is to say, as a territory, or rather territories, which are factors in production and places for planning and for solidarity, face the task of devising a theory of spatial justice.

That is all very abstract, I hear you say. But, as a practitioner of operational urban planning and regional planning in the Ile de France, I see urban issues as a concrete illustration of what is at stake in the collective debate on sustainable development. Take these examples:

– a debate in the urban planning committee one evening in the town hall on a development project: the density and mix of buildings, and whether

it should include affordable housing, opposed in some quarters ostensibly for ecological reasons, but in fact for reasons linked to a desire for segregation;
- the negotiation of an agreement between state and city designed to put into practice, by achieving a balanced mix of housing and offices, the work/housing balance provided for in the regional development plan for the Ile de France.

These are very modest examples. But it can hardly be denied that the urban model (density, mix, functional diversity) of a city like Paris represents a classic win-win situation for residents, economic stakeholders and authorities alike, and is effective in economic, social and environmental terms. The creators of this urban environment were practising sustainable development for centuries without realising it; if we manage to preserve it – and we are by no means there yet – it will represent a major asset for the future.

Think globally, act locally

Sustainable development invites us to think globally, act locally. Tomorrow's city will be above all what each of us makes it. A city's "added value" (or "positive externalities" as economists put it) lies in the city-dwellers who create it by coming together in their professional and personal lives and through their engagement as citizens. Its problems, or "negative externalities" (congestion, various forms of pollution, social segregation by area, exclusion) are also created by the inhabitants, through their choice of residence, their means of getting about and the effects of the market. Regulatory action by the authorities must therefore be aimed at an informed and responsible urban population.

Why should Europe be concerned with its cities, whether through the guiding principles produced by the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT), the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), or the Urban Community Initiative? Because, while firms which locate in Europe may set cities and regions in competition with each other at certain points in their history, what they need more than anything is access to a coherent territory, and first and foremost a regional, national and European network of towns and cities. Because European cities, despite their diversity, have a great deal in common compared with, say, their American counterparts: there is a big difference between 200 years and 2 000 years of history. Equally, European countries, if we look beyond the diversity of their organisational structures and social protection systems, share a common project and model, reflected most particularly in European construction.

Because, while it is primarily states which are constructing Europe (and the nation state continues, and will continue for some time, to represent an effective model for economic and social integration), the cities, alongside regions, businesses, NGOs and citizens, also have their part to play. This is not just a platitude, it is the reality – the Hanseatic networks pre-existed modern states. That, in a nutshell, is the challenge faced by co-operation programmes like Interreg and Urban.

M. Heller

Marseille

So, what of the French city of tomorrow?

This depends on the joint efforts of city-dwellers and their appointed leaders: not just the local elected representatives, but also those in charge of inter-municipal co-operation structures (who, one day, will have to be elected by universal suffrage), and even regional, national and European leaders. Cities cannot be confined within administrative borders, and require the attention of all territorial decision-making levels: that is the aim of the horizontal and vertical co-operation referred to in the ESDP. The co-operation process must preserve and nurture our historical assets, our physical heritage, public space and social, cultural and spiritual values. Finally, it must open a dialogue with towns and cities in Europe and in neighbouring countries (it is vitally important for French towns, for instance, to strengthen links with the cities of the southern Mediterranean), and with cities throughout the globe.

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Maribor, pressures for city redevelopment

Town of Maribor

Maribor

In Slovenia, spatial and urban planning is going through a transition as a consequence of social and global changes. Most Slovene cities and towns are experiencing a "quiet" restructuring. Maribor's urban concept plan is not some "grand" city plan, but a plan seeking to establish dynamic co-operative planning processes that ensure a complex and continuous co-ordination of the city's redevelopment.

The Municipality of Maribor involved over a hundred experts in the preparation of its new urban concept over six years. An update of the old planning document with its 20-year-old urban concept was most urgently needed. One of the reasons for this lies in the fact that after Slovenia's independence and due to a temporary loss of former Yugoslav markets, the city with a population of 100 000 and a predominantly heavy-manufacturing industry turned into a city with the highest unemployment rate in the country (over 20 %). The findings of an extensive targeted analysis of the city and the potential for urban development show that the former prescriptive system of intensive, welfare-supported spatial planning resulted in a noticeable methodological, production and content-related discrepancy. It was therefore necessary to produce a new document, based on a completely new psychological approach to spatial planning in relation to modern city development.

The city plan concept – the city turning inwards

The city's introverted growth is based on the following:

- the building of a modern central city core binding together into a unified structure the city areas which had been previously separate;
- the step-by-step exploitation and redevelopment of wasteland and other empty urban spaces (in the centre and periphery);
- the steady improvement of the infrastructure network supporting the development of public transport;
- the intensive expansion of building projects including public green spaces;
- the setting up of homogeneous urban areas – a sub-regional town.

Workshops on urban planning and architecture were closely connected with the preparation of the city plan and made it possible to immediately verify the conceptual premises of the document and, in particular, enabled the wide participation of both the professional and the lay public. Urban planning workshops were extremely efficient and helped in tackling topical issues of modern spatial development of cities, such as revitalisation of city centres, redevelopment of peripheral built-up city areas, reclamation of environmentally harmful industrial areas in the city centre, establishment of green spaces, modernisation of traffic infrastructure by greatly increasing the share of alternative means of transportation and pedestrian traffic, etc. Workshops were financed by the Slovene Ministry of the Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy and the Municipality of Maribor. In the space of five years, seven workshops took place, with over three hundred professionals and students in the field of spatial planning (planners, urban development specialists, architects and landscape architects) participating.

The key quality element introduced by these workshops is a genuine ongoing contact between planners and the environment. Access to information, participation of local authorities and professionals, the mixed origin of groups (there were always two local groups of urban development specialists) and the ever-present idea of public urban design are also important.

Nominated

In 2002 Maribor's urban project was nominated for the European Urban and Regional Planning Achievement Awards. The European Council of Town Planners (ECTP) received 253 nominations from thirteen different countries, four of which were granted special awards by the Council President Charles Lambert and the panel:

- the Spanish quarter project in Naples because of successful participation in the planning process;
- the new city regulations in Faenza in Italy for designing sustainable development tools and methods;
- Bantry Bay for introducing a new instrument, the charter, which involves the local population and organisations in town planning and development;
- the Maribor urban concept – the spatial development plan for the town planners' professional approach to implementing the project.

The panel justified its decision by underlining that the urban development plan for Maribor demanded rapid and highly professional action. This was achieved through a series of workshops which brought together the professionals and the public. It ensured not only the quality of the transformation process but also meant wide acceptance and monitoring of the ideas, as well as strengthening the internal development strategy, as an integral part of the overall aim of sustainability, as is stated in the justification of the award (4th European Urban and Regional Planning Achievement Awards, 2002, awarded by the ECTP).

The city's redevelopment plan sets out steps leading from the level of spatial concepts to the detailed plans and implementation, in other words from the urban development concept, through to workshops which organise calls for tender in order to guarantee the best possible quality in practice. This year a lot of attention has been paid to open urban spaces, the subject of the international Mikrourabnika workshop organised in co-operation with the Ljubljana Academy of Fine Arts, Graz Faculty of Architecture, and other designers and landscape architects.

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The competition "Thinking about the town and countryside"

In 1998, at the spatial planning day of the international exhibition "EXPO 98" in Lisbon, the Portuguese ministers responsible for planning and education signed an agreement to create a national competition for pupils aged 14 to 16 years, in order to involve them in discussion of the question of "where we live, how we live and how we want to live". The aim was to make young people aware of issues of sustainable urban and rural development, and to encourage their sense of responsibility as citizens.

The three main objectives were:

– to promote an interdisciplinary vision of town and country planning;
– to think about, discuss and question the potential and problems of towns and countryside;
– to foster a critical and creative spirit in relation to towns and countryside.

The competition is entitled "Thinking about the town and countryside" and has been run continuously since it was launched in the academic year 1998-1999; this will be its sixth year.

The competition

The timing is arranged to coincide with the school year, and the rules specify, among other things:

– that each entry must be concerned with the town or rural area where the pupils attend school or live;
– that entries must be collective, submitted by a group of pupils or a class and co-ordinated by teachers at the school.

Entries may be submitted in the form of reports, drawings, paintings, audiovisual materials, models or Internet websites.

The competition has its own website providing information about basic texts relating to the theme and useful links, as well as about the competition itself.

In addition, a team composed of experts from the Planning Department and the Secondary Education Department, who are responsible for running the competition, carries out a publicity campaign each year among secondary teachers to inform them of the theme and objectives of the competition. This campaign is mounted at national and regional level, sometimes with the support of academic experts and professional NGOs. The team is also responsible for evaluating each round of the competition when it has finished.

DGATT

Winners of the competition

Various prizes are awarded to the pupils, the co-ordinating teachers and the schools. Exceptionally, honourable mentions may be given to entries which, while not deserving a prize, raise particular points.

And how it works

The competition jury is made up of representatives of the Planning Department, the Secondary Education Department and a recognised expert in the field of town and country planning.

Prizes are presented at a public ceremony marking the opening of the exhibition showing all the entries submitted to the competition.

This ceremony, to which all participating pupils, teachers and schools are invited, along with the mayors of the municipalities and communes where the winning schools are located, is always held in a place connected with the theme of the competition, generally a renovated building.

The Planning Department acts as secretariat for the competition and provides the funding.

Over the last five years, this competition has raised awareness of sustainable planning and urban development among young people, teachers and civil society. There have been a growing number of partnerships at the local level between pupils, schools and civil society. The competition also stimulates group and interdiciplinary work in schools.

It should also be mentioned that the schools often use the competition to advertise their activities in the local community, and that many entries which have won prizes or been given an honourable mention have been developed and implemented by the local authorities linked to the schools in question.

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A new lease of life for the historic centre

The city of Graz, which was added to Unesco's World Heritage List in 1999, was declared Cultural Capital of Europe 2003. Avant-garde architects regard it as the capital of modern architecture in Austria. So how does Graz manage to reconcile the historic character of the old city with its modern architecture?

Nicknamed "Pensionopolis" because of the large numbers of retired people who have settled there, Graz is also a university town, with three universities and around 50 000 students. Hence, it is a city of contrasts. The first university opened its doors in 1584, in the former Jesuit college, the impressive Priesterseminar as we know it today. In 1607, it moved next door into its own purpose-built premises. So, Graz can also claim to be an old university town.

Historic city centre

A very traditional way of life exists in Graz alongside a vibrant and creative youth culture. The city centre may be steeped in history, but it is also home to the creations of a number of world-famous architects, graduates of the Graz School of Architecture. Architectural competitions have served to raise the standard of architecture in the city.

Residential developments, as well as a number of university institutes, have been acclaimed for their distinctive character, while at the same time blending into their classical surroundings. In 2003, a number of new projects were carried out in the city centre, of which the most remarkable include the Kunsthaus designed by Peter Cook and Colin Fournier, and Vito Acconci's island on the Mur, to the south-west of the Schlossberg, which dominates the heart of the city. The new Museum of Childhood and the Literature Centre, a little further out, are also worthy of mention.

It is quite some time since the first discussions were held on the best means of protecting the historic city centre. A law on the conservation of the old city was passed in 1974, and serves as a working basis for the committee of experts on the old city. The committee strives to preserve the city's most notable features, and in particular its skyline, which is under constant threat from a host of extension and development projects. It also seeks to intervene, where appropriate, in the renovation of existing buildings and the construction of new, high-quality buildings in the historic centre.

H. Hohmann

Aerial view of the historic centre of Graz

As a result of these activities, the city's historic centre has not become fossilised: the urban fabric is still alive and changing to accommodate contemporary additions. Moreover, it is this contrast between the historic buildings and new constructions, which are built to a high standard and blend with the landscape, which makes the centre of Graz a distinctive architectural ensemble. Monuments from every era, from the twelfth century to the present day, exist side by side.

Problems

There are some problems, however. As in many European cities, the pedestrianised areas in the city centre make access to shops by car difficult, if not impossible, forcing some businesses to close. A number of boutiques and shops, some of them very old, now stand empty, while the large shopping centres on the outskirts are thriving.

Even the great city-centre store, Kastner & Öhler, has felt the wind of change, and recently built a five-storey underground car park for 500 cars underneath an ancient monastery listed as a historic monument. The project was designed by Karla Kowalski and Michael Szyszkowitz. Access to the car park from the inner ring road is by a lowered ramp next to the Mur. This avoids congestion in the city centre and customers can drive to the store, which is clearly what they want. They also have access to another underground car park for 140 cars built at the same time as the Kunsthaus and located within easy reach of the store.

It is hoped that measures such as these will halt the exodus of shops from the city centre. If the historic buildings serve no useful purpose, sooner or later they will come under threat. Converting them into museums is not always the answer. Unless they attract the public in large numbers, museums are nothing but a financial burden for the authorities.

Under the law on conservation of the old city, the adjustments needed to accommodate new functions should not result in radical alteration of the city's ancient architectural structure. This is the only way to ensure that the historic architectural features can be reused sustainably, and it makes greater demands on the skills of the architect than designing a new building from scratch.

# of Graz

The conversion of historic buildings is a never-ending source of surprises. It may bring to light frescoes or features dating back to earlier monuments or even old temporary structures in need of restoration. In the past, it was easier to "recycle" existing buildings rather than demolish them to make way for new buildings. Historic buildings should be altered as little as possible. Inappropriate intervention runs a great risk, for instance, of destroying vaults, normally one of the most enduring of architectural features.

Living in the city centre

The restructuring of historic city centres in response to the exodus of businesses should not be seen solely in negative terms: it may also represent an opportunity. True, many property owners are so used to deriving a large income from their property that they are unwilling to admit that the situation has changed, and may take a very long time to find new tenants. In the longer term, there is a great risk of empty buildings falling into disrepair. However, if rents were to revert to more reasonable levels, people might move back into the city centre. With the departure of the former residents, no longer able to pay the high rents, to say nothing of the other drawbacks they suffered, the centres of many towns and cities have become unsafe. After the shops have closed in the evening, there is no social control. The return of more people to live in city centres would be welcome, if only to counter this phenomenon.

However, city centres need to be made better places to live in if more residents are to be attracted to them. While the volume of car traffic, and the related physical dangers, noise and pollution, has fallen appreciably since the 1960s and 1970s, late closure of bars and restaurants and the emergence of the "events" pseudo-culture have created new sources of nuisance, driving more residents out. Cycle or go-kart races or other sporting events such as handball, basketball or volleyball matches have no place on the main square or in the old city. True, they create a momentary – if somewhat dubious – excitement, but they also cut off some parts of the city temporarily, impeding traffic and producing noise and air pollution with their streams of cars, disturbing both residents and tourists. In Graz, the situation is not yet very serious, but it is beginning to cause concern.

H. Hohmann

The so-called "Murinsel" was created by the New York artist Vito Acconci in the framework of Graz, Cultural Capital of Europe 2003. It was built over the river Mur

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The projects planned in the old city centre were the main reason why Graz was chosen in 1976 to house the International Forum for Historic Cities, a specialist information and documentation centre. The centre arose chiefly out of the initiative of Lord Duncan Sandys in London, the then President of Europa Nostra. The archives of Europa Nostra, which contain thousands of projects entered in their annual competitions organised throughout Europe, have been kept at the forum for many years.

Horizon vision/Sunset

Athens

The code of good practi

The protection of the European urb

The code of good practice has been prepared by a group of experts providing advice on the needs of urban archaeology to the Cultural Heritage Committee of the Council of Europe. The code was approved by the Cultural Heritage Committee at its 15th plenary session on 8 to 10 March 2000.

Objectives of the code of good practice

The code is intended to enhance the protection of the European urban archaeological heritage through facilitating co-operation between planners, archaeologists and developers. All are concerned with the town of the future. Having first highlighted areas where the revised European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage is of particular relevance to urban planning, the code of good practice presents the many areas where such co-operation between all parties in the urban project can be readily ensured.

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC AUTHORITIES AND PLANNERS

Public authorities and planners will appreciate that the parts of the revised European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage most relevant to urban planning are:

The value of the urban archaeological heritage to society

The urban archaeological heritage is of value to society as a whole. It is important both to the residents of the community and to visitors (European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised), Preamble and Article 1).

Presumption for preservation

In urban planning, there should be a preference for the preservation *in situ* of important archaeological remains wherever possible, and development plans should be modified to minimise adverse impact (Articles 4.ii and 5.ii.a, iv).

Urban identity

The archaeological heritage can contribute to the identity of a town and to its future evolution (Preamble and Article 1).

Urban topography

The archaeological heritage should be taken to include upright structures and buildings, as well as the historical topography of the town, which can form an important part of the character of the town and may merit protection (Preamble and Article 1).

The unique record of the urban past

The decisions of planners can affect the archaeological heritage irrevocably. Once archaeological remains have been destroyed, they can never be replaced (Preamble).

Development plans

Planners should take account of archaeology in their work. This includes when making development plans for towns; deciding budgets for urban development projects; and giving permission for new developments carried out by private investors (Article 5.i).

Adequate archaeological advice

Before taking decisions affecting the archaeological heritage, planners should obtain adequate archaeological information and advice, applying non-destructive methods of investigation wherever possible (Articles 2 and 3).

Disputes

Appropriate measures should be taken to reconcile the respective needs of archaeology and development plans (Article 5.ii -iv).

Urban archaeology and education

Planners should take steps to explain to the public and developers why the urban archaeological heritage is important and why money should be spent on preserving or investigating it. Public education through displays, museums, publications and other means are among the ways this can be achieved (Article 9).

THE ROLE OF ARCHITECTS AND DEVELOPERS

Architects and developers shall:

Professional archaeological evaluations

At the earliest possible date seek a professional archaeological evaluation of potential redevelopment sites. Such advice may be obtained from nationally or regionally approved archaeological authorities. The purpose of this evaluation will be not only to establish if it is necessary to dig but also to build a picture of its urban morphology and its potential.

Presumption for preservation

Recognise the desirability of preserving important archaeological deposits *in situ* wherever possible, in preference to their excavation, unless there are strong and clearly defined research grounds for excavation and such research is fully funded.

Integration of archaeology

On the basis of this evaluation integrate the archaeological work into the overall design, construction and conservation strategy for the development.

Timescale and costs

Allow both adequate time and financial support to permit an archaeologically worthwhile investigation.

Structural remains

Be aware of the possibility of displaying important structural remains *in situ* and that, given they can be sympathetically incorporated into the new works, they could add value to the project.

ice – the Esslingen code

pan archaeological heritage

Publication
Give full consideration to the important need for scientific and popular publication as an essential part of the excavation costs.

Finds and records
Ensure that archaeological movable objects, records and reports are deposited with appropriate institutions.

Disputes
Try to settle any disputes through negotiation, where appropriate through a nationally or regionally organised arbitration body.

Media coverage
Give support to media coverage, e.g. joint press releases and agreed statements, as to the discoveries made and the type of support given; give consideration, when naming the development, to the archaeological and historical context and to the display of the archaeological discoveries within or near the development.

Project team
See the archaeologist as a member of the project team, to be given appropriate access to the site and to be properly informed of all design and programming changes, so as to enable the archaeological input to be properly integrated.

THE ROLE OF ARCHAEOLOGISTS

Archaeologists shall:

Information and evaluation
Provide all necessary information to other relevant authorities and to the developer at the earliest possible stage in the consideration of the development. The archaeological authorities will advise on any evaluation that will be required to determine more fully the extent, character and importance of archaeological deposits and remains.

Presumption for preservation
Recognise the desirability of preserving important archaeological remains *in situ* wherever possible, in preference to their excavation unless there are strong and clearly defined research grounds for excavation and such research is fully funded.

Added value
Be aware of development costs and adhere to agreed timetables. The archaeologist will be aware that archaeological work adds value to the development, contributing to the overall concept and architectural design. The archaeological work will thereby contribute to the urban landscape of the future.

Timescale and costs
Ensure that archaeological work, both on site and writing the report, will be carried out to written agreements setting out standards, timetables and costs. The archaeologist will be aware

T. Niemi/Sunset

Ålesund, Norway

that the archaeological work is generally part of a larger project and that the archaeologist is part of the project team.

Structural remains
Assist in integrating important structural remains in the development.

Publicity and displays
Assist the planning authorities and developer, as appropriate, in any displays or other publicity.

Finds and records
Ensure that archaeological movable objects, records and reports are deposited with appropriate institutions.

Disputes
Try to settle any disputes through negotiation, where appropriate through a nationally or regionally organised arbitration body.

Information to partners and media
Discuss promptly and fully with the planning authorities and developer, as appropriate, the implications of any unforeseen discoveries made in the course of an excavation. Ensure that any statements to the press are made together or in agreement with the project team. Keep the project team informed of the media potential and implications of any discoveries.

Publication
Ensure that the results of archaeological work are adequately published within a reasonable time.

Sichov/Sipa

St Petersburg

Guidelines for urban rehabilitation

Almost since the outset, urban rehabilitation has been a matter for debate and discussion, while sustainable development reflects a social purpose. This issue, which keeps recurring in most European countries, is particularly acute in the countries of central and eastern Europe in the context of their political and economic transition.

The approach developed by the local authorities and the authorities responsible for the architectural heritage seldom takes into account the complexity of the rehabilitation process. Not only must the urban heritage be "rehabilitated" but, above all, districts that are in decline need to be revitalised.

In the view of the Council of Europe Directorate of Culture and Cultural and Natural Heritage, the economic and social dimensions of the rehabilitation process cannot be dissociated from the heritage dimension, but rather they incorporate both dimensions in a new perspective. The cultural heritage has become a key factor in improving people's surroundings, addressing issues of social cohesion and encouraging economic development.

The debate on urban rehabilitation

On the basis of the experience acquired by the Technical Co-operation and Consultancy Programme (TCCP) related to the integrated conservation of the cultural heritage (under which co-operation projects have been carried out in twenty-seven European cities between 1990 and 2003), a "Lisbon Debate" on the rehabilitation of housing in old city centres as a factor for economic development and social cohesion was begun in 1998.

The work of the ad hoc group of experts led to the drafting of recommendations and was complemented by research undertaken by Mr Felipe Lopes (Portugal) on best practice in Europe. A second group of experts summed up the professional experience and values implicit in the pilot projects underway or carried out since 1997.

The outcome was a number of guidelines providing the basis for an urban rehabilitation strategy and adopting the principles and values of the Council of Europe. The work of Ms Myriam Goblet (Belgium), member of the Legal Support Task Force of the TCCP who carried out an exhaustive analysis in 2002-2003 of Council of Europe reference texts on social cohesion and human rights (and of the main reference texts of the European Union and the United Nations), has finally made it possible to validate the inclusion of heritage sector rehabilitation projects among the social objectives of the Organisation. Her analysis confirmed that the decisions taken in the field by the TCCP complied with human rights and coincided with the social cohesion strategy of the Council of Europe.

Brochure published for the Technical Co-operation and Consultancy Programme (TCCP) related to the integrated conservation of the cultural heritage

The implications of the approach

The original position emerging from the debate on rehabilitation is a direct contribution by the Council of Europe to combating poverty and social exclusion. It reflects the role played by the cultural heritage in promoting European democratic values and in achieving the social project pursued by the Organisation, by focusing on the everyday lives of the individuals and communities that make up Europe.

Because of the complexity of the questions that it raises and the number of actors involved, urban rehabilitation is primarily of a political nature, and it takes place through an economic process affecting the social cohesion and cultural identity of the populations concerned.

What is known today as "old" can no longer be merely equated with monuments. Old things may no longer be considered, *a priori*, of lower value than new ones. To recover and reuse what is old must be regarded as a wise and prudent policy that will foster social cohesion in the Europe of the third millennium. Rehabilitation goes well beyond simple restoration, implying renovation dynamics which recognise the value of older districts, in a spirit of integrated heritage conservation, social cohesion and sustainable development.

Council of Europe reference texts on urban rehabilitation

The adoption of Council of Europe reference texts on urban rehabilitation (over 200 are listed in the *Guidelines*) is directly linked to the change in contexts, stakes and major concerns of Europeans. Broadly speaking, four main periods of change can be defined:

- the 1970s: the concept of urban rehabilitation is defined for the first time by the protagonists of the cultural heritage, who are anxious to achieve integrated conservation of sites and complexes of historic or artistic interest, situated in historic centres;
- the 1980s: the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe builds on the work of the protagonists of the cultural heritage, seeing urban rehabilitation as a major component of urban and local development policy;
- the 1990s: planners and environmental activists call public attention to the urgent need to apply the principles of sustainable development to development planning strategies;
- the 2000s: in response to profound changes brought about by globalisation, recognition of cultural diversity and the improvement of the well-being of the population have become essential requirements of balanced and sustainable urban development.

Evolution of the concept of urban rehabilitation

Because of the problems generated or exacerbated by early urban rehabilitation efforts, responsible authorities have been led to pay greater attention to the "social dimension" and to making it a priority in their policies. Protection of the right to housing for the disadvantaged, and involvement of inhabitants in the process of urban rehabilitation have gradually been recognised as crucial requirements for the success of rehabilitation.

The authorities have also had to confront problems of access, traffic management and parking resulting from increased traffic in rehabilitated districts. Civil society and decision makers have become more aware and are paying greater attention to the "environmental dimension". Furthermore, the "economic dimension" of urban rehabilitation is recognised as a powerful driving force for local development

(vis-à-vis the population, investors and tourists), given the challenge of a global economy and international competition. Finally, following the rapid rise in migration and the development of increasingly multicultural urban societies, promotion of the "cultural dimension" of districts in need of rehabilitation appears to be an essential contribution to the creation of a shared local identity and hence to the cohesion of the urban society.

The current concept of urban rehabilitation

Urban rehabilitation is a process of revitalisation and regeneration of cities, carried out over the medium and long term. It affects both the urban landscape and the people who live, work or spend leisure time there.

The concerns regarding the urban landscape are:
- integrated conservation of the cultural heritage of older districts;
- protection of housing in relation to other, more powerful urban functions;
- spatial cohesion or balance between different districts and between town and country;
- sustainable development of the city through prudent ecological management of the environment.

The concerns regarding its inhabitants are:
- local development mobilising the economic potential of each district;
- social cohesion or balance between different social groups;
- respect for cultural diversity as the basis for shared local identity.

Urban rehabilitation is therefore part of an overall urban project (a local development strategy or plan), which requires a broad, integrated approach comprising all urban policy areas. The challenge is to reconcile heritage conservation with social progress and the sustainable economic development that will emerge from the new European policy on urban rehabilitation.

Ways of acting and respect for democratic principles

If the objectives and concerns of urban rehabilitation are actually to be put into practice, suitable ways of working, with a better guarantee of successful action, need to be used. As a result of experience acquired in the field, the TCCP relies on these seven basic principles:
- incorporation of rehabilitation projects in urban policy;
- the driving force of the public authorities;
- support from an operational technical team;
- participation by the population;
- adequate legal instruments;
- adequate financial resources;
- consciousness of a timeline.

The political, human, legal and financial aspects of "operations" form the "public framework for intervention" which is a necessary part of any rehabilitation project. This framework must meet the specific needs of the project. It must be flexible and suited to the local context and the type of action being carried out. This way of working must comply with the democratic principles promulgated by the Council of Europe since the 1960s, namely:
- respect for human rights, which assumes participation by citizens in the life of the community, respect for the rights of others, for the right to property, for freedom of meeting and association, and for the right to a plurality of information, freedom of expression and non-discrimination. Rights to the city (the right to housing, heritage, culture and the environment) are necessarily part of the whole;
- the primacy of democratic debate as the means of legitimising and giving meaning to action. The process of making decisions about the rehabilitation of older districts as spaces for shared living must now take place through discussions involving all interested parties (decision makers, technicians and inhabitants);
- the development of democratic institutions and procedures which provide the full and entire legitimacy of the political powers resulting from democratic elections. According to the principle of "subsidiarity", this calls for respect and complementarity between the powers and activities conducted at different levels (local, regional, national and European). It is a reminder that there is no monopoly of the general interest.

The role of the TCCP in new European urban policy

In the coming years, the TCCP will continue to play a role in developing a new European sustainable urban development policy. Pilot projects carried out in the last few years in Rostov Veliky (Russian Federation) and Tbilisi (Georgia), the Regional Programme for Cultural and Natural Heritage in South East Europe, and more particularly the Regional Programme for Cultural and Natural Heritage in the South-Caucasus – Management of Historic Cities and Institutional Capacity Building, 2003-2005, will provide the preferred operational framework for the implementation of the *Guidelines for Urban Rehabilitation* which will be published at the beginning of 2004.

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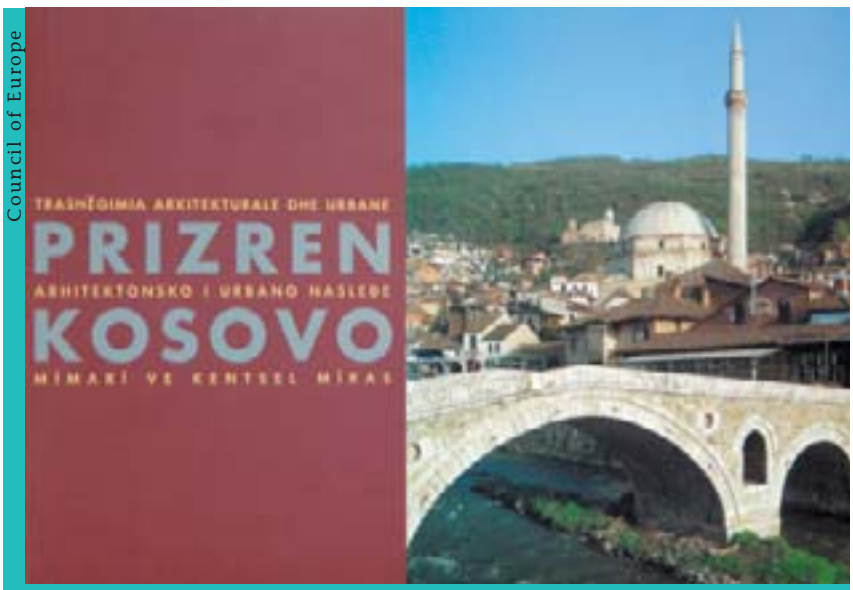
The bulk of this article is drawn from the work of Ms Goblet, which is currently being published in the Guidelines *series appearing since 2000 under the aegis of the TCCP.*



Brochure published for the TCCP

The situation of cultural heritage in Baku

Azerbaijanis are very proud of their historic heritage, and indeed they have every reason to be so. It ranges, all over the country, from the mesolithic stone carvings in Gobustan, the Zoroastrian temples in Ateşgah, the Shirvanshah Palace and the old city in Baku including the impressive buildings dating from the first oil boom in Baku at the end of the 19th century, to numerous other examples of beautiful and very respectable heritage cities, fortresses, mosques, churches and temples, all testimonies of a multicultural and multiethnic past.

The heritage of the region is immensely rich and varied by any yardstick, but much of it is also in crisis. Monument conservation is essential in order to sustain cultural identity and diversity. The main problem regarding preservation of cultural patrimony is, most of the time, the lack of money and bad management, even though most of the state and local budgets are reserved for conservation of cultural heritage. For example, some monuments are protected in reserves. All the reserves are controlled both by the Ministry of Culture, which establishes them, and by the local authorities. Experience shows that this can create problems since the efforts are not always co-ordinated, and conservation sometimes suffers. On the other hand, external assistance in a limited form has already been given by the World Bank, the Council of Europe, Unesco and some national agencies of other countries.

In Baku, the traditional old town with the Shirvanshah Palace and the Maiden Tower is already part of Unesco's World Heritage. As long as the adopted laws about urban planning and monument preservation are respected and as long as the city and state budgets allow decent and continuous restoration, there should be no major problems preserving the architectural heritage, at least in the capital. Unfortunately, the existing legislation in this field is obviously not being respected. A recent report from Unesco mentions new construction sites within the protected old town of Baku "…menacing clearly the authenticity of the site…" in spite of a recent decree of the President freezing all construction work in this area, except for restoration. Similar problems regarding the non-respect of existing laws also seem to exist in the field of copyright legislation, the latter being particularly important for the protection of immaterial cultural heritage.

Even if everybody agrees that conservation of cultural heritage is a main target of current cultural policy in Azerbaijan, there is no sense in maintaining patrimony if general access to it cannot be guaranteed for all citizens, regardless of their economic, social, political or religious background. This is the point where cultural tourism issues also start to matter in developing strategies about preserving the past. Consequently, to guarantee access to a global economy, Azerbaijan must first guarantee access to the diversity of local cultures, which have to be reconstructed and sustained as a matter of urgency. On the other hand, an efficient strategy concerning cultural tourism should be based on Caucasian distinctiveness, and used in order to build bridges between cultural patrimony and contemporary arts.

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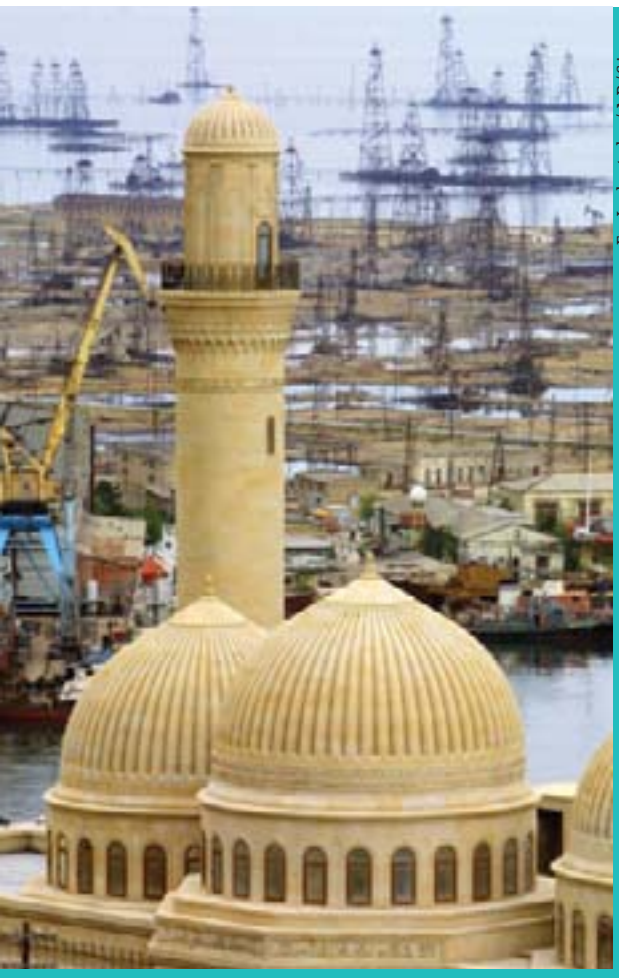

E. Lukatsky/AP/Sipa

In Baku, a newly built mosque with oil wells in the Caspian Sea in the background

The most obvious and urgent problem is certainly the inspection and recording of the state of cultural heritage in Nagorno-Karabagh. External assistance and involvement and the establishment of a formal programme could facilitate major progress. If sensitively handled, this could become a base for confidence building between the conflicting groups.

East-West c

It was only when Bursa was appointed to join the international conference jointly organised by the Greek Ministry of Culture and the Council of Europe on Cultural Policies for Cities, held in Thessaloniki (Greece) in November 2002, that we noted how enthusiastic the participating countries and cities were about culture, regeneration and co-operation. The participants were representatives of the member countries of Mosaic (Managing an Open and Strategic Approach in Culture), Stage (Support for Transition in the Arts and Culture in Greater Europe) and the Council of Europe.

All parties from Caucasia, south-east Europe and Turkey demonstrated a willingness and enthusiasm for co-operation.

Only eight months after the conference in Greece, Bursa was invited to South Caucasia. The mission this time was to accompany a Council of Europe group of experts visiting Baku, Azerbaijan. We met various local and ministerial bodies, and observed the developments achieved by the cultural authorities, agents and people in Baku

Yerevan, a changing city

History has left deep marks on Yerevan, frequently providing an explanation for the current situation and points of reference for an understanding of its complexity.

M. Japaridze/AP/Sipa

General view of Yerevan, with Mount Ararat in the background

The past

The history of Yerevan takes the form of a number of strata which will briefly demonstrate this complexity: the foundation of Erebouni in the Bronze Age (in 782 BC) on the site of present-day Yerevan; the adoption of Christianity as the state religion as early as 301 AD; the invention of an original alphabet in the 5th century AD, and the development of a national literature; and the key position of the city at a crossroads on the famous "Silk Route".

Nearer to our own times, major events have also left profound scars that may still be keenly felt: the events of 1915, which are still too little recognised; Soviet domination; the terrible earthquake of 1998 (which was not the first and will unfortunately not be the last in this high-risk area); and the still unresolved conflict over Karabagh, with its economic and political consequences.

A changing city

But Yerevan is also the capital of a new country which is being transformed and is willing to meet the challenges facing it and to take its place in the concert of nations. Armenia is today a democratic, secular republic.

The strong political will for modernisation took practical shape in 1997 with the adoption of new laws according a major role to culture.

As a metropolis, the city of Yerevan has a complicated administrative structure: it is the capital of the country, of a region (the largest in Armenia) and of a commune. This situation is reflected in the fact that the mayor of Yerevan is not elected but appointed by the President of the Republic.

The city has around 1 200 000 inhabitants, over a third of the total population of Armenia (estimated at 3 million). Ethnic minorities account for some 3 % of the population. The Armenian diaspora is estimated at 6 million.

As the capital, the city generally has the best infrastructure in the country. Zvartnots international airport links it with other major cities. Motorways and railways converge on the city. The vast majority of hotels in the country which meet international standards are concentrated there. A modern underground railway serves the city centre. It is also the main Armenian university city.

The same observations apply in relation to culture; the city has a wide range of facilities: museums, concert halls, libraries, schools of art and music, cultural centres, etc.

Planning is also heavily influenced by the Soviet period, with imposing buildings and a plan dating from 1924. The widespread use of local volcanic stone, pink and ochre tufa, gives the visitor an impression of great architectural unity.

The city is currently a vast building site: roads and networks are being repaired, obsolete tramlines removed, new buildings erected, the Opera Square and the museums renovated, and so on.

Cultural tourism: an opportunity worth seizing

New tools to promote tourism have been created: the Armenian Tourism Development Agency (in 2000), and the Kenats Festival (in 2002), which is held in September and aims to foster Armenian popular traditions.

Given the priceless historical and traditional heritage of Yerevan and its region, cultural tourism may become the driving force for the development of the city and help to make it a cultural capital with a very positive image that will attract investors as well as tourists.

But caution is called for in this sphere: great care will have to be taken to ensure that the tourism that is developed is "sustainable", both respecting the environment and producing fair benefits for the population.

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o-operation

during the past two years, since the initiation of the Stage project there.

There was a further mission: Bursa was assigned by the Council of Europe to establish associate city relations with Baku. For this purpose our delegation took with them copies of nine culture-based projects implemented and realised in the city of Bursa.

The group of experts were given a comprehensive tour of the city and visited sites such as the cemetery (Şehitgah), the Shirvanshah Palace (Şirvanşah Sarayı), the Ateşgah (an old caravanserai) and the Gobustan (a 30 thousand-year-old settlement area).

We met a lot of people from the cultural industry, who demonstrated their warm hospitality and an eagerness for co-operation.

The need for co-operation is as strong in the west as in the east of Europe.

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Council of Europe

The Iveria Hotel in Tbilisi

In the case of the Iveria hotel, one can almost sense the locals' creeping delight for a former Soviet Union glory turned into a contemporary eyesore. Nevertheless, the Iveria's dilapidated state accentuates the royal fervour of Davit Aghmashenebelis, "the builder". The revered Georgian king's statue strategically placed in front of the hotel, seems to lead the way into the 21st century. He draws behind him a monument to contemporary world culture: the "ship" of the displaced. A recent visit by Council of Europe experts to Tbilisi, Georgia, in the south Caucasus encouraged possible rehabilitation.

The geometrical centre of Tbilisi – the capital of the "newly" independent democratic state of Georgia – is marked by the overwhelming presence of the Iveria Hotel. Due to the topography of the city – a linear development crossed by the river – visitors and dwellers alike are inevitably drawn to the hotel site, often more than once a day. The panoramic and almost picturesque view from the hotel rooms assists the understanding of the relation between the growth of the city and the configuration of the landscape. The conspicuous site was deliberately chosen in 1967 – in a gesture of Soviet urban rhetoric – to construct the best ever hotel not only in Tbilisi but in the whole of Georgia.

Today the state of the Iveria is a side effect of the war on the city; a fifteen-storey vertical refugee camp for 800 uprooted Abkhazians. After the break up of the Soviet Union and the 1992-93 war in Georgia, around 200 000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) flooded into Tbilisi. They were officially received and resettled and the Iveria emerged as the highest-profile IDP refuge.

The hotel's temporary residents have remained in a state of transition for ten years already. Caught in a state of limbo, they are still unable to return home and yet not integrated into the host city for reasons that are too complex to discuss here. During their prolonged stay, the IDPs have acted upon the architecture of the building and adapted it to their needs. Balconies have been turned into rooms. Walls made of wooden planks or blue plastic mark the attempts of the residents not only to make a home out of a hotel room, but also to make this home distinct and personal.

Waiting for rehabilitation

To an outsider it seems quite obvious that in the Iveria, the people and the building alike are awaiting their rehabilitation. Rehabilitation (the restoring to effectiveness or normal life by training etc., especially after imprisonment or illness; restoration of former privileges or reputation or to a former condition) is mainly a medical term. Due to the similarity of heritage conservation to the medical notion of a cure, rehabilitation became a key operative concept in the context of cultural heritage practice.

Experts prescribe cures. Cultural experts in particular, following the analysis of a specific context, deploy strategies and formulate policies for regeneration, including rehabilitation, especially in the context of a city. However, and despite the fact that cultural policies are usually closely linked with economic and social development, in the absence of the political, cultural measures only produce a body of practices and institutions. In other words, they produce politics which are merely the art of administration by experts.

The Iveria hotel stands as a reminder that the political cannot be ignored for it has violently invaded contemporary cities, not only in Georgia but worldwide since the last decade of the 20th century. By political we mean the moment at which the definition of politics, the organisation of social reality takes place. It is the moment at which a problem or a crisis dislocates our social constructions. The political is associated with this moment of contingency and indecisiveness marking the gap between the loss of one socio-political identity and the creation of the desire for a new one.

The Iveria is our encounter with the absolutely real. As such, it provokes anxiety and triggers imaginary defence mechanisms. For its sight to be tolerated, it probably has to be invested with artistic qualities or thought of in the context of calm rehabilitation. However, the political moment that follows confrontation with reality, demands an inventiveness that can't be guaranteed. If we think of IDPs and displacement not as a state of crisis but as the new reality, we are forced to face up to anxiety and turmoil. To give an example, what will happen in this case to the chain that links architecture to property, inheritance, heritage, monuments, conservation, and links rehabilitation of buildings/sites to economic regeneration? The Iveria is disturbing for it forces experts to reconsider their presuppositions and it directly challenges the Council of Europe's political foundation. What would happen if the Council of Europe were to undertake a symbolic initiative to work with and support transit centres that could even "function as a welcome catalyst for local development in vulnerable regions, rather than as unwelcome 'dumping grounds' for the desperate"? If that were the case, culture would be shaped within another social reality.

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Villages and cultural landscape in Romania

Although the great Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga provided clear documentary evidence of the enduring existence of autonomous rural ownership in Romania, and the sociologist Henri H Stahl's essential work in this field, *Satele devălmaşe din România (The Autonomous Villages of Romania)*, published in 1965 and republished in 1998, contained a competent and thorough discussion of the subject, it was impossible to demonstrate the extent of such ownership until property boundaries had been identified and drawn up on the basis of documents and maps.

It is also important to emphasise the viability of the social set-up shaped by the continuity of such ownership over the centuries; it has been preserved to the present day, even surviving fifty years of forced collectivisation of agriculture.

In Romania, autonomous rural ownership, which had become the norm for social and rural organisation virtually throughout the vast territories of Europe, rapidly developed into a stakeholder rural society; by the 16th century it had become an effective financial and land ownership system in the modern sense of the term.

Rural community property ownership, evidenced by the privileges handed down by voivodal courts immediately following the formation of Romanian villages in the mid-16th century and attested to in documents throughout most of the last seven centuries, has been confirmed as a fundamental legal entity along with other forms of ownership, such as voivodal ownership, ownership by boyars and monasteries and, more recently, individual ownership.

An original structure

The main feature of sites developed along the lines of autonomous rural ownership is that they operate as an organism. Roads are merely traffic areas, bearing no relation to social status, and usually follow winding, circular routes (the circumference of the circle containing the maximum surface area); houses do not border the streets but are sited in the most favourable direction, towards areas sheltered from inclement weather. The peasant's house and the boyar's manor are of related designs, configured to stand separately within the property rather than being aligned, joined or attached in any way.

The layout of these sites is a result of the fact that the area inside the village was initially distributed to the family units making up the community in a homogeneous, egalitarian manner without preference or prejudice. This original system of land division was subsequently divided further according to the number of descendants in each family, but still in an egalitarian manner; in each case, the best solution was sought for the people concerned. When population density threatened to become intolerable, young families always moved to the outskirts of the village in question (in a number of cases, seasonal sites then became independent villages).

In close proximity to built-up areas, agricultural districts made up of communal land (cultivated fields, lakes, ponds, pastures and meadows) and privately owned land give the landscape a dynamic, distinctive character. While farmland in non-collectivised villages has retained this traditional quality, the abolition of borders and the introduction of single crops over large areas as part of the collectivisation process unfortunately destroyed the original layout of these sites.

Regaining the original appearance

It is hoped that once confiscated land, which was used for large areas of single crops, has been returned to small farmers and divided up, the landscape will regain its original appearance.

Consolidated studies and methods of identifying, measuring and administering land so as to preserve distinctive local features must be based on substantial historical investigations that afford an appropriate foundation for drawing up urban and regional planning regulations.

Land is the most significant documentary record ancestors have bequeathed to their descendants; it can, however, be interpreted only in so far as the "alphabet" used in this vast "document" is fully deciphered.

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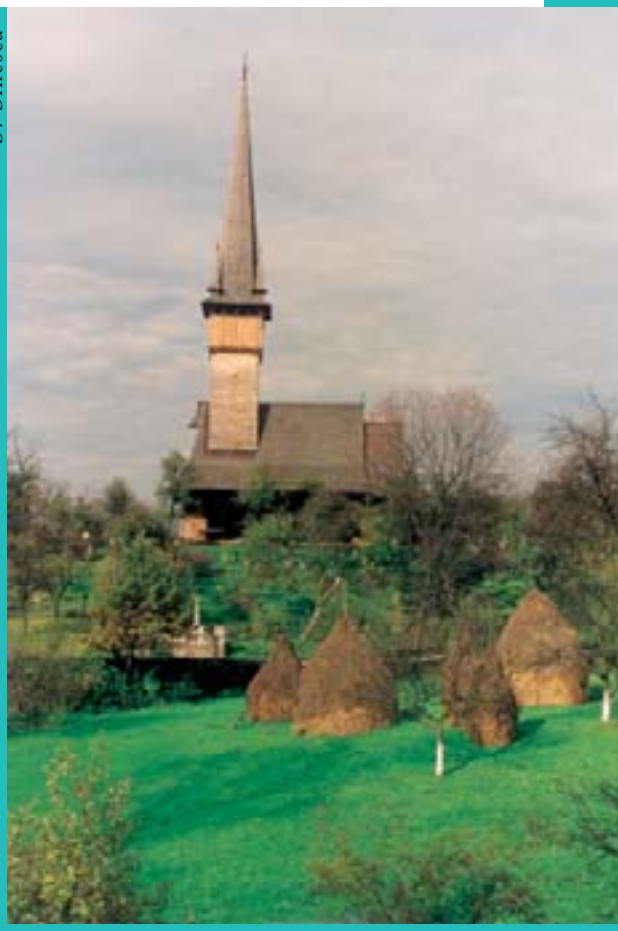


D. Dinescu

The wooden church "The Archangels" dating from the 18th century is included in the World Heritage List

Preserving and enhancing the heritage of

The early years of the twenty-first century in Europe have been characterised by the explosion of information technology and the protracted decline of industry, which saw its beginnings in Great Britain. Workers' housing schemes and garden cities, in a sense the progeny of the Industrial Revolution, appear to reflect this trend, as the tangible and intangible industrial, social and cultural heritage represented by hundreds of thousands of affordable houses, financed either directly by companies or from workers' savings, or by co-operatives and local authorities in industrial cities and urban regions, is disappearing from the built environment. At the same time, their heritage value is being eclipsed like that of industrial buildings and tools.

Testaments to the past

Do these schemes, which alleviated poor housing conditions and introduced new ways of incorporating the countryside into our towns, occupy the place they deserve in Europe's collective memory at the dawn of the twenty-first century? Hardly! No one could claim that workers' housing schemes have the same place in the collective consciousness and in public opinion as they did during the first third of the twentieth century. We are now having to make a real effort to prevent these testaments to the past, this tangible civilisation bequeathed by the Industrial Revolution, entire swathes of which are being consigned headlong to oblivion, from being wiped from our consciousness. At a time when the European Union is set to enlarge, it is worth reminding ourselves that industrial values remain an integral part of our value system, and that the industrial heritage and workers' housing schemes are not some kind of third-rate heritage.

Most of these schemes still exist; they are inhabited, flower-bedecked, doing their best to paper over the cracks which are inevitable in a city with economic and social roots. Others are riddled by the kind of segregation, exclusion, dilapidation and vandalism that have been the scourge of our housing estates for decades. Does this make them a lost cause? Not as I see it. What they need are new forms of protection and conservation, recognition and consideration. In all sincerity, I would echo the words of the Austrian author Robert Musil who, in another era and during another crisis of European values, said: "Let us save what is worth saving".

Spurred on by the widespread process of de-industrialisation – sometimes spontaneous and sometimes planned – which has swept Europe since the global crisis of 1973-75, a large number of cities and regions have endeavoured to conserve their industrial heritage. Even then, the Council of Europe recognised the cultural importance of the heritage of these workers' housing schemes, and encouraged specific measures to protect and safeguard them. This was also the time when the industrial archaeology movement set up a European network and a worldwide organisation: the International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage (TICCIH). But it was not until the 1990s that the national sections of this movement, following an already established British tradition,

P. Heckner

The Cité in Mulhouse was founded in 1853

workers' housing schemes

finally came to regard the heritage of workers' housing schemes as part of the industrial heritage.

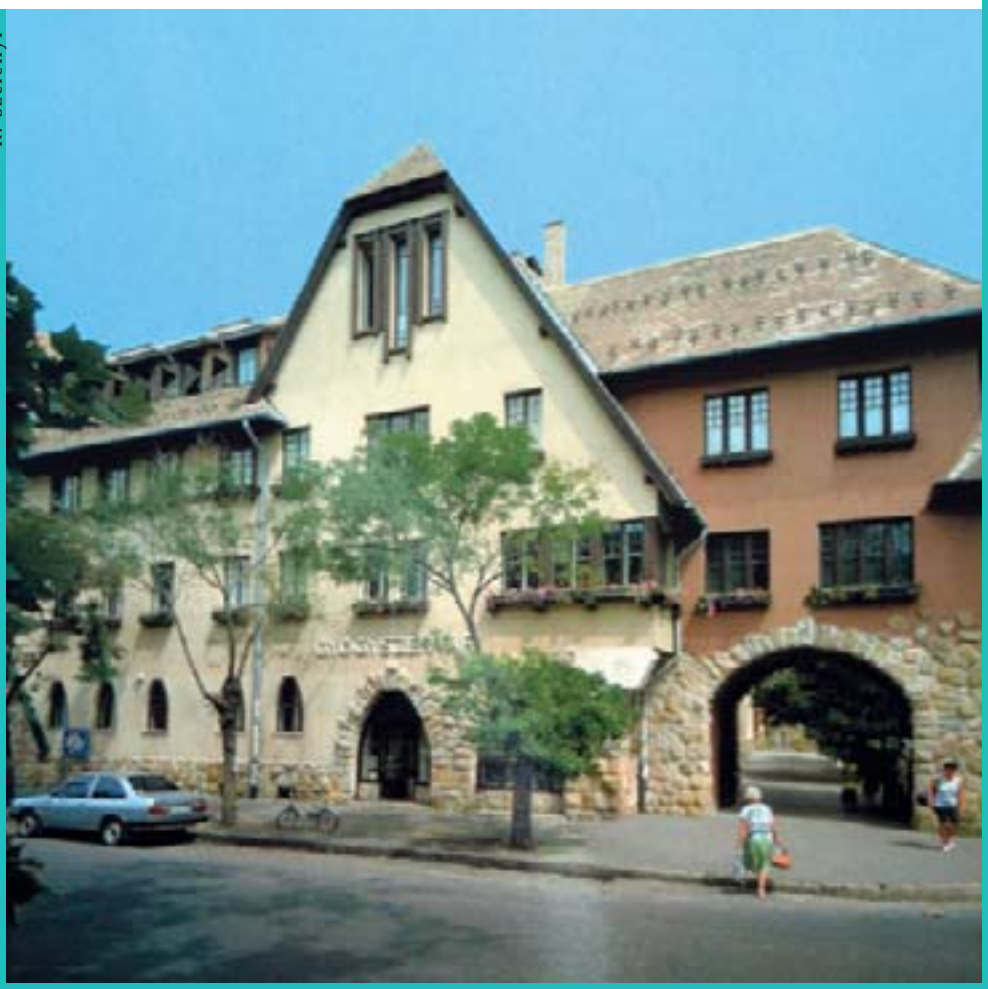
To change attitudes

Do we need new Europe-wide legislation or regulations in order better to protect and safeguard the heritage of these schemes? I do not believe so. A better approach would be to change attitudes regarding our past industrial heritage. After all, our industrialists and decision makers, to take one significant example, have long had at their disposal Council of Europe Recommendation No R (90) 20 on the protection and conservation of the industrial, technical and civil engineering heritage in Europe, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 13 September 1990. Fortunately, there are numerous champions of workers' housing schemes among conservationists and heritage associations. Listing workers' housing schemes for their heritage value may be one effective means of protecting their architecture, their green spaces and landscapes and preserving their social equilibrium, as demonstrated by a recent European study on the industrial garden cities of Mitteleuropa within the context of the CIES programme of activities.

For the future?

What of our strategy for the future? One way ahead is undoubtedly to go beyond recognition, however useful, of the network of world heritage cities, and to recognise the universality of urban culture and devise urban conservation policies. The innovative industrial cities which drove the first two industrial take-offs – and which still have dense networks of workers' housing schemes – must be part of this. Numerous studies show that the movement and the concept of workers' housing schemes and industrial garden cities which emerged during the first two industrial take-offs, and the numerous projects arising out of them, have a very high social, cultural and artistic value. They also encapsulate the urbanisation of towns and the socialisation of city-dwellers, and represent an ecologically sound means of reintroducing nature into the urban artefact. Hence, they made a fundamental contribution to the formation and development of cities in the twentieth century.

K. Szelényi



House No. 2 on the main square of the Wekerle in Budapest

For example Mulhouse, a famous French industrial city, industrious and innovative "French Manchester" was one of the five main industrial centres in France in the nineteenth century. Its workers' housing schemes are among the oldest and most acclaimed in Europe. In our struggle on behalf of workers' housing schemes, we tend to cling to symbols.

The twenty-first century is dawning amidst modest signs of heightened public awareness of our industrial heritage. Heritage associations have done much to contribute to the growing awareness of the value of the industrial heritage. Workers' housing schemes hope to take advantage of this trend to secure improved protection, to help them overcome the latest in a long series of challenges, namely the obliteration of our industrial past and the new industrial decline, which are jeopardising their unique heritage and their industrial and social tradition as sustainable places to live.

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The post-industrial landscape of the Ruhr

For one hundred and fifty years, industry has taken whatever land it needed. The particular interests of the firm prevailed. The government took a liberal stance, on the basis the interests of the firm coincided with its own. It continued in this vein, even when it was no longer possible to hide the damage caused by this arbitrary appropriation of space. Initially, this phenomenon affected the regions where industrialisation took place early on, and which had endured a long period of unscrupulous appropriation of land.

In the Ruhr Basin, realisation came around 1900. It was not motivated by a respect for landscape, but by a concern for the health of the workers. State intervention was then seen as an instrument for basic territorial planning and organisation. Around 1912, Robert Schmid wrote a much commented upon paper on the Ruhr, in which he condemned the damage to the general interest caused by anarchic industrialisation. This paper marks the beginning of public regional planning.

In the Ruhr, the intermunicipal grouping Siedlungsverband Ruhrkohlenbezirk (SVR) took the initiative in this respect, with a view to preserving the landscape that remained intact.

"Green belts" became the central element of this supra-regional planning, aimed at delimiting localities and preventing their taking up all available space and forming a single, sprawling built-up area. As a means of guaranteeing balanced planning, it was decided to remove regional planning powers from municipalities and transfer them to the region, through the SVR.

W. J. Hannapel

"Spiralberg" a slag heap redesigned by the architect H. Prigann in Halde Rheinelbe near Gelsenkirchen

At that time, the inhabitants of the Ruhr numbered 3 million, a figure which had doubled by 1960 to a maximum of 6.2 million. At the same time, the built-up area had grown even more than the population. Population density had also risen considerably, from fewer than 200 inhabitants per km^2 around 1850 to some 2000 inhabitants per km^2 today.

Despite the will to ensure that the public interest was taken into account in planning decisions, the interests of industry continued to take precedence over the interests of the state, however much the state tried to balance the two. Planning remained an abstract concept which, in reality, favoured the private sector. This phenomenon was especially evident in the Ruhr, a region which had long been the German government's "arms factory".

The result was an industrial landscape, where the principles of western landscape culture no longer applied. It was neither town nor countryside, but a sort of combination of the two, a hybrid town.

The decline of the mining industry that began in the 1960s put a stop to the trend of increasing appropriation of land by industry. This was the start of a long period of industrial sites shutting down, freeing up a larger area than was required for housing and professional premises.

It is difficult to imagine that, after 150 years of land appropriation by industry, the trend was to go into permanent reverse in favour of the restoration of land. The principle whereby "the town was devouring the countryside", was reversed. For the majority of the population, such a prospect was untenable. This unwanted reversal of a trend which had never been regulated, was rejected. Reality was denied.

In fact, the joint interests of the state and the private sector have not changed fundamentally to this day. On the contrary, the lack of jobs associated with a high unemployment rate pushes the authorities to prioritise employment in their decisions. Here, the general interest is a secondary consideration and regional planning is seen as a hindrance.

In this case, the regional demographic and economic context is the determining factor. The increase in the economic value of the landscape is slowing down. And the fact that local authorities continue to plan for industrial and commercial areas, which they are selling off at reduced rates, changes nothing.

Intervention or non-intervention

The liberal state of the nineteenth century would have left well alone, not getting involved. Former industrial sites would have been abandoned and reclaimed by nature. The following phases would have been observed: appearance of the first plant species, followed by perennial plants; these would have been followed by single-species woodland (usually birch) and finally mixed woodland, depending on local conditions. A process which leads from diversity to biological uniformity.

But the state does get involved. Whenever a firm of any size closes its gates, politicians promise to create new jobs without delay, if possible in equivalent numbers and on the same site. In order to do that, they claim it is necessary to demolish the plant, decontaminate the site and remove the foundations. This activity is costly for the community, but lucrative for demolition and decontamination firms. As long as the authorities continue to finance the comprehensive rehabilitation of industrial sites, this activity will flourish. The firms that are closing down their factories enter into one "final contract" with the region, by creating subsidiaries to take care of this rehabilitation.

In this way, and taking into consideration the manifest interests involved, the number of rehabilitated industrial sites is considerably higher than is required for long-term needs. From an economic point of view, this does not make sense and, from an ecological point of view, it merely perpetuates the destruction of nature after the phase of unscrupulous appropriation of land. The process of returning to nature is held back, at least temporarily. Ultimately, areas which have been rehabilitated at great expense are returned to nature, once attempts to convert them are abandoned when no purchaser can be found.

In this case, from both an economic and ecological point of view, it would be better if the state stood back, and refrained from intervening. That would permit the emergence of a new landscape, in which old factories would be gradually destroyed by the elements and the sites would become overgrown. The different stages of reappropriation of these spaces by nature and the deterioration of the buildings would create landscapes hitherto unseen in the history of mankind. This type of landscape can be seen here and there, when the finances of the state and the local authority can no longer finance


W. J. Hannapel

The return of nature

compulsory reconstruction and former industrial sites are abandoned to nature. It is generally true to say that public opinion and politicians are dismayed by this wonderful state of inactivity. They may even panic! The obligation to take action is clearly inherent in industrial society, work being the supreme virtue, not forgetting order and the desire for tidiness and safety. But above all, most people cannot bear to see decline and the progressive return of natural vegetation. They are incapable of appreciating the beauty of the process.

There is concern about the risks associated with the pollution of land and the collapse of buildings. The authorities call for safety. Well, it is much less dangerous to evolve on this derelict industrial land than to use roads which have been "rendered safe" by the highway code and road signs. Aesthetic considerations tie in well with the debate concerning safety, which advocates the removal of scrap and waste.

Natural intervention

The authorities become involved, then, in one way or another, but the question that needs to be asked is in what spirit? Is it because of economic considerations, in order to create space for new installations? Is it on the grounds of tidiness and order? Or is it to do with nurturing, according to the principle of natural growth and cultivation?

In 1987, the authorities of the *Land* of North Rheinland-Westphalia decided to give nature a chance in the northern part of the industrial area on the banks of the River Emscher. This was quite an astonishing decision in view of what has been said above. The "special status" granted to this area was in the context of the International Architecture and Building Exhibition (Internationale Bauausstellung – IBA), and the experiment was limited to the period 1989-1999. The region's seventeen local authorities participated in the experiment, more or less voluntarily. In accordance with the principle of natural intervention, they undertook to comply with three main principles:

1. no action to be taken against nature, with each intervention respecting ecological cycles;
2. history to be respected: all vestiges of the industrial past to be preserved, initially, whether or not they had any value as architectural heritage;
3. each project (building or landscape) to meet aesthetic criteria.

This large-scale regional experiment was preceded by financial analyses at local level. These revealed that, at the very most, it would be necessary to rehabilitate half of the derelict industrial sites.

The Emscher valley had undergone the most intensive industrialisation and, as a result, was most affected by factory closures. This area covers 800 km^2, measuring a maximum of 50 km across, inhabited by 2 million people. The derelict industrial land, together with the pre-industrial landscape that had survived (the odd agricultural plot, vestiges of woodland and roadside verges) represented a potential post-industrial landscape of some 300 km^2, that is to say approximately 40 % of the total area covered by the project. The time it was anticipated it would take for this new landscape to emerge was at least 50 years. The 10-year period for the IBA Emscherpark was intended to launch the project. This park received an initial investment of 500 million euros, designated for the enrichment of natural processes, while complying with the three principles set out above. The budget was, in the main, financed by public subsidies, much of it from European funds.

This natural intervention strategy mobilised considerably less public money, comparatively, than the other forms of intervention designed to fully rehabilitate derelict industrial land to accommodate new undertakings or housing. The result has been a major increase in ecological value, which has had a positive effect on the qualitative attraction of this region, which hitherto had been negligible. The region has been spoken of in the highest terms. Its inhabitants are starting to be proud of their history and the changes to their landscape, which it is said attract visitors and tourists. Natural intervention therefore favours the regional identity and is a convincing instrument in the economic development of a region.

The image of the landscape

Although this natural intervention initiative encompasses more than 100 projects, these "dots on the landscape" are not sufficient to form a completely separate landscape space. For this reason, these new landscapes need strong images and a common thread, in the beginning particularly, to link the different projects.

These strong images are "topographical markers" identifying the north and south of the Emscher valley, which is practically no longer identifiable as such today. Using the summits of mountains, the names of which people have remembered over time, has proved appropriate to this end. The "Industrial Tourism Route" constitutes the project's common thread. This well-marked tourist route is intended principally for those who live in the region, and for tourists only as a secondary consideration, because the 5 million people who live in the Ruhr must first of all become tourists in their own region.

However, the objective of natural intervention, embodied in topographical markers, is to preserve the rough outline of a fading industrial landscape, the contours of which must be allowed to remain visible in the new landscape for a long time. This is a somewhat particular view of protecting the historical heritage, because its aim is not to preserve it, but rather to follow its gradual deterioration. In this case, protecting the heritage and the landscape involves respecting natural processes!

The topographical markers are fixed reference points that cannot be ignored. The natural landscape over which they tower is a process of natural evolution authorised by man. This is how this project differs from regional planning in the strictest sense. The project may be called the "Emscher landscape park" but, in fact, it is quite the opposite of a park, which is closely-delineated and planned down to the last detail.

Conclusion

The Ruhr Basin is the region of western and central Europe that has undergone the greatest transformation as a result of industrialisation. Here, the return to nature of derelict industrial land began earlier than elsewhere, is more spectacular and has a more marked effect on the landscape. This is why this region is particularly appropriate for experiments and educational experiences on landscape change in the post-industrial era.

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A decentralised co-operation programme

The decentralised co-operation programme is the implementation of a Type II Public-Private Partnership on capacity-building of local authorities for urban sustainable development, which was officially presented at the Johannesburg Summit, jointly by UN-HABITAT, the World Associations of Cities and Local Authorities Co-ordination (WACLAC), a multinational company such as Veolia Environnement, an NGO Global Ecovillage Network, and other partners.

The decentralised co-operation programme, in recognition of the role of local authorities in achieving international development goals locally, aims to provide local authorities and local actors with the necessary training and best practices to achieve guaranteed access to essential services (such as water, sanitation, waste management, transport, energy, information and communication and health protection).

It is within this framework that the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) has signed, in 2003, a memorandum of co-operation with the Council of Europe. The European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT), held on 17 September 2003, in Ljubljana, has adopted Resolution No. 2 related to the training of authorities responsible for sustainable spatial development. This resolution stipulates, among other things: to promote the implementation of the International Training Centres for Local Actors Programme (CIFAL) in Council of Europe member states and to examine the modalities of collaboration with UNITAR and the European Network of Training Organisations (ENTO).

The training activities are being achieved through the exchange of urban best practices, in relation with international organisations and UN agencies, associations of local authorities, NGOs, local and global business companies and academia. In doing so the decentralised co-operation programme plays the role of a hub for information, communication and training on sustainable urbanisation.

Training activities are being implemented through the network of specific collaborative regional training centres known as CIFAL. As far as the region of Europe is concerned, the choice will be made with the Council of Europe and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe. Negotiations are underway for an operational start in 2004.

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Ministerial Conference

The 13th European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT) was organised by the Council of Europe and held in Ljubljana (Slovenia) on 16 and 17 September 2003 on the invitation of Mr Janez Kopač, the Slovenian Minister for the Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy. It was one of the main political events in the context of sustainable spatial development and the implementation of the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent (Recommendation Rec (2002) 1 adopted on 30 January 2002 by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe).

The conference brought together more than 100 participants from 36 Council of Europe member states and observers. Representatives of the Committee of Ministers, the Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) and the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) were also present.

The aim of the ministerial conference was to review the measures taken to implement the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent and to promote transnational and inter-regional co-operation through development projects. Delegates also considered means of promoting and implementing the guiding principles by establishing legal provisions and effective policies as well as innovative strategies with regard to territorial planning and management.

The general theme on "Implementation of strategies and visions for sustainable spatial development of the European continent" was treated in the framework of three sessions:
- Europe in the world and the integration of the continent;
- implementation of the principles for sustainable territorial development;
- trans-European co-operation.

The ministers responsible for regional planning/heads of delegation:
- adopted the Ljubljana Declaration on the territorial dimension of sustainable development;
- adopted Resolution No. 1 on public-private partnerships in spatial development policy;
- adopted Resolution No. 2 on the training of authorities responsible for sustainable development;
- adopted Resolution No. 3 concerning the prevention of floods and better co-ordination of all activities designed to minimise the risks and consequences of disastrous floods;
- approved Resolution No. 4 on the terms of reference of the Committee of Senior Officials of the CEMAT and its Bureau, deciding to transmit it to the Committee of Ministers for adoption;
- adopted Resolution No. 5 on the organisation of the 14th Session of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning;
- took note of the European Rural Heritage Observation Guide adopted by the CEMAT Committee of Senior Officials in Budapest (Hungary) on 28 March 2003;
- took note of the work carried out in connection with the sustainable spatial development of the river Tisza/Tisa, resulting in:
  - the signing of the Initiative on the sustainable spatial development of the Tisza/Tisa river basin by the Ministers responsible for Regional/Spatial Planning of Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovak Republic and Ukraine, at the 13th Session of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT), on 16 September 2003; and
  - the adoption of the Declaration on co-operation concerning the Tisza/Tisa river basin, by these same states, on 16 September 2003.

At the end of the conference, Mr Paulo Taveira de Sousa, State Secretary for Spatial Planning, Ministry for the Cities, Spatial Planning and the Environment of Portugal, addressed the participants and issued an invitation to the 14th CEMAT to be held in Portugal in 2006.

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AT THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The European Heritage Network (Herein)

Herein is the network of public authorities responsible for cultural heritage working together through the Council of Europe. Herein is based on a network of national correspondents in the thirty-two member states taking part so far in the network's activities.

The human network uses information and communication technologies for decentralised co-operation. This information system allows, *inter alia*:
- for the updating and publication of reports, the thesaurus, a portal and a news section, directly by the national correspondents;
- the hosting of virtual exhibitions and thematic forums;
- multilingual access to the information.

The network's Internet site www.european-heritage.net gives access to the following resources:
- the national heritage policy reports of twenty-five European countries;
- the Herein multilingual thesaurus (ten European languages) offers a terminological standard for national heritage policies. This tool is intended to help the user of the website when surfing through the various on-line national reports. Thanks to its standardised vocabulary and to the scope notes appended to each term, it gives access, with one concept, to different national experiences or policies whose specific designation, administrative structure, and development provide a view over the wide-ranging extent of European cultural diversity. As well as this, the thesaurus offers the user a terminological tool which allows them to have a better understanding of all the concepts they come across when reading the reports; thanks to the hierarchical and associative interplay of terms, the users can complete or extend their knowledge of the subject;
- the virtual exhibition "Extraordinary Travels: the Silk Road", designed by the Heritage and Modernity Association and the Griffon company with assistance from the French Ministry of Culture and the Council of Europe, will soon be placed on-line via the site.

The 5th Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" was held in Kyiv in May 2003. The ministers and heads of delegations adopted a paragraph on biodiversity in the Ministerial Declaration where they recognised the role of the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS) as an important instrument for the implementation of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity in the pan-European region. They also endorsed the resolution on biodiversity, submitted by the PEBLDS Council, and committed to achieve the nine targets for halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010 through national efforts and regional co-operation.

The Group of Experts on the Geological Heritage held its first meeting in Strasbourg on 13 September 2002 and emphasised the existence of many European initiatives for geological conservation and the necessity to support them, avoiding the creation of new instruments. Therefore, at the second meeting held on 15 September 2003, the group decided to prepare a draft recommendation on conservation of the geological heritage and areas of special geological interest. This draft recommendation, once adopted by the Committee for the Activities of the Council of Europe in the field of Biological and Landscape Diversity, will be transmitted to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe for possible adoption and transmission to the member states so that they may apply it as appropriate.

European Diploma

By decision of the Committee of Ministers of 28 May 2003, the European Diploma of Protected Areas was awarded to three new protected areas, in recognition not just of their biological, landscape and geological qualities but also of the way in which they are managed:
- the Thayatal National Park in Austria;
- the Matsalu nature reserve in Estonia;
- the volcanic features of the Tihany Peninsula in Hungary.

Bern Convention

Substantial progress was made in 2003 in the following areas covered by the Bern Convention.

Invasive alien species

The text of the European strategy drawn up by a group of experts was submitted to the Standing Committee for adoption at its meeting from 1 to 4 December 2003.

Conservation of large carnivores

In the Alps and the Carpathians in particular, the convention aims to promote co-ordinated, harmonious management of these species in the various countries concerned. A number of meetings and workshops were organised on this topic, notably in Brasov in Romania, culminating in recommendations and action plans. In addition, an agreement was signed between the central and regional authorities in Spain responsible for conservation of the Iberian lynx (*Lynx pardinus*), one of the most threatened species in Europe and a vital part of Europe's natural heritage.

Protection of birds

Five new action plans were prepared for the most threatened birds, as well as draft recommendations aimed at minimising the adverse effects of power lines and wind energy.

Resolving problems encountered in applying the convention

In response to complaints from NGOs concerning the construction of the Odelouca Dam in the Algarve and the Via Baltica motorway in Poland, the government bodies concerned organised on-the-spot appraisals in Portugal and Poland. The aim was to analyse the foreseeable impact of these projects on species and habitats of European importance, and to help the authorities, in agreement with all the stakeholders, to find the most appropriate means of reconciling the ecological and socio-economic considerations.

The nature and landscapes of our seas and coastlines: an economic and social asset for Europe

The seas surrounding Europe, and its coastline, are a very important economic and social asset for our continent. The wealth of Europe's seas and coastal areas is reflected in their biological diversity,

the variety of landscapes, the economic importance of fish stocks, and the transport, leisure and tourist economy. They therefore represent an area in which conservation and environmental protection policies are extremely important as a means of preserving what constitutes the basis for substantial economic development.

The Council of Europe considers that a concerted, dynamic policy for the sustainable development of coastal and marine areas is therefore needed to preserve ecosystems and species living in a marine and coastal environment, so as to safeguard the economic and social values that these areas represent for the European countries concerned. In this context, the establishment of a larger number of marine protected areas is a key means of preserving marine biodiversity and supporting local communities living off economic activities relating to the sea and coastline.

This is why the Council of Europe is organising in Dubrovnik on 16 and 17 October 2003, a symposium on "Marine and coastal biodiversity and protected areas", with the co-operation of the Croatian authorities. This event is organised in the context of the activities of the Organisation relating to the environment and the establishment of ecological networks, and will bring together representatives of all the major initiatives in this field.

The symposium should lead to a programme in support of the establishment of more marine protected areas, as called for at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development in September 2002.

It is planned, at the symposium, to launch the idea of a forum to promote dialogue with a view to pooling efforts to preserve the marine and coastal environment and eliciting further action and consultation between governments, in co-operation with those responsible for existing initiatives and instruments. Machinery for the co-ordination and regular monitoring of the various schemes under way that takes account of the general problems existing Europe-wide will be proposed. The focus will be on recommendations concerning particular geographical areas: the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, the Atlantic Ocean and the North Sea, and the Caspian Sea.

2003: International Year of Freshwater

The United Nations General Assembly declared 2003 International Year of Freshwater, thereby recalling the need to implement the decisions taken in particular at the Johannesburg summit. Improving awareness of the importance of this resource and the vital issues surrounding its use, management and protection is a challenge facing all governments, national and international organisations, civil society and private enterprise. Throughout 2003, therefore, those concerned held meetings in connection with the International Year of Freshwater in order to promote existing activities and programmes and launch new initiatives at international, European, national and local level.

Issues linked to water resources management are central to the concerns of the Council of Europe and its Parliamentary Assembly, both in relation to agriculture, spatial planning and the environment and to the responsibilities of local and regional authorities.

The Parliamentary Assembly could not fail to rise to the challenge. The Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs therefore set up an ad hoc sub-committee for the International Year of Freshwater 2003, with the task of monitoring closely a number of initiatives, participating in events and preparing a report on the necessary management and co-ordination at European level of issues and initiatives relating to water (rapporteur: Mr Velikov, Bulgaria, LDR). The report will be put before the Parliamentary Assembly during the first half of 2004.

Furthermore, because water does not stop at borders, and in response to a proposal for a resolution on the need for European support for the protection and preservation of lakes Dojran, Prespa and Ohrid, the sub-committee organised a colloquy on the management of transborder lake and river basins in Ohrid, in "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia". The Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs decided to focus in greater detail on the issue of transborder catchment areas and lakes, a topic which might provide a platform for renewed co-operation between the member states at national, regional and local level. A report on the issue (rapporteur: Mr Toshev, Bulgaria, EPP) will also be submitted to the Parliamentary Assembly during the first half of 2004.

Hunting and its environmental impact in the countries of central and eastern Europe

A number of countries in central and eastern Europe have liberalised their legislative and regulatory framework on hunting in recent years, in a bid to promote commercial hunting and attract hunters from abroad.

Commercial hunting may provide a substantial source of income for these countries and help develop their infrastructure. Properly controlled hunting can be an important factor in preserving the biological balance, while benefiting a substantial section of society.

However, excessive liberalisation of hunting may have a detrimental impact on wild fauna. More specifically, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe fears that the proliferation of commercial hunting may jeopardise the biological balance and damage the environment in the longer term.

On an initiative from Romanian parliamentarians, it therefore decided to conduct an in-depth study of the subject with a view to preparing a report containing practical recommendations to be forwarded to the Committee of Ministers. The aim is to harmonise member states' legislation on hunting whilst maintaining the biodiversity and wildlife which constitute our shared heritage, and ensuring that economic and com-

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mercial interests do not take precedence over the need for sustainable development.

The Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs staged a parliamentary hearing at the European Youth Centre in Budapest in December 2003, bringing together representatives of national and international organisations and parliamentarians from the member states of the Council of Europe; the findings of the hearing will form the basis for the committee's report.

Europe:
"from one street to the Other"

It is a Council of Europe pilot project for children aged 9 to 11. Some thirty schools in more than twenty European countries have taken part in it since 2001. The project offers a multitude of activities – through a specific educational booklet published in seven languages (English, French, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish and Swedish) – centred on a street in the neighbourhood of the young people concerned. It allows not only the pursuit of an active educational approach to the school curriculum but also a reaching out towards "the Other", in order to improve mutual understanding, to raise awareness of the European dimension of their surroundings, of Europe's cultural diversity and highlight the multicultural and intercultural aspects of Europe's common heritage. In seeking to bring together the peoples of Europe, the project reflects one of the Council of Europe's fundamental tasks and can provide an ideal means of promoting tolerance, citizenship, peace and conflict prevention.

It is also designed to encourage children to think about their architectural surroundings in their towns or villages and about the way in which the inhabitants of their environment interact with one another. They also learn to gauge the influence that individuals can have on the appearance and aesthetics of the places in which they live, and to think about the way in which things could change in the future. The pilot stage is finishing and its international aspects

are being developed in particular, also through common creative work. An evaluation of the activity with a view of its future development is underway.

A specific Internet site (http://www.culture.coe/eral) was designed and should strengthen the links between schools.

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