


CENTRE FOR ARCHITECTURE | THEORY | CRITICISM | HISTORY

View metadata, citation and similar papers at core.ac.uk

brought to you by  CORE

provided by University of Queensland eSpace



Author	Macarthur, John
Title	'Strange encounters in mid-century British urbanism: townscape, anti-scrape and surrealism'
Date	2007
Source	<i>Panorama to Paradise: Proceedings of the XXIVth International Conference of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand</i>
ISBN	1-920927-55-7



Strange Encounters in Mid-Century British Urbanism: Townscape, Anti-Scrape and Surrealism

John Macarthur

School of Geography, Planning and Architecture
The University of Queensland, Australia

Abstract

The main impetus to the Architectural Review's (AR) Townscape movement was Sir Nikolaus Pevsner's attempt to marry picturesque concepts of visual empiricism to modern functionalist architecture and planning. Townscape cannot, however, be reduced to a simple scenography because it also involved the particular problem of historic structures. While Pevsner did promote a kind of visual formalism, the other editors of the AR at various times took a second line on Townscape that was anti-aesthetic and materialist. Hubert de Cronin Hastings proposed that the interest in abjection of eighteenth century writers was directly connected to the 'surrealistic picture' that the modern planner must make. Hastings drew on the surrealist painter Paul Nash's article "Swanage, or Seaside Surrealism". Like Nash, the painter John Piper wrote both for the AR and John Betjeman's Shell Guides for tourists. The painters valued the remnants of the past not for the identifications they allowed but for the disjunctions they provided. In "Pleasing Decay" Piper recounts the history of the 'anti-scrape' building conservation philosophy so as to demonstrate that an ethic of evidential practice can be received aesthetically. Anti-scrape vigorously opposed restoring buildings to a form where their aesthetic qualities could be appreciated if this meant losing evidence of the life of the building. For Piper this life itself was image-able through modern artistic concepts of collage and dialectical image disjunctions. If today Townscape is characterised by nostalgia and identification with images of tradition, this is the wake of a larger idea. Townscape was as much an affective structure as it was an empiricism, and historic buildings were more than a problem for planners that Townscape could help to manage. At the basis of Townscape was the idea that one could see obsolescence, and feel the disjunction of historic objects from history; such as that grander history that flowed from the picturesque to modernism.

The mid-twentieth century British movement Townscape is currently emerging from the fog of our over-familiarity with its later dismal history. By the 1980s Townscape had become a kind of lite-historicism, and there was little memory of its existence before Gordon Cullen's book *The Concise Townscape* of 1971.¹ In that moment when the failures of modernist planning were becoming arguments for post-modernism, Townscape's interest in the picturesque form of existing urban circumstances seemed distastefully timid, nostalgic and English. This is especially so when compared with European Rationalism with its philological analysis of traditional urban form and elaborate defenses of historicism as a route to architectural autonomy. But the failure of post-modernism, and the rise of neo-modernism, have reversed this situation, and scholars are beginning to show that Townscape was a vehicle for the assimilation of modernism into mainstream British architecture.²

Townscape was the most common of several names used by the journal the *Architectural Review* in its campaigns and polemics from the mid thirties to the mid seventies.³ With its editorial team including, at various times, J M Richards, Nikolaus Pevsner, and Peter Reyner Banham, it was staunchly modernist and progressive when, for much of the period, modernism was received as a continental fad. Hubert de Cronin Hastings was the owner and dictatorial chair of the editorial board over the whole period and under his pseudonym Ivor de Wolfe, the main author of the crucial Townscape articles.⁴ Hastings's main concern was to popularize modernism by showing that its crucial tenets such as irregular planning had their origins in England, in the picturesque, and what the *AR* called the functional tradition. To an extent this meant attacking doctrinaire modernism, its *tabula rasa* approach to urban design, and the idea of it being historically unprecedented. Pevsner's historical research was put to this purpose, and in 1942 Hastings and Pevsner planned a picturesque-cum-modernist movement.⁵ It was to be a book called *Visual Planning*, the incomplete manuscript of which is at the Getty.⁶ *Visual Planning* drew on arguments made as early as the mid thirties and which were named Townscape in 1949 after a period of eccentricity when it was called *sharawaggi*, an eighteenth century term for irregularity. My main interest has been in Townscape's use of the picturesque, but in this present paper I am going to explore two aspects which distinguish Townscape and make it something other than a modernized picturesque.

Townscape drew on both surrealism and the language and ideas of the building conservation philosophy nick-named 'anti-scrape'. Much of the failure to recognize Townscape's

modernism arises from seeing it through the lens of 1950s high modernism, when it was already under attack by neo-avant-gardists of a constructivist colour such as Banham and the Smithsons. However, Townscape began in the 1930s when the dominant modernist movement in British painting and poetry was surrealism. Similarly, the explicit interest of Townscape in old buildings is often assumed to be a cover for historicism in architectural design, when in fact, the anti-scrape tradition is radically materialist in its historiography and aesthetics. In this paper, as well as de Wolfe's texts, I will look at the contributions of two painters, Paul Nash and John Piper, both variously involved in surrealism and historic conservation.⁷

The theory of Townscape could be briefly put as follows. In contrast to the intentionality and rationality of architectural design, cities are made by the contingencies of history and accord to no overall principle, even if many ideals have been enacted in their parts. Cities are less formed than buildings, and this is not merely a matter of degree, but rather a difference in the kinds of form involved. Cities can thus not provide any general determination for the form that buildings should take. This idea of a categorical difference between urban and architectural form has the effect of privileging empirical experience. On a case-by-case basis from actual viewpoints, the abstractly determined form of buildings, and the insensibly complex history by which they had come together could be experienced as a pictorial composition. As advice to designers, Townscape never amounted to much more than advocating point-of-view planning based on the principles of picturesque landscape design. The idea of humble buildings being an urban fabric which framed architectural works in an ensemble goes back to Camillo Sitte,⁸ and, as Pevsner argued, is implicit in the eighteenth century picturesque of Uvedale Price.⁹ Townscape extended this idea by thinking the urban fabric might be not merely humble and indifferent, but actually bad, in poor taste, and in styles and ideologies at odds with its architectural reframing. In its insistence on the city having its own formal character external to architecture, and interacting with it, a nature against which architectural ideologies and particular buildings could be tested, Townscape became the premise of later 'urbanisms' particularly those of Colin Rowe, and Robert Venturi and Denise Scott-Brown, which owe a great deal more to it than the polemics of the time would suggest.¹⁰ Today Townscape's modernist account of context, not as a spatial circumstance but as a fleeting image condition, is quite like Rem Koolhaas, Iñaki Ábalos, and others who use 'picturesqueness' to describe the condition of building now that the urban has become co-extensive with the landscape.¹¹

Townscape rejected the *tabula rasa* of modern planning for two reasons. The historically developed city with its accidental and communal formal effects could provide the horizon to architectural form that I've already described. Modernism had been unsuccessful in 1930s Britain, in part because it was thought to necessitate the demolition of buildings and places of public affection. The *AR* proposed that although modernism had made older buildings obsolete, technically and aesthetically, this did not mean that they needed to be replaced wholesale. Thus there could be no general critique of modernism in the name of historic preservation. However, many modernists thought this a dispiriting compromise with conservative values. It is these modernist architects who the *AR* tried to win over by describing the proposed amalgam of historical and modern building as forming a surrealist picture.¹²

The *AR* had been ruminating on the concepts of Townscape through the late 1930s. It was formulated and put under the banner of a picturesque revival in an article by the Editor in 1944 titled "Exterior Furnishing, or Sharawadgi: The Art of Making Urban Landscape".¹³ According to the Editor, the popularity of clichéd building forms was not only based on the public's uncritical sentimentality but also on the failure of doctrinaire modernists to provide a 'picture' – the formed experience that would result from their ideals. The Editor reminded the reader of the great English anti-idealist tradition of the picturesque, and then explicitly repeated and updated its formula. He argued that architects and planners, need to learn from painters, in this case from contemporary British painters, in particular John Piper and Paul Nash, who showed that "a music-hall or a Victorian pub or a pylon, or a wild Gothic four-cornered lamp-post are what correspond in our urban scenery to the grotto, the umbrello, the tumble-down cottage and the sunk lane ...".¹⁴ The painters knew that the picture could give unity to disparate objects, even those that in a different view would be considered repulsive. The Editor then turns to picturesque theory of the eighteenth century and claims its kinship with the latest anti-formalist aesthetic – surrealism.

Amongst architects unfortunately even the most eager and progressive believe that the defence ... of Victorian fantasy is reactionary They have forgotten – or never discovered – their Uvedale Price, perhaps the first man in history to reveal that an object may be 'ugly' in itself and yet in a suitable context have aesthetic possibilities. Payne Knight, it will be remembered, brought up the carcass of an ox as an instance of a revolting object which could evoke painterly delight – could produce, that is to say, a picturesque effect In their development of a visual

aesthetic capable of including the awful and the odd ... the eighteenth century intelligentsia cut right across the centuries linking Salvator Rosa with Salvador Dali.¹⁵

In its Townscape articles the *AR* attempted to provoke its readers by including Victoriana and popular culture, and especially so when something in ghastly taste could be shown to demonstrate an admirable spatial or visual arrangement. In Townscape, the historic fabric rarely includes buildings of value as architecture - not Pugin, nor Cockerell, but lumpish churches of indeterminate age with eroded details and chintz Victoriana. In principle, Townscape accepted historic buildings for their historical, rather than their architectural, value, and aimed to show that modern architecture could cleverly accommodate old buildings that had been maintained for their associations or curiosity even if completely devoid of architectural merit.¹⁶ But in practice, it was the clash of the past and present building stock that gave Townscape its particular visual style. As the Editor puts it in a rather racy phrase: Townscape is a place where “the Victorian dolls-house must be politely encouraged to lie down with Mr Fredrick Gibberd’s flats”.¹⁷ In a kind of spoof of stream of consciousness writing he rapps: “one bus stop, two public lavatories, one Underground entrance, one manhole cover ... six plane trees ... and a hundred and fifty horizontal windows From such assortments the radical planner has to produce his practical surrealist picture”.¹⁸

The planner combines urban objects of quite different values, artistic, historical, sentimental, ancient and ephemeral on the basis of their visual contribution to the ‘picture’. The Editor argues that the mixed aesthetic with which unpretentious people furnish their homes, is a model for urban design:

The fear of one’s modern cupboard clashing with the Victorian atmosphere of a room, or one’s Victorian chandelier looking out of place in an Aalto environment is wholly unjustified. Even more undesirable is the fear that any object, in itself not up to a discriminating contemporary aesthetic standard, would be a blot on a whole interior. The aesthetic qualities of the individual items are quite irrelevant. Let them be ugly, let them be incongruous. What matters alone is the unity and congruity of the pattern. A frankly vulgar little bronze poodle on an Italian marble pedestal might even hold a place of honour on the mantle shelf, either because of its value as an accent in a picturesque whole, or – and here is a new argument – because of some equally legitimate sentimental value.¹⁹

Townscape, like its model the picturesque, is thus a strangely inverted aesthetic. It supposes strong aesthetic powers for the form of pictures, but gives few rules about what constitutes pictorial form. Instead, it is much more interested in the ugly, distorted, mundane and sentimental things that it can master. Townscape's use of historic building fabric is like the collages that British surrealists such as Humphrey Jennings were learning from Max Ernst.²⁰ Here, fragments are dissociated from their original role and reassembled so that visual unity is always made unstable by the possibility of deciphering the original meaning of the pieces. In one graphic essay entitled "Architectural Review employs shock tactics to stimulate visual awareness" the journal drew together from its photo library: a monumental concrete swan in a provincial town; a formalist photograph by Moholy Nagy; a decayed medieval door, and fantasy Chateau. About this array the Editor writes:

The reconquest of architectural vision entails the use of many of the same methods that are employed in curing amnesia. A shock will often do it, or the focusing of attention on familiar objects, which have almost disappeared by being taken for granted. ... This is why cubism and surrealism were such important movements to architects...²¹

In an article and photo essay entitled "Pleasing Decay" of 1947, a few months after these shock tactics had been announced, the painter John Piper introduced the reader to some of the history of 'anti-scrape'.²² William Morris's foundation of the *Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings* in 1877 was the culmination of nearly a century of outrage by aesthetes and antiquaries at practices of restoration that scraped old buildings back to some misunderstood ideal state.²³ The basis of the name 'scrape' was the practice of restorers to remove decayed plaster and often frescos, to reveal stonework that had only ever meant as substrate. Wyatt and then Scott's restorations of Salisbury Cathedral were infamous examples of aggressive restoration based on a decision that the cathedral had been perfected quite early in its long history of building.²⁴ Anti-scrape valued evidence of the life of a building, and thought that restoration involved hubristic judgements as to the artistic merits of one phase of building over another. This might seem to pit historical value and evidence against artistic value and form, but, in fact, the most strident critics of restoration were completely aesthetic in their appreciation of formal qualities of aged materials and altered forms. Reading Ruskin one might think that history had occurred largely so that buildings could exhibit the hybrid styles and the 'changefulness' of successive building campaigns – so that moldings could erode and soften their curves. In large part the appreciation of historic

building, and the appreciation of townscape, are constituted by a distaste for strong closed forms and for singular artistic intentions.²⁵ There are thus very strong links between progressive concepts of art and architectural conservation. As Piper writes:

just as we have learned ... to appreciate Utrillo as well as Cotman, there are other characteristics that can, and must be added to Ruskin's elements of 'picturesqueness' to-day; and if he himself had lived to-day he would certainly have added them. The incorporation of Picasso and Matisse, Ernst and Mirô into our visual philosophy may mean an uncomfortable stretching of the word 'picturesque' to embrace our beliefs; but it is certain that if the lessons of these painters are properly learned 'pleasing decay' will be found to have a very large place in our present-day visual consciousness. [For] the visually re-educated planner, it will not merely be a question of retaining and incorporating the best existing buildings ... but a question of using existing buildings ... that will be an enrichment, or allow an area of rest, or even note of agitation, in a new planning and building scheme.²⁶

While on one side the picturesque-ness of townscape was advertised as a compromise of modernism with tradition, for Piper, the picturesque was assimilable to modern art, collage and the as-found. Piper lists buildings of significance to historians, those with "circular white and blue plaques on their façades" and implies that these are not as interesting as old buildings available to architects as material in the same way as Picasso used pieces of old rattan, or Ernst cut up mail order catalogues.²⁷ Despite his recommendation of Ernst and Mîro, Piper's own painting remained closer to Utrillo and the School of Paris. It was an older artist Paul Nash who had introduced the *AR* and its readers to surrealism.

Nash came to fame as a war artist, had phases of abstraction, and formed the earliest British surrealist group Unit One in 1933. In 1936 he was on the committee of the first British surrealist exhibition. The British art scene had been largely divided along the lines of figuration vs abstraction, a division that was debated in the journal *Axis* set up by Piper's wife Myfanwy Evans.²⁸ Many British artists saw a resolution of this dichotomy in surrealism in its biomorphic abstraction, and the potential of found objects to bring the real directly into art without representation. While Henry Moore is perhaps the most famous of such artists, Paul Nash explored the same territory through his paintings and his essays and photo essays in the *AR*. While Nash's surrealism began with explicit clashes of visual logic,²⁹ in the 30s he

returned to landscape and the potential of relatively subtle juxtapositions that were closer to the aim of Townscape and its origins in the picturesque. *Landscape from a Dream* of 1936-9 is based not on uncomfortable contrasts of objects, but rather on an estranged relation of time and place. His late landscapes seem to depict not the forms of the landscape but their psychical vitality. A tremendous foreboding or joy seems to arise from simple phenomenon like the grouping of trees on a hilltop. In *Monster Field*, a photo and text essay in the *AR* that became a major painting, fallen trees appeared to Nash as “objects alive in another world”.³⁰ Like many artists of the time Nash was deeply interested in the idea that pre-history revealed the primitive psyche.³¹ In *Landscape of the Vernal Equinox (III)* of 1944 what appears to be a naively centric landscape composition is actually a depiction of ancient British hill forts.³² For both Nash and Piper the pastness of the past was a method to imaginatively enrich the experience of the present day.³³ How this approach to landscape might become a townscape is clear in Nash’s 1936 photo essay for *AR* “Swanage or Seaside Surrealism”.³⁴

Nash celebrates “beauty, ugliness and the power to disquiet” of Swanage, a decayed resort town in Dorset in which he lived. He puts together a pre-history in which Swanage was the “haunt of turtles and crocodiles”, its fame as the site in which King Alfred repelled a Danish fleet, and modern Swanage, which – ornamented with architectural fragments salvaged from London by an eccentric Victorian magnate – is “of such extreme ugliness, architecturally, that the inhabitants instinctively look out to sea”. While Nash’s aesthetic values and language are surrealist, the genre and procedure of the essay are touristic. For Nash the genre of the guidebook plays something of the role of the automatism in surrealist writing practices, or Max Ernst’s use of catalogue illustrations – it provides a procedure. Both Nash and Piper wrote, drew and photographed for the *Shell Guides* to English counties, which was set up in 1933 by another of the *AR*’s editors John Betjeman. According to Betjeman, the series was firmly anti-scrape in its principles. It was intended to counter the antiquarian and pedantic attitudes of the existing guides, and to deplore restoration.³⁵ For Betjeman who “preferred unimportant things to ones which are well known”,³⁶ this was only the first step in a more catholic programme, which he described in his *AR* article “The Seeing Eye: or How to Like Everything”.³⁷

The main point of convergence of surrealism and anti-scrape is in the concept of *objet trouvé*, and the materialism, vitalism and anti-individualism that this entailed. For the surrealists the found-ness of the object was valued because this meant that the aesthetic

quality of things were imminent in them not merely projected on to them by a subject. Anti-scrape was a conservative take on the same visual values, wishing to preserve the object from categories of form being placed over it by restorers. Both discourses are at play in the guide book genre where questions of evidence become programmes for experience. For Betjeman, Piper and Nash, imagination could be exercised in a fragment, or layers of fragments, that could disturb the given-ness of the visible world. This material imagination stood in opposition to the kind of connoisseurship involved in judging the formal value of 'antiques'. Pevsner's *Buildings of England* guidebook series, which from 1951 rivaled and then overtook the *Shell Guides*, had an authoritative aim and pedantic tone that Betjeman had set out to avoid. However, Pevsner had begun his project with the much more whimsical *AR* series "Treasure Hunts" in which architectural lessons were found in historical survivals.

Surrealism in Britain had the same problems of naturalization that the *AR* faced with architectural modernism. In 1936 Hebert Read and Hugh Sykes Davies attempted to assimilate surrealism to Romanticism by pointing out precedents in Wordsworth, Coleridge, Lewis Carroll, Edward Lear, and other British writers, several of whom were mentioned by André Breton in the Surrealist Manifesto.³⁸ This was an affront to those, such as Humphrey Jennings, who believed in the revolutionary nature of surrealism and its opposition to bourgeois art.³⁹ In part this insistence on rupture derives from the communist politics of surrealism but it is also a strong critique of romanticism. Romantic subjectivism emphasized the transformative powers of the individual artist's imagination. Surrealism, by contrast, sees the imaginative potential already in things. Nash's photo essay on Swanage, like automatic writing, was not a projection of artistic will, but a strategic practice to de-categorize thought and produce a personal liberation. This is a distinction as important for Townscape as it is for the visual arts. When the *AR* authors linked the picturesque and surrealism, this too was intended to draw a line against Romanticism. The *AR* instructed the reader to find the theoretical resources of Townscape in the eighteenth century picturesque, before its corruption by the Gothic revival and national romanticism in architecture.⁴⁰ Like the surrealists who insisted on the revolutionary nature of their actions, the architects were anxious to disavow revivalism and claims to continuity in their use of historical precedent. They were appropriating historical materials, but eschewing the claim to tradition. The *AR*'s call on the picturesque, was however, not only a refusal of revivalism but of romanticism *per se*. The picturesque is often thought of as nascent and naïve Romanticism, a theory of sense without sentiment.⁴¹ The picturesque observed the affective power of perception, but without

going on to constitute the romantic subject who constructs an individual life from reflection on being affected. Hastings and Pevsner described the picturesque as a visual empiricism, which is one way to insist that its subjectivism is not romantic – associating Townscape with surrealism serves the same end.

Many artists thought that surrealism had come to pass with the bombings of World War II which scattered house hold items and body parts through the trees of London's parks, and revealed strange vistas to familiar monuments.⁴² The *AR* maintained its anti-formalist aesthetic by pluckily finding visual and architectural potential in the destruction. Well before the end of the conflict was in sight the journal was exercising the possibilities of post-war reconstruction and warning against popular sentiment for restoration and recreation. In one of the most extreme applications of anti-scrape philosophy, the *AR* campaigned for a suggestion of John Summerson's, later backed by the Dean of St Pauls, that the bombed churches should be neither restored nor demolished but left to crumble as monuments to loss and as objects of picturesque contemplation, contemporary versions of the abbeys ruined during the Reformation.⁴³ During the bombing, John Summerson and Jim Richards published updates on architectural causalities. These updates became a very curious picture book, *The Bombed Buildings of Britain*, published in 1942 after the defeat of the Luftwaffe but well before the outcome of the war was discernable.⁴⁴

The photographs clearly have a surrealist appreciation for the violent dissociation of the stuff of the buildings from the lives and uses they formerly served. Richards wrote that longer reflection was required to decide which buildings should be demolished and which restored, but the purpose of the book was neither to begin this debate nor to rouse a justified outrage at the destruction. Rather it was a plea for some of the buildings to be maintained as ruins for their aesthetic value and architectural inspiration. As Richards puts it:

This is not a picture-book of air raid scenes. Instead of the confused, dynamic drama of active destruction, and the human heroism that went with it, here is its architectural by product, the residue left high and dry after the wave of destruction has passed on. Its quality is, by contrast, altogether impersonal and static, even reposeful. ... The architecture of destruction not only possesses an aesthetic peculiar to itself, it contrives its effects out of its own range of materials. Among the most familiar are the scarified surface of blasted walls, the chalky

substance of calcinated masonry, the surprising sagging contours of once rigid girders...⁴⁵

Kenneth Rowntree's January 1944 cover for *AR* shows Alvar Aalto's Paimio sanatorium framed in the arch of a bombed medieval church.⁴⁶ This can be read as a direction for reconstruction, for a new architecture arising from the ashes of the old, as Coventry Cathedral was famously to do. But we should be wary of understanding Rowntree's painting quite so simply. While Pevsner's idea of the continuity of the picturesque into modern architecture was resolutely teleological, as a whole Townscape had a less naturalistic concept of history, age and aesthetic becoming, which we can see in its admixture of anti-scrape and surrealism.

Endnotes

¹ Gordon Cullen, *The Concise Townscape* (London: The Architectural Press, 1971); Gordon Cullen, *Townscape* (London: Architectural Press, 1961).

² Mathew Aitchison, "Visual Planning and Exterior Furnishing: A Critical History of the Early Townscape Movement – 1930 to 1949" (PhD, University of Queensland, 2007); John Macarthur and Mathew Aitchison, "Ivor De Wolfe's Picturesque, or, Who and What Was Townscape?" (paper presented at *Limits: Proceedings of the 21st Annual Conference of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand (SAHANZ)*, Melbourne, 2004); Mathew Aitchison, "Visual Planning and the Picturesque: Sir Nikolaus Pevsner and Townscape Revisited" (paper presented at *Celebration: 22nd Annual Conference of the Society of Architectural Historians Australia and New Zealand (SAHANZ)*, Napier, New Zealand, 2005); John Macarthur, *The Picturesque: Architecture, Disgust and Other Irregularities* (London: Routledge, 2007).

³ As well as Aitchison, on this see Erdem Erten, "From Townscape to Civilia: The Evolution of a Collective Project" (paper presented at the *Cities of Tomorrow: 10th International Planning History Conference*, University of Westminster and Letchworth Garden City, July 10-13, 2002); Erdem Erten, "Shaping 'The Second Half Century': The Architectural Review, 1947-1971" (PhD, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2004).

⁴ Ivor de Wolfe, "Townscape: A Plea for an English Visual Philosophy Founded on the True Rock of Sir Uvedale Price", in *The Architectural Review* 106, no. 636 (1949); The Editor, "Exterior Furnishing or Sharawaggi: The Art of Making Urban Landscape", in *The Architectural Review* 95 (1944); The Editor, "The First Half Century", in *The Architectural Review* 101, no. 601 (1947); The Editor, "The Second Half Century", in *The Architectural Review* 101, no. 601 (1947).

⁵ Nikolaus Pevsner, "C 20 Picturesque", in *The Architectural Review* 115, no. 688 (1954); Nikolaus Pevsner, "Heritage of Compromise: A Note on Sir Joshua Reynolds Who Died One Hundred and Fifty Years Ago", in *The Architectural Review* 92 (1942); Nikolaus Pevsner, "Humphrey Repton: A Florilegium", in *The Architectural Review* (1948); Nikolaus Pevsner, "Price on Picturesque Planning", in *The Architectural Review* 95 (1944); Nikolaus Pevsner, "Reassessment 4: Three Oxford Colleges", in *The Architectural Review* 106, no. 632 (1949); Nikolaus Pevsner, "The Genesis of the Picturesque", in *The Architectural Review* 96 (1944); Nikolaus Pevsner, "The Other Chambers", in *The Architectural Review* 101 (1947).

⁶ Nikolaus Pevsner, Mathew Aitchison, and John Macarthur, *On Visual Planning and the Picturesque: Pevsner's Townscape* (Santa Monica: Getty Research Institute, 2010 (forthcoming)).

⁷ David Fraser Jenkins, "Piper, John Egerton Christmas (1903–1992)", in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford University Press, 2006); Myfanwy Piper and Andrew Causey, "Nash, Paul (1889–1946)", in H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (eds.), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁸ George R. Collins and Christiane Crasemann Collins, *Camillo Sitte: The Birth of Modern City Planning, with a Translation of the 1889 Austrian Edition of His City Planning According to Artistic Principles* (New York: Rizzoli, 1986); Camillo Sitte, *Der Städtebau Nach Seinen Künstlerischen Grundsätzen* (Braunschweig/Wiesbaden: Vieweg, 1889 (reprinted 1983)).

⁹ Pevsner, "Price on Picturesque Planning".

¹⁰ Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1972); Robert Venturi and Museum of Modern Art (New York N.Y.), *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture, Museum of Modern Art Papers on Architecture: 1* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1966); Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, "Collage City", in *The Architectural Review* 158, no. 952 (1975).

¹¹ Iñaki Ábálos, *Atlas Pintoresco- El Observatoria Vol 1* (Barcelona: Editorial Gustavo Gill, 2005); Iñaki Ábálos, *Atlas Pintoresco- El Observatoria Vol 2* (Barcelona: Editorial Gustavo Gill, 2006); Rem Koolhaas et al., *Great Leap Forward* (Koln: Cambridge, Mass.: Taschen; Harvard Design School, 2001).

¹² The AR refers to surrealism more or less loosely in relation to Townscape in the following articles: Anon, "Found Sculpture" in *The Architectural Review* 85 (1939); Anon, "Maginalia: Paul Nash [Obituary]", in *The Architectural Review* 100, no. 597 (1946); The Editor, "Summer, 1945", in *The Architectural Review* 99, no. 593 (1946); The Editor, "Surrealist City", in *The Architectural Review* 99, no. 592 (1946); Paul Nash, "Monster Field", 88 (1940); Paul Nash, "Swanage or Seaside Surrealism", in *The Architectural Review* 79, no. 151 (1936); Paul Nash, "The Object", in *The Architectural Review* 80 (1936); Paul Nash, Roland Penrose, and The Editor, "Competition Result. Holiday Surrealism", in *The Architectural Review* 80 (1936); Nikolaus Pevsner, "Surrealism in the Sixteenth Century", in *The Architectural Review* 106, no. 636 (1949).

¹³ Editor, "Exterior Furnishing or Sharawaggi: The Art of Making Urban Landscape".

¹⁴ Editor, "Exterior Furnishing or Sharawaggi: The Art of Making Urban Landscape", 6.

¹⁵ Editor, "Exterior Furnishing or Sharawaggi: The Art of Making Urban Landscape", 5. The Editor is incorrect about the ox. It was Price who used this example of a painting by Rembrandt.

¹⁶ The Editor, "Exterior Furnishing or Sharawaggi: The Art of Making Urban Landscape", 95.

¹⁷ Editor, "Exterior Furnishing or Sharawaggi: The Art of Making Urban Landscape", 5.

¹⁸ Ivor de Wolfe, "Townscape: A Plea for an English Visual Philosophy Founded on the True Rock of Sir Uvedale Price", 106 (1949): 361.

¹⁹ Editor, "Exterior Furnishing", 6.

²⁰ Ernst was exhibited with Arp, Miró, and Picabia in the first significant public showing of surrealism at the Mayor Gallery, London, in 1933. Michel Remy, *Surrealism in Britain* (Aldershot, Hants, England; Brookfield, Vt.: Ashgate, 1999), 33

²¹ The Editor, "The First Half Century", in *The Architectural Review* 101, no. 601 (1947), 31-32.

²² John Piper, "Pleasing Decay", in *The Architectural Review* 102 (1947).

²³ Wim Denslagen, *Architectural Restoration in Western Europe : Controversy and Continuity* (Amsterdam: Architectura & Natura, 1994); Nikolaus Pevsner, "Scrape and Anti-Scrape", in Jane Fawcett (ed.), *The Future of the Past: Attitudes to Conservation, 1174-1974*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976).

²⁴ Thomas Cocke and Peter Kidson, *Salisbury Cathedral: Perspectives on the Architectural History*, (London: Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England HMSO, 1993), 50

²⁵ Brian Ladd makes a strong case for the origins of the concept of urban context in preservation controversy. His account covers German discussions, but not similar and earlier British controversies. Brian Ladd, "Urban Aesthetics and the Discovery of Urban Fabric in Turn-of-the-Century Germany", in *Planning Perspectives*, no. 2 (1987).

²⁶ John Piper, "Pleasing Decay", in *The Architecture Review* (1947), 93.

²⁷ Piper, "Pleasing Decay", *The Architecture Review*, 93.

²⁸ Remy, *Surrealism in Britain*.

²⁹ *Northern Adventure*, 1929; Remy, *Surrealism in Britain*, 44

³⁰ Nash, "Monster Field", 122

³¹ Lyndsey Stonebridge, "Bombs, Birth, and Trauma: Henry Moore's and D.W. Winnicott's Prehistory Figments" in *Cultural Critique*, no. 46 (2000).

³² Since preparing this paper I have become aware of the work of Kitty Hauser who shows that Nash and Piper were deeply involved in archeology, Piper making his own compilations of the journal *Antiquity* from 1927-42. Hauser has described how both artists partook of a more general 'archeological imagination' in which the process of documenting and deciphering evidence of a distant past became a method to imaginatively enrich the experience of the present day. Kitty Hauser, *Shadow Sites: Photography, Archeology, and the British Landscape 1927 - 1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

³³ Hauser, *Shadow Sites: Photography, Archeology, and the British Landscape 1927 - 1955*.

³⁴ Nash, "Swanage or Seaside Surrealism".

³⁵ John Betjeman, "A Preservationist's Progress", in *The Future of the Past: Attitudes to Conservation 1174-1974*, ed. Jane Fawcett (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976), 59. Piper's first book was on Oxfordshire, and Nash's on Dorset.

³⁶ Betjeman, "A Preservationist's Progress", 56

³⁷ John Betjeman, "The Seeing Eye or How to Like Everything", in *Architectural Review* 86 (1939).

³⁸ Hebert Read and Hugh Sykes Davies (eds.), *Surrealism: Contributions by André Breton, Hugh Sykes Davies, Paul Eluard, Georges Hugenet* (London: Faber, 1936).

³⁹ Remy, *Surrealism in Britain*, 96-7

⁴⁰ Editor, "Exterior Furnishing", 8.

⁴¹ See for example Martin Price, *To the Palace of Wisdom : Studies in Order and Energy from Dryden to Blake* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1970).

⁴² Stonebridge, "Bombs, Birth, and Trauma".

⁴³ John Summerson, "The Preservation of Old Buildings [Excerpts from a Report to the Architectural Association by John Summerson]", in *The Architectural Review* 90, no. Jul-Dec, Dec (1941), 184; XXXVIII, XL; The Editor, "Save Us Our Ruins [with a Foreword by the Dean of St. Pauls, W.R. Matthews]", in *The Architectural Review* 95, no. 565, Jan (1944), 13-4; Marjory Allen, David Cecil, Kenneth Clark, F.A. Cockin, T.S. Eliot, H.S. Goodhart-Rendel, Julian Huxley, Keynes, and E.J. Salisbury, "Save Us Our Ruins [Letter to the Editor of the Times August 12]", in *The Architectural Review* 96, no. 574, Oct (1944), XLV; Christopher Hussey, "Save Us Our Ruins [Letter to the Editor of the Times September 9]", in *The Architectural Review* 96, no. 575, Nov (1944), LI.

⁴⁴ J. M. Richards and John Summerson, *The Bombed Buildings of Britain: A Record of Architectural Casualties: 1940-41* (London: The Architectural Press, 1942).

⁴⁵ Richards and Summerson, *The Bombed Buildings of Britain: A Record of Architectural Casualties: 1940-41*, 3

⁴⁶ *The Architectural Review*, XCV: 565, 1944