

PILLE METSPALU

The changing role of the planner.

Implications of creative pragmatism
in Estonian spatial planning



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Department of Geography, Institute of Ecology and Earth Sciences,
Faculty of Science and Technology, University of Tartu, Estonia

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Supervisor: Kadri Leetmaa, University of Tartu, Estonia

Opponent: Prof. Tuna Tasan-Kok, professor of Urban Governance and
Planning at the University of Amsterdam's (UvA)
Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences.

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CONTENTS

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS	6
AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION	6
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	7
INTRODUCTION	8
1. THE AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS	10
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	11
2.1. The role of the planner in the light of transforming planning theories	11
2.2. Pragmatism	14
2.2.1. Early pragmatism	14
2.2.2. Neo-pragmatism and critical pragmatism	16
2.2.3. Pragmatism as a core theory in planning practice	21
3. METHODOLOGY	23
3.1. Research strategy	23
3.2. Study area.....	23
3.3. Data and methods.....	25
4. MAIN RESULTS.....	31
4.1. Publication I. "Summurbia" – a mix of rational-comprehensive and pragmatic planning with pragmatism becoming dominant over time. "Summurbanites" as planners.....	31
4.2. Publication II. Large housing estates – a rational comprehensive plan with a strong presence of creative pragmatism	33
4.3. Publication III. Planners' education and role – a struggle between path-dependency and new qualities	36
5. DISCUSSION	39
5.1. A rational technician, pragmatic implementer, creative adapter and mild mediator – the changing role of the Estonian planner.....	39
5.2. Manifestations of pragmatism in Estonian planning.....	41
5.3. Pragmatism enhanced by creativity, a key to planners' training.....	44
6. CONCLUSION	46
REFERENCES	48
KOKKUVÕTE. SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN.....	52
PUBLICATIONS	57
CURRICULUM VITAE.....	121
ELULOOKIRJELDUS	123

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

This dissertation is built on three publications which will be referred to in the thesis by their respective Roman numbers.

Publications included in the dissertation:

- I Nuga, M., **Metspalu, P.**, Org, A., Leetmaa, K. (2015) Planning post-summurbia: From spontaneous pragmatism to collaborative planning? *Moravian Geographical Reports* 23 (4): 36–46.
- II **Metspalu, P.**, Hess, D.B. (2017) Revisiting the role of architects in planning largescale housing in the USSR: the birth of socialist residential districts in Tallinn, Estonia, 1957–1979. *Planning Perspectives*, 33 (3), 335–361.
- III Roose, A., Raagmaa, G., **Metspalu, P.** (2018) Advancing Education for Planning Professionals in Estonia – Between New Qualities and Path-Dependency. In: *Urban Planning Education*, The Urban Book Series, 189–204. Frank, A.I. and Silver, C. (eds.) Springer International Publishing AG.

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

- I The author bore primary responsibility for assembling the planning-related theoretical framework, participated in conducting interviews and writing the manuscript.
- II The author was accountable for formulating the research strategy and was primarily responsible for conducting the interviews, data analysis and writing the manuscript.
- III The author conducted the majority of the empirical research and participated in writing the manuscript.

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INTRODUCTION

Spatial planning in the western world is going through one of its periodic crises of confidence. Fragmentation of planning theory and unprecedented trends like shrinkage, climate change and increasing migration flows call for innovative spatial approaches. Planning thought and practice nowadays encompass a wider spectrum of topics and methodologies than ever before. Times of absolute consensus about what we mean by spatial planning and how should it be conducted have long gone. However, there is a common understanding that planning is inevitably connected to the social order, culture, history and traditions of a specific country, and no universal planning toolkit exists.

In defining planning, I rely on P. Healey and L. Albrechts, and I understand planning as a governance practice that addresses complex colocations of activities and their relations and the impacts that these colocations generate across space–time. Through planning a vision, actions and means are produced to shape what a place is and may become. Planning involves the formation and practice of complex public realm judgments about what to do and how to do it. I also draw on J. Forester (1989, 1993, 1999), whose conception of planning practice urges practitioners to recognize the inherently political nature of their work and describes how to grasp this as an asset rather than an impediment. I acknowledge the multitude of terms used for planning in the modern world. In my thesis I use spatial planning as an overarching term, supported by both EU and Estonian legislation.

Planning paradigms are in constant flux and, as a rule, are closely related to transformations in society. Societal change and the transition from socialism to capitalism has inspired scholars of the Central and Eastern European (CEE) planning scene for decades. Hirt and Stanilov's (2009) synoptic study about urban planning in transitional countries covers topics from planning history to monitoring and education. Adams' (2006, 2008, 2010, 2014) research is focused on Baltic perspectives in European spatial planning networks and knowledge. Many authors (Tsenkova 2006, 2008, 2017; Leetmaa et al 2015, 2018; Hess et al 2014, 2018; Golubchikov 2004, 2017; Gentile et al 2012) explore housing and strategic urban planning as well as their relationship to economic geography in post-socialist Europe.

Theoretical concepts pertaining to post-socialist cities, a realm of research very close to planning, are of constant interest to scholars in the Central and Eastern Europe region and Scandinavia (see for instance Ferenčuhova 2012, 2016; Sýkora and Bouzarovski 2012; Ouředníček 2016; Sjöberg 2014). A matter of conceptual and theoretical one-way import of mainly Western-developed ideas into CEE has been noted by Sjöberg (2014), while Ouředníček (2016) describes “developmentalism” as the belief in the realignment of former socialist cities to their Western counterparts and in the gradual “correction” of their socialist character. Tuvikene (2016) notices the double exclusion of post-

socialist cities in comparative urbanism: they are neither centre nor periphery, neither mainstream nor part of the critique.

Theoretical deliberations focusing on post-socialist spatial planning are somewhat scarce. Studies on post-socialist cities tend to favour empirical work at the expense of theoretical contributions (Ferenčuhova 2016), although theoretical connotations are sometimes proposed. Hiob's research is centred on Estonian historic suburbs (Hiob 2016, Hiob and Nutt 2016) with implications for the rise of participatory planning. Roose and Kull (2012) describe shortcomings in statutory planning duties and note the need for planning practitioners' new skill set. Ruoppila (1998, 2006, 2007) observes the establishment of a market-oriented urban planning system by analysing the urban landscape of Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. Raagmaa (2014, 2015) unveils the impacts of European policies on Estonian spatial planning.

Planning as a practical activity is in continuous need of rethinking. For planning to work, broader understanding is needed about which approaches and methods prove to be effective in certain situations. The father of planning theory, J. Friedmann, has demonstrated throughout his career the multiple dimensions of theorizing – predictive and prescriptive, theories in planning (land use, transport, urban design), about planning and finally, as a loose term as in *thinking about planning*. The latter is the driving force behind this thesis.

In this thesis, I aim to position Estonian spatial planning in a contemporary theoretical framework through the examination of the planner's role. I focus on spatial phenomena specific to Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and Estonia – large housing estates (Publication II) and socialist-era summer house settlements referred to as “summurbia” (Publication I). Seen as anomalies by the Western world, these settlement types are a melting pot of various planning approaches. As vivid examples of the legacy of socialist spatial planning, these areas probably most clearly reflect our socio-cultural background and are thus a suitable subject for discussing both theoretical concepts in planning and planning practice. As Friedmann (2003, 9) has stated, planning theory is essential to the vitality and continued relevance of planning as a profession. Training and skillsets needed for Estonian planning practitioners in the light of prevailing theoretical concepts form a second part of this thesis (Publication III).

1. THE AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The aim of this thesis is to examine the role of planners in society and to propose a theoretical concept for spatial planning in Estonia. I study tasks assigned to planners and powers seized by them over time. I observe the opportunities they sought and the skills they need in their professional activities. I suggest pragmatism as the theoretical framework underlying Estonian planning, and I explore the wider context of expectations for planners.

The first part of my research concentrates on socialist summerhouse settlements – ‘summurbia’ – and large socialist housing estates. The evolution of these distinct living environments exposes role of the planner on multiple levels. I examine the theoretical concepts of rational comprehensive and pragmatic planning underlying the development of these settlement types. Since the concept of rational comprehensive planning as a flagship of the socialist era is more familiar and thoroughly researched, greater attention is paid to pragmatism, a theoretical approach with which I have been fascinated during my everyday work as a planner and while reading planning literature.

The retrospective analysis that forms the first part of my thesis helps to explain the nuances of the Estonian historical planning framework. Also, the study seeks a deeper understanding of the challenges that planners are facing today by examining the heritage of Soviet planning that is still influencing our contemporary planning scene. The legacy of parallel existence of two somewhat controversial planning paradigms, rational and pragmatic, shapes the mindsets and skillsets of planners and provides a frame for the development of training and planning education.

The investigation of the advancement of planners’ education and skills in the light of societal and paradigmatic change forms a second part of my thesis. Altogether, my research offers an insight into the evolution of Estonian planning as a field and as a profession from the socialist era through the transition period to today.

The thesis addresses following **research questions**:

1. How has the role of the planner in Estonia changed over time?
 1. What is the role of the planner in planning ‘summurbia’?
 2. What is the role of the planner in planning large housing estates?
 3. What is the role of the planner today?
2. What are the manifestations of pragmatism in Estonian planning?
3. What are the relationships between pragmatism and Estonian planners’ education?

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. The role of the planner in the light of transforming planning theories

As John Friedmann, often called the pioneer of planning theory, has stated (2003), there is no consensus as to what constitutes “planning theory,” not even within the academy and less so among practitioners who tend to learn by doing. There are all kinds of theories – about, in and of planning. Similarly, a large variety of categories exist – predictive and prescriptive theories, theories about the subject of planning as well as theories about planning process.

Theoretical deliberations about planning procedures and planners’ roles are generally of most interest to planning practitioners. At the same time, the need for and relevance of theory is constantly contested (see for instance Sanyal 2002, Bengs 2005, Alexander 2016). Calls to consider theories as tools rather than expressions of truth and slogans like “let’s put our planning theories to work” are common in planning forums¹. It is obvious that a straightforward, one-to-one application of a certain theory is never the sole goal for plan making. However, constantly renewing theories gives a fresh orientation to the role of the planner.

Planning as a profession and understandings about skills needed to do planning work have changed considerably over time. The era of maestro-planning at the end of 19th century saw planning as a natural extension of architecture, a planner being a visionary architect (or sometimes civil engineer) drawing up blueprint plans for new towns. In Western countries, this notion of planning as an art of creating new settlements and of the planner as an artist involved in physical design prevailed until well after the Second World War. This view came to be questioned and, to some extent, abandoned during the 1960s because many of the outcomes (or apparent outcomes) of post-war planning practice were criticized in the late 1950s and 1960s (Taylor 1998, 4). A common accusation was that planners were insufficiently informed about the nature of the reality with which they were tampering. The “technical-professional” model of town planning assumed that the values and principles of good town planning were self-evident and generally agreed upon. Because of that, there was little need for the public or their political representatives to participate in debating town planning matters (Taylor 1998, 54).

By the 1960s, planning had “imported” two new approaches: systems theory and rational decision-making theory. These new approaches evolved in other disciplines and had wide influence in planning thought in 1970s, with Brian McLoughlin, George Chadwick and Andreas Faludi leading the way. The new concepts saw planning as a rational process involving analysis and control of

¹ see for instance <https://www.planning.org/blog/blogpost/9138589/>, www.planetizen.org, <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/>

urban areas and regions viewed as systems. Karl Popper's pioneering work (1957, 1963) on the scientific method was often the source of inspiration, with planning goals or policies seen as analogous to scientific hypotheses which should be subjected to rigorous testing before adoption.

Taylor describes the "opening up" of the town planning profession in 1970s to graduates from disciplines other than architecture and states that it was geographers who mostly exploited this opening (1998, 65). The traditional concern with space and location was translated into viewing settlements and land uses as locations within networks of interrelated places – as spatial systems (see, e.g. Haggett, 1965, 17–23 in Taylor 1998). In *Urban and Regional Planning: A Systems Approach* (1969), McLoughlin promotes geographical work on location theory rather than design theory as the necessary theoretical foundation for planning. At the same time, the practice of planning at the local level remained largely focused on design and aesthetics, not mathematic modeling. However, after Faludi's influential book (1973) in which he draws a distinction between 'blueprint' and 'process' planning, even at the local level planning was seen as an ongoing, continuous process of rational decision-making. The new approaches suggested the need for a new kind of planner altogether, one who was trained in analyzing and understanding how cities and regions functioned spatially in economic and social terms – a planner, that is, trained in economic geography or the social sciences rather than architecture or surveying (Taylor 1998, 63).

During the same period, the 1970s, the understanding that planning is a political process picked up steam. The relevance of comprehensive theoretical rationale was perhaps for the first time strongly questioned during the heyday of modernist rational planning by Rittel and Webber in their influential "Dilemmas of General Planning Theory" (1973). Distinguishing between "tamed, scientific problems" and "inherently wicked planning problems," Rittel and Webber argue that policy problems cannot be definitively described and complex urban problems solved by scientific rational methods and professional judgment. They discovered that the seeming consensus, which might once have allowed distributional problems (like roads, sewage, etc) to be dealt with, is being eroded by growing awareness of the nation's pluralism and of the differentiation of values that accompanies the differentiation of publics. As the sheer volume of information and knowledge increases, as technological developments further expand the range of options, and as awareness of the liberty to deviate and differentiate spreads, more variations are possible. Having powerfully questioned the traditional approach to the reconciliation of social values – to entrust de facto decision-making to the wise and knowledgeable professional experts and politicians – Rittel and Webber emphasize that the expert is also the player in a political game, seeking to promote his private vision of goodness over others: "Planning is a component of politics. There is no escaping that truism" (1973, 169). The realization that plans and planning decisions rest upon value judgments about what kind of environment we are planning for and are thus inherently political had a significant impact on planning thought and practice.

Although the political nature of planning was widely recognized by the end of the 1970s, goal-setting and other planning steps were still seen as expert, technical matters rather than a matter of debate about values and politics. However, the acceptance of planning as a political process gave way to new understandings about the planning profession. With Sherry Arnstein's conceptual analysis of the "ladder of citizen participation" already published in 1969, planning seemed to demand new skills. Planners achieved new roles as moderators and negotiators who have to balance the needs and wishes of different groups in a society.

Realizing that planners typically mediate between various interests, planning theorists acknowledged the existence and encouraged the development of "collaborative," "communicative," or "community" planning, which emphasizes communication, participation, and consensus-building throughout the planning process (Forester, 1989; Healey, 2003; Innes 1995). This approach combines incrementalist and comprehensive planning, as it simultaneously deals with the everyday issues of the participants and puts together long-term strategies and goals. The most important contribution of collaborative planning theorists was therefore the claim that planning would only be successful if its stakeholders were able to participate in the process in a meaningful way.

The end of the 20th century witnessed an unprecedented number of branches in the planning paradigm. There were different schools of thought whose contradictory prescriptions for good planning (Alexander 2001) had practical implications. Most eminent were probably the fierce debates between advocates of Habermasian communicative practice (Forester 1989, Sager 1994, Innes 1995, Healey 1996) and its Foucauldian critics, who accused proponents of the communicative approach of power-blindness (Flyvbjerg 1998, Yiftachel 1995; Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger, 1998).

However, there was and still is an agreement that communication in planning is not only a one-way process of planners presenting their proposals clearly and attractively. Communicative practice is seen as an interpersonal activity involving dialogue, debate and negotiation.

In postmodern times, there is a multitude of interpretations about planners' roles as well as planning theory in general. Friedmann (1998), acknowledging and saluting the absence of the single planning theory, listed four difficulties in thinking about planning: the problem of defining planning as an object to be theorized; the impossibility of talking about planning disconnected from actual institutional and political contexts; the several modes of doing planning theory – normative, positive, critical and paradigm-shifting – and the dilemma of choosing among them; and the difficulty of incorporating power relations into planning discourse. Friedmann summarizes this by stating that theoretical austerity is clearly not the way to go. This visionary statement is fully followed in the 21st century as planning theory has become increasingly fragmented and expectations of planners' skills have grown exponentially. The planners' expertise should encompass artistic, technical, and analytical as well as communicative skills. This expectation can only be met with an understanding that

planning involves teamwork performed by a group of specialists rather than one “superhuman” visionary planner.

However, to cope in a complex world presenting high expectations, the planning profession does require something like a theoretical paradigm. As Harper and Stein (2006) elaborate, planners do not need a paradigm in the sense of a rigidly fixed set of protocols that govern our profession. Instead, there is a need for some shared framework of presuppositions, concepts, values, norms and standards within which planners can do their work and conduct their debates. These shared elements are dynamic, fluid, evolving and in flux, but they are still shared (Harper and Stein 2006, XV).

2.2. Pragmatism

Significant changes in society bring along new concepts in planning theory and practice, and planning traditions cast aside can re-emerge. Pragmatism is one of these streams in planning thought that has been reclaimed, especially during times of change.

In a nutshell, pragmatists believe that the meaning of ideas is only found in their effects and consequences in experience. Pragmatist ideas have been distinctly influential in the United States. Healey (2009) emphasizes that these ideas have infused, often unacknowledged, the intellectual climate in which planning ideas have developed. In the European context, Healey indicates only a few authors like Mäntysalo (2000, 2002), Sager (1994) and Harrison (2002) as influenced by or working directly with pragmatism. However, in writings about Eastern European planning, pragmatist thought is quite often detectable. Adams et al (2013) describe the evolving landscape for planning practice in the Baltic states as strongly influenced by a culture of pragmatism, emphasizing efforts to absorb EU funding. The authors follow a quite narrow path in interpreting pragmatism, stating that the culture of pragmatism is also demonstrated by the fact that the Latvian and Estonian associations for spatial planners have yet to formally discuss European territorial cohesion and did not respond to the European Commission Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion.

Pragmatism as a philosophical school has a long history. The following chapters present a brief overview of the evolution of pragmatist thought and its relationship to planning practice.

2.2.1. Early pragmatism

Pragmatism has its origins with the philosophers C. Pierce, W. James and J. Dewey in the United States at the end of the 19th century. The term “pragmatism,” derived from a Greek word meaning “action,” was first introduced into philosophy by C. Pierce in 1878 but met with wider audiences via W. James’s writings. James (James and Thayer 1907/1975) describes pragmatism as a

method to interpret each notion by tracing its respective practical consequences. What difference would it practically make to anyone if this notion rather than that notion were true? James refers to Peirce in saying that if our beliefs are rules for action, to develop a thought's meaning, we need only determine what conduct it is fitted to produce: that conduct is for us its sole significance. Thayer, in his introduction to James's seminal book, *Pragmatism*, emphasizes the value of pragmatism in the determination of meanings and processes and how it enables us critically to discover "what works best in the way of leading us, what fits every part of life best and combines with the collectivity of experience's demands, nothing being omitted" (James and Thayer 1907/1975).

Healey (2009) describes how the original US pragmatists claimed a "humanist" orientation. They believed that what was true and good was continually asserted and discovered in the flow of thinking and acting in the messy world and the practical enterprise of living. In their view, no *a priori* principles should be established. They advocated a focus on the way meanings and conceptions of truth and belief are created in the social contexts of human existence; they are "socially constructed," as Healey explains we would say today. While understanding the role of habit and routine in human life, they sought to resist tendencies to unquestioning "rule-following" behaviour and to encourage creative exploration and discovery.

It is important to note that pragmatists did not oppose scientific methods *per se*. It was the method of continual critical inquiry and exploration of empirical phenomena that attracted the pragmatists, in contrast to the preoccupation with abstract exegesis characteristic of much philosophy or the preoccupation with past precedent in much conventional government practice (Dewey 1982 in Healey 2009). Pierce and James emphasize the inherent social and practical situatedness of what we take to be "true" and the significance of recognizing that all our knowledge is potentially "fallible," in that new knowledge may one day show that what we once thought was true is not so. Both James and Dewey emphasize that our knowledge gets organized and focused at critical points when we are faced with choices. Making (strategic) choices is the very nature of planning. Early pragmatists celebrated what we might now call the "power of agency," of the human capacity to invent, create, and transform (Healey 2009, 281).

Allmendinger (2001) argues that there is no one pragmatism, differentiating between the pragmatism of liberation and communication shared by Rorty and Dewey and the pragmatism developed by James, with its sole emphasis on method. James (James and Thayer 1907/1975) argued that theories are not answers to enigmas but instruments in which we can rest. For planning as a practical discipline, this notion had concrete implications. Dewey (1904, 1933) was among the first to write about reflective practice with his exploration of experience, interaction and reflection. He integrated the consideration of consequences, obligations and virtue as aspects of what he called imaginative plan making. The core of this "unique method" was the habit of questioning and exploring, testing answers and discoveries in relation to empirical evidence of

one kind or another. It was the practice of questioning and testing that was the essence of the method. Dewey was deeply critical of the conversion of the method into precise protocols or standard rules of procedure. He imagined that, in the future, philosophy might be more invigorated by the social sciences and the arts, providing comparable inspiration to that given by the mathematical and physical sciences (Rorty 1982, 76; in Healey 2009). Dewey envisions each contributing to the qualities of practical action needed to address a specific situation (Hoch 2018, p 122). Healey (2009) calls James and Dewey philosophers of social hope and human potentiality.

The pragmatic method . . . means . . . an attitude of orientation. The attitude of looking away from first things, “categories,” supposed necessities; and looking towards last things, fruits, consequences, facts. (James 1907/1991, 27 in Healey 2009, 297).

2.2.2. Neo-pragmatism and critical pragmatism

The first signs of re-emerging pragmatist thought could be found in the work of systems analysts in 1960s, particularly C.W. Churchman, who later formed a new school of planning scholars at the University of California at Berkeley who were greatly influenced by pragmatism. Under Churchman’s guidance, J. Forester (Healey 2009) became the major figure in neo-pragmatist tradition.

Rittel and Webber revealed a significant impulse for the development of neo-pragmatism in 1973 when they questioned the modern-classical planning model, which was based on rational decision-making. Rittel and Weber define planning as an argumentative process in the course of which an image of the problem and of the solution emerges gradually among the participants as a product of incessant judgment subjected to critical argument (1973, 162). The authors propose that the classical paradigm of science and engineering – the paradigm that has underlain modern professionalism – is not applicable to complex, “wicked” urban problems. The authors see increasing cultural diversity, politicization of subpublics and diverse valuative bases as major influencers of planning’s way ahead.

Rittel and Webber (1973) present ten arguments when describing the wickedness of planning problems and provide expressive examples to support them. Firstly, there is no definitive formulation of a wicked problem, as information needed to understand the problem depends upon one's idea for solving it. In planning, finding the problem is often the same thing as finding the solution. There is no “stopping rule” – the process of solving the problem is identical with the process of understanding its nature. Because there are no criteria for sufficient understanding and because there are no ends to the causal chains that link interacting open systems, the would-be planner can always try to do better. Thirdly, solutions to wicked problems are not true-or-false but good-or-bad, depending on assessors’ personal interests, their special value-sets and their

ideological predilections. There is no immediate test of a solution because any solution, after being implemented, will generate waves of consequences over an extended – virtually an unbounded – period of time. At the same time, every implemented solution is consequential – this is the fifth argument. The number of solutions for a wicked problem is always indefinite, as it is a matter of judgment to determine which strategies or moves are permissible to solve the problem. Here, Rittel and Webber rely on “realistic judgement” hand in hand with creativity and cooperation, for

in such fields of ill-defined problems and hence ill-definable solutions, the set of feasible plans of action relies on realistic judgment, the capability to appraise ‘exotic’ ideas and on the amount of trust and credibility between planner and clientele that will lead to the conclusion, ‘OK let’s try that.’ (Rittel and Webber 1973, 164).

For the seventh argument, Rittel and Webber assert the essential uniqueness of every wicked problem. To make things more complicated, every wicked problem can be considered a symptom of another problem.

The level at which a problem is settled depends upon the self-confidence of the analyst and cannot be decided on logical grounds. There is nothing like a natural level of a wicked problem. Of course, the higher the level of a problem’s formulation, the broader and more general it becomes: and the more difficult it becomes to do something about it. On the other hand, one should not try to cure symptoms: and therefore one should try to settle the problem on as high a level as possible (Rittel and Webber 1973, 165).

Based on the need to aim at the highest level possible, Rittel and Webber criticize incrementalism, a policy of small steps in the hope of contributing systematically to overall improvement. As the eighth argument, the authors state that if the problem is attacked on too low a level (an increment), then success of resolution may result in making things worse, because it may become more difficult to deal with the higher problems. Marginal improvement does not guarantee overall improvement. (Rittel and Webber 1973, 165). Incrementalism is often attributed to the pragmatist approach, which tends to focus on practicalities that can be addressed during a planning process at hand.

As a ninth indication about the wickedness of planning problems, the authors declare that the existence of a discrepancy representing a wicked problem can be explained in numerous ways. They emphasize that the choice of explanation determines the nature of the problem’s resolution and that the most important thing to realize when thinking about planning is that attitudinal criteria guide that choice. People choose those explanations which are most plausible to them. Although it is somewhat, but not greatly, exaggerated, it can be said that people pick the explanation of a discrepancy which fits their intentions best and which conforms to the action-prospects that are available to them. The analyst’s “worldview” is the strongest determining factor in explaining a discrepancy

and, therefore, in resolving a wicked problem. For the final, tenth reason, the authors assert that “the planner has no right to be wrong.” In the world of planning, the aim is not to find the truth but to improve some characteristics of the world where people live. Planners are liable for the consequences of the actions they generate; the effects can matter a great deal to people who are touched by those actions. Moreover, planners’ would-be solutions are confounded by a still further set of dilemmas posed by the growing pluralism of contemporary publics, whose valuations of planning proposals are judged against an array of different and contradicting scales (Rittel and Webber 1973).

Webber (1974) developed a major turn in the planning profession by suggesting that urbanists should be enablers, not designers or controllers, using an engineering approach to solving urban planning issues. Webber proposed that urban designers should not internalise the concepts and methods of design from civil engineering and architecture. He was an advocate of grid settlements, and, as Heywood asserted, he “dismissed attempts to shape settlements to support traditional values of physical interaction” (Heywood 2011, 236). From Heywood’s point of view, Webber called for planning to abandon “narrow and negative constraints” and allow the natural forces of technological change to reshape society into a more dynamic and psychologically challenging exploration of new urban structures (Webber 1974, in Heywood 2011).

For planners, neo-pragmatists proposed a new code of conduct. Major influence came from the seminal book, *Reflective Practitioner. How Professionals Think in Action* (1983), in which Schön, following Dewey’s theories, advocates for using knowledge gained from action. Schön questions the model of technical rationality in which professional activity consists of instrumental problem solving by the application of scientific theory and technique. For Schön, reflection-in-action was the core of “professional artistry” – a concept contrasted with the “technical rationality” demanded by the paradigm whereby problems are solvable through the rigorous application of science. In his view, a reflective practitioner:

...is not dependent on the categories of established theory and technique, but constructs a new theory of the unique case. His inquiry is not limited to a deliberation about means which depends on a prior agreement about ends. /.../ He does not separate thinking from doing, ratiocinating his way to a decision which he must later convert to action. /.../ reflection-in-action can proceed, even in situations of uncertainty or uniqueness, because its not bound by the dichotomies of Technical Rationality (Schön 1983, 69).

Pragmatist thought has influenced a number of contemporary planning theorists. Forester links a pragmatic approach with critical exploration of the practices and potentials of the communicative dimensions of social action in public sphere contexts, as developed in the work of Jurgen Habermas. He refers to the result as “critical pragmatism” (Healey 2009). In *The Deliberative Practitioner: Encouraging Participatory Planning Processes* (1999), Forester follows the same path as Schön and shows how skilful deliberative practices can facilitate

practical and timely participatory planning processes. He argues that deliberative planning practice in complex urban contexts takes political vision and pragmatic skill. Pongsawat (2001, 90), in his review of *The Deliberative Practitioner*, a “book about contemporary planners telling themselves how significant their work is,” reproaches Forester for being vague and ultimately confounding in his recourse to philosophies of practice. Taylor (2001) offers a more neutral view, describing that the main thing which seems to distinguish Forester's latest statement of communicative and deliberative planning theory is what could be called a “group therapy” model of planning practice. According to this, individuals and groups who have an interest in some planning matter should be encouraged (with planners acting as ‘facilitators’) to ‘tell their own stories’ as they bear on the matter at hand, for such stories are relevant evidence which should be heard in the process of arriving at planning judgements. Forester claims that “we are likely to learn far more in practice from stories than from scientific experiments” (Forester 1999, 39).

Dewey’s conception of processes of democratic inquiry together with communicative approach is the source of inspiration for Blanco (1994), who sees planning as a “process of imbuing vague and general public goals or objectives with specific meanings.” (164). This way, public planning makes a contribution by “developing a public language that could reanimate a meaningful public realm” (164).

Healey (2009) positions Faludi, a pioneer of critical rationalism, among neo-pragmatists as well. Faludi stresses the importance of judging possible courses of action by their anticipated consequences, not their correspondence with a priori principles (Faludi 1986 in Healey 2009). In a subsequent book (Faludi 1987), he draws explicitly on pragmatist ideas to underline that planning work is always situated and contingent on specific situations, and he begins to identify the significance of frames of reference or “assumptive worlds,” which he then refers to as “doctrines” within which planners work. This leads him to advocate planning as a methodology for exploring consequences prior to making choices. He links this to Popperian ideas about hypothesis testing, leading him to characterize rationality as a method for justifying and legitimizing risky decisions (Healey 2009).

Healey’s numerous writings bear a strong pragmatist tradition. Healey and other collaborative planning theorists strictly emphasize taking account of the concrete settings in which planning takes place, which relates back to the incremental-pragmatic philosophies and practices of planning. Healey’s influential book (1997) on collaborative planning makes the case for inclusive participation among those likely to be touched by the consequences of a plan. She has consistently adopted a relational approach linking a pragmatically inspired conception of collaboration with a critical sensitivity to encompassing social and territorial relationships. However, Healey warns about overenthusiasm for the pragmatic tradition with its ever-hopeful view of human potentiality in social contexts (2009, 288).

The main critiques of pragmatism involve its approach to the issue of power. Postmodern and post-structuralist theorists (Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger 1998, Hillier 2011) blame pragmatist planning for ignoring how power relationships undermine the deliberations they champion. Friedmann is close to ridiculing communicative planning theory: “Consider the communicative action paradigm with its Panglossian view of the power of dialogue to bridge the gap between those who command substantial power and those who do not” (1998, 250). As a response, Forester (1989) demonstrates how planners in their everyday work can think politically and rationally at the same time and overcome dichotomies of being either professional or political, detached or distantly rational. Hoch (2018) explains the critique on failing to deal with power by the difference in vocabulary. In his view, the critics insist that power refers to forms of economic, political or social domination, exclusion, exploitation and subjection that inescapably impose themselves. Hoch relies on Mouffe (1996) in demonstrating that pragmatists on this account naively describe power in terms of economic, political or social legitimacy, inclusion, solidarity and consensus. Hoch argues that pragmatists recognize that we acquire our moral capacity and practice within the context of specific cultural and institutional settings that include every sort of power relationship. Pragmatists do not ignore power; they just recognize that its inevitable presence does not trump or preclude creative practical moral effort to resist and recast nasty and destructive plans with less repressive and more useful ones (Hoch 2018, 124).

Another line of critique asserts that pragmatism is not progressive. Social and practical situatedness determines the choices and alternatives considered during a planning process to be only small deviations from the existing situation. Thus, the examination and comparison of different alternatives are relatively simplified. Although more often associated with incrementalism, a policy of small steps in the hope of contributing systematically to overall improvement, the inability to attain new ideals is also attributed to pragmatism. The short-sightedness of pragmatic planning is also pointed out, as analyses of consequences – the focal point of pragmatism – are based on actual experiences and are therefore limited (see Rittel and Webber 1973, Næss 2001). As Healey puts it: “the pragmatists insist on focusing transformative attention in the flow of practice and the practical challenges and puzzles that are continually confronted in the particularities of practices” (2009, 287). Following this approach, the planner would see no value in comprehensiveness, preferring instead to deal with problems as they arise. By relying on such small steps and cycles of learning and adaptation, the more restrained incremental approach has been recognized as the antithesis of planning (Kemp et al., 2007). At the same time, as a planning approach it still takes into account that it has to “address the difficulties created by the complex collocations of activities and their relations and the impacts these collocations generate across space-time” (Healey, 2009, 277). Both major lines of critique – power and conventionality – are addressed in the discussion part of this thesis.

Pragmatism has not only inspired theorists and practitioners but, as Healey (2009) sees it, the planning literature has developed beyond pragmatist philosophy itself through its detailed attention to practice specificities and its persistent call to keep specific practical endeavour in the forefront of attention.

2.2.3. Pragmatism as a core theory in planning practice

Planning is generally acknowledged as a highly practical, ‘action-oriented’ discipline, although it is variegated in its manifestations. There are a number of arguments that favour the pragmatist approach, which focuses on practical consequences of ideas, in urban and regional planning.

Hoch (2018) deliberates over the pros and cons of pragmatist approach. He describes the popular cultural interpretation that pragmatists lack principles and integrity, believing that ends justify the means. At the same time, he praises the pragmatist commitment to collaborative inquiry that uses inclusive and intelligent problem solving to advance social learning. Moreover, Hoch (2018) proposes that the pragmatist approach offers an especially attractive theoretical framework for urban planning because it focuses explicitly on human judgment as purposeful, anticipatory and future oriented.

Harper and Stein express the same view, using neopragmatism in setting forth “a firmer normative theoretical grounding for planning that is reflective and incorporates best practices” (2006, xvii). They propose dialogical planning as a normative procedural planning theory that they believe is relevant to contemporary planners. The authors are quite self-confident in stressing the importance of one overall theory, asserting that “Planners who ignore relevant planning theory do so at their own peril, and a planning profession that attempts to practice without reflective theory in the contemporary turbulent context may be doomed to irrelevance, decline, and perhaps even extinction” (Harper and Stein 2006, xx). The authors state that they are not (indicating that planners in general should not be) interested in unachievable utopias: “To implement normative ideals, we must devise a feasible incremental path from here to there” (Harper and Stein 2006, xxi). In describing the normative process of planning, instead of “rational” they use “reasonable” to express a broader content, meaning an acceptance of fair terms of cooperation and a commitment to abide by them, provided that everyone else is also similarly committed. However, as some have argued (Hoch 1993 in Healey 2009), Harper and Stein’s neo-pragmatism seems to retreat from pragmatic insistence on the importance of a focus on practices and to locate itself in an ivory tower of idealized, *a priori* principles.

Hall is more reserved in outlining how to “overtly, consciously, and systematically use the pragmatic method in planning” (2014, 25). For Hall, the main question is the elimination of goal-achievement as part of the planning process. Hall argues that the goal-achievement approach is not appropriate for pragmatic planning because deductive thinking, which involves “vicious abstractionism,” is anathema to pragmatism. Stating that elimination of goal-

achievement is arguably desirable in any event, Hall emphasizes that pragmatism requires and provides an alternative, namely, determining the goodness of any proposed action or of any action taken. The planning process and the content of plans using the pragmatic method need to be reconsidered. Plans need a framework *inter alia* using the idea of “goals,” but not for testing outcomes against “goals” as presently conceived and used in the goal-directed method. Outcomes will be analysed in a different way – for goodness. Hall follows Meyer’s (1975) account of pragmatism, an approach that is summarized in his references as knowing, believing, creating, corroborating, testing, hoping, and being guided by fittings, workings, and successes, not *a priori* commitment (Meyer 1975, 73 in Hall 2014).

Alexander (2016) sees pragmatism as a kind of redemption for spatial planners. He explains that planners’ frustration at the contrast between their aspirations and the realities of their experiences in practice is well known and not surprising. It is difficult to reconcile a spatial planner’s prescribed role as a “moral actor” in a public agency with actual practice or to enact the “planner as social change agent” while deliberating on a development proposal. Alexander (2016) argues that these frustrations can be avoided if spatial planning has a more pragmatic role. Then practitioners will not have to aspire to transform society but can content themselves with a more mundane – but still challenging – task. Essentially, this is to deploy their technical knowledge and skills as expert professionals representing the public interest (linked to the politics of planning governance) in intervening in the land-property markets that are in their remit (Alexander, 2016, 24).

Another key notion of pragmatism, social learning, plays an important role in the emerging therapeutic planning concept in which planning is seen as a healing process for communities that have experienced collective trauma, including from past planning processes (see Sandercock, 2004; Schweitzer 2014, Erfan 2017).

A number of influential planning theorists have demonstrated the importance of pragmatist ideas in emphasizing the dimensions of planning as a practical discipline. A pragmatic approach is said to make planning proactive and responsive. Notions of planning as a social learning activity which should draw on the full range of human capacities, the sociocultural situatedness of human thought and action, exploring consequences prior to making choices, and judging possible courses of action by their anticipated consequences rather than their correspondence with *a priori* principles – all prove to be reasonable for ‘wicked’ planning problems. As Hoch (2018) explains, everyone plans, so improving plans for complex social and spatial problems requires improvement in the craft of plan-making in different cultural, institutional and geographic settings. The complexity of human interaction and interdependence requires flexible and provisional practical judgments about the arrangement of future settlement. Neo-pragmatist planning theory focuses on how to conduct such decision-making processes more intelligently and wisely using inclusive democratic inquiry (Hoch 2018, 127).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research strategy

The aim of this research is to portray the theoretical concept of Estonian spatial planning with an inquiry into the evolution of the planner's role. The research had two phases in terms of focus and methods used.

In the first part of my study, I focus on spatial phenomena specific to CEE and Estonia – socialist-era summer house settlements known as “summurbia” (Publication I) and large socialist housing estates (Publication II). Seen as anomalies by the Western world, these specific settlement types are a melting pot of various planning approaches. The complex character of these settlements contributes to the thorough manifestation of diverse planning-related aspects.

The evolution of these distinct living environments reveals the role of the planner in various ways. I examine the tasks assigned to planners and the powers seized by them, the opportunities they sought and skills they needed. I follow a period of early socialist city building in the 1960s (Publication II) to contemporary post-socialist planning practices (Publication I, Publication III). The wide timeframe of my research enables me to examine trends and changes, path-dependencies and paradigm shifts in the roles of planners. In parallel, I analyse pragmatism as a proposed theoretical concept underlying Estonian planning to explore the wider context of expectations for planners.

The second phase of my study addresses the skills and training of planners (Publication III). Competencies needed for present-day planning practice are associated with pragmatist understandings and the Estonian historical and socio-cultural background. The results of Publication I and Publication II are used as inputs in analysing the educational needs for contemporary planners. In light of the skills needed, challenges in developing a comprehensive educational program for planners are discussed.

3.2. Study area

The focal points of this study lie in Tallinn (Publication II) and Tartu county (Publication I), parts of Estonia in which planning activities have been more intense throughout time (see figure 3.2.1). In Tallinn, three large socialist residential districts of prefabricated apartment houses, Mustamäe, Väike-Õismäe (see figure 3.2.2.) and Lasnamäe are analysed. The study reveals information about the qualifications and roles of planners that can be applied to Estonia as a whole, and this information may also be relevant to neighboring planning cultures.



Figure 3.2.1. Study area. The case study areas appear in dark grey.



Figure 3.2.2. One of the case study areas, Väike-Õismäe. On the left, a curving road in Väike-Õismäe, 1970s, Tallinn, Estonia. Photo by Johannes Külmet. Source: Museum of Estonian Architecture, used with permission. On the right, the same curving road in Väike-Õismäe, 2017, Tallinn, Estonia. Photo by Pille Metspalu.

3.3. Data and methods

This research is based on extensive qualitative data. In the first phase of my study, four sets of interviews were carried out. For Publication I, summerhouse residents (interview group I), municipal planning officers (interview group II) and Soviet-era planners (interview group III) were questioned. For Publication II, semi-structured interviews with senior architects involved in planning large housing estates (interview group IV) were conducted.

Interview group I was comprised of 21 interviews with residents (“summurbanites”) in the Tartu region. Participants were selected from cottages in different conditions and with signs of presumable permanent living (new fully refurbished house, a house with sufficient winter-proof refurbishment, summerhouse in its original condition). The everyday practicalities of living in a former summer home as well as the planning- and management-related issues were discussed. I participated in designing the interviews. Interviews were carried out in 2009 by Kadri Leetmaa, Mari Nuga, Anette Org, Anneli Kährik and Helen Lainjärv. Initial contact with each interviewee was made at their house, and the interview was conducted either at their home or in a café suitable for the participant at a time agreed upon with the interviewee. The discussions lasted for about one hour, and the household member who showed the most interest in the topic was questioned. The interviews were taped, transcribed and then coded manually (Nuga 2016).

In Publication I, 19 interviews with municipal planning officers working with summurban planning issues were also used. The interviews were prepared by a working group led by Kadri Leetmaa and carried out by Anette Org in 2010. Interviews were structured by focusing on the following topics: the historical formation of the summerhouse areas; the permanent residency of these areas (including the relation of residents to the municipality); the main problems that were related to the areas in question (including obstacles that were related to planning activities by the municipality); and the official and unofficial visions for former summerhouse areas (Nuga 2016, 39). Mari Nuga carried out the directed content analysis of the interviews.

To deepen knowledge about the initial planning processes and the establishment of summurbs, the third set of interviews was conducted. These were expert interviews with people who were involved in the establishment of the former summerhouses. The interview topics were put together by our working team following a guided interview form (Rossman and Rallis, 1998, in Nuga 2016, 39). This method provided participants with the opportunity to speak openly about related issues and, in that way, explore areas of conversation that might not otherwise be uncovered. During the interviews, two main topics were covered. Firstly, the planning of residential areas and establishment of housing during the Soviet era was discussed, including ideological considerations, norms, institutional responsibilities, availability, and general satisfaction. Then the Soviet-era summerhouse areas were discussed more thoroughly, including

decision-making and location, norms and responsibilities, how location-related decisions were made, and functional zoning.

The experts interviewed were as follows:

1. Peep Männiksaar (interviewed by Mari Nuga in Viljandi on 18.02.2011), an architect working mainly in Viljandi County, Estonia, during the Soviet period.
2. Hille Rodima (interviewed by Pille Metspalu in Tartu on 20.04.2011), the coordinator of the geodesy works and bureaus. At the time of the interview she was still working in Tartu County Government and had worked there since 1974. She also worked on the Tartu City Executive Committee before 1974.
3. Vaike Kotkas (interviewed by Mari Nuga in Muuga on 06.09.2011), who worked in the former Ministry of Agriculture and was and still is an active summerhouse user with one of the summerhouse cooperatives in the surroundings of Tallinn.
4. Anne Siht (interviewed by Mari Nuga in Tallinn on 08.09.2011), a specialist architect who worked on the Estonian Building Committee during 1979–91.
5. Eve Niineväli (interviewed by Mari Nuga in Tallinn on 20.09.2011), a specialist architect who worked on the Building Committee.

Each of these conversations lasted around two hours. The interviews were taped and transcribed. The conversations were analysed, keeping in mind, among other things, the subjectivity and possible memory errors of the participants (Nuga 2016, 40).

For Publication II, I turned to primary sources from the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. I used archival official planning documents and, importantly, semi-structured interviews with critical informants (interview group IV). The following senior architects were interviewed:

1. Dmitri Bruns (interviewed by Pille Metspalu in Tallinn on 12.07.2012), Tallinn Chief Architect, 1960–1980.
2. Irina Raud (interviewed by Pille Metspalu in Tallinn on 12.07.2012), leading architect in Eesti Projekt, 1969–1989, and Tallinn Chief Architect, 1989–1991.
3. Olev Zhemchugov (interviewed by Pille Metspalu in Tallinn on 06.01.2013), leading architect in Eesti Projekt, 1970–1977.
4. Jüri Lass (interviewed by Pille Metspalu and Daniel B. Hess in Tallinn on 17.02.2016), leading architect in the Estonian State Building Committee, 1982–1990.
5. Raal Kivi (interviewed by Marju Sild in Tartu on 14.05.2013), leading architect in Eesti Projekt, 1969–1972, and Tartu Chief Architect 1972–1991.

These architects, now at the end of their professional careers, gave us access to their observations, which seldom appear in written form because of censorship during Soviet times. Because of the respectable age of the architects who were active during the socialist period, we found it was vital to include their knowledge in studying the nuances of socialist planning practice. The information gathered is of a sensitive nature, reflecting retrospectively the subjective notions of experts involved in everyday planning practice. The recordings of the interviews as well as transcriptions are available in the Department of Geography at the University of Tartu. As the interviewees were asked for consent to use the interview materials in thematic research, a valuable database has been collected to facilitate further research.

In addition to interviews, archival documents – planning proposals (Figure 3.3.1, 3.3.2), planning documents (including original protocols and memos and official approvals/non-approvals from state authorities), and contemporaneous newspaper and magazine articles (Figure 3.3.3) were analysed. A deductive method, or more precisely a directed content analysis starting with a theory or relevant research findings as guidance for initial codes (see for instance Hsieh and Shannon 2005), was used to work with the collected materials. Primary source interviews and a review of archival documents allowed us to assemble a meaningful picture of planning practice related to large socialist housing estates.



Figure 3.3.1. Mustamäe architectural competition entry by Group X. Original drawing, 1958. Source: Museum of Estonian Architecture.

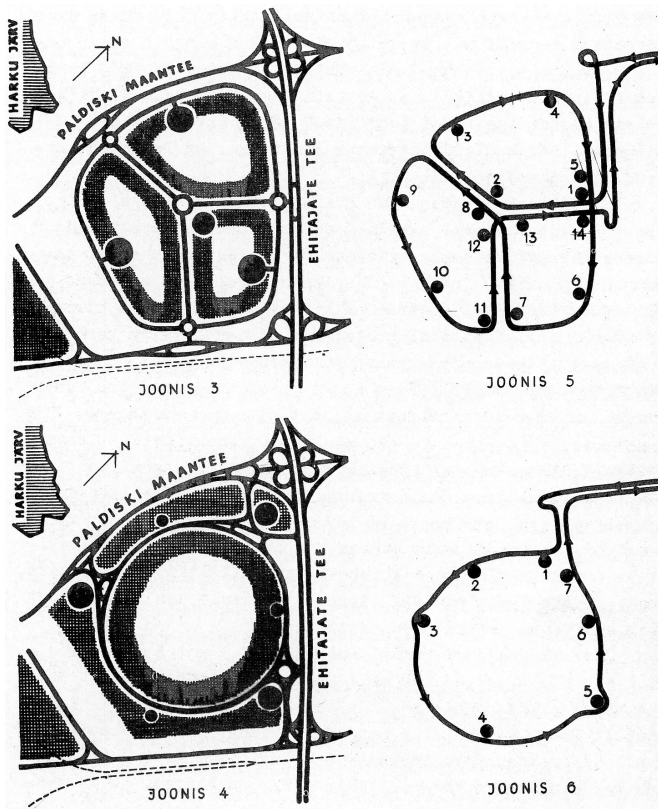


Figure 3.3.2.
Original drawings for
Väike-Õismäe detailed
planning project, 1968.
Source: Port 1969.

These drawings drafted during the original planning process represent alternative transportation network schemes and, at the same time, the structural analysis for mikrorayon² layout. Option 4, lower left-hand image, which configures the district as a single makrorayon, was the selected option. This novel approach disregarded the central principles of mikrorayon formation and abolished the strict population normative.

² In socialist city planning, comprehensively planned residential district composed of standardized buildings.



Mustamäe elamumassiiv

Hiljuti valmis instituudis «Estonprojekt» Mustamäe elamurajooni detailplaneerimise lõplik kavand, mille autoreiks on arhitektid V. Toppel, L. Petal, T. Kallas ja insener A. Prahm.

Projektis on autorid arvesse võtnud möödunud aastal toimunud Mustamäe elamumassiivi planeerimise ideekavandite saamiseks toimunud võistluse tulemusi.

Plancerimiskava haarab ca 360 ha suurust maa-ala, mis on piiratud Rahumäe tee, Mustamäe nõlva, Habersti tee ja uue magistraaliga, mis ühendab Kadaka teed Matrosovi tänavaga. Väljapoole elamurajooni piisutatakse

siia ümbrusse kohaliku tööstuse ettevõtte, TPI hoonete kompleks, Teaduste Akadeemia instituudid jm.

Valminud projektis on lahendatud ühiskondlike, kaubanduslike jm. hoonete paigutus, peamised liiklusteed ja transpordiliigid, maa-alused kommunikatsioonid jne.

Autorid on planeeringu teostanud kaasajal üldist tunnustust leidnud vaba hoonestamise põhimõtte.

Elamurajooni peatänavaks kujuneb kahe sõiduteega Sõpruse puiestee, mille huvitavale kujundamisele on pandud erilist rõhku. Sõpruse puiestee äärde rajatakse kultuuri ja kaubanduse kes-

kus. Siia on grupperitud sellised ehitused, nagu teater, kino, hotell, administratiivhoone, restoran, kohvik, söökla, kaubamaja, turuhall ja rida kauplusti.

Peatänava ümbrusse on paigutatud neli gruppi 8-korruselisi tornelumaju mis omapäraste aksentidena tõusevat esile madalama hoonestuse keskelt.

Elamurajooni lõpliku väljehitamise tähtsaks on 1970. aasta, millal siir elaja ca 57 500 elanikku. Teede ehitamist alustatakse veel käesoleva aastal, esimesed elamud aga kerkivad Habersti tee piirkonda 1981. aastal.

H. Härmsen

Figure 3.3.3. Announcement (in the Estonian language) of an approved plan for Mustamäe, published in Estonia's cultural newspaper, *Sirp ja Vasar*, August 28, 1959. Source: *Sirp ja Vasar*.

For Publication III, two different surveys were conducted. Firstly, to explore the necessary skills for the profession, a questionnaire survey was conducted by the University of Tartu in collaboration with the Estonian Association of Planners. I prepared the questions, managed the overall process and was the main analyst of the results. This survey efficiently mapped the educational background of professional planning practitioners and sought to identify possible shortcomings in their skills base. A database of planners, planning officers and officials in state authorities involved in approving plans was assembled as potential respondents. The questionnaire was e-mailed to 800 individuals working in planning practice, achieving a response rate of 44% (351 responses). The majority of responses (63%) were received from the public sector; the remaining respondents were from the private sector (24%) and non-profit/self-employed sector

(13%). The database and survey made a debut in Estonian planning research as a comprehensive overview of planning practitioners.

The second survey for Publication III aimed to provide a cross-section of planning courses taught in Estonian universities in 2015. I participated in designing the survey, and the study was carried out by Lauri Lihtmaa and Heiki Sepp. The year 2008 was used as a reference; according to the feedback from the universities, this was the year when the number of students enrolled in planning-related programs reached a peak. Bachelor and master's degree programs in six universities were examined, covering 192 subjects altogether. The universities participating in the survey were the University of Tartu, the Estonian University of Life Sciences, Tallinn University, Tallinn University of Technology, Tartu College of the Tallinn University of Technology, and the Estonian Academy of Arts. To determine the planning-orientation of the curriculum, the courses were categorized based on subject descriptions, compulsory literature, learning outcomes and assessment methods. Publicly available data on universities' websites were used, and the universities were offered the option to elaborate on the descriptions of courses beforehand.

For typology, the following criteria were agreed on: 1) the relation to planning; 2) the share of theory and practice; 3) type of planning: development or physical/land use planning; 4) planning level (general or detailed); and 5) sectoral type (design, social environment and culture, economy and administration, natural environment, law, technology). Additionally, the planning-relatedness of each separate course was assessed in three categories: 1) planning subject; 2) subject supporting planning; or 3) non-planning subject.

The professional code for spatial planners, developed by the Estonian Association of Spatial Planners and Estonian Qualifications Authority in 2014, was used as an additional input for this thesis. I was a member of the taskforce developing the code, and I continue to serve as an acting member of the Planners Licence Committee.

4. MAIN RESULTS

4.1. Publication I.

“Summurbia” – a mix of rational-comprehensive and pragmatic planning with pragmatism becoming dominant over time. “Summurbanites” as planners.

In my first article, we examined the particular suburban milieu in formal socialist summerhouse settlements, looking for a deeper understanding of the challenges facing planners in the present stage of post-socialist transformation. We coined the term “summurbia” in order to emphasise both the seasonal and the suburban nature of the settlements. We identified the presence of two planning paradigms in summurbia: rational-comprehensive and pragmatic-incrementalist.

Initially, in the 1960’s–1980’s, planning summer house settlements was a representative example of rational problem solving. The summurbs were meant to alleviate tight living conditions and food shortages. The aim was to provide temporary land use for citizens to grow their own vegetables and have a recreational spot for a healthy lifestyle. Using rational-comprehensive methodology, a comprehensive planning process that is logical, consistent, systematic, and follows an idealized ‘analysis-problem-solution-implementation’ planning model (Lawrence, 2000 in Publication I) was carried out. For summurbs, strictly and centrally regulated plans were prepared. Site selection was carefully administered following rules from Moscow. Summurbs were not built on good agricultural land, but rather on fields that were not accessible to large agricultural machinery. The land used for settlements consisted mainly of wild brushy 600–1100 m² wetland plots (Niineväli, 2011; Siht, 2011 in Publication I). The workplaces and trade unions where the cooperatives were formed applied for the land from the district executive committee, *rayispolkom*. After the land was provided, the Building Committee was responsible for putting together a detailed plan covering the subdivision of the plots, main roads, water wells, drainage, and electricity supply (Niineväli, 2011 in Publication I). In this way, summurbia represents the strict planning and functional regulations that characterized the socialist years. We demonstrated that in summerhouse settlements, planning was seen as a largely technical exercise of translating detailed rules produced in Moscow into finished designs of settlements. This notion of planning as a largely technical field in the Soviet Union is supported by a wide range of well-known authors (Hirt and Stanilov, 2009; Golubchikov, 2004, 2017 in Publication I).

The rational-comprehensive approach in its pure form emphasizes predictability and seeks to eliminate such aspects as uncertainty, human fallibility and indecisiveness (Rosenhead, 1980 in Publication I). However, in summurbs, we witnessed a parallel presence of “spontaneous pragmatism,” a sort of incrementalist “one bite at a time” (Näss, 2001, 513 in Publication I) planning.

Although the Building Committee had been responsible for putting together the detailed plan, summurbanites prepared, cleared, and built on their plots themselves. Plot-owners still found ways to circumvent the regulations (Siht, 2011; Niineväli, 2011 in Publication I), resulting in a spontaneous evolution from garden cooperatives (which only permitted small huts or shacks) to modest summertime settlements. Already during Soviet times, some people moved to their summer houses permanently; and creativity and self-reliance became commonplace. Although comprehensive, planning could not fully control the activities that took place in summurbia as people adjusted their summer houses in accordance with their dreams and available resources (Niineväli, 2011 in Publication I). In this way, the evolution of summurbia could be seen as an act of spontaneous and creative pragmatism itself.

We found that the concept of spontaneous pragmatism strengthened in post-socialist summurbia, as the municipal building regulations on design and (re)construction were (and still are) minimal. Sometimes municipal planners were satisfied with just any reconstruction and were either unable or unwilling to issue more specific building regulations. The residents themselves commonly rebuild former summer huts. The interviews revealed how the homes and gardens represented often never-ending creative building projects for the residents, inspired by their own dreams. As there often was a lack of planning guidelines to solve deficiencies of the general infrastructure (water supply and sewerage, roads and power lines), the residents started to look for temporary pragmatic solutions. Almost no one complained about the municipality's lack of interest in the living conditions in the neighbourhood, as independence from the authorities was often related to lower infrastructure-related expenses.

Our analysis demonstrates that one of the major barriers for comprehensive planning and solutions nowadays lies in the private ownership rights for each plot. Improving infrastructure-related problems has proven to be complicated as plot owners attempt to fix the problems within their own boundaries. As a rule, municipalities have not initiated renovation works, although they are responsible for ensuring the provision of water and sewerage in densely populated areas. As most of the settlements are not fully inhabited all year round, post-summurbia is not always formally defined as a densely populated urban area. Furthermore, ownership issues complicate planning – for instance, the legal ownership status of the roads is still often unclear. In some cases, roads belong to the municipality, but, in many others, they were privatized by a former cooperative which no longer exists, or ownership is shared between the properties. Undoubtedly, planning regulations are difficult to enact when the ownership situation is fragmented. This gives municipalities an excuse to call off their task to provide infrastructure and results in extreme cases of pragmatic planning or perhaps simply 'non-planning' (cf Kem et al, 2007 in Publication I).

In summurbia, we can observe the residents taking over the role of the planner. After the authorities approved the detailed plans, the plot-owners became ad-hoc planners themselves by implementing the plans and modifying them on the way, creatively circumventing the regulations. By the beginning of the

2000s, residents were already pragmatically re-planning areas with local municipalities silently accepting the formation of new residential areas. As there was no long-term vision for the summurbs during the post-transition years and the following neoliberal period, the conduct of local authorities can be seen as an act of “wait and see” pragmatism.

In our article, we define collaborative planning as an approach, which combines incrementalist and comprehensive planning, as it simultaneously deals with the everyday issues of the participants and puts together long-term strategies and goals. Also, collaborative planning theorists emphasize taking into account the concrete settings in which planning takes place, which relates back to incremental-pragmatic philosophies and practices of planning (Healey, 2003, 2009 in Publication I).

We argue that post-summurban residents’ independent activities and the passivity of the authorities have resulted in the near absence of general perspectives and planning. Problems are solved only when they cry out loud or are presented within a politically powerful framework. The municipal officials interviewed in our study were affected by post-socialist attitudes of rejecting rational comprehensive planning altogether. It appears that this stance inhibited them from seeing alternatives that lie between the two extremes of comprehensive planning and non-planning. In order to find new ways of planning or, more specifically, introduce collaborative planning in post-summurbia, the pragmatic roots of the evolution of these areas have to be respected. The residents’ learned experiences of self-sufficient problem solving are a valuable untapped resource for planning in these settlements. This uniqueness is worth preserving as it has made the locals bond to their living places in multi-dimensional ways. They are strongly motivated to develop post-summurbia as a liveable and sustainable environment and are willing to take on the role of the planner themselves.

4.2. Publication II.

Large housing estates – a rational comprehensive plan with a strong presence of creative pragmatism

My second article focuses on another type of socialist living environment – large housing estates, often associated with inhumane architecture and unwelcoming public space. We analysed the planning logic and procedures of the socialist residential districts in order to examine in detail the role of local architects.

A number of contemporary studies have retrospectively critiqued socialist urban systems and particularly policies leading to the formation of mikrorayons. However, among city planners, state socialism was a fascinating phenomenon that provided unique opportunities to experiment with new models of city planning. Centrally planned systems – and government ownership of all land

and industry – permitted a grand-scale approach to urbanization and a mechanism for promoting rational use of human and industrial assets, improving life quality, and reducing costs. Planning as a discipline enjoyed an unprecedentedly high and respected status. Architects charged with planning new housing estates had great power to shape cities, demonstrating that city planning was a centrepiece of central economic planning.

Our research confirms the decisive role of local architects in shaping city forms. In scholarly literature, the actual power resting within the hands of local architects is often debated, since the state suggested the location for residential space, dictated its volume, and furnished land and financing. However, trained architects undertook all city planning duties. General plans and detailed plans for mikrorayons were, as a rule, prepared by professional teams whose members possessed various backgrounds (engineers, traffic specialists, landscape architects, etc.). A chief architect always led such teams. Based on centrally issued density norms, architects developed the site design, which consisted of an ensemble – composed of residential buildings, service structures, pathways and roads and open space – that forms the long-lasting effect of mikrorayons on urbanization.

The birth of large housing estates was in itself an act of pragmatism consisting of the economically feasible provision of residential housing on a large scale. To liquidate the housing shortage in an optimistic period of 10–12 years, the Communist Party launched an ambitious housing construction programme in the USSR in 1957. The task was to build quickly and economically. Following directives from Moscow, our case study districts of Mustamäe, Väike-Õismäe and Lasnamäe were constructed successively, reflecting a maturation of the mikrorayon concept.

The analysis of three large housing estates in Tallinn indicates creative interpretations or even disregard of USSR planning and building regulations. The Mustamäe planning concept featured direct resemblance to Finnish or Swedish modernist residential planning (e.g the towns of Tapiola and Pihlajamäki) where building blocks are harmoniously attuned with surrounding landscapes. Väike-Õismäe suggests a bold vision of imaginative architects inspired by pure modernist ideals. A single makrorayon with a compositional focus on a broad encircling street (characteristic of socialist-modernist urban form, it was impressive when viewed from above) was planned instead of three mikrorayons, pedestrian crossings were not separated from vehicles, and monotony was alleviated by grouping the buildings in various combinations. In Lasnamäe, the backbone of the detailed plan included two key east–west thoroughfares. One of the major roads was innovatively sunken (7 m deep), making possible flyover bridges and permitting higher traffic speeds below while enhancing safety by removing vehicular traffic from the pedestrian space. High-rise building blocks were arranged to form inner courtyards to express the cosiness characteristic of Scandinavian new towns. However, the intended expression was largely lost due to the enormous scale of the housing estate.

As finances were limited, an incremental, step-by-step way of implementation was decided on by local administration. Districts were divided into building phases, and a number of features were not implemented, including centrally located business and community centres, recreational facilities, greenery and landscaping. Due to the partial construction, the integrity and attractiveness of the residential districts decreased considerably. In Lasnamäe, one-third of the planned apartment houses were not constructed, making the spatial structure of the largest housing estate in Tallinn functionally incomplete.

Customization of rules according to practical and context-based needs is the very essence of pragmatist planning, which values the fittings, workings and successes (Meyer 1975, 73 in Hall 1974), not *a priori* principles. In addition to strong parallels with pragmatism, our research revealed the creative artistry of the planners, who were supported by a powerful administration with architects in leading positions. Architects enjoyed a compelling role in creating artistic blueprints for new residential districts and at the same time fulfilling the goals of the Soviet regime.

Artistic creativity was enhanced by international modernist ideas. Our research reveals a surprising amount of communication regarding planning, including international communication manifested through a strong “westward gaze.” Foreign influences in city planning can be attributed to the “Khrushchev thaw” in the late 1950s to early 1960s, which made possible organized study trips for Baltic professionals to capitalist countries and limited distribution of international city planning and architectural literature. More than half of the members of the Estonian Architects’ Union visited Finland during the 1960s following an inaugural trip in 1957, and this coincides with the formation of ideas about Mustamäe. Architects who had the chance to visit capitalist countries openly popularized Western ideas upon their return by writing articles and columns in newspapers (Publication II, 9).

Our main finding is that architects maintained a consistently strong role in town planning practice. Because architectural education began in Estonia in the 1920s, local professional architects had gained several decades of experience prior to the socialist era. Thus, it is not surprising that Estonia was one of the few republics in the Soviet Union that preserved an independent site-planning and design capability and apparatus (Eesti Projekt, EKE Projekt, Tööstusprojekt, Kommunaalprojekt).

Professional architects were represented in almost all levels of official decision-making in town planning processes. A chief architect traditionally led the State Building Committee. In municipal governance, an architectural department and architectural advisory board were important bodies. The official empowerment of architects was also supported by a strong tradition of architectural competitions in Estonia, which started in the 1930s and continued throughout the Soviet occupation.

Our study highlights an oversimplification of socialist modernism and the role of Soviet architects. We challenge the assumption that the uniformity of socialist residential housing can be attributed to strict design requirements in a

rigid centralized system. Our results suggest more nuanced explanations for town planning outcomes and demonstrates how international modernist city planning ideals, combined with local expertise, strongly influenced town planning practice in Estonia. The process we describe in our article produced more desirable housing estates in Estonia than would result from strict adherence to system constraints, giving party leaders exemplary town planning ensembles to support residential expansion, while Estonian architects experienced a supportive atmosphere (contrary to common assumptions about the USSR) to pursue modernist ambitions that they hoped would be admired beyond the borders of the Soviet Union.

4.3. Publication III. Planners' education and role – a struggle between path-dependency and new qualities

In my third publication, the factors and drivers influencing planning education in Estonia are examined. We discuss current trends, developments and changes concerning the consolidation of Estonian planning education in relation to emerging planning practices.

In describing the context of planning in Estonia, we acknowledge the confusion caused by the transition from a socialist to a liberal, market-led planning system. Planners were pressured by private investors and stakeholders and faced with the reality of planning *in situ* with no help from central norms and standards. During times of change, the simplest pragmatist behavioural patterns were reclaimed – planners tended to revert to their previously practiced habits and approaches. Many of the first plans in the early 1990s were statistical reports rather than documents guiding development with respect to territorial resources and conditions. For planners, the new societal situation was too incomprehensible to apply more thorough pragmatist thinking by understanding the “wicked problems” of planning and fully employing social and practical situatedness. We argue that the mere imitative application of Western policies led in many ways to controversial results in CEEs because of the different economic and social environment, strong institutional dependency, and path-dependency of know-how, methods, and practices.

Following the evolution of contemporary planning in Estonia, we point out difficulties in empowering municipal comprehensive plans in the 2000s, when common practice included massive amendments in zoning via private development proposals. Due to NIMBY³ to attitudes, a growing number of plans, including strategic developments like Rail Baltic or military exercise fields, were resisted at the local level. To improve the planning system, a new

³ abbreviation for *Not In My Back Yard*, opposition by residents to a proposed development in their local area

Planning Act came into force in 2015. The new act received stern opposition from planners as the substantial changes in Estonia's planning framework introduced by the act were seen as controversial steps towards the centralisation of planning.

We explain how the planning system at the beginning of the 21st century was malfunctioning due to a lack of professional planners, missing planning knowledge, and a shortage of skills for processing and assessing applications. The majority of plans were implemented in the form of project-based business planning with an emphasis on short-term financial return. In the aftermath of the real estate bubble and economic crises in 2008, the speed of development and the associated volume of planning decreased substantially, leading to higher quality plans and a streamlining of the process. In order to improve strategic planning and coordination, planning responsibilities were recentralized at the county level in the 2010s, devaluing local authorities. Still, the implementation of strategic objectives remained hampered by pro-growth localism.

In the light of societal change, we document the reinvention of the planning profession in Estonia. As in other CEE countries, planning in Estonia has its intellectual roots in architecture. While the predominant role of architecture was strengthened during the early 1990s, its importance waned when, from 1995 onward, a broader territorial, sustainable development and land-use-based approach was adopted. Subsequently, from the mid-2000s onward, there was a resurgence of the architect planner as booming real estate development, commercial and housing projects demanded fast, lean, and impressive designs (Publication III, 194).

In our analysis, we see the development of a professional code for spatial planners by the Estonian Association of Spatial Planners and Estonian Qualifications Authority in 2014 as a breakthrough. The professional code and the start of issuing planners' qualification certificates represent a turn from a traditional, architecture-based planning to a wider professional concept. According to the professional code, attributes and competencies of the "ideal" planner include communication and negotiations skills, high ethical standards, and being adaptable, innovative and versed in strategic thinking. There was also agreement that planners are to be knowledgeable about research methods, planning theories, and forecasting and visualization techniques, which highlights the need to cover such topics consistently in planning curricula (Publication III, 194). The content of the skillset defined by the professional code can be directly associated with Forester's critical pragmatism. Although Forester's *The Deliberative Practitioner* was not used as a direct source, the professional code demonstrates a belief in skilful deliberative practices that can facilitate practical and timely participatory planning processes.

To explore the profession's skills needs, a survey was conducted among planning practitioners. The aim was to collect knowledge for forming the basis of planners' training and possible planning curricula. The responses for the survey were not differentiated by background and job specialties. Analytical and logical thinking (94% respondents), ability to formulate spatial relations

(87%), communication and teamwork (37%), accountability (14%) and creativity (12%) were the keywords mentioned most often (Publication III, 195). Planners stressed the need to teach practical skills for day-to-day tasks in addition to conveying to students a contemporary ethical framework. This differs from academic preferences to focus on core knowledge and structured methodological approaches and amplifies the need for the pragmatic situatedness emphasized by Faludi (1987) and Schön (1983). The results of the survey and the establishment of the professional code thus mark the end of a long tradition of planning seen as merely a specialization of architecture and a technocratic instrument (Hirt and Stanilov 2009; Maier 1994), a development recognizable not only in Estonia but in other CEE countries (Publication III, 195).

Our study demonstrates that planning education in Estonia is highly fragmented. As of 2015, altogether 18 “planning-related” programs existed in 6 different universities. The number was even higher (20) in 2008 in the immediate aftermath of the real estate boom and deriving from opportunistic decisions by universities. Content analysis of the programs established that universities tend to teach what staff expertise allows, but that may not be what is needed to prepare students for planning practice. Planning content often remains secondary, and, in many programs, core subjects such as planning theory and process are missing totally. Many other subjects are taught by lecturers from other faculties with little reference to planning. Also, a lack of practical training proved to be a problem. As a consequence, graduates are not ready to enter planning practice as they are lacking both multidisciplinary as well as specialized skills.

Planners in Estonia often play several roles in parallel – this is likely a function of the country’s size. Thus, they need universal knowledge backgrounds and a balanced skill set. Reflecting the need and Estonian context, we proposed a cross-university multidisciplinary program for planning. The program addressed the perspectives of organizational patterns, comprehensiveness and practicality as well as alternative teaching methods. The program elaboration represented a test of academic and institutional collaboration among Estonian universities. Eventually, the program failed to be adopted due to institutional barriers and academic competition. However, our argument remains the same. We believe that having a broad professional coalition and engaging universities, students, and practitioners in the design of planning education curricula could lead to a unique profile and identity for the program and its graduates (Publication III, 203).

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. A rational technician, pragmatic implementer, creative adapter and mild mediator – the changing role of the Estonian planner

The role of the planner in Estonia has evolved over time, framed by the social order and the responsibilities assigned to spatial planning.

In planning the summurbs, local planners initially performed the task of rational problem solving, finding locations and composing detailed plans for summer house settlements to alleviate tight living conditions and food shortages. Each played the role of a rational technician, translating strict rules from Moscow into reasonably place-specific subdivisions through comprehensive planning proposals with road and infrastructure networks. During the first implementation phase of the plans, the planners stepped aside, and the plot-owners took over their role, circumventing the regulations and adapting the plans as much as possible to their personal needs. This was one of the indications that the role of rational planners was fading in Soviet Estonia.

The pragmatic, step-by-step re-designing of the summurbs continues today. Local residents take an active role, adjusting their summer homes for year-round residency and looking for ways to develop infrastructure. In newly independent Estonia, local municipalities lacked the will, vision and means to address the summurbs as they were spontaneously turning into residential districts. Planners in local authorities formally defined the summurbs as densely populated areas and, when possible, helped the residents to apply for funding to improve infrastructure. This situation has not changed during the last decade. Nowadays, it is hard to detect who is actually planning the summurbs. One could argue that the summurbs are already built-up and need no further attention from planners. At the same time, the gap between original planning solutions for seasonal gardening-oriented settlements and residential neighbourhoods as they are today is too wide. Through comprehensive re-planning lead by a deliberative and collaborative planner, these areas could be transformed into sustainable compact residential districts. With the passive attitude from local municipalities and with private ownership complicating the situation, the summurbs continue to follow incremental, survival-oriented planning. The residents continue to act as planners, as pragmatic implementers of their personal ideas about improving their living environment. This trend seems to suit planners in local municipalities, as there is a lack of political will and long-term vision regarding the future of the summurbs. Choosing a “wait and see” tactic follows a pragmatic school of thought that resembles Forester’s critical pragmatism, with planners thinking politically and rationally at the same time.

In planning large housing estates, the general planning rationale was similar, developing from rational problem-solving to pragmatic and, at the same time,

creative plan-making. As I demonstrate in the third article, in these settlements the architect-planners played a more substantial role.

The first Estonian architect-planners were trained at the beginning of the 20th century, when planning in the Western world was seen as a large-scale architectural exercise. The common idealization of the first Estonian Republic period frames the belief in architectural maestro planning, which is still at some parts a common preconception about planners. Since then, the architectural tradition in planning has been strongly favored, and it was amplified during Soviet era by an independent site-planning design capability in the state planning and design apparatus, a rare example among the Soviet Republics. Indeed, the “planning culture” of Estonia stood out in the former Soviet Union. In Estonia, artistic creativity was highly valued, and plans were often discussed in public. Compared to the current situation, socialist architects had considerable power in official decision-making, enjoying positions of authority in all levels of government. Thus, the Western critique of pragmatist planning, in which postmodern theorists blame pragmatic planners for ignoring how actual power relations undermine the deliberations they celebrate, was not relevant in socialist Estonia.

There is no doubt that the socialist deficiency of resources affected town planning practice. Planners were forced to find creative ways of achieving the best planning outcomes using scarce resources and limited funding. Their creativity was revealed in many ways. The general attitude could be described as “always find a way” to get things done and, at the same time, to respond to specific local and social conditions as much as possible in the planning process. This approach is especially evident in summurbia, where residents act as self-sufficient planners. In large housing estates, the ingenuity of planners was enhanced through artistic creativity inspired by modernist ideals. As creative adapters, planners adjusted regulations and norms, convinced the authorities of the compliance of their solutions, and enjoyed the consequential role they were granted as city-builders. Since architect-planners were represented at many levels of decision-making, both artistic creativity and inventiveness were strongly favored, even when contradictions with the regulations occurred. The mentality of circumventing or customization of rules, the very essence of pragmatist planning, is also very much present in contemporary architectural planning. Often the winning prizes of architectural competitions are granted to entries that do not follow the pre-conditions set by initial statements/detailed planning or that interpret the conditions very creatively (see for instance the competition for Tartu City Library and Art Museum 2011, Estonian Academy of Arts 2008).

Gradually, the position of planning in Estonia has weakened and the role of the planner has blurred. The power situation has changed considerably. Architect-planners, who during the Soviet time were represented in almost all levels of official planning-related decision-making, are no longer involved in governance, and architectural advisory boards do not exist. In local municipalities, planning co-ordination is often a part-time task for a building or

environmental officer. Due to a deficiency in skills, knowledge, and staff and to politically demanded flexibility to meet any development applications, planning at the local level is reactive, not proactive. The Soviet legacy of resistance to long-term strategic planning is amplified by a rapidly changing society in which setting preconditions for any kind of development can be seen as overregulation. On the state level, spatial planning is just another sectorial department, at the moment operating under the Ministry of Finance. Lately, there have been discussions about institutional advancements to support the central role of planning and spatial design in development processes.

In contemporary Estonia, planning is hardly visible in space and society. There are urban design initiatives for single streetscapes or urban plazas, but, as a rule, re-shaping our built environment is driven by single projects rather than strategic choices followed by a spatial plan. At the same time, trends like shrinking settlements, climate change, and smart technologies are waiting to be grasped by long-term spatial planning. Planners who do not have the support of power, comprehensive education and training cannot be expected to respond adequately and take full responsibility in delivering sustainable spatial change.

Participatory and especially community planning, often driven by the will to protect existing values, helps to raise awareness about planning but, at the same time, restricts planners to the role of mild mediators. With low professional self-esteem, planners are often intimidated by powerful interest groups or short-sighted political will. A neo-pragmatist role of planners as enablers, not designers or controllers, has not reached its potential in Estonia. However, the gloomy situation of Estonian planners and planning is not unique. The communicative turn in planning and the ongoing trend of neoliberalism has left planners in the dark elsewhere as well. In the Global North, as Sager states, the ideal has changed from expert planning with a public involvement supplement to participatory planning with a technical-economic expert supplement (2018, 96). Allmendinger puts it even more bluntly, asking how it is possible to have a profession if you argue that there is no such thing as expert knowledge, only different opinions brought together (2009, 2200). Facing these tendencies, the challenge for planning lies in continuous development as a profession.

5.2. Manifestations of pragmatism in Estonian planning

The rationale during socialist planning was inherently pragmatic, relying on practical consequences while dealing with “wicked” planning problems. In a command economy, planning had an outstanding position and, at the same time, a specific meaning. Economic development in the Soviet Union followed 5-year cycles. The so-called 5-year plans that initially were meant for industrial production and military industry soon existed at all levels and in all fields in society, including in most organizations. Fulfilling the goals set by the 5-year plan in a shorter period was considered true progress and resulted in rewards and prizes for the leaders and the workers. Failing to achieve the goals defined

by the 5-year plan could lead to public humiliation and possibly to reduced funding. At the same time, there was a severe deficiency of resources in a number of domains, including the building sector. In order to receive at least some resources to fulfill the goals, leaders of the collective farms and other organizations often “swelled” the numbers – for example, they asked the central administration for considerably larger amounts of building materials than were actually needed. The goals had to be carefully selected – they were preferably achievable in a shorter period but seemingly progressive and suitable for applying for at least twice as many resources as needed. This kind of “code of conduct” seriously undermined the meaning of strategic planning, with the general understanding being that long-term planning is nothing but a farce. For that reason, the popular cultural meaning of “ends justify the means” characterizing pragmatist planning is highly relevant in both the socialist historical context and as a mental legacy in post-socialist Estonia.

In post-socialist Estonian planning, down-to-earth pragmatism tends to prevail. “Getting things done” has been the main societal expectation towards planning, as far as we can speak about expectations, for the majority of the society is only vaguely aware of the concept of planning. In governmental circles, skepticism about planning has long been the main attitude; it is slowly being replaced by more constructive viewpoints in recent years. Still, spatial planning is not seen as an instrument of long-term policy implementation by the elected decision-makers. We seem to experience the same situation Western Europe witnessed in 1980s – a neoconservative disdain for planning and skepticism, both of which tend to view progress as something which, if it happens, cannot be planned (Healey, 1997a). The scope of planning in Estonia is, as a rule, narrowed down to defining land use for the coming years. Strategic spatial planning that might act as the proactive and strategic coordinator of all policy and actions that influence spatial development (Nadin 2007) and to tackle strategic change is hard to detect. Estonian planning can still be called project-planning, as opposed to strategic planning. We seem to lack the kinds of strategic plans that Faludi and van der Valk (1994) define as frameworks for action and which need to be analyzed for their performance in helping with subsequent decisions. Instead, we use project plans, blueprint land-use plans that form a narrow guide for short-term action.

In Estonian planning processes, strategic alternatives are rarely considered and debated. Characteristically for a pragmatist approach, only small deviations from the existing situation are analyzed and anticipated. During the Soviet time, the one-party, single truth optimisation system made it impossible to think about liquidating the housing shortage in any other way than designing monstrous pre-fabricated housing estates. The same goes to summerhouses; with no private land ownership, compact gardening and summerhouse cooperatives were the only way to control access to greenery and an additional vegetable supply. The lack of strategic alternatives is very much in line with the critique on the lack of progressive vision of pragmatist planning (see for example Næss 2001) caused by the social and practical situatedness valued by pragmatists. As

strategic alternatives were not supported by power during the Soviet time, path dependency in attitudes as well as skills might be playing an important role. We see a similar “no alternatives” pattern today. Vivid examples in which there is no discretion can be presented from the field of mobility planning: should we tackle growing transportation needs by building railways or highways? Should we plan for public and light transport or increased accessibility by private cars? Strategic development plans often declare the need for sustainable mobility, but the projects implemented favor car transport (for example, Reidi Road in Tallinn). In Finland, already our source of inspiration during the Soviet era, new residential districts enjoy fast and effective public transportation links, and car traffic is seen as a last option (for example in Kruunuvoorenranta, where a new bridge was built only for pedestrians and the tramway). Interestingly, from the United States, a birthplace of pragmatism, planning initiatives like Complete Streets and Form-Based Codes, which are consciously working for a sustainable human-scale environment, overrule the understanding that pragmatic planning cannot be progressive.

The other main line of critique in pragmatist planning besides unprogressiveness, “power-blindness,” has become relevant in contemporary Estonia. While during socialist times, planning formed an important part of the state agenda, in neoliberal Estonia political power barely recognizes the role of planning. Planning practices have become blurry, a tendency likely to deepen in the light of a shift from government to governance (see Mäntysalo and Bäcklund 2018) and postpolitics (see Metzger 2018). Planning is left alone, separated from sectoral politics and decision-making.

In addition to its historically pragmatic character, the increasing bureaucracy of planning processes diminishes the visionary nature of planning. The planning process for a single residential building in a built-up environment can last for years, and industrial developments require 3–7 years of planning, depending on their location. Because of that, “big things” tend to happen without planning involved. The bureaucracy of planning is reflected in an increasing number of pre-conditions presented by different governmental authorities and interested bodies. On one hand, this proves that planning is still playing a role in society and might be accepted as a strategic coordinator of spatial policies and actions. For that to happen, spatial planning needs some additional legislative empowerment with specific instruments forcing private landowners and sectorial governmental agencies to follow the approved plans. On the other hand, by incorporating every wish from agencies, the meaning of planning is reduced to a set of rules, regulations and demands of what not to do. Planners are acting as gentle moderators aiming for compromises and getting plans approved.

To facilitate the shift from land-use planning to spatial planning, more direct links are needed between long-term political goals and planning; political directions should be translated into planning language and vice versa. So far, National Plan Estonia 2030+ is the single example of state-level planning policy documents. This form of planning policy statements accompanied by pilot plans could be considered as a way of addressing both the political will and relevant

trends like shrinkage and climate change. At the local level, especially among local politicians, efforts should be made to raise awareness about the advantages of spatial planning. For planning to be in the picture, educated planners are needed.

5.3. Pragmatism enhanced by creativity, a key to planners' training

For planners to play the role of enablers and facilitators of change, planning has to develop as a profession. For that, a comprehensive educational program is needed to help planners obtain the skills and knowledge required for contemporary spatial planning.

In Estonia, planning is nested in the field of architecture. During Soviet times, regional planning with geographers in the lead also gained power, but city planning remained largely in the hands of architects. In post-socialist Estonia, the educational background of planners is highly fragmented. The planning scene in contemporary Estonia could be characterized by a dichotomy in which planners, planning education and planning approaches are split between architects and “the others.” The turn towards a social-science orientation in planning, reported in emerging markets (UN-Habitat 2009 in Roose et al 2018), cannot yet be corroborated in the background of Estonian planners.

The current situation, in which planning is thought of as a minor subject in six Estonian universities, has not proven satisfactory. Ideally, a joint program by a collaborative university consortium would provide comprehensive planning education for a country as small as Estonia. Also, the shared program could tackle the dichotomy between architects and “the rest” involved in planning. Planning does need the artistic creativity of architects as well as analytical and reflectively communicative skills from other disciplines. Considering the high autonomy and lukewarm attitude of universities, we should at least aim towards a set of agreed upon topics and learning outcomes to advance spatial planning education. In developing curricula for spatial planning, creativity in the widest sense needs extra attention as it helps in alleviating unprogressiveness, one of the disadvantages of pragmatism.

Introducing a professional code and issuing certificates for planners is a step in the right direction, but, without regular training, it remains just an act of market regulation. The approach that planning is needed “to get things done” is reflected in the professional code for planners, in which a planner is seen more as a project (and team) manager, not as an enabler or facilitator of change. Broad-scale training programs should be re-introduced to professional planners, following the example of the half-year training program recently offered through the University of Tartu Pärnu College. Otherwise, up to now, planning-related training is mostly concerned with changes in legal acts and other highly practical issues. Although training should respect the pragmatic nature of

Estonian spatial planning and the learned experiences of self-sufficient problem solving and inventiveness, deeper understanding is needed about the relationships between built forms and citizens in towns and rural areas. New qualities and skills can be achieved when focusing in creative, broad-scale scenario-building as well as in reflective and deliberative practices, as demonstrated by Schön and Forester. However, a planners' certificate is a powerful tool for professional community building, which is essential for planning to be heard and seen in society.

Examining how to fully employ the principles and tools of creative pragmatism in developing Estonian planning practice and education is definitely worth further research.

6. CONCLUSION

The wide timeframe of my research enabled me to examine trends and changes, path-dependencies and paradigm shifts in the roles of planners. The results of the thesis confirm a significant turnaround in planners' roles and reveal the creatively pragmatist nature of Estonian spatial planning and planners.

Pragmatist theory recognizes that practical consequences matter for the beliefs we hold. This notion has guided Estonian spatial planning through its history. The pragmatic approach in planning is manifested in different ways.

During the Soviet time, initially rational plans for summurbs and large housing estates were elaborated in a pragmatic way, creatively circumventing regulations. Summurban plot-owners and later residents were and still are performing as planners, adjusting the summurbs to their needs using inherently pragmatic social and practical situatedness. Local authorities accept the spontaneous and creative pragmatist re-planning. The residents' learned experiences in the field of planning remain a valuable untapped resource for collaborative planning.

The large socialist housing estates present a case of a rational comprehensive plan with the strong presence of creative pragmatism practiced by empowered architects. The planning process was characterized by creative customization of rules according to practical and context-based needs. The research reveals a surprising amount of public communication regarding planning, including international study trips and, later, Western ideas openly popularized in magazines and newspapers. Local architects planned the large housing estates in Tallinn with a strong "westward gaze."

Pragmatism offers good principles for the planning instrument to work: thinking through the spatial consequences, trusting human judgment, and communication being both the origin and consummation of knowledge. These principles can be found in Estonian planning practice; they are strengthening over time but are still in need of improvement. The downside of pragmatism is well-displayed in Estonian planning as well. Circumventing the rules and principles and the lack of strategic alternatives analyzed during planning processes are perhaps the most important of the negative characteristics of pragmatism which are very familiar in Estonian planning practice.

In contemporary Estonia, planners are struggling to make a difference. In a rapidly changing society burdened by a heavy socialist legacy, planners are often downgraded to mere mediators trying to bring together powerful interest groups and form a compromise of building rights for the coming years. Planners are, as a rule, seen as regulators or designers, not as experts who can help to facilitate sustainable spatial change. For planners to fully employ the positive instruments of pragmatic planning and move away from the negative aspects, as well as to take up the role of visionary enablers, comprehensive professional education and continuous training is needed. Also, spatial planning needs some additional legislative empowerment with specific instruments forcing private landowners and sectorial governmental agencies to follow the approved plans.

Creativity in the broadest sense is rooted in our planning history, embodied in self-sufficiency, inventiveness, “always finding a way” and a strong belief in architectural artistry. This wide spectrum of creativity should be emphasized and elaborated in planning education and training as it helps to alleviate the disadvantages of pragmatism. Creative scenario building to encompass new visions and lessen pragmatic social and practical situatedness should be one key factor in curricula and training courses. Only then can pragmatic planning be an instrument to facilitate socially acceptable and place-specific change. By widening the scope of pragmatism in planning with creativity, I hope my thesis will contribute to the continued relevance of planning as a profession.

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KOKKUVÕTE. SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Planeerija muutuv roll. Loov pragmatism Eesti ruumilises planeerimises

Ruumiline planeerimine haarab tänapäeval laiemat teemaderingi kui eales varem, olles samal ajal metoodiliselt killustunud. Ajad, mil valitses üksmeel planeerimise tähenduse ja eesmärkide osas, on nüüdseks ammu möödunud. Konsensuslikuks võib pidada vaid arusaama, et planeerimine on tihedalt seotud riigi ühiskonnakorralduse ja piirkonna sotsiaalsete ning kultuuriliste oludega ja universaalne planeerimismetoodika puudub. Siiski vajavad just praegused globaalsed trendid nagu kahanemine, kliima soojenemine ja kasvavad rändevood innovatiivseid planeerimislikke lähenemisi.

Minu doktoritöö keskendub Eesti ruumilisele planeerimisele. Väitekirj põhineb kahe eelretsenseeritud teadusartikli ja raamatupeatüki tulemustel. Uurimuse eesmärgiks on portreerida Eesti ruumilise planeerimise teoreetilist kontseptsiooni, uurides muutusi planeerija rollis. Ma vaatlen planeerijate ülesandeid, otsustusõigust ja võimu, samuti professionaalseid oskusi erinevatel ajajärkudel. Eesti ruumilise planeerimise teoreetilise raamistikuna pakun välja loova pragmatismi, mis aitab mõista planeerijatele esitatavate ootuste laiemat konteksti. Analüüsin planeerija rolli ja pragmatismi ilminguid Kesk- ja Ida-Euroopale ning Eestile iseloomulike ruumiliste nähtuste, suvilaalade ja paneel- elamurajoonide, näitel. Sotsialistliku ruumiplaneerimise ehedate näidetena peegeldavad need alad meie sotsiaal-kultuurilist pärandit. Sealsete eripäraste elukeskkondade kujunemislugu avab planeerija rolli erinevatel tasanditel. Planeerija rolli muutuste valguses analüüsin ka Eesti planeerimishariduse olukorda. Artiklite tulemustel põhinev planeerija rolli ja pragmatismi ilmingute ülevaade on koondatud peatükki 4.

Doktoritöö sissejuhatuses planeerimist defineerides tuginen P. Healey ja L. Albrechtsi kirjutistele, mõistes planeerimist kui valitsemistava, mis keskendub tegevuste ja nende omavaheliste suhete keerukale paiknemisele ja sellest tulenevatele aeg-ruumilistele mõjudele. Läbi planeerimise tekivad visioonid, tegevused ja vahendid, mis kujundavad kohtade olemust ja tulevikku.

Uurimuse esimene osa vaatleb planeerija rolli ja planeerimislikku lähenemist 'summurbias', nõukogude perioodist pärinevates endistes suvilapiirkondades ja paneel- elamurajoonides. Nende elukeskkondade arengu analüüsimisel käsitlen teoreetilise raamistikuna ratsionaalset tervikplaneerimist ja pragmaatilist planeerimist. Kuna sotsialistliku perioodi planeerimise 'lipulaev', ratsionaalne tervikplaneerimine on põhjalikumalt uuritud, pööran suuremat tähelepanu pragmatismile. Pragmatism planeerimisetooriana on mind kütkestanud nii igapäevatöös planeerimiskonsultandina kui ka planeerimiskirjandust lugedes. Ülevaade pragmatismi kujunemisloost ja koolkonna erinevatest mõttevooludest, samuti pragmatismi sobivusest planeerimise alusteoriaks annab väitekirja teine peatükk.

Uurimuse tagasivaatav osa aitab mõista nüansse Eesti planeerimise ajaloolises kujunemises. Nõukogude perioodi pärand mõjutab tänapäevast planeerimist, mistõttu aitab ajaloo parem mõistmine avada planeerijate ees seisvaid väljakutseid. Ratsionalismi ja pragmatismi kui mõnevõrra vastuoluliste teoreetiliste lähenemiste paralleelne eksistents on kujundanud meie planeerijate mõttemustreid ja oskusi ning mõjutab seeläbi planeerimishariduse vajadusi. Planeerimishariduse ning planeerijate oskuste arengud on fookuses minu uurimuse teises osas. Kokkuvõttes annab minu doktoritöö ülevaate Eesti planeerimise kui valdkonna ja elukutse kujunemisest, alates sotsialistlikust perioodist läbi üleminekuperioodini tänapäevani.

Keskendun doktoritöös järgmistele uurimisküsimustele:

1. Kuidas on aja jooksul muutunud Eesti planeerija roll?
 - a. Milline on olnud planeerija roll “summurbias”?
 - b. Milline on olnud planeerija roll paneelelamurajoonides?
 - c. Milline on planeerija roll täna?
2. Kuidas avaldub pragmatism Eesti planeerimises?
3. Millised on pragmatismi ja Eesti planeerimishariduse vahelised seosed?

Kasutan oma töös ulatuslikku ja mitmekesist, valdavalt kvalitatiivset andmes-tikku. Andmeid ja metodoloogiat kirjeldan peatükis 3. Tuginen neljale erinevale intervjuude grupile. Intervjuud on läbi viidud suvilapiirkondade elanikega, kohalike omavalitsuste planeerimisnõunikega, nõukogude perioodi planeerijate ja nõukogude perioodi juhtivate arhitektidega. Kolm esimest intervjuude gruppi on läbi viidud Kadri Leetmaa ja Mari Nuga juhtimisel, neljanda intervjuueeritava grupi, juhtivate arhitektidega tegelesin mina koos Daniel B. Hessiga. Paljud intervjuueeritavad on nüüdseks austusväärses eas, mistõttu on viimane aeg nende personaalsete, omaaegsele planeerimispraktikale suunatud hinnangute ja arva-muste talletamiseks. Intervjuude käigus kogutud andmestik on tundliku ise-loomuga ja olemuselt subjektiivne, kuid pakub siiski ainulaadset võimalust dokumenteerida omaaegsete planeerimispraktikute arusaamu ja selgitusi. Intervjuude lindistused ja transkriptsioonid on kättesaadavad Tartu Ülikooli geograafia osakonnas. Kuna intervjuueeritavad andsid ametliku nõusoleku infor-matsiooni kasutamiseks uurimustöodes, on tegemist väärtusliku andmebaasiga ka edasisteks retrospektiivseteks uurimusteks.

Intervjuude raames kogutud teadmisi täiendasin arhiivimaterjalide läbitöötamisel kogutud teabega. Minu uurimuses olid algallikateks ametlikud planeerimis-dokumendid ja planeerimisprotessi menetluslikud lisad nagu ametkondade kooskõlastused, töökoosolekute protokollid ja otsustajate heakskiitmisaktid. Oluliseks teabeallikaks oli tollaegne ajakirjandus, eriti ajalehes Sirp&Vasar ilmunud asjakohased artiklid. Materjalidega käisin tutvumas Tallinna Linna-valitsuse arhiivis ja Arhitektuurimuuseumis.

Planeerija oskuste ja haridusvajaduste väljaselgitamiseks viisin koos kolleegidega läbi kaks uurimust. Tartu Ülikooli ja Eesti Planeerijate Ühingu koostöös viidi läbi planeerija kui elukutse jaoks vajalikke oskusi ja teadmisi

käsitlev küsitlusuuring. Küsitlus saadeti 800 planeerimisega seotud isikule nii avalikus- kui erasektoris. Vastused saadi 44% respondentidest. Uuringu läbiviimiseks koondati esmakordselt Eesti planeerimispraktikuid koondav andmebaas, samuti oli tegemist esmakordse selleteemalise uuringuga.

Planeerimisalase kõrghariduse hetkeolukorra väljaselgitamiseks viidi läbi õppekavade uuring. Osalesin uuringu ettevalmistamisel ja tulemuste tõlgendamisel, uuringu viisid läbi L.Lihtmaa ja H.Sepp. Uuringus käsitleti kuue kõrgkooli, Tartu Ülikooli, Eesti Maaülikooli, Tallinna Ülikooli, Tallinna Tehnikaülikooli, Tallinna Tehnikaülikooli Tartu Kolledzhi ja Eesti Kunstiakadeemia bakalaureuse ja magistritasandi õppekavu. Kasutades kõrgkoolide kodulehtedel avalikult kättesaadavat teavet, tüpologiseeriti õppeained ainekirjeldustele ja õpieesmärkidele tuginedes ja analüüsiti nende planeerimisele suunatust.

Täiendava andmestikuna olen oma uurimuses kasutanud Eesti ruumilise keskkonna planeerija kutsestandardit. Osalesin kutsestandardi ja kutse ostmise korra väljatöötamisel ning olen planeerijate kutsekomisjoni liige.

Doktoritöö diskussioonis, viiendas peatükis esitatud tulemustest selgub, et ruumilise planeerija roll Eestis on aja jooksul oluliselt muutunud. Kannapöörded ühiskonnakorralduses ja läänemaailmast meile jõudnud arusaamad planeerimisest kui kommunikatiivsest, poliitiliste väärtushinnangutega seotud tegevusalast on tugevalt mõjutanud Eesti ruumilise planeerimise olemust. Planeerija roll on teisenenud ratsionaalsest tehnikust pragmaatiliseks elluvijaks, loovaks kohaldujaks ja seejärel leebeks moderaatoriks. Nõukogude perioodil kaheldava väärtusega eristaatust omanud planeerimisest on saanud läbi keerulise üleminekuaja pigem tagaplaanile jääv ja pidevas identiteediotsinguis tegevusvaldkond. Siiski on läbi ajastute võimalik tajuda Eesti ruumilise planeerimise loovalt pragmaatilist olemust.

Pragmatism planeerimisteooriana tõdeb, et meie uskumused ja teadmised põhinevad praktilistel tagajärgedel. See arusaam on Eesti planeerimises sisaldunud läbi aegade, avaldades erineval moel. Nõukogudeaegseid ratsionaalseid planeeringuid suvilapiirkondadele ja paneelelamurajoonidele tõlgendati ja viidi ellu pragmaatiliselt, hiilides mööda kehtestatud regulatsioonidest. Suvilakruntide omanikud ja nüüdsed elanikud võtsid endale koheselt planeerija rolli, kohandades algselt aianduskruntideks planeeritud maatükke oma vajadustele, lähtudes pragmaatilistest sotsiaalsetest ja kohapõhistest vajadustest. Kohalikud omavalitsuste suhtumine suvilapiirkondadesse on samuti pragmaatiline, aktsepteerides pika-ajalise visiooni puudumisel elanike spontaanset ruumilist planeerimist alade edasiarendamiseks. Paneelelamupiirkondade kavandamisel said arhitekt-planeerijad realiseerida suurejoonelisi linnaehituslikke visioone, ammutades inspiratsiooni Põhjamaadest ja kohandades Moskvast tulenevaid reegleid oludele ja oma visioonile vastavateks. Võimu poolt aktsepteeritud arhitektid omasid tugevat positsiooni nii erinevatel valitsustasanditel kui planeerimis-meeskondade juhtidena. Leidsin oma uurimuses arvukalt tõendeid nii rahvusvahelise koostöö kohta (nt õppereisid lääneriikidesse) kui ka üllatuslikult tiheda avalikkusega suhtlemise kohta meedias. Paneelelamu-kriitilisi artikleid avaldati nii elanikelt kui arhitektidelt koheselt peale esimeste elamute valmimist. Uurimus

kinnitas, et meie paneelelamurajoonide kavandamist mõjutas tugevalt läänemaailma modernism.

Planeerija oskusi ja planeerimisharidust käsitlev osa uurimuses näitas, et planeerimisharidus Eestis on killustunud. Terviklik arusaam planeerimiseks vajalike oskuste ja teadmiste näol on olemas küll planeerija kutsestandardis, kuid ei ole veel juurdunud hariduses ja koolitustes. Mitmed pragmaatikute poolt väljatoodud suhtlevale-analüüsivale planeerimispraktikale omased oskused leiavad rõhutamist kutsestandardis, mis näeb planeerijat läbirääkija ja planeerimismeeskonna juhina. Samas on sarnaselt läänemaailmaga planeerija roll neoliberaalses ühiskonnas ähmastunud. Nagu Allmendinger (2009, 2200) küsib – kuidas saab planeerimine olla elukutse, kui ekspertteadmine kui selline puudub, oluline on vaid erinevate arvamuste koondamine. Sellises olukorras nõuab planeerimise kui professiooni jätkuv areng tõsist tähelepanu.

Reeglite kohapõhine kohandamine ja *a priori* põhimõtetest hoidumine on pragmatismile sügavalt omased. Samuti on oluline usk inimese kaalutus- ja otsustusvõimesse ning kahepoolsesse kommunikatsiooni. Samas on Eesti planeerimises hästi tajutav ka pragmatism tumedam pool. Üldistest põhimõtetest kõrvalehiilimine, pika-ajalistest plaanidest hoidumine ning sisukate alternatiivide kaalumise vältimine on ehk kõige selgemalt pragmatismiga seonduvad planeerimisnähtused Eestis. Siiski jõudsin oma uurimuses arusaamale, et pragmatismil on palju pakkuda nii planeerimisvaldkonnale kui planeerimisele kui professionile. Siinkohal on oluline väärtustada loovust selle kõige laiemas tähenduses, mis on Eesti planeerimisele olnud läbi aegade omane. Loovust pean oluliseks kõige laiemas mõttes, nii kitsastes (rahalistes) tingimustes leidlike lahenduste otsimise näol kui pealehakkamise ja julgete arhitektuursete visioonide valguses. Selleks, et planeerijad tegutseksid 'visionäärsete võimaldajatena' on vaja pragmatismi tugevamaid külgi edasi arendada ja nõrkusi leevendada läbi tervikliku planeerimisõppe. Loov, stsenaariumipõhine mõtlemine peaks olema üheks planeerimisõppekava ja täiendkoolituse võtmeteguriks. Läbimõeldud planeerimisalane haridus aitab planeerijatel vääriliselt reageerida tänapäevase maailma ruumilistele suundumustele. Loodan, et minu doktoritöö, milles laiendan tavapärast arusaama pragmatismist, aitab kaasa planeerimise kui professiooni jätkuvale elujõulisusele.

PUBLICATIONS

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name: Pille Metspalu
Date of birth: 03.08.1976
Phone: +372 514 8308
E-mail: pille@hendrikson.ee

Education:

2009–... University of Tartu, Human Geography, PhD studies
1999–2006 University of Tartu, Human Geography and Regional Planning,
MSc studies
1994–1999 University of Tartu, Geography, BSc studies
1991–1994 Tallinn Science School, secondary education

Work experience:

1999–... Hendrikson&Ko Ltd, planning expert, Head of Planning
Department
1999–2001 Institute of Future Studies, planning specialist
1995–1999 Tondi Üks, planner
2012–... University of Tartu, Department of Geography, contracted
lecturer

Additional career information:

2002 Estonian Association of Spatial Planners, founding member
2006–2012 Estonian Association of Spatial Planners, Chairman of the
Board
2012–... Estonian Association of Spatial Planners, Member of the Board
2015–... Member of the Planners Licence Committee

Research interests:

Spatial planning; urban and regional planning; planning theory; planning education.

Publications:

Roose, A., Raagmaa, G., Metspalu, P (2018). Advancing Education for Planning Professionals in Estonia – Between New Qualities and Path-Dependency. In: Frank, A.I. and Silver, C. (eds.) *Urban Planning Education*, 189–204. Springer International Publishing AG.
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ELULOOKIRJELDUS

Nimi: Pille Metspalu
Sünniaeg: 03.08.1976
Telefon: +3725148308
E-mail: pille@hendrikson.ee

Haridus:

2009–... Tartu Ülikool, doktoriõpe inimgeograafias
1999–2006 Tartu Ülikool, MSc inimgeograafias
1994–1999 Tartu Ülikool, BSc inimgeograafias
1991–1994 Tallinna Reaalkool, keskharidus

Töökogemus:

1999–... Hendrikson&Ko OÜ, planeerimisekspert, üld- ja
regionaalplaneeringute osakonna juhataja
1999–2001 Eesti Tuleviku-Uuringute Instituut, planeerimisspetsialist
1995–1999 Tondi Üks AS; planeerija
2012–... Tartu Ülikooli geograafia osakond, lepinguline lektor

Täiendav teave:

2002 Eesti Planeerijate Ühing, asutajaliige
2006–2012 Eesti Planeerijate Ühing, juhatuse esimees
2012–... Eesti Planeerijate Ühing, juhatuse liige
2015–... Ruumilise keskkonna planeerija kutsekomisjoni liige

Uurimisvaldkonnad:

Ruumiline planeerimine; linna- ja regionaalne planeerimine; planeerimisteooria; planeerimisharidus.

Publikatsioonid:

Roose, A., Raagmaa, G., Metspalu, P (2018). Advancing Education for Planning Professionals in Estonia – Between New Qualities and Path-Dependency. In: Frank, A.I. and Silver, C. (eds.) *Urban Planning Education*, 189–204. Springer International Publishing AG.

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