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**Assembling the future: the role of Transactive Planning Theory in generating alternative urban strategies.**

A thesis submitted to the Open University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Philosophy.

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And finally Kenneth for expanding the subtleties of complexity, as lived.

This dissertation is dedicated to those in the struggle for the future.

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## **Assembling the future: the role of Transactive Planning theory in generating alternative urban strategies.**

Conditions of uncertainty, rapid change and heightened social, economic and spatial inequalities are symptomatic of an increasingly internationalised and urbanised world system. These issues correspond to the emergence of an urban problematic that requires the requalification of planning's tools and techniques. Within this context: How does planning go about assembling the future?

The Mont Fleur civic scenarios undertaken in South Africa (1991-1992), the Toekomstverkenningen Amsterdam (1998-1999), and the Bishopsgate Methodology Statement proposed for an inner-city development site in London (2002), are presented as illustrative examples of how, planning connects knowledge to action in the public domain, translates complexity, deals with the future; Do the tools and processes used in the examples, extend or limit the possibility of alternative urban strategies?

These questions, are a starting point from which to explore John Friedmann's theory on Transactive Planning (1973). This theory is defined as a normative response to improving the practice of planning through a dialogical process that combines various forms of technical and experiential knowledge, through which a deeper understanding of issues surrounding a particular problem, is achieved. Within the present research framework, Transactive Planning is used to formulate the principles, tools and techniques of an approach corresponding to the conditions of an urban problematic.

The final question: "What kind of future do we want to assemble?" opens the discussion towards considering the role, not only of Transactive Planning, but of an urban imaginary as a way of rephrasing the urban problematic. The endgame is to refunction the notion of the future, not as "uncertainty" that has to be resolved, but as a creative process that generates innovative urban strategies.

Elena Pascolo

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## Introduction

### The strangely familiar

The emerging shape of the world system is described by many as globalised, by some as internationalised, and by others as urbanised.<sup>1</sup> Regardless which authors one chooses from the mounting publications on globalisation and its discontents, it can be stated that, what is common to all these interpretations of the contemporary condition, is that there is rapid simultaneous (unevenly distributed) change occurring on a scale that is unprecedented.<sup>2</sup> This change embraces all spheres of the social, cultural, economic, environmental, technological and spatial aspects of people's lives. What is of interest are the emergent processes that planning has used to accommodate, direct and respond to these changes. How is planning going about assembling the future?

As an activity, to borrow a phrase from Rexford Tugwell<sup>3</sup>, planning seeks the utility of the future in the present, and by implication, has had the uncertainty of the future as its central object and subject of investigation. A working definition of planning is defined as, "correct decision-making, concerning future courses of action,"<sup>4</sup> in which urban planning, is understood as, the "conscious formulation of goals and means of metropolitan development, regardless of whether these determinations are conducted by people officially designated by planners or not"<sup>5</sup>. It is this interface, between the uncertainty of the future, and the application of planning's decision-making tools, that opens up terrain for investigating the "how" of planning, its "ways of seeing, ways of doing " the future, not as uncertainty, but as an innovative activity. It is for this reason that the research framework for this dissertation focuses on the application of Transactive Planning, as elaborated by John Friedmann in the 1970s. This, it is hoped, will provide a broader understanding of the transformative potential that this form of planning might have on how we go about assembling alternative strategies to approach a respatialised urban problematic.

<sup>1</sup> Authors include: Saskia Sassen whose work ([Losing Control: Sovereignty in an Age of Globalisation](#) (1996) and [Cities in a World Economy](#)(1994) represents global cities as material manifestations of structural processes that have an econocentric bias. To this end her discourse is functionalist, stressing the command and control function of global cities as the concentration of post-industrial services. Hirst and Thompson who in [Globalisation in Question](#) (2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1999) present an alternative interpretation of the forces shaping the world system than that given by the globalisation discourse expounded by the monetarist agenda of institutions including the World Bank and the IMF. The UNCHS in [Cities in a Globalising World: Global Report on Human Settlements](#) (2001) outlines the statistical and human indicators of an urbanised world system.

<sup>2</sup> The current pace and scale of change that is occurring across systems: including economic, ecological, informational, cultural, social and spatial, not to mention political, marks the impact of these contemporary forces as unprecedented.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Friedmann (1987:11).

<sup>4</sup> Faludi (1986) in Sandercock (1998:89).

<sup>5</sup> Fainstein (1999:251).

An exploration related to the way we plan, the way we do urbanism or envision possibilities, inevitably opens up investigations which refer to what I have categorised as social, spatial and political modifiers. These include: scale, context, method and power. Together, these modifiers form the subscript to the ensuing presentation of illustrative case studies in Part A of the dissertation, namely: the Mont Fleur civic scenarios undertaken in South Africa (1991-1992); the Toekomstverkenningen Amsterdam (1998-1999); and the Bishopsgate Methodology Statement (London 2002). These particular cases have been chosen not only as they intimate the emergence of a Transactive style of planning but because they respond to a particular scalar register of assembling the future, namely: the regional and national, and the regional and metropolitan or city scale. The procedures of assembling the future therefore require an understanding of power, its locations and its mutations. This is in order that power might be contested, not through empty manifestos, but through actioning transformative change that has an impact on the normative and substantive bases of not only planning, but on the material conditions of our urban reality. Transactive Planning is presented as a resource for moving towards processes of assembling the future, of planning for change, which are generative of alternative urban strategies. Strategies that are not power, scale or context shy, but which actively seek to transform themselves and the structural bases of an urban reality.

Alternative urban strategies, based on a reproblematised understanding of the urban, and its relation to the unprecedented changes that affect the production of the urban in all its scales, contexts, involves a consideration of how the urban is defined in terms of scale, context and how it manifests power relations and power structures and processes. A schematic outline of the urban theoretical investigations undertaken by Henri Lefebvre and David Harvey is included as a means of approaching these issues from a theoretical perspective. It is hoped that aspects related to the "right to the city" and to the concept of an "urban imaginary", will further qualify and amplify Transactive Planning's potential role in assembling the future through alternative urban strategies. This discussion will form part of Part C of the dissertation, in which underlying themes and issues explored through the theoretical underpinning of John Friedmann's Transactive Planning presented in Part B, and through an exploration of issues exposed through the three illustrative examples, presented in Part A of the dissertation, are combined with a urban theoretical perspective in order to speculate further territories of research and action for a Transactive Planning approach.



## Transactive Planning: A schematic introduction

As a theory elaborated by John Friedmann in the 1970s, Transactive Planning sought to link new forms of knowing to action in a way that was responsive and reflexive to conditions of change in the setting of a post-industrialized USA. From a crisis position<sup>6</sup>, Friedmann proposes a style of planning "which changes knowledge into action through an unbroken sequence of interpersonal relations" (1973:171). This represents a response to the fragmentation of knowledge and the incommunicability between technical planners and their clients, which results in inappropriate decision-making by experts. Though Transactive Planning has expanded beyond this initial contextualisation, the focus is, however, still directed to elaborating linkages, not only between types of knowledge described as personal and processed, but also those established between people involved in these exchanges. It is only through these transactions that the personal knowledge of the client can "fuse" with the processed knowledge of the technician into meaningful action. Interpersonal relations are therefore central to the dynamism of the process. The dominant mode of communication is face-to-face dialogue in small groups, who through a constant feedback loop of processed and experiential knowledge, arrive at a deeper understanding of the conditions they are facing. The outcomes of these forms of engagement result in a "learning society" which seeks diversity of solutions at regional and local levels, and according to Friedmann, enables the recovery of the political community.

As a theory, Transactive Planning draws on the philosophical tradition of the American Pragmatist and New Humanism School, was influenced by the Chicago School's planning paradigm of the 1950s and 1960s, and drew references from Friedmann's formative work experiences at the Tennessee Valley Authority in 1953. Work on Small Group Theory in the 1970s and a general climate that saw the activation of radicalised grass-roots participation in

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<sup>6</sup> The setting for *Retracking America: A Theory of Transactive Planning* (1973) is post-industrial USA of the 1970s whose changes signal a world of uncertainties. Within this context of a destabilized world economic order, the claims and pressures on planning (both physical, social, and economic) were greater than ever, as it had promised to maintain a balance of economic and social conditions ensuring limitless growth in the post war period. However, shaken by shocks in the oil market, by political uprisings and the threat of nuclear war, the system started to show signs of instability and turbulence. For Friedmann, the unfolding irrationality and unpredictable patterns of the social and economic spheres of governance signalled that the tools and procedures of planning, (rooted in meeting the logistical needs of the military and adapted to respond to the needs of streamlining the efficiency of an emergent industrial basis for an integrated global economic system), were no longer effective in guaranteeing limitless growth. The emergent shape of this system, whose physical and social manifestations were increasingly obvious in the inner city upheavals in the USA during the 1970s, was characterized by Friedmann as a world in which there was a crisis in knowing and a crisis in valuing. It was a system in which major social transformations were underway and which therefore required a radical re-conceptualisation of the tools and techniques with which planners directed the system. Robert Beauregard in *Voices of Decline: the postwar fate of US cities* (1993) gives a well documented account of the impact that the discourse of inner city decline had on the formation of urban planning theory and practice, which serves as a useful contextualisation of Friedmann's "crisis" position.

voicing concerns and aspirations for civil society also impacted on the evolution of his theory that sought to action knowledge.

Transactive Planning has been chosen as a focus of this research framework because it is felt that the principles and processes it has elaborated, could form the basis of an innovative, if not transformative,<sup>7</sup> approach to assembling the future. Innovative in the manner in which it recombines and recalibrates the tools and instruments already at its disposal, in order to generate new ways of seeing and new ways of doing planning: transformative, not only of the normative basis of planning, but of its substantive outcomes and procedures. More importantly Transactive Planning is described as a process which is mobile in its ability to locate the mutating and relocating points of power as it reconfigures itself to accommodate the needs of an increasingly internationalised world economic order. It is this agility and mobility that presents itself as an innovative strategy that is able to confront power directly, by means of proposing actionable strategies. Transactive Planning then, offers alternative ways of interpreting what at first appears the “strangely familiar” in our contemporary urban condition. It enables us to reconfigure our strategies for assembling the future in a manner that is cognisant of the familiar issues, yet not subservient to a particular logic in the way in which responses to the issues are structured.

## **Methodology**

This dissertation explores the potential role of Transactive Planning, in generating alternative urban strategies, through the exploration of the tools and techniques and the emerging themes and issues raised in illustrative examples of how planning is currently going about assembling the future. The examples serve to introduce the operationalisation of some of Transactive Planning’s principles and processes. They are also indicative of what can be referred to as undercurrents of dissatisfaction with how planning has gone about approaching the uncertainties of the future. Furthermore, the illustrations are also instances of the emergence of planning’s transformative impulses which are supported by an innovative application of its tools and techniques. This forms the basis of a consideration of Transactive Planning’s potentially transformative role in shaping alternative strategies for how we approach assembling variant futures.

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<sup>7</sup> The traditions from which Transactive Planning draws from, include those of Social Learning and Social Mobilisation, both of which include radical and transformative agendas. These will be elaborated in Part B of the dissertation.

It should be clarified at the outset that, although it can be said that Transactive Planning corresponds to a participatory style of planning<sup>8</sup>, that this does not form the only criteria that would evaluate the potential role of Transactive Planning. Issues of inclusivity:exclusivity and the institutional or professional barriers that preclude a more democratic response to the question of assembling the future are acknowledged, but not considered as the only emergent themes. By releasing the evaluation from the standard critique of the inclusion:exclusion discourse it enables new questions to be asked of the processes of planning (i.e. not only whether they are inclusive of other viewpoints or if they are responsive to other needs) and how it responds to the modifiers of scale, context, method and power. This releases planning from a standardised set of procedures that effectively renders normalised responses to the challenges of the future. The application of a rehearsed set of responses prevents innovation and the potential transformation of both the normative and substantive aspects of planning at any scale. Rather, what is proposed is that the issues and themes emerging from the illustrative examples serve as vehicles through which a deeper understanding of the potential and shortcomings of Transactive Planning principles can be reached. This also broadens a consciousness of both the uses and abuses of the tools and techniques currently deployed by planning in the name of inclusivity, adaptability and responsiveness. This iterative method of interrogating practice (i.e. the illustrative examples) through theory (i.e. Transactive Planning) and vice versa reflects the “feedback” process of a transactive style of planning, which seeks to re-establish a generative link of knowledge to action.

### **Choice of illustrative examples**

The Mont Fleur civic scenarios undertaken in South Africa (1991-1992), the Toekomstverkenningen Amsterdam (1998-1999), and the Bishopsgate Methodology Statement (2002), are presented as illustrative examples of how planning, connects knowledge to action in the public domain, translates complexity, deals with the future; Do these tools extend or limit the possibility of alternative urban strategies? Are these diagnostic, prognostic or generative process? Common to all the examples is the manner in which the task of considering, if not assembling the future, is approached. All the examples make use of the principles and processes characteristic of what is loosely referred to as Transactive Planning. As mentioned these include: dialogical processes of face-to-face discussions based on small groups, the

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<sup>8</sup> A participatory style of planning is a decentralised inclusive approach to planning in which decisions are taken collectively.

inclusion of a broad range of knowledge bases, including both experts and lay-people, and the use of feed-back loops between theory and action to inform decision-making.

These examples have also been chosen as indicators of a general dissatisfaction in planning, not in terms of what some might see as its failures as part of the modern project<sup>9</sup>, but in terms of disillusionment. Disillusionment both by its practitioners, who recognise the shortcomings of the tools they use when operating within a given institutional structure, and by civil society which demands more responsive and responsible policies and strategies that deal with the complexity of the interface between spatial, social, economic and environmental structures in an ever internationalising and globalising world. The illustrative examples thus reveal what can be referred to as dissatisfaction, discontentment or in deed, an impulse towards requalifying, not necessarily planning's normative basis and principles, but its substantive outcomes and procedures. Are these impulses suggestive of planning looking for new ways of seeing, new ways of doing?

The choice of examples consciously draws from distinctive fields and scales of planning. The Mont Fleur civic scenarios are concerned with envisioning the political impact of various macro-economic and development approaches at a national and regional scale, whereas the Toekomstverkenningen Amsterdam (also referred to as the TVA) is a future-scoping exercise undertaken by a physical planning department at a citywide scale. Focusing at a completely different scale is the Bishopsgate Methodology Statement, which although referring to the strategic nature of an inner-city development site in London, outlines the contribution that a design-led approach could have in expanding perceived development potentials and constraints. Taken together, these different registers illustrate the emergence of similar dissatisfactions and impulses, which appear to correspond to various types of planning across different scales. They also intimate at the ability of Transactive Planning to confront issues of power by means of exposing its various forms and locations through alternative envisioning techniques. The evaluation of these examples is, therefore not in terms of their direct comparability, but with respect to showing that vigilance is required in establishing how tools are translated from one field to another, how they are applied, and to what agenda they are attached to.

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<sup>9</sup> Sandercock (1998).

## **Structure**

The structure of the dissertation includes the presentation of the illustrative examples in Part A: Ways of seeing, ways of doing. This is followed by a review of Friedmann's Transactive Planning in Part B: Translations. In the light of the themes and issues exposed by the illustrations presented in Part A and informed by an understanding of Transactive Planning's theoretical basis as revealed in Part B, the final part of the dissertation, Part C: Assembling the future, deals with a consideration of Transactive Planning's role in generating alternative urban strategies through an interrogation of Henri Lefebvre's and David Harvey's conceptual schema of the "right to the city" and the "urban imaginary".

# 2

## Ways of seeing, ways of doing.

"To become aware of true future possibilities is a creative activity, and to realise them a political activity."  
Ake Sandberg.

"Innumerable confusions and a profound feeling of despair invariably emerge in periods of great technological and cultural transitions. Our "Age of Anxiety" is, in great part, the result of trying to do today's job with yesterday's tools -with yesterdays concepts." Marshall McLuhan.

The future is not what it used to be. That we live in a world characterised by growing uncertainty and rapid change is no longer questioned or denied. What was once a clear path to a predictable end-state no longer comes with easy to follow directions. Planning is no longer business as usual. Everything is constantly reshaping itself to fit the requirements and conditions, of what some are calling a hyper-modernist or hyper-capitalist, trans-global economy.

How to plan, how to decide, what to do, in a multi-multi world? A world which is increasingly described as multi-dimensional, multi-faceted, multifarious, multi-disciplinary, yet still employs the analytical tools inherited from a rational comprehensive paradigm that institutionalises implementation procedures into rigid hierarchies, with predefined roles and power bases. In this centred model, based on the tradition of Enlightenment epistemology, the planner is "knower", having unquestionable expertise and objectivity. Planning is defined as, "correct decision-making, concerning future courses of action,"<sup>1</sup> and borrows extensively from the fields of organisational and public-choice theory, in order to determine what is an appropriate form of societal guidance. Though this has been the focus of extensive debate in planning theory and practice since the 1960s, it is still the predominant model that is being used to manage and direct change in urban centres around the world. This planning paradigm is shifting from a project or masterplanning model to an approach, which is more strategic and hence more open-ended, de-centred and flexible, making it more responsive to the structural, needs of what some refer to as advanced capital<sup>2</sup>. It is a move from what Andreas Faludi and Arnold Van der Valk (1994) would also describe as a technocratic, to a sociocratic understanding of the variables impacting on plan making. The field of strategic planning, both in business management and planning have produced a variety of tools to deal with uncertainty and indeterminacy. As noted by Patsy Healey in the OECD 2001 report: Towards New Roles for Spatial Planning, the new

<sup>1</sup> Faludi (1986) in Sandercock (1998:89).

<sup>2</sup> Amin, Hirst and Thrift amongst a burgeoning literature on globalisation, are examples of authors who have written on the restructuring of the world economic system. This system is no longer constrained by national protectionist laws and restrictions to trade. This move towards enforcing the necessary laws and agreements to enable unrestricted movement of capital on a global scale necessarily has spatial consequences and influences planning strategy in as much as cities are increasingly competing to attract international finance and investment.

urban territorial realities forged by the parallel processes of globalisation and localisation, require new tools for understanding the conditions, in order to structure responsive strategies.<sup>3</sup> This trend perhaps signals a realisation that we have as Marshall McLuhan said, been trying to do today's job with yesterday's tools -with yesterdays concepts.

The future is necessarily a terrain of contested realities, aspirations and interests. It is a site of struggle. Who can know what about the future? Who can choose among which futures? How are the resources, which determine the objective and subjective possibilities for action distributed? In this sense, the future has always been the subject and object of planning, be it territorial, spatial or fiscal. There will always be a struggle for the future. This part of the thesis looks at how the "future" has been used as a methodological tool to assemble possible and plausible alternative urban strategies. How has planning gone about assembling the future? What are the main themes and issues arising from this?

However defined, planning is concerned with "some kind of future arrangement in time and space" (Chadwick 1971). It can therefore be claimed that all planning is long-range and futures oriented, in as much as it:

- Involves a conscious control of the development of an organisation or society, based on analysis of available knowledge.
- Utilises knowledge in order to examine and specify the course of developments and the possibility for action.
- Forms part of an institutional structure with resources to control developments in the desired direction.

(Adapted from Sandberg 1976)

Planning then, is concerned with approaching conditions of change, of uncertainty and of structuring responses to inevitable conflictual relations, which might arise as a consequence of decision implementation. The various traditions of planning have thus always been concerned with channelling conflict: with limiting parameters of the unknown in order to secure the realisation of projected outcomes. In western styled economies and democracies this has

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<sup>3</sup> That these responsive strategies are primarily focused towards finding and optimising the apparent competitive advantage of cities, and their localities should be noted. What is apparent is that the potentially radical and transformative nature of the tools mentioned / itemised by Healey and Harris in the OECD 2001 report are geared towards competitiveness an innovation in technologies and techniques of planning to ensure a better quality of place for the interests of an increasingly footloose and transnational complex of capital.

inevitably been to serve the interests of capital formation and accumulation. It is this nexus between the state and the planning apparatus which has led to not only the refutation of the possibility of a radical planning practice (Cenzatti in Friedmann 1987) but concomitantly has led the development of an offshoot called radical planning practice. Without going into a detailed explanation of the evolution of the radical tradition in planning, which started way before the 1960s, it is introduced here as a note to link the discussion of the uses of the future back to the intentions of John Friedmann, and the effect this had on extending the radical possibilities of a transactive style of planning to expand to include dialogue and communication as a means of social mobilisation and social learning across various territorial scales. This method of including the tools of dialogue, of mutual learning and of incorporating feedback loops between not only theory and planning, but between different types of knowledge, necessarily approached issues of power. Who is control of the process of learning? Who directs what action to take? Whose interests are foregrounded? What criteria are used to decide what is an appropriate course of action? Whose future counts?

Why then this interest in the future? Since the crises facing the world economy during the 1970s, through to the increased attention to environmental issues and sustainability prerogatives there has been a burgeoning industry in future studies, not only in the field of management studies but increasingly in the spheres of development studies and planning practice. From the influential Club of Rome report in the 1970s, through to an increasing number of local, regional and national foresight reports and spatial planning exercises<sup>4</sup>, to the Urban Future 21: A global agenda for twenty-first century cities<sup>5</sup> report of 2000, there has been a growing use and manipulation of future studies methods to communicate the possibilities and limitations of the future. These also inevitably make use of the discourse or rhetoric of inclusivity in decision-making processes that need to be reviewed critically. It is from the too easily accepted framework of these kinds of studies, which do not provide a detailed account of the process of their formulation, or of the assumptions that they have drawn, which further begs the need for a critical reflection on what these tools and techniques claim and assume and how they are used to assemble variant urban futures. What then are the uses of the future?

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<sup>4</sup>This is particularly evident in the Netherlands since the 1970s through to Ireland and Finland, and Sweden whose national planning foresight exercises are presented in the OECD 2001 report on spatial planning.

<sup>5</sup> Prepared by Peter Hall and Ulrich Pfeiffer as a background report for the Global Conference on the Urban Future (URBAN 21) held in Berlin in July 2000. This document provides an outlook for sustainable urban futures through the presentation of trends, their outcomes and two scenarios on which they based policy recommendation for the governance of cities in the under developed world.



This part of the dissertation looks specifically at ways that we have approached planning for the future through the presentation of three illustrative examples: the Mont Fleur civic scenarios which were undertaken in South Africa in 1992 as a means of exploring the question of what post-apartheid South Africa would look like in 2002; the Toekomstverkenningen Amsterdam (TVA) undertaken by the Department of Physical Planning (dRO) in Amsterdam 1998-1999; and the Bishopsgate Methodology Statement which was prepared by the office of Zaha Hadid as part of a master planning bid for an inner-city regeneration site in London in May 2002. The salient themes and issues exposed by these illustrations will be used to consider the role of Transactive Planning in generating alternative urban strategies. As part of the discussion, each example will also be considered in terms of the particular response to issues of, scale, power, method and context. This reinforces the need to review Transactive Planning's potential role in generating alternative urban strategies, against these issues and their influence on how it is we see our "sorry reality", and how it is we action change.

Although none of the illustrations are formally described as Transactive Planning examples, they nevertheless all utilise the basic Transactive Planning principles of: face-to-face transactions; small group interactions; the expansion of knowledge bases through a dialogical processes; a focus on generating change and transformation in either physical or institutional terms. This forms the basis by which they have been chosen as exemplars of an emerging way of approaching conditions of change and uncertainty, of ways of assembling the future in a manner that might be called transactive. It should be noted at the outset, that the illustrative examples would not be presented as case studies, and will therefore, not be evaluated or assessed, or for that matter compared, according to set indicators or criteria. Their relevance is, in presenting how tools and techniques, for identifying future potential courses of action and decision-making in planning, are utilised in specific ways.

That there are countless examples that could fit this broad-brush definition of a Transactive Planning style is not denied. These particular illustrations are chosen, not as best-practice exemplars, but as snapshots of this emergent form of planning, which together respond to conditions of change and uncertainty at: various scales and contexts (from the regional significance of the Mont Fleur example, to the strategic national importance of the TVA case and the multi-scalar potential of the Bishopsgate Methodology Statement); and have very different interpretations of a dialogical method (from the civic dialogue process of the Mont Fleur

scenarios, to the dialogue-as-research basis of the TVA process and the implied generative workshop methodology of the Bishopsgate illustration); and respond to very specific power configurations (from the complex political dynamics of the Mont Fleur scenarios undertaken in South Africa during the transition from apartheid to democracy, to the intricate power webs in a city planning department and the inclusion of identified stakeholders, and the generative process of the Bishopsgate example which describes a methodology by which stakeholders are invited to suspend their expectations and narrow interests by means of imagining the potential of the site through parameters they are not accustomed to). For this reason, it is felt that they support the argument which states that Transactive Planning is a flexible approach which has the potential to not only be diagnostic of salient conditions, prognostic in intimating the likely effectiveness of interventions, but generative of innovative, if not alternative urban strategies.

More importantly, what the illustrative case studies explore, is the ability of a Transactive style of Planning to engage in elaborating strategies for not only exposing the locality or points of power, but also in actioning responses relevant to identified needs. Transactive Planning in its many forms and interpretations retains a mobility which enables it to migrate across different scalar registers (from the local to the global) and in so doing, is better equipped to identify the various incarnations and mutations of power bases as they are reconfigured to suit the needs of an increasingly internationalised world economic order. This characteristic of "mobility" will be explored in subsequent chapters of the dissertation and forms the basis of understanding Transactive Planning's contribution to the assemblage of futures which are responsive to the needs of civil society, as opposed to being directed by the narrow remit of corporate global capital.

# 3

## **Civic Scenarios and Civic Dialogue: The Mont Fleur Scenarios, South Africa (1991-1992)**

Scenario planning is used in business as a method to help strategic decision makers think differently about the problems and uncertainties they are facing<sup>1</sup> (Refer to Box 1 for definitions of Scenarios). This entails making dramatic shifts in perception of the given problem and its relation to other variables. A process focused on dialogue, research into possible and plausible futures that could evolve given a set combination of variables, and “storytelling” or framing the scenario by means of a narrative, is used. As such, it sits comfortably within the tradition of what is referred to as Transactive Planning, as its focus is on improving dialogue and learning between experts and non-experts in a given field so as to achieve a greater in-depth understanding of evolving conditions. This knowledge is then used to direct more responsive action. The classical scenario making process also involves small group-based interactions and is thus closely related to the team and group work principles characteristic of a Transactive Planning process.

The use of scenario planning methodologies as tools for civic dialogue and civic engagement, and in this sense as tools for facilitating social change, has gained increasing prominence. This has been mainstreamed by a workshop held by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Guatemala during November 8-10 in 2000<sup>2</sup>. The focus of this workshop was the use and application of scenario planning methodologies as a tool for civic dialogue in war-torn or conflict-ridden countries in which a political impasse seems inevitable. South Africa was the country that first adapted scenario planning for a national agenda. The Mont Fleur scenarios undertaken in South Africa between 1991 and 1992 are regarded as an exemplar of the civic scenario process and were used as a best practice case study in the UNDP workshop.

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<sup>1</sup> Interestingly the history of scenario methodology evolved from its strategic use in the military during World War II. Through the RAND Corporation, it made its way into the business sector and was made popular through its application by Royal Dutch Shell in the 1970s oil crisis. They had effectively forecast the oil crisis and were thus better able to deal with the rise in cost and demand. For a detailed overview see Ian Mile's contribution, Scenario analysis: identifying ideologies and issues in, Methods for Development Planning: Scenarios, models and micro-studies UNESCO Press, 1981.

<sup>2</sup> The motivating force behind this workshop was the success of three scenario processes in South Africa in 1991-1992 (Mont Fleur), in Columbia in 1997-1998 (Destino Columbia) and in Guatemala in 1998-2000 (Visión Guatemala). These experiences showed the potential for what is referred to as the civic scenario process, to build a shared vision across ideological political differences and through a process of dialogue, mutual learning and trust, bring about dramatic shifts in perceptions and the reframing of problems so as to create a common ground across political boundaries and differences. A detailed workshop summary can be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.undp.org/rblac/scenarios/documents>.

At the time the Mont Fleur project began, South Africa was in a transitional phase in which there was confusion, uncertainty as to the outcomes of the transition from apartheid to democracy would mean.<sup>3</sup> During the tumultuous period between 1990–1994, when the liberation movements were legalised and Nelson Mandela was released from prison and the first democratic elections were held, a period of intense negotiation and preparation took place in South Africa. It was a time of transition to democracy, and the Mont Fleur project played its part in informing public debate and assisting in the transition in a variety of ways. Central to this, was the process of the Mont Fleur scenarios, which brought together prominent people from across South African society. These included, African National Congress (ANC) officials, trade unionists, academics, establishment economists, corporate executives, conservative politicians, and community activists. Their objective was to develop a set of alternative stories about South Africa's future in order to provoke debate, understanding and initiate an optimistic outlook for South Africa during a time of transition mired with fear and uncertainty at the possibility of a peaceful transition to a democratically elected government.

This chapter looks at the Mont Fleur scenario making process as an illustration not only of the potential of this methodology to promote dialogue across boundaries, bring about shifts in perceptions and the framing of issues, the possibility of building a shared vision in which people are motivated to action change, and create an environment in which people are willing to adapt to a more fluid personalised approach to collective thought and learning, but also the need to be vigilant with regards to the uses and abuses of the future.

The Mont Fleur civic-dialogue scenario process was chosen as it signals the emergence of a planning approach at a national and regional scale that can be harnessed to achieve wide ranging institutional transformations in civic society. What the Mont Fleur illustration also does is establish a regional scale for the possible application of Transactive Planning methodologies. By this is meant that the tools of understanding and exposing multi-viewpoint perspectives of reality within which planning needs to operate, are effective in mediating between conflicting power bases in order to arrive at a commonly agreed on outcome. In this sense, various manifestations of political and financial power bases were able to be exposed through

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<sup>3</sup> Although a negotiated political settlement was not at the time assured, the likelihood was that democratic elections would produce an African National Congress (ANC) government, representing a black majority. The expectation was that the ANC would nationalise major industries and implement other strategies for the rapid redistribution of wealth, and act quickly to address historical disadvantages. That the business establishment was fearful of a populist macroeconomic policy, therefore came as no surprise.

unconventional methods (story-telling and narration) and defused in order to provide generative solutions as opposed to entrenching antagonistic relations between invited participants. What this does, is show what an unconventional approach to civic-dialogue that is not necessarily premised on establishing a negotiating field, but on forming common ground, can achieve. Power could not be camouflaged but was exposed in all its scales and concentrations. For this reason the Mont Fleur process was chosen as it shows how the principles of a Transactive Planning methodology are applicable across scalar registers and are able to be recalibrated to serve particular needs, in this case to enable processes of civic dialogue in a political context which was deemed almost intractable.

#### **The official story: Building a common future.**

Deeper News, the official news sheet from Global Business Network, a key player in corporate scenario making processes, states that the purpose of Mont Fleur was “not to present definitive truths but to stimulate debate on how to shape the next ten years”<sup>4</sup>. It was thus seen as a way of stimulating debate and to develop and disseminate stories about what might happen in South Africa between 1992-2002.<sup>5</sup> The objective was therefore as much about stimulating debate as it was about constructing a process whereby some of the difficult political choices facing South Africa during a transitional period, could be understood.<sup>6</sup> (Refer to Box 2) What this amounted to was establishing what was required to build a positive future for the country that was increasingly becoming overwhelmed by a pessimistic outlook.

A multidisciplinary team of 22 participants formed a heterogeneous negotiating elite,<sup>7</sup> drawn from the Conservative Party, and National Party (NP) on the right, through to the ANC and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) on the left. The Mont Fleur project was in effect, a multi-stakeholder dialogue process similar to many of the national debates / discussions going on at the same time. However, two elements made it different: one was the use of scenario

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<sup>4</sup> Deeper News Vol. 7 Number1, August 1992 accessed on the Internet May 2002.

<sup>5</sup> The University of Western Cape, through the Institute for Social Development, initiated the process, drawing together expertise from Shell international (Adam Kahane) and funded by the Friederich Ebert Stiftung and the Swiss Development Agency. The process of scenario formation included 3 intensive workshops between 1991 and 1992. The process of the Mont Fleur scenarios however cannot be seen as an isolated instance, rather as Bond (2000) points out, it is a part of a sometimes subtle sometimes audacious incursion of business interests into the political arena to ensure that South Africa's free market economy would not be dismantled along with the oppressive apartheid regime.

<sup>6</sup> The question of ANC's economic policy was a polemical topic of the 1990s as its previous economic models were focused on macroeconomic populism, in particular nationalisation.

<sup>7</sup> List of participants: Rob Davies, Howard Gabriels, Adam Kahane, Koosum Kalyan, Michiel Le Roux, Pieter Le Roux, Johan Liebenberg, Saki Macozoma, Tito Mboweni, Gaby Magomola, Mosebyane Malatsi, Thobeka Cikizwa Mangwana, Trevor Manuel, Vincent Thabane Maphai, Philip Mohr, Nicky Morgan, Patrick Ncube, Gugile Nkwinti, Brian O'Connell, Mahlomola Skosana, Vivienne Taylor, Sue Van der Merwe, Dr. Winfried Veit, Christo Wiese.

methodology and the other was the fact that the participants attended as individuals in their own right and not as representatives of the parties to which they belonged. Drawing together participants from divergent political ideological camps meant that for the process to start, that common ground had to be established in terms of defining what the dimensions of South Africa's crisis was. In fact this approach to using scenarios as a tool for establishing common ground as opposed to negotiation, which involves having a clear position which one is defending, is a key principle towards building understanding. It has been remarked that the success of the subsequent politically focused, formally mandated high level negotiations that occurred in South Africa prior to the 1994 elections, were to some extent enabled by having broken the ice, created a mutual trust and respect between negotiators that had participated in the Mont Fleur process.

Once this common ground had been established and that the team was working towards approaching a shared concern, namely: "What would South Africa be like in 2002?" the process of thinking about alternative interpretations of the possibilities of the future, began. After having compiled stories explicative of South Africa's possible futures which ranged from revolution, right-wing revolts, free-market utopias and economic repression, the team narrowed down the options to the remaining 4 scenarios which were finally agreed as being plausible and relevant, these included the:

- *Ostrich*, in which a negotiated settlement to the crisis in South Africa is not achieved, and the country's government continue to be non-representative (i.e. the continuation of apartheid.)
- *Lame Duck*, in which a settlement is achieved, but the transition to a new dispensation is slow and indecisive, i.e. weak government. What this amounts to is a narrative in which the government attempts to respond to all but satisfying no one, thereby creating an environment in which investors are uncertain and growth is held back. This mitigated the dangers of a coalition government.
- *Icarus*, in which transition is rapid but the new government unwisely, pursues unsustainable, populist economic policies i.e. populist economic policies with huge public spending program resulting in an economic crash.
- *Flight of the Flamingos*, in which the government's policies are sustainable and the country takes a path of inclusive growth and democracy.

(Adapted from [Deeper News](#) August 1992 accessed on the internet Feb 2002.)

These were seen as possible "alternative pathways to the future", and not as "blueprints". (Refer to Box 2 for more detailed outline of the 4 scenarios.) As scenarios, they were supposed to track possible trajectories of certain choices, thereby enabling people to think about the future differently. In this sense they were not predictions, but served as a means of identifying possibilities. From the start it was obvious that the Flight of the Flamingos scenario was the image of the future that was deemed as the most sustainable path to ensuring economic growth, and included some measure of addressing historical disadvantages. The scenarios were distributed by means of a 14 page insert in a influential newspaper (respected by the Left) in South Africa, a video and high profile discussion with fifty groups representing a varied cross section of trade unions, political organisations civic organisations etc. This was instrumental in creating informal networks based on a shared language and mutual understanding, forming a set of understandable narratives each of which had clear messages for South Africa in 1992. The scenario stories became household names and encouraged debate across South African society as people came to terms with the possibility of various futures. In this sense the Mont Fleur project was a civic process whose impact and footprint expanded beyond the network of the initial participants. As an economist interviewed by Glennifer Gillespie (2000) stated: "In April 1994, the Government of National Unity came to power in South Africa, under Nelson Mandela. Trevor Manuel became Minister of Finance in 1996. A few months later, he introduced the GEAR (Growth, Employment and Redistribution) strategy- a conventional conservative supply side type of economic policy. It kept interest rates high, applied conservative fiscal policy with a low budget deficit and liberalised exports. It was intended to promote growth and drive unemployment down. When I saw GEAR –and this was not even conceptualised at Mont Fleur, it was something that was decided by the new government and the appropriate structures- when I saw it, I could look at the relationship between what the policy said and where I thought it was going to take us, and those are the sort of footprints that Mont Fleur made." (Quoted in Gillespie in UNDP 2000.)

### **Box 1: Definitions of Scenarios as applied in business management**

- “Scenarios are descriptive narratives of plausible alternative projections of a specific part of the future. They are methodically researched and developed in sets of three, four, or more to study how an organisation, or one of its decisions, would fare in each future in the set.”

Fahey and Randall in: Learning from the Future: Competitive Foresight Scenarios (1998).

- “Scenarios are stories which describe different, though equally plausible, futures. They are a tool for ordering one's perceptions about alternative future environments in which one's decisions might be played out... Scenario planning as a methodology is a virtuous circle and an ongoing process. You keep returning to the beginning with a higher level of understanding of the past and the future. You learn to see many facets of the world at once and make more informed decisions in the present.”

Peter Schwartz: The Art of the Long View (1991).

- “A scenario is a tool for ordering one's perceptions about alternative future environments in which today's decisions might play out. In practice, scenarios resemble a set of stories, written or spoken, built around carefully constructed plots. Stories are an old way of organising knowledge, and when used as planning tools, they defy denial by encouraging-in fact, requiring-the willing suspension of disbelief. Stories can express multiple perspectives on complex events; scenarios give meaning to these events.”

Global Business Network: (<http://www.gbn>) (accessed April 2002).

- “Scenario planning derives from the observation that, given the impossibility of knowing precisely how the future will play out, a good decision or strategy to adopt is one that plays out well across several possible futures. To find that 'robust' strategy, scenarios are created in plural, such that each scenario diverges markedly from the others. These sets of scenarios are, essentially, specially constructed stories about the future, each one modelling a distinct, plausible world in which we might someday have to live and work.”

Lawrence Wilkinson: How to Build Scenarios Wired 2.11 September 1995.



## **Box 2: Summary of The Mont Fleur Scenarios**

Mont Fleur workshop participants analysed the social and political and economic issues confronting South Africa and compiled 30 stories about how events might unfold over the next decade. These included stories for revolution, right wing revolts and democratic free market utopias. The workshop team then carefully evaluated these potential scenarios against criteria such as plausibility and consistency, until nine stories survived. These ultimately became the following four possible futures for the country.

### **The Ostrich Scenario**

The Ostrich depicts a government that does not want to face reality and hides its head in the sand at the first sign of danger. It is unable to fly. As a result of the initial steps taken by the De Klerk government, the international community becomes more tolerant towards white South Africa. Encouraged by this support the Nationalist government hardens its negotiating position, while at the same time the liberation movement loses international support because it is too radical. The result is a standoff; negotiations break down, and the government decides to form a moderate alliance unacceptable to the black majority. The state represses by force the resistance that ensues. The business climate worsens and the economy remains stagnant. Social inequities remain un-addressed and eventually the opposing parties are forced back to the negotiating table, but under worse social, political and economic conditions than before.

### **The Lame Duck Scenario**

The Lame Duck envisions a protracted transition period lasting for most of the decade. No matter how hard it tries the nation cannot get off the ground. The Nationalist government and leaders of the liberation movement succeed in making a negotiated settlement, but it is a transitional arrangement filled with 'sunset clauses' containing minority vetoes, and various other checks and balances. These agreements that respond to the wishes of all parties, but in fact satisfy none, are paralysing the government. The social and economic crises remain inadequately addressed, with the government mired in a long and indecisive transition period. This situation discourages investors and creates more uncertainty about the future.

### **The Icarus Scenario**

Icarus was the figure in Greek mythology who achieved flight in wings made of wax and feathers but, exhilarated by this new found freedom and power, flew too close to the sun. The sun melted the wax, and Icarus fell to his death. In this scenario, the new democratically elected government tries to achieve too much too quickly, embarking on a massive spending spree to address the imbalances of the past. Initially, living standards increase and social conditions improve, but this is economically unsustainable and results in economic collapse. The very people the new government is attempting to serve end up worse off than before.

### **The Flamingo Scenario**

This is the scenario of inclusive democracy and steady growth. Flamingos take off slowly, rise together, and fly high. In order to achieve such a future for South Africa, the new government creates conditions in which economic growth is initially slow, but sustainable. It adopts sound social and economic policies and observes macroeconomic constraints. It makes well-targeted social investment, which give people confidence that their social needs will be met in the longer term. Business people become convinced that the government is trustworthy and that its policies will remain consistent, and therefore investment and employment grow. The essence of this scenario is the notion of broad participation that allows for a sound balance between social reconstruction and sustained economic growth.

(From UNDP Civic Scenarios Civic Dialogue Workshop 2000:60 Accessed on the Internet Feb 2002.)

## Outcomes, outputs and impact

Adam Kahane<sup>8</sup> in his presentation to the UNDP workshop on Civic Scenarios in 2000 outlines that 4 types of results are produced in civic scenario processes. These include:

1. Reframing mental models
2. Shared commitment to change developed through dialogue
3. Regenerated energy and optimism
4. Renewed action and momentum

Interestingly, the evaluation of these processes (based on dialogue and feedback loops, which are by definition fluid and open-ended) remains elusive. At times the process is more important than the products and as a UNDP representative at the workshop stated, " In UNDP we find it useful to make the distinction between outputs (what we can control) and outcomes (what we can't control)" (UNDP Workshop Report 2000: 20).

However Katrin Käufer, a co-contributor to the workshop suggests that, "civic scenarios have an impact on three levels; on the individual participants, on the people the participants engaged with and the organisations they belonged to, and on concrete decisions and initiatives in the countries where they took place. Each scenario<sup>9</sup> initiated a dialogue among diverse participants and established new patterns of relationship and thought. The task, the development of different plausible scenarios of the future, had a team building effect and connected the participants with their aspirations, both individually and collectively. The process of scenario building provides a tool to move participants through different stages of communication, to engage in dialogue and to move towards action. Additionally the process allows participants to reflect on their own intent." (Käufer in UNDP 2002)

These correspond to the three important arenas in which Gillespie identifies that the Mont Fleur project had an impact: "First it influenced the thinking of individuals who were involved in the scenario work, some of whom went on to occupy powerful political and national positions as a

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<sup>8</sup> Adam Kahane was the facilitator of the Mont Fleur scenario making process. Having gone through the Royal Dutch Shell training ground of scenario making at London's Group Planning division, he is now the director of Generon Consulting, a consulting firm which specialises in scenario making processes and co-ordinated /facilitated the UNDP conference on Civic Scenarios in Guatemala 2000. He was also instrumental in the civic scenario processes of Destino Columbia, and Visión Guatemala, both regarded as exemplars of the civic scenario process.

<sup>9</sup> Referring to Mont Fleur, Visión Guatemala, and Destino Colombia.

result of South Africa's first democratic election in 1994.<sup>10</sup> Second, the scenarios ...informed public debate in the period of transition to democracy, as project participants presented them to the National Executive Committees of political parties, to the Cabinet of the existing government, to business leaders and to the general public. Finally the project had an impact on the thinking of the African National Congress executive group, particularly around the development of its economic policy, which was influenced by scenario work that illuminated some of the dangers of a populist macroeconomic approach." (Gillespie in UNDP 2000: 58)

What these evaluations suggest is that civic scenarios have multiplier effects and that the lifecycle or the footprint of these projects extends beyond the defined problem on which the scenario process is initially focused on. The transactions facilitated by the networks established through a process based on open dialogue are exponential, thereby expanding the surface area for contact, and opening up multiple possibilities for change. The scale of transformation, be it at an institutional, structural or personal level is extensive and operates exponentially across contexts, be they institutional, political, economic or personal. The process of engaging in a methodology, making use of a small group, which interrogates the possibility for change thereby amplifies not only an understanding of what that change implies in material or operational terms, but expands the horizon of possible strategies to be used to ensure that agreed goals and principles are attained.

### **A closer inspection**

Ian Miles argues that in classical trend analysis: some variable, thought of signifying prime importance is hypothetically projected forward in time. "Most scenario studies proclaim their superiority to trend extrapolations while actually resting on little more than informal extrapolations. The "causal processes" which the scenarios are supposed to illuminate often turn out to be the old familiar trends again, with all the rhetoric of the study clothing merely more-or-less informed exercises in predicting the consequences of their onward march" (Miles in UNESCO 1981:32). What normally happens, is that a number of different rates of growth are postulated for a readily quantifiable / familiar variable (i.e. population size and GDP etc) and high, medium and low variants are given the title of "scenario". No serious explanations of the processes, that have produced the past trends or might produce future trends, are provided.

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<sup>10</sup> A substantial number of participants went onto occupy influential positions in South Africa in 2000 these included the Minister of Finance, the Governor of the Reserve Bank, the Chairman of the South African Broadcasting Corporation, the Managing Director of Transnet, a national transport company, and two influential ANC members of parliament.

Trends therefore appear to be causing history. This process is thus only useful for short-term views into the future, as trends are likely to be uniform. By assuming stability of processes, it also directs attention away from changes in the status quo. The political implications arising out of this process and its validity are thus questionable. By projecting an image of the standard world, the ensuing scenarios are nothing other than discussions of different political relations around this standard world.

Miles suggests that, by utilising a richer range of variables than used in trend projections, and the ability to take non-quantifiable events into account that there would be a focus on how events might interact. The potential consequences, the different areas and issues (results from different methods of thinking about the future) would be amplified and would need to be compared. This implies a cross-analysis of the chosen scenarios, which would result in a more comprehensible, forecast that consider counter-tendencies as well as tendencies. Images of the future, to which the consequences of technological developments or political choices would be related, would thus be provided. This enables the possibility to consider how interests would conflict in the future, not to mention how current conflicts of interests are bound up with attempts to realise different futures. It would thus be possible to achieve more than what is yielded by extrapolation and prognostication, as it inserts conflict and power as part of the scenario process.

So perhaps the question of the applicability, if not relevance, of scenario planning in spatial planning needs to be recalibrated with respect to the way in which scenario researchers and planners have gone about assessing and analysing causal processes and possible events. Is this an inherent pattern? Do scenarios necessarily depend upon assumptions that the future is revealed in past trends? Attempts to bring about major transformation are doomed if they do not base themselves on a criticism of the dominant structures of the present world. This for Miles, means headlong confrontation with the types of social theory that has largely been produced in order to expedite the operation of these structures (i.e. "scenario analysis" as a tool with which to understand different theories of the social system under assumption). The types of theoretical assumptions underpinning the scenarios and images of the future commonly considered also need to be identified, and that any new scenarios that are constructed be well grounded in an explicit and defensible framework of concepts and data (Miles in UNESCO 1981:35).

If one accepts that scenarios are about projections about the future and not its prediction, then they are concerned with ways of building a knowledge base about alternatives of how to get to a desired end-state, or what to do if one of the projections envisaged suddenly occurs. They are about changing perspectives, assumptions and liberating ones understanding of uncertainty, as possibilities and not as a paralysing force. They are “thinking frameworks” or “learning lenses” that use a zoom-in, zoom-out approach which jumps in scale from the big-picture to the fine print of daily operations. They are as Paul Schoemaker (in Fahey and Randall 1998: 427), says: “a collective surfacing of our ignorance”, and expose those invisible points of conflict, consensus or convergence that are easily, either assumed to exist, or denied by decision-makers, who above all, are crisis managers and not creative managers. What is interesting about these statements is that it gives the role of scenarios a dimension which potentially goes far beyond that required to promote the competitive agendas of corporations working, in what some would describe as a hyper-global post-industrial economic terrain, i.e. the traditional use of classical scenario techniques. What I am referring to is the consensus building participatory nature implicit in any story telling and vision sharing process which involves a confluence of diverse mindsets, world views and value systems as found not only in the microcosm of the “corporation” but more so in the terrain described by the city and its bureaucracy and constituencies. Are scenarios then a form of social learning?

Scenario planning then can be seen as descriptive of an epistemology of action that is dependant on continual feedback loops to inform and challenge assumptions, and bears obvious resemblance to the principles of Transactive Planning. Therefore there appear to be many uses for the future. That these can be abused to serve various ideological agendas is not disputed. What needs to be understood, is the potential of these tools, to be harnessed to generate more radical responses to an urban imaginary<sup>11</sup>, as opposed to diagnosing the present in terms of trends and their projections.

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<sup>11</sup> A more detailed discussion related to the notion of an urban imaginary will be presented in part C: Assembling the future.

### **Box 3: The historical context of Scenario processes in South Africa**

The period between 1990 and 1994 was a time of change. Nelson Mandela was released from prison, the political terrain of the country changed as previously banned anti-apartheid organisations were legalised, (African National Party (ANC), the Pan African Congress (PAC), the South African Communist Party (SACP)) and the first democratic elections were held. During this historic interregnum numerous discussions, some high profile, some informal, some overt some covert, some held in order to discuss the way forward to a democratic future, some focussing on a transition of power, and others on the changes needed to initiate a transformation of centuries of institutionalised racism and discrimination. Themes discussed ranged from housing to constitutional overhaul, from education to economic policy, from land rights to gay rights. The Mont Fleur Scenarios were part of this discursive moment that pre-empted the agendas for what was the negotiated settlement of South Africa's future.

What the official story does not state is that the Mont Fleur scenarios (undertaken between 1991-1992) were part of a trajectory of scenario making approaches which were initiated by South African corporations; the biggest players with the most to loose if the economic policy was to change from favouring a corporatist agenda, to a socially/ populist responsive policy favouring redistribution and possible nationalisation of the economy. Bond (2000) relates a fascinating overview of this process which included the Anglo American scenarios by Clem Sunter: with Shell's Pierre Wack *The World and South Africa in the 1980s* , the Nedcor / Old Mutual scenarios by Bob Tucker: *Prospects for Successful Transition* (1993) and Lawrence Schlemmer's scenarios for Sanlam, and Robin Lee of Nedcor /Old Mutual social democratic scenario building process in Professional Economists Panel 1993 *"Growing Together"*.

Some quotes from Patti Waldmeir's *Anatomy of a miracle* (1997) are prescient of the forces at work in formalising the transition of macroeconomic policy frameworks:

"The economy of South Africa, the day after the ANC flag flies over the Union Buildings, will be exactly the same as the day before...you can't transform it by edict unless you are prepared to risk a complete economic collapse. We can't just bake slogans-we've got to bake bread." Joe Slovo (Quoted in Waldmeir 1997: 253).

"Even if we leave aside the merits of the economic debate, there is a political reality facing us. The business community worldwide is not going to have any truck with a government that wants to nationalise: it's a reality. Do you want to fly in the face of this reality? You can't do it."

Nelson Mandela at an ANC Economic Policy Conference May 1992, after having attended the Davos World Economic Forum (Quoted in Waldmeir 1997:256).

"Rather than debating our paradigms, we learned to debate the realities facing us."  
Alec Erwin (Quoted in Waldmeir 1997:257).

## **Emergent themes: confronting issues**

### **On the uses of the future**

The themes that emerge form a consideration of the use of civic scenarios, as illustrated in the Mont Fleur project, are inevitably at a macro economic scale and thus are primarily political, economic or social in form. Civic scenario processes are thus almost entirely political processes, as they seek to influence future leaders, and policy formulation that will thereby impact on the future of a nation. As noted by Gillespie's review of the Mont Fleur project, "It is clear from the interviews that the intention of the Mont Fleur project was to influence future leaders-future ANC leaders in particular. This was a serious exercise undertaken specifically to make a contribution to the future of South Africa by influencing the elite." (Gillespie in UNDP Workshop Report 2000:69). Power, in all its forms and scales of operation (i.e. from multinational corporations whose key interest was ensuring a pro-business economic policy, to left wing political parties whose mandate was to ensure the redistribution of wealth and resources) was inscribed in the process from the outset. A political dimension to the process could therefore not be ignored. The salient issues arising from this political dimension of the civic scenario process include:

- Who convenes the scenario team and what is their agenda?
- Who funds the project and why?
- Who is selected to participate and why?
- In the dissemination process who does the presentation, to whom and why?
- Who owns the scenario project?

(From UNDP Workshop Report 2000)

It was precisely the acknowledgement of the political dimension, of the obvious conflicts of interest represented at the Mont Fleur scenario workshops that was harnessed as a generative potential in a process aimed at broadening the scope for civic dialogue in a national context that was heading towards what some were seeing as an almost inevitable civil war. The contribution of the Mont Fleur workshops was that it approached the process of assembling the future not from a position of negotiation, but from one of trying to establish a common ground from which to structure narratives, or possibilities of what the future could become. How the conflicting power bases and interests were mediated opens up the issue of the "future" as a contested terrain.

The future then has various uses, each of which are customised to particular objectives and agendas. Aristotle distinguished between two aspects of the future: the future as an "evolving framework" and the future as a series of "options and decisions" a "series of voluntary actions."<sup>12</sup> From these two positions it is clear that the uses of the future, as avenues of presenting and obtaining information about current and projected trends and processing it as knowledge, is essentially about power relations between those who have access to the methods of shaping this information into images of the future. The uses of the future are therefore based primarily on the agenda at play, and are persuasive tools in directing, guiding influential decision makers in redirecting resources and reconfiguring decision-making structures, in order to steer towards a preferred outcome. They can thus be either used for ideological or utopian ends.

If the struggle for the future is to ensure an equality of access to the processes that shape them, then we need to consider how we perceive the future in order to understand how we structure images of it. As Friedmann in chapter five of Retracking America points out, the future appears to us as:

- An objective dimension of metric time
- A projected dimension
- A dimension of yet unrealisable possibilities
- A dimension of change
- A dimension of choice
- A non-homogenous dimension
- An unbounded dimension

(Adapted from Friedmann 1973: 115)

All of these have implications on how we perceive and act out our realisations of future states that essentially involve processes of learning and adjustments to conditions. Our psychological make-up apparently also alters our behaviour to try and perpetuate continuity and order, therefore we are necessarily resistant to change which inevitably reduce our possibilities of choice. This is true for the immediate future as it is most likely to affect us directly. However, the

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<sup>12</sup> Abraham Moles: The future oriented society-axioms and methodology in *Futures* vol. 2 no 4 Dec. 1970 p316.



distant future enables us to think beyond the confines of our direct present, as it is not going to affect our daily lives or immediate prospects.

Thus the future is about projected realities. The future may be viewed in two ways: "As future history, it is continuous with the past, and appears either as a logical extension of, or in dialectical opposition to, past events. As utopia, it is projected as an ideal state discontinuous with the past but capable of informing and inspiring present actions." (*Ibid*: 116). This is referring back to Karl Mannheim's conception of the two basic ideological orientations that influence how we approach the future. This is relevant in our discussions as it points out that Friedmann was also thinking of methods through which to engage the theory of Transactive Planning within the field of practice.

The uses of the future thus are dependant on a critical analysis of the power structures that frame their interpretation and presentation. As Ake Sandberg notes: "The methods of planning and an organised planning activity become power resources, just like other political, economic, intellectual and ideological resources. Those with large power resources can exercise power. i.e. control the actions and thoughts of other parties." (Sandberg 1976:20). For this reason, planning activities are an important aspect of the struggle for the future. Statements about the future are not made because we will them to happen, but because we want to influence present action. Thus the forecaster is not morally neutral, but a change agent who wants to influence change/ behaviour. Scenarios are powerful tools to insinuate narratives and images to influence mindsets. Scenarios are therefore primarily instruments of persuasion.

The assumption that tomorrow's world would resemble today's reality is repeatedly challenged by the emergence of unprecedented anomalies that do not fit economic models based on previous experience.<sup>13</sup> From a political dimension, this raises questions of the state's functions and of planning's remit within a globalised and localised territorial scale of action. It is argued that through an analysis of the uses of the future, that this necessarily problematises planning activities, as it brings to our attention the role of constructing alternative perspectives through socially constructed positions. This in turn leads to a necessary politicisation of planning in order to reenergize it. To what extent then, can planning be brought into the services of creating

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<sup>13</sup> Schön (1971) describes this attitude as "dynamic conservatism" in which people and organisations do not wish to acknowledge that the "stable state" does not exist but that our reality is immersed in uncertainty and is constantly changing. Organisations are thus plagued by what he calls "inertia" as they only see what they want to see. They cannot, "think beyond the box" of their own assumptions.

alternative futures? To what extent will it become an instrument for an uncontrolled exercise of power by providing a formally "inclusive" decision input with the help of sophisticated methods, while outwardly disguising or justifying that same use of power?

As Miles suggests, a reconstruction of our understanding of scenarios may be necessary in order for them to be rendered appropriate for different practices and purposes. The salient problem with the classical definition of scenario planning is, that as a process it is based on an element of subjective judgement, relative plausibility and reasonableness. What this does not do is challenge the assumptions of plausibility and reasonableness: Plausible for whom? Reasonable in terms of what assumptions? This implies that the mechanisms and outcomes of a classical scenario planning process is directed with a specific target audience in mind and the entire process, is thus from the start, complicit with an underlying agenda in terms of criteria for assessing credibility, usefulness and ease of understanding. Are scenarios merely another pseudo-scientific method to perpetuate the status quo? "(C)ould it be that a dialogue is necessary concerning the assumptions and data on which the scenarios are based? Indeed may it not be the case that forecasters have few qualms about specifying the need for 'plausibility' and 'reasonableness' precisely because most....planners...have shared a view of the world which has gone unchallenged?" (Miles in UNESCO 1981: 35)

How to approach the "future" creatively, as opposed to the paralysis generated by uncertainty? I include a lengthy quotation by Peter Marris, as it is useful in exposing the "temptations" of harnessing the latent transformative, and hence potentially disruptive, forces of a dynamic future. What this shows is that the promises of the future can be usurped by dominant power structures in order to perpetuate a particular end game, thereby effectively dismissing the potential of transformation.

"There is a logic to the management of uncertainty which constitutes one of the most fundamental temptations of power. If you cannot be sure what is going to happen, your chances of doing well are greatest if you have a range of actions open to you, from which to choose as events unfold. But that freedom of choice is only useful if you can predict what will happen if you decide on a particular action. And this implies an inherent inequality in the management of uncertainty. The value of freedom of action depends on other people being committed in advance to act as you expect, should you decide on any one of the courses of action open to

you. Others therefore cannot be allowed the same freedom of action that you seek to enjoy. Hence in every hierarchy of power, the actions of subordinates are constrained by the freedom of their superiors; and the lower the level of power, the more people's lives are contingent on the behaviours of others. The burden of uncertainty is thrust cumulatively downwards, as the weak are more and more subject to the behaviour of others that they cannot control or even predict. This use of power to secure a competitive advantage in the mastery of uncertainty is, I believe, an even more fundamental aspect of domination than is the competitive accumulation of resources." (Peter Marris in Friedmann and Douglass 1998: 13).

Identifying and exposing the locus of power within any planning process is thus paramount to ensuring that the "future" is not colonised as a province serving the interests of the few over the needs of the many.

#### **Elite transition: realigning the future**

Patrick Bond in Elite Transition: from Apartheid to Neoliberalism in South Africa (2000) explores the transition from a popular-nationalist anti-apartheid project to an official neoliberalism<sup>14</sup> during the 1990-1994 periods. It is an exploration of the forces of both structure and agency<sup>15</sup> which mitigated this process and which were instrumental in guiding this journey from a position of anti-imperialism to one of a home grown structural adjustment set of economic policies. What caused this deviation from the liberation movements mandates<sup>16</sup>? How was the dominant business sector complicit in this manoeuvre? What tactics were used to restructure a vision of how the forces of economics and policy and social mandate were to be reprioritised? In approaching these questions he presents what amounts to an unofficial story of scenario making process in South Africa's transition period.

By tracing how capitalist crisis coincided with neoliberal ideas, and in turn was exacerbated by uneven development, Bond builds an argument which exposes; "one of the many ways –certainly the most transparent, at a time of prolific, murky behind-the-scenes deal-making- in which key ANC leaders took a neoliberal turn was their convergence with business representatives in endorsing social contract capitalism which promised much; and thus if the underlying appeals for 'moderation' from both Left and Right were largely spurious, the

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<sup>14</sup> Taken here as the adherence to free market principles at the expense of social obligations of the state.

<sup>15</sup> Understood in this sense as structure corresponding to the balance of forces in the economy and society, and agency as relating to the leadership i.e. ANC (Bond 2000:53).

<sup>16</sup> Mandates established as early as the Kiptown Freedom Charter 1955.

discourse of scenario planning nevertheless reveals much about the banalities of an elite transition.” (Bond 2000:53) Bond therefore, sees scenarios basically as a tool that leads to the destruction of progressive economic and social policy aspirations (Bond 2000:53). Scenarios are one of the processes related to the macro-economic compromise that occurred within the democratic movement negotiating / policy making elite between 1992-93 whose neoliberal outcomes are endemic of the “corruption of decades-old redistribute economic ambitions” (*Ibid*: 54).

The Mont Fleur scenario process was, in this interpretation, specifically aimed at generating a social democratic compromise. It was however also seen as a contest rigged from the start, in which “ the subtext through the Mont Fleur process was the maiming of poor *Icarus*, who initially soared in trying to meet vast working-class expectations but ended up aiming too high and self-destructing” (*Ibid*: 71, italics as original) What this translated into, was the neutering and discrediting of the fundamental Democratic Movement tenant of “growth through redistribution”. (*Ibid*: 72). The subtle coercive nature of discrediting the inherent logic of one of the scenarios, in this case that of *Icarus*, can be seen as a move to “deradicalise further the politicians and technocrats of the democratic movement, precisely in order to prepare them to join the elite.” (*Ibid*: 74).

So while the assessment of the extent to which the Mont Fleur influenced economic policy is an indefinite matter, everyone who was interviewed agreed that the work done over the period of the scenario project gave them an opportunity to think through particular courses of action to their logical conclusions. However as Bond notes, “some significant material damage to the interest of the poor and working-class was done in all of this scenario posturing and econocrat –led pacting.”

What Bond contributes to an evaluation of the potential use of scenario planning tools and techniques, is the need for vigilance over the power structures that mobilise scenario-making processes to direct attention to a particular framing of the future. Scenarios are thus seen as tools for realigning the future towards a specific objective, which can either, be overt or covert. This is the double-edged aspect of any tool or method and requires a critical understanding of both the potentials, and problems in any application, in a spatial planning dimension.

### **Scenarios as Social Learning**

The Mont Fleur exercise demonstrated the informal, indirect scenario approach to be an innovative and productive method for a society in conflict, to approach the future. The process of building understanding through dialogue, through learning to listen and building on ways of structuring knowledge from a range of invited experts in diverse fields or from divergent ideological positions, the format of working in small groups through which a team effort and team identity was nurtured by establishing common purpose, i.e. in this case of approaching the question of "What South Africa would be like in 2002?", all indicate that the process of civic scenarios is compatible with the principles of social learning. One specific contribution of this shared knowledge process was "creating a more realistic assessment of the crucial economic dimension of the transition; previously, most people had focused only on political, military and constitutional aspects." (Kahane from <http://www.wholeearthmag.com/ArticleBin/222.html> accessed May 2002) What Bond, in his critique of the scenario making process in South Africa, shows however, is that this process of "social learning", has the uncanny ability to be either radical or conservative. The question then is, who is learning what and for what purpose?

### **Making common ground**

The civic scenario approach is different from, and complementary to, negotiation. If you are not thinking in terms of having to agree, i.e. as in a negotiation process which tends to focus on identifying positions and interest of parties and then finding a way to narrow or reconcile these differences, then you are more open to exploring areas of shared understanding. The aim of such a non-negotiating process is, according to Marvin Wiesbord (an organisational consultant), to "find and enlarge the common ground". This then opens up the possibility of forming common ground, even if engaging in a discussion with ideologically opposed participants. This is useful for spatial planning applications of scenario methodologies as spatial planning, is a terrain that is characterised by conflicting agendas and interests.

As this illustration demonstrates, it is a promising tool for future attempts to reach public consensus. (Kahane 1992:4) Above all, it was not a mandated negotiation process, which meant that participants did not feel restricted to toeing the party line, and thus engaged in an open conversation that was an exchange of ideas, ideologies and explanation of positions. This no doubt, formed the background to national negotiation processes which were occurring in parallel, and which were mandated and formal. In this sense the Mont Fleur process is seen as

a preamble to the negotiated settlement of South Africa and, as Bond outlines, part of the step in ensuring that the country's economic policy would steer in the direction of a neo-liberal agenda as the only alternative.

### **Scenarios as a transactive process**

Kahane, in his review of the Mont Fleur scenarios, outlines why he views the process as producing successful results:

- The scenario process is logical
- The process is open and informal
- The process is inclusive and holistic
- The process elicits choices
- The process is constructive

By using a process based on team work and face-to-face communication in small groups, shifts in language, thinking and language occur and therefore constitute a reframing of the problem, which through a process of reviewing is a generative position i.e. a new way of looking at a problem is a new way of finding solutions. In this sense the civic scenario process is an example of social learning and of transactive planning in practice that harnesses and mobilises small group dynamics to action change and decision-making. Within this process, dialogue is the essential tool for change that allows access to the deeper level of behaviour. This suggests that there is a stage of transition between "talking nice" (i.e. establishing the rules), "talking tough" (speaking your mind), reflective dialogue (listening and developing an inner observation regarding what one is saying), to what amounts to truly creative thinking which is achieved by "generative dialogue". This is only achieved through a reflective, as opposed to debate-oriented approach. A similar "discovery" process occurs in the scenario project process.

Generative dialogue allows the recognition of common ground. It also allows interactions to take place "at a level of connection that transcends individual interest. Generative dialogue allows the participant to experience the whole. Another example of generative dialogue is when a new idea comes up in conversation and it is not possible to identify which participant had the idea because the idea emerged from the flow of conversation." (Käufer in UNDP 2000). These qualities of transcendence, and the ability to shape ideas beyond the logic of an inscribed ideological interpretation of current conditions are generative aspects of a transactive planning

process that enable the formation of a common ground, of a shared vision of what the future could be. This goes beyond narrowly enshrined interests to include possibilities that could not have been imagined within a narrow defined set of objective which respond to particular interests. These techniques thus expand the territory of possibility and is no doing start to question the normative and substantive basis of power structures that premise decision-making according to static or sclerotic ideological positions which are cumbersome and not responsive to change.

What the Mont Fleur civic-scenario making process does is intimate the possibility that transactive mechanisms, tools and processes, have in achieving decisions-making frameworks if not processes, which are more mobile, which are more responsive to the fluid terrain of change in a manner which harness the future, not as uncertainty but as a generative field do possibilities. More importantly it exposes the complicit nature of power in the process of assembling the future. This is of significance as it starts to elaborate how Transactive Planning procedures are able, not only to locate the points of power within a system (i.e. political and economic), across scales (i.e. national, regional, international), and contexts (i.e. social, political, economic etc.), but are able to propose action, ways of doing, ways of progressing the assembly of the future, in a manner that is not power shy, but cognisant of the implications of every action and proposition.

# 4

## Debate as research method:

### The Toekomstverkenningen Amsterdam (1998-99)

This chapter looks at the illustrative example, Toekomstverkenningen Amsterdam (Future Prospects Amsterdam) (TVA) which was a project initiated in 1998 by the city's Department of Physical Planning (Dienst Ruimtelijke Ordening of Amsterdam or dRO). It was a project that focused on developing a scenario for what Amsterdam could be like in the year 2030. Such a vision was seen as necessary to form the basis for directing physical planning efforts by the municipal administration of Amsterdam. The underlying objective for such a vision was to ensure Amsterdam's competitiveness in the region and ensure its ongoing profile within the urban-province<sup>1</sup>.

The intention was also to test whether debate was an effective research method for the dRO. In so doing, the TVA serves as a typical example of Transactive Planning practice, which gives communication, dialogue, debate and the transfer and exchange of knowledge primacy as a process. The TVA, thus encompasses methods of consultation, communication, future studies, trend analysis, all used to inform decision-making at a city scale of physical planning. A review of the TVA is used to form the basis for both a critique of Transactive Planning techniques, and of the use and abuse of theory/ ideology when utilised for a specific political goal; i.e. in this case ensuring the competitiveness and attractiveness of a particular place, not necessarily for its inhabitants but in order to attract investment by transnational corporations and finance. Themes raised through the presentation of this illustrative example will inform a consideration of the role of Transactive Planning in generating alternative urban strategies.

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<sup>1</sup> In the 1980s, Amsterdam politicians launched a campaign to give Amsterdam more say over its hinterland. The proposals to split Amsterdam into 16 autonomous districts, were formulated in order to assist Amsterdam with its serious financial and economic problems caused by the "haemorrhaging" of the city's tax base, high levels of unemployment, and poor service and infrastructure provision, all of which were caused by the overspill of growth centre policies of the 1970s. This was to form a new style urban province, enabling the debate to flourish on how to allow the "great" cities of the Netherlands to fulfil their role in international competition, through a co-ordinated yet decentralised network of city-regional authorities. Fragmentation of both spatial and administrative co-ordination was seen as increasingly disadvantageous in ensuring the regions competitiveness within Europe. There is currently an increased awareness that, co-operation between Amsterdam and its surrounding municipalities is essential in order to keep abreast of European competition for international investment. This is evident in the establishment of the Regional Forum of Amsterdam that was established in 1984 with 20 municipalities. The task of this forum was the reform of local and regional government, whereby planning would be the chief responsibility of city-regional authorities, thereby giving Amsterdam more of a chance to implement its policies. Structure planning and strategic decisions and key projects now remain the sole responsibility of the city. The rest being devolved to surrounding districts. The province has also granted the structure plan the status of provincial plan (since 1990) which means that this forms the basis for approving plans drawn by other districts. Amsterdam thus exercises de-facto planning control over its jurisdiction. Faludi and Van der Valk ( 1994:192 ).



The underlying question posed to Transactive Planning techniques,<sup>2</sup> used in a spatial planning context, is whether they limit or liberate the future; whether they are true instances of transaction between different types of knowing, (of technical knowledge and experience based knowledge), or whether they are a subtle and coercive manner of installing the visions directed by dominant political parties, of where and how development is to progress. Is a Transactive process, in which both civil servants and citizens are made to feel a part of a debate and discussion about the future, a participatory process, or merely a sophisticated marketing methodology by which future plans are presented in a manner that is more palatable than the outright imposition of a particular vision? This goes to the heart of the rhetoric with which Transactive Planning methodologies have been marketed by planning departments, i.e. that they are exploratory tools which engage a variety of experts, and citizens in qualifying possible and alternative futures which could assist in guiding current policy formulation thereby, making the planning processes more manageable and effective. Together with other forecasting tools, namely scenario planning, these processes and procedures are viewed as assisting decision-making by liberating experts and policy makers from established assumptions which, to use management jargon, enables them to think beyond the box. In so doing, assumptions, expectations and objectives are exposed. Through an apparently open ended and accessible discussion and debating forum, new ideas are contributed to the processes of planning for the future development of a city and of a region. The question remains as to whether this exposure leads to radical changes, or merely to the necessity of repackaging the city "vision" in a manner in which the old assumptions are masked, thereby perpetuating a particular view of what the present is, and how the future should be. Interestingly the graphic chosen by the dRO to illustrate the poster inviting the citizens of Amsterdam to attend a public consultation congress, was that of a genie emerging from an Arabic lamp. What exactly does the TVA as a process show us about the principles of a Transactive Planning? What does it let out the lamp? Who is the genie in the process; the dRO or civil society? Who, in other words, responds to which command of the future?

The TVA scenario process was chosen as it signals the emergence of a planning approach at a city scale and takes into consideration trends that are affecting planning strategies at a national and regional scale. This embeddedness of scales and the impact this has on structuring planning

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<sup>2</sup> Understood as techniques which give dialogue between different stakeholders primacy, which focus on face-to-face transactions, which operate in feed-back loops in which technical and experiential based knowledge informs action and vice versa.

methodologies which are able to respond to the subtle and sometimes large shifts in policy direction, is of interest in that it exposes methods of planning that are more responsive, more mobile and more agile in their response to influences from a range of overlapping scales. A recognition of the regional scale, of the need to ensure regional competitiveness through strategic planning, and its impact on the framing of localised or city scale policy and strategies for assembling the future, led to a recognition that change had to occur within the institutional process of plan-making within the dRO. It is for this reason that the TVA was chosen as an illustration of the emergence of a transactive style of planning at a regional-city scale as it highlights how transactive processes are able to approach issues across not only scalar registers but are also able to be adapted to respond to different contextual needs (i.e. the institutional and the civic context and its relation to the spatial context of planning for the future). What the TVA illustration also does is establish changes and transformations within the institutional context of plan-making or of envisioning the possibilities of the future. This in turn exposes the nature of power structures that exist in an institutional setting and makes a further call for vigilance at the rhetoric of future studies and scenario planning methodologies that pay lip service to the principles of collective decision-making and participation.

#### **The TVA: the process of identifying Amsterdam's future prospects**

The TVA will be presented, not in terms of its outcomes i.e. in terms of the identification of future project foci and themes, but from a procedural perspective. This is key in identifying what and how, a so-called open-ended, non-linear planning process, based on communication and debate, amounts to. How have the principles of a Transactive Planning process been used? Has a Transactive process limited or liberated the assembly of the future from the institutionalised technocratic way of seeing, way of doing planning? Is debate and dialogue a viable research method? What are the uses of dialogue and debate in assembling the future?

The starting point for the TVA's inception was the acknowledgement by the dRO that the management of urban developments is increasingly more difficult due to what Frotina Zuidema (process co-ordinator TVA 1996-1999) states, as being the rigidity and linearity of physical planning and the decision-making processes related to its formulation and implementation. This traditional, technocratic linear approach -using Andreas Faludi and Arnold Van der Falk's model- is described as a process in which the role of the professional is central, in which the plan is conceptualised as a blueprint whose scope is comprehensive, and usually involves the

presentation of a final product, the masterplan. In initiating the TVA, it can be said that the dRO has identified that society changes faster than the conventional plan making process, and that this results in plans becoming outdated before they are even implemented or approved. The question then is; How to plan in a process which is open-ended? What style of planning is more responsive and more flexible to accommodate different needs without losing a strategic outlook? In short this signals a move from the technocratic to the sociocratic model of planning as outlined in Faludi and Van der Falk's schema.

|                                 | <b>Technocratic planning</b> | <b>Sociocratic planning</b> |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Planning subject</b>         | Monolithic                   | Coalition                   |
| <b>Role experts</b>             | Linchpin                     | One out of many             |
| <b>Centralisation decisions</b> | Great                        | Small                       |
| <b>Plan as product</b>          | Dominant                     | Relative                    |
| <b>Form of plan</b>             | Blueprint                    | Indicative                  |
| <b>Measure of effectiveness</b> | Conformance                  | Performance                 |
| <b>Scope</b>                    | Comprehensive                | Selective                   |
| <b>Notion of rationality</b>    | Absolute                     | Contextual                  |
| <b>Planning process</b>         | Linear                       | Cyclical                    |

Figure 1: Two forms of intervention and planning: technocracy and sociocracy

(From Faludi and Van der Valk, 1994:11)

The recognition of the need to reform the institutional framework of the city's plan-making and decision-making procedures, can also be regarded as the dRO recognising that the role of both the dRO as physical spatial planning department, and that the role of the processes of physical and spatial planning itself are being called into question.<sup>3</sup> This relates specifically to the effectiveness of planning in a rapidly changing environment and the need to respond competitively to attract international investment capital in the city and the region. The attempt to use a different process of researching what the future needs and desires of the citizens of Amsterdam are, was therefore seen as a necessary investment which would yield potential new ways of working at the departmental level and the administrative level of local politics. What this

<sup>3</sup> Interestingly this legitimisation crisis facing planning is covered in a recent publication by the OECD (*Towards a New Role for Spatial Planning 2001*) in which the role of spatial planning is discussed. It appears that the main message from the OECD paper is that a strategic form of planning is crucial in ensuring competitive advantage of cities and regions in the current form and shape of the world economy.

signals is a shift in the focus of planning from localised project orientation, to a strategic orientation that is broader in outlook.

|                     | <b>Project plans</b> | <b>Strategic plans</b>  |
|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Object</b>       | Material             | Decisions               |
| <b>Interaction</b>  | Until adoption       | Continuous              |
| <b>Future</b>       | Closed               | Open                    |
| <b>Time element</b> | Limited to phasing   | Central to problem      |
| <b>Form</b>         | Blueprint            | Minutes of last meeting |
| <b>Effect</b>       | Determinate          | Frames of reference     |

Figure 2: Two types of plans: Project plans ad Strategic pians

(From Faludi and Van der Valk 1994:3)

The dRO identified that, in order to deal with problematic developments, i.e. problematic in terms of what services to provide, whose needs to cater for, what scale of influence to respond to etc, that a method was required which would shed light on the procedural aspects of urban development. This was to involve researching what the desirable, likely and possible developments could be, and how they would most likely affect one another. What was identified is that an ongoing process, whereby research into and design of the future city and its environs, was needed. This was to be a continuous process conducted through public debate, forming the basis for the TVA.

### **Objectives**

The stated objective of the TVA was to develop a scenario for what Amsterdam could be like in the year 2030. This vision of the future was meant to provide the municipal administration of Amsterdam with a template of possible projects and proposals that would serve to reinforce Amsterdam's provincial and regional position over the next 30 years. Two courses of action, involving civil servants and elected administrators were undertaken in order to achieve this objective. The civil servants at the dRO, were charged with research and design, and the city administrators focused on the broad societal debate which included a range of participants and stakeholders which were not usually consulted in traditional planning processes undertaken by the city. The objective of this was "to enrich the research and design process", and amounts to

essentially a high profile opinion poll in which the dRO led the discussion, so as to effectively delimit the debate around radical departures from the themes and issues already identified by wethouder Duco Stadig in the Hub Amsterdam ! (1998) publication, which was circulated to 3,000 inhabitants of Amsterdam.

### The process

The parallel, yet independent, course of action involving both civil servants and administrators, was to lead to “decisions involving the selection of possible spatial interventions”. These processes were however connected through discussion fora in which salient themes and issues were compared. What this amounts to, is an institutionalised feedback loop between civil servants and administrators, which can be diagrammatised as follows;

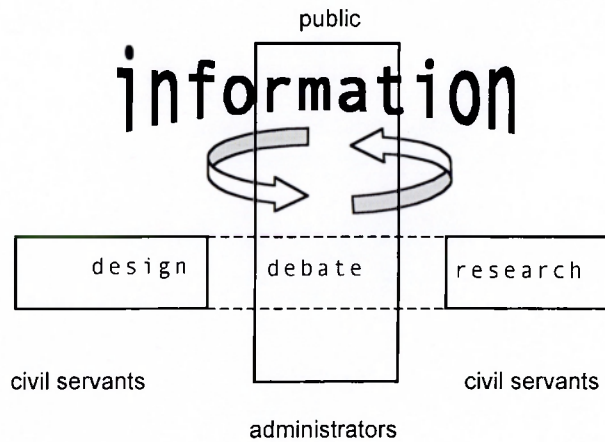


Figure 3: Feedback loop

In order that the cycle could work, the logic was that officials from the dRO would mediate and oversee the process, once launched to incorporate the input from the wider public. What this denotes is, that from the outset, control in steering and directing the outcome of any contentious issues which might arise from a public forum, is vested within the locus of local functionaries of political power and technocratic knowledge. The structure of these debates, thus reflects more of a “presentation” than a debate in which conflicting viewpoints could be explored. The tendency in this approach is towards consensus around the viewpoint sanctioned by the dRO.

This feedback loop process, whose emphasis is dialogue, communication and the exchange and transfer of different types of knowledge, is a classical definition of Friedmann's Transactive Planning of the 1970s. It fits neatly into his theoretical schema of the 1970s in which he identifies the need to shake up how planning is done. The parallel to Friedmann is also evident in the way in which these transactions and exchanges are conducted, namely that they occur within small groups and that knowledge and information, once distilled, is then transferred to other groups. This not only amplifies the type of knowledge and information gleaned but also ensures that social and organisational learning occurs. These instances of mutual learning are key in Friedmann's conceptualisation of Transactive Planning as a vehicle for this kind of learning to occur.

However, in referring to the stated objectives of the dRO, as wanting to use the TVA as a means of accumulating a range of issues to research, it can be said that the process is then one of "stocktaking". It, therefore has missed an opportunity to engage in real debate, if not dialogue, around issues and themes presented in Stadig's Hub Amsterdam ! (1998). As Friedmann points out, "...it is preferable to substitute the more dynamic concept of social learning, which is the way we critically appropriate experience for action, for the more solid 'knowledge' that suggests a fixed stock of accumulated learning." (Friedmann 1987:394).

Central to the process of the TVA, as presented by the dRO, was the concept that public debate was to act as a research method. This required the inclusion of a wide range of participants and stakeholders to ensure that issues and ideas extended to cover a wider range of issues than those imaginable by civil servants working at the dRO. Debate was to become an integral part of the planning process. The dRO goes to some lengths to reiterate this point and to make a case for "debate as research", however this is not clear in terms of whether contentious issues were indeed raised or whether consensus won the day and suppressing potentially radical ideas.<sup>4</sup> As stated by Frotina Zuidema, the process co-ordinator; "The TVA is different to other projects since communication plays a decisive role. Communication in itself is not an objective but a strategic tool for taking new viewpoints into account. Questions relating to content guide the process and not the other way round. By constantly gauging research and design against

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<sup>4</sup> As Paul Treanor in Limiting Urban Futures (2002) points out, truly radical themes or ideas such as, for example, renaming Amsterdam or questioning whether it should even exist as a city, or what the implication would be if it were to become an Islamic city were sidelined. He claims that these kinds of questions would have made for a debate that was representative of contemporary conditions in the city as opposed to those cited by Duco Stadig or in the trends outlined by the National Physical Spatial Planning Scenarios.

public debate it is hoped to develop a vision that renders urban development decision-making more manageable and that gives it more support" (Plan Amsterdam issue 6 1999:15). The inclusion of public debate is, therefore inserted as a political tool to at least gauge public opinion for current dRO thinking, if not ensure its outright support.

### Timetable

A brief review of the timetable of events and preceding tasks of the TVA is also indicative of emerging themes related to the uses and abuses of a Transactive style of planning. The TVA study can be tracked back to 1995 in which the necessity for a vision for directing the future development of the city and region was advised by Dirk Frieling <sup>5</sup>, together with mayors and administrators. It was acknowledged that the traditional planning and research methods utilised by the dRO, were not effective in visioning processes, and attention turned to the need to develop procedural aspects of planning which were able to accommodate a wide variety of viewpoints.

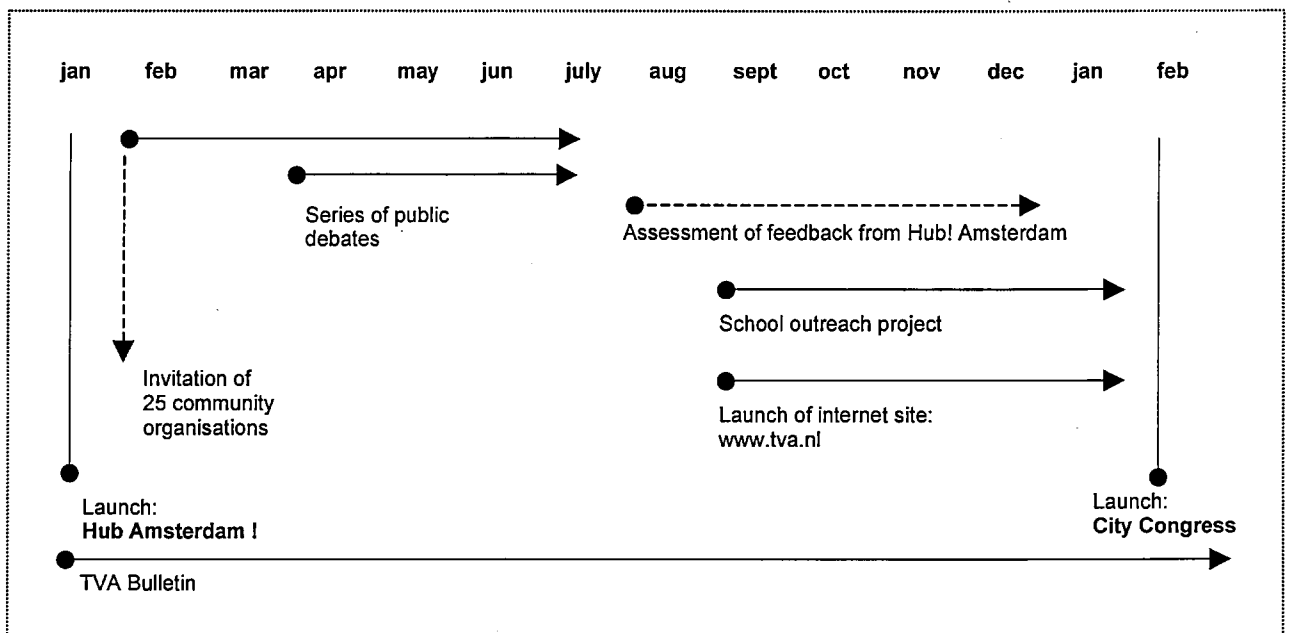


Figure 4: TVA timeframe

(From Plan Amsterdam 6, 1999)

<sup>5</sup> A Dutch urban planning specialist.

## Hub Amsterdam! : Producing the script

The development of these procedural aspects can be summarised by the events leading up to the TVA and its culmination in the Tweeduizend en een Stad congress in 1999. In 1997 a think-tank comprising Duco Stadi<sup>6</sup> and other independent researchers<sup>7</sup> was established to provide a creative impulse to the debate on the future of Amsterdam. They met over three intensive weekend sessions to outline what were to become the themes and ideas later published in Hub Amsterdam! in January 1998, in which Stadi<sup>6</sup> sketched his vision of the salient questions facing the city and a vision for its future development. The publication of Hub Amsterdam!<sup>8</sup> in January 1998, marked the start of the societal debate in which the following themes gain currency;<sup>9</sup> De Duurzame Stad (the sustainable city), De Zorgzame Stad (the caring city) and Stad en land (city and country), Mobiliteit (mobility).

A series of questions relating to a set of issues identified by the think-tank, were included in the Hub Amsterdam! document (refer to Box 4). These were directed at the citizens of Amsterdam, who were invited to answer and give their opinion on what the city should be like in 2030. What the questions and the presentation of issues raised in the document suggest is the emergence of a series of themes that would later form the framework for the Stadscongress. The themes include: economic and cultural renewal, the relationship to Schiphol Airport, mobility, infrastructure and car use, and the interface between city and county.

An elaboration of the themes is not important to the focus of this thesis. That they were established by a limited core of academics who referred to a restrictive set of trends and scenarios prepared by the National Physical Planning Agency and subsequently distributed to the wider community by a booklet announcing the “wethouder’s” opinion as the “vision” for Amsterdam as a hub or node, effectively translates into a “scripting” of peoples ideas on the possibilities of the future. The application of these techniques, used within a so-called participative context requires vigilance.

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<sup>6</sup> Holding the position of “wethouder” or “alderman”, this politician is the principal advisor to the mayor of the city on issues relating to housing and physical planning.

<sup>7</sup> Felix Rottenberg (chair), Duco Stadi<sup>6</sup> (wethouder dRO, Amsterdam) Maarten Kloos (director of ARCAM), Dirk Freiling (voorzitter Het Metropolitane Debat), Francine Houben (Mecanoo Architects) Joost Schrijnen (director dS+V Rotterdam) Dirk Sijmons (landscape architect H+N+S) Adri Duyvesteijn (Second chamber member PvdA) and Klaas de Boer.

<sup>8</sup> Title taken from aviation industry to identify a node of transport infrastructure and connection network; this is the vision of Stadi<sup>6</sup> regarding Amsterdam’s role.

<sup>9</sup> 3000 copies of Hub Amsterdam were circulated and served as invitations to react to Stadi<sup>6</sup>’s vision and questions aimed primarily at Amsterdam’s community organisations.



**Box 4: Questions taken from Hub Amsterdam! (1998):**

1. Should Amsterdam aim to maintain Schiphol as a simple national airport or should Amsterdam consider other options i.e. an airport at sea?
2. Should Amsterdam acknowledge its increasing dependence on Schiphol and entangle with it, or is it too risky?
3. How should Amsterdam operate between the tensions of class diversity: segregation? Are we thieving our own wallets by maintaining social housing in "desired" parts of the city? Or is this the choice we make; to bring in social housing and social functions into high-end locations?
4. Should Amsterdam, with its housing (policy) aim for its own identity and attract conscious urbanites with comfortable housing in housing densities? Should the "invasion" be stopped by "suburban" housing?
5. How to attack the increasing insecurity with semi-public space? Omit those spaces by separations of public-private space?
6. Which direction for Amsterdam North? Further extension of the 'other side' as a positive quality? Or try and emancipate and absorb into greater Amsterdam?
7. Did the separation of work-living go too far? How far do we go with de-mixing? Do we keep environmental rules, or do we build housing in overcharged areas?
8. Do we keep adding highways? Or is this the conclusion: more roads just adds traffic.
9. Do we keep investing heavily in rail services or do we revalue existing services, like the metro?
10. Is it feasible to keep the structure of Amsterdam as a city of hubs or do we acknowledge the idea that Amsterdam is becoming part of a much bigger "grid metropole" with green park landscapes?
11. Does the coalition model offer the best chances to keep up with regional integration?

### **Official histories, official futures**

As mentioned by Paul Treanor in his critique of the TVA process, Limiting Urban Futures (Internet accessed Feb 2002), the initial filtering of potential themes and issues related to Amsterdam's future, came directly from scenarios prepared by; the National Physical Planning Agency or the RPD; the Province of Noord-Holland; and two academic specialists. From these studies 9 "tasks" and 3 "issues" are taken<sup>10</sup>. The most comprehensive are the four RPD scenarios, of future spatial development in the Netherlands, Nederland 2030.<sup>11</sup> In turn, these are based on three future models from the national economic planning bureau: "Global Competition", "European Co-ordination" and "Divided Europe". This amounts to a limiting of potentials at the outset of the process, as nationally focused trends are assumed as being directly scaleable and relevant to local contingencies.

Paul Treanor also highlights the historicism of the study, which is most visible in the Interim Report The Dynamic Region/De Dynamische Regio. As in many planning studies, the history of the city region is summarised and, as is usually the case, is presented as a rigid linear history. This summation goes against the stated objectives of the study, which were to include a non-linear process of identifying potential futures. Amsterdam is presented as the inevitable result, of a singular inevitable history. In turn, this history is stated in terms of a rigid metaphor of layers (the palimpsest metaphor of history). As Treanor notes: "Alternative futures of alternative pasts are not considered "what-if" questions. In other words, this linear history is in itself exclusionary. It is implicitly used to legitimise the existing city. Then, claims of deterministic historical patterns are used, to legitimise one future scenario against another. And finally there is an implicit preference for historical continuity, for a "no-break future". What does this show us? That from the outset the filtering and framing of the debate systematically destroyed arguments for potential radical breaks and contestations for the official histories and future vision, in order to establish an incontestable logic for Amsterdam's "official" future.

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<sup>10</sup> Treanor identifies that the 6 tasks of the national (RPD) scenarios are: the spatial claims of counter-urbanisation, the effects of transport infrastructure, sustainable development, social diversity and segregation, the legitimacy of governments and governance, and the definition of the value of nature. The academic scenario names as central issues: economic efficiency, social justice, and sustainability. The second Interim Report lists: accessibility, spatial diversity (the sprawl issue), security, and long-term economic strengths.

<sup>11</sup> These are summarised in English by Edwin van Uum, in Spatial Planning Scenarios for the Netherlands in Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie vol.89 no1 (1998 :106-116 ).

The "tasks and issues" from the various sources overlap and are also restrictive. They are a fixed choice for the TVA study. Again quoting Treanor; "The two development options, finally, indicate that there is just one real issue in the TVA study: how much sprawl, how much suburbanisation, de-concentration and/or counter-urbanisation. That is an interesting planning issue: but it is *not* a survey of possible futures for Amsterdam. The TVA study is not even about the future, in the sense implied by its name Toekomstverkenningen Amsterdam, Future Prospects Amsterdam." (Internet access January 2002, italics as original). This shows how easily the terms; future, alternative and strategies, let alone participation, dialogue, are used in order to perpetuate the officially mandated areas of research and concern.

#### **Internal process: institutional learning**

What is interesting in the preparations leading up to the launch of the TVA, through the publication of Hub Amsterdam!, was the fact that there was an internal communication, information and knowledge transfer, process which was initiated as early as 1997. Since 1997 all dRO staff participated in lunchtime discussions to which a number of journalists, writers, scientists were invited to give lectures on Amsterdam's future.

This led to each dRO departmental team to adopt one "wandelgangesprek", or informal discussion group in which a particular issue or theme was discussed on a one-to one, face-to-face basis. The findings of these small group discussions were printed in a weekly TVA Bulletin that served to circulate the accumulated knowledge and ideas within the dRO. This process ended with the formation of the TVA-pool that effectively formed a reserve of dRO staff that was, through the internal process of research through debate, well rehearsed in the salient issues and themes. It was envisaged that the TVA-pool would form the knowledge corps that would guide the Stadscongress phase of the TVA process by chairing and leading the discussion forum that was to be open to the general public. The dRO was therefore to maintain a central role in managing the process.

What all this amounts to, is a rehearsal of arguments prior to the Stads congress. i.e. streamlining and neutralising debate and issues. The themes in the Hub Amsterdam ! document form the template for any discussion and, as such, represents a vision by one elected official who has made use of the Transactive Planning principles of feedback loops and open dialogue, to reinforce his and 10 other peoples viewpoints, and to give the disguise of openness and

participation. What this internalised learning process exposes is the multiplier effect of knowledge when transmitted by small groups through cellular interactions and the social learning that occurred within the department through the process of “doing” the process of debate as research. Debate as research method is thus effectively institutionalised before the process is launched publicly.

#### **Community workshops, public debates and school laboratories**

Prior to the Stadscongress, 25 organisations, including voluntary associations, community groups and the chamber of commerce etc., were introduced to the TVA process and the themes and issues presented through the Hub Amsterdam ! document. The purpose of this exercise was to encourage the organisations to replicate the institutional learning model undertaken by the dRO, and encourage the development of internal debate and research around the themes. The outcomes of the organisational learning cycle was to bring new ideas to the launch of the Stadscongress. The outcome however was not as dynamic as first envisaged by the dRO. Very little feedback was received from the organisations. This was ascribed to possible capacity related issues or to the fact that asking them to give their visions of Amsterdam was too demanding or that the TVA process and objectives were perhaps not clarified at the outset. Surprisingly only the voluntary sector responded with enthusiasm, perhaps signalling the need for more vehicles through which contributions from civil society can be harnessed to plan-making process. Larger organisations perhaps felt that they could present their ideas through a process that was more “political” in the sense that issues could be offset against their particular interests, gains and losses. The outcome of the poor response from the 25 organisations led the dRO to redirect the structure of the Stadscongress and to use the themes and issues, as opposed to the comments and ideas received from the 25 organisations, as the structure of the public debate. What this meant is that the discursive terrain was further delimited through another lost opportunity.

Leading up to the city congress, a range of public outreach programs were initiated and coordinated by the dRO. This raised not only public awareness of the forthcoming congress but the profile of the administrators who had shown that a more inclusive planning process was being undertaken. Planning goes “downtown” so to speak, and it is argued that these excursions are little more than isolated instances; sightseeing by officials if the information and knowledge transfers are not inscribed as part of an ongoing process of mutual learning.

### **The Stadscongress; Tweeduizend en Een Stad**

The city congress, held on the 5 and 6<sup>th</sup> February 1999, was the culmination of the social debate process initiated by the Hub Amsterdam ! publication in 1998. The contents of the congress were inspired by the themes and issues arising out of the Hub Amsterdam ! document and, partially on the subsequent discussion between community organisations. The city congress was intended for anyone with an interest in Amsterdam and its environs. The goal of the congress was therefore promoted as being one of an exchange of ideas about developments, which were seen as strategic to the Amsterdam Region, and to present ideas that would be worthy of further research and design.

The congress was held in the Felix Meirtiz building. The basic layout of the congress is mentioned as it spatialises the inherent hierarchy of the TVA process. This is with particular reference to the in camera debates. Access all areas was definitely not the game plan. In the Koepelzaal, at the top of the building, four workshops were held around the most important themes from Hub Amsterdam !, these included; De Duurzame Stad (the sustainable city), De Zorgzame Stad (the caring city) and Stad en land (city and country), Mobiliteit (mobility) . Interestingly, participation in the workshops was by invitation only. In tandem with these selective workshops, roundtable discussions were held in the Teekenzaal, which were accessible to the general public. However, these discussions were led by members of the city council, which again reinforces a hierarchy of leadership and a selective filtering of discussion topics. A mutual exchange and level debate is not possible under these circumstances of what amounts to state sponsored tutelage. As if pre-empting this line of critique, the process co-ordinator, does in her synopsis of the congress, mention that the discussion that occurred between the two areas was compared. What and how this happened, however, is not referred to, nor is a itinerary or inventory of what the open debate itemised as what the citizens of Amsterdam felt as being relevant to a vision of their futures.

The meeting rooms in the Meirtiz building were given names relating to the activities that would take place there. The Discussiestad (Zuilenzaal) was the site for forum discussion, the Kennisstad (Concertzaal), was used for lectures, the Consumer City (Shaffyzaal) was the place to go for films and interviews with famous Amsterdammers, and the Broedplaats (Koepel en Tekenzaal) was where participants and invited guests worked on new perspectives for the identified themes of the congress; namely; mobility, city and rural landscape, the sustainable city and the caring city. Interestingly (or ironically), the only completely accessible area was the Consumer City, which is a somewhat patronising gesture for inclusivity through commercialism and consumerism. If you are a citizen of Amsterdam, the most meaningful contribution you may make to the future, is through entertainment and leisure and consumerism. Perhaps these in effect are the salient themes which should have been discussed at the TVA and which would have yielded alternative lifestyle and infrastructure strategies.

#### **Themes arising from the congress**

Most discussion groups came up with the same themes and subjects namely; the human scale, the city's administrative possibilities versus co-operation, sustainability and the growing role of information technology. Is this serendipitous or is it merely an indication that the themes and issues Hub Amsterdam! all pointed towards a narrow restricted set of themes to discuss?

#### **Outcomes and outputs**

Frotina Zuidema, the process co-ordinator goes on to outline that the: "TVA's main achievement has been the visible involvement of residents in the future of their city and local area. This is particularly important at a time in which Amsterdammers often exhibit little interests in their surroundings. The falling turnout for elections speaks for itself. It is equally important to ensure that this involvement continues, if only in order that support for the policy might be maintained. One thing is certain, enthusiasm and involvement vanishes quickly if nothing more is heard from the party that took the initiative." (Plan Amsterdam issue 6 1999:15). The outright political nature of the TVA's objectives cannot be denied and once again calls to mind the use of debate, dialogue and participation tools that have been mainstreamed under the guise of broadening input and inclusivity. The question that always needs to be asked is whose future are you planning for?

The outputs were stated as harvesting ideas<sup>12</sup> for future research in the department of physical planning and testing a means of information gathering that cannot be gained by conventional research especially in determining desirable developments, by means of supposed "debate". They thus conclude that debate is a desirable research method, i.e. in terms of prioritising main subjects and minor issues. This had arguably, already been done by the Hub Amsterdam document, which was forwarded as the script for identifying points of consensus and contentions. The outcome however was political in nature. What is also interesting, is that in the dRO's evaluation, the open-ended nature of the process makes it difficult to evaluate the process, what can however be evaluated are; the ways in which public opinion has been formed and the vision that the TVA has produced. The dRO acknowledges that they have received material both in terms of possible content and processes of planning and implementation (Refer to Box 5). These are to be utilised in contributing to the federal governments Fifth Policy Document on Physical Planning as well as in the new structure plan (June 2002). Input from the TVA is also expected to inform other policy areas that include the Social Structure Plan for Amsterdam. What is also identified is that the TVA has left a sense of renewal in administrative circles which is a direct result from the process of institutionalising a new way of learning through doing, i.e. through the debate process which was rehearsed in-house before the Stadscongress.

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<sup>12</sup> "The purpose of this process is to give the Department of Physical Planning material to consider. This means using the present as a time to shake up the department and stuff it with new information. Later, when the dust settles, the department will have the task of using all this information as grist in the mill for coming up with concrete products."(Duco Stadig).

### **Box 5: Possible research and design suggestions**

1. Stimulate agricultural tourism where people from the cities can go and do volunteer work in model farms and stay in farm hotels.
2. Provide a masterplan for the co-ordination of agricultural tourism.
3. Give more chances for innovative 'green' space in the derelict parts of the city's periphery.
4. Partnering between the agriculture and nature organisations and the city authorities.
5. Community water management.
6. More heavy freight haulage over waterways.
7. A regionally co-ordinated traffic authority.
8. More high-rise development.
9. More roof gardens.
10. More neighbourhood tree planting.
11. More fountains.
12. More swimming pools.
13. Provide more activities for the youth.
14. Let the youth manage their own youth centres.
15. Include the youth in plan-making.
16. Better relationship between school-street-house. Use schools as community centres.
17. Amsterdam: Silicon Valley.
18. Away with the 'green heart'- in with the 'green circle'.
19. Schipholstad as tourist attraction.
20. Sprawl strategy.
21. Harbour activities concentrated in Rotterdam.
22. Amsterdam as information / knowledge city.
23. Nature institutes generate economic spin-offs.
24. The informal economy generates 30% of the total city economy.
25. Network city.

(From Plan Amsterdam 4/5 June 1999)



## **Exploring the themes, confronting the issues**

### **Letting the genie out the lamp: My wish is your command**

The image /logo of the Stadscongress serves as a metaphor for what these processes, claiming to be based on dialogue and debate, are about. The genie has, to a certain extent, been summoned from the lamp, and what it shows us is that at the core of any Transactive process is a power hierarchy that cannot be denied. In the TVA case, although supposedly opening the discussion for envisioning the potential future of a city in the year 2030, was lead by dRO's civil servants and politicians who had been rehearsed in a particular sub-set of themes and issues as formulated by the principal political advisor, Duco Stadig and which had been circulated to 3000 inhabitants as a basis form which to discuss the future prospects of Amsterdam. What this amounts to is a massive opinion poll exercise, in that Stadig outlined his vision and what the questions he thought were facing the city's future. A case of "My wish is your command" rather than the other way round? To this end, the exercise is not at all comparable with the complexities, overlaps and conflictual, if not contradicting positions of interest that are exposed in a public debate. The TVA thus used the mantra of participation and dialogue and debate as a politically powerful tool, in that it made Stadig's party appear to involve participation in the direction of the cities future, across political divisions in order to formulate a common grounding for a future vision. This translates into nothing less than tutelage from the state in the manner in which the future is assembled in the collective imagination. The question remains then: Do scenarios and debates about the future liberate or limit the future?

### **Power, method and context**

The TVA operated in two contextual settings: one the physical context of Amsterdam and the other the institutional setting of the dRO. Both contexts responded to influences from different scales (i.e. the regional and the metropolitan or city scale), which outlined different objectives (i.e. regional competitiveness and local competitiveness between cities) and informed different strategies for attaining these. These were brought together under the co-ordinating framework of attempting to outline future directions of spatial planning research and initiatives for a city willing to restructure both its institutional structure, policy framework and physical infrastructure in order to compete with an expanding European economic market. It is unsurprising that a reconfiguration of power and its codification, in terms of spatial proposals, if not identifiable publicly agreed objectives, was at stake in this process. Even in a planning system that has

institutionalised and publicly supports a participative / collaborative planning process, it nevertheless is more than apparent that the end game is pre-scripted, and that the methods deployed to substantiate participative processes are geared towards attaining covertly established end-goals that might bear no resemblance to the stated needs and desires of the citizens participating in the process of strategic plan making.

### **Whose future?**

The basis for a critique of the TVA process, is offered by Paul Treanor who outlines the implicit elitism of the process of structuring the TVA. The upshot of his critique is, that he claims this example of "future studies" is limiting the possibilities of Amsterdam's future's. The main points raised by his article is that the manner in which the scenario study, or rather visioning process, was organised, its task and preliminary studies, all ensured a very limited, historicist approach that could only result in very narrow options or interpretations of possible futures. What this curtails, is the idea of radical proposals. What is also interesting is that the Amsterdam case is "centred" i.e. no reference to other European cities is made and the city itself is depicted as an island, which as Treanor points out, is an incredibly nationalistic diagrammatisation of its geopolitical position. The future vision that emerges from the TVA study could, as Treanor states, therefore only be a recognisably *Dutch* city. "Like the existing Amsterdam, it will be 'European' only in the sense that it is located in Europe. A very large category of possible future cities, including all specifically European cities, is excluded by the pervasive nationalism of the TVA study." (Ibid. italics as original.)

In his critique Treanor also makes reference to the polemic of democracy. This is with respect to the arbitrariness of present inhabitants determining the future of future generations. For Treanor, future studies are not appropriate for local democracy. "A design dictatorship, enforcing an ideal city, is morally no worse than a 'democratic' vote, where the affected are excluded. The longer the time horizon of the futures study, the more that will be true. The longer the time horizon, the less chance that the group voting, and the group affected, have any common members. And if this applies to perfect referenda, it certainly applies to studies like the TVA, which involve less than 1% of the local population." To whom then, does the city belong? These tenacious issues, which at best are contentious and at worst, are empty gestures, should not be avoided or ignored by planning, its forms, its claims, the expectations it raises, and the uses and abuses of the future to achieve particular objectives and agendas.

It is his parting shot that opens up a major point of critique and consideration: "Once again: despite the name, scenario-type studies of urban futures are not about urban futures. On the contrary, they are designed to *limit* urban futures - to limit even *thinking* about radically different future cities." (Italics as original) .How then are we to plan for unlimited futures, is this possible? Can we assemble a future that contains the possibility of generating alternative spatial strategies for our cities? Can we make the cities we want?

Treanor thus contrasts issues of power with those of scale. The scale of the city and that of the region become conflated. This impacts an interpretation of interpretation of democracy, of civic governance and of consensual decision-making. His contribution to the debate surrounding the uses and abuses of the future is to highlight how power; and the use of a particular method (i.e. scenario planning) to delimit and circumscribe the questions, is used to fit a particular set of requirements. What this does is draw to our attention the need to be cognisant of the fluidity of power and of the concept of the "future": who does it, where does it reside, who shapes it. It is nevertheless proposed that a transactive style of planning is able to expose these contradictions and potential conflicts in order that the future and all its implications is envisioned across scalar registers and power bases.

# 5

## Ways of seeing, ways of doing: From diagnostic to generative approaches

"Power determines what counts as knowledge, what kind of interpretation attains authority as the dominant interpretation. Power procures the knowledge which supports its purposes while it ignores or suppresses that knowledge which does not serve it." (Bent Flyvbjerg 1998:226 in Fairstein 1999:254).

So what have we learned about how planning has gone about assembling the future? Are there any general characteristics that we can draw from the methods, procedures and outcomes of the Mont Fleur examples and TVA?<sup>1</sup> An initial categorisation is presented:

| Illustration                     | Activity   | Objective  | Participants   | Planning Process  | Scale              | Approach   |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|---|--------------------|------------|
| <b>Mount Fleur: South Africa</b> | Civic Scenarios between political parties and corporate stakeholders | Vision of post-apartheid South Africa (10 yr. outlook) | High ranking politicians of opposing political parties, corporate stakeholders, trade unions     | Scenario Planning, social learning: Initiated/led by corporate stakeholders | National: regional | Prognostic |
| <b>TVA: Amsterdam</b>            | Debate as a research method  | Vision of Amsterdam in 2030 (30 yr. outlook)           | Administrators, civil servants, academics, professionals, community organizations, civil society | Dialogue, social learning: Led by municipal government                      | City: region       | Diagnostic |

Figure 5: Comparative table

This table identifies that the approaches of both examples are identified as being diagnostic and/or prognostic. What does this mean?

Mont Fleur, and the civic scenario process it utilised in approaching the question of what a post-apartheid South Africa could look like in 2002, is an example of what is referred to as a prognostic approach. The use of scenario planning visioning methodologies, places this example within the discipline of Future Studies. By implication, this draws on contemplating the possible, plausible and potential outcomes of the interaction of a set of variables descriptive of an identified area of uncertainty or concern. A prognosis, in medical usage<sup>2</sup>, involves a forecast of the probable course of a case of disease and is also descriptive of the art of making such a

<sup>1</sup> Although it is acknowledged that the illustrations are not directly comparable either in terms of the scale at which the future scoping exercise were held, i.e. the TVA at the scale of the city: region and the Mont Fleur at the scale of the nation: region, nor in terms of the timescale of their projections, they are however comparable in terms of their planning process, sharing the underlying principle of social learning. What therefore makes these illustrations interesting is the consideration of issues that arise from the application of similar planning principles over different physical and temporal scales.

<sup>2</sup> All definitions are taken from The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary On Historical Principles Calrendon Press1978.

forecast. As shown in the description of the final 4 Mont Fleur scenarios, it can be said that the structure of the narratives and the choice of imagery to describe the scenarios was prognostic in the identification of the probable outcomes. This is most evident in the Icarus scenario in which the “logical” outcome of a populist based macroeconomic policy was described as resulting in the collapse of the economy and the inability of the government to meet insatiable social demands. A prognostic approach to the future is thus potentially delimiting. Delimiting in that it uses a set of predetermined criteria to evaluate the merits of a particular way of proceeding.<sup>3</sup> This is all too easily usurped by dominant power bases that repackage knowledge to further their own agendas. However, it is not argued that the tools and techniques of civic scenario processes should be discredited in approaching the question of assembling alternative urban strategies. On the contrary, the tools of a civic scenario making process can be recalibrated and applied in a transformative manner. Transformative in the sense that they result in outcomes, and processes which could create significant material improvements to peoples social, civic, economic, spatial realities. This then would be referred to as a generative approach.

If we consider the TVA example and what the organizers claimed its objectives where<sup>4</sup>, and we look at the process through which this was to be enabled, we can conclude that far from being an inclusive, participative exercise that established Amsterdam’s “future prospects” through debate and dialogue, that it translates into a cataloguing of potential research projects for the dRO to undertake. The formulation of these possible research topics was based on what is referred to as a diagnostic approach as it merely identifies characteristics of the present conditions facing Amsterdam through observations by academics, professionals and, to a limited extent, input from the general public. This enumeration (translatable as a high profile opinion poll) does not identify any radical departures or a potential transformation of planning’s status quo or methodologies for dealing with the rigidity and linearity of decision-making processes. As in the medical use of the term, the spatial “diagnosis” of Amsterdam’s past (as outlined in Hub Amsterdam ! (1998) document), its present and its future (as presented in the Stadscongress 1999), is merely a determination of the nature of the condition through the investigation of symptoms caused by previous physical planning policies (i.e. rising

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<sup>3</sup> In this case the criteria was obviously set as those of a neo-liberal macroeconomic and monetarist agenda in which the nationalisation of part of the economy was seen as the anathema to both economic and social development.

<sup>4</sup> The vision of the future was thus meant to provide the municipal administration of Amsterdam with a template of possible projects that would serve to reinforce Amsterdam’s provincial and regional position over a 30-year timeframe.

unemployment, a shrinking tax base, urban dereliction caused by the forces of de-industrialisation affecting the port, and the suburbanisation of work force due to increased physical mobility supported by infrastructure investment). Dialogue, participation, and debate are not necessarily creative. They do not ensure or enable innovative responses in the qualitative improvement of people's lifeworlds.

How then to describe a generative approach to our ways of seeing, ways of doing planning? To "generate", is to bring into existence, to produce, to bring about, to evolve. It is a productive activity that, in terms of planning, implies that civil society, becomes the producer and consumer of its destiny. In a diagnostic and prognostic approach, on the other hand, civil society assumes the role of political spectator, and a consumer of the processes and products of planning.<sup>5</sup> In a generative approach, citizens become both the subjects and objects of their own future, whereas in prognostic approaches, citizens are more likely to become passive objects. Can we look to any examples of generative planning approaches? It is argued that by refunctioning the principles of Friedmann's Transactive Planning, that a generative approach to the assembly of alternative urban strategies could be supported. Are there any precedents we can refer to which offer indications of how this is materialised?

### **The Bishopsgate Methodology Statement: a generative design-led process as action**

Rather than attempting to provide an exhaustive listing of social learning examples, I will briefly introduce what appears to be an innovative response to the conditions of inner city development as experienced in London. The Bishopsgate Methodology Statement (Zaha Hadid and consultants 2002 unpublished) is included, not as an emergent example of what I have referred to as a generative approach to planning<sup>6</sup>, but as an indication of the potential that a design-led approach has, in thinking not only beyond the box, to use management jargon, but beyond the confines of the site and its inscribed conflicts of interest.

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<sup>5</sup> This is evident in both the TVA and Mont Fleur illustrations. In the TVA example civil society, as represented by the 25 community organizations and members of the public who participated in the Stads Congress merely gave their insight and responses to the questions outlined in the Hub! Amsterdam document that already preempted their contribution by providing a limited set of questions related to the question of the future of Amsterdam in the year 2030. The Mont Fleur scenarios became household names in South Africa during the transitional period between 1992-94.

<sup>6</sup> As a methodology statement submitted as part of a masterplanning bid for the Bishopsgate site in London in May 2002, it remains conjectural. It does nevertheless show the potential of including social learning, and social mobilization techniques in spatial planning and the generative potential of a design-led approach.

This particular illustrative example has been chosen because it refers to the specificity of planning in a city scale within a strategic planning context that, locates and relocates a particular site within both the strategic projections of two London Boroughs (namely Hackney and Tower Hamlets), and within a wider reaching strategic planning framework for the city as a whole and its strategic or competitive advantage at a regional and international scale of operation.<sup>7</sup> The issue of scale thus becomes a spatial, social, political and economic modifier that affects the physical manifestation of form and of programme that needs to be inscribed on a site. The illustration is thus presented as a seminal approach which looks at transactive methodologies which are design-led as opposed to being led by particular interest groups as a mechanism by which new interpretations of a site's inherent potentials and power sources and resources, are exposed so as to generate innovative urban strategies.

What is meant by a design-led approach? The work of Zaha Hadid Architects is exemplary in approaching this question. In the architectural establishment, this practice is regarded as avant-garde in the sense that it remains committed to exploring unconventional approaches both in terms of architectural design methodology, and its material / structural resolution. The design process is not formulaic. It does not proceed by interrogating a site and the attached development brief in terms of tried and tested typologies. Typologies that, for all intents and purposes, are sclerotic interpretations of salient economic interests inscribed in the spatial dimension of a location, and which, in a consultation process leads to polarization between stakeholders. This in turn further entrenches antagonism rather than focusing on arriving at innovative responses. On the other hand, the design process involves an iterative movement between both the brief, and the design: between the site and its potentials. These potentials are exposed by means of abstract procedures in which, as the methodology report states, " the early stages of graphic production and modeling serve to reveal the site's strengths, values, and constraints, often beginning only as a series of lines which respond to the landscape at a variety of different scales. The lines do not *represent* the existing site; so much as *respond* to a diversity of forces that present themselves. They may suggest the trace of a potential flow of people, a line of sight, or the importance of a surface, and together generate a framework

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<sup>7</sup> The Bishopsgate Goodsynd is a 10.5 acre semi-derelict site which has been earmarked for a station on an extended East London line. It is an important and strategic development site located within the City Fringe area of London. The area is identified as a Key Opportunity Area in the draft London Plan, for which strategic development should be balanced with planning gains that promote social inclusion. The opportunities the site offers, and the range of issues it raises, exemplify many of the challenges faced by the urban regeneration projects in general and the area in specific.

against which an alternative volumetric landscape can take shape" (Bishopsgate Methodology Statement, italics as original).

What this exposes is that there are ways of doing, ways of seeing, which are not necessarily confined or constrained by the dictates of either best practice, or a set checklist of tasks and outputs. By approaching the challenges of inner-city development in a manner that is cognizant of the major trends and impacts on the site but not constrained by these, a series of openings, or ruptures are presented, that represent literal and figurative breaks with established or rehearsed design procedures. A new interpretation of the "realities" of a site's temporal and spatial coordinates, thereby generate new possibilities that could not have been considered possible, let alone plausible, if following a list of tried and tested precedents. To a certain extent, this process of thinking beyond preconceived approaches, and exercising a different logic in assembling the physical, spatial and programmatic components of a site, makes this comparable to the civic scenario process.

The use of the abstract process of architectural production and the reproduction of those techniques and approaches precludes the dead-end of political discussion and inevitability of an impasse to stymie development. "The work begins neither with the distribution of well-rehearsed typologies, nor with a schedule of pre-defined uses. Instead it begins with an attentiveness and openness toward what the site might become." (*Ibid.*) The production of evocative models therefore does not play directly into the pre-established preconditions of political and economic interests operating within an area. But rather, diverts their attention to the possibility or impossibility, of a physical proposal that expands and explores the opportunities of a physical site beyond the material scale of institutional and municipal demarcations.<sup>8</sup> This is a case of not only thinking beyond the box, but beyond the site, in order to inform the programmatic interpretation of what the needs now, and on the future, might be. In this design-led process of envisioning the future, the use of physical models operate in a similar manner to the narrative frameworks used in scenario-making processes, in that they give form to possibilities, and give shape to identified ambitions.

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<sup>8</sup>The intention is that "this pattern of production allows discussion and consensus-building to emerge around the spatial qualities of a new landscape, rather than becoming mired in the oppositions among entrenched interests which so often crystallize around particular land-uses." (*Ibid.*)



A design-led process, much like the social learning process described by Friedmann, operates in a feedback loop. This iterative process includes approaching the brief and the design as a correlative processes. This process, by which the one informs the other, is a response to the failure of large scale urban projects in London (i.e. Elephant and Castle) which effectively "... rule out the simple repetition of standard urban design solutions, and make the early establishment of a definitive brief impossible." (*ibid.*)

Although I have focused on the design-led approach as being potentially indicative of what a generative response to assembling the future of our cities might be, the workshop process identified in the Bishopsgate Methodology Statement is also of interest as it proceeds along the principles of social learning. Rather than focusing on the exchange of knowledge and "knowing's" of the site, it emphasises the "action" side of the "learning through doing" equation of a social learning methodology. The proposed workshops were envisaged as being organised around the principle of actioning knowledge. This was in order to ensure that workshops did not only become an exercise in consultants' presentations. Regarding the workshop topics, the Bishopsgate Methodology Statement identifies that, to structure the themes around standard typologies and discrete land-uses would surface the social and economic questions that inevitably lead to polarized opinion at the outset, thereby reinstating differences as opposed to exploring commonalities. Workshops therefore, like the architectural process "should reflect a process of discovery". For this reason, they chose the themes of scale, pattern and intensity<sup>9</sup> as the moderators of the design input.

The move from a diagnostic to a generative approach in assembling the future therefore requires a recalibration not only of the tools, techniques, instruments and procedures of planning, but also a reframing of salient issues. The overarching theme that emerges in both the TVA and Mont Fleur scenario process is the possibility of establishing "common ground". What also emerges, is that in both the Mont Fleur and the Bishopsgate illustrations, is that stakeholders become both the subjects and objects of the process of assembling the future. This is a departure from processes that present stakeholders with predefined solutions that they either agree with or object to.

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<sup>9</sup> These terms are to be understood spatially or physically. Together they have an impact on the programmatic possibilities of a site and their location and distribution.

## On making common ground

What kind of future are we aiming to assemble? A discussion involving the imagining of the future, necessarily involves a consideration of what values form the template of the shape of things to come. The desire of finding a "common good",<sup>10</sup> whether in a class-divided or a pluralist society of conflicting or contradicting values, has appeared to be an unattainable objective. This corresponds to the notional character of the "common good". The "common good" is not attainable as it is a regulative idea that is tasked with the constant and vigilant search for appropriate institutions that safeguard the democratic imperative. This regulative aspect thus ensures that these institutions are not usurped by the vagaries of narrowly focused interest groups whose agendas do not correspond to democratic values.

Within this framework, we can however still ask the following questions. Are there appropriate values to govern urban life? Is a broad common value structure that embraces difference, whilst recognizing the subjective nature of concepts of the "good", possible? Susan Fainstein, in a chapter in Robert Beuregard and Sophie Body-Gendrot's collection of essays on the urban moment, explores these themes, and questions the "extent to which it is possible to combine the values of equality, diversity, participation and sustainability in a cosmopolitan urban milieu." (Fainstein 1999:250). We turn to Fainstein's discussion on the "good city" as a means of drawing together the themes and issues presented by the two illustrative examples of the TVA and Mont Fleur scenarios. The premise of her argument is that the "city should be purposefully shaped rather than by the unmediated outcome of the market" and that this, in other words, ensures that planning "is a necessary condition for attaining urban values." The values of social diversity, equality, democracy and environmental sustainability, all of which constitute the foundations of a "good city," are inevitably conflict ridden when their various commitments are counterposed. Questions that urban planning, understood as, the "conscious formulation of goals and means of metropolitan development, regardless of whether these determinations are conducted by people officially designated by planners or not"<sup>11</sup> should not evade or ignore. What is the link between exposing urban values and their conflicts and contradictions and commonalities in assembling alternative urban strategies? The options are, as the illustrative examples have shown apparently, to either diagnose or prognosticate the outcomes or, accept

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<sup>10</sup> This is evident in the TVA in which this amounted to what can be referred to as finding ways, projects and policies towards a collective vision of either the "good city". Similarly in the Mont Fleur civic scenarios process images and narratives descriptive of a common purpose towards a peaceful transition to a democratic dispensation in a country emerging from a past mired by racial discrimination, inequality and oppression were sought.

<sup>11</sup> Fainstein 1999:251.

the conflictual and shifting relationships between these values structures and proceed to generate possibilities and potentials beyond a position of negotiation, which implies compromise, to one of transformation, which implies change. As Fainstein asks: Can we make the cities we want? It is this question that underscores the exploration of considering the role a Transactive Planning principle and processes might have in generating alternative urban strategies, in assembling our variant futures.

What the illustrative examples and Fainstein shows us, is the overt if not covert social power structures which condition knowledge and thus determine action. Mont Fleur exposes the distortions of knowledge in presenting a particular set of images, which were constitutive of the options for a post-apartheid South Africa, whilst the TVA exposes the subtleties of directing change according to a script for the future that was prepared by the local city government. Although the Mont Fleur civic scenario process was not a formal negotiating or discussion forum as such, it nonetheless through its dissemination strategy and "infiltration" into the daily parlance of South Africa, helped to form both public opinion and subsequently the elected governments' macro-economic policy directions. This recalls Flyvbjerg's statement that, "Power procures the knowledge which supports its purposes while it ignores or suppresses that knowledge which does not serve it"<sup>12</sup>. Power and its inscription in both knowledge formulation, i.e. the way we see things, and in action, the way we do, needs to be consciously addressed in any consideration of planning and its theory and practice. Although a detailed extrapolation of what this involves, and what its impact on planning is, is beyond the scope of this thesis, it is nonetheless an area that cannot be ignored.

Is liberal pluralism inadequate in ensuring the inclusion of disparate agendas and interests when offset by the realities of the great inequalities of wealth and power that currently exist? This structural inequality and uneven access to power and resources amounts to the inability of the powerless to set the agenda for discussion, a characteristic evident in both the TVA and the Mont Fleur processes. In approaching the future then, we need to revisit how we define identity and acknowledge the problems of identity politics which, when narrowly defined, "mainly involves participants demanding marginal changes in the status quo or benefits that respond to their narrowly defined interests." (Fainstein 1999:268).<sup>13</sup> This then, together with participative

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<sup>12</sup> Bent Flyvbjerg 1998:226 in Fainstein 1999:254.

<sup>13</sup> She refers specifically to the United States where cities are dominated by business or corporatist agendas, i.e. no social welfare state or redistributive culture of governance.

and dialogical and consensual approaches to assembling the future, exposes the inherently divisive nature of identity politics. They are not necessarily focused to produce better outcomes along a common value or vision of social justice, or towards social transformation. The making of "common ground" is a tricky business indeed, and all the more difficult in an economic restructuring with its spatial and social implications. If the "good city" is seen as a process rather than a particular outcome, if making "common ground" is a terrain of struggle and conflict, if the approaches we are currently using, appear to be outdated, then how do we go about achieving alternative urban futures? The next part of the thesis looks at Friedmann and his work on Transactive Planning and the relationship between knowledge and action. This is proposed as a way to consider the role this approach might have in generating alternative urban strategies that take the themes and issues exposed in the illustrative examples into consideration, and enable us to navigate through the minefield of questions raised by urban theorists including Susan Fainstein.

The Bishopsgate Methodology Statement is thus a useful illustration, as it signals the potential of an approach that moves from a participative or collaborative model of planning to one, which is action, oriented. Action is qualified at the outset as including the creative contribution of the design process by all stakeholders which expands the basis of a collaborative approach beyond the inclusion of participants as vetoing or agreeing to a particular approach or design strategy. Stakeholders, in this method, are able to foreground their strategic interpretation of the site at the outset, and are therefore enabled to suspend their expectation of a "building". This methodology deploys not the predictable participative methodologies, based on dialogue and talk-shops, or a structured critique of power bases and conflicts of interest at play on the site, but the process of an interrogative design process, through which various potentials and lines of thought, are translated and inscribed on the site by the architect and urban planner. This inevitably foregrounds questions of authorship and power in choosing what knowledge or what aspects are chosen over others to develop a line of thinking about the site. However it is the imagination of the architect as mediator, and as ultimately as generator of a new interpretation, that has to somehow be ascribed and committed to. Power in this instance resides both in the designer's role and in what issues the participants foreground.

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## Translations:

### Friedmann's Transactive Planning revisited.

"We look at the present through a rear-view mirror. We march backwards into the future."

Marshall McLuhan 1967.

"We cannot wish *not* to know, and we cannot escape the need to act." John Friedmann 1987.

How has planning gone about assembling the future? What are the traditions and tools in planning theory and practice that have approached the question of uncertainty and multiplicity? How have they adapted to meet new needs, new challenges and crisis points which are perceived as characteristic of the emerging context of an increasingly connected world economic system? Can planning be mobilised as an activity that reconnects knowledge to action in the public domain? These questions form the basis of John Friedmann's explorations in planning theory and practice over the last 3 decades. In a contemporary reproblematisation of planning - in which it is seen as an activity which is engaged with change - they are questions that are not only still relevant, but crucial starting points from which we can translate alternative responses and strategies to the challenge of assembling the future.

In responding to contemporary conditions which are symptomatic of an increasingly internationalised world economic system, are we as Marshall McLuhan observed, trying to do today's job with yesterday's tools: with yesterday's concepts? Is the manner in which we are approaching these issues, and the types of responses we are proposing, all strangely familiar? Do these responses cloud our analytical capacity to review and reassess the effectiveness of the ways in which we are seeing our contemporary reality: our ways of doing and being in the world? What then, with specific reference to knowledge and action in generating alternative urban strategies, is the role of Transactive Planning theory and practice?

The previous chapter was presented as a series of illustrative examples of an emergent style of planning across various spheres and scales which has approached issues of change, of complexity and of knowledge and action formation. This chapter follows on from the issues and themes exposed by the illustrations and, through revisiting the work of Friedmann on Transactive Planning, aims to establish possible reinterpretations of what planning as social learning and/or social mobilisation might mean in a contemporary context in which scale, power

and method are critical in formulating planning responses that are generative of alternative solutions, as opposed to being purely reactive and crisis driven.

How to revisit Transactive Planning? The structure of this chapter involves a contextualisation of Friedmann's work on Transactive Planning within the planning tradition. This includes a brief presentation of the influence of the Chicago School's planning paradigm, his formative work experiences at the Tennessee Valley Authority in 1953, the intellectual tradition of American Pragmatism and New Humanism, and work being done in the 1970s on Small Group Theory. Together these influences expose his endeavour to understand the reason for planning and the role of knowledge and action in generating change. A consideration of how his initial ideas regarding the link of knowledge to action and planning as a form of social learning, have been subsequently mainstreamed or amplified and reinterpreted in the "communicative turn" in planning in the 1990s is also included.

This contextualisation, which looks both backwards (i.e. at the antecedents of Transactive Planning's theoretical schema) and forwards (i.e. at the inheritors and the subsequent translations of Friedmann's theories and approaches), forms the basis of a more detailed elaboration of Transactive Planning and its trajectories, both in Friedmann's theoretical work, and in its subsequent reinterpretation and wider applications, from the 1970s through to the 1990s. What this will show is how the approach has undergone a shift from a position based on the definition of planning as societal guidance, to the idea of planning as part of social transformation processes, culminating in its reinterpretation as a tool for building what he refers to as the learning society.

The last part of the chapter considers the contribution of Transactive Planning in terms of reviewing concepts of scale, context, method and power. Themes and issues emerging from the illustrative examples presented in part A of the dissertation are also included, thereby establishing the link between theory and practice and the need for theory to inform and be informed by practice. This reinvigorates the discussion by referring to contemporary challenges and by using different themes to translate and reinscribe the relevance of Transactive Planning in a contemporary context. The objective of this part of the argument is to consider the role of Transactive Planning and how it enables us:

- To look at ways of seeing ways of doing: how do we learn?
- To move from diagnostic to generative responses: how do we create the new?
- To harness planning as a transformative activity: how is change sustained?

### **Friedmann and Transactive Planning in context**

Why revisit Friedmann and Transactive Planning? As a theorist and practitioner, Friedmann has been prolific in his contribution to the field over the last 3 decades. He has focused his work in reproblematising planning's normative and substantive foundations within a framework of understanding the linkages between knowledge and action, drawing on diverse fields of discourse -ranging from, philosophy and the social sciences to business management science- in order to inform his evolving contribution to how it is we "know" and what it means to act as planners.

Friedmann's aim is to shift the terrain of planning to encompass social transformation and reconstruction rather than being purely motivated by the reformist tendencies of societal guidance. In later writings he states that, "at issue is the creation of an alternative social order which necessarily involves a restructuring of the basic relations of power." (1987:400) This clearly demonstrates that power is embedded in his discussions related to the links between knowledge and action, between planners, civil society and the state. For this reason his work remains relevant. It not only has the potential to unlock a discussion regarding power structures and the processes of transformation, but could also provide the basis for an epistemological and political break with mainstream planning practice, even if he has been criticised for not confronting these explicitly in his theoretical presentations.

Thus, Friedmann's objective was and continues to be, the formulation of a more relevant and responsive planning practice whose remit has shifted from responding to the logic of market rationality, to one which is socially responsive and whose premise is social transformation. Planning is therefore always foregrounded as a political activity in the world, and as such, needs to constantly be rethought of with respect to emerging conditions affecting the public domain. This reflexive nature is crucial, and even though many<sup>2</sup>, including himself, have highlighted that his work does not adequately confront the issue of power relations directly, it can be said in his

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<sup>2</sup> Some of his critics include Susan Fainstein, Patsy Healey and Judith Innes.

defence, that his theoretical postulations look less at theories of power relations and more at methods of action. It can be therefore claimed that, in considering the processes and the terrain of action- the kind specifically targeted at what he would refer to as liberating lifespace from the grips of the state- that this necessarily opens up sites and situations that inevitably confront established structural power bases. So Friedmann, and the themes of action, of knowledge and of ways of seeing and doing planning, remain critical in revisiting planning's remit and ongoing reformulation in a contemporary context of rapid change, whose scale and breadth of influence affects all spheres of our everyday life.

In exploring the contribution that his work on Transactive Planning has made in both planning theory and practice, reference will be made to two of Friedmann's seminal works. Transactive Planning was first elaborated in Retracking America: Towards a Theory of Transactive Planning (1973) and explored as part of the mediations on the transformative role in planning in his book Planning in the Public Domain From Knowledge to Action (1987). These two texts span the evolution of his ideas regarding the recalibration of planning's tools in order that they might be more responsive to the needs of citizens and, together they expose various influences that have contributed to the elaboration of a Transactive Planning theory. Central to both texts is a concern not only with what Friedmann refers to as, the recovery of the political, but his ongoing exploration of various forms of knowledge and the linkages between knowledge and action and how this translates into a requalification of planning's normative and substantive basis.

So why or how has Friedmann come to reproblematised planning in terms of the links of knowledge to action? Why this desire to argue for an epistemological break in the manner in which we approach the act of planning; the activities of knowing and being in the world? As already mentioned, Friedmann's ideas regarding planning, draw references from diverse fields and influences ranging from his formative years working as an economist for the Tennessee Valley Authority, to the philosophical antecedents of planning traditions. I have chosen to narrow the focus to four main influences that correspond to the fields of, education, planning, philosophy and the social sciences. The intention of including these references is not to provide an exhaustive review of either American Pragmatism and the New Humanism, Small Group Theory, or a detailed review of the Chicago School of Planning's contribution to the field of planning, let alone the detailed workings of the Tennessee Valley Authority, but rather to highlight salient and foundational themes and ideas which have influenced Friedmann's



formulation of a Transactive Planning theory, and how some of these ideas are still strangely familiar in their various translations through more contemporary forms and styles of planning.

### **The Chicago School: planning as applied social science**

In the 1950s, Friedmann received a Masters from the Program of Education and Research in Planning in the Division of the Social Sciences at the University of Chicago. The program, which included such luminaries in the profession at the time as Taylor Banfield, Rexford Tugwell and Harvey Perloff, became the single most influential school of planning in post-war USA. What emerged out of this combination of theorists and practitioners was an urban planning paradigm that became the model for planning education in the USA for at least the next 40 years. What this approach comprised was a comprehensive rational model of problem solving and decision-making to guide state intervention (Sandercock 1998). This purported a planning process that would be independent of politics with its rational decision-making and problem-solving techniques and social analytical methods.<sup>4</sup>

Planning was not taught in terms of land-use regulatory mechanisms but, was contextualised within a wider societal role. Planning was therefore reinterpreted as a form of applied social science. It was to have a centralised co-ordinating function that, much like the brain or the body's central nervous system, would ensure that every aspect of the organism would benefit. Not only was planning to have a co-ordinating function but, it would make the future relevant for the present; it was to be process by which society could discover its future.

During the formative years of the Chicago School, there was a general optimism about the future of planning and the ability of expert planners to retain a critical distance and transcend competing and conflicting interests of various factions of capital, the state and labour. Planners were seen as neutral disinterested intelligentsia- a position informed by 19<sup>th</sup> positivist

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<sup>4</sup> An interesting historical coincidence between the American Pragmatist tradition and the emerging Chicago School of thinking in planning, is included as it highlights the emergence of a way of approaching the formation of knowledge in an American society responding to the needs of a mass-industrialisation. In 1896 John Dewey opened the University Elementary School of the University of Chicago. It was to become known as the Laboratory School or the Dewey School. It was a place, which he wanted to "work out in the concrete, instead of merely in the head or on paper, a theory of the unity of knowledge." (Dewey in Menand 2002 p320.) By this he meant that knowledge is inseparably united with doing. As Menand points out, "Education at the Dewey School was based on the idea that knowledge is the by-product of activity: people do things in the world, and the doing results in learning something that, if deemed useful, gets carried along into the next activity." (*Ibid*: 322) Knowledge therefore is not cut off from the activity in which it has meaning but gets reinforced through associated action. This quest for determining what is valid knowledge to inform action is still part of planning theory and practice discourse, and prefigures the underlying principles of not only Transactive Planning, but also of what is referred to as the Collaborative, Participative and Communicative style of planning.

philosophy in which objectivity and a detached intellect investigates passive objects. The role of the planner was thus to act as an expert who could utilise rational laws to provide societal guidance. Politics was irrational and needed to be guided by the detached reason of planners whereby the, "knowledge in planning would precede and shape the actions taken by investors, households and governments. Knowledge and reason would liberate societies from ideologies and prejudices." (Sandercock 1998) Planning had come of age. It had decoupled itself from purely politically motivated imperatives and would be directed to the service of modernisation, of progress and unlimited growth. Within this schema, it was identified as a process in which:

1. Planning is concerned with making public decisions more rational.
2. Planning is more effective when it is comprehensive. This requires integrative and co-ordinative functions across sectors.
3. Planning as a science and as an art.
4. Planning is a project of state direct futures.
5. Planners are neutral and best positioned to make the best decisions for the "public interest".

(From Sandercock 1998: 27).

On graduating from this program, Friedmann's view of the scope and role of planning was one which saw the bigger picture and which presumed that a comprehensive plan could be produced by neutral investigators of the forces which shape society, in order to attain desired goals. This assumed a progressive state with reformist intentions that would serve the ongoing long term needs of all groups. Indeed issues of heterogeneity, of conflicts of interests, of power and resource access and distribution were not to be included into the messy terrain of plan and decision-making until the 1970s. Interestingly, it is almost against the presumptions of the Chicago School that his later work in planning theory is addressed as it deals with a strategic form of thinking and being in the world which questions the role of the planner "as knower" and which opens up terrain of multiple knowings and ways of interpreting our "sorry reality". In this interpretation of planning's role, the planner is no longer neutral and truth is no longer static or claimed. What this signals is the emergence of a rupture within the established form and format of "doing" planning which the Chicago School was instrumental in reinforcing. Indeed it has subsequently been referred to as the "crisis" in planning, which has unleashed at least a decades worth of intensive debates on the planning's normative and substantive basis and

spawned what some refer to as a new paradigm -postmodernism. However, the Chicago School remains a seminal influence, as it relocated planning as a social process, thereby establishing a paradigm that could ultimately include more radical interpretations of what a social process could be, and to what ends it should be directed.

### **The Tennessee Valley Authority: planning as social process**

In Retracking America: Towards a Theory of Transactive Planning (1973), Friedmann makes reference to his experience as a college graduate student who, on obtaining a Masters from the Chicago School, was ready to apply his theoretical knowledge to the service of the "common good". The frustrations, and indeed reality of the working and practical environment of a planning bureaucrat, was to expose basic contradictions between what was taught as theory, and what was being done in practice. This first encounter, with the realities of the planning profession and its various dimensions, was to form the basis of much of his work in the following decades, forming the catalyst that launched him into publishing his first journal article on planning theory.<sup>5</sup> In this article he introduced themes including: the identification of planning with the guidance of change in society; the recognition of the time-binding nature of planner; and the view of planning as a social process (*ibid*:05); which would form the basic template of his subsequent investigations.

So what did Friedmann encounter at the Tennessee Valley Authority back in 1952, that lead him to question the normative and substantive basis of planning? As he points out, "instead of a free-swinging agency devoted to the betterment of life in a backward region, it was a tired bureaucracy fighting for its existence, more concerned with saving its budget from a hostile administration in Washington than with innovative action." (*ibid*:05) moreover it also did not have a comprehensive plan or overall objectives of what it wanted to achieve for the development of the regions economy- something that he came to expect as a recent graduate from the Chicago School. This reliance on the processes of bureaucratic systems and the subsequent inertia that this engenders, showed the dangers of an system which would form ideologies out of initial ideas and which is driven by the internal social dynamics and relational webs and networks created between people, between departments, instead of by well informed policy directives. It was the experience of this organisational hubris which leads Friedmann to state in 1973 that; "The utopian thrust of planning thus runs counter to the inherent

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<sup>55</sup> Planning, Progress and Social Values *Diogenes* no17 Spring 1957 pp98-111.

conservatism of mature bureaucracies. To maintain this thrust, ...planning may have to be taken outside the constraining framework of bureaucratic organisation." (*Ibid*:07). The experience of the Tennessee Valley Authority, also to a certain extent, exposed the contradiction, if not impossibility, of the neutral planner and the possibility of a centralised intelligence to guide social development. This therefore opened the way to start thinking about alternative methods and tools for engaging in problem definition and in thinking about how it is we plan and understand our "sorry reality" and about locating planning as a function not necessarily governed by the state, but potentially relocated within civil society.

### **American Pragmatism: learning through doing**

Philosophy is always a good place to start when thinking about ideas, and when concerned with the how and why of ideas, what better source than the American Pragmatists. As a school of thought<sup>6</sup>, or rather as a "metaphysical club", the Pragmatists had an enormous influence on how America reshaped itself after the Civil War and how Americans thought and continue to think about education, democracy, liberty, justice and tolerance. The main protagonists of this "club" included William James, Charles Pierce and John Dewey, all of whom had an idea about ideas. They believed that, "ideas are not 'out there' waiting to be discovered but are tools -like forks and knives and microchips- that people devise to cope with the world in which they find themselves, that ideas are produced not by individuals, but by groups of individuals-that ideas are social.....they believed that since ideas are provisional responses to particular and unreproducible circumstances, their survival depends not on their immutability but on their adaptability.(Menand 2001:xi). The belief of the Pragmatists was therefore that ideas should never be fixed, in the sense that they should never become ideologies that either justify the status quo, or form a basis for renouncing it. This attitude was formative in an America recovering from a Civil War and, according to Menand, helped people cope with the emergence of a heterogeneous mass-market, industrialised society. In the context of a civil crisis that inspired a wealth of ideas and approaches about how it is we are and think and act in the world, it all sounds strangely familiar. Indeed it is reminiscent of Friedmann's first major publication: Retracking America: Towards a Theory of Transactive Planning.

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<sup>6</sup> As a philosophical tradition it encompasses epistemology and political theory and is located between the traditions of institutionalism and historical materialism. For a historically grounded account of Pragmatism refer to The Metaphysical Club by Louis Menand, 2001. Flamingo Press.

In this text, Friedmann does the same thing: he initiates a discussion which expounds the crisis in post-war America and how this has led to an inability for planning to respond effectively to people's needs. Taking the 1970s as a starting point, Friedmann states that, " A major...part of the present situation is our growing inability to bring the relevant scientific and technical knowledge to bear on political actions. The crisis is one in the guidance processes of the society. "(*Ibid*: 170). Because planning for Societal Guidance is invariably embedded into the state-capital apparatus, it is incapable of coping with the crises of industrial capital<sup>7</sup>. This translates into a general crisis of planning's legitimisation, as the system no longer delivers on its promise of material sufficiency, social equality and democratic rights. The crises of industrial capital together amount to the crisis in planning in as much as they sever the link between knowledge and action. The crisis in planning for Friedmann is therefore identified as follows:

1. The theories about how we obtain valid knowledge about society are being radically revamped.
2. The sheer pace of historical events seems to outpace our abilities to harness the forces of change to a social purpose.
3. The kind of problems we face and their magnitude render historically derived knowledge of little use in attempting to solve them.

(From Friedmann 1987:13)

Transactive Planning is thus initially conceptualised as a response to the crises in knowing and crises in valuing. In Retracking America, Friedmann outlines three conditions that have resulted in what he refers to as the crisis in valuing. He initiates the discussion by introducing what he calls the Age of Utility, which in a world still recovering from the aftermath of war is locked in a mindset of sacristy in which 'utility' is a standard according to which commodities, services, labour and time are evaluated. This describes a utilitarian approach in which a person is reduced to an individual functional unit whose interaction with other "functional units" is regulated by time and is increasingly mediated through commodified objects and situations for

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<sup>7</sup>These are itemised as:1)The weakening of the nation-state, as capital continues to leave its national 'incubator' to become a truly global force.2)The growing impoverishment of peasant societies in Latin America, Asia, Africa and the Middle East, which together hold roughly two thirds of the worlds population.3)The growing awareness that our physical environment has only a finite capacity to accommodate growth in population and production.4)The increasing redundancy of labour throughout the world, a result of several interactive trends, including the general slowing of economic growth and the spread of new- labour saving technologies.5)The staggering volume of international indebtedness, especially in semi-industrialised countries such as Mexico, Brazil, Argentina and Chile. (From Friedmann 1987:10)

contact. This describes the classic Taylorist model of both the economy and of society in a nascent military-industrial complex. In a "Taylor" made world, people are passive and the "plan" becomes the blueprint for end goals. This is a closed system in which there is no deviation from the identified end game. The system is premised on the assumption that the needs of "society" are easily determined through scientific methods as society is considered as a homogenous mass with shared value systems. However in the Transactive model proposed by Friedmann, open-endedness, which by definition cannot be itemised into specific tasks and units of production, face-to-face exchanges are required to drive the system. In this model people are no longer reduced to passive units of production, but are considered as active agents of their own history. He then introduces the Age of Consumption in which the idea of scarcity is no longer a central issue. This describes the USA in the 1970s where choice is no longer calculated in terms of utility and opens out terrain for conflicts of interest and values in arriving at a choice that is not determined by a rational indication of utility. This shapes his view of contemporary post war American culture as a potentially problematic field as he sees the crises as one of finding common ground in which to guide the future course of society. This leads into the presentation of what he calls Cultural Pluralism. The proliferation of diverse cultures is presented as the fragmentation of values. He sees this as a major point of concern. On the one hand his text presents a view in which he valorises the Americanisation of immigrants, whilst it can also be interpreted as the assimilation of immigrants into a social structure which built consensus towards a "common good", predominantly based on the aspirations of white upper middle class male planners. In this frame, social cohesion/assimilation is a precondition for societal guidance. Achieving the "common good" requires a hegemonic and universalising approach to diversity and difference. Further exposing the liberal position of universalising a particular set of values.

For Friedmann the crisis in valuing is linked to the Crisis in Knowing. He is concerned with the possibility of "knowing" enough of the complexity of a situation and a system in order to outline an effective course of action. It is for Friedmann, "this failure to understand, and the consequent inability to provide even minimally effective guidance, which has led to what some observers have called a "turbulent" environment in which individual and collective action produce negative and unpredictable results for others..." (*Ibid*: 105). The outlines of his epistemology for an action based knowledge, builds onto his elaboration of the Age of Utility, its move through the Age of Consumption and its manifestation on a culturally diverse social system in which a one-size fits all response does not seem to fit.

The crisis in planning thus amounted to what he saw as the inability of planners to respond to challenges at hand. Planning can't cope, or rather planning conceptualised from a Social Guidance framework, can't cope because it is linear, non responsive, and hierarchical. By providing a way out of this impasse, and importantly, by centering the planner, planning is legitimised and given scope for evolving into a radicalised role which is linked to the ideology of a Social Transformation paradigm. In so doing, like the dynamics of capital, crisis becomes generative. By this it is meant, that motivated by a crisis, new institutional, operational, normative and substantive forms of planning are created. The system learns and reformulates itself.

So in looking at the basic schema of the Pragmatist approach to epistemology, what else do we find that recurs in Friedmann's recalibration of planning's normative basis? First and foremost we find an ongoing optimism in the American dream: faith in the future, a reading of democracy as equality and the progressive nature of science, the possibility of human self-realisation through experimental and experiential learning, and a strong advocacy for scientific planning in which science is directed towards the needs of society, thereby providing the material basis for liberation and growth of individuals.

Dewey, as the most prolific exponent of the Pragmatist school of thought, was a profound influence in the tradition of planning. His "scientific politics", in which learning from social experiments was regarded as fundamental to the development of a healthy democracy and his belief in social progress through science whereby, "Government, business, art, religion, all social institutions have a meaning, a purpose. That purpose is to set free and to develop capacities of human individuals without respect to race, sex, class or economic status. And this is all one with saying that the test of their values is the extent to which they educate every individual into the full stature of his possibility. Democracy has many meanings, but if it has a moral meaning, it is found in resolving that the supreme test of all political institutions and industrial arrangements shall be the contribution they make to the all-round growth of every member of society."(Dewey in Friedmann 1987:189) This undoubtedly made an imprint on Friedmann. However, perhaps the most foundational of Pragmatist concepts was the idea that one learns by changing reality, that one learns through doing. This was a method of knowing which was self-corrective and enabled people to learn from their mistakes as well as successes.

Within this schema of knowledge, change is incessant, and as Dewey stated, "the heart of the method is the discovery of the identity of inquiry with discovery. Within the specialised, the relatively technical, activities of natural science, this office of discovery, of uncovering the new and leaving behind the old, is taken for granted."(Dewey in Friedmann 1987:189).

This notion of change, and indeed other aspects of Dewey's Pragmatism, is prescient in Friedmann's conceptualisations of Transactive Planning. Dewey claimed that all valid knowledge comes from experience, by which he refers to the interaction between human subjects and their material environment; "in its primary integrity, experience recognises no division between act and material, subject and object, but contains them both in an unanalysed totality". In this interpretation, knowledge is an active mode of being in which experience not only gives us understanding but also shows how we can change the world. In Friedmann, this translates into his presentation of the validity of technical and experiential knowledge and the diverse and necessary information these bring to bear on any situation, in any context.

Remaining with Dewey and his descriptions of the feedback-loop and the spiral movement between plan and practice, and back again, as forming the diagram of how we learn, it is clear that knowledge formation occurs in cycles. We consolidate what we know by what seems relevant to solving a problem. For Friedmann, what we deem as relevant to problem definition and decision-making emerges from a dialogical process informed by different types of knowledge which are contextually inscribed and, which through a process of mutual learning - that is between the technical and the experiential types of knowledge- inform what amount to as effective actions. This clearly builds onto the Pragmatist understanding that "emphasises praxis and the application of critical intelligence to concrete problems rather than a priori theorising," (Festenstein in Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones 2002:15). Through feedback-loops, and informed by a dialogical process of mutual learning, individuals are constantly questioning and reassessing the processes and institutions of society.

Following on from this, the series of difficult questions that Pragmatists had to engage with regarding the validity of knowledge, of whose reality counts and of which knowledge is chosen as the driving force of change, inevitably lead one to question the power base of knowledge creation. Questions which all too clearly are still applicable to an interrogation of not only Friedmann's work, but also to any attempt to reformulate planning epistemology. The



Pragmatists influence and correspondence with Friedmann's work therefore, helps in foregrounding issues of concern regarding the role of power in linking knowledge to action. The power blindness of pragmatism therefore exposes the need for planners to be open about their power as gatekeepers, and the bias and prejudices they have, if they are to be innovative and generate new practices and processes that are innovative and "change" oriented.

### **New Humanism: the Learning Society**

Friedmann was formulating his theory of a Transactive Planning during the 1960s. This influence of "the sixties, which through its counterculture movement, had sought to express a new humanism had, also given rise to the notion of a "turbulent environment". The new paradigm insisted on man's psycho-social development as a central focus on planning, and portrayed planning itself as a form of social learning." (Friedmann 1974:7) The theoretical basis of Transactive Planning was later published in Retracking America in 1973. This was a text that he links to other seminal theoretical contributions,<sup>8</sup> all of which collectively amounted to a paradigm shift in planning. All these texts rejected the bureaucratic model of organisation in which traditional planning had been moulded. "They stressed the cognitive limits of central intelligence and its inherent incapacity to gain a comprehensive overview of large, complex, and rapidly changing social systems. They understood planning as a form of social learning that occurred in loosely linked network structures consisting of small temporary non-hierarchical and task-oriented working groups. They emphasised interpersonal transactions as the basic means of exchange between technical experts and clients. In this process scientific and technical knowledge was seen to fuse with the personal knowledge of client actors in a process of mutual learning. They also pointed to the spoken word of dialogue, as the medium through which mutual learning would occur, facilitating the transition from knowledge to action. The direct object of such planning was the innovative adaptation of social organisation to a constantly shifting environment, but its ultimate purpose was to support and enhance man's own development as a person in the course of the transforming action itself. The future was thus collapsed into the present, the classical dichotomy of ends and means, decisions and actions, was washed out." (Friedmann 1974:7) What this amounted to was a shift in planning whereby planning emerges as a learning system. This translates as a move from a post-industrial society, whose structures were based on a rational comprehensive system of planning as

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<sup>8</sup>Listed by Friedmann (1974) as including: Radical Man by Charles Hampden-Turner (1970), Edgar Dunn's Economic and Social Development (1971), Donald Schön's Beyond the Stable State (1971).

guidance, to one in which actors and agents are subjects and objects of their own destiny and are thus responsible for making their own history.

Friedmann refers to Retracking America as, an "endeavour to refocus planning on a central concern with humanistic values in which existential knowledge, the life of dialogue, and self-actualising groups, would become the regenerative forces of society." (*Ibid*: 6). His concern at the time was, how reason might gain ascendancy over the sentient forces that seemed increasingly to dominate the institutions of western society: the learning society seemed to be the way out of this impasse of crisis and turmoil. The future would, accordingly, not be the chance result of social turbulence nor directed by an all-powerful presidium of central technocrats. Rather it would be dispersed throughout the social system in a loosely articulated network of active learning groups.

In so doing, Friedmann did thus consider the context and scale of power relations. The fact that he was not prescriptive about how to approach these is indicative of his understanding of power as a changeable and mutable correlation of contingent forces. What his project of a Transactive Planning Theory involved was the provision of a tool for engaging "with" and "acting" on power. By this I mean that through the tools of engaging different types of "knowledge" that "power" would have to either be encountered, described or exposed. This I argue is possibly more radical than prescribing a set of processes. By providing a tool for approaching a multi-layered and polyvocal understanding of reality, Friedmann contextualises the responsibility of exposing power relations through groups of citizens that are mobilised into making their own history and creating their own solutions to their problems.

#### **Small Group Theory: planning for change**

At the time of writing Retracking America, a humanist vision for America -which promised to transform industrial capitalism into a fluid post-industrial society in which exploitation, oppression and coercive power was no longer necessary- emerged. Where did this humanist vision come from? One of the precursors to this paradigm shift was work being done in the field of Organisational Development (OD). This followed on from a groundswell of interest and

research<sup>9</sup> referring to, where and how learning took place, in order to ensure and enhance long-term profitability of the industrial complex.<sup>10</sup>

A brief introduction to OD is required as it situates Transactive Planning within this shift, not only with respect to the role of the planner, but also regarding the role of planning as a change mechanism in society. This is a field of studies that initially focused on how to achieve and direct change in organisational structures. Its premise was to ensure that organisations, their structures and the behaviour of people working within these systems would be more responsive and adaptive to conditions of change. "Organisation development is a response to change, a complex educational strategy intended to change the beliefs, attitudes, values, and structure of organisations so that they can better adapt to new technologies, markets, and challenges, and the dizzying rate of change itself." (Warren Bennis quoted in Friedmann 1974). What various experiments in the field showed was that the most effective mechanism to change behaviour and to enable innovative responses to new challenges was the small group. The small group was seen as an ideal social setting for changing behaviour. These changes are dependant on the interpersonal web of relations between objects and subjects of the learning environment, and amount to a move away from processes usually associated with rational decision-making.

What is interesting in the formulation of Small Group Theory - as a process of change responding to people's interrelations- is that it is seen as a follow on from the initial philosophical investigations of Dewey. Small Group Theory can thus be said to form part of the same social learning tradition. They both involve establishing how it is we learn and how it is this learning is translated into action to achieve an established goal. The work of Kurt Lewin at the Research Centre for Group Dynamics at MIT from the 1944 onwards, was instrumental in establishing the basic characteristics and dynamics of small groups. The basic premise was that groups are interactive wholes comprising dynamic relationship, whose sum is greater than the parts:

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<sup>9</sup>This was initially targeted at the sphere of organisations and institutions but subsequently had far reaching influence through research institutions and through the writings of Schön and Argyris and Lewin which were to inform social sciences and establish a new field of planning known as Organisational Development.

<sup>10</sup>The motivation for this research was to ensure a greater adaptiveness in changing conditions in organisational environments and increased long-term productivity of workers and increased creativity in management strategy.

- The way to study groups was to change their behaviour. This was thus a form of action research in which theory would be directly linked to the practice of changing reality.
- The difference between group dynamics and social learning was that a change in behaviour was thought to require an outside "change" agent.
- The acting subject: a process of re-education in which members of groups experience themselves as acting subjects, and that the group itself becomes the subject for learning.

(From Friedmann 1998).

What was instrumental in Small Group Theory, was the idea that through a collaborative system of small groups, who were both the subjects and objects of their own research, that this could enable them to get a more complex view of the reality in which they were embedded. This "consciousness" would enable groups to reassert themselves in the megastructures of corporations and the state. This notion of recovering the self and recovering the political through a small scale social unit which is actively involved -by social learning mechanisms of dialogue and mutual learning - in determining their future, is reminiscent of Friedmann's discussions on the household economy and the rise of civil society. However, what small group dynamics and OD did not face up to in their normative understanding of change, is the relation of groups to a larger power structure.

#### **Transactive Planning in context: Back to the future**

In order to consider the potential role of Transactive Planning in assembling alternative urban strategies, it is necessary to provide a brief account of the contemporary landscape of planning theory and to describe the shifts in planning paradigms: from a modernist to postmodernist and collaborative planning approach. What this will also expose is, how many of the principles of Transactive Planning have been mainstreamed into contemporary planning forms, thereby establishing Transactive Planning as a seminal precursor to many of the ideas and, in deed issues currently being discussed in planning theory and practice.

Friedmann, by providing a general definition of planning, in Planning in the Public Domain (1987) gives an account of the development of planning theory that spans at least two centuries and incorporates a vast source of philosophical and social theory. This is a useful roadmap of planning's' intellectual inheritance as it marks specific shifts in paradigms and conceptions regarding rationality and planning epistemologies. This quest for a responsive planning theory (whether in keeping with a market-led or socially responsive rationale) and practice has resulted

in the relentless search for new directions in planning theory which, as Harris states has, " in the past two decades ...witnessed the emergence and increasing credibility of different strands of planning theory, which may be interpreted as competitor paradigms in the wake of damaging criticism of the classical rational model." (in Allmendinger +Tewdwr-Jones 2002 :41).

### **The Crisis in Planning**

The crisis in planning amounted to what Leonie Sandercock describes as a realisation that planning was not able to respond to the needs of a social and spatial environment characterised by rapid change and uncertainty, by heterogeneity and multiplicity. Her argument is that, "modernist/mainstream planning is not equipped to provide us with answers that are satisfactory for the dilemmas of difference in the emerging cities and regions of the twenty-first century." (Sandercock 1998:21) This realisation did not occur overnight, but was indeed part of the radical tradition described by Friedmann, which, in the 1960s started to call for a requalification of the both the normative and substantive basis of planning. This call was instrumental in shaping the paradigm shift which, in the 1980s culminated in what is referred to as postmodernism: a new paradigm which was to deal with issues of diversity and equity in the multicultural cities of the third millennium (Sandercock 1998).<sup>11</sup>

It is in fact as a response to this crisis, that Friedmann not only formulated his initial outlines for a Transactive theory of planning way back in the 1970s, but in deed has formed the basis of subsequent developments in planning theory which have sought to approach amongst other issues: the role of the planner; the role of knowledge; the role of the state; the role of citizens; the role of "other voices", other knowledge bases; the role of class, race, gender and the environment in qualifying planning objectives and strategies; the role of power, to name but a few, in formulating responses which are context and situation specific, as opposed to being directed by some perceived form of neutral and scientific rationality.<sup>12</sup> What this amounts to is a

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<sup>11</sup> Sandercock outlines the following points as the foundations of a postmodern praxis:

1. Means-end rationality is still a useful concept if coupled with practical wisdom.
2. Planning is more people centred.
3. Different types of knowledge, and ways of knowing are useful in directing planning action.
4. Planning is no longer a state directed top-down process but through the bottom-up processes of community based planning is geared towards community empowerment.
5. Planning incorporates multiple publics and therefore requires new skills and tools.

(Adapted from Sandercock 1998:30).

<sup>12</sup> As identified in Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones, these shifts away from positivist thinking are attributed to insights provided by Kühn and Feyerabend, both whose philosophies of science began to derail the "positivist understandings of the universalisation of conditions of knowledge, the neutrality of observation, the givenness of experience and the independence of data from theoretical interpretation". (*Ibid.* 2000:5) Data and theories began to be understood as belonging to larger social and historical contexts and social

reformulation of planning's normative and substantive basis. It signals a move beyond a linear hierarchical system which takes the comprehensive masterplan, structured by a rational decision-making process as the unquestionable "script" of the future, and questions whether there are other ways of perceiving our "sorry reality" in order to formulate alternative urban strategies.

The "crisis" thus refers to a realisation that, in an emerging world order characterised by rapid change, by uncertainty, by mass industrialisation, by mass migrations and heterogeneity, that planning was no longer business as usual. It amounted to a review of the modernist project, in which science was seen as being able to respond to the challenges of unlimited growth and the provision of rational ways of attaining the good life.<sup>13</sup> How then was planning to respond to multiple claims; to multiple stakeholders; to a relational view of reality? Was it possible to plan for a future that accommodated this level of complexity?

### **The Rise of Civil Society and the recovery of the political**

It is not the intention of the dissertation to launch into a detailed historical genealogy of emerging planning forms and styles, however what will be introduced is what Friedmann, throughout his writing, refers to as the rise of civil society as it qualifies the shift in planning approaches and the emergence of different roles for all stakeholders in the process of planning the future.

The rise of civil society - understood as the emergence of social movements, associations and voluntary groups that are reasserting the sovereignty of civil society over the state - has radically altered the climate in which planners work. The emergence of an active civil society has resulted in challenging the notions of social planning which revolved around top-down provision of services. It is the exposure of planning to other discourses i.e. feminism, post

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reality was understood as social construction; the role of the planner and planning vacillated as both the objects and subject of planning. The shift was not a rupture and started challenging hegemonic practices which did not query the epistemology of knowledge they were using began to break down in the 1960s and 1970s. Friedmann's work at this time is part of what is referred to as the shift in planning paradigms that started looking at how knowledge and other forms of learning are created/generated. As such this marks the importance of Transactive Planning as being a forerunner of the principles that were, and still are, being mainstreamed in current planning forms and styles.

<sup>13</sup> Sandercock in Towards Cosmopolis (1998) gives an account of how "the social sciences have been dominated by a positivist epistemology which privileged scientific and technical knowledge over an array of equally important alternatives-experiential, intuitive, local knowledge's, knowledge's based on practices of talking, listening, seeing, contemplating, sharing; knowledge expressed in visual and other symbolic, ritual and artistic ways- rather than in quantitative or analytical modes based on technical jargons that by definition exclude those without professional training.' (*Ibid*: 5).

colonial studies, cultural studies, historiography, philosophy of science and theories of knowledge and communication, that has all opened up avenues for attacking the premise of the planning paradigm inherited from the Chicago School and its adherence to a modernist positivist paradigm. According to Sandercock (1998), these new avenues of thinking, "contain attacks on the concepts of; objective knowledge technical rationality, critical distance; notions of progress and enlightenment; they embrace multiple discourses and reject totalising ones; and they propose a shift from linear time and physical inert space to new ways of conceiving of space and time, dialectically, socially and historically." What emerges is a new paradigm; a new understanding of power relations and of method, of context and of scale.

The rise of civil society is inevitably associated with what Friedmann refers to as "the recovery of the political". This is a key point in his elaboration of a Transactive Planning style, in as much as it signals the recovery of spheres of daily life - of lifeworlds- from the control of the state. By this is meant that citizens regain control of aspects of their daily existence. This signals a move from citizens as passive receptors of policy and state directed planning, to a role which is active and which assumes the corresponding responsibility of directing change and transformation from below.

The mechanism for achieving what amounts to a potential structural change in power relations between the state and civil society, according to Friedmann, is the household. Households are instrumental in active resistance to the hegemonic discourse of globalisation. Interestingly, although acknowledging that the household is also the site of contested power struggles, he nonetheless claims that this is the basic unit of the reproduction of daily existence. As such, by mobilising households into a co-ordinated network of "small groups", the perimeters of civil society will expand and be reclaimed from the control of the state<sup>14</sup>. These, as mentioned in his introduction to Cities for Citizens (1998:2-3): "are claims and struggles: not to overturn the state, nor to replace it, but to transform the state in ways that will serve all of its citizens, and especially the least powerful, as a matter of ideology and intention as well as actual practice."

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<sup>14</sup> Friedmann goes on to qualify the physical boundedness of civil society, yet he sees potential in the development of technology and an increasingly mobile world population as having the potential to expand the mobilisation of civil society beyond territorial definitions. What is interesting in this is that an incremental scalar dimension is included as power is reclaimed from the household outwards. "Civil society is lodged within the territorial limits of a state, region, city or neighbourhood, but its linkages and networks extend increasingly beyond these boundaries to the rest of the world through electronic media, the migration of kin and friends and associational bonds." (*Ibid*: 23).

The emergence of civil society is thus a collective actor in the construction of cities, of regions, in search of the "good life".

### **The Communicative Turn and Collaborative Planning:**

Within the postmodern planning paradigm shift that occurred in the 1980s, and with the amplification of social theory being embedded in planning theory, an impasse was reached in planning theory and practice. What this amounted to was competing conceptions of rationality and the need to establish an appropriate place for rationality in planning theory. To cut a long story short, in which the merits and paralysis of a multi-perspectivist view of reality were tediously argued, in the 1990s a level of consensus was reached around approaches to planning based on Jürgen Habermas's Theory of Communicative Action (1984), and signalled what Innes referred to as the new paradigm for planning. (Harris in Allmendinger + Tewdwr-Jones 2002). The "Communicative Turn" signalled planning's attempt to respond to crucial changes signalled by the resurgence of economic valuation and the postmodern critique of scientific rationalism. These changes reflect the broader ongoing crisis in planning theory that I already described as relating to the decline of the rational planning model. The "turn" identifies a change of direction and emphasis in planning theory; a turn towards an interactive understanding of planning activity, and is therefore included as an important contemporary development in planning theory that qualifies Transactive Planning potential role in assembling alternative urban strategies.

Neil Harris (in Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones 2002) outlines how Collaborative Planning attempts to perform the intricate task of retaining allegiance to the utopian normative principles of the Habermasian project while also striving to gain credibility as a model of planning, a practice that is both capable of being carried out and socially worthwhile to do so. As a hybrid of social and economic theories<sup>15</sup>, it is identified as part of a longer-term programme of research focused on the democratic management and control of urban and regional environments and the design of less oppressive planning mechanisms (*ibid*: 22).

According to Patsy Healey, Collaborative Planning "is about why urban regions are important to social, economic and environmental policy and how political communities may organise to

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<sup>15</sup> Harris identifies the institutionalist sociology and regional economics geography.



improve the quality of their places. "(Healey 1997:xii) This outlines how this form of planning - understood as both a framework for understanding and as a framework for practical action - revolves around practical concerns related to understanding and action. It also identifies the multiscalar role it can strategically span, as it is able to integrate a range of concerns related to issues of contemporary relevance: notions of community; power relations; global economic restructuring and regional impact; cultures and systems of governance, environmentalism; conflict resolution; and spatial planning. These issues are not only multisectoral but multiscalar as their spheres of influence and impact are both borderless and operate across levels of governance: from the local to the regional and ultimately, the international. The ability, or recognition of Collaborative Planning's potential to operate at a multiscalar level, has obvious resonance with Friedmann's transformative objective for Transactive Planning. Furthermore, the focus on action, and on organising if not mobilising for change, is a significant move away from the impasse that was developing as a consequence of the multi-relational views offered by postmodernism. The issue here is not to attempt a contribution to the ongoing definition of whether indeed postmodernism and the subsequent iterations and variant elaborations mark a complete rupture with modernist or indeed from the Enlightenment transition, but to consider what it is we do with our multiple knowings. The question of epistemology inevitably unlocks questions of agency: themes that continue to interrogate planning.

If as Healey states, "Every field of endeavour has its history of ideas and practices and its traditions of debate. These act as a store, which those within the field draw upon in developing their own contributions, either through what they do, or through reflecting on the field. This 'store' provides advice, proverbs, recipes and techniques for understanding and acting, and inspiration for ideas to play with and develop." (*Ibid: 7*), then perhaps one can view Transactive Planning Theory's role as a store of ideas and explorations in planning theory and practice over the last three decades. As such it continues to be a useful knowledge bank of how we can approach the question of recalibrating an epistemology of planning which is responsive and generative of alternative strategies for how it is we go about assembling our various futures.

### **Altered states: Transactive Planning in the 1980s to 1990s**

Returning the focus to Transactive Planning's theoretical elaboration, a brief synopsis of its trajectory and evolution during the 1980s and 1990s is provided. This serves to reconnect Transactive Planning theory to the contextualisation, and shows how, for Friedmann, this has served as a useful "store" to which he returned and requalified in terms of responding to shifts in planning approaches.

As illustrated, Transactive Planning, as a form and style of planning based on social dialogue, was presented through Retracking America, as a response to this crisis driven condition. Friedmann argued that social dialogue was required to bridge the numerous divisions that threatened the social cohesion of the USA during the turmoil of the 1960s and 1970s. It was a way of linking ways of knowing, to inform ways of acting in a world that was increasingly difficult to describe as a predictable linear system. This theme of unpredictability and the development of a more responsive epistemology of planning action resurfaces in his writing during the 1980s and 1990s. Interestingly in Planning in the Public Domain, Transactive Planning, whose initial explorations in the 1970s formed the basis of his explorations of the link between knowledge and action, leading to his model of a planning framework, is relegated to a parenthetical mention in a chapter on radical planning practice. What Friedmann has distilled from his 1970s postulations is the potential application of Transactive Planning principles of dialogue, mutual learning, feedback loops and the small group operational scale as a mechanism and tool for radical planning practice. In this sense, in the service of social reconstruction Transactive Planning, is a necessary tool for planning as social transformation, for planning as a radical practice, and marks an "epistemological break"<sup>16</sup> with past ways of thinking and doing. What does this mean? Friedmann refers to one of his initial definitions of planning as, an attempt "to link scientific and technical knowledge to processes of social transformation, and identifies that radical practice and theory, when applied to the ends of achieving social transformation, necessarily involve what he refers to as mediations.<sup>17</sup> These mediations are ambiguously described in his last chapter in Planning in the Public Domain as emancipatory practices<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> "Radical Planning does not lie on a logical continuum with planning for societal guidance. It implies an 'epistemological break' with past ways of thinking and doing." (Friedmann 1987:391).

<sup>17</sup> "Radical planning is the *mediation of theory and practice in social transformation*" (Friedmann 1987:391, italics as original).

<sup>18</sup> In Chapter 10 of Planning in the Public Domain Friedmann outlines the following aspects of radical planning practice; selective de-linking, collective self-empowerment and self-reliance, thinking without frontiers, the recovery of wholeness, networking and coalition building, strategic action, mutual learning. (Friedmann 1987)

whose "task is to wrest from the political terrain, still held by the state and corporate capital, expanding zones of liberation in which the new and self-reliant ways of production and democratic governance can flourish" (Friedmann 1987:412). Together, they correspond to what Friedmann proposes as a transformative theory of planning which includes; a focus on the structural problems of capitalist society viewed on a global scale, provide a critical interpretation of existing reality, chart a forward-looking perspective towards probable future courses of a problem and its solution, elaborate images of a preferred outcome based on emancipatory practice, and suggest a best strategy approach in realising preferred outcomes (*Ibid*: 389). These, to his mind, signify a break from a social guidance framework of planning based on "linkages" between knowledge and action. The significance of this for our contemporary consideration of the role of Transactive Planning in generating alternative urban strategies is, that beyond focusing on semantic substitutions for verbs, that we focus on what an epistemological break implies. What to make then of this epistemological break, how are we to think without frontiers? How do we think in a non-euclidean, non-hierarchical way? Does this give us a range of filters through which we can see an altered state of our institutional relationships, and structural changes in power relations both at a territorial and local scale? If, as Albert Einstein remarked, "Our theories determine what we measure," then what has or does Transactive Planning enable us to see of our "sorry reality", and what course of action, terrain of interrogation does this reveal?

Perhaps the passage on thinking without frontiers in Friedmann's last chapter in Planning in the Public Domain is the most useful in terms of approaching our consideration. In this paragraph he outlines what he regards as ways that radical planners can shape theory to the requirements of practice. This involves a way of thinking that does not respect established and institutionalised boundaries that he identifies as: 1) the hierarchical delimitation of valid and invalid knowledge; 2) the bounding of knowledge according to the terrain stipulated by academic disciplines; 3) the parochialism of applicable knowledge i.e. contextualism gone haywire; 4) theory/practice distinction between formal knowledge as the only relevant input of theory. What all of this is pointing to is that we stop thinking with an inherited lexicon of planning as formulated along a market rationality, and start to think beyond the confines of an institutionalised discipline. It is a way of acting generatively, or creatively. This might mean following trajectories which are not previously recognised by the rule book of traditional planning

as valid ways of seeing, ways of doing in the world. Simple stated, the message is: think different.

We return to Friedmann's exploration of Transactive Planning in the 1990s as identified in an article Planning Theory Revisited<sup>19</sup>. This serves as an expansion of this "think different" approach and shows how he substantiates this along the lines of a non-Euclidean approach to planning. This marks the departure of his 1980s explanation of reason, as inherited from the Enlightenment, and positions his theoretical framework firmly in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Ways of seeing, ways of doing, are approached from sub-atomic principles with reference to Werner Heisenberg's uncertainty principle<sup>20</sup>, and the importance of the subject position in determining what we see and how we know. The theme of unpredictability is, therefore firmly lodged between the knowledge:action axis. In a non-Euclidean model of the world and of reality in which the planner acts, Friedmann justifies and represents his theory of Transactive Planning in the following manner; "Transactive Planning is situation-specific. And thus appropriate to decentered planning, which seeks diversity of solutions at regional and local levels. Transactive Planning seeks to draw potentially affected populations in the planning process from the very beginning, when problems still need defining. It is a participatory style with its own characteristics. Above all else, participation requires time. ...Transactive Planning works best in small groups of up to twenty people. Because community representatives may not be empowered to speak for others, Transactive Planning is not an answer to the issue of democratic accountability. Its claim is more limited. Transactive Planning brings more detailed and specific knowledge to bear on a situation than would be possible if only expert knowledge were used. In addition, it may also strengthen communal responses and channel them away from blind resistance in to more constructive paths. Transactive planning seeks to tap into peoples capacity for proactive practice and where it is successful, may help create a sense of collective solidarity." (*Ibid*: 484).

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<sup>19</sup> European Planning Studies Vol. 6, No. 3, 1998:245-253.

<sup>20</sup> Heisenberg's investigations of uncertainty at a sub-atomic scale stated led him to define a principle that states: " It is impossible to simultaneously measure the position and the momentum of atomic particles with an arbitrary degree of accuracy."

### **Concluding the contextualisation**

In reviewing Transactive Planning's inheritance and subsequent trajectories, it becomes apparent that as a theory, it continues to serve as a useful "store" of ideas about ideas on planning, and about showing ways of seeing, ways of doing planning in conditions characterised by conditions of rapid change and uncertainty. Added to this, it also enables us to ask more qualified questions of planning and its relation to power, knowledge and action.

Can we find a way of action that does not necessarily involve planning? By this I refer back to the Bishopsgate illustrative example in which a process of action and of knowledge creation, regarding a site in a context of inner city regeneration, working at a variety of scales, was initiated by means of a method in which the focus was not the creation of the usual contents of a development plan, but which sought to uncover the possibility of combining unthought of programmatic uses. This cut across the need to negotiate boundaries, both in physical and political terms, and diverted the attention away from focusing purely on stakeholder's interests, in order to consider the site according to other parameters. This, much like the civic dialogue process of the Mont Fleur illustrative example, enabled participants to suspend their expectations and assumptions, in order to enable the formation of common ground.

Can we involve the community in decision-making? This topic is laced with an evolving and expansive tradition in planning and in political philosophy. It forms the very basis for our position to this answer regarding the democratic foundations of western state and governance methods and procedures. It is not within the scope or field of study to elaborate further on these. The question is nevertheless asked as it underlies Friedmann's theoretical and practical excursions into the manner in which knowledge is linked to action and what this could mean with respect to recovering the political in a planning context whose normative and substantive basis has, over the last three decades, been constantly challenged by so called new paradigms. What are we planning? For whom are we planning? On whose terms are we planning?

It is argued that as a theory, or as a heuristic, that Transactive Planning continues to serve as a useful tool with which we can approach these questions. It continues to open up new trajectories that, takes us back to the "future," as a generative field, of potential, of alternatives, of transformation.

### **Revisiting the role of Transactive Planning: scale, context, method and power**

The last part of this chapter considers the contribution of Transactive Planning in terms of reviewing concepts of scale, context, method and power. It aims to establish possible reinterpretations of what planning as social learning and/or social mobilisation might mean in a contemporary context in which scale, power and method are critical in formulating planning responses that are generative of alternative solutions, as opposed to being purely reactive and crisis driven. This reinvigorates the discussion by referring to different themes to translate and reinscribe the relevance of Transactive Planning in a contemporary context. The objective of this part of the argument is to consider the role of Transactive Planning and how it enables us:

- To look at the ways of seeing ways of doing: how do we learn?
- To move from diagnostic to generative responses: how do we create the new?
- To harness planning as a transformative activity: how is change sustained?

Themes and issues arising from the contextualisation of Transactive Planning, will be presented in the light of concerns emerging from the illustrative examples presented in part A of the dissertation. This thereby establishes the link between theory and practice and the need for theory to inform and be informed by practice.

### **Themes and issues**

When considering what alternative urban futures might mean, let alone be, Friedmann's work in elaborating not only the theoretical reformulation of planning's normative basis, but his specific interest in the link between knowledge and action, opens up encounters with various themes and issues. I have identified the following themes as being pertinent to the consideration of Transactive Planning's role in generating alternative urban strategies: crisis, knowledge, ideology and utopia, the learning society. Each of these relate to issues of scale, context, method and power, thereby exposing Transactive Planning's transformative and generative potential in assembling alternative urban strategies.

## **Crisis**

As previously discussed, the notion of a "crisis" in planning stimulated a flourishing of new approaches in planning theory and practice. What does a crisis-led response lead to then? Inevitably this encourages the review of existing planning methodologies, tools and instruments. This however, is framed as a response to a particular set of conditions identified by the "crises". This translates into what can be called a diagnostic response, in that it uses the lexicon of the prevailing conditions and structural components in order to identify the solution and implement the strategy. The issues arising from this crisis-led interrogation of planning's tools, methods, let alone normative basis, involve a consideration of whether this inadvertently merely perpetuates the structural logic of that which one is opposing. Is it possible to introduce a clear break, a rupture; in other words a true transformation by using this self-referential logic? Is it possible to think different?

The example of the Mont Fleur scenario planning project in South Africa, illustrates this issue. The historical timing of the project meant that there was no certainty of a peaceful transition from apartheid to democracy. At stake were major business interests, that felt uneasy about the impending prospect of the nationalisation of key industries and companies through the populist macroeconomic policy of the ANC. Amongst the high levels of political violence, economic uncertainty and an impending gloom spreading over the country, the Mont Fleur civic scenario process was meant to structure a vision of alternatives which would clearly describe South Africa's economic options, and explore the social impact of their logical conclusion. As mentioned by Bond (2000), who traced the history of scenario use in South Africa, it comes as no surprise that the scenario favouring what amounts to a neoliberal conservative economic and fiscal policy won out. What this shows is, that even though the objectives of the Mont Fleur civic scenario making process, was to establish alternative frameworks for South Africa's future, that the dominant logic, namely that of a corporatist agenda, thwarted any real discussion concerning potentially transformative, if not radical, alternatives which would have required major concessions from the business sector. In the end, it was not possible to think different from the macroeconomic economic framework inherited from the apartheid regime.

In the context of an impending civil war, the tools and methods of a civil scenario process did as the case of Mont Fleur illustrates, provide alternative ways of seeing and interpreting the conditions and historic contingencies that were panning out. In this sense, processes that

include a form of dialogue and incorporate multiple "knowings" of a situation enable us to learn different aspects of the context in which one is immersed. However, issues of power relations between participants and larger scale interest-groups, of the consequences of particular interpretations of identified possible routes for achieving a desired end-game remain crucial in elaborating strategies that are socially and structurally transformative.

**Knowledge : action = politics + power**

This is where it is all at in Friedmann's work on Transactive Planning, and in his framing of planning in the public domain. He has provided an extensive outline of planning's ways of knowing, ways of seeing through formulating "dialogical" epistemologies<sup>21</sup> of knowledge based on transactive face-to-face encounters between experts and lay people. He has outlined an expansive account of planning's historical inheritance from various traditions, and left us with a heuristic descriptive of planning's workings. But what he has not done, although it is fair to say he has intimated towards this, is how it is we should action this knowledge gained from mutual exchanges of experience and technical know how. Where and how is the power of knowledge? Who controls knowledge creation? What is the politics of knowing?

A commitment to improving our sorry reality requires a recalibration not only of the tools, techniques, methods, instruments at our disposal, but also the structures and forms of our institutions. By motivating the use of knowledge and action towards the recovery of the political<sup>22</sup>, defined as liberating space from the state, he reiterates that we cannot choose not to know, not to act. The exponential equation of knowledge and power, of action and politics, is an inescapable function of planning. This is evident in both the TVA and the Mont Fleur illustrations, both of which have identifiable power bases. It is argued that in the TVA, the power base, even if considering what Amsterdam could be like in 30 years time, resides with the dRO (the Physical Planning Department) who thereby has an effective veto or censoring power over what these visions and alternatives could be. Similarly, the fact that the filtering of the narratives of South Africa's alternatives resulted in supporting a scenario descriptive of what amounted to neoliberal macroeconomic principles is suggestive of the power that industry and business

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<sup>21</sup> By this Friedmann refers to, "A new holistic dialogical epistemology: old technocratic planning is superseded. Knowledge is provisional and perspectivist. This new mode turns inquiry into a dialogical process between subject/actor, planer/ researcher. Use language able to communicate subjective realities." (From Friedmann 1987:414).

<sup>22</sup> Friedmann defines this as, "the collective self-production of life and the reclaiming of the political terrain from the State; in short, the recovery of a genuine political community." (Friedmann 1987:326).



interests brought to bear, on what was meant to be an informal, high-level process of exploring civic alternatives. That this knowledge/power nexus directs action is not surprising, nor is a new theme or phenomena. What however needs to be reiterated is the need for vigilance and a critical consciousness of who is playing whom, and for what gains. Debate and dialogue are by no means innocent processes in which there is somehow a level playing field or undistorted channel of information or communication. The acknowledgement of these traits in any process in which the dreams and desires of some, are the potential horrors of others,<sup>23</sup> is indeed part of the democratic process of trying to establish the possibility of "common ground", whilst at the same time being able to consider alternative possibilities within this commonality. By understanding what, and where, this power stems from, one is better able to conceptualise the uses and abuses of power.

This inevitably refers back to the question of: How to action the knowledge of Transactive Planning? In deed two options emerge: either the tools of this planning approach are inserted into planning processes; or the tools of Transactive Planning become politicised, and thereby more explicit in terms of their use and objectives. What the illustrative examples, especially the Mont Fleur and the TVA, is that Transactive Planning's tools of interrogating the possibilities of the future through feed-back loops immersed in a dialogical method, can be either used or abused to attain planning objectives which are either based on market rationality or on a more socially responsive logic which requires commitment to the social and structural transformation of a particular planning context.

### **Ideology and utopia: in defence of the "good society"**

Throughout his work Friedmann refers to the "common good", the "good society", and the utopian objectives of transformative theory and practice. The planner's role in all of this is as a mediator within a specific social and spatial context. Whilst the planner is the pragmatist capable of unbiased thinking, utopia was presented as an image of transcendence: to motivate us to achieve the unimaginable. Both these positions are firmly grounded in Karl Mannheim's theory of the free-floating intelligentsia<sup>24</sup>, the principia media<sup>25</sup>, and in his ideas on ideology and

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<sup>23</sup> Iris Young in Justice and the politics of difference (1990) has written on this theme of "communities" and the danger a generalised assumption of their inherent benevolence can have. Indeed this opens up a new theme of communities of interest as opposed to communities of fate which have also been explored by Paul Hirst in Associative Democracy: new forms of social and economic governance (1996) amongst others.

<sup>24</sup> This states that, in a world in which knowledge is situationally concrete, and cannot be objective or completely true, that planners, nevertheless are the professionals who, in their independence are most

utopia in which he presents the uses of the future as a moral imperative: "The only form in which the future presents itself to us is that of possibility, while the imperative, the 'should', tells us which of these possibilities we should choose. As regards knowledge, the future -in so far as we are not concerned with the purely organised and rationalised part of it- presents itself as an impenetrable medium, an unyielding wall. And when our attempts to see through it are repulsed, we first become aware of the necessity of wilfully choosing our course and in close connection with it, the need for an Imperative (a utopia) to drive us forward. Only when we know what are the interests and imperatives involved are we in the position to inquire into the possibilities of the present situation, and thus to gain our first insight into history." (Mannheim 1929 quoted in Friedmann 1987:343).

This Janus like, about-face look to the past and the future, corresponds to the feedback loops Friedmann identifies as part of the process of a Transactive Planning. It is this continuous interrogation that prevents the ossification of ideas into dogma and ideology that is sclerotic and unable to adapt to change.<sup>26</sup> If we are not able to look to the future we remain captives of our present, not being able to question the basis of its existence. Similarly if we do not know the "interests and imperatives involved", then we will not be in the "position to inquire into the possibilities of the present situation, and thus to gain our first insight into history."

What this outlines is the existence of conflict between different interests. Indeed, Mannheim describes the emergence of social positions formed by two basic types of opposition thinking that result in conflict. These he outlined as ideology and utopian types of thinking. Ideological thinking is concerned with the perpetuation of the present, whilst utopian thinking is future oriented. Ideological thinking is concerned with ensuring the perpetuation of an existing set of social and power relations, and is therefore held by the dominant classes who use instruments of social oppression to suppress utopian thinking which by definition transcends the static view

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adept at making the most appropriate decisions in the interests of the common good. The intelligentsia thus comprises those professionals detached from the existing social order and who are thus disinterested referees acting on behalf of the common good, without bias.

<sup>25</sup> This involved understanding the developmental processes that lead to structural change. What the *principia media* states is, that in terms of Systems Science, complex systems are remarkably insensitive to changes in many parameters. However they are highly sensitive in a few. The greatest change can therefore be affected through the least resistance or effort. As a strategy this is key for policy, regarding strategic action/response. In terms of a principle for a Transactive Planning, this idea of strategic action is key regarding a position to direct action at an effective scale, as small changes may produce consequences with large effects on the structural relations within a social system.

<sup>26</sup> This bears resonance with the thinking of the American Pragmatists, who as already mentioned in this chapter, also identified the difference between ideologies and ideas. Ideologies are conservative in nature, as they always perpetuate a predefined set of relations, whereas ideas are radical or innovative and transformative, as they always question assumptions.

of the status quo to challenge the existing social pattern and its power structures, calling for their radical transformation.

The struggle between ideology and utopia, between knowledge and action, between finding an epistemology that mediates the destructive dialectic of the two, underscores Friedmann's investigation. He takes what he can from Mannheim's sociology of knowledge and builds an epistemology of action in which he sees the "intelligentsia" of Mannheim's model as the principle agents of societal guidance. Mannheim's project was to show how planners could guide the course of society's development toward utopia. This involved an analysis of forms of knowing, of rationality and of the connection between knowledge and action. Planning was thus able through such "guides" to build a holistic view of an irrational world. In this model, planners assume almost a shamanic role, both in guiding others, and as "seers" of future trajectories. It is precisely the danger of this mystification of the planners role within Friedmann's 1970s formulation of Transactive Planning, which forms the basis of a critique related to his early formulations. In this move it can be argued that far from being potentially "utopian", that Transactive Planning could be also be regarded as an extension of ideological thinking, as it seeks new avenues of legitimisation for both a profession and function of the state, which is ultimately repressive of any meaningful or transformative change in the status quo.

With respect to the illustrative examples,<sup>27</sup> we could outline the fine line that exists between claims to a "utopian" transformative outlook, and the veiled existence of ideological undercurrents that direct the outcomes of any discussion, debate or dialogue of future possibilities or alternatives. The issue then remains one of the relations between power, knowledge and action, and how these forces respond to issues of scale, context and method. What we do however gain from Mannheim and Friedmann's translation of his social theory into planning theory is a framework descriptive of two oppositional ways of thinking. This enables us to frame a critical position regarding how it is we learn, how it is we create the new, and how we can go about sustaining change.

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<sup>27</sup> The TVA illustration can also be seen as an example of the subtle coercive objectives of the social control theory of Ross (1901) in which the natural passions in people are controlled through consensus. Consensus is thus a coercive instrument used to suppress discovery of blatant injustices and used to prevent civil disobedience and revolt. (Friedmann 1987:05). This bears resonance with the relationship that existed between planning and the state in the USA in the 1960s, which Friedmann describes as, "the mailed fist of repression and the velvet glove of social planning." (*Ibid*:08).

## The Learning Society

From Mannheim's ideas of democratic social planning practice, Friedmann assimilated the conceptual difference between different types of knowledge. Mannheim identified that planning was primarily a way of thinking: the problem of planning therefore revolved around the possibility of comprehensive social knowledge. He attributed the crisis in bourgeois society to "perspectivist thinking", that reflected the thought patterns of small groups of people locked into particular niches in social order. This would be overcome by "relational thinking" which would be undertaken by a small group of intellectuals who were free of the confining visions of prevailing ideologies and were thus free to project utopian futures for society. Friedmann incorporated this notion of types of knowing in his schema of a Transactive Planning. This translated into what was described as "technical" and "experiential" knowledge. What this amounted to, in a feedback-loop process of mutual exchange, was an amplified understanding of reality, based on the contributions of the professional's technical understanding and on the client's personal knowledge of the context. In so doing planning became a reflexive process by which change could be actioned.

The proposition of a Transactive Planning, stemming from an assessment of America's crisis in planning in the 1970s, therefore enables Friedmann to establish an argument for what he calls social learning. His view is that American society needs a "heightened capacity for learning about itself, and to make what it learns effective in guiding its own development, a way to transform learning into appropriate actions. This implies that (they) must find a way to join scientific and technical intelligence with personal knowledge at the critical points for social intervention....Transactive Planning is the most appropriate method for achieving this linkage." (Friedmann 1973:190). This signals the broadening of planning towards an acceptance of its political role. He notes that: "throughout American society there is an extraordinary high degree of centralisation in the power to make effective decisions. A system so structured experiences great difficulties in responding to the needs of the people.' (*Ibid*: 191). He outlines a system of poor information feedback of misguided prioritisation and distortion of information of slow response and bureaucratic and institutional obstacles which all result in dissatisfaction,

expressing itself in violent protest.<sup>28</sup> In this sense, the scope for a Transactive Planning is expanded to include the institutional context of planning.

A contradiction is insinuated. Part of the discourse of mutual learning, of the learning society and associated processes based on dialogue, is that they pre-empt the emergence of conflict: it is a strategy of accommodation. What this exposes is the mainstreaming of a (potentially transformative and hence radical practice). However, in practice, what this mainstreaming amounts to is a disenfranchising of civil society, perpetuating the cycle of tutelage and dependency on the state and corporate power. The result is an increased sense of disconnection from one's environment, exacerbating civic and political apathy and reinforcing the dependency of civil society on tutelage by the state. This combination of apathy, and alienation renders planning unresponsive to the needs of civil society. These to Friedmann are the forces that he sees as tearing the social fabric of society apart and results in a crisis-driven planning system that only responds with palliative measures and does not get to the basis of the structural problems. In this context, planning cannot harness the transformative aspects of social forces and ceases to be generative in nature.

The political implications of this are obvious, in that he calls for a decentralised model of decision-making. This necessarily implies devolution of power to the local scale and a redefinition of the role of both the state and professionals involved in resource allocation/distribution. The potential radical nature of this is alluded to in both his early and later writings, but never actually presented as possible ways forward. One might say that this is because the manner in which it is materialised should be in keeping with the idea of the learning society, i.e. the form of action should evolve through a understanding of a specific condition and is thus by definition organic in nature. The conclusion drawn from this, is that Transactive Planning should be viewed as a heuristic, as a model through which we can better understand the implications of a world increasingly connected, bearing resonance with contemporary conditions with which planning is faced.

Referring to the illustrative examples in the previous chapters, it is clear that the TVA 's use of dialogue and debate could be interpreted as a form of anticipatory decision-making (i.e. a

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<sup>28</sup> Robert Beauregard (1993) offers another interpretation of the inner city violence in American cities in post war America that focuses on the pervasive and insidious nature of discourse in framing planning policy approaches.

cognitive process using technical reason to explore and evaluate possible courses of action). In this scheme it reflects a Policy Analysis model of planning in that all direction was aimed at the dRO, namely the "rational decision-makers" who are the implementers of policy (Friedmann 1987:181). This is in direct contrast to a social learning paradigm, which is action oriented and constitutes a form of social practice involving a continuous interaction between the process of learning and the activities of practice, thereby shaping the plan and not only commenting on it.

### **The transformative potential of planning**

By referring to both the contextualisation of Transactive Planning with the field of Planning Theory and by interrogating illustrative examples of what is referred to as an emergence of a Transactive style of planning, it becomes apparent that Friedmann's work begins to engage a political dimension and social accountability to planning. Planning thus begins to extend beyond the remit of the state. As a potentially radical form of planning, Transactive Planning denotes an epistemology of action<sup>29</sup> adaptable to the purpose of social transformation (Friedmann 1987:315) whose objective is, "the reclaiming of territorial life ..., constituted as a political community, autonomous and sovereign over the life spaces we claim as our own.....the collective self-production of life and the reclaiming of the political terrain from the state; in short, the recovery of a genuine political community." (*Ibid*: 326). The recovery of the political community involves: "to shift the axis of power accumulation in society from the vertical, which connects the domain of the corporate economy to the state, to the horizontal, which relates civil society to political community." (*Ibid*: 344).

It is in sites and situations emerging from the intersection of the public domain and political practice that Transactive Planning has the most to offer in ways of seeing, ways of doing future possibilities. It is the translations of what these sites and situations hold as potentials that requires a generative application of Transactive Planning principles, tools techniques and instruments. Translating the transformative potential of Transactive Planning in terms of its response to issues of scale, method, power and context involves approaching questions relating to: How do we action the knowledge of Transactive Planning? At what scale will this engender structural transformation? How is change sustained? How are information, knowledge and

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<sup>29</sup> In attempting a definition of action Friedmann refers to the work of the philosopher Hannah Arendt, in which she sees action as the activity of setting something new into the world. This newness then is transformative, as it signifies a break or rupture, with that that went before. In this sense Friedmann's notion of action can be regarded as radical in nature.

action initiated and operationalised? How stakeholders are involved? Together these expose not only the structural bases of power and inconsistencies and contradictions but potentially signals new terrain for action within the structure of governance and economy. Understanding the political economy of planning is thus crucial in order to apply tools in a manner that is transformative. In order to approach some of this question, if not from a procedural dimension, then at least form a conceptual basis, the writings of Henri Lefebvre and David Harvey will be introduced in part C. This also serves to introduce the concept of the urban imaginary and the multiscalar, which could expand the dimension of what a transformative planning could be and do.

# 7

## Assembling the future

"Our task is not to explain our sorry reality, but to improve it." August Lösch 1954 in Harvey 1996

"What is critical consciousness at bottom, if not an unstoppable predilection for alternatives?" Edward Said

"To think about alternative possibilities we need utopias. The right to the city emerges as a consideration of the possible impossible." Henri Lefebvre

How to improve our "sorry reality"? How to imagine variant futures in this urban age? That there have, in planning's histories, been transitions in how reality has been interpreted, and whose version of reality is prescribed as a template for directing action, is not contested. Questions regarding the contextualisation and problematisation of planning's normative basis and substantive procedures, remains fundamental to how we imagine ourselves out of the self-imposed boundaries that delimit the possibility for change. The urban question: its relation to power; its association to the spatial and social processes; its imbrication at various scales; and the procedures of its production and reproduction, needs to be requalified. It is only through a critical consciousness of these modifiers of the urban question that we are able to imagine and assemble visions and projects, of the future which are not predetermined and pre-packaged according to narrowly defined objectives, as the only alternative to our "sorry" reality.

What kind of future do we want to assemble? How do we assemble the future? What constitutes an alternative urban strategy? These are all questions that require a refunctioning of how we understand: the future; change; and their strategic relation to the urban problematic. The central argument of this dissertation is that Transactive Planning, as presented in the illustrative case studies and elaborated through the theoretical explorations of Friedmann, offers the tools and processes of learning with which to generate alternative urban strategies for assembling variant futures across scales, in various contexts of power, through situation specific and customised methods. Transactive Planning therefore constitutes processes through which the components and strategies constituting an alternative future are elaborated and exposed. Transactive Planning is thus presented as a process that is defined as mobile. This refers to the ability of this process to evolve new tools and methods that respond to salient conditions and issues. As such Transactive Planning operates less as a theory and more like a heuristic. As a heuristic it assumes the role of a model through which we can better understand the implications of an increasingly connected world in which issues related to the urban question are embedded across scales. It is proposed that it is precisely this ability of



Transactive Planning to provide a set of tools and a mind frame with which to approach issues related to scale, context, method and power within an urban planning discipline, that enables a more generative response to contingent conditions, opportunities and challenges.

A "transactive" mode of planning has surprisingly also enabled a new reading of power. This is surprising in that Friedmann has over the last three decades been extensively critiqued regarding the apparent inability of his theories to confront issues of gender, power and identity. What is argued in this dissertation is, that through outlining a process of Transactive Planning, Friedmann essentially provided a tool, or a method, (as opposed to a sclerotic planning ideology) with which power can be interrogated, exposed and explored at multiple scales of engagement, in whatever context (be it spatial or institutional) one is involved in "planning" for the future. As a heuristic it is also able to resist being mainstreamed as a planning ideology, and through its in-built processes of "learning through doing" and dialogical feed back loops, it ensures a constant recalibration of its tools. It is this ability to "shapeshift", and respond critically to contingent conditions, that makes Transactive Planning a more fine-tuned tool with which to recognise the shifts and mutations of power sources and resources which qualify the urban problematic. Far from being power shy, Transactive Planning therefore offers a new way of seeing, a new way of doing, which is able to confront power obliquely. In so doing it offers new perspectives regarding the shape and manifestations of power. What this oblique and mobile interpretation of power does, is imply the possibility for alternative responses to dealing with the outcomes of power that have a negative impact on the urban condition, on the everyday.

This part of the dissertation looks specifically at the urban question, the urban problematic and what or how Transactive Planning can contribute at this scale of intervention in order that alternative strategies of urban planning might be considered. The work of Henri Lefebvre and David Harvey is included as a way into this scale of operation. Their work is presented schematically as they have, as theorists, made significant contributions in the field of urban theory regarding just how it is we approach the modifiers of scale, context, method and power. It is felt that any consideration of the reframing of Transactive Planning, in the light of themes issues and concerns highlighted in the illustrative case studies presented in Part A, that certain aspects of both Henri Lefebvre and David Harvey's theoretical investigations need to be mentioned. This, it is hoped, further qualifies the need to revisit Transactive Planning as a fertile source of methods for dealing with the future as a generative field of possibilities, as opposed to

a minefield of uncertainty and predetermined outcomes. What the work of these two theorists has done is start to explore the possibility of contesting power and of assembling the future. It is argued that although these issues are raised in their work, that they remain transfixed in theory and are thus seen as static constructs. It is precisely the mobility and agility of Transactive Planning to move and shapeshift into variant forms of itself in accordance to particular requirements, that makes it a relevant tool with which to approach emerging issues related to the urban problematic. Instead of describing power relations as a foregone conclusion, Transactive Planning is able to find points on which power acts through processes of exposure: through unexpected tools including scenario planning narratives and design charettes.

It is felt, that in order to interrogate these issues further, and in order to establish the potential contribution of Transactive Planning, within the contemporary urban condition, that a brief exploration of the contributions of two urban theorists needs to be considered. The work of Henri Lefebvre and David Harvey is included as they are urban theorists that have approached these issues or modifiers of the urban question and urban problematic in a manner which exposes different gradations of inference than that offered by Friedmann, who has approached these issues from the vantage point of a practitioner engaged in the problem of planning for diversity in the light of uncertainty. Lefebvre and Harvey also approach these modifiers from a different scale: that corresponding to the creation of a meta-theory or met-structure that delineates the processes and systems and relations that both shape and are simultaneously formed by our being and becoming in the world. Their work thus forms part of a long trajectory of the tradition of a Marxist translation of the relation of power to form, of structure and agency, through a method of dialectics.

The structure of this part of the dissertation therefore includes a schematic outline of the ideas of Henri Lefebvre and David Harvey regarding the urban moment and the urban imaginary as fields of investigation, if not insurgency and direct action. This then forms the basis for speculating on a requalification and review of Transactive Planning through an urban imaginary that serves as mechanism to unlock the future as a field of possibilities as opposed to as a battle field of power struggles.

# 8

## Reframing the role of Transactive Planning:

### The urban moment

A speculation of Transactive Planning's role in generating alternative urban strategies requires revisiting the "urban" in a contemporary urbanising and internationalising condition. The world, we are told, has entered the "urban millennium"<sup>1</sup>. The implications of this paradigm shift will continue to affect cities, regions and countries across the uneven terrain of economic development. The future, to paraphrase William Gibson, is already here; it is just not widely distributed. This pressures the need to reconfigure not only the tools, techniques and procedures at planning's disposal, but the normative basis from which planning contextualises itself. If we agree that the perpetuation and intensification of disparities is untenable, as a model for the future development of humanity, then there is a need to reflect on what this urban millennium demands of planning and urbanism. Planning, in short, needs to be reproblematised, not within the bounded domains and narrow focus of the military-industrial complex of western styled advanced capitalism, but to cast its gaze beyond these constructs, in order to consider what exactly it is that the multiple unfolding futures within which it operates, can bring, and to whom it is accountable to.

A brief presentation of some of Henri Lefebvre's and David Harvey's conceptual contribution to the definition and implications of the "urban", as a terrain of research through which transformative action is possible, is included as a means of reframing the role of Transactive Planning through urban theory which focuses a definition of the urban moment. As mentioned in the introduction to part C, both Lefebvre and Harvey are referred to as they approach the "urban" from the scale of meta-theory. It is hoped that this more abstract gauge will amplify certain aspects of Transactive Planning's procedures through Lefebvre's description of the urban moment and Harvey's call for an urban imaginary. This frames a discussion on the urban imaginary as yielding broader horizons of possibilities, than those defined by the agendas of various factions of capital (e.g. mercantile, industrial). It is argued that it is through an urban imaginary that we can approach, preparing, if not planning, in a traditional sense, for multiple futures within which a variety of livelihoods are supported. At the outset, it should be clarified that this chapter is not intended as an overview of Lefebvre's and Harvey's work, but merely identifies salient themes and schemas; the "right to the city" and utopian thinking. These are

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<sup>1</sup> Cities in a Globalising World: Global Report on Human Settlements, 2001(UNCHS, Kenya).

deemed as useful for an interrogation of Transactive Planning along more abstract theoretical lines that are not necessarily grounded in praxis. The combination of these two themes, qualified through Lefebvres' humanised urbanism and Harvey's hopeful urbanism, is instrumental in forming a new consciousness of spatial and social processes which, in turn opens up a new way of seeing, a new way of doing planning and urbanism; a way of imagining the "urban".

### **Lefebvre: seeing the urban moment**

Lefebvre, as Katznelson points out, is important in repositioning urban research as the "means of emergence of a new social and political practice." (Katznelson 1992:96). Through using a Marxist conceptualisation of history as praxis, Lefebvre builds an argument which foregrounds the production and the reproduction of the "everyday" by people. In this schema, the city itself is seen as an oeuvre that is built, imagined, and dreamed, through a slow process involving miniscule changes and shifts in everyday life. The "city" (in form, content and formation), is seen as a key actor which concentrates human relations in non-repressive ways, freeing the possibility for self-organisation and decision-making through direct democracy. It is this focus on the everyday, on the ramifications of urban relationships, and not on the classical themes of class, the basis of ownership and the organisation of industrial production, that Lefebvre saw as the vehicle through which the vision of a non-exploitative society could be achieved. By focusing on human relationships and their effects on refashioning space, Lefebvre effectively proposes a new format for human liberation to the one provided by the traditional Marxist perspective. Through Lefebvre, the terms of reference therefore shifted, and so too the strategy with which to approach a world of flexible hyper accumulation and consumption whose b(u)y - products are new forms of social alienation and spatial atomisation. Lefebvre, therefore signals a move towards a renewed urban problematic, or a spatialised social problematic. Planning and urbanism assume a new social and political practice, which requires an analysis of the state and the role of the political, in order that we might shape our position with respect to the city as oeuvre, and the urban as a moment for transformation. The "urban", in this framework, is seen for what it is, across various scales (from the everyday of individuals, households, communities, to the global reach of neo-liberal economy as experienced at the scale of nation, of region). From this vantage point, the "urban" is recognised as a moment of transition, yielding potentially revolutionary transformations; of the everyday and the everywhere, is made visible. The shift in

perception of what the "urban" is and does, translates into a recalibration of the tools and strategies of urban planning. The "urban moment" then, is a moment of transformation across the normative and substantive terms of reference of all the activities associated with what is referred to as the "city".

However it has been pointed out that this offers a static schema of the various fields of power acting on the city. Lefebvre's conceptualisation of the relations between the urban and citizens or the everyday renders a static or rigid stratification of these territories of action. What emerges is a tiered hierarchy of static relations that perpetuates the ascendancy of the state over that of citizens and, furthermore, positions the urban as a mediator between these two different scales of power. The urban in this schema is privileged as the locus of struggle between two oppositional forms of power or of visions for what the urban and what society should and could be. The urban then, more than being a mediator between two force fields, becomes a form-giver or shapeshifter that is firmly delineated and inscribed in its hierarchical location. Power in this schema always flows downwards from the state. For this reason it is described as a static rendition of the relations between power across force fields or territories of engagement which are not necessarily locked in place or scale for that matter. What, on the other hand, is an important contribution by Friedmann, is that he proposes a "mobile" rendition of Transactive Planning. Its scope of engagement and action is not necessarily predicated on a hierarchical or relational structure. In so doing, it frees itself from providing a mediating role, to one of potential radical transformation in the structural bases of power, its structure and its agencies. What emerges from the tools and procedures provided by Transactive Planning, is that the very location of power is exposed and confronted through an active engagement in understanding the complexity of the urban moment.

### **The right to the city**

To Lefebvre, the 20<sup>th</sup> century outlines an urban moment in which industrial capitalist society is transcended by urban society. In this translation of contemporary forces, the "urban" is the driving force of change. Capital becomes an historical artefact. It is no longer solely concerned with the production of surplus value in industrial activity but, with its creation through speculation and finance, thereby superimposing secondary and tertiary circuits of flow on the lattice of an internationalised system of exchange and accumulation. By implication, the tools

and methods inherited from a critique focused on industrial activity, become redundant. Planning, as the organisation and accommodation of industrial capitals' spatial demands, of its de- and re-territorialising requirements at a city and national scale, is no longer tenable. Urbanism now transcends the city, simultaneously responds to the local and global scale of action and reaction, and therefore reorganises social relations in a revolutionary way. Revolutionary, because it transfigures that which came before: spatially, socially and institutionally. The urban age, as Lefebvre would therefore claim, promises the possibility of a new humanism. So what is this urban moment then? Katznelson points out that Lefebvre offers us a description and a prescription for this: "the urban moment constitutes an opportunity to achieve a new phase in human history by the appropriation of the 'right' to use space to serve human purposes and to reassert the meaning and dignity of everyday life... It is also the place of encounter, the assemblage of differences and priority of use over exchange value." (Katznelson 1992:98).

This right to the city translates into the right to formulate the basis of space creation, not in terms of capital's destructive metabolism, but to the demands of people and their everyday. Space, its creation, its production and reproduction, becomes the terrain of social engagement and liberation through an ongoing conscientisation of the uses and abuses it has engendered. It is like Friedmann's Transactive Planning Theory, perpetuated through a continuous feedback loop of information and knowledge creation between the state and citizens and therefore fulfils a mediatory role.

Lefebvre proposes that a consciousness of space (i.e. in terms of its production and consumption) requires an understanding of the contradictions of capital, namely that it requires the simultaneous destruction of the city, and the intensification and extension of the urban. In order to pierce this veil that shrouds us from the machinations of capital, we have to delve into the dialectic movement between form and content, thought and reality. How are we to see the urban moment?

Urban form is based on simultaneity that socially involves the bringing together and meeting up of everything in its environs. Urban society is the privileged site of the meeting of the oeuvre and the product. In modern society, simultaneity intensifies the capacity to meet. This however

has a corollary effect that includes increased dispersal evidenced in the spatial segregation of poor neighbourhoods, the heightened specialisation and division of labour and new forms of alienation. The rapid processes of urbanisation at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the incredible densities of population and intensity of conflicting needs and aspirations it has focused on the "city", has necessarily reintroduced the question of "rights" into the urban agenda. What are the rights of citizens who, by historical contingency, find themselves isolated or trapped in the periphery? To whom does the city belong? Lefebvre in The Right to the City (in Kofman and Lebas 1996) outlines how, for 200 years this has merely translated into the right to an opinion and the right to vote. Lefebvre, however, imagines a citizenship that should "aim to create a different social life, a more direct democracy, and a civil society not on abstraction but on space and time as they are lived." (Kofman and Lebas 1996:33) His conclusion is, that we must reformulate the framework of citizenship such that the right to the city brings together the urban dweller and the citizen. In this schema, rights are not simply derived from the politico-state but are anchored in civil society (Kofman and Lebas 1996:41). These are manifest, not as abstract rights, but as concrete rights pertaining to identifiable social groups. It emerges as the highest form of rights: liberty, and individualisation, in socialisation, the environment and in ways of living. What this calls for is a renewed urban society, leaving opportunity for rhythms and use of time that would permit the full usage of moments and places, and accommodates a regrouping of difference in relation to each other.<sup>2</sup> The right to the oeuvre (participation) and appropriation (use value) was implied in the right to the city. The oeuvre is unique, it is a totality assembling difference, characterised by simultaneity, where all parts refer to the whole and vice versa. The city is the supreme oeuvre, entering into conflictual, ambiguous and dialectical relationships with its institutional form. How these rhythms are recognised, how difference is assembled and translated into urban strategies of multiple futures and livelihood opportunities, remains a key question facing spatial or physical planning. As outlined in this thesis, it is speculated that Transactive Planning, when applied critically, could respond to these questions in a manner yielding generative as opposed to diagnostic interpretations of contemporary conditions. This is achieved through a strategy of mobility by which it is meant that the tools and conceptual frameworks of Transactive Planning enable planners, urbanists and citizens to expose the new locations, incarnations and relations of power. This enables new questions to be asked, new

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<sup>2</sup> This has resonance with the theory of transnational urbanism proposed by Michael Peter Smith (2001). The ability to form allegiance, to form identity and belonging beyond and across scales and definitions of territory translates into an opportunity to define civil society beyond its territorial constraints.

interpretations and translations of the urban moment that in turn offer alternative approaches to making and shaping the urban.

"Seeing" the moment then, remains crucial in order to reproblematised the urban question, the tools and strategies we use to understand it and which we mobilise to structure our arguments and propositions for possible futures. In Lefebvre's schema, capitalism and statism have crushed the creative capacity of the oeuvre, by harnessing it to the attainment of narrowly defined goals and objectives. It is this problematisation of the creative impetus, not only of capitalism i.e. in the continuous destruction and rebuilding of itself but of people's ambitions and desires that this thesis poses itself to. The claim is that an urban imaginary creates a space that reactivates the creative capacity of the city, of its citizens.

### **The right to u-topie**

Traditionally the ability to think beyond a repressive present is derived from the ideology of utopia. The tradition of spatial and social utopias has been explored extensively and has been both hailed and discredited on various points.<sup>3</sup> The intention is not to provide an overview of this tradition or its literature, but to offer an introduction on Lefebvre's interpretation of utopia and to determine how this can inform an urban imaginary. This goes beyond the critique waged against the potential repressive and authoritarian undercurrents of utopian and communitarian ideologies.

Lefebvre applies an open non-teleological dialectic thinking to the transformations taking place in cities and their relationships with the wider world. The relationships start with the urban as the everyday and the lived, from which we must construct our utopias, in order to clarify the "possible impossible", not as fixed ideas and projects, but as responsive to changing conjunctures and structures. Understanding is not closed or exhausted by analysis, there is always an opening<sup>4</sup>. What he does, is make us think critically about the myths and rhetoric of contemporary urbanism and recognise the tensions between unity and difference, as an integral

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<sup>3</sup> Lewis Mumford in The Story of Utopias (1922) gives an account of the repressive potential of utopias when framed from a perspective of perpetuating a particular ideological position. In this sense they are no different from repressive authoritarian regimes as they seek to ossify a particular social, political, economic model.

<sup>4</sup> As mentioned previously, this makes use of a similar conceptual platform to Friedmann's Transactive Planning and social mobilization paradigm that requires an endless feedback loop to inform and generate new approaches and appropriate responses to unfolding conditions.



movement of dialectical materialism: "To think about the city is to hold and maintain its conflictual aspects: constraints and possibilities, peacefulness and violence, meetings and solitude, gatherings and separation, the trivial and the poetic, brutal functionalism and surprising improvisation. The dialectic of the urban cannot be limited to the opposition centre-periphery, although it implies and contains it....Thinking the city moves towards thinking the world [thought as a relationship to the world] ...globality as totality....the universe, space-time, energies, information, but without valuing one rather than the other...One can hope that it will turn out well but the urban can become the centre of barbarity, domination, dependence and exploitation...In thinking about these perspectives, let us leave a place for events, initiatives, decisions. All the hands have not been played. The sense of history does not suppose any historic determinism, any destiny." (Lefebvre 1985 in Kofman and Lebas 1986 :53)

Lefebvre offers us a mirror from which we perceive the narrow confines of our thinking, and in so doing, provides us a line of sight into the possibility of approaching urbanism, urbanisation, planning and its subsets of procedures as potentials: as tools at the disposal of the oeuvre; as instances of the moment, as inferences of the multiple u-topie(s) beckoning. It is his clarification of, our right to the city that establishes our right to the future. The struggle for the future then, involves leaving space open for events, decisions and initiatives. <sup>5</sup>

#### **Harvey: seizing the moment and spatial play**

If Lefebvre was instrumental in showing us how to see the urban moment, then it can be said that Harvey reveals to us, that the opportunity exists to seize the moment, in order to construct alternative possibilities. If Lefebvre's work on the urban moment is about "ways of seeing", then Harvey's work on social justice and spatial play, is about "ways of doing" in the midst of this urban moment. It is for this reason that his recent contributions on the need to restructure an urban imaginary (which refocuses our attention on the possibility of agency and action), are considered. In Spaces of Hope (2000) he brings together ideas of the right to the city and utopia, offering an insight into the contemporary condition, by providing examples of instances

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<sup>5</sup> Reference is made to the illustrative case study of the TVA in part A of the dissertation. This example clearly demonstrated the need to be vigilant with respect to the potential uses and abuses of the "future" as a conceptual frame with which to structure strategies of action. What Treanor in his critique of the TVA showed was that it is necessary to ensure that in any scenario planning exercise, that "space" is left over within which one can criticize unfolding spatial and political solutions and within which other voices can be heard.

of action, and the insistence of action within the hegemony of globalisation. Harvey thus repositions the urban imaginary (or spatial play), within the tradition of utopian thinking. As a continuation of Lefebvre's trails of thought, Harvey poses questions regarding the urban problematic; How do we structure it? How do we act? What possibilities does it present? It is this intersection of the urban imaginary, and the urban problematic, which asks new questions of Transactive Planning. Inversely, can Transactive Planning, amplify or ask new questions of Harvey's urban imaginary in terms of: its relation to scales of operation; of its ability to expose power and its location; of its agility in formulating reflexive methods of interrogation and action? Can Transactive Planning, with its methodology, be harnessed to generate an urban imaginary that is responsive to multiplicity and change? Can an urban imaginary expand the envelope of Transactive Planning's contribution? Can both these approaches confront the spatial and political modifiers of scale, context, method and power in a manner that reformats the urban problematic so as to register salient contemporary issues and themes?

Friedmann elaborates the possibility of contesting power and of assembling the future through Transactive Planning, which as a mobile process, locates the points of power and the restless migration between scales, between contexts and methods and social, spatial and political registers. Harvey's theoretical constructs initially could be read as cumbersome tools with which to approach a more agile reading of power and its many disguises, but it is argued that his more recent elaborations of an urban imaginary can be read as an attempt to call for the development of tools, of frameworks of thinking which are as agile as the forces of power and their mobility through the lattice of capital that forms and reconfigures the urban and its problematic.

### **Spaced times: spatial play and the tradition of utopian thinking**

In recent writings,<sup>6</sup> Harvey outlines how the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century approached the urban problematic in terms of utopian thinking. The problem, in examples spanning both centuries was not their "totalising vision but (their) persistent habit of privileging things and spatial forms over social processes." (Megacities Lecture 4:29, accessed February 2002). This way of structuring a utopian vision was based on the proposition of a fixed spatial order that perpetuated social stability by ensuring the containment of all processes within a fixed spatial frame. It is precisely against this sclerotic interpretation of the "utopian", that Harvey bases his

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<sup>6</sup> Megacities Lecture 4 (internet access February 2002) , Spaces of Hope (2001).

call for an urban imaginary that does not atrophy the possibility of on-going change and transformation. Therefore the urban imaginary, understood as spatial play, is open-ended and able to respond to contingent conditions. It is however still part of the utopian tradition, in as much as it thinks of possibilities of new social and spatial processes and structures that are premised on human liberation. Unlike utopian ideology however, spatial play is evolutionary, constantly changing and, likened to the act of playing, engages the imaginary.<sup>7</sup>

Although the form and content of utopian models in their authoritative, segregationist and static or closed sense, have been discredited<sup>8</sup>, Harvey argues that we can still use the trajectories of utopian thinking to bring us out of a narrowly focused dystopic and crisis driven views of the world, in order to arrive at multiple possibilities. Within this schema then: "the issue is not one ... of gazing into some misty crystal ball or imposing some classic form of utopian scheme in which a dead spatiality is made to rule over history and process. The problem is to enlist in the struggle and advance a more socially just and politically emancipatory mix of spatio-temporal production processes rather than acquiesce to those imposed by finance capital, the World Bank and the class-bound inequalities internalised within a system of uncontrolled capital accumulation." (*Ibid*: 31)

Through this call, Harvey makes a claim for repositioning the urban within contemporary debates. By doing this he claims that it transforms our assumptions of the urban, of urbanisation, of urbanism. This would enable us to "abandon the view of the urban as simply a site or container of social action in favour of the idea that it is, in itself, a set of conflictual heterogeneous processes which are producing spatio-temporalities as well as producing things, structures and permanencies in ways which constrain the nature of social processes." (*Ibid*: 23)

Add to this the intensification of capital's contradictions, the multiple spatio-temporalities created by superimposed production and social processes, and rapid uncontrollable urbanisation processes, and what you get are effectively, "all sorts of interstitial spaces in which

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<sup>7</sup> The Mont Fleur civic dialogue scenario process in South Africa, illustrated in part A of the dissertation is an example of a similar process which makes use of narrative, story-telling and imagination to structure possible and plausible scenarios which are able to respond to contingent condition in a manner which is not prescriptive and predictable but innovative and supportive of transformation.

<sup>8</sup> He also points out that utopianism was used to disguise the early capitalists plan for accumulation and speculative land development through the provision of living environments which were supposedly improving living conditions but were effectively used only to ensure a pacified and healthy workforce. What this shows is the danger of reformism posing itself as radicalism and draws our attention to the skeptical use of historical models and experience not as best practice but as "anti-models that can be surpassed". (Sachs quoted in Harvey).

all sorts of liberatory and emancipatory possibilities can flourish. " (*Ibid.* :31) What to do in this urban moment then?

### **Seizing the moment**

In Spaces of Hope (2000) Harvey, like Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson in Globalisation in Question (1999), analyses the contemporary condition of capital and finds leverage for hope, for optimism and for spaces of "insurgent practice"<sup>9</sup>, both for practitioners and citizens. We are, as he says, "faced with a historic opportunity to seize the nettle of capitalism's geography, to see the production of space as a constitutive moment within (as opposed to something derivatively constructed by) the dynamics of capital accumulation and class struggle" (Harvey 2000:57). The extension of this claim is to provide an insight as to what scales of action, and what scope of action is available to us.

Harvey's account of the language of globalisation is that, not only is it used to describe the persuasive strategy, pace and scale of capital's current phase of expansion, but that it has also assumed currency as the dominant way in which we organize our thoughts of what exactly is going on in cultural and social fields. Once this master narrative is analysed critically (i.e. through the theory of uneven development), understood for what it is and what its implications are, Harvey claims that it presents itself as an opening. This offers nothing less than an opportunity, "to emancipate ourselves from imprisonment within a hidden spatiality that has had the opaque power to dominate (and sometimes to confuse) the logic of both our thinking and our politics.....we are then in a better position to understand the spatio-temporal contradictions inherent in capitalism and through that understanding, better able to exploit the weakest link and so explode the worst horrors of capitalism's penchant for violent though 'creative' destruction." (*Ibid.* : 57-58). Transactive Planning, through a similar strategy, could be a move in which the tools of production of planning, driven by a purely capitalist profit driven agenda, are seized in order to imagine an urban millennium which, through processes which expose the concentrations and manifestations of power at certain scales, is able to reconfigure itself according to requirements which are not necessarily driven by narrowly defined profit agendas.

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<sup>9</sup> James Holston first coined the term in his description of collective urban resistance movements in South America in the 1990s. This term has subsequently been adopted in the field of urban planning theory to describe a whole range of divergent citizen led and bottom-up initiatives which seek to reinstate citizenship with in the agenda a of urban governance.

By framing the reasons why we should be looking at the spatialisation of globalisation as a process that further intensifies the production of uneven geographical development, Harvey contributes to the call for a more critical and more responsive spatial planning, not to mention a more active civil society which is politicised and which is cognisant of the implications of global capital across scales and territorial definitions. Similar to Hirst and Thompson<sup>10</sup>, he shifts the focus from a dominant globalised perspective to, in this case, include the idea of uneven geographical development. This shift in language that describes world economic processes also includes a reformatting of a citizen driven political agenda that embraces the opportunities, territories or niches exposed through a shift in the terms of reference used to describe contingent conditions of the world economy.

What then is uneven geographical development? Through this theory, Harvey outlines the contradictions of the time horizons of capital. He illustrates, how in the current shape and format of capitalism, that there is a persistent need to make turn-over-time rapid, to manufacture and distribute products in order to generate profits. This can only be done by massive investments in infrastructure which take time, and which are fixed in space. What emerges is an explosive contradiction in the different time horizons of capitals functioning. The second point is that capitalism needs to eliminate spatial barriers, to “annihilate space through time” as Marx put it. This however can only be achieved through the production of a fixed space (which takes time). These fixed spaces are, in turn, particular to capitals needs in a particular moment in history, and need to be reconfigured perpetually. Differentiation thus occurs in the form of space and time. This triad of concepts leads Harvey to understand the process of globalisation as a process of production of uneven temporal and geographical development that accommodates contingencies of history and territory, in order to generate comparative advantage of certain sites over other localities. In approaching the question of how capital creates and sustains diversity and disparity, Harvey elaborates a theory of uneven geographical development. This is based on two fundamental components of; the production of spatial scale; and the production of geographical difference. The production of spatial scale refers to our propensity to create a nested hierarchy of scales through which we interpret , organise our activities within the world. The impact of globalisation is that the hierarchical scales at which human activities are

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organised are now interlaced. This has a corollary effect on the production of geographical difference as when we examine the world at a particular scale in a particular location, it reveals the effects and processes that produce differences in standards of living, resource use and allocation etc. What emerges is a multi-layered palimpsest of difference. With the superimposition of the disparity occurring as a by-product of capital, what surfaces in this geography of uneven development, is the perpetuation and increase of poverty on a global scale and the accentuation of wealth to an increasingly smaller number of individuals. What Harvey's theory does, is call for the need to analyse the imbrication of scales and hierarchies, to think "about differentiations, interactions and relations across and within scales " (*Ibid: 79*) as this reveals, not only the tragedy of disparity and inequality, but salient niches of consequential opportunities arising from the revelations of capital's contradictions, therefore helping to define new territories of action.

Uneven geographical development then, is an account of how capitalism has structured its geography, how it has built and rebuilt a distinctive landscape mediated through the networked spaces of transport and communication infrastructure. The theory of uneven geographical development catalogues how this is by no means homogenous, leading him to identify this as containing opportunities of resistance against the disparities generated by this logic of space creation. Harvey's caveat is that this resistance has the danger, like all reactive responses, to be exclusionary and usurped by populist-nationalist agendas. It is for this reason that he resurrects the spectre of Marx as offering a model through which the pluralist and universal can be synthesized within a politics able to find commonality within multiplicity and difference. The struggle for Harvey then, is "How to build a political movement at a variety of spatial scales as an answer to the shape and place shifting strategies of capital?" (Harvey 2000:52) The answer for Harvey lies, in finding ways of constructing a dialectics of politics which moves freely between scales and, which is informed by conditions and objectives / objections of each. It is Transactive Planning theory's ability to expose power sources and locations in all their mutations, which could inform an action based planning response tot he conditions unleashed by uneven geographic development.

### **Urban momentum, urban manoeuvres, urban mobility**

If a recognition of the urban moment is being mainstreamed through the documentation of demographic projections and accounts of current conditions through global agencies, including the likes of the United Nations, the World Bank, the OECD etc, then it can be claimed that a wide scale conscientisation of the salient problems, contradictions and possibilities flowing from the economic and urbanising forces of a global economy, is also occurring.

In order to liberate the consideration of urban futures, which are not ensnared within the master narrative of globalisation, there is a need for urban manoeuvres which respond to the challenges of disparity, of poverty, of inequality, of limited resource access and allocation, of restricted life choices and the right to social physical and economic well being. These urban manoeuvres would respond to these challenges by: reprobematising the urban question; recalibrating our tools for interpreting the present imagining a range of possibilities with which we can assemble multiple futures. The urban imaginary therefore requires what are referred to as, recombinant and recombiant strategies.

When considered in the light of the urban moment, the urban imaginary presents itself as a recombinant and recombiant strategy that is able to assemble the possibilities of manifold futures into realisable objectives. Recombinant in its ability to accommodate and refunction divergent demands and desires of the future: recombiant in its critical approach to the interpretation of salient conditions. The principles of a dynamic exchange of ideas, between technical and experiential knowledge, the strengthening of interpersonal relationships based on these exchanges occurring in small groups, the feedback between theory and practice and between planner and client, and the open-endedness of the process, ensures that the theoretical and procedural basis of Transactive Planning has both a recombinant (i.e. in terms of how different types of knowledge are combined to give new insights) and a recombiant (i.e. in terms of enabling a dynamic alliance between groups to form around the process of solving actual problems) role to play.

If we accept that we, as citizens, as planners, as urbanists, have a right to the city, a right to actively shape and direct the production of space and the creation of new spaces, whose programs are not necessarily subsumed to the uses and abuses of capitals profiteering remit,

then it is claimed that the struggle to ensure our active involvement is directed to the right to imagine manifold futures. The struggle for the future then, is a struggle for an urban imaginary beyond its conscription to capital. The urban imaginary is about harnessing a poetics of imaginaries to create ways of communicating and acting out visions that will have material consequences. Consequences that transform the material, social and spatial conditions of our everyday lives and how they are lived in the everywhere. This construction necessarily involves the dialectical nature of the labour process of creating; "as we collectively produce our cities, so we collectively produce ourselves. Projects concerning what we want our cities to be are, therefore, projects concerning who we want, or perhaps even more pertinently, who we do not want to become." (Harvey 2000:61) Returning again to Harvey, we read that: "The issue of 'contested' cities is not simply about contestation inside cities but more importantly concerns contests over the construction and framing of cities-especially what that they are going to be in the future." (*Ibid*: 27) It is precisely these questions of contestation, of diversity and conflicting interests which occur across scales, that planning should not ignore when reproblematising the urban question and which in turn provides a terrain of action for engaging the tools of a Transactive Planning recalibrated to respond to issues of scale, power, context and method, in a manner that is generative and thus infused with the potential for a radical transformation of the way we see, the way we do urbanism.

The process of imagining the future is, by definition a creative act. Both Lefebvre and Harvey allude to the broadening of possibilities through the formation of a new consciousness of spatial and social processes which, in turn opens up a new way of seeing, a new way of doing planning and urbanism; a way of imagining the "urban". It is to this task, namely that of engaging in processes which aim to gain a deeper understanding of the subtleties and complexities of reality that Transactive Planning has always focused on. By acknowledging the dialectical nature of the creative process of imagining future's, (not as uncertainty or a paralysing conflict, but as an impulse of expanding opportunity) this process could transcend the inertia inherent in purely rational, hierarchical, and linear processes of planning. If Transactive Planning is requalified through an urban imaginary, how can these considerations of what the "urban moment" is, inform or requalify Transactive Planning?



### **Assembling action, assembling assemblies**

Processes of assembling the future require tools and methods that actively interrogate and expose power sources and concentrations, in all their mutations, in all their scales, in all their sites and situations. This would enable a more generative response to the process of preparing, if not planning for multiple and variant futures which are able to mediate the negative aspects of power and all its ramifications, and which in turn are able to reformat and refunction power as a resource for the attainment of commonly agreed objectives which are not solely directed by the agendas of capital and increasingly imperialist tendencies of world power blocks as those defined by the USA and UK alliance. Assembling the future comprises the act of combining knowledge with action. The questions related to this, not only refer to the substantive outcomes and the normative basis of planning, but also to the assemblies of people, their interests, their dreams and aspirations for what the future could be. This recalls Lefebvre's observation that the, "the urban moment constitutes an opportunity to achieve a new phase in human history by the appropriation of the "right" to use space to serve human purposes and to reassert the meaning and dignity of everyday life... It is also the place of encounter, the assemblage of differences and priority of use over exchange value." (Lefebvre in Katznelson 1992:98).

This does not necessarily imply that the process of plan-making can ever be completely radical or transformative of institutionalised power structures, nor does it mean that the role of the professional is one of a direct response to identified needs and aspirations. Rather the process is more subtle and flexible, allowing for the creative contributions of both professional and client, either in the form of critique based on a critical consciousness of the situation and its contingencies, or by the ability to generate alternatives which do not necessarily follow the logical conclusion of the logic inscribed in the system. There is, and should always be, the opening for a creative response and solution which goes beyond the assumptions and preconceptions of both the client and planner at the outset of the process of assemblage.

# 9

## Reviewing the role of Transactive Planning:

### Learning from theory and practice

In a closing remark in Planning in the Public Domain, Friedmann refers to Transactive Planning as a heuristic. It therefore assumes the role of a model through which we can better understand the implications of an increasingly connected world. It enables us to find things out for ourselves about the subtleties and complexities of the conditions in which we live.

This dissertation has explored, through the presentation of illustrative case studies, how Friedmann's theory of Transactive Planning has presented us with a model through which we can interrogate the locus of power. Its agility in being able to move between sites and scalar registers ensures that it will serve as a "store house" of ideas regarding not only how we see and assemble the future, but in how we constantly shape and reshape the tools with which we imagine the variant possibilities of the urban. What then, have we learned from Friedmann and the illustrative examples presented in part A of this thesis? How do these insights outline Transactive Planning's potential role? In a Pragmatic tradition, I refer to lessons learned from theory (with reference to Friedmann, Lefebvre and Harvey) and practice (the illustrative examples) so as to arrive at speculations regarding the role of Transactive Planning in assembling the future.

#### Dynamic Dissatisfaction

The dissatisfaction regarding planning, as presented in the illustrative examples, can be interpreted as being indicative of the unexplored transformational potential of Transactive Planning. It is not proposed that Transactive Planning assume the role of a panacea to the contradictions in planning. On the contrary, it is speculated that it is precisely the interrogative nature of the principles of Transactive Planning that a continuous process of renewal and engagement is initiated. It is a process, which "actions" knowledge, and therefore prevents the paralysis of the sclerotic outlook of ways of seeing the world, and which in its mobility is able to constantly locate the sites and situations and manifestations of an increasingly mobile power structure that fashions and refashions itself according to the requirements of an internationalising world economic order. In what way can we make our tools more critical? How can we be more creative with the insight our tools and techniques give us? What can we transform, and how are we to do it?

### **The possibility of radical transformation**

Friedmann's work is saturated with the promise of the possibility of a radical planning practice. His interpretation of what this implies refers specifically to the mediatory role of the professional in creating the conditions through which the recovery of the political community is made possible. This "fluorescence" of society thus opens up the possibility of transformations initiated at the scale of the household and linked to the wider global nexus, through associations and the allegiances of social movement networks. Transactive Planning thus engages with the social, spatial and political modifiers that include: scale, method, context and power.

What then is the role of Transactive Planning in this "recovery of the political community", in this transformation? Is it to reactivate the role of the political, by means of providing the basis for a critical reflection of the contemporary conditions of our urban reality?

One of the applications of Transactive Planning is to address these questions through the processes of mutual and social learning. Through these exchanges the territories requiring transformation are made visible. A sense of the "radical" and of "transformation" then, is directed from a theoretical postulation, to a substantive dimension. The institutions of western liberal democracies already have an in-built predisposition of checks and balances that aim to ensure that the "future" is not usurped by narrowly defined interest groups. However, the tools and techniques these institutions use to interpret our contingent realities need to be constantly reviewed. What this means is that vigilance and consciousness is required, so as to be aware of the possibility and potential for change. The new terrain for radical practice is the spatialisation of these open-ended procedures in the public realm, so as to preclude the subsumption of the future. This requires a conscious active civil society and planners in planning systems whose paradigm has shifted to incorporate a more open-ended generative response to the task of assembling the future.

### **Epistemological break**

Transactive Planning signals the recognition that different ways of seeing and knowing the world, result in different ways of “doing”. The ability to “think different”, requires the flexibility of being able to apply various tools, techniques and procedures within a process that can accommodate deviations from a set pattern of decision-making. The principles of Transactive Planning not only enable these shifts but, through a commitment to a cyclical process of critique and creation, is able to refunction itself as a generative theory and practice.

An epistemological break does not signify a severance of the link between knowledge and action. On the contrary, it opens up new terrain for investigating what new ways of seeing, new ways of doing planning and urbanism might be. The “break” is more an instance of recognition in which the ideological and normative basis of our inherited planning models is surfaced. A transactive approach to planning could ensure, that plan and decision-making processes are not ensnared in pre-rehearsed lexicons and logics, but are open to the possibility of transformation, even within normative and substantive parameters. Transactive Planning might not change the world, but at least it might change how we see it.

# 10

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**Bishopsgate Methodology Statement**

Bishopsgate Goodsyrd is at the centre of two counterposed trends in the contemporary urban process. On the one hand, the densification of the inner city follows the ongoing growth of international finance and business services, coupled with a growing demand for inner city residences. On the other hand, job creation in general and most especially in manufacturing and lower-level services, along with overall residential demand, continue to disperse outside the major cities. The scale of the two trends has brought urbanism to a critical decision-making point. New office development can no longer be contained within a relatively compact business district, and threatens to undermine the ideal of a continuous urban fabric of living and working. Job loss and community decline around the edges of the City present a series of intractable social and economic problems. These trends have been in place now for three decades, and the magnitude of the difficulties confronting areas like the City Fringe are widely acknowledged. Traditional approaches to planning and design, coupled with ameliorative social and economic policies, have proven insufficient. Today, a more concerted strategic approach to spatial development is required, and itself calls for innovative approaches to urban design at all scales.

On the positive side, urbanists have new resources at their disposal, and new urban processes stand ready to become more widely-used instruments of strategic development. Today, some community organizations demonstrate a maturity that makes them valuable allies in the political and developmental processes, capable of marshalling resources into sustainable local initiatives. In a very different frame of reference, the growth of business services as the primary force for job creation in the city center means that we no longer need to separate work from home life. The offices, studios, and research labs of many of the fastest growing industries of the new economy no longer appear incompatible with family and residence. There is a subtle, intricate, and yet profound set of relationships between these seemingly disparate trends, and these can already be witnessed in the area around Brick Lane. Our strategic approach aims to grasp and respond to these relationships as spatial forces and opportunities present at Bishopsgate.

**Defining a Spatial Strategy for Bishopsgate**

The Bishopsgate Goodsyrd presents an opportunity to establish an exemplary model of strategic development for key London sites. Not only will it establish a pattern for the relationship between the City and the boroughs surrounding it, but will also indicate a future direction for the densification of London's transport nodes. Together, these issues suggest that the Bishopsgate site must be understood not only in relation to its immediate surroundings, but also as part of a broader intention to define the character of the urban process in London.

We agree that the site should accommodate a relatively dense, multi-use development, with a major office component weighted toward its western end. In addition, we would begin work with four starting positions in mind. First, we would avoid a clearly demarcated east-west split of the site, primarily because this would encourage a more insular office development on the western edge, which would likely work against the permeability of the site toward the west. Also, such a schism would tend to be read as a distinction between the development policies of Hackney and Tower Hamlets, and so diminish the value of this development as a statement of coordinated intentions for the City Fringe. Instead we would look for lines of integration and patterns of cohesion while working with the differential planning guidelines for the site.

Secondly, we would work intensively with the ground condition, both by opening the edges of the site to promote street-level activity at its borders, and in multiplying the ground to achieve greater vibrancy within the site. Activities can become highly concentrated and programmatic density tied to everyday patterns of movement. Cuts, openings, and atria can maintain important visual connections among levels, enhancing a sense of collective life. This appears a fertile design direction for the site because of the viaduct, whether this is retained as a structure or simply as a trace. With the Bishopsgate Station of the East London Line placed at first-floor level, the opportunities become too compelling to miss. A hallmark of Zaha Hadid's office has long been the

manipulation of groundform, and we believe this background of research will prove valuable during the consultation process when it will become necessary to demonstrate the spatial qualities and programmatic possibilities of this complexity.

Thirdly, we would pursue a locally targeted balance among the mixture of uses. The opening direction of our work would be to retain meaningful planning gains on or near the site, such that Bishopsgate responds positively to the complexity of its urban surroundings. This may involve testing the suitability on site of various sports and recreation facilities for local youth, or the morphological and typological possibilities of large-family housing systems. Additionally, today's large-scale developments cannot afford to leave unexplored the potential synergies with the growth and proliferation of small and medium enterprises. However, the uncertainties of this segment of the local economy would demand the incorporation of flexible development scenarios within well articulated design guidelines. Finding this local balance requires willingness to combine programmatic and spatial complexities throughout the design process, modeling and reviewing a variety of developmental options with the client in the pursuit of a preferred master plan.

Finally, we would assist Railtrack in defining a tripartite process for investigating and refining the preferred master plan through a commitment to public consultation. Such a process was successfully carried out by the joint venture for the Bishopsgate site in 1989 and has also been used effectively in a number of other major projects in London in recent years. We envisage that the process would involve a time span of six months following the initial one-day workshops and, modified to meet present circumstances, represents the best possible platform for a successful planning application to develop the site. Effective outreach and public involvement can help ensure that community expectations are neither forgotten nor exaggerated. We have assembled a team around the specific intersection of large-scale strategies, the articulation of spatial complexity, and the flexible response to local programmatic requirements. Into this team we have incorporated deep experience in directed community consultation in order to promote effective communication and consideration of a range of spatial strategies.

The recent collapse of the process for the redevelopment of the Elephant and Castle signals again the difficulties encountered by large-scale developments in London. Dramatic changes in the urban process and obvious conflicts among various interest groups appear to rule out the simple repetition of standard urban design solutions, and make the early establishment of a definitive brief impossible. Instead, the brief and the design should be approached together, through a process of learning and iteration. It has become a highly public process, and yet one which must be skillfully guided by architects and urbanists sensitively aware of their work process and the conditions in which it is embedded.

#### Exploring Spatial Qualities

The way of working at Zaha Hadid Architects is ideally suited to these conditions, for it aims the process of graphic production at the discovery of a site's hidden potentials. The work begins neither with the distribution of well-rehearsed typologies, nor with a schedule of pre-defined uses. Instead, it begins with an attentiveness and openness toward what the site might become. The early stages of graphic production and modeling serve to reveal the site's strengths, values, and constraints, often beginning only as a series of lines which respond to the landscape at a variety of scales. The lines do not *represent* the existing site, so much as *respond* to a diversity of forces which present themselves. They may suggest the trace of a potential flow of people, a line of sight, or the importance of a surface, and together generate a framework against which an alternative volumetric landscape can take shape.

Beginning in this way, a diversity of volumetric landscapes can be modeled and investigated for their spatial qualities. One can quickly explore possible patterns of movement, networks, and linkages, or question the character and rhythm of public spaces, or define a set of locations for tall buildings. Issues of phasing and flexibility can be assessed, or the effects of built form on surrounding fabric. In this way, we may work with Railtrack to initiate a range of evocative discussion models which capture the site's possibilities with some precision, but which are prior to decisions about final programming.

This pattern of production allows discussion and consensus-building to emerge around the spatial qualities of a new landscape, rather than becoming mired in the oppositions among entrenched interests which so often crystallize around particular land-uses. As the most compelling set of uses

become more well defined through the tripartite planning process, it will be in part because they can already be envisioned within an emerging urban landscape. Questions of ongoing space management can also be raised and addressed along with the definition of spaces and programmes, so that the manageability of the proposals can be considered as early as possible. Taken as a whole, the progression from abstraction through to spatial definition in the work of Zaha Hadid Architects potentially avoids some of the political pitfalls which so regularly characterize London developments. It develops an order of architectural production in which spatial definition achieves more—and responds to more—than the repetition of isolated typologies or entrenched interests.

This pattern of work is one which we have used successfully in the master planning of a 190 hectare site in Singapore over the past year. The plan has been launched in December of 2001 after eight months work, and building has already begun. Detailed Phase 1 design guidelines will be delivered in the coming month, as the process of refinement continues. The most interesting aspect of this achievement in relation to the Bishopsgate site, is that the plan was developed in the midst of political dispute over proposed changes to Singapore's spatial development strategies, and required Zaha Hadid Architects to help present the case for changes to the Urban Redevelopment Authority's normal guidelines and procedures. Zaha Hadid's work is, in this sense, an example of architectural innovation with clear value for changing patterns of urban development.

Additionally, we believe that this way of working is reminiscent of the way that new uses are naturally found for old structures, and so may be especially suited to the redevelopment of brownfield sites. The best examples of imaginative reuse of abandoned structures begin by suspending both normal patterns of inhabitation or programme, and normal readings of typology and function. Such examples nevertheless begin with an open vision toward the possibilities presented by the space, and then engage a process of excavation, cutting, and shaping until new patterns of activity come precisely to fill and enliven it. The architectural work at Bishopsgate, if it is to lead successfully to a master plan, will be defined by a series of themes which will help to cut across old divisions and generate a variety of new consensual perspectives. It is these which will cut and shape the new site, and they may have to do so with new multi-cultural values attached to movement, connectivity, inclusiveness, programmatic density, and so on. We believe that the architectural approach at Zaha Hadid's office will promote and enliven this search for new multi-cultural spaces and visions.

#### Progress and Refinement of the Master Plan

The programme of workshops and consultations envisaged by the Bishopsgate Goodsynd Working Group resembles a tradition of planning sometimes called "social learning." It tends to be most effective when a series of actions draw diverse participants into a pattern of responsible and collective decision-making. Learning is contained within the practice of the group; it is reflective, and focused by the action itself. Social learning is weakest when disparities of power and lack of action prevent diverse groups finding any reason for common cause. The social learning tradition begins with the valuable recognition that there is no single perspective or starting point from which to initiate actions, but that the pursuit of collective objectives must result from the actions themselves: learning must become concerted. Along these lines, we recognize that the series of workshops must each be organized as an action, or as the pursuit of some novel achievement. It will not work if it is understood simply as a listening session, but must be guided toward the sense of achievement in the face of a range of problems.

However, just as we would avoid beginning with standard typologies and discrete land-uses, so we would avoid focusing upon social and economic questions which tend to polarize opinion and have no immediate solution. These would forfeit the sense of action that the workshops must seek. No doubt there are many such problems which must be raised and addressed in the course of developing the plan: the escalating costs of local housing; the mismatch between City-type job creation and local skills; the loss of affordable local space for small and medium size businesses; potential cultural conflicts; the conflict between public space and private development, and so on. These do not make the site unique so much as exemplary. They must be raised and addressed while the focus is kept upon an action unique to the site itself. The workshops and consultation should, to the greatest extent possible, reflect the process of spatial discovery internal to the architecture and planning of the area. This should not in any way be understood as an unwillingness

to engage with these central and legitimate questions, but to direct the pursuit of them toward the spatial definition of the plan.

We will discuss topics for the initial three workshops more fully in a moment, but we would suggest two milestones which should precede them. First, we would encourage the careful consideration of the opportunities and constraints presented by the retention of the Braithwaite Viaduct. The preservation of historic structures is clearly of value in London today, but not if presented as a token gesture. The potential conflict with eight tracking already suggests the need for an engineering review of the decision to list the Braithwaite. Additionally, our view is that the viaduct establishes an important asset only to the extent that the spatial qualities it offers outweigh the alternative qualities its removal could promote. Zaha Hadid's work is known to value a diversity of ground conditions, multiplying these and incorporating them into well integrated and vibrant spatial compositions. We would wish to assess the alternatives with Railtrack as early as possible, in order to clarify both the commercial and transport engineering issues surrounding the Braithwaite.

Secondly, the baseline report should be available for the start of the workshops, and should reflect an expert knowledge of the site. It should include a detailed spatial survey of the area, including a dynamic understanding of how the City Fringe is changing. It should show familiarity with the relevant economic and demographic patterns, and their relationship to spatial changes in the area. Clearly, it should incorporate the key information from EDAW's City Fringe Office Impact Study of 1999 and from Greater London Enterprise's Managing the Impact: Background Study, as well as ARUP's forthcoming report. Also, transport and engineering reports should be incorporated or produced. Hopefully, the forthcoming London Plan will be available to us, informally if not yet formally, so that we may be guided by its overall spatial strategy. Equally important, we would wish to have begun the exploration of spatial qualities with a sound understanding of Railtrack's commercial aspirations for the site.

We suggest three topics which would serve well the purpose of concerted learning in the initial one-day workshops, and these we might call *scale*, *pattern*, and *intensity*. While multiple issues will be raised and discussed at each session, we would guide the day's work through particular models and graphic material toward a clarification of these key aspects of the site's spatial possibilities.

#### Workshop I: Scale

The Bishopsgate Goodsyards presents a major opportunity to establish London's spatial development strategy for the coming years. As a transport node and as a site which must confront the great disparities of the City Fringe, the development must be recognized as having effects extending well beyond the immediate surroundings. In this workshop we will question how this larger strategic role should be valued. At what scales can the long-term effects of the development be most clearly understood? This will involve considerations of the rapid expansion of City-type businesses, their potential changes and synergies, and different possibilities for spatial integration of office landscapes into urban communities. There is a second meaning of scale which will also provide a focus for the workshop, and this refers to the scale of development of the site. This will raise questions of density, gross floor area, plot ratios, anticipated working population in office buildings of various sizes, and so on. Linking the two understandings of scale is the issue of transport: what is the role of Bishopsgate on the East London Line and potentially on the Central Line? What level of office development can be accommodated without overburdening peak hour transport infrastructure? How might an aggressive upscale housing programme address these issues? How might a London of densely developed transport interchanges work differently? This session will be organized with the intention, not of defining the scale of development at this early stage, but of producing a graphic and spatial understanding of these issues.

#### Workshop II: Pattern

Mono-functional environments present a range of problems which are becoming increasingly recognized, from lack of safety to lack of flexibility. They tend to have poor-quality public spaces, remaining inward looking and fragmented from the wider urban fabric. They tend to place disproportionate burdens on the transport infrastructure. Nevertheless, their simplicity, economies of scale, and opportunities for single-industry synergies have made them attractive to many planners and developers. To encourage urban transformations, these qualities of simplicity, economy, and synergy must be encouraged in mixed-use developments. Clear design guidelines and integration must be balanced with a variety of scales and uses. Flexible and incremental responses to changing conditions must have clear developmental frameworks within which to work. In this session we will

explore strategies for achieving complex environments through simple approaches to spatial development. This will set the stage for probing the range of uses the group would envision at Bishopsgate. We will also begin to get a sense of the range of approaches to the issue of planning gain. Which issues might effectively be resolved on the site itself, and which would better be managed through a wider strategy?

#### Workshop III: Intensity

To close out the initial workshops, we propose a session to focus on the most compelling possibilities of the site. There is a history in the Spitalfields area of effective local organizing to support local needs. This has produced, for example, housing co-operatives, workshop organizations, language and training resource groups, an action group to organize temporary uses of the Market buildings. A similar vitality extends up Brick Lane and through the Goodsyards. Can this vitality and enthusiasm for innovative local development be marshaled for similarly ambitious goals, suited now to the strategic densification and commercial realities of the site. Can we begin to discover the possibilities for innovative, large-unit housing, for example, or convincing and flexible development scenarios for small and medium enterprise spaces? Can we find spatial solutions in the Goodsyards for such an integrated co-existence of multiple intentions?

Together the workshops will indicate a range of paths forward for the process of concerted learning combined with the spatial composition of a new urban landscape. We will have defined a range of approaches to issues such as spatial integration, density, quality of public space, mix of uses, flexibility, and commercial vitality. We have closed these workshops on the issue of intensity, for in the work of Zaha Hadid Architects, once the spatial possibilities have been explored, a process of spatial intensification begins to refine itself around a specific collection of programmes. We will at this point have the tools to continue this refinement through investigation of options and ongoing consultation.

#### The Team

Our intention is to understand fully the range and history of possible community-driven solutions to new development, coupled with a forward-looking approach to urban design. We believe that the polarizations which often occur over proposed large-scale developments are partly the result of a failure to innovate in design, responding to difficult conditions with promises of benefits rather than robust spatial solutions to impending problems. This balance between design, community planning, and strategic planning is reflected in the team, the core of which have been collaborating and investigating these issues in the Graduate School of the Architectural Association for many years.

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