

Abstracts of the Conference Papers (Palermo, 1992)

- [1. Louis Albrechts: Dilemmas in Planning: What is and what Ought to Be](#)
- [2. E.R. Alexander: The Architecture of Institutional Design: Interorganizational Coordinative Structures](#)
- [3. Judith Allen: Imagine That! The Effects of the 1988 Housing Act on British Housing Associations](#)
- [4. Bruno Amoroso: Planning Theories, Technologies and Institutions in a Context of Globalization and Polycentric Economic Systems](#)
- [5. Franco Archibugi: Towards a New Discipline of Planning](#)
- [6. Sergei S. Artobolevskiy: Regional policy in present Russia: The New Role of the State](#)
- [7. Valery Babintzev: Techniques of Optimal Planning and the New Russian Economic System](#)
- [8. Howell S. Baum: Community and Consensus: Reality and Fantasy in Planning](#)
- [9. Robert A. Beauregard : Theories and Techniques of Subnational Economic Development Planning in the United States](#)
- [10. Giuliano Bianchi: Regional Planning: Requiem or Renaissance?](#)
- [11. Sergio Boisier: Regional Management in the New International Order: Quasi-States and Quasi-Firms](#)
- [12. Richard S. Bolan: Institutional Design for Planning: Lessons from Central and Eastern Europe](#)
- [13. Marios Camhis: Perspectives of the Development of the European Community's Territory: The Operation "Europe 2000"](#)
- [14. Mario Centorrino: An Instrument for Optimal Foreign Trade Policies: The Trade-Gap Analysis](#)
- [15. Hector Correa: An Approach to the Operational Integration of the Technical and Political Aspects of Planning](#)
- [16. Tarcisio Della Senta: Planning in Global Framework: Theory and Practice of Planning in Global Setting](#)
- [17. Yehezkel Dror: Planning in the 21st Century](#)
- [18. Andreas Faludi: Dutch Planning Doctrine: The Social Construction of a Planners' Paradise](#)
- [19. John Forester: Perception, Political Judgment and Learning about Value In Transport Planning: Bridging Habermas and Aristotle](#)
- [20. John Friedmann: Educating the Next Generation of Planners](#)
- [21. Robert Scott Gassler: Non-profit Economics and Planning Science](#)
- [22. Harald Hagemann: On Some Macroeconomic Consequences of German Unification](#)
- [23. Patsy Healey: In Search of Democracy; New Ways of Using Old Tools; the Form and Content of Development Plans](#)
- [24. Stuart Holland: Planning and the Mixed Economy](#)
- [25. Yasuo Katamura: Economic Planning in a Market Economy](#)
- [26. Vladimir Kollontai: Some Specifics of Economic Reform in Russia](#)
- [27. Antoni Kuklinski: The Future of Strategic Planning in Central and Eastern Europe](#)

- [28. Wassily Leontief: World Environment Planning: What to do and how to do it](#)
- [29. Summer Levine: Thoughts on the Planning of Technological Development](#)
- [30. Dalia Lichfield: Effect of Land Use Zoning on Planning Technology: A Comparison in Four Countries](#)
- [31. Nathaniel Lichfield: Planning and the Environment: Institutions for Sustainable Development](#)
- [32. Seymour J. Mandelbaum: Communitarian Sensibilities and the Design of Communities](#)
- [33. Luigi Mazza: An Exercise in Re-constructing a Planning Tool, Second Thoughts on Italian Land-Use Planning](#)
- [34. Alex Michalos: What Every Planner Should Know about Measuring the Quality of Life](#)
- [35. Jonathan A. Morell: Integrating Technological Change into Planning: the Case for an Interdisciplinary Perspective](#)
- [36. Peter Nijkamp: The Changing Role of Governments: the End of Planning History?](#)
- [37. Efim Nisevich: Some Theoretical and Practical Problems of Planning Institutions Redesign in Russian Federation](#)
- [38. Barnett R. Parker: Ensuring a Responsive Health Care Planning Function in Emerging Regions of the World](#)
- [39. Giorgio Piccinato: Reconsidering Planning for Historic Centres](#)
- [40. Stanislav Pirogov: Nature of Planning Systems and Contradictions of their Practical Use](#)
- [41. Ignacy Sachs: What State? What Markets, For What Development? The Social, Ecological and Economical Dimensions of Planning](#)
- [42. Pasquale Lucio Scandizzo: Trade Patterns, Cooperation and Growth](#)
- [43. Gustav Schachter: Multiregional Input-Output Systems for Socioeconomic Planning](#)
- [44. Jacek Szlachta: Dilemmas of National and Regional Planning during Transformation to the Market Economy \(Case Study Poland\)](#)
- [45. Nestor A. Terleckyj: Institutional Requirements for Effective Use of Quantitative Indicators in Policy Planning](#)
- [46. Jan Tinbergen: The Duration of Development](#)

1.
 Louis Albrechts
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Dilemmas in Planning: What is and what Ought to Be

The legitimation of planning as a political process to guide the forces, which determine the development of an area/sector in a socially acceptable direction, has been increasingly questioned in the last two decades.

Planning is essentially constructed within the social, economic and ideological framework that is dominant during a given historic era.

So planning moved from a rather well respected discipline that was considered to steer developments in a 'desired' direction towards a practice in which utilitarian tendencies dominated planning culture and distributive issues were neglected or obscured.

This paper tends to reconsider critically the role of planning and planners taking into account their traditional strengths and eradicating their traditional weaknesses but also taking into account the changing circumstances. Some first ideas will be offered as a way towards a realistic rethinking of the role of planning and planners.

Reconsidering the role of planning also needs adapted institutional structures to make this planning work.

2.

E.R. Alexander

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The Architecture of Institutional Design: Interorganizational Coordinative Structures

Planning as commonly understood, and as described in normative rational decision making models, is essentially strategic planning, i.e. it involves deciding what to do. But there is another aspect of planning which is less well appreciated: coordinative planning, which is essential in any complex undertaking where large or multiple organizations are deployed. Once a course of action has been chosen through strategic planning, coordinative planning is the interactive process of determining how to get it done. Coordinative planning is what links planning to implementation.

Markets and market-like collective decisions in the economic and political realms do not need planning. But, extending transaction cost theory, I have shown that planning is associated with hierarchy, and with the complex organizations and interorganizational structures which complement political and economic markets in society as we know it. Action in these contexts requires coordination, of organizational units in single complex organizations, and of independent organizations in interorganizational systems, "action sets" or "implementation networks".

Coordinative planning includes the design or selection of coordinative structures, the "architecture" of organizational and interorganizational coordination. A set of coordinative structures is described and reviewed, arrayed on a continuum from least to most hierarchical. They range from informal networks through market-like frameworks of norms and rules (e.g. for common resource pool associations), interorganizational groups (e.g. commissions, boards,

task forces), and coordinating units, to single organizations formed from merger or created de novo.

Selected cases of interorganizational coordination (IOC) will illustrate the performance of these structures in contexts including regional development, new towns planning and development, neighborhood revitalization, metropolitan government, environmental control, social services delivery, and public-private and private enterprise. The cases are drawn from experiences in IOC in France, Germany, Israel, the Netherlands, the U.K., the U.S. and Venezuela.

Analysis and evaluation of these cases suggest some common aspects of IOC which provide material for descriptive and prescriptive conclusions. The former address the relation between perceived transaction costs in the interorganizational field prior to the emergence of a formal interorganizational network, and the degree of hierarchy in the IOC structure through which the network is coordinated. The latter present some contingent prescriptions relating different types of undertakings and various contexts to IOC structures, and offer some tentative principles for interorganizational design.

3.

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Imagine That! The Effects of the 1988 Housing Act on British Housing Associations

The UK Government's aim, in the 1988 Housing Act, was to force housing associations (non-profit providers of social housing) to become private sector landlords, by changing the financial subsidy arrangements. The effect was to force the emergence of a "third sector" in social housing provision, poised between market and state provision. This paper traces the effects of the 1988 Housing Act on the organisation and planning techniques of one of London's largest Housing Associations, whose mainstream provision has been concentrated in three Inner London Boroughs. The aim of the paper is to identify the ways in which the emergence of a third sector requires new approaches to strategic planning at this local level.

4.

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Planning Theories, Technologies and Institutions in a Context of Globalization and Polycentric Economic Systems

Development in planning theories and technologies has taken place under condition of national capitalism and national welfare systems. Present development in the European communities is characterised by increasing globalisation and EC integration.

Three main problems are in sight:

1. The increasing number of EC member states from 12 to 18-20 before the end of this decade.
2. The increasing tendency toward "triadic globalisation" followed by new inequalities within the Community members and regions.
3. The destabilisation of the regions around the 12 EC countries representing about 2/3 of the wider continental Europe.

Destabilisation around and marginalisation within the Community are symptoms of the same problems: the failure of the process of development in European regions outside the EC. They can both be cured by reactivating a process of development of the regions by a polycentric institutional market structure.

The aim of this study is to analyse which changes in planning theory will be required for what it concerns aims, means and institutions in order to sustain such polycentric development. Particular attention will be given to:

1. The strategic economic variables connecting the regions (at continental level: the EC - Mediterranean - Baltic) with each other. These variables are identified in the new technologies and international price system regulating strategic products.
2. The design of a new system of specialisation based on complementarity between needs and production within each region and among the regions.
3. The institutional frames required in order to plan such cooperation.

5.

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Towards a New Discipline of Planning

Towards a new "discipline" of planning, or a new "planning science" (or Planology). This is the direction in which inter-disciplinary collaborations, trans-disciplinary techniques, and multidisciplinary approaches, applied in many fields and "experiences" of planning, have been pushing for four decades. Initially a brief excursus of this will be done.

For the same four decades economists, sociologists, urban planners, project engineers, ecologists, geographers, and political scientists have met, and at times

collided, in their different fields of application. These fields may be summarised as: a) macro-economic planning (predominantly at the national level, but also at regional level); b) "social" planning (ranging from social service projects to grand programmes for cultural advancement); c) urban and environmental planning; d) planning public expenditure; and e) evaluation and design of single investment projects.

Frustration and failure have been features of the experiences in all these fields, across the political and historical range from ex-communist states to the welfare states and developing countries.

Despite the development of inter-disciplinary cooperation in each of these fields of application a disciplinary culture has prevailed. Hence macro-economic planning has been dominated by economics and economists; social planning by social sciences and social scientists; urban and environmental planning by urban studies and urban planners; public spending by operational research, systems engineering, and related professionals; investment projects by economics and system sciences and managers; and so on.

Notwithstanding the predominance of one discipline in each field, the increasing inter-disciplinary collaboration in all the fields of planning mentioned above has led to the emergence of two distinguishable "moments" of the process: analysis and synthesis. The former is mainly concerned with disciplinary analytical competence (provided that it develops within adequate epistemological guidelines) and is based on "objective" knowledge. The latter, on the other hand is more concerned with "subjective" evaluation, and is accordingly further from objective knowledge. This is the moment that precedes and postulates the choice and decision.

The "moment" of synthesis, or evaluation, has long been considered within the reign of the decision-makers, that is those who are entitled to decide. However, the complexity of goals, phases, and levels with respect to which decisions are made, and knowledge of the inter-dependence of different decisions (this goes for the individual as well as group, national, and increasingly global human levels) has led to the development of support-techniques for decision-makers. These serve to help the latter in their choices, and though they do not substitute decision-makers they clearly belong to the moment of synthesis or evaluation, and not that of disciplinary (scientific) analysis.

These techniques for the support of decision-making are often presented as "decision-making techniques", operational research, "praxiology", linear (and non-linear) programming, dynamic programming, systems analysis, cost-benefit analysis, or cost-effectiveness analysis, and can all be considered "evaluation techniques". They are all married to the original disciplines of the various fields of planning: economics, sociology, urban studies, etc., across the board, creating a kind of "trans-discipline".

Yet this trans-discipline, though applied in the various fields of planning to varying extents, has yet to lead to the creation of a common methodological framework. Thus these techniques have failed to transform themselves into one general methodology of planning.

