Workshop on urban regulation and models in Europe, Lyon, France, 16 December 2005

A workshop on the theme of urban regulation and models in Europe, organized by the 'Géophile' research team, took place at the Ecole Normale Supérieure Lettres et Sciences humaines (ENS/LSH) of Lyon on 16 December 2005. International comparative studies on this subject are very difficult owing to the fact that, in addition to national governments, local authorities are also involved in the making of regulations. We must take into account not only the normative texts but also consider their consequences for urban forms in each place, and that the relevant information has been published in different languages. As a first step, ISUF founded a working party on the subject several years ago. The Lyon workshop, with three contributors and many comparative themes, was an opportunity to share knowledge in several directions: methodological questions and definitions, the French perspective and the UK perspective.

Cities in Europe have different urban regulations. As these have a direct influence on both urban forms and architecture, they can help to explain some of the differences between urban forms. When urban regulations are elaborated, they are referring to urban models or norms, which can then be directly copied, changed or rejected. The theme of urban regulation has been selected because it gives information about the circulation of urban models and concepts in Europe, and about the different ways of applying those models in every city.

The first paper was on 'Urban regulation, its models, its actors and its effects: Lyon 1850-1950', by Anne-Sophie Clémençon (ENS/LSH, Lyon). She explained that the theme of urban regulation can be examined very broadly: the history of regulation; but also in terms of the models used, local culture and actors, and the implementation of the laws and dispensations, and their general effects on urban forms. From this point of view, the city of Lyon is an excellent test case. The public debate is intense, the archives are rich and four phases of urban regulation are evident between 1874 and 1909.

The Lyon case suggests that as urban regulations are, in this period, the consequence of local authority administration and local culture, they tend to maintain traditions. However, they can also provide new original solutions, and they are efficient tools to integrate external influences such as haussmannism, concern for public health, social housing provision, and Parisian exemplars. Urban élites, helped by technical professionals, formulate these regulations. At different points, the regulations are laid out by engineers, architects or physicians, focusing therefore on different preoccupations. A regulation must be the result of a consensus between the actors who will implement it. If implementation is insufficiently strict, it has no use; if too strict, it is not applied. Finally, we must bear in mind that urban regulations provide important financial income. A large and lucrative (for the municipalities) system of dispensations from the letter of the law tended to expand. After the Second World War, this whole normative system focusing on the scale of architecture was replaced by another, focusing on the scale of the city. This is the beginning of 'town planning'.

The second paper, 'Urban regulation in Paris since the Second World War', was by François Laisney (IPRAUS, Paris). The Parisian urban regulations of the nineteenth century maintain a classical tradition focused on the aesthetic of the roads. The hygienist (public health) movement influenced the next regulation, which controlled Parisian urban form from 1902 to 1961. It had three main consequences: a break in the scale of roads, densification and private speculation. After the war, urban regulations were a consequence of national laws focused on town planning and affecting every French city.

The period after the Second World War can be summarized in terms of several key characteristics. The reference to haussmannism was significant. The violence of the destruction during the 1970s and 1980s reinforces a dominant position against high-rise buildings. There is a tension between private works, which tend to respect common law, and public works, which tend to become exceptions and experiments. Constructions are limited inside the street-blocks, which impoverishes the variety of the traditional typology. Richness remains only in the old districts, which were then renovated and became more appreciated. Finally, because of the density of the urban fabric and the lack of car parks in the traditional districts, Paris has been able to hold out against the domination of the car and save its 'urbanity'.

The final contribution was on 'Legislation and urban form in the UK', by Peter Larkham (UCE Birmingham, UK). He reviewed the long history of

the effects of legislation on urban form in the UK. But throughout this long period there was relatively little legislation of direct impact: most was *indirect*, and much more was achieved through control mechanisms other than 'legislation', i.e. Acts of Parliament. Agreements between owners and developers, legal restrictions on occupiers known as 'restrictive covenants', policy guidance from central and local government, and planning standards from local planning authorities are all much more significant in the UK. The impact of other socio-economic factors, and issues such as fashion in architecture and development, are also frequently used to explain the patterns and changes in urban form and structure.

Much of the published history focuses in particular upon London, although many useful examples can be found in detailed local studies of other towns, but this literature has not been systematically collected and compared. Likewise, much of the interest – and legal activity – has been focused on legislation and control initially intended to deal with other issues, principally public health. Pivotal points are the rebuilding of London after the 1666 Great Fire, and nationally the 1875 Public Health Act and 1918 Tudor Walters report on housing. The aftermath of wartime bomb damage, and more recent policy decisions, have had intended and unintended outcomes in the built environment.

This small workshop generated considerable debate and interest. It is hoped that the contributions will be published, and the format is worth repeating.

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Conference on Vernacular Architecture in the Twenty-First Century, Oxford, UK, 12 December 2005

This one-day conference on 'Vernacular archi-tecture in the twenty-first century: theory, education and practice', at Oxford Brookes University, was timed to coincide with the publication of a book of the same name. The book was in honour of noted vernacular architecture scholar Paul Oliver and edited by Lindsay Asquith and Marcel Vellinga, who were the conference organizers.

Seven invited lectures, by authors of chapters in the book, provided an overview of some of the current state of work in the field. The title of the conference was well reflected in the selection of speakers, who together showed that vernacular architecture scholarship is not only vibrantly reflecting contemporary society, but is also relevant to architectural and planning practice. Simon Bronner used three architectural/urban forms of twenty-first-century America – the Jewish *sukkah*, the Amish barn raising, and recycled houses in Houston – to argue for the dynamic nature of architecture and its transformation. Amos Rapoport described a model-based system for understanding the complexity of vernacular environments, arguing that scholars in the field would do well to look toward the physical and biological sciences to understand how theory might be induced from the wide range of knowledge that already exists about vernacular environments worldwide.

Though Bronner and Rapoport were not focused on the application of scholarship to practice, most of the other speakers talked about how new knowledge might be put to use in contemporary problems of building and planning. Roderick Lawrence spoke about principles for bringing together research in vernacular studies and climate studies for settlement planning; Geoffrey Payne spoke about his work in settlement design, based on careful observations of traditional cities, in developing countries; Issac Meir and Susan Roaf described work based on measurements of the climate responsiveness of traditional buildings in the Middle East. Current European urban design projects of the International Network for Traditional Building, Architecture and Urbanism were described by Matthew Hardy. The main session concluded with Howard Davis describing how architectural education might change to educate professionals who will play a major and positive role in the design of a world that is rapidly urbanizing.

At the end of the main session, Paul Oliver spoke briefly but incisively, reminding the audience that despite all the talk about urbanization, one-half of the world's population is still rural, and that despite all the work that has been done in documenting traditional rural settlements –

including Oliver's own *Encyclopedia of vernacular architecture of the world* (1997) – there is still much work to be done in recording and analysing those settlements and their buildings. The formal sessions concluded with a lively discussion in which participants raised issues ranging from education to preservation, mirroring the variety of approaches taken by the speakers.

This was a lively and useful conference, and Lindsay Asquith and Marcel Vellinga deserve credit for conceiving and organizing it.

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Annual meeting of CISPUT, Alessandria, Italy, 21-22 October 2005

Following meetings in Pienza, Anghiari, Chioggia, Cortona and Lucca, the Annual Meeting of CISPUT for 2005 was held in Alessandria.

The theme of the first day was 'Territorial Planning'. Introducing M.G. Dapuzzo's book *Piovera and its territory,* Giancarlo Cataldi (Faculty of Architecture, Florence) illustrated the latest developments of the theory of the square form as it was applied to south-western Padania. In particular he demonstrated the relationship between survey and project applied on a large scale in the field of territorial planning effected by the Romans in ancient times.

Two successive contributions dealt with various aspects of the methods of reading territory used by the Italian School of Process Typology. Roberto Ghelfi illustrated a study he had undertaken with Alessandro Giannini (University of Genoa) on the territory of the Po Valley, and Annalinda Neglia (Polytechnic of Bari) described the results of her research on urban and territorial planning in Aleppo. The proceedings of the first day were concluded with an account by Pier Giorgio Gerosa

(Ecole d'Architecture de Strasbourg) on 'Territorial planning as a knowledge acquisition process'.

The theme of the second day was 'Beyond modern architecture'. Giancarlo Cataldi spoke about the contribution of the Muratorian school to the Italian architectural panorama. He referred to a two-year cycle of lectures organized in 2003/4 at the Faculty of Architecture in Florence and to a paper, co-authored with G.L. Maffei, N. Marzot, G. Strappa and P. Vaccaro, that had been presented to the ISUF symposium held in London in August 2005. Further contributions on research on the same theme were provided by G. Cavallina, A. Regazzoni Caniggia, M.L. Barabino and A. Boccardo. Attilio Petruccioli (Polytechnic of Bari) rounded off the meeting with an interesting survey of studies and didactic projects set in Islamic and Indian cities.

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Ville Recherche Diffusion

A number of publications of interest to urban morphologists are available from Ville Recherche Diffusion, Ecole d'Architecture de Versailles, 2 avenue de Paris, 78000 Versailles, France (web site: www.versailles.archi.fr/VRD). Among the publications recently advertised are:

Bowie, K., Texier, S. and Bonnefoy, l. (2003) *Paris et ses chemins de fer*

Bruant, C., Blain, C., Genaille, G. and Sellali, A. (2003) *Architecture et formes urbaines en villes nouvelles: enquête bibliographique sur les sources écrites*

Doutre, M. (2003) *Modalités de transformation de la ville au début du XIXe siècle en Auvergne: l'édifice public et son espace urbain – pouvoirs et conflits*

Ducos, L. (2005) *L'aménagement des terrasses de Saint-Julien et des Carmélites à tours au XIXe siècle: un projet urbanistique et architectural en décalage*

Gauthiez, B., Zadora-Rio, E. and Galinié, H. (2003) *Village et ville au moyen age: les dynamiques morphologiques*

Navarina, G, (2003) *Plan et projet: l'urbanisme en France et en Italie*