



Introductory Report Workshop 1B: A Keen Eye – Visioning and Development of Strategic Projects

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Introduction

The “Urban Trialogue” can be usefully boiled down to a simple, but internally complex, statement. Within the context of the Belgian-inspired SP2SP framework (the change in planning thought from spatial planning to strategic planning), the “urban trialogue” invites articulation, conceptualization, and discussion of projects that: are publicly led, institutionally and socially inclusive, visionary, strategic, have large-scale impacts, and which achieve normative objectives. The tri-ologue, as presented throughout the call for papers for the 43rd ISoCaRP Congress, is at a minimum a sex-ologue or septo-ologue. Are there such projects? Is a trialogue possible or this phrase just planning pabulum?

Normal definitions of the word “keen” invoke ideas such as “acuteness”, “the ability to draw fine distinctions,” “incisive comment”, “icy knifelike reasoning”, “sharp as the stroke of a fang”; “penetrating insight” and other equally graphic and/or metaphorical images. ***A keen eye is particularly appropriate here as the papers in this workshop take on the somewhat obfuscated trialogue concept and provide it with real world contexts, tools, and strategies.***

Workshop 1B contains twenty-two papers that explore, from various keen attributes, the relationship between visioning and the development of strategic projects. The visions included in this workshop range from visions of systems of urban settlements to the provision of a knowable axis through established neighborhoods. Strategic projects similarly range from conceptual or thought systems enabled to allow understanding of urban places to specific examples of how trialogue inspired planning theory is used in specific planning instances.

The twenty-two papers are distributed through six sessions. The first two sessions are contextual and urban systems oriented. The middle sessions include examples of trialogue thinking in regards to heritage and landscapes, waterfronts, and urban projects. The final session is most critical (in the sense of keenness), attempting to provide a language for understanding the role of visioning strategic projects, with a deliberate attempt to be real rather than normative.

Contexts for Visioning and Development of Strategic Projects

As defined, the urban trialogue is more about individual projects than about more system-wide concepts or institutional planning processes. Nevertheless, these concepts and processes provide context for individual dialogues. Three papers explore the context in which urban dialogues exist. Kai Wang is Deputy Chief Planner of the China Academy of Urban Planning and Design. Focusing on the anticipated system of cities that will emerge over the planning horizon, the role of the spatial plan to promote economic development, social progress, and sustainable balanced development is demonstrated using principles of technical studies is examined. Keeness is apparent in the mandated reliance on technical

and objective characteristics as well as reliance on specific spatial layouts focused on multiple centers and traffic corridors. Juxtaposed against this backdrop of national planning, Rojas explores current planning problems in the Brasilia metropolitan region, arguing that regions are not (or cannot stay for long as) designed objects, but rather face growing problems of re-urbanization. At the same time, across the globe, Zheng pursues the opposite argument in discussing the overall development challenges in the greater Chongqing region in China. Using the “one circle and two wings” metaphor, the role of state and government intervention in internationalization, regionalization, and urban-rural issues in pursuit of a specific metropolitan form is outlined. The keen eye examines these differences in strategy.

Visioning and Strategic (Thinking) Projects at the Scale of the Region or Metropolitan Area

Three papers explore visioning and strategic thinking at the scale of the meso-region or metropolitan area. Pichler-Milanović explores the importance of strategic links and potential partnerships in the Alpine-Adriatic cross-border region. Using surveys of public officials and official documents, views and attitudes regarding urban development patterns, policy initiative suggestions, and prospective areas of inter-urban cooperation are outlined and discussed. Bonnefoy uses the intriguing notion of “convivial regions” to argue that metropolitan regions are composed of individual sub-regions, which are collectively cognized by their inhabitants. The method allows the planner “to explain that largest possible area that can be perceived by the greater part of its inhabitants as being their space of belonging, that in which they can be directly involved and can have confidence in the system of governance.” The keen eye should focus on the distinction but possible joint-ness of both uniqueness and inclusion within a structure of networks. Scornik and Schneider describe a community visioning process conducted within the Great Resistencia Metropolitan Area in Argentina by a university-led consortium.

Visioning and Development of Strategic Projects in Coastal Areas and on the Waterfront

Four papers examine attributes of the urban dialogue in coastal areas and waterfronts. Imbesi focuses on the “Urbacost” project that is operating northwest of Rome. Three types of strategic interventions are described: network, areal, and point. Less conceptual but clearly more pro-active is the approach of Bogunovich who uses the Auckland waterfront as a case in the promotion of eco-urbanism. The keen eye is focused on the differences in the strategies: one spatial and analytical; the other based on values and politics. Two papers provide context for discussing these broad strategic approaches. Pacheco details the important relationship between city and port, and illustrates strategic project principles in an analysis of the Lisbon waterfront. Ulker-Kacar reviews the Long Dock waterfront development project in Beacon, New York, using material from various planning and impact assessment studies.

Visioning and Development of Strategic Projects in Heritage and Landscapes

Four papers focus on the use of the urban dialogue in either heritage and/or landscape planning. Costa Lobo, Craveiro and Lober provocatively argue for an “urban contract” as a new mode of planning. Here, cities engage in strategic thinking with federal and banking institutions. The approach is illustrated for a neighborhood planning intervention in Rio de Janeiro. Singh explores the growing problem of governmental and semi-governmental land uses in a heritage city, by developing the strategic argument that the old city centre meets criteria for inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The keen eye is focused on inter-organizational cooperation.



Two papers explore the strategic potential of the triologue in landscape and eco-region situations. Costa, Farah and Boucinhas examine the provision of green space as a triologue between urban, landscape, and culture attributes in a series of projects in the municipality of Santo André, within the São Paulo metropolitan region. Besio describes various scenarios for the intrusion of new urban phenomenon on rural land formerly used either for agriculture or smaller urban places. The keen eye considers the relationships among multi-disciplinary systems

Visioning and Development of Specific Strategic Planning Interventions

The urban triologue is really about specific projects. The four papers in this session are strategic projects designed to meet specific normative goals. Morgado examines the potential of unoccupied spaces in Lisbon to yield usable public spaces. Gossop discusses two interlocked visions for the King's Cross area "opportunity area" of the London Plan. Verhagen presents a conceptual planning approach for developing public support for public spaces. Finally, Heirman discuss planning interventions on the urban fringe. The keen eye here is focused on the interaction of attributes and how strategic projects can be realized.

Conceptual Issues in the Urban Triologue itself, particularly at the Scale of the Metropolitan Region

The last session in Workshop 1B includes three papers that attempt to be keen by design and intent. These papers deal with overriding methodological issues. Aubert, noting the challenge of meeting urban needs, describes the availability and use of a new planning legislative framework in France. Prosperi and Lourenço argue that the urban triologue is poorly formulated from both a technical and political perspective and show how issues of scale, objectives, and combination rules can improve planning practice, with examples from both South Florida and Portugal. Finally, Unsal discusses strategic projects within Istanbul but more importantly develops a typology of projects including: imposed projects, macroform stretching projects, benefit-for-all projects, and community-based projects. The keen eye here is focused on improving planning practice by higher levels of analytic understanding.