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Tracing urban design's 'Townscape' origins: some relationships between a British editorial policy and an American academic field in the 1950s

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ABSTRACT: In the 1950s, 'urban design' was born in American debate thanks partly to the import of foreign discourses in a new context. Among others, was the fragmented and erratic translation of the British *Architectural Review*'s 'Townscape' discourse. This article traces carefully this translation not only to describe another key moment in the Anglo-American dialogue on planning but also to give a more complex portrait of the foundation and early development of the field of urban design. Involving some American universities, *Fortune* magazine and the Rockefeller Foundation, these lines of exchange also exemplify variations on the translation of a militant discourse into an academic one.

For half a century, the expression 'urban design' has designated a field of practice and knowledge, particularly in the United States, under which title numerous universities grant Master's degrees. Less than a decade ago, articles began to trace it back to its origins and showed that this field was 'born' through different genealogies. The most important and coherent one, and one of the most documented now, is the translation of the European Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) discourse on urbanism into the American higher-education context.[1] This translation happened through the Urban Design Conferences that occurred at Harvard's Graduate School of Design (GSD) between 1956 and 1970. Another genealogy, less documented and much less coherent,

The footnotes reference different archives using the following abbreviations:
MIT: MIT Archives and Special Collections (manuscript collection/box/folder)
RF: Rockefeller Foundation Archives (record group/series/box/folder)
RIBA: Royal Institute of British Architects Archives (collection/box/folder)
TGC: Thomas Gordon Cullen Personal Archives (unprocessed)

[1] See the special issue 'The origins and evolution of "urban design", 1956–2006', *Harvard Design Magazine*, 24 (2006); E. Mumford and H. Sarkis (eds.), *Josep Lluis Sert: The Architect of Urban Design, 1953–1969* (New Haven and Cambridge, 2009); and E. Mumford, *Defining Urban Design: CIAM Architects and a Formation of a Discipline, 1937–69* (New Haven, 2009).

is the 'rationalization' of the American discourse on urban forms through programmes granted by the Rockefeller Foundation's (RF) Division of Humanities.[2] These programmes began in the early 1950s and eventually led to a broad RF research programme entitled 'Studies in Urban Design' (SUD) in 1962.

As the first genealogy clearly appears to be transnational, the second one may appear to belong strictly to a national context. But among the different roots of SUD and the programmes that preceded it, one of the most important came also from overseas: from the famous 'Townscape' editorial policy of the British *Architectural Review* (*AR*) that began towards the end of the 1940s. Indeed, several programmes granted by the RF were, partly, attempts to translate a journalistic discourse often seen to be very British and conservative into an American scientific one. But if the translation of the CIAM discourse on urbanism in a new discipline can be considered as quite direct, the translation of the British 'Townscape' discourse into US research programmes and actions was very chaotic, including zigzags, U-turns and dead-ends. Although this translation was not direct nor articulated by a single and coherent historical object or actor, it did happen. Thus it exemplifies how complex some transnational relationships can be.

This article will try to trace carefully the different fragments of this last translation. First, *AR*'s 'Townscape' editorial policy and GSD's Urban Design Conferences will be placed in the context of CIAM's history not only to describe their content but also to link them. Through the debate surrounding post-war CIAM, it is possible to show how both were parallel productions of the same new historical context in the architectural and planning sphere. Next, two different kinds of translation of the 'Townscape' discourse in a US context directly linked with the RF will be described: the use of its content in two research programmes and two attempts to launch a similar editorial policy. A last moment of translation will then be described: the erratic involvement of the two main 'Townscape' authors in a RF programme to study US cities. Finally, the context of the RF's SUD programme will conclude and extrapolate out to an explanation of this particular moment in the Anglo-American planning dialogue.

The 'Townscape' discourse and the field of urban design as parallel productions

CIAM was founded in 1928 by avant-garde architects who appealed for a 'rationalization' and an 'industrialization' of architecture, i.e. a 'modern'

[2] See P.L. Laurence, 'The death and life of urban design: Jane Jacobs, the Rockefeller Foundation and the new resarch in urbanism, 1955–1965', *Journal of Urban Design*, 11 (2006), 145–72.

architecture. The idea was to build a worldwide lobby that used its own energies to promote this 'modern' architecture against mainstream historicist architecture.

CIAM was modelled after numerous international organizations founded to discuss many different topics during the first half of the twentieth century. In the book *Can Our Cities Survive?*, which summarized the production of the pre-war CIAM, a scheme depicted congresses as general assemblies of an organization framed by national chapters and headed by a 'committee' associating delegates from each national chapter.[3] But despite the attempt to follow this model, CIAM remained above all a lobby and the national chapters had no real independent life as their heads were actually co-opted by the central 'committee'.

The topic of urbanism quickly became central to the debates inside the organization and the focus of the discourse produced for its external audience. The 1933 congress and the publication of the Athens Charter established the main discursive elements of 'rational' and 'scientific', i.e. 'modern', urbanism through the concept of the 'functional city'. This gave the appearance of a consensus on the move of the field towards a scientific discipline. But while this new discipline began to differentiate itself from architecture, pre-war CIAM cultivated the architect-planner ideal as a tool for a revolutionary avant-garde that aimed to change not only architecture, but society itself.[4]

Due to the political changes of the 1930s and the war, the CIAM structure changed drastically. Important national chapters of CIAM, such as the German and the Spanish ones, were dissolved. Many CIAM members emigrated, such as core committee members Walter Gropius and José Luis Sert who finally went to the US. During this period, CIAM's English chapter, the Modern Architectural Research (MARS) group, obtained a core position in the organization by being in charge of the first and third post-war CIAM congresses. But members from this chapter, since its foundation in 1933, came from many different national origins because the 'modern' architectural milieu in England was very cosmopolitan.[5] Thanks to these events, CIAM's organization evolved from an international framework to a transnational one, i.e. from an organization framed by nationalities to an organization that crossed nationalities. In 1947, at the first post-war congress held in Bridgwater, England, CIAM officially renounced its international structure and adopted a new transnational one. A new council became the governing body of the organization, piloted by a small permanent bureau that brought together José Luis Sert, now CIAM's president, Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius and the art

[3] J. L. Sert, *Can Our Cities Survive?* (Cambridge, 1944), 243.
[4] About this discourse and its evolution, see E. Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928–1960* (Cambridge, 2000).
[5] About the MARS Group, see J.R. Gold, *The Experience of Modernism: Modern Architecture and the Future City, 1928–1953* (London, 1997).

historian Siegfried Giedion, while the former 'committee' – composed of the chapters' delegates – became less and less important. The chapters were no longer national, but 'local', i.e. structured around one person or institution and not a nationality.[6]

But the CIAM discourse about the city also changed significantly with World War II: the issue of urban forms and aesthetics came back, after being ignored by the pre-war discourse about the 'functional city', in order to lend to it a more techno-scientific aspect. In the US, this theme corresponded to a plea for a 'New Monumentality' that debuted in 1943 as the combination of Giedion's aesthetical focus and Sert's focus on planning.[7] In the UK, as the war came to an end, this theme expanded in parallel through the *AR*. This journal was Britain's main support for the 'modern' architecture and a 'rationalist' approach to planning in the 1930s. Once the war was over, *AR*'s editor James Maude Richards became the MARS group leader. At the first post-war, and 6th CIAM congress, in 1947, held in Bridgwater, England, the convergence between Giedion and Sert's plea for a 'New Monumentality' and Richards' and *AR*'s interest for 'architectural expression' became evident and began to redirect the CIAM discourse.[8]

Hubert de Cronin Hastings, founding member of the MARS group and the co-owner and co-editor of the *AR*, was behind the new editorial policy. The same year of the Bridgwater congress, Hastings – in order to support this editorial policy – appointed a young architect art editor for the review, Gordon Cullen, whom he had met before the war while Cullen was a draughtsman for MARS group's exhibitions and the firms of some of its members.[9] Articles belonging to this editorial policy became labelled as articles about 'Townscape', but the shift from a simple editorial policy into an attempt to build a coherent discourse did not happen until December 1949. In this issue of *AR*, Hastings published an article simply entitled 'Townscape' under the pseudonym Ivor de Wolfe, followed by another article from Cullen entitled 'Townscape casebook'.[10] In his article, Hastings proposed an explicit theory for a regional version of CIAM's 'modern urbanism' based on homologies with the eighteenth-century English aesthetic debate about landscape gardening. The principles and

[6] For a short account on the organizational history of CIAM see M. Kouriati, 'L'auto-dissolution des CIAM', in J.-L. Bonillo, C. Massu and D. Pinson, *La modernité critique. Autour du CIAM 9 d'Aix-en-Provence* (Marseille, 2006), 62–75.

[7] In 1943, Sert, Giedion and the painter Fernand Leger wrote 'Nine points on monumentality' which remains unpublished. See a bilingual version of this text in X. Costa and G. Hartray, *Sert, arquitecto en Nueva York* (Barcelona, 1997), 14–17. But it grounded the article of S. Giedion, 'The need for monumentality', in P. Zucker, *New Architecture and City Planning* (New York, 1944), 549–68.

[8] See Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism*, 168–79.

[9] For biographical elements about Cullen see D. Gosling, *Gordon Cullen: Visions of Urban Design* (London, 1996), which is unfortunately often too idiosyncratic, and E. de Maré, 'Gordon Cullen', *Architectural Review*, 200 (1996), 81–5.

[10] For more on Hastings see S. Lasdun, 'H. de C. reviewed', *Architectural Review*, 200 (1996), 68–72.

criteria of this theory were illustrated by sketches and pictures in Cullen's article. Both articles discussed the visual quality of urbanism.

Until his departure in 1959, Cullen was the main author of the 'Townscape' articles. Cullen analysed the visual qualities of urban spaces for pedestrian observers through drawings in a very personal manner. They contributed greatly to the 'Townscape' articles' renown. His contributions were eventually collected in a book of the same title in 1961.[11] In 1954, Hastings recruited a new journalist, Ian Nairn, who quickly co-wrote articles with Cullen. Nairn was not an architect but a skilled writer whose 'Townscape' articles made him famous. He left *AR* in 1969 but continued to write about architecture for newspapers and guidebooks.[12] The 'Townscape' editorial policy lived beyond Nairn and Cullen, who was replaced as art editor by Kenneth Browne, and ended only in the beginning of the 1970s. As it had many sympathizers in both the professional milieu and amongst the public, it became the core of a movement that was a driving force in the British urban debate of the 1950s and the 1960s.

The 'Townscape' discourse was fed by different pre-war English discourses on planning.[13] Globally, it proposed a 'new art of relationship' between the elements of the urban environment to obtain 'the excitement and drama [which cannot] be born automatically out of the scientific research and solutions arrived at by the technical man'.[14] Between 1947 and 1959 it evolved, focusing successively on three different topics and progressively becoming an organized discourse. The policy's first period, from 1947 to 1953, is associated with post-war rebuilding plans. The 'Townscape' policy began through proposals made by the review itself and studies on different types of urban spaces.[15] From October 1948 on, this heterogeneous series of articles was understood by the label 'Townscape' that appeared on its pages. During the second period, from 1953 to 1955, the 'Townscape' editorial policy began to include pointed critiques of the first 'New Towns'. To feed this critique and some counter-proposals, the analysis in the articles became more systematic and led to town studies.[16]

[11] Gordon Cullen, *Townscape* (London, 1961).

[12] For more on Nairn, see G. Cullen, 'Ian Nairn (1930–1983)', *Architects' Journal*, 178 (1983), 29; and C. Hurst, 'Ian Nairn: 1930–1983', *Architectural Review*, 174 (1983), 4.

[13] See in particular Erdem Erten, 'Thomas Sharp's collaboration with H. de C. Hastings: the formulation of townscape as urban design pedagogy', *Planning Perspectives*, 24 (2009), 29–49.

[14] Cullen, *Townscape*, 10. About the articulation of the 'Townscape' editorial policy and the planning debate in the UK, see N. Bullock, *Building the Post-War World: Modern Architecture and Reconstruction in Britain* (London, 2002), 39–60.

[15] See Gordon Cullen's proposals: 'Westminster regained: proposals for the replanning of Westminster precinct', *Architectural Review*, 102 (1947), 159–70; T.H. Carline, E.W. Macdonald, P.S. Boston, A.G. Gass, J.K.O. Trew, G. Cullen, 'A precinct for Liverpool Cathedral', *Architectural Review*, 104 (1948), 280–6; C.H.P. Bailey, G. Winteringham and M. Lee, 'A scheme for the centre of Birmingham', *Architectural Review*, 109 (1951), 90–7, etc., and the studies G. Cullen, 'Hazards', *Architectural Review*, 103 (1948), 99–105; G. Cullen, 'Legs and wheels', *Architectural Review*, 104 (1948), 77–80, etc.

[16] See G. Cullen, 'Midland experiment: Ludlow', *Architectural Review*, 114 (1953), 171–5; D. Dewar Mills, 'Midland experiment: Bewdley', *Architectural Review*, 114 (1953), 319–24; G.

During the third and final period, from 1955 to 1959, the main target of the 'Townscape' editorial policy became suburbanization and its destruction of rural and urban visual qualities. This critique, at times very vehement, led to the publication of two special issues: *Outrage*, a survey of the visual effects of suburbanization, and *Counter Attack against Subtopia*, proposals to curb these visual effects.[17]

During the third post-war congress, and 8th CIAM, held in Hoddesdon, England, in 1951, the convergence between CIAM's bureau and MARS on urban aesthetics contributed greatly to the congress' theme: the 'city cores'. Jaqueline Tyrwhitt, who helped to shape it, joined the bureau that same year.[18] In 1953, Sert became the new dean of Harvard's GSD and invited the members of CIAM's bureau who were closest to him, Tyrwhitt and Giedion, to teach at the GSD. With their help, he transformed the idea that underlay the GSD. In 1936, its founding father Joseph Hudnut merged Harvard's three Schools of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture in one single body. By doing this, he tried to gather the three disciplines of the built environment into one unique discipline as a tool for modernizing architecture. Hudnut recruited Walter Gropius to lead the Department of Architecture and also welcomed many former Bauhausians and Gropius' long-time friends and collaborators. Despite Hudnut's determination to fuse the three disciplines, the disciplines became more and more separated, and they struggled to preserve their autonomy at the GSD.[19] Sert, with Giedion and Tyrwhitt, changed Hudnut's project from a merging of the disciplines to the building of a platform for a dialogue between them.

They began in 1955 with an experimental seminar. In 1956, while CIAM was ending, they organized a conference on 'urban design' at the GSD. They invited to this conference not only architects, planners and landscape architects who were leading professionals and/or academics, but also a mayor and a critic to discuss the physical shaping of the contemporary city both in general terms and through US case studies. The main objectives of the conference were very clear: 'This invitation conference is intended to

Cullen, 'Midland experiment: Evesham', *Architectural Review*, 115 (1954), 127–31; G. Cullen, 'Midland experiment: Shrewsbury', *Architectural Review*, 115 (1954), 323–30; etc.

[17] These special issues were converted into books by the *AR* publisher: I. Nairn, *Outrage* (London, 1956) – *AR* issue of June 1955 – and I. Nairn, *Counter Attack against Subtopia* (London 1957) – *AR* issue of December 1956.

[18] The contributions collected for the volume *CIAM 8: The Heart of the City* (London, 1952) were underpinned with explicit historical references and an implicit discourse on aesthetics. See, in particular, J.L. Sert, 'Centers of community life', 3–16; and J.M. Richards, 'Old and new elements at the core', 60–5. About the work of Tyrwhitt, see E. Shoshkes, 'Jaqueline Tyrwhitt and transnational discourse: on modern urban planning and design, 1941–1951', *Urban History*, 36 (2009).

[19] See J. Pearlman, 'Breaking common ground. Joseph Hudnut and the prehistory of urban design', in Mumford and Sarkis (eds.), *Josep Lluis Sert*, 117–27; and J. Pearlman, 'Joseph Hudnut and the unlikely beginnings of post-modern urbanism at the Harvard Bauhaus', *Planning Perspectives*, 15 (2000), 201–39. For a global view on Harvard Graduate School of Design's history, see A. Alofsin, *The Struggle for Modernism: Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and City Planning at Harvard* (New York, 2002).

be exploratory, not didactic, and to try to find a common basis for the joint work of the Architect, the Landscape Architecture and the City Planner in the field of Urban Design'; 'In fact, in late years, the scientific phase has been more emphasized than the artistic one. . .Urban design is that part of city planning which deals with the physical form of the City. This is the most creative phase of city planning and that in which imagination and artistic capacities can play the most important part.'[20]

This conference was the first of a series of twelve which ran through 1970. This series could be seen as pursuing the debate and research stopped by the end of CIAM, but it also grounded the development of a new field of practice and research. Indeed, in 1960, it led to the creation of an experimental academic programme at the GSD and finally to new Master's degrees in 'Urban Design'.[21] To renovate their curriculum, other US universities recruited during the same period former students of the GSD, or other professionals close to it in their schools of architecture. At the same moment, in the same schools, the planning discipline became increasingly scientifically grounded, dealing with flux, quantities, data, etc. The growing gap in approaches and scales between architecture and planning led to the creation of autonomous departments of planning and to the recruitment of academics from the social sciences. To make room for their urban approach, new teachers who were modern architects launched in the 1960s urban design programmes as at the GSD.[22] In numerous cases, it was a renovation of the old 'Civic Design' curriculum that was strong enough to give 'birth' to a new field of practice and research which is now well established across the US but also in other English-speaking countries.

The origin of the surprising resurgence of urban aesthetics in CIAM that preceded the 'Townscape' editorial policy and the field of 'urban design' seems to belong, at least partly, to the cultivation of the architect-planner ideal by its actors while they confronted a new relationship between architecture and planning in the US and the UK. In those countries, these disciplines became more and more separated as two different academic curricula and two professional organizations.[23] The continuing pursuit of the architect-planner ideal which was strongly anchored in the minds

[20] J.L. Sert, 'Scope of the conference' and 'Introduction', in J. Tyrwhitt, 'The Harvard Urban Design Conferences 1956–1962' (unpublished manuscript) (RIBA TyJ/25/5).

[21] See Mumford, *Defining Urban Design*; and E. Shoshkes, 'Jaqueline Tyrwhitt: a founding mother of modern urban design', *Planning Perspectives*, 21 (2006), 179–97.

[22] David Crane, also graduated from the GSD, led a new programme in urban design at the University of Pennsylvania in 1957 (see later in this article). Fuhimiko Maki and Roger Montgomery, also graduated from the GSD, did the same at Washington University at St Louis in 1960.

[23] The professional organizations were the Royal Institute for British Architects (RIBA), and the American Institute of Architects (AIA), the Town Planning Institute (TPI) and the American Institute of Planners (AIP). This issue was so important that New York's CIAM Chapter was founded around Joseph Hudnut in 1943 as the American Society of Planners and Architects (ASPA) with the aim to compete with the other American organizations. See A. Shanken, 'Between brotherhood and bureaucracy: Joseph Hudnut, Louis I. Kahn and the American Society of Planners and Architects', *Planning Perspectives*, 20 (2005), 147–75.

of CIAM actors who lived in the UK and the US and who faced a reality structured on another scheme, seems to explain the search for a 'third way' that drove the 'Townscape' movement and the urban design field. This specific Anglo-American issue inside the CIAM movement also probably explains a large part of the growing distance between the first generation, now mainly expatriated, and the second generation. For this new generation which was still in continental Europe, academic and professional organizations kept the ideal of the architect-planner still possible. The distance and misunderstanding finally caused the end of CIAM in 1959.[24] The common origins and parallel development of the 'Townscape' editorial policy and the field of 'urban design' created of course an opportunity for exchanges. We will see that these Anglo-American exchanges were of different kinds and for different purposes.

The use of the 'Townscape' discourse to feed the field of urban design

AR's attempt in the 1950s to build a new, coherent discourse relating to urban aesthetics echoed two different issues in the current US urban debate: urban renewal and suburbanization. Each of these issues called for research programmes in which the journalistic discourse about the 'Townscape' could be translated into a more academic one. Both were funded by the Rockefeller Foundation and led to the publication of two major works of this period: *The Image of the City* and *Man-Made America: Chaos or Control?*.[25]

The first research programme was held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and entitled 'The perceptual form of the city'. It was managed by two professors, Kevin Lynch and Gyorgy Kepes, between 1954 and 1959 in order to build a preliminary body of research for MIT's new Center for Urban and Regional Studies. This new programme proposed to take a more scientific approach to the issue of urban aesthetics and forms and opened a new field of research on which Lynch's students and collaborators worked until the 1980s.

This research programme clearly belonged to the building of the new urban design field. By focusing on Boston's urban core, it was closely linked to the city's urban renewal that, during this period, led to the rebuilding of entire parts of the city.[26] Kepes participated in the first Harvard Urban

The US schools of architecture began to split in two departments, one of Architecture, the other in Planning, since the late 1940s.

[24] About this end, see Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism*, 225–65.

[25] K. Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, 1960); and C. Tunnard and B. Pushkarev, *Man-Made America: Chaos or Control?* (New Haven, 1963).

[26] Just after the end of the programme, Lynch participated in several plans for the implementation of John F. Collins and Ed Logue's urban-renewal programme. See J.R. Myer and M.H. Myer, *People and Places: Connections between the Inner and Outer Landscape* (Hanover, 2006), 61–70; and R.S. Sturgis, 'Urban planning: changing concepts',

Design Conference and Lynch went to the others. Lynch was recruited by MIT in 1948 in order to keep a link between the two departments of Architecture and City Planning, which had just separated. During three decades he repeatedly criticized the use of the expression 'urban design' and the 'immaturity' of the field, but he simultaneously remained a leading figure in that field.[27]

The origin of this research programme was closely linked to the 'Townscape' editorial policy. The programme was the result of an experimental seminar organized by Lynch at MIT in 1951– during which he discussed the issue of 'The visual form of cities' – and one third of the seminar's bibliography was composed of articles that showed a 'treatment of an urban area in the manner of the magazine'.[28] The programme was also the result of several experiments in methodology done during Lynch's Ford Foundation fellow research travel in Italy (1952–53). In his travel diary he used visual sequences that may have been inspired by *AR*'s first town studies.[29]

But if this programme was rooted in the 'Townscape' editorial policy, it showed a clear attempt to render the discourse more scientific by exchanging the word 'vision' for 'perception' and by using analytic tools from social sciences, such as psychology of perception and anthropology. Despite these differences between the 'Townscape' journalistic discourse and the research done by Lynch, the last publication produced by the programme, *The View from the Road* published in 1964, still made clear references to Cullen's book *Townscape*.

The second research programme was managed by a professor at Yale University, Christopher Tunnard, with one of his students, Boris Pushkarev. Between 1957 and 1961, they focused on 'problems of aesthetic design in the urban–rural fringe areas'. This programme was actually the outcome of investigations led by Tunnard at Yale's Graduate Program in City Planning on the subject of urban regions since 1950. It attempted to develop new design standards regarding urban sprawl and, in particular, the development of 'urban strips' in formerly rural areas.

The connection between this programme and the 'Townscape' editorial policy was Tunnard himself. A Canadian landscape architect, he worked in England during the thirties with the avant-garde members of the Modern Movement and the MARS group and, as a result, became a friend of Cullen

in M. Henderson Floyd (ed.), *Architectural Education and Boston: Centenial Publication of the Boston Architectural Center 1889–1989* (Boston, MA, 1989), 109–18.

[27] Lynch preferred the expression 'City Design'. See K. Lynch, 'The immature arts of city design', *Places*, 1 (1984), 10–21. Lynch wrote in 1974 the article on 'urban design' for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

[28] One third of the bibliography is composed from the 'Townscape' articles. K. Lynch, 'Some visual references on the visual form of the city', Sep. 1951 (MIT MC208/3/'Early Steps').

[29] K. Lynch, Diary 3 Fulbright Visit in Italy, 19 Apr. 1953 (MIT MC208/13). Alternatively these sketches may have drawn upon Raymond Unwin's *Town Planning in Practice.*

very close to the whole board of the *AR*.[30] He published several articles in the *AR* that were collected in the book *Gardens in the Modern Landscape*, published in 1938.[31] In 1950, teaching at Yale, he made an important contribution to *AR*'s special issue, *Man-Made America*, in the form of an article conforming to the 'Townscape' editorial policy that addressed the current urban-planning scene.[32] Finally, while presenting his programme to the Rockefeller Foundation, Tunnard stated he was 'encouraged' that there was public desire for work on this subject 'by the success of the recent campaign to improve British landscape launched in the pages of the *Architectural Review*'.[33]

While less involved than Lynch, Tunnard participated in the birth of the urban design field in two ways. First, because of his collaboration with Gropius in England, he was recruited in 1939 to Harvard's GSD to teach landscape architecture. Second, after military service, he taught city planning at Yale's School of Architecture but remained for decades the only professor exclusively devoted to this programme in a school clearly dominated by the discipline of architecture and by a discourse of aesthetics. This last point, combined with his landscape background, made his discourse on planning less abstract and more formalist.

Despite using the 'Townscape' articles in the building of their research in urban design, Lynch and Tunnard produced discourses very far from the discourse of the *Architectural Review*. The 'Townscape' articles came from the register of criticism – architectural criticism – and not of research. Indeed, for a US discourse to have been closer to that of the 'Townscape' articles, it would have had to be produced under the same conditions; i.e. as an editorial policy that criticized the poor quality of the contemporary environment.

Two attempts for a US 'Townscape' campaign and the role of the urban design field

By the end of the 1950s, the first attempt to launch a campaign similar to that of the *AR* came not from a professional magazine but from the renowned magazine *Fortune*. This campaign consisted of a series of articles that were edited by William 'Holly' Whyte, senior editor of *Fortune* at a time when the magazine still allowed for a very broad interpretation of business journalism.[34] This series of articles followed a previous one written entirely

[30] On Tunnard in England see L.M. Neckar, 'Christopher Tunnard: the garden in the modern landscape', in M. Trieb (ed.), *Modern Landscape Architecture: A Critical Review* (Cambridge, 1994), 144–57.
[31] C. Tunnard, *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* (London, 1938).
[32] C. Tunnard, 'Scene', *Architectural Review*, 107 (1950), 345–59.
[33] Letter from C. Tunnard to Edward F. D'Arms, 15 Feb. 1957, 12 (RF 1.2/200/472/4033).
[34] For a short biographical account on Whyte, see E.L. Birch, 'Whyte on Whyte: a walk in the city', in Rutherford H. Platt (ed.), *The Human Metropolis: People and Nature in the 21st-Century City* (Amherst, 2006), 25–31.

by Whyte, about the new, white-collar society and later collected and re-edited in the 1956 book *The Organization Plan*. In the last part of this book, Whyte criticized the post-war 'New Surburbia', the home of the 'organization man'. Interested in developing this last topic, he published a new, short series of six thematic articles about 'The exploding metropolis' between September 1957 and April 1958.[35] All of the texts were written by *Fortune* staff members except for the last one.

This last article about urban renewal was written by the young and then-unknown Jane Jacobs from *Fortune*'s sister review at Time Inc.: *Architectural Forum* (*AF*). Since 1956, Jacobs had championed *AF*'s criticism of urban-renewal policies. That same year, she made a great impression on many participants at the first Harvard Urban Design Conference by giving a talk on the topic. Whyte discovered Jacobs while attending this first conference. Following their meeting, he asked her to write an article in his series about urban renewal. She used an article which was intended for *AF* and that announced the main themes of her future masterpiece, *The Death and Life of the Great American Cities*.[36]

Her brilliant 'Downtown is for people', along with other articles in the series and in the magazine, was carefully illustrated. As a luxury publication, *Fortune* commissioned skilled photographers and painters as regular collaborators or freelance artists for one-off works related to article topics. While regular collaborators were asked to illustrate most of the articles in the series,[37] the first and last publications were occasions for special commissions. For Jacobs' concluding article, Whyte commissioned Cullen and Nairn, who 'produced two critiques on the English landscape and townscape, Outrage and Counter-Attack, that have provoked so much attention – and second thoughts – from architects, planners, and citizens that a Counter-Attack bureau has been set up to handle the flood of inquiries' to produce a series of illustrations entitled 'Scale of the city'.[38]

Normally, Cullen made the drawings and Nairn wrote the captions for their work for *AR*'s special issues. But Cullen was unable to travel by plane, a problem that obliged him to take a ship for overseas destinations during his entire life. So, for this special issue, Nairn worked alone in the US, walking the streets and taking photos of New York, Boston, Chicago, San Antonio, Louisville and San Francisco. Cullen stayed in the UK and

[35] The articles were published in the following issues of *Fortune*: Sep., Oct., Nov. and Dec. 1957, Jan. and Apr. 1958.

[36] For details on Jacobs during this period, see P.L. Laurence, 'Jane Jacobs before death and life', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 60 (2007), 5–14; and A.S. Alexiou, *Jane Jacobs: Urban Visionary* (Piscataway, 2006), 57–67.

[37] All were renowned or would be renowned as skilled artists: Russell Hoban, illustrator and writer of children's books; Dong Kingman, famous watercolourist; William A. Garnett, photographer specializing in aerial views. *Fortune* was the first non-professional magazine to publish a portfolio of the latter who became a professor at Berkeley's College of Environmental Design in 1968.

[38] *Fortune*, 57 (1958), 135.

Figure 1: Jane Jacobs' *Fortune* article 'Downtown is for people'. First page of Jacob's landmark article with an illustration by Gordon Cullen showing San Francisco's Union Square as 'the city at its best'. *Fortune*, 57 (1958), 133.

made the drawings from Nairn's photos after his return. This practice of drawing from photos was quite typical for Cullen's 'Townscape' articles.[39]

Just after its publication in *Fortune*, the *The Exploding Metropolis* series was collected and published as a book. In the book, however, almost all of the illustrations disappeared. Whyte decided to take Cullen's drawings

[39] Cullen, like many other journalists at the *AR*, used to take photographs, print them in a small size and glue them on leaves. Many of the sketches of Cullen's articles correspond to photographs from his archives. Nairn apparently used to make the same kind of leaves. See R. Elwall, *Building with Light: The International History of Architectural Photography* (London, 2004), 162–3. Cullen also was a very close friend of Eric de Maré, one of the most important photographers who worked for the *AR* and the Architectural Press after World War II. See R. Elwall, *Eric de Maré* (London, 2000).

and Nairn's captions and give them special attention by separating them from Jacobs' article and compiling the work into a portfolio that concludes the book.[40] Jacobs found her life changed by the series of articles in *Fortune*, as did Whyte. By the time of his death, he had written four books about planning – a continuous advocacy against urban renewal and for pedestrian urban spaces.

Five years later, the connection between *AR*'s 'Townscape' editorial policy and the *AF* reappeared through the publication of a book by *AF*'s managing editor, Peter Blake. An architect who was an *AF* editor when Jacobs wrote her articles, Blake wrote in 1961 and 1963 two articles he later expanded upon in *God's Own Junkyard*. This book implicitly referred to the *AR* by attacking '"the mess that is man-made America" as a British magazine has called it'.[41] A reference that was picked up in a very positive book review in the *AR*, 'Counter junk'.[42]

The second attempt was linked to the series of articles published by *Fortune* but came from a very different side: from a university and a foundation. Even before the publication of Jacobs' article, a Department of the Humanities officer of the Rockefeller Foundation, Chadbourne Gilpatrick, was intrigued by it. Years earlier Gilpatrick had managed several grants for research in urban aesthetics, including Lynch's and Tunnard's grants. As he was searching for a new Lewis Mumford – someone capable of criticizing current urban developments – he asked Jacobs to leave the *Architectural Forum* and write a book based on her articles: *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.[43] In her book, Jacobs explicitly acknowledged Nairn and Cullen for their 'two remarkable books' *Outrage* and *Counter-Attack*.[44] On the other side of the Atlantic, the *AR* editor de Cronin Hastings acknowledged in 1963, under his 'Townscape' pseudonym Ivor de Wolfe, the 'warm but high wind [that comes] across the Atlantic and (one hopes and believes) a hot handshake for the Ian Nairns, Gordon Cullens and Kenneth Brownes of this continent in the shape of a book which is a *must*'.[45]

Gilpatrick's interest in criticism and design led him to propose that the University of Pennsylvania create a new grant programme. During the 1950s, the School of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania was in

[40] W.H. Whyte (ed.), *The Exploding Metropolis* (New York, 1958), 186–99.

[41] P. Blake, *God's Own Junkyard: The Planned Deterioration of America's Landscape* (New York, 1964), 8. The two articles are 'The ugly America' published in May 1961 in the art magazine *Horizon*, and 'The suburbs are a mess', in the *Saturday Evening Post*, 5 Oct. 1963.

[42] For a more detailed account about this transatlantic link between Jacobs and the 'Townscape' editorial policy see C. Klemeck, 'Placing Jane Jacobs within the transatlantic urban conversation', *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 73 (2007), 49–67.

[43] Laurence, 'Jane Jacobs before death and life', 12.

[44] J. Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York, 1961), 509n. See also another positive critique in J. Jacobs, 'Do not segregate pedestrians and automobiles', in D. Lewis (ed.), *The Pedestrian in the City. Architects' Year Book 11* (London, 1965), 110.

[45] I. de Wolfe, 'The death and life of great American citizens', *Architectural Review*, 133 (1963), 91.

the midst of rebuilding its curriculum. This process led, in particular, to the recruitment of a large part of the new faculty. Numerous new professors were former students and professors of Harvard's GSD during Gropius' tenure, such as Dean G. Holmes Perkins and the head of the Department of City Planning, William L.C. Wheaton.[46] During this process, the Rockefeller Foundation played a pivotal role by providing generous grants. In 1958, Gilpatrick asked Wheaton for a programme on urban criticism and Wheaton proposed 'to hold a small, one-day conference of the persons who have contributed most in recent years to this field'.[47] This above exchange made it clear that the field in discussion was urbanism in journalism, and the question of improving the quality of production in the US urban environment.

David Crane, a young member of the faculty and Lynch's former research assistant, was chosen to organize the conference.[48] Crane graduated from the GSD in 1952, and worked for modern architects Marcel Breuer in 1953–54 and José Luis Sert in 1954. In 1957, he joined the University of Pennsylvania, where he founded an urban design studio. While working on the conference, he made it clear that his main reference was the 'British ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW' and 'its editorial policy [that] is clear, militant, and unequivocal'.[49] He also proposed, among other things, 'an American "Counter Attack Bureau"'.[50] Crane's main source for this paper was Grady Clay, real estate editor of the *Louisville Courier* and clearly a great admirer of *AR*'s editorial policy as his column, one of the few in US newspapers which specialized in planning criticism, was entitled 'Townscape'.[51]

[46] See A.L. Strong, 'G. Holmes Perkins: architect of the school's renaissance', G.H. Perkins, 'G. Holmes Perkins', and M. Meyerson, 'William L.C. Wheaton', in A.L. Strong and G.E. Thomas, *The Book of the School: 100 Years*, the Graduate School of Fine Arts of the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, 1990), 130–49, 156, 166.

[47] Letter from W.L.C. Wheaton to C. Gilpatric, 26 May 1958, 1 (RF 1.2/200/457/3904).

[48] Crane worked with Lynch on the orientation maps study that would result in the book *The Image of the City*. When he worked on the conference, he also was the mentor of Denise Scott Brown at the University of Pennsylvania, who would become his teaching assistant one year later. He became chief architect-planner at Ed Logue's Boston Redevelopment Authority between 1961 and 1965, before returning to teach at the University of Pennsylvania. In 1972, he moved to Rice University. See D. Scott Brown, 'Urban design at fifty, and look ahead: a personal view', *Harvard Design Magazine*, 24 (2006), 33–44; and C. Sullivan, 'David A. Crane', in Strong and Thomas, *The Book of the School*, 188.

[49] D. Crane, 'A working paper for the University of Pennsylvania Conference on Urban Design Criticism', 4 Sep. 1958, 12 (RF 1.2/200/457/3904). The other references show the same admiration: 'Yet, if our urban environment is "dreary", "corrupt", "scrofulous", "infantile", and "hopeless", we have to hear it from foreign publications like the British *ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW*' (1); 'Superficiality has sometimes been excused on the grounds that architects do not read, but many architects indicate an unfulfilled thirst by subscribing to foreign publications like the British *ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW*' (11).

[50] About the 'Counter Attack Bureau' proposed, see Crane, 'A working paper for the University of Pennsylvania Conference on Urban Design Criticism', 4 Sep. 1958, A-6, A-7.

[51] Clay would become long-time editor of the professional *Landscape Architecture Magazine* from 1960 to 1985. He also wrote several books on the topic of urban design criticism.

Figure 2: The University of Pennsylvania's Urban Design Criticism conference organized by David Crane, taken from the first pages of Grady Clay's article with a picture of some attendees. Left to right: William L.C. Wheaton; Lewis Mumford; Ian McHarg; J.B. Jackson; David Crane; Louis Kahn; G. Holmes Perkins; Arthur Holden, architect and writer; Perkins' secretary; Catherine Bauer Wurster; Leslie Cheek, director of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; Mrs Eric Larrabee, wife of *American Heritage*'s editor; Jane Jacobs; Kevin Lynch; Gordon Stephenson, British planner and architect; Mrs Grady Clay and I.M. Pei. Photo by Grady Clay. *AIA Journal*, 31 (1959), 24–5.

The conference held in Rye, New York, partly failed because Crane was too young and isolated in the preparation, but also because it revealed that US professional journals were unable to launch a campaign similar to *AR*'s and the main actors in the field of urban design were not really interested in urban-renewal criticism in reality.

The impossible convergence between 'Townscape' and urban design actors

The last direct translation of the 'Townscape' editorial policy in the US context appeared through the direct involvement of Cullen and Nairn in an academic project. Again, the Rockefeller Foundation and the University of Pennsylvania were involved, but surprisingly the involvement of Cullen and Nairn was coincidental.

The Foundation also played a great role in the reopening in 1955 of the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania after a lapse of about fifteen years. In the beginning, only one assistant

His first was *Close-Up: How to Read the American City?* (Chicago, 1973) in which Cullen's 'Townscape' articles remained a core source (see 29–30).

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professor, Ian McHarg, was recruited to this department and associated with the city-planning professors. Born in Scotland, McHarg came to Harvard's GSD in 1946 after his military service in the British army. McHarg followed not only courses in landscape architecture but also in city planning in order to obtain a Master's degree in each discipline. More importantly, McHarg participated in 1950 in one of the academic experimentations that took place during Gropius' tenure and which prefigured the future academic programme in urban design during Sert's tenure: a collaborative thesis published in the CIAM 8 book. Through an urban renewal scheme for downtown Providence, Rhode Island, McHarg as a student in planning and landscape architecture experimentally collaborated with students in architecture. Between 1950 and 1954 he returned to Scotland to become assistant planning officer in the midst of the UK planning debate in which the 'Townscape' editorial policy took centre stage. He wrote two articles, one for the *Architects' Year Book*, the organ of the post-war MARS group, the other for the *Architectural Review*.[52]

In 1954, he was recruited by the School of the Fine Arts of the University of Pennsylvania to rebuild the Department of Landscape Architecture. The School of Fine Arts asked the Rockefeller Foundation for a small grant for research on 'significant developments' in 'modern landscape design' in association with a bigger job on city planning.[53] In 1957, McHarg tried to transform his small two-year programme into a broader four-year programme that would cover different subjects. Apart from the usual fare – playgrounds, sculpture in the landscape, gardens – the new curriculum addressed 'the townscape', which he described to Gilpatrick from the staff of the Rockefeller Foundation as 'what the city appears to be to the human eye in the city, i.e., not from a distance as in the air or diagrammatically'.

While McHarg explicitly linked this topic to the *Architectural Review* in his explanation, he surprisingly did not name any of the 'Townscape' authors. Instead he proposed to recruit Peter Shepheard, 'a young British landscape architect interested in city planning [who] has done excellent work on the staff of the *Architectural Review*'.[54] Informed immediately by Gilpatrick of McHarg's proposal, Jacobs 'expressed enthusiastic approval' for the project, with one exception: she proposed that Nairn head the project.[55] Despite Jacobs' recommendation, McHarg continued to ask for Shepheard probably because he was much closer to his

[52] See I. McHarg, *A Quest for Life: An Autobiography* (New York, 1996).

[53] See Institute for Urban Studies, University of Pennsylvania, 'Research proposal. History of town and country development and current trends in landscape design' (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), attached to a letter from G.P. Harnwell to J. Marshall, 20 Jun. 1956 (RF 1.2/200/456/3899). At first reluctant because this topic seemed close to Lynch's research at MIT, the Foundation finally acknowledged it one year later with a $66 000 grant for this programme and a bigger research project on the history of Town and Country development done by the English author E.A. Gutkind for the Department of City Planning.

[54] Interviews: visit of C. Gilpatrick to Institute for Urban Studies, School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 7 May 1958, 1–2 (RF 1.2/200/456/3900).

[55] Excerpt from C. Gilpatrick Diary, 9 May 1958 (RF 1.2/200/456/3900).

landscape-architect background.[56] When Shepheard finally withdrew the proposal, McHarg continued to propose names other than those of the authors of the 'Townscape' articles. These authors – first Hugh Casson and then James Richards – were both members of the editorial board of the *Architectural Review* and related to the 'Townscape' editorial policy, but not its two main authors. Gilpatric met Cullen and Nairn in the beginning of 1959 on the way back to the US from a trip in Asia.[57] But McHarg finally asked Nairn and Cullen because of James Richards, who 'urged that [the University of] Pennsylvania commission' them.[58]

The story of this commission is very erratic. Nairn and Cullen were initially commissioned to do one job: write a book provisionally entitled *Townscape USA*. But their work ultimately split into two parts as they did not work together on the same subjects. Nairn arrived in the US at the beginning of November 1959 and embarked immediately on a trip by car from New York to San Francisco, then to New Orleans and back to New York, and then returned to the UK in January 1960. Although McHarg requested a text about city cores, Nairn mainly wrote a critique of the suburbanization of the United States in the fashion of *AR*'s *Outrage*.[59] The work on city cores was done by Cullen, who finally came to the US by ship. Between his arrival in April 1960 and his return in June 1960, he visited New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Pittsburgh, Chicago and Boston. McHarg commissioned Cullen for the whole design of the book that combined Nairn's and Cullen's texts. However, they remained separated into two volumes. Random House agreed to publish Nairn's book, *The American Landscape, a Critical View by Ian Nairn*, but they refused to publish Cullen's book because it was too expensive to produce.[60]

The 'Townscape' editorial policy as a given resource for urban design

Trying to reinforce the newly born field of 'urban design', Gilpatrick built inside the Rockefeller Foundation's Division of Humanities a wide research programme rooted in the Foundation's previous research grants for Lynch, Tunnard and even McHarg, and so partly by the 'Townscape'

[56] School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania, 'A proposal to the Rockefeller Foundation for research in the design of the urban environment, Institute for Urban Studies' (unpublished manuscript, 2 Jun. 1958), 10 (RF 1.2/200/456/3901). Thanks to McHarg, Shepheard entered later the faculty and finally became dean.

[57] He met Cullen in New Delhi when the latter worked for a new master plan granted by the Ford Foundation and directed by Albert Mayer. Excerpt from C. Gilpatric Asia Trip Diary, 9 Mar. 1959 (RF 1.2/200/456/3901). And he met Ian Nairn at *AR*'s office in London. Letter from C. Gilpatric to I. Nairn, 24 Apr. 1959 (RF 1.2/200/456/3901).

[58] Interviews: C. Gilpatrick with I. McHarg, 24 Jun. 1959. But he said to Gilpatrick 'I think it can be said that the best qualified people have been obtained to write what can be a very valuable book.' Letter from I. McHarg to C. Gilpatrick, 17 Jun. 1959 (RF 1.2/200/456/3901).

[59] Letter from I. Nairn to G. Cullen, 7 Nov. 1959 (TGC).

[60] Letter from J. Epstein to C. Gilpatric, 15 May 1963 (RF 1.2/200/457/3903).

editorial policy: the broad SUD programme. By doing that, Gilpatrick at the Rockefeller Foundation followed the same line as the Ford Foundation. This last foundation, under the guidance of its Division on National Affairs officer Paul Ylvisaker, developed during the 1950s a very important grant policy on planning by supporting specific actions and research programmes to study the massive transformations of US cities and their urban-renewal projects in particular.[61] Like the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation began providing grants for studies about this issue that became increasingly important in the US. But Ylvisaker was a former professor in political science, so he gave grants mainly to research in urban studies that focused on the social part of this issue. Gilpatrick and the RF's Division of Humanities naturally supported research programmes principally focused on the aesthetic aspect of this issue.

Just a little earlier, the UK faced tremendous changes in the urban environment – the pre-war urban sprawl and post-war reconstructions – which seemed similar to those of the US. As in planning the transnational Anglo-American dialogue has always been a core resource for the discipline in the US, so looking at the UK seemed natural. But the debate in the UK about the transformation of the urban environment was mainly aesthetic. So the 'Townscape' discourse greatly helped to ground the aesthetic part of the US debate on precedents in terms of questions and also answers. Sometimes consciously, sometimes not, actors such as Gilpatrick shaped the debate about the 'unreadibility' of the human environment in terms that were coined in a British, and even English, context which was far removed from the US's context.

In the 'Townscape' editorial policy, the debate was actually not about urban renewal but post-war rebuilding; not about Gottman's megalopolis but the destruction of the historical English landscape; not about shopping malls but new towns that were almost totally absent from the US context. The articles were written in a very English style of criticism rooted in an Oxbridge fashion so different from the scientific discourse that prevailed in US research universities since the 1920s. But despite that distance, the words and pictures crossed the Atlantic to be translated in a new fashion and then fed into a national debate. Despite a difference of context, the discourse travelled and changed successfully.

If the translation of this discourse seems easy, the translation of men, i.e. their acculturation, on the contrary, was a more difficult task. In the case of the 'Townscape' editorial policy, it failed. Gilpatric met Cullen and Nairn but the poor use of them at the University of Pennsylvania, although they were widely renowned thanks to their publications, underscored a frequent misunderstanding. This misunderstanding kept Nairn and

[61] This policy had a very strong influence on US planning and coined the expression 'grey areas'. On Ylvisaker, see V.M. Esposito, 'Paul Ylvisaker: a biographical profile', in V.M. Esposito (ed.), *Conscience and Community: The Legacy of Paul Ylvisaker* (New York, 1999), xv–xxix.

Cullen, too truly English for a global service, away from an international career which was available to them thanks to their renown. The translation from CIAM into the Urban Design Conferences was in the end much more a people issue, and Jaqueline Thyrwhitt is a key example of this. The translation from the 'Townscape' editorial policy into a fragmented body of research was rather a discourse issue. Transnational people versus transnational discourse: two poles for a translation.

Ylvisaker's initiatives lasted more than a decade and played a core role in structuring the field of urban studies, for instance through the Ford Foundation's funded institutions such as Harvard–MIT's Joint Center for Urban Studies. On the contrary, the SUD programme stopped only two years after it began. Even if this last programme secured the funding of several projects, including Edmund Bacon's masterpiece *Design of Cities*, these projects were still too diverse for the building of a coherent theoretical discourse in urban design.[62] This last field did not became the place of a coherent discourse until the birth of the 'New Urbanism' movement. But this is the product of another transnational translation and another moment of the Anglo-American dialogue in US planning history.[63]

[62] The board of trustees of the Rockefeller Foundation decided in April 1962 to fund this programme for one year, and then continued support for one additional year in July 1963. The members of the advisory committee were Otto L. Nelson, Jr, from the New York Life Insurance Company, I.M. Pei, James W. Rouse, William L. Slayton, from the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency, and Catherine Bauer Wurster. The evaluators proposed were Lewis Mumford, Crane, Jacobs, Barclay G. Jones and Lynch. Through this programme, the RF granted a study 'on large cities in advanced industrial civilization' by Allan Temco at Berkeley, a book 'on the design of cities' by Edmund N. Bacon at the University of Pennsylvania, a study of 'voting behavior with respect to public expenditure issues in urban areas' by Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson at Harvard and a study of 'the urban design process in urban renewal' by Roger Montgomery at Seattle's University of Washington (RF 3.2/911/11/59).

[63] And to see how the 'Townscape' discourse was translated into the French context, see F. Pousin, 'Du *townscape* au "paysage urban", circulation d'un modèle rhétorique mobilisateur', *Strates*, 13 (2007), 25–50.