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**The American Impact on Western Europe:
Americanization and Westernization in Transatlantic Perspective**

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Americanization in Germany has been the subject of considerable historical attention. In addition to the forthcoming GHI-sponsored Handbook, "Germany and the United States in the Era of the Cold War," recent volumes, one edited by Konrad Jarausch and Hannes Siegrist and another by Alf Lüdtke, Inge Marssolek, and Adelheid von Saldern, have explored positive and negative influences. These scholars identify a number of images or stereotypes attached to America: modernism, advanced technology, industrial rationalism, market capitalism, materialism, rising living standards, democracy, but also soullessness or lack of true culture, mass society, especially in terms of consumption and the media, and superficiality.¹ Such stereotypes may have been grist for the mills of German intellectuals, media, and politicians, but exploring the concrete, practical influences of American ideas and actions remains a challenge. Urban planning is one area where we should be able to do so. At the same time, the subject of this conference includes the term "Westernization," which provides a vehicle for escaping too narrow a focus on American influences.

I propose here to approach this issue from several directions, admitting that this can hardly be exhaustive in a brief paper. Naturally direct American actions or interventions must be considered, but it is equally or perhaps more important to explore the larger debate in Germany about the principles which should guide town planning.

As I argued in my book, In the Wake of War, German town planners may have dreamed of a blank slate when they contemplated the ruins of their cities in May 1945, but in fact they came to their formidable task with full portfolios of planning concepts.² Hardly any planners wished to rebuild the bombed cities as they had been before the war. Nor is this surprising. German planners shared the widespread critique of the old

cities as being unhealthy and dysfunctional precisely because their expansion and high population densities had not been planned but rather the result of the pressures of uncontrolled growth in the industrial age. Postwar planners believed that even where some historic features were to be retained, the rebuilt cities ought to be modern cities: this was a unique opportunity for the planning profession.

The underlying concepts of postwar planning were derived from a western European discourse about ideal cities that had been going on since the turn of the century. Note, a western European discourse, not a narrowly German one. Of seminal importance was the garden city movement, launched by Ebenezer Howard.³ Howard argued for the creation of new towns, complete with farms, industry, shops, and cultural amenities, all set in greenery but with links to metropolitan areas, and a few such model towns were indeed built. Letchworth and Welwyn attracted the attention of continental planners, and the Germans Hermann Muthesius, Ernst May, Richard Riemerschmidt, and Heinrich Tessenow brought the model to Germany, in good part under the sponsorship of the Deutscher Werkbund, the umbrella organization for German modernists. In German hands, the result was more garden suburbs than truly new garden cities, but this was in fact the case in most countries where the garden city movement took root. Planners hoped that garden suburbs could replicate the kind of village or neighborhood experience that had disappeared in the great metropolises. Few planners could conceive of the possibility of a radical restructuring of existing big cities; the legal, financial, political, and logistical obstacles were too great, and there was too much opposition from the citizenry.

The other main source of planning concepts was the modernist, functionalist theory most closely associated with Le Corbusier and the 1932 Charter of Athens, the manifesto of CIAM (International Congresses for Modern Architecture), but also with the architectural and planning ideals of the Bauhaus.⁴ This too was an international movement. Walter Gropius and his student Hubert Hoffmann, for example, were active

in planning the CIAM meetings of 1931 and 1933. Like the early garden city manifestos, the Charter of Athens was a call for new, though larger, cities, with the essential functions of housing, work, and recreation clearly articulated and separated not only by greenery but also by the transportation system that integrated everything. However, where the garden city movement emphasized small housing units such as traditional cottages or small rows of town houses, the CIAM modernists advocated high-rise apartment towers built with the new materials of steel, glass, and concrete. Except for in the distant reaches of the Soviet Union, busy with industrializing its society under Stalin--and several German planners, including Ernst May, went to the USSR in the 1930s--the idea of building whole new cities using the modernist model was simply utopian.

The Third Reich and World War II brought a temporary rupture in active German participation in the international planning discourse, but not a complete discontinuity in planning concepts. Many prominent modernists--notably Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, and Martin Wagner--fled Germany to settle in other countries, including the United States, but many remained and continued to work in one capacity or another. To be sure, Nazi Neugestaltungspläne for monumental representative cities with broad parade avenues, gargantuan party buildings, and the like certainly was new, and these plans preoccupied most active planners during the Nazi period. Prewar concepts, however, continued to be discussed, though under Nazi guises. Gottfried Feder's 1939 book, Die neue Stadt, built on the garden city model. Functionally articulated suburbs became Ortsgruppen als Siedlungszellen, for example, and these new housing settlements were to be carefully sited to harmonize with the natural landscape, forming a Stadtlandschaft. The layout of the new industrial cities of what is now Wolfsburg and Salzgitter derived in good part from functionalist planning models.

In late 1943, following instructions from Albert Speer, a core group of city planners, mostly from northern Germany, turned their attention to the rebuilding of the

bombed cities. Speer himself urged them to concentrate not on individual buildings but on the structural, functional needs of big cities and particularly on traffic planning, so that Germany might avoid the problems found in cities like New York.⁵ The members of this planning group, the Arbeitsstab Wiederaufbauplanung, set about with great energy to undertake the systematic planning for urban reconstruction. This involved not only adapting prewar planning models but learning about reconstruction planning elsewhere, including England, about which information was obtained via Lisbon.

Although none of the Nazi-era reconstruction plans were implemented after the war, most of the members of the Arbeitsstab found jobs in town planning offices. Equally important, the key planning concepts, the Leitbilder that had shaped the west European discourse on planning before and had continued to be discussed in Germany during the war, now came to dominant postwar planning. Indeed, some of the most important German texts that defined these “postwar” town planning concepts had in fact been drafted late in the war but only published after the war ended. Cut off from their European colleagues during the war, German planners rushed to reestablish contacts and rejoin international professional associations. As soon as conditions allowed, they took study trips to Scandinavia, Holland, France, and England, where they sought out examples of good planning and noted the apparent success of strong planning legislation.⁶

At the same time, some of the most vocal proponents of modernist planning and architecture reestablished contacts with the exiles of the 1930s, including Mies, Gropius, and Wagner. Otto Bartning, the head of the Bund Deutscher Architekten, Hans Schwippert, the chair of the Werkbund's Düsseldorf chapter, Alfons Leitl, the editor of Baukunst und Werkform, and Rudolf Schwarz, Cologne's first postwar planner, all tried to get Mies to come to Germany to accept a position, to speak, or to write for a publication, all without success.⁷ Gropius was asked to take academic positions and was even offered a government post by Konrad Adenauer, but he declined, having

become too much an American. He did make a controversial trip to Germany in 1947 at the invitation of the American military government, giving several public addresses, granting interviews, and offering his opinions on rebuilding the bombed cities. Those opinions proved not always welcome. Berlin's city planner Karl Bonatz attacked Gropius's concept of "neighborhoods" as too American, utopian, and impractical under the prevailing conditions in Berlin. Martin Wagner, Berlin's pre-1933 planner and in exile a colleague of Gropius at Harvard, would have returned, had he been offered a post. His planning ideas, however, were too radical and his personality too abrasive, though his ideas for a comprehensive redesign of central Boston were displayed at the pioneering and influential 1951 Constructa building exhibition in Hannover.⁸ Wagner finished his career in the United States.

The return to Germany of the exiled giants of classical modernism, of course, was not at all necessary for modernist planning models to gain a central place in postwar Germany. The Bauhaus was not reestablished after the war, but the founding of the Ulm Hochschule für Gestaltung was a kind of substitute. It received financial support from the government of the Federal Republic and the American High Commission for Germany. Gropius spoke at the opening, which was attended by notable members of the old Werkbund, including Theodor Heuss and Henry van de Velde.⁹ But even apart from the Ulm school, there were many advocates of modernist planning and architectural ideals who had remained in Germany and who played important roles after the war. The first issue of Baukunst und Werkform, the journal that in many ways served as the standard bearer for modernism, appeared in 1947 and featured articles by Hans Schwippert, Otto Bartning, Hans Scharoun, Hugo Häring, and Egon Eiermann, although it also included articles by the aged Hamburg planner Fritz Schumacher and Rudolf Schwarz, the Cologne planner who had expressed skepticism about the Bauhaus before the war and who published a strong attack on Gropius in Baukunst und Werkform in 1953.¹⁰ The 1947 premier issue contained a manifesto

signed by 38 prominent architects, planners, artists, and writers advocating the rebuilding of the bombed-out cities in new rather than historic forms, with clearly articulated parts, including overseeable neighborhoods, organized around cultural and political urban cores.¹¹ In another article in that issue, Hugo Häring defended the “new building” or “new architecture” in its German variant as an answer not only to historicist architecture and Nazi architecture but also to the extreme geometric approach of Le Corbusier. Häring argued that whereas Le Corbusier would impose buildings on a landscape, the approach of the Bauhaus would be to fold them into the landscape in a “symbiosis between buildings and nature.”¹² None of this constituted a radical call to arms, but it contained the seeds of the modernist program as it took shape in postwar German town planning.

The year 1948 marked the publication of Organische Stadtbaukunst by Hans Bernhard Reichow, Stettin's wartime planner who had worked on reconstruction planning under the Arbeitsstab Wiederaufbau and then settled in Hamburg after the war.¹³ By organic, Reichow meant not mimicking nature but rather designing cities and buildings that coexist in close harmony with the natural landscape and what he considered the natural needs of humans. He thus rejected extreme modernism and sterile “Sachlichkeit” or objectivity. Reichow praised, for example, Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin and “Falling Water” houses, a country house in Lincoln Mass by Karl Koch, and Charles Eames's plywood furniture as being properly “organic,” but he criticized the grid street pattern of Manhattan as inorganic and geometric. On the other hand, he also praised a model by Mies van der Rohe for apartment towers for Chicago because the design displayed the elements of the spaces on the outside of the building. In Germany, Heinrich Tessenow's prewar work earned Reichow's special admiration. The thrust here was to appropriate some features of international, Western (and American) modernism but transform them by applying organicist models. Cities should be both modern in function and architecture yet harmonize with natural features, thus producing

a true urban landscape, or *Stadtlandschaft*. A healthy organic city would consist of clusters, or cells, of residences and industry growing along a transportation skeleton given shape by the natural landscape.

The Charter of Athens was published in German in 1949 in Neue Bauwelt, where it received some criticism but also a strong defense by one of its authors, Hubert Hoffmann, who rejected the contention that the Charter was too schematic and formalistic for German purposes. It would be a mistake, he argued, to reduce the significance of the Charter to particular architectural renderings of Le Corbusier or his student Marcel Lods (who in fact had produced quite radical and never implemented plans for rebuilding Mainz). Instead, Hoffmann noted that the Charter called for functional cities grouped around those essential needs and tasks central to a city working as an organic whole: work, housing, recreation, and transportation. Seen in this way, there were broad opportunities to apply the Charter's principles to German reconstruction.¹⁴ (Hoffmann, it may be recalled, had helped prepare the CIAM meetings in 1931 and 1933, worked with Gropius before the latter left Germany, and then worked with the modernist architect Hans Scharoun in 1937. As we shall see, he subsequently coauthored one of the two most important books on planning in the 1950s.)

Here then one finds the key Leitbilder of German postwar planning: modernist, functional layout of cities, but modified to conform with the landscape. Organic functionalism, in other words, was a program both West European and German, shaped primarily by the planning experiences of England, France, Holland, Germany, and the Scandinavian lands. This approach received its clearest expression in Die gegliederte und aufgelockerte Stadt, published by Johannes Göderitz, Roland Rainer, and Hubert Hoffmann in 1957. The date is deceptive, actually, since the book was drafted during the last years of the war and printed in a small edition which was destroyed at the war's end. However, the basic content had become common currency well before the book finally reappeared under the auspices of the German Academy for City and Regional

Planning. Hoffmann we have already met. Göderitz, Braunschweig's planner, had long also worked for the academy, while Rainer now was a planner in Vienna. In their book we again find model cities that are functionally articulated but organically tied to the natural landscape of hills and waterways.¹⁵ The authors have in mind what they call “the most fruitful idea in modern Western town planning--the idea of the Garden City--which has born fruit in the decentralized urban expansion of London after 1945.”¹⁶ One should start, they argue, with proper housing, namely single-family houses, or row houses, with their own attached gardens. Residential areas of 1000 to 1500 dwellings would constitute neighborhoods, 4 neighborhoods a cell, 3 cells a town district, 4 districts a “Stadtteil” or small city. While all of the largest units would be tied together both by landscape (Stadtlandschaft) and by rail and motorized transport (though the latter must not be imposed in a sterile grid), the relatively small size and density of each neighborhood and district would make it possible for people to go to work, to shop, and to reach recreation sites on foot or bicycles.

What is missing in this model is a realistic engagement with rapidly growing use of private automobiles, something already called for by Speer in 1943. German planners were in fact ambivalent about auto traffic in their cities. On the one hand, growing automobile traffic signified an improving economy and renewed urban prosperity even while reconstruction was incomplete. On the other hand, the American experience seemed to pose a fundamental challenge to the kind of cities most German planners advocated.¹⁷ There was no lack of attention to American traffic problems. A few examples can suffice. Kurt Leibbrand, a traffic specialist in Stuttgart before moving to the Technical University of Zürich, praised Americans for giving traffic engineers the preeminent place in town planning.¹⁸ From his roost at Harvard, Martin Wagner railed at his German colleagues to take radical approaches suitable for modern traffic needs.¹⁹ Some German reporting on America was practical. Günther Nasemann provided a careful analysis of crossing-free intersections in Washington, D.C.²⁰ Der Spiegel warned

planners of the critical necessity of coming to grips with urban traffic, and it noted with interest instances where German cities were imitating America with the installation of parking meters and validated parking tickets in parking lots.²¹ And after having visited the United States, Düsseldorf's planner Friedrich Tamms took the radical step in the mid-1950s of building an elevated urban freeway through central Düsseldorf on the model of Los Angeles.²²

But it is somehow fitting that Hans Bernhard Reichow, the author of Organische Städtebau, brought the discussion of planning for automobiles to a head with his 1959 volume Die Autogerechte Stadt. Admitting the need to accommodate motor vehicles, Reichow continued to criticize purely formal and technical solutions, including those based on geometric grids. He rejected trying to solve the problems of "hopelessly overbuilt metropolises" with "monstrous traffic exchanges" like multilevel cloverleaves in the United States. Laws, punitive regulations, and reliance on automatic signal systems wouldn't work either. Instead, Reichow insisted on organic, functional cities in the natural landscape as the only solution. This was his program of a decade earlier.²³

Reichow's remarks support what was suggested at the beginning of this paper, namely, that American planning did not have a significant positive influence on German planning concepts or practice.²⁴ During the 1950s, what influence there was came through two venues. First, in 1951, the Marshall Plan funds were used to sponsor a huge planning competition and subsequent construction of model housing projects in 15 cities. The goal of the Americans here, however, was not so much to transform German town planning as to stimulate more rapid construction of less expensive housing. Except for a project in Bremen, the result was new housing built on the fringes of the bombed cities, mostly laid out along modernist lines, with mixtures of single-family homes, row houses, and apartment blocks sited for optimal sunlight, air, and access to green areas.²⁵ Commentators have frequently observed that this Marshall Plan project was influential, but it is difficult to see how it differed very much from what the Germans

themselves had been proposing. Most of the 725 entries in the competition followed nicely the sort of planning models advocated by Reichow in his Organische Stadtbaukunst. One important critic in fact commented that most of the competition entries weren't so much planning as formulaic placement of housing units on designated blocks without any consideration of how these projects might relate to neighboring built up areas.²⁶

It is also interesting to note that the official publication on the competition contained two articles by American planners and members of the prize committee, both of whom held up the American urban experience as a negative example for the Germans. Harvard University's Walter Bogner, who served on the committee in place of the originally invited Gropius, noted that in the United States, the growth of motor vehicle traffic posed "the danger of the total collapse of old community structures, the fall of land and building values in urban centers, . . . and falsely located schools, businesses, and industry." Donald Monson, a former Detroit planner, urged the Germans to follow British laws on planning in order to deal with the threat of growing traffic. Monson described the automobile as "a bacillus," whose "astonishing growth" would soon resemble an "epidemic."²⁷ Thus even as the Americans sought to influence German planning through sponsorship of the competition, American planning was not offered as a solution to Germany's urban problems.

The second opportunity for American influence was the 1955-57 International Building Exhibition in Berlin. Again Marshall Plan funds were instrumental in underwriting a planning competition and actual construction. The planning competition was in good part an exercise in Cold War propaganda, since it called for the redesign of all of central Berlin as if it were a whole, undivided city and still the national capital. Naturally no plans were realized. On the other hand, the most visible product of the Interbau was the construction of the Hansa-Viertel. Here the ruins of a bombed-out area near the Tiergarten in central Berlin were leveled, and its densely built blocks

replaced with modern apartment towers in a park-like setting. The architects of the towers came from the ranks of internationally renowned figures--including Walter Gropius, Alvar Aalto, and Oscar Niemeyer--and leading Berlin architects like Hans Scharoun and Hubert Hoffmann. The Hansa-Viertel became one of the commonly discussed models of modernist urban renewal, but the opportunities for emulation were few because by this time there were few large inner-city parcels available for this sort of redevelopment in West German cities and because funding for such development was not generally available.²⁸

As we have seen, positive American influences on urban planning during the first 15 postwar years were modest in impact (as opposed to ambition) when the result of direct American action, and equally modest when considered part of a more general and international package of planning ideals prevalent everywhere. It is interesting, then, that the contributions of certain American critics of the prevailing planning ideals formed an integral part of the thinking of German planners, both practitioners and planning educators, after 1960. That year marked the appearance of two seminal articles. Edgar Salin, a German economist teaching in Basel, delivered a (quickly published) keynote address entitled "Urbanität" (Urbanity) to the main meeting of the Deutscher Städtetag, German Cities Association.²⁹ The sociologist Hans Paul Bahrdt published an essay entitled "Nachbarschaft oder Urbanität" in the leading architectural and planning journal, Bauwelt.³⁰ Combined, these two essays began the debate about the Leitbilder of German planning, and both essays, I think, have American roots.

Those roots are clearest in Salin. For Salin, while the original meaning of urbanity must be found in the ideal conditions of ancient Athens, in its modern variant it consists of a special atmosphere, a kind of "humanistic urbanity" based on the "civic sense of old families," "the consciousness of a great history," the energy of "great lord mayors," and the "proud identification with a blossoming community." This urbanity also depends upon a considerable presence of education, civilization (Gesittung), and "a

fruitful mixture of cultures and their traditions, clans, and races.”³¹ The National Socialists crushed this sort of urbanity in Germany; the challenge to its revival is how to find a form that will strengthen the central urban core while dealing with the revolutionary force of motor vehicles, a form that will produce citizens who are intellectually and political engaged with the essential activities of the city.

Salin declares that this is a central problem not only for Germany with its bombed-out centers but also for England and America, and he recommends “the extraordinarily instructive articles” to be found in the book, The Exploding Metropolis, edited by Fortune magazine and published in 1958. When we turn to that publication, what we find is a scathing attack both on suburbia and on the state of planning for redeveloping existing big cities, particularly the trend toward creating superblocks with high-rise housing or with massive civic centers. William H. Whyte, the editor and author of the introduction and the lead article, argues that both these redevelopment projects and suburbs--even garden suburbs--are killers of cities. Subsequent chapters deal with the challenges of automobile traffic, the critical need for active leadership from mayors, the need for more imaginative solutions to “enduring slums” than the kind of redevelopment projects currently being touted, the blight of urban sprawl, and the character of vital downtowns. The last chapter, “Downtown is for People,” was written by Jane Jacobs, a writer for Architectural Forum.

Whyte and Jacobs argue for dense, multifunction urban areas defined not by huge open spaces and slab architecture but by vibrant streets, filled with all sorts of people bumping into each other as they do many kinds of things, and lined with town houses. Jacobs observes that the prevailing models of urban development “will be spacious, parklike, and uncrowded. They will feature long green vistas. They will be stable and symmetrical and orderly. They will be clean, impressive, and monumental.” These are attributes, of course, to be found in the German models of the 1950s. But as Jacobs caustically notes, “they will have all the attributes of a well-kept, dignified

cemetery.” On the contrary, “to create [in the central area] an atmosphere of urbanity and exuberance” one needs “hustle and bustle,” “the cheerful hurly-burly.” Lively streets, streets alive day and night, are the key to urbanity and thus to healthy cities, and Jacobs cites as proof the studies done by Kevin Lynch and Georgy Kepes of MIT.³² To have lively streets and a healthy city, one needs not just expert planners and architects but engaged laymen who like the city and want to live in it. “Where the citizen . . . has become so involved that he feels rather proprietary about the city, where he feels that it is his town, the animation--and affection--are tangible.”³³ Here then are nearly all of the essential ideas put forward by Salin in his influential address.

Hans Paul Bahrtdt takes on another key motif in German (and international) planning: the neighborhood.³⁴ He contends that the planners of new suburbs have a romanticized vision of organic, bounded, tightly integrated communities that can overcome the extreme, alienating individualization of modern mass urban society. These planners, he feels, hope that genuine democracy will grow from these neighborhood units, and they based that belief on the experience of the United States. But this is misplaced. The American form of neighborhood developed in good part in the context of the open frontier and open society, where people moved to form new, self-reliant communities. In Germany, the neighborhood ideal derives more from the English and German garden city movement, and European conditions are quite different. New industrial towns and new garden suburbs might, in the very short run, experience a temporary citizen activism, but soon the normal processes of urban institutions take over. Instead of idealized closed neighborhoods, Bahrtdt argues for communities marked by “incomplete integration” and the presence of both public and private spheres, civil and bourgeois societies, where people of all kinds of necessity come into contact with each other, communicate with each other, and accommodate each other.³⁵ This is a healthy kind of urbanity, the kind where the “city air” of an open society “makes one free” in a way that a closed, integrated, homogeneous

neighborhood does not.³⁶ Neighborhoods as currently imagined by most planners don't produce such a society, but the big cities of modern mass society don't either. The real task for planners is to find out how to master the roaring, pressing automobile traffic that makes the functioning of an urban public sphere and a civil society so difficult. In other words, one must foster urbanity through good urban design, not neighborhoods planned on an abstract model.

Unfortunately Bahrtdt does not leave in this crucial article a footnote trail to help us see the origins of his ideas, so I must speculate. Perhaps it is a coincidence that certain key themes can be found in a reading of the Chicago "School of Urban Studies," which in turn built on the thinking of Max Weber and Georg Simmel. Consider, for example, Louis Wirth's 1938 essay, "Urbanism as a Way of Life: The City and Contemporary Civilization." Wirth defines an urban way of life as one in which there is a "juxtaposition of divergent personalities and modes of life," where "a certain degree of emancipation or freedom" is the gain that offsets the loss of "the morale, and the sense of participation that comes with living in an integrated society."³⁷ Urban mobility and instability produce both an ethic of toleration of others and individual alienation. Wirth's urbanism comes quite close to Bahrtdt's urbanity; both derive from an incompletely integrated, diverse society, not a tightly and completely integrated neighborhood. Again, postulating a link between Chicago's urban sociologists and Bahrtdt is speculation, and it is interesting to think that, to the extent that the Chicago school started with German sociologists, there might be a re-importation of German ideas paralleling the re-importation of the Bauhaus.

In any case, if Salin and Bahrtdt kicked off the German discussion of urbanity, then the study of the books of Jane Jacobs and Kevin Lynch quickly became an important part of the discussion.³⁸ For example, Jacobs's Life and Death of Great American Cities, published in 1961, appeared in German translation in 1963 in an imprint series of the Bauwelt, and soon a noted architecture critic praised certain new

neighborhoods in Hamburg which would be “alive” throughout the day in the sense demanded by Jacobs.³⁹ The book also stirred some controversy. Jürgen Brandt criticized Jacobs in a long review in which he praised her criticisms of modern functional planning, but argued that she saw all cities in terms of her own New York neighborhood streets and that she failed to appreciate the problems that auto traffic posed for cities and planners. In a subsequent issue, Hans Siedentopf and Rudolf Hillebrecht came to Jacobs's defense, calling her work the most important book since Le Corbusier's 1923 Vers une architecture. Brandt replied by noting that some city residents, particularly those in intractable slums, were “asocial” without the financial resources to support the kinds of shops and cultural amenities which Jacobs admired. In comparison to those slums, the new housing projects really are improvements. For Brandt, functional zoning was still essential.⁴⁰

Jacobs and Lynch came out the winners here. They became part of the canon of master works that all new German planners had to know. Hans Paul Bahrtdt contributed here. If he did not actually cite American sources in his 1960 article discussed earlier, his reading of Jane Jacobs was clearly central to Bahrtdt's thinking in his highly influential book of 1969, Humaner Städtebau, in which many of the ideas present in the 1960 article are fully elaborated. The book's acknowledgments contain the admission that the influence of Jacobs is “unverkennbar” throughout, and indeed everywhere one finds an extensive adaptation of her critique of the dominant models of city planning as well as an extended discussion of the concept and reality of “neighborhoods” as ingredients of urbanity. Bahrtdt also cites Kevin Lynch's Image of the City and William Whyte's Organization Man.⁴¹

Other evidence for the significance of Jacobs and Lynch can be found in the writing of Gerd Albers, undoubtedly one of the most important scholars and teachers of urban planning of the first postwar generation of German planners, can act as a guide. Indeed, Albers's career is a prime example of the “Westernization” of German planning.

After military service in the war, he studied architecture in Hannover and then went to America in 1948 on a fellowship from the American Friends Service Committee. He worked with Mies van der Rohe and Ludwig Hilberseimer at the Illinois Institute of Technology, completed a Masters of Science in City Planning, and then returned to Hannover, where he studied further with Werner Hebebrand while working in the office of Reichow. In 1952, he moved to a position in the planning office in Ulm, where he worked with Max Guthert and was influenced by the Hochschule für Gestaltung. In 1954 he moved to head the planning office in Trier before going to Darmstadt and then on to the chair in city and regional planning at the Technical University of Munich in 1962, which became his academic home until his retirement. In 1962, he also led the Institut für Städtebau und Wohnungswesen of the Deutsche Akademie für Städtebau und Landesplanung, which had been founded and led by Johannes Göderitz.⁴² America and Germany, Mies van der Rohe, Hilberseimer, Hebebrand, Reichow, Göderitz, Guthert: hallmarks of a modern international career.

In 1964, the prominent Berlin-based architectural review Bauwelt began to devote 4 issues a year to urban planning, and Gerd Albers served as one of the coeditors, giving the publication a distinctly critical voice. The inaugural issue of Stadtbauwelt included a long piece by Hans Paul Bahrdt in which Bahrdt put forward some of his views on the functioning of neighborhoods. The second issue featured an advance look at Alexander Mitscherlich's Die Unwirtlichkeit unserer Städte, which quickly became one of the classic psychological criticisms of functionally articulated modern city. The third issue began with a report by Tom Sieverts on a recent Congress of American Planning Officials in Boston and ended with an essay by Albers on planning education. That essay concluded with the question: "From Ebenezer Howard to Jane Jacobs, or, was everything [done] wrong?"⁴³ Albers clearly wished German town planners to be fully part of the critical discussion of prevailing West European and American urban planning models.

The generation of middle-aged planners that had led postwar urban reconstruction--men who had studied before the war and gaining planning experience during the Third Reich-- did not, of course, simply abandon their fundamental Leitbilder in the face of the criticisms of the 1960s, but they did acknowledge that those models had become problematic. Thus Wilhelm Wortmann noted that the sort of dense city typical at the turn of the century which had occasioned both the garden city movement and the program of the Charter of Athens had already greatly changed, but even the dispersed and functionally articulated city of the 1950s was now antiquated. Cities had become urban regions and required new planning concepts.⁴⁴ Rudolf Hillebrecht, Germany's most celebrated postwar town planner, returned from a trip to the United States both to criticize America's unplanned, amorphously shaped cities but also to admit that their growth and their efforts--even where unsuccessful--to cope with new forms of mobility made possible by motor vehicles challenged Germany to rethink uses of space in relation to modes of transportation.⁴⁵ And, like Albers, Hillebrecht also urged his fellow professionals to reexamine their work in light of the evolution of urban planning "from Ebenezer Howard to Jane Jacobs"--echoing the article published the previous year by his younger colleague Gerd Albers.⁴⁶

What has this brief history of German town planning told us about Americanization and Westernization? I have argued that there was great continuity in German thinking about planning between the periods before and after Nazism. German planning models derived in part from the English garden city movement, the international modernism of CIAM, and the Bauhaus. The Nazi period's attempted innovations were short-lived, and thus that period was an interruption but not complete break with a West European dialog on planning, and the fact that key exiles did not return after 1945 did not matter much. Prewar concepts, refined during the war and propagated after 1945 by planners like Reichow, Göderitz, and Hillebrecht, centered on the organic, functionally articulated city with neighborhoods as the basic units.

In spite of the US sponsorship of the ECA housing competition in the early 1950s and the Berlin Interbau in the mid-1950s, the positive influence of America on German planning was not very great, though Germans did pay close attention to American developments, as is evident in the leading professional journals. Hence we can speak of Westernization, though this had been true before 1933, but not Americanization. America's attempts--seen as not very successful--to meet the challenge of the automobile served as a more negative than positive influence.

On the other hand, in the 1960s, the critique of contemporary urban planning by Jane Jacobs and her and Kevin Lynch's ideas about livable neighborhoods did indeed have a strong impact on German thinking. The concept of "urbanity" was not solely an American import, but American thinking helped shape that concept, and urbanity has remained a central motif of German planning thinking to the present. In conclusion, one must see urban planning in Germany as an international, largely Western European profession, with planners well informed about both theory and practice in the United States and elsewhere in Europe. Since 1945 it has been a thoroughly Western profession and not parochially German.

Notes

¹ Konrad H. Jarausach and Hannes Siegrist, "Amerikanisierung und Sowjetisierung. Eine vergleichende Fragestellung zur deutsch-deutschen Nachkriegsgeschichte," in Konrad Jarausach, Hannes Siegrist, eds., Amerikanisierung und Sowjetisierung in Deutschland 1945-1970 (Frankfurt, New York, 1997), 22; Alf Lüdtkke, Inge Marssolek, Adelheid von Saldern, "Amerikanisierung. Traum und ApItraum im Deutschland des 20. Jahrhunderts," in Alf Lüdtkke, Inge Marssolek, Adelheid von Saldern, eds., Amerikanisierung. Traum und ApItraum im Deutschland des 20. Jahrhunderts Vol. 6 of Transatlantische Historische Studien. Veröffentlichungen des Deutschen Historischen Instituts Washington, DC (Stuttgart, 1996), 9-11.

² See my In the Wake of War. The Reconstruction of German Cities after World War II

(New York and Oxford, 1993), and Werner Durth and Niels Gutschow. Träume in Trümmern. Planungen zum Wiederaufbau zerstörter Städte im Westen Deutschlands 1940-1950, 2 vols. (Braunschweig and Wiesbaden, 1988).

³ See Ebenezer Howard, To-morrow: a Peaceful Path to Real Reform (London, 1898) and Garden Cities of To-morrow (London, 1902).

⁴ Two key Le Corbusier texts were Vers une architecture (Paris, 1923) and La ville radieuse (Boulogne, 1935).

⁵ See Diefendorf, In the Wake of War, 172ff.

⁶ Right from the beginning, journals like Die Neue Stadt, Neue Bauwelt, and later Bauwelt regularly carried articles on architecture and, to a somewhat lesser extent, town planning in the United States and countries all over Europe. This helped reestablish the Germans' international credentials while, of course, helping them distance themselves from the Third Reich. Rudolf Hillebrecht provides an interesting case in point. He had spent the war years in Hamburg, working under Konstanty Gutschow, the architect for the redesign of that city and one of the leaders of the Arbeitsstab Wiederaufbauplanung. After the war he went to Hannover and became its chief planner, a post he held for decades. His success in Hannover made him postwar Germany's most influential planner. He had followed British planning efforts during the war, and soon after the war was writing about planning in England, Sweden, and Holland. He consistently praised the planning legislation and actual reconstruction plans of England, France, and Holland. See, for example, "Wohnsiedlungen in zerstörten Stadtgebieten," in Hermann Wandersleb and Hans Schoszberger, eds., Neue Wohnbau, vol. 1, Bauplanung (Ravensburg, 1952), 46, and "Neuaufbau der Städte," in Hillebrecht, Städtebau als Herausforderung. Ausgewählte Schriften und Vorträge. Die neuen Schriften des deutschen Städtetages, vol. 30 (Cologne, 1975), 34-5. The latter piece was originally published in Handbuch moderner Architektur (Berlin, 1957).

⁷ See the correspondence in the Mies van der Rohe papers, Library of Congress, containers 6, 25, and 53.

⁸ See Diefendorf, In the Wake of War, 183-6, and Harald Bodenschatz, Platz frei für das neue Berlin! Geschichte der Stadterneuerung seit 1871 (Berlin, 1987), 147-8.

⁹ Paul Betts, "Die Bauhaus-Legende. Amerikanisch-Deutsches 'Joint-Venture' des Kalten Krieges," in Alf Lüdtke, Inge Marssolek, Adelheid von Saldern, Amerikanisierung. Traum und Alptraum im Deutschland des 20. Jahrhunderts. Vol. 6 of Transatlantische Historische Studien. Veröffentlichungen des Deutschen Historischen Instituts Washington, DC (Stuttgart, 1996), 276-7.

¹⁰ For the controversy launched by Schwarz in 1953, see Betts, 271-4, and Christian Borngräber, Stil Novo. Design in den 50er Jahren. Phantasie und Phantastik (Frankfurt, 1979), 23-4.

¹¹ "Ein Aufruf: Grundsätzliche Forderungen," in Baukunst und Werkform 1, nr. 1 (1947): 29.

¹² Hugo Häring, "Neues Bauen," in Baukunst und Werkform 1, nr. 1 (1947): 35.

¹³ I have seen 2 editions of this work, Organische Stadtbaukunst. Von der Grosstadt zur Stadtlandschaft (Braunschweig, Berlin, Vienna, 1948) and Organische Stadtbaukunst, Organische Baukunst, Organische Kultur (Braunschweig, 1949).

¹⁴ Hubert Hoffmann, "Zur Charta von Athen: Auseinandersetzung mit einer 'Auseinandersetzung,'" in Neue Bauwelt 4 (1949): 667-8.

¹⁵ Johannes Göderitz, Roland Rainer, and Hubert Hoffmann, Die gegliederte und aufgelockerte Stadt (Tübingen, 1957), 23.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁷ Bruce E. Seely, "Der amerikanische Blick auf die deutschen Autobahnen. Deutsche und amerikanische Autobahnbauer 1930-1965," in Werkstatt Geschichte 21 (1998): 11-28, notes that German traffic engineers paid close attention to American road building in the 1940s and 1950s, but in earlier decades Italian freeway construction was perhaps more influential in Germany than the American example.

¹⁸ Kurt Leibbrand, "Verkehr und Wiederaufbau von Städten," Die Neue Stadt 3 (1949): 469.

¹⁹ Martin Wagner, "Vernunft-Perspektiven im Städtebau," Die Neue Stadt 3 (1949): 140-3.

²⁰ Günther Nasemann, "Neue zweistöckige Verkehrsanlage in Washington," Die Neue Stadt 5 (1951): 315-8.

²¹ "Verkehrsprobleme: Planer, werdet hart," in Der Spiegel 6, nr. 1 (2 January 1952): 24.

²² See Werner Durth, "Düsseldorf: Demonstration der Modernität," in Klaus von Beyme, Werner Durth, Niels Gutschow, Winfried Nerdinger, and Thomas Topfstedt, eds., Neue Städte aus Ruinen: Deutscher Städtebau der Nachkriegszeit (Munich, 1992): 240 and 364 note 36. See also Barbara Schmucki, "Schneisen durch die Stadt--Sinnbild der 'modernen' Stadt. Stadtautobahnen und amerikanisches Vorbild in Ost- und Westdeutschland, 1925-1975," in Werkstatt Geschichte 21 (1998): 43-63.

²³ Hans Bernhard Reichow, Die Autogerechte Stadt. Ein Weg aus dem Verkehrs-Chaos (Ravensburg, 1959), 8, 16.

²⁴ In a dissertation entitled "Building Stalin's Germany" and nearing completion at the University of California, Berkeley, Greg has compared the visit of a small group of senior East German planners to the Soviet Union in 1950 with the visit of a group of West German architectural students to the United States that same year. Whereas the influence of Stalinist architecture and planning was overwhelming in the German Democratic Republic, the visit of the West Germans to America had little impact. Only one of the "trainees" became a practicing planner in Germany, and that in the small town of Kehl-am-Rhein.

²⁵ See Hermann Wandersleb and Hans Schoszberger, Neue Wohnbau, vol. 1, Bauplanung and Wandersleb and Georg Günthert, eds., Neue Wohnbau, vol. 2, Durchführung von Versuchssiedlungen. Ergebnisse und Erkenntnisse für heute und morgen. Von ECA bis Interbau (Ravensburg, 1958).

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- ²⁶ Phillip Rappaport, "Städtebau und ECA," in Wandersleb and Schoszberger, Neue Wohnbau, vol. 1, 47-9.
- ²⁷ Walter F. Bogner, "Lageplan," and Donald Monson, "Städtebau," in Wandersleb and Schoszberger, Neue Wohnbau, vol. 1, 128 and 129.
- ²⁸ See Die Interbau wird diskutiert: Die ersten Ergebnisse (Wiesbaden and Berlin, 1960), Harald Bodenschatz, Platz frei für das neue Berlin! Geschichte der Stadterneuerung seit 1871 (Berlin, 1987), 164ff, and Carola Hein, Hauptstadt Berlin, städtebaulicher Ideenwettbewerb 1957/58 (Berlin, 1991).
- ²⁹ Edgar Salin, "Urbanität," in Erneuerung unserer Städte: Vorträge, Aussprachen und Ergebnisse der 11. Hauptversammlung des Deutschen Städtetages, Augsburg, 1.-3. Juni 1960 Neue Schriften des deutschen Städtetages, nr. 6 (Stuttgart and Cologne, 1960).
- ³⁰ Hans Paul Bahrtdt, "Nachbarschaft oder Urbanität," in Bauwelt nr. 51/52 (1960).
- ³¹ Salin, "Urbanität," 21.
- ³² Jane Jacobs, "Downtown is for People," in The Exploding Metropolis, The Editors of Fortune (New York, 1958), 157, 159, 164.
- ³³ William H. Whyte, Jr., "Introduction," in The Exploding Metropolis, 19.
- ³⁴ See Dirk Schubert, "'Heil aus Ziegelsteinen'--Aufstieg und Fall der Nachbarschaftsidee: eine deutsch-anglo-amerikanische Dreiecks-Planungsgeschichte," in Die alte Stadt 25 (1998): 141-173, for an excellent discussion of the spread of the garden city movement and related idea of neighborhoods from Britain to the United States, where it was most significantly realized in Radburn in 1928, and the influence of British and American experiences with garden cities on German planners, including Reichow and Rainer. For a sociological rather than historical analysis, see Bernd Hamm, Betrifft: Nachbarschaft; Verständigung über Inhalt und Gebrauch eines vieldeutigen Begriffs, Bauwelt Fundamente 40 (Düsseldorf, 1973).
- ³⁵ Bahrtdt, "Nachbarschaft oder Urbanität," 1474. Here Bahrtdt's thinking resembles some of that in Jürgen Habermas's Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit (Neuwied, 1962).
- ³⁶ *Ibid*, 1477.
- ³⁷ Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life: The City and Contemporary Civilization," reprinted in Classic Essays on the Culture of Cities, ed. Richard Sennett (New York, 1969)
- ³⁸ Kevin Lynch, The Image of the City (Cambridge, 1960) and Jane Jacobs, The Life and Death of Great American Cities (New York, 1961). Lynch's book was translated into Germany in 1965 in the same Bauwelt Fundamente series in which Jacobs's book appears..
- ³⁹ Günther Kühne, "Neue Märkte--Die Bildung zentraler Orte in Hamburg," Bauwelt 54 (1963): 1149.
- ⁴⁰ See the exchange in Bauwelt 54 (1963): 1211-12, 1385-6, and 1514.

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- ⁴¹ Hans Paul Bahrdt, Humaner Städtebau, Zeitfragen Nr. 4 (Hamburg, 1968), 9 for the acknowledgment. William H. Whyte, Jr.'s The Organization Man (Garden City, N.Y., 1957) was translated into German in 1958.
- ⁴² Klaus Borchard. "Laudatio," in Zwischen Transformation und Tradition. Städtebau in der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts. Gerd Albers zum 60. Geburtstag (Munich, 1979): 6-8.
- ⁴³ See Albers, "Erdachtes Gespräch über die städtebauliche Hochschulausbildung," in Stadtbauwelt 3, Bauwelt 55 (1964): 202. It does not come as a surprise that Kevin Lynch and Jane Jacobs received pride of place in Albers's textbook presentation of the most influential planning texts of this century. For the early period he pointed to Ebenezer Howard and Raymond Unwin on garden cities and Le Corbusier on modernist cities. For the post-1945 period Albers included, for the 1940s, Hans Bernhard Reichow's Organische Baukunst and Roland Rainer's Städtebauliche Prosa, for the 1950s Reichow's Die Autogerechte Stadt. Ein Weg aus dem Verkehrs-Chaos and Die gegliederte und aufgelockerte Stadt by Johannes Göderitz, Roland Rainer, and Hubert Hoffmann, and, for the 1960s, the works of Jacobs, Lynch, and Bahrdt. See Albers, Zur Entwicklung der Stadtplanung in Europa: Begegnungen, Einflüsse, Verflechtung (Braunschweig, 1997), and, with Alexander Papageorgios-Venetas, Stadtplanung. Entwicklungslinien 1945-1980 (Tübingen, 1984).
- ⁴⁴ Wilhelm Wortmann, "Das Verhältnis zwischen Stadt und Land" in Stadtentwicklung, Nahverkehr, Regionalplanung. Mitteilungen der deutschen Akademie für Städtebau und Landesplanung vol. 9 (1965), 33.
- ⁴⁵ Rudolf Hillebrecht, "Stadtentwicklung in den USA (Ostküste) und Stadtform," in Stadtentwicklung, Nahverkehr, Regionalplanung. Mitteilungen der deutschen Akademie für Städtebau und Landesplanung vol. 9 (1965), 15-17. Richard Michael singles out Hillebrecht's 1962 model plan for Hannover "as a benchmark of the aims and objectives of generally informed West German planning opinion in the 1950s and 1960s." "Metropolitan Development Concepts and Planning Policies in West Germany," in Town Planning Review 50 (1979): 287.
- ⁴⁶ Hillebrecht, "Städtebau heute? -- von Ebenezer Howard bis Jane Jacobs," in Bauwelt 56 (1965): 626-31, 656-8. This speech was delivered to the annual meeting of the Deutscher Akademie für Städtebau und Landesplanung in November 1965; it was widely reprinted.

The American Impact on Western Europe: Americanization and Westernization in Transatlantic Perspective Conference at the German Historical Institute Washington, D.C., March 25-27, 1999. Jeffrey M. Diefendorf The West German Debate on Urban Planning. www.ghi-dc.org/conpotweb/westernpapers/diefendorf.pdf. © Jeffrey M. Diefendorf. The West German Debate on Urban Planning. Jeffrey M. Diefendorf University of New Hampshire. Americanization in Germany has been the subject of considerable historical attention. The Urban Planning Context in Belfast: a City Between War and Peace William J.V. Neill. His publications include works on urban development questions, in particular dealing with socio-spatial segregation in the Middle East. involved in a debate over what to emphasise or de-emphasise in national identity, a debate which is at least nominally equivalent to debates on "Germanness" in 1938, 1916 or 1871.³² Central to the contestation over present German identity is what Kramer has referred to as the effort by Germans to try "to talk their way out of an unutterable past and." crimes against Jews committed in their name so that millions were emotionally touched and moved.⁵¹ The West German television series Heimat broadcast in 1984 to an equally Urban planning, design and regulation of the uses of space that focus on the physical form, economic functions, and social impacts of the urban environment and on the location of different activities within it. Learn more about urban planning in this article. Alternative Titles: city planning, town planning, urban design. Learn about German's urban development planning with project HafenCity Hamburg. Learn about the German development project known as HafenCity Hamburg, an example of urban planning. Contunico © ZDF Enterprises GmbH, Mainz See all videos for this article.