

Introduction: In Search of Welfare Planning

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Rexford Tugwell and the Emergence of Welfare Planning

In *The Principle of Planning and the Institution of Laissez Faire* (1932)¹, American economist and planner Rexford Tugwell (1891–1979, Fig. 1) criticises the ideology of laissez-faire that promoted a minimal State intervention in the market. Prevalent in the USA since the Gilded Age until the 1920s, laissez-faire was considered inefficient by Tugwell to overtake poverty and unemployment. The dramatic turn of the Great Depression further ascertained him to consider the market unable to recover itself from recession. He formulated as a response the counter principle of central planning that entails, in a context of a mixed economy, large-scale economic plans undertaken at the Federal level to unify decision-making. Tugwell was convinced that only economic planning could ensure the pursuit of the public interest, conversely to classical liberalism². Head of the Resettlement Administration from 1935 to 1937, he envisioned crop reductions to end the agricultural surplus in exchange for allocating to farmers an income³. The demographic decrease of rural population would enable relocation to suburban new towns planned with all the urban welfare amenities: civic buildings, schools, cooperative housing, green

¹ Tugwell, R. Guy. 'The Principle of Planning and the Institution of Laissez Faire'. *The American Economic Review*, vol. 22, no. 1, Supplement, Papers and Proceedings of the Forty-fourth Annual Meeting of the American Economic Association, Mar. 1932, pp. 75–92.

² Keiser, Kurt J. *The Institutional Economics of Rexford G. Tugwell*. Southwestern College Academic Press, 2014.

³ Keiser, Kurt J. 'The Political Economy of Rexford G. Tugwell'. PhD Thesis. Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado, Spring 2005.

recreation areas. Resettlement would bring in the meantime the opportunity to decongest cities through urban deconcentration that stimulated the circulation of the garden city concept among planners.

Launched in 1935, the Greenbelt towns program was settled as an experimentation of his theory, outcoming in the realisation of three planned communities, Greenbelt (Maryland, Fig. 2), Greendale (Wisconsin) and Greenhills (Ohio). Their urban design follows the principles of the neighbourhood unit formulated from circa 1923 by Clarence Perry from the Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA), which organises a community-based development clustered around a civic centre⁴. Lewis Mumford's influential essay *The Culture of Cities* in 1938, and the subsequent film *The City* (1939)⁵, directed by Ralph Steiner and Willard Van Dyke, provided a contemporary account of the program. They highlight a key moment of historical intersections between social housing, welfare and urban planning through the internationalisation of the garden city and the new town movement.

However, the United States Court of Columbia District put an early end to the Greenbelt towns program and declared it unconstitutional by the *Franklin Township v. Tugwell*⁶. Mistakenly blamed for his presumed collectivist ideology, Tugwell endured a second failure as the first director of the New York City Planning Commission in 1938⁷. Resigned by his inland experience, 'Rex the Red' as he was nicknamed became governor of Puerto Rico (1941–1946). There, he finally experimented his central planning theory through the creation of the cooperative Proportional Profit Farms and a comprehensive planning board including zoning, social housing, low-cost schools and health centres. These plans were aimed at ending poverty and dependence to inland market⁸. Above all, they unpack the intertwinement

⁴ Perry, Clarence. *The Neighbourhood Unit* [1929]. Reedition, London: Routledge/Thoemmes, 1998.

⁵ Mumford, Lewis. *The Culture of Cities*, New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1938.

⁶ 'Franklin Township in Somerset County, NJ v. Tugwell, 85 F.2d 208 (D.C. Cir. 1936)'. US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, 18 May 1936.

⁷ Namorato, Michael V., *Rexford G. Tugwell: A Biography*. Bloomsbury Academic, 1988.

⁸ Ayala-McCormick, Diego. 'Colonialism, "Efficiency" and Development: Re-examining Puerto Rico's Land Reform, 1935–1945'. *Journal of Agrarian Change* 21.2 (2021): 396–416.

of spatial planning with economic policies, an interplay first envisioned by German urban designer Walter Hegemann in the early twentieth century⁹.

Tugwell's whole life shaped the seminal idea of welfare planning by tasking the physical design of towns with carrying social and material progress¹⁰. His struggle for a planned America forms the story of a utopian aspiration conjectured from the political experience he gathered since his integration into President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Brain Trust¹¹. Tugwell's welfare planning was a partially fulfilled hope, and a historical ideal left in a state of unachievement. His thoughts were empirical, pointing out the historical emergence of planning models rather than their solely ideological formation. Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal (1960)¹² notices that Marxist theory didn't originally envision economic planning that actually emerged in the early twentieth century, a confusion due to its large-scale implementation by the USSR. Delving into the history of economic planning in non-socialist countries, French economist Jacques Sapir (2022)¹³ situates the rise of economic planning in the German warfare experience of ammunition shortage during World War I managed by industrialist Walter Rathenau at the War Raw Materials Department (*Kriegsrohstoffabteilung*) of Imperial Germany. Economic planning expands the strategies of warfare to peacetime, henceforth oriented toward welfare ends: increasing the citizens' living standards through housing, infrastructures and employment location¹⁴.

Entangling welfare and planning

The emergence of the 'Welfare State' concept originally followed another historical path. If its origins are commonly acknowledged in Otto von

⁹ Crasemann Collins, Christiane, *Werner Hegemann and the Search for Universal Urbanism*, New York: Norton, 2005.

¹⁰ Levin, Linda C. 'Mid Century Planning in San Juan, Puerto Rico: Rexford Guy Tugwell, Henry Klumb, and Design for "Modernization"'. Master's thesis, Washington University in St Louis, Department of Architecture, 2013

¹¹ Tugwell, Rexford G. 'The Diary of Rexford G. Tugwell: The New Deal, 1932–1935'. Greenwood, 1992.

¹² Myrdal, Gunnar. *Beyond the Welfare State: Economic Planning and Its International Implications*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960.

¹³ Sapir, Jacques. *Le grand retour de la planification ?* Paris: Cercle Aristote, 2022.

¹⁴ Op. cit.

Bismarck's social legislation during the 1880s in Imperial Germany, the expression was generalised with the 1942 Beveridge Report in the United Kingdom that sets the universal allocation of health and unemployment provisions¹⁵. Danish sociologist Gøsta Esping-Andersen (1994)¹⁶ provides a classification of welfare capitalism, to which great part of the scientific literature as referred to¹⁷: the liberal model of Anglo-Saxon countries, the corporatist model of continental Europe including France and Germany, and the social-democrat model characterising the Nordic countries. French Keynesian economist Christophe Ramaux (2012)¹⁸ has pointed out Esping-Andersen's contradiction in framing the extent of welfare policies. While the Danish sociologist pretends to adopt a 'broad' perspective to welfare, he merely reduces the criteria of welfare to social provisions and income support. Ramaux blames such 'narrowing' and conversely proposes a broader redefinition of welfare by four pillars expanding Beveridge's five-pillar-structure originally focused on social welfare: not only social security (health, housing and unemployment benefits) and labour regulations, but also public services (health services, education, cultural infrastructures) and economic policies (monetary, trade and industrial policies)¹⁹. Daniel Buhr and Volguart Stol (2014) have similarly criticised Esping-Andersen's inability to incorporate industrial production and State intervention within a transversal view of welfare²⁰. Historically, the Welfare State was built during the 'Great Transformation'²¹, when the post-war industrial development and the

¹⁵ Kuhnle, Stein, Sander, Anne, 'The Emergence of the Western Welfare State', In *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021 (2nd edition), pp. 73–92.

¹⁶ Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.

¹⁷ Swenarton, Mark, Avermaete, Tom, van den Heuvel, Dirk. *Architecture and the Welfare State*. London: Routledge, 2014.

¹⁸ Ramaux, Christophe, *L'État social. Pour sortir du chaos néolibéral*, Paris: Mille et une nuits, 2012.

¹⁹ Op. cit., 'L'État social ne se résume pas à la protection sociale', in Ramaux, Christophe, *L'État social*.

²⁰ Daniel Buhr and Volguart Stol, 'More than just Welfare Transfer? A review of the Scope of Esping-Andersen's Welfare Regime Typology', In *Social Policies and Society*, vol. 14, n°2, 2015, pp. 271–285.

²¹ Polanyi, Karl, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1957 [1944].

State-market balance steered the mid-century expansion of architectural and urban design into a new logic of mass production – encompassing housing, infrastructure, community, and regional planning. In this context, the methods of planification emerged as a highly effective means to address these changes²².

By omitting those multi-faceted categories, Esping-Andersen adapts welfare to liberalism by implicitly allowing the privatisation of public services and the dismissal of economic and industrial policies. Esping-Andersen's classification implies the enhancement of an engineered 'societal welfare' by Scandinavian social-democracies reluctant to launch large-scale plans as in the British town and country planning or French five-year plans. Those critiques engage a reassessment of contemporary Nordic models as social-liberal rather than social-democrat. However, Ramaux's expanded classification provides an incomplete view of those 'pillars' of welfare, as we argue that he omitted planning, both spatial and economic, as a fully-fledged 'pillar'. The global approach to public policies inherent to welfare planning appears irreducible to a criteria or pillar-based approach. This holistic outlook challenges the epistemological framework of Esping-Andersen's classification that rejects architecture and planning as potential objects of welfare. The pillar-based approach also points out the sectoral nature of Keynesian stimulus policy. According to Myrdal, economic planning designates the reorganisation of public management to coordinate cross-sectional plans of industrialisation, social engineering and modernisation²³ that this volume intends to investigate through planning regulations and physical design. Myrdal argued in 1961 that economic planning was generalising in Western countries during the post-war period as a reaction against the unefficient aspect of interventionist policies that followed uncoordinated modes of implementation. In this last perspective, unemployment was conceived separately from work and dwelling location. He foresaw planning as a substitute for the shortcomings of interventionism with the aim of making economic policies efficient. In other words, the expansion of welfare should be achieved through planning. Myrdal finally demonstrates how nearly all post-war national economies beyond socialist countries integrate partial elements of

²² Galbraith, John Kenneth, *The New Industrial State*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967.

²³ Op. cit., Myrdal, Gunnar. *Beyond the Welfare State*.

planification, whether it be the Western bloc (including Scandinavia and the USA) or in developing countries from the Global South²⁴. Conversely to Tugwell's envisionment of the spatial consequences of welfare, Keynes neither projected industrial nor spatial plans.

The term 'welfare planning' had already been used in scientific literature to explore how welfare programmes can influence physical planning²⁵ or be integrated into urban planning policies²⁶. However, these studies do not explicitly identify architectural and urban design as forms of welfare. Not only does the problematic definition of 'welfare planning' highlights the original divergence between welfare and planning, but the notion of the 'Welfare State' is also subject to varying definitions: in French, 'Etat-Providence' ('*providential State*') conveys a nearly teleological and finalist dimension exploited in the first section of this volume dedicated to the ideals of French planners. Welfare strictly means 'well-being' in Latin languages and thus runs a risk of depoliticisation when translated, even though it still conveys the goal of improving living standards. In Scandinavia, and particularly in Sweden, the concept of welfare is closely associated with the *folkhemmet*. Coined during Per Albin Hansson's tenure as Prime Minister, the *folkhemmet* envisions the nation as a familial community united by strong bonds of solidarity²⁷. In this volume, welfare does not specifically adopt any of those national versions, but rather the transnational and holistic view pointed out above.

Yet, 'planning' deserves clarification. Does it entail spatial planning and physical design or economic planning? The first section on French planners and both articles on the Sri Lankan Mahaweli Development Program and on Soviet regionalisation highlight a deliberate attempt of integrated spatial organisation of industries and housing. But they do not systematically imply each other, as 'economic planning' precisely targets political models of governance based on economic plans, over a predetermined period of time, originally to coordinate the relief of industrial production. Explored

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Erikson, Robert, 'Welfare as a Planning Goal', In *Acta Sociologica*, vol. 17, n°3, 1974, pp. 273–288.

²⁶ Wood, Elizabeth. 'Social-Welfare Planning' *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 352, 1964, pp. 119–28.

²⁷ Op.cit., Pierson, Christopher, Leimgruber, Matthieu, 'Intellectual Roots of the Welfare State', In *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State*, p. 46.

in this volume, early Danish environmental regulations decorelate policies from quantitative goals. Bakema's use of the open society concept, Danish neighbourhood planning and American single-home allotments are devoid of any economic planification. Assimilating urbanism to 'planning' misuses the language in that case, insofar as demonstrated above that 'welfare' policies originally emerged without spatial planning, but sectoral stimulation of demand through programmes of housing and infrastructures. Translations in French challenge meanings as planning could alternatively be translated by either *aménagement* (spatial layout by regional master plans), *urbanisme* or *planification économique*. Myrdal solves the problems by assimilating 'planning' to 'reorganisation' throughout a finalist conception of public management²⁸. Tugwell's inductive theory encompasses all policy fields and provides a multiscalar framework to operate programmes of welfare planning. This volume focuses on the physical and spatial extent and understands welfare planning as a cross-level entanglement of social welfare, economic development and physical design.

A Plural Approach to Welfare Planning

Planning as a welfare project transforms the missing 'pillar' of planning and physical design as transversal points of departure to investigate welfare programmes and its diverse manifestations in theories, policies and realisations encompassing all scales from the individual home to spatial planning. This volume explores the historicisation of theoretical frameworks of welfare planning and the intentionalities claimed by its historical actors, carried out through design. Situated within the epistemological paradigm of the Cambridge School of intellectual history²⁹, this anthology explores the historical impact of ideas and demonstrates how planning was conceived not merely as an alignment with social realities, but as an active force in arranging and shaping them. Are examined models and projects of regional planning (Soviet economic regionalisation, Sri Lankan Mahaweli

²⁸ Op. cit., Myrdal, Gunnar. *Beyond the Welfare State*.

²⁹ Whatmore, Richard, 'Quentin Skinner and the Relevance of Intellectual History', In Richard Whatmore et Brian Young (sous la direction de), *Companion to Intellectual History*, Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015, pp. 97–112.

Development Program, Eugène Claudius-Petit's national plan), theories and narratives (Jaap Bakema on Karl Popper's open society, Jean-François Gravier on Lewis Mumford's historic conceptualisation of technological eras), policies (environmental welfare planning in Denmark) and realisations (Danish community-planning, State-supported suburbanisation in the United States). Following the post-war expansion of Welfare States, this volume focuses on a period from the mid-century until today through case studies from Western countries, socialist countries, and the Global South. The United States and north-western Europe are closely examined for their role in shaping international models in spatial and community-planning. The contributions not only consider architecture and planning as a subsequent 'spatialisation' of welfare, but they also reverse this perspective to explore how material programming and physical modelling have contributed to the shaping of a welfare society. They stress how architectural and urban design are no longer pure symbolic meanings of governance and polity, but part of their physical content. Finally, *Planning as a welfare project* highlights the key role of individual actors – Jean-François Gravier, Eugène Claudius-Petit, Ulrik Plesner and Jaap Bakema – during a period when planning policies were dominated by men.

The articulation of urban planning to welfare should be first relied to the conceptual formation of urban planning in the early twentieth century that seminally entangled economics, sociology and urban design³⁰. While retracing this literature lies beyond the scope of this collective essay, *Planning as a welfare project* rather posits its contribution to the more recent bibliography on welfare. Anthony Jackson (1970)³¹ brought an early insight into the articulation of architecture with political agendas. Tom Nielsen and Niels Albertsen (2004)³² coined the 'welfare city' to examine how social-welfare policies shape urban development. The anthology *Architecture and the Welfare*

³⁰ Sonne, Wolfgang, 'The Birth of Urban Design History Out of the Spirit of Multidisciplinarity', In Thomine-Berrada, Alice, Bergdol, Barry, *Repenser Les limites : L'architecture à Travers l'espace, Le Temps Et Les Disciplines*, Publications de l'Institut national d'histoire de l'art, 2005.

³¹ Jackson, Anthony. *The Politics of Architecture: A History of Modern Architecture in Britain*. Architectural Press, 1970.

³² Nielsen, Tom, Albertsen, Niels. Welfare City Theory: Editorial introduction. Nordisk Arkitekturforskning. 2004;17(2).

State edited by Tom Avermaete, Mark Swenarton and Dirk van den Heuvel (2014)³³ provides the historical and epistemological framework to incorporate the transnational history of post-war Welfare States within their material and spatial manifestations in planning and architecture. This anthology acts as a departure for unpacking the intertwining of social welfare with physical design by strengthening the layers of programmatic theories and planning policies. This multiscale articulation to infrastructures and urban-spatial planning was previously brought by Michael Ryckwaert (2011)³⁴ to analyse the material and economic factors of modernisation and urbanisation in Belgium, emphasising transport infrastructures and industrial zoning. Other national case studies have followed, as welfare in the French context introduced into post-war suburban history by Kenny Cupers (2014)³⁵. Cupers was seminal in exploring the notion of ‘Géographie volontaire’ to understand the theoretical and epistemological genealogy tools of planning in twentieth century France³⁶. British research and more recently explored the topic with Nicholas Muthesius and Miles Glendinning (2017)³⁷.

Scandinavian research has favoured social aspects in intertwining welfare with architecture and everyday life. The collective volume *Swedish Modernism: Architecture, Consumption and the Welfare State* edited by Helena Mattsson and Sven-Olov Wallenstein (2010)³⁸ has analysed the role of post-war architecture and urban planning in the development of the State-market balance in the Swedish Welfare State. More recently, research on ‘Welfare landscapes’ have focused on the social and physical integration of green

³³ Swenarton, Mark, Avermaete, Tom and van den Heuvel, Dirk. *Architecture and the Welfare State*. Routledge, 2014

³⁴ Michael Ryckwaert, *Building the Economic Backbone of the Belgian Welfare State: Infrastructure, Planning and Architecture 1945–1973*, Rotterdam: nai010 publishers, 2013.

³⁵ Cupers, Kenny. *The Social Project: Housing Postwar France*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014.

³⁶ Cupers, Kenny. ‘Géographie Volontaire and the Territorial Logic of Architecture’. *Architectural Histories* 4 (2016): n. pag.

³⁷ Muthesius, Nicholas, Glendinning, Miles. *Towers for the Welfare State: An Architectural History of British Multi-storey Housing, 1945–1970*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 2017.

³⁸ Mattsson, Helena, and Sven-Olov Wallenstein. *Swedish Modernism: Architecture, Consumption and the Welfare State*. Black Dog, 2010.

areas as devices of well-being in Nordic social housing³⁹. Kirsten Marie Raahauge, Deane Simpson, Martin Søberg and Katrine Lotz (2022)⁴⁰ have elucidated how spatial changes brought by welfare shaped the citizens' everyday life after 1970. A broad range of welfare architecture studies have brought a critical approach to State-market balance, the physical shaping of citizenship and the spatialisation of consumerism. However, the historical boundaries of welfare planning received less attention. Among those, this volume examines the challenging identification of welfare with economic planification, Eastern socialism, and liberalism beyond its usual connection with social-democracy or welfare capitalism. It approaches the topic through the lens of spatial planning, a perspective that has been less studied than architecture until now. This volume also scrutinises the intertwining of community-planning and single housing with the Welfare State programmes associated with broader social and national scales. As well, the transformations of welfare planning after the immediate post-war period are investigated through the rise of environmental concerns and the critiques of architectural modernity.

Finally, post-war architecture and planning in the Global South have been increasingly explored through the eyes of decolonisation, international expertise and aid programmes⁴¹. The transnational making of planning practices was equally investigated by Patsy Healey and Robert Upton's volume (2010)⁴². Until now, however, most of the discussions on the relationship between decolonisation and the Welfare State have largely taken

³⁹ Braae, Ellen, Svava Riesto, Henriette Steiner, and Anne Tietjen. 'Welfare Landscapes: Open Spaces of Danish Post-war Housing Estates Reconfigured' In *Mass Housing of the Scandinavian Welfare States: Exploring Histories and Design Approaches*, edited by University of Edinburgh, 27–38. 2020.

⁴⁰ Raahauge, Kirsten Marie, Deane Simpson, Katrine Lotz and Martin Søberg. *Architectures of Dismantling and Restructuring: Spaces of Danish Welfare, 1970–present*. Lars Müller Publishers, 2022.

⁴¹ Łukasz Stanek, *Architecture in Global Socialism. Eastern Europe, Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020; Tom Avermaete, Serhat Karakayali et Marion von Osten, *Colonial Modern: Aesthetics of the Past – Rebellions for the Future*, London, Black Dog, 2010.

⁴² Healey, P., & Upton, R. (2010). *Crossing Borders: International Exchange and Planning Practices*. Routledge.

place outside the field of architecture⁴³. While critical approaches to the Welfare State in the Global South have recently received more attention⁴⁴, less focus has been placed on its large-scale intertwinement with developmentalist national planning, as exemplified by the article on the Mahaweli Development Program in Sri Lanka.

This positioning unpacks a series of questions explored in each article. Did planning promote growth around big cities or urban decentralisation to achieve welfare? Were planning models based on high-rise new towns or low-rise, village-like communities? How environmental concern or climatic devices were integrated into planning to ensure well-being and wealthy dwellings? Did architects and planners support a ‘collective’ model of neighbourhood design or an ‘individual’, car-based single-home sprawl? Did officials let inhabitants’ self-sufficiency and advocacy planning or carry a technocratic, top-down attitude to welfare policies? If all welfare planning models share the ultimate goal of improving living standards and the general well-being of the many, they differ in their historical and cultural contexts, institutional mechanisms, ideological foundations, and ultimately, in the failures and shortcomings of their implementation.

The first section *A French model of welfare planning?* explores the heterogeneous origins of ‘Aménagement du territoire’ (regional planning) throughout two of its most important figures. In *Eugène Claudius-Petit’s regional planning policy*, Benoît Pouvreau centres his contribution on the centrist politician Eugène Claudius-Petit who drafted in 1950 the seminal *plan national* to provide a spatial extent to the economic planification firstly launched by the Monnet Plan of 1947. Pouvreau traces back the influence of Le Corbusier, British town planning and the seminal travel to the USA in 1946 in Claudius-Petit’s conceptions of spatial planning. In *Planning is a Redemption. The Theoretical Contribution of Lewis Mumford to Jean-François*

⁴³ Ferrand, Antoinette and Mayens, Paul (directors), *Welfare State et développement : circulations globales et politiques locales (années 1920–1970)*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes. « Monde(s) », 2024/1 N° 25, p.192. URL: <<https://shs.cairn.info/revue-mondes-2024-1?lang=fr>>.

⁴⁴ Konstantina Kalfa, Stavros Alifragkis et Panayotis Tournikiotis (editors), ‘Small-scale Building Enterprise and Global Home Ownership. Beyond the Welfare State’, *ABE Journal*, vol. 22, 2022.

Gravier's Planning Model, Dorian Bianco explores the intellectual genealogy of the controversial geographer Jean-François Gravier. The article scrutinises his engagement with Lewis Mumford's theoretical framework developed in *Technics and Civilisation* (1934). It highlights how Gravier used Mumford's historical tripartition of sociotechnological ages to endorse a finalist conception of planning, based on a narrative that conceived spatial decentralisation as the fulfilment of a 'neotechnic era'. The article reassesses Gravier's position to American urbanism and his epistemological backbone in planning rather than geography. This section provides an insight into the marginalised technocratic ideals of French planners modelled on American New Deal progressivism.

The second section *The internationalization of welfare planning models. The examples of the Netherlands and the USSR* examines the international circulation of welfare planning, illustrated by two opposite models: the liberal market-state balance in the Netherlands and the socialist system in the USSR. In *Jaap Bakema and the Rise and Fall of the Dutch Welfare State* Dirk van den Heuvel explores the planning model developed by the Dutch architect Jaap Bakema, member of the post-war CIAM and Team 10. Endorsing Karl Popper's concept of open society, he envisioned through design the fulfilment of a democratic and post-national welfare state, materialised by a 'total urbanisation'. His megastructure projects are influenced by Japanese architects including Kenzo Tange and Fumihiko Maki. Bakema's ideas embody a progressive vision of the Dutch welfare state model in a moment of transition from mass production to knowledge economy. Stéphane Gaessler's article, *Regional planning in Soviet Russia and the influence of Western welfare policies (1945–1970)*, offers an introduction of Soviet architecture into welfare architecture studies. While Soviet politicians and planners rejected the notion of welfare, ideologically blamed for accommodating capitalism, they intensively examined and imported Western planning models. From 1954 onwards, regional planning underwent a transformation coinciding with a period of political reform and social liberalisation under Nikita Khrushchev. International reopening allowed architects and planners to travel and study foreign experiences, contributing to the emergence of the Soviet city based on the *Mikrorajon* (Soviet Neighbourhood Unit) and energetic and economic decentralisation.

Gaessler's article highlights the gap between geopolitical clash and the meantime cooperation around technical expertise.

The third section *The challenges of environmental welfare planning* explores environmental policies and planning programmes as goals of welfare from the 1960s to the 1980s, placing them in perspective between the Global North and The Global South. Both articles challenge the centrality of 1970s Western grassroots activism to address environmental and climatic concerns. Anne Brædder and Mikkel Thelle's article *Abstract Future or Polluted Presence? Environment, Welfare, and Planning in Denmark* deals with the emergence of environmental concerns in 1960s Danish politics. The post-war period is associated with economic growth and the rise of a welfare society, simultaneously broadly affecting the environment through the pollution of water, air, plants, animals and soils. The article takes a departure in the concepts of 'environing' and environment as a 'potential area of government policy', as put by historians Paul Warde, Sverker Sörlin and Libby Robin. This highlights how Danish environmental policies were an incremental process since the 1950s, leading to the creation of the first Danish ministry and legislation for the environment (1973) with deep consequences for welfare planning. Dorian Bianco's article *Western-based or Decolonised Welfare Planning? Ulrik Plesner's Role in Town Design for the Mahaweli Development Programme in Sri Lanka (1982–1987)* seeks to unpack the ambiguities of economic development in a context of decolonisation. It focuses on the narrative and the role of Danish architect Ulrik Plesner (1930–2016) within the Mahaweli Architectural Unit, a department of the Mahaweli Development Programme, where he assisted with the architects Nihal Perera, Lene Funch and Dan Wajnman the design of twelve new towns claimed to be based on vernacular architecture. The article scrutinises Plesner's engagement through the intertwinement of the political and economic rationale underpinning the inflow of Western technical expertise, alongside the bottom-up and incremental approach to design based on the settlers' needs. Both articles highlight divergent ends of environmentalist welfare planning. Whereas in Denmark, a growing awareness of protecting natural resources emerges as the result of a developed and industrialised country, in Sri Lanka, the environment is primarily viewed as an instrument of agricultural productivity within a developmentalist framework.

Does community-planning better achieve a welfare society than single housing? Mumford conceived once the garden city, that historically contributed to neighbourhood design, as the answer to ‘metropolis’⁴⁵, which is today associated with the urban sprawl triggered by suburban detached homes. The last section *Smaller scales of welfare planning: The neighbourhood and the single-family home* investigates the smaller scales of the welfare society, both at the level of neighbourhood communities and individual homes. In twentieth-century Denmark, social housing emerged alongside the rise of the welfare state and established new standards of urban and societal living. Anne Corlin and Mikkel Høghøj’s article *Designing social life: visions for ‘community’ in Danish social housing architecture* examines Danish welfare architecture by investigating three housing estates: Grantofte (1967–1970), Gadekæret (1975–1979), and the House of Generations (2020), all located in the Copenhagen region. Those three case studies focus on key moments of social housing history. They highlight how architectural design intended to shape social functionings, as well as the significance of communal spaces in fostering community cohesion. In *The Suburban Ideal: A Historical Model of Planning for the Mixed Economy of Welfare*, Élodie Bitsindou attacks from the rear the common idea that suburban individual homes would be a failure of welfare housing. Parts of the post-war single-home allotment in American suburbs were actually subsidised and supported by the public authorities, a Keynesian and volitional impulse dating back to the 1930s New Deal era and the establishment of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) in 1934. The FHA archives expressed a social project based on the democratisation of the individual home, whose ideal refers to the transatlantic genealogy of the villa.

⁴⁵ Mumford, Lewis. ‘Suburbia-and beyond’. In *The City in History*. Harcourt, Brace and World, 1961.



Fig. 1. Rexford Tugwell, © Wikimedia Commons

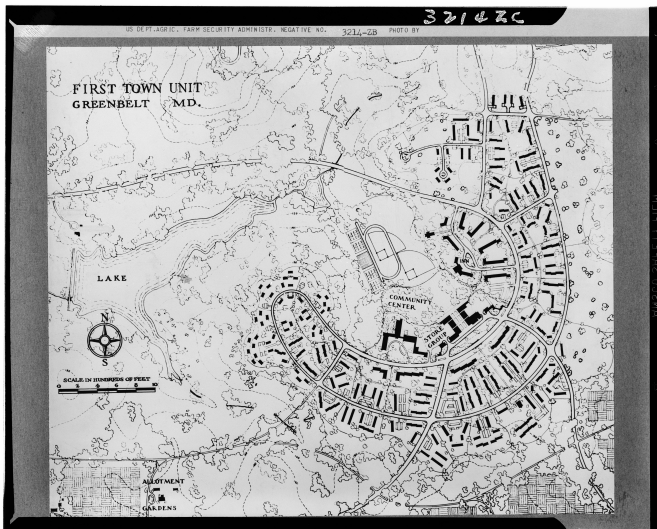


Fig. 2. Map of first town unit at Greenbelt, Maryland, Library of Congress