

the loss of balance of nature, has turned the yearly affair of sightseeing and recreation into an indispensable part of daily life. Besides, the increase in income and leisure as well as the improved means of transportation have provided a spur to the growing trend, bringing about a tremendous increase in tourists. This is the case in contemporary China and if local tourism can be promoted at the same time, capital will be accumulated very soon with which more facilities can be added. But since the requirement, of foreign tourists are quite different from those of local tourists, two different kinds of design should be taken into consideration so as to accommodate both groups of tourists.

Last of all, the conservation of landscapes is especially important in Hainandao because one of its intrinsic attraction is the naturalness and the lack of pollution. One should always bear in mind that those natural and cultural heritages have been created over the millennia and cannot be made by the human efforts of our time. Once destroyed, it would take a long time to recover or at the worst it may never recover at all.

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香港地理學會

HONG KONG GEOGRAPHICAL ASSOCIATION

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EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

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Dr. Anthony Yeh
University of Hong Kong

The Hong Kong Geographer is the newsletter of the Hong Kong Geographical Association. It serves as a means for relaying news of the Association's activities to its members, publicizing the activities of other institutions and individuals relating to the geography of Hong Kong and its region, and publishing feature articles on topics of interest to members of the Association.

Contributions to the Hong Kong Geographer are welcome. The Editorial Committee particularly encourages articles concerned with any of the following:

- *Geographical education: e.g., teaching methods, curriculum, experiences in the classroom
- *Application of geographical knowledge to practical settings
- *The role of geographers in policy making

Manuscripts should be typewritten and ordinarily should not exceed 2000 words. Submit manuscripts to the Editorial Committee, c/o Dr. Bruce Taylor, Department of Geography, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, New Territories, Hong Kong.

Opinions expressed in feature articles published in the Hong Kong Geographer are those of the writer and do not represent the views of the Hong Kong Geographical Association, its officers, or the Editorial Committee of the Hong Kong Geographer.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

New Editorial Committee

With this issue a new Editorial Committee takes over responsibility for producing the Hong Kong Geographer. Its members are listed on the inside front cover.

The Committee wishes to express its appreciation to Dr. David K.Y. Chu, Mr. Ng Yen Tak, and Dr. Hsu Sheng I, the previous editors of the Hong Kong Geographer, for their work over the past three years in initiating and establishing the newsletter.

Executive Committee Membership for 1985-86

The Association is pleased to announce the membership of its Executive Committee for 1985-86:

(a) Office Holders

Chairman: Dr. K.Y. Wong (The Chinese Univ. of H.K.)
Vice-Chairman: Mr. Edward S.W. Woo (St. Paul's Co-Educational College)
Hon. Secretary: Dr. Bruce Taylor (The Chinese Univ. of H.K.)
Hon. Treasurer: Dr. Julian C.Y. Wong (The Chinese Univ. of H.K.)

(b) Elected Members

Dr. Larry C.H. Chow (Hong Kong Baptist College)
Mr. H.L. Law (Geography Section, Education Dept.)
Dr. Y. Leung (The Chinese Univ. of Hong Kong)
Ms. Shirley K.F. Li (Clementi Middle School)
Dr. Anthony G.O. Yeh (University of Hong Kong)

(c) Members Nominated by Institutions

Dr. R.D. Hill (University of Hong Kong)
Dr. K.C. Lam (The Chinese Univ. of Hong Kong)
Mr. W.P. Lam (Sir Robert Black College of Education)
Dr. S.M. Li (Hong Kong Baptist College)

(d) Co-opted Members

Dr. Victor F.S. Sit (University of Hong Kong)
Mr. K.Y. To (Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Chang Ming Thien College)

Constitutional Amendment

At the 15th Annual General Meeting held on March 2, 1985, an amendment to Regulation 9 of the HKGA Constitution was approved by the members present and voting. Subject to the approval of the Societies Registration Office, Royal Hong Kong Police, Regulation 9 will now read as follows (the added wording is underlined):

"One representative from each of the universities and from Baptist College, and one representative from one of the three Colleges of Education on rotation, shall be invited annually to serve on the Executive Committee, and shall be offered Honorary Membership. By a two-thirds majority, the Executive Committee may from time to time elect at a meeting duly called for the purpose representative with Honorary Membership from other relevant institutions to serve on the Executive Committee."

Microcomputer Group

Dr. Anthony Yeh and Dr. K.C. Lam are organizing a micro-computer user's group within the Association. The purpose of the group is to promote the use of microcomputers in geographical teaching and research in secondary schools and post-secondary institutions, and to exchange experiences in using microcomputers in teaching and research.

At its initial stage, HKGA members who have experience in microcomputer programming are invited to join the organising committee to discuss future directions and activities. It is hoped that short introductory courses on the use of microcomputers can be organised in the future for interested HKGA members.

Members who are interested in joining the organising committee or in participating in the future activities of the Microcomputer Group should fill in and return the reply slip found on the inside back cover of this issue of the Hong Kong Geographer. Anyone with questions about the activities and functions of the group should also feel free to contact the convenors, Dr. Anthony Yeh (tel. 5-8592721) and Dr. K.C. Lam (tel. 0-6352475).

Missing Members

Several members of the Association are having their publications returned by the Post Office. If any HKGA members can supply a correspondence address for any of the following people, please contact Dr. Julian C.Y. Wong (tel. 0-6352469).

Mr. Cheung Kam Hon
Mrs. Cheng Lau Hing Yim, Lisa
Mr. Ip Shu Kuen
Mrs. Ma Lau Yuen Ki

Article on "Status of Geography in Hong Kong"

An article on the status of geography in Hong Kong will be published in a 1986 issue of the prestigious American journal Professional Geographer as part of its regular feature "Status of Geography in Foreign Countries". Dr. Bruce Taylor, Hon. Secretary of the HKGA, will take charge of compiling the article on behalf of the Association.

Members who wish to contribute information or viewpoints to this article are welcome to contact Dr. Taylor (tel. 0-6352442).

Activities Survey

To aid the Executive Committee in developing a programme of activities for the Association which best serves the needs of its members, a survey is being conducted of members'

preferences with respect to several different classes of possible activities. The survey form is found on a separate sheet inserted into the center of this issue.

All members are asked to fill out this survey and return it to the Hon. Secretary, Hong Kong Geographical Association, Tsim Sha Tsui Post Office, P.O. Box 97553, Kowloon. The results will be reported in the next issue of the Hong Kong Geographer.

Extramural Studies Course

The Association will offer its course entitled "The New Junior Secondary Geography Curriculum for School Teachers" for the second time this coming fall, in cooperation with the Extramural Studies Department of the University of Hong Kong. Mr. W.P. Lam (Sir Robert Black College of Education) will serve as convenor for the course, which will begin at the end of September.

Both members and non-members of the Association are welcome to take part in this course. For enrollment information, contact the HKU Extramural Studies Department Town Centre (tel. 5-450021).

FEATURE ARTICLE

THOUGHTS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GEOGRAPHY AND PLANNING

Bruce Taylor

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Introduction

In Hong Kong a close connection exists in a number of ways between the two fields of geography and planning. Planning-related subjects appear on secondary school geography syllabuses, sometimes under headings such as "urban problems" (in fact, one local planner has commented that the revised HKCEE syllabus touches on most of the topics covered in the professional examinations of the Royal Town Planning Institute). At the two universities and at Baptist College undergraduate courses in urban and regional planning are taught by geographers. Professionally, a number of geographers work in the Town Planning Division of the Hong Kong Government, or in other Government departments in some planning capacity; others play an active role in the local professional planning institute. It is easy in these circumstances to take for granted that this relationship exists as part of the "natural order of things", owing to some unique sense of shared interest existing between geographers and planners.

Yet a close relationship between geography and planning does not exist everywhere in the world. Indeed, a look at the historical development of the planning profession in Western societies suggests that geographers are relative newcomers to planning: the field has its roots in architecture, landscape design, engineering, and social work. Where geographers have moved successfully into planning, many of them do not attempt to forge strong linkages between the two disciplines; instead, they tend to neglect their association with geography (Harrison and Larsen, 1977). The field of planning is itself diverse, attracting people from a wide range of backgrounds, and its extensive professional literature covers many topics which are far removed from the usual subjects of geographical study.

So is it only due to historical accident that planning and geography have close ties in Hong Kong? I suggest in this article that geographers here and elsewhere have a number of strengths which they bring to the practice of planning, but that these are counter balanced by areas of weakness where geographers often have little knowledge, or where the "geographical point of view" or ideology (see Gould, 1985) is itself at odds with what most planners would believe. The two sub-sections which follow discuss first the areas of strength, and then the weaknesses.

Areas of Strength

1) Concern with space. Land-use planners (the pre-dominant group in Hong Kong) are interested in determining the appropriate use of land resources which best supports the activities carried out by people living in a city or region. Unlike other resources, such as labour and capital, plots of land occupy unique points in space. Uses and users of land also are arranged in spatial patterns, which planners seek to influence or control through their actions. It can be argued, then, that the subject of greatest interest to our local planners is basically a geographical one, since the analysis of spatial distributions (which would include distributions of urban/regional land uses) is central to the field of geography. Geographer/planner Peter Hall (1975) has gone so far as to assert that urban and regional planning is actually human geography under another name, applied for problem-solving purposes (a view which many planners would dispute, as Hall himself realizes).

2) Concern with interrelationships. Besides noting the spatial patterns of individual land uses, geographers recognize that interrelationships exist among the elements which make up the total urban or regional system. In Hong Kong, the need for people to interact results in physical movement of travelers from place to place and in less tangible flows of communication, while the need to move products creates goods traffic along the roadways and through the port. All of these interactions require the proper facilities to support them, and it is no accident that planners charged with providing

these facilities place great importance on understanding the nature of interrelationships among components of the urban system (see McLaughlin, 1969) -- a task to which geographers are quite well suited.

3) Concept of "region" in geography. There are many ways in which the long geographical tradition of regional analysis can be useful in planning. For instance, it is often difficult to define suitable regions for planning purposes (where are the "proper" boundaries of the Pearl River Delta region?), and geographical studies which identify the distinguishing traits of a region can be most helpful in the task of drawing regional boundaries. Likewise, planners concerned with promoting growth in a backward area could use the methods of economic geographers and regional scientists to assure themselves that a new town ("growth centre") or a new industry introduced into the area would indeed have a stimulating effect on the local economy. To solve such problems as these geographers can call upon their understanding of linkages between cities or regions and their hinterlands.

4) Physical knowledge of the earth. Many development proposals have potential adverse impacts on the natural environment, while others may prove infeasible owing to the topography, geologic conditions, soil characteristics, or drainage conditions occurring at the sites planned for them. Planners often do not have the background needed to make judgments on these factors, and knowledge of the "carrying capacity" of the land and the relative fragility of the ecosystem represents an important contribution to the practice of planning from physical and environmental geographers.

5) Technical skills. Planners are making increasing use of tools and methods derived from geography. For instance, aerial photography and remote sensing can be important tools for planning purposes -- surveying traffic in cities and determining crop patterns in agricultural regions, to name but two examples. Other planners employ quantitative modeling techniques used in urban geography to help make a systematic evaluation of suggested alternative

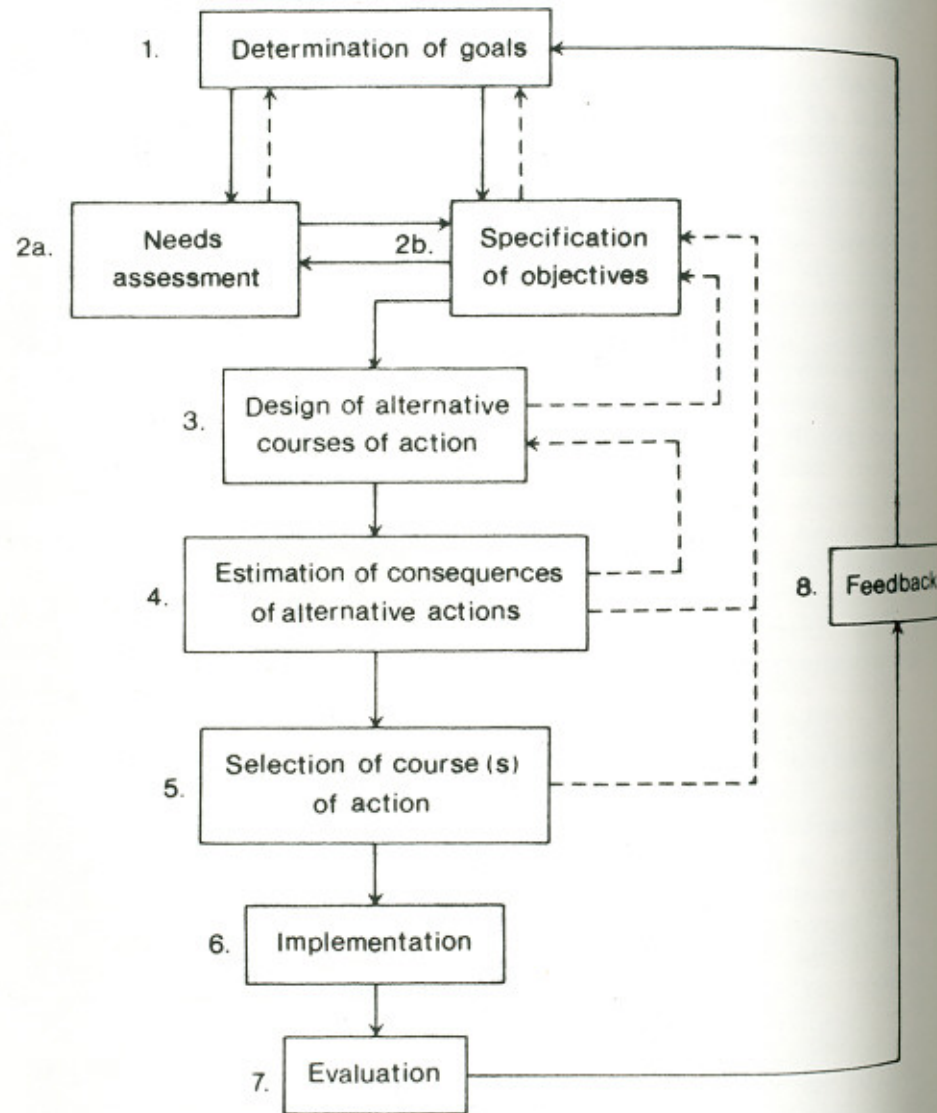
plans. The Hong Kong Government's programme of long-term development planning (Pryor, 1985) used a computerized urban model in carrying out such work.

Areas of Weakness

1) Spatial determinism. A concern with space was listed above as a strength which geographers bring to the field of planning. However, it is easy to take this concern to an extreme and argue that so-called "spatial processes" in themselves are the most significant determinants of the form of cities and regions. (An elementary example might be the process of "invasion and succession" suggested long ago by Burgess). This spatially deterministic view ignores the fact that spatial structure becomes established as a result of economic and political activities which ultimately create the patterns of land use which we can observe in space. There is no question that some physical attributes of space, such as topography, have a strong influence on the form of cities (note, for instance, the narrow band of urbanization along the north shore of Hong Kong Island). But the presence of new towns in Hong Kong, for instance, or suburbs clustered around the central cities of the United States, is best explained in terms of economic or political considerations -- a fact that is not always recognized or appreciated by geographers.

2) The planning process. Geographers base their claim of relevance to the planning field on their knowledge of substantive topics, like those listed above. But besides this "substantive theory", as it is termed by Faludi (1973), there is also a body of "procedural theory" concerning the way in which planners operate and the process by which they influence development decisions, and this information is much less well known among geographers. Figure 1 illustrates the stages of the "rational planning model", one conception of the planning process which many planners hold as an ideal. The rational model reflects a belief that planning decisions should be taken as a consequence of a careful process of deliberation in which many alternative plans are developed and evaluated before a choice is made. Other planners, convinced that the model is unachievable in practice or that

Fig. 1
IDEALIZED FLOW OF STEPS IN
THE RATIONAL PLANNING MODEL



it acts to reinforce the status quo favored by powerful interests, have developed other conceptions of the planning process.

3) Decision-making environment. Planning, like any other function of government, does not take place in a vacuum. Planners work within complex governmental systems where the lines of authority are often confused (according to Bristow (1984), this is especially true of Hong Kong), and to be effective, planners must understand the workings of their governmental setting. Moreover, government organizations themselves are influenced by outside decision-makers, such as the business community, pressure groups and the public at large. Many geographers have little understanding of these political and administrative arrangements, which profoundly influence the conduct of urban and regional planning.

4) Distributional effects. Carrying out a plan involves to some extent the redistribution of some of society's limited resources (land, capital, human efforts), and this may act to either reinforce or contradict the existing distribution of these resources among people and social groups. Geographers have never made the study of resource distribution in society a focal point of the discipline, although recent movements towards "welfare geography" (e.g., Smith, 1977) represent welcome advances.

5) Practical problem-solving ability. Despite the wish of geographers to become more "policy relevant", much geography is still taught in theoretical terms, and little attention is paid to the "nuts and bolts" stages of getting theoretical concepts implemented (Berry, 1972). Some of the skills required to solve the problems which crop up during the implementation of plans are human-centered, involving techniques of bargaining, negotiation, and reaching acceptable compromises. Others are financial, dealing with the assessment of the economic feasibility of proposed developments, while still others may be legal or political in nature. Geographers have yet to make a significant mark in many of these fields, although they are certainly not alone in this -- most other specialists are equally untrained

in the tools of problem-solving, and perhaps many such skills can only be learned on the job.

Conclusion

The strengths listed above are considerable, and indicate that especially in a technical sense geographers have a good deal to contribute to planning. The weaknesses are also significant, but they tend to center around planning's political and policy-analytic components rather than its technical side. This suggests that geographers in Hong Kong may have established close connections with planning because locally planning is viewed largely as a technical field rather than a political one. Important policy decisions concerning Hong Kong's development are made by senior civil servants, not by planners, and the Western concept of involving the public and organized interest groups in the planning process has not (yet) caught on in Hong Kong.

In view of the changes expected in the decision-making process in Hong Kong before 1997, geographers who teach planning-related subjects may wish to instill in their students the recognition that planning is more than a technical discipline, but a field that includes politics, economics, and perhaps even a strong dose of philosophy in its makeup. Though we cannot devote our full energy to training planners under another name, we can make sure that geography students with an interest in the subject are fully aware of the diversity and the complexity evident in the planning field.

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