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BULLETIN 17
DECEMBER 1999

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR URBAN RESEARCH AND ACTION

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL MEETING 1999 IN GLASGOW AND DURHAM

INURA Bulletin 17
DECEMBER 1999

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Front cover
Marching with banners at the Durham Miners' Gala.
The 'Big Meeting' still takes place each July, even though all the mines
on the Durham Coalfield have now closed. Today it is a celebration of
the labour movement and working-class solidarity - and serves as
a reminder of historic struggles.

Foreword: happy memories and future prospects.

This issue of the INURA Bulletin serves as a record of this year's Annual
Meeting in Glasgow and Durham, which centred on the theme
'Regeneration and Renewal'. The Bulletin also presents news about INURA
developments and activities. In addition we look ahead to the next Annual
Meeting which will be held in Brussels in May 2000.

We were delighted that everything went well this year and we have
wonderful memories of the presentations, debates and comradeship which
we shared in Glasgow and Durham. Judging by the comments that
participants made afterwards there was a strong feeling that the event was
a success on many different levels, and that INURA remains interesting and
lively - and has much potential for future development and growth.

Our favourite and abiding memories include: the initial arrivals at the
rendezvous, The Old Print Works pub in Glasgow; Dragan's presentations
of art and life in Novi Sad in Yugoslavia; visits to projects in Newcastle; the
arrival of the long-awaited Exodus group; the party, Philipp's violin, Chris's
miners songs and rendition of Shakespeare; and, of course, the beauty of
Durham. And...the sun shone.

It was particularly good to see, once again, that new members to the
Network were welcomed and quickly became part of things. There was also
a real commitment to building up INURA, to establish more effective
administration and promote common projects. The Annual Meetings are
great and offer an opportunity to share our experiences and talk about our
activities - but we could do much more together.

A few apologies might be in order. In drawing together the material for
this Bulletin we have had to edit some contributions and rely on our
memories for others. We hope we haven't made too many errors. In
addition, one of us (Fred) still feels a bit guilty about losing most of the
people who came on the guided walk round Durham; sorry about that -
I still don't know how that happened.

We now pass the 'INURA torch' to our Belgian friends and look forward to
meeting everyone again in Brussels next year.
With best wishes to everyone involved in INURA.

Louanne Tranchell
Fred Robinson
(INURA 99 Organisers)

Proceedings of INURA 99: Regeneration and Renewal

Glasgow

The Annual Meeting began in Glasgow, the UK City of Architecture and Design 1999. Participants stayed in Baird Hall, an Art Deco building which was once the most modern hotel in the city, and is now one of Strathclyde University's halls of residence. Visits included the Lighthouse, Glasgow's new Centre of Architecture, Design and the City, which celebrates the work of architects Mackintosh and 'Greek Thomson'; and the 'Homes for the Future' exhibition near Glasgow Green.

George Aitken of Strathclyde European Partnership (SEP), found the good location for this year's 'rendezvous', organised the 'safari' throughout Glasgow on the Sunday, and hosted the first 'session' the following morning, in the conference suite of the SEP offices. He is the Programme Manager (Tourism & Cultural Industries) and he introduced the Impact of European Objective 2 Structural Funds in Glasgow and Western Scotland. This is a complex programme of Regeneration projects across the region, which also includes eligible sites and areas of need in Glasgow.

Roddy Byers spoke to us about the Glasgow Alliance, which was established in 1998 as a Company Limited by Guarantee, with Members from the City Council, the Development Agency, Health Board, Scottish Office, Scottish Homes, and the Voluntary and Business sectors. This is a partnership body aiming to undertake and support a comprehensive approach to regeneration.
The future is likely to be affected by the new Scottish Parliament, and the EU new structural fund regulations (which were yet to be announced).

Durham

The accommodation here was in St Chad's College between the river and Cathedral. We had very pleasant walks around both, as well as a formal tour of this Norman Cathedral, the seat of the Prince Bishops. The first part was built between 1093-1133, not long after the 'Norman Conquest'.

A variety of themes were covered in the papers presented, which stimulated wide-ranging discussion about the processes and politics of urban development and change; who gains, who loses, who is it for.

Urban renewal, Sustainability and Participation the case of 'Contratti di quartiere'
Alfredo Alietti and Dario Padovan (Dept. Sociology/Univ. Padua Italy)

At last, after years of proposals, reflections, and back-tracking, a national programme has been launched aimed at regenerating and renewing declining urban areas in Italy. These 'neighbourhood agreements', Contratti di quartiere, have emulated the French model in that they focus on strategies for up-grading urban areas; strategies which are built around urban architectural and social policies. Projects are selected by a National Committee on the basis of specific criteria, the most important of which are:
>the way in which the intervention will be carried out (bottom-up);
>ensuring that improvements can be sustained over the long term.
These Contratti di quartiere have been very successful and have served to reveal a widely felt need for a new urban planning policy. Until now, no policy has been able to overcome the enormous political hurdles or to find adequate funds for certain types of structural interventions. Today these projects are only in the initial stages of implementation; it is as yet, impossible to critically analyse the processes which initially determined the strategic choices that were made within each project. Most of them, both in the north and the south, are concerned with council/public housing and housing estates.

Over the past ten years living conditions in these areas have declined markedly. The process of restructuring the Italian Welfare State, and the problems of work and unemployment, especially in Southern Italy, have led to a concentration in these areas of individuals at risk of being marginalised. It is also very important to note that in Italy, for years, public housing construction has been subject to personal interests and corruption. This has created a vicious circle which combines the lack of structural maintenance of buildings with the lack of effective social planning.

Another element that makes the Italian case atypical from the situation in other European countries is that there is no single spatial model of concentration and segregation, as for example in the French banlieus or British inner cities. Run-down areas exist both in the periphery and inside the so-called centri storici, historical town centres. Italian public housing policy is a combination of projects set up during the Fascist period and other housing projects set up during the post-war economic boom (1960s and early 1970s). Given that the situation is unique, it is difficult to predict and construct, a priori, an adequate or exhaustive model. Even when analysing the situation at a very general level the

marked difference between the Italian regions cannot be ignored. In the South, both the characteristics and the phenomenology of social marginalisation are very different from the North. For example, in Milan it is frequently the elderly on low incomes who are in public housing, while in the South, in Naples, there are large families, with the main wage-earner who is either unemployed or 'employed' in the informal economy.

The emergence of the problem of the urban periphery and of urban areas in crisis in the 1990s

Over the past decade, housing and social conditions in public housing areas on the periphery of towns have progressively worsened. One of the main causes of such decline, at least in Northern Italy, is that the resident population is ageing. Younger generations tend to leave these areas, for a variety of reasons: to avoid being stigmatised because of their origins; to avoid becoming involved in juvenile delinquency or petty crime; to seek work outside the restricted local labour market; to find new paths of social mobility. Most of the remaining residents are elderly families who have no intention of leaving the area, or of abandoning the social relationships that they have built up over the years and which offer them a degree of trust and emotional security.

Other factors, including housing allocation policies, have aggravated the problems of living in such areas. The public institutions, whose task it is to chose tenants, have been assigning this housing to people with social, economic, and health problems. In addition many council flats have been allocated to immigrant workers from other countries. This has tended to create a social dynamic that has triggered a high level of conflict.

We should stress that the creation and formation of the marginalised areas is a new experience for Italy. Not even during post World War II mass migration from the impoverished South to the industrialised North of the country were large urban 'ghettos' formed like those in crisis today in the large metropolitan areas. At the time, urban planning policies always managed to avoid concentrating homogeneous populations and social groups in specific areas of the town or city.

The 'Neighbourhood Agreement'

Set up in 1998 by the *Comitato Edilizia Residenziale del Ministero dei Lavori pubblici* (Housing Construction Committee of the Ministry of Public Works) these 'neighbourhood agreements' provide new ways of breaking with the old style of urban policy decision making. They offer:
- the introduction of urban ecology concepts and sustainable planning in the areas of construction/building and social and environmental development

- closer integration between urban planning tools and methods, and those for planning and managing policies and interventions(services, gas/electricity supply, refuse collection, access, transfers) which affect the way in which urban areas evolve
- provision for greater involvement of more institutional and economic actors, of representatives of civil society, residents groups, individuals and Union members, in the planning processes for urban renewal policies.

Such participation is crucial if these 'neighbourhood agreements' are to be implemented. An important debate is developing around the concept of 'participation' and the various experiments that it has inspired. We believe that the challenge has, so far, been insufficiently explored, not only at the theoretical, but also at the practical level. Invoking participation and arguing that the 'neighbourhood agreement' is a 'participatory project' often only hides the lack of real, effective participation by those involved in council/public housing.

Participation should not merely mean social service intervention, the idea of 'assisting'the weaker strata of the population; neither should it simply mean making local recreation areas available. Participation should mean a long and complex process at the end of which those involved can, publicly and freely, discuss, argue, mediate and negotiate solutions which fit their felt needs, their values and their interests.

David Rudlin & Nicholas Falk

Collaborative Planning - a way forward for London
Michael Parkes (London)

The Planning and development processes have undoubtedly failed to deliver on many of the big points of importance to London and Londoners eg Kings Cross Railway Lands (blighted for 12 years); London Bridge City Phases 2-4 (empty for 15 years); Guinness site (derelict for 10 years) and so on.

In my opinion the future for Planning in London has to:

Recognise the social and political implications as well as the economic and environmental implications of new development

Recognise consumer interests in the production of good planning and development

Recognise that many inner city Local Planning Authorities are no longer trusted by whole swathes of their electorate, to have the same agenda as they have

Recognise that there is huge suspicion about Councils 'leading' (and even worse, Quangos leading)

Recognise that the present structure of national, regional and local, guidance and regulation is much less in need of review, than local delivery of good development. The future lies in how we define 'local delivery' and 'good development'.

Inner London Boroughs need more planning and decision-making resources to deal with strong development pressures; that includes more high quality planning staff and local Councillors to secure local delivery of good development. The planning process needs to be based on collaborative planning, genuine partnership and community participation. Planning has to be a three-way process involving: public-private-local community organisations and interests.

The planning process should mediate and facilitate. Local people must be involved from the outset. and there has to be something in it for them. Local community interests need independent and experienced technical aid in order to engage constructively in planning processes.

London has to counter the trend towards polarisation. It requires services and labour of all kinds and should sustain its rich diversity. That means mixed uses and tenures, supported by the planning process.

Symbolic and Aesthetic Forms of the Built Environment, and Social and Political Meanings
Marvi Maggio

This paper discusses the relationship between art and politics; and between the form of the built environment and social change. Art is an expression of the values and ideas of a society, and connects with power and exclusion (through what is produced, how it is produced and who produces it). For urban design and architecture, the connections between form, function, values and ideas of society are even stronger. The built environment is an expression of the values, functions and ideas of the society, it is more than just appearances.

The creation of a built environment which represents and fosters relations founded on social justice and equity is obstructed by a number of factors:
-the power of the market for art - closed, discriminatory, elitist
-the functioning of the real estate market - which produces homogeneity through mass production; segregation; decay; an urban aesthetic dedicated to institutional and economic power or commercial objectives; and forms which cover a cultural emptiness
-the power of the dominant ruling class to control art and the values expressed in it
-feasibility - difficulties in securing funding to produce alternative forms.

When we look at places produced in the past, their strong personality or spirit of place may be evident. They can have the capacity to uplift or amaze. But it needs to be borne in mind that:
-they were socially produced through a complex of social, economic and institutional relations; they were not simply the product of an architect or ruler - so they can have a variety of meanings
-social use changes spaces and produces spaces - giving new meanings, new uses
-there are marginal spaces, not controlled; these can become sites for social change.

Sometimes we misunderstand spaces because the social relations that produced them have gone, and we may be unaware of them - so we can appreciate the aesthetic, without bearing, or knowing about, their social costs.
Some historic centres (even Venice) are used as theme parks. The cultural emptiness of, for example, shopping malls can spread into the existing built environment.

Many urban social movements have marked their presence through coloured squatted buildings and murals, and through the use of public spaces with demonstrations, concerts, raves and land occupations. These movements reuse existing buildings and spaces - giving them new meanings.

What kind of aesthetic form is implied or demonstrated by squatting and other movements involving the built environment? Which types of symbolic forms and spaces are now representing the right to the city and claims for a society able to overcome discrimination and social injustice? Can we identify a new design for our built environment (and more participatory ways to produce it), an alternative in opposition to the city produced by global capitalism and the market?

Demographic Developments in Eastern Germany
Karl - Otto Richter (UCEF, Rostock, Germany)

Major demographic changes have taken place in Eastern Germany since re-unification in 1990. The birth rate has fallen dramatically, and there has been substantial net out-migration, principally to Western Germany.

The large and medium sized cities are also undergoing rapid suburbanisation. It is forecast (by UCEF) that these trends will continue, leading to further population decline and an ageing population structure in the east.

Demographic change will have major consequences for urban planning and economic development, especially in relation to the locally-oriented service sector.

Politics and Possibilities:
Re-living the Suburban Paradox in the New Toronto
Stefan Kipfer and Karen Wirsig (York University, Toronto)

Prevalent urban renewal strategies are selective in their geographical focus. In Toronto, "revitalisation" is a code word to expand downtown citadel spaces: condominiums, office towers, upscale lofts, waterfront playgrounds, entertainment complexes, trendy cafes and restaurant strips, and infrastructure for the film, communications and business services industries. Strategies and discourses of revitalisation largely bypass the city's postwar inner suburbs - New York, Scarborough, and Etobicoke. Outgrown by Toronto's sprawling ring of outer suburbs, the postwar suburbs have often been captured unevenly with images of decline and stagnation, hostile to growth and reinvestment.

Our focus on the old suburbs is motivated firstly, by a desire to renew progressive political projects in the newly amalgamated City of Toronto. Given that the postwar suburbs account for about 60% of Toronto's 2.3 million residents, developing an alternative to current political priorities in the Mega-City is only possible with a neighbourhood-connected, City-wide force that reaches deep into the postwar suburbs. Indeed, without a change in the municipal dynamics in the City's old suburbs, the future of left urban politics in Toronto will be relegated to a down-town centred 'anti-suburban', and defensive resistance to the emerging political realities in the new Toronto. Secondly, our focus on Toronto's postwar suburbs also attempts to address limitations in the literature. Much recent debate in critical urban studies has bypassed the postwar suburbs to focus either on sprawl, governance and restructuring in the "exurbs", or gentrification, redevelopment and social conflict in inner cities.

The suburbs are seen as uniform social worlds of white middle-class, patriarchal bedroom communities that express the 'anti-urban' spatial forms of the suburbs: low population density, the predominance of detached, single-family housing, the physical segregation of residence from workplaces, and a glaring absence of public space. Such images of the suburbs are not false insofar as they do capture important dimensions of lived suburban experience. However, homogenising images of the suburbs come dangerously close to the persistent myth of suburbia as a bourgeois utopia (Robert Fishman). The suburban myth makes it easy to reproduce the real and imagined boundaries between 'the suburbs' and the 'inner city' and thus block any prospect of forming new, progressive political forces in and beyond the postwar suburbs.

The state of the postwar suburbs in Toronto is paradoxical, shaped as it is by ongoing restructuring and differentiation AND a persistence of conventional municipal property politics. Toronto's old suburbs no longer simply reflect the ideal of the gendered white middle class residential refuge from 'the city'. Already in the 1970's, studies catalogued the changing social composition and economic function of the suburbs that resulted from industrial deconcentration and metropolitan government policies to decentralise public housing and expand public transit. Twenty years later, the latest census data reflect decades of industrial restructuring, economic stagnation, booming exurbanisation, and immigration from non-European countries. The postwar suburbs still differ significantly from the older parts of Toronto in terms of homeownership, reliance on public transit and urban form (density, housing stock). However, they are now as much or even more socially differentiated than the inner city. Suburban areas with high levels of rental and public housing, unemployment and poverty, transit and welfare dependency, and recent immigration from non-European countries have more in common with equivalent downtown neighbourhoods than with more established middle and upper-class suburban communities.

The transformation of the postwar suburbs during the last thirty years led to new forms of conflict over policing, 'race relations', housing, community grants, land-use decisions, and the appropriation of urban space. However, these new conflicts, which concern low-income, unemployed, and non-white suburbanites, were largely confined to the level of everyday life. The suburban municipal arenas continued to be dominated by conflicts between homeowner groups and development interests. Low taxes, the protection of property values, the delivery of services, etc. continued to define the political priorities in the old suburbs. Protecting 'suburban ways of life' from 'urban problems' meant demarcating suburban politics from downtown reform and asserting 'local control'. In the early 1990's, suburban municipal councils reinforced the predominant political culture and responded to the recession with crime control initiatives, privatisation, tax freezes, programme cuts and additional user fees. Suburban politics continued to ignore the (not-so) new social realities of the postwar suburbs, largely denying the existence of tenants, low-income people and new immigrants except as alien 'urban' phenomena.

While the resistance against city amalgamation in 1997 had many roots, attempts to fend off the 'Mega-City' with appeals to 'local democracy' and 'local control' had clear overtones of defensive territorialism both in the suburbs and in the inner city. In the new City of.

Toronto, numerous debates about amalgamating services and tax levels degenerated into turfwars between politicians that appealed to their 'urban' or 'suburban' constituencies as homogeneous entities.

It remains to be seen whether amalgamation can be transformed from a threat to the residues of urban reform into an opportunity to broaden the meaning of municipal politics in the former suburbs. Unfortunately, establishing municipal politics as an arena for left and progressive politics in Toronto's suburbs is difficult not only because of the historical legacy of suburban property politics and the enduring bourgeois myth of suburbia. Gaining ground in Toronto's postwar suburbs also requires challenging the lingering hostility towards 'the suburbs' among reformers and the downtown left. The political suburbanisation of the new Toronto cannot be countered by a downtown centred, reverse territorialism.

For a copy of the full paper, email: skipfer@cspc.toronto.on.ca

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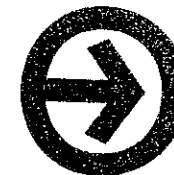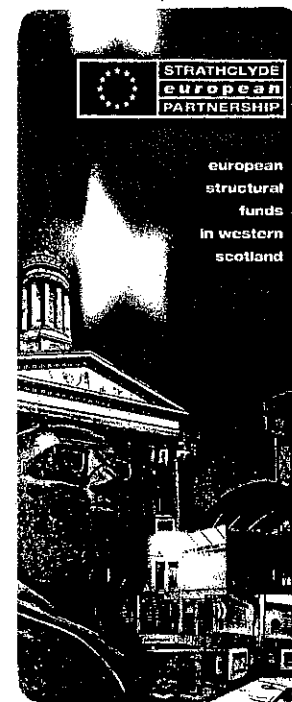
@ The Lighthouse

Homes for the Future

Glasgow 1999
UK City of
Architecture
and Design

Equality, Ethnic Minorities and Planning
in the North of Ireland

Geraint Ellis (The Queen's University, Belfast)

'Peace is not the absence of conflict, but the presence of justice'
Martin Luther King

Northern Ireland is not a society noted for its tolerance, yet the ongoing (but fragile) peace process has helped establish a progressive legislative context for the protection of minority rights which may provide a model of good practice on an international scale. An example of the significance of this is within the land use planning system.

The planning system in Northern Ireland operates under a different legislative and organisational structure than that of the rest of Great Britain. As a result of Unionist abuse of political power in the 1970's, responsibility for planning and other local government functions were centralised to the Northern Ireland Office and its Department of the Environment (DoE, NI); the arms of the UK national government. This has opened up a 'democratic deficit' where decisions affecting the development of neighbourhoods in Northern Ireland are effectively undertaken by a member of the British Cabinet and where accountability is non-existent. The planning system is, however, similar to the rest of the UK in that it has an obsessive tendency to isolate its activity to 'technical land use matters', often to the detriment of broader social or environmental goals. As a consequence, planning has tended to reproduce rather than challenge the inequalities in society, including the direct and indirect discrimination of ethnic minorities. Although planners have a legal, moral and professional obligation to combat racial discrimination, since 1983 a number of studies in Britain have painted a picture of widespread apathy and inaction in meeting the needs of ethnic minorities through the planning system.

None of these studies have looked at the situation in the North of Ireland and I am currently examining how this issue has been addressed in a society dominated by a division along Catholic/Nationalist and Protestant/Unionist fault lines. The small size of the ethnic minority population (about 1.5%) and the dominance of the larger colonial struggle against the UK has, until recently, left ethnic minorities relatively invisible in political debate. Effective lobbying of ethnic minority groups and the inclusion of more radical parties (eg. Sinn Fein and the Progressive Unionist Party) have allowed a broader discussion of equality and resulted for the first time (in 1997) in criminalising racial discrimination.

The ongoing peace process has also had more direct impacts on inequality in that the Good Friday Agreement provided for the establishment of an Equality Commission. This amalgamates previous Commissions responsible for discrimination on gender, religion and racial grounds and creates a new and progressive means of enforcing equality in government policy. While planning in Northern Ireland has never addressed the specific needs of ethnic minorities, as from September 1999, the DoE (NI) will be required to submit an equality scheme to the Equality Commission. This will have to include an Equality Impact Statement that notes how its policies will impact on vulnerable groups in society. These impact statements will be subject to consultation with different 'user' groups (ie. ethnic minority communities, women's groups). If the impact statements are judged to be inadequate the Equality Commission will have the power to direct any public body to resubmit their scheme. This will then be subject to review every five years.

This provides a very progressive legislative context for equality measures in that it is anticipatory (rather than post hoc), participatory (rather than paternalistic) and integrated (rather than a tokenist gesture). It remains to be seen how effectively this will be implemented, but provides an example of how the North of Ireland is beginning to develop a more just and inclusive society.

For a copy of the full paper, email g.ellis@qub.ac.uk

Led-Art 1999

Newcastle Visits

An important element of the Annual Meeting is to engage with the locality, gaining a sense of local issues, problems and policies. We are grateful to the Sustainable Cities Research Institute at the University of Northumbria for sponsoring our visit to projects in the Newcastle area this year, and providing a lunchtime reception.

West End of Newcastle. One group went to the West End of Newcastle, an inner city area which has experienced massive deindustrialisation, and suffers high unemployment, deprivation, empty and abandoned housing and stigma. Julie Jacques, from the 'Reviving the Heart of the West End' regeneration programme, discussed the area's problems and policy responses. Low demand for housing is a particularly difficult problem - and it remains to be seen whether it can be resolved. Some demolition is planned; more may follow. We visited the Millin Centre, a newly -opened drop-in centre for Black residents in North Benwell, which offers a range of support services and training provision.

Grainger Town. Chris Oldershaw of the Grainger Town project explained the challenges and opportunities for regenerating this historic part of Newcastle City Centre. Architecturally, the area is magnificent with many 'listed' (protected) commercial buildings from the early nineteenth century. But there are considerable problems of decay and much empty office space. Older buildings need major investment to render them suitable and acceptable to businesses. Some of the buildings from the 1960s are brutal and unwanted. There is a difficult combination of underinvestment - which the regeneration project aims to change by public funding subsidy - and insufficient market demand.

Ouseburn. This is a mixed use, old industrial area close to the River Tyne. Robin Beverage, of the Ouseburn Partnership, talked about efforts to retain the variety and interest of the area while bringing about improvements through a programme of regeneration. This regeneration programme has a strong commitment to community involvement and working with businesses and organisations based in the Ouseburn Valley.

We visited the 'Angel of the North', a huge (20 metres tall) sculpture by Antony Gormley, on the way to Newcastle. The Angel had been on the front cover of the last INURA Bulletin and symbolised the themes of Regeneration and Renewal. Before returning to Durham, visits were made to Bede's World, an Anglo Saxon heritage attraction, and the Eco Centre, an ecologically sensitive development which accommodates Groundwork South Tyneside.

Future Development of INURA

At this year's Annual Meeting, time was set aside to discuss the development of INURA in the future. It was felt that INURA has proved a success as an effective network based on agreed principles. The Annual Meeting is at the heart of INURA. There are also Bulletins, some public events and collaborative projects such as the book 'Possible Urban Worlds'.

Next year's meeting in Brussels has been agreed and is being planned. In the discussions, it was felt that INURA has the potential to do more, particularly in terms of extending the network (eg. to Latin America, Eastern Europe and the South) engaging in common, collaborative projects and securing funding. Moreover, it was generally considered that INURA needs to develop a better infrastructure, including a website.

Philipp Klaus put forward a proposal, to set up the INURA Zurich Institute (IZI), a non-profit organisation which would support the network and promote research and other activities. This had been discussed in principle at previous Annual Meetings and had now become a more specific proposal. It was agreed that IZI should be established.

The objects of IZI will be:

1. to support the INURA NETWORK
2. to take projects forward
3. to arrange seminars and course teaching
4. to co-ordinate events and actions
5. to organise tours
6. to employ staff and provide management services

Philipp Klaus proposed to draw up a CONCEPT - a business plan and circulate it. The relationship between the INURA NETWORK and IZI will be proposed at the next Annual Meeting in 2000.

During the year, we will discuss the practices, procedures and organisational structure of the INURA NETWORK on the INTERNET.

Common Projects and the Power of INURA

The INURA network grew from sharing experiences, exchanging information, and through the common aim of improving the urban experience through research and action. In the last nine years we have had nine conferences, some big, some small, but all inspiring. We have visited action groups in many countries, invited action groups to our conferences, and had many interesting and encouraging discussions. Since the early beginnings of INURA we have talked about extending the network's activities by doing more things together. At this year's meeting in Durham, a number of participants began to discuss how members of INURA could develop more joint or common projects. Since then a group of us have continued this discussion via email. Some initial ideas for common projects are set out here, clustered around a number of themes:

1.   INURA Work Groups

Work Groups to bring together experiences on an issue/theme. They could focus on:

      collecting and sharing experiences of action groups
      movements and processes in all the different cities
      comparing results of existing international research
      initiating their own research (see collaborative research, below)
      organising events, seminar, actions and publications

The first Work Group, set up in Durham, deals with "Empowerment and Participation". A second group "Urban sprawl and suburbs" is developing. We hope such groups will take the spirit of INURA and challenge conventional wisdom, and look for alternative ways of defining problems and their solutions. Members of the network should feel free to start their own Work Group on different topics by contacting specific individuals or posting a notice on the list serve.

2.   INURA Database

INURA has thrived on the exchange of experiences of action and research. It is proposed to bring together the information, experiences and ideas of INURA members into a single searchable database, ultimately accessible via the web. This would also support the activities of Work Groups and common research.

We are beginning to compile information for the database by circulating a form with this bulletin on which information of innovative projects can be recorded for the database. We are particularly interested in collecting information that is not usually available ("grey" literature, videos, unpublished papers, information on successful local campaigns or that which supports the other ideas for common projects). This will take some time to get up and running, but its strength relies on your knowledge, so please spend some time filling in the form and helping the database grow.

3.   Collaborative Action

INURA is not just about research. It is about action and this also needs to be encouraged through common projects. We want to broaden and develop contact with people struggling against injustice, discrimination, exclusion, lack of human/social rights, destruction of the environment and non-democratic processes (remembering that democratic processes in themselves often do not work very well either). The aim would be for INURA to create more links with groups, movements and action, by sharing of skills, media work or using the INURA name to support a campaign. One way to do this may be to encourage more international alliances of groups focussed on local urban struggles. Another idea is to identify projects which exemplify the INURA principles and somehow ensure they have proper recognition - perhaps through some sort of award. This could lead to closer collaboration with other organisations, for example international environmental movements, where INURA could provide expertise on urban issues.

4.   Consulting

INURA includes a wide range of skilled people. Some have professional skills of planning, media or training; others of political organisation and struggle. INURA already has examples of people helping each other, but we would like to further develop an interchange of these types of skills, co-operation and encouragement. One potential model is the British "Planning Aid", which provides advice to people on low incomes who are confused by the bureaucracy of the planning system. Another idea is to list skilled and experienced people alongside the questions many of us may want answered, for example INURA members from the former East Germany will be uniquely placed to help out on issues such as *"What you shouldn't do if you want to make real socialism"*.

We would welcome thoughts on how this could be further facilitated.

5. Common Research

We would like to see more research activity undertaken jointly by members of INURA on issues of common interest and to which the INURA network can bring "added value". Through such research we would hope to identify and establish international and local trends, disseminate good practice and understand the nature of effective action. The options are numerous, but we would hope the INURA principles would focus the direction of this research so that it would challenge the status quo and provide a basis for alternative futures.

One idea that we are keen to initiate is a project on
Urban Alternatives In Theory And Practice.

This would aim to give shape to those "possible urban worlds" by defining the processes needed to produce them (participation, self-management, empowerment, inclusion) and the elements of the built environment that would be needed (public space for art and culture, meaningful work, good quality housing for everyone etc.) If you are interested in this project, please contact Marvi Maggio for more information.

We would welcome further discussion and ideas on these issues. Don't let us wait until the next INURA meeting, so contribute to the discussion via INURA's listserve (INURA@YORKU.CA)
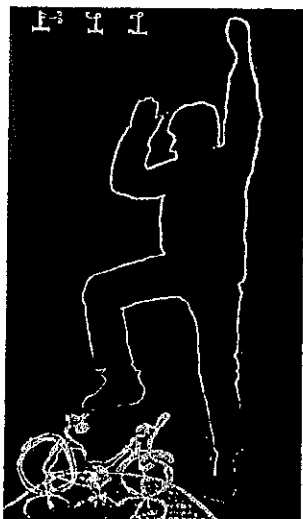
Phillip Klaus (*klaus@smile.ch*)
Marvi Maggio (*marvi_maggio@libero.it*)
Karl-Otto Richter (*Ucefgmbh@aol.com*)
Geraint Ellis (*g.ellis@qub.ac.uk*)

Led-Art 1999

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INURA Membership

Join our network! Exchange experience of research and action! Get the INURA Bulletin twice a year! Take advantage of our listserve! Have an address list of people involved in research and action all over the globe! Visit our Home Page http://www.inura.org! Get information and >contact@inura.org<! Join one of our work groups! Attend the annual conference! Get in touch with experts and activists.

If you have not yet paid the membership fee for 1999, do it now! You can see on your address-label whether you have paid or not. If the label says 'yes', thank you for paying your fee. If it says 'no', then you haven't yet paid - please do so! We keep non-paying persons for two years on our address list; after that they are removed from it.

Membership Fees:
(all prices in Swiss Francs)

Individuals, informal groups	30.-
Institutions	200.-
Reduced fee	20.-
Donations	Welcome

Please choose one of the following modes of payment:

1. Bank to bank payment, any currency, from your account to the account of   INURA, Richard Wolff
3516-8.082824.1 Zuercher Kantonalbank
CH-8037 Zuerich.

2. Eurocheck in Swiss Francs to
INURA, Nordstr. 151
CH-8037 Zurich, Switzerland.

3. Post to post payment, any currency, from your post office to
Postcheck account: 80-207996-8 INURA
CH-8037 Zurich, Switzerland.

Do not send personal cheques! (Charged with 10.-SFr. commission!)

Do not hesitate to pay your membership fee for next year together with this year's fee.

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The ARK Community Activity & Training Centre
EXODUS Collective   HAZ Manor, Luton UK

Members from the EXODUS Collective joined us in Durham - a few days late, but for a very good reason. On Monday 26 July at Lea Manor Recreation Centre, the Levellers, one of the UK top folk-rock bands, played a benefit concert in support of EXODUS and their latest plan - and challenge - to turn a disused factory in a housing estate, into a community centre.

The former electronics factory is in the Marsh Farm estate, and the project is planned to create 84 full-time jobs, with seven classrooms linked to the local college and the Government's New Deal scheme. Other facilities would include an arts & crafts workshop, an advice centre, motor maintenance, a sound recording and engineer studio, theatre/cinema, snooker room, gym, cafe and creche. A charitable trust, made up of people from local schools and churches, tenants and residents groups, and EXODUS members, would be set up to manage and run the ARK, which would be not-for-profit. A planning application has been made to Luton Borough Council, and EXODUS, who welcome a referendum on this proposal, are talking to the owners of the building.

EXODUS continue their self-help projects, running HAZ Manor (where they hosted INURA 96) and the Long Meadow Community Free Farm in Chalton. They have organised more raves and approached Woburn Abbey with the intention of trying to find a piece of land that the group could use on a permanent basis.

They also recently took part in a popular television programme 'Living with the Enemy' where they gained wide sympathy by preparing good accommodation and a warm welcome for the Chair of Cambridge University debating society! He walked out on them after a day, and went to the trouble of reporting them to the local police station for using cannabis. (They campaign openly for its legalisation; unexpectedly in a recent survey, many police chiefs across the UK agreed with this.)

IS IT NOT MONSTROUS THAT THIS PLAYER HERE,
BUT IN A FICTION, IN A DREAM OF PASSION,
COULD FORCE HIS SOUL SO TO HIS WHOLE CONCEIT
THAT FROM HER WORKINGS ALL HIS VISAGE WANN'D,
TEARS IN HIS EYES, DISTRACTION IN HIS ASPECT,
A BROKEN VOICE AND HIS WHOLE FUNCTION SUITING
WITH FORMS TO HIS CONCEIT ....

Philipp played the violin : Chris sang for the miners
and spoke for the Bard at St Chad's

Come all ye gallant miners
where ever ye ma...
Whether yo...
or in the m...
Come you w...
and earth t...
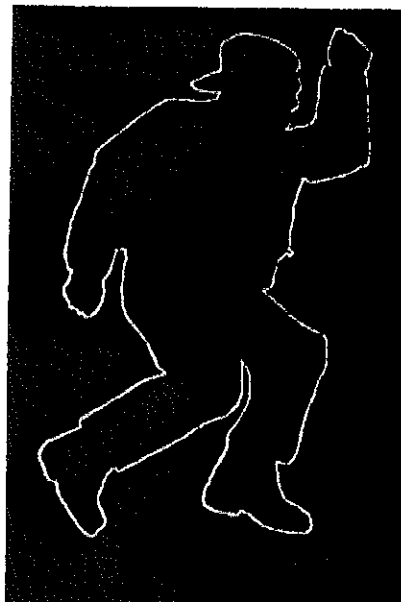They say yo...
that coal has...

Let's not th...
lest we dissapointed be
for joy may turn to sorrow
as we may daily plainly see
today we are strong and healthy
but tomorrow comes the change
as we may see by the explosion
that's occurred at Trimdon Grange

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SEASONAL GREETINGS TO ALL THE NETWORK
cheers
and GOOD WISHES for
2000

INURA Meets Led-Art Group from Novi Sad and Belgrade

At this year's conference we had the exceptional opportunity to have Dragan Zivancevic with us.

Dragan is an artist living in Novi Sad, Serbia. He had just left behind NATO bombing on his city. He is a member of the famous artist group Led-Art (Led=Ice), who perform in public spaces, mainly on the squares and streets of the cities of former Yugoslavia. Their exhibits are frozen cubes of tons of ice, or frozen objects of daily life which they display inside a deep freeze truck, and which the public enter the truck to view. Their main 'actions' in recent months have been the *reconstruction of the crime*. People in the streets were asked to lay down on black paper to have their contours drawn with chalk. These 'papers' were then put on show in the street.

Interestingly, this year's INURA conference title 'Regeneration and Renewal' was very relevant. What this could mean in the town of Novi Sad (capital of the former autonomous region of Vojvodina) was demonstrated by slides of the three bridges which cross the Danube; all three have been destroyed. Novi Sad (200,000 inhabitants) was the most damaged town by NATO bombing. This is in a city that has traditionally elected an opposition-government!

Dragan gave us, through his presentation and in many discussions, a deep insight into Yugoslavia, Serbia and Novi Sad. He especially demonstrated what it means to live in this country, where for almost ten years human rights, crime, corruption and an enormous economic decline are the ruling patterns. Isolation from the Western world is increased by the West itself through non-understanding, disinterest and the belief that the ruling government is the only possible partner. Everybody knows the outcome for the whole Balkan region.

Let us hope the ice will melt soon!

INURA 2000 Brussels

Next year's INURA meeting will be held in Brussels (Belgium). Probably most of you will associate Brussels with the international institutions present in this city. It is true that a rather small city like Brussels, which has only one million residents, has an overwhelming presence of (inter)national organisations. A disproportionate part of the political, economic and military decision-making is located in Brussels and has deeply affected the local geography and social composition. It has undoubtedly brought growth and wealth to the urban region and created a local economy greatly dependent on these international functions.

But Brussels is not only one of Europe's richest regions, it is also one of the most fragmented and socially segregated cities in Europe. A long tradition of laissez-faire urban politics has accelerated the uneven distribution of wealth created within the region. It probably comes as no surprise that the young people of Brussels are most affected by this. Being young and of foreign parents puts you almost automatically on the least desirable side of the urban wealthy-scale and in the least appealing neighbourhoods of the city.

It is these contradictions that we want to reflect upon during next year's meeting. We will also take advantage of the fact that Brussels is Cultural Capital of Europe in the year 2000 (it shares this title with 8 other European cities). In contrast to most of its predecessors, Brussels has refused to build new cultural temples to host mega events. Instead it has tried an interesting small-scale approach, using the existing cultural richness of Brussels which reflects the strong multicultural character of this city (which is too often denied by local and regional politicians). This will be a welcome occasion to show and discuss the cultural turn of much of the grassroots activism in this city.

The Annual Meeting will start on Saturday evening, 20th May 2000. The first four days (Sunday till Wednesday) will be spent in Brussels and are open to a broader public. We will organise a stimulating mix of urban expeditions, visits, talks and discussions. It is our wish to establish a dialogue between the international visitors and local activists and academics so that ideas and thoughts can be exchanged. As usual, we will focus on the concerns of the city's residents.

You will be accommodated in a former factory situated in one of the most deprived parts of town (Molenbeek), close to the city centre. It was refurbished by local unemployed youth, and it now houses a hotel for visiting groups, a training centre for unemployed people, and a rock-factory (don't worry, it is soundproof). We are sure this is a good place to continue and promote the informal spirit of the INURA meetings.

The second half of the week (from Thursday 25th of May onwards) will be spent in Durbuy, the smallest municipality of Belgium in the southern part of the country (one hour's drive from Brussels). Transport to and from Durbuy will be arranged. Here we will have our traditional INURA retreat where we can reflect on the Brussels experience, where papers can be presented by INURA members, and where good food will be served with lots of music and ambience.... On Saturday 27th May, we will return to Brussels to join the 'Zinnekeparade'. This is one of the highlights of Brussels Cultural Capital 2000, and not to be missed.

During the conference you will be hosted by BRAL, City Mine(d) and the Geography Department of the Free University of Brussels (VUB). BRAL (the 'Brussels Council for the Environment' - Brusselse Raad voor het Leefmilieu) is a non-profit grassroots organisation which operates region-wide on a broad array of issues (housing, transport, pollution and neighbourhood development). BRAL has close connections with the Geography Department of the VUB, which does research on urban social and environmental issues. City Mine(d) is also a non-profit organisation which supports and produces socio-artistic initiatives that contribute to urban social development.

It is our intention to minimise the cost of the conference in order to make it as accessible as possible to those with few resources. Everyone who wishes to come and contribute to the conference but is short of money can contact us. We'll try to help.

The next bulletin will be our job, and is expected to be published by the beginning of next year. Anyone who can't wait until then and wants to know more about INURA 2000 Brussels can contact us by email (sdecorte@vub.ac.be or bral@village.uunt.be) or write to BRAL (Zaterdagplein 13, 1000 Brussels, Belgium) or the University (INURA 2000 Conference, Geografisch Instituut (6F332), Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussels, Belgium). Hope to see you in Brussels in May!

The INURA 2000 organising team.