Bauhaus Graduates' Urban Planning in the 1950s

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Abstract

Graduates from the Bauhaus implemented urban planning in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia during the 1950s. We clarified their urban planning activities by analysing their designs using published reports and books. Our study reveals the following four points. First, the German Building Academy led urban planning in East Germany, and urban planners, including Edmund Collein (1906–92) and Selman Selmanagic (1905–86), held important positions, and designed new cities in East Germany. Second, in Hungary, Tibor Weiner (1906–65) designed the Sztálinváros. Weiner was involved in constructing the new socialist city of Orsk in the USSR in the 1930s. Third, Arieh Sharon (1900–84) designed 15 new cities in Israel. Fourth, graduate Konrad Püschel (1907–97) was involved in the post-war reconstruction of the North Korean city of Hamhung. All held government or academic positions and led new urban planning in East Germany, Hungary, and Israel. Bauhaus graduates commonly conducted thorough research on the nature, history, culture, and settlement of the area before urban planning using the results of their urban planning. These characteristics were influenced by the general urban planning methods of the 1950s and the analytically oriented education in Bauhaus.

Keywords
Bauhaus, 1950s, Post-war Reconstruction, Socialist City Planning

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INTRODUCTION

URBAN PLANNING EDUCATION AT THE BAUHAUS AND URBAN PLANNING BY BAUHAUS GRADUATES' IN THE 1950S

Urban planning education at the Bauhaus commenced under the second director, Hannes Meyer (1928–30), and continued under Ludwig Hilberseimer, an urban planning theorist invited to the Bauhaus in 1929[1]. The four main educational outcomes are as follows:

(1) In 1929, under the close guidance of Hannes Meyer, architectural students were responsible for the design of the Dessau-Törten settlement[2]. (2) In 1929-30, the City of Dessau's building department prepared the General Development Plan of the City of Dessau. (3) From 1931, Bauhaus students, under the close guidance of Hilberseimer, conducted an urban analysis of Dessau, the results of which were presented at the 4th CIAM congress (Paris, 1933). (4) The urban analysis of Dessau provided the basis for the 'Junkers Settlement' Project (1932), an industrial city with a socialist character designed by Bauhaus students[3].

Therefore, it can be said that urban planning education at Bauhaus was based on the scientific analysis of the city. The Bauhaus was quick to incorporate the state-of-the-art of the time into its teaching, as can be seen in the 4th CIAM 'The Functional City'[4].

Conversely, during global urban reconstruction after World War II, some Bauhaus graduates led urban planning at the national level (Fig. 1). In East Germany, Bauhaus graduates or people closely associated with the Bauhaus, such as Edmund Collein (1906–92), Richard Paulik, and Selman Selmanagic (1905–86), held key positions in urban planning[5]. In socialist Hungary, Tibor Weiner (1906–65) was responsible for the new urban planning of Sztálinváros (Dunaújváros since 1961) (1950–65). In Israel, Arieh Sharon (1900–84) drew up a national land plan and designed a new town immediately after the founding of the state (1948–53). Konrad Püschel (1907–97) designed the North Korean city of Hamhung as a socialist city at the request of the East German government[6].

PREVIOUS RESEARCH AND AIM OF THIS STUDY

Although the urban planning of the 1950s by these Bauhaus graduates has been studied individually, no studies have taken urban planning education at the Bauhaus as a starting point and look at it cross-sectionally in the context of the Bauhaus graduates. The aim of this study is therefore to provide a cross-sectional overview of urban planning by Bauhaus graduates in the 1950s and to identify commonalities. As research material, the study uses the designers' own published reports and books. The paper is structured as follows: Section 2 describes the German Building Academy that advanced urban planning in East Germany and the Bauhaus staff involved in new urban planning. This is followed by examples of urban planning by Bauhaus graduates in Hungary in Section 3, Israel in Section 4 and North Korea in Section 5. Finally, Section 6 discusses the above in a cross-cutting way.

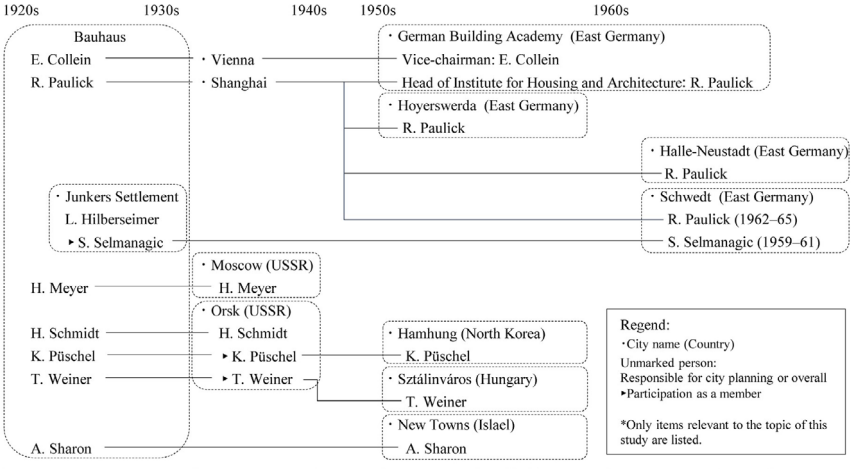

Fig. 1. Diagram showing the relationship between the Bauhaus people and the urban planning in which they participated.

BAUHAUS GRADUATES ACTIVE IN EAST GERMAN URBAN PLANNING

In East Germany in the 1950s, there was an urgent need to repair the damage caused by the Second World War and to socialise urban space. The German Building Academy (Deutsche Bauakademie), founded in 1951, was at the forefront of these efforts. Its first chairman was Kurt Liebknecht, who had experience of building new cities in Magnitogorsk in the Soviet Union in the 1930s; the vice-chairman was Bauhaus graduate Edmund Collein (1906– 92); and the head of the Institute for Housing and Architecture was Richard Paulick (1903–79), who was not a Bauhaus graduate but was closely associated with Gropius and the Bauhaus. In general, the main features of the inner city space in socialist states can be described as marching streets, centrally located urban squares with adjacent monumental architecture, and housing estates. These elements that characterise socialist cities appeared in the urban planning of the 1930s in the first socialist state, the USSR. The influence of German-speaking architects such as Ernst May, Hans Schmidt and Hannes Meyer, who planned cities as foreign architects, can also be seen[7]. The aforementioned Liebknecht was part of May's team in the design of the New City in Magnitogorsk, while Bauhaus graduates Konrad Püschel and Tibor Weiner, described later, were part of Schmidt's team in the design of the new city in Orsk. Thus, socialist urbanism in East Germany in the 1950s was based on the experience of the former Soviet Union. It was in this context that the aforementioned Bauhaus graduate Collein, as vice- president of the German Building Academy, set the standards for socialist urbanism in East Germany.

Socialist cities in East Germany in the 1950s and 1960s were divided into (1) new socialist cities (e.g. Stalinstadt, Hoyerswerda, Schwedt, Halle Neustadt) and (2) the simultaneous reconstruc-

tion of existing cities from war damage and socialist urbanisation (Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig, etc.), which can be broadly divided into two categories[8]. The aforementioned Paulik was involved not only in the planning of the new cities of Hoyerswerda, Schwedt and Halle-Neustadt, but also in the socialist urbanisation of the existing city of Berlin. The urban planning of the new socialist city of Schwedt was carried out by Bauhaus graduate Selman Selmanagic from 1959–61, while Paulik was in charge from 1962–65. The above confirms the involvement of Bauhaus Graduates in the design of socialist cities.

URBAN PLANNING OF THE HUNGARIAN SOCIALIST CITY OF SZTÁLINVÁROS BY BAUHAUS GRADUATE TIBOR WEINER.

The Hungarian socialist city of Sztálinváros, the focus of Section 3, was designed by Bauhaus graduate Tibor Weinar (1906–65), who was responsible for the area including the village of Dunapentele. Situated about 67 km south of the capital Budapest on the right bank of the Danube, the city was called Sztálinváros in 1951-61 and then Dunauýváros. Born in Budapest, Hungary, Weiner studied architecture at the Bauhaus from 1929 and went to the USSR in 1930 with Hannes Meyer, the second director of the Bauhaus, and others[9]. He returned to Hungary in 1948 to work at the Academic Centre for Architecture, and from 1950 he was responsible for the design and construction of the city. The history of Sztálinváros began in 1949, when the Central Committee of the Hungarian People's Labour Party decided to build housing for workers in the steel complex. As is well known, Stalin means 'steel (man)' and towns were named after Stalin when they were built in the socialist states of Eastern Europe in

areas where the steel industry flourished. The content of the urban planning of Sztálinváros is described by the designer Weiner himself in 'Sztálinváros, Miskolc and Tatabánya' (1959)[10]. On the basis of this work, the content of the analysis of nature and urban planning is clarified.

The first half of the relevant part of Weiner's book contains a description of the content of the natural environment analysis of the proposed site. The sections are entitled 'New tasks: building a socialist city', 'Hungary's new heavy industry centre', 'Site selection', 'Natural features of the Dunapentele plateau', 'History of the site' and 'Urban development programme'. In this section, the contents of 'Site selection' and 'Natural features of the Dunapentele plateau' are explained. The 'Choice of location' section can be summarised as follows. In Sztálinváros, the rivers are mainly used as routes for transporting supplies to the ironworks. The main business of Sztálinváros - the water needs of the ironworks and the water transport of raw materials - was planned along the Danube. Thus, the Danube was not only useful for the town of Sztálinváros, but also as a transport route for the raw materials of the ironworks. The choice of location for the town of Sztálinváros can thus be understood in relation to the ironworks. As a result, the Dunapentele plateau to the north of the ironworks was chosen as the site for the city of Sztálinváros. This is followed by a description of the 'natural features of the Dunapentele plateau'. The main points are as follows. The topography of the Dunapentele lateau extends north of the ironworks. Villages exist on the Dunapentele Plateau and near the Danube, an agricultural area producing grapes and corn for wine. There were no forests on

the Dunapentele Plateau, and the wind carried smoke and soot from the factories; therefore, wooded areas and parks were created between the new city and the ironworks. Weiner's book indicates that parks are intended to provide recreation, create a good urban landscape, and improve the urban environment.

The latter part of Weiner's book describes urban planning in three phases. The first phase of urban planning, which happened in the first half of 1950, consisted of the preparation of an urban master plan and a building plan for the first housing units. This phase involved in-depth research, analysis of needs, and comparison with the results of urban planning worldwide. The second phase lasted from mid-1950 to mid-1952. It begins by reviewing the planning methods for Phase 1. New types of socialist urban public buildings were built to meet new social needs, such as shopping centres, central squares, hotels, office buildings, cinema complexes, and housing. The third phase occurred between 1952 and 1954. Weiner notes that this third phase was 'problematic for the city, as urban planning degenerated into formalisation'. Weiner notes that this formalisation occurred throughout Hungary because of a misunderstanding of the methods of socialist realism. In Sztálinváros, these misunderstandings led to the construction of two types of buildings: ornate buildings with an eclectic mix of styles, and uneconomic buildings.

ISRAEL'S NATIONAL LAND PLAN AND NEW TOWN PLANNING BY BAUHAUS GRADUATE ARIEH SHARON

Section 4 focuses on the land planning and new town planning for the whole of Israel by Bauhaus graduate Arieh Sharon (1900–84). Sharon was born in 1900 in Jaroslaw, Poland, the son of Jews, and graduated in architecture from the University of Brune in 1920. He graduated from the Bauhaus in November 1929. He moved to Palestine in 1931, worked on the construction of Tel Aviv in the 1930s, opened his own architectural practice and began designing kibbutzim (collective agricultural communities) in 1938. From 1948–53 he worked on national land planning and urban planning as head of the Planning Department, which reported directly to the Prime Minister[11]. One of his achievements was 'Physical Planning in Israel' (1951)[12]. This was Israel's first national land-wide plan, often referred to in Israel as the 'Sharon Plan', and became the basis for the Israeli National Land Plan. When Israel was established in 1948, there was an urgent need for a national land plan to accommodate the settlers coming to Israel from different parts of the country. In 1948, David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister, set up a planning department directly under the Prime Minister, consisting of some 150 architects, town planners and other experts, and entrusted its leadership to Aryeh Sharon (1948–53).

As mentioned above, Sharon's findings were summarised in 'Physical Planning in Israel' (1951). The structure of this report is as follows. 1.Outline of the National Plan, 2. National Planning, 3.Village Planning, 4.Land and Landscape, 5.The New Towns, 6.Hafia Regional Plan, and 7.Jerusalem Outline Scheme, 8.Tel.: Aviv District Regional Plan, 9.Layout and Architecture. Of the 15 new towns, nine are planned for populations between 10,000 and 60,000. This is because the only towns and settlements in Israel are villages of 500 and towns of over 100,000,

and the new towns were positioned to fill the gap between the two. Therefore, the new town was also required to act as a rural-urban centre to unite the existing villages. In fact, four years later, in 1955, Sharon published a paper entitled 'Collective Settlements in Israel', in which he outlined the characteristics of Israeli settlements and stated that these characteristics had been inherited by Sharon's own settlement plan[13]. If the role of the new town plan is to merge existing settlements, it is assumed that the new town will also inherit some kind of settlement spatial structure. In the Sharon settlement plan, the characteristics of the kibbutz plan are observed: buildings are located along contour lines and public facilities are located at the highest elevation in the settlement[14]. Therefore, 15 new town plans were analysed for the presence or absence of the kibbutz planning feature of contour lines, buildings located along contour lines and public facilities located at the highest elevation in the town.

Analysis of 15 new town plans showed that 10 cities had buildings located along contour lines. In addition, nine cities were found to have public facilities located at the highest elevation in the city. Conversely, in plans where contour lines could not be identified or where public facilities were not located at high elevations, the contour intervals were found to be relatively large. This suggests that contour lines and height are not important on flat land, whereas on land with narrow contour line intervals, buildings are placed along contour lines and public facilities are built at higher elevations. In particular, the plan of the new town 'MIDAL GAD' is a plan whose characteristics can be clearly read both in the drawings and in the commentary: houses for 30,000 inhabitants are arranged along the contour lines, public facilities are located on the central hill and agricultural land is located in the lower areas. The perspective map also shows how the houses are built along the contour lines and the public facilities are planned at higher elevations. The plan description here clearly uses terms such as lowlands and hills to explain the design intent of the new town.

POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION AND SOCIALIST URBANISATION OF HAMHUNG BY BAUHAUS GRADUATE KONRAD PÜSCHEL

Hamhung, located in the northern coastal area of the Korean peninsula. During the Korean War, which lasted for about three years from June 1950, Hamhung was completely destroyed due to its rapid industrial development sin the late 1920s during the Japanese colonial period. Hundreds of engineers and their families moved to the city from East Germany, which was responsible for rebuilding the city after the war. The head of the urban planning department of the 'German Work Team Hamhung' (Deutsche Arbeitsgruppe Hamhung), who supported the reconstruction, was Konrad Püschel (1907–97), a Bauhaus graduate. Püschel studied at the Bauhaus from 1926 to 1930, and in 1931, he travelled to the USSR with Hannes Meyer (1889–1954) and others as members of the Bauhaus Brigade, working first in architectural design in Moscow and, from 1934, in the construction of new towns in Orsk. From 1948, he worked as the chair of urban architecture at the Weimar School of Architecture and Urban Planning in East Germany. In 1954, he was involved in the wartime reconstruction program in Hamhung, where he headed the town planning department[15].

A review of Püschel's papers and reports indicates that, after conducting research in the Hamhung and Heungnam regions of the planned areas, Püschel tried to understand the structural nature of the planned areas by placing them in the context of the Korean peninsula as a whole. With this in mind, Püschel and his team analysed the internal space of the houses and their layout, which varied from region to region, and produced drawings classifying them as typical housing types in each province of the Korean peninsula. In their article 'An Overview of the Development and Formation of Settlement Planning in Korea' (1959), they summarised the settlements in Korea formed by a cluster of houses as follows: Korean settlements were classified into four types (settlements around valleys, river settlements, seaside settlements and mountain settlements) according to topographical features, and pointing out that topographical features and the water system determine the spatial arrangement of settlements, he concludes that Korean settlements are rooted not only in the shape and composition of the Korean landscape, but also in the interrelationship between landscape, society and economy[16]. He concludes that they are also rooted in interrelationships.

Adding the traffic survey results to those mentioned in the previous section, Püschel's plan divides Hamhung into five regions based on natural conditions and traffic technology. Each of these regions has a number of districts below it. It can be seen that neighbourhoods, which are units of administrative districts, include a cluster of residential complexes with primary schools, kindergartens, nurseries, clubhouses, department stores and shops. According to the records of the 1958 'Hamhung and Hungnam' exhibition, two of these neighbourhoods were completed by 1958[17].

CONCLUSION

The above has provided an overview of the urban planning of Bauhaus graduates in the 1950s. Finally, we would like to discuss the figures we have focused on in this study from two cross-sectional perspectives.

First, we would like to review the pre-1950s urban planning backgrounds of the architects featured in this study. Collein, who formulated the standards for socialist cities in East Germany, had worked on housing for a workers' housing association in Vienna. Paulik, who was involved in the design of several new cities in East Germany, had designed cities in Shanghai in the 1940s. Selmanagic, who designed Schwedt, was one of the designers of the socialist 'Junkers Settlement' project (1932) at the Bauhaus. Weiner, who designed Sztálinváros, and Püschel, who designed Hamhung, both had experience of designing new towns in Orsk, USSR, in the 1930s. Sharon, who designed new towns in Israel, was involved in the design of a settlement in a collective agricultural kibbutz in the 1940s. Thus, the individuals discussed in this study had some form of urban planning experience in the 1930s and 1940s, prior to their involvement in national urban planning in the 1950s. The presence or absence of such experience may have influenced their involvement in urban planning in the 1950s.

Next, we want to find commonalities in the urban planning process. The three graduates who designed cities in East Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe all carried out a thorough

analysis prior to their designs and based their designs on this analysis. Such a design process could be described as a common design process at the time, but from the perspective of Bauhaus urban planning education, it can also be seen as an extension of the analysis-oriented architectural design methods taught at the Bauhaus into the field of urban planning. In particular, both Shalon and Püschel paid attention to the settlement structure of the target area in their urban planning and applied the structures extracted there to urban planning, a point of strong similarity that can also be attributed to their education at the Bauhaus[18].

The study was not able to analyse the specific design methods of socialist cities in East Germany. This is a subject for future work.

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DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTOR

Dr. Hideo Tomita (b. 1974) has been working as a Professor at the Faculty of Architecture and Civil Engineering, Kyushu Sangyo University in Japan. He graduated from the doctoral course of the Graduate School of Engineering at Hiroshima University, receiving his Doctor of Engineering degree in March 2002. From 2005 to 2006, he was a guest researcher at the Bauhaus University Weimar. In 2015, he was granted the Journal of Asian Architecture and Building Engineering Best Paper Award 2014 from AIJ, AIK, and ASC. From 2016 to 2017, he was a guest researcher at the Technical Institute of Berlin.

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