

I The Idea behind the Introduction of Spatial Planning

Founding Concept of TU Kaiserslautern: After the establishment of Universität Trier-Kaiserslautern in 1970, as of 1972 the ARUBI emerged gradually from the “Technologie” department. The rector, Prof. Martin Graßnick, an architectural historian and monument conservator, was responsible for organizing the establishment of the university. He played a pivotal role in degree courses in Spatial and Environmental Planning as well as Architecture being offered a mere two years after the university was established.

Reformed Courses as the Result of a Paradigm Shift: The Spatial Planning course at TU Kaiserslautern was introduced in the late 1960s when there was a paradigm shift in urban planning teaching. New values such as civic participation, the promotion of urban development and the appreciation of existing buildings led to educational reforms and the introduction of undergraduate degree courses. The generation of professors largely shaped by the years of post-war reconstruction was replaced by younger colleagues who championed new ideas and transdisciplinary approaches, and addressed international developments. Planners subsequently developed a different view of themselves, as all-rounders with interdisciplinary training and the coordinators of decision-making processes.

Innovative Study Program: When, in 1972, Albert Speer was appointed to TU Kaiserslautern it was a stroke of luck for him that he was in a position to be able to start out with an entirely clean slate and thus without any conflicts in terms of boundaries or possible competitors. Together with Rudolf Stich he developed the Spatial and Environmental Planning course, whose teaching concept was right up to date with the latest specialist discourse at the time. Even today, the course’s curriculum can be seen as a synopsis of the discourses of the day on urban and regional planning, on the theories and methods of planning, environmental and monument preservation. Its combination of the terms space, environment and planning was wholly in tune with the times. Even today, the 1975 study concept is as topical as it was then. The problems remain the same even if they have become more complex.

Interdisciplinarity and Practice Orientation: The course’s recipe for success lay in the multiplicity of the subjects it addressed and the flexibility of its teaching material. The main focus of the study projects was at all times in touch with reality and practice-oriented. The strong weighting of urban planning design played a role in communicating and training the design aspect as the tool of the planner’s trade. Collaboration between different specialist disciplines in the study projects was an integral part of the course, for example transport planning, the housing and water industries and landscape planning, not to mention a close relationship with architecture. This interdisciplinary collaboration was the calling card of the ARUBI department. With the department having been divided up into subdisciplines in the 2000s, sectoral approaches became more significant.

The Spirit of the Professor: The spirit Prof. Speer had and indeed passed on to his students and staff was crucial to the success of the study model. This also involved communicating networked thinking, assuming responsibility, gaining independent experience, to surviving locally as a team and expanding one's horizons. True to the motto "think local, act global", students were encouraged to gain experience internationally outside Kaiserslautern.

II Innovative Planning Processes

Ideas Competition for the Bid for the Olympic Games in Frankfurt/Main: For the bid for the Summer Olympic Games between 1986 and 1988, Albert Speer's architectural firm staged an international ideas competition in which a team from the professor's chair took part. The competition was assisted by an independent panel of experts. At the time these peer review processes with limited, reliable time frames were a new development, and have stood the test of time. On the basis of the expert opinion for the bid for the Olympic Games one of the measures implemented was the planning for Frankfurt's riverbank area, which is still in existence today. The plans for major projects can only be realized effectively if appropriate formats such as ideas competitions or test plans are implemented. This procedure also proved effective in the planning of the Allianz Arena in Munich.

Major Projects as a Motive for Innovative Planning Processes: In urban and spatial planning the question of the timeframe and the right timing should always be taken into account. Given favorable conditions, special challenges can produce planning and procedural innovations. Major projects and those with a limited timeframe such as the bid for the Olympic Games are an important impetus in this respect. The correct moment in time plays an important role because the success of the projects depends on the way the market develops and the player constellations involved. From this point of view, planning should be seen as a political assignment. At the same time, festivalizations such as international construction fairs are an expression of the fact that in everyday planning the interplay between ambitions and assignments no longer works. In view of the current challenges this format logic and these occasions will continue to increase in number.

The Planner as a communicator: In order to engage the players designing space in a permanent, interdisciplinary, rhythmical exchange with one another about the future of space, communication is needed. This must be well organized, is complex and demands an innovative player construct. Prof. Albert Speer stood out for his ability to take equal account of the arguments, lines of argumentation and the interests of all those involved. In this respect he never lost sight of the common good and a good planning result.

The Future of Planning: Planning today needs a further paradigm shift, particularly in view of digitization, climate change and the global shortage of resources. The challenges we are now facing can only be solved in part using the teaching content of past decades. For the future we should be checking which

methods and approaches can continue to be used and at what points new solutions are called for.

III Combining Theory with Practice.

The Planning Agency as a Reflection of the Study Concept: AS+P Albert Speer + Partner GmbH is a reflection of the curriculum that Prof. Albert Speer taught at TU Kaiserslautern. His teaching focused on major designs handled by interdisciplinary teams. His firm boasts not only spatial and urban planners but also numerous architects, landscape architects and transport planners, along with other specialist disciplines. The successful development of the course and AS+P have always benefited each other.

Responsibility as Planners: Planners must adopt a responsible approach to their assignments. They are at one and the same time presenters and mediators, people who help decision making, and who market their planning. Prof. Speer's teaching provided his students with the necessary skills for these tasks. An understanding of the fact that planning is also a political activity should, even today, be communicated in the teaching process.

Job Profile: An important criterion for the curriculum structure is the question of which skills graduates should have acquired in order to hold their own on the open market. In Kaiserslautern, as on most other urban planning courses, the importance of the design aspect of urban planning in the training of an urban planner has, however, declined. Today's graduates are well schooled in academic work. However, creative processes and designing are not usually something that they are familiar with. The basics of the original urban planning courses are something that should be taken up again.

The Discipline of Spatial Planning: After 50 years the discipline of spatial planning has become established and a successful model. It is, however, valued and underrated at one and the same time. Unlike architecture or civil engineering, as a profession spatial planning is still not defined clearly enough, the creation of a proper profile is called for.

Practical Orientation as Part of the Teaching: Project studies were the core of the course in Kaiserslautern. To this end, teachers who already have experience of practical responsibility are needed. There is evidence of teaching becoming increasingly scientific, leading to fewer and fewer employees with practical experience joining the universities. It is the privilege of university staff to have an academic career, to have to work in a practical context, and to be able to teach. At the same time, planners have a need for more academic training since the assignments they are faced with are certainly becoming more complex, as are the planning decisions they are faced with.