

INTRODUCTION - FOUNDING CONFERENCE OF AESOP IN AMSTERDAM

Andreas Faludi

As part of its 25th anniversary-celebrations, the Institute for Planning and Demography of the University of Amsterdam hosted the Founding Conference of the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP) on 19th to 21st November, 1987.

The holding of this conference is a sure sign that European planning education has come of age. In the recent past we have witnessed a trend towards independent programmes. But many differences remain, and institutional, cultural and linguistic boundaries hamper a continuous flow of exchange between those with a professional concern for planning education.

The Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP) aims to improve this situation. In taking the initiative, the founding committee has drawn inspiration from the example set by the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) in North America. Thus, AESOP will be a platform for exchanges and a focus for joint action in the field of European planning education. Also, it will provide mutual support to its members.

The conference discussed how to achieve these aims. Also, an immediate start was made with productive exchanges. To introduce the almost one hundred planning educators to the local situation, planning problems of Amsterdam were discussed. The main educational papers were: "The Evolution of Planning Education in Europe" (A. Rodriguez-Bachiller, Senior Lecturer, Oxford); "The Changing Context of Planning Education and Research: An American Perspective" (Professor E.R. Alexander, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee); "Dutch Planning Education: where it is now and how it got there" (Dr. Barrie Needham, Senior Lecturer, Catholic University of Nijmegen); and "Dutch planning education in its international context" (Professor A. Faludi, University of Amsterdam). Workshops concerned topics like: "New jobs for planners? The job market" (Convenor Professor L. Albrechts, University of Louvain, Louvain); "Planning fashions. How to respond in planning education and research" (Convenor Professor B. Marchand, University of Paris VIII); "Are we fair to overseas students?" (Convenor Professor Klaus R. Kunzmann, University of Dortmund); "Research education and training: The lonely Ph.D.-student?" (Convenor Professor P. Healey, University of Newcastle); "Post-modern planning: Retreat to urban design?" (Convenor: Professor D. Frick, Berlin University of Technology); "For which future do we educate planners?" (Convenor Professor W. Schmid, Zurich University of Technology). Practical issues like the ERASMUS arrangements, a newsletter, the 1988 conference (due to be held at the University of

Dortmund), a directory of planning schools and research were also discussed.

The papers below are the two Dutch presentations. Both authors have been involved in planning education abroad. Barrie Needham has lectured at various English planning schools, in particular at the University of Aston at Birmingham. He is a one-time president of the Education for Planning Association. Andreas Faludi, too, has lectured in England, at the Oxford Polytechnic, before coming to the Netherlands where he has devoted his Delft inaugural lecture to the topic of "Planning theory and the education of planners".