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Summary

On this Issue

In planning the remaining intact environment that is left us, are we repeating the mistake committed in our cities?

In Switzerland we can hardly talk about mistakes in this field, since the first steps towards regional planning have only just been taken. To be sure, everyone is repeating the phrase "regional planning", but the interest groups, whether political or economic, are involved in disputes on spheres of competence.
The question remains open whether, as is the case in our cities, it is not already too late to plan recreation areas. Do not we have the same situation as in the matter of environmental pollution, where so much damage is already beyond repair? Will it really be necessary for a catastrophe to occur for the authorities to intervene? The question is justified, because around our cities there are no longer any recreation zones. Those that survive are so far away that they are accessible only on long week-ends and during vacations, and, in any case, the beneficial effects are cancelled out by the strain of the return journey on crowded roads. Do things really have to be like this?
Our planning, guided by economic considerations and real estate prices, is absorbing the last available plots of land, and the magic word "planning" is not in the first instance something that serves the public interest, but it remains the outcome of a compromise among disparate interests. Tourism is nowadays a branch of industry with a very high growth rate; it must have a place in any national budget, for it frequently helps to correct, it would seem, the balance of payments.
Our economic system, geared to the maximalization of profits, has logically had to exploit a resource that has not yet been totally exhausted. Moreover, many planning projects that are serious have been compelled to adapt to the interests of a local population that has often been underprivileged, and no one would begrudge them their chance to unload "profitably" their poor land on holiday makers or their agents.

Erwin Mühlestein

Tourist industry planning: pilot projects for future town-planning?

Michael Annen, Geneva

(Pages 255–256)

The reflections that follow are based on broad experience acquired in Switzerland in association with planning experts. Whether this is an advantage or not, the public authorities in Switzerland grant no direct aid to tourist planning operations of this kind, some features of which we describe below.
In Switzerland, as elsewhere, the most scenic landscapes are marginal economic zones undergoing depopulation. Only the tourist industry is in a position to reactivate the declining economy of these regions. In 1965 income from the tourist industry represented 9% of the national product.
Regional tourist planning projects can assume various forms:

a) The old resorts: largely composed of hotels, and their situation is generally privileged.

b) The newly created resort centres: more frequent in the Mediterranean area and the French Alps. Present trend toward condominium apartments. In general, low-grade quality in construction and appointments.

c) Development of existing villages: Most frequent in Switzerland. The residents of the village concern themselves with entertaining the tourists. Here we are confronted with problems of communal restructuration. The villagers are greatly tempted to indulge in lucrative sales of their land.

Formerly the hotel was the base of the tourist industry infrastructure. Forgotten for a time, it is now regaining significance. The vacation villa in isolation, entailing too many inconveniences, is yielding to the vacation village.
For any planning project it takes a long time for all the associations and commissions concerned to concert their action. In a tourist development scheme, the village as a whole must be organized functionally and economically. Every resident is thus concerned and this if only because of the capital to be invested; the communities are thus compelled to plan.
While in the cities the main accent is on the struggle against real estate speculation, in the tourist centres it is necessary, rather, to promote investments. From the financial standpoint, the building of hotels is a risky enterprise; the infrastructures (aerial cableways, etc.) do not generally pay well. If the planners ignore these problems, a resort can become completely sterilized.
It is essential here to proceed to capacity studies (length of ski runs, access roads, water supply, etc.), and it is only recently that people have recognized the necessity of working in terms of entire regions.
To get as many guests as possible to the foot of the Jungfrau is no longer enough. Over and above the natural landscape, it is necessary to create everything artifically and to ensure constant financing of installations. The most profitable policy consists in extending the length of the seasons by attracting all through the year guests of different age groups, which prevents resorts from becoming excessively large. A resort ought as well to possess an identity of its own, a character which permits it to become a kind of model for valid urban complexes.
However, although the attitude of the authorities is sincere in this quest for an identity, they capitulate too often to certain pressures, and positive examples are still few in number. In one word, the step from defensive planning to creative planning is a painful one. Every decision of the planners modifies the environment, and it will be necessary, sooner or later, to become aware of the problems of creation and of the quality of living spaces.

Planning of the resort of Jeizinen

Annen, Siebold, Siegle, Geneva

(Pages 260–261)

Jeizinen is situated at the entrance to the Lötschental at an altitude of around 1500 meters. The planning project was sponsored by an association made up of residents of the local region.
Since the construction in 1960 of an aerial cableway, the number of beds has increased from 12 to 300. This development, which changed a farming village into a resort, made necessary a restructuration of the activities of all the inhabitants.
At construction level, the village up to recently was still entirely safeguarded. This is so because the laws of the Valais on inheritance divide up land in plots that are too small to allow for construction without prior regrouping of plots. Nevertheless, the building recently of a forest road may encourage the proliferation of holiday houses.
The master plan intended to safeguard the character of the village envisages the following zones:

- Centre of the resort with protection of the existing village.
- Peripheral zone with buildings in keeping with traditional style.
- Reserve zone for new and future developments.

If we leave aside the few villagers who own a vehicle, the village will remain closed to cars, and this is in keeping with tradition and topography. The municipality is building along the forest road parking sites which can be resold. Sports facilities will come above these parking sites.
The skiing zone is separated from the village by a wooded mountain crest. Thanks to the heavy snow on the most elevated part (between 1500 and 1800 meters), it is hoped that the season can be extended, with transportation of guests to higher levels by means of the aerial cableway.
The promoters of Jeizinen are aware of the fact that their plan can only succeed with the cooperation of the neighbouring village communities. The future will show whether this path of development will be followed and whether it is possible to win over the local population to the idea that tourism is something other than merely selling land at a big profit.

Vacation village of Bodrum

A. + B. Çinici, Ankara

(Pages 266–270)

In this vacation village sited in the midst of an archeological area, the public interest was given priority over the interests of the 80 promoters of the project.
This is the spirit in which we designed "Cap Resort Town" down to the last details, in an attempt to maintain here the atmosphere of the local whitewashed stone houses, variously shaped chimneys, strange rocks, the leaves of the tangerine trees and exotic flowers. Moreover, we have attempted to create structures showing clearly to visitors what true landscape values are.
Taking as models the urban structures of Priene and Miletus, we planned this small village on the basis of a grid of 5×5 m. The combination potentialities between the units are varied, but in all cases the natural environment remains intact and the stone walls remain free.
The Turkish Ministry of Tourism has invested 50 million Turkish Pounds (13.8 million Swiss Francs) in this project, and at the present time nothing stands in the way of commencement of work. The zone to be built on extends over 12 ha and guarantees 93 m^2 of garden space to each resident. The total capacity will be 11,000 beds. A beach of 282,300 m^2 will be accessible via a bridge in lively colours.
The new harbour will have the name of the bay in which it is situated: Termera. Within the village transportation will be via barouches modelled on old-style Turkish chariots. Mozol Square, head of traffic, will be the community centre: reception, Turkish baths, restaurants, shops, cafés, discothèques, clubs, etc. Folklore shows and sports events will be held on another square.
The totality of this tourist region and its infrastructure comprising commerce, industry, agriculture, education and services, will be articulated in 3 sectors:
Sector 1: Agriculture with groves.
Sector 2: Production, with fruit preservation and canning, as well as extraction of ceramic clay.
Sector 3: Historic and tourist elements.
All the buildings are put up on masonry piling, 1.25 meters square in section. The masonry is of the pointed stone that is abundant in the neighbourhood. They are whitewashed, the lime also being local. The reed roofs are carried by timber beams and covered with a layer of concrete and a mattress of reddish earth. The vaulted elements interconnecting the different units are of asbestos-cement and likewise serve as breeze-ways.

Floating vacation hotels

Janez Hacin + Zlat Kralj, Geneva

(Pages 275–277)

As the architects have not imposed any detailed specifications on the engineers, the latter were able to develop a floating structure with optimum properties. With a length of 182 m and a width of 55 m, this pontoon structure is clearly distinguished in its proportions from a standard boat hull. Its weight will fall between 7000 and 8000 tons and its draught between 70 and 80 cm.
There is nothing unprecedented about such floating platforms; they have been in existence for a long time in the shape of drilling platforms, floating docks and cranes. However, they have been in operation up to now only in calm waters; on the open sea, a floating structure is bound to exhibit special properties.
To ensure stability, two solutions can be envisaged: Two independent caissons, one submerged, the other above the surface, are connected by beams maintaining an interval in which the waves meet little resistance. Another solution would be a standard boat hull of shallow draught equipped with stabilizers.
To assemble several pontoon structures, the following variants had to be studied:
a) The floating structures are connected by means of semi-mobile attachments, which does not obviate difficult structural problems.
b) The floating structures are moored separately or contiguously, and joined by light gangways.
However, prior to any actual project, it will be necessary to test models of pontoons in a testing basin in order to study the properties of the floating elements.
The interior part that is filled with water constitutes a marina, as proposed by the architects, and it can be constructed as a raft und stabilized by means of steel cables.
Excerpt from the report of the Maierform S.A., Geneva.