

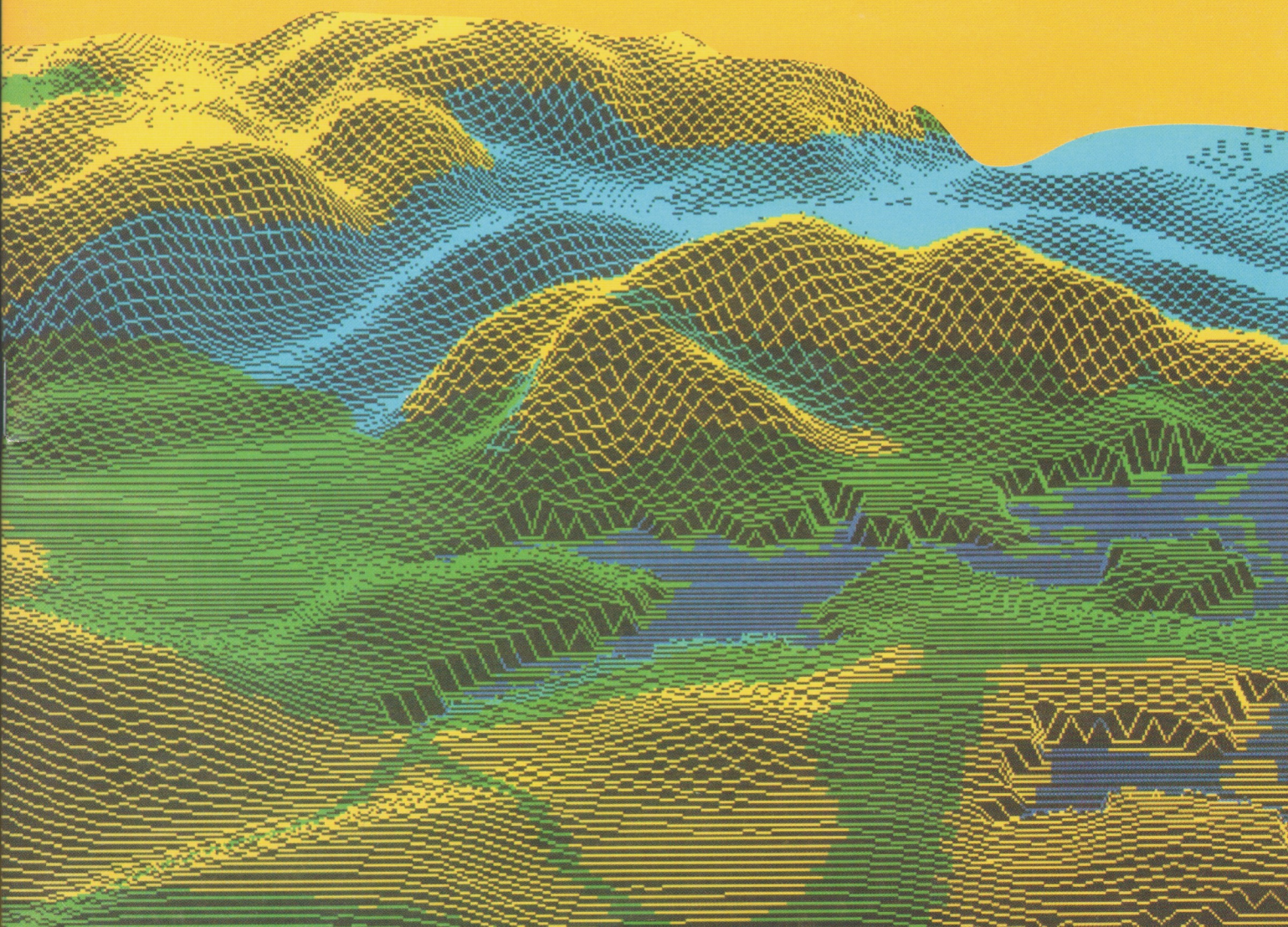
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SALZBURG CONGRESS ON URBAN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Antonín VAISHAR

Salzburg Congress on Urban Planning and Development (SCUPAD) is an independent non-profit organization with its statutes lodged with the City of Salzburg. It originates from the Salzburg Seminar and was founded by the fellows of the Seminar's Planning Session in 1965.

The SCUPAD objectives are as follows:

- to continue contacts among participants of all Urban Planning and related Sessions of the Salzburg Seminar,
- *to exchange research results and new concepts and policies in the field of urban planning and development,*
- *to organize an annual congress on urban planning and development, and to publish its results in the SCUPAD Newsletters and other publications.*

The 150 SCUPAD members are based all over Europe, in the Middle East and North America, and lately also in other countries. Professors represented in SCUPAD include architects, city and regional planners, ecologists, economists, geographers, lawyers, sociologists as well as politicians.

With its annual congresses, SCUPAD attempts at raising topics for discussion concerning contemporary nature, which are of critical relevance to urban planning and development. SCUPAD has developed its characteristic style as a more personal exchange among experts, so as to engender:

- informality, facilitating personal input rather than officially approved statements,
- *international and transdisciplinary discourse,*
- *a lively social and professional network that carries on beyond the Congress.*

The already 28th SCUPAD Congress was held at the beginning of June 1996 under the slogan REGIONS ON THE RISE and it was attended by 44 experts from 17 countries of Europe, North America and Near East. The most represented countries were Germany, Netherland, U.S.A., Israel and Italy.

Form of the Congress usually derives from its mother institution - the Salzburg Seminar. Key papers were mainly presented at the beginning of the event being followed by plenary discussions, targeted discussions within Seminar groups whose conclusions were made public at plenary meetings again. Then there was another round of discussions in the Seminar groups, which concerned issues aroused from the first discussion round. The whole event ended with a final plenary discussion. This arrangement gave a possibility to each participant to take part in the discussions. In addition, a considerable number of participants took an active part in the formulation of inquiries and answers as speakers, leaders of seminar groups, seminar group reporters, etc. Results from the Congress will be published in SCUPAD Newsletter.

The opening paper concerning Regional Planning and Development: The European Perspective was presented by Leo van der MEER (Arnhem, Netherlands). It tackled political frameworks of the regional issue a.o. also on the basis of principal documents of EUROPE 2000 from 1991 and EUROPE 2000+ from 1994. It appears that the major (unpronounced) reason to the increased concern of European Union for the regional issue is an effort to put a brake on the influence of powerful national countries such as Germany and France by dissecting them into regions which would be capable of mutual competition. The so called Euroregions between the EU countries and on the EU borders with

other European countries are expected to reduce marginality of these areas and - similarly as in the former case - to weaken the influence of national countries. An example can be seen in the present Swiss borders which have been compactly covered with a system of Euroregions that are gradually incorporated into the EU mechanism, so that it is only the very central part of the country which has been left outside the Union. The national states obviously begin to be perceived as an objective brake to the process of aggressive European Union integration by its advocates. They even become to considered politically obsolete - an anachronism which may be a nursery of Nazi ideologies as well as political and economic discrepancies. Although the whole process of regionalization in Europe is being declared a decentralization, it is necessary to answer the question whether the disintegration of Europe into the regions would not - on the other hand - increase the importance of Brussels as a EU center. It is also worth mentioning that in terms of the European Union the Czech Republic could have a maximum of two regions: Bohemia and Moravia. A more detailed differentiation would be simply not possible to cope with from the Center (Brussels).

The author demonstrated his scheme of development in Europe by means of a model called „Red Octopus”. The development belts stretching from the central European areas (Benelux-Rhineland/The Ruhr Basin-North Italy) to the East of Europe pass the Danubian Basin in the Vienna-Budapest-Beograd direction and the Polish plains in the Berlin-Warsaw-East Europe direction. The Czech space is outside this planned development belt, and neither Prague nor any other Czech city is included in the planned innovation centers - in contrast to Budapest, Warsaw, Beograd, Poznan, etc. The project was criticized by some participants as excessively identifying development with the major axes of technical infrastructure. Some opinions anticipate rather a development based on certain innovation poles, ie. important cities or agglomerations.

Contrasting aspects of regional experience were presented by Neal PIERCE (Washington, U.S.A.) who discussed urban regions, Peter TOWNROE (Sheffield) with comments on the restructuring of one of the largest metallurgy centers of the last 20 years, and Rajmond REHNICER (Sarajevo-Prague) who dealt with the problem of regional identity. Following were the concrete regional projects presented by Christian HAE-



Fig. 1 Leopoldskron Castle: seat of the Salzburg Seminar - provides august environs for efficient course of SCUPAD congresses. The Castle is known as a scene of one of the most successful super movies of all times „Sound of Music”



Fig. 2 The town of Salzburg is the fourth largest city in Austria. It is known as a cultural center associated with the name of W. A. MOZART and an important tourist center.

FLIGER (Basel, Euroregion Upper Rhineland), Dieter KEIM (Cottbus, Euroregion Frankfurt/Oder-Slubitz) and Anat GONEN (Haifa, Rural regions in Israel).

From the viewpoint of a geographer, the discussion was somewhat confused at the beginning with unnecessarily too much time being spent by attempts at a general definition of the region. It was apparently much more important to cast light on the objectives of concrete regionalization planned by the European Union, to clear the task of regional planning at implementation of these objectives, and to search the most appropriate methods. It must be said that regional planning has been recently going through a certain crisis even in West Europe, which was caused by changed conditions. Instead of making the projects to order (mostly for governments) a delicate game is opened between various actors in regions (politicians, businessmen, scientists, non-governmental institutions, citizens). It is possible to claim that the 28th SCUPAD Congress provided its participants with certain intellectual impulses in this process.

A part of the Congress was also the General Meeting of members. The forum was presented reports by the Secretary on membership issues and by the cashier on budgeting. In this connection an important fact is that SCUPAD is financed almost exclusively from membership dues (raised to 500 ATS per year) and conference fees. A new Committee was elected as follows: Chairman - Ron SHIFFMAN (New York), Vicechairmen - Leo van der MEER (Arnhem) and Frohmut GERHEUSER (Brugge), Secretary - Dick van ALPEN (Haag), Cashier - Gerhard SCHIMAK (Vienna), and members Angelika ARRAS (Basel), Elly BOOMSMA (Amsterdam), Enrique CALDERÓN (Madrid), Adam MAZOR (Haifa), Joachim SIEFERT (Düsseldorf), Bruno ZANON (Trento), Peter ZLONICKY (Dortmund). One seat has been left vacant for a possible member from East Europe. A basic problem much discussed at the meeting is the fact that experts from our part of the world find it impossible to travel - in some cases even several times a year - to the Committee workshops held in West Europe.

A topic of the 29th SCUPAD Congress will be „Planning and the Creativity“. The Congress will again be held in Salzburg from 30 May to 2 June 1997, and will be a part of the festival organized to the 50th anniversary of the Salzburg Seminar. Possible topics were discussed for further meetings of which the meeting in 1998 will be the thirtieth.