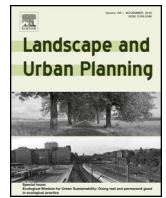




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Jaqueline Tyrwhitt translates Patrick Geddes for post world war two planning

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HIGHLIGHTS

- Tyrwhitt's editions of Geddes' works were highly influential in postwar planning.
- Tyrwhitt's interpretation of Geddes infused modernist discourse on urbanism.
- Tyrwhitt's interpretation of Geddes influenced UN human settlements policy.
- Ecological urbanism discourse builds on Tyrwhitt's interpretation of Geddes.

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ABSTRACT

Beginning in Britain during the Second World War and continuing internationally through the 1970s Jaqueline Tyrwhitt (1905–83)—a British planner, editor and educator—played a key role not only in stimulating interest in Patrick Geddes' planning ideas for post World War Two reconstruction, but also in formulating the Geddesian branch of the planning arm of the postwar modern movement. The range of Tyrwhitt's contributions must be placed in the context of her efforts to reactivate transnational exchanges of planning ideas and practices that had been interrupted by the war. Tyrwhitt's work at various educational institutions in Britain and North America, as a member of the inner circle of CIAM (Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne), as a consultant to the United Nations, and in collaboration with Greek planner Constantinos Doxiadis (1913–75) in the Ekistics movement, positioned her to insert her synthesis of Geddesian bioregionalism and modernist social-aesthetic ideals firmly within the emergent global discourse on sustainable urbanism.

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1. Introduction

Patrick Geddes (1854–1932) is honored as a founding father of Anglo American regional planning and pioneer of holistic, community-based design (Hall, 2014), a tradition that today finds expression in the concept of ecological urbanism (Mostafavi, 2010; Spirm, 2012). Yet at the time of his death, Geddes' legacy was far from established (Meller, 1990). His publications were difficult to obtain and hard to understand. He mainly exerted influence through personal contact, inspiring devoted disciples (notably, leaders of the British town planning movement including Raymond Unwin, George Pepler, H.V. Lanchester and Patrick Abercrombie;

and members of the Regional Planning Association of America, especially Lewis Mumford, Benton Mackaye and Catherine Bauer). People who became familiar with Geddes's ideas before World War Two learned about them second hand. The enduring impact of Geddes on planning thought is generally attributed in large part to Mumford, who interpreted Geddes' ideas through his own writings (Novak, 1995).

This paper provides a more nuanced historical perspective on the origins and evolution of Geddes's legacy by illuminating the key role of Jaqueline Tyrwhitt (1905–83)—a British town planner, landscape architect, editor and educator—in stimulating the mid-century revival of interest in Geddes's ideas. Her edited versions of Geddes (1947), and an abridged edition of *Cities in Evolution* (1949; 1915)—appeared at a critical moment when planning was becoming consolidated as a separate profession, academic field, and an arm of government, and had a profound impact on planning

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and design theory, practice and pedagogy worldwide. Moreover, in the course of planning for the physical reconstruction of postwar Britain, Tyrwhitt forged and promoted an influential synthesis of planning ideas grounded in Geddes' bioregionalism and the ideals of European modernism. She exerted significant influence on the transmission, translation, and evolution of a Geddesian line of thought now prominent in discourses on sustainable development and ecological urbanism.

Building on my previous Tyrwhitt-related work (Shoshkes, 2013, 2014, 2015), this paper analyzes key texts produced by Tyrwhitt, and archival material located at the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Library, libraries at Edinburgh, Strathclyde, and Harvard Universities, the Architectural Association, and a private collection of Tyrwhitt's papers to situate those texts in their contemporary and current contexts. The arguments in this paper will proceed along roughly chronological lines.

2. Jaqueline Tyrwhitt: formative years

Tyrwhitt, who was raised in London, trained for a career as a garden designer, including a year (1924–25) at the Architectural Association (AA)—which ran the leading school of architecture in Britain—and practiced what is now called landscape architecture for several years. During the Depression, wanting to do more meaningful work, she studied economics, and became an organizer for the League of Industry, a national effort to federate self-governing industries. In 1935, in order to learn more about the integration of industry with agriculture, Tyrwhitt took a job at Dartington Hall, the estate rehabilitated by Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst as an experiment in rural revitalization. Tyrwhitt also became involved in the Industries Group of Political and Economic Planning (PEP), which was financed by the Elmhirsts. Organized by biologists Julian Huxley and Morris Carr-Saunders, PEP signaled the expansion of ecological concepts into the realm of public affairs (Anker, 2001). It was probably at Dartington Hall that Tyrwhitt came across an out of print edition of *Geddes's Cities in Evolution* (1915), which inspired her interest in town planning. (Geddes and his son, Arthur, had a close relationship to Leonard Elmhirst as a result of their work together in India.) In 1936, Tyrwhitt decided to study Geddes's ecological approach at the new school of planning that had recently opened at AA.

The School of Planning and Research for National Development (SPRND) opened as an offshoot of the AA School of Architecture in 1935 under the direction of E.A.A. Rowse (1896–ca. 1982). Rowse was a great admirer of Geddes, as were several members of the Advisory Board, including Unwin and Pepler. Geddes's ideas provided the conceptual basis for the school's curriculum, specifically that a plan must be preceded by regional and civic surveys encompassing social and economic as well as physical factors. Tyrwhitt enrolled in the two-year diploma course in October 1937. However, in June 1938, AA terminated its relationship with Rowse and SPRND. Rowse managed to keep his school open until shortly after England declared war on Germany. When Tyrwhitt passed her exams in July 1939, she was among SPRND's first and last graduates—and had become “an ardent disciple” of Geddes.

3. The war years

Tyrwhitt's ideas about planning and the education of planners crystallized during the war years, which she spent in London as director of the Association for Planning and Regional Reconstruction (APRR), a new organization created to carry on SPRND's research work. The war gave impetus to a consensus that had been forming among planners since the 1920s and 1930s on the broad conception of regional planning pioneered by Geddes. APRR

embarked on a broad research agenda encompassing all aspects of regional planning, including industry, agriculture and nutrition, population, housing and recreation, health and education, and uses of waste. Its work encompassed multiple scales, from the flow of resources within the global system, to the size and location of schools, to kitchen fixtures. Research reports were published in standardized broadsheet format to facilitate communication across specializations. APRR also developed methods for cross-disciplinary survey research and for displaying survey data through a range of media, including thematic maps, reports, books, diagrams and photographs, thereby operationalizing Geddes's principles for application to postwar reconstruction.

An important stimulus to formalizing this new concept of planning was the wartime correspondence course that APRR ran for armed forces personnel. In the absence of a textbook, Tyrwhitt compiled readings by Geddes and Geddesians, such as Unwin, Mumford and Abercrombie, among others. To run the course, on behalf of the War Office, she redesigned Rowse's pre-war school as the School of Planning and Research for Regional Development (SPRRD), operated as an arm of APRR. Tyrwhitt's career as planning educator began when the first registrants arrived in December 1943. By war's end over 1500 had participated, Ian McHarg among them (McHarg, 1996). Hundreds more enrolled in the post-war three-month completion course that Tyrwhitt ran for returning soldiers who wanted professional certification, among them Percy Johnson-Marshall and John F. C. Turner. Tyrwhitt was especially proud that SPRRD trained a small, but influential cohort who made significant contributions to postwar reconstruction worldwide as they assumed positions throughout the Commonwealth, in developing nations, and as advisors to the UN, diffusing Geddes' ideas very widely (Meller, 1990: 323).

3.1. Forging a synthesis

Through her friendship with H.V. Lanchester (1863–1953), who had worked with Geddes in India, Tyrwhitt became privy to one of the few complete sets of town planning reports Geddes had made in India between 1915 and 1919. Lanchester had tried unsuccessfully to publish a selection from these reports, so Tyrwhitt offered to help. In 1944, she convinced Lund Humphries to publish excerpts which she would edit and illustrate, assisted by Arthur Geddes. As she familiarized herself with the reports she also became involved with members of the Modern Architectural Research (MARS) Group, the British branch of *Congres International d'Architecture Moderne* (CIAM). Tyrwhitt first articulated her synthesis of Geddes's planning ideas and modernist ideals in “Town Planning,” her article in the first issue (1945) of the *Architects' Year Book*—a journal committed to showing how European modernism could be adapted to postwar conditions in England.

Tyrwhitt (1945: 11–12) opens “Town Planning” boldly, stating: “Regional planning and neighborhood planning have come to the fore... [T]owns of many sizes can be countenanced, provided . . . that, at one level, they fit into the general framework of the region and, at the other level, they are suitably differentiated in coherent neighborhood units.” Once a regional planning unit is determined, a multidisciplinary team conducts a survey, their purpose being “to see the region always as a whole and, by pooling the individual knowledge . . . of its members to enable a balanced and dynamic development continually to take place.” This approach is presumably scientific and democratic: “The distribution of a sufficient range of clearly presented survey maps, setting down the salient facts of the district as a whole, would provide all interested people with a reasonable basis for informed criticism and judgement of local town planning proposals.”

Modern technology also demands regional planning to make the supply of infrastructure for transportation, communications

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