

Dissertation presented at Uppsala University to be publicly examined in Brusewitzsalen, Gamla Torget 6, Uppsala, Friday, May 11, 2007 at 10:15 for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The examination will be conducted in Swedish.

**Abstract**

Strömberg, A. 2007. Samordning, hyfs och reda. Stabilitet och förändring i svensk planpolitik 1945–2005. (Co-ordination, Manners and Order. Stability and Change in Swedish Planning Policy). Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. *Skrifter utgivna av Statsvetenskapliga föreningen i Uppsala* 166. 277 pp. Uppsala. ISBN 978-91-554-6846-0.

Based on some central assumptions of the Enlightenment – particularly the ability of mankind to change and choose its future – this thesis investigates how thoughts on planning have changed since the Second World War. A Weberian ideal type of modern planning is outlined, based on the concepts of rationalism, voluntarism, utopianism and the collective good. Two main debates concerning urban and spatial planning are then studied with an argumentative discourse analysis, using the ideal type as a point of comparison.

In the international *academic* planning debate, five different discourses are identified, with competing views on what planning is and ought to be about. In contrast to previous research, the study concludes that modern and enlightened values are still highly estimated, even in discourses formulated as ‘post-modern turns’ in planning.

In the Swedish *political* planning debate four central policy processes are analysed: the development of the Building Act in 1947, the political background of the National Physical Planning Act adopted in 1972, the lengthy political process behind the Plan and Building Act which was finally accepted in 1987, and some reconsiderations concerning the Planning and Building Act after 1990.

Previous research claims to have identified a great shift in planning thought over the time period studied. It is maintained that a rational model based on the assumption that public planning can guide or even bind the future to a blueprint has been replaced by a more incremental, communicative or post-modern planning practice. However, this thesis shows how Swedish planning policy has rather been characterized by stability and continuity. Ever since the 1960s, it has been dominated by a rational, albeit adaptable discourse, influenced by modern and enlightened values.

*Keywords:* planning, policy, built environment, Enlightenment, modernity, discourse analysis, Sweden

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