

THE RISE OF URBAN HISTORY IN BRITAIN

*c.*1960-1978

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Abstract

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The advent of urban history is noteworthy for its early success, longevity, and the dominant personality of H.J. Dyos. Much that has been written on the rise of urban history in Britain emerged following Dyos' death in 1978. These texts do not provide a neutral assessment of Dyos' role, nor do they consider the underlying factors behind the emergence of the field. The establishment of the Urban History Group and urban history in Britain are inextricably linked. A distinct sub-field of History, urban history emerged in the post-war decades that saw aspects of British society undergoing rapid transformation. Higher education opened up to previously under-represented sectors of society. Scholars arrived wanting to explore a wider range of topics that reflected their diverse social and economic backgrounds. To cope with the increased range, the discipline of History underwent a period of fragmentation into specialist subject areas. Urban history was one such area. Past urban societies provided historians with a location in which they could study class structure and social mobility. The built legacy of Britain's urban past underwent reassessment, with formerly ignored remnants subject to contemporary valorisation and demands for protection. For some, the urban was a neutral location in which to study social systems. For urban historians, the urban milieu and the processes of urbanization were the determining factors that fashioned urban society. The establishment of the Urban History Group and the rise of urban history was a reflection of increased interest in the urban past and urban society. Unravelling the underlying factors behind the appearance of urban history revealed the process of disciplinary sub-field formation, the main actors, their role, their motives, and the importance of academic structures. The research places the post-war formation of urban history within the wider context of Britain's shifting social structures and urban agenda.

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Page 32 Frontispiece. Clough Williams-Ellis, *England and the Octopus* (London, 1928).

Glossary

ATV	Associated Television
CUH	Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester
DC	H.J. Dyos Collection, Special Collections, David Wilson Library, University of Leicester
EHS	Economic History Society
ELH	Centre for English Local History, University of Leicester
IHR	Institute of Historical Research
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
LWT	London Weekend Television
OU	Open University
UHG	Urban History Group in the United Kingdom
<i>UHN</i>	<i>Urban History Newsletter</i> in the United Kingdom
UHG-US	Urban History Group in the United States
<i>UHN-US</i>	<i>Urban History Newsletter</i> in the United States
VSC	Victorian Studies Centre, University of Leicester

Chapter One

The Rise of Urban History in Britain, c.1960-1978

‘I have been lucky enough to catch one of the biggest breakers to have risen in Modern History since the war.’¹

This thesis is an examination of the rise of urban history as a distinct academic entity within the wider discipline of History. It considers the forces underpinning the initial inspiration behind its establishment and driving its continuing growth in the first decades of its existence. It explores H.J. Dyos’ role as the often acknowledged motivating force behind the UHG and the wider field of urban history in Britain, although his position is not focused on exclusively nor is it unquestioned. The establishment of urban history is placed within the context of wider cultural shifts, specifically; the opening up of higher education to previously under-represented sectors of British society, and to a change in attitude to the country’s urban past.

In the post-war era, the academic discipline of History² experienced a period of fragmentation into subject specialisations. It was embracing new topics such as class structure and social mobility, the result of an influx of new historians from previously under-represented groups following the social upheavals of the Second World War and accelerated thanks to the implementation of the Robbins Report.³ Outside of academia, a myriad of concerns over urban society generally moved the topic up the political and public agenda. Contradictory pressures to redevelop city centres in order to cope with the rise of privately owned motor transport led to fears over the loss of historic urban environment, whilst at the same time, people were no longer willing to accept slum dwellings. Post-war reconstruction, new road layouts, slum clearances, and their CIAM⁴ influenced replacements, changed the experience of the urban radically. New mass-housing schemes often led to concerns, first raised in the United States, around the concept of an ‘urban problem’. Fears over the loss of the historic urban environment led to increased calls for its protection. Placed within this wider context, urban history’s

¹ H.J. Dyos, ‘Urbanity and Suburbanity’ in D. Cannadine and D. Reeder, (eds) *H.J. Dyos: Exploring the Urban Past: Essays in Urban History* (Cambridge, 1982), p.19.

² (H)istory is used throughout this thesis when discussing the discipline and (h)istory for its object of research.

³ Higher Education, Report of the Committee appointed by the Prime Minister under the Chairmanship of Lord Robbins 1961-63, Cmnd. 2154 (London, 1963).

⁴ *Congrès International d’Architecture Moderne*. An organization founded in 1928 and disbanded in 1959 whose members aimed to spread the principles of the Modern Movement in architecture and urbanism.

emergence not only sheds new light on how disciplinary sub-fields are established but also the extent to which they are a reflection of wider cultural shifts. In order for this to be achieved, this thesis has not only considered the processes and structures underlying the establishment of urban history, but also whether or not they were a response to, or reflection of, concerns gathering momentum around the urban future, and correspondingly, interest in the urban past. Urban History was just one sub-field of many that emerged in the discipline of History during this period. The methodology chosen for this thesis and the choice of sources has allowed a consideration of a number of issues to a new depth and manner. Unlike its counterpart in the United States, very little has been written on the development of urban history in Britain.⁵

Personal Reflections

Although the UHG was established 50 years ago, when compared to some university subjects it can be categorised as a new presence within academic History. The death of its main personality Dyos in 1978 promoted a wave of texts produced as a memorial to the charismatic Professor of Urban History. The many obituaries produced at the time reflected on his unstinting promotion of the UHG and the field of urban history alongside his work with the Victorian Society, but understandably few went into any depth on the underlying factors surrounding the formation of the field. David Cannadine and David Reeder's collection of Dyos' essays and publications was also framed within two celebratory texts from the editors and so lacks objectivity. Both historians worked with and were close to Dyos and therefore, whilst informative, both Reeder's introduction⁶ and Cannadine's conclusion were uncritical retrospectives of Dyos'

⁵ This is not the case in America where there has been far more self-analysis within the Urban History than in Britain, and this will be discussed in chapter 7 of this thesis 'The Extent of an Anglo-American Urban History?' However for a small example of American texts see: C. Abbott, 'Retrospection and Research: Reflections on the "Modes of Inquiry"' *The Urban History Newsletter*, no. 5 (March, 1991), pp.1-2. A.F. Davis, 'The American Historian vs. The City: Part One', *Social Studies*, 56, no. 3 (1965), pp.91-96. M.H. Ebner, 'Urban History: Retrospect and Prospect', *The Journal of American History*, 68, no. 1 (1981), pp.69-84. C.N. Glaab, M.H. Rose and W.H. Wilson, 'The History of Kansas City Projects and the Origins of American Urban History', *Journal of Urban History*, 18, no. 4 (1992), pp.371-394. E. Lampard, 'American Historians and the Study of Urbanization', *The American Historical Review*, 67, no. 1, (1961), pp.49-61. B. McKelvey, 'Urban History Today', *The American History Review*, 57, no. 4 (1952), pp.919-929. R.C. Wade, 'An Agenda for Urban History' in Herbert J. Bass (ed.), *The State of American History* (Chicago, 1970), pp. 43-70. M. White and L. White, 'The American Intellectual verses the American City' *Daedalus* 90, no. 1 (1961), pp.166-179.

O. Handlin and J. Burchard, *The Historian and the City* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963).

⁶ D. Reeder, 'H.J. Dyos and the Urban Process' in D. Cannadine and D. Reeder (eds), *Exploring the Urban Past: Essays in Urban History by H.J. Dyos* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. xi-xix.

career and role within the development of the field.⁷ The short section at the beginning of S.G. Checkland's 1978 article titled 'The Dyos Phenomenon' can also be placed in the category of unquestioning memorial texts.⁸ Written by insiders, these texts should be seen as non-neutral interpretations of events. The 1983 publication of papers from the conference organized to consider the future direction of urban history did contain a number of essays that looked to the earlier years of the field but only as a springboard to considering its future.⁹ Once again they did not analyse the underlying factors behind the formation of the field.¹⁰ The earliest attempt to explore the development of the field in Britain and Dyos' role at its head in an apparently critical manner came from the American historian S.J. Mandelbaum in 1985.¹¹ However, whilst considering Dyos' approach to the field and his role in the UHG, Mandelbaum failed to explore the wider contextual factors behind the successful formation of the group and the subsequent emergence of urban history. Mandelbaum analysed Dyos' written output before noting many of the tributes made following his death. Mandelbaum, who considered himself a 'stranger in the land' of urban history,¹² came to the conclusion that Dyos' attempts to form an integrated field were not only a reflection of Dyos' wish to be at the centre of developments but also grounded in his 'mystic' view of cities.¹³ Mandelbaum argued that Dyos' aim to attempt to create a coherent whole from the disparate collection of approaches to the study of urban history had led to unproductive polarities and specious debates around the distinction between field and discipline.¹⁴ Whilst it has been suggested that Mandelbaum's article was a thinly veiled attack on Dyos,¹⁵ it remains the only attempt to explore the position of Dyos at the head of the UHG and raises a number of important questions that are reconsidered throughout this thesis. Two further contributions were added in 2008 with Paul Laxton's light-hearted article that utilised personal reminiscences and early editorials from the *UHN* to describe the first years of the

⁷ D. Cannadine, 'Urban History in the United Kingdom: the Dyos Phenomenon and After' *Exploring the Urban Past: Essays in Urban History by H.J. Dyos* (Cambridge, 1982), pp.203-222.

⁸ S.G. Checkland, 'Urban History in the British Idiom', *Urban History Review*, 1 (1978), pp. 57-77.

⁹ D. Fraser and A. Sutcliffe (eds), *The Pursuit of Urban History* (London, 1983).

¹⁰ D. Fraser and A. Sutcliffe, 'Introduction' pp. xi-xxx; S.G. Checkland, 'An Urban History Horoscope', pp. 449-466. T. Hershberg, 'The Future of Urban History' pp. 428-448, in D. Fraser and A. Sutcliffe (eds), *The Pursuit of Urban History* (London, 1983).

¹¹ S.J. Mandelbaum, 'H.J. Dyos and British Urban History', *The Economic History Review*, 38 (1985), pp. 437-447.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 446.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 443.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 443.

¹⁵ A number of historians interviewed for this thesis raised Mandelbaum's article and have suggested it was particularly unfair but all wanted their comments on the text classed as off the record and therefore it has not been possible to provide direct attribution.

UHG; however, there was no real analysis of the events or any attempt to contextualize its establishment.¹⁶ Despite this omission, it does provide a succinct overview of early developments. A more in-depth consideration of changing approaches toward urban history can be found in Rodger and Sweet's online article 'The Changing Nature of Urban History' Rodger and Sweet explored the changing approaches to the subject and proved extremely useful; however, once again it lacked any discussion of the underlying factors behind the emergence of the field.¹⁷ Finally, as part of the Centre for Urban History's silver jubilee celebrations in 2010, a one day conference *Urban History Past and Future*¹⁸ was organised that brought together scholars who had a direct or indirect relationship with the Centre to debate the path urban history took in the past and its trajectory for the future.¹⁹ As part of the celebrations, a booklet was published, *Unfinished Work: an essay in honour of H. J. Dyos*.²⁰ Its author, Peter Jones, was a former student of Dyos and this text is very much a reflection of the standing in which Jones held his former tutor and therefore was an uncritical assessment of Dyos' role and personal attributes. Yet, as with many of these personal reflections, Jones's text provides insight into some of the personal issues driving Dyos' interest in urban society and the study of its history. The majority of existing work on the development of British urban history can therefore be categorized as non-neutral assessment of Dyos' role at the head of the UHG and written from a personal perspective. As such, apart from Mandelbaum's work and the short online article from Rodger and Sweet, very little critical analysis has been written on the development of the UHG and the field of Urban History in Britain. This thesis corrects this omission by providing a new and in depth analysis of the processes and actors central to the field's development.

Underpinning all the researches in this thesis are a number of core questions. Why were historians relatively late to address the history of the urban? What were the factors behind the change in attitudes that led to a group of likeminded scholars, the majority economic historians but including representatives from other disciplines interested in the urban arena, coming together and forming the UHG? How did its formation lead to

¹⁶ P. Laxton, 'Round-table Discussions and Small Conferences: Reflections on the Slow Gestation of the Urban History Group', *Urban History*, 32, no. 2 (2008), pp. 275-287.

¹⁷ R. Rodger and R. Sweet, 'The Changing Nature of Urban History', <http://www.history.ac.uk/ihr/Focus/City/articles/sweet.html> [Accessed 13/8/2010].

¹⁸ 'Urban History Past and Future'. Centre for Urban History, 3 July 2010.

¹⁹ G.W. Davies, 'Conference Report: Urban History Past and Future' <http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/urbanhistory/news/archive/anniversary/anniversary-report> [accessed 10/12/2011].

²⁰ P. Jones, *Unfinished Work: An Essay in Honour of H. J. Dyos* (Leicester, 2010).

the establishment of Urban History as a distinct field of History? Did the increased interest in urban history reflect wider changes in attitude towards the urban in Britain? Moreover, was the field's establishment and early accomplishments the result of developments within the higher education sector or simply the efforts of the scholars involved? How did one scholar come to be seen as the dominant personality driving the early trajectory of the field and to what extent was this accurate and was it a positive or negative state of affairs? It considers the actors at the heart of developments and their motives for promoting a new sub-field of History. Considering the wider context of Britain's changing urban agenda in the post-war years and exploring the extent to which it was reflected within the higher education sector provides the context for the examination of a set of processes integral to discipline sub-field formation. In other words, what aspects of the study of the urban and the processes of urbanization did Dyos *et al* argue were so inadequate that the topic warranted its own specialised field of study?

What is Urban History?

Cities and towns are a palimpsest: the result of a series of interactions between innumerable generations of human beings.²¹ As such, it is in a continual state of flux, not only as a reflection of changing human society but also a generator of change: it is a site of permanent transition and discontinuities. It is also more than simply a physical manifestation of human cohabitation, as Robert E. Park noted in 1915,

We can think of the city, that is to say, the place and the people, with all the machinery, sentiments, customs, and administrative devices that go with it, public opinion and street railways, the individual man and the tools that he uses, as something more than a mere collective entity. We may think of it as a mechanism - a psychological mechanism - in and through which private and political interests find corporate expression. Much of what we ordinarily regard as the city - its charters, formal organization, buildings, street railways, and so forth - is, or seems to be, mere artefact. However, it is only when and in so far as these things, through use and want, connect themselves, like a tool in the hand of a man, with the vital forces resident in individuals and in the community that they assume the institutional form. As the whole the city is a growth. It is the undesigned product of the labors (*sic*) of successive generations of men...It is the structure of the city which impresses us by its visible vastness and complexity, but this structure has its basis, nevertheless, in human nature.²²

²¹ H.J. Dyos, 'Agenda for Urban Historians' in H.J. Dyos (ed.) *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), p.5.

²² R.E. Park, 'The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the City Environment', *American Journal of Sociology*, 20, no. 5, (1915), pp.577-558.

The urban entity is as much a psychological creation as a physical one. For Park, it was an arena within which the ingenuity of human nature constantly struggled against the economic, social and technological Malthusian restraints incumbent upon an expanding and ever complex urban existence. The urban provided a perfect location for Park to explore the multifaceted social structures fashioned by its inhabitants in response to its complexity: a laboratory petri dish in which the resilience of human nature could be studied.²³ Some fifty years later, the Marxist architectural historian Manfredo Tafuri similarly wrote of the complex nature of the urban and the consequential difficulties for anyone interested in recording its correspondingly complex history. Like Park beforehand, Tafuri saw the urban as a site of an on-going battle, but unlike Park, it was the physical remains and artefacts of this conflict that intrigued him, not the psychological response of its participants.

The construction of a physical space is certainly the site of a ‘battle’; a proper urban analysis demonstrates this clearly. That such a battle is not totalizing, that it leaves borders, remains, residues, is also an indisputable fact. And thus a vast field of investigation is opened up – an investigation of the limits of languages, of the boundaries of techniques, of the thresholds “that provide density.” The threshold, the boundary, the limit all “define”: it is in the nature of such definition that the object so circumscribed immediately becomes evanescent.²⁴

In acknowledging the complexity and transient nature of the urban setting, Tafuri recognized that any attempt to study its broad history would be a vast and fraught undertaking. Such a task, he noted, would necessarily require an expansion of historical techniques in order to comprehend such an ephemeral phenomenon as the urban milieu. Both scholars, although of different generations, considered the urban as a man-made construction whose form was the result of a complex set of social forces and inter-relationships wrought out of a collision of the material and the psychological: an artefact and a living organism at one and the same time. These two scholars are simply examples representing two different approaches to the study of the urban; the first interested in the psychological and social consequences of urbanization and the latter its

²³ Park listed a series of questions directed at gaining understanding of human nature generally. See Park, ‘The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior’, pp.583-84 and 590.

²⁴ M. Tafuri, *The Sphere and the Labyrinth: Avant-Gardes and Architecture from Piranesi to the 1970s* (Cambridge, MA., 1987). p.8

physical remains. Their respective disciplinary backgrounds, Park was a sociologist and Tafuri an architectural historian, ensured they differed in their particular area of focus. However, the primary object of research remained the urban. But was there space on the British academic continuum for a field of study sufficiently flexible to embrace these two scholarly approaches, along with many other diverse approaches, to the urban? The appearance of Urban Studies in Britain with the publication of the journal *Urban Studies* in 1964 and the formation of the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies (CURS) at the University of Birmingham in 1966 could be considered as one answer. Urban Studies, as primarily a discipline within social science, concentrated on the contemporary consequences of urbanization, and so space remained for an academic institution motivated by a historical curiosity about the urban condition.

Unlike Park and Tafuri though, it was not just a single aspect of the urban arena that the early urban historians wished to place under the historians' gaze, but all the causes and effects of urbanization: the physical, social, and the psychological. However, as Tafuri acknowledged, and as it will be shown later in the thesis, the term *urban* itself is far from stable in its meaning and subject to constant debate and deliberation. Here, the term *urban*, when used throughout this thesis, is adopted in preference to the more indistinct and variable interpretations associated with the taxonomy of *town* and *city*. In the context of this thesis the nomenclature *urban* is understood as representing a setting demonstrating the widely recognised set of characteristics which are dissimilar from those understood to be rural, especially as opposed to the countryside, and not necessarily delimited to areas defined by political or municipal administration or boundaries. The terms *city* and *town*, or any variant thereof, are used only when they reflect their original use in a specific source or in a source's contemporary understanding of the terms. A number of other expressions used in this thesis can be ambiguous and therefore require clarification. The use of Britain, Great Britain, or British refers to England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In order to differentiate between the institutional manifestation of the discipline of History and Urban History and history as their topics of research, the convention of initial capitalization is adopted.²⁵

²⁵ A more nuanced exploration of Urban History's object of research is dealt with later in the thesis.

British Historians and the Urban

As one of the first modern nations to see its population transcend its rural and agricultural roots to become primarily urban and industrial, the remnants of the battle described by Park and Tafuri are clearly evident in Britain. The urban as an artefact and palimpsest has become ever more ubiquitous: increasingly the experience of the majority. Nonetheless, despite Britain's status as a predominantly urban nation, its historians were relatively late to look to the urban as an object of research in itself. This appreciation did not occur until the decades following the end of World War Two when a small number of historians began a process that would eventually lead to the formation of a field of historical study whose attention would be fixed on the urban as an object of research. Rather than the urban as a petri dish that simply provided a location in which human behaviour could be studied, they identified the importance of the urban and the processes of urbanization as variables that shaped those behaviours. In particular, this group of historians wanted to understand the forces underpinning the processes concurrent with urbanization: social and economic forces, both internal and external, that helped shaped urban expansion. It is this endeavour to establish urban history in Britain that is the focus of this thesis. The development of the field will be set not only within the context of changes in the wider discipline of History itself but also developments in wider society, particularly the changing perception of the urban generally.

The research has encountered many discussions, both of a historical and contemporary nature, on how urban history could or should be categorized: fully-fledged discipline, sub-discipline, stand-alone field, sub-field of History, or simply a loose conglomeration of scholars interested in exploring aspects of the urban past. Each of the above adjectives is associated with specific disciplinary and pedagogical connotations and it is therefore crucial that a definition is set as early as possible. Any attempt to define the nomenclature of urban history as the object of research must be distinct and separate from the deliberations found within the early field itself when many of the central actors engaged in discussions on the identity of the new academic entity they were helping to establish. These debates form part of urban history's genetic makeup and are therefore explored within a number of the subsequent chapters. What follows is therefore a clarification of the methodology adopted for defining urban history in terms of *this* thesis' object of research.

Discipline, Field, or Loose Consortium?

The concept of a discipline is complex despite the simple etymological origins which combine *discipulus*, meaning pupil, and *disciplina*, meaning teaching. A discipline provides academic training in the methods, theories, and cultural norms associated with that discipline, as well as imposing behavioural constraints codified within that institutional setting.²⁶ Soffer used the phrase ‘the natural history of disciplines’ when describing the formation of these structures,²⁷ others have talked about the process in evolutionary terms,²⁸ but no matter how they are described, the formation of the structures and territorial boundaries are necessary to guarantee the validity of a discipline’s academic identity and the identity of the associated scholars.

R.N. Soffer argued that there were two dominant approaches to the study of discipline formation: institutional chronologies of different areas of study and efforts to place disciplines within an intellectual and sociological milieu.²⁹ A combination of both can be found in this thesis. Soffer explored the myriad of interrelated processes leading to ‘one set of ideas and practices [becoming] articulate, systematic, and professional’ while another set failed.³⁰ Soffer believed disciplines needed a set of primary conditions to succeed, including ‘proficient and insightful leadership; a consensus on a common methodology, aims and objectives amongst practitioners; organisational structure; a system of training;’ and, perhaps most importantly, ‘adequate funding.’³¹ And, in order to ascertain the relative strengths and weaknesses of these conditions, Soffer argued the historian needed to undertake a wide-ranging analysis of the ‘intellectual, biographical, sociological, comparative, and prosopographical’ environment in order to understand the detailed processes underlying a discipline’s development.³² She further argued that the choice of subjects taught was influenced by a range of factors not only within academia but from wider society.³³ This is a central concept of this thesis.

²⁶ A. Krishnan, ‘What Are Academic Disciplines? Some Observations on the Disciplinary vs. Interdisciplinary Debate’, *NCRM Working Papers Series* (Southampton, 2009), p.8.

²⁷ R.N. Soffer, ‘Why do Disciplines Fail? The Strange Case of British Sociology’, *The English Historical Review* 97, no. 385 (1985), p.767.

²⁸ H.A. Goldstein and J. Carmin, ‘Compact, Diffuse, or Would-be Discipline? Assessing Cohesion in Planning Scholarship, 1963-2002’ *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 26 (2006), p.66.

²⁹ R.N. Soffer, *Discipline and Power: The University, History, and the Making of an English Elite, 1870-1930* (Stanford, 1994), p.2.

³⁰ Soffer, ‘Why Do Disciplines Fail?’ p.768.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p.768.

³² *Ibid.*, p.2

³³ *Ibid.*, pp.2-4.

This link was expounded further when she considered the reasons why some disciplines succeeded while others failed. The examination of a failed discipline would, she proposed, shed light on the reasons why others succeeded. Her choice was early twentieth-century British Sociology. Post-1945 Sociology has been a successful university discipline, yet it failed in the pre-war period when other social sciences were prospering. At this time, Sociology had succeeded in establishing itself as a professional academic discipline in America, France and Germany but its failure in Britain was, according to Soffer, due to a lack of 'charismatic personalities, the energetic activity of a group of believers, and the receptivity of institutions' required for its establishment as a professional academic subject.³⁴

The creation and continued existence of a discipline is dependent upon the presence of a set of practices - overt and covert, conscious and subliminal - that reinforce academics and academic institutions through the organisation of research, publication, and teaching.³⁵ The hallmarks of a discipline can therefore be summarised as a series of shared objectives and principles that form the basis for the identification of a problem, in other words, a particular object of research; the provision of a set of procedures as a means of examining that object of research in a measured and consistent manner, ensuring the creation and amassing of new knowledge; the dissemination of the new knowledge through recognised academic channels; and its teaching through an agreed standard of educational techniques and systems.³⁶

Far from all disciplines showing similar traits, many fail to display every variant of the structures and organisation, but the more they do the greater the discipline's stability and its longevity.³⁷ Those that exhibit a greater number of these characteristics can be described as compact disciplines with high levels of internal cohesion, as compared to diffuse disciplines whose goals are less focused and therefore show little internal cohesion. Those with higher levels of cohesion tend to have developed over generations of scholars, whereas disciplines, or prospective disciplines, with less internal cohesion, are in more danger of being subsumed within larger academic units or from suffering

³⁴ Ibid., p.768.

³⁵ T. Becher and P.R. Trowler, *Academic Tribes and Territories: Intellectual Enquiry and the Culture of Disciplines* (Maidenhead, 1989).

³⁶ Goldstein, 'Compact, Diffuse, or Would-be Discipline?' p.68.; A. Krishnan, 'What are Academic Disciplines?', p.9.

³⁷ Krishnan, 'What Are Academic Disciplines?' p.10.

from outright extinction.³⁸ As Soffer argued, one of the most important factors leading to high levels of internal disciplinary cohesion was the presence of a dominant guiding figure.³⁹ This thesis discusses the presence of H.J. Dyos in this role for urban history in Britain.⁴⁰ It has often been noted that while he was at the heart of developments, urban history in Britain was centrally organised from the University of Leicester.⁴¹

Disciplinary Attributes

Along with a strong central personality, urban history exhibited many of the attributes considered vital for the establishment of a fully-fledged discipline. The founders wanted to address a perceived failure by historians to study the city as a determinant factor in the formation of social structures which as an object of research had been dominated for too long by the social sciences.⁴² Urban history had an object of study (the urban environment); a *raison d'être* (to address the lack of historical analysis of social structures within that environment); an institutional base with the Urban History Group; a dominant central figure in H.J. Dyos; a method of creating a canon of work and the ability of dissemination within the *Urban History Newsletter/Urban History Yearbook*, and later a personal Chair at the University of Leicester. Urban history did not, however, have its own set of methodologies nor any specific theoretical approaches which is the subtle yet important distinction between a discipline and a disciplinary sub-field. The discipline creates its own methodologies and theoretical approaches in response to its object of research whereas a disciplinary sub-field adopts its approaches from its parent or associated disciplines.⁴³ In urban history's case, the core methodologies were those of History and the more nuanced techniques, such as quantification, came from the Social Sciences. With this in mind, when the term *urban history* is used throughout this thesis it is as a field of historical study and not a discipline, it refers to the institution formed by a loose collaboration of historians interested in the history of urban society and the processes of urbanization gathered

³⁸ See S. Toulmin, *Human Understanding* vol. 1, (Oxford, 1972).

³⁹ Soffer, 'Why do Disciplines Fail?' p.794.

⁴⁰ S.G. Checkland, 'Urban History in the British Idiom', *Urban History Review* 1, no. 1 (1978), p.58; B.M. Stave, 'A Conversation with H.J. Dyos: Urban History in Great Britain' *Journal of Urban History* 5, no. 4 (1979), p.469.

⁴¹ D. Cannadine, 'Urban history in the United Kingdom: the 'Dyos Phenomenon' and After', p.203.

⁴² H.J. Dyos, 'Agenda for Urban Historians' in H.J. Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), p.7.

⁴³ Krishnan, 'What Are Academic Disciplines?' p.10.

under the umbrella of the UHG, some subscribing to the *Urban History Newsletter* (*UHN*), the later *Urban History Yearbook* (*UHYB*) and attending UHG gatherings.⁴⁴

Sources and Methodologies

Much of this research could not have been carried out without access to the University of Leicester's records and collections. A crucial resource in the research has been the Dyos Collection. Removed from Dyos' office following his death, it is a record of his attempts to establish urban history within academic History. It provided details of a wide range of activities from general academic administration through to the organisation of publications and conferences. It was particularly useful in illustrating the level and commitment Dyos had in promoting the new field and his driving ethos: a basic fascination with the historic urban environment in general and nineteenth-century London specifically. Not only did the collection shed light on Dyos' work but also, through his prodigious networking capabilities, it also flagged names of other actors important to the field's early formation.

As a new institution, publications such as the *UHN* and *UHYB* were often the arena in which discussions about the role of the field and problems surrounding its definition were aired and as such they proved invaluable, especially the many conference reports contained therein. Looking at the development of the field in the United States was aided by its earlier formation and subsequent self-analysis. Compared to Britain, where very little has been written, the rise of urban history in the United States is documented and analysed in numerous articles from the 1960s through to the 1980s. The lack of a similar canon in Britain is of interest itself and it is the central task of this thesis to correct. The archives of the Victorian Society provided insight into the changing perceptions of nineteenth-century urbanization and its remnants from one deemed worthy only of demolition to one demanding preservation.

Finally, it has been a privilege to take oral testimonies from a number of historians who played a role in the formation of the field. Each is mentioned within the notes of the relevant chapter; however, it is necessary to note that I was fortunate to interview

⁴⁴ Later in the thesis, the earlier emergence of an Urban History Group in the United States of America is discussed. To avoid confusion between each country's organizations, within this chapter I have adopted the acronym UHG for the group in Britain and UHG-US for its counterpart in the United States.

Anthony Sutcliffe who sadly died in 2012. His recollections and ideas about the rise of Urban History were invaluable.

Periodization

The temporal framework set for the main focus of this thesis is necessarily a retrospective imposition but arguably one that has been recognised as a cohesive period by a number of the historians influential in the early development of urban history.⁴⁵ In order to delimit the object of research I have chosen 1960, two years before the UHG was formed in Britain, as marking the opening point and 1978, the year of Dyos' death, as the close. Whilst the thesis considers events prior to and after these years for contextual analysis, the majority focuses on this period.

This time frame is not meant to suggest that aspects of urban history did not have a presence on university curricula prior to the establishment of the UHG. The problem of marking a starting point for an academic topic was considered by Withers and Mayhew through their examination of Geography in the period before it became a fully-fledged university discipline.⁴⁶ They argued that historians of the subject tended to concentrate solely on the university institution of Geography, whilst ignoring evidence of its presence within the British university sector prior to its inception as a modern discipline. The authors explored this earlier period and set out the parameters against which a comparison could be made by defining the term *discipline* as: 'a separate degree scheme run in an identifiable and autonomous department, academics trained in that subject and researching an aspect of it and students receiving formal qualifications in that subject.'⁴⁷ They rejected the narrative in which a subject could only exist if it displayed the unambiguous characteristics of a discipline described above. For this thesis it is accepted that urban history would have had a presence within the British university system prior to the establishment of the UHG. The history of urban society not only existed within History curricula prior to this but also in a number of cognate disciplines within the Humanities and the Social Sciences: Art History, Architectural

⁴⁵ This has been confirmed by oral testimonies detailed later in the thesis.

⁴⁶ C.W.J. Withers and R.J. Mayhew, 'Rethinking 'disciplinary' History: Geography in British Universities c. 1580-1887', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 27, no. 1, (2002), pp.11-19.

⁴⁷ Wither, p.11.

History, Historical Geography, Historical Sociology and Literature.⁴⁸ However, it was not deemed a separate entity and formed part of other curricula, a subtle yet crucial distinction. This thesis rejects Withers and Mayhew's criticism and is focused on the development of Urban History as an institution because to do otherwise would prove problematic to delimit as an object of study.

Theoretical Considerations

Michael Bentley's exploration of historiography in the post-war period provided an especially useful framework in which to place the research.⁴⁹ For Bentley, the period begins with the demise of Whig history and ends with the emergence of post-modernism. He described the period as one of an 'age of modernism' and one in which many of the methodologies initiated within the Social Sciences became increasingly influential inside the historical profession: a point confirmed in urban history with the early adoption of quantification. Bentley identified the era's distinctive characteristics, achievements, weaknesses and their consequences through an examination of what it replaced: constitutional, religious, and imperial history. He further argued against considering the era as one of 'an uneasy tension between intimations of a changing discipline and persistent memories and re-enactments of a Whig canon.'⁵⁰ If this was the case, then approaches to historiography would have remained relatively static until the emergence of post-modernism. This was not so; rather, the era's new historians explored historical territories previously ignored. For Bentley, this illustrated a commitment to the modernisation of the British historical profession, not only in terms of methodology but also the objects of study. The extent to which urban history's emergence as a discrete field fits into this era of modernism is one of the central tenets of this thesis. In a similar vein, any examination into the origins of urban history must include a discussion of what its proponents considered it needed to replace.

In order to understand how urban history evolved out of a series of informal discussions into a discrete sub-field of History, the thesis has had to consider the processes underlying disciplinary cultures. The concept that university disciplines were formed within different academic cultures was raised by C.P. Snow's seminal 1959 Rede

⁴⁸ J. Summerson, *Georgian London* (London, 1945), S. Nenadic, 'English Towns in the Creative Imagination' in P. Waller (ed.), *The English Urban Landscape* (Oxford, 2000); D.J. Olsen, *The City as a Work of Art: London, Paris, Vienna* (London, 1986).

⁴⁹ M. Bentley, *Modernizing England's Past: English Historiography in the Age of Modernism 1870-1970* (Cambridge, 2005).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.2-4.

lecture.⁵¹ As both scientist and novelist, Snow recognised an apparently unbridgeable gap between academics situated in the sciences and the humanities. This was evident in the organisation of typical departmental structures - normally based on a single discipline in order to meet the specific requirements of research, teaching and administration. The two cultures are often differentiated by a hypothesis suggesting the existence of paradigmatic frameworks directing the physical sciences compared to the non-sciences, such as history, which are less structured.⁵² A further division between hard/soft and pure/applied was advocated by Anthony Biglan, the former distinguishing hard sciences from soft social sciences and humanities and the latter differentiating between the theoretical and applied.⁵³

This division was explored further by Becher and Trowler who mapped the territory of academic knowledge, the disciplines into which that knowledge coalesced, and the cultures of the academics engaged in those disciplines.⁵⁴ Influenced by the anthropological methodologies of Clifford Geertz, Becher and Trowler applied theories on the formation of complex societies to the formation of academic cultures. They concluded that academics working in different disciplines shared many of the attributes found in members of different tribes, for example, the ethos of a department tends to reflect the attitudes of its higher management much as a tribe reflects those of its elders. Based on interviews of academics across twelve disciplines and eighteen institutions in Britain and the United States, they considered structural commonalities and differences within higher education through an exploration of a shifting set of overt and clandestine agendas, rules and resources. Their principal argument rested on the existence of a hidden curriculum inside and outside of academia that helped form not only the discipline's territorial boundaries but also an individual's disciplinary identity. Becher and Trowler argued that academic cultures and disciplinary epistemology were interconnected. In other words, the *specific* form of a subject produced *specific* structures within a *specific* academic culture which in turn reinforced and gave permanence to its social practices, values and attitudes.⁵⁵ Their concept of academic tribes underpins much of this thesis. Attempts by a small group of historians to form a

⁵¹ C.P. Snow, *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution* (Cambridge, 1961).

⁵² A. Biglan, 'The Characteristics of Subject Matter in Different Academic Areas', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 57, no. 3, (1973), p.195.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.201.

⁵⁴ Becher and Trowler, *Academic Tribes and Territories* (Buckingham, 2nd ed., 2001).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p.23.

new field took place within rather than without the discipline of History and therefore necessarily adopted many if not all of that discipline's academic conventions.

Just as the university was one of the sources of a nation's culture, the transfer was reciprocal, with developments in wider society effecting provision and approaches in higher education. The wider social milieu fed cultural currents into universities affecting academic practices, values and attitudes. In the post-war expansion of the higher education sector, especially in the 1960s, new entrants brought with them attitudes and practices unfamiliar to existing members such as the culturally specific standpoints of gender, race, ethnicity and social class. While new members had to adopt certain pre-existing characteristics they did not, according to Becher and Trowler, automatically lose specific attitudes because of the power of disciplinary epistemology. Culture is both enacted and constructed. Like any other social actors, the academic was not simply an involuntary victim of disciplinary structures; to an extent they were able to shape their own academic environment.⁵⁶ The ability of Dyos to focus on the establishment of Urban History whilst spending his entire career at Leicester will be explored with Becher and Trowler's concepts in mind.

While disciplines inhabited diverse territories, Oili-Helena Ylijoki argued that 'cognitive boundaries of the academic territory' were neither fixed nor categorical, since pure or applied and hard or soft trends often coexisted within a single discipline.⁵⁷ She raises the concept of a 'moral order' as a more suitable metaphor distinguishing between the vices and virtues of a particular culture, which set a baseline of what was acceptable and unacceptable: in other words, the groups driving ethos.⁵⁸ For Ylijoki, the socialization of new members, either students or staff, involved an acceptance of these moral codes. This helped the discipline form an identity and gave the individual orientation.⁵⁹ Like Becher, Ylijoki accepted that whilst formed within academic cultures, the moral order could be affected by outside influences. Societal pressures changed the relationship between university and the wider world, but for Ylijoki, in the final analysis only the academic tribe could 'acculturate novices into its membership.'⁶⁰ The process by which new members were initiated into urban history is a further

⁵⁶ Ibid., p.24.

⁵⁷ O. Ylijoki, 'Disciplinary Cultures and the Moral Order of Studying: A Case-Study of Four Finnish University Departments', *Higher Education*, 39, no.3 (2000), p.342.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p.342.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p.341.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p.359.

question dealt with in this thesis. It is especially pertinent in the analysis of the field's institutional paraphernalia, such as the *UHN* and attendance at their conferences as pathways for new members. It is equally relevant to the question the significance of Dyos' willingness to correspond with anyone who expressed an interest in the nascent field as a point of contact for prospective urban historians.

Angela Brew disagreed with the anthropological model; instead, she suggested that academic relationships were more 'permeable or transient; defined for the moment.'⁶¹ Rather than a set of distinct academic territories, Brew gave a prominence to academic relationships and moved away from Snow's sharply demarcated environment, which was perhaps a product of his own 'hard' scientific background, towards a merging of disciplines. For Brew, disciplinary identity no longer entailed the reinforcement of boundaries but a confluence where disciplines constantly combined and shifted.⁶² She stressed the relationships rather than the differences. Brew brings a more nuanced approach and provides a methodology which is considered complementary to Becher and Trowler's in this thesis, especially when the ephemeral disciplinary boundaries of urban history are analysed in later chapters.

Gabrielle M. Spiegel provides further insight into the factors framing discipline formation.⁶³ Quoting Michel de Certeau's concept of an unstable triangular disciplinary matrix consisting of '*place* (recruitment, a milieu, a profession), analytical *procedures* (a discipline), and the construction of a *text* (or discourse)',⁶⁴ Spiegel suggests change is inculcated within the historical discipline because the distance between the past (the object of study) and the present (the place history is written) ensures the discipline requires a constant re-supply of new objects for study. Another way of expressing Spiegel's argument would be to suggest the evident fragmentation of History stems directly from the need to create new specialised subject areas of study. For Spiegel, the success or otherwise of historians' attempts to adopt new or revised methodologies and directions were dependent upon the constraints temporarily set through the specificities of de Certeau's matrix. Analogous to Becher and Trowler, Spiegel cites the opening up of the discipline in the 1960s to academics from non-traditional backgrounds bringing

⁶¹ A. Brew, 'Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Affiliation of Experienced Researchers', *Higher Education*, 56, (2007), p.433.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p.434.

⁶³ G.M. Spiegel, 'Revising the Past/Revisiting the Present: How Change Happens in Historiography' *History and Theory*, 46 (2007), pp.1-19.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.6.

their own social identities and career aims and thereby creating new patterns, directions, and investigative techniques. Accordingly, if History is a constantly changing concept of the past which is continuously modified in the present, then the fragmentation of History into specialist fields such as urban history was an inevitable consequence of changes in the wider social milieu. Although Spiegel was writing specifically on the linguistic turn, her suggestion of a relationship between the acceptance of change and the transformations in the post-war society can be extrapolated to the wider concerns of post-war discipline formation in general and urban history in particular.⁶⁵ Spiegel's considerations are paramount when the wider cultural context of attitudes and changing cultural patterns towards the urban are examined within this thesis.

Writing Historiography

There are many texts describing the evolution of History as a discipline and therefore certain circumspection was required in the choice of those considered. Two authors that illustrate the most common approach were Arthur Marwick and Georg G. Iggers. Marwick's seminal text *The Nature of History* is now regarded as an 'A' Level publication or first year undergraduate text at most because it represents a very traditional approach to historiography, however it does suggest a useful framework.⁶⁶ Beginning with an attempt to define History, Marwick illustrates the discipline's intersection with other disciplines within academia. He also sets out a series of arguments in order to justify History's place within the academic firmament and considers the practical development of the discipline from the Enlightenment through to the early 1970s. Marwick follows his analysis of theory in the development of the discipline with a wide-ranging discussion of History as an interdisciplinary subject, its sources and the numerous methods of representation before considering the historian's role in society. Finally, he evaluates a number of controversies which, he suggests, will always occur due to the nature of History because it is a discipline based on the subjective interpretation of facts and artefacts. Iggers' work commences in a similar manner to Marwick's with the development of the discipline divided into phases: the

⁶⁵ Ibid., p.1.

⁶⁶ A. Marwick, *The Nature of History* (London, 1989).

origins of the discipline, the challenge originating from the Social Sciences, and the emergence of post-modernism.⁶⁷

C. Lorenz declared historiography was the ‘reconstruction of reconstructions’ and as such required theoretical scaffolding.⁶⁸ A common, yet according to Lorenz an inadequate approach, was to situate historiographical discourse within a single temporal-spatial framework founded on a particular nation-state. Built within this framework, any evaluation of a specific historiography would necessarily remain narrow in its focus and therefore provide a myopic understanding of just one nation’s approach to a certain historical topic. Focusing on the historiography of a single nation-state also ignored the growing globalisation and fragmentation of History. For Lorenz, one of the most prominent features of Western historiography from the 1960s onwards was the ‘*common* demise of the nation-state as the central focus and the simultaneous *common* rise of social, ethical, gender, regional, and local identities.’⁶⁹ The formation of Urban History is placed within this commonality. Moreover, as Marc Bloch declared, all history is comparative, either implicitly or explicitly. Lorenz considered this a vindication of his assertion that a comparative historiography was not just prudent, but a logical necessity. However, this thesis does not compare the rise of urban history with that of any other country to any degree simply because of constraints placed around its format and length. It does give a brief overview of developments in the United States in light of its earlier incarnation and in order to explore whether developments on one side of the Atlantic influenced those on the other.

Lorenz also advocated the comparison of different forms of historiography juxtaposed as ‘a continuum from the particular and concrete to general and abstract’ so that a ‘rudimentary typology’ could be fashioned out of the complex milieu of historiographical practice.⁷⁰ The more empirical overviews of historiography were to be found at the concrete end of the continuum. These tended to place historiography into either traditional spatial and temporal clusters or corralled within texts dealing with History’s specialist sub-disciplines. This is where urban history can nominally be found. Conversely, situated towards the abstract end of the continuum were texts concerned

⁶⁷ G.G. Iggers, *Historiography in the Twentieth-century: From Scientific Objectivity to the Post Modern Challenge* (London, 1997).

⁶⁸ C. Lorenz, ‘Comparative Historiography: Problems and Perspectives’ *History and Theory*, 38, no.1 (1999), p.27.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.36. Original Italics

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

with the philosophy of historiography. Of course, within these extremes lie hybrid approaches reflecting both ends of the spectrum.⁷¹ This thesis has, it is hoped, avoided both extremes by adopting a more nuanced methodology that does not exclude either end of the spectrum.

The historiographical approach offered by Jörn Rüsen's theory of a 'disciplinary matrix' is particularly useful.⁷² Utilizing a term taken from Thomas S. Kuhn,⁷³ Rüsen argued that History played a role within society by providing orientation within the passage of time as well as theories about how the past is experienced. Rüsen placed these factors within a circular inter-relational format, or disciplinary matrix, akin to Heidegger's *Hermeneutic Circle*.⁷⁴ Historiography, written with Rüsen's framework in mind, must therefore consider the role of a particular history within the wider historicised society as well as the traditional evaluation of research methodologies and forms of dissemination. The majority of this thesis is written with Lorenz's concept of a disciplinary matrix in mind, especially the role of History in society and the influence of society on History.

P. Novick's introduction to his text examining objectivity in American historiography distinguishes between the histories of history and the history of disciplines.⁷⁵ Most histories of historical disciplines, he argued, looked at the acquisition and dissemination of specialist knowledge and the adoption of different methodologies. For Novick, the most prominent form of historiographical practice was framed within biographies: the study of a single outstanding personality, or, at the most, two or three individuals.⁷⁶ Novick considered the biographical approach was useful because it gave the historian the ability to concentrate on a small number of individuals. Moreover, if a lack of space prevented an in depth analysis of a wider cohort, such a concentration would, he argued, provide a focus and a tighter framework. However, the biographical approach could have its dangers.⁷⁷ Novick worried that generalisations based on one, or a small number

⁷¹ Ibid., pp.30-31.

⁷² A. Megill, 'Jörn Rüsen's Theory of Historiography between Modernism and Rhetoric of Inquiry' *History and Theory*, 33, no.1 (1994), p.39.

⁷³ T.S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (London, 1970), pp.182-186.

⁷⁴ The hermeneutic circle is a representation of how the understanding of an entire text is derived from the understanding of individual parts and the understanding of individual parts is based on the understanding of the entire text.

⁷⁵ P. Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge, 1998), pp.12-13.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p.7.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p.8.

of individuals, were not always productive.⁷⁸ Another concern was the hazard of the ‘understandable but misplaced tact and courtesy’ historians could apply to their subjects when these were fellow historians; especially if they were still living.⁷⁹ The thesis takes particular care over this latter concern. Although the opportunity to interview historians present at the formation of the field proved invaluable, there was a danger that the conclusions of this thesis would not necessarily match the memories of those concerned. This is a primary reason why this thesis avoided an overly biographical analysis. However, in terms of Urban History, it is impossible to ignore the centrality of Dyos, and whilst this thesis is far from a valorisation, it does note his seminal role in the field’s early development.

Extrapolating methods used in the history of science to the history of all academic disciplines, Novick described a divide between internalists who considered the internal structures of a discipline and the externalists who were more concerned with the discipline’s relationships with broader society. He further divided approaches between the cognitivists who focused on the substantive scholarly work and its development and the non-cognitivists who concentrated on the societal factors affecting the discipline: psychological, sociological, political and economic. Once again, rather than adopting either extreme with the subsequent danger of omitting crucial information through an ideological obduracy, I have adopted a mixed methodology of internalist/externalist *and* cognitive/non-cognitive in order to minimise the risk of reductionism.

A. Rigney’s ‘communicative theory of historiography’⁸⁰ considers the importance of language to convey coherent information about the world to an audience. It was essential, she argued, to assess historiography not only in relation to its empirical fidelity but also for its ability to impart information in a clear and narrative form and to the widest possible audience. Historiography had therefore to take into account, to assess perhaps, not only whether the factual information presented was relevant to the topic under discussion, but also the language utilised was relevant to the topic itself.⁸¹ Rigney’s ideas are mentioned simply because one of the main debates within Urban History centred on the rise of quantification and the subsequent danger of alienating the

⁷⁸ Ibid., p.7.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p.12.

⁸⁰ A. Rigney, ‘The Point of Stories: On Narrative Communication and Its Cognitive Functions’ *Poetics Today*, 13, no. 2 (1992), pp.263-283.

⁸¹ Lorenz, ‘Comparative Historiography’ p.33.

potential audience. Moreover, because of urban history's relevance to contemporary issues, its proponents often had to address audiences unfamiliar with the traditional tenets of academic History.

I. Johannesson offered yet another approach.⁸² Whilst ostensibly exploring the ways in which historical conjuncture analysis had similar properties to qualitative and quantitative research, he also considered the factors underlying how certain ideas and practices within a discourse became legitimised to a greater extent than others. For Johannesson, the concept of historical conjuncture analysis was one way of illustrating the matrix of decisions, influences and bureaucratic systems leading up to the success or otherwise of a particular idea. Historical conjuncture analysis could lead to an understanding of the processes underlying the normalization of a meta-discourse through exploring the range of individual discourses and their inter-relationships with participants' conscious and unconscious ideas, practices and social strategies. Johannesson suggested this was more evident within organised professions where members tended to reinforce established discourses because they had themselves been trained within the strictures of their own profession.⁸³ It is argued this is especially true of professional academics. They are educated to follow certain rules in order to avoid punishment (the loss of career opportunities) and so they tend to produce historiographies within a structure built upon a *priori* of ideas. This investigation into the origins of Urban History utilised the concept of historical conjuncture analysis because it helped to illuminate the professional and social strategies that either facilitated or prevented those involved from adopting new or professionally unaccredited methodologies. While the above discusses general approaches to historiography and disciplinization, the following section turns to more specialised disciplinary histories. It focuses on Economic and Social History because they were two of Urban History's main progenitors.

A. Kadish attempted to create a detailed account of Economic History's emergence as an academic discipline.⁸⁴ Central to Kadish's approach is the belief that any history of an academic discipline which concentrates on linear intellectual history is unsatisfactory. He also rejected the idea of thematic similarity between scholars as a

⁸² I.A. Johannesson, 'The Politics of Historical Discourse Analysis: A Qualitative Research Method?' *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 31, no. 2, (2010), pp.251-264.

⁸³ Johannesson, p.254.

⁸⁴ A. Kadish, *Historians, Economists, and Economic History* (London, 1989).

basis for causal narrative. While the early arguments over methodology in Economic History are understood, they do not explain its disciplinization. Indeed, the possibility of identifying a number of contemporary scholars who may have thought and written on similar lines and who were united in their criticism of an existing orthodoxy cannot be accepted as an adequate explanation of the creation of a new discipline, nor is the emergence of such an intellectual fashion self-explanatory.⁸⁵ If accepted, Kadish's argument raises issues around the accepted narrative of Urban History's emergence through the dominance of a single personality who gathered around him a group of likeminded academics. With this in mind, this thesis looks to factors outside of History but at the same time not diminishing the importance of disciplinary structures outlined above.

T.C. Barker took a more structured approach. In 1977, the Economic History Society celebrated its golden jubilee with a special issue of the Society's journal in which Barker used quantitative analysis of the Society's membership lists and conferences to ascertain the periods of popularity and those of decline.⁸⁶ His analysis confirmed that the period from the Society's inception in 1926 until the end of the Second World War saw membership remain quite static but the opening up of the university sector in post-war Britain was reflected in the doubling of membership by the late 1950s.⁸⁷ In an analysis of publications in the same issue, Harte carried out quantitative analyses of the books and articles contained within the bibliography section of the Society's journal.⁸⁸ The analysis showed two distinct periods: the first between the Society's formation in 1926 until 1949, and the second, between 1950 and 1974. The immediate post-war period saw little growth in the publication of books whereas the number of articles grew enormously.⁸⁹ In order to delineate between different areas of economic history, Harte took the categories introduced by the journal in 1967 and applied them retrospectively to the earlier bibliographies. Harte discovered the biggest category was industry and trade, the second was urban studies and local history, the third agriculture and agrarian society, and the lowest was methodology and historiography. However, closer analysis showed the basic figures hid some interesting trends. Whilst methodology and

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. ix.

⁸⁶ T.C. Barker, 'The Beginnings of the Economic History Society', *Economic History Review*, 30, no.1 (1977), pp.1-19.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p.4.

⁸⁸ N.G. Harte, 'Trends in Publications on the Economic and Social History of Great Britain and Ireland, 1925-74', *The Economic History Review*, 30, no. 1 (1977), pp. 1-39.

⁸⁹ Ibid., pp.40-41.

historiography came out as lowest overall, the period towards the end of Harte's analysis showed it grew substantially which mirrored the increasing importance of theory generally.⁹⁰ Moreover, the emergence of the urban as a topic within Economic History is perhaps an indication of the head of steam that would eventually lead to the formation of Urban History as a discrete field of study.

The emergence of Social History out of Economic History is discussed by E.J. Hobsbawm who focused on the adoption of cliometrics as a primary factor in the separation. Whilst traditionally linked, he argued that Social History had been attempting to separate itself from Economic History since the early 1960s. It had begun to ratify itself as an emergent academic specialisation through the creation of institutional paraphernalia such as journals. However, while there had been conformity over the types of questions this new field should be asking, he felt the same could not be said of its methodologies. For Hobsbawm, it was the adoption of quantitative analysis that lay behind the increased gap between economic and social historians. He argued cliometrics was 'peculiar in as much as it [attempted] to project economic theory – mathematical or otherwise – into the past.' Moreover, one of the limitations of Economic History was also one of its strengths, 'its ability to isolate its subject matter for the "other things" which are so often irrelevant (or "equal") in theory; but rarely irrelevant, or equal, in practice.' Social history, in contrast, was open to study the entire society, which clearly entailed 'all human behaviour'. For Hobsbawm, cliometrics was of far more value in analysis of the present and the future rather than the past but he recognised cliometricians had opened up questions which led to new knowledge. While the increased popularity of statistical analysis in this period can be associated with its novelty and the advent of computing power, Hobsbawm suggested another, perhaps more cynical, reason. He argued it was impossible to criticise the work due to the average historian's inability to understand the methodological approach. Unlike narrative history, to understand the work of the cliometrician the reader required an understanding of mathematics rather than historical discourse.⁹¹ Hobsbawm clearly saw Social History as a refuge for historians who found the statistical approach unfamiliar. In this thesis, the adoption of quantification by certain urban historians and its later rejection are examined with Hobsbawm's concerns to the fore.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p.32.

⁹¹ E.J. Hobsbawm, 'Economic and Social History Divided' *New Society*, 24 (1974), pp.74-5.

Focusing on the role of the historical establishment of the 1950s, M. Taylor looked at the wider societal debates around the general distrust of the state, or the 'end of ideology' thesis. According to Taylor this had resulted in an increase of discourse focusing on Victorian individualism, philanthropy and *laissez-faire* government.⁹² Of particular interest was George Kitson Clark, who according to Taylor 'fashioned this anti-rationalist mood into a recognizable social history of nineteenth-century Britain.'⁹³ Clark broke away from the traditional focus on the 'self-conscious, self-confident minority' who dominated history in favour of the 'emotions, the irrational feelings, the prejudices, the experiences which form men's minds.'⁹⁴ Clark remained influential until the late 1960s and through his work a number of themes emerged that informed the study of nineteenth-century Britain, including the emergence of a social policy in Victorian government, the cult of respectability and social ethics.⁹⁵ The relative dominance of nineteenth-century studies in urban history's early years, along with the rise of conservation issues focused on Victorian architecture, will be considered in this thesis.

A third influence on British Social History was 1950s Economic History which led to its focus on the emergence of industry in Britain. Rather than emanating from a specific institution, Taylor suggests Economic History's influence on Social History resulted from a set of individuals including H.L. Beales, J.H. Clapham, W.H. Hutt, Arthur Redford, R.H. Tawney, Alice Clark and Eileen Power.⁹⁶ As part of the general rejection of anti-capitalist ideology, Economic History changed direction away from the Marxist towards an approach that recognised the importance of entrepreneurial and business history. Taylor suggests this redirection saw a growing interest in the figures of the industrial revolution such as Josiah Wedgewood and a reassessment of the benefits industrialisation had on Victorian society. A further area of interest was the history of social policy and the examination of poverty, the Factory Acts, and educational policy. The separation of Social History from Economic History was an important precursor to the establishment of Urban History. Without a doubt, its place in the intellectual lineage of the field history is paramount.

⁹² M. Taylor, 'The Beginnings of Modern British Social History', *History Workshop Journal*, 43 (1997), p.158

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.159

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.160-162.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.163.

Whilst not directly related to urban history, A. Berguère's approach to the history of the *Annales* was worth considering because it was dictated by his status as an insider.⁹⁷ Throughout, Berguère stresses a multifaceted methodology to history and rejects any concept of a fixed paradigm. He dispenses with the common approach whereby the history of the *Annales* was based on the generations marked by Bloch and Febvre, the hegemony of Braudel in the 1950s and 1960s, and finally, the younger historians of the 1960s.⁹⁸ As an alternative, Berguère used a series of moments in the School's evolution to illustrate different phases in the *Annales* development. The Labroussian moment is linked to the Marxist historian Ernest Labrousse. The second, led by Michel Foucault, saw a move away from considerations of the socio-economic through a quantitative methodology towards an emphasis on discursive representations. The third and final 'moment' was a return to political history through the work of the German scholar Norbert Elias.⁹⁹ Berguère concentrates on specific historians and assesses their influence upon the School. This method departs from another common approach where histories of the *Annales* focused on the School's theoretical foundations. Berguère's also considers a series of case-studies in which the different methodologies adopted by personalities within the School are explored through an examination of their writings. In a similar manner and within the frameworks laid out above, this thesis looks at a number of 'moments' or 'staging posts' within the trajectory of urban history's establishment.

Chapter Layout

The thesis is divided into eight chapters, each of which deals with a specific issue. Grouped into three sections, the first considers the context and historiographical genealogy of the field and details the initial attempts to establish the field up until the staging of the first conference dedicated to urban history that took place at Leicester in 1966. Section Two is limited to an examination of this conference and its immediate aftermath. As a staging point in the field's development, it was crucial in establishing the field. Section Three considers three other aspects that helped form the field's academic identity: Urban History's arrival on university curricula; its presence outside traditional academia; and finally, an examination of the extent of cross-Atlantic influence on the development of the fields in Britain and in the United States.

⁹⁷ A. Burguère, *The Annales School: An Intellectual History* (London, 2009), p. x.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.xii.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.xiii.

Conclusion

Urban history was just one sub-field of many that emerged from the discipline of History in this period; however, the methodology chosen for this thesis and the choice of sources has allowed the consideration of a number of issues to a new depth and manner. As stated above, unlike its counterpart in the United States, very little has been written on the development of the field in Britain. What exists tended to emerge as memorials to Dyos following his death in 1978 and written by insiders and therefore, whilst certainly valuable, can be seen as non-neutral interpretations of events. This thesis corrects this omission by providing a new and in depth analysis of the processes and actors central to the field's development. This research also throws light on how and why urban history emerged when it did. It is evidence of History reflecting the society in which it was situated rather than just a discipline locked into its analysis of the past. It therefore illustrates the importance of considerations outside of academia in ascribing relevance to new topics or approaches as different areas of concern rise and fall on the political and public agenda.

Moreover, in doing so, it also sheds light on the processes themselves. Often these are discussed with fully-fledged disciplines in mind rather than smaller sub-fields. As smaller entities, disciplinary sub-fields appear to emerge far faster than disciplines themselves. They are more agile and able to adapt to the ever-changing pressures within and outside of academia. Occasionally this means they fail, but as this thesis will show, urban history did not fail; indeed, it remains today as a large and influential field with its own institutional location and centre of excellence at the Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester.

Chapter Two

The Road to Sheffield, 1962

As a discreet field of historical study, urban history made its entrance on the academic scene in Britain relatively late when compared to other academic approaches focused on the complexities of the urban setting and the processes of urbanization. When it did arrive however, its success meant it could accurately be described as ‘one of the biggest breakers to have risen in Modern History since the war.’¹ The field certainly experienced a period of rapid growth beginning in the early 1960s and lasting through to the late 1970s,² but why, as Dyos noted in 1966, had ‘it taken as long for such an urbanised country as Britain to develop such a marked interest in the history of its cities and towns?’³ The answer lies in a remark Dyos made in 1975 when he noted that the early stages of the field’s incarnation had been ‘powerfully conditioned by the British attitude towards cities’ which ensured that although Britain tended to venerate its history generally, there was little such veneration of its urban past outside of traditional town biographies.⁴ An exploration of this ‘general attitude’ will place the emergence of the field within its proper national and historical context. It is not only critical to the understanding the field’s origins and its promulgation but also its later form and character.⁵

The Inter-war Years

Evidently, interest in the history of the urban was not new in 1960s Britain.⁶ However, due to their propinquity, it is important to distinguish the decades of the inter-war period

¹ H.J. Dyos, ‘Urbanity and Suburbanity: Inaugural Lecture, University of Leicester, 1 May 1973’ in D. Cannadine and D. Reeder (eds), *Exploring the Urban Past: Essays in Urban History by H.J. Dyos* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 19.

² A. Briggs, ‘Foreword’ in H.J. Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), p. vii; Sutcliffe quoted in J. Obelkevich, ‘New Developments in History in the 1950s and 1960s: Witness Seminar’, *Contemporary British History*, 14, no. 4 (2000), p.157.

³ H.J. Dyos, ‘Agenda for Urban Historians’ in H.J. Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), p. 16.

⁴ H.J. Dyos, ‘The English Approach to the Urban Past’, unpublished paper prepared for the *1st Convegno Internazionale Di Storia Urbanistica*, Lucca, Italy (24 September 1975), pp. 2-3. DC: 1/9/1.

⁵ Boone argues the manner in which the historiography of cities developed was a reflection of how they were considered in wider society. M. Boone, ‘Cities in Late Medieval Europe: the Promise and the Curse of Modernity’, *Urban History*, 39, no. 2 (2012), p. 329.

⁶ P. Clark, ‘The City’ in P. Burke (ed.), *History and Historians in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 38-41. P. Clark, ‘Visions of the Urban Community: Antiquarians and the English City before 1800’ in D. Fraser and A. Sutcliffe (eds), *The Pursuit of Urban History* (London, 1983), pp. 105-124; R. Sweet, *The Writing of Urban Histories in Eighteenth Century England* (Oxford, 1997); Also see bibliographical surveys presented in D.M. Palliser (ed.), *Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, vol. 1, 600-1540 (Cambridge, 2000); P. Clark (ed.), *Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, vol. 2, 1540-1840 (Cambridge, 2000); M. Daunton, *Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, vol. 3, 1840-1950 (Cambridge, 2001).

and the years following 1945 up to the field's establishment as significant.⁷ These include the years of World War Two which, as Bentley demonstrated, exerted contradictory influences on the discipline of History.⁸ On the one hand, the upheavals of total war ensured some academic trajectories begun in the pre-war period slowed or halted entirely, whilst in contrast others were expedited.⁹ The examination of the period will demonstrate the convergence of certain intellectual and societal trends that helped create the academic climate in which twenty or so economic historians would answer a call to collate and disseminate their research on urban society at an informal meeting held during the Economic History Society's (EHS) 1962 Sheffield conference.¹⁰ This impromptu gathering was the first stage of a process that would eventually lead to the establishment of a British UHG and to the publication of the first *UHN* in December 1963.¹¹ Of the trends evident in the period, two are singled out as having a particular impact on the early character of urban history and the timing of its emergence. First, was an intensification of an anti-urban rhetoric focused on the remains of the Victorian built environment alongside an associated promotion of an idealized rural national identity;¹² secondly, the beginning of the process that would see an expansion of the university sector and a subsequent change in student and staff demographic that saw previously ignored areas gain the attention of scholars.¹³

Anti-Urban Sentiment 1918-1945

An anti-urban bias was so ingrained in British culture that it seemed natural¹⁴ and was clearly evident in one of the seminal political speeches made in the immediate aftermath

⁷ A. Briggs quoted in J. Obelkevich, 'New Developments in History in the 1950s and 1960s: Witness Seminar', *Contemporary British History*, 14, no. 4 (2000), p. 145.

⁸ M. Bentley, *Modernizing England's Past: English Historiography in the Age of Modernism, 1870-1970* (Cambridge, 2005).

⁹ J. Obelkevich, 'New Developments in History in the 1950s and 1960s', *Contemporary British History*, 14, no. 4 (2000), p. 127. P. Alter (ed.), *Out of the Third Reich: Refugee Historians in Post-war Britain* (London, 1998). D. Snowman, *The Hitler Emigrés: the Cultural Impact on Britain of Refugees from Nazism* (London, 2002). E. Hobsbawm, *Interesting Times* (New York, 2002).

¹⁰ G. Ortolano, *The Two Culture Controversy: Science, Literature and Cultural Politics in Post-war Britain* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 21.

¹¹ The events that took place at the 1962 Sheffield Conference of the Economic History Society and the subsequent developments in urban history are the subject of the thesis.

¹² P. Clark, 'The City', p. 41; H.J. Dyos, 'Agenda for Urban Historians', p.2. A. Howkins, 'The Discovery of Rural England' in R. Colls (ed.), *Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880-1920* (London, 1986), pp. 62-88.

¹³ For a contemporary discussion on the reform and expansion of the university sector see A.N. Little, 'Will More Mean Worse? An Inquiry into the Effects of University Expansion', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 12, no. 4 (1961), pp. 351-362; especially p. 352.

¹⁴ R. Williams, *The Country and the City* (Oxford, 1973).

of the Great War. On 23 November 1918, Britain's wartime coalition Prime Minister Lloyd George addressed a meeting at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre during which he promised to 'make Britain a fit country for heroes to live in.'¹⁵ As an act of electioneering, the speech provides valuable insight into the coalition Prime Minister's understanding of the public mood at the time. An anti-urban rhetoric was at the heart of the speech in which it was argued for a resurrection of Britain's rural life. Noting how the reduced health of many prospective recruits into the armed services had exposed inadequate living conditions in urban slums, the stark comparison was made between the losses of life in the recent conflict and the poor housing in Britain's cities. He informed his audience,

there are millions more of maimed lives in the sense of undermined constitutions through atrocious social conditions that you have got in consequence of the whole of the terrors of this great war.¹⁶

Urban slum-clearance and the subsequent rehousing of their tenants were therefore considered of vital national importance. However, according to the Prime Minister, any new housing schemes would have to be provided outside urban boundaries in the surrounding countryside due to the lack of land in the cities. This formed part of a nostalgia driven agenda to resurrect Britain's rural life through a direct contrast between urban slums and the 'ideal life' amongst the trees.¹⁷ Rather than the poor health prevalent in the majority of Britain's cities,¹⁸ Lloyd George was promoting a return to a rural life which he argued would reinvigorate Britain's inhabitants by providing a place for people to live and work 'under the healthiest conditions throughout the whole land.'¹⁹ The sentiments expressed in Lloyd George's speech, even though clearly aimed at the forthcoming election, signposts an attempt to associate the values of an idealized rural past with a new rural future. In short, the reward offered for Britain's fighting men and workers on the home front was the prospect of a rural rather than urban future. Lloyd George was reinforcing negative perceptions of urban living to promote a rural future; yet, at the same time he was laying the framework for an expansion of suburbia that came to be seen as one of the greatest threats to Britain's rural life.

¹⁵ 'Mr Lloyd George on his task: comradeship rather than coalition—land and housing', *The Times* (25 November 1918), p. 13.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ A 1920s report confirmed that more than 500,000 Londoners remained in 'unhealthy' and unsatisfactory districts'. See *Housing*, 11, no. 37 (1920), pp. 153-154.

¹⁹ 'Mr Lloyd George on his task', p. 13.

The Fougasse²⁰ cartoon used by Clough Williams-Ellis²¹ as the Frontispiece for his 1928 polemic *England and the Octopus*²² illustrates.²³ The British *Tommy* returns from the front in 1919 and discovers an industrial landscape instead of the rural arcadia he left behind in 1914. Implicitly, the question is asked, was the sacrifice of the war in vain if the soil being defended was destroyed not by foreign forces but indigenous changes? The rural setting was once again valued over the industrialized and urban one.

The cartoon introduced a book by Williams-Ellis whose text was equally explicit. Britain was deemed 'inconveniently if not dangerously overcrowded.'²⁴ Although clearly hyperbole, like all exaggerations it was built around a grain of truth: the country had seen approximately 60,000 acres of land utilised for building 2,700,000 new homes between 1918 and 1930. Indeed, by the outbreak of the Second World War, one-third of all houses in Britain had been constructed post-1918.²⁵ In a later volume of equally polemical essays edited by Williams-Ellis, anti-urban attitudes were clear and unambiguous. One contribution author argued that,

in 1918 it could have been said with some truth that in spite of all the last century had done to it, our country was still in the most parts a green and pleasant land. What is it to-day? And what will it be tomorrow...the march of an inglorious suburbia across our countryside; the wanton sterilization of much of our most productive agricultural and market-garden land...in short the blighting touch of the townsman upon the country.²⁶

It can be seen that there was a conflation of the physical spread of the urban through its sprawling suburbs and a fear of urban values seeping into the countryside.

²⁰ Fougasse was the pen-name for the *Punch* cartoonist and later editor, Cyril Kenneth Bird.

²¹ Sir (Bertram) C. Williams-Ellis (1883-1978) was a founding member of The Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE), Vice President of the Institute of Landscape Architects, Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects (FRIBA), CBE in 1958 and knighted in 1972. See C. Williams-Ellis, *Architect Errant: The Autobiography of Clough Williams-Ellis* (London, 1971).

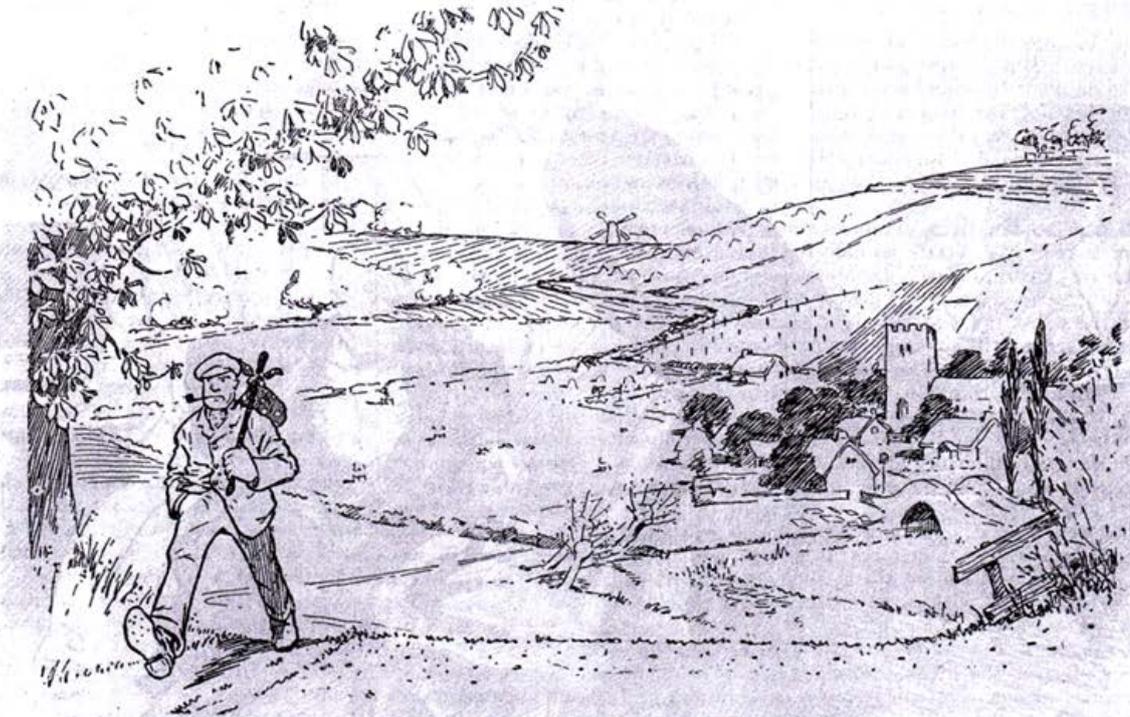
²² C. Williams-Ellis, (ed.), *England and the Octopus* (London, 1928).

²³ Original taken from *Punch, or the London Charivari*, September 17, 1919, p.249. Copyright Punch Limited, 55 Park Lane, London, W1K 1NA.

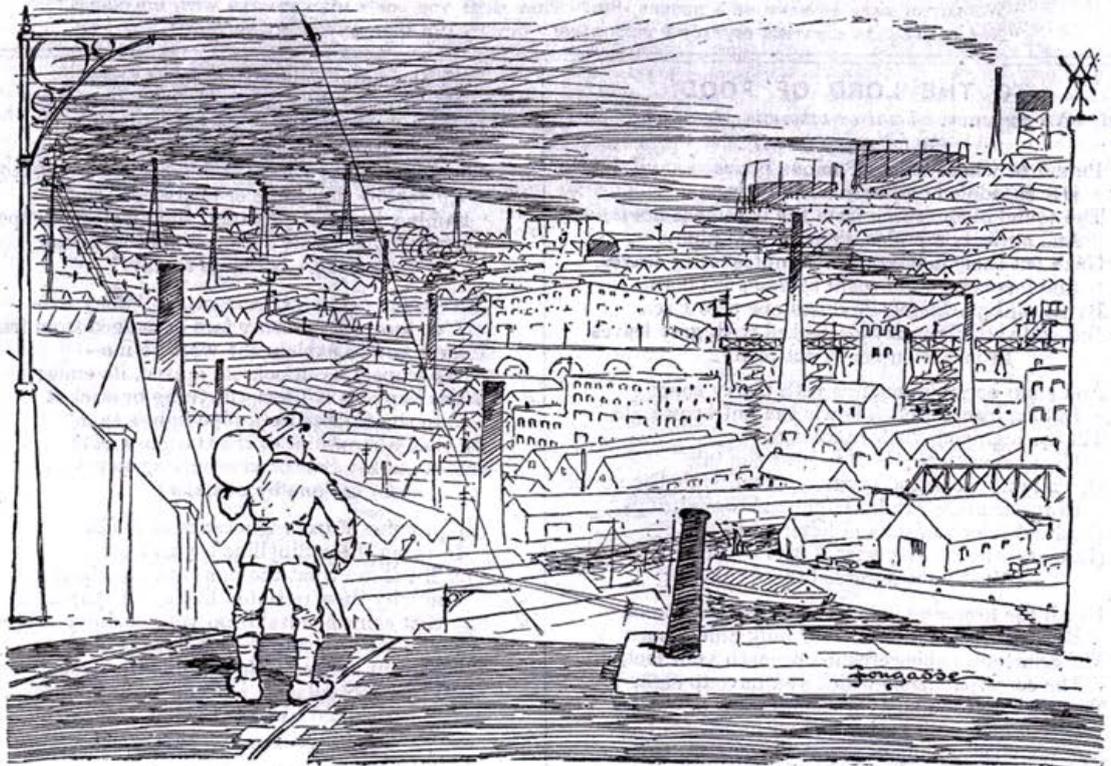
²⁴ C. Williams-Ellis, *England and the Octopus*, p. 43.

²⁵ G.E. Cherry, *The Evolution of British Town Planning* (Leighton Buzzard, 1974), p. 79.

²⁶ G. Boumphrey, 'Shall the Towns Kill or Save the Country' in C. Williams-Ellis (ed.) *Britain and the Beast* (London, 1937), pp. 101-121.



1914.—MR. WILLIAM SMITH ANSWERS THE CALL TO PRESERVE HIS NATIVE SOIL INVIOLEATE.



1919.—MR. WILLIAM SMITH COMES BACK AGAIN, TO SEE HOW WELL HE HAS DONE IT.

Figure 1: Frontispiece – Clough Williams Ellis, *England and the Octopus* (London, 1928). (c) Punch Limited, Suite 5, 55 Park Lane, London W1K 1NA.

The provision of cheap excursion tickets provided the city-dweller with the opportunity to enjoy the delights of the countryside with ‘mystery trips’ from London stations. One such example in 1932 illustrates how rural populations may have considered themselves under siege from urban visitors. The Southern Railway Company organised a mystery night ramble, leaving from central London at midnight. A crowd of over 16,000 people turned up. Another saw the residents close to Chanctonbury Ring in West Sussex ‘invaded’ by over 1,000 urban day trippers.²⁷ The rise in private motor car ownership was also deemed a dangerous development for the countryside. The editorial pages of *Country Life* were regularly populated with discussions on the alleged impingement of urban populations into their rural hinterlands.

The golden age of roads is at hand. Yet this is sometimes watched with resentment...This land of ours is a land of matchless beauty, and nature had decreed that old England should be a garden of flowers and green luxuriance, where trees should grace its peaceful pathways and silence should dwell along streams.²⁸

Twenty years after Lloyd George’s speech promoted a vision of suburbia, Thomas Sharp focused on its negative connotations in his popular wartime text *Town Planning*.²⁹ He believed a natural symbiosis existed between the city and the countryside whereby the relationship relied upon the distinctive nature of each environment. Attempts therefore to combine aspects of each into a third form only produced a bastardised suburb that would eventually lead to the destruction of both.³⁰ Whilst Sharp was more focused on the renewal of urbanity rather than rural issues, his main target was the same as Williams-Ellis *et al*: an aversion to the built remnants of Victorian urbanization. Believing English towns had been ‘repulsive and inefficient’ leaving a legacy of ‘sordid, dreary and ugly towns’,³¹ it was the inter-war period that had seen the greatest decline.³² The resultant urban environment was so poor that it drove its inhabitants to ‘creep’ out along mechanical and noisy main roads between

²⁷ J. Lowerson, ‘Battles for the Countryside’ in F. Gloversmith, *Class, Culture and Social Change: A New View of the 1930s* (Brighton, 1980), p. 269. Chanctonbury Ring is the site of an Iron Age hill fort outside Worthing, West Sussex.

²⁸ *Country Life*, LVII 10/01/1925, p. 64.

²⁹ T. Sharp, *Town Planning* (London, 1940). The publication sold over 250,000 copies. K.M. Stansfield, ‘Thomas Wilfred Sharp (1901-1978)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), [http://www.oxforddnd.com/view/article/31673, accessed 5 Feb 2011]. See also his earlier work T. Sharp, *Town and Countryside: Some Aspects of Urban and Rural Development* (London, 1932).

³⁰ Sharp, *Town Planning*, p. 25.

³¹ Sharp, *Town and Countryside*, p. 4.

³² Sharp, *Town Planning*, p. 11.

ribbons of ‘tawdry houses’ in order to escape to the country.³³ To some, urban incursions into the countryside were ‘sucking the countryside dry’ through the ‘disgorging [of] its surplus population upon the victim of its economic lust.’³⁴ The most consistent target of anti-urban rhetoric was Greater London and its burgeoning suburbs.

The Problem of London

The inter-war period saw an increasing concern around a sprawling Greater London, which by 1939, had doubled in size since 1918.³⁵ Indeed, the four adjacent counties to London (Essex, Kent, Middlesex, and Surrey) saw a greater number of houses built (983,048) between the wars than had been built before 1918 (944,154).³⁶ Not only were there fears over its physical expansion but also its financial domination led some to suggest it constituted a danger to the entire country rather than just its immediate hinterlands in South East England.³⁷ Patrick Abercrombie,³⁸ author of a number of post-war reconstruction plans and founder member of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, believed that unless something was done to prevent the spread of urban, ‘rural England [would] in a few years have totally disappeared.’³⁹ As a member of the Royal Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population (Barlow Report),⁴⁰ Abercrombie helped ensure fears over the growth of the megalopolis and its commercial and industrial dominance were evident within the Commission’s final report.⁴¹ The Commission’s terms of reference illustrate the adoption of an overtly negative stance towards the urban from the outset. The vocabulary adopted is far from neutral. They were to consider,

what social, economic or strategical disadvantages [arose] from the concentration of industries or of the industrial population in large towns or in

³³ Ibid, p. 5.

³⁴ H.J. Massingham, ‘Our Inheritance from the Past’ in Williams-Ellis, *Britain and the Beast*, p. 34.

³⁵ J. Huxley, ‘Foreword’ in F. Stephenson and P. Pool, *A Plan for Town and Country* (London, 1944), p. 7.

³⁶ M. Swenarton, ‘Tudor Walters and Tudorbethan: Reassessing Britain’s Inter-war Suburbs’, *Planning Perspectives* 17, no. 3 (2002), p. 267.

³⁷ *Country Life*, 27/02/1926, Volume LIX, (1926-1) p. 462.

³⁸ Sir (Leslie) Patrick Abercrombie (1879-1957) was a Member of the Royal Commission on the distribution of the industrial population. Abercrombie also co-authored the 1943 *County of London Plan* with J.H. Forshaw and the 1944 *Greater London Plan* with G. Stephenson and P. Shepherd. For further details see M. Miller. ‘Abercrombie, Sir (Leslie) Patrick (1879-1957)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), online edition [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30322>, accessed 12 Jan., 2011].

³⁹ P. Abercrombie, ‘Town-Planning in Rural England’, *The Times* (6 April 1925), p. 15.

⁴⁰ Report of the Royal Commission on the distribution of the industrial population: cmd. 6153 (London, 1940).

⁴¹ Known hereafter by the common title of the *Barlow Report* after the head of the Commission, Sir Montague Barlow.

particular areas of the country; and to report what remedial measures if any should be taken in the national interest.⁴²

Urban expansion was evidently considered deleterious from the Royal Commission's inception. The Commission concluded that most industrial concentrations existing in and around a small number of Britain's cities were disadvantageous and constituted a serious handicap and 'in some respects dangers to the nation's life and development' by diminishing the prospects of other cities.⁴³ Although the terms of reference were framed to consider the dangers of limiting industrial production to a small number of cities, it was the populations these industries attracted that presented the greatest fear. Overcrowding due to large number of workers seeking accommodation had led to poor health, a lack of open air recreation, and a lack of contact, especially children who lacked access to the resources and amenities of country life. Instead the city provided 'smoke and dirt, fog and general absence of sunlight; and noise.' It was recognized that the city did offer culture of many kinds, but this small section consisted of just seven lines.⁴⁴ The urban as a setting is clearly deemed the poor relation to the countryside. Although ostensibly set up to address the dangers of industrial concentration across Britain, it was the fears over London's expansion that led to its establishment⁴⁵ and unsurprisingly it was the British capital city that dominated the committee's considerations.⁴⁶ Greater London presented the most urgent problem.⁴⁷ The answer was decentralization and dispersal of industry and population. Such were the anxieties that the Commission demanded immediate action to reverse the continuing 'drift' of workers to Greater London in order to prevent the social, economic and strategic dangers this unchecked problem would cause.⁴⁸ The Commission adopted a relatively measured approach; however, those not confined by political etiquette felt freer to express their disgust of London in more vivid terms.

London is a hotbed of chronic disease, Londoners are so ignorant, so poor and so mismanaged they incur preventable pain and postponable death...one Londoner in ninety is a definite mental case and one Londoner in ten is held to be too stupid to benefit by normal education...In the elementary decencies London remains primitive. Its

⁴² Barlow Report, p. 5, paragraph 11.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 195, paragraph 413.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 187, paragraphs 396 and 397.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 5, paragraph 9.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 4, paragraphs 7 and 8. London had its own dedicated section of the Report. Chapter XIV 'Some Aspects of the Problem of London' pp. 158-178.

⁴⁷ Barlow Report, p. 186, paragraph 394.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 202, paragraph 428, point 5.

streets dirty; its citizens' seclusion has been abolished by a riot of noise; the grime in the atmosphere – which has not abated in ten years – is greater than some Black Country boroughs; behind every “good” residential quarter lurks a slum.⁴⁹

It can be seen from the above that an anti-urban rhetoric was evident immediately following the end of the 1914-18 war. Whilst there was a clear distinction between those who saw the expansion of cities into the countryside as wholly negative and those who argued the problems caused by overcrowding and slum dwellings resulting from rapid urbanization and concentrated industrialization could only be countered by further dispersal, both considered the urban arena negatively: the first as a danger to the countryside, the latter as a location from which to escape. Indeed, the very popularity of the suburbs meant their residents helped to turn the world's first modern urban nation into its most suburban by 1939.⁵⁰ There was a conflation between the urban and the suburban expansion that drove an anti-urban bias within the *cognoscenti* of British society who exerted influence on academic life: social commentators and fellow academics. The urban was seen as a negative inheritance of Victorian industrialization and its subsequent *laissez-faire* expansion of the built environment. Against this was a promotion of a rural idyll that was seen as being under threat from the growth of suburban areas around cities, especially London. It is therefore not surprising that there was little interest in the establishment of a field dedicated to researching urban history between the two wars.⁵¹

Reconstruction Plans

Although the Barlow Report was published in the December of 1939 it had been completed the previous August. The declaration of war in September delayed its publication and consequently it should not be seen as a wartime report. Furthermore, its publication took place in the middle of the period that has come to be known as the ‘phoney war’ when there was very little actual contact between combatants and the aerial bombardment of Britain's towns and cities had yet to occur.⁵² On the other hand, just as the end of the First World War galvanized Lloyd George's anti-urban stance, the

⁴⁹ R. Sinclair, *Metropolitan Man: The Future of the English* (London, 1937), pp. 18-25.

⁵⁰ P. Hall, *World Cities* (London, 1984), p. 18.

⁵¹ For example, G.M. Trevelyan's *English Social History: A Survey of Six Centuries* (London, 1944) one of the most widely history texts of the post-war period was also explicitly anti-urban and contained the idealization of rural England.

⁵² W. Murray, ‘The Strategy of the “Phoney War”’: A Re-evaluation’, *Military Affairs*, 45, no. 1 (1981), p.13.

events of the Second World War can be seen as having a direct causal effect on the production of reconstruction plans whose authors saw the conflict as an opportunity to address the inadequacies of Britain's cities.⁵³ The six years of the war and decade immediately following saw a boom in physical reconstruction plans.⁵⁴ Although ostensibly spurred by wartime bomb damage, the publication of over 200 of these plans in a ten year period indicates that many looked to *reconstruct* towns and cities that suffered very little or no damage at all. Clearly there were areas of mass-destruction but they were the exception rather than the rule.⁵⁵ In the early years of the war, Sharp had suggested in his best-selling Pelican publication *Town Planning* that German bombs had 'destroyed for us much that we have not had the courage to destroy ourselves.'⁵⁶ Huxley shows how this attitude was maintained when in 1944 he noted how wartime bombing had provided 'much-needed demolition.'⁵⁷ Overall then, the aerial bombardment suffered by a few British cities was seen as an opportunity by planners, whether or not their particular city had suffered damage. As Huxley continued, cities in Britain had been allowed to 'spread like sores...It is rather like the fungi which cause fairy rings in the fields: they poison the soil they grow on, and so the spores will only spread on the outside of the ring.'⁵⁸ Once again the presence of an anti-urban rhetoric is the underlying principle in the production of these plans and the legacy of Victorian urbanization was their specific target. A point confirmed in the promotional film produced for Abercrombie and Forshaw's *County of London Plan* (1943), where it is clear that the golden age of British cities was considered the Georgian period and that the built legacy of the Victorian era deserved nothing but demolition.⁵⁹

⁵³ N. Tiratsoo, J. Hasegawa, T. Mason, T. Matsumura, *Urban Reconstruction in Britain and Japan, 1945-1955: Dreams, Plans and Realities* (Luton, 2002), p.5.

⁵⁴ P.J. Larkham and K.D. Lilley, 'Exhibiting the City: Planning Ideas and Public Involvement in Wartime and Early Post-war Britain', *Town Planning Review*, 83 (2012), p. 649; P.J. Larkham and K.D. Lilley, 'Plans, Planner and City Images: Place Promotion and Civic Boosterism in British Reconstruction Planning' *Urban History*, 30 (2003), p. 183.

⁵⁵ N. Tiratsoo, 'The Reconstruction of Blitzed British Cities, 1945-55: Myths and Reality', *Contemporary British History*, 14, no. 1 (2000), p. 28.

⁵⁶ Sharp, *Town Planning*, p. 26.

⁵⁷ Huxley, 'Foreword', p. 7.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ *The Proud City: A Plan for London* [promotional film], directed by R. Keene (Greenpark Productions, 1946).

Documentary Film

The problem of Britain's inner cities became a topic of many inter-war, wartime, and post-war documentaries.⁶⁰ Pronay, Coultass, and Thorpe's catalogue of government films produced during the war showed 54 non-fiction documentaries or more accurately propaganda films publically funded on the subject of town planning and post-war urban reconstruction.⁶¹ Documentaries such as *Housing Problems*,⁶² *Five Towns*,⁶³ *The Way We Live*,⁶⁴ and *Land of Promise*⁶⁵ showed the poor conditions suffered by those living in slums and looked at the attempts of local authorities to clear and rehouse their inhabitants.⁶⁶ The dominant discourse around the evacuation of Britain's cities argued that the masses of children allocated to homes in safer areas of the country, 'children with lice, little in the way of decent clothing, children who had no experience of a plumbed in bath, internal lavatory, or their own beds' brought inner city conditions to the attention of the comfortable middle classes.⁶⁷ The 'unkempt, ill-clothed, undernourished and often incontinent children of bombed cities' acted as 'messengers carrying the evidence of the deprivation of urban working-class life into rural homes.'⁶⁸ A.J.P. Taylor concluded succinctly in 1965 that 'the Luftwaffe was a powerful missionary for the welfare state.'⁶⁹ Later historians revised this view and suggested the episode in fact confirmed middle-class stereotypes about the urban poor.⁷⁰ Whether the evacuation led concerns to counter urban poverty or to reinforce the urban rural divide, both discourses strengthened negative stereotypes associated with Britain's cities. So much so that when Dyos wrote in 1974 that there had been a generally negative attitude towards towns and cities, he was describing a negativity focused almost exclusively on the legacy of Victorian urbanization, in other words, inner city slums. Moreover, any interest in the history of the Victorian city was more focused on the pessimistic side,

⁶⁰ J. Gold and S. Ward, 'Of Plans and Planners: Documentary Film and the Challenge of the Urban Future, 1935-52' in D. Clark (ed.), *The Cinematic City* (London, 1997), p. 64.

⁶¹ F. Thorpe, C. Coultass, and N. Pronay, *British Official Films in the Second World War: a Descriptive Catalogue* (Oxford, 1980).

⁶² *Housing Problems* [documentary], directed by E. Anstey, A. Elton (British Commercial Gas Association, 1935).

⁶³ *Five Towns* [documentary], directed by T. Bishop (Greenpark Productions, 1947).

⁶⁴ *The Way We Live* [documentary], directed by J. Craigie (Two Cities Films, 1946).

⁶⁵ *Land of Promise* [documentary], directed by P. Rotha (Paul Rotha Productions, Films of Fact, 1946).

⁶⁶ Gold, 'Of plans and planners', p. 64.

⁶⁷ R. Lowe, *Education in the Post-war Years: a Social History* (London, 1988), p. 5.

⁶⁸ D Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State. A History of Social Policy Since the Industrial Revolution* (London, 1973), pp. 195-210

⁶⁹ A.J.P. Taylor, *English History, 1914-1943* (Oxford, 1965), p. 455.

⁷⁰ See J. Welshman, 'Evacuation, Hygiene, and social policy: The Our Town Report of 1943', *The Historical Journal*, 42, No. 3 (1999), pp. 781-807.

looking for reasons why they had reached such a state and how this could be avoided in the future rather than any attempt to understand urban life and culture in the nineteenth century. The inter-war period saw a 'nostalgic, deferential and rural, 'Englishness' ...as the template on which the national character had been formed and thus the ideal towards which it must inevitably return.'⁷¹ As Mort elegantly argued, reconstruction plans, the Royal Commission, and the documentaries were not 'simply the product of rationally judged professional and political initiatives' they took their remit from a wider range of cultural visions based on popular concepts of city life.⁷² Many of these concepts tended to be wholly negative, with the destruction of the Victorian city – or slum clearance – sitting atop of the town planner's list of priorities.⁷³ The task of establishing a new field of historical study within this milieu had therefore to contend with a general antipathy towards its main object of research; however, attitudes began to change by the later 1950s.

Rehabilitation of Victorian Architecture

When it came to a reassessment of the legacy of the Victorian built environment, it was the rehabilitation of its architecture that signalled an alteration in the general attitude to the period. The change is illustrated in the approach of Nikolaus Pevsner.⁷⁴ In 1961, Peter Ferriday described Pevsner as 'the most important contributor to Victorian studies'⁷⁵ yet twenty years previously, Pevsner had ironically described searching for significant Victorian architecture as a 'Treasure Hunt' due to the period's eclectic ornamental adornment.⁷⁶ Whilst conceding that it was worthy of study, he argued that it was not to be taken seriously.⁷⁷ Pevsner's conversion was indicative of how attitudes towards the Victorian built environment mellowed and rather than simply dismissing the it, aspects were slowly being seen as worthy of preservation. It was the beginnings of this reassessment that led to the formation of the Victorian Society.

⁷¹ P. Mandler, 'Englishness: English Culture and the Limits to Rural Nostalgia, 1850-1940', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 7, (1997), p. 155.

⁷² F. Mort, 'Fantasies of Metropolitan Life: Planning London in the 1940s', *The Journal of British Studies*, 43, no. 1 (2004), p. 123

⁷³ *Housing* Cmd. 6609. Paragraphs 5 and 6. (London, 1945).

⁷⁴ Pevsner became the Victorian Society's Chairman from 1963 until 1976 when H.J. Dyos took over the position.

⁷⁵ P. Ferriday, 'Victorian Studies' in *Architectural Review*, 129, no. 767 (1961), p. 158.

⁷⁶ Harries, *Nikolaus Pevsner: A Life* (London, 2011), p. 339.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 339-340.

The Society was founded in February 1958 with the aim of countering the widespread dislike and destruction of all things Victorian, but especially the period's architecture. A point noted in the Society's first report which suggested that the majority of people in Britain 'either ignore or dislike Victorian architecture' that there was 'still a widespread belief that anything built between 1840 and 1900 is automatically ugly.'⁷⁸ The growth of post-war reconstruction and modernization plans threatened the Victorian urban legacy which was increasingly becoming the focus of preservationists. Campaigns were instigated such as the one to protect the Euston Arch by John Betjeman, as Vice-Chairman of the Victorian Society, Woodrow Wyatt MP and Nikolaus Pevsner.⁷⁹ The Society argued that, like the Marble Arch and Temple Bar, if the Euston Arch was to be demolished the stones should be individually numbered to aid in its rebuilding.⁸⁰ Despite the campaigning, demolition began in December 1961. Whilst their campaign failed, others succeeded, including the awarding of listed status to St. Pancras in 1966 which prevented its proposed demolition by British Rail. In the same year of the Euston Arch's demolition, the Ministry of Housing added buildings of high architectural quality, and of 'importance in the development of town planning or technology, such as garden suburbs, model housing, and early prefabricated buildings, railway stations, schools, and hospitals constructed between 1800-1914' to their statutory preservation lists.⁸¹

Given the high profile debate over saving the Euston Arch and its subsequent failure alongside the introduction of listing of architecture constructed in the nineteenth century, it is clear that the late 1950s and early 1960s can be seen as a fulcrum in attitudes toward the urban legacy of the Victorian era. Ideas of preservation had begun to emerge but had yet to gain enough momentum to influence decision makers. But, as evidenced in the saving of St. Pancras, by the middle of the 1960s the ambition to

⁷⁸ Victorian Society Leaflet published 1957. LMA/4460/02/01/001.

⁷⁹ The first notification of the Arch's demolition was given in a newspaper article headlined '£180,000 to move arch at Euston: L.C.C. told of station reconstruction plan' Proposals for the Euston Arch', *The Times* (27 January 1960), p. 10.

⁸⁰ The Victorian Society sent a telegram to the Prime Minister in which it stated that the Society 'sincerely [hoped] demolition of the Euston portico may be postponed to give us a chance of raising funds for its removal to an appropriate site. If immediate demolition is unavoidable we earnestly and with great respect entreat you to ensure that the stones are numbered and stored to make further re-erection possible as was done for Marble Arch and Temple Bar.' 'Euston Arch: No Change of Plan', *The Times* (2 October 1961), p. 12. John Gloag, President of the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain wondered if any other European country would allow such a landmark of architectural history to be removed, on economic or any other grounds, without some attempt made for its preservation or re-erection?' J. Gloag, 'Doric Arch at Euston', *The Times* (15 July 1961), p. 9.

⁸¹ Quoted in P. Thompson, 'The Victorian Society', *Victorian Studies*, 7, no. 4 (1964), p. 388.

preserve architecture of the Victorian era had gained a higher profile and influence.⁸² What was once anathema and worthy only of demolition had begun to be seen as worthy of protection.

Although Dyos was able to suggest in 1973 that the post-war decades still suffered from a 'deep-seated ambivalence towards the city',⁸³ the rehabilitation of Victorian architecture, and by extension, the Victorian city generally, is an example of the process in which the 'threshold of historic significance creeps slowly forward.'⁸⁴ Undoubtedly, it is a process that is often hastened in periods undergoing rapid change, bringing historic significance ever closer to the present. The decades leading up to the emergence of urban history were certainly a period of rapid urban change.⁸⁵ Britain had seen many transformations, not only to its built environment but to its social and cultural norms as the effects of the Great War and following economic depression took their toll. The outbreak of hostilities in 1939 and the years of total war confirmed these upheavals. Another consequence of rapid change was the need for society to orientate itself. The nineteenth century represented a time when Britain still had its Empire and was a true world power, and looking back helped a society still coming to terms with its new position in the world.⁸⁶

The decade in which urban history coalesced was one that has retrospectively been assigned a coherence not necessarily reflected in reality. The arrival of the so-called *sixties* is illustrated with examples of social upheavals such as a new sexual permissiveness, the spending power of teenagers, and of particular relevance here, the re-development of city and town centres. The 1960s are remembered as a time of radicalism despite most of the country's population outside of the small cadre of pop stars, photographers and fashion models remaining pinned down by post-war austerity. Yet as has often been the case, when society experiences change, whether real or experienced vicariously through the consumption of mass-media, looking back to a

⁸² A closer examination of the rehabilitation of the Victorian built environment can be found in the chapter titled 'The Public Face of Urban History' later in this thesis.

⁸³ Cannadine, *Exploring the Urban Past*, p. 28.

⁸⁴ P. Hubbard, 'The Value of Conservation: A Critical Review of Behavioural Research', *The Town Planning Review* 64, no. 4 (1993), p. 359.

⁸⁵ Larkham, 'Plans, Planner and City images' p. 184.

⁸⁶ The late 1950s and early 1960s were a time when Britain was attempting to establish itself in the new world order. See C.P. Snow's 1959 Rede Lecture *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution* (New York, 1961).

previous, although mostly fictitious periods of stability, provide the illusion of a safe haven.

During the two decades following the Second World War, Britain had to adjust to its decline as a great power on the world stage. As C. Barnett argued, Britain was suffering under the illusion of victory which made this transition more fraught than the former occupied countries of Europe and the defeated axis powers.⁸⁷ It is no great surprise that it was during this period of enforced readjustment, looking back to a past when the country was the most powerful took hold. The past became a cultural presence Britain. As Lowenthal argued, it was repackaged and commoditised as heritage and infused with contemporary purposes.⁸⁸ In the new Elizabethan age, marked by the Festival of Britain in 1951 and the Coronation in 1953, Britain's past became more accessible with the widespread adoption of television in homes. Evidence of how the Victorian period became fashionable can be seen in LWT's series *Upstairs Downstairs*. For 68 episodes over five series from 1971 to 1975, along with the BBC's attempt to emulate LWT's success, *The Duchess of Duke Street* (1976-1977), these programmes helped with the rehabilitation of the period. A generational prejudice that equated free market *laissez-faire* Victorian commercialism with the urban slums and urban poverty were being broken down. All things Victorian were increasingly fashionable.

But it was not until the debates surrounding modernism that interest in Victorian design and culture came to the fore. For example, the first book to take Victorian architecture seriously was Kenneth Clark's *The Gothic Revival*, although first conceived in 1924 and published in 1928, its editions in the 1950s and 1960s proved extremely popular.⁸⁹ The change in attitude towards the Victorian age and the results of its unrestrained urbanization ensured moves to protect previously derided redbrick Victorian architecture met with increasing support. The predominately anti-urban, anti-Victorian inner city prejudice of previous generations began to subside and the rehabilitation of the Victorian urban environment took hold. It was part of a wider use of Victorianism within which to frame a more conservative approach to counter the alleged drive to modernise Britain beyond recognition: a modernisation that saw an increasing number of inner cities razed and replaced with dual carriageways or brutalist concrete shopping

⁸⁷ C. Barnett, *The Audit of War: The Illusion and Reality of Britain as a Great Nation* (London, 1986).

⁸⁸ D. Lowenthal, *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* (Cambridge, 1998), p. xv.

⁸⁹ K. Clark, *The Gothic Revival: An Essay in the History of Taste* (Harmondsworth, 1964). First published 1928 and reprinted from the 1950s onwards.

centres with their adjacent multi-storey car parks. The wheel of fashion turned and rather than seen as an entity in need of sanitizing, control, or indeed demolition, the Victorian city and its social history attracted the interest of scholars and of the fledgling heritage industry. As Day argued, the Victorian past was framed within the values of the present. However, the era venerated was not based on an accurate representation of the nineteenth-century but mediated through the values of the middle and second half of the twentieth-century: looking to the past and setting up connections to the present.⁹⁰ The nineteenth-century, or the Victorian age, furnished a usable past for the 1960s in the same way that the medieval period provided solace for the Victorians during their social upheavals. Dyos' urban history, focused as it was on the nineteenth-century, profited from this revival and the utility of Victorianism. Urban history's success can therefore in part be placed within the wider rehabilitation of the Victorian period in general and the remnants of its urban environment in particular.

Reorganization and Expansion of Higher Education

G. Ortolano distinguished four factors underlying an ideological conflict over the post-war future of Britain: the expansion of the university sector; the development of social history; the response to Britain's loss of empire and subsequent immigration; related concerns over the decline of the nation, and an intellectualizing of the liberalization perceived as the 1960s.⁹¹ Britain had come through the Second World War on the victorious side but the cost had been high. The country had lost half its merchant fleet, it had begun to lose the market of the Empire and it needed to address a huge foreign debt of £23 million with little or no reserves.⁹² For many, although the war was over, the conditions failed to improve, indeed for some they deteriorated with the rationing of essential foods and commodities lasting until 1954.⁹³

Calls emerged for an expanded and managed education system as part of a managed economy which was deemed essential to halt the danger of a much heralded national decline. The number of commissions and reports produced in the last years of the war and the following decade illustrate how various governments attempted to find solutions

⁹⁰ G. Day (ed.), *Varieties of Victorianism: The Uses of the Past* (New York, 1998), p.282.

⁹¹ G. Ortolano, *The Two Culture Controversy: Science, Literature and Cultural Politics in Post-war Britain* (Cambridge, 2009), p.2.

⁹² P. Johnson, 'The English Disease, 1945-79', *The Wilson Quarterly*, 11, no. 4 (1987), p. 111.

⁹³ Lowe, *Education in the Post-war Years*, p.3; Johnson, 'The English Disease', p. 111. See also Barnett's discussion in C. Barnett, *The Audit of War: The Illusion and Reality of Britain as a Great Nation* (London, 1986) and J. Tomlinson, 'Welfare and the Economy: The Economic Impact of the Welfare State, 1945-1951', *Twentieth Century British History*, 6, no. 2 (1995), pp. 194-219.

to the nation's perceived decline, particularly those related to town and country planning and higher education. The period saw *The Barlow Report* (1940) recommending larger numbers of science places at university, *The Percy Report* (1945) dealing with the expansion of technical education, *The Clapham Report* (1946) looking at the provision of social science; *The Anderson Report* (1958) on student funding, and *The Robbins Report* (1963). The latter tends to overshadow most of the former, considered the expansion of higher education in general.⁹⁴ The consensus was that the country needed a more highly educated population and that the way to achieve this was the opening up of higher education to classes previously excluded. The expansion of the university sector had profound consequences on student and staff demographics and consequently the range of subjects undertaken. As Simmons suggested in his history of the University of Leicester, not only did the institution shape the student but the student shaped the institution.⁹⁵ New lecturers replaced those initially trained in the 1920s.⁹⁶ The University College Leicester and its later incarnation as the University of Leicester was an embodiment of these developments and it is where H.J. Dyos settled into his academic career and from where he would steer the development of Urban History in Britain. He was a product of the immediate post-war expansion, profiting from the 'Further Education and Training Scheme'.⁹⁷

H.J. (Jim) Dyos

Dyos' interest in urban history has been linked to his upbringing; he described himself as urban and throughout his academic life he remained fascinated with his home city.⁹⁸ Born 1921, in the North-West London borough of Kentish Town, he left school at fifteen and after a number of positions in administration he joined the Royal Artillery at the outbreak of the Second World War. There is an old adage describing war as consisting of long periods of boredom punctuated by moments of terror, and Dyos used

⁹⁴ Ortolano, *Two Cultures*, p. 14. See also H. Silver, *Higher Education and Opinion Making in Twentieth-Century England* (London, 2003), p. 127.

⁹⁵ J. Simmons, *New University* (Leicester, 1958), pp. 139-140.

⁹⁶ W. Richardson, 'Historians and Educationists: The History of Education as a Field of Study in Post-war England Part I: 1945-72', *History of Education* 28, no. 1 (1999), p. 3.; J. Carswell, *Government and the Universities in Britain: Programme and Performance 1960-1980* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 181.; Committee on Higher Education, *Higher Education: Report of the Committee Appointed by the Prime Minister under the Chairmanship of Lord Robbins 1961-3* (London, 1963).

⁹⁷ B.M. Stave, 'A Conversation with H.J. Dyos', p. 470. The Further Education and Training Scheme was first considered in the White Paper *Educational Reconstruction* (London, 1943), p. 25, paragraph 95 which set out the government's plans for the provision of financial support for ex-service personnel.

⁹⁸ Stave, 'A Conversation with H.J. Dyos: Urban History in Great Britain', *Journal of Urban History*, 5, no. 4 (1979), p. 469. P. Jones, *Unfinished Work: an Essay in Honour of H.J. Dyos 1921-1978* (University of Leicester, 2010), p. 6.

the periods of inactivity for introspection about his future, deciding to set about the task of self-improvement through the completion of a part-time course. By 1945 he had met his initial aim of achieving matriculation and commenced study for a part-time economics degree, but, having been posted to Germany, he was unable to complete the course. Following his discharge at the end of the war, aghast at the prospect of returning to office work, he took and passed the entrance exam for the London School of Economics (LSE) reading for a degree in Economics. Having graduated with a 2:1, he qualified to undertake research and successfully applied for funding from the 'Further Education Training School Grant'. The application was helped, Dyos believed, by his lofty ambition of becoming a university teacher which ensured he could argue the research he hoped to undertake formed part of his professional training.⁹⁹ His thesis, 'The Suburban Development of Greater London: South of the Thames 1836-1952' was supervised by the economic historian H.L. Beales and completed in 1952. Following the award of a Ph.D he commenced his employment at the then University College of Leicester as lecturer in Transport History based in the Department of Economics. Dyos was appointed, along with Geoffrey Martin, as replacements for W.G. Hoskins who had moved to Oxford following his election as Reader in Economic History in 1951.¹⁰⁰ Dyos remained at Leicester until his death from a stroke on 22 August 1978.

His presence at the centre of developments during the initial stages of British Urban History has been acknowledged in many quarters. In an interview published shortly after his death, Stave suggested any discussion of British urban history saw all roads leading to Dyos and the University of Leicester.¹⁰¹ Stave was far from alone in expressing this view. Obituaries noted how Dyos had thrown himself 'unflinching into the exposition of the role of urban historians'¹⁰² and that the field's 'outstanding success' had rested on his unique 'drive and personality'.¹⁰³ The majority of existing work published on the emergence of the field in Britain was published in the aftermath of Dyos' death. One contained a series of twelve Dyos essays framed between valedictory texts from David Reeder and David Cannadine.¹⁰⁴ Reeder's represented

⁹⁹ Obituary, 'Professor H.J. Dyos', *The Times*, (25 September, 1978), p. 12. Stave, 'A Conversation with H.J. Dyos', p. 470.

¹⁰⁰ J. Simmons, *Leicester and its University College* (Leicester, 1955), p. 36.

¹⁰¹ Stave, 'A Conversation with H.J. Dyos', pp. 469-500.

¹⁰² Obituary 'Professor H.J. Dyos', *The Times* (25 August 1978), p. 12.

¹⁰³ Obituary 'Professor H.J. Dyos', *The Times* (8 September 1978), p. 16.

¹⁰⁴ D. Cannadine and D. Reeder (eds), *H.J. Dyos, Exploring the Urban Past: Essays in urban history by H.J. Dyos* (Cambridge, 1982).

Dyos as a pioneer who challenged stereotypes of urban change and its consequences. A former student, colleague, and personal friend, Reeder recognised his mentor's position as the 'doyen of British urban historians'.¹⁰⁵ The valedictory nature is also evident in Cannadine's essay when he declared 'there had been no one equipped, either as a personality or as a professor, to inherit or lead the historical sub-discipline which was his [Dyos'] personal creation.'¹⁰⁶ Following his review of urban history texts, Cannadine also remarked that in some way they were all direct or indirect products of the Dyos phenomenon.¹⁰⁷

Sentiments such as these can be dismissed as those that flow upon the sad news of a colleague's death. However, Dyos' position was often acknowledged during his lifetime. Many of the reviews following the initial publication of the *Urban History Yearbook* in 1974 pointed to his central presence in the field. The *British Book News* described the 'indefatigable Professor Dyos' whilst the *Scottish Economic History Newsletter* remarked on his 'tireless' efforts [in] stimulating interest and discussion on urban history.'¹⁰⁸ A more florid description came from the *Journal of Historical Geography* which argued it was 'the midwifery of Professor H.J. Dyos which has largely helped give birth to the lusty infant of British urban history.'¹⁰⁹

Economic History

Bentley classified the Second World War as a pause in a series of social and cultural developments that surfaced in Britain in the aftermath of the 1914-18 war and which climaxed in the 1960s.¹¹⁰ Rather than a pause, the war should be seen as more of a punctuation point when the processes of change in British social structure were accentuated, forming the basis of the post-war political consensus that lasted until the last years of the Callaghan minority government and the election of the Conservatives under Margaret Thatcher in 1979.¹¹¹ For the discipline of History in particular, the

¹⁰⁵ D. Reeder, 'H.J. Dyos and the Urban Process' in Cannadine, *Exploring the Urban Past*, p. x

¹⁰⁶ D. Cannadine, 'Urban History in the United Kingdom: the 'Dyos phenomenon' and After' in D. Cannadine and D. Reeder (eds), *H.J. Dyos, Exploring the Urban Past: Essays in urban history by H.J. Dyos* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 203-204.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. , 203-204

¹⁰⁸ *Scottish Economic History*, 3. DC, 4/7.

¹⁰⁹ DC, 4/7.

¹¹⁰ Bentley, *Modernizing England's Past*, p. 81.

¹¹¹ E.J. Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes: the Short Twentieth Century 1914-1991* (London, 1994), p. 627. Hobsbawm considered the disbandment of the U.S.S.R and the unification of Germany in 1991 as the end of the period but in relation to the development of the discipline of History I'm concerned with here, the election of Margaret Thatcher is a more precise moment of transition.

accelerated evolution of British society seen during the 1939-1945 war can certainly be seen as the fulcrum upon which the transition occurred between one academic approach to the study of history and another. Urban history needs to be placed within the lineage of this historiographical change. Within the discipline of History, the core progenitors of urban history in Britain were Economic History, Social History and English Local History: the latter's incarnation at Leicester under the stewardship of W.G. Hoskins.

The most established of the three progenitors was Economic History. The first recorded instance of Economic History occurred in 1876 when an exam paper 'Political Economy and Economic History' formed part of the new History *Tripes* in Cambridge. In Harte's examination of the discipline, the aforementioned exam and the 1910 publication of Cunningham's *The Growth of English Industry and Commerce*¹¹² are selected as the foundation of Economic History as a discipline in Britain,¹¹³ although it is acknowledged the subject had been taught previously in different guises since the seventeenth century.¹¹⁴ Later, in celebration of the EHS golden jubilee, Harte quantified the disciplines growth through an exercise of 'cliometric bibliometrics', or an analysis of publications listed in the bibliographies of the *Economic History Review* for the years 1925 to 1974.¹¹⁵ He saw the jubilee as an occasion when the methods of History could be turned towards introspection by completing an examination of the size and changing focus of literature on Economic History.¹¹⁶ The importance of the post-war period in the development of History generally can be extrapolated from the figures which show a steady increase in publications from 1925 until the late 1940s and early 1950s when there is a rapid growth across all categories.¹¹⁷ Harte's work therefore confirms the general 'explosion' of information within the social sciences and humanities with a total 20,055 separate items logged as being published between 1925 and 1974 on economic and social history.¹¹⁸ From 1925 through to 1939, a total of 138 books¹¹⁹ and 50

¹¹² W. Cunningham, *The Growth of English Industry and Commerce during the Early and Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1910).

¹¹³ N.B. Harte, *The Study of Economic History* (London, 1971), p. 390.

¹¹⁴ Harte, *The Study of Economic History*, p. xii.

¹¹⁵ Harte, 'Trends in Publications', pp. 20-21.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹¹⁷ For his article Harte adopted the categories unchanged from those first used by the EHS journal in 1967 and amended in 1971. Prior to 1967, only three separate sections were used within the bibliographies: original documents, books and pamphlets, and articles in periodicals. Harte retrospectively assigned the 1967 categories to those listed between 1927 and 1967 based on their titles.

¹¹⁸ Harte, 'Trends in Publications', p. 2

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Table 5, p. 34.

articles¹²⁰ were published in the category of local and urban history. However of more relevance for this research is the growth of publications in that category during the period 1940 to 1962 which confirm an increase of interest in urban development and its inhabitants.¹²¹

It is clear that although there was some interest in the category during the pre-war period,¹²² the real growth occurred from 1950s onwards with the decade seeing the largest percentage increase in related publications. Undoubtedly this was not only a reflection of the growing interest in urban matters but also the expansion of the university sector and the subsequent increases in student numbers. Although there is a dip in the number of books listed between 1960 and 1964, this is more than made up for by the increase in the number of articles. The lower rate of books listed in the wartime quinquennium reflects the restrictions placed on printing and subsequent rationing of paper supplies. The two statistics that jump out are those of the 1950-1954 quinquennium where there are annual growth rates for both books and articles which show a significant increase: the former hitting just over 50 per cent and the latter over 46 per cent. And crucially, the years leading up to the Sheffield Conference (1962) show a substantial increase: evidence of the 'breaker' described by Dyos in his inaugural lecture and quoted above. These represent the biggest increases for the category across the entire time span of Harte's analysis and suggest the period was one in which the urban and local history was beginning to raise its profile with economic historians. Other data analysis show a similar growth from 1950 onwards in the categories 'social structure and demography' and 'social conditions and policy' which is a further illustration of how History developed an interest in social issues in the post-war period.¹²³ The editors of the EHS journal *Economic History Review* felt no need to separate the subjects of urban studies from local history thus making it impossible to ascertain whether either subject underwent its own trajectory. The combining of the subjects into a single category indicates their close association. It prior to the arrival of

¹²⁰ Ibid., Table 7, p. 35.

¹²¹ The seventh category of 'urban studies and local history' has been summarised in Tables 1 and 2 of this thesis' Appendix.

¹²² Harte, 'Trends in Publications', Appendix I & II, pp. 40-41.

¹²³ Ibid., pp. 184-190.

urban history as a distinct field of study, urban history was deemed to form an integral aspect of local history: as a study of particular towns rather than urban processes.¹²⁴

English Local History

The importance of the relationship between local history and urban history was crucial to the latter's development. This was especially true at Leicester where Dyos often had a closer working relationship with members of the department of English Local History (ELH) and with the Victorian Studies Centre (VSC)¹²⁵ he helped establish in 1966 than he did with colleagues in his own department.¹²⁶ The department of ELH was established in 1948 on the recommendation of Jack Simmons and with the agreement of the then principal, F.L. Attenborough. Simmons was the University College's head of History and as his inaugural lecture demonstrated, his interest in local history was central to his work.¹²⁷ The department's establishment was certainly a milestone in the development of Local History and hence urban history at Leicester. Although Reading, Exeter, London, and Hull had already appointed personnel in the subject and the Victoria County History (VCH) had been resident at the Institute of Historical Research (IHR) since 1933,¹²⁸ Leicester was the first institution to found a department dedicated to the study of local history across the whole of England. The department was established mainly to lure W.G. Hoskins back to Leicester so he could continue his research that led eventually to his trailblazing *The Making of the English Landscape*.¹²⁹ Hoskins remained its sole member until Joan Thirsk's appointment in 1951 as a research fellow focused on Lincolnshire agrarian history. However, before Thirsk took up her appointment, Hoskins left Leicester for the post of Reader in Economic History at All Souls, Oxford and was replaced by H.P.R. Finberg who became Britain's first Professor of English Local History. During Finberg's leadership, the department saw the launch of the series *Occasional Papers in Local History* and the establishment of the

¹²⁴ Interview with Charles Phythian-Adams undertaken by G.W. Davies (October, 2012).

¹²⁵ The relationship between urban history and the VSC will be considered in Chapter Seven, *Urban History in the Curriculum*.

¹²⁶ Charles Phythian-Adams (October, 2012).

¹²⁷ J. Simmons, *Local, National, and Imperial History: an Inaugural Lecture delivered at University College, Leicester, 16 February 1948* (Leicester, 1950).

¹²⁸ M. Hackett, *The Little Big Red Book: a Celebration of 75 years of the Victoria County History at the Institute of Historical Research* (Woodbridge, 2008), p. 17.

¹²⁹ J. Thirsk, 'William George Hoskins (1908-1992)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, 2008), [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38631>, accessed 21 January 2011].

W. Boyd, 'William Boyd: Rereading "The Making of the English Landscape by WG Hoskins"' *The Guardian*, (11 May 2013), p. 20. W.G. Hoskins, *The Making of the English Landscape* (Stratford upon Avon, 1955).

journal *Agricultural Review*, both of which Finberg edited.¹³⁰ When Hoskins returned as department head on Finberg's retirement in 1965, his chair was titled the Hatton Chair of English History; the omission of 'local' from the Chair's original title was in recognition of the national coverage of Leicester's brand of English Local History.¹³¹

Although Hoskins' more romantic approach was closer to the anti-urban rhetoric of the inter-war period than any pro-urban stance, the relationship between ELH and urban history was particularly important at Leicester.¹³² A common theme in Hoskins work was the formation of the English rural community during the medieval period and its assumed dissolution beginning in the eighteenth and culminating in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹³³ Yet, it was in this aspect of Hoskins work that the relationship to urban history is most evident because the transformation from a rural to an urban society prioritised the process of urbanization. Furthermore, the focus on English urban history and the concentration on the medieval and early modern period by colleagues in ELH provided the opportunity for Dyos and fellow embryonic urban historians to differentiate their work by exploring the international aspects of urbanization and by looking at the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹³⁴ ELH was therefore the field discipline urban history could build upon but also stand against. The presence of Hoskins at Leicester also provides evidence of the importance of personal connections in the early development of the field: Charles Phythian-Adams was supervised by Hoskins' at Oxford and in 1966 was appointed to a three year research fellowship in urban history based at Leicester's ELH.¹³⁵ Phythian-Adams knew Peter Clark from his time at Balliol, Oxford and encouraged Clark to apply for a position at Leicester in 1975 which would eventually lead to the establishment of the Centre for Urban History in 1985.¹³⁶ Moreover, during his third year at Balliol, Clark had attended a number of research seminars arranged by Asa Briggs which included a number of

¹³⁰ C. Phythian-Adams, 'English Local History: Some Current Approaches Appraised', *Acadiensis* 5, no. 1 (1975), p. 117.

¹³¹ M. Tranter, (ed.), *English Local History: The Leicester Approach: A Departmental Bibliography and History 1948-1998* (Leicester, 1999).

¹³² M.H. Johnson, 'On the Particularism of English Landscape Archaeology', *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, 9, no. 2 (2005), p.114.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ Interview with Charles Phythian-Adams undertaken by G.W. Davies (October 2012).

¹³⁵ *Ibid.* A further connection with urban history and Hoskins can be found in Paul Slack whose Ph.D. was also supervised by Hoskins and later Slack would co-author *English towns in transition 1500-1700* (London, 1976) with Peter Clark.

¹³⁶ Peter Clark was the University of Leicester's Centre for Urban History's first Director.

papers on early modern towns which Clark remembers as ‘exciting pioneering stuff.’¹³⁷ The presence of Briggs in Clark’s recollections confirms that although there was a clear connection between the field of Urban History and the discipline of Economic History, the field’s initial period was perhaps influenced to a greater degree by Social History.¹³⁸ Indeed, on a personal level, Briggs was Dyos’ immediate predecessor as the driving force behind the emergence of Urban History as a distinct field and this important facet of the field’s development will be considered in the following section.

Asa Briggs and an Urban Social History

Traditionally, Social History is seen as part of the historical movement which considered new topics, especially from sectors of society previously ignored by historians. The approach came to be known as history from below. Taylor however argued for an alternative historiography.¹³⁹ Citing the 1990 publication of the *Cambridge Social History of Britain, 1750-1950* in which he noted many of the contributors dealt with themes that could not be slotted into the framework of history from below, he therefore concluded that the ‘empire builders’ of Social History in Britain could be found in the traditional universities of the 1950s and 1960s. In fact he considered Social History a refuge from Economic History¹⁴⁰ where historians were ‘pushed’ because this was where they could study capitalism’s effects on history and the ‘unseen foundations’ and inner drives that determined human behaviour.¹⁴¹

One of the most vocal advocates of the new Social History, and also a major contributor to the initial emergence of urban history, was Asa Briggs. As Taylor remarked, interest in social history was not new in the immediate post-war years; rather, its development could be traced back to the 1920s and 1930s and the Second World War.¹⁴² The periodization in each institution differed of course; Oxford, for example, was one of the more traditional locations that remain attached to the pre-war curriculum. This was evident when Briggs moved to Worcester College, Oxford from Cambridge at the end of the war. Here, Briggs met G.D.H. Cole who was ‘seriously interested in social

¹³⁷ Email correspondence between G.W. Davies and Peter Clark. 22 July 2013.

¹³⁸ Interview with A. Sutcliffe undertaken by G.W. Davies (April 2010).

¹³⁹ M. Taylor, ‘The Beginnings of Modern British Social History’, *History Workshop Journal*, 43 (1997), p. 156.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 158

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 169

¹⁴² J. Obelkevich, ‘New Developments in History in the 1950s and 1960s: Witness Seminar’, *Contemporary British History*, 14, no. 4 (2000), p. 145.

history' and perhaps more importantly, had a certain amount of power which Briggs later acknowledged led directly to his 'very peculiar' readership in 'recent social and economic history'.¹⁴³ Although, with Cole's support, Briggs offered his students a larger range of topics than Oxford normally permitted, Briggs was the exception in what remained a traditional environment.¹⁴⁴ Indeed, Briggs later recounted how the conservatism at Oxford had inhibited his attempts to develop a modern curriculum,¹⁴⁵ and that the word 'recent' in the title of his readership concerned the majority of the dons in Economics, Economic History, and History.¹⁴⁶ Finding Oxford too traditional and not open to the changes he wanted to make to the curriculum, Briggs moved to Leeds in 1955. Here, unconstrained by convention, he managed to 'break the stranglehold' political history had held over intellectual history by widening the choice of courses available to students from a purely political to social and economic history.¹⁴⁷ In particular he opened up the previously neglected nineteenth-century.¹⁴⁸ It took little imagination to recognize an interest in the socio-economic processes of the nineteenth-century could lead on to the study of the urban setting in which these processes could be effectively studied. Indeed, Briggs had been actively asserting the view that history of the urban was a valid historical field of study for some time. Before Social History had achieved full academic recognition, he had begun to raise the prospect of urban history becoming a 'prominent field of English historiography'.¹⁴⁹ Briggs therefore recognized the utility of a specialist study into the historical underpinnings of urban development.¹⁵⁰ He argued that it deserved the attention of historians because it exemplified how a society's social and political character was reflected in its material culture; specifically, the palimpsest that made up the urban environment.

Fascinated by industrial cities, Briggs wanted to understand what was unique in each city.¹⁵¹ Despite the success of his Birmingham history,¹⁵² he felt its concentration on a

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 145.

¹⁴⁴ D. Fraser, 'Editors Introduction', in D. Fraser (ed.), *Cities, Class and Communication: Essays in Honour of Asa Briggs* (London, 1990), p. 2.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 2.

¹⁴⁶ A. Briggs, quoted in J. Obelkevich, 'New Developments in History...Witness Seminar', p. 145.

¹⁴⁷ Fraser, 'Editors introduction', p. 2.

¹⁴⁸ Obelkevich, 'New Developments in History', p. 128.

¹⁴⁹ A. Briggs, *History of Birmingham* (London, 1952).

¹⁵⁰ In 1960 Briggs argued that the study of the city required a specialist. See A. Briggs, 'Historians and the Study of Cities', *George Judah Cohen Memorial Lecture* (Sydney, 1960), p. 3.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

single city prevented an analysis of any uniqueness: he wanted to discover what was different about a particular city, not what was similar, and this could only be achieved through comparison. The task of the historian was therefore first to discover a 'sense of unity and order before losing himself in the complexities of the particular.'¹⁵³ Briggs recognized five economic elements that could provide a basis for such a comparison; the numbers and types of occupations; the size of industrial activities; the structures of local industrial relations; the levels of economic mobility; and finally, the ability of a community to cope with the vagaries of economic fluctuations.¹⁵⁴ This interest in the economic structures that helped shape the physical and social environment of a city can be traced back to Briggs' formative years which were forged within the deprivations of the Depression. Personal experience led him to assert the link between historical developments and their underlying economics.¹⁵⁵ Briggs achieved the aim of a comparative urban history with his *Victorian Cities*. Here, he compared the economic, political and social factors concomitant with nineteenth-century urbanization between a number of British and American cities. Within its pages he recognized the urban as a locale was so complex that the limits of the historian would be reached before its full nature could be understood. Briggs was therefore not only pursuing a comparative study but also advocating an inter-disciplinary approach; arguing that historians could not only bring their own specialist tools to the study of the city but that they were uniquely able to act as a focal point for contributions of other specialists interested in unravelling the secrets of urban development.¹⁵⁶

In *Victorian Cities*, Briggs offered a new type of urban history, a comparative and inter-disciplinary approach that was not only interested in the facts of urbanization but also in the values expressed by those who experienced its effects directly. It was different from the previous forms that were produced as city boosters or by antiquarians: the former being more concerned with ensuring a city's future than exploring its past and the later losing much of the city's vitality and dynamism.¹⁵⁷ It provided an in depth discussion of the merits of studying the historic urban environment and the methodologies required to

¹⁵² C. Gill, A. Briggs, A. Sutcliffe, *History of Birmingham: Borough and City, 1865-1938* (Birmingham, 1952).

¹⁵³ A. Briggs, *Victorian Cities* (London, 1963), p. 58.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

¹⁵⁵ G. Smith, 'Asa Briggs: A Personal Profile', in D. Fraser, *Cities, Class and Communications: Essays in Honour of Asa Briggs* (London, 1990), p. 12.

¹⁵⁶ Briggs, 'Historians and the Study of Cities', p. 4.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

grasp its complex nature. The radical nature of the second instalment of his Victorian trilogy¹⁵⁸ was perhaps part of the reason behind *Victorian Cities* remaining Briggs' own favourite out of his extensive canon of work.¹⁵⁹

It should not be forgotten that in Britain, urban history as a discrete field of historical study, initially emerged under Briggs' sponsorship.¹⁶⁰ Despite his early promotion of urban history, it is therefore remarkable that it is not Briggs but Dyos whose name is most often associated with the early stages of the field in Britain. Briggs tended to be motivated more by the process of invention rather than any long term development of new areas of historical research. He often came up with the concept of studying a previously under-explored area only to leave the longer term consolidation to others. Indeed, he admitted that 'in some respects his interest [could] wane once the creative phase was over.'¹⁶¹ This was certainly the case for Urban History. As he left Social History to Harold Perkin,¹⁶² he left a void in the development of urban history which would be filled by Dyos. However, he would later remark that he felt the institutionalization of the field was an error, arguing that the 'over-institutionalization' of a sub-field tended to discourage relationships between history and other disciplines and that 'in some ways the attempt to create specialist departments and organisations in the post-war period had great weaknesses attached to it.'¹⁶³ As Fraser wrote in 1990, 'there is little doubt in my mind that pride of place must go to his [Briggs] contribution toward the emergence of a broadly conceived social history, a British version of *histoire totale*.'¹⁶⁴

Conclusion

The two questions underpinning this chapter asked why Urban History's entrance on the academic scene occurred relatively late in Britain and what changed to facilitate its eventual arrival. Dyos suggested, along with many others, that the generally negative attitude towards urbanization had not only helped to delay its formation but that a pervasive anti-urban attitude in Britain shaped the field's later development. Beginning

¹⁵⁸ A. Briggs, *Victorian People: A Reassessment of Persons and Themes 1851-67* (London, 1954), *Victorian Cities* (London, 1963), *Victorian Things* (London, 1988).

¹⁵⁹ Fraser, 'Editors Introduction', p. 5.

¹⁶⁰ Fraser, 'Editors Introduction', pp. 1-2.

¹⁶¹ A. Briggs, quoted in D. Fraser, 'Editors Introduction', p. 2.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 6

¹⁶³ Obelkevich, 'New Developments in History...Witness Seminar', p. 156.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

with Lloyd George's speech, it has been shown that when Dyos discussed an anti-urban rhetoric in the build-up to the field's establishment, it was not an over-embellishment. The results of the Victorian unregulated expansion and governments subsequent failure to address the poor conditions suffered by many, led to a discourse in which the urban was considered the poor relation to a rural, yet unachievable, idyll. The best alternative was the suburb, which quickly came to be seen as a threat to the very countryside the new suburban dwellers were attempting to experience. Existing rural residents felt threatened, not only by the physical intrusion of the built environment but also by the encroachment of an urban value system deemed alien to the sensibilities of rural life; as Sharp argued, the poor conditions in cities led many to flock to the countryside which in turn was perceived as a threat to its future.

It was London and the Home Counties where this threat was felt most strongly due to the continued expansion of the nation's capital. The negative connotations of the capital's growth were expressed in the pages of the *Barlow Report* (1943) and in the plans for the conurbations post-war reconstruction. In answer to the first question, the reason why urban history did not emerge earlier was because its object of research was simply not deemed worthy of scholarly attention. The urban was deemed worthy of control or demolition and not academic study. Whilst the negative perceptions attached to the urban never truly dissipated, the immediate post-war years saw a softening of attitudes led by a fear of loss brought on by the wartime bombing and subsequent plans to modernize the country's cities. The Victorian built environment became subject to ideas of preservation and study rather than dismissal and demolition: in other words, it became slightly more fashionable.

In answer to the second question, the rehabilitation of the Victorian built environment ran alongside the expansion of the university sector that began as part of an attempt to rebuild Britain's international standing. The result was a widening of student demographics and new scholars bringing with them an interest in a wider set of topics. Clearly this was a trajectory evident during the inter-war years but the social evolution that occurred during the Second World War accentuated these changes. Social history emerged with its interest in 'history from below' whereby class and social structures rose up the academic agenda. The city, with its mass of inhabitants and their experience of rapid urbanization proved to be a perfect object of study where social structures could be explored. The Victorian era of rapid and unfettered urbanization was especially

pertinent and historians increasingly turned to the period beginning with Briggs, who began to address the city and argued the urban environment needed a dedicated and specialist approach. When it came therefore to the idea of forming a coalition of scholars whose work focused on the urban and its society, although many still held negative views, it was no longer deemed unworthy of attention. The door to reassess the urban arena and consider its history was partly ajar and during the Sheffield Conference of the Economic History Society (1962) it was pushed fully open.

Chapter Three

The Road to Leicester 1966

During the research for this thesis by far the majority of comments about the development of the field have pointed to the pivotal role of the UHG generally and that of Dyos in particular in directing the Group. There have been a few lone voices who wished to note that urban history was practised outside of the group's sphere and that some historians refused to consider the group as the sole representative of the field. However, its centrality to the field's formation and direction cannot be ignored even though it may not have represented all aspects of its development in the 1960s and 1970s. The impetus behind the formation of an UHG in Britain came from a series of informal discussions between the historians H.J. Dyos and S.G. Checkland in the run up to the 1962 Sheffield conference of the Economic History Society. They were curious about the extent and organization of research into the historic urban environment being undertaken at this time and whether there was any formal contact between researchers or sharing of work. In order to ascertain this they organized a meeting at the 1962 EHS conference open to fellow delegates to share details of their urban based research or any that they knew their colleagues were undertaking. According to later accounts, the meeting was an overwhelming success with around 'twenty or thirty' delegates participating. It was so successful that later, Dyos reminisced over Checkland's alleged exclamation 'I think we have hit the jackpot.'¹ Unfortunately, there are neither extant minutes of the meeting nor a record of attendees to confirm either of these later assertions, only Dyos' later recollections, however, it is undeniable that the meeting was the forum in which the concept of organizing a loose association of scholars interested in Britain's historic urban centres took hold.²

A year later, at the EHS's Edinburgh conference, a follow-up meeting took place during which a committee was formed whose task was to 'explore the possibilities of aiding [urban history] research by the publication of a news-sheet once or twice a year.'³ The newsletter would, it was hoped, formalise the process of dissemination of on-going research instigated in Sheffield the previous year. The newsletter would circulate

¹ B.M. Stave, 'A Conversation with H.J. Dyos: Urban History in Great Britain', *Journal of Urban History*, 5, no. 4 (1979), p. 481.

² Paul Laxton noted that the last member of the original group of scholars, Geoffrey Martin, had died in January 2008. P. Laxton, 'Round-Table Discussions and Small Conferences: Reflections on the Slow Gestation of the Urban History Group', *Urban History*, 35, no. 2 (2008), p. 276.

³ H.J. Dyos (ed.), *UHN*, no. 1, December, 1963, p.1.

information about the progress of research into British urban history and ‘any other matters of interest.’⁴ Over and above the production of a newsletter, there was also a proposal to arrange ‘some round-table discussions and small conferences’ exploring all aspects of the nascent field.⁵ Once again, apart from the well-crafted *UHN* editorials, there has to be reliance upon later reminiscences about these early meetings due to a lack of any contemporaneous records. This includes an absence of details surrounding the events around the establishment of the Group’s first steering committee: how its members were chosen and the method of its legitimization. Judging by the home affiliations of the committee’s membership, it was populated by scholars with close ties to Checkland and Dyos: the majority were colleagues and there was one former student: David Reeder. Chaloner, who was from Manchester, was the exception with the remainder coming from Checkland and Dyos’ home institutions of Glasgow and Leicester respectively. In an editorial written by Dyos for the inaugural issue of the *UHN* dated December 1963, the committee was said to have been ‘formed’ and only later in the December 1964 issue was it stated that there had been some form of election.⁶ There is no record of who formed the electorate nor the extent to which the committee’s membership was agreed beforehand, which appeared to have been the case. Of course this is perfectly understandable during the early stages of any new organization when officers and volunteers tend to be recruited locally via what can euphemistically be described as ‘the old boy’s network’.⁷

Urban History and History’s Post-war Modernization

Checkland’s purported exclamation of surprise and Dyos’s later description of the numbers attending as ‘extraordinary’⁸ were perhaps understandable, but in retrospect the positive response to their invitation should be understood as a confirmation of similar developments taking place throughout the discipline of History at this time. The decision to organize such a meeting in the first instance illustrates how some professional historians felt able to explore the possibility of focusing on smaller or previously under-explored topics. It was an example of how new entrants entering the

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ H.J. Dyos, ‘Editorial’, *UHN*, no. 3, December 1964, p. 1.

⁷ Committee membership included S.G. Checkland (Glasgow), W.H. Chaloner (Manchester), G.H. Martin (Leicester), D.A. Reeder (Garnett Training College), and H.J. Dyos (Leicester). Following the listing of committee members, Dyos’s position is confirmed as the main point of contact for enquires, news items and possible submissions. *UHN* no. 1, December 1963, p. 1.

⁸ Stave, ‘A Conversation with H.J. Dyos’.

discipline of History changed it. For, although the two meetings took place prior to the implementation of the Robbins Report,⁹ the pre-Robbins post-war broadening of the university sector saw students from more disparate backgrounds beginning to enter higher education.¹⁰ History benefitted from this new influx which saw undergraduates who began their career in the immediate post-war years coming to the fore as new academics in the middle to late 1950s: Dyos and Checkland certainly emerged from this post-war cohort.¹¹ They were part of a generation who had experienced the depression of the 1920s and 1930s either directly or through the memories of their immediate family as well as the rigours of total war with many seeing active service.¹² With this background of social and political upheaval it was perhaps foreseeable that, as the *Times Literary Supplement* noted in its 1966 analysis of the study of history in England,¹³ these newly qualified historians had experienced a ‘pervasive sense of discomfort or malaise’¹⁴ about their chosen discipline. It is arguable that rather than a dynamic discipline reflecting the social changes underway in post-war Britain, the discipline of History remained mired in the legacies of the Victorian and Edwardian eras. Persisting as a training ground for civil servants and politicians with historians relying upon their common sense rather than any theoretical tools, it was seen as a craft rather than a science and far too removed from developments in other academic disciplines.¹⁵ As a discipline, it was open to the criticism of being constricted, monotonous, and one that consciously avoided the complicated and disordered environment of wider society: a discipline unable to explain society’s mutability.¹⁶

⁹ Robbins Report (1963) Cmnd. 2154, reviewed the pattern of Higher Education and recommended the opening up of the sector without radically changing its basic structure.

¹⁰ The immediate pre-war period 1938-39 50,000 students were in full-time higher education. The period 1954/55 this reached 82,000 and in 1962/3 118,000: an increase from 1938/39 of 136 per cent. Robbins Report, Table 3, p.15

¹¹ The humanities at 28 per cent were the largest sector followed by pure science at 25 per cent, technology 15 per cent, social studies 11 per cent, education 4 per cent, and agriculture 2 per cent. Robbins Report, Table 10, p. 26

¹² Dyos spent the war in the Royal Artillery reaching the rank of Captain and Checkland was a tank commander and saw service in the Normandy landings where he received a severe injury to his leg that caused permanent nerve damage ensuring he walked with a permanent limp. A. Slaven, ‘Checkland, Sydney George (1916-1986)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, 2004): online edition, Oct 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/49181>, accessed 25 May 2012].

¹³ A series of three dedicated issues beginning 7 April 1966 celebrating the sixtieth jubilee meeting of the Historical Association ‘New Ways in History 1’, followed by 28 July 1966 ‘New Ways in History 2 and 8 September 1966 ‘New Ways in History 3’.

¹⁴ *Times Literary Supplement* ‘Leader, New Ways in History’, p. 295.

¹⁵ Keith Thomas, ‘The tools for the job’, *Times Literary Supplement*, p. 275. The establishment of the London School of Economics in 1895 was a notable exception – its motto *rerum cognoscere causas* (to know the causes of things) indicating an interest in wider causal analysis.

¹⁶ *Times Literary Supplement* ‘Leader, New Ways in History’, p. 295.

Perceptions outside the discipline fared little better: historians were seen as remote from the events and issues that affected the everyday lives of all sectors of society. Britain was changing, but the professional discipline of History lingered in its pre-World War Two, or indeed pre-1914 incarnation. History was parochial.¹⁷

The scholars emerging from the post-Robbins expansionist university sector wanted to modernize the discipline by widening its remit from the limited analysis of great men and the consequences of constitutional transactions. The choice of subject matter increased and new comparative approaches were beginning to be pioneered alongside the rejection of existing temporal periodization. Of course, there is a danger of imagining that the processes of disciplinary change were more logical, homogeneous and consistent than they could possibly have been. Historians often apply a retrospective cohesion to a period that did not exist at the time. Moreover, they also tend to describe developments through the examination of the antecedents and survivors in an attempt to illustrate the discontinuities and fractures rather than continuances. However, the transformation in the academic discipline of History in Britain between the 1950s and the early 1970s was genuine and was not of later manufacture.¹⁸ Whilst some recollected the transformation as a steady and pedestrian process rather than revolutionary and rapid one,¹⁹ many others were aware of their role as members of a modernizing, and without a doubt revolutionary, generation.²⁰ As a result, the thirty years following the end of the Second World War were a period of particular fecundity in which historians felt able to explore novel approaches and apply innovative techniques to previously ignored themes. The 1946 establishment of the *Communist Party Historians Group* saw scholars including Christopher Hill, E.P. Thompson, and E.J. Hobsbawm attempt to change the perspective of British history, and in E.P.

¹⁷ The 7 April *Times Literary Supplement* leader compares the discipline described in these 1966 issues with their findings in an issue published to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Historical Association in 1956. It is noted that 'things are moving' but changes in the discipline were 'scarcely keeping pace with a rapidly changing world and with the accelerated tempo of social movement within our own society.' p. 295.

¹⁸ For a more general discussion see M. Bentley, *Modernizing England's past: historiography in the age of modernism 1870-1970* (Cambridge, 2005).

¹⁹ J. Obelkevich, 'New Developments in History in the 1950s and 1960s (Witness Seminar)', *Contemporary British History*, 14, no. 4 (2000), p. 143.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 125. The majority of historians interviewed as part of this research acknowledged they felt part of a revolution within the discipline. Charles Phythian-Adams in particular noted how the period was exciting and radical with many new topics, new sources and methodologies through which they could be analysed. Interview with Charles Phythian-Adams undertaken by G.W. Davies (October 2012).

Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* they were certainly successful.²¹ The first issue of *Past & Present: Journal of Scientific History* was published in 1952: its editorial board expressed the intention to 'record and explain [the] transformations that society undergoes by its very nature.'²²

Developments in France, with the *Annales'* willingness to utilise the methods of other disciplines, including anthropology, economics, psychology and sociology²³ was particularly important, especially their emphasis on an interdisciplinary approach to the study of *mentalities* as a tool towards the creation of a 'total history'.²⁴ Similarly, the rise of population history in the decades prior to the establishment of the *Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure*²⁵ has been described as one 'of those phases that subjects do sometimes experience, when everything seemed to be happening.'²⁶ Within this tumult a number of new historical sub-disciplines emerged: English Local History (1948), agriculture (1952), transport (1953), Urban History in the US (1953), business (1958), labour (1960), Urban History in the UK (1962), and oral history (1969).²⁷ Historians' agenda now included the effects of class and the local as well as national and international politics and the city, with its concentration of

²¹ E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London, 1963).

²² Eric Hobsbawm J., 'Introduction', *Past & Present*, 1 (1952), p. i. The journal's subtitle was changed after the arrival of Lawrence Stone in 1958 to *A Journal of Historical Studies*. Original editor J. Morris, assistant editor E.J. Hobsbawm. The first editorial board consisted of G. Barraclough (Prof. of Medieval History, University of Liverpool), R.R. Betts (Masaryk Prof. of Central European History, University of London), V.G. Childe (Prof. of Prehistoric European Archaeology, University of London), M.H. Dobb (Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge), J.E.C. Hill (Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford), R.H. Hilton (Lecturer in History, University of Birmingham), A.H.M. Jones Prof. of Ancient History, University of Cambridge), and D.B. Quinn (Prof. of History, University College of Swansea). Advisors were listed from China, Florence, Karachi, Melbourne, Paris, Prague, Strasbourg, the USSR and Washington 'and other countries.'

²³ A. Burguiere, *The Annales School: An Intellectual History* (London, 2009).

²⁴ This was noted by many of the historians interviewed for this thesis. Peter Clark suggested himself and others, notably Briggs and Pythian-Adams, were 'heavily influenced' by French publications considering regional society and urban demographics. Clark noted that works such as Pierre Goubert's monumental *Beauvais et le Beauvaisis*, were considered a revelation. For a full analysis of Goubert's text see R. Harding, 'Pierre Goubert's Beauvais et le beauvaisis: an historian "parmi les homes"', *History and Theory*, 22, no. 2 (1983), pp. 178-198.

²⁵ The *Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure* was formed in 1964 by Peter Laslett and Tony Wrigley with support from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation of London, in particular its Secretary James Thornton.

²⁶ E.A. Wrigley, 'Small-Scale But Not Parochial: The Work of the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure', *Family & Community History*, 1 (1998), p. 27.

²⁷ The Department of English Local History was founded by W.G. Hoskins at the University College, Leicester; the British Agricultural History Society founded 1952; Business History founded 1958; the Society for the Study of Labour History founded in 1960; the Oral History Society was established in 1973 but dates back to an informal day conference held in 1969 under the egis of British Institute of Recorded Sound (BIRS) which in turn led to the formation of a committee that would later establish the Society, and the Economic and Business History Society founded in the US in 1975.

populations and the subsequent social structures provided ample opportunity to explore these new areas. The city was becoming 'history's looking glass' magnifying the 'conflicts of class and race and ideology',²⁸ although Dyos often railed against historians using the city purely as a laboratory to explore social structures, instead he saw the urban itself as the object of research.²⁹ The success of the initial meetings at Sheffield and Edinburgh should not have come as too much of a surprise. The meetings need to be understood as a manifestation of new entrants to the professional ranks of university history willing to consider ways in which they could modernize their discipline.

The Urban History Newsletter

As described in a previous chapter and noted above, despite the appointment of a committee in 1963, the UHG's formation and its early direction has traditionally been placed in the hands of one historian in particular: Dyos. It was he who wrote the *UHN* editorials that shed light on the early development of the group and how the publication was used to cultivate an audience.³⁰ The aims of the group were set out in the third issue of the *UHN*.

It is not intended to form yet another learned society with its panoply of officers and costly printed journal. The object is simply to give a focus to the rather diffused work of numerous historians, economic historians, sociologists, and others, who are concerned with the problems of understanding urban life and its environment in the past. The *Newsletter* is the simplest and cheapest way of doing this. It will concern itself only with news of events likely to interest urban historians, and will publish by turns a current bibliography of British urban history and a register of research in progress. It is conceivable that occasionally a short critique of the agenda of urban history may be included, but there are no firm plans yet afoot. Members of the Group have met informally at the last three annual conferences of the Economic History Society and the next opportunity comes at Easter 1965 in Brighton, when it is hoped to make progress with the idea of a round-table conference in the concepts and methods of research in urban history.³¹

²⁸ H.J. Dyos, 'Some Historical Reflections on the Quality of Urban Life', in D. Cannadine and D. Reeder (eds) *Exploring the Urban Past: Essays in Urban History by H.J. Dyos* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 65.

²⁹ See Dyos, 'Agenda for Urban Historians' in H.J. Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), pp. 1-46. H.J. Dyos, 'Urbanity and Suburbanity' in D. Cannadine and D. Reeder (eds), *Exploring the Urban Past: Essays in Urban History by H.J. Dyos* (London, 1982), pp.19-36.

³⁰ Laxton, 'Round-table discussions', p. 275.

³¹ *UHN*, no.3, December 1964, p.1.

The *UHN* also illustrate the difficulty of organizing a group yet at the same time circumventing the formal structures Dyos and the committee suggested they wanted to avoid. In this chapter, the editorials are used to explore the extent to which the group's aims as laid out above came to fruition in the lead up to the first conference on urban history to be held in Britain that took place at Leicester in the September of 1966.

Dyos, as the head of the steering committee, wanted to avoid the creation of another formal journal and the format of a newsletter met this criterion. It was relatively cheap to produce; indeed, its early production has entered urban history's folklore as having been a Dyos family collaboration with Dyos' wife Olive and his young daughter Linda involved in its reproduction and circulation.³² Starting out at just eight cyclostyled pages on alternating pink and yellow quarto-sized paper, it hit its zenith at 88 pages in the autumn issue of 1972.³³ The *UHN* ran for 23 issues with a subscription fixed for the first three years at ten shillings (approximately £2.00 today) in the UK and \$10 (approximately \$70 no elsewhere).³⁴ The initial eagerness of historians to consider the urban was not only evident in the number attending the meetings at Sheffield and Edinburgh but also the in *UHN*'s success. At fourteen pages, the second issue could confidently assert the popularity of the new field in Britain and America, as well as to 'some extent' in Europe.³⁵ With publication set at twice a year, Dyos and the steering committee agreed the mid-year edition in May would contain a register of research which would rely upon submissions from its readers and the end of year issue in November/December, a bibliography of urban history. The first issue to contain a bibliography arrived in December 1964 and covered new contributions to the field 1962-64. The bibliography is a clear representation of the dichotomy at the heart of urban history at this time. For Dyos, it needed to reflect the complex nature of the urban and any attempts at its comprehensive study, yet at the same time it needed to be refined enough to help establish the field's academic boundaries otherwise the field would be in danger of dilution and calls of irrelevance.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 275. This was also confirmed during an interview with Linda Dyos in 2011 in which she remembers filling envelopes. Interview with Linda Dyos undertaken by G.W. Davies (September 2010).

³³ Linda Dyos confirmed the use of coloured paper had little to do with any aesthetic considerations; rather it resulted from the availability of unused stocks in Dyos's department at the University of Leicester.

³⁴ *UHN*, no. 3, December 1964, p.1. At today's rates the equivalent of 10 shillings is approximately £2.50 and \$10 is equivalent to approximately \$70.

³⁵ *UHN*, no. 2, May 1964, p.1.

As with any new field or organization, attempts to demarcate urban history's boundaries were always at the forefront of considerations in these early years. Through his editorials, Dyos argued that to reflect the lack of field boundaries the bibliography was to be 'catholic as is feasible' yet he was also aware the nascent field needed to form its own identity.³⁶ It was a balancing act. Whilst arguing to exclude texts relating to the new discipline of Urban Studies he acknowledged that if any of these excluded works contained 'either useful historical data or ideas likely to stimulate urban historians' they should be retained.³⁷ Architecture and transport history were also subjected to particular attention because they both had their own journals but once again, if the texts on architecture or transport provided relevant historical data, they were to be included in the bibliography. Dyos may have been concerned not to encroach on established journals (entering a pre-existing market), but more likely he was worried about leaving the new field open to claims of duplication and hence inconsequence. Dyos therefore recognised that the porosity of the field ensured the bibliography would consist of a number of marginal entries, in private however, it was a different matter, with Dyos arguing the bibliography needed to be populated and as such, he urged committee members to include anything 'vaguely' urban.³⁸ At this stage, Dyos and the committee considered the list short enough not to require classification, giving two reasons: the first was its then brevity, ensuring it was easy enough to scan through and secondly, it appeared that urban historians at this time were more interested in place rather than theme. As such, the bibliography was divided between general and local studies and the only categorisation was based on a grouping of town histories related to their specific location.

Creating and maintaining the bibliography was time consuming but it was recognized as essential to the formation of the field. The amount of work needed to produce the bibliography was noted by a number of subscribers. Congratulating Dyos on the *Newsletter*, William Ashworth wrote asking if it was all his own work. It was, according to Dyos, 'certainly a good deal more work than I had expected.'³⁹ He had the assistance of John Kellett, who 'did a little towards listing the printed books', but this, Dyos was

³⁶ *UHN*, no. 3, December 1964, p.4.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Interview with Anthony Sutcliffe undertaken by G.W. Davies (April 2010).

³⁹ Letter Dyos to Ashworth 12/02/1965. DC: 1/1/4.

sorry to discover, was the ‘merest beginning.’⁴⁰ The centrality of Dyos to the project is confirmed in a series of letters between him and Kellett over the content of the bibliographies. Kellett argued it would have been impossible to list ‘all the small fry’ which were often published locally and had only a small circulation and therefore should be omitted. Dyos however successfully argued that their omission would lead to a ‘deficient’ list and if they were not to include the ‘small fry’ along with the ‘big fish’, it would hardly be worth the effort.⁴¹ Indeed, believing that nationally published texts were far more likely to come to the attention of scholars without appearing in the *Newsletter*, Dyos preferred to have the smaller publications.⁴² Correspondence surrounding the formation and maintenance of the bibliography illustrates the control exercised by Dyos even at this early period of the group; it also confirmed the importance of the bibliography in creating a canon of work to bolster the fledgling field. If British urban history was to flourish, then not only had there to be an increase in the numbers of university courses on the topic, but also a general increase in the publication of texts supporting these courses. The initial justification behind the provision of a bibliography in the *Newsletter* was therefore to inform its subscribers; of equal importance was its promotional aspect. The bibliography showed subscribers that they were not alone in focusing on the urban and that there were texts available for students and publishing opportunities for scholars.⁴³

Published in alternate issues to the bibliography were the records of research. Comparatively, these required far less work than the compilation of the bibliography every six months. The list of on-going research was initially based on the records of the *Institute of Historical Research*, although they were heavily supplemented by subscribers’ personal notification and by issue six the register of research was formed on an independent survey of the field. The early registers of research were dominated by histories of individual towns but there was also a clear trajectory towards the economic and social history of wider geographical areas. Not all entries have the academic department listed but where there is an accreditation, another trend is evident with many attached to departments of Economic History or Economic and Social History. However, it is the clear dominance of London as a topic that is the most obvious

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Letter Dyos to Kellett 15/6/1964 – 18/6/1964. DC: 1/11/1.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ See Table 3 of this Thesis Appendix which shows an increase in numbers represented in the *Newsletter*’s bibliography which reaches over 700 in December 1969.

characteristic to emerge. Starting with the records of research recorded in 1962 and November 1964 there were 95 listed articles or publications focused on London with Liverpool next on eight, Manchester with seven, Bristol on six and Birmingham and Nottingham with five each.⁴⁴

The fluidity of the field's boundary meant there was no agreement on the scope of the register; indeed, Dyos took a very liberal view at this early stage and attempted to ignore any dogmatism in order to ensure the register was at least populated with entries. Perhaps due to this pressure to ensure the list was populated, a number of entries came from private individuals, indicating the interest of amateur historians in urban history: Dyos was particularly keen to obtain these details.⁴⁵

The UHG was not, therefore, to be restricted to professional historians.⁴⁶ Once again an aspect of urban history's development mirrored wider developments outside of academia. The 1956 special commemorative edition of the *TLS* argued that the growth of popular interest in history had led to the Historical Association to change its rules to allow membership to 'all persons interested in the study of and teaching of history', rather than restricting membership to professional historians.⁴⁷ The successful launches of *History Today* in 1951 and *The Amateur Historian* in 1952 showed there was an escalating interest in history amongst non-professionals.⁴⁸ Indeed, by 1966, *History Today* had reached a monthly circulation of 30,000.⁴⁹ The most obvious difference between the professional and the amateur historian was choice of subject-matter, with the amateur restricted to local issues and topics of personal interest due to a lack of time and easier availability of sources. It would have been natural for the amateurs to look closer to home and the urban as a setting provided an abundance of subject matter alongside a reasonably accessible set of source materials. Although many would not have described themselves as urban historians - rather their association would have more resonance with Local History with its focus on community - their interest in the

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ *UHN*, no. 2, May 1964.

⁴⁶ Letter Dyos and Checkland 14/10/1965. DC: 1/3/5.

⁴⁷ The change of rules occurred in 1917.

⁴⁸ See J. Roberts, 'The Amateur Historian' *Times Literary Supplement* 7/4/1966, p.294 in which he categorises the professional as one who is in full time paid employment related to the study of history; in other words, a university researcher, lecturer, or author. The term amateur did not denote a person of lower abilities but someone who practiced historical research in their own unpaid time.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p.294

development of social and cultural practices framed within the confines of their local urban environment played an important role in the early development of the field.

The *Newsletter's* third issue was introduced with the news that the *EHS* had agreed to provide financial support which promoted a move away from a casual gathering of interested scholars to a more organised group through the introduction of membership and subscriptions to the *Newsletter*.⁵⁰ However, as detailed above, although Dyos's initial aim was not to create a new society with its own constitution, there had to be some form of recording the details of those who were associated with the UHG and this was achieved through the subscription to the *Newsletter*. Confusion about the status of those associated with the group emerges in the early editorials where at first the term 'members' is adopted which suggests some form of registration and there are a number of letters from academics wishing to 'join' the UHG. However, Dyos responded consistently to all such requests with the same advice: he simply advised they could become subscribers to the *Newsletter*. There is no suggestion that debates took place around what constituted an association to the UHG over and above Dyos's wish to sidestep formal organization: subscription to the *Newsletter* or attendance at gatherings sufficed and so the terms subscriber and member were adopted at various times. The first issue went out to just twenty five individuals but by the fourth issue, dated June 1965, numbers had grown to about 100 and within its pages the editorial committee suggested a list of subscribers would be produced in the following issue, however this did not occur.⁵¹ Likewise, there was anticipation that the third issue would see an account of university teaching in urban history. In issue two, Dyos had asked subscribers to submit details of under-graduate courses which were 'either specifically or largely concerned with the urban phenomena: copies of curricula and syllabi' together with explanations where necessary and where such courses sat in the degree scheme and the number of students enrolled.⁵² However, it was later acknowledged there had only been a 'ragged' response to the call.⁵³ The request to supply details of courses was an attempt to illustrate the institutionalised nature of the field: if the

⁵⁰ The Economic History Society awarded a grant of £25.00 per annum but it remained untouched because the subscription covered printing and postage and because the University of Leicester had provided Dyos with the paper and a typist free of charge. Dyos to A.W. Coates 19/1/1968. DC: 1/3/7.

⁵¹ It has been suggested that although Dyos was seen as the central figure organizing the UHG, his administrative abilities were not always up to the task. A point illustrated by the repeated failure to publish a list of subscribers

⁵² *UHN*, no. 2, May 1964. p.2.

⁵³ *UHN*, no. 4, June 1965, p.2.

committee could show the level of interest within academe then this would form a platform upon which urban history could be developed. It appears that rather than any apathy leading to the failure to respond, it was simply that specific courses named or described as urban history did not exist at this time.⁵⁴

Many of Dyos's colleagues were interviewed and confirm he was particularly interested in fostering contacts in America. Indeed, there is some confusion over whether the American UHG and its *Newsletter* first published in 1953 was the drive behind the formation of its British counterpart. Dyos suggested he was unaware of the American UHG at the time the British Group was instigated, although he acknowledged he had learned about it 'very soon afterwards.'⁵⁵ Yet Dyos did give credit to events in America in the second issue of the British *Newsletter* when he acknowledge that their American colleagues had been arranging conferences and circulating newsletters for 'some years' and that their activities were an 'inspiration for the inauguration of the *Urban History Group* in this country.'⁵⁶ Noting the latest issue of the American *Urban History Group Newsletter* (no.20, March 1965), Dyos 'happily' conceded that it formed part of 'our own' parentage and had complemented the emergence of the British version, suggesting 'at present its publication seems much better established than our own, and I [Dyos] recommend it to members.'⁵⁷ Once again the centrality of Dyos to the direction of urban history is evident with a clear Anglo-American dominance reflecting Dyos's own focus. Much of the surviving correspondence for this time is dominated by his attempts to cultivate contacts across the Atlantic. Prior to the 1966 conference, America was ranked second in terms of subscribers at 14.06 per cent, although English subscribers clearly dominated at 67.19 per cent.⁵⁸

In the years immediately prior to the publication of the *Urban History Yearbook* (*UHYB*) in 1974, the amount of content in the *Newsletter* dropped dramatically with the Spring 1973 issue reaching just 32 pages. Preparation for the *UHYB*'s launch in 1974 ensured that content which could have been placed in the four final issues of the *Newsletter* was held back, leaving them diminished at an average of just eight pages

⁵⁴ The lack of response will be addressed later in the thesis as part of Chapter 7 'Urban History on the Curriculum.'

⁵⁵ Stave, 'Conversation with H.J. Dyos', p.482.

⁵⁶ *UHN*, no. 2, May 1964, p.2.

⁵⁷ *UHN*, no. 4, June 1965.

⁵⁸ See Table 4 of this Thesis Appendix which provides a breakdown of the subscriber nationalities as of June 1966.

each. The final issue, number 23, was sent out at Christmas 1978 as a memorial to Dyos.

Entries in the early editions of the *UHN* confirm the urban was an increasingly popular area of study, both in its contemporary and historical manifestation. They contained details of conference and publications from a wide set of organizations. The Victorian Society, for example, planned to hold their annual conference in 1965 on the topic of Victorian industrial cities in the Midlands or in the North.⁵⁹ Although abandoned in favour of a conference focusing on Victorian rural England, it was suggested within the pages of the *UHN* that the UHG would help organise its urban counterpart.⁶⁰ Whilst this suggestion is described as originating from the entire committee, the voice of Dyos can clearly be heard. The same year saw a number of other conferences and events on an urban theme. The Institute of Economics and Statistics held a conference at Oxford on urban structures following on from their previous year's conference theme on urban studies. The 1965 conference included sessions on: Transportation Planning; Sociological Composition of Towns, Planning Models, and Housing Demand. The Institute of British Geographers formed their Urban Study Group in 1965 and their 1966 conference theme was on the 'Social Structure of Cities'. The British Sociological Association's 1966 conference was to be held on the theme 'Urbanism in Contemporary Britain'. The urban, whether approached historically or in its contemporary existence, was a topic attracting interest of a wide range of scholars, and Dyos, along with his fellow committee members, hoped that they, via the *UHN* could provide a forum in which these scholars, regardless of their home discipline, could share their work.

Not Quite a Journal

The organization and publication of the *UHN* illustrates a central ambiguity within the early years of urban history. As discussed in previous chapters, for a new field or discipline to succeed there needed to be a conglomeration of factors. Not all are needed but the more there are the greater the chance of success and longevity. The UHG provided many of these factors but at the same time, its early aims and ambitions were set squarely against the creation of these very same structures. The *UHN* was one such constituent although it was not a fully-fledged journal in any accepted understanding of

⁵⁹ *UHN*, no. 3, December 1964.

⁶⁰ *UHN*, no. 4, June, 1965.

the term.⁶¹ It did contain the occasional article considering the development of the field in other countries; however, there was no form of peer review, blind or otherwise apart from the editorial committee or specifically Dyos. Yet at the same time the presence of a bibliography and perhaps more importantly the collation and publication of a register of research does meet some of the criteria used to foster new sub-fields and disciplines. The bibliography helped to provide a stable canon and the register of research confirmed the level of interest in the field and offered the readers of the newsletter confirmation of a cadre of fellow historians: they were not ploughing a lone furrow. Dyos argued that he did not want to create a 'panoply of officers' yet the committee could be described as such in that they were recognized as a formal group controlling the content of the *UHN* and arrangements of meetings. Each also had a responsibility for a specific aspect of the *UHN*'s publication. This raises other issues around the publication and content, especially the dominating presence of Dyos. He was clearly the controlling voice. One historian interviewed suggested that you knew who was considered 'part of the team' if your comments were published in the conference reports or their publications reviewed. It was Dyos you needed to impress, once asked to assist the UHG, it was unthinkable to turn the offer down. This control was also evident in the preparation for the round-table conference held at Leicester in 1966.

Preparation for Leicester 1966

The EHS conference held at Reading (1964) was once again the setting for a meeting of the nascent UHG. It was during this meeting that agreement was reached to begin work on the organization of a 'round-table discussion between scholars from different disciplines on the scope and methodology of urban history.'⁶² The *UHN* editorials, which must be seen as dominated by Dyos's personal account of activities, noted the existence of an agreement within the UHG of scholars attending that there was a need to standardise and clarify the main terms and concepts, beginning with a general theory of urbanisation, growth and decline. There was a continuing concern over a lack of the systematic approach to the historic analysis of urban themes and the conference would,

⁶¹ Generally, an academic journal utilises a system of blind peer review. The *UHN*, although it had an editorial committee there was no such system in place.

⁶² *UHN*, no. 2, May 1964, p.1

it was hoped, be the forum in which this absence could be addressed through the creation of a coherent methodology.⁶³

The idea of holding regular round-table meetings was not new as it formed one of the central tenets of the UHG's initial aims and aspirations. Moreover, correspondence shows how it remained a core to Dyos's view of the group's trajectory. He was getting anxious about the inability of the committee to settle the question of organising a conference on urban history or not. However, to a great extent the impasse appeared to have come from Dyos himself for, as the controlling personality at the head of the UHG, he exerted such high levels of control that other members of the committee tended to sit back and wait for him to take the lead which ensured very little was achieved without direction from Dyos.⁶⁴ Still he argued that because the prospect of a round-table conference had been raised in the *Newsletter*, if there was no further action then subscribers to the *Newsletter* would be justified in not taking them seriously.⁶⁵ In a letter to John Kellett, Dyos was less reticent in his views, arguing that the UHG would be seen as a 'laughing stock' amongst their colleagues.⁶⁶ It is safe to suggest that Dyos saw himself as the group's central personality and if it were to become a 'laughing stock', he feared he would also be seen in a similar manner. Therefore, in order to speed up discussions, he wrote to various members of the committee suggesting they met following the conclusion of the EHS Council meeting at LSE on 29 October 1965, to 'hammer out' some definite proposals.⁶⁷

Yet once again his apparent inability to allow others to assume responsibility is seen in a letter Dyos wrote to Checkland, although he asked if Checkland had any 'concrete ideas' he felt the need to reassure that he himself was trying his best to 'sketch something out as a stalking horse for the rest of you.'⁶⁸ Checkland's response was simple, a decision on the subjects covered had to be made and they needed to be 'fairly precise' about the prospective delegates.⁶⁹ Checkland could not attend the meeting at the LSE and in a later telephone conversation between himself and Dyos it was confirmed that the EHS Council meeting on 29 October allowed very little time to

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ This point was raised by Anthony Sutcliffe and a number of other historians during interviews with the author. Interview with Anthony Sutcliffe undertaken by G.W. Davies (April 2010).

⁶⁵ Letter Dyos to Checkland 14/10/1965. DC: 1/3/5.

⁶⁶ Letter Dyos to Kellett 14/10/1965. DC: 1/11/1.

⁶⁷ Letter Dyos to Checkland, 14/10/1965. DC 1/3/5

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Letter Checkland to Dyos, 2/2/1965. DC: 1/3/5.

discuss the idea of an urban history conference. Dyos had hoped to 'co-opt some of those present for this purpose' but most appeared to have disappeared quite quickly, almost immediately after the meeting had ended. However, enough did volunteer to stay and discuss the issue, including Maurice Beresford and Theo Barker. From Dyos's reminiscences, the general preference was that the conference should be set for Christmas 1966. Dyos confirmed he would be drafting a more precise programme with accompanying notes which he was to circulate to all concerned as soon as he could.⁷⁰

Checkland also suggested the format of a two-part conference with the first section devoted to methodology looking at the sources of urban history and its treatment, considering maps, censuses and other data of that kind.⁷¹ He felt this could best be approached if the section exclusively concentrated upon the British industrial city from the eighteenth century to date. The second part of the conference would be more of an omnibus treatment of specific cities and towns serving as a jumping off point for a comparative discussion or the consideration of individual themes, such as the demographic behaviour of particular groups. Checkland still supported the round-table notion with a group of 20-30 'well informed people', and to achieve this he felt they needed to 'rope in any suitable Americans or other aliens, who are available.' As to date, he argued for Easter 1966 but Dyos felt this was too soon.⁷² Kellett, who also was absent from the LSE meeting, argued for two sessions, the first on topographical information and the urban historian, and the second on sources of urban history, which, he believed would 'surely provide plenty of methodological problems to chew over.'⁷³ Dyos's urged his colleagues to respond as a matter of urgency as it was less than two weeks before his *Newsletter* deadline.⁷⁴ Positive and largely uncritical replies were received from Theo Barker, Alun Armstrong, Geoffrey Martin, Asa Briggs, David Reeder, W.G. Hoskins, J.O. Foster, R.O. Newton and Bill Ashworth. However, Checkland's reply, which arrived on the day of the deadline, was more detailed. Beginning with general congratulations on the content of the proposed programme, Checkland made a number of specific points:

1. It is probably a good idea to have a general paper to start off with, especially as constituting a semi-social occasion on the first evening. It

⁷⁰ Letter Checkland to Dyos, 2/2/1965. DC: 1/3/5.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Letter Checkland to Dyos November 1965 (Transcript of telephone conversation), DC: 1/3/5

⁷³ Letter Kettett and Dyos, 14/10/1965. DC: 1/11/1.

⁷⁴ Letters Dyos to Checkland, Kellett, Chaloner, Beresford, and Barker, 19/11/1965. DC: 1/3/5.

- is, however, necessary that the person doing it should think pretty closely on (sic) terms of work actually in progress and themes being pursued.
2. I do not think you should have Asa Briggs acting a both “Key Noter” and later as rapporteur.
 3. We seem to start the morning [of the first day] here on a pretty particular basis. I suspect that there is some danger of having a number of pretty highly specialised studies that do not look very far beyond the immediate context. This would mean that the real work would have to be done by the rapporteur. It would be necessary for him to try and make something out of a bundle of material presented to him. It might be a good notion if time permits to write to Professor Hoskins with this proposed range of subjects, asking him tentatively what he thinks might be done.
 4. The morning [of the second day] takes us sharply into problems of sources and method. I would myself think that it would probably be better for this part of the programme to appear on the Saturday morning [the previous day]. We would thus have a sharp corrective or, if you like, antithesis to the inevitably general discussion of the previous evening. When we approach Professor Conzen about the “Historical Interpretation of Maps”, we should insert into this title a specific urban reference. Thus it should perhaps be “Urban History and the Use of Maps”.
 5. Is it worth considering at the end of the conference having a kind of “Brains Trust” consisting of the rapporteurs? This is at least worth considering in case one of the sections of the programme does not prove practicable. I do think some kind of summing up exercise would be useful.⁷⁵

Checkland was clearly concerned about maintaining the ethos of the conference. Its aim was to consider approaches and methodologies and there was, he suggested, a danger of losing the general aim within the specifics of the various papers.⁷⁶ Ashworth expressed similar concerns, asking if the objective of this initial conference was

to present urban history as a separately defined subject, or to make an attempt to mark out common ground between urban history and business history. If we are making a bid for independent life, ought we deliberately to run any risks of being made into changelings in infancy.⁷⁷

A specific concern for Ashworth was Checkland, who had been pencilled in for the final session and who might turn it into a discussion of his new area of interest, Business History. Dyos later assured Ashworth that Checkland had agreed to limit the discussions to the agreed heading.⁷⁸ Maurice Beresford considered the idea of the conference ‘very exciting and enticing’ and wondered if there was any room for ‘some real urban

⁷⁵ Letter Checkland to Dyos, 3/12/1965. DC: 1/3/5.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Letters Ashworth to Dyos November 1965 – January 1966. DC: 1/1/4.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

phenomenon, even at the expense of more conventional methods of study.’⁷⁹ Kellett was concerned over the mechanics of the discussion procedure but agreed with Dyos that one of the aims of the conference should be to clarify ‘scope and method and exploring the possibilities of comparison.’⁸⁰ He felt none of the papers presented on the morning of the first full day would actually bring them any closer to providing an answer.⁸¹ He suggested the five papers would be of more interest to a Department of Politics rather than to economic historians and all, apart from Everitt, appeared to be coming just to read their monographs.⁸² He feared that the momentum of ‘their’ group might be dissipated rather than enhanced by these papers.⁸³ Kellett wanted to see the conference succeed, but felt it was rather too crowded and ambitious. He also feared a dilution of the new field, arguing that those with an interest in urban politics might be better served in a follow-up round-table conference comprised of ‘political and straight historians’.⁸⁴

At the heart of these discussions was a debate on whose version of the field was to move forward and more specifically what identity it would eventually adopt. Historians were promoting their own ideas for conference which they all recognized as being a crucial point in the development of the field. However, once again, it was Dyos whose plans came out on top. Indeed, by the time Checkland responded, Dyos had already completed the tentative programme which he sent out to members of the UHG committee and others whose opinions he wished to garner, or indeed, from whom he hoped to garner support. He set the deadline for any changes at December 3 1965 in order to allow for an announcement to be placed in the December issue of the *Newsletter* due on the thirteenth.⁸⁵ At this time, the provisional date for the conference was Easter 1967 but due to Easter being early, the University of Leicester authorities were finding it difficult to provide suitable accommodation, so it was brought forward six months to the September of 1966.

⁷⁹ Letter Dyos to Beresford, April 1963 – December 1965. DC: 1/1/4. Original underline.

⁸⁰ Letter Kellett to Dyos, 24/11/1965. DC: 1/1/4.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Letter Kellett to Dyos 24/11/1965. DC: 1/11/1.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Correspondence between Kellett and Dyos, 24/11/1965-10/1/1966. DC: 1/11/1.

⁸⁵ Letter Dyos to Ashworth, 22/11/1965. DC: 1/1/4.

Dyos appeared to take a number of criticisms on board, especially those relating to the heavy workload to the two days, but he also argued that due to the papers having been circulated 'in extensor' the sessions would be given over entirely to discussion.⁸⁶

If we take the papers as read, and get straight into discussion, I really believe the proceedings will have a lot more bite to them, and, in any case, there will be the opportunity for a more leisurely hearing of papers on each of the three evenings.⁸⁷

In response to Ashworth's comment over Checkland's introduction of Business History, he advised Checkland that the session given over to 'Business Activity in Towns' had been completely abandoned due to a number of issues, not the least the unsuitability of one of the speakers and the danger of diluting the conference theme.⁸⁸ To close the conference, Dyos wanted to see, under a general title 'Towards a Definition of Urban History' a paper examining the interplay between urban history and its historical cousins.⁸⁹

At this time, Checkland also raised the possibility with Dyos of forming a journal with the title of *Urban Studies* to be published by the University of Glasgow along with a supplement *Urban History* which would incorporate the *Newsletter* and form the basis of a joint subscription. Checkland's initial thoughts were that he and Dyos could act as joint editors. Canvassing Dyos's opinion, Checkland was concerned that the Americans might beat them to it because he believed *Urban Studies* already occupied 'the centre of the stage' and there had been 'certain overtures from American interests.'⁹⁰ Dyos suggested he wanted any decision 'put on hold' because he was not able to give the idea any great deal of thought due to the pressures of organizing the conference and because he was away on study leave, therefore he had little opportunity to give it the level of consideration it warranted.⁹¹ It appears Dyos was purposely obstructing Checkland; indeed, Dyos confirmed that he had his own plans for the future of the UHG when responding to Checkland's suggestions, referring to his editorial in the December 1965 issue of the *UHN* where he had speculated on the 'shape of things to come.'⁹² Clearly,

⁸⁶ Letter Dyos to Kellett, 2/12/1965. DC: 1/11/1.

⁸⁷ Letter Dyos to Kellett, 22/12/1965. DC: 1/11/1.

⁸⁸ Letter Dyos to Checkland 21/12/1965. DC: 1/3/5.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Letter Checkland to Dyos, 10/12/1965. DC: 1/3/5.

⁹¹ Letter Dyos to Checkland, 21/12/1965. DC: 1/3/5.

⁹² Ibid.

despite his reputation for catholicity, Dyos was not open to any other suggestions when it came to the future of the UHG. Whilst levelling faint praise on Checkland's ideas, he dismissed them and confirmed he had been 'contemplating something somewhat different.'⁹³ Any decision therefore should, he argued, be postponed until the completion of the September 1966 conference.⁹⁴ The matter was left on the table because Checkland was in 'high policy' discussions with a couple of unnamed American universities who were the 'interests' Checkland had mentioned considering a publication focusing on urban studies.⁹⁵ The committee agreed, in Dyos's absence, to wait until the end of the conference before the future of Urban History was addressed, along with the possibility of conjoining the *Newsletter* with a journal focusing on urban studies.⁹⁶ In retrospect, this can be seen as the point where Dyos and Checkland, the two originators of the UHG, parted company. They remained colleagues and friends but Checkland no longer took a great deal of interest in the running and direction of the UHG, focusing instead on his own interests at Glasgow. Again, Dyos's control is clear. Perhaps because the aim of the conference was to consider the future direction of the field, it was understandable that they wanted to wait until its outcome before addressing any collaboration or merger with *Urban Studies*; however, Dyos's absence from the committee of the UHG, due to his study leave, seems to have ensured they felt unable to discuss let alone make a decision without his presence.

The final selection of session chairman was made by Dyos in April 1966. He remarked 'I have now got pretty well all the Geographers I think we could ever want, and as many of every other discipline too, except for Sociologists, who are deplorably thin on the ground.'⁹⁷ The idea of a more focused conference with urban history as its main theme was now in its final stages. It was to be held at Gilbert Murray Hall at the University of Leicester between 23 and 26 September 1966. It was a strict invitation only event with participants chosen by the steering committee directed by Dyos. There were to be two principal objects: first was to 'clarify the general scope and methods of urban history' and second, 'examine some specific possibilities for comparative research.'⁹⁸ Dyos wanted to 'bring together scholars from a variety of disciplines but

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Letter Dyos to Checkland, 21/12/1965. DC: 1/3/5.

⁹⁵ Letter Checkland to Dyos, 14/1/1966. DC: 1/3/5.

⁹⁶ Letter Checkland to Dyos, 25/4/1966. DC: 1/3/5.

⁹⁷ Letter Dyos to Checkland 26/4/1966 – 31/8/1966. DC: 1/3/5.

⁹⁸ *UHN*, no. 5, December 1965, p.2.

whose fields of work overlap as much as possible', he also hoped to publish a volume of essays considering the future and methodology of the nascent field arising from the conference although not necessarily limited to the papers given to it.'⁹⁹

Conclusion

The formation of the UHG in 1962-63 cannot be seen as anything other than part of the call to explore new topics and the subsequent fragmentation of the historical discipline. In a period of just four years the UHG developed out of a meeting attended by a small number of economic historians held on the fringes of the 1962 EHS conference in Sheffield to the opening of the 1966 conference in Leicester, the first dedicated to the study of urban history in Britain. Its newsletter increased from eight pages in 1962 to 46 in December 1965 reflecting a growth from just 25 initial subscribers in 1962 to around 100 by the end of 1965 and by 1972 it reached 88 pages. The bibliography began with 262 items in a single year and peaked at over 700 and within five years an international conference and subsequent publication of its papers and discussions came to fruition. Its formation and growth occurred, and indeed was facilitated by, a context of an expanding interest in history, both at the professional and amateur level alongside a widening of subjects under consideration. The field's development therefore needs to be set within the growth of the professional discipline, nurtured by a changing demography within an expanding student body which helped ensure urban society came to the fore as fertile ground on which they could explore the new approaches, methodologies, and topics. Both the academic and social environment was one in which the opportunity to develop new approaches were indulged and the academic community was generally open to the exploration of new topics with fresh methodologies. In a period of particular fecundity, the emergence of the UHG was not unique, but what was remarkable was the dominance of one academic at the centre of its development. The UHG may have begun as a small cadre of economic historians but it not only survived, it grew.

Yet within this record of success there were a number of issues around the UHG's future direction. Dyos did not want to create a formal organization with a constitution and officers but to some extent that was exactly what was created. The success of the UHG and consequently the growth of the field required some of the structures that Dyos opposed, and it was Dyos's vision that drove the trajectory of the Group as shown

⁹⁹ Ibid.

above. The *UHN* was a proto journal that helped create a recognized canon of work and provided a forum through which scholars could share their research. The bibliography ably illustrated the growth of the field as did the register of research. Whilst arguing against the formalised structures Dyos was at the same time pushing to populate the *UHN* with anything vaguely urban. In doing so he was acknowledging the importance of such structures in ensuring the establishment of the new sub-field. The organization of the conference can likewise be seen in this light. Dyos believed that if the 1966 conference had failed to go ahead, the group, and therefore in his eyes, he, would be considered a laughing stock. The success of the *UHN* was not enough on its own to ensure the UHG's, or the field's future. A conference was required and it needed to address some of the basic assumptions of the field: its *raison d'être*, its methodologies and its future trajectory.

Chapter Four

The First Conference, Leicester 1966

The evolution of an academic discipline can be mapped out by following a series of place markers: pedagogical, organisational, and cultural. These include the subject's placement on the university curriculum, the publication of journals, newsletters, monographs, and the organisation of colloquiums, seminars and conferences. All are evidence of the structures described by Becher and Trowler that exist within academia which help to form not only the discipline's territorial boundaries but also the academic identities of participating scholars which are crucial if a discipline is going to succeed. In other words, the creation of a discipline and its continuing stability depend upon the existence of a set of practices that are reinforced by the academics themselves through the organisation of their professional lives. These practices are built upon the intellectual work in which they are engaged, ensuring each individual subject produces its own explicit set of structures within a specific academic culture that reinforce and gives permanence to its social practices, values and attitudes.¹ Although nominally a field rather than a discipline, urban history needed similar staging posts in its evolution if it was to establish itself.² As described previously, these included the first inauspicious meetings on the fringes of EHS conferences in 1962 and 1963, the establishment of a UHG committee in April of 1963, and the first *Newsletter* in the same year. As a method of enlarging the reach of the new field and engaging scholars, the *Newsletter* was particularly successful. In the 33 months from its initial publication to the edition immediately prior to the 1966 conference, it increased in size from just eight pages to 34 with subscriber numbers increasing to around 200.³ Despite this success, Dyos and others on the committee became increasingly concerned about maintaining the field's momentum⁴ and thoughts turned to the organisation of the round-table conference first mooted in the UHG's original declaration of its *raison d'être*, published in the first issue of the *Newsletter*.⁵

Up until this point the committee had relied upon the *Newsletter* to promote the nascent field. Whilst successful, it still remained the creature of a small number of dedicated scholars over

¹ T. Becher and P.R. Trowler, *Academic Tribes and Territories* (Buckingham, 2001), p. 23.

² The debate of classification was covered in Chapter One of this thesis.

³ *UHN*, no. 6, June 1966, p. 1.

⁴ See discussion in previous chapter 'The Road to Leicester'.

⁵ *UHN*, no. 1, December 1963.

which a single individual [Dyos] had a great deal of authority. Indeed, despite its growing list of subscribers, the publication remained small, home produced, and restricted to listing conferences, publications, and research activities the committee deemed related, no matter how indirectly to the urban past. It was initially aimed at a circulation of no more than 50, with an average twenty pages per issue. Although the *Newsletter* was a great deal of work⁶ and certainly helped with the field's initial establishment, acting both as an advertisement and a gateway, it does not provide complete evidence of a stable and developing field. Rather, it is to the round-table conference at Leicester (1966) that this chapter looks for evidence of the full establishment of the field on the academic stage.

The conference was to set forth the interdisciplinary nature of the field as delegates tried to define its methodologies, topics, and boundaries. As the first conference in the United Kingdom dedicated to urban history, it was of paramount importance to the development of the field. It can therefore be regarded as the essential next stage of the development of the field; the culmination of the initial period and an opportunity to cement the progress made over the previous four years. The majority of this chapter uses transcripts of the papers and discussions published as *The Study of Urban History*.⁷

Organisation

As shown, the initial concept behind the UHG had always included the arrangement of round-table discussions and small conferences and that this had yet to be achieved was a particular concern for Dyos and his committee members. The decision to go ahead with the round-table conference was taken in a meeting on the fringe of the EHS conference in 1964; its aim was to call together scholars from a variety of disciplines to discuss the scope and methodology of urban history.⁸ The concept of a round table conference remained the favoured option, with an attendance set between 20-30 invited delegates, although the eventual numbers would top out at 43.⁹ By the November of 1965, a tentative outline was put out to the steering committee which included, Sydney Checkland, John Kellett, Bill Chaloner, Maurice Beresford and Theo Barker. Members of the committee remained anxious

⁶ Dyos to Ashworth, 12/2/1965. DC: 1/1/4.

⁷ H.J. Dyos, *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968).

⁸ *UHN*, no. 2, May 1964, p.1.

⁹ For full list of attendees see Table Five in Thesis Appendix.

that the conference could be premature, that the field was still in its formative stages but Dyos and Checkland both disagreed and clearly any fears about the readiness of the field were put to one side when the final date was set for September 1966.¹⁰

Originally, it was intended that all but one of the papers was to be circulated beforehand in order for the sessions to be set aside for discussions.¹¹ This would, according to Dyos, give the discussions 'more bite', believing that there would be plenty of opportunity to discuss the papers in the evenings.¹² However, just ten of the sixteen papers were issued prior to the conference and a further one was handed to delegates upon their arrival¹³ which led to eighteen hour days of intense discussion.¹⁴ As discussed previously, Dyos was the driving force behind the organisation but he quite often looked to Checkland for validation of his plans, as well as Beresford and Barker. All were anxious that they were in danger of losing the momentum gained through the publication of the *Newsletter*, yet there remained indecision about conference themes.¹⁵ The vast array of topics that could be addressed by the urban historian ensured there was disagreement about what themes the conference should focus upon, with Checkland noting all suggestions proffered at previous UHG meetings had been vetoed by Dyos.¹⁶ In the end, and reflecting Dyos' stance, the committee members felt the conference had two main areas to address: the definition of urban history and its methodologies. It is clear from the correspondence surrounding the conference's organisation, that whilst Dyos was in overall control, he had a constant need to gain endorsement for his ideas from his peers. The main problem was the contradiction between his wish to keep the field free of the constraining ornaments of an academic field, whilst at the same time trying to convince scholars that he was serious about developing the field into an authentic and valid field of study. Perhaps, if this contradiction had been addressed earlier, the conference could have taken place sooner. Another aspect of Dyos' wish to control the field's development was the conference's invitational nature; the growth in *Newsletter* subscriber numbers would suggest if the conference had been open to all, far more would had

¹⁰ Letter Dyos to Checkland, 19/11/65. DC: 1/3/5.

¹¹ Letter Dyos to Kellett, 2/12/65. DC: 1/11/1.

¹² Letter Dyos to Kellett, 22/12/65. DC: 1/11/1.

¹³ *UHN*, no. 7, December 1966, p. 3.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* .

¹⁵ Letter Dyos to Checkland, 14/10/65. DC: 1/3/5.

¹⁶ Letter Checkland to Dyos, 22/10/62. DC: 1/3/5.

wished to attend.

Aims and Ambitions

The aims of the conference were first publicly aired in the fifth issue of the *Newsletter*. The principal objectives were described as a clarification of ‘the general scope and methods of urban history’, and to examine ‘some specific possibilities for comparative research’.¹⁷

These aims were clarified in the conference report published in the issue of the *UHN* immediately following the gathering. It suggested there was a need to come to an agreement on the object of urban history: ‘if merely a field of study, what were its contents and limits; if a putative discipline of its own, what were its distinctive attributes and methods?’¹⁸

Underlying these was a belief that the field would only prosper if scholars were brought together from all the disciplines associated with the study of the urban setting, historical as well as the contemporary - was it possible to ‘produce a system of general validity capable of spanning differences in time and space?’¹⁹ The organisers also wanted to ensure urban historians adopted a ‘systematic approach’ to ensure the creation of a coherent canon.²⁰ In order to settle on the scope of urban history, to agree a set of boundaries and a system of validity, it is arguable that the underlying issue of defining the urban itself was crucial. For, how could one adopt comparative methodologies if there was no delimitation of the object of study? This was especially important for urban history because at its heart was a belief in cooperative research not just between fellow historians but associated disciplines. A successful outcome therefore would be one which settled on a unifying theme. This however, as shown below, would prove too elusive.²¹ Whilst there were high expectations for the conference in terms of discussion, no one believed that at the end of the weekend they would leave having settled on a coherent and acceptable definition. Indeed, there were some delegates attending who might well have accepted Peter Hennock’s viewpoint on urban history, that it was just another entry on the list of ‘adjectival history’ that was expanding at an exponential rate in the decades following World War Two.²²

¹⁷ *UHN*, no. 5, December 1965, p. 2.

¹⁸ *UHN*, no. 7, December 1966, p. 2.

¹⁹ Fifth Discussion, *The Study of Urban History*, p. 272.

²⁰ *UHN*, no. 2, May 1964.

²¹ Dyos, ‘Agenda for Urban Historians’, *The Study of Urban History*, p. 9.

²² Quote attributed to Anthony Sutcliffe in J. Obelkevich, ‘New Developments in History in the 1950s and

The Delegates

As an invitation only conference, the academic prosopography of the delegates not only tells us about the growing movement toward interdisciplinary study at the time but also a particular viewpoint on urban history and the ethos underlying its development. Of the 43 delegates, 26 were historians made up of eleven economic, one local, one history of art, one regional historian, and eleven who simply described themselves as historians. Of the other disciplines present there were nine social scientists, including five sociologists, one from population studies, one each from local, social, and urban studies. The remaining delegates came from geography (3), architecture (2), education (1), English (1), along with the then editor from the *Survey of London*.²³ All but four were British; the exceptions included one each from Denmark,²⁴ France,²⁵ West Germany,²⁶ and the United States.²⁷ In terms of their institutional affiliation, unsurprisingly Leicester came out on top with five delegates. Cambridge, Glasgow and Liverpool were represented by three delegates each and two from Birmingham, Kent, Manchester, Oxford, Sheffield, and Sussex. The remaining delegates represented Aberystwyth, Belfast, Bristol, Edinburgh, Essex, Exeter, Garnett College, Lancaster, Newcastle upon Tyne, Reading, and Swansea with one delegate each. The Ruhr in West Germany and Wisconsin in the United States were the only two international institutions to be represented because at this time the French delegate, François Bédarida, was then director of *Maison Française* in Oxford. The presence of the civic universities demonstrates the willingness of newer institutions similar to Leicester to consider different topics and novel collaborations. The dominance of historians is clear and expected; however, the number of sociologists suggests Dyos and the committee under him saw the social sciences as central to the historical study of the urban milieu. It was certainly a reflection of the rise of social sciences and the beginning of History's adoption of some of their techniques, as seen in a number of discussions that took place at the conference; although, as noted in the previous chapter, the rapprochement was not so close that they wanted a merger

1960s (Witness Seminar), *Contemporary British History*, 14, no. 4, (2000), p. 154.

²³ See Table 1.

²⁴ John H. Westergaard.

²⁵ François Bédarida.

²⁶ W. Kollmann.

²⁷ Leo Schnore.

or to be a junior partner in a shared journal.²⁸

Table 1: Delegates attending 1966 conference The Study of Urban History

Delegate Name	Delegate Institution
Mr. W.A. Armstrong	Lecturer in Economic and Social History, University of Nottingham
Professor W.Ashworth	Head of Department of Economic History, University of Bristol
Mrs. A.B.M.Baker	Research Assistant, Department of Economic History, University of Leicester
Mrs S.E.Baker	Research Scholar, Department of History, Queen's University, Belfast
Professor T.C.Barker	Head of Department of Economic History, University of Kent
Mr. F. Bedarida	Director, Maison Française, Oxford
Professor G.F.A.Best	Department of History, University of Edinburgh
Mr. H.Carter	Department of History, University of Edinburgh
Mr. C.W.Chalkin	Lecturer in History, University of Reading
Dr. W.H.Chaloner	Reader in History, University of Manchester
Professor S.G.Checkland	Head of Department of Economic History, University of Glasgow
Dr. R.A.Church	Lecturer in Economic History, University of Birmingham
Professor P.A.W.Collins	Department of English, University of Leicester
Professor M.R.G. Conzen	Department of Geography, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne
Dr. H.J.Dyos	Reader in Economic History, University of Leicester
Dr. D.E.C.Eversley	Reader in population studies, University of Sussex
Dr. H.E.S.Fisher	Lecturer in Economic History, University of Exeter
Mr. W. Forsyth	Lecturer in Economic History, University of Glasgow
Mr. J.Foster	Fellow of St. Catharine's College, University of Cambridge
Mr. T.W.Freeman	Reader in Geography, University of Manchester
Mr. C.Harris	Lecturer in Sociology, University College, Swansea
Dr. J.R.Harris	Director of Social Studies, University of Liverpool
Dr. E.P.Hennock	Senior Lecturer in History, University of Sussex
Professor W.G.Hoskins	Head of Department of English Local History, University of Leicester
Mr. F.M.Jones	Director of the Housing Research and Development Group, Liverpool School of Architecture, University of Liverpool
Dr. J.R.Kellett	Senior Lecturer in Economic History, University of Glasgow
Professor W.Köllmann	Historisches Institut der Rhur-Universität, Bochum
Dr. P.H.Mann	Lecturer in Sociology, University of Sheffield
Dr. J.D.Marshall	Senior Lecturer in the Regional History of North-west England, University of Lancaster
Dr. G.H.Martin	Reader in History, University of Leicester
Mr. R.J.Morris	Research Scholar, Nuffield College, University of Oxford
Dr. R.Newton	No Affiliation Noted

²⁸ As explained in the previous chapter, during the lead up to the conference Checkland had asked Dyos to consider whether or not the field would benefit from the formation of a journal *Urban Studies* with Urban History as a supplement.

Dr. R.E.Pahl	Lecturer in Sociology, University of Kent
Dr. D.A.Reeder	Head of Department of Education, Garnett College, London
Professor Leo Schnore	Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin
Dr. F.H.W.Sheppard	Editor, Survey of London, County Hall, London
Mr. K.M.Spencer	Research Officer, Housing Research Group, School of architecture, University of Liverpool
Sir John Summerson	Curator of Sir John Soane;s Museum and Slade Professor of Fine Art, University of Cambridge
Dr. A.Sutcliffe	Research Officer, Department of History, University of Birmingham
Mr. D.M. Thompson	Research Fellow, Fitzwilliam College, University of Cambridge
Dr. P.R.Thompson	Lecturer in Sociology, University of Essex
Mr. P.M.Tillott	Staff Tutor in Local Studies University of Sheffield
Mr. J.Westergaard	Centre for Urban Studies, University College, London

Source: H.J. Dyos, The Study of Urban History (London, 1968), pp. xiv – xv.

There were seven sessions in total and each had their own Chairman: W.H. Chaloner, T.C. Barker. J. Summerson, J.R. Kellett, D.E.C. Eversley, W.G. Hoskins, and W. Ashworth. The two days of the conference were divided into themes: materials and methods, visual evidence, problems with quantitative study, comparative research, and urban society and politics. A total of sixteen papers were delivered by seventeen delegates.²⁹ Whilst all the papers reflected the then concerns of the nascent field, two stand out as being pivotal: Dyos' opening paper 'Agenda for Urban Historians'³⁰ and Checkland's closing address 'Toward a Definition of Urban History'.³¹ Both these papers were central to achieving the aims of the conference because they directly addressed the more conceptual task of defining what urban history actually was.

H.J. Dyos' 'Agenda for Urban Historians'

A 'midwife' facilitating at the birth of a new field of British History was how Sydney Checkland was later to described Dyos' presence at the evolutionary stage of urban history. The dominance of his personality through these initial stages was such a 'phenomenon of entrepreneurship and guru-ship' that Checkland thought it worthy of the attention of

²⁹ Dyos gave two papers, the second alongside Mrs A.B.M. Baker, his research assistant.

³⁰ Dyos, 'Agenda for Urban Historians' *The Study of Urban History*, pp. 1-46. This version contained a far larger bibliography than the original paper. Unfortunately, only the first minute of the tape recording survives therefore it is impossible to tell the extent to which the published transcript differed from the original paper.

³¹ Checkland, 'Toward a Definition of Urban History' *The Study of Urban History*, pp. 343-361. Fortunately, a full recording of Checkland's paper remains and confirms the version published remained unchanged from the original.

scholarship.³² Checkland's rather flamboyant description, alongside the memories of others who worked with Dyos,³³ suggests that, to all intents and purposes, it was Dyos' own personal vision of urban history that emerged in the early stages. As such his paper 'Agenda for Urban Historians' is worth a great deal of analysis for it points to many of the issues lying at the heart of his particular take on how the field should develop. The paper addressed what, for Dyos, were the deep-seated issues needing to be considered by the conference. They can be summed up as a concern that the complex nature of the city meant that any field whose aim was its historical understanding could well fall victim to that complexity. Citing Park's classic portrayal of the city as a 'state of mind, a body of customs and traditions, and of unorganised attitudes and sentiments that inhere in those customs and are transmitted with this tradition',³⁴ Dyos raised a number of questions aimed at establishing the *raison d'être* of the nascent historical field: what was urban history; its tasks; methods; the scope of its literature and its sources? Was urban history an idiographic or nomothetic field? In other words, was it to consider all things urban in a generalized approach aimed at forming a general theory underpinning the urban or an analysis of specific urban factors in an attempt to gain wider meaning of what it was to be urban? There were, Dyos recognised, no easy answers, indeed, underlying these questions lay another, perhaps more fundamental concern: how could one delimit the urban in order to study it. Structures needed comparison if they were to illuminate anything to historians but how could one successfully compare material collected in a dissimilar manner and for dissimilar purposes. So, before engaging with Dyos' own attempts to answer these questions, it is perhaps productive to take a step back and consider what it was that Dyos actually felt was the field's principal object of study.

Conceding that there would be agreement between urban historians that dealing with all aspects of the town would be impossible, Dyos felt there would not be similar levels of agreement when it came to approving what should be left out, nor 'how to interpret what was

³² S.G. Checkland, 'Urban History in the British Idiom' *Urban History Review*, no.1 (1978), p.58.

³³ Interview with Robert Morris undertaken by G.W. Davies (May 2011), Interview with Anthony Sutcliffe undertaken by G.W. Davies (April 2010). H.J. Dyos obituaries and essays within *Exploring the Urban Past: Essays in Urban History by H.J. Dyos*, D. Reeder e-Bulletin 'Urban History: A Personal Retrospect', <http://www.le.ac.uk/press/ebulletin/features/urbanhistory.html> [accessed 14/05/2010].

³⁴ R.E. Park, 'The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behaviour in the City Environment', *Journal of Sociology*, XX, no.5 (1915), pp. 577-612.

left in'.³⁵ For Dyos, the definition of what constituted urban history needed to be narrowed otherwise historians would suffer from a 'free-wheeling mindless empiricism.'³⁶ There was, he argued, a need for an engagement between the different disciplines bordering on urban history, and, despite the predominance of economic historians, the presence of delegates from other disciplines at the conference shows how he and the organisers attempted to achieve this. According to Dyos' viewpoint at this time the dominant form of urban history tended to consider the individual town history, mostly emanating from London but not necessarily about London.³⁷ Town biographies were certainly widespread in the *UHN* bibliographies and registers of research although there was little evidence to support his assertion that most urban history was written from London. Yet, if this is what Dyos believed then he was justified in arguing that in order to develop Urban History it needed to engage with the wider underlying processes of urbanisation and this could only be achieved through comparative study - but a comparison with what?³⁸

In his own work however, he was less open. It was the city that lay at the heart of Dyos' urban history,³⁹ and not just any city, but specifically, nineteenth-century London. For Dyos, Victorian London in particular was a theatre, a laboratory, a multifaceted machine in which there existed

not only the training of a multiplying band of experts of every kind to make and run a machine fit for living in but to adapt the human to the machine - to make him, conceivably, some kind of sentient machine himself.⁴⁰

Much as E.P. Thompson looked to 'rescue the poor stockinger, the Luddite cropper, the "obsolete" hand-loom weaver, the "utopian" artisan...from the enormous condescension of posterity',⁴¹ so Dyos suggested he wanted to find the voice of the sentient individual in the vast complexity that formed the urban environment. This was, for Dyos, the task of the urban historian: a problem of ascertaining values as well as material facts, within the intricate

³⁵ Dyos, 'Agenda for Urban Historians', p 2.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., p.44. A point confirmed in the analysis of the records of research published in the *UHN* up to this point.

³⁸ Ibid., p.2.

³⁹ See S.J. Mandelbaum, 'H.J. Dyos and British Urban History', *Economic History Review*, 38, no. 3 (1985), pp. 437-447.

⁴⁰ H.J. Dyos, 'Urbanity and Suburbanity' in *Exploring the Urban Past: Essays in Urban History by H.J. Dyos*, p. 27.

⁴¹ E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (1968), p.13.

physical and social maze that formed the urban arena. He was interested in the 'sheer bodily sensations...the emotional demands...the mental reactions to the special miseries and the gaieties of living in the gutters of urban society'.⁴² The historian, along with the aid of the associated disciplines, could, he argued, pick out the history that was embodied in the city's very fabric for 'the city, any city, embodied its own past'.⁴³ It may therefore have been a more accurate nomenclature to call Dyos' vision for the new field the History of Urban Experience: from its workhouses, slums to the more affluent suburbs, Dyos argued for the placement of the individual in his or her urban surroundings and to understand how those surroundings came to be. Clearly, at the centre of his work was a genuine love of the metropolis. Quoting Maitland's 1898 *Township and Borough*, Dyos was also persuaded that there were 'some thoughts which will not come to men who are not tightly packed,'⁴⁴ In other words he was advocating the importance of an urban variable. For Dyos, the city was the main tableau upon which the work of an urban historian should have been based.⁴⁵ The urban landscape was an unexplored continent and Dyos wanted to drive its future interrogation, but he feared the historian may have been too late to join the expedition.⁴⁶

Sociologists and geographers had already staked out the urban as a topic worthy of investigation. According to Dyos, the historian had failed to participate with others as they formulated theories, whereas they should have been at the forefront and leading the way. But he felt not all was lost; there was still space in which the field could develop. A gap was left between the sociologist, who looked more towards the discovery of solutions by examining the 'aberrations of urban life' in order to address contemporary urban problems, but who, in the process, ignored the normal everyday activities of urban life, and the geographer, who shone a spotlight on the creation of urban space by focusing on the geographical restraints restricting the growth of towns, whilst neglecting the more vibrant aspects such as community.⁴⁷ Dyos argued for urban history to take the lead in exploring the manner in which urban space was created and how human beings adapted to live within it. The input of

⁴² H.J. Dyos, 'The Slums of Victorian London', *Victorian Studies*, 11, no. 1 (1967) p. 5.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴⁴ F.W. Maitland, *Township and Borough* (Cambridge, 1898), p. 24.

⁴⁵ Dyos, 'Urbanity and Suburbanity', p. 21.

⁴⁶ Analysis of Dyos' belief that historians were late to appreciate the utility of the urban was carried out in chapter two of this thesis, 'The Road to Sheffield'.

⁴⁷ Dyos, 'Agenda for Urban Historians' p. 4

the historian, especially if research was to inform policy, was crucial, yet at the same time, he warned against examining history through the 'peep hole' of the present, calling for the historian to take account of the urban palimpsest whilst recognizing the significant marks his own time had made upon the urban canvas.⁴⁸ In other words, Dyos was arguing that history could provide a platform from which the future could be based.

Dyos' opening paper certainly addressed many of the concerns and questions surrounding the future direction of urban history, but it is also evidence of his single-minded focus on the Victorian era in general and on London in particular, a point he confirmed during his inaugural lecture where he argued that when considering Britain's urbanization 'any explanation of this remarkable transformation of modern times, what happened in the nineteenth century and, above all, what happened in Britain, matters still.'⁴⁹

Problems of Definition

One of the main aims of the conference was to search for a sustainable definition of urban history, although some, including Martin and Checkland, felt that there had been undue attention given over to attempts to define the field and that this would ultimately prove counterproductive. Rather than worrying about definitions, Checkland argued that urban historians should, in his opinion, 'simply concentrate on writing urban history'.⁵⁰ For Checkland, there was no need to settle on a set of rigid definitions from the outset as long as all of the terms used were clearly explained because for many urban history was a secondary or an initiating field.⁵¹ He therefore wanted to avoid a rigid structure and focus more on methodologies, on how to collect and analyse the copious amounts of data produced in the urban environment. For Checkland then, this was more crucial to the field's development than historians tying themselves in knots trying to produce a set of classifications. Martin agreed. He argued it was a waste of 'emotional capital' worrying about definitions and field boundaries. Rather, 'the members of various disciplines interested in the history of

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 4-5.

⁴⁹ Dyos, 'Urbanity and Suburbanity' p.23. See also Mandelbaum's discussion of Dyos' approach in Mandelbaum, 'H.J. Dyos and British Urban History', *The Economic History Review*, 38, no. 3 (1985), pp. 437-447.

⁵⁰ Notes on the discussion following the conference's first session. W.H. Chaloner, 'Discussion', in H.J. Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), p. 62

⁵¹ Ibid.

urbanism...would best advance the cause by getting on with the job.’⁵² Dyos agreed ‘up to a point’ but argued that all the disciplines addressing the urban needed to set out their terms at the beginning of any cooperative work.⁵³ Moreover, Dyos explained that he felt an agreed set of terms would only be needed once a single theory of urbanisation had been agreed and disseminated. Discussions over definitions can be expected in any new or relatively new academic discipline or field.⁵⁴ Yet, the urban as the object of research in urban history was itself so diffuse that there was a danger these discussions would dominate and the writing of history would suffer. Checkland and Martin saw this danger and to some extent so did Dyos. However, Dyos remained interested in the creation of a definition for the field *and* consequently a theory of urbanization itself: the two for Dyos were inseparable.

The historian’s focus on the town and city as a category of analysis was considered problematic for some delegates. In what could be seen as an argument against the approach of concentrating upon the psychological aspects of urbanisation, Bédarida advocated that urban history was more than just the analysis of the manner in which inhabitants experienced the city or the town, it also included the history of urban organisation, hinterlands, planning and its architecture. Many feared that these areas could be lost in the detail of local atmosphere.⁵⁵ What emerges here is evidence of a divide between those who wanted to see the structures of the city and the town as the main object of research and those more interested in the experience of urban living. Clearly there was not a sharp demarcation, but it illustrates the difficulties of attempting to form a coherent field around such a complex object of research. In response, Dyos argued that urban historians should refrain from attempts to study the town or city in their entirety because the sheer complexity of the urban environment was such that this was doomed to failure. Urban centres were not homogeneous entities but extremely variegated ones; moreover, such was their nature that they might be variegated differently in other places making comparisons problematic.

To ensure urban historians did not stretch their current methodologies beyond breaking point,

⁵² Ibid., p. 63.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 62.

⁵⁴ See Becher, *Academic Tribes and Territories*.

⁵⁵ François Bédarida quoted in the notes on the discussion following the conference first session, Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History*, p. 63.

it was recognised that they needed to address a relatively narrow set of categories.⁵⁶ Dyos wanted urban historians to concentrate on a small number of issues rather than attempting a wide spectrum of urban topics. Unfortunately, the longer the conference went on, the greater the number of categories emerged, leading to the concept of producing a total history for the city, which all agreed, needed to be avoided.⁵⁷ Yet, how would Dyos be able to achieve his much vaunted all-encompassing theory of urbanization if the field consisted of a myriad of micro-analyses without some form of overview bringing them together? Arguably, Dyos saw himself in particular and the UHG generally as the organ of conglomeration bringing together the disparate approaches and forming a single coherent theory.

As discussed, delegates wrestled with the concept of the urban and how it should be delimited and categorised. In the United States, a city was based on its municipal boundaries and as such could be of any size, large or small, whereas in the United Kingdom, nominally, a city was a town with a cathedral and in Germany, the designation of *Stadt* was a privilege that needed to be earned. Could there be a single definition that would cover all eventualities?⁵⁸ What was needed was a dynamic and flexible definition to reflect the rapid changes that occurred within urban societies: multiple labels covering aspects such as growth, decline, location, and movement. Many of the delegates from a historian's background looked towards the sociologists for an answer. The relationship between urban history and Sociology, whilst mutually beneficial, did occasionally cause some issues to rise to the surface. The sociologists at the conference agreed that a definition was needed; however, they felt the most valid basis was to pin the definition to the array of human reactions to living within towns and cities. For example, when considering the lives of the inhabitants of nineteenth-century industrial cities, some wondered if they were affected by their visual environment. They certainly had to deal with the noise and dirt that pervaded homes, leisure and workplace, and of course, everywhere accompanied by smells. Jones pointed to the brightness of working class homes as evidence of an anaesthetic against the dullness.⁵⁹ This would appear to correspond to Dyos' viewpoint that the urban historian

⁵⁶ Ibid., p.62.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p.64.

⁵⁸ Fifth Discussion, *The Study of Urban History*, p, 274-5.

⁵⁹ Third Discussion, *The Study of Urban History* p. 183.

should be interested in the human side of the urban. Others felt there was a need to consider the evolutionary process, linking the definition to size and population, setting a level at which the point the village became a town. Of course, this also ignored the problem of categorisations surrounding the village as well as the point in its history when it became a town.⁶⁰ Westergaard suggested it was confusing to try and define the differences between the historian and sociologist's view of the urban because operational needs meant they would always differ. The city was a multi-dimensional entity and it was a waste of time trying to reduce it to a single object. Pahl went much further, suggesting the built environment of the city confused the issue, although the geographers argued this was crucial for their work and many of the historians agreed.⁶¹

At this time, urban history was a domain where amateur historians still played an important role, and they, alongside many professional historians, tended to produce individual town histories.⁶² Dyos worried the proliferation of individual city case studies would prevent the development of comparative studies which in turn would place a brake upon the creation of a general theory of urbanization. Town histories by their very nature focused on the individual rather than the comparative, but the majority felt he was exaggerating the danger. They argued that the individual town history also had implications in terms of defining urban history, in that as long as historians, either professional or amateur, focused on single case studies they would never encounter the need for definitions.⁶³

Perhaps the most vocal debate to emerge was over the issue of whether towns had personalities. J.R. Harris began by arguing that historians needed to actually live in the town they were researching in order to 'absorb its personality as well as its documentation.'⁶⁴ This was seen as reflecting the biological or organicist schools, which were considered by some as the result of intellectual fashion, looking back to the work of Patrick Geddes. Many disagreed but the main opponent was Summerson who 'objected vehemently to the use of analogy between human and urban personality and to the whole concept of biological urbanism.'⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Fifth Discussion, *The Study of Urban History*, p. 276.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.276.

⁶² First Discussion, *The Study of Urban History*, p. 62.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p.62.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 64

Harris, seen as the target of Summerson's attack, countered suggesting anyone visiting a northern town would notice the difference between it and a southern one. Indeed, he suggested you need not go from one end of the country to another to discover the difference, anyone visiting Leeds and Bradford would note their dissimilarity.⁶⁶ None disagreed with this assertion but rather than describing it as a personality many were happier with the term characteristic; even so, it would always be based on a subjective impression according to the age and background of the observer – it was a local impression not an urban one. A general agreement existed on this point but as Hennock argued, in order to differentiate and study the problem of objective/subjective analysis, a specific set of questions based around 'class structure, demography, and immigration' needed consideration.⁶⁷ Armstrong felt there was nothing wrong with citing personal impressions as long as the core of analysis was based on objective research that was comparable statistically.⁶⁸ Throughout the conference, it is this point that appears to have raised the temperature of discussions, perhaps due to Harris' assertion that an urban historian would not be able to write a true history without having lived in the object of their research. If correct, the field of Urban History would not have continued to thrive due to the simple logistics resulting from Harris's argument and to a certain extent it was an attack on those historians present who had not taken the decision to relocate to their chosen city or town of research. The debate shows one of the dangers concurrent with attempting to create an open and non-dogmatic field. Whilst it allowed free discussion it could also cause division.

Methodological Approaches to Urban History

Of all the discussions, the most in depth were those considering the different methodological approaches open to the new field. Chaloner began suggesting he wanted to see a guide on how to write urban history, along the lines of the Rev. J.C. Cox's text *How to Write the History of a Parish*⁶⁹ but this was not taken any further, instead, it was the issues surrounding collaborative research that was the main topic of conversation. Harris once again appeared to be the catalyst for debate, suggesting the lone urban historian would produce a 'certain literary unity' and therefore, although a team might appear to be the best choice to

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 63.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p.64.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p.65.

⁶⁹ J. Charles Fox, *How to Write the History of a Parish* (London, 1886).

study the complex nature of the urban setting, the single historian was better, because collaborative work tended to produce a non-unified history which did not give a 'living impression' to the reader.⁷⁰ He regarded the comparative approach with some ambiguity, fearing a loss of insights into the town's personality if the emphasis was moved from individual analysis to collaborative work. He did not want to impose collaborative approaches on future generations just because it was fashionable in 1966. Hennock felt there should not be a problem if collaborators were given the opportunities to discuss the project together, making the role of the editor even more central.⁷¹ Harris was in the minority here, by far the majority of delegates from all disciplines present saw the future of Urban History as a collaborative field and not necessarily exclusively the sphere of the lone historian.

Theo Barker wanted to address what he saw as the editor of the *Survey of London* concentration on architecture rather than the general economic importance of the city. However, noting how the architectural roots had influenced the shape of the *Survey*, Sheppard confirmed that it was not possible to amend this remit; there was no feasible way that it could contain social and demographic material. The *Survey* aimed to provide facts for others to interpret rather than interpreting anything itself. Summerson agreed, praising Sheppard for the increase in the numbers and types of buildings included. Summerson argued

the reason why one should most emphatically not try to get it [*The Survey of London*] to do more than it is doing is that it is pinning down visual evidence of the history of towns which will not be with us for very much longer...If one of our great national repositories of archives were gradually being eaten away by mice, we should all have terrible nightmares about it...But here is something of equal value, the visual evidence of towns.⁷²

Dyos joined the debate pointing to his interest in suburban London. Whilst acknowledging that there was a greater interest in the recording of buildings in the centre of London to ensure details were recorded before the 'demolition squad gets at them', he was concerned that this focus would inevitably mean that attention to the outer boroughs would be postponed for

⁷⁰ First Discussion, *The Study of Urban History*, p. 63.

⁷¹ Second Discussion, *The Study Urban History* p.153.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 152.

many years.⁷³ Dyos pressed Sheppard to include details of more suburbs in his publication but the *Survey's* editor dismissed the possibility as 'remote.'⁷⁴

Other areas of urban history were briefly addressed, Summerson for example found it fascinating that no one had looked at the role of construction companies and builders; however, Dyos and Reeder pointed out that this was due to a lack of sources. They both had tried to explore the records of builders but all they found were the grand portraits of former directors. Newton urged urban historians to use the records of estate agents. Dyos agreed, adding the use of auction houses might also be worthwhile, but he felt solicitors and loan companies probably held the most valuable records, but of course, these would be inaccessible. Visual evidence was the last part of the historian's business according to Martin, 'we need to know what it was like visually.'⁷⁵ A concerted effort was needed to preserve the interiors of working class homes as described in Victorian novels and the period's art,⁷⁶ and whilst Hennock and Jones were concerned about their subjectivity, Martin argued this was a bonus because it showed attitudes present at the time.⁷⁷ Other than Harris's interjection over residency, it was in the area of quantitative analysis that created the most excited set of responses. It was here that all the results from the above mentioned sources could be put to the test. It was, however, accepted that it would be a waste of time if the wrong questions were asked and if the categories were incorrectly defined. Therefore, obliquely, the talk returned to the need to define the object of the urban historians study.

It was Armstrong's paper, focused as it was on the quantitative analysis of Census Enumerator's books in the Victorian city of York, which separated the delegates between those who had already considered the use of computer aided analysis and those that had not. The latter group formed the majority illustrating a general lack of knowledge when it came to computer based statistical analysis. Whilst Armstrong's research was pioneering in the United Kingdom, it was also deemed controversial. A general distrust of computer analysis was evident, especially the fear that it was not possible to peer review a historian's work based in quantitative analysis unless you had a degree in statistics. Yet again, following

⁷³ Ibid., p. 153.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 153.

⁷⁵ J. Summerson, 'Third Discussion' in *The Study of Urban History*, p. 186.

⁷⁶ Second Discussion, *The Study of Urban History*, p. 153.

⁷⁷ Summerson, 'Third Discussion', p. 187.

Dyos' second paper, jointly delivered with Mrs A.B.M. Baker on the possibilities of using computer analysis, there was more animated discussion focusing on method rather than results achieved. This led to Barker suggesting that historians using computers had ensured they were 'impregnable' to criticism, as their work was so complicated that any conventional historian would be unable to criticise their findings.

The discussion fell into one of techniques and was limited to a small number of delegates who had experience with computers; the rest listened 'more in awe than understanding.'⁷⁸ It is interesting that economic historians, who should have seen the potential for computer assisted statistical analysis, tended to be found in the less well-informed group when it came to their use. There was a clear distinction evident between those who saw computer analysis as an aid in the more traditional use of electronic calculation versus those, such as Armstrong, who considered their use as a tool for the analysis of more social than economic data. The debate revolved around the methodology used to categorize data and not necessarily the analysis itself.

Armstrong had used a punch card system which placed a limit on the number of categories, for example, his worked failed to address a breakdown of industrial groupings. But Dyos argued the use of newer computers cleared this obstacle, indeed, this was one of the benefits, the ability to add and amend categories.⁷⁹ Hennock argued the number of columns you had was not the issue, it was the original data that was crucial and without the correct and adequate data to begin with the results would be worthless.⁸⁰ Harris suggested the categories provided by the different censuses were not sufficiently wide enough to provide any concrete findings. Kollman also questioned whether the responses given in the census were honest, although this was a problem with all historical sources whether collated by a computer programme or not. Checkland agreed, the choice of occupation was 'self-selective, although Tillott disagreed, arguing the scope for self-selection was limited.

The debate over the use of computers in urban history mirrored the on-going arguments within the wider discipline of History. Over and above a general fear that findings based on

⁷⁸ Second Discussion, *The Study of Urban History*, p. 146.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

computer collation would prove difficult to review, the main concern was over the choice, availability and validity of sources. Those delegates who had no experience of computer collated data and therefore had little or no understanding of how the results were achieved reverted back to an older argument with which they were more comfortable: questioning of sources. As such, although the discussion on quantification was lively, it did not move the debate on and to a certain extent it entrenched previously existing viewpoints.

Returning to a more traditional source the delegates discussions moved on to the use of maps. They were, it was agreed, crucial to urban history and if any monograph, especially a town history, was published without maps, it was as bad as publishing a book without an index which, according to Hoskins, would lead to the 'book would be taken out of copyright straight away as a punishment.'⁸¹ Some delegates questioned how the historian could be expected to use maps if there had been a drop off in the use of maps by geographers.⁸² Bédarida argued the correct use of maps meant the historian needed access to top quality and well-staffed drawing offices. It was very important to get the geographer and the historian working together but this would only produce decent results if both were working to the same programme, and it was this that took the time, which was why maps tended to either be omitted or a rushed last minute improvisation. It was agreed that the urban historian could not and should not avoid the use of maps despite the acknowledgement that they were expensive and time consuming.⁸³ In reality though, as Checkland remarked, there was simply a lack of money, and he believed it was more difficult to get the geographer to understand the historians 'idiom'.⁸⁴ Checkland argued for continuity in the use of maps, it was no good having just one, there needed to be evidence of development and change in order to be significant. M.R.G. Conzon, building upon Checkland's point argued that continuity emphasised the uniqueness of cities. Even the grid-iron pattern of nineteenth-century towns, he argued, differed from one another in subtle ways giving each a distinctive stamp and the longer the town or city's history the more pronounced that uniqueness was.⁸⁵ Checkland agreed, stating that cities had not just been built once and that they were not a continuum,

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 150.

⁸² First Discussion, *The Study of Urban History*, p. 61.

⁸³ Ibid., pp. 61-62.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 61.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 151

they were in a constant process of renewal. Freeman also saw the map as an excellent original source, but because many were still held in private hands and hence unavailable, a thorough search and catalogue was required; otherwise, they would remain an afterthought and turn up at the end of the historians' work.⁸⁶

Discussions on the different methodologies and sources available to the urban historian illustrated the danger first raised at the start of the conference; the urban environment was such a complex entity that pinning down a specific method of analysis was at best problematic, if not impossible, and possibly, unnecessary. Each of the sources and approaches discussed could be adopted by different disciplines associated with the urban in a mix and match manner, where the scholar chose the most appropriate for their research. The crucial point to come out of the discussions was not therefore a hierarchy of methods but an acknowledgement that such a hierarchy was impossible, especially if collaborative research between the diverse disciplines associated with the city was to flourish.

Publication

The entire conference was recorded on magnetic tape and it was always intended that these would be transcribed so that the papers and the discussion sessions could be published.⁸⁷ Committee members agreed to stay over to the Monday when the publication of the conference could be discussed along with the future of the UHG. Clearly, this was not a discussion for the entire membership, just Dyos and his small committee. Knowing how much Asa Briggs had suggested he wanted to attend the conference, Dyos wrote almost immediately afterwards remarking that 'it was certainly regarded by those who came to it a success.'⁸⁸ The papers 'exceeded expectations' despite the speed in which some of them had been written and they managed to 'stimulate some very coherent and well directed discussion which never looked like flagging in the least.'⁸⁹ He reminded Briggs that the sessions had all

⁸⁶ Second Discussion, *The Study of Urban History*, pp. 151-152.

⁸⁷ The surviving tapes are held by Linda Dyos, however they were copied and can be accessed digitally by contacting Colin Hyde at the East Midlands Oral History Archive, Room 1, 1 Salisbury Road, Leicester, LE1 7QR. Tel: +44 (0)116 252 5065.

⁸⁸ Letter Dyos to Ashworth, 19/10/1966. DC: 1/1/4

⁸⁹ Letter Dyos to Briggs, 27/09/1966. DC: 1/2/7

been taped and that it had already been agreed the transcripts should be presented in print and asked successfully if he would be willing to write the Foreword.⁹⁰

Initially it was hoped that Leicester University Press would take on the task, however the cost of the print run was estimated at around £2500, which the Press were unable to cover. Dyos suggested Leicester's press were 'somewhat hard up' at the time but that he had been in discussions with Edward Arnold and they had agreed to publish the work.⁹¹ The form of the publication, to be titled *The Study of Urban History*, was open to debate. Ashworth rejected the approach of transcribing verbatim and just adjusting the grammar from the spoken word to the written because this would have ensured the transcripts would have been too long for publication. A second consideration was to present the main themes of the conference via a series of short essays quoting from the papers delivered. Again this was rejected because it was felt the reader would not be party to how the flow of the discussion developed, 'the cut and thrust would be lost.'⁹² Ashworth's favoured approach was to present the papers in the order they were delivered, but in summary form only. Each delegate would be given 5000 words, some, it was recognised, would consider this too narrow. And, it was also argued that certain papers needed to be made more 'intelligible than they actually were!'⁹³ Dyos agreed the papers needed to be presented in a uniform manner and considered there were only two viable alternatives. The first was Ashworth's favoured choice of summarising the papers strictly in sequence, mixing direct and reported speech without adding any editorial commentary; the second involved writing a more even-handed essay, using the points and ideas to develop a small number of major themes, which inevitably meant individual contributions would disappear.

Ashworth's fears over the loss of the 'cut and thrust' were discounted; indeed, Dyos argued it would reduce the distortion caused by delegate's remarks being raised out of context from original comments made in earlier sessions.⁹⁴ Dyos concluded that rather than losing the 'sparkle', the contrary would be the case, that it presented an opportunity to put it back in.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Letter Dyos to Ashworth, 19/10/1966. DC: 1/1/4.

⁹² Letter Ashworth to Dyos, 01/12/1966. DC: 1/1/4.

⁹³ Letter Ashworth to Dyos, 24/10/1966. DC: 1/1/4.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Letter Dyos to Ashworth, 02/12/1966. DC: 1/1/4

Dyos thanked Ashworth for having ‘done your level best to vivify the reported speech [however] I do think this is bound to seem relatively flat to someone following the discussion for the first time in print.’⁹⁶ What Dyos clearly wanted was some kind of ‘higher journalism’ which would represent the ‘spirit of the discussion’ a ‘suitably and academically correct version of Alastair Cooke.’⁹⁷ Dyos argued that he did not want to lose the humour that existed throughout the conference. Whilst Ashworth acceded to Dyos’ points, he doubted if this meant any of the so-called sparkle would return, or that the treatment would retain the humour of the original spoken word, of which, Ashworth argued, there was not, in fact, a great deal.⁹⁸ Ashworth’s redrafted essay read far more ‘freshly and interestingly’ according to Dyos, who also commented in a rather chauvinist manner, that his secretary, Miss Davies, ‘one who doesn’t like heavy reading’, agreed they were ‘very much more interesting’, and therefore Dyos used it as a prototype for the other papers.⁹⁹

Edward Arnold made a concrete offer of a print run of 3,000 (1,000 marked for the U.S.A. by St. Martin Press) selling between 70/- and 80/- with lump sum royalties of £25 for each main contributor and £10 to those undertaking editorial work with general royalties at 2.5 per cent. The finished publication *The Study of Urban History* was published as a hardback in 1968 and paperback three years later. The Foreword was written by Briggs, and Dyos as the editor, wrote the Preface. Divided into seven sections, the sixteen papers were presented in the order that they were delivered at the conference and followed by a transcript of the discussions that concluded each session.¹⁰⁰ The first was a fully annotated version of Dyos’ opening paper ‘Agenda for Urban Historians’ with a bibliography totalling 141 entries. Clearly the limit of 5000 words per paper only applied to certain delegates with Dyos’ totalling 46 pages.¹⁰¹ The texts were supported with 54 black and white plates. The majority of the images illustrating the architect Francis M. Jones’s paper ‘The Aesthetic of the Nineteenth-Century Industrial Town.’¹⁰²

⁹⁶ Letter Dyos to Ashworth, 01/11/1966. DC: 1/1/4.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Letter Ashworth to Dyos, 2/12/1966. DC: 1/1/4.

⁹⁹ Letter Dyos to Ashworth, January 1967. DC: 1/1/4.

¹⁰⁰ See Table Six in Thesis Appendix for a full list of published papers.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² F.M. Jones, ‘The Aesthetic of the Nineteenth-Century Industrial Town’ in *The Study of Urban History* pp. 171-182.

Briggs began his Foreword remarking that conferences on cities had become a familiar feature on the international academic scene. Interdisciplinary in character, they were either directly or indirectly related to the gathering of historical evidence in order to interpret contemporary problems.¹⁰³ This illustrated that the conference sat within a wider growth of interest in the urban as a centre of human activity. The city and its problems had become so complex that looking for parallels in the past was quite natural, yet, many in this conference were not interested in examining the past in order to address the present; indeed, Dyos had specifically argued against it at one point. However, Briggs felt that anyone who studied the history of the city could not but be influenced by the developments and the 'pre-occupations of modern inter-disciplinary urban studies'.¹⁰⁴ He also suggested an approach whereby historians, rather than forcing categories from their own time on to a simpler past, they should look at the differences that were recognised and categorised by the period's contemporary writers such as Charles Booth. This would reveal how the data used by later historians was originally collected and sorted. This was becoming ever more important due to the growth in the use of quantitative analysis where, as noted in the conference's discussions and described above, the origins of the data used became ever more central.

Briggs noted that changes in the wider discipline of History were bound to be reflected in the approaches of the new field, in particular the adoption of the techniques originating in the social sciences and the use of comparative studies. Briggs associated the new field of urban history with Social History, the success of which depended upon the work of historians and associated groups such as the UHG and its *Newsletter*. The urban environment, however, was such a complex object of study that the urban historian not only needed to accrue the traditional skills of the historian including analytical power and a real sense of the past, but also needed to be a historian of the family, of business, society, and of politics, architecture, culture and fashion, hence the inter-disciplinary nature of the conference. The character of the city was 'ethereal' and forever changing and therefore any definition would be equally porous and open to many interpretations.¹⁰⁵ The development of urban history, for Briggs, alongside that of urban studies, was a vital counterpoint to the speed of the transformation

¹⁰³ Asa Briggs, 'Foreword', *The Study of Urban History*, p.v.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ H.J. Dyos, 'Preface', *The Study of Urban History*, p.vi.

seen in the post-war city. The subsequent demolition of many of the signs of the past, such as the Euston Arch in London, would, he argued, ensure the loss of much of the urban historic environment, both 'blighted and beautiful' which would lead to a break in the continuity of memories and symbols of the urban past. Briggs's Foreword emphasised the connection between the development of the field in Britain and the growth of interest in its towns and cities. As discussed in previous chapters, the loss of the historic urban environment, particularly the Victorian artefacts of industrialization, were, according to Briggs, the catalyst for the field he initially began in the late 1950s.

Conclusion

The conference in Leicester was the next logical step in the establishment of Urban History. It continued the momentum created by the *Newsletter*. Its principal objectives were the clarification of urban history's scope and methods; the examination of comparative research; and an agreement on the limits of the object of urban history: in other words, a definition of urban history.¹⁰⁶ However, despite the level of commitment and intense debate, both during the sessions and in the 'free' time, delegates were aware that they had failed to come up with a workable definition of the field, but this was not too disappointing with many considering a rigid definition would be a double-edged sword. Many felt a definition, or series of definitions, was needed if comparative studies between the urban, time, and space, was to work, but it was also recognized that the urban was such a complex environment that setting a definition at this point in the development of Urban History risked imposing a rigid structure that would blinker the field to new topics and approaches and perhaps alienate some scholars. The field was always meant to be a 'talking shop' for scholars whose work brought them to the urban as a secondary as well as a primary topic. Because the number of disciplines matching this definition was large, fixing a definition might have prevented the open nature of the field and lead to some disciplines exclusion. The urban environment could form the backdrop to an infinite number of projects, and therefore finding a description to meet everyone's operational needs was considered a fruitless task. Many agreed it was far better to write urban history than to procrastinate over what it meant. Indeed, it could be argued that a lack of a fixed definition was, to all intense and purposes, exactly why the field prospered between the initial formation of the UHG and the conference. Part of the success of

¹⁰⁶ *UHN*, no. 7, December 1966, p. 2.

the field at this time was it could mean many things at once. The UHG was a jumping off point as well as an organizational entity. Yet there was an equal danger of not knowing what it was the urban historian was to write about. This conflict remained at the heart of the field for many years and it could well be argued that it remains today. What was reinforced in the conference was the need for inter-disciplinary cooperation and collaboration. Harris appeared to have been the lone voice arguing that this would dilute the historian's product. Dyos reflected the general opinion that it was important to stick to finding the right questions even though the sources may not be there to answer them.¹⁰⁷

Where the conference did succeed was in its aim to engage multiple disciplines in the study of the urban setting. Although the majority of the delegates were British historians representing British institutions, there were enough social scientists, geographers, and representatives from architecture to deem that the conference achieved its aim. It was to the social sciences that urban history looked to find common ground yet at the same time they did not want to become the 'handmaidens' of other disciplines.¹⁰⁸ Many of the delegates accepted that the sociologists were asking the questions that historians should have been and that they had better theoretical tools; yet, they still suffered equally from the problem of defining the urban.¹⁰⁹ The presence of American, Danish, French, and German academics certainly made the conference international but whether four delegates out of 43 widened the geographical focus to any major extent is questionable. According to Ashworth's closing statement, the conference wanted to define its 'working terms more accurately, but soon ran into difficulties.'¹¹⁰ He considered it a worthwhile attempt to define urban history, but he concluded that definitions needed to be left for future discussions, no one system could fit the multitude of areas involved in the study of the city.

I think it is pretty clear that in this question of defining urban history we have not solved our problems, what we have done is to establish the value of a continuing dialogue between people who come to this subject from a variety of different origins and bring to it a variety of different experiences and different preconceived notions. And I think we have done a service in clearing our minds where we have cluttered them up with things which we have been taking for granted and using implicitly and failing to make explicit; failing also, perhaps, to question whether we ought to be

¹⁰⁷ Final Discussion, *The Study of Urban History*, p. 365.

¹⁰⁸ Fifth Discussion, *The Study of Urban History*, p. 273.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 365.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

using them at all. I think we have also benefitted from coming and opening our minds to things which we had not really considered seriously before. This must have happened to all of us; and this is perhaps the most useful immediate thing that has come out of this conference.¹¹¹

Despite its failure to meet its aims and objectives, especially in its attempt to set boundaries and definitions for the field, the Leicester conference certainly succeeded in placing the field firmly on the academic stage. It also strengthened Dyos' placement at its centre.

¹¹¹ Ashworth, Final Discussion, p. 368.

Chapter Five

The Public Face of Urban History

In his 1966 article 'Growth of an Audience' for the *Times Literary Supplement*, Eric Hobsbawm noted that there had been such a growth in the number of historical books published that History was now a 'money-maker'.¹ The previous year had seen a 15 per cent increase in history publishing in Britain and an even greater increase of 24 per cent across the Atlantic in the United States.² It can reasonably be argued that the upsurge in the sales of history books at this time was the consequence of a growth of interest in history as a leisure pursuit within the broader public sphere. The reasons underlying this growth were, according to the Marxist historian, manifold: from the expansion of the higher education sector through to the requirement of a rapidly changing society to find historical bedrock upon which it could anchor its identity. However, for Hobsbawm it was the nature of the discipline itself that lay at the heart of this increased popularity. For History, he argued, was unlike many other disciplines in that it was not seen as incomprehensible to the layman. Historians who wanted to widen their audience to the realms outside the ivory tower did not need to engage in 'baby language but only English'.³ Simply, it was far easier to package and to sell history.⁴ Some years later, in retrospective mood, David Cannadine seemed to reinforce Hobsbawm's earlier statement by labelling the post-war period up until the late 1970s as a 'golden age' for History.⁵ Although Cannadine appeared to be focusing on the expansion of the academic discipline from one dominated by constitutional, economic, and political history to one of an increasing number of sub-disciplines rather than its presence outside academic circles, he noted that publishing houses and the media had certainly helped to ensure History had continued to mature not only as an academic subject but also as a leisure pursuit.⁶ If Hobsbawm and Cannadine were essentially correct in their analysis and History in this period had indeed reached a broader public then surely it should be possible to ascertain the extent to which urban history, or at least aspects of history that

¹ E.J. Hobsbawm, 'Growth of an Audience', *Times Literary Supplement: New Ways in History I* (7 April 1966), p. 283.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Hobsbawm cited E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London, 1963) in his 'Growth of an Audience' article.

⁵ D. Checkland, 'British History: Past, Present – and Future?', *Past & Present*, 116 (1987), p. 170.

⁶ Interview held under the auspices of 'Making History: The Discipline in Perspective' <http://www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/interviews> [accessed 22/05/2011].

could be classed as urban, was part of this engagement. This is the aim of the following chapter.

It will illustrate, through a small set of examples, the extent to which aspects of urban history engaged with a broader public: in other words, outside traditional academia. Before doing this however, it is important to clarify what is meant by the term academia. Here, it has been adopted in a rather straight-forward manner, whereby it is understood as relating to the teaching within the confines of an undergraduate or post-graduate degree, or the research that occurs within higher education and the institution of a university aimed at publication within a recognised academic peer reviewed journal or as an academic monograph.⁷ This allows the chapter to consider Adult Education and Extra-Mural activities even though they may have originated inside an Adult Education Department within a university's organisational structure, but at the same time, does not consider the work of the public broadcasts of the Open University. It also permits consideration of activities by academics whose employment was as full-time or part-time members of staff within university departments but who, outside their normal work hours, chose to participate in activities that may well have had some relation to their scholarly interests but were not necessarily directly dependent upon them, for example, a historian of the Victorian era volunteering as an assessor for a conservation campaign group such as the Victorian Society.

Once again, a problem at the heart of this chapter is how one defines what is and what is not urban history. If one is to argue that urban history existed outside traditional academia then there needs to be some form of boundary, or at least an idea of what one is actually looking for. To ensure consistency, this chapter adopts the definition set out in the introduction to this thesis. Utilising this characterisation allows examination of disciplines and fields that are not normally considered part of the discipline of History, let alone urban history: areas such as the Social Sciences, Geography, Archaeology, Architecture, Town Planning, and urban history's closest cognate field, Local History. Within these fields and disciplines, practitioners often dipped into the historical analysis of the urban environment by way of framing or illustrating their core object of research. It also has to be acknowledged that many of the scholars and professionals concerned

⁷ It is acknowledged that there is some flexibility within this definition because a small percentage of work migrated from the confines of academia, such as Thompson's *Origins of the British Working Class*, and to some extent Dyos' *Victorian Suburb*. However, the percentage is so small that it does not unduly affect the concept.

within the illustrations discussed below would not have classed themselves as urban historians at the time, or indeed do so retrospectively. The high level of ambiguity surrounding the field's territorial boundaries has been discussed in some depth elsewhere in this thesis; however, for clarity, it should be reinforced that in the early period covered by this research the nomenclature was not necessarily recognised nor readily accepted. Secondly, after the field was established, many historians whose object of research fitted neatly under the label of urban history did not assume the mantle of urban historian. Finally, many of the examples discussed arose from outside the historical discipline; therefore, any ambiguity is countered by fixing on the definition of the object of research as urban history and not on the home discipline or profession of those involved. The chapter is divided into a number of sections: non-academic printed media, radio, television, and urban conservation. Each section will consider examples in order to illustrate a wider development. Looking for the existence of urban history outside academia would suggest there was an expectation of success, for although proving the negative in itself would be of value it would not be worth the focus of an entire chapter. Why therefore, should urban history have been presented within wider non-traditional academia? One area which could be seen as offering the opportunity to reinforce the importance of the urban setting in the development of the country was the medium of print. The extreme catholicity of the field means that there are numerous examples that can, on some level, be described as urban history. This next section therefore looks at a small selection chosen because it represents the main approaches.

History Today

History Today was first published in January of 1951. Its editors argued that the time was ripe for such a magazine because many of its proposed audience had lived through an astonishing period of 'bewilderingly swift' changes.⁸ Internationally, states had risen and fallen, there had been two world wars; nationally there had been radical changes in class-structures and the reconstitution of social institutions. The United Kingdom was no longer one of the world's top two powers, a mantle taken by the United States and the U.S.S.R., and it had shed many of its former colonies. The result was the increased 'sense of historical perspective' and an intensification of national heritage. *History*

⁸ Peter Quennell and Alan Hodge, 'Foreword' in *History Today* (January, 1951), p.9.

Today was to consider history in its broadest sense. Whilst it would utilise experts, it wanted to address the general reader.

Besides the analysis of historical trends, both in the New and in the Old World, it will include detailed portraits of outstanding men and women, essays on literature, science and art and on the contribution they have made to international background, accounts of economic development and a series of articles dealing with the origins and growth of British Towns and Cities.⁹

It is to this final sentence that this section addresses itself. Its very presence in the opening Foreword of the new magazine illustrates how the development of British towns and cities were at the forefront of the editors' concerns. Moreover, on a simple marketing level, the editorial board must have considered there was an audience interested enough in the urban setting to justify the allotted space. The series of articles on British cities began in the first issue with the port city of Bristol.¹⁰ Commencing with a geographical description of Bristol, it was recognised that it had been overtaken by developments consequent to the Industrial Revolution but in terms of its history, it could look back at least four times longer. Bryan Little's analysis of the city was extremely traditional, a town biography that considered the relevance of its geographical position to its development as an Atlantic port. It included the city's architecture, engineering, and the internal decoration of churches, all supported with images. Each period of the city's history was dealt with through reference to the local economic, municipal, religious and social structures within the wider context of national developments. The most in depth section looked at what is called Bristol's 'greatest phase' in the eighteenth-century when Bristol was the country's second city after London. Little's analysis briefly enters into the twentieth century when the city became a regional capital but there is no mention of the Second World War or the years thereafter.

The remainder of the series followed a very similar pattern despite being penned by different authors. They were all traditional town biographies. Although the Foreword in the first issue suggested the series on towns and cities would consider British cities only, D.W. Brogan had three similar articles published looking at international cities.¹¹ Although Brogan's final article dealt with London, it was not deemed part of

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Bryan Little, 'British Towns and Cities I: Bristol', *History Today*, (January, 1951), pp.25-33.

¹¹ Ibid.

the series on British Towns. This seemed to stem from a contractual position with the writer rather than any editorial decision. His approach was also different. Along with his two prior articles, looking at New York and Paris respectively, Brogan gave a greater focus on social developments and how these had helped shape the physical environment. Beginning with a discussion of geographical location and the differences between Manhattan and Brooklyn, Brogan's discussion of New York considered the cultural and artistic life of the city before moving on to what is perhaps its most recognisable feature, its architecture and skyline.

Brogan's approach was not completely different to the main series on British towns; the economic and industrial history of the city was dealt with in similar terms to Little's work on Bristol and others in the other series of articles; however, Brogan's were dissimilar because they focused on the development of social structures in the city. For example, New York's role in the American Civil War as a refuge centre for freed slaves is deemed important because it opened up an analysis of the effects subsequent waves of immigrants had on shaping the physical and social layout of the city.¹² A survey of *History Today's* articles with the city at their core shows how the majority were published within the first few years following the launch of the title. It was perhaps the recognition that many of the 'bewildering' transformations that had occurred internationally and nationally within the living memory of its readership, especially the changes in social and class structure, took place within towns and cities, that led to the focus in these early issues.

Architectural Review

One of the most palpable traits used to define what constitutes the urban is its physicality. Density is a concrete reality not just an abstract set of figures on a chart. Ask any member of the general population to define the term urban and their most likely response will point to some aspect of the built environment. However, focusing on the solid artefacts of the built environment has normally been the reserve of the architectural historian and therefore, once again, there is a question of differentiation. What makes the object of research for the architectural historian different from that of the urban historian, or, indeed, is there a difference?

¹² D.W. Brogan, 'New York 1900-1950', in *History Today* (February, 1951), pp.46-56.

During the disciplines early development, architectural history tended to concentrate on the evolution of styles.¹³ However, architectural history was not immune to the changes occurring within the wider discipline of History resulting from the rise of the social sciences. The architect had begun to adopt a specialist sociological vocabulary, ‘all the stuff about people in the Piazzetta in Venice’.¹⁴ In a similar way to a number of other historical fields and sub-disciplines, this led to a greater consideration of the social and cultural determinants shaping society, making the differentiation between urban and architectural history far more nuanced. Local historians suggest they set themselves apart because of their focus on the community, it can therefore be argued that the origin of an architectural historian’s object of research is the best means of identification. It is the buildings, set of buildings, architect or architects that sit at the heart of their work. Taking this as a point of departure, it is argued here that there existed a cross-over and that the architectural historian, and indeed the architect, undertook forms of research that can surely be classified as urban history.

In the chapter considering the presence of urban history within higher education, it will be noted that many modernist architects and schools of architecture in the United Kingdom rejected history, an ideology based loosely on the philosophy of Walter Gropius. It may therefore be somewhat unexpected to find any form of history in such an organ of *avant-garde* modernist thought, architecture, planning and criticism as *The Architectural Review*. It was argued that that ‘modern architecture [had] won its battle against period revivalism and against the denial of the technological revolution that the use of reminiscent styles implied,’¹⁵ there remained a recognition of the importance to understand the role of community in the development of the built environment. This was especially the case when considering ways in which it could have been improved, at least during the immediate post-war years and prior to the dominance of the ideologies and practices originating from CIAM¹⁶ and the later Team X.¹⁷ An analysis

¹³ For example, Romanesque, Gothic, Classical, Baroque, Mannerist, Rococo, Gothic Revival, neo-Classical, modernist and post-modern. See David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History* (London, 1980) for an overview of Architectural History’s historiography.

¹⁴ R. Banham. ‘The Future of Universal Man: Symposium with Anthony Cox, Gordon Graham, John Page, & Lawrence Alloway’ *Architectural Review*, 127, no. 767, (March, 1960), p. 254.

¹⁵ ‘A Symposium by Gregor Paulson, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, William Holford, Sigfried Giedion, Walter Gropius, Lucio Costa, and Alfred Roth, ‘In Search of a New Monumentality’, *Architectural Review*, 105, No. 628 (1949), pp. 178-180.

¹⁶ *Congrès International d’Architecture Moderne*.

¹⁷ Team X (or Team 10) was a grouping of architects who during the 9th congress of CIAM challenged CIAM’s ideological approach to urbanism and urban development.

of Thomas Sharp's plans for Oxford argued that planners needed to understand the processes that led to the *fait accompli* of the existing physical environment and existing social organisms. Each needed to be explored in relation to the other, with the social requiring a scientific approach and the built environment an artist's 'eye for the present facts and the historian's understanding of past causes.'¹⁸ The importance of history was recognised when it came to the understanding of the built environment confronting architects and planners, especially how former residents and their employment activities had helped shape the street layout and the architectural form of buildings.¹⁹

Henry Russell-Hitchcock reaffirmed the view by arguing that there were two ways in which a building could be seen, that of the critic or of the historian, and this was dependent upon the contemporary 'cultural temper'.²⁰ Later, in 1960, John Page argued that a major issue leading to many of the problems evident in the raft of new towns was the failure of planners and architects to consider how the communities that were moved *en-masse* from the East End had developed over time. Instead, he believed they had attempted to impose their own middle class family structures. Page was arguing for a sociological approach to architectural design, a type of architectural sociology. However, he did not underestimate the importance of understanding the historical processes that had created the specific East End communities he was discussing.²¹

In the same text, Banham reiterated his belief that within an architect's training, history should be taught by a trained historian rather than an architect with a passing interest in history, arguing that it was unfortunate that 'the profession would rather listen to an architect with a smattering of specialty than the specialists themselves.'²² In other words, he recognised the need for history *and* sociology within an architect's training otherwise they would be producing work that was remote from reality: a condemnation that would be expressed with ever increasing volume during the following few years.²³

¹⁸ 'Dark-blue Print: Thomas Sharp's Proposals for the Replanning of the City of Oxford', *Architectural Review*, 103, no. 646 (April 1948), p. 131.

¹⁹ M. Rose, 'Dwelling and Ornament in the East End' *Architectural Review*, 103, no. 648, (June, 1948), pp.241-246. W. Bunning, 'Historical-Socio-Economic Influences on Australian Architecture', *Architectural Review*, 103, no. 649, (July, 1948), pp. 5-9.

²⁰ Henry Russell-Hitchcock, 'Victorian Monuments of Commerce', *Architectural Review*, 105, no. 626, (February 1949), p.61.

²¹ Banham. 'The Future of Universal Man: Symposium', p. 254.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 254.

²³ *Ibid.*

Further evidence of the presence of history in *Architectural Review* from the late 1940s can be seen in the many articles focusing on the Victorian era and its built environments, many by Peter Ferriday.²⁴ Topics included studies of the social and architectural development of Public Houses and Music Halls,²⁵ architects of the Victorian era and their legacy on the built environment.²⁶ Ferriday specifically linked the development of architectural styles in the Victorian era with the changes in wider Victorian society,²⁷ whilst others looked to social developments, such as education and how these were illustrated in the style of the built environment.²⁸

By 1960, recognising that the history of Victorian architecture, and arguably the wider built environment, was for the first time being written and rewritten, Ferriday applauded the growing insight provided into the social 'complexity and contradictions of the age.'²⁹ The architect, he argued, was at the centre of the period, he was crucial to the reshaping of the Victorian built environment, and he cited the Church of England as the 'greatest single influence on Victorian architecture.'³⁰ However, in light of the redevelopments occurring within British cities, he also feared the loss of Victorian architecture and urged other historians to 'work a little quicker' than the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments in order to ensure their protection.³¹ Around this time however, a change in focus can be seen within the pages of the *Architectural Review*, with less written on the results of architectural developments (its architecture) and more analysis of the profession's theoretical approaches: a growing emphasis on the history of the Modern Movement and the role of the historian in its recording. Peter Collins explored the problem. He argued that histories of the twentieth century tried to achieve an 'up-to-dateness' (*sic*) whereas those of earlier period strove for objectivity. The modern historian was being accused of being too close to the topic, citing Le

²⁴ Peter Ferriday also edited the 1963 collection *Victorian Architecture*.

²⁵ H. Scott, 'The Pub Music Hall', *Architectural Review*, 105, no.627, (March, 1949), pp.121-128; M. Gorham, 'The Pub and the People', *Architectural Review*, no. 633 (October, 1949), pp.209-220; H.M.G. Dunnett, 'The Tradition' *Architectural Review*, 105, no.627, (March, 1949), pp.223-248.

²⁶ C. Grillett, 'Edward Prior: Born 1852' *Architectural Review*, 110, no.660 (December, 1951), pp.303-308. H. Russell-Hitchcock, 'Ruskin & Butterfield', *Architectural Review*, 116, no. 695, (November, 1954), pp.285-289. Peter Ferriday, 'Lord Grimethorpe' *Architectural Review*, 117, no.700, (April, 1955).

²⁷ P. Ferriday, 'The Revival' *Architectural Review*, 124, No.722, (March, 1957), pp.155-158.

²⁸ D. Gregory, 'Towers of Learning' in which he considered the design and placement of schools in Victorian London as the physical manifestation of moral and educational betterment, the social aspirations and aesthetic determinations espoused by E.R. Robson, the first architect of the London School Board.

²⁹ P. Ferriday, 'Victorian Studies', *Architectural Review*, 129, no. 767 (March, 1961), pp.157-158.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 157

³¹ *Ibid.*

Corbusier's '*L'homme dans le temps et dans le lieu*'³² arguing that there needed to be a clear separation between history and architectural theory.³³

This short review of the *Architectural Review*, it is argued, reinforces the discussion of the legacy of the Victorian built environment. Both its architectural and social elements, became more popular within the architectural profession following the end of the Second World War. Architecture was used to illustrate wider social developments within Victorian society. The discipline of Architectural History, as seen in the pages of the *Architectural Review*, engaged with social history and this engagement to all intents and purposes produced what can legitimately be characterised as urban history, albeit with an architectural slant. However, as described earlier, the rise of modernist ideologies and the consequent disavowal of History in the profession of architecture led to less Victorian urban history and more analysis of the Modern Movement. Of course, the *Architectural Review* was one of the main organs of modernist thought in the United Kingdom and as such this is not unexpected. Architectural historians and architects certainly continued to research and debate developments occurring in the nineteenth-century; indeed, this is evident at the first urban history conference held in 1966³⁴ with Frances M. Jones, the Director of Liverpool School of Architecture's Housing Research and Development Group, giving a paper³⁵ and the following discussion led by the architectural historian John Summerson.³⁶ The rise of interest in the Victorian built environment can also be linked to the growing concerns in this period over its loss and demolition.

The Listener

Reyner Banham was not only a regular contributor to the *Architectural Review*; in 1968 he also gave a series of four talks on the Third Programme based upon his experiences in Los Angeles. Later, he would publish *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies*³⁷ and present a BBC television documentary broadcast in 1972, *Reyner*

³² Translated as 'the man in time and place.'

³³ P. Collins, 'Historicism', *Architectural Review*, 128, no. 761 (January, 1960), p.103.

³⁴ See Chapter Four in this thesis, 'The First Conference-Leicester 1966.'

³⁵ F. M. Jones, 'The Aesthetic of the Nineteenth-Century Industrial Town' in H.J. Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), pp.171-182. He was accompanied by K.M. Spencer, a Research Officer

³⁶ John Summerson, 'Discussion' in H.J. Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), pp.183-188.

³⁷ R. Banham, *Los Angeles: the Architecture of Four Ecologies* (London, 1971).

Banham Loves Los Angeles.³⁸ However, it is not the radio programmes themselves, nor the subsequent book, or indeed the television documentary that are of interest here but the articles accompanying the radio programmes published in *The Listener*.³⁹ Of the four articles, the final one is more of an opinion piece and contains little that could be described as urban history but the first three are peppered with sections considering how the city of Los Angeles developed, especially the social reasons behind its built form and layout. Looking to Rasmussen's description of London as a collection of villages, Banham argues that a similar situation existed in Los Angeles, although rather than the Underground forming the connections it was the freeway. Whereas London and other European cities had been developing since the middle ages, Los Angeles was only established in 1890, but similar to London, it had not sprawled out from the centre into virgin territory; instead it expanded by incorporating existing urban settlements.⁴⁰ At the time of the articles' publication, the riots in the district of Watts that had taken place three years previously and which had claimed 34 lives were at the forefront of Banham's mind.

One of the problems cited for the riots was the lack of transport links between Watts and the remainder of the city; however, Banham considered it was the presence not the lack of freeways that was a primary cause: they cut off districts, acting as a barrier. Watts' residents were unable to access well-paid employment because they had no transport access to wealthier areas of the city and therefore they could not afford motor cars. It was a vicious circle. Banham explored how the transport infrastructure played a crucial role in this aspect of the city's history. From the introduction of the steam railway through the electric tram and its eventual decommissioning beginning as early as 1924, Banham argued it was their complete replacement in 1961 by the freeway that had led to the outbreak of violence. He discussed the personalities behind the large transport companies, including such names as Henry Edwards Huntington and his Pacific Electric Railroad company that had helped to create 1,500 miles of track. The district of Watts was, according to Banham, not only the creation of the Pacific Electric

³⁸ BBC, *Reyner Banham Loves Los Angeles* (documentary and architectural criticism) 52 minutes (London, 1972).

³⁹ R. Banham, 'Encounter with Sunset Boulevard' in *The Listener*, 80, (22/08/1968), pp.235-236; 'Roadside with Rusting Rails' (29/08/1968), pp. 267-268; 'Beverly Hills, Too, Is a Ghetto; 'The Art of Doing Your Thing'' (12/08/1969), pp. 330-331.

⁴⁰ R. Banham, 'Encounter with Sunset Boulevard' in *The Listener*, 80 (22/08/1968), p. 236.

Railway but also its victim.⁴¹ The formation of the road network was also an aspect of the city he considered with a section on Gaylord Wiltshire, the originator of Wiltshire Boulevard. Of particular interest was its retail mid-section creation originated by the real estate developer A.W. Ross. Ross had calculated the greatest distance shoppers in the 1920s would be willing to drive to their stores from the surrounding residential neighbourhoods and settled on the mid-section of Wiltshire. Ross had to fight for his idea because the section was originally zoned as residential, which for the English historian, showed Los Angeles had not come into being purely as a result of unplanned and free development.⁴² In the penultimate article, Banham explored how incorporation had been used by different areas for different ends, from attempts to prevent residential occupation by residents deemed unsuitable by middle class inhabitants through to the protection of water rights. He also acknowledged how many of the cities within the Los Angeles area had been formed out of the older ranches whose land came originally from grants by the Spanish Crown or later from the Republic of Mexico.

Although an architectural critic and historian, Banham in these articles looked at the social and economic factors behind the development of Los Angeles. Unlike his future book or television programme, there was very little discussion of individual buildings or architects. Instead, he concentrated on the social consequences of historical decisions around zoning, incorporation and transport infrastructure: linking these to contemporary problems, such as the Watts riots, or the gated communities of Beverly Hills. Banham provided not only urban history, but a contemporarily relevant urban history. Whether or not his analysis stands the test of time is for this thesis irrelevant, it was the presence of the articles that showed the editors of the *Listener*, and of course the radio commissioners that believed the history of urban development and its effects on contemporary life were important enough to be included.

New Society

New Society was a centre-left magazine that came from the same publishers as *New Scientist*. Published between 1962 and 1988, its interest in social developments meant that it focused a great deal on the social sciences; however, there were also articles from other disciplines, including social history. It is to a series of articles introduced by two texts from Dyos that form the topic of this section. *New Society* readership was drawn

⁴¹ R. Banham, 'Roadscape with Rusting Rails' in *The Listener*, 80 (29/08/1968), p. 267.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 268.

from those who benefited from the opening up of higher education following the recommendations of the *Robbins Report*. Its period of publication also mirrors the era in academia that saw the social sciences in the ascendancy. Dyos' discussions on the slum, therefore, fitted perfectly within the pattern of the publication. His two articles formed an introduction to a series titled 'The Origins of the Social Services'.⁴³ The remaining contributions included two from Asa Briggs on the topic of public health, and two from E.P. Hennock that focused on the development of social security from the Poor Law to the *Beveridge Report* of 1942.⁴⁴

Dyos' articles were focused on the slums and therefore predominantly urban in their focus. Beginning with a comparison between the responsibilities of contemporary British governments and the *laissez-faire* approach existing at the start of the nineteenth-century when housing was considered a private matter, Dyos saw the development of social housing as a process of changing attitudes.⁴⁵ The wealth created in the nineteenth-century was not being put towards the alleviation of poor housing for the working classes but instead used to increase the separation between the better off and the poor, in other words, the creation and propagation of the suburbs. Housing was the physical reflection of social structure and this was never more apparent than in the slums of Britain's large cities; however, it was not considered a separate problem for much of the nineteenth-century, rather, it was seen as an addendum to the wider concerns of public health. The creation of the slum, he argued, had a direct relationship to the creation of the suburb: a concept fully considered in the essay 'Slums and Suburbs', co-authored with David Reeder.⁴⁶

Briggs's articles considering developments in public health provision can only be described as urban insofar as many of the sanitary problems used as examples were located in the new industrial urban environments and the crowded metropolises (similar health concerns also presented themselves in isolated rural villages). Much of Dyos and Briggs' arguments centred on the development of a sense of social obligation in

⁴³ H.J. Dyos, 'The Slum Observed', *New Society*, (1/2/1968), pp.151-154. H.J. Dyos, 'The Slum Attacked', *New Society* (8/2/1968), pp. 192-195.

⁴⁴ A. Briggs, 'Public Health: The "Sanitary Idea"' (15/2/1968), pp.229-231, A. Briggs, 'Public Health: The Health of the Nation' (22/2/1968), pp.267-269, E.P. Hennock, 'The Poor Law Era' (29/02/1968), pp.301-303. E.P. Hennock, 'Social Security: A System Emerges' (7/3/1968), pp. 336-338.

⁴⁵ Dyos, 'The Slum Observed' p. 151.

⁴⁶ H.J. Dyos and D. Reeder, 'Slums and Suburbs' in H.J. Dyos, M. Woolf (eds), *The Victorian City: Images and Realities II* (London, 1973), pp. 359-386.

Victorian society brought about through the growing recognition of the economic consequences of the nation's poor health. This pattern can also be seen in Hennock's articles where he sets out to analyse the evolution from the *laissez-faire* to the expansion of government involvement in the lives of its citizens, 'from the barest provision of security against starvation to the fuller concept of a minimum standard of civilised life.'⁴⁷ Much as Dyos and Briggs had done, Hennock saw it as a journey dependent upon a set of changing attitudes about society and methods of influencing its development: the progression towards centralised governments increasing involvement with the private lives of its citizens.⁴⁸

Whereas Dyos and Briggs concentrated on the nineteenth-century, Hennock looked back to the Elizabethan poor laws to find the antecedents of the 1834 reformed legislation. Hennock's second article and the last in the series considered developments in the first decades of the twentieth century. Of the six articles, Dyos' were the more urban in their focus. Brigg's set the urban alongside his analysis, but not central to it and Hennock's work was more of a cultural and social history of attitudinal change. Yet the initial focus on the urban as the location of social transformation, as the physical reflection of psychological processes, was at the core of all six. The centrality of the nineteenth-century in shaping the social and built environment of the twentieth illustrated the importance of the urban and the historical processes of urbanisation as an object of research.

The above examples of urban history in the non-academic printed media show how the field was utilised in many arenas. Of course, historians wrote articles in periodicals prior to these examples but those chosen mirror the evolution of the wider discipline of History from the more traditional economic history and town biographies seen in *History Today* to the increasing emphasis on social structures seen in the *New Society* articles. Banham's pieces in *The Listener*, although set in a more up-to-date arena, show how urban history could be used to clarify contemporary urban issues.

Urban Conservation

The decades following the end of the Second World War are often described as offering a window of opportunity for architects and planners to impose the modernist ideologies

⁴⁷ E.P. Hennock, 'The Poor Law Era' in *New Society* (29/2/1968), p. 301.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

of CIAM on British inner cities. Flinn has recently shown how the realities were far more nuanced.⁴⁹ However, many British cities did undergo some degree of redevelopment; either driven by the rise of the private motor car and the emergence of retail as a leisure activity, or the result of slum clearance and the so-called golden age of social housing.⁵⁰ The redevelopment of town centres affected all strata of urban society. The response was as varied as the populations of the cities: neither outright rejection nor total acceptance. One consequence can be seen in the appearance of groups who campaigned for the protection of the historic built environment deemed under threat from the actions of the planners.

At this time, the majority of Britain's industrial cities had centres that were dominated by Victorian redbrick architecture, which was problematic when attempting to convince the authorities that they needed protection. Building on the inter-war polemics, such as those of Clough Williams Ellis, the attitude towards the Victorian built environment tended to be extremely negative,⁵¹ however, it is worth reiterating that the Victorian red brick architecture that formed the backdrop to the majority of Britain's towns and cities was deemed by many, worthy only of demolition not protection. It was simply not fashionable. Yet as Summerson had surmised as early as 1948, the Victorian age had become distant enough to be considered history.⁵² Even though the legacy of the Victorian built environment was known for its 'special monstrousness' and its 'unique ugliness',⁵³ as far as he was concerned, it was necessary to carry out historical research, without which it would be impossible to differentiate poor remnants and those which were historically significant.

Central to attempts to promote the protection of the nineteenth-century built environment was the Victorian Society. Founded in February of 1958, the Society was formed as a counter to the widespread dislike and destruction of all things Victorian. Noting in its first report that the majority of people in Britain ignored or shunned Victorian architecture and that there remained a widespread belief that anything built

⁴⁹ C. Flinn, 'The City of our Dreams', *The Political and Economic Realities of Rebuilding Britain's Blitzed Cities, 1945-54*, *Twentieth Century British History*, 23, no.2, (2012), pp.221-245.

⁵⁰ A. Ravetz, *Council Housing and Culture: the History of a Social Experiment* (London, 2001).

⁵¹ These anti-Victorian attitudes and their softening were dealt with in Chapter Two, 'The Road to Sheffield'. See C. Williams-Ellis, *England and the Octopus* (London, 1928), C. Williams-Ellis, *Britain and the Beast* (London, 1937).

⁵² J. Summerson, 'The London Suburban Villa', *Architectural Review*, 104, no. 620, (August, 1948), pp.63-72.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

between 1840 and 1900 was ‘automatically ugly’, they wanted to ensure that

the best Victorian buildings and their contents [did] not disappear before their merits [were] more generally appreciated...The objects of the Society comprise[d] the study and appreciation of Victorian architecture and associated art with a view to the preservation of outstanding examples.⁵⁴

The Society was not purely interested in large architectural edifices they also wanted to preserve the vernacular, as illustrated in the listing of 356 Norman Shaw houses in Jonathon Carr’s West London suburb known as Bedford Park.⁵⁵ The first committee included J. Betjeman, N. Pevsner, J.M. Richards, the architectural critic and editor of *Architectural Review*, and Mark Girouard, the critic and architectural historian; however, at this time there were no social historians.⁵⁶ As the Society evolved so did their aims and objectives. Just a year after the Society’s formation, the objectives had become more nuanced. It wanted to conserve not just Victorian architecture but ‘relevant drawings and documents.’⁵⁷ The Society’s objects were described as:

To awaken public interest in and the appreciation of good Victorian and Edwardian architecture, decoration and design.
To afford advice to owners and public authorities in regard to the preservation and repair of Victorian and Edwardian buildings and the uses to which they can, if necessary, be adapted.
To save from needless destruction or disfigurement, Victorian and Edwardian buildings or groups of buildings of special architectural merit.⁵⁸

Seven years later the Society still recognised these core objectives, with the addition of the creation of a register of research:

To draw attention to the merits and significance of the best of Victorian and Edwardian architecture, design crafts and decoration.
To encourage the study of these, and that of related social history.
To provide a point of contact for scholars of the period and to compile a register of research.
To help form a basis of aesthetic discrimination.
To prevent the needless destruction of important Victorian and Edwardian buildings and their contents.
To co-operate with the Ministry of Housing in the listing and protection of Victorian buildings of architectural and historic value.

⁵⁴ Victorian Society Leaflet published 1957. LMA/4460/02/01/001.

⁵⁵ One of the first garden suburbs that now falls within the West London Boroughs of Ealing and Hounslow. See the Bedford Park Society: <http://www.bedfordpark.org.uk>

⁵⁶ See Table 6 of this Thesis Appendix for a list of committee members.

⁵⁷ Victorian Society Leaflet published 1958. LMA/4460/02/01/002

⁵⁸ Ibid.

To make representations to local authorities and to give evidence at public enquiries.⁵⁹

The inclusion of the phrase ‘related social history’ is certainly the result of the widening of committee membership to include the historians Asa Briggs, F.M.L. Thompson, and Michael Wolff in 1965.⁶⁰ This approach was continued. So much so that by 1975, Dyos had joined the committee along with the architectural historian Gavin Stamp. In terms of its remit, rather than purely concentrating on preservation, and whilst recognising that organised education was outside its then capabilities, the Society wanted to ‘bring together all those who are working in the field of visual arts, literature, and cultural and social history of the years between 1830 and 1914.’⁶¹

Locally, Dyos certainly helped to establish Leicester’s Victorian Society Group, whose early major campaign was the attempt to save the Sun Alliance Building,⁶² its final demolition leading to Leicester’s innovative or some would argue controversial planner Konrad Smigieski’s resignation in 1972.⁶³ An early member of the Society remembers Dyos’ typical approach of laying on a table with wine and biscuits for the first meeting. However, the most active member of the University of Leicester’s staff in the local campaigns was Jack Simmons. Responding to a letter from the architectural historian Hazel Conway of Leicester Polytechnic (De Montfort University), David Lloyd, the national Society’s architectural advisor, asked if she was willing to help to keep the society informed because the Society’s existing contacts were unreliable.⁶⁴ This was a state of affairs that continued, even after Dyos became a member of the national committee, with Lloyd writing to a local member in 1975 asking if there was a ‘reliable’ person able to keep the Society informed of events in the city.⁶⁵ Although drafted on to Leicester City Council’s Conservation Advisory Committee (CASC) in December 1975,⁶⁶ Dyos seemed more interested in the national rather than the local stage.⁶⁷

⁵⁹ Victorian Society Leaflet published 1965. LMA/4460/02/01/003.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Victorian Society Leaflet published 1974. LMA/4460/02/01/004.

⁶² Leicester Buildings Sub-Committee. LMA/4460/01/19/001

⁶³ *The Municipal Journal*, (London, 1972) Smigieski was however due to retire the following year so it was not too much of a statement.

⁶⁴ Correspondence between H. Conway and D. Lloyd dated 21/1/1972, 9/2/1972 and 13/2/1972. LMA/4460/01/19/002.

⁶⁵ Letter from D. Lloyd to D.A. Calow 25/5/1975. LMA/4460/01/19/003.

⁶⁶ See P. Jones, *Unfinished Work: An Essay in Honour of H.J. Dyos 1921-1978* (Leicester, 2010).

⁶⁷ Dyos gave evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee, Environment Sub-Committee as part of his responsibilities as the Societies Chairman. Environment Sub-Committee 9/11/1977-14/12/1977, p. 75, paragraph 291, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers.

The transformation of a Society established to respond to a perceived threat of redevelopment to Victorian architecture to one which saw its role not only in conservation but also in considering the social and cultural history of the period, and mirrors the wider changes in the approach to academic History. Academically, architectural historians dominated the Society in its early years but the arrival of social historians in the later 1960s and early 1970s was crucial to its development. Once again, it is not possible to state categorically that urban history resided at the centre of this work or whether it was in the minds of those involved. But the main threat, as evidenced in the reports of the Society's Building Sub-Committees, related to towns and cities with very few dealing with structures in rural areas. The extension of interests into social and cultural activities can, it is argued, be construed as fitting into the description of urban history as laid out above. The renewed interest in the built environment of the Victorian era was also reflected in one of the main organs of architectural criticism and analysis, the *Architectural Review*.

Urban History on the Radio

Launched in 1922, at the heart of the BBC was John Reith and his remit to educate, enlighten as well as to entertain.⁶⁸ Reith wanted education to be stimulating, 'I wish somebody would invent another word to describe the sort of education which makes life so much more interesting and enjoyable than it otherwise would be.'⁶⁹ The medium of radio offered the opportunity to bring 'a very human, understandable and understanding' expert into the homes of the listeners.⁷⁰ The Third Programme, until its replacement by Radio Three and Radio Four, was the location of much intellectual broadcasting but it was not truly *Reithian*. It was seen by many as elitist and creating a segregated audience. Reith had wanted to bring education into as many homes as possible and so it was the establishment of local radio where this ethos was actually achieved.⁷¹

The local radio experiment began in 1967, the same year as the reorganisation of BBC's national radio service which saw the Light, the Third and the Home services replaced by

⁶⁸ John Reith, Director General, B.B.C., 'The New Talks Programme', *The Listener*, (30/04/1930), p. 767.

⁶⁹ *The Listener*, 30/04/1930, p. 767.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ D. Hendy, *Life on Air: A History of Radio Four* (Oxford, 2007), p.2.

Radio's One, Two, Three, and Four.⁷² The new local stations offered audiences regionally based history. Local history programmes were recognised as having more of a *Reithian* appeal because the subject matter cut across 'social groupings, and levels of academic attainment', giving audiences the 'opportunity of seeing the significance of history to human beings in a society largely fashioned by their predecessors.'⁷³ In particular, the use of oral history had been 'constantly' developed by the BBC's Education Office, and was considered of 'greatest significance'.⁷⁴ For example, oral history was at the centre of Radio Derby's *Sign of the Times* which looked at the development of Rolls Royce and its close relationship with the city, and the same station's *The Story of Derby*, aimed at schools, looked at the daily life of Derby's inhabitants whilst setting the town in the wider context of national history.⁷⁵ However, it is to Derby's East Midland neighbour of Nottingham that this section looks to as the primary example of urban history on public radio.

Between February 1968 and May 1969, three series of programmes under the heading *Nottingham's History* were broadcast on Thursday evenings and repeated the following Sunday morning on the newly established BBC Radio Nottingham. The concept and final execution originated through the University of Nottingham's Extra-Mural Department of Adult Education and in particular its history tutors and not from the BBC.⁷⁶ This was not the first time the East Midland's university had entered the world of mass-communication. Driven by a clear political ideology, the factors at the core of Nottingham's wish to utilise radio and television were straight-forward. Their overwhelming belief in the promotion of adult education meant they wanted to reach a wider cross-section of the adult population as possible and radio and television provided an unrivalled level of access. The medium was also far more economical and efficient and it reached audiences in their own home where they were more comfortable, and hence, believed to be more amenable. This would ensure audiences that had

⁷² Radio Leicester (8 November 1967), Radio Sheffield (15 November 1967), Radio Merseyside (22 November 1967), Radio Nottingham (31 January 1968), Radio Brighton (14 February 1968), Radio Stoke-on-Trent (14 March 1968), Radio Leeds (24 June 1968), and Radio Durham (3 July 1968).

⁷³ Letter Hal Bethell of the Local Radio Education Office to Dyos 13/4/1972 - DC:1/2/7.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ List of 168 local radio programmes that used oral history in the four and a half years since local radio began broadcasting. Letter from Hal Bethell of the Local Radio Education Office to H.J. Dyos 13/4/1972 DC:1/2/7.

⁷⁶ Interview with Alan Rogers undertaken by G.W. Davies (February 2013).

traditionally been ignored or who had escaped the normal methods of adult education could be reached, described as 'the loner, [and] the less educationally sophisticated.'⁷⁷

In the early 1960s, staff associated with the University of Nottingham's Extra-Mural Department, especially its director Harold Wiltshire, was extremely keen on using the media for adult education.⁷⁸ In 1963, a meeting between the Department's director and his deputy took place with Norman Collins (then Deputy Chairman of Associated Television) at Claridges. The meeting would eventually lead to a 1964 series of thirteen programmes broadcast on Granada focusing on economics.⁷⁹ Financially assisted with a Leverhulme grant, the University of Nottingham provided a work-book that contained exercises that needed to be returned to local tutors once the programmes had aired. Jenny Lee (Harold Wilson's appointment to consider the idea of an 'University of the Air') visited Nottingham and was impressed, so much so that this work can certainly be seen as the progenitor of the Open University established a few years later in 1971.

Following the success of the Granada series, Nottingham's Department looked to the newly established BBC local radio station in Nottingham as the next opportunity. Utilising original sources, including maps, population figures and a number of photographs, a series of broadcasts took place on Thursday nights and repeated the following Sunday. The first series, *Themes from Nottingham History*, was aired between February and March 1968. The concept behind the programmes was that the city was more than just its built environment, taking as its theme the motto 'It is not the Buildings and Machines which make the City of Nottingham but the People'.⁸⁰ The programmes did not attempt to consider every aspect of the city's past but instead picked a number of questions crucial to an examination into the history of any city: the organisers wanted to promote discussion and debate. The first two programmes looked at the changing population of Nottingham, the third and fourth at how the population helped to shape the built environment, and finally, programmes five and six dealt with occupations in the nineteenth century. Over 500 of the booklets were requested by

⁷⁷ A. Rogers, 'Adult Education in Broadcasting' in A.H. Thornton, M.D. Stephens (eds), *The University in its Region: The Extra-Mural Contribution* (Nottingham, 1977), p.77.

⁷⁸ Interview with Alan Rogers undertaken by G.W. Davies (February 2013).

⁷⁹ Norman Collins, then Deputy Chairman of Associated Television leading to an article in the *Times Educational Supplement* of January 1963.

⁸⁰ Taken from a 1951 exhibition organised by the Nottinghamshire Council of Social Service. Quoted in A. Rogers, *Themes from Nottingham's History* (Nottingham, 1968), p.23.

members of the public and the meeting arranged at the end of the series, aimed at obtaining listeners' feedback, was extremely well attended.⁸¹

The success of the first series led directly to the second and enlarged set of nine programmes aired between May and June 1968. Entitled *Old Nottingham: From the Castle to St. Mary's*, the concept behind this series was to encourage listeners to consider their surroundings in greater depth. Rather than looking at an old house and simply acknowledging its age, the tutors wanted their listeners to reflect on the building's social as well as material history. Who built the house? What style and why? Who had lived and worked there? In other words, the tutors wanted to encourage their listeners to see the city as a social and physical palimpsest.⁸² Each programme was made up of an outside broadcast recording of a walking tour through a section of historic Nottingham. The route was provided to listeners in a booklet so they could, if they wished, follow in the footsteps after the programme aired. Set in the so-called historical half mile of Nottingham, it crossed an area then under threat from redevelopment.⁸³ Although issues of conservation were not central, the wider concerns of Nottingham's redevelopment certainly formed the backdrop to this second series, illustrating what was to be lost.⁸⁴

Two meetings were organised, the first half way through and the second at the end. A walk was also organised and attended by approximately 80 people.⁸⁵ Once again the popularity of the first programmes led to the commissioning of a third; however, the final series was far less successful than the first two. Whilst it is argued that the first two series could be categorised straightforwardly as urban history, the last one was most certainly dominated by traditional Local History. Rather than being produced by Nottingham's Extra-Mural Department, three separate local history groups were asked to create two programmes each introducing their research and conclusions. Unfortunately, the three groups chosen were less than enthusiastic and would have preferred to have carried on with their research rather than create radio programmes.

⁸¹ Interview with Alan Rogers undertaken by G.W. Davies (February 2013).

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Alan Rogers, *Old Nottingham: From the Castle to St. Mary's* (Nottingham, 1968). The new road of Maid Marion Way cut through the centre of the so-called 'historic half mile' of Nottingham.

⁸⁴ Interview with Alan Rogers undertaken by G.W. Davies (February 2013).

⁸⁵ No record or register of attendees was organised at the time.

Moreover, none of the groups had actually completed their research and so the results offered were all quite rudimentary.⁸⁶

The city was central to the first two series but the tutors did not consider themselves urban historians; indeed, although the majority would perhaps have described themselves, if pushed, as local history tutors, they felt no need to differentiate between the various approaches or to attach labels. Yet, despite the lack of nomenclature, under the definition set out above, the first two series could certainly be categorised as urban history. They embraced aspects of many of the cognate disciplines that made urban history such a catholic field of study, including architectural history, demography, local history, geography, and urban studies. The placement of the city at the centre of series one and two is highlighted when the problems surrounding the third are considered. Although there were other issues, it could be argued that its relative failure was in part caused by its non-urban setting. The first two series were firmly set within the city itself, the second in the very centre of the old city. For the target audience, including workers in the city, it was relatively easy to attend the meetings or walks due to their central locale. Radio Nottingham was within a few minutes of the Department of Extra Mural Adult Education which meant any cooperation between the two institutions was straight-forward. Listeners were able to use the copies of the original plans and maps to explore contemporary urban locales which would have engendered a sense of place. This connection between the abstract idea of the city found in the primary sources, and the physical reality explored in the walks would have eased the fears of those listeners uncomfortable in the more traditional educational environment, the one Reith wanted to avoid. The third series was far more old-fashioned in its approach, concentrating on isolated datasets and discussions of Nottingham's Enclosure Movements, public health in Arnold and analysis of populations in a number of villages surrounding the city. Moreover, the third series, because of its more rural emphasis was organisationally problematic with each group having to make special journeys into Nottingham for the production of their programmes.

Whether the *Reithian* and Extra Mural ethos of widening the remit of education was met is also questionable. No demographic analysis of the audience was ever undertaken, but it was remarked that the audience at the meetings and those who attended the walk in

⁸⁶ Interview with Alan Rogers undertaken by G.W. Davies (February 2013).

the second series were the typical ‘middle aged, middle educated, and middle class’ that normally attended activities provided by the Extra-Mural Department, including members of the new Civic Societies and those concerned with architectural and urban conservation in the face of Nottingham’s redevelopment.⁸⁷ Finally, why was this not mirrored at Leicester, especially when Hoskins had established the Department of English Local History (ELH) there in 1948? The answer is relatively simple, the Leicester department actively refused to become associated with regional local history, it wanted to be considered a national centre, hence the addition of ‘English’ to the nomenclature.⁸⁸

Urban History on Television

The period under scrutiny was one in which the television took over from the radio as the main form of broadcast entertainment within the home. *Discovering London* was a series of programmes broadcast on London’s local independent television station, London Weekend Television (LWT).⁸⁹ Although focused on London and originally planned to be on air at the weekends only, LWT networked the series around the country on Associated Television (ATV). The series of programmes were broadcast on Sunday mornings. The first series covered the development of London until the arrival of the Stuarts, from which point the second continued and concluded at the end of the nineteenth-century. Accompanying the programmes, LWT produced a pair of box sets, each containing four books. Each box set had the title *Discovering London*.⁹⁰ Aimed at the ‘mass-market audience’ who had left school at fifteen, the programme style was described as ‘lively and interesting’. It was hoped that the relaxed style would stimulate people with a fairly limited education to go out and see some of the surviving landmarks of the period discussed’.⁹¹ As the title suggested, the accompanying books were intended as ‘brief histories cum (*sic*) guide books’.⁹² Each programme considered a distinct period. Costumes, food, houses, furniture and living conditions were used to

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Interview with Charles Phythian-Adams undertaken by G.W. Davies (October 2012) confirmed in an interview with Alan Rogers undertaken by G.W. Davies (February 2013).

⁸⁹ First broadcast 1968.

⁹⁰ *Discovering London: How to Find the London of the Past in the City of Today. Four Books of an Eight Volume Guide to London Through the Ages. With a Specially Drawn Map Showing all the Places of Historical Interest* Box Set 1: G. Derwent, ‘Roman London’; D. Brechin, ‘The Conquerors London’; K. Derwent, ‘Medieval London’; A.R. Robertson, ‘Tudor London’. Box Set 2: M. Pearse, ‘Stuart London’; D. Brechin, ‘Georgian London’; D. Hill, ‘Regency London’; G. Norton, ‘Victorian London’ (London, 1969).

⁹¹ Letter from Joanna Evans, Assistant Editor, Publications (LWT) to Dyos 31/10/1968 DC:1/12/4

⁹² Ibid.

explore the social and cultural history of the metropolis. Central to its ethos was the aim of showing its audience how contemporary customs and practices had their origins within the past.⁹³ To achieve this, the programmes focused on individuals and institutions that were then linked to specific areas of London's built environment. The cross over between Architectural History and urban history is clear once again in the three series presented by the architectural historian and lecturer Alec Clifton-Taylor.⁹⁴

At the age of 68, Clifton-Taylor he wrote and presented the first of his three series considering the architectural history of a number of British towns: *Six English Towns*, *Six More English Towns*, and *Another Six English Towns*.⁹⁵ As one might expect, the core of these programmes was architectural in nature, with Clifton-Taylor singling out a number of individual buildings such as churches, factories, and residences. However, in doing so he often began with a short introduction that provided a précis of the social and cultural history behind the layout and architectural styles he found. In a similar manner to the LWT programme, the three series were accompanied by a set of books published to provide more in depth information.⁹⁶ They were very popular, so much so that when Dyos asked for review copies for the *UHN*, he was informed there had had to be a further print run and that none were currently available.⁹⁷

Addressing the audience, Clifton-Taylor would first discuss the geographical location over a panoramic sweep of the town. The audience for Clifton-Taylor's programmes was certainly not the same as the LWT series. Rather than being 'lively', the style was more patrician in nature, often with long pauses in narration. Moreover, although aspects of the programmes could very loosely be described as urban history under the definition set out above, they could be best described as Architectural History in that

⁹³ The second series (1) The Early Stuart and the Beginning of Colonial Settlement, (2) Cavalier London and the Beginning of the Power of Parliament, (3) Parliamentary London and Cromwell, (4) Stuart Londoner – Plague and Fire, (5) Restoration London – the London of Wren, (6) The Later Stuarts – Cash and Crafts, (7) The London of Hogarth and Fielding, (8) The London of Doctor Johnson, (9) Georgian London – the Age of Elegance, (10) London's River – of river, bridges, docks and trade, (11) The London of Beau Brummel (Regency London), (12) The London of Young Dickens, (13) The Beginning of a New Era – the London of Young Victoria.

⁹⁴ D. Moriarty, 'Alec Clifton-Taylor, (1907–1985)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004). [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30942>, [accessed 15 Jan., 2013].

⁹⁵ BBC, *Six English Towns* (Chichester, Tewkesbury, Richmond, Stamford, Totnes, and Ludlow) First Broadcast 1977; *Six More English Towns* (Warwick, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Saffron Walden, Lewes, Bradford on Avon, and Beverley) First Broadcast 1981; *Another Six English Towns* (Cirencester, Whitby, Bury St. Edmunds, Devizes, Sandwich, and Durham) First Broadcast 1984.

⁹⁶ Alec Clifton-Taylor, *Six English Towns* (London, 1978); *Six More English Towns* (London, 1981); *Another Six English Towns* (London, 1984).

⁹⁷ Joanna Evans, Assistant Editor, Publications (LWT) to Dyos 31/10/1968, DC:1/12/4.

there was a far greater focus on building styles and techniques than on the community or the processes of urbanisation. Yet, although less urban in nature than the LWT programmes, both their broadcasts illustrated the utility of setting history programmes within the urban built environment and their producers clearly recognized there was an audience ready and willing to view their programmes.

Conclusion

Seen within the Foreword to *History Today's* debut issue is an acknowledgement of the social transformation that had occurred in Britain in the living memory of a large number of its citizens. The destruction and carnage of two world wars had led to many changes in Britain's social environment, including the realignment of class, gender relations, and mores, which were matched or encouraged by the technological innovations such as the arrival of mass-communication. Its editors argued that in the face of these changes, the role of history was to provide a constant. As Hobsbawm commented a decade or so later, 'those who are puzzled by the present seek to discover how it came to be what it is, the most confident about tomorrow draw their confidence from yesterday.'⁹⁸ It is arguable therefore that changes occurring in the built environment, regardless of whether or not they were seen as positive or negative developments, would have produced a higher level of interest in its history. The examples detailed above are, it is argued, evidence of this. The effects of development on Britain's cities was not restricted to the abstract realm of academic discussion, and this can be linked to the first issues of *History Today* which contained the articles exploring the forces behind the expansion of a number of British and foreign cities.

Reflected in these town biographies was a recognition that many of the transformations that had occurred in British society, and indeed were still taking place, were marked and could be experienced within the country's urban centres. Fears over changes to the historic urban environment were also reflected in the events leading up to the establishment of the Victorian Society. The early focus of the Society on the architectural remnants of the Victorian era evolved and widened into an interest in the more ephemeral aspects of the urbanising century. A similar transformation is evident in the pages of the *Architectural Review* and the articles by Banham accompanying his

⁹⁸ E. Hobsbawm, 'Growth of an Audience' in *The Times Literary Supplement* (April, 1966), p.283.

Third Programme talks. Rather than considering the biography of towns and cities, the social and cultural developments came to the top of the agenda.

The clearest evidence of urban history's presence outside traditional academia could be found in the activities and subsequent broadcasts, booklets, walks and meetings of Nottingham's Extra-Mural Department. However, while the recognition of a public interest in the city, especially when redevelopment was threatening to reshape its historic half-mile, utilised what retrospectively can be declared 'urban history', at the time, none of the tutors would have described their approach as such. Unlike the printed media or radio, television was still in its relative infancy and there were only a few stations available. The need to meet the needs of a general audience was therefore more central and the definition of urban history is possibly stretched beyond breaking point. Whilst LWT's *Discovering London* was, it is argued, a strong example of urban history's presence, Clifton-Taylor's series of programmes on *Six Towns et al*, is more problematic. It certainly discussed the social and cultural history of the towns but always as an aside and as an introduction to their architectural histories.

Although not discussed above, programmes such as Kenneth Clark's *Civilisation* dealt with urban development and many of the events considered took place within urban environments. Yet, as discussed earlier in this thesis, simply because many historical events took place within urban centres this does not mean their study and analysis can be characterised as urban history. Another area outside the remit of the chapter was the Open University programmes running alongside its modules on the Early Modern city. Although it needs to be acknowledged that they were intended to be standalone entities and therefore accessible for those not taking part in the organised courses, their production originated as part of a higher education course and so they were not considered for that reason.⁹⁹

What is seen in the chosen examples is a clear move towards a focus on social development, its structures, and their reflection in the built environment. This evolution mirrored what was occurring within the academic discipline of History with its move toward a more social history. Many of the examples can be described retrospectively as urban history although they were not noted as such at the time of broadcast or publication. Yet there was a clear interest in towns and cities, their history and future

⁹⁹ See Chapter Seven of this thesis, 'Urban History on the Curriculum'.

environment and historians, whether urban or not, played their part in the engagement between academic History and the wider public.

Chapter Six

The Extent of an Anglo-American Urban History

Historical interest in urban society was not a new phenomenon in Britain. What was innovative in the decades following the end of the Second World War was the assertion by a small cohort of historians that the urban environment was a complex object of historical research in itself, rather than just a convenient locality within which other topics could be sited. The next logical step was the acknowledgement that the urban merited the formation of its own distinct field of historical research within the broader discipline of History. Given that Britain was the first modern nation to cross the Rubicon to a predominantly urban population, it is paradoxical to note that it was not here that post-war historians first attempted to institutionalise the study of the historical urban environment but the United States.

The urban as a concern for historians was not just an Anglo-American post-war phenomenon; there was a comparable upsurge of interest in other countries.¹ The immediate post-war years saw the university sector experiencing the initial phases of academic globalisation,² and as such there was an increase in the levels of international cross-fertilisation, where ideas, approaches, and methodologies traversed many international boundaries through institutional and/or personal networks.³ This was as true for urban history as it was for many other fields and disciplines. Nonetheless, it is the Anglo-American relationship, due in part to a shared language, which produced a

¹ See J. H. Westergaard, 'Scandinavian Urbanism: A Survey of Trends and Themes in Urban Social Research in Sweden, Norway and Denmark', *Acta Sociologica*, 8, (1965), pp. 304-323., I. Hammarstrom, 'Urban History in Scandinavia' *UHYB*, (1978), pp. 46-55., F. Bédarida, 'The Growth of Urban History in France: Some Methodological Trends' in H.J.Dyos, *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), pp. 47-60., D. Roche, 'Urban History in France: Achievements, Tendencies and Objectives', *UHYB* (1980), pp. 12-22., J. Reulecke and G. Huck, 'Urban History Research in Germany: Its Development and Present Condition', *UHYB* (1981), pp. 39-54. H.A. Diederiks and P.H.J. van der Laan, 'Urban History in the Netherlands: A Survey of Recent Writings and Developments', *UHYB* (1976), pp. 19-34., R.A. Butlin, 'The Urban History of Ireland', *UHN*, no. 6, (June, 1966), pp.4-6. W. Forsyth, 'Urban History in Scotland: An Introductory Bibliography with Notes on Sources', *UHN*, no. 8, (June, 1967), pp. 8-13. , G.H. Martin, 'Polish Work on the History of Towns', *UHN*, no. 8, (June, 1967), pp. 14-15., M. W. Swanson, 'Some Remarks on Urban History (paper presented to the Conference on African Urban Research Priorities, Milwaukee, June 1966)', *UHN*, Issue 8, (June, 1967), pp. 15-18., B. Freund, 'Urban History in South Africa', *South African Historical Journal*, 52, no.1, (2005), pp. 19-31., P. J. Corfield, 'A Conversation with Vera Bacskai: Urban History in Hungary', *Journal of Urban History*, (1999), pp. 514-535., Unattributed, 'Urban History in India: A Brief Survey' *UHN*, no. 13, (December 1969), A. Birch, 'Urban History in Australia', *UHN*, no. 5, (December, 1965).

² J.C. Smeby and J. Trondal, 'Globalisation or Europeanism? International Contact among University Staff', *Higher Education*, 49, no.4 (2005), p.450; P. Scott (ed.), *The Globalisation of Higher Education* (Buckingham, 1998).

³ Within Dyos' correspondence, although relationships with American urban historians dominate, there is evidence of interest in the field from Europe, notably the Netherlands and Belgium, Europe's other early urban and industrialised nations.

greater volume of tangible connections. It is this relationship that is the sole focus of this chapter.⁴

It will be shown that the first post-war urban historians in Britain looked to developments in America for inspiration, even though, analogously to urban history's rise in Britain, historians in America had questioned themselves why their profession had taken so long to address the city. The specialist field of urban history in the United States was also considered a relatively late occurrence.⁵ In 1952 McKelvey wrote that not only had American historians tended to avoid the city as a topic, what was 'more surprising than the wide neglect of America's urban growth by the general historian was the dearth of specialized studies.'⁶ Of course, histories of American cities had been the topic of amateur and professionals alike for 150 years,⁷ but this chapter remains focused on developments that took place during the middle decades of the twentieth century. As a group, Abbott labelled these urban historians 'the comparative generation', placing the cut-off date from the previous generation of 'new urban historians' at 1960. This dichotomy is too artificial. The generation of urban historians working during the 1950s through to the late 1970s was much more of a combination of the two. It is this combined generation and the associated upsurge of interest in urban history within the United States that underpins this chapter. With this in mind, the objective of this chapter is to gauge the extent to which the slightly earlier development of Urban History in the United States exercised any influence over the later growth of the field in the United Kingdom.

To evaluate such a subjective notion as *influence* is far from straight-forward. In order to achieve the task here, the development of the American field will first be placed within its broader historical and social context. The demonstration of the degree to which the field developed an explicitly *American* national identity in response to a specific set of *American* concerns over its urban environments will provide a platform

⁴ The second issue of the British *UHN* reflected on the popularity of its initial publication, mostly in Britain and in the United States rather than in Europe. Indeed, Dyos pointedly remarks that the interest on the continent was more limited. *UHN*, Issue 2, May 1964, p.1

⁵ R.C. Wade, 'Agenda for Urban History' in H.J. Bass, *The State of American History* (Chicago, 1970), p. 43., W. Stull Holt, 'Some Consequences of the Urban Movement in American History' *Pacific Historical Review*, 22, no. 4 (1953), pp. 337-351., B. McKelvey, 'Urban History Today', *The American History Review* 57, no.4 (1952), p. 919.

⁶ McKelvey, 'American Urban History Today'.

⁷ C. Abbott, 'Thinking about Cities: the Central Tradition in U.S. Urban History', *Journal of Urban History*, 22, no.6 (1996), p.687-701.

from which to ascertain levels of American influence upon the development of British urban history, and whether any such influence was unilateral or bilateral in nature. The chapter will also consider evidence of any direct relationships at an institutional and at a personal level. Finally, it will consider whether or not levels of influence fluctuated as methodologies and concerns associated with each country's urban environments developed differently.⁸

National Traditions

M. Boone has shown how shifting approaches towards urban development and society at a national level influenced the manner in which scholars, including historians, addressed the urban environment within their research and publication. He argued that attitudes to the urban found within a country's wider social and cultural environment were reflected in academic and research communities and hence also shaped urban historiography. Urban History therefore exhibited a degree of national specificity.⁹ This was recognised in many historiographical accounts of the rise of urban history in the United States.

In his 1977 assessment for the British *UHYB*, Z.L. Miller noted that like all other forms of History, urban history was a phenomenon of the present. His assertions that any study of historical writing on the urban had to take into account not only what historians wrote but also their perceptions of the urban are fundamental to this chapter's analysis. For Miller, any historiography of urban history had to consider when the city 'came to be seen as something more than a commercial, political, or residential community and therefore an appropriate object of study for the student of society.'¹⁰ Similarly, Frisch also reflected on how urban historians were concerned with a history as it related to and informed their own present.¹¹ Clark felt that a country's research community often worked towards a set of national agendas and specific chronological priorities which

⁸ The aim of this entire thesis is to explore the formation of the field of urban history within the United Kingdom and therefore the analysis of events related to the field in America must necessarily be far more circumspect in nature. A full historiography of urban history in the United States would be a standalone project in itself. This chapter will focus on the formative issues and as such will provide a valid platform to explore any bilateral influences.

⁹ M. Boone, 'Cities in Late Medieval Europe: The Promise and the Curse of Modernity', *Urban History*, 39, no. 2, (2012), pp.329-349.

¹⁰ Z.L. Miller, 'Urban History in North America', *Urban History Yearbook*, (1977), p.6.

¹¹ M. Frisch, 'Urban History as an Example of Recent Historiography', *History and Theory*, 18, no. 2 (1979), pp. 350-377 (esp. p.350).

replicated the explicit national urban character.¹² In short, the approach of the American historian towards the urban setting was built upon a set of national traditions and conceptions that radically influenced the way they wrote their urban histories.¹³

This was recognised as influencing the field's post-war development in the United States when R. Wohl and L. Strauss argued that the idea of the urban was formed within a 'persuasive propaganda about its distinctive attributes' through which the city-dweller created a set of associations which were a shorthand for the characterization of the city.¹⁴ The genesis of this argument can be found in the work of the Chicago sociologist Robert E. Park who maintained that the city was more than just its concrete manifestation when, in 1915, he argued for the existence not only of a physical city but also one formed by a 'psychophysical mechanism.'¹⁵ In a later version of the paper Park expanded on the concept arguing that,

The city...is something more than a congeries of individual men and of social conveniences, streets, buildings, electric lights, tramways, and telephones etc.; something more, also, than a mere constellation of institutions and administrative devices – courts, hospitals, police, and civil functionaries of various sorts. The city [was] a state of mind, a body of customs and traditions, and of the organised attitudes and sentiments that inhere in these customs and are transmitted with this tradition.¹⁶

If the city was indeed a state of mind, it would therefore be experienced psychologically as well as physically.¹⁷ The American urban historian was not immune and hence based their observations of the urban through an 'imaginative stare' guided by a specifically American approach to the urban.¹⁸ It influenced the manner in which urban research was funded, written about and published.¹⁹

¹² P. Clark, *European Cities and Towns: 400-2000* (Oxford, 2009), p. 9.

¹³ C.N. Glaab, 'The Historian and the American Urban Tradition', *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 47, no. 1 (1963), pp. 12-25 (esp.p.16).

¹⁴ R. Richard Wohl and L. Strauss, 'Symbolic Representation and the Urban Milieu', *American Journal of Sociology*, 63, no. 5 (1958), pp.523-532 (esp. p.523).

¹⁵ R.E. Park, 'The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the City Environment', *The American Journal of Sociology*, 20, no. 5, (1915), p.577. Georg Simmel also considered the psychological approach to the city in his seminal 1903 article, 'The Metropolis and Mental Life'

¹⁶ R.E. Park, *The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the Urban Environment* in R.E. Park, E.W. Burgess and R.D. McKenzie (eds), *The City* (London, 1925).

¹⁷ Wohl, and Strauss, 'Symbolic Representation and the Urban Milieu', p.523.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.527

¹⁹ Wider concerns over the urban environment led policymakers to make funding available which also shaped research objectives. The Ford and Rockefeller Foundations funded research that included urban historians in an attempt to find answer to the contemporary urban problems experienced by the United States. Fuller details will be provided later in this chapter. See Mark I. Gelfand, *A Nation of Cities: The*

American Anti-Urban Attitudes

The predominant post-war attitude to the urban in the United States was one of negativity.²⁰ From the 1930s onwards the centralised industrial cities that had dominated at the turn of the century began their trajectory towards decentralised metropolitan areas.²¹ With various federal incentives favouring the expansion of the suburb, the subsequent acceleration in the process of decentralisation of inner city areas led to a spiral of decline.²² Social relations in the city were altered with racial divisions replacing class as the main cause of urban conflict.²³ American inner cities suffered from 'white flight' which reinforced racial segregation and helped create the tensions that erupted in the riots of the late 1950s and 1960s. Whilst urban riots were not unique in the twentieth century, the regularity and intensity of those that took place in these decades made them historically exceptional and they helped to shape the approaches to the urban by forming the back-drop of an urban crisis.²⁴ For example, *Newsweek* published a dedicated issue looking at the problems of urban America with the title *The Sick, Sick, Cities*.²⁵ The wider attitude to the urban environment ensured any history of the processes underlying America's rapid urbanization had been put to one side, even when the problems of suburbanization and 'white flight' had been raised. Urban historians in America had ignored urbanization in favour of examining urban problems.²⁶ As a consequence post-war urban history in the United States was often considered as a tool to provide insight into contemporary urban problems.²⁷ This

Federal Government and Urban America, 1933-1965 (New York, 1975), esp. chapter 8, 'The Emergence of an Urban Consciousness: The 1950s', pp. 238-275.

²⁰ Abbott, 'Thinking about Cities: the Central Tradition in United States Urban History' pp. 689-694.

²¹ E. Avila, 'Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Film Noir, Disneyland, and the Cold War (Sub) Urban Imaginary' *Journal of Urban History*, 31, no. 3 (2004), p. 3.

²² M.I. Gelfand, *A Nation of Cities: The Federal Government and Urban America, 1933-1965* (New York, 1975), T. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Post-war Detroit* (Princeton, 1996), S. Welch, 'The Impact of Urban Riots on Urban Expenditures' *American Journal of Political Science* 19, no. 4 (1975), pp. 741-760.

²³ See B. Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920-1965* (Chicago, 2002). T. Sugrue, 'Crabgrass-Roots Politics: Race, Rights, and the Reaction against Liberalism in the Urban North, 1940-1964', *The Journal of American History*, 82, no.2 (1995), pp. 551-578 (esp. pp.552-553).

²⁴ D. Myers and J. Pitkin, 'Demographic Forces and Turning Points in the American City, 1950-2040' *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 626, (2009), pp. 91-111 (esp. p.93). W.J. Collins and R.A. Margo, 'The Economic Aftermath of the 1960s Riots in American Cities: Evidence from Property Values', *The Journal of Economic History*, 67, no. 4 (2007), pp. 849-883.

²⁵ *Newsweek Magazine*, 'Sick, Sick, Cities' no.73, 17/03/1969.

²⁶ E.E. Lampard, 'Urbanization and Social Change; on Broadening the Scope and Relevance of Urban History' in O. Handlin and J. Burchard (eds), *The Historian and the City* (Cambridge, Mass. 1963), p. 230.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.227., M. White and L. White, 'The Intellectual vs. the American City', *Daedalus*, 90, no. 1, (1961), pp. 166-179., K.E. Boulding 'The Death of the City: A Frightened Look at Postcivilization' in

ensured that historians concentrated on the difficulties experienced by cities when the 'sudden and apparently unexpected appearance of a whole range of dangerous and intractable problems in cities led to panic in both scholarly analysis and public policy' rather than their positive attributes.²⁸ Much of the historical research of the city was therefore based on the assumption that it represented 'an abnormality in society' and a 'deviation from a normal order of life.'²⁹

The emergence of urban history in the United States can therefore be placed within the wider approach to the urban setting that occurred in the post-war period which was predominantly negative. Yet, problems associated with the consequences of urbanization ensured that there was a place for urban historians in the attempts to counter the so-called urban crisis: federal authorities, when looking for answers, 'corralled' historians to give a broader picture.³⁰ This problem orientated approach to urban history was one of the defining differences between the development of the field in the United States and in the United Kingdom; indeed, Brogan suggested, somewhat unfairly, that there was an 'astonishing refusal in Britain, not only to think about urban problems, but to admit that they really exist.'³¹ Whether wholly accurate or not, this perception alone would have ensured that many of the approaches adopted in the United States would not have carried across to the United Kingdom.³²

Relationships

It was within this negative and overtly problem orientated milieu that an American Urban History Group (UHG-US)³³ emerged in 1953. Rochester's city historian Blake

Handlin and Burchard, *The Historian and the City*, (Cambridge, MA., 1963), pp. 133-145., A.F. Davis, 'The American Historian vs The City' part I, *Social Studies*, 56, no. 33 (1965), pp. 91-96., E.E. Lampard, 'The Dimensions of Urban History: A Footnote to the "Urban Crisis" *Pacific Historical Review*, 39, no.3 (1970), pp. 261-278., E.E. Lampard, 'Historians and the Study of Urbanization', *The American Historical Review*, 67. No. 1, (Oct., 1961), pp. 49-61.

²⁸ Wade, 'An Agenda for Urban History', pp.43-48.

²⁹ Glaab, 'The Historian and the American Urban Tradition', p.15.

³⁰ Wade, 'An Agenda for Urban History', p. 47.

³¹ D.W. Brogan 'Implications of Modern City Growth' in Handlin and Burchard (eds), *The Historian and the City*, p. 161.

³² As discussed in previous chapters, the wider cultural milieu in which British Urban History emerged was one dominated more by concerns of heritage and ideas of national standing.

³³ To differentiate between the UHG in the US and the UK the following acronyms have been adopted in this chapter: UHG-US in the United States and simply the UHG in the United Kingdom. The establishment of the UHG-US will be considered below as part of a wider examination of the social and cultural environment within which the urban came to be deemed worthy of study.

McKelvey³⁴ had been surveying the approaches taken by others to the writing of town histories.³⁵ Wanting to create a library of similar works, McKelvey had been considering organizing a meeting of city historians when he was asked by the American Historical Association (AHA) to write a paper on the state of urban history in the United States.³⁶ McKelvey received 'favourable' feedback following the publication of his paper,³⁷ in particular from Bayrd Still and Richard C. Wade.³⁸ McKelvey and Still corresponded and agreed to arrange a meeting at an up-coming conference of the American Historical Association, out of which came agreement to form an UHG-US and to issue a *Newsletter*. Comparable to the later incarnation in the United Kingdom, it was hoped that scholars would begin to send in details of their activities and that a yearly meeting could be arranged.³⁹ Unlike its British counterpart however, it was not immediately successful. Few historians responded to the call to provide details of their research projects and it soon became a problem to fill the *Newsletter*. By the second meeting, to counter this lack of response, a questionnaire was produced asking the twenty-five attending to provide details of their on-going research. By the second year, a further twenty had returned details and it was based on these returns that the UHG-US began to hold its yearly gatherings.⁴⁰ Important as the UHG-US was, it was not a central to the field's development there as its counterpart was for the United Kingdom due to the geographical separation of various institutions leading to very particular approaches. However, the American group's *Newsletter* did prove influential in the United Kingdom.

³⁴ Out of a concern that service records of American servicemen in the First World War should be kept, New York State passed a law requiring towns to appoint a historian. They were not only to keep war records but write and lecture on the town's history. Rochester NY, was one of the few that not only appointed a historian but also made it a salaried position. Blake McKelvey (1903-1998) was the second such historian.

³⁵ McKelvey specifically mentions Constance McLaughlin Green, *Holyoke, Massachusetts: A Case History of the Industrial Revolution in America* (New Haven, Conn, 1939) and G. M. Capers, *The Biography of a River Town: Memphis, Its Heroic Age* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1939).

³⁶ Stave, *The Making of Urban History*, p.44.

³⁷ McKelvey, 'American Urban History Today'.

³⁸ B. Still, (1906-1992), 1947-1982 Professor of History at NYU. Richard C. Wade (1921-2008) whose works included *The Urban Frontier: The Rise of Western Cities 1790-1830* (Cambridge, Mass, 1959); *Slavery in the Cities: The South, 1820-1860* (New York, 1964).

³⁹ B.M. Stave, 'A Conversation with Blake McKelvey' in B. Stave, *The Making of Urban History*, p.49.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*.

US and UK *Urban History Newsletters*

Transnational knowledge transmission occurs at the formal and informal level.⁴¹ This was certainly the case for urban history. As a formal means of introduction, the American *Newsletter* provided an efficient conduit. Although it was first published in 1953, according to an interview published shortly after his death, Dyos suggested that he knew nothing of its existence at the time when he was thinking of organising a similar group in Britain.⁴² Yet it is clear that by the second edition of the British *Newsletter* any such ignorance had been addressed. The May 1964 issue acknowledged that their American colleagues had been arranging conferences and circulating *Newsletters* for 'some years'.⁴³ Their activities were an 'inspiration for the inauguration' of the UHG in Britain, and like the British version, the American *Newsletter* was interested in bibliographies and records of on-going research.⁴⁴ When, in February 1963, Sam Bass Warner wrote to Dyos to congratulate him on the publication of his *Victorian Suburb*,⁴⁵ Dyos confirmed that just a few weeks previously he had been in touch with the UHG-US in Madison, and was now receiving their *Newsletters*. He informed Warner that he was 'trying to arrange something similar in this country.'⁴⁶ The American *UHN-US* was therefore 'happily acknowledged' as part of the 'parentage' and was seen as complementary to the emergence of the British version.⁴⁷

This was reinforced in 1968 when Dyos confirmed that that 'we [UHG] were ourselves half-derived from the long-established *UHN-US* in the United States.'⁴⁸ The British *Newsletter* also contained the details of activities within American urban history; in particular there were regular reports on the contents of the latest American *Newsletter*.⁴⁹ Conference reports were also a regular occurrence.⁵⁰ And, although it was always

⁴¹ J.C. Smeby and J. Trondal, 'Globalisation or Europeanism? International Contact among University Staff', *Higher Education* 49, no. 4 (2005), p. 450; A. R. Welch, 'The Peripatetic Professor: The Internationalisation of the Academic Profession', *Higher Education*, 34, no.3 (1997), pp. 323-345.

⁴² B.M. Stave, 'A Conversation with H.J. Dyos: Urban History in Great Britain', *Journal of Urban History*, 5, no.4, (1979), pp. 481-482.

⁴³ *UHN*, no. 2 (May 1964), p.2

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ H.J. Dyos, *Victorian Suburb: A Study of the Growth of Camberwell* (Leicester, 1966).

⁴⁶ Letter between Dyos and Warner dated 26/2/1963. DC: 1/23/2

⁴⁷ *UHN*, no. 4 (June 1965).

⁴⁸ *UHN*, no. 10 (December 1968), p.2

⁴⁹ See numbers 3 (December 1964), 4 (June 1965), 8 (June 1967), and 15 (Spring 1971)

⁵⁰ The Nineteenth Century City – Yale University 29-30 November 1968, a review by Lynn Lees in *UHN*, no 12 (July, 1969), p. 6.

regretted that the space available was never enough to provide full details of American conferences, it appears that where Dyos had attended personally, space was always found.⁵¹ Conversely, the role of the British *Newsletter* was equally important in fostering Anglo-American connections. Dyos never missed an opportunity to promote the publication within any communication he entered into, no matter how unrelated. There are numerous examples of scholars from the United Kingdom, continental Europe, and the United States being introduced to the 'modest' publication whenever they contacted Dyos.

Dyos was certainly aware of the importance of the *Newsletter* as a tool to foster Anglo-American relationships, as discussed in a previous chapter. By December 1965, out of a total of 147 subscribers, although 80 per cent came from individuals and institutions within the United Kingdom, the next largest grouping was from the United States.⁵² The impetus to address the US as well as the UK market is evident when Dyos not only surveyed the views of his British colleagues about the idea of transforming the *Newsletter* into something more substantial,⁵³ but also wrote to Charles N. Glaab⁵⁴ and Eric E. Lampard.⁵⁵ At least one American historian wrote to Dyos unprompted, arguing that the British *UHN* should remain in its more informal state, and that it was

a valuable tool but also reveals the personalities and individual choices of scholars in the field, an absolutely irreplaceable source of information for those of us abroad who might hope to work among you some day.⁵⁶

No one from mainland Europe was approached for an opinion. This reflected the view that the publication of the proposed new *UHYB* could only be justified if it also considered developments outside of the United Kingdom, in particular looking to North America.

Dyos' Personal American Connections

Dyos' connection with Sam Bass Warner led to one of the more influential relationships between the English urban historian and an American counterpart. In 1963, Warner

⁵¹ Review of conference *Victorian Cities*, University of Indiana, Bloomington. March 1967 in *UHN*, no. (4 June 1965).

⁵² See previous thesis chapter 'The Road to Leicester, 1966'.

⁵³ At this point, subscribers had reached over 300 and the production of the *Newsletter* in such numbers made home production untenable.

⁵⁴ See DC: 1/7/2

⁵⁵ See DC: 112/1

⁵⁶ P. Viles, Assistant Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania. Letter 01/10/1968 DC: 1/22/1.

wrote to Dyos suggesting the English born historian, but then an American citizen, Eric E. Lampard was the ‘best economic historian writing on cities in the US at the time.’⁵⁷ Lampard had, like Dyos, attended the London School of Economics but there is no evidence of the two of them interacting.⁵⁸ Warner recommended Lampard’s ‘Urbanization and Social Change; on broadening the Scope and Relevance of Urban History’ paper delivered to a 1961 Harvard conference.⁵⁹ But it was not until Lampard wrote to Dyos in 1965 requesting a subscription to the *UHN*,⁶⁰ that Dyos suggested that the second volume of his *Victorian Suburb* on the social and political structures in the London suburb was ‘guided not a little’ by Lampard’s own ‘excellent observations on the primary objectives of urban history.’⁶¹ The strength of Dyos’ admiration for Lampard can be seen in a reference he wrote for the National Endowment for the Humanities (N.E.H.) in the United States. Lampard wanted to initiate a series of summer seminars looking at the transformation of the United States from a rural to an urban nation and the N.E.H. wanted to know if he was sufficiently qualified. Dyos responded,

Urban history was one of the fastest growing fields of historical scholarship both in the UK and the US...it was one of the most urgently needed field of study among advanced societies.’ [Lampard] was and remains the authentic pioneer in the United States in the conceptualisation and empirical justification of urbanisation as a social process central to economic, technological, political and cultural change...his reputation [was] second to none.⁶²

The relationship with Lampard was perhaps the most important connection for Dyos but he also visited North America on a number of occasions. The most productive took place in 1974 when he gave papers and conducted seminars at a number of North American universities during which he arranged a large number of meetings with fellow urban scholars.⁶³ One scholar present at a paper Dyos gave at Harvard remembered how

⁵⁷ Letter Warner to Dyos 01/03/1963 DC: 1/23/2.

⁵⁸ Lampard first attended the L.S.E. before the start of the Second World War. At the declaration of war with Germany, the School temporarily relocated to Cambridge. He remarked that upon returning to London there was a large cohort of ex-servicemen: Dyos was one of this cohort. See Bruce Stave’s ‘Conversation with E.E. Lampard, *Journal of Urban History*, 1, no.4 (1975), pp.440-472.

⁵⁹ E.E. Lampard, ‘Urbanization and Social Change; on Broadening the Scope and Relevance of Urban History’ in Oscar Handlin, John Burchard (eds), *The Historian and the City* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), pp.225-247.

⁶⁰ Letter dated 20/07/1967 DC: 1/12/1.

⁶¹ Letter dated 05/08/1965 DC: 1/12/1

⁶² Letter dated 31/07/1978 DC: 1/12/1

⁶³ S. Fraser, British Columbia, Professors I. Watt (Stanford), J. Altholz and P. Raup (Minnesota), J. Lemon, R.J. Helmstadler, J.M. Careless, E. Shorter, J. Jacobs (Toronto), M. Katz (York), D. Gagan

there were queues to attend his seminars and that he was seen as something of a personality.⁶⁴ But his meeting with Jane Jacobs was less memorable than he might have wished for with Jacobs, famously uninterested in academics, wanting only to discuss her latest crop of organic tomatoes and not wishing to delve into the depths of urban issues.⁶⁵ Dyos was therefore not always successful in cultivating North American contacts. Upon the advice of Stephen Thernstrom, Dyos wrote to Seymour Mandelbaum hoping to compare their work on Census returns, suggesting that his work was closely tied in with what Thernstrom was doing.⁶⁶ Over a month later Dyos wrote again since he had not received a reply, asking Mandelbaum if he would be interested in receiving the *Newsletter*, 'a modest journal'⁶⁷ but he never received a reply. Interestingly, in 1985, Mandelbaum maintained he was asked to write a review of Dyos' work because he was an 'outsider who would see Dyos and British urban history at a critical distance, undiminished by personal acquaintance, obligation or (I must add) deep familiarity.'⁶⁸

Conferences

Another conduit was, as it is today, attendance at conferences. As discussed in an earlier chapter, the Leicester conference (1966), widely acknowledged as putting the field on the academic map in Britain, was deemed international through the presence of Schnore, Köllmann, and Bédarida (although at the time Bédarida was based in Britain as the director of *Maison Française* in Oxford). However, it was dominated by scholars from Britain, a point raised with some humour by the American sociologist Leo Schnore, who upon his arrival at the conference venue exclaimed that the gathering could now be deemed international.⁶⁹ But, as Dyos noted in 1968, the published papers from the conference had yet to be noticed in America and using his connection to Lampard he asked the American based historian to write a review which he hoped would raise the conference's profile.⁷⁰ While the conference was deemed important in the UK, there was no mention of it as influencing the development of American urban

(McMaster), G. Stelter (Guelph), J. Bater (Waterloo), C. Griffen and A.S. Wohl (Vasser), J. Ellis (Holyoke), E. Chinoy (Smith).

Oscar and Mary Handlin, J. Clive, D. Aron. D. Landes, A. Gerschenkron, K. Andrews, S. Thernstrom (Harvard), S. Bass Warner Jr. (Boston), and E. Lampard (SUNY Stony Brook).⁶³

⁶⁴ Ann Katherine Isaacs during conversation with G. W. Davies (30/08/2012).

⁶⁵ Authors email communication with Gilbert Stelter with whom Dyos resided whilst visiting Guelph

⁶⁶ Letter Dyos to Mandelbaum, dated 07/03/1966, DC: 1/13/3.

⁶⁷ Letter Dyos to Mandelbaum dated 22/04/1966, DC: 1/13/3.

⁶⁸ S.J. Mandelbaum, 'H.J. Dyos and British Urban History' *Economic History Review*, 38, no.3 (1985), pp. 437-447.

⁶⁹ Letter Dyos to Warner 15/10/1966, DC: 1/23/2

⁷⁰ Letter dated 19/08/1968, DC: 1/12/1

history. A survey of Stave's 'Conversations' with urban historians on both sides of the Atlantic illustrates this quite clearly.⁷¹ It is only Dyos and Anthony Sutcliffe who raise the importance of the gathering whereas none of the Americans make mention of it. This suggests the conference maintained its low profile in the United States, despite Dyos' best efforts. Wade did however quote from Dyos' opening paper at the British conference in his similarly named essay 'Agenda for Urban History'⁷² noting that the neglect of the city was not just characteristic of American historians.⁷³

There were a number of important conferences during the earlier development of the field in the United States that helped shape urban history. For example, the Yale conference (1968) on the nineteenth-century industrial city that introduced 'new urban history'⁷⁴ and the 1970 Wisconsin conference *The New Urban History: Quantitative Explorations* (1970)⁷⁵ can all be cited as milestones. British involvement in these was the exception rather than the rule. Quite simply there were too few British historians interested enough in the urban at this time to make attending worth the cost and effort; moreover, the cost of transatlantic flights at this time would have proved a barrier to most scholars, especially as most of the above mentioned conferences lasted no longer than a few days. The conference held at Harvard (1968) under the auspices of the *Joint Center for Urban Studies* was one such exception. Originally titled 'The City in History', its papers were published as *The Historian and the City*.⁷⁶ Two British delegates attended, neither of whom could be described as urban historians: one was there more for his interest in American history in general rather than any particular focus on the city, but the second, Sir John Summerson, directed his paper at clarifying the role of the historian in the city, especially those interested in its fabric. For Summerson, primarily an architectural historian, the city was a 'physical' and 'visible' entity and he argued that up to this point [1961] the history of the fabric of the city had

⁷¹ Stave, *The Making of Urban History*.

⁷² H.J. Dyos, 'Agenda for Urban History' in H.J. Dyos (ed.) *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), pp.1-42.

⁷³ Wade, 'An Agenda for Urban History', p.43.

⁷⁴ C. Abbott, 'Retrospection and Research: Reflections on the "Modes of Inquiry"', *The Urban History Newsletter*, (American) no. 5 (March, 1991), pp.1-2.; S. Thernstrom and R. Sennett (eds), *Nineteenth-Century Cities: Essays in the New Urban History* (New Haven, 1969).

⁷⁵ L.F. Schnore and E.E. Lampard (eds), *The New Urban History: Quantitative Explorations by American Historians* (Princeton, N.J., 1975).

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

not yet been written.⁷⁷ For the historian to understand the city, he argued, much as Dyos did five years later,⁷⁸ the urban historian needed to access the knowledge of the political, economic, industrial, and social historians. Historians had to be able to utilise topographical material: maps, prints, drawings, photographs, and textual descriptions of buildings, especially of those that had been lost. Indeed, for Summerson, History of Art was equally important to the study of Victorian slums as it was for the Tuscan Covent Garden.⁷⁹ He wanted architectural historians to explore not only facades and write about architectural styles but to study the city as a 'total artefact', one including 'marble, bricks and mortar, steel and concrete, tarmac and rubble, metal conduits and rails.'⁸⁰

This approach can be found in Dyos' *Victorian Suburb*⁸¹ and Sam Bass Warner's *Streetcar Suburbs*,⁸² two monographs published within a year of each other and which would have been at the final stages of preparation when Summerson made his Harvard argument. As already noted above, Warner wrote to congratulate Dyos on his *Victorian Suburb* noting the similarity of approach, each related the creation of the more abstract social structures found in urban settlements to the layout of the built urban environment and subsequent the spread of new transport technologies. Warner argued that technological advances in the nineteenth-century, in particular transport technologies, produced a standard type of urban and suburban development, be that in Boston, Massachusetts or Camberwell in London.⁸³ Although both texts emerged independently of each other and without either author being aware of the others work, it is further evidence of similar developments in the field on both sides of the Atlantic, however independently.

The Chicago School

The role of the Chicago School of Sociology cannot be underestimated in the development of the field in the United States, in particular, the sociologist Robert E. Park's contribution encapsulated in his 1925 paper 'The City: Suggestions for the

⁷⁷ Sir J. Summerson, 'Urban Forms' in Handlin, *The Historian and the City* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), p.165

⁷⁸ See Dyos, Agenda for Urban Historians' in H.J. Dyos, (ed.), *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), pp.1-46.

⁷⁹ Summerson, 'Urban Forms' p.171.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p.166. Summerson's immensely successful work *Georgian London* would be published the following year.

⁸¹ H.J. Dyos, *Victorian Suburb: a Study of the Growth of Camberwell* (Leicester, 1961).

⁸² S. Bass Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs: the Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962); B.M. Stave, 'A Conversation with H.J. Dyos', p. 477.

⁸³ Letter Warner to Dyos 26/02/1963, DC: 1/23/2.

Investigations of Human Behaviour in the City Environment'.⁸⁴ Aimed at fellow sociologists, Park used his paper to suggest a number of approaches and questions that could be addressed in the urban environment that were equally valid for the urban historian, arguing that the city was not just a conglomeration of people and social arrangements.⁸⁵ Park wrote that it was imperative to study the sentiments, traditions, and the history of neighbourhoods because it was here that you would find the processes that created urban communities out of a simple geographical location.⁸⁶ However, much of the Chicago School's focus was associated in the first instance with the battle to wipe out the slum and to study human behaviour and social organisation for which the city provided a perfect laboratory. While the adoption of social scientific methodologies in British urban history did occur, as Briggs mentioned, the methodologies of the Chicago School were not unproblematic; its theories were useful but they could not just be adopted wholeheartedly, they needed to be adapted to the study of British cities in the correct historical context.⁸⁷

New Approaches and a New Urban History

The closer association of urban history in America with contemporary urban problems is manifest in the call for a more concrete association between the field and the economic, social, political and technical studies of contemporary urbanism.⁸⁸ The need to produce a collaborative theory of urbanisation implied by such disparate approaches as urban sociology, urban ecology, and urban geography was held back due to a lack of 'systematic comparative analyses' with most studies being confined to single cities.⁸⁹ The lack of comparative urban research was not due to a lack of foresight but due to the absence of comparable or standardised information, not just from one city to another but between countries. As urban historians had noted, data on cities and urban areas was available but it suffered from a number of serious defects; one of the most important was the lack of comparability from one country to another. Defining the limits of what

⁸⁴ R.E. Park, 'The City: Suggestion for the Investigations of Human Behaviour in the City Environment', *The American Journal of Sociology*, 20, no.5 (1925), p. 579.

⁸⁵ Park used a definition of institution gleaned from William Graham Sumner, *Summer Folkways: a Study of the Sociological Importance of Usages, Manners, Customs, Mores, and Morals* (Boston, 1906), p. 56.

⁸⁶ Park, 'The City: Suggestion for the Investigations of Human Behavior in the City Environment', p. 579.

⁸⁷ A. Briggs, *Victorian Cities* (London, 1963), pp. 55-56.

⁸⁸ F. Gutheim and A.E. Shidler, 'The Building Blocks of Urban History' in O. Handlin and J. Burchard (eds), *The Historian and the City* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), pp. 248-250.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

the urban was as an object of research was therefore as crucial here as it was in Britain, but again, America was at the forefront of developments.

One example, although not historical in context, was the attempt to define the process of urbanisation by the Ford Foundation's funded International Urban Research (IUR) group in 1956. Based at the University of California's Berkeley campus they were funded for a five year research programme on 'cities and urbanization throughout the world' and looked to analyse existing data in order to provide a set of internationally comparable commonalities.⁹⁰ The IUR group attempted to establish a standardized set of recognised points of comparison to allow the delimitation of urban populations. The study was not a reworking of existing data but an analysis of data for a purpose for which it was not originally intended.⁹¹ The IUR's project certainly influenced Kingsley Davis⁹² but there is no evidence that it was directly referenced by urban historians; however, it is arguable that as an illustration of the wider focus on the urban environment in the post-war period, it is worthy of note.

The IUR argued that as cities developed to cope with locally and nationally specific conditions and therefore at different speeds making comparative analysis was extremely complex. Yet, the rise of quantification offered hope and allowed these previously ignored areas of urbanisation to be explored; moreover, the greater the number of cities, regions, and countries that published their data, the easier it would become to compare the forces driving urbanisation. Quantification in urban history was therefore seen as one of the ways in which the field could be pushed ahead but also as a force in pushing authorities to produce and release data.⁹³ Quantification was also one of the features in the development of urban history on both sides of the Atlantic that appears to show an appreciable level of cross-border influence.

In the United States, it was the work of Stephen Thernstrom that can be seen as the turning point. His 1964 work *Poverty and Progress: Social Mobility in a Nineteenth-Century City* was not only limited to the study of the single community of Newburyport,⁹⁴ but also rejected the more traditional subjective analysis of the

⁹⁰ The University of California, *The World's Metropolitan Areas* (Berkeley, 1959).

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Kingsley Davis, (1908-1997) American sociologist and demographer.

⁹³ Ibid., p.1.

⁹⁴ Newburyport, Essex County, Mass., 35 miles northeast of Boston. Est. 1635.

opportunities for mobility, favoured in American historiography, for the quantitative analysis of Census data.⁹⁵ As in much of American urban history at this time, Thernstrom linked his research to the broader interest in social issues, suggesting that his findings would provide his contemporaries with a framework for those working on the question of whether America had remained a land of opportunity. Thernstrom argued that social scientists had tended to ignore the problem in any particular kind of historical depth, believing there had been a systemic ignorance of the very lowest echelons of nineteenth-century urban society.⁹⁶

The rise of quantification is signalled in the United States through the addition of the adjective 'new', as seen in 'New Urban History', a term coined by Thernstrom in the Preface of his *Nineteenth-Century Cities*.⁹⁷ Its emergence in Britain was more controversial, as seen in the response of the delegates at the 1966 Leicester conference *The Study of Urban History* to a paper by Armstrong on the computer analysis of Census Enumerators returns.⁹⁸ Dyos looked to the unrevised reprinting of Adna Weber's statistically complex text in 1963⁹⁹ as 'a disturbing and challenging event', and as a call to arms for urban historians.¹⁰⁰ Looking to Thernstrom and Warner for advice¹⁰¹ and noting nothing similar had emerged in Britain. Dyos suggested that his second volume building on *Victorian Suburb* was to contain findings based on Census data manipulated on a mainframe Atlas Computer.¹⁰² In letter to a former student, Dyos advised that she

⁹⁵ S. Thernstrom, *Poverty and Progress: Social Mobility in the Nineteenth Century City* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964)

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.1-2.

⁹⁷ S. Thernstrom and R. Sennett, *Nineteenth-Century Cities: Essays in the New Urban History* (London, 1969).

⁹⁸ See 'The First Conference: Leicester 1966'.

⁹⁹ A. Weber, *The Growth of Cities in the Nineteenth Century: a Study of Statistics* (1899), p. 1. See also A. Weber, 'The Significance of Recent City Growth: The Era of Small Industrial Centres', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 23 (1904), pp. 29-42.

¹⁰⁰ H.J. Dyos, 'The Growth of Cities in the Nineteenth Century: A Review of Some Recent Writing', *Victorian Studies*, 9, no. 3 (1966), p.225. Whether Dyos was referring to the complex arithmetic or taking note that scholars needed to refer to a text published at the end of the nineteenth century is open to question, but clearly he saw its republication as a call to arms and evidence of the need to reinvigorate the field.

¹⁰¹ Correspondence DC: 1/20/2 and DC: 1/23/2 respectively.

¹⁰² Dyos was using the Atlas Computer Laboratory at Chilton in Berkshire. Set up in 1961 and administered by the then Science Research Council within the Department of Education and Science. It provided computer services to all researchers in British universities free of charge and used predominantly science based projects such as the Rutherford High Energy Laboratory, but it was also offered available to researchers in the humanities and social sciences.

may be somewhat entertained to know that I too, have been led inexorably towards a computer. In my case it is the big Atlas computer at the Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Harwell, and I have been made to go in that direction because the University computer is too small to process the data I am taking from the census returns for the nineteenth century.¹⁰³

However, it appears that just as the second and third volumes never materialised, his work with the Atlas was never fully completed. At the start of 1970 the administrator of the computer centre chased Dyos and wondered if his work had been completed; it had not.¹⁰⁴ Yet, in an earlier joint paper given at the 1966 conference with A.B.M. Baker, Dyos proposed that using a 'machine' to organise historical information would provide a means to discern the meaning of data more easily. Urban history, they argued,

with its ton upon ton of deeds, directories, vestry minutes, rate books, school log-books, election data, surveyors' returns, medical officers' reports, census books and the like there seems to be a special need for more highly developed methods of classifying, counting, and cross-tabulating the more or less standardised entries which they contain. The electronic computer is a tool that might have been designed for this purpose.¹⁰⁵

However, for Dyos, the transformation of raw data into more manageable forms was just the beginning and could not be seen as the end of the research process. This ambiguous attitude towards quantification also existed in the United States where not all urban historians considered it the panacea to all problems of historical analysis. Warner wrote to Dyos of his similar concerns over how to combine his studies on the impact of urbanization in the twentieth-century through the analysis of computerised Census data. He suggested his main problem was that he was unable to combine quantification and oral history.¹⁰⁶ Whilst this would be a problem for many years to come, it is clear that Warner still saw a place for computer generated findings in more traditional areas of economic history.

In the United Kingdom, the approach gained a foothold, not in urban history but in historical demography.¹⁰⁷ This approach, as Thernstrom had noted in the United States, appeared particularly suited to the study of the city and Census data; however, in the United Kingdom, scholars had to negotiate the rule that prevented full access to Census

¹⁰³ Letter Dyos to V. Hall dated 29/04/1966, DC: 1/10/2.

¹⁰⁴ Letter from the Atlas administrator to Dyos dated 21/01/1970 DC: 1/12/1.

¹⁰⁵ H.J. Dyos and A.B.M. Baker, 'The Possibilities of Computerising Census Data' H.J. Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), p.88.

¹⁰⁶ Letters dated 07/01/74 DC: 1/23/2

¹⁰⁷ P. Laslett, *The World We Have Lost* (London, 1965).

returns for a century after they were recorded.¹⁰⁸ In October 1966, as part of his preparation for the second and third volumes of his Camberwell study, Dyos entered into a correspondence with Somerset House regarding access to records between 1871 and 1901, which produced an important breakthrough. It was agreed the records would be copied to microfilm but have the names blocked out to ensure confidentiality was maintained.¹⁰⁹ Whilst this would have provided Dyos with the ability to produce a general snapshot, unlike Thernstrom and others in the United States, it prevented analysis of specific cases of mobility by ensuring he would be unable to follow individuals: a point noted by Armstrong in his paper to the 1966 Leicester conference.¹¹⁰

Dyos maintained an intermittent correspondence with Thernstrom, but like many British historians across the discipline, Dyos came to see quantification as leading to the removal of the human factor, producing a flat history. This view was mirrored by Warner in a letter congratulating Dyos on the award of his Chair and to thank him for the copy of his inaugural lecture. Stating that he enjoyed the lecture, Warner agreed that New Urban History was not actually urban history because its followers did not care about cities or the urban dimension - a point reinforced by Thernstrom who he noted had decided to call himself 'some sort of historian of populations' rather than an urban historian.¹¹¹ Whilst acknowledging that quantification gave a greater precision to historical analysis, they also argued that it could not formulate any new hypothesis.

Dyos' other main American contact appeared more ambivalent, with Lampard arguing in a 1975 essay¹¹² that quantification was a 'hypothetical deductive system' used by historical accountants that required a theoretical anchor if it was to produce meaningful results for the historian, but he also felt its use would continue to grow and in doing so it would be central to the future development of urban history. However, to do so, Lampard recognised that as the primary readership for History was the lay public who were interested in straight-forward written analysis, pure quantification would have the

¹⁰⁸ Lord Chancellor's Instrument No. 12. Section 5 (1) 1966 under the Public Records Act 1958.

¹⁰⁹ Correspondence 22/08/1965 - 11/08/1966 DC: 5/4f.

¹¹⁰ W.A. Armstrong, 'The Interpretation of the Census Enumerators' Books for Victorian Towns' in H.J. Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), p. 82.

¹¹¹ Letter Warner to Dyos dated 7/1/74, DC: 1/23/2.

¹¹² E.E. Lampard, 'Two Cheers for Quantitative History: An Agnostic Forward' in Leo F. Schnore (ed.), *The New Urban History: Quantitative Explorations by American Historians* (Stanford, 1975), pp. 12-48.

effect of distancing the historian from this audience, History therefore 'was best served by serving its readers.'¹¹³

Defining Urban History

A further common theme running through the development of urban history on both sides of the Atlantic was the constant attempt to define the field. Just as there was in the United Kingdom, in America, debates over disciplinary boundaries were constantly taking place.¹¹⁴ Handlin noted the attempts at definition evolved out of the problems of nomenclature, which in turn were a reflection of indeterminate disciplinary limits. He saw urban historians were therefore reaching for some 'vague concept of the metropolis to describe the release of urban potential for its recognised ambit.'¹¹⁵ It was argued that there was a need for a framework to overcome the prevalent dissatisfaction with the writing of urban history and to clarify its scope and relevance:¹¹⁶ American urban history was 'on the one hand wide and vague, and on the other specific and parochial.'¹¹⁷ Again, this mirrors the issues that surrounded the development of the field in Britain; indeed, Dyos noted in an article aimed at an American readership that the growth of any field raised questions over its 'definition, scope, and method', especially in the 'ragged borderlands' between history and the social sciences.¹¹⁸ American urban history, more than its British counterpart because of its greater association with the task of finding solutions to the urban crisis, found a home in these 'ragged borderlands'.¹¹⁹

Conclusion

The question at the beginning of this chapter was whether developments in urban history across the Atlantic in the United States had any bearing on the formation of the field in the United Kingdom. It was noted that discovering levels of influence was not straightforward. Occasionally, such as Dyos' correspondence with Eric Lampard, it appeared overt; however, this was the exception rather than the rule, and the direction of

¹¹³ E.E. Lampard, 'Two Cheers for Quantitative History: An Agnostic Forward' pp. 47-48. See also E.J. Hobsbawm, 'Growth of an Audience' *Times Literary Supplement* (7 April 1966), pp. 283-287.

¹¹⁴ P.M. Hauser, 'Urbanization: An Overview' in P.M. Hauser and L.F. Schnore (eds), *The Study of Urbanization* (London, 1965), p. 8.

¹¹⁵ O. Handlin, 'The Modern City as a Field of Historical Study' in Oscar Handlin and John Burchard (eds), *The Historian and the City* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), p.1.

¹¹⁶ Lampard, 'Urbanization and Social Change: Broadening the Scope and Relevance of Urban History', p.225.

¹¹⁷ C. Tunnard, 'The Customary and Characteristic: A Note on the Pursuit of Planning History' in O. Handlin and J. Burchard (eds), *The City and the Historian* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), p. 217.

¹¹⁸ Dyos article for *Anglo-American Associates Newsletter*, DC: 1/5/2.

¹¹⁹ Handlin, *The Historian and the City* p.vi.

influence were mostly much more subtle. To achieve the aim of this chapter, rather than looking for the more intangible aspects of Anglo-American influence, it has concentrated on the channels of influence, both on the institutional and personal level.

The positioning of American urban history in its social and historical context showed how the field grew in response to very specific American concerns, much as the British version related to distinctly British ones. It is argued that this alone would have guaranteed that certain approaches adopted by American urban historians were not suitable for or suited to their British counterparts, at least without some form of adaption. In particular, the manner in which urban history was associated with contemporary urban problems, or the urban crisis, ensured urban history in America developed a distinctly American identity, one quite dissimilar to the field in Britain. The role of the Chicago School, whilst clearly canonical, was also seen by early urban historians in Britain as needing adaption if its methodologies were to be seen as useful to those studying the historic rather than the contemporary urban environment.

Unlike in Britain, where Dyos and his UHG tended to dominate developments, and where a dedicated centre with the establishment of the Centre for Urban History was established in 1985, in the United States, the group formed by McKelvey and Still in 1953 was just one point of contact. A survey of many historiographical articles, written at the time, as well as retrospectively, give no or very little space to the American Group, apart from the 'Conversations' that Stave undertook when the group loomed large in the memories of those directly involved with its formation.¹²⁰ Moreover, for the American urban historian, the fears over their nation's urban future provided an impetus and ensured funding was available. Federal policy makers wanted to address what they saw as the increasingly problematic urban areas which ensured money from federal government flowed to various institutes tasked with placing these problems within a broader historical framework. Many of the factors driving the development of the field in America were specifically American in nature. America's vast land mass and the westward migration were clearly local phenomena unseen in Britain. Differences between each country's recent histories were also paramount in restricting the level of influence. For example, America had not been subjected to the bombing raids experienced by British urban centres during the Second World War which in Britain had

¹²⁰ See the 'Conversations of McKelvey, Still, and Glaab in Stave's *The Making of Urban History*.

led to an awareness of the fragility of its urban historical infrastructures. In America, any urban nostalgia tended to focus on the pioneers and the towns they created that forged a civic identity.¹²¹

Yet there were similarities. Whilst originating from specifically national attitudes, urban historians on both sides of the Atlantic had to fight against an existing anti-urban milieu, which looked to an unrealistic agrarian myth. There was an acknowledgement that historians on both sides of the Atlantic were late to the study of the city. Just as Dyos had suggested in his 1966 conference paper,¹²² American urban historians recognized a need to catch up with scholars from the social sciences who had been considering the city as a laboratory in which to study human behaviour since the beginning of the twentieth century. The fields on both sides of the Atlantic were institutionalised during a period when the urban had become a fashionable topic, albeit for dissimilar reasons. Other similarities existed that perhaps are connected more to the attempts to legitimise a new sub-field of historical study rather than any particular Anglo-Saxon sensibilities, for example, the need to define the terms, reference, topics, and methods.

Urban history, as a distinct sub-field in America and Britain had different evolutionary paths, which is entirely expected given the dissimilar geographical and political infrastructures. Yet the common European heritage, especially the Anglo-Saxon, ensured some commonalities. Of all the similarities, it was perhaps in the rise of quantification that most cross-fertilisation occurred, nevertheless, it was not the case of one country looking to adopt the methodologies of the other. Quantification emerged at the same time in response to similar forces driving the development of the broader discipline of History. As Warner's communication showed, as the fervour for quantification diminished within British urban history, similar sentiments were developing in the United States. In Britain quantification remained a tool that traversed demographic history, much as Thernstrom did in the 1970s.

The importance of the *Newsletter* on both sides of the Atlantic was shown. In a period when mass communication still required a postage stamp, they helped to inform scholars of developments in either country. It is interesting that later in his career Dyos

¹²¹ For an analysis of the role of cities in the American War of Independence, see G. Nash, *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979).

¹²² Dyos. 'Agenda for Urban Historians', p.3.

downplayed the importance of the American Group in the formation of the British Group. As was shown, this was not the case in the early years of the British UHG when developments in America were placed firmly at the core of British urban history.

Dyos was at the heart of the Anglo-American relationship, both as his role as editor of the *Newsletter* and the later the *Yearbook* which made him the obvious point of contact, but also because of his research interests. The two more influential contacts he made were with Sam Bass Warner and Eric E. Lampard with both staying in personal contact with him up until his death. Within the Dyos archive are many instances of scholars and students from America writing to ask for advice or for a bibliography of works, all of whom Dyos responded with his customary sales pitch for the British Group and *Newsletter*. With much of the developments in Urban History in the United States and the United Kingdom, influence and cross-fertilisation were much more about wider issues rather than specific transfers of methods. Because the US and the UK shared a common language and to some extent a common academic system, developments in the wider discipline of History were mirrored in each country. The greater focus on class and 'history from below' ensured the city's placement on the research agenda of both countries. However, the very explicit national circumstances ensured that when it came to urban history in particular, any influence was at a more superficial level than a fundamental one.

Chapter Seven

Urban History on the Curriculum

New disciplines are formed to deal with a particular object of research that has either been previously ignored by existing disciplines, which is rare, or when an object of research is considered worthy of its own institutional entity and attracts a particular set of methodological and theoretical approaches, which is far more common. As with any embryonic discipline or sub-field attempting to gain a foothold in academia, if urban history was to succeed as an independent field within the larger discipline of History, those disciplinary characteristics it did exhibit had to be maintained and encouraged in order for the field to move from one generation of historians to another. While institutional structures such as conferences were important and covered earlier in the thesis, in this chapter, I will be considering another equally important facet: urban history's placement on the curriculum and the development of its pedagogy.

There are a number of characteristics that are prerequisites of any new area of research if it is to coalesce and mature from a loose amalgamation of scholars interested in a particular theme into a more coherent and distinct academic discipline.¹ Although occasionally urban history has been mistakenly described as a discipline,² it was and remains at most a sub-field of its parent discipline History. As described in an early chapter of this thesis, the development of urban history in Britain is quite easily styled in evolutionary terms, insofar as its ancestry can be traced through a linear progression from the main discipline of History via Social and Economic History with the social sciences added to the mix: Dyos argued the point in his 1973 inaugural lecture,

It must by now be clear, that urban history is a field of knowledge, not a single discipline in the accepted sense but a field in which many disciplines converge, or are at any rate drawn upon. It is a focus for a variety of forms of knowledge, not a form of

¹ Discussed within this thesis's introduction. Also see R. Soffer, 'Why Do Disciplines Fail, the Strange Case of British Sociology', *The English Historical Review*, 97, no. 385 (1982), p.797.

² For example, in the first issue of *The Journal of Urban History*, where the editorial argues for the 'discipline' of Urban History to encourage any potentially fruitful lines of inquiry as possible. A far later instance can be found on the Victoria County History website where Urban History is considered a 'separate historical discipline in England.'

<http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/local-history/writing-urban-history/urban-history-separate-historical-discipline>, [accessed 2/11/2012].

knowledge in itself.³

However Dyos would later dilute this description further by arguing that Urban History was not even a clear-cut disciplinary subfield, regarding it as a kind of operational strategy or simply a collection of approaches, a ‘preoccupation with certain kinds of issues, certain sorts of material, certain elements in contemporary history’.⁴ Issues surrounding nomenclature and definitions abound within the historiography of Urban History and whilst it is true that as it emerged under the ‘organizational centralization’ of Dyos at Leicester,⁵ the field in Britain exhibited many of the traits required for a nascent discipline: an object of study (the processes and experience of urbanisation); a charismatic and evangelistic central figure (Dyos); an institutional base (although informal, Dyos was helped with the organisation of the UHG by the Economic History Society and the University of Leicester), and a forum in which a canon of work could be established (*Urban History Newsletter* and the later *Urban History Yearbook*). It did not possess its own set of theoretical or methodological approaches which is a central requirement of any new discipline.⁶ The field’s core methodologies and theoretical foundations were, and remain, those of History, its parent discipline, even though the field adopted techniques, such as quantification, from its cognate disciplines within the Social Sciences and Demography in particular.

Before moving on to my analysis of urban history as a taught topic an important point needs to be clarified. Throughout, this thesis has pointed to the formation of urban history as a distinct and institutional entity and as the starting point of my analysis. This remains the case in this chapter; however, it is also taken for granted that before the institutional establishment of urban history in the third quarter of the twentieth century, the urban history was taught in many areas of the historical discipline, although rarely labelled or delineated as such. Art historians examining the Italian Renaissance would certainly have looked at the city-states

³ H.J. Dyos, ‘Urbanity and Suburbanity’ in David Cannadine, David Reeder (eds), *Exploring the Urban Past: Essays in Urban History by H.J. Dyos* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 31.

⁴ B.M. Stave, ‘A Conversation with H.J. Dyos: Urban History in Great Britain’ *The Journal of Urban History*, 5, no.4 (1974), p. 491.

⁵ D. Cannadine, ‘Urban History in the United Kingdom: The ‘Dyos Phenomenon’ and After’, in D. Cannadine and D. Reeder (eds), *Exploring the Urban Past: Essays in Urban history by H.J. Dyos* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 203.

⁶ A. Krishnan, ‘What are Academic Disciplines? Some Observations on the Disciplinary vs. Interdisciplinary Debate’, *NCRM Working Papers Series* (Southampton, 2009), p. 8.

and their governance when considering the role of patronage. Economic historians would have reflected on aspects of growth and development driven by and consequent upon, the expansion of towns and cities, even if these urban areas provided little more than background landscape. Many of the great constitutional developments around the world, by their very nature, were accommodated in capital cities as these were predominantly the seats of government. Any study of revolution would inevitably be focused on the city as the location of protest for the same reason, and of course sociologists often chose the urban environment to site their research whilst utilising a historical framework for comparison, the role of the Chicago school being foremost in leading this approach.⁷ Historical demography could also be considered as studying urban history if the object of its research was situated within urban centres;⁸ indeed, some former historians who originally described themselves as urban historians eventually reclassified themselves as ‘new social historians’⁹ or historians of population.¹⁰ Depending upon the looseness of how the field of Urban History is defined, it could also be argued that any study dealing with epidemiology would at some point need to consider the historical urban environments within which diseases such as cholera were manifest. Clearly this is not an extensive list; even so, this chapter cannot hope to consider such a wide spectrum and so it concentrates on those instances where courses were more overtly signposted as Urban History. The presence of urban history is considered within cognate disciplines, including Architecture and Architectural History, and Town Planning where those courses were specifically noted as History.

Urban History at Leicester

As discussed previously, Dyos and Leicester were acknowledged by many as sitting at the centre of early developments in British urban history.¹¹ Dyos spent his entire academic career at Leicester. He was first appointed as a temporary part-time lecturer in Leicester’s

⁷ R. Linder, *The Reportage of Urban Culture: Robert Park and the Chicago School* (Cambridge, 1996); James F. Short, *The Social Fabric of the Metropolis: Contributions of the Chicago School of Urban Sociology* (London, 1971). Historical geography relied upon contributions of historians, see H. M. Mayer and C.F. Kohn (eds), *Readings in Urban Geography* (Chicago, 1959), p. 2.

⁸ E.A. Wrigley, ‘Small-Scale but not Parochial: The Work of the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Structure’, *Family & Community History*, 1 (1968), pp. 27-36.

⁹ B.M. Stave, ‘A Conversation with Stephen Themstrom’ in Bruce M. Stave, *The Making of Urban History* (London, 1977), p.230.

¹⁰ Letter from R.C. Wade to Dyos in which Wade bemoans the fact the Themstrom was no longer describing himself as an urban historian but as ‘some sort of historian of population.’ DC: 1/13/3.

¹¹ See the many tributes written to Dyos following his death in 1978.

Economic History department in February 1952¹² and was confirmed as a permanent member of the department in the June of 1953.¹³ By 1965 he had been elected Dean of Social Sciences for a period of three years. It could therefore be suggested that he was in the position to push for urban history to be placed on the curriculum, either as a distinct subject or as part of a more general course. He was certainly keen to enter into the administration and organisation of his new department. He was appointed to the Board of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences as early as October 1954¹⁴ and a year later he became a member of the Board for the Extra Mural Certificate Course in Social Studies with the title 'History of Modern Britain.'¹⁵ Reappointed to the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences in 1960¹⁶ he was present when History was being transformed in the immediate post-war period.¹⁷ A request to consider changing the wording of an 'Economic and Social History' paper to one described as 'Comparative Economic History' is evidence of the move towards comparative history.¹⁸ The resurgence of interest in the nineteenth-century is also evident in a number of requests to change course descriptions placed before Leicester's Social Science and Arts boards.¹⁹ Interest in social structure was also coming to the fore with special alternative courses becoming available considering the theories and problems of social change.²⁰ Indeed, not only was Dyos on the Board of the Social Science Faculty rather than the Arts, where History sat, he was also appointed internal examiner for a new diploma in Social Studies. Yet none of these minutes mention urban history overtly, yet it is arguable that many of these new approaches would have taken the city as a location for their studies. Dyos' role in the Faculty of Social Sciences might also point to his future position on the importance and centrality of the social sciences in an interdisciplinary urban history.

The extent to which there was any thought of creating a distinct urban history course is

¹² University College Leicester, Establishment Board Minutes, 5/2/1952.

¹³ University College Leicester, Establishment Board Minutes, 6/6/1953.

¹⁴ University College Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, 18/6/1954.

¹⁵ University College Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, 4/5/1955.

¹⁶ University of Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences, 11/12/1959.

¹⁷ See J. Obelkevich, 'New Developments in History in the 1950s and 1960s' *Contemporary British History*, 14, no. 4, (2000), pp.125-142 and J. Obelkevich, 'New Developments in History in the 1950s and 1960s: Witness Seminar', *Contemporary British History* 14, No. 4, (2000), pp.143-197.

¹⁸ University College Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, 15/6/1956

¹⁹ For example, a third year course Economic and Social History course changed its emphasis from a generalised study beginning in 1850 to one that focused more tightly on the nineteenth-century. University of Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences, 18/3/1960.

²⁰ University of Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Leicester, 22/10/1959

unclear. There was some discussion in 1964, when a wide ranging review of amendments to all courses for the BA in Social Studies was undertaken, of an optional third year course and final exam, described simply as urban history. This would have considered the economic and social development of a number of English towns and cities after the seventeenth century. It was to have begun in the academic year 1966-7²¹ but no further mention of it is made in any subsequent discussions of the new degree scheme and it certainly did not make it onto the curriculum. Perhaps this was the result of the decision by a special committee established to consider the establishment of new degrees, at which point it was agreed that all existing BA degrees within the Social Sciences would remain unchanged, for the 'foreseeable future.'²² Dyos was not only appointed the convener of the committee but later he was appointed the chairman of a sub-committee looking at the structure and functioning of the first year Social Science undergraduate degree, none of which appeared to lead to the presence of urban history on the curriculum.²³ This said, urban history's placement, no matter how ephemerally, within a proposed Social Science degree rather than one for History might well suggest that Dyos was at least attempting to place the subject on the agenda of the board of which he was a member.

The urban as a topic was, however, emerging within the cognate disciplines under the umbrella of the Social Sciences at Leicester. Sociology had a third year option on urban sociology and on social stratification; a second year course on the 'Historical Geography of European Expansion and Economic History post 1500' as part of the joint degree in Geography, Economics and Economic History; and those undertaking an Economic History degree had the opportunity to take 'The Economic and Social History of Britain since 1750' which made particular reference to the factors involved in the creation of advanced industrial societies.²⁴ The closest the urban history came to being placed overtly on Leicester's curriculum in the 1960s was as part of a course on Economics and History of Transport²⁵ which looked at the problems surrounding urban congestion and the coordination of traffic,

²¹ University of Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Leicester 13/2/1964

²² University of Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences Leicester 4/6/1965

²³ University of Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Social Science, Leicester 23/10/1970

²⁴ University of Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Social Science, Leicester 4/6/1965

²⁵ Dyos was initially employed as a lecturer specialising in Transport History.

but this was far more of a contemporary consideration rather than a historical one.²⁶ By 1973, this had been renamed 'Transport and Urban Economics' reflecting a greater emphasis on the urban as a determinant.

The paucity of courses overtly dedicated to the study of urban history at its home in the United Kingdom was evident in Dyos' response to A.E. Musson's request for information on such courses at Leicester. Musson had been appointed to Manchester's quinquennial committee which was considering proposals for funding in the following five years. The committee, having come to the conclusion that the urban as an object of study might be one of the possible new areas of growth, hoped to establish a multi-disciplinary Urban Studies degree. The departments of Town Planning, Architecture, Geography, Sociology, and Economic and Social History at Manchester had all agreed to participate and Musson was writing to various outside institutions in an attempt to discover the level, type, and methods of urban history teaching that existed at the time. As late as 1975, thirteen years after the initial meeting that began the process of forming the UHG, and despite Dyos' efforts to promote the field during the intervening period, he had to admit to Musson that the only course that could be described as urban history at Leicester was a joint third year under-graduate course within Economic History and the Victorian Studies Masters course.²⁷ Even here, Dyos did not provide any further information, which in itself raises questions about his approach to the teaching of urban history.

The Victorian Studies Centre

The Victorian Studies course at Leicester sat within the purview of the Arts Faculty and not within Dyos' own Faculty of Social Science. The Victorian Studies Centre (henceforth VSC) was established in 1966 following the award of £30,450 from the Leverhulme Trust. The grant covered the first six years of the VSC and provided finance to recruit an annual Visiting Professor, two three year Fellowships, and a Bibliographer.²⁸ The personalities driving its foundation were Professor Phillip Collins, Professor Jack Simmons, and Dyos. Their aim was to provide teaching, predominately at post-graduate level, through a multi-disciplinary

²⁶ University of Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Social Science, 18/5/1965

²⁷ Correspondence between Dyos and Musson, 25/5/1975 – 11/6/1975. DC: 1/3/7.

²⁸ In December 1966, the first Visiting Professor appointed was R.K. Webb of Columbia University. Priscilla Metcalf was appointed to a three year Fellowship and J.B. Warner to a two year Fellowship.

approach; to collect and make available information about on-going research, the publication of research, to build a collection of sources, and the organisation of conferences, colloquia, and vacation courses concentrating on Britain and Britain's former Empire.²⁹ The evident success of the UHG at this time, the organisation of the first urban history conference was well underway, was a clear influence on the VSC's founding aims and ambitions; indeed, they were very similar to those of the UHG in 1962.

The multi-disciplinary approach was reflected in the variety of disciplines on the VSC's first advisory committee.

Table 1 *Members and Departments of VSC's First Advisory Committee May 1966*

Name	Department
Professor P.A.W. Collins (Chairman)	English
Mr W.H. Brook	Astrology and the History Science
Dr H.J. Dyos	Economic History
Mr D. Fraser	Economics
Professor F.W.J. Hemmings	Literature (nineteenth-century French)
Professor W.G. Hoskins	English Local History
Professor Humpreys	English
Dr A.J. Meadows	Astronomy and History of Science
Professor R.L. Meek	Economist
Professor J. Simmons	English Local History
Professor B. Simon	School of Education

Source: Victorian Studies Centre Advisory Committee Minutes 20/05/1966

At the heart of the Centre was to be a taught MA course. Five approaches to MA were discussed at the first Advisory Committee meeting in May 1966:

- (1) Great figures of interest.
- (2) Analysis of important books (fiction and non-fiction).
- (3) Arbitrary periods.
- (4) A theme or set of themes (the growth of towns, change in village, evangelism, utilitarianism, *laissez-faire* (*sic*), the family and the position of women, sex and prudery, social class, the operative class, education and society, the past, medievalism, religion and science, the decline of natural theology, science and the practical arts).
- (5) A combination of two or more of these.

²⁹ University of Leicester, Special Collections, Victorian Studies Centre Advisory Committee Minutes, 20/05/1966.

Out of these five, the fourth option gained greater support and in order to cater for a wider range of interests, it was agreed that two themes were to be set: one considering an institution and the other, an idea. The Victorian City was the most popular for the institutional theme and religion met the needs of the second.³⁰ Within the remit of the MA, it was hoped extra mural visits and field days would play a part in the consideration of the period's art and architecture. The initial course description for teaching during 1967-68 listed these two themes: 'The Victorian Town, with special reference to London and Manchester, and the novels of Charles Dickens and Mrs Gaskell; and Religion in Victorian life, with special reference to Evangelicalism, the Oxford Movement, and the controversies about Christian evidences.'³¹ The Victorian City was to be built upon and existing seminar on urbanization run by Dyos for Leicester's department of Economic History.³² Dyos, Meadows and Hoskins were co-opted onto a sub-committee looking at the establishment of the MA.

Although design to be multi-disciplinary, the majority taking the course were literature students, no doubt attracted by Collins, an acknowledged expert on Dickens. However, the Friday morning seminars run by Dyos were the highlight of the course, according to a former student.³³ Organised by Dyos, he often brought in lecturers from a wide disciplinary spectrum and countries. However, they always tended to reflect his own interests: Jim Hepburn, a visiting fellow and specialist on George Eliot; Bill Aydelotte from Iowa and an early statistical enthusiast. There were also specialists in the history of science such as Bill Brock from Leicester. Peter Keating presented on the working class novel whilst Anthony King brought the colonial dimension during his visiting fellowship in 1970-1971. Sheridan Gilley gave a paper on the London Irish and Raphael Samuel presented on the arrivals and departures of working people from the Victorian city.

Over and above the MA, a number of vacation courses were planned for the long summer breaks in British universities. The first was to have taken place in the summer of 1968 and

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid. There appeared to be some indecision on which term, town or city, to use. Although in the first draft of the entry the term 'town' appears, this was later dropped in favour of 'city'.

³² This is the only entry in any of the records explored for this thesis that note Dyos taught a weekly seminar on urbanization. It appears to be a general description rather than the actual title of a particular course; indeed, Dyos makes no mention of it in his reply to Mussen some years later.

³³ Email correspondence between G.W. Davies and Peter Jones 12/09/2013.

took the Victorian city as its theme; however, it was ultimately cancelled due to a lack of interest. Only one prospective student registered. The lack of interest was put down to the expensive nature of the three week course at £64 if resident or £46 for non-resident attendance (equal today to approximately £1000 and £700 respectively). While it failed to run, its organization and the committee's belief in its worth, although clearly misguided, does illustrate the credence given to the study of the nineteenth-century urban environment at this time. Following this failure, it was agreed to run a summer course on Dickens in 1970, his centenary year.³⁴ Unlike the vacation course, the MA proved more successful, although it began slowly with doubt over the viability of the course due to low enrolment numbers in 1968 and 1969.³⁵ However, by 1970, applications to the course hit twenty and the seminars on the Victorian Town and religion were well attended.³⁶ By 1976, the committee could report that in the decade of its existence, 40 students had followed the MA course with 25 awarded the degree.³⁷ In 1978 the Social Science Research Council withdrew recognition for the Victorian Studies MA because it felt there was little social science involved despite the committee assertion that there was 'considerable Social History content.'³⁸ Following Dyos' death in 1978, Anthony Sutcliffe took on the remaining teaching associated with the Victorian City but it was removed from the prospectus in 1979. The committee, recognising Dyos' important role in the VSC argued that his legacy could best be preserved and fostered by the establishment of a H.J. Dyos Chair in Modern Urban History which would, they hoped, maintain close links to the VSC.

The evident popularity among the VSC Advisory Committee member of the Victorian city as central theme on their new MA course and, even though it failed to run, the first vacation course, shows how interest in the city and effects of Victorian urbanization were at the core of Victorian Studies. Dyos' presence and his promotion of urban history are clear, yet he has little to say on the evident success of the course when replying to Mussen's enquiry. The

³⁴ University of Leicester, Special Collections, Victorian Studies Centre Advisory Committee Minutes, 03/07/1967.

³⁵ University of Leicester, Special Collections, Victorian Studies Centre Advisory Committee Minutes, 22/05/1970.

³⁶ University of Leicester, Special Collections, Victorian Studies Centre Advisory Committee Minutes, 19/02/1971.

³⁷ University of Leicester, Special Collections, Victorian Studies Centre Advisory Committee Minutes, 05/11/1976.

³⁸ University of Leicester, Special Collections, Victorian Studies Centre Advisory Committee Minutes, 17/02/1978.

Victorian City course was urban history but it was not labelled as such.³⁹ The Board of the Faculty of Arts did agree to a supplementary special subject in 1968 labelled as 'The English Town 1640-1727' and 'The Mid-Victorian Age 1859-1880', the first of which was straightforwardly urban history and the latter would no doubt have had urban society at its core.⁴⁰

Dyos' response was rather apologetic in nature and as one of the primary prophets of the field in Britain; it must have been difficult to admit no dedicated urban history courses existed in his home department. If Musson had requested similar information just a year later, Dyos could have responded with notification of the third year course within the degree in the Social Sciences, 'The Development of the English Town, 1450-1750'.⁴¹ This, along with the above mentioned course 'The Victorian City', might well have eventually become permanent fixtures on the Social Science degree scheme and the Masters in Victorian Studies; however, following Dyos' death in 1978, the Victorian City course was replaced with one entitled 'The Mid-Victorian Economy'. It is also worth noting that at Leicester, urban history at undergraduate level appeared to take off only after Dyos' death when from the late 1970s and early 1980s urban history courses became more apparent. Of course, as the creation of new courses takes a number of years from planning to fruition, it is quite likely that Dyos had a large part to play in their initial establishment. In 1979, the Social Science degree scheme included the courses 'Urbanisation in Western Europe', 'Post-war Reconstruction', and 'Transport and Urban Economics.'⁴² Sociology offered students a course on the 'Sociology of Industrialisation' which looked at urbanisation and the structure of urban communities. In Applied Sociology, students could undertake the 'Sociology of Planning' and within the joint degree of Politics with Economics and Social History, out of a total of nineteenth special third year subjects, students could choose 'Urbanisation in Western Europe.'⁴³

When questioned, historians who worked with Dyos at Leicester reiterated that whilst following his death his name has increasingly been placed at the core of the field in Britain, he was just one member of his department and not an institution in his own right. He was not

³⁹ University of Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Arts Leicester 12/12/1966.

⁴⁰ University of Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Arts, Leicester 9/12/1968

⁴¹ University of Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Social Science, Leicester 5/3/1976.

⁴² University of Leicester, Board of the Faculty of the Social Sciences, Leicester 29/6/1979.

⁴³ University of Leicester, Board of the Faculty of the Social Sciences, Leicester 6/3/1981

alone in his interest in urban history, the presence of English Local History, established by Hoskins in 1948, provided a cadre of fellow scholars interested in researching the history of the urban environment; however, many refused to consider the nineteenth-century, leaving Dyos isolated.⁴⁴ He was able to supervise a number of higher degrees that considered urban history in some form or another and it is clear that moving into the 1970s, he was the member of the department to whom students were directed to if their research was in some manner related to or could be described as urban in nature. Unfortunately, records failed to provide any more detail apart from the most basic of descriptions, such as M. Harrison's 'Urban History',⁴⁵ Helen Lowe's 'Modern Urban History',⁴⁶ and Peter Jones' *The Development of Elites and their Operation in Three 19th Century Towns (Leicester, Peterborough, and Lincoln)*.⁴⁷ The presence of more early modern courses can be linked to the arrival of Peter Clark from Magdalen College, Oxford, whose interest in early modern urbanisation is reflected below in the discussion of urban history at the Open University.

Urban History at the Open University

The study of the urban locale was not restricted to the traditional university sector, it also made its presence felt in the fledgling Open University. The 1960s and the early 1970s were a period of expansion across the higher education sector with the *Robbins Report* recommending a widening of participation and an increase in the percentage of students undertaking a first degree. All those with the appropriate qualifications should be guaranteed a place and in doing so, it was argued, the untapped reservoirs of ability could be accessed. The report recommended an increase in the university population from 216,000 in 1962/3 to 560,000 in 1980.⁴⁸ Alongside the increase in the more traditional university sector, the 1966 Labour Party manifesto *Time for Decision* promised to establish an 'University of the Air', or the Open University (henceforth the OU) which would, 'enormously extend the best teaching facilities and give everyone the opportunity of study for a full degree', providing 'genuine

⁴⁴ Interview with Charles Phythian-Adams undertaken by G.W. Davies (October 2012). Interview with Phillip Cottrell undertaken by G.W. Davies (August 2011).

⁴⁵ University of Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Arts, Leicester 27/9/1973

⁴⁶ University of Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Arts, Leicester 7/12/1973

⁴⁷ University of Leicester, Board of the Faculty of Social Science, Leicester 5/12/1975

⁴⁸ Higher Education, Report of the Committee appointed by the Prime Minister under the Chairmanship of Lord Robbins 1961-63, Cmnd. 2154 (London, 1963), paragraphs 3 and 831.

equality of opportunity' for those previously excluded.⁴⁹ The newly established OU welcomed its first 25,000 students in the January of 1971. Its open access policy meant that anyone, with or without prior qualifications, could enrol, taking preliminary foundation courses before moving onto level two and three courses. Just a year after the first students registered for their foundation courses in the arts, social sciences, science, and mathematics, the OU offered an Urban Development course (DT201).⁵⁰

Supported through the provision of radio and television programmes as well as printed material, DT201 was a second level Social Science course that was first run in 1973. The course team⁵¹ wanted to give their students an opportunity to study contemporary urban issues through the evaluation of different approaches to urban planning, an appreciation of the features, causes and effects of urbanisation. In doing so, they hoped to challenge the *priori* of conceptions about the city and urban development at the time and in turn help shape the future development of the built environment.⁵² The central aim was therefore focused more on contemporary and future cities rather than on historical analysis. The correspondence course was divided into four mono-disciplinary blocks.⁵³ This course was introduced through the first five units (each unit was to be completed in a single week), grouped under the title of *The Process of Urbanization*.⁵⁴ Units two and three were concerned with the internal structures of cities and four and five with the effects of contemporary migration; therefore, it is to the first unit 'The Urban Embrace'⁵⁵ that one needs to look to find any overt urban history. This unit's objectives sought to give the students a framework within which the remainder of the course could be built, ensuring they could use social scientific models, ideas around primate cities, the importance of fertility, nuptiality, and mortality rates appropriately; be able to describe the main points of G.

⁴⁹ *Time for Decision, 1966 Labour Party Manifesto* (London, 1966).

⁵⁰ First run 1973.

⁵¹ The course team was made up of Michael Drake, Ruth Finnegan, Andrew Learmouth, David Boswell, Norman Long, Phillip Sarre, Hedy Brown, Andrew Blowers, Chris Hammett, Geoffrey Edge, Frank Knox, Ray Thomas, John Barrett, G.S. Holister, Keith Attenborough, Andrew Porteous, John Cannell, and John Sparkes.

⁵² Social Sciences: A Second Level Course, Urban Development Units 1-5, *The Process of Urbanization* (Bletchley, 1973), p. 5.

⁵³ Block One: The Process of Urbanization; Block Two: The City as a Social System; Block Three: The City as an Economic System; Block Four: The Built Environment.

⁵⁴ Social Sciences: A Second Level Course, Urban Development Units 1-5, *The Process of Urbanization* (Bletchley, 1973).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.9-44.

Sjoberg's model of the pre-industrial city and to subsequently identify similar traits within London 1650-1750.⁵⁶ Students were also expected to test G.W. Brease's hypotheses on the role of primate cities⁵⁷ through a close reading of Wrigley's 1967 *Past and Present* article 'A Simple Model of London's Importance', which was reproduced in full.⁵⁸ These texts were also supported with the set reading of H. Blumenfeld's *The Modern Metropolis*.⁵⁹ The course was comparative throughout, to the extent that the course team wanted to encourage students to compare their own experiences of twentieth-century cities in Britain with Wrigley's description of seventeenth and early eighteenth century London and then to consider any similarities between the developing metropolis in England and the developing Nigerian city of Ibadan.⁶⁰

In his review of the course for the inaugural issue of the *Urban History Yearbook*,⁶¹ Anthony Sutcliffe suggested that at this time, the OU was considered a 'dirty word' in traditional university circles and whilst he would normally hesitate to review another colleague's course, because DT201 was so good, and because it was supported by a series of publicly broadcast radio and television programmes, he had no problems in doing so.⁶² Whilst giving a cautious welcome to the course, as a historian he clearly believed it was a wasted opportunity and he was therefore disappointed with a lack of history or historical comparison in what was ostensibly a course considering the contemporary issues surrounding urbanisation in the West and in developing countries. Although there was some historical focus, he argued there was very little urban history involved, and nothing provided as an historical framework. This despite the opportunity the course offered where a historical perspective would have provided students with a valuable historical comparison of urban development. The course, in his opinion, offered little to the aspiring urban historian or to the teacher of urban history

⁵⁶ G. Sjoberg, *The Preindustrial City: Past and Present* (Glencoe, Illinois, 1960).

⁵⁷ G.W. Brease, *The City in Newly Developing Countries* (Hemel Hempstead, 1969).

⁵⁸ E.A. Wrigley, 'A Simple Model of London's Importance in Changing English Society and Economy 1650-1750' *Past and Present*, 37 (1967), pp. 44-70. Reprinted in its entirety in Social Sciences: A Second Level Course, Urban Development, Units 1-5, *The Process of Urbanization* (Bletchley, 1973), pp. 1-37.

⁵⁹ H. Blumenfeld, *The Modern Metropolis: Its Origin, Growth, Characteristics and Planning* (Cambridge, Mass, 1971).

⁶⁰ The comparison between preindustrial London and the developing city of Ibadan form the context of the courses second unit, 'The comparative analysis of urban development' in *The Process of Urbanization*, pp. 43-67.

⁶¹ H.J. Dyos (ed.), *Urban History Yearbook* (1976) pp. 24-27.

⁶² *Ibid.* p. 24.

apart from some insight into the issues surrounding contemporary urbanisation and so, he concluded there was no place for any urban historian to teach on the course.⁶³ Overall, he felt that the lack of urban history on the course was detrimental because any study of contemporary urbanisation clearly had to have its roots in the past.

Sutcliffe was correct in suggesting there was a lack of historical content, but as a social science course this was to be expected; however, the inclusion of Wrigley's article as an introduction showed that the course team recognised the need to provide a historical comparative base upon which the remainder could be built. Indeed, in the second unit, although ostensibly considering the internal structure of cities, one of its main aims was to build upon the comparisons begun in the first unit. Moreover, the interdisciplinary nature of the field meant that despite its lack of historical context it was still welcomed within the growing canon of urban history: a point illustrated in a letter written by Dyos to Sutcliffe in which he recommended that he should make the time to listen to the radio programmes and to watch the broadcasts.⁶⁴ Arguably, Sutcliffe's review, placed as it was within the first issue of the *UHYB*, reinforced the original ethos of the UHG-UK, in that it should be interdisciplinary in nature and open to all scholars interested in the urban.

There was however, no lack of urban history in the OU's slightly later offering 'English Urban History 1500-1780' (henceforth A322) which as the title suggested, sat firmly within the remit of the urban historian. Looking at the early modern period rather than at nineteenth-century urbanisation, the period that dominated the first years of urban history on both sides of the Atlantic, the course was initially conceived and designed between 1972 and 1975, helped by Peter Clark, who would later become the first Director of the Centre for Urban History when it was established in 1985. Unlike the majority of OU courses at the time, a majority of the course team was made up of scholars from the traditional university sector rather than the OU's own in house staff, clear evidence, according to Clark, of a generalised lack of expertise in the study of urbanisation in the early modern period at that time. As well as Clark, others from outside of the OU included his Leicester colleague from English Local History, Charles Phythian-Adams, Peter Burke (Sussex), Paul Slack (Oxford),

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Letter Dyos to Sutcliffe, (1973). Unfortunately only the year is evident in the remnant of the correspondence. DC: 1/19/12

Penelope Corfield and Valerie Pearl (London), others included John Barrett, John Stevenson, and Kevin Wilson.⁶⁵

A322 was a third level half-year course run by the Arts faculty. Initially, it was hoped it would attract around 600 students a year for four years or so from 1977 onwards. Clark remained on the course team although the chair was eventually taken over by Rosemary O'Day.⁶⁶ There were some who criticised the exclusion of Scotland and Wales in the design of the course, suggesting it was a limiting factor to focus only on England; however, this was a pragmatic decision rather than anything more parochial, with Clark arguing that not only were the processes and effects of urbanisation in the period more evident in England during the period than in Scotland and Wales, but that to ensure the course was successful there needed to be relatively easy access to primary and secondary sources, and again, there was far greater availability when it came to England than either Scotland or Wales.⁶⁷ The course required up to 25 tutors throughout the country and it was hoped these would be recruited from the UHG.⁶⁸ As well as forming part of a wider degree scheme, it was also offered as a stand-alone course for those students either not intending to carry on to a full degree or at least not one in History. The open access provided by the associated radio and television programmes meant that it was hoped that they might be used in relevant university courses elsewhere.⁶⁹

Described as an urban equivalent to Laslett's *The World We Have Lost*,⁷⁰ at the heart of the A322's design was social history, linking the development of wider society with the rise of the town and the processes of urbanization, which occurred prior to the developments consequent upon the Industrial Revolution.⁷¹ Students would be given the opportunity to examine the various forces that changed the early modern English town, those that helped to create the new urban identity and community: the economic, social, political and the cultural. This would, it was hoped, provide the student with insight into the social order of early

⁶⁵ P. Clark, 'English Urban History 1500-1780: A New Open University Course', *Urban History Yearbook* (Leicester, 1976), pp. 37-38.

⁶⁶ Professor O'Day remains at the OU as Emeritus Professor and Senior Research Officer in History.

⁶⁷ P. Clark, 'English Urban History 1500-1780: A New Open University course', pp. 37-38.

⁶⁸ 'English Urban History 1500-1780: A new Open University course', p.38

⁶⁹ D.M. Palliser, 'The Open University and Urban History', *UHYB* (Leicester, 1978), p. 56.

⁷⁰ P. Laslett, *The World We Have Lost* (London, 1965).

⁷¹ Arts: A Third Level Course English Urban History 1500-1780: Units 1-3, *The Urban Setting* (Milton Keynes, 1977), pp.9-10.

modern England. London's growing dominance and the subsequent detrimental effects on smaller provincial capitals remained a constant theme throughout the course. A secondary theme was the effect of the many external pressures that helped to transform the towns of the period.⁷²

Most OU courses were divided into separate units and A322 was no exception. Its sixteen units, all of an average of 12,000 words, were grouped together into four themed blocks which were mailed out separately during the OU's academic year.⁷³ The first block consisted of three units which considered the definition of the pre-industrial town and the structures making up urban society at this time, both in the English and the European context.⁷⁴ Under a separate cover, unit four was a collection of documents selected and edited by Clark and Phillip Morgan and grouped together under five separate categories: general descriptions of towns; the urban economy; the social structure; politics; and cultural life. Within each section, the documents were ordered according to their chronology with the intention of providing the students with easy access to a number of primary sources.⁷⁵ The remainder of the course included: Block II, units 5-8 *The Fabric of the Traditional Community* which identified the economic and other structures in towns of the period, and their political organisation and administration with specific reference to the guilds.⁷⁶ Block III, units 9-12 *The Traditional Community Under Stress* focused on the pressures leading up to the disruption of the traditional English town and questioned whether there was a 'large scale crisis' in urban society in the seventeenth-century. This was addressed through a separate focus on the period's economic and social problems.⁷⁷ Block IV, units 13-16 *The Rise of the New Urban Society* concentrated on London's urban development in the post-restoration period: its growth in an English and European context; its economic life and social conditions; its governance, and its relationship, especially its growing dominance, with the

⁷² Palliser, 'The Open University and Urban History, p.58

⁷³ Clark, 'English Urban History 1500-1780: A New Open University Course', p.38. The Open University's academic year ran from January through to the September unlike the traditional university sector.

⁷⁴ Unit One: Introduction: Defining the Town; Unit Two: The European Context; Unit Three: The English Urban Landscape: The Urban Setting (Milton Keynes, 1977).

⁷⁵ Arts: A Third Level Course, Unit 4, *English Urban History 1500-1780: A Document Collection* (Milton Keynes, 1977).

⁷⁶ Arts: A Third Level Course, Units 5,6,7 and 8, *English Urban History 1500-1780: The Fabric of the Traditional Community* (Milton Keynes, 1977)

⁷⁷ Arts: A Third Level Course, Units 9, 10, 11 and 12, *English Urban History 1500-1780: The Traditional Community Under Stress* (Milton Keynes, 1977).

rest of the nation.⁷⁸ Set books included Hill's *Reformation to Industrial Revolution, 1530-1780*,⁷⁹ Clark and Slack's *English Towns in Transition* (which was written bespoke for the course),⁸⁰ MacCaffrey's *Exeter 1540-1640*,⁸¹ George's *London Life in the Eighteenth Century*,⁸² and the main course reader, Clark's *The Early Modern Town: a Reader*.⁸³ Supporting the written texts were the radio and television programmes. The television programmes were to provide visual data on the changing face of the early modern English town, whereas the radio programmes dealt with the urban historian at work and the methods of cognate disciplines such as demographers and historical geographers and to how these could be applied to urban history. The establishment of the course at the OU, which was one of the first truly urban history courses in Britain, illustrates that alongside the dominance of the nineteenth-century as the main period under scrutiny, there were examples of early modern courses. Whilst this suggests that the accepted understanding of the field's development – that it was dominated by research into the nineteenth-century – is not wholly correct, the lack of nineteenth-century courses was the reflection of the time lag between the growth of research into the Victorian era that occurred in the post-war period and its subsequent placement on the curriculum. It should also be noted that it occurred at the new OU and not at Leicester where the presence of Dyos and the organizational hub of the UHG might have suggested it would have been established first.

Urban History at Other Universities

The trajectory of urban history as a taught undergraduate topic seen in Leicester, the 'home' of the field in the United Kingdom, was mirrored in a number of other universities. The field began as a research area for established academics which influenced a rise in the topic at doctoral level. It was only by the mid-1970s that it began to be seen on the undergraduate and Master's curriculum. This was confirmed in a review of urban history teaching carried out for the 1976 edition of the *UHYB*.⁸⁴ After contacting 87 institutions, both universities and

⁷⁸ Arts: A Third Level Course, Units 13, 14, 15 and 16, *English Urban History 1500-1780: The Rise of the New Urban Society* (Milton Keynes, 1977).

⁷⁹ C. Hill, *Reformation to Industrial Revolution, 1530-1780* (Harmondsworth, 1969).

⁸⁰ P. Clark and P. Slack, *English Towns in Transition 1500-1700* (London, 1976).

⁸¹ W.T. MacCaffrey, *Exeter 1540-1640* (London, 1975).

⁸² M. D. George, *London Life in the Eighteenth Century* (Harmondsworth, 1964).

⁸³ P. Clark (ed.), *The Early Modern Town: a Reader* (London, 1976).

⁸⁴ A.C. Hepburn, 'Teaching Urban History: A Survey of courses offered in British universities and polytechnics', *UHYB* (Leicester, 1976), pp. 35-36.

polytechnics, 57 replied,⁸⁵ out of which a classification was created that divided the topic into four main themes: Modern Urban History,⁸⁶ Early Modern Urban History,⁸⁷ Local and Regional English History,⁸⁸ and Other Urban History Courses.⁸⁹

Accordingly, just thirteen years after the formation of the UHG, the subject, as defined by Hepburn, was taught in just under half of the universities in the United Kingdom and under a quarter of Polytechnics.⁹⁰ No specific post-graduate course existed but there were urban history courses of one form or another. A further breakdown of the figures confirmed the impression given in the register of research compiled for the *UHN* and subsequent *UHY*, that the nineteenth-century was the dominant period of interest, which, considering it was the period of England's most rapid urbanisation, is unsurprising. Very few courses looked to Europe at this time, concentrating instead on England or to a lesser extent, America. As seen in the provision of the OU courses above, Early Modern urban history was beginning to break the dominance of the Victorian period. Many of the responses, according to Hepburn, took a comparative approach which looked to the local and extrapolated findings to the national. This again can be seen in the closer analysis of the OU's course and in those of Leicester. At this time, urban history was more often than not, offered during the third year of a degree course and as a special subject. Interestingly, although there were scholars' interested in urban history at Oxford and Cambridge, there were no specific urban history papers. Whilst there was an increase in the number of books and journal articles considering urban history, most covered the topic from an economic standpoint and therefore there was a shortage of texts with a more social emphasis.⁹¹

Higher Degrees and Research

For this thesis, entries listed in the *UHN* and the yearly *UHYB* registers of research from 1963 to 1978 were considered. These illustrated that there was a widespread disregard of the larger

⁸⁵ See Table 7 in Thesis Appendix.

⁸⁶ Courses that concentrated on the late-eighteenth century to the present, with specific reference to Britain and/or America.

⁸⁷ Preindustrial English Towns

⁸⁸ Courses with some form of urban emphasis.

⁸⁹ Nineteenth-century French cities, Italian city states, the American city, and the economic and social history of Australia

⁹⁰ Taking the total number of British universities and polytechnics in 1976 the percentage of those offering Urban History courses in any recognized form equates to 48.2 per and 22.5 per cent respectively.

⁹¹ A.C. Hepburn, 'Teaching Urban History', pp.35-36. See various 'Registers of Research' published throughout the period within the *UHN* and *UHYB*.

forces of urbanisation and urbanity in favour of more biographical histories of towns and cities.⁹² At the beginning of the period, British cities formed the majority and London was by far the most popular subject of study. Although the percentage of cities outside of the United Kingdom grew towards the end of the 1970s, hitting around 25 per cent, London always maintained its position as most favoured location. There were topics with more nuanced studies of the social and economic development of towns and cities rather than a purely biographical history mentioned above.⁹³ However, what could be described as urban themes formed the largest percentage of the remaining research: morphology and the built environment (25 per cent); administration and urban governance (20 per cent); institutions and organisations (17 per cent); social and cultural studies (16 per cent); economic activities (11 per cent); demography and population studies (7 per cent); and services (4 per cent).⁹⁴

Urban History Education and Contemporary Urban Issues

One of the constant themes within this thesis is the link between the rise of urban history as a distinct academic entity and urban issues of the time. As it was shown in an earlier chapter, this was quite overt in America, more so than in the United Kingdom.⁹⁵ Dyos actually warned against the dangers of looking at history through what he termed the ‘peephole of the present’.⁹⁶ Yet, in the introduction to the first block of the OU’s A322, the course team makes this link explicit.

It is difficult to pick up the newspapers nowadays without being assailed by columns of print on the innumerable problems of urbanization. The City is undoubtedly a topic of world-wide concern. In the West we are mainly concerned with environmental problems, the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution and the recent but no less traumatic technological changes. In the underdeveloped or developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America the problems are more basic – hunger, disease and political and social instability – spawned by urban growth on an unparalleled scale...Whether we are primarily concerned with the urban problems of the West or with those of the Third World, the need to understand the process of urban growth and

⁹² An average of over 70 per cent of research topic could be described in some manner as the history of a specific town with just eight percent considering larger urban processes.

⁹³ Fifteen per cent of research topics

⁹⁴ ‘Research in Urban History’ *Urban History Yearbook* (Leicester, 1976), p.158

⁹⁵ Chapter Six, ‘The Extent of an Anglo-American Urban History’.

⁹⁶ H.J. Dyos, ‘Agenda for Urban Historians’ in H.J. Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), p.5.

development can hardly be over-stated.⁹⁷

By considering urban society in England prior to the Industrial Revolution the course team hoped students would be able to ‘make tentative comparisons between English urbanization at that time and the situation both in present day [late 1970s] developing countries and in England itself after industrialization.’⁹⁸ Such was the link that the course team hoped that a number of students registered on A322 would have already completed the OU’s social science offering DT201. There were other links, in both courses Sjoberg’s model of the preindustrial city was used as a starting point of comparison. His argument that all preindustrial cities, either in the past or present, shared the same ecology, relationships between class, economic, educational, political and religious structures that were entirely different to the industrial city was the basis of comparison. Could the students find similar patterns described in Wrigley’s article at the start of DT201 and could they discern them in the documents provided by the course team in A322. It is clear that both DT201 and A322 utilised Sjoberg’s model as a framework,⁹⁹ in fact they mirrored the structure of Sjoberg’s seminal 1960 text and although they both approached their topics from different perspective: the first via Social Science and the latter via History, each looked at issues of urbanism in the developing world. Both hoped that their students would discover shared properties between preindustrial cities in the past and those in the third world of their own time.

It is also interesting to note that the relative immaturity of the field was acknowledged within the pages of A322’s first unit. It was hoped those undertaking the course would begin to consider the approaches to urban history in a more critical manner. Addressing them directly, the organisers explained how urban history was a new field and discipline which [had] grown very rapidly over the previous decade, and that A322 was part of its continuing expansion. The course team even appeared to suggest to their students that the structure and methodologies adopted for ‘English Towns’ was something of an experiment.

Because it was a new field, practitioners were still experimenting with new techniques, ideas, and concepts from human geographers, demographers, and

⁹⁷ P. Clark, P. Burke, and P. Slack, *The Urban Setting* (Milton Keynes, 1977), p.9.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.9.

⁹⁹ G. Sjoberg, *The Preindustrial City: Past and Present* (Glencoe, Ill., 1960).

sociologists – even if it is only to discard them again when they do not come up to expectations. There is an exciting sense of opening up new avenues, both in methods and ideas.’¹⁰⁰

Urban History in Architecture

One of the disciplines where one might expect to find the presence of urban history is Architecture and its sister discipline, Architectural History. Any discipline dealing with the physicality of the built environment would surely need to consider its history as well as its contemporary nature. The urban environment is a palimpsest with architecture forming its most overt physical remains; therefore, if only in terms of a problem orientated approach such as that seen in the United States during the 1960s¹⁰¹ it would be natural to assume History would form a segment of the curriculum. Yet for the majority of the period under scrutiny in this thesis, the assumption would be incorrect. Its absence is worth considering because it illustrates some of the problems around the establishment of a multi-disciplinary field when some of the associated disciplines were considered outright opponents of History as part of their make-up.

The post-war period in British architectural education was one dominated by the modernist approach as it emerged out of the pre-war period. Here, architecture was considered the corporeal manifestation of the time, or spirit of the age, and as such there was no place for History on the architectural curriculum. Architectural education in this period, at least up to the early 1980s, was dominated by the approach of Walter Gropius, who, during his time as the director of the Bauhaus and his later position as Professor of Architecture at Harvard, set out his beliefs on the role of history in the architect’s education. For Gropius, the education of the architect was a holistic affair that should concentrate on creativity rather than the more technical and theoretical aspects. The danger of an over-emphasis on the technical and theoretical aspects of the profession would, he argued, stifle the creativity needed to produce good design. For him, ‘the book and the drafting-board’ could not replace the practical experience brought about by trial and error. A favouring of practical experience ensured the new architect would not undertake ‘precocious’ designs brought about by too much

¹⁰⁰ Arts: A Third Level Course English Urban History 1500-1780, pp.9-10.

¹⁰¹ See Lampard in previous chapter

knowledge of the processes and history of building.¹⁰² In other words, the student needed to learn from personal experience rather than by looking back to the past. Linking architecture to music, Gropius argued that just as music, even the most moving and emotional, was composed of just twelve notes, which he used to justify his assertion that restricting architectural students' access to the history of architecture would ensure creativity.¹⁰³ Just as there was a common musical language, there needed to be a common language of visual communication and this could, according to the Gropius, be achieved through a generalist approach and not through intellectual work alone. Architects were, he feared, 'too over-confident of the benefits from intellectual training.'¹⁰⁴ Going further, he believed 'the visual arts [were] being taught by historical and critical methods of 'appreciation' and 'information' instead of through **direct participation in the techniques and processes of marking things.**'¹⁰⁵ For Gropius, it was a 'fallacy' to rely on the historical approach to produce creativity.¹⁰⁶

Because his approach to architectural philosophy saw architecture as the physical manifestation of the spirit of the age, any study in the history of art or architecture was too intellectual and analytical in character. It made the student too aware of the conditions and reasons behind the visual expression of periods other than his own which could, he argued, prevent the student from developing their own style, suggesting that 'when the innocent beginner [was] introduced to the great achievements of the past, he may be too easily discouraged from trying creative work of his own'.¹⁰⁷ Historical studies were therefore

best offered to older students who had already found self-expression...For the awe of the masters of the past is so great that frustration may develop from timidity, making him inactive and prejudice against his own creative potentialities.¹⁰⁸

Gropius' approach was dominant in the western architectural education, which ensured the

¹⁰² W. Gropius, 'In Search of Better Architectural Education' in *A Decade of Contemporary Architecture* (Zurich, 1954), p. 47.

¹⁰³ Ibid. p.48.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p.49.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. (original bold), p.49.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. p.49

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. pp.50-51.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

majority of architectural schools rejected history in architectural pedagogy or at best, it was looked at with suspicion. This ensured that as the rest of the historical discipline was embracing new approaches, looking toward social history,¹⁰⁹ the discipline as it related to architecture remained staid and weak in comparison. For some, the effect on the discipline of Architectural History was 'disastrous'.¹¹⁰ Indeed, the first post-graduate course on architectural history was not established until 1981 when Mark Swenarton and Adrian Forty set up their MSc History of Modern Architecture at the Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London (later to become their MA Architectural History). Murray Fraser, a member of one of the first cohorts of students, noted how revolutionary the course was because it widened its remit from the pure study of buildings into areas such as politics, economics and the social processes behind architectural development and urbanism, citing the rise of cultural history in Britain as a primary influence.¹¹¹

It was the Bartlett School that can be seen as the avant-garde when it comes to the reinsertion of history into the architect's education with their early 1980s course on the 'Production of the Built Environment.' In its introduction to the course during the Bartlett's 1985 summer school, the organisers stated their axiomatic belief that

the idea that anyone involved with the building industry, planning processes and the architectural profession must have an understanding of all factors, political, economic, social and cultural, which influence and affect what is built. Hence the name of the course (the Contextual Course): an attempt to outline the context of work in architecture, planning and building construction.¹¹²

In the first sessions students concentrated on seventeenth-century buildings and society, eighteenth-century urbanisation, the Industrial Revolution, and the problems of architecture, planning and building at the beginning of the nineteenth-century. In the second, they considered similar aspects but concentrating on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries,

¹⁰⁹ See *Times Literary Supplement* special editions 1966. J. Obelkevich, 'New Developments in History in the 1950s and 1960s' *Contemporary British History*, 14, No.4 (2008), pp.125-142.

¹¹⁰ M. Swenarton, 'The Role of History in Architectural Education' *Architectural History* 30, (1987), p.212. The presence of Sir John Summerson and N. Pevsner clearly indicates that architectural history continued despite its removal from many architectural schools curricula. The point here is that it was not taught as part of a general architectural training.

¹¹¹ D. Dunster, 'An Attempt to Teach a History of the Built Environment: A Report on a Course for First Year Students at the Bartlett' *Bartlett International Summer School: Papers and Abstracts* (1985), p.89

¹¹² *Ibid.*

identifying issues surrounding the relationship between architects, the State, the theories and realities of planning between 1870 and 1914, mass-production and experiment design in Germany and Russia, the rise of the Modern Movement, the growth of American influence in architecture following World War Two, all of which was brought together in a general discussion of the contemporary conditions and issues of architecture and society.¹¹³ Unlike many schools of architecture, the Bartlett had mixed courses for architects, planners, and builders; therefore, a normal history course was not feasible. The majority of topics in the course were seen as ‘handy hooks’ for the students to begin their own investigation if warranted.¹¹⁴ Just as the general discipline of History was undergoing a period of introspection and self-criticism, the course threw up a number of questions based in and around architectural history. At the time it focused on the history of the so-called greats, but there had been little discussion on who and how these ‘greats’ came to be designated as such. Moreover, there was a lack of any critical analysis of vernacular architecture and the dominant approach had been purely descriptive. When forming the framework for the course, questions over definitions came to the fore, just as they occurred at the beginnings of Urban History, with Dyos *et al* debating what was meant by apparently simplistic terms such as urban and city, here there were debates over what was meant by the term ‘typical’ when it came to architectural form. It was time for a new approach to History within architecture, but one that avoided the creation of a ‘linear but complex’ history. The course organisers wanted their students to question existing assumptions. Interestingly, it was also asserted that just as there had been no serious discussion of the forces that created vernacular architecture, neither had there been histories written on the processes of building production, or the more general history of the ‘nexus of power and ideologies’ as they affected the production of the built environment.’¹¹⁵ Clearly, there was a certain degree of isolation and hence ignorance about publications and research areas popular within urban history. For instance, the early examples of Dyos’ *Victorian Suburbs*¹¹⁶ and Bass-Warner’s *Street Car Suburbs*¹¹⁷ would have proven these topics had not been ignored outside of the architectural profession.

¹¹³ Ibid., p.89

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p.90.

¹¹⁶ H.J. Dyos, *Victorian Suburb: A Study of the Growth of Camberwell* (Leicester, 1961).

¹¹⁷ S. Bass-Warner, *Street Car Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900* (New York, 1962).

The promotion of the multi-disciplinary approach towards the teaching aspects of urban history in architecture can also be found here with the Bartlett's courses. The course team was made up of two historians, an economist/economic historian, a planner, an environmentalist, and a studio teacher who had an interest in history and theory.¹¹⁸ Even though the course organisers believed in their approach, it was also recognised there was still a debate about the utility of history within architectural education. It would have been difficult to over-turn such an ingrained belief against the historical perspective in modern architecture but there were instances of history being used by theoreticians and architects such as Robert Venturi,¹¹⁹ and Pevsner certainly considered the historical aspects in his history of building form.¹²⁰ Kaufmann's *Architecture in the Age of Reason*¹²¹ could be another work cited as containing a degree of urban history. The establishment of the course at the Bartlett was in part due to the nature of the school. Its longstanding ethos was to 'conceptualize' all the elements of the building process, in other words, the door had always remained partially open. The school recognised that the relationship between those who built and those who designed was created within a range of structures that were either restrictive or flexible at any given point in time and these structures should, it was argued, be studied and understood, especially the power and influences of the guilds.¹²² It was not just about the reintroduction of history into architectural education, which in itself was important, but it offered an opportunity to readdress many of the issues and assumptions posed by the conventional terms used often without question. The main aim underlying the courses formation was to rewrite history as it related to architecture: they were not looking at the history of town planning but the history of towns; they were not looking at the history of architectural forms but at the history of spatial organisation and the history of types; not the history of landscape gardening but the history of land transformation.¹²³ This description of the 'Production of the Built Environment' course could have been written or presented to any of the UHG meetings and accepted as a valid definition of urban history itself; therefore, although urban history did not necessarily find a place within architectural training during the

¹¹⁸ Dunster, 'An Attempt to Teach a History of the Built Environment', p. 90.

¹¹⁹ R. Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (New York, 1966).

¹²⁰ N. Pevsner, *A History of Building Types* (London, 1976).

¹²¹ E. Kaufmann, *Architecture in the Age of Reason: Baroque and Post-Baroque in England, Italy. France* (New York, 1955).

¹²² Dunster, 'An Attempt to Teach a History of the Built Environment', p.91.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

field's early incarnation, arguably, with the course at the Bartlett, by the 1980s, it had certainly established itself there, even if not in name but in character.

Urban History in the Training of Town Planners

The following section will provide a brief overview of the role urban history played in the training of town planners. As with the section on architecture above, it takes a very narrow look at the assessment of the profession. The history of Town Planning and the training offered have been covered in some detail elsewhere.¹²⁴ The purpose of this section is therefore not to detail all instances of urban history within the profession's training but to illustrate the different approach to history and its utility in forming new built environments found within the professions of architecture and town planning. As noted above, history of the built environment, or in other words, urban history, was considered anathema to the design process and creation of modern architecture, whereas in town planning, it was believed to be essential. The Town Planning Institute wanted to ensure the planner was more of a generalist, one who could consider a more comprehensive approach to work. To reflect this, there was an increase in the range of topics covered in their training.¹²⁵ This is evidenced in a new set of exams planned to begin in 1950 that had history at their core. Prospective Town Planners would have to produce a study of a square, street, or group of no fewer than three substantial buildings following which they would have exams on the history of the town planning movement and one on the history of architectural and garden design in Britain.¹²⁶ The existing schools already provided their students with a historical background to their work. The School of Civic Design at Liverpool included the history of civic design within its certificate programme. Indeed, the description of Liverpool's history course it

¹²⁴ D. Hardy, *From New Towns to Green Politics: Campaigning for Town and Country Planning, 1946-1990* (London, 1991); A. Sutcliffe, *The History of Modern Town Planning: A Bibliographic Guide* (Birmingham, 1977); G. Cherry, *The Evolution of British Town Planning: A History of Town Planning in the United Kingdom during the 20th Century and of the Royal Town Planning Institute, 1914-74* (Leighton Buzzard, 1974); C. Bell, *City Fathers: The Early History of Town Planning in Britain* (London, 1969); C. Stewart, *A Prospect of Cities: Being Studies Towards a History of Town Planning* (London, 1952). A. Harris, S. Moore, 'Planning histories and practices circulating urban knowledge', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 37, no. 5 (2013), pp. 1499-1509. M. Huxley, 'Historicizing planning, problematizing participation', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 37, No. 5 (2013), pp. 1527-1541. See also the work of John Gold, Frank Mort, and N. Tiratsoo.

¹²⁵ A. Rodriguez-Bachiller, 'British Town Planning Education: A Comparative Perspective' *Town Planning Review* 62, No. 4 (1991), pp.431-435.

¹²⁶ 'Existing Courses in the Study of Town and Country Planning', Ministry of Town and Country Planning, *Report of the Committee on Qualifications of Planners* (London, 1950), pp.78-79.

could have been a description of urban history itself.

The historical development of Britain: Historical geography, the development of political, economic and social organisation in Britain, the growth of legislation, the evolution of settlements and the development of planning; the evolution of landscape design.¹²⁷

The University of Durham's Department of Town Planning explored the history of town planning up to 1850 in their first year, and the history of landscape and garden design and the history of town planning from 1850 to date in their second.¹²⁸ The history of town-planning was at the centre of the course offered by Leeds College of Art's Department of Planning and Housing as it was at Manchester's Division of Town and Country Planning.¹²⁹ At the Regent Street Polytechnic, potential town planners had to study the history of industrial location, general history and sociology as it related to planning and the issues surrounding the built environment, and the history of landscape architecture along with the problems of ensuring the preservation of historic buildings.¹³⁰

Conclusion

This chapter began with a discussion on how a certain set of characteristics were required if a new field or discipline was to succeed. It argued that one of the main aspects was the need to disseminate new research and new methodologies through its placement on the curriculum, in particular within the higher education sector. Without this, the new generations of historians would not be inspired to focus on the urban as a determinant in historical causation and therefore worthy of study in its own right. It recognised that the definition of urban history was fraught with difficulties when it came to its existence or otherwise in courses. The urban, as the location for many of the historical fractures and achievements, ensured that it was always an undercurrent within many different disciplines. However, to be valid, it suggested that rather than the urban being purely a location in which the study of other topics could occur, the definition of urban history on the curriculum was the overt placement of the urban arena as the main factor behind courses founding ethos. With this in mind, and considering the evidence provided, it is arguable that urban history did not begin to enter

¹²⁷ Ibid., p.79.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

curricula until the middle to late 1970s and really did not take off until the 1980s. Assumptions have been overturned. The fact that Dyos and Leicester were considered the centre for urban history in the United Kingdom would have suggested that the university would have been among the early adopters of the topic on its curricula; however, this was far from the case. Dyos was important and clearly central to many of the developments, and whilst he sat at the heart of the network that formed from the UHG, he was just one member of a department. Despite sitting on many of the committees and boards with responsibility of course creation and placement, he did not have the type of influence required. It is to the Open University that one looks to find one of the first true urban history courses. It was not the nineteenth-century that it considered but the early modern. As such, it went against the grain seen throughout the field's historiography; however, it remained focused on London which matched the majority of on-going research.

Urban history's existence within the cognate disciplines of Architecture and Town Planning illustrate some of the issues surrounding the creation of a multi-disciplinary field. History of the built environment was considered essential in Town Planning as early as the *Barlow Report* in 1940 because it provided a framework for the types of decisions the professional had to make on a daily basis. However, within architecture, the belief that history could act as a brake on creativity was espoused by many schools due to the overwhelming influence of Walter Gropius, ensuring its omission from most architects training. It was an issue addressed in the 1980s by the Bartlett School who introduced their 'Production of the Built Environment' course that not only introduced their students to the governmental, social, and cultural structures within which architecture was shaped and produced, but also opened up wider discussions on the type of history needed in the professions training. Indeed, it is arguable that their description of the type of history required was one of the most coherent and straightforward definitions of urban history itself. Although there was a concentration on the Bartlett, it also needs to be acknowledged, as discussed previously, that members of Liverpool's School of Architecture attended and presented at Britain's first conference held on urban history at Leicester in 1966.¹³¹ The link between the study of urban history and the contemporary urban environment was also quite explicit, although perhaps less pronounced

¹³¹ See thesis Chapter Four, 'The First Conference: Leicester 1966'.

than within the field in the United States.¹³² Finally, there was a time lag between the formation of the distinct field and its placement onto the curricula of higher education. Whether the time difference was more extreme than in other new approaches to history is difficult to ascertain; however, returning to a constant theme with this thesis, the lack of a coherent definition of the field, the very catholicity that is often offered as its greatest asset, would not have helped. Aspects of the field would have been taught to undergraduates and postgraduates over many years but not necessarily considered a separate field or identity.

¹³² See chapter Six, 'Atlantic Crossings: The Extent of an Anglo-American Urban History?'

Chapter Eight

Conclusion

For many urban historians associated with the rise of the field in the 1960s, the defining feature of urban history was that its object of research was the urban setting itself, the processes of urbanization, and the manner in which they shaped a distinctly urban society, rather than the urban being seen as simply a convenient locale in which historical events could be studied. The latter has taken place as long as there has been the organized study of history. By their very nature, the majority of events that have helped shaped human history occurred within the walls of towns and cities because these urban centres have been, and remain today, the chosen location of administration, culture, government, markets, scientific institutions, and universities: the subjects of History. Urban historians were interested in why these events took place in urban centres, the processes underpinning the trajectory from a rural to an urban world and the experiences of the people who were part of these changes.

As one of the world's first modern nations, it would be expected that a dedicated field of study focused on the history of the urban environment in Britain should have arrived much earlier than it did. Instead, as discussed, historians in Britain waited until the late 1950s and early 1960s for the formation of urban history. Dyos suggested that historians had 'arrived like prospectors late for the first gold rush, geographers, sociologists, economists, social psychologists, civic designers, were already out ahead panning for gold.'¹ One constraint was a lack of interest in the historic nature of Britain's urban centres within the higher echelons of British society. The urban environment was seen as the location of the country's worst living conditions and therefore in need of amelioration, control or demolition, not necessarily historical study. In particular there was a general antipathy towards the Victorian era that lay behind Britain's late entry into the field. It was simply not fashionable. Whilst Victorian literature had always evoked interest, when it came to the legacy of the Victorian built environment and its architecture, attitudes were predominantly negative. The polemics of Clough Williams-Ellis expressed extremely negative attitudes to

¹ H.J. Dyos, 'Agenda for Urban Historians' in H.J. Dyos (ed.) *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), p. 3.

the legacy of the Victorian city.² Hines wrote that ‘the victims of industrial squalor are silent because they have to live in vile places always, and so, in very self-defence, cannot allow the ever-present ugliness to prey on their consciousness unendingly.’³ Patrick Abercrombie’s plans for London’s post-war redevelopment also show how negatively he and his colleagues considered the Victorian legacy and the lack of architectural development of the era.⁴ The film produced to promote his *County of London Plan*⁵ was overt in its promotion of Georgian architecture which was considered more worthy of conservation whilst the built remnants of Victorian urbanization were associated with the slums and need for clearance. Thomas Sharp argued that the ‘Victorian era [was] not so much memorable for its prosperity and Empire-building as it [was] for the legacy of sordid and ugly towns that it left us.’⁶ He elaborated, ‘the industrial revolution blinded our eyes to all beauty.’⁷ He saw the Victorian legacy as one of ‘repulsion and inefficiency’.⁸

The study of nineteenth-century urban society and its built remnants in Britain were not widely studied because many academics and intellectuals considered the only option was its demolition. But things began to change in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The Victorian Society was founded in the February of 1958 following a gathering organised four months earlier in November 1957 in which 32 invitees, including John Betjeman and Nikolaus Pevsner, considered the formation of a society whose aim was the preservation of Victorian architecture and arts. The Society was formed as a counter to the widespread dislike and destruction of all things Victorian, especially the period’s architecture. This was a point noted in the Society’s first report which suggested that the majority of people in Britain saw the remnants of Victorian urbanization as ugly.’⁹

This change in attitudes reflected a wider mood in British society. History provided

² C. Williams-Ellis, *England and the Octopus* (London, 1928). C. Williams-Ellis, *Britain and the Beast* (London, 1937).

³ G.C. Hines, ‘Cathedral Pilgrimage’ in C. Williams-Ellis, *Britain and the Beast* (London, 1937), p. 160.

⁴ J.H. Forshaw and P. Abercrombie, *County of London Plan* (1943), p. 5. P. Abercrombie, *Greater London Plan* (1944).

⁵ *The Proud City: A Plan for London* [promotional film], directed by R. Keene (Greenpark Productions, 1946).

⁶ T. Sharp, *Town and Countryside* (Oxford, 1932), p. 3.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p.5.

⁸ T. Sharp, *Town Planning* (Middlesex, 1940), p. 11.

⁹ Quoted in P. Thompson, ‘The Victorian Society’, *Victorian Studies*, 7, no.4 (1964), pp. 387-392.

bedrock of stability at a time when Britain had lost its place on the international stage to the USA and USSR. Moreover, the failure of the State to prevent the events of the Second World War after the suffering of the Great War led to a collapse in trust. The nineteenth-century was seen as a period when Britain was still powerful on the international stage, the State was less invasive and more *laissez-faire* and Britain's entrepreneurial skills were allowed to flourish: the opposite of what many believed was the situation in the immediate post-war years. When added to fears of loss and destruction of the historic urban environments, either the result of war damage or by the plans for redevelopment that followed, the growth of nostalgia for the nineteenth-century in the post-war years is clear. If one was interested in the study of the processes and effects of urbanization, then looking to the nineteenth-century as an earlier period of rapid urban change was a straight-forward choice, leading to the period becoming more attractive and more fashionable. Indeed, with the expansion of interest in nineteenth-century urbanization, a process that fundamentally altered the urban landscape and society, there was a consequent need to understand earlier urban environments in order to explain the trajectory, and changes, that nineteenth-century urbanization brought about. The study of urban history in the early modern period also flourished.

The rehabilitation of the Victorian built environment specifically and the wider utility of Victorianism generally as a counter to the changes taking place in post-war Britain is linked here to the success of urban history as a nascent field within the discipline of History. Yet clearly the development of the field was not restricted to historians fixated on the nineteenth-century alone. Indeed, it could be argued that due to their charters and walls there were greater differentiations between urban and rural settlements prior to the nineteenth-century and as such urban history might be seen as more of an early modern field than one focused on the modern period. This was emphasized by Sydney Pollard, who, according to Sutcliffe, believed that whilst you could have an urban history prior to 1750, it was nonsensical afterwards, because everything thereafter was urban and hence there was no need to differentiate an urban and a social history.¹⁰ Peter Clark also noted the existence of a debate over the loss of an urban variable due to Britain's overly urban nature.

¹⁰ Interview with A. Sutcliffe undertaken by G.W. Davies (April 2010).

He suggested that Dyos had felt under pressure from the pre-modernists like Hennock, Laslett and to arguments similar to those voiced by Pollard to justify the separate study of nineteenth-century urban history. In many ways the more successful urban history became the more it had to promote the study of nineteenth-century urban environments: the focus on large industrial towns and cities of the Victorian period acting as a counter to the charge of an evaporating urban variable levied by some pre-modernists. On the other hand, historians of the modern period occasionally argued that apart from London, the concept of a pre-modern town was in itself problematic, especially urban values if not their corporeal manifestations.¹¹

Clearly the early modern period was not ignored, however, historians interested in pre-modern urban history tended to avoid a direct association with the UHG. Whilst their work was submitted to the *UHN*'s registers of research and many attended the early UHG meetings run alongside EHS conferences, there is little evidence that they played any significant role in administration of the UHG itself. Instead they looked elsewhere for institutional support. Local history, with its concentration on community was one such alternative, as was the *Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social History*. There were linkages but these tended to be the result of wider changes within the discipline of history rather than specifically related to urban history and the UHG, for example, the rise in quantification and growth historical demography. It has also been argued that interest in the early modern period was a method of differentiation. Dyos' centrality within the organisation of the UHG was not universally welcomed. Although wishing to remain off the record, one historian argued that Dyos' constant association with urban history was problematic and that to forge an academic career based on an interest in urban history without associating yourself with Dyos and what was seen as 'his group', periods other than the nineteenth-century offered a best pathway. As such, historians considering the early modern period can be found within the trajectory of the nascent field but they tended to be on the peripheral rather than at the core. This changed with the appointment of Peter Clark at Leicester. Clark's appointment was ostensibly to assist Dyos and to provide pre-modern expertise. The success of the Open University courses and the establishment of the

¹¹ Email correspondence between author and Peter Clark (22/07/2013).

Pre-Modern Towns Group in 1978 is evidence of Clark's presence and his attempts to widen urban history's remit.¹² However, without this change in attitude to the Victorian era generally, illustrated by the renaissance of Victorian of all things urban, the growth of interest urban history and its early success would have been harder to achieve.

The change in student demographics also helped ensure the field's success. Following war and then as a result of the recommendations of the *Robbins Report*,¹³ the higher education sector in the United Kingdom experienced an unprecedented period of expansion in the 1960s and 1970s. The new influx of students from a more diverse set of backgrounds and interests resulted in the transformation of many of the established disciplines. History was no exception as it experienced a widening of its subject area and an adoption of methodologies from other disciplines, especially those of the social sciences.¹⁴ New entrants to the discipline found it constrained and often stuck in a pre-war mind-set. These new historians prompted a diversification in subject matter and interest in previously ignored sectors of society. Class and social structures was one such area and the urban setting provided a location in which they could be easily demarcated and studied. The rise of new topics, along with the new methodologies they required, would have been unmanageable if not for the emergence of special interest fields focusing on more narrow aspects of history breaking the enlarged discipline into more discrete units. Many of the breakthroughs that occurred in historical knowledge throughout the post-war period can be attributed to these 'adjectival' histories,¹⁵ supporting David Cannadine's assertion that this was a 'golden era' for History in Britain.¹⁶ Urban history was one such field of study.

Urban history exhibited many of the attributes vital for the establishment of a fully-fledged

¹² See Chapter Seven, 'Urban History on the Curriculum' for a discussion of Clark's role in initiating the Open University's courses which focused on the consequences of early modern urbanization.

¹³ The Committee on Higher Education chaired by Lord Robbins and published in 1963 recommending the expansion of the number of universities in Britain. Cmnd. 2154 (London, 1963).

¹⁴ J. Obelkevich, 'New Developments in History in the 1950s and 1960s: The Witness Seminar', *Contemporary British History*, 14, no.4 (2000), pp. 143-167. See also 'New Ways in History' the special issues of *The Times Literary Supplement* of 1966. (April 7, July 28, and Sept. 08, 1966).

¹⁵ P. Hennock used the term in a negative sense believing that the fragmentation of History led to problems of synthesis. Quoted by Anthony Sutcliffe in Obelkevich, 'New Developments in History' p.154

¹⁶ D. Cannadine, Interview carried out by Danny Millum under the auspices of 'Making History: the discipline in perspective' <http://www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/interviews/CannadineDavid.html>. [accessed 4/12/2010].

discipline, let alone a disciplinary sub-field. The founders of the field wanted to address a perceived failure by historians to study the city as a determinant factor in the formation of social structures which, they argued, had been dominated for too long by the social sciences.¹⁷ The response was the formation of the UHG in 1963 which provided institutional support and a point of contact for a disparate set of scholars interested in the urban landscape and its society. The publication of the UHG's *Newsletter* provided scholars with an outlet for their work in the form of a record of on-going research and a regularly updated bibliography, both of which helped to create a recognised canon of work.

The *Newsletter*, although not technically peer reviewed, did have an editorial board, and although it tended to be simply a rubber-stamp for Dyos, decisions were made about what it contained and the focus of the editorials. There were regular meetings held on the fringes of the yearly EHS conferences.¹⁸ These culminated in the first conference in Britain to specifically focus on the study of urban history held at the University of Leicester in September of 1966. Two years later, the regular meetings at the EHS conference were formalised with a programme of papers and discussions and these have evolved to become the yearly UHG conferences. In 1974, the *UHN* was replaced by the *UHYB*, which in turn has been replaced by the journal *Urban History*. Urban history therefore had many of the character traits associated with the formation of a fully-fledged discipline: an object of study; a *raison d'être*; an institutional base; a method of creating a canon of work and the ability of dissemination. However, urban history did not have its own set of methodologies and theoretical approaches and this is the subtle but important distinction between a discipline and a disciplinary subfield: a new discipline creates its own methodologies and theoretical approaches in response to its object of research whereas a disciplinary sub-field adopts its approaches from its parent or associated disciplines.¹⁹ In urban history's case, the core methodologies were those of History. Dyos' directing presence, although providing the essential point of focus, also ensured it did not take on all the facets of a discipline.

¹⁷ H.J. Dyos, 'Agenda for Urban Historians', p. 7.

¹⁸ The yearly UHG conferences still take place in the same venue and immediately prior to EHS conferences today.

¹⁹ A. Krishnan, 'What are Academic Disciplines? Some Observations on the Disciplinary vs. Interdisciplinary Debate', *NCRM Working Papers Series* (Southampton, 2009). p. 10.

One of the most important factors leading to the high levels of urban history's early internal cohesion was the presence of a dominant guiding figure in the person of Dyos.²⁰ While he was at the centre of developments, the field in Britain was centrally organised from the Economic History department at the University of Leicester.²¹ In 1973, Dyos was awarded a personal Chair at the University of Leicester and he chose Urban History as its title: the first such Chair in Britain. Dyos' presence at the centre of the UHG provided a single point of contact and driving force directing its trajectory up until his death in 1978. Yet there were problems associated with this personal dominance. He exercised such control that others were discouraged from offering new directions or approaches. Whilst remaining at the centre of the UHG, Dyos continually used his position to promote the notion of the group remaining a loose collection of scholars bound only by their interest in the historic urban environment and the human consequences of urbanization.²² There was to be neither official membership nor subscription, apart from the group's newsletter; yet, at the same time Dyos directed the trajectory of the group from Leicester. It was to be an open and 'catholic' association of scholars but its direction was controlled not by any free group but by a small cadre which in turn was directed by Dyos. The contradiction was evident in Dyos' his failure to maintain a stable definition for the group. He continually asserted that his intention was not to 'form yet another learned society with its panoply of officers and costly printed journal.'²³ Instead Dyos suggested his objective was to provide a forum through which scholars interested in all aspects of the urban environment could discuss and share research.²⁴ Later, in his 1973 inaugural lecture, he argued that he was trying to form a field rather than a discipline. Urban history was, he stated, 'a field of knowledge, not a single discipline.'²⁵ At this point, Dyos saw Urban History more as a gathering point for a number of disciplines and forms of knowledge engaged with the urban environment and not

²⁰ R. Soffer, 'Why do Disciplines Fail? The Strange Case of British Sociology', *The English Historical Review*, 97, no. 385 (1982), p. 794. S. Checkland, 'Urban History in the British Idiom', *Urban History Review* 1, no. 1 (1978), p.58; B. M. Stave, 'A Conversation with H.J. Dyos: Urban History in Great Britain' *Journal of Urban History* 5, no.4 (1979), p. 469.

²¹ D. Cannadine, 'Urban History in the United Kingdom: The 'Dyos Phenomenon' and After' in D. Cannadine and D. Reeder (eds), *Exploring the Urban Past: Essays in Urban History by H.J. Dyos* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 203.

²² *UHN*, 3, (1964), p.1.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *UHN*, Issue 3, December 1964, p. 1.

²⁵ H.J. Dyos, 'Urbanity and Suburbanity' in D. Cannadine and D. Reeder, *Exploring the Urban Past: Essays in Urban History by H.J. Dyos* (1982), pp. 31-32.

a form of knowledge itself but again he remained at its centre controlling its direction. This definition was further diluted when he suggested that Urban History was not a discipline, it was not even a clear-cut disciplinary sub-field. Instead Dyos regarded it as a kind of operational strategy or simply a collection of approaches to the study of the city.²⁶ Yet, the *UHN* and later *UHYB* were in effect helping to establish a formal identity for the field. The regular conferences, although known as gatherings in an effort to reinforce their allegedly informal nature, had agendas, steering committees and invited speakers. All of which illustrates the aim of remaining simply a loose gathering of scholars and others interested in the urban environment was often unachievable.

The organization of the first conference in Britain held on urban history at Leicester in 1966 was an illustration. It was not open to anyone but an invitation only event and Dyos was in the lead of deciding who was invited. For Dyos, the meeting at the Sheffield conference of the EHS that led to the formation of the UHG may well have begun as a genuine response to his and Checkland's interest in the historical study of the urban, but later, once it took off and became successful, it evolved into a vehicle for his own self-promotion. He was successful in ensuring the UHG, and hence the field, developed in Britain and therefore he is a constant theme within this thesis; however, his presence is not considered uncritically. Dyos was an egotist and found it difficult to let others make decisions over the UHG's future.

The role of Dyos is therefore problematic. His presence at the centre of the UHG and hence the establishment of the field is unquestionable. His analysis of the issues proved incisive at times and his promotion of the UHG was unstinting. He provided the central personality driving the field forward. He was the main point of contact and figurehead. Yet, the importance of Asa Briggs is often ignored. It is clear that Briggs laid the groundwork and that Dyos stepped in. Yet, even in Dyos' reminiscences, Briggs is barely mentioned. It is the existence of the memorial texts written in the immediate aftermath of his death that prove so challenging. Clearly they were non-neutral assessments but they have tended to dominate the discourse. Much of what they contain has been enshrined within the evolutionary memory of British Urban History. However, interviewing surviving

²⁶ Stave, 'A Conversation with H.J. Dyos', pp. 491-492.

colleagues reinforced the ambiguousness of Dyos' presence, with all interviewees praising him whilst at the same time acknowledging the problematic aspects of his personality. Many have suggested that towards the end of his life, he was beginning to move away from urban history to concentrate on his public profile and his work with the Victorian Society. Adopting a counter-factual approach, it is interesting to ponder whether his legacy would have been considered in a similar manner if the memorial texts had not dominated the discourse.

The conference *The Study of Urban History* held at the University of Leicester's Gilbert Murray Hall in September 1966 remains the event that established urban history on the British academic map as the first of its kind. The conference set forth the interdisciplinary nature of the field as delegates tried to define the field's methodologies, topics, and boundaries. The aims of the conference were first publicly aired in the fifth issue of the *Newsletter*.²⁷ The principal objectives were described as the clarification of 'the scope and methods of urban history' and an examination of some of the specific possibilities for comparative research and to come to an agreement on the object of urban history: 'if merely a field of study, what were its contents and limits; if a putative discipline of its own, what were its distinctive attributes and methods?'²⁸ Underlying these was a belief that the field would only prosper if scholars were brought together from all the disciplines associated with the study of the urban environment, the contemporary as well as the historical. Moreover, the organisers also wanted to ensure urban historians adopted a 'systematic approach' to ensure the creation of a coherent canon.²⁹ A successful outcome would be one which settled on a unifying theme.³⁰ This was not the case.

Dyos' opening paper 'Agenda for Urban Historians'³¹ and Checkland's closing remarks 'Toward a Definition of Urban History'³² are important texts in the development of the field. Dyos saw the conference as an opportunity to organise urban history and to address

²⁷ *UHN*, no. 5, (December 1965), p. 1

²⁸ *UHN*, no. 7, (December 1966), p. 2.

²⁹ *UHN*, no. 2, (May 1964), p. 1..

³⁰ Dyos, 'Agenda for Urban Historians', p.9.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-46. The version edited for publication contained a far larger bibliography than the original paper. Unfortunately, only the first minute of the tape recording survives and it is impossible to tell the extent to which the published transcript differed from the original paper.

³² S.G. Checkland, 'Towards a Definition of Urban History' in H.J. Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968).

some of the ‘stumbling blocks’ that were preventing its unification, which, once again, is a contradiction when compared with his stated aim of not wanting to create a formal organization. Yet, he hoped the chemistry of the conference would foster a conversation between those practising urban history and the disciplines that bordered it.³³ Both Dyos and Checkland recognised that the complex nature of the city meant that any field whose aim was its historical understanding could well fall victim to that complexity. Yet they disagreed that in order to settle on the scope of urban history it was crucial to agree a set of academic boundaries and an agreement on the definition of the term *urban*. Dyos argued that it would be impossible to adopt comparative methodologies if there was no delimitation of the object of study; whereas Checkland believed the constant attempts to define the field were a distraction. This argument was not restricted to Dyos and Checkland; it was considered especially important because at the heart of urban history was a belief in cooperative research not just between fellow historians but associated disciplines. The delegates failed to come up with a definition for the nascent field but they did reinforce the need for comparative research carried out in an inter-disciplinary framework when addressing the complex nature of the urban. It was agreed that the complexity of the topic meant that researchers could not remain confined within their individual disciplinary boundaries because they could not be bound by one set of methodologies.³⁴

Dyos noted that the complex nature of the urban as an object of research ensured that the urban historian could not remain an historian ‘*pur sang*’ without running the danger of deserting the problem in front of him.³⁵ He believed urban historians had to find the individual in the crowd, ‘the community in the mass, personal identity among statistics’, it was a problem that straddled more than one academic field and made demands on a number of disciplines.³⁶ Briggs agreed that a successful urban historian not only required all the accepted attributes of a traditional historian but also needed to be capable of dealing with demography, sociology, political science, art and architecture, intellectual as well as

³³ Dyos, ‘Agenda for Urban Historians’, p.3.

³⁴ ‘Final Discussion’ in H.J. Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History*, (London, 1968), pp. 362-368.

³⁵ Dyos, ‘Agenda for Urban Historians’ p. 7.

³⁶ Dyos, ‘Urbanity and Suburbanity’ p. 21.

cultural history.³⁷

The answer was an inter/multi-disciplinary methodology.³⁸ In order to successfully study cities required more than one discipline because it was impossible for a single historian to cover all the aspects of the city themselves but this opened up the prospect of collecting and assimilating data created by non-historians and recognising when the historians skills had become exhausted. For Dyos specifically, if urban history was to become a true inter-disciplinary field then it was vital that the fundamental variables were identified and the terms were defined precisely,³⁹ because in order to be able to cross a boundary there needed to be boundaries in the first instance and those crossing needed to be known. Moreover, to allow greater comparative study, either nationally but certainly internationally, there needed to be some form of agreement capable of spanning differences not only across periods but also geographically.⁴⁰ However, there was never been an agreed set of terms and definitions and therefore urban history was never a true inter-disciplinary field of study, despite the aims and ambitions of its early promoters. The danger, according to Dyos, was that other disciplines were less forthcoming when asked to communicate with those in other fields; they were often caught in a 'purdah of their own jargon.'⁴¹

These concerns over definitions illustrate the dilemma surrounding the field's establishment: its fluidity of definition and conceptual ambiguity about its object of research has remained a concern throughout its development. Urban history has been described as having 'more mysteries to it than self-evident facts',⁴² and despite the indisputable success of the field many of the early urban historians questioned what was meant by the nomenclature. What were its tasks and methods and what was the scope of its literature and sources.⁴³ Such queries in the formative period of a new field were understandable at a time when scholars were attempting to establish a foothold in academia. Others argued that it was the very lack of definitions that ensured urban history's success and that the field's fluidity provided a cornucopia of research opportunities: any

³⁷ A. Briggs, 'Foreword' in H.J. Dyos (ed.), *The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), p. v.

³⁸ Dyos, *Agenda for Urban Historians* p. 7.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 16

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.5.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.3.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.2.

attempt to narrow the field's boundaries would therefore be counter-productive. In response to these concerns, Checkland and others advocated that urban historians just needed to get on with the job of writing urban history and forget about theoretical deliberations.⁴⁴ The continued success of the field is evidence that rather than Dyos' concerns over definition being problematic, Checkland was correct in advocating that urban historians should focus on the writing of urban history.

However, the complex nature of urban history's object of research cannot be entirely ignored. Whilst the nomenclature suggests the object of research is the 'urban', it is never made clear what this actually means or how it can be delimited. Anthony Sutcliffe suggested it was this lack of clarification that led him to transfer his allegiance to planning history, which, he argued, was far more clear-cut.⁴⁵ Eric Hobsbawm on the other hand noted that urban history '*apparently*' possessed a technologically determined unity; the field was, as the name implied, to focus on the history of the urban or even the history of *things* and social structures within the urban environment and the processes of urbanisation itself.⁴⁶ The city was a 'geographically limited and coherent unit, often with its specific documentation.'⁴⁷ Dyos would have tended to agree; for him the object of study was the city in general, and the nineteenth-century city in particular, arguing that the role of the urban historian was to consider the city as a determining factor and not just the convenient location in which other societal traits could be explored.⁴⁸ However, once again, the fluidity of urban history comes to the fore. A field that focused solely upon legally defined entities characterised as cities would have been far too restrictive. Even if the problem of finding an internationally agreed set of standard definitions was addressed the scholar would have to consider issues of the unbounded city where the political boundaries were smaller than the urbanised area and the reverse, the over-bounded city where the legal boundaries extended beyond the urban agglomeration and included areas of rural land.⁴⁹ This problem was recognised by many of the early pioneering urban historians in the United Kingdom and in

⁴⁴ Ibid., p.62.

⁴⁵ Interview with A. Sutcliffe undertaken by G.W. Davies (April 2010).

⁴⁶ E.J. Hobsbawm, 'From Social History to the History of the Society' *Daedalus*, 100, no. 1, Historical Studies Today (Winter, 1971), p.34, (Original Italics).

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 34.

⁴⁸ Dyos, 'Agenda for Urban Historians', pp. 1-46.

⁴⁹ University of California, *The World's Metropolitan Areas* (Berkeley, 1959), pp.6-7.

the United States.

In 1967, the American historian R. Lubove raised a concern over how the city was becoming the key to explaining the evolution of American life, but he noted that if the city was to be spared from becoming a kind of historical variety store, a thematic free-for-all used to explain everything and hence nothing', it would be necessary to limit or define the subject.⁵⁰ Again, Dyos would have agreed but with the caveat that urban history could not narrow its focus unless and until a definition of what was meant by the term 'urban' was fully agreed, allowing urban historians to be confident that they could define it in 'exclusive terms.'⁵¹ For many these were not purely theoretical machinations; they were central to the future of urban history; because to study the urban in all its facets required an articulation of how it could be defined and how it could be measured. Any attempt to analyse or study the urban environment, especially in any useful comparative sense, had to address the issue of definition and its delimitation; otherwise, there would remain a 'lack of clarity surrounding the category used to determine the field.'⁵² Whilst the majority of these deliberations were never fully concluded, the rise of the field continued and primary evidence of this was the placement of urban history on university curricula.

Although the UHG was initially conceived between the two EHS meetings in 1962 and 1963, it took far longer for it to appear, at least with the label of urban history, as a distinct subject on university curricula: due in part to the length of time new courses took to pass through university administration processes but mainly owing to problems of definition. Urban history, or at least history of the urban environment, existed within a number of disciplines including History before the foundation of the UHG but was not necessarily recognized as such. Rather urban history would have been seen as an integral aspect of other studies. The lack of a coherent definition of the field, the very catholicity that is often offered as its greatest asset, did not help when attempting to place the new field on university curricula. The Open University's course 'English Urban History 1500-1780' focused on the early modern period. This period lacked many of the problems associated

⁵⁰ R. Lubove, 'The Urbanization Process: An Approach to Historical Research', *The Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 33, no. 1, (1967), p. 33.

⁵¹ H.J. Dyos, 'Urbanity and Suburbanity' pp. 31-32.

⁵² E.J. Hobsbawm, 'Economic and Social History Divided', p. 75.

with nineteenth-century urban society due to the clearer delineation between the urban and rural landscape. It also provided evidence of what the later period's urbanization built upon and subsequently transformed. Historians had to understand early modern urban society in order to recognize and measure the changes wrought by nineteenth-century urbanization. It is therefore not anathema to argue that the rise of interest in nineteenth-century urban society led to a growth of interest in other periods of the urban past. Organising a course based around the study of the earlier period was straight-forward and did not require subtle definitions of what was and what was not urban.

One of the originators of the Open University course was Peter Clark who was Dyos' colleague at Leicester, and yet he had to go to Milton Keynes to set up an urban history course. For, despite the presence of Dyos, there was little or no urban history on the curriculum at Leicester. Dyos, whilst known as being at the centre of the UHG and developments in the wider field of urban history, was just another member of staff with the same restrictions as others when it came to shaping what was offered to Leicester's students. As such, despite the success of the group in the 1960s and 1970s, urban history was a new topic and as with all new topics, there was a time lag between the field's initial establishment and its maturity as a full university subject. With the general rise of interest in urban society, both historical and contemporary, urban history was not confined to academia.

The urban landscape and society along with its associated problems ensured that in America the field of urban history became associated with finding solutions to the so-called 'urban problem' arising from questions over race riots, white flight, and urban deprivation. The same did not occur in Britain in the first decades of the field's rise where proponents were generally more interested in the analysis of past class structures than present social division. The Open University course, discussed above, did link the historical analysis of cities and the processes of urbanization to the contemporary study of urban issues but was no more than a link between two courses in an attempt to ensure student crossover.⁵³ However, outside academia the level of interest in the historic urban environment was evident in a number of publications aimed at the general public. Articles in publications

⁵³ The link between DT201 and A332.

such as *The Listener*, *New Society*, and *History Today* by Briggs, Dyos and Hennock ensured urban history reached a far greater audience than if it had remained within the university campus. Its presence was also felt wider afield in publications such as *The Architectural Review*. Although a publication with a more specific readership than those previously considered, the work of Peter Ferriday and Henry Russell-Hitchcock on aspects of Victorian architectural history dealt with developments in urban society. The wave of interest in Victoriana and increased concerns over the threats to the Victorian built environment resulted in the formation of the Victorian Society in 1958, and although missing from its early incarnations, as shown, the arrival of social historians and later Dyos steered the Society towards the protection of not just architectural remains but also archival sources that provided insight into the ordinary lives of nineteenth-century and early twentieth century urban dwellers and Dyos followed Pevsner as the Society's Chairman in 1976.

As urban history was on the doorstep of anyone who lived or worked in a town or city, it proved a readily accessible source for public education. The radio programmes produced by BBC Nottingham and Nottingham University's Extra Mural Department of Adult Education proved how the urban setting could be utilised to widen access to History. And, although not specifically linked to contemporary issues, concerns over the redevelopment of Nottingham's so-called historic half-mile provided the background to a number of the programmes aired. The issue of definition is also illustrated here. The members of Nottingham University who worked with the BBC did not consider themselves urban historians despite their work matching many of the definitions of the field. It was evidence of urban history's public profile but not necessarily its public acknowledgement. However, the success of the first two series which were located firmly within Nottingham's centre when compared to the comparative failure of the third confirms the utility of the urban environment as a tool of engagement. The urban as a setting in which the public could engage with history was shown again in LWT's programmes *Discovering London*. The programmes were aimed at a mass audience who had left formal education without qualifications at the age of fifteen. Central to its ethos was the aim of showing its audience how contemporary customs and practices had their origins in the past within familiar environments. The box sets of books that accompanied the series sold out and required a

second print run. Once again they looked to early modern period as illustration of how London of the late 1960s had been transformed by nineteenth-century industrialization and urbanization. They again demonstrated popularity of the urban as a space for studying history at all levels.

As already noted, Dyos' presence at the centre of the UHG was influential and one aspect of his approach was a fascination with the United States. The institutionalization of urban history occurred ten years earlier in America than it did in Britain. In a very similar way to events ten years later in Sheffield, Blake McKelvey and Bayrd Still formed the UHG in the United States in 1953 during a fringe meeting of a conference held under the auspices of the American Historical Association. During this meeting, alongside an agreement to hold regular meetings, it was agreed to produce a newsletter to disseminate details of on-going research related to urban history. Despite the similarities between events in America and Britain, fringe meetings out of which urban history groups are formed with members agreeing to produce a newsletter, and to hold regular meeting, Dyos always asserted he was unaware of developments in America in 1953 when he and Checkland organized their 1962 meeting at Sheffield. He did note however that he had become aware shortly afterwards. There is no evidence to suggest otherwise, although the date of some correspondence between Dyos and a number of American historians does raise ambiguities. These are reinforced in the editorial of the second *UHN* where it is noted that the activities of the American group were an 'inspiration for the inauguration of the Urban History Group' in Britain.⁵⁴ Indeed, throughout the early years of the field in Britain there were points of convergence, such as the rise of quantification, but more often than not the American and British fields developed along their own lines, each taking note of the other but both mired in their own national approaches to their urban environments. The most distinctive difference was the relationship of American urban historians had to policy making. In the United States, urban history was in danger of becoming simply a 'footnote to the urban crisis.'⁵⁵

⁵⁴ *UHN*, no. 2 May 1964, p. 2

⁵⁵ E.E. Lampard, 'The Dimensions of Urban History: A Footnote to the Urban Crisis', *Pacific Historical Review*, 39, no. 3 (1970), pp. 261-278.

What the exploration of the factors driving the rise of urban history has shown is that at the heart of the field there existed a number of ambiguities. There were those who saw it as an open field offering the opportunity to study facets of the urban environment as diverse and complex as the urban environment itself, and those who believed its future success depended upon the formation of definitions and a clarification of the object of research. More often than not, both of these opinions were held simultaneously by scholars attempting to forge urban history's academic identity. On the one hand urban history's lack of academic boundaries was considered vital to its success and longevity because it allowed a diverse and unrestricted area of study. Yet, at the same time, there was a danger of urban history losing any identity it may have had. For the first twenty years and the years up until today, the former view proved correct.

This research into the rise of urban history during the post-war decades illustrates how changes in British society outside of academia drove the development and provision of topics considered within higher education. The field did not emerge as an abstract entity but in response to a number of factors: the changes in social structures and the opening of higher education to new students with different concerns and experiences; a reassessment of the urban generally and the legacy of Victorian urbanization in particular; the growth of history as a leisure pursuit, and the accessibility of the urban as an environment in which it could be studied.

Urban History Now and in the Future

Urban history remains an open and diverse field. Its object of study is now so huge, so complex, and so omnipresent that it can attract scholars from all, or at least the majority of disciplines within the humanities, social sciences, and to some extent, the natural sciences as well.⁵⁶ Yet, whilst this is certainly an opportunity, as some of the early urban historians noted, it could also be a danger. For compared to the demarcation disputes arising over the definitions of the urban centres that the early urban historians struggled with, today's megalopolises and polycentric metropolitan areas make these debates pale into insignificance. Today's urban areas will become the objects of research for future urban historians. If urban history wants to consider history from the late twentieth century rather

⁵⁶ Fears over climate change and sustainable resource's bring in Physics, Biology, and Chemistry.

than remaining overly focused on earlier periods of urbanisation, it will need to reconsider its *raison d'être*.

At a time when the world is moving towards an increasingly urban future, having already past the watershed when more than half of the world's population is classified as urban,⁵⁷ urban history will need to revisit earlier arguments in order to justify its existence as a standalone academic entity. As the world's population becomes ever more urban there are a number of issues that will need to be addressed as a matter of increasing urgency: housing, utilities, immigration and emigration, social cohesion, the effects of centripetal forces on rural communities and the ability to provide enough food for burgeoning urban populations. Whilst the celerity of urbanisation in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries far outstrips that of the early modern period and the nineteenth-century, and although most urbanisation is now occurring beyond the so-called developed world, urban history surely has a role in ensuring that the benefits of urbanisation can outweigh the disadvantages.

The challenge is in learning how to exploit the opportunities and although not all answers to current problems are found in the past, with careful analysis, the way in which society adapted to earlier periods of rapid urbanization can provide signposts to how society today and in the future can adapt, avoiding some of the pitfalls experienced by our recent ancestors. Although the British pioneers of the late 1950s and 1960s failed to fully exploit the potential of urban history to provide advice and guidance to the urban policymakers of the twentieth century, there is an opportunity, if the field is properly defined and its boundaries established, for urban historians to have an input into the future of our towns, cities, and polycentric metropolitan areas. Urban historians should take the initiative and play a role in what the UNFPA believes is now necessary, 'A concerted international effort at this crucial time to clarify policy options and provide information and analysis that will support strategies to improve our urban future.'⁵⁸ It is within this context that the future of urban history should be seen.

⁵⁷ UNFPA: State of world population 2007.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Appendix

Table 1 Publications per quinquennium in the category 'urban studies and local history' 1940-1964

	Quinquennium				
	1940-1944	1945-1949	1950-1954	1955-1959	1960-1964
<i>Number of books published</i>	9	11	84	142	115
<i>As a % of all books published</i>	10.7	6.8	12.7	14.9	12.3
<i>Annual growth rate of books</i>	-10.7	4.1	50.2	11.1	-4.1
<i>Number of articles published</i>	15	25	171	290	296
<i>As a % of all articles published</i>	6.3	6.6	13.4	16.5	13.5
<i>Annual growth rate of articles</i>	1.0	10.8	46.9	11.1	0.4

Source: N.B. Harte, 'Trends in publications on the economic and social history of Great Britain and Ireland, 1925-74', *The Economic History Review*, 30, no. 1 (1977), pp. 184-190

Table 2 Publications per year in the category 'urban studies and local history' 1945-1962

	Year 19xx																	
	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62
<i>Books</i>	2	1	0	4	4	2	9	13	20	40	49	37	14	29	13	22	15	23
<i>Articles</i>	1	0	7	6	11	14	32	50	38	37	62	42	51	49	86	80	79	57

Source: Appendix I & II in N.B. Harte, 'Trends in publications on the economic and social history of Great Britain and Ireland, 1925-74', *The Economic History Review*, 30, no.1 (1977), pp. 40-41.

Table 3: Issues of the Urban History Newsletter

Issue	Date	Total	Size	Bibliography
1	December	8	quarto	
2	May 1964	14	quarto	
3	December	18	quarto	262
4	June 1965	17	quarto	
5	December	46	quarto	428
6	June 1966	34	quarto	
7	December	34	quarto	423
8	June 1967	51	quarto	
9	December	44	quarto	269
10	June 1968	56	quarto	
11	December	66	quarto	513
12	June 1969	64	quarto	
13	December	64	quarto	742
14	Summer	62	A4	
15	Spring 1971	52	A4	726
16	Summer	62	A4	
17	Spring 1972	50	A4	345
18	Autumn	88	A4	
19	Spring 1973	34	A4	335
20	Christmas	8	A4	
21	Mid-	10	A4	

22	Mid-winter	8	A4
23	Christmas	6	A4

Table 4: *Urban History Newsletter* subscribers as of June 1966

Country	No.Subscribers	% of Total
England	129	67.19%
USA	27	14.06%
Scotland	13	6.77%
Canada	8	4.17%
Australia	5	2.60%
France	3	1.56%
Wales	2	1.04%
Ireland	1	0.52%
Sweden	1	0.52%
W.Germany	1	0.52%
Italy	1	0.52%
N.Ireland	1	0.52%
Total	192	100.00%

Table 5: Papers presented in the 1966 conference *The Study of Urban History*

Section One	
H.J.Dyos,	Agenda for Urban Historians
François Bedarida	The Growth of Urban History in France: Some Methodological Trends
W.H.Chaloner	Discussion
Section Two	
W.A.Armstrong	The Interpretation of the Census Enumerators' Books for Victorian Towns
H.J.Dyos and A.B.M.Baker	The Possibilities of Computerising Census Data
M.R.G.Conzen	The Use of Town Plans in the Study of Urban History
F.H.W. Sheppard	Sources and Methods used for the Survey of London
T.C.Barker	Discussion
Section Three	
G.H.Martin	The Town as Palimpsest
Francis M. Jones	The Aesthetic of the Nineteenth-Century Industrial Town
J.Summerson	Discussion
Section Four	
Leo F.Schnore	Problems in the Quantitative Study of Urban History
J.Kellett	Discussion
Section Five	
J.D.Marshall	Colonisation as a Factor in the Planting of Towns in North-west England
Harold Carter	Phases of Town Growth in Wales
D.A.Reeder	A Theatre of Suburbs: Some Patterns of Development in West London
D.E.C.Eversley	Discussion
Section Six	
John Foster	Nineteenth-Century Towns – A Class Dimension
R.Newton	Society and Politics in Exeter, 1837-1914
E.P.Henock	The Social Compositions of Borough Councils in Two Large Cities, 1835-1914
W.G.Hoskins	Discussions
Section Seven	
S.G.Checkland	Toward a Definition of Urban History
W.Ashworth	Discussion

Source:H.J. Dyos,*The Study of Urban History* (London, 1968), pp. xvii – xviii.

Table 6: Committee Members of the Victorian Society

1957

Chairman

The Rt. Hon. The viscount Esher, G.B.E., Hon. F.R.I.B.A.

Vice Chairman

The Countess of Rosse

Mr John Betleman

Committee

Sir Hugh Casson R.D.I., F.R.I.B.A., F.S.I.A

Mrs Gay Christiansen

Mr Peter Clarke

Mr Peter Ferriday

Mr Peter Floud, C.B.E.

Mr Willaim Gaunt

Mr Mark Girouard PH.D.

Mr H.S.Goodhart-Rendal, C.B.E., F.S.A., Hon. A.R.I.B.A

Mr Ian Grant

Mr Rupert Gunnis

Mr J. Brandon Jones

Mr Christopher Hussey, C.B.E., F.S.A., Hon. A.R.I.B.A.

Mr Ivor Idris

Canon C.B.Mortlock, F.S.A. Hon. A.R.I.B.A.

Professor N. Pevsner, C.B.E., F.S.A., A.R.I.B.A.

Mr J.M.Richards, A.R.I.B.A

Mr Carew Wallace, A.R.I.C.S.

1958

Chairman

The Rt. Hon. The viscount Esher, G.B.E., Hon. F.R.I.B.A

Vice Chairman

Christopher Hussey

Council

The Countess of Rosse

Sir Colin Anderson

Sir Hugh Casson R.D.I., F.R.I.B.A., F.S.I.A

Mr Rupert Gunnis

Mr David W. Lloyd A.M.T.P.I.

Committee

Miss Elizebeth Aslin

Mr. J.Brandon-Jones A.R.I.B.A.

Mrs Gay Christiansen

Mr Peter Clarke

Mr.C.D. Dulley (Hon treasurer)

Mr Peter Fleetwood-Hesketh, T.D., D.I., (Hon. Architectural Advisor)

Mr Mark Girouard PH.D.

Mr Ian Grant, A.R.I.B.A.
Mr T.A.Greaves, A.R.I.B.A.
Mr Frank E. Halliwell, O.B.E. (Hon Membership Sec.)
Mr C. Handley-Read
Mr John Harris
Mr Ivor Idris
Mr Donald W. Insall, A.R.I.B.A., F.S.Dip
Mrs Charmian Lacey A.R.I.B.A.
Dr. Royston Lambert
Mr Anthony Mitchell
Canon C.B. Mortlock F.S.A., Hon. A.R.I.B.A.
Hon. Thomas Pakenham
Professor Nikolaus Pevsner, C.B.E., F.S.A., Hon. A.R.I.B.A.
Mr J.M.Richards, A.R.I.B.A.
Mr Nicholas Taylor
Mr Paul Thompson
Mr Carew Wallace, A.R.I.C.S.

1965

Chairman

Professor Nikolaus Pevsner, C.B.E., F.S.A., Hon. A.R.I.B.A.

Council now included

Prof. Asa Briggs

Professor Henry Russell Hitchcock

Mr Michael Wolff

Committee now included

Dr. F.M.L.Thompson

Helemn Lowenthal

Prof. Phillip Collins

Dr. Paul Thompson

1974

Professor H.J.Dyos joined the committee along with Gavin Stamp and Dr David Watkin.

Source: London Metropolitan Archives - 1957: LMA/4460/02/01/001; 1958: LMA/4460/02/01/002;
1965: LMA/4460/02/01/003; 1974: LMA/4460/02/01/004.

Table 7: Urban History Courses at British Universities 1976

Universities	Modern Urban History	Early Modern Urban History	Local and Regional English History	Other Urban History Courses
Aberdeen				X
Aston			X	
Bangor		X		
Bradford			X	
Durham	X			X
East Anglia	X			X
Essex	X			
Exeter	X (PG only)			
Glasgow	X			
Hull	X			
Keele	X			
Kent		X	X	
Lancaster				X
Leeds	X		X	
Leicester	X		X (two courses)	
Liverpool	X		X (PG only)	
Loughborough			X (two courses)	
Manchester				X
Nottingham		X		
Open		X		
Reading		X		
Sheffield	X			
Southampton	X			X
St. Andrews			X	
Sussex	X			
UCL	X			
Ulster	X			

(UCL=University College London, PG=Postgraduate)

Polytechnics	Modern Urban History	Early Modern Urban History	Local and Regional English History	Other Urban History Courses
Hatfield	X			
N. Staffordshire	X			
N.Ireland	X			
Portsmouth			X	
Teeside	X			
Thames	X			
Wolverhampton			X	

Source: A.C. Hepburn, 'Teaching Urban History: A Survey of courses offered in British universities and polytechnics', *Urban History Year Book* (Leicester, 1976), pp.35-36.

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