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‘RAUMPLANUNG’
IMPOSED
1935-1945
[i] Karl Strölin (1890-1963; third from the right) discussing plans with planners (location and date unknown)
5.1 Introduction

"The Germans secured control, removed the central office to Brussels, but allowed the British to hold presidential and other positions, with which they were satisfied."\(^1\) Thus Purdom retrospectively judged the reunion of the IFHTP with the Verband that was finally achieved in 1937 after a decade of continuous quarrelling. Undoubtedly, Purdom’s judgement was heavily coloured by personal dissatisfaction – he had always been one of the more outspoken opponents of the Verband – and knowledge of the events that took place after the re-amalgamation. What was Purdom hinting at?

The terms for reunion definitely had not been a unilateral German diktat, but a heavily contested compromise. We can be certain that the Nazis that had just seized control over the Verband were reluctant to relinquish their grip on the Verband, unless there was something to be gained. On the other hand, the Germans could not sabotage the fusion without jeopardizing the official Nazi foreign policy of a Neues Europa – one united Europe under German guidance. The compromise did not hand the IFHTP on a silver plate to the Germans, but it did provide an excellent position for the Nazis to expand their influence, an opportunity they seized with both hands. German historian Nachtmann has demonstrated that the German attempts aimed at taking over the IFHTP were inseparably tied up with the person of Karl Strölin, Oberbürgermeister of Stuttgart and leader of the Auslandinstitut, who became president of the IFHTP in 1938. What steps did Strölin and the Nazis take to gain control over the IFHTP and how did the other members react to this? Moreover, what were the consequences for the conception of international planning embodied in the IFHTP, its organisation and membership, its activities and its central message?

5.2 German annexation

The entrance of Strölin

Strölin’s involvement in the IFHTP started when he received an invitation for the 1935 congress in London. Several factions of the German delegation wanted to promote Strölin, who had long made himself a name nationally as a prominent housing expert, as the German candidate for vice-presidency. It was this offer of vice-presidency that really attracted Strölin’s interest in the IFHTP. Daniel Siglocher, a subordinate of Strölin and loyal delegate at the congresses of the IFHTP, urged his chief not to contend himself with the post of German vice-president, but to actively seek the leadership of the German delegation. After his chat with Siglocher, Strölin immediately phoned the Deutsche Gemeindetag (DG) that subsequently endorsed him as its official representative for the congress. In London he obtained the desired position and the DG also got its representation in the executive committee (Walter Stöckle). Strölin thought he had secured an influential position, but the refusal of the general secretary to keep him posted regularly on the work and intentions of the IFHTP, made it clear to him that the position did not provide any real power.\(^2\)
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So the Germans sought new openings to increase their power. The DG had been instrumental in facilitating the reconciliation between the IFHTP and the Verband through the intermediation of its director Kurt Jeserich, which resulted in a merger of the two at the 1937 congress in Paris (see paragraph 4.2). Jeserich wanted to capitalize on this contribution and, referring to the high German membership in the IFHTP, claimed the presidency of the new amalgamated body for Germany. Nachtmann connects the former nomination of Robert Schmidt of the Ruhrsiedlungsverband directly with the German presidential nominees in 1937. However, Schmidt’s nomination dated from 1930-31, well before the establishment of the DG. Moreover, Schmidt died in 1934, so he could not be considered as the first German president of the reunited body. In the absence of Schmidt, two candidates were considered: Strölin and professor Elkart, Stadtrat of Hannover. The national-socialist oriented delegates strongly favoured Strölin, thinking that he would best represent the Nazi-ideology of the present German regime. They sabotaged Elkart’s shot at the presidency, clearing the way for Strölin.\(^3\)

Remarkably, the name of Reinhold Niemeyer did not turn up among the candidates. Niemeyer was Ernst May’s successor as Stadtrat in Frankfurt Am Main (1931-1937) and Robert Schmidt’s successor as President of the German Academy for Urban, Reich and Regional Planning (1934-1946). Moreover, he had been president of the Ruhrsiedlungsverband. As such, the international prestige of Schmidt and his pioneering planning achievements in the Ruhr area had rubbed off on him, paving the way for elevation into the leading circles of the IFHTP. He was already a member of the bureau, had been a prominent member of the negotiation committees with the Verband and acted as honorary treasurer between 1935-1938.\(^4\) Nevertheless, the DG nominated Strölin. The DG wanted to endorse its own candidate, not depend on candidates affiliated to rivalling German organisations.\(^5\) More importantly, Strölin was a convinced Nazi, whereas Niemeyer only joined the Nazi party on 18 April 1933, suggesting that his affiliation was instigated by convenience, not ideological conviction. Some Nazi superiors thought that Niemeyer had been a bit too friendly with his former socialist colleagues in Frankfurt (especially former mayor Landmann).

Strölin was very pleased to see his candidacy accepted at the 1937 Paris congress, but he had to tolerate Pepler before him who would hold the presidential seat until after the planned 1938 congress in Mexico. This postponement did not stop Strölin from virtually acting as president. Thus he was very displeased, when visiting Pepler in London, to discover that Jeserich had been corresponding with Pepler behind his back. Back in Stuttgart, he immediately called Jeserich to order: “I would be obliged, if you in future could send me copies of the correspondence.”\(^6\) Jeserich got the message and subsequent miscommunications did not occur any more. Clearly, Strölin did not want to become a mere puppet of the DG and actively sought to concentrate power and influence in his hands. It became common practice for the German representatives to adjust their intentions to reach a unanimous German stance before important meetings.\(^7\)
A growing American influence

The merger at Paris posed a lot of work to the IFHTP. A new set of rules for the amalgamated body had to be drafted and approved, nominations for the officers and seats in the internal bodies had to be officially confirmed and, most importantly, the controversial issue of the location of the central secretariat had to be solved. The meetings to decide on the new organisational framework took place on February 11th and 12th, 1938. Apparently, the controversial issue of the location had already been settled. Brussels was the designated new statutory seat. The IFHTP was to find accommodation in the same building as the Union Internationale des Villes (UIV) and the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS). However, it was not German, but largely American pressure that was responsible for the move to Brussels.

French historian Saunier points towards the ventures of the American Rockefeller Foundation into municipal reform, or to be more precise its Spellman Fund branch, through the instrumentality of the Public Authority Clearing House (PACH) in the 1930s. The PACH was established in 1930 on the campus of the University of Chicago, that had attracted a cluster of professional organisations in the field of social sciences, housing, municipal governance and town planning from the middle of 1929 onwards. This cluster was housed in the Public Administration Building at 1313 E. 60th Street, which lent the cluster its more well-known name of ‘1313 group’. Thus the Chicago campus matured into “a major national and international centre of clearance, research, consultancy and experiment in the field of government from the 1930s to the 1960s. The 1313 group was powered by Foundation money, academic guidance and complicity, and professional dedication (...).” Central objective was to promote contact between government officials and academics and to parallel the improvement of government with the advance in social sciences. PACH was a pivotal player in the Chicago group. It was a central agency in charge, under the direction of Louis Brownlow, to organize cooperation and information at 1313 and to be a national resource in public administration.

From the outset the Chicago project had an international dimension. Already in 1928 the Spellman Fund had surveyed foreign and international societies, eligible for support. But the time was not ripe yet. Building a structure in the US to organize cooperation with societies of officials was given priority. Moreover, the international chapter of the Fund was undoubtedly thwarted by the effects of the Great Depression. Still, this did not stop the Spellman Fund or the growing number of Chicago societies sponsored by it to acquaint themselves with the European networks of the Urban Internationale. During the early 1930s the ringleaders of the Chicago group toured through Europe for weeks. They visited relevant organisations, interviewed the leaders, attended conferences and inspected municipalities in Belgium, England, France, Germany, Holland, Sweden and Switzerland. This enabled them to identify those societies and organisations with whom it was possible to build long term relations with their US equivalents. At the same time they were looking for models, ideas and recipes in Old Europe that could be translated in the US. Especially the valued examples
[ii] Charles Merriam (left) and Louis Brownlow (right), the ringleaders of Public Administration Clearing House (PACH), at the Whitehouse, Washington, in 1938
in England and Germany were held in high esteem. Thus the Spellman Fund sponsored visits of the executive secretaries and directors of the municipal groups of Chicago into Europe and invited European experts in public administration to the USA.\textsuperscript{10}

But the ambitions of the Spellman Fund were more ambitious than merely sustaining a trans-Atlantic exchange by providing travelling grants. It wanted to organize this exchange on a structural basis. Therefore it wanted to financially support “some European or international outposts, strategic points from where it would be later possible to withdraw without loss or upon which further investment could be made.”\textsuperscript{11} However, the tactics to be used were still uncertain. The experiences of the Rockefeller Foundation in Europe had shown how difficult it was to weld a coherent European program. Moreover, the key-persons in the 1313 group were well aware that Hitler’s rise to power and the subsequent tensions in Europe posed a significant hindrance. Nevertheless, in 1933 an opportunity materialized. At the conference of the IIAS a motion was adopted to organise international research and cooperation. The Spellman boys seized this opportunity and used it as a Trojan horse to implement their foreign program in the European-based Urban Internationale. They wanted to establish an equivalent of the PACH on the European mainland, which they soon referred to as the “Brussels centre”, to be built on the Belgian nucleus of the UIV and the IIAS.

Once the objective was set, the machinery was put into action. The Americans gently pushed international organisations active in the field of public administration towards cooperation, starting with the UIV and the IIAS. The Spellman Fund financed meetings and sent a special deputy to Europe to put the Europeans in a “cooperative frame of mind”, beginning with the executive directors of the IIAS and IUV, respectively Edmond Lesoir and Emile Vinck. Rowland Egger, a political sciences teacher at the university of Virginia, was recruited for the job. Egger extensively travelled Europe between 1935 and 1937, urging municipal groups in Europe to join in the transnational activity, and relentlessly pushed Vinck and Lesoir in the way of cooperation. The crown on Egger’s work was achieved in early 1937 as the IIAS and the IUV merged their secretariats and moved into a new joint headquarters at the brand new Shell office building in Brussels. Early 1938 they were joined by the IFHTP, that had just merged with the \textit{Verband}. Saunier claims that Egger and the ‘1313ers’ had taken an active part in this move.\textsuperscript{12} Although we miss archival evidence to prove the existence of American insistence behind the move, it is not hard to imagine that the IFHTP was very susceptible to the prospect of (material) support, even if it did come with American guidance. A limitation of resources had always been a problem. Moreover, it must have been reluctant to give ground to its main rival, the IUV, that certainly benefitted from the American support.

The Americans aimed higher than merely guiding the Urban Internationale. They got actively involved in the life and work of the international organisations, starting with the IUV. The Spellman Fund opened its purse once more to raise the American contribution to secure the attainable maximum seats in the governing and executive bodies of the IUV. This added a lot
of weight to the American voice on the board. The US representatives used their increased influence to push the UIV in a clearly defined direction: “the Union was to be made more effective in its work, its purposes had to focus on techniques, machineries and organization, it had to pay service to its constituency and it should endeavour to attract new members. Also, the Union was to take place in a larger scheme for international research and clearance of information.”

The results of the American pressure soon became evident. Not only did the sectional meetings at the conferences become more technical, but the culture of the organisation as a whole was modified in a spirit of rationality and efficiency. However, it would be wrong to attribute this fundamental reorientation solely to the Americans. As historians Gaspari, Payre and Saunier point out, the IUV of the 1930s was characterized by a pitched battle between the American representation and the German representation striving to gain the upper hand. Just like the Chicago men, the Deutsche Gemeindetag and its representatives wanted to push the international body towards more rational and efficient methods, although their rationale was a different one. The Nazis pursued transnational unity to support and propagate the official Nazi foreign policy of one united Europe under German leadership. The 1936 congress of the IUV in Berlin was clearly used by the German hosts to propagate its Nazi ideology. It was the Germans, not the Americans, that seized total control in 1939-1940. It is important to note that, despite the increasing rivalry between Germany and the US, the ‘1313’ and their German peers, were intensively trading ideas and experiences – the contact between Charles Merriam and Kurt Jeserich was not just professional, but mirrored a mutual admiration and respect (although Merriam would finally dismiss Nazi central administration as unsuitable for democracies).

The American influence was also felt in the IFHTP, although the conditions differed slightly. For one thing, US participation did not increase significantly in the 1930s. Already in the early 1920s the conferences of the IFHTP attracted growing numbers of American delegates, the core of the American representation provided by the American Town Planning Institute (1917) and the Regional Planning Association of America (1923). From 1934 the American Society of Planning Officials (1934) started participating. Moreover, the IFHTP had already traded in a narrative treatment for a highly technical treatment of subjects in the second half of the 1920s. Nevertheless, clearly a leap forwards was made in the second half of the 1930s in terms of efficiency and cooperative spirit. The Americans successfully coerced the IFHTP to partake in the joint secretariat in Brussels, which presented a landslide compared to its previous stubborn reluctance to collaborate with its main competitors. The culture of taking care of daily business introduced by the Americans at the Brussels centre must have influenced the IFHTP. However, it seems that the majority of measures to raise the effectiveness of the international organisation stem from a German quiver, deliberately introduced to counter the influence of the old British leadership and the growing pressure from the other side of the Atlantic.
A tightrope walker’s act
The IFHTP Strölin sought to get control over in the course of 1938 was a hornet’s nest. Just like Strölin was actively seeking possibilities to expand the German influence, the (British) leaders of old and their supporters were frenetically trying to hold on to the old ways. Moreover, the American members were striving to force the IFHTP in a course in concordance with the foreign program of the 1313 group. Strölin’s negotiating position deteriorated as a rapid succession of events in the course of 1938-1939 - the Anschluss of Austria (March 1938), the Sudeten Crisis (February-September 1938), the subsequent invasion and annexation of the remainder of Czechoslovakia (March 1939), the pogrom against the Jews (the Kristallnacht of November 1938) and the onslaught wrought by the German Condor legion in the Spanish Civil War - fed a growing anti-German sentiment.\textsuperscript{17} But Strölin not just had to fight against a foreign distrust. The municipality of Stuttgart was very suspicious of the activities of its head-mayor in a ‘democratic environment’ and his interaction with leading socialist activists, a distrust that was shared by Strölin’s superiors in the Nazi party and state machinery. More generally, by the time Strölin had taken over the presidency, the times of peaceful cooperation were over and Germany resorted to a policy of (military) aggression and as a consequence the Nazi interest in the Federation dwindled.\textsuperscript{18} The fact that despite these difficulties he managed to strengthen his position bears testimony to Strölin’s obvious skill in diplomacy. How then did he take control in the face of increasing political tensions?

At the meetings of the IFHTP In February 1938 in Brussels Strölin’s nomination for presidency was made definite and as aspirant-president he got a seat in the bureau. Once positioned, he immediately set out to acquaint himself with his new surroundings. The attendance of meetings and correspondence enabled him to identify those friendly and those hostile towards Germany. He developed friendly relations with ‘pro-German’ members in position of power, such as Boldsen (Denmark), Sellier (France) and Vinck (Belgium) of the bureau and Emile Klöti (Switzerland) of the executive committee, that went well beyond a mere professional exchange.\textsuperscript{19} He must also have been pleased to notice that there was no united front against the Germans. The anti-German members were divided in their view of the American influence. Some members fiercely opposed the unorthodox way of pushing Brussels through as the statutory seat without proper discussion. Gierløff (Norway) and Bruggeman (France), two fervent militants of the old ways and opponents of a German domination, raised objections to the imposed move to Brussels. As their complaints fell on deaf ears, they resigned from the executive committee.\textsuperscript{20} One of the main concerns of Strölin was to find a suitable framework for his accession to the presidential office. A grand congress in Germany, along the lines of the 1936 congress of the IUV in Berlin, was not possible, as the agenda of the IFHTP was already spoken for. The matter was solved by the Federation’s participation in the Deutsche Bau- und Siedlungsaustellung in 1938 at Frankfurt am Main to provide a suitable background for Strölin’s rise to presidency.\textsuperscript{21} The German representatives tried to boost the prestige and
political significance of the participation by adding a tea reception at the office of Albert Speer to the program. However, Pepler, residing president and unofficial record holder for most loyal attendance of Federation meetings, declined, intimating to Schäfer that he was unable to attend. Was Pepler really unable to attend or are we dealing here with a silent protest? At any rate, the meetings in Germany planned for early October never came through. Officially the meetings were postponed to late October due to the serious sickness of general secretary Donald Murray, a reason for postponement first introduced by Strölin himself. Undoubtedly this official reason served to camouflage the political tensions that made it impossible for many members to travel to Germany. In this context Nachtmann explicitly refers to the Sudeten crisis. The Frankfurt meetings were rescheduled for October 28th and 29th in Brussels, where the presidency was finally unceremoniously transferred to Strölin.

Back home Strölin immediately informed his colleagues and superiors, first and foremost the Führer himself, about the important international position he had acquired. However, he was mainly ignored. Rather than to await official approval, he set out to gain control over the international organisation. He devised three strategies, employed more or less simultaneously, to improve his position: (1) raising German representation to counter British and American influence, (2) pushing personal assistants forwards and moving activities to Stuttgart, thus effectively integrating the staff of the IFHTP with his municipal subordinates, and (3) subtly dissociating himself from outright Nazi rhetoric.

Strölin charged his personal assistant Kienmoser to check whether Germany was adequately represented on the basis of its membership. A brief survey revealed that Germany was underrepresented. So Strölin and his associates started pondering upon the possibility of another German in the bureau. As the number of bureau members was fixed, either a residing member had to step down or the council was to be seduced in changing the numerus fixus. Forcing a residing member to resign was risky. Boldsen, Sellier and Vinck were considered ‘pro-German’, leaving Dutch member Scheffer as the only suitable candidate for dismissal. But the Germans feared the British were not willing to let Scheffer go without a fight. Pressuring the council to change the number of bureau members was also thought unwise. Fear of the German influence could deliver disastrous results, while at present the bureau at least held a pro-German majority. Doing nothing seemed the best course of action. Kienmoser did see a possibility: if the British were to gain another bureau member through an alteration of the rules, Germany could claim the post of general secretary - preferably dr. Gut – as the old general secretary Murray had just died. Gut was a Munich Stadtrat that was employed by the city of Stuttgart to assist its head-mayor in his new international activities.

Kienmoser’s tactic was doomed from the outset. Sellier and Vinck in vain urged to appoint Paula Schäfer as the next general secretary. Strölin thought the office could only be filled by
a man and the Anglo-Saxon members insisted on an Anglo-Saxon, preferably an American “in view of the contact recently established with America.”\textsuperscript{28} As a way out of the deadlock it was resolved to appoint Pepler as temporary honorary secretary until he had found a suitable replacement for Murray and that in the meantime Schäfer would run the daily affairs in Brussels and would receive the salary of the general secretary without formally being appointed as one.\textsuperscript{29} This situation continued until the outbreak of the Second World War. Pepler did nominate American Donald Tweedy, but this candidate was vetoed by Strölin. Tweedy stemmed from the 1313 groups and was a known collaborator at the Brussels centre where he had helped reshaping the periodical of the UIV \textit{Local Government Administration}.\textsuperscript{30} Strölin’s main objection to Tweedy was the latter’s unwillingness to relocate in Brussels due to the political tensions on the continent. Tweedy was willing to settle in Britain, but Strölin feared he could not control a general secretary on the British isle. For sure, the fear of an independently operating secretariat was an obsession of Strölin. He had lost the battle for the general secretary, so he had to find other ways to control the Brussels secretariat. Thus he forced dr. Gut, who was already conducting the publication of the Federation’s periodical in Stuttgart and who functioned as his personal secretary, upon Schäfer to ‘assist’ her.\textsuperscript{31}

The name of Gut brings us to the activities of the IFHTP. Although Strölin was unsuccessful in raising the German influence in the leading circles of the international body, he had more success in bringing its activities under his direct control. Gut was despatched to Brussels in 1939 to supervise the preparations for the Stockholm congress later that year. But the German take-over of activities started earlier. Already before his nomination for presidency was formally acknowledged, Strölin had seduced Pepler and Murray to relocate the publishing activities to Stuttgart, to be paid out of the German contribution.\textsuperscript{32} Thus from 1938 the tri-lingual periodical of the Federation, now called \textit{Housing and Town Planning}, was printed by Verlag Julius Hoffmann in Stuttgart. Strölin held high ambitions for the periodical. It was the first real opportunity to demonstrate the superiority of German leadership. The periodical underwent a remarkable transformation. The stack of copied papers, knitted together, morphed into a genuine illustrated periodical with dustcover. Additionally, Strölin wanted to issue a new monthly newsletter, so that the periodical could be devoted exclusively to scientific articles.\textsuperscript{33} Initially the Federation hesitated, but once Strölin promised to pay the extra costs out of Stuttgart’s municipal chest, objections evaporated.\textsuperscript{34} Supervision of these publications was given to dr. Gut. Effectively, the execution of Federation activities was taken from the Federation staff in Brussels and handed to municipal employees in Stuttgart.

Besides the improvement of the Federation’s publications, Strölin booked two more successes before the War. Both were public performances that required a subtle balance between his personal (political) ambitions and those of his Nazi superiors on the one hand and the neutrality befitting a president on the other hand. In May 1939 he had to open an international town planning exhibition in London, prepared by the English members. He
wanted to use the planned reception with Prime Minister Chamberlain, who also was vice-
president of the IFHTP, to address the strained British-German relations due to the German
invasion of Czechoslovakia. However, the German Foreign Office and German ambassador in
London dissuaded him to do so. He was to conduct himself politely to the English, but not
too friendly. Political controversies were to be avoided at all costs. The actual reception
passed smoothly. Time went by swiftly as they discussed town planning issues and the work
of the IFHTP.\textsuperscript{35}

The Federation’s congress in Stockholm in July 1939 was a highlight of Strölin’s presidency.\textsuperscript{36}
Again, the venue was surrounded by political difficulties. Strölin not only had to overcome a
growing anti-German sentiment; he also experienced difficulties organising the German
participation. He wanted to secure a large German attendance of the congress, not to be
grossly outnumbered by the British delegation and other anti-German sections, but the
Ministry of Economy gave priority to the Rüstung and refused to finance Strölin’s ambitions.
The situation only improved once German Minister of Labour, Franz Seldte, joined the
German congress delegates. A practical problem presented itself in the form of several
congress reports received from Czechoslovakia that no longer existed as the Germans had
invaded this country and established the protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia plus an
‘independent’ Slovakia. To be on the safe side, Strölin contacted the German Foreign Office
that ordered him not to print the controversial reports. Because of the international political
tensions, the usual meeting of the German delegates before the congress gained
importance. The preparatory meeting focussed on the unity and unanimity of public
performances, dress-code and accommodation. Strölin stressed to avoid political themes.

Both friend and foe agreed that Strölin cut a good figure for himself at the congress.
Although initially met with distrust and guarded hostility, his exemplary conduct earned him
much goodwill and by the end of the event he had grown into the darling of the Swedish
media. Undoubtedly, this foreign reorientation towards the individual Strölin originated in
his deliberate rejection of politically charged pronouncements and Nazi propaganda, thus
posing the very opposite of Seldte who used his presentation for outright Nazi propaganda.
He carefully confined his public performances to presidential words of welcome and thanks.
In his presidential opening of the congress he wisely limited his scope to the work done and
to be done by the IFHTP, highlighting his personal achievements (the publications of the
Federation). In his presidential closure he subtly distanced himself from Seldte’s Nazi
rhetoric. He dismissed the political use of the conference and stressed the international
exchange of ideas as the main importance of the event: “The meaning of the congress I do
not see in professional lectures, but above all in the direct exchange of experience and in the
establishment of interaction from man to man. (...) It is true, in the fields of housing, town
planning and regional planning, all countries have great concerns, great needs and great
problems, and every country tries to solve them in its own way. Still, in these fields the
countries do not stand opposed to each other as opponents, but explicitly as helpers and partners in adversity.”

It was this closing speech that dismissed Seldte’s ‘Deutschland über alles’ mentality and instead championed international cooperation that charmed the international audience. In private conversations with leading members of the IFHTP he was even more outspoken in his condemnation of Seldte’s performance. Finally he had harvested acknowledgement and was regarded as an intelligent and diplomatic individual, not a mere infiltrate of the Nazi government. This new-found trust in Strölin manifested itself in the fact that he was given supervision over the preparations for the next congress in America, planned for 1941. However, Strölin never got to exert this trust to the full. Only weeks after the Stockholm congress, Germany invaded Poland. World War II had arrived and turned the familiar world of the IFHTP upside-down.

Through the darkest hour
The consequences of the War made themselves felt almost immediately. Active European members were no longer able to attend the meetings of the governing and executive bodies, due to travelling restrictions, and the American members for the time being chose to remain on their side of the Atlantic. Initially, the active members held the belief that a political solution for the conflict was still attainable and that the political situation would stabilize in 1940, enabling a resumption of the meetings. However, this belief proved to be naive. The escalation of the conflict had dire consequences for the IFHTP. Strölin had to reinvent the organisation to cope with the obstructions of war and to keep his footing with regard to his new-found notion of international cooperation against increasingly persistent instructions of his Nazi superiors.

Initially Strölin had to abide by the democratic representative structure, but once it became impossible to hold meetings of the internal bodies, proper procedures were soon by-passed. Although in name still an exponent of transnational associative life, in reality the role of the members was marginalized. Boosted by the trust received at Stockholm and the absence of meetings of the internal bodies, Strölin more and more acted as a single authority. He did correspond with leading foreign members, first and foremost the members of the Bureau deemed pro-German (Boldsen, Sellier and Vinck), on the work of the IFHTP, but this cannot be qualified as votes by correspondence. Usually Strölin only informed his correspondents about his latest steps, expecting acknowledgement and support, rather than seeking approval for steps to make. These unilateral steps included a campaign against terror bombing in 1939-1940 and the removal of the central secretariat from Brussels to Stuttgart. The efforts against illegitimate air raids will be discussed in the paragraph dealing with the activities of the IFHTP (paragraph 5.5.2), so I will only go into the removal of the secretariat here.
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The relocation to Stuttgart took place in early 1941. The motivation for this move was not primarily instigated by a German desire to increase the control over the secretariat, but originated in a lack of financial means. The war had brought about a drop in received membership contributions and the cancellation of the 1941 congress in the United States meant that the financial shortages would not be compensated by revenues generated through the cancelled event. Money was running out and the IFHTP no longer could afford its headquarters in Brussels, making a departure from Brussels unavoidable if the Federation was to survive.\(^\text{39}\) The choice for Stuttgart as new host of the IFHTP seemed a logical one as Strölin was head-mayor of this city. He could directly supervise the work of the secretariat and he could use municipal resources at his disposal to secure the survival of the Federation during the War. Still, he was very reluctant to move the secretariat to Stuttgart. He must have understood how a removal to Stuttgart would be interpreted by the majority of the foreign members, so he was eager to stress that Vinck also approved the transfer to Stuttgart as an unavoidable necessity.\(^\text{40}\) Strölin must also have been very wary of the increased control on his international activities that inevitably came with the arrival of the secretariat in Stuttgart. His notion of international cooperation as expressed at the Stockholm congress certainly was not acknowledged at home.

Stuttgart had surfaced because it was the best alternative available. A relocation of the secretariat had been an issue for discussion on previous occasions, but Strölin had thus far always dismissed the other options. Already at the end of 1939 Visconde de Ameida Garret had offered his city of Lisbon, should the War escalate and Belgium be unable to maintain its neutrality. This offer was dismissed as the violation of Belgian neutrality was not a topical issue. Still, Strölin was not assured. He discarded Lisbon because it was too far removed from Germany and informally asked Boldsen, whether Copenhagen could be an alternative location if the war expanded.\(^\text{41}\) A far more challenging alternative was proposed in the course of 1940. As the negotiations with the Americans for the planned 1941 congress in the United States were fully underway, the American delegation proposed to move the secretariat temporarily to New York.\(^\text{42}\) Strölin disapproved, because he would not be able to control a secretariat on the other side of the Atlantic. Moreover, the Germans saw another attempt of the 1313 group to move Donald Tweedy forwards as general secretary.\(^\text{43}\)

Once the secretariat was accommodated in Stuttgart, Strölin set out to raise the efficiency of the IFHTP under the war-time conditions. As it was no longer feasible to organise international congresses – the Americans had called off the 1941 congress in the United States and the planned 1942 Rome congress at Mussolini’s showpiece exhibition grounds EUR was also silently abandoned in the course of 1941 – Strölin’s efforts had an internal focus. Firstly, the organisation of the Federation was modified. Secondly, the internal activities were rationalised, divided into sections, and intensified. And finally a serious effort was made to solidify and expand membership. The wartime activities will be discussed in
paragraph 5.5, so I will only go into the organisational restructuring and membership recruitment activities here.

Strölin surrounded himself with a professional, paid staff to realize his ambitions for the IFHTP. Apart from Schäfer, all staff members were on the payroll of the municipality of Stuttgart. The secretariat was fully integrated in the municipal hierarchy and stopped functioning as an independent, transnational body. These changes were unfavourable to Schäfer. She was rapidly relieved of most of her tasks and her remaining competences were confined to the archives and collections. To get Schäfer out of the way, the archives and collections were relocated to Gaildorf, a little village near Stuttgart. Strölin thought that the general secretary should be a man and Strölin’s preferred man was dr. Gut. Thus Gut took over most of Schäfer’s competences. However, Gut was a poor choice. He continuously infringed Schäfer’s remaining tasks and the other staff members complained about Gut’s meddlesome behaviour as well. Moreover, Gut repeatedly failed to meet the deadlines for the publications, making it necessary to call upon Schäfer’s experience to bail him out. Gut’s interferences and inadequacy fed a growing resentment between him and the other staff members. So Strölin finally decided to send Gut to his home-town of Munich to prepare the publications from there. Thus the secretariat was geographically divided into three groups by 1943: the central secretariat in Stuttgart, the ‘Gaildorf’ group and the publication section in Munich, as can be seen in figure 5.1. This figure seems to only represent the structure of the secretariat, but it actually represents the Federation as a whole. Clearly, there was no
more room for democratic representation of the members (the old council, executive committee and bureau) in the organisational structure.

Although the foreign members were no longer part of the organisational structure, they still played a role in Strölin’s plans. He actually wanted to increase commitment and participation of the members and recruit new members. As it no longer was feasible to hold international congresses, the publications of the Federation became the main focal point for member participation. Members which still could be contacted were continuously pressed to provide texts for the Federation’s publications. Strölin was well aware that correspondence alone would not do the trick. Direct interaction at the congresses had always been the cement that held the organisation together, so new forms of direct interaction had to be employed. Thus Strölin and his secretaries Gut and Schäfer toured occupied Europe and countries allied to Germany in 1942 to establish direct contact with the members to secure their continuing participation and urge them to recruit new members. Strölin visited Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Italy and attended a reconstruction conference in Madrid. His travels were paid for by the German Foreign Office. Gut and Schäfer toured the Netherlands, Belgium and France, visiting the headquarters of the national delegations.

Strölin was not just depending on the members for his membership recruitment campaign and the acquisition of publication material. The German embassies were called upon as an integral part of the network of the IFHTP, a clear indication how independent the IFHTP actually was. Especially the embassy in Portugal played an important role. While all direct contacts with the allied world were blocked, it was possible to obtain British and American periodicals though intermediation of the embassy in Portugal well into 1942. It was these journals that served as a source for articles on British and American housing and town planning achievements in the Federation’s publications. The main source for achievements in the allied world however, were foreign reviews, that is indirect sources. For example, The Norwegian Byggmästaren was used to get particulars on the 1943 London County Plan. Portugal was also an important link between the Stuttgart secretariat and the American members until the US joined the War.

The membership recruitment campaign largely failed. Foreign members that still could be contacted were reluctant to cooperate with the German leadership, especially once it became evident that Germany would lose the War. For example, the Dutch members, coordinated by the Nederlandsch Instituut voor Volkshuisvesting en Stedebouw (NIVS), were very reserved in their participation. Just before the German invasion in Holland L.S.P Scheffer apologized that the Dutch municipalities were reluctant to cooperate due to ‘the international situation.’ Once the Germans held absolute sway in the Netherlands, their attitude did not change, but they had to mask their motivations more carefully. They evaded requests by the Stuttgart secretariat by stating they were too busy. In January 1943 Scheffer reported that he and Henk van der Weijde, the two main coordinators of Dutch
participation, were no longer capable to personally supply information for the Federation’s publications. Remarkably, no one cancelled his or her membership, despite the discontent with its German leadership. Probably they feared that such an action would be interpreted as a sign of hostility towards Nazi Germany. Strölin tried to turn the tide by launching a new working program for the IFHTP in early 1943. However most members remained silent and those that did respond remained vague in their promises or intimated to be unable to cooperate. Clearly, the end of international collaboration under German guidance was near. The coup de grâce followed in 1944. Continuous allied air raids on Stuttgart prevented Strölin from giving serious attention to the IFHTP and the central diktat to limit the publication sector due to ‘war-economical reasons’ forced the IFHTP practically into non-existence.

5.3 Active membership marginalized

Undoubtedly the organisational developments described in the previous subparagraph affected membership and were partly facilitated by changes in membership. In the following text I will once more analyse the active members and their networks to reconstruct the interplay between active members and their networks and the organisational changes of the Federation. It almost goes without saying that the period under scrutiny (1937-1945) has to be divided into two periods: the period before WWII (1937-1939) and the period during WWII (1940-1945). I have identified the last regular meeting of the bureau under ‘normal conditions’ in December 1939 as the turning point between the two periods; not the official start of the War when the Germans invaded Poland in September 1939 and the United Kingdom, France and the British Dominions subsequently declared war on Germany.

Figure 5.2 Hierarchy of IFHTP membership 1937-1939

5.3.1 German domination

Bureau before the War

If we order membership according to influence we can again create a pyramidal model (figure 5.2). At the top is the bureau, composed of Boldsen (Denmark), Pepler (England),
Scheffer (Netherlands), Sellier (France), Strölin (Germany) and Vinck (Belgium). Although officially not members of the bureau, we can count secretaries Murray and Schäfer also among the central influential active members. Only Strölin is a newcomer; the other members are old hands with a history in the IFHTP and/or its fusion partner, the Verband. The only mutation in the period 1937-1940 in the central level of influence is the death of secretary Murray in 1938. He is replaced by Pepler, who after his presidency (1935-1938) continued to serve in the Bureau as honorary secretary.

Figure 5.3 Continuity of active IFHTP membership expressed in attended meetings (minimal attendance is 3 meetings; source: surviving minutes of the Executive Committee and Council 1937-1939, located at IFHP-Archives + IVWS-Archives).

Executive committee and council before the War
In the next zone we find the active members of the executive committee and council that took an active part in the policy-making. If we behold the names of the active members that frequently attended the meetings of these internal bodies (figure 5.3), it becomes clear that it was still a relatively small population that decided on the future of the international organisation. If we compare this figure with figure 4.4 in the previous chapter, the changes in active membership immediately become evident. First and foremost, the population of active members has shrunk significantly: from 33 to 22 individuals (a decrease of about 33%). German active membership significantly increased (from about 21% to 36%), to become the largest national faction of active members as British active membership dropped dramatically (from about 30% to about 18%). The decrease in active British membership can be attributed to the conditions for fusion – the Verband only wanted to merge if the British hold of the Federation was pushed back. If we behold the German active
members, it becomes clear we are dealing with a Nazi infiltration. Socialist activists such as Otto and (Bernard) Kampffmeyer had been replaced by Nazi sympathizers. But the Nazi regime did not just substitute leftwing activists. Planning and housing professionals that had been too friendly with former socialist magistrates or had opposed the rise of the Nazi party as a rule did not return as active members in the period under scrutiny in this chapter. For example Roman Heiligenthal, who had been one of the dominant German contributors to the activities of the IFHTP in the period 1928-1935, was obstructed to participate in the IFHTP. This changing of the guard was also facilitated by the death of old hands as (Hans) Kampffmeyer and Stübben.

Although we have encountered references to a growing American influence in the previous text, this influence certainly was not exerted through increased active membership. Basically American members still only turned up at the congress meetings. Figure 5.3 does not list American active members at all, but this is mainly because the meetings at the 1938 congress in Mexico City are not integrated in the statistic, because there are no surviving minutes from these meetings. If we would correct the statistic to include the meetings in Mexico City, Americans Coleman Woodbury and Walter Blucher, representing respectively the American Society of Housing Officials and the American Society of Planning Officials, both member of the ‘1313’ family, would also be listed as active member. Probably, the American influence was mainly effected through prominent 1313 representatives as Rowland Egger and Donald Tweedy, who were present at the joint Brussels secretariat.

![Hierarchy of participants in the IFHTP in the period 1940-1945](image)

**Figure 5.4 Hierarchy of participants in the IFHTP in the period 1940-1945**

**Presidential control during the War**

If we order affiliation during the War according to influence (figure 5.4) the changes compared to the final years of peace (figure 5.2) become evident. I deliberately speak of ‘affiliation’ because it would be inappropriate to attribute influence to (active) membership. Active participation of the members was still sought when it came to acquiring printing material for the publications of the Federation, but they no longer had a say in the policy-making. At the head of the organization stood president Strölin who at first sight ruled the
international body as an absolute sovereign. For sure, all major decisions and activities of the Federation originated in presidential initiative. But Strölin’s rule was not truly an absolute one. Every step of the Federation had to be acknowledged and approved by a group of high-ranking civil servants of the Nazi regime, officials of the NSDAP and of course the city council of Stuttgart. It was this circle of Nazi control that usurped the role that was traditionally reserved for the executive committee and council. However, Strölin did not follow the instructions of his Nazi chaperones blindly. Despite persistent suggestions of his Nazi superiors not to associate himself with leading socialist dissidents, Strölin continued his contacts with Klöti, Sellier and Vinck.54

Strölin’s policies were effectuated by the secretariat (mainly Gut and Schäfer). In a strict sense, the secretariat of course was not staffed by members, but by employees (most of them not even paid by the IFHTP). Although the influence of the formal internal bodies of the Federation had come to an end, Strölin did correspond with some members of these bodies concerning the work of the IFHTP. However, the influence of these correspondents on the policy-making was only marginal; essentially the course of the Federation was decided upon in Germany. Not all former active members were included in Strölin’s correspondence. Obviously the War cut off means of communication with members in the allied world. But not all members that still could be reached were consulted. Strölin only selected members he personally considered ‘pro-German’ and by including known socialist activists distinctly deviated from official Nazi policies. Thus Boldsen (DK), Klöti (CH), Sellier (F) and Vinck (B) became Strölin’s correspondents, but other former active members, such as fellow bureau member Scheffer (NL), were sidelined. The majority of the members only had a passive role as audience of the activities initiated in Stuttgart. The only active participation open to them was providing information and articles, to be published in the periodical of the IFHTP (provided that they managed to get through Nazi censorship).

5.3.2 Disintegrating networks

Just like in the previous periods it is essential to look beyond the active members that defined the course of the international body and reconstruct their networks. Up until the outbreak of World War II the IFHTP was an important intersection of the networks of internationally active planners and housing reformers and their organisations. Its last international congresses before the War (Mexico City 1938 and Stockholm 1939) continued to attract audiences of about 1,000 delegates that wanted to maintain and expand their networks and attach themselves to the transnational trade of ideas and experiences. But the Federation still was not the only available platform in the transnational exchange of housing and town planning experience. Although the International Housing Association had merged into the IFHTP in 1937, the UIV continued to be the main rival of the IFHTP. The newcomers CIAM and the International Association for Linear Cities, that had joined the Urban Internationale in 1928 and secured themselves some exposure in the 1930s, failed to make much of an impression in the last two years of peace and during the War. After its 1937 congress in Paris (CIAM V), the CIAM had little more to offer than two meetings of its
executive, before the outbreak of the War suspended its operation. Benoît-Lévy and his Association Internationale des Cités Linéaires similarly faded into the background in the period 1937-1945. But the Federation did not just look at the UIV, when scanning the Urban International for potential rivals and collaborators. The removal of its secretariat from London to the joint secretariat of the IUT and the IIAS in 1937 also brought the Federation in direct contact with the latter organisation. The IIAS certainly was not a newcomer in the Urban International – it was established in 1930 out of the International Congresses of Administrative Sciences (1910-1930), but so far the IFHTP had always ignored it.

The social networks underpinning the IFHTP can still be best characterized as a transnational nebula, composed of interrelated national nebulas. Just like the previous periods the active members stand out and form the backbone of the transnational nebula. These active members and the (national) organisations they represented continued to be interconnected through active membership in other exponents of the Urban Internationale. The big difference compared to the previous periods is that the IFHTP was no longer exclusively bound to its international rivals through cross-membership among the active members, but that now a formal direct contact was institutionalized through the joining of the Brussels centre. For the first time the IFHTP was embracing a cooperative spirit when it beheld colleague institutions in the Urban Internationale.

This situation did not last long. The War brutally severed the branches of the networks of the IFHTP’s networks in the allied world and disrupted lines of communication to the occupied territories and pro-German countries as well. This condition made it very hard to maintain networks, especially in the absence of the physical performance of the congresses. Nevertheless, Strölin made the best of the situation and devised new means to maintain the networks. He and his secretaries toured the continent to enable physical interaction, the German embassies were called upon to act as intermediaries in communications with existing and potentially new members and Swiss correspondent Klöti was asked to serve as intermediary for correspondence with Vinck and Sellier, that could not be properly reached directly by mail.
5.4 Transnationalism postponed

Initially the IFHTP continued as a voluntary association and partook in the wider transnational civil society. However, the distinction between the national representatives and their governments increasingly blurred as international politics coloured their conduct. The German participation coordinated by the *Deutsche Gemeindetag* (DG) did not have a truly transnational character, as it was directly aimed at endorsing official Nazi foreign policy and its international activities were directly supervised by government officials. Strölin had to report and seek approval for every step he made in the IFHTP. Outwardly, especially the performance at the Stockholm congress of Franz Seldte, the German minister of labour, confirmed that the Nazis had taken over the transnational activity from Germany and transformed it into an extension of Nazi propaganda. But surely, the other national delegations, especially those active members employed by their national governments, also received instructions for their dealings with Nazi officials. For example, Neville Chamberlain must have had some form of briefing before his reception with Strölin.

The Nazi infiltration in the last two years of peace foreshadowed what was to follow during the War. Shortly after the invasion of Belgium the secretariat was carted off to Germany and the system of democratic representation sidelined. As president, Strölin acted as the sole executive power and the Nazi regime (German government, NSDAP and City Council of Stuttgart) effectively usurped the governing powers. Although still a federation in name, the international organisation had very little in common with associative life. Moreover, as it was Nazi officials that directly controlled the Federation’s activities, we no longer can label it a part of the transnational civil society. In reality, the Federation had become an extension of the Nazi state machinery.
CHAPTER 5 ‘RAUMPLANUNG’ IMPOSED 1935-1945

[vii] Newspapers announce Britain’s declaration of war (Photo taken at the Strand, London, 3rd September 1939)

[viii] US president Franklin Delano Roosevelt signs declaration of war against Germany on 11th December 1941
How does the faring of the Federation during the War relate to the wider transnational civil society? Available literature on the transnational civil society generally identifies a collapse of transnational activity during the War. Many transnational organisations were forced to suspend their operation for the duration of the conflict. Obviously the international climate was unfavourable for transnational endeavours to increase understanding and cooperation between nations. On a more practical level transnational activists suffered from travel restrictions, limited funds and obstruction and persecution (especially in the countries belonging to the Axis powers and countries controlled by them). Just like the transnational civil society as a whole, the activities of the IFHTP were deeply affected by the War, although the consequences manifested themselves differently. One cannot speak of a collapse of its activities, but the volume of activity certainly shrunk significantly. Strictly taken, transnational activity did cease, not because the Federation closed its doors, but because its operation was taken over by the Nazi regime.

Was the case of the IFHTP during the War unique? Like most transnational organisations, the majority of exponents of the Urban Internationale was forced to close its doors and await better times. However, the UIV also suffered a take-over by the Nazis. This hardly comes as a surprise, for we already saw in the previous chapter that the Union was identified by the Nazis alongside the Federation as the organisation in the Urban Internationale most suitable to convey the Nazi message of one united Europe under German guidance. Although the fates of both organisations were similar, there were differences. The UIV did not have a German, but a Bulgarian president in the person of Imanow, head mayor of Sofia. This of course made little difference as Bulgaria, a minor power in the Axis Alliance, obediently followed the German lead. The real power in the organisation of the Union was concentrated at its German Secretary General Götz, who virtually ruled the Union as Strölin ruled the IFHTP within the confinements of central Nazi control. The main difference between Götz and Strölin was their conception of international cooperation. Götz strictly adhered to Nazi ideology and denied a position for dissident and inferior participants, whereas Strölin expanded his horizon to include the prominent socialist activists Klöti, Sellier and Vinck. Götz knew these three dissidents through his dealings in the Union and urged Strölin not to associate himself with these undesired elements.

5.5 From external to internal activity

Just like in the previous periods it was mainly its activities that outwardly defined the IFHTP. After a lapse in congress activity in the first half of the 1930s, the Federation firmly re-established its routine of organising congresses regularly after the 1937 Paris congress, before the outbreak of World War II put a spoke in its wheel. Traditional activities had to be transformed or temporarily abandoned to make the best of the war-time conditions, whereas new opportunities presented themselves as well. What activities did the IFHTP engage in during the period 1937-1945 and what changes did take place compared to the
previous periods? Moreover, what factors defined the operations of the IFHTPs and account for the changes?

5.5.1 Political tensions and struggle for power

The activities of the IFHTP were still defined by a constellation of internal and external factors. Most relevant factors have already been treated in the past chapters. On the one hand there were internal factors as the organisational framework, the culture of debate, active membership and the availability of extensive social networks and on the other hand there were old external factors as scientific and technological advance, economic conditions, environmental and social developments and the (international) political context. After the merger with the Verband at the 1937 Paris congress undeniably the internal focus was on the reorganisation of the international body to meet the conditions for amalgamation. This organisation task provided the occasion for a continuing power struggle. The Nazis wanted to take over the organisation to make it a branch of Nazi propaganda, the Americans wanted to force the Federation in the direction of international cooperation as defined by the 1313 group, the old members of the Verband wanted to reduce the grip of the old (British) leaders further and the old (British) leaders and their supporters wanted to preserve the old ways as far as possible. This power struggle was very much coloured by the political tensions in Europe. As Nazi Germany increasingly resorted to aggression, both to its citizens and neighbouring countries, the factions in the Federation increasingly were divided in pro-German and anti-German camps, although it must be said that some (European) members also resented the American pressure. I use the adjective ‘pro-German’ here in the sense that Strölin used it. It does not necessarily imply a sympathy with Nazi ideology; it is mainly characterized by a willingness to continue to cooperate with German representatives, despite the political tensions. Although some members must have been wary to collaborate with Nazi officials, the Nazi pressure did not substantially affect (active) membership. The meetings of the internal bodies still drew a steady group of active members and also under the German presidency the congresses (Stockholm 1939) still attracted over 1,000 delegates.

The outbreak of the Second World War decided the power struggle in favour of Nazi Germany. Contacts with the allied world were severed and members from the countries of the Axis Alliance and the occupied countries were weary to voice a reluctance to accept German leadership. The Germans moved the secretariat to Stuttgart and seized absolute control. Although the Nazis had finally achieved their desired control over the international body, they could make little use of it for propagandistic aims. In the face of the difficult wartime conditions, Strölin was forced to (internally) focus on the survival of the international organisation and await better times to launch external initiatives to highlight German leadership. The obstructions were formidable. It was no longer possible to organise international congresses, traditionally the Federation’s foremost medium for communication and publicity and its main source of income. Additionally it was very hard to contact members because of travel restrictions and inadequate lines of communication. Materials
required for its activities, for example printing paper, became scarce, increasingly expensive
and eventually unavailable. These conditions contributed to one of Strölin’s biggest
problems: a decline of participating members. A participating member can be defined as a
member that actively provides information and articles for the publishing activity of the
IFHTP (not to be confused with an active member that actively participates in the policy-
making). Other, more important motivations behind the drop of participating members must
have been a resentment of the sidelining of the members of the executive committee and
the council in the policymaking of the international body and a (silent) condemnation of
German aggression and/or Nazi ideology. Although none of the foreign members cancelled
his or her membership, probably fearing that it would be interpreted as an anti-German act
by the Nazi leaders, they became increasingly reluctant to actively participate. So Strölin was
forced to concentrate on keeping members involved and attracting new members.

The initial focus on reorganisation, followed by a focus on survival, explain the significant
drop of committee activity. During the War, committee activity ceased altogether, its tasks
being overtaken by the German secretariat. Undeniably, the focus was turned inside.
Although the IFHTP had opened up to its international rivals and had even partaken in a joint
secretariat in Brussels, its preoccupation with internal affairs prevented it from closely
monitoring its rivals to identify possible collaboration and competition. Only in 1943 Strölin
briefly surveyed a possible collaboration with the UIV. On the initiative of its president
Imanow and the explicit desire of Reichsleiter Karl Fiehler, chief of the main NSDAP office for
municipal politics, the Union had taken up the issue of “tasks of the local authorities with
regard to the consideration and alleviation of the damages to the population plagued by air
raid terror.” Strölin was affronted that this question was not brought before him, because
he considered the IFHTP the proper authority to deal with this matter. So he urged Götz to
keep him posted and to closely collaborate with the Federation on this issue. However, Götz
turned to a strategy of stalling and subsequently the IFHTP crept into its shell once more.

5.5.2 Outline of activities

Although the international political tensions, making themselves also felt in internal turmoil,
affecting the activities of the IFHTP, it nevertheless managed to stay in business. Up until the
outbreak of the War the traditional routine of activity was upheld as far as possible and
subsequently it adapted its activities to the wartime conditions. What activities then did the
IFHTP have to offer in the period 1937-1945?

Congresses

After the 1937 Paris congress the IFHTP managed to pull off two more international
congresses (Mexico City 1938 and Stockholm 1939) before the outbreak of the War made
the organising of congresses impossible. The outlook of these congresses followed the line of
the previous congresses and therefore still can be labelled large CityEvents. The only notable
deviation can be found in the location of the congresses. The traditional focus of Western
Europe was traded in for a visit to South America and an outing to Scandinavia. The
cancelled congresses for 1941 (first Los Angeles, later New York) and 1942 (Rome) reveal that this geographical diffusion was not an incidental deviation, but a structural change. Apparently, the IFHTP made a serious effort to make its conferences a more truly intercontinental affair.

It is tempting to identify traces of the internal power struggle in the outlook of the congresses, but such an attempt is not without dangers. Both congresses had already been arranged before the merger between the IFHTP and Verband took place, so a reflection of the power struggle that took place after the fusion would be limited. For example, although the choice for Mexico City to host the 1938 congress was totally consistent with the intent of the 1313 group to involve South America more actively in their transnational cooperation project, the Mexican congress was not the result of American pressure. In fact, the Mexico City Congress was already planned for 1937, but was delayed at the latest hour to make place for a congress in Paris to enable the fusion with the Verband. Ultimately, the congress can be directly traced back to Mexican invitations made almost a decade earlier. Although the “1313-ers” were not responsible for organising the 1938 congress, they did send a heavy delegation to Mexico and must have used the event to strengthen their ties in the South-American continent. Although the Nazis had not had absolute control over the organisation of the 1939 Stockholm congress, they nevertheless managed to turn the event to their hand. Papers from countries annexed by Germany were rejected and Nazi minister of Labour Franz Seldte unashamedly used his paper presentation for political propaganda. For the first time the propagandistic aims of the host were overshadowed by those of foreign participants.

Publications
We already saw that the publication activity underwent a remarkable transformation in 1938 as the centre of this activity was relocated from London to Stuttgart. The Federation’s periodical became a genuine, professionally printed, quarterly magazine with illustrations and a dustcover. Additionally, from 1939 the Federation started issuing a monthly planning newsletter, so that the periodical could be exclusively dedicated to articles of a more scientific nature. French planning historian Saunier connects this professionalization and rationalisation of the publishing activity with the American wind that was blowing at the joint secretariat at Brussels. He refers to the monthly *Tablettes documentaires à l’usage des administrations publiques*, issued by the joint secretariat of the UIV and IIAS, that was explicitly inspired by what was done at 1313, and presupposes a similar influence for the newsletter of the Federation. However, we already saw that the launch of the newsletter originated in German initiative, not American influence. Strölin might well have been inspired by the example of the *Tablettes* and/or the work of the 1313 group, but ultimately the newsletter was to reflect German efficiency, not American efficiency, as a foundation for German leadership.
[ix] Paula Schäfer and Karl Strölin at the library of the IFHTP in Stuttgart (undated)
Once the War was reality and it no longer was possible to organise large international congresses, the publication activity rapidly became the core business of the Federation. The *Housing and Town Planning* magazine took over the role of the congresses with thematic issues offering national reports on specific housing and town planning issues, for example an issue dedicated to park systems and an issue dedicated to emergency shelters. The newsletter became the prime medium to disseminate the latest housing and town planning news, including reports on legislation, the latest schemes, personal details and the work of the Federation among the members. From the outset the publishing activities under German direction were plagued by delays, a situation that worsened during the War until the Federation was forced to cease is publications in 1944. Difficulties were mounting: internal turmoil in the Stuttgart secretariat, concentrating around the person of Gut, a growing reluctance among the foreign members to cooperate with the German leadership, especially once it became evident that Germany would lose the War, increasing problems to contact members as lines of communication were disrupted or even severed, a dwindling interest of central Nazi circles to use the Federation for their own agenda, resulting in less support made available for the international body and heavy Nazi censorship on the activity of the Federation (most information on housing and planning developments was considered classified military information).

**Centre of knowledge**

Strölin held higher ambitions for the IFHTP during the War than merely continuing the publication of its periodicals and newsletters. Because of the widespread restrictions of the housing production and destruction caused by battles and air raids, he recognized that reconstruction would become a main subject. However, being without significant influence and possibilities of free exchange of information, there was little he could do. The best conceivable contribution was the establishment of an extensive, thorough documentation to serve as a reference for the future reconstruction task. Thus Strölin put Frau Schäfer in control to professionalize and rationalize the collections of the Federation. Just like the earlier improvements to the publication activity, the introduction of German efficiency in the management of the collections must have served as another demonstration of the superiority of German leadership compared to the former British domination. The library, archives and collections of photos and plans were to be expanded and catalogued and made easily accessible through indexes and other search tools. Additionally, there was talk of doing a revised edition of the international housing and town planning glossary, first published by the IFHTP in 1934. Despite the hard work, none of the set aims were met. An index of its publications issued between 1938-1942 was the only tangible result the Federation could present during the War.

**Terror bombing**

Despite the difficult situation, Strölin did not settle for the mere survival of the IFHTP, but actually launched a new campaign to increase his international standing and that of the Federation. In September 1939 the idea of a campaign for an international aviation warfare law and protection of the open cities was born. During a brief visit to the Brussels secretariat
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[x] US bombers above Ploesti, Rumania, August 1st, 1943 (photo by Jerry J. Jostwick)

[xi] View of destruction wrought by air raids in Dresden (photo from 1945 by G. Beyer)
to confer with Schäfer and Vinck, Strölin raised the question whether the Federation did not have an obligation to make every possible effort to protect the cities from harm caused by war actions.\^68 Vinck was enthusiastic about the idea. He agreed to contact the Western-European countries, whereas Strölin was to sound Nazi Germany and, through the intermediation of Klöti, Switzerland. Subsequently, Strölin contacted Klöti and relevant persons and institutions in the Nazi state machinery (the Foreign Office, Ministry of Aviation, central command of the Wehrmacht, et cetera). The Nazi leaders showed their interest in an international law on air raids, but after the Poland campaign with the bombing of Warschau they did not desire precise formulations that would bind Germany. It was the German Foreign office that enabled Strölin to personally witness the destruction wrought by terror bombing in Poland and suggested him to contact the International Red Cross in Geneva to make a next step.

Upon his return from Poland he sought contact with Geneva. A meeting with Max Huber, president of the International Red Cross, was scheduled for 20th February 1940. Klöti was drummed up to join Strölin for the meeting and the two were chaperoned by German general consul Krauel. Strölin stressed that he acted as president of the IFHTP, not on German orders, but the presence of his chaperon gave off a different signal. Fact is that Strölin’s initiative was totally consistent with official Nazi policy, and his steps of course were approved by his Nazi superiors. Hitler had referred to an international law on aviation warfare in several of his latest speeches and Strölin’s action under the aegis of the IFHTP perfectly fitted official Nazi foreign policy. Hitler had envisioned a scenario similar to the conquest of Czechoslovakia for his Poland campaign. Basically he thought that England and France would react indignantly, but he had not expected the declarations of war that followed. Confronted with these declarations, Germany resorted to a brief policy of appeasement, hoping to achieve a settlement of the conflict along the lines of the Munich Agreement of 1938.

Strölin, seconded by Klöti, urged Huber to join their campaign for the protection of open cities, but he also followed the orders of his superiors and deliberately remained vague when it came to defining the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate military targets. Huber reacted positively to Strölin’s plea. He promised to study the question if and how the International Red Cross could make an appeal to the parties that had ratified the Geneva Convention. Huber worked fast. Already on 12th March 1940 he issued a call referring to the protection of civilians against air raids on behalf of the international council of the Red Cross. This call convened what Strölin and Huber had been talking about and urged the national governments to immediately work on a binding convention on the protection of the civilian population. This was an impressive result of his efforts and naturally Strölin was quick to pride himself with it. However, the euphoria was short-lived as the German air raids during the western campaign and the Battle for Britain shattered Strölin’s hopes. Despite this setback, Strölin did not abandon his attempts to place terror bombing on the international agenda and brought the subject to the fore whenever possible. However, he grossly overrated his political influence as international cooperation no longer was an issue. His close contact with the Foreign Office that held out false hopes to him made him lose touch with reality. Every time he raised the issue of the protection of open cities he met a wall of resistance. His superiors explicitly forbade him to pursue the matter. After the allied air raids on German cities the Nazis did not want to show signs of weakness.\^69
Support for the members

The Nazi conquest of Europe brought a lot of members into trouble. It was one thing to partake in the power struggle between pro-German and anti-German factions in the Federation, a struggle that largely took place at a safe distance, but the occupation of the major part of Europe brought the struggle closer to home than most members would have liked. They were forced to take sides: either they collaborated with the occupier or they were sidelined. Most members in occupied Europe silently accepted Nazi domination, while others wholeheartedly embraced collaboration with the Germans, like for example Strölin’s fellow bureau member and personal correspondent Boldsen, who after the War was accused of being a bit too friendly and eager to collaborate with the Germans.70 However, collaboration was not a choice for all active members. Some members unavoidably faced repercussions or even persecution because of their political sympathies or Jewish origins. Sellier and Vinck, both renowned socialist activists, were relieved of all their public positions and the former was even incarcerated. Naturally they turned towards their German president to ask him to intervene on their behalf.

These requests must have put Strölin in a tight spot. Secretly continuing his correspondence with his socialist friends outside Germany was one thing, but openly coming to their aid was something else. Still, a sense of loyalty forced him to intervene and use the little real influence he had as president of the Federation. He managed to get Sellier out of jail, but getting Sellier and Vinck fully reinstated proved to be a bridge too far.71 Surveying Strölin’s support for the members that ran into difficulties with Nazi authorities, we cannot but wonder whether it is appropriate to label this support as part of the Federation’s work. Strölin’s interventions clearly reek of favouritism. He only came to the aid of his befriended fellow bureau members Sellier and Vinck, whereas the other members in occupied Europe were left on their own to deal with the authorities. There was no such thing as a pro-active Federation policy to support their members in the difficult wartime conditions.

5.6 The mission confined

Just like in the previous periods, the interaction between members and prominent external factors affected the central message of the IFHTP. The tensions arising out of the power struggle between British, American and German factions who all wanted to model the IFHTP after their image and obviously the outbreak of the Second World War must have left a mark on the congresses, newsletters and periodicals. However, at first sight there is little variation compared to the housing and town planning discourse as presented at the congresses of the previous period. Nevertheless, subtle changes did creep into the agenda to culminate in the reconstruction theme that unavoidably rose as the War wreaked havoc across Europe. Why did the Federation primarily stick to its old agenda and what amendments did it introduce? Unlike the previous chapters, I will not only look at the congresses here, but also look at the Federation’s publications that rapidly gained importance after its transformation in 1938 to become the sole medium for the dissemination of the central message once the War made it unfeasible to organise international congresses. The big problem with analyzing the message disseminated through the periodical is the fact that I have been unable to locate surviving copies of the Federation’s periodical for the years 1942 and 1943, nor do I have a complete set available for the other wartime years. Fortunately, surviving archives contain references to the content of the missing issues of the periodical.
5.3.1 The housing path: diversification and emergency dwellings

Although Strölin was a confessed militant of Raumplanung – the German equivalent of an all-encompassing comprehensive planning science as introduced by German planning pioneer Gustav Langen in the late 1920s – the last two congresses of the Federation in peacetime nevertheless were still characterized by a forced separation of housing and town planning themes. As of old, the sessions in the housing path were preoccupied with the economy of housing. Affordable, proper dwellings in a well-planned environment were still considered to be the ultimate objective. Without disqualifying the contributions of other countries, the housing path of the previous period essentially was characterized by a confrontation of German and Austrian (foremost the municipal housing program of Vienna) housing experience on the one hand and British housing experience on the other hand, centring around the principal choice between cottages and high-rise apartments. Housing experience in the Parisian suburbs also had some influence, although by the 1930s French housing policy was generally considered to be lagging behind. This British-German domination of the housing discussions was broken open. Additionally, the focus on the ‘low-rise versus high-rise’ controversy was silently abandoned – it was not solved though; a majority still favoured one-family houses, but practice forced them to accept high-rise as a reality - to make place for new topics on the housing agenda.

Pre-war thematic and geographic expansion

The arrival of the congress caravan in Mexico city in 1938 was a clear indication that the IFHTP wanted to broaden its geographic scope, while at the same time the fact that the meetings of the bodies that usually took place at the congresses now were scheduled at the central secretariat in Brussels revealed that it was not ready to relinquish its European power basis. Mexico saw the introduction of a new housing theme, undoubtedly intended to appeal to the hosting country and hosting continent at large: housing in tropical and subtropical climates. For the first time the familiar western treatment of the housing question was bypassed to explore what the housing question meant to the rest of the world. However, the IFHTP failed to bypass the western perspective. The session devoted to tropical housing was dominated by representatives from colonies and the British Dominions. A serious attempt was made to map required amendments to make western houses suitable for tropical and subtropical countries. The whole subject held little appeal to the few attending European members, who were mostly struck by the oddities of cultural differences. For example, in the Dutch East Indies superstition played an important role in the housing of local people. Breaking ground was accompanied with magical formulae and the house had to be allocated in a specific relation to the four winds. Because the wife was considered to be head of the household, her birthday had to be respected in the construction process.

The en-route and post-congress tour across the United States was of far more interest to the European delegates. For decades the Americans had been crossing the Atlantic to learn from European housing and town planning experience, but now they could demonstrate that they had mastered the art of their European examples. The itinerary included visits to the Tennessee Valley Project, including the construction site of the town of Norris where some 1500 workmen engaged in the building of the Norris-dam were to be housed, the new PACH-headquarters at the Chicago University campus, the new state-sponsored ‘Tugwell-towns’ Greendale and Greenbelt, slum clearance sites in Washington and New York park systems.
CHAPTER 5 ‘RAUMPLANUNG’ IMPOSED 1935-1945

[xii] Greenbelt in Maryland, design by Resettlement Administration (circa 1937)

[xiii] The advance of public housing in the US (from Housing and Town Planning, 1939)
These steps were no mere shallow echoes of European examples; they could easily rival with the most ambitious European schemes. Above all, they demonstrated that America had outgrown the age of laissez faire and now wholeheartedly embraced state intervention and initiative under the Roosevelt administration and its New Deal program.75

Whereas the Mexico City congress established foreign acknowledgement of public housing experiences in the United States, the 1939 congress in Stockholm did the same for Sweden. In its final issue of Housing and Town Planning for 1938 the IFHTP for the first time paid attention to low-cost housing in Stockholm that at that time was causing quite a stir internationally. Referring to the production methods Werner Hegemann qualified the Stockholm cottages "among the most modern and most interesting demonstrations on the international housing map."76 The Stockholm suburbs offered an abundance of inexpensive small houses, besides modernist flats, in a layout on garden city lines. The Stockholm low-cost housing achievement rested on four pillars: (1) The houses were built of standardized prefabricated building materials and fixtures according to a limited selection of standardized designs and floor plans. Most building materials were purchased and distributed by the municipality on a large quantity contract basis, resulting in about a 20% cut in the costs of building materials. (2) with the exception of skilled labour at certain stages of construction, the actual building work was executed by the family that was to occupy the house upon its completion under expert supervision and support, resulting in an additional saving of approximately 10% without significant loss of quality. (3) The garden suburbs were built on land owned by the municipality in a spacious layout (only 45 to 55% of the sites was reserved for building houses upon) and planned in relation to the wider Stockholm region. (4) The financing of the scheme was done by the municipality on a 30-year amortization basis up to 90% of the actual building costs, effectively providing small houses in suburbia for about the same price of a one-room and pantry flat in downtown Stockholm.77

The importance of the Stockholm congress went beyond highlighting Swedish housing experience. The housing section featured a most interesting thematic expansion: housing for special groups. The groups referred to were: (a) agricultural workers, (b) retired people, (c) unmarried wage-earners of both sexes, (d) people with large families, (e) war invalids and (f) undesirable tenants. For the first time the opportunity was opened to look beyond the regular family that implicitly had always been the object of the past treatment of the housing question and see what this question meant in relation to other groups. However, the delegates failed to seize the opportunity. They did not arrive at diversified housing typologies for different groups. The basic belief of the one-family house as the best available housing unit persevered.78

War-time confinement
Once the War was a reality the thematic and geographical expansion of the housing path was rapidly undone. The armed conflict unavoidably divided the world in two spheres: the allied world on the one hand and the Axis powers and territories controlled by them on the other hand. As the IFHTP was located in Germany, its geographic scope gradually was limited to Germany, its allies, the countries occupied by it and some neutral countries. Just before the War, the periodical of the IFHTP under German guidance still featured extensive coverage of housing experience in countries that were to constitute the allied powers, for example the extensive treatment of the 1937 American Housing Act in the issues of 1938.79 In the first wartime years, the contribution from the allied world rapidly shrunk to indirect
reports based on articles and reviews in other periodicals. By the end of the War coverage of the allied world had become close to non-existent.

But it was not just the geographic scope that suffered from the War; the thematic scope was affected as well. Already in 1939 Dutch planner de Jonge van Ellemeet had raised objections to accommodate the publication activity in a belligerent nation fearing censorship. For sure, the publications of the Federation were monitored meticulously by Nazi officials, altered to fit Nazi ideology and ultimately censored to prevent military strategic information from being circulated. For example, the thematic expansion introduced at Stockholm was not taken up again. In Nazi ideology the traditional family was the cornerstone of society, and as such, the housing path again centred around the one-family house. The housing of anti-social groups (undesirable tenants) certainly was not an issue in Germany. With reference to military censorship, we can move the obvious absence of statistical data and plans forwards as an example. Statistical data could render the allied forces information about the effectiveness of their air raids and city plans of course could be used to locate potential targets.

Despite the regressing horizon of the housing path, Strölin did manage to introduce one new housing theme: emergency dwellings. This new theme was introduced very late. The Federation’s special issue of its periodical devoted to emergency dwellings was only issued in 1944, whereas housing shortages originating in damages and destruction wrought by the War and a general stagnation of the building sector had already become a pressing problem at the beginning of the War. Undoubtedly the Nazi leaders initially wanted to uphold a picture of a strong Germany that could not be brought to its knees by allied bombardments, but once the allied air raids were intensified and were also explicitly aimed at civilian targets, the German picture crumbled and was no longer credible, opening the way for a dialogue on the resulting housing problems. But it was not an open dialogue. Not all members were able and willing to participate. Evidently, the allied members could not participate directly, but their experiences were also not covered in reports. Moreover, the treatment of the subject was censored. The articles and reports in the emergency housing issue contain some references to air raids, but (politically charged) condemnations of these attacks were carefully avoided. For example the report on emergency housing in Rotterdam cautiously avoids identifying Germany as the aggressor. More striking though, is the complete absence of an assessment of the scale of the emergency housing problem. The extent of damage and destruction suffered by air raids was military classified information, and as such could not be discussed and circulated.

Confronted with these confinements Strölin resorted to a highly technical treatment of the subject. The emergency dwellings discussion centred around questions of construction and methods to be employed. Although the needs differed from country to country, generally the solution was thought to be found in standardization. In Sweden and Finland the demand for emergency shelters was minimal. Since the 1920s a modern, highly efficient industry of standardized, prefabricated wooden houses had arisen in these two countries that could easily cope with the internal housing demands. In fact, benefitted by the War the Nordic wooden houses had turned into a profitable export industry. In the Netherlands the situation was totally different. Here, emergency houses were not considered. Makeshift wooden houses were too expensive and emergency houses of brick were not much cheaper
than normal houses because the average Dutch house had always been more lightly constructed than elsewhere due to the soil conditions.

The Belgians spoke with authority on the subject, for they had had ample experience with emergency dwelling in the aftermath of the First World War. Belgian member Raphael Verwilghen dismissed the barrack solution. The old barrack camps had turned into slums. He had repeatedly pointed out the dangers of haphazard agglomerations of hutments on sites chosen at random and had insisted on the application of sound town-planning principles. Basically he championed the construction of small semi-permanent settlements on garden city lines. The semi-permanent dwellings were governed by the concept and method of standardization – a uniform wooden skeleton was handed out to the prospective inhabitants that subsequently filled it themselves with brickwork under the supervision of a skilled bricklayer. He rested his case by presenting the garden city of Ligy at Ypres (1920, by architect R. Acke) as the perfect example of best practice. The French report revealed that the French had chosen a path similar to the Belgian one.

Of course Germany claimed the prime spot in the emergency dwellings issue, although the German solutions did not significantly deviate from Verwilghen’s approach. German contributor Hans Spiegel condemned the attitude of architects to construct makeshifts as if they were permanent dwellings. He thought good hutments preferable to bad housing for bombed families. In Germany emergency dwellings were built with every conceivable material available or assembled from prefabricated parts. Also in Germany, the key to quality and quantity was sought in standardization. An elaborate system of Reich standards was set up that prescribed uniform standards for all kinds of building parts and constructions. But Spiegel was not just content with technically adequate shelters. The first attempts at emergency homes had rendered uncouth and ugly results. Therefore he hoped that in the future usefulness and cheapness could be coupled with beauty. The German contribution also included a plea for the application of town planning principles, coupled with the ideals of community building and a reconciliation of urban and rural life. The Germans favoured the construction of small semi-permanent settlements on the outskirts of cities and small towns. These settlements were to be carefully integrated into the surrounding landscape, creating a landscape space that could be called ‘Heimat’ and that provided natural shelter from air raids.84

Analyzing the contributions for the emergency dwelling issue of the periodical of the Federation, we cannot but notice that the contributors moved towards a reconciliation and re-integration of housing and planning. No longer were housing and planning artificially separated as two distinctively different, albeit associated, disciplines, but they were finally again treated as two sides of the same coin. This reorientation was aptly acknowledged in the change of names of the periodical which now explicitly included the all-encompassing Raumplanung. Another noteworthy feature of the discussion was the revaluation of the old garden city idea. In the face of air raid terror and the immediate need for cheap makeshift houses the old garden city ideals offered familiar and practical leads.

5.3.2 The planning path: national planning and reconstruction

Just like the housing path, the planning path initially was little more than a continuation of the agenda of the past decade. Unlike the housing path, the planning path did not witness a significant thematic or geographic expansion in the last years of peace. The issues under
discussion mostly had been addressed at previous congresses, both independently (city administration and traffic) and as part of other themes (recreational planning and national planning). British and German planning doctrine continued to dominate the transnational trade of ideas and experiences at the congresses, but now under the guidance of the 1313 group (see paragraph 5.2) and experiences of New Deal planning in their baggage the Americans claimed a more prominent position in the spotlight. Once the Second World War broke out, the Germans soon solely dictated the planning path.

A confrontation of western and Latin-American planning
The town planning sessions at the 1938 Mexico City Congress held little appeal to the European and (North) American planners. Carl Feiss, professor at the Department of Architecture of Columbia University, who only arrived in Mexico City after the closing of the conference was told by Walter Blucher that “nothing had been missed” and Feiss and Raymond Unwin “were well out of a very dull meeting.” The fact that Pepler devoted the major part of his report on the Mexico City congress to the en-route and post-congress tour through the United States also suggests that the congress itself held little appeal to him. The only new issue introduced at Mexico City was ‘underground planning.’ The reporters unanimously concluded that systematic planning was severely missed with regard to sewerage, piping (gas and water), wiring (electricity), subway and street traffic. English engineer and surveyor E.J. Goodacre pointed out the significance of underground planning with regard to air raids and recommended taking precautions.

Besides ‘underground planning’, ‘planning recreation’ was a main conference theme at the planning sessions in Mexico City. Riboldazzi points out that that the leisure theme had already featured prominently at the CIAM congress in Paris in 1937, although it is unlikely the 1937 CIAM congress served as a reference for the Mexico City congress of the IFHTP. In the planning discourse of the IFHTP leisure so far had been a part of two distinctly different strands: on the one hand it had been part of Howard’s original idea of community building and as such applied in garden city schemes (playgrounds, civic centres, (public) gardens, et cetera), on the other hand it had been part of the supervisory regional planning science that was embraced in the 1920s (parks and park systems, preservation of the countryside, restriction of (thoroughfare) traffic, et cetera). Although the advance of functionalist planning and - in western industrializing cities - the rapid transformation of the use of public space – ever more space was being claimed by motorized vehicles – called for more space reserved for physical activities and pastime, especially considering children, the majority of the national reporters focussed on the old ideal of civic improvement and the preservation and improvement of valuable natural surroundings.

Most reporters tied civic improvement up with gymnastics as a means to improve a sense of collectiveness and to raise physical and spiritual health. The Czechoslovakian report presented the Sokol movement, a youth sport movement and gymnastics organisation established in 1862 in Prague by Miroslav Tyrš and Jindřich Fügner. Nearly every Czechoslovakian city and village had a Sokol sports centre. Cuba was working on a national health programme. Sverre Pedersen reported that on an average winter Sunday about one tenth of the residents of Oslo fled town to ski in the countryside. Mexico City offered splendid playgrounds with gymnastics halls, swimming pools, sports centres et cetera. In the US it was common to use local schools for neighbourhood activities in the evening hours. Additionally, civic centres were created across the country, especially in the new Greenbelt
[xvii] Regional plan for Copenhagen and its Environs (1938), designed under aegis of Dansk Byplanlaboratorium

[xviii] Definitive design for Amsterdamse bos (1937) by Municipal Department of Urban Development of Amsterdam
Towns. Italian engineer Vincenzo Civico elaborated on the new towns in the reclaimed Pontian Marshes. Fascist Italy invested in a large agricultural society and its new towns in the countryside were equipped with a range of amenities for leisure. The reports also paid special attention to parks and park systems. In the plan for Greater Prague 27% of the area was reserved for green space, public gardens and other public space. Dutch landscape architect J.T.P. Bihouwer presented the plan for the Amsterdamse Bos, an enormous public park near Amsterdam. From Palestine attention was called for Patrick Abercrombie’s greenbelt for Haifa Bay that was to separate residential quarters from industrial quarters. Mexico had designated 26 national parks. In that respect, the US reporter had far more impressive figures to show: in the US in 1935 1200 cities with more than 2500 residents offered 15,105 parks, covering an area of 381,496 acres. The reporter called attention to the advance of new parks outside the cities. In 1935 299 cities had such a park with an average acreage of 253. By 1938 national parks covered an acreage of 1,700,000. National forests covered another 17,815,772 acres on June 30th 1937. Based on origin and character, the US had four different types of national parks: nature parks, estates protected because of the extraordinary natural beauty; historical parks, estates protected because of their significance in national history; military parks for important historical battlefields; national monuments, protected due to their geological, archaeological or historical significance. National woods were protected because of their richness of building wood, as well as other economic considerations. Two round table sessions on town planning education and city administration completed the programme of the Mexico City conference. These issues were very relevant for the hosting country, and the hosting continent at large. South-American planning historian Arturo Almandoz demonstrates that most South American countries were still in the process of institutionalizing town planning. By the late 1920s industrial growth, the exodus from the countryside to the cities and suburban sprawl forced Latin American’s major capitals to adopt plans, which were undertaken by local governments relying both on foreign experts and new generations of native professionals. The influence of European pioneers was still evident in the widespread use of books by authors such as Camillo Sitte, Marcel Poëte, Pierre Lavedan and Raymond Unwin, that were translated or circulated in their original language among Latin American professionals. Besides new professional periodicals, for example Mexican Planificatión, (inter)national conferences played an important role in the dissemination of urbanism and technical innovations. Confirming the necessity of administrative change for the consolidation of planning – as most advanced western industrialized countries had already acknowledged in the preceding decades – the South-American planning machinery took shape in the second half of the 1920s, when urban problems became a public issue for administrative regulation. Most of the national and municipal offices of urban planning were a joint effort by local and national governments, new professional organisations and urban research centres. As a late expression of inter-war colonialism in Latin America, which was still seduced by Europe’s cultural and academic prestige, the new offices of urban planning, although boasting teams that already had professionally matured, hired famous experts from Europe, either as advisors or coordinators of the plans to be produced. According to Almandoz the new instruments seemed to reach the value of manifestoes of the emerging planning profession, unlike the European countries where the first planning laws had more epistemological significance. Capitalizing on the eclectic side of French urbanism in Belle-
Époque Latin America, prominent representatives of the École Française d’Urbanisme (EFU) were attracted to partake in proposals and plans for some major South-American capitals. French landscape architect Jean-Claude Nicolas Forrestier inspired the Commissión de Estética Edilicia for its ‘organic plan’ for Buenos Aires (1925) and also drafted the Plan for the Beautification and Enlargement of Havana, which was included in the new Cuban Act of Public Works (1925). Léon Jaussely visited Montevideo in 1926. The founder of the Société Française des Urbanistes (SFU) seemed to reinvent the repertoire of the Beaux-Arts tradition as he dismissed the colonial grid in favour for garden city principles in relation to city extension. Donat-Alfred Agache coordinated a plan for Rio (1926-1930), which presented a methodological model with many geographical surveys and an informative synthesis of the sprawling capital. The office of Henri Prost advised the Directorate of Urbanism of Caracas’ Federal district, which produced a first plan for the Venezuelan capital in 1939, which offered a belated example of the EFU’s eclectic tradition. An alternative interpretation of French modern planning was imported through Le Corbusier, who was invited to visit Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Saõ Paulo and Rio in 1929, while the second gathering of the Congrès Internationaux d’Architecture Moderne (CIAM) took place in Frankfurt. Latin America did not just look at France. Planning professionals from the German-speaking world were also invited to contribute to the emerging Latin American urbanism. Werner Hegemann, the editor of the influential planning periodical Der Städtebau, was invited to Buenos Aires in 1931 by Los Amigos de la Ciudad, a pragmatic society which was not satisfied with either the EFU’s academic proposals or Le Corbusier’s prefabricated plans. The most conspicuous representative from the German-speaking world was Austrian architect Karl Brunner, whose long sojourns in Santiago de Chili and Bogota confirmed him as the main champion in Latin America of a rationalist and contextualized Städtebau pursued by some professionals in the aftermath of Sitte’s aestheticism. In 1928 a planning commission, the Asociación Nacional para la Planificación de la República Mexicana (ANPRM), was installed to advise the national Mexican government. Experts from all over the developed world were appointed to advise the Mexican government. This is considered the first official commission for planning in modern Mexico, following the initiative and advice of Mexican architect Carlos Contreras, who was trained at Columbia University. The National Association for the Planning of the Mexican Republic consulted famous planners, architects, civil and road engineers, as well as urban designers with the newest urban ideas, theories, plans and experiences, among those were: Ebenezer Howard, Raymond Unwin, Patrick Geddes, Arturo Soria y Mata, Jacques H. Lambert and Edward H. Bennett.

The consolidation through university courses and legislation was an important part of the institutionalisation process of modern town planning in Latin America. Post-revolutionary Mexico, was one of the first Latin American countries where a town planning milieu matured, boosted by the technocratic reforms launched by the national government in the 1920s. The course ‘city planning and civic art’ was inaugurated in 1926 at the National School of Fine Arts. Initially José Luis Cuevas Pietrasanta was in charge; in 1929 he was succeeded by Carlos Contreras, while Cuevas set up a similar programme at the Autonomous University. Led by the ANPRM, the celebration of the first national conference on town planning in 1930, as well as the passing of a general law on planning in the same year, confirm Mexico’s pioneering development of a professional and legal groundwork.
South-American countries such as Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia witnessed similar trajectories for the institutionalization of modern town planning. Of all the visiting foreign maestros, Karl Brunner reached the greater influence on the institutionalization of modern planning in Latin America. Not only had he been instrumental in consolidating the professional and institutional platforms of Chile and Colombia, but he also produced the influential two volume *Manuel de urbanismo* (1939-1940). Brunner's manual reviewed the solutions that the emerging planning profession provided for the problems that manifested the world metropolises, with many examples drawn from Latin America's fast-growing cities. The manual aimed at comprehending the 'scientific system' of the discipline, comprising political–sociological, technical and artistic components, the latter of which included the 'history of urban art.' By grouping and synthesizing the trends that allegedly accounted for the evolution of contemporary urbanism—namely a historicist *Städtebau* related to the English town planning, the Haussmannian Beaux-Arts and a landscape architecture originating in the City Beautiful—Brunner recomposed traditions that, in spite of the noticeable absence of CIAM's already-consolidated presence, informed most of the palette that coloured Latin America's first urban plans.

It was Carlos Contreras, prominent Mexican campaigner for the professionalization of town planning and long-standing member of the executive committee of the IFHTP, who used his position in the local organizing committee of the Mexico City congress, to add the round table sessions on town planning education and city administration to the congress agenda. These themes were not just topical with regard to the advancing Latin American institutionalization of town planning, but they also fitted his personal ambitions. Contreras endeavoured to set up a faculty of planning in Mexico that would certify students in three years. Undoubtedly, Contreras saw the potential of the round table session on town planning education to further his agenda. Prominent foreign experts were invited to discuss town planning education. The session was chaired by professor W.G. Holford of the department of Civic Design of Liverpool University. Other contributors included the aforementioned professor Karl Brunner (Austria), Raymond Unwin (England), K. Köster (Germany) and some Latin American experts. Contreras' original initiative of a faculty of planning was not carried out. Nevertheless, in 1939 a graduate programme on Urbanism and Planning was created at the National Polytechnic Institute's High School of Engineering, probably the first in Latin America. The town planning education session at the Mexico City conference might have served as a catalyst, but without additional archival evidence this question cannot be answered.

The other round table session on city administration provided a litmus test. Could Mexican town planning legislation and organisation live up to western standards? The session was chaired by Charles E. Merriam, professor of political sciences at Chicago University and one of the ringleaders of the 1313 group. The international party scrutinized the Mexican planning laws of 1933; especially the new Expropriation law (1937) was studied. Of course the session also offered an occasion to inspect the latest Mexican plans, including Contreras’ 1935 plan for Mexico City. Mexico, like most other Latin American countries had borrowed urban models form the advanced industrialized western world, but had adapted them to meet local customs, climatic conditions, economic, geographic and environmental situations, as well as social and political visions. South-American planning enticed attempts to construct a cultural identity, regarded both as ‘modern’ and as ‘Latin American.’ Thus, the use of
[xiv] Carlos Contreras, road plan for Mexico City (1938)
modern urban models generated different outcomes when compared to the outcomes of more developed countries (such as Britain, France, Germany and the United States). Most western planners failed to see the merits of Latin-American planning, prompting Italian architectural historian Riboldazzi to label the 1938 Mexico city congress of the IFHTP a ‘missed opportunity.’ To use the words of Carl Feiss: “I had a very pleasant time with Contreras and saw a good deal of the work which is being done. They have many handicaps to overcome in Mexico and terrific problems. Unfortunately, the Latin desire for monumentality seems to predominate.”

The advance of national planning
For its 1939 conference the IFHTP returned to Europe. Stockholm provided the scenery for the final congress in peacetime. The planning discussions were somewhat overshadowed by the housing sessions. Recent Swedish housing experience was causing quite a stir internationally at that moment. Moreover, the minds of most delegate were preoccupied with the inevitability of a new war. The town planning sessions were dedicated to local traffic and regional and national planning. Especially the introduction of national planning as main conference theme was conspicuous, although the notion of national planning of course was not new. Ever since Unwin had proposed a national plan (for Belgium) at the 1915 planning conference of the IFHTP, the concept of national planning had popped up at planning sessions, especially with regard to infrastructural planning.

The delegates at the local traffic session that had attended the planning sessions at the 1931 Berlin congress of the IFHTP must have experienced a déja-vu. The delegates arrived at similar conclusions, that had not only been reached at the 1931 Berlin conference of the IFHTP, but also at the Fifth International Road Congress, held in Milan in 1926. The national reports revealed that all towns suffered from congestion of traffic. Especially big cities had to deal with overcrowded transport lines at peak hours. Unlike Welwyn Garden City, most cities lacked a proper relationship between home and work, causing a great deal of travel, fatigue, discomfort, expense and loss of leisure time. Parking had become a serious problem in most towns. Although the number of private cars had greatly increased, their use in town centres was actually decreasing because of the absence of sufficient parking accommodation. Street improvements and central garages were very expensive and would merely intensify difficulties because they would lead to an immediate increase of motor traffic and ultimately to a higher degree of concentration and crowding. The delegates proposed several “palliatives”: one-way streets, roundabouts, cloverleaf junctions - the first European cloverleaf junction at Slussen, Stockholm (1935) was explicitly referred to -, control of parking, ring roads, (central) coordination of different forms of public transport, staggering of working hours, new building developments to be planned in relation to available and projected means of transport, zoning to prevent an intensification of land use, restriction of freight traffic and the introduction of ‘freeways’ – especially the freeway motor route in the metropolitan area of New York. There was general agreement that these solutions were palliatives only. The real remedy was to be found in recentralisation of work and housing to satellite towns, providing opportunity for drastic central reorganisation of the city centres to allow freedom of movement for the major functions which must be centralised. This remedy could only be achieved by the preparation of comprehensive plans based upon complete surveys of existing conditions and tendencies, and by requiring...
development (both public and private) and transport undertakings to comply with the plans when made.\textsuperscript{116}

Swedish planner Albert Lilienberg acted as general reporter for the ‘administrative basis of national and regional planning’ session. He pointed out that in order to justify planning, planners must be able to demonstrate that by planning better and more universally beneficial results can be achieved. He suggested that the answer to this problem greatly depended upon whether they succeeded in acquiring sufficient insight to solve planning questions and upon how they could administer both the preparation and execution of the plans. He was convinced that the personality of those who were to run the administration was of greater importance than the details of the actual administrative apparatus. Lilienberg concluded that of all the countries from which reports had been received, only Germany, facilitated by the Gleichschaltung, could display a comprehensive organisation for national and regional planning – of course we have to remember that the Soviet Union under Stalin also had national planning, but the soviets did not participate in the IFHTP.\textsuperscript{117} At the head of the Nazi planning apparatus was the Reichsstelle für Raumordnung, a bureau with a director appointed by Hitler himself. All organs for regional planning were subordinate to this central bureau. These organs, however, were not specially created for this purpose, but were composed of the governors of the various provinces. For the preparation of a regional plan, a special directorate was appointed, the members of which were to represent the interests within the region. Half the expenses of these directorates were paid by the State, and half by the communal authorities and other interested parties within the affected region. Lilienberg was quick to note that this German organisation only administered the drafting of national and regional plans and not to the execution of these plans. Execution was taken up by the local authorities after detailed planning had been done in accordance with the regional plans.

Lilienberg remarked that in some countries, like Great Britain and Sweden, there was a state organisation for the state’s planning and building activity. He considered the possibility to administer national planning through these existing organisations. He doubted whether this would be adequate, for national planning covered so many aspects that did not belong to the working sphere of these existing authorities. If these authorities were to concern themselves with national planning, they would have to be reorganised for the purpose and to be supplemented with officials who already specialized in national planning. He suggested that one of the first tasks under a national plan would be to effect a division of the country into suitable regional plan districts, the boundaries of which could be altered when new circumstances should require such. The national plan authority should see to it that regional plans were prepared in so far as they were needed. Therefore national planning authorities needed legal backing to compel the preparation of a regional plan for areas which did not make plans on their own initiative. To safeguard proper coordination between regional plans, these plans should not become valid before they had been sanctioned by the national planning authority. Thus the regional plan would be brought in concordance with the national plan just like detailed town plans were related to regional plans. Lilienberg stressed that financial responsibility for preparing and carrying out plans should be shared between state, the region and the locality in fair proportions. A concession system, to ban land speculation, also was one of Lilienberg’s priorities. Finally, public education to stress the need of planning should not be forgotten.
Lilienberg’s plea for national and regional planning was supported by the national reports. Although apart from Germany, participating countries seemed to lack a coherent national planning regime, the reports did reveal that regional planning and state planning had advanced in the countries concerned, and most of them were contemplating forms of comprehensive national planning as well. Australia did not have a national plan, but in several states planning infrastructure, civil aviation, maritime services, afforestation, rural development electric power reticulation (to a degree), water conservation and irrigation were matters under state direction.

In Belgium, railways, roads and navigation were under national direction, but the country lacked a national plan. The nation was mainly responsible for planning and reconstructing the devastated regions and in 1935 had appointed a special commissioner to study certain districts which were suffering acutely form the Depression. With regard to the regions around Spa and Fagnes the commissioner had produced a report in 1937, proposing the planning of the whole region, the protection of springs and the countryside, the reorganisation of gaming and a touristic development of the region. The proposals were not yet put before parliament, and the outcome uncertain. In the sphere of economics an interesting attempt at national planning was made. The government had installed an Office of Economic Restoration (OREC) to provide enterprises with capital, resulting from a revaluation of the gold stock in the national bank. This office only had an advisory status, but had the authority to start all kinds of useful studies and to provide information and advice to the government. It was the OREC that had advised to appoint the aforementioned special commissioner. The OREC also occupied itself with the question of slum clearance and small agricultural holdings. Unfortunately the efforts of the OREC had ceased, once the economic conditions worsened.

Olaf Forchhammer reported on Denmark, Kai Hendriksen elaborated on the Danish situation in the discussions. The Danish called attention to the fact that in Denmark agricultural land had had an important measure of protection for the past 150 years. It was not allowed to dispose agricultural land for other purposes without permission from the government. Hendriksen confessed that Denmark had been lagging behind in matters of regional planning, but a considerate advance had been made in the region of Copenhagen. Under the aegis of the Dansk Byplanlaboratorium a committee had been appointed to work out a greenbelt plan for Denmark’s capital. This plan was not a novelty, it had already been shown by the Danish at the Mexico City Congress of 1938. Hendriksen also referred to the Law for the Preservation of Natural Amenities, which stipulated that a special preservation plan had to be drawn up at the instigation of the Supreme Court for the Preservation of Natural Amenities. In 1938 a supplementary law had been issued stipulating regulations for these special preservation plans. Finally, the Danish Town planning Law of 1938 contained a provision enabling the ministry of the interior to require local authorities to draw up town plans and to decide summarily in the case of disagreement.

Great Britain was represented by planner John Dower, that would later author the well-known Dower Report on National Parks (1945). Dower tackled the administrative basis of national planning in England and Wales and referred to relevant regional and provincial organisations. He advocated the establishment of ten provincial regions to act as
Advance of regional planning in England (1939) and the Netherlands (1937)
intermediary between local authorities and parliament. Such regions could check the increasingly strong centripetal tendency towards London. He also advocated the preparation of a national plan and summarized the 1938 report of the National Survey and National Planning Committee, installed by the Town Planning Institute in 1936 with Leslie Scott acting as chairman, echoing the summary of the report provided by W.G. Holford at the ‘city administration’ round table session at Mexico City. Dower concluded that relocation of industries and a large part of the population that was dependent on industrial employment was the most important aspect of (national) planning. Dower’s views did not remain unchallenged. Sir Seymour Williams, ex-chairman of the Rural District Councils Association, wanted to make clear that district councils were competent planning authorities; he resented the idea to transfer their planning competences to provincial regions.

H. van der Weijde reported that most Dutch experts recognized the need for an all-embracing scheme to preserve and develop natural landscapes and other areas of recreational or scientific interest. The government had commissioned the State Forest Administration to make a scientific survey of natural scenery and an interdepartmental committee had been charged to draft a bill for the preservation of places of natural beauty. In several provinces advisory regional planning committees had been set up and the preparation of a national plan was being advocated.

In Sweden there was no law with regard to regional or country planning; planning was primarily an affair of local authorities. However, in 1931 the city of Stockholm and about forty surrounding communes had formed a voluntary regional planning association which had prepared a plan for the Stockholm region. This plan, compromising a radial development with green wedges in between, was approved by all local authorities concerned in 1935. At the time of the Stockholm congress and advisory joint regional planning committee was in the process of being formed in Gothenburg.

From Raumplanung to Weltraumplanung
The War inevitably affected the planning path, just like it had affected the housing path (see paragraph 5.3.1). Organising international congresses was no longer possible, so the planning discourse of the IFHTP was narrowed to its periodical as dominant medium. The geographical expansion of the planning path was rapidly undone. The War divided the world in allies, enemies and neutrals. In the first wartime years, the contribution from the allied world rapidly shrunk to indirect reports based on articles and reviews in other periodicals. By the end of the War coverage of the allied world had become close to non-existent. Strölin attempted to compensate this geographical confinement by raising participation in European Axis countries, neutral countries and occupied territories. The occupied countries were not exactly forthcoming, but Strölin’s visits to Spain and Eastern Europe did result in articles for the periodical. The index of publications by the IFHTP in the period 1938-1942 reveals a significant increase of articles and reports from countries such as Bulgaria, Hungary, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Rumania and Turkey. The highlight of Strölin’s endeavours was the ‘Südosteuropeheft,’ a special issue of the periodical of the IFHTP published in 1943 that was exclusively dedicated to housing and planning experience in South eastern Europe. Another special issue dedicated to housing and planning achievements in the Scandinavian and Mediterranean countries was programmed, but probably never issued.
It seems that the thematic scope of the planning path was far less affected by the War. The publications of the IFHTP continued to carry articles and reports on: the latest planning legislation, strongly focussing on national planning; rural development; city extensions, clearly favouring decentralisation and recentralisation; urban renewal. These themes were not in conflict with Nazi ideology, so with regard to the planning path thematically the IFHTP could continue ‘business as usual,’ provided that no military sensitive information was disseminated. Thus presented planning schemes did not feature detailed maps and statistics. In fact, continuing the routine of the planning path perfectly served Nazi policies. By stressing the pioneering position of Germany in matters such as regional and national planning, rural development and housing the concept of Neues Europa was reinforced: “Germany took the lead (fundamental decree of June 26th, 1935 dealing with the Reichsstelle für Raumordnung or Reich Office for Space Planning).”

Strölin did not want to linger in past achievements. Confronted with the havoc wrought by the War he recognized the enormity of the reconstruction task. Of course the IFHTP was to take the lead in this matters. In a circular address from 1944, Strölin urged the members to work together. “The horrors of war will have taught us how to create something new, even something revolutionary in the realm of housing and town planning. Our Federation will then act as mentor to planners and builders everywhere. It will be able to strengthen the will of all those who are resolved on defeating the powers of destruction by the innate power of creative ideas.” The surviving archives of the IFHTP reveal that Strölin already had quite definitive ideas about the proposed reconstruction work of the IFHTP. According to him the statements of the delegates at the Stockholm congress of the IFHTP had voiced a basic belief that the culture of laissez faire, especially in the field of housing and town planning, had led to a jumble and that this culture had to be opposed be a new perspective that placed housing and town planning in the higher sphere of Raumordnung and would lead to a comprehensive Raumgestaltung.

This new perspective had spread significantly during the War, especially in those countries “that with the victory march of the German weapons simultaneous had been won for the new European order.” The Nazis set up centrally coordinated space planning regimes in the territories occupied by them. According to Strölin, in the assessment of war damages in the occupied territories, the concepts of Raumplanung and Raumgestaltung found a willing ear. After the First World War in Belgium and northern France the sentiment dominated that all that had been destroyed has to be reconstructed to meet pre-war appearances. However, under the guidance of the German authorities local powers in these countries had come to the conclusion to undertake the reconstruction task on the basis of new principles. Of course valuable monuments had to be preserved or, when destroyed or damaged, carefully reconstructed to their former glory, but the reconstruction as a whole was to be based on sound planning principles, especially with regard to infrastructure and other requirements of the modern age. Strölin stressed the tendency to reject international, cubist architectural styles for the reconstruction task; instead local building traditions had to be respected.

But Strölin saw that the nations that still warred against this Neues Europa, also increasingly had appropriated the German new sense of order. So far the IFHTP had quite naturally defined planning within the confined frames of national borders, but due to the politics of the Axis powers the horizon had expanded to include the planning of continents and
CHAPTER 5 ‘RAUMPLANUNG’ IMPOSED 1935-1945

Part of the Generalplan-Ost: plan showing origins of the settlers being resettled in the Warthegau, Poland (1939)
Part of the Generalplan-Ost: the regional plan from 1941 for the region around Kutno, a town between Poznan and Warsaw. The plan clearly demonstrates the application of Walther Christaller’s central place theory.
Grossräumen; Raumordnung had assumed the character of Weltraumordnung. A comprehensive practical application of the concepts of Grossraumplanung and central control of town planning was to be found in the new eastern territories of the Reich, where to secure German Volkstum a profound redevelopment was being undertaken. Strölin boasted that under this new Raumordnung populations of hundreds of thousands had been resettled in the last years. He was convinced that once the major political decisions had been made about global planning, the IFHTP could contribute to the definition of this new Grossraumplanung by providing scientific surveys and international exchange of experiences.\textsuperscript{129}

The 1944 presidential circular letter of course referred to the Ostkolonisation, the Raumplanung of vast stretches of Eastern Europe, especially Poland, to provide Lebensraum for the German people, under the infamous Generalplan Ost. For obvious reasons, both military (classified information) and political (some members might not agree with the German efforts behind the Eastern front), Strölin did not elaborate on the peculiarities of the Ostkolonisation. Indeed, populations of hundreds of thousands were resettled under the Generalplan Ost. However, Strölin did not mention that this mass resettlement amounted to racial cleansing.\textsuperscript{130} Volksdeutschen and Germanic populations in the occupied territories were resettled to designated areas, whereas inferior races were deported. These occupied territories were incorporated in the Third Reich. This incorporation was not just affected through demographic imperialism: the occupied eastern territories were also thoroughly Germanized through spatial planning. Spatial models such as Walther Christaller’s central place theory were applied and the landscape, villages and towns were remodelled after German examples.\textsuperscript{131}

According to Strölin, town planning thought in the last wartime years had experienced an essential deepening. The experiences of aerial warfare imposed new, revolutionary requirements upon town planning. Luftkrieg forced the cities to open up and to make the clearest possible separation between residential areas, industrial areas and amenities and infrastructure. Fortunately, the requirements of Luftschutz largely were congruent with general social, hygienic, aesthetic and especially ‘demography-political’ requirements, that also prescribed the opening of the cities.\textsuperscript{132} Of course, Strölin had to camouflage his belief in Neues Europa for his 1944 circular letter. This appeal was unsuccessful. By 1944 everyone was convinced that Nazi Germany would eventually lose the War; foreign members mostly ignored Strölin’s appeal or politely declined the offer to partake in a reconstruction campaign under German domination.

5.7 Conclusion

In the period 1935-1945 the Nazis gradually seized control over the IFHTP. The German attempts at taking over the IFHTP are tied up with Karl Strölin, head mayor of Stuttgart. Strölin entered the IFHTP in 1935, when he was chosen as vice-president on the initiative of the Deutsche Gemeindetag. As this position did not provide any real influence, the Germans sought new openings to increase their influence. The Germans wanted to capitalize on the instrumentality of the Gemeindetag with regard to the fusion of the Verband and the IFHTP and proposed Strölin as first president of the amalgamated body. Strölin’s candidacy was accepted in 1937, but he had to tolerate British planner Pepler before him as first president. Strölin would succeed Pepler after the planned 1938 Mexico City congress, but this did not stop him from seeking means to gain influence.
Strölin entered a hornet’s nest. Nazi Germany wanted to increase their influence in the IFHTP to propagate the Nazi ideology of *Neues Europa*, whereas the (British) leaders of old and their supporters frenetically tried to hold on to the old ways. Moreover, American representatives from the ‘1313 groups,’ powered by the vast resources of the Spellman Fund of the Rockefeller Foundation, were coercing the European based Urban Internationale, including the IFHTP, towards a new world order based on cooperation and efficiency on American lines. The first litmus test was the location of the secretariat of the amalgamated body. Germany demanded a departure from London, but Germany was unacceptable to the British and French. The IFHTP ended up in the Shell Building, sharing a joint secretariat with the UIV and the IIAS. One might suspect that the Germans had won the argument, but the joint secretariat actually was an initiative of the 1313 groups. The American concept of effective cooperation pervaded the joint secretariat. This American spirit must have had some influence on the performance of the IFHTP, although most aimed at increasing its efficiency stemmed from a German quiver, intended to illustrate German superiority and thus the naturalness of German leadership.

In the face of a rapid series of events in the course of 1938-1939 – the *Anschluss* of Austria, the Sudeten Crisis, the subsequent invasion and annexation of the remainder of Czechoslovakia, the pogrom against the Jews and the onslaught wrought by the Condor Legion in the Spanish Civil War- anti-German sentiments grew among the members of the IFHTP. Strölin devised three strategies, more or less employed simultaneously, to gain influence: (1) raising German representation to counter British and American influences, (2) pushing personal assistants forward and moving activities to Stuttgart and (3) subtly dissociating himself from outright Nazi rhetoric. The first strategy was unsuccessful. Because of the political tension, the Nazis saw no opportunity to raise their representation in the bureau without resistance. At the present, at least there was a majority in the bureau willing to cooperate with the Germans, so it was thought best to do nothing. After the death of general secretary Murray in late 1938 Strölin unsuccessfully tried to promote his personal assistant Gut as next general secretary. The Anglo-Saxons opposed, urging the appointment of an Anglo-Saxon, preferably an American. The matter was solved by appointing Pepler as temporary honorary secretary to assist secretary Schäfer. Strölin sent Gut to Brussels to supervise Schäfer’s work. Once the War was a fact, Gut soon assumed the position of general secretary.

Strölin’s second strategy was more successful. Already before his rise to presidency he convinced the IFHTP to relocate the publication activity to Stuttgart. Thus from 1938 the periodical of the IFHTP was printed in Stuttgart. Strölin held high ambitions for the publication activity. The periodical morphed into a genuine illustrated periodical with dustcover. Additionally, he wanted to launch a new monthly newsletter. The IFHTP hesitated, but Strölin’s proposal to pay the newsletter out of Stuttgart’s municipal chest settled the issue. Supervision of these publications was given to Gut. Effectively, the publication activity of the IFHTP was transferred to Strölin’s municipal subordinates.

Strölin cut a good figure for himself at the 1939 Stockholm congress. Although initially met with distrust and guarded hostility, his exemplary conduct earned him much goodwill. He deliberately avoided politically charged pronouncements, posing the very opposite of Nazi
Minister of Labour Seldte, who used his presentation for outright Nazi propaganda. In private conversations with leading members of the IFHTP he was more outspoken about the desirability of transnational cooperation on equal footing and he condemned Seldte’s performance. Finally he was no longer distrusted as mere infiltrate of the Nazi government. Strölin never got to exert this trust to the full. Only weeks after the congress Germany invaded Poland. World War II had arrived, posing a context unfavourable for transnational collaboration.

The War effected the IFHTP almost immediately. Due to travel restrictions most European members were unable to participate directly and the Americans avoided war torn Europe. Strölin had to reinvent the organisational structure of the IFHTP to stay in business and to keep his footing with regard to his conception of international cooperation against increasingly persistent instructions from his Nazi superiors. He by-passed the democratic representative structure of the IFHTP and drew all power towards him. The role of members was marginalized. He did correspond with ‘pro-German’ bureau members to inform them about his latest steps, seeking acknowledgement rather than approval.

In 1941 the Brussels secretariat was moved to Stuttgart. Once the IFHTP had arrived in Stuttgart, Strölin set out to raise its efficiency. He surrounded himself with a paid professional staff. All staff members were on the payroll of the municipality of Stuttgart, thus fully integrating the secretariat in the municipal hierarchy. Although there was no more room for members in the decision-making, Strölin wanted to increase commitment among the members and actively recruit new members to compensate the absence of the members in the allied world. As congresses were no longer possible, Strölin and his secretaries Gut and Schäfer toured occupied Europe and countries allied to Germany to establish direct contact in order to secure the continuing support of the members and urge them to enlist new members. The German embassies also played an important role in this largely unsuccessful membership campaign. Strölin did manage to raise membership in countries belonging to the Axis Alliance, but members in the occupied territories were reluctant to collaborate, especially once it became clear that Germany would eventually lose the War.

The trajectory of the IFHTP in the period 1935-1945 differed from the general path of most transnational organisations that were forced to close their doors and await better times. However, the path of the IFHTP was not unique. Other mainstream platforms of the urban international – for example the neighbours of the IFHTP in the Shell Building in Brussels: the UIV and the IIAS - suffered similar fates: they were annexed by the Nazis.

Up until the outbreak of the War the IFHTP maintained its routine of activity. It organised two congresses: Mexico City 1938 and Stockholm 1939. The agenda for these congresses was already set, so the Nazis could hardly leave their mark on the agenda of these congresses. Once the War was a reality, congress activity stopped and Strölin focussed on the publication activity instead. The periodical took over the role of the conferences with thematic issues offering national reports on specific housing and planning issues. The newsletter became the main medium to disseminate the latest achievements and experiences. The publication activity was continuously plagued by delays. The IFHTP was forced to stop its publication activity in 1944. Strölin wanted more than merely continuing the publication activity of the IFHTP. The library, archives and collections of photos and plans
of the IFHTP were expanded and their management professionalized so that the IFHTP could serve as centre of knowledge for the tremendous reconstruction task at hand. Strölin did not settle for the mere survival of the IFHTP and launched a new campaign to increase his international standing and that of the IFHTP. He wanted to protect the open cities against air raids. His Nazi superiors showed interest in his initiative and directed him to the Red Cross in Geneva. This contact resulted in a call referring to the protection of civilians against air raids by the international council of the Red Cross in March 1940, something Strölin was quick to claim credit for. However, the subsequent bombing of Warsaw by the Nazis had already shattered all hope. Strölin did pursue the matter of Luftterror on other occasions, but further initiatives were obstructed by his Nazi superiors that feared that such initiatives might be interpreted as German weakness.

Strölin was a confessed militant of Raumplanung, the German equivalent of an all-encompassing comprehensive planning science as introduced by German planning pioneer Gustav Langen in the late 1920s. Nevertheless, he could not ignore the separation on the agenda between housing and town planning that had been adopted in the preceding period. In the final years of peace the housing path witnessed a significant expansion. The Mexico city congress introduced a new housing theme, housing in subtropical climates, and revealed that the United States under Roosevelt’s New Deal had made significant advances in the field of public housing. Whereas the Mexico City congress brought acclaim for American public housing, the Stockholm congress did the same for recent Swedish low-cost, prefabricated housing experience. Moreover, at Stockholm yet another new housing theme was added to the agenda: the housing of special groups. In war-time this expansion was rapidly undone, as Nazi ideology and (military) censorship dictated the dialogue. The War separated the world in a allied world, the axis powers and the neutrals. Obviously, the allied world hand no part in the IFHTP that was controlled by the Nazis. The thematic expansion was undone; subtropical housing and housing of special groups were not issues of interest to the Nazis. Instead, the one-family house with a garden was once more pushed forward as the (exclusive) cornerstone of the Nazi perspective on public housing. Strölin did manage to introduce one new housing theme that was very topical in the war: emergency housing.

The planning path did not introduce any real themes. The main planning topic of the last two congresses was national planning. In the absence of a substantial German delegation in Mexico City, it was the American New Deal planning experiences – the Tennessee Valley project, the new towns Greendale and Greenbelt, the Public Administration Clearing House at Chicago (the heart of the 1313 groups) and parkways in New York – that highlighted the event. The national planning session at Stockholm was dominated by Germany, that was acknowledged as the sole country with a comprehensive organisation for regional and national planning. During the War Strölin readily drew on this acknowledgment. He presented Raumplanung as the ultimate tool to bring about the new order of Neues Europa. This new sense of order spread across Europe simultaneous with the German victory march. The Germans set up centralized planning regimes in all occupied territories. Strölin was especially proud of the endeavours of German planners in Eastern Europe, where Raumplanung had assumed the dimension of Weltraumordnung. He thought that the IFHTP could be a valuable partner in the shaping of this new world order. However, most members ignored Strölin’s plea; they did not want to become part of the proposed German new world order.