2. 'What are we to do with our new affluence?' Anticipating, framing and managing the putative plenty of post-war Finland

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When the first internationally known 'garden city' – Tapiola, near Helsinki – was being developed some 50 years ago, warnings about forthcoming prosperity, excessive consumption and urban sprawl came into the picture from the very beginning. In retrospect, deciding what to do with a 'new affluence' – overflow management, in other words – was not the most obvious problem in one of the poorest countries in Europe and one, moreover, which was just recovering from the heavy losses of war. The affluence was more utopian dream than any kind of reality. Nevertheless, standards of the 'good life' and 'proper' consumption in Finland began to be defined by professionals from relatively new fields such as home economics and sociology, together with urban planners and architects. In the course of the Tapiola building project, the discursive frames of the different professions involved converged by means of fairly ambiguous concepts such as 'biological function', 'catching up', dormitory town', 'cross-sectional society' and 'neighbourhood unit'. A closer look at the reality behind these terms reveals a seemingly shared view of the necessity, as well as a deterministic theory, of social progress, and the aim of restricting the wrong kind of growth.

Today Tapiola, with its 20 000 inhabitants, exemplifies a rare persistence of Ebenezer Howard's original term 'garden city' (Aario, 1986; Ward, 1992). When in 1952 Tapiola's construction work began under the supervision of the Housing Foundation (Asuntosäätiö), a journal published by the Family Federation of Finland (Väestöliitto) saw Tapiola's future as follows:

> The planned area of Hagalund is not intended to become any kind of 'dormitory town'; instead, it is intended as a daughter city of Helsinki that

> will be as self-contained as possible … It is estimated that at least 12 000 residents can be located in the area, 700 of them into detached houses, 3000–3500 into row houses, and the rest into apartment buildings, four stories high at most. (*Asuntopolitiikka*, 1951, 3: 4–5)

The large body of written material that has been produced in connection with Tapiola Garden City provides the main sources for the present chapter (for further references, see Pantzar, 2010). Tapiola's early developers favoured holistic design, whether it was a question of national planning, housing design or education (Nikula, 1994; Nupponen, 2000; Tuomi and Paatero, 2003). In the Finnish context, Tapiola was the first example of highly systematic and organized planning and living. My view, however, is partly personal, as I spent my adolescence in Tapiola, from 1967 to 1981. It was the young who were the objects of the discourse of the model city. We children were the plants of the garden city, to be watered, fertilized and activated (see also Jerram, 2011).

In creating the Garden City, oppositions between the necessary and the superfluous, real needs and bric-a-brac, and active and passive leisure were frequently evoked. Forces such as bureaucracy, self-interest and the economy needed to be restrained (Pantzar, 2010). Therefore the main focus of this chapter lies in identifying how a threatening overflow was framed and managed with a specific discourse about 'urban sprawl', 'excessively materialistic culture' and 'idle time'.

BUILDING A MODEL CITY

Tapiola's builder, the Housing Foundation, had been established by a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) ranging from trade unions to the Finnish tenants' union and the Family Federation of Finland. The Housing Foundation's multidisciplinary planning and building teams consisted of experts in education, sociology, household economics, architecture, town planning and garden planning – actually the first housing project in Finland to include sociologists and home economists. The Housing Foundation acted as a point of intersection in the planning process, packing and unpacking bundles of ideas and models from home and abroad (Czarniawska and Sevón, 2005). Meetings, workshops and team palavers along with discussions in the local newspaper acted as fora where ideas were spurred forward from one place to another or, alternatively, prevented from moving any further.

Tapiola's early phases were described in most revealing terms by Wolf von Eckardt (1967: 351), architecture critic for the *Washington Post*, who dedicated his book 'To Heikki von Hertzen whose great example is surely making the whole world a better place to live'. What built Tapiola was not a system but a man, a man of simple beliefs, great organizational talent, civilized tastes and great energy. His name is Heikki von Hertzen. Prosperity came late to Finland, von Hertzen told me, as we lunched in the excellent restaurant on top of Tapiola's tower. Until 1952, the year its planning began, the country had to pay exorbitant war reparations to the Soviet Union:

> When we finally caught up [with the West] we asked ourselves: What are we to do with our new affluence? We can't eat more. There is a limit to the automobiles and gadgets we really need. So I started to persuade my countrymen that we should build a beautiful and suitable environment for everyone.

This citation exemplifies the selective manner in which the inhabitants of an impoverished country were beginning to talk about building a new kind of consumer society of plenty. More developed countries were not viewed uncritically as objects of imitation; overeating, cars or gadgets were clearly not part of life in an ideal society. 'Consumerism', consumption of the wrong kind or 'idle time' were seen as threats to be fought against.

As will be seen, when Tapiola was being created, it was not just a question of constructing new houses; there were numerous other human and material building projects ongoing at the same time. Interestingly, what started out as an anti-urban, anti-consumerist and anti-individualistic utopia in the 1940s had developed by the 1970s into an urban, consumerist and individualistic community, heavily reliant on private transport. Coincidentally or not, the head office of Nokia, economically the most successful company in contemporary Finland, is situated right next door to Tapiola. In a sense we can say that utopian plans to create new types of citizens were never realized. The motto of the current Tapiola 2010 development project is 'All good things together', and in future there will be a considerable increase in commercial space, more department stores, megastores, specialty shops, cafes, restaurants, cultural activities, leisure and recreation facilities and, finally, underground parking space for 3000 cars.

The Family Welfare League of Finland was established in 1941, during the war, to ensure homes and welfare for the population; Heikki von Hertzen, then a young lawyer, was invited to be its executive director in 1943. He had begun his career in banking and had succeeded in surrounding himself with leading politicians representing different sides of the political field. The Second World War had led to an urgent shortage of housing in Finland and new homes had to be built for hundreds of thousands of evacuees from the ceded part of Karelia. My conclusion is, however, that in the planning and making of Tapiola Garden City the shortage of housing played only a minor role once building actually commenced.

In time, perspectives widened and deepened as the (material) work progressed. On the one hand, the builders' perspective broadened from individual houses to optimizing entire blocks and service complexes of blocks (shops, schools, cultural services). On the other hand, the developers turned their attention more to residents' everyday life. The Family Federation of Finland was the most important organization behind the idea of Tapiola and emphasized the need to produce citizens who were more cultivated, not so much in self-centred economic terms but rather in moral terms. What was required, and to some extent achieved, was not just quantitative growth of population but also qualitative developments within individuals and communities. Unspecified growth was considered dangerous.

In most European countries investments, both private and public, were prioritized in the post-war period (see, for example, Kroen, 2006; Daunton, 2007): the doctrine of the economic policy was that the citizens' activities ought to serve the balanced development of the national economy. Capital formation, through both human and industrial investments, was also the main doctrine in post-war Finland and Tapiola.

The pro-investment doctrine was not the one defended when Tapiola Garden City was envisaged. Von Hertzen pointed out wherever possible that Tapiola was a collective project in which the principal aim was one of developing a welfare-state prototype, but without either state bureaucracy or technocracy. This resonates with what Scandinavian institutional theorists have said about benchmarking and imitating best practices in terms of models and prototypes (Sahlin-Andersson, 1996; Czarniawska and Sevón, 2005). The different professional interest groups involved in the building of Tapiola all sought to convince others of the merits of their particular understanding of how the world is, how it should be, and what kinds of policies would make it better in the future (see also McCann, 2003; Vitale, 2009). Political persuasion worked through different discursive frames: simplifications of the world which selectively identified and attached meanings to certain actions, experiences and events in order to impact politics and policies.

The case of Tapiola demonstrates how imitating ideas that had been developed elsewhere represents an unusual mixture of creativity and disciplined copying of existing models. Kerstin Sahlin-Andersson (1996) refers to the principles governing such simultaneously creative and disciplined processes as 'editing rules'. She identifies commonalities shared by many success stories (that is, benchmarking of organizations): success is typically communicated in a form of story; it is described as having followed a careful planning process and specific rationality; and it is decontextualized. Indeed, the Tapiola success story (especially that of the early developers) was told in terms of rational planning. Specific local prerequisites were de-emphasized, both when the garden city model was imported, and when the experiences of the Finnish version were exported. However, Tapiola's case adds an important aspect to Sahlin-Andersson's editing rules: new and less acknowledged concepts that do not fit any pre-given categories can occasionally act as 'boundary concepts' (Star and Griesemer, 1989; Löwy, 1992) with the potential to integrate different discursive frames. The most important ideas and ideals came from the fathers of the garden city concept: Lewis Mumford and, to a lesser degree, Ebenezer Howards and Patrick Geddes, whose texts about the promises of social progress and the condemnation of the passive lifestyle were carefully read by the developers of the Finnish garden city.

What made conceptual packages travel so smoothly from one place to another had partly to do with the fact that the studied time period witnessed the triumph of a whole new kind of team concept; a team consisting of multiple professions – in this case lawyers, architects, gardeners, home economists, sociologists and engineers. Occasionally, ideas were transformed into abstract entities such as two-dimensional maps and graphs, or even into laws such as the New Towns Act 1946 in the UK, or the Arava (state-subsidized loan arrangement) Act 1948 in Finland. Some of the ideas were expressed in symbols and brands. For instance, huge gardens and spectacle lawns in Tapiola's centre were intentionally designed to characterize a common identity. Another function of these lawns was to function as greenbelts to restrict the city's overgrowth.

MANAGING OVERFLOW: THE ORIGINATORS' VIEW

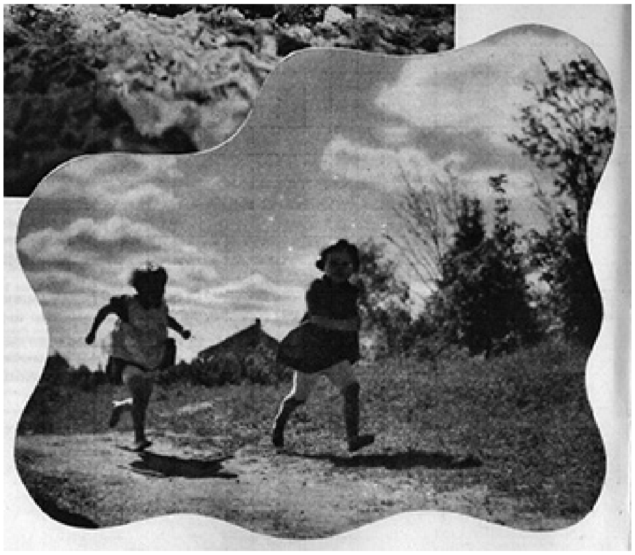
> We wanted to build a town that was dedicated to man and to his home life, his leisure, and his recreation.' (von Hertzen, 1965: Planning, Design, and Management of Tapiola. University of Pennsylvania European New Towns seminar, as quoted in Heideman, 1975: 11)

For Ebenezer Howard (1898/1965), the originator of the concept, the 'garden city' represented an optimal combination of the urban and the rural in the early 1900s, at a time when the countryside in Britain was in danger of being emptied of inhabitants while cities faced the risk of congestion from growth. But there was no risk of either in 1950s Finland. When the war ended in Finland's defeat, von Hertzen and the the Family Federation of Finland began to look for new models and guidelines from 'more developed' countries to create what was to become Tapiola. International publications as well as excursions within Finland and abroad encouraged new perspectives on building. In 1945, right after the war, the Welfare League's representatives made an extensive tour of Finland's population centres to hear about their housing situation and town plans. They also collected a large number of maps and photographs (*Asuntopolitiikka*, 1961: 2, 6–7). On excursions abroad they learned about the achievements of Finland's Western neighbours in the field, particularly the Swedes.

One of the outcomes of the tours was a polemic 'flyer booklet' entitled *Koti vai kasarmi lapsillemme* (Homes or tenements for our children) by von Hertzen (1946), where it becomes apparent that von Hertzen regarded the countryside as the only healthy place in which to live. In addition to housing solutions, the booklet approaches the lives of children and young people more broadly. It is easy to see, looking at the photographs, many of which were taken by von Hertzen himself, that happy children live in the countryside: scampering around in the fields and woodlands, smiling, constantly on the move. These photographs, with their rounded edges, speak clearly of the softness of the organic world (see Figure 2.1). In contrast, the photos of urban children are square-cornered. The children are pictured standing motionless, smoking cigarettes, in the narrow courtyards of city blocks or inside within four walls (see Figure 2.2).

Von Hertzen's commentary about Mumford's famous film *The City*, originally made for the 1939 New York World Fair, is indicative of the import of Mumford's thinking to Finland:

> Naturally I had read his books, but the biggest impact he made upon me was through his film, *The City*. I first saw it when I was invited to a showing by the Finnish Ambassador to Denmark … Since then I have used the film's theme quite often, underlining the fact that we are biological beings and the most important environment for the majority of our lives is the town or city … At the moment it is not the right environment: With pollution it is not biologically correct, it is not a sociologically pleasing place either, and we can be quite certain from a mental or spiritual point of view that this environment doesn't give the right impulses for a happy kind of life. (as quoted in Alanen, 1983: 43–44)



Source: von Hertzen (1946). Reprinted with permission of the Family Federation of Finland (Väestöliiton kuva-arkisto).

Figure 2.1 Homes or tenements for our children I

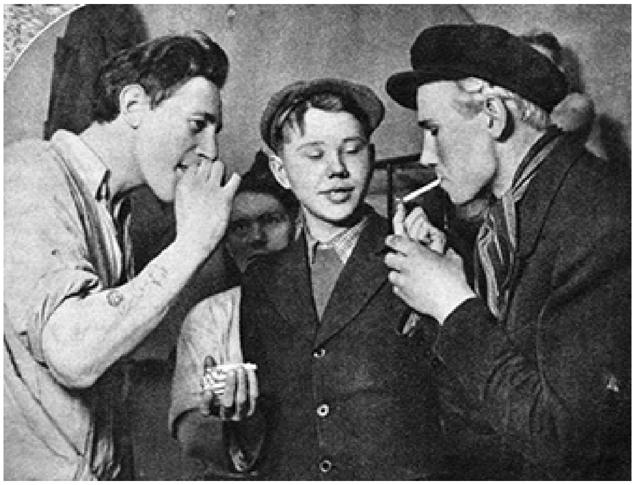


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Figure 2.2 Homes or tenements for our children II

Thus the excess of whatever was wrong with the city had to be managed or removed.

MANAGING OVERFLOW: TAPIOLA'S ARCHITECTS DEFINING BALANCED SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE GOOD LIFE

> The architect is not only a builder, however; he is an artist, and as artist he carries the burden of prophesy and the compulsion to tell what the good life is. (von Eckardt, 1967: xii)

The architect who was foremost in importing international influences on Tapiola was Otto-Iivari Meurman (1890–1994), a professor of town planning (1940–1959) and the father of Finnish townscape thinking. As early as 1915 he had taken part in preparing a town plan for Greater Helsinki together with the architect Eliel Saarinen (1873–1950) (Saarinen, 1915). Both Meurman and Saarinen had been involved from the early 1900s in the international movement which Mats Deland (2001) has referred to as the 'Social City'. Its central reformist idea was that town planning is at least as much a question of controlling masses of people as it is of technology and aesthetics, and that a better physical environment produces better people.[1]

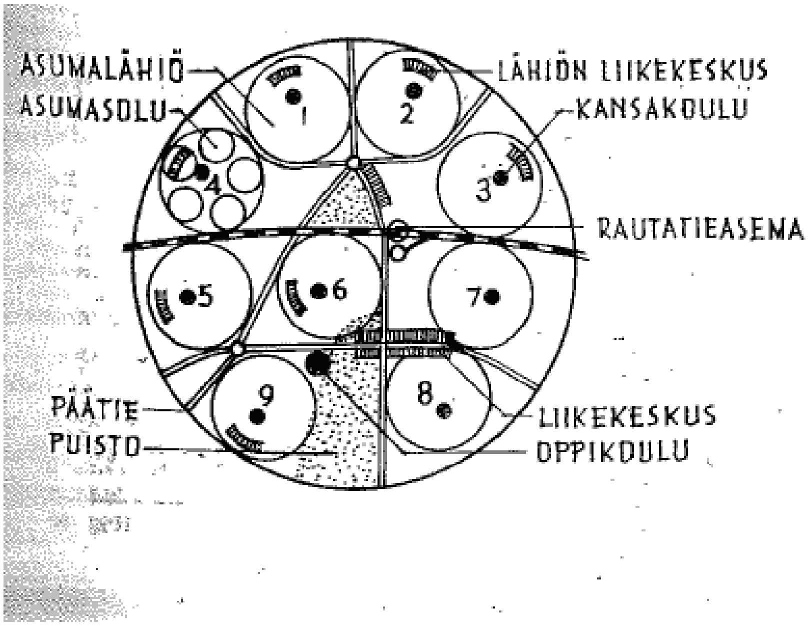
The fathers of the Finnish garden city movement took their stimulus from problems originally encountered elsewhere, and the local differences were barely recognized by the developers. The solutions created to alleviate problems of urban sprawl, slums and violence in Edinburgh (Geddes), London (Howard) and New York (Mumford) were assumed to be directly applicable to the Helsinki region, with the scale, for instance, not seen as an important characteristic of the model. This is one aspect of disembedding (Sahlin-Anderson, 1996) as it relates to the Finnish version of overflow management. Another aspect lies in the fact that models of town planning (that is, context-free prototypes) originated from general models used to represent living systems. Saarinen followed Patrick Geddes, a student of Charles Darwin and one of the most important pioneers in town planning, when he generalized biological models directly to the cases of giant cities, using terms such as 'organic decentralization'. He even used graphical representation of cancer taken from the pathology textbooks: 'Now slums are a cancer in the urban body, and it is a well-known fact how cancer must be cured' (Saarinen, 1943/1958: 147). He defined the community unit as a place 'where the bulk of the population can exist without being compelled every day to rush back and forth into the congested heart of the city or elsewhere to make a living' (Saarinen, 1943/1958: 208).

In accordance with this view, several articles in the journal *Asuntopolitiikka* [*Housing Policy*] and *Valtakunnansuunnittelu* [*National Planning*] written by O-I. Meurman, a close friend of Saarinen, emphasized that a city is like a tree: a tree's overgrowth makes the distance from the bark to the core grow too large, thereby eroding the bark and congesting the core. Meurman, as a regular contributor to *Asuntopolitiikka*, wrote articles on urban planning issues such as the need for towns to comprise 'residential cells' (Meurman, 1951, 1954). Like the annual rings that form around the central pith in a tree, so new residential cells with their own nuclei will form around a city. The nucleus of an individual cell would create a sense and feeling of a common destiny among the residents. Meurman saw this communal feeling as vital for a nation recovering from two wars: a civil war in 1918 followed by the Second World War. 'Under such circumstances social contrasts will be mitigated and optimism will gain more ground' (Meurman, 1950: 7). Moreover, he was emphatic that the cellular structure should be explicitly social, not administrative (Meurman, 1947: 79) and that 'a residential area should have a home-like spirit' (Meurman, 1947: 76).

In his writings Meurman frequently referred to the urban-critical views of Lewis Mumford and Ebenezer Howard, who considered green belts necessary to restrict growth. It was also Meurman who introduced the three levels of urban planning to Finland – neighbourhood units, residential units and communities – through his articles and his 1947 book *Asemakaavaoppi* [*Town Planning*] (Saarikangas, 2002: 392).[2] This classification was very visible in the subsequent building of Tapiola (Figure 2.3) (Meurman, 1950). Here Meurman followed Saarinen (1943: 208), who had suggested that 'in the functional community, walking must be considered the basic system of individual transportation'.

Accordingly, issues such as optimal positioning of the service network received serious attention in Tapiola. Services had to be located within residential cells so that neighbourhood facilities such as grocery stores and schools were at a maximum distance of 250 metres from residents' homes. Young, 'fresh' architects were selected to plan neighbourhood units intended to house approximately 500–1000 residents each,[3] and because the units were bigger than individual buildings, these new-generation architects began to double up as town planners.

Considering the remarkable number of people taking part in the design and building of Tapiola it is problematic to assume that inspiration flowed in as if through a single pipeline – which is what the official archive materials (of the Housing Foundation) would imply. Instead,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Source: Meurman (1950). Reprinted with permission of the Family Federation of Finland (Väestöliiton kuva-arkisto)

Figure 2.3 Two 'models' of Tapiola

inspiration came from numerous sources and numerous individuals.[4] For instance, Aarne Ervi, Tapiola's principal architect, deviated from the pattern of many of the so-called 'hero architects' of that time (Aalto, Corbusier, Saarinen) by non-theoretically, even popularistically, stressing life's small, everyday details. To him, nature was an essential source of pleasure and enjoyment, but he felt that the recreation offered by movies, restaurants and shopping malls, for example, was equally important (Lahti, 2006). In puritan Finland of the 1950s this kind of attention to everyday comforts combined with a genuine enthusiasm for technological advances such as personal helicopters was rare indeed.

HOME ECONOMISTS, SOCIOLOGISTS, LANDSCAPE ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHERS AS OVERFLOW MANAGERS

The best models from abroad were adopted to build Tapiola (at least, this is the story as told by the early developers themselves, such as von Hertzen and Itkonen, 1985). Engineering experts from Sweden, for example, were hired from the early 1950s onwards to design (or mainly to supervise) the novel centralized electric power and heating systems, inspect the Finnish plans and calculate prognoses for future heating systems. Thus, in the first instance, Tapiola was modelled on examples from Sweden (housing design, collective spaces, electrical and heating systems), but best practices were additionally sought from other countries: Denmark (garden design, landscaping), Great Britain (new suburbs in accordance with the garden city ideology, the New Town movement), and the United States (roads for light traffic, a schooling system based on youth activity) (von Hertzen and Itkonen, 1985). But when Tapiola was 'exported' into the wider world, the origin of such ideas was obscured; for example, the Swedish techno-bureaucratic approach to building soon began to be seen as an outright antithesis of Tapiola's development (von Eckardt, 1967; von Hertzen, 1971a).

The home economists in the foundation's multidisciplinary teams, some of whom had been employed in the Household Work Efficiency Institute that had been established during wartime, contributed to Tapiola by commenting on matters such as kitchen and bathroom design to standardize the work of the housewife. Chronic fatigue among housewives was one of the pressing social problems of the 1950s. Experts emphasized that housewives had a right to domestic appliances and equipment to make housework easier. Tapiola's home economists also defended this equipment in the name of rationalization (*Asuntopolitiikka*, 1954; Ritvala, 1958). It was representatives of home economics who first proposed the collective provision of storage, laundering and deep-freezing equipment, for instance, as an alternative to more individualized ways. Besides common laundry rooms and cold stores in apartment houses, they also imported to Finland ideas such as the American bar kitchen in apartment houses, fair-faced brick walls in interiors and narrow air vents, many of these as early as in the 1950s. The masses were introduced to the newest trends in architecture and domestic technology in local housing exhibitions featuring fully furnished apartment interiors.

In the 1950s, the ideals of better-equipped homes were similar in many Western countries. Managing time and money was a central concern, especially for the mother of the family. The washing machine, for instance, made it possible for her to devote more time to her family (Pantzar, 2003). However, as one of the pioneers of efficient housekeeping and director of the Work Efficiency Institute proclaimed: 'it is not only equipment, machines and appliances that make people's work easier. People themselves have a crucial position: their capability to organize, to think, to understand' (Janhonen, 1986: 5). The housewife should be encouraged to reflect on her work so as not to tire herself out unnecessarily, whereupon she could spare 'resources to improve herself and create the home's atmosphere' (ibid.). Household appliances were part of the promise of progress. Progress, but not just any kind of progress: the woman's workplace was still at home.

In consumer expenditure the share required by 'necessities' such as food, clothes and housing started to diminish fast in the 1950s and the elite began to worry about the wrong sort of consumption. In Finland the key text expressing the ideal of an investment-driven economy was published in 1952 by Prime Minister Urho Kekkonen. The name of his book is very telling*: Onko maallamme malttia vaurastua?* [*Does Our Nation Have the Patience to Prosper?*]. Kekkonen's central concern was how to make private households defer the satisfaction of their consumer desires. Characteristic of the period was that, in real terms, interest on bank savings was negative, and public institutions were channelling funds into investments. The building of national infrastructures, roads and communication networks, and state-run industry, was of primary importance. The 'patience' required for making the nation prosper meant investing in durable goods such as refrigerators and washing machines, and especially private apartments. Therefore, somewhat paradoxically, consumer goods – refrigerators, automobiles and washing machines – and houses became important means of controlling the excess and the impulsiveness of the population. Banks and the leading figures in economic policy regarded saving for owner-occupied homes, and even for household appliances, as a way to restrain the desire to consume, to induce people to save their wages, and thus to enable the country to finance industrial investments (Lehtonen and Pantzar, 2002).

Household appliances were durable tools, and thus much more appropriate to the industrial mode of the times than would have been, for example, Mediterranean tours or exotic foods. Their time would not come until the 1980s. One could speculate that the unique combination of Eastern planning and investment-driven economic thought, and of Western dreams of consumption, could be one of the reasons why

Finnish households accomplished an exceptionally swift transition from an agrarian surplus-saving culture into a Western consumer and 'credit culture'.

Throughout his life von Hertzen maintained a critical position in his writings towards the dangers of the 'wrong' kind of progress (material growth) that placed too much emphasis on economic concerns (that is, production and consumption). For instance, when the oil crisis broke out he continued to stress education as the question that would determine the fate of the whole nation:

> We see spiritually underdeveloped individuals and groups of individuals fighting to destroy one another in a way that may end in the total demolition of human culture … Due to an underestimation of the education process, society is teeming with frustrated and character-disordered individuals, families, and homes that are falling apart. (von Hertzen, 1973: 2–3)

It is no surprise that this kind of thinking had led the founders of Tapiola to emphasize educational activities from the very beginning (von Hertzen, 1962).

MANAGING TIME: ACTIVE VERSUS PASSIVE LEISURE

The role of professional youth workers and teachers was to provide advice on how to keep the children off the streets. Like the plants growing in its gardens, Tapiola's youth also had to be tended in subtle terms. Von Hertzen explained the delicate rhetoric of freedom and discipline in von Eckardt's (1967: 355) book as follows:

> Was there any adult supervision and management of these activities? 'Of course,' smiled von Hertzen, 'we have a very imaginative young man on the staff. But we don't call him a youth activities officer, or anything like that. That we fear would only scare the very kids that need involvement most. His title is assistant town engineer.'

At the end of the 1950s, when new Finnish-speaking schools were established with the help of the Housing Foundation, the conflict between the old and the new era grew: an experimental school, Tapiola Coeducational School, became feasible only after the more traditional forces withdrew – that is, when an American-type pioneer spirit and openness overcame the bureaucratic and hierarchical Swedish-German system (Opintiellä, 1998). The chair of the school board had a background in consulting in Los Angeles and it was he who introduced new terms such as 'team work' and 'innovations' to the teachers.

The overall innovative pattern of the garden city is also evident in the discussion of controlled spontaneity in the founding of the youth theatre: in the absence of finished manuscripts, everything was done collectively, on the young people's own initiative. The same encouragement of individual initiative was repeated in Tapiola's schools, which were among the first in Finland to teach a special subject called 'oral presentation'. At the same time business English and engineering drawing were also introduced into the curriculum.

The record sales of pianos in the shopping mall, the audiovisual equipment in the schools, team sport activities and cultural exchange (mainly with the US) all demonstrate the kinds of things that were appreciated in the model town. Car driving, spending time in idleness, watching TV, and generally staying locked up within four walls represented 'bad' consumption and the wrong kind of time use in Tapiola. The risk of dormitory towns or bedroom suburbs was pointed out in many public statements published in the journals *Asuntopoliiikka* and *Valtakunnansuunnittelu*. Heikki von Hertzen was editor-in-chief of both journals. Though initially, in the 1950s, the term 'dormitory town' only referenced the contrast of job self-sufficiency and traffic problems in the city centres, by the 1960s it began to refer to all forms of passivity associated with the suburbs.

A lively debate about the activity or passivity of Tapiola's residents continued throughout the 1960s. In a 1967 seminar of the Finnish Society of Architects ('What can we learn from Tapiola?'), sociologist Paavo Seppänen reported on time-use surveys indicating that people were likely to choose idleness if services were not located within walking distance from their homes – which posed the risk of such areas degenerating into dormitory suburbs. Accordingly, optimization of the service network was an issue that received serious attention in Tapiola. At the same time, trifles were juxtaposed with real needs. Self-interest was seen as a force to be controlled, while new residents moving to the community were greeted by newsletters sent to them by Tapiola's 'public relations officers'. According to a brochure entitled *Tapiola Garden City* (Tapiola Housing Foundation, 1957: 14), 'These newsletters also use dry humour on occasion to inculcate lessons of good behaviour and consideration for one's neighbours, both upon the young and their parents. They also bring together people with similar interests and hobbies.'

As already noted, the initial expectations, interests and plans of Tapiola's originators, and especially of von Hertzen himself, were targeted at anything but an urban consumerist way of life. Of course, in reality, the variety of opinions on the requisite conditions for a happy life was wider among the developers than official history writing leads us to understand, and perceptions of a 'proper' lifestyle also transformed in the course of the building process. Nor could conflicts be avoided. The architect Alvar Aalto, for example, attacked the home economists by remarking that individually owned refrigerators, deep freezers and washing machines were taking the race for household equipment much too far at the cost of commonly shared facilities (Aalto, 1952).

MANAGING OVERFLOW: CONTROVERSIAL VIEWS

The propaganda films about Tapiola made in the 1960s usually picture a family – mother, father and two children – on a ski track that leaves right from their own doorstep. This kind of romantic image of Tapiola attracted a lot of criticism, especially from young architects and sociologists. In the seminar 'What can we learn from Tapiola?' mentioned above, young architect Kirsti Nordin mused at the applied rhetoric:

> Typical features of Tapiola's institutional ideology are hermeticalness, organizational isolation, transformation of organization into social reality, fierce opposition to any attempt at criticism, use of slogans, invoking of emotions, traditions, wishes, and obscure theory – I still haven't figured out whether the 'biological function' refers to reproduction or to skiing – and a striv[ing] to control people instead of things. (Finnish Association of Architects Seminar, 1967)

One of the most notable controversies that arose concerned the role of 'lower' social classes. Von Hertzen felt that the involvement of sociologists was necessary so that the area could be approached both as a population issue and as a way to promote national unity. In a theme article on Tapiola in *Reader's Digest*, von Hertzen used sociological terms to depict Tapiola as a 'cross-sectional society' where class differences had lost their meaning (Taylor, 1966). He expressed his pride at the achieved success in a book published a few years later: 'Foreign visitors find it hard to believe that so many people with low and middle incomes live in Tapiola and this had had practically no negative influence on the appearance, cleanliness, level of culture, or spirit of the community' (von Hertzen and Spreiregen, 1971: 170). Sociologists, however, did not accept this kind of story at face value. One of them, Professor Paavo Seppänen, for example, interviewed in the book *Tapiola – A Village of Better Folks*, expressed the view that:

> the environment that the children [of Tapiola] are socialized into is a community of people who represent a particular lifestyle. Were such a sphere of experience some kind of absolute ideal, the solution might be optimal also from the children's viewpoint. But with no guarantee of this, there is at least a danger that the children's worldview in a community of this type tends to become one-sided – restricted, in a sense. (Hiisiö, 1970: 148)

Von Hertzen expressed his dissenting opinion in an unpublished memo entitled 'Hiisiö's compliments' (von Hertzen, 1971b):

> What's wrong if the upper middle class becomes an object of imitation: if it isn't the upper middle class that is taken as the benchmark to pursue, then where do you get the benchmark? Does everyone have to descend to the level of social class IV? And is that what citizens are now asking us to do? It certainly isn't. Citizens want advancement, not descent, and if we are truly realistic this advancement is usually targeted at reaching the upper middle class. In a way it is strange, even outright depressing, that sociopolitical and sociological thinking is still so undeveloped that a statement like this cannot even be made without belittlement. As a matter of fact, it is a question of one of the very greatest achievements of the Tapiola project. But even that would be belittled, were it only possible.

Von Hertzen's comment partly explains how it was possible several decades before there was any material (democratic) affluence to raise the question of what to do with affluence when it arrived. Von Hertzen saw material progress advancing inevitably in a linear way, like many other people in the Finnish elite. What was seen as 'trickledown' in the social sphere was seen as a 'catching-up' phenomenon on the scale of nations. In retrospect he was right, but there could have been another turn of events, such as that in post-war Latin America, where promises of material wealth and democratization were not realized. This observation requires further examination: how to explain the unison of so many people in the idea of making a model town in a relatively poor and peripheral country such as post-war Finland.

MAKING A MODEL FOR MODERN-DAY PEOPLE: THE STRENGTH OF WEAK CONCEPTS

The Housing Foundation used its powerful mediatic position to control the changing content of the garden city story. The discourse on Tapiola actually abounded with much-repeated new, and therefore ambiguous and flexible, concepts such as 'garden city, 'real needs', 'modern-day people', 'cross-sectional society' and 'dormitory or bedroom suburb', as well as 'overplanning' (with particular reference to Sweden). These terms were especially favoured by the early developers, Meurman and von Hertzen. It was partly through ambiguous concepts and through positive and negative references to other countries that the various professional discourses (of expectation management) and disciplines became integrated and activists were mobilized.

Although unanimity was not total and critical voices were heard, nonetheless the majority of Tapiola's builders shared a strong belief in a better future. International comparisons provided the raw material for self-assessment (Pantzar, 2010). The evolution of a consumer society in Finland, a country that had recently lost the war alongside Germany, had much in common with corresponding development in Germany, and the United States became an important model to follow in both countries (Heinonen and Pantzar, 2002; Kroen, 2006).[5] Aarne Ervi, in particular, who designed the area's main shopping mall among other things, brought American thinking into the planning of Tapiola. It was also he who managed to change the founding fathers' original understanding of the good life to include facilities such as the new type of shopping centre that offered all kinds of recreation and activities. Even von Hertzen, who in the 1940s had been highly critical of urban pleasures, was forced to 'edit' his attitude towards bars and restaurants along with the arrival of the shopping mall. Very similar developments towards tolerance were taking place all over post-war Europe (Jerram, 2011).

Many of Tapiola's ideals were generally compatible with those equating technological advancement with quality of life, but no single model of prosperity was adopted. Illustrative of this diversity is the way Alvar Aalto in the 1940s questioned his American colleagues who proudly pronounced that American homes were at the forefront of progress: 'How many rowboats are there in the United States per thousand people? And how many American hairdressers are able to go skiing from their doorstep? How many Americans are able to reach clean fishing waters just 15 minutes from their home?' (Schildt, 1989: 107). The Housing Foundation had purchased a rowboat for use by all residents as early as the 1950s.

Tapiola could hardly have materialized as a result of the purely top-down plans and orders of overflow managers. Indeed, apart from much elitist philosophizing, a specific feature of Tapiola was the lively public discussion in the local newspaper about very concrete details such as the upkeep of clubrooms in buildings, the preservation of individual trees during construction works, and the need for audiovisual equipment in the schools. Tapiola's uniqueness in the Finnish context was in its powerful emphasis on community planning and activities. As has become evident, the exceptionally strong commitment to the development of the community and communal activities introduced a new organic terminology:

> Many people still think that planning ends with the drawing of the master plan and town plan … What happens during the actual construction period is also vital. And life must be breathed into everything that has been planned. A community … must be a living organism, its heart must be made to beat. (Von Hertzen, 1965, as quoted in Heideman, 1975: 12)

This terminology, largely borrowed from Mumford (and indirectly Geddes), generated and emphasized concern about the reproductive qualities of the community. In different fields of expertise these became translated somewhat differently but the main idea was shared. Table 2.1 summarizes and simplifies the main ingredients and implications of the biological or organic metaphor of living community in the context of overflow management.

Table 2.1 Living community as seen by urban planners, educators and economists

Excess	Frame	Solution	Managers
Urban sprawl, slum	Biology, overgrowth of a cancer cell	Greenbelts and cells with functioning centres	Architects and urban planners Engineers Landscape administration
Discretionary expenditure Affluence	Rational non-myopic behaviour	Saving, economizing and long-term investments in durables	(Home) economists Sociologists
Idle time	Dormitory vs. active leisure	Organized free time Educational institutes	Educators Sociologists

Tapiola's founding fathers believed that people could and would change in the processes of living and building. However, they did not always understand either the changing activities (or actually passivity) of ordinary people or the autonomous development efforts of the business world.

The well-known architecture critic Jane Jacobs (1961/1993) also pointed out that both Howard and Mumford had quite a static view of city life. Their approach to commerce, for instance, was in terms of a standardized supply of goods, with little attention paid to the tendency of businesses to expand, or to human conflicts. Good planning was conceived as a series of static acts that were based more on averages than deviations. In a quite similar vein, the main difficulties that Tapiola's developers faced were both attracting business companies into the area and changing human character permanently. The clubrooms and other youth facilities in many housing companies, for example, were quickly closed down due to noise disturbances, and also for financial reasons.

The Mumfordian idea of starting from a pristine state was most obvious in the lack of concern on the part of Tapiola's builders with private car-ownership. This may, in fact, have been the biggest error in the design of Tapiola. The developers were as unenthusiastic about, even disinterested in increasing traffic requirements and the use of private cars as Mumford had been. In this sense Tapiola was unlike the rest of Finland, where American influences favouring private car use were adopted much more readily. Von Hertzen felt, for instance, that it sufficed if a removal van was able to drive up to a house once in a lifetime. The majority of traffic would move along pedestrian walkways and bikeways. He did not foresee that Tapiola would be taken over by private cars, especially after the area became part of Greater Helsinki with the completion of the Länsiväylä freeway connecting it with central Helsinki.

CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter I have discussed little-known aspects of the birth of consumer society in Finland, with special focus on forthcoming riches, idle time and overused land area. Tapiola's developers were eager to copy models that had proven successful elsewhere. Models and ideas travelled as elements of larger ideological complexes developed by Mumford and other thinkers of the early 20th century, and found their own shape and place of attachment in the perhaps unexpected contexts of post-war Finland. What had been a concern over the quantity of population (the 'population crisis' of the 1930s) turned into a concern over its quality in the 'human capital discourse' of the 1950s and 1960s.

At the start, Tapiola's building process was shadowed by thoughts evoked by the war economy as well as by worries over the detrimental effects of cities on the masses, fitting well with what was known to be happening elsewhere in Europe. In retrospect, the emerging rhetoric emphasizing the active participation of citizens, and young people in particular, may seem to have been highly calculated, having subsequently fanned the growth of the national economy. But in fact the wishes, interests and plans of the first developers of the area comprised anything but an emphasis on an active, urban consumerist lifestyle.

Findings in this discussion underline that even in a small and relatively open economy modernization (or Americanization) was far from a simple process of imitation. The analysis supports Frank Trentman's thesis (Trentman, 2009: 209) that globalization of consumption is more than financial flows and commodity trade: 'It involves human actors whose ideas, identities, anxieties and power can facilitate, manipulate or contain global exchange.' In processes like this certain languages of description, explanation and calculation came to acquire the value of truth, and specific kinds of action and techniques become possible by such truths. Meanwhile, maps, charts, diagrams and graphs make things stable, mobile, durable and comparable, and they convince others (Rose, 1999).

The chapter adds a not so widely acknowledged aspect of modernization to the insights of Trentman and other commentators on modern consumerism (which ignored the role of the home economist, for example): the role of a relatively new profession in mediating the future, in this case in managing and anticipating a forthcoming overflow. In Tapiola's case the highly specialized division of labour of its planners and builders influenced the way 'proper' consumption was defined. In the encounter of many different professions with their own internal communication patterns, ideas of the good life within a garden city were translated into many different sublanguages of various historical origins. Residents probably failed to realize that the greenbelts linked their community to Ebenezer Howard's idealistic thought and through him to Leonardo da Vinci's early visions, Thomas More's *Utopia*, or Edward Bellamy's faith in techno-optimism, classless society and the cooperative movement. These utopian thoughts acted as background and origin of fuzzy terms such as 'biological function', 'dormitory town' and 'urban sprawl' with which overflow management was exercised. The fact that these terms were loosely defined explains why they functioned as boundary concepts, adaptable to local sites, and facilitating communication across various professions.

EPILOGUE

My parents' generation was guided by the ideal of progress and a naive belief in a better and more civilized society. In our upper-middle-class family of six the shaping of a young person's life and ideals was surprisingly consistently steered by modern Western consumption culture. However, the Tapiola of the 1960s was not yet an individualized consumer society; it was more of a Mumfordian and Galbraithian model community, embracing a sense of collective responsibility and collective upbringing – which, paradoxically, created an excellent ground for the emergence of a society of almost limitless consumerism. In fact, many of the leaders of the Finnish 'mobile information society' are former classmates of mine, who had adopted Nokia's values long before Nokia itself. Good public performance skills, internationalism, tolerance and pragmatism were at the core of Tapiola's pedagogical philosophy. Tapiola's schools were the first in Finland to teach business english and engineering drawing, and children were made familiar with computers on class visits to the University of Technology a few kilometres away. This was where several of my classmates would continue their studies and even today many are living somewhere in the neighbourhood.

NOTES

1. The association that later came to be known as Asuntoreformiyhdistys (Housing Reform Society) was established in Finland as early as 1910 to promote building activity that aimed at 'the public good' and 'more social and healthy' housing.
2. A neighbourhood unit was defined as the area within walking distance from home to school and a basic shop. It also referred to the kind of social community (*Gemeinschaft*) emphasized by sociologists in the 1950s worrying about the loss of community (for example, Mann, 1954: 163–168). The neighbourhood unit concept formed an important starting point in the 1952 housing reform competition where many of the young architects for the Tapiola project were found.
3. In the winning plans, potential residents were classified by household types: 'The results of the competition indicate that family dwellings should generally not be located into high tower buildings, but into low apartment houses or row houses, whereas dwellings for single households or families without children are more suitable in tall buildings' (*Asuntopolitiikka*, 1953: 5). In any case, this was how Heikki von Hertzen (the editor-in-chief of both *Asuntopolitiikka* and *Valtakunnansuunnittelu*) saw it.
4. For example, the architects who designed the area were quite diversely oriented: Meurman represented the 'old school' where German influence was predominant, while younger designers such as Aarne Ervi (1910–1977) drew most of their influences from the United States and Great Britain. Ervi was an important actor as a town planner as well. He realized what exceptional freedom Tapiola enjoyed in being able to develop as part of Espoo municipality, a district with almost no housing regulation in the post-war period. Part of this freedom came from the fact that land prices were fairly low because the border of Porkkala, an area leased to the Soviet Union after the war, was just 15 kilometres away.
5. Generally speaking, Finland was not 'Americanized' by a flow of physical objects, but mostly in the form of ideas and cultural goods. For instance, of all the countries of

Europe, it was Finland where Donald Duck and *Reader's Digest* drew their largest audiences. Small artifacts such as records, comics and cosmetics were not only materializations of the notion of the modern society but its carriers as well (Heinonen and Pantzar, 2002). It is also symptomatic that American ideas and ideals were imported and translated for Finnish audiences mainly through books that were critical of American society, for example through the writings of Mumford, Galbraith and Packard.

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