

PROMISING LINES OF INVESTIGATION FOR THEORISTS OF URBAN AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ninie Anggriani

ABSTRACT

To conclude the understanding on theoretical pluralism in the context of theory practice relationship, it is worth to bear in mind of these: there are options are opened for us to follow planning theory stream. It is important to planners/theorists of having a tradition of critical self-awareness for performing credibility of the profession. By developing of each style of theories, there will be a richness of pluralistic theories. Approachment of theories development can be achieved by practicing the conflict-consensus mechanism. Lost of challenge for theorist to proceed their investigations on the processes underlying urban and regional development, in terms of bridging the gap theory practice, bridging the diversity of theories, developing medium style of paradigms and the implication of those in the practicalities. We have to develop the professional attitude principles to our own for our professional episode.

INTRODUCTION

Within urban and regional planning Theory emerged as identifiable area in the late 1960's. Theorists stand behind this thought interest in about how plans are and how they should be made. Then the type of theory developed is now referred to as procedural planning theory. But in the last decade, there is a shift from planning as a technical preoccupation to planning as a form of social behaviour, or social advocacy. This shift has been reflected in planning theory.

The massive changes in urban and regional planning, has become increasingly necessary to link the process of planning to its substance, to link theories of how decision are made to why and whether they should or should not be made.

Then the type of theory developed later, is now pertinent to as Substance planning theory (Batty, 1993). It is understandable then, critique and counter-critique has been occurred in the development of planning theories.

Within the light of planning theory debate, there has also been an increasing interest in what practitioners want, bringing the substantive focus of planning back to the beginning. And as theory and practice desperately need each other, a bridge between the two must be built, it is emerge a need to develop the nature of the theory link in planning work (Breheny, 1983).

Realising the danger of chasm between theory and practice, as Breheny restated the work of Kiernan, and considering the need for rationalising and clarifying the planning function in social organization of pluralistic societies, it is necessary to urge the need for integrating procedural and substantive element of planning theory in ways that reflect the multiplicity of process-object linkages of current planning practice through planning for diversity. (Galloway & Mahayni, 1977).

THE IMPORTANCE OF CRITIQUE.

Indeed, radical critique in current planning theory debate has opened up new theoretical orientation. In order to improve what has been argued, there is a challenge to explore new orientation. The diversity and turbulence in planning thought is not new to the profession. Planners are becoming increasingly aware of the pluralistic nature of values and of their pluralistic composition as a group of professionals. Planners both theorists and practitioners, should have a tradition of critical self-awareness in order to perform the raising credibility of the profession. In addition to self-awareness, there is a belief that no concept is final; concepts are created and recreated. Naslas (1979), claimed that: a rational and coherent system of planning should be the creation of concept which bring unity and meaning to understanding of our physical and social environment. It is appropriate to consider town planning not only as a rational and coherent system but also as an open system. Only open plans can be radically created a new urban life. This created and recreated thinking is becoming a challenge to profession to explore radical critiques. Currently, then it has been developed a critical theory. Forester, suggested that critical theory gives planners a new way of understanding action as attention-shaping. He added then critical theory will help planners in anticipating and correcting for (a) undeserved resentment and mistrust of them, (b) obstacles to effective design review and democratic planning process, and (c) intentionally counter-productive technical planning practice. Furthermore, Kemp in Healey et al (1982) introduced the critical approach, the analytical approach and the normative approach, in order to apply critical theory to the study of urban and regional planning, and thereby critical planning theory seeks to understand the relation of political and economic power which constitute, and are constituted

in the planning process. The development of critical planning theory follows the dialectic triad; thesis, antithesis and synthesis; by which it has been produced the richness of classification of planning theories.

But a hammer can be used to drive a nail or to hit somebody's head as Batty said in his 'social power in plan generation'. So this richness of planning theories should be brought into operation to narrow the gap between theory and practice and between theorists and practitioners. In pluralistic society, there are conflict and consensus. Whatever critiques and conflict emerged, they will come to an agreement and consensus then go together in building of social justice and social welfare. Planning is for the people not for building.

THE PLURALISTIC OF PLANNING THEORY

In the course of planning theory development, there are two problems encountered, in relation to the planning and to the theory. The views to planning and to theory are depend on who and whom he or she stands for. Then it has been known that there are many schools of thought of planning theory. To classify these streams of planning theory, Mc Connel (1981) summarised them into three inter connected kinds of planning theory. This classification consists of: theory in theory of and theory for planning, and each kind can be explanatory or normative. The substantive theories used in planning are derived from many disciplines, concerning phenomena with which planners deal as well as are concerned with making plans, proposal or strategies. The procedural theories of planning, in which the processes and operations. Whilst the third, the social theories for planning which explain why society and planning as it is and how it should be in future. The latest, is related to political and moral theory. Within this pluralistic situation, Mc Connell suggested that if planners are to be perceived to be necessary, they have to prescribe, as well as to regulate and to control in accordance with a plan.

To go into deeper in the situation of theoretical pluralism, Healey et al (1983) provided a set of theories development, aiming to guide planning theorists for creating and sustaining critical communication between those who do not necessarily agree about theory but recognise they are working in the same field. This set of theories, cover a range of styles or paradigms from procedural to critical planning theory, there are seven difference styles, which are having a switch in order between big theory and specific case studies. The lack of middle-range theory, indeed Healey et al's contribution displayed another illustration of difficulty of turning theory into practice. Concerning this contribution, we have to be aware of due to Healey et al's argument that theory should not only be explanatory, but should be predictive and prescriptive. This argument seems to be

contradicted with another their argument related to government intervention, appears to be concerned solely with an explanatory theory (Breheny, 1983). In addition to that, Breheny remained us that a proposal of reade seems to cut across explanation and description; and this tends to provide a confusion in the matter. Whatever the case of this contribution, anyway it provides a useful frame work for us: in finding the boundaries of planning theory, in searching the criteria for constructing theory within the planning field, in establishing communication between the plurality of positions, as well as in studying the relationship between theory and practice.

From another stand point, Cooke in his theories of planning and spatial development, provides a contribution with an analysis and critique of four important theories of knowledge ranging from positivism to the realist philosophy of science. Those are positivism, idealism, rationalism and realism. In the situation of theory pluralism, this contribution supported with its theory-approach and its explanation on implications for planning policy, as well as its connection to interrelatedness between the social relation of production, civil society, the state, the planning system and the spatial development process, provides a useful framework for practitioners to develop theories into practices. Since it relates to the spatial development processes, it seems to bring the planning mode back to the beginning, back to the roots in the statutory control function, as Breheny argued (Breheny, 1983).

From the subject matter of land use planning and social science, Kirk G (1980) spoke about various different theoretical approaches which have a bearing on land use planning issues, and purported that four perspectives have been emerged. Those are the pluralist approach a bureaucratic approach, a reformist view and the structuralist approach of the Marxist tradition. All four theoretical approach are concerned directly or indirectly the distribution of power in society and the mechanism for effecting possible changes in existing power relationship. Again in the light of theoretical pluralism situation, this contribution provides a practical guide to the effort of bridging the gap between theory and practice.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ORTHODOX ANALYSIS

The result of criticism have been to greatly improve the intellectual input to and demand from planning education and hopefully practice. The procedural planning theory has been criticised due to its inadequacy. Paris, in his conclusion claimed the main problem of the procedural planning theory is that it cannot reconcile technical dimensions of decision making with the forces which shape and reshape the social world. In making critical self awareness then this

stream of planning thought has produced a bulk of materials, namely planning theory A Reader in Planning Theory as well as Essay on Planning Theory and Education. These should give evidence of a continuing interest in stream of procedural planning theory.

Although there is a set of problems of procedural theory of planning as Cross and Bristow (1983) stated, which covers: the paradoxicality in the purpose of planning, the relationship of the substantive focus to the planning activity, and the attempts to produce a general procedural theory; it has been explored within its research avenue, the new derivation of its stream of thinking. The development of procedural planning theory provides three new theoretical orientations, namely: Implementation and Policy. Since procedural planning theory is too concerned with policy design, so the focus should be on policy in action; Social Planning and Advocacy Planning since procedural planning theory should be oriented to social welfare; and incrementalism since procedural planning theory is overambitious, idealist and it will not work. Faludi himself then developed three paradigms of planning theory after analysing the problems of planning theory in nineteen-eighties. Being characterised by the way they conceive of planning, they are called; the object-centred view of planning, the control-centred view of planning; and the decision-centred view of planning (Faludi). Before doing this, Faludi has persuaded other planners to undertake comparative planning research with three reasons behind his persuasion, those are; to advance planning theory, to improve practice and to bring about a unification of the implications of critical rationalism for planning and planning methodology, by formulating a Popperian approach to decision-making in planning with a view to throwing light on the planning problem, the meaning of rationality (Faludi, 1983).

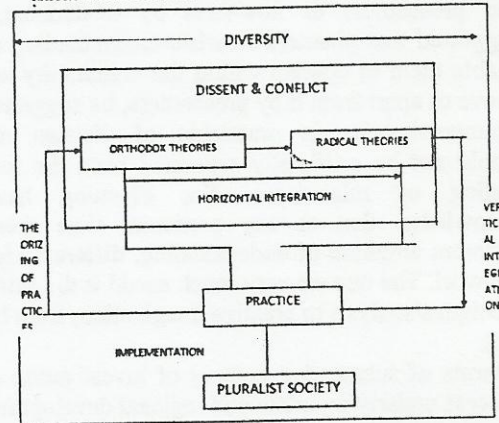
THE DEVELOPMENT OF RADICAL CRITIQUE OF PLANNING THEORY.

To add the richness of pluralism of planning theory, Thornley (1990) introduces “Consensus Theory and “Conflict Theory” as branches of social theory, based upon his views to conservative, liberal and radical theories persuaded by Harvey, Taylor, Walton and Young. Consensus theory sees society as a system of action unified at the most general level by shared culture, agreement, values and political organization. Whilst, conflict theory sees a change and a dissent in society. Dissent or conflict is seen as a necessary condition of social change and this is located within the social structure.

Opposing to procedural planning theory, radical theorists then developed three new orientations, namely; Pragmatism since all theorizing gets us nowhere, so we must concentrate on doing real and practical things, “The New Humanism” since planning

is mechanistic and unresponsive, planning should encourage a new consensus based on interpersonal relations; and political economy, since planning is the product of specific economic and social relations (Healey)

APPROACHMENT BETWEEN THE TWO STREAMS OF PLANNING THEORY.



Within the pluralistic democratic society, there are agreements among citizens and whoever involved in the planning activity to have conflict and consensus mechanism, as Thornley said (1979).

By developing diversity in planning theories it has been achieved a richness in thinking.

There is a need to demonstrate a horizontal integration between all planning theories that have been developed, in order to classify and rationalise the planning function in practices as Galloway and Mahayni suggested.

There is a need to narrow the gap between theory and practice, as claimed by Breheny. For this vertical integration, for the purpose of practical implications for planning, it is worth to create a polishing practice as the reconciliation of scientists and practitioners.

In smoothing this vertical integration, Balon (1980) suggested a schematic framework for theorising of practices and developed seven key points in attempting to synthesis of theory and practice, for the development of professional disciplines and training for professionals.

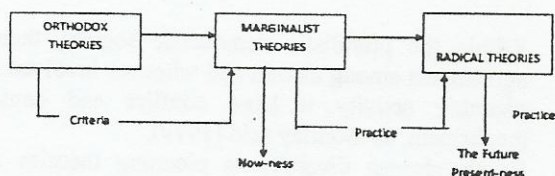
So, for the sake of implementation of planning, it is necessary to develop a rapprochement between planning theories development. This does not mean that planning theories have to mix each other. They, of course still can stand side by side to develop the dialectic triads. As Hemmers introduced the work of Bolan, he said that if the professional can be seen as a moral agent not a purely instrumental problem solver, then the activity of planning is centrally concerned with the task of achieving agreement on right ends.

PROMISING LINES FOR THEORISTS IN THE FUTURE

What seems to be most promising line of investigation for theorists of the processes underlying

urban and regional development in the future? To answer this question intend to bring back the discussion and relate to my diagram under approachment point of view. To be within the theoretical pluralism situation, theorists may held two professional attitudes as king suggested; relatedness, and presentness or now-ness by relatedness, king suggested that planners/theorists understanding should enable them to operate within the community and not above or apart from it by presentness, he suggested that planners/theories in practicing of decision making would not be artificially separated from the intuitive feeling of relatedness. So; Planning have to acknowledge that at any particular time there are different emphases of understanding, different views of the world. The one we very much need is the shift from techniques/analysis to creative imagination, from hard to soft.

Interms of substantive matters of investigation of the process underlying urban and regional development.



Theorists can develop this integratedness. In another way then bring them to the practical ground of urban and regional development. There are still many ways that theorists can do in this horizontal integrated-ness. In term of vertical integratedness, as Yewlett, and Breheny persuaded to bridge the gap between theory and practice, theorists can challenge the idea of the practitioners as theorists as Bolan introduced Bolan's ideas fills two professional attitude principles of King. Bolan claimed that ; professional practice uniquely links scholarly disciplines to action; epistemology to ethics and commitment. But this practice cannot be divorced from its ontological origins and cannot overlook its interventions at the level of phenomena.

This is the challenge of the theorists to investigate the possibility opened. It is needed to investigate planning problem for introducing medium style of theories

CONCLUSION

To conclude the understanding on theoretical pluralism in the context of theory practice relationship, it is worth to bear in mind of these: there are options are opened for us to follow planning theory stream. It is important to planners/theorists of having a tradition of critical self-awareness for performing credibility of the profession

By developing of each style of theories, there will be a richness of pluralistic theories.

Approachment of theories development can be achieved by practicing the conflict-consensus mechanism.

Lost of challenge for theorists to proceed their investigations on the processes underlying urban and regional development, in terms of bridging the gap theory practice, bridging the diversity of theories, developing medium style of paradigms and the implication of those in the practicalities.

We have to develop the professional attitude principles to our own for our professional episode.

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