

end, while not as pessimistic as Balibrea, he agrees with her that the 'haves' will probably continue to benefit, and the 'have-nots' will continue to be downtrodden as society continues to globalise.

Taken as a whole, the book offers keen insights into the Barcelona phenomenon and what planning and enlightened political leadership did together to make it happen. It will mostly appeal to planners and urban designers of all stripes, and astute city observers and leaders who look to Barcelona as a prototype for a contemporary city with a high quality of life. There is no doubt that planning has made this so.

Yet on a number of counts the book is unsatisfying, as it does not deal with a number of issues of import not only to Barcelona, but to all large international metropolises. Missing is an analysis, or even a mention, of such key forces as tourism, immigration, skyrocketing real estate prices, and the role that the political economy plays in urban fortunes. Also given scant attention are urban regimes, the inner workings of planning processes, and the civic engagement of important sectors of society, including bankers, real estate developers and other economic actors (with the exception of the analysis of the urban social movements in Chapters 3 and 4, and to a limited extent in Chapter 6). These shortcomings can be largely attributed to the selection of a narrow range of technicians – largely planners, architects and engineers – as authors.

While the list of authors reads as a who's who of Barcelona planning, the articles selected are not as rigorous and reflective of the authors' other writings. As a result, this insiders' compilation reads as cheerleading, not impartial analysis. A further problem of the text, besides the unevenness of the quality and tone of the individual chapters inherent in almost all edited volumes, is that many of

the chapters were translated from Spanish or Catalan, and do not flow smoothly. Finally, so many basic conditions have changed since the first publication of many of the articles (1996) and of the final volume (2004), that numerous facts and statements are out of date. More importantly, new phenomena have become manifest since then, or then-emergent tendencies have become prominent, leading to a serious questioning of the highly touted Barcelona model that this volume covers. This questioning has been inadequately addressed by the insiders or by the observers and analysts. It awaits the next definitive assessment of the city and its planning.

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Dialogues in Urban and Regional Planning, Bruce Stiftel and Vanessa Watson (eds), *London and New York, Routledge, 2004, 384 pp., £80.00 (hb only)*

In my presidential address at the first Joint Congress ACSP–AESOP in Oxford in 1991, I launched the idea of a world congress of planning schools. Exactly ten years later the first world planning schools congress was held in Shanghai. Talks between leaders of nine planning schools associations and the international steering committee for the Shanghai congress led ultimately to the establishment of a global planning education association network (GPEAN). This book is the first substantive product of this emerging global cooperation.

The nine organisations were responsible for the selection of the papers in this volume. The selection procedure reflects of course the tradition and the institutional maturity of each

organisation. The editors were not actively involved in the selection of the papers, leading to a rather eclectic collection. One could look in different ways at this collection: at the themes raised, the focus, the colour of the contribution (theoretical, empirical, analytic, descriptive and critical), the places dealt with, and the literature sources. I have the feeling that the themes chosen are not always typical of the organisations. They vary from urban land-use, land markets, the aftermath of the Olympic Games, rural management, to rapid changing settings in a world metropolis, economic-ecological zoning, participation and diversity, the use of stories and normative theories and critical planning theory. The locations take us from the Brazilian Amazon to Shanghai, from Toronto to Sydney, but also from west Oxfordshire to Papakolea in central Honolulu. The approaches and concepts used include the purely descriptive, whole landscape approach, mixed-use theory, critical theory, townscape management, ecological-economic zoning, story telling, and a neo-Marxist approach. During my visits to Latin America – more specifically at the Anpur congresses – I was struck by the fact that the literature references are quite

different from the ones used in the AESOP and ACSP congresses. This is confirmed by this book. This brings me to a suggestion for forthcoming editions in this series. My feeling – unlike that of the editors who stress emerging commonalities – is that we have to make fuller use of differences and cherish them as several authors do in their papers on diversity. This could be done by selecting one (or a few) common theme(s) and inviting selected authors from the nine organisations to contribute.

The fact that nine organisations with different cultures, traditions and degrees of institutionalisation managed, in such a short time span and within the loose framework of GPEAN, to produce this book deserves our full appreciation. I want to congratulate GPEAN and more specifically the two editors for this achievement. The mere fact that this collection of papers was published is for once more important than its content. It is a pity that the book is only available in hard cover and is far too expensive for dissemination in more than half of the nine organisations.

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