

## **Bruce Stiftel, Vanessa Watson and Henri Acselrad (Eds): Dialogues in Urban and Regional Planning 2**

**Routledge, London and New York, ISBN 0-415-40285-9 (hbk)**

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Published online: 22 February 2008  
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*Dialogues in Urban and Regional Planning 1*, first published in 2004, represented something of a breakthrough in Urban and Regional Planning research publications. The series aims to publish in one biennial volume path-breaking papers nominated by the nine planning education associations that constitute the Global Planning Education Association Network. That volume marked the starting point of a series of “Dialogues” that, besides offering a selection of the best planning scholarship from every region of the world, intends to assist in bridging language and regional gaps among planning researchers. Indeed, the first *Dialogues* has now been published in both Portuguese and Spanish.

The 12 chapters in *Dialogues* volume 2 are as diverse as those in *Dialogues* volume 1, and as the editors note, it would again be a mistake to attempt to impose strict thematic categories on them. Nevertheless, a number of general themes are identifiable and provide the organization framework against which the various chapters are presented. The first three chapters in this volume directly explore the issue of economy, urban space, and planning, although a concern for economic factors is apparent in the treatment of some of the other themes as well. The next set of three papers explores various issues that might be interpreted as addressing the theme of environment and the conservation of heritage. Thereafter, two chapters consider the development of planning ideas over time: the first focusing on the influence of American ideas on the planning discourse of Australia and the second providing a genealogy of ideas on planning and cities. A single chapter tackles the highly complex issue of planning and transport, a critically important theme when considering that many cities are, from a transport point of view, literally coming to a grinding halt. The final chapter addresses the theme of planning and gender in the context of Africa’s Botswana.

Besides the content of the papers assembled in this volume, there is a very important lesson in the underlying rationale of this series—the communication of

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different planning discourses is thoroughly imbued with the geographic specificity of their respective regions. This is the type of effort that will enable a far broader view on the planning challenges associated with different regions in the world and aid in addressing the hegemonic position of academic English and its concerns in urban and regional studies generally. This collection makes it possible to understand, within the context of the different linguistic planning discourses and their regions, the various challenges and solutions on their own terms. What this “project” aims to achieve provides an admirable example to all disciplines, not least the field of urban studies, which is woefully overshadowed by Anglo-American discursive realities. This volume is essential reading for any urban and regional planner—practitioner or academic—and will be of great interest to urban geographers and urban sociologists. *Dialogues 2*, as was the case with its predecessor, comes highly recommended.

#### **About the Author**

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