



BOOK NOTES

Urban ecological design: a process for regenerative places by *Danilo Palazzo* and *Dean Frederick Steiner*, Island Press, Washington DC, USA, 2012, 256 pp. ISBN 978-1-5972-6829-5. An outline of an interdisciplinary 'process model' for urban design that has been developed and tested over time is presented. The aim is not to explain how to design a specific city precinct or public space, but to describe useful steps in approaching the transformation of urban spaces. The different stages in which the process is organized are presented, using theories, techniques, images and case studies. Urban design is viewed as an interface between different disciplines. The field is described as 'peacefully overrun, invaded, and occupied' by city planners, architects, engineers and landscape architects (with developers and politicians frequently joining in). It is suggested that environmental concerns demand the consideration of ecological and sustainability issues in urban design. The urban designer is seen as helping to orchestrate human relationships with other living organisms in the built environment.

Principles of urban retail planning and development by *Robert Gibbs*, Wiley, New York, USA, 2012, 272 pp. ISBN 978-0-4704-8822-5. This is a guide to retail-planning development for urban planners, urban designers and architects. It includes an overview of the history of retail design, and a consideration of both retail and merchandising trends and principles for new retail developments. It provides insights and techniques needed to enable historical downtowns to compete with modern suburban shopping centres.

Reading the maps: a guide to the Irish Historic Towns Atlas by *Jacinta Prunty* and *H. B. Clarke*, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, Ireland, 2011, 264 pp. ISBN 978-1-9048-9070-6. This is a companion to the Irish Historic Towns Atlas series. Samples from the first 22 atlases are used to illustrate aspects of Irish urban

history. Various town types reveal the different bases of urban culture across Ireland. Richly illustrated with maps, plans and photographs, a historico-geographical approach is used to explore the evolution of Irish towns and cities.

American urban form: a representative history by *Sam Bass Warner* and *Andrew Whittemore*, MIT Press, Cambridge, USA, 2012, 176 pp. ISBN 978-0-2620-1721-3. The changing patterns of houses, buildings, streets, parks, pipes and wires, wharves, railroads, highways, and airports reflect the changing patterns of social, political and economic processes that shape the city. In this book, Warner and Whittemore map more than 300 years of the American city through the evolution of urban form. They do this by offering an illustrated history of 'the city' – a hypothetical city that exemplifies the American city's transformation from village to merchant seaport, industrial city, multi-centred metropolis, and, finally, regional metropolis that participates in both the local and the global.

City rules: how regulations affect urban form by *Emily Talen*, Island Press, Washington DC, USA, 2012, 256 pp. ISBN 978-1-5972-6692-5. Many present-day codes encourage sprawl and even urban blight. This has not always been the case. Talen shows how certain eras used rules to produce beautiful, walkable and sustainable communities, while others created just the opposite. She makes complex regulations understandable, demystifying city rules such as zoning and illustrating how written codes translate into real-world consequences. Most importantly, she proposes changes to these rules that will enhance communities' freedom to develop unique spaces.

The idea of a town by *Joseph Rykwert*, Faber and Faber, London, UK, 2011, 252 pp. ISBN 978-0-5712-7478-9. Roman towns and their

history are generally regarded as being the preserve of the archaeologist or the economic historian. In this unusual book, which touches on such disparate themes as psychology and urban architecture, Rykwert has considered them as works of art. His starting point is the mythical, historical and ritual texts in which their foundation is recounted. He invokes the comparative method of the anthropologists, examining first the 'Etruscan rite', a group of ceremonies by which practically all Roman towns were founded. The basic institutions of the town, its walls and gates, its central shrines and its forum are all part of a pattern to which the rituals and the myths that accompanied them provide clues. These rituals and myths served to create a secure home for the citizens of Rome and made them feel part of their city and enabled them to place it in a knowable universe.

Ventilating cities: air-flow criteria for healthy and comfortable urban living by *Shinsuke Kato*, Springer, New York, USA, 2012, 207 pp. ISBN 978-9-4007-2770-0. The majority of the world's population live in environments with artificially weakened wind, as buildings in urban areas form windbreaks and reduce wind speeds. Anthropogenic heat is also generated and during the summer dense urban areas suffer from the urban heat island effect. This book discusses how to evaluate the urban wind environment, including ventilation performance and thermal comfort. It is organized in two parts: 'Wind environment and the urban environment' and 'Criteria for assessing breeze environments'. It includes chapters on sea breeze in urban areas; thermal adaptation and the effect of wind on thermal comfort; health risk of exposures; pollutant transport in dense urban areas; legal regulations for urban ventilation; and new criteria for assessing the local wind environment.

Urban rivers: remaking rivers, cities, and space in Europe and North America by *Stephane Castonguay* and *Matthew Evenden*, University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, USA, 2012, 256 pp. ISBN 978-0822-96185-7. How rivers affected urbanization spatially, in infrastructure, territorial disputes, and in floodplains, and by their changing ecologies are examined. Providing case studies from Vienna to Manitoba, the chapters are written by geographers

and historians to provide a comparative survey of how cities and rivers interacted from the seventeenth century to the present. Rising cities and industries were great agents of social and ecological change, particularly during the nineteenth century, when mass populations and their effluents were introduced to river environments. In many cases, drinkable water for cities now had to be drawn from distant sites. These developments required significant infrastructural improvements, creating social conflicts over land jurisdiction and affecting the lives and livelihood of non-urban populations. The effective reach of cities was extended and urban space was remade. By the mid-twentieth century, new technologies and specialists emerged to combat the effects of industrialization, and the health of urban rivers gradually improved.

Planning Los Angeles edited by *David C. Sloane*, American Planning Association, Chicago, USA, 2012, 224 pp. ISBN 978-1-6119-0040-0. Despite the city's reputation for spontaneous evolution, a deliberate planning process shapes the way Los Angeles looks and lives. More than 35 essayists provide a richly illustrated view of this vibrant metropolis. Together they cover the influences and outcomes of planning for a diverse population, regulating land use, and providing transportation in a sprawling city, protecting green space, and supporting economic development.

Living over the store: architecture and local urban life by *Howard Davis*, Routledge, New York, USA, 2012, 264 pp. ISBN 978-0-4157-8317-0. The shop/house – the building combining commercial/retail uses and dwellings – appears over many periods of history in most cities in the world. This book combines architectural history, cross-cultural understandings and accounts of contemporary policy and building practice to provide a comprehensive account of this common but overlooked building. It covers the merchant's house in northern European cities, the Asian shophouse, the apartment building on New York's avenues, and typical apartment buildings in Rome and Paris. This variety of shop/houses along with the commonality of attributes that form them, mean that this hybrid phenomenon is as much a social and economic one as it is an architectural one. Professionals, city officials and developers are

taking a new look at buildings that allow for higher densities and mixed use. Describing exemplary contemporary projects and issues pertaining to their implementation as well as their background, cultural variety and urban attributes, this book is for designers dealing with mixed-use buildings as well as academics and students.

Urban design, chaos, and colonial power in Zanzibar by *William Cunningham Bissell*, Indiana University Press, Indianapolis, USA, 2010, 394 pp. ISBN 978-0-2532-2255-8. In places such as Zanzibar, the British sought to import scientific techniques and practices, ranging from sanitation to urban planning. But time and again plans failed to come to fruition. By focusing on these flawed efforts to impose colonial order, Bissell offers a different view of colonialism and cities, revealing the contradictions, confusion, and even chaos that lay at the very core of British rule. In this portrait of a cosmopolitan African city and an exploration of colonial irrationality, he opens up new perspectives on the making of modernity and the metropolis.

Urban composition: designing community through urban design by *Mark Childs*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, USA, 2011, 144 pp. ISBN 978-1-6168-9052-0. The buildings, public works, plazas and parks of even a small town embody substantial amounts of capital, energy, natural resources, history, and aspirations. Generally no single individual is responsible. Cities mostly arise from dialogues between multiple designers, clients, regulators, citizens, critics and users. Too frequently they have only fragments of greatness or are soul-deadening and environmentally unhealthy. Just as private doctors have responsibility for their individual patients and for public health, project designers are accountable to their clients and for a set of public goods such as environmental stewardship and fostering civil society. Childs introduces ways in which the architects, planners, artists and engineers of individual projects can fulfill their public trust to help make great urban places.

Spatial planning and sustainable development: approaches for achieving sustainable urban form in Asian cities edited by

Mitsuhiko Kawakami, Zhen-jiang Shen, Jen-te Pai, Xiao-lu Gao and Ming Zhang, Springer, New York, USA, 2013, 452 pp. ISBN 978-9-4007-5921-3. Insights into the achievement of sustainable urban form through spatial planning are considered in local cities and metropolitan areas in Asia. The impact of planning policy is explored from multidisciplinary viewpoints in relation to land-use patterns, housing development, transportation, 'green' design, and agricultural and ecological systems. Aspects discussed include economic development and ecological protection.

Henri Lefebvre and the Spanish urban experience: reading from the mobile city by *Benjamin Fraser*, Bucknell University Press, Lewisburg, USA, 2011, 243 pp. ISBN 978-1-6114-8368-0. This book applies in detail Lefebvre's thinking on cities to the culture and literature of Spain. Fraser shows how this complex view of the city is relevant to understanding a variety of Spanish cultural products. These range from urban plans and short writings on the urban experience during the nineteenth century by Mariano José de Larra, Ramón de Mesonero Ramanos and Ildefons Cerdà to urban theories, cultural practices and literary fiction of the twentieth century by Luis Martín-Santos, Juan José Millás, Juan Goytisolo and Manuel Delgado Ruiz. Key concepts of Lefebvre's urban theory are explored, including his critiques of static space, modern urban planning, knowledge, alienation in everyday life and his emphasis on a method that underscores the importance of movement and rhythm. Fraser shows these aspects of Lefebvre's work are interrelated.

People and space: new forms of interaction in the city project by *Giovanni Maciocco and Silvano Tagliagambe*, Springer, New York, USA, 2011, 252 pp. ISBN 978-9-4007-2613-3. This book explores new forms and modalities of relations between people and space. The starting point is the idea that in contemporary societies the loss of relationship with place is a symptom of a breakdown in the relationship between ethics and aesthetics. This has caused a crisis not only in taste, but in people's sense of beauty and moral values. It has led to a loss of engagement with the landscape. It is argued that new forms of interaction between people and space are occurring in 'intermediate space', at the border of 'urban

normality' and those parts of a city where citizens experiment with unconventional social practices. These new relations emerge, it is argued, only after the 'therapeutic illusion of space', which still exists today, is abandoned: projects for the city should have as their keystone the notion of social action.

Urban geography by *Tim Hall and Heather Barrett*, Routledge, London, UK, 2012, 384 pp. ISBN 978-0-4154-9232-4. This extensively revised and updated fourth edition examines the new geographical patterns forming within and between cities, and also the way geographers have sought to make sense of this urban transformation. It is structured into three sections – 'contexts', 'themes' and 'issues' – that move students from a foundation in urban geography through its major themes to contemporary pressing problems. Key literature in the following areas is synthesized: the urban world; changing approaches to urban geography; urban form and structure; economy and the city.

The Chinese city by *Weiping Wu and Piper Gaubatz*, Routledge, New York, USA, 2012, 312 pp. ISBN 978-0-4155-7575-1. China's cities are home to 10 per cent of the world's population. Their remarkable transformation builds on major traditions, including feudal dynasties, semi-colonialism and socialist commands. Studying them provides perspectives on both the complex character of the changing city and Chinese economy, society and environment. This book explores how the complexity of the Chinese city both conforms to and defies conventional urban theories and experiences of cities elsewhere in the world. It contains a wealth of up-to-date statistical information, case studies, and suggested further reading.

Medieval Naples: an architectural and urban history by *Caroline Bruzelius and William Tronzo*, Italica Press, New York, USA, 2011, 160 pp. ISBN 978-1-5991-0203-0. This is the first comprehensive English-language review of the architecture and urban development of Naples from late antiquity to the late Middle Ages. For the period from about 400 to 1139 the range of topics discussed includes the development of the city's urban fabric and chief monuments,

among which are the catacombs, the baptistry of San Giovanni in Fonte, the forum area and the early history of San Lorenzo Maggiore and the Pietrasanta. Within the period from the twelfth century to the end of the Angevin period, topics covered include religious foundations and urban topography, various forms of patronage – religious, mercantile, noble and royal – and the Angevin reconfiguration of the city in the late Middle Ages. This book is a survey for scholars, students and general readers.

The European Landscape Convention: challenges of participation edited by *Michael Jones and Marie Stenseke*, Springer, New York, USA, 2011, 336 pp. ISBN 978-9-4048-9931-0. This is a presentation of research into public participation in landscape conservation, management and planning, following the 2000 European Landscape Convention which came into force in 2004. It examines the theory of participation and suggests lessons that can be learnt from specific European examples. Consideration is given to the extent to which the provisions for participation in the European Landscape Convention have been implemented. Comparisons are made of the different experiences of participation in selected countries from different parts of Europe, and there is an examination of public participation in practice. Many of the conclusions drawn are of global relevance. The book is a reference work for researchers and advanced students in landscape policies and management, as well as for professionals and others interested in land-use planning and environmental management.

Post-wall Berlin: borders, space and identity by *Janet Ward*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, USA, 404 pp. ISBN 978-0-2302-7657-4. Theoretically broad but historically well-grounded, this book offers a lens through which to view Berlin's latest self-reinvention. It provides a cross-disciplinary approach to understanding one of the world's most iconic cities, dealing with recent developments in post-Cold-War cultural history, memory studies, visual culture, and border studies. Through a focus on the changing boundaries of Berlin, new light is shed on debates concerning the city's division and rebuilding, post-1989, the new Europe, urban preservation and 'memory sites'.