

entertainment areas. The last paper in the section, by Lineu Castello, on 'Redesigning brownfields in Porto Alegre', describes the redevelopment of the site of an old factory headquarters into a shopping mall.

'The struggle to make a better city for the community' is the final section. It centres on projects developed to promote social inclusion. 'Urban design, planning and the politics of development in Curitiba', by Clara Izabal, describes the worldwide well-known planning experience of Curitiba. Despite its successes this city has been criticized and attention drawn to the contrast between its standard of living and that of the poorest neighbouring cities. Vicente del Rio's 'Reclaimed city image and street liveability', investigates the Rio Cidade projects developed by the local department of Rio de Janeiro to improve public spaces. Rio Cidade's successful outcome caused several Brazilian cities to develop similar projects, among them São Paulo, as can be discovered in the third paper 'Reshaping the metropolitan territory', by Carlos Leite, who presents contemporary planning interventions characterized as a policy to re-energize downtown areas and metropolitan cities.

The last paper, 'Upgrading squatter settlements into city neighborhoods', by Cristiane Rosa Duarte and Fernanda Magalhães, describes projects seeking to establish social inclusion, upgrade *favelas* and promote their recognition as part of the modern city's urban structure. As the paper reports, the inclusion of illegal settlements has been responsible for improving the quality of life, but official control of such expansion to date has not been so effective.

To sum up, the authors' intention was to present urbanism beyond Brasília, and to point out that there is more than the creation of this capital in Brazilian urbanism today. The careful analyses are the bases for both positive reflections and criticisms of what is happening in present-day Brazil. Contemporary urbanism is presented through a focus on successful projects implemented either as government policy or by private entrepreneurs, or characterized as mixed enterprises. However, it is necessary not to lose sight of less optimistic scenarios of modern Brazilian urbanism, which the authors of this volume tend to circumvent: the great majority of Brazilian cities suffer from chaotic urban expansion. Importantly too, since 1988 local administrative boards have been responsible for planning policies, yet most of them do not have even a single professional concerned with urban development. A lack of effective

planning policies and inadequate development control result in ugly and hazardous developments.

#### Reference

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**International exhibitions and urbanism: the Zaragoza Expo 2008 project** by Javier Monclús, Ashgate, Aldershot, UK, 2009, 208 pp. ISBN 978-0-7546-7650-8.

Since the 1980s local authorities, whether acting alone or in concert with the private sector, have increasingly relied upon the planning and implementation of large-scale urban development projects, such as museums, waterfronts, exhibition halls and parks, business centres, and international landmark events, to reinforce the competitiveness of their urban economies within a context of rapidly changing conditions at local, national, and global scales. Such projects have been used both for urban promotion and marketing and also as catalysts for urban regeneration and transformation.

Javier Monclús highlights the strategic role that expositions can play. Through a comparative analysis of nearly 50 events that have taken place over the past 150 years, he explores the relationships between exhibitions and urbanism from a planning perspective. The analysis of urban developments associated with expositions is particularly interesting because they are, as in the case of the Olympic Games, episodes in which urban development, architecture and urban culture are expressed within the specific framework of the host city.

For many authors, the world of expositions epitomizes the ephemeral, providing visitors with synthetic experiences and offering the cities that host them a brief moment of splendour. Here, however, the author is not so much interested in narrating the events or describing their sites, but rather in the longer-term impact that such events have on the urban structure and future development of the city. One of the main questions that Monclús

tries to answer is to what extent expositions provide opportunities for urban innovation and for the application of urban development strategies directed towards catalysing different planning strategies and projects.

The first generation of expositions, from the mid-nineteenth century until 1930, which the author refers to as 'classical', began with architectural landmarks: towers, palaces and halls. These were emblematic monuments to technology and to the glory of the nation in question. From the end of the nineteenth century, feats of engineering tended to be less prominent than architecture: this was a time when movements that sought to make cities more beautiful began to make their mark.

The character of expositions changed after 1930. The modern age heralded a greater interest in the structuring and designing of their sites. After the Second World War, notable changes were evident in both general objectives and how events were used for the purpose of urban development. There was the growth of 'edutainment' (that is, education plus entertainment) expositions, which created spaces designed for entertainment and leisure. But at the urban scale, post-war expositions followed more pragmatic urban strategies and attempted to encourage changes in infrastructure that cities had already planned.

In events held during the last 20 or so years the urban development and planning strategies that have been promoted are suggested by Monclús to have been more interesting than the designs of the exhibition sites themselves. They reflect to a larger degree the logic of promoting and marketing the city, at the same time as carrying out urban development projects. In these new conditions for urban development expositions have been utilized, Monclús argues, as strategic instruments for urban development and planning.

Significantly, the successful longer-term impact of an exposition is shown to depend on its ability to integrate with the city and its broader goals. A good example of this is provided by a detailed case study of the Expo Zaragoza 2008 project, which is presented in the last part of the book. This project focused on integrating public spaces into the natural environment. This permitted the regeneration of the banks of the River Ebro and particularly the strategic Ranillas Meander site. The Ranillas Meander, which lies upstream from the city, was originally agricultural land but is now only 2-3 km west of the city centre and 1 km from the new high-speed railway station. It had already been proposed as an area for development in the Ebro Riverbank Regeneration Scheme of 2001. The Expo Zaragoza

2008 project was therefore the culmination of two urban development projects that complemented each other perfectly.

The ephemeral and synthetic experiences that expositions offer their visitors contrast with the spatial footprints that they have tended to leave and this is a theme that the author highlights. Since their first appearance, temporary expositions, such as the World Fairs, have sought to capture the heterogeneity of the world within a bounded enclosure. Today's expositions, in contrast, are shown to play with the ambivalence of this enclosed space. There is an interesting dialectic between what is temporary and what is permanent.

Through the study of expositions, Monclús explains how certain large-scale urban development projects can become urban catalysts and help define the character of cities. Expositions are therefore strategic instruments capable of not only promoting greater integration amongst existing urban and architectural elements but also fostering future urban development projects.

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**Turning a town around: a proactive approach to urban design** by *Tony Hall*, Blackwell, Oxford, UK, 2007, 187 pp. ISBN 978-1-4051-7023-9.

Tony Hall, now an Adjunct Professor in the Urban Research Program at Griffiths University in Brisbane, Australia, was for several years the main advocate of good urban design in Chelmsford, UK. He championed the adoption of sustainable development practices both as Professor of Town Planning at Anglia Ruskin University and, more importantly, as a member of the Chelmsford Borough Council. Between 1996 and 2003, he worked with fellow elected officials and professional planners to raise standards of good design and to facilitate the renaissance of the city centre. He has written a clear, well-organized, well-illustrated and stimulating account of Chelmsford's experience during his years of service as a council member. To echo the titles of other works that describe successful planning efforts (for example, Punter, 2004; Purdom, 1963), he could well have entitled his book *The Chelmsford*