

open space between the *ped-sheds*. Within a large urban system, non-residential *ped-sheds*, accommodating low-intensity commercial, distribution and manufacturing units along with large hospital and educational complexes, could be developed at intervals along the quality public transport links between the residential *ped-sheds*.

Having produced his theoretical city model Hall recognizes that the opportunity to create an entirely new city on the theoretical lines he develops is extremely unlikely, so he then goes on to examine how it could be applied to the extension and intensification of existing cities. The author criticizes the present paradigm for development plans as 'two-dimensional uniform land-use allocations' which are 'an inadequate tool for achieving a more compact, sustainable urban form involving a mix of land uses'. The primary consideration should not be land-use allocation but the outlines of physical form in three dimensions, these in themselves being steered by the desired goals. Land-use allocation should be secondary to the physical guidelines which reflect the more persistent features of urban areas and the ones which are most capable of responding to the desired outcomes of promoting higher quality of life and greater levels of sustainability. The physical structure should be designed in such a way as to cope with social and economic changes rather than subsequently being required to be fundamentally (and expensively) altered to deal with such changes.

A logical consequence of Hall's argument is that key public transport infrastructure should be the essential initial development and all other development should not be allowed if it cannot be reached by a combination of walking and local public transport. This leads to the main criticism of Hall's thesis which is that it simply fails to take into account what has become increasingly evident to this reviewer, namely the selfish frailties of human nature – especially as evidenced in the growth and use (including the way that many people actually drive) of the private motor vehicle. Many people would broadly agree with the desired planning goals of improving the quality of life and increasing levels of sustainability but, equally, many of those same people, despite also recognizing the positives in energy saving and health advantages, would be reluctant to and probably resent the restrictions on traffic speed (to around 50 kph) and the requirements to walk that are essential components of Hall's 'robust' city. In other words, he is absolutely right in theory but, in practice the obstacles to implementation are formidable and would

require an immense amount of political will and public persuasion. Nevertheless, as stated at the outset, this remains an important book and despite this pessimistic comment, one can only admire the optimism that has inspired it. For planning practitioners, and for planning policy makers in particular, it should be required reading.

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Metropolis Barcelona. Catalogue Vol. 1 – El urbanismo metropolitano hoy / Metropolitan Urban Planning today; Catalogue Vol. 2 – Transformaciones metropolitanas / Metropolitan transformations; Atlas - Cartografías contemporâneas / Contemporary maps edited by *Carles Crosas*, Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain, 2015. 320 pp. (Vol. 1); 320 pp. (Vol 2); 198 pp. (Atlas). ISBN 978-84-87881-14-5.

This three-volume publication is the general catalogue of an Exhibition supported by the Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona and curated by Joan Busquets, as part of the continuing discussions on, and drafting of, the new *Plan Director Urbanístico Metropolitano* for Barcelona. The exhibition and catalogue outline the evolution of that metropolis during the last 40 years, and point to future planning concerns and challenges. The catalogue, with Catalàn, Spanish and English texts, comprises two printed volumes and a cartographic appendix. Volume 1, *Metropolitan urban planning today*, provides a conceptual and sectorial approach to the main challenges and territorial components, namely: new ways of living and working; the metropolitan form of economic activity; the residential urban fabric; the landscape of the metropolis; ecology, leisure and production; public facilities in the metropolis; the centres of the metropolis; metropolitan mobility; the metropolitan metabolism; Metropolis Barcelona: a capital point in Europe. Volume 2, *Metropolitan transformations*, focuses on the changes experienced by Barcelona since the adoption of the 1976 *Plano Geral Metropolitano* (*Metropolitan Master Plan*), and on the planning

tools that have fostered and enabled such transformations. A discussion on the role and contribution of the discipline of urbanism in the twenty-first century metropolis completes that volume. The appendix, entitled 'Atlas – contemporary maps', provides thematic cartographic documents illustrating various layers and components of the territory. The maps are grouped by themes (such as mobility, residential fabrics, centres, metabolism); by diachronic sequences (1975–2015); and finally, by plans and projects under which the metropolitan development has been framed.

Barcelona is home to a well-established and famed urbanism school of thought that has produced widely acknowledged theoretical and design-oriented research. One of the key characteristics of the Barcelona approach is its capacity to bond, within a strong spatial framework, urban phenomena at various scales, in a synthesis of reading, decoding, planning and design. In other words, the city's spatial commons, its public collective space, is seen as a fundamental constituent for social, economic and cultural development, so that one can see in the city's built environment an embodiment of this shared experience. The contributions of Manuel de Solà-Morales, Antonio Font and Joan Busquets testify not only to this commitment to spatially-oriented research – in which urban morphology occupies a central place – but also to a continuing dialogue with the urban planning and design protagonists who actively shape the city.

Metropolis Barcelona offers a broad representation of the city's current state of development and recent transformations at the metropolitan scale. The complexity of the metropolis requires a multi-disciplinary perspective that pursues various lines of enquiry. Producing a synthesis is a challenge. *Metropolis Barcelona* aims at offering a systematic portrait of the various territorial systems and varying spatial patterns. This systematization combines four levels of interpretation: the territorial systems (for example, housing, commerce, production, urban facilities, leisure areas, infrastructural and ecological networks); their spatial configurations (for example, morphological and typological interpretation of housing districts, economic activities areas or urban centres); the transformation dynamics (for example, demographic evolution, land-use changes); and the strategies, plans and projects that shaped such transformation. Further, Volume 1 delves into recent answers to current urban challenges, by looking at innovative forms of living

and working, the new character of infrastructural landscapes, and the metabolic flows that maintain everyday life in the metropolis.

The catalogue and accompanying atlas provide sophisticated yet accessible graphic and cartographic representations. Morphological and architectural themes in particular are communicated intelligibly. In addition to being clearly understandable by a wider public, the graphics of *Metropolis Barcelona* constitute a model for planners, academics and researchers to emulate in their need to find methods to decode and represent the territory. The difficulty of communicating morphological information and problems often undermines the possibility of addressing such matters in everyday planning practice at the metropolitan level. It is precisely in its capacity to provide a synthesis of various modes of spatial representation and interpretation that some may find the greatest utility and relevance of the catalogue for urban morphology. Three main contributions can be underlined: first, the development of analytical and research-by-design perspectives at metropolitan scales of planning; secondly, the innovative cartographic exploration and interpretation of large-scale urban and territorial realities; and thirdly, the typological approach applied to specific topics at a metropolitan scale, namely the metropolitan metabolism and networks; the new landscapes of nodes and street intersections; the forms of economic activity; residential urban fabrics; spaces of ecology, leisure and production; and the mapping of change.

Volume 2 offers a more critical content, including a comparative perspective that contrasts Barcelona's metropolitan planning and major projects to similar initiatives in metropolises worldwide. Some strategic directions and alternative choices of the metropolitan plan are discussed (density as distinct from intensity; continuous cities compared with fragmented ones; local scale design vis-à-vis urban planning strategies), based on well-illustrated case studies. Specific urban projects are put in the balance to highlight urbanism's response to policy and planning orientations and strategies.

A territory as complex as that of Barcelona calls for multiple readings, some anchored in a morphological approach, others based on statistical or diagrammatic characterization. However, *Metropolis Barcelona* achieves a comprehensive presentation in which these readings come together in support of a compelling spatially-bounded argument. Sophisticated cartographic analysis, urban morphology's tool of preference,

offers a common ground for the various topical explorations.

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The town house in medieval and early modern Bristol by *Roger H. Leech*, English Heritage, Swindon, UK, 2014, 440 pp. ISBN 978-1-84802-053-5.

This is an important work in a number of ways. First, it is an authoritative account of a major English provincial town. Secondly, it reaches much farther afield, looking at links across the Atlantic into the Caribbean and what became the USA. Finally, it raises interesting methodological points. Like virtually all British practitioners in urban archaeology (the author's discipline), urban history and historical geography, Leech is well aware of, and uses, Conzenian analysis. However, in a work concerning typology he never refers to the Italian School, instead working from a number of British predecessors.

He commences by looking at the growth of the city, beginning with the Saxon and medieval town where he relies heavily on Conzenian methods, and then turns to the developers responsible for the early modern expansion. Next, he looks at house types where he distinguishes two types calling them by names found in a late-medieval rental. They were the hallhouse and the shop-house. The former were large premises centred on a typical medieval hall open to the roof. The shop-house was smaller and comprised a ground floor shop with other accommodation restricted to the floors above. These units had often been divided off from the street frontage of a hallhouse. By the last years of the Middle Ages a further type was appearing beyond the walls on the slopes above the Rivers Avon and Frome. This was the garden house or lodge where affluent merchants could retreat from the noise and smells of the city. These were set in gardens often surrounded by high walls and located at the upper end of the slope regardless of the position of the access. They were typically of several storeys giving a view of activity in the harbour below. These, unlike the other two,

were a form particularly associated with Bristol. Another idiosyncrasy of the local property market was the absence of small shops with a miniature hall behind, such as survive on the opposite side of Gloucestershire at Tewkesbury.

Moving on to the early-modern period, the abrupt change from vernacular architecture to classically-derived forms that occurred around 1700 is addressed. This is set in the changing economic and social environment during which there was a rapid expansion beyond the medieval limits. Leech then turns to Bristol and the Atlantic world before ending with a consideration of the relationship between merchant capitalism and the streets of Bristol.

Returning to methodology as an issue of particular interest to readers, Leech bases his classification on an approach pioneered by William Pantin in the 1960s. Pantin (1962–3) looked at larger town houses of the medieval period, that is those with large or open halls, producing a typology based on whether the hall was parallel or at right angles to the street. He saw this as an adaptation of the more prestigious rural forms to the constraints of urban living. Pantin did not consider smaller houses or examine the social and economic contexts. This was addressed by subsequent writers. The more significant (and heavily used by Leech) begin with John Smith (1983) who was concerned with the role of towns in architectural innovation that led him to discuss tall, narrow and often unheated dwellings. Then John Schofield (1995) produced his own classification for London using room numbers as an indicator of economic and social status. Jane Grenville (1997) then set urban housing in its wider context. Finally, Roland Harris (1994) has examined houses with commercial uses on two storeys. This proved very relevant for Bristol, where taverns were usually located in basements.

For the moment, Leech's study can be seen as the culmination of this British approach. It is very pragmatic when compared with the Italian school. There is no quest for archetypes but much interest in practical detail such as carpenters' techniques.

This is a handsome, lavishly illustrated and comprehensive book. Bristol did not suffer a Great Fire and many historic buildings survive at least in part, whilst far more lasted long enough to be recorded by antiquarians, water-colourists and sketchers. More recently, some 50 years of rescue archaeology has added a further dimension. All this material can be related to rich documentary sources, not only the properties' deeds but also the