

institutional framework of projects and the physical results themselves.

The morphological characteristics of each project are clearly illustrated with a consistent format that includes four process diagrams (including the situation before the intervention, plot subdivisions, planning prescriptions for buildings on the plots, and the final state of the projects) and four analysis diagrams (including building uses, green space, transport and the street network). These diagrams as well as aerial views at the scale of 1:10 000 and figure-ground drawings at the scale of 1:5000 are consistent from project to project, allowing for ready comparisons. The case studies also include plans of typical buildings, with explanations of how features of urban morphology affect building designs themselves. Here as well, the connection is made to the institutional framework, so that for example in the case of Vauban, 'architecturally, the multitude of participating interests has led to a multitude of built solutions' (p. 95).

In addition to the types of maps and diagrams that are common to each case study, ample historical and current images help provide a complete picture of each project.

The concise writing, clear and consistent illustrations, and coverage of each project in a holistic way that includes politics, finance, urban morphology and building typology should make this book a useful reference for students and professionals alike. The word 'handbook' in the title is perhaps a misnomer, as the book does not lay out a simple set of procedures for urban design. But with a choice of case studies that span history and provide a variety of strategies for implementation and an equally wide variety of physical results, the book will prove to be a useful reference both for students and for the various professionals who have a hand in shaping cities.

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**A blessing in disguise: war and town planning in Europe, 1940-1945** edited by *Jörn Düwel* and *Nils Gutschow*, Dom Publishers, Berlin, Germany, 2013, 416 pp. ISBN 978-3-86922-295-0.

It is now 68 years since the end of the Second

World War and, whilst living survivors are becoming fewer and their memories are beginning to recede, new work continues to emerge covering the physical and sociological impact of the wartime destruction; for example by Richard Overly (2013). Detailed studies exploring the various efforts made in reconstructing urban environments following wartime devastation also persist in a range of academic disciplines. Although much has been written about the impact within Europe of replanning after the Second World War – both in terms of the planning process and the physical product – Düwel and Gutschow's lavish new volume provides fresh perspectives on the contested nature of reconstruction planning and its impact on urban form during the mid-twentieth century. Drawing on recently-unearthed and/or newly-interpreted data, this collection of essays is particularly impressive and visually striking. The unusually large page size helps in this regard as it allows for the high-quality colour reproduction of key maps, plans, and artistic representations associated with European reconstruction ideas. These form the central underpinnings of this book, and demonstrate the high standards of graphic representation and the concepts behind town planning during and after the Second World War. Chapters are provided by both renowned experts in the field and recent PhD researchers; furthermore, one of the book's editors, Gutschow, has a direct family connection to the debate surrounding post-war European reconstruction as his father was the wartime city architect-planner of Hamburg.

Three early chapters trace the contours of key debates relevant to European planning during the early part of the twentieth century; the visions of planning, and the politics associated with aerial and land warfare and of replanning are all explored. These chapters provide innovative perspectives on 'reconstruction' as a product of both the political and military histories of the nature and extent of destruction, and the political and personal ideologies of the planners and others involved. The beautifully-illustrated collection of essays by Düwel *et al.* provides a perceptive analysis of the ideas and convictions on which post-war urban planning was modelled; here it is suggested that 'we must ask again and again: what expectations did the 'professional experts' ... have of the city – and for future society' (p. 10). There is an insightful and provocative discussion of bombing as 'opportunity', despite how unpalatable this concept might be to those who lost family, friends and homes. This point is reaffirmed by Kuchenbuch in an instructive chapter in which he discusses

the ways in which ideas for reconstruction are represented by diagrams as a means of communicating the 'hopes and expectations of [European] planners' (p. 55).

Whilst several chapters graphically disentangle the considerable differences in ideology and opinion between 'expert' planners, politicians, architectural theorists and others involved in conceptualizing and representing ideas for the future city, perhaps rather less attention is given to the perspectives or reactions of those people and communities that were being 'planned for'. Although each of the essays included in this text is underpinned by a hugely detailed and richly informative analysis of 'official' archival accounts, plans, maps, sketches, diagrams and other representations, there are also obvious dangers implicit in assembling planning histories that rely mainly on such sources. Accounts of the process of wartime and post-war urban planning that are reliant on these sources arguably offer a somewhat distanced view, removed from the experiences of those residents living, working and socializing in bomb-damaged and reconstructed cities. However, Hewitt's chapter on the destruction and subsequent replanning of Königsberg/Kaliningrad helpfully brings into question the view that wartime destruction should be interpreted as an 'opportunity' for planners to pursue such visioning with unbridled fervour, posing the question 'can planning be described as ... an ethical and responsible process, when it totally ignores the lives and places, as lived?' (p. 102).

Several detailed chapters discuss the individual cases of Rotterdam, Hamburg and Königsberg/Kaliningrad. These chapters are perhaps the key strength of the volume. For example, Wagenaar's chapter unpicking the two different reconstruction plans designed during the German occupation of Rotterdam by the Head of the Municipal Town Planning Office, Willem Gerrit Witteveen, and his colleague and successor, Cornelis van Traa, is richly illuminating. It explains how the replanning process came to be shaped by a complex and intricate mesh of military, political, economic, personal and professional ideas. Whereas the assiduously assembled architectural work of Witteveen stressed the importance of defining the qualities of urban form in the streets, squares, and parkways that came to characterize Rotterdam's historic public spaces (p. 126), Wagenaar draws attention to the contrasting personal design ambitions of Van Traa which sought to 'relegate the aesthetic qualities of urbanism' in favour of 'functional zoning and the design of traffic

systems' (p. 126). There were understandable concerns from local businessmen that a post-liberation plan for Rotterdam, based on Witteveen's intricate network of aesthetic rules and regulations (p. 127), would dangerously inhibit the economic functioning of the post-war city.

The detailed chapters are supported by overviews of Germany, England, Vichy France, and the USSR. The overview chapters are informative but perhaps less novel, though it is also instructive to read of the significance of international connections and how, for example, German planners were conscious of Donald Gibson's plans for the reconstruction of Coventry as early as 1941. These chapters are also particularly useful in allowing the reader to draw comparisons between the process and product of replanning.

This volume was designed to accompany an exhibition held in Hamburg in late 2013, which also explains the book's main focus on Germany and on Hamburg itself; but one might question whether the key messages from each of the excellently-produced chapters will be interpreted by readers beyond those already working in the field of post-catastrophe reconstruction. Furthermore, chapters tend to start and end rather suddenly. Clearer chapter conclusions could have been provided; and the links between chapters might have also been made stronger. Individually, these are very small issues that should not detract from the overall quality of the book. However, greater attention to the links between chapters might have helped to guide readers into making connections across and between the different case studies. There are, inevitably, some rather minor errors that might have been identified by thorough proof-reading; there is some repetition of material within and between chapters, though perhaps these points are the unavoidable consequence of producing such a far-reaching multinational and multilingual work of this nature.

Notwithstanding these observations, this book makes a substantial contribution to several academic and practice fields: not just to the sub-discipline of post-war reconstruction planning, but to wider understanding of twentieth-century planning history; the shaping and re-shaping of urban form and, lastly, to the way in which planning ideas were (and could be) communicated amongst professionals and to a wider public.

## Reference

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**Living over the store: architecture and local urban life**, by *Howard Davis*, Routledge, Abingdon, UK, 2012, 251 pp. ISBN-978-0-415-78316-3.

Howard Davis once remarked that to write a book takes him numerous years. This is particularly evident in *Living over the store*, a book whose origins are rooted in his hometown where as a child he was able to witness the versatility of the shophouse – the principal focus of this book.

In choosing the methods and tools necessary for performing a morphological analysis, Davis demonstrates a preference for the Italian school of urban morphology to define what a shophouse is: a building type that at its most basic level combines a first-floor dwelling with a ground-floor working space. As the author notes, this building type accommodates two of the most basic activities performed by human beings.

The book is divided into three parts. The first section presents the shophouse as a global phenomenon. The second section discusses the performance of this construction in the daily life of citizens. The third section investigates the reasons for the shophouse's relative demise within the contemporary urban scene.

The first part of *Living over the store* covers the surviving basic types of shophouse in Asia, southern and northern Europe, Britain, and North America. The presentation of each region includes a literary quotation carefully selected to describe and illuminate aspects of users' daily lives. The book is generously illustrated with photographs and plans. These include beautiful three-dimensional diagrams that show evolutionary aspects of the basic types. Every example of a shophouse in a specific location (for example, Kyoto, Rome, Lübeck, London, New York, and Portland) is presented in the form of interviews with residents, analysis of pictures and plans, and documentary research carried out in registration offices and local planning agencies. The author is consequently able to confirm that although buildings differ from region to region they possess commonalities. These include location, plots perpendicular to streets or canals, the use of upper floors for warehousing, and the use of lower floors for both

dwelling and commercial purposes.

While drawing comparisons between regions, Davis demonstrates that the shophouse is a global phenomenon adopted by many civilizations over the course of centuries. Moreover, the development of this building type with its mixed-use activities often performed in small spaces, Davis believes occurs owing to a combination of factors, such as the correct choice of site and location in a street block, and a distinct mode of implementation within a neighbourhood. It thus becomes apparent that the shophouse not only represents a point of convergence and communication between users, consumers, traders, and residents, but also functions as a diversified living space. Owing to this versatility it fits the categories suggested by Jacobs and Alexander by constituting a space that accommodates various qualitative attributes. These qualities in turn promote urban diversity by integrating physical space, and engendering partnerships and general economic activity. As well as acknowledging the work developed by Jacobs and Alexander, Davis also cites Rapoport whose work emphasizes the intrinsic value of universal building characteristics being shared by different cultures. In summary, as Davis makes clear, it is almost as if there were common forces acting upon the construction of these quintessential urban buildings: hence the consequent common results of shophouses around the world. Notably too, Davis surmises as to whether the object of his research might be a cultural example of a *world type* present in the minds of human beings, a building type constructed, shared and incorporated into a diversity of cultures by individuals within different societies.

On analysing other arguments that explain the shophouse's longevity and permanence, Davis addresses further issues related to its implementation in streets and neighbourhoods – suggesting that in a sense it reflects the qualities embedded in urban areas. Exploring as well the architecture of hybrid types, Davis presents examples of common building design attributes found in different cultures. In this context the solutions implemented by architects relating to, for instance, access and strategies employed for accommodating public and private uses in the same space, are also highlighted, albeit in conjunction with the shophouse's role as a small-scale, private contribution to urban sustainability and local economic activity. Curiously, as the author notes, very few of these elements in shophouses have been recognized or valued in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and, as a consequence, the shophouse has not received the