



BOOK NOTES

Shaping the city: studies in history, theory and urban design edited by *Rodolphe El-Khourey* and *Edward Robbins*, Routledge, Abingdon, UK, 2013, 320 pp. ISBN 978-0-4155-8462-3. Critical ideas in urban design are examined through a study of particular cities at important periods in their development. Discussions of cities such as Los Angeles, Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia and Brasilia at particular moments in their history exemplify such topics as the mega-city, the post-colonial city and New Urbanism. In this new edition case studies critical to the study of contemporary urbanism have been added, including those of Dubai and wider issues of informal cities in the Global South. The book serves as both a textbook in urban design and planning and is also relevant for scholars in other fields. It provides an overview of the range and variety of urbanism.

The tall buildings reference book edited by *David Parker* and *Antony Wood*, Routledge, Abingdon, UK, 2013, 512 pp. ISBN 978-0-4157-8041-4. Tall buildings are an increasingly important means of accommodating growth in today's urban areas. Whether residential, workplace or mixed use, they are both a statement of intent and a defining image for the new global city. In this book the issues relating to building tall, from the procurement stage, through the design and construction process, to new technology and the contribution to the urban habitat are considered. A case study section highlights the latest, most innovative, 'greenest' and the most inspirational tall buildings being constructed today. This reference book, containing contributions by over 50 authors, is written in an accessible concise style supported by more than 300 illustrations.

A history of future cities by *Daniel Brook*, W. W. Norton, New York, USA, 2013, 480 pp. ISBN 978-0-3930-7812-4. In 1703 Tsar Peter the Great founded a new capital on a barren Baltic marsh believing it would usher in a Westernized

future. In the nineteenth-century Age of Imperialism, the British rebuilt Bombay and three Western powers put their stamp on Shanghai. In our own time, the sheikh of Dubai has endeavoured to transform his desert city into a global hub. The cultural and historical threads that connect these cities are brought into relief in Daniel Brook's mixture of history and reportage – a story of architects and authoritarians, artists and revolutionaries. This book is both a reminder of globalization's long march and a look into the possibilities of the Asian century.

Rethinking the informal city: critical perspectives from Latin America edited by *Felipe Hernandez*, *Peter Kellett* and *Lea K. Allen*, Berghahn Book, Oxford, UK, 2012, 264 pp. ISBN 978-0-85745-607-6. Latin American cities have been characterized by a tension between their formal and informal dimensions. These discussions relate not only to the physical aspect of cities but also to their socio-political fabric. The contributors to this book – from such disciplines as architecture, urban planning, anthropology, urban design, cultural and urban studies and sociology – focus on various methods of analysis of the phenomenon of urban informality. A review is provided of the work that is currently being carried out by scholars, practitioners and governmental institutions, in and outside Latin America, on informal cities.

The planning imagination: Peter Hall and the study of urban and regional planning edited by *Mark Tewdwr-Jones*, *Nicholas Phelps* and *Robert Freestone*, Routledge, New York, USA, 2013, 328 pp. ISBN 978-0-415-50608-3. Peter Hall is internationally renowned for the breadth and depth of his studies and writings on urban and regional planning. For the last 50 years, he has captured and helped to create the 'planning imagination'. Here a series of critical reflections on Peter's contributions are brought together. Five parts cover in turn the history of cities and planning, London, spatial planning,

connectivity and mobility, and urban globalization. Finally, as a sixth part, the editors have asked Hall himself to reflect on his career and the sources of his imagination. It is not a singular, logically consistent view elaborated over several decades. Instead the insights and imperfections that inevitably accompany the exercise of a remarkably fertile, restless and inspiring planning imagination are revealed.

Urban design ecologies by *Brian McGrath*, Wiley, Oxford, UK, 2013, 320 pp. ISBN 978-0-470-97405-6. The discipline of urban design is undergoing a rapid expansion and realignment. It is experiencing a shift from a profession dominated by architects and planners, directed at urban development, to a wider set of practices engaging with new forms of social and environmental ecology. Bringing together old and new writings, this reader focuses attention on the tools needed to understand how cities have been designed and constructed and then changed over time. It points the way forward to reconciling the often conflicting concerns of urbanism and environmentalism. There are four sections: metropolitan architecture, the sprawling megalopolis, the megacity, and the recently emerging metacity.

Planning Los Angeles edited by *David Sloane*, American Planning Association, Chicago, USA, 2012, 336 pp. ISBN 978-1-611-90004-0. Despite the reputation of Los Angeles for spontaneous evolution, a deliberate planning process shapes the way it looks and lives. Editor David Sloane has enlisted more than 35 writers to construct 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.

Staging the new Berlin: place marketing and the politics of urban reinvention post-1898 by *Clair Colomb*, Routledge, London,

UK, 2013, 368 pp. ISBN 978-0-415-59403-5. This book explores the politics of place marketing and the process of 'urban reinvention' in Berlin between 1989 and 2011. Following the Fall of the Wall, the 'new' Berlin was not only being built physically, but 'staged' for visitors and Berliners and marketed to the world through events and image campaigns which featured the iconic architecture of large-scale urban redevelopment sites. Public-private partnerships were set up specifically to market the 'new Berlin' to potential investors, tourists, Germans, and Berliners themselves. The book analyses the images of the city and the course of urban change that occurred over 2 decades. In the 1990s three key sites were turned into icons of the 'new Berlin': the new Potsdamer Platz, the new government quarter, and the redeveloped historical core of the Friedrichstadt. Eventually, the entire inner city was 'staged' through a series of events which turned construction sites into tourist attractions. New sites and spaces gradually became part of the place marketing imagery of the early twenty-first century, as urban leaders sought to promote the 'creative city'. Urban political economy and cultural approaches from several disciplines are combined.

Measuring urban design: metrics for livable places by *Reid Ewing* and *Otto Clemente*, Island Press, Washington DC, USA, 2013, 200 pp. ISBN 978-1-610-91194-8. In recent years, many 'walking audit instruments' have been developed to measure such attributes as building height, block length and sidewalk width. But while easily quantifiable, these physical features do not fully capture the experience of walking down a street. In contrast, this book addresses broad perceptions of street environments. It provides operational definitions and measurement protocols of five intangible qualities of urban design: specifically imageability, visual enclosure, human scale, transparency and complexity. The result is a reliable field survey instrument grounded in constructs from architecture, urban design and planning. A case study is provided of its application to 588 streets in New York City, which shows that it can be used effectively to measure the built environment's impact on social, psychological and physical well-being.