

## Book Reviews

### **Global Sustainability: Bending the Curve**

GILBERTO C. GALLOPÍN and PAUL D. RASKIN, 2002

London: Routledge

232 pp.; £60.00 hardback

ISBN 0 415 26592 4

This book is published as part of the Routledge/Stockholm Environment Institute Global Environment and Development Series and is concerned with examining the processes at work in, and characteristics of, the global system and then outlining various pathways for future global development. The authors begin from a belief that current global trends are both ecologically and socially unsustainable and that some form of major transition is needed to shift the world onto a sustainable basis. These issues are explored by using a scenarios approach to analysis; ‘scenarios’ are “stories about the future with a logical plot and narrative”, but are not “deterministic projections or forecasts” (p. 10). This approach begins with an outline of the current state of the world in relation to demographic change, economic development, social and cultural change, technology, the environment and governance, supported by extensive statistical appendices.

Following this outline, in subsequent chapters the authors devise a set of scenarios on a two-tier basis. First, three broad classes of scenarios are developed, based on different social visions of the future. These are termed: Conventional Worlds, Barbarisation and Great Transitions. For each of these three classes, two variants are identified reflecting possible outcomes within each of the three classes—these are termed Market Forces and Policy Reform within Conventional Worlds; Breakdown and Fortress World within Barbarisation; and Eco-communalism and New Sustainability Paradigm within Great Transitions. The authors then set out a set of sustainability goals based on social and environmental objectives against which to judge the impact of the various scenarios. These include hunger levels, population with unsafe drinking water, adult illiteracy and

life expectancy at birth for the social objectives and climate change (CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and temperature change), resource use (economic-output–materials ratio and materials use per capita), toxic substance release, freshwater (use–resource ratio) and ecosystem pressure (deforestation, land degradation and overfishing) for the environmental objectives.

The Market Forces scenario is one where current neo-liberal ideals remain predominant in global development and where expanding global trade, finance and capital flows drive economic growth. Despite some material benefits, outcomes include increased energy and water demands, continued hunger and pressure on ecosystems, while neither carbon emissions nor temperatures begin to stabilise. Overall, it is argued that this ‘business-as-usual’ approach runs severe environmental risks and fails to meet the social sustainability objectives. The Policy Reform scenario keeps the same economic assumptions, yet assumes a more interventionist approach at national and international scales involving a shift in political will to address sustainability objectives.

The remaining two classes of scenario involve very different outcomes. The Barbarisation scenarios of Breakdown and Fortress World both involve increasing polarisation, instability and violence but differ according to the reaction of global institutions to the crisis. In the Breakdown scenario, civil order collapses and social, cultural and political institutions disintegrate. Ironically, equity and environmental degradation decrease, but only because absolute levels of poverty increase and the world economy collapses. Under the Fortress World variant, élites in rich and poorer nations retreat to protected enclaves, while those outside these are subject to high levels of poverty and repression from military and police control. Both these scenarios are treated in less detail than the other four (only six pages in total) and little attempt is made to evaluate these against the sustainability criteria.

Finally, the Great Transitions scenario involves

a values-led shift towards an alternative global development vision. Materialism, consumerism, and individualism are tempered by the greater valorization of more qualitative desiderata, such as spiritual, cultural, and intellectual fulfilment, quality of community and enjoyment of nature (p. 110).

Essentially, the big difference here, especially compared with the Policy Reform scenario, is the delinking of notions of well-being and satisfaction from consumption. Both the Eco-communalism and New Sustainability Paradigm variants envisage a much greater emphasis upon local, more self-reliant, communities. Substantial gains are made in relation to both social and environmental sustainability objectives.

Overall, I found this a useful book which sets out a number of potential future outcomes depending upon future global developments. The authors would obviously prefer the New Sustainability Paradigm over other outcomes, but one of the shortcomings of the book is any real sense of how this might be achieved. The authors mention the September 2001 World Trade Centre attack several times as a defining 'before' and 'after' moment in world history and as part of their view that such moments may be necessary events to shift broad social attitudes. As they recognise, however, the outcomes may not be entirely benign. Events since 11 September, however we construe US motivations, look more likely to engender their Fortress World outcome than more benign futures. One of the strengths of this kind of back-casting is to get a sense of how we get from the present to this future desirable state of affairs. The authors set out a supposed history of their Great Transition, but I got no real sense of how or why this should happen. Instead, we have a realisation by policy-makers and society more generally that things can not continue as they are which somehow translates into a call for action, shifting values and popular pressure and an eventual 'New Planetary Deal' which introduces more equitable economic development, better governance measures and greater knowledge-sharing. All this seemed to me to be highly optimistic and largely neglects the fact that any such shifts are only likely to come about through political organisation and pressure. This may be slow, lengthy and subject to continued setbacks, but I would suggest that the history of social and environmental improvements is one of long-term, dedicated work by activists and politicians rather than any autonomous shift in values.

Finally, criticism can be levelled at the fairly simplistic view of the authors on spatial issues. Thus they argue that "socio-ecological systems can be defined at local, national, regional, and global scales. The global system is decomposable into a nested hierarchy of interacting sub-systems at each of these levels". These are seen as subject to "unique forces acting at the level of the spatial unit" (p. 6), albeit that they are linked both horizontally and vertically, and interaction comes through the impact of global forces on smaller spatial scales. Each scale is seen as "partially separable and quasi-autonomous" (p. 32). However, this approach seems to miss some of the complex interplay of processes at work in the global economy, where the global and the local are intertwined, such that—for example, supposedly local actors operate at much broader spatial scales and, indeed, may operate at different scales in order to achieve their own aims. The argument is not helped by the authors' division of the world into 11 global regions based on stages of development and geopolitical considerations (although the detailed rationale for such a division is not provided).

DAVID GIBBS  
*Department of Geography*  
*University of Hull*

**New Regional Development Paradigms, Volume 1: Globalization and New Regional Development**

ASFAW KUMSSA and TERRY G. MCGEE (Eds), 2001  
Westport, CT: Greenwood Press  
243 pp.; £54.50 hardback  
ISBN 0 313 31765 8

This book is part of a series of four, with the enticing title of 'New Regional Development Paradigms'. The series is based on a four-day forum organised by the United Nations Centre for Regional Development and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in December 1998. The objective of the current book is to present a "broad theoretical and trend analysis of the current era of globalisation and its effect on the theory and practice of regional development". The later volumes are made up of case studies of current regional planning practices, primarily in the developing countries. Following an introduction, the book is divided into two main sections: globalisation and the current

state of regional planning and theory; and the spatial and environmental effects of globalisation.

The editors argue that the “era of globalisation is creating profound changes in global relationships and these are manifested at international, regional, national and subnational levels” (p. 12). They contend that the old concepts, tools and approaches to regional development are becoming obsolete and ineffective due to current global socioeconomic changes and new approaches and models are needed to capture and explain emerging trends. While this may be largely correct, there are dangers of throwing ‘the baby out with the bathwater’. In particular, there is a danger of neglecting the insights of older theories, concepts, etc. while jumping at whatever is ‘flavour of the month’ for development agencies or their advisers and giving insufficient attention to other more profound models or concepts.

The first issue set out in the Introduction of the book is that of the shifts in the global political economy, especially the democratic and market economy reforms since the collapse of the Soviet system. This has focused attention on the growing importance of the devolution of power to local and regional communities and on decentralisation, good governance and democratisation. These have been increasingly, though perhaps belatedly, emphasised by policy agencies including the World Bank and also in academic literature. This is partly developed in the chapter by Boisier with an interesting discussion on the importance of different types of capital for development. These include those related to more intangible (but arguably still ‘real’ and important) factors such as social and civic capital, as well as the more commonly accepted ones such as economic (physical, etc.) or human capital.

A second key issue is the emergence of globalisation, leading to increased tension between the formation of various types of international trading bloc (such as in North America, Asia, Europe and eastern and southern Africa) which, combined with the growing emphasis upon the regional (i.e. sub-national) basis for economic development and democratisation, may lead to the often written about ‘hollowing out’ of the nation-state. However, some argue that the nation-state may be more resilient and Sassen’s chapter on territorial jurisdiction counsels against a simple win–lose duality in terms of shifts in nation-state power, claiming rather that nation-states have responded to the changing claims of global capital by producing new forms of legal regimes. This raises

questions regarding the most appropriate system of co-ordination among the various powerful economic actors and how to deal with equity and distribution issues in the context of a globally integrated economic system with great inequalities.

Generally, the chapters make a successful effort to link the issue of globalisation to wider themes, in particular those of increased marginalisation of disadvantaged people. Kumssa, for instance, emphasises the adverse effects of globalisation but also tries to present some possible ways forward by arguing for a just global economy, optimistically recognising that this would require a redistribution of global wealth and power, perhaps through a global Tobin tax (although he argues that this is not likely to be practical).

The book emphasises the need for new tools, etc. for regional development and many of those discussed in chapters are of general interest, although they may not be particularly new. One technique to identify future tools and concepts that may be needed is scenario analysis (which has been used by bodies as wide-ranging as the European Union, the UK’s Department of Trade and Industry and local councils in recent years to consider long-term development issues). McGee’s chapter considers two scenarios: one based upon the conventional model of economic growth leading to continued global urbanisation; and the other based upon an unconventional model, partly using George Soros’ views on the global capitalist system and its deficiencies, which assumes a period of accelerating global inequality between OECD and developing countries. The latter scenario suggests, among other things, what the author terms ‘de-development’. This is where the structural shift away from agriculture continues; growth in industrial output for export will be slow, although the low-income service sector will increase; the growth in urbanisation may slow; and relatively more people will live below the poverty line. He concludes that, while the scenarios are highly generalised and are unlikely to occur as depicted, they show that regional development paradigms must be rethought and that regional planners must be trained to focus on institutional capacity-building at a lower, local level. While this is an interesting chapter, it would be useful if alternative implications were considered and the wider literature on scenarios and regional development had been more fully explored (including its advantages and disadvantages).

The second section of the book considers the spatial and environmental effects of globalisation, focusing primarily on Asia. One of the main spatial consequences of globalisation is a self-reinforcing concentration of global activities in a system of mega-urban regions. This mirrors some earlier suggestions in literature on core-periphery models and also, at a more local scale, some recent research on the centralising effects of information and communication technologies within nations and the potential catastrophic implications for rural depopulation in developed countries.

A major potential problem, particularly in a forum aimed at current practice, is that the comments or insights quickly appear dated. Inevitably this is a problem in a book such as this, where much has happened between the holding of the forum and publication. For example, some papers only refer to the start of the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s, yet the situation has moved on considerably; also the 'current' problem of financial decline in markets since 2000, with the knock-on effects of, for instance, changing foreign direct investment on regional development, are not really considered. A few chapters sometimes have the feel of being focused on the particular issues of the late 1990s. A more significant point is that much of the literature on recent developments in regional development, particularly on developed countries, should arguably be given more emphasis. To take two examples, the debates on the policy use of the concepts of regional competitiveness or the knowledge economy are rarely mentioned. The growth of the software industry in India, or the development of strategies of regions within South Africa, show that these can be important issues for all countries in a more globalised world.

It is often an unenviable task for an editor to pull together a series of papers from a conference or forum and ensure that they present a coherent set of perspectives on the issues, while not omitting key sets of theory or practice. To its credit, this book partly achieves its main objective in an interesting and thought-provoking way. Overall, the chapters are well-written and raise important issues concerning how we view globalisation and its implications for regional development.

RONALD MCQUAID  
Employment Research Institute  
Napier University, Edinburgh

### **The World of Cities: Places in Comparative and Historical Perspective**

ANTHONY M. ORUM and XIANGMING CHEN, 2003

Oxford: Blackwell Publishing

180 pp.; £45.00 hardback, £12.99 paperback

ISBN 0 631 21025 3 hardback; 0 631 21026 1 paperback

*The World of Cities: Places in Comparative and Historical Perspective*, by Anthony M. Orum and Xiangming Chen, is a very nice, clear explication of cities globally in both theory and practice. The book is divided into six well-organised chapters that spell out a range of urban topics, contemporary and historical. One of the most interesting parts of the first chapter, 'Cities and Places', is a section entitled 'Cities become places of Contest', in which the authors discuss urban tensions—for example, between residents, neighbours and private developers—and argue that many cities become fragmented and contentious because of the class conflicts engendered by development, gentrification and other forms of urban change. Also in this chapter are citations to contemporary works such as *Streetwise* by Elijah Anderson and *Sidewalk* by Mitchell Duneier. Clear explications of more classic works by William F. Whyte and Jane Jacobs will be useful to students, as will discussions of the 'built environment', community and a sense of home. In this chapter also are discussion of Marx, Weber and Durkheim in connection with ideas of place.

Chapter 2, 'Social Theory and the City', reviews in a rather comprehensive manner, basic theoretical perspectives on the city, from Robert Park's and Amos Hawley's ecological views, to the neo-Marxist works of Henri Lefebvre, Manuel Castells and David Harvey. The reviews include discussions of spatial practices and representational spaces (Lefebvre), consumption and class struggle (Castells) and social justice, commodities and the power of the market (Harvey). These discussions are short, but they acquaint students with basic writings and concepts. In this chapter, especially in the section 'Cities as Symbolic Economies: The Invention and Re-invention of Place', Orum and Chen draw on Sharon Zukin's work on New York City. As they point out, Zukin, like Castells and Harvey, sees the city as having been created by the forces of capitalism, but she also pays attention to cultural shifts and styles as they change over time. Also in this chapter is the idea that the city is no longer local, but the authors are quick to point out that the impact of globalisation is uneven across national

contexts. Here Saskia Sassen's work figures prominently, especially her book *The Global City*.

Less interesting than other chapters in the book, is the primarily historical Chapter 3, which treats issues of ethnicity and migration within a hodge-podge of sunbelt cities and historical material on pre-industrial cities. In addition to rather superficial discussions of race, the chapter includes a very short section on 'Gender and Metropolitan Space'.

The material on China in Chapter 4 is quite well done, particularly as it returns to issues of globalisation. Of great interest is the historical time-line for recent Chinese history and urban development and the discussion of urbanisation in Shanghai. The chapter begins with a clear, strong statement at the beginning of a section entitled 'Pressure from Above and Response from Below: Economic Globalisation and the Restructuring City', in which the authors assert the importance of strong local urban economies and strong ties to other cities

To begin with, urban places are grounded in and sustained by economic activities. Without a solid local economy of some kind, cities, large or small, tend to lose their source of existence. When the local economy experiences continued growth, a city generally prospers. When the local economy declines and then enters a sustained stagnation, a city can become lifeless. When the local economy rebounds from weak growth, a city can return to its former vitality. The fortune of places ... is tied closely with the particular type or mix of a city's economy and its capacity of responding to economic change. Moreover, the economic life of one particular city can be heavily influenced by its relative position and role in a system of many cities (p. 96).

The authors go on to point out that globalisation has intensified in the past several decades

While the spatial impact of globalization is uneven, cities, regardless of their size, location, and position in the urban hierarchy, have been affected and transformed in different ways. They have become increasingly denationalized and differentially linked to an increasingly globalized economy (p. 98).

Interesting details about the importance of large (New York, London, Tokyo) and not as large, but nonetheless international cities (Miami, Toronto, Sydney) are provided, including discussion of the

substantial impact of industrial operations pulling out of relatively small urban places such as Lima, Ohio. When Lima lost a BP refinery in 1997, due to the company's global restructuring (corporate headquarters in London), the costs to Lima included 500 jobs, a \$31 million payroll, \$26 million in annual fees to local utilities and \$11 million to local vendors (p. 99). The larger point is that few places are unaffected by economic globalisation. At the same time, while local responses to globalisation vary, there are distinct local responses, whether these involve maintaining features of the local economy, as in the case of the manufacturing sectors of Shanghai, or refashioning and transforming local economic features into new formations. The effects of globalisation on local and national governing powers have been substantial as state authorities are losing power to local and supranational entities (p. 108).

The impact of globalisation on local culture receives attention as well in this chapter in a section entitled 'Places with Hybrid Imprints: Global Consumerism and the Shifting Local Cultural Landscape'. Here, Orum and Chen talk about the ways global consumerism affects urban landscapes. Starbucks, basketball tournaments run by Nike and fast-food chains: all are impacting Chinese landscapes.

Chapter 5, 'From a Critical Sociology, to a Reconstructive Sociology of Cities', the final chapter of the book, deals with the relationships between theory and practice. First, Orum and Chen reiterate their main themes: the nature of urban places and the idea that "cities must be seen as places that are essential to human well-being"; and, "that cities also must be seen as significant spaces that both produce and are produced by the social institutions that both men and women construct" (p. 140). In this last chapter, the authors suggest ways that cities might be improved. The first important point for Orum and Chen on urban improvement is that the reconstruction of urban space must attend to matters of inequality. Having argued that place attachment is essential for human life and human identity, anything that interferes with the ways humans are attached to places is inherently damaging. The authors proceed to explore how attachments to place can be facilitated by a series of proactive measures. Residents of places must be able to make their own mark on the urban landscape—from recreating features of homelands, to celebrating publicly the larger community. Dolores Hayden's preservation projects

in Los Angeles, Jane Jacobs' famous book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* and the New Urbanism are all mentioned in the context of proactive movements towards the preservation and celebration of place.

In sum, this book is a nice overview of urban issues in theory and in practice. It is short and concise and, therefore, usable in advanced undergraduate- and graduate-level classes in urban studies. It would work well with case studies of particular cities, neighbourhoods, or regions.

RHODA H. HALPERIN  
*Department of Anthropology*  
*University of Cincinnati*

### **The Transformation of Cities: Urban Theory and Urban Life**

DAVID C. THORNS, 2002

London: Palgrave Macmillan

258 pp.; £16.99 paperback

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This is a conventional survey of urban studies for unconventional times. Packed full of ideas and examples for its relatively short length, Thorns provides the reader with snapshots of important theories and models on cities covering most of the past century (i.e. using the Chicago urban ecologists as the intellectual starting-point). In all of this, a very strong sense is received of the social changes that are creating the 'transformation of cities' that is his subject.

There are eight substantive chapters between a short 'introduction' and an even shorter concluding 'reflections'. Between them they cover all the basic topics that one would expect to find in a general overview urban course. The starting-point is to set up the concept of the 'industrial-modern city' in order to provide the base for contemporary transformation and to introduce past approaches to studying the city as this 'pre-transformation' urban entity. Discussion of the actual transformation is begun by delineating the contemporary demographic changes that have culminated in 'mega-cities'. The following chapter is entitled 'Global Cities' but is largely about post-modernity and globalisation with Sassen's global city concept only appearing near the end. Chapter 5 deals with 'everyday life' in the city and covers debates on the home and neighbourhood. This leads on to two chapters billed as covering the 'two faces' of contemporary urbanisation. On the

'glitzy' side, a chapter on culture and consumption features commodification, shopping malls and theme parks. On the down side, inequalities and social exclusions are documented and discussed. The final two substantive chapters deal explicitly with what used to be called policy concerns. First, there is a chapter in which urban planning, governance and movements are described in their historical evolution. This is followed by a discussion on the sustainable city, as a practice that sometimes appears as a culmination of the material in the previous chapter but at other times appears to supersede it. Clearly, here we have a wide-ranging text that by and large does a good job at providing an accurate picture of current urban studies—for instance, industrial production in the contemporary city is lost in the emphasis on transformation.

The book effectively divides into two parts wherein the first three substantive chapters act as an extended introduction for the remainder. The latter all deal with the inside of cities, which is where this author and most current urban scholars are most comfortable. But to develop a sound understanding of the nature of cities, they must be studied for their external relations as much as their internal relations. Here the former are presented as almost exogenous to the city and its current transformation. Thus the chapters on demographic change and global cities (in the first part) are presented as the 'context' for understanding contemporary cities (p. 66, p. 93). Demographic change is the classic example; this is presented as the massive upheavals of people whose outcome is mega-cities. Similarly, globalisation is the context for 'global cities' to be created. In fact, the author conflates these two city concepts (p. 90), which is indicative of his lack of a comprehensive urban theory to guide the discussions of multiple topics that follow.

Of course, what is 'removed' from the city and presented as 'context' tells us about the urban theory being employed. In this case, it is precisely 'connections' that are shorn from contemporary cities when they come under Thorns' inspection. Trade, for instance, is something that cities did historically (p. 3), but not presumably today. This is because we have become accustomed to thinking that it is only countries that trade. Despite Jacobs' (1984) exhortations of two decades ago, this book maintains this conventional view even under conditions of contemporary globalisation when cities appear to be transcending their states' boundaries so explicitly. With its demographics

up front and its hidden state-centrism, this book is an exercise in conventional sociology: five chapters in the second part of the book provide fine summaries of half the knowledge we need to understand the current transformation of cities.

I am conscious that this critique appears to be one that complains that an author is not writing about what I do. However, I do not mean this review to be another case of those unfair assessments that effectively say how the reviewer would have written the book. In fact, I think that in many ways Thorns provides a very fair reflection of what passes for urban studies today. Studies of cities went through an 'internalist turn' a couple of decades ago and the rise of globalisation as today's buzzword has not yet created a new, more balanced synthesis. This is the message I take from Thorns' book.

PETER J. TAYLOR  
*Department of Geography*  
*Loughborough University*

## Reference

JACOBS, J. (1984) *Cities and the Wealth of Nations: Principles of Economic Life*. New York: Random House.

## Cinema and the City: Film and Urban Societies in a Global Context

MARK SHIEL and TONY FITZMAURICE (Eds), 2001  
 Oxford: Blackwell Publishers  
 298 pp.; \$31.95 paperback  
 ISBN 0 631 22244 8

Stitching together the complex and multiple intersections between film, cities, urban cultures and globalisation is no simple task, as any number of very good single-authored works will demonstrate. Despite these difficulties, Shiel and Fitzmaurice's excellent anthology rises to the occasion and, in the process, pushes film studies beyond its usual terrain of textual, audience and production analyses to relocate the subject matter within urban sociology, particularly that branch that draws on the work of authors like Henri Lefebvre, David Harvey, Fredric Jameson, Edward Soja and Saskia Sassen. As the relationships between film and the city continue to develop as a focus of critical inquiry, *Cinema and the City* stands as one of the more accessible and innovative entry-points into the issues.

Shiel and Fitzmaurice open the collection with

two brief but useful introductory essays. Shiel summarises the ways in which film studies might benefit from an engagement with globalisation and urban sociology rather than its more traditional spatial connections with nations. Both the neophytes and those who are already familiar with the scholarship on film and the city will find a concise, useful mapping of some of the major issues emerging in this area. Shiel's short essay will not suffice as an introduction to any of the sub-fields that might find the book useful, but it works well to synthesise diverse perspectives into a coherent context, work that is reiterated by Fitzmaurice in his overview of the articles and the common positions taken up in the collection.

The editors have made a very carefully balanced selection of 20 short articles (most only 10–15 pages in length) and assembled them into 4 sections, each covering a particular group of cities across the globe. The first (and shortest) section, devoted exclusively to Los Angeles, sets the tone for the rest, demonstrating the ways in which cinema is intimately involved in the formation of local political agendas, the unevenness of economic (re)development and the everyday-ness of urban social life. Mike Davis tracks the histories of a former slum (Bunker Hill) and the Hollywood film industry, showing how the neighbourhood—now 'redeveloped'—has been repeatedly imagined as "the dark side" of the "City of Lights" in films shot on location in LA over a 40-year period. Josh Stenger's article also updates the on-going symbiosis of the film industry and LA, turning the camera on the Hollywood Redevelopment Project's nostalgised 'Golden Age' of Hollywood. This serves as the basis for renewing one of the most heterogeneous neighbourhoods in the city, transforming it into something like a 'restored' movieland theme park. The second section turns to less 'canonical' cinematic cities that are nonetheless important nodes in national and global urban networks, such as Tampa, Berlin and Milan, to focus on the influences of cinematic production and exhibition in (re)creating and sustaining civic identities. James Hay argues that cities (in this case, post-WWII Houston) and cinemas (Hollywood) are complex and interdependent *assemblages*, each articulating the other in emerging political and cultural economies. Paul Swann examines post-Fordist Philadelphia's creation of a regional/city film office to recruit film shoots as one replacement for declining industrial manufacturing jobs. Julian Stringer shows how international film festi-

vals have shifted from isolated events intended to promote independent *national cinemas* to become part of an ever-widening circuit that distributes cultural (and economic) capital within the global *urban* network.

The third section, dealing with cinema in post-colonial and 'peripheral' cities, is perhaps the most unique to this collection and moves into new debates by positioning these cities and cinemas as potentially resistive to globalisation, its local legitimating ideologies and its crises. Most of the essays in this section connect particular films, formats or cinematic practices to the contests over 'official' civic or regional identities created to legitimise political regimes at the national and international levels and/or to capture some part of global capital flows. J. Paul Narkunas argues that the disjointed history and political economy of post-WWII Saigon (and Vietnam) are reflected in *Cyclo (Xich Lo)*, a 1995 film about an unnamed pedicab driver, which suggests that, despite the rhetoric of unbounded individualism in the free market, it is money and capital themselves that are given ultimate agency over humans in the post-communist era. Obododimma Oha, in a similar way, argues that Nigerian videos produced for the local/national market indict the post-colonial city (Lagos) as a cultural, social and environmental *sickness* in contrast to official representations of the capital city as the civilising national centre. The final section takes up examples from London and Paris, two world cities that were once the centres of empires. In an insightful way, these final four essays restate many of the arguments made about cinema and the post-colonial metropolis in the previous section; their juxtaposition suggests parallels between the downfall of urban modernism in the West and the rise of post-colonial urban suffering in 'the rest.'

*Cinema and the City* will be a welcomed addition to the reading-lists of graduate and advanced undergraduate courses in film studies and urban studies/sociology, and almost any course related to globalisation, in each case expanding the topics under consideration and lending a new level of complexity. As an innovative work, the major contribution of the anthology is its overall implication of the need for new research. It also gives a nod towards a global cultural studies that does not accept the extreme positions of the post-modern cultural homogenisation theses and yet clearly demonstrates the processes that do connect otherwise disparate events and practices of difference across the planet. In that regard, *Cinema and*

*the City* ranks with and might be usefully placed alongside the best academic work on global music, which also builds on an implicit urban analysis (although in popular music scholarship this is usually phrased in terms of local/regional 'scenes' or traditions). Finally, the collection points towards a spatial recontextualisation of film studies and perhaps a new name: the study of cinemas.

JOE AUSTIN

*Department of Popular Culture  
Bowling Green State University*

### **Urban Sprawl: Causes, Consequences, and Policy Responses**

GREGORY D. SQUIRES (Ed.), 2002

Washington, DC: The Urban Institute Press

364 pp; US\$32.50 paperback

ISBN 0 87766 709 8

There are many books available these days about urban sprawl and smart growth. The topic is certainly a hot one for urban planners and those in related fields and, as a result, there are many manuscripts from which to choose when pursuing information on the topic or designing courses. In situations like this, then, the test of a book becomes whether it successfully summarises the disparate literature that exists on the topic, or whether it offers anything unique to the literature. *Urban Sprawl: Causes, Consequences, and Policy Responses*, edited by Gregory D. Squires, makes more of a contribution to the second of these concerns.

The book deals exclusively with the American experience of urban sprawl. Nevertheless, the sub-title alone suggests a rather ambitious agenda for the book and in fact the book is loosely organised around the three themes of causes, consequences and policy responses. Of the three themes, the consequences and policy responses receive the most attention. Rather than finding comprehensive summaries of the literature or public discourse associated with each of the themes, however, the book instead offers excellent examples from a sampling of arguments in each of these themes.

For example, on the topic of the consequences of sprawl, there is a very representative argument presented by David Cieslewicz, the cofounder and executive director of 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, a state-wide environmental interest-group on the environmental impacts of sprawl. Paul Jargowsky contributes a chapter on some of the social and

poverty effects of sprawl, while John Powell has authored a chapter on sprawl and race. These are each cogently argued chapters, illustrating well the lines of debate they represent. But, as a whole, one cannot claim that the collection has covered the field on the consequences of sprawl, when issues such as sprawl's impact on local fiscal strain, increased infrastructure costs and dysfunctional transport systems are largely absent. Even in Powell's chapter, which describes the ways in which sprawl reproduces and exacerbates racial inequalities in metropolitan areas, the causal arrow spends as much time pointing from race to sprawl as it does pointing in the other direction.

As others have noted (see, for example, Galster *et al.*, 2000; Lopez and Hynes, 2003), there is a certain imprecision in the literature when it comes to the definition of sprawl. This imprecision has three dimensions. First, among those who suggest that sprawl is an identifiable type of decentralised growth, there is a lack of consensus on the particular characteristics that constitute sprawled growth versus unsprawled urban forms. Writers give various emphases to such features as density of development, land-use segregation, patterns of leapfrog development and the like. This lack of consensus leads to differing judgments about the nature and extent of sprawl across metropolitan areas and introduces the troubling possibility (at least from an analytical viewpoint) that your idea of sprawl may not be mine. The second dimension of the definitional imprecision is the confusing of sprawl and its essential attributes from its consequences. This problem is illustrated by those who describe sprawl by describing its effects (such as loss of farmland, auto-dependency, fiscal disparities, etc.). The third variant of the definitional problem is the frequent blurring of the concepts 'suburbanisation', on the one hand, and 'sprawl' on the other. Here, the problem is that some seem to use the terms interchangeably suggesting that *all* suburbanisation is sprawl. Such a position seems to deny the possibility of unsprawled suburbanisation and consequently identifies all forms of decentralising growth as problematic. Although Squires offers a definition for sprawl in the introduction to the book, he offers no discussion of the important issues surrounding the lack of definitional consensus in the field, nor does he locate his particular definition within the literature. The only discussion of this topic, in fact, is hidden away in Jargowsky's chapter. In the end, this collection of essays offers us little help on this central issue in the sprawl debate.

I would like to return, however, to the second criterion I posed at the beginning—whether the book offers something unique to the literature. Here is where the strength of the book lies. The section of the book that might loosely be viewed as the part dealing with policy responses is delivered in a series of chapters that focus on sprawl in particular metropolitan areas or regions. There are chapters on Atlanta, Portland, Minneapolis–St Paul, Maryland and Chicago. The choice of these areas is obviously not unique. Virtually all books on the subject make reference to Portland and Atlanta, the 'poster-children' for, respectively, aggressive growth management and unconstrained sprawl. The Twin Cities, because of its history of regional problem-solving, is also a frequent reference in the sprawl literature. What makes these chapters unique, however, and therefore of greatest use, is the detailed political analysis of sprawl within each of these regions. These chapters, while emphasising different issues and utilising somewhat different approaches, provide fine-grained descriptions and analyses of the economic, social and political dynamics that shape the sprawl debate in each of these regions. What emerges from a reading of these chapters is the beginning of a first-rate comparative analysis of the politics of sprawl in American cities. The chapters illustrate many of the themes introduced earlier in the book. For example, earlier in the book the role of federal housing and highway development programmes (as well as a range of other federal programmes) is described by Hank Savitch in one of the chapters dealing with the causes of sprawl. This argument (as well as Powell's argument about race) is brought to life in the chapter on Atlanta by Charles Jaret. Myron Orfield's chapter on Minneapolis–St Paul and Carl Abbott's chapter on Portland depict a range of policy solutions, but also analyse the political context in which these solutions emerged and are implemented (or, as the case may be, not implemented).

The volume constitutes a valuable addition to the sprawl literature, less for its implied comprehensiveness (as reflected in the sub-title) than for the highly representative arguments offered in the early chapters and the comparative case studies described in the later chapters.

EDWARD G. GOETZ  
*Urban and Regional Planning Program*  
*Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs*  
*University of Minnesota*

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### **Seeing with Their Hearts: Chicago Women and The Vision of the Good City, 1871–1933**

MAUREEN A. FLANAGAN, 2002

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

328 pp.; £24.95 hardback

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Several recent books on the history of American urbanism have chronicled the world of women activists. Sarah Deutsch's (2000) *Women and the City: Gender, Space and Power in Boston, 1870–1840* and Daphne Spain's (2001) *How Women Saved the City*, for example, provide new insights on urban development. Maureen Flanagan adopts a similar framework while pushing more emphatically into the intersection between municipal politics and gender. Flanagan's work shares both the strengths and the weaknesses of these other books. She usefully explores new historical material. Her account privileges women and their 'vision' of Chicago. What is largely absent is a nuanced view of cultural context and political power that helps the reader to understand not only contestation but points of overlap and appropriation between women's and men's urban visions. Hopefully, future historians can draw upon these books' insights to forge a more synthetic understanding of the urban world.

In Flanagan's view, different visions of the city were "rooted in differing gender perceptions and experiences" (p. 124). Women saw the city as "a collection of homes", while men saw it as "unbridled private enterprise" (p. 4). This difference led women and men to expect very different things of local government. Women looked to government to promote common welfare and equality of opportunity. Most men sought a "minimalist, passive, property-protecting" government. (pp. 38–39) Women reformers sought the "common good". Men reformers sought "administrative efficiency". Anna Nicholes, the superintendent of the Woman's City Club, insisted in 1913 on a connection between housework and cleaning the city. Nicholes argued that women's urban view "might almost be said to

come from the hearts of the women, a sense that the city is not alone a business corporation" (p. 86). Used by Nicholes, the activist, this stark dichotomy between men's and women's views might inspire club members' activism. Used by Flanagan, the historian, however, it leads to serious analytical limitations.

Flanagan insists that "historians have resisted" seeing Chicago women's perspective because they "take male ideas as the norm" (p. 117) and see women as "a stereotype" (p. 259). Yet Flanagan herself relies on curiously stereotypical portrayals of the 'ideas' of male civic, business or political leaders. Through the decades that Flanagan studies, legions of Chicago men of many stripes engaged in a discourse that insisted that the city needed to transcend mere money-making. Drawing upon rooted religious ideals, many male civic and business leaders, not to mention religious figures, journalists, architects and artists, struggled to find ways in which their lives and their city could be turned to more cultivated pursuits. The forms and structures of the city's park, civic, educational, religious and cultural landscape were viewed as central to this project. While arguing that Chicago women worked across lines of class, race and ethnicity to arrive at their common vision of the city, Flanagan overlooks men and women who apparently worked across lines of gender in pursuit of higher possibilities for city life.

Flanagan traces the origins of women's activism in Chicago to their charitable initiatives following the 1871 Chicago fire. Wealthy men with the Chicago Relief and Aid Society directed the effort. The men established a systematic relief programme that aimed to "protect and rebuild private property and to guard and maintain their own positions within the city" (p. 24). In contrast, women's relief work flowed out of a sense of empathy for displaced women and children. They resisted the Aid Society structures because they "believed that alleviating the distress of people suffering dreadful losses in the face of the cold winter months should take clear precedence over any concern about the rights of property" (p. 23). One of the episodes that Flanagan finds "particularly enlightening" came in the varied response of men and women to the presence of Cincinnatians channelling tens of thousands of dollars raised in their city into a free soup kitchen. The men of the Relief and Aid Society hounded the Cincinnatians and their money out of the city, lest the soup kitchen serve people who were not

truly in need, sap them of initiative to join in city rebuilding and undercut local businesses. Chicago women supported the Cincinnati project and tried to recoup the money for their own personal and empathetic charitable endeavours. Although the chapter provides an excellent foundation for the book, documenting the significance of gender as a frame for relief efforts, it fails to acknowledge more complicated realities. Flanagan obscures the gender of members of the Cincinnati relief contingent, describing them as “people” and a “group” led by “J. L. Keck”. Surely the author’s analysis would be more interesting and fruitful if she grappled with the facts here. In this contest over relief, the all-male Cincinnati group, led by Josiah Keck, apparently shared the gendered perspective of Chicago women.

Flanagan discusses many women’s organisations that arose out of the fire relief effort, along with a broadening of women’s participation in public and municipal affairs. The volume of organised activity seems impressive indeed, although a paucity of sources that might flesh out the work of these organisations weakens the case. The book tells us little about some organisations beyond their names alone, leaving readers without much sense of how they were started, what they accomplished or how they met their demise. Many exist as little more than acronyms—27 in a list at the start of the book—that at times get stacked up many deep in a single sentence—one mass meeting in 1916 included the “WCC, CWC, CPEL, CESA, CWA, Woman’s Church Federation, Juvenile Protective Association, CWTUL, CTF ...” (p. 139). In the face of thin documentation, it is also hard to assess one of Flanagan’s primary assertions: that the organisations worked across lines of race, class and ethnicity in pursuing their vision of the city. One wonders whether a White activist addressing a Black reform organisation constitutes a meaningful cross-race alliance.

Part two of Flanagan’s book shows women taking up a whole host of municipal issues including housing, recreation, school reform, sanitation, justice and police issues, charter reform and labour relations. Their involvement in these reform campaigns also led them to recognise the need for the vote and to crusade for suffrage. After detailed analysis of women’s activism in defeating a proposed 1907 municipal charter that did not include women’s suffrage, Flanagan dispatches in a single sentence the fact that the Illinois legislature granted women suffrage in 1913. Again, there must be an important history involved in how the men of the Illinois legislature adopted women’s suffrage.

The book’s third and final section surveys women’s participation in party politics, as voters, candidates and office holders. Flanagan has mined the available election returns from 1914 to 1920, which are broken down by gender, to argue that women did indeed pursue a gendered politics, supporting certain candidates and certain issues in percentages quite different from men. She also argues that the men who led the established parties refused to slate women as candidates and thus systematically blocked women from becoming office-holders, making it “virtually certain that activist women’s comprehensive vision of the good city would never prevail” (p. 124). There is useful analysis here of both individual elections and the ways in which district voting militated against women candidates. Yet the third section of the book does not explain why some women voted Republican, others Democratic, or why women lagged so far behind voter registration rates of men; in 1932, after nearly two decades of suffrage, their registration rate was only 43 per cent that of Chicago men. That fact, taken together with the failure of women candidates to win election, testifies that gender did not trump all else in women’s political decisions. These women did not behave only as “women” and it does not do justice to their lives and commitments to suggest that they did. If at times they worked across lines of race, class and ethnicity, Chicago women were unable to unite across the lines of political party in sufficient numbers to elect women candidates who presumably shared their “vision of the good city”. Without information about what the Democratic and Republican parties represented in this period, one wonders whether women dividing between parties meant that race, class and ethnicity actually represented less permeable barriers than Flanagan’s account suggests.

The book’s 24 illustrations succinctly underscore the text’s strength; they reveal the emergence of Chicago women’s political participation and their agency in the public realm.

DANIEL BLUESTONE  
*Department of Architectural History*  
*University of Virginia*

**The Construction of Built Heritage: A North European Perspective on Policies, Practices and Outcomes**

ANGELA PHELPS, G.J. ASHWORTH and B.O.H. JOHANSSON (Eds), 2002  
Aldershot: Ashgate  
264 pp.; £23.50 hardback  
ISBN 0 7546 1846 3

Yet another book on conservation and heritage.

Does it make a significant contribution to the already-burgeoning literature? Is it sufficiently distinctive to make purchase worthwhile? Will it be a useful resource for teaching and/or research? My answer to all of these questions is unequivocally positive. This is an interesting and usable contribution. However, the book's origins also prove to be its limitations.

As the Preface states, this volume is the result of collaboration between departments at Nottingham Trent University (UK), the University of Groningen (The Netherlands) and Göteborg University (Sweden). This was supported by the EU's Socrates programme "for advanced curriculum development" and it is "designed to support a module for the advanced study of heritage management in Europe". The text focuses on these three countries: yet does this really provide what the title promises—a "north European perspective"? One could argue the geographical accuracy but, in my view, using only three countries provides a rather limited perspective. Apart from the funding, there seems little rationale for the use of *these* three countries.

If this volume is intended as a text to support a specific taught module, does it have wider relevance? It certainly does explore a wide range of heritage issues and case studies, and (for this reviewer) it is very welcome to see some of these published in English and written in an accessible form. However, as a high-level text and a research aid, some aspects are frustrating. Most of the chapters are not widely referenced: in places one is left looking for the sources of facts or statements. The index, that most valuable tool for the reader, is rather brief. Translations of some Dutch and Swedish terms and names (for example, of organisations) would have been helpful. Most worrying is the range of minor errors: there is no English Grade 1\* listing (p. 105) and some authors' names are mis-spelled, for example. And, finally, for such a visual topic, the book seems under-illustrated. It is perhaps a missed opportunity that EU support did not appear to extend to aspects of the book's production.

However, the book's structure and content are very relevant and its sections well-structured, with useful introductions. The writing is generally fluent and informative. Ashworth and Phelps provide a helpful introduction to the cultural construction of heritage conservation, although this is more a discussion of the book's rationale and structure than of 'cultural construction' *per se*. The first section, of three chapters, relates the history of built environment conservation in the

three countries. Although quite short, and treading very well-trodden paths, these chapters do helpfully discuss issues such as 'the problems of success' and suggest future directions.

The bulk of the book is devoted to case studies. These are grouped under four themes: 'Heritage, identity and urban regeneration', 'The heritage site as attraction', 'Heritage as a strategic policy option' and 'Heritage and the restructuring of symbolic places'. It is invidious to single out specific chapters, as most debate some thorny issues. This is ideal if the book is a teaching resource! However, the study of the issues in creating a new structure from original, never-built plans, at the Villa Rustica of Gunnerbo (Ernstsson and Johansson), the problems of promoting heritage tourism in post-industrial Bolsover (Black) and the exploration of the Jewish ghetto heritage of Folkingerstraat, Groningen (Ashworth) are particularly challenging and of wider relevance. The cultural construction of heritage might have been afforded greater prominence than my own reading revealed. Although 'culture' is implicit in many if not most chapters, it might be explored more in, for example, the sections on policy development, implementation and economic issues including deindustrialisation. However, the consideration of culture in the creation and manipulation of 'symbolic places' (including Parliament Square, London, slavery in Liverpool, the Jews in Groningen and museums in Vänersborg) is very welcome.

Ashworth also provides a concluding chapter. Although this does revisit the four themes, as a whole this chapter is a frustrating taster rather than a magisterial overview. Ashworth is a fluent and thoughtful writer on heritage issues and surely the complexities of this subject, and indeed of the case studies themselves, would merit a far deeper conclusion than this. Yet a textbook should not provide all of the answers in readily digested form! An exploration of the perhaps chaotic flux of competing and contradictory ideas in heritage and conservation over space and time would be interesting. A more explicit discussion of the different national experiences would be useful, especially as one wonders whether the originally diverse theories and national approaches may be converging under the unifying influence of the EU and of the growing body of international conventions, standards and treaties.

In short, this book presents a constructive and informative read, particularly through its set of case studies. The range of issues raised could and should provoke intense discussion in graduate

seminars, and I will be very happy to use it in this way. Undergraduates, inevitably, will want more definitive 'answers'—although, as Ashworth states, "there is no definitive answer. Or rather the answer depends upon who poses the question, in which context and with which objective" (p. 257).

And the general reader might also want more context, comparison and conclusion.

PETER J. LARKHAM  
*School of Planning and Housing*  
*University of Central England*

