



BOOK REVIEWS

Contemporary urbanism in Brazil: beyond Brasilia edited by *Vicente Del Rio* and *William Siembieda*, University Press of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, USA, 2009, 320pp. ISBN 978-0-8130-3281-8.

According to the authors, 'Brazil is transforming itself into a modern state, still facing many longstanding problems, yet its leaders have also realized that the city is a major arena for fostering well balanced development, social justice and full citizenship'. However, they assume that two urban ideologies, modernism and post-modernism, coexist in practice, which in the context of Brazil means that a legal framework and central planning policies by a centralized and paternalist government exist. They also believe that attention to the role of space and the construction of everyday life provides a means to understand social action (Dear, 2000). These two different ideologies structure the book, which begins with a historical background in which the evolution of urbanism in Brazil in the 1930s is the starting point. Modernist thought is presented through four papers in the section on 'Late Modernism: the struggle to control city form and function'.

The first paper on Modernism, 'Brasilia, permanence and transformations' by Maria Elaine Kohhlsdorf, Günter Kohhlsdorf and Frederico de Holanda analyses the pilot plan prepared by Costa in 1960 to set out the primary changes in urban morphology since Brasilia's founding: several urban fabrics have appeared since the city was formed which were not contemplated in the city's original plan. 'Challenges for new town design in a frontier region', by Dirceu Trindade, presents the plans for the settlement of Palmas, the capital of the state of Tocantins: it illustrates strategies and city development similar to those of Brasilia in the 1960s. Still continuing, such strategies have been

implemented in Brazil since colonial times when the government intervened to create new development-inducing poles in hinterland Brazil.

The remaining two papers show two different forms of public intervention intended to promote development. 'The vertical cityscape of São Paulo' by Silvio Macedo examines new land-use paradigms introduced first in São Paulo in the 1970s, and subsequently deployed by planning boards all over Brazil. He illustrates what Aldo Rossi regarded as the influence of a speculative process in planning, and demonstrates the implementation of land speculation and the resultant increase in wealth for the few. The same process is observed by Gilda Bruna and Heliana Vargas in 'The shopping centers shaping the Brazilian city', and is viewed as a means of creating new activity poles, which in turn promote land-value increases. This process, first implemented in São Paulo, has been followed by several examples in Brazil.

The second section of the book, entitled 'The struggle to make the best of the existing cities', presents four renewal projects developed during the recent past in Brazil. In 'The cultural corridor project: revitalization and preservation in downtown Rio de Janeiro' by Vicente del Rio and Denise Alcântara, an explanation is given of the process of improving the urban fabric around a popular retail centre in Rio de Janeiro, in accord with the local community and their needs. The case of Salvador, in the paper by Ana Fernandes and Marco Aurélio Filgueiras Gomes on 'Revising Pelourinho', describes a development project led by the state government to improve an historical centre for tourism purposes and the gentrification process that was established to bring urban improvements. 'Riverfront revitalization in the Amazon' by Simone Seabra and Alice Rodrigues, with its concern with urban renewal in northern Brazil, reflects on the use of riverfronts as leisure and

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

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

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

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

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

Reference

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

achievement.

The book is divided into two parts. In the first, Hall describes the 'proactive approach' that Chelmsford adopted in order to improve the cityscape. The emergence of political leadership, the creation of a qualified urban-design team, the development of a vision, the adoption of policy documents and regulations, the enunciation of objectives and criteria and their application in negotiations with developers are explained in the first 80 pages of the book. In the next 90 pages, Hall documents the changes that better urban design brought about in mixed-use developments in central areas and in residential developments in all parts of the town. He uses a variety of projects, both private and public, large and small, to illustrate the successful collaboration of developers and planners and its outcomes.

By the early 1990s, Hall tells us, Chelmsford 'was not especially favoured in terms of its built heritage or administrative record' (p. 1) – hence what the city achieved should not be out of reach for other cities. By the early 2000s, all new projects met stringent criteria for urban integration, residential quality and architectural design. They helped to increase the intensity of land use, the sustainability of development, and the aesthetics of the public realm. Although Hall does not say so explicitly, what he describes is, in effect, a collective learning process involving officials, developers, planners and the public.

Change of such depth and scope as Hall presents can only be explained by a variety of factors. Chief among them is sustained political leadership, in large part by Hall himself, which made good urban design a requirement rather than a wish. The obligation to achieve quality was written into plans for large areas (strategies and master plans) and for specific sites (frameworks and briefs) by a team of professional urban designers. It was soon internalized by developers, who increasingly took to hiring highly qualified architects. For Hall, the lesson is clear: 'strong planning intervention' by means of 'detailed, . . . purposeful . . . [and] explicit controls' is needed to give 'clear guidance' to developers (pp. 175–6). This guidance must span the whole development process, from 'pre-application negotiation' to 'post-permission . . . monitoring' (p. 176). All this is possible only if elected officials provide strong political support to professionals and make themselves the champions of good design. Adopting a 'proactive attitude to urban design', Hall concludes, means 'having vision, making [the] implications of this vision very clear in advance to all parties and providing the

expertise to carry it [through]' (p. 177). The square brackets in the quotation above show places where mistakes occur in this key sentence of the conclusion.

Another round of editing of the text would have removed such errors and would have perhaps helped to improve some awkward sentences elsewhere. It would have been good as well to include a general map of Chelmsford, to give the reader a better sense of the place and to identify the location of specific areas, sites and buildings which are discussed in the text.

Although Hall presents detailed explanations and numerous illustrations of plans and guidelines, he does not show clearly the extent to which morphological analysis was used in their preparation. Like any good urban designer, he notes the importance of analysing existing urban and architectural forms, but the prescriptions he presents for new development – for example, 'continuous frontage, building on, or near the footway, modest front-to-front distances, shallow-plan dwellings, good size and shape for the back gardens' (p. 48) – are fairly general and do not seem to result from a desire to reproduce local patterns and types. When Hall talks about relating the present to the past, it is mostly to tell us that the poor quality of the inherited urban landscape pushed the planners to recommend departures from established norms rather than adherence to them.

In his conclusion, Hall notes that being proactive on urban design means, among other things, 'knowing what its citizens want and need' (p. 177). However, there is very little indication of the way in which officials and planners got to know citizens' expectations. Public consultation is mentioned only twice, and only once does the reader get any information about the involvement of ordinary citizens in creating a collective vision. The story, as told by Hall, is one of officials and professionals – planners, developers, architects – working together to make their city a better place. The reader is left to surmise that the population supported the council's policy because it yielded positive results.

Even though his narrative is focused on the work of officials and officers, among whom he was prominent, Hall writes with modesty: he does not use the first person, refers to himself only indirectly as one actor among many, and admits freely that 'both good fortune and design' (p. 134) were necessary to enable Chelmsford to change for the better. He acknowledges the fact that local planners found much inspiration in national and regional planning policies and design guides, and

he recognizes that their merit lies primarily in using existing opportunities well.

But Hall also writes with assurance. His intimate knowledge of both the political/procedural and of the substantive issues comes through in his account of the city's experience and in his description of specific plans and projects. Although the lessons he presents are not very original, they are based on solid evidence and sound analysis. Hall is right that senior planners who have achieved success in their career must write about it 'so that others may benefit from it' (p. vi). Best-practice books such as his are useful to younger professionals in giving them a sense of what it is possible to achieve and an understanding of how to achieve it. Hall must be thanked for telling us his story, and for telling it well.

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Urban paleontology: evolution of urban forms by Ming Tang and Dihua Yang, Universal Publishers, Boca Raton, Florida, USA, 2008, 233 pp. ISBN 978-1599429496.

Analogical reasoning is a prominent tool for effectively familiarizing the unfamiliar. Organic analogy based on biological references to the wholeness of an organism has been a powerful design conception in art and architecture (Steadman, 2008). This approach is reflected, for example, in normative and analytical urban theory, with the organic metaphor of the city as a vibrant, growing and regenerating entity (Marshall, 2009). Within this framework *Urban paleontology* provides an addition with regard to evolutionary emergent urbanism.

As a research domain, transformation of urban form viewed as a developmental or evolutionary process – morphogenesis – is far from being a new branch of scholarly thinking. However, Tang and Yang propose a further perspective incorporating a

series of concepts borrowed from palaeontology. In their conceptual framework, each emerging pattern is explored on the basis of its previous condition. The method of analysis is based on decomposing the whole fabric of districts. The conceptual link between palaeontology and urban morphology is concisely provided in the first chapter. Homologous and analogous structures, 'urban fossil', 'urban plasm' and 'urban stratum', are presented as the key concepts in the subsequent relational framework.

In the following two chapters palaeontological concepts are exemplified by case studies, termed 'urban excavations', in Beijing, China and Savannah, USA. The basic unit of analysis in 'excavations' is the street with layer-based illustrations of pattern transformation allowing for the identification of 'urban species', that is typological elements of the urban fabric. 'Species' are types of street structure and buildings: their solidness, location, integration, and evolutionary characteristics. Whilst demonstrating the nature of 'species', their adaptations in relation to external factors ('magnetic fields') are also depicted. In this way, relating physical development and transformation processes to the socio-cultural and political aspects enriches the morphological analysis.

In the last chapter of the book, the authors define their overarching conceptual schema – the 'urban evolutionary tree'. Within the definition of the family-tree the primary argument is that different urban patterns are rooted in the same ancestor. In terms of another concept – 'interrelated reproduction' – the authors suggest that the formation of street patterns is the product of the iteration of the same genetic codes by different individuals. But, as the authors point out, development of the method in a more comprehensive way is reliant upon integrating case studies in the future. Only then can a general theory of morphological urban elements be developed.

The major weakness of the book is the lack of sufficiently detailed explanations. The lack of textual elaboration is especially evident when linkages are made between the key concepts of palaeontology and urban form. In addition, a clear definition of the selection criteria of the scale levels for determination of the sites and urban species is required.

Reflecting the professional standpoint of the authors, the book does not end with grand analytical statements. The main motivation of the authors is to present a new working basis for

design. A key point is that urban conservation strategies do not necessarily need to be based on the preservation of architectural units and built-up fabric. The underlying structure/pattern of the urban fabric provides a relevant reference for the regeneration of historical urban sites. As the authors state in their introduction, 'with such knowledge, we will be able to understand our cities better and guide their development accordingly'.

References

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The genealogy of cities by Charles P. Graves, Jr. Kent State University Press, Kent, Ohio, USA, 2008, 367 pp., with CD containing 1000 downloadable city plans. ISBN 978-0-87338-939-6.

The genealogy of cities is an urban designer's A–Z reference atlas of 226 city ground plans from various parts of the world, shown at often random points in their growth history to illustrate different visual patterns of street systems and built-up areas. The plans are severely simplified in order to be represented by four different styles of figure-ground drawings, and are shown at many different scales so the plans can fill the page. A compact disk accompanying the book contains digital files of these and others to offer 1000 urban plans overall in downloadable format.

The book's title is misleading, because it would seem to promise a genetically-based classification of urban ground plans. In fact, the classification is of a historical parade of plan features and partial characteristics from different periods that can be found embedded in the ground plans of many cities. It is certainly not a classification of individual urban ground plans in all their composite historical complexity. Thus, particular cities are included

because they contain – and have been chosen to illustrate – one, and only one, plan feature across the entire classification scheme. (For example, the ground plan of Como, Italy, is classified as typical of a plan type Charles Graves terms 'Medieval on early fabric', but it could equally well demonstrate two others he has defined: the 'Roman colonial' or the 'Grid expansion' type.) So, 'genealogy' here is simply a loose metaphor for a range of plan features that have appeared in the historical development of urban planning practice.

The key purpose of the work, however, is to provide inspirational examples of different plan configurations – past and present, real and contemplated – for graphic training and urban design projects. To the extent that figure-ground cartography fulfills such a goal, the book's appeal would seem to be great. The mapping technique, while it has lost ground in architectural work to three-dimensional computer visualizations, remains useful in urban design courses as a graphic discipline. Graves seeks to enhance its utility by investing it with interpretive value, and this possibility, given the sheer abundance of city plans collected here and their great historical and geographical sweep, prompts the question whether the work might also serve as a plan source for comparative work in urban morphology.

The heart of the book is a large collection of city ground plans, one per page, arranged alphabetically, and assigned a significance related to one of 28 plan features considered important in the history of urban design worldwide. These features are discussed briefly in a preceding expository chapter ('Historical typologies') that represents a forced march through more than 2 millennia of selected urban planning highlights. Examples of the typological categories are 'Early cities', 'Greek colonial', 'Islamic', 'Medieval new town', 'Renaissance ideal', 'Grid expansion graphed onto earlier fabric', 'Formal expansion', 'Company towns', 'Garden city', 'Early modern and Fascist new towns', 'New urbanism', and 'New modernism'. Given the space allotted to this (only 21 pages, with copious graphics) the choice of highlights, and therefore plan features identified, is understandably lean. For urban morphologists, however, many of the 'types' will appear problematical. For example, 'Medieval on early fabric', 'Medieval linear, spinal, or multiarms', 'Medieval circular or free growth', and 'Medieval new town' by no means exhaust, typify, or even accurately specify the various forms recognized in the morphogenetic analysis of medieval urban plans.

As to the towns and cities selected, European

and American cases are overwhelmingly favoured, and although early Asian and the Middle Eastern ones receive passing coverage – including examples of cities founded well before they were influenced by Western planning ideas – pre-Hispanic cities of Central and South America are completely absent. Cuzco (Peru), for example, the oldest continuously occupied city in the New World, with Inca fabric to this day shaping the plan of the central area, could well have justified a page in this book, even if it had to be at the expense of, say, Fairfield (Alabama).

In each section of the expository chapter, stylized icons serve to introduce each plan feature or type. In design they are overly elaborate and some too close in visual texture to be quickly distinguished. The icons then appear all together along the bottom margin of every plan page, with the relevant classification highlighted. The plan pages also contain thumbnail sketches, printed in red, showing the mere outline of the larger plan on the page, and it is only these little sketches that are drawn to a standard scale throughout the A–Z section. There are also minute directional indicators showing how far the plan has been rotated from the convention of ‘north up’ to fit the page. The large plans are rendered in one of four figure-ground drawing styles: (1) city block as aggregate mass; (2) blocks with plots outlined; (3) collective building footprints with some plot lines within open space; and (4) collective building footprints with public-civic buildings shown by interior layout (so-called Nolli plans, after Giambattista Nolli’s 1748 plan of Rome). The reason behind these four styles is not explained, although the choice is presumably dictated by the limitations of the original cartography.

This brings us to map sources. Graves found maps mostly reproduced in well-known secondary sources and travel guides, including, for example, the simple tourist cartography of Karl Baedeker. He seems to have made no use of the splendidly detailed and highly accurate urban plans in the pan-European *Historic Towns Atlas* (1969–present) series.¹ His sources are summarized only in a general list, making it impossible to check the provenance of a particular city plan. The plans range widely in date, mostly from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries, covering urban plans dating from the third century BCE to the near-present. The failure to provide individual source citations severely reduces the book’s scholarly value. For example, it strains credulity that the detailed plan of Venzone (Italy) dates from a document either produced in AD 1255 or showing the town at that

date, as stated (pp. 311, 363), since, among other things, the cathedral presented in modern outline in the plan was only begun in AD 1338.

Graves felt the plans had to be accurate, but there is no explanation how this was determined. He created from all such images new renderings, standardized to his four drawing styles for a welcome if limited degree of comparability. Since the main objective was to seek out and present a good variety of built environments across time and space, including places large and small, simple and complex, a uniform scale for these large plan sketches was not attempted. But since the work is ‘meant to help urban designers comprehend scale relationships at a city level’ (p. xi) this is a definite drawback, especially from the perspective of morphological analysis, since the tiny, same-scale, silhouette thumbnails are no compensation. Consequently, the plans appear in haphazard sequence, prisoners of the alphabet, with scale, degree and type of plan detail, date of pattern, and typological classification ricocheting back and forth from one page to the next like pin-balls. Considering the book’s claim to offer a ‘genealogy’ of cities, a genealogical progression would seem to have been the obvious basis for a sequence.

There is a short additional section (‘Typological icons representing city makeup’, pp. 324–39) which represents an idiosyncratic and irrelevant detour. It offers a new set of 33 completely different, unrelated (and fussy) graphic icons designed to express the author’s sense of recurrent patterns. These are purely morphographic, and not in any way historical. Examples include ‘circle’, ‘amoebic’, ‘object’, ‘morph’, ‘fingers’, ‘peninsula’, ‘processional circulation’, ‘scrambled’, and ‘designed urban seedbeds’(!). This so-called typology is then illustrated with city plans, one per icon/category, except for the ‘domino’ type, which for some reason is missing. Ironically, the 32 plans in this section – adding little if any value to the book conceptually – are printed at a standard scale! If that were possible here, why not throughout the main A–Z section?² A final component of the book is the Appendix, which lists the 1000 cities in the book and the CD and their historical-typological classifications (but not those of the ‘city makeup’ scheme).

Below the surface, the organization of the main historical typology is a complete mess. While there are ‘twenty-eight typological icons representing various periods in the history of urban design and planning. . . [that] allow the user to identify the plan’s historical period. . .’ (p. 1), only 27 distinct icons appear in the expository chapter. The chapter

presents 14 major rubrics (headings in red ink); 27 types and sub-types with icons attached; 2 types without icons; 4 types that share icons with other types (India & China; Fascist & modern city planning); and a 28th type implied by icon #15 ('Early New World urbanism or Late Renaissance') that is missing from the chapter but present in the icon strip printed on every A-Z plan page as well as in the Appendix. Furthermore, the identifying labels in the Appendix do not match those used in the section headings of the 'Historical typologies' chapter – some even carrying significantly different meanings (for example, icons for types 14: 'Colonial grid' and 16: 'Grid expansion' in the Appendix appear in the chapter discussion attached to 'New settlements') – creating further confusion. In addition, the typology's sequence (types 1-28), shown in that order in the icon strips and Appendix, does not match that in the expository chapter after the eleventh type (the sequence being 1-11, 13, 12, 17, 18, 21, 19, 20, 14, 16, 23, 22, 25, 24, 26, 27, 28, with 15 missing), for no apparent reason, complicating attempts to cross-reference cases.

Considering the very small amount of text in relation to graphic material, the frequency of editorial and typographical errors is unnerving. Examples include five typographical errors before reading beyond page 3, including misspellings of two authors' names; reversed captions for the plans of Como and Arezzo (p. 4), and for New York and Herrnhut (p. 15); erroneous dates for the 1858 plan of Como (given as 1950 on p. 4, and 1958 on pp. 128 and 347); an inaccurate name for the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (twice on p. xiv); and, throughout the Appendix (pp. 342-65), on every page for type 24, the label 'Colonial expansion', which ought to be 'City Beautiful Movement'. Graphic errors can also be found throughout the work: the plan of Pietrasanta (Italy) is shown 'north up', whereas in reality the street grid runs at a 45° angle; the rowhouses of Pullman (Illinois) are shown as discontinuous clusters, whereas they are continuous within the city blocks. The book evidently took 9 years to mature; it is a

shame its final form betrays marks of hasty completion.

For students in urban design courses this book is no doubt of considerable value. It introduces something of a historical dimension into urban ground plan depiction all too often favouring abstract pattern over formative process. For urban morphologists, the partial standardization of numerous urban plans offers some access to cross-cultural comparative cartography on a quantitative basis hardly available before. Yet the lack of a common map scale is hugely frustrating, as is also the frequent inconsistencies between plans that show, for example, plot boundaries and those that do not. It is not clear the author made every effort to obtain the best plans available for certain cities, or chose cities wisely with maximum comparability in mind. Nevertheless, the historical typology offered, no matter how lean and debatable it may be in some critical details, offers a starting point for comparative study on an international scale. This book, with all its flaws, should spur others to improve upon it, especially with the more systematic needs of morphogenetic analysis in mind.

Notes

1. *Historic Towns Atlas* (1969-present) series. Complete listing of town plan publications at <http://www.wien.gv.at/kultur/archiv/kooperationen/lbi/staedteatlas/bibliographie/index.html>
2. A recent book that provides just such a collection is Eric J. Jenkins (2008) *To scale: one hundred urban plans* (Routledge, New York), reviewed in vol. 13 (2) of this journal.

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