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Reviews

Race, riots and policing: lore and disorder in a multi-racist society by M Keith; UCL Press, London, 1993, 280 pages, £35.00 cloth, £12.95 paper (US$75.00, $25.00), ISBN 1 85728 109 8, 1 85728 110 1

Despite the circumscribed empirical focus on London in the early 1980s, this is an ambitious and wide-ranging book, which effectively combines ethnographic work in Brixton, Notting Hill, and Stoke Newington with a rigorous analysis of Home Office arrest data and other official sources. Through his own detailed and critical observations of the 'riots' of 1981, together with cautious use of selected secondary sources, Michael Keith has successfully unravelled some of the complex connections between 'race' and crime in contemporary Britain, persuasively demonstrating the constitutive role of place in the process of racialization.

Among his many useful and original contributions, Keith provides a careful dissection of the diverse series of events that have come to be grouped together as 'riots'. The search for specificity leads him to criticize those who seek to identify the 'typical rioter'. In place of such misleading statistical abstractions, Keith uses arrest data to highlight a range of significant differences among the 'faces in the crowd'. On the basis of this evidence, Keith suggests that Black people were more likely to be arrested for 'riot' offences, such as violence against the person and to reside relatively near the disturbances, whereas White people were less localized and more associated with 'looting' offences such as theft and burglary. Such findings contradict the notion that Black and White people regularly unite in street battles against the police—a view that Keith rejects as 'virtually untenable' (page 116). Keith's findings do, however, substantiate Paul Gilroy's observation that, whatever the statistical pattern of arrest data may show, the riots are remembered in distinctly racial terms.

Keith begins by rejecting conventional explanations of police racism which includes 'rotten-apple racism' and the blanket condemnations of a pathological and poorly specified 'police culture'. Rather than arguing that police racism is simply a reflection of the wider society, Keith attempts to recover the detailed histories that lie behind specific place-based antagonisms in what the police themselves refer to as 'symbolic locations' and which the press have dubbed the 'front line'. Significantly, Keith argues that such local histories are rarely known to the police themselves because of the rapid turnover of officers in inner-city police districts. The 'contested fictions' of local history in Brixton, Stoke Newington, and Notting Hill are carefully charted, focusing on specific 'front line' streets (Railton Road, Sandringham Road, and All Saints Road, respectively). Keith then weaves a complex narrative involving five interrelated threads: a juxtaposition of theories of 'police-community relations' with a description of the realities of specific localized conflicts; a statistical analysis of the 1981 'uprisings', an ethnography of policing in three of London's 'front line' districts; a contextualization of this evidence in terms of national policing policy; and a synthesis of these findings in terms of a theory of institutionalized racial subordination.

The book is scrupulously researched. The reader is frequently reminded of the limitations of the data and of the author's inevitably partial perspective. Occasional outbursts of moral condemnation over "the manifest obscenity of press irresponsibility" (page 42), for example, are leavened by frequent touches of wit, such as references to "Scotland Yardies" or "shaggy dog riots". The writing is generally clear and direct, though footnotes sometimes deteriorate into obscurity (such as the impenetrable thicket on page 71). Well versed in contemporary social theory, Keith pays particular attention to the metaphorical content of riot discourse where inner-city conditions are described as a heady cocktail, ready to be ignited by the slightest spark. The police's job is to 'defuse' such explosive mixtures. Crowds are described as bestial, with 'herds' of irrational rioters and the constant fear of 'copycat' rioting. Dramaturgical metaphors also abound with 'actors' and 'scenes', and rioting being 'staged' as a kind of extemporized drama, reminiscent of Erving Goffman.

It is a great strength of Keith's work that he eschews sweeping judgments about 'institutional racism', preferring to specify the policies and practices through which racist outcomes are actively reproduced. He does not excuse police racism where he finds evidence of it, but his ethnographic experience has given him respect for the integrity and courage of many of the officers whom he has met. Keith records conversations with senior officers about the occurrence of 'front line deviancy' among police officers whose morale has been chronically undermined. But he also notes frequent acts of personal bravery and public interventions by senior officers which have effectively prevented the occurrence of violent disorder.

Working over a period of years, Keith has acquired an intimate knowledge of police practice on the ground which gives him unusual insights and a finely balanced judgment on crucial issues. He is clearly conscious of the ethical dimensions of his research and notes the difficulties of faithfully reporting "angry scenes in dispassionate prose" (page 5). But his labours have been amply rewarded in a book of richness and subtlety that repays careful scrutiny and which should be read by anyone involved in the British criminal justice system, whether practitioner or critic. Keith's concluding chapter on the discursive construction of 'racial' categories, the scale of racialized criminalisation, and the role of space and place in contesting the process of racialization is particularly rewarding, suggesting that histories of racialization should pay more attention to the particular spaces—the streets, tower blocks, and council estates—in which such processes literally take place.

Given the intellectual quality of the work, it is unfortunate that the production of the book has some minor defects; a couple of maps appear with no scale; typographical errors abound; the source of some quotations is incomplete in the text; and references are missing from the bibliography. But these minor problems should not be allowed to detract from the author's accomplishment. This is a significant and impressive book, a tribute to Michael Keith's tenacity in the field, his fair-minded and penetrating scholarship, and his passionate commitment to a fairer society in which racialized injustices may eventually be eradicated.

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The British planning system: an introduction by Y Rydin; Macmillan, London, 1993, 404 pages, £45.00 cloth, £14.99 paper, ISBN 0 333 52740 2, 0 333 52741 0

This book is intended to be an introductory textbook for undergraduates consisting of five parts. The initial section is an account of the development of British town planning policy and theory. Each of the three chapters in the first part has a commentary identifying the main theories of planning evident during the time periods under review. The dominant concern in the 19th century and early 20th century was public health and the main approach to this concern was from within the architectural-urban design tradition. The theoretical base for planning in the interwar period focused upon comprehensive land-use planning at a larger scale. After World War 2 the principal theories of planning are identified within a wider spectrum of concerns, including economic and social impacts of land-use change, alongside the identification of planning as a form of rational decisionmaking (procedural planning theory). In the 1970s, Rydin notes that reexamination of the activity of and justification for town planning as a result of public criticism led to a plurality of theories of planning. The Thatcher years are when Rydin believed that planning theory diverged into three strands: New Right, New Left, and an institutional approach, the last "... taking on board many different points from different disciplines and theoretical persuasions" (page 74). This approach is further explained as being the application of the structure-agency dyad to town planning policy and outcomes. Rydin's framework for the analysis of planning in the 1990s is based on four theoretical approaches; the political-ideological approaches of New Right and New Left and the academic analyses of "... liberal political economy and the institutionalist approach" (page 79). This framework is then applied throughout subsequent sections.

Part 2 is entitled "Planning today" and it "... surveys the current planning system with a view to providing a description of its main elements" (page 85). In thirty pages the author covers land-use planning and conservation, countryside policy, environmental planning, and

urban policy and transport. A feature of the book is the use of 'summary boxes' which present a curt author's interpretation of key features of these elements of planning policy. The main institutions and agencies of British planning today are covered in part 3 which is focused on the politics of planning with chapters on the state, the planners, and the public, respectively.

Part 4 applies conventional economic analysis, first, to the four alternative theoretical approaches that are used as the analytical template throughout the book (to show how conventional supply–demand analysis can be used to show market success and failure) and, subsequently, to housing land, minerals exploitation, pollution emission and control, and to inner-city problems.

The final part of the book is an evaluation of town planning policy and impacts in which the author returns to the main sectors identified in part 2 (land-use planning and conservation and so on). It offers some empirical research findings in order to assess the effects of the planning system and which point to its weaknesses, failure to achieve desired outcomes, and the tendency to generate unintended and inappropriate impacts. In a concluding chapter Rydin seeks to rehabilitate these pessimistic conclusions by identifying three rationales for planning, namely dealing with periods of economic instability, helping social transition during periods of restructuring, and preventing the irreparable breakdown of environmental systems. This summary of the content implies a valuable compilation. So why is the book so profoundly unsatisfactory? First, it is much too ambitious. As this summary indicates, its scope is very wide. Any one of the parts, if given fuller treatment in its own right, could have been an effective contribution towards understanding the British planning system. The best section of the book is where Rydin is on her own ground, namely the section on economics applied to planning issues.

Because the whole enterprise is so ambitious this leads on to my second main criticism. The author has unsuccessfully attempted to produce a descriptive text of planning history and institutions, a contribution to theory of planning, a political sociology, an introduction to applied economics, and an evaluation of planning policies. The book, in the main, is superficial and generalised. Many of the sections are much too truncated and so broadly sketched that information and ideas become incoherent. I found myself reading some sentences over and over again and trying to imagine what an undergraduate could possible make of them. So much is left out because of the span of coverage that the result is often vacuous. Very little lightens the crushing generalities that bombard the reader. Even the 'exhibits', those increasingly popular insertions in undergraduate texts, which intersperse the highly generalised discussion do not offer the detailed cameos and case studies that we have come to expect of this device. Equally problematic are the 'summary boxes' which are reduced to a few lines to characterise extremely complex issues and policies [for example, is it helpful for students to read (page 150) that the "focus" of waste management is "waste"?].

A further problem, in my opinion, is the analytical framework used throughout (New Right, New Left and so on) as a device for interpreting policy and impacts. Every aspect of current British planning which is covered here is subjected to this Procrustean bed, as if there are New Left or New Right observers out there who have subjected the planning system and policies to this kind of analysis. It is too simplistic to offer any meaningful understanding of the decisions and dilemmas facing the practitioner or to offer a thorough explanation of the policy process in planning. The main difficulty with the approach, as applied here, is that there is so little sustained argument (using a wide range of empirical evidence and seeking out counterfactuals as a pathway to explanation). The counterfactuals are simply placed into a different box within the framework when a useful intellectual contribution would have been to search for synthesis. This is taxonomy, not understanding.

There are other difficulties. In too many places the information is factually incorrect. It might be possible to excuse an occasional error, but the list of inaccuracies is long. Blight is used in a very specific way in town planning to refer to the effects on land and property of official land-use decisions and not to the archaic dictionary of poor layout or obsolescence (page 27). There was no Sanford Committee on Scottish National Parks in 1945 (page 124).

The 1985 Local Government Act did not sweep away structure plans in the metropolitan areas (page 64). London Regional Transport was formed prior to the abolition of the GLC (page 174). There are many other howlers. The list of mistakes is too long in a book intended to be recommended to students by teachers who are working to develop good habits of scholarship. Nor does it offer a good model of careful presentation. The proofreading is poor. Many cited authors will find their names misspelt and whole categories of publications mentioned in the text are not referenced in the bibliography (especially government reports, White papers and so on). The references are quite narrowly drawn for a book of this scope and ambition and are drawn extensively from secondary sources.

Overall, therefore, this is not a book that I can recommend. Thank goodness for Cullingworth!

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Urban development in Nigeria edited by R W Taylor; Avebury, Aldershot, Hants (published in the USA by Ashgate, Brookfield, VT), 1993, 245 pages, £35.00 (US$59.95) ISBN 1 85628 456 5

The misconception that African cities are largely the result of European creation or influences has largely been dispelled by the increasing accumulation of evidence testifying to the existence of some magnificent cities in a few areas of Africa before the arrival of the Europeans.

Urban development in Nigeria dates back to the early medieval period. It has been suggested by Wheatley (1971, page 9) that the area of present day Southwestern Nigeria is one of the seven areas of 'primary' urbanization where an urban mode of life was independently invented as compared with the other urban civilizations which were 'secondary' or derived from the original seven areas (Mesotopotamia, the Indus Valley, the Nile Valley, the North China Plain, Meso-America, Central Andes, and Southwestern Nigeria). The last two decades, particularly, have witnessed an unprecedented rate of urbanization in the history of Nigeria. The enormity of problems that are engendered by this high rate of urbanization and explosive growth of cities has posed an enormous challenge to the Nigerian government. This collection of essays edited by Taylor addresses many of the issues related to the problems of population growth and urban development in Nigeria. Taylor spent a year as a Fulbright Professor at the University of Jos in Nigeria and thus had the opportunity of garnering papers for this book from many Nigerian academics.

The book is made up of twenty chapters which are divided between four sections. The introductory chapter and the first section of the book (called the contextual overview and which consists of two chapters) are both written by the editor. In chapters 2 and 3 Taylor presents a framework within which urban development in Nigeria should be understood. With respect to this framework, he examines: increasing urbanization in relation to the historical context and some theoretical and policy issues such as growth poles; urban bias in policy-making; the role of the informal sector; physical planning; and housing and land policy.

The second part of the book consists of six chapters on urban planning in Nigeria with individual chapters on administration of physical planning, transport and regional planning, and training of town planners in Nigeria. In this section, Egunjobi's two chapters on economic planning and regional planning are particularly noteworthy. The core of Egunjobi's argument is that national development planning policy in Nigeria has not adequately taken into consideration the spatial dimension of economic growth and has thus contributed to urban decay and rural underdevelopment. He in turn advocates the adoption of regional planning, and the integration of economic growth and physical planning.

The third section of the book consists of seven chapters, and is devoted to the general issue of urban housing. Provision of shelter both in urban and in rural areas remains one of the most acute problems in Nigeria. Successive federal and state governments in Nigeria have paid particular attention to the provision of shelter and over the years billions of Naira have been invested in the housing sector. Unfortunately public policies have had only a marginal

impact on the solution to the housing problems. The reason for this has been attributed to the fact that investment in this sector has concentrated on the provision of public housing units for the citizens. Mba and Awotona among others examined this problem from different perspectives.

The final part of the book is devoted to the issue of land. It has long been recognized that the ownership and use of land lie at the core of housing problems and urban development. In an attempt to confront the problems of ownership, poor management, haphazard urban development, and misuse of land, the Land Use Act was adopted in Nigeria in 1978. The Act in essence 'nationalized' all land in the country and allowed it to be held in trust to be administered by state governors for the benefit of all citizens. Okolocha and Sule examined the impact of this Act on urban development, and the general issue of land policy as an inhibiting factor in urban development in chapters 17 and 18, respectively.

As with most collections of this genre, this book is not suitable for readers who wish to get a deeper understanding of the dynamics of urban development in Nigeria. Some of the chapters provide only a superficial treatment of the issues involved. Indeed most of the chapters are less than ten pages in length. Many of the mediating factors or mechanisms that have set and are setting the general conditions for urban growth in Nigeria (such as the changing global economic climate and structural adjustment programme, administrative and political decisions, and so on) are not examined in the book. Perhaps this is a result of having limited the selection of contributors to mainly geographers and physical planners. A better mixture of contributors particularly through the inclusion of sociologists, economists, and political scientists might have led to the production of a more fascinating book. Nevertheless, the book provides a good flavour of the various issues related to urban development in Nigeria and is thus appropriate as an introductory text. Unfortunately it is overpriced for Nigerian students (and lecturers I must add!!) and I hope that a much cheaper edition specifically targeted to this market will be produced.

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Wheatley P, 1971 *The Pivot of the Four Quarters: Preliminary Inquiry into the Origins and Character of the Ancient Chinese City* (Aldine, Chicago)

The regions and global warming: impacts and response strategies edited by J Schmandt, J Clarkson; Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1993, 337 pages, £55.00 (US$59.95) ISBN 0 1950 7586 2

The global warming crisis has now become an important part of public policy agendas. National governments have declared that climate change must be taken seriously in policy and planning. Even individual cities, such as Toronto, have made their own efforts to address climate change in their jurisdictions. In fact, a whole 'industry' has developed to promote action on global warming. The emerging science of global warming has spawned expensive and wide-ranging research on biological and physical processes, as well as considerable scientific controversy. But, although much has been made of the need for policy-oriented research and action on 'human responses' to global warming, analytical work in this field is only now coming to be taken seriously alongside the more established physical and climatological work. In this context, of linking social science analysis to more conventional physical and biological analyses of global warming, *The Regions and Global Warming: Impacts and Responses* is an important contribution. The book is a collection of essays prepared as part of an Environment Prize competition that addressed climate warming as an issue of human response—subject to social science analysis.

One clear message of these essays is that the 'problem' of global warming is not well defined in terms of what it means to economic and social change. Many of the anticipated effects of global warming described, pale in the context of the reallocation of resources in

comparison with trade, war, and power shifts now taking place across the planet. Both policy and scientific communities have been very good at suggesting solutions to the problem of global warming, but not so good at defining what constitutes the 'problem'—at least in terms of mobilizing human societies to gather the resources needed to respond effectively.

Although there is a consensus of opinion among climate researchers that global warming is under way, many still believe that the evidence is not yet sufficient to warrant action. The authors take this as their point of departure, but all proceed in a different direction. The book is organized into three sections: (1) identifying regional impacts of and vulnerabilities to climate change; (2) analyzing the regional impacts of climate change; and (3) developing regional policies for climate change. Herein lies the strength of the book, but also its weakness. Its strength is that the essays represent a wide diversity of methods, approaches, and thinking, which all attempt to analyze the response to climate change in current regional management and planning situations. Its weakness lies in the wide differences in methods and approach that make the essays appear haphazard—especially for those not familiar with the climate change debate or the plurality of social science analysis. Conscious of this, perhaps, the editors have included a statement at the end of the volume which brings together some of the ideas. This is unfortunate; understanding the differences in method, approach, case study, and theoretical underpinning would have been worthy of a concluding chapter. In such a chapter the editors would have done well to analyze the differences among the contributors, which are more interesting than the similarities. After all, it is what people disagree about that makes the debate on human response to climate change so interesting. Another missing chapter is one on the climate change debate itself. This debate has already spawned considerable research and is itself a phenomenon just as worthy of study as it is causing reorientation in the research and policy communities—even though physical evidence of global warming still remains scant and controversial. All the authors agree that this evidence is not yet available, but many argue that society is already responding. This is illustrated by the many cases presented in the book.

This volulme is an important contribution to the social science of climate change and it clearly demonstrates that there is further room for exciting analytical work that integrates the biological, physical, and human aspects of climate warming. For such work to be fruitful, however, social science analysis must be devoted more attention and resources in its own right—as opposed to being treated as an extension or add-on to the more expensive climate change modeling or other physical process-oriented research.

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Housing conditions in Barbados: a geographical analysis by R B Potter; Institute of Social and Economic Research, the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, 1992, 129 pages, US$15.00 paper (J$150.00) ISBN 9 7640 0040 1

Housing Conditions in Barbados continues Potter's contributions to Third World urbanization. This monograph differs from his more recent anthologies, however, with its focus on spatial-geographic variations of housing conditions in one Caribbean island, and the inclusion of a discussion on Caribbean vernacular architectural styles. More consistent with Potter's long involvement with the advocacy of geographic perspectives towards urban physical planning, this work directly addresses contemporary *urban* housing policy in Barbados and makes a telling point that physical planning in the Caribbean must include *rural* housing in any national schema aimed at the equitable provision of shelter.

Potter achieves his objectives, namely to provide the first ever appraisal of the spatial variability of housing conditions within the island of Barbados. Even in such a small territory, Potter successfully presents a case for recognition of rural-urban, nonmetropolitan-metropolitan distinctions in housing amenities. By using well-accepted multivariate measures derived from the 1980 Census, he demonstrates the considerable regional variation in housing quality.

There is certainly merit in structuring the phases of analysis, where Potter undertakes the same procedures to investigate first nonmetropolitan Barbados (chapter 5) then metropolitan Bridgetown (chapter 6). There is almost a case for redundancy among the data examination procedures, with the massaging of the individual measures of housing conditions being followed by a principal components analysis in each chapter.

The data description is comprehensive, to be sure, and publication of the baseline data matrices in the appendices follows an honest tradition: upholding the practices of early *Land Economics* urbanist pioneers. This affords the reader an easy and comprehensible framework to evaluate Potter's conclusions on the interregional variation of housing 'disamenities' he finds across the island's parishes, while providing the inquisitive reader with information to draw out additional conclusions. A reexamination of the analytical results of the principal components reveals considerable robustness in the first component, an 'amenities' measure for sure, in both nonmetropolitan and metropolitan Barbados. However, there are relative differences of importance in the second and third components that might lend themselves to further interpretation. Indeed, comparison of the two results suggest an island-wide 'robustness' of age of housing stock as a discriminating feature of Barbados housing conditions, whereas homeownership patterns appear to differ in their regional importance.

The inclusion of a discussion in chapter 3 on the development of Barbados' vernacular housing type, the 'chattel' house, although welcome, is not so successful a contribution to this analysis. Potter draws extensively upon Edwards's (1980) original treatise of the housing style's historical antecedents, and contextual circumstances, and argues positively on behalf of this quasi self-help solution to housing the island's poor. These conclusions, in chapter 3, are not well integrated into the remaining discussion, however. In subsequent nonmetropolitan and metropolitan multivariate analyses, Potter chooses to depict island-wide variations of housing conditions in terms of their objective (census enumerated) characteristics: construction material, age, presence or absence of amenities such as electricity, piped water, or use of a pit latrine. I would have preferred more discussion on how the 'self-help' character of housing qualifies the analyses of spatial unevenness of housing stock conditions, when the outcomes of the analyses are being summarized in chapters 5 and 6. On the other hand, in chapter 7, when urban housing policy is discussed, Potter appears reluctant to deal further with his spatial-geographic results and themes and instead mainly relies on building his argument around the chattel house model.

If there is one weakness in this thorough treatment of housing conditions in Barbados it is the uneasy alliance, or 'lumpy mix' of the spatial-geographic investigations and the discussions of the appropriateness of vernacular styles of housing, and their social meaning, the planning implications of tenantries, and associated shelter considerations. Potter chooses to present the spatial variation of housing *disamenities* in 1980 Barbados to illustrate the rural–urban dichotomies, and to question conventional wisdom (or myopia) in conceiving housing provision for the poor as strictly an urban phenomenon. This perspective seems uncomfortably at odds with the arguments defending the chattel house as an appropriate housing form.

Building upon the conclusions derived from each perspective, this monograph might have benefitted from an additional thoughtful, or even provoking, chapter, where Barbados (and Caribbean) low-income *and middle-income* housing futures could be addressed in light of this examination of the interregional variations of the peoples' housing situations up to 1980. This monograph's deliberate focus on low-income, vernacular housing, is timely and well-conceived, but the island-wide multivariate analyses and discussions of spatial-geographic variations thereby overlook the opposite dimensions of the island's housing conditions: the distributions of the middle-income and upper-income housing, that is, recently built housing with amenities.

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Edwards J D, 1980, "The evolution of vernacular architecture in the Western Caribbean", in *Cultural Traditions and Caribbean Identity: The Question of Patrimony* Ed. S J K Wilkerson (University of Florida, Center for Latin American Studies, FL) pp 291–339

Brazil: a new regional power in the world-economy by B K Becker, C A G Egler; Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992, 205 pages, £30.00 cloth, £10.95 paper (US$49.95, $14.95) ISBN 0 52137 008 6, 0 52137 905 9

Very few regional geographies have been written by Latin Americans and virtually none have been translated into English. As this book is written by two well-informed Brazilians about a large country with an intoxicating mixture of interesting features, the Amazon, foreign debt, a disgustingly unequal distribution of income, huge cities, slums, and political corruption, I ought to be able to welcome it warmly. Alas, I simply cannot do so.

The greatest problem with the book is its language. What began as Portuguese never quite made the transition to English. Frankly, I do not know whether to blame the translator or to express sympathy with him. He was clearly faced by a text which aspired to combine the precision of Marxian conceptualisation with the latest gems of geographical phraseology. The terminology of Kondratieff, Lefevbre, and Wallerstein haunts its pages. The consequent mélange contains such mind-numbing phrases as "the spatiality of the semiperiphery" (page 140) and "the persistence of diachronic structures whose time-flow is defined by solidly rooted patterns which tend to 'slow' the clock of modernity" (page 141).

A related problem is caused by the authors' determination to enliven the text with unforgettable one-liners. Occasionally they and their translator get it right; in the discussion of the recent decline in fertility I liked the observation that "the Brazilian population entered the era of the pill without leaving the era of misery" (page 120). Unfortunately, they usually get it wrong and the poor reader simply flounders in a slough of pretentiousness and incompetence. Lest anyone reading this review should think I am exaggerating try: "Mexico desubstituted imports" (page 108), "Brazil detached itself from Latin America" (page 109), or, arguably the worst example, "incorporating the already existing tendencies of the economic and social reality, the government net involved the territory as a whole and acted on various scales, seeking to mold the territory according to the model of a space of discontinuous and connected valorization through 'concentrated deconcentration' of industries and services (page 99).

If this were a book of new and profound thought, then an excess of jargon and pretension might be permissible. After all, we can all think of certain classics that achieved fame despite their linguistic weaknesses. But this book was never meant to be a path-breaker, it was always intended to be a university text. The main responsibility of the writers of a text is to communicate ideas and facts clearly to the reader. In this book, however, the language employed defeats such a purpose. Clarity here appears but fleetingly; the book hints at intoxicating new concepts but fails to explain them [for example, a "Cartorial State" (page 113)], it flaunts high-sounding but meaningless phrases, it contradicts itself frequently.

If this were not enough, it also fails to make Brazil interesting. This is partly because it is so difficult to understand what is being said, but it is also because the authors provide too little detail about the most fascinating milestones along Brazil's troubled path to development. Brasília warrants a couple of pages, the Amazon programme not much more. Favelas get hardly a reference, the Indians three or four lines, deforestation a couple of pages spread throughout the book, and Rio de Janeiro is rarely mentioned. Worst of all, Brazil's people have mysteriously gone missing; that compelling combination of warmth, amorality, competence, and charm that makes Brazilian society so alluring hardly gets a look in.

In conclusion, therefore, I have to recommend that this is a book that should be kept well away from the unsuspecting student. If it were to be read it might damage the fledgling's writing style. More perniciously, it would destroy any lurking belief that regional geography might actually be interesting; it might even undermine the idea that Brazil is a fascinating place to visit. As such, all teachers are strongly advised to keep it off the reading list, please!

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Transport and communications innovation in Europe edited by G Giannopoulos, A Gillespie; Belhaven Press (John Wiley, Chichester, Sussex) (copublished in the Americas by Halsted Press, New York), 1993, 369 pages, £42.00 (US$67.50), ISBN 1 852 93269 4

The European Science Foundation has funded a Network for European Communications and Transport Activities Research (ESF-NECTAR) over the last six years, and this volume is one of the outputs from that research network. It brings together an international cast of authors to provide a long-term perspective on innovation in the spheres of transport and communications. The first part of the book sets the framework for change with a range of overlapping but distinctive views on technological innovation, the new intrastructure, organisational and institutional innovation, and commercial innovation. Michel Frybourg's typically wide ranging contribution on the complexity of organisations is complemented by a historical review from Roberta Capello and Andy Gillespie, together with a series of propositions on the means to unravel this complexity. The message is elusive as there are too many unknowns and too much uncertainty.

The second part of the book addresses technological innovation through a series of detailed analyses. These include trends in technology and two substantial chapters reviewing European research on transport telematics. The synoptic perspective given by George Giannopoulos provides an extremely useful overview of the DRIVE, PROMETHEUS, and other European programmes—it also gives a guide to the acronym-strewn world of telematics. The next three chapters cover clean fuel and engine systems in transport. The search is taking place for new sources of energy which are clean, renewable, and in plentiful supply (such as hydrogen), but it may take at least thirty years for such sources to replace traditional oil-based sources of energy. The final chapter in this part of the book highlights the technical changes taking place in the telecommunications sector.

In the third part of the book, the arguments are widened to include some of the linkages between transport, economic development, and spatial organisation. Here, there are contributions on the Italian banking and textile industries as case material within which to examine technological and organisational change. Further contributions cover the changes in freight logistics and the particular problems facing rural areas. In each case, the arguments concerning the importance of space as a barrier to communication and movement are rejected as travelling becomes easier and as the new technological infrastructure increases flexibility and choice. In addition, there are the increases in real income levels and a shortening of the working week and this means that new markets are emerging for tourism and recreation—this is a theme taken up by Alain Bieber and Francoise Potier.

The book is premised on the assumption that technology and innovation will lead to greater mobility. This may be true at the aggregate level, but it is only with Erik Swyngedouw's contribution that concepts of equity and social justice are taken up. It is clear that not all people will have access to the same technology or the knowledge and resources to use that technology. Particular social groups may be disempowered and excluded from the benefits of technology, whilst other social groups will reach new heights. He argues that those with high mobility will control economic power, profitability within industry, and cultural capital, as well as exerting social power over those who cannot share the new mobility.

As with many volumes involving contributions from a wide range of researchers, the material is rich, but of a variable quality. Some of the conceptual chapters itemising changes and choices are challenging in that they set out the agenda, the rapid rate of change, and the complexity of the interactions. Other chapters are more descriptive of particular forms of technological innovations, or of recent research programmes, or of experiences in particular countries. A third group of chapters are both normative and prescriptive in their views of change in Europe, some displaying an ecological focus, with others relying more on the technologically led future. The overall view reached is that this book reads as a series of interesting and challenging parts, but as a whole there is no clear structure or message. But this conclusion may reflect the complexity and uncertainty inherent in any book which attempts to map out a long-term perspective on transport and communications innovation.

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Books received

Bressi T W (Ed.) *Planning and Zoning New York City: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ, 1993, 267 pages, $34.95, ISBN 0 88285 143 8

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