

Introduction

The latest stage of global capitalist development has produced considerable turbulence in architectural, planning and urban design practice all over the world. Strategic planning is now seen as the best means for a city to take advantage of the opportunities of globalization and the Large Urban Project as the principal mechanism for implementing a futuristic vision of a global-oriented strategy. This has produced drastic changes in the scale of urban interventions, has led to the development of complex urban management systems, to greater competitiveness in urban projects and to greater social and spatial fragmentation. It has also created new prospects for 'public gain' by capturing the increased values generated by these large scale interventions and a general belief that something in the relationship between the state and the market (again) needs to be reviewed for making possible this gains to be distributed. At the same time the development of modern transport and telecommunications infrastructure has allowed an upward scalar shift of urban functions as a result of greatly increased space/time compression, albeit accompanied by increased space/time mobility and cost differentiation. There has been a decrease in industrial activities and a general sprawl of all activities over broader regional territories.

Arrogant bridges and pompous airports, gracious boulevards and stunning buildings have appeared all over the world in a short space of time. The fascination with heights, the travesty of forms and the cultivation of the 'shock effect', have reshaped the skylines of cities all over the world. A famous Dutch architect designs tower-blocks stretching from the USA to China and back to Mexico where he builds a tower-block of 100 floors; an American architect designs the striking Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao and a similar one in Panama; an Argentinean architect designs the highest twin-towers in Malaysia and yet another in the centre of The Hague. Globalization, it seems, is being shouted from the rooftops. Architecture, engineering and project management have taken over from planning as the discipline in charge of the form of cities and its relation with nature. A new way of planning cities through large urban interventions has emerged which can best be defined as 'planning through large projects'. To some it is fascinating, yet to others it is simply unsustainable and socially divisive.

As in the past, city visions have once again become associated with large urban transformations to achieve pre-conceived and imaginary goals such as the City Beautiful, the Garden City, La Ville Radieuse and the Radiant City, as embodied in the ideas of Howard, Parker, Geddes, Mumford, Le Corbusier, Lucio Costa, Oscar Niemeyer and others. Large Urban Projects in the 21st century are again envisioning greater transformations associated with the new global development stage which has been stirred up by the ICT technological revolution. City visions have come to bear on issues pertaining to turning urban areas into the Informational City, the Global City, the First Class City, the Creative City, the Cultural City, the Smart City, the Network City, the Knowledge City, the Ecological City, the Friendly City or whatever. Regardless of what these visions entail, there is always the underlying need to enhance the competitive advantages of regions and cities to take advantage of the opportunities opened up by globalization. This has generated a new system of cities and urban structures as a result of pressures on large urban agglomerations to conform in order to meet the demands of the economies of scale associated with the new global economic system based on the acceleration and mass production of customised products, increased flows of flexible financial capital and nodes for advanced global services. This new, diffuse, splintered and poly-nucleated system is bound together by rapid mobility corridors and efficient transport systems, restructuring modern regional functional networks in pursuance of the newly postulated visions. This has fundamentally transformed the old city systems and city structures inherited from the industrial, modernist and Keynesian eras. New city functions have emerged whilst other functions have become obsolete and large areas of cities have fallen derelict. The compatibility of the various land uses has changed, as has the location of new global activities in the urbanized region.

Since the Eighties the ‘technological determinist’ approach of Friedmann & Wolff (1982) Friedmann (1988), Harvey (1989), Sassen (1991) and Castells (1995, 2001), explained how with the information revolution, a new stage of capital accumulation had been reached. In it they assigned a guiding role to trans-national firms who set about changing the global division of labour and re-organizing space at the various levels and scales. The former global production system based on import-substitution, industrialization associated with protectionism, Fordism and the Keynesian mixed economy is being replaced with a new system characterized by the free market, global neo-liberalism based on export orientation and the mass production of customized goods and services. The rapid development of specialized financial services, telecommunications, infrastructure and industrial services, have stimulated global trade, investment, finance, technology transfer and labour flows. It has also given greater importance to major cities as locations for the management, servicing and financing of these greatly enhanced global economic circuits.

According to the technological determinists, a bigger role has emerged for knowledge creation, innovation and productivity in spatial dynamics as compared with the Sixties and Seventies. It is argued that, as markets opened up and became bigger, large urban agglomerations became the natural centres for financial co-ordination and direction. According to Sassen (2000) ‘Cities have become the strategic nodes through which the new economy can be planned and facilitated’. Castells (1995, 2001) refers to the ‘informational city’ and Halfani (1996) to a ‘symbolic economy’, which assigns to architecture and design an important role in the generation of added value, decreasing the role of capital inputs and increasing the role of social infrastructure, education, logistics and innovation.

The new global financial geography re-asserts the importance of large agglomerations and metropolitan regions, particularly since most governments in developing countries advocate globalization as the most promising way out of under-development (Toledo-Silva, 1995). They expect that under urban modernization and economic growth, globalization will ultimately lead to the spread of social and economic development to all regions and all social groups. This means that national boundaries are rapidly losing their importance as regions and cities open up their production and financial services to international capital and increasingly become the dominant economic units. The speed and intensity of these social and spatial changes distinguishes this stage of the globalization process and makes the analysis of the relationship between globalization, strategic planning and Large Urban Projects a pressing issue.

This book is the result of research carried out within the IBIS network into the relationship between ‘Globalisation, Urban Form and Governance’. It provides information and analysis of urbanization processes, the historical development of urban strategies and the emergence of Large Urban Projects as a new way of planning in 30 cities. It explores the contradictions that have emerged around this new mode of making cities which is based on a number of central elements including:

- urban planning through projects;
- modification of the social function of land and the prevalence of private appropriation of increased land and property values;
- privatization of urban functions and the elimination of the public character of services, and
- a change from comprehensive urban regulations on a city-wide scale for customised regulations with in particular normative frameworks.

In most of the cities analyzed in the book the relationship between the state and the market which has predominated for over fifty years, has changed and so too have the ways of planning, financing, designing and managing cities. The book aims to show how Large Urban Projects have become a major part of strategic planning and to better understand their relationship with contemporary globalization trends and development strategies.

Large Urban Projects do, however, bring a number of important questions to the fore, viz: Can they meet long term as well as short-term societal needs? Do Large Urban Projects as such constitute diagnostic instruments in a city-wide context and be used as a negotiation tool for building a more democratic urban environment? How can Large Urban Projects address the negative externalities they create themselves in terms of social inequalities and environmental depletion? How are decision-makers to deal with strategic planning and Large Urban Projects under conditions of inadequate or insufficient urban information, poor community participation and large financial expectations? Does the new urban form that is emerging as a result of planning through Large Urban Projects provide a sustainable solution to problems pertaining to climate change and energy consumption?

There is currently a growing need to match urban productivity improvements with environmental questions and to urban poverty alleviation and to reduce the violence and insecurity that has grown exponentially outside of the islands of wealth, comfort and leisure of the rich. The increasing gap in welfare and opportunities within cities is a matter of growing concern. The growing urbanization of poverty, particularly in developing countries reflects a paradox where cities are both the engines of growth in national economies, but also significant loci of poverty and deprivation. Projections of one billion people living on less than one dollar per day in 2000, which were made in 1995, have since become a reality and the projection of 2 billion for the year 2010 looks very likely (UNCHS Global Report in Human Settlements, 2007).

One particular aspect of globalization which has come to be associated with the new form of strategic planning, is the rapidity with which spatial fragmentation, social differentiation and inequalities between regions, countries, cities and social groups is taking place (Burgess (2004, 2005); Brenner (2004); Graham and Marvin (2001). An increasing diversity of urban realities, both within and between developed and developing countries, is being created and this book hence also examines the relationship between economic growth and social development, between local and regional development and between poverty and current policies.

The research covers cities from countries with different levels of economic and social development. The thirty cities studied in this book are to be found in twenty countries in Europe, Asia, South America, Central America and Africa. They include cities located in the core, semi-periphery and periphery of the world system, and many of their differences can best be understood as consequences of their different structural position in the new global spatial division of labour.

The European cities are Bilbao, Glasgow, Liverpool, Paris, Rotterdam and The Hague, most of which have gone through a process of demographic shrinkage and economic decay which has in turn become the basis for their regeneration policies. The North American city presented in the book is Mexico City, one of the largest mega-cities in the world which continues to grow in spite of efforts towards decentralisation. The Central American cities are San Salvador and Panama, which are fast growing urbanizing areas and economically booming. The South American cities presented here have different development contexts in terms of demographic and economic prospects - some are demographically shrinking, yet economically growing, some are growing demographically but suffer persistent economic decay, while others are shrinking both in demographic and economic terms. The cities are Bogotá, Caracas, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Montevideo, Buenos Aires, La Plata, Córdoba, Santiago and Valparaiso. The majority of the Asian cities studied are booming and growing demographically and economically and include Tokyo, Fukuoka, Beijing, Shanghai, Ningbo, Hsinshu, Daegu, Singapore and Taipei. African cities include Pretoria (currently Twshane) and Lusaka.

On close examination there appears to be great economic differences between the twenty countries and cities. Whilst in countries like the Netherlands, Japan and Singapore the GNI per capita is around US\$ 40 000, in Argentina and Chile it is about US\$ 8 000, in South Africa US\$ 3 000, in China US\$ 2500 and in Zambia only US\$ 800. Cities in the various countries are also differentiated in terms of the incidence of poverty, the distribution of income, the quality of life as well as cultural, political and institutional terms.

There are significant differences between the cities included in the book: some of them are mega-cities while others are small cities in large city-regions; some are primate and others secondary cities; some are port-cities and others are located in the hinterland; some are old shrinking cities whilst others are rapidly expanding and some of the cities are subject to a process of inverted metropolization while others are sprawling outwards, swallowing up existing settlements. Some cities are small in terms of population - The Hague, Rotterdam and Valparaiso have less than one million inhabitants, while others are megalopolises, such as Tokyo, São Paulo, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, Beijing and Buenos Aires which are still increasing their population, spatial extent and economic preponderance. Historical factors account for enormous differences in the way cities carry out their local politics, decision-making and local governance. Social and political accountability and city democracy vary from country to country and city to city. The different urban morphology and structure of the cities studied in this book relate to varying historical processes and the way primitive accumulation took place and how the surpluses extracted from economic activities were invested (or not) in the city by local elites. Primitive accumulation in the case of European cities was in many cases related to colonialism which found expression in the city structure in the provision of monumental buildings, services and infrastructure. Many Latin American cities were also moulded by colonial interests, although the lapse of 200 years since independence, together with the influence of local forces, have worked together to shape cities in distinctive ways. In African countries, the influence of colonialism remains rather protracted - a fact that is clearly reflected in the way cities are currently laid out

and planned. However, the continued influence of master planning, government responses to rapid urban growth and migration flows and the importance of bi-lateral and multi-lateral aid in urban development programs, have all contributed to create differences in how cities deal with their past, their inherited built environment and in the way cities are coming to terms with globalization. South African cities differ from other cities on the continent because of their unique history of urban development, the particularity of their past urban strategies and in the way state power has played a determining role in all spheres of urban life. The spatial effects of the apartheid model of capital accumulation linger on despite a decade of integrated development plans and popular participation in the planning process.

The book is organized into three Parts. The first part consists of three chapters. The first provides a framework on the impact of globalization on urban and social structures. It presents the main theme of the book, which is the demise of master planning and the shift towards strategic planning and 'planning through projects'. It explores the relationship between urban and spatial planning theories and practices and the dominant development strategies over the last fifty years; changes in the relationship between the state and the market; the shift from Master Planning to Strategic Planning; the rise of neo-liberal development strategies; and the new role assigned to Large Urban Projects in urban development. Next, the cities are listed in alphabetical order, identifying the main urban projects currently underway in each. The list includes Large Urban Projects in each city that warrant closer scrutiny, thus providing a handy overview. The third chapter discusses the achievements and limitations of spatial and architectural planning in the Netherlands over the past 50 years. The IBIS network has been coordinated from the Netherlands and the Dutch context has been used as a common denominator for the assessment of how to deal with history, tradition and the new trends.

Part Two presents the 30 cities. Each city is systematically analyzed using the same format. First basic city data is presented, followed by a city profile that outlines the main characteristics of its current development: the history of the city, its planning background, and the impact of globalization on the particular city. Then the use of strategic planning and the main urban projects recently or currently undertaken are investigated. Next, the most important Large Urban Projects are analyzed, to show which interest groups and actors are involved. This is followed by a set of conclusions.

Part Three present the conclusions with a final appraisal of the case studies presented in the book, focusing on the similarities between the cities, rather than the differences. Despite the many geographical, environmental, social, economic, technological and cultural differences between the 30 cities, they also have much in common. They are all experiencing similar urban processes propelled by global technological and cultural developments. Three general issues are identified: namely the formation of metropolitan regions (the City-Region) and even larger urban conurbations; the city competitiveness approach, including the improvement of technical and social infrastructure; and finally, the shift from an industrial to a service society, complete with changing urban forms, urban functions and managerial instruments. The third part concludes with a comparative chart of the main issues under discussion. It presents a summary of the main strategic urban issues of each city together with the corresponding strategic plan.

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