

Editorial

Structural Adjustments, Trade liberalisation and the new 'Global City Order'

While the Genoa G8 meeting was hotting up with anti-capitalist protests, there had been an upsurge of interest in the impact of 1980s Structural Adjustments programmes in Africa, debt crises in Latin America and more recent trade liberalisation programmes both in Asia and Europe. In a way these major global annual forums like the G8 Summits or Conventions on climatic change are also becoming synonymous with cities of siege, protests and riots, and developing into hotbeds of international media attention. No wonder the role of the IMF or the World Bank is no longer the preserve of development "experts" but has now become a discussion topic in the tabloids too. We do not need to dwell upon those structural adjustments or trade liberalisation again here, but it is appropriate at this time reconsider a few extracts from a recent national newspaper coverage in UK which seems to be of much relevance to our so called global built environment.



Alan Simpson, the labour MP for Nottingham South (UK), subtly attempting to legitimise the G8 protests in Genoa, has very articulately challenged British leaders (including the Nobel economics laureate Amartya Sen, now resident Master of Trinity College in Cambridge) in the well-respected The Guardian column of 'Comment and Analysis', suggesting that globalisation is not delivering for the poor (Simpson, A. The Guardian, p12, 15 August, 2001). Pointing out that three million people in over 20 countries have protested against globalisation this year, Simpson argues that even though the world is incomparably richer than ever before (agreeing with Sen) it also has levels of extraordinary deprivation and staggering inequality. This implies globalisation makes it even worse. He goes on to suggest that 'Globalisation rules require the developing world to sign to liberalisation and privatisation programmes that are little more than a fire sale of their most important assets.' Commenting on the emerging north-south relationship Simpson observes that 'job losses in the north become wealth losses in the south as the real economic transfers go to global corporations, rather than national economies' (ibid).

It is within this context we offer the second issue of GBER containing a host of articles and commentaries that have contributed to the above themes of structural adjustments, trade liberalisation, globalisation and their impact on cities of both the developed and the developing world.

This volume of the journal consists mainly of articles mainly from south Asia and a couple from Europe, a rough balance between northern and southern hemisphere we strive to achieve. The volume conforms to our house style of first having the commentaries followed by articles, book reviews and finally the conference reporting and events calendar. Articles which cover similar subjects are kept together enabling useful comparison, e.g. the case

studies of Karachi and Liverpool, and then e.g. the methodological papers from Khulna and Riyadh.

We are pleased to provide an updated commentary by Yu Li, Director of the Centre for International Co-operation and Training (CICT). This is a unit within the prestigious China Academy for Urban Planning and Design (CAUPD) based at Beijing and a practising Urban Planner, writing on the emerging architectural and planning consulting market in China, following the trade liberalization and China's entry into the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The commentary represents an overview of the contemporary urbanization in China and describes the role of Urban Planning and Design with particular emphasis on the emerging role of foreign consultants. The article also introduces readers to the China Academy of Urban Planning and Design (CAUPD) which should be helpful for prospective consulting architect planners.

On the aspects of the impact of globalisation on metropolitan cities, Charles Rawding's commentary on Prague provides a typical view of a contemporary global tourist city. This scenario is relevant for much of Western Europe, whether it is Amsterdam or Barcelona, but it is possibly also relevant as a guide to similar developments in Marakesh or Istanbul and elsewhere in the developing world. Rawding rightly defines this phenomenon as a feature of 'Virtual World Cities' while indirectly questioning the frustrating role of global architects and planners.

Arif Hasan (Karachi, Pakistan) provides a full overview of urban informal sector post-trade liberalisation. His paper, based on active consultation between the actors in the informal sector and the author, Arif Hasan, is dedicated to Orangi Pilot Project (OPP), one of the best known urban poor Non-government Organisations in South Asia. At the time of writing this editorial it has become known that the OPP project has been awarded the World Habitat Award for 2001 (see GBER Events and Listing section). This paper is also an attempt to understand the changes in the informal sector in Karachi with respect to physical/social infrastructure needs of low and lower middle income communities in the 1990's decade presumably affected by the major changes in global and local economies following trade liberalization. The author also charts the negative aspects of privatisation policies of government institutions.

Karen Leeming from England presents a snapshot of a successful sustainable community life-based urban development project in the historic city of Liverpool, England. It is an exemplary case study of a 'best practice' model of urban development, providing a contextual study of a social, economic, political and historical scenario of a community transformed over 20 years, from virtual stagnation to a viable thriving community. Since the 1990's the importance of stable local communities has been reflected in many of the UK's urban policy initiatives and is now identifiable in many local authority urban regeneration initiatives. However, this was not always the case. The industrial restructuring impacted so heavily on the city that it left workers frustrated and cynical and the district became increasingly left wing. One of the strategies that the Development Trust has embraced in the creation of a concept of community-based economic development (or CBEP), a non-governmental organisation strategy (NGO) may be compared with OPP in Karachi. The Eldonians were a small community founded by Irish Catholic immigrants who worked in the docks and subsequently suffered job losses. It is reported that the social and economic conditions are one of the worst of Western Europe. Today the effort of the Eldonians is considered by many as the 'best practice' model of successful sustainable urban development, which may be paralleled by

Orangi communities in Karachi, as described by Arif Hasan earlier. Today many of the Eldonians are in paid employment, training or business that have been encouraged to set up in the area. The only difference between the Eldonians and Orangi Pilot Project lies in the support of the local government being probably much greater in Liverpool than in Karachi.

From Bangladesh, Ghulam Murtaza's article discusses the environmental problems faced by householders in the port city of Khulna, Bangladesh. The analysis is based on a large scale study of 'good old' households funded by US Agency for International Development (USAID), carried out by the members of Urban and Rural Planning discipline of Khulna University in 1999. The environmental variables used for the analysis include solid waste disposal, drainage systems, types and use of latrines, waterlogging, noise and odour pollution, cattle and poultry rearing, social environment and householders' perception of environmental problems. In a way it is shocking to know that 5% of the surveyed sample still has so called 'hanging latrines' (similar to that of Oxfam's poster of the 1970s!) and 3% with no latrines at all! Other alarming findings include 84% of the sample felt discomfort from odour pollution coming from solid waste disposals, sewer overflow, stagnation of water in open drains and decomposition of waste from nearby slaughter houses. Other points to note that about half the sample have either a cattle or poultry farm within the city. In terms of social environment, Murtaza rightly observes a marked deterioration of the city over 15 years. On the other hand, even living in a semi-rural setting of one of the poorest countries of the world, the residents of Khulna city have raised the fundamental rights of modern day urban dwellers as an issue by questioning the responsibilities of the city government towards tax payers. Also, it is encouraging to note that three quarters of the sample expressed their willingness to co-operate with city authorities.

Mezyad Alterkawi's paper from Saudi Arabia provides a methodological guide towards the use of GIS in Transportation Planning. GIS has improved transport planning efficiency and now is in place in Riyadh, helping to track road deficiencies. It is an environmentally sound approach with a combined time-demand analysis supported by emission estimation processes attempting to ensure conformity of transportation plans with air-quality standards. This is a timely approach as any recent visitor to Riyadh would have experienced - the high concentration of potentially high emission vehicles in the congested roads of the capital. This is a sophisticated international travel demand model, based on the specific transportation applications of GIS which involves road design, highway mapping and analysis of accident data and traffic volumes. However, it is important for the Saudi environment for it to become more sustainable. People need to make the effort to change their way of life, their use of motor cars, and they need to build an efficient public transportation system instead of imitating western policies of encouraging individual modes of transport. In many parts of the developing world where much emphasis is placed on the design and maintenance of the built-environment, less attention is paid to transportation planning or improvising innovative methodologies for in-city transportation studies. Alterkawi's article, including a review of a number of recently developed analytical methods and techniques, may provide a useful methodological tool for modelling GIS applications and planning in-city transportation policies. Perhaps one should not forget, however, the role of policy makers in terms of their own use of public transport and their influence on the rest of the population's transport habits, as exemplified by for example Ken Livingstone, the Mayor of London.

Belkis Uluoglu from Istanbul Technical University provides a pioneer review article based on all-women architect groups from South Asia. The reviewer considers whether the main focus of the book is actually on gender issues or on the definition of architecture and the role of

architects in the contemporary society. Ulouglu brings together a stimulating discussion by offering several theories of planning advocacy, participatory design, politics and space and informally comparing them. The more complex aspects of praxis, theory and discourse are skilfully presented through interviews with established female architects documented in the reviewed book. This extended review article will be enjoyed by a wide readership. The architect academic Belkis Uluoglu engages in an invigorating architectural discourse sprinkled with an historical analysis of the conceptualisation of space.

As in the first issue, Ayyub Malik (London) provides us with the exhibition review and an extended listing of the forthcoming events. The work of Laurie Baker, one of the leading vernacular architecture specialists in South India was recently celebrated at Architectural Association (AA) in London. Ayyub pays tribute in a well-illustrated guide to the legendary architect's career. Particular thanks go to Kate Chapman for help during the lean summer vacation with initial editing of the papers.

The Journal itself has received critical acclaim from several quarters already and continues to grow in readership. Once again readers are earnestly encouraged to send reports and articles for possible inclusion and are invited to encourage others to read it. On the editorial front, we are pleased to welcome Dr Clive Grey, an academic linguist, as language consultant, to oversee the linguistic diversity of contributions to the journal. The Journal now has official ISSN numbers for both the current on-line version, and the possible forthcoming hard copies, currently under negotiation.

Tasleem Shakur

24 August 2001

International Centre for Development and Environmental Studies

Edge Hill, Ormskirk, Lancashire L39 4QP, UK

Tel: (+44) (0) 1695 584551 or 584573

Fax: (+44) (0) 1695 584573 or 57997

Email: shakurt@edgehill.ac.uk

Websites: www.edgehill.ac.uk/icdes

www.edgehill.ac.uk/gber