

hosts and guests. Here, the author deals with the concepts of cultural shock and its complexity, euphoria, disillusionment and opposition resulting from the actual experience of a place and its inhabitants. Then, he puts these concepts into the framework of his own travel experience in Western Samoa, as well as to other destinations.

Just before closing his book, Suvanola rightly looks at the effects of travel experience on our perception of home. Using a comparison between backpackers and conventional tourists, the author claims that travel not only provides us with the opportunity to see our home differently, but also may put the understanding of ourselves in a different perspective. Finally, the work illustrated in this book gives the reader the opportunity to profoundly understand, from a humanistic geography approach, tourists' experiences of place. 'Place' in this case, is either the 'other', i.e., the tourist destination, or 'home', where travel motivations and/or destination-choices are formulated. But 'place', according to Suvanola's approach, is also the socio-cultural discourse between home and the destination.

The merit of this book is not only in its new approach to the study of tourist experience, but mainly in putting this experience in a spatial framework. In this sense, it is an important contribution and complements very well the behavioral and more conservative view of consumer behavior. What makes it a very important contribution to the knowledge of travel behavior is also the dialogue between profound theoretical review, and a critical review of this theory against data collected through Suvanola's own travel experience as well as through interviewing other travelers. The only concern I had is that the interviewed tourists were either backpackers or 'other (conventional) tourists'. It would be far better to draw comparisons in travel experiences between backpackers and other more clearly defined segments of the tourism market. Finally, this very well structured book is highly recommended as an important source for those interested in learning and understanding travel behavior in a wider context. It is also highly recommended for those who normally expose themselves to the more conventional and positivistic approaches to the study of tourism, tourists and the tourist space encompassing them.

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CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN REGIONAL PLANNING, edited by Tim Marshall, John Glasson, and Peter Headicar. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002.

This book is a difficult case to express one's definite judgment. On the one hand, it is professionally written and includes a number of interesting chapters. On the other hand, its title is clearly misleading, and the quality of production is well below any criticism. Thus, for instance, the volume starts with page 19 (!) and has neither introduction nor front pages (I hope that only my copy looks like that). Such a surprising beginning leaves me guessing whether the volume was simply hastily bound

(which is quite untypical for such a serious publisher as Ashgate) or was designed in such a way by its editors. Then, again, the title does not seem to reflect the book's content accurately. In fact, the volume *does not* deal with regional planning per se, but rather with a narrow range of issues faced by regional development planning in Britain. Though this topic is legitimate in its own right, a potential reader, attracted by the book's title, may nevertheless be disappointed by the narrowness of its content. Something like, *Regional Planning in the U.K.: Challenges of Transition*, might have reflected the actual content of the volume more accurately.

The book *appears* to consist of five parts. (I write 'appears' since the 'crippled' copy I have contains only four parts, starting directly with Part II.) Presumably, Part I is Introduction, which is followed by Regional Realities and Regional Institutions (Part II); Themes and Topics (Part III); Regional Planning—Regional Variation (Part IV), and Conclusions (Part V).

The first chapter of Part I (by A. Cochrane) attempts to provide a conceptual framework of 'regional thinking', focusing on the following major questions: *What are the regions? What purpose do they serve?* However, answers to these questions remain obscure, partially due to the fact that the author attempted to undertake an obviously unattainable task of introducing and discussing various region-related concepts, such as regional autonomy, regional networking, innovation, regional functions, regional growth, etc. As a result, he failed to address any of these complex concepts in sufficient depth. Instead, after mentioning these important issues in a cursory manner, he switches to a discussion of development problems faced by a particular region—the South East England.

The next chapter (by J. Alden) deals with scenarios for the future of regional planning in the U.K. This chapter is, undoubtedly, the central piece of the volume. The author not only demonstrates a deep understanding of the current planning practice in the U.K., but also provides a comprehensive description of the challenges that British regional planning may face on the wake of the country's integration into the European Union. The chapters in the rest of Part II are narrow-focused. They deal respectively with the contemporary agenda of regional planning and development in Scotland (G. Lloyd); government offices for regions in the U.K. (by M. Baker), and the role of local communities in regional planning (by M. Stott). These chapters hardly deserve discussion, since they lack any sound theoretical framework, and make no attempt to sustain their claims by empirical data.

Part III of the volume covers three separate themes: regional transport development (P. Headicar); regional utilities (S. Martin), and the sustainable development of regions (two separate chapters written respectively by H.R. Howes and P. Roberts). The former two chapters (by Headicar and Martin) are, undoubtedly, serious studies of the problems faced by regional infrastructure planning and development. However, these 'technical' chapters may be boring for a general reader.

Many papers and books have been written on the topic of environmental sustainability since the early 1970s. Hardly anything new can thus be said on this 'ground out' topic. However, H. Howes and P. Roberts clearly managed to avoid banalities in

their writing. Robert's chapter is especially interesting. In a concise and convincing way, its author introduces a brief history the 'sustainability movement' and provides a concise outline of the key concepts of sustainable regional planning and development. The sustainability aspects, covered by this chapter, range from the rational use of resources, and the promotion of social welfare, to territorial integration, and economic progress that respects the carrying capacity of the natural environment. An important differentiation suggested by the author relates to the definition of the region as a territorial entity. He sees the geographic region as both a 'valley section' which contains most of the elements necessary for urban living, and a 'natural region' which is formed around a river basin, and presents many sustainable development challenges.

Part IV of the volume contains four chapters dealing with the contemporary issues of regional development planning in the following four regions of the UK: East Midlands (T. Aitchison); West Midlands (J. Deegan); South West (D. Gobbett and M. Palmer), and South East England (C.M. Williams). It appears, however, that the development challenges faced by these regions exhibit considerable similarities. As a result, the chapters center on similar issues, contributing relatively little to each other. The chapter on regional planning guidance and regional governance (by J. Glasson) concludes the volume. However, somewhat surprisingly, it does not summarize the previous chapters. Instead it introduces a wealth of 'new' themes (local governance, cultural identity, the relevance of regional boundaries, etc.), none of which is discussed in this chapter in sufficient detail.

A characteristic attribute of the volume is the excessive use of abbreviations, which may confuse a reader who is not thoroughly familiar with the 'professional jargon' of the British planners. Let me give some examples: "relationship between NWRA and the GONW is explicitly recognized by NWRA in...the consultation document to emerge from the RPG process" (p. 79), or "Sos (GO), with support of RPB, to ensure development...consistent with RPG" (p. 77). I spent on futile attempts half of my time devoted to the reading of the volume in deciphering these linguistic puzzles.

Would I advise this book to my students? The answer to this question is rather negative.

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INTERNATIONAL HANDBOOK ON GEOGRAPHICAL EDUCATION, edited by Rod Gerber. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers 2003.

Teaching Geography is not enough to achieve Geography Education. As the edited book *International Handbook on Geographical Education* suggests, teaching geography is aimed at achieving much more than transmitting geographical information from teachers to students. The guiding line of this book is that geographical education