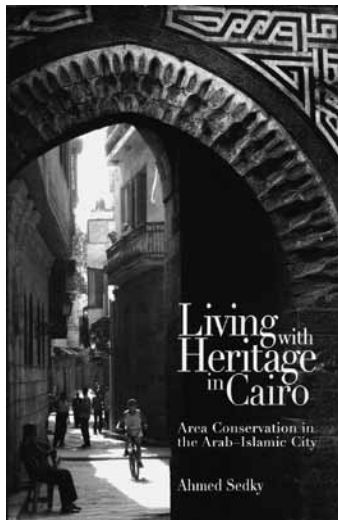


## Book Reviews



*Living with Heritage in Cairo: Area Conservation in the Arab-Islamic City.* Ahmed Sedky. Cairo: The American University of Cairo Press, 2009. 320 pp., b&w illus.

There is a great need throughout the Middle East and North Africa for contemporary urban research that goes beyond classical analysis of the traditional Arab City. Important topics include urban transformation, the flow of global capital and its affect on urban realities, urban structures and polity, changes in social life and lines of inclusion and exclusion, and such “metropolitization” forces as migration, slum formation, and neoliberal investment.

*Living with Heritage in Cairo* attempts to move in such a direction, skillfully investigating the history, politics and reality of contemporary urban conservation. Its author, Ahmed Sedky, spent some ten years conducting field research in cities of the Arab world. His specific emphasis here on the deterioration of Cairo’s ancient fabric grows from and reflects this larger research effort. Through its various sections, the book addresses the difficulty of projects in areas such as Bab al-Nasr, Al-Darb al-Asfar, al-Tumbakshiya, Al-Mu’izz Street, Al-Azhar Square and al-Ghuriya, al-Batniya, and Darb al-Ahmar. As the title suggests, Sedky considers the problem to be an ongoing and dynamic one.

The book is particularly strong in its investigation of competing interests in area conservation efforts. Sedky has divided stakeholders into three general groups. First is what he calls the “U” group: local users and inhabitants whose main concern is to continue to occupy heritage areas in traditional ways. Next is the “W” group: international organizations and institutions such as UNESCO and ICOMOS, which claim to represent the interests of the world community. Third is the “N” group: city and national institutions and organizations, such as the Egyptian Ministries of Culture, Awqaf, and Tourism, whose interests and responsibilities often conflict with those of the first two.

In Part One (“What to Conserve”), Sedky investigates the meaning of historic Cairo. He describes the old city as an Arab-Islamic phenomenon, defines its cultural significance, identifies its key values, and assesses the dilapidated condition of its historic areas. He then addresses the cultural, demographic and urban transformation of Cairo over the last several centuries. A typical Arab-Islamic city at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Cairo underwent Westernization during the era of Khedive Isma’il (1863–79), a neo-Islamic revival at the turn of the twentieth century, and a later turn to social modernity, especially during the Nasser era after the revolution of 1952. The first section of the book also looks at the general meaning of the city’s historic areas for the three stakeholder groups. The “U” group (residents) cherish values of place, associated lifestyle, and functional authenticity (a living tradition); the “N” group (national organizations) are preoccupied with physical qualities and with enforcing “sanitized” versions of conservation policies and practices; and the “W” group (international organizations) focus on Cairo’s value for all humanity and prioritize more social and humane approaches to historic preservation.

In Part Two (“How to Conserve”), Sedky moves to a discussion of contemporary international theories, concepts and processes, based on his field research not only in Cairo but also in such cities as Amman and Salt in Jordan; Damascus and Aleppo in Syria; Beirut, Sidon and Tripoli in Lebanon; Tunis and Qairawan in Tunisia; and Istanbul in Turkey. He reviews Western concepts of area conservation, discussing various schools of thought (e.g., English, Italian, French); he examines the impact of various conventions and charters (e.g., Venice, Burra, Nara, and regional Arab-Islamic ones); and he skillfully discusses

important issues such as authenticity, integrity, sustainability and gentrification. The second part of the book also addresses historic area appraisal, designation and management, and the difficulty of establishing effective community participation, and it addresses funding mechanisms and the problematic role of foreign donor agencies in area conservation and urban rehabilitation in the Arab world.

The discussion here is based on a diverse set of case studies from a variety of settings, Arab and non-Arab. These are helpful, but they could have delved more deeply into a number of issues, including the politics of various financing methods, the pros and cons of tourism-led projects, and the role of donor agencies in initiating projects and defining their goals. The discussion also could have examined in greater detail conflicts between donor agencies and other stakeholders such as local communities, urban activists, and national governments. And, in terms of the Arab world, it could have addressed the role of local families, philanthropists, and urban activists in the rehabilitation of cities such as Tripoli, Beirut, Sidon and Amman, where such actors are playing an increasingly crucial role, which has not yet been fully researched.

In Part Three (“Assessment of Area Conservation in Cairo”) Sedky presents an in-depth analysis of the history and politics of area conservation in Cairo. He begins by assessing the history of these efforts since the 1930s. He looks at the slum clearance of the 1950s and the role of the Ministry of Housing in the 1970s, the efforts of UNESCO at both theoretical and practical levels, and the national awareness of urban rehabilitation and area conservation that emerged after the earthquake of 1992. He then investigates the involvement of the “U,” “W,” and “N” stakeholder groups and their achievements vis-à-vis a variety of projects in the city. He discusses how different values and interests, levels of involvement, and [preferred mechanisms of power underlie the different approaches they have adopted.

In the “N” group, the author addresses the role of the Cairo governorate and its different departments, the Egyptian Ministry of Housing and related bodies such as the Fatimid Cairo Organization, the Ministry of Culture and related bodies such as Historic Cairo Organization, the Ministries of Awqaf (religious endowments) and Tourism, and the Ministry of IT and Communication, including the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. In the “U” group, he addresses the role of various activists and community representatives, as well as community-based organizations and NGOs such as al-Darb al-Ahmar Development Limited. In the “W” group, he addresses the involvement of international organizations such as UNESCO, ICOMOS, and various foreign-aid agencies including JICA (Japanese) and GTZ (German).

It soon becomes apparent how frequently these actors and organizations find themselves in conflict with one another on issues of setting, functional authenticity, integrity, and approach. Furthermore, in many cases local authorities from the “N” group lack adequate background in the general history and typological and morphological characteristics of Cairo — let alone theories and practices of urban rehabilitation and area conservation.

The book concludes with an extensive list of resources on historic Cairo and area conservation in addition to a synopsis of international and regional charters and conventions of heritage and area conservation.

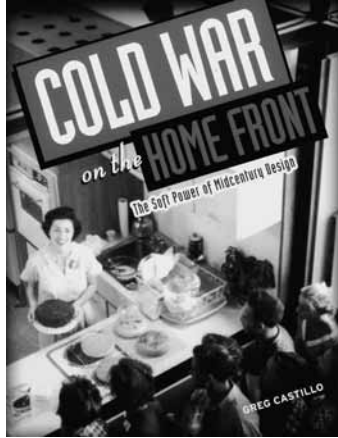
I would like to conclude by offering a few recommendations for future work on area conservation in the Arab world. First, since area conservation is not well institutionalized in local practice, I recommend that such work tackle specific case studies, with an emphasis on the design process and obstacles to implementation. This should include examination of project initiation, stakeholder interests (including those of project designers), implementation mechanisms, and realities. Second, I strongly recommend that future work evaluate the complicated relationship between the avant-garde narratives of designers and urban activists and the practices of local communities or government stakeholders that result in “kitsch.” Third, it is crucial to address the ramifications of ignorance among agents and actors at the national level, especially when it comes to the theory and practice of heritage and area conservation and to understanding the historic fabric of cities in terms of evolution and cultural change. Fourth, I recommend addressing, through detailed case study, the politics of donor agencies and their involvement in area conservation projects. Finally, it is crucial to address problems surrounding the definition and appreciation of urban heritage in the Arab world. For example, there is currently little attention to the heritage of modernity and to more recent heritage sites. But there are other problems and obstacles, too, in particular a present lack of cultural and political leadership.

**Rami Farouk Daher**

*Jordan University of Science and Technology*

***Cold War on the Home Front: The Soft Power of Midcentury Design.*** Greg Castillo.

Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010. 312 pages, 97 b&w photos.



My father, who held a Ph.D. in literature and was a member of the Union of Soviet Writers, once stole a book. It happened in 1959 at the American exhibition in Moscow. The American guides did not mind. In fact, they encouraged him. But at the exit, he was stopped by two plainclothes KGB agents, and the book was confiscated.

Recently, I was telling this story to Jack Masey, who, while working for the American Information Agency (USIA), had been the chief coordinator of the exhibition (see the video at [http://paper.ny.com/Jack\\_Masey\\_books.mov](http://paper.ny.com/Jack_Masey_books.mov)).

“We wanted people like your father to steal books,” Jack told me. “He was our audience.”

To understand the full meaning of this episode, one must read Greg Castillo’s *Cold War on the Home Front: The Soft Power of Midcentury Design*. The book describes the Cold War duel of two globalization projects, American and Russian, concentrating on the less-known “soft power” battles. Castillo borrows the term from the political scientist Joseph Nye, who defined “soft power” as the product of intangibles like culture, values, belief systems, and perceived moral authority.

Unlike the American globalization project, Soviet soft power has remained a terra incognita of contemporary cultural theory. However, this book offers a well-researched and convincingly narrated story of what the cultural historian György Péteri called “the largest deliberately designed experiment in globalization in modern history.”

The book starts with a quotation from an obscure 1951 parody, “The Nylon War,” by a famous sociologist, David Riesman:

*Behind the initial raid of June 1 were years of secret and complex preparations, and an idea of disarming simplicity: that if allowed to sample the riches of America, the Russian people would not long tolerate masters who gave them tanks and spies instead of vacuum cleaners and beauty parlors. The Russian rulers would thereupon be forced to turn out consumer goods or face mass discontent on an increasing scale.*

Surprisingly, many Americans took the joke seriously (just as some years before they had believed Orson Welles’s

radio drama of a Martian invasion). Even more surprisingly, writes Castillo, “less than a decade after its publication, Riesman’s lampoon came to seem prophetic.” Advising on 1959 exhibition planning, Llewellyn Thompson, the U.S. ambassador to the U.S.S.R., proposed that the displays “endeavor to make the Soviet people dissatisfied with the share of the Russian pie which they now receive, and make them realize that the slight improvements projected in their standard of living are only a drop in the bucket compared to what they could and should have.”

The 1959 exhibition became a Trojan horse. Cars, stoves and refrigerators were aimed at “ordinary Russian citizens,” while books and abstract paintings targeted the “more politically alert and potentially most influential citizens” (i.e., people like my father), as specified in a classified USIA report.

Castillo traces the home-front battles in two major locations: Berlin and Moscow. After the introduction of the Marshall Plan (European Recovery Program), Berlin became ground zero in a consumer propaganda war. And the aesthetic lingua franca of the Marshall Plan was International Style modernism, which, as Castillo stresses, “was anything but typical for American household consumers.”

Americans’ first major exposure to the International Style had been the 1932 MoMA show “The International Style: Architecture Since 1922,” organized by Philip Johnson after his seminal 1928 meeting with the Bauhaus’s Mies van der Rohe. Paradoxically, the initial G.D.R. (East German) response to the American cultural offensive was to claim that same Bauhaus tradition as its own.

The U.S.S.R. reluctantly accepted the rules of the game offered by the U.S. In Berlin, said Nikita Krushchev, “the comparison is made, which order creates better material conditions: that of West Germany or East Germany.” But eventually, under the insistence of Soviet bosses, the soft power offensive of modernism in East Germany gave way to a bizarre version of Socialist Realism. Erection of the infamous Berlin wall in 1961 could be read as a sign of the complete surrender of the soft power battlefield. The official Soviet line on consumer goods from that time on was best described by the writer Vsevolod Kochetov: “Mass-stamping toilet bowls is much easier than hammering out the New Man.”

The 1959 American exhibition in Moscow, Jack Masey told me, was an organizational and logistical miracle. The Soviet-American agreement for the exhibition was signed on September 10, 1958. The exhibition opened on July 23, 1959. Within ten months, Jack’s team had to develop a concept, raise the money (\$4 million), plan the territory (40,000 sq.m.), design and build two major pavilions including Buckminster Fuller’s geodesic dome, design and produce a multi-screen show, as well as accomplish hundreds of other tasks.

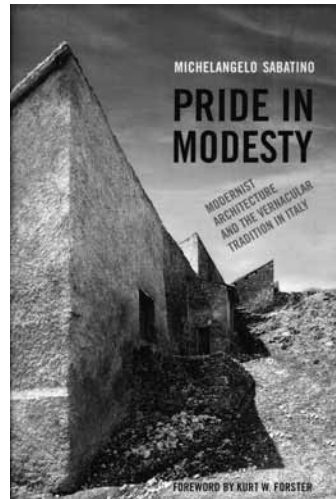
How was it possible, I asked Jack, to do so much so quickly for so little money? It was the enormous enthusiasm, he answered, for converting foe into friend. Plus, he added, he managed to recruit very talented people, including such design greats as Fuller, George Nelson, and Charles and Ray Eames — some of them for little or no money.

It worked. “As fantasized in Riesman’s fictional ‘Nylon War,’” Castillo writes, “an unsustainable escalation of consumer desires, fueled by Western lifestyle comparison at times explicitly promoted by the Party leaders, bankrupted state socialism.” My father got disillusioned with communism, wrote some sharp political satire, got expelled from the Party, and, even though he never left the country, blessed my decision to emigrate.

Greg Castillo’s book is not a triumphalist history celebrating the American Way of Life. The winning globalization project, based on unlimited consumption, has created its own series of disasters. Perhaps it’s time to reexamine the European response to the battle of two globalizations and search for something in the middle. That, to me, is the lesson of Castillo’s useful and timely investigation. ■

*Vladimir Paperny*  
Marina del Rey, CA

*Pride in Modesty: Modernist Architecture and the Vernacular Tradition in Italy.* Michelangelo Sabatino. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010. 368 pp., b&w illus.



That vernacular architecture might be a source of inspiration to avant-garde architects seeking to break away from the strictures of academic tradition is one of the central tropes in the historiography of modernism. This position was neatly glossed by Ludwig Hevesi, the art critic and promoter of the Vienna Secession, when he proclaimed that “peasant styles were always secessionist, for they know nothing about

academic theory.” For Northern European architects, the sacred spring of this evocative, untainted architecture was the vernacular of the Mediterranean basin, especially the area around the Bay of Naples, where Josef Hoffmann, Le Corbusier, and others found an autonomous and deeply rooted architecture that partly inspired the flat roofs, unadorned walls, and geometric abstraction of the modernist formula. While architectural historians have long studied how Northern European architects sought inspiration in Southern and Central European peasant architecture, far fewer have focused on the rediscovery and appropriation of the same material by Italian modernist architects themselves. Michelangelo Sabatino’s *Pride in Modesty* addresses this want by deftly revealing the ways Italian architects were influenced by the varied regional building traditions of the peninsula. The result is a successful attempt “to trace an alternative genealogy of the spaces and places of Italian modernist architecture of the twentieth century” (208).

One of the strengths of Sabatino’s book is its broad chronological scope, examining the six decades between the 1910s and the early 1970s. In doing so, the author counters the periodization of many studies of Italian modernism, which bracket the *ventennio fascista* from the preceding and following years, even though a number of the most important architects had careers spanning the entire period. Among them was Marcello Piacentini, the key arbiter of architectural culture under the Fascist regime. Among other activities, he oversaw the master plan of Sabatino’s first case study, the 1911 exhibition celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Italian republic. A part of that exhibition was given over to an “Exhibition of Italian Ethnography” that included reconstructions of vernacular houses from across Italy, on the model of Arthur Hazelius’s Skansen, an open-air museum founded in Stockholm in 1891.

The interest in vernacular architecture at the time followed from a broader ethnographic and anthropological

recovery and revival of regional folk traditions, customs, and cultural forms, which sought to foster national pride and unity through the concept of *Italianità* — supposedly authentic manifestations of the Italic race. Therefore, the vernacular was not simply an aesthetic category; it also had moral and political overtones that associated preindustrial peasant culture with a mythopoeic period of unity and cultural purity. In his first chapter, Sabatino explains that this exhibition brought the vernacular into greater prominence, establishing it “as an alternative to more traditional expressions of Italian identity based on classicism” (49). The following chapter then traces the deepening “picturesque revival” of rustic forms in the years after the World War I, when Piacentini and Gustavo Giovannoni promoted the idea of “minor architecture” in numerous publications, a movement which took form in the garden suburbs of Garbatella and Aniene in Rome.

Chapters 3 and 4 in Sabatino’s book tackle more familiar terrain, namely the vexing question of the relationship between Rationalist architects and Fascist politics. Under the heading “*Tabula Rasa* and Tradition,” Sabatino centers his discussion on the island of Capri, whose primitive buildings provided a way for both Futurists and Rationalists to escape historicism and proclaim their vernacular-inspired modernism to be inherently Italian. This last quality was a necessary condition of professional survival when chauvinism and patriotic enthusiasm for empire made foreign cultural influence anathema. At the same time, the vernacular’s matter-of-fact functionalism, seemingly effortless responsiveness to its environment, and lack of superfluous detail were seen to contain important lessons for contemporary practice.

This was the explicit message of the Exhibition of Italian Rural Architecture organized by Giuseppe Pagano and Guarniero Daniel at the 1936 Milan Triennale. However, in an otherwise excellent discussion, the author makes the questionable claim that recourse to the vernacular was a form of “resistance” to Fascist doctrine and an antidote to the “bombastic classicism” of official architecture. This is perplexing given that romantic primitivism was a hallmark of Fascist policy, and that, as Sabatino readily admits, Pagano and many of the most prominent Rationalists were committed Fascists. Part of the confusion may stem from the fact that his emphasis on the vernacular leads to a one-dimensional characterization of classicizing architecture, which was arguably as polymorphous as vernacular modernism.

The final chapter of *Pride in Modesty* traces the continuing vitality of Italy’s vernacular tradition in post-World War II architecture, especially its use as a model for public housing and contemporary urbanism. For example, the irregular form of the traditional hilltown was emulated in a number of projects, such as Ludovico Quaroni’s village of La Martella (1951), an influence that lent a sense of the incidental and spontaneous to the master plan.

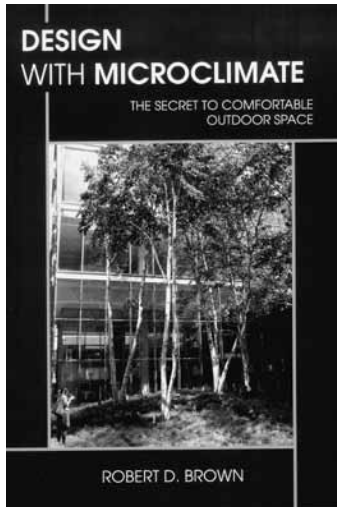
Though tantalizingly brief, this survey also addresses the continuity in the careers and concerns of Modernist architects as they navigated the transition from the Fascist to postwar periods. “Like an underground river that meanders through the crevices of the bedrock, only to surface occasion-

ally and disappear once again, the ubiquitous presence of vernacular architecture was a continuous presence in Italian modernist architecture and design,” Sabatino writes (196). His eloquent and significant study of this lineage establishes and develops the critical ground that will serve as a benchmark for future research. ■

*Andrew J. Manson*  
University of Kentucky



*Design with Microclimate: The Secret to Comfortable Outdoor Space.* Robert D. Brown. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2010. 179 pp., b&w illus.



Whether by necessity or by choice, people throughout history have used outdoor spaces for activities such as meals, community meetings, contemplative thinking, and visiting with friends. However, as building strategies have progressed to create fine-tuned, controlled environments, people have been drawn indoors for easier comfort. The vast majority of lives in the United States are now spent inside. This increased

thermal convenience, in partnership with altered contexts and methods of planning, building design, and material use, has resulted in less populated and less comfortable outdoor spaces.

In *Design with Microclimate*, Robert Brown masterfully outlines the various complexities and considerations embedded in creating comfortable, usable and even popular outdoor spaces. His goal is to encourage designers to think holistically as they strive to design meaningful places. Though once integrated into local designs through trial and error over time, responses to complicated issues of temperature, moisture, wind, and other environmental variables have been culturally forgotten and are now often absent from the design process. Unfortunately, these criteria deeply affect outdoor environments, specifically those associated with structures in the landscape, and their omission is adversely effecting our designed environments.

In this volume Brown breaks down the intricacies of atmospheric physics into easily understandable criteria and illustrates strategies to apply them. His first chapter, “Experiential,” compiles examples from his experiences to illustrate how inhabitants of different contexts have adapted their environments to be comfortable and successful. Among other sources, his examples are drawn from his childhood in Canada, travels through Africa, and research endeavors in Italy. Using this material, Brown capitalizes on his gift of narrative to connect conditions of atmospheric physics to design strategies and considerations. At times the flow and transition between stories is difficult to follow and the extensive narratives distract from the message and substance. However, the conceptual framework provided through the stories substantially illustrates the historical and community value of well-designed outdoor spaces, and is helpful in understanding the principles and details that follow.

The narratives in chapter one lay the groundwork for Brown’s “enduring microclimate hypothesis.” Simply stated, this is that “Landscapes that create positive microclimates are

likely to endure, while negative microclimates are likely to be removed or replaced over time.” Unpacking this further, Brown focuses on the “energy budget” of a space at the core of his conversation. Much like the carbon-neutral discussion in building design, Brown breaks down different energy paths into and out of a designed outdoor space to establish the criteria for creating a truly comfortable space.

Following the examples and the statement of this thesis, chapter two, “Vernacular,” reviews various instances in which microclimates have historically been understood, often through trial and error, by indigenous and native peoples. Through a series of examples set in assorted climates around the world, Brown validates the importance of microclimate consideration in design throughout history.

Chapter three, “Components,” and Chapter four, “Modification,” then break down the structure of the hypothesis. Chapter three outlines the separate components of microclimates to enable designers to appropriately and knowledgeably incorporate these elements into their designs. With subsections of “Big Picture,” “Air Temperature,” “Humidity,” “Solar Radiation,” “Terrestrial Radiation,” “Wind,” “Precipitation,” and “Energy Budgets,” it reviews the concepts integral to Brown’s position.

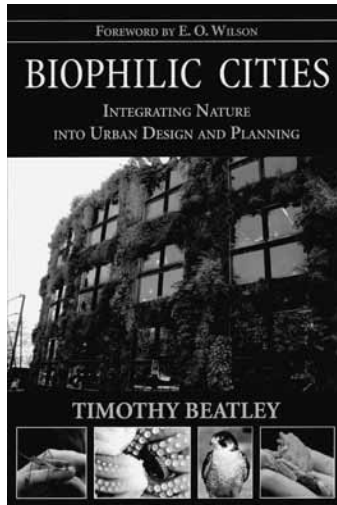
Chapter four builds additional depth with two subsections, entitled “Critical Component Design” and “Process.” The latter is where the proverbial rubber hits the road. Addressing issues of “Climate,” “Precedents,” “Microclimate Modification through Design,” “Communication,” and “Evaluation,” Brown walks the reader through specific considerations needed to establish an energy balance, and therefore create comfortable outdoor space. The steps and concepts are fairly easy to follow, providing a nice roadmap for outdoor space design.

Brown’s final chapter, “Principles and Guidelines,” is intended as “a chapter where the key information [is] summarized and easily accessed.” It succeeds wonderfully at this. In essence, it functions as a *CliffNotes* for the whole book, listing bullet points for “Main Concepts” as well as sections on “Understanding and Modifying Radiation,” “Understanding and Modifying Wind,” “Understanding and Modifying Air Temperature and Humidity,” and the “Effect of Landscape Elements.” In an additional section titled “Quick Reference,” Brown compiles all key information relating to the orientation of a site into a series of tables that are clear, simple and concise.

*Design with Microclimate* provides a valuable resource for anyone involved with designing buildings, outdoor spaces, and landscapes, regardless of role or experience level. It is particularly applicable to students and professionals engaged in the design process itself. However, project managers, project architects, and contractors would also gain from reference to it during implementation. Brown’s “enduring microclimate hypothesis” is rooted in valued and time-tested local examples; the posited hypothesis is extremely pertinent; and the presentation succeeds at clearly outlining the concepts needed to design valued and poignant spaces. ■

**Traci Rose Rider**  
North Carolina State University, Raleigh

*Biophilic Cities: Integrating Nature into Urban Design and Planning*. Timothy Beatley. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2010. 208 pp., b&w illus.



Architects, landscape architects, and city planners will likely be eager to dive into Timothy Beatley's latest offering. A long-time advocate of creative strategies by which cities and towns can reduce their ecological footprints and become more livable and equitable, he is the author of numerous books, including *Green Urbanism: Learning from European Cities* (1999). Yet while *Biophilic Cities* provides a convincing argument for integrating "nature" into

cities, from a practitioner's perspective, it is lacking in detail, depth, and practical value. At approximately half the size of *Green Urbanism*, *Biophilic Cities* is written in a similarly persuasive, "overview" format, but does not reverberate as strongly as this earlier volume.

At its outset, the book is hampered by recourse to the age-old and problematic dichotomy of "nature" and "culture." It is prefaced with statements that emphasize that society and culture should attempt to mirror what exists in the "natural" biosphere, and it seeks to distinguish between what is "nature" and what is "culture" — insisting that there is not enough of the former in cities. In a pure ecological context, "nature-culture" cannot be so divided; rather, they are complex, interacting systems. Beatley clearly prioritizes the sociobiologist's perspective, as emphasized by E.O. Wilson's conspicuous foreword. And, as such, the book falls prey to the fallacy of environmental determinism. Yet, despite this conceptual misstep, the author eventually calls for rapprochement between "nature" and "culture," generating at least the wish for a more holistic, integrated landscape.

Chapter one begins on a strong note. Beatley clearly outlines the argument for biophilic cities. He contends that the majority of Americans don't understand how cities can support much "nature," and he cites various studies that outline how sedentary lifestyles have created problems, especially a lack of outdoor stimulation, a rise in obesity, and new Vitamin D deficiencies. In this regard, the book is excellent at bringing together environment-behavior studies and summarizing the latest in environmental-psychology research. Irrespective of the book's mainly descriptive format, Beatley does a solid job outlining this debate, mixing ongoing academic research and current case studies.

Chapter two describes the range of urban biodiversity and urban nature that has adaptive advantages. Here, Beatley

draws extensively on Sim Van Der Ryn and Stuart Cowan's *Ecological Design* (1996) and Janine Benyus's *Biomimicry* (1997), to whom, to be fair, he does pay homage later in the book. One fascinating example of a species that adapts to its environment is the "water bear" or "moss piglet." This creature shrivels and dries up out of water, but rehydrates and swells to life when rain falls, a process called "anhydrobiosis." In addition, Beatley mentions several other "bio-indicator" species from which urban designers and architects can learn strategies of resiliency.

Next, Beatley tackles what a biophilic city really is. Criteria such as access to "nature," multisensory environments, and stewardship are requirements for a sustainable city. Successful architectural projects that have made use of environmental design, such as the Harare-Eastgate Center by Michael Pearce, are identified as notable precedents. However, projects in development, such as Masdar City (the performance of which has yet to be determined), are prematurely cited as excellent initiatives. Antoni Gaudi's work can obviously be classified as biophilic, but lumping work by Zaha Hadid and Santiago Calatrava into the same "ecological" camp is somewhat questionable.

In chapter four, Beatley outlines recent projects representative of biophilic urban design and planning. Here he draws mainly on Cynthia Girling and Ronald Kellet's *Skinny Streets and Green Neighborhoods* (2005) to provide planners and designers with a framework for gauging biophilic scale. Topics in this section include regional planning, urban forestry, streets and infrastructure, urban agriculture, car-free developments, green buildings and roofs . . . even biophilic schools. The list goes on. . . .

The last chapter, which addresses new tools and institutions to foster biophilic cities, would seemingly provide the most utility to planners, although the mechanisms are described only cursorily. Beatley is correct in acknowledging that physical "green" design will only go so far, and that more regulation and incentives for biophilic planning are needed. Importantly, Beatley mentions that overcoming cultural and social obstacles to biophilic cities is harder than addressing regulatory barriers, which explains why Europe has advanced more quickly in this endeavor than North America.

In short, Beatley's book is not as visionary as one might hope, except that he conceptually extends Wilson's concept of "biophilia" to describe advances in sustainable urbanism over the past ten to fifteen years. Overall, the focus seems to be on providing many examples rather than engaging in a detailed examination of process or quality. The emphasis and interest in education and "nature" seems to be genuine. But this book is perhaps best suited as a starting point for examining biophilic case studies. One might hope that future work will assess the performance of strategies outlined here more critically. ■

*Nicola Szibbo*  
University of California, Berkeley