

# Contradictions of Neoliberal Planning

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Editors

# Contradictions of Neoliberal Planning

Cities, Policies, and Politics



Springer

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Kop van Zuid (Rotterdam): A product of Neoliberal planning



# Preface

The idea for this book on the contradictions of neoliberal planning first came about in April 2008 while the editors were relaxing on a sunny terrace on Massachusetts Avenue in Boston at the culmination of a long and successful Association of American Geographers (AAG) session that they had organised. The credit crunch had not yet become a major topic of discussion, although the first signs of the looming crisis had been brought up during the session. Later, while sitting on the lawn of the beautiful, sunny garden of the AAG venue in Washington DC and discussing the final arrangements for this book in April 2010, the devastating consequences of the credit crunch had become clearly visible and were the subject of various conference sessions, meaning that while writing and editing this book we were experiencing first hand just how the contradictions of neoliberalism could affect our cities and lives.

The financial crisis and its impact on cities and urban planning may not feature prominently in this book, but we nevertheless hope to open up unexplored conceptual grounds by explicitly bringing together ‘neoliberalism’ and ‘planning’ to fill a major gap in planning theory. Our primary focus is to underline the contradictions created by the forces of neoliberal policies in planning theory and practice. How does planning in well-established welfare societies deal with neoliberalisation processes? To what extent does that eat into the provision of welfare? What is the stake of the state in planning in a neoliberalising world? To what extent and in what ways do transnational organisations take over in local planning processes? What alternatives do social movements provide for the ‘self-help’ society? How does privatisation affect our everyday lives, and what environmental risks does it generate? In what ways do property-led planning practices clash with public interest? How and why has neoliberalism diffused across the globe, as if there were no alternative? Bringing together a wide variety of case studies, the book aims to provide (partial) answers to these questions, with a focus on the contradictions stemming from the neoliberalisation of urban development. It is hoped that this will be a first step in laying bare the realities of ‘neoliberal planning’.

As Friedrich Hayek once remarked, the world will be changed by second-hand dealers in ideas. We dedicate this book to the new, open-minded generation of planners, who will hopefully provide us with alternatives; and we look forward to future AAG sessions now that they have moved beyond the (crucial) phase of mere critique

and can now focus on dreaming up new, powerful planning frameworks that will contribute to more justice in the city.

Our thanks go in the first place to the authors of this book for their valuable contributions and patience throughout the lengthy publishing process; and we also offer our gratitude to Evelien Bakker and Bernadette Deelen-Mans, both at Springer, for their continued support and patience in this project; to Prof. Dr. Ayda Eraydın and Prof. Dr. İlhan Tekeli, and Prof. Dr. Sezai Göksu for their kind help and suggestions; and to Nancy van Weesep, Colin Sutcliffe, and Çiğdem Özönat and Deniz Altay for their editorial support. We would also like to thank The Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning, and OTB Research Institute for the Built Environment (TUDelft) for co-financing this book, and to the participants at our 2008 AAG session in Boston for inspiring and motivating us to publish it.

Ankara, Turkey  
Malmö, Sweden  
April 2011

Tuna Taşan-Kok  
Guy Baeten

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