

# Hendrik M Goudappel “reader” over de urbanistiek en planologie

Das Steyn (J.J.) (Editor)

Review by Pieter J Potgieter

This reader pays tribute to an exceptional man and academic from the Netherlands. It comprises 14 of Henk Goudappel's better known writings and was carefully selected by the editor, Das Steyn. Prof Steyn not only knows Henk Goudappel as an academic but also as a friend and has special insight into his thought processes. It is therefore not surprising that this reader saw the light.

As stated by the editor in the preface, “urbanistiek” (Urbanistics) is not a theory but a concept whereby every individual is allowed to address the reality which is locked up in planning practice through their own uniqueness. The articles selected for this reader clearly illustrate the philosophy behind the concept as well as Goudappel's thoughts in coming up with his ideas.

According to Goudappel (in the only English article in the reader) “urbanistics emerged as such a framework, defined as ‘a systematic inventory and classification of the elements that rule our active interventions through physical planning and a vehicle for understanding the patterns in man's

relationship with his environment” (2009, 205). This framework is based on three levels by which humans (planners) tackle problems.

The first level is the physical (INFRA-STRUCTURE) level or what of the problem.

Secondly, the next level is the technical (SUPERSTRUCTURE) level, the how of the problem.

The final and highest level is the idea (IDEOSTRUCTURE) level, the why of the problem.

By making use of interesting diagrams and sketches, Goudappel illustrates how the interrelatedness of these levels can assist planners (and other people / professionals) to interpret man's decisions in his relationship with the environment.

The “reader” is a collection of 13 Dutch and 1 English articles, with the preface and introduction in Afrikaans. It is clear that the book is intended specifically for the West-European (Netherlands, Belgium, Germany) markets because this is where Goudappel's work is the

best known and appreciated. For non-Dutch speakers or anybody whose knowledge of the Dutch language is limited, the reader can be a hard nut to crack but it definitely makes for informative reading. Afrikaans speakers however will find that Dutch is easier to read than they thought as students from rural Afrikaans areas normally found Dutch easier to read than English and I will recommend them to read this work.

Size, format and printing are clear and it is interesting that the publishers have decided to use copies from the original publications, which gives the reader a uniqueness that supplements the spirit in which the publication was set.

Published in: 2009

Publisher: SUN PRESS, Bloemfontein & NIROV will be the distributor in The Netherlands.

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227 pages

ISBN: 978-1-920383-02-2