

**Review by John Dinwoodie,
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"Even if you have not yet booked your place at the 9th World Conference on Transport Research (WCTR) in Seoul in May 2001, the proceedings of WCTR8 should be on your bookshelves. They offer the convenience of a triennial one-stop-shop for contemporary transport research in a comprehensive compendium of 200 diverse papers filling 2625 pages, selectively distilled from some 900 presentations.

These volumes are not exclusively, and nor do they purport to be, 'geography'. In the opening address, the term is used to reference the spatial scale of research contexts, rather than one of the named transport subject disciplines. Many contemporary geographical policy issues including sustainable transport systems, land use planning, trip reduction and telecommuting are well-aired, mainly in volume 4, but pressing geographical perspectives on novel modes, scenario planning for movement minimisation and social access to information and markets are side-stepped. Given the respectability of almost three decades of WCTR gatherings, geographers might have anticipated more philosophical, rather than purely methodological input, and indeed, comparatively few papers really radically redefine their underlying research paradigms. But such a statement misses the point. This publication was intended to provide, and potently succeeds in furnishing, a unique meeting place for diverse transport professionals, rather than an exclusive congress of transport geographers.

The editors' decision to 'deliberately' make no modal or disciplinary taxonomic subdivision within each volume complicates attempts to cross-reference themes between so many papers. However, this approach stimulates a powerful inter-modal and interdisciplinary cross-fertilisation of contexts and concepts in contiguous papers, but can obfuscate the modal 'big picture'. Whilst a comprehensive thematic index would be unwieldy, a simple key-wording system in future proceedings would assist readers with specialist needs. As an unashamedly research volume, the anchoring policy scenarios often provided by politicians or civil servants as keynote overviews at specialist conferences are also unavailable.

In Marvin Manheim's notable opening address, one of the 14 issues identified in a critical perspective of transportation, emphasised a need for increasing the individual and collaborative effectiveness. Cognitive informatics (the study of how people think and act in an attempt to enhance the ways in which they work) was highlighted. The contexts proposed for such research included transportation operations, models for policy and planning, discrete models of traveller behaviour and environmental impact analysis. Given this backdrop and a labour intensive industry, the minimal reporting of the human resources issues is surprising. Applications to educational and training issues in transport, crucial in enhancing the effectiveness of managers, are also surely implicit within the paradigm proposed.

The transport modes and systems discussed in volume one include multifarious papers. Maritime geographers will appreciate studies on the concentration of container flows in Europe, competition between ports on the US East Coast and the Italian maritime economy. Less overtly 'geographical' papers cover reform in Canadian ports, restructuring of shipping companies, ship manager-client relationships, a model of re-engineering port processes for European ports, a forecasting model for the Baltic Freight Index, an efficiency model for Korean container terminals and a positioning model for Mediterranean Ferry Services. Perhaps more geographical are papers on strategic air alliances, models of

European business travel, competition between airport hubs, US open skies policies, aviation networks, safety, leasing and navigation. Specialist papers address ownership and regulation issues in inland navigation and urban public transport, reliability in public transport, strategic and information systems in logistics and a freight mode choice model for the Channel Tunnel. Greek freight villages, the impact of sustainability policies on urban freight systems, urban goods models from South East Asia and French urban mobility plans are also highlighted.

The issues of transport planning, operation, management and control presented in volume two may interest some transport geographers. Excellent papers cover multi-modal models for traffic and transport, accident monitoring and reduction, road pricing, traffic management, routing and other issues which should fascinate transport operators. Volume three, based on transport modelling and assessment, commences with specialist papers on choice modelling, activity based modelling, assignment processes and preference modelling. Applied papers include a Swedish and Dutch value of time estimation model, a Danish mode-choice model, Spanish suburban and inter-city rail passenger demand models, and a Polish activity based model. A novel stated preference approach to estimating shippers' willingness to pay for different levels of an integrated transport service is interesting, as is an interregional commodity flow model and an integrated network model of transport flows and patterns in response to port investment. Following a series of land-use transport interaction, car ownership and other transport planning models, are three applications of geographical information systems to transport planning and a French model of long-distance mobility. An extended socio-economic cost-benefit analysis model for evaluating national economic, transportation and road policy levels is also included. Approaches to impact evaluation cover the regional network significance of individual road links, socially necessary rail services, tourist impacts of the Channel Tunnel, effects of the Jubilee Line Underground Extension in London, effects of the Kobe earthquake on transportation infrastructure and regional economic development impacts of a container terminal improvement. Also covered are sea freight mode-split in Italy, road haulage deregulation benefits in France and impacts of the TGV on mobility.

In Volume four, transport policy, notable contributions invite a revision of the conventional wisdom of scale economies in the European bus industry, international comparisons of the effects of rail privatisation and models of airline competition. Impact studies discuss trans-European transport networks, transportation systems and industrial location decisions in Japan, road investment in a Chinese city, greenhouse gas emissions and environmental and energy impacts of car use in Japan and various 'geographical' issues noted above.

Is this publication good value for money? The price may seem high, but compared with the cost of flights, hotels and conference attendance, or the myriad of journal subscriptions which would be incurred in accessing the same sources, not to mention the time involved, these volumes surely represent a cost-effective investment for every transport researcher."

John Dinwoodie, University of Plymouth, in *Journal of Transport Geography*, Volume 9, 2001