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Germain, Annick. *Les Mouvements de Réforme Urbaine à Montréal au Tournant du Siècle : modes de développement, modes d'urbanisation et transformations de la scène politique.* Montréal : Centre d'information et d'aide à la recherche, Département de sociologie, Université de Montréal, 1984. Pp. xviii, 415

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Citer ce compte rendu

many asides, and the occasional attempt to develop a perspective on Maclure's architecture. The history is organized in 10 chapters. After a précis of the career of "this noteworthy artist," the story begins when Maclure's English parents went out to what became New Westminster, as part of the contingent of Royal Engineers charged with bringing civilization to a frontier gold colony in the 1850s. They stayed on to help run the telegraph from a house at Matsqui in the Fraser Valley, where Sam spent his boyhood years before a critical year in the Spring Garden School of Art in Philadelphia in the 1880s (the closest he came to formal training). Maclure's early years as an architect (1890-92) were spent in New Westminster, where he worked first with Charles Clow and then Richard Sharp in executing quasi-pattern book designs. His "heyday" in Victoria was marked by over 140 residences, including what are referred to as 'Maclure Bungalows' as well as more palatial designs in his distinctive variant of the Tudor Revival style. In Vancouver he designed about 50 houses, first with Cecil Fox and then after the war with Ross Lort. Separate chapters treat Hatley Park, a 40-odd room rural retreat for James Dunsmuir outside Victoria, and designs for employees' cottages at brother Charles' brickmaking concern at Clayburn in the Fraser Valley. The wartime death of his partner Cox devastated Maclure, and his slower practice in the 1920s was less spectacular, typified by smaller houses in the Georgian Revival style, before his death in 1929. An epilogue on other family members rounds out the history. Throughout, the architect is wonderful; so are his family, and, by default, his satisfied clients. His designs were "delightful" houses to live in.

So much more could have been written, however, even recognising the dearth of records to work with. The book unfortunately perpetuates local folklore that equates Maclure just with half-timbered houses. His work in other styles receive only passing reference ("an unusual example of Maclure's work") and are never really considered worthy of assessment as important elements of an evolving design philosophy. It is always assumed that the reader (and the author) knows everything there is to know about Frank Lloyd Wright, Webb, Shaw, Baillie Scott, Sullivan, Voysey, etc., since there is no significant engagement with a broader architectural or historical literature. The Maclure Bungalow, a telling design for a Victoria linked to British India as much as to the mother country, surely needs to be seen in the light of Tony King's work on the colonial bungalow; the large houses warrant assessment in the context of Girouard's work on the English country house; and the Tudor Revival style should be assessed in terms of its execution elsewhere on the continent by many other architects. Hatley Park may not have been cloned from Compton Wynyates in Oxfordshire, but since we know that Goodyear Rubber founder F.A. Seiberling did have a copy built in Akron, Ohio, and that many Tudor Revival houses grace Cleveland, Minneapolis and countless other cities, what is it about Maclure that is so distinctive, or what is it about his B.C. clientele that made them so strongly anglophilic? Bingham treats none of these

or other important questions and instead relies too uncritically on the reminiscences of family, colleagues, or obituary writers. When she does seek the world beyond, it leads to wild conjecture, such as parallels between the Clayburn cottages and the industrial town of Saltaire in mid-19th century England.

In an age of expensive books, one is tempted to applaud the efforts of a small Gulf Islands publisher for producing an attractive volume with some 82 illustrations selling for less than $10.00. However, the partial visual coverage is as lopsided as the text. One saving grace might have been the appendices cataloguing Maclure's work. Yet the list for Victoria and Vancouver Island is flawed by being presented in alphabetic sequence of owners rather than arranged by time-period (lacking even approximate dates). The list for Vancouver work is better, but for me at least only served to resurrect questions about the role of Cecil Fox in the partnership, he being the person who trained with the influential architect Charles F.A. Voysey in England. Who taught who, what, and when? The appendices reinforce frustrations that accumulate through a reading of a rambling text and its badly-flawed footnotes.

The book contains a generous foreword by famous Vancouver architect Arthur Erickson that could be valuable for students of Erickson's architecture. The author's own Introduction begins with her resentment at being beaten to two watercolours sketches by Maclure that she had discovered in a Victoria antique shop fifteen years ago. That sour anecdote is the lemon for the parochial brew that follows and serves to place her book in the genre of architectural history that seeks the rare and precious rather than the comprehensive. Maclure and his important work still awaits serious attention. Hopefully, when that happens, the study will be located not only in a rigorous architectural history that stretches to Philadelphia and beyond, but also be grounded in an informed social and political assessment of life in a company province. Civility alone is an inadequate basis for useful analysis.

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Germain, Annick. *Les Mouvements de Réforme Urbaine à Montréal au Tournant du Siècle: modes de développement, modes d'urbanisation et transformations de la scène politique.* Montréal: Centre d'information et d'aide à la recherche, Département de sociologie, Université de Montréal, 1984. Pp. xviii, 415.

Urban reform has a large literature, one that is international and interdisciplinary, and one that is controversial.

For while scholars have sensed the importance of the urban reform movement, they have disagreed profoundly on its motivations, causes and impact. However much it seems to have been a universal phenomenon, it seems to have had a mysterious and perhaps divergent ancestry, and a particularist growth.

In few places has this been so true as in Montrêal, where anomolies abound, compared to reform in other North American places.

Professor Germain, a sociologist, has set about in her doctoral thesis (published here as a book) to resolve these anomolies in terms of a structuralist approach that derives from social realist and dependency theories, especially of Alain Touraine and F.H. Cardoso.

She makes few claims to original research, but rather has placed the existing literature, much by historians, into these recent theoretical frameworks, which are, themselves, adapted to the situation in Montreal and Quebec at the turn of the century.

It has proven to be a valuable exercise, for it not only explains much about what happened in Montreal between 1870 and 1930, thereby dealing with the peculiarities of the place, but it does so by anchoring those peculiarities in global explanations, thereby admitting some generalization.

Germain's initial purpose was to explain the feebleness of urban planning as part of the urban reform movement in Montreal. That implied an explanation of why urban reform was, itself, narrow — successful mainly in the area of political and administrative reform — and why, in the face of "bossisme," it proved weak. "A Montréal, le réformisme municipal . . . semble avoir draîné plus d'énergie que les autres composantes du réformisme, et par rapport à d'autres villes canadiennes, ses succès politiques semblent avoir été plus fragiles face à l'emprise du bossisme sur la société montréalaise après la guerre" (p. viii).

But "bossisme," too, could do little, for it operated at the low, institutional "registre" of the political structure as a distributor of social goods.

Why was reform displaced by "bossisme"? Why was "bossisme" in its turn reduced to the weakest level of the political apparatus?

The answers turn on the pivot of a dependent economy in Quebec and Montreal, one like that of many Latin American states, whose cities display a disjunction between population growth and distribution, and economic activity. They are unlike many North American cities, where, so the literature would have us believe, changing modes of production are clearly related to urban growth (in size and distribution). A reform response of a classical type follows.

But in Quebec, Germain argues, there was a "disarticulation" of the middle classes, one fairly typical of dependency situations. It was especially true in Montreal. While an "industrial" middle class, engaged in import substitution for domestic consumption, emerged in the last third of the nineteenth century, it neither found common cause with the older commercial class oriented to external trade, nor a place in the political machinery of the city. Neither commercial nor industrial class in Montreal found common ground with those classes, from English Canada or the United States, which in the twentieth century arrived to exploit the province's natural resources. These latter established an "enclave" economy linked to the provincial "state," which continued to remain the support of the liberal-professional elite. There was little development of a new technological class or group.

This fragmented middle class was also faced, in Montreal, with another product of an economy of dependency: urban masses which were not structurally linked to the urban economy, and, as a consequence, not part of the apparatus of organized labour either. Yet, in the face of poverty, they became great consumers of social goods and services, and, with the vote, threatened to control the political apparatus at the local level that delivered such goods.

Reform, expressed through a fragmented middle class that had little influence with the provincial "state," was inevitably weak. It was, in time, pushed aside by "bossisme," which was the political expression of the urban masses. But the social and political threat of "bossisme" compelled the provincial "state" to constrain the power of "bossisme" by limiting its power in the city. This was done by weakening the executive branch of local government. As they said at the time: "Le maire regne mais ne gouverne pas."

The power of the core city was also weakened by a centrifugal metropolitan development, often characterized by the development of suburban enclaves of the middle classes. There, they could ensure themselves of the provision of important services. As part of the core city, money for services might likely be channelled into social consumption for the masses. In a sense, the chief urban problems were confined to the core; the resources to solve them were suburbanized.

In brief, Germain's argument rests on a new view of the social relations of the Montreal middle classes within a provincial economy of at least partial dependency. It is these social relations of classes that are critical, in terms of the development of the urban landscape — the geography of capitalism — and in the political field. Urban reform (and urban planning) were, ultimately political expressions of the social relations of classes in Montreal. The nature of the latter ensured the weakness of the reform impulse.

Much depends, in Germain's argument, on how far one can accept the notion of a weak, dependent economy unique to Quebec. Most cities in the United States and Canada

were very much like Montreal. Very few made the transformation from the commercial to the industrial pattern in an archetypal fashion. It might be better to argue that the dependency argument would work well in most other places: Montreal is a typical example of the norm.

There surely can be little doubt that reform, especially its planning component, was not much more successful elsewhere than it was in Montreal. If it was weaker in Montreal, it was only marginally so.

Perhaps more problematical in Germain's argument, a problem she recognizes, is the possibility of a large secular shift at the turn of the century, in which cities changed from producers and promoters of capital and industry into delivery systems for social goods and services. What we may be seeing in Germain's argument is the emergence of the typical dependent city of the twentieth century, one in which the booster nexus between capital and place is shattered.

Regardless of the demurrers, Professor Germain has produced a much more satisfactory explanation of urban reform than we have seen hitherto, whether for Montreal, or in general. We will no longer be able to read the literature of reform with the same eyes. The book is a reflection of the sensibility of the author, and also the virtue of reflecting on the literature of both other disciplines and other traditions.

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Wright, John Ross. *Urban Parks in Ontario. Part I: Origins to 1860.* Ottawa: 1983. Designed by Media Production Services, University of Ottawa. Pp. x, 109. Illustrations, maps, tables.

Wright, John Ross. *Urban Parks in Ontario. Part II: The Public Park Movement 1860-1914.* Ottawa: 1984. Designed by Media Production Services, University of Ottawa. Pp. xiv, 220. Illustrations, maps, tables. Copies available from Ontario Government Bookstore, 880 Bay St., Toronto. $5.00 payable to Treasurer of Ontario.

Some years ago, those of us interested in Ontario's outdoor recreation history applauded when the provincial Ministry of Tourism and Recreation decided to subsidize a history of urban parks by Professor J.R. Wright of the University of Ottawa's Recreology Department. Since the historiography of urban recreational space in Canada is so thin, we waited impatiently for the appearance of this study, and entertained high hopes that it would match the standards of scholarship attained in comparable American and British literature. Alas, those hopes have not been realized.

The kindest thing one can say about these first two volumes of a threatened trilogy is that the chronology of urban park development in Ontario has been clarified, and considerable information previously scattered in obscure local sources compiled into one study. It is interesting to learn that the first urban parks appeared in Ontario during the 1850s in Hamilton, Kingston, Niagara-on-the-Lake and Toronto. These were created shortly after the establishment of the first British pleasure grounds (London's Victoria Park 1842 and Liverpool's Birkenhead Park 1843), and at the same time as the first great American parks (Fairmount Park in Philadelphia 1855 and New York's Central Park 1858). No urgent urban crisis or social problems existed in predominantly agrarian Canada West in the 1850s, as they did elsewhere, to explain the appearance of Ontario's urban parks. Evidently, until the late 1880s when the pressure for public parks intensified in the United States, Ontario kept ahead of the Americans in the provision of outdoor recreational space. The early 1870s, for example, witnessed a noteworthy expansion of parks in towns and cities across Southern Ontario. In the absence of professional landscape architects, most of these new recreation areas were laid out and designed by amateurs. The province lacked a Frederick Law Olmsted. Not until the appearance after 1900 of the Boston-born, Montreal-based Frederick G. Todd did Canada possess a first-rate resident landscape architect. His influence on Ontario urban park design was of no little significance.

Professor Wright's interpretation of the mid nineteenth century rationale for public parks is not entirely convincing. He attributes the appearance of the first parks in the 1850s to the efforts of an Anglophile elite "attempting to duplicate in the New World the conditions in Britain from which they had so recently come." The primary purpose of the parks, he continues, was "beauty and nature appreciation" and "public health and morals." This is not a sufficient explanation. Even the documents quoted in the first volume (p. 67) suggest that both the civic boosterism of local businessmen seeking tourist dollars, and the reform inclinations of the middle class interested in social control, helped give rise to the initial parks. These themes might well have emerged more strongly had Wright undertaken a socio-economic analysis of the people petitioning for parks. Who, for instance, belonged to the Kingston Subscribers' Committee (1853)? Likewise, who were the members of civic groups like the Committee on Public Walks and Gardens set up by Toronto City Council in 1851? Since no information is provided about the membership of these groups, and no analysis attempted, the author is not persuasive when discussing motivation.

Wright's interpretive framework for the years from 1860 to 1914, the time frame of his second volume, is also problematical. "This was the period of romanticism," he asserts, "the period in which the newly-conceived urban parks were intended as places for exercise, instruction and psychic restoration." While applicable to the period prior to 1890, this