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Hohenberg, Paul M., and Lynn Hollen Lees. *The Making of Urban Europe, 1000-1950*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985. Pp. xiv, 398. Tables, figures, index. \$30.00 (US.)
Konvitz, Josef W. *The Urban Millennium: The City-Building Process from the Early Middle Ages to the Present*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985. Pp. xxi, 265. Illustrations, index. \$24.95 (U.S.)

Victor M. Batzel

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Jim Coleman, Eric Whitehead and other journalists, Kearney has used his writing skill, and his ability to identify with particular people in specific situations, to create sports history that is entertaining and instructive. Like all of us who study sports seriously, Brian Flood should learn from Kearney's example.

Morris Mott
Department of History
Brandon University

NOTES

1. Donald Creighton, "History and Literature," in *Towards the Discovery of Canada: Selected Essays* (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1974), 18-19.
 2. P.B. Waite, review of *The Private Capital: Ambition and Love in the Age of Macdonald and Laurier*, by Sandra Gwyn, *Canadian Historical Review* 66 (September 1985): 417-418.
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Hohenberg, Paul M., and Lynn Hollen Lees. *The Making of Urban Europe, 1000 - 1950*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985. Pp. xiv, 398. Tables, figures, index. \$30.00 (U.S.).

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Whether it is better to view the historical process from below, a little at a time but closely and carefully, or from above, as a magisterial panorama, is a question to which the authors of both these books have offered a firm answer. Upon first reading, one is reminded of the obvious: that a millennium is a long time and that Europe encompasses a lot of space, especially when it is defined so as to include Russia to the Ural Mountains. One is reminded, too, that devising statements to embrace so complex an entity as a city or so involved a venture as urban growth over so great a span of time and territory is a high-risk activity for professional historians, especially in this modern age of precision-built micro-history. W. O. Aydelotte once defined the term "generalization" to a group of struggling graduate students as a statement somewhat broader than another statement and warned that the higher the power of the generalization the greater the likelihood that essential differences and unique qualities would be lost. A large globular object, in various schemes of things, may be a large and immature navel orange, an orange, a citrus, a fruit or vegetable matter; while each level of magnitude may offer insight, each step up the ladder subsumes and obscures significant qualities of the items below.

The question which these books raise is whether the insights gained by so high an intensity of generalization compensate for the loss of precision inherent in the exercise. More specifically, will the generalizations generated in these studies add significantly to our understanding of a single urban experience? To use the authors' own perspective: in general, only to a limited extent. Both studies leave the reader with broad analytical devices and general observations too imprecise to be useful beyond the introductory level.

To be sure, Hohenberg and Lees are very aware of the risks involved; the book is salted with cautionary reminders: "as in other things, the towns of Europe were both a part of and an exception to the prevailing demographic regime," and, "it is difficult to generalize meaningfully about the extensions of cities and towns, since they took every conceivable turn" (pp. 85, 305). Of greater significance than attempts to put towns both inside and outside regimes or warnings about the number of turns, is the author's attempt to control the inherent weakness of highpowered generalizations by raising theirs to the dignity of formal models. *The Making of Urban Europe* introduces an extended argument that the development of urban society is interdependent with large economic and social processes and that the complex and variegated nature of this interdependence is best understood by concurrently using two models of urban systems analysis: the city as a *central place* and the city as part of a *network* of trade, information and influence. The central place model recognizes the importance of the city as a purveyor of economic, administrative and cultural services; the focus of this analysis is the region, which is the key both to the relationship of town to country and of the hierarchical links among nearby towns. The network model emphasizes the place of cities in an international setting. Both models allow economic, political and cultural dimensions which are extensively explored. The ensuing exposition takes place within a precarious balance of topical analysis and chronological periodization, with emphasis alternately upon grand model-building and single-city examples. The result is, at best, mixed: repetition gives way to striking insight, barren abstraction to forceful specific, meandering reservation to meaningful observation. The book, like its subject and method, is frustrating.

It is almost with relief that one turns to Konvitz's observation that "each city's development can be explained with only minimal reference to general phenomena," and that cities reacted to forces and events "that were experienced most intensely at the local level" (pp. 6-7). This greater willingness to accept the uniqueness of individual city development is, in large part, vitiated by the book's spatial and temporal dimensions. Konvitz focuses upon architecture, vernacular construction and planning, and discusses the ways in which they, together, shape the urban environment. He sees a general pattern of development in which cultural factors predominate from the early Middle Ages to the late seventeenth century, economic criteria in the eight-

eenth and early nineteenth centuries, and political and social considerations in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In sum, "in the cultural mode, emphasis is on the user; in the economic mode, on the investor; and in the political, on the regulator" (p. xvi).

At the conclusion of the exercise there is a moral: modern cities are no longer easily adapted to frequent, unavoidable and unpredictable changes in the conditions affecting urban life in the way that their medieval and early industrial counterparts were. The modern urban world has lost its capacity for gradual, flexible and almost automatic accommodation to a constantly changing environment; cities are lost in the embrace of their own rigid infrastructures. His conclusions — that bureaucratic and regulatory organizations have become the dominant factors in environmental design, that social and political objectives now predominate and that users and owners have, consequently, lost control over property and its use — would have been stronger had — he opted for more depth and less breadth in his presentation.

Between the extremes of antiquarian grubbing for minutia on the one hand and millennial surveys of continental urban growth on the other there must surely be a mid-point where the breadth of the general statement will not so completely obscure the design of the constituent parts. Neither of these studies has found that golden mean.

Victor M. Batzel
Department of History
The University of Winnipeg

Hamm, Michael F., ed. *The City in Late Imperial Russia*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986. Pp. ix, 372. Illustrations, maps, tables, index. \$27.50.

This important collection of essays on the eight major cities of the former Russian Empire in the sixty years of rapid socio-economic change before 1917 represents a collective effort by nine specialists in the field. The cities and their biographers are Moscow (Joseph Bradley), St. Petersburg (James H. Bater), Kiev (Michael F. Hamm), Warsaw (Stephen D. Corssin), Riga (Anders Henriksson), Odessa (Frederick W. Skinner), Tiflis (Ronald Grigor Suny) and Baku (Audrey Altstadt-Mirhadi). An Introduction by Hamm and a conclusion by Daniel H. Brower round out the volume. The fact that the whole represents a planned and coordinated effort involving several years gives the book a greater cohesion and thematic unity than is usual in publications of this type.

The most conspicuous general features affecting the major urban areas in late Imperial Russia were the dynamic economic development (commercial rather than industrial), the

concomitant rapid growth in population (predominantly by migration facilitated by the concurrent expansion of the railway network) and the physical transformation of the cities from what might be called "clusters of villages" into more or less modern urban areas. The attendant problems, such as overcrowding, sub-standard housing, and increasing class and ethnic conflicts soon exceeded the capability of municipal organs to deal with them; this inevitably resulted in intervention by the central government. The ensuing situation, further aggravated by labour unrest and the mass violence of the revolutionary period 1904-05, transformed the major cities into hotbeds of popular discontent, undoubtedly a major factor in the final explosion of 1917.

The character and relative weight of these general factors naturally varied among the different cities. In the ethnically homogeneous ones, such as St. Petersburg and Moscow, the determining factors were primarily socio-economic, conditioned by the physical transformation of the environment and the transient character of the major segment of the population. In St. Petersburg, "the most expensive and the least healthy of the European capitals," the overcrowding, underdeveloped public transport and inefficient municipal management contributed to the generally dismal environment for the broad mass of the population. Warsaw and Riga, the two ethnically non-Russian and culturally "Western" cities, shared with others a rapid growth and impetus towards modernization, but additionally had special problems. In both cities the sources of conflict were primarily of national-political or ethno-cultural rather than social character; the spectacular growth and politicization of the daily press in the early twentieth century may be seen as symptomatic in this respect.

Kiev and Odessa had ethnically diverse populations. Odessa, in addition, had the most spectacular increase in population: an almost unbelievable 3,677 per cent over approximately fifty years. Both cities contained a large Jewish population, a source of friction that occasionally manifested itself in outbreaks of anarchic violence. Tiflis and Baku, the two non-Russian and non-European cities, the former basically binational (Georgian-Armenian), the latter multinational, experienced the same phenomena of economic growth and rapidly expanding population as the other major urban centres in the Empire. In both, the demographic changes arising from mass immigration were the dominant factor. The resulting ethno-religious and national-cultural tensions, combined with the increasingly active labour movement, accounted for much violence, especially in Baku, and provided a congenial ground for revolutionary activity. In this respect Tiflis was not far behind: by 1905 it had sizable Marxist groups, mainly of the Menshevik persuasion, and was the scene of bloody demonstrations in the same year.

Each essay is accompanied by a bibliographical note and a useful bibliography of secondary works in English; the