

Conzen, M.P., ed. (1986) *World Patterns of Modern Urban Change : Essays in Honor of Chauncy D. Harris*. Chicago, The University of Chicago, Dept. of Geography, Research Papers 217-218, 479 p.

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quelques lignes lui sont consacrées, surtout au niveau du costume. Cette situation s'explique par l'absence d'études publiées portant sur la vie urbaine à Louisbourg. Pour lui par ailleurs, pas question de manipuler la dialectique fonctionnelle, bien qu'il en emprunte le vocabulaire à l'occasion. Pas question de s'arrêter à des concepts comme ceux de l'air et de l'eau tels que véhiculés par les discours officiels de l'époque, concepts qui se dégagent et se vérifient à l'aide des plans d'époque notamment. Pas question non plus de remettre en question les traditionnels clichés de sorte que le texte manque de souffle et de conviction.

D'autre part, signalons au passage quelques phrases qui découlent sinon d'une méconnaissance du sujet, à tout le moins d'une mauvaise formulation. Ainsi en est-il du « développement des villes sans plan d'aménagement bien structuré » (p. 41) ; c'est faire abstraction des efforts des ingénieurs militaires. Ou encore de cette affirmation que « les remparts aggravent les incendies comme les épidémies » (p. 90) ; c'est renier la topographie de Québec. Enfin que « l'Église, aidée par l'État, règle la période annuelle de travail et par conséquent le revenu des salariés aussi bien que le rythme économique et social de la vie urbaine » (p. 107). Il est vrai que l'Église impose un calendrier liturgique chargé ; on conçoit moins facilement cependant comment elle peut régler le rythme économique.

L'on aurait souhaité que Lachance se démarque des apports des autres pour avancer quelques considérations originales sur la société urbaine. Or selon lui, la dynamique urbaine se base sur l'autorégulation dans laquelle se complaisent et se confondent l'État, l'Église et la famille (p. 112-115). Il prend soin d'ajouter toutefois que ce principe s'applique également à la campagne. Mais alors la société urbaine se distingue-t-elle de la société rurale ? La question demeure posée puisque Lachance n'y répond pas. Et pourtant le voyageur du XVIII^e siècle trouve les villes coloniales « très civilisées »...

Certes ce texte rassemble-t-il une bonne documentation sur quelques gestes urbains mais reste à savoir s'il s'agit là de l'essentiel de la vie urbaine.

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CONZEN, M.P., ed. (1986) *World Patterns to Modern Urban Change: Essays in Honor of Chauncy D. Harris*. Chicago, The University of Chicago, Dept. of Geography, Research Papers 217-218, 479 p.

This *festschrift* is a tribute to the forty-five-year contribution to urban geography made by Chauncy Harris through his teaching and research at the University of Chicago. Like most such volumes, it reflects outstanding scholarship created under the influence of a great scholar, while facing the almost impossible task of presenting a focussed and integrated collection by a group of people who have more in common through association with Chicago than theoretically. The result is a text that is broad-ranging, somewhat uneven, decidedly a product of urban geography of a particular time and place.

The book is divided into four sections, three regional and one thematic. The first regional section is defined as « regions of long and continuous modernization » that include Britain, France, West and East Germany, Poland, the Soviet Union and Southeastern Europe. There is as much diversity of approaches among these papers as there is diversity among the urban systems discussed, but they have in common a discussion of systems of cities at the national scale, with emphasis upon demographic transition, the physical/spatial modification of urban boundaries, and the role of national policy, especially since World War II. A thoughtful paper by Michael Wise stands out for its emphasis upon the personal involvement of the geographer, both in his or her commitment to understanding the causes and processes of change, and for his or her role in effecting change by influencing planning policies.

A second section is devoted to « regions of recent modernization of ancient urban traditions. » With the exception of Norton Ginsberg, who chooses 1969 as the point of departure for his discussion of Southeast Asian cities, each author makes some attempt to account for both historical origins and modern developments. Ginsberg's paper displays an intimate knowledge of the mingling of economic and social forces that define conditions and set dilemmas in contemporary Southeast Asian cities. Amiran and Shacher's discussion of Israel brings home the complexity of that society, and the very delicate nature of geographical control that has been brought about by deliberate, ideological, urban planning. Hou Ren-Zhi's focussed discussion of the transformation of Beijing, aided by creative and informative maps, provides a fascinating account of the process of striking the urban landscape in a particular ideological image. Shinzo Kiuchi fails to do justice to the topic of recent change in Japanese cities in 6½ short pages of text, although he does provide some useful tables of population change at the national scale. Singh and Singh make some interesting allusions to the need for cultural synthesis, but the paper does not go beyond providing a regional classification of Indian cities according to population.

The third section, devoted to regions of recent urbanization and modernization, is least successful as a thematic collection, for it is difficult to argue that the regions included here have more in common because of recent modernization than they have in contrast. The approaches are also diverse. Akin Mabogunje's discussion of the peasantization of Sub-Saharan Africa is the only paper in the book to come to grips with processes of urban change, by emphasising the nature of the post-colonial political economy, rural-urban migration as a reactive policy, and urbanization as a symbol of the failure of development strategies that limit the productive capacity of cities. Wilhelmy's description of Argentina, on the other hand, is limited to spatial pattern and the distribution of population. Speridião Faissol addresses the distribution of wealth and regional patterns of inequality in Brazil, but a factor analysis to score various dimensions of the urban system fails to take the study beyond the documentation of urban spatial structure. Gutiérrez de MacGregor provides a detailed description of the processes of concentration and dispersal in Mexico, with an interesting, but very tentative, discussion of the relations between urban location and climate. Harold Mayer finds the task of relating four decades of change in urban North America much too great for even the 50 pages it is allocated. The paper is rambling, general and inconclusive, and does a great injustice to Canada, which seems to have been included as an afterthought, supported only by a couple of references to planning documents in Toronto.

Overall, despite the inclusion of several excellent papers, the conceptual organization of the book does not work. In addition to advancing an implicit Eurocentricism, its use of chronology as a dominant theoretical rationale for urban development masks many of the most vital elements of urban change today. It not only forces similarities where an emphasis upon diversity would be more appropriate, it creates a distorted view of urban development, as in the case of Mexico, classified as a country of « recent urbanization » despite its having one of the oldest urban traditions in the world. Furthermore, none of the papers addresses the issue of whether chronology provides any sort of explanatory factor in accounting for regional urban development.

In the final section, three papers are provided as examples of changing directions in urban geography. Güssefeldt and Manshard's use of factor analysis to develop a typology of Irish towns, while interesting and empirically useful, is hardly a new direction. Brian Berry discussing Pittsburgh displays his enormous talent for synthesis of ideas and shows that the case study is still one of the best ways to get across principles of a more general nature. Jean Gottman ends the collection with an essay consisting of eloquent and thought-provoking prose, but one searches in vain for the conceptual spark that will light fires of change within urban geography.

In sum, this is a diverse collection, extremely useful as a reference to changing urban trends in different parts of the world, and therefore useful also as a classroom text. The reader who searches, however, for new trends in urban geography of the sort put forward by Chauncy Harris several decades ago, will be very disappointed. Finally, the copy editors deserve to be chastised for including a map (p. 7) upon which the interval is reversed, and for allowing the text to go to press without purging it of gender exclusive language.

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