

Wynot, Edward D. Jr. *Warsaw Between the Wars: Profile of the Capital City in a Developing Land, 1918-1939*. Boulder, Col.: East European Monographs, 1983. Pp. viii, 375

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lordism. As late as 1914, 91% of housing was privately rented; only 9% was owner occupied and virtually none was state owned. By 1977 the figures were 14%, 56%, and 30% respectively. So unanimous has become the consensus in Britain that privately rented housing is exploitative and must be replaced by either subsidized (low rent) government housing or subsidized (through tax relief on mortgages) owner occupation, that left and right combined virtually to wipe out the private landlord, and thus a major sector of petit bourgeois investment, on the cold electoral calculation that this interest was politically expendable. An ironic perspective on all this is provided by Daunton's own experience as a house buyer. Like many British middle class academics of today he aspires to be the owner-occupier of a terraced house which almost a century ago some private landlord was renting to a working class family.

Such "bye-law" houses were built in the later nineteenth century conforming with local regulations prescribing standards of space and sanitation. They varied from town to town in accordance with local taste and topography. Daunton is good in describing and accounting for their variety. He discerns in all the local responses to the "housing problem," indeed to the whole "urban problem," at least one common theme — the distinction between public and private space: the elimination of communal courts and the conversion of narrow streets and dead ends from semi-communal, socially ambiguous space to purely public, disciplined, anonymous space. Without taking off into the Foucaultian empyrean (in fact, he never mentions him) Daunton also applies these insights to the redefinition and reallocation of interior housing space — particularly with the advent of gas for heating, lighting and cooking, and of flush toilets. One notable consequence he discusses was the cult of the front parlour or "best rooms," that remarkable example of spatial self-denial which became the hallmark of working class respectability.

Daunton pays considerable attention to Scotland, particularly Glasgow, where the predominant form of working class urban housing was the tenement, typical of Europe, rather than the terraced house of England (except parts of north-east England). Non-English urban historians will be interested to see that he presents the English form as exceptional and draws on European and American examples in discussing the various factors which contributed to the very different English and Scottish "solutions." The strikingly different character of Scottish land law, landlord-tenant law (much less favourable to the tenant than English law) and building codes are made admirably clear in the process. In sum, this book, handsomely produced and illustrated, is worth its startling price.

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Wynot, Edward D. Jr. *Warsaw Between the Wars: Profile of the Capital City in a Developing Land, 1918-1939*. Boulder, Col.: East European Monographs, 1983. Pp. viii, 375.

Since extensive news coverage of recent Polish political developments sheds little light on Warsaw's long history, Professor Edward Wynot's major study of Warsaw in the 1920s and 1930s is all the more valuable. He brings considerable expertise to bear on the subject from a previous book and several articles on other aspects of inter-war Poland. The present book is well-researched and amply documented from printed primary sources (particularly government reports) contemporary analyses, and recent secondary literature. He provides the most comprehensive survey available in any language, although some significant flaws exist.

The largest city and capital of the newly-independent Polish state, Warsaw was a fascinating city of contrasts between the two world wars. Rich aristocrats rubbed elbows (or tried not to) with poor Jewish tailors. Modern engineering plants operated near artisanal shops that seemed to come out of the Middle Ages, while great department stores competed with door-to-door peddlars. In short, inter-war Warsaw had entered a transitional stage of development like Canadian cities a few decades earlier and "third world" cities a few decades later.

Warsaw comprised a population of 1,000,000 in 1921 and 1,300,000 in 1939, due to natural increase, immigration, and absorption of suburbs. It enjoyed a balanced economy and social structure with about one-third the working population involved in industry and trades, one-fifth in commerce, another fifth in public service, and the remainder split among communications, transportation, and domestic service. Industry and trade rose from 30 per cent to 40 per cent of employment during the period thanks to growth in electrical production, metallurgical industries, food processing, chemicals, and printing. On the whole, however, Warsaw industry comprised smaller and less productive enterprises than other major centres such as Upper Silesia and Lodz.

Finances posed a continual problem to the city which required national subsidies to meet a budget that ran deeper and deeper into the red, but, municipal expenditures (which were frequently mandated by the national government) reflected a surprising maturity on the part of a city government whose modern experience in self-government reached only to 1915 when Russian occupation ended. After independence, Warsaw substantially improved mass transit service, street paving, telephones, fire protection, sanitation, hospitals, other public health facilities and welfare. The city also contributed to cultural development by extending public schooling and libraries, as well as subsidizing theatres, opening a National Museum and setting up a zoo. With all this activity, Warsaw easily assumed a central position in

Polish life far outstripping its rivals from pre-partition days, Cracow and Poznan.

The city also had social, political, and ethnic problems which Wynot acknowledges but understates. Large numbers of inhabitants were destitute, particularly in the early 1920s and during the Depression. Western travellers, hardened by the miseries of the Depression in the West, were struck by the pitiful hordes of beggars, and peddlers and indigent children, crowding the streets. The city lacked the resources to cope with so massive a problem, although it tried. Poverty was aggravated by ethnic conflict between Catholics, who made up 70 per cent of Warsaw's population, and Jews, the remaining 30 per cent. The Catholics tended to be somewhat underrepresented in business and the professions while the Jews were substantially underrepresented among both blue-collar and white-collar employee groups, but Wynot's statistics hide wretchedly impoverished Jewish artisans and peddlers under the rubric "small businessman" or "middle-class." He also overlooks the gratuitous impoverishment of Jews in Warsaw due to discriminatory hiring by state-owned enterprises and state-regulated cartels (which were driving the inefficient, small Jewish entrepreneur out of business) and due to discriminatory licensing of artisans. Wynot fails to discuss the violence perpetrated by nationalist gangs against Jews in the schools and, in the later 1930s, in the streets as well.

Urban tensions rose higher with the split in the city council between a majority of nationalist politicians and a large minority of socialists. The Pilsudski coup of 1926 installed a centrist "non-party bloc" nationally which attracted little support from the two extremes. As a result, the national government intervened increasingly into the affairs of the city until, in 1934, it established a "caretaker" government under the direction of Stefan Starzynski, who had an impressive record in the finance ministry.

Although Starzynski failed to solve Warsaw's budgetary problem, he gained additional national financing for civic improvements which were designed by a new Bureau of Urban Planning integrating suburban expansion, industrial growth, mass transit and housing construction; jurisdictional conflicts and financial problems limited the success of the bureau. Wynot's topical organization splits this interesting episode into several chapters but he is well aware of its importance.

On the whole, Professor Wynot ably, if somewhat dryly, recounts Warsaw's growing modernity as an urban centre and makes a useful contribution to the literature on urban history. His ambitious claims of examining Warsaw as an early example of a "third world" or "developing" primate city and as a focus of national integration, must be discounted since Wynot provides no supporting evidence. In addition to criticisms which pertain to the author, readers

will find the book sloppily edited, deficient in maps and lacking an adequate index.

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Diefendorf, Barbara. *Paris City Councillors in the Sixteenth Century: The Politics of Patrimony*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983. Pp. 351. \$27.20.

In our virtually unlettered age, the connection between "city" and "civilization" is too often lost. Nor is this merely an etymological matter, for it was the interaction of market, theatre, and governance, often paying obeisance to altar, that created the socio-cultural world we now inhabit and formerly celebrated in the liberal-arts education of yore. The city *is* civilization, but while television effectively spreads *aperçus* of urban life and culture to the hinterland, the passivity of television viewing, together with the death of the inner city and the cultural morbidity of the suburb, presages the downturn of our present cycle of civilization. It is therefore instructive for any modern student of the city to read a good book about cities in the past. It should be especially illuminating to read about the nascent phase of modern Paris, one of the principal generative cities of Western civilization.

Sixteenth-century Paris was governed by a *prévôt des marchands* (the merchants' provost), four *échevins* (or aldermen), and twenty-four councillors. While the administration of the city was provided by the various bureaucrats directed by the provost and aldermen, general advice without formal legislative power and deliberation about policy directions were provided by the councillors. Diefendorf has studied the ninety men who held councillor office between 1535 and 1575. Although she briefly introduces the reader to the structure of Paris government, its relations with royal authority (unfortunately, not also with diocesan authority), and some of the major political issues, the focus of her study is the politics of patrimony. She is interested less in what the councillors did in office than in how they got there, stayed in office, and helped their relations' advancement. How long a potential councillor has lived in the city or what ties to its patriciate facilitate acquiring citizenship, what professional and social attributes qualify one for urban service, and what personal connections promote urban political careers are questions not without interest to students of modern city government.

Diefendorf also examines the Paris city councillors' professional associations, marriage alliances, and family wealth. A 1554 edict of Henry II specified the council's composition: ten royal officers, seven bourgeois, and seven