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Hise, Greg. *Magnetic Los Angeles: Planning the Twentieth-Century Metropolis*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997. Pp. xiii, 294. Maps, black and white illustrations, bibliography and index. US $35.95 (cloth)

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siderations. In their schema the natural region was only uncovered through a regional survey. Regional planning was a process intended to accentuate the strengths and minimize the problems of these naturally existing spatial entities.

Looking back from an era in which such an activist and anti-market conception of public action is simply ruled out of "realistic" conversation, the expansiveness of their thought seems positively Quixotic. Yet given the common sense rationality of so much of what they advocated in light of what came to pass, the book forces one to consider why we permit ourselves to continue to succumb to "realism" when "idealism" might in fact be more efficient.

Spann's treatment of this group is fair and balanced. His conclusion that the full scope of what they taught and believed still awaits a better airing by policy makers is correct. Their ideas will continue to attract adherents not only because the problems, that they were among the first to identify, persist, but with the advent of globalization, have worsened. Thus their idea for establishing a rational spatial basis for a socially equitable civic life will continue to attract adherents. In that regard, this book becomes required reading for those seeking to understand the depth and complexity of the physical and written legacy which these talented people have bequeathed us.

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Hise, Greg. *Magnetic Los Angeles: Planning the Twentieth-Century Metropolis*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997. Pp. xiii, 294. Maps, black and white illustrations, bibliography and index. US $35.95 (cloth).

Los Angeles has been called everything imaginable, most of it bad. Perhaps the most acid description was discovered by Carl Abbott who quoted, though not approvingly, a critic who said that "Los Angeles was "topless, bottomless, shapeless, formless, and endless, ... random, frenzied, rootless, and unplanned" and "a violently aggressive organism."[1] One hopes that this critic will never read Greg Hise's very good book on metropolitan planning in the city that everyone loves to hate. Not only will the critic read a very stimulating story of planning in the Los Angeles and other areas, he will be in for an agonizing reappraisal. It has been an open secret in the profession of urban history that Los Angeles County created one of the first countywide planning commissions in the nation; that the city and county adopted a uniform street plan in the 1920s; that the city elected the first African American to the California state legislature; that the area created an enlightened scheme for metropolitan government in the Lakewood Plan; and that people from its suburb of Pasadena provided leadership for everything from the reinvention of Throop Institute into the California Institute of Technology to the creation of the Mount Wilson and Palomar observatories. These, together with developments in the Bay Area, made California the world leader in astronomy. The area is, and has been, anything but the retrograde, bible-thumping, poodle-worshipping nut case that its critics have charged. Rather, the area was, and is, a captivating human cauldron, fusing a new culture.

Kevin Starr and Carl Abbott have made this story clear, and Hise's history of city planning adds many important dimensions. Hise argues that the Los Angeles area was a leader in the adoption of sound, reformist, Progressive city planning principles. The American city planning tradition evolved from a number of sources, and as it did, both public planners and private developers quickly incorporated this tradition of "community building" into their repertoire. The tradition drew on the work of Ebenezer Howard; Lewis Mumford, Henry Wright, Clarence Stein and the regionalists of the 1920s; housing reformers; the New Deal new towns; the rural housing and "physical planning and social reform" work of the Resettlement Administration in California; the developments of businessmen and builders; and Southern California's and the Bay Area's experiences with wartime housing.

From the 1920s, when developer Walter Leimert created Leimert Park, Southern California has been at the forefront of the American planning tradition, along with other areas like the Country Club District of Kansas City. In the thirties, the Farm Security Administration experimented with mass-produced housing, novel materials like metal, innovative groupings, and enlightened models from Radburn, New Jersey.

From there, the FSA ideas drifted back into town, along with the war workers from the agricultural camps, and took root in Bay Area wartime housing. In Southern California, other experiments were conducted by both the aircraft industry and private builders. Like the FSA, they also had adopted mass production principles years before Leavitt and Sons. Far from being "planless"and "formless," these suburbs were located within driving distance of the factories that were churning out warplanes, as was Westchester, located within sight of the plants at Los Angeles Municipal Airport. All this was not a flight from the center city, but rather an attempt to integrate shopping, services, home, and work for suburban factory hands.

These threads of "community building," harking back to the 1920s, came together in the postwar developments of Henry Kaiser. One was planned decentralization, enough to have warmed the cockles of Lewis Mumford's heart. These suburbs offered not single use, but rather occupational and economic diversity; access to employment; comprehensive financial and city planning; and linkage of center city and periphery. Too, they were systematically formed around major arterials. The city was not being disowned, but rather tied together; the past was not rejected, but rather affirmed and built upon. Kaiser and his partner Fritz Burns believed that a home gave a working class family a stake in American society. To achieve his goal of providing both white- and blue-collar housing, Kaiser also tried to industrialize the process of home building and to promote vertical business integration.

This is a very good book which pulls together well all of the American planning traditions and relates them to trends in business.

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Crinson, Mark. *Empire Building: Orientalism and Victorian Architecture*. London and New York: Routledge, 1996. Pp. xvi, 288 pages. 95 black and white illustrations, index. $104.95 (cloth); $34.95 (paper).

Crinson's study of nineteenth-century British building in three Near Eastern cities resonates with current geopolitical issues (the cities are Alexandria, Istanbul, and Jerusalem). Arab-Israeli struggles over Jerusalem and a Palestinian homeland, the role of a westernizing Egypt (and its internal problems with a militant Islamic fundamentalism), Turkey poised between east and west and now rebuffed by the European Union; all this and more makes *Empire Building* immediately relevant, even though engagement with these current issues is not on Crinson's agenda. That they lurk nearby is evident only from the continuing dialogue with Edward Said that informs the argument. Said's thesis about the hegemonic nature of Orientalism and its essentially imperialistic goals provides a running counterpoint to the urban and architectural investigation, and evidence from specific projects corrects some of Said's more sweeping conclusions.

Although complex themes overlap and interact, a clear, straightforward structure helps us find our way. The "Introduction" introduces key themes, especially questions raised by Said's thesis which can be tested against the specific examples of British building in the Near East. Crinson notes the difference between the "informal" empire developing in the Near East and true imperial rule in India and suggests the even greater complexity of interests and audiences to be addressed where British power was not consolidated and official. Said drew on Foucault's analysis of power and knowledge, the two inseparable and working through discursive structures. Architecture for the Victorians was just such a discourse. Writing on eastern buildings and culture by Ruskin, Fergusson, and Owen Jones provide discursive themes for analysis in Crinson's critical account

Part I, "Orientalism and Architecture", sets the scene with a review of the travel accounts, espionage reports and other documents that included Islamic buildings as notable only among other exotic sights. Through the eighteenth century increasingly accurate knowledge of the cities and buildings of Islamic regions issued from various expeditions. The forms their reports revealed to the European public provided examples for the rationalist analysis of architectural form by theorists such as Laugier. Chief among the British architects who studied and wrote sympathetically on the subject was Owen Jones. Jones used his knowledge of eastern building to confront the prevailing revivalism of the west and the dilemma of a style for the modern (mid-nineteenth century) age.

Jones, Ruskin, the historian Edward Freeman, and James Fergusson were key figures in the attempt to place Islamic building in an historical context, to give what we would consider a social-scientific account. Freeman, writing in the 1840s, was dismissive. The east was static, the fruit of a "lifeless seed" compared to the architecture of the west. To the contrary the architectural theorist and historian James Fergusson, in views informed by theories of race and development drawn from geology and ethnology, found the work fertile and inventive, but lacking in the discipline achieved in the west. Ruskin also drew on his knowledge of geology to argue the need for an art informed by nature. The conventionalism and abstraction he found in Islamic design pointed both to moral and intellectual failure. While Ruskin used examples from Islam to support his rejection of industrial society, Owen Jones found them to suggest ways forward, constructive examples of how design might meet the needs of industry. These he promoted both at the 1851 Hyde Park exhibition, and in various publications, notably the monumental *Grammar of Ornament* of 1856. Underlying all these positions, whatever their differences, were the common themes of western conquest and control.

Western expansion brought to the front the question of style; British building in the east raised the question of how best to address domestic and expatriate audiences, as well as the local, native, population and local urban contexts. Where some of the key building projects were for churches, Byzantine architecture might have been considered a useful bridge to the east. While the French made notable contributions to the study of Byzantine architecture the British hung back, and it was not until Lethaby and Swainson's 1894 study of Hagia Sophia that a close, first-hand British study of a Byzantine work appeared. Complex liturgical issues, as well as the religious politics of the Holy land and the Crimean war contributed to this ambivalence, while confirming colonialist views of the Near East.

The buildings studied in the second part of *Empire Building* give architectural instances of the diverse attitudes set out in Crinson's analysis of texts. The principal subjects are James Wild's church of St. Mark's, Alexandria, 1845–54; G. E. Street's Crimean Memorial Church, Istanbul, 1864–68; designs by a number of architects for an unbuilt British consulate in Alexandria; and Christ Church, Jerusalem by J. W. Johns and Matthew Habershon, 1839–49. A number of other related buildings, and the work of other architects are also illustrated and discussed, to reveal conflicting views of appropriate design, and the other issues, including budget and site, that shaped the progress of each project. As well the buildings are located in their urban contexts, illustrated by contemporary city plans.

The buildings discussed illustrate a range of responses. At one end was the British embassy in Istanbul (1842–54, W. J. Smith), a Renaissance palazzo with an enclosed central court following Charles Barry's London Reform Club (1837–41). Conventional