

Pitt, Leonard and Dale Pitt. *Los Angeles A to Z: An Encyclopedia of the City and County*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997. Pp. xix, 603. Maps, black and white illustrations, appendices, selected readings and films. US\$34.95 (cloth)

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tions interrégionales pour éviter la «minorisation» des francophones sur l'île de Montréal. La préservation du caractère français de Montréal passe aussi par la relance économique.

Les livres qui traitent de sujets encore d'actualité au moment de leur parution ont souvent le défaut de vieillir très vite. Cependant, comme celui de Levine retrace les événements de façon chronologique et qu'il raconte l'histoire linguistique de Montréal à partir d'aussi loin que 1760, il devrait garder longtemps son intérêt. Les modifications que Levine a dû apporter à son dernier chapitre montrent cependant qu'il est hasardeux d'interpréter l'histoire à mesure qu'elle se fait : au rythme où les relations linguistiques évoluent à Montréal, il faudrait sans doute réécrire une nouvelle version du dernier chapitre à tous les cinq ans. Par exemple, il affirme presque que le référendum de l'automne 1995 et le discours du Premier ministre Parizeau qui a suivi ont modifié pour toujours «le cours de la dynamique linguistique de Montréal» (p. 375). Il me semble qu'il faudrait attendre un peu avant de se prononcer sur cette question. Le livre demeure toutefois un incontournable pour tous ceux qui veulent comprendre la dynamique linguistique de Montréal. Il est important par ailleurs de souligner l'excellence de la traduction de Marie Poirier.

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Pitt, Leonard and Dale Pitt. *Los Angeles A to Z: An Encyclopedia of the City and County*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997. Pp. xix, 603. Maps, black and white illustrations, appendices, selected readings and films. US\$34.95 (cloth).

This volume is the latest in a wave of encyclopedic treatments of urban histories that have appeared over the past decade, beginning with *The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History* (1987, 2nd ed. 1996), *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis* (1994), and *The Encyclopedia of New York City* (1995). All differed in details of format but are similar in breadth of coverage which, if the trend continues, will make it possible to do comparative studies of urban developments.

Los Angeles: A to Z is a handsomely designed volume with over 300 black-and-white illustrations, just under 2000 articles, appendices, maps, a bibliography for further reading, a chronology, and even a select list of films about Los Angeles. The articles range from topical overviews on such subjects as agriculture and architecture, ethnic groups and earthquakes, murders and, of course, the motion picture industry. The rest of the volume is filled with interesting, brief articles ranging from 50 to several hundred words in length, sketching histories of individuals, neighborhoods, landmarks and agencies, all encompassed within 603 pages. This is a remarkable achievement, for apparently all of the research, assembling and writing was done by the authors themselves, although they did, of course, consult a vast array of books, libraries, archives, and

individuals in a process that began in 1991 and was completed in 1996.

This is a handy desk reference work that will be indispensable to librarians, local teachers, journalists and speech writers, as well as the general reader who is interested in the history of Los Angeles. But the researcher will want something of more depth and richness of detail, even as a first cut, than this volume furnishes. For example, the topical article on architecture is tantalizingly lacking in examples of buildings, architects, architectural firms, with the result that it is a chronicle of architectural styles that might be found in almost any American city. The biographical sketch of Ellen Stern Harris gives no dates. Presumably she is still living, because the last sentence is written in the present tense. It should be said, however, that this is by no means true of most of the biographical sketches. Hollywood and the motion picture industry are well-represented, though, to be sure, the film buffs will find many stars and directors omitted, but the giants are there. Business and industry seem to be under-represented.

There are some suggestions for inclusion in the second edition (the authors hint that there might be one), to make the work even more useful and user-friendly. First and foremost, include an index, which would allow the reader access to the names, events or topics covered within the text of multiple articles; cross-references to related articles, particularly to topical articles; key sources under articles, particularly to manuscript collections, public documents and reports — all would ease access to the rich materials in this volume.

Los Angeles: A to Z is, nevertheless, a great achievement, a boon to citizens of Los Angeles, and will hold its own with the small but growing collection of metropolitan encyclopedias.

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Gerhard, Anselm. *The Urbanization of Opera: Music Theatre in Paris in the Nineteenth Century*. Trans. Mary Whittall. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998. [Originally published as *Die Verstädterung der Oper: Paris und das Musiktheater des 19. Jahrhunderts*. Stuttgart: J.B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung und Carl Ernst Poeschel Verlag GmbH, 1992.] Pp. xxi, 503. Black and white illustrations, bibliography, index.

During the middle decades of the nineteenth century when Italians talked about opera, their first thoughts frequently centered on the quality and dynamics of the human voice. For Germans, caught up in the excitement of Wagnerian music drama, it was the orchestration and the multilayered nature of the symphonic underpinning that captured the public imagination. But in France, despite the presence and success of theatres performing Italian and German operas, not to mention the *Opéra Com-*