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Rabb, Theodore K. and Rotberg, Robert I., eds. *Industrialization and Urbanization: Studies in Interdisciplinary History*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981. Pp. 324. \$5.95 (paper)

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reality. For that reason one is struck by his failure to suggest a methodology by which these reconstitutions of early communities could be improved by the proper application of research techniques familiar to him as an urban historian. The final offering of the section of the Philadelphia "Centennial" affirms the utility of artifacts for historical interpretation and refers to the considerable interest in them by historians. Attention is again directed at the teaching possibilities of the event, thereby evading the issue of how those historians actually interpret history by using artifacts.

The third section finds the author straddling the two themes. Entitled "Landscapes as Artifacts," the section devotes its first study to vegetation and the third to "above-ground archaeology," both of which point out the historical evidence apparent in our physical surroundings. The value of recognizing this information is clearly established, although the prior knowledge of historical fact appears to be a prerequisite, if for no other reason than to distinguish false leads from valuable clues. Thus the artifact again becomes illustrative. The middle chapter on regional studies in America suggests Chicago as a model for the practice of urban history. Useful for its extensive bibliography on Chicago, this segment provides urban historians with few lessons on how to examine a community beyond the obvious one of doing it well and in detail. The final section of the book, aptly called "Coda," is a useful, but not novel, series of reflections on historical fallacies and a number of the crafts' fundamental objectives.

Regardless of the theme of a particular chapter, Schlereth tantalizes the reader with references to the volume of work now touching on the interpretation of artifacts. He alludes occasionally to his viewpoint, mentioned in the introduction, that artifacts contain unique data which can be unlocked with "methodological rigor and precision." For the most part the singular nature of material evidence is not proven and the methodology remains unarticulated. If Schlereth knows how to unlock this information, he is not telling. Certainly he fails to apply the insights developed by studying urban history to this closely-related field. To be fair to the author, he also intends the book to expatiate teaching techniques, and in this he succeeds. The author declares himself as addressing professional historians, students and the general public in writing history. Readers of this journal will likely find that there is little in the volume for them unless they have the energy and desire to get their classes out of the classroom. Considerably more will be found by their students, particularly those engaged in urban and regional studies and public history courses. Persons not actively engaged in history will benefit particularly from exposure to *Artifacts and the American Past*. It is well-written and clearly organized and underscores the existence of historical evidence all around us. As for those of us waiting for some leadership in the establishment of a methodology for studying artifacts, Schlereth has just provided *Material Culture Studies in America*. A compendium of seminal essays

in the field, the volume does not obviously impinge upon urban history and is thus best reviewed elsewhere, but it does provide a thoughtful review of past scholarship, a bibliography and useful introductions to classic material culture studies. Urbanists interested in all aspects of their surroundings are well advised to secure a copy of the second volume.

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Rabb, Theodore K. and Rotberg, Robert I., eds. *Industrialization and Urbanization: Studies in Interdisciplinary History*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981. Pp. 324. \$5.95 (paper).

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One of these collections brings together some of the most influential and polished essays that have appeared in the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*; the other, papers presented to a 1979 conference at the University of Connecticut on "The Dynamics of Modern Industrial Cities." In form and content these respective volumes reflect their origins.

Rabb's and Rotberg's *Industrialization and Urbanization* is slick, sophisticated to the touch and to the eye, and impossibly eclectic in its presentation of an urban experience that reaches from imperial Rome to post-colonial India, passing by early industrialization in England, nineteenth-century Marseille, coal mining "towns" in England, Wales and the United States, and social experience in Gilded Age and Progressive Boston and Buffalo. Were this not enough, such specialized essays are supplemented by book reviews supposedly indicative of the "revisionist concern . . . of the new urban history." There are workers, families, transients and ideologies sufficiently afloat in the pages of this collection to attract numbers of scholars (most of whom will be, as are the contributors and editors, historians), but just what is distinctly urban about their experience is never forcefully articulated, nor is it readily apparent what kind of reader could possibly remain riveted to this disparate assemblage of articles, however attractively packaged.

*Modern Industrial Cities*, edited by Bruce Stave, is also discursive, spanning American and European experiences, but is more focussed conceptually, exploring how families, neighbourhoods, housing and urban organization have reflected city-dwelling peoples' adaptation to the class tensions of capitalist society. Subtitled *History, Policy, and Survival*, this volume addresses the academic's classic moment of self-doubt: is what I do useful in the real world?

The historians, urban planners, sociologists, environmentalists, geographers and others who gathered in Storrs, Connecticut obviously thought so, attempting to address the historical origins of the contemporary urban crisis, and relate their findings to, in Eric Lampard's words, "our masters — namely those experts and functionaries who will make our urban critical choices" (p. 613). The resulting papers, like all conference proceedings, are rough, and the many commentaries reproduced chatty and academically witty, if often lacking in substance. Unlike the Rabb and Rotberg collection, then, Stave's volume is a little unrefined, done up in Sage's unfortunate gaudy style, with print, maps, figures and tables as unpleasing as it is possible to imagine. That Princeton's attractive and tasteful *Industrialization and Urbanization* is priced at \$5.95, while Sage's crass edition (its back cover has an advertisement for the Sage-produced *Journal of Urban History*) will set you back \$4.00 more is a reminder of market realities: policy can be made to pay.

For all of their differences, these works touch common bases: each concerns itself, as their titles announce, with the city and industrial-capitalist development. What is curious in the end, after more than six hundred pages, is just how little we have been told about this relationship. This is a consequence of many factors including some obvious difficulty in conceptualizing just exactly what urban history is.

As Lampard himself recognizes in a concluding comment in the Stave collection, there may well be no such entity as "the urban," for cities and their historical generation and current problems are bound up in the totality of particular social formations, in which political, economic, social, and cultural forces work simultaneously and interdependently upon town and country, across regions, up and down sea-boards, and into interiors. Of course there is a spatial component of particular social formations that is distinctly urban, but cities have lives of their own, on the one hand, and are integrated into and influenced by other settings, on the other. Certainly many of the essays in *Industrialization and Urbanization* buttress this point. William Sewell's account of the capacity of peasants' sons to secure non-manual occupations in mid-nineteenth century Marseille, Thomas Africa's mention of Rome's dependence upon imported foodstuffs and the resulting precariousness of social order, threatened by the bread riot of the urban masses, and Virginia Yans-McLaughlin's pioneering depiction of seasonal labour and family organization in early twentieth-century Buffalo can be read in this way. Nor can the essays of the Stave volume be read entirely outside of such a perspective: François Bédarida and Anthony R. Sutcliffe, for instance, point out the diversity of generic terms used to designate streets in nineteenth-century London, including terrace, lane, grove and drive, obvious borrowings from a rural culture.

This skepticism about an insular urban experience is reinforced, dramatically so, in those essays that actually situate their historical subjects in the basic context of economic

life and capitalist development. What is amazing is that so few of these volumes' articles do this. Notable exceptions in the Rabb and Rotberg collection include Jon Amsden's and Stephen Brier's fascinating discussion of coal miners' strikes between 1881-94 and Howard Spodek's analysis of the transformation of post-colonial Indian towns. Amsden and Brier locate the formative years of the United Mine Workers of America in the period when a *national* market for coal emerged out of the late nineteenth-century years of capital consolidation, integration of the home market, and post-Reconstruction political stabilization. But their study, so significant in terms of coal's vital importance in urban life and the UMWA's place as a pacesetter in labour unionism's program, is anything but narrowly urban, focussing as it does on coal communities of the west, mid-west, and upper south. The power of Spodek's essay, similarly, lies in its demonstration of how an aggressive rising bourgeoisie in the Indian region of Saurashtra wrestled power from the urban-based but landed princes to consolidate parochial city-states that brought "the agrarian sector into fuller participation in a reciprocal urban-rural market" (p. 315).

These kinds of processes are simply not addressed in *Modern Industrial Cities*. In spite of a section entitled, "The Economy of Cities," the papers published distance themselves from economic structure in a maze of sub-issues, from "gentrification" to a neoliberal jargonistic escapism that Stephan Jonas's "Future Organization of the European Industrial City" (this in a section on the economy of cities!) champions as "substitute urbanism" (p. 243). This is perhaps not surprising in a volume prefaced by Michael Kammen's comment that Marxist influence in the new urban history is relatively slight. Marxists obviously have other fields to cultivate, fields in which the connectedness of economic and social life, as well as the political power and cultural hegemony that blur them into a larger totality, are recognized, fields where the urban experience is not hived off from "the other," but integrated into it.

This may not be urban history, but it may well be just the kind of analysis needed if we are to comprehend the current process of decay. For the crisis of the city in capitalist society is *not* an isolated experience, peculiar to the urban entity. It is part and parcel of the fiscal crisis of the state and the current crisis of capital: one moment in the massive restructuring of the mode of accumulation and appropriation. Those urbanists who aim to make their "masters," the policy framers, sit up and take notice have seldom dealt with the rise and fall of the city beautiful on this level, however. They have tended, with rare exceptions, to limit their response to urban decay, in part because their focus on the process of city development inhibits a wider appreciation of the ways in which the experiences of town and country, politics and economics, are all inseparable.

Sam Bass Warner's closing comments to the participants of the conference on "The Dynamics of Industrial Cities"

are themselves characteristic of this setting of limits within urban studies, and strike an explicit political note:

Someone mentioned that some years ago we were much concerned with the ghetto and its turmoil but we do not seem to be worried about that anymore. . . . The blacks have quieted down, so there is no longer a crisis . . . as a group we wish to be experts and reformers, and, like our predecessors, we are concerned with the elaboration and multiplication of middle-class lifestyles. . . . If we notice our own behaviour in the past, and the unexpected behaviour of cities, it seems that we should be constantly talking about the processes whereby people do not get so badly hurt as they have in the past. . . . We should not lose sight of our equity concerns; which probably are one of the nice things about the bourgeois liberal tradition. (p. 292-3, 295-6).

The value of these two collections is that they give one cause to pause and think over the meaning and limits of such words and such politics. After some reflection it may be possible for urbanists to address these limits of their discipline, and to realize that they have more to tell us about than a reified urban experience. For it should be apparent that the current crisis engulfs the modern industrial city at the same time that it extends beyond it. The urban, as part of a larger totality, is too important to be left to itself.

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Saunders, Peter. *Social Theory and the Urban Question*. London: Hutchinson University Library, 1981. Pp. 310. Tables. \$18.95.

*Social Theory and the Urban Question* is a fascinating and sophisticated review. Its stated purpose is to make a critical assessment of major theories in urban sociology and the way they have conceptualized "the urban" (p. 8). But it succeeds in doing far more than this. For, contributing to a recent debate on social science epistemology which seems to emanate from the University of Sussex (see Sayer, 1979),<sup>1</sup> Saunders confronts controversial issues such as the empirical validation of theory and the question of structural determination versus human agency in urban explanation. These are matters which have been discussed in many other disciplines than urban sociology.

The book, then, has one central theme and various sub-themes. With consideration of the three major social theorists in capitalism, Marx, Weber and Durkheim, Saunders begins his search for a specifically "urban" theory for urban sociology. These three are found to have theorized the social relations of capitalism but not to have proposed any theory

of the city or the urban: the modern city is seen in their work "simply at the most visible expression of developments in society as a whole" (p. 47). Human ecology, though its earliest applications were to urban communities, now has no necessary link to urban phenomena. It has become a specialized sort of structural functionalism concerned with "how human aggregates adapt to changing conditions, and there is nothing specifically urban about that" (p. 78).

Recent attempts to found a new sociology of the city on the concept of housing classes are argued to have failed for several reasons, including the need for patterns of housing consumption to be analyzed with a theory of class structure or ideology rather than a theory of the city (p. 147). And detailed critical discussion of Marxist explanations, especially those of Castells and Lefebvre, find they have treated urban theories as ideological rather than scientific. Even Marxist work which conceptualizes the urban as a spatial unit of collective consumption uses the process of consumption as theoretically significant and the city as one expression of this. "Urban struggles," similarly, are theorized in their relation to class struggle rather than to the spatial context in which they arise.

The point is clear. Sociologists have not been able to theorize the urban. Rather, they have linked theories of social processes to particular spatial outcomes. Saunders concludes that urban sociology, despite its name, must have a non-spatial theoretical core. He proposes the development of a distinctive urban sociology based upon theoretical analyses of three themes: social consumption, local government and competitive politics.

Perhaps the books' sub-themes are of greater interest. They certainly are more contentious. Consider the two mentioned above: the question of the empirical validation of theory and that of the merits of structural explanation versus explanation according theoretical primacy to human agency or voluntarism. Saunders ends his book with an Appendix entitled "A Note on the Empirical Testing of Theories." Here he agrees with the proposition widely advanced in recent epistemological discussion (e.g. Sayer, 1979) that "facts" are not theory-neutral. But, he argues, any theoretical perspective must be testable, if only on its own terms; it must specify "disconfirming instances." Marxist approaches which do not develop such "counter-factuals" are assessed as tautological, and a Weberian "ideal-type" framework is advocated instead. Tackling Marxist work again, Saunders indicates insight in his discussion of structural determination and human agency in social science explanation. Castells' writing on urban social movements is criticized here. It is argued that Castells' explanation of urban social movements as the "automatic" expression of structural contradictions is unsatisfactory, since it cannot account for "the question of how actors understand their situation" (p. 203). Clearly, "if the same structural contradictions manifested in the same sorts of crises can result in different modes of political strug-