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Matthew COOPER and Margaret RODMAN, *New Neighbors: A Case Study of Cooperative Housing*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991. 326 pages, \$19.95 (paper)

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[See table of contents](#)

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This case study enriches the notion of community politics. It broadens the concept to that of an arena which is approached from the plurality of positions of the peasant members. It rejects the notion of political engagement as a result of a representation of interests; instead, it calls for an analysis of the interplay between diverse social and economic constructions and the internal dialogue conducted among the participants.

The author argues for an approach to political practices firmly situated in local and regional contexts. Thus, he challenges macroscopic studies of peasant rebellions which conceal the specificity of history and locality as well as microscopic descriptions of culture which dichotomize human nature between the 'them' and the 'us' (p.218).

This complexly argued work is an excellent piece of anthropological writing. At the theoretical as well as the substantive level, *Livelihood and Resistance* represents a major contribution to the literature on peasant economies and resistance movements. Furthermore, this volume is of great importance for Andean studies because it shows the ways in which Andean communities contain within them the seeds necessary to generate a critical, militant awareness regarding their exploitation. These communities are economic and social sources of life and of political engagement, and Andean people are thinkers of their own who are able to alter their circumstances.

Matthew COOPER and Margaret RODMAN, *New Neighbors: A Case Study of Cooperative Housing*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991. 326 pages, \$19.95 (paper).

By Barbara Spronk

Athabasca University

Those who work in the field of cooperative housing in Canada have produced a great deal of material on this alternative form of housing, but very little of it is readily accessible to those outside the field. Matthew Cooper and Margaret Rodman have rendered the wider world of urban and community research a considerable service with *New Neighbours*. Their major aim is to describe how this little-known kind of alternative housing works, by focusing on two relatively new co-ops, Harbourside and Wind-

ward, in the Harbourfront area of Toronto. Their wider aim, however, is to exemplify through this descriptive approach the benefits of resident control of housing, and thereby contribute to "the realization that citizen participation and democratic control are essential for the future of our cities" (p. x). By following the development of these communities through their first three years, Cooper and Rodman are able to elucidate several aspects of community formation, including the shaping influences of political and economic environment in which they are enmeshed, the impact of the conceptual baggage of private property and its attendant allegiances and values that co-op residents bring with them to their new homes, and the challenges these residents take up in their struggle to forge something they can call a "community" out of the mix of ages, abilities, affluence and ethnicity that constitutes their cluster of new neighbours.

The authors intentionally skirt issues like what constitutes democracy or how best to define community or participation, preferring to show how these concepts are put into practice in the daily lives of co-op developers and residents. For the most part, this approach works well, especially when we are allowed to hear the residents' own voices. The excerpts the authors have chosen from their volumes of transcripts never fail to touch the heart as well as the intellect. This grounding of the concepts of cooperative living in residents' own reality increases as the book progresses. The third and second-to-last chapters, on control and conflict, offer by far the richest mine of both conceptual and interpretive material. The authors' portrayal of flowers and shrubs as "not simply things people fight about", but rather as "things people fight with" (p. 24), is truly inspired, as is their overall demonstration of the ways in which spaces and physical constructions are settings for social actions and part of those actions, both constraining residents' behaviour and being constructed in social terms by that behaviour. Landscape provides a setting for social action, but also becomes part of that action.

By comparison with these last chapters, the initial chapters that deal with housing policy on the federal and Metro Toronto levels, the development history of the two co-ops, and an overview of cooperative organization and goals, seem somewhat bloodless and even tedious, especially for the non-Toronto reader. At times, too, the middle chapters on how these co-ops recruit new members and deal

with their intended mix of incomes, family types, and “wheelies” and “walkies” (Windward parlance for those residents confined to wheelchairs and those not- Windward is Canada’s first coop fully accessible to chair-bound residents), tend to lack focus and to wander around a number of points before achieving closure. However, the authors’ practice of providing a concluding section at the end of each chapter that summarizes the main points helps keep the reader on track.

The result is a book that community researchers and activists should have on their shelves. The bibliography alone is worth the price of the book. Cooper and Rodman’s balanced appraisal of the benefits and drawbacks of integrated communities that residents themselves control provides a strong affirmation that these communities do work, and that mixed-income, integrated, non-profit housing cooperatives merit public support. In light of the February 1992 announcement that federal funding was being withdrawn from this housing sector, let us hope that this case study finds its way onto the shelves of federal and provincial policy makers, and into the arsenal of those who are struggling to make Canada’s cities equitable and humane environments for community life.

Phillip C. SALZMAN and John G. GALATY (eds.), *Nomads in a Changing World*, Instituto Universitario Orientale Dipartimento di Studi Asiatici Series Minor XXXIII, Naples, 1990. 470 pages, (paper).

By Ian Whitaker

Simon Fraser University

This volume is a further symposium on aspects of nomadism edited by Salzman and Galaty, and is an important contribution to the study of migratory pastoralists. Regrettably the book has been long delayed, being the proceedings of a meeting held in London in 1978. As a result some of the discussion is not always cognisant of theoretical developments, and a number of the contributions do not cite publications after the 1970’s. This is unfair to the participants as well as to readers. Some authors have been able to make some revisions, however, and this certainly redeems the collection. The fieldwork on which much of the material is based is all from that period, and ranges from the Middle East, Northern,

West and East Africa, South America, and the European Arctic.

In an important introductory essay, the editors give some consideration to the present status of nomadic societies, many of which now demonstrate a high level of economic specialization, which no doubt contributes to their survival in rapidly industrializing countries. Often livestock play only a minor part in ongoing productive activities, but remain important both ideologically and as reserve option maintained for long-term security. Indeed, as Frantz shows in a fine survey of pastoralism in West Africa, varying external and internal forces — he deplores these two adjectives, but they have utility as shorthand — require a detailed analysis society by society. Not all the contributors have shown such caution.

In some instances sedentarization of nomads, as for example in the Libyan situation reported by Dalton, creates a complex situation which offers individuals considerable choice. In an essay analysing processes in the Middle East, Emanuel Marx shows the competing pressures of wage labour openings, increase in the price of meat, and attempts to maintain token herds, even at a loss. The maintenance of traditional frameworks is often striking, and deserves a more lengthy analysis than it receives in the volume as a whole. The editors acknowledge that there has been a movement away from earlier paradigms which stressed human or cultural ecology, which often in turn emphasised exchange, man/land relations as well as natural elements. This drift in the study of nomadism is to be attributed, they suggest, to cultural materialism and varieties of Marxism.

This is the dominant intellectual basis of several of the studies. In particular Pierre Bonte devotes over 50 pages to an essay on French Marxism, and he points to the continuing significance of class structures, modes of production and the theory of value. Peter Rigby, on the other hand, has an even longer discussion of pastoral production and socialist transformation among three ethnic groups in Tanzania: Ilparakuyo, Maasai and Barbaig. His approach is broadly comparative, but his starting point is Marx’s *Grundrisse*. Not all his readers will share his acceptance of such Marxian labels as the ‘Germanic’ mode of production. However his rich data permit alternative paradigms for those readers who find classical Marxism too restrictive.

Paul Spencer writes in a more ‘mainstream’ social anthropological tradition. The title of his