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James T. Lemon

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1960s. In Toronto, for instance, they kept many of the residential neighbourhoods alive while suburban development was in full swing. For a time it looked as though these inner-city residents would be moving out just as the suburbanites moved back. Now, increasingly, the immigrants of 20 years ago are staying put, selling their cars if they had them, joining in the life of the city, and chuckling at the growing discomfort of their suburban relatives. Yet another flaw of this book is its failure to perceive that existing residents of urban cores might have a lot to offer. Only Lowry touches on this point, but with an odd proposal that would doom the local government of urban centres to impotence caused by factional squabbling.

Low-density suburban development will not be able to adapt to the sharp reductions in energy use that will begin during the 1980s. Only urban efficiency or rural self-sufficiency will allow North American society to continue in something like its present form. I'd like to read a book that helps me figure out how we can survive. This gloomy, inept book from Massachusetts is more of an invitation to live it up until the whole thing falls apart.

Richard Gilbert
Alderman
City of Toronto

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Within the outburst of Marxist writings over the past two decades, two main lines of attack have developed. In the cultural-historical file, the flagship is E.P. Thompson's now well-known *The Making of the English Working Class*. In the structural line, the writings of L. Althusser stand out. Recently with the appearance of Thompson's *The Poverty of Theory* the struggle between these two perspectives has been engaged. Both invoke Marx, but historians may be relieved to know that the empirical, concrete approach of Thompson, Hobsbawm and others, have grappled successfully enough to soften, if ever so slightly, the harsh logical structuralism of French theoreticians.

This is apparent, even explicit, in Castells. Although very much a sociologist out of the French structural mode, in *City, Class and Power [CCP]*, he recognizes the need to pursue concrete research with a more flexible language; the concern now must be more with "historical relevance than with formal coherence" (p. 12). Indeed, this is an advance from the logical preoccupations of *The Urban Question [UQ]* which is (ironically) incomprehensible because he seeks too tight a language.

Even so, the development of Marxist work in the urban scene is of importance. The writings of David Harvey, Allen Scott, Shoukry Roweis and others are influencing geographers, planners, and urban students generally. The

International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, begun in 1977, has become the focus for debate among Marxist urbanists. Of greater significance is the concern of Castells and others on urban social movements, on local collective action, bringing this thrust close to the central issue of Thompson: the working class was made through the action of ordinary people under the development of competitive industrial capital. Today's concern, though still fixed on class, is somewhat different in that it asks how, under corporate capitalism, do people organize in large "monopolvilles"?

UQ is divided into five sections (eighteen chapters) and an afterword. I, the historical process of urbanization, primarily dealing with "the formation of the metropolitan regions in industrial capitalist societies," Latin American dependent urbanization, and "the urban phenomenon in the socialist countries;" II, the urban ideology, chiefly a critique of Chicago sociology; III, the urban structure, the development of his own view of what should be studied; IV, urban politics - not spatial analysis but power relations through state urban planning and social groups; V (written in 1975), the urban process attempting to clarify planning and grass-roots movements; and the Afterword (also written in 1975), answering the critics on concepts. In *CCP* the same issues are addressed but less formally, with the focus on the notion of collective consumption, planning and urban social movement, and ecology movements. In both books the empirical material is drawn primarily from France and the United States. As he and his structuralist friends attempt to work out an urban "science," other

writings appear. Now at Berkeley, Castells is turning more to the U.S. scene.

I will touch on Castells' views on four central points: the urban question itself, the notion of collective consumption, state action in planning, and urban social movements. First, the urban question refers to the problem of the object of study. To clear the way in *UQ*, he criticizes the classical urban sociology of the Chicago school, that of Park, McKenzie, Burgess, especially Wirth, and latter day urban "ecologists," Hawley and Duncan. Fundamentally, he rejects the Wirthian paradigm that size, density, and heterogeneity are the determinants of an urban culture and subsequently of a theory of space. Further, the basic distinction between city and country is rejected because they are both within the same social scheme, namely capitalism. The rural community, described by Chicago anthropologist Redfield as small, homogeneous, and without the alienating pathologies of the city, cannot be accepted. In this review Castells is in one sense telling us nothing new. Raymond Williams has successfully dealt with the city/country issue, and Oscar Lewis nearly thirty years ago challenged Redfield. Castells' point, however, is to attack the naturalistic basis of Chicago, to turn us toward a social view, toward acceptance of collective co-operative action, particularly class action, something impossible or difficult in a city of disassociated competitive individuals. Perhaps, however, by downplaying size, density and heterogeneity, he tends to deny *spatial* questions prime importance. Access is primarily a social question and only secondarily a

spatial issue. Some spatially-oriented Marxist geographers and planners reviewing his work believe he should accord equal status to the spatial as an "object" of concern. Indeed, Castells seems to dislike (or did) the word *city*, thus contributing to the tangling up in *UQ*.

The second point is collective consumption. In Monopolville under corporate capitalism, urban life is defined primarily by consumption rather than by production. Castells is shifting Marxist thought strongly to the "reproductive" from the "productive" sphere. Under this new urban model social interconnections are stronger, whether people like this or not, tending toward rigidity and standardization, and as a coherent whole becoming "a completely totalitarian universe" (*CCP*, p. 33). Thus, "ruled by the centralized power of a far-away machine," Monopolville is oppressive but also loaded with contradictions. Housing, urban transport, education, and health will become more inequitably distributed, and an issue in one sector affects the others in the urban scene.

Although I can agree that inequality is always a danger, the term "collective consumption" is bothersome for two reasons. First, *production* of wealth is still a major attribute of cities despite the obvious importance of restaurants, day care, and professional sports. The problem for Marxists (and for many others too, on the right as well as left) is whether people working in restaurants are actually productive. Are agriculture and manufacturing the only spheres producing wealth? Are academics

productive? Sometimes we doubt this, of course! Yet we must believe so; otherwise how can we claim any rights? My second problem is whether consumption ties down everything that is not productive. Sex between lovers and worship for those still religious in a serious way are hard to reduce to consumption, collective actions though they may be. Similarly, community movements cannot easily be thus characterized.

Third, the state has stepped more and more into the resolution of contradictions through what we call planning. Obviously Castells is correct here. From piecemeal interest in traffic congestion and public transport, we now witness comprehensive planning of land use covering all aspects of urban life and urban living. Castells sees planning as a political matter, and therefore recognizes that immediate political concerns can subvert the planners who prefer to believe they are operating neutrally and technically rather than politically. Planners, as others have also said, have become mediators among interests, interests that are not equally balanced among those with capital and those without.

Fourth, conflicts continue to arise so the politicization of urban life, of neighbourhood life, appears. Very clearly influenced by the events of May 1968 in Paris and residents' actions elsewhere in the western world, Castells loads great value on the urban movements dealing with questions of consumption, of reproduction, rather more than those of the shop floor. The social movements at best are not reformist nor party based; they seek to transform the urban consumption system, to create "pertinent effects in the power

relations" (*UQ*, p. 348). He analyzes the successes and failure in Santiago, Paris, and Montreal in the early 1970s. As in sociology generally, he uses typologies, here based on kinds of demands, responses, and successes/failures. Certainly, though optimistic about local movements, he is willing to criticize them.

In *CCP* a chapter is devoted to environmental movements. His uncertain conclusion - "the fight for the environment in the United States will either remain a vast mystification undertaking, or become a powerful lever of change" (p. 166) - while undoubtedly correct points to a fundamental difficulty I see in current Marxist work (and others too!). How are we able to handle the "land" question? Seemingly, we cannot handle it as easily as the "labour" question, not that these can be separated cleanly, nor indeed can they be separated from the greatest of the three in our present system, capital, because they can substitute for one another, and certain realities can take on different faces. The city can be viewed from the point of view of all three separately and simultaneously. To avoid a tangle, let me reduce the labour question to class signifying divisions among people, the land question to place or nation. Historically, the Marxist preoccupation has been with labour and on the class struggle. Yet it is obvious, for example, that E.P. Thompson is talking about the making of the *English* working class and that the people in China feel they are not only "red" but Chinese, a sense of collectivity antedating 1949. Now Castells talks of the city in terms of collective consumption; therefore in reality the place question, neighbourhoods, communities, and

the like become far more important than in traditional Marxism (though Marx himself was more subtle). Thus, I don't believe Castells can really make a clear distinction between reformist and radical movements when it comes to the urban environment. When the left comes to power, it has to deal with the whole community not just represent the working class. Ultimately, if Marxists hope for the classless society, then everyone would participate. Class issues remain and may become more serious; yet land, place, and, indeed, community questions are in the last analysis more fundamental.

James T. Lemon
Department of Geography
University of Toronto

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Artibise, Alan F.J., and Stelter, Gilbert A., eds. *The Usable Urban Past: Planning and Politics in the Modern Canadian City*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1979. Pp. viii, 383. Maps, illustrations. \$9.95.

The Usable Urban Past: Planning and Politics in the Modern Canadian City is a major addition to the study of North American urbanization. The thirteen essays are thoroughly researched, well written, and cogently argued. Moreover, the uniformly high quality of the contributions points to the exemplary state of urban research in Canada, which, on a proportionate basis and with the exception of Quebec and the Maritimes, is more organized and advanced than that of Great Britain and the United States (despite the obligatory caveat in the editors' introduction about the sorry state of Canadian urban historiography). Finally, *The Usable Urban Past* has a unity and a coherence usually