

Solomonson, Katherine. *The Chicago Tribune Tower Competition: Skyscraper Design and Cultural Change in the 1920s*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Pp. xiii, 370. Illustrations, bibliography, index

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describing Italian food preparation she roams backwards and forwards in time, from 1917 to the 1890s, then to the 1940s and the 1930s. (78-79) This quality may be more suggestive of the continuities in ethnic food practices and the nature of Diner's sources (reminiscences about the food one enjoyed in childhood, for example, might be imprecise in terms of time) than any fault of the author. Overall, this rich treatment of immigrant foodways will be of value to scholars in immigration history in particular, and more casual readers interested in American culture and urban life during this period will find much to digest.

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Solomonson, Katherine. *The Chicago Tribune Tower Competition: Skyscraper Design and Cultural Change in the 1920s*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Pp. xiii, 370. Illustrations, bibliography, index.

In June 1922, the *Chicago Tribune* co-opted the closing convention banquet of the American Institute of Architects with news of its own: the announcement of an international competition for the design of the "world's most beautiful office building" for the headquarters of the *Tribune*, the self-proclaimed "World's Greatest Newspaper." \$100,000 in prizes were at stake for a building intended to combine "artistic nobility and business effectiveness." Two hundred and sixty-three architects from around the world entered the competition, including ten well-known American firms invited by the *Tribune*, which also paid for their submissions. The *Tribune* milked the project for news throughout the competition period and up to the completion of the winning design by Americans John Mead Howells and Raymond Hood. Critics and historians would go on to debate the results for generations beyond the close of entries, and the competition would become one of the best-known mileposts of the history of modern architecture. Katherine Solomonson's book is the first monograph on the *Tribune* competition, offering both a complete recounting of the story of the architectural competition and a full biography of the resulting building.

The competition began in a circulation war with William Randolph Hearst's *Herald and Examiner*. The *Tribune* co-editors (and co-publishers) were Robert McCormick and James Patterson, first cousins and members of the paper's controlling family. Both were educated at Yale, shared a Progressive-era sense of noblesse oblige, and both returned to Chicago to become active in city and state politics. The *Tribune* imagined its readership as equally noble-minded and aspiring; its architectural competition broke with a cycle of lotteries and giveaways by the competing papers to create a circulation gimmick that appealed not to greed but rather to the reader's sense of civic pride and cultural ambition. In support, the *Tribune* ran an extensive series of features during the competition to give its readers a crash course in architectural history.

Solomonson establishes the situation of the competition in terms of the civic, cultural and commercial thought and motivations of its period. In the aftermath of the World War I, the *Tribune* and others saw the infusion of "high culture" aspirations as a means to create cultural unity among workers and immigrants and to counter the threat of socialism. This effort encompassed the Chicago Plan, an offshoot of the 1893 World's Columbian Exhibition and the City Beautiful movement. The Plan's supporters saw it as a kind of "architectural eugenics," a parallel of efforts to assimilate and improve immigrants through the "100-percent Americanism" of the melting pot. The *Tribune* also brought popular culture to bear on high culture, seeking suggestions from readers on the appearance of its new building. "The *Tribune* thus developed a variety of strategies to produce an image of its role in an imagined community whose ideals the new building would represent."

Solomonson's archival work changes our understanding of the historic record. While the competition was open and international, and entries from Germany were particularly encouraged, we learn the work of the competition jury was all but finished before most of the foreign entries arrived in Chicago. Of the twelve entries set aside as finalists in the first cut, all were American and six were from invited competitors. Drama came just three days prior to the announcement of the winners, when "an eleventh-hour entry from Europe caused a sensation." This was the entry of Eliel Saarinen of Finland, the eventual second-place design and the only non-American prizewinner. The chair of the jury, architect Alfred Granger, assessed the outcome: "One gratifying result of this world competition has been to establish the superiority of American design." Solomonson shows that this outcome was a result not of design merit, but of the timing of the jury process.

The mainstream of American architecture expressed satisfaction with the results, viewing Howells and Hood's Gothic tower with its lantern and flying buttress crown as an expression of the best aspirations of American business and building culture. The *Tribune* Tower design aligned itself with the tradition of the 1893 World's Fair and the riotous styles of New York skyscrapers, while offering a new clarity of vertically oriented expression that would give rise to a modest crop of Gothic skyscrapers.

Louis Sullivan, godfather of Chicago-School architecture, led the minority dissent, seeing in the Gothic tower a decadent feudal style inappropriate to democracy. He characterized Howells and Hood as men "governed by ideas", while championing Saarinen as a "master of ideas" whose design confronted the reality of the tall office building. In a notable example of quotation out of context, when the *Tribune* published an album of competition entries, carefully placed ellipses allowed Sullivan's diatribe to stand in apparent praise of the results. Chicago architect Irving K. Pond saw the American entries as "gripped in the stranglehold of conventional forms," asking, "Is there no American as American in his feelings as the man from Finland appears to be?" Saarinen's design was to be more influential in later years than was the winner's. The stepped shaft leading to its integral crown, expressed with neither cornice nor surface decoration to detract from the vertical thrust, became an archetypal skyscra-

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per form. Even Tribune Tower architect Raymond Hood cribbed from Saarinen's design in his 1924 American Radiator Building in New York.

The preferred debate of the history of modern architecture, between the winner and the design by Bauhaus director Walter Gropius, is shown to be a product of Gropius' self-promotion. It is unlikely that the jury ever saw Gropius's drawings, and in any case the jury was indifferent to those functionalist schemes that did arrive on time. Solomonson reviews Sullivan's writings about appropriate windows for different building types and the zoning restrictions that banned habitable space above 260 feet. In so doing, she demolishes any claim for rational expression on behalf of Gropius' design, with its "department store" windows showing equal disregard for function at the office floors and at the thirteen uninhabited floors of the upper tower.

The book also treats the construction and later life of the Tribune Tower and site, the reception of the Tribune competition and building in popular culture, and the role of the developing corporate culture in the skyscraper city. Illustrations are particularly generous and well reproduced. The postscript reviews the historiography of the Tribune Tower competition. Part of the Cambridge Press series "Modern Architecture and Cultural Identity", it ably fulfills the series mandate to explore "the complex interplay between modern identity and local, regional, national and related cultural traditions."

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Naquin, Susan. *Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400–1900*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000. Pp. xxxv, 816. 43 figures, 8 maps, 9 tables, bibliography, glossary-index. US\$80.00 (cloth).

Naquin's magisterial study explores the central place of temples and general religious life within the social, cultural, and physical geography of Peking during the Ming (1368–1643 CE) and Qing (1644–1911) dynasties. Contemporary readers, familiar with the now-standard mainland Chinese hanyu pinyin romanization "Beijing", may find the older style "Peking" incongruously replete with Western associations and bias. Yet, as Naquin notes, the appellation "Peking", with its long history in European languages, is as arbitrary as "Jingshi" (Capital city) or the various other Chinese names by which the city was known during this 500-year period. Naming her subject "Peking" emphasizes the inadequacy of any single name to encompass the discontinuities and shifting identities of this grand city's successive transformations.

Consisting of a preface, sixteen topical chapters, and an epilogue, the text traces the changing valuation of particular temple sites and the genus "temples" within the shifting constructions of Peking as a physical and imagined place. Several chapters focus on the significant influence of imperial patronage, whether through an elaborate bureaucratic system of registering deities and providing annual temple subsidies, or the individual piety of

members of the dynastic house. These activities fostered state penetration of Peking society and earned it a reputation for benevolence, especially when imperial support favored locally popular deities. At other times, imperial patronage explicitly furthered state policy, as during the Qing, when munificent support for existing and new Tibetan Buddhist temples reflected the dynasty's claims to suzerainty over Tibet.

This work augments the long-established focus on the family and the state with research on the still largely unknown early modern Chinese world that lay beyond. Naquin demonstrates how temples constituted the site and substance of communal life. Peking was highly compartmentalized by class, courtyard walls, ethnic and native place identities, family networks, and creed. The 2,564 known Buddhist, Daoist, Christian, Muslim, and local folk temples (400–700 seem to have existed at any given time) both reflected and transcended these divisions. The Ming and Qing states warily supervised all cities, Peking in particular, to arrest the development of autonomous political and civic organizations, which were assumed to be potentially seditious. Peking was celebrated for its open urban scenery, e.g., the expansive Forbidden City palace, imperial park and altar complexes, the development and social import of which Naquin examines. Yet these sites were closed to the public (especially during the Qing, when the northern "Inner City" was officially reserved for Manchu banner personnel) and the city lacked other large open areas. Temples and their compounds thus provided a rare form of public space and were used by urban residents for a wide array of activities – state functions, public charity, marketing, pilgrimage, politics, and leisure. Naquin highlights the different capacities of urban society to organize itself and intervenes in recent debates on the applicability of work on the European public sphere. She suggests that while inarguably public, the autocratic reach of state power limits the relevance of Habermas and should move us to appreciate the different structure of late imperial civil society.

This study is a tour de force of scholarly dedication and imagination. Students of late imperial China face a relative dearth of social history sources – the journals, diaries, broadsheets, and pamphlets that have enabled the vital historiography on Europe and Japan are few or non-existent. Naquin has overcome this deficit through scrupulous consideration of a wide-range of sources, including a particularly dogged examination of inscriptions in stone and metal on stelae, bells, and walls. These often overlooked, far-flung sources provide Naquin evidence of the presence and actions of the varied multitude, otherwise unknown, who favored particular gods, frequented specific temples, and participated in the lay associations that dominated organized religious life. Naquin thus constructs a vivid, holistic social portrait of disparate actors, for example, powerful, long-lived empress dowagers, eunuchs whose incapacity to father children moved them to endow temples to care for their spirit tablets in perpetuity, pious widows, successful merchants, and prelates as connected through their religious belief and practice.

Despite these virtues, one must admit that this is a dauntingly thick tome. Yet, as Naquin herself notes, it is both overly long and too brief. I anticipate that many readers will, like me, adopt