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Mahoney, Timothy R. *River Towns in the Great West: The Structure of Provincial Urbanization in the American Midwest, 1820-1870*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990. Pp. xi, 319. Figures, tables, maps, appendices, index. $39.50

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with, or interested in, heritage preservation. Many of the issues and, indeed, some of the solutions put forward are very similar. For example, in Canada, recent legislation aimed at the designation and preservation of heritage railway stations recognized and responded to growing public concern over the rapid disappearance of the physical evidence of our rail history. Bill C-205, the Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act, prohibits railway companies from altering or disposing of designated heritage railway stations owned by them or under their control without the authorization of the Governor in Council. A railway company planning such action must give public notice of its intention thereby providing an opportunity to concerned citizens and groups to comment on the proposal. In Britain, British Rail, which has long been "resentful" of its responsibility for the large number of listed buildings in its charge, underwent a radical transformation of attitude during the 1980s which also reflected public opinion and concerns. It has since adopted a more flexible approach to the sale of surplus property; rid itself of a corporate mania for design standardization; recognized the potential of tourism; and accepted the principle of multiple use for its remaining stations. In 1985 the Railway Heritage Trust was created with a BR grant of £750,000 to help preserve those listed buildings within its portfolio.

Conservation Today is an interesting, informative (if specific), and well written book. The case studies clearly reflect the author's own flexible and creative approach toward adaptive re-use which acknowledges the architectural merit and integrity of a building and respects its defining characteristics, both aesthetic and functional. They also reflect, however, a pragmatic recognition of the changing functional, setting, and

economic realities of the current context in which these projects were and are continuing to be carried out.

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Timothy R. Mahoney's new scholarly book, *River Towns in the Great West*, is an important contribution to understanding the structure and dynamics of nineteenth-century sub-regional urbanization in the midwestern United States. With that said, it is important to note that regions of the United States are based more on economic relations than on geography. At present, most people in the United States accept that the nation has four sections, the Northeast, the South, the Midwest, and the West. Yet, few people would agree in total with the boundaries of these regions. Some would, for example, place the old southern cities of Baltimore and Washington in the Northeast. Where the West begins has generally been accepted as the Mississippi River, but a good case can be made for the Rocky Mountains. And, it can be argued that the present American West will—over the next several decades—either break up into a number of new sections, or merge with the South to form a super-region called the Sunbelt that will challenge the rest of the nation for supremacy.

The biggest gainers in population in the 1990 census were Florida, Texas and

California. A few years ago, a geographer said in a review about a book that I wrote on the rise of the urban South that I did not understand geography. I suppose he was right in a geographical sense, but his review failed to recognize how the American version of westward settlement—technically the concept of the "Moving Frontier" as advanced a hundred years ago by Frederick Jackson Turner—has constantly redefined the nation's regions. A hundred years ago the Great Plains would have been defined as part of the West. Now, the force of economic relationships, the power of the regional centres of Chicago, St. Louis, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Kansas City, and even Omaha, has shifted North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas to the Midwest. A theme of American history has been the hewing out of hinterlands through economic rivalries by successful regional metropolises. What popular magazines of the nineteenth-century called "urban imperialism" played a major role in midwestern settlement, with St. Louis losing a "Great Urban Rivalry" to Chicago. As was to be expected in a great battle for regional domination there were losing cities, some innocent victims and others forced by circumstances to drastically scale down their urban aspirations, coming to terms with and joining and accepting subservience to a new emerging economic order.

Mahoney considers what happened from 1820 to 1870, in the western parts of a distinctive topographical area of the Prairie Peninsula. This district, embracing eastern Iowa, northeastern Missouri, and northwestern Illinois, geographically resembled southern Manitoba. So, there were all sorts of sites for cities. By the middle of the nineteenth-century, a number of localities had emerged as marketing towns, including Cedar Rapids and

Davenport in Iowa, Hannibal in Missouri, and Peoria and Naples in Illinois. These places developed specific economic functions, such as the marketing of grain, that seemed appropriate to the hewing out of a region based on geography. As part of the process, elites emerged that exercised both social and economic stewardships.

There was no Midwest in a modern sense, although the Prairie Peninsula was considered part of a larger con-figuration, the Great West, fought over by St. Louis and Chicago. The very rise of Davenport and Peoria attracted the inter-est of the two competing metropolises, which had the impact of hurting their chances of rising to the level of a true regional metropolis, that would have made the Prairie Peninsula a distinct sub-region. By the post-Civil-War period, the Prairie Peninsula had lost its identity and become part of a midwestern region dominated by Chicago. The main goal of the elites was to define their own roles in such ways as to keep a measure of com-munity control. This worked out imperfect-ly. As Mahoney observes, "people's social and intellectual lives in any town were constantly buffeted by outside for-ces and compelled to respond to ideas, actions, and attitudes of social groups that positively or negatively changed their social identity." He states further: "In short, as the system continued to grow at the entreports, the pattern of interurban social relationships were continually transformed. Urbanization brought a greater variety of social structures across the whole system and their complicated issues such as social mobility and social control by confounding class identities."

Mahoney's study, based on a wide variety of soundly researched primary and secondary materials, represents a significant starting point for the study of

sub-regions, not only in the United States, but also in Canada, especially in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

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Jones, Emrys. *Metropolis: The World's Great Cities*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1990. Pp. xi, 228. 16 illustrations, 2 tables. £19.50.

Many books have been written on the world's great cities, and readers might be excused if their first reaction is that this is simply another one. Just when we thought there was nothing left to write about, however, Emrys Jones provides us with a particularly informative, interest-ing, and readable book. Jones discusses great cities, both past and present, and also provides a peek at what the future great city might be like. As have many scholars, he highlights characteristics they share in common as well as those that make each city unique. Jones goes beyond convention, however, by incor-porating cultural-specific aspects that allow him to avoid the familiar trap of dis-cussing a world class system of cities based only on the model and dominance of the western city. Nevertheless, this does not mean Jones ignores the impor-tance of variables that are cross cultural in nature, such as communications, centralization of power, wealth accumula-tion, and the formation of an elite group in society.

Discussions of super cities in China, other parts of South East Asia, and the developing world have been con-spicuously absent from previous work. Moreover, Jones' mix of historical and current examples allows the reader to identify characteristics that have been im-portant throughout the ages, as well as

those that are unique at present. The book also does a good job of balancing interesting narrative and description with quality interpretation and explanation.

Jones begins his own account with an analysis of the work of others who have written about world-class cities and the characteristics his predecessors have used to measure greatness. He then provides an overview of the evolution of the metropolis from antiquity through to the industrial city. The scope of this coverage is remarkable. Cities from early civilizations include Ur in the Middle East, Ch'ang-an in China, Angkor in Cam-bodia, Athens, Rome, Constantinople, and cities in Pre-Columbus America. Ex-amples of pre-industrial cities include Venice, Florence, Bruges, Genoa, Amsterdam, Isfahon, Delhi, London and Paris. Paris, London and Delhi are re-visited in the industrial era, and Chicago, cities of the Rhine Ruhr, and Mexico City are added.

The effect of technology and economics on form and function, a theme that runs throughout the book, is particularly well developed in Jones' discussion of cur-rent super cities. He illustrates how society's current emphasis on business and the handling of financial transactions has created a transactional city with little of the direct production that was charac-teristic of the industrial city. The as-sociated urban environment is epitomized by the American model repre-senting both suburbanization and centralization with its extensive and low-density residential areas suddenly and dramatically peaking in a skyscraper core.

The transactional metropolis, which Jones describes as transcending nation-al interests because it is part of an inter-national network of activities, is the