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Theses Abstracts/Résumés des Thèses

Melvin Baker, "The Government of St. John's, Newfoundland, 1800-1921." Ph.D. Thesis, Department of History, University of Western Ontario, 1980.

Although Newfoundland was settled from at least the early seventeenth century, its growth, including that of St. John's, was slow until the first quarter of the nineteenth century when the great Irish influx began. With this immigration, demands arose – mainly in St. John's – for political institutions to meet the consequent urban problems. In response, in 1832, the Imperial Government established a colonial legislature at the capital. A St. John's town council was not instituted for several reasons. The most valuable land in the town was largely owned by British absentee landlords, who exercised strong opposition to any municipal taxation of their property through their St. John's agents. Again, the cyclical nature of the capital's fishing economy prevented long-term plans for improvement, St. John's residents being unable to guarantee funding for local services. Thirdly, the merchants, who were predominantly Protestant, were unwilling to allow the town's mainly Roman Catholic population to control local affairs. The merchants felt that the legislature, which they could control, could adequately fulfill the functions of any municipal corporation.

Thus, under the representative system established in 1832, the colonial government continued to hold administrative sway over most of the capital's institutions and services – roads, law and order, poor relief, and medical attendance on the sick poor being examples. By contrast, the local hospital, administered by an elected board of residents, and the town's schools, which were run by appointees of the various religious denominations, were financially assisted by the legislature. Certain other services – fire protection, street lighting, and the water supply – were left to private enterprise.

The coming of responsible government in 1855 further centralized the administrative machinery of both capital and colony. An overall Board of Works was appointed to administer all public buildings, property, roads, and streets in the colony. In 1863 this Board also took over the construction and maintenance of the St. John's sewerage system. Fire protection and water supply remained separate, because of strong outport (away from St. John's) opposition to funding them out of the general colonial revenue. Various attempts were made to meet the municipality's needs in these areas while avoiding the formation of a municipal corporation.

The creation of a more conventional local government was only postponed by these measures: in 1888, in order to undertake an expensive sewerage system and other costly street improvements, the colony was forced to impose a limited form of self-rule on St. John's. The Council elected in that year received authority over the water supply, streets, sewers, parks, the fire brigade, and building regulations only. Its subsequent history to 1921 was characterized by this limited administrative and legislative power and constant government interference in civic affairs. The result was several revisions of the 1888 Municipal Act, and chronically insufficient revenue. These problems were finally addressed by William Gosling, a leading St. John's merchant, during the years 1913-1921 and the final achievement of the Charter can largely be attributed to his efforts.

G. Lavigne, "La formation d'un quartier ethnique: les portugais à Montréal." Thèse de Ph.D., Faculté d'Aménagement, Université de Montréal, 1979.

L'analyse de la formation du quartier portugais à Montréal avant tout d'un constat: en 20 ans, les Portugais ont pris possession d'une parcelle de l'espace urbain montréalais. Comment? Dans l'intérêt de qui? La formulation d'une thèse susceptible d'expliquer les tenants et les aboutissants d'un tel phénomène prend la forme, ici, d'une double problématique: celle de l'immigration et celle des relations ethniques. En effet, d'analyse des éléments théoriques portant sur la question ethnique permet, d'une part, de situer les factuers originels du découpage par ethnie au niveau de l'économie politique de l'immigration, et elle authorise, d'autre part, de concevoir les relations ethniques sur la base des rapports de classe. En fait, la question ethnique ne prend un sens qu'en référence au concept de la lutte de classes, le découpage ethnique en étant une manifestation concrète.

Le groupe ethnique est conçu non pas comme une entité homogène mais bien comme un corps lui-même dynamisé par des rapports de classes mettant aux prises une petite bourgeoisie et une fraction des travailleurs, l'une et l'autre réunies sous une même étiquette ethnique. Le problème consiste donc à identifier comment une telle petite bourgeoisie ethnique peut prendre corps à même une fraction du prolétariat. La formulation même du problème en fournit la réponse et celle-ci est très simple. Le seul réseau de redistribution de la plus-value, qui soit suffisamment important pour donner lieu à une accumulation et auquel une fraction de prolétariat peut accéder, reste la rente.

La rente et la propriété foncière qui la fonde deviennent donc le moyen terme par lequel les conditions inhérentes à une certaine forme d'immigration, qualifiable de dépendante, sont transformées en conditions objectives sur lesquelles prend forme un rapport de classes à l'intérieur de groupe. A ce point, le quartier ethnique apparaît,à la fois, comme le produit de ce rapport et comme le moyen de sa matérialisation. C'est là l'essentiel de la thèse.

La suite de l'analyse traduit, en terms opérationnels, les propositions qui constituent la thèse afin de les soumettre à un traitement quantitatif mettant en cause les Portugais. Sont alors analysées plusieurs dimensions: la concentration, les différences

entre ceux qui sont concentrés et ceux qui ne le sont pas, la propriété foncière sous plusieurs aspects, les relations propriétaires-locataires. Ce traitement débouche sur une classification des biens selon leur rentabilité et sur la définition des types de propriétaires dont un au moins peut être assimilé à un èlèment constitutif de la petite bourgeoisie portugaise.

Un des points que met en évidence ce travail tient à l'interdépendance entre les éléments identifiés comme participant de la problématique. Il est montré, par exemple, que les interventions sur l'immigration auront des effets sur les groupes ethniques, tout comme d'ailleurs celles sur la propriété ou le logement, même si l'objectif de ces actions est totalement étranger à la question des groupes ethniques. Aussi peut-on concevoir que nombre d'interventions, définies à partir d'analyses disciplinaires centrées sur des problèmes particuliers, peuvent mettre en cause des éléments non inclus dans l'analyse et avoir des effets qui ne seront perceptibles qu'après coup. C'est là un des problèmes cruciaux auxquels les analystes et les praticiens, appelés à oeuvrer dans le domaine de l'urbanisme et de l'aménagement, ont à faire face.

Jean Query, "Montréal sous l'occupation américaine, 1774-1776: répercussions socio-économiques." Thèse de M.A., Département d'histoire, Université de Montréal, 1978.

La ville de Montréal et la région environnante furent occupées durant huit mois par les milices américaines qui avaient envahi la Province de Québec en septembre 1775. Aucune étude n'ayant été faite pour évaluer l'impact de cette occupation sur la population montréalaise, il nous est apparu intéressant de pousser notre investigation dans cette direction, afin d'en déterminer de façon aussi précise et détaillée que possible les répercussions socio-économiques. Après avoir consulté divers ouvrages portant sur l'invasion américaine de 1775, et n'y ayant pas trouvé de données suffisantes pour étayer l'aspect traité dans ce mémoire, nous avons tiré parti de deux sources documentaires qui n'ont pas encore été exploitées.

D'une part, les comparaisons entre les relevés de mariages inscrits dans les registres des paroisses du district judiciaire de Montréal de 1774 à 1778 apporteront un éclairage nouveau sur un aspect du comportement social des habitants. D'autre part, les indications fournies par la compilation et l'examen des minutes notariales, à la même époque, permettront d'identifier les types de transactions et les secteurs de district judiciaire de Montréal qui furent particulièrement touchés par la présence américaine, de novembre 1775 à juin 1776.

T.R. Bird, "Cultural Conflict and Crime Among Irish Immigrants in Hamilton, Ontario in 1891." M.A. Thesis, Department of Geography, Queen's University, 1977.

The nineteenth-century Canadian city was an immigrant city whose residents had been assembled both from this country and abroad. The new urban residents differed in their national, religious, and cultural backgrounds, having had little or no previous exposure either to each other or to city life. To understand the ways in which those groups adjusted to and contributed to their new environment is essential if we are to learn how a Canadian urban society was created from its raw beginnings.

In this study some of the problems of adjustment faced by Irish immigrants to Hamilton, Ontario, in the late nineteenth century will be explored. It will be argued that the nature of the social mores brought by these people from Ireland made cultural conflicts in their new home almost inevitable. In certain instances such conflicts were felt strongly enough to warrant criminalization.

Records of such conflicts are available in the Hamilton Police Court Register for 1891. Evidence provided by this data set is viewed as revealing an index of conflict rather than absolute criminality. Those cases appearing in the Register are taken to represent situations where a complainant considers the actions of the defendant objectionable enough to file an official complaint. Viewed in this way, the evidence offers a good reflection of the nature of Irish-Canadian relations in Hamilton during the last decades of the nineteenth century.

Comparison of the representation of Irish immigrants with their Canadian hosts in these records indicates those activities among the Irish-born derived from their cultural heritage which were generating conflict in their new home. Further analysis of the relationship between the Irish and their complainants, both citizens and police, highlights not only conflicts of cultural heritages but also the influences of class factors and community associations. Finally, comparison of rates of court appearance between the Irish-born, their Canadian hosts and second generation Irish immigrants reveals the degree to which the assimilation process to 1891 had influenced the behavioural characteristics of the latter group.

C.J. Hall, "The Image of the Small Ontario Town in Fiction, 1900-1918: A Case Study in Humanistic Geography." M.A. Thesis, Department of Geography, Queen's University, 1979.

The growing interest in humanism in geography has allowed for a re-evaluation of the approaches taken to subjective source material. The role of fiction as a source for geographic studies is examined in order to contribute to the understanding of its potential applicability to the study of society. In the review of literature a commentary is effected on the past use of literary sources in geography which criticizes its application as a reflection of the real world. The work of humanists with literature provides a more appropriate view of fiction as an active transmitter of ideas which operated to help shape popular consciousness.

The popular romance published in the early twentieth century and set in southern Ontario provides an opportunity to reflect upon literary conceptions of society at a time characterized by modernization and change. Results of the examination of the sample fiction reveal a romanticization of the small towns and countryside and an idealization of the past which perpetuates a mythology of small town life.

The images conveyed in this popular romance are distinctly different from the more objective information obtained from census data for the same period. The literary conception of the society of Ontario contradicts the trends of the time. It is believed that in its strong idealization of non-urban, unmodernized values and life styles, the literature provided a critique of contemporary society, and an imaginative escape from the present.

T.C. Carter, "A Profile of Tenants in Central Edmonton: Their Characteristics and Housing Preferences." M.A. Thesis, Department of Georgaphy, University of Alberta, 1978.

To a large extent, the combined choices of thousands of households with respect to where they live determines the physical and social character of urban residential neighbourhoods. This thesis delves into the housing choice of a specific group of households – tenants in central area rental housing. The research has been spurred by the realization that there is extremely little hard information available about the central city renter – who they are, and why they have chosen their particular residential setting.

The thesis begins with a discussion of previous work related to the residential location decision, with specific emphasis on inhabitants in the central area. It discusses market theory, land use theory, and the concepts of life cycle, dwelling satisfaction and place utility, summarizing basically what is known about households renting in the downtown area and the reasons why they have chosen a central location.

The thesis then presents the analysis which identifies the characteristics of a sample of renters in central Edmonton and assess the active variables in their residential location-decision-making process. The variables examined within the context of the decision include those associated with the interior of the unit, aspects of site and structure, aspects of management, physical and social aspects of the surrounding development and neighbourhood, accessibility to other facilities and financial considerations. The research determines the role of each of these variables in the location decision and how they vary with the characteristics of the individual households.

The purpose of the study is to verify or clarify existing models, hypotheses and assumptions. It addresses itself to what has been discovered as an information gap – the paucity of evidence on the characteristics of central area tenants and their reasons for choosing a central as opposed to a suburban residential location. The study does not introduce new models or hypotheses, but it does discuss policy and theory implication of the work and suggest approaches that future work could take to further our knowledge of central area tenants.

H.P. Eliasoph, "Edmonton's Impacct on Surrounding Urban Centres." M.A. Thesis, Department of Geography, University of Alberta, 1978.

Empirical evidence suggests that the major determinants of growth and development in areas proximate to growing metropolitan centres relate primarily to geographic location. This thesis investigates the degree to which locational determinants explain or account for variation among development levels of urban centres proximate to Edmonton. Relevant hypotheses are formulated and tested in order to discern patterns of urban spatial interaction underlying the form of development levels.

The data, obtained primarily from the Census of Canada, are comprised of various development measures or indicators. An index of development, constructed via principal components analysis, is used to measure development levels of urban centres in the study area. Two series of linear regression analyses are conducted. The first set of analyses is intended to test hypothesized relationships between variations among development levels of urban centres, and (1) distance from Edmonton, and (2) population size. The second set of analyses focuses on the hypothesized effects of commuting on the form of development levels around Edmonton.

Considering all urban centres in the study area, the findings indicate that development levels are inversely related to distance from Edmonton and directly related to population size. However, the effect of commuting on these relationships is considerable. Whereas the overall strength and significance of these relationships derives from urban centres located in the Edmonton commuting hinterland, variation among development levels of urban centres beyond the commuting hinterland cannot be explained by their distance from Edmonton or their population size. The analyses also show that the form of development levels around Edmonton features an area of upward transition, characterized by high levels of development, within a radius of approximately 35 kilometres, and, a surrounding downward transitional area with low levels of development, extending between 35 to 150 kilometres from Edmonton. Though the area of upward transition is less extensive than the commuting hinterland of Edmonton, recent trends indicate that the former is extending further outward into the commuting hinterland. This evidence strongly suggests that Edmonton is exerting an impact on development levels of urban centres via the labour market and that the magnitude of this impact appears to be consolidating.

C. Jeffares, "Dawson City, Yukon Territory: An Evaluation of Factors Contributing to its Renewed Viability." M.A. Thesis, Department of Geography, University of Alberta, 1977.

The community of Dawson City is examined both in historical and contemporary perspective. The settlement of Dawson originated following the discovery of gold on a tributary of the Klondike River in 1896. The subsequent Klondike gold rush sparked a massive population migration to a remote corner of the northwestern Yukon, transforming a small mining camp into the largest Canadian city west of Winnipeg. The initial exuberance of the settlement was soon replaced by a long period of decline and decay. The erosion of Dawson's two major bases (mining and Territorial capital functions) in the last two decades pointed to a possible complete stagnation of the community.

In the past five years several factors have indicated a revival of Dawson City as a viable community. The results show that an increasing number of tourists are visiting the Yukon and Dawson each year. With the implementation of a restoration programme in Dawson, funded by the Federal Government, increases in tourism will provide the community with a relatively permanent, albeit seasonal, economic base. In addition Dawson's function as a minor regional service centre, with respect to government administration and transportation, will also supply Dawson with the economic basis necessary for stabilization or even a slight growth. In particular the proximity of Dawson to the soon to be completed Dempster Highway, which links the settlements of the Mackenzie Delta to the major populated areas of Canada via the Yukon, will increase the regional service function of the community as well as complementing Dawson's burgeoning tourist resource.

The present services and facilities of Dawson are adequate but even a slight growth would place a strain on these existing facilities. They do, however, offer a basis for improvement at minimal cost. If increased usage is gradual, the community will be able to reorganize and adjust these services to meet the growing need. Of immediate concern is the necessity of Dawson residents becoming directly involved in the renewed viability of the community. Not only will they benefit financially but local control of commercial concerns may in fact influence the direction of future development within the community.

Dawson's potential as a revitalized community in the North has increased significantly in the past five years and with careful, realistic planning and greater resident participation the community will contribute to further Yukon development.

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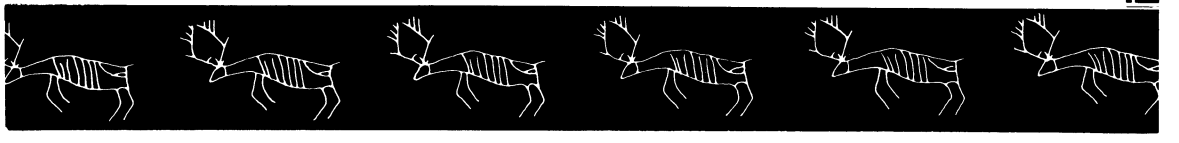
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