

**Mollenkopf, John Hull, *A Phoenix in the Ashes: The Rise and Fall of the Koch Coalition in New York City Politics*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992. Pp. xi, 285. Tables, maps, index**

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It will not take the reader long to realize that even though the book is entitled *Tokyo Rising*, the author's nostalgic heart is with Edo's once popular quarters of *shitamachi* (translated by the author as Low City; originally implying the settlement below the castle where the merchants and plebians resided). One readily notices the impact of Kawabata and Kafû, which the author seems to have warmly acknowledged, on his view of Tokyo and his distinct sense of aestheticism. Low City, by the way, was cruelly devastated by the great earthquake of 1923. One of the themes of the book is the decline of Asakusa, a "bustling place" (*sakariba*) with its celebrated theatres and brothels, and the devastating changes that took place in other quarters such as Ginza in the Low City. The feelings of an aging character for the fading flavours of the past in Kafû's novel *During the Rains*, cited in the book, seems to be those of Kafû and the author himself: "The Ginza of today is not the Ginza of yesterday. ... The old pleasure centers are gone, and the good taste threatened to go with them" (pp. 24-25).

The urban change in the years following the earthquake is recorded by a chronology of anecdotes, which can hardly be found anywhere else in English-language literature. Through these seemingly disparate materials, the author gives life and character to different places in what now becomes the multi-centre Tokyo metropolis. One learns all sorts of behind-the-scenes stories about the architecture, dress, food, entertainment, and crime during the past seven decades. For example, the author describes the circumstances in which Tokyo's first subway line was built in Ginza in 1927 and traces the origins of Tokyo's first *meitengai* (shopping mall) at the Yaesu Mouth in Tokyo station, and then takes pains to identify the etymological root of the name of Yaesu to a certain Dutchman, Jan

Joosten, who served the first Tokugawa shogun in early seventeenth century. On other occasions, with a fine eye for detail, the author tells the reader trifles which should become good materials for a Trivial Pursuit game exclusively for Tokyoites: that customers were allowed to wear shoes in the department stores only after the earthquake, or that the practice of wearing Western-style underpants among the female employees at the Shirokiya began after this famed department store was struck by a fire in late 1932.

The author acts here neither as historian nor as a researcher intending to provide a methodical and comprehensive study of Tokyo's history. The book rather should be read as a distinctive literary expression of the author's affection and attachment to the city.

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**Mollenkopf, John Hull, *A Phoenix in the Ashes: The Rise and Fall of the Koch Coalition in New York City Politics*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992. Pp. xi, 285. Tables, maps, index.**

Recently American cities have tended to develop in one of two ways. After rejecting conservative governments, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Philadelphia, for example, elected liberal biracial coalitions. Boston, Minneapolis, and San Francisco, on the other hand, choose white, liberal, neighborhood-oriented administrations heavily dependent on minority votes. Although it was the nation's biggest metropolis and had a large minority population, New York took yet a third course. Campaigning for mayor in 1977, Edward Koch appealed to white ethnic constituencies by attacking black leaders and ardently defending

middle-class values and interests. Thus he added to his usual white liberal support the votes of middle-class Jewish and white Catholic elements from outer-borough neighborhoods. This strategy involved the risk of alienating black voters, but Koch apparently accepted this as a necessary cost and attempted to minimize the damage by cultivating his ties to minority politicians. His shrewd implementation of this approach carried him to victory over Mario Cuomo in both primary and general elections.

Recognizing that his electoral base was weak, Koch sought to create an effective governing coalition by seeking support from municipal unions, black defenders of poverty programs, and the white Catholics who had voted for Cuomo. At the same time he cultivated alliances with the regular Democratic county organizations and Manhattan's post-industrial corporate elite. These measures established his conservative credentials so effectively that Republican county leaders were willing to offer him their party's nomination for mayor in 1981.

This unique conservative political coalition emerged in the context of a city making the transition from an industrial to a post-industrial era. Major features of the change were a sharp decline in manufacturing activity and a remarkable growth in financial and service industries. The mayor took advantage of the new conditions by advocating ambitious construction projects that appealed to the real estate developers, investment bankers, and lawyers who constituted the post-industrial elite. In return they provided the financial support he needed to make the coalition effective. Meanwhile, an economic recovery made it possible for him to provide pay raises for public employees, while shrewd distribution of patronage kept the regular Democratic county organizations in line. In this way

he transformed his fragile electoral base of 1977 into a governing coalition so successful that he was reelected in 1981 and 1985.

Although Mollenkopf recognizes that demographic change and post-industrial conditions made emergence of such a conservative coalition rather likely, he emphasizes the role of the Koch team in perceiving the possibilities and developing the appropriate electoral and governing strategies. Koch lost his campaign for reelection in 1989 partly because of corruption and partly because he carried his strategy too far, but Mollenkopf is impressed by the early success and believes the New York experience has relevance to the recent scholarly pluralist-structuralist debate over the nature of community power. Pluralists believe urban politics works through short-term coalitions that result from a process of bargaining among a multiplicity of interest groups. For them, no single group dominates New York politics; rather, the city functions through a "process of negotiation and mutual accommodation". As an alternative the structuralist opposition proposes a refined version of the older idea that socioeconomic elites are always the dominant element in city government.

The author likes the structuralists because they recognize the influence of "systemic cumulative political inequality" in local political affairs. He points out, however, that they have a tendency toward economic determinism which leads them to "trivialize politics". As a result they fail to explain "real and important variations in outcomes over time and across places." Concluding that neither of the current theories is fully satisfactory, Mollenkopf uses the experience of the Koch administration to suggest that the concept

of a "dominant political coalition" can provide a more inclusive theory that recognizes both socioeconomic factors and the significant role of political actors who use economic elites to achieve their own non-economic purposes. The important lesson here is that politics drives economics rather than the contrary as structuralists would have it.

Mollenkopf, a political scientist who served in the Koch administration, supports his interpretation by providing an abundance of tables and electoral maps. His use of modern quantitative techniques contributes to the persuasiveness of his argument. Historians, however, may come away dissatisfied. Although his approach suggests that human agency in the form of political actors is of crucial importance in shaping local politics, few flesh and blood humans appear in this account. The emphasis is on abstract forces or generalized interest groups. The named individuals fail to emerge as vital and interesting participants in the policymaking process. However, the author clearly has done what he set out to do and his produced a useful and often fascinating analysis that has both descriptive and theoretical value.

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**Cooper, Matthew and Margaret Critchlow Rodman. *New Neighbours. A Case Study of Cooperative Housing.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992. Pp. xi, 326. Black and white photographs and illustrations. \$19.95 (paper).**

*New Neighbours* represents a complex mix of qualitative and quantitative longitudinal research on two cooperative housing projects in downtown, waterfront Toronto (the Windward and the Harbourside Cooperatives). This book by urban

anthropologists Cooper and Critchlow Rodman, is an important contribution to the in-depth examination of quality of life issues for the disabled and the able bodied. As well, *New Neighbours* explores the social implications of mixed income housing in co-ops. The authors completed their SSHRC funded three-year research project in the context of a city faced with chronic shortages of affordable housing. Increasing pressures by a federal Conservative government to reduce subsidies and to target assistance for needy households makes the examination of cooperatives particularly sensitive.

The early introduction of use/exchange theory in analyzing the benefits to communities served by cooperative housing helped to distinguish the social uses of coops from private investment sector housing which is used as a market commodity. An extensive set of references and bibliography adds to the credible level of scholarship provided in this book. It was not always clear however whether analysis of the cooperatives was derived from the data collected in the study or whether the observations made were expressed views of the authors.

The extent of detail provided in various quotes from the interviews gives the reader a level of contextual analysis that cannot be obtained from quantitative approaches alone. This is particularly true of reporting on the Windward Cooperative. This Cooperative provides a 'revolutionary' approach to the integration of able-bodied and disabled residents by having all units accessible and adapted, even though only a percentage are occupied by disabled members.

The examination of socio-economic mix in both the Windward and Harbourside Cooperatives adds to the growing literature and interest in social mix in social housing. The study presents a balanced