Urban History Review
Revue d'histoire urbaine

Borneman, John. *Belonging in the Two Berlins: Kinship, Nation, State.* (Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology) New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992. Pp. 400. 5 figures, 1 plate. $59.95 (US)

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Découvrir la revue

Citer ce compte rendu

ment with non-coastal cities like Denver. In fact it hardly matters, as the book is mainly a concise summary, based largely on contemporary newspaper accounts and previous scholarship, of the political context of five City Beautiful plans produced between 1906 and 1912: Daniel Burnham's Plan for San Francisco, Charles Mulford Robinson's (unfortunately consistently given as "Charles Mumford Robinson," suggesting lax editing) plans for Oakland and Los Angeles, Virgil Bogue's Plan for Seattle, and Edward Bennett's Plan for Portland.

In San Francisco, Blackford's focus is on why the destruction wrought by the 1906 earthquake did not lead to the execution of Burnham's plan; he emphasizes the importance of the paralysis brought on by conflict between labor and management. In Oakland, by contrast, he looks at why Robinson's limited and realistic plan was more fully implemented than more ambitious plans elsewhere. He then examines Robinson's plan for Los Angeles (1907), where Robinson proposed a new railroad station and a civic center "to dignify and emphasize the historic old Plaza," a remnant of the Spanish colonial origins of the city, and where he projected a new park and boulevard system on the Olmsted model. Little of this plan was executed as intended, and Blackford details once again how the construction of the Owens Valley aqueduct, the Federally-funded construction of the new artificial harbor at San Pedro, and the first large-scale implementation of land-use zoning set Los Angeles on its path of massive decentralized growth, a story already well told in Robert Fogelson's *The Fragmented Metropolis: Los Angeles, 1850-1930* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967).

Blackford then turns to Seattle and yet another exercise in City Beautiful planning, Virgil Bogue's ambitious if rather ungainly plan of 1912, rejected by the

voters as too expensive. Once again he offers an overview of the political context of the plan, based on archival research and the use of contemporary newspaper accounts. His final chapter is devoted to the adoption of Burnham's associate Edward Bennett's 1911 plan for Portland, again with much of the account based on newspaper reports of the time. In each case he makes clear that much of the support for City Beautiful planning came from reform-minded businessmen. This is hardly a startling conclusion, but certainly one that may be of interest to planning advocates today.

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As a former resident of pre-unification East Berlin, I was intrigued by how Borneman employed ethnographic analysis and representations to correlate individual lifecourse reconstructions of the majority ethnic Germans with state narratives in East and West Berlin. The author rejects the view that everyday life is unpolitical and asks, in constituting his object of study, "how, with what mechanisms, did the two German states try to produce different subjects in the postwar Berlin, and what particular subjectivities have been constructed?" (30)

Borneman considers everyday activities and experiences central to the construction of kinship and belonging over the lifecourse of individuals and for the legitimacy of a state. State discourses and identity strategies, however, in seeking to assert control over the citizens in

the nation "set the ideational framework in which experiences are categorized and periodized" (32) and provide individual experiences coherence and identity. Using the concept of the experiential trope is an elegant manner of exploring the "slippage" between privileged state narratives and individual and generational response strategies, especially in the face of the tendency of people to make their narratives "fit" the state's as much as possible. Germany has had a historically tenuous relationship with the legitimacy of state narratives, exacerbated by experiences in twentieth century Weimar and Nazi Germany.

The author worked with three groups of informants during seven months of fieldwork in the GDR and thirteen in West Berlin: Generation I comprised older residents born between 1910 an 1935; Generation II were those of a similar age cohort as Borneman born between 1940 and 1955; and Generation III included those born after 1960. Borneman concentrated his own fieldwork on those of Generation II, after discovering previously conducted and published interviews and oral histories in both East and West with Generation I, and youth studies with Generation III. State narratives of kinship and belonging objectified in legal and political codes of the GDR reveal into two phases: 1) the *Aufbau* or construction from 1949 (the founding year for both states) to 1965/68; 2) sentimentalization from 1965 to 1989. The Federal Republic of Germany pursued in the same two periods strategies of restoration and desentimentalization.

Borneman discerns three different types of "emplotment" domains for the experiences in each country: aesthetic, ideational and teleological. For example, the aesthetically emplotted "romantic mode" of GDR policies "perceived its policies and citizenry in idealized form, as progressive, following a nearly sacred mis-

sion," whereas the West German "satiric-lapsarian" mode operated within the framework of timeless principles enshrined in a constitution (Basic Law of 1949) presumed to protect Germans from political peril. While the GDR citizenship was based on an achieved socialist/political membership, the FRG maintained the particularistic, blood-based membership criterion prominent in its recent past. While the GDR sought to construct an egalitarian socialist society into which people were integrated, the FRG hierarchically assimilated acording to class. While the self-representation of the GDR state foregrounded its activity in directing social change, the West German state foregrounded the autonomous consumer while retracting itself from direct view. While both asserted to represent the best interest of "the family", each state applied different strategies for its reconstruction. While in the FRG kinship was sentimentalized in the *Hausfrauenehe* at the heart of restoration policies until the 1970s, the GDR pursued policies of what Borneman termed kinship reconstruction and desentimentalization of the family.

The author analyzes each generation's inventive reactions to state narrative strategies and guides the reader through each successive generation, devoting the bulk of his own narrative to this task: childhood, youth, partnership/marriage, adulthood, and the aged, first the East and then the West. The wealth of material and the expanse of his analysis are at times breathtaking, and I will not attempt the folly to replicate it here. Perhaps the most successful depictions are those of Generation II, with whom he feels the most affinity, followed by those of Generation I. Treatment of Generation III is somewhat sketchy, but the author has already forewarned us of this. Differences between Generation I in East and West Berlin derive from experiences in the 1950s and 1960s. Whereas West Berlin-

ers experienced the *Wirtschaftswunder* as one of prosperity, the *Aufbau* in the East signified work. While West Berliners of this generation constructed lifecourse narratives largely according to the state versions, those of the East rarely did so. Generation II categorized their lifecourse experiences primarily according to state versions, but with differing trajectories. The initial egalitarian, utopian and integrative narratives generated by the GDR state among the children and youth yielded to later disappointment at the increasingly rigid state control in the late 1970s. The West German state, on the other hand, became more conciliatory and integrative as prosperity increased and the new social movements were seemingly successful.

This book represents an important contribution to history, anthropology and German Studies by correlating two types of strategies in creating a sense of nationness, practical and state/official narratives. It is a paradoxically unique for cultural anthropology in its investigation of the German ethnic majority and will hopefully encourage further research interest both on state narratives as well as on practical lifecourse strategies.

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Ward, Steven V., ed. *The Garden City: Past, Present and Future.* London: E & FN Spon, 1992. pp. xiv, 215 Maps, illustrations, black and white plates, index, bibliography by chapter. $112.50 (Hardcover only)

After labouring in obscurity for years, Ebenezer Howard initiated a revolution in urban planning with the publication in 1898 of *To-morrow: a Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, (republished in 1902, slightly revised, under the famous title

Garden Cities of To-morrow). Even by the end of his life, the movement initiated by these books and Howard's accompanying activism led to considerable action on his ideas but little if any adherence to his social reform program. The Garden City movement, despite—or perhaps because of—the rejection or distortion of Howard's social ideals in most practical projects, remains a major influence on urban planning in much of the world.

The Garden City: Past, Present and Future attempts to assess the impact of Howard's ideas in various parts of the world, and, surprisingly, to argue that these ideas have a future in the industrialized world. While there is no chapter on Canada, the book is nevertheless of interest to Canadian readers, if only because as a study in the transmission and evolution of ideas, there is much here that students of Canadian planning history will find familiar, illuminating, or both.

Although the book does deal with the present and future, it is primarily historical; as such, this is a valuable set of essays that provide a solid overview of the Garden City influences on urban planning in the countries covered. Those contributors who do deal in some depth with future prospects come to widely divergent conclusions. Robert Fishman argues persuasively that the Garden City is irrelevant in the United States today, primarily because the possibilities for building compact, relatively isolated settlements with a strong sense of community have been overtaken by the massive automobile-oriented suburban growth of the last fifty years. Dennis Hardy, in contrast, sees a promising future for the Garden City in Britain and perhaps Europe, if only environmentalists would recognize the prospects for sustainable development implicit in the types of settlements advocated by Howard.