Urban History Review


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trained to fit into the human world of work and pleasure. Besides, pet shops have no trouble selling them as commodities. As for food production, only a few people—vegetarians—deny themselves meat. A few more may decry assembly-line output and ask for "free-range" chickens and the like. But the vast majority of human beings have no qualms about industrially raised and slaughtered beasts.

As for the third way we deal with animals, societies advocating the prevention of cruelty to animals, groups demonstrating against seal hunts or decrying the penning of dolphins orcas for amusement, and still others protesting inhumane treatment of laboratory animals receive media attention, usually, of course, when they dramatize conditions. (Zoos are not discussed.) Perhaps these concerns reflect a society that can now afford to be nice to animals, compared, say, to the early settlers who saw wild beasts as competitors on the land and as threats to human survival.

I do not think the author has gone far enough in space and time, however. The western city as such is not the problem and our culture runs historically much deeper than western capitalism about which she often decries as the culprit. First, the ten proffered photos of sculptures of animals and people in Toronto are interesting. Yet the bronze cows resting in the Toronto-Dominion Plaza in Toronto are only a step away, as it were, from the cows chewing their cud in a fenced pasture. Such a pastoral scene is also an artifact of human invention. Also consider that before there was a Jerusalem, the ancient Israelites, while still camping an route to the promised land, brought down Yahweh’s wrath by worshipping the golden calf image. So the city is secondary, and no more of an artifact than much of the work of agricultural people in the past. In fact, their work through the ages has contributed to the making of the modern city.

The author thus has a problem of continuity. Why blame capitalism? As we know our predecessors in early post-glacial North America quickly hunted to extinction several of the megafauna. Moreover, pet shops have no trouble selling them as commodities. As for food production, only a few people—vegetarians—deny themselves meat. A few more may decry assembly-line output and ask for "free-range" chickens and the like. But the vast majority of human beings have no qualms about industrially raised and slaughtered beasts.

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view, he continues, as "in fact, Ottoman Cairo represented the pinnacle of an 800-year history" (p. 190). Part Four: Contemporary Cairo (1798–1992) begins with the arrival of the French and carries the history up to 1992. It includes the period of the colonial occupation by the British (until 1936) (given surprisingly short shift) and a long chapter (16) entitled "The Nightmares of Growth (1936–1992)." The latter is a cautionary note about the pain and disaster of modernization, western-style, of an old city. Between 642 and 1850 that old city occupied roughly only 400 of the 30,000 hectares that make up present-day Cairo (p. 375). It is also a split city, between traditional and colonial, oriental and modern, typical, as the author often notes, of North African cities. (Raymond uses all such descriptors with great care, sometimes with quotation marks, implicit acknowledgment of recent vociferous debates about Orientalism.)

The core of the book lies in Part Two and Three. The delightful part of the narrative of Mamluk and Ottoman history here represented is its insistence on using and evoking the voices of contemporary sources. It reflects the explosion of research in the last two decades, on the Mamluks in particular, but also on the Ottoman period. Raymond makes very effective use of Ahmad al-Maqrizi, 1364–1442, primary historian of the Mamluk rulers who left such a monumental and indelible mark on the old city. Between 1293 and 1340, Raymond estimates that fifty-four mosques and madrasas (schools) were built, representing just a quarter of the 198 monuments credited to the Mamluks (p. 120).

For the eighteenth century, he relies on Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti and Description de l'Egypte, the famous record of the expedition and explorations of the brief French occupation (1798–1801). Chapters 12 and 13 in Part Three are particularly rich on the inner life of Ottoman Cairo, its administration and social welfare system as well as its commercial vitality. The sources dictate in some respect Raymond's focus on the architectural achievements of its various rulers, and the intricacies of its trading system. They also allow the reader to see the scale of human disaster, such as Maqrizi's description of the 1348 plague that probably killed 100,000 inhabitants (p. 140).

The section on the modern city is a litany of unequal development, uncontrollable population growth and gradual neglect and destruction of the ancient core. Since the 1940s, the city's human growth has been phenomenal, "...presaging a doubling of the population every eighteen years" (p. 348). The city that the pages of Raymond's work evokes has all but disappeared, making his careful reconstruction of trades, residential quarters, regulations, ethnic distribution, and elaborate web of entrepreneurial and patronage alliances so valuable to urban historians.

Cairo as a trading city, integral to medieval and early modern world markets, is one of the main themes of much of the work, linking Raymond's work to that of Braudel and the more recent world-history movement, sometimes overtly (p. 11 and following on the Geniza archives, for example). The Nile and its ecological implications for city growth and management, however, are more assumed than woven into this history of the city, except where the river impeded its expansion, or the desert environ-

References:


In this book, Peter Borsay sets out to examine the history of the image of Georgian Bath. Covering the period from 1700 to 2000, Borsay looks at the genesis of the image, at its characteristics, and how they have changed over time, and finally, at the uses to which the image has been put during the last three hundred years. Obviously, this is not a standard local history of a particular English town. Borsay charts the rise, fall, and resurrection of Bath's image as a primarily Georgian city. Clearly influenced by post-modernism, Borsay argues that sources were not (more or less) transparent windows on a real world, but images, and that if there was any reality to be discovered, it was in the images themselves rather than in what purportedly lay behind them. (p. 5)

The questions Borsay explores are interesting ones: Why and how has Bath come to be known as the Georgian city par excellence? And why has this period become so crucial in the city's reputation and identity? In answer, Borsay begins by discussing contemporary Georgian perceptions of Bath as a desirable place for the fashionable elite to live, visit, and restore its health. Bath's Roman past was celebrated during the eighteenth century, but did not diminish the contemporary image since the Georgians saw themselves as the heirs to the Romans, carrying on the great classical tradition. In the nineteenth century this "classical duopoly" (p. 66) constituting the image of Georgian Bath suffered an eclipse, however. The Victorian fascination with the Gothic and the Medieval, their disapproval of Georgian morals, their faith in progress, and their sheer proximity to the Georgian period all contributed to the decline of Bath's image as a Georgian city. In the twentieth century, in turn, as Victorianism fell out of fashion, the idea of Georgian Bath again grew popular, especially after World War I. After the Second World War, "an enthusiasm for the present and future and their cultural manifestation, modernism, temporarily reduced the spa's deference" to its classical past (p. 96). Britain's relative decline in the 1970s called this optimism into question, however, and with the conservative resurgence classicism re-emerged triumphant,