

THE GROWTH OF CITIES

- KINGSTON, JAMAICA: *URBAN GROWTH AND SOCIAL CHANGE, 1692–1962*. By COLIN G. CLARKE. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975. Pp. 270. \$25.75.)
- WORLD CAPITALS: *TOWARDS GUIDED URBANIZATION*. Edited by H. WENTWORTH ELDREDGE. (New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1975. Pp. 642. \$19.95.)
- URBANIZATION IN LATIN AMERICA: *APPROACHES AND ISSUES*. Edited by JORGE E. HARDOY. (New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1975. Pp. 480. \$4.50.)
- THE SPATIAL EVOLUTION OF GREATER BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA: 1870–1930. By CHARLES S. SARGENT. (Tempe: Arizona State University, Center for Latin American Studies, 1974. Pp. 163. \$8.95.)

The words urbanization, urbanism, planning, development, urban design, civic design, etc., are strewn throughout these books. However, there are ambiguities in their use: “planning and development,” for a development economist, may convey a certain basic procedure; but the substantive differences may be great when used by, say, an urban planner. Ditto for the nuances of urban design vs. civic design, or certainly architectural design. Also, one is hard-pressed to find a common thread running through these books except in a very broad sense. They do deal collectively with human settlement patterns and they do address geographic areas that are mostly under the rubric of “Latin America.” In this respect, there is some license taken with the Clarke volume on Kingston, Jamaica; also, only the articles on Caracas and Brasília of the Eldredge volume are included here. It is also only fair to warn that much of what follows deals with omission; i.e., the criticisms are of what was not done rather than what was.

These books have to do with the growth of cities and, one is gratified to observe, include considerations of their spatial dispositions, so that human ecology is viewed in the context of urban morphology. Indeed, even if it does take four books (although Hardoy does it alone), the fact that they range from regional economics to architectural design is of some moment. There is considerable material on the classic location questions—internal-form theories of the city and Burgess are much in evidence; there is an obvious overlap with the “Laws of the Indies,” which serves as the introduction to virtually everything reflecting on Latin American urbanization; Sjoberg’s *Pre-Industrial City* also predominates in setting the stage for socioeconomic discussions of historic development (whether his premises are agreed with or not); and it is only a little surprising that “transactive planning” and other “in” words do not appear more often.

Since two of these books (Clarke and Sargent) come out of dissertations, it is not overindulgence to find many references to theory; it is only later in professional careers that academics can belabor the *lack* of theory. But whatever the editorializing about theory, it is refreshing to find works that do hypothesize, that do survey the literature of the field and then apply a testing procedure to a

specific place over a specific time. So, while this is clearly apparent in the two works mentioned above, the case studies cited in Hardoy and Eldredge are welcome illustrations of the mass of erudition that the reader of all these books can apply to representative places.

All is not completely well. There are those who would carp about some coverage and treatments, for example, the wisdom of applying Chicago paradigms to these cities. There are those, on the other hand, who would question Morse's attack (in Hardoy) on the application of Sjöberg to Latin American cities. While there is much on the social, there is little on the sociological to the degree that the man on the street, or his life, is touched on; some more specific comparative work on cultural anthropology, including the sociopolitical, would round out these volumes. (What is the life of a person in a *favela*; what about political disorder as it has, does, or may occur?) It also would have been interesting to have more direct comparative work among and between the countries and regions surveyed.

Another cavil: the lack of reference to other works, even where inordinately germane; for example, E. A. Johnson's *The Organization of Space in Developing Countries* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970), which, among other things and other places, uses Puerto Rico as a case study. (Indeed, it is surprising that the wealth of material—certainly on planning and development—on Puerto Rico is ignored when the “measurement” possibilities would have been provocative.) The work and subsequent volumes of Friedman on Chile also could have borne more use. One could go on in this vein, but everything and everybody could not have been included to the extent that any random soul would like. However, these examples suggest that *some* seminal-like works are missing and that more deliberate comparative efforts could have been attempted along the way. One waits until Violic (in Eldredge) to find a sophisticated, well-rounded perception of what urban planning cum decision-making processes are all about. Similarly, if Hardoy's prefatory editorial note is put together with his first and sixth chapters (discussed below), then the reader can appreciate the bridge between process and product, cause and effect, means and ends in an urban milieu. Urbanists are not necessarily cognizant of the professional fields of planning and design; consequently, there is considerable naiveté on the part of some who parade conventional wisdoms on this topic.

There are also sins committed in the perceptions of preconceived urban end states, i.e., of “designs,” whether of a city sector, a new town, or the like. There is confusion as to what might be considered “urban design” as against old “civic design.” Hardoy's architectonic descriptions are just that; on the other hand, Evenson (in Eldredge) destroys the social-scientist image of the “Master Designer” as applicable to all physical planners. As pointed out, Brasília is much more comparable to a Renaissance royalist civic design, a stage set, and hardly follows the concept of those in the field today (more later). I do not belie the lack of historical recording here except to say that some very interesting and valuable insights have been missed in not tracing the history of design *ideas*; i.e., pre-determined alternate or optional physical ends, from the Laws of the Indies onwards. Surrogates for the development process could also have been the

shaping and forming of the physical community (1) by the inadvertencies of underlying decisions (unseen-handism) and/or (2) by conscious and deliberate intent.

The works by Clarke and Sargent are both welcome contributions to the paucity of information on individual cities. Clarke's is important in this way—indeed, even unusual—as applied to cities and towns of the Caribbean. It is an attempt to examine spatial and social structure together in a community of rapid growth and heterogeneous population composition (over 500,000) in a place of historical interest (certainly to Americans). He does this by “reconstructing” three stages of that history: periods of slavery, a time of adult suffrage (1943), and another point in time just short of the colonial period (1960). The book is light on the regional context, yet it exists in the midst of a *regional* revolution. One map showing “location in middle America” does little to set even the uniqueness of Kingston in the region, let alone its similarities to other settlements. Despite a creditable assembly of data, it does not dig deeply into the relationships of cities and towns, the systems of settlements in the area.

Clarke has accumulated and integrated much information that synthesizes the spatial and the socioeconomic, but he does not include decision-making analysis apropos of planning, or commentary on the evolution of the three-dimensional environment (beyond the few pictures). However, he does cover the physical environment and reflects on it from the historic perspectives of natural resource eras (i.e., from sugar to tourism and bauxite), and human resource eras (from slavery to socialism, and from cultural features such as Victorian Protestantism to Voodoo). There is much support from tables, maps, etc., to establish patterns of demography building, locational growth, density, etc. There is emphasis on Lewis' “culture of poverty” as being applicable. The inevitable reference to the Burgess model can be found here as well, somewhat superficially applied to Kingston, to enable one to question the wave of urban development there in the context of, say, Sjoberg's pre-industrial societies. These sorts of references do, however, keep the book from being a mere descriptive volume on a special place. Kingston deserves the examination that Clarke gives it and the work constitutes a contribution particularly because of the author's synthesis.

Sargent's book on Buenos Aires, by its very title, is similar to Clarke's. However, one significant addition is the Preface by Richard Morse, whose name appears throughout (and in the Hardoy volume, etc.). Indeed, this Preface might well have been used for all these books in that Morse (the doyen of Latin American scholarship, one could conclude) remarks on: (1) urbanization of Latin America as a “lively field of scholarly effort,” and proceeds to elaborate on that impressively; (2) the approaches to such work covering studies of components of cities, cities as a whole, cities as regional systems, third-world contexts, associations with other regions, etc.; (3) patterns of growth—comparing Western and Latin American cities, particularly in the vein of a “forty-year tradition of North American scholarship in the internal spatial structure”; and (4) the politico-institutional structure of decision-making as the “strategic variable” in determining urban form.

All of the above was an effort to provide a background for Sargent's study, not to criticize his "lineal analysis," and offered despite his own conclusion that the formidable obstacle of generalizing about postindustrial cities has prevented the formation of any "general theory of land use." Morse points out Sargent's intent to focus on the evolutionary, and not only establishes the content for the book, but in effect reviews it. This spatial evolution analysis omits "the sociological and cultural realms," but the book is a "well-researched, authoritative account of population growth, transportation innovation, and real-estate market interactions," which may be construed to have broken "the inherited concentric frame of the city in favor of one multinucleated and differentiated by sectors."

In his introduction, Sargent points out that the rapid growth of Buenos Aires, due to the pattern of settlement, railroad building, immigration, and political unification, was at the seat of his inquiry. However, that had to be modified to focus on *where* it occurred and the factors behind this growth. There is also a comparison with growth processes "characteristic of Anglo-American and European cities." Hence, the contents reflect growth concern (in the hundred-year period from 1869, the metropolitan area grew from 171,000 to 8,350,000), through the analysis and delineation of four eras, and concludes by making observations on "parallels." There are good supporting maps and figures and some valuable insights: for example, the "three sets of dynamic elements" (space, occupancy, and time) that Sargent tries to explain by a "nesting theory," apropos of such determinants as accessibility, settlement foci promulgated by land speculation, etc.

Using the criteria in the Preface, however, one must note an absence of commentary on planning (other than the original plans); similarly, there is little on the systems of cities of *that* region as another factor that could be externally significant. (Sargent's caveats do mention this; it is clear what he did and what he did not do, which acknowledges, at least, that he knew.) But one wonders whether all dissertations, when finally published, must at least prove that the candidates went through the initiation of "knowing the literature." Might it not have been better to fill in the deficiencies rather than to reiterate the pedagogy of "early urban models"—i.e., from Von Thunen (sic) up through the "Chicago School" (Burgess, Haig, Hurd, Harris/Ullman; what about Hoyt)? But this is editorializing, if not "reviewing," or, indeed, if not just carping. Sargent has produced an interesting work, particularly as it is supplemented by Morse and as it brings in the dynamics of streetcar suburbia and land speculation. Even more challenging is the conclusion that *not* cultural occupancy but those factors mentioned above gave Buenos Aires "more in common with cities like Chicago . . . than other Latin American cities."

Of *Urbanization in Latin America*, one can point out, initially, the strengths and weaknesses of all anthologies. But this one is better than most. It is an excellent collection of studies: some published elsewhere, some revised and augmented here, and some original. As the editor has proclaimed, the contributions come from authors with a wide distribution of backgrounds, interests, and disciplines. It is of considerable merit to find essays hitherto unpublished in

English. The Preface also establishes that purely technical studies have been avoided "in favor of others with a descriptive emphasis." (True. However, the "sampling of ideological positions" is not so clear and pristine if the political realm is considered ideological. A continuum of thought from Marxian socialism to the market-based politics of capitalism is not provided—the former yes, the latter no. Milton Friedmanisms are only ghosts herein.)

The contents are enhanced by the division into four parts: (1) historical studies involving spatial analysis, (2) the present spatial structure in terms of "political and demographic forces," (3) dispersion versus concentration notions of spatial development, and (4) three case studies from Latin America—city primacy and rank-size in Argentina (Vapnarsky), Mexican urbanism and urbanization (Unikel), and São Paulo urbanization and development (Singer). That brief description does not do justice to the volume. Consider it another way: of the some fourteen authors, can one go wrong when, in addition to those mentioned, Hardoy himself, Morse, and Yujnovsky are represented? The others are not excluded from these accolades; admittedly, personal experience accounts for those "known." (One of the advantages of perusing such a volume is to become acquainted with the formerly "unknown.") It is, therefore, a book of introduction to the world of Latin American urban researchers and scholars; a meaningful contribution.

It is not, however, without its deficiencies. How could a *book of this coverage* be presented without graphics? I do not mean only the absence of maps; I do not mean only the avoidance of any pictures or drawings; I mean the indication of location, pattern, distribution, propinquity, concentration, styles, density, etc. beyond mere documentation with words. If the "medium is the message," this book must be discounted. There must be some reasons why the editor and authors did not include visual material. Although this is a common fault of those who do not ordinarily use this method of communication, it borders on the unforgivable for those trained in design, those for whom the text is used to amplify *the designs* (expressed in graphic terms), which are conceptual as well as communicative. For example, diagrams and schematics, used to explore relationships and to provide capsule overviews of systems and subsystems, can be infinitely more effective than words. To find them missing (as well as locational maps and the like) is indeed a mystery in a volume that deals with spatial, physical interrelationships.

Also, there is much attributed to physical design that is simply not in the mainstream of current thought on urban design. It is as if a chapter had been lifted from a fifty-year-old, *nouveau*-like interpretation of Le Notre's royalist garden design for Versailles. To be left with that interpretation by some of the names represented among these authors is a surprise. Consider the unevenness, say, of Hardoy's polemic in the Preface. He takes on colonization, power structure effects, autocracies, and national spending priorities and concludes that concern with environmental, social, and economic issues is more proper than with "architecture," which he writes off by noting that "aesthetics are not forgotten." His first chapter, "Two Thousand Years of Latin American Urbanization," is almost *totally* characterized by description of physical urban artifacts,

enhanced by civic design wisdoms, and is in severe contrast to the Preface. And chapter 6 (by him and others) on "Urban Land Policies and Mechanisms for Its Regulation and Tenure in South America," shows that these three sections end up by not reinforcing one another; and their separation in the text and lack of reference to one another tends to give the impression that they may belie each other.

From the Preface again: "It is simply necessary to adopt less individualistic, less monumental aesthetics, combined with adequate use of the natural landscape." This statement is not explored or defended. This, too, interprets the emphasis of architecture as aesthetics alone. What an opportunity to have cited the failure of Brasilia, singularly concocted as a piece of sculpture from a neo-Renaissance notion of design and singularly ironic in that it would be further implemented by an architect whose career is identified with Communist ideologies. It is curious that the whole evolution of "civic" design is not carried into current theories and arguments on "urban" design.

The point of all this is that "architecture" is part of the built environment that gets located and erected deliberately and/or inadvertently by socioeconomic and political determinants. Indeed, the deliberateness of separate decisions affecting the built environment is a matter of "design"; the "architecture" of city parts is not the same as the architecture of separate buildings, and visual attributes are not solely the goals of design, let alone architecture. There is a conventional wisdom suggesting that no architect deals with "operating plans." What happened to the Vitruvian mandate of *commodity*, *firmness*, and *delight*? Hardoy is saying all this, but indirectly. So the introductory words, designed to set the stage, may be popular rhetoric, but also may be somewhat misleading. Consider the following quote from Urquidí in "The Underdeveloped City" (chap. 9): "But town planning itself, in the sense of operating plans rather than architects' dreams, is almost nonexistent. Where a city has been planned and developed from scratch, as in the case of Brasilia, it has solved little or nothing." Hardoy does little to elaborate on such generalizations, or to place them in their proper context.

However, Morse's chapter on the "Framework for Latin American History," while not dealing with architecture per se, does emphasize the city as artifact by: (1) distinguishing between preindustrial and industrial cities, (2) comparing philosophical attributes of ancient cities with derived elements of the same, and (3) tracing the character of medieval towns, particularly from Iberia, to their possible relationship to the Latin American focus. It brings out the essence of Latin American urban growth as it was originally, at least, affected by and/or differed from the origins of cities elsewhere in the world. Cardoso's "City and Politics" puts further emphasis on the uniqueness of the Latin American scene and emphasizes that the times of settlement patterns were components of an imperial system in Latin America; Yujnovsky ("Urban Spatial Structure . . .") stresses the city as structured by socioeconomic forces; and, as noted before, Hardoy, Basaldua, and Moreno (chap. 6) concern themselves with urban land policies affecting regulation, tenure, etc. (an excellent piece on public and private determinants of the quality and character of development, past and present).

Under "Future of the Latin American City," Romo develops the notion of development policy affecting physical space, "the regionalization of planning . . . maximizing economic growth and minimizing gaps between different regions." In a study of demographic characteristics, Lander and Funes consider "Urbanization and Development" largely as related to the dynamics of "socioeconomic development." So does Urquidi in the piece on "The Underdeveloped City." It is here that Third-World generalizations come up. Indeed, one wishes for more comparison than a few references to similar problems elsewhere in the world.

Only several chapters of *World Capitals* are reviewed here. Suffice it to say, however, that the book is supposed to reflect on nationalism under which "the capital bears high the symbolic torch." There are chapters on Stockholm, Paris, London, Washington, Toronto, Moscow, Tokyo, Chandigarh, and Dakar. Caracas and Brasília are the Latin American examples: the former is dealt with under "Western: New World" (as against "Western: Old World"); the latter is found under "Developing Nations."

"Caracas: Focus of the New Venezuela," by Francis Violich, reviews the colonial heritage of Latin American cities, the strong urban centers forthcoming, primacy, and the like. Critical issues stemming from rural-to-urban change are examined, and comments on the nature of more compact morphology also precede discussion of the planning process in Latin America. This is one of the rare pieces in English; coupled with Hardoy et al.'s chapter 6 in *Urbanization in Latin America*, it represents probably *the* work in the field. Violich discusses physical change, policy effects (or lack), and redistribution of power; Hardoy's chapter reflects on the same with more specifics as to land regulation and the like. Violich, further, reviews Venezuelan urbanization and significant geographic factors of the Caracas region and the city. The huge population growth of the 40s and 50s is related to planned and developed patterns in some detail, citing examples of road building, housing, etc. From the story of changes in urbanization, the author then concentrates on the "critical urban issues of metropolitan Caracas," broken down into social, economic, and physical problems. These discussions, in turn, are followed by chapters on the Caracas process of urban planning and "an approach to planning" for that area.

Violich does a superb job of identifying past forces and the constraints inherent in the times, and the circumstances, and the piece excels in the sophisticated sections dealing with planning and development. On the one hand, he identifies the uniqueness of Latin American cities' planning *not* occurring at a municipal level and why (including the dynamic nature of urban growth and the static, rigid nature of the institutional system), and, on the other hand, the cities' possibilities for remedial treatment. In the litany of the various analyses he makes clear the connection between land and community patterns, between urban planning and social change, and between planning process and planning product. In the discussion of development strategies, this diagnosis is coupled with the prescriptive in an unusually comprehensive way.

However, while there is a good choice of several maps and photos to give an idea of location and physical disposition in the beginning, they are missing for later development and redevelopment. Other than a before-and-after depic-

tion of a street at eye level, which certainly, upon redevelopment, could be anywhere, there is little to point out current plans of land use, public facilities, and transport. Certainly, too, there is little to show these in a *corrective way*, as the text emphasized for the planning process. Too bad. Much is done to bring home general lessons à la Caracas; could this not also have included speculation on the potential physical end products? Again, this may be a criticism of what was *not* done; but an uneasiness arises from the lack of a product scenario to accompany a process scenario.

"Brasília," by Norma Everson, does focus on a "product"—namely, the physical city. The emphasis is primarily on *what* was produced, accompanied by the rationale for *why* it was produced the way it was. In any case, the subtitle, "Yesterday's City of Tomorrow" (a quote from Lewis Mumford as applied to Brasília by Everson), tells it all. It is the story of the application of archaic design premises to meet (supposedly) the requirements of a contemporary, viable community, notwithstanding the capital inference. The unwary extrapolates from this example that Brasília is an "architect's" model and, despite the easily observable as to what it does not accomplish, refuses to recognize that perhaps its real, but somewhat underlying goal, was a political one. It is not original to state that President Kubitschek's expectations of a symbolic monument was followed (perhaps well in second place) by "aiding in the long-term development of the interior." It is no defense to postulate that "viability" was not a conscious intent and therefore Brasília should never be used as anyone's model any more than Washington, Canberra, New Delhi (or, indeed, its spiritual godfather, Versailles) could be construed as an ideal city.

The article traces the idea of a capital to before 1900 and tells the story of the choice of location. It describes the competition for the design and how it was inevitable that it would end up an "architect's city" with severe shortcomings even as an architectural scheme. It is interesting history, a caricature of the design process—how architect Costa won the competition for the layout, and architect Niemeyer was entrusted with the three-dimensional development, virtually making building decisions on a day-to-day basis. Indeed, the jury's rationale was exemplified by citing the examples of "Pompeii, Nancy, Wren's London, Louis XV's Paris." Everson speculates that the trio—Kubitschek, Costa, and Niemeyer—were inbred by acquaintance and motivated to build a stage set (my words) so as to be virtually held in awe (as inspired by a Le Corbusier-like architectonic idiom).

Consequently, "President Kubitschek's dream" turned out on a huge scale, intimidating to the common man, an exercise in making three-dimensional the new royalty-bureaucracy of democratic office housed in monumentalism. The article also outlines the building history, the development of a satellite town system, etc. It tells how, as usual, the work camps became "temporary settlements" (Ciudade Libre—Free Town!) typical of boom towns, with their "rip roaring, blood-red life" in contrast to the "majestic but somewhat sterile city." Alas, all predictable. Costa and Niemeyer, publically proclaimed Communists, chose not to identify with the lack of provision made for low-income people; yet, as may have been anticipated, the development produced a large influx of

them. Interestingly enough, this stimulated the notion of accommodating them outside the city, in satellite towns related to rural development of the Federal District. On the segregation of social groups?—Niemeyer begged off, so the validity of the grand concept was deemed important enough not to change. As for the ideologies of design theory, the architectonic mannerisms of Le Corbusier won out over the garden city paradigm; hence, Brasília emerged in a mannerist, international style on a baroque, monumental scale.

The author points out that it has become a national monument (the Sydney Opera House is the same); to some it is “less a viable city than a frigid and megalomaniacally scaled stage set”; others add that even on its own terms, it is bad architecture—as a whole or in its parts. While it is clearly not a triumph of urban design, indeed even as narrowly conceived “architecture,” certainly it is not an example of social concern, considering the resources used, the needs, and the possibilities. There are those, Evenson postulates, that find a kind of success in that its “essential purpose is to exist where it is” (a rose is a rose is a rose?). The author describes this very interesting phenomenon of the twentieth century with admirable restraint until that point. I am not sure about such evenhanded journalism; one could not rationalize the buildings on the Acropolis as being their own reason for being when one considers how and when they got there. Another provocative question arises: There are many places where Brasília simply could not have been built; how and why was it in Brazil? Whatever the issues may or may not be that make it uniquely Latin American, they do set forth the particularistic determinants of history: If a “Law-of-the-Indies” colonialism, then a Brasília?

What if all these works were in one book; or what if the intent was, in one volume, to cover theory, history, the dynamics of urbanization, and the conscious acts and inadvertencies of development in Latin America as put in a world-city comparative framework? Indeed, then, Morse’s scholarly tour de forces and Violich’s amalgamation of process and product in planning and development, together with Hardoy (including the pieces on the history of the Latin American city and civic design extending to latter versions of management planning) and the one-of-a-kind happening of Brasília by Evenson would comprise a seminal work.

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