

PAUL-ANDRÉ LINTEAU. — *Maisonneuve: Comment des promoteurs fabriquent une ville (1883-1918)*. Montréal, Boréal Express, 1981. 280 p.

Maisonneuve, at one time an obscure village of 350 inhabitants in the east of Montreal island, became a separate municipal entity in 1883 and by 1911 was a model industrial suburb boasting a population of more than 18,000, over 80 percent of whom had migrated from other areas of greater Montreal as well as from rural Quebec. After a climactic phase of grandiose construction of public buildings and beautiful avenues, the city fell upon hard times with the beginning of World War I. In a state of virtual bankruptcy, Maisonneuve was annexed by the City of Montreal in 1918.

Linteau ably describes this historical evolution and analyzes the dynamics of suburban growth at the end of the nineteenth century. He notes three phases of development. The first was the stage of slow urbanization (1883-1896) during which land developers together with municipal leaders made considerable strides forward in the area of public services: water-supply, sewers, electricity, gas and public transportation. The second stage was the period of industrial development (1896-1910) when land capital combined with industrial capital and multiple fiscal advantages to attract diverse industries together with large numbers of new working-class residents. The third stage (1910-1918) was characterized by a *politique de grandeur* of municipal leaders who, with the support of a wealthy French-Canadian minority made up primarily of old established families, followed the prevailing North American pattern of heavy long-term borrowing to beautify cities with public buildings of pretentious architectural style.

The role of the land developer is examined closely. Linteau suggests several steps to land development in an urban environment (p. 37). The first involves the landowner who divides a large amount of agricultural land into separate lots. Then comes the speculator who puts the land blocks together (*réunification*) followed by the *promoteur* or developer who structures and plans future development. The developer is the one who finally produces three types of land units — large holdings (land capital), small holdings, and what Linteau calls "direct institutional property".

In his chapter on industrial promotion during the "take-off" period (1896-1910), the industrial context is used to explain the phenomenal population growth of Maisonneuve. Its population doubled in five years between 1896 and 1901 and quadrupled in the following ten years. This increase coincided with a period of strong economic growth throughout the Canadian economy (1896-1914). However, special efforts were made in the case of Maisonneuve to attract industries. Advertisements hailed Maisonneuve as the Pittsburgh of Canada. In 1911, its population reached 18,000; in 1913, according to Lovell's directory, 32,000. Many widely publicized advantages and tax exemptions were provided throughout this period. The net result was a real boom in industrial growth. Between 1900 and 1910, production increased 341 percent (p. 109). At the same time, the extension of public services kept apace. Perhaps the most significant development was the linkage of Maisonneuve by rail with the Montreal transportation network.

Because of its industrial character, Maisonneuve became a working-class suburb made up, from a residential standpoint, mainly of tenants. Their only political right was that of voting in municipal elections. They had virtually no voice as to what went on in month-to-month and even year-to-year economic and political decisions involved in the development of Maisonneuve. As to the social segregation of residential space, although little information is available, there is some indication of population concentrations on the basis of the economic hierarchy (pp. 176-77).

In the third part of the book, Linteau deals with the "garden city" phase of urban land development (pp. 185-86). A chapter (pp. 199-221) is devoted to the *politique de grandeur* which was really the outcome of the ideological commitment to "progress and prosperity" which impregnated the thinking of all North American developers of this period. Finally at the outset of World War I, Maisonneuve succumbed to the nation-wide economic crisis and found itself unable to meet its financial commitments, primarily due to an excessive debt burden flowing from this grandiose building period.

The main thesis that Linteau develops is that, contrary to other conflicting statements, the French-Canadian landowner and developer was definitely not a conservative risk-avoiding entrepreneur; rather he was a major component of the urban and suburban development process in Quebec. He joined his land capital with industrial capital and by monopolizing the municipal decision-making process provided the principal driving force that brought about such spectacular growth. Linteau suggests that this mechanism is probably true of other Quebec cities during comparable periods of growth.

In general, this volume presents a balanced treatment of the historical growth process of one major entity, of present-day Montreal. From a geographer's standpoint it would have been interesting to have more information on the social segregation of urban space; but, apparently, for the given time-period detailed information was hard, if not impossible, to find. The book reads well and is extremely interesting to anyone with an urban studies orientation. Some of the descriptive passages tend to be a little repetitive, but this is small criticism compared to the overall value of this work.

Peter M. FOGGIN
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E. A. WRIGLEY and R. S. SCHOFIELD. — *The Population History of England 1541-1871*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1981. Pp. xv, 779.

The Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure has been assiduously working on the demographic history of England for almost twenty years. During that time they have reported on their progress in articles, collections of essays and the occasional short book. The volume under review represents the climax of their efforts, as well as that of several hundred local historians. It is the most authoritative account we are ever likely to have of what happened to England's population between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In one respect the book confirms what historians have known for some time: that England's population rose just over sevenfold in those 330 years, from about 3 million to 21.5 million. What is new is the refinement they bring to the figures, drawing to our attention that population did not increase by linear progression, and showing us exactly where in the curve the peaks and valleys occur. What is exciting about this dense and often difficult volume is the manner in which the authors use their findings to refashion our understanding of England's economic and social history.