REVIEWS/COMPTES RENDUS


Dans leur introduction au recueil dont ils ont assumé la direction, Jean Paelinck et Alain Saliez soulignent que, dans le domaine de l'analyse spatiale, « les courants de recherche francophones ont été aussi nombreux qu'originaux depuis une vingtaine d'années » et que « le dépassement des cadres trop rigides des modèles anglo-saxons étaient une nécessité compte tenu des mécanismes en jeu en Europe, notamment dans les pays francophones et latins ». Si la première proposition est éloquemment démontrée dans cet ouvrage qui regroupe 15 textes écrits par 24 auteurs, la seconde l'est beaucoup moins.

Bien que le livre se restreigne à la pensée scientifique européenne de langue française (la contribution canadienne étant ignorée), le lien entre l'évolution de cette pensée et le contexte propre à l'Europe n'y est que peu développé, tout comme d'ailleurs l'idée du besoin de dépasser les « cadres trop rigides des modèles anglo-saxons ». Il serait de fait plutôt dangereux de faire la promotion de la pensée européenne de langue française en opposant sa largeur de vues et de préoccupations à l'étroitesse des « modèles anglo-saxons » : un vieux proverbe français ne dit-il pas que : « qui trop embrasse, mal étreint ! »

Heureusement, le recueil réussit à éviter l'écueil que suggérait l'introduction. Les divers auteurs y présentent les travaux des spatialistes européens francophones comme des apports à la science universelle, plutôt que comme des réactions au courant scientifique anglo-saxon. Il en émerge de nombreuses synthèses et de nombreux bilans qui réjouiront autant les familiers de la littérature spatialiste de langue française que les nouveaux venus.

De ce panorama, se dégage une image rassurante de jeunesse et de vitalité. L'école spatialiste franco-européenne y apparaît sur le point de s'affranchir des deux grandes obsessions qui, vues de loin, ont semblé la caractériser : celle de la théorie des pôles de croissance et celle du schéma marxiste. On lira, par exemple, à la page 85, à propos de la théorie des pôles de croissance, ces quelques phrases courageuses de M. Penouil :
On peut se demander d'ailleurs si une erreur d'interprétation historique n'a pas été parfois commise. Parce que l'on observe aujourd'hui une concentration des activités sur des zones fortes et entraînantes, on a cru devoir conclure que le développement était engendré par la présence de ces zones fortes, ce qui est aujourd'hui exact dans les pays développés. Or, semble-t-il, la causalité initiale est inverse. C'est le développement qui, à un moment donné de son évolution, a conduit à la concentration et à la polarisation des activités. Cela reste vrai aujourd'hui.

De même, le livre se termine sur une interrogation salutaire concernant le riche courant marxiste de la littérature spatialiste francophone :

Vision fondée sur le matérialisme historique, elle apporte un renouvellement de l'approche traditionnelle. Saurait-on dépasser le stade verbo-conceptuel et devenir opérationnelle ? Telle est la question essentielle pour l'avenir de ce courant de recherche.

Cette réflexion semble particulièrement importante dans ce domaine que chérissent tout particulièrement (et aussi, assez isolément, il faut le dire) les spatialistes européens francophones, celui de l'étude de la rente foncière (ou plutôt des rentes foncières). Elle présente aussi un grand intérêt pour l'évolution future des recherches sur la Division spatiale du travail (DST) (cf. Ph. Aydalot).

Une des grandes qualités de l'ouvrage consiste à mettre en lumière l'importance des contributions francophones dans le domaine de l'économétrie spatiale et dans celui de la théorie économique spatiale. Nous touchons là à des travaux hautement mathématiques qui semblent (assez curieusement) avoir eu plus de difficultés à franchir la barrière linguistique que les apports plus littéraires de la théorie des pôles de croissance ou des analyses marxistes.

Dans une tentative de synthèse, P. H. Derycke croit pouvoir « discerner quatre séries d'apports par lesquels les économistes français se sont distingués par rapport à leurs homologues étrangers, notamment anglo-saxons » (p. 231). Ces apports concernent 1) la recherche d'une conceptualisation plus adaptée de l'espace urbain, 2) le renouveau des analyses foncières, 3) un scepticisme croissant dans l'usage des modèles et 4) la recherche de nouvelles logiques de croissance des ensembles urbains. Si le recueil de J. Paelinck et de A. Saliez rend très bien compte des deux premiers types d'apport et du quatrième, par contre, il n'insiste pas outre mesure sur le troisième. Il n'est pas sûr qu'on doive lui en tenir rigueur puisque cet ouvrage nous convainc facilement que les spatialistes européens de langue française peuvent s'imposer par leurs apports positifs, encore mieux que par leur scepticisme et par un esprit trop uniformément critique.

En somme, voici un volume important destiné à devenir un ouvrage de référence. Souhaitons qu'il soit bientôt traduit et qu'il contribue à alimenter le dialogue entre les courants scientifiques qu'il présente et les autres courants spatialistes.

Luc-Normand Tellier
INRS-Urbanisation
Université du Québec


Although fitting that this tribute to the scholarship of Boudeville has been published in the prestigious UNRISD/Mouton Regional Planning Series, several problems make it one of the less memorable volumes in the series. It comprises 25 papers which address in Part One: Polarized Development—Theory and Methodology (6 papers); Part Two: Regional Development, Regional Policy and Regional Planning in Interdisciplinary Perspective (10 papers); and Part Three: Empirical Studies (9 papers). There is also a foreword by the editor and a Tribute by Philippe Aydalot, both of which stimulate the reader and lead him to hope that the questions posed and the research of Boudeville briefly reviewed will present a focus for the subsequent chapters. Alas, this is not the case. First, about half of the papers (10) were previously published or presented at conferences between 1973 and 1978. One would have hoped that, for a tribute of this nature, original up-to-date essays would have been contracted to honour this innovative scholar. Second, although the format of the volume reflects in its parts and the locational coverage Boudeville’s wide interests, there is a lack of cohesive focus to the volume. The intention is to describe the world-wide experience of regional development policies during the past 30 years, to present alternative models, to explore interdisciplinary theory and methodology and to act as an inducement to find in Boudeville’s contributions “a source of inspiration for the process of re-evaluation of polarized development”. As there is little reference to Boudeville in the contributions there are few examples of inspiration to act as encouragement to researchers, while world-wide experience excludes the USSR and China, whose experience is especially pertinent to contemporary debate.
In the search for a focus, the reviewer returned to the relevant questions posed by Kuklinski in his foreword. Based on the experience of the past thirty years he asks whether polarized development should be considered in technical terms or ideological perspective, whether the modest results of such a strategy have induced new approaches, whether the successes and failures of regional policies are related to the concepts and instruments shaped by the theoretical frameworks of polarized development, and how this framework can be used, particularly through an interdisciplinary approach, to devise new regional policies. Kuklinski hopes that the critical reader will find in the volume the theoretical and empirical background to consider these topics. It is true that the reader will find that background, albeit only in general oblique terms. The questions are sufficiently important to have been used as specific themes for individual authors to address. Other questions could have been added addressing more specifically present controversies within regional development and the utility of polarized growth strategies. To what extent can bottom-up development strategies work in DCs as well as LDCs? To what extent can regional policies be made more effective in democracies in the face of Marxist alternatives, while retaining the essential ingredients of multiparty democratic societies? To what extent can the long-term time dimension of regional development be reconciled with the short-term electoral framework of western democracies? To what extent can polarized growth strategies be integrated with bottom-up strategies? To what extent can transportation, communication and financial infrastructures, as well as employment patterns, be modified to create stronger spread mechanisms? It is a disappointment to this reviewer that few of the contributions touch on these topics or treat substantively Kuklinski's questions.

Turning to some individual contributions, in Part One those by Penouil, Parr and Ciechocińska are noteworthy. Penouil's thoughtful paper reminds us that national political, social, and economic policies explain the performance of a growth centre strategy which may be only one of several development approaches. He states that scientific analysis appears to have retreated before ideological arguments, which leads this reviewer to consider the fact that unacceptable disparities in spatial or group terms exist in every society whatever its political ideological system. Parr, in an excellent paper, examines the links between growth poles and the central place system, indicating that dynamic elements in the latter can serve as a basis for regional policy. Ciechocińska distills social implications from Boudeville's work more successfully than Coraggio, who presents the standard leftist criticisms of the lack of political and social variables in growth poles strategies, that dependent links to "world poles" inherent in capitalism should be broken and that only elites benefit. Higgins recommends more empirical studies on interactions between centres involving technology diffusion, investment, migration and place preferences rather than commodity flows. It is noted that research on such topics has been under way during the 1970s. Strassoldo spends too much time on definitions of centres and peripheries to hold the reader's attention.

In Part Two, only Hilhorst's paper stimulates with a treatment of development from below, growth pole strategies and a concluding set of research suggestions. It would more usefully have been located in Part One. Szczesniak's description of regional economic planning in Poland, Ayal's argument that regional policy is dictated by large industrial corporations, and Lefebre's claim that urban industrial interests dominate rural agricultural ones argue for social and political change in capitalist democracies. If it is change along the lines of socialist bloc planning, as usual there is no mention of the horrendous inefficiencies or inequities of that planning. Buttimer's beautifully written paper, arguing against positivist planning and decrying the lack of consideration of the consumer being planned for, seems to have missed the widespread evolution of public participation in western planning (and its absence in other ideological systems) as well as the impracticality of a phenomenological approach to planning. However, Lamb calls for more integrative regional planning, including some of the subjective values to which Buttimer refers. Reflecting the eclectic range of the contributions, Bassand discusses the relevances of regional power and regional elites, Bivand reviews centre-periphery symmetrical and asymmetrical relationships based on Norwegian experience and how regional policy can intervene in these relationships in relation to "modes of production" and "social formations", and Fernandez and Lapatza tackle the financing of self-governing communities with alternative taxation allocations. This topic could be expanded considerably in terms of equity and efficiency, the experience of municipalities in western democracies and the implications for bottom-up communal development. Kuklinski concludes the section with a plea for more attention to spatial order in formal education and its relevance to instilling social responsibility in planners. Although the authors of papers in this section are trained in a number of disciplines the "interdisciplinary perspective" is masked for the reader, who has to question, therefore, the title of the section and the focus of the papers.
Of the empirical studies presented in Part Three, those by Hansen on the spatial dynamics of settlement systems in the USA, Mexico and their mutual borderlands and by Taylor on the theory and practice of African regional development, especially in Kenya, advocating convincingly bottom-up rural agro-urban centres are well written and focused essays. Baeyens and Dolman remind us of a sensitive issue in their description of the planning of a development pole in pluriethnic Malaysia. Black and Ray focus on environmental concerns of a conserver society in Canada but do not treat polarized development as indicated in their title. Ideological discussions of the over-concentration of resources and benefits in Latin America by DiMattos and an interesting historical treatment of the evolution of regional economic and political power in Belgium by Quévit beg discussion of alternative strategies or sequences of events. Three data-oriented pieces conclude the book: a description of the Dutch functional data bank by Ancot, Kemp, Paelinck and Smit shows what can usefully be achieved in a small country; Zienkowski describes attempts to measure national income (product) by regions in Poland; and Arnold, Danieli and Zacchia review, in an overly long and detailed paper, interregional migration 1950-70 in Europe.

Although there are some individual papers which are excellent contributions in their own right, this long (517 pages) and expensive volume is a disappointment. It does not provide the reader with any critical evaluation or application of Boudeville’s ideas (or indeed those of Perroux), or a series of papers which address in a focused and unbiased manner the important controversies in contemporary regional development. A notable exception may be Hilhorst’s useful contribution. Consequently this reviewer is unable to recommend the book as a text. It could serve, however, as ancillary reading for students. Although several strange English words appear throughout the text, no doubt resulting from translations, the main weakness lies in the initial organization of the book. Finally, work by notable researchers on growth pole/centre topics such as Richardson, Moseley and Lasuen is conspicuous by its absence.

R. G. Ironside
Department of Geography
University of Alberta


This thought-provoking compendium of scholarly essays embodies six chapters and an epilogue. The initial chapter by Kent A. Price provides an “Introduction and Overview” wherein the reader is reminded that while there are continuous regional disputes in the United States, regions “per se” are legally nonexistent. Furthermore, Price is cognizant that in an extended time horizon, regional delineation is perhaps similar to nailing a custard pie to the wall. Why? Because regional realities shift with both time and technological perspectives. Reader interest is heightened via the simplistic, yet quite apropos observation that there is seemingly a relatively low level of regional conflict in the United States (i.e., Snowbelt-versus-Sunbelt confrontation) vis-à-vis Belgium and Spain, among others.

The second chapter, on “History and Perspective” by Nathan Rosenberg, emphasizes that even given the ambiguities permeating regional definitions, a historical regional inquiry underlies the central issue of regional equity. For instance, not only are there familiar considerations such as the post-1880 narrowing of regional income differentials, but there is an ever expanding public awareness of the need for contemporary regional environmental equity with respect to explosive site issues (i.e., external costs associated with the disposal of toxic chemical or radioactive wastes in a Love Canal; chemical dioxin in both Jacksonville, Arkansas, and Times Beach, Missouri, to mention a few). The author certainly heightens reader interest with the apparent, yet sometimes ignored premise that the “proper targets of government policy ought to be people, and not regions.”

Hans H. Landsberg, in the third-chapter presentation pertaining to “Energy Haves and Have-Nots”, observes that an important irritant emanates from the specific usage of state energy taxation (i.e., severance taxes) within a regional setting of the “haves” whereby the interregional tax shift induces a price effect which, according to Landsberg, obviously arouses consumer hostility and

---

1 For a discussion of a pessimistic technological implication for regional growth (i.e., the bioeconomics of Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen), the interested reader should see William H. Miernyk, Regional Analysis and Regional Policy (Cambridge, Mass.: Oelgeschlager, Gunn & Hain, Publishers, Inc., 1982).

perhaps explicit retaliatory policies in the realms of the energy "have-nots" (i.e., New York and Connecticut attempt to tax oil companies and headquarters located within their boundaries). Regional friction, of course, can be ameliorated via the utilization of less corrosive policies directed toward such issues as nuclear waste disposal and offshore oil and gas development, among numerous others. Even so, as Landsberg mentions, national policy attempts to soften adverse regional site impacts should not impede shifts in economic activity which in turn responds to an efficient price mechanism in the search for the golden fleece of Pareto optimality.

Chapter Four, the essay by Allen V. Kneese relating to "Typical Cases Involving Natural Resources," highlights the familiar Kneese recognition of the cause-effect nature of externalities (i.e., real in the form of interstate river pollution or pecuniary via state tax policy) and regional conflicts. Reader enthusiasm is enhanced with the advent of such contemporary analytical issues as salinity in the Colorado River, the Montana Coal Tax, and the waste isolation pilot plant controversy (i.e., the nuclear waste repository at the Los Medanos site in Eddy County, New Mexico). Furthermore, Richard B. Stewart addresses "The Legal Structure of Interstate Resource Conflict" in Chapter Five, wherein the discussion ranges from a historical legal perspective to a modern presentation of U.S. Supreme Court Cases (e.g., Marland v. Louisiana, Commonwealth v. Montana, Minnesota v. Cloverleaf Dairy, among others). Stewart properly agrees with Kneese and others when the reader is again reminded that "disposal is by no means a problem-free process even when the state in principle agrees to it." Since the author believes that the federal courts are "ill-suited" to adjudicate interstate pollution controversies, innovative institutions should be forthcoming (e.g., a site selection jury).

The sixth-chapter treatment of "Externality, Conflict, and Decision" by Clifford S. Russell reaffirms how externalities develop (e.g., a la Russell political externality wherein a state develops a resource and distorts a wilderness or scenic area valued by other regional populations). Perhaps reader interest wanes with various aspects of the author's cursory analytical content. One aspect of Gilbert F. White's "Epilogue" is certain: "international considerations will strongly shape the course of actions taken in the United States." Thus, reader imagination expands on the perspective to the future international implications of acid rain on various economic settings (e.g., the Ohio Valley).

This volume not only focuses on the need for additional research but provides an understanding of the problematic causal effects and seemingly elusive policy solutions to such considerations as externality-induced regional conflict in the national struggle for an efficient Pareto interregional improvement in societal welfare. Individual chapters would enhance both undergraduate and graduate reading lists in regional economics.

Jack E. Adams
University of Arkansas at Little Rock


The title of the book is somewhat unusual and is derived from the term used to describe the frantic land-disposal activity of government land offices in the United States during the early nineteenth century. According to the author, "doing a land-office business" came to be synonymous with any wildly successful or booming enterprise. The subject matter of the book, better described by the subtitle, concerns the experience of four North American metropolitan areas which grew rapidly during the 1970s and which therefore experienced a "land-office business" in their residential property market. The primary intention of the book is to evaluate several explanations of the high and sharply-increased cost of urban housing during that decade by means of four case studies. Each of two large American metropolitan areas, Houston (2.9 million) and Phoenix (1.5 million), and the two medium-size Canadian metropolitan areas, Edmonton (600,000) and Calgary (525,000), is examined in a separate chapter. Although only two of the seven chapters may be said to involve comparative analysis, the author is clearly interested in generalizations concerning housing-market behaviour and the effectiveness of public policies aimed at reducing housing costs.

In a short introductory chapter the author reviews briefly some of the well-known "explanations" of the high housing and land costs. In both countries the land component is identified as one of the major causes of high housing costs, and it is therefore the land-cost issue which is the principal focus of the book. Based
on the literature, the author suggests that there have been four explanations of the high land prices: strong demand in the face of a fixed or inelastic supply; speculative gains by landowners and developers; a small number of developers dominating the supply of building lots; and supply scarcity created by public control over development. There is no critical assessment of the validity of these hypotheses in this theoretical review; instead, the author intends to use the analysis of the individual housing markets as a means of evaluating the importance of these causal factors.

In a multi-case study approach it is always a difficult task to decide how to balance the unique and common elements of the cases. Given the author's goal of generalizing about housing market behaviour, it can be said that the four cities were not subject to sufficient common analysis and that the hypotheses stated in the first chapter were not rigorously, consistently, or even adequately tested in any of the four case studies. Corporate concentration, for example, is analyzed for Calgary and Edmonton but not for the two American cities. Similarly, the differences between the American and Canadian cities in terms of land regulation are noted but not analyzed for their impact on land prices. The latter is particularly surprising since Houston, which does not have a zoning ordinance to control development, may be sharply contrasted with Calgary and Edmonton which both have strong land-use controls. In fairness, the author does acknowledge the difficulty of obtaining consistent data for each metropolitan area.

There was one notable attempt to obtain comparative data by means of a mail questionnaire survey of builders and developers in the four communities, but this met with little success. Only 70 usable surveys were returned, a response rate of just over ten percent. The number of respondents varied from only 9 for Houston, the largest metropolitan area, to as many as 28 for Calgary, the smallest metropolitan area. Moreover, the survey respondents accounted for as little as 3.3 percent of all housing starts in Houston. When the respondents are classified in various ways (builder, developer or builder-developer; detached or multifamily housing; and scale of operation), the result is that sample size is inadequate for even tentative conclusions. In addition, no attempt was made to control for quality, size of structure, location within the city or any other factors.

Nevertheless, in a well-written final chapter the author makes several conclusions from his study. Relative to their counterparts the Canadian builders typically market a smaller house on a smaller lot at a higher price. The cost of a serviced lot was found to be the major contributory factor to differences in house price: on a per square foot basis the Canadian serviced lot was three to four times more expensive. The degree of corporate concentration and the role of large-scale builders were not found to be significant determinants of land prices. The factors which were considered as contributing most to the American-Canadian differential in land costs were: higher cost of raw land in Canada (four or five times higher per square foot of finished lot); higher proportion of land dedicated for public use in Canada; and higher servicing standards in Canada. The last factor appears to be particularly important: the cost of servicing a lot (exclusive of land costs) in Edmonton and Calgary was about $300 per front foot in 1980 compared to a serviced-lot price (including both land and service costs) of about $160 per front foot in Houston. The author's recommendations on public policy are few and well known: a more careful assessment of development standards and of the time required in the processing of development applications, and caution about the use of public land banking as a means of reducing land costs.

Overall my impression is that the book is well written but promises more than it delivers. An in-depth comparative analysis of four rapidly-growing American and Canadian cities appears to be a potentially useful undertaking, and it is unfortunate that in this case the task proved too difficult. Perhaps if the author had directed more of his resources to the questionnaire survey and less to the descriptive surveys of the four cities, the study would have been more successful.

George Nader
Department of Geography
Trent University


This rather large volume represents the proceedings of the 1980 World Congress on Land Policy, co-sponsored by the International Centre for Land Policy Studies and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. Placed in its temporal context, four years after the Habitat Conference in Vancouver, it represents to a certain extent a stock-taking of land policy in human settlements, mainly urban. Its strength lies in the strong representation of papers from developing countries (at least half of the twenty papers in
the volume have a very strong emphasis on developing countries), in the high quality of many of the papers either from the perspective of the thought-provoking nature of the arguments or because they represent a well-structured research report, and in the generally high quality of the text-editing. Its weakness lies in the organisation of the volume and the general lack of strong introductory statements placing each paper into some sort of conceptual framework.

The organisation of the volume follows that of the congress itself. The papers are organised in five parts, four of which represent the various sessions of the congress, while the fifth includes three papers prepared for the congress but not actually presented there. While there are themes to each of the first four sessions, because of the quite focused nature of many of the papers it would have helped to have the themes and relationships among the papers laid out explicitly—William Doebele's introductory remarks to the second session is the only one that comes close to this. Clearly, introductory comments that are appropriate in the context of a conference are not necessarily the best means of achieving the most effective communication of the proceedings in published form. This is also apparent in the inclusion of eleven and a half pages in Part I for introductory comments from each of the nine workshop chairmen, and of nineteen pages in Part IV for summary reports from the workshops. Without strong linking statements, these lose much of their value in the published format adopted, even though the workshops must have provided a stimulating forum for exchange of views for the participants. It is also not unlikely, on the basis of some of the comments made in the workshop summaries, that some of the workshop presentations would have been more useful in published form than some of the actual papers published.

In Part I, the dominant theme is that of land policy (mainly urban land policy). A recurring message is that both the priorities attached to different issues and what is possible in the area of land policy varies from one country to another. Penalosa's introductory paper stresses the problems of urbanisation associated with the quality of life and underscores the lack of progress made in responding to these issues, a fact he attributes both to lack of a proper information base on land and to the political power structure in many countries. The comments from various world regions stress the differences between countries, especially within the Third World, in terms of land tenure, power and problems, and the link between land policy and other social issues such as productivity and income distribution. This last point is also a central theme in Lee's very specific paper on Taiwan, which deals more with rural land reform than other papers in the proceedings. Lim presents a very eloquent argument concerning the failure of Western planning approaches in Third World countries—although it is interesting that his criticisms of physical planning in a Third World context can equally be levelled at Western planning in Western countries in many contexts. The final paper in Part I is one by Brian Berry on the implications of recent trends in urbanisation and counter-urbanisation for metropolitan development in the 1980s. Based on evidence regarding changing core-periphery relationships in terms of rates of development in many countries that caught many people off-guard in the 1970s, he asks whether very high levels of urbanisation (or metropolitanisation) are indeed a permanent feature of high levels of economic development, since there appears to be evidence emerging of limits to size and concentration. Unfortunately, these provocative questions are not picked up again by other speakers; it would have been fascinating to have had some responses to these questions from the many Third World participants present in terms of trends and land policy implications.

Part II is devoted to urban land markets and methodologies of analysis of such markets. Researchers will find a number of very interesting papers in this part of the volume, well worth their attention. Ingram has a useful general paper, comparing land value and population density in several cities in Korea and Columbia. Brown, Philips and Roberts present a very good paper, based on empirical analysis of land ownership patterns in six metropolitan peripheries in Canada and the U.S. The analysis is based on a threefold categorisation of landowners in the urban periphery (namely, users, investors and developers) and shows considerable complexity in terms of submarkets. This element of complexity is also reiterated in the paper on Tokyo's fringe by Hasegawa and Hanayama, in their more geographically-specific research report. Of three papers based on Latin American studies, those by Geisse and Sabatini (Issues and Methodology) and Mohan and Villamizar (case studies of Bogota and Cali, Columbia) are particularly interesting, well written and well documented. Geisse and Sabatini make the point, based on a comparative study of six case studies, that the urban land markets they are involved with are becoming more complex and heterogeneous, and that speculative increases are more a function of the increasingly important role of financial capital in urban land markets than the landowners' behaviour per se. Mohar and Villamizar present case studies of Bogota and Cali in which they investigate the distribution of urban land values within the cities; this is an interesting empirical paper, with a solid conceptual framework and with some useful substantive research results. The final paper of note in this part is one by Echenique in
which he develops the interesting argument that public investment in transportation infrastructure will bring down average urban land values because with transportation developments accompanying urban growth it breaks monopoly power, resulting in a tipping of the land value-distance relationship.

Part III includes only two rather general and very short papers by Wood and White, dealing respectively with some of the changes in the urban environment that must be considered to make cities "fit to live in" and with the pitfalls of incentive zoning for improving urban environments, based on New York experience. There is clearly a discontinuity in the flow between these papers and those of Parts I and II; this is another point where some initial attempt at outlining and developing an explicit framework for the published volume would have been useful. In Part IV, apart from the workshop summaries already alluded to, there are two brief but thoughtful concluding statements from Oberlander and Ramachandran. Oberlander, for example, returns to Peñalosa's question in the opening session — Why has there been so little progress since Habitat? — and emphasizes that techniques alone do not constitute a policy. Part V has, unfortunately, the appearance of being tacked on to the proceedings; these three papers might have been more usefully incorporated—despite the fact they were not actually presented at the Congress—into other parts of the volume. For instance, Prest's lengthy treatment of land taxation and urban finances in less-developed countries might have been more usefully incorporated into Part I.

Overall, then, the student looking for a comprehensive statement on land policy will be disappointed in this volume. But as a set of proceedings, it has several qualities that will make it a worthwhile addition to any library on (urban) land policy: there is a very strong contribution from developing countries, especially from Latin America, including some carefully-thought-out and well-documented studies of urban land markets; there is evidence in abundance in many of the papers that land policy needs much more fundamental research both into what is possible in different cultural contexts and into the functioning of land markets under different conditions; and there are a large number of individual papers which will undoubtedly be referred to frequently in the coming years.

Christopher R. Bryant
Department of Geography
University of Waterloo


This is a modest volume about an important issue of policy and theory, the location and status of skid row districts in American cities. As Miller indicates in his introductory chapter, skid row has for several reasons drawn considerable attention from North American social scientists: as an indictment of market societies, as an exemplar of the coping strategy of individuals and social groups, as an expression of ecological and land use processes, and as an exotic laboratory of urban subcultures. The objective of this book is disappointingly slight: "the development of a Skid Row-ness scale" and the "testing of some implications of certain theories" (p. 104). The theories are in many instances quite dated, and the major issue distinguishing them seems to be the debate in the 1940s concerning ecological and cultural value explanations of urban land use patterns. Knowledge of a more contemporary urban literature is largely absent, so that following a description of the three basic models of urban spatial structure, the author agrees with a 1971 paper stating that there had been no conclusive results in evaluating the three models. Apparently the product of a decade of social area analysis and factorial ecology directed to precisely this question (for example, in Canada by Murdie in Toronto and Herbert in Winnipeg) has passed by unnoticed.

This dated framework is incorporated with a number of the concerns of a still earlier generation of human ecologists and leads to a purely locational analysis of the likely direction and spatial form that skid row displacement will take. What sharpens the poverty of this question is that only a single case study (Seattle-Tacoma) is examined, and this for only a seven year period from 1972 to 1978. Moreover, data derived from the methodology were overwhelmingly observational and were collected "between 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, in early August each year" (p. 55). The identification of skid row was accomplished using an observational checklist of the presence of such features as rescue missions, pawn shops, cheap hotels, and "recumbent loiterers". Other data to support the spatial delimitation of skid row involved the casual use of police department figures and census data. A survey of either 117 or 127 interviews (both figures are given) with skid row men was also undertaken, but the only question reported on in the study concerns the likely district where displaced residents of skid row might relocate; 55 percent replied "I don't know". The "skid row-ness scale" was compiled for 180 blocks in Seattle and nine blocks in Tacoma; some slight...
changes occurred between 1972 and 1978, but their significance cannot be established from the decontextualised methodology employed in the study. Indeed it is possible from the text that changes are the product of measurement errors or of new social policies by skid row service agencies; for example, arrests by police showed remarkable yearly variations that could only be attributed to changing priorities of enforcement.

There is much in this book which is intellectually innocent and on occasions I am surprised that it qualified as a thesis, still less a published manuscript ("As this author understands from casual reading, housing projects mainly house blacks and families" p. 99). There is no serious discussion of the important contexts of skid row, such as the metropolitan housing market, the politics of centre city redevelopment, or contemporary labour market conditions. The study highlights the limitations of a naive empiricism and the poverty of a spatiality which emphasizes space at the neglect of place as a social construction. This is a surprising blind spot for a sociologist, and perhaps in recognition of it, Miller's concluding chapter is an ethnography of the daily life of the tramp. But this conclusion only highlights the methodological and theoretical inconsistency of the entire project, for in place of an ethnography of skid row we are introduced to the social world of riding freight trains and a two-week journey with the author between North Dakota and Washington, although "such information seemed to have little to do with my study." Overall this is a disappointing book.

David Ley
Department of Geography
University of British Columbia