



BOOK REVIEWS

Village et ville au Moyen Age: les dynamiques morphologiques by *Bernard Gauthiez, Elisabeth Zadoro-Rio and Henry Galinié* (eds), Presses Universitaires François Rabelais: Maison des Sciences De L'homme, Tours, France, 2003, vol. 1 'Texte', 485 pp, vol 2 'Plans', 413 pp. ISBN 2-86906-178-1.

This edited work contains eighteen essays on urban and rural settlement form, chiefly relating to France across the span of the Middle Ages. It consists of two volumes, the first containing the essays, and the second containing plans and illustrations. *Village et Ville* is the outcome of a programme of research carried out between 1995 and 2000 to examine the morphogenesis of medieval settlement, looking on the one hand at the role of 'planning' in the process of settlement evolution, from village to town, and on the other at regional variations and differences in medieval settlement form and chronology.

The project and its historiographical context are set out by Elisabeth Zadoro-Rio in her introductory essay. This usefully reviews themes dominant in French morphological literature, such as the classification of settlement form, particularly the continuing influence of Pierre Laveden and his typologies of plan-forms. She also identifies and summarizes the Conzenian approach, noting in particular its usefulness for studying the development of urban landscapes, but pointing out too that Conzen's work has for a long time rarely entered the lexicon of French urban archaeology and history, except through the work in particular of Galinié and Gauthiez, both of whom are contributors to the project and this volume. Indeed, the study of settlement form in general, she suggests, has been rather absent in past archaeological and historical work on medieval towns and villages in France. A tendency among urban historians, for example, is to use plans to illustrate historical information rather than as a source for research. Her comments on these

disciplinary traits make interesting reading, for they have resonance with the use of morphology among medieval historians and archaeologists in the UK. In France, as in the UK, things started to change in the 1990s, as the analysis of medieval settlement form received more serious attention. This has raised questions about the processes of settlement formation, and in particular 'planning' in the Middle Ages. This is the focus for the subsequent essays in the volume, presenting the results of a number of studies using the analysis of form as a guiding principle, and addressing processes that were at work changing settlements in France during the Middle Ages.

The essays are divided into a series of sections. The first of these covers issues of 'planning', the second is on development described as 'spontaneous', the third considers political and jurisdictional influences on settlement form, and the fourth addresses 'variations' in form over time and space. The final section reflects on three themes (forms, actors, and sources) emerging from the essays. Each of the sections has its own introduction, identifying issues explored in the essays. The division between 'planning' and 'spontaneous' development is one that is questionable, as the editors recognise, suggesting that they are not 'distinct categories' (p. 31). They note, too, the importance of antecedent features in influencing the forms of settlements to different degrees.

The first section includes a study of towns in Normandy by Bernard Gauthiez, in particular Verneuil sur Avre, Falaise, Pont-Audemer, and Lisiuex, places he has covered previously in his detailed *Atlas morphologique des villes de Normandie* (1999). He offers quite detailed plan-analyses of the four towns, dealing with their plans and written sources, and offering interpretations of the changing forms and also considering matters of agency, particularly the influence of lordship. The model used in Gauthiez's chapter is also used in two subsequent chapters in this section, one on Montferrand and Riom (by Josiane Teyssot), and

another on towns and villages in the central Languedoc region (by Laurent Schneider). The other chapters, on Montpellier (by Gislaine Fabre and Thierry Lochard) and towns of the Aude valley (by Jean-Loup Abbé) take a slightly different approach. However, what all demonstrate is that 'planning' took different forms, and gave rise to morphologically composite plans, a conclusion that has resonance with recent studies of English medieval 'new towns' and their urban forms. Since apparently 'planned' towns have plans showing period-growth (themselves 'planned'), the validity of the idea of 'spontaneous' urban development has to be doubted.

The essays of the second section, on development described as 'spontaneous', deals with larger urban places with complex forms and Roman antecedents. These include Grenoble (by Alain Badin de Montjoye), Rodez (by Jean Catalo), Angers (by François Comte), Lodève (by Laurent Schneider), and Poissy (by Luc Bourgeois). These chapters also make fascinating reading, in part for the interesting application of morphogenetic principles to morphologically complex layouts, as in the case of Rodez with its clearly-defined enceintes, which Catalo uses to trace through the city's medieval development. Again, these examples provide a firm basis for Anglo-French comparative study, not least because the methods being employed are themselves comparable with those used in Anglophone urban morphology. Indeed, rather than being spontaneous, these places show, through their plan units, similarities with the 'planned' forms of the towns of the previous section, and like them reflect period-growth phases.

Chapters in sections three and four are somewhat different in character to the detailed case studies of sections one and two. The emphasis shifts more to matters of interpretation, firstly in terms of political influences on form, and secondly what can be deduced from spatial and temporal variations in form. On the former, attention is given to the role of particular agents and their urban jurisdictions, especially ecclesiastical ones. For example, the role of the Church is considered in the morphological development of Tours, Saint-Denis and Fécamp. Section four, on 'Variations', then looks at forms more comparatively in different regional contexts, including one chapter on the new towns of King Alfred of Wessex, in southern England. These two sections try to explain urban forms through connecting them to contemporary social and cultural processes. In his chapter on Normandy towns, for example, Gauthiez identifies certain traits in their urban form, such as triangular

market places and 'harmonious' street plans appearing in the twelfth century. These he then relates to geometrical knowledge circulating at the time at which these forms were appearing. His discussion touches upon issues of symbolism and meaning of urban forms, a matter also explored in this journal a few years ago (see Lilley, 1998, 1999). Again, these thematic and comparative chapters further point to the potential for collaborative study of medieval urban forms in France and England, and certainly they provide a sound starting point for those wishing to see how town plans and planning are currently being considered in France. The final section draws together the previous chapters and examines three related themes, 'forms', 'actors', and 'sources'. Here again there are important and complex matters being discussed, for instance on the 'promoters of urbanism', the role of surveying, and the 'question of planning'. These, too, would provide fruitful areas for further discussion. In all, this is a well-researched and timely collection of essays that for urban morphologists interested in the Middle Ages offers not only useful empirical insights but also methodological reflections. It deserves to be widely consulted and certainly institutional readers of this journal should encourage their libraries to acquire a copy.

References

- Lilley, K. D. (1998) 'Taking measures across the medieval landscape: aspects of urban design before the Renaissance', *Urban Morphology*, 2, 82-92.
 Lilley, K. D. (1999) 'Geometry and medieval town planning: a reply', *Urban Morphology*, 3, 111-114.

Keith D. Lilley, School of Geography, The Queen's University of Belfast, Belfast, Northern Ireland, BT7 1NN. E-mail: k.lilley@qub.ac.uk

Dublin 1745-1922, hospitals, spectacle and vice by *Gary A. Boyd*, Four Courts Press, Dublin, Ireland, 2006, 224 pp. ISBN 1-85182-960-1 hardback; ISBN 1-85182-966-0 paperback.

This is the fourth volume in the series *The making of Dublin city* (series editors, Joseph Brady and Annegret Simms). It is an original and ambitious study that is difficult to categorize. It is an

architectural history, focusing specifically on the myriad of institutional buildings that were encompassed by the term 'hospital', and the activities they accommodated. A study in urban planning, it explores the making of public, semi-public and private space, and the tensions between them. As a geographical study, it has an innate appreciation not just of 'what is where, when, and why' but what is behind, unseen, on the margins, in the shadows. It is above all a study in the dynamics of urban change, which will resonate with the modern reader: despite the loftiest of planning ideals and the efforts of police, activities which were neither prescribed nor predicted invariably spilled over to take control of public and semi-public space. The text has much to offer those interested in urban morphology, ranging as it does from the large scale of house plans to streetscapes and city districts.

Despite the ambitions of the title, about two-thirds of the book deals with the Rotunda hospital from its opening in 1751 to the 1790s (143pp). This is by far the strongest section, where the author is most clearly in control of what is truly a fascinating subject. The founder of this first maternity hospital in Britain or Ireland, the flamboyant Bartholomew Mosse, secured the patronage of the wealthy through astute social networking and, most memorably, by establishing a 'pleasure garden' to generate funds on an ongoing basis. Sited at the closing end of Sackville Mall (now O'Connell Street), the hospitals and gardens complex was to exercise an extraordinary influence on the morphology of the eighteenth-century city and on its social life, both seen and unseen. Boyd traces the development of the gardens and of the hospital, drawing parallels with contemporary urban developments elsewhere in Dublin, in Britain and on the continent, and (more immediately), with the south-city development, on a site of similar significance, of Leinster House and its gardens, the city residence of the Earl of Kildare, and the work of the same architect (Cassels). The point of Boyd's lengthy meditation on the background to eighteenth-century estate investment in Ireland, and the comparisons he draws between sites, becomes clear when we learn of the role played in the advancement of the hospital by the premier aristocratic family in Ireland, the Kildares. The Rotunda pleasure gardens had the 'potent combination of architecture, aristocratic patronage and charity as permanent fixtures', ensuring its popularity for far longer than the Vauxhall gardens in London, or any of several other contemporary models. Theatrical and other entertainments were

on offer in the Rotunda pleasure gardens: fireworks, orchestral music, lotteries, bowling, tea parties, in a magical (and ever changing) landscape of waterfalls, terraces, and meandering walks. Above all was the 'promenade'; the opportunity to see and be seen, to mix with your social superiors (or indeed, for those of rank, the enticement of possible encounters with those just slightly 'below'), and all for the price of an admission ticket.

Boyd is interested in the symbolism of architectural form, the relationship of a building to its immediate setting (mall, garden, stable yard), and how the addition of wings and extensions might alter or reinforce that relationship; he is interested in who entered a building, how they moved through it, what they saw and how they were seen, who they might meet or from whom they were shielded. The Rotunda Hospital gives him a cast of hundreds, from the poor lying-in women great with child on whom the trainee man-midwives learned their skills, through to the governors, aristocratic patrons, and ticket-buying public, including inevitably those whom the hospital management would not at all wish to be in its vicinity. Boyd's interest in skylines and streetscapes, in the topographical detail of areas undergoing demolition and the realignment of building plots and thoroughways, leads him to explore the area's growing reputation as an exclusive residential enclave, with the development of grand mansions in its vicinity, the creation of Rutland Square (now known as Parnell Square), and the attentions of the Wide Streets Commissioners. For Boyd, this north city complex represents the intersection of many diverse but interconnected cultural, social and personal landscapes. Moving from the 1740s onwards he tracks the impact such spaces have on the development of Dublin, and the growing division of the city into discrete spheres of 'spectacle' and 'invisibility'. He literally invites the reader to 'look again', as the editors note, 'to see, with new eyes, a landscape that we believed we understood'.

The imbalance between the treatment afforded the Rotunda (by far the bulk of the text) and the other institutions (prisons, Lock Hospital, Hospital for Incurables, asylums) is disconcerting to the reader. Almost all this material deals with the period up to 1812, with some brief references to the subsequent fate of these buildings. The text then jumps, without warning, to the last decade of the nineteenth century and the Montgomery Street north city red-light district (interrupted by a section on statistics). Twelve pages are devoted to what is a summary and rather disjointed study (under the grand title 'spaces of empire'), entirely derived

from secondary reading, and not at all as original or engaging as the early Rotunda study, or the associated studies of the Lock Hospital and Hospital for Incurables, all of which were based on archival sources.

Despite the problems which this reviewer found with the structure, there is much here that is useful and original. Immense effort was invested in mapping the locations, and relocations, of so many institutions, some of which are notoriously difficult to pin down. Different aspects of architectural theory, most notably the work of Foucault, have been applied to this study with valuable results. In the epilogue, Boyd argues for the 'theatrical consistency' of Sackville Street and the persistence of a 'backstage Dublin', with its disease, poverty and vice still beyond the control of successive administrations irrespective of their political ideologies or cultural affiliations. In bravely tackling this shadowland, so much more elusive and poorly documented (by definition) than the 'monumental city', Boyd has modelled what might be done elsewhere.

This series is noted for the quality and number of its images and Boyd's text does not disappoint. The quality of practically all 96 illustrations is splendid. There is a judicious mixture of ground plans (some redrawn), elevations, contemporary map extracts and original maps constructed for this text, which are very carefully placed, and utilised to the full in the discussion. There are some delightful plates drawn from contemporary journals and guide books and, for comparison's sake, several illustrations from case studies outside Dublin. While it may seem a minor quibble, a list of the sources employed, for example primary manuscript sources listed by repository, followed by primary printed sources, would be a lot more useful than the two-page essay appended here, followed by a mixed list of printed materials. The editors might also be persuaded to allow footnotes for such studies as this which rely heavily on primary sources and need to be tightly referenced.

The advertising note claims that this book 'challenges the vision of eighteenth-century Dublin as an ideal Protestant city by investigating the hidden world behind its wide streets and magnificent Georgian façades'. The vice and poverty of eighteenth-century Dublin have been widely acknowledged by researchers for many years; for example, in the excellent work of Edel Sheridan, published in 2001 in this series, in the edited volume *Dublin through space and time, c. 900 - 1900*. Boyd's book does much more than expose the underbelly of the eighteenth-century

city; through its combination of architectural, planning and geographical perspectives, and their associated theories, it provides insights into the personalities, forces, and processes that have shaped the city – all of its spaces – both overtly and covertly.

Jacinta Prunty, Department of History, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland. E-mail: jacinta.prunty@nuim.ie

The Calgary project: urban form / urban life by *Beverly A. Sandalack* and *Andrei Nicolai*, University of Calgary Press, Calgary, AB, Canada, 2006, 209 pp. ISBN 1-55238-217-6.

In *The Calgary Project*, Beverly Sandalack and Andrei Nicolai trace the evolution of Calgary's urban form, providing a detailed history of its development by examining the city and its forms from the scale of the building to that of the regional. Calgary, a city of roughly one million citizens, is currently enjoying great wealth due to Alberta's booming oil and gas industry. Its history, however, is relatively short, having started in 1875 when it was established as a fort for the North West Mounted Police. Calgary's rapid growth, through the many dramatic booms and busts of Alberta's frontier economy, is detailed by the authors.

The book's primary chapters each focus on a distinct era of the city's history, detailing the changes which were imparted to the city's built form in each era, as well as the dominant actors and approaches to city building. Each of these chapters is organized in a similar structure, allowing for comparisons across eras as well as presenting the research in a logical, easily navigated volume.

After a short introduction, each chapter includes a section on the ideas, plans and planning of the era, where the authors detail opinions and preferences of the public, developers and planners. As in many other cities, tensions often existed amongst these actors. Development plans and goals were repeatedly drawn up, especially for the downtown core, only to be later shelved due to lack of support, which at times included fierce public opposition. The subsequent section in each chapter describes the spatial structure of the city, focusing on the distribution of land uses, transportation network development, and parks and public spaces. Especially of interest in this section is a discussion

of the development of the city's infrastructure, including water, sewage, power and communication systems. Although not as glamorous as other elements of the city, acknowledgment of the role that these essential services play in shaping the city is critical in explaining urban morphogenesis.

In the following section, entitled 'Urban form and urban types', the authors focus on specific areas of the city, including the downtown and residential neighbourhoods, allowing for finer-scale analysis of these areas. Since the entire city could not be studied at such a micro-scale, representative neighbourhoods are examined with the use of clever graphics showing land use, plots and building footprints. Elements of the streetscape and architectural styles are also illustrated for each of the eras. The book is well illustrated throughout with many photographs, maps and computer generated diagrams which add greatly to the discussion; however, many of the figures are too small to be fully appreciated.

The final chapter of the book raises the question 'Where to next?' By detailing the course of development throughout Calgary's history, the authors present a platform from which this question can begin to be answered. It is necessary to understand how and why the city's present shape has come to be. Although not always ideal, the current urban form has been inherited from past development shaped by ideas and pressures of the time in which it was created. Consideration of this allows for improvements to the existing fabric to be approached with greater understanding and success. Also, by learning from the past, it is possible to better shape new areas of the city. An appreciation of a city's history, such as that presented in this volume, is instrumental in guiding its future.

The public realm is one topic on which the authors highlight the need for greater attention in the future. They are concerned by the lack of consideration that the public realm has received in recent developments. In the past, as shown by their analysis, the public realm was intrinsic in development, but recently has been largely ignored or privatized. With such knowledge the future

development and redevelopment can be more attentive to public spaces, for it is in these areas that cities shine with creativity, networking and culture.

Sandalack and Nicolai have undertaken a townscape analysis of Calgary in order to illustrate the evolution of the city's urban fabric. They took a similar approach in their study of Halifax (Sandalack and Nicolai, 1998), although it can be argued that *The Calgary Project* offers a more refined version. Their approach melds morphological analysis with techniques of urban design and planning to provide a comprehensive picture of the city. These techniques make the book of interest to those who wish to learn how to read and interpret the landscape of a city. In addition, the book's potential audience includes those who are interested in Calgary's history specifically, and the development of Canadian cities in general.

A city of only 4000 people at the turn of the twentieth century, Calgary has experienced rapid development over the last century that continues today fuelled by the oil and gas industry. Its history is relatively short; its fabric has been woven over a brief period. As explained by the authors, its form has had little time to enter into a mature state; whereas many European cities have had successive generations of development and redevelopment in which their forms can be refined. Although still in its temperamental adolescent years, Calgary has the potential to mature into a fine city. This process is only possible with an understanding of the city's past, its growth and evolution, such as is provided by this book.

Reference

Sandalack, B. A. and Nicolai, A. (1998) *Urban structure – Halifax: an urban design approach* (Tuns Press, Halifax, NS, Canada).

Mathew Novak, Department of Geography, University of Western Ontario, 1151 Richmond Street, London, Ontario, N6A 5C2, Canada. E-mail: mathewnovak@gmail.com