

Cities of the Heartland: The Rise and Fall of the Industrial Midwest, by Jon C. Teaford. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993. xii, 300 pp. Illustrations, tables; notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY TIMOTHY R. MAHONEY, UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

Jon C. Teaford's *Cities in the Heartland* can be read with considerable interest by both urban historians and general readers interested in defining the Midwest and its culture and understanding its relative decline. Throughout, Teaford places his generally descriptive, anecdotal analysis of the rise and fall of the urban industrial Midwest in a sufficiently broad regional and national context to provide or infer broader explanations of the course of regional development and decline. Although he seeks to explain the differences among midwestern cities as a consequence of culture, the driving force behind this history is, correctly, the economic development, transformation, and decline of the industrial Midwest.

Teaford describes the establishment of a commercial frontier urban network in which a few large cities (as well as each state capital) prevailed over numerous contenders to become the dominant regional entrepôts. As cities such as Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Milwaukee, and St. Louis took advantage of the railroad revolution, the broadening of regional and national markets, and the influx of outside capital to tap the resource base of the region—farm produce, mineral wealth, and wood—they became the centers of American industry. Then, between 1900 and 1930, many smaller towns and cities, stretching from Pennsylvania to western Illinois, provided raw materials, services, and specialized parts for automobile assembly plants in Detroit, Lansing, Flint, Toledo, and Kenosha, establishing the urban Midwest as the center of American industry (107). But the volatility of markets for durable goods, and the rapid impact such volatility could have on one or two industry towns, proved to be a weakness when the market sagged. This midwestern industrial system thus suffered during the downward cycles of 1919–1920 and 1929–1937. It revived during the war years, only to gradually unravel thereafter. The midwestern urban system steadily declined into the rust belt of the 1980s for a variety of reasons: aging facilities and infrastructure, labor strife, shifting national markets, a change in capital investment strategies, a shift in migration patterns (which made many midwestern cities much more southern and black), and foreign competition.

Within this framework, Teaford suggests a series of social, cultural, and political consequences that gave midwestern cities their particular character. Empowered by rapid growth and rising wealth, concerned about the essential business nature of their cities, and con-

values, midwestern urbanites, Teaford cogently argues, sought to create the most reformed cities in the nation as models for others to follow. Chicago and, to a lesser extent, other midwestern cities became, between 1890 and 1920, great urban laboratories, the birthplaces of social work, social science, political reform, urban planning, and modern architecture. At the same time, they were at the forefront in the conflict over the capitalist system and became hotbeds of labor strife, unionization, political radicalism, and socialism. After 1940, however, a persistent imbedded provincial inferiority complex, which Teaford traces to the earliest development of midwestern urban culture, combined with the rising cultural hegemony of New York and Los Angeles, undermined much of this social, intellectual, and cultural vitality, resulting in "a less than exhilarating postlude" (174). Midwestern cities crumbled, their governments confused and facing grievous financial restraints, dependent on outside sources for capital to renew or maintain themselves. Today most of these once vibrant, distinctive urban places are, in Teaford's words, but colonial outposts, "consumers" rather than "creators . . . of culture" (244), functionally and symbolically passé, overwhelmed by a feeling of inadequacy (248), and quite simply losing their importance in an increasingly suburbanizing region.

Throughout this general argument Teaford intertwines economic, social, political, and cultural history into a generally convincing story. Nevertheless, he remains primarily content to describe midwestern cities as variations within the general process of urbanization, "somewhat distinguishable" (vii) from cities elsewhere. Although the general nature of the work precludes deeper analysis, the author seems uninterested in exploring the functional and structural variation that characterized and shaped the history of midwestern cities. In this context, Teaford's overused biological metaphor, which sees cities moving from youth to old age, seems especially unhelpful. Where does one go, after all, if a city is at the end of the "entire urban life cycle" (vii)? In an increasingly integrated national and world economy and culture, expending the energy to make Milwaukee or Peoria a center, a world of its own, possessing a distinctive culture or society—a goal that was a bedrock of the metropolitan faith of the nineteenth century—seems inefficient, even parochial, as well as an extravagant use of limited current resources.

Finally, the cities Teaford describes remain strangely passive conduits through which forces of political, social, and demographic change move. We never really get inside these cities or understand very much how people who lived there sought to shape their cities. Perhaps this passive contextual perspective is rooted in Teaford's

essentially passive and contextual definition of the region as an enduring, unchanging place with certain environmental characteristics; it is the "Industrial Midwest" or the Old Northwest "as well as adjacent St. Louis" (vii). The region's values remain rooted in a stable, romanticized, or parochialized image held by a persisting minority of the region's urban population. In their vision of a region occupied by yeoman farmers and small towns, large cities and sprawling suburbs still seem somewhat alien. Cloaking the region in the public relations term *heartland*, which seems to speak to some nostalgic yearning for an imagined centrality as the standard bearer of truly American values, hardly clarifies the definition of the region. In this study of the "Industrial Midwest," Iowa plays a peripheral hinterland role. Yet today it is Iowa, not Ohio, that welcomes interstate travelers to "the Heartland."

The Protestant Experience in Gary, Indiana, 1906–1975: At Home in the City, by James W. Lewis. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992. xv, 304 pp. Illustrations, tables, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY CHARLES E. QUIRK, UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

Beginning his research by asking how well mainline Protestantism related to the twentieth-century industrial city, James W. Lewis assumed a negative answer in light of the scholarly consensus. By examining an unquestionably industrial city, Gary, Indiana, and two local congregations, however, Lewis uncovered substantial data pointing to a vigorous urban ministry that thrived for several decades. The subtitle of the volume aptly discloses the author's viewpoint.

The book is organized into two major divisions. In the first several chapters Lewis concentrates on the city of Gary. He deftly summarizes the formative years and the political, social, and religious responses to the diversity of the Indiana municipality. The second part focuses on two important local congregations: First Presbyterian Church and City Methodist Church. A chapter on the theme of cities and congregations opens the volume, and an epilogue summarizes the significance of the experiences of the two Gary congregations.

In the first part of the book, Lewis cogently describes the role of Judge Ebert Gary and the United States Steel Corporation in the formation of the northwestern Indiana city. For Lewis, diversity—social, racial, and ethnic—characterized Gary from its inception. He devotes considerable space to the public school system created by William A. Wirt. Serving as Superintendent of Schools from 1907 to 1938, Wirt lengthened the school day and year, maximized the efficient use of

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