

## *Comptes rendus/Reviews*

**Cities, Poverty and Development: Urbanization in the Third World.** A. Gilbert and J. Gugler. Second edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992, 331 pages.

Gilbert and Gugler have produced a volume that explains and interprets the Third World urbanization process. The book's subject is vital in that approximately 80 percent of humanity resides in parts of the globe often discounted as "out there"—that is, they live in the South.

Although the proportion of the population living in urban places in these underdeveloped areas is half that of the North, the pace of growth of such cities surpasses that in countries in the northern world by a factor of four or five. Indeed, the rankings of city sizes are increasingly dominated by southern examples. The world city is not just epitomized by such places as London, New York, and Toronto; Mexico City, Beijing, and São Paulo also must be considered.

This second edition of *Cities, Poverty and Development* is much more than a slightly revised version of an outdated text; it is a sophisticated, synthetic account of the rapid transformation taking place in Third World urban centres. It makes most of the standard texts on the city and urbanization appear naive in that the Third World city is much more than a mere mirror of the First World's urbanization process. Southern cities are "shaped" by quite different forces. They are new and occupied by people caught up in the transition between peasant and proletariat, between lives shaped by cultural wholes in rural areas and lives pursued in autonomous, individualistic urban places, often characterized by alienation and poverty. The Third World city is dominated by lacks: lack of economic growth, lack of social services, lack of infrastructure, and lack of development. These cities are located within Third World nations which were peripheralized and underdeveloped in the past at the hands of imperialism and colonialism, and today they continue to be peripheral parts of the global economy because of trade and the workings of the economic system.

In an introduction and eight subsequent chapters the reader learns more about the unevenness of the First and Third worlds and how urbanization is differentiated in a world system. The book also considers the pattern and causes of disparities, the migration system

whereby thousands of humans rationally move from the countryside to join the vast numbers of unemployed urban dwellers, and the housing conditions of these poor people, often dominated by squatter settlements and vast numbers. Further, an examination of the urban labour market poses and answers such questions as: Why do children work? Why is there a huge and growing informal economy? And why do few industries exist in such cities? As well, one learns how this new urban centre is organized socially and politically. Finally, the reader learns how the individual city is an element of a much larger urban and regional system.

This book has a dual purpose. In one sense, it is a voice from the frontier (and both authors are quite active), indicating the little that is known about the Third World city, collating information from seemingly widely disparate parts of the globe, and indicating the questions that require answers. In another sense, this is a superb reader-text for a senior undergraduate course in either the city or the Third World. The authors are masters of their subject and contextualize the analysis of the Third World city. Both researcher and student will learn from this book; it is thoughtful, perceptive, and contemporary.

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**The Immigration Dilemma.** Steven Globerman, ed. Vancouver: Fraser Institute, 1992, 260 pages.

To a reviewer who at one time had a modest research interest in Canadian immigration trends and who more recently has become familiar with comparable debates on immigration policy elsewhere, this volume is disappointing in that it provides no fresh insights. Perhaps I should have adjusted my expectations after reading in the editor's introductory chapter:

The purpose of this volume is to provide a condensed yet comprehensive overview of the major issues surrounding immigration policy in Canada. . . . [T]he primary emphasis is on empirical evidence bearing upon the major policy issues. Much of this evidence has been discussed elsewhere including the recent Economic Council of Canada report and other studies done by contributors to this volume. . . . While the basic findings and conclusions of this volume tend to support the existing literature, some of the evidence is new.

I have two gripes about this. First, the volume is neither "condensed" nor "comprehensive". It can hardly be condensed when

several of the chapters tediously repeat the most basic and well-known material on the changing composition of Canadian immigration in the last half-century. Nor can it be called comprehensive when six of the ten chapters focus repetitiously on the macroeconomic impacts of immigration, relegating to just three chapters the demographic, social, and legal dimensions of the policy debate.

My second concern is with the modern, academic-recycling ethos. The editor seems not at all embarrassed to admit that much of the evidence has been presented elsewhere by the same authors. There may well be *some* point in bringing material together in a compact, accessible form for the benefit of those unfamiliar with the field, but those people are unlikely to include the readers of this journal.

The major conclusion from the several chapters of economic analysis—all clearly written and devoid of jargon and complex formulas—is that the impact of immigration on key Canadian economic indicators is modest. This is an important conclusion, but it could have been demonstrated clearly enough in two to three, rather than five to six, chapters, thereby permitting an extension of the volume into several important fields (and academic disciplines other than economics) that are simply ignored. First, some comparative assessment of the extensively researched Australian immigration situation would have been invaluable; it is with Australia—not the United States and Europe—that Canada shares an immigration context of comparable scale and type.

Second, there is no explicit assessment of how immigration may consciously be used for national demographic management, essentially to ease some of the well-known macroeconomic problems associated with increasing age-dependency ratios. The major problems of ageing in the West will be concentrated in a 20-30 year period when the baby boomers become senior boomers. Constructively used, immigration could ease these problems by boosting the working population and tax base, but only if immigrant selection is focused on those age groups that can smooth out the national age profile; for demographic management, one needs to "fill in" behind the babyboomer cohorts.

Third, some microperspectives are needed to lighten the deadening macroanalytical emphasis and to remind us that we are dealing with real people in real situations. Thus, the regression-based chapter on links between immigration and house prices in Vancouver would have been enhanced by some disaggregation of the housing market, including, at the very least, some reference to the impact of particular groups such as the Hong Kong Chinese in particular sectors and areas. Similarly, the chapter on social integration contains only one paragraph on the key issue of urban residential segregation. It needs to be emphasized that there are critical differences between Canada and Australia, on the one hand, and the United States and Europe, on the

other, in their recent experiences with ghettoization, ethnic marginalization, and race rioting, reflecting above all the greater ethnic diversity among immigrants to Australia and Canada—something that both governments would do well to maintain.

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