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Bernard Gauthiez, *The Production of Urban Space, Temporality, and Spatiality: Lyons, 1500-1900*. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2020. xi + 257 pp. Maps, tables, figures, notes, bibliography, and index. \$68.99 U.S. (hb). ISBN 9783110619638; \$68.99 U.S. (eb). ISBN 9783110623062.

Review by David Garrioch, Monash University.

Urban history is a broad church, embracing methods that stretch from quantitative social science to the writing of individual stories. This book is closer to the former than the latter, but it aims to move beyond functionalist interpretations of the way cities developed, to accord more agency to individuals and groups, and to consider social factors as well as economic ones. Bernard Gauthiez's central argument is that urban space—primarily buildings, but also the spaces that surround them, since the two elements are inseparable—is historically constructed through the decisions of individuals and groups, which are in turn influenced by economic and demographic conditions and by the interventions of state authorities, including local government. His study is based on a remarkable reconstitution of the buildings in Lyon from the late fifteenth to the late nineteenth century that, despite gaps in the data, enables a broad understanding of the way the city developed, and results in some valuable wider conclusions.

Lyon has unusually good sources for this kind of study. Its archives preserve building permits since 1617, with only one major gap in the later eighteenth century. They include not only permissions granted for new buildings, but also for large and small modifications to existing ones. Records of the municipality's requirements for the alignment of buildings on the streets go back even further. This precious information provides the core of Gauthiez's analysis, enabling GIS (Geographical Information System) reconstruction in three dimensions. These sources are supplemented by plans, maps, and cadastral and tax records, notably a remarkable list from 1493 that indicates the owners of real estate. Gauthiez also makes excellent use of paintings and drawings and of archaeological excavations of particular sites. This holistic approach is commendable, and combining these diverse data into a single database is a huge achievement. It enables a time-series that the author rather strangely likens to a sausage (Lyon is, after all, a gastronomic capital); and then, in a happier metaphor, to a film, as opposed to the "snapshot" more usually afforded by surviving records. Lyon is unusual in having had very little suburban development before the twentieth century, so changes took place in the same limited area, making mapping and direct comparison over time far easier than in most other places. The appendix offers a series of maps that enable the reader to follow the major transformations between 1620 and 1909, although these seem unlikely to surprise those who know the city's architectural and planning history.

The book is divided into three parts. The introduction and part one are theoretical, discussing key concepts, as well as the sources and the methodologies used, but they also contain an extended discussion that addresses specific debates in urban geography. Some of this, such as the explanation of the sources and how they have been used, is important for understanding the subsequent analysis. Some of it reads a little like a primer in historical geography and goes well beyond what is covered in the book. The author loves typologies, presented in dot-points, as numbered series, or occasionally as tables. Part one opens, for instance, with an enumeration of seven scales on which modifications to urban space can be conducted, moving from large developments such as new towns, at one extreme, to ephemeral modifications such as awnings and street furniture at the other, with individual buildings and groups of buildings in the middle. Since neither the first nor the last of these levels is relevant to this study, it is not clear why they are included. Similarly, an extended discussion of dating moves well beyond the question, important here, of how to evaluate the age of specific buildings and of how dates can be ascertained and used for mapping purposes. It includes a section on dating plot patterns, which makes no specific reference to Lyon. A potted history of the regulation of real estate includes the Code of Hammurabi, Roman laws and those imposed by the Visigoths, and medieval European regulation, while a few pages later there is an extended digression on questions of conservation versus restoration in heritage management. Considerable space is devoted to the need to dispense with the concept of the “building” as the basis of urban fabric and to replace it with that of the “construction-unit,” defined as “the realization of a conception unit, i.e., the material fruit of a project” (p. 7). This is important for the database, where the consolidation of two existing buildings into a single structure (for example) needs to be distinguished from a new construction. Most of the book, nevertheless, uses the terms “building” and “house” perfectly unambiguously.

Part two, entitled “Demography and Building Typology,” introduces the GIS and the way it was constructed from the various sources, then offers a typology of buildings in Lyon from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century. The latter is largely based on traditional sources, and the broad outline is already well known, but it offers some valuable insights. Medieval houses were low, with “only one floor or none” (a Gallicism used repeatedly in the book that will puzzle readers unfamiliar with the French use of “*étage*,” meaning a floor above ground level). The period between the 1480s and the 1560s saw their replacement by taller, multifamily houses, which became the norm in the early seventeenth century. Gauthiez observes, perceptively, that these were intended for many uses—residential, commercial, and manufacturing—and the internal spaces were therefore designed to be adapted or combined, to suit their function. The seventeenth century also witnessed the spread of a new form that he insists was invented in Lyon, with dwellings located around a central courtyard and stairway. Older buildings were modified to meet new demands, and particularly under pressure of population growth (though this is calculated, for the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, from the number of houses and households living in them). Other than that, part two contains little on the city’s demography, despite its title.

Part three, “Temporalities of Urban Fabric Production,” analyzes patterns (what the author terms “logics,” again a direct translation from French) of construction and renovation. It considers their seasonality (unsurprisingly, building slowed in the winter), the numbers of new buildings erected per year, and the trends these reveal. Medium-term rises and falls were “probably” caused by economic cycles. Much more interesting are the long-term changes. Lyon witnessed the largest increase in the numbers of buildings in the first half of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth. After that, construction continued only slowly, in both

wealthy and poor quarters. Further population growth was largely accommodated by the addition of floors to existing buildings. In the eighteenth century, most construction was for wealthy people, with little new housing for the poor, despite modest population growth, while in the early nineteenth century the number of buildings grew rapidly, and the population returned to its 1789 level.

The final section of part three looks at who the owners of houses were, and I found this the most interesting and original section of the book. It reveals that in 1493, a third of the house-owners belonged to wealthy social groups who possessed around 45% of the houses, while people from the poorest sections of the population owned 20% (and smaller houses). Subsequently, the proportion of households who owned property declined steadily, from 35% in 1493 to 5.7% in 1789. The largest drop occurred in the first half of the sixteenth century. There was also a decline in the number of households that lived in the properties they owned, from around 70% in 1493 to 27% in 1709, and the figure fell further in the nineteenth century. Quite why these trends occurred is not clear. This section of the book also uses case studies of particular areas in order to identify who was investing in real estate. Architects were overrepresented, and the nineteenth century witnessed the arrival of joint stock companies with far more capital. A nice detail is that the number of owners rose between 1789 and 1808, particularly among less wealthy parts of the population, thanks to the expropriation of religious property during the Revolution.

The causal factors underpinning changes in the form of housing, when they are identified, are overwhelmingly local, with the primary emphasis placed on municipal regulation, the rise and fall of population, and the growth of the silk industry for which Lyon was famous. Only two external influences are accorded any real importance. The French Revolution nationalized and sold off church property, and the conquest of the city by the revolutionary armies led to the demolition of a small number of buildings. Subsequently, the arrival of a handful of major investors in the later nineteenth century produced a small number of large-scale redevelopments. Given the book's evident ambition to offer Lyon as a model of the way urban spatial development occurred, it might have been useful to explore correlations between patterns of building and various other factors, both local and regional, such as the evolution of landed income and the commercial and manufacturing growth of the city. The economics of building are also conspicuously absent, even though costs, and particularly the rising price of timber over the early modern period, must have influenced investment decisions.

This book will be of most interest to scholars working on Lyon, but it offers many details that historians of other cities will find useful for comparison. The quality of the sources is extraordinary, the statistical analysis rich, and Gauthiez's inclusion of renovation as well as new construction makes his work particularly valuable. Some readers will appreciate the analytical completeness of the numerous lists and typologies, while others may find them unhelpful. The writing is not always clear, and those familiar with academic French style will recognize many features that have been transposed, not always successfully, into English. The GIS does not seem to have been used as much as the book's description suggested, although it clearly underpins some of the analysis and certainly enabled the production of quite a few maps. Many of these, unfortunately, are too small or carry too much detail to be very useful. It is clear that there is still much to be drawn from the analysis and explanation of these data, and we can no doubt look forward to further publications in the future.

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