

points out, the authors in question overwhelmingly worked for newspapers or wrote advertising copy. The influence of these industries on their more self-consciously artistic work, then, seems direct and occupational, rather than indirect and resulting from the generally pervasive influence of new technology.

Süssekind's claims for the influence of cinema and the phonograph are far more vague. As she demonstrates, these influences did not become fully manifest until the modernist era: "It was only with the rise of modernist prose that montage and cuts became common in literary technique" (p. 29). This observation makes the literature in question sound premodernist after all, and thus seems to work against Süssekind's initial premise.

The author notes that most of the novels she considers are "now largely forgotten" (p. 1), but she continually refers to scenes and characters from these works as if they were commonly known, failing to give any contextual information. This off-putting habit points to a more serious drawback: Süssekind fails to persuade the reader that these works are worth investigating as anything other than the canvas on which critics paint their own designs.

That said, the author's argument regarding the influence of technology on literary perception is provocative and generally convincing, and sheds significant light on the cultural history of the Old Republic. This work was originally published in Portuguese in 1987, and has been elegantly translated here by Paulo Henriques Britto. Süssekind writes a prose of many commas and few periods, and Britto successfully retains the density of her style while avoiding impenetrability.

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*O Recife: gênese do urbanismo, 1927-1943.* By JOEL OUTTES. Recife: Editora Massangana; Fundação Joaquim Nabuco, 1997. Photographs. Illustrations. Table. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. 250 pp. Paper.

Joel Outtes, who received his Ph.D. from Oxford University for work on town planning in Brazil and Argentina, has published his master's thesis on the genesis of urbanism in Recife from 1927 to 1943. The thesis, published in Recife in 1997, had won the Joaquim Nabuco Foundation's Nelson Chaves Prize for history six years earlier.

That the author holds degrees in architecture and urban planning as well as history is evident in his study, although it is markedly deficient in historical analysis. There are five chapters: on epidemic disease and eighteenth- and nineteenth-century plans for sanitizing Recife, one of the least healthy places in Brazil; on the role of Domingos Ferreira and European planning ideas from 1927 to 1931; on the Nestor de Figueiredo plan during the early 1930s; on modifications during 1935 and 1936; and finally, on the revised Figueiredo plan during the Estado Novo. The treatment is institutional, and

adds little to our understanding of Recife under the Vargas regime, although the city was deeply affected by Vargas's policies, by political instability, and by the forceful (and repressive) administration of Vargas's imposed interventor, Agamenon Magalhães.

Outtes reveals that the planning innovation of the 1930s was to look at the city as a whole, rather than to deal with urban improvements in the traditional way, that is, piecemeal. Recife's urban configuration posed unusual problems because the city was traversed by rivers, forcing traffic to use narrow bridges. The capital of a poor state, Recife lacked municipal resources for massive projects. Moreover, there was little public discussion about what the planners were doing, although legislators argued over budgetary issues and the wisdom of proposed loans. These debates generated coverage in the press.

City planners managed to implement a zoning system and showed concern for relieving congestion, especially to provide efficient access to the docks. Planners in Recife were well aware of advances in the rest of the world, especially in France and at the 1934 Athens Conference on architecture and planning, although there were virtually no agencies in place in Recife to implement plans for improvements and no national policy on urban rehabilitation.

For this and other reasons, Recife's urbanists welcomed the suppression of legislative activity after 1935 and the Estado Novo coup in 1937, because the regime's commitment to technological modernization and the ability to carry out decisions under an authoritarian government made urban reconstruction easier. The urbanization of the city accelerated significantly during this period, although some important work was not completed for several more decades. As usually happens, planners and their political allies were more concerned with demolishing old buildings in poor neighborhoods than anything else. As a result, while demolition paved the way for banks, government office buildings, movie theaters, and the like, the poor were not only displaced from their homes but many lost their livelihoods when the little shops and workshops where they had manufactured sweets, roasted nuts and coffee beans, repaired pots and pans, and sold liquor, the source of their only opportunities for economic betterment, were torn down as well.

Outtes's book contains photographs, although because they appear in an appendix there is little opportunity to analyze them. As a history of engineering and urbanization planning, the study does not explore to any extent the interaction of planning and politics, and offers very little analysis of the impact of planning decisions on the population at large. Most of the sources used for the study are official documents and engineering and planning journals. As such, the book reveals its origins as a master's thesis. Many such master's theses are published in Brazil, and while they often add new detail, they rarely generate significant discussion, and therefore are of limited use.

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