

Reviews of books

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Richard Rodger and Denis Menjot (eds.), *Teaching Urban History in Europe/L'enseignement de l'histoire urbaine en Europe*. Leicester: Centre for Urban History, 2006. xiv + 142pp. 3 figures. 6 tables. £5.00/€12.00.
doi:10.1017/S096392680621424X

The editors of this slim volume argue that the study of urban history has rarely seemed 'more relevant, more urgent, more necessary' (p. 2). Nevertheless, the variable importance of urban history teaching in selected European countries becomes evident from the essays which follow, ranging from relative strength in the UK and Sweden to a more marginal position in Poland and Spain. These proceedings of a panel session from the European Urban History Association's 2004 conference offer more than a simple 'stock-taking' of urban history teaching in 11 European countries. Over the course of 14 chapters (3 of them in French), a broad range of issues is explored. These include the nature and definition of urban history, its role in society and academia, the strengths and weaknesses of interdisciplinarity and the desirability and success of international linkages. The reader is left with much to ponder.

Urban history teaching is clearly in a state of flux, largely due to the impact of the Bologna Agreements, which most of the authors recognize as offering potential for the development or redesigning of urban history curricula at national level, as well as enhancing international linkages. Readers can learn of the experience of existing graduate-level international teaching programmes in the chapters on Sweden, Germany and the UK. In many countries the study of urban history is in its infancy, frequently forming part of a broader history curriculum, with relatively few specialist degrees or diplomas. Individual research interests and research poles have tended to play a role in the development of the discipline, although this is not a given, as the essay on Spain demonstrates. The value of urban history to developing urban policy, alluded to in the introductory chapter, has been recognized in its inclusion in courses of professional formation in France and Greece. For similar reasons Dutch municipal administrations have commissioned a large number of urban histories in recent times. Current enthusiasm for urban history in Hungary is associated, at least in part, with questions of local attachment and national identity. Most essays observe that urban history has benefited

through the cross-fertilization of inter-disciplinary studies, although in both Portugal and Italy this diversity of approaches has led to some difficulties for the subject.

This collection of essays provides a useful snapshot of current urban history teaching, as well as a starting point for renewal and reorganization. Particularly interesting is the prospect of new methodologies opening up the field, as explored in Cardesin and Penedo's essay on multimedia websites. They observe that 'we are now witnessing the dawn of a particularly promising stage for sharing perspectives' (p. 129). As a whole, this volume challenges urban historians to enrich the discipline through greater dialogue and both international and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Ruth McManus

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Jay Kinsbruner, *The Colonial Spanish-American City: Urban Life in the Age of Atlantic Capitalism*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005. xvi + 182pp. 2 line drawings. 4 maps. 1 table. \$18.95 pbk.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806224246

In this masterful survey, Jay Kinsbruner examines the forms and functions of the colonial Spanish-American city. Although he examines the famous gridiron plan, Kinsbruner loosely defines 'city' as a compact, permanent agglomeration inhabited by at least a few thousand residents, most of them removed from agricultural production. Thus the colonial city, though not industrial, was nevertheless a space of occupational specialization that relied on either a rural hinterland or steady imports for subsistence. Ranging from pre-Columbian water management to late colonial bread riots, Kinsbruner weaves together a diverse range of events and ideas. Published primary sources are employed from time to time, along with concepts borrowed from Lewis Mumford and others, but this is, as the author states, a work of synthesis, largely dependent on recent scholarship on specific cities. Its structure is more thematic than chronological. Fortunately, Kinsbruner's lively prose and obvious passion for his subject keep the narrative from lagging or becoming disjointed. Colourful vignettes abound, some of them horrific reminders of the uncertainties of colonial urban life.

Throughout, Kinsbruner insists on seeing the Spanish-American city as an outgrowth of commercial capitalism (although the Atlantic dimension of the subtitle is not well developed). Kinsbruner is most provocative on the formation of a petty bourgeoisie among small traders and artisans, many of mixed, or *casta*, heritage. As to why this sector faced constant denigration from above, the author favours demographic over cultural explanations. Whether New World racism derived from class relations or the other way around is an old question. For Kinsbruner, much like Eric Williams, racism grows out of the relations of production. Readers will no doubt have their own opinions on this matter, but the author's decision to spotlight race is appreciated. Kinsbruner is more sensitive perhaps to the nuanced evolution of class categories, for example rejecting the term 'plebeian' as too derogatory and imprecise to be useful. Yet despite this emphasis on commercial mechanisms and class formation, the considerable splendour – and squalor – of colonial Spanish-American cities is not forgotten. There are excellent

discussions of the urban family, the pervasive role of the Church in everyday life, the profusion of artistic styles and endless streams of theatrical events, from bull baiting to the ever-popular *auto-de-fé*. Still, Kinsbruner argues that these patterns of culture, much like racism, were always framed, almost determined, by the wealth or poverty of a given location based on its position within the capitalist world-system.

Although a good reflection of recent scholarship, some readers may find Kinsbruner's reliance on examples from Mexico City excessive. Scholarship on other cities might have been consulted to highlight specific themes. The discussion of urban food supply, for example, might have benefited from Eric Van Young's classic study of the Guadalajara region, and the description of urban market women in the Andes, many of them indigenous, would have gained by use of Kimberly Gauderman's more recent work on Quito, among others. Overall, however, this is a timely, provocative and accessible survey of colonial urban life.

Kris Lane

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Daniel M. Abramson, *Building the Bank of England: Money, Architecture, Society 1694–1942*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006. x + 282pp. 267 plates. Bibliography. Index. £50.00.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806234242

Considering the international renown of the Bank of England, both as an institution and as a building, it is astonishing that this should be the first detailed survey of the Bank's architectural development from its foundation through to the present day. Daniel Abramson's meticulously researched and superbly illustrated study is a very fine response to this challenge. Starting with the Bank's first rented accommodation in Grocers' Hall, and ending with the reconstruction of Sir John Soane's lost Bank Stock Office in 1986–88, Abramson charts the twists and turns of the intervening centuries with commendable clarity. Inevitably, the central focus of the book is Soane's surveyorship (1788–1833), the phase which saw the Bank's most dramatic growth, and the creation of its most significant architectural statements. Most of these structures were swept away in the 1920s, but Abramson deftly recaptures the flavour of what has been lost, while offering fresh insights on Soane himself. In contrast to his customary portrayal as a tortured genius, he is shown here as a consummate professional, no less concerned with practicalities than he was with monumentality. Significantly, his work is also placed in its proper context, and Abramson demonstrates the considerable debt owed by Soane to his predecessor, Sir Robert Taylor, who pioneered the use of top-lit banking halls, and began construction of the famous perimeter wall.

Indeed, context is Abramson's overriding concern. Taking as his theme the relationship between architecture and capitalism, he firmly interlinks the Bank's physical evolution with its institutional development. The early directors, comparative outsiders in the City of London, conducted their business in the familiar, legitimizing surroundings of a livery hall, and preserved essentially the same layout when they created their first purpose-built accommodation. In the late eighteenth century, however, as the directors became part of the Establishment, and the Bank a pivotal feature of the national economy, Taylor and Soane expanded

the original buildings into a specialized and vastly more imposing complex which, in turn, served to accelerate the City's emergence as primarily a financial district. Conversely, by the time further reconstruction became unavoidable in the 1920s, the Bank's public image was so closely wedded to Soane's distinctive fabric that the directors felt obliged to commission a design which preserved the character and indeed part of the structure of the old building. Economic historians may find some of Abramson's contextual coverage oversimplistic, and his account of public reactions to the Bank's physical character is less convincing for the eighteenth century than it is for later periods – how many of the early traders genuinely registered the neo-Palladian proportional system of the 1730s building? Nevertheless, such minor concerns should not detract from Abramson's considerable achievement in presenting this major architectural landmark in a new and altogether convincing light.

Paul M. Hunneyball

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Samir Khalaf, *Heart of Beirut: Reclaiming the Bourj*. London: Saqi, 2006. 280pp. 208 plates. 11 maps. Bibliography. £12.99 pbk.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806244249

Among challenges facing urban planners in the Middle East, few rival the problems presented by Beirut. Lebanon's capital experienced the rapid, barely regulated growth seen elsewhere in the region's cities since 1945, fed by rapid population increase and rural–urban migration; Beirutis comprise 45 per cent of all Lebanese. The process of welding this growing, shallow-rooted population into a cohesive urban society has been complicated greatly by sectarian tensions while the devastation wrought by years of civil war erased most of the progress that had been made. Yet Samir Khalaf argues that recent efforts to revive the city will lead Beirut to a future as vibrant as its storied past.

In 2004 Khalaf served on the jury judging proposals for reconstruction of the Bourj, the central public space of Beirut, and he views this project as key not only to the physical repair of the city, but also to healing the psychological traumas that still separate religious communities. In a 'retribalised' city such as Beirut, physical and social space are the same; if the Bourj can regain its old role as the meeting point for city residents uniting to challenge foreign domination, or to experience global changes adapted to local sensibilities, then both city and society will overcome recent fragmentation. Reawakened collective memory of communal life will aid collective amnesia of traumatic conflict. Khalaf highlights communal life in his history of Beirut's physical and social structure, concentrating upon the city's growth under first Ottoman then French rule and in the years from independence (1944) to the civil war (1975). Buildings that became prized landmarks resulted from local initiatives and drew upon the talents of Beirut's craftsmen and architects. Local participation limited the physical and social disruption caused by even such misguided imperial ventures as the interwar French attempt to recreate Paris' *Etoile* in the centre of Beirut. The cohesion promoted by these shared spaces and architecture was destroyed by the civil war, however, as public squares and major thoroughfares became battle-lines between factions. Whereas urbanization normally implies openness

and mixing, the war turned Beirut's districts into 'ghettos'. It is this war legacy that reconstruction of the Bourj and other projects target. Provision not only of housing but also restored or new commercial, cultural and leisure space, designed and executed primarily by Lebanese architects and builders, is the priority. Khalaf believes (and includes ample supporting photographs) that recovery of the centre as the public meeting space for residents of the various ghettos is progressing quickly, boding well for Beirut's future as a functioning urban society.

For Khalaf the proofs of the plan's success were the decision to bury in the Bourj Rafiq Hariri, the former prime minister assassinated in 2004, and the mass protests against Syrian influence subsequently held there. While it is tempting to believe him fully, his obvious passion on the Syrian question raises an overarching concern, that he may be too close to the topics he discusses. He presents an overly romantic vision of a strong, multi-confessional Lebanese national identity in the past; present public resistance to the anti-Syrian movement and the city reconstruction plans (criticized by some as elitist), while acknowledged, may be dismissed too blithely. There are also signs of the book having been written in haste, including variable spellings, shifting dates for Hariri's murder and other inconsistencies. Despite these concerns, the book is recommended as a spirited guide to Beirut's (re)development, lively in style, rich in illustration and perceptive in analysis.

Frederick Anscombe

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Roderick Floud and Paul Johnson (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Britain*, vol. I: *Industrialisation, 1700–1860*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. xix + 536pp. 28 graphs. 76 tables. £24.99.

Roderick Floud and Paul Johnson (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Britain*, vol. II: *Economic Maturity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. xix + 552pp. 39 graphs. 96 tables. £24.99.

Roderick Floud and Paul Johnson (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Britain*, vol. III: *Structural Change and Growth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. xix + 573pp. 239 tables. 120 graphs. 5 figures. £24.99. (Available as three volumes set at £65.00 pbk.)
doi:10.1017/S0963926806254245

After two successful editions published in 1984 and 1994, a new version of *The Cambridge Economic History of Britain*, edited by Roderick Floud and Paul Johnson, is now available. The new collection's structure is similar to that of its 1994 predecessor, dividing the 1700–2000 period in three major phases: 'industrialisation' (1700–1860), 'maturity' (1860–1939), and 'structural change and growth' (1939–2000). Interestingly, the titles of the second and of the third volumes do not mention concepts such as 'decline', 'crisis' or 'climaterium'. The structure, content and language of the new edition show the teaching-oriented character of the volumes, something new and different from the 1994 edition and, maybe even more remarkably, from the original 1984 one. Therefore this review focuses mainly on the assessment of the volumes' value as teaching instruments and, given the

scope of the exercise, provides a general overview rather than the analysis of single chapters or volumes.

It is evident that the editors have made a substantial effort to equalize the depth of the analysis of the chapters and to make sure that the language is accessible to students without much knowledge of economic jargon. Apart from a few exceptions, unsurprisingly in a collection of such scope and variety, the attempt is successful. Teachers of economic history wishing to prepare an undergraduate lecture or a seminar can confidently use the chapters in these books as basic references. Students will find the subjects covered with clarity of language, depth of information and critical analysis. Completeness is another asset of the volumes, as virtually all the fundamental themes and debates of two centuries of British economic history have been covered. From this point of view the new edition represents a clear improvement. Not only does it provide up-to-date and more teaching-friendly versions of subjects already analysed in the previous editions, but also introduces new important chapters. In this reviewer's view, for teaching purposes particularly welcome are chapters on Scotland (covered in two of the three volumes), the impact of Europe, regional policy and the global dimension.

It would be dismissive, however, to reduce the value of the books to a mere collection of teaching materials. Scholars will appreciate the volumes as instruments to acquire easily a strong sense of the directions of the discipline. Many chapters explicitly start with an analysis of where British economic history stood at the time of the previous edition, allowing the reader to grasp immediately what the last ten years have achieved in terms of results and trajectories of research. This is particularly important for subjects that have been substantially re-written in the last ten years, such as the living standard debate during the industrial revolution, the structure of nineteenth-century British industry, consumption and consumerism, the importance of legal institutions, the role of government before World War II, post-1945 macroeconomic performance and the British economy in the global perspective. Nowadays moaning about the present state and the future prospects of the discipline seems to be the distinctive mark of economic historians. The message of the latest edition of *The Cambridge Economic History of Britain* is that such a pessimistic attitude does not have much validity. British economic history is still alive and well and it is possible to teach it in a way that respects rigorously of analysis while adopting a 'user-friendly' language.

P. Di Martino

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Dieter Schott, Bill Luckin and Geneviève Massard-Guilbaud (eds.),
Resources of the City: Contributions to an Environmental History of Modern Europe. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005. 300pp. 17 b&w illus. £47.50/\$94.95.
 doi:10.1017/S0963926806264241

Comparison and contrast continue to be the most basic tools of urban studies. Although city biographies can be illuminating, understanding the broader processes of urban growth and society has come from analysing the patterns of many places over time and space. *Resources of the City* stakes out several important landmarks in a relatively new frontier of research, the European urban

environment. By providing a rich load of case studies, these conference papers help fuel a critical mass of comparative analysis with their more heavily documented American counterparts. Despite inevitable unevenness, the collective weight of the essays attests to the success of the idea of organizing an on-going 'roundtable' that periodically brings together core members and new faces. The book represents the outcome of the second conference in Leicester, in 2002, which followed the inaugural meeting two years earlier in Clermont-Ferrand, France.

Twelve case studies cover a range of topics and methodological approaches. The roundtable's emphasis on the city's input-side of interaction with the environment unites them and balances the previous meeting's focus on the output-side of urban pollution. As Dieter Schott highlights in his introductory essay, these themes 'have promoted a new perspective on the city as an urban metabolism, an approach which embeds cities in their wider natural environment, to analyse the flow of materials through them' (pp. 9–10). Joel A. Tarr and Clay McShane take a conventional, Cronon-like approach, examining urban horses as consumers of farm products. But Sabine Barles reverses course by looking at urban by-products that were re-cycled into inputs for the rural economy. She shows how outputs of slaughterhouse wastes, old rags and even ashes from French cities during the nineteenth century were sent to the farm as essential raw materials. Underscoring a two-way flow, Barles challenges the anti-urban bias of organic metaphors of the city as a 'parasite' on the country. However, while these essays stress market mechanisms of environmental change, most of the other contributions emphasize the role of policy makers. Brilliant contrasts of political cultures and social attitudes towards nature are reflected in several essays on the formation of urban environmental policy. Geneviève Massard-Guilbaud is outspoken in condemning local officials in France for complicity in industries' plans at the cost of the public health and welfare. In Clermont-Ferrand, for example, municipal leaders allowed the Michelin tyre company to expand its factories right in the middle of the two historic towns, permanently destroying the green space that united them in the past. In the case of post-war Naples, Gabriella Corona examines how its 'city-building coalition' (p. 107) of government, business and the mafia transformed the idyllic Mediterranean port into an ecological catastrophe. Bad planning had disrupted the two-way, organic flows between town and country. Simone Neri Seneri paints a comparable picture of environmental crisis resulting from Milan's hydraulic engineering plans to meet modern standards at the turn of the century. On the contrary, Christoph Bernhardt sheds light on the ways in which Communist officials in East Germany responded to popular protests by significantly improving the quality of urban life. The pay-off for huge investments in housing and sanitation was a 'culture of legitimacy' (p. 186) that helped stabilize the regime.

Urban environmental history from the grass-roots forms another provocative set of essays. Helen Meller turns around the top-down perspectives of planning history in an exemplary piece on peoples' tenacious efforts across Europe to keep their city gardens over a 150 year period. In an analogous case, Michèle Dagenais shows how the affluent of Montréal redefined its outlying landscape from farm communities into suburban enclaves of class and ethnic/religious exclusivity. Although Montréal seems far from the continent, Dagenais' lucid illustration of the social construction of nature is close to one of the most valuable insights of comparative analysis. Consider how the self-image of an English Victorian suburb

as the location of 'heavenly waters' conflicted with the real crises of reoccurring epidemics. Nicholas Goddard tells a cautionary tale of the power of denial as Croydon refused to accept mounting scientific evidence linking its plagues to germs in the water supply. Returning to post-war Germany, Jens Ivo Engels demonstrates how suburbanization fostered a convergence of urban and rural environmental concern. Common causes such as nuclear power, river pollution and highways forged not only political bonds between traditional conservationist and New Age eco-protesters, but also new concepts of nature.

Postmodern modes of inquiry also raise challenging questions about the historical interpretation of the urban environment and its reform movements. As Engels reveals, a single word – ecology – was powerful enough to launch a new political institution, the Green Party. In a similar vein, Laurence Lestel interrogates the contentious debate among experts over the quality of Paris' water supply. His fascinating micro-history of 'the lead war' during the 1870s exposes the role of scientific knowledge in policy formation. Even more problematic than the authority of expert advice in the public sphere, our concept of noise seems completely subjective. Michael Toyka-Seid traces the ups and downs of city-dwellers' toleration of sounds, including the inter-war years when the volume of noise became a measure of a city's progress and modernity. Finally, historiographical essays by senior scholars Bill Luckin and Martin V. Melosi cast the case studies in wider contexts. *Resources of the City* will prove to be a useful point of departure for further research on the urban environment on both sides of the Atlantic.

Harold L. Platt

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Andrew C. Isenberg (ed.), *The Nature of Cities: Culture, Landscape, and Urban Space*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2006. xix + 200pp. 4 maps. 7 figures. £45.00/\$75.00.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806274248

This is a collection of nine essays which were originally contributions to a conference entitled 'The Nature of Cities: New Perspectives in Urban Environmental History' at the Shelby Cullom Davis Center for Historical Studies at Princeton University in December 2003. The original title gives a clearer indication of the focus of the study which is outlined in a short editorial introduction: here Andrew Isenberg traces the recent evolution of the specialism of environmental history from its initial preoccupation with the 'rural' and the 'wild' to an acceptance that urban history has a vital environmental dimension. The book is divided into three – perhaps slightly contrived – sections, the first of which is entitled 'Urban spaces, death, and the body'. This focuses on the familiar urban environmental themes of epidemics and pollution linked to the current interest in 'the body'. Ari Kelman writes on the 1853 New Orleans yellow fever outbreak which 'overturned enduring assumptions in the city about urban spaces, ethnicity, and class privilege'. Peter Thorsheim analyses the complexity of motives for the preservation of open space in Victorian London stressing the late nineteenth-century view that it was necessary to expose the working population to nature in a controlled and formalized framework to avoid the moral and physical degeneration of

individuals. Bubonic plague in San Francisco following the 1906 earthquake prompted a 'war on rats' which Joanna Dyl demonstrates transformed its ecology as 'the natural' and 'the urban' became increasingly compartmentalized while the 'body theme' is more explicitly explored in Ellen Stroud's essay 'Dead bodies in Harlem: environmental history and the geography of death'.

Three contributions to the second section are subtitled the 'Geography of power and consumption' and in varying ways offer contrasting perspectives on the established theme of water management in environmental history. Karl Appuhu looks at the dilemmas facing early modern Venice while the editor contributes a study of mid-nineteenth-century Sacramento where the initial perceived natural characteristics of the city's location quickly became a liability which required artificial protection for its maintenance. The third essay, by Matthew Klinge, examines the contested landscapes of water and land-based recreation in early twentieth-century Seattle. Two contrasting essays in terms of time and location comprise the third section entitled 'Cities deconstructed'. Emmanuel Kreike writes on 'The Palenque paradox: bush cities, bushmen, and the bush' where he stresses that ecosystems (of which humans are a part) consistently move back and forth between the categories of 'domesticated' and 'wild' while Sara Pritchard revisits the topic of 'Paris et le Désert Français' to show how urban and rural environments were at the basis of debates over the foundation of the post-war French political economy.

The *Nature of Cities* constitutes an engaging and stimulating collection of essays. Inequalities in economic and political power are pervading themes running through the three sections as are various manifestations of environmental conflict. While the focus of many of the authors is on the social and cultural dimension of the city, the editor recognizes that 'the environment was an actor as well as acted upon: flood, earthquake, and disease testified to the agency and presence of nature in urban history' as recent environmental catastrophes continue to remind us. Underlying all of this is a theme which does not gain explicit mention in this volume – that of the ultimate 'sustainability' of urban formations.

Nicholas Goddard

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Gary A. Boyd, *Dublin, 1745–1922. Hospitals, Spectacle and Vice*. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006. 224pp. 96 illustrations. Bibliography. £45.00 hbk, £19.95 pbk.

doi:10.1017/S0963926806284244

This volume, the fourth in the series, *The Making of Dublin City*, is based on the author's Ph.D. thesis, which was undertaken at the School of Architecture, University College Dublin, and is concerned with the relationship between selected historic public spaces and buildings in Dublin and the activities they accommodated and facilitated. The book's setting is historical, primarily the eighteenth century, but the focus is largely architectural and geographical. The hospitals of the title were voluntary hospitals, so called because they were entirely dependent on voluntary financial support or philanthropy for their existence. The first such hospital, the Charitable Infirmary, was established in Dublin in 1718, two years before England's first voluntary hospital, the Westminster, opened. The book

does not examine Dublin's voluntary hospital network as such. Instead it focuses on three specialist institutions that catered for incurables, expectant mothers and individuals suffering from sexually transmitted diseases, dating from 1744, 1745 and 1755 respectively. We are not informed either in the book's introduction or elsewhere why these particular institutions were given precedence. That said, an earlier historian of the lying-in or maternity hospital described its opening on 15 March 1745 as a red-letter day in Dublin's medical history,¹ and with good reason. Bartholomew Mosse's lying-in hospital, the first maternity hospital in these islands, evolved into the Rotunda Hospital, which has served Dublin's mothers-to-be for more than two and a half centuries.

The author provides an accurate analysis of the chief characteristics of Dublin's early hospitals, their modest beginnings in humble domestic premises, their precarious financial bases, their location in the confined medieval precincts of the city and the lack of attention paid to concepts of contagion and ventilation. However, the inspiration for founding and funding voluntary hospitals in Dublin, provincial Ireland, Britain and elsewhere, together with the motivation and role of governors, was far more complex than Dr Boyd suggests (pp. 13–22). The author's focus on architectural and spatial relationships is much more convincing and is neatly captured in the link between the lying-in hospital and its pleasure gardens, part of the spectacle of the title. The pleasure gardens were built to generate income for the lying-in hospital. Like other public arenas in eighteenth-century Dublin, the gardens introduced new types of social engagement, amusement and entertainment to the city, a social interaction that could and did have negative consequences, such as unwanted pregnancies and an increased incidence of sexually transmitted infections. The book's closing sections explore Dublin's demimonde and the vicious habits and activities of the city's various social classes. Illicit sexual activity propagated venereal disease, which in turn led to the establishment of the Westmoreland Lock Hospital for its treatment. Over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the book's focus shifts a few hundred metres eastwards from Dublin's fashionable centre to the teeming brothels and tenements of its notorious red-light district, Monto. The book closes in 1922, the year that witnessed the painful birth pangs of independent Ireland, and the publication of Joyce's *Ulysses*, in which Monto features as the setting for the 'Nighttown' or 'Circe' chapter.

This is an elegantly written, engaging and stylish work. Visual imagery is an important part of the story and the many illustrations that are included enhance the volume. On the debit side, there are far too many factual errors: Dr Steevens' Hospital is referred to as Dr Steeven's throughout; St Patrick's Hospital opened in 1757, not 1747 (p. 21) or 1748 (p. 25). The reference to Logan and Martin, 1984 (p. 22) is not followed up in the bibliography, a bibliography that is selective and has some curious omissions. Jones and Malcolm are also listed under Malcolm and Jones and there is a discrepancy in their edited volume's cited titles. Dr Boyd completed his Ph.D. in 2002 but does not appear to have updated the bibliography to include works on the history of Irish medicine and Dublin hospitals published since then. The introduction is woefully inadequate, while the text, incorporating the 96 illustrations, spans a mere 190 pages. This book will be of interest mainly

¹ T.P.C. Kirkpatrick, 'The origin of some of the hospitals of Dublin', *Dublin Quarterly Journal of Medical Science*, 3rd series, 137, (1914), p. 106.

to students of architecture and geography. Those seeking a more comprehensive treatment of Dublin's voluntary hospitals and the actors in the unfolding drama – the medical personnel, patients and governors – will need to look elsewhere.

Laurence M. Geary

University College Cork

Clive Edwards, *Turning Houses into Homes: A History of the Retailing and Consumption of Domestic Furnishings*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005. ix + 294pp. 20 b&w illustrations. 2 tables. Bibliography. £52.50.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806294240

Turning Houses into Homes is part of Ashgate's History of Retailing and Consumption series and its author Clive Edwards has published widely on the history of furniture design and furnishing, as well as aspects of consumption, business and retailing. In seeking to illuminate distribution and reception it promises a reasonably comprehensive understanding of the significance of domestic furnishings across a long period of study from the eighteenth century to the present. The result is certainly ambitious and is characteristic of a researcher who has made a habit of encyclopaedic publications such as a *Complete Dictionary of Furniture* and a forthcoming *Encyclopaedia of Furnishing Fabric and Soft Furnishings*. *Turning Houses into Homes* is organized chronologically, with the double focus on retailing and consumption supported throughout the structure. Edwards states first that his work is a contribution to the history of retailing and that 'retailing cannot be understood fully without some analysis of the consumption practices that feed it' (p. 8). After the introduction, which ranges from the medieval period to the seventeenth century, come a pair of chapters on the eighteenth century treating retail and comfort, and convenience respectively. Two chapters on the nineteenth century follow, addressing retailing responses to consumer demands and the social significance of domestic consumption. Next are two chapters on the twentieth century – the first on a shift from mass to niche marketing and the second on the consumption of home furnishings. The book therefore deals in sequence, if not in tandem, with the dual concerns of its title and the series to which it belongs. Rather than filling a gap in the literature by supplying an analysis of 'the interaction between retailer and consumer' as the blurb suggests, the framework of the book implies that retailing and consumption are discrete, albeit contingent, entities to be considered sequentially rather than simultaneously.

Edwards emphasizes the importance of urbanization in the development of retail culture, pointing out for example that London was host to fixed shops for retailing furniture and furnishings during the Middle Ages. Then, using Pepys, he establishes that the later selling of furniture involved the retailer in home visits to clients to assess their needs. By the eighteenth century, notwithstanding 'the amazing diversity of the retail infrastructure' (p. 74), 'the prime location for a furnishing business in England had to be London' (p. 41). Yet, London itself was a moveable feast with furniture workshops and showrooms gradually moving west, in pursuit of London society, eventually ending up in 'furniture street', Tottenham Court Road and Oxford Street. 'Status-conscious furnishing business' also existed in York, Norwich, Bristol, Liverpool and Edinburgh, and in the eighteenth century fairs remained important sources of goods for the rural

population of consumers and itinerant tradesmen alike. Edwards introduces the significance of overseas trade, considering the role of France as a supplier, and the channels of communication open to North American consumers wishing to keep up with London fashions (p. 70). In addition, he returns to the role of second-hand trade in local networks. The eighteenth-century separation of manufacture and retail activities, and its impact on urban development as premises became increasingly specialized, continued into the nineteenth century even as general department stores and complete home furnishers arose. Edwards elaborates upon further retail developments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries including antique dealing, mail order, hire purchase, direct selling by manufacturers, global outsourcing and the production of cheap copies. He also reviews the selling of interior design schemes by house builders such as Wimpey, which in allowing customers to pre-select bedspreads to match their new home interiors entirely 'removed the retailer's function' (p. 180). While Edwards places changes in retailing practice within the context of broader urban themes, visual information on the distribution of the furniture industry in the form of maps would have been a useful addition. The figures supplied are of trade cards, catalogues and images of showrooms and retail environments.

Repeatedly, Edwards poses himself the question 'How did people acquire furniture?' (pp. 32, 66, 135). In one section, which makes greater use of primary sources than the overviews elsewhere, the author discusses the range of different types of furniture businesses, from workshop to showroom (pp. 55–60). The parts in which Edwards turns his attention to the consumption, rather than purchase, of furniture and furnishings are based on diaries, letters, pattern books and advice books as well as on the secondary literature. He uses advice literature without reference to recent methodological contributions on the complex place of mediating discourses between production and consumption, and its strengths and weaknesses for the writing of history, which requires careful handling to avoid its simplistic use as evidence of consumption. Edwards does consider the role of the furniture retailer as advisor (e.g. p. 173) and didactic shop displays (p. 184); this reader at least wished for more here, given that the neutrality assumed for the 'impartial advisor' is compromised by the commercial imperative of the salesperson.

Turning Houses into Homes is essentially a history of the retailing and, to a lesser extent, the consumption of furniture and furnishings. It will interest readers in a broad range of fields. Students, particularly, will benefit from the overviews offered here of: theories of consumption, the furnishing of a medieval home, eighteenth-century retailing practices, hire purchase and so on. While the book's scope is impressive, it does occasionally canter rather too quickly through its constituent parts, for example twentieth-century 'branding' is dealt with in only two pages. Also, because one of the strengths of this book is its synthesis of secondary literature across the range of its subjects, it is unfortunate that the majority of sources date from the twentieth century; reference to more recent work would have extended the shelf life of this book. Nevertheless, this is a richly useful book, which brings together otherwise largely disparate topics and students or researchers in a number of fields would be wise to consult it.

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Keir Waddington, *The Bovine Scourge: Meat, Tuberculosis and Public Health, 1850–1914*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006. 256pp. Bibliography. £50.00. doi:10.1017/S0963926806304245

Although tuberculosis (TB) has attracted substantial historical attention, most work has focused on the human or pulmonary form of the disease. The few investigations into bovine TB have centred on milk as a vehicle for infection, ignoring the threat posed by diseased meat. This book, by medical historian Keir Waddington, aims to fill the gap in the literature, while providing broader insights into the history of food safety, public health and bacteriology and the roles and relationships of butchers, Medical Officers of Health (MOsH) and veterinary surgeons. Starting in 1850, Waddington reveals how rising urban demand for meat combined with deteriorating livestock health drove the sale and consumption of diseased meat. Concerns surrounding these practices were initially connected to discussions on food adulteration and the fraudulent sale of sub-standard food items. Over the next two decades, however, veterinary reformers and leading MOsH attempted to reframe diseased meat as a public health issue. Their proposed solution – improved inspection of slaughterhouses and butchers' shops to prevent dangerous meat being sold for human consumption – was hindered by the difficulties of defining diseased meat and the danger it posed. Further problems arose due to local variation in the implementation of permissive public health legislation, and the low status and poor training of nuisance inspectors appointed to examine meat.

Following European investigations confirming the zoonotic potential of bovine TB, and Robert Koch's 1882 announcement that bovine and human TB had a common cause, diseased meat became synonymous with tuberculous meat. Countering the threat remained problematic, however. Was bovine TB a local disease, such that the removal of visible tubercles from a carcass rendered it wholesome, or did the germs pervade the body, requiring the complete and costly condemnation of any carcass bearing even slight signs of the disease? Butchers, MOsH and veterinarians clashed repeatedly over this issue, as they fought for authority over the definition and control of diseased meat. A much-publicized court case, brought in 1889 by Glasgow Corporation against a butcher and salesman, highlighted the lack of consensus. In this context of rising public concern, the government appointed a Royal Commission to examine the problem more closely. Unable to reconcile conflicting views, it turned to science. Reporting in 1895, it confirmed existing views about the transmissible nature of bovine TB and supported the local notion of infection supported by veterinarians, farmers and the meat industry. A second commission, appointed in 1896, made more concrete recommendations on the regulation of the meat trade, focusing on the practice of meat inspection and training of inspectors. A third commission reaffirmed the zoonotic properties of bovine TB in response to Robert Koch's 1901 claim that bovine and human TB were different diseases. By then, however, attention was turning to milk as a vehicle for infection. The debates and activities surrounding this product form the subjects of Waddington's penultimate chapter. Presumably included for the sake of completeness, it relies heavily on existing literature. The final chapter explores another control strategy pursued in the light of the recognized deficiencies of meat inspection: the eradication of disease in cattle. This proved technically, economically and politically problematic, and had made little headway by the outbreak of World War I.

This is a coherent and well-researched account, which should appeal to historians interested in agriculture, medicine, trade regulation and the urban environment. Though it makes few revelatory claims, it connects well with the existing historical literature, and is a welcome addition to work on tuberculosis, public health and food safety. I am surprised by the limited reference to farmers since they were surely threatened – as butchers were – by the drive for more widespread condemnation of tuberculous carcasses. My only other criticism relates to the author's tendency to make general claims that are referenced to a single specific source. These points should not detract from Waddington's achievement in providing a readable and original account of an under-researched subject.

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Susan Barton, *Working-class Organisations and Popular Tourism, 1840–1970*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005. xii + 237pp. £55.00.
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This is a book of modest aspirations, seeking to identify the distinctive ways in which the British working class shaped its own holiday activities to the extent that the actual experience of holidaymaking became less of an exception over the years. As the author herself admits, its function is essentially one of filling the gaps left by others, notably James Walvin and John Walton, in their studies of the development of tourism and holidaymaking. The main contextual features – the Great Exhibition, the campaign for holidays with pay, the role of the state and the development of overseas package tourism – will thus be familiar to most readers, as will the author's confirmation of earlier findings that organized labour played a particularly important role in the campaign for paid holiday entitlements, which culminated in the 1938 Holidays with Pay Act.

Similarly, the main conclusion – that far from emulating middle-class holiday habits the working class influenced the development of the tourist industry in accord with its own tastes and preferences – will come as little surprise to labour historians. The notion that British workers were merely passive recipients of cultures and life styles imposed upon them through various agencies of social control was discredited long ago. Yet there are subtleties in this debate that Barton does not really explore. She is careful to remind her readers periodically that neither organized labour nor working-class holiday makers represented more than a minority of workers but more might have been made of the point. For example, while the subsequent impact of the Great Exhibition in enhancing working-class mobility is rightly emphasized, consideration of nineteenth-century observers such as Flora Thompson, Rider Haggard and Seebom Rowntree would have provided a different, because rural, perspective. Again, notwithstanding the fact that even some of the poor went on holiday, it is worth noting that George Orwell's oft-quoted list of the pleasures which made inter-war working-class life tolerable in the north of England included nothing as ambitious as holidays. In this context Barton's argument could perhaps have been strengthened by a fuller discussion of how the poverty cycle, mentioned briefly in passing, affected the composition of the holidaymaking working class. It would have been equally informative to

include some reference to the ways in which the state of the labour market or industrial relations affected the ability of members to contribute to the holiday savings clubs which developed in the aftermath of the Great Exhibition, but again this is not explored in any depth. As the author indicates, these clubs were often encouraged by employers such as Cadbury and Lever but the opportunity is not taken to put this into the wider context of the more general interest taken in labour welfare by a number of major employers in the early decades of the twentieth century. On the other hand, Barton does make the interesting observation that these holiday savings schemes seem to have been most common in industries with a high proportion of female employees.

But if the contextual and theoretical underpinnings might thus have been further developed, the book is still a worthy addition to the literature and one that is successful in achieving its stated objectives. It is eminently readable, simply yet effectively organized on a thematic basis and the sections dealing with the provision of appropriate accommodation for working-class visitors to the Great Exhibition, the development of holiday camps and the activities of the Workers Travel Association are especially informative. It emerges quite clearly that the key elements of the now familiar package holiday – cheap travel, accommodation, information and guides – were first developed in the nineteenth century in the context of the Great Exhibition. The clubs set up by working-class bodies to facilitate visits to the Crystal Palace in 1851 may well have inspired the establishment of similar organizations to support seaside outings as their feasibility developed in the second half of the nineteenth century. The initial role of trade unions in fostering holiday camps is well portrayed although it was not long before the camps fell under the sway of commercial interests which alone had the resources necessary to provide facilities of the standard which campers demanded. The book also makes some interesting observations about the history of responses to the growth of working-class holidaymaking. Just as the imminent arrival of hordes of working-class Britons was said to have terrorized Spaniards and others as the package holiday industry developed on the back of cheap flights after 1960, so middle-class Britons were equally alarmed a century earlier by the prospects of annual influxes of seaside revellers from working-class areas. One thing that has changed, however, is relative cost. It is a salutary thought that at today's prices four copies of this book would be sufficient to buy an off-peak week's package holiday in Spain.

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Gábor Gyáni, *Identity and the Urban Experience: Fin-de-Siècle Budapest*. Trans. Thomas J. DeKornfeld. New Jersey: Centre for Hungarian Studies and Publications Inc., 2004. ix + 274pp. 1 map. \$40.00.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806324248

After the Compromise of 1867 the city of Budapest acquired a new dynamism thanks to its status as the capital of the modern nation state of Hungary. As such it was a highly complex social entity subject to the processes of urbanization and economic and political modernization and their accompanying social and cultural changes. Gábor Gyáni's monograph (translated from Hungarian) and written from

a distinctly Hungarian perspective, focuses on the social and cultural history of the city after 1873, the point at which the independent cities of Pest, Buda and Óbuda (with a combined population of 270,000 in 1869) were unified into one. From then onwards the city began its rapid transformation into a modern metropolis and by 1914 was home to a population of 933,666. The narrative is divided into three main sections: the social history of urban public space, the uses and misuses of urban space and the psyche of the urban personality. Empirical material in the subsections is prefaced by brief surveys of some theoretical perspectives on issues such as the distinction between private and public space and elite and mass culture.

The author identifies the particular factors contributing to the transformation of the physical, social and cultural spaces of the city focusing on the way that daily confrontations with specific features of the metropolitan environment impacted on the lives and behaviour of the city's inhabitants in ways that generated attitudes and responses to the phenomena of modern life which were often deeply ambivalent. The identities of specific urban spaces and spectacles, bridges, streets and promenades, department stores and theatres, restaurants, cafes, public parks, panoramas, exhibitions and cinemas, are shown to be dependent on the way they were perceived and used by the city's inhabitants. Most aspects of everyday urban life are covered, if somewhat briefly: policing, codes of public behaviour, sociability, gender issues, special days, divorce and adultery, suicide and funerals, riots and strikes. A major source is the recently published diary of the Csorba family, kept almost daily from 1873 to 1876, in which husband and wife detail their encounters with the city. Entries reveal an absence of any clear distinction between workdays and holidays in the life of Géza Csorba, a low level official who often took afternoons off for excursions and visits to restaurants and cafes with his wife. Resident in Pest, the Csorbás occasionally cross to Buda, which they experience as tourists. More often they explore the rapidly changing spectacle of Pest itself (they were particularly excited by fires), their comments on new buildings and changes in the environment suggesting ways in which the formation of the new metropolitan culture was shaped by the infinite number of adjustments and changes in the attitudes and behaviour of the city's inhabitants as they responded to the physical, social and cultural changes in their environment.

In a study of a city of immigrants the question of the relationship between assimilation, language and the formation of cultural identities cannot be overlooked and one of the most interesting sections deals all too briefly with the role of the boulevard press in the evolution of a specifically metropolitan form of Magyar, a response to the urgent need for communication. Finally, Gyáni ventures into well-populated territory in Central European studies with a brief discussion of the relationship between modernity and the impetus towards cultural modernism pointing out that attempts to construct a history of European modernism on sociological foundations linking it to the cultural behaviour of a generation of alienated Jewish intellectuals ignores 'the complexity of experiential reality and of its internal contradictions' (p. 221), an argument which requires much greater elaboration than it is given here although the book as a whole represents a valiant, if limited, attempt to examine the formation of a distinctively metropolitan view of the world.

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Anthony J. Stanonis, *Creating the Big Easy: New Orleans and the Emergence of Modern Tourism, 1918–1945*. Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2006. 344pp. 10 photos. 3 figures. Bibliography. \$59.95 hbk, \$22.95 pbk.
doi:10.1017/S0963926806334244

Recent years have witnessed the emergence of a burgeoning literature on urban tourism in the United States. In *Creating the Big Easy*, Anthony J. Stanonis adds to this scholarship by providing an authoritative account of the development of tourism in New Orleans between the two World Wars gleaned from careful study of archival documents and historical records. Stanonis' historical narrative correctly notes the centrality of gender and race in conflicts over the transformation of New Orleans. Elite white males dominated the major institutions of New Orleans society and promotional campaigns and attractions were constructed by whites for whites (p. 23). In the early chapters of the book, Stanonis expertly documents how the image-making and promotional campaigns of the New Orleans Association of Commerce played strategic roles in galvanizing local support for tourism development. In drawing attention to New Orleans' infamous prostitution trade, the book highlights the interlocking nature of race and gender in the constitution of tourism showing that white reformers (both men and elite white women) were primarily concerned with preserving the virtue of white women and ignored black involvement in the sex trade (p. 116). From the 1920s through to the 1940s, women reformers established historical preservationist and neighbourhood organizations to protect the residential basis and architectural heritage of the French Quarter. Gender and race extended to Mardi Gras, jazz music and Creole culture. Here Stanonis brilliantly documents the role of elite white businessmen in building a tourist image of New Orleans as a 'white' place that systematically ignored the accomplishments of the city's people of colour.

Stanonis' arguments are important and backed by significant empirical support. Yet there are at least three problems with the book that obscure its intellectual merit and make it difficult to evaluate its broader impact. An indefatigable researcher in primary sources, Stanonis sometimes seems unaware of current scholarship. The opening chapters of the book provide a superficial overview of oft-repeated tourist images of the city. In addition, Stanonis overemphasizes the role of demographic shifts and transportation technologies to understanding tourism. Contrary to Stanonis' account, the Association of Commerce developed its image making and promotional campaigns to bolster the financial fortunes of the city in the context of new forms of racial conflict, class struggle and inter-urban economic competition. Second, Stanonis could be clearer about the role of extra-local power relations, class conflict and policy struggles in the development of tourism in New Orleans. Indeed, the book focuses on the actions of white males and women activists but we get little in the way of broader context and macro-level processes in shaping local manifestations of racism and sexism. Finally, Stanonis reifies vacationers' interests and desires as casual forces in the development of New Orleans tourism. Interestingly, he acknowledges the inherent epistemological problems of relying on tourists' voices as sources of evidence (pp. 23–4). Yet in arguing that tourism boosters responded to visitors' interests, Stanonis eschews larger social structures and power dynamics shaping and constraining visitors' preferences and demands.

These criticisms are important but they should not detract from the insightful and significant historical detail provided in the book. The shortcomings of the book do not overshadow its contributions. Stanonis offers a compelling portrait of the rise of tourism in New Orleans and adds unique insight to our understanding of the city's distinctive history. The book is a thought-provoking and penetrating analysis of the early development of tourism in New Orleans and should be the starting point for historians interested in understanding the city's cultural and economic structure between the two World Wars.

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