Gomer Williams, a Liverpool author writing in 1897, who commented (in *History of the Liverpool Privateers*, London) that he felt compelled to refer to some individuals mentioned in his text only by their initials, owing to their now respectable middle-class families, only two generations removed from direct connection with slavery, being still resident in the City. Jane Longmore's contribution, '"Cemented by the blood of a negro"?', makes a good case that, rather than invest in the port's cultural activities such as libraries and theatres for altruistic reasons – 'laundering their ill-gotten financial gains', so to speak – eighteenth-century merchants were more inclined to spend their money upon their own estates or on infrastructure likely to be of benefit to themselves, such as port facilities and shipbuilding.

The contributions of Kenneth Morgan, Stephen Behrendt, Paul Lovejoy, David Richardson, Suzanne Schwarz and Trevor Burnard also provide, albeit indirectly, useful material beyond the confines of the transatlantic slave trade for those involved in the search for British black history, particularly black family history. Burnard offers valuable information of a more direct nature on the source countries of African slaves, the antecedents of both West Indians and many of our present-day Black British population. It was a little puzzling why, in note 37, he felt that the 27 slaves described as 'Indians' were 'presumably from . . . the Mosquito shore (Honduras). . . or from British North America', when there was, in fact, a Native American population in the form of the Taino people, an Arawak-speaking people, in Jamaica. Indeed, some present-day Jamaicans and their descendants, such the black Welsh athlete Colin Jackson, who was found to have as much as 17 per cent Taino ancestry in his DNA, still carry their genes today. This, of course, is a very minor criticism, as this was a very absorbing contribution. Suzanne Schwarz's 'Commerce, civilization and Christianity: the development of the Sierra Leone Company' outlines another source of black British settlers, the founding of the Sierra Leone settlement by slaves repatriated to their mother continent, if not their own particular home countries.

Since its opening in August 2007, many thousands of visitors to Liverpool's excellent International Slavery Museum have certainly been made aware of the full horrors of the slave trade. Having been suitably inspired by their visit to learn more, anyone seeking a clear, balanced and thoughtful presentation of the issues surrounding one of the most shameful episodes of human history could not do better than to arm themselves with a copy of this absorbing and well-edited book. For this reason, it is a pity that a more affordable paperback version is not available to the general public.

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Martin Spence, *The Making of a London Suburb: Capital Comes to Penge*. Monmouth: Merlin Press, 2007. xii + 131pp. 14 figures. Bibliography. £9.95 pbk.
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This modestly self-styled 'little book' comprises an account of the development of Penge as a suburb of the first capitalist world-city, from its humble rural manorial origins, when economic survival rested on the exploitation of ancient woodlands,

to its role as semi-rural retreat for the increasingly prosperous middle classes wishing to escape the stink of the City, and through to the socially heterogeneous late nineteenth-century melting-pot of a commuter stop. Along the way we learn of the consequences of speculation and accumulation, failed communications and national monuments and morality and loyalty for the 'ordinary, resolutely unfashionable' suburb. Spence provides an admirably broad view of a rapidly industrializing and modernizing suburban society, its landscape and its people, and does so within a very short space.

The book begins with a disclaimer clarifying what it is not, notably that it is not intended to be an exercise in local history, nor a 'miscellany of recollections of bygone days . . . a chronicle of colourful local characters, events or anecdotes'. Instead it is to be a study of the transformation that took place in the landscape and society of Penge as the railways arrived. The structure of the book sets this aspiration up nicely, as it moves from a general discussion (in fact an extended definition) of the concept of capitalism in the abstract, with the identification of the key components of capitalism as it has operated in historical cities, to a closer look at the effects of these components upon Penge during the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The first part of the book consists of a concise overview of the extraordinary growth of early modern London as context to the explosion's consequences for Penge, a brief discussion of the creation of the city's southern suburbs and a (necessarily) sweeping overview of the history of Penge from the Conquest to the early eighteenth century. These background chapters are followed with more detailed thematic sections on the areas that Spence sees as being crucial to an understanding of the effect of urban capitalization upon suburban communities. Thus there are chapters on land disputes and enclosure, canals and railways, the selling of the 'commodity' of Penge as an idyllic middle-class residential haven and the impact of the high-stake financial gamble that was the Crystal Palace. Finally the book ends with a qualitative look at some of the households enumerated in various census returns with the aim of illustrating the complex character of the population.

Basing his account almost exclusively on fairly general secondary works, Spence is careful to avoid slipping into anecdotal narrative, and makes a fairly successful job of drawing his discussion back to the theoretical framework he sets up in his introduction. He does occasionally find it hard to resist being briefly distracted into a thought-provoking aside which is somewhat tangential to his main argument, or by a particularly amusing, touching or otherwise resonant piece of local Penge trivia, but the book is not the weaker for it. Indeed, if anything it might be argued that the pains taken to ground the account in the theoretical leads to sections which might benefit from a little more 'local life' being breathed into them, perhaps drawing from the kinds of detail to be found in primary sources. A consequence of this is that the book sometimes finds it difficult to avoid an overly deterministic sense of the development of Penge, both in terms of a historically privileged view of the seeming inevitability of the way the suburb developed, but also and this is the more disappointing, that the story being told could have been about *any* London suburb. Nevertheless *The Making of a London Suburb* is an interesting 'little book', not least in its spirited approach to a complex set of interrelated broad social and economic urban issues (and its muscular turn of phrase) and it is a good example of a particular kind of local history that seeks to place itself in wider historical contexts. There is a distinct tang of

political perspective about some of the subjects broached, most notably a largely unreconstructed Marxist viewpoint on both the forces of urban capitalism and social class relations (the agents of capitalism, for example, often find themselves appearing in the text with the adjective 'ruthless' in close attendance). While this book may not contribute much to debates about the impact of industrialization, entrepreneurial innovation and commoditization upon the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century suburban landscape, it does offer a preview of how the local and the theoretical might be combined to produce interesting ways of looking at these issues.

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Ian Duncan, *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008. 416pp. 7 halftones. Bibliography. $39.50/£23.95.
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Edinburgh was in many ways, as Ian Duncan asserts in this monumental new book, the 'capital of the nineteenth century' and *Scott's Shadow* substantiates this claim both in the way the city was the site of an explosion of cultural production, and in the way Edinburgh become a trope for or model of civic organization itself. Duncan argues that a city that become commonly known as the 'Modern Athens' was the focal point of a debate about civic nationalism moving from 'an oligarchic and republican idea of citizenship based civic virtue' (born of Scottish Enlightenment philosophy) to an 'aesthetically based cultural nationalism' promoted by the new culture of the literary magazine.

Once established as a synecdoche for the nation, Edinburgh speaks for Scotland (and, in complex ways, Britain) both as a representative figure and as a publishing centre; culture itself becomes a form of political, commercial and social activity, conferring a national identity that speaks the language of aesthetics. In nineteenth-century Britain, Scotland's national distinctiveness cannot take the form of explicit political independence, but becomes the cultural supplement (often figured as lost or archaic) to contemporary politics and in turn starts to take on the discourses of the political. In a compelling chapter on the architecture of Edinburgh, Duncan shows how the appearance of the city itself, its increasingly renowned beauty and sublimity, becomes a way of figuring the triumphs of Britain in a post-Napoleonic world – the viewer is instructed to see the modern civic architecture (including the never-completed National Monument to Britain's 1815 victory) as a triumph of imperial ideology set in, and underpinned by, the timeless or archaic order of the city's natural background.

Cities are, of course, states of mind as well as bricks and mortar, and the bulk of the book is about Edinburgh's role in the production of this culture, and particularly its dominant genre (both in Scotland and in Europe), the novel. Duncan dexterously manages the difficult task of linking the history of publishing with the history of ideas, interweaving the story of literary Edinburgh with an account of the fiction that emerged from it. The key figure here is the philosopher David Hume, whose theorizing of the imagination as a 'novelistic' mode of experience in its ability to render common life underscores the historical novel's challenge to 'factual'