

praising their goals evades the question of their results. Smith notes that others have criticized Burnham's plan for its lack of attention to social problems and especially housing issues, yet he generally refrains from taking any side himself. Do the plan's ambitious goals neglect the realities of actual people on the street? Smith notes that smaller plans may be more successful and serve more diverse people, but big plans are impressively inspiring, and it is important to consider metropolitan regions comprehensively. In other words, he takes few sides. This can be frustrating.

Like Burnham's Plan itself, Smith's book begins with a history of planning. Smith relates early antecedents to Burnham's plan as well as the city that Burnham and his colleagues encountered in 1909 – yet one longs for a stronger authorial point of view than is contained in a list of how many streetlights Chicago had in 1909. In tone, this work resembles Bessie Louise Pierce's classic *History of Chicago* (1940–41). Her work ends in 1893; Smith takes up where Pierce left off, and his work may stand alongside hers as the starting-point for numerous inquiries into the fascinating city of Chicago. For planners and activists interested in changing urban space, Smith's most important chapter may be the one on the extensive promotional activities undertaken by supporters of Burnham's plan. Clever use of the media, school system, churches, public lantern-slide lectures and films were all part of this early and innovative lobbying effort – yet even with all that, the public was not always persuaded by the plan. There are lessons to be learned here, though Smith himself does not draw those lessons out. Smith's measured tone is most welcome in his final chapters assessing the complex legacy of Burnham's plan. He acknowledges how many proposals pre-existed Burnham's plan itself, how many proposals were modified during execution and how difficult it is to assess the impact of this iconic document. Here, his balanced tone is a welcome contrast to the bombast of many Plan supporters and opponents.

Carl Smith and the editors of *The Encyclopedia of Chicago* have placed the full text of Burnham's plan online, as well as the delightful *Wacker's Manual of the Plan of Chicago* (1911), which, for decades, was a required textbook for every eighth-grade student in Chicago's schools. Since the online version of Smith's book is also available, and since the online version features many illustrations in their glorious original colour, instead of the black-and-white necessary for economical book printing, the best way to teach this will be to use the material Smith has provided online, in order to help students assess the primary documents themselves.

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Ian Packer, *Liberal Government and Politics, 1905–15*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006. viii + 241pp. Bibliography. £45.00.

James R. Moore, *The Transformation of Urban Liberalism: Party Politics and Urban Governance in Late Nineteenth-Century England*. Historical Urban Studies Series. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006. xii + 323pp. Appendices. Bibliography. £55.00.

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Recent years have seen a paucity of texts dealing directly with the party politics of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Britain. Contemporary events,

post-modernism and the emergence of governance, rather than party, as the key organizing concept in urban politics has led to a diminution of interest in ideology, policy and personalities at the expense of bourgeois consensus. A lack of interest in politics is even more characteristic of contemporary debates about Britain in the twentieth century. In particular the decline of the Liberal party, a topic once central to interpretations of the mid-twentieth century – and especially the key moment of late forties welfarism – is one that has slipped out of view. Yet as both authors under discussion here recognize, Liberalism as an ideology and the Liberal party as an embodiment of that ideology were central to the political development of nineteenth-century Britain and probably represent the key manifestation of urban politics during that period. Certainly these two books offer fresh views of Liberalism in its heyday, one by subjecting many of the hoary old debates about the Edwardian Liberal party to the litmus test of Liberal ideology, the other offering a detailed case study of organization and policy in two key Liberal strongholds of the third reform era.

Packer sticks to conventional debates and topics, his unique approach being his focus on 'how Liberal' the 1905–15 government was in tackling its problems. Following a good survey of the large – though now rather dated – literature on the subject he examines the structure of the party. Although knowledgeable about the activities of the party outside parliament this is not his forte and indeed just one page is devoted to constituency and municipal politics. He is much more comfortable with the 'high politics' of government and policy formation, showing how foreign and defence policy and especially constitutional issues like Ireland and women's suffrage, caused the Liberals some of their most anguished moments – not least when attempting to balance competing claims in a fair manner whilst not conceding too much party advantage. Packer provides a sound, if unadventurous, defence of nonconformity in politics and the free churches' enduring importance to the Liberal party up to 1914. The chapters on economy and social reform emphasize the importance of free trade to identity and policy and the attendant need to tap novel revenue streams in order to square the circle of increased defence and social spending without alienating upper-middle-class supporters of the party. His final chapter reflects on the Liberals' encounter with war, arguing that war, whilst not good for Liberalism, was no more ideologically divisive for them than it was for either Labour or the Conservatives.

His desire to move the focus away from social reform and traditional debates about the New Liberalism or the *Strange Death of Liberal England* is to be welcomed, as is the wish to show that Asquith's government brought together a broadly consistent and modern set of ideas. Yet he misses the opportunity to move the debates on significantly by engaging with the concept of modernity, and with some of the agendas developing in social, cultural and urban history around the management of society at the turn of the century and what Liberalism had to offer that process. But the book's big weakness is its failure to engage with the ideas and attitudes of the rank and file. For while he is convincing in his argument that connections between government and the rank and file were minimal and that in office ministers could largely do what they wanted, party members in the constituencies were vital to the development, maintenance and sustainability of Liberalism into the twentieth century. There is a literature which addresses these issues but it is largely overlooked by Packer who privileges metropolis over provinces and cabinet over activist.

James Moore takes the opposite approach in his book which tackles a deeply neglected period of British party political history – that from roughly 1880 through to 1900 – and in the process challenges some long-established views about the relationship between class and urban governance in the late nineteenth century. In many respects he has much in common with Packer – focusing on party structures, ideology, policy and politics as a game of party advantage. Adopting a different focus from, say, Garrard with his emphasis on popular political structures driven forward by national organizations, Moore's emphasis is on the creation of local organizations to manage local problems which often led to conflict with emerging Radicals seeking greater democracy and organizational control. The early chapters – addressing the emergence of these organizations in Manchester and Leicester around the time of the third reform act and the home rule crisis – reveal the eclipse of the urban notables which mirrored the passing of the Whigs at Westminster. Long-serving aldermen and committee chairs, secure from 50 years of one party rule, were challenged from both left and right by new social groups, a younger, more radical generation and those who saw party and ideology, rather than personality and commitment to the interests of the ward, as the primary function of the councillor. His second theme – municipal government transformed – fits more with recent urban political history by exploring the functioning of municipal government in what were 'one party' fiefdoms. These chapters have some interesting things to say about the operation of the committee system in city hall, especially the role of the chairman when seniority was dominant and corruption probably rife. In such conditions it was outsiders, like the elected auditor, who acted as guardians of the public interest.

Moore has most to offer in his discussion of suburban politics, highlighting the demands of newly incorporated suburbs for improved and expanded services, especially schools, libraries and even street lights. In such circumstances, boundary extension could benefit the Liberal party, even in more affluent areas, contrary to the rather two dimensional image of 'Villa Toryism' which has dominated the subject for almost 50 years. His discussions of the emergence of the ILP, however, have a little less to offer. There is a focus on personalities, especially in the Manchester case, and rather too close an examination of the electoral machinations of working-class wards. On the other hand, his exploration of progressivism and the early stages of new liberalism is thought provoking as is his challenge to the class conflict approach to the rise of Labour. Ultimately, however, this is a book about the end of the politics of urban notables – a very different concern to that of recent studies of elites and the argument might have benefited if it had paid more attention to that literature.

Together these texts illustrate much which is good in traditional political history but also some of its limitations. Although Moore is more willing to step outside well-worn debates than Packer, both remain structured by the form and concerns of a less ambiguous historiographical approach. They stick closely to the corridors of political power – in parliament or council chamber – and rarely engage with either activists or the broader world which politicians aimed to govern. Given Liberalism's central place in shaping and governing modernity in England and the intimate link between urban change and urban liberalism, a new method is required which merges these political and ideological histories with the emergent social and cultural approaches which characterize the best of modern urban history.

Both these books offer glimpses of where such an approach might be most fruitfully taken and provide a platform upon which to build.

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Duanfang Lu, *Remarking Chinese Urban Form: Modernity, Scarcity and Space, 1949–2005*. Oxford: Routledge, 2006. xii + 204pp. Bibliographical references and index. £69.00.

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As China makes tremendous economic progress, the shifting profile of city landscapes becomes an ever more important issue. The interweaving of people and space has gained more and more attention in the recent literature of urban studies, and an interdisciplinary approach combining perspectives of architecture and urban human geography allows us to understand urban practice better. Duanfang Lu's book examines this topic in depth and presents an insightful account of Chinese urban changes over the last five decades under the Chinese Communist regime. Contrasting examination of Chinese central government's espoused policies with actual development in cities, this book sets out to demonstrate that scarcity of resources – of space, of material and of political will to address the real issues of lack of housing and facilities for workers – played a very critical role in shaping the evolving Chinese city landscape.

Duanfang Lu points out that by building on approaches to modernization current since the nineteenth century, and following the lead of Soviet economic planning, China put industrial development as the priority, and most resources were concentrated into cities. Each urban space was shared by work units, and it was the work unit's role to carry out central policies with responsibility for mobilizing and managing people for production. The author's research demonstrates that conflicts between the City Planning Bureau (which had responsibility for urban design) and these work units, within the context of policy set by the Central Government, provide the essential entry point to understanding the development of Chinese cities. On the one hand, the blueprints produced by the City Planning Bureau loyally responded to the economic schemes of the Central Government by minimizing expense on utilities for work units' residents. On the other, reacting to this policy of enforced scarcity, workers were not happy about the living standards with which they were provided. Under pressure from workers, and taking advantage of the grey area that existed within the vertical power structure from central authority to work unit, leaders of work units frequently had to be very creative with budgets, manipulating them to accommodate requests from within the units. Duanfang Liu asserts that the microdistrict scheme – the Soviet-inspired approach to urban planning which went back to the early years of the Communist regime – was not carried out in the way the Party's economic urban plan proposed, right up until Deng Xiaoping's reforms in 1978. Even after 1978, due to the high demand for residential houses in cities, and development policies drawn by the central authorities, the building regulations supposedly followed by work units were often compromised for commercial reasons.

Duanfang Lu concludes that the development of China's urban environment was a 'mix', combining socialist and Third World-type experiences. Unequal