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Reviews of books

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Wilbert Van Vree, *Meetings, Manners and Civilization. The Development of Modern Meeting Behaviour*. London: Leicester University Press, 1999. ix + 370pp. 30 figures. Bibliography. £55.00.

This volume charts the rise of meetings and what the author terms 'meeting behaviour' through Western society, as an example of the civilizing process in practice. The book will throw up few surprises for the urban historian, and may even cause a few historical teeth to grit, but this is the quibble of a historian attacking a sociologist on her own ground. The application and refinement of Elisa's theory of civilization is illuminating and, despite the emphasis on the Dutch experience, the comparative approach throws the peculiarities of individual state development into sharper relief. Van Vree starts his discussion with the earliest meetings in military–agrarian societies, necessitated by the need for co-operation in war, and charts their subsequent development through medieval and early modern Europe to the twentieth century. It is not, however, a comparative history of meetings, but a succession of case studies. There is an extended discussion of the role of meetings and meeting behaviour in the era of the Dutch Republic, where he traces the development of what he calls the first 'meeting class': an elite which defined itself by its eligibility to participate in meetings and its conformity with the rules of meeting behaviour.

Van Vree is a sociologist and, not surprisingly, his arguments are most convincing when discussing the significance of meeting behaviour in late twentieth-century society as the means of negotiating power and relationships in a society which has eschewed open violence. He concludes by observing the extent to which modern society is run through and by meetings: 'Whoever wants to participate in society with some degree of success needs to know and be able to apply elementary meeting rules, and to have mastered the type of language spoken in meetings' (p. 331). However, his attempts to extrapolate the concept of meeting and to use it as a tool of historical analysis fall short. He has little to say that is new about meetings in the medieval or the early modern period; and what he does have to say is derived from secondary sources. Nor is this reviewer convinced that the focus on the meeting is actually directed at the most interesting historical developments which are charted in this book; the diversity in function, character and social significance of the so-called 'meetings' is inevitably lost when they are all subsumed into one sociological model and undue prominence given to their common features. Too much significance, one suspects, has been attached to the Dutch experience. One must also note that the author's argument is sadly let down by the quality of the translation. However,

the emphasis on the meeting, as an illustration of the 'civilizing process', as in the restraint of aggression, the observation of rules, and as an expression of group identity, is of undoubted merit, and has obvious implications for the development of urban political culture. The comparative dimension, the chronological range and the theoretical approach of this book is stimulating and thought-provoking, if not invariably convincing.

Roey Sweet
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Steiner Supphellen (ed.), *Urban History, the Norwegian Tradition in a European Context: A Report from the Conference in Urban History held in Trondheim 21–22.11.1997*. No. 25 Trondheim Studies in History, Trondheim, Department of History, Faculty of Arts, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 1998. 152pp. No price stated.

This volume is remarkable for two reasons. First, it was produced as a record of the urban history conference called to celebrate the publication of a history of Trondheim in 6 volumes. This latter project, the history of medieval Europe's most northerly city, and currently Norway's third largest, represents what is identified in one paper (Anders Kirkhusmo, 'Urban History as Local History') as in the finest tradition of Norwegian urban history. Yet the second reason why this collection of essays from the conference is remarkable is that they represent a serious attempt to put the 'Norwegian' approach, not only into a wider European context, but also to encompass an interdisciplinary approach to the question of what, exactly, is urban history.

The history of Trondheim, its population, physical structure, administration and institutions over its 1,000-year history has been lovingly done. It is presented as one integrated story, touching upon all sides of urban life. Yet in scale and sources, Trondheim is exceptional. Four papers from foreign scholars – Richard Rodger from Britain, Lars Nilssen from Sweden, Ole Degn from Denmark and Katalin Szende from Hungary – attempt to put the Norwegian scholarship in a European perspective. There is a real dialogue between them and the Norwegian contributors in further papers, together teasing out the best way forward for Scandinavian urban history. Richard Rodger contributes a theoretical approach to the 'urban variable' in history and Katalin Szende provides a stunning overview of how archaeology is shaping our understanding of medieval towns and the crucial questions not only of urban origins but urban living as well.

Lars Nilssen plugs the whole proceedings into the historiography of the American urban historians and in his second paper, provides an outline of the challenge for urban historians in Europe over the next decades. Ole Degn compares Norwegian urban history with that of Denmark. The Norwegian contributions come from those involved in the Trondheim project and from Finn-Einar Eliassen, Reidar Bertelsen and Jan Eivind Myhre. The Norwegian papers are full of questions about the future. Will urban history be funded in the future? Will professionals still work alongside 'amateurs'? Will there be new theories to enable greater syntheses of city life or comparative frameworks to provide a stronger sense of the many, yet distinct, European urban identities? In all this speculation, there is always a note of caution, of gentle modesty, about the work

that has been completed. This reviewer at least, would like to congratulate the historians of Trondheim in articulating the importance of European urban history. Here we have, in the history of Trondheim, clear evidence of the emotional regard in which the city is held. As a European city, people still live in it, work in it and study in it as well as pursuing all the other activities associated with modern civilization. This is not always the case in cities in other continents and cultures. We need a strong tradition of European urban history, distinct and separate, analysing and celebrating the huge variety and diversity of the European urban experience. The writers in this volume should have confidence in their own convictions and broadcast the message more loudly!

Helen Meller
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Peter Csendes, *Historical Dictionary of Vienna*. Historical Dictionaries of Cities of the World, No. 8. Lanham, Md, and London: Scarecrow Press, 1999. xxxv + 259pp. 12 illustrations. 5 maps. Chronology. 6 tables. Bibliography. £47.00.

The main body of this useful English translation of Peter Csendes' *Historical Dictionary of Vienna* is constituted by instructive, if brief, alphabetical entries on important persons, events, localities, historical terms, movements, monuments and sites of architectural interest. These categories of information are in line with the other Historical Dictionaries published by Scarecrow. In addition there is a historical introduction and a chronology, but no index. An extensive and helpful bibliography, organized chronologically and thematically, lists publications both in English and German. The historical maps and the clear introduction give some indication of the topographical changes undergone by the city, particularly during its period of greatest and most rapid population growth from the second half of the nineteenth century to the First World War. However, dictionaries of this kind are essentially supplements to other kinds of works and readers who do not already carry a mental map of the city in their heads will find it necessary to refer to some other source of guidance. As a vice-director of the Municipal and Provincial Archives of Vienna Peter Csendes is well placed to offer the urban historian with a general interest in Vienna the kind of interesting details that narrative histories and popular guidebooks usually leave out and which contribute to making this dictionary a reference work of reference. The historical introduction succinctly outlines the social, economic, cultural and political past of the city paying attention to the more problematic aspects of its history as well as the period of its occupation by the four Allies and the policies followed by the newly independent city administration from 1955. Paying due attention to the legacy of the city's cultural past, including its baroque monuments and fin de siècle architecture, the entries also include information about features of the less well-known post-war scene and plans for future developments.

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Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. xxiv + 1383pp. No price stated.

Burrows and Wallace open their epic account of New York's rise to pre-eminence with an allegorical tale set in thirteenth-century Nottinghamshire, where residents saved themselves from King John's retribution by their 'mad' behaviour. While many New Yorkers past and present could testify to the madness of some of their cohorts, the strange ways identified with the original Gotham were dramatically manifested in the frenetic and creative activity of the more illustrious of Gotham's residents – busy making money, merriment and mayhem. The authors convey this pulsating energy with hardly missing a beat throughout the vicissitudes of the city's development from a Dutch enclave in the seventeenth century to 1898, when New York and Brooklyn, the largest and fourth largest cities in the USA, consolidated to form Greater New York.

Since this is a long story to tell, Burrows and Wallace are careful to anchor the narrative within a firm conceptual framework that emphasizes the interplay of 'external' and 'internal' events. For example the city's position within a global economy, beginning with the 'imperial world system' of commercial capitalism through the ascendancy of corporate capitalism is stressed. Likewise, the city's evolution from being the nation's *de jure* capital to its *de facto* capital is highlighted. Crucial to the city's development and its spatial geography is an understanding of the 'oscillating' movements of economic expansion and contraction and waves of physical building and removal. New York was/is a place where both wealth and poverty are conspicuously displayed, and where grandees, middling sorts and the *menu people* have left their marks on the cityscape.

Above all, *Gotham* demonstrates that class, ethnic, gender and race relations were fraught with tensions, played out in the contested terrains of the workplace, political arena and streets. The reader receives an accessible account of how artisans, labourers and sweatshop workers attempted to cope with if not challenge the imperatives of capitalist production by forming unions, co-operatives and ad hoc protest organizations.

Political affairs could be equally fractious. This is attested by the frequent and hotly contested elections in the colonial period, the intense rivalries between Democratic-Republicans and Federalists during the era of the early Republic, and the efforts of 'good' government campaigners and other reform movements to eliminate Tammany Hall's control over municipal purse strings between 1870 and 1898.

No less conflictual was social life. On one level New York, especially Manhattan, featured a mosaic of ethnic and racial communities that epitomized its diversity and vitality, but on another, signified a unstable and threatening environment, which under certain circumstances could spark violence. This occurred when German and Irish immigrants clashed with police who attempted to enforce newly enacted blue laws at the behest of pious and evangelical protestants, or when Irish immigrants rioted against military conscription during the Civil War and rampaged through African-American neighbourhoods.

If *Gotham* contains one overarching theme, it is the conflict caused by attempts by social-economic elites to impose their authority over less wealthy, cultured and educated New Yorkers. Merchant, industrial and financial capitalists dis-

covered their extensive holdings, control over markets and access to credit, did not easily translate into the establishment of 'bourgeois' hegemony, and the defenders of gentility and respectability found the creation of a moral order simply did not emanate from efforts to eradicate the coarse, bawdy and licentious features of popular amusements.

Gotham is a *tour de force*, and this brief review probably does not do justice to its incisive analysis, suggestive interpretations and lucid narrative style. This is urban history at its best, integrating the study of political affairs, economic life, social relations and cultural activity. Its sequel is eagerly anticipated.

Ronald Mendel
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Christopher Dyer, *Bromsgrove: A Small Town in Worcestershire in the Middle Ages*. Worcestershire Historical Society Occasional Publications Number 9, 2000. 60pp. 4 figures. £5.00 + 50p postage from Robin Whittaker, Worcestershire Record Office, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester, WR5 2NP.

During the 1980s, in a series of carefully constructed essays, Rodney Hilton opened a new era in the study of the small town in medieval England. In his new study of Bromsgrove, Christopher Dyer has shown how our understanding of the role of the small town within the feudal economy has been revolutionized by that legacy. We now appreciate that 10 per cent of all English people, or half of the urban population, lived in small towns, and we talk in terms of a hierarchy and a network of towns as we understand just how integral they were to the feudal world.

After locating Bromsgrove within its region and its local economy, Dyer turns to the question of origins. He debates whether, given its location within a great royal manor, Bromsgrove should be considered a 'primary town' and the site of an Anglo-Saxon minster, but answers in the negative. What seems certain is that the town originated during the years 1245–75, that it grew substantially during the last two decades of the thirteenth century, and that it was the product of landlord initiative. Drawing on the techniques of spatial analysis, Dyer shows how the town was planned, not only in terms of the laying out of tenements and the designing of the market area, but in the deliberate creation of a thoroughfare which maximized the flow of traffic through the town.

Dyer is particularly impressive in his recreation of Bromsgrove's hinterland, which in the early fourteenth century, we are told, comprised around 3,000 customers, of whom some 300 provided the greater part of its trade. Bromsgrove did not specialize in any particular commodity, but its hinterland did: in the production of pigs and oats. Not surprisingly, its market became noted for these. Over and above this, however, Bromsgrove is an example of a 'thoroughfare town', profiting from purely passing traffic. Other issues addressed include industrial zoning, which was clearly present even in a town as small as this, governance, both formal and informal, the existence of both an unofficial body of leading townsmen and an economic elite, who were wealthy by purely local standards, and the visibility of an underclass. The rise of a more prosperous local peasantry with greater spending power in the late fourteenth century seems to

have saved the town from decline, and urban historians will particularly appreciate Dyer's use of the records of the royal clerk of the market to assess the relative vitality of the various urban markets as the royal household passed through the midlands in 1405.

Finally, Dyer asks why Bromsgrove should have remained a small town. His answer is threefold: the existence of rivals, its relatively small hinterland, and the failure to develop a specialism which would have attracted wealthy customers. In its thoroughness, in its elegance and in the acuteness of its observations. Dyer's study is a model of a small town history.

Peter Coss
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Maureen C. Miller, *The Bishop's Palace: Architecture and Authority in Medieval Italy*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2000. xv + 307pp. 98 figures. Bibliography. £32.50; $49.95.

All over Western Europe bishops were once very much more powerful politically than they are now. In Italy this was a crucial fact in the history of urbanization because bishops, with few exceptions, chose from the beginning to live in towns and cities. The choice of the episcopal *residence* as a subject is undoubtedly a novel way to explore the link between town and bishop and this alone lends Maureen Miller's thoroughly researched book true originality. Most of the book is taken up with explaining how bishops were absolutely crucial in shaping, both physically and metaphorically, the towns of medieval Italy. It is in two parts: first, a survey of the development of the residences themselves, covering the period 300–1300; and second, a deeper analysis of the power which this development evidences. In Late Antiquity bishops lived in the cathedral complex whether this was at the centre of town or, as was more common, on the edge. There are some remains of such residences in Aquileia, Grado, Parenzo, Ravenna, Florence and Naples, and excavations show that such buildings grew organically over long periods. The graceful style of episcopal living found at Ravenna, to which Miller perhaps pays too much attention given this town's oddity (pp. 22–33), does seem nonetheless to have been fairly typical of the times. The early Middle Ages, Miller argues, brought radical change (or as she would see it, decline) with new types of simpler and smaller episcopal buildings which had balconies, loggias and towers. Although bishops were ever more politically powerful, Miller argues that their dark and cold houses did not reflect this. By the tenth century there were political difficulties too, arising from the increasing unity and power of the cathedral chapters, which often opposed the bishop as in the famous example of Verona (studied by Miller in an earlier book). There is not space here to deal with the appearance of communes and the most interesting arguments Miller presents about the part bishops played in this. Whatever one thinks of the argument, it must be pointed out that Miller has used a very wide range of evidence, rightly giving prominence to the often neglected charter or notarial material, which is particularly rich in Italy. She pays close attention to changes in terminology and periodization: from the Late Antique *episcopium* via early medieval *domus Sancte ecclesie* to eleventh- and twelfth-century *palatium* (a discussion most usefully drawn together in an appendix). She also commands the surviving material

culture and, indeed, has clearly trekked around many towns locating the – now often neglected – remains of the bishops' houses. In the face of all this documentation and the stimulating ideas drawn from it, it is a bit churlish to criticize. Yet there are significant problems of selection and emphasis. First, the book is not really about medieval Italy but *northern* Italy as there is little here about anywhere south of Rome (Naples excepted) even though there were far more bishoprics in the south than in the north. Second, there is a reluctance to follow examples throughout each of the three key periods, as in the interesting discussion of early medieval Genoa (pp. 65–67), where the long-term consequences for Genoese urban development of the early separation of the bishop's residence from the cathedral are not explored. Third, some of the most politically important towns, notably Milan, Bologna and Perugia, could have done with rather more extended treatment as could the more generic problem of bishoprics in small towns, such as Bobbio and Brugnato. Lastly, I would have in particular liked to know rather more about the family connections of bishops and how this affected their choice and style of residence. Not easy, given the problems of the evidence, but undoubtedly worth a try.

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Alexander Cowan (ed.), *Mediterranean Urban Culture 1400–1700*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000. x + 277pp. 32 plates. £42.50.

This collection of fourteen essays, a revised version of the proceedings of a conference held in 1995, is presented by the editor as a collective attempt to respond to two large questions: What is urban culture? Was there a common Mediterranean urban culture in the early modern period? Unfortunately, editorial direction has been rather weak, allowing most members of the team to focus attention on their specific interests at the expense of common problems.

The concept of 'culture', left implicit (apart from Nicholas Davidson's definition on p. 197), is generally used by the contributors in a broad sense. It includes architecture (discussed by Donatella Calabi in her chapter on ghettos and by Ruth Gertwagen on Modon), painting (Tom Nicholas on perspective), and literature (Benjamin Arbel on travelogues). The problems of what we often call 'multiculturalism' are discussed in four contributions, grouped under the rubric 'Religion, Ethnicity and Minority Groups'. Davidson's chapter is concerned with the 'cultural relations' of Venice and the cities subject to it. Two chapters are devoted to forms of urban sociability, a comparative survey by Jim Amelang and case studies of the 'culture of the street' in Córdoba (by John Edwards) and of local loyalties in Venice (by Joseph Wheeler). Although the editor does his best to squeeze the two remaining chapters under the umbrella of culture by describing them as concerned with 'the relationship between economic activity and cultural forms', the chapters themselves remain resolutely economic. On the other side, the chapter on perspective in Venice has relatively little to say about the city, apart from a brief discussion of urban planning. From the thematic point of view, it should have been replaced by an essay on the transmission of knowledge in the city, or one on civility, major topics which are virtually absent from the collection.

The second major question with which the contributors are concerned (or with which the editor would have liked them to be concerned) is that of the unity or disunity of Mediterranean culture. Half a century ago, Fernand Braudel, evoked by Alex Cowan in his introduction, painted a portrait of a relatively unified Mediterranean, to some extent as a conscious reaction against a conventional contrast between Christian and Muslim worlds. At much the same time, apparently unknown to Braudel, a group of anthropologists working on Spain, North Africa, Italy, Greece and Turkey, including Julio Caro Baroja, John Peristiany and the young Pierre Bourdieu, were becoming aware of their common interests and constructing the field of 'Mediterranean anthropology', with a stress on the city as one of its defining features. Recently, these conceptions of the Mediterranean as a cultural unit have been criticized by both anthropologists (notably Michael Herzfeld) and historians. Jim Amelang addresses this problem directly in his piece on 'the myth of the Mediterranean City', but the majority of contributors virtually ignore it. The geographical imbalance of the volume makes the general problem more difficult to discuss than need have been the case. Four articles out of fourteen focus on Venice, while other contributors also discuss that city. Spain receives a reasonable amount of attention (especially Barcelona and Córdoba), and so does the Greek-speaking world (especially Salonica and Modon). On the other hand, the South of France is missing. An even more conspicuous absence is that of the Muslim Mediterranean – Aleppo, Alexandria, Algiers and so on. The discussion by Arbel of the reactions of Western travellers to those cities is no substitute for the two or three chapters required to launch a general debate. Without Islam it is difficult even to begin discussing the problem of Mediterranean unity. On the other side, to have raised the old problem of the specificity of the 'Islamic city' at a conference at which specialists on Venice, Bari and Barcelona were present might well have been illuminating.

In sum, this is a useful collection of discrete essays in which almost everyone has something new to say which will be of interest to readers of this journal, although the large questions raised at the beginning are not systematically discussed, some contributors are allowed to go their own way, and the choice of contributions is somewhat parochial (the 'parish' in question being Venice). Jim Amelang's essay in particular deserves to be widely read.

Peter Burke
Emmanuel College Cambridge

Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies 1500–1800: The Origins of an Associational World*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000. xviii + 516pp. 16 plates, 4 tables. Bibliography. £60.00.

One of the least remarked features of early modern Britain was the rapid spread of clubs and societies, which by 1800 could be numbered in their thousands. Recruiting principally, but not only, from the more affluent urban classes, mainly amongst men, they included societies for eating, drinking, singing, politics, religion, science, art, literature and sports and diversions by the dozen. Clark calculates that there may have been up to 25,000 different clubs and societies in the English-speaking world in the eighteenth century. The book is ambitious,

plotting the scale of the phenomenon and enquiring into the location, organization and membership of these bodies. Clark proceeds to investigate the reasons for this development, which gets under way in the middle of the seventeenth century and then continues with gathering momentum for a century and a half. Clark wonders whether such manifestations of public sociability helped 'to engender a more integrated British social space encompassing the British Isles and nascent empire' (p. 6).

This is an heroic enterprise, especially in view of the fragmentary sources before the 1790s. Those bodies which have bequeathed detailed records, such as the Freemasons and the chartered bodies, were in many respects exceptional. Inevitably, Clark is forced to exercise some selectivity, deciding to exclude religious and commercial organizations and administrative trusts while choosing to concentrate on 'private associations, overwhelmingly male, meeting on a regular, organized basis, mostly in public drinking places, where they combined a common sociability with a more specific purpose, whether recreational, locational, educational, political, or whatever' (p. 12).

The first four chapters of the book trace the chronological development of the clubs and societies. They had to overcome a number of serious obstacles, including, in the seventeenth century, the hostility of central and local government bodies as well as the church and a general prejudice against such private associations. Early clubs tended to be small affairs, often meeting in private rooms. Progress was slow. By 1688 there was only a sprinkling of societies but a considerable amount of experimentation with names, structures and patterns of meeting. Thereafter a greater complexity appears with a greater variety of local and regional development and a declining dependence upon the influence of London. Nevertheless, in London alone there were around 1,000 clubs and societies in 1760 which may be caterogized into over 60 different types of association (p. 89).

Further chapters examine particular aspects of this phenomenon. One chapter investigates the long-term causes of the growth of clubs and societies, heavily linked, of course, to urbanization. However, and ingeniously, Clark also relates the growth to their admissions strategies and their self-promotion. 'The integration of members was . . . promoted by the stress on specialist interests, by traditional rites and more fully fashionable practices of fellowship and . . . by appeals to the collectivity of personal enjoyment and self-interest' (p. 233). There are further chapters on regional and ethnic societies, the masonic order and benefit societies. Clark does not confine himself to the British isles, but devotes a lengthy chapter to the international exportation of these peculiarly British forms of sociability. He examines not only the North American colonies but also the West Indies, Canada, India, Malta, Gibraltar and Minorca.

How significant were these developments? Some of the societies (e.g. benefit societies) were more successful than others (e.g. the moral reform clubs). Others, including the scientific, medical and agricultural societies, played significant roles in mobilizing opinion and spreading information. Perhaps even more important were the integrative functions performed by the societies, both across space and across social boundaries. Consequently, they may have been instrumental in promoting cross-class collaboration rather than the process of class formation. However, their role in promoting politicization cannot be doubted.

This is a major work on the emergence of civil society in early modern Britain and it will at once become a standard work. Clark's conclusion, that such a civil society requires a constellation of circumstances – 'urbanization, an expanding better-off class, a free press, limited government and good communications' (p. 488) – will be widely discussed. No doubt the error in the dating of chapter three in the Table of Contents will be corrected in a paperback edition.

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Gregory Stevens Cox, *St Peter Port 1680–1830: The History of an International Entrepôt*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1999. xix + 247pp. 60 plates. 30 figures. 23 tables. Bibliography. £35.00.

This account of St Peter Port reflects a considerable amount of meticulous archive research much of it helpfully presented in maps, graphs and tables, and detailed in over fifty pages of appendices. Stevens Cox uses this wealth of evidence to present a rounded and coherent history of the town in the long eighteenth century. During this time St Peter Port grew to be a major entrepôt in the Atlantic trade, largely thanks to its peculiar legal position which allowed the port and its merchants to evade many of the restrictions and duties imposed by the Navigation Acts.

Rather than treat this story of commercial growth in isolation, Stevens Cox places the port into the context of its wider geographical networks and its broader urban history. Notwithstanding the lack of detailed port records, he shows how St Peter Port fitted into local, European and Atlantic trading systems. It often played a key role in linking these different scales of activity, not least by supplying high tariff goods to smugglers. Indeed, its eventual decline as an entrepôt came only when the British government tightened its grip on such activities during the Napoleonic Wars. He also traces the ways in which the growing port shaped the local economy, demographic and migration patterns, and the social, cultural and physical development of the town. From around 3,000 in 1680, its population rose to nearly 14,000 by 1831. Natural increase played a surprisingly large part in this growth, although in-migration, especially from England, was important in the late eighteenth century when the entrepôt was at its zenith. Increasing wealth and population spurred socio-cultural changes, the town becoming increasingly 'English' in character, outlook and appearance. These changes are carefully traced through parish records, letters, diaries, newspapers and so on, and are represented in sixty illustrations (twenty-two of them in colour). Unfortunately, there is only limited reference to these in the text and the captions are often too brief, telling the reader what they are looking at rather than why it is significant to the analysis presented.

The integrated approach adopted by Stevens Cox is one of the great strengths of this book. Too often we regard the different dimensions of a town individually and separately, and it is refreshing and instructive to have them causally linked in a coherent narrative. There is a danger, of course, that analysis can become deterministic: all changes being linked to the economic prosperity of the town. Whilst this line of causality is clearly uppermost in the author's mind, he generally presents a balanced picture of economic, social and cultural transition.

Occasionally though – as with his arguments for conspicuous consumption amongst the wealthy merchants, and the changing social and leisure practices of the elites – there is a reluctance to explore alternative motivations (notions of fashion, novelty and identity, for instance) and broader causal processes (such as the spread of metropolitan influence).

The book is impressive in terms of its careful analysis and presentation of detailed primary research. It presents a clear, cogent and very human picture of what was clearly an important, but little-studied element of the urban and commercial network of eighteenth-century England. Beyond this, Stevens Cox seems reluctant to go. The analysis is by no means parochial, and broader issues are incorporated, but there is little attempt to engage with larger historiographical debates raised by the study such as the relationship between power and governance, local and national urban identity, and the whole idea of urban renaissance.

Jon Stobart
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Sabine Barles, *La Ville délétère. Médecins et ingénieurs dans l'espace urbain, 18^{e}–19^{e} siècle*. Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1999. 377 pp. FF185.

Urban pollution is of course far from being simply a problem of the twenty-first century. In the advanced economies its characteristics have changed, however. Barles considers how growing urban centres in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries learned to cope with massive volumes of human and animal excrement and contaminated liquids. To a substantial degree historians of urban renewal in France have concentrated on Second Empire Paris and the work of its Prefect, Haussmann and the engineers Alphand and Belgrand. Barles effectively shifts the focus back to examine earlier debates about environmental decay and its moral and pathological impact. The plague epidemic in the Marseille area in 1720 resulted in some 50,000 deaths. Given the limits to medical knowledge, explanations for this massive mortality related it to the Divine will, cosmology and the climate. Subsequently both contagionists and anti-contagionists were able to subscribe to propositions which blamed epidemics on vapours, pestilential miasmas, rising out of the earth. Their impact then depended on the individual constitution and especially the circulation of the air, determined by the prevailing wind, as well as the extent of soil contamination. Doctors concerned themselves with 'putrid' emanations from wells, cesspits, sewers, dung heaps, stagnant water, marshes, decomposing vegetables and animal matter, mud and animal excrement in the streets, decomposing bodies in the cemeteries, and all the causes of the stench which prevailed in so many towns and which seemed to corrupt the very air people breathed. The humidity associated with confined living and working conditions was regarded as particularly dangerous.

In 1776 the Société Royale de Médecine was established as a forum for discussion and for the collection of information on local medical and geographical conditions. The creation of a *statistique médicale* would prove to be the essential prerequisite for the subsequent '*transformation du milieu*'. During the 1832 and 1849 cholera epidemics locating the place of residence of victims would

lead to the establishment of a close correlation between the prevalence of disease and a degraded urban environment. Medical opinion remained divided on the causes but, whether the cholera was transmitted through the air or spread through contagion, it appeared to be closely associated with poverty and insalubrity. The focus of interest shifted towards questions of public hygiene.

In pre-industrial societies urban waste had largely been recycled, with animal and human excrement employed as fertilizer in the surrounding countryside. Accelerating urbanization and the expanding volume of faecal material caused enormous difficulties. There was growing concern, partly due to cholera, that the use of human waste as fertilizer might contaminate farm produce, as well as the soils and water supplies of those suburban zones where decaying matter underwent conversion to *poudrette*. To the growing number of cesspits and the circulation of malodorous night soil carts was added the difficulty of disposing of the contaminated liquids emanating from the homes of the better off as they acquired water closets, baths and new habits of cleanliness. This problem was exacerbated by the laudable effort to clean the streets, and pave them in order to reduce noise and wear and tear on carriages and carts. The solution to one problem created new difficulties as the run-off of surface water accelerated beyond the capacity of the limited sewer network.

The means of disposal of this waste was increasingly a matter for debate, with the solution evidently a question for engineers rather than doctors. Infected water might be allowed to drain back into the soil through drainage pits but this was likely to contaminate the underground water resources on which Paris largely depended. Eventually the solution adopted and gradually implemented from the 1850s was that a '*tout à l'égout*', requiring a massive and expensive reconstruction and especially expansion of the sewer network. This depended for its effectiveness on a vast improvement in water supply in order both to flush the system out and meet increasing consumer demand for water. The emptying of the sewer system into the Seine would cause problems downstream but proposals for a sewer to the sea, the only solution immediately apparent once the employment of human waste for fertilizer had been rejected, appeared too ambitious.

The decision-making process, which informed urban reconstruction, was complicated. The embellishment of the capital city and reinforcement of its security from revolution, as well as disease, were foremost. The improvement of public hygiene depended ultimately on the political will to provide the financial resources. However wrong-headed the science, the collection of information by doctors nevertheless contributed substantially to identifying the problems caused by rapid population growth, and to creating an informed opinion in favour of a solution which would markedly improve the quality of urban life and significantly reduce mortality.

Roger Price
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Gerrylynn K. Roberts and Philip Steadman, *American Cities and Technology: Wilderness to Wired City*. London: Routledge in association with the Open University Press, 1999. xii + 267pp. Illustrations, figures and tables. Select bibliographies. £16.99.

Gerrylynn K. Roberts (ed.), *The American Cities and Technology Reader: Wilderness to Wired City*. London: Routledge in association with the Open University Press, 1999. ix + 309pp. Illustrations, figures and tables. Select bibliographies. £16.99.

David Goodman and Colin Chant, *European Cities and Technology: Industrial to Post-Industrial City*. London: Routledge in association with the Open University Press, 1999, ix + 363pp. Illustrations, figures and tables. Select bibliographies. £16.99.

David Goodman (ed.), *The European Cities and Technology Reader: Industrial to Post-Industrial City*. London: Routledge in association with the Open University Press, 1999, xi + 305pp. Illustrations, figures and tables. Select bibliographies. £16.99.

Will this impressively presented package meet the needs of Open University students in search of a clear and readable introduction to a complex, interdisciplinary body of theoretical and empirical knowledge? The volume on the American city is undoubtedly more coherently organized and historiographically reliable than the collection devoted to industrial and post-industrial Europe. This may be related to issues of editorial control and division of historical labour. Gerrylynn Roberts, an experienced hand on projects of this kind, has written six out of eight of the American chapters, with the other two being highly competently handled by Philip Steadman. One might quibble with the sequence in which individual themes have been tackled – a chapter on building types and construction is slotted between two others on automobility and 'technologies of waste, water and pollution' and telecommunications is somewhat oddly placed immediately after a discussion of the '"car crisis" in the late twentieth century city'. But the general standard is high.

An outline chronology of American urbanization is clearly if somewhat cursorily established – two full-scale tables devoted to demographic change and the rank-ordering of cities between 1790 and 1990 are clearly presented and complemented by an inset on changing percentages of the non-agricultural labour force between 1840 and 1930. Roberts moves from transport to automobility, and then on to the built environment, methods of waste disposal and interactions between technology and governance. Spot-checks identified few gaps in terms of key references or additional reading and also revealed several themes more than slightly off the beaten track – refuse disposal, street cleaning, lighting and urban fires. However, in the hundred or so pages devoted to transport, Roberts and Steadman mention but then veer away from the technological determinants and social repercussions of road traffic accidents. Steadman's overview of the contemporary car crisis is nevertheless excellent, detailing considerably more than the average student will need to know and making pertinent use of graphs and tables. It is shown, for example, that, in terms of passenger miles between 1960 and 1990, American automobiles consistently accounted for well over 90 per cent of the aggregate while the train system failed to move above a miserable one hundredth (p. 210).

Roberts and Steadman's publishers and picture researchers have worked overtime on this volume. Whether depicting population distribution, the stately Gottlieb Daimler, plumbing contractors or the partially completed Empire State Building, *c*. 1930, illustrative material – as well as extended captions – complement and enrich the text. There is a particularly stunning early twentieth-century photograph of ranked masses of messenger boys on the steps of the Sub-Treasury Building on Nassau Street, New York (p. 249). Theoretical issues – and specifically debates centring on social constructivism and rival definitions of environmental history – are excluded. At a verbose extreme, Latour, Callon, Bijker *et al*. can seem impenetrably contorted. But the basic distinction between 'human' and 'non-human' actors is central to the ways in which American scholars are currently attempting to make sense of the evolution and social power relations embedded within the modern networked city. Analogously, students are kept ignorant of the major issues which divide 'agro-ecologists' from 'urban-environmentalists'.

It is difficult to be excessively enthusiastic about the volume devoted to the *Industrial to Post-Industrial City*. First, too many cooks have spoilt the historical broth. David Goodman and Colin Chant contribute the majority of linked articles on urban centres before and after 1870. But, from chapter six onwards, something seems to have gone structurally awry, with Nicholas Bullock handling relationships between technological change and everyday life in Berlin and 'new ways of building and government sponsorship' and Mark Clapson contributing a chapter on planning within the context of the development of Milton Keynes. These are good essays but it is difficult to see how in precise structural terms they are organically linked to what has gone before. In a third and somewhat tagged-on section, Colin Chant and Michael Bartholomew confront the issue of urban technology transfer via an analysis of Russia and colonial India. Second, and linked to the above criticisms, there is no Lampard-like overview – demographic, economic or political – of urban development since 1945. This creates the impression that the first 250 pages have been logically constructed from the nuts and bolts of the classic period of European urbanization but that the final hundred have been altogether less carefully planned. The quality of these later chapters is not in doubt but they belong to a separate – and necessarily separate – volume devoted to the post-industrial city. It is extraordinary that there is no concerted attempt at a working, typological definition of this key phrase.

Third, the early chapters are methodologically and historiographically flawed and therefore likely to communicate an oversimplified version of the current state of play in relation to debates about interactions between industrialization and urbanization from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century. David Goodman's decision to deploy two sets of inter-urban comparisons – Manchester and Glasgow and London and Paris – is a good one and evocative use is also made of concrete examples derived from the social and industrial histories of Middlesbrough and Merthyr Tydfil. Nevertheless, compared with Roberts' introductory chapter to the American volume, background demographic data is scant and compressed into two sourceless tables, the second of which purports to compare the populations of Liverpool, Glasgow, Manchester and Birmingham in 1775, 1801 and 1851. However, relevant data is said to be unavailable for three out of four of these centres for the first of the selected bench-mark years! (A glance at any one of several easily available eighteenth-century urban or demo-

graphic texts would have solved this problem.) The extent to which the industrial revolution really was 'revolutionary' is covered in a page and a half and supported, in terms of references, by a brief passage from Pat Hudson's *The Industrial Revolution* (1992) – an admirable source but not in itself sufficient for a distance-learning student preparing an essay on an exceptionally demanding topic. Finally, in this background chapter, there are difficulties attaching to the ubiquitous dilemma of technological determinism, which will not be clarified by the statement that 'a few towns (around twenty) were creations of the Industrial Revolution: new technology brought them into being from nothing, or almost nothing' (p. 3).

One further, among a cluster of historiographical issues, demands to be noted within the compass of a brief review. A majority of historians continue to focus on the 1870s as a crucial decade in terms of the emergence of a distinctively new phase of economic, technological and urban development in north-western Europe and north America. But the assumption that the term 'second industrial revolution' meaningfully elucidates these linked changes gives rise to precisely the same kinds of problems as uncritical reliance on the concept of a non-problematic Ashtonian transformation between the 1780s and the 1830s. Nevertheless, in his chapter on the 'second industrial revolution and modern urban planning', Colin Chant declares himself a true believer, concluding that since the 'second industrial revolution' hypothesis has been confirmed by three 'commentators of quite diverse historiographical persuasions', the case is irrefutably proven (p. 127). The historians in question turn out to be Eric Hobsbawm in the dated and flawed *Industry and Empire* (1969), David Landes in his classic, though now more than thirty-year-old *Unbound Prometheus* (1969) and D.S.L. Cardwell in the recent and professedly generalist *Fontana History of Technology* (1994).

Understanding of the interactions between urbanization and technology in the modern period depends on a suspension of conventional periodizations that have long underwritten economic and social history. These Open University volumes suggest that significantly greater theoretical and methodological progress has been made in the United States than Britain in terms of the development of a flexible approach to novel and hybrid themes. Those concerned with British cities may still be too heavily reliant on benchmarks that obscure rather than imaginatively frame hitherto largely unexamined urban-historical processes. In that sense, the time is ripe for creative desimplification – a difficult undertaking at a time when many of the old certainties and continuities have been discarded and economic history in particular has been plunged into methodological and institutional crisis. (There are signs that social history is now being forced to confront similar kinds of problems – the indirect legacy, perhaps, of a less than thoroughgoing 'theoretical revolution' which produced remarkably few revolutionary results.)

The readers which accompany these volumes are relevant, expertly edited and as user-friendly as one has come to expect.

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Malcolm Gee, Tim Kirk and Jill Stewards (eds), *The City in Central Europe: Culture and Society from 1800 to the Present*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999. xii + 276pp. 36 figures. Select bibliography. £49.50.

Central Europe as defined here was part of the German zone of cultural influence until 1945, and only Poland offers a distinctive tradition, to judge from David Crowley's exciting essay on changing portrayals of Wawel Hill in Krakow. The thirteen essays deal with culture, very broadly defined, in a number of big cities. Artistic, creative culture is the main focus, but mass culture and daily life make occasional appearances. A political dimension is often identified, but here again definitions are either broad, or blurred, or lacking. The focus on the large city does much to determine the emphasis on 'elite' culture, of course, but it would also have provided scope for more study of the 'kleiner Mann'.

Central Europe is here defined, in general terms, as Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Poland and the Baltic States. The editors' incisive 'introduction' unites the whole region in a most convincing way. Less convincing is the heavy emphasis on Vienna, with five of the thirteen essays dealing with that noted Paris rival. Jill Steward portrays the city as a leading centre of international tourism before 1914. The methods used to attract foreign tourists while retaining the flows of visitors from the provinces are especially interesting. Steven Beller's fascinating article, 'Big-city Jews', throws much light on ethnic and racial interaction in large cities. Vienna was, however, a special case, its success as an imperial capital relying partly on its capacity to attract minorities drawn from its distant and culturally disparate territories. The Jews, of whom there were 300,000 in Vienna by 1914, proved ready to assimilate but by retaining their cultural traditions, such as scholarship, hard work and artistic creativity, they became leaders in many spheres. Beller concludes, provocatively, that the Jews 'largely created the cultural world of Vienna around 1900'.

Tim Kirk shows how the Viennese Social Democrats, like those in Germany, developed a self-conscious working-class culture to rival that of the upper classes. Evening classes, publishing, libraries, sport, rallies and hobbies were all intended to give workers and their families a sense of identity and unity. There was a link with co-operative production, and a rejection of commercial entertainments and pastimes. Health and physical fitness were probably more important than Kirk indicates, and this reviewer further regrets that he devotes so much space to commercial entertainment facilities in Vienna, rather than to the rich variety of the Social Democrat programme.

After the First World War 'Red Vienna' became a political reality. The Social Democrat housing programme of the 1920s is well known, but Gerhard Melinz deals with a more insidious problem, the organization of unemployment relief during the world economic crisis of 1929–33. The Social Democrats were determined to act with their usual energy, but they came up against intractable financial problems and the complexity of Viennese society. Melinz stresses the growing split between skilled and unskilled workers, especially women, and the growing division between the federal state of Vienna and the increasingly rightist national government of Austria. Unemployment had been rising in the later 1920s owing to economies and cost-saving rationalization arising partly from Vienna's loss of its imperial capital status. In the early 1930s social benefits were reduced and many workers ceased to qualify. This deterioration gives Melinz the

chance to examine a wide range of alternative relief programmes and opportunities, semi-official and voluntary, which recall the pre-war years of self-help. However, with the Social Democrats struggling to economize at city hall, they lost much of the support of the masses. Tantalizingly, Melinz hints at a link with the rise of popular conservatism and fascism which contributed to the civil war of 1934 and the *Anschluss* of 1938.

Susan Zimmermann's discussion of prostitution in Vienna and Budapest between 1860 and 1920, like most work on this topic, tells us more about policy and bourgeois morality than it does about the workforce. All her working girls are in dire poverty and many are unemployed. The possibility that prostitution might be associated with sexual desire and convention, middle- and upper-class demand, and the prospect of high earnings, scarcely dawns on the author. Pabst's evocative Vienna-set film, *Die freudlose Gasse* (1925), with its overtones of prostitution, is not mentioned. Standard charges for services and weekly incomes, often cited in the courts, do not figure here. Super-rich courtesans, who were notoriously abundant in Vienna, are not allowed to leaven the lump. Zimmermann nevertheless conveys some valuable information on the development of social welfare policies towards prostitutes, with prejudice and crude moralizing on the way out by 1920. Overall the article tells us almost nothing about women, but a great deal about official (male) attitudes. This, we are told, is an example of 'the new women's history'.

Three further essays deal with Berlin, a city twice the size of Vienna but with a smaller artistic reputation. Malcolm Gee portrays the Berlin art world at its peak, between 1918 and 1933, when modernism and expressionism throve in the climate of distorted realism and political chaos which followed the First World War. Gee is concerned more with organization than output, but his account provides a valuable background to the painting and sculpture of the period. Anthony McElligott pursues the theme of 'fastest city on earth' mentioned by Gee (p. 65). However, his study of Walter Ruttmann's pioneer 'city symphony', *Berlin, die Symphonie einer Grossstadt* (1927), tells us more about Germany's growing street traffic than it does about the film. For the record, Figure 12.6 is a publicity montage, not a still from the film. Sabine Jaccaud's *Wim Wenders and Berlin* has a contemporary focus, making some very interesting connections between the past, memory and reconstruction.

Architecture and planning figure in two essays. Matthew Jefferies' piece on the creation of a new, self-conscious architecture for Hamburg between 1900 and 1918 associates culture, architecture and politics through the writings of the SPD supporter, Paul Bröcker, friend of the architect, Fritz Höger. Jan Pavitt follows with the impressive flowering of the Modern Movement in Czechoslovakia between the wars. She presents Czech prowess in architecture and planning as the product of a strong middle class with its commitment to democratic modernism, and the economic success which provided work for the best modern architects.

Urban networks inspire two essays. Robin Lenman's study of German art centres before 1914 shows how provincial capitals strove to retain their traditional artistic roles within the new Empire. With art academies thriving in many cities such as Dresden and Munich, distinguished schools of painting sprang up all over Germany, attracting hordes of students and buyers. Artists' colonies were numerous by 1914, and some attracted crowds of tourists. Tourism, mobility and the growth of the international art market meant that German art remained

highly localized throughout the century, despite the gradual emergence of Berlin as a national capital of art after 1850.

Ludá Klusáková's ambitious survey of towns and their cultural institutions in the non-Germanic part of central Europe between 1750 and 1900 is the closest to pure urban history that this volume can provide. She reminds us that Absolutism did much to shape the towns and their culture before 1800, with the urban middle classes extending this older tradition thereafter.

In this superbly edited volume every page offers something of interest. However, with ten out of the thirteen essays dealing with Germanic countries, the overall impression of homogeneity may be predetermined. Would a fuller investigation of the eastern regions and the Baltic states produce a similar picture?

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Sharon Marcus, *Apartment Stories: City and Home in Nineteenth-Century Paris and London*. London and Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999. x + 323pp. 24 illustrations. No price stated.

Within urban modernity there was, according to Marcus, a direct female equivalent of the male *flâneur*. In nineteenth-century Parisian apartment blocks the female *portière*, a live-in caretaker, was an almost universal presence, collecting the rents, performing light housekeeping duties and responding to tenants' problems whenever the bell was rung. Just as the *flâneur* subjected the city's streets to his masculine gaze, so too was the *portière* able to subject the domestic realm of the apartment to her feminine observation. The two figures, slipping between their literary and real existences, thus complemented one another, ensuring the characters of the private and the public were open to the same degree of categorization in the city's *physiologie*, *tableaux* or catalogue: 'It's our *portière*,/Who knows all, who sees,/Hears all, is everywhere' (p. 47).

But to reconfirm these dichotomies of public and private is not Marcus' project. In her analysis of the literary, architectural and social investigative representations of the city home in the early Victorian period she aims to 'bring to light the domesticity of Parisian urbanism and the urbanism of London's domesticity' (p. 4). The significance of the apartment block was that it was built as part of the city, with shops often underneath people's homes and with the streets of the city literally coming right up and into the apartment. The private was therefore not conceptualized as distinct from the public and whereas the gaze of the *flâneur* might or might not stop at the street, the *portière* ensured the same transparency to domestic human intercourse as that which occurred outside.

However, in the 1850s French architects turned away from planning a continuum between home and street life, and looked to the domestic ideals of London suburban living, which sought to distinguish clearly the homes of the middle classes from the public sphere. Although Marcus argues that practical considerations prevented any English family from really living a life which matched the domestic ideal, the emphasis on separate spheres was incorporated into Parisian architecture so that the urban reforms of Haussmann enclosed many previously open public spaces (street sellers into shops), zoned the city into residential and commercial quarters, and separated the home from the street

through the building of the large-scale boulevards. This process of 'interiorization' was consciously designed to transform Parisian life from one of 'transparency' to 'enclosure', whereby men would return to the home and be morally and physically regenerated to the good of the nation. As an ideal this too failed and many literary works of the time commented on the consequences for those who tried to live their lives from entirely within the domestic interior, separated from the wider social networks of the streets beyond the apartment block.

It is a plausible argument and one that posits a change in the lived realities of ordinary Parisians from the July Monarchy to the Second Empire. Yet Marcus' argument is overtly culturalist dealing principally (as she points out in a rather tortuous introduction) with discourses and representation. *Apartment Stories* will therefore not satisfy those wishing for an interpretation of the apartment dweller's experiences of these discursive shifts and they might express surprise that Marcus' interpretation of transparency and interiority rests principally on a reading of Balzac's *Le Cousin Pons* and Zola's *Pot-Bouille* respectively. Readers ought also be made aware that despite the subtitle, London is only dealt with in one chapter and then the argument on the inachievability of the domestic ideal is constructed through a reading of the haunted house genre of popular fiction. Moreover, Marcus is certainly no materialist and there is little in her book on the economic and the physically constraining factors which might have explained housing development.

However, *Apartment Stories* does offer a highly imaginative reading of a wide variety of texts, a comprehensive list of footnotes demonstrating Marcus' familiarity with mid-Victorian representations of domestic life. And, given that she is dealing with the separate spheres ideology, a subject very much the construct of cultural discourse, her archival material is well chosen and her problematization of the boundaries between public and private complements a growing and necessary literature. Her detailed readings of texts is also, at times, excellent and she offers convincing interpretations of the changing relationship between the home and the street that historians of a less literary persuasion will want to test and investigate further. *Apartment Stories* is therefore a welcome and important addition to our understandings of urban history.

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Heather Shore, *Artful Dodgers. Youth and Crime in Early Nineteenth-Century London*. London: Royal Historical Society, Boydell Press, 1999. xiii + 193pp. 13 tables. Bibliography. £35.00.
Michael Lavalette (ed.), *A Thing of the Past? Child Labour in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999. x + 278pp. 5 figures. 20 tables. Bibliography. £14.95 pbk.

Is childhood a 'walled garden' or a 'prison'; a 'world of freedom and opportunity' or one of 'confinement and limitation' (see B. Goldson, ''Childhood'': an introduction to historical and theoretical analyses', in P. Scraton (ed.), *'Childhood' in 'Crisis'?* (London, 1997), 1–27, esp. 2)? The vexed conceptualization of childhood underlies both Shore, *Artful Dodgers* and Lavalette, *A Thing of the Past?* The cultural fear induced by children breaking through discursive structures on

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childhood to replicate 'adult' behaviour emerges clearly in *Artful Dodgers*. Here, Shore analyses with scholarly precision the social, political and legal processes, whereby juvenile delinquency became defined as a major social problem in the early nineteenth century. She demonstrates that the increasing tendency to indict young offenders, combined with a greater recourse towards custodial sentences, summary judgements and transportation, drew children into the criminal justice system on a hitherto unprecedented level. This created an almost self-fulfilling prophecy as to the criminality of young, working-class law-breakers. The professional preoccupation with the figure of the delinquent also reinforced the anxieties of the middle-class reading public, already highly sensitized to the spectre of an ill-educated, dirty and infectious working class roaming out of control in the sprawling capital. In effect, however, the majority of children were convicted for petty offences, typically for pickpocketing. Indeed, in contrast to the contemporary stereotype of a 'criminal career', most young offenders were active (if underemployed) members of the economy, finding work when and where they could as labourers, errand-boys, servants and, occasionally, apprentices. Frequently struggling to maintain a basic standard of living in a shifting and fractured metropolitan economy, juvenile law-breakers, notes Shore, should be analysed within the context of plebeian survival strategies (which Anna Davin's excellent study of childhood in working-class London has also highlighted so clearly: Davin, *Growing Up Poor. Home, School and Street in London 1870–1914* (London, 1996)).

Despite Shore's careful attention to the discursive and cultural dimensions to her subject, one of the book's central agendas is to give these children their own voice. Certainly Shore's assiduous research forms a respectful tribute to the various troubled, frightened, cheeky or belligerent young people whose stories colourfully emerge during the book, and who were subject to, yet never uniquely defined by, a punitive and highly insensitive legislative system. Despite some harrowing accounts (one thinks of the 'dreadfully distressed' Joseph Harwood awaiting the death penalty in his cell) the author's skilful handling of her material forestalls any sentimentality. This is a succinct book, and at times one might wish for greater contextualization. Shore's analysis of the attitudes towards child punishment and reformation might have been further enhanced by placing her discussion within the context of contemporary debates on the nature of childhood and conflicting debates on child-rearing. Similarly, the author's perspective comments on the diverse nature of plebeian masculinities might have been better rooted within the emergent literature on this theme; and her account of transportation and compulsory emigration might have been extended to explore this interesting, yet often neglected facet of colonial ideologies. However, these comments are as much driven by the questions the book prompts, as they are by any inherent weaknesses in the text itself.

Debates over juvenile delinquency could easily become refracted on to other aspects of child behaviour, as Lavalette's edited collection on child labour makes apparent. *A Thing of the Past?* brings together some of the leading scholars and professionals in the field of child employment. The book's eclectic combination of chapters cleverly counterpoises historical research into child labour in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with essays discussing recent sociological and psychological insights. It highlights the shifting patterns of the marginalization and exploitation of child labour across the period (although the

omission of children working in the sex industry is surprising) and points to many telling continuities – not least persistent governmental apathy and legislative inadequacy. The contributors present sometimes conflicting analyses – a deliberate strategy on the part of the editor. To pick just one (and perhaps the most obvious) example, the views presented by Ben Whitney (an employee of Staffordshire Education Authority) in chapter 10, that child employment is largely a benign phenomenon from which the majority of children benefit, is strikingly at odds with the analyses presented by Michael Lavalette and Madeleine Leonard. For Lavalette, 'Child labour is at heart a problem of exploitation under capitalism' (p. 253). However, the full benefits of incorporating these divergent perceptions might have been better reaped by a somewhat lighter editorial touch, for Lavalette's numerous contributors tend to dominate the text. Considering that many of his arguments have already appeared elsewhere (for example, M. Lavalette, *Child Employment in the Capitalist Labour Market* (Aldershot, 1994; idem, 'Thatcher's working children: contemporary issues of child labour', in J. Pilcher and S. Wagg, *Thatcher's Children? Politics, Childhood and Society in the 1980s and 1990s* (London, 1996), 172–201) this seems unnecessary, and perhaps concluding comments from an 'external' author would have brought greater freshness to the project.

In common with Heather Shore, many of the book's contributors emphasize the need to listen to children's voices in this debate. However, children are curiously silent in *A Thing of the Past?* This is a pity. Many of the chapters are overviews, either of existing literature or of a broad chronological sweep (see for example chapters 2, 7 and 8) and, whilst valuable, might have gained greater saliency by the incisiveness which first-hand accounts can bring. More importantly, the perspectives of children and young people are vital for intellectual reasons, namely the issue of agency. A number of the chapters portray child employment as an insidious tool of capitalism, pointing in particular to the egregious levels of pay, poor standards of health and safety, lack of regulation and long hours which feature in many trades and industries. Whilst it is clear that significant numbers of children are working in clearly inappropriate environments and conditions, greater quantitative and qualitative evidence on sectoral distribution (in addition to the citation of 'worst case scenarios', see p. 249) would have been welcome. The majority of child employees are to be found in delivery work (usually newspapers), shop work and babysitting. Whilst these have their own health and safety implications, and occasionally a knock-on effect in lowering adult wages (see Lavalette, *Child Employment*, ch. 5), we need to have a much clearer understanding of children's own attitude towards such employment – their experiences and motivations – and not automatically consign all child workers to the status of pawns within a complex economic and cultural system. The attention paid by a number of the contributors to gender and class variables are clearly important in this context, although, once again, some claims warrant greater substantiation. For example, Lavalette's comment that children might express a desire to work so as to avoid 'hunger or starvation' (p. 250) requires fuller explication. In a consumer-driven culture, the wish to prohibit children from acting as economic agents, might well be construed by the subjects themselves as confinement to a very thorny 'garden' indeed.

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Gavin Stamp and Sam McInstry (eds). *'Greek' Thomson*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994; pbk 1999. xvi + 249pp. 11 colour plates. 183 figures. Bibliography. £19.95 pbk.

This book, first published in 1994, was the first major effort of the Alexander Thomson Society (founded 1991) to focus attention on Glasgow's second most celebrated architect after C.R. Mackintosh. Mackintosh has been the subject of exhaustive documentation and widespread adulation. Thomson by contrast, though admired and respected during his relatively short career, 1849–75, and immediately thereafter, has during the twentieth century been short of promoters. Albert Richardson was one, as Gavin Stamp points out here, and Sir John Summerson's brief appreciation, written for this book, was inspired by Richardson. Otherwise Andor Gomme and David Walker's *Architecture of Glasgow* (1968) devoted a chapter to Thomson, while Ronald McFadzean's monograph (1979) charted his life and work.

The challenge to Stamp and McInstry was to enlarge public understanding of Thomson without falling into an uncritical enthusiasm which would tend to diminish understanding. The book they have edited, consisting of 17 essays by 16 authors, does not wholly avoid this pitfall; but in several ways it does push forward knowledge of Thomson's achievement. In particular it draws attention to his impressively cogent architectural theory, expressed principally in his Haldane lectures, delivered in 1874, the year before his death. There are also important chapters on his domestic interiors and furniture.

One whole section is devoted to Thomson's urbanism. This is, however, rather uneven and tantalizing. The most meaty of the three essays, by Brian Edwards, is focused on the Glasgow Improvement Scheme of 1866, which laid down the guidelines for the redevelopment of the city centre slums under the influence of Haussmann's Paris. Edwards shows how Thomson's ideas on city development were out of sympathy with this scheme, and that as a result he lost opportunities to participate effectively in the city centre redevelopment.

John McKean, like Edwards, discusses Thomson's alternative idea for building workmen's tenements as a series of paired four-storey terraces protected by glazed galleria-like roofs, an idea which remained on paper. McKean also discusses this and several of Thomson's most famous buildings, the Egyptian Halls, St Vincent Street church and Moray Place, in relation to Glasgow's character as a city. Mark Baines analyses the vocabulary of Thomson's architecture. Both these essays are attempts at interpretation, not much concerned with the realities of development and planning control in Glasgow in the 1850s and 1860s.

These essays suggest that there is room for a full-scale study of Thomson's buildings not as individual monuments or stylistic statements, but as contributions to his concept of a modern city. With the loss of so much primary documentation, in particular Thomson's office papers and drawings, this will not be easy. But Thomson was a prolific architect, working almost exclusively in and around Glasgow, and there is clearly much more to be discovered about his relationships with planners and speculators and his own role as a developer.

The present book is a paperbook reprint of the 1994 publication. It is regrettable that the opportunity has not been taken to correct misprints or to bring the bibliography up to date.

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Jan Palmowski, *Urban Liberalism in Imperial Germany: Frankfurt am Main, 1866–1914*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. xiv + 391pp. 6 figures. 9 tables. 2 appendices. Bibliography. £50.00.

The notion of the 'unpolitical German', espoused most eloquently by Ralf Dahrendorf in the 1960s, has long since been rejected by historians as a model for understanding the politics of the *Kaiserreich* at the national or regional levels. It has, however, survived rather longer as a concept that historians are willing to apply to German municipal government. In this context it is often stated that overt politicization did not occur until the 1890s or even the 1900s, prior to which time, the local notables (*Honoratioren*) who held urban office were either dignitaries above party strife or expert administrators who did not believe that politics had any place in the town hall. The natural corollary of this, that German municipal corporations were apolitical realms, is a notion that this book sets out to challenge head on through the example of Frankfurt, the one-time capital of the German Confederation and a rich conurbation of prominence and standing.

According to Jan Palmowski, far from being 'unpolitical', this was a city where the local progressive Liberals and their rivals, the Democrats, had been in contention with each other since the mid-1850s. It was also a city where the adverse experience of the Wars of Unification had produced, during the late 1860s, a marked heightening in political awareness. As a result, from the very earliest days of the *Kaiserreich*, local government in Frankfurt was marked by vigorous political activity. In municipal elections, left liberals of various affiliations used the unwelcome annexation of the city by Prussia and the consequent need to promote Frankfurt's distinctiveness as a means of distinguishing themselves from their electoral rivals in the pro-government National Liberal Party. Having achieved success with this strategy at the polls, they used their new political positions both to battle for the maintenance of local autonomy against an interfering Prussian state and also to promote essential liberal causes such as non-denominational primary schools. According to Palmowski the political experience gained from these battles was vital to Frankfurt's left liberals as it helped them to face two new challenges: the emergence of opposition *Mittelstand* groups as a result of the fragmentation of the middle class; and the emergence of the opposition Social Democrats through the radicalization of the working class. In the traditional historiography, it is often stated that these two developments politicized an otherwise 'unpolitical' local government. Palmowski maintains otherwise, contending that Frankfurt liberals would not have been able to meet these new and formidable challenges had they not already been politicized and, thus, been in possession of the sophisticated political awareness necessary for this purpose. It was this pre-existing experience, for example, that gave the liberals the deftness and acumen to adopt a rhetoric of social concern with which to counter the appeal of the SPD, while at the same time advocating policies explicitly designed to favour those on middling incomes. This latter group benefited most from municipal spending and municipal taxation codes; not entirely coincidentally, they also formed a core segment of the urban electorate, one that the liberals had to win to maintain their position in local government.

On the basis of evidence such as that described above, Palmowski is very successful at making the case for Frankfurt's early politicization. He is on weaker ground, however, when it comes to extrapolating from Frankfurt's experience to

make judgements about Germany as a whole. The book regularly propounds the idea, as exemplified by a typical quote from p. 250, that 'there is no reason why the basic assumptions . . . in Frankfurt should have been different in other cities'. While this is certainly plausible, it is hardly proven. Until Palmowski's work on Frankfurt is duplicated for an extensive range of other cities, the paradigm he proposes must remain confined to one locality. However, in that context it is wholly convincing.

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David O. Stowell, *Streets, Railroads, and the Great Strike of 1877*. London and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999. xii + 181pp. 14 figures. Bibliography. £11.95 pbk.

Straddling an historiographical intersection where labour history and urban history converge, Stowell's study of the Great Strike makes useful linkages between hitherto discrete bodies of scholarship and suggests useful ways of reconceptualizing the relationship between labour unrest and the spatial organization of American cities. Taking their lead from Marx, who saw in the upheavals of 1877 a working-class revolt which grew out of workplace antagonisms between labour and capital, most labour historians have characterized the Great Strike as simply a job action, albeit a job action with revolutionary overtones, precipitated by wage cuts in the railroad industry. As a corollary of this, they have tended to assume that the crowds which took to the streets in 1877 were made up of striking railroad workers together with other groups of wage labourers acting in support of the railroad brotherhoods or seeking redress for workplace grievances of their own. Arguing that this view of events detaches workers from the cities in which they lived, Stowell constructs an alternative analytical framework that shifts attention from the workshops and factories of industrializing America to the larger urban milieu in which the Great Strike played itself out.

For Stowell, the origins of the urban disorder of 1877 lay as much in the physical relationship between the railroads and the streets as in the job-related grievances of industrial workers. Drawing upon newspapers, city directories, common council records and contemporary street maps, he examines the ways in which railroad construction in the 1870s transformed the urban environment in Syracuse, Albany and Buffalo, three medium-sized cities in upstate New York. City streets in the late nineteenth century were heterogeneous public spaces used by different groups of urban residents for a wide range of social and economic activities. The railroads, Stowell argues, had a profoundly disruptive impact upon them, killing and injuring hundreds of pedestrians each year and threatening the survival of small businesses by impeding the free flow of traffic. Prior to 1877, city dwellers from across the social spectrum had banded together to oppose railroad encroachment upon their communities through legal means but had made little headway. The strike of railroad workers that began in July 1877 gave them the opportunity to vent their frustrations. Where spatial arrangements permitted, as in Buffalo where the railroad industry was a particularly visible presence in the urban core, crowds made up of women, boys and small business

owners as well as male wage earners attacked railroad property and stopped trains, often in the face of opposition from striking railroad workers. In so doing, Stowell concludes, they transformed what had begun as a strike over bread-and-butter issues into a much wider protest against capitalist industrialization as it was experienced on the city streets.

Exhaustively researched and persuasively argued, this is an important piece of scholarship. By placing the Great Strike in the context of an ongoing struggle over the use of city streets, Stowell opens up new ways of thinking about the process of industrialization and the responses it provoked both inside and outside the workplace. Just as importantly, by transforming the streets from the crudely painted backdrop to the upheavals of 1877 into a key component in his 'interpretive scaffolding', he reminds historians that strikes cannot be understood independently of the internal dynamics of the urban spaces in which they take place.

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S.C. Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture in Southwark c. 1880–1939*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. xi + 206pp. 1 map. £40.00.

This study in the Oxford Historical Monographs series explores the religious attitudes of the people of Southwark, the borough often dismissed as a place of 'spiritual desolation' in the words of Bishop Thorold of Rochester. The author writes with notable clarity, tackling a complex subject with subtlety, and making judicious and entertaining use of 29 oral interviews with elderly inhabitants of south London.

The first chapter delineates the scope of the exercise as an investigation of 'inward spiritual graces', difficult as they are to discern. The whole study is posited on the assumption that popular religion is more than 'a corrupt version of orthodoxy'. Christian orthodoxy, indeed, still had a part in popular religion, as is shown in later chapters.

Urban historians might well find the account of the Metropolitan Borough of Southwark in the second chapter of especial interest. It was chiefly residential throughout the period under review, except for a narrow strip of industry and commerce by the Thames. In the particular context of this subject it is interesting to discover that Southwark had few immigrants from abroad, even from Ireland. The sense of local community was strong, centred on the pub, the music hall, and churches and chapels.

Subsequent chapters explore many fascinating issues. Urban folk religion was, without doubt, quasi-magical, but it was based on much more than simple luck and superstition, and it was certainly not pagan. Participation in worship in church or chapel was occasional, usually for rites of passage, and, interestingly, often on New Year's Eve. A chapter on 'the ideal of the true believer' paints a skilful picture of what people in Southwark considered to be an orthodox Christian and explains why most of them were unable to change their lifestyles to attain this perfection. They were not slow, however, to detect hypocrisy in clerical and lay members of the church. Most people participated vicariously in institutional religion by sending their children to Sunday School – and that not

simply to get rid of them for an hour on Sunday afternoon – and by keeping Sunday as a special day, often marked by hymn singing at home. The final chapter challenges the widespread belief that the bulk of urban dwellers in these 60 years were indifferent to Christianity. A general theism, perhaps akin to Reinhold Niebuhr's 'primary religion', with a distinct Christian flavour, co-existed with 'survivals of semi-pagan magic'.

The author succeeds in her aim of re-evaluating the concept of secularization, using a very wide definition of religion. It would be splendid if she were to turn now to a study of popular religion in Southwark in the 60 years since 1939. Anglican baptisms in the diocese of Southwark are now the lowest in England in proportion to population, except for those in the diocese of London, which indicates that participation in liturgical rites of passage has declined sharply, but doubtless superstition and luck flourish still in Southwark, with horoscopes consulted with varying degrees of conviction and fingers crossed for a lottery win.

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Nigel J. Morgan and Annette Pritchard, *Power and Politics at the Seaside: The Development of Devon's Resorts in the Twentieth Century*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1999. ix + 243pp. £45.00.

I begin by declaring an interest: I examined Nigel Morgan's doctoral thesis on the Devon seaside resorts, which provides the evidential core for chapters 4–6 of this book, subsequently encouraging him to publish from it and advising on the process. The outcome goes substantially beyond anything I could have envisaged originally, however: Morgan's post-thesis career has been in local tourism management (including a stint attempting to revive the failing fortunes of the Welsh resort of Barry Island), and then as an academic in the emergent discipline of tourism studies. His co-author, Annette Pritchard, is firmly grounded in this latter academic territory, and this makes for a particularly fruitful approach to the issues surrounding the heyday, widespread decline and (in some cases) incipient revival of the English (and, importantly, Welsh) seaside resort in the twentieth century. To an unusual extent, this book shows awareness of the parallel literatures both of the social history of tourism and leisure, and of the mix of economics, anthropology, geography and cultural studies (including the new cultural geography) which provides the dominant influences on tourism studies. An important part of the authors' agenda involves making tourism studies aware of the importance of history, emphasizing as they do the deep roots of practices and conflicts which are often treated as having been discovered or invented in a post-war or post-1970s efflorescence of something unreliably labelled 'mass tourism'. But the ideas should also travel in the opposite direction, making historians more aware of the importance of tourism and the issues it raises.

The themes Morgan and Pritchard choose to emphasize are of particular interest to urban historians. They are interested in the politics of space, image and 'social tone' in this important and distinctive kind of town, and they pursue historians' questions about conflict and consensus, community and change

through archivally-rooted (and very thoroughly researched) case studies in the contrasting settings of Torquay, Ilfracombe and (as an extreme example of carefully-safeguarded selectness and gentility) Sidmouth. Above all they explore conflicts between resort interest-groups over what kinds of visitor to attract and cater for, and how much to spend on promoting the holiday industries, over a period during which the wider political, economic, cultural and financial framework went through significant changes, in which local government, whose importance they rightly acknowledge and emphasize, was at the forefront. After overview chapters reviewing a broadly-defined and extensive literature and surveying general trends at the British seaside in the twentieth century, Morgan and Pritchard settle into their Devon case study, with chapters on 'social tone', advertising and image-building, and entertainment provision, before revisiting their initial questions in the conclusion.

This is a well-constructed, original and sustained analysis which should interest a wide range of readerships across several disciplines. The Devon case study bears some of the stigmata of the original doctoral thesis, but the exposition is always clear and accessible, without ducking complex issues. I have a few reservations on specific issues. It is surprising that no attention is given to the extensive literature in tourism studies on the so-called 'resort cycle', if only to dismiss it. The statistics of tourist industries are notoriously 'soft', and too much credence is given to them here, especially where visitor numbers and spending patterns are concerned. The terminology of 'mass' tourism, sometimes with and sometimes without inverted commas, would benefit from more sustained interrogation. There are a few little local difficulties. The resort map on p. 35 places Bridlington on Flamborough Head, Cleethorpes on Spurn Head and (much more confusingly) Barry Island on Lundy Island. Some of the Scottish inclusions and exclusions might appear eccentric, too. The rail passenger figures on p. 71 work out at surprisingly low averages (did fewer than a hundred people a day really arrive at Torquay in 1913, for example?) and (through no fault of the authors) give no indication of seasonal variations. On p. 90 Exmouth's 4,000 day trippers per year in about 1900 also seem remarkably few. Are there hidden assumptions behind these figures? On p. 101 Blackpool's pioneering role in the municipal advertising of resorts is accurately presented as far as it goes, but the context of the town's unique power to levy an advertising rate, granted anomalously in 1879, needs to be emphasized. But these are small matters in the context of the whole enterprise, and this is a very good book whose efforts to pull together disparate constituencies merit high praise.

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