

Reviews of books

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Hinnerk Bruhns and Wilfried Nippel (eds), *Max Weber und die Stadt im Kulturvergleich*, Kritische Studien zur Geschichtswissenschaft, vol. 140. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000. 201pp. DM49.
DOI: 10.1017/S096392680321110X

Mention the name Weber to an English student of modern urban history, and he or she is as likely to think of Adna Ferrin as of Max. The influence of Max Weber's *The City*, during the 80 years since its publication, is uncertain, as several essays in this volume indicate. Even the more modest claim that Weber was 'the founder of modern urban research in Germany' (*Urban History Yearbook*, 1981, p. 41) might be questioned. Nevertheless, Weber's text remains important as an ambitious experiment in comparative history, and well worth greater attention. The purpose of this volume, which originated in a 1997 conference in Berlin, is to examine *The City* in the context of the rest of Weber's *oeuvre*, to reconstruct the state of research at the time when the text was written, and to ask how well do Weber's analytical categories stand up in the light of current knowledge? The ten essays together manage to achieve most of these objectives, albeit sometimes in a roundabout and discursive way.

There is no editorial introduction. Instead, one editor, Nippel, contributes an interesting essay on the genesis and reception of Weber's text and the structure of his argument, while his fellow editor, Bruhns, traces those elements in Weber's other work which influenced *The City*. In general, urban historians have paid most attention to the typology presented in the first section of the book, where Weber plumps for an economic definition of a city. However, one of the clearest points to emerge from this volume is that Weber's interest was not with the city *per se*, still less with 'urbanism' or the process of urbanization. Instead, Weber was concerned with the city as the locus of a fundamental social process – namely the emergence of a bourgeoisie. Thus the text lay at the heart of Weber's lifelong inquiry into the origins of capitalism. Weber's central question was why, given the prevalence of cities in antiquity and in Asia, did an 'economically rational' bourgeoisie only first appear in the medieval European city. Characteristically, his methodology was to construct ideal urban types and draw generalized comparisons, and he found his answer in a mixture of religious, political and economic factors. Only with the occidental medieval city, Weber argued, did the notion of the town as a corporate body of free individuals become established. The foundation for this was the emergence of the oath-bound fraternity (*conjuratio*), based, in turn, upon the Pauline ideal of Christian fellowship. This formed the origin of constitutional

urban government and provided the social cohesion and civic unity missing in clan- and caste-ridden Asian cities, dominated by autocratic rulers, and in the patrimonial cities of antiquity dominated by bureaucratic and military interests and by archaic institutions such as debt slavery. Within Weber's categories, the medieval Italian city-states, with their long-distance trade, territorial ambitions and military power, remained closer to the cities of antiquity, than did the towns of northern Europe, whose function was more purely economic and entrepreneurial. The limits placed by powerful states on the political expansion of cities north of the Alps helped displace the energies of their burghers into commerce and manufacture, thus sowing the seeds of modern capitalism. While the citizen of the ancient city had remained *homo politicus*, during the Middle Ages in north-western Europe he or she became *homo economicus*.

The remainder of the essays in this volume explore several of these themes in the context of current research. Breuer discusses the meaning of Weber's notion of legitimacy, while Colognesi investigates the limited connections between Weber's agrarian sociology and *The City*. Schmeller follows up Weber's reference to the 'day in Antioch' – when Paul, in opposition to Peter, espoused fellowship with the uncircumcised – and offers a exegesis on this defining event. Other essays deal with Weber's treatment of the Greek *polis* and Russian, Indian, Chinese and medieval occidental cities. Judged by the standards of today's scholarship, Weber's analysis of the Indian city displays the most shortcomings. Mann's essay reveals, for instance, that Weber's account of Indian religiosity was largely adopted uncritically from Imperial British texts. Nevertheless, in general, the quality of Weber's history stands up well to modern scrutiny.

Some of this, admittedly, is for Weber scholars in particular, rather than for urban historians in general. Moreover, Weber's grand scheme of socio-economic change across millennia, and his heuristic use of ideal city types and stage theories of development, may prove unfashionable in an age when great unifying discourses have been widely rejected. Nevertheless, most contributors to this volume conclude that Weber's reflections on the genesis of the western bourgeoisie are not obsolete, and they argue forcefully that his comparative approach to cultural and urban history remains a valuable model for others to follow.

Robin Pearson

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S.R. Epstein (ed.), *Town and Country in Europe, 1300–1800*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. xi + 343pp. 17 figures. 13 tables. £45.00. DOI: 10.1017/S0963926803221106

This useful and informative book brings together 13 essays on different parts of Europe by expert authors, most of whom cover their territory's town–country relations from the late Middle Ages until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For England and the Netherlands there are two contributions, in each case one early and the other late, and Italy is divided geographically between the south and north. The essays are prefaced by the editor's introductory essay which poses crucial questions in an incisive and challenging fashion. His premise is that for all of the uncertainties, not least the difficulty of distinguishing urban from rural, and in assessing the size of the urban sector, the relations between town and country

are central to our understanding of the late medieval and early modern economy. Subjects still under debate include whether it was the urban or the rural sector which played the main part in promoting economic growth; the importance of political coercion, rather than market forces, in precipitating innovation; and the significance for the economy of political relations between the state and the town: did urban autonomy help or hinder economic change?

Epstein is a keen protagonist of the view that political coercion and state policy were moving forces behind the economy in this period, and presumably he advised his distinguished team of contributors to address these issues for each country and period to which they were assigned. They all pay some attention to the editor's agenda, though they rightly reflect their local historical traditions and preoccupations. So the contribution on Germany has much to say about central place theory, and the essay on Switzerland clings to institutional definitions of towns as places with charters and autonomous government.

They all attempt to draw a line between town and country, and to make a judgement of their relative importance by assessing the proportion of the population living in towns. The estimates of the percentage of town dwellers varies between 5 per cent in Sweden in c. 1500, to 45 per cent in Holland in 1514, which rose in that province to above 50 per cent after 1550. The figure often hovers around the 20 per cent mark, and in parts of eastern Europe, such as Prussia and the Czech lands, can be calculated in the sixteenth century as high as 25–27 per cent. The figures are not always comparable, as the urban threshold is not always consistently defined. Urbanization had often occurred before the period covered by these essays, so that the urban percentage did not necessarily increase greatly in the early modern period.

On the role of the state, England stands out as an exception. Although markets were chartered, and sometimes prohibited in the vicinity of large towns, and although monopolies were created under Elizabeth, in general the market was not dominated by the coercive power of towns or the state. The powers of municipal governments did not extend far beyond the town gates. On the continent, however, towns often possessed trading monopolies, and on occasion they restricted rural markets, suppressed rural industry, forced food to be brought in to their markets, and prohibited the sales of wool to any but their own merchants.

There are inevitable doubts about the effectiveness of these restrictions, and a number of authors point to the difficulty of enforcement, the competition between authorities, and the disputes between one town and another, which made controls ineffective. But for all of the reservations, Epstein's belief that coercion influenced the economy finds a good deal of support. The debate about whether the independent town or the princely state was most conducive to economic growth continues – in northern Italy, the transition from the city-state to the regional state damaged the urban economies, while in Castile it is thought that urban autonomy helped to prevent market integration.

One of the most useful insights to emerge from these essays is the variety of contacts that can be identified between town and country. These range from the obvious connections of trade, migration and credit, to the purchase of land by townspeople (and in Germany acquisition of land by the town as a corporation), the co-ordination of rural industry by urban entrepreneurs, and the extension of urban institutional privileges to country dwellers as outburghers. The focus of the

book is on economic connections, and more could have been made of the social, cultural and religious links which often had economic implications.

This is a collection of essays of high quality, skilfully co-ordinated by the editor, which will both encourage new thinking, and serve as a work of reference.

Christopher Dyer

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Susan Naquin, *Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400–1900*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000. xxxv + 816pp. 9 tables. 8 maps. 43 figures. Bibliography. \$80.00 hbk.
DOI: 10.1017/S0963926803231102

Between 1403 and 1911, when it was the capital of China, Peking was served by at least 2,500 temples, only a very few of which survive today. This study explores the roles these temples (Buddhist and Daoist establishments, as well as mosques and Christian churches) played in Peking's history: how they attracted imperial patronage, provided sojourners with the spiritual comforts of home, brought city residents together for a variety of purposes, and contributed to a local urban identity that survived Peking's loss of 'imperial' status in the early twentieth century.

Naquin is not the first to analyse city life in pre-modern China through a study of religious institutions. Several influential articles in *The City in Late Imperial China*, the seminal work in Chinese urban history (ed. G. William Skinner, 1977), took up the question of how urban communities were sustained by common religious practices and the institutions that organized them. But Naquin's work is of an entirely different magnitude. Monumental is the best word to describe it. With 700 pages of extremely well-documented text (plus another 100 for appendices, bibliography and glossary-index), *Peking* is a record of one of the most impressive research projects ever carried out by an individual historian of late imperial China.

Naquin's basic message is this: temples were central to communal life in Peking. Their histories show us how urban life was transformed over the 500 years during which the city was the political heart of the Ming and Qing empires. The book's first section provides a general introduction to the city and its temples and communities. The second and third examine, respectively, the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) eras, a division justified by the substantially different functions of temples in the two periods. An epilogue reflects on Peking's post-imperial history.

The Peking that emerges from these pages is a complex place, dominated by the imperial court but influenced also by diverse communities of sojourners (come to serve in government, take the civil service examinations, or engage in trade), religious specialists (from all over China, Tibet, Central Asia, Russia and Western Europe), and local people. This last group, living in the shadow of the brilliant court and lacking the literacy of the sojourning and clerical communities, is the most difficult to study.

Her efforts to uncover the communal activities of Peking natives led Naquin to examine thousands of inscriptions on stone commemorative tablets erected in temple courtyards by religious associations. As she points out, the information in these inscriptions is frustratingly limited. Nevertheless, her research on these

temple associations promises to change the way historians think about urban communities in Chinese cities, as well as how they study them.

Naquin argues that temple associations, which began developing in the late Ming and flourished during the Qing, gave Peking residents 'scaffolding' upon which to build communities beyond the family. The best documented of these temple-centred communities were formed to support the popular pilgrimage to worship the goddess Bixia Yuanjun at Miaofengshan north-west of the walled city. Although outlawed by imperial edicts, these pilgrimage associations thrived in the eighteenth century, bringing together ordinary city residents and more privileged Bannermen (descendants of the Qing conquerors given stipends and allowed to live in the central part of Peking).

Naquin uses her data on the pilgrimage associations – as well as a plethora of other sources – to discuss such topics as the declining role of women in religious patronage, the creation of Peking identity among the Bannermen, the development of Peking's suburbs, and the ambivalent attitude of the imperial court towards religious movements. Many questions remain about the institutional capacity of these temple associations, but Naquin's account of them puts the proliferation of local associations in Peking in the late nineteenth century, such as the fire brigades she describes in chapter 16, into much needed historical perspective.

Unfortunately, the profusion of detail in *Peking* affects its readability. Naquin scatters intriguing observations and arguments throughout her book, such as the wonderful reconstructions in chapters 7 and 14 of the Dongyue Temple. All too often, though, these jewels are obscured by dense thickets of more routine description. Research of this calibre deserves a more vivid presentation to ensure that it reaches the broadest possible audience.

Peking certainly will provide the jumping off point for much future research on Chinese urban history. Explicitly declining to make 'comparisons that go beyond China' (p. 705), Naquin compares Peking only with a few other large, relatively well-known Chinese cities. Nevertheless, urban historians of other places and times who take up this challenging and stimulating book will be rewarded not only with a meticulous case study of a fascinating city, but also with new ways of thinking about how imperial and religious institutions affect their urban settings and vice versa.

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David Avery (ed.), *The Mediaeval Merchant Gentry of Edmonton Hundred*, Occasional Paper No. 60, Edmonton Hundred Historical Society, Enfield, Middlesex, 2000. 36pp. £2.50.

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The processes whereby new, urban, money buys access into the landed gentry, is of abiding historical interest. Nowadays, all manner of people reinvent themselves and some successfully pass themselves off as members of a 'superior' class. Style and skilful packaging can overcome a lack of property. There were chancers in medieval England too, but in the countryside, land was the basis of status and wealth and people were alert to changes in ownership and titles. Outside the gentry, merchants and lawyers were the best placed to accumulate the capital

necessary to take advantage of fluctuations in rural land values, but not always, as Sylvia Thrupp demonstrated in her *The Merchants of Medieval London* (1948), with the intention of setting themselves up as country gentlemen. An alderman of London enjoyed considerable political and social power, and for many rural property was more important as security for investment in London's trade. Some self-made merchants never moved from London but exploited their country investments and called themselves merchant and gentleman. Others, gentry sons migrating into London, had commercial aspirations but also retained strong rural links.

This pamphlet is more concerned with status, titles and heraldry, than with commerce and thus a rounded view of the men observed. It provides various details of the estates of fifteen or so London aldermen in a series of manorial descents, but it does so in a vacuum. There is no reference to Thrupp's work, and especially to her appendix of merchant biographies, nor to more recent work on, for example, Adam Fraunceys. As a locally focused study, this could be forgiven perhaps for reviewing familiar material, and no doubt there are new items which Avery has unearthed which were hitherto unknown. However, this pamphlet has missed the opportunity to move beyond a compilation of details and into a considered synthesis.

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Patrick O'Brien et al. (eds), *Urban Achievement in Early Modern Europe: Golden Ages in Antwerp, Amsterdam and London*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. xiv + 361pp. £47.50.
DOI: 10.1017/S0963926803251105

This collection is one of the fruits of the Achievement Project funded for a number of years by a wealthy entrepreneur and based at the Centre for Metropolitan History in London. 'Achievement' fits more comfortably in the language of accountants and businessmen than of historians, and Patrick O'Brien in his introduction wisely puts it on one side. Thus, in spite of its title, the book concentrates on an examination of the distinctive prosperity, innovativeness and outputs (economic, social and cultural), of three north-west European cities – Antwerp, Amsterdam and London – during their heyday in the early modern period. The choice of the three cities is not explained: Antwerp and Amsterdam are fairly obvious, both international port cities. But London was never just a great port city, while it might be argued that the most influential city in northern Europe during much of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was none of these three, but the great Court city and state capital of Paris.

The chapters on the three individual cities – looking in turn at the economy, built environment, the arts, book trade and science – are inevitably somewhat uneven in quality. On Antwerp Michael Limberger summarizes the latest research, stressing the political context of the city's rise in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and the significance of its financial innovations, while also drawing attention to the scale advantages of such a large agglomeration. The city landscape is explored by Piet Lombarde, whose well-illustrated account highlights radical new developments like fortifications (built by Italian engineers), the speculative

buildings of van Schoonbeke, important public edifices, such as the Renaissance town hall (1561–65), and the growth of the architectural profession. Overall, he argues, Antwerp provided an important stage and model for the realization of Renaissance, mannerist and baroque architecture and town planning in northern Europe. The splendid Plantin-Moretus museum in Antwerp reminds us of the role of the humanist publishing industry there, but Werner Waterschoot also draws attention to more traditional literary activity organized by the chambers of rhetoric until they were banned by the Spanish. Not all of the pieces of the jigsaw fit the concept of a 'golden' age: in the field of science the main activity occurred in the years before the Spanish siege in 1585, when the city was already past its economic prime, while Hans Vlieghe points out that the most dynamic time for the city as a centre for the arts occurred during the period of Spanish rule in the seventeenth century.

The Spanish siege of Antwerp and the exodus of many of its citizens ushered in the glittering ascendancy of Amsterdam, but as Clé Lesger contends the Dutch city's rise can be dated much earlier to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when its pivotal position in the north German and Baltic trades enabled it to ride out the general crisis in Holland at the end of the Middle Ages. After 1585 the arrival of many refugees from the south gave the city a tremendous boost, bringing as they did not only capital but networking resources. At the same time, Amsterdam's success (like that of Antwerp, but arguably not that of London) depended on its role in an integrated regional network of complementary specialist towns. On the built environment Marjolein't Hart has a good account of the vital role of the city authorities from the 1630s, driven by political rivalry with the stadtholder, in developing a great range of public facilities such as the Athenaeum Illustre, the public theatre, the chambers of rhetoric and the grandiose town hall, as well as promoting other civic improvements. By the later seventeenth century Amsterdam 'presented a striking image of modernity and amenity' with new canal extensions, improved drainage and extensive street lighting along the canals. As the economy lurched down from the 1680s, however, civic funding ran out and urban improvement ground to a halt. On the arts, Marten Jan Blok offers a valuable study emphasizing the advent of a mass market in the city, fuelled by wide consumer affluence, falling prices caused by the growing productivity of painters, genre specialization and commercialization. Everything went into reverse in the late seventeenth century, as prosperity dried up and demand fell, just at a time when overproduction flooded the market (a word might have been said about the declining fashionability of traditional Dutch painting, as the Dutch elite became captivated by French courtly influences). No less striking was Amsterdam's dynamism as a book and publishing centre, encouraged, as Paul Hoftijzer shows, by an absence of regulation and the business acumen and drive of the city's publishers and booksellers, a success which lasted well into the eighteenth century (eclipsing their London rivals). Amsterdam's vitality as a scientific centre – marked by advances in mechanics, optics, Cartesian geometry, medicine and botany – was closely linked to the influx of immigrants and, according to Karel Davids, the creation of a dense grid of educational institutions both in the city and across the country, institutions which attracted many foreign students.

The contributions on London may seem less original to British urban historians. Peter Earle provides a useful survey of work on London's economic growth

1660–1730, stressing foreign trade and rising incomes (personally, I would have underscored rather more the landed influx into the capital, attracted by cheaper living costs and government and political perks in Whitehall and Westminster). Judi Loach sketches changes in the urban landscape, and Adrian Johns presses for the important alliance of booksellers (through the Stationers Company) and the Crown in the post-Restoration book trade. Surprisingly, little is said about the breakthrough in publishing during the English Revolution or the rise of the newspaper industry after the end of censorship in 1695 (more dynamic and influential, I suspect, than book publishing). Larry Stewart reminds us of the importance of coffeehouses for scientific networking and lecturing (though more needs to be said about coffeehouse clubs). The best of the London group is David Ormrod's chapter on cultural production and import substitution in the arts – encouraged by rising consumption, new techniques brought by immigrants and the growth of training facilities. No less influential, he demonstrates, was the arrival of the concept of a unified furnishing scheme for fashionable homes, requiring a wide range of artistic products.

Evidently, this is a diverse collection, whose contributors rarely rise above the specialist parapet to venture general or comparative ideas. Here the book is saved by Patrick O'Brien's first-rate introduction which seeks to identify what was shared by these three cities in their rise to greatness. All three had strong locational and economic advantages inherited from the medieval era. Also important were the high inflows of betterment immigrants, which were readily integrated in relatively tolerant and open societies. The three cities also prospered from international trade, they learned from the experience of foreign cities, they developed high levels of artisanal skills, they created and exploited local urban networks, encompassing a flourishing mixed variety of social groups. The big contrast of course is that Antwerp and Amsterdam were old-style metropolitan entrepôts – of a type common in the Middle Ages – whilst London was not just an international port but a state and soon-to-be imperial capital, which surely helps to explain the long-lasting nature of London's golden age – climaxing in the nineteenth century – compared to the short-lived spurts of greatness of its continental predecessors.

Peter Clark

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Peter Lake, *The Boxmaker's Revenge: 'Orthodoxy', 'Heterodoxy' and the Politics of the Parish in Early Stuart London*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2001. x + 422pp. £55.00 hbk, £19.50 pbk.
DOI: 10.1017/S0963926803261101

In this book Peter Lake continues an investigation of English puritanism which began with his *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (1982). Whereas that earlier study was set against the background of Elizabethan Cambridge, the context of the present book is London in the decades before the Civil War and the teeming religious life of the capital with its concentration of over a hundred often very small parishes. Lake quite explicitly sets out to restore what he regards as a neglected 'metropolitan' perspective to the post-Reformation history of the period. Of his two leading protagonists, Stephen Denison, minister of St Katherine Cree, was indeed a Cambridge-educated divine and product of the milieu analysed in *Moderate*

Puritans. Denison's opponent, however, John Etherington – memorably described here as a 'back-street Socrates' – was a layman and largely self-educated. Via the literary warfare conducted between Etherington, a sometime acolyte of the Family of Love, and Denison, a puritan cleric and doctor of divinity, Lake seeks to penetrate the religious 'underground' of early Stuart London. At the same time part of his wider purpose is to subvert a variety of historiographical assumptions about the allegedly stable nature of puritanism, stressing instead its chameleon-like capacity to present alternating radical and conservative faces. In the process many historians in the field receive some sharp, albeit usually well-merited, criticism.

Lake has a fascinating story to tell or rather a series of interconnected ones, since Denison was an inveterate controversialist and abrasive personality, whose triumph over the unfortunate Etherington was more than matched by his subsequent defeat at the hands of a group of leading parishioners and the Laudian authorities. As regards the latter, events at St Katherine Cree are brilliantly reconstructed from a great variety of sources both printed and manuscript. This provides in many ways a model investigation of the religious life of a parish at this time, all the more impressive because no churchwardens' accounts survive for the relevant dates. Apart from the published writings of Denison, Lake has also utilized a very revealing manuscript collection of sermon notes taken down by a member of his auditory in the late 1630s. On the basis of this evidence he is able to show *inter alia* that Denison preached a 'species of popular predestinarianism' that demonstrably found favour with a social cross-section of his flock – something which helps to rebut the claim of an influential modern school of interpretation that for pastoral purposes preachers soft-pedalled their Calvinist beliefs. Moreover these sermons are replete with semi-autobiographical allusions which Lake is adept at decoding.

According to Denison, Etherington was a 'sect master' who had been proselytizing since the 1590s and certainly at various stages of his career he had inhabited some of the wilder shores of religious radicalism in London. Lake writes of him as having been a member, at least in his younger days, of 'a conventicle of like-minded people meeting together to expound scripture and be instructed in the thoughts and insights of some sect master or illuminatus'. The original leader in question may have been Thomas Lemur, identified by Lake with the T.L. whose prophetic works Etherington edited in 1651. It was the unsettling effect of the teachings of Etherington on some of the religious followers of Denison that led the latter to take up the cudgels in the 1620s. On this occasion Denison received the backing of the authorities, although the tables were turned in the 1630s when he embarked on a sustained vendetta against the Laudianization of St Katherine Cree – including the installation of an 'idolatrours' east window.

While one cannot really fault this deeply researched and splendidly crafted book, a cause for regret is that although Denison lived on until 1649 it did not apparently prove possible to discover his attitude to the religious changes introduced by the Long Parliament. Did they represent the attainment of a presbyterian promised land, to which he did not even dare allude in his unpublished sermons of the 1630s? Or putting the question differently, how far had the puritan Denison ever been truly integrated within even the Jacobean Church? Again the remarkable intellectual career of Etherington has perforce largely been reconstructed from his printed writings, but more could perhaps have been said about the Baptist or 'Anabaptist' circles in which he also seems to have moved and about which some

information at least has survived. Nevertheless this book remains an investigative triumph, combining an extremely sophisticated analysis of rich textual material with a meticulous reconstruction of the local London context.

Nicholas Tyacke

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David Hussey, *Coastal and River Trade in Pre-Industrial England: Bristol and Its Region 1680–1730*. Exeter Maritime Studies. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000. xxiv + 296pp. 8 plates. 3 maps. 10 figures. 49 tables. Bibliography. £45.00.

DOI: 10.1017/S0963926803271108

This fascinating volume raises at its core the tensions between qualitative and quantitative approaches inherent in large database analysis. The primary source material for David Hussey's book is the enormous database of all the Gloucester port books, 1680–1730, supplemented by analysis of all surviving coastal port books for the twenty official customs ports of the Bristol Channel from Mount's Bay to Milford Haven, 1695–1704, and two major sets of surviving business papers. This is a study of daunting richness, presenting findings based upon English ports from Newcastle upon Tyne to Whitehaven. However, its predominant link was to the Severn: Bristol accounted for three-quarters of the entries and clearances for Gloucester; despatched more than half of the 255 coastal port books, 50,000 shipments and some 2.5 million data attributes. It represents a dramatic and overdue advance upon the existing literature on the coasting trade, still dominated by T.S. Willan's pioneering studies of the 1930s.

The objective is to define the systems of coastwise trade, inter-port linkages, commodity profile, mercantile organization, shipping and shipownership, and then to exemplify these important findings in two case studies. It succeeds fully, though it cannot be pretended that the outcome is easy reading. The huge volume of material makes writing difficult, documenting the subject with such fine detail as to defy convenient metanarratives, an experience shared by many pioneers of large database research. Its success lies in inducing readers to explore the Gloucester port book database for themselves, and for other agendas, having learned so much of its potential from Hussey's work.

Bristol's trade and trading functions are here redefined, when the conventional historiography has tended to stress its overseas trade, the world of Africa, slaves, sugar and tobacco. Bristol is shown to have had trading links to 77 regional ports, and another 74 beyond; three-quarters of Gloucester's entries and clearances were from Bristol; and many goods were covered only by the 'letpass' system, thus being under-recorded and understating Bristol's position. Several staple primary products were the core of these trades: coal came from the South Wales ports to Somerset, Devon and Cornwall, almost wholly returning in ballast; Cheshire salt from Liverpool, a major feedstock for Bristol Channel food-processing and industry; and grains, carried predominantly into Bristol from Gloucester and Chepstow. The trade seems not to have attracted grand and formally-designated members of the urban commercial elite: shuttle trade of small – average 28-ton – shipping with relatively modest but speedy returns did not generate great mercantile houses.

It is the richness of coastwise commodity trades that will intrigue further, and access to knowledge of people and business in a host of smaller towns that will excite. Bristol and Gloucester acted as regional entrepôts, distributing a huge range of 'discrete commodities', 445 and 218 respectively, in the data record of 1695–1704, and at the other end of the distribution, Neath and Llanelli, with 29 and 6 goods, were among the least differentiated; but Cardiff (51), Swansea (70) and Bridgwater (125) all indicated a richness in traffic that refuted the conventional picture of coasting as wholly concerned with low value bulk staples. Adjacent ports were finely differentiated, denoting clearly specialist urban functions: Tenby's trade was dominated by coal, among 15 cargoes appearing more than once; by contrast, nearby Milford Haven, with 50, was acting as a modest staging post for redistribution of foreign luxuries. The final chapter of case studies, of Hoare and Company, a largely Presbyterian group of twelve Bridgwater merchants, trading predominantly in Liverpool and Droitwich salt; William Alloway, in the same port and trade; and their distribution networks up to the head of navigation of the Parrett, at Ham Mills, enriches the broad statistical framework with human faces.

This is a major contribution to the history of domestic trade, transport and commercial systems; important as a coherent study of a region; significant if oblique in its value for the student of material culture; and deeply valuable as a study of a network of urban economies, the actors within them, and of the patterns of differentiation between large and smaller towns. For the urban historian its significance lies in the plurality and range of towns covered: this is not an urban history, but it does represent an invaluable contribution to the history of early modern towns in their primary function, trade and exchange.

J.A. Chartres

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Nicolas Rügge, *Im Dienst von Stadt und Staat. Der Rat der Stadt Herford und die preussische Zentralverwaltung im 18. Jahrhundert*. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000. 387pp. 8 plates. 19 tables. Prosopographical appendix. Bibliography. 44.00 euros.
DOI: 10.1017/S0963926803281104

Recent decades have seen a decisive shift in the pattern of research into the history of early modern German towns. The traditional thesis of urban decline in central Europe (especially in the aftermath of the Thirty Years War) following the flourishing years of the late medieval period and sixteenth century, has received a good deal of critical scrutiny. A more nuanced approach has emerged to the socio-economic, political and cultural consequences of the loss of urban autonomy and economic and demographic power during the 'crisis of the seventeenth century' and the incorporation of towns into the early modern princely states. In particular attention has focused on the character of the urban elite and its role in the process of change.

In his doctoral thesis (University of Bielefeld) Nicolas Rügge investigates these issues through a case study of Herford and its elite. He reconstructs with painstaking care the leading groups of burgomasters, aldermen and judges in this small Westphalian town, which contained a population of roughly 2,700 inhabitants

in the period under research, 1718 to 1808. Choosing these dates, encompassing the Prussian reforms introduced by Frederic William I and the termination of *ancien régime* urban politics following the French occupation, the author indicates that his study is firmly embedded in the legal and constitutional framework of the period. His careful examination of the administrative activities and governance of the municipal authorities reveals a transition of the town's officials into agents of the early modern state, what were effectively civil servants. In this way Rügge resolves the apparent conflict between rising stately power and declining urban autonomy, reinforcing the arguments developed by the historians Heinz Schilling, Luise Schorn-Schütte, Christopher Friedrichs and many others. Early modern 'statebuilding was an urban event', as Carl Hoffmann has summed up the process, paraphrasing A.G. Dickens' well-known description of the German Reformation. If Rügge's argument, therefore, is not a novel one, it is nonetheless true to say that the revisionist case has hardly ever been made in such a detailed manner through the person by person reconstruction and prosopographical analysis of an urban elite. In exposing the networks that existed between the civic leaders of Herford and the administrative and legal state elites, Rügge has amplified our understanding of early modern state building by revealing the social substructure of this process: 'Staatsbildung als Elitenbildung' (p. 322). He contends that state building goes hand in hand with the formation of specific new elites into which many elements among the traditional urban leaders – the long-assumed losers in the process – became assimilated.

H.Th. Gräf

University of Marburg

Keir Waddington, *Charity and the London Hospitals 1850–1898*, The Royal Historical Society New Series. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000. xi + 252pp. 12 figures. 24 tables. Bibliography. £40.00.
DOI: 10.1017/S0963926803291100

Keir Waddington's book is in part based on a detailed analysis of financial material relating to Metropolitan charity hospitals in the second half of the nineteenth century. The material used in this volume has been ignored by many historians previously and the comprehensive treatment afforded here is timely. Part 1 of the work relates to 'Philanthropy and funding' with a section entitled 'The philanthropic imperative', which is particularly important as it tackles the question of why the middle and upper classes became involved in the financing of medical charities in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It goes beyond somewhat simplistic notions of duty and benevolence by using impressive details of philanthropic funding, including a comprehensive analysis of individual donations and their impact on specific hospitals. Nowhere has such a comprehensive treatment of this aspect of medical philanthropy been published previously, so that this section is very important. Having established philanthropic motivations for financing medical charities, the remainder of section 1 of the book investigates how the medical treatment of the 'sick poor' in the Metropolis was financed, in relation to general and specialist hospitals. The impact of voluntary societies, of the Charity Organisation Society (COS) and the emergence of the Sunday Hospital Fund and its working-class equivalent, the Saturday Hospital

Fund, on the hospitals available to the 'deserving poor' is dealt with here. However, what is absent, perhaps inevitably, is any discussion of hospital facilities for the 'undeserving poor'. This group, a larger one than the group Waddington considers, was dealt with by the Metropolitan Poor Law medical services, which were more numerous and comprehensive than suggested. Although the pauperized poor were, probably with good reason, fatalistic about illness, in the Metropolis they were served by specialist infirmary wards in workhouses, in some cases created before the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. Some of the infirmary wards in these institutions, particularly those in so-called 'special act parishes', had attained large size and importance, with some functioning as separate infirmaries, some of which were used to train doctors. As the COS had the intention of co-ordinating charity with the Poor Law, the existence of parallel Poor Law medical institutions might have figured in the analysis offered. The inclusion of tables and graphs illustrating the financial aspects of medical charity were particularly useful. Section 2 of the book, entitled 'Philanthropy and control', continues to offer an excellent tight analysis of the way that the management of Metropolitan medical services was altered in the second half of the nineteenth century. Very appropriately finance was shown to shape this in a deterministic fashion, with other aspects, such as the emergence of a medical profession with a vested interest in hospital management well considered. Andrew Scull's suggestion of the emergence of a 'medical hegemony' regarding the lunatic asylums after 1845 appears to parallel exactly the case made by Waddington regarding, particularly, specialist hospitals and one wonders why Metropolitan charitable facilities for the mentally infirm were not considered in this book. Part 3 of the book, entitled '1898 and beyond' considers the inevitable conflict between voluntarist and centralist Metropolitan hospital administration. This summary only latterly considers the impact of the creation of a national general authority in relation to the Poor Law and medicine, the Local Government Board, together with the impact of the Metropolitan Asylums' Board and a common funding principle, in the Metropolitan Common Fund, to finance the Poor Law. This book provides an invaluable new source for both scholars and students of nineteenth-century medical history.

Frank Crompton

University College Worcester

Victoria E. Thompson, *The Virtuous Marketplace: Women and Men, Money and Politics in Paris, 1830–1870*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000. viii + 229pp. 12 plates. Bibliography. \$32.00.

DOI: 10.1017/S0963926803301105

Since Laqueur argued the parallel between prostitution and consuming desires a number of texts have followed his and Walter Benjamin's track and have looked at prostitution, gambling, gender and money together. This short book ambitiously sets out to follow some of these directions, without engaging with this particular historiography, arguing convincingly that the market was a gendered entity in nineteenth-century France and that it was constitutive of gendered identities.

Thompson has worked mostly on representations of women in the market place such as the *physiologies* of the 1840s and innumerable texts devoted to the stereotyping of social and moral codes over the period. The book contains four chapters looking at a number of representations of female market autonomy and modes of existence in the urban world with an argument that, over the period 1830–70, the range of possibilities diminished and women's choices as traders became increasingly restricted while their role as consumers became increasingly emphasized and as consumption itself became feminized. The central figure in representations of female trade was of course the prostitute but the prostitute went through a series of reconfigurations. The grisette, a stereotype of the working-class girl whose sexuality and financial autonomy conveyed ambiguous messages of depravation and generosity, was replaced, over time, by the more manipulative and negative stereotype of the lorette, the speculative prostitute embodied by Émile Zola's *Nana*. Where the book is innovative is in treating the evolution of these stereotypes not only as a change of perception of what prostitution might be but as an indicator of the gendering of the market. For instance Thompson's attentive reading of Alexandre Parent-Duchâtelet's work is innovative because she stresses the ambiguities of any reading of prostitutes as emancipated beneficiaries of the free market. Her reading of the *La Femme Libre*, a feminist newspaper of the July Monarchy, also addresses the radical alternatives to traditional stereotyping of women. From her quasi-prostitute status of easy girlfriend living on the margins of regulated prostitution, the grisette became a romantic ideal of selflessness, talent, love and sexuality resisting the market place. The most famous embodiment of this nostalgic and simplistic cliché is to be found in Murger's *La Vie de Bohème* which had a long career in theatre and opera long after the grisette had vanished. Paradoxically this classic representation, in spite of its fame and the fact that it fits so well with the argument, is never mentioned in the book. The second chapter develops issues of work, wages and citizenship and the politicization of female wages in 1848 stressing that the increased denigration of women's work corresponded to the greater acceptance of the market place as part of the masculine public sphere. The following chapter is perhaps the one that will appeal most to urban historians in the sense that it tackles the taming of the Paris market as a gendered place and the erosion of strong-worded stereotypes of women traders (*poissardes*) whose role and place was more rigidly codified and policed in the various market places of the street, stalls in the Palais Royal or in the reformed *Halles*. Some fierce tradeswomen are not included in this survey of changing attitudes and regulatory practices. The *blanchisseuses* who cleaned the Parisian clothes and who were operating in a female-dominated trade are not mentioned in spite of the fact that the famous 'madame sans gêne' who adorned Napoleon I's court provides the best example of *poissarde* woman remaining true to her plebeian origins while operating in high social circles.

The final chapter on the speculative culture of the stock exchange and its female counter-stereotype of the enterprising semi-mondaine prostitute or lorette is a fascinating insight into the developments of a purely male market place which excluded women as a way of establishing its respectability. Preventing women from speculating (a measure that could only affect small-scale speculators since the others could still trade while being absent from the stock exchange) was, according to Thompson, a way of ensuring that women remained or became economically dependent, the main pre-condition of the establishment of a virtuous market place.

Finally, the conclusion is the least satisfactory part of the book. It contains some of the most problematic and revealing assertions. First, it operates through a now clichéd parallel between France and Britain which is too hasty and based on old secondary sources to be really useful. Second, it makes some assumptions about women's financial autonomy which are not sustained by closer examination of either the law or its practice, reflecting a lack of engagement with much French social history. Contrary to Thompson's assertion, the Code Napoléon, Livre III, titre v, which codified the matrimonial regimes, stated that of the three status available in marriage (*communauté universelle, communauté de biens réduite aux acquêts, séparations de biens*) only the first really surrendered a woman's wealth to her husband (with specific issues relating to the dowry); in the second status the husband could manage but not sell her belongings or dispossess his wife without her consent, while in the third 'the wife keeps the entire administration of her wealth and the free enjoyment of her incomes' even if, in practice, she might have to use strawmen and intermediaries to manage some of it. Most social historians who have worked on France know the legalistic and contractual nature of the marriages uniting wealthy individuals and many examples show women exercising great care in the protection of their assets when contracting marriage and throughout their marital life. For the urban working classes the default status of universal community would apply in the absence of contract but the evidence shows also that regular marriages were not always the favoured mode of union. Some of the final generalizations are a shame because the argument works best and is indeed very convincing and innovative when it does not confuse representation and praxis.

Bertrand Taithe

University of Manchester

Erika Diane Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000. xiii + 323pp. 22 figures. Bibliography. No price stated.
DOI: 10.1017/S0963926803311101

During the 1860s and 1870s, William Whiteley developed his Westbourne Grove drapery into London's first department store. In 1909, Harry Gordon Selfridge, who had made his name (and money) at Marshall Field's in Chicago, opened his palatial new store at the west end of Oxford Street, taking stores and shopping into a new era. Both identified their ways of business with the modern; both promoted the woman shopper, both sought to provide for a wide social mix of customers; both, predictably, were targets of criticism as well as acclaim.

Erika Rappaport's commendable study blends the evolution of London retailing during the late Victorian and Edwardian periods with developments in catering and the theatre, the expansion of public transport and the role of a changing press in promoting a consumer culture. All this was in the context of a growing number of women able and willing to claim shops, the streets, restaurants and theatres as extensions of their private space.

The author demonstrates how, by the middle of the nineteenth century, expanding suburbs, with a daytime population largely made up of women and children, had become an extension of the private leisure sphere of middle-class women. An abundance of well-dressed women first brought Whiteley to

Bayswater: his store and the publicity it attracted only reinforced their numbers. As the 'Universal Provider', Whiteley initially attracted widespread hostility not just from neighbouring tradesmen forced out of business but from those hostile to the mixing of social classes in his stores or uncomfortable with his promotion of shopping as a pleasurable activity for women. Over time, however, the association of Whiteley's store with the general commercial prosperity of the area, brought increasing support, especially in the local press.

Rappaport also examines the close association between the press and retail activity, evident long before Selfridge's advertising blitz of 1909. She analyses the use of the 'flâneuse' in women's periodicals like *Queen* or *Lady*. This urban woman guided readers through the commercial city, encouraged them to use trains, omnibuses and underground, introduced them to women's clubs and tea rooms and advised them on the delights of particular shops or shopping streets. By the turn of the century, popular papers like the *Daily Mail* or its sister *Evening News* were providing the same service for lower-middle and working-class readers. Shopping and the West End sold papers and periodicals; papers and periodicals sold shops and shopping.

Selfridge put the relationship with the press on a new footing. Hitherto, retailers had used catalogues rather than large-scale press advertising. Now, in a single week in March 1909, Selfridge bought 97 pages of advertising at a cost of £36,000, hiring the best graphic artists to illustrate his copy. This was backed by a close personal association with prominent newspaper proprietors. The financial incentives towards frequent and favourable press attention did not go unremarked by his rivals.

Even more than Whiteley, Selfridge emphasized the modernity of his store, making shopping thrilling and exciting by comparison with what had gone before. It was certainly distinctive in sheer scale (a hundred departments on eight floors) and in the space given over to amenities (resting places, dining and club rooms, reading and writing rooms). Emphasis on the shopper as spectator was reflected not only in interior layout but in the novelty of the window displays, artistically designed and hidden, like a theatre set, by curtains until the day of opening. This association of shopping and theatres, conveniently juxtaposed in London's West End, is developed by Rappaport in an imaginative chapter showing not only how theatres tapped into the shopper market but also how familiar images of shops and shopping became the material of light and musical comedy.

In spite of the media image of a West End given over to the female shopper, department stores, theatres, restaurants and tea rooms also provided increased opportunity for informal unchaperoned heterosexual leisure activity. Thus we are presented with an evolving commercial culture that undermined divisions by gender as well as class; a return, as Selfridge claimed, to the traditions of the great fair before shops became hidden behind walls and closed doors.

Rappaport sets out to establish shopping as a primary fault line, challenging 'existing notions of stable class and gender identities and clearly demarcated physical spaces'. In a well-constructed and presented book, making imaginative use of an impressive range of primary and secondary sources, there can be little doubt that she has succeeded.

Rex Pope

University of Central Lancashire

David Wolff, *To the Harbin Station: The Liberal Alternative in Russian Manchuria, 1898–1914*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999. ix + 255pp. £30.00.
DOI: 10.1017/S0963926803321108

In 1896 the Russo-Chinese treaty of alliance allowed for the construction of a railroad across a part of Chinese territory which would accelerate the completion of the Trans-Siberian railway through Russia to Vladivostok. Along the route the city of Harbin was founded by Russian engineers and developed rapidly from a communications centre to being the social and administrative centre of Russian Manchuria. Its status as such was based on the fact that although Chinese central and local government were involved in the administration and finance of the whole railway project the real power lay with the Russian Ministry of Finance. In addition, Harbin became a focus for Russian emigrants to live and work and even a Russian military centre during the Russo-Japanese War. Its interest, however, lay in its anomalous status. Although seen as a 'Russian' city from St Petersburg's point of view it was not fully integrated into Tsarist Russia. Russian laws could only be applied selectively. After all, not all the population were Russian citizens. There were Chinese and Japanese citizens living there also. In addition it was at the centre of a triangle of competitive colonialism whereby any moves by Russia to annex territory outright in Manchuria would have received a negative response from the Chinese and especially Japanese governments. David Wolff's scholarly monograph on Harbin brings out the complexities of this situation. Drawing on Russian, Chinese and Japanese sources he analyses the development of the city and the railroad from a rich variety of angles – social, ethnic, political, economic, military.

The book is particularly good in providing specific case studies of more general issues in Tsarist Russia. For example, Wolff provides us with an insight into ministerial rivalries in late Tsarist government as the Ministry of Finance sought to retain its controlling interest in Harbin against the desires of other ministries to share in the success of Russia's Far East. As part of this conflict we can also perceive the changing nature of Russian imperialism in the late nineteenth century. Witte, the Tsarist Finance Minister, felt that Russian influence could be better extended in areas such as Manchuria by state-encouraged private investment and immigration rather than the earlier armed conquest and exertion of central control. The book displays the divergence between Tsarist policy as conducted at the centre and as applied in border areas. In order to promote the growth of Harbin, a more liberal political climate was sustained which would encourage settlement especially by those Russians who were otherwise oppressed in Western Russia. As Wolff points out, we see such flexible approaches also adopted with some success to the colonization of Central Asia and development of Siberia. Not surprisingly Harbin saw the growth of communities of schismatics, Poles and especially Jews. In Harbin they could all be 'Russians' in a way that such attitudes as anti-Semitism in the heartland would not allow them to be. Perhaps not surprisingly by the 1905 Revolution Harbin had also become a centre of revolutionary activity, having attracted revolutionaries to its comparatively liberal safe haven. The spread of the 1905 strikes to the railway there was seen by the military as a stab in the back for the troops in this militarily strategic area.

Wolff also draws out the international significance of Harbin. The construction of the Trans-Siberian railway gave a boost to the confidence of the Tsarist regime at home and abroad but it also provoked the suspicion of the Japanese about Russian intentions in Manchuria. Wolff examines the role of Harbin in the Russo-Japanese War as the centre of the army's rear headquarters. Here again we see an instance of the infighting in Tsarist politics with the rivalry between civilian and military authorities over the use of the railway. A particularly interesting and rather unexpected part of the book is the chapter on Russian orientology. Wolff shows the way in which Russian academic expertise in Chinese was developed, the various scholars and institutes involved and how this was used to support the spread of Russian influence in Manchuria. Here and elsewhere in the book we gain an insight into the Eurasianist dimension of Russian identity – Russia seeing itself as a bridge between East and West and, for many Russians, having a 'civilising' role in Asia.

Wolff's monograph is therefore much more than an excellent addition to the still relatively small amount of research on the Russian East. What at first may appear to be a rather obscure case study has much wider significance. It will be of interest to those concerned with the development of Russian national identity, the complexities of Tsarist government both local and central and the nature of Russian imperialism. As a work of urban history it adds Harbin to that list of frontier or borderland cities which stand at the crossroads of cultures, ethnic communities and international rivalries and which therefore make fascinating studies in their own right.

Paul Flenley

University of Portsmouth

Peter Derrick, *Tunneling to the Future: The Story of the Great Subway Expansion that Saved New York*. New York: New York University Press, 2001. xii + 442pp. 8 maps. 2 cartoons. 24 illustrations. 2 tables. 2 appendices. Bibliography. \$34.95 cloth.
DOI: 10.1017/S0963926803331104

New York City's first subway line, running the length of Manhattan, opened in 1904, the product of co-operation between the city government and a private company, the Interborough Rapid Transit Company (IRT). From its first day in operation, the subway proved both popular among New Yorkers – who packed the cars – and profitable to the IRT. Even before it opened, city officials and the public looked forward to constant expansion of the system. But the very success of the first subway contracts made expansion difficult. Unscrupulous financiers forced a merger that sucked \$40 million out of the IRT. Conservative bankers warned the company against new ventures that would lower its profitability. And demagogic politicians seized on the IRT's success to demonize it as a parasitic monopoly unworthy of further support from the city. Though everyone agreed on the desirability of subway expansions, especially across the East River to Brooklyn, for more than ten years, no one could find quite the right mix of public and private capital to accomplish the job.

Tunneling to the Future portrays this impasse as the result of tensions between three groups, each with its own subway agenda. Managers of the IRT and rival transit companies, responsible to their stockholders and their bankers, sought extensions through densely developed areas, whose crowds would assure a profit. Demagogic politicians, notably newspaper publisher and perennial candidate, William Randolph Hearst, claimed populist credentials by vilifying the transit companies and proposing instead a subway system to be entirely financed and operated by the city government, even though the city's debt limit would restrict its scope. The third key group – Progressive reformers, led by Manhattan Borough President George McAneny – rejected both these views as short-sighted. The reformers hoped that new subways would encourage people to move out of Manhattan's slums to less crowded neighbourhoods, reducing the crime and disease so woefully documented by muckraking journalists. But they feared that slow, incremental expansion would only yield new slum districts along the extensions. To avoid this outcome, McAneny insisted that several lines be built at once, moderating the spike in land values and removing the incentive to build new tenement districts. The only way to amass the necessary capital for this strategy would be to merge public and private funds into a single pool.

In 1913, after years of negotiation, McAneny finally achieved his vision, negotiating simultaneous contracts with both the IRT and its rival the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company (BRT). Each company agreed to build and operate routes specified by the city, using funds raised from both corporate and municipal bonds, for a total projected cost of \$366 million (\$22 billion in today's dollars). Though First World War inflation, unfriendly mayoral administrations, and competition from the automobile wrecked the expansion's financial model, the rest of the vision worked out largely as planned. The Dual Contracts, as they were known, doubled the mileage of the city's subway system and opened much of the city's outer boroughs to development. In concert with the 1916 zoning law, which emerged from the same Progressive impulses, the subway expansion let hundreds of thousands of people escape the tenements of lower Manhattan for roomier housing elsewhere. Even today, Derrick argues, the Dual Contract subways are vital to the well-being and prosperity of millions of New Yorkers, which makes his subtitle only a mild exaggeration.

Derrick has written a thorough, persuasive account of the Dual Contract expansion, based mostly on newspapers and government reports, supplemented by some digging in manuscript archives and oral history collections. Although based on his 1979 dissertation, the book engages with many secondary works published since then. The downside of Derrick's thoroughness is that large sections of the book are devoted to proposals that never went anywhere and seemingly minor debates, such as whether one company would be allowed to sell all its bonds at once or only as needed for construction. Compared to Derrick's vivid descriptions of New York City's pre-subway slums and post-expansion 'subway suburbs', these detailed descriptions of defeated proposals make for tedious reading. Moreover, Derrick is so focused on the deadlock over a massive expansion that he buries the incremental new construction that did take place between 1904 and 1913. On the other hand, by chronicling the many pitfalls and dead-ends in the planning process, Derrick shows that the Dual Contract expansion could very well have failed to materialize.

Derrick has hacked a narrative through a nasty tangle of shifting alliances, rewritten laws, complex financial instruments and simple fraud. While no suspense thriller, *Tunneling to the Future* is an important contribution to the histories of New York City, rapid transit and Progressive-era city planning.

Zachary M. Schrag

Columbia University

Aileen Reid, *Brentham: A History of the Pioneer Garden Suburb 1901–2001*. Brentham: Brentham Heritage Society, 2000. 264pp. Numerous b & w and col. plates. Bibliography. £25.00.
DOI: 10.1017/S0963926803341100

In 1938 Osbert Lancaster wrote in *Pillar to Post* of ‘... rows of quaint and whimsy little cottages, all pebbledash and green shutters, appeared in the ... suburbs of London in clusters which their builders considered themselves justified (by the presence of two sunflowers and a box hedge) in calling Garden cities ... From surroundings such as these did the New Woman emerge to bicycle off to an interesting meeting of the Fabian Society.’ Lancaster’s gentle satire touches upon features associated frequently – but not always correctly – with the early garden city movement: an architecture based upon rural vernacular housing; the advent of feminism; and the politics of the Labour Movement. Reid’s fine book charts the inception and creation of Brentham in west London, founded in 1901 and one of the earliest examples of the type of residential development of which Hampstead Garden Suburb was the most famous, and deftly sets it in the context of late nineteenth-century attempts to create a viable alternative to the speculatively-built suburb. A fascinating web of connections emerges linking the early garden city movement and radical politics in the 1900s. The Fabian Society was just one of various groups then attempting to reconsider relationships between people in capitalist society. More important for the genesis of Brentham was the co-operative movement, which proposed redistributing the profits of a business concern for the benefit of the consumer, and its offshoot, the co-partnership movement, which proposed giving workers a share in both the profits and the risk of a business.

Henry Vivian, secretary of the Labour Co-partnership Association, was instrumental in applying this idea to housing, setting up a building company which put up houses for rent at levels the artisan could afford. From this small start came a company with 800 members, which capitalized on improved rail networks by buying agricultural land west of Ealing and building houses with money subscribed by prospective tenants and by outside investors, who could buy either loan stock or shares in the company, receiving interest or a dividend in return. This system, Vivian believed, combined healthy self-interest on the part of tenants with a commitment to the collective ideal. Thus, intriguingly, Vivian emerges as more significant for the construction of the 600 or so houses built at Brentham and for a significant proportion of the houses at Hampstead and Letchworth (also built by co-partnership societies) than was Ebenezer Howard, whose 1898 book *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path for Real Reform* had set out a radical alternative to urban living by the creation of new, collectively-owned and managed ‘garden cities’. As Reid acknowledges, Howard’s emphasis upon co-operation and on social opportunity in the garden city informed the rethinking of street and town

evident in the planned developments of the 1900s. 'But without co-partnership, Brentham would never have been founded at all', she observes.

Her book skilfully evokes the period in which the housing options available to Londoners were broadened by the infant LCC and by the co-partnership movement. The founders of Brentham did not aspire to provide for the lowest-paid, whose needs could be met by municipal housing schemes; nevertheless they built a broader mixture of flats, cottages and houses for different income groups, with more varied house-plans and designs than can be found at Hampstead. This, and the cool response of early Brenthamites to church-building proposals, is symptomatic of the independent-mindedness of the co-partnership movement. However (and surprisingly, given their involvement in the larger co-partnership movement), women did not play a large role in Brentham tenants' committees before the First World War.

The subsequent history of Brentham is skilfully drawn, charting the steady erosion of the co-partnership ideal after 1915 in the face of increased competition from private builders, the wider remit for housing provision by local authorities, and the inexorable drift towards home ownership as an ideal. Today, Brentham, in common with other desirable suburbs, suffers from increased car ownership, demands for private space and individual household security. That it still remains a more complex and interesting place than neighbouring suburbs is indicated by the method which residents devised for publishing this book: a co-partnership share scheme. The resulting volume is testament both to the historical deftness of the author and to the strong sense of identity which Brentham's remarkable past has inculcated in its inhabitants.

Louise Campbell

University of Warwick

A. Scott Henderson, *Housing and the Democratic Ideal: The Life and Thought of Charles Abrams*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000. 230pp. Bibliography £24.00; \$37.50.
DOI: 10.1017/S0963926803351107

Charles Abrams' *Forbidden Neighbors*, published in 1955, stands as the seminal statement of the case against discrimination in housing in America's post-Second World War period. Scott Henderson's masterful study places that significant work in the context of Abrams' multi-faceted career in which social commentary grew out of active involvement in public policy and public administration. Indeed, Henderson makes the case that the impact of *Forbidden Neighbors* lay in Abrams' ability as a 'public intellectual' to draw upon his considerable expertise to communicate in terms the public could understand.

Henderson's volume, he acknowledges, is 'necessarily biographical', yet it sets a more ambitious goal to trace the evolution of Abrams' thinking about housing and related social issues in the context of the history of American social policy during the critical years of his engagement – from the New Deal to the Great Society. The focus on Abrams provides insights into the nuances of public policy debate, especially through the example of his involvement in specific New York cases, affording a grass-roots perspective on national policy and administrative issues (if that city can be considered grass-roots), while certainly not providing

a comprehensive review, for which readers must turn elsewhere. In addition to Abrams' extensive published writings, Henderson draws upon the Abrams papers at Cornell University and interviews and correspondence with the daughters of Charles and Ruth Abrams, among others.

Henderson frames his evaluation of Abrams' policy position on housing issues in terms of 'state-building', a concept presented somewhat abstractly when introduced, but which takes on increasingly tangible meaning as he examines the evolution of Abrams' thinking about the appropriate role of the public and private sectors in housing policy in the 1930s, during the Second World War, and in the post-war decades. During the 1930s Abrams, concluding that restrictions on the private sector only produced limited results, championed an expanded public role where private investment proved inadequate. However, increasingly he objected to 'business welfare' approaches which provided public subsidies to private interests rather than direct public support to achieve policy objectives. New Deal-era federal mortgage guarantees to investment institutions rather than relief to prospective home owners were a case in point. In Abrams' view, in a mixed economy the private sector was likely to address what would provide it with profits, and the public sector should therefore take on what the private sector would not, like affordable housing. In the post-war years, as Abrams confronted the issues related to urban renewal, he distanced himself from his earlier support of large-scale projects precisely because of the tendency to rely upon subsidies to large investment and development institutions, and instead advocated forms of direct assistance to low income residents. Ironically, during the housing policy debates of the 1960s this position led Abrams to have a greater affinity with the proposals of moderate Republicans like Charles Percy than with some of the policies of Robert Weaver and the Johnson administration.

Abrams' biography indeed provides important insight into his policy positions. Born in Tsarist Russia in 1902 in the Jewish ghetto of Vilna at a time of aggressive anti-Semitism, Abrams accompanied his parents two years later in their resettlement to Brooklyn, where he witnessed at an early age the crowded conditions of tenement living, the atmosphere of racial hostility and discrimination, and the lack of adequate provisions for public welfare. Embarking upon a lifetime career as a lawyer, Abrams served as legal consultant to mortgage investment companies and made shrewd housing investments of his own, experiences that Henderson argues paradoxically gave him a grounding in knowledge of actual real estate and investment practices that other critics and reformers lacked. In the 1930s Abrams was called upon to help draft some of the pioneering legislation for the creation of the New York City Housing Authority, and as its general counsel he became a leading expert on the legal underpinnings of public housing policy. Not always as politically as intellectually adept, Abrams moved from direct public service to an academic position at New York's New School, pioneering the field that would come to be urban studies, and for the rest of his career serving as commentator and consultant on urban housing issues.

Abrams' evolving concerns about private/public sector roles came to bear directly on issues of discrimination during the 1940s when he became a leading critic of plans for the massive Stuyvesant Town residential development. Planned to address the severe post-war housing shortage in New York, the proposal to replace a blighted area on Manhattan's Lower East Side called for combining the resources of mortgage investment capital with the government housing powers

Abrams had helped to pioneer. This approach, however, involved tax exemptions, lacked provisions for resettlement and discriminated against African Americans. Abrams found this last especially egregious, since he had become convinced that if past patterns of discrimination in existing housing areas proved difficult to address, at least new housing projects offered an opportunity to start out on a non-discriminatory basis and could become a model for race relations in the post-war era. Abrams' continuing concerns about the imperative to address housing discrimination culminated in his publication of *Forbidden Neighbors*, whose chronicle of discriminatory practices and recommendations for remedies represented what Henderson (paraphrasing housing reformer Catherine Bauer) calls – perhaps with overstatement but understandable conviction – 'an *Uncle Tom's Cabin* for Housing'.

A chapter on Abrams' post-war activities as technical adviser on housing issues for a series of United Nations-funded studies of needs in developing countries and his critique of United States Cold War overseas assistance underscores the important global dimension of his role, though it lacks the sharp focus of Henderson's analysis of his fair housing position in the same era. The latter undoubtedly represented the strongest feature of Abrams' legacy, and the signal contribution of Henderson's volume is that it so effectively places Abrams' manifesto on race and housing in the context of an enormously creative, varied, committed and influential career centred on critical issues in American housing policy.

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