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Review of periodical articles

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Pre-1500

One of the attractions of medieval urban history is the fact that major conceptual problems in the field continue to be debated. In a stimulating review article by J.H. Mundy, 'Philip Jones and the medieval Italian city-state', *J. of European Economic History*, 28 (1999), 185–200, one distinguished scholar is taxed for holding views now dismissed by some, but of which he is by no means a unique surviving representative. One of these views assumes a clear distinction between the antique city, supposedly a bureaucratic centre with limited economic functions, and the medieval city, as the home of industrious artisans and nascent capitalism. The image of the non-profit-making ancient town may be overly indebted to the nature of the literary sources and to the prevalent interests of classicists; but, although many would now agree that both the elements in the above equation need qualifying, a more focused comparison is presently lacking, and a fine book is still waiting to be written on the transition from the ancient world to the middle ages in urban history.

Chronologically speaking, fifth-century events now appear to have interrupted urban life everywhere. This hiatus is exemplified at York, which is subjected to important fresh analysis by C. Norton, 'The Anglo-Saxon cathedral at York and the topography of the Anglian city', *J. of the British Archaeological Association*, 151 (1998), 1–42. Norton, in fact, makes a case for the origins of York's medieval revival at an earlier date than previously imagined; but at the same time he emphasizes the physical and cultural break with the Roman past. The site of the pre-Viking age cathedral, which became the dominant factor York's early medieval topography, had no significance within the late Roman city. The picture is sketched of an important urban centre before the Scandinavians came to what they would call *Yorvic*, but one whose relationship with the antique past of the Roman *Eboracum* would continue to be ambivalent. An equally clear post-Roman interruption of urban life is evident elsewhere in S.W. Ward, 'The archaeology of medieval Chester: a review', *Transactions of the Chester Archaeological Society*, 73 (1998 for 1994/95), 31–62.

Another view challenged by Mundy and attributed by him, like the first, to the continuing strength of a nineteenth-century liberal tradition, sees a clear distinction between the medieval town and the countryside. This, certainly, is a presupposition which has come in for assault over several decades. For a long time, prosopographical studies have shown the ties of property ownership and regional commerce which bound urban elites to their hinterlands. A recent case in point is P. Daileader, 'Town and countryside in northeastern Catalonia,

1267–c. 1450: the *sobreposats de la horta* of Perpignan', *J. of Medieval History*, 24 (1998), 347–66. These officials were the heads of a city-based agricultural guild whose regulations, with the backing of municipal authority, protected the interests of both landowners and farm workers in north-eastern Catalonia. A different critique of the supposed 'town-country' divide has been made from the viewpoint of the smallest marketing centres, which linked rural production into the lower end of a hierarchy of towns. A research project of just this kind is described in J. Laughton and C. Dyer, 'Small towns in the east and west Midlands in the later Middle Ages: a comparison', *Midland History*, 24 (1999), 24–52. These authors emphasize the need to consider urbanization within the context of a range of places of exchange, including large towns, small towns, market villages and regional fairs. In the light of evidence such as theirs, the line dividing town from country becomes blurred.

None the less, in the eyes of the contemporary beholder the medieval town was perceived as having different qualities from the encircling countryside. Some of the most creative work in medieval urban history continues to be undertaken in this area of the image of the city, which could often differ markedly from material realities. P. Carolla, 'Roma vista da Bisanzio e dai Goti: l'epistola di Belisario a Totila in Procopio. Una *laus urbis* nel contesto storicopolitico', *Quaderni medievali*, 46 (1998), 6–18, discusses an incident in which Totila, king of the Goths, refrained from sacking the city of Rome in AD 547 following his receipt of a letter from the Byzantine general, Belisarius. The letter had urged the protection of Rome, not on grounds of its economic or religious or political importance – for it had virtually none – but because of its antiquity and its artistic treasures. Later in the medieval period, Rome would contract still further from its classical apogee, taking on ever more the appearance of an untended tract of countryside. Yet some elements of antiquity remained, sufficient to provide the iconographic basis for the brief but memorable ascendancy of Cola di Rienzo in the middle of the fourteenth century. Remarkably, two articles have appeared simultaneously on Rienzo's use of both textual sources and visual imagery to fire up the Roman population with the mood of independence. A. Collins, 'Cola di Rienzo, the Lateran Basilica, and the *lex de imperio* of Vespasian', *Mediaeval Studies*, 60 (1998), 159–83, emphasizes that the demagogue was able to draw upon a living legal tradition for the story of how the Roman people had once, in its former greatness, created the emperor. Notary that he was, Rienzo would have been aware of lawyers' texts recording the constitutional powers of the classical emperors, to which he directly referred when attempting to create his own personal ascendancy in the city. C.E. Benes, 'Cola di Rienzo and the *lex regia*', *Viator*, 30 (1999), 231–51, focuses solely upon the bronze tablet bearing the text of the Vespasianic law, which Rienzo rediscovered and publicly displayed, framed by pictures of his own devising. Benes points out that the antique lettering of this inscription probably was, as the contemporary chronicler asserts, incomprehensible to other fourteenth-century Romans. Rienzo's theatrical use of the tablet therefore presented him, Moses-like, to the citizens as the privileged interpreter for the modern age of the city's grandiose, antique past. Ambition led Rienzo to move too fast from the reconstitution of the ancient republic to the creation of a neo-Vespasianic imperial authority, with catastrophic results. Yet these two studies show the potential resonance within an urban community of carefully manipulated images of civic identity.

In addition to imagery drawn from the prestigious past, those who hoped to weld urban society together in the medieval period often made telling use of civic building projects, thereby giving tangible existence to the public domain. Such were the open market-places of the early communes. M. Tulliani, 'Il Campo di Siena: un mercato cittadino in epoca comunale', *Quaderni medievali*, 46 (1998), 59–100, records the creation and management of the main piazza of Siena between c. 1250 and c. 1350. The whole project is a very early example of the kind of public work which, of itself, helped to bring the commune into being and then to give it an objective image. As time went on the public sphere would extend further into the fabric of city life. Thus the Mercanzia of Siena, the commercial office of an association of traders, which had been first built as a private venture in the fourteenth century, came to be lavishly extended in the fifteenth century; but this time the director of operations was the republican Signoria. As is argued by D. Friedman, 'Monumental urban form in the late medieval Italian commune: loggias and the Mercanzie of Bologna and Siena', *Renaissance Studies*, 12 (1998), 325–40, this communal involvement exemplifies the developing centralization of state control over urban building. The same theme is developed more thoroughly for Siena by F. Nevola, "'Per ornato della città: Siena's Strada Romana as a focus of fifteenth century urban renewal', *Art Bulletin*, 82, 1 (2000). Here the government's self-conscious concern to ornament the principal street of the city drove its increasing involvement in legislation and funding to ensure that Siena's best public face was turned to greet its innumerable visitors. At the time of the reconstruction of the Siennese Mercanzia, the city had a much reduced need for economic offices, compared with the preceding century when the Mercanzia had been erected. On the other hand, renewed political threats to the republican constitution of the city encouraged a return to tradition in communal decoration, as is brought out by C. Shaw, 'Memory and tradition in Siennese political life in the fifteenth century', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th ser., 9 (1999), 221–31. The tradition of Siena's republicanism was constantly challenged in the fifteenth century by moves towards a more narrow government. But it is striking that one response to these challenges was the production of traditional images of the republican city. These included the tapestry copies made in the 1440s of the 'Good and Bad Government' frescoes of 1339 on the walls of the Council Chamber, and the carvings of the she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus which were erected along the length of the Strada Romana within the city.

A similar point about the power of urban images is made by M.M. Bullard, writing about the town hall of Florence in 'Adumbrations of power and the politics of appearances in Medicean Florence', *Renaissance Studies*, 12 (1998), 341–56. As has been described recently in greater detail by N. Rubinstein in *The Palazzo Vecchio 1298–1532* (Oxford, 1995), the redecoration of this central monument of the Florentine commune in the middle of the fifteenth century had a sinister aspect, being designed to distract attention from the fact that the Medici family were simultaneously subverting the values of the republic. The appropriation of civic imagery to serve particular ends was further exemplified by Lorenzo de' Medici's predatory involvement in Florentine masques, described by C. Dempsey, 'Portraits and masks in the art of Lorenzo de' Medici, Botticelli, and Politian's *Stanze per la Giostra*', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 52 (1999), 1–42. Lorenzo took traditional Florentine popular dance and theatrical forms and turned them

into something much more refined and exclusive. The new *mascherata* looked forward to the spectacles of the sixteenth-century Florentine grand dukes, the French *ballet du cour* and the English royal masque. Taking his inspiration from accounts of antique triumphs, Lorenzo de' Medici thus remodelled civic culture to suit his political ends.

Not that rulers, whether *de facto* or constitutional, could simply impose their own versions of urban iconography upon a passive population. Anyone who has studied such issues is aware, rather, of a continuous exchange of ideas as different elements in urban society find in the imagery meanings congenial to themselves. The point is illustrated by A. Brown, 'Bruges and the Burgundian "theatre-state": Charles the Bold and Our Lady of the Snow', *History*, 84 (1999), 573–89. This Burgundian duke is found to have joined a large and prestigious guild in Bruges, by which he did not so much assert his princely authority, as align himself diplomatically with a popular urban tradition. At the same time, the duke's own versions of civic splendour tended to incorporate a touch of magnificence which was beyond the pockets of the citizenry. This was seen most spectacularly in the quantities of lights which were carried about the Burgundian dukes as they moved through the streets of the towns, creating an effect so bright that it seemed the person of the prince was dispelling the shadows. E. Lecuppre-Desjardin, 'Les lumières de la ville: recherche sur l'utilisation de la lumière dans les cérémonies bourguignonnes (XIVe–XVe siècles)', *Revue historique*, 609 (1999), 23–43, argues that when the chroniclers wrote that a 'paradise' had been created by the duke's presence in the city, the effect of the lights, above all, had actually created this sensation for the onlookers.

Civic governments also used images to celebrate the theme of a harmonious spiritual community. At Empoli, following an alleged blasphemy during the Corpus Christi procession of 1518, a Jew was found guilty of 'error' and fined by the commune: his fine was allocated to an artist to make an image of the Virgin Mary to be displayed at the scene of the crime. L.A. Waldman, who describes the case in 'A late work by Andrea della Robbia rediscovered: the Jews' Tabernacle at Empoli', *Apollo*, 150 (1999), 13–20, makes the point that, while on the one hand the civic governors clearly hoped with this commission to satisfy and defuse anti-Semitic feeling over the incident, on the other hand the tabernacle remained as a constant testimony to tensions between the two religious communities.

The volatility of urban images, and their appropriation by differing sectors of the population, is repeatedly seen in their use by the voluntary associations known variously as guilds or as confraternities. W. Levin, 'A lost fresco cycle by Nardo and Jacopo di Cione at the Misericordia in Florence', *The Burlington Magazine*, 141 (1999), 75–80, describes some lost Marian scenes painted in the fourteenth century for the major lay charitable company of the Misericordia in Florence. Recent work has emphasized the fluidity and adaptability of these organizations, qualities demonstrated in the article by A.F. Sutton, 'The silent years of London guild history before 1300: the case of the Mercers', *Historical Research*, 71 (1998), 121–41. Another study which has turned up fraternities where none were previously thought to exist is M.-M. de Cevins, 'Les confréries de Bratislava à la fin du moyen âge d'après les sources testamentaires', *Confraternitas*, 9, 2 (1998), 3–21. An examination of the surviving wills for this heavily Germanized town in Hungary has revealed some two dozen guilds of various kinds. An important detail noted by the author is that a number of testators

mention outstanding debts to these confraternities, which implies that these organizations were regularly underwriting loans to members. Many of these societies were tiny, demonstrating lay piety and social solidarity at the most local level. As in the case of Bratislava, their traces are generally to be found, if at all, in the humblest of records, exemplified also by H. Combes, 'Piety and belief in 15th-century London: an analysis of the 15th-century churchwardens' inventory of St Nicholas Shambles', *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society*, 48 (1998 for 1997), 137–52.

At the other end of the scale, however, the league of towns might perhaps be considered as a particular form of grand fraternity. Relatively little has been written since the nineteenth century on these politically highly significant alliances. O. Kammerer's study, 'Réseaux de villes et conscience urbaine dans l'Oberrhein (milieu XIIIe siècle – milieu XIVe siècle)', *Francia*, 25, 1 (1998), 123–76, suggests that it would be worth looking again at the various medieval leagues of cities in a comparative context. Those of twelfth-century north Italy have, characteristically, tended to be treated separately; but the theme would reward comparative treatment across Europe both north and south of the Alps. A final charge of J.H. Mundy, in the essay noted at the start of this review, is against the persistent segregation respectively of the north and the south in medieval urban history. To survey the medieval urban world, from the Mediterranean to the Baltic, has been made the more challenging by the existence of markedly different historiographical traditions in, for example, Italy, Germany and Russia. Yet the potential rewards of such comparisons, in terms both of fresh insights and new questions, are tempting indeed.

1500–1800

Are you anxious? Is urban history anxious? Anxiety has certainly become an important theme in social and cultural history. Yet as Alan Hunt observes in 'Anxiety and social explanation: some anxieties about anxiety', *J. Social History*, 32 (1999), 509–28, the term has received little critical examination. In a survey of how sociologists and historians ranging from Stuart Hall to Jean Delumeau have used the term, Hunt highlights the dangers of declaring that a particular social anxiety lay behind or even caused a historical phenomenon. However, unlike William M. Reddy's cutting-edge 'Emotional liberty: politics and history in the anthropology of emotions', *Cultural Anthropology*, 14 (1999), 256–88, which synthesizes speech act theory and the latest social constructivist anthropology, Hunt does not develop his arguments with reference either to anthropological studies which see the emotional categories of one culture as different from those of another or to post-structuralist critiques of the whole notion of historical 'context'.

James Epstein's 'Social practices/democratic vistas', *Social History*, 24 (1999), 294–310, addresses the latter knotty problem. Urban historians of a theoretical bent might concur with his proposition that 'thinking about the relationship between the logic of spatial practices and ... the production of meanings' is a good place from which to start rethinking notions of 'context'. The first half of this short article, telling the story of John Frost, arrested for seditious words outside a Marylebone coffee shop in 1792, brings out the potential of this kind of approach. For Epstein traces how Frost encountered a succession of spatially

defined language communities – the coffee house, the court, the prison, the street. Such *locales*, Epstein stresses, were not just backgrounds to Frost's words, they actively contributed to the ordering and the meaning of those words.

Renata Ago's 'Enforcing agreements: notaries and courts in early modern Rome', *Continuity and Change*, 14 (1999), 191–206, M. Martinat's 'Le blé du Pape: système annonnaire et logiques économiques à Rome à l'époque moderne', *Annales HSS*, 54 (1999), 219–44 and Douglas Hay's 'The state and the market in 1800: Lord Kenyon and Mr Waddington', *Past and Present*, 162 (1999), 101–62, all suggest that early modern markets exemplify Epstein's argument. All three demonstrate that different legal and cultural contexts transformed the nature of the transactions occurring within a particular market and indicate the problems of applying neoclassical economic models to early modern economies.

Ago's study responds to recent work by Craig Muldrew on early modern English credit and debt litigation. It reveals how the economy of baroque Rome linked 'debtors and creditors into a single chain of almost infinite length' with a range of credit networks and the expectation that the vendor should be prepared to wait for the purchaser to pay up. Litigation can be interpreted, therefore, not simply as the breakdown of trust between two parties, but also as a way of establishing the terms of what were often ambiguous and poorly defined agreements. Like Ago, Martinat stresses how market exchanges in Rome expressed social relationships rather than abstract economic rules, and relates this to scholastic notions of 'just price' rather than to E.P. Thompson's rather abstract use of the term. For papal authorities intervened extensively in the Roman markets, even establishing one specifically for small producers and buyers, in order to ensure that these ethical codes were followed rather than permitting individuals to raise prices when they thought the market would support it.

Hay's hugely erudite article, meanwhile, examines common law cases around 1800 in which merchants were found guilty of forestalling and regrading goods. These prosecutions and the stern judgements delivered against the offences by the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Kenyon, were widely publicized *causes célèbres* at the time and were subsequently dismissed as absurd anachronisms by nineteenth-century commentators. Yet they are worthy of note, Hay shows, 'because they encapsulated a critical moment in the history of classical political economy and also in popular economic beliefs' (p. 149). As late as 1800 the free market theories which were being read by London merchants and MPs were fiercely contested by many authorities. Such voices had real political power because they included many of the judiciary, men whose political culture and political agency Hay richly delineates.

Like Hay, David Garrioch's examination of 'The everyday lives of Parisian women and the October days of 1789', *Social History*, 24 (1999), 231–49, explores the transformation of moral economy at the end of the eighteenth century. The prominence of women in the major riots of that year was an extension of their long-standing involvement in neighbourhood culture and the politics of the market-place and the street. However, unprecedentedly these women rioters came from all over Paris, and Garrioch argues that this was due not only to the political crisis after the fall of the Bastille but also to the gradual integration of the Parisian economy.

As Peter M. Jones shows in 'Living the Enlightenment and the French

Revolution: James Watt, Matthew Boulton, and their sons', *Historical J.*, 42 (1999), 157–82, these events had a profound and wide-ranging effect. Birmingham and its main learned society, the Lunar Society, were, he shows, part of a genuinely European intellectual culture linked by correspondence, trade and visits. The papers of James Watt, Matthew Boulton and their families reveal how this republic of letters was torn apart by the bitter conflicts of the revolutionary period which were mirrored by the Birmingham Church and King riots which destroyed Priestley's laboratory.

In 'Autopsie du massacre de l'Hôtel de Ville (4 Juillet 1652): Paris et la Fronde des Princes', *Annales HSS*, 54 (1999), 319–51, and 'Freeman and independence in English borough politics, c. 1770–1830', *Past and Present*, 161 (1998), 84–115, meanwhile, Robert Descimon and Roey Sweet respectively bring out the particularity of early modern urban political cultures. In a detailed examination of the events which led up to the killing of some of Paris's leading citizens, Descimon argues that they can be understood in multiple ways, as flowing from 'traditional' forms of urban revolt structured by notions of just price, from the failure of the Hôtel de Ville to meet protestors' demands, and also from the political feuds of noble groupings. However, he concludes not by stressing the polyvalence of the day's bloody events, but by emphasizing the extent to which they transformed the structure of Parisian politics. Examining (mainly parliamentary) elections in five boroughs, Sweet argues cogently that provincial loyalties were not extinguished by national political movements or by commercial culture. Her article demonstrates that the rhetoric of 'independence', rooted in a 'civic ideology of ... chartered rights and freemen's privileges, which derived from a sense of local urban identity', continued to play an important role in local politics, particularly up to 1820.

In stressing the vitality of provincial culture, her account pays less attention to the interaction of centre and locality addressed in different ways by T. Watson, 'Friends at court: the correspondence of the Lyon City Council, c. 1525–1575', *French History*, 13 (1999), 280–302, D.K. Smith, 'Learning politics: the Nîmes hosiery guild and the statutes of 1706–1712', *French Historical Studies*, 22 (1999), 493–533 and M.J. Power, 'Politics and progress in Liverpool, 1660–1740', *Northern History*, 35 (1999), 119–38. Watson describes the correspondence network of the second city of France, noting that the language of fidelity was a part of urban as well as noble political culture. Smith retells in considerable detail how the stocking-knitters of Nîmes managed to persuade the State Council to establish guild regulation over the Languedoc hosiery industry despite the opposition of the city's governors and the region's wealthy *negociants*. He shows, furthermore, how the guild's political *savoir faire* fits poorly into the standard models of political culture employed by historians of pre-revolutionary France and suggests sensibly that they need to adopt 'a more inclusive approach to the idea of politicization'. Power, too, explores connections between economic advance and political structures. The port of Liverpool grew tenfold between 1660 and 1740, and its merchants took an active role in the expanding North Atlantic trade. However, the large-scale investment in urban infrastructure, not least the highly innovative new dock necessary for this growth, was accomplished between 1695 and 1715. Power suggests that this should in part be attributed to the city's political situation, for these two decades were marked by the ascendancy of a merchant oligarchy in which commercial interests outweighed party or religious

divisions. The periods before and after this interlude saw far more political controversy which stymied other civic improvements.

Miles Ogborn's 'This most lawless space: the geography of the Fleet and the making of Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Act of 1753', *New Formations*, 37 (1999), 11–32 and Helen Hills' 'Cities and virgins: female aristocratic convents in early modern Naples and Palermo', *Oxford Art J.*, 22 (1999), 29–54 offer more topographical (and more gendered) explorations of power. In the first half of the eighteenth century thousands of clandestine marriages were performed in the chapel of London's Fleet Prison. Ogborn notes that representations of this area mobilized a 'range of meanings about property, seduction and [social] difference' in debates about marriage. Although his general point foregrounding this spatial imaginary is powerfully made, the study builds up a composite image of an area the author labels, 'The Fleet', but which does not seem to be especially prominent in the passages quoted. Hills is more interested in spatial practices than in imagined geographies. Nuns were increasingly cloistered, she notes, and this was expressed inside and outside convents in the elaboration of screens, gateways and convent walls. Yet, paradoxically, the sisters increased their presence upon city space even as they became more enclosed. The number of nunneries rose; they thus owned more and more of the city centre in perpetuity and developed more assertive building projects.

The Counter-Reformation's impact on public space is further brought out by José Antonio Mateos Royo's 'All the town is a stage: civic ceremonies and religious festivities in Spain during the golden age', *Urban History*, 26 (1999), 165–89. This surveys the elaboration of devotion on the streets in festivals such as Corpus Christi, the importance of celebrations such as Carnival which he terms pagan survivals, and the various secular entertainments. Unfortunately, he gives little substantive analysis of the morphology or social meanings of particular ceremonies. More original is Grayson Wagstaff's 'Music for the dead and the control of ritual behaviour in Spain, 1450–1550', *The Music Quarterly*, 82 (1998), 551–63. This examines how polyphonic settings of the *Libera Me* in the funeral Matins came to be the model for the service into the twentieth century. Its development, he argues, was part of a wider drive for new forms of appropriate behaviour in early sixteenth-century Spain. One part of this was the condemnation of excessive crying and wailing in church. 'By the . . . death of Charles V in 1558, there had been a systematic codification of the liturgy, music and ceremonial of death rituals', and the dead monarch was thus memorialized with polyphonic music in every major city across Spain and Latin America.

Several articles explore the nature of space *within* urban dwellings. Tim Meldrum's 'Domestic space, privacy and the metropolitan household', *Urban History*, 26 (1999), 27–39, further complicates our understandings of the notions of public and private in the long eighteenth century. London church court depositions reveal that innovations like back stairs for servants can be found much earlier than in conventional chronologies of architectural history, and that servants did not move in the regimented fashion which house plans might suggest. As Meldrum suggests, we need more fully to contextualize the notion of the 'private'. In "'Pots and pans history": the material culture of the kitchen in early modern England', *J. Design History*, 11 (1998), 201–16, Sara Pennell similarly examines the *uses* for domestic space. Sensitively reading inventories alongside depositions, Pennell suggests that close attention to the details of material culture

in the kitchen – distinguishing between different types of saucepan and skillet – is essential if historians are to enrich histories of consumption with ‘a sense of how individuals accommodated a proliferating material environment within what was still a profoundly ordered world’.

In ‘Inside out: clothes, dissimulation, and the arts of accounting in the autobiography of Matthaus Schwarz, 1696–1574’, *Representations*, 66 (1999), 100–21, Valentin Groebner uses clothes, rather than pots and pans, to illuminate Augsburg life. Schwarz’s extraordinary ‘autobiography’ consists of a series of 137 pictures of him, beginning with an image of him as an infant and concluding with a representation of him as an old man. Groebner relates this pictorial project to a culture of dissimulation in which clothes carried enormous social and economic significance and suggests Schwarz was thus trying to fix and to play with the social identities in which he was portrayed.

The widest implications of such material culture studies are brought out by John E. Crowley’s ‘The sensibility of comfort’, *American Historical Rev.*, 104 (1999), 749–82, and Mimi Hellman’s ‘Furniture, sociability, and the work of leisure in eighteenth-century France’, *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 32 (1999), 415–45. Analysing a wide range of British and American authors, Crowley argues convincingly that modern notions of comfort as a physical rather than a social condition appeared around 1700 in texts trying to draw the line between luxury and necessity. The ‘desire for greater comfort’, he argues, cannot therefore be invoked as a straightforward explanation for seventeenth- and eighteenth-century consumerism – soft chairs, for instance, were not regarded as desirable because they were deemed appropriate only for invalids. Rather, the language of comforts was developed as a form of legitimation for popular consumption. Only in the late eighteenth century was it sufficiently diffused to be incorporated into the sentimental and humanitarian languages of social reform. Discussing fine eighteenth-century French furniture, a field traditionally dominated by connoisseurship *par excellence*, Hellman’s sparkling study links material culture with the history of the body and with social practices, and provocatively inverts the relationship between people and objects. *Salon* culture, she suggests, was constructed through the consumption and use of material goods. But crucially, the ‘very mobility and convenience’ (not to mention fragility) of objects like dressing tables and china teacups also made them ‘challenging to use’ (p. 423). Their physical characteristics thus structured the forms of behaviour – in her words, ‘Tables, chairs, and other decorative objects were social actors that both facilitated and, in a sense, monitored the leisure acts of privileged society’ (p. 416).

Corpses are revealed as similarly powerful social actors in Ulrike Strasser’s ‘Bones of contention: cloistered nuns, decorated relics, and the contest over women’s place in the public sphere of Counter-Reformation Munich’, *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 90 (1999), 255–88. With a remarkable range of sources she illuminates the resentments felt by the sisters of the Pütrich convent when they were barred from city streets by their strict claustration in the 1620s. The nuns, however, did not remain entirely confined. Strasser shows how the cult of purgatory provided a new conceptual space which the nuns colonized and how the veneration of saints offered them civic roles. Not only did their cloisters become veritable ‘prayer and purgation factories’, but the nuns actively collected relics, notably the bones of St Dorothea from the catacombs of Rome, and put

them on public display in their church, ensuring that they had an important role in public religious life once more.

In 'Searchers of the dead: authority, marginality, and the interpretation of plague in England, 1574–1665', *Gender and History*, 11 (1999), 1–29 and 'Nosology, mortality and disease theory in the eighteenth century', *J. History of Medicine*, 54 (1999), 261–84, Richelle Munkhoff and Margaret DeLacy investigate more secular treatments of the dead. Munkhoff focuses on the identity and cultural significance of the women who examined corpses in early modern London, revealing both the significance of their interpretations of bodily signs and how their ambiguous expertise has been erased in most histories of the plague. Far more research is needed, however, on the identity and social standing of searchers before everyone is convinced by the parallels drawn between searchers and witches. DeLacy's article appears in a special issue devoted to the interpretation of causes of death registration data and to encouraging dialogue between demographers and medical historians. Her lucid survey of the changing understandings of disease in eighteenth-century Britain is unlikely to bridge the epistemological divisions between them, but reveals effectively how historians of mortality must examine the changing intellectual as well as the social contexts of doctors' and searchers' 'acts of interpretation'.

John Craig and J.F. Merritt present more conventional discussions of urban religion in 'Reformers, conflict and revisionism: the Reformation in sixteenth-century Hadleigh', *Historical J.*, 42 (1999), 1–23 and 'Puritans, Laudians, and the phenomenon of church-building in Jacobean London', *ibid.*, 41 (1998), 935–60 respectively. The Suffolk town of Hadleigh, Craig notes, has a reputation for a rapid urban reformation, due at least in part to its celebration by the Protestant martyrologist, John Foxe. However, his minutely researched piece shows not only that early advocates of religious reform in the town were less united and less thoroughly Protestant than Foxe claimed, but also that many townsfolk were slow to embrace reformed teaching, and some were actively hostile. Craig incidentally reveals how Foxe adapted his history according to the political and religious circumstances of each successive edition of his *Acts and Monuments*, and Merritt similarly goes behind the accounts of partisan contemporaries, warning of the danger of importing the vocabulary of seventeenth-century polemic – 'beautification', 'neglect', etc. – into modern accounts of the condition of churches. Whereas many historians have accepted Laudian claims that Puritans neglected the fabric of parish churches, Merritt shows that there was substantial rebuilding and edification of London parish churches well before Laud was made a bishop. This took many forms and its meanings were multivalent and not restricted to a sense of the beauty of holiness as a number of scholars have suggested. She omits to note, however, the devastating implications of her discovery that 'the standard range of parish documentation may not always record even large-scale programmes of building and repair' (p. 940) for those historians who seem to think that churchwardens' accounts offer a full history of the Reformation.

Strasser's microstudy highlights how urban history should encompass time as well as Lucy Peltzer's 'Aestheticizing the ancestral city: antiquarianism, topography and the representation of London in the long eighteenth century', *Art History*, 22 (1999), 472–94, explores how engraved representations of the capital interacted with discourses of the ancient and of the modern. Both C.M. Harris

and R.E. Cray Jr, meanwhile, demonstrate how cities often contain or serve as sites of remembrance. In 'Washington's gamble, L'Enfant's dream: politics, and the founding of the national capital', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 56 (1999), 527–64, Harris shows that in 1790–91 Congress agreed to construct a new capital on an open site next to the Potomac River. George Washington and the French architect, Pierre Charles L'Enfant, planned for this to be a city of grand monuments designed to unite the divided states, and L'Enfant's 1799 design for Washington's tomb would have made the city a site of national remembrance. Republicans, notably Jefferson, however, condemned such ambitions as undermining the autonomy of individual states and ensured that none of these grand schemes were granted the necessary funds. The conflict between Federalists and Republicans, Cray demonstrates, in 'Commemorating the prison ship dead: revolutionary memory and the politics of sepulture in the early republic, 1776–1808', *ibid.*, 565–90, was also played out in disputes about how and whether to build a memorial to the 11,000 revolutionary sailors who died on British prison hulks. Finally in 1808 the New York Republican political club, the Tammany Society, processed from Manhattan to Brooklyn for the unveiling of such a monument.

However, the temporality of city life is not just the relationship between past and present. R. Abad's 'Un indice de déchristianisation? L'Evolution de la consommation de viande à Paris en Carême sous l'ancien régime', *Revue Historique*, 610 (1999), 237–75, explores both the rhythms of Parisian stomachs and the tempo of dechristianization. The Counter-Reformation closed the Paris cattle markets for six weeks to ensure strict observation of Lent. Those who were permitted to eat meat for reasons of health had to get their supplies from the Hotel Dieu. Late seventeenth-century observers reckoned that the numbers of animals slaughtered in the Hotel Dieu was rising faster than the Parisian population, and Abad confirms this was definitely the case in the eighteenth century. By the end of the *ancien régime*, he observes, Lenten abstinence was no more than a memory. Paul Griffiths' impressively researched 'Meanings of nightwalking in early modern England', *The Seventeenth Century*, 13 (1998), 212–38, meanwhile, casts fresh light on the regulation of the night before effective street lighting and on early modern gender and policing. It is conventional, he notes, to assume that nightwalker was a synonym for prostitute. But, although darkness was regularly associated with crime and disorder from medieval times, most of those arrested as 'nightwalkers' in fifteenth-century London were men. In an exhaustive enumeration of the 'nightwalkers' brought into Bridewell he shows that in the late 1610s a quarter were men, but that by the late 1620s the category was being applied almost exclusively to women. Although Griffiths is unable to give a definitive explanation for this shift, he makes a good case for the institutional role of Bridewell in the process, and establishes that this was a distinctively metropolitan phenomenon – outside London the majority of those arrested as nightwalkers in mid-seventeenth-century England were men.

Bridewell had many continental cousins and Joel Harrington explores one in Nuremburg in 'Escape from the great confinement: the genealogy of a German workhouse', *J. Modern History*, 71 (1999), 308–45. As his title suggests, Harrington draws out the historiographical implications of his study. A workhouse was proposed in Nuremburg in 1588, but no such institution was created until the 1670s. In a lengthy critique of the modernization narratives underlying the

historiography of social policy and of the ways it envisions the relationship between ideology and action, Harrington argues that the foundation of the workhouse is attributable to shifts 'not at all in the generally assumed realm of ideology, but in the mundane mechanics of early modern bureaucracy'. Small-scale administrative changes were decisive in producing policy initiative.

A very different sensibility informs Ravi Ahuja, 'The origins of colonial labour policy in late eighteenth-century Madras', *International Rev. of Social History*, 44 (1999), 159–95, which is concerned to refute arguments that imperial rule made little impact on the structures of Indian society before 1800. On the contrary, he argues, the later eighteenth century was marked by repeated attempts to create a police committee, to regulate labour and to reduce what was deemed to be speculation on the Madras docks. Although there were many parallels between the policies pursued in Britain and those in India, imperial rule was more physically coercive, especially in Madras city.

In two useful articles, 'Women and the branks in Stirling c. 1600 to c. 1730', *Scottish Economic and Social History*, 18 (1998), 114–31 and "'Objects of charity": petitions to the London Foundling Hospital, 1768–72', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 32 (1999), 497–510, John G. Harrison and R.B. Outhwaite outline little-known aspects of women's experience. The branks, the scold's bridle, is much cited in general histories, but little systematic is known about its use. There were, Harrison shows, forty-four punishments involving the branks in Stirling over the seventeenth century and a further hundred cases where women were threatened with it. Although he steers clear of notions of a gender crisis, he notes that its use peaked in the 1640s and 1650s when there was a rise in witchcraft prosecutions; its use as a punishment faded fast after 1680. Outhwaite, meanwhile, describes the affecting petitions which women presented to the London Foundling Hospital in the later eighteenth century, showing how they reveal the enduring structures of labouring women's lives between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In 'Gambling and Venetian noblemen c1500–c1700', *Past and Present*, 162 (1999), 28–69 Jonathan Walker explores how leisure contributed to the urbanization of an aristocracy. Gambling, he shows, moved from being the private activity of small groups of nobles to being a major feature of Venetian culture carried out in semi-public *ridotti* and *casini*. Not only did the development of betting on cards, dice and elections parallel the increasing commercialization of Carnival in the city, but gambling also increasingly became part of noble self-presentation, serving as a way of testing a man's fortitude and boldness. As such, he concludes, competitive gambling offered one way by which the city's nobility reconciled their commercial heritage and their military culture. An exemplary story of gambling losses is told by William J. Connell and Giles Constable in 'Sacrilige and redemption in Renaissance Florence: the case of Antonio Rinaldeschi', *J. Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 61 (1998), 53–98. The unfortunate Antonio lost money and in a rage threw dry horse dung at an image of the Virgin as he returned home. Miraculously, the dung adhered to the image in the form of a rosette; a great outcry led to Antonio's apprehension, and his execution for blasphemy. Thereafter, the image became the centre of a devotional cult. Combining archival material with a contemporary painting of the episode, the authors reconstruct the story and use it to illustrate the centrality of Marian devotion and concerns about blasphemy in the populist regime established in early sixteenth-century Florence.

Several articles this year describe how the elite recreations, such as those described by Walker, support and require the labour of others. T.J. McGee's 'In the service of the commune: the changing role of Florentine civic musicians, 1450–1532', *Sixteenth-Century J.*, 30 (1999), 727–43, for instance, describes how these ceremonial musicians adapted their style and repertoire for increasingly private forms of music-making suitable for aristocratic households. In 'Continuity, change, and specialization within metropolitan London: the economy of Westminster, 1750–1820', *Economic History Rev.*, 52 (1999), 469–93, C. Harvey, E.M. Green and P.J. Corfield show how the database of Westminster poll books demonstrate the remarkable continuity of Westminster's occupational structure and how the census enumerators' taxonomy of occupations flattened out the baroque array of specializations, such as a dog doctor and a mousetrap maker, which could be supported by the London economy. Their findings 'reveal . . . the adaptability of the workforce that sustained the fleshpots of metropolitan life'.

Post-1800

In 'The other suburbanites: African American suburbanization in the north before 1950', *J. American History*, 85 (1999), 1495–1524, Andrew Wiese interrogates the values of Chagrin Falls Park, a community with a population of just under a thousand, located in the Cleveland region. Presenting both positive and negative representations of single-race developments of this kind in the period between the 1940s and the 1960s, Wiese documents the ways in which black Americans, rekindling powerful memories of southern folk-ways, capitalized on the advantages of living on the outskirts rather than at the centre of conurbations. He emphasizes that, between 1910 and 1940, as many as 285,000 – or 15 per cent – of all northward-bound black migrants settled in places like this, subscribing to the core values of white suburbia while simultaneously hankering after mores associated with the 'old south'. Reaching a peak population in 1960, the community declined thereafter, as a new generation committed itself to lifestyles assumed to be 'race-free' and condemned semi-rural black developments as sustaining regressive nostalgia for a world that would never be recovered. Wiese concludes a subtle exercise in social historical reconstruction by claiming that, in its prime, Chagrin Falls represented an 'intimate, stable and controllable community life that differed from both central city black neighborhoods and the highly mobile, individualistic, and nuclear-family-based society of middle-class white suburbia'.

Issues of communal identity also underpin linked contributions by Erik Olssen *et al.* on 'Urban society and the opportunity structure in New Zealand: the Caversham Project' and 'The ties that bind: persistence in a New Zealand industrial suburb, 1902–22', *Social History*, 24 (1999), 39–54 and 55–73. In urban centres within the nation as a whole, Olssen and his collaborators detect an accelerating rate of urbanization, substantial reductions in fertility and mortality, high levels of movement to the North Island, 'a dramatic surge in immigration from Britain and Australia', and growing reliance on new sources of energy for industrial production and transport systems. Concentrating on levels of persistence in the suburb of Caversham in Dunedin, they report that only about a third of the local population was found still to be present in the community at the end of each of the decades under review. Concurring with the pessimistic conclusions

of authors such as Thernstrom and Katz, Olssen *et al.* argue that those in search of rapid upward social mobility sought an escape from Caversham, while those who remained behind 'appeared to be trapped by children, mortgages and the gentle economic decline of the suburb'. An ambitious exploration of the multiple tonalities of communal belonging, Geneviève Massard-Guilbaud's 'The genesis of an urban identity: the Quartier de la Gare in Clermont-Ferrand, 1850–1914', *J. Urban History*, 25 (1999), 779–808, examines the different meanings ascribed to 'neighbourhood' by nineteenth- and early twentieth-century contemporaries. This is complemented by an analysis of persistence in the main avenue of the *quartier*. Recording a moderately high level of turnover, Massard-Guilbaud nevertheless notes that social solidarity was enhanced as a result of a long-running legal battle between residents and a local chemical works which threatened to destroy environmental salubrity. The author concludes by commenting on the extent to which, during her search for the essence of the Quartier de la Gare, she found herself repeatedly encountering the same social groups – landowners, shopkeepers and railway workers. 'Does this mean', Massard-Guilbaud asks, 'that all socially heterogeneous *quartiers* were ... given their shape by those precise sections of their populations who could most easily make themselves heard?' The article has been excellently translated by Geoffrey Crossick.

Relying predominantly on oral testimony, Graham Smith and Peter Jackson juxtapose pre- and post-independence modes of 'Narrating the nation: the "imagined community" of Ukrainians in Bradford', *J. Historical Geography*, 25 (1999), 367–87. In the period before 1991 émigré identity was decisively shaped by the fact that it was impossible to compare long-inherited images of the homeland with modern realities. Following independence it became evident that traditional 'Ukrainianness' in exile may have been decisively shaped by émigré political and religious orthodoxies. Now, at the turn of a new century, it may be possible to narrate the history of a reconstituted nation in several different generation- and gender-specific ways. Smith and Jackson conclude their article with the methodological reflection that oral evidence may be more usefully deployed to reveal the social construction of memory itself than as a means of transforming diverse recollections into 'histories'. In a complementary article – 'Narrating location: space, age and gender among Bengali elders in east London', *Oral History*, 27 (1999), 65–74 – Katy Gardner focuses on recreations of a 'golden era' and how such reconstructions shape collective memory and identity, while simultaneously underpinning the cultural centrality of work, family and community. Gardner reports that a number of interviewees displayed ambivalence towards the homeland, characterizing it both as irreplaceable *fons et origo* and a place in which poverty, privation and corruption remained unacceptably rife.

The maintenance and rejuvenation of tradition deeply preoccupied the little known Louis Napoleon Parker, an eccentric French-born, anti-modernist populist dramatist, heavily influenced by German and Swiss notions of *Fest* and *Erinnerungsspiele*. As Michael Woods fascinatingly documents in 'Performing power: local politics and the Taunton pageant of 1928', *J. Historical Geography*, 25 (1999), 57–76, Parkerian events were used to celebrate invented tradition and communal cohesiveness in several English towns and cities between the Edwardian period and the early 1930s. The York Pageant of 1909 drew on the skills of 13,000 professional and amateur actors and attracted half a million spectators during a twelve-week run. In relation to the less ambitious Taunton event, Woods defines

the essence of Parkerianism as a 'means through which elite discourses of power and locality were reproduced' and as a rural preservationist counter-blast to 'socialistic' tendencies strongly associated with large-scale industrial centres in the midlands and north. In Woods's view, the actors recruited to perform in these seemingly anodyne *tableaux vivants* became unwittingly involved in reproducing the authority structures of an urban elite. More direct forms of communal control are examined in James Kneale's "'A problem of supervision": moral geographies of the nineteenth century public house', *J. Historical Geography*, 25 (1999), 333–48. Drawing on major parliamentary inquiries undertaken in the 1850s and 1890s, and reading these as prescriptive rather than investigatory texts, Kneale detects a need on the part of social and administrative elites to make a clear-cut spatial distinction between the pub and other private and public areas. Attention is also drawn to the objective of introducing internal controls which would make it increasingly difficult for morally unreliable members of the working class to indulge in 'secret drinking'. This interpretation would have been more convincing had it been supported by evidence drawn from a wider range of sources.

There are a number of connections between urban identity and control and the 'tourist gaze'. In "'London in all its glory – or how to enjoy London": guidebook representations of imperial London', *J. Historical Geography*, 25 (1999), 279–99, David Gilbert agrees with Dean MacCannell that an account of visiting and exploring urban locations can constitute an 'ethnography of modernity'. Tracing divergent depictions of the capital between the nineteenth century and the near-present, the author seeks to establish run-of-the-mill and invariably anonymous guidebooks as a distinctive form of historical and geographical knowledge. Gilbert claims that, even before tourism as such had formally emerged, visitors to the capital were encouraged to follow the 'St Paul's-Westminster Abbey-Tower of London' route. Within a generation sightseers were informed that only in the metropolis was it possible to experience that most astonishing and 'modern' of phenomena – a 'new [urban] world in the making'. Twenty years later London was being marketed as the pulsing 'heart of the empire', a discourse which continued to predominate, though in a less strident version, until the mid-twentieth century.

Metropolitan geographies of desire are compellingly described in Lynda Nead's 'From alleys to courts: obscenity and the mapping of mid-Victorian London', *New Formations*, 37 (1999), 33–46. Identifying three early to mid-nineteenth-century 'key players', she focuses on Parliament, purveyors of pornography in the notorious Holywell Street, off the Strand, and the Central Criminal Court. Following an extended and stormy struggle, *The Times* exultantly announced in February 1858 that the 'Royal Academy of Filth in Holywell Street has been shorn of its dirty honours and dirty profits'. Nead juxtaposes anti-obscenity discourses against programmes for large-scale public works and street reform from the 1850s onwards. Marcus Collins' heavily London-centred 'The pornography of permissiveness: men's sexuality and women's emancipation in mid-twentieth century Britain', *History Workshop J.*, 47 (1999), 99–120, reveals that, as late as 1961, the timidly unreconstructed *Men Only* advocated chastity before marriage and declined to acknowledge the existence of 'healthy female carnality'. Following a brief period of Heffner-style 'liberation', insecurity, detectable in both visual representation and luridly lubricious editorial content in top-shelf best-sellers, gradually established itself. Collins concludes

that 'pornography emerged from a pitiful, hypocritical existence before permissiveness [flowered] briefly in the sixties only then to succumb in the seventies to pornography's tragic flaw: that this genre of pleasure is curiously host to all manner of male anxieties and fears'.

In a virtuoso performance Frank Mort recaptures a specific moment in the history of metropolitan regulation and desire. His 'Mapping sexual London: the Wolfenden Committee on homosexual offences and prostitution, 1954–57', *New Formations*, 37 (1999), 92–113, explores a topography of moral irregularity in the post-war capital: the muddled and ambivalent aims of the Wolfenden Committee itself, and divergent representations of the underlying pathologies of male homosexuality championed by those who sought either limited reform or comprehensive civil equality with heterosexuals. To this heady brew, Mort adds the influential, though informal evidence volunteered by Peter Wildeblood, a senior diplomatic correspondent for the *Daily Mail*, who had earlier been imprisoned for improper conduct; Goronwy Rees's resignation from the committee following the publication of newspaper articles which scandalously publicized his long-standing friendship with the sexually voracious Guy Burgess; and the testimony of under-cover members of the Metropolitan Police who had for many years been used as plants in clubs and public lavatories. The latter voiced salaciously puritanical euphemisms that owed as much to Joe Orton as an impartial inquiry into social reform.

According to Ross McKibbin in his recently published *Classes and Communities*, homosexual men had good reason to welcome the blanketing darkness that descended on the capital and other urban centres during the blackout. But what of that nebulous construct, 'civilian morale'? Despite Richard Titmuss' pioneering research into this subject in his classic though drably titled *Problems of Social Policy* (1955), little systematic work has yet been undertaken in this field. Making connections between the war-time 'will to survive', and progressive plans for urban regeneration, Junichi Hasegawa's 'The rise and fall of radical reconstruction in 1940s Britain', *Twentieth Century British History*, 10 (1999), 137–61, argues that it is possible to detect widespread opposition to shop-window projects which threatened to lead to increases in the rates and to deprive cash-strapped areas – and particularly public housing – of additional funds. Hasegawa also identifies a strong anti-planning animus. Thus a Conservative councillor in Portsmouth announced that 'urban experts' were invariably people who knew 'a great deal about very little, [went] on to learn more and more about less and less until finally [they knew] almost practically nothing'. Planners also themselves had doubts – by the early 1950s the *Architects' Journal* confessed that some progressive practitioners had been 'so busy with the struggles of getting anything done at all, that they [did] not have the time to stop, to pause, to think', and that this could only spell 'danger ahead'. In a complementary contribution – 'Governments, consultants and expert bodies in the physical reconstruction of the City of London in the 1940s', *Planning Perspectives*, 14 (1999), 121–44 – Hasegawa takes a down-beat view of the rebuilding of the golden square mile. The Labour government pressurized the Corporation into sidelining its own preferred plan and drawing on the skills of external consultants. Nevertheless, enforced stringencies in relation to capital expenditure, careless sitings and rapidly erected and aesthetically displeasing buildings evoked widespread criticism. All this was compounded by the fact that business decentralization –

which had been assumed to be a key to successful planning in the immediate aftermath of war – was never rigorously enforced. Finally, relevant ministers found themselves unable to persuade the Corporation to adopt coherent policies, with the result that ‘an opportunity to provide not just a physically but also a politically ideal environment . . . was missed. The physical restoration of the City of London was sadly illustrative of the general run of the post-war reconstruction in Britain’. Brad Beaven and John Griffiths preface ‘The blitz, civilian morale and the city: mass-observation and working-class culture in Britain 1940–41’, *Urban History*, 26 (1999), 71–88, with a section devoted to a clarification of terms. Critically interrogating stereotypes derived from Mass-Observation reports – that ‘utilitarian’ Mancunians were characterized by a ‘background of softness’ or that Liverpoolian sailors’ wives were likely to be ‘tough’ because they had become accustomed to long periods of self-sufficiency when their husbands were away at sea – Beaven and Griffiths concentrate on less subjective factors. These include the manner in which city centres withstood mass bombing, the degree of disruption to recreational institutions, and the impact of the blitz on working-class neighbourhoods and lifestyles. Here, as in other investigations, Mass-Observation appears to have got just about everything wrong. Finally, in this batch of articles, John McCarthy’s ‘The redevelopment of Rotterdam since 1945’, *Planning Perspectives*, 14 (1999), 291–310, provides a succinct summary of reconstruction in western Europe, assesses the implementation of development plans in bomb-razed inner sections of the city, and documents continuing local opposition to redevelopment plans.

A thought-provoking essay review which draws welcome attention to Andrew Hurley’s *Environmental Inequalities: Class, Race and Industrial Pollution in Gary, Indiana 1945–1980* (1996), H.L. Platt’s ‘The emergence of urban environmental history’, *Urban History*, 26 (1999), 89–95, argues that the subdiscipline can inform public policy without surrendering its claims to scholarly historicity. This is a position long championed by Joel A. Tarr whose ‘A note on the horse as an urban power source’, *J. Urban History*, 25 (1999), 434–48, explores equine contributions to the social and economic life of nineteenth-century cities. Conceptualizing urban centres as ‘energy sites’, Tarr focuses on ‘horse power machines’ within the context of the construction industry, hoisting and pulling, and factories and workshops. He concludes that horses successfully occupied a ‘niche in the small weave of activities that enabled cities to function, filling the interstices between larger enterprises with greater power needs’. Tarr also hypothesizes that technological and urban-environmental historians have tended to ignore ‘horse power machines’ because of their strong association with rural life and incompatibility with progressivist accounts of the unfettered triumph of steam. Drawing on material derived from two key suburban legal confrontations over the use of DDT in Long Island in 1958 and 1966, Chris Sellers’ subtly theorized ‘Body, place and the state: the makings of an “environmentalist” imaginary in the post-World War II U.S.’, *Radical History Review*, 74 (1999), 31–74, makes the case for a chronological reordering of the development of organized opposition to pollution. A tacit condemnation of the quintessentially *laissez-faire* ideology of the Yeltsin years, Jon Oldfield’s ‘The environmental impact of transition – a case study of Moscow city’, *Geographical J.*, 165 (1999), 222–31, concentrates on unacceptably high levels of atmospheric pollution associated with mass car-ownership, deteriorating water treatment standards, and the negative impact of

the unfettered development of office building and large-scale retail outlets on the provision of parks and open spaces. Fiona Simpson's 'Tourist impact in the historic centre of Prague: resident and visitor perceptions of the historic built environment', *Geographical J.*, 165 (1999), 173–83, sounds warning-bells in relation to the heritage industry and urges the replacement of a 'sanitized and popularised identity' by a 'true' history of the 'Paris of the east'. The Prague region as a whole has not yet been adversely affected by mass tourism, but, at the inner core, there have been significant displacements of resident populations by visitor-oriented enterprises. Simpson advocates more effective regulation, not least in order to protect the grandeurs which originally attracted so many tourists to this resplendent capital.

Among a cluster of contributions to demographic and socio-medical history, James C. Riley's 'Why sickness and death rates do not move parallel to one another over time', *Social History of Medicine*, 12 (1999), 101–24, draws on friendly society data from villages in Rutland, Cardiganshire, Northamptonshire and from the town of Ashbourne in Derbyshire to substantiate the hypothesis that there is no automatic symmetry between the death-rate within a given historical community and the prevalence of morbidity. In his response in the same issue of this journal Bernard Harris is critical – and justifiably so – of Riley's source material (*ibid.*, 125–33). In an unusually well-documented contribution, Erik Beekink *et al.* discuss 'Surviving the loss of the parent in a nineteenth century Dutch provincial town', *J. Social History*, 32 (1999), 641–70. This analysis of Woerden is based on a sample of birth, death and marriage certificates. Making use of hazard analysis, Beekink and associates focus on paternal and maternal orphans, stepchildren and, as a control, offspring whose parents were alive at the end of the period in question. It is concluded that, up until the age of six months, the death of a mother might frequently precipitate the demise of an infant. Between six months and the first birthday, severe repercussions were likely to flow from the death of a father, as maternal labour was redirected from domestic and child-caring tasks to securing income within the urban labour market. Finally, Beekink *et al.*'s data suggests that stepchildren may have fared considerably better than fairy tales and anecdote would appear to imply.

Presenting case study material, Vera Blinn Reber vividly contextualizes 'Blood, coughs and fever: tuberculosis and the working class of Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1885–1915', *Social History of Medicine*, 12 (1999), 73–100. Professionals held to a fundamentally 'modern' view of the disease, but were also convinced that generalized immorality frequently played a key role in exacerbating levels of mortality. For their part, working-class sufferers from the condition were willing to make use of out-patient clinics and – less frequently – of sanatoriums. However, they invariably resisted going into hospital as in-patients and ignored propaganda urging them to reform allegedly immoral lifestyles. In circumstances such as these, a reduction in the death-rate would only be achieved through long-term improvements in housing, living and working conditions. The role played by the central and local state in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries lies at the heart of Graham Mooney's exploration of 'Public health versus private practice: the contested development of compulsory infectious disease notification in late nineteenth century Britain', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 73 (1999), 238–67. Mooney engages with a problem which attracted the attention of a wide range of individuals and agencies – general practitioners,

hospital out-patient departments, local medical officers of health and the elite epidemiological inspectorate at the Local Government Office. In a contribution which provides the most comprehensive account that we yet have of the main players in a complex series of confrontations and compromises, Mooney emphasizes the importance of local improvement bills which, once the principle of notification had been inserted, became 'an integral component of the local authority's exercising of its independence of central government'. In the mid-nineteenth century improvements in social and health conditions had frequently been achieved as a result of central medical bureaucracies shaming backward localities into action. In relation to notification, this process was frequently reversed, with public health authorities creating an 'early warning system of pending epidemics'. According to Arthur Newsholme, 'knowledge was always power, and it was self-evident that a local authority using the information given it by notification, was in a better position . . . to adopt early preventive measures against the spread of disease'. In a suggestive conclusion, which will nevertheless require further substantiation, Mooney argues that, without a more effective monitoring of disease at local level, early twentieth-century advances in the application of scientific medicine might not have been achieved.

Rejecting what she describes as the 'popular belief' that it was only in the twentieth century that health services began to discriminate against the elderly, Claudia Edwards argues in 'Age-based rationing of medical services in nineteenth century England', *Continuity and Change*, 14 (1999), 227–65, that this may not have been the case. Comparing the Bristol Royal Infirmary with the Shoreditch Poor Law Infirmary between the 1820s and the 1870s, Edwards concludes that, in the longer established voluntary hospital, young adults and the middle-aged were given priority over children and the elderly. Admissions of older patients were relatively higher in east London – and improved during the period in question – but nevertheless failed to meet what the author calls 'higher health needs'. It is suggested that historians may have overstated the quality of care for the elderly under the Poor Law and that institutions like the Shoreditch Infirmary failed fully to compensate for the age-selectivity of the voluntary sector. Within different national cultures, widely divergent attitudes existed in relation to the relative advantages of breast and artificial milk for infants; safe and rapid transition from one to the other; and the role to be played by charities and public health authorities in educating a purportedly ignorant working class to adopt more hygienic and child-centred attitudes. Adding to her growing portfolio of articles in this area, Jacqueline H. Wolf argues in "'Mercenary hirelings" or "a great blessing": doctors' and mothers' conflicted perceptions of wet nurses and the ramifications of infant feeding in Chicago 1871–1961', *J. Social History*, 33 (1999), 97–120, that radically different attitudes continued to be held by mothers and medical authorities. Surveying a lengthy period, Wolf concludes that, even though doctors strongly recommended breast milk rather than artificial substitutes, lay knowledge was heavily conditioned by the act itself and the agents involved in feeding. 'Women', she writes, 'who hired out wet nurses linked the product so closely with the producer that any benefit the product provided was overshadowed by what employers perceived as the producers' utter lack of attractiveness and morality. It is not a far cry from thinking a person is beneath one's station to thinking a person's function is beneath one's station'. Although J. Ronald Shearer's 'Shelter from the storm: politics, production and

the housing crisis in the Ruhr coal fields, 1918–24', *J. Contemporary History*, 34 (1999), 19–48, is not directly concerned with demographic or medical history, it will nevertheless be highly suggestive to researchers in these areas. Thus, in Bochum, both marriage and fertility rates rose rapidly in the mid-1920s, with the result that a housing survey indicated that there were no unoccupied dwellings in the city in 1925 and that a fifth of all living space was officially overcrowded. This was in stark contrast to conditions in the immediate aftermath of the war when large numbers of inhabitants, intimidated by the spiralling cost of living under conditions of hyper-inflation, moved to the countryside. Shearer's major interest lies in the relationships between demographic and technological change, and the extent to which the housing crisis reduced the size of the available pool of potential miners, thereby forcing employers to introduce new systems of mechanized production.

In the linked fields of the history of charitable activity and the formal and informal treatment of the poor, Christine Adams' 'Constructing mothers and families: the Society for Maternal Charity of Bordeaux, 1805–1860', *French Historical Studies*, 22 (1999), 65–86, reports that the perceived role of the organization was to teach mothers how to nurse and protect their babies. Detecting a response located between passive reception of knowledge and opposition to the enforcement of middle-class norms, Adams concludes that many impoverished and dependent mothers internalized the lessons directed at them, or 'at least learned to create an image of themselves that met with the approval of their social betters'. She also notes that leading members of the charity were determined to extend their moralized vision of 'caring womanhood' to as wide a constituency as possible. This was a 'message [which] was ... favoured by the state which sought ... to control and shape the messengers'. Andrea Tanner's 'The casual poor and the City of London Poor Law Union, 1837–1869', *Historical J.*, 42 (1999), 183–206, suggests that, during this period, the golden square mile, a veritable prince among paupers, dealt charitably not only with the most needy of its own inhabitants but also with large numbers of non-settled 'strangers' who sought relief during the winter months. Making use of the language of welfare selection, Tanner claims that the CLU 'gave an unparalleled level of choice to those who were truly at the bottom of the heap in Victorian London'. Further research now needs to be undertaken into responses to poverty in the City in the late nineteenth century, a period during which the administration of the metropolitan Poor Law underwent profound change and in which industrial and economic problems in districts bordering on the golden square mile became increasingly severe. Drawing on a methodological approach developed by the prolific and versatile Pierre Bourdieu, Peter Shapely's 'Charity, status and parliamentary candidates in Manchester: a consideration of electoral and charity fields and the social analysis of power, 1832–1910', *International Rev. of Social History*, 44 (1999), 1–22, is built around statistical information which throws light on how the politically ambitious perceived those whom they sought to represent. Shapely reveals how different sectors of the working class in the 'shock city' of the Industrial Revolution may have conceived of those who made political capital out of formal association with charitable works. Between 1832 and 1852 – critical years, which witnessed the slow and uneven establishment of a moderately stable system of local self-government in Cottonopolis – little more than a quarter of parliamentary candidates considered it worth their while to become

involved with such activity. Between the mid-1850s and the early 1890s, this figure leaped upwards to nearly 90 per cent, before dropping back to 57 per cent between 1895 and 1910. During the peak period of involvement, Shapely suggests that candidates' connections were viewed by 'respectable voters' – themselves potentially highly influential, though indirect shapers of opinion – as an indication of 'high moral worth'. This timely contribution generates questions about the declining urban-municipal role of religion, and particularly nonconformity, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; mediated historical relationships between candidates and voters; and the continuing puzzle of the near-silence of political, social and urban historians on post-1900 Manchester. It needs to be read in conjunction with Martin Hewitt's *The Emergence of Stability in the Industrial City: Manchester, 1832–67* (1996).

This has been an excellent year for contributions concerned with cultural activities located within urban arenas. In 'Learning to listen: audiences for chamber music in early Victorian London', *J. Victorian Culture*, 4 (1999), 25–51, Christina Bashford detects a shift from a desire to see and be seen to greater involvement with the experience of music itself. Levels of unsolicited interjection declined, members of the audience began to come in and leave less noisily, and many now 'even [stayed] for the whole performance'. Programme notes began to be distributed to listeners who were also encouraged to make use of miniature scores. Throughout the 1830s etiquette books, directed at the burgeoning middle classes, and providing information on correct modes of behaviour in a wide range of social situations, flooded on to the market. Although rarely giving advice on how to comport oneself in the concert hall, these publications emphasized the importance of listening to rather than talking over guests at the dinner or lunch table, and this may have had the effect of enhancing attentiveness at public performances. Bashford concludes that, during her period, 'music was founding its own temples of art in the West End, and chamber music was leading the way'. In 'Challenging cultural categories: the transformation of the Venice Biennale under Fascism', *J. Modern Italian Studies*, 4 (1999), 184–208, Marla Stone presents a revisionist reading of the relationships between a major cultural showcase and a reactionary, though aesthetically modernizing, political regime. Rather than juxtaposing 'art' against 'propaganda', Stone opts for an approach which depicts Mussolini's bureaucrats as challenging the elitism that had characterized art appreciation in Venice since the beginning of the century, encouraging the participation of middle-class elements who were likely to be impressed by Fascist sponsorship of the arts, and internationalizing a hitherto somewhat parochial event. By 1936 visitors to the Biennale could enjoy Disney cartoons at the Lido; Venini vases in the decorative arts section; and Goldoni at the Theatre Festival. In 'Cinema and the city: Milan and Luchino Visconti's *Rocco and his Brothers* (1960)', *J. Modern Italian Studies*, 4 (1999), 209–35, John M. Foot relates a classic film, which is now less highly praised by critics than during the 1970s and 1980s, to the 'economic miracle' of the 1950s and 1960s. Drawing on the Visconti archive, Foot emphasizes that, despite the great director's commitment to an idiosyncratic variant of 'aristocratic' Marxism, his vision of *Rocco* involved multiple rather than unitary, and hence politically and culturally reductive, images of the city. Focusing on the troubled 'southern problem', Foot notes that 'while trying to make a film in favour of the plight of southerners in Milan, Visconti produced a story which appeared to combine all the worst

elements of public ... fears about mass immigration and sexual violence, excessive [commitment to the values of the family], murder and a weak work ethic'. In this sense *Rocco* proved itself characteristic of the Visconti canon as a whole – ideological, and more specifically, neo-realist objectives were more than counterbalanced by what Foot terms the 'demands of tragedy'. In the light of *The Damned*, *The Leopard* and *Death in Venice* one might also draw attention to the influence of a cinematic equivalent to operatic *verismo* and an obsession with visual voluptuousness and sexual ambivalence. In a complementary contribution – 'Mass culture, popular cultures and the working-class in Milan, 1950–70', *Social History*, 24 (1999), 134–57 – the same author engages yet again with the repercussions of the period of perceived mass affluence experienced in urban Italy between the 1950s and 1970s. As in earlier publications, Foot refuses to opt for a black-and-white differentiation between political and ideological solidarity and passive incorporation into a new national mood dominated by the values of consumerism. Discriminating between 'mass', 'popular' and 'working class' cultures, and drawing revealingly on the voluminous writings of Pier Paolo Pasolini, the author rejects 'apocalyptic versions of ... change in the post-war period'. Concluding that many working-class inhabitants chose 'privacy over socialisation, television over the bar and the cultural circle [and] the home over the street', Foot throws down the gauntlet to those who would unquestioningly associate such 'consumerist' and 'retreatist' preferences with an unqualified rejection of activist values. Finally, in this cluster, there is John Newsinger's 'The American connection: George Orwell, "literary Trotskyism" and the New York intellectuals', *Labour History Rev.*, 64 (1999), 23–43. Newsinger emphasizes that, even when Orwell had ceased to believe in the possibility – or even the desirability – of revolution in Britain, he remained in meaningful ideological dialogue with and contributed to *Politics* and the *Partisan Review*. Reluctantly acknowledging that Labourism constituted the least unacceptable governmental ideology that could be expected to emerge in post-war Britain, Orwell nevertheless continued to show a keen interest in non-totalitarian forms of revolutionary politics. This was despite the weakness of non-Stalinist splinter-groups in Britain both before and after the war. By way of conclusion, Newsinger contends that it is legitimate to describe the writer as mediating between 'literary Trotskyism' and 'Tribune socialism'.

George Orwell might have been intrigued by Dick Geary's ambitious 'Working-class identities in Europe, 1850s-1930s', *Australian J. of Politics and History*, 45 (1999), 20–34. Avoiding linguistic and postmodernistic readings, and drawing extensively on his deep knowledge of Germany, Geary favours something of a return to basics. Contesting the classic Marxist position that the expansion of industry will 'inevitably' generate a proletariat which is coordinated and unified in terms of political and economic agendas as well as consciousness of its own identity as a class, Geary argues that less reductive interpretations are required. He seeks to establish that class-based politics has frequently preceded urban-industrialism and that 'technological modernity' can work against rather than encourage proliferation of protest. In addition, economic growth is said to have been as likely to fragment as to unite European labour movements. Focusing on 'multiple identities', Geary concludes that 'no teleology leads from wage labour to class consciousness without external interventions of state, employers and other social actors: and even when

solidarity is achieved, it is brittle and soon broken, as the inter-war history of European labour, let alone the privatisation ... of the postmodern world, suggests'. In "'A strike of girls': gender and class in the British metal trades, 1913', *J. Historical Sociology*, 12 (1999), 158–80, Clifford L. Staples and William G. Staples dismantle the existing historiography and present a sceptical interpretation of an important pre-First World War labour dispute. According to the well-informed Lord Askwith, the conflict began with 'some girls at Dudley saying they could not live any longer on the wages paid to them. Just as years ago the London match-girls had started the London dock-strike, so these girls lit the torch which fired the Midlands. The men followed suit in factory after factory'. According to the Staples, the girls gained little as a result of their militancy: victory may have been won, but men – as well as patriarchy in general – were the major beneficiaries. Dismissing Hugh Clegg's standard account as an implicit legitimization of a gender-biased solution to the dispute, the authors insist that 'unquestioned assumptions about the subordinate status of women provided the point of agreement around which working-class men, their union, and their employers worked out their (class) differences'. There would be more of the same in the immediate aftermath of the First World War when male-dominated working-class organizations of every kind, unreconciled to dilution, pressurized the government into restoring pre-war differentials, reduced female participation in the industrial labour-force, and indirectly contributed to the social construction of new images of domesticity which played a key role in the maintenance of a long-term gendered division of labour. Mark Bevir's 'The Labour Church Movement, 1891–1902', *J. British Studies*, 38 (1999), 217–45, emphasizes the analysis of belief systems. Denying that the roots of his chosen organization should be sought within the context of the 'decline of religion [or the] rise of class', Bevir also suggests that an explanation of ultimate failure may have lain in the 'weakness of its religious doctrines as a political theory'. Connections are made with the Christian Social Union and, in a provocative afterword, with New Labourism and the meritocratic moralism of Tony Blair. The ubiquitous John Foot offers an 'Analysis of a defeat: revolution and worker-peasant alliances in Italy, 1919–20', *Labour History Rev.*, 64 (1999), 159–78. This contribution homes in on the *biennio rosso* – or 'two red years' – in Milan and Lombardy in an attempt to explain the collapse of embryonic united fronts between town and countryside during what would later be seen as a pivotal moment in the political and social history of modern Italy. Foot detects a rich variety of regional strategies, counterbalanced by the inherent conservatism of influential trade union leaders. Emphasis is placed on the role of the 'periphery' – particularly in Milan – and of 'intermediate groups'. In this respect, Foot argues that 'worker-peasants, peasant-workers and textile workers proliferated in the "grey zones" where urban met rural, and constituted possible organic links between classes and across social space'. But comprehensive collaboration was never established and, within a year, the 'moment of revolution' had passed. Now the major task was to construct a socialistically-rooted opposition to the Fascist onslaught. A rather different and less overtly ideological form of oppositionalism informs Matthias Marschik's 'Between manipulation and resistance: Viennese football in the Nazi era', *J. Contemporary History*, 34 (1999), 215–29. The author argues that major governmental promises – including freedom of travel, and the right to a home, car and consumer goods – were never fulfilled. As a result, weekend football,

perceived in terms of the maintenance of tradition rather than as an 'act of resistance', served as partial compensation for those who believed they had been duped by a putatively paternalistic and protective political regime. Robert Bruno's 'Everyday constructions of culture and class: the case of Youngstown steelworkers', *Labour History*, 40 (1999), 143–76, focuses on 'America's Ruhr' in Ohio and the detailed life-experiences of selected employees of three major and oligopolistic companies between 1944 and 1979. Drawing on an impressive volume of in-depth interview material, Bruno concentrates on quality of family life, the role of churches and sporting clubs, and trade unions. He concludes that the relationships that he has unearthed are 'reminiscent of an earlier, morally redeemable time when observers actually believed that labor offered a different vision of social existence'.

Encompassing economic, sociological and gendered themes, nineteenth- and twentieth-century north American urban historiography is becoming increasingly comprehensive in terms of analysis of regional urban systems, micro-studies of individual cities, and location-specific research into occupational structure, ethnicity and education. Philip Scranton's 'Multiple industrializations: urban manufacturing in the American midwest, 1880–1925', *J. Design History*, 12 (1999), 45–64, is an impressive revisionist contribution which concentrates on the experiences of Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland and Grand Rapids, with Philadelphia being intermittently used as a control. Rejecting single-path theories, Scranton concentrates on the period associated with the 'second industrial revolution'. Making use of disaggregated census material and a miscellany of complementary sources, he examines leading sectors and value added in manufacturing. This leads to the conclusion that each of the four mid-western cities followed a distinctive route to full industrialization and that each was strongly influenced by non-Fordist factors. The four centres are then compared with Philadelphia and their relative positions evaluated in the benchmark years of 1900 and 1925. Scranton suggests that his findings indicate a considerably higher degree of diversity than is usually acknowledged. This appears to limit 'the reach of both [an] agro-industrialization model ... and of the Fordism concept more generally, yet opens new avenues for research in regional industrialization and its structured variations'. A complementary contribution by Andrew Dawson on 'The workshop and the classroom: Philadelphia engineering, the decline of apprenticeship and the rise of industrial training, 1878–1900', *History of Education Quarterly*, 39 (1999), 143–60, traces a process, lasting for approximately a generation, whereby changes in organization – particularly in mechanical engineering – convinced a small group of local industrialists that traditional methods of learning on the job had become outmoded. This had a profound effect on the nature of schooling in the city, and in other centres, as manual training was gradually assimilated into the vocational educational movement associated with the Progressive Era.

Mary Ann Irwin's "'Going about and doing good": the politics of benevolence, maternalism and welfare in San Francisco, 1850–1880', *Pacific Historical Rev.*, 68 (1999), 365–96, initially establishes the demographic context – a population of less than a thousand in 1848 had rocketed to nearly a quarter of a million by the 1870s. In circumstances such as these, exclusively public bodies were incapable of confronting a bewilderingly wide range of novel urban problems. As a result, middle-class women stepped into the breach, capitalizing on an opportunity to

enhance their status, act as a moralizing influence in relation to a poverty-stricken and unstable population, and work towards the development of a gendered division of labour in the fields of health and welfare provision. Surveying the San Francisco Orphan Asylum, the Ladies' Protection and Relief Society and the Protestant Orphan Asylum, Irwin contends that charitable action of this kind pressurized public agencies into giving greater attention to women's and children's problems than would otherwise have been the case. Martha Marie Gardner's 'Working as white womanhood: white working women in the San Francisco anti-Chinese movement, 1877-1890', *J. Social History*, 33 (1999), 73-96, describes an immature and volatile urban labour market. The author traces the process whereby women reacted to the stereotypes forced upon them by employers and middle-class reformers by lending their support to the anti-Chinese movement. Seismic shifts in the demographic structure of major American cities, and the extent to which they are invalidating the 'white-black' filter that is still automatically applied to the formulation of major public policy initiatives, underpin Mike Davis' polemical 'Magical urbanism: Latinos reinvent the US big city', *New Left Rev.*, 234 (1999), 1-43. Selecting Las Vegas, the nation's most rapidly expanding metropolitan region, Davis reports that, a generation ago, Latinos were scarcely visible. However, by the late 1990s, they outnumbered blacks both in the general population and in relation to 'back-of-the-house' casino jobs previously monopolized by America's 'traditional' premier minority group. California, Texas, New York, Florida and Illinois are identified as prominent Latino enclaves with the largest urban concentrations, numbering five million in the aggregate, living in New York, Los Angeles and Chicago. Guillermo J. Orenier and Max J. Castro's 'Triadic politics: ethnicity, race and politics in Miami, 1959-1998', *Pacific Historical Rev.*, 68 (1999), 273-92, is concerned with the pre- and post-'Cuban' eras in the city. In 1960 Hispanics were greatly outnumbered by black Americans. However, by 1990 there were nearly twice as many Hispanics as blacks. Despite the existence of individual friendships and communal projects designed to reduce tension between the two groups, negative perceptions have persisted, and generated policy problems which have not yet been adequately confronted.

A major contribution to occupational history, Leonard Schwarz's 'English servants and their employers during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries', *Economic History Rev.*, 52 (1999), 236-55, suggests that this category did not account for a larger proportion of the population in 1850 than in 1780. To substantiate this revisionist position, Schwarz concentrates on living-in female servants and argues that the case that they significantly increased during this period is 'sufficiently weak to be very much in doubt'. More controversially, Schwarz contends that the female proportion may actually have declined 'in a long-term process that was under-way by the mid-eighteenth century if not earlier'. Similar reservations are expressed in relation to the total number of manservants in England and Wales. Here the key variable is said to be distance of household from London. Schwarz concludes by stating that the conundrum that he has created might be best resolved by evaluating the extent to which living-out female domestics 'were far more important throughout this period than has usually been thought'. Isidor Dubert's 'Domestic service and social modernization in urban Galicia, 1752-1920', *Continuity and Change*, 14 (1999), 207-26, focuses on a region which was studded with towns of between 2,000 and

25,000 in the mid-eighteenth century. Selecting three benchmark dates – 1752, 1898 and 1920 – Dubert charts a progressive decline in the numbers of households containing individuals officially designated as working in this sector. Thus in Santiago, where the reduction was significantly less pronounced than in some other centres, those working as live-in servants fell from 23 per cent in 1752 to just over 11 per cent in 1920. Contesting the view that this phenomenon constitutes an indication of ‘social modernization’, Dubert prefers to emphasize the roles of feminization and ruralization. Manchao Lu’s ‘Becoming urban: mendicancy and vagrants in modern Shanghai’, *J. Social History*, 33 (1999), 7–36, contends that, in terms of how they viewed themselves and were perceived by others, beggars were less peripheral to the city’s professional hierarchies than has previously been argued. In this sense, and particularly in the case of those who had migrated to Shanghai in order to take up a career of begging, the new way of life marked an upward rather than downward movement in social and occupational status. The ‘profession’ constituted one of the ‘lures of the city in modern China’. In terms of chronological framing, the author follows the conventional orthodoxy that ‘modernity’ within the Chinese context is defined by the period 1843–1949. Whether this is helpful in relation either to social or political change remains unclear.

Finally, there is Jonathan Rée’s ‘E.P. Thompson and the drama of authority’, *History Workshop* J., 47 (1999), 209–21. This intriguing autobiographical fragment begins with a synopsis of the now half-forgotten Snow-Leavis debate, and memorably characterizes the latter’s prose style as a ‘fair imitation of a force of nature [with] gales and mountainous seas crashing down on the shore’. Drawing on parallels between this high-wire act of literary self-dramatization and Thompson’s polemical ‘Open Letter to Lezek Kolakowski’, Rée sketches in the highs and lows of English ‘socialist-humanism’, internecine squabbles on the board of the *New Left Review* and the origins of the ideological supremacy of Louis Althusser. (‘Infinite altitudes of editorial omniscience’ perfectly captures Perry Anderson’s inimitably olympian style.) This was the era in which it was possible for Barry Hindess and Paul Hirst to declare that ‘Marxism, as a theoretical and a political practice, gains nothing from its association with historical writing and historical research. The study of history is not only scientifically but also politically useless’. Rée concludes with a vivid evocation of the famous Oxford History Workshop plenary session in a ruined church in Walton Street in 1979 and Thompson’s memorable, though in many ways distasteful, rhetorical destruction of his younger ‘theoretical’ critics. Rée was himself ‘disgusted’ by this *tour-de-force* by a towering performer here unfairly caricatured as a ‘stage-Englishman’ – in Moscow’s hilariously off-centre characterization, by the way, he was ‘Edgar [sic] Thompson, the acknowledged leader of the British revisionists’. Rée neglects to add that never again would the way in which we conceptualize history seem important or socially compelling enough to attract an audience of over seven hundred. Times – and expectations – have changed and may, with the death of postmodernism and deconstructionism, change yet again.