

Kohlrausch indicates in his introduction that his book is conceived as a sort of group biography of the region's modernists. At times, he provides insights into their shared experiences and ideas. But the work he has written is not what historians would call a 'prosopographic' study; rather more, it is an analysis of these architects' discussions, visions and activities. *Brokers of Modernity*, as the title has it, nevertheless is a good description of the book. But the subtitle – *East Central Europe and the Rise of Modernist Architects* – is misleading. Kohlrausch does consider developments in the newly founded Czechoslovak and Hungarian states, but the bulk of his book is focused on Poland. Aside from this problematic subtitle, Kohlrausch's concentration on Poland and the new city planning there is not a defect but an important corrective. Far too little has been published about Polish modernism or urbanism outside the country; Kohlrausch is absolutely right to try to mend the imbalance. What he has produced is a useful look at Polish modernism and urbanism set into its regional context that will, one hopes, begin to shift our shared view a little further to the east.

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Guy Ortolano, *Thatcher's Progress: From Social Democracy to Market Liberalism through an English New Town*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. xvi + 301pp. 17 figures. 3 maps. £29.99 hbk.
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For those familiar with Guy Ortolano's previous monograph, a study of the planning, politics and architecture of that most idiosyncratically British town Milton Keynes may be something of a surprise. As the author notes, Milton Keynes is both the object of endless study and the recipient of the heaped scorn of popular culture. It is (unjustly) a byword for dullness, conformity and planning failure. That Ortolano has produced such compelling arguments in a highly readable book is testament to his own skills, but also reminds us how fertile and paradoxically underexploited a subject of study the New Towns project still is. Here, the planning and governance of Milton Keynes allow Ortolano to scrutinize the trajectories of social democracy and market liberalism through the built (and sometimes unbuilt) environment. This is a decidedly political history, yet written through the production and regulation of lived spaces.

The title might, nevertheless, mislead some readers. *Thatcher's Progress* is not a Bunyanesque allegory concerning the Iron Lady's career, nor solely an examination of Thatcherite policy *per se*. Instead, the title refers to a series of vignettes from the new prime minister's 1979 tour of Milton Keynes, that are used as thematic epigraphs to each chapter. Indeed, although there is much here for historians of the 1980s, the book is strongest examining the 1970s. The first two chapters of six – thematically arranged in pairs that proceed along a rough chronology – document a changing planning environment in the 20 years following the war. Here, both plans for a 'monorail metropolis' and the model of automobility and dispersal

that superseded them reflected the priorities and attitudes of an adaptable social democracy. Chapters 3 and 4 examine modernist architecture and attempts to foster community respectively, demonstrating the dynamism of social democracy's responses to the often hostile political and economic contexts of the 1970s. In the final two chapters, Ortolano shows how the development of an international planning consultancy and approaches to home ownership represented attempts by the public sector to lay claim to the instruments of market liberalism itself. In these last chapters, 1979 emerges as a transformative moment for Milton Keynes, because the peculiarities of its governance rendered it particularly vulnerable to Thatcherite policies. What these case-studies illustrate is the dynamism of social democracy's responses to unfavourable economic conditions and increasingly coherent challenges from the right. Yet, as Ortolano concludes, this very adaptability meant that social democracy's champions increasingly became the agents of the market liberalism they sought to stave off.

The book comes to several important conclusions. First, Ortolano situates a seemingly provincial moment of British planning in a distinctly global context, depicting Milton Keynes enmeshed within transnational networks. It is a strength of the book that such an emblematically British case-study so lucidly shows different state actors reshaping global relationships, rather than retreating from them as Britain's imperial influence collapsed. Second, the book highlights individual agency as a key driver of particular outcomes in Milton Keynes. Ortolano may well be concerned with the fate of the social democratic project, but it is a cast of distinct planners, community workers and managers – often presented with a discernible fondness and no little humour – that interpret and react to the challenges of emerging market liberalism in this study. Third, the book attests to the depth and resilience of the social democratic project that stemmed from the dynamism of its supporters during the 1970s. Ortolano thus presents a convincing challenge to 'sequential' histories that imagine a flagging, intellectually depleted social democracy falling to a vital market liberalism, yet also rejects accounts that look for the origins of market liberalism in deep-seated forms of individualism, home ownership or consumerism during the earlier decades of the century. The trademark of Ortolano's work, and what makes it stand out, is how carefully he pulls apart the historiographical structures and assumptions that he seeks to challenge.

There is, thus, remarkably little for a reviewer to criticize in this book, although the label 'welfare state modernism' will engender some debate. Ortolano argues that the relationship between modernism and welfarist policies was so symbiotic that as the latter failed, so too the former was discredited. In Milton Keynes, this meant that tenants and mortgage lenders increasingly rejected modernist dwellings due to associations with social housing. Yet, the unpopularity of social housing's often-distinctive style was not restricted to modernist designs. The system-built walls and pebble-dashed finishes, unfenced gardens, uniform colour schemes and ambiguous green spaces of cottage estates attracted similar opprobrium. Indeed, the output of the welfare state was overwhelmingly the cottage estate, made up of mainly semi-detached housing in decidedly vernacular styles. These were as ambitious and historically unique a set of designs for living and class mixing as their modernist contemporaries. Equally encoded in their bricks and timbers were the objectives of post-war social democracy. That modernist housing became

emblematic of social democracy's issues in certain areas is convincingly argued here, yet viewed from cottage estates the exact nature of 'modernism' embedded within Ortolano's terminology warrants further examination.

In *Thatcher's Progress*, Ortolano has produced one of the stand-out studies of urban history in the last few years. This is precise, stimulating material that showcases the characteristic thoughtfulness and precision of the author's work. The discussion of how to re-examine the way historians have tackled the period in the introduction has a freshness of approach that should prove grist to the mill of many researchers. Those compiling reading lists for contemporary British history modules might also consider setting the introduction's discussion of social democracy and market liberalism alongside the likes of James Vernon on the welfare state or Jim Tomlinson on deindustrialization. This book deserves to be read widely and will likely find a market beyond the academy, where Milton Keynes and Thatcher both hold a fascination that only polarized public opinion can create.

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J.I. Little, *At the Wilderness Edge: The Rise of the Antidevelopment Movement on Canada's West Coast*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019. x + 216pp. 11 figures. 5 maps. Bibliography. £91.00 cloth.
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In this short but dense volume, J.I. Little details the interplay of development pressures, natural resource industry interests and environmental conservation efforts around the Howe Sound near Vancouver, Canada. Each of the five chapters focuses in on the responses to development proposals in a particular area, ranging from Devonian Harbour Park on the edge of Vancouver to the northernmost end of the Howe Sound, and spaces in between. In so doing, Little attempts to explain why local residents were particularly successful in pushing back against unfettered development despite Vancouver's widespread growth from the 1960s to 1980s.

At the Wilderness Edge begins its exploration with Devonian Harbour Park, detailing multiple attempts to redevelop a small piece of Vancouver waterfront. Little deftly handles two decades of development fights as local protests successfully deterred five iterations of development plans for the parcel, ranging from hotels to apartments to office buildings. While Little gestures to alliances between disparate grassroots actors, his account of the proceedings primarily keep to higher-level political officials and policy-makers. Though this chapter suggests the importance of passive public space was key to the anti-development actors, Little does not fully flesh out the ways this thread runs through the long history of development proposals on the property.

Chapter 2 details how competing concepts of recreation negotiated for the use of Hollyburn Ridge, situated north of West Vancouver. After successfully protecting the ridge from clearcutting, the provincial government set aside thousands of acres for a park reserve. In subsequent years, hikers and naturalists fought against