

Gossips' and many of the scholars mentioned above, and commands us to take seriously the emotional lives of the very poorest of town dwellers. The concept of respectability comes to life in defamation cases in Church of England courts (1780–1820); they tightly revolve around sexual reputation and show the amazing range of ways in which 'whore' could be used as an epithet. Women could also be 'loose', 'violent-tempered' and 'drunk about the streets' (p. 27). Women were far more numerous than men as defamers as well as defamed. As MacKay concludes, slander was 'two-edged. At once a code through which women could express their outrage and grievance . . . its usage also reaffirmed the value construct by which female behavior was restricted and controlled' (p. 26).

Putting respectability at the centre of her study has led MacKay to a more accurate reading of slum survival strategies than a more traditional focus on wages or women's housekeeping skills can provide. MacKay provides a full basis for her position by showing how St Martin in the Fields was economically structured to make material survival difficult, but also to provide stable neighbourhood forms of mutual help. A reader might become impatient with the book's depth of detail, much of it statistical, on women's and men's trades, residential clustering by male occupations, and so on. Yet, this information amply supports the author's central argument: reputation was the quintessential component of subsistence for the very poor. To be reputed respectable allowed an individual 'to maintain access to the collective resources of the neighbourhood' in the form of shopkeepers' credit, landlords' toleration of arrears, pawnshops' co-operation and neighbours' sharing of food, childcare and other resources (p. 30). Wages were just one of several means of subsistence and not the most important; Mackay aptly cites Muldrew and King's view that 'credit rather than weekly wages lay at the heart of the family economy' (p. 44). The real value of a job was that it generated respectability, which in turn, could be cashed in for food or coal.

### Ellen Ross

Ramapo College of New Jersey

**Ondřej Ševeček and Martin Jemelka (eds.),** *Company Towns of the Bat'a Concern*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013. 311pp. 20 b/w illustrations. 42 b/w photos. Bibliography. Index. €54.00 pbk.  
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Tomáš Bat'a, with his siblings Antonín and Anna, founded the Bat'a Shoe Company in 1894 in Zlín in what was then the Austro-Hungarian empire and is now the Czech Republic. As an early proponent of mechanized mass production and with an affordable product line that catered to the needs of working people, during the first decades of the twentieth century the company grew rapidly, increasing the size of its operations in Czechoslovakia and building manufacturing plants elsewhere. By 1938, on the eve of World War II, Bat'a employed over 65,000 people in a global network of retail stores and subsidiary factories (partly as a way to circumvent protectionist trade tariffs). The construction of company towns was a key feature of this international expansion; as new factories were built in Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Switzerland, France, Britain, the Netherlands, India, Canada, and the United States during the 1920s and 1930s, Bat'a towns went up alongside them. Zlín provided a template that was

followed in each of these locations; workers lived in company housing linked to their jobs and were given little choice but to socialize with work colleagues in their leisure hours, while their children attended company schools in which they were instructed in the qualities valued by the company. Through the total management of the society around its factories, the company aimed to manufacture a system of life, one in which its workers became model 'Bat'amen' and 'Bat'awomen', standardized individuals much like the company's standardized shoes. Wherever it set up shop, Bat'a exerted a powerful influence over all aspects of its employees' lives, though, and as the authors here demonstrate, the extent of this influence varied from place to place.

As the editors of this volume point out, it is the modernist architecture and urban design of the Bat'a towns that have attracted the majority of scholarly attention. Here, by contrast, the 17 assembled authors look to how the Bat'a towns constituted a way of life for the people who lived and worked in them, and how corporate values were made concrete through workers' dwellings and town planning. The book is divided into three sections: the first reflects on Bat'a's history; the second comprises detailed case-studies of the Bat'a towns in Ottmuth (Germany), Möhlin (Switzerland), Vel'ke Bošany and Batovany (Czechoslovakia), Svit (Czechoslovakia), Batadorp (the Netherlands), Belcamp (the United States), Batawa (Canada) and an unrealized project in Kolín-Zálabí (Czechoslovakia); the third includes essays on Bat'a architecture and urbanism, and further case-studies of the company's principal town in Zlín. A variety of different approaches are taken. Martin Marek and Vít Strobach's contribution examines how Bat'a used town planning and urban design as a way to control and discipline its workforce. Theresa Adamski makes a similar argument in her study of Zlín. Zachary Doleshal uses Bat'a's involvement in the 1939 New York World's Fair as a way to unpick the company's experience in the United States, while Antonie Doležalová places Bat'a's social concept into a broader context of national and intellectual development. Kimberly Elman Zarecor argues that the panel building techniques favoured by Bat'a were the first example of construction methods more widely used during the Communist era in eastern Europe. Markéta Březovská looks at how, in the case of Batanangar, the company's Indian manufacturing base, Bat'a created urban space that reflected the brand's values. For students of urban history, the individual case-studies will perhaps be of most interest. These provide detailed descriptions of the circumstances in which Bat'a towns were created, and several are rooted in close examination of unpublished archival sources. Taken together, they provide some indication of the factors that motivated the company during the inter-war period, though some chapters are more enlightening than others.

As is perhaps evident from this broad outline, and as is stated in the preface, the book has its origins in an international conference held at the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of the Sciences of the Czech Republic in March 2011 and is a planned output of a Czech Science Foundation project on the 'Company Towns of the Bat'a Concern'. One consequence of this is that it reads more like a set of conference proceedings than a coherent volume. While there is a wealth of interesting material on a number of the Bat'a towns, the various academic approaches – and the varied research interests of the contributors – make it difficult to draw comparisons across the different locations studied, or even to come to an overall interpretation of the Bat'a town phenomenon. To make matters worse, the standard of the contributions varies considerably. Some verge toward

the hagiographic, celebrating Bat'a as a major contributor to Czech society, while others wade laboriously through the decision-making processes that led to these towns' construction. There is little on what it meant to live and work in a Bat'a town, nor of their impact on the day-to-day realities of human life. While it is clear that Bat'a was, as the publisher states, 'one of the true pinnacles of private capitalist urban planning in the first half of the twentieth century', this volume does not grapple with what this meant as thoroughly as it might. It makes an admirable start at widening the discussion on the company and is a worthy contribution to existing scholarship on Bat'a and the company town phenomenon, but is best seen as an interesting adjunct to other work, and not as the final word on any of the topics covered. As is admitted in the final line of the final chapter, '[f]urther research will be necessary in order to broaden our understanding of these processes'.

**Thomas Turner**

Birkbeck, University of London

**James R. Brennan**, *Taifa: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania*.  
Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2012. 264pp. £20.99.  
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As Brennan's title suggests, and his introduction explicitly states, Taifa is a combination of intellectual history and urban social history. It explores the changing intellectual and popular discourse (especially from the inter-war years onwards) around terms of social group identity such as 'race' and 'nation' in Tanzania while exploring connections between this discourse and the relationship between urban policy making, space, social structure and (especially ethnic, racial and national) identity in Dar es Salaam. One of Brennan's arguments, in keeping with those made by historians for other African cities, including Cape Town in the nineteenth century, is that 'racial' and other social group identities were not merely colonial or top down creations but were 'mutually constituted' by 'multiple participants', including those who came to see themselves or others as Africans, Indians, Arabs and Europeans.

This process in turn resulted from both 'intellectual' and 'economic' (material) inputs, with the former capable of its own separate trajectory from material factors in determining consciousness and identity, yet often (predictably enough) interacting with said material factors. This approach, one that some historians might describe as a 'post-social' historical understanding of 'identity' and 'experience', allows a degree of autonomy to human consciousness. At least occasional complete, rather than 'relative', autonomy was not quite conceded by the cultural materialism of the likes of E.P. Thompson, which emphasized of course a continual link between consciousness and social condition, while still being alert to the possibility (perhaps even likelihood) that material factors could have agency.

In terms of the latter, Brennan draws attention for instance, and significantly, to the impact of colonial urban policies in Dar es Salaam during World War II. In particular, he argues that the colonial government felt the need to support what they hoped would be a containable urban population through the reliable provision of modest rations in the form of food, clothing and housing. But racial