European Cities: Containers or Groups of Inhabitants?
A Review of some Recent Developments in Early Modern Urban Studies’

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Abstract
The study of European cities and their inhabitants in the early modern period (approximately from the 14th through the 18th centuries) has changed in emphasis in the last few decades. Instead of focusing on the role of urbanization in the development of modern capitalism, modernity or other major epochal shifts such as the Renaissance or Reformation, scholars from various disciplines look at cities as sites of exchange and conflict where identities are created and power is exercised in specific spatial contexts. These contexts are increasingly international and sometimes global.

The argument that the rights and privileges of city dwellers were praiseworthy and should be expanded to include those that lived in the countryside was included in the discussions that took place in the mid-19th-century German-speaking world. ‘City air’ has been given an important role in the development of European political institutions. The proverb ‘city air makes one free’ was popularized as a key political and historical slogan. Theoreticians conceptualized urban life as an important, if not the most important, aspect of the social history of the continent and, sometimes, the world. Legal historians and customary-law specialists such as Jacob Grimm and Ernst Theodor Gaupp helped to popularize the view that the specific rights granted to the (mostly-male, property-owning, Christian) urban leaders were important milestones on a route to a political system with more generalized rights. The influential German theoretician Karl Marx expanded on this idea. He went so far as to give these urban elites, which he labeled as the ‘bourgeoisie’, a central role in what he saw as a specific phase in the evolution of economic life. Although it seems that the privileges to which reference originally were made were tied to specific instances of medieval colonizing and real estate development, 19th-century politicians and theoreticians such as Marx optimistically generalized and firmly established ‘bourgeois’ society as a milestone in European (and perhaps world) history.

In the years before World War I, the influential German sociologist Max Weber built on these foundations. In a wide-ranging, if incomplete, comparative essay published after his death, Weber stressed the unique nature of what he considered ‘the Western City’ (‘die Stadt des Okzidents’). More than the result of economic factors, this ideal city was the end product of unique social and political developments. Weber stressed the role of the individual as he stepped voluntarily into a new corporate grouping through the taking of an oath. With this act, the individual broke from older patterns of affiliation such as to the clan or tribe. This process, which Weber postulated began in the cities of the northern Italian peninsula in the later 10th century and continued at least until the 14th
century, also involved breaking from pre-existing lordship relationships. The European city became in this conceptualization the central location for the development of new and influential forms of economic, social and political organization. These new forms, rooted in a Christian worldview and predicated on an assumption concerning the important role of ties to a common Church, would become central to the understanding of modern society.

Since the times of Marx and Weber, historians, economists, sociologists, and others have been earnestly pursuing the study of city life, its manifestations, phases, characteristics, and nuances. Although earlier city chroniclers eagerly listed the floods, plagues, and other problems their cities faced over the years, the new schematizations meant that these seemingly isolated events could be placed into larger analytical frameworks. Each individual city thereby won increased importance due to its relationship with epoch-making developments. Urban history became modern history. The study of central and western European cities won particular pride of place as the study of the sites of key transformations in the economic and political landscapes of the continent.

With the relatively recent interest in comparative, global and post-national history writing, the discussion of early modern cities has been given new life. If one should not look exclusively at nations as the subject of historical research, perhaps cities could provide a replacement? Of course, other subjects had and have been presented: the famous triad of race, class and gender is probably the best known grouping of such subjects. Urban history is another route to the past that has shown itself to be worth traveling. Because of the increasingly urbanized experience of so much of the world’s population, the study of urban spaces and the historical experiences of people in these spaces has clear relevance to many consumers and producers of historical scholarship.

For readers in the English-reading world, there are at least three major journals now dedicated to the study of the histories of spaces which their editors define as ‘urban’; *Journal of Urban History*[^7], *Urban History*[^8], and *Urban History Review/Revue d’histoire urbaine*.[^9] The website and discussion group H-Urban, connected to the wider H-Net world via Michigan State University (East Lansing, Michigan, USA) is also a source for ongoing discussions of interest to what are sometimes called ‘urbanists’.[^10] A survey of the content of the journals and website reveals that the chronological period of most interest to the editors, authors and presumably the readers of the four sites is to a large degree limited to the last century. The introduction of a 2003 special edition of *Journal of Urban History* that wanted to introduce the results of the Fifth International Conference of the European Association of Urban Historians to an American academic audience pointed to another difficulty encountered in the active field of urban studies: ‘[f]or the foreseeable future, there will not be an agreed, qualified definition of the city’.[^11]

When one travels back into the period from roughly the demographic downturn of the 14th century until the political revolutions and economic shifts of the 18th, a period that has often been conceptualized as key in the transformation from a ‘traditional’ to a ‘modern,’ or from a ‘feudal’ to a ‘bourgeois’ form of social organization and one that historians now often refer to as ‘early modern,’ two competing ideas of what the period meant for the women and men who lived in European cities can be found. The first can be associated with the name and project of the late Charles Tilly. The second is much less clear and can be associated at least for pedagogic purposes with the work of Christopher R. Friedrichs. The ideas organizing these approaches can in some ways be connected to the earlier arguments of Marx and Weber, respectively.

Tilly and his associates have been working diligently on the project of describing (and to some extent explaining) the emergence of what has become conceptualized as modern...
‘states’. In the introductory chapter of Cities & the Rise of States in Europe, A.D. 1000 to 1800, published over a decade ago, Tilly stated clearly one of the questions of the study: ‘… how did urbanization and the transformation of states interact?’12 He went on to assert, ‘[c]ities shape the destinies of states chiefly by serving as containers and distribution points for capital’.13

The counterpoint to Tilly’s emphasis on state building and the more general point about how cities relate to the transformation of systems of economic configurations was provided in 1995 by Christopher R. Friedrichs. In the introduction to his well-received survey of early modern European urban history, The Early Modern City, 1450–1750, Friedrichs distanced himself from the larger schema into which Tilly, Marx, or others placed the urbanization of Europe. He wrote, ‘this book will not attempt to fit the early modern city into some broader patterns of progress or modernization’.14 Friedrichs pointed out how, at least for the centuries on which he chose to concentrate, the structures of urban life remained rather stable and continuities outweighed any changes resulting from the imagined shift from medieval to modern times. Friedrichs chose to organize his analysis around two related concepts: ‘community’ and ‘power’. This dual framework of analysis would allow the reader to understand how urban dwellers made ‘the most of early modern urban society’.15 His emphasis on community in particular recalls Weber’s stress on the constitutive organizations of ‘Western’ urban life.16

When one surveys the recent scholarship in the field of early modern urban studies, it appears that Friedrichs’ approach has been the more popular one. Although students of early modern urban life have attempted to tie their work into some of the classic broader themes associated with the period 1300–1800, themes such as the Renaissance and the Reformation, explorations and expansion, and gender studies, scholars from a variety of fields have turned more and more to specific case studies and detailed analyses of aspects of city life. The big stories seem now to be less interesting than the little ones.

Another important aspect of recent early modern urban studies, indeed of urban studies more generally, is its interdisciplinary orientation. Specialists in urban history traditionally defined share the field with scholars coming from a variety of other academic disciplines. Of course, as is evident from the material presented above, economists, sociologists and political scientists have weighed in concerning the study of the urban world. So have architectural historians, archeologists, art historians, literary scholars, city planners and urban geographers. It is this characteristic which makes early modern urban history as currently practiced so rich.

When one thinks of Early Modern Studies, the older, twinned, concepts of ‘Renaissance’ and ‘Reformation’ often still come to mind. These tried-and-true labels have distinguished pedigrees and after-lives. Historians have argued that the cultural, religious and political phenomena associated with the Renaissance and Reformation have particular urban roots. The city-states of northern Italy and the Imperial Free Cities of the Holy Roman Empire have been cited as cradles for the two respective movements.

The works of two influential historians of Renaissance Italy, Lauro Martines and Gene A. Brucker, can stand for many others which in the latter decades of the last century continued along the path of emphasizing the important urban roots of various political and cultural developments now known under the umbrella term ‘Renaissance’. Brucker’s The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence (1977) and Martines’ Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy (1979) reveal an urban focus in their titles. Martines chose to concentrate on the increasing power of the urban communes as his organizing factor. By reaching back to the Italian peninsula in the 11th century CE, his popular book echoed Weber.
Martines pointed out the important role of Christian institutions, particularly episcopal ones, in the development of independent urban jurisdictions. He defined a commune ‘in its opening phase, as a sworn association of free men collectively holding some public authority …’ After a break in its development around 1300, the commune, Martines continued, established the basic political and cultural arena in which Renaissance culture developed. He went so far as to assert that 15th-century Humanism, one of the key intellectual and pedagogical movements of the period, would not have been possible ‘without the civic ideals … that rose out of the 13th-century commune’.

Brucker similarly concentrated on the elites who came to dominate the political cultures of his chosen north Italian city, Florence. He emphasized the period between the Black Death in the early 14th century and the capture of authority in the city by the Medici family a century or so later. In an article published in the Journal of Modern History a few years after the appearance of his Civic World, Brucker even attempted to test Weber’s concept of a ‘rational-legal’ system which he postulated developed after the earlier ‘patrimonial’ one. Following his established methodology of a close and extensive reading of Florentine archival sources, Brucker looked at records of the petty officials who assisted the urban commune’s leaders. These records dated from around 1300 until the decline of these officials’ activities under the Medici Grand Dukes in the early 16th century.

Brucker had to admit that the consistent trajectory implied by Weber’s categories did not apply to the Florentine case. Instead, he wrote, the group of officials ‘… did not serve as a model for later developments…. It was a precocious, and aberrant, creation of a republican party with no future …’ The sources he had examined in Florence revealed that the princely regime of the Medici grand dukes marked the end of a phase of the city’s history. Early modern urban history here was not marked by a clear victory of the urban elites tied by oath and allegiance, a common religion, and a common set of values.

In the second half of the 20th century, the study of the Reformation, like the study of the Renaissance, was influenced by the belief that the urban environment was significant. This urban aspect helped to explain the outcome of the religious developments in Latin Christendom in the early sixteenth century, particularly in central Europe. The scholar most closely associated with this argument was the German theologian Bernd Mueller. In 1962, he published a brief but influential essay titled Reichstadt und Reformation (Imperial City and Reformation). Mueller pointed out that the Free Cities of the Holy Roman Empire were the first official collective entities to officially adopt Protestantism, and that of the around 65 such cities in the Empire in the early sixteenth century, over 50 at least temporarily did so.

A quarter of a century earlier, Hans Baron had pointed out in a study of the Free Cities in the Reformation that the political attitudes of the leaders of the German cities were ‘a necessary supplement to the question of the relationship of religion to political thought during the Reformation’ and that ‘[o]nly a contemplation of the individual history and the varied political and economic structure of the leading south German towns enables us … to understand what the nature of the decision was bound to be …’ in relation to the Empire. Now, in the early Sixties, Mueller issued a call for more study of the social factors in each city which resulted in the success of the Reformation. Echoing (and citing) Weber, Mueller underlined the importance of the oath taken by male citizens as well as the close community of interest between the bourgeois and the Christian urban worlds. It was not simply theological arguments, as many had posited up until that time, which determined the outcome of the Reformation, Mueller responded.
Humanism had surely played a role, but the people (Volk) as well as ethnic factors, social, and economic life had also been important and must be studied in detail. Reformation historians followed Mueller’s lead in droves, producing a large number of monographs centered on the particular experiences of the urban populations in the cities affected by the conflicts associated with the Christian theological controversies of the period. Following a more general trend towards the writing of social history, historians chose to situate the early modern religious movement popularly associated with the ducal subject Martin Luther in the worlds of bourgeois citizens such as Ulrich Zwingli, or to emphasize the specific case of the one-time episcopal seat, the city of Geneva, its sometime religious leader John Calvin, and its significance for the development of Protestantism as a European (and then Atlantic) phenomenon.

Beginning in the 1990’s, faith in large overarching theories and explanations seems to have been replaced by detailed, almost fragmentary studies of specific urban phenomena in the early modern world. Urbanists are still scouring municipal archives for evidence of life within the walls of early modern cities, but they are less interested in the big historical themes of ‘Renaissance’ or ‘Reformation’ and have turned to vaguer concepts such as those discussed by Friedrichs above. Themes such as ‘community’ or ‘power’ are being used as organizing devices.

Another way to attack the question of early modern cities has been to see how they reacted when placed into extra-European settings. This in some ways recalls Weber’s comparative approach, but it also speaks to a broader, post-colonial set of interests which attempts to relativize the impact of Europeans’ institutions on the societies with which the Europeans came into contact in the early modern period. This approach places urban history into the dialogue and negotiations that characterized international relations at this time. When placed in a world-wide context, the impact of European city forms and societies can be seen to have been rather varied. George D. Winius, for example, reminds us that the Portuguese attempts to settle European-style grid-shaped cities in Africa and particularly Asia were confronted by local political conditions much different than those faced by the Spanish or later the English, French, and Dutch in the Americas. In Asia, pre-existing urban configurations and the political structures to which they were tied interacted with European plans, providing only limited space for imported city forms.

The situation was different in the Americas. In South America, for example, Spanish plans for colonization foresaw a type of what Richard Morse has referred to as ‘enforced urbanization’: the Europeans set up lowland centres from which to administer the appropriation of Amerindian agricultural and mineral resources. Populations were forcefully relocated to the new centres. These increasingly replaced the defensible hill and mountain-top urban settlements which had previously characterized the landscape. According to this model, cities were not motors of development and hotspots of trade; they were instead bureaucratic nodes set up along standardized grid patterns. (The source of these grid patterns has been debated.)

Richard Kagan has pointed out how a Christian ideology of salvation also influenced some Europeans’ ideas about proper urban forms, particularly in the Spanish settlement regions of the Caribbean, Central and South America. Unlike Morse, Kagan did not emphasize the economic or political contexts of early modern Latin American developments. He chose instead to look at what he called the ‘intellectual foundations’ of Spanish American towns. His intellectual history of the idea of towns looked to Greek and Latin roots, but concentrated on the Judeo/Christian foundations of the urbanizing enterprise. Cities were to be sites of order and expressions of proper organization, places
where cloistered souls could benefit the world through their prayers. They were also physical reflections of a religious skepticism vis-à-vis the political powers of this world. Referring particularly to images in the biblical prophecies of Isaiah, prophecies which, among other things, stated ‘[f]or the strong city shall be desolate’ [27:10] and ‘salvation shall possess thy walls’ [60:18], Kagan argued that the Spanish authorities’ relative lack of defenses for their urban foundations in the New World was the expression of a religious confidence which only was conquered by the intrusion of Dutch, English and French interlopers over the course of the seventeenth century. In Kagan’s formulation, cities leave the realm of the mundane and approach, at least tentatively, the sublime.

When one returns to Europe proper and analyses of urban developments produced in the last decade or so, the role of urban geographers should not be overlooked. As part of what is sometimes now called the ‘spatial turn’ in historical studies (echoing earlier ‘linguistic’ or ‘cultural’ turns), the acknowledged role of geography has provided new insights into experienced life in places known as cities. The respected Viennese urban geographer Elisabeth Lichtenberger, for example, has forcefully restated the case for the role of politics in the determination of urban frameworks. Her historical sketch of the stages of urban development in Europe echos Weber.30 In some ways, the vocabulary and analytical terminology of urban geography can be seen to provide a ‘middle route’ between the large analytical frameworks presented by Tilly and his colleagues and those more localized and source-specific studies inspired by Friedrichs: her use of visual evidence, spatial reconstruction, and modeling has roots in the urban physical environment, but reaches beyond the local both in space and in theory.

Lichtenberger points out that there are Ancient models for many aspects of modern cities. These include the specific grid pattern mentioned above in reference to Latin American urban developments, the important role of monumental public buildings, and the availability or desirability of a technical infrastructure. Even the physical location of many European cities is an inheritance from Antiquity. Again the medieval city is given pride of place in the development of urban Europe. Lichtenberger points to the 13th and 14th centuries as the high point in the development of a trade-oriented urban entity where economic activity was concentrated on the provision of goods and services. Exceptions are made for the early modern period when, according to Lichtenberger, a new type of city appears on the scene: the noble residence city. This development seems to go against the trend of increasing urban privileges and power. Cities such as Versailles, Karlsruhe, Mannheim, St. Petersbourg, or Turin all owe their conception and development not to independent groups of oath-swearing Christian males, but to rulers who recognized the advantages of having a fixed place from which to administer their holdings, or at least from which to project an image of their authority.31 Lichtenberger’s residence city, Vienna, as well as its rival Prague, can be seen in the early modern period as an amalgamation of both of these models of urban development. They were sometimes residence and burgher cities simultaneously!

A late 1999 conference held in Leipzig and concentrating on central European cities gave evidence of the mixed nature of these entities and the difficulties inherent in trying to place them into overarching themes such as modernization or the development of capitalism. Subtitled Funktionen von Metropolen im frühmodernen Staat (‘Functions of Metropolises in the Early Modern State’), this collection’s articles pointed toward the variety of functions urban settlements can be said to have had.32 In general, the cities of central Europe such as Prague, Cracow, Gdansk, Buda or Vienna were seen by the scholars analyzing them more as sites of communication or cultural interaction than as cogs in the developing machine of early modern states. (Of course this could be due at least in part
to the fact that few central European political units developed along the lines of their centralizing and historiographically more influential western cousins.)

This recent shifting of emphasis from broad themes to local studies has allowed space for the study of many other aspects of early modern urban life. Perhaps not surprisingly, the people left out of the earlier studies and theories relating to urban developments are increasingly being brought into the analysis. These include the variety of non–citizens such as the Christian women and the Jewish women and men who made up significant portions of the early modern European urban populations. Helen Mills edited a collection of articles relating to architecture, power, and gender which illustrates this development.33 In her contribution to this collection, Elizabeth A. Lehfeldt moved nuns into the discussion of early modern European cities.34 In Spain, she writes, convents were moved into cities for two perhaps contradictory reasons: for the protection and regulation of the inhabitants. The safe urban spaces created for the nuns led to conflicts with neighbors. One of the primary religious reasons for the nuns’ existence, providing intercessory prayers for others, led to contact with the wider urban community. Lehfeldt concludes that the convents were ‘dynamic, permeable and contested spaces’.35 There is little talk here of city air and its freedom-creating qualities. Instead, the talk is of contest and renegotiations. In the same collection, Marilyn Dunn continued the emphasis on urban nuns, this time in Rome.36 Following the same path as Lehfeldt, Dunn reminds her readers of the importance of the nuns’ patronage. Through this mechanism, the nuns projected themselves into their church, and even to some extent into the streets around their convent.

In Mills’ book, Dagmar Eichberger chose to concentrate on one house, the urban residence of the important early sixteenth-century Habsburg princess and regent Margaret in Mechelen in the Low Countries.37 Eichberger pointed out how the city council in Mechelen wanted Margaret’s presence there, and how it seems Margaret wanted to project an image to the city population via the use of her urban palace, both in its exterior and interior. As Eichberger reminds us, space was an ‘important criterion for projecting political and social significance’.38 In a city, this space was often at a premium. The presence of a ruler such as Margaret within a city’s walls challenges the image of the independent city commune and reminds one of bifurcated cities such as Vienna and Prague pointed to by Lichtenberger. Cities were more than seats of trade; they were seats of rulers. Many times, these rulers were women.

For another subset of the urban population, the Jews of early modern cities, in some ways the trajectory of early modern urban history was a positive one. When the stranglehold on political power exercised by the Christian male burghers was relaxed due to the increasing role of princes in urban affairs, the Jewish population could often benefit. As R. Hsia pointed out in his important survey of urban Jewish life in the early modern period, the confessionalization and divisions among Christians which marked the period resulted in a degree of toleration of Jews.39 The period from around the mid-16th up until the 20th centuries, Hsia argues, was a comparatively peaceful and prosperous one for Europe’s Jews. After the expulsion of the Jewish populations from Imperial Free Cities such as Nuremberg or Regensburg in the early 16th century, Imperial intervention resulted in some constitutional basis for legal Jewish residence. Although segregated urban residential districts for Jews did exist, these were very often less like walled ghettos and more separately–administered neighborhoods. The increase in princely residential cities resulted in an increase in the opportunities for the Jewish urban populations.

Cities need not be physical entities and, as Kagan pointed out, the concept has important conceptual or intellectual aspects which also have been studied of late. Alison

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Findlay, for example, has looked at the image of cities in drama and the specific urban contexts of late seventeenth-century London. With the Great Fire, the image of the city became more confused. It could hardly be connected as easily to order and therefore opened spaces for performance and imagination. In this way, the ‘Restoration’ label for the period obscures much, pointing back to some imagined past instead of to the details of the urban present of the post-1666 period. Findlay shows how women’s drama of the period boldly engaged urban space, used perspective in uncentering ways, and moved out into the street. Similarly, Martha Pollak stressed the use of an image of the city, in her case the besieged city. Instead of dwelling on the politics of the urban institutions, Pollak reduced (as did the authors of her sources) the cities of Europe to trophies gained in princely warfare. Again the counter-current of princely power is engaged in the analysis.

Another way by which to engage in the study of early modern urban life is represented by the recent collection edited by Alexander Cowan and Jill Steward, The City and the Senses. The articles in this collection reduce the city to the sensory experiences of its inhabitants, whether the sense of touch, as reflected in 16th- and 17th-century disputes over status in Venice analyzed by Cowan, or sight, as discussed by Ulf Strohmayer in reference to Paris around 1600. A particularly rich vein to tap appears to be the discussion of the sense of sound: both Miguel Ángel Marín and David Garrioch have attempted to enter the early modern world via descriptions of the aural landscapes to be found there. The bells, criers, trumpeters, hawkers and others who contributed to the urban world helped map it as well. Discussions of their contributions help to expand the image of early modern cities and their roles in history.

Although the general trend seems to be towards the specific and the local in early modern urban studies, some major projects continue to study larger themes. For example, one of the four primary themes of a 30-year-long research project sponsored by the European Science Foundation (ESF) and undertaken in seventeen European countries is ‘the city’. Six seminars held in six cities from 2000–2003 resulted in a volume titled Cities and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400–1700. In this work, cities are seen as ‘transfer points between economic and cultural zones’. One difference between this research project and other synthesizing and generalizing ones such as those by Marx or Weber is that foreigners are given a large role in the analysis. Whether it is ‘desirable foreigners’ such as artists or ambassadors, merchants or travelers and pilgrims, or the less-wanted transient populations, minorities are now visible in much of recent research on early modern cities. When tied to urban geographers’ interest in theories of spatial utilization over time, this ESF project serves to complicate the general picture of a universal movement in research themes toward the specific and local.

A review of the programme for the 2008 European Association for Urban History’s ninth international conference (held in Lyon, France) reveals some of the trends outlined above. The study of the role of soldiers in early modern cities, whether as frontier guards, garrisons, or even POW’s is another example of the recognition of the heterogeneity of urban populations. The relationship between production and consumption in early modern cities was also discussed, showing a somewhat new orientation toward a demand-side analysis of urban economic affairs. Economic immigrants as well as voluntary ‘ex-pat’ communities were also the subject of panels. The geographic/spatial orientation of much of urban studies is shown in the emphasis on the creation of particular artistic districts, or the specific roles of Mediterranean harbor towns.

Early modern urban historians constitute a minority in the field of urban history generally. They continue to develop long-established themes while recognizing these themes’ limits and developing new research emphases. Detailed research on urban elites continues,
now with an explicitly prosopographical approach. Emphasis on urban identities means the study of a variety of significant denominations in the early modern city’s population, including generational studies. Archeologists have now moved into the study of the early modern city in significant ways, detailing how urban life was constituted and shaped.49

In her recent survey of theses in international and comparative urban history, Nancy Haekyung Kwak wrote, ‘It is an exciting time to be an urban historian: cities matter now more than ever, with over half of the world’s population finally calling them home. The most pressing world problems occur in cities …’50 Although she did not mention early modern subjects, Kwak reflects an enthusiasm for urban studies which can be said to characterize early modern Europeanists’ approach to their period as well. Cities mean a lot in the histories of early modern Europe. Whether they were the spaces that made capitalism, ‘Western’ individualism, the Renaissance, the Reformation or even simply cultural exchange, cities have had and hold a particular place in early modern studies.

Short Biography

Joseph F. Patrouch is a specialist on the histories of early modern central Europe, particularly the lands of the Habsburg Dynasty and the city of Vienna. His edition and translation of a book about Vienna written by Heinz Fassmann and Gerhard Hatz and titled Understanding Vienna: Pathways to the City appeared in 2006. In addition, he has published a monograph as well as numerous articles and reviews relating to the early modern histories of central Europe, the Habsburgs and Vienna in journals such as Sixteenth Century Journal, Austrian History Yearbook, Teaching Austria: An E-Journal, and Pro Civitate Austriae: Informationen zur Stadtgeschichtsforschung in Österreich. His new book Queen’s Apprentice: Archduchess Elizabeth, Empress Maria, the Habsburgs, and the Holy Roman Empire, 1554–1569 is scheduled to be published later this year. He has led a series of seminars comparing the cities of Vienna and Miami. In 2008 he co-curated an exhibition titled ‘Spanning the Divide of Centuries: Vienna from the Last Habsburgs to the Austrian Republic,’ at the Wolfsonian-FIU Library in Miami Beach. Prof Patrouch has been the recipient of grants from the Fulbright programs for research and study in Austria and has been an invited guest researcher at institutes in Potsdam, Leipzig, and Ceske Budejovice. In 2004, he was a guest professor at the University of Vienna’s Institute for Geography and Regional Research where he co-taught seminars on ‘The Image of Vienna. ‘Marketing’ the Heritage of the City’ and ‘Urban Preservation vs. Urban Renewal – The Example of Vienna’. In 2008–09, he was a guest researcher affiliated with the Friedrich–Meinecke-Institut of the Free University of Berlin. Prof Patrouch is a member of the Executive Committee of the Society for Austrian and Habsburg History and a list editor of the H-Net discussion group HABSBURG. He has served as the president of the Florida Conference of Historians and is a board member of the Miami Beach Historical Association. He earned his PhD and MA at the University of California, Berkeley and his BA at Boston University.

Notes

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1 This article grew out of a research seminar on early modern European cities held at Florida International University (Miami, USA), Spring Semester, 2008.

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circa 1905–1912). On line at http://germazope.uni-trier.de/Projects/WBB/woerterbuecher/dwb/wbgui (accessed 28 Jul, 2009). The entry underlines how ‘city air’ is defined by its opposite: ‘country air’. This can be seen as an important characteristic of the study and conceptualization of cities: they are what they are not.


4 Weber claimed that through this oath, the citizens became tied to the city, not to the “Sippe oder der Stamm.” Weber, Stadt, 118. These terms are notoriously complicated to translate into English. They imply some type of hereditary and therefore involuntary identity and are opposed here to the voluntarism implicit in Weber’s concept of urbanites’ identity. In his contribution to the publication of papers delivered on a panel about Weber’s contribution to pre-modern urban studies held at the 1990 German national conference of historians (Historikertag), Hinmerk Bruhns criticized Weber’s ideas concerning related concepts such as family as too static, at least when related to the Ancient world, where marriage, adoption, variable inheritance strategies, etc. allowed for a more elastic concept of affiliation than postulated as the counterpoint to Weber’s “Western” city model. H. Bruhns, “Verwandtschaftsstrukturen, Geschlechterverhältnisse und Max Webers Theorie der antiken Stadt”, 59–94 in C. Meier (ed.), Die okzidentale Stadt nach Max Weber. Zum Problem der Zugehörigkeit in Antike und Mittelalter (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1994). See particularly 93–94. Weber’s emphasis on (Christian, male) oath-taking has obvious implications for the analysis of non-Christs’ and Christian women’s roles in pre-modern urban histories.

The question of oath-taking may have been on Weber’s mind as he volunteered for Imperial German military service in the summer of 1914. On the date of Weber’s military service, see W. Nippel, “Editorischer Bericht”, 45–58 in Weber, Stadt. Here, 50. On Weber’s idea of the important role and power of the oath as the means to create social cohesion, see G. Dilcher, “Max Webers ‘Stadt’ und die historische Stadtforschung der Mediävis tik”, 119–43 in Bruhns and Nippel, Weber und die Stadt. Here, 137.

5 A central concept postulated by Weber was that of ‘Verbundenheit’. The term recalls an active role in the process of creating family–like social relations and has some monastic overtones relating to voluntary networks of communities. The variety of affiliations available to late medieval and early modern city dwellers was the expression of this process of ‘Verbundenheit’. Predictably, Weber also cited the ‘city air makes one free’ proverb in his discussion: Weber, Stadt, 105.


7 http://juh.sagepub.com/.

8 http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayJournal?jid=UHY.

9 http://www.urbanhistoryreview.ca/.

10 http://www.h-net.org/~urban/.


13 Tilly and Blockmans, Cities, 8.


15 Friedrichs, Early Modern City, 15.

16 It should be pointed out that Weber’s attention was focused on the comparisons between what he saw as the Antique and Medieval periods as well as between the Oriental and Occidental models he postulated. His examples for the most part are not drawn from the Early Modern period.

17 L. Martines, Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy (New York: Knopf, 1979), 18.

18 Ibid., 333.


20 Ibid., 131*.

21 B. Mueller, Reichstadt und Reformation. Schriften des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte 180. In the following, the revised edition of 1987 (based on the 1966 French translation published in Geneva) will be cited. It was published in (East) Berlin by the Evangelische Verlaganstalt. This revised edition included a long postscript responding...
to the research on the topic up until around 1985. The US historians H. C. E. Middelfort and M. U. Edwards translated and published this piece along with other writings by Mueller on related topics a decade after Mueller’s original piece appeared in print: Imperial Cities and the Reformation (Philadelphia: Fortress Press).

22 He went on to write, ‘[w]hether religious ideas profoundly transformed the external world in which they existed, or whether they themselves were transformed by political needs and ideals, depended always on the historic environment. It is impossible to generalize on this subject …’ H. Baron, “Religion and Politics in the German Imperial Cities during the Reformation,” English Historical Review, 52 (1937): 405–27, 614–33. Here, 407, 427, 633.

23 Mueller, Reichstadt und Reformation, 12. The reference to Weber’s fragment on cities can be found in 10, fn. 1.

24 Ibid., 23, 32. Mueller attributed some role to the different Stammen involved, complicating Weber’s model. (See 4 above.) To Mueller, some of the differences in the characteristics of the (urban) Reformation in the Holy Roman Empire might be attributable to the “Stammesgrenze” between Franconia and Swabia or to characteristics of the Swabian-Allemannian area (Raun) more generally. 56, 57. By 1987, Mueller had retreated to a position that gave equal billing to church history and theology vis-a-vis political and social history. 97.


35 Ibid., 145.


37 D. Eichberger, A Noble Residence for a Female Regent: Margaret of Austria and the ‘Court of Savoy’ in Mechelen”, 25–46, in Mills, Architecture.

38 Ibid., 36.


41 M. Pollak, “Representations of the City in Siege Views of the Seventeenth Century,” 605–46 in Tracy, City Walls.


46 Editors’ Introduction, ibid., 26.

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