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Review of B. Ann Tlusty and Mark Häberlein (eds.), *A Companion to
Late Medieval and Early Modern Augsburg*
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BOOK REVIEWS

B. ANN TLUSTY and MARK HÄBERLEIN (eds.), *A Companion to Late Medieval and Early Modern Augsburg*, Brill's Companions to European History, 20 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), xvii + 595 pp. ISBN 978 90 04 41495 2 (hardback). €228.00

B. Ann Tlusty and Mark Häberlein's monumental volume on late medieval and early modern Augsburg brings the history of this intriguing, and in many ways unusual, imperial city to a wider anglo-phone audience. The last few years have seen something of a trend for the publication of large edited volumes focused upon the most significant late medieval and early modern cities, including Andrew Brown and Jan Dumolyn's *Medieval Bruges c.850–1550* and Bruno Blondé and Jeroen Puttevils's *Antwerp in the Renaissance*.¹ The present volume brings Augsburg into this august company, and has already succeeded in attracting widespread interest amongst urban historians who are far more used to reading about the cities of the Low Countries and Italy. Any such volume faces a fundamental choice of how far it should focus upon acting as a comprehensive survey and introduction to its city, and how far it should aim to capture the state of the art in historiographical innovation as demonstrated in work on that particular city. This is no easy decision, and it is inevitable that no compromise will entirely satisfy all readers. Brown and Dumolyn's volume on Bruges tacked further towards the complete survey, with many authors collaborating on each chapter to create a rounded and consistent interpretation of the city's fortunes, while Blondé and Puttevils's volume on Antwerp is a collection of distinct essays reflecting the individual research interests of the contributors. Tlusty and Häberlein's volume on Augsburg embodies a compromise

¹ Andrew Brown and Jan Dumolyn, *Medieval Bruges c.850–1550* (Cambridge, 2018); Bruno Blondé and Jeroen Puttevils (eds.), *Antwerp in the Renaissance* (Turnhout, 2020).

between these two approaches. Most chapters are single or dual-authored, but generally survey quite tightly defined areas rather than reflecting particular interests.

The volume is organized into four thematic sections: 'The City', 'Economy, Politics, and the Law', 'Religion and Society', and 'Communication, Cultural and Intellectual Life'. The first section appears intended to serve as a form of extended introduction, for, unusually, the volume lacks an introduction in the traditional sense, and non-specialist readers are somewhat thrown into the deep end. Helmut Graser, Mark Häberlein, and B. Ann Tlustý's opening chapter on 'Sources and Historiography' situates Augsburg's importance in historiographical terms—not least in discussing the significance of Richard Ehrenberg's work on the Fuggers, which is well known in both English and French as well as German. Barbara Rajkay's chapter on topography, population, and visual representations effectively sets the scene for many of the issues discussed in later chapters, but in doing so it also highlights one of the most notable absences from the volume: maps. The half-page reproduction of Rogel's woodcut of 1563 is conspicuously the only map in the entire volume. On one level, now that spatial approaches are such an important element of contemporary urban historiography, we might have expected to see some chapters make use of thematic mapping; but more broadly, there is a real need for at least schematic maps identifying the locations, boundaries, and features discussed. The absence of even one such map from the volume is a real disappointment for this reviewer.

Claudia Stein's chapter on 'Invisible Boundaries' is extremely interesting and conceptually ambitious. Here, the now-familiar question of the early modern 'medical marketplace' is given a unique new dimension: Stein's 'invisible boundaries' are both confessional boundaries between Catholics and Protestants, and the boundaries of the body. Exploring these concepts in parallel offers a distinctive contribution to debates in medical history, while also powerfully explaining the reality of a bi-confessional city in a way to which the rest of part one only alludes. However, the nature of this chapter means it perhaps sits uncomfortably amongst its more descriptive neighbours in part one. Gregor Rohmann's chapter on 'Textual Representation' completes section one, introducing the wide range of

chronicle and related sources for the city in largely narrative fashion, but also considering the contexts and motivations behind their composition in a very insightful manner.

The second part of the volume focuses upon the broad but inter-related matters of trade, politics, and law, along with a digression into crime. Häberlein's chapter on production, trade, and finance sets out to look 'beyond the Fuggers'. Considering them in the broader context of fustian weaving, other merchants, and mining, he clearly proves that this was no one-horse town. Two chapters explore Augsburg's politics: Christopher W. Close considers the era of the dominance of the guilds over the city's government up to 1548, while Häberlein and Rajkay's chapter picks up the story with the patrician regime, which lasted until 1806. This regime-change aligned with the shift from an earlier embrace of the Reformation to what became Augsburg's distinctive bi-confessional nature. Together, these chapters offer a compelling narrative; yet some key aspects are explained only cursorily. While the closed patriciate might be familiar to historians of Augsburg and a good number of its neighbours, it is an alien concept to historians of many other European cities. More discussion of the formation, composition, and character of the patriciate – and, indeed, of the character of Augsburg's guilds themselves – would have made this section much richer for a broader range of readers. Allyson F. Creasman's chapter on crime and punishment does not lack context or explanation: the inquisitorial process and its implementation in the city are explained in a very accessible manner, making frequent comparisons with the wider European context. Likewise, Peter Kreutz's chapter on the civil law neatly balances a summary of the city's courts, processes, and legal code with a comparative analysis placing Augsburg in its context. The enduring influence of the 1276 *Stadtbuch*, although many neighbouring cities, by contrast, updated their legal systems with new Roman law-influenced codes during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, is striking, as is the late adoption of formal recognition for bills of exchange in the city of the Fuggers.

The third part of the book is entitled 'Religion and Society' – although, as we have seen, religion in this city had a great deal to do with its politics, and questions of social stratification and inequality are largely explained by its commercial life. Michele Zelinsky

Hanson's chapter on the urban Reformation provides a lively narrative of the changing tides of confessional policy in the city, helpfully expanding many of the points introduced in the pair of chapters on city politics (indeed, these three chapters should be read alongside one another). Marjorie E. Plummer and B. Ann Tlusty's chapter, 'Catholic-Protestant Coexistence', considers Augsburg's distinctive pattern of religious change and an unusual degree of tolerance through a welcome discussion of lived experience, offering an engaging picture of how this bi-confessional city worked in practice. Sabine Ullmann's 'Jews as Ethnic and Religious Minorities' offers an important reminder of the limits to the city's relative religious tolerance: Jews were expelled in the fifteenth century and not readmitted to the city until the early eighteenth.

Part three also includes four chapters on Augsburg's social structures. Mark Häberlein and Reinhold Reith's chapter on 'Inequality, Poverty, and Mobility' provides an overview of the city's tax structure, its increasingly diverse guilds and economic specialization, and its structures of poor relief. These are all quite typical stories for western European cities of this period, so it would have been interesting to see the detailed discussion of Augsburg's people and their fortunes contextualized in terms of its neighbours and competitors. Margaret Lewis's chapter on women, family, and sexuality makes the point that Augsburg's women experienced the same tribulations as most others in the Holy Roman Empire, but that the role of guild influence in the formative stages of the Reformation in the city gave them a particularly sharp burden to carry. B. Ann Tlusty's chapter on sociability and leisure is also framed around the influence of the Reformation on everyday life—especially in light of the fact that its support came more from the guilds than the elites. Nonetheless, there is much engaging detail on the city's inns, as well as intriguing leisure activities, such as sleigh rides around the squares. Finally, Andreas Flurschütz da Cruz addresses what has been sitting in the background of all the issues discussed so far during the seventeenth century: the experience of war. Rather than simply recounting the city's brushes with the Thirty Years War, this chapter provides an engaging cultural consideration of the city-dwellers' experiences.

The final section, 'Communication, Cultural and Intellectual Life', encompasses a broad range of arts and culture, beginning with print and the book trade. Regina Dauser's opening chapter on the dissemination of news connects Augsburg's centrality in financial networks to its centrality in news networks, first in manuscript and then print. Print then provides the focus for Hans-Jörg Künast's chapter on book production, which explores Augsburg's prominent role in the German print trade and its uniqueness in producing more vernacular than Latin texts, which is explained by the absence of a university. Wolfgang E. J. Weber's chapter on learned culture goes on to show that this absence of a university, however, did not prevent the emergence of vigorous humanist and intellectual networks—notably featuring an early embrace of the city's Roman origins and the natural sciences.

Victoria Bartels and Katherine Bond's fascinating (and richly illustrated) chapter on dress and material culture explores Augsburg as a city with a particularly rich clothing culture, and one possessed of uniquely abundant sources for fashion, including the illustrated manuscripts of Matthäus and Veit Konrad Schwarz. Their compelling analysis considers clothing as a key means of constructing status, identity, and gender in light of the city's complex social and confessional structures. Andrew Morrall's chapter on the arts—encompassing painting, printmaking, sculpture, and luxury trades such as goldsmithing—also illustrates Augsburg's distinctive richness, which resulted from the convergence of German and Italian influences. Alexander J. Fisher's analysis of music in the city also emphasizes the significance of this conjunction of Italianate and Germanic influences, along with the patronage of the Fuggers and their associates. Dietrich Erben's chapter on architecture explores a combination of influences in terms of 'competitive patronage', including the intriguing example of humanist mayor Marcus Welser's 1583 garden house, designed to exhibit Roman antiquities. The chapter also includes rich analysis of architectural features of the streetscape which greatly adds to the sense of the city that the early chapter on topography began to create; the two should certainly be read together.

There is no doubt that this volume must stand as one of the most complete and wide-ranging surveys of any single early modern city. However a volume like this is organized, readers might inevitably feel

that the editors could have done things a little differently, and that another structure or combination of chapters might have been better. It does seem, however, that the exhaustive structure of this volume actually creates some gaps through its segmentation, and some of the most interesting interpretative threads are left for the readers to assemble themselves. Surveying the whole volume, it becomes obvious just how indivisible the questions of religion and politics were in Augsburg (and how they influenced everything else), and it is tempting to think that it would have been both richer and clearer to weave the stories of Reformation and political change together into a collaboratively authored chapter. These areas of missed conjunction between chapters seem all the harder to follow in the absence of an introduction to provide an overall frame through which to interpret them, in addition to the absence of a map to navigate the places discussed in them. Context and comparison are strong features of some chapters, but are sparse in others, suggesting the question of quite whom this volume is intended to serve? The choice to publish in English rather than German marks it out as intended to reach a broader audience, many of whom might seek to employ it as a comparison in work on other cities; yet the reader who is less familiar with the region might sometimes be left lacking the contextualization required to really place the huge depth of detail offered. Regardless of any criticisms, however, the volume that Tlusty and Häberlein have put together is a supremely impressive achievement, and it will undoubtedly succeed in bringing the intriguing history of Augsburg to a wider audience for a long time to come.

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