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Andrew Lees, Lynn Hollen Lees. *Cities and the Making of Modern Europe, 1750-1914.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. xii + 300 pp. $80.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-521-83936-5; $28.99 (paper), ISBN 978-0-521-54822-9.

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Commissioned by Susan R. Boettcher

A Useful Survey of Modern European Cities

Andrew Lees and Lynn Hollen Lees have contributed a new volume to the series "New Approaches to European History." Their book serves well the purpose of the series, which, according to the book jacket, seeks to offer "concise but authoritative surveys of major themes and problems in European history since the Renaissance."

The book is divided into two parts. The first and shorter part emphasizes the deterioration of urban life prior to the middle of the nineteenth century. The second, longer part stresses improvements after 1850. The book offers quite a broad treatment of urban life. The many strands in the survey include demography, governance, protest, sanitation, public health, architecture, planning, high and popular culture, and volunteerism. Throughout the book the authors pay attention to issues related to gender and diversity.

Given the focus of the authors' previous scholarship, it should come as no surprise that German history and British history are well served in this survey. French history also is stressed. However, the reader also will learn something about cities in the Habsburg Empire, Italy, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, and Spain. A chapter on "imperial and colonial cities" highlights the imperial functions of cities both in Europe and in overseas European colonies. The discussion of African and Asian cities, particularly Algiers, Batavia, Bombay, Cairo, Calcutta, New Delhi, and Sydney, is most welcome. This chapter helps to differentiate this survey from one which might have been written a generation ago.

Understandably the most attention is given to large capital cities–London and Paris more so than Berlin and Vienna. Here the problems the authors mention occurred on the largest scale, were most visible, and had the most impact on governments. Here, too, the efforts made to deal with the challenges of life in modern urban communities were most concentrated. However, this volume is not only focused on the history of the metropolis. The authors include many details from the histories of other cities. Among German cities multiple references are made to Dresden, Duisburg, Essen, Frankfurt am Main, Hamburg, and Munich. Among British cities Birmingham, Glasgow, and Manchester are featured, but attention also is given to Bristol, Leeds, and Liverpool. Among French cities we learn the most about Bordeaux, Lille, Lyon, and Marseille.

This is a readable survey with numerous illustrations, such as maps, photographs, and works of art. The authors augment their analysis with statistical information and with telling quotations from primary sources. Bibliographical suggestions, primarily to works in English, are made at the end of each chapter. This book could be assigned usefully both to graduate and undergraduate students. All readers will benefit from the authors' systematic effort to present urban history in a transnational, comparative framework.

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