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Markian Prokopovych. *Habsburg Lemberg: Architecture, Public Space and Politics in the Galician Capital, 1772-1914.* West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2008. 357 S. $49.95 (paper), ISBN 978-1-55753-510-8.

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Habermas in a Habsburg Town?

What does a nationalist building look like? How does nationalism shape urban space? Why do so many cities in Central Europe–the heartland of both integral nationalism and multiethnicity–look so similar? Markian Prokopovych's new contribution to the urban history of the Habsburgs answers these questions and raises a few more. For Prokopovych, Lemberg was an imperial city. It was *kaisertreu*–faithful to the kaiser-ruled Habsburg Empire even if that faithfulness expressed itself in Ruthenian and Polish national variants. Viennese bureaucrats worked with local architects to shape not Lemberg's single public sphere, but rather its multiple and overlapping public spheres–as Prokopovych argues, bringing Jürgen Habermas's notion of *Öffentlichkeit* to this Habsburg town.[1] Prokopovych calls the city "Lemberg" both to accurately reflect his chronology (that is, the city's Habsburg period of 1772-1914) and to show that only "Lemberg" reflects the imperial vision of all the protagonists: "Thus contrary to Polish and Ukrainian national historiographies that emphasize either the city's historical Polishness or the Ukrainians' increasing prominence in the city, Lemberg remained a Habsburg city where individuals held multiple identities until the outbreak of World War I" (p. 291). The choice to call the city Lemberg perfectly reflects Prokopovych's argument.

By now it is well-established in the scholarship that Galicia–especially the city known variously as Lemberg, Lwów, Leopolis, Lviv, Lvov, and Lemberik–was multiethnic. This is however less noticeable to current visitors, in part because the region is *not* multiethnic today, thanks to the great social engineering projects of the twentieth century and the ethnic cleansing of World War II and the Holocaust. One of the results of the ethnic cleansing and Soviet-thwarted nationalist projects is scholars' tendency to use history to reinforce the concept of the nation. The city now known as Lviv, this historiography attempts to prove, was *really* (Polish) Lwów or (primordially Ukrainian) Lviv. In that sense, Prokopovych's book is refreshing: it was Lemberg, Habsburg, imperial. Prokopovych's book moves beyond simply re-proving the cliché of Galician multiethnicity to show concretely how ethnic nationalism and imperialism manifested themselves in the urban built environment. Ultimately, he suggests a general pattern for the empire: multiple "public spheres" overlapped in Habsburg imperial cities. Habermas existed in Habsburg towns, but differently than in Paris, Berlin, or London.

Prokopovych makes his argument in four chapters. First, he demonstrates a link between architecture, public space, and politics. The Josephinian bureaucrats of the *Vormärz* period arrived from Vienna to "Austrian Siberia" to organize and rationalize the urban space of the unruly city–but the result of their efforts was the emergence of ethnic public spheres in multiple variants: Jewish, Ruthenian, and predominantly, Polish (p. 66). Prokopovych cautions, however, that these public spheres were themselves not national, but intertwined with the imperial Viennese state project.

Chapter 2 complicates his argument by focusing on the specific groups creating the multiple "public spheres" of Habsburg Lemberg. In fact, style did come to be intertwined with ethnicity in the attitudes and discourse of the locals. Viennese bureaucrats, for example, associated baroque architecture with the Poles. As the Austrians struggled to organize the city in enlightened absolutist

fashion, they also strived to turn the (Polish) baroque into the (Austrian) neoclassical. Not surprisingly, the Poles then associated the neoclassical with the Austrians, and later undertook the task of architectural transformation in reverse. By focusing on specific individuals, however, Prokopovych is able to prove that style and nationality were hardly ever clear categories.

Ignac Chambrez, for example, was the leading architect of the Viennese Vormärz period and loyal (*kaisertreu*) to Vienna, but was also true to his homeland of Moravia, and his home of Lemberg. In other words, he was hardly a "Germanizer," as Polish nationalists later condemned these bureaucrats after 1867. Julian Zachariewicz, for another example, was a Protestant Polish Lemberg professor of architecture trained in Vienna. Perhaps the central figure in shaping Lviv's late nineteenth-century cityscape, he also defies categorization. In 1881, archaeological work at Halicz uncovered the medieval foundations of Galicia. Both Poles and Ruthenians argued for Halicz as proving their own group's dominance in the region. Zachariewicz, however, argued for Galicia as a *synthesis* of architectural styles, both the Byzantine of the Ruthenians and the Romanesque and Gothic of the more Western-oriented Poles. Zachariewicz, like his contemporaries, ascribed ethnos to architecture (his theory of "architectural civilization"), but still his promoting of synthesis in Galicia oddly prefigures much of the emphasis on the region's multicultural uniqueness today. It is this focus on little-studied figures, such as Chambrez and Zachariewicz, and transposing them from a national to an imperial framework, that constitutes one of the strengths of Prokopovych's book.

The buildings themselves take the focus in chapter 3, as Prokopovych shows how not only the individuals–like Chambrez or Zachariewicz–but also Lemberg's built environment reflected an imperial, not a national, identity. Buildings attached to specific groups, such as the Poles' Skarbek Theater and Ossolineum library, or the Ruthenian National Institute, still reflected a Habsburg worldview. It was the Polish-dominated Lemberg municipality that pressured the conflicted Ruthenian community to push construction forward and "galvanized the process of the Ruthenians' establishing a presence in Lemberg" (p. 151). Similarly, Prokopovych notes, the Adam Mickiewicz monument–a landmark in today's Lviv–may have resulted from a Polish lobby and Polish-dominated Galician government, but the sculptor modeled it not on other statues of the Polish poet, but rather on Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's statue in Vienna. Moreover, Mickiewicz was both a Polish national symbol, and–as an aristocrat–a symbol palatable to Habsburg loyalty. National and imperial could coexist in the built environment.

Chapter 4, "Using the City: Commemorations, Restorations, and Exhibitions," puts architecture in motion. Prokopovych examines various public events to argue for Habsburg loyalty *even* in the post-1867 period so renowned for Polish nationalism. Although organizers and activists endowed these events with national meaning, the greater Lemberg public received these mass events as spectacle and entertainment. Put more provocatively, the nation could not stand up to the empire; pro-nation intentions created pro-empire consequences. The Habsburg public remained kaisertreu and part of the greater Habsburg public space. Prokopovych ends with World War I; the overlapping public spheres and multiple identities so intrinsic to the Habsburg Empire would fracture and clash in the violence of World War I and the rise of nation-states after Versailles.

Photographs and pictures throughout the book illustrate Prokopovych's argument; these depict not individuals, but rather the architectural results of multiple agents. Lemberg's Viennese Coffee House, for example, "could be anywhere in Central Europe" (p. 7). Coffee house culture traveled with Austrian bureaucrats across the Habsburg domains and constitutes a legacy of the attempt at centralization, making "Habsburg town" a viable category of analysis for Prokopovych (p. 6). The relative ability to synchronize style, culture, and urban environment in Habsburg Europe could offer fruitful comparisons with other empires. Certainly Russian bureaucrats, too, traveled across the vast imperial expanse, but–generally speaking–they seemed to have worked more extensively with local styles. The dynamic between centralization and decentralization may have operated differently under the Romanovs. Tbilisi, Irkutsk, Kyiv, and Vilnius were all Russian imperial cities … but that material and architectural synchronicity seems perhaps more manifested in the multiple Russian orthodox churches dotting the cityscapes of the former empire.[2] One hopes that Prokopovych's work will lead to further comparative research elucidating the relationship between empire and architecture.

However, this book's greatest strength is its greatest flaw. It concludes the historiographic debate between Ukrainians and Poles, but remains constrained by the debate's categories. In other words, the book settles a debate about a multicultural city that ignores the population that constituted 30 percent: the Jews. As

Prokopovych notes, the population was about 50 percent Polish, 30 percent Jewish, and 15 percent Ruthenian (p. 16). The most intriguing section of chapter 2, "Gentiles and Places of Filth and Stench," centers on the condemnation of the Jewish districts by the Christian populations, who ascribed stereotypes of dirtiness, both hygienic and moral, to the Jewish community. Clearly, Prokopovych hopes to weave the Jewish story back into Habsburg history, but without reference to Jewish sources, specific buildings used by the Jewish community, or the Jewish contribution to the Habsburg public sphere. Opportunity still remains for truly exploring the Jewish element in Lemberg's multicultural urban environment and articulating how buildings used by the Jewish community reflected a Habsburg imperial attitude. One of the characteristics of Habsburg towns was their Jewish population; the Jewish-Christian dynamic, surely, proved just as crucial to shaping the public sphere as the Ruthenian-Polish or Polish-German ones.

For example, one of the photographs is of Lemberg's Jewish Reform synagogue built in the 1840s. Who designed, built, lobbied for, described, or condemned this building? In addition to the Ruthenian National Institute and the Polish Skarbek Theater, the Reform synagogue offers another example of multiple agents creating a "national" building that–perhaps? –reflected an imperial identity. Michael Stanislawski's recent *A Murder in Lemberg: Politics, Religion and Violence in Modern Jewish History* (2007) tells the story of the murder of Lemberg's Reform rabbi by a fellow Jew. His narrative reveals the fractures in the Jewish community, and the difficulties experienced by the Viennese bureaucrats in managing the incident. One imagines that a story of public space, politics, and architecture could be found in the building of the Jewish Reform synagogue. How the Jews responded to Christian stereotypes, how the Jewish community may have been particularly "Habsburg," how the "Jewish public sphere" overlapped with those of other ethnic groups: these remain questions for further research.

Of course, few buildings from this Jewish public sphere remain standing today. But Prokopovych proves that material culture and built environment constitute a major legacy of the Habsburgs throughout Central Europe: the partially scratched-out signs in Yiddish on shop buildings one can still find in Lviv that hint of its Lemberg past; the coffee houses found in not only Vienna, but also Prague, Trieste, and Cracow; and the "Habsburg yellow" paint gracing the buildings across the domains of Maria Theresa and her son (p. 7). Prokopovych shows how this centralization interacted with local multiethnicity to create an urban environment particular to Central Europe. His contribution should interest students and scholars of urban history, Central Europe, and the relationship between architecture and politics.

Notes

[1]. See Prokopovych's note on Habermas scholarship (a field unto itself) on page 15. Geoff Eley, "Nations, Publics and Political Cultures: Placing Habermas in the Nineteenth Century," in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 289-339, is a good exploration of the implications of Habermas's ideas, but Prokopovych may be correct that multiethnicity has yet to figure in Habermas studies.

[2]. See, for example, Valerie Kivelson, *Cartographies of Tsardom: The Land and Its Meaning in Seventeenth-Century Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007); and the classic work, Marc Raeff, "In the Imperial Manner," in *Political Ideas and Institutions in Political Russia* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2008), 156-187.

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