

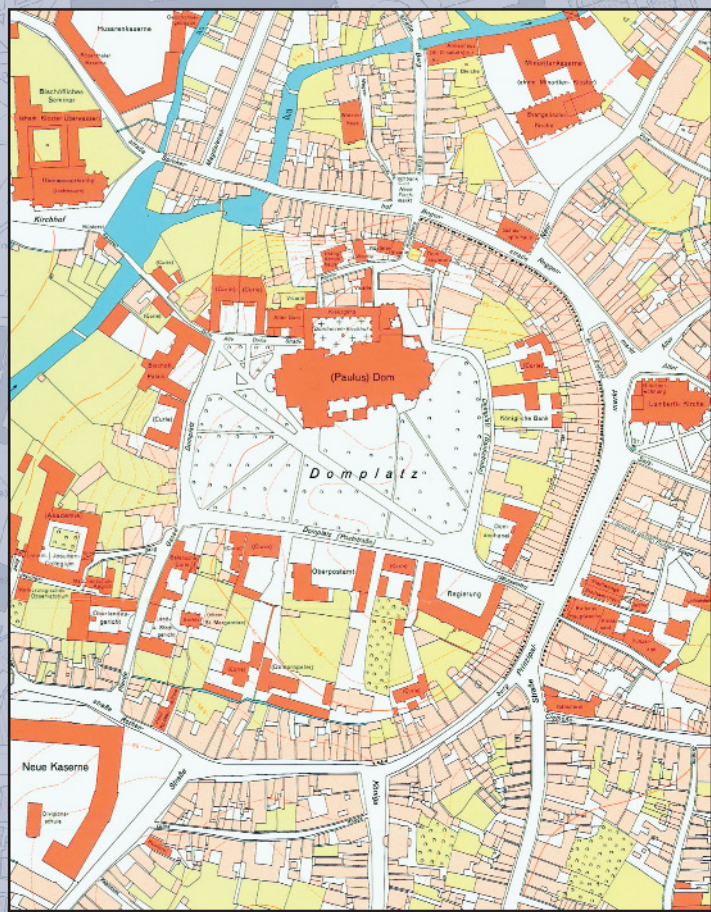
garten



Lords and Towns in Medieval Europe

The European Historic Towns Atlas Project

Edited by
Anngret Simms and
Howard B. Clarke



Neue Kaserne

Straße

Regierung

Oberpostamt

Domplatz

(Paulus) Dom

Musantenkaasne

Kirchhof

Überwasser Hof

Bischöfliches Seminar

M. Maria-Lazarareth

Musantenkaasne

M. Maria-Lazarareth

M. Maria-Lazarareth

M. Maria-Lazarareth

M. Maria-Lazarareth

M. Maria-Lazarareth

M. Maria-Lazarareth

M. Maria-Lazarareth

M. Maria-Lazarareth

M. Maria-Lazarareth

M. Maria-Lazarareth

LORDS AND TOWNS IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE

This volume is based on possibly the biggest single Europe-wide project in urban history. In 1955 the International Commission for the History of Towns established the European historic towns atlas project in accordance with a common scheme in order to encourage comparative urban studies. Although advances in urban archaeology since the 1960s have highlighted the problematic relationship between the oldest extant town plan and the actual origins of a town, the large-scale cadastral maps as they have been made available by the European historic towns atlas project are still necessary if we want to understand the evolution of the physical form of our towns. By 2014 the project consisted of over 500 individual publications from over 18 different countries across Europe. Each atlas comprises at least a core-map at the scale of 1:2500, analytical maps and an explanatory text. The time has come to use this enormous database that has been compiled over the last 40 years. This volume, itself based on a conference related to this topic that was held in the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin in 2006, takes up this challenge.

The focus of the volume is on the question of how seigneurial power influenced the creation of towns in medieval Europe and of how this process in turn influenced urban form. Part I of the volume addresses two major issues: the history of the use of town plans in urban research and the methodological challenges of comparative urban history. Parts II and III constitute the core of the book focusing on the dynamic relationship between lordship and town planning in the core area of medieval Europe and on the periphery. In Part IV the symbolic meaning of town plans for medieval people is discussed. Part V consists of critical contributions by an archaeologist, an art historian and a historical geographer.

By presenting case studies by leading researchers from different European countries, this volume combines findings that were hitherto not available in English. A comparison of the English and German bibliographies, attached to this volume, reveals some interesting insights as to how the focus of research shifted over time. The book also shows how work on urban topography integrates the approaches of the historian, archaeologist and historical geographer. The narrative of medieval urbanization becomes enriched and the volume is a genuine contribution to European studies.

Anngret Simms is Professor Emeritus of Historical Geography at University College, Dublin and a member of the Royal Irish Academy.

Howard B. Clarke is Professor Emeritus of Medieval Socio-Economic History at University College, Dublin and a member of the Royal Irish Academy.



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Lords and Towns in Medieval Europe

The European Historic Towns
Atlas Project

*Edited by Anngret Simms
and Howard B. Clarke*

First published 2015 by Ashgate Publishing

Published 2016 by Taylor & Francis

2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

Copyright © 2015 Anngret Simms and Howard B. Clarke

Anngret Simms and Howard B. Clarke have asserted their right under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, to be identified as the editors of this work.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Notice:

Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

The Library of Congress has cataloged the printed edition as follows:

Lords and towns in medieval Europe : the European historic towns atlas project / edited by Anngret Simms and Howard B. Clarke.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-7546-6354-6 (hardback) 1. Cities and towns, Medieval--Europe. 2. Nobility--Europe--History--To 1500. 3. Power (Social sciences)--Europe--History--To 1500. 4. City planning--Europe--History--To 1500. 5. Urbanization--Europe--History--To 1500. 6. Social history--Medieval, 500-1500. 7. Cities and towns, Medieval--Europe--Historiography. 8. Atlases--History--To 1500. 9. Europe--Historical geography. I. Simms, Anngret. II. Clarke, Howard B.

HT131.L67 2015

307.76094--dc23

2015009326

ISBN 9780754663546 (hbk)

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>ix</i>
<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	<i>xv</i>
<i>Ferdinand Opll: An Appreciation</i>	<i>xxi</i>
Introduction	1
<i>Anngret Simms and Howard B. Clarke</i>	
PART I: THE CHALLENGE OF COMPARATIVE URBAN STUDIES	
1 The European Historic Towns Atlas Project: Origin and Potential	13
<i>Anngret Simms</i>	
2 Comparative Approaches in the Historico-topographical Analysis of Towns and Cities	33
<i>Dietrich Denecke</i>	
PART II: CASE STUDIES FROM A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE IN THE CORE AREA OF MEDIEVAL EUROPE	
3 The Topography of Power in the Towns of Medieval Italy	65
<i>Francesca Bocchi</i>	
4 The Atlas historique de Bordeaux: A Newcomer to the Series Atlas historique des villes de France	87
<i>Sandrine Lavaud</i>	
5 Reinventing the German Towns Atlas? Trends in the Development of a National Historic Towns Atlas Project	99
<i>Daniel Stracke and Thomas Tippach</i>	

6	Seigneurial Power and the Development of Towns in the Holy Roman Empire <i>Peter Johanek</i>	117
7	The King and 'His' Town of Litoměřice/Leitmeritz in Medieval Bohemia <i>Josef Žemlička</i>	155
8	Seigneurial Power and Planning: Aspects of the Origins of Towns in Austria with Particular Reference to Vienna and Wiener Neustadt <i>Ferdinand Opll</i>	165
9	Town Planning in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries: Symbolic Meaning and Pragmatic Process <i>Martina Stercken</i>	189
10	Lordship, Economy and Society in English Medieval Marketplaces <i>Terry R. Slater</i>	213

**PART III: CASE STUDIES FROM A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON
THE PERIPHERY OF MEDIEVAL EUROPE**

11	Polish Town Plans as Expressions of Political and Economic Power <i>Roman Czaja</i>	235
12	Royal Power and Urban Space in Medieval Hungary <i>Katalin Szende and András Vég</i>	255
13	Medieval Town Plans in Romania <i>Paul Niedermaier</i>	287
14	The Medieval Planned Town in Croatia <i>Mirela Slukan Altić</i>	305
15	Planning and Regulation in the Formation of New Towns and New Quarters in Ireland, 1170–1641 <i>Howard B. Clarke</i>	321
16	Town Plans as Expressions of Political and Economic Power and Ecclesiastical Organization in Scandinavia <i>Marjatta Hietala</i>	355

PART IV: SYMBOLIC MEANINGS OF TOWN PLANS

- 17 Medieval Urban Form in the Low Countries:
State of Research, Comparative Perspective and
Symbolic Meaning 375
Bram Vannieuwenhuijze and Reinout Rutte
- 18 Maps of Medieval Thought? Cartographical
Imaginations, Cultural Symbolism and Urban
Forms of the Late Middle Ages 399
Keith D. Lilley
- 19 Early Medieval Winchester: Symbolic Landscapes 419
Derek Keene

**PART V: APPROACHES TO THE INTERPRETATION OF
LARGE-SCALE TOWN PLANS**

- 20 The Foundation and Formation of Towns from
the Viewpoint of the Archaeology of the Middle Ages 447
Matthias Untermann
- 21 The Primary Formation of Medieval Town Plans in
Central Europe from the Perspective of an Art Historian 467
Jürgen Paul
- 22 Adapting a Medieval Urban Landscape in
Nineteenth-century Ireland: The Example of
Trim, County Meath 483
Mark Hennessy
- Appendix A* 493
Appendix B 515
Appendix C 521
Index 527



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

List of Figures

3.1	Principal sites in medieval Bologna	77
3.2	Principal sites in medieval Florence	80
4.1	Map showing published atlases in the Atlas historique des villes de France	88
4.2	Historical map of Bordeaux c.1790	92
4.3	Reconstructed map of central Bordeaux in the mid nineteenth century	93
4.4	Extract from the general account of the history of Bordeaux	95
4.5	Extract from the catalogue of sites and monuments at Bordeaux	96
5.1	Redrawn cadastral map of Brunswick at a scale of 1:2,500, 1885	102
5.2	Redrawn cadastral map of Brunswick, at a scale of 1:2,500, based on Andreas Haacke's district maps, 1764–6	104
5.3	The residential landscape of eighteenth-century Brunswick	111
5.4	The military infrastructure of eighteenth-century Brunswick	113
5.5	Town planning measures in eighteenth-century Brunswick	114
5.6	The residential topography of eighteenth-century Brunswick	115
6.1	Regional map of Lübeck, 1:25,000, 1880, detail	129
6.2	Growth map of Lemgo, 1:5,000	139
6.3	Histogram of urban growth in central Europe from the mid eleventh to the mid twentieth century	143
6.4	Growth map of Warburg, 1:5,000	145
6.5	Reconstruction of settlement in the environs of Warburg in the eleventh century	146
6.6	Growth map of Brunswick to c.1881	147
6.7	Growth map of Neuenrade, 1:5,000	151
6.8	Growth map of Borgentreich, 1:5,000	152
7.1	Ground plan of Litoměřice after 1640	160

7.2	View of Litoměřice from the west by Johann Willenberg, woodcut	162
8.1	The initial layout of Vienna as a planned town	178
8.2	Cadastral map of Vienna and its immediate suburbs, 1:10,000, 1829, detail	183
8.3	Cadastral map of Wiener Neustadt and its environs, 1:2,500, 1820, detail	186
9.1	Towns connected with the dukes of Zähringen	190
9.2	So-called towns of the dukes of Zähringen with their street patterns	191
9.3	Aachen Minster, octagon with candelabra	195
9.4	Ideal plan of a Zähringer town	196
9.5a	Presumed crosswise streets in Zürich, Rennweg-Fortunagasse/Kuttelgasse	197
9.5b	The fortification of Zürich in the eleventh and twelfth centuries	198
9.6a	Conjectural view of Freiburg c.1300	202
9.6b	Archaeological evidence for Freiburg c.1200	203
9.6c	Freiburg illustrating a merely technical approach to medieval planning	204
9.7	Visions of Ezekiel: the construction of the New Jerusalem (Schwarzhof, c.1150)	205
9.8a	Reconstructed street and plot patterns of Berne	206
9.8b	Reconstruction of Etlingen in 1192	207
9.9	Legendary conflicts over the construction of Berne	210
10.1	Comparative marketplace size and shape (a): Reading, Bristol, Norwich (Tombland), Gloucester and Caernarfon	216
10.2	Comparative marketplace size and shape (b): Banbury, Hereford and Nottingham	217
10.3	The market infill at Cambridge (1), Coventry (2), Norwich (3) and Salisbury (4)	218
10.4	The Poultry Cross, Salisbury, from the south-west	220
10.5	The market infill at Ludlow, Shropshire	222
10.6	The market infill at Ludlow, Shropshire	223
11.1	Reconstruction of the spatial development of Wrocław/Breslau in the thirteenth century	238
11.2	Reconstruction of the earliest town plan of Lwówek/Löwenberg	239
11.3	Cadastral plan at 1:2,500 of Środa Śląska/Freimarkt c.1905	240
11.4	Reconstruction of the layout of the oldest part of Cracow in the thirteenth century	241
11.5	Extract from the town plan of Poznań/Posen, 1728	243

11.6	Extract from the cadastral plan at 1:2,500 of Świecie/Schwetz, 1882–1942	246
11.7	Reconstruction of the layout of the oldest part of Toruń/Thorn, 1236–50	247
11.8	Reconstruction of the spatial development of Toruń/Thorn in the thirteenth century	248
11.9	Reconstruction of the layout of the Old Town at Elbląg/Elbing in the thirteenth century	249
11.10	Extract from the cadastral plan at 1:2,500 of Chełmno/Kulm c.1910	250
11.11	Extract from the cadastral plan at 1:2,500 of Elbląg/Elbing c.1839	251
11.12	Reconstruction of the layout of Gdańsk/Danzig in the fourteenth century	253
12.1	The ground plan of Zagreb, with an indication of the reconstructed original layout	266
12.2	The planned restructuring of Buda, Esztergom and Fehérvár in the mid thirteenth century	268
12.3	Buda: the results of the excavations at Szent György tér, with an indication of plot boundaries	272
12.4a	Buda: areas laid out with standard-sized plots and the orientation of the churches	275
12.4b	Buda: areas laid out with standard-sized plots and the orientation of the churches	275
12.5	Growth map of Sopron from the middle of the thirteenth to the middle of the sixteenth century	277
12.6	Growth map of Sátoraljaújhely in the fourteenth century	282
12.7	Growth map of Kecskemét in the sixteenth century	283
13.1	Town plan of Câmpulung	289
13.2	Town plan of Suceava	290
13.3	Town plan of Târgoviște	291
13.4	Town plan of Sebeș	293
13.5	Town plan of Sighișoara	294
14.1	Dubrovnik – ground plan of the town based on the cadastral map of 1837	308
14.2	Ston – ground plan of the town based on the cadastral map of 1837	311
14.3	Korčula – ground plan of the town based on the cadastral map of 1831	314
14.4	Pag – ground plan of the town based on the cadastral map of 1824	316

14.5	Gradec – ground plan with a reconstruction of the division of plots at the beginning of the fifteenth century	319
15.1	Medieval Kilkenny showing the town walls of Irishtown to the north and the Hightown to the south	325
15.2	The distribution of towns and market settlements in medieval Ireland	329
15.3	The gridiron street plan of Derry and house types according to Stewart’s survey, 1728	348
15.4	The simple-linear street plan and town walls of Carrickfergus	350
15.5	The concentric street layout of Armagh in 1618	351
16.1	Köge, 1660	359
16.2	Street regulation plan for Uppsala in the 1640s	360
16.3	Stege, c.1670	361
16.4	Seventeenth-century reconstruction of Viipuri/Viborg	364
16.5	Plan of Turku/Åbo	368
17.1	Map of towns in the Low Countries around 1400 indicating those to which an atlas or monograph has been devoted	378
17.2	Map of the genesis of towns in the Low Countries in eight groups (tenth to fourteenth centuries)	384
17.3	Urban expansion from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century in the north of the Low Countries	385
17.4	Map of urban politics and town planning in the Low Countries, with lordships and towns	390
17.5	Timeline of urbanization in the Low Countries	394
18.1	A plan analysis of Coventry	402
18.2	The route of York’s Corpus Christi procession and pageant	404
18.3	Ricart’s plan of Bristol, c.1480	406
18.4	The shared street designs of Conwy and Beaumaris	411
18.5	The Norman expansion of Norwich, Hereford, Bristol and Nottingham	415
19.1	Winchester in 1611	421
19.2	Winchester in the eleventh century, showing the street plan and religious precincts on the eve of the Norman Conquest	422
19.3	Winchester street grid – a diagrammatic representation identifying the ninth-century grid, later additions and block dimensions	423
19.4	Suburban churches, pilgrimage and landscape at Winchester	430
19.5	Winchester High Street and cathedral, looking west from St Giles’s Hill (April 2010)	437

19.6	Winchester Cathedral, looking north from St Catherine's Hill (April 2010)	437
19.7	St Cross Church and Hospital at Winchester, looking west from St Catherine's Hill (April 2010)	439
20.1	Plans of Lübeck	449
20.2	Münster im Breisgau, thirteenth-century streets with fresh water pipe and drainage channel	451
20.3	Freyenstein, reconstructed ground plan	452
20.4a	Freiburg im Breisgau, ground plans	454
20.4b	Freiburg im Breisgau, ground plans	455
20.5	Plans of Chemnitz	456
20.6	Ulm, Ottonian settlement in the vicinity of Neue Straße	459
20.7a	Plans of Ulm	460
20.7b	Plans of Ulm	460
20.8	Ulm, late medieval town enlargement	462
20.9a	Ulm, settlement finds of the eleventh and early twelfth centuries with the possible extent of a pre-Staufen early town, based on archaeological evidence in 2000	463
20.9b	Ulm, settlement finds of the eleventh and early twelfth centuries with the possible extent of a pre-Staufen early town, based on archaeological evidence in 2000	463
21.1	Plan of central Brunswick, 1873–81	479
22.1	Part of Trim in 1836 showing the infantry barracks of the Meath Militia	487
22.2	Growth map of Trim showing the nineteenth-century State quarter south of the medieval core	491



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Notes on Contributors

Francesca Bocchi is Professor Emeritus of Medieval History and the History of Towns at the University of Bologna. She was the founder of the Centro Gina Fasoli per la storia delle città at the same university, of which she is the academic director. A vice-president of the International Commission for the History of Towns, she is the co-director of the Atlante storico delle città italiane. In 1996–9 she published with others the atlas of Bologna in four volumes.

Howard B. Clarke is Professor Emeritus of Medieval Socio-Economic History at University College Dublin. Since 1991 he has been a joint editor of the Irish Historic Towns Atlas and is the author of *Dublin, Part I, to 1610* (2002). He is the co-editor with Anngret Simms of *The Comparative History of Urban Origins in Non-Roman Europe ...* (1985); the editor of *Irish Cities* (1995); the co-author with Jacinta Prunty of *Reading the Maps: a Guide to the Irish Historic Towns Atlas* (2011) and co-editor with Sarah Gearty of *Maps and Texts: Exploring the Irish Historic Towns Atlas* (2013). He is a member of the Royal Irish Academy and of the International Commission for the History of Towns.

Roman Czaja is Professor of Medieval History at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. His PhD thesis on the socio-topography of Elbląg/Elbing became the basis of a book dealing with Prussian towns and the Teutonic Order. His research interests are concentrated on the history of medieval towns, the Hanseatic League, the Teutonic Order and historical cartography. He is an editor of the Atlas historyczny miast polskich/Historischer Atlas polnischer Städte and a member of the International Commission for the History of Towns.

Dietrich Denecke is Professor Emeritus of Historical Geography at the University of Göttingen. He has published widely on methodological approaches in urban historical geography. Jointly with Gareth Shaw he edited *Urban Historical Geography: Recent Progress in Britain and Germany* (1988) and from 1985 to 2004 he was the joint editor of the journal *Siedlungsforschung – Archäologie, Geschichte, Geographie*. He is a member of the scientific council

of the ongoing series *Landschaften in Deutschland – Werte der deutschen Heimat* and of the commission for regional geography at the Sächsische Akademie der Wissenschaften in Leipzig.

Marjatta Hietala, Professor Emeritus of General History at the University of Tampere in Finland, has been President of the International Committee of Historical Sciences (ICHS) since 2010. With others she has produced the atlases of Kokkola – Gamlakarleby (1990) and of Helsinki – Helsingfors (2009). She has published several books, including *Services and Urbanisation at the Turn of the Century: the Diffusion of Innovation* (1987) and (with Marjatta Bell) *Helsinki – the Innovative City. Historical Perspectives* (2002). She is a member of the Finnish Academy of Sciences and of the International Commission for the History of Towns.

Mark Hennessy is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography at Trinity College Dublin, where he teaches historical geography, the history of cartography, the history and philosophy of geography, and interdisciplinary Irish studies. His main research interests are the geography of imperial expansion in high medieval Ireland and the historical geography of Irish towns. He is the author of *Trim* (Irish Historic Towns Atlas, no. 14), published by the Royal Irish Academy in 2004.

Peter Johaneck is Professor Emeritus of Westphalian and Medieval History at the University of Münster. From 1984 to 2007 he was the director of the Institut für vergleichende Städtegeschichte at Münster and he is currently a joint editor of the *Deutscher Historischer Städteatlas* and of the *Historický atlas měst České republiky*. He is a corresponding member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna and an honorary member of the International Commission for the History of Towns. The comparative urban history of central Europe is one of his research interests and with F.-J. Post he edited *Vielerlei Städte. Der Stadtbegriff* (2004). A volume of his selected works was published as *Europäische Stadtgeschichte* in 2012.

Derek Keene was the founding director of the Centre for Metropolitan History in London and then became Leverhulme Professor of Comparative Metropolitan History until his retirement in 2008. His research focuses on European cities from the seventh century onwards, often linking form and social organization. Major publications include *Survey of Medieval Winchester* (1985). He is an honorary member of the International Commission for the History of Towns and is currently working on contributions to the British atlas.

Sandrine Lavaud is a senior lecturer in medieval history at the University of Bordeaux 3 and is a member of the Ausonius laboratory (UMR CNRS 5607), where she co-ordinates the research theme 'Espaces: fabrique, usages, représentations' (Spaces: creation, usages, representations). She is a specialist

on viticulture and wines in medieval Aquitaine and also in urban history. With Ezéchiél Jean-Courret she co-directs the Atlas historique des villes de France collection and jointly with him published the innovative atlas of the city of Bordeaux (3 vols, 2009). Dr Lavaud is a member of the International Commission for the History of Towns.

Keith D. Lilley is Reader in Historical Geography at Queen's University Belfast. His research includes using spatial technologies to analyse medieval maps and urban landscapes, and has resulted in innovative web-based resources such as an interactive version of the celebrated Gough map (www.goughmap.org). He is the chairman of the British Historic Towns Atlas committee, as well as a member of the International Commission for the History of Towns. He has collaborated with the Irish Historic Towns Atlas on developing an online version of the Derry-Londonderry atlas fascicle and was the editor of *Mapping Medieval Geographies: Geographical Encounters in the Latin West and beyond, 300–1600* (2013).

Paul Niedermaier is a member of the Romanian Academy of Sciences, director of the Research Institute for Historical Sciences and Professor Emeritus of the Lucian Blaga University at Sibiu. His research interests are focused on urban history, in particular on the history of urban form, and on settlement history in general. He founded the Romanian historic towns atlas and edited the volume *Elenchus fontium historiae urbanae* for Romania. His many publications include *Städte, Dörfer, Baudenkmäler. Studium zur Siedlungs- und Baugeschichte Siebenbürgens* (2008). He is an honorary member of the International Commission for the History of Towns.

Ferdinand Opll is Director Emeritus of the Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv and was the joint editor of the Austrian historic towns atlas. With Martin Scheutz he represents Austria on the International Commission for the History of Towns, where he serves as a convener of the atlas working group. As a medieval historian he has a particular interest in the comparative urban history of central and southern Europe and in the history of cartography. His numerous publications include *Wien. Geschichte einer Stadt* (3 vols, 2001–6 jointly with Peter Csendes) and *Friedrich Barbarossa* (4th edn, 2009).

Jürgen Paul is Professor Emeritus of the History of Art at the Technical University in Dresden and is a member of the Saxon Academy of Sciences. His expertise lies in the conservation of architectural monuments and he has written extensively on the interface between architectural history and cultural identity, with a focus on the theory of monument preservation. He participated in the debate about the reconstruction of German towns and cities after World War II. One of his research interests is Protestant church building in the Baroque period, which led him to become the artistic advisor for the

restoration of the historic Frauenkirche in Dresden, and he is the author of *Der protestantische Kirchenbau des Barock und die Dresdner Frauenkirche* (2006).

Reinout Rutte is an architectural and urban historian, specializing in town planning in the Netherlands from the eleventh to the seventeenth century. He is Assistant Professor at the Institute of the History of Art, Architecture and Town Planning and in the history department of the Faculty of Architecture at Delft University of Technology. Jointly with J.E. Abrahamse he published *Atlas van de verstedelijking in Nederland: 1000 jaar ruimtelijke ontwikkeling* in 2014.

Annret Simms is Professor Emeritus of Historical Geography at University College Dublin. She is joint editor of the Irish Historic Towns Atlas and a member of the Royal Irish Academy. Jointly with Howard Clarke she represents Ireland on the International Commission for the History of Towns, where she serves as a convener of the atlas working group. Her main research interest is the comparative history of towns in western (Ireland) and central Europe. She is the co-editor with Howard Clarke of *The Comparative History of Urban Origins in Non-Roman Europe ...* (1985) and with Professor John Andrews of *Irish Country Towns* (1994) and *More Irish Country Towns* (1995).

Terry R. Slater retired as Reader in Historical Geography from the University of Birmingham in 2010. He is now an Honorary Senior Research Fellow there. His research is focused on the topographical development of medieval towns using the techniques of town-plan analysis. He has edited volumes on *The Church in the Medieval Town* (1998), *Towns in Decline 100–1600* (2000), *Edgbaston. A History* (2002) and *A County of Small Towns: the Development of Hertfordshire's Urban Landscape to 1800* (2008). He is an Honorary Lay Canon of Birmingham Cathedral.

Mirela Slukan Altić is a senior research fellow at the Institute of Social Sciences in Zagreb, Croatia, where she works as a principal in the Centre of Urban and Local History. She is also an Assistant Professor in the Department of History in the University of Zagreb. She is the author of 12 books, including five volumes of the Croatian historic towns atlas. Dr Slukan Altić is a member of the Commission on the History of Cartography under the auspices of the International Cartographic Association (ICA) and of the atlas working group of the International Commission for the History of Towns.

Martina Stercken is Professor of General History at Zürich University and deputy director of the National Centre of Research 'Mediality: Historical perspectives'. Town history and historical maps are amongst her main fields of research. She is a member of the committee preparing the Swiss atlas project and of the International Commission for the History of Towns. With others she has published *Die mittelalterliche Stadt erforschen Archäologie und Geschichte im Dialog* (2009).

Daniel Stracke holds a PhD in medieval history. At the Institut für vergleichende Städtegeschichte in Münster he is joint editor and author of the *Deutscher Historischer Städteatlas*. Currently he is engaged in a project called 'Topographies of the Multireligious' in a specialized research centre of the University of Münster. His principal research interests include medieval monastic communities, cartography and town views as historical sources, as well as all aspects of urban morphology. His *Monastische Reform und spätmittelalterliche Stadt. Die Bewegung der Franziskaner-Observanten in Nordwestdeutschland* was published in 2013.

Katalin Szende is Associate Professor in the Department of Medieval Studies at the Central European University (CEU) in Budapest. She graduated in history, medieval archaeology and classical philology and defended her PhD in medieval studies at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), Budapest. She has worked in the Museum of Sopron, the National Archives of Hungary and since 1999 at the CEU. Her fields of interest and publication include urban history, economy and topography; material culture and everyday life; and the history of literacy. She is a member of the International Commission for the History of Towns representing Hungary as the joint editor of that country's atlas project, a co-author of *Sopron* (2010) and a convener of the commission's atlas working group.

Thomas Tippach holds a PhD in history. He is a member of the Department of History at the University of Münster and is a junior editor of the *Deutscher Historischer Städteatlas*. His main research interests lie in the history of urbanization, cartography and warfare. His publications include *Koblenz als preußische Garnison und Festungsstadt. Wirtschaft, Infrastruktur, Städtebau* (2000).

Matthias Untermann has been Professor of the History of European Art at the University of Heidelberg since 2000. After graduation he worked as a medieval archaeologist and architectural historian in Baden-Württemberg, directing large-scale excavations on monastic and urban sites. He specializes in the history of medieval European architecture, focusing on building techniques and fabric, and on town planning and religious institutions in relation to regional history and archaeology, as well as on methodological problems of interpretation and reconstruction. His publications on medieval archaeology and art history include *Handbuch der mittelalterlichen Architektur* (2009).

Bram Vannieuwenhuyze is a member of the Research Group for the History of the Middle Ages at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven. His research focuses on the analysis of medieval and modern urban space. His doctoral thesis dealt with the development of medieval Brussels, integrating different fields of study such as archaeology, architecture, cartography, history, spatial morphology and toponymy, resulting in the publication of *Laatmiddeleeuwse*

Brusselse cijnregisters (12de–15de eeuw). Bron voor de historische topografie van Brussel en omgeving (2014).

András Végh is an archaeologist and senior research fellow in the Budapest History Museum. He graduated from Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), Budapest, in history and archaeology and was awarded a PhD in medieval studies by the same university for a dissertation on the medieval topography of the town of Buda. This monograph, with a gazetteer of all relevant written evidence, was published in 2008 and has become the standard work in the field. He has directed several excavation projects on Buda's Castle Hill and in its medieval suburbs. He has also been involved in a number of exhibitions, including the comprehensive presentation of the medieval and early modern history of Budapest opened in 2012.

Josef Žemlička has retired from his professorial position in the Historical Institute of the Academy of Sciences in the former Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic) and in the Charles University in the city of Prague. He is an honorary member of the International Commission for the History of Towns, sits on the board of the *Journal of Historical Geography* and is associate editor of the *Czech Historical Review*.

Ferdinand Opll: An Appreciation

We dedicate this volume to Ferdinand Opll in appreciation of his important contribution to the European historic towns atlas project. This project, initiated by the International Commission for the History of Towns in 1953, was founded in a spirit of reconciliation after the destruction of European towns during the Second World War. Medieval historians such as Heinz Stoob (Münster), Charles Higounet (Bordeaux) and Mary Lobel (Oxford) were the pioneers. Most fortunately for the ever more complex project, both in terms of methodology (digitization) and thematic reach, Ferdinand Opll emerged in the second generation as a leading figure. As one of the editors of the *Österreichischer Städteatlas* he has in fact a lot of practical experience in this field, which has turned out to be of great importance to countries that have only recently joined the project.

Ferdinand Opll was born in 1950 in the small town of Mödling, just outside the city of Vienna. He grew up in Liesing, the 23rd district (*Gemeindebezirk*) in the south-east of the city. Whoever has had the good fortune to have been taken for a walk by him in this part of the city will understand that here in his early years his interest in urban history was stimulated. His formal studies opened up further horizons. He studied history, German and the history of art at the University of Vienna, where he benefited from the guidance of Heinrich Appelt, one of the foremost Austrian medieval historians. It was Appelt who invited Ferdinand to co-operate in the publication of the imperial charters (*Kaiserurkunden*) of Frederick Barbarossa for the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*. Ferdinand also did a three-year course at the prestigious Institut für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung that prepared him to be an archivist. During this time he completed his PhD on 'Das Itinerar Friedrich Barbarossa vor der Katastrophe vor Rom bis zum Antritt des Kreuzzuges' (The Itinerary of Frederick Barbarossa between the Catastrophe at the Gates of Rome to the Start of the Crusades). These studies fermented his enduring love for Italy, its art and its medieval history.

In 1977 Ferdinand joined the staff of the Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv. Here he was given the responsibility of editing the Austrian historic towns atlas. From then on, work on Barbarossa's charters took second place. He had

started this work in 1975 and completed it in 2011 in four published volumes. His *Habilitationsschrift* (a monograph that entitled him to teach history in the university) was called *Stadt und Reich im 12. Jahrhundert* (Town and Empire in the Twelfth Century) and skilfully combined his interest in medieval towns with that of the imperial history of the Staufen dynasty. From 1989 to 2010 Ferdinand served as a director of his archives. During this time he continued to pursue his research interest in the history of towns. In 1990 he was elected to be one of the Austrian representatives on the International Commission for the History of Towns. In the following year he was elected membership of the Wissenschaftlicher Beirat of the Institut für vergleichende Städtegeschichte in Münster. This interconnectedness made him a much sought-after advisor in matters of European urban history.

After the fall of communism in eastern Europe, Adriaan Verhulst (Ghent), then president of the International Commission for the History of Towns, appointed Ferdinand jointly with Anngret Simms as co-ordinators of the atlas working group of the commission. He successfully compiled and continuously updated a complete list of all atlas publications for the homepage of the Viennese archives. After his retirement from the Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv, this task was taken on by the Irish Historic Towns Atlas team, who maintain an up-to-date atlas publication list on the website of the Royal Irish Academy – with the unstinting support of its former compiler – at www.ria.ie/research/ihta/european-project.aspx.

Ferdinand's research interest is focused in particular on the history of Vienna and its constituent parts, on the history of cartography and on comparative urban history. In this context he succeeded in organizing three major international conferences, whose proceedings he published. These included *Bild und Wahrnehmung der Stadt* (Images and Perceptions of Towns, 2008), *Europäische Städte im Mittelalter* (European Towns in the Middle Ages, 2010) and *Stadtgründung und Stadtwerdung* (Town Foundation and Town Formation, 2011). The last volume focused on the importance of archaeology for medieval urban history and turned out to be of particular significance for the debate on methodological questions concerning the exploration of early urban origins.

Accordingly the European historic towns atlas project owes Ferdinand Opll continuous support, friendship and vision for the future. It is our great pleasure to dedicate this volume to him.

Anngret Simms and Howard B. Clarke

Introduction

Anngret Simms and Howard B. Clarke

The origin of this work is a conference on the theme 'Topography and power in medieval towns', which was held in the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin in 2006. The aim was to bring together historical evidence for the formation of medieval towns and insights gained from an examination of large-scale cadastral maps as they have been made available by the European historic towns atlas project. This international project has been in the making since the 1950s, yet it is a relative newcomer in the consciousness of urban historians. In 2014 the project consisted of well over 500 individual publications from 18 different countries across Europe.

For the publication of this volume we focused in particular on the questions of how seigneurial power influenced the creation of towns in medieval Europe and of how this process in turn influenced urban form in relation to ground plans. The latter proved to be more resistant to change than other aspects of the urban landscape, such as the built environment or land use. Ours is a restricted focus that nevertheless needed to embrace cultural, economic and political factors in order to explain the various processes that contributed to the formation of towns. We were conscious that towns were, and still are, not self-contained phenomena but part of distinct phases in the development of society. In order to demonstrate the link between process and form, we chose the topic of royal and seigneurial influence on the foundation and early planning of medieval towns. The power of lordship was felt in various ways: choice of site, often on or near that of an existing settlement; the strategic positioning of a castle; the establishment and protection of a market; the patterning of the ground plan for a new town. In the course of time seigneurial power in successful towns was replaced by institutional arrangements made on behalf of and by the townspeople themselves.

Part I provides an essay tracing the history of the use of town plans in researching urban form going back to the nineteenth century. The prominence of German scholars in this field may have been related to unification in 1870: part of the cultural context at that time was a growing awareness of

urban colonization east of the River Elbe in which large numbers of towns were founded in the high Middle Ages. Since the ultimate aim of the historic towns atlas project is to promote comparative studies of European towns in their historical development, Part I also includes an essay on methodological approaches to the comparative study of historic towns; this should serve as a clearing house for future work in this field.

The core of this book is to be found in Parts II and III, focusing on the dynamic relationship between lordship and town planning. Two essays describing in some detail greatly improved versions of the original atlas programme in France and in Germany are also included. The case studies are divided into those from the core area of medieval Europe, largely associated with the former Roman Empire, and those from the periphery. Although most contributors were or are editors of national historic towns atlas projects, some responded more successfully to the request to use nineteenth-century cadastral maps as a source than others, whose delight with medieval urban chronicles was stronger than their curiosity directed towards such maps.

In Part IV the thematic framework is widened. Since all maps are at once surface and symbol, the symbolic meaning of town plans for medieval people is discussed and this is where the all-encompassing power of the dominating medieval world view as represented by Christianity comes into play. One essay examines in detail the conscious remodelling of Winchester in southern England with allusions to Jerusalem, ancient Rome and other distant pilgrimage sites. The same section contains a contribution on how townspeople saw themselves as expressed in urban chronicles. In Part V the interdisciplinary character of the towns atlas project is strengthened by critical contributions by an archaeologist, an art historian and an historical geographer. No doubt the most important recent contribution to medieval urban history comes from archaeology.

Case studies from the core and periphery

The narratives in this volume on town foundation in different countries confirm that the formation of the urban network in medieval Europe occurred overwhelmingly in the context of territorial structures and on the initiative of lords, be they abbots, bishops, kings or noblemen who founded towns for financial and security reasons. Looking at our case studies from the core of medieval Europe it can be seen that Italy remains a fascinating example for urban change. The most important urban phenomenon of late Antiquity was the introduction of ecclesiastical buildings, as in the case of cathedrals (late fourth century) located within former defensive enclosures alongside royal palaces that represented imperial power.

In the early twelfth century the idea evolved that townspeople should take responsibility for town government: power was to be based on the consensus of the leading inhabitants. Many communes constructed public buildings

such as town halls on main squares, following the model of the ancient Roman forum. During the life-span of the communes not one castle appeared in these towns, unlike in Sicily where castles were built next to towns in order to control the population. Across the Adriatic Sea in Croatia the statutes of Dubrovnik (1272–96) are the oldest regulations prescribing that streets had to be of a certain width and outside blocks were to be reserved for noblemen. The local count's residence loomed over the market square. There was less planning in the inland towns of Croatia since there was less seigneurial interest in such places.

From documents for the German lands we learn that feudal lords repeatedly referred to the inhabitants of their towns as *homines et mercatores nostri* ('our people and merchants'). According to one of our contributors, 'medieval rulers were the shakers and movers in the process of town founding. They initiated in co-operation and by negotiation with other social groups a fundamental and epoch-making social change'. At the same time, 'merchants were partners of significance': attracting settlers was another crucial task that the lord had to undertake. Town law, as expressed in the granting of charters in Latin in much of twelfth- and thirteenth-century Europe, 'constituted the core of urban life'. Words frequently repeated in these documents are *instituere, erigere, construere, edificare, plantare* and *locare*; all of these are about constructing a place and for that people were needed.

Chronicles of medieval towns in German lands refer to the founding of towns as 'a seigneurial task'. The ruler would have determined the site and the territorial extent of the new town and he would have chosen the pattern for the ground plan, informed by the latest fashion. He might have invited religious orders to come and settle, as the Babenbergs did in Vienna when they encouraged Irish monks to settle in their town. But the actual building process within the newly demarcated town would have been beyond the capacity of a lord and required the co-operation of the future citizens. A strong contemporary statement for the closeness of the lord and his citizens is the statue of Emperor Otto I on horseback in front of the town hall at Magdeburg on the River Elbe: Otto was perceived as the person who initiated the planning of the town and instituted the Magdeburg code of town law.

Examples from the Low Countries show that the oldest proto-urban settlement cores dated back to the tenth and eleventh centuries. At the end of the twelfth and during the thirteenth century existing settlements were turned into towns, a process in which the dukes and counts played an important role. The fourteenth century saw another wave of new towns initiated by seigneurial intervention.

A common pattern in west Slavic areas is the development from an administrative stronghold to a chartered town with a regular layout. The Bohemian State was formed in the tenth century and fortresses were built. Then in the early thirteenth century the Czech lands experienced the first wave of new town foundation: 'from the thirteenth century onwards the future belonged to the municipalities, whose institutions had come into

existence in western Europe'. Ottokar II (1253–78) founded around 30 towns and was busily involved with the help of his 'locators' in selling plots to future settlers, many of whom were from a German background. Using the example of Litomerice on the River Elbe, the development from a fortress to a chartered town is demonstrated step by step with the help of cadastral maps: the town plan shows a regular square at the centre, as was customary in Bohemia at the time. The new towns were fortified in order to protect their urban markets and royal protection also helped these towns to grow beyond their regional frameworks.

Some of the case studies from the periphery of medieval Europe also highlight the importance of security. In Hungary the selection of sites for royal seats that were eventually transformed into towns was directed by the criterion of defensibility, which was more important than continuity from a former Roman site. In Hungary a special external factor that contributed to urban development was the Mongol invasion of 1241–2. In an attempt to secure his territory King Béla IV started to issue town charters and to encourage the building of town walls. The new rights contained in town charters were for all citizens and thus a degree of social unity was created. A wave of new towns initiated by the king came after 1247; the regular layout of these towns, as in the case of Buda, was deliberately adjusted to the priorities of defence.

The Irish example confirms that urbanization in that country was closely linked to two colonization processes, medieval and early modern. The essential unit of planning and regulation for medieval Ireland was the feudal lordship. In town plans, elements of regularity were combined with elements of irregularity, with the latter usually reflecting the footprint of older settlements. One particular feature of Ireland is that only 18 per cent of the places that were granted a borough charter developed into towns and the rest remained market settlements (manorial villages). This fact points to an important difference between the core area and the periphery in medieval Europe: the latter was less densely urbanized because its population density was lower. Failure to attract settlers in Ireland meant that feudal lords created a virtual urbanization that did not fully translate into reality.

Low population density is also particularly true of medieval Scandinavia. For example, there were only six medieval Finnish towns, all founded by kings in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries for taxation purposes. Only one of these, Viborg, was walled. Since almost all Scandinavian towns were built entirely of timber, they were especially vulnerable to fire and nowadays only the town plan incorporates traces of the medieval period in addition to a few public buildings.

Interdisciplinary approaches

The contribution by an art historian to this volume is surprisingly down-to-earth. It is argued that most formations of town plans are based on practical

considerations before all else. For example, according to this approach the main square in Lübeck overshadowed by the Gothic church of St Mary and the broad street in Würzburg leading from the castle straight across the River Main towards the west front of the cathedral were not laid out in accordance with aesthetic values but rather for purely practical reasons – they provided space for a market. It is suggested that, in order to understand town plans, we need to investigate the purposes for which they were created. The only elements in a medieval town with aesthetic or symbolic aspirations were the churches, castles and communal buildings such as town halls and gates. To interpret broad medieval streets, as was done in the 1930s in Germany, as a type of *via triumphalis* would reflect the state of mind of scholars who had fallen under the spell of the ideology of that time rather than historical reality. This is a chilling reminder of how scholars can be influenced by the *Zeitgeist*.

If the historic town atlases can provide ‘a gateway to the social worlds of the past’, then we have an exciting journey ahead of us to ascertain how cultural symbolism was written into urban landscapes. To what degree were these landscapes shaped according to contemporary Christian ideas and how can we open up meanings that urban forms might have had in the Middle Ages, mystically and allegorically? With reference to towns founded by the dukes of Zähringen, by transforming former villages into towns in present-day Switzerland, it has been suggested that the regular layout of these towns presented a mirror of the egalitarian, self-administering community of citizens, with no sign of the dualism between lord and citizen characteristic of older towns. Here we have a functional explanation combined with a symbolic one. These types of new town combine ‘the ideal urban form with the perfect ideal order’ since they are a reflection of the town of God. Finally an essay on the State, governmentality and the urban landscape has been included for largely methodological reasons. Through the lens of Foucault’s concept of power in society, we are invited to explore how the urban landscape of the nineteenth-century centralizing state is reflected in cadastral maps. This approach could fruitfully be transported back into the medieval period.

The comparative dimension

By presenting case studies from different European countries, the present work combines in one volume research findings that were hitherto unavailable in English, necessitating a great deal of translation and textual revision on our part. Not all countries are represented here, for a variety of reasons. In this volume the task of comparison has been successfully carried out on a national level. For example, the essay on English towns considers one morphological element – the medieval marketplace – and examines its form and functions in a number of towns. The Hungarian case study refers to towns that started as centres of a royal county; all of them were parcelled out into urban plots by the middle of the thirteenth century. The essay on the Low Countries provides

detailed comparative material on towns in the southern part of the country in contrast to the northern part and in relation to different time phases.

The availability of around 500 town plans published so far in the European towns atlas project should encourage comparative studies on a European scale. This task is not an easy one, however, and a theoretical framework for comparative topographical research was not developed either on the initiation of the atlas project or since then! The juxtaposition of town plans is not in itself a problem-orientated comparative analysis. Another difficulty is that historical information linked to the topography of a town that would allow for meaningful comparison across the centuries and across Europe is not provided systematically in most of the national town atlases. An Irish ancillary publication, significantly called *Maps and Texts*, shows that historical data are as essential as maps for creating a workable historic towns atlas.

We anticipate that, despite differences in the formation of medieval towns arising from the various contexts presented by contributors to this volume, readers will recognize similarities in underlying processes and the importance of unifying structural elements in medieval society. These are exemplified by the desire of lords to embrace the foundation of towns – based on charters as a means of modernization and on the use of Latin as the ecclesiastical and legal language of record – as well as by the all-pervasive influence of the Christian church, both Latin and Greek Orthodox. One of our contributors writes that feudal powers brought about the first urbanization of central Europe which, over time, was an important element in replacing that very same social system. As medieval chroniclers tell us, feudal lords had a much more problematic status in bigger towns than in smaller ones.

Lessons learnt

One of the insights learnt from looking at national historical atlases in the core and in the periphery is the remarkable diversity of towns with roots in the medieval period. For example, in Walachia and Moldavia in Romania cadastral maps show that towns originating under the influence of the Eastern Orthodox church are characterized by small votive churches, princely strongholds and an irregular town plan in contrast to towns in Transylvania where, under the influence of German colonization, chartered towns were created with a regular layout. In present-day Poland there are still notable differences between the topography of towns founded by the Teutonic Knights in the north of the country on the lower reaches of the Vistula and that of towns in the rest of the country. The knights combined their newly established towns with a seignorial castle into one defensive system as, for example, at Toruń.

The individual narratives contained in this volume invite us to go beyond the national approach to urban history and to extend our horizons in a functional direction. Medieval new towns should often be seen in the context

of a lord's drive to modernize his territory. The foundation of new towns was part of the political organization of space and the focus on small towns has made this process intelligible. Charles Higounet and Maurice Beresford, and more recently Peter Johanek and Eike Gringmuth, have shown that the spread of new towns was similar in western Europe to that in east-central Europe. The difference was that the foundation of the new type of town came between 150 and 200 years later in Hungary than in Flanders. In terms of morphology, certain distinct types of town plan spread across Europe. The introduction of urban plots as basic unit of taxation and of civil rights associated with the market, a town hall and churches are the cornerstones of medieval town plans. They provided the paradigm for the wave of urbanization so dramatically shown in a histogram in this volume (Figure 6.3). A comparison with early modern plantation towns in Ireland shows that the strength of medieval urbanization was its cultural unity across Europe, despite the fact that lordship had come to be associated with different Christian traditions and that cultural coherence had become fragmented.

In relation to the medieval period the extraordinary vitality of many lords at that time should not create the impression that these lords were necessarily enlightened characters who could do no wrong, since they were perfectly capable of besieging, damaging and even totally destroying towns when it was in their interest: the history of medieval Europe is littered with such incidents. Another critical aspect to keep in mind is that the subdivision of urban space into individual plots was not a high medieval invention, for even the Vikings had used such plots in their trading stations in Scandinavia and elsewhere, whilst medieval colonists laid out plots in planned villages as a matter of course. Nevertheless the association of plots and town charters brought a new quality to urban life.

Important questions raised in this volume relate to continuity and discontinuity. Town foundation and town planning were not necessarily simultaneous processes and older structures are often found under assumed medieval streets. We hope that the book can communicate a vision of how work on urban topography can integrate the approaches of the historian, archaeologist and historical geographer and of how urban morphology as a potential research tool can be further explored. Certainly, more than one academic discipline is needed to bring about a better understanding of medieval towns. In the context of the Hungarian case study, for instance, the importance of the reconstruction of plot patterns and their chronological sequence underlines the attempt to explain the early phases of urban development. This methodological approach points towards the importance of the European historic towns atlas project, in which the earliest accurately surveyed town plans are a central focus. The interpretation of these town plans suggests why urban space was formed in particular ways and how it was reinvented under changing conditions. A full appreciation of the history of our towns depends on an understanding of processes in space as well as in time.

Scholars and scholarship

A comparison of the English and German bibliographies attached to this volume reveals some significant differences. The 1960s and 1970s were a time when both in English and in German textbooks were written on the history of towns within a national framework and with an emphasis on towns as a new social order. After the Second World War, probably as a reaction to the fascist period, historians researched the origin of the civic urban community; the focus was on urban freedoms. In the work of outstanding historians such as Edith Ennen and Hans Planitz, a connection is made between topography and socio-historical factors, yet Ennen's book on the medieval town does not contain a single map, in contrast to David Nicholas's two volumes on the growth of the medieval city. Peter Johanek, in his 2010 contribution, stressed nevertheless that we owe Ennen and Planitz a methodological debt by their drawing attention to cartography and to archaeology. It was the emphasis on cartographical evidence that led to the production of the historic town atlases. Johanek also writes that there was a paradigm shift in urban history in the 1970s towards social groups, internal urban conflicts, gender issues and the concept of the urban landscape in theoretical contexts.

In the second half of the 1980s comparative histories appeared, whilst in the 1990s a number of general textbooks were published in English on the history of urban form by mainstream historians and architectural historians. There are very few critical voices in German concerning the production of the historic town atlases, almost as if the topic were taboo. After the year 2000 the theoretical approach addressing the form of medieval towns and their symbolism informed publications in English. The iconography of towns in early prints has been dealt with in publications in German, though the topic that has created most passion in German, Swiss and Austrian publications is the contribution of archaeology to early urban origins that prompted a paradigm shift with a stronger emphasis on the process of town formation than on the single legal act of town foundation. Volume 1 of the *Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, published in 2000, included a chapter on the morphology of towns, whereas such a general presentation is not available in recent German-language publications. There is no equivalent in German of the journal *Urban Morphology*, though *Siedlungsforschung*, published in Bonn, does contain material dedicated to urban historical research from a morphological perspective. An important advance is the recently published companion volume to this one, edited by Wilfried Ehbrecht, *Städteatlanten. Vier Jahrzehnte Atlasarbeit in Europa (Town Atlases. Four Decades of Atlas Work in Europe)*.

Acknowledgements

The editors would like to thank Edel Sheridan-Quantz (Hanover) for translating Dietrich Denecke's complex German text. We thank Sarah Gearty from the Irish Historic Towns Atlas team in Dublin for providing an updated version of the map showing the publication of town atlases across Europe, Jennifer Moore from the same office for data on the chronology of European towns atlas publications and Rhiannon Carey Bates (Trinity College Dublin) for compiling both the alphabetical list of fascicles across Europe (Appendix A) and the English-language bibliography (Appendix B) at the end of the book. Michael Ann Bevivino undertook the arduous task of compiling the index, for which financial support was obtained by Professor Michel Pauly, president of the International Commission for the History of Towns. We thank Angela Byrne (Irish Historic Towns Atlas) for editorial assistance and we acknowledge Daniel Stracke's patience in checking German-language references in the library of the Institut für vergleichende Städtegeschichte in Münster (Appendix C). Jeremy Whitehand, too, provided us with valuable editorial advice. We are grateful to Ferdinand Opll (Vienna) for a set of the earliest minutes of the International Commission for the History of Towns that made it possible to reconstruct the beginning of the atlas scheme. We wish also to thank Peter Johaneck (Münster) for his help in enabling us to appreciate more fully the body of work created by Ferdinand Opll, a highly valued co-operator in the European historic town atlas project to whom we dedicate this volume. We have been continuously indebted to the Royal Irish Academy for supporting our work since the Irish Historic Towns Atlas was established by the academy in 1981. And finally we should like to thank our publisher, Ashgate, and indeed our contributors, for their enduring patience. This book has taken a very long time to complete and we shall be pleased if it could make even a small contribution to the European towns atlas project at large.



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

PART I:
THE CHALLENGE OF COMPARATIVE URBAN STUDIES



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Chapter 1

The European Historic Towns Atlas Project: Origin and Potential

Anngret Simms

The human spirit in material form: antecedents of the European historic towns atlas

At the end of the Second World War a desire grew up amongst European countries to work together in the spirit of reconciliation. For its part, the International Commission for the History of Towns (ICHT) agreed in 1955 in Rome to the production of a European historic towns atlas. The intention was then, and still is, to facilitate comparative urban studies and to encourage a better understanding of common European roots. The focus of this work was an edition of the first accurately surveyed cadastral plans produced in the early nineteenth century in order to have a reliable topographical base for comparative research concerning the origin and development of towns in Europe. In fact, the aim of the towns atlas project was not primarily to explore individual towns but to establish a typology of European towns.¹

Yet the project was not the brainchild of the commission alone, but drew on pioneering work by German scholars who lived in the nineteenth century. In a review article M.P. Conzen (Chicago) pursued the question of how, why and when such 'a creative impulse' emerged.² According to him, the first scholar to mention the importance of town plans in exploring historic urban

¹ W. Ehbrecht, 'Atlasarbeit auf dem Weg. Eine Einführung: Bilanz und Perspektiven', in W. Ehbrecht (ed.), *Städteatlanten. Vier Jahrzehnte Atlasarbeit in Europe* (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna, 2013), p. VIII. This volume is based on a conference held in Münster in 2007 focused on the role of town atlases in urban history; it was organized jointly by the Institut für vergleichende Städtegeschichte in Münster and the atlas working group of the ICHT.

² M.P. Conzen, 'Retrieving the pre-industrial built environments of Europe: the historic towns atlas programme and comparative morphological study', *Urban Morphology*, 12/2 (2008): 143–56. See also H.B. Clarke, 'Joining the club: a Spanish historic towns atlas?', *Imago Temporis. Medium Aevum*, 2 (2008): 27–43; F. Oppl, 'Der Europäische Historische Städteatlas.

morphology and topography was the German social and cultural historian W.H. Riehl, who in 1859 wrote that the town plan of Augsburg served as the ground plan of society and expressed in material form the culture of its people.³

Towards the end of the same century, Johannes Fritz, a secondary school teacher in Strasbourg with a doctorate in history, wrote a brochure containing a study of German town plans.⁴ In the nineteenth century many individual town histories had been written, mainly by parish priests and teachers, yet they did not include town plans. Travel literature such as the Bäder volumes included town plans, but at a very small scale. Fritz proposed a new approach to urban history. He suggested that, whilst exploring the constitutional identity of medieval towns, we should not forget their physical form and suggested that 'we look at the material body of towns beyond their constitutions, their statutes and their institutions and compare them according to their manner of construction, layout and appearance'.⁵ He actually proposed the compilation of a book of German town plans.

Following in the footsteps of nineteenth-century historians, Fritz wrote that any overall changes in the physical fabric of a town would have been associated with legal changes such as the granting of a town charter. He pointed out that, wherever east of the River Elbe during the period of medieval German colonization towns were regularly laid out either on the site of an older Slavic settlement, or near to it, or on *tabula rasa*, the reason for this innovation was primarily to be found in the granting of German town law and not in the activities of German settlers as such.⁶ In his native town of Rostock on the Baltic he observed that the Altstadt (old town), Mittelstadt (middle town) and Neustadt (new town) were founded between 1189 and 1252, and were amalgamated in 1262 when the town was granted a new charter. The amalgamation of the former independent units brought with it the layout of a new centrally located marketplace with a town hall.

Fritz's innovative brochure was printed in the journal of the school in Strasbourg (Straßburg) where he taught at the time – hardly a publication of high visibility. Nevertheless, five years later the cultural geographer Otto Schlüter referred to Fritz's collection of town plans as indicators of national identity.⁷ Town plan analysis at that time was preoccupied with the attempt to define regional identities. Medieval historians were supportive of these

Projekt – Ziele – Leistungen', *Pro civitate Austriae. Informationen zur Stadtgeschichtsforschung in Österreich*, new series, 215 (2010): 9–20.

³ W.H. Riehl, 'Augsburger Studien, II: Der Stadtplan als Grundriss der Gesellschaft', in W.H. Riehl (ed.), *Culturstudien aus drei Jahrhunderten* (Stuttgart, 1859), p. 270.

⁴ J. Fritz, *Deutsche Stadtanlagen. Beilage zum Programm Nr. 520 des Lyzeums Strassburg* (Strasbourg, 1894).

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4 (author's translation).

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁷ O. Schlüter, 'Über den Grundriss der Städte', *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde Berlin*, 34 (1899): 446–62.

studies since they were short of documentary evidence for the early formation of towns. Some of them assumed that street patterns reach back into a town's period of origin. This is a controversial issue to which we need to return later. The emphasis on town plans as source material for urban history gained in importance and provided a counterweight to the historian's focus on urban constitutional topography, concerned with the power structure that influenced the formation of towns.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, scholars such as Wilhelm Neumann, whose paper on town plans as historical documents appeared in 1911, and Christoph Klaiber, whose book on German medieval town plans was published in 1912, began to recognize distinct growth phases of plans as well as the importance of the urban plot as part of the building blocks.⁸ From the same period stems a masterpiece of thematic urban mapping at a large scale – Hugo Hassinger's *Kunsthistorischer Atlas* of Vienna, published in 1916.⁹ In this remarkable work Hassinger, a geographer who established a close link between geography and art history, indicated in colour the age of individual buildings (often distinguishing between façades and the rear), thereby providing information for the preservation of historic buildings as well as illustrating the phased character of the urban fabric.

According to the medieval historian Heinz Stoob, the founder and former editor of the *Deutscher Städteatlas*, formal efforts to produce a towns atlas go back to 1913, when Paul Krauss and Erich Uetrecht, both geographers, published a volume of 50 multi-coloured plans of German towns.¹⁰ Stoob criticized this project because the format was too small and the collection included only big towns; the town plans were drawn to different scales and only street blocks were shown but not individual house plots, which are vital for the interpretation of a town plan.¹¹ Furthermore, the main drawback of this pioneering effort was that the dates of the maps were such that they included all the post-industrial changes in the centre of towns.

⁸ W. Neumann, 'Der Stadtplan als geschichtliche Urkunde', *Mitteilungen aus der livländischen Geschichte*, 21 (1911): 84–9; C. Klaiber, *Grundrißbildung der deutschen Stadt im Mittelalter unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der schwäbischen Lande* (Berlin, 1912). In his introduction to the collective papers of M.R.G. Conzen, the editor Jeremy Whitehand provides a review of the work undertaken by German scholars in setting up the paradigm of urban morphogenesis. See J.W.R. Whitehand (ed.), *The Urban Landscape: Historical Development and Management. Papers by M.R.G. Conzen* (London, 1981), pp 1–24. See also J.W.R. Whitehand, 'Conzenian urban morphology and landscapes', in *Proceedings of the Sixth International Space Syntax Symposium* (Istanbul, 2007), pdf.

⁹ H. Hassinger, *Kunsthistorischer Atlas der K.K. Reichshaupt und Residenzstadt Wien und Verzeichnis der erhaltenswerten historischen Kunst- und Naturdenkmäler des Wiener Stadtbezirkes*, ed. M. Dvoark (Vienna, 1916).

¹⁰ P. Krauss and E. Uetrecht (eds), *Meyers deutscher Städteatlas* (Leipzig, 1913).

¹¹ H. Stoob, 'The historic town atlas: problems and working methods', in H.B. Clarke and A. Simms (eds), *The Comparative History of Urban Origins in Non-Roman Europe: Ireland, Wales, Denmark, Germany, Poland and Russia from the Ninth to the Thirteenth Century* (2 parts, Oxford, 1985), part 2, p. 583.

The first attempt at compiling a small regional towns atlas was K.O. Müller's publication in 1914 of old and new plans of Upper Swabian imperial towns.¹² An important step forward was the towns atlas for Lower Saxony compiled by P.J. Meier and first published in 1922.¹³ This contained in folio format 29 cadastral maps of towns in central Europe, published from c.1830, as its centrepiece. These showed the pre-industrial town plan in several colours and were generally considered suitable source material for comparative analysis. Alongside these maps an essay provided a short history of the town. The maps show clearly that the individual urban plot constitutes the fundamental spatial unit that makes up the town plan. For the historic town of Brunswick (Braunschweig), Meier provided maps at different dates in the town's development and produced a growth map of the type that was to become a feature of later town atlases. Meier's atlas was reissued in 1926 and folios for a further seven towns were published in 1933 and 1935. Meier died in 1946 at the age of 91 with his regional atlas of reconstructed town plans not completed. The two world wars were probably to blame. Fortunately Meier's concepts were revived on a European scale in the 1950s by the ICHT.

The International Commission for the History of Towns and the European historic towns atlas project

By the end of the nineteenth century, research into urban history began to flourish, but only within national boundaries. We can reconstruct the steps that led to the establishment of the ICHT from the minutes of the commission.¹⁴ It was at the historical congress in Warsaw in 1933 that the first signs of international urban studies began to surface.¹⁵ At the historical congress in Rome in 1953 Edith Ennen in particular evoked the need for further exploration of urban history at international level in order that a typology of European towns might be established. At the congress a number of historians from France, Germany and Poland agreed informally at an evening session that research into comparative urban history should be encouraged under agreed guidelines. It was also suggested that, in order to facilitate this aim, important source material concerning national urban histories should be made available in print. Hermann Aubin and Ennen, the German representatives on the International Council of Historical Sciences, went a step further and proposed

¹² K.O. Müller, *Alte und neue Stadtpläne der oberschwäbischen Reichsstädte. Eine Ergänzung zu den Darstellungen aus der württembergischen Geschichte* (Stuttgart, 1914).

¹³ P.J. Meier, *Niedersächsischer Städteatlas* (Hanover, 1922).

¹⁴ The early meetings of the commission were published in *Cahiers bruxellois*, 1/2 (1956). I am very grateful to Ferdinand Opll for making a set of these minutes available to me.

¹⁵ It was in 1939 that Erich Keyser in Danzig (after the war, in Marburg) began to publish the first of the multi-volume series *Deutsches Städtebuch* (11 regional volumes between 1939 and 1974) that provided information on over 2,000 German towns. The series followed a standard framework with 20 subdivisions that facilitated comparisons.

the establishment of a separate international commission for the history of towns. This request was finally granted at the historical congress in Rome in 1955 and Aubin was asked to put the plan into action.¹⁶ He was told to co-opt members and the new commission was to define its own projects. Its first session was held in Dijon in 1956 and since then the commission has convened annually in different European cities and towns.¹⁷ The commission decided to focus its work on the publication of source material for the study of urban history, which was to be done separately in the different European countries but to a common concept. The following tasks were decided on:

1. Top of the list stood the distribution of bibliographies as an aid for neighbouring countries. The motivation for this was to encourage comparative work.¹⁸
2. The publication of medieval town charters. Friedrich Keutgen's collection of charters concerning the constitutional history of towns that had been in use in Germany for over half a century by then was to serve as a model. This codex was to facilitate comparative studies.¹⁹
3. The publication of an atlas of the historical typology of European towns during the Middle Ages.

The European historic towns atlas project

From the very beginning it was intended that the atlases should be based on a unified concept in order to facilitate comparative studies. Therefore the establishment of agreed guidelines was an important point. In this context the most contested issue was the scale for the core map. A prolonged discussion took place within the ICHT on this point. In 1969 Stoob, showing signs of exasperation, posed the question: 'How can we contemplate an international atlas at the scale of 1:5000 if that scale implies that we cannot include small towns and medium-sized towns?' Stoob suggested that it was necessary either to forget about small towns altogether (constituting 80 per cent of all towns) and produce an atlas of big towns only, or to choose another scale

¹⁶ *Cahiers bruxellois*, 1/2 (1956), p. 145.

¹⁷ The inaugural meeting at Dijon was attended by Hektor Ammann (Aarau), Hermann Aubin (Freiburg im Breisgau), Pierre Bonenfant (Brussels), Philippe Dollinger (Strasbourg), Edith Ennen (Bonn), S.I. Fockea-Andrae (Leiden), J.S. Niermeyer (Amsterdam), Karl Schib (Schaffhausen), Hans van Werveke (Ghent) and Philippe Wolff (Toulouse). Erich Keyser (Marburg) was absent owing to illness.

¹⁸ A number of volumes of national bibliographies were published, but listings on the internet have made these less pressing.

¹⁹ F. Keutgen, *Urkunden zur städtischen Verfassungsgeschichte* (Berlin, 1901). The commission has overseen the publication of a collection of town charters on a national level under the title *Elenchus*.

at 1:2000 or 1:2500.²⁰ In the end it was decided to use the early nineteenth-century cadastral maps at a scale of 1:2500.

The task of setting up the historic towns atlas project was facilitated by the fact that in 1954, a year before the atlas scheme was decided upon, three well-known German scholars – the historian Erich Keyser and the geographers Thomas Kraus and Emil Meynen – had written a position paper in which they explained why a German towns atlas should be undertaken.²¹ This position paper (*Denkschrift*) was a manifesto confirming that the German towns atlas was to interpret German towns in their central European context regarding their historical development and present-day existence. The cartographically based volumes were to support scholars as well as administrators. The emphasis was to be on the spatial formation of towns as represented in town plans or reconstructed maps. The focus was to be on the core of towns and cities and on the phased expansion of the built-up area. Contour lines were to be included. The German atlas was to be published as individual sequences consisting of town plans but also images, since elevations were considered to be just as important for a town's identity as ground plans. The scale would vary according to the size of towns – either 1:5000, 1:10,000, 1:25,000 or 1:50,000. Information on the functional and social characteristics of towns was to be included. A special volume was to be published on the topic of preparations and intended results of the German towns atlas, whilst a final volume was to interpret the contents of the whole series concerning the history of German towns from their origin to the present day. The manifesto clearly did not restrict the intended atlas to morphological issues, nor did it insist on the use of one scale only for all sizes of town.

Stoob would have known of this position paper when he submitted his ideas on the conceptual framework of a European towns atlas to the ICHT at a meeting in Switzerland in 1967, but according to the minutes he made no reference to it. In the end Stoob's cartographical scheme consisted of three principal maps:

1. A multi-coloured cadastral map at the scale 1:2500 from the early nineteenth century, redrawn to precise standards representing the town as closely as possible to 1840 – that is to say, before the onset of the industrial revolution.
2. A map of the town in its surrounding region from the early nineteenth century at a scale of between 1:50,000 and 1:100,000.
3. A modern town plan at the scale of 1:5000.

²⁰ 'Douzième réunion tenue à Oxford du 26 au 28 octobre 1969', *Cahiers bruxellois*, 14/2 (1969), pp. 144–5 (translated by the author from the French).

²¹ E. Keyser, T. Kraus and E. Meynen, *Denkschrift 'Deutscher Städteatlas'* (Remagen, 1954). Members of the commission are grateful to Michael Conzen for having made this paper available to them in digital format.

To these were to be added a growth map that presents a diachronic approach, as well as an essay that focuses on the topographical development of a town. StooB stressed emphatically that in the atlas original sources and research results should be kept strictly separate.

At the commission's meeting in Oxford in 1969 these guidelines were accepted under the enthusiastic leadership of StooB, supported by M.D. Lobel.²² It was not easy to produce the required maps in all countries and in 1969 the then president, Philippe Wolff, set up a subcommittee consisting of Lobel, StooB, Adriaan Verhulst and M.M. Wolters, who were charged with facing the challenge that the publication of the town plans had created. There was also the question of whether contour lines should be included and whether pre-Ordnance Survey town plans should be used as a whole or in part. Then there was the issue of the inclusion of an aerial photograph. Differences in the representation of big towns in contrast to small towns were also discussed. Another point for debate was the spelling of topographical names.

In conclusion, the focus of the historic town atlases is the town plan in the form of the cadastral map. Each atlas, with the exception of the Rheinischer Städteatlas which was perceived as a reference work only, is accompanied by an explanatory text. The Rheinischer Städteatlas in part compensates for the lack of an essay and a growth map by including an extensive topographical information section. The Irish atlas and the Hungarian one have continued the tradition of a topographical information section that has proved essential for comparative studies. For the German atlas StooB had decided that the essay should consist of two pages in the larger format for all towns, whether it was Cologne or a small provincial place. This rigidity severely limited the topographical narrative of big towns.

Cadastral maps

Cadastral maps show the layout of a town at the time when it was surveyed; they confirm that the individual urban plot is the fundamental spatial unit that makes up the town plan. They constitute the best kind of source material for a comparative analysis of the topography of European towns. This is as true in relation to the study of the origin of towns as it is in relation to the study of urban change. The cadastral map, showing the pattern of house plots and property boundaries before industrialization, allows in association with archival and archaeological evidence a retrospective town plan analysis.²³

²² StooB, 'Historic town atlas', p. 584.

²³ A. Simms, 'Foreword', in F. Bocchi (ed.), *Medieval Metropolises: Proceedings of the Congress of the Atlas Working Group, International Commission for the History of Towns, Bologna 8–10 maggio 1997* (Bologna, 1999), p. 6; K. Szende, 'How far back? Challenges and limitations of cadastral maps for the study of urban form in Hungarian towns', in Ehbrecht, *Städteatlanten*, pp. 153–90. The importance of cadastral maps as the basis of reforms in property taxes is discussed in R.J.P. Kain and E. Baigent, *The Cadastral Map in the Service of the State. A History of Property Mapping* (Chicago, 1992).

Archaeologists who have excavated in city centres have criticized the long-held conviction by some historians that cadastral maps show an undisturbed pattern of house plots in the pre-industrial period and the layout of the town from its very origin.²⁴ As Katalin Szende and H.B. Clarke have recently pointed out, there are aspects of continuity in the layout of towns, as at Cologne where the cadastral map leads back to the Roman period. But Cologne is also a good example of intervention in medieval town plans owing to new roads being built through the centre.²⁵

Elsewhere I have alluded to the fact that Stoob himself came to accept a paradigm shift away from the concept of a one-off town foundation to that of town formation – that is to say, phased growth. The cadastral map is no longer considered an absolute, but it remains an important tool. It refers only indirectly to socio-economic aspects of the inhabitants over time. Archaeological and archival material and illustrations are more than just ‘a help’ in understanding a town’s topography. They are essential tools for our interpretation of a town’s history.²⁶

Publication of the European historic town atlases

Most countries represented on the ICHT set up their own national town atlases with the support of academic institutions.²⁷ The British atlas edited by Lobel never enjoyed an institutional home, although in 1969 it was the first to start publication. It was followed by the initial volumes of the Rheinischer Städteatlas and of the Deutscher Städteatlas.

Hektor Ammann, president of the ICHT from 1965 to 1967, developed a proposal that for the whole of Europe 400 individual town plans representing towns of different sizes, periods of origin, functions and regions should be published. Quotas were announced for each individual country that were to be achieved within a given framework (by the 1990s). For example, for Germany within the boundaries of 1937 a quota of 70 towns was suggested.²⁸

²⁴ Stoob, ‘Historic town atlas’, p. 583.

²⁵ Szende, ‘How far back?’; H.B. Clarke, ‘Construction and deconstruction. Components of an historic towns atlas methodology’, in Ehbrecht, *Städteatlanten*, pp. 31–54.

²⁶ Ehbrecht, ‘Atlasarbeit auf dem Weg’, p. XXI.

²⁷ Such as the Institut für vergleichende Städtegeschichte in Münster (Deutscher Städteatlas and Westfälischer Städteatlas), the Institut für Rheinische Landeskunde in Bonn (Rheinischer Städteatlas), the Hessisches Landesamt für geschichtliche Landeskunde in Marburg (Hessischer Städteatlas), the Ludwig-Bolzmann-Institut für Stadtgeschichtsforschung in Linz and Vienna, and the Vienna Stadtarchiv (Österreichischer Städteatlas), the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin (Irish Historic Towns Atlas), the Polish universities in Toruń, Wrocław and Cracow (Atlas historyczny miast polskich/Historischer Atlas polnischer Städte), the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague (Historický atlas měst České republiky), and the East-Central European University in Budapest (Magyar Várostörténeti Atlasz/Hungarian Atlas of Historic Towns).

²⁸ Ehbrecht, ‘Atlasarbeit auf dem Weg’, p. XXVII. Stoob included in his quota some towns that had belonged to Germany before 1937, but were now either in Polish or in

What has been achieved since then? By 2013 some 500 towns from 18 different European countries had been published as part of the scheme (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Number of published atlases

Country	Number of published atlases (2013)	First publication date
Austria	64	1982
Belgium	4	1990
Croatia	5	2003
Czech Republic	23	1995
Denmark	4	1983
Finland	4	1977
France	49	1982
Germany	241	1972
Great Britain	13	1969
Hungary	2	2010
Iceland	1	1988
Ireland	23	1986
Italy	32	1986
Netherlands	7	1982
Poland	17	1993
Romania	6	2000
Sweden	3	1983
Switzerland	4	1997
TOTAL	502	

Germany's tendency for federalism is reflected in a number of town atlases representing different German regions. The first German regional atlas to be published was the *Rheinischer Städteatlas* in 1972; next came the *Westfälischer Städteatlas* in 1975 and eventually the *Hessischer Städteatlas* in 2005. These regional atlases are an important reservoir of small towns.

It is an indication of critical self-assessment that the *Deutscher Städteatlas* reinvented itself in 2006 as the *Deutscher Historischer Städteatlas*.²⁹ The new atlas series (four publications so far) remains focused on the core maps of the European atlas project, but it includes a larger text section than before with more historical information, as well as thematic maps and a second growth map that illustrates the development of the town in the nineteenth and

Russian territory: for example, Königsberg (Kaliningrad, 1979), Memel (Klaipėda, 1979), Oppeln (Opole, 1979) and Breslau (Wrocław, 1989). After German unification Stooß's successor, Peter Johaneck, announced in print that he would discontinue this practice, but offered Polish colleagues support by supplying cadastral maps for the production of towns in former German territories. This co-operation worked well for the publication of Toruń (Thorn) in 1995, undertaken by A. Czacharowski.

²⁹ D. Stracke and T. Tippach, 'Der Deutsche Historische Städteatlas. Zur konzeptionellen Weiterentwicklung eines nationalen Städteatlas', in Ehbrecht, *Städteatlanten*, pp. 55–76.

twentieth centuries.³⁰ In their latest publication, of Brunswick (Braunschweig, 2013), German colleagues countered the criticism that their atlas focused mainly on the medieval period; instead they included maps showing the topographical pattern of the town in the industrial period. They also added a distribution map indicating buildings that were used by national-socialist institutions. And finally they incorporated a map that highlights changes after major post-war reconstruction.

Unfortunately some of Europe's peripheral countries, such as Greece and Spain, have not as yet joined the atlas scheme, because no one has managed to make a start. The countries of east-central Europe joined the project only after the fall of communism in 1989, since previously the production of maps had been restricted. This turn of events motivated the then president, Verhulst, in 1993 to set up an atlas working group of editors of historic town atlases under the joint chairmanship of Ferdinand Opll (Vienna) and myself, to be joined in 2010 by Katalin Szende (Budapest). The main task of this group was to attempt to ensure the comparability of the different national towns atlas projects and to make the project available to a wider audience. A list of all published town atlases was compiled and Opll updated it on the website of Vienna's municipal archives from 1996 to 2013. Since then this list has been maintained, with Opll's support, by the Irish Historic Towns Atlas team in Dublin on the website of the Royal Irish Academy.³¹ As it stood in 1997 the list was also published, with a commentary, in the German journal *Siedlungsforschung*.³² A complete version is offered, for the first time in alphabetical order across Europe, as Appendix A to this volume.

After the fall of communism the first Polish historic towns atlas appeared in 1993, followed by the Czech (1995), the Romanian (2000), the Croatian (2003), the Hungarian (2010) and most recently a Ukrainian series.³³ The atlas working group promotes the historic towns atlas project at the European level by encouraging selected libraries to keep a full set.³⁴ It also attempts to raise awareness of the need to follow a common methodology in support of comparative studies. A number of symposia based on the atlases, held in Münster (1995), Bologna (1997), Bordeaux (1999) and Dublin (2006 and 2015), have explored cadastral maps as source material for urban history.³⁵

³⁰ Heinz Stoob had refused to include images of a town, using the argument that the atlases were not picture books.

³¹ At www.ria.ie/research/ihta/european-project.aspx.

³² A. Simms and F. Opll, 'Historische Stadtatlanten: Stadtgeschichte in Karten', *Siedlungsforschung*, 15 (1997): 303–25.

³³ M. Kapral (ed.), *Lviv* (Ukrainian Historic Towns Atlas, vol. 1, Lviv, 2014).

³⁴ A complete set of the publications of the European historic towns atlas project is to be found in the Institut für vergleichende Städtegeschichte in Münster and an almost complete set in the map section of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, and in the Regenstein Library at the University of Chicago, the latter at www1.lib.uchicago.edu/e/su/maps/Hist_Towns_Atlas.html.

³⁵ The latter constitutes the core of this volume.

At the ICHT's annual meeting in Lisbon in 2013 it was decided under the leadership of Ferdinand Opll to go formally beyond the initial focus of the atlas project on the medieval and early modern town with an end date around the middle of the nineteenth century and instead to embrace industrial developments by including maps from the twentieth century.³⁶ In his time Stoob had intended to publish a second series of town atlases focused on the evolving urban pattern during the industrial period (c.1840–1940). Unfortunately this plan never came to fruition except in so far as the latest German towns atlas includes distribution maps concerned with events in the twentieth century.³⁷

Comparative urban studies

At the beginning of the last century there were important attempts by related disciplines to contribute to comparative urban studies, as Max Weber did in his extended essay *Die Stadt* (1922), where he explored the western town founded in Antiquity. In order to define the identity of the western town, he compared it with oriental and far-eastern examples.³⁸ Amongst mainstream historians, it was Ennen who delivered a lecture at the historical congress in Rome in 1955 on the typology of European towns.³⁹ In an address to the International Congress of Historical Sciences in Vienna in 1965 Aubin, then president of the ICHT, set the scene within the commission for the emergence of comparative urban studies. He spoke of the nature of medieval towns based on the creativity of burgesses and the re-emerging importance of towns in the nineteenth century as the result of the industrial revolution based on the work of citizens.

³⁶ This innovation was based on a submission made by Opll at the ICHT's meeting in Prague in 2012, where he formally raised the question of whether the period after the first cadastral maps (early nineteenth century) should be included in the historic town atlases. He argued that, if this idea was accepted, towns that flourished as a result of industrialization could become part of the atlas. The new set of maps will include a reproduction of a town plan from the turn of the twentieth century (1:5000, 1: 10,000 or 1:25,000). For countries where the First World War had a great impact, a town plan at one of these scales relating to the 1920s or 1930s should be chosen and, for all towns, the reproduction of a town plan from c.2000 was recommended.

³⁷ The intended title of this publication was 'Atlas zum Stadtgefüge im Industriezeitalter (c.1840–1940)'. Stoob had intended to include 20 towns for the period 1840–1940. Instead, the institute in Münster published *Probleme des Städtewesens im industriellen Zeitalter* (1978), edited by H. Jäger. Stoob himself wrote a chapter entitled 'Zur Städtebildung im industriellen Zeitalter', in H. Stoob (ed.), *Die Stadt. Gestalt und Wandel bis zum industriellen Zeitalter* (2nd edn, Cologne, 1985), pp. 225–60.

³⁸ M. Weber, 'Die Stadt. Eine soziologische Untersuchung', in M. Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (Tübingen, 1922), pp. 513–600.

³⁹ E. Ennen, 'Les différents types de formation des villes européennes', *Le moyen âge*, 62 (1956): 397–411. Ten years later she addressed the same topic under the following title: 'The different types of formation of European towns', in S.L.Thrupp (ed.), *Early Medieval Society* (New York, 1967), pp. 174–82.

At the annual meeting of the ICHT in Oxford in 1969, Philippe Wolff proposed a session at the forthcoming historical congress in Moscow 'for the elaboration of a comparative study of European town plans'.⁴⁰ He encouraged commission members to send him index cards with information on representative towns in their countries concerning the granting of charters and to produce thematic maps on specific issues, such as urban uprisings and urban freedoms. Ennen suggested compiling information in relation to two types of town – big ones with more than 20,000 inhabitants and smaller ones with a population of between 3,000 and 20,000 – from different parts of each country. The minutes of the commission do not record the final outcome of this initiative, which does not seem to have been successful. It appears that, when Stooß's influence in the commission increased in the 1970s, the emphasis was on getting the atlas publications right by adhering to the agreed rules and that comparative studies could be considered once a body of town atlases had been published. With hindsight, it would have been advisable to include the development of a comparative approach at an early stage in the project. Stooß wrote in 1985 in a paper in which he introduced the German atlas: 'We hope thereby to afford valuable assistance to our European neighbours ... on all aspects of comparative urban studies'.⁴¹ But in the years to come, neither he nor the ICHT got involved in developing a methodology of comparative studies based on atlases. Instead, as the senior editor of the research series *Städteforschung*, Stooß initiated a number of volumes focused on general themes of urban history with a comparative component.⁴²

Now with over 500 towns published to date (which is a success story in itself), we have no excuse not to engage with the issue of comparative urban studies. At present this appears to be a challenge, as Dietrich Denecke explains in his introductory chapter to this book. Towns that have been included in the various national historic town atlases seem to have been selected without the benefit of theory. We need to develop categories of comparison that, according to Wilfried Ehbrecht, should include topography, growth, economy, social structure, law, constitution, governance, administration, environment, centrality and functionality. For comparative research the identification of urban type is most important.⁴³

A serious concern is that, when engaging in comparative urban studies, we have come to realize that there are a number of major issues, since in spite of the existence of agreed guidelines some of the national atlas schemes have

⁴⁰ *Cahiers bruxellois*, 14/2 (1969), p. 104.

⁴¹ Stooß, 'Historic town atlas', p. 614.

⁴² For example, on city centres in historical perspective (*Stadtkernforschung*, 1987), where archaeologists and historians presented case studies not related to atlas publications. Further themes were differentiation and processes within the inner core of nineteenth- and twentieth-century towns (*Innerstädtische Differenzierung und Prozesse im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, 1978), the urban hinterland in pre-industrial times (*Städtisches Um- und Hinterland in vorindustrieller Zeit*, 1985) and finally medieval town foundation in south-eastern Europe (*Mittelalterliche Städtebildung im südöstlichen Europa*, 1977).

⁴³ Ehbrecht, 'Atlasarbeit auf dem Weg', p. XXX.

fallen short in following them. Michael Conzen writes in his retrospective review of the atlas project of an ‘unsettling heterogeneity of methodology and treatment’. He found that only 15 of the 27 national atlas schemes that he looked at met the prescribed standard of the main cadastral map (departures being mostly in the area of scale – the cardinal sin), and 12 of the 27 schemes offer no growth-phases maps.⁴⁴ These maps had become an important addition since the first volume of the *Deutscher Städteatlas* was published in 1973. In a detailed analysis of the methodologies applied in the different national atlas schemes, Clarke criticized deviations from the original scheme that make comparisons a lot more difficult.⁴⁵ Part of the problem is that, in a voluntary environment, it is not easy to enforce guidelines. Another important point is that it has become obvious that, for meaningful comparative studies, the inclusion of information that links historical and topographical data is vital. But as was mentioned above, only the *Rheinischer Städteatlas*, the *Irish Historic Towns Atlas* and the *Hungarian Atlas of Historic Towns* contain such topographical information. Ironically, Stoob had not considered the inclusion of a historical topographical information section because precise historical information was readily available on German towns in the German topographical dictionary.⁴⁶ And last but not least there is no coherent theory of comparative studies, which makes comparative urban studies more of a pioneer exercise than is desirable. Denecke in his contribution to this volume makes a strong plea for structured conceptual approaches in comparative urban studies.

In spite of these challenges, some rewarding comparative work based on the historic town atlases has been published. Clarke (Dublin) presented a comparison between the cities of London and Dublin in the medieval period whilst Oppl (Vienna) compared Vienna and Cologne.⁴⁷ Notwithstanding differences in the origin of the two cities (Roman and Viking respectively) and in their size and population, Clarke found that from c.1200 onwards the topography of London and Dublin converged. Both cities had an organic street pattern with an east–west axis; both had a single bridge, an imposing castle in the south-eastern angle of the defensive walls and several street markets. They belonged to the same charter tradition. The defining factor for the morphological evolution of both cities seems to be the location on a major river crossing and their role as a principal city with trading functions. A difference in cartographical approach made the comparative study more difficult: the British atlas does not include a manuscript map of early nineteenth-century London, as proposed by the ICHT, but has instead a reconstruction map of the city in c.1520 from which suburbs are excluded.

⁴⁴ Conzen, ‘Retrieving the pre-industrial built environments’, p. 152.

⁴⁵ Clarke, ‘Joining the club’, pp. 31–5.

⁴⁶ See above, fn. 15.

⁴⁷ H.B. Clarke, ‘London and Dublin’, in Bocchi, *Medieval Metropolises*, pp. 103–25; F. Oppl, ‘Cologne and Vienna in the Middle Ages: a comparison’, *Acta Poloniae Historica*, 92 (2005): 5–30.

The comparison of Cologne and Vienna in the medieval period carried out by Opll echoes some of the themes from the previous study. Both cities are located on major rivers. Local topography determined that Cologne was closer to the River Rhine than Vienna was to the Danube. Cologne was more closely aligned to the road system of its Roman *castrum* than Vienna was to its legionary camp. In the Middle Ages, Cologne was much larger in population and territory than Vienna. At Cologne the expansion of the medieval city was related to churches, whereas Vienna had far fewer churches and less developed trading activity. Vienna gained in importance in 1150 when it became the residence of the dukes of Babenberg. In 1280, with the arrival of the Habsburgs, the new palace (the Hofburg) was built in the south-eastern quarter of the walled city. Vienna was always under secular rule, whilst Cologne was ruled by its archbishops until the end of the thirteenth century. In the 1470s Cologne became a free imperial town (*freie Reichsstadt*). Both cities were walled and their principal marketplaces were located parallel to their respective rivers. In both, the town hall was in a similar position and both had Jewish quarters in proximity to the lord's residence.

The exploration of morphological agents was the aim of a number of comparative studies that I myself have carried out. By using the cadastral map of Wetzlar in Germany, in comparison with the cadastral map of Budějovice in Bohemia, I investigated the relative location of urban institutions such as parish churches, marketplaces and town halls as indicators of the dominant forces that shaped the early beginnings of towns.⁴⁸ In the case of Wetzlar – typical of towns that emerged from a royal manor in the Carolingian period – the former area of the churchyard became the medieval marketplace in immediate proximity to the church.⁴⁹ In the thirteenth century Wetzlar expanded and in 1260 the first town wall was built. The story proved to be different in Budějovice, a royal town, which was granted a charter in 1265 by the king's representative. St Nicholas's Church was built at the time of foundation; the town was laid out with a large regular marketplace and significantly the church was situated away from the market square in the north-eastern quarter. Most towns created during the period of settlement colonization follow this pattern, as do most of the Anglo-Norman towns in Ireland: for example, Carrickfergus where the parish church was located off the market street.⁵⁰ These topographical differences reflect a shift in the power

⁴⁸ A. Simms, 'Interlocking spaces: the relative location of medieval parish churches, churchyards, marketplaces and town halls', in H.B. Clarke and J.R.S. Phillips (eds), *Ireland, England and the Continent in the Middle Ages and Beyond: Essays in Memory of a Turbulent Friar, F.X. Martin, O.S.A.* (Dublin, 2006), pp. 222–34.

⁴⁹ A transformation of the churchyard into a marketplace could be observed in the Danish town of Ribe, an early trading settlement dating from the eighth century that became an episcopal seat: O. Degn, *Ribe* (Scandinavian Atlas of Historic Towns, no. 1, Odense, 1983). In Ireland we find a similar pattern in those towns that originated from monastic proto-towns such as Kells, Co. Meath: A. Simms with K. Simms, *Kells* (Irish Historic Towns Atlas, no. 4, Dublin, 1990).

⁵⁰ P. Robinson, *Carrickfergus* (Irish Historic Towns Atlas, no. 2, Dublin, 1986), p. 3, fig. 1.

structure, where merchants had become the most important influence and so their marketplace with a representative town hall became the main focus. The rectangularity of the ground plan is an innovative element.

Another comparative analysis, focused on the internal organization of medieval towns, had to be restricted to case studies from atlases that provide detailed historical information.⁵¹ On the basis of their respective town atlases it was shown that Kilkenny (Ireland), Kalkar (the Rhineland) and Sopron (Hungary) had a lot in common with regard to their internal organization. This uniformity came about because all three towns were founded by feudal lords who used a blueprint for medieval town formation to develop their territories. The charters of these towns, founded in different parts of Europe, refer to *cives* or *burgenses*. In order to facilitate the collection of taxes, the inhabitants of all three towns were granted individual plots of the same size along the streets, as they are represented on the early nineteenth-century cadastral maps. But without archaeological excavations we cannot say how far back these subdivisions date. The street pattern shows up as a linear arrangement in Kilkenny and Kalkar, whilst Sopron has less regularity. The market attested in written sources referring to these towns played the most important functional role. Their layout differed. The parish churches erected in the thirteenth century in all three towns represent the first public buildings. Religious houses were founded in Kilkenny and Sopron in the thirteenth century, but they were established in Kalkar not earlier than the fourteenth century and were less numerous there.

Since 2009 an annual seminar has been organized in the Royal Irish Academy with the aim of facilitating comparative work on Irish towns that are part of the Irish Historic Towns Atlas series. The papers presented between 2009 and 2011 have been published in a single volume.⁵² In this book the comparison is carried out between towns that share a common origin as monastic proto-towns, Anglo-Norman towns with strong castles, Gaelic market towns or plantation towns. A second line of inquiry follows topographical themes: for example, religion, defence, administration, manufacturing, trades and services, transport, health, education, and entertainment, memorials and societies. The most innovative section of the book presents a critique of the atlas as being too exclusively focused on morphological features, to the neglect of socio-economic aspects and a discussion of spatial technologies as applicable to historic town atlases.

In general, the comparative analysis of a number of medieval towns from different European countries shows the emergence of certain criteria for comparative studies. They include location (relation to a river), continuity in the street system from pre-medieval settlements (Roman or Viking), topography

⁵¹ A. Simms, 'Unity in diversity: a comparative analysis of thirteenth-century Kilkenny, Kalkar and Sopron', in S. Duffy (ed.), *Princes, Prelates and Poets in Medieval Ireland. Essays in Honour of Katharine Simms* (Dublin, 2013), pp. 107–23.

⁵² H.B. Clarke and S. Gearty (eds), *Maps and Texts: Exploring the Irish Historic Towns Atlas* (Dublin, 2013).

of governance (secular or episcopal palace), of defence (walls), of economic life (markets), of churches and religious houses, of public buildings (town halls and monuments) and of Jewish quarters. These criteria are a mixture of internal and external processes, as Denecke puts it. The unravelling of the interplay of these criteria in towns belonging to the same category allows us to arrive at a better understanding of the major factors that influenced the development of medieval towns, and how at the same time individual towns created their own responses to major trends, with the result that comparisons become the story of difference.

The historic town atlases go digital

When we first started the Irish Historic Town Atlas in the early 1980s, we worked on typewriters and the maps were drawn by hand. Then a few years later we transferred to computers for the production of the text and maps. Since 2008 every Irish atlas includes a digital version of the town on a CD-ROM, as do the publications of the Austrian and Hungarian atlases. Little did we realize back in the 1980s that we would find ourselves in a 'cartographical revolution' and that at the beginning of the twenty-first century we would be exploring the digitization and the spatial technologies of historic urban landscapes.⁵³

In 1997 the atlas working group of the ICHT met in Bologna. It was here that our host, Francesca Bocchi, introduced us to digitized cartography and the virtual reconstruction of older town topographies. Archival maps of Bologna were used in computer-generated programmes that facilitated the reconstruction of the city pre-dating the first officially surveyed maps.⁵⁴ The precondition for this detailed reconstruction was the presence of references in the archives, such as the *Libri terminorum* (1245), to properties bordering on to public land with the purpose of protecting public property from private encroachment. In this way it was possible to identify convents, hospitals, palaces, crosses, walls, bridges and canals.

In this new approach that has become part of the historic town atlas of Bologna,⁵⁵ the chronological order of research has to be reversed. Instead of

⁵³ K.D. Lilley, 'Mapping futures? Digitisation, spatial technologies and historic town atlases', in Clarke and Gearty, *Maps and Texts*, pp. 278–96.

⁵⁴ F. Bocchi, 'The four-dimensional city', in Bocchi, *Medieval Metropolises*, pp. 29–33.

⁵⁵ G. Sassatelli, C. Morigi Govi, J. Ortalli and F. Bocchi, *Bologna I. Da Felsina a Bononia. Dalle origini al XII secolo* (Atlante storico delle città italiane (Italia settentrionale e Sardegna), Emilia–Romagna, no. 2, Bologna, 1996); F. Bocchi, *Bologna II. Il Duecento* (Atlante storico delle città italiane (Italia settentrionale e Sardegna), Emilia–Romagna, no. 2, Bologna, 1995); R. Dondarini and C. De Angelis, *Bologna III. Da una crisi all'altra (secoli XIV–XVII)* (Atlante storico delle città italiane (Italia settentrionale e Sardegna), Emilia–Romagna, no. 2, Bologna, 1997); G. Greco, A. Preti and F. Tarozzi, *Bologna IV. Dall'età dei 'Lumi' agli anni Trenta (secoli XVIII–XX)* (Atlante storico delle città italiane (Italia settentrionale e Sardegna), Emilia–Romagna, no. 2, Bologna, 1998); F. Bocchi, *Bologna V. Atlante storico multimediale di Bologna: Bologna – La storia, i luoghi, le persone. Cronologia e bibliografia* (Bologna, 1999). The latter is available on a CD-ROM.

starting from the earliest times and working forward, it is necessary to work backwards in time.⁵⁶ In Bologna the icons representing the city – the two towers that have been standing there for the past 900 years – were taken as the demonstration project. The first step was to construct a vectoral skeleton based on an architectural survey of buildings around the piazza di Porta Ravegnana. Where surveys were not available, photographs were taken by an electronic processing method that allowed the transfer of the data on to the vectoral base. Each building and space was defined on the basis of available historical sources. The first step backwards in time went as far as the clearances at the beginning of the twentieth century, the next to 1798 when the thirteenth-century Chapel of the Cross was demolished – once one of the most significant urban landmarks of the city. This particular reconstruction is based on measurements taken at that time. The final step backwards was to the 1570s and illustrates the period preceding the construction of the church of St Bartholomew, which has survived. The initial aim was to extend this reconstruction process to the whole of the medieval city, but this did not happen unfortunately because of the costs involved.

This type of approach is possible only as teamwork, where historians take on the role of co-ordinators. The dissemination of the research results will no longer be restricted to publications of the printed word or to the static medium of a CD-ROM. Rather, as Bocchi wrote, the internet will make it possible to gain immediate access to the product and allow interactive consultation between various cities and towns. The methodology of digitized cartography means that the computer produces images rather than reproducing them. This kind of procedural modification, compared to pre-computer technology, is bringing about a significant change in the organization of knowledge. The technical expert who worked on the Bologna reconstruction maps points out that the knowledge base of the individual who operates the technological instruments in turn influences the organization of knowledge.⁵⁷ This happens in the digital media, according to Fernando Lugli, because of the close connection between its logical structure and the processes of reasoning and the definition of conceptual themes in particular areas of knowledge. The result is that the separation between knowledge and the medium becomes less clearly defined as they are brought together in a single graphic application. What this approach has done for the Italian atlas is that computerized mediation between historical sources of a quantitative type and their spatial representation provide us with applications that modify the image of the sources and through them also of the societies that produced

⁵⁶ In a personal communication Jeremy Whitehand pointed out that in using the method of digital cartography we need to be aware that a distinction has to be made between the order of *research* and the reconstruction of *process*. The latter can be understood only in chronological sequence – an approach fundamental to an understanding of historical developments, including the burgage cycle and fringe belts.

⁵⁷ F. Lugli, 'The methodology of digitised cartography', in Bocchi, *Medieval Metropolises*, pp. 141–7.

them. Nevertheless the production of sophisticated computer-generated maps is limited because of the cost factor, whilst the uneven availability of suitable source material clearly challenges the historian.

Together with European colleagues, the Irish team has explored over the past five years the intricate question of how best to present the digital version of the Irish Historic Towns Atlas, and ultimately the European project in the future. In 2013 we celebrated the launch of the Derry-Londonderry atlas online in order to mark as the UK City of Culture. This digital atlas is a joint collaboration between the Royal Irish Academy, Derry City Council and Queen's University Belfast. It is an experimental web-GIS resource that uses the content from the printed version of the atlas fascicle published in 2005.⁵⁸ Brunswick (as was mentioned earlier the latest publication of the German Historic Town Atlas series) is in the process of being prepared for the internet as an online resource. Maps are being geo-referenced so that they can be superimposed on each other.

The ultimate aim is to put all European historic town atlases online. Keith Lilley has distinguished three major aims for online urban mapping resources that use digital cartography: offering a basis for historical research, the visualization of past urban landscapes and the dissemination of computer-based cartography arising from original research. It would be desirable to connect the historic town atlases to wider debates and developments in digital cartography and spatial technology.⁵⁹

Conclusion

What contribution does the European historic towns atlas make to urban history? It appears that there are a number of different expectations. First Ehbrecht has written recently, as Stoob had done 40 years earlier: 'We should aim at producing an atlas of the typology of European towns'.⁶⁰ In order to achieve this aim, he suggests the production of thematic distribution maps showing the spread of town foundation across Europe, different phases of town fortification, the evolution of marketplaces, town halls and so on. Ehbrecht goes so far as to provide a catalogue of distribution maps from different publications beyond the atlases that might be useful in the context of comparative urban studies.⁶¹ This approach – as Ehbrecht recognizes

⁵⁸ A. Thomas, *Derry-Londonderry* (Irish Historic Towns Atlas, no. 15, Dublin, 2005). The Derry-Londonderry maps can be viewed at www.ria.ie/ihtaderrylondonderry.aspx.

⁵⁹ Lilley, 'Mapping futures?', p. 293.

⁶⁰ Ehbrecht, 'Atlasarbeit auf dem Weg', p. XXV.

⁶¹ W. Ehbrecht, 'Städte im Vergleich. Verbreitungskarten – Eine vergessene Aufgabe historischer Städteatlanten?', in Ehbrecht, *Städteatlanten*, pp. 255–357.

himself – is close to what in German is called *Kulturraumforschung*, research into regional identities.⁶²

Secondly there are scholars who are primarily interested in the processes of town foundation and town formation. For them town plans, like art, are an external expression of internal processes. Town plans allow us in conjunction with historical sources to trace existing forms back to underlying formative processes. Our comparative studies have shown that the exploration of space is an important explanatory variable for our understanding of the transformation of the medieval and early modern town across Europe.

Thirdly cadastral maps provide an ideal source material for exploring the morphogenesis (history of form) of any given town, a method refined in the Conzenian school – the British school of urban morphology that emanated from Birmingham.⁶³

Fourthly there are a growing number of voices calling on the atlas producers to find ways to represent life in towns through time. It has been suggested that the only way in which the atlases can approach the life experience of town dwellers is to include distribution maps referring to socio-economic and cultural aspects as well as population structure, public and private property, and public buildings.⁶⁴

Fifthly and finally there are scholars who see cadastral maps as a physical link to the past in the context of modern town planning. In situations such as east-central Europe where, during the communist period historic urban patterns were replaced by large-scale collective modernization, the early nineteenth century large-scale maps provide a link with a past that town planners might want – at least in part – to recreate in an effort to provide urban identity.

The European historic towns atlas project has now been in the making for almost 50 years. During this time important paradigm shifts have occurred in the humanities. The atlases were set up in the 1960s primarily as reference works providing source material, particularly cartographical source material, on which further urban studies could be based. From a post-modern epistemological point of view, it has been suggested that this essentially quantitative and normative way of thinking promotes a research culture around the atlases that focuses the analysis on measurable variables over less tangible urban attributes of great importance.⁶⁵ In 2007, in a review of the Irish Historic Towns Atlas, Leslie Proudfoot, writing from this perspective,

⁶² This concept was abused by the Nazis, who argued for the superiority of one ethnic group over another.

⁶³ Since 1997 the journal *Urban Morphology*, founded by Jeremy Whitehand, has been published biannually. It is concerned with the processes shaping medieval and early modern towns as well as modern towns and is rooted in the Conzenian school.

⁶⁴ Ehbrecht, 'Atlasarbeit auf dem Weg', p. XL.

⁶⁵ T. O'Keefe, 'Being-in-the-town, being-in-the-atlas: some reflections on capturing the experiences of town dwelling in the historic past', in Clarke and Gearty, *Maps and Texts*, pp. 266–77.

complained that little attention was paid to the human experience associated with the topographical spaces described in the Irish atlases.⁶⁶ Similarly Tadhg O'Keeffe has asked how the enormous amount of source material contained in the Irish atlases can be connected with the historic experience of living in urban spaces.

These kinds of question are useful since they raise our consciousness of the fullness of urban life. The 'cultural turn' in the social sciences has favoured discussions on town plans as ideological constructs. It is true to say that the material landscapes of cities and towns that the atlases represent are socially constructed, since they are the result of networks of power, religion, defence, administration, transport and so on. No doubt an understanding of the general processes of urbanization in Europe at a particular time contributes to a better appreciation of urban developments in a particular country. Therefore the history of individual towns should not be separated from wider societal processes.

As was observed already, cadastral maps communicate complex material on the fabric of a town at a particular point in time in the early nineteenth century. How far back in history the whole of a ground plan, or parts of it, can be taken can be established only with the help of historical documents and archaeological evidence. A full appreciation of the history of our towns depends, however, on an understanding of processes in space as well as in time and that is why the historic towns atlas project has an important contribution to make in European urban history.

One important challenge is how to carry out comparative studies. What can be compared? Individual features or general patterns? Which features are common to all European towns and which are most likely to be specific? At the end of all that effort, can we define the identity of the European town? And last but not least, it is an important advantage that maps communicate across language barriers and that is why the European historic towns atlas project is particularly well suited to co-operation across international boundaries. We have carried on the work that the first historic towns atlas editors started, but we are acutely aware that the project still has a lot of potential that has, as yet, not been realized, be it in the context of a unified methodology or, equally important, in the context of conceptual approaches to the interpretation that the cadastral maps may offer. It has been said that to live means to leave behind traces. Our challenge is to discover and to interpret, on a comparative basis, traces of human endeavour that have been left behind on cadastral maps.

⁶⁶ L. Proudfoot, review of the *Irish Historic Towns Atlas*, vol. 2, in *Urban History*, 34/1 (2007), p. 151.

Chapter 2

Comparative Approaches in the Historico-topographical Analysis of Towns and Cities

Dietrich Denecke

To compare is to reflect and only by reflecting can we compare. The analytical, comparative approach in scientific research is a general path to productive insights. The subjects and areas of comparison vary significantly, with the result that comparative methods must also be differentiated. This contribution is concerned with comparisons of topographical elements in historic towns based on the analysis of town plans, and spatial or locational and temporal topographical comparisons. The comparison is based on maps of entire historic town centres. It is important to focus on selected structural elements or comparative levels in the town plan and the built fabric, in order to reach productive conclusions for the scientific method itself and the actual comparison. With regard to methodology it is necessary to distinguish between different comparative levels, references and types, each of which should be pursued separately. Comparative analyses take place in dimensions and relations that must be differentiated.

Comparison as a scientific method

THE COMPARATIVE APPROACH IN SELECTED DISCIPLINES: STATUS AND PROBLEMS

The comparative approach is applied in many disciplines, especially in the humanities, as an analytical tool that facilitates greater abstraction than idiographic description focused on the individuality of single objects. This analytical approach seems to be inherent to some areas of research, but apart from some fundamental elements it is used in very different ways depending on subject, scale, problem and research aims. Many studies claim to use a comparative approach without actually doing so. In general, there is little or no critical analysis of the approach, even in studies that apply it. There is, however, a growing body of theoretical studies that analyse and criticize the method as applied to numerous disciplines, especially history and sociology.

Comparative scientific approaches are used in political science, sociology, psychology, literature studies, history, economics and geography.

Comparative scientific approaches differ fundamentally not only according to the discipline in which they are applied, but also in the subsidiary fields of disciplines, depending on the specific object of study or research aims. Comparative approaches call for broad scientific knowledge and critical analytical thinking: 'To compare is to reflect and only by reflecting can we compare'. The comparative approach looks for characteristic similarities and differences, their causal relationships and development processes.

As early as the second half of the nineteenth century, reference was made to the scientific aims and benefits of a comparative approach, initially in the context of regional geography and subsequently with specific reference to historical and geographical urban studies. Nevertheless this was generally not followed up in practice. Of special interest are historico-topographical urban studies and the retrospective analysis of town plans. Even so, methodological principles and a critical analysis of the problems involved in the study and comparison of town plans have not been developed. Criteria for comparative methodology and its aims are essential prerequisites for comparative studies. The processing of sources and the development of hypotheses and scientific practices for comparative studies should be orientated towards a comparative methodology from the beginning.

Previously published studies have so far failed to define the aim of historico-topographical urban studies, providing an inadequate basis for further methodological development. Comparison is an ambitious task in the absence of methodological guidelines and clearly defined aims. It is frequently considered sufficient to juxtapose individual town plans at the same scale, presenting comparable basic materials without specific comparative analysis.

Comparisons of town plan analyses in topographical urban studies are primarily based on the model of planned urban layouts in the context of an urban model that was improved through time. The specific development processes involved in laying out streets, building along them, densification and successive change in urban topography down to the present time are insufficiently addressed. Yet intervention in changing townscapes and the actors and causal factors behind these processes are central issues in the analysis of an individual town or city, especially when comparing different regional levels.

*COMPARISON IN GEOGRAPHY: COMPARATIVE GEOGRAPHY
AND COMPARATIVE REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY*

Comparative description and analysis in German geography can be traced back to the second half of the nineteenth century, with some earlier precursors. Comparative approaches are found in 'general regional geography',¹ 'general

¹ The term used by Alexander von Humboldt in 1807.

comparative geography',² 'comparative geography',³ 'comparative regional geography',⁴ or 'comparative landscape studies'.⁵ Early studies by von Humboldt, von Richthofen, Ritter and Drygalski concentrated on worldwide comparison of the continents. Hettner confined himself to the comparison of selected landscape elements: 'It is a fundamental task of general regional geography to compare settlements in different countries and to look for the causes of these differences'.⁶ Following up on von Richthofen's work, Hettner compares typical regional geographical factors in a worldwide overview in his multi-volume work on comparative regional geography. Passarge posited the existence of landscape types in his definition of climatically determined landscape regions. Although the titles of these works claim a comparative approach, they generally lack a clearly expressed comparative methodology.

There was a second active period in attempts at comparative regional geography between 1920 and 1940. A typical feature of this phase was the comparison of specific landscape phenomena: for example, pastoral areas in the southern hemisphere by Waibel, the reconstruction of primeval landscapes by Lautensach, high mountain morphology by Troll or dominant, typical landscape features by Krebs.

These works very often focus on morphological features of the landscapes studied – that is, they employ a physiognomic approach. Nevertheless the comparative approach in German regional geography has not been developed as a major research method. The studies mentioned here do not go beyond the juxtaposition and classification of selected 'comparable' elements of the landscape, based on typological similarities.⁷ It is noteworthy that, in his later writings, Passarge considered comparative regional geography to be an impossibility, given the absence of a sustainable comparative framework for highly complex individual regions and countries.

The regional geographer Otto Maull made one last attempt to establish the comparative approach within a holistic regional geography as a major geographical paradigm: 'Thus in the course of geographical development, comparative regional geography is the dominant, ordering and guiding conclusion of all attempts at regional geography. It is therefore superior to

² C. Ritter, *Die Erdkunde im Verhältnis zur Natur und zur Geschichte des Menschen, oder allgemeine vergleichende Geographie als sichere Grundlage des Studiums und Unterrichts in physikalischen und historischen Wissenschaften* (Berlin, 1836); C. Ritter, *Einleitung zur allgemeinen vergleichenden Geographie und Abhandlungen zur Begründung einer mehr wissenschaftlichen Behandlung der Erdkunde* (Berlin, 1852); also F. Marthe, *Was bedeutet Carl Ritter für die Geographie?* (Berlin, 1880).

³ O. Peschel, *Neue Probleme der vergleichenden Erdkunde als Versuch einer Morphologie der Erdoberfläche* (Leipzig, 1876).

⁴ A. Hettner, *Vergleichende Länderkunde* (4 vols, Leipzig, 1933–5).

⁵ S. Passarge, *Vergleichende Landschaftskunde* (5 parts, Berlin, 1921–30), part 1.

⁶ A. Hettner, 'Die Lage der menschlichen Ansiedlungen', *Geographische Zeitschrift*, 1 (1895), p. 361.

⁷ See E. Plewe, *Untersuchung über den Begriff der 'vergleichenden' Erdkunde und seine Anwendung in der neueren Geographie* (Berlin, 1932).