



Prague City Archives, Institute of History of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Masaryk Institute and Archives of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Faculty of Humanities of Charles University in Prague and Institute of History of Faculty of Arts of University of J. E. Purkyně in Ústí nad Labem

Historiography Connected With Cities: Historiography on Cities and in Cities

The 35th international conference on urban history

Prague, October 4 – 5, 2016

Prague City Archives, along with its partner institutions invites participation in the annual conference on urban historiography from the Middle Ages to the beginning of the 20th century. The chief themes of the 2016 conference is urban historiography, private or corporate; the second is historical works written about specific cities. Much of the focus will be on Prague itself, but papers on other Czech towns and on other European cities of comparable significance are encouraged.

At the forefront would be urban chronical writing, or chronicles written in cities retrospectively, and histories of the capitals or other cities significant for authors, as one of the main pillars of the conceptualisation of the construction of both the state and national historical narrative. A national – in the premodern sense – community of a key city have always enabled to prove a level of a nation's advancement, organization and both civilisational and cultural equality, comparable with other nations. Therefore, the birth of the *city* had had to be laid in dim and distant past and connected with the birth of a state and establishment of the order within a community (let there be the works of Titus Livius, 142 books of the history of Rome, *Ab Urbe Condita*, perceived as a binding example for many following authors of historiographical genre).

This concept, however, did not disappear even in the 'modern' times. It is possible to support this statement again with the Czech example of the City of Prague. We can therefore explore significance of history of the capital of the kingdom for the conception of the modern Czech nation: Prague used to be a historical stage of the great deeds – and tragedies – of the Czech nation, she herself featured as a dramatic character of the nation's 'great history' and simultaneously, she too was a treasure chests containing proofs of the nation's glorious and newly articulated legitimacy that had been created within a civil concept during the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century. Seeing through Palacký's little history of Prague, through Tomek's gigantic history of the city and Winter's history of the city's everyday life, presented in many features, and finally to the Teige's great anthologies, Prague has always been standing at the centre of historicity of the Czech political discourse and the then actual situation 'of the nation without the national state' – nevertheless, successfully striving for a full participatory position within the elites of the Habsburg empire.

We would therefore be interested both in the authors of the urban histories as well as and in the initiators and orders, in terms of changes they could have underwent since the Middle Ages by the beginning of the 20th century. Equally we would like to find out, 'what has been written' in chronicles and urban histories: what the authors thematised and what was left behind; what was the key selected of the recorded events, personalities or levels of reality; how the authors put their cities into the broader contexts of the history of regions and countries or even into a wider global circle? Did only the great the ancient tradition play the role, or were other historiographical works deal-

ing with history of significant 'partner' cities taken into consideration? What was the contribution of such works for preservation of collective memory? Can we follow mechanisms connected with production and distribution of these works? These are the moments where we seek both regional and international comparison in particular. And in the same way, we can pose questions related to the reception of such works. Were they read only by petty circles of interested – in terms of both politics and power – or could these works be perceived as books that had become popular at least amongst burghers and intelligentsia? Could they initiate the writing of other chronicles – though dedicated only for a family background? Did the Latin and German printed historiographical works or their passages on cities – Prague in our terms – become perceived internationally?

While the major themes have been stated above, the conference organizers also encourage innovative proposals that will enrich the overall theme of urban historiography within the whole-European range to c. 1900.

Relevant Information:

Applications in Czech, German or English are to be submitted at the latest by **April 15, 2016**. Applications without abstracts will not be considered. The organizers reserve the right to choose. Length of proposed contribution: 15–20 min.

Chosen and/or presented papers in an appropriate form (e. g. max. 20 pages) may be submitted for publication in the journal *Documenta Pragensia*. The articles are subject to approval of the journal's Advisory Board.

There is no charge for participation.

Active participants from outside the Czech Republic will be provided with accommodation at the hotels of the Czech Academy of Sciences or Charles University in Prague. All transportation fees are to be met by participants.

Conference languages: Czech, German and English. Simultaneous translation from German language will be on hand.

Organizing Committee:

Prof. Dr. Jiří Pešek, CSc.

PhDr. Olga Fejtová, Ph.D.

Doc. Dr. Václav Ledvinka, CSc.

PhDr. Petr Hrachovec, Ph.D.

Doc. Dr. Michaela Hrubá, Ph.D.

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