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Hamm, Michael E, ed. *The City in Late Imperial Russia*.
Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986. Pp. ix, 372.
Illustrations, maps, tables, index. \$27.50

K. A. Papmehl

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[See table of contents](#)

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eenth and early nineteenth centuries, and political and social considerations in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In sum, "in the cultural mode, emphasis is on the user; in the economic mode, on the investor; and in the political, on the regulator" (p. xvi).

At the conclusion of the exercise there is a moral: modern cities are no longer easily adapted to frequent, unavoidable and unpredictable changes in the conditions affecting urban life in the way that their medieval and early industrial counterparts were. The modern urban world has lost its capacity for gradual, flexible and almost automatic accommodation to a constantly changing environment; cities are lost in the embrace of their own rigid infrastructures. His conclusions — that bureaucratic and regulatory organizations have become the dominant factors in environmental design, that social and political objectives now predominate and that users and owners have, consequently, lost control over property and its use — would have been stronger had — he opted for more depth and less breadth in his presentation.

Between the extremes of antiquarian grubbing for minutia on the one hand and millennial surveys of continental urban growth on the other there must surely be a mid-point where the breadth of the general statement will not so completely obscure the design of the constituent parts. Neither of these studies has found that golden mean.

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Hamm, Michael F., ed. *The City in Late Imperial Russia*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986. Pp. ix, 372. Illustrations, maps, tables, index. \$27.50.

This important collection of essays on the eight major cities of the former Russian Empire in the sixty years of rapid socio-economic change before 1917 represents a collective effort by nine specialists in the field. The cities and their biographers are Moscow (Joseph Bradley), St. Petersburg (James H. Bater), Kiev (Michael F. Hamm), Warsaw (Stephen D. Corssin), Riga (Anders Henriksson), Odessa (Frederick W. Skinner), Tiflis (Ronald Grigor Suny) and Baku (Audrey Altstadt-Mirhadi). An Introduction by Hamm and a conclusion by Daniel H. Brower round out the volume. The fact that the whole represents a planned and coordinated effort involving several years gives the book a greater cohesion and thematic unity than is usual in publications of this type.

The most conspicuous general features affecting the major urban areas in late Imperial Russia were the dynamic economic development (commercial rather than industrial), the

concomitant rapid growth in population (predominantly by migration facilitated by the concurrent expansion of the railway network) and the physical transformation of the cities from what might be called "clusters of villages" into more or less modern urban areas. The attendant problems, such as overcrowding, sub-standard housing, and increasing class and ethnic conflicts soon exceeded the capability of municipal organs to deal with them; this inevitably resulted in intervention by the central government. The ensuing situation, further aggravated by labour unrest and the mass violence of the revolutionary period 1904-05, transformed the major cities into hotbeds of popular discontent, undoubtedly a major factor in the final explosion of 1917.

The character and relative weight of these general factors naturally varied among the different cities. In the ethnically homogeneous ones, such as St. Petersburg and Moscow, the determining factors were primarily socio-economic, conditioned by the physical transformation of the environment and the transient character of the major segment of the population. In St. Petersburg, "the most expensive and the least healthy of the European capitals," the overcrowding, underdeveloped public transport and inefficient municipal management contributed to the generally dismal environment for the broad mass of the population. Warsaw and Riga, the two ethnically non-Russian and culturally "Western" cities, shared with others a rapid growth and impetus towards modernization, but additionally had special problems. In both cities the sources of conflict were primarily of national-political or ethno-cultural rather than social character; the spectacular growth and politicization of the daily press in the early twentieth century may be seen as symptomatic in this respect.

Kiev and Odessa had ethnically diverse populations. Odessa, in addition, had the most spectacular increase in population: an almost unbelievable 3,677 per cent over approximately fifty years. Both cities contained a large Jewish population, a source of friction that occasionally manifested itself in outbreaks of anarchic violence. Tiflis and Baku, the two non-Russian and non-European cities, the former basically binational (Georgian-Armenian), the latter multinational, experienced the same phenomena of economic growth and rapidly expanding population as the other major urban centres in the Empire. In both, the demographic changes arising from mass immigration were the dominant factor. The resulting ethno-religious and national-cultural tensions, combined with the increasingly active labour movement, accounted for much violence, especially in Baku, and provided a congenial ground for revolutionary activity. In this respect Tiflis was not far behind: by 1905 it had sizable Marxist groups, mainly of the Menshevik persuasion, and was the scene of bloody demonstrations in the same year.

Each essay is accompanied by a bibliographical note and a useful bibliography of secondary works in English; the

range and variety of sources used by the contributors are impressive; and the illustrations are helpful, with the unfortunate exception of the single and unrepresentative one of Warsaw. The city maps are schematic with distances and angles occasionally distorted but quite adequate for their purpose. Taken as a whole, the book succeeds in demonstrating the connection between the urban environment in a stage of rapid and largely uncontrolled expansion and the growth of the revolutionary movement. It will be useful to students of Russian social and economic history as well as to those interested in the more general problems of accelerated "urbanization," internal migration and social conflict.

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Olsen, Donald J. *The City as a Work of Art: London, Paris, Vienna*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986. Pp. xiii, 311. 142 black and white plates; 8 colour plates. Index, bibliography. \$35.00 (U.S.).

Donald J. Olsen's unusual interdisciplinary book is neither traditional art history nor conventional urban history, but imaginatively combines elements of both. By focusing upon the building and rebuilding of London, Paris and Vienna in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, he demonstrates that concern for aesthetic principles and social comforts were as important to town planners as considerations brought about by increased industrialization, economic growth and political power. To support this argument, Olsen assembles a particularly rich collection of visual material ranging from old contemporary photographs, plans (both of cities and of individual buildings), prints, drawings and paintings. The result is an attractive volume which offers a fresh approach and original insights into the historical development of three major urban centres.

Olsen believes that "societies better reveal themselves at play than at work." For this reason, he concentrates his study of urban life upon five "superficial" aspects of the city's function: luxury, monument, home, playground and document. In these categories, Olsen examines significant historical events which shaped London, Paris and Vienna.

Each of the three, he argues, was distinctive. Londoners glorified the virtues of domesticity, privacy and family life and preferred individual dwelling houses rather than block units. Neighbourhoods reflected social stratification; upper classes fled the city core and resided in suburbs. Social pleasures were not taken in public places but in private homes and clubs. A social mix was the norm in central Paris; one result was the appearance of cafés, restaurants, gardens and boulevards where Parisians amused themselves informally

out of doors. Their flats were more crowded and communal than English houses but faced an inner private courtyard. The Viennese middle and upper classes aspired to remain in the city core despite the pressures caused by the expansion of commercial spaces. For them social life revolved around formal receptions and the ornate public buildings which lined the *Ringstrasse*. They lived in flats whose private spaces were sacrificed for a series of formal receiving rooms. The circles of the imperial and royal court enjoyed numerous aristocratic social functions. Thus the plan of Vienna came to reflect the preference for monumental public display where parks and promenades, cafés and theatres lined pleasant streets. In all three instances, Olsen believes that the architecture of the city reveals the inner nature of the period in which it was built. He disagrees with some urban historians' implicit denial that art has any relevance for history by arguing that aesthetic factors are simply another kind of evidence which cannot be justifiably overlooked in historical inquiry. Needless to say, he finds the outward appearance of cities a significant factor in determining the *Zeitgeist* of the age which created them.

The text reflects the author's wide range of reading and research in art history which is not applied conventionally towards his subject. He avoids discussions of aesthetics for their own sake; instead he employs the tools of the art historian's trade in order to examine theories of cultural and urban history. His discussions are both scholarly and readable, although at times his generalities seem strained and his comparisons self-consciously forced, as if he were attempting to impress the reader with the breadth of his knowledge. Numerous verbal illustrations to support contentions are provided: historical examples are drawn from politics, music, drama, poetry, painting, architecture and philosophy, among other things. To explain the language of architecture, Olsen writes: "Henry Adams did not really worship the Virgin Mary while at Chartres any more than we adopt the tenets of the Mayan religion while wondering at the monuments of Uxmal. Yet as an understanding of the intellectual life of early thirteenth-century France contributes to an aesthetic apprehension of Chartres, an awareness of the intentions of their builders can intensify our pleasure in Vienna, Paris, and London." Such juxtapositions are typical of both the style and the substance of the book.

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Stinger, Charles L. *The Renaissance in Rome*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985. Pp. xv, 444. \$37.40 (U.S.).

Charles L. Stinger's book on Renaissance Rome is based on a number of assumptions, the most important of which is