

“Why France?” the authors ask in the first chapter. Only in France, Adams and Adams argue, did the royal mistress become a “tradition, a quasi-institutionalized political position, generally accepted if always vaguely scandalous” (15). French notions of gender, they claim, contributed to the creation of the royal mistress. Paradoxically, the Salic Law that banned women from the throne “created opportunities for female authority” (5). Because the royal mistress could not usurp the throne, she was allowed to wield some power as an “open secret.” At the same time, the “theatricalization of the court” in the first half of the sixteenth century made it possible for the mistress to publicize her power and assert her personality. The authors also credit another court institution—the male favorite, or *mignon*—with paving the way for the royal mistress. Both *mignon* and royal mistress subverted the traditional gatekeepers of the court, the high nobility, and depended only on the king. By virtue of her sex, however, the royal mistress exercised limited power and posed less of a threat to other courtiers. Consequently, she survived, while the *mignons* disappeared at the end of the reign of Henri III.

For the next two hundred years, the French kings conferred the official title of royal mistress on six women. These women had different ambitions: Madame de Maintenon sought to influence the composition of the clergy, while Pompadour concentrated on state appointments. These women also exerted different degrees of power. Pompadour worked tirelessly for her supporters, sometimes intruding into the area of foreign affairs. Du Barry found it harder to ward off opposing factions and had much less influence on matters of state. The authors make few comparisons between the different mistresses, and one misses a concluding chapter that might have brought together all the threads of the argument and provided answers to some general questions. Why did kings elevate these women who were lightning rods for criticism? How did the royal mistress enhance the monarchy or contribute to its functions? *The Creation of the Royal Mistress* tells us how the mistress was created, but not why. Still, this is a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the French monarchy and the changing roles and relationships of women at the royal court.

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*A Companion to Late Medieval and Early Modern Augsburg.* B. Ann Tlusty and Mark Häberlein, eds.

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Augsburg was one of the largest and most influential cities in Germany in the early modern period: a major political, economic, and cultural center, and home to the Fuggers, the wealthiest family in Europe. This volume offers a detailed look at the imperial city from the founding of its guild-based government in 1368 through Augsburg's

golden age in the sixteenth century, and its long decline over the next two centuries to its loss of independence in 1806. Its twenty-three informative and readable chapters, written by scholars from Europe and North America, introduce anglophone readers to a great deal of recent work on Augsburg written in German.

The book is divided into four parts. Part 1, "The City," has four chapters and provides a brief historiographic overview of research on Augsburg and describes the city's physical space and its depiction in maps and chronicles. A chapter on "invisible boundaries" concerns health care but also introduces a theme that runs through the remaining chapters: the line that divided Protestants and Catholics in the wake of the 1555 Peace of Augsburg. Part 2, "Economy, Politics, and the Law," opens with a description of the city's twin economic engines, local fustian production and long-distance trade and banking. The city's political development is covered in two chapters, the first devoted to the guild regime established in 1368, and the second dealing with the patrician government that replaced the guild regime in 1548 and ruled the city until it was incorporated into Bavaria in 1806. The last two chapters of this section deal with crime and criminal procedure and with the city's civil law code.

Part 3, "Religion and Society," begins with two chapters describing the impact of the Protestant Reformation on Augsburg up to 1555 and the long-term challenge of religious coexistence. Less directly influenced by religion was the city's economic boom in the sixteenth century, which increased the already significant divide between rich and poor, and the long economic decline that began with the Thirty Years' War. Two chapters focus on marriage and sexuality and on leisure activities. These areas were influenced by the religious divisions of the sixteenth century, but also by changing economic conditions and, in the case of leisure activities, growing secularization. A chapter on the experience of war looks more closely at the impact on the city's inhabitants from the Schmalkaldic War in the mid-sixteenth century, through the Thirty Years' War in the seventeenth century, to the War of the Spanish Succession in the early eighteenth century. A final chapter considers the marginal place of Jews, who were expelled from the city in 1438 and not allowed to reside in the city until the beginning of the nineteenth century, but who still played a significant role in trade and commerce.

The first chapter of Part 4, "Communication, Cultural and Intellectual Life," describes Augsburg's importance for the dissemination of news, in part to meet the needs of the city's merchant and banking firms. A chapter on printing highlights the production of vernacular publications by Protestant printers through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the growth of Catholic Latin publications in the eighteenth century. A chapter on dress and material culture describes the economic and cultural value of clothing and of the suits of armor produced in the city. The two movements of humanism and the Reformation shaped the city's learned culture through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but by the early Enlightenment Augsburg lagged behind other German cities as a cultural center. The final three

chapters deal with the arts, architecture, and music. Here, too, religious change played a role, as a secular art market emerged after the Reformation and musical culture separated into Catholic and Protestant forms. Ecclesiastical patronage was replaced by civic and patrician patronage, with considerable investment in public fountains and the new city hall.

The volume's greatest strength is its long chronological perspective. The Protestant Reformation brought a major change to Augsburg, but there were important continuities and gradual changes from the late fourteenth through the early nineteenth century that are obscured by the traditional division between medieval and early modern. The chapters are synthetic, and each has a lengthy bibliography of primary and secondary sources at the end, making the volume ideal for both graduate students starting their research and scholars looking for detailed treatment of a specific topic. Although the book concerns Augsburg, much of what is written about that city sheds light on urban history in Germany more generally, and its broad coverage of economic, social, and cultural topics makes it valuable for readers in a variety of historical specializations.

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*Imperial Villages: Cultures of Political Freedom in the German Lands c. 1300–1800.* Beat Kümin.

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One remarkable feature of the Holy Roman Empire was the sheer variety of political authorities that made up its fabric. While the empire's principalities, independent cities, and self-governing ecclesiastical institutions have long received scholarly attention, one polity has often been ignored: *Reichsdörfer*, or imperial villages. These rural communities claimed no overlord except the emperor, which gave them a status akin to the much better-known imperial cities. Beat Kümin's new book seeks to remedy this situation. In this "microhistory of politics" (4), Kümin provides a nuanced analysis of popular political culture in imperial villages that adds an important perspective to our understanding of how political structures evolved during the early modern period.

Kümin focuses on five villages as case studies: Gochsheim and Sennfeld in Franconia, Sulzbach and Soden in Hesse, and Gersau in the Swiss Confederation. Analysis of the case studies is interwoven throughout the text, which adopts a thematic approach. After an introduction that sets the historiographic context and a chapter that lays out the empire's structure, the heart of the book begins with chapter 3, which analyzes the institutions and decision-making bodies in the five villages. Kümin differentiates between aristocratic rural regimes, where power was concentrated in the hands of a closed group, and democratic regimes, where the wider community took part in