

OLD REGIME URBAN POLICY IN EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN SOCIETIES

Keywords:

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States in their own building process, institutions and social networks, families and communities have developed different forms of social control in the historical perspective. Many of those have taken specific patterns in the urban arena giving particular features to urban life and identity. This session analyses expressions (practices and representations) and meanings of policy (policey) in preindustrial urban societies. It points out a comparative focus to explain policy forms similarities and contrasts in between colonial and metropolitan cities. This session analyses, on one hand, the role played by preindustrial cities as an environment in which was expressed urban policy, but also its agents, instruments and efficiency. On the other hand, it deals with the urban geography of transgressions and social control or social discipline. According to all these analytical perspectives preindustrial city outbursts as a territory of social integration but also an environment that produces social exclusion, relationships and domination; as well it comes out as a public and political sphere of authority historically built with different shapes and morphologies. These gave every city the chance to built their forms of representation and selfidentity in terms that urban ordinances were shaping at least from medieval times. In the beginning of the 15th century many European cities expressed throughout their local norms some of the policy (policey or pollitzei) features. This was then showed in terms of government and justice; means to preserve social order and public peace. This aim also made easy the development of a great variety of social control actions because the definition of social order also made that of social deviance and transgression (ordinances and local law helped to do that) and this justified urban policy actions. In the two sides of the Atlantic the processes of definition of social deviance and social control throughout urban policy showed a really complex historical phenomenon during the Old Regime. This gives an additional scientific value to the comparative analytical perspective that is stressed in this session. The convergence of research about European and American experiences will gave the chance to give commen better answers to the aims of this session for the explanation of urban political and policy actions and representations for the benefit of the construcción of urban selfidentity and urban patterns as a well-ordered and governed res publica.

