

## MASS MIGRATION AND URBAN GOVERNANCE

### Cities in the United States and in Central Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries

German Historical Institute (Washington D.C.)

Place: German Historical Institute,  
Washington D.C.

Date: May 11-12, 2007.

Conveners: Daniel Czitrom (Mount  
Holyoke College), Marcus Gräser  
(University of Frankfurt/Main).

Conference presentations and  
discussion will be in English.  
Proposals from Europe and the  
United States are welcome.

Please submit a paper proposal of  
no more than 500 words (one page)  
and a short CV to both conveners  
([dczitrom@mtholyoke.edu](mailto:dczitrom@mtholyoke.edu);  
[M.Graeser@em.uni-frankfurt.de](mailto:M.Graeser@em.uni-frankfurt.de))

The deadline for submission is  
November 15, 2006.

Participants will be notified by  
the middle of December. They will  
receive lump sum reimbursement  
for their travel and lodging  
expenses.

American urbanization in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries has always been described as a unique experience. Migrants from the peasant villages and small towns of Europe and Asia as well as African Americans from the southern States converged on the metropolises. The American city was, as Jon C. Teaford aptly phrased it, »a mass of segregated and unassimilated humanity«. It resembled a patchwork and its ethnic divisions were at once a source of dynamism and of conflict. »When there are added to one American city more Italians than there are Italians in Rome, we have something new in history«, remarked the sociologists Robert E. Park and Herbert A. Miller in 1925.

Yet from a comparative perspective the assumption of an American urban exceptionalism may be questioned: Urbanization in Central Europe during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was no less the result of mass migration, mostly from rural areas. Most, but not all migrants had the same ethnic background as the old-stock city dwellers. Some German cities, however, especially in the Ruhr area and in Silesia, and, to a lesser extent, Berlin, experienced an influx of Polish peasants. Likewise, in most of the big cities in the Hapsburg empire – especially Vienna and Prague – urbanization and migration divided along lines of ethnicity: Prague was split between Germans and Czechs and a considerable part of the population of Vienna was Czech, Galician and Italian.

While none of the Central European cities had an ethnic make-up that really resembled the situation in a typical big American city, the experience of mass migration – either mono- or multiethnic – had a crucial impact on urban governance in both Central Europe and in America: The aim of this workshop is to examine this impact, asking questions such as: How did mass migration change the local political regime and its administrative capacity? How did the degree of democratization, the processes of naturalization and the local party traditions influence the political and social inclusion/exclusion of migrants? And how did the various symbolic attempts to unify a fragmented city, correlate with the local politics of inclusion/exclusion?

The workshop will provide a platform to focus on:

- a) comparative studies of two (or more) cities
- b) local case studies
- c) research on national politics of citizenship and its implication for the local political arena
- d) the contribution of contemporary sociology and literature to the phenomenon of migration and city-building
- e) questions and prospects for further research.