

## WHAT MAKES A CITY GREAT? OR WHAT MAKES A GREAT CITY?

When I was a History professor at UC Davis, I taught two undergraduate courses, Western Civilization for lower division students and Twentieth Century Europe for upper division students. One evening about dinner time, I received a telephone call from a publisher on the East coast, who said: "Would you be interested in writing a textbook on the History of Twentieth Century Europe?" To my surprise and with no premeditation, I instantly replied, "No, but I would be willing to write a History of Western Civilization. It would, however, be different from the texts currently being used. I would base it around studies of several great cities at the height of their creativity." He asked for a three page outline, which I duly produced. His company took a major chance of my being able to do this and an even greater one of it ever selling, and accepted.

That in many ways, changed my life. I produced a long book, which had a reasonable reception from other urban fanatics like myself. At Davis, I offered a one quarter freshman course, called "Cities: A Survey of Western Civilization", in which I talked about one great city each week, and it was well received. Later, my publisher said that the trend was toward World Civilization, and would I oblige. I did, and the book became *World Civilizations*.

But it was after I retired from Davis that the books really paid off. I found a position as lecturer on Seabourn Cruise Line, which had small, luxury ships, who sent me to the Mediterranean and to Northern Europe. I then suggested that,

Later we added South America and the Caribbean. Then the South Pacific. Finally we added Africa, South-East Asia, China, and Japan. Through my book I had found a second career, which lasted for twenty-three years, and took me around the whole world several times.

So, to come back to that original proposal and the subject of my talk today, Great Cities. To choose my cities, I asked five questions, which will form the basis of my paper and, I hope, of our future discussion. Those questions were:

- 1) How did the city produce its wealth?**
- 2) What social relationships developed within this economic system?**
- 3) How did the citizens conceive of the relationship of the individual to the state in theory and carry it out in practice?**
- 4) How did the city spend its wealth?**
- 5) What were the city's unique cultural achievements?**

For each question, restricting myself to European cities, I will take just one example of how one city was great in that criterion.

### **1) How did the city produce its wealth?**

Let me begin with Amsterdam in the seventeenth century, a city with almost no natural advantages but which managed, in less than a century, to become the richest city, at least in per capita income, in Europe.

In the sixteenth century, Antwerp had been the center of European banking and international commerce. It was sacked, however, by mutinous Spanish soldiers in 1576, and six

thousand of its citizens were killed. Amsterdam then took over Antwerp's commercial and financial role, and it sustained this preeminence for almost a hundred and fifty years.

Many of the factors that aided Amsterdam's rise could have been turned to advantage by other great seaports. Wealthy refugees from Antwerp had scattered throughout Europe, and not just to Amsterdam. Great profits could be made by shipping companies able to buy up the surplus grain of Eastern Europe in order to supply lands where famine threatened. The failure of Spain and Portugal to develop the industries that could supply export goods to their own empires left extraordinary opportunities for other countries to supply the manufactured goods that would be exchanged for the bullion of the Americas. The vast expansion of European shipping offered a great opportunity for the country that could gain a semi-monopoly on the naval supplies, especially wood and tar, which as a result of the great deforestation of western Europe completed in the sixteenth century, had to be obtained from Scandinavia. Even greater profits could be obtained by the sale or lease of fully equipped ships. It was, however, Amsterdam more than any other port of Europe that was ready to capitalize on these lucrative opportunities.

Amsterdam's first advantage was its superb merchant marine. Many ships had been built for the North Sea fisheries, which had boomed suddenly when the herring shoals had inexplicably moved from the Baltic into the North Sea in the sixteenth century. Other ships specialized in carrying bulky goods, especially for the Baltic trade in cereals, timber, copper and iron. In the 1590s Amsterdam invented a low draught freight carrier, the flyboat, or fluit, which could be built quickly

and cheaply and used for transport of goods. The flyboats made it possible for them to undercut all their rivals in freight rates. With the beginning of interloping voyages to the Indies at the end of the sixteenth century, the Dutch also turned out larger ships that could make the long transoceanic voyages. By the mid-seventeenth century, they owned half the merchant ships in Europe.

Second, the Amsterdam merchants were prepared and able to trade in almost every commodity in world commerce. All commercial services were offered, including skilled classification of merchandise, credit facilities, insurance, brokerage, and rational legal treatment of commercial disputes. Goods traded through Amsterdam were handled with exemplary efficiency. Ships could be unloaded and filled again with purchases in a matter of days. But the variety of goods available was the greatest inducement to foreigners to buy in Amsterdam. It was Europe's biggest seller of wheat, naval supplies, armaments, and fish. It controlled most of the metal exported from Sweden and of the wool of Spanish sheep, much of the salt from Denmark, and even a good share of the unfinished woolen cloth from England. Many of the goods brought into Amsterdam were raw materials or semi-finished goods that could be turned, at a large profit, into finished goods for export. Unfinished cloth was dyed and dressed, beer brewed, glass blown, armaments cast, tobacco cut, paper manufactured, books printed, jewels shaped, and leather dressed. Even the agricultural produce of the rich wet fields around Amsterdam and the newly re-claimed land, or polders, such as high quality cheese and butter, fed the Amsterdam trade.

But the greatest temptation, to which the Dutch succumbed in 1594 with the foundation of the Company of Far Lands, was to break the spice monopoly of the Portuguese and Spanish. The first fleet of four ships made its way as far as Java and the Moluccas and brought back a moderately profitable cargo of pepper and mace. Thus with direct access to the spice lands made possible and the enormous difficulties of Portugal in maintaining its monopoly made obvious, large numbers of ships were sent by companies in Amsterdam and the other Dutch ports. Once again, Dutch commercial skills triumphed. They brought suitable goods for trade, such as armor, glassware, and toys; they traded honestly, and they made no attempt to proselytize. They did, however, compete with each other, and in 1602 they were pressured by the States General into forming one monopoly company, the United Netherlands Chartered East India Company. It was given sole rights to Dutch trade between the Cape of Good Hope and the Straits of Magellan, and it could make war and peace, build forts, capture foreign vessels, and coin money. Amsterdam, which subscribed half the original capital, was dominant in the company, and its main offices and warehouses, which are still standing, were built in the city. The East India Company was soon sending annually a fleet to the spice islands, bringing back spices, silks, and cottons. Its members quickly made treaties with native princes, and territorial claims, first on the Moluccas and then on the Indonesian archipelago. In Batavia on Java, they built their administrative and military capital and used it to set up a trading empire among Asian states. They drove the Portuguese out of Malaya and Ceylon, and founded a trading post at Nagasaki, to which the Japanese entrusted a monopoly

of their export trade, and planted a settlement at the Cape of Good Hope as a supply center for their fleets traveling to the Far East. To the European goods available in their warehouses they had thus added pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg, cotton, silks, porcelain, tea, and coffee. Nineteen years after the foundation of the East India Company, bellicose Calvinist elements founded the West India Company, to attack the trade, possessions, and ships of the Spanish in the Western Hemisphere.. It established a superb base for trading and marauding by taking the rocky island of Curaçao in the Caribbean, held the sugar producing provinces of Brazil for several years, and sold slaves from West Africa in the Spanish colonies. Following the exploration by Henry Hudson, an Englishman in service of the Dutch West India Company, of the river subsequently named for him, the company founded a colony of the New Netherlands, establishing both a settlement called New Amsterdam on the tip of Manhattan Island and a trading post up the river at the site of present-day Albany. Only a few thousand emigrated, however, and the colony was seized by the English without trouble in 1664.00000 The West India Company was soon torn with dissensions between the Amsterdam merchants and the other Dutch traders, especially as many of its ventures lost money. It was eventually declared bankrupt. Nevertheless, the two companies had won for the Netherlands an immense trading empire

Amsterdam's third advantage was the availability of large quantities of capital together with the means for its investment. The Amsterdam middle classes had been accumulating wealth through the sixteenth century from the Baltic trade in grain and naval supplies, and to this was added

the large patrimonies brought into the city by the refugees who moved there from the textile towns of Flanders during the war with Spain. The Jews who were expelled from Spain and Portugal brought capital, to which they added wealth created in the Brazilian sugar trade and, later in the century, by trading in shares.

The imperial trade conducted by the East and West Indian companies enriched many investors, notably their own boards of directors. Others profited from war. Amsterdam merchants supplied the Spanish armies while they were attacking the Netherlands and later the armies of Louis XIV during his wars against the Dutch. They supplied ships for both sides in the war between Denmark and Sweden. They fed both Roundheads and Cavaliers in the English civil war. By the end of the century, Amsterdam was the foremost supplier of all forms of military supplies. Like Milan a century earlier, it had several stores that could equip an army of five thousand men.

To make wealth readily available for productive investment, the city of Amsterdam founded and continued to supervise the most efficient and reliable bank in northern Europe, the Amsterdam Exchange Bank. Money poured in from as far away as Russia and Turkey, as the continent's rich sought security for their fortunes. Shortly afterward, the city founded the Amsterdam Lending Bank, which offered loans to its best customers at three percent and soon succeeded in driving out the Italian moneylenders. Finally, there was the Amsterdam Stock Exchange, or Beurs, which was the center for trading in commodities. In its colonnaded courtyard, merchants from all over the world conducted the most concentrated trading in

Europe. The city of Amsterdam, in short, was a superbly organized creator of wealth.

## **2) What social relationships developed within this economic system?**

The classic example of how an unjust social system can be formed as a result of the acquisition of great wealth by a city is Republican Rome.

The acquisition of an empire transformed the economic basis of the city of Rome, revolutionized its social structure, and changed for the worse the Romans' image of themselves. Throughout the history of the Republic, leading Romans preached a civic ethic of service and self-denial that derived from the honest peasant farmers they honored as their ancestors. Livy, writing his history of Rome at the time of Augustus, sought "to turn [his gaze] away from the troubles which our age has been witnessing for so many years ... absorbed in the recollection of the brave days of old." His reader should imagine the change in Rome, "how, with the gradual relaxation of discipline, morals first gave way, as it were, then sank lower and lower, and finally began the downward plunge which has brought us to the present time when we can endure neither our vices nor their cure."

The economic basis of Roman life at the beginning of the Republic in 509 B. C, was quite simple. Rome controlled only about four hundred square miles of territory, and already the population was too large for the land available. There were very few slaves until the beginning of the overseas wars of conquest —perhaps fewer than twenty thousand as late as



300 B. C. The bulk of the Roman population, even of the city itself, engaged in small-scale agriculture to feed their own families. It was part of the accepted belief of Roman patricians that these small farmers possessed the Stoic virtues of thrift and frugality that the state should encourage because they made ideal soldiers. Nevertheless the great families of the Roman oligarchy required ever more wealth to maintain their political leverage within the oligarchy. They concentrated particularly on expanding their landholdings in Italy, buying the small holdings that peasant conscripts were compelled to sell cheaply, and taking for themselves a large part of the lands confiscated in the conquest of peninsular Italy. As a result, the oligarchy provoked deep social conflict based on rivalry for land. In this conflict, the smallholders and expropriated farmers were joined by the remaining freemen of Rome—the artisans, small shopkeepers, the traders, and manual laborers. The victories over Carthage ensured the predominance of the senatorial oligarchy, who became agricultural capitalists on their huge estates. The acquisition of the great wheat producing regions of Sicily, Sardinia, North Africa, and Spain made it less profitable to grow cereals than to raise animals in central Italy. The wheat of the conquered regions was exacted as tribute and sold by the government below the market price or given away free. Hannibal's sixteen-year campaign in Italy itself drove many more peasants off the land, and the government distributed the vacant lands in large estates to those with the capital to care for them. Finally, the victories over Carthage and the Hellenistic monarchies brought vast numbers of slaves into Roman possession and thereby transformed the whole character of Rome,

Probably seventy-five thousand prisoners were put on sale during and after the First Punic War, and afterward the numbers increased rapidly, supplied not only from conquests of the campaigns and by pirates but even from the children of desperate peasants. By the time of Augustus, two-fifths of Rome's one million population were slaves. Part of the fear in which Romans came to live from the second century B. C. on was the knowledge that in the fields and mines of Italy, among the hundreds of thousands of enslaved human beings, many were reaching that point of desperation where they would risk torture and crucifixion to destroy their odious captors.

The smallholders, dispossessed by the growing estates, poured into the cities, especially into Rome. Here again they found much of the manual work and even many of the manufacturing and commercial jobs being carried on by slaves. Even the state used large numbers of "public slaves" as bureaucrats or in provision of services like the baths or aqueducts.. The city proletariat, however, faced with the competition of slaves for the available jobs, became increasingly dependent on handouts of food by the government and for free entertainment d by aspiring politicians and generals, in what became known as "bread and circuses." It was hardly surprising that vast tensions were building within this empire, particularly in the city of Rome itself.

First, the acquisition of empire produced extremes of wealth and poverty of a magnitude previously unknown in Rome. Second, the constitutional process disintegrated into a series of struggles among major family groupings within the oligarchy for control of power, during which the Senate, which

had been the principal guarantor of political stability, saw its authority continually erode. And third, the manipulation of violence, through the pressure either of the city mob or of legions loyal to a single general, became the principal instrument in the transfer of power. This combination of corruption, family ambition, and violence destroyed the Roman Republic.

### **3) How did the citizens conceive of the relationship of the individual to the state in theory and carry it out in practice?**

Athens has traditionally been regarded as the most perfect example of direct democracy, that is the personal involvement of all citizens in the running of their own state, as opposed to our form which is representative democracy. Pericles summed up that concept, according to Thucydides, in his Funeral Oration spoken over the dead soldiers at the end of the first year of the Peloponnesian War in 430 B.C.

“It is true that we are called a democracy, for the administration is in the hands of the many and not of the few. But while the law secures equal justice to all... the claim of excellence is also recognized, and when a citizen is in any way distinguished, he is preferred to the public service, not as a matter of privilege but as the reward of merit. Neither is poverty a bar, but a man may benefit his country whatever be the obscurity of his condition... We alone regard a man who takes no interest in public affairs, not as harmless but as a useless character....

So how did Athens achieve this desirable form of government? Ironically, it was the work of three leaders who were called in to remedy economic and social grievances tearing Athenian society apart.

Solon was the first, chosen in 594 B.C. Many peasants held their land as sharecroppers and could be sold into slavery for not producing what was owing, or for personal debts. As a result there was widespread demand for the end of sharecropping, for redistribution of the land, for cancellation of debts, and for the freeing of persons sold into slavery for debt. Solon canceled all debts and all mortgages on land, freed those in slavery for debt, and even bought back from abroad those sold into debt slavery there. Having restored the freedom of the peasantry of Attica, he set about making a constitution that would curb the political power of the aristocrats. He divided the population of citizens into four classes according to wealth. He permitted all citizens to take part in the assembly. Even the poorest were given the right to take part in the juries.

Fortunate in the mediation of Solon, Athens was even luckier in its so-called "tyrants", Pisistratus and his son Cleisthenes, whose rule began in 546 B.C.

Pisistratus allowed the existing constitutional machinery to go on working, intervening only when necessary to make his own policies respected. In a period of calm, the Athenians got used to running the machinery of government that Solon had created. The continuing grievances of the poor farmers were partially removed by grants to them of state lands and of estates confiscated from disloyal aristocrats. Farmers in trouble were granted loans. Above all, he and his son set out to make the Athenians proud of their own state. Health within the

city of Athens was improved by provision of a good supply of clean water. Religion was used to cement loyalty to the state. Athena's head and her owl appeared on the coinage of Athens, which soon became the most important currency of the eastern Mediterranean region. Athena was glorified by the embellishment of Athena's temple on the Acropolis, and the Acropolis was turned into the shrine of the city. Thus, under Pisistratus, music, drama, and poetry became Athenian institutions, open to the whole body of the citizens. By the end of the tyranny the average Athenian had the protection of a law code and a constitution requiring his participation while, at the same time, the growing physical beauty of the city was strengthening his emotional identification with the well being of the city.

In 510 B. C. Cleisthenes carried out a new remodeling of the Athenian constitution, which gave the city the system of direct democracy that lasted throughout its period of greatest achievement in the fifth century. Cleisthenes made the unit of local government the *deme* which was the equivalent of a village or city ward and of which there were about one hundred and seventy in Attica. He then divided Attica into three areas—the city, the inland, and the coast—and formed ten completely new tribes, each composed of demes from all three new divisions. The tribe was now composed of citizens of all parts of Attica, who came to feel a new loyalty to their country as a whole.

All Athenian citizens, who numbered between twelve and twenty thousand, were eligible to sit in the Assembly, or *ecclesia*, which met about forty times a year and was the supreme legislative and judicial body. Anyone could speak who

could make the others listen, and proceedings were frequently emotional, tempestuous, and chaotic.

The business of the Assembly was prepared by the Council of Five Hundred, or *boulē*, whose members were chosen by lot from the ten tribes. The Council members served in groups of fifty, called *prytanies*, for one tenth of the year, maintaining a permanent executive between full meetings of the Council. Juries, which numbered from 101 to 1001 members, were also chosen by lot from a list volunteers from the assembly, while magistrates were elected from the whole assembly and reported back to it at the end of their term of office. Thus, because of the use of election by lot, the majority of citizens would have served in the Council and been directly responsible for the local administration of the city. The only position where strong leadership could be perpetuated was the office of general. The ten generals were elected annually for their competence, a test that applied in no other office in the Athenian state. It was as general that Pericles was able to guide Athenian policy for more than thirty years.

This system worked because it was in harmony with the economic and social structure of Athens. The Athenian population numbered between two hundred and two hundred fifty thousand, of which one third were slaves and one-tenth resident aliens. The aliens, who were not allowed to own land but were still liable for taxes and military service, took care of a large part of the city's commerce and banking. Slaves worked beside Athenians in most other occupations, and there was never a fear in Athens, as there was in Sparta and later Rome, of slave revolt or indeed of excessive reliance on slave labor. The majority of the citizens were independent small farmers,

With the help of two or three slaves, they could feed their families and share in a small way in the export of oil and wine. The citizens who lived in Athens itself tended either to be larger landowners, who could afford to leave a bailiff to manage their estates, or tradesmen and artisans who made and sold the staple items of the Athenian export trade in manufactures. Among the citizens of Athens, therefore, division by wealth did obtain, but the poorer citizen felt a sense of social independence from the wealthier, since his livelihood was derived from his own farm or trade. This feeling was the essential basis of the system of direct democracy, in which all citizens met on equal terms in the assemblies and the juries.

In addition, all citizens and resident aliens were required to do military service. The landed aristocrats, wealthy enough to own horses, formed the cavalry. Sometime during the seventh century B. C., however, a great change had taken place in military technique, which had significant social and political consequences. The new technique was to arm the slightly less prosperous or richer farmers, as soldiers called hoplites, in breastplates and helmets of heavy armor, with large strong shields and spears about nine feet long. This infantry formation, called the phalanx, was a more effective force than the cavalry, and was the mainstay of the army. This was the force that defeated the Persian invasions in 490-479 B.C. and ushered in the Golden Age of Athens, the Pentekontaetia, or "the time of fifty years," which ended with the Peloponnesian War that began in 431 B.C.

In spite of the achievements of that period, there was a contrast, which thoughtful Athenians recognized and many deplored, between their ideal of Athens and the material

realities of its social and political life. No one was more sensitive than Pericles, to the glaring irony of the coexistence of one Athens of the Acropolis and drama festivals and democratic assemblies, and another Athens of imperialist expansion and political demagoguery and war profiteering. This seeming contradiction between superb achievements of the human intellect and the continuance of social injustice and political self seeking was recognized by Pericles as a problem of the utmost importance. In a way that Plato would expand later in his theory of ideas, it took the greatness of Pericles to remind the Athenians that it was the pursuit of their ideal city, a city that did not yet exist, except in their vision of what a perfect city should be, that mattered, and that without seeking that ideal the rest of the city's activities would degenerate into individual self seeking. The true wellbeing of the individual Athenian citizen, he constantly urged, lay in the pursuit of that ideal city.

#### **.4) How did the city spend its wealth?**

Let us take Paris in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as an example of how a Baroque city spent its wealth. So the analysis must begin with WHO was spending that wealth.

The most important function of the Baroque city was to be the residence of the ruler and that small group of the upper classes that formed the court. It therefore required a palace or palaces and a large number of palatial houses in fairly close proximity. The palace served a kind of psychological function, impressing on the masses their inferiority by the contrast of their own homes with that of the sovereign and emphasizing



by physical separation their remoteness from political decision making. Even before King Louis XIV moved the government to Versailles in 1682, he had made several important additions to the old royal palace, the Louvre. He added a massive east facade which has a ground floor so plain and forbidding that few would be attracted to approach it. In the Louvre Palace itself, he added the Gallery of Apollo, a superb hall that foreshadowed the Hall of Mirrors in Versailles. He also constructed a long avenue leading from the Louvre, in pure baroque style, to create a distant perspective which was called the Grand Cours but which would from 1709 be re-named the Champs Elysées.

The palace also accommodated the bureaucrats who actually exercised the power of government, and if the palace became insufficiently large for the growing horde of middle class administrators required by the centralizing monarchs, special government ministries were erected nearby. The idea of a governmental section of town, devoted solely to office buildings, was born with the baroque city.

The presence of the court required large numbers of houses for the aristocracy, built on a splendid enough scale for them to entertain each other. French nobles demanded a townhouse separated from its neighbors by high walls, with an inner court surrounded by stables and offices, and frequently a broad garden behind the house. There was a large market for these houses in Paris because hundreds of middle class families had bought their way into the nobility by purchase of offices, and they were beginning to entertain, most notably in the salons presided over by their wives, to ensure their acceptance as gentlemen. The demand for townhouses

inspired one of the most sumptuous examples of real estate speculation in Paris when a group of engineers, in return for building a bridge, was given the right to drain the two little islands upstream from the Ile de la Cité and to sell off the resultant building lots. In a short time, the Ile Saint Louis became the favored quarter for nobles and lawyers,.

The upper nobility mostly abandoned Versailles and returned to Paris during the reigns of Louis XV and Louis XVI, and new districts like Faubourg Saint Germain were created to house them. Among the mansions was the Hotel Biron, now the Rodin Museum; the Palais Matignon, the residence of the Prime Minister ; and the Palais de Salm, now the Palace of the Legion of Honor in Paris and copied in San Francisco.

The army accompanied the monarch into the city as the insurance of his power. The army required a fortified building or area as a center of operations in times of rebellion, and as a position from which it could retake the city, a place that would symbolize to the citizens the power of the monarch. In Paris the Bastille remained the symbol of royal power, but to prepare for the increasingly technological advances in warfare, Paris created the Ecole Militaire, designed by the architect Gabriel, and the nearby gardens were transformed into a parade ground called the Champ de Mars, where the Eiffel Tower now stands. Louis XIV's four, ever longer wars created the need for a Hotel des Invalides, which originally housed six thousand invalid soldiers.

The economic function of the city, even of those primarily administrative capitals, remained important.. The Paris stock exchange or Bourse was founded in 1724 , on the right bank

+of the Seine, while the banks settled in the Marais district when the nobles moved away from there to the Faubourg Saint Germain. From that time, the trading and banking functions of Paris were located on the right bank.

Finally, the requirements of religion had to be met. At one extreme were churches deliberately conceived as the physical expression of great religious movements. In Paris the Catholic Reformation inspired some of the most impressive building programs for churches, monasteries, and nunneries in Europe. The leader of the revival of Catholic fervor in Paris was the great preacher St. François de Sales, who persuaded a number of French noblewomen to found new or radically reformed orders. Madame Acarie, a beautiful, wealthy widow who underwent mystical trances, was encouraged to found French houses for the order of Carmelites, which St. Teresa had begun in Spain. St. François then urged Ste. Jeanne de Chantel to begin the Order of the Visitation as one of the most humane orders of nuns, open to the old and the infirm and even to those uncertain of their vocation. Their lovely convent, built by Francois Mansart, accepted women from every rank of French society, and established a pattern of convent life sharply opposed to the austerity of the Carmelites. The most magnificent ensemble of all, the nunnery of Val de Grâce, was founded by Anne of Austria, the mother of Louis XIV, for aristocratic nuns with whom she liked to pray.

After 1650, many of the churches erected in Paris served less exclusively religious purposes. The splendid domed church of the Invalides in Paris is, as its name suggests, attached to the military hospital, while the great Pantheon, originally the Church of Sainte Geneviève, became a repository

for the ashes of the great men (later also women) of France in 1791.

Thus the urban planners had to provide for the requirements of a royal court and aristocracy, a well to do commercial bourgeoisie, a large military class, and the church.. They presupposed the existence of a large laboring class, but they made very little provision for it.

### **5) What were the city's unique cultural achievements?**

I would like to take the example of Vienna. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, Vienna was the music capital of Europe. How did it achieve this position?

Many factors strengthened Vienna's interest in great music. The patronage of the Habsburg family for many generations was probably the most important of all. The founder of the dynasty, Rudolf of Habsburg, was a friend of the medieval troubadours. By the sixteenth century, there was a large court orchestra and choir, and from the seventeenth century almost every emperor was not only a proficient musician but a composer as well. Queen Marie Antoinette had lessons from Gluck before her marriage to the dauphin of France. Both Gluck and Mozart were appointed to the position of Royal and Imperial Court Composer .

The great aristocrats followed the musical example of the Habsburgs, maintaining their own orchestras and employing their own Kapellmeister, or resident musician. The most famous example was the Esterhazy family, at whose estate forty miles from Vienna, Haydn spent thirty years in uninterrupted intellectual growth. All the great families, such

as the Lobkowitz, the Starhemberg, and the Schwarzenberg, gave entertainments at which the symphonies and concertos of composers :in their employment were performed. Beethoven's powers of improvisation, one of Vienna's favorite diversions, took him into the palace of Prince Lichnowsky. From 1780s, many Viennese women were opening salons that offered not only sparkling conversation but musical performances of the highest quality. By the early nineteenth century, Vienna's salons rivaled the aristocratic palaces as artistic homes for the city's composers.

As aristocratic patronage declined in the early nineteenth century, the middle classes became increasingly important as patrons, through attendance at public concerts , like those of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, founded in 1842, at opera performances, and the purchase of sheet music.

Yet it was also significant that throughout Austrian society, from the country towns to the court, there existed the habit of not merely listening to but also performing music. In the 1770s the English musical writer Charles Burney commented over and over on the counterpoint singing of students in his inn, of glees sung by soldiers on guard, and especially of the music teachers in the provincial towns.

Vienna's patronage thus encouraged the influx of musicians from all over Europe. These musicians learned from each other and thereby increased the overall quality of Viennese music. Perhaps the most out-standing example was the relationship of Haydn and Mozart, from which Haydn, twenty-four years the senior, may have profited most. Beethoven arrived in Vienna in 1792 to study with Haydn, but, impatient from the start, he soon became the teacher himself. Beethoven

taught Czerny, Schubert studied with the court composer Salieri, and so on.

Vienna, however, acted as a fuser of musical styles in a far broader sense, owing to its geographical and cultural position as the meeting place of the Germanic and Italian worlds. With the visit in 1618 of the first Italian opera company, Viennese music was dominated for a century and a half by the Italian pursuit of melody, both in the voice and the orchestra. It was the Viennese Gluck who brought this style of opera to perfection in the 1760s with his operas *Orfeo* and *Alceste*.

The orchestras improved in parallel with the development of opera for both technical and stylistic reasons, and this too was essential preparation for Vienna's classical age. The harpsichord was replaced by the pianoforte, which was invented in 1709 in Italy but in Vienna was replaced by what came to be called the Vienna Piano, invented by Stein in Augsburg but brought to Vienna by Mozart. Most important, however, was the development of the orchestral stringed instruments. The production of the violin and other instruments of the same family, the viola and the violoncello, was brought to perfection in Cremona by such craftsmen as Stradivari and Guarneri, both of whom were living in the Austrian empire for a major part of their lives. By the time of Haydn, the stringed and wind instruments had all been developed so that their combination in the form of the modern orchestra had been reached. The form in which the Viennese composers achieved their greatest writing for the orchestra was the symphony. Mozart carried on from the achievement of Haydn's 104 symphonies. And it was of course Beethoven who

made the symphony the supreme expression of human greatness and human loneliness.

Meanwhile the Viennese middle classes had gone off into the gentle Romanticism of what is called the Biedermeier age. The attitude was a natural reaction to the strain of the years of war with Napoleon. The Viennese withdrew into the family circle. In the evening the daughters played the piano or a group of friends sang from newly printed song sheets. Many of Schubert's songs were written for groups like these. And the greatest escapism of all was the waltz. Soon all the composers, including Haydn, Mozart, and even Beethoven, were being called on to write dances for the balls in the Hofburg and at Schönbrunn. In the post-1815 period, Schubert, writing slow, regular waltzes for dances in the open-air taverns of the Vienna woods or for winter parties in the homes of his friends, created one of the finest of Biedermeier forms—warm, pure, rustic, and immediately intelligible. In the 1830s, the dance orchestras became far more elaborate with the enormous success of Josef Lanner and Johann Strauss the Elder. Strauss became the demon king of the waltz, frenzied, exotic, irresistible. Lanner and Strauss became the chief tourist attractions of Vienna until 1844, when Strauss's son and namesake formed his own orchestra and began to compose the most popular waltzes of all.

Behind the scenes of Biedermeler revelry was the constant presence of the secret police. No absolutism has ever succeeded like the Viennese because no other has persuaded its citizens that spontaneous enjoyment is in the interests of the state. The creative urge, and even the desire for enjoyment, were channeled by the state into directions that would release

enthusiasms harmlessly. And what could be more harmless and moral than music? Metternich himself adored it. "Nothing affects me like music. I believe that after love, and above all with It, It is of all things in the world the one that makes me a better human being. Music excites and calms me at the same time. It has the same effect on me as something remembered. It takes me outside the narrow framework in which I live. My heart unfolds. It embraces at one and the same time the past, the present, and the future. Everything comes to life: trouble and enjoyment that is past, thoughts and pleasures to which I look forward with yearning. Music rouses me to gentle tears. It draws my sympathy on to myself, it does me good, and it hurts me which in itself is good." Here at least is a partial explanation as to why the age of Metternich is also the age of Beethoven, and a partial answer to the question as to how the great rebel in music, the passionate lover of human freedom, could work with the master of the Spielberg prison.

You all probably have your own suggestions for how my questions could be answered. And I welcome any disagreements or additions you have with my own Michelin classification to the world's great cities.