Princes and Townspeople: A Collection of Historical Statistics on German Territories and Cities

5: Construction Activity

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1 Introduction

This data set documents construction activity for the 2,390 cities listed in the *Deutsches Städtebuch* (Keyser et al., eds, 1939-2003). We record dates at which buildings were constructed (or rebuilt after destruction), and categorize the types of buildings.

In the following, this document sketches types and broad development of construction encountered in the Holy Roman Empire (HRE) from the Middle Ages to the beginning of Industrialization. A description of the variables follows in Section 3. Section 4 then documents how we deal with specific issues that arise in the coding process.

2 General Approach

The construction sector has held a prominent role in economic activity of the cities in the HRE. In 1800, around 10% of the manufacturing workforce were employed in construction (Henning, 1985, p. 265). For this reason, construction activity has long been used as a pre-industrial economic indicator (Lütge, 1958).[1]

[1] At the same time, the lack of reliable statistical data on construction activity has been ackowledged widely (Gömmel, 1985, p. 1).

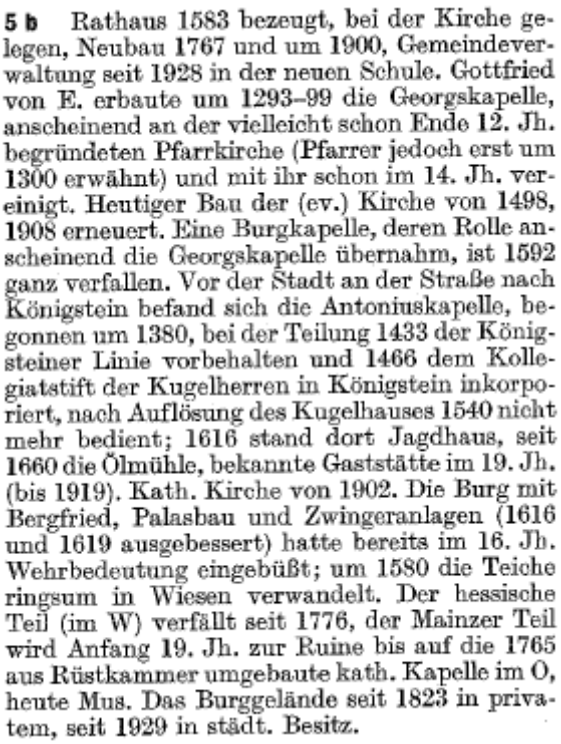
The late Middle Ages saw the "Golden Age of Manufacturing" (Gömmel, 1985, p. 7), which was interrupted in the first half of the 16th century. The late parts of the century saw substantial economic growth until the onset of the Thirty Years' War. From this substantial depression, economic activity only slowly recovered and from the second quarter of the 18th century until the onset of Industrialization declined again (Gömmel, 1985, p. 7 ff.), a development that was accelerated by the heavy war activity of the period.

To discern trends also implies discerning building categories. The Middle Ages were shaped the construction of religious buildings. At the turn to the Early Modern Era, secular buildings played the more prominent role (Gömmel, 1985, p. 1); this turn was especially strong in Protestant territories (Cantoni et al., 2018). Town halls manifested increased city power, as did burghers' representative town houses (Kellenbenz, 1977, p. 256). In addition to new construction, rebuilding and extensions played a central role (Kellenbenz, 1977, p. 256). In addition to building categories, building styles changed over time, and stone was increasingly favored over wood as building material (Gömmel, 1985, p. 1).

The base of our dataset are the cities listed in the *Städtebuch*. For each city, article 5 in the *Städtebuch* entry contains information on construction events in that city. Examples of article 5 are shown in Figure 1 and 2 for both the postwar and prewar editions, respectively. This data does not contain information about city fortifications, which will be released in a separate data set.

3 Description of the Variables

city_id Unique identifier of each city, clustered by *Städtebuch* volume.



5 b Rathaus 1583 bezeugt, bei der Kirche gelegen, Neubau 1767 und um 1900, Gemeindeverwaltung seit 1928 in der neuen Schule. Gottfried von E. erbaute um 1293–99 die Georgskapelle, anscheinend an der vielleicht schon Ende 12. Jh. begründeten Pfarrkirche (Pfarrer jedoch erst um 1300 erwähnt) und mit ihr schon im 14. Jh. vereinigt. Heutiger Bau der (ev.) Kirche von 1498, 1908 erneuert. Eine Burgkapelle, deren Rolle anscheinend die Georgskapelle übernahm, ist 1592 ganz verfallen. Vor der Stadt an der Straße nach Königstein befand sich die Antoniuskapelle, begonnen um 1380, bei der Teilung 1433 der Königsteiner Linie vorbehalten und 1466 dem Kollegiatstift der Kugelherren in Königstein inkorporiert, nach Auflösung des Kugelhauses 1540 nicht mehr bedient; 1616 stand dort Jagdhaus, seit 1660 die Ölmühle, bekannte Gaststätte im 19. Jh. (bis 1919). Kath. Kirche von 1902. Die Burg mit Bergfried, Palasbau und Zwingeranlagen (1616 und 1619 ausgebessert) hatte bereits im 16. Jh. Wehrbedeutung eingebüßt; um 1580 die Teiche ringsum in Wiesen verwandelt. Der hessische Teil (im W) verfällt seit 1776, der Mainzer Teil wird Anfang 19. Jh. zur Ruine bis auf die 1765 aus Rüstkammer umgebaute kath. Kapelle im O, heute Mus. Das Burggelände seit 1823 in privatem, seit 1929 in städt. Besitz.

Figure 1: Eppstein (Revised Edition)

comment Relevant excerpt of entry 5b in the *Städtebuch*.

time_point Year corresponding to the documented construction event.

building This column contains the type of building that was recorded. A list of all types is included below.

1 Church: churches, chapels, extensions of other buildings with chapels, churches of monasteries

2 Monastery: monasteries

3 Clerical: parsonages, 'Beginenhaus', church administration, graveyards, deaneries

4 Administrative: courts, regional administration, prisons, customs

5 Town hall: town halls

6 Economic: pharmacies, mills, restaurants, hotels, pensions, breweries, wineries, storages, factories, manufactories, guilds' houses

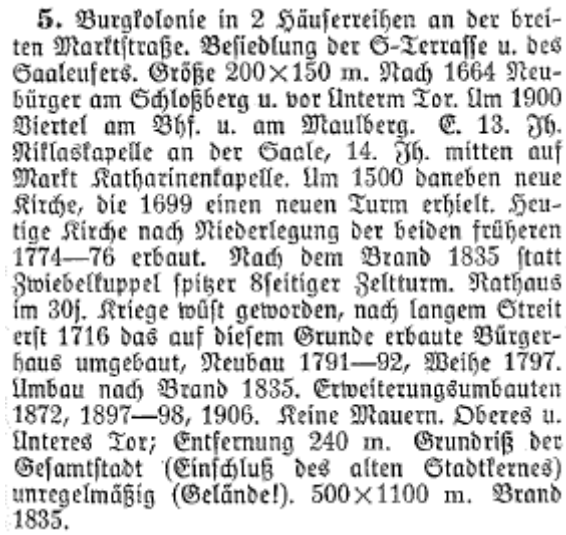
7 Mall: malls, exchanges

8 Infrastructure: bridges, streets, fountains, channels

9 Private: palaces of noble families, notable citizens' houses

10 Military: Barracks, stables, arsenals

11 Palace: representative castles, hunting lodges, moated castles



5. Burgkolonie in 2 Häuserreihen an der breiten Marktstraße. Besiedlung der S-Terrasse u. des Saaleufers. Größe 200×150 m. Nach 1664 Neubürger am Schloßberg u. vor Unterm Tor. Um 1900 Viertel am Bhf. u. am Maulberg. E. 13. Jh. Niklaskapelle an der Saale, 14. Jh. mitten auf Markt Katharinenkapelle. Um 1500 daneben neue Kirche, die 1699 einen neuen Turm erhielt. Heutige Kirche nach Niederlegung der beiden früheren 1774—76 erbaut. Nach dem Brand 1835 statt Zwiebelkuppel spitzer 8seitiger Zelltturm. Rathaus im 30j. Kriege wüst geworden, nach langem Streit erst 1716 das auf diesem Grunde erbaute Bürgerhaus umgebaut, Neubau 1791—92, Weihe 1797. Umbau nach Brand 1835. Erweiterungsumbauten 1872, 1897—98, 1906. Keine Mauern. Oberes u. Unteres Tor; Entfernung 240 m. Grundriß der Gesamtstadt (Einschluß des alten Stadtkernes) unregelmäßig (Gelände!). 500×1100 m. Brand 1835.

Figure 2: Hirschberg (Saale) (Original Edition)

12 Castle: castles (fortifications)

13 Social: baths, hospitals, homes for sick, homes for the elderly, orphanages

14 Education: schools, universities, colleges

15 Culture: theaters, libraries, archives, operas

16 Other: memorials, gardens, parcs

buildgen Broader categories of building type.

1 Clerical: churches, monasteries, other clerical buildings

2 Administrative: town halls and other administrative buildings

3 Economic: malls and other economic buildings

4 Private, representative: private houses and representative buildings

5 Military: castles, fortresses and other military buildings

6 Social, welfare: buildings with social, educational or cultural purpose

7 Other: infrastructure, miscalleneous buildings

newbuild Indicates if the recorded construction activity was an entirely new building or a modification to an already existing building.

0 The construction activity in question was a repair or an extension to an already existing building

1 An entirely new building was erected

uncertainty Indicator if the date is described as “at the earliest” or “at the latest”.

0 This date is accurate.

1 The date is referred to as “at the earliest”.

2 The date is referred to as "at the latest".

range The degree of imprecision in time_point:

0 Date is accurate.

1 Date is accurate up to 5 years.

2 Date is accurate up to 25 years.

3 Date is accurate up to 50 years.

4 Date is accurate up to 100 years.

5 Date is not accurate.

4 Specific Issues

Inaccurate Dates In case multiple dates or textual ambiguity, we chose the earliest possible date. Recurring cases are:

- "Beginning of the century": Set time_point =XX00 and range $= 3$.
- "Mid-century": Set time_point =XX50 and range $= 2$.
- "End of the Century": Set time_point =XX75 and range $= 2$.
- "Middle Ages": Set time_point $= 1500$ and uncertainty $= 2$.

5 Contents of the Data Package

construction.csv Data on construction activity for *Städtebuch* cities.

6 Collaborators

Data collection Tillman von Carnap-Bornheim, Florian Döbler, Maximilian Höfl, Matthias Mall (all LMU)

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References

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