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978-0-521-12415-7 - City Walls: The Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective

Edited by James D. Tracy

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## CITY WALLS

### The Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective

The essays presented in this volume describe a phenomenon so widespread in human time and space that its importance is easily overlooked. City walls shaped the history of warfare; the mobilization of manpower and resources needed to build them favored some kinds of polities over others; and their massive strength, appropriately ornamented, created a visual language of authority. Previous collective volumes on the subject have dealt mainly with Europe, but the historians and art historians who collaborate here follow a comparative agenda. The millennial practice of wall building that branched out from the ancient Near East into India, Europe, and North Africa shows continuities and points of contact of which the makers of urban fortifications were scarcely aware; separate traditions in China, sub-Saharan Africa, and North America illustrate universal themes of defensive strategy and the symbolism of power, each time embedded in a distinctive local context.

James D. Tracy is Professor of History at the University of Minnesota. He is author of *Erasmus: The Growth of a Mind*, *Politics of Erasmus*, *A Financial Revolution in the Habsburg Netherlands*, *Holland under Habsburg Rule*, *Erasmus of the Low Countries*, and *Europe's Reformations*. He is also editor of several volumes and author of numerous academic papers, articles, and book reviews.

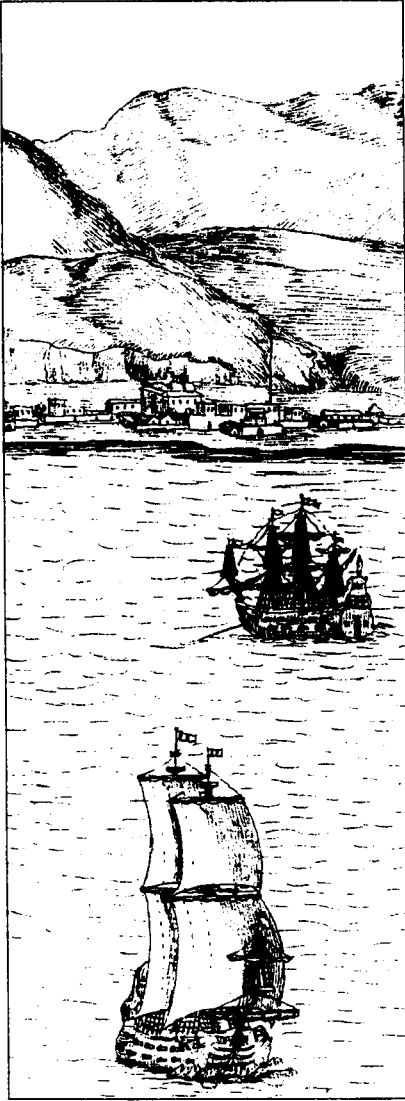
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PERSPECTIVE

*Edited by*

JAMES D. TRACY

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## Contents

List of Figures	page xi
Contributors	xvii
Acknowledgments	xix
Introduction	1
<i>James D. Tracy</i>	
<b>PART I TO WALL OR NOT TO WALL</b>	
1 Contained communities in tropical Africa	19
<i>Graham Connah</i>	
2 Palisaded settlements in prehistoric eastern North America	46
<i>George R. Milner</i>	
3 To wall or not to wall: Evidence from medieval Germany	71
<i>James D. Tracy</i>	
4 Medieval walled space: Urban development vs. defense	88
<i>Kathryn L. Reyerson</i>	
5 A world without walls: City and town in colonial Spanish America	117
<i>Richard L. Kagan</i>	
<b>PART II WALLS OF WAR</b>	
6 The fortifications of Epaminondas and the rise of the monumental Greek city	155
<i>Frederick A. Cooper</i>	

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-12415-7 - City Walls: The Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective

Edited by James D. Tracy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii	<i>Contents</i>	
7	Imperial walled cities in the West: An examination of their early medieval <i>Nachleben</i> <i>Bernard S. Bachrach</i>	192
8	Walled cities in Islamic North Africa and Egypt with particular reference to the Fatamids (909–1171) <i>Jonathan M. Bloom</i>	219
9	Delhi walled: Changing boundaries <i>Catherine B. Asher</i>	247
10	Ottoman military architecture in the early gunpowder era: A reassessment <i>Simon Pepper</i>	282
11	Walled towns during the French wars of religion (1560–1630) <i>Michael Wolfe</i>	317
12	Portuguese urban fortifications in Morocco: Borrowing, adaptation, and innovation along a military frontier <i>Martin M. Elbl</i>	349
13	The artillery fortress as an engine of European overseas expansion, 1480–1750 <i>Geoffrey Parker</i>	386
<b>PART III SIGNIFYING WALLS</b>		
14	Representations of Chinese walled cities in the pictorial and graphic arts <i>Nancy Shatzman Steinhardt</i>	419
15	The hierarchy of Ming city walls <i>Edward L. Farmer</i>	461
16	Decoration of city walls in the medieval Islamic world: The epigraphic message <i>Sheila S. Blair</i>	488
17	Medieval French representations of city and other walls <i>Wolfgang G. van Emden</i>	530
18	Siege law, siege ritual, and the symbolism of city walls in Renaissance Europe <i>Simon Pepper</i>	573

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-12415-7 - City Walls: The Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective

Edited by James D. Tracy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

	<i>Contents</i>	ix
19	Representations of the city in siege views of the seventeenth century: The war of military images and their production <i>Martha Pollak</i>	605
	Annotated bibliography of selected secondary works	647
	Index	663

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-12415-7 - City Walls: The Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective

Edited by James D. Tracy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Figures

1.1	Distribution of enclosed settlements in the text.	Page 22
1.2	Type N settlement unit at Ntsuanatsatsi, South Africa.	23
1.3	Enclosures at Bigo, Uganda.	24
1.4	Barth's 1851 plan of the walled city of Kano, Nigeria.	27
1.5	French military plan of the fortified settlement of Mourgoula, Mali, in 1881.	31
1.6	The city walls of Ife, Nigeria.	33
1.7	Earthwork enclosures in the Benin City area, Nigeria.	34
1.8	Site of the Swahili walled city of Gedi, Kenya.	37
1.9	The fortified town of Kalenga, Tanzania, in 1894.	39
2.1	Palisade segments.	56
2.2	Palisade postmold diameters (cm) for Mississippian and northern sites.	57
2.3	The distribution over time of Mississippian and northern walled settlements.	64
4.1	Medieval Montpellier.	97
4.2	Suburban Montpellier.	100
4.3	Monspessulanus, Montpellier.	110
5.1	Map of Spanish America.	120
5.2	Juan de Solórzano Pereira, "Concordia Quos Unit Munit."	134
5.3	Juan de Solórzano Pereira, "Legum Munia Urbium Mænia."	135
5.4	Map of Texúpa (Oaxaca).	143
5.5	Juan de Matienzo, Plan of a Reducción, 1567.	146
5.6	Map of Heuxutla (México). 1580.	148
5.7	Anonymous. <i>Our Lady of Cocharcas</i> .	150
6.1	Messene, plan of site and walls.	158
6.2	Messene, view of Arkadian Gate and Tower L.	159



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-12415-7 - City Walls: The Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective

Edited by James D. Tracy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xii	<i>List of figures</i>	
6.3	Gyphtokastro, Portal B.	159
6.4	Gyphtokastro, view of N wall from N.	160
6.5	Aigosthena, E wall from SE.	160
6.6	Boudoron, walls.	161
6.7	Sounion, masonry styles.	168
6.8	Sounion, earlier rubble wall encased in later isodomic construction.	168
6.9	Rhamnous, masonry styles.	170
6.10	Siphai, view of tower.	182
6.11	Siphai, view of consoles at portal.	183
6.12	Kreusis, view of tower.	184
6.13	Mantineia, plan.	187
6.14	Mantineia, detail of portals and walls.	188
6.15	Attica and Boiotia, plan of sites.	190
8.1	Map of the Mediterranean region.	220
8.2	Plan of Mahdia in the early tenth century.	221
8.3	Schematic plan of Cairo and the surrounding districts.	237
9.1	Map of Delhi's "Eight Cities."	248
9.2	Alai Darwaza, Jami (Quwwat al-Islam) Mosque Complex.	260
9.3	Map of Qila Rai Pithora, Siri, Tughluqabad, and Jahanpanah.	261
9.4	Sketch plan of Tughluqabad.	262
10.1a	Ottoman fortifications at Constantinople.	290
10.1b	Ottoman fortifications at Constantinople.	291
10.2a	Fortification plans.	291
10.2b	Fortification plans.	299
10.3a	Ottoman fortifications at the Dardanelles.	302
10.3b	Ottoman fortifications at the Dardanelles and Thessaloniki.	303
10.4	Castle of the Morea, straits of Patras, 1499–1500.	310
11.1	Map of fortified towns.	319
11.2	Montauban's fortifications in 1621.	330
11.3	Montauban 1585–6. Bastion construction at Portes de Campagne and de Moustier.	334
11.4	Montauban 1585–6. Bastion construction at the Portes de Campagne and de Moustier.	334
11.5	Siege of Amiens. 3 April 1597.	342
11.6	Arc de triomphe sur la magnificence du Roy.	343
11.7	La justice et la clemence sont agenouillées.	344
12.1	Morocco in the early sixteenth century.	351

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-12415-7 - City Walls: The Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective

Edited by James D. Tracy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

	<i>List of figures</i>	xiii
12.2	Perspective model of Muslim and Portuguese Ceuta, fifteenth–sixteenth centuries.	359
12.3	Perspective model of the fortifications of Tangier, fifteenth–early sixteenth centuries.	362
12.4	Perspective model of the fortifications of Alcácer Ceguer, fifteenth–sixteenth centuries.	363
12.5	The Manueline <i>torrião</i> of the Kechla, in the <i>qasba</i> of Safi.	371
12.6	The Manueline <i>torrião</i> at Azemmur (ca. 1515).	375
12.7	The Muralla Real and the Foso de San Felipe, Ceuta, with orillioned bastion.	383
13.1	The development of modern fortifications in Europe.	390
13.2	The Renaissance-style fortifications around Makassar.	413
14.1	Remains of wall of Liao Shangjing, Balinzuoqi, Inner Mongolia.	420
14.2	City in North China.	422
14.3	<i>Zhaoyu tu</i> . Tomb of King Cuo, Zhongshan kingdom, Pingshan, Hebei.	423
14.4	Redrawing of “Walled Enclosure.” Mawangdui tomb no. 3, Hunan.	425
14.5	“Lishicheng” detail. Tomb at Helinge’er, Inner Mongolia.	427
14.6	“Fanyangcheng” detail. Tomb at Helinge’er, Inner Mongolia.	428
14.7	“Wangcheng” (ruler’s city).	433
14.8	Idealized plan of Northern Song capital, Bianliang. <i>Shilin guangji</i> .	433
14.9	Painting showing “fortification.” Detail of north wall, Dingjiazha tomb no. 5, Jiuquan, Gansu.	434
14.10	“Shooting Birds.” Brick from tomb in Jiayuguan, Gansu province.	435
14.11	Line drawing of city wall. Mogao cave 257, Gansu, Northern Dynasties (386–581).	436
14.12	“City Scene,” Relief sculpture from tomb in Chengdu, Sichuan province Eastern Han dynasty (A.D. 23–220).	437
14.13	Line drawing of city wall. Mogao cave 249, Gansu, Northern Dynasties.	438
14.14	Architecture and walls in panorama. South side of ceiling, Mogao cave 420, Gansu province.	440
14.15	Line drawing of walled city. Mogao cave 85, Gansu, Tang period.	441

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-12415-7 - City Walls: The Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective

Edited by James D. Tracy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xiv	<i>List of figures</i>	
14.16	Line drawing of Buddhist paradise, Magao cave 217, Tang dynasty.	443
14.17	“Jetavana Monastery.” Daoxuan, <i>Zhong Tianzhu Sheweiguo Zhihuasi tujing</i> .	445
14.18	Line drawing of <i>Houtu huangdi qinmiao ziangtu</i> (Earthgod temple) stele.	446
14.19	“Datong city.” <i>Datongxian zhi</i> , juan 1; A.D. 1830.	447
14.20	Illustration of city wall with towers and of <i>mamian</i> , ca. 1040.	448
14.21	Wall of Xi’an, Shaanxi province, Ming period.	449
14.22	Line drawing of <i>Pingjiang tu</i> .	450
14.23	Zhang Zeduan, <i>Qingming shanghe tu</i> , detail.	453
14.24	Anonymous, <i>Zhao Yu’s Pacification of the Barbarians South of Lu</i> , detail.	455
14.25	Wang Zhenpeng, “The Dragon Boat Regatta on Qingming Lake.”	456
14.26	Shen Zhou, <i>Tiger-Flight Spring at the Back Gate</i> , Chinese, Ming dynasty.	459
15.1	Guanghua <i>xian</i> (Huguang).	469
15.2	Xuzhou (Henan).	471
15.3	Daming <i>fu</i> (Beizhili).	473
15.4	Kaifeng (Henan).	474
15.5	Zhangyuan <i>xian</i> (Beizhili).	475
15.6	Nanjing, the southern capital.	476
15.7	The Capital, Ming Beijing.	477
15.8	Zhenyi <i>bao</i> (Liaodong).	481
15.9	Ningxia (Shaanxi).	482
15.10	Zhucheng <i>xian</i> (Shandong).	483
15.11	Haizhou (Nanzhili).	484
15.12	Yunyan <i>xian</i> (Sichuan).	485
16.1	Map of the Jazira showing the location of Amid/Diyarbekir.	491
16.2	Plan of the walls of Diyarbekir.	492
16.3	Diyarbekir, view of the Kharput Gate.	493
16.4	Diyarbekir, detail of tower LVI.	498
16.5	Diyarbekir, detail of tower XXX.	504
16.6	Cairo, Bab al-Nasr.	508
16.7	Diyarbekir, tower XXXIX known as the Yedi Kardaş.	513
17.1	Town wall at Autun.	531
17.2	Semur-en-Auxois.	535
17.3	Château Gaillard.	538
17.4	Carcassone (citadel).	541

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-12415-7 - City Walls: The Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective

Edited by James D. Tracy

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*List of figures*

xv

17.5	Fougères.	560
17.6	Trévoux.	561
19.1	Siege of Vienna, 1529.	629
19.2	Siege of Vienna, 1683.	629
19.3	Battle of Pavia, 1525, woodcut.	630
19.4	Battle of Pavia, 1525, tapestry.	630
19.5	Conquest of Tunis by Emperor Charles V, 1535.	631
19.6	The Imperial camp outside Wittenberg, 1547, woodcut.	631
19.7	Siege of St. Quentin, 1557, woodcut.	632
19.8	Siege of Hohenaspern, 1519.	632
19.9	Siege of Amiens, 1597.	633
19.10	The conquest of Montmellian, 1691.	633
19.11	Siege of Ostend, 1601–4.	634
19.12	Siege of Groll, 1597.	634
19.13	Siege of Groll, 1627.	635
19.14	Siege of Breda, 1625.	635
19.15	Siege of La Rochelle, 1627.	636
19.16	Siege of St. Omer, 1638.	638
19.17	Siege of Casale Monferrato, 1630.	638
19.18	The entry of the King of Sweden into Frankfurt, 1631.	639
19.19	Victories of Marchese Spinola in Germany, 1620–1.	639
19.20	Siege of Corbie, 1636.	640
19.21	Siege of Turin, 1640.	641
19.22	Siege of Turin, 1640.	641
19.23	Siege of Copenhagen, 1658.	642
19.24	Assault of Fredrichsodde, 1657.	642
19.25	Siege of Lille, 1708.	643
19.26	Siege of Luxembourg, 1684.	644
19.27	Portrait of Louis XIV, 1684.	645
19.28	Siege of Mons, 1691.	646

Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-12415-7 - City Walls: The Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective  
Edited by James D. Tracy  
Frontmatter  
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978-0-521-12415-7 - City Walls: The Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

xviii

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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James D. Tracy,  
*Director, Center for Early Modern History*