

Urban History, 45, 2 (2018) © Cambridge University Press 2018
doi:[10.1017/S096392681800007X](https://doi.org/10.1017/S096392681800007X)

Review of periodical articles

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Pre-1500

Historians are held hostage by the sources that are available to them, and for that reason, the historiography of medieval towns is dominated by research on thirteenth-, fourteenth- or fifteenth-century case-studies. In preceding centuries, literacy was largely the monopoly of ecclesiastical milieus, who were often hostile or simply not interested in describing the urban settlements which then emerged all over Europe. An interesting exception, however, is the Breton town of Redon, which took shape around an abbey that was established in 832 with support of the Carolingian Emperor Louis the Pious. By navigating the unusually extensive set of Carolingian cartularies of this abbey, as well as the available cartographic and archaeological evidence, Julien Bachelier has developed an incisive sketch of the development of a town in the shadow of the Carolingian abbey in the eleventh and twelfth centuries (*'Une ville abbatiale bretonne. Redon du IXe au XIVe siècle'*, *Histoire Urbaine*, 48 (2017), 133–54). This case-study confirms once again that the urbanization of medieval Europe was more than a side-effect of the rebirth of long-distance trade as the canonical Pirenne thesis would have it. The Redon case provides a valuable contribution to the revisionist perspective that stresses the importance of local demand from abbeys, episcopal palaces and castles as a stimulus for urban development (see esp. the seminal work of A. Verhulst, *The Rise of Cities in North-West Europe* (Cambridge, 1999)).

Another noteworthy contribution to the economy of medieval cities is Kate Staples' exploratory investigation of the 'grey markets' in Paris ('Con-artists or entrepreneurs? Fripperers and market space in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Paris', *J. of Medieval History*, 43 (2017), 228–54). Proceeding from a critical analysis of normative sources, she presents a reinterpretation of the second-hand market in clothing and similar goods, a sector that was an important arena for female labour and entrepreneurship. The result is an effective challenge to older interpretations, in which fripperers were marginal in the urban economy. Instead, they answered important needs to the burgeoning population of the French capital: as clothing was a relatively expensive commodity as opposed to labour in the pre-Plague era, the business of repairing and reselling used clothes was a necessary complement to the better-studied market segment of cloth production. This article dovetails nicely with similar research for the early modern era, and thus opens up exciting venues for long-run analysis of urban textile markets (see esp. the various contributions in J. Stobart (ed.), *Selling Textiles in the Long Eighteenth Century: Comparative Perspectives from Western Europe* (London, 2014)).

Next to the classic juxtaposition of norm and practice, economic historians are breaking new ground by rethinking the nature of the institutions that defined and redefined the normative framework. An interesting application of this New Institutional Economics paradigm is the reassessment by Justyna Wubs-Mrozewicz of the Hansa, a late medieval trade federation that included c. 200 towns in the Baltic and North Sea area. The central claim is that, apart from other, better-studied commercial and political assets, the Hanse mattered to its members because it allowed for the articulation and implementation of a relatively efficient and impartial mechanism for conflict resolution that largely revolved around arbitration and mediation, rather than costly and time-consuming court settlements. Even if disputes over deals, both within the Hanse as with external partners, were rather rare, the Hanse mattered because it provided merchants with a framework for dispute settlement to which all involved parties could agree, thus lowering the threshold to engage in commercial ventures. An extremely similar argument has been developed by Mika Kallioinen, who focuses on the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century evidence for Finnish towns and their main trading partners (e.g. Gdansk or Stockholm). The correspondence of its traders provides an empirical complement to the evidence of Wubs-Mrozewicz, which is more geared towards records from German and Netherlandish towns, and reveals the crucial role of urban governments in setting up 'the rules of the game' (J. Wubs-Mrozewicz, 'The late medieval and early modern Hanse as an institution of conflict management', *Continuity and Change*, 32 (2017), 59–84; and M. Kallioinen, 'Inter-communal institutions in medieval trade', *Economic History R.*, 70 (2017), 1131–52).

Economic historians thus attach an increasing importance to the role of urban elites and urban government, and recent scholarship suggests that political historians are answering their call by investigating the composition of urban government, as well as the expectations that urban communities had from their rulers. The rapprochement between economic history and political history is best illustrated by George Dameron's incisive analysis of Firenze, San Gimignano and Luca. Proceeding from Amartya Sen's claim that most food crises are not so much rooted in underproduction as in socially skewed distributions of food resources within a community, Dameron convincingly argues that the emergence of urban republics in Tuscany largely revolved on the capacity of newly emerging bourgeois elites (the so-called *popolo*) to manage the town's grain supplies in ways that were satisfactory to the lower classes of those emerging city-states. Food supplies thus cemented the bond between new elites and urban society, and, consequently, the issue weighed heavily on the political agenda of city-states of centuries to come, as the subsequent territorial expansion of city-states such as Firenze (Florence) also largely revolved around meeting local demand for food security as the *conditio sine qua non* of legitimate urban rule ('Feeding the medieval Italian city-state: grain, war, and political legitimacy in Tuscany, c. 1150 – c. 1350', *Speculum*, 92 (2017), 976–1019). This approach finds a useful complement in Paolo Grillo's analysis of the changing nature of urban government in those Italian communes between 1250 and 1350. On the one hand, his investigation confirms the classic claim of, amongst others, William Bowsky, that Italian city-states were innovative in their precocious development of a police force to monitor the streets. This provided an alternative to established forms of self-help, in which repression of crime revolved on shared cultural norms about mandatory assistance in case of emergencies (the 'hue and cry' known as the 'accurruomo'). On the other hand, the article also shows the limits of that modernization paradigm in revealing that self-help survived well into the fifteenth century as a necessary complement to police forces that did not have sufficient means to impose a rule of law on the town and its hinterland ('Du cri à la patrouille: l'ordre public dans les communes italiennes (1250–1350)', *Revue Historique*, 682 (2017) 251–66).

This revision of the early history of the Italian city-states is supported by similar research for the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, a period that is traditionally imagined as the 'stable' result of the thirteenth-century rise of the commune. Connecting to recent attempts to revise this image, Marta Gravela reveals that the Piedmontese town of Turin, which came to host a university around 1500 as well as the princely court of the dukes of Savoy in the 1560s, saw a thorough restructuring of its ruling class and its prerogatives. The coalition of urbanized noblemen (magnates) and wealthy bourgeois (the 'popolo') – a typical arrangement in many city-states – was replaced in the fifteenth century by a political elite that

recruited its members among lawyers, merchants and bureaucrats that did not always have long-established or durable ties to the Turin urban community. This transition was not only a side-effect of the growing integration of Turin in a greater polity, with its own regional elite that used Turin as one of its many bases of operation, but also of a complex shift in the social and legal attitudes of elite families. As prominent dynasties were increasingly prone to opt for impartible inheritance protocols to keep the family's patrimony intact in the face of ever-greater financial responsibilities as urban magistrates, the responsibility for the biological reproduction of the family came to rest on an ever-smaller group of individuals, and, in turn, this greatly increased the rhythm with which elite families became extinct, thus making space for newcomers who often had close ties with the emergent dukes of Savoy. The extinction of the old cluster of families thus also meant the end of a distinct political milieu ('The primacy of patrimony: kinship strategies of the political elite of Turin in the late Middle Ages (1340–1490)', *Continuity and Change*, 32 (2017), 293–321).

The research interests of specialists of the Italian peninsula is mirrored by an impressive spate of studies on the heavily urbanized duchy of Brabant in the Low Countries. In his incisive study of the nobility of the rural district around Brussels, Mario Damen not only shows that many of these noblemen were committed to urban politics – just as was the case in many Italian towns – but also that the majority of those noblemen were knights, and thus high-ranking noblemen, rather than esquires, or lower-ranking noblemen, whereas in other parts of Brabant, the opposite was true. This brings into focus another similarity with the case of Turin, in that in Brussels too, the rise of strong princely states made its mark on these elites that straddled town and countryside. Brussels was the capital of the duchy, and also a favourite residence of the Valois dukes of Burgundy, who also came to rule the duchy of Brabant. The close ties with the prince, who conferred or withheld knighthood, explain the somewhat distinct profile of the Brussels nobility, although Damen is careful to stress that – just as Gravela argues for Turin – the social composition of the group was largely shaped by the choices of nobles on the marriage market, rather than by the prince ('The knighthood in and around late medieval Brussels', *J. of Medieval History*, 43 (2017), 255–84). The considerable overlap between the nobility and the Brabantine urban elites observed by Damen is expanded upon in the research of Valerie Vrancken. A close reading of the discourse of the leaders of the revolt against the duke of Brabant in 1420–21 reveals that the entanglement of rural and urban elites was mirrored in a shared set of ideas and expectations about 'the common good' and 'good governance', as well as in a repertoire of concerted political actions ('United in revolt and discourse: urban and noble perceptions of "bad government" in fifteenth-century Brabant (1420–1)', *J. of Medieval History*, 43 (2017), 579–99).

The discursive approach to Brabantine politics is closely aligned with the focus of Jelle Haemers and Chanelle Delameillieure on the contribution of women and lower-ranking social groups in the public sphere. Proceeding from the criminal records that survive for fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Mechelen, Antwerp and Leuven (the three major Brabantine towns next to Brussels), the authors intervene in the historiographical gap between medievalists who see a declining role for women in late medieval society, and early modernists who have long since recognized a substantial role for women in popular politics. The Low Countries were a region with a relative degree of freedom for women in the public sphere, and this is reflected in the sources, as women are occasionally prosecuted for insulting mayors, aldermen and so on. Haemers and Delameillieure are careful to point out that the number of incidents remains stable over time, so that the deteriorating position of women in the urban economy (female labour and entrepreneurship was progressively restricted in the 1300–1600 era) did not end the widely recognized right of women to participate in public debates about urban government. Both the form and the content of the insults and comments that women shouted at urban officials correspond closely to the political and discursive norms of the day, and repression was not so much geared at the overstepping of gender norms of what was thought to be appropriate behaviour for women as to the potential threat to the public order that such comments posed. An added bonus is the comparison with similar research for Bologna, Venice and Florence, which suggests that the leeway for political action for women was considerably greater in Netherlandish than in Italian towns, which may mirror the more independent economic position that Netherlandish women enjoyed ('Women and contentious speech in fifteenth-century Brabant', *Continuity and Change*, 32 (2017), 323–47). Comparative analysis of the differences and similarities between the heavily urbanized Italian peninsula and the Low Countries has a long history, but recent scholarship reveals that this approach still holds great promise to reveal the root causes of political, social and economic change.

Both in Italy and in the Low Countries, the rise of the state is recognized as a significant factor in the development of late medieval urban society, and, of course, that story is not limited to the impact of princely courts on the composition and stature of urban elites. The main preoccupation of princely states was with war and taxes, and its implications for urban history have also received attention in recent publications. An unusual contribution is the detailed, event-centred reconstruction of the siege of the French town of Harfleur by an English army in 1415 by Dan Spencer, which happens to be the first siege with a significant role for artillery bombardment. This makes for an interesting contribution to the long-standing debate on the 'Military Revolution' and its implications for urban society, because the experiments at Harfleur heralded great changes in urban planning: in the centuries that followed, warfare would

increasingly revolve around protracted and ever-larger sieges of urban settlements which were surrounded with increasingly extensive bulwarks, culminating in the well-known projects of Vauban and others (“‘The scourge of the stones’”: English gunpowder artillery at the siege of Harfleur’, *J. of Medieval History*, 43 (2017), 59–73).

A well-known side effect of the Military Revolution was that the costs of warfare rapidly increased so that even the wealthiest princes of Europe could only hope to remain in the game if they established increasingly extensive fiscal systems. This process has been charted in great detail for France by John Bell Henneman and other scholars, who also became increasingly attentive to the political fallout of increasing taxation for urban and rural societies. Mathieu Caesar continues this fruitful line of enquiry with a study of two episodes of unrest in two towns in the borderlands between Brittany and the Poitou. The first point of interest is that in this case, too, the revolts against royal taxation were not so much the linear result of increased fiscal pressure, but rather shaped by expectations about ‘reasonable taxation’ which were used by contemporaries as a yardstick to evaluate the actions of royal officials, just as was the case with grain supplies in the Italian city-states discussed by George Dameron. The second point of interest is that – similar to what has been observed for Italy and the Low Countries – the interactions between city dwellers and neighbouring noblemen were much more intense than is usually allowed in older scholarship that proceeded from a rigid dichotomy between town and countryside (‘Legal uncertainty, resistance to royal taxation and rural revolts in late medieval France: the case of Beauvoir-sur-Mer and Bois-de-Céné (1480)’, *J. of Medieval History*, 43 (2017), 342–58). This point was also made for England as early as 1988 by Rosemary Horrox, and it underpins Sebastian Sobcecki’s rich and amusing case-study: Sobcecki argues with great vigour that the activities and writings of the fourteenth-century gentlemen Geoffrey Chaucer and John Gower must be situated primarily in Southwark, a settlement that would eventually fuse with London, and here, too, ambivalent attitudes towards royal taxation bring to light various aspects of urban life (‘A Southwark tale: Gower, the 1381 poll tax, and Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales*’, *Speculum*, 92 (2017), 607–29).

That rural and urban elites overlapped to a considerable extent, and that they shared many assumptions about ‘good government’ and all that pertained to it, should not lead to a new fallacy, according to which historians assume that urban politics had nothing distinctive within a given polity. An important warning in this respect comes from Chris Fletcher, who carefully points out that medieval English towns, which rarely counted 10,000 inhabitants or more, had a very different political logic than that of the nobility and gentry. Barred from the rights and means to mobilize armed forces, urban politicians had to tread much more carefully as only London was a significant military power in its own right. In consequence, the contribution of English towns in the polity was more

shaped by negotiation than that of more aristocratic actors. As a corollary of this lack of military might, urban political elites also faced more internal opposition to their authority, which pushed urban governments to monitor carefully the circulation of rumours and complaints within the urban community. Fletcher's approach provides interesting similarities with the discussed article of Paolo Grillo about the 'accurruomo' in Italian city-states. The English equivalent – the so-called 'hue and cry', in which clamour was used to make public claims to solidarity and assistance to fellow townsmen, was increasingly subject to scrutiny by the mayor and aldermen. Here, too, self-help and royal justice continued to operate in a more complementary manner than earlier generations of historians liked to think, but Fletcher reveals that the interplay between these two different public order solutions was largely shaped by concerns about political stability and the vested interests of established ruling classes ('News, noise, and the nature of politics in late medieval English provincial towns', *J. of British Studies*, 56 (2017), 250–72).

The mastery over urban society is also what brings together a series of articles and reviews on the uses and conceptualizations of urban space in late medieval France. Urban governments were not only interested in monitoring the public discourse and rumours in the towns, they also actively tried to monitor urban space and its uses. On the one hand, city councils were concerned with marginalizing activities that could stain the town's honour. This is revealed in great detail in Agathe Roby's analysis of the two-year-long deliberations of the aldermen of Toulouse about the location of a new public brothel in the town after the demolition of the old brothel 'La Grande Abbaye' to make space for new city walls. The well-documented attempt to find a 'suitable spot' – i.e. not too close to a convent, a church or a school – reveals much about contemporary preoccupations of aldermen to define morality in urban societies ('De la Grande Abbaye au Château Vert. L'installation d'un nouveau bordel municipal à Toulouse au XVIe siècle', *Histoire Urbaine*, 49 (2017), 17–35).

On the other hand, urban elites also tried to develop landmarks that embodied the collective urban identity – as defined by those in power – as a rallying point for the various social groups in town. These landmarks were not only secular (e.g. belfries) but also often religious in nature. For France, much has been done in this respect by those medievalists who elaborated on André Vauchez's concept of 'civic religion' as 'a collection of religious phenomena – cultic, devotional and institutional – in which civil power plays a determining role, principally through the action of local and municipal authorities' to legitimize urban government (*La religion civique à l'époque médiévale et moderne (chrétienté et islam)* (Rome, 1995), 1–2). Yet, recent publications reveal that scholars are also moving beyond the boundaries of the paradigm. Fabienne Henryot presents an interesting alternative to Vauchez's stress on the agency of urban elites with her analysis of the Lyon cloister that hosted the last resting place

of St Bonaventure. In this case, the initiative to use the saint's cult to reinforce contemporary political arrangements did not rest with the Lyon aldermen (they only stepped in in the seventeenth century), but with the French crown, so that this particular locus of worship doubled as an ideological umbilical cord between the French crown and Lyon as the second city of the kingdom ('Les Lyonnais et saint Bonaventure (fin du XVe–XVIIIe siècles), *Revue Historique*, 682 (2017), 267–96). Next to case-studies that overturn expectations about the evolution in urban ideological practices from the local to the 'national', there is also the much broader reassessment of the concept of 'urban space' in French historiography in the mutual reviews by Dominique Iogna-Prat and Florian Mazel as the respective authors of the monographs *Cité de Dieu, cité des hommes. L'Église et l'architecture de la société, 1200–1500* (Paris, 2016), and *L'évêque et le territoire. L'invention médiévale de l'espace (Ve–XIIIe siècle)* (Paris, 2016) (both reviews are published in *Annales. Histoire. Sciences sociales*, 72 (2017), 99–107 and 109–20). Read together, both reviews present an incisive overview of the achievements and agenda for future research for scholars of the so-called 'spatial turn' for medieval urban society.

Last but certainly not least is Carla Roth's incisive essay on obscene humour in St Gallen, a town that came to belong to the Swiss Confederacy. Proceeding from the well-known *Commentationes* of Johannes Rüttinger, she not only reconstructs the cultural framework in which jokes about sex and defecation were funny to contemporaries, but she also adds an innovative twist to the burgeoning body of scholarship of the history of humour by developing a distinctly social approach to these cultural performances. Whereas older scholarship usually assumes that these jokes all fulfil a basic and immutable social function, that is, the release of frustration that stems from either aggression or desire, Roth points out that these jokes had complex social lives. They circulated in a surprisingly wide array of social contexts, ranging from the humanists gathered at the university to the textile artisans on the shop floors of many towns, and because they were tailored with great precision to each social context, they allowed the jokers not so much to vent their frustrations, but to display values that were prized in a sixteenth-century town of scholars and textile workers, namely masculinity, vigour and erudition ('Obscene humour, gender, and sociability in sixteenth-century St Gallen', *Past and Present*, 234 (2017), 39–70). This remarkable contribution is typical, I think, for the growing entanglement of social, economic, political and cultural history as the dominant trend in urban historiography as evinced in the articles published in 2017.

1500–1800

Social inequality is an important topic in academia today, particularly since the publication of Thomas Piketty's *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*.

The latest issue of *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis* looks more closely at inequality in the early modern Low Countries. In the introduction, Jutta Bolt and Wouter Ryckbosch synthesize the major studies of Kuznets, Piketty and Atkinson ('Introduction: inequality in the Low Countries', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis*, 14 (2017), 5–9). In 1955, Kuznets introduced his famous inverted U hypothesis, whereby inequality first rises and subsequently falls with growing average (per capita) income. However, Jan-Luiten van Zanden has questioned such a straightforward causal connection, as inequality in pre-industrial Holland was also rising in times of economic boom. Moreover, it has been argued that the Kuznets curve does not hold for the evolution in income and inequality in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Therefore, Bolt and Ryckbosch stress the need to gather as much historical data on inequality as possible. Krisiof Dombrecht and Wouter Ryckbosch focus on the sixteenth-century polder region – north of Bruges – to tease out a link between inequality and economic transformations ('Wealth inequality in a time of transition: coastal Flanders in the sixteenth century', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis*, 14 (2017), 63–84). Farms became much larger and more commercialized. In the long run, social inequality soared, but it was anything but a linear process. Some episodes saw a levelling of the income distribution. The trend can be explained by looking at the changing nature of wealth. From the late fifteenth century onwards, the number of households with real estate fell, while the commons were increasingly subdivided and sold to a small upper-crust of wealthy farmers, noble, clerical or urban landlords.

The causal relationship between economic growth and inequality is also questioned in Guido Alfani and Francesco Ammanati's latest article ('Long-term trends in economic inequality: the case of the Florentine state, c. 1300–1800', *Economic History R.*, 70 (2017), 1072–102). In Tuscany, social inequality decreased after the Black Death (1348–49), but it rose steadily during the early modern period. A long-term analysis is also by Ulrich Pfister, who looks at big data on prices and wages to sketch the evolution of real wages in Germany on the long run ('The timing and pattern of real wage divergence in pre-industrial Europe: evidence from Germany, c. 1500–1800', *Economic History R.*, 70 (2017), 701–29). Pfister demonstrates that the divergence happened in two stages. In the first stage, around the mid-seventeenth century, the mercantile and financial rim of the North Sea moved away from its hinterland, while in the second stage, in the early eighteenth century, Germany took a 'third way' between the booming economy of (southern) England and the stasis of Italian states. However, the evolution of commodity prices and – to a certain extent – real wages ran strikingly in parallel in these regions despite their limited market integration.

Disasters, vulnerability and resilience remain important subjects in urban history. Due to the survival of a unique source – the detailed journal

of patients of the Chester Infirmary – and a masterly combination with John Haygarth's census records, Simon Szreter has been able to produce detailed estimates of the incidence of syphilis in Chester and its rural surroundings in the late eighteenth century. These figures were compared with estimates on venereal diseases from 1911–12 ('Treatment rates for the pox in early modern England: a comparative estimate of the prevalence of syphilis in the city of Chester and its rural vicinity in the 1770s', *Continuity and Change*, 32 (2017), 183–223). Due to the peculiar symptoms, contemporaries labelled this phase of the disease as the pox. Hence, it was possible to produce age-specific estimates of the extent to which adults of each sex had been treated for the pox, by the age of 35. Apparently, a staggering 8 per cent of the population of Chester had been infected with syphilis before their 35th birthday, against barely 1 per cent in the city's rural surroundings.

Risk also looms large in Jeroen Puttevils and Marc Deloof's latest article, which analyses the extremely rare account books of an Antwerp marine insurance broker (see 'Marketing and pricing risk in marine insurance in sixteenth-century Antwerp', *J of Economic History*, 77 (2017), 796–837). In their impressive case-study, they sketch the well-functioning insurance market in mid-sixteenth century Antwerp which, both in scale and scope, could easily compete with other insurance hubs such as Venice, Genoa and Burgos. Key features were the openness of the market and the extensive mercantile liberties, which enabled even small-scale traders to turn to the insurance market, where occasional and more permanent subcontractors were active. The premium rates charged were largely determined by the underlying risk factors, which seems to indicate that those taking out insurance relied on sensible risk management strategies.

Given the current crisis of Syrian refugees (amongst others), it comes as no surprise that historical research is also heavily geared towards migration, integration and regulation in the past. In 'Comment être vénitien. Identification des immigrants et "droits d'habiter" à Venise au XVI^e siècle' (*Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, 64 (2017), 69–92) Rosa Salzberg and Claire Judde de Larivière examine how Venetian migration policy changed in the sixteenth century, when the economic and political power of the republic waned. First of all, there was a cry for more state control and regulation. For a long time, the city administration had simply relied on the *cadastre oral* – or the lore in neighbourhoods, where details on the place of origin, occupation, family situation and reputation were meticulously – yet orally – registered to identify the *forestieri* (foreigners). Inclusion and integration was primarily negotiated at the local level of neighbourhoods, streets and workshops. In the early sixteenth century, the Venetian state came up with a new set of rules to monitor the influx of migrants more closely. Keepers of *osterie* (inns) and *albergarie* (lodging houses) were forced to keep detailed registers of their customers. These lists had to be handed in at the Giustizia Nuova. In 1545,

the state tightened its grip even more by introducing the *bolletino*. Upon arrival, every foreigner had to fill in a form, regardless of the length of stay, and submit it to the proper officials. In the meantime, the concept of *forestieri* was changing radically. Even though city administrations used the term to label anyone from outside Venice, the *popolani* only used it for itinerant and unknown strangers. More settled migrants were tagged with their place of origin. In the sixteenth century, the fault line between Venetians and *forestieri* became clearer, as the government – spurred by religious motivations – forced some minorities to live within the confines of several enclaves such as the *Fonacaco dei Tedeshi* (Germans), the *Ghetto* (Jews) and the *Fondaco dei Turchi* (Muslims), where they could be monitored more efficiently.

Less successful were the efforts of the Ottoman rulers to keep the immigration of the *bekâr* – literally bachelors – at bay. In ‘Invisible city: Istanbul’s migrants and the politics of space’ (*Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 50 (2017), 173–93), Shirine Hamadeh describes how Istanbul was beleaguered by an army of thousands of male migrant workers in the eighteenth century, who swelled the ranks of the casual labourers, odd-jobbers, pedlars and beggars. Housing in particular was a matter of concern, as the *bekâr odalari* (bachelor lodging houses) not only mushroomed around commercial areas and the harbour, where their tenants were typically employed, but also thrived in the *malhalle* (residential quarters), where they were a thorn in the flesh of more settled citizens. Frequent purges and campaigns, whereby *bekâr odalari* were torn down or set ablaze by the government, were to no avail, as the shacks, hovels and barracks were eventually rebuilt. Hamadeh claims that the resilience of these migrant communities was highly dependent on their successful integration in local communities. Newcomers turned to their *odabasi* (innkeeper), *hanci* (headmaster) or employer for support, while these locals saw immigrants as a highly lucrative source of income. Connections with Janissaries and other army units were also vital, as they provided all sorts of opportunities for work in construction, transport, coffee houses and other sectors, that were beyond control of the guilds. On the other hand, the *bekâr* provided the sheer manpower – not to say cannon fodder – when Janissaries unleashed their umpteenth revolt against the sultan. Due to these power-wielding patrons, the policy of the Ottoman administration to remove the *bekârs* from even the most residential quarters of Istanbul were ultimately doomed.

In his latest article, Peter King questions the widely held assumption that migrants were singled out and treated more harshly by early modern police forces and judges (‘Immigrant communities, the police, and the courts in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century London’, *Crime, Histoire et Sociétés*, 20 (2016), 1–30). In his article, King masterly combines a qualitative *micro-storia* of one Old Bailey homicide case from 1799 with a more serial analysis of 12,000 entries from the *Newgate Calendars*. From

the evidence of accusations, verdicts and punishments, it appears that migrant communities were rarely if ever discriminated against by the judges and jurors of the Old Bailey. Foreign suspects – from Europe and other parts of the worlds, but also from Wales, Scotland and Ireland – were not necessarily treated more harshly than Londoners born and bred. Even more surprisingly, the same holds true for Jews and black people. However, there was one exception to the rule: Irish migrants were much more likely to be indicted for murders, assault and battery, riot, rape and other violent crimes than other offenders. King argues that these differences hint at some deeply entrenched prejudices against the Irish, which echoed the *communis opinio* that they were more prone to violence. It remains a moot question whether these discriminatory trials were the result of long-held prejudices or rather the outcome of recent political turmoil and – more especially – the United Irishmen Rebellion of 1798. It is beyond doubt, however, that the criminal justice system and its main officials – police, magistrates and judges – harboured some hard-nosed prejudices against Irish immigrants, even if discrimination against other ethnic groups was conspicuously absent.

Ever since Keith Luria launched his famous hypothesis, the way in which various confessional groups more or less peacefully co-existed in early modern cities has been vehemently debated. In ‘Religious conflict and civic identity: battles over the sacred landscape of Montpellier’ (*Past and Present*, 237 (2017), 53–91), Barbara Diefendorf shatters the rosy picture of Catholics and Huguenots living together in perfect harmony in Montpellier. Frequent outbursts of religious violence demonstrate that the oecumenical co-existence was but a thin veneer, while, underneath, the religious tensions festered on. Taking a spatial turn, Diefendorf maps the recurring conflicts, whereby space was symbolically marked as sacred by the consecration of churches, processions and other powerful rituals, but also fiercely contested through bouts of iconoclasm. Sacred space – both for Catholics and Protestants – served as a constant and bitter reminder of old enmities, which, even in times of peaceful co-existence, sparked off mutual antagonism. Militant Huguenots razed the Catholic churches and monasteries when they came to power after the Edict of Nantes (1598) turned them into Protestant temples, sabotaged – or even banned – processions and removed the *Magestat antiqua* (Black Madonna) from the city seal. When royal power was restored after 1622, Catholics reclaimed their sacred space by organizing processions, building new churches, erecting crosses and – ultimately – by pulling down the Protestant Grand Temple in 1682.

Religious co-existence – or rather the sheer lack of it – is also an issue in Max Deardorff’s ‘The ties that bind: intermarriage between Moriscos and Old Christians in early modern Spain, 1526–1614’, *J. of Family History*, 42 (2017), 250–70). Deardorff analyses marriages between so-called Old and New Christians. The latter – also tagged as *conversos*, Moriscos or *nuevos*

convertidos de moros in legal terms – were former Muslims, who had been converted to Catholicism in the slipstream of the conquest of the Nasrid kingdom of Granada in 1492. In the sixteenth century, the Spanish state still looked askance at these *conversos*, as they stuck to their old traditions, spoke Arabic, wore ‘Moorish’ styles of clothing, honoured culinary taboos or remained faithful to their ostensibly Islamic rituals. These crypto-Muslims were expelled in recurrent purges and pogroms, leading to the final ethnic cleansing in 1609–14, when hundreds of thousands of Moriscos were banished from Spain. Marriage with an Old Christian was, as Deardorff proposes, a crucial argument to avert expulsion, as the Spanish government saw mixed weddings as an important tool to integrate former Muslim minorities. Hence, petitions of *conversos*, who stood in fear of expulsion, focused on their Christian lifestyle, on their active role in fighting the Muslim rebellion of the *Alpujarres* (1568–70) and, above all, on their marriage with faithful Old Christians. In most cases, the last argument proved decisive to avert banishment. Deardorff also points to fascinating gender differences. Whereas female *conversos*, who were married to Old Christian husbands, did not need extra arguments, Moriscos wedded to Old Christian wives had to provide additional proof of their Christian life. These differences echo deeply entrenched ideas about patriarchal hierarchy.

Emily Michelson looks more closely at the co-existence between Catholics and Jews in early modern Rome through the lens of conversionary preaching in ‘Conversionary preaching and the Jews in early modern Rome’, *Past and Present*, 235 (2017), 68–104. Every Saturday, Roman Jews were processed from the ghetto to the Santissima Trinità dei Pellegrini (Confraternity of the Most Holy Trinity), where they were treated to an endless sermon. Through a forensically detailed analysis of the Scripture, Talmud, Kaballah and other canonical texts, the prelate tried to convince his audience that the Jewish interpretation was false and faulty. Michelson argues, however, that Jews were not the only – nor the most important – audience, as these sermons always attracted a crowd of Christian listeners. Therefore, conversion of the lost Hebrew sheep was not the principal aim; it was much more important to convince one’s own flock of the regained vigour and dynamism of the Counter-Reformation church. In this way, conversionary preaching was part of a much wider programme of sermons, processions, pilgrimages and other devotions, which had to demonstrate the unmistakable health and glory of the Baroque church. As they were the oldest opponents, Jews were a rhetorically more rewarding target than Muslims, Protestants and other foes.

Thanks to the bodily turn, urban historians have increasingly turned their attention to the more physical dimensions of everyday life in early modern Europe. In “Facing identity” in a “faceless” society: physiognomy, facial appearances, and identity perception in

eighteenth-century London' (*Cultural and Social History*, 14 (2017), 137–53), Kathryn Woods details the ups and downs of physiognomic theory and practice in early modern London. Even though the idea that facial expressions and features – a big nose, bright eyes, heavy eyebrows – were a telltale indicator of one's character was widespread in the seventeenth century, it was challenged by the new ideal of politeness, which urged people to look beyond outward appearances and looks. Yet, in the late eighteenth century, physiognomy was back again, as a flood of treatise and observations evidence. Woods explains this evolution by referring to some sweeping societal changes. Urbanization – London's population had by 1750 risen to a staggering 750,000 – created the uneasy sense of an anonymous and 'faceless' mob; an anxiety which was also fuelled by fading social boundaries. In this climate, physiognomy gave something to grasp hold of. The bodily turn is also tangible in Matthew McCormack's newest article on 'Boots, material culture and Georgian masculinities' (*Social History*, 42 (2017), 461–79); in this case, literally, as McCormack handled several specimens to say something about the changing experience and feel of wearing boots in early modern Britain. With this material culture approach, he questions the idea that men's footwear was – in stark contrast with women's decorative, flimsy and impractical shoes – predominantly plain, sturdy and functional. In reality, boots evolved from the stiff, bulky and chafing jackboots which were popular in the early eighteenth century, to the much more supple, soft and elegant Wellington in the early nineteenth century. McCormack's claim that boots were much more than functional gear is also endorsed by eighteenth-century owners' obsession for polishing, with a clear preference for shiny black shoe-polish. Boots also emphasized masculinity through their military association, but also by their physical effect on the body, which drew the eye to the shape of the man's leg and his crutch.

Bodily features also loom large in the *Commentationes* of Johannes Rütiner, a well-heeled citizen, who recorded all sorts of obscene humour in sixteenth-century Switzerland. Carla Roth draws on this unique manuscript to provide fresh perspective in the ongoing debate about laughter in early modern Europe ('Obscene humour, gender, and sociability in sixteenth-century St. Gallen', *Past and Present*, 234 (2017), 39–70). First of all, it becomes clear that sexual and scatological jokes were all but a guilty pleasure, which had to be read in secret and recited in hush voices. Rütiner frequently heard these obscene quips in inns and taverns, but was also keen to repeat them to pepper the conversation with his intellectual, humanist friends. Sexual and scatological jests, whereby sperm, faeces and urine were standard ingredients, even served as a sort of 'admission ticket' to these elite circles. Moreover, the *Commentationes* reveal how malleable and adaptable early modern humour actually was. *Facetiae* and other printed collections may have served as an inspiration for humour, but the witty *homo ioci plenus* rarely if ever stuck to this material,

but skilfully tailored their jokes to their audience and the circumstances. Last but not least, Roth challenges the widely held idea that most jokes had a misogynous baseline. In fact, most obscene humour focused on men who were unable to control their own bodily functions, leading to unforeseen eruptions of sperm, excrements and other fluids. By way of inversion, these jokes substantiated masculinity.

Time awareness in early modern cities has witnessed a revived interest lately. In her latest article, Anne Murphy takes a closer look at the business archives of the Bank of England – and, more particularly, at the reports of the Committee of Inspection – to assess the importance of the clock in the everyday operational management of the bank ('Clock-watching: work and working time at the late eighteenth-century Bank of England', *Past and Present*, 1 (2017), 243–50). Murphy shows how virtually every aspect of the bank's corporate culture was imbued by a strong horological awareness. Clerks were kept in line by strict working hours and fines for lateness. They worked from nine till five, six days in a week. Public holidays were scarce, while Saint-Monday (Monday was, by tradition, part of the weekend) was never observed. Moreover, the clerks' answers to the committee suggest that they frequently worked against the clock and were familiar with time pressure. Most of them also had a side-job. After five, they worked as brokers, speculators or merchants to maximize their income, which seems to hint at de Vries' industrious revolution. Murphy not only challenges Thompson's black-and-white opposition between pre-industrial and industrial time awareness with her analysis of the Bank's inspection reports, but also uncovers some interesting social differences. Whereas the clerks worked excessively long hours, the more senior staff were more laidback. They slipped away shortly after three, which seems to suggest that they preferred more leisure time above a larger pay-packet.

In recent years, early modern apprenticeship and learning on the job has drawn a revived interest. In his latest article, Ruben Schalk looks at 400 orphan apprentices from Dutch cities. Despite their high degree of mobility, these orphans were seen as a cheap labour force by the guilds ('From orphan to artisan: apprenticeship careers and contract enforcement in The Netherlands before and after the guild abolition', *Economic History R.*, 70 (2017), 730–57). Masters ceaselessly recruited new apprentices, while the need to stipulate the nature of employment in a contract weakened. In Leiden, most of these orphans ended up in the textile industry, where guild-regulation was low or non-existent. They were mainly recruited for low-skilled labour and slipped away as soon as an apprenticeship in a guild-controlled craft opened up. Flexibility in apprenticeship in other parts of Europe is also stressed in the latest contribution of Ruben Schalk, Patrick Wallis, Clare Crowston and Claire Lemerrier ('Failure or flexibility? Apprenticeship training in premodern Europe', *J. of Interdisciplinary History*, 48 (2017), 131–58). They emphasize the volatility of work: youths – including apprentices and journeymen –

came and went, roved from one place to another, moved from master to master, and – most likely – frequently switched occupations. Schalk *et al.* draw a compelling analysis of the individual careers of these youths from their initial apprenticeship to the final settlement as a master in Amsterdam, Leiden, Lyon or Shrewsbury by a meticulous comparison between the initial articles of apprenticeship and the final mastership. Instability was the buzzword. Although cities witnessed an enormous efflux of apprentices, none of the guilds attempted to enforce the completion of the contracts, which suggests that masters and apprentices were well aware of the fact that their labour contract could come to an untimely end.

Labour is also an issue in ‘Gender, life cycle, and family “strategies” among the poor: the Barcelona workhouse, 1762–1805’ (*Economic History R.*, 70 (2017), 810–36) by Montserrat Carbonell-Esteller and Julie Marfany, who question the link between poor relief and family strategies. Traditionally, historians separate north-western Europe, where nuclear families thrived, from Mediterranean and eastern Europe, where extended families prevailed. It is often assumed that family ties were much stronger in the latter. Marfany and Carbonell use the records of the Barcelona workhouse to provide chapter-and-verse on the origins, ages, gender and marital status of the inmates. Furthermore, their analysis looks closely at the family ties of these paupers. Apparently, the workhouse was overwhelmingly populated by young, male singles from outside Barcelona. Yet, the institution was also used as a sort of (urban) substitute for (rural) kin by migrant families, who dealt with short-term crises. Marfany and Carbonell also stress the importance of training on the job offered in the workhouse, which enabled youths to enter the urban labour market.

Ever since Oscar Gelderblom published his book *Cities of Commerce*, the discussion on the importance of institutions to facilitate international trade rages through economic history. In the introduction of the special issue on the topic in *Continuity and Change*, Alain Wijffels introduces the new concept of conflict management – as opposed to conflict resolution – as an analytical tool to study commercial clashes of interest through the lens of legal institutions (‘Introduction: commercial quarrels – and how (not) to handle them’, *Continuity and Change*, 32 (2017), 1–9). New research suggests that the legal power of urban governments to create the necessary conditions for international trade was rather limited. Focusing on Portuguese merchants in England, Normandy and Flanders, Flávio Miranda examines potential differences in laws, rules and institutions in these different regions (‘Conflict management in western Europe: the case of the Portuguese merchants in England, Flanders and Normandy, 1250–1500’, *Continuity and Change*, 32 (2017), 11–36). Drawing on hundreds of records – ranging from safe-conducts and petitions to prosecutions – Miranda’s research rather emphasizes the role of diplomacy in conflict management and the lasting importance of privileges.

Equally influenced by the New Institutional Economics, Justyna Wubs-Mrozewicz claims that the medieval and early modern Hanseatic League was much more than an organizational structure; it developed all sorts of procedures for mediation and arbitration between disputing parties ('The late medieval and early modern Hanse as an institution of conflict management', *Continuity and Change*, 32 (2017), 59–84). The Hanse created added value for the membership of individual traders and cities by serving as an effective institution for conflict management, which transcended the patchwork of political and judicial backgrounds. Mika Kallioinen also provides an interesting case-study on conflict management and legal institutions by examining the correspondence between Finish and foreign city councils in the late Middle Ages and early modern period ('Intercommunal institutions in medieval trade', *Economic History R.*, 70 (2017), 1131–52). Its focus on a region outside the well-studied core of western Europe provides fresh perspective. Kallioinen takes a closer look at an institution which prevailed in the Baltic area and could best be described as an inter-urban tool for conciliations. When a dispute arose, mediation took place between the city councils rather than between individual merchants.

Post-1800

The increasing popularity of urban living is one of the most striking developments of our time, radically transforming residential, consumption and investment patterns. It is only during the last three decades that major western cities have come to experience substantial demographic growth again. From the early 1960s to the mid-1980s, most cities were undergoing an unprecedented loss of both residents and jobs. Simultaneously, local governments were initiating redevelopment schemes meant to replace an outdated housing stock with modern tower blocks, office buildings and shopping centres. While urban historians have come to label this era of rapid decline and comprehensive redevelopment as the urban crisis, a remarkable backlash swelled in neighbourhoods that were either slated for demolition or neglected by planners and investors. Here, the changing demographic and economic tides opened up new prospects and spaces for a rapidly growing cohort of artists, students and young professionals, setting in motion a process we nowadays refer to as gentrification.

Yet despite gentrification's significance for how and where people live nowadays, little is known about its roots. The pioneering stages of the process, first observed in American cities during the 1950s, are usually treated by geographers as a mere afterthought, while historians have only recently forayed into the field of gentrification. Qualitative research is lacking in particular. According to Suleiman Osman in 'Gentrification matters', *J. of Urban History*, 43 (2017), 172–9, this should come as no surprise, as gentrification is only a recent phenomenon and urban historians dislike the contemporary hype surrounding an issue

that is difficult to define. Still, at least in the American context, Osman discerns an increasing historical awareness, and calls for his colleagues to develop gentrification studies into a relevant subfield of urban history. In ‘Gentrification 1.0: urban transformations in late nineteenth-century Berlin’, *Urban Studies* (OnlineFirst), Philipp Reick takes this call one historical step further by investigating gentrification processes in Berlin during the late nineteenth century, employing historical address books to portray uneven geographies of inner-city neighbourhood change. In his challenging contribution, Reick comes to the conclusion that contemporary gentrification dynamics are resuming a multidirectional dynamic of displacement, urging urban historians to extend their temporal and spatial scopes. In this respect, an excellent early endeavour was last year’s special issue of *Informationen zur Modernen Stadtgeschichte*, 48 (2017), which focused on spatial urban inequalities.

Recent gentrification processes are often attributed to the rise of the creative class; a city-oriented social stratum involved with the knowledge-based production of ideas, technologies and content. In ‘“Brain magnet”: Research Triangle Park and the origins of the creative city, 1953–1965’, *Journal of Urban History*, 43 (2017), 470–92, Sayf Cummings historicizes the emergence of a creative class in North Carolina’s Research Triangle metropolitan area. Cummings convincingly demonstrates how as early as the 1950s a local growth coalition made up of academics, businesspeople and state officials lured not only investments or jobs, but also an educated class of workers to the surroundings of Durham and Raleigh. In a special edition on the importance of knowledge transfers in central and eastern European cities between 1880 and 1945, ‘“Emerging cities”: knowledge and urbanization in Europe’s borderlands 1880–1945’, *J. of Urban History*, 43 (2017), 575–87, Eszter Gantner and Heidi Hein-Kircher also draw our attention to the historical significance of local science hubs. They propose to shift our focus from western metropolises to the emerging cities in Europe’s borderlands, where academics were deriving valuable technical and social knowledge from the modalities, strategies and practices of rapid urbanization processes.

The notion of a creative class was popularized by Richard Florida, whose ideas on successful cities became guiding policy principles over the last 15 years. Yet 2017 saw the publication of *The New Urban Crisis*, in which Florida demonstrates how the same forces that powered the revitalization of large conurbations are now turning against themselves, leading to issues of increasing unaffordability and displacement. Indeed, the enormous popularity of urban living is one of the most striking global developments of our time, radically transforming residential patterns, forms of consumption and cycles of real estate investment. Obviously, the title of Florida’s latest book is a wink at the urban crisis proper, which is also the theme of a special section by Themis Chronopoulos and Jonathan Soffer, ‘Introduction. After the urban crisis: New York and the rise of

inequality', *J. of Urban History*, 43 (2017), 855–63. Similar to Kim Philipp-Fein's 2017 book *Fear City*, the authors assert that New York's long-term structural inequalities were exacerbated by the politics of austerity and neoliberalism, which were implemented after the city's near bankruptcy of 1975.

How New Yorkers coped with declining infrastructure, services, standards of living and increasing inequality stands at the core of Benjamin Holtzman's and Reiko Hillyer's contributions, respectively "'I am not co-op!': The struggle over middle-class housing in 1970s New York' and 'The Guardian Angels: law and order and citizen policing in New York City', *J. of Urban History*, 43 (2017), 864–85 and 886–914. Holtzman focuses on the 1970s struggles between city officials, the real estate industry and those tenants who preferred rent-regulated housing over homeownership, notwithstanding the profits they could potentially make. Tenants achieved considerable success in challenging the notion that ownership would benefit the middle classes, but were soon sandwiched by top-down gentrification policies and an increasing grassroots acceptance of conversions by tenants who thought to benefit economically. Hillyer draws our attention to another consequence of New York's urban crisis: the rise of the Guardian Angels, a community patrol organization of mostly black and Latino youths founded in 1979. Their theatre of operations mainly concerned the city's subway system, which had fallen on hard times due to the slashing of services and personnel layoffs. According to Hillyer, the Angels were an ambivalent reflection of a desire for community control and self-determination as well as the widespread hysteria about a city out of control and calls for more aggressive policing, which were mainly coming from conservative forces.

The driving force of the post-war urban crisis was suburbanization. In a fascinating and meticulously researched article on the Asian American suburbs of Los Angeles, 'Design assimilation in suburbia: Asian Americans, built landscapes, and suburban advantage in Los Angeles's San Gabriel Valley since 1970', *J. of Urban History*, 43 (2017), 332–71, Becky Nicolaidis and James Zarsadiaz explore how Asian residents melded their homeland memories, the American dream of comfort and luxury and prevalent architectural neo-styles, emerging as an affluent suburban middle class. Over the course of 2017, suburbanization also loomed large in this journal. In the original 'Suburbanization and cultural change: the case of club cricket in Surrey, 1870–1939', *Urban History*, 44 (2017), 44–68, Duncan Stone examines how and why cricket spread throughout the south-east of England, demonstrating the cultural importance of elite sports in shaping class identities. In a more orthodox approach, Michael McGreevy investigates suburbanization in 'Suburban growth in Adelaide, South Australia, 1850–1930: speculation and economic opportunity', *Urban History*, 44 (2017), 208–30, as the growth of self-contained communities. One major growth incentive was the availability of large backyard lots,

where married women in particular could generate produce and income for their families.

Obviously, suburbanization was facilitated by transportation networks connecting new developments with older settlements. In 'Transport planning as suggested in John Claudius Loudon's 1829 plan for London', *Planning Perspectives*, 32 (2017), 271–80, Patrice Bouche demonstrates how transport planning and decentralization in John Loudon's 1829 expansion scheme for London were aimed at creating a socially inclusive city, providing Londoners of all classes with a freely accessible and innovative network of carriageways and railways. Such ideas travelled fast in the British empire of the Victorian era. Albeit in a less idealistic way, railway planning was extremely important to the expansion of provincial colonial cities such as Delhi, as Raghav Kishore shows in 'Planning, traffic and the city: railway development in colonial Delhi, c. 1899–1905', *Urban History*, 44 (2017), 253–69. Kishore demonstrates how the local planning process was driven by visions of the city as a space for the circulation of commercial traffic on the one hand and an increasingly authoritative rule by the British Raj on the other. In another contribution on urban planning in India, 'Communitarian regionalism in India: how lessons from the New Deal Greenbelt programme translated to postwar India', *Planning Perspectives*, 32 (2017), 225–47, Laurel Harbin and Kristin Larsen examine how and why American ideas about greenbelts were exported to post-colonial India and adapted to local needs through the input of indigenous knowledge, in which the famous planner Albert Mayer played a pivotal role.

Underpinning the planning principles of sound transportation networks, greenbelts and the marriage of town and country were the ideals of Ebenezer Howard, who in his 1898 *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* proposed to export the people and jobs of congested cities to self-contained new towns in the open countryside, free of industrial pollution, overcrowding and overpriced land values. Such thinking was blown up to enormous proportions during the post-war era, when the growing affluence enabled planners to envision ever grander schemes and modernist thinking reached its zenith. Similar to James C. Scott's groundbreaking *Seeing like a State*, an indictment of how central governments force legibility on their subjects through planning, Renato Leão Rego examines the massive colonization and settlement scheme for Brazil's Amazonian territory in 'Shaping an urban Amazonia: "a planner's nightmare"', *Planning Perspectives*, 32 (2017), 249–70. During the 1970s, the Brazilian government's attempts to attract people to the hinterlands led to a failed marriage between city and country due to infrastructural and environmental constraints, agricultural disappointments and misguided policy-making. The city–country binary is also the central theme in Jeremy Krikler's 'Rural masters and urban militants in early twentieth-century South Africa', *Historical J.*, 60 (2017), 771–93, in which historians are urged

to pay more attention to the bearing of class interests upon the responses of rural landowners to urban movements.

At the same time as Brazil was cultivating its indigenous territories, American and British cities were reclaiming their own land, albeit with different means and objectives. Still, some planners saw no problem in comparing deforestation with redeveloping slum areas, or as New York's chief planner Robert Moses once infamously said: 'You can draw any kind of pictures you like on a clean slate and indulge your every whim in the wilderness in laying out a New Delhi, Canberra and Brasilia, but when you operate in an overbuilt metropolis you have to hack your way with a meat axe.' The post-war rise in car ownership influenced where people lived, worked and consumed, thereby redefining the boundaries between city and countryside. Solutions were sought to accommodate cars in central urban areas, not only by cutting away existing developments such as Moses proposed, but also by adapting street life to the dangers of increasing car traffic. In the illuminating article 'Play streets: women, children and the problem of urban traffic, 1930–1970', *Social History*, 42 (2017), 233–56, Krista Cowman traces the pre-war emergence of so-called play streets, which were closed to through traffic most of the day. Cowman convincingly argues that working-class street sociability was strongly connected to children's play. Despite their initial success and governmental support, the dazzling increase in car ownership of the 1960s and shift towards indoor play led to the demise of this bottom-up planning intervention.

Soon after the first urban expressways were planned, inner-city residents raised their voices by filing petitions and taking to the streets. In 1970s Houston, less orthodox ways of protesting came into vogue amongst members of both white and black communities, as investigated by Kyle Shelton in 'Building a better Houston: highways, neighborhoods, and infrastructural citizenship in the 1970s', *J. of Urban History*, 43 (2017), 421–44. Coining the term 'infrastructural citizenship', Shelton demonstrates how Houstonians presented their living environment as a space of negotiation over what the city was and would become, connecting city-wide debates about resources, politics and mobility to conflicts over homes and streets. In this case, black and white neighbours shared a common desire to protect their communities, but this was an exception to the rule in twentieth-century America. The dominant trend was segregation, as explained by Trevon Logan and John Parman in 'The national rise in residential segregation', *J. of Economic History*, 77 (2017), 127–70. This comprehensive article shows how segregation doubled between 1880 and 1940, which was long before the urban crisis and decades of white flight. In fact, the authors assert that increasing racial sorting at the household level was much more important for segregation than large-scale urban developments.

In general, the planned urban resettlements of the twentieth century were a solution to what planning historian Peter Hall has labelled 'the city of dreadful night', which featured prominently in the periodical literature of 2017. In 'Surviving the industrial city: the female poor and the workhouse in late nineteenth-century Belfast', *Urban History*, 44 (2017), 69–90, Olwen Purdue focuses on welfare provision in Belfast, in particular the secularized workhouses. Here, poor mothers and their children could make use of welfare services regardless of their faith, which were provided by middle-class women. Thus, Purdue argues that workhouses can shed a new light on the class identities and behaviour of women. In a similar contribution, 'Womanliness in the slums: a free kindergarten in early twentieth-century Edinburgh', *Gender & History*, 29 (2017), 359–86, Elizabeth Darling shows how a free childcare facility was the product of a network of women urban reformers, who greatly contributed to social welfare and early childhood education. In a methodologically innovative article, 'A tale of two cities – infant mortality and cause of infant death, Dublin, 1864–1910', *Urban History*, 44 (2017), 647–77, Ciara Breathnach and Brian Gurrin also uncover new social relations and realities in the Victorian city. With the use of contemporary mortality rates and extensive mapping, Breathnach and Gurrin conclude that Dublin's urban poor were much more affected by bad living conditions and diseases than deprived people living in rural Ireland or other UK conurbations, paying special attention to the city's historical rootedness of social inequality.

Those who did not survive the hardship and misery of living in a nineteenth-century Victorian slum could not always rest in peace, as Maximilian Scholz demonstrates in 'Over our dead bodies: the fight over cemetery construction in nineteenth-century London', *J. of Urban History*, 43 (2017), 445–57. Whereas cemeteries have always been interpreted as great achievements in the provision of public health, Scholz highlights the struggles Londoners fought against the establishment of graveyards near their homes. In fact, the construction of the 'Magnificent Seven' cemeteries between 1832 and 1841 was driven by private entrepreneurship with ambivalent consequences. While church revenues waned, public parks were closed and social segregation was aggravated, a rapidly growing London was provided with new burial spaces and thus better public health conditions. Another nineteenth-century concern of urban public health were stray dogs, omnipresent in all western metropolises but especially in Paris. In the lengthy, well-researched 'Stray dogs and the making of modern Paris', *Past and Present*, 234 (2017), 137–72, Chris Pearson details the changing political and cultural attitudes towards strays. Local authorities, in particular those of a city that was in the international vanguard of urban sanitation, quickly associated the quadrupeds with deathly diseases such as rabies and urban disorder in general. Despite their efforts, health officials and police officers were never able to control

the phenomenon fully, leaving Parisians at risk of being bitten by a rabid stray.

As always, some themes in the periodical literature are recurring for no particular reason. This year, there was a strong presence of articles connecting communism with the urban. In 'The Russian Revolution in New York, 1917–1919', *J. of Contemporary History*, 52 (2017), 959–79, Tony Michels lays bare the attitudes towards Bolshevism as it constellated among immigrant Jews in New York City, demonstrating the global reverberations and repercussions of the Russian Revolution. As Natallia Barykina exemplifies in 'Transnational mobilities: western European architects and planners in the Soviet industrial cities, 1928–1933', *Planning Perspectives*, 32 (2017), 333–52, 10 years later, the Soviet Union had become an appealing travel destination for western architects and planners. The nascent Soviet state, which by the late 1920s had just embarked on its first Five-Year Plan, could not do without western expertise on designing and building standardized housing projects, implying extensive knowledge transfers and frequent working visits. After the Iron Curtain had come down in the 1950s, such contacts became increasingly difficult. Some planners working for communist regimes decided to flee, as was the case with Egon Hartmann. Annika Levels, 'Across the border. Ties of architects and urban planners between East and West Germany: the case of Egon Hartman, 1954–1976', *Planning Perspectives* (2017), 557–76, asserts that the integration of a personal dimension and specific communication patterns into our understanding of Cold War history reveals rather informal ties across the Iron Curtain. Also from a non-design perspective 2017 was a fruitful year for those urban historians interested in socialism and communism. In 'Crosstown traffic: punk, rock, space and the porosity of the Berlin Wall in the 1980s', *Contemporary European History*, 26 (2017), 353–77, Jeff Hayton argues that the political legitimacy of the East German government was undermined by a lively punk subculture, which was heavily influenced and even frequented by alternative youths from West Germany.

To what extent have cities, their physical form, cultural identities and symbolic meanings, influenced the course of the aforementioned urban histories? In other words, do cities have agency and if so, how can we define it? Such were the questions of a special issue by *Urban History*, Simon Gunn, 'Urban agency: debating the aims and limits of urban history', *Urban History*, 44 (2017), 110. In a wide array of contributions, scholars from various backgrounds give tentative answers to these challenging questions. In 'The technosphere: a new concept for urban studies', *Urban History*, 44 (2017), 145–54, Chris Otter urges us to meld the meanings of agency and city together in the technosphere, an envirotechnical formation influencing our way of life far more than we have realized ourselves so far. In a similar way, Bert de Munck, 'Re-assembling actor-network theory and urban history', *Urban History*, 44

(2017), 111–22, presents Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as ‘the natural ally of history’, enabling us to study the development of capitalism as a material and cultural process simultaneously. Hopefully, next year’s periodical review will boast at least a few contributions in which this well-known but empirically underused theory is put to the test.