the construction of this narrative. While the reformation of the convent allowed both the pope and the Benedictine Order to wrestle control over convents and their resources from the Roman urban elite, this process also allowed the nuns to claim a privileged relationship with the papacy (Mary Harvey Donyo, 'Roman women: female religious, the papacy, and a growing Dominican order', *Speculum*, 97 (2022), 1040–72).

Rachel Delman, finally, shows that the English town of Stamford also knew a 'prominent female culture' of religiosity in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Taking the powerful noblewoman Margaret Beaufort (mother of King Henry VII) as a starting point, Delman exposes a vibrant network of rich urban women that oscillated between the town of Stamford and Beaufort's household at Collyweston in Northamptonshire. Lady Beaufort functioned as a conduit within this network, as did the guild of St Katherine and other urban anchoresses in Stamford (Rachel Delman, 'The vowesses, the anchoresses and the aldermen's wives: Lady Margaret Beaufort and the devout society of late medieval Stamford', *Urban History*, 49 (2022), 248–64).

1500–1800

Religious co-existence is at the core of a debate that keeps on firing the imagination of early modern historians. All too often, the history of religious tolerance and co-existence is written from the top-down, through the eyes of the dominant religious majority. Genji Yasuhira takes a different approach route by scrutinizing from the bottom-up – using the extremely rich, but barely scrutinized judicial sources – how the Catholic minority in Utrecht deployed a series of survival strategies to profess their religion in a hostile Protestant environment ('Transforming the urban space: Catholic survival through spatial practices in post-Reformation Utrecht', *Past & Present*, 255 (2022), 39–86).

During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Catholics were rather successful in protecting their sacred space. Even though the Reformation had officially secularized churches, monasteries and chapels (in hospices), some of these spaces were still used for clandestine Catholic services, funerals and other rituals well into the seventeenth century. Moreover, Catholics even succeeded in safeguarding a lot of crucifixes, saints' pictures, stained-glass windows, altars and other 'remnants of the Idolatry of the Papacy', as the Reformed consistory remarked bitterly in 1620. Yasuhira claims that the survival was not so much the result of the tolerance of the Utrecht city council and the magistrate – who, unlike the mellow stereotype of Dutch tolerance, took a hard line against Catholicism – but was only possible due to the support of canons, *klopjes* (women who lived together in a beguinage way) and local elites, who acted as patrons of the Catholic minority. They also protected their fellow believers in the second half of the seventeenth century, when Catholic life was forced to retreat from the (semi-)public space into private houses, where bolted doors, hatches and other secret let-outs for priests, *klopjes* and worshippers prevented Catholic life from being eradicated by an overzealous sheriff. Yasuhira's research not only makes a serious dent in the stereotypical

image of tolerance of the Dutch Republic, but also illustrates that the notion of 'public worship' was extremely flexible and could easily entail Catholic rituals in private dwellings.

Co-existence is also centre stage in Martin Christ's latest research about multi-confessionality and the senses in the Holy Roman Empire ('Sensing multiconfessionality in early modern Germany', *German History*, 40 (2022), 317–39). Christ delves deep into a variety of sources to examine how people in Upper Lusatia, the prince-bishopric of Westphalia, the Imperial Free City of Wetzlar and other multiconfessional places, where Catholics, Lutherans and Calvinists lived more or less peacefully together, experienced co-existence. Quite often, worshippers of different confessions were forced to show some consideration for rival cults because of the *simutanea* or *Simultankirchen* (shared churches). Temporal regulations were often in place to prevent any misunderstandings or conflict. Catholics went first to early mass and then stepped aside for their Lutheran or Calvinist brethren, who used the church in the late morning and afternoon, while they handed on the torch to the Catholics again during the evening mass. Space was also frequently used to separate the worshippers, whereby Catholics were allocated to the choir and Protestants to the nave. Physical barriers – ranging from a curtain or a lattice screen to a stone wall – could also help sift the wheat from the chaff. Yet, even with these measures in place, there was always the possibility of mutual influence, as Protestants sometimes smelled a whiff of incense, spotted a monk through the rood screen or heard the Catholic bells tolling, and vice versa. Even though confessional communities sometimes used sensory experiences to provoke conflicts – Protestants defecating in front of the altar, spitting in the baptismal font, chanting hymns to drown out the priest who mumbled the Eucharist – Christ claims that Scribner's 'tolerance of practical rationality' was in most cases prevalent. Confessional communities in the Holy Roman Empire not only shared their churches without too much fuss, but also frequently used the same church bells, baptismal fonts, altars and even churchyards.

Classic debates on consumption and economic history have recently been revitalized by insights from the burgeoning field of material culture studies. That is also the focus of Laura Working's recent work ('Tobacco and the social life of conquest in London, 1580–1625', *Historical Journal*, 65 (2022), 30–48). Drawing upon insights from anthropology and archaeology, Working tries to cut the proverbial Gordian knot in consumption history. How did a product like tobacco – that was originally associated with wild and savage Algonquian-speaking Indians – turn into an item of mass consumption among the civilized upper and middle ranks of British society? Working argues that the introduction and spread of tobacco should not only be understood in terms of economic supply and demand, but should also be explained culturally in terms of acculturation, transfers, appropriation and material adaptations. To accentuate the differences between the 'savage' Algonquian way of smoking and the 'civilized' European style, British – and later on Dutch – pipe-makers developed a new style of pipes. English pipe-bowls were small and bulb-shaped and mounted on a long, elegant stem, while the original pipe-stems were short and thick. Pipes – engraved with heraldic or royal motives, stored in elegant cases and used with sophisticated tools such as tamps – soon became a status symbol. British smokers also developed complex rituals of smoking

that set them apart from the original Indian consumers. Connoisseurs could pick the right brand and quality – 'Rowle Trinidado', 'Leafe' or 'Pudding' – almost blindly. Tobacco soon became the ultimate 'discourser' in polite conversation, as it was thought to kindle wittiness and rhetorical talent, which were essential to concepts of political authority.

While consumer history is almost always focused on how people acquired all sorts of things, less is known about the experience of loss. Which strategies did consumers deploy to get their goods back when they were stolen or lost? Drawing evidence from the 'lost' notices in eighteenth-century British newspapers and taking inspiration from sociology, Kate Smith tries to answer these questions in her latest article which focuses on watches lost and found ('Lost things and the making of material cultures in eighteenth-century London', *Journal of Social History*, 55 (2022), 875–98). It turns out that Londoners took great pains to get their favourite possessions back by circulating handbills or by buying newspaper space for detailed 'lost' notices. They also memorized – or wrote down – the most salient features of their watches, including the material (mostly gold or silver), the maker (whose name often featured on the dial or on the back), a serial number and the size of their timepiece. It was not only a coping strategy to retrieve the watch as fast as possible in case of loss or theft, but it is also a tell-tale for the emotional and symbolic value of these prized possessions. Losers not only drew information from their own memory, but also frequently solicited specialists such as their watchmaker to retrieve the details.

Political history does not always have to be about kings, ministers, MPs and other rainmakers. During the last few years, there has been a tendency to focus more on the micro-politics in parishes, neighbourhoods, small towns and other theatres of power. An excellent example is Jonah Miller's recent analysis of parish elections in Chelsea ('Patricians, plebeians, and parishioners: parish elections and social conflict in eighteenth-century Chelsea', *Social History*, 47 (2022), 372–94). Traditionally, these elections for local parish officials have drawn little if any scholarly attention, as they are often seen as dull, unexciting events. However, with an analysis of 85 witness depositions from the bishop of London's consistory court, Miller draws a slightly different portrait of a bitter electoral struggle, whereby literally all stops were pulled. Nominees – and their aristocratic or plebeian supporters – tried to persuade voters with wine and beer, with veiled – or not so veiled – threats and even took matters to court when they lost the election. It led to a series of electoral disputes in Chelsea in 1708, 1720 and 1723, where the local farmers and artisans, often backed up by the poor, crossed swords with the gentry and high nobility, newly arrived from London, who settled in suburban Chelsea. Through a thick reading of the depositions, Miller analyses how this upper-crust faction tried to discredit the middle-class voting mob as unreliable. According to the elite, those votes were null and void since the middle-class electorate lacked financial and social independence and could thus be easily manipulated. Or in other words, they were simply too poor to vote.

While Miller looks at the machinery of local elections through the microscope, the same could be said for Gerrit Verhoeven's analysis of the *modus operandi* of the *Vierschaar* or the local court of criminal justice in Antwerp ('How to question a suspect thoroughly? Legal proceedings, judicial inquiry, and interrogation at the

Antwerp Vierschaar (1730–1792)', *Crime, History & Societies*, 26 (2022), 25–48). Unlike the British system, the Antwerp court opened its own investigation when manslaughter, larceny, assault and battery or any other serious crime had been committed. Two examining magistrates set out to collect testimonies of eyewitnesses, material evidence, forensic reports and other incriminating evidence. They also interrogated the suspects. Drawing evidence from the *examinatieën & informatieën*, Verhoeven shows that the actual procedure of these examining magistrates was poles apart from the classic stereotypes of extremely brutal, superficial and sloppy interrogation strategies, where intimidation, threats and torture were run-of-the-mill. Antwerp magistrates rather deployed a toolbox of well-honed interrogation techniques – including non-committal questions, probing for contradictions, confrontation with eyewitnesses and material evidence, subsequent interrogations and other strategies – to cull a confession from the suspect. During the eighteenth century, this *instrumentarium* became more refined, as torture and other coercive means went out of fashion.

Who owned Florence? Delving into the *Decima ricera* – or the tax census of 1561 – Justine Walden and Nicolas Terpstra try to answer this seemingly straightforward question ('Who owned Florence? Religious institutions and property ownership in the early modern city', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 26 (2002), 222–67). This article is a spin-off of the larger DECIMA-project that started in 2011 at the University of Toronto and has generated a gargantuan database on property information in sixteenth-century Florence. Walden and Terpstra focus on one particular slice of the data on religious institutions. It renders a wealth of interesting results. Religious institutions were, for instance, the second most important property owner in Florence (20.2 per cent of all revenues) after the individual property owners (76 per cent). However, the revenue that was drawn from this real estate was significantly lower than the average income, which seems to suggest that religious institutions owned smaller – and thus less valuable – properties or deliberately lowered rents to accommodate poorer tenants. Religious orders were the most important real estate owners (45 per cent) – where the classic contemplative orders were slowly but surely outstripped by the more successful mendicant orders – followed by the monastic chapters (17 per cent), the hospitals (16 per cent), the confraternities (6 per cent) and so on. Religious institutions not only rented houses to private individuals, but also held one third of the commercial properties in Florence in stock. Data from the *Decima ricera* seem to suggest that they preferred to let their properties to a wide array of master craftsmen, shopkeepers and merchants in the neighbourhood. Lower rents may have operated as the bargaining chip for all sorts of free or cheap services.

Residential patterns are also analysed in Tamsin Prideaux's latest work on migrant communities in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Venice, who often lived together in certain neighbourhoods, *fondacos*, lodging houses and inns. Sharing a house/room was a way to instil trust, confidence and reciprocity. Trust is the central focus in Prideaux's article ('Navigating family welfare and dwelling space for mercantile migrants in Venice, 1550–1700', *Cultural and Social History*, 19 (2022), 371–87). Delving into the petitions to the *Cinque Savi all Mercanzia* – the authority responsible for the weal and woe of foreign traders in Venice – Prideaux analyses how relations between migrants and the government were oiled

by trust. Mercantile migrants assumed that the *Cinque Savi* would come to their assistance when they – and their families – got into low water due to bad luck. They also expected that the authorities would help their orphans and widows out in case of sudden death. To deserve such assistance, they framed themselves in the requests as loyal servants of the Venetian Republic, responsible family men or faithful Christians. Even though the *Cinque Savi* functioned as an important safety net, mutual assistance between mercantile migrants, bound by family relations, friend-ships, neighbourliness and other links, was even more important.

Mercantile migrants are also at the heart of Sylvain Lloret's latest analysis of French expat communities in Spanish port towns ('Des nations dans la ville: les marchands français à Allicante, Valence et Malaga au XVIIIe siècle', *Histoire Urbaine*, 64 (2022), 37–51). Unlike the larger French trading colonies in Cadiz or Barcelona, these smaller commercial settlements have often been ignored. In Valencia, Alicante and – to a lesser extent – Malaga, the linchpin of commercial life was the nation (*le corps de Nation*), which, in tandem with the French consul, protected the commercial interests of French traders. With a lot of contraband trade, it boiled down to safeguarding the privilege of being exempt from the regular inspections of warehouses, ships, workshops and so on. Together, the consul and the nation also played an important role in cementing these expatriate communities together by organizing all sorts of religious and civic festivities in honour of the French monarchy or saints. French migrants often lived together in the same neighbourhood in close proximity to the harbour. However, Lloret shows that this idyllic image of perfect harmony was frequently smashed into smithereens by merchants who played *cavalier seul* and put their own interests before the com-mon good. This is less surprising if we bear in mind that these expatriate communi-ties were often populated by birds of very different feathers: moneyed, international traders, who lived in lush Andalusian mansions versus impoverished shopkeepers or artisans, who shared a room in a run-down rental apartment. Moreover, expatriates came from every region in France. No wonder that their interests were not always the same.

In recent years, studies of early modern inequality have boomed and empirical data has become available covering different cities and regions. Erik Bengtsson, Mats Olsson and Patrick Svensson present a study on inequality in Stockholm between 1650 and 1750 ('Mercantilist inequality: wealth and poverty in Stockholm, 1650–1750', *Economic History Review*, 75 (2022), 157–80). Based on census data, tax records and probate inventories, they analysed social structure, poverty, wealth and economic inequality. They found that the Swedish capital was already very unequal in the early modern period, with the 10 per cent most wealthy citizens owning 90 per cent of the total wealth. Stockholm was therefore more unequal than the country as a whole. The authors point out that in the capital a large concentration of poor people lived side by side with the very rich. Bengtsson, Olsson and Svensson argue that this inequality was generated by an active fiscal-military state offering low remuneration for sailors, soldiers etc., but at the same time creating opportunities for the rich. Therefore, the authors rely less on eco-nomic growth and external shocks to explain the development of social inequality in Stockholm, but emphasize the internal structure of the country as a crucial factor for its evolution.

Usually, historians apply external proxies to distinct social groups. In some rare occasions, researchers can use parameters that people in their own time applied. In the article of José-Antonio Espín-Sánchez, Salvador Gil-Guirado and Chris Vickers ('La "doña" è mobile: the role of women in social mobility in a pre-modern economy', *Journal of Economic History*, 82 (2022), 1–41), the measure of social standing was the identification as a *don* or *doña*, an honorific denoting high, though not necessarily noble, status. Even though these titles existed in a number of areas with Spanish origins, the article focuses on eighteenth-century Murcia. The key element in their research is that this title existed for both men and women, which provides a technique to study the transmission of status in a maternal line. They found that the role of mothers in transmitting social mobility was important, especially for daughters, quite opposite to what one might expect. Moreover, the relative importance of mothers and fathers in transmitting status changed during the eighteenth century, flattening the differences between the roles, so that by the end of the century the effects of mothers and fathers were similar for both sons and daughters. This case-study provides both new techniques and new insights into social mobility and the role of women.

In his contribution on credit and poverty in early modern Venice ('Credit and poverty in early modern Venice', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 52 (2022), 513–36), Matteo Pompermaier focuses on an unusual form of lending, namely the pawnbroking services provided by Venetian inns and *bastioni* (warehouses selling wine). He argues that this service provided by inns and warehouses to their customers can cast light on how Venice dealt with the supply of credit to the lower strata of urban society. Although literature on early modern credit has exploded since the 2000s, we still know little about how the urban poor acted as debtors and creditors, mostly because they lacked access to more formal credit institutions. In his contribution, Pompermaier highlights the term 'handkerchief economy', which he describes as a system in which small, humble objects – such as handkerchiefs – gave access to credit and consumption, although modest in value. However, due to the number of transactions and the volume of the exchanges, 'mobilizing tens of thousands of objects and thousands of ducats every year', this market was finally recognized and formalized by the government of Venice.

During the last third of the sixteenth century, when hostilities peaked between the Spanish crown and (parts) of the Low Countries, northern European merchants in Seville reacted in a very particular way to this changing socio-economic environment. Germán Jiménez Montes shows how Flemish and German merchants refused to accept the various plans proposed by the monarchy to establish a particularized institution to organize and protect their trade with northern Europe ('The Flemish and German nation of Seville. Collective strategies and institutional development of the northern European merchant community in Seville, Spain (1568–1598)', *Tijdschrift voor sociaaleconomische geschiedenis*, 19 (2022), 37–60). Rather than using these new institutions, they adapted their collective strategies to Seville's institutional framework in the last third of the sixteenth century. For instance, instead of participating in a newly established guild known as the *Almirantazgo de los comercios de los Países obedientes de Flandes*, they organized and adapted themselves to the existing institutions. For the author, it proves that these solutions facilitated the integration of newcomers and temporary migrants into the host society, enhanced the position

of northern European merchants and shipmasters in the region's economy and ultimately shaped a distinguishable identity for the community.

Medieval and early modern urban governments made a practice of taxing beer sales. From the thirteenth century on, levies on beer provided a remarkable share of total urban revenue. In some Dutch cities, the proportion of beer taxes could reach up to 60 per cent of total revenue, especially in the sixteenth century. In England, this general picture was more or less the same. It is therefore no surprise that central governments also established practices to levy duties on the sale of goods, especially during the sixteenth century when war and expanding bureaucracies triggered the need to fill the treasury. However, as Richard W. Unger points out ('Beer and taxes: the fiscal significance for Holland and England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', *Tijdschrift voor sociaaleconomische geschiedenis*, 19 (2022), 61–86), from 1650 onwards, Dutch taxes from beer went into a long-term decline. In England, the evolution was more stable. Unger argues that analysing the patterns of change in the tax receipts allows us to understand developments in the two economies. Changing taste and the rise of competing drinks had a negative impact on beer consumption and therefore beer taxation. Experiments by the Dutch central government in lowering the rates of beer tax proved inefficient. In England, fiscal policy moved towards increasing excises on retail purchases of common commodities. With increasing population and incomes, tax receipts rose continually, unlike in the Dutch Republic. In England, tax collectors kept on earning substantial rewards from beer excises.

A grand narrative in economic history is the relationship between urbanization and economic growth. Following the pioneering studies of Lewis (1954), de Vries (1989) and Bairoch (1988), pre-industrial cities have generally been considered to be a factor in economic development, as high urbanization rates helped to keep fertility down and to drive up death rates. Through Malthusian mechanisms, urban living standards could rise. But in the past 20 years, studies of developing countries question the supposed correlation between urbanization and economic growth. Luigi Oddo and Andrea Zanini tackle this debate, analysing the relationship between urbanization and economic growth in the pre-industrial Republic of Genoa, with a new dataset on cities and rural populations ('The paradox of "Malthusian urbanization": urbanization without growth in the Republic of Genoa, 1300–1800', *European Review of Economic History*, 26 (2022), 508–34). The authors found that from 1300 to 1800 the Republic of Genoa experienced all the features of Malthusian stagnation: a rise in urbanization was triggered by long-lasting migration from the overpopulated countryside surrounding the Ligurian cities, rather than by economic growth driven by the urban sector. This high degree of urbanization as a result of widespread poverty is called 'Malthusian urbanization' by the authors.

How did pre-industrial cities deal with major disasters? How did they finance the rebuilding of their territory? In their article 'Financing the rebuilding of the City of London after the Great Fire of 1666' (*Economic History Review*, 75 (2022), 1120–50), D'Maris Coffman, Judy Z. Stephenson and Nathan Sussman analysed how the Corporation of London, the municipal governing body of the City of London, funded the rebuilding of public infrastructure and buildings after the Great Fire. Historians consider the rebuilt city to have been well governed given that the

City's institutions, economy and wealth were not destroyed by the disaster. However, the financial aspects of the Fire and specifically the Corporation's defaulting on its debt have not been fully examined yet. The late seventeenth century is considered to be a period in which sovereigns, city-states and others experimented with new instruments of public credit to support their strategies of borrowing, but as the authors show, the Corporation drew on well-established instruments, private, short-term, interest-bearing deposits, to meet the financial challenges of rebuilding their part of the City. The Great Fire placed a heavy burden on the Corporation already known for its deep financial troubles. Because it did not adapt to new financial opportunities and relied on its reputation based on meeting repayments, the financial consequences for this urban institution were dramatic.

Post-1800
doi:10.1017/S096392682300007X

Although the COVID-19 pandemic is far from history, its devastating effects have inspired copious scholarship among urban historians in 2022. The overwhelming majority of infections and deaths occur in towns and cities, which the UN's secretary general, Antonio Guterres, called the 'ground zero of the COVID-19 pandemic'.[2] 'Epidemics, planning and the city' was a special issue of *Planning Perspectives*, whose editor, Juliet Davis, responded to current debates on how cities might adapt to mitigate the future spread of disease and their consequences. COVID-19, she writes, may be a new pandemic presenting new challenges, but 'strategies such as social distancing and the promotion of fresh air are old' ('Epidemics, planning and the city: a special issue of planning perspectives', *Planning Perspectives*, 37 (2022), 1–8). Acknowledging current tensions between concepts of pandemic-proof 'open-air' cities of the future and the need for sustainable urban development through high-density buildings and public transport networks, articles in this special issue presented historic examples of what has been done before, why and how they turned out.

Antonio Carbone's 'Epidemics, the issue of control and the grid: a nineteenth-century perspective from Buenos Aires' (*Planning Perspectives*, 37 (2022), 9–26), addressed the complex interactions of disease, rapid urban expansion and the inadequacies, in nineteenth-century Buenos Aires, of partial reforms to a colonial-legacy, grid-based, city management system. Before the city's cholera and yellow fever epidemics between 1867 and 1871, its traditionalist and new liberal administrations had variously supported the old, closed-grid plan or partially opened the grid, producing a palimpsest of the two. By Carbone's account, this was an uneasy compromise which came into question in light of the epidemics, specifically regarding city elites' ability to control lower-class dwellings and their assumed culpability for the disease outbreaks. Such concerns existed before but Carbone argues that disease fuelled them still further. They added urgency to discussions reimagining the city's future and its use of space, whose concepts aligned with different social and

---

[2]A. Guterres, 'COVID-19 in an urban world', *United Nations*, www.un.org/en/coronavirus/covid-19-urban-world (accessed 17 Jan. 2023).