

Cities and Citizens

Seventeenth-Century Studies Conference

Durham University
Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies
13-15 July 2015

Durham's Centre for Seventeenth-Century Studies – now part of the Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies – has, since its foundation in 1985, organized over a dozen high-profile international conferences. Next year's conference will address the topic of 'Cities and Citizens' and will focus on the ways in which urban centres were perceived, experienced, understood and represented in the 'long seventeenth century' (c.1580-1720). The conference will be held within the UNESCO World Heritage Site on Palace Green in the heart of the medieval city of Durham.

The built environment of the city was represented in cartography, painting, printed images and in literary and dramatic works. What were the physical and sensory characteristics of the urban environment? How did the material form of the city change? Especially important here is architectural form – civic, ecclesiastical, official and vernacular. How did urban and rural people read the urban landscape? Here we hope to draw on the insights of archaeological theory as well as on recent findings in post-medieval urban archaeology.

The distinctiveness of the urban experience will be explored. What were the effects of inter-urban trade and of trade and migration between town and countryside? What were the economics of urbanization? In what ways did urban labour differ from that in rural communities and how was it regulated? How did urban people understand customary law and access to common resources? How did civic remembrance connect with popular memory? How did religious conflict change cities and in what ways were confessional identities inflected by the urban experience?

Special emphasis will be placed upon the idea and practice of citizenship. Who did this term include and who was left out? In what ways were ideas about citizenship inflected by nationality, ethnicity, belief, class, gender, property, skill, schooling and age? How far were early modern ideas about citizenship reflective of classical ideals, and how did they connect to those of the late medieval period? To what extent did citizenship guarantee inclusion within the urban polity, and what rights and obligations came with that inclusion? In what ways did those excluded from citizenship nonetheless participate in the urban polity?

We invite proposals either for single papers or for 3-paper panels. Papers should last for 20 minutes, with half an hour at the end of each panel for discussion. Panels may be specific to a particular town or city, or might be national or international in scope, including New World urban centres. Potential subjects might include (but are not restricted to):

- Defining towns, cities and urban communities
- The urban environment and the urban landscape

- Perceptions of space and time
- Gender, age, household and citizenship
- Social relations and social conflicts
- Crime, authority, resistance and the law
- Civic identities and vernacular urban cultures
- Urban customary rights and common resources
- Urban political cultures and public spheres
- Work and leisure
- Print, literacy and education
- Cities and international trade and exchange
- Fuelling and feeding the city
- Migration and social mobility
- Urban parish identities and patterns of belief
- Monastic houses, cathedrals and religious authority
- Occupations, social structures and demographics
- Disease, famine, medicine, and social policy
- Siege warfare
- Urban revolt
- Art, architecture and civic portraiture

Proposals for 20-minute papers and full panels should be submitted to early.modern@durham.ac.uk by 1 November 2014. Replies will be sent in early December 2014. Details concerning travel and accommodation for both speakers and delegates will be made available around the same time. It is hoped that the conference will give rise to an edited volume of selected essays.