

The Antwerp Centre for Urban History and the EPIBEL-project invite you to a book presentation and debate

Daniel Curtis *Epidemic Disease and Society in the Premodern Low Countries. Inequality & Community.*

Routledge, 2026. Available in [Open Access](#)

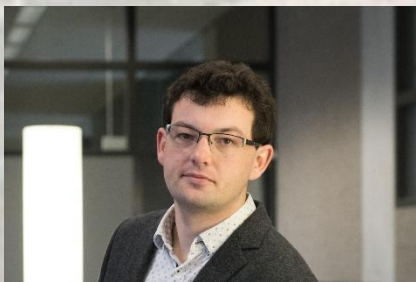
Where and When? UAntwerp, City Campus, SJ117, Thursday 28 May 2026, 14-16h

Registration? All welcome, but please register via this [link](#)

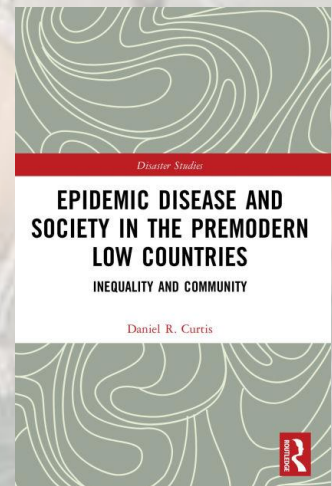
In this book, evidence from a long-run history of epidemic-society interaction in the Low Countries shows that most recurring outbreaks were accommodated by communities, and most reactions, responses, and changes seen were the product of frequent and incremental adaptations, sometimes in periods outside of epidemics.

Epidemics blur the distinction between the normal and the sub-normal. Accordingly, although

histories tend to emphasise epidemics' capacity to create sharp changes, deviations, or transitions within societies and economies, this book develops an alternative argument that the most relevant questions are not "how and why change", but given the substantial pressures of raised mortality, why was change often so modest? It brings together around five centuries' worth of existing and new evidence on epidemics and societal resistance, wealth redistribution, and women's experiences to support this interpretation.



Challenging conventional narratives about epidemics as agents of dramatic change, this book will be of interest to researchers examining historiographical debates about crisis and continuity in European history.



Program:

14u00: welcome with coffee (Tim Soens, UAntwerp)

14:10: presentation by the author, Daniel Curtis (Erasmus University Rotterdam)

14:40: Reflections on the book and the topic by Claire Weeda (Leiden University); Stef Espeel (UAntwerp) and Nicolò Zenaro (UAntwerp)

15:10: Response by the author

15:20: Q&A and debate

16:00: drinks @Agora

