

# **Revitalizing Air: More-than-Human Relations in Urban Health Beyond the Modern-Premodern Binary**

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## ***ABSTRACT ORIGINAL***

The cleanliness, mobility and quality of urban air has regained political legibility in debates on post-pandemic cities. To contextualize the political and epistemological significance of air in urban contexts, we suggest looking at the under-researched experience of premodern cities and bodies, how they developed a complex ecological imagination and solutions guided by findings from Hippocratic-Galenic medicine. While we do not romanticize these efforts, we argue that they represent an overlooked archive through which the post-Enlightenment mechanization, securitization and abstraction of air can be challenged. Turning to recent findings from both more-than-human thinking and microbiology as applied to air (aerobiome), we acknowledge that microbiome science is a result of laboratory science; however, we argue that findings from microbiome science point to a reanimation of air as something that cannot be fully instrumentalized or securitized as in modernistic programs of biopolitical control. By drawing on the on the experience of the Hippocratic tradition as a catalyst and a proxy for wider ontologies of flows and corporeal porosity across the Eurasian landmass, we suggest arriving at an affirmative reconceptualization of human-environment entanglement based on notions of permeability and a non-binary ontology of flows. This more-than-human approach may not only complicate the alleged simplistic view of the “West” as a dualistic monolith but act also as bridge and companion to Indigenous and Southern ontologies and experiences of life, non-life, matter and nature.

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