



## Introduction

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Abstract: This article reviews this issue's main goals: shedding light on the figure of the building contractor over a long period (from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century); focusing research on individuals rather than on businesses; paying more attention to "small contractors"; and drawing attention to the diversity of their occupations. After reviewing thought developed since the 1980s about the notion of the contractor, the authors' contributions are examined in light of recent historiography.

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