

Spaces and Practices of Leisure in Early Modern Europe (EAHN 2010 Guimaraes)

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Call for Papers

Spaces and Practices of Leisure in Early Modern Europe

European Architectural History Network, 1st International Meeting

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Leisure was a concept fundamental to the practices and spaces of early modern European society. Authors identified books to be studied at leisure, while architects designed increasingly codified urban and rural social spaces. Since at least the fourteenth century, leisure suggested time unoccupied by often public duties and responsibilities – time in which individuals could pursue entertainment, intellectual and spiritual enrichment, and physical relaxation. With the renewed fifteenth-century interest in Antiquity and the simultaneous shift from a landed feudal to a professional elite, the concept of leisure became both more formalized and more complex. It became associated particularly with wealthy elites, assumed learned connections to Antiquity, and encompassed more identifiable activities in particular spaces. Authors published books and poems describing the leisured elite life, while exclusive social circles moved in specific spaces from rural villas to urban pleasure grounds to late seventeenth-century royal palaces.

Intersections of shifting practices and spaces of leisure, however, have been studied primarily for the industrialized world and have remained split among leisure studies, cultural and social history, and analyses of building types. This session offers a more synthetic and interdisciplinary approach to early modern leisure; it invites papers concerning built spaces of leisure, landscape architecture, and visual and written depictions of villa life or other leisure activities. We particularly seek proposals that suggest new methodological approaches or that aim to re-evaluate long-standing approaches and arguments – for instance, through a new variety of sources or a study of social alongside architectural context. Themes of especial interest include: city-country connections, the relationship of interior to exterior leisure spaces, the villa's seemingly paradoxical role as working farm

and site of elite leisure, practices of hospitality and their connections to architectural design, changing social and architectural relationships of public to private, the role of the renewed interest in Classical Antiquity (eg, villa culture, notions of negotium/otium, and philosophical claims about contemplative v. active life), the commercialization of leisure, the role of gender, varying ideas of leisure with social class, court culture, and the relationship of regional to international in circulating ideas of leisure.

Please send abstracts of no more than 300 words (including applicant's name and affiliation), a short CV, and full contact information (email and postal addresses, telephone and fax numbers) by October 30, 2009 to: Dr. Freek Schmidt, Vrije Universiteit, De Boelelaan 1105, 1081 HV, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, f.schmidt@let.vu.nl tel: 0031 205986372, fax: 0031 205986500, and Dr. Kimberley Skelton, Brandeis University, 415 South Street, Waltham, MA, 02453, USA, tel: 001-443-253-5529, fax: 001-781-736-2672, KCSkelton@aol.com.

Further information on abstract submission and on the EAHN conference is available at: www.eahn.org.

Reference:

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