

Panel at ISCH (Rovaniemi, 16–19 Jun 25)

International Conference on Cultural History, University of Lapland, Rovaniemi,
Finland, Jun 16–19, 2025
Deadline: Jan 15, 2025

Christa Syrer

"Cultural Entanglements of Humans, Space, and Nature in the Cases of Early Modern Urban Heating and Cooling Practices"; a panel at the International Conference on Cultural History (ISCH 2025).

Max. 300-word abstract proposals are to be submitted via Submission Form (<https://auth.oxfordabstracts.com/?redirect=/stages/77153/submitter>) by the 15th of January at the latest.

Convenors:

Yunus Ugur, Marmara University, Istanbul / Freie Universität, Berlin;

Christa Syrer, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich,

Panel description

In the early modern period under the Little Ice Age, environmental and climatic conditions profoundly impacted city centers, prompting urban dwellers to develop diverse responses that reveal intricate cultural entanglements between humans and nature. This panel seeks to explore these interactions by examining heating and cooling practices in early modern urban centers.

Heating methods during cold periods and cooling strategies during hot seasons illustrate how people negotiated their relationship with nature within the urban environment. From sourcing heating materials like wood and coal, and cooling agents such as snow and ice from mountains and wells to their transportation, storage, distribution, and use in cities—these processes formed a complex cultural tapestry. Urban temperature and these practices influenced urban infrastructure, settlement patterns, architectural choices, material culture, literary expressions, clothing, and culinary traditions. They reflect both global cultural similarities and local differences, contributing to a rich cultural diversity.

Despite their significance, these human-nature-city relationships in the early modern period have been less studied, even within debates such as the Little Ice Age. Challenges such as low rates of urbanization and predominantly qualitative sources have limited research on this period, compared to the wealth of data available for the modern period.

This panel invites papers that use heating and cooling practices as a lens for understanding the cultural history of human-nature interactions in early modern cities. We welcome empirical case studies, comparative analyses, and theoretical discussions that illuminate how these practices shaped and were shaped by environmental, social, and cultural dynamics. This panel particularly invites contributions from scholars who are using digital humanities. Their use of digital data and

simulation can shed new light on these historical practices. By bringing together diverse perspectives, this panel aims to deepen our understanding of past environmental challenges and human responses, offering insights that resonate with current concerns about human-nature relations.

Important dates:

Call for individual papers: 2 December 2024 – 15 January 2025

Notification of acceptance for papers by 17 February 2025

Registration starts: 3 February 2025

Conference: 16–19 June 2025

<https://isch2025.com/cfp-2/>

Reference:

CFP: Panel at ISCH (Rovaniemi, 16-19 Jun 25). In: Arthist.net, Dec 20, 2024 (accessed Jan 22, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/43609>>.