

S13 USERS AND USES OF GREEN SPACES IN CITIES, 1800-2000

Organisers: Matti Hannikainen (University of Helsinki)
 Martina Fendt (Technische Universität Darmstadt, Germany)

Period: Modern/Contemporary

Date: Thursday, 30 August 2012

Time: 16:00-17:30

Room: 200

Description

Urban green spaces are not only defined by their material shape and the way they are incorporated into the urban fabric. To a large extent, green spaces have been constituted by how different groups of users have both perceived and used them. This session focuses on the evolving uses of urban green spaces and on how the different groups of users and other actors have defined these uses in a comparative European context from 1800 to 2000. Since the early 19th century, an increased diversity of green spaces like public parks, botanic gardens, sports areas, playing grounds, allotment gardens and nature conservation areas has induced a variety of using practices. Policies determining both planning and preservation of green spaces have favoured certain prospective users and uses, defining also corresponding concepts for intended uses like organized sports. However, the actual range of uses has not necessarily followed rationale of the planners. The variety of new kinds of urban green has enhanced more informal uses, even previously illegitimate ones. Thus, regulations, surveillance, and common conventions have influenced actions and debates, occasionally culminating into conflicts between different groups of users or even between them and municipal authorities.

This session explores transformations of uses of green spaces in context of societal changes and paradigm shifts in leisure and in urban planning. The organisers hope that papers should discuss at least one of the following questions: How have different types of green spaces been used for various leisure activities? How have rationales defining suitable uses of green spaces reflected and transformed anticipated uses, and if so, by whom? How have transformations of urban power reflected into uses and influenced modes of negotiation between different potential users? What has been the role of gender, class, race, ethnicity or age in the usage patterns? While urban development programmes and their propositions on green spaces have been investigated from various perspectives, both actual and intended uses need a more thorough analysis with a comparative approach. Therefore, exploring not only the changing materiality of green spaces, but also the ways they have been perceived and used focuses on a socially relevant dimension of cities.

This session invites scholars from various disciplines like historians, sociologists, geographers, planners and architects, to analyze the diverse and rich past of green spaces in European cities to share their insights and to foster a multidisciplinary discussion.

Scientific Programme

- 1363 CONFLICTING USES OF SOCIALIST URBAN GREEN SPACES – THE EXAMPLE OF THE GDR**
Harald Engler (Leibniz Institute For Regional Development And Structural Planning (Irs), Scientific Collections, Erkner, Germany)
- 1224 GENDER AND CLASS ISSUES IN RELATION TO URBAN SPACE AND GREEN AREAS IN SWEDEN C. 1940 TO 1970**
Catharina Nolin (Stockholm University, Art History, Stockholm, Sweden)
- 303 CONFLICTING USES, CONCEPTIONS & PERCEPTIONS OF URBAN GREEN SPACE. URBAN POLITICIANS VERSUS URBAN ACTION GROUPS, ANTWERP 1860-2010**
Bart Tritsmans (University of Antwerp, History, Antwerp, Belgium)