



**Call for papers  
"Food, court cultures and the world since 1850"**

The European Social Science History Conference (<http://www.iisg.nl/esshc/>) convenes researchers who tackle historical questions by using the methods of the social sciences. The ESSHC 2008 takes place in Lisbon (Portugal), from Wednesday February 27<sup>th</sup> up to and including Saturday March 1<sup>st</sup>. We would like to organize a session on *Food, court cultures and the world since 1850*.

After Louis XIV had invited her to dinner (in December 1674), la duchesse d'Orléans wrote to la duchesse de Hanover that because of that the *courtiers* admired everything she did, whether it was good or bad. Such close bond between food and social hierarchy has been emphasized since long. Scientifically, it was discovered through qualitative and quantitative inquiries in the second half of the nineteenth century, particularly with regard to differences between (and within) working-class households. Since then, anthropological, sociological and historical studies have confirmed this link (e.g. Bray, Dietler, Laurioux, Mennell). Moreover, this connection has been clearly situated within relations and negotiations of power. Food was (and is) used to mark borders, include or exclude people, construct identity and shape subtle, refined differences between groups, subgroups, and individuals.

We wish to explore to what extent this was also true within elites, and, more specifically, within court elites of the nineteenth century. What happened to court society *after* 1789, the chronological ending point of Norbert Elias' famous study *Die höfische Gesellschaft*? Could the food that was served at the court 'compete' with the food of the new fancy restaurant (that may be seen as the bourgeois locus of power)? Did food (still) create and maintain hierarchies at nineteenth-century courts? Who got invited to dinner by kings and queens, and did the table setting reflect contemporary social hierarchy? And how about the presumed bond between food and (social, economic, cultural, political) power?

We welcome papers that study the *power of food* at a (European) court in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is possible that the papers will be published after the conference in 2008. We are negotiating with a publisher. Abstracts should be approximately 250 characters. Both abstracts and papers should be written in English. Deadline for abstracts is **March 15<sup>th</sup> 2007**.

**Submission and information:**

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