



CAT-ference 2019 session proposal

Title: (Re-) Thinking European Memorials of Revolution

Description:

Memorials, as material components in European cities and landscapes, are selective actions to derive values and ideas from the past, authorize practices of commemoration and to transfer them to the present and future (Macdonald 2013). Strongly associated with one selected element from the past and expected to serve as infrastructure for commemoration only, memorials are often conceived as *mono-sectoral* and *stable heritage*. Yet memorials display and provoke a *diversity, fluidity* and *relationality* of values, interests and practices towards them, which are changeable in time, space and by content.

Of particular relevance for this session is the phenomena of contestation and (re-) construction of memorials, propelled by divers local to global actors and groups of actors, who are bounded in and relate themselves to specific time-space configurations and societal interdependencies (Danilova 2015:2). Often the purpose of memorials is accomplished and/or challenged by both interests and practices going beyond commemoration (e.g. touristification, heritagization), as well as by disinterest and ignorance in terms of unwillingness of later generations “to see the achievements of long gone generations as part of their own accomplishments” (Alois Riegel). The multiple and fluid perspectives on memorials thus propose to look at memorials as “products of collective memory work” (Macdonald 2013:1) and/or as assemblages of collected, often-conflicting values and practices, going beyond commemoration (Neugebauer et al. 2018) and authorized discourses.



Memorial of Podgarić (source: wiki commons)

As ruptures of societal order – including political regimes, institutions, values and routines – revolutions have often been not only among the selected moments to be commemorated, but also contested and modified. No matter if built-up or just envisioned, memorials of

revolution (re-)produce important elements from the past and present, and commemorate public and liminal cleavages in society and space. They are thus ever challenging pieces of heritage, since they ask two things at least - for awareness and knowledge, (self-) positioning and tolerance within the (local) societies as well as for practical approaches, how to deal with them in urban/ spatial development and planning. Even though there has been a broad attention focused on the European memorials and revolutions in general, much less has been researched about Europe's memorials of revolutions of the 20th and 21st century. This session thus intends to offer an interdisciplinary platform for a thorough (re-)consideration of Europe's memorials of revolution, with the following aims:

- to enrich the *conceptualization of memorials* as socio-material heritage and process within European societies and spaces marked by revolutions; and
- to gain insights into practical challenges and potentials to deal with memorial sites of revolution in urban/ spatial development and planning.

We particularly look forward to discussing and engaging with the following topics:

1_ Concepts and practices towards memorials of revolution, aiming to examine both the diversity and interplay of (local) actors, practices and concepts (i.e. interests, values and meaning) attached to memorials of revolution and the (local) contexts which enable, steer and hinder the various concepts and/ or practices of commemoration, contestation and those beyond (e.g. touristification, management), and

2_ Memorials of revolution as junctures of past, presence and future, aiming to question the rhythmicity, path-dependencies of changing and continuous concepts, practices and actors linked to the memorials of revolution. Here we would also welcome discussions on socialist memorials in times of capitalism; evolving discourses and institutions of memorial management; persistence, change and modification of practices of commemoration; visions for the future, e.g. in planning and marketing etc.

We look forward to receiving empirically informed and theory-based abstracts (300 words max.) tackling one or several of the aforementioned topics by **April, 4th 2019**. Full paper submissions of **app. 3000 words** are welcomed **by August 10th, 2019**. It is intended to publish contributions of the conference session. We are interested in submissions from all disciplinary backgrounds and parts of Europe.

Session Organisers:

Carola S. Neugebauer
RWTH Aachen, Germany
Email: carola.neugebauer@rwth-aachen.de

Nebojša Čamprag
TU Darmstadt, Germany
Email: camprag@stadt.tu-darmstadt.de

Lana Lovrenčić
NGO Office for Photography, Zagreb, Croatia
Email: lovrencicl@gmail.com

References:

- Danilova, Nataliya (2015). *The Politics of War Commemoration in the UK and Russia*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan Memory studies.
- Macdonald, Sharon (2013). *Memorylands: Heritage and Identity in Europe Today*. London: Routledge.
- Neugebauer, Carola & Music, Edita (2018). Erinnerungen schützen, nutzen, managen? Überlegungen zur Gedenkstätte Kadinjača in Serbien. In: Christoph Michels, Rozbeh Asmani, Clarisaa Blum-Jung (eds): *Erinnerung. Studien zu Konstruktionen, Persistenzen und gesellschaftlichem Wandel*. Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh.