

Nachwuchstagung

Built Environment and Mnemonic Landscapes in Post-Independence Croatia



Date: 5 – 9 May 2025

Venue: Zagreb, Croatia

Organising committee:

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Language: English

Topic

Yugoslav socialism collapsed in the early 1990s during the Yugoslav Wars. In Croatia, a government followed that endeavoured to eliminate any continuity with the previous regime. In this interdisciplinary event, we will use approaches from cultural anthropology, cultural history and media studies to examine which materialities of past regimes have survived capitalism and are still relevant. In doing so, we ask questions about the reasons and circumstances of destruction and active maintenance that go beyond explicit ideological positioning.

The event will cover three areas:

- Monuments and the culture of remembrance
- Residential architecture and public infrastructure
- The aftermath of empire and socialism

Notes on the event

The course is mostly held in English, especially during group excursions in Zagreb and Vukovar, with guest lecturers from the surrounding area. Relevant texts will be circulated in advance.

The costs for the bus journey to and from Vukovar will be covered by the Southeast Europe Association; participants must pay for all other costs (including flights, accommodation and food) themselves.

Arrival is recommended for Sunday, 4 May. Departure on Saturday, 10 May, or on Sunday, 11 May, if desired, to take part in optional excursions to Spomen-područje Dotrščina and Maksimir Park.



Registration

To register, please send an e-mail to the conference committee's members.

MONDAY, 5 MAY 2025

Building, experiencing, and undoing imperial spaces

08:15 Meeting point: „by the horse“, Trg bana Josipa Jelačića

09:00–11:00 Guided city tour – “Building imperial space: Architects, finances, crises”

11:30–12:00 Group work: Experiencing public spaces in Zagreb's city center
Working in five groups with historical sources and on-site observations: How were public spaces and green areas in Zagreb developed? How did citizens perceive them? What remains today in terms of material substance and use? What transformations have taken place?

12:00–13:00 Lunch

13:00–15:00 Group work

15:00–17:30 Group presentations

18:30 Movie and pizza night, University of Zagreb

Guiding literature:

- *Eve Blau: „Modernizing Zagreb: The Freedom of the Periphery“, in: Jan C. Behrends, Martin Kohlrausch: Races to Modernity: Metropolitan Aspirations in Eastern Europe, 1890–1940, CEU Press, Budapest/New York, 2014, 289–312.*
- *Dragan Damjanović: “In the Shadow of Budapest (and Vienna)–Architecture and Urban Development of Zagreb in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries”, Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung, 67, 4, 2018, 522–551.*

TUESDAY, 6 MAY 2025

Socialist modernism today

08:30 Meeting point: tram stop „Frankopanska“ close to Pekarnica Britanac. Ride with tram 14 to stop “Velesajam”

09:30–10:30 Socialism in pre-socialist working-class neighborhood: BLOK and the Trešnjevka Neighborhood Museum. Reading with author Maša Kolanović

10:30–12:00 Neomodernism: Museum of Contemporary Art – Geschichte des Museums and Besuch der “Futures”-Ausstellung

12:00–13:00 Lunch, Avenue Mall Zagreb

13:00–13:30 Mamutica Plateau – making space for greenery, art, community, commerce

13:00–14:30 Everyday modernism: tour through district Dugave with Tamara Bjažić Klarin

15:00–16:30 “Neglected Modernism”: Audio guided tour through Zagrebački velesajam (Zagreb Fair)

Guiding literature:

- *Vladimir Kulić: “Architecture and Ideology in Socialist Yugoslavia”, Unfinished Modernisations: Between Utopia and Pragmatism, Udruženje hrvatskih arhitekata/Croatian Architects’ Association, Zagreb, 2012, 36–63.*
- *Maša Kolanović, Underground Barbie.*

WEDNESDAY, 7 MAY 2025

Croatia beyond Zagreb – Time travel and frozen time (Vukovar)

08:30 Meeting point: Palmotićeve ul. / Vlaška ul. At Good Food Centar. Bus ride to Vukovar, 30 min break halfway

12:00–13:30 Dealing with the recent past – Historical trauma and memorialisation of the 1991 Fall of Vukovar. Visit to the memorial site and the mass grave Ovčara

13:30–14:30 Lunch

14:30–15:15 Learning from the dead or telling the dead how to behave? Visit to the Memorial Cemetery for the Victims of the Homeland War

15:30–16:15 Architectural symbolism. Visit to the Vukovar water tower (Vukovarski vodotoranj)

16:30–18:30 “The Hero City” or the “Martyr City”. Guided tour through the centre of Vukovar

18:30–19:30 Dinner, Restaurant Stari vodotoranj

Approx. 20:15 Arrival at the accommodation, Otočki virovi, Otok

Guiding literature:

- *Siniša Glavašević: Geschichten aus Vukovar/Priče iz Vukovara.*
- *Marta Zorko: „Divided Space or Divided Society? The Case of Vukovar”, in: Valentin Mihaylov (Hrsg.), Spatial Conflicts and Divisions in Post-socialist Cities, Springer, Cham, 2020, 75–89.*
- *euronews (deutsch): „Vukovar: ‚Wie Salz, das man in eine Wunde streut““, YouTube, 08. November 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FKQju7HMGk>.*

THURSDAY, 8 MAY 2025

Croatia at war with its past – Dealing with spomenici

09:00 Departure from Otočki virovi

09:45–10:15 Visit to the Dudik Memorial Park
<https://www.spomenikdatabase.org/vukovar>

09:45–10:15 Group work

Participants will be divided into four groups, and each group will be assigned to visit and evaluate a memorial site in the Vukovar city centre using Ana Milošević’s CAF model (see required texts). These sites include the memorial cross on the Danube, the busts of Franjo Tuđman and Jean-Michel Nicolier on the main square, murals on Trg slavija (15-minute walk from the centre), and the Vukovar Hospital. What are the main visual elements of each monument? What story is told and who allows it to be told? What are the main characteristics, actors (who is remembered and who is remembering), and features of this space? Teams will then report their findings before lunch.

12:30–13:30 Lunch

13:45–15:00 Borovo and memories of work in Yugoslavia. Visit to Borovo naselje

15:00 Departure for Zagreb

17:15–18 Uhr Confronting the legacy of the fascist Independent State of Croatia. Visit to Jasenovac memorial site and Stone Flower monument
<https://www.spomenikdatabase.org/jasenovec>

18:00–20:00 Drive to Zagreb incl. a break for dinner

20:00–20:30 Arrival in Zagreb

Relevant literature

- Ana Milošević: „Hunting down monuments: the CAF model—characteristics, actors, and functions“, in: Maria Mälksoo (Hrsg.), *Handbook on the Politics of Memory*, Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, 2023, 228–245.
- Todor Klujčić: *Umkämpfte Vergangenheiten: Die Kultur der Erinnerung im postjugoslawischen Raum*. Verbrecher Verlag, Berlin, 2010, 151–173.
- Ljiljana Radonić: „The Europeanization of Memory at the Jasenovac Memorial Museum,“ in: Gorana Ognjenović und Jasna Jozelić (Hrsg.), *Nationalism and the Politicization of History in the Former Yugoslavia*, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2021, 73–93.

FRIDAY, 9 MAY 2025

Temporal collapse in the city of the dead

09:00 Meeting point “by the horse”. Ride to the Mirogoj cemetery

9:30–12:00 Visit to the Mirogoj cemetery and groupwork

In groups, participants will visit various memorials and graves in the Mirogoj cemetery that relate to different political and temporal regimes – from the Habsburg period, the Independent State of Croatia, socialist Yugoslavia and post-independence Croatia. As in previous exercises, the purpose is to evaluate how these periods are remembered (or forgotten) in a space that attempts to preserve the memory of the dead, even where enemies are buried side by side. What visual elements are present on these monuments or graves, how well are they maintained, are they visited by others, and what phrases are present that might indicate a particular political narrative or orientation? We will reassemble at 12pm by the grave of President Franjo Tuđman to discuss our findings.

12:30–13:00 Lunch

13:30–16:00 Joint reflexion: Future and nostalgia

Relevant texts

- Ingeborg Matečić, Petra Rajić Šikanjić und Ana Perinić Lewis: “The potential of forgotten and hidden Zagreb historical cemeteries in the design of ‘dark’ tourist experiences”, *Journal of Heritage Tourism* 16 (4), 2021, 450–486.

- Carol S. Lilly: “Communities of the Dead: Secularizing Cemeteries in Communist Yugoslavia”, *The Slavonic and East European Review* 97 (4), 2019, 676–710.

SATURDAY, 10 MAY 2025

Departure. Or alternatively:

10:00 Meeting point “by the horse”. Ride to Spomen-područje Dotrščina

11:00–13:00 Walk through Dotrščina

<https://www.spomenikdatabase.org/dotrscina>

13:30–15:00 Picnic/walk through Maksimir park

Evening: Antifascist bonfire night / “Trnjanski kresovi” for the 80th anniversary of Zagreb’s liberation (8 May 1945)

<https://peoplesdispatch.org/2024/05/06/zagrebs-anti-fascist-flame-a-decade-of-liberation-celebrations-and-resistance/>

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