

CITY &  
MEMORY

28-29  
October  
2021

International  
conference

**CITY & MEMORY**  
CALL FOR PAPERS

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A deeper historic consciousness of the masses has developed since the time of Enlightenment, which found its expression in thriving historical science and in the creation of memory cultures. Memory is today one of the leading research categories in humanities. It helps to analyse how normative and formative forms of the past were constructed.

An act of remembrance could take the form of, e.g. the (re)construction of a bygone past in historical works, collecting and exhibiting artefacts, building a monument or edifice, or a municipal commemoration ceremony. The role of the media of remembrance could be played, among others, by cultural goods which then served as tools for mediating the memory of the past, or as the inspiration for creating new narratives. The multiculturalism of cities in Central and Eastern Europe meant that building a dominant culture of memory and the related process of forgetting stimulated the emergence of other, alternative cultures of memory, as well as individual and group "counter-memory" basing on this ethnic, religious and cultural variety.

The culture of memory, defined as "all sorts of texts, images and photos, paintings, monuments, constructions, ceremonies, rituals along with symbolic and mythic forms of expression [...]" (Christoph Cornelißen), filled and fills to a large extent the public sphere. The co-founders of this culture: rulers, politicians, officials, architects, artists, writers, historians, conservationists, along with its users, drew from the treasury of the past, described history, commemorated, cultivated traditions and restructured urban space. By doing this, they were constantly making adaptations, reinterpreting, compiling, practicing bricolage and pastiche, looking for analogies and adapting to old traditions that were being newly discovered. These practices of memory were linked by an orientation towards the needs of the present and future of a given group. They were also part of what we now call "identity politics", or a political strategy to construct or strengthen group togetherness with the help of the manipulation of beliefs related to a sense of common identity.

## ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The aim of the conference is to examine different manifestations of the existence and development of memory cultures in the context of towns and cities of Central and East-Central Europe since the end of the eighteenth century. We invite general historians, art and architecture historians, and cultural researchers to submit proposals for papers on the following issues:

- constructing, practicing and imposing memory cultures in towns and cities, as well as the social agency of different types of media of remembrance (memorial plaques, museums and exhibitions, monuments, historical works, etc.);
- the influence of the memory cultures on urban local, national, religious, ethnic, gender, etc. identities, and on the creation of new cultural codes;
- creating a popular idea of heritage and the relations between the phenomena of place identity and group identity;
- memory cultures and the historically sensitive identities as a weapon in the political struggle for the legitimacy of power and spatial hegemony, for the right to exist of various communities and for the creation of separate spatial and social structures, often inaccessible from the outside (ghettoization, gentrification);
- and finally, the question of whether towns and cities created their own cultures of memory independent of states (through, e.g., city museums, monuments and plaques, the contents of exhibitions, book collections, etc.).

The conference will take place on **21-22 October 2021** online via the program **Zoom**. The conference languages will be English and Polish. Applications (max. one page including a short CV) should be submitted by **1 May 2021** to: [urbanhistory@ihpan.edu.pl](mailto:urbanhistory@ihpan.edu.pl). Guests should register by 1 October 2021 through the conference website [ihpan.edu.pl/city-and-memory](http://ihpan.edu.pl/city-and-memory). Admission decisions will be announced by 1 June 2021. Afterwards, the conference referees will be kindly asked to submit full texts written in English. The texts will make up a book, which will be a new reflection on the issue of towns/cities and memory in the region in question. The manuscript will be sent to one of the leading Anglo-Saxon scholarly publishers.

**Conference languages:**

English and Polish

**Conference organisers:**

T. Manteuffel Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences

Gdynia City Museum

**Organisation committee:**

- Prof. Jacek Friedrich
- Dr. Aleksander Łupienko

**Conference committee:**

- Prof. Maciej Janowski
- Prof. Rafał Makąła
- Prof. Włodzimierz Mędrzecki
- Prof. Małgorzata Omilanowska
- Prof. Jacek Purchla
- Prof. Magdalena Saryusz-Wolska
- Prof. Krzysztof Stefański
- Dr. Marek Stępa
- Prof. Agnieszka Zabłocka-Kos