

CALL for PAPERS

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INTERNATIONAL INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE

Urban Narratives: Rebuilding and Rebranding European Cities from the 20th Century until Present Day

October 19-20, 2023

Venue: Herder-Institute for Historical Research on East Central Europe, Marburg, Gisonenweg 5-7
The conference will be organized as hybrid event by the UrbanMetaMapping Research Consortium

“Fall in love with Warsaw”, „Dresden – amazingly different“, “Liverpool. Do it your way” these are just a few examples of contemporary promotional slogans of European cities that suffered extreme damage due to World War II and therefore had to reinvent themselves from almost scratch.

Throughout history, city planners, architects, inhabitants, and politicians had to respond and adjust to caesuras caused by humankind (war) or forces of nature (extreme climate phenomena). Both man-made and natural destruction pose a threat to a city's structure and appearance but can also be a chance for its renewal. But whose intentions and voice are heard in this process? Already early tourist guidebooks sold a certain “vibe” by fostering or changing preexisting images, city authorities refer to the livability to attract new inhabitants and businesses while literature and arts often establish counter-narratives. And recently, visitors add their personal view by posts in social media.

Based on the idea of a city being a rhizomatic entity, the conference aims at exploring different visions on the development of European cities whose identity has been challenged by political, military, natural or social conflicts. We wish to bring these discourses together with marginalized voices of the urban narrative that subvert the usual hierarchies in city development in order to address the needs of other groups in an urban society.

This conference is organized within the research consortium UrbanMetaMapping that investigates

urban development as a cultural practice of transformation. After the 2021 conference “Cartographies of Catastrophes” and the 2022 conference “Mapping post-conflict city”, the third conference aims at contrasting official and subversive processes in city development and therefore invites papers dealing with questions such as

- › How do manmade and natural conflicts affect cityscapes, self-image, and perceptions of a town?
- › What are the current challenges for European cities? How do they influence the city's narrative and self-branding in different media?
- › Which strategies do city authorities (building, planning, tourism, marketing) follow to create a certain character of the town? How are these policies perceived by locals?
- › What are examples of local initiatives to influence a city's or a neighborhood's character?
- › What is the relation between textual, cartographic and visual perspectives on city planning?
- › What are the current challenges for disciplines dealing traditionally with urban changes (critical cartography, urban planning, architecture, heritage and conservation)?

We particularly look forward to proposals from the field of history, literature, urban studies, language and cultural studies, history of arts, architecture, critical cartography, and digital humanities. Also, projects on the intersection of disciplines and with a comparative approach are highly appreciated.

Funding: We expect to cover accommodation as well as travel costs. However, we wish to give priority to participants whose institutions cannot offer financial support. We appreciate a short note about needed refunding and the preferred mode of participation (on site or online) upon submission of your proposal.

Application

Please send a short proposal (300 words max.) together with a biographical note and your contact data (email, phone, affiliation) to forum@herder-institut.de until March 19.

Notification of acceptance will be given by April 24.

For further information please contact: elisa-maria.hiemer@herder-institut.de

<https://urbanmetamapping.uni-bamberg.de/conf/UNC/>



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