

[CfP for the session '6.11 From indifference to selective destruction: equivocal approaches to historic urban spaces during the interwar period' in AISU Conference, 6-10 Sept 2022, Turin, Italy](#)

Announcement published by Mesut Dinler on Wednesday, March 30, 2022

Type:

Call for Papers

Date:

September 6, 2022 to September 10, 2022

Location:

Italy

Subject Fields:

Archaeology, Architecture and Architectural History, Environmental History / Studies, Urban History / Studies, Historic Preservation

We are organizing a session for the International AISU (Associazione Italiana di Storia di Urbana) Conference which will take place in Turin (Piedmonte), Italy between September 6-10, 2022 under the theme *Adaptive Cities through the Post-Pandemic Lenses: Times and Challenges in Urban History*. We are also planning a publication following the conference.

The session theme is inserted below. We are looking forward to receiving contributions.

Regards,

Mesut Dinler (Politecnico di Torino), Pinar Aykac Leidholm (Middle East Technical University), Elif Selena Ayhan Koçyiğit (Başkent University)

From indifference to selective destruction: equivocal approaches to historic urban spaces during the interwar period

The interwar period generated a context where a conscious approach towards historic urban space is clearly manifested. This interest, to a certain extent, was a response to the traumatic destruction of the WWI, yet urban spaces, particularly public spaces were also the showcases of rising nationalism and nation-making efforts in the aftermath of the fall of empires. The same period also reveals a major shift in the conceptualisation of historic cities as heritage sites. Thus, the interwar period demonstrates an ambivalent approach towards historic cities where one can trace both the nationalist agenda to transform the urban space and the preservationist attitude emerged from the aftermath of the WWI. The current scholarship particularly evaluates the destruction and/or preservation of historic cities as if they are diametrically opposed, representing opposite ends with opposite goals, operating within the same set of socio-political, economic, and cultural dynamics. The preservationist interventions during the interwar period, however, can be considered as selective destructions during peacetime considering their effects on collective identity of varying groups in the process of nation-building.

Citation: Mesut Dinler. *CfP for the session '6.11 From indifference to selective destruction: equivocal approaches to historic urban spaces during the interwar period' in AISU Conference, 6-10 Sept 2022, Turin, Italy*. H-Announce. 05-27-2022.

<https://networks.h-net.org/node/73374/announcements/10032231/cfp-session-611-indifference-selective-destruction-equivocal>

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In this session, we invite contributions that critically investigate the complexities of urban conservation during the interwar period by considering the counter-narratives of selective destruction and preservation during peacetime. Acknowledging the reciprocity of preservation and selective destruction, the session explores how societal conflicts emerged, were controlled, and challenged by the interventions to historic cities that did not necessarily arise from wars or destructions but from a relatively more peaceful context. We invite papers that address, but are not limited to, the equivocal approaches to historic public spaces with nationalist agendas ranging from indifference to selective destruction. Papers may address such questions as: How can preservation and selective (or sometimes 'creative') destruction be understood as dialectical processes in the remaking of historic urban spaces? What are the underlying socio-political, cultural, or ideological motives behind the remaking of historic urban spaces? How are preservation and selective destruction processes appropriated, negotiated, or contested by different groups?

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