

CFP: IASTE 2018, "The Politics of Tradition" - Abstract submission deadline 6 November 2017

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Type:

Call for Papers

Date:

November 6, 2017

Location:

Portugal

Subject Fields:

Architecture and Architectural History, Cultural History / Studies, Geography, Sociology, Urban History / Studies

"The Politics of Tradition" is the theme of the sixteenth conference of the International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments (IASTE) to be held in Coimbra, Portugal from October 4-7, 2018.

Past IASTE conferences have dealt with themes as diverse as Value, Myth, Utopia, Border and many others. This conference intends to prolong this collective reflection by foregrounding an examination of the ways in which the domain of the political and traditions in and of the built environment are intertwined. While the political in traditions has always been part of the debate at IASTE conferences, at a time of struggles globally around the meaning and the practices of political participation in making the built environment, it is valuable to address how the built environment has been shaped by state apparatuses or by citizens to advance diverse political positions, often deploying imaginaries of tradition, purportedly rejecting emerging spatial practices and political subjectivities.

Consequently, the conference will offer reflections both on the importance of the concept of tradition for the political question in itself and on the ways in which variants of governance structures face the question of tradition in the built environment. Participants are encouraged to question the practice of tradition in the production of space in relation to different regimes of politics. In addition, the conference will examine the systems of politics as a category of tradition, reflecting on how the construction and deconstruction of professional political bodies act on the built environment.

As in past IASTE conferences, scholars and practitioners from architecture, architectural history, art history, anthropology, archeology, folklore, geography, history, planning, sociology, political science, urban studies, and related disciplines are invited to submit papers that address one of the following tracks:

Track I: Traditions of Everyday Social Practices and the Shaping of Architecture and Urbanism

Papers in this track will be attentive to how everyday practices of the built environment, or the creation and recreation of the built environment by citizens, continuously produce and reproduce orders of the political, as well as political subjectivities. Emphasis will be given to the contestations between different groups under accelerating neoliberalization; how these dynamics have been

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reshaping the political landscapes around the world today. How does urban informality interact productively with the state apparatus in the shaping of politics, notably at a time of material struggles around the role of migrants in Europe and elsewhere? How are spaces, both urban and virtual, practiced everyday or through events of insurgence in ways that condition political futures? How do actual practices of housing and urbanity resist and subvert expert imaginations of the political? Papers in this track may confront everyday social practices and their impact on institutional politics.

Track II: Theorizing the Political from the Spaces of Traditional Environments

Contemporary research in political science and related fields rarely consider actual built environments or the implications for understanding the political in relationship to theories of space. This may also include the politics of contestation of traditional environments and their consumption in the process of nation building. Papers in this track will address how contemporary theories of the political or of democracy, in their diversity, can learn from built environment research dealing with tradition, particularly in the cities of the global South where the majority of humans live today under conditions of neoliberalism, mass migration, and a refugee crisis. Papers also addressing the funding conditions of public infrastructure and urban renewal around the world are welcome.

Track III: The Political in Tradition and Place: An Open Track

Papers in this track will explore how tradition is deployed in architecture and in planning to support prospective imaginations of the urban that are integral to situated political-economic regime projects. Papers in this track will also address the traditions of development practices and their impact on the formation of the contemporary state and its apparatus, including in former colonial spaces, for example through the establishment of networks of standardized spaces like parks, schools, and administrative buildings. Papers considering the persistences of a rationality of colonialism in the ways in which traditions are deployed in political projects, through flexible modes of valuation or rejection of tradition, are encouraged. Papers also addressing the impact of movements like "Brexit" and "American first" on the built environment are particularly welcome.

Scholars from relevant disciplines are invited to submit a 500-word abstract and short biography by November 6, 2017. Submission details are available online at: <http://iaste.berkeley.edu/conferences/2018-conference/>

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