
Editorial
Uvodnik
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Neža Čebtron Lipovec
Univerza na Primorskem, Slovenija
neza.cl@fhs.upr.si

Discussing heritage and memory, together or separately, has been a central topic over the last two decades in humanities, the social sciences and elsewhere. To the point that it has almost become a buzz word. While memory studies experienced a first boom about two decades ago (see Berliner 2005), interest in heritage first experienced a boom in the 1980s (Lowenthal 1995; Harrison 2013). However, in the last decade or so there has been an impressive global growth in interest, including from other disciplines such as the natural sciences (see Wienberg 2021). Currently, different fields are addressing topical issues. In heritage studies, scholarship is engaging in topics centred on climate change and the Anthropocene. Likewise, the field of memory studies has been expanding with interstitial subjects. For example, environmental history has developed concepts such as “slow memory” (Wüstenberg 2023). At the same time, an established and flourishing perspective in the field of anthropology of memory deals with absence and silence (Trouillot 2015; Baussant 2002; Baussant 2021b; Hrobat Virloget 2023). The latter intersects with topical issues in the field of critical heritage studies, namely that of affect and emotion (Smith, Wetherell and Campbell 2018), along with issues concerning the trajectories of (mis)recognition in heritage discourses. Meanwhile, a recent branch of critical heritage studies is focusing on conceptualising the heritage-border and border-straddling (Harvey 2023), with a call for the reconceptualization of both

core concepts, and also of the role of liminalities, bordering practices, transnationalism and the agonism. These broad themes set the framework for thematic issue 2023/II of the *Studia Universitatis Hereditati Scientific Journal*.

The issue gathers together seven papers prepared by colleagues from different fields (anthropology, political sciences, geography, history, architectural history) who participated in a bilateral project of the Proteus research programme named *Pasts without history and displaced histories of people without traces*, led by leading scholars in the field of anthropology of memory, Michèle Baussant and Katja Hrobat Virloget. The project dealt with the effects of mass depopulations and repopulations, and the consequent radical socio-economic and political transformations. As the project leaders underscored, the intent was to shed light on “the crossed and parallel social constructions of the presence and absence of the other and, therefore, the self” (Baussant 2021a). Since the existing displacement of population analyses were often confined to epistemologies of single disciplines, the Proteus project tried to grasp them together through concepts such as landscape, lived space, home-making, history, objects, practices, and language, this way challenging binary national identities. A transversal concept that emerges from the interstices of memory, places, and heritage is that of borders and borderlands, mobile, liquid, imagined, or simply newly-made through bordering processes.

The project included the organisation of several symposia (Prague, June 2021; Paris, March 2022; Koper/Capodistria, October 2022, etc.) and two webinars. One webinar was dedicated to memory, heritage and the built environment, entitled “Walking through spaces/traces of the past(s)” (guests included the sociologist Olga Sezneva and the architect Gruia Badescu), and the other was dedicated to the issue of the Roma holocaust in the Czech republic, entitled “Space(s) and politics of memory: the Roma holocaust in the Czech Republic” (with guests Yasar Abu Ghosh, Alenka Janko Spreizer and Nina Ludlová). The webinars were organised by the junior researchers in the project team. It was the work of this group of emerging professionals that led to this thematic issue being proposed. There was the wish to record some of the research that had been carried out related to the project and that had not yet been published, as well as to promote established research beyond solely national frameworks.

The first article, by the anthropologist Michèle Baussant, is the result of an autoethnographic reflection of several years of research on the absent and/or silenced memory of displaced people, namely the French-speaking inhabitants expelled from Algeria after the independence war in 1959, and especially of their descendants. The article unveils personal and family attachments to lost places in the “hometown” of Algiers in Algeria, through the use of “broken language” and inherited attachment and perception of toponymy and sense of place. The imaginary presences, as felt by the second generation, are investigated mainly through the combination of French and Arabic, as well as through the use of local denominations of places from Algeria, transposed to France. By revisiting the linguistic, spatial and temporal cartography of attachments and detachments among displaced people, the article illustrates the role of rupture and reinvented continuity.

The anthropologist Maria Kokkinou presents a forgotten chapter from Europe’s history, as she deals with the memory, memorialisation

and heritageisation of the temporary presence (or passage, or crossing) of Greek refugees in Czechoslovakia in the 1950s and 1960s. After the Greek Civil War, alliances within the communist parties enabled the refugees from Greece to find refuge in different countries of the Eastern Bloc and other Soviet-influenced countries. In some countries, this temporary presence is now acknowledged and heritageised, while in others it is not. This is the case of the present-day Czech Republic and the town of Těchonín, a site of former barracks transformed into a temporary convalescent home for 600 Greek refugees. A particularity of this research lies in the fact that it was conducted in 2021, during the COVID pandemic. The fact that only one interlocutor was found indicates that memorial discourse about this historical phenomenon is absent. As a result, the interlocutor’s personal photographs turn out to be the only monuments that serve as a reminder of this past presence.

Greece, its contested northern border with Albania and the related memorialisation and heritageisation processes, are the focus of the paper by the geographer Pierre Sintès. The paper presents the region called Thesprotia in Greece and Chameria in Albania, marked by historical turmoil, population change, and the consequent polarisation of national discourses. Particular attention is paid to the different trajectories of these discourses within the border society and its many groups, namely that of the Chams, the large Albanian-speaking community, which disappeared from the western section of the Greek-Albanian border after WWII, but has been reactivated as a central memory politics topic since the fall of the communist regime in Albania and the daily migration of Albanian workers to Greece. A particular theme that emerges from the analysis is the role of past violence and its impact on the structuring of memory narratives. The paper derives from years-long research and fieldwork since the early 2010s, presented here in an ex-post outlook.

Catherine Perron, an expert in political sciences, presents a complex reflection on the

permanent exhibition of the recently inaugurated Documentation Centre for Displacement, Expulsion, Reconciliation in Berlin by focusing on the approaches and discourses presenting the issue of the “flight and expulsion of the Germans”. It then compares different types of museums (*Heimatismuseum*, *Landesmuseum*), not from a museological perspective, but through the lens of political history and anthropology. By looking at which objects are presented and how, it addresses the question of presenting loss, absence and violence, and their roles within the different narratives. It concludes with a double critical thought, first by challenging the format of such space between memorial, museum, archive, and meeting place. Secondly, it questions the aim and effect of such new interpretations of difficult history and silenced memories that raise awareness about the issue in an empathic way within the wider society, but do so at the expense of shedding light on the specificities of the flight and expulsion processes.

The last three papers are dedicated to issues of historic and current memorialisation narratives in the contested region of Istra/Istria, on the border between Slovenia and Italy. The historian Petra Kavrečič reflects on the impact of the bordering process on people’s everyday lives. She focuses on the early post-WWII period in Istria, by analysing the effects of a new Yugoslav-Italian border – established after 1945 and again in 1954 – on everyday life, as well as the economic and social interactions among local inhabitants. From the perspective of social history, she analyses the process of “bordering” and the new political division that affected the northern Istrian territory. Key attention is placed on how past interconnections and relations changed radically and were interrupted after the establishment of the new, previously non-existing border. It reveals especially how communication, cooperation and exchange of goods were able to continue when the border caused a strong territorial division.

The historian Aleksej Kalc and the architectural historian Neža Čebren Lipovec present an

interdisciplinary case study about the role of the school, as an institution and as architecture, in the framework of the post-WWII establishment of the Slovene state, within the Yugoslav federation, in the historically multicultural and contested borderland region of Istria, between Italy and Slovenia. Two primary schools in the city of Koper/Capodistria are at the core of the analysis. The older of the two schools was built in 1951 and was the first post-war school that initially hosted pupils of both Slovene and Italian mother tongues, and was promoted as a symbol of the brotherhood of the two cohabiting ethnicities, under the aegis of the communist ideology. Yet, since the educational system was a primary tool for re-establishing the region’s Slovene identity, after the final integration of the region into Slovenia and Yugoslavia in 1954, the school became a central space for (re)creating the Slovene and Yugoslav identity of the northern Istrian urban space. The article ends with a reflection on the heritage significance of these buildings and the institution itself, especially since both of the two first post-war schools were torn down 15 years ago.

The last paper is provided by a young researcher from the field of history, Leon Vrtovec, whose contribution comes from outside the aforementioned Proteus project. The paper is dedicated to elucidating the circumstances and factors that contributed to the erection of the monument to Nazario Sauro in Koper/Capodistria in the 1930s, during the Kingdom of Italy. Nazario Sauro was a sailor and a soldier, an active Italian irredentist who was born in Koper/Capodistria under Austria and was hanged by the Austrian authorities for having deserted the army. As a result, he was considered a martyr and became a central symbol of the Italian national struggle in Istria. The analysis provides a detailed account of the central personalities of the fascist regime, from Rome to the local authorities who influenced the decision about the site and symbolism of this central landmark in the ethnically contested region of Istria, perceived during fascism as the “finally redeemed Italian

land”. The erection of this monumental marker of space also performed several interventions in the historic tissue, adjusting the public space to the representational needs of the fascist regime.

The seven contributions reflect the variety of disciplines involved and their related epistemologies and methodologies, in analysing the interlinks between memory and heritage. A particularity that occurs in most of these texts, however, is that they tackle cases of displaced populations or re-settled areas, leading to the question of what and when was memorialised and heritageised, and which trajectories of (mis)recognition these processes imply? In other words, what was chosen to be remembered, and what concealed, forgotten, silenced, and therefore which sites, objects, material traces or practices were claimed as heritage and by whom. Hence, the analyses presented here invite the reader to reflect upon the large span of concepts (and the cases that illustrate them) between contested, dissonant, silenced and erased memories and heritages, and on different scales – from local to global. The issues raised by all the papers finally converge in questioning the role of borders, their mobility and (in)visibility.

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