



VYTAUTAS
MAGNUS
UNIVERSITY
MCMXXII



International Commission for History of Towns
Commission Internationale pour l'Histoire des Villes
Internationale Kommission für Städtegeschichte

Dichotomies of Urban History

Forgetting and Remembering the Past in Urban History

International Conference



10-12 September 2026
Kaunas, Lithuania

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PROGRAMME

9 September

17.00-19.00	ICHT Board meeting (Faculty of Humanities, Vytautas Magnus University, 313 room, V. Putvinskio g. 23)
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10 September (Kaunas City Hall, Rotušės a. 15)

9.00-9.15	Opening ceremony INETA DABAŠINSKIENĖ, Rector of Vytautas Magnus University ROSA SMURRA, President of International Commission for History of Towns SIMONAS JAZAVITA, Director of Kaunas City Museum
9.15-11.30	I Section chaired by ROSA SMURRA MICHAEL L. POTTERTON (Maynooth University, Ireland) Forgetting and Remembering the Past in Anglo-Norman Urban Ireland PABLO ORTEGO RICO (University of Málaga, Spain) "Reconquest", Historical Myth, and Urban Identity: Castile, Thirteenth–Fifteenth Centuries ROBERT ŠIMŮNEK (Institute of History of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague) The Long Shadow of Medieval Urban Memory in Bohemian and Moravian Cities
11.30-12.00	Coffee break
12.00-14.15	II Section chaired by CHRISTOPH SONNLECHNER DANIEL STRACKE, (Institute for Comparative Urban History, Münster, Germany), The Memory of the Siege / The Siege of the Memory. Losing, Finding, and Interpreting the 'Victory Banner' of Péronne (1536) JUHAN KREEM (Tallinn City Archives, Estonia) Remembering (and Forgetting) the Livonian War in Reval/Tallinn LAURENȚIU RĂDVAN ("Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași, Romania), From Remembrance to Oblivion. Streets and Markets/squares in Romanian Cities of the Last Two Centuries
14.15-15.15	Lunch break
15.15-17.00	ICHT General Meeting
17.00-18.00	Kaunas City Hall Visit
18.00-19.30	Kaunas Old Town Excursion
19.30	Dinner

11 September (Senate Hall of Vytautas Magnus University, S. Daukanto g. 28)

9.00-10.45	III Section. Atlas Working Group chaired by KEITH LILLEY, KATALIN SZENDE Drawing out 'Hidden Histories': the Role of HTAs in Remembering and Forgetting Urban Pasts. An AWG panel discussion followed by updates and business meeting
10.45-11.00	Coffee break
11.00-13.15	IV Section chaired by ROMAN CZAJA CARSTEN JAHNKE (University of Copenhagen, The Saxo Institute, Denmark) Forgetting the Own Roots? The city of Lübeck: Denmark and the Hanseatic League in Urban Memory GERGANA GEORGIEVA (St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria) Town of Veliko Tarnovo as Repository of the Bulgarian Collective Memory STEINAR AAS (Nord University, Bodø, Norway) Trans national War Remembrance
11.00-12.00	AWG/Digital Standards Group chaired by NIKLAS ALT (DANIEL STRACKE on site) (212 room, S. Daukanto g. 28)
13.15-14.15	Lunch break
14.15-16.30	V Section chaired by MARIJANA NIEMI OLGA KOZUBSKA (Institute for Comparative Urban History, Münster, Germany), From Cossacks' Siege to Liberation Myth: Shifting Memories in Lviv from the mid-17 th to the mid-20 th Century VALENTINA ORIOLI (Università di Bologna, Italy), Trees in the City Between Memory and Oblivion. Avenues and Parks of Remembrance Commemorating the First World War in the Cities of Romagna, Italy HÅKAN FORSELL (Stockholm University, Sweden) Layers of Time, Layers of Memory: Temporal Belonging and Urban Change in Södermalm, Stockholm
16.30-17.00	Coffee break
17.00-19.15	VI Section chaired by KATALIN SZENDE VAIDAS PETRULIS (Kaunas Technological University, Lithuania), Building, Silencing, Reinterpreting: Kaunas Architectural Modernism and the Identity of the City RAFAŁ EYSYMONTT (Wrocław University), Remembering and Erasing the History in the Urban Space of Wrocław, Selected Examples MARTIN EBERT (Norwegian University of Life Sciences) From Cancellation to Urban Renewal. Urban History in the Small Towns of Eastern Middle Europe

Poster Exhibition (available throughout the Conference)

MARCO ORLANDI (University of Padua) Forgetting and Remembering Arian Ravenna: a GIS-Based Analysis of Gothic Symbols and Urban Memory from Justinian's Reconquest to UNESCO Heritage
REMIGIJUS CIVINSKAS (Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania) Writing the History of a Nineteenth-Century City: Kaunas between Imperial Rule and Urban Modernity

12 September

9.00-15.00	Excursion to Kėdainiai
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ABSTRACTS

I SECTION

Michael L. Potterton
Maynooth University, Ireland

Forgetting and Remembering the Past in Anglo-Norman Urban Ireland

The Anglo-Norman arrival in Ireland from 1169 is often associated with the creation of a ‘new’ urban network. Yet few of these towns were genuinely ‘new’ foundations; many represented selective appropriation and reconfiguration of existing settlement landscapes. This paper examines Anglo-Norman urban development in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Ireland through the lens of forgetting and remembering.

Drawing on comparative evidence from dozens of towns published in the *Irish Historic Towns Atlas*, the paper argues that colonial urbanism operated through strategic selection and limited invention. Viking ports, Gaelic royal and ecclesiastical centres, and established river crossings were appropriated and intensified. Their environmental resilience, commercial viability, and political centrality were consciously ‘remembered’, even as earlier social and power structures were marginalised or overwritten through castle-building, mendicant foundations, and the creation of chartered boroughs. In contrast, some greenfield foundations and planned boroughs faltered or failed, underscoring the risks of disregarding established settlement logic.

The analysis highlights key dichotomies in medieval urban history: continuity and rupture, resilience and abandonment, success and failure, annexation and bypass. Archaeological evidence, toponymy, street morphology, and documentary sources are integrated to demonstrate the layered character of Irish towns and the persistence of twelfth- and thirteenth-century spatial decisions in the urban fabric.

Finally, the paper briefly reflects on a second moment of forgetting and remembering: the twentieth-century marginalisation and subsequent recovery of Ireland’s medieval urban heritage through the Urban Archaeology Survey and the *Irish Historic Towns Atlas*. In the lead-up to 2027 and the European Year of the Normans, this perspective situates Anglo-Norman urban development within both medieval and modern processes of urban memory.

Pablo Ortego Rico
University of Málaga, Spain

“Reconquest”, Historical Myth, and Urban Identity: Castile, Thirteenth–Fifteenth Centuries

The “Reconquest” of al-Andalus between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries has long functioned as one of the foundational myths in the historiographical construction of the Crown of Castile. From the medieval period onward, the Christian conquest of major Islamic cities —and its commemoration and ongoing reinterpretation by urban authorities and other social and political actors— became a central element in the formation of mythologized local identity narratives in emblematic cases such as Toledo, Córdoba, Seville, and Granada.

This paper seeks to undertake a comparative analysis of the mechanisms employed in these cities to (re)construct an “urban memory of the past” after the Christian conquest. This memory endowed urban elites and inhabitants with a sense of historical consciousness that was actively mobilized to shape and reinforce communal identities. It also served to create, consolidate, or defend urban privileges —or those of specific groups— vis-à-vis other powers. In other contexts, the invocation of the urban past functioned as a means of strengthening the political standing of the city, its elites, and its citizenry within the broader framework of the Crown, particularly in situations of interurban rivalry.

The strategies deployed were diverse:

1) Memorial practices in the form of historiographical narratives or legends, as well as the recovery or preservation of legal traditions from the past, intended to demonstrate the ancient prestige, reputation, and significance of the city and its inhabitants (whether rooted in Antiquity, the Visigothic period, or the Andalusi era), restored or granted continuity after the Christian conquest.

2) Symbolic and performative strategies to commemorate and mythologize the Christian conquest as reinforcement of a collective local identity defined in opposition to the Islamic past. These included annual celebrations marking the date of conquest and the commemoration of the death anniversaries of conquering monarchs buried in the royal pantheons of these cities, underscoring the political and symbolic bond between city and monarchy.

3) Processes of resignification of material remains from the Islamic urban past operated as forms of cultural appropriation that reinforced the symbolism of Christian triumph over Islam, alongside the deliberate destruction of Andalusi material elements as a strategy of forgetting and *damnatio memoriae*.

These strategies were by no means confined to the medieval period. On the contrary, the Christian conquest as a foundational narrative continues to shape the identity discourse of these cities in the present day (particularly in the cases of Seville and Granada). This enduring projection of the medieval past invites a critical dialogue between past and present and opens a broader reflection on the role of medieval history in the construction of contemporary urban memory.

Robert Šimůnek

Institute of History of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague

The Long Shadow of Medieval Urban Memory in Bohemian and Moravian Cities

Some elements of collective traditions in the urban environment have persisted for centuries, although the contexts have changed and, therefore, the forms and means of expression of their commemoration and, consequently, the role in constituting the collective urban memory. I focus on the historical memory of three events of the first half of the 15th century - the failed assault on the city of Jihlava/Iglau in 1402 by the nobles, the “miraculous” rescue of the city from the Hussites (battle near Most/Brüx 1421) and the long-term siege of the city (Plzeň/Pilsen, 9 months during 1433–1434). These are events that have been part of the memory of local urban communities since the Middle Ages, found their expression in text and image, and remained part of living urban memory at least until the 19th century. Typical in all cases is the instrumentalization of the past - by the church and the city municipality: by those who currently consider themselves representatives of the city's collective memory and could thus incorporate the “old tradition” into “updated” frames of meaning.

II SECTION

Daniel Stracke

Institute for Comparative Urban History, Münster, Germany

The Memory of the Siege / The Siege of the Memory. Losing, Finding, and Interpreting the ‘Victory Banner’ of Péronne (1536)

The paper traces the story of the origin, tragic loss, and surprising reemergence of an artwork depicting a pivotal moment in the history of the French town of Péronne in the 16th century. Once part of the living memory of a proud and resilient urban community, the events the artefact shows are obscured as Péronne's history is reimagined as a victim of the First World War in recent times.

The *Bannière de Péronne* was created to commemorate how a small frontier town in the Picardie overcame the onslaught of the forces of Emperor Charles V threatening to overrun the French heartlands, in the Great Siege' of 1536. The lavish silk embroidery adorned with threads of gold and silver depicts a bird's-eye view of the town amidst the turmoil of war. Its dramatic account captures all the historic events of 32 days in just one image. The actions of local nobles and the townsfolk of Péronne include a rare depiction of the prowess of their legendary local heroine, Marie Fouré, and her deeds in the town's defence.

Created in a moment of triumph and royal favour, the Banner became a centrepiece of civic pride and historical imagination for the small town of Péronne and its role in the Valois wars of the sixteenth century. Its message of valour and defiance against the Habsburg intruders was reinvoked whenever Prussian/German attacks were imminent thereafter on the banks of the Somme. In WWI, however, Péronne was quickly overrun and had to put up with German occupation in the dangerous back area of the front. The Battle of the Somme in 1916 came to a halt just before reaching the town, but Péronne's museum was severely damaged, and in the ensuing chaos, most of its treasures were lost, the Banner among them.

By the time the embroidery eventually reappeared at a London auction almost a hundred years later, its buyer ignorant of its identity and history, the town too had lost much of its connection to its urban past. The historical focus in Péronne had shifted as a 'lieu de memoire' for visitors stopping over on the WWI heritage trail, but in a way strangely disconnected from its locality.

While the *Bannière de Péronne* has not yet returned to Péronne, the rediscovery of the Renaissance embroidery brings about the opportunity for reinterpreting the banner's content by looking beyond the narrative of French national resistance to foreign aggression.

Juhan Kreem

Tallinn City Archives, Estonia

Remembering (and Forgetting) the Livonian War in Reval/Tallinn

The Livonian War (1558-1583) was a major crisis that reshaped the Baltic region. Its events were perceived as historical already by contemporaries and initiated a major boom of chronicle-writing. For Reval the war meant the subjection of the city to the Swedish crown in 1561 and two Muscovite sieges in 1570-71 and 1577. These events found wide interest all over Europe. In the local Revalian context, the event was commemorated in monuments and memorial rituals.

Although the monuments remained in urban space, and the chronicles were available and re-read continuously, one can demonstrate some folkloristic distortions and forgetting in the 19th century. In the 20th century, fiction and film have sometimes even replaced the historic memories. Different political circumstances have rewritten or edited historic events, sometimes even tried to erase or reanimate old stories. Besides these rather obvious forces behind remembering and forgetting, the presentation will also point to some spatial aspects in urban development, which can bring about forgetting.

Laurențiu Rădvan

"Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași, Romania

From Remembrance to Oblivion. Streets and Markets/Squares in Romanian Cities of the Last Two Centuries

In this paper, we aim to examine how the memory of significant places in Romania's historic cities has been preserved or, more accurately, forgotten, focusing on the former Romanian principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. While street and market names remained remarkably stable throughout the Late Middle Ages and early modern period, often lasting for several centuries and typically indicating the types of people who lived there, their professions, the goods sold, or the proximity to churches or monasteries, the situation frequently changed dramatically after 1800. Apart from the introduction of

officially accepted names from 1832 onwards, there was a tendency to align the names of streets and markets (or the new squares – *piețe*) with the prevailing ideologies of the time. The old cattle, fish, and flour markets, as well as the streets named after trades, were forgotten, and their names were replaced with those of historical figures or national heroes. A more drastic change occurred with the enforced introduction of the communist regime, when a new group of leaders, this time from the labour movement or Soviet history, took their turn to name streets and squares. Various historical figures from the more or less distant past were added, who were eager to have their names associated with important places in cities. Even new neighbourhoods of apartment blocks were given such names. An inventory of urban names shows that very little of the original medieval past has been preserved in the names of contemporary streets and squares, and we will seek to explain this situation.

III SECTION. ATLAS WORKING GROUP

AWG / Digital Standards Group

The Digital Standards Group is made up of GIS specialists who aim to harmonize the GIS-data structures of the national atlas series to enable spatial comparison and the reuse of common software solutions. The meeting will feature a short presentation of the recommendations and a discussion on the aim and vision of the group.

IV SECTION

Carsten Jahnke

University of Copenhagen, The Saxo Institute, Denmark

Forgetting the Own Roots? The city of Lübeck: Denmark and the Hanseatic League in Urban Memory

Two events stand out as turning points in the history of Lübeck: the city's flourishing under Danish rule, which ended with the city's rebellion and imperial freedom, and the city's integration into the Hanseatic League.

The first event is marked by the establishment of the Dominican convent at the castle and a special holiday on St. Mary Magdalene's Day. However, both fell into oblivion with the Reformation. The second is represented by the Hanseatic Hall in Lübeck Town Hall, the 'enormous, dark, dirty barn' that was gutted and dismantled in 1818. Both points demonstrate how the memory of important events in a city's history can change over time.

Even though imperial freedom and the Hanseatic League play a major role in Lübeck's self-image today, the architectural reminders of this have been destroyed over time. This did not happen by chance, but rather because today's values are very different from those of the 18th and 19th centuries. This article will trace the traces of these memories in the cityscape, but also in the city's written history.

Gergana Georgieva

St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria

Town of Veliko Tarnovo as Repository of the Bulgarian Collective Memory

Veliko Tarnovo occupies a central place in the Bulgarian collective memory, functioning as a privileged repository of national history. From the medieval columns in the church of the Holy Forty Martyrs to the proclamation of Independence by Ferdinand I of Bulgaria in 1908, the visual landscape of the city has been transformed into a material narrative of the Bulgarian past. As a former capital, Tarnovo emerges as a key topos in the construction of the national historical canon, combining monuments, museums, and commemorative rituals in the sense of lieux de mémoire conceptualized by Pierre Nora.

The contemporary urban narrative privileges politically legitimizing events – the rule of the powerful medieval Bulgarian tsars, the establishment of the modern Bulgarian state, the creation of the Constitution, and the proclamation of Independence – while marginalizing the everyday life of the Revival period and the multilayered Ottoman heritage. Sites such as Tsarevets Fortress dominate the symbolic landscape, reinforcing a heroic and state-centered interpretation of the past. In this selective process of remembrance, one historical paradigm prevails almost unconditionally, shaping national identity while relegating alternative memories and architectural layers to the margins.

Steinar Aas

Nord University, Bodø, Norway

Trans national War Remembrance

The Norwegian city of Narvik was on everyone's lips in the spring of 1940, when Nazi Germany occupied the remote Norwegian town on 9 April. In the months that followed, more than 30,000 German, Norwegian, British, French, and Polish soldiers fought in and around Narvik, supported by their respective navies and air forces. The Allies (Norway, Poland, France, and Britain) soon regained control of the area, but the final offensive was halted after Germany attacked France, Belgium, and the Netherlands that same spring. Norway could not continue the fight alone against a far stronger enemy, and the hard won victory at Narvik was ultimately relinquished.

As a result, Narvik became a significant focal point in the memory politics of all the nations involved in the campaign. The Nazi German forces were the only ones able to immediately publicly celebrate their victory, which they framed as a successful final stand. In the German-speaking world, Narvik soon gained a prominent place in regimental remembrance. For the French and British, however, commemorations had to wait until the end of the war, and their respective memory politics developed along quite different trajectories. In the Polish People's Republic, the politics of remembrance became even more complex. Nevertheless, the importance of the Polish contribution to the campaign grew increasingly recognized toward the late 1970s, and even more so after the fall of the Iron Curtain in the early 1990s.

This paper examines the trans national dimensions of the commemoration of Narvik 1940 in post war Europe and explores how the remembrance of a remote arctic Norwegian town could contribute to reinforcing national narratives, as well as forming national identity.

Olga Kozubska

Institute for Comparative Urban History, Münster, Germany

From Cossacks' Siege to Liberation Myth: Shifting Memories in Lviv from the mid-17th to the mid-20th Century

The paper examines the commemorations of three seventeenth-century sieges of Lviv – in 1648 (Cossack–Tatar forces under Maksym Kryvonis), 1655 (the Cossack army of Bohdan Khmelnytsky together with Muscovite troops), and 1672 (Ottoman–Tatar–Cossack forces) – and the ways these events were remembered, reinterpreted, and spatially inscribed in the city from the seventeenth to the twentieth century. Although Lviv's fortifications prevented the town from being captured or destroyed, contemporaries and later authors portrayed its survival as a miraculous deliverance and a heroic civic defense, worthy of commemoration despite the heavy tributes that resulted in the city's economic decline.

Early memorial practices emerged almost immediately after the sieges and took diverse forms, mobilizing different parts of the urban fabric. Urban chronicles and panegyric texts, inscriptions and verses on city walls, prominently displayed cannonballs, and dedicatory inscriptions on public buildings all contributed to constructing a memory of Lviv as a steadfast and loyal city that had withstood assaults from external enemies. These media linked specific locations – gates, walls, churches – to stories of defense and deliverance, turning urban spaces into *lieux de mémoire*.

In the eighteenth century, authors increasingly attributed the city's salvation to the intercession of the Observant Franciscan Jan of Dukla (d. 1484), recasting him as Lviv's heavenly patron. This process culminated in the erection of a baroque column with his statue in 1736. The miraculous narrative was further disseminated in nineteenth-century literary and visual culture, placing the urban space symbolically under the protection of a Catholic saint and reinforcing a specifically Polish-Catholic reading of the sieges.

After the WWII and the incorporation of Lviv into the Soviet Union, however, the commemorative landscape was radically reconfigured: key Polish-Catholic monuments were removed or marginalized, new Soviet figures and events were introduced into urban spaces, and episodes of Ukrainian history were reinterpreted through the prism of socialist "liberation ethos". In this context, Cossack leaders who had besieged the city in the seventeenth century could be newly celebrated as liberators; for example, a memorial sign to Maksym Kryvonis on the High Castle hill praised him as a destroyer of "Polish-noble armies of occupants", reframing former attackers as precursors of Soviet-Ukrainian emancipation.

By following these successive layers of commemoration and erasure, the paper asks how the same military events underpinned competing narratives, and how these narratives were materially anchored in Lviv's urban space. It further investigates which actors, sites, and memories were marginalized or silenced in these transformations, and what this reveals about the politics of remembering and forgetting in the multi-ethnic city.

Valentina Orioli

Università di Bologna, Italy

Trees in the City Between Memory and Oblivion. Avenues and Parks of Remembrance Commemorating the First World War in the Cities of Romagna, Italy

After the end of World War I, while the Italian State was organizing the final burial sites for the fallen, objects and places dedicated to commemorating their sacrifice began to spread throughout

many towns. Already in the first months after the end of the conflict, the construction of memorial stones and monuments had been a spontaneous activity of a variety of actors in local communities, but with Benito Mussolini's rise to power, the commemoration of the Great War definitively took on the multiple forms of an institutional project. In this context, in December 1922, in the aftermath of the March on Rome and Mussolini's appointment as head of government, a circular from Dario Lupi, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Education, recommended the construction of Parks and Avenues of Remembrance so that every city could honour the memory of its fallen soldiers.

Lupi's initiative led to the creation of new memorial sites, where a tree is dedicated to each fallen soldier, based on an idea already widespread in other countries that participated in the conflict, particularly the United Kingdom and Canada. The idea behind the initiative is simple and effective, entrusting municipalities and school superintendents with the task of compiling a list of the fallen and organizing the planting of trees by students, with commemorative plaques associating each tree with a fallen soldier. This led to the creation of numerous avenues and parks, typical urban features of modern cities, which have a specific function linked to the memory of the war, but at the same time are also symbols of rebirth thanks to the presence of trees.

To today, even though a great deal of work has been done to catalogue the places of remembrance associated with the centenary of the end of the Great War, there is no complete inventory of Italian memorial parks and avenues. The current inventory of the Ministry of Culture identifies 579 parks and 40 avenues preserved in various Italian regions, but the list is clearly incomplete. In Emilia-Romagna, there are 23 parks and 4 avenues registered as places of historical and landscape interest. These are therefore places with different urban shapes and functions, where trees represent a powerful Memory that transforms urban landscape.

However, trees live and die and are often used as sacrificial material in urban transformations. In today's cities, these spaces of memory still exist in some cases, while in others they have been so transformed that their original value has been forgotten and is no longer visible. This process of 'forgetting' depends on functional or urban transformations, but even more so on the collective removal of a series of uses and rituals that date back to fascism.

Based on archival research already conducted by the author, this contribution aims to explore the special relationship between trees and memory in urban spaces that characterized the commemoration of World War I in Italy in the years following its conclusion. Through the reconstruction of various cases in the cities of Romagna, the dialectic between memory and oblivion that characterized the years when parks and avenues were planted and the events that followed will be presented in a critical perspective with regard to contemporary conservation issues.

Håkan Forsell

Stockholm University, Sweden

Layers of Time, Layers of Memory: Temporal Belonging and Urban Change in Södermalm, Stockholm

In this paper, I employ the conceptual pair of co-spatiality and contemporality to illuminate a recurring tension—yet also a site of exchange and negotiation—through which local communities strive to sustain collective memory and social cohesion over time. Co-spatiality refers to a locally grounded extension of time that enables the present to reach back toward those who lived before—often through family and lineage, but also through shared associations, practices, and the material traces embedded in buildings and landscapes inhabited by past generations. Within co-spatiality, the historical connections rooted in a particular place carry greater significance than contemporary links to other, yet more unfamiliar, locales. Contemporality, by contrast, concerns the influence exerted by other places upon the local, and how communities compare themselves with broader social spaces. In this mode, historical depth recedes; what matters instead is the conviction that the 'contemporary'—the present moment of exchange, mobility, and connection—should serve as the primary basis for cohesion. In expanding, dynamic, and modern urban environments, the tension between co-spatiality and contemporality becomes especially pronounced. Local communities are continually subjected to

pressures for transformation, to the point where longstanding forms of rootedness and the value of intergenerational relationships are sometimes fundamentally questioned.

In light of this, I aim to explore how the city, understood as a local community, sustains cohesion and collective memory over time, and how the desire for continuity interacts with the pressures of transformation. I do so by focusing on a specific case.

Historically, the district of Södermalm in Stockholm was, until the early twentieth century, a notably isolated and difficult-to-access part of the city. Stockholm's archipelagic character had largely been preserved, and the island of Södermalm developed its own architectural history, its own demographic profile, and a form of cultural autonomy distinct from the rest of the urban landscape. With the onset of industrialization in the late nineteenth century and the large-scale urban planning and welfare-state investments of the twentieth century, Södermalm underwent profound physical and social transformations.

I will concentrate on the institutions that carried and shaped collective memory throughout this period of transformation. Rather than examining the official memory institutions established at the same time—such as municipal museums and city archives—I will foreground local, popular, and civic associations, as well as the spaces in which shared, conservative relationships were preserved in an era increasingly defined by contemporary networks and exchange.

VI SECTION

Vaidas Petrulis

Kaunas Technological University, Lithuania

Building, Silencing, Reinterpreting: Kaunas Architectural Modernism and the Identity of the City

This presentation examines how Kaunas architectural modernism has continuously shaped and reshaped the identity of the city across different historical periods. Emerging in 1919-1940 as an ambitious project of state-building, modernism materialized a new civic identity grounded in progress, rationality, and European orientation. After 1940, this architectural language was partially silenced and ideologically marginalized, yet never erased. Continuity in professional practice allowed interwar modernism to persist beneath Soviet transformations. From the late Soviet period onward, modernism was reinterpreted as a suppressed yet authentic expression of urban and national identity. In the 21st century, this reinterpretation expanded into international heritage discourse, culminating in global recognition. By tracing these phases: building, silent continuation, and reinterpreting, the presentation argues that Kaunas modernism is not merely a historical style, but an enduring framework through which the city sustains its identity.

Rafał Eysymontt

Wrocław University, Poland

Remembering and Erasing the History in the Urban Space of Wrocław, Selected Examples

The memory and forgetting of cities' history is expressed in their images, the processes of disseminating their history, and ultimately in the city's space and architecture. This presentation addresses three selected aspects of the process of perpetuating and forgetting the city's history. The first is the creation of its vedutas in the late Middle Ages and early modern period. These images are not entirely objective. The second issue analysed is the specific treatment of medieval Jewish heritage in the contemporary city. The third group of discussed manifestations of the specific

treatment of the city's historical legacy concerns its urban space and architecture. Three examples (Młodzieżowy Square, the pocket-sized skyscrapers in the northern part of the Old Town, and Nowy Targ) clearly demonstrate how post-war architecture, inspired by the idea of modernism, disrupts the continuity of the historical process that resulted in over 750 years of harmonious city development. The conclusion resulting from these considerations is that only proper recognition of the city's history and the "constitutive features" of the analysed area of the city allows us to avoid the process of erasing history and facilitates its co-creation for future generations.

Martin Ebert

Norwegian University of Life Sciences

From Cancellation to Urban Renewal. Urban History in the Small Towns of Eastern Middle Europe

Background. During the last months of World War II, advancing Soviet troops destroyed several towns in the Eastern parts of the German Reich and Poland. The destruction was executed wilfully and thoroughly. It was not related to acts of war between military units, but was a one-sided, arbitrary destruction of civil structures by the Soviet army. It left a lasting trace on the built structure in these towns, which were rebuilt from 1945 to 1990 following the shifting paradigms of international urban planning. Since 1990, these communities have been undergoing a process of urban renewal guided by narratives of the pre-1945 era.

Aims and objectives. The contribution seeks to establish a catalogue of towns destroyed by Soviet troops during the last weeks of WWII, and if possible, establish a pattern of cause and method. Following, it aims to analyse the reconstruction efforts in the period between 1945 and 1990. Finally, it seeks to review the ongoing status of urban renewal, driven by the recent results of archaeological research.

Methods. The study will review the events during the last weeks of WWII, review witness accounts to determine if the destruction was part of military actions during the advance of Soviet troops, or if it was actually initiated without provocation. The post-war development of the towns will be analysed by literature study and on-site registration to establish the age and structure of the built structures. Finally, recent efforts in urban renewal will be registered and analysed for patterns and structural similarities. The study aims to undertake a comparative study of 1 or 2 towns in both Mecklenburg (Germany) and Greater Pomerania (Poland).

Expected outcome. They may establish a catalogue of attempted urban cancellations, initiate a catalogue of archaeological excavations related to it, and give insight into the architecture, urban structure, and urban paradigms of the post-war reconstruction efforts. It will use recent urban renewal projects in these towns to give an outlook on the future direction of sustainable urban development in small urban communities.

POSTER EXHIBITION (available throughout the Conference)

Marco Orlandi

University of Padua

Forgetting and Remembering Arian Ravenna: a GIS-Based Analysis of Gothic Symbols and Urban Memory from Justinian's Reconquest to UNESCO Heritage

The Arian-Catholic duality of Ravenna is one of the best-known cases of attempted *damnatio memoriae* in late antique urban history. Following Justinian's reconquest in 540 CE, a systematic

campaign was initiated to eliminate Gothic and Arian symbols from the urban landscape. This included the conversion of churches such as Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, as well as the transformation of their iconographic programs. While the process of "forgetting" Arian heritage is well-established in scholarship, this paper proposes a GIS-based approach to map the persistence and transformation of Gothic urban memory. This is achieved by examining how elements of the built environment, street names, monuments, and public spaces still serve as repositories of collective memory.

This study employs historical GIS and cartographic analysis to trace the spatial distribution of Gothic/Arian monuments and their evolving perception from the 6th century to the present-day UNESCO recognition.

The methodology integrates archaeological evidence and historical cartography to reveal patterns of selective memory preservation, demonstrating that despite systematic obliteration attempts, certain Gothic symbols not only survived but became central to Ravenna's cultural identity. Monuments such as the Mausoleum of Theoderic, Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, and the urban cluster around the Arian Baptistry have been transformed from contested spaces to celebrated UNESCO World Heritage Sites. GIS analysis demonstrates how medieval and modern street naming patterns, tourist itineraries, and urban development projects have continuously renegotiated the meaning of these "forgotten" spaces.

The use of digital cartography can then help better understand the long-term dynamics of cultural forgetting and remembering, showing that attempted erasure often paradoxically ensures preservation through transformation.

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Writing the History of a Nineteenth-Century City: Kaunas between Imperial Rule and Urban Modernity

This poster presents the conceptual framework of an ongoing synthetic study of the history of Kaunas between 1795 and 1914. The work continues a long-term scholarly programme developed by historians at Vytautas Magnus University, which has already produced the first two volumes of the city's history, covering the period from its origins to 1795. The nineteenth century, however, remains a particularly complex and contested chapter in the urban narrative, and one whose meaning has rarely been settled. Following the incorporation of Kaunas into the Russian Empire, the city experienced political subordination, restrictions on autonomous development, and substantial losses of property and institutional continuity. Its subsequent designation as a governorate centre in 1843 deepened bureaucratisation, while the construction of the Kaunas Fortress reshaped the city through militarisation, spatial control, and new imperial functions.

The study argues that this era should not be read solely through the lens of imperial constraint. Kaunas was equally shaped by economic and social forces that fostered demographic growth, migration, the diversification of urban society, and the restructuring of the local economy, especially towards the end of the long nineteenth century. Such dynamics mirrored not only local trajectories but also wider European and imperial patterns of modernisation, governance, and mobility. The city thus emerges through a double movement of constraint and transformation that lies at the heart of the poster's argument.

Writing this history is itself understood as an interpretative and commemorative act. The synthesis is being prepared within the project funded by the Research Council of Lithuania (contract No. P-LISM-26-6). It draws archival, cartographic, statistical, and historiographical evidence into a coherent interpretative account, while reconsidering how nineteenth-century Kaunas has been remembered, marginalised, or selectively forgotten in urban historical consciousness.

