



Memory and Populism from the Margins

Date: December 1st - 4th, 2024
Venue: Prague, Vila Lanna, V Sadech 1, Prague, Czech Republic
Organiser: Dept. of Mobility and Migration, Institute of Ethnology, CAS
Submission Deadline: July 21st, 2024

About the Conference

The Memory and Populism from the Margins conference seeks to explore the interplay between memory and populism, with a focal point on the multifaceted concept of “margins,” exploring both its literal and symbolic dimensions.

Etymologically, the word “margin” traces back to the Latin “margo,” meaning “edge” or “border.” In its literal sense, margins denote the boundaries or peripheries of geographical spaces and places, whether it be the edges of a map, the borders of a nation, or the fringes of specific landscapes. Additionally, margins embody spaces of exclusion, where diverse social, cultural, and political boundaries intersect and collide. These are the realms inhabited by marginalized communities, voices, and perspectives—those often relegated to the periphery of mainstream discourse and power structures. This thematic inquiry delves into how marginalized communities and perspectives shape and are influenced by populist movements. Positioned at the intersection of the social sciences and humanities, our conference aims to gather scholars to examine the unfolding dynamics of memory, identity, and power from the societal peripheries.

The surge in support for populist movements globally, with significant occurrences in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), presents a pressing challenge. Here, populist sentiments have catalysed a fervent politicization of historical narratives and their material traces. Notable examples include Viktor Orbán’s invocation of the Treaty of Trianon and Jaroslav Kaczynski’s stringent memory laws, underscoring populism’s acute concern with constructing and manipulating the past.

The backdrop of forced migration serves as fertile grounds for political exploitation. Central and Eastern Europe, once a mosaic of diversity, has undergone rapid transition into ethnically homogeneous nation-states. This demographic shift, born from tumultuous population transfers and genocides, underscores the urgency of confronting historical legacies. However, the process of reckoning with the past remains stunted, impeded by suppressed memories and unresolved traumas. Populist movements adeptly capitalize on this unprocessed history, wielding it to incite fear and resentment, thus galvanizing support for polarizing agendas.

Untold narratives, silenced histories and uncharted experiences lie within the margins, demanding scholarly scrutiny and collective reflection. The Memory and Populism from the Margins conference serves as a platform to illuminate these obscured voices, interrogate dominant narratives, and foster inclusive dialogues that transcend societal confines. Through rigorous examination and interdisciplinary exchange, we endeavour to unravel the complexities of memory and populism, offering insights that resonate far beyond societal margins.



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Topics of Interest

We invite submissions on a wide range of topics related to memory and populism from the margins, including but not limited to:

- historical and contemporary populist movements
- memory and identity in marginalized communities
- the role of literature and art in shaping populist narratives
- sociopolitical impacts of populism on marginalized groups
- border studies and the politics of inclusion/exclusion
- ethnographic studies of borderlands and marginalized groups
- memory politics in postcolonial and post-imperial contexts
- gender, race, and class in populist rhetoric
- ecological memory in identity politics
- marginalized affects and emotions
- perceptions of forced displacement in borderlands
- material traces and agencies of built environments and mnemonic landscapes

Important Dates

- Paper Submission Deadline: July 21st, 2024
- Notification of Acceptance: August 2024
- Conference Dates: December 1st - 4th, 2024

Submission Guidelines

Please submit abstracts of up to 300 words along with a brief biography to mempop@eu.cas.cz by July 21st, 2024. Please put "Memory and Populism Conference Abstract" as the subject of the email.

For any inquiries, please contact mempop@eu.cas.cz

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