

**City, ethnicity, nationalism. Urban transformations within the nation building processes
(19th-20th centuries)**

Location: Italy

Call for Papers Date: 2011-03-15

Congress website: <http://www.storiaurbana.org/>

Session V/e: City, ethnicity, nationalism. Urban transformations within the nation building processes (19th-20th centuries).

V Conference of the AISU (Italian Association of Urban History) "Out of the ordinary: the city facing disasters and exceptional occurrences", Rome 8th-10th September 2011.

The city – either as a preferential place for the political action, or often as a decisional center, and lastly as an environment where societies climax in their highest degree of complexity – naturally tends to be considered as a favourable observation point to inquire into the nationalization processes that deeply transformed world societies between the 19th and the 20th centuries.

The progressive waves of nationalism not only considered the city as a mere stage of their action, but have shaped these “theatres” according to the dictates of the new ideology in place, thus both materially and socially changing the structure of urban centers.

Urban transformations have occurred in more impetuous and traumatic ways as a result of revolutions, wars, ethnic-religious conflicts that have their matrix in the currents of radical nationalism and chauvinism. In these cases the process of nationalization is not limited to a diffusion of an ideology, but assumes the contours of forced exclusion of one or more "nationalities" from an urban context that claims to homogenize from an ethnic point of view.

The key issues this session will deepen concern, therefore, the subsequent urban transformations to the policies of nationalization that took shape either in a more "peaceful" by the process of nation building, or in more violent and radical ways that opposed nationalisms fighting among themselves, especially in border and multi-ethnic cities, that for this reason were contested by different factions.

By taking a comparative perspective and through discussion of several case studies, here we intend to answer to a number of questions:

1. Which dynamics - social, political, urban, territorial – are accompanied by the passage of a city from a national entity to another one?
2. What is the evolution of the social, political and economic composition of a city in the path of ethnic “reductio ad unum” (distribution of land ownership on urban space based on ethnic, religious, increased/decreased economic burden of a community over another, division of a city neighborhoods for ethnic connotation, etc.)?
3. Which are the measures taken by new administrations that mark the change of the national belonging of a city (toponomastic and street names changes, removal/replacement of the symbols, monuments and places of worship, language policies, foundations of cultural societies and associations based on ethnicity, etc.)?
4. Through which discourses, representations, rhetorics is the process of nationalization of a city brought forward?

This is a very broad and fascinating. In this brief presentation we deal with just a few of the possible issues related to the "nationalization of the cities".

These are aspects that can be enriched by new perspectives, new ideas, more tips and suggestions.

To do so, we warmly invite scholars who are interested in the issues to attend the meeting and to submit proposals for discussion.

REFERENCES

Deadline for send proposals: 15th March 2011

Length: Max 1200 characters.

Proposals may be sent both to: gcristin@unict.it; convegno@storiaurbana.org

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Thematic area: "Wars, Revolutions, Invasions" Languages: Italian, English and Spanish.

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