

## Mapping the Spaces of Modernist Cities (Nova Gorica, 11–13 Mar 20)

Nova Gorica, Slovenia, Mar 11–13, 2020

Deadline: Oct 15, 2019

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Mapping the Spaces of Modernist Cities within the Context of CIAM's Athens Charter  
International Conference

More than a quarter of a century since the adoption of the Athens Charter, which established the principle of a functionalist town at the 4th CIAM (Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne) congress, presents a period long enough for a renewed critical evaluation of its principles and an analysis of the development of housing estates, which were founded on these principles. One such example is Nova Gorica, a town built after the Second World War next to the newly delineated border between the socialist Yugoslavia and the Republic of Italy. From today's perspective, Nova Gorica represents a pendant to the town Gorica (Gorizia) in Italy, the former historical medieval and modern-day centre of the region, while it is also an excellent example for carrying out comparative scientific research on how these types of towns were created, how they developed in the following years, and how they adjusted to various economic, political and social circumstances.

We are

interested to know the extent to which the original design of modernist towns and neighbourhoods was carried out and if/whether they are settled in the minds of general and professional public as an important urban heritage, worthy of being known and preserved.

What kind of dilemmas does monument protection encounter in the preservation and renovation of modernist towns? How much influence did new urban theories and the critique of functionalist planning have on their further development? To what extent did the advantages, as well as shortcomings and inconsistencies of this type of planning mark the

establishment of new buildings in a town and influenced the placement of visual art in public space? We are interested in examining these cases on examples of newly established functionalist towns in other, European and non-European countries.

Researchers in the fields of art and architectural history, architecture, urbanism, landscape architecture, history, sociology and geography are invited to participate.

The contributions should address the following topics:

- The foundation and establishment of a functionalist town. Nova Gorica belongs among European towns which were planned in accordance with the Athens charter, adopted at the 4th CIAM congress in 1933. Its original urban plan closely follows the principles of a functionalist town, divided into three areas for residence, recreation and industry, connected by areas reserved for traffic and greenery. We are interested in research that studies newly built functionalist towns and

neighbourhoods and in a wider European context represents historiography of their origin and a critical analysis of their further development. In what kind of circumstances did architects and urban planners decide on such principles when planning a new town? To what extent did they adjust these principles to regional needs and the state authorities? How did CIAM X in Dubrovnik influence the planning of neighbourhoods after the war?

- The centres of new functionalist towns and the identity of a town. Planning of town/neighbourhood centres along with the necessary public infrastructure has always presented a particular challenge. We are interested in analysing the planning of the centres of new towns as well as in what did architects and urban planners wanted to emphasize with their design. What kind of problems did they encounter? How was the identity of new towns formed, how did it develop and to what extent does it depend on successful town planning? How is the value of the urban heritage perceived by the local residents?

- Monotony or diversity of modernist residential architecture. The greatest emphasis in the Athens Charter is dedicated to the quality of stay as one of the primary needs of a person. Thus, one of the key areas defining a functionalist town is dedicated to residency. Consequently, architects placed special attention to planning residential architecture. They followed concurrent urban guidelines, their own inspiration and regional characteristics, while oftentimes they succumbed to the demands for a typification of projects. What are the characteristics of residential architectural fond of new towns? How did it change over time? What kind of challenges does it face today? How can we preserve and evaluate it?

- The forgotten and decaying industrial heritage. The industry crucially characterised the appearance of urban centres. In planning new modernist towns, architects and urban planners focused special attention to designing and positioning industrial infrastructure into the urban context. Owing to economic and political changes, today numerous large industrial halls are empty and decaying, in some places entire parts of towns are degraded. How can we give new value to industrial building and restore them from oblivion? What are the possibilities for their revitalization?

- Religious architecture in new functionalist towns. Already in the 19th Century, industrialisation, urbanisation and secularisation caused great changes in the area of the significance and positioning of religious architecture into the town structure. Urban plans for towns and neighbourhoods in socialist countries show a complete absence of religious architecture. Similarly, no such architecture was included into the original plans for Nova Gorica. Our goal is to problematize the absence of religious architecture in functionalist towns. We are interested in when and in how did individual towns approached solving this problem and to what extent did they took into account the existing religious buildings when planning new urban structures of towns or when constructing architectural buildings.

- Monuments in the public space of functionalist towns. An important component of the image of modernist towns are also public monuments, which use their visual image and content to add complex spatial and semantic dimensions to towns. Contributions, researching the following aspects of artworks, placed in the public space of modernist towns, are especially welcome: the manner of placing monuments in urban fabric – the dynamics of interventions, the changing of monuments, degradation; monuments as carriers of identity of a place/town; iconography of monuments in a modernist town; art patronage and the reception of monuments in the context of

changing social and political circumstances.

- The mapping and visualization of a town space. Digital humanities offer numerous new methods for researching and reinterpreting town space, its key architecture and visual art in public space. What are the advantages and disadvantages of such presentations? We are interested in critical analyses of examples of good practice in this field and the presentation of possibilities for their improvements.

#### SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

Presentations should be delivered in English and not exceed 20 minutes. An e-book with conference proceedings will be published prior to the conference.

Deadline for submission of application with short CV (in English, 100 words max.) and abstract (in English, 300 words max.): 15th October 2019.

Deadline for submission of articles (in English, 5000 words max.): 30th January 2020.

Please send your proposals to: [uifs@zrc-sazu.si](mailto:uifs@zrc-sazu.si)

The conference will be organised within the research project Mapping the Urban Spaces of Slovenian Cities from the Historical Perspective: Modernism in Nova Gorica and its Contexts (L6-8262, 1. 5. 2017 – 30. 4. 2020), which is financially supported by the Slovenian Research Agency, Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts and Municipality Nova Gorica.

For more information on the project see [www.novagoricaart.si](http://www.novagoricaart.si)

#### Reference:

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