

Call for Papers

Semiotics of Monuments: Politics & Form from the 20th to the 21st century

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Editors: *Lia Yoka* and *Federico Bellentani*

The culture of monuments and memorials has undergone a profound transformation since World War II. Their material form and aesthetics has changed, while their function has shifted from commemorating heroic leaders and brave soldiers to an attempt to make sense of military death and social actors other than nation states. At times, monuments have assumed a function critical of established commemorative practices, as in the case of counter-monuments (*Gegendenkmale*) that have been widely debated and often contested. The way we think of collective memory has also changed. It is neither a mere deposit of past thoughts that can be straightforwardly materialized, nor an *in vacuo* political construct of governments and mass media. The emergent interdisciplinary field of memory studies bears witness to the richness, but also to the political stakes of this problematic.

Semiotics is in the privileged position to draw from psychoanalysis, perceptual psychology, politics, history, art history, anthropology, sociology, geography and media studies for the analysis and theorisation of monuments and memory. The advantage comes with a responsibility to recognize the global and local meanings of monuments, the systematic and the spontaneous elements in memorialisation, the ideological inertias and political dynamics of widespread phenomena like the demolition of Soviet era monuments in Eastern Europe, the building of genocide museums in Africa, 9/11 spontaneous memorials or the recent removal of Confederate memorials in the US.

Punctum invites papers that semiotically examine aspects of the current landscape of monuments, memorials and memorialisation. Subject areas include:

- Public visualisation after Auschwitz
- Pulling down material memory: Iconoclasm in the post-1968 and post-1989 eras
- The poetics and politics of counter-monuments and anti-monumentality
- Is there such a thing as ‘public memory’? The semiotics of memorializing
- Monuments as artworks: form and aesthetics in public space

Prospective authors should submit an abstract of approximately 300 words by mail to the guest editors, Lia Yoka (liayoka@arch.auth.gr) and Federico Bellentani (federico.bellentani@gmail.com), including their affiliation and contact information. Acceptance of the abstract does not guarantee publication, given that all research articles will be subjected to the journal’s double peer review process.

Timeline

Deadline for abstracts: **May 31, 2019**

Notification of acceptance of the abstract: **June 21, 2019**

Deadline for submission of full papers: **October 10, 2019**

Reviewers’ report: **November 30, 2019**

Final revised papers due: **December 31, 2019**

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