International Summer School on Sources of Urbanity in Former Mono-functional Towns

Visaginas
August 14-26
August 17, Thursday

9.00 >>> Breakfast
10.00 >>> Visualizing modernity workshop: Re-imaging Visaginas 1970s <> 2010s
- Ben Cope *Views from above and modernity in Visaginas*
- Alla Pigalskaya *Already made modernity? Visual environment in Visaginas 1970s <> 2010s*
11.30 >>> Visualizing modernity workshop
13.00 >>> Sandwiches
17.00 >>> Visualizing modernity workshop
18.30 >>> Dinner

August 18, Friday

9.00 >>> Breakfast
10.00 >>> Visualizing modernity workshop
11.30 >>> Visualizing modernity workshop: discussion of results
13.00 >>> Sandwiches
13.30 >>> Library workshop
- Dalia Čiupailaitė *It takes two (and more) to tango: the changing ideas, buildings and users of the library in the 21st century*
- Žemartas Budrys and Eugenijus Kaminskis *Library as a place for a meaningful discovery*
15.00 >>> Library workshop
20.00 >>> Dinner

August 19, Saturday

8.00 >>> Breakfast
9.00 >>> Role-play game / slow individual fieldwork
20.00 >>> Dinner

August 20, Sunday

9.00 >>> Breakfast
10.00 >>> Surrounding lake walk / slow individual fieldwork
18.30 >>> Dinner

August 21, Monday

9.00 >>> Breakfast
10.00 >>> Consultation of individual projects
13.00 >>> Sandwiches
13.30 >>> Work on individual projects
18.30 >>> Dinner
August 22, Tuesday
9.00 >>> Breakfast
10.00 >>> Consultation of individual projects / work on individual projects
13.00 >>> Sandwiches
13.30 >>> Finalizing individual projects
18.30 >>> Dinner

August 23, Wednesday
9.00 >>> Breakfast
10.00 >>> Library workshop
- Miodrag Kuč New institutions for new times
- Vladyslav Tyminskyi Can one building trigger the development of a whole city? The second life of a Zhytomyr water tower
11.30 >>> Library workshop
13.00 >>> Sandwiches
13.30 >>> Library workshop
18.30 >>> Dinner

August 24, Thursday
9.00 >>> Breakfast
10.00 >>> Library workshop: discussion of results
11.30 >>> Putting together presentations for final discussion
13.00 >>> Sandwiches
13.30 >>> Putting together presentations for final discussion
17.00 >>> Final discussion
20.30 >>> Dinner

August 25, Friday
9.00 >>> Breakfast
10.00 >>> Follow up
12.00-14.00 >>> Departure to Vilnius
16.00 >>> Check-in to Downtown Forest Hostel (Paupio str. 31A)
Cultural program in Vilnius

August 26, Saturday
>>> Cultural program in Vilnius

August 27, Sunday
>>> Departure >>>
**TALKS:**

**Ignalina NPP and the establishment of nuclear technopolitics in Lithuania**

*Andrei Stsiapanau*

From the first years of its construction until its full decommissioning in 2009, the Ignalina NPP played a key role in shaping relationships between the population and the authorities in nuclear terms. If the scientific mobilization of the 1980s was against the INPP construction on the territory of Lithuania, then political and nationalist responses at the end of the 1980s were deeply linked to issues of national identity and sovereignty. During the 1990s, antinuclear claims were translated into terms of energy independency and sufficiency, and then became an issue for EU admission. In the late 2000s, after the second reactor was shut down, antinuclear claims reappeared in the context of the debates about the revival of a national nuclear program. The Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant is not an ordinary case of nuclear decommissioning. It is a case of the establishment of nuclear technopolitics in Lithuania, and thus of the shaping of the relationships between political institutions and the public, ethnic groups and the authorities, scientists and politicians, and individual and collective action as they engage with nuclear things.

**Without A Wing, Without A Heart, Without A Face: Intimacy-Geopolitics in Visaginas**

*Inga Freimane*

In 2014, local residents routinely presented Visaginas as a city ‘without a wing’, ‘without a heart’, and ‘without a face’. This paper explores these metaphors of lacking something and being incomplete, of being displaced and disfigured. These articulations are directly related to a politics of memory, where certain narratives about the past are employed in negotiating subjectivity and agency in the present. Attending to the power dynamics that these metaphors reveal poses the questions of how the ‘intimate’ is linked to the ‘geopolitical’. ‘Intimacy-geopolitics’ is defined here following the work of feminist political geographers (Pain and Staeheli 2014) that challenges the attribution of ‘politics’ to rigidly defined national, inter-national and global scales. Instead, the approach focuses attention on the apparently apolitical scales of body, home and intimate relations. It argues that ‘intimacy’ is inseparable from the apparently placeless and disembodied sphere of ‘geopolitics’. ‘Ordinary’ people and their experiences of living through change are thus considered as ‘geopolitical’, and producing power dynamics of their own.

**Vocation and Urbanity**

*Siarbri Liubimau*

This talk problematizes empirical settings of Visaginas by unpacking the question of how the deindustrialization of a mono-functional town with a skilled workforce affects the practices of the transmission of professions, professional attitudes and vocational projects within the socialization milieus of families and educational institutions. Visaginas was built very recently, in Soviet Lithuania in late 1970s and 1980s for the workers of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant and for their families. The INPP and the nuclear industry generally were markers of privilege in the USSR and presupposed a range of mechanisms of conversion of high-level professional status into high-level social status. The closure of INPP and the town’s gradual loss of its core function have provoked a question about the preservation of the town’s relatively high quality of human capital and urbanity. This talk proposes to discuss the empirical realms, as well as the conceptual instruments, through which to work with this question.

**Citizen Empowerment and Urban Planning from an STS Perspective**

*Iryna Lunevich*

*STS - Studies in Science, Technology and Society*

The presentation will bring to the focus the complex relations between technical and social components in cities. It will take a closer look at a number of the STS (Science, Technology and Society studies) theories and explain why it might be relevant to apply them to the analysis of the ongoing process of urban reconfiguration. It will demonstrate that the process of urban planning is not merely a technical exercise, but a political process that involves many stakeholders and interest groups. The second part of the presentation will aim to engage with the problem of public participation in urban planning and decision-making. It will focus on the case of the ‘Active Citizen’ platform that was launched by the Moscow city authorities in 2014 in order to stimulate the involvement of Muscovites in the urban decision-making process. It will discuss its effects on the ways in which the Muscovites administrative, urban planners, architects and citizens collaborate with each other.
**Towns as Historical Infrastructures**

*Felix Ackermann*

As a historian trained in cultural analysis and historical anthropology, I do research on the production of knowledge about urban spaces. In previous work in Visaginas, I learnt how to relate changing forms of statehood and various dimensions of infrastructure to each other. In my remarks, I will talk about the relationship between the processes of reading physical traces of infrastructures and communication with inhabitants of Visaginas. Finally, I wish to address the special challenges posed by discussing different observations in a mixed academic group.

**Experiments in mapping methodologies and forms**

*Benjamin Cope*

This talk presents and reflects on some examples of projects that experiment with methodologies and forms of mapping. If, during modernity, the making of maps was a monopoly held by the nation state, today global technological firms lead the way in opening up new modes, scales and speeds of the provision of spatial information. This change has profound social implications that are only beginning to emerge, but it is certainly interesting to note that the post-socialist epoch has coincided with this change in instances and modes of mapping. In presenting student projects that reflect critically on and experiment with the relations between information and space, the talk aims at opening discussion of the potentials and difficulties of critical mapping in the context of today’s Visaginas.

**Visualizing scale and boundary in social research**

*Siarhei Liubimau*

This presentation will focus on qualitative research projects that reflect on the issue of cities’ causation and on recent cases of change in modes of cities’ causation. More specifically, it will address the question of how cities are bounded and re-bounded collectively under various structural conditions. On the one hand, this presentation aligns with current discussions about what geographical scales are, and shows how these discussions can be grounded in qualitative social research. On the other hand, it contributes to the attempts to understand how urbanization processes establish social difference via spatial forms. In terms of methodologies of data collection and techniques of displaying research findings, the author will discuss the ways in which maps are a helpful instrument for visualizing geographical scale and boundary in arguments based on qualitative social research.

**From documentation to immersion: approaches to photography as a tool for (re)mapping a city**

*Dalia Čiupailaitė*

“Stories are in one way or another mirrors. We use them to explain to ourselves how the world works or how it doesn’t work” (Neil Gaiman). An image is a story and a mirror. It might be distorted; it always reflects just a small piece of anything we hold it towards. In this presentation, I’ll offer a review of ways to undertake photographic research in order to analyze the city. I’ll place emphasis on the theoretical and methodological reflectivity of a researcher in the application of the tricky thing that is an image. In so doing, I will present questions of objectivity and subjectivity in epistemological approaches to photo-research, and suggest the potential value of different methods in analyzing aspects of conceptual questions related to the urban as a place and a process, and in helping/allowing/aiming to reveal different perspectives.

**Views from Above and Modernity in Visaginas**

*Benjamin Cope*

In his article “Adventures on the Vertical: From the New Vision to Powers of Ten”, Mark Dorrian argues that a key element of modernity was the emergence of two new types of view from above: that of the microscope and that of the aerial view. These new scales of vision, the micro and the macro, offered new possibilities of scientific analysis (and thus of the construction of knowledge), but also engendered new anxieties and new schemes for control. By the post-war period, Dorrian argues that the ability to play with a multiplicity of scales had become primarily a question of geopolitical interests. This lecture reconstructs Dorrian’s argument as a basis for analysing the role of views from above in the production of Soviet modernity in Visaginas.
**Already Made Modernity?: Visual Environment in Visaginas 1970s <> 2010s**

*Alla Pigalskaya*

The city of Visaginas built in the 1970s in the spirit of modernist ideas was realized in very difficult cultural and historical circumstances (the existence of the LSSR in the USSR was by no means cloudless). Today, the city also does not correspond to the vision that is projected onto it (as evidenced by multilingualism in today’s Visaginas, against Lithuanian as the national state language). The lecture focuses on the visual traces of the implementation of the modernist city project in Visaginas, such as typefaces, texture and details, with particular reference to how models relate to copies, and originals to repetition. This analysis is connected with the development of visual identity as a concept in design, a concept which also went through a significant evolution in the 1970s.

**It takes two (and more) to tango: the changing ideas, buildings and users of the library in the 21st century**

*Dalia Čiupailaitė*

In the talk I’ll present ethnographic research on the Vilnius University Scholarly Communication and Information Center, which is a part of Vilnius university library. The library constitutes the first attempt in Lithuania to change the notion of an academic library as an archive and sanctuary of knowledge and redefine it through architectural intervention, in line with ongoing changes in the library paradigm in the western world. In my talk, I explore the multiple interchanges (and miscommunications) of the library as a building, organization and institution in relation to reading/working practices.

**Library as a place for a meaningful discovery**

*Žemartas Budrys and Eugenijus Kaminski*

The Vilnius County Adomas Mickevicius Public Library has a goal to become a leader in cultural communication. Currently, it focuses on attracting non-users that fall into its potential target audience of working professionals. This is a challenging task and requires revision not only of the library’s communication, but also of the services provided by the library. The shift from a library as a function-information provider to a library as service is needed, providing a place and services for people with specific interests and hobbies.

**New institutions for new times / Creating a cultural monster**

*Miodrag Kuč*

From the initial idea to blend a contemporary art-residence with a socio-cultural centre almost 5 years have passed. Today, ZK/U (Centre for Art and Urbanistics) constitutes an institutional hybrid and platform for critical urban pedagogy. The next development phase is challenged by the complexities of multiple usage, neighbourhood conflicts and the struggle for basic public funding. How to bridge global discourses with local practices? How to reach solidarity in the process of urban learning?

**Can one building trigger the development of a whole city? The second life of a Zhytomyr water tower**

*Vladyslav Tyminskyi*

The presentation will be focused on applying the methodology of strategic design and (spatial) planning to the adaptive reuse of currently abandoned buildings that have lost their initial functional purpose, yet could become development drivers for a whole city in revised and redefined contexts. Based on the example of the strategic development project of a former water tower in Zhytomyr (Ukraine), emphasis will be placed on the methods of a systemic and multiscale analysis, scenario-based design and prototyping in real-life urban conditions.
Inga Freimane is a PhD student at the Northumbria University in Newcastle. Her research focuses on spaces of activism in the context of the ongoing war in Eastern Ukraine. Writing about the war from the perspective of feminist political geography, Inga considers the emotions and bodies of activists as a primary unit of geopolitical analysis. This interest in emotions, embodiment and politics follows from ethnographic work conducted in Visaginas three years ago.

Eugenijus Kaminskas uses research as a way of seeing the world and society in reflection. His academic and professional path combines various perspectives, ranging from arts and philosophy to cultural economics and community development. He has applied quantitative and qualitative research skills within various projects on national and EU levels, in both private and public sectors. Recently, in the framework of the program “Create Lithuania”, Eugenijus was working as a consultant for the Lithuanian Ministry of Economics and the Ministry of Culture on solving the problem of cultural activities not being adapted to the specific needs of different local communities. By involving communities into cultural life in the regions, taking cultural and historical context, local traditions and common interests into consideration, Eugenijus helped to introduce the concept of creative placemaking, and design a creative placemaking strategy for policy makers and a practical guide for cultural operators. This opened new paths for creative partnerships, local entrepreneurship, animation of heritage and community involvement in local cultural life.

Miodrag Kuč is an interdisciplinary artist and urban theorist trained as an architect/urban planner in various cultural settings. His work explores the role of ephemeral structures in uncertain urban conditions and the spatial appropriations of marginal social groups. He is founder of the studio ParaArtFormations, which moves at the intersection of urban studies, performative-planning, artistic interventions and micro politics. Currently, he works as project coordinator at ZK/U (Centre for Art and Urbanistics) Berlin, exploring new ways of knowledge production through the lens of critical urban pedagogy.

Siarhei Liubimau holds a PhD in sociology (2010, Polish Academy of Science) and works at the EHU Department of Social Sciences. His researches, writes and thinks about various effects of relations between state border regimes, space uses and meaning making.
Inseparable from the apparently placeless and questions of how the ‘intimate’ is linked to the heart’, and ‘without a face’. This paper explores Inga Freimane’s work Without A Wing, Without A Heart, in Lithuania, and thus of the shaping of the claims reappeared in the context of the debates on independency and sufficiency, and then became translated into terms of energy sovereignty. During the 1990s, antinuclear claims were launched by the Moscow city authorities in 2014 in the case of the ‘Active Citizen’ platform that was a question of geopolitical interests. This lecture analysing the role of views from above in the emergence of two new types of view from above: the micro and the disembodied sphere of ‘geopolitics’. ‘Ordinary’ urbanization processes establish social difference and subjectivity in epistemological approaches to photo-research, and suggest the potential value of mapping. In presenting student projects that are only beginning to emerge, but it is certainly important to relate to copies, and originals to repetition. This lecture will take a closer look at a number of the mechanisms of conversion of high-level production of knowledge about urban spaces. In my remarks, I will talk about the relationship between dimensions of infrastructure to each other. In my understanding, this lecture is a story and a mirror. It might be ‘as the conceptual instruments, through which to relate to copies, and originals to repetition. This lecture is a story and a mirror. It might be analysing the role of views from above in the emergence of two new types of view from above: the micro and the disembodied sphere of ‘geopolitics’. “Ordinary’ urbanization processes establish social difference and subjectivity in epistemological approaches to photo-research, and suggest the potential value of mapping. In presenting student projects that are only beginning to emerge, but it is certainly important to relate to copies, and originals to repetition. This lecture will take a closer look at a number of the mechanisms of conversion of high-level production of knowledge about urban spaces. In my remarks, I will talk about the relationship between dimensions of infrastructure to each other. In my understanding, this lecture is a story and a mirror. It might be analysing the role of views from above in the emergence of two new types of view from above: the micro and the disembodied sphere of ‘geopolitics’.