

**Wednesday, March 27, 2019**

**Reconstructing Spaces: Protest, Memory and Discourse**

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How do people engage with, reconstruct, and (re)claim their spaces? And how can we read 'what happens' in these spaces? We will explore these questions through semiotic and critical heritage approaches to the study of space. Focusing on events of resistance and other forms of protests, two empirical examples will be compared and discussed in a round-table session. From the city of Gothenburg, we will showcase the ways in which the historic environment of the former working-class neighborhood, Gårda, was discursively reconstructed to arm from-below strategies of resistance to neoliberal urban development projects. While struggling for their right to remain in their neighborhood, the resisting groups challenge and broaden the authorized heritage practices that since the 19th century have been informing and governing local urban policy discourses and documents. From the city of Johannesburg, we will show how students reconstruct the space of Palestine on a South African university campus at the same time as they re-create a joint memory in which the struggle in the past against South African apartheid is linked to the current Palestinian struggle for independence. The presentation of the two examples will be followed with discussions on the processes of *reconstruction* of memory and space and their relevance for political purposes.

**Feras Hammami** is assistant professor of critical heritage studies and urban planning at the Department of Conservation, University of Gothenburg. His research concerns heritage, conflict and peace-building, with a focus on the politicisation of cultural heritage and its entanglement in the politics of identity and memory. His current research project explores the different forms of displacement, gentrification and resistance in neoliberal cities, and investigates relations of heritage and security with a specific focus on the role that heritage may play in helping to colonize 'the other' and or to dismantle regimes of injustices.

**Tommaso M. Milani** is Professor of Multilingualism at the University of Gothenburg. Over the last ten years, his research has encompassed: language ideologies and language debates, language and space, as well as language, gender and sexuality. He takes a broad approach to what counts as 'language' so as to encompass visual images, bodies and music. He has recently worked on the ways in which language, visual images and bodies convey political meanings in space, particularly in the context of South Africa. He is currently involved in several projects that deal with the relationship between language, commodification and urban segregation.