

EDITORIAL

Dear friends and colleagues,

We are pleased to present to you the second issue of *Acta Universitatis Carolinae – Studia Territorialia* for 2021, entitled “The Aesthetics of Protest Movements: The Politics and Culture of Discontent.”

Protesters worldwide employ aesthetics, objects, and emotions to achieve their various goals. The aesthetic elements of protest movements are used to mobilize onlookers’ imaginations as a major force for re-envisioning the past and present. The cultures of protest are diverse and multi-layered; they arise from the interaction of underlying social, political, and cultural factors. The political and social dimensions of protest movements have already received considerable attention from academia. However, the aesthetic dimension of protest is as yet largely unexplored. To help fill this gap, we have gathered three original articles for this special issue. They look into the visual, performative, and conceptual aspects of protest actions from various perspectives and through select case studies from different national contexts. They focus on the form, content, political practices, and communication strategies of protest actions.

The first article is a contribution to the study of remembrance culture in contemporary France. Issues such as the Algerian War and colonial crimes in Africa have slowly come to the fore in the French public consciousness after decades of silence. Alexandra Preitschopf explores how the memory of the French colonial past is expressed in contemporary rap music as a means of social protest, especially among descendants of immigrants from France’s former colonies. The author analyzes the lyrics of select rap musicians, and identifies the main discourses developed by French rappers. She centers her analysis on the phenomenon of *concurrency victimaire* (a clash between the memory of colonialism and the memory of Holocaust) and the rappers’ claimed solidarity with Palestine.

The second article is a study of the visual language used during public protests. It takes the reader to the contemporary Balkans, a region rich in populist movements of various kinds. It analyzes the communicational aspects of populism, primarily in terms of communication style. Employing a visual studies approach, Ewa Wróblewska-Trochimiuk tracks the different strategies used to visualize populist and anti-populist rhetoric and presents various themes that appear in the visual discourse of populism. She contrasts mass demonstrations against Serbia's authoritarian-leaning president, Aleksandar Vučić, with protests in Croatia against the former mayor of Zagreb, Ivan Bandić, which took place from 2017 to 2020.

Finally, the third article offers a theatre and cultural studies perspective on contemporary protest, which no longer takes place exclusively on-site but increasingly expands into the online domain as well. Tobias Gralke explores various tactics that protesters use to disseminate their messages. He is particularly interested in how protesters frame their events and control the narratives of their protests as they translate them from the on-site to the online domain. To that end, he synthesizes the findings of theatrical observations he made during three European protest events in London, Budapest, and Dresden in 2019.

Despite the restrictions caused by the on-going pandemic, *Acta Universitatis Carolinae – Studia Territorialia* has continued to internationalize its scope. In late 2021 the journal was included in the major international abstract and citation database, SCOPUS. Indexing in SCOPUS is not only an acknowledgment of the progress we have made over the last years, but also an achievement that motivates us to keep working hard to maintain high editorial standards, further improve the quality of the content we publish, and attract an even broader scope of authors, reviewers, and readers.

Wishing you a thought-provoking read,

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