

T2M Annual Conference | T2M & MoHu Joint Conference
Padua, Italy, 21-24 September 2022

Call for Papers

Convenors: Silja Laine and Adam Borch, Åbo Akademi University, Finland

Representations of Tram Closures: Nostalgia, Modernity and Obsolescence

The first main era of electric tramways in many European and North American cities ended in the mid-twentieth century. Often, the closure of a tram network was commemorated in some way as marking a break with now-obsolete phases of modernity, heralding a new kind of urban transport future. Cinema newsreels, newspaper reports and photojournalism were among the modes in which tramway closures were represented, for example in London (1952), Glasgow (1962), Turku and Copenhagen (both 1972). The final closure of a city's electric tram network often seemed to have a symbolic value worth recording. After the event, sometimes decades later, the disappearance of trams from the streets of cities such as these has inspired diverse literary and visual reflection. Although not neglected (e.g., Eckstein, 2006; Schmucki, 2012), the cultural impacts of this closure phase call for more attention, especially in light of the tramways so-called 'renaissance' in recent years (e.g., Boquet, 2017; Petkov, 2019).

This session will focus on narratives and representations of tram closure events, both representations that were contemporary with the closures and those produced afterwards. We also welcome presentations dealing with the ways the closures have been remembered and invite the presenters to think of the various ways, from souvenirs to political decisions concerning future transport, in which memories of the past are present in today's urban culture. Cultural forms and media covered could include imaginative literature (poetry, fiction, memoir), journalism, documentary film, enthusiast and activist writing, or interviews with those who still recall the disappearance of tramways from their cities in this period. The focus could be on European and North American cities, but proposals concentrating on cities elsewhere in the world, with different historical trajectories, are also welcome.

The session is open to scholars from all backgrounds. If interested, send your abstract (max. 300 words) to the session organisers (adam.borch@abo.fi and silja.laine@abo.fi) no later than **11 April 2022**. All abstracts should include a title as well as the names, affiliations and email addresses of all authors. Please also provide a short bio (max. 100 words) for each author.

The T2M Conference is set to take place in Padua, Italy from 21-24 September 2022. It is planned as a **hybrid** event. For more details, see <https://t2m.org/call-for-papers-mobilities-disruptions-and-reconnections/>.