Marcus Colla [2015] is a lecturer in Modern European Political History at the University of Bergen in Norway. His books include ***Prussia in the Historical Culture of the German Democratic Republic: Communists and Kings*** and ***Rethinking Socialist Space in the Twentieth Century*** (128,29 €).

Marcus' current work is on the history of the Esperanto movement. It is split into two separate book projects - a longer-term history using Esperanto as a lens to explore the relationship between language and identity in the modern world; and a more targeted archival-based study on the movement in Eastern Europe after 1945. He says:

Although Esperanto never became the global lingua franca its proponents envisioned, it nonetheless remained a very large transnational movement in Eastern Europe after 1945, enabling tens of thousands of people to communicate across national and continental borders. In a region marked by linguistic diversity and complex political identities, Esperantists formed a dynamic speech community that built networks of correspondence and exchange across borders and continents.

https://www.gatescambridge.org/biography/7342/

Marcus Colla

- Alumni
- Australia
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I completed my PhD in History in 2019, and after two years working as a Departmental Lecturer in Modern European History at Christ Church, University of Oxford, was the Mark Kaplanoff Research Fellow at Pembroke College, Cambridge. I am now Associate Professor in Modern European History at the University of Bergen. My first monograph appeared with Oxford University Press in 2022 (see https://global.oup.com/academic/product/prussia-in-the-historical-culture-of-the-german-democratic-republic-9780192865908?lang=en&cc=no)

Rethinking Socialist Space in the Twentieth Century

Editors:

- Marcus Colla,
- Paul Betts

- Takes stock of the current state of the art in research on ‘socialist space’
- Explores socialist spaces across several continents and analyses the interactions between them
- Provides insights for researchers in multiple disciplines around the rubric of ‘space’

Part of the book series: St Antony's Series (STANTS)

About this book

This edited collection explores the problem of space under socialist regimes in the twentieth century. Bringing together contributions from international scholars with expertise in the architectural, urban, social, and cultural history of twentieth-century socialism, the book includes examples from China, Africa, Mongolia, Eastern Europe and the USSR. The volume reflects on how developments in the field over the past two decades have altered our understanding of how such spaces were constructed (both literally and discursively), how they could become sites of contested meanings, and how they were perceived outside the socialist world. Moreover, the volume is concerned with how scholarly approaches associated with post-colonialism, global history, gender history, and the ‘temporal’ and ‘sensory’ turns have reconfigured our knowledge of, and approach to, the history of socialist space.

Chapter 5, 'Global Bridges, Local Ruins? Re-thinking Socialist Spaces Through the Experience of Non-aligned Enterprises,' is available open access under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License via link.springer.com.

Prussia in the Historical Culture of the German Democratic Republic: Communists and Kings

Abstract

This book charts the afterlife of Prussia in the German Democratic Republic. No case study exemplifies the fluidity of the past within the GDR more powerfully than that of the history of the Prussian state. Initially attacked in East German official histories as the historical engine of German militarism and reaction, Prussia underwent a remarkable transformation in official and public memory from the late 1970s. In this ‘Prussia-Renaissance’, for the first time, the East German state began to recognise and even celebrate figures from Prussian history who had not served a ‘progressive’ agenda. But the GDR’s ‘Prussia-Renaissance’ was also a political and cultural phenomenon with a wide public resonance. Using the case study of Prussia, this book presents a multi-perspectival approach to the way that a distinctive ‘historical culture’ was constructed in the GDR. Examining political figures, historians, cultural elites, and heritage preservationists, as well as exhibitions, museums, television programmes, films, novels, plays, and artworks, it explores the way that the past was negotiated and disputed. In essence, the book poses four fundamental questions for our understanding of politics and culture in communist East Germany: how was history there ‘made’? How was it understood? How was it contested? And how was it used?