



Workshop

4-5 May 2026

University of Padua

Sala Bortolami

Palazzo Jonoch Gulinelli

via del Vescovado 30, Padova

POLITICAL ACTIVISM AND MATERIAL CULTURE

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN RESEARCHERS, ARCHIVISTS AND MUSEUM CURATORS



UNIVERSITÀ DI PADOVA

Dipartimento
di Scienze storiche,
geografiche e dell'Antichità



Centro Interuniversitario di Storia Culturale

Activate



Funded by
the European Union

Workshop

Political Activism and material culture: definitions, practices, periodisations. A dialogue between researchers, archivists and museum curators

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Sala Bortolami, Palazzo Jonoch Gulinelli, via del Vescovado, 30, Padova

Monday, May 4

10.00 - 13.00

Chair: **Michele Magri** (University of Paris-Est Créteil)

Carlotta Sorba (EUI-University of Padua) and **Alessio Petrizzo** (University of Padua), *Introduction*

Session 1. Uses and reuses: what is political in a political object?

Guillaume Poisson (University of Lausanne), *The snuff-box, a political object for Liberals in 19th-century France and Spain*

Jitka Gelnarová (National Museum, Prague), *Unruly objects: tracing feminist activism in the collections of the National Museum in Prague*

Discussion

Coffee break

Katarzyna Jarosz (Vizja University), *The obscure object of desire: the political role of toilet paper in the Eastern block*

Karolina Koziura (University of Toronto), *(Un)ordinary objects: archives, affective presence, and diasporic communities of care*

Discussion

14.30 - 17.30

Session 2. Activists as memory makers

Chair: **Laura Valentini** (Friedrich Ebert Foundation)

Paul Boulland (CNRS, Paris), *Presence, traces, and memories. Investigating activist objects through collections, archives, and oral histories (post-1945 France)*

Emily Aran Brockenbrough (University Institut of Lisbon), *Collecting militancy: political stickers, citizen archives, and revolutionary memory in Portugal*

Giulia De Carlini (University of Bologna), *From Tschüss SED to Tschüss DDR: protest objects and the reframing of GDR memory*

Discussion

Coffee break

Emma Martin (University of Manchester), *Towards a Tibetan material culture of dissent*

Clara Martín Rivero (Pompeu Fabra University), *Can K-pop light sticks and memes be protest objects? The Museum of Japanese Colonial History's exhibition "Democracy and the Flag"*

Discussion

Tuesday, May 5

Session 3. Archiving and displaying the material of politics: processes, instruments, challenges

Chair: **Oksana Sarkisova** (Blinken OSA Archivum, Central European University)

María Zozaya-Montes (University of Évora), *Proposal for an inventory of political objects: a model to register, record, identify, understand, and preserve printed and modelled arts from Europe*

Néguine Mathieux (Carnavalet Museum, Paris), *Political objects on the art market: the value of activism*

Roberto Balzani and **Elena Musiani** (University of Bologna/Museum of the Risorgimento, Bologna), *'Homes', chronologies, objects. Proposals for the creation of a museum of 19th-century history in Bologna*

Discussion

Coffee break

Francesca Olivini (National Museum of Science and Technology Leonardo Da Vinci, Milan), *Just another (monkey) wrench?*

Ondřej Daniel (Charles University), *Disobedient things, fragile lives: ethical dilemmas in archiving militant material culture at the Czech and Slovak Archive of Subcultures*

Discussion

Anja Kruke (Friedrich Ebert Foundation), *Concluding remarks*

14.30 - 17.30

Internal seminar for the Activate Consortium concerning the project of the online exhibition

Chair: **Anja Kruke** (Friedrich Ebert Foundation)

Laura Valentini (Friedrich Ebert Foundation), *How to present political objects: concept and approach for the ACTIVATE online exhibition on the material culture of transnational activism*

General discussion