



**TALKS SERIES**  
CICLO DI CONFERENZE

**N. 3**

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**Entangled  
memories in the  
Bell and the Drum  
Towers in Beijing**

**Florence Graezer Bideau**  
*College of Humanities, EPFL*

In 2012, a project proposed by local authorities aimed to revitalize, after a century of interruption, the use of Beijing's Bell and Drum Towers and the social traditions associated with it. As a result, more than one hundred households living in 66 traditional courtyards were to be relocated. Based on ethnographical fieldwork, the research assesses the potential of the UNESCO 2011 Recommendation for historic urban landscape (HUL) and examines links between collective memory (Halbwachs 1950) and social and spatial location. The study reveals three main groups of stakeholders which claims reflect three distinct temporalities. The local government defined that the heyday of the area was about 400 years ago based on a map drawn in the imperial period; the active preservationists were concentrated on the present, but also on the past which has value to be preserved; and the locals were largely concerned about their future.

**Discussant / Filippo De Pieri**



**POLITECNICO  
DI TORINO**  
Dipartimento di  
Architettura e Design



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Politecnico di Torino, via Nizza, 230 - 10126 Torino  
/ Info e contatti: [manfredo.dirobilant@polito.it](mailto:manfredo.dirobilant@polito.it)