

Heritage Protection after 1945 (Exeter, 21–22 Nov 17)

Reed Hall, University of Exeter, UK, Nov 21–22, 2017

Michael Falser, Heidelberg

State Socialism, Heritage Experts and Internationalism in Heritage Protection after 1945

CONFERENCE SYNOPSIS

Histories of heritage usually perceive their object of study as a product of western modernity, and exclude the socialist world. Yet, understood as a cultural practice and an instrument of cultural power, and as a “right and a resource”, heritage has played important roles in managing the past and present in many societies and systems. In the postwar period, preservation became a key element of culture in socialist and non-aligned states from China, the Soviet Union, and the Eastern Bloc to Asia, Latin America and Africa. Attention paid to the peoples’ traditions and heritage became a way to manifest the superiority and historical necessity of socialist development. However, the contribution of socialist states and experts to the development of the idea of heritage is still to be fully excavated.

The conference aims to understand the rising contributions of socialist and non-aligned actors to the development of heritage at both domestic and international levels. This phenomenon was in part the result of country-specific factors – such as a reaction to rapid industrial development; the destruction of both the Second World War or wars of national liberation; and the necessity to (re-)invent national traditions on socialist terms. But it was also due the growth of a broader international consensus on international heritage protection policies – in which socialist and non-aligned states and their experts played an important role. To this end, the conference will also address the relationship between socialist conceptions of heritage and those found in the capitalist world: to what extent can we discern the convergence of Eastern and Western dynamics of heritage discourses and practices over the second half of the twentieth century? To what degree did heritage professionals from socialist states play a role in the formation of the transnational and transcultural heritage expertise? To what extent did heritage still play a role in Cold War competition? Socialist states claimed that their respect for progressive traditions and material culture distinguished their superior methods of development from that of the capitalist world. Non-Aligned countries often attempted to blend aspects of socialist and capitalist logics of cultural heritage politics.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Day 1 – 21 November

08.45-09.15 Registration

09.15-09.30 Introduction

09.30-10.30 Panel 1: Transnational Circulations of Heritage

Concepts and Ideas (Part 1)

Chair James Mark

Discussant Michael Falser

Nikolai Vukov (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) Ethnographising the Past, Ideologising the Present: Traditional Heritage as an Ideological Resource and International Asset in Eastern Europe after 1945

Yao Yuan (Nanjing University) International Factors in Shaping Chinese Heritage Conservation Policy

10.30-10.45 Refreshment Break

10.45-12.00 Panel 1: Transnational Circulations of Heritage

Concepts and Ideas (Part 2)

Chair Corinne Geering

Discussant Nelly Bekus

Marko Spikic (University of Zagreb) Between Exceptionalism and Internationalism: Ethics and Politics of the Conservation System in People's Republic of Croatia of the 1950s

Pablo Gonzalez (University of Lisbon) A Rebel Heritage for the Cuban Revolution: Socialist Internationalism, Art and Soviet Influence

12.00-13.00 Keynote Lecture: Stephen Smith (University of Oxford) Heritage in Contention: the Soviet Union and China after 1945

13.00-14.30 Lunch

14.30-16.00 Panel 2: International Organisations and Socialist Heritage

Chair Kate Cowcher

Discussant Nikolai Vukov

Nelly Bekus (University of Exeter) Tracing Multiple Logics in Soviet Heritage-Making: Pan-Soviet, National and International Agencies of Cultural Power

Corinne Geering (Justus-Liebig-University Giessen) World Heritage beyond UNESCO: Soviet Approaches to World Heritage before 1988

Emanuela Grama (Carnegie Mellon University) International mediations: UNESCO visits to Romania at the end of the Cold War or heritage as a right to place

16.00-16.15 Refreshment Break

16.15-17.15 Panel 3: South East Asia and Socialist Heritage

Chair Natalia Telepneva

Discussant James Mark

Michael Falser (Heidelberg University – Université Bordeaux-Montaigne) Cold War and non-

aligned heritage politics in South and South-East Asia

Alicja Gzowska (University of Warsaw) One man's dream? Polish conservation experts in Vietnam

19.00 Drinks Reception – Devon and Exeter Institution

20.00 Conference Dinner – Rendezvous

Day 2 – 22 November

09.00 – 10.30 Panel 4: The Development of Socialist Ideas of
Heritage in Africa (Part 1)

Chair Nelly Bekus

Discussant Paul Betts

Kate Cowcher (University of Maryland) Origin Myths and Incarcerations: Ethiopia's National Museum amidst socialist revolution

Piotr Marciniak (Poznan University of Technology) From Warsaw to Faras. The Polish School of Reconstruction and Conservation of Monuments and Sites: People, Doctrine and History

Natalia Telepneva (University of Warwick) The Soviet-Somali Archaeological Expedition and the Global Struggle for the Horn of Africa

10.30-10.45 Refreshment break

10.45-11.45 Panel 4: The Development of Socialist Ideas of
Heritage in Africa (Part 2)

Chair Michael Falser

Discussant Marko Spikic

Nadine Siegert (University of Bayreuth) (Re)activated heritage. State-sponsored socialist propaganda and architecture in the Luanda cityscape

Nina Díaz Fernández (University of Ljubljana) Yugoslav Experts and the Protection of Monuments in the Third world

11.45-13.00 Round Table

Paul Betts (University of Oxford)

Michael Falser (Heidelberg University – Université Bordeaux-Montaigne)

James Mark (University of Exeter)

13.00 Farewell Lunch

Conference Convenors:

Professor James Mark and Dr. Nelly Bekus
University of Exeter and 1989 after 1989

ArtHist.net

Dr. (habil.) Michael Falser
Heidelberg University and Université Bordeaux-Montaigne

Dr. Ezster Gantner, Herder Institute

H O M E P A G E :

<http://1989after1989.exeter.ac.uk/2017/10/programme-now-available-for-our-conference-on-state-socialism-heritage-experts-and-internationalism/>

Reference:

CONF: Heritage Protection after 1945 (Exeter, 21-22 Nov 17). In: ArtHist.net, Nov 7, 2017 (accessed Apr 16, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/16674>>.