

World Heritage in Global Conflict

Instructor: Lynn Meskell

Seminar: 3hr, max enrolment 25

Heritage is always political. Such a statement might refer to the everyday politics of local stakeholder interests on one end of the spectrum, or the volatile politics of destruction and erasure of heritage during conflict, on the other. If heritage is always political then one might expect that the workings of World Heritage might be especially fraught given the international dimension. In particular, the intergovernmental system of UNESCO World Heritage must navigate the inherent tension between state sovereignty and nationalist interests and the wider concerns of a universal regime. The World Heritage List has more than 1200 properties with many contentious examples, including sites in Iraq, Mali, Syria, Crimea, Palestine, Armenia and Cambodia. As an organization UNESCO was born of war with an explicit mission to end global conflict and help the world rebuild materially and morally yet has found its own history increasingly entwined with that of international politics and violence.

Requirements

Assessment 1: Class presentation and oral participation (40%). This is a seminar, *not a lecture-course*, and consistent participation by all members is vital. Each of you will select specific readings the discussion of which you will commit to facilitate. Facilitation entails coming up with questions that will enable constructive and well-informed conversation based on presentations of the readings. It is expected that all students will attend all classes and participate in all discussions.

Assessment 2: Research paper to be handed in at the end of term on a topic developed in consultation with the instructor (60%). The paper should: (a) show that you have read and understood the texts at hand; and (b) provide an opportunity for you to think about the material in relation to your own writing and research. For undergraduates, the paper is to be double-spaced and approximately 15-20 pages in length. Papers submitted by graduate students are expected to be more detailed at 20-25 pages or longer, to be discussed with the instructor. **The paper is due on the last class of the term.** Please email me an electronic copy of your essay. Late papers will not be accepted.

Schedule of Meetings

The following lecture outlines and readings may be slightly modified in the course of the seminar.

Class Text: L. Meskell, 2018. *A Future in Ruins: UNESCO, World Heritage and the Dream of Peace*. OUP, New York.

WEEK 1 Introduction to course, assessment and seminar designations (Jan 22)

I would like you to look at the recent World Heritage Committee meetings online livestream videos from 2024 UNESCO World Heritage Committee Meetings

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/46COM/records/and>
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=world+heritage+committee

WEEK 2 Introduction to UNESCO World Heritage (Jan 29)

Please look at the recent World Heritage Committee meetings online from Paris and focus on the discussion of Odessa as inscribed on the World Heritage List on an emergency basis. Please go to the UNESCO website listed here (also on Youtube) and its 1:22:00 (1 hour, 22 mins) into the video.

* <https://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/18extcom/records?day=2023-01-25>

* [The Destruction of cultural heritage as a consequence of the Russian aggression against Ukraine - Security Council Arria Formula meeting | UN Web TV](#)

* Meskell, L. 2018. *A Future in Ruins: UNESCO, World Heritage and the Dream of Peace*. OUP, New York. Chapter 1.

* Meskell, L. 2019. The Politics of Peril: UNESCO's World Heritage List in Danger (with N. Brown and C. Liuzza) *Journal of Field Archaeology* 44/5: 287–303.

* The Temple That Sparked an Armed Conflict: System Error VICE NEWS
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwGP3Q9PDGY>

WEEK 3 World Heritage and War (Feb 5)

* Brosché, J., Legnér, M., Kreutz, J. & Ijla, A., 2017. Heritage under attack: Motives for targeting cultural property during armed conflict. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 23 (3), 248-260.

* Frowe, H and D. Matravars, 2019. *Conflict and Cultural Heritage A Moral Analysis of the Challenges of Heritage Protection*, Getty Occasional Papers 3.

* Meskell, L. 2018. *A Future in Ruins: UNESCO, World Heritage and the Dream of Peace*. OUP, New York. Chapter 6.

* Van Der Auwera, S., 2014. Culture for development' and the UNESCO policy on the protection of cultural property during armed conflict. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 20 (3), 245-260.

* Vrdoljak, A.F., 2017. Cultural heritage, human rights and the privatisation of war. In Durbach, A. & Lixinski, L. eds. *Heritage, Culture and Rights: Challenging Legal Discourses*. Oxford: Hart Publishing, 1-33.

* Weiss, T.G & N. Connelly, 2019. Protecting cultural heritage in war zones, *Third World Quarterly*, 40:1, 1-17.

heritageconflict.org

WEEK 4 Ukraine (Feb 12)

* Rosén, F. 2023 “Russia, Cultural Property, and why NATO lags behind adversaries.”, *Paper prepared for NATO Cultural Property Protection Conference NATO Headquarters*, 1-9.

* Juurvee, I., V. Sazonov, K. Parppei, E. Engizers, I. Pałasz, M. Zawadzka. 2020 “Falsification of History as a Tool of Influence NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, 1-93. (for further background and reading).

* Key take-aways NATO Cultural Property Protection Conference at NATO Headquarters Brussels on February 9, 2023, and the subsequent workshop organized by the Nordic Center for Cultural Heritage and Armed Conflict (CHAC) on February 10, Draft April 10, 2023, 1-6.

* Betlii, O. 2022 “The Identity Politics of Heritage Decommunization, Decolonization, and Derussification of Kyiv Monuments after Russia’s Full-Scale Invasion of Ukraine”, *Journal of Applied History*, 4, 149-169.

* Rosén, F. 2023 “Putin’s Upper Hand: Cultural Heritage”, *Nordic Center for Cultural Heritage & Armed Conflict*, 1-9

* Shultz, D., C. Jasparro. 2022 “How Does Russia Exploit History and Cultural Heritage for Information Warfare? Recommendations for NATO”, *Antiquities Coalition, Policy Brief Series*, 11, 1-16.

* Mick, C. 2023 “The Fight for the Past: Contested Heritage and the Russian Invasion of Ukraine”, *The Historic Environment: Policy & Practice*, 1-20.

* Українська, F. 2022 “Ukraine: Russians Pillage Kherson Cultural Institutions”, *Human Rights Watch*, 1-16.

Cultural Heritage as the Target and Victim of War: First-hand reports from Ukraine
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5R1s5CsmgeE>

WEEK 5 Japan & Korea (Feb 19)

- * Johnsen, N. 2021. Katō Kōko's Meiji Industrial Revolution – Forgetting forced labor to celebrate Japan's World Heritage Sites – Part 1. *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 19 (23):1-19
- * Johnsen, N. 2021. Katō Kōko's Meiji Industrial Revolution – Forgetting forced labor to celebrate Japan's World Heritage Sites – Part 2. *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 19 (24):1-17
- * Johnsen, N. 2022. The Sado Gold Mine and Japan's 'History War' Versus the Memory of Korean Forced Laborers. *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 20 (1):1-22
- * Lincicome, M. P. 2020. The UNESCO World Heritage Convention and Japan's Pursuit of International Cultural Legitimacy. *JAPANESE STUDIES* 40 (1):1-20
- * Palmer, D. 2018. Gunkanjima / Battleship Island, Nagasaki: World Heritage Historical Site or Urban Ruins Tourist Attraction? *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 16 (4):1-25
- * Palmer, D. 2008. Korean Hibakusha, Japan's Supreme Court & the International Community: Can the U.S. & Japan Confront Forced Labor & Atomic Bombing? *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 6 (2):1-11
- * Trifu, I. 2018. *Dealing with a Difficult Past: Japan, South Korea and the UNESCO World Heritage List*. Chapter 10:197-217

WEEK 6 Preah Vihear, Cambodia (Feb 26)

- * Chachavalpongpun, P. 2012. Embedding Embittered History: Unending Conflicts in Thai-Cambodian Relations. *Asian Affairs* 43:81-102
- * Croissant, A., and P. W. Chambers. 2010. "A Contested Site of Memory: The Preah Vihear Temple," in *Cultures and Globalization: Heritage, Memory & Identity*. Edited by H. K. Anheier and Y. R. Isar, pp. 148-157. SAGE Publications Ltd: London.
- * Hauser-Schäublin, B. 2011. "Preah Vihear. From Object of Colonial Desire to a Contested World Heritage Site," in *World Heritage Angkor and Beyond: Circumstances and Implications of UNESCO Listings in Cambodia*, vol. 2. Edited by B. Hauser-Schäublin, pp. 33-56. Göttingen Studies in Cultural Property: Göttingen,
- * Hauser-Schäublin, B., and S. Missling. 2014. The Enduring Agency of Borderland Regimes: The Aftermath of Serial Regulations with Different Scopes and Temporal Scales at Preah Vihear, Cambodia. *The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law* 46:79-98.
- * Meskell, L. 2016. World Heritage and Wikileaks: Territory, Trade and Temples on the Thai-Cambodian Border. *Current Anthropology* 57 (1), 72-95.

WEEK 7 Angkor Wat, Cambodia (March 5)

- * Falser, M, 2015. "Representing Heritage without Territory: The Khmer Rouge at the UNESCO in Paris During the 1980s and Their Political Strategy for Angkor," in *Cultural Heritage as Civilizing Mission*. Edited by M. Falser, pp. 225-249. Springer: New York.
- * Falser, M. 2015. "Epilogue: Clearing the Path Towards Civilization: 150 Years of 'Saving Angkor'," in *Cultural Heritage as Civilizing Mission*. Edited by M. Falser, pp. 279-346. Springer: New York,
- * Mura, K. 2015. "Discourses and Practices between Traditions and World Heritage Making in Angkor after 1990," in *Cultural Heritage as Civilizing Mission: From Decay to Recovery*. Edited by M. Falser, pp. 251-278. Springer: New York.
- * Mura, K. 2011. "World Heritage Making in Angkor. Global, Regional, National and Local Actors, Interplays and Implications, in Hauser-Schäublin, Brigitta (Ed) " in *World Heritage Angkor and Beyond: Circumstances and Implications of UNESCO Listings in Cambodia*. Edited by B. Hauser-Schäublin, pp. 9-33. Universitätsverlag Göttingen: Göttingen.
- * Falser, M, 2021. "1992: Pushing Angkor onto the World Heritage List: UNESCOs politics with 'danger,'" in *Angkor Wat. A Transcultural History of Heritage Vol. 2 Angkor in Cambodia. From Jungle Find to Global Icon*. Edited by M. Falser, pp. 353-386.

WEEK 8 India (March 19)

- * Meskell, L. 2024, "Teardrops at the Taj: wicked problems of World Heritage preservation, pollution and politics." *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 30.4 (2024): 438-453.
- * Menon, A. G. K. 2015. "Between the Colonial, the Global, and the Local: Civilizing India's past under Different Regimes." In *Cultural Heritage as Civilizing Mission: From Decay to Recovery*, edited by M. Falser, 67–82. Cham: Springer.
- * Waraich, S. 2018. "'Authenticity' as Intermediary: Contested Memories of the Mughal Fort of Old Delhi." *International Journal of Islamic Architecture* 7 (1): 107–140.
- * Ahmed, H. 2013. "Secularising the 'Secular': Monumentalisation of the Taj Mahal in Postcolonial India." *Economic and Political Weekly* 48 (50): 71–78.
- * Menon, J., and S. Varma. 2019. "Archaeological Places: Negotiations between Local Communities, Archaeologists and the State in India." *Journal of Social Archaeology* 19 (2): 141–161.
- * Svensson, T. 2021 "Curating the Partition: dissonant heritage and Indian nation building, *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 27:2, 216-232.

* Taneja, A.V. 2017. *Jinnealogy: Time, Islam, and Ecological Thought in the Medieval Ruins of Delhi*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press (for further background and reading).

* Ahmed, H. 2015. *Muslim Political Discourse in Postcolonial India: Monuments, Memory, Contestation*. New York: Routledge (for further background and reading).

<https://vimeo.com/197855642>

WEEK 9 Mali (March 26)

* Ba, O, 2020. Contested Meanings: Timbuktu and the prosecution of destruction of cultural heritage as war crimes, *African Studies Review*, 63/ 4: 1-20

* Joy, C. 2011. Negotiating Material Identities: Young Men and Modernity in Djenné. *Journal of Material Culture* 16:389-400.

* Joy, C, 2012. *The Politics of Heritage Management in Mali: From Unesco to Djenné*. Left Coast Press, Inc.: Chapter 5.

* Joy, C. 2015. "'Unesco Is What?' World Heritage, Militant Islam and the Search for a Common Humanity in Mali," in *World Heritage on the Ground: Ethnographic Perspectives*. Edited by C. Brumann and D. Berliner. Berghan: Oxford.

* Petrovic, J. 2013. What Next for Endangered Cultural Treasures; the Timbuktu Crisis and the Responsibility to Protect. *New Zealand Journal of Public & International Law* 11: 381-426

* Meskell, L. 2018. *A Future in Ruins: UNESCO, World Heritage and the Dream of Peace*. OUP, New York. Chapter 8.

WEEK 10 Syria (April 2)

* Meskell, L. 2018. *A Future in Ruins: UNESCO, World Heritage and the Dream of Peace*. OUP, New York. Chapter 7.

* De Cesari, C. 2015. Colonial Ruins: Why the Islamic State targets Archaeology *Anthropology Today*. Vol. 31 No 6, December, 22-26.

* Jones, C. 2018. "Understanding ISIS's Destruction of Antiquities as a Rejection of Nationalism." *Journal of Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology and Heritage Studies* 6 (1): 31-58.

* Plets, G. 2017. "Violins and Trowels for Palmyra: Post-Conflict Heritage Politics." *Anthropology Today* 33 (4): 18-22.

* Munawar, N. A. 2019. "Cultural Heritage and the Arab Spring: A Review of (Inter) National Efforts to Safeguard Heritage under Fire." in *The World Community and the Arab Spring*, edited by C. Çakmak and A. Özçelik, 83–115. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

* Luke, C. & L. Meskell, 2019. Archaeology, assistance, and aggression along the Euphrates: reflections from Raqqa, *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 25:7, 831-842.

* <https://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1303#:~:text=The%20Declaration%20recommends%20that%20heritage,armed%20conflict%20or%20natural%20disaster>

*39th World Heritage Committee –Bonn Declaration 06/29/2015
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-pMWc22Rsz8>

* 'Cultural cleansing is human tragedy of Middle East' – UNESCO chief to RT <https://www.rt.com/news/317632-unesco-isis-cultural-cleansing/>

WEEK 11 (April 9) Bamiyan Valley, Afghanistan

* Colwell-Chanthaphonh, C. 2003. Dismembering/Disremembering the Buddhas: Renderings on the Internet During the Afghan Purge of the Past. *Journal of Social Archaeology* 3:75-98.

* Francioni, F. & Lenzerini, F., 2003. The destruction of the buddhas of Bamiyan and international law. *European Journal of International Law*, 14 (4), 619-651.

* Meskell, L. 2002. Negative Heritage and Past Mastering in Archaeology. *Anthropological Quarterly* 75:557-574.

* Gamboni, D. 2001. World Heritage: Shield or Target? *The Getty Conservation Institute*

* Reza Hussein, S. 2012. Destruction of Bamiyan Buddhas Taliban Iconoclasm and Hazara Response. *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies*, 16(2), 15-40

* Blake, J. and S. Ali Naqi Masoumi 2022. From the past to the future: Protecting Afghanistan's cultural heritage – progress, fears, and hopes. *International Journal of Cultural Property*, 1-24

* Cassar, Brendan and Sara Noshadi, S., Editors 2015. Keeping History Alive Safeguarding Cultural Heritage in Post-Conflict Afghanistan

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBk5-zRUuNQ>

Bamiyan – Crumbling of the Buddhas https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KF9PQ_4iKWA

Rebuilding Bamiyan - Al Jazeera English Part 1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t9Cu5iOjHQo>

Part 2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMKtmlFzzCE>

WEEK 12 (April 16) No in-person class but please watch the UNESCO anniversary event for 1954 Hague Convention

<https://www.youtube.com/live/61GjLRI0X08>

WEEK 13 Iraq (April 23)

* Bokova, I. 2015. Cultural Heritage: Extremism's New Target. Address by Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO at the Royal Institute of International Affairs. London, 1 July 2015. UNESCO DG/2015/129.

* Bokova, I. 2015. Fighting Cultural Cleansing: Harnessing the Law to Preserve Cultural Heritage, *Harvard International Review*, 36/4: 40-45.

* Harmansah O. 2015 "ISIS, Heritage, and the Spectacles of Destruction in the Global Media". 2015. *Near Eastern Archaeology*. 78 (3): 170-177.

* Isakhan, B. & González Zarandona, J.A., 2018. Layers of religious and political iconoclasm under the Islamic state: Symbolic sectarianism and pre-monotheistic iconoclasm. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, (1), 1-16.

* Isakhan, B., and L. Meskell. 2023. "Rebuilding Mosul: Public opinion on foreign-led heritage reconstruction" *Cooperation and Conflict*: 1-26.

* <https://english.alaraby.co.uk/english/indepth/2021/1/21/mosul-a-wounded-city-trying-to-heal>

WEEK 14 (April 30) **Final Class Discussion and final papers due**