

Abstracts: “Heritage Across Borders”, Hangzhou, 1.-6. September 2018

2 Sept: Session 0073 – “Heritage Politics: Challenges for the 21st Century’s Heritage Management” (Organized by Torgrim Guttormsen & Knut Fageraas)

Title: Monumentalizing Refugee Heritage Across Borders: Vietnamese Boat People Memorials

Torgrim Guttormsen

Abstract: Memorials and their monuments can be seen as 'solid metaphors' with a compact symbolic content reflecting trends, visions and public values in a society, and represent strong cultural and political statements about the past. Memorials associated with 'roots' has a long track record in national identity projects. However, memorials can also convey a symbolic content associated with 'routes': transitional (transit-cultures), transnational, and cosmopolitan memory practices at work, as shown for instance by refugee memorials.

This paper examines the post-conflict discourses of the Vietnam War based on how Vietnamese Boat People memorials are commemorated around the world (i.a.in Europe, USA, Canada, and Australia). The presentation has a specific case study focus on the Vietnamese Boat People Memorial erected in Oslo, Norway, in 2015. The memorials commemorating refugees, such as the Boat People who escaped from Vietnam, recalls a diasporic heritage which include traumatic memories and a difficult heritage that still cause conflicts today. The memory practices related to the Vietnam War have many layers, such as geopolitical influence in a divided world of capitalism and communism, and the documentation of the war in the media has had world-wide impact. In addition, the division of the Vietnamese people that was caused by the civil war still struggles the population today, not least by being a nation of people spread throughout the world.

A refugee memorial in Norway that relate to a conflict in another region, or country, such as the Vietnam War, invokes several controversies that challenge public authorities to handling multiple interests and needs. I pursue these themes by exploring how the cultural heritage management deals with refugee heritage through its policy and practice. The Oslo case exemplifies what that causes conflicts when refugee memorials are constructed at public places, more specifically at museum and heritage sites. What materialize as challenges when memorials devoted to political refugees are constructed and what are the functions of refugee memorials in post-conflict societies?

With this presentation, I want to raise a discussion about heritage caused by forced migration and the challenges of how refugee heritage and their globalized transcultural contexts could be contributing in cultural and political dialogues across borders.

Title: Cultural Heritage Management on the Geopolitical North Atlantic Fringe: Contested National Heritage Politics in the Small North-Easternmost Norwegian Town Vardø

TITLE OF YOUR PAPER: Cultural Heritage Management on the Geopolitical North

Atlantic Fringe: Contested national heritage politics in the small north-easternmost Norwegian town Vardø

This presentation seeks to raise a discussion about the role, and how to find room for, local production of heritage values in the shadow of geopolitical struggles. The Norwegian Government's High North Strategy is part of a geopolitical agenda to exercise sovereignty, managing marine resources and battling accelerating climate changes. One of the Strategy's most outspoken priorities is improving living conditions and sustaining livelihoods for citizens. Hence, in a national perspective promoting community development and heritage politics in remote towns such as the north-easternmost city of Vardø is integral to geopolitical strategies. As a result, its historical status as a medieval stronghold of the expanding Norwegian royal power, a centre for the Norwegian-Russian *Pomor trade* from the 18th Century, and its deconstruction during the Second World War by German forces and Allied bombing followed by a national reconstructing program are part of grand national narratives of the High North.

At Vardø, however, conceptually far from geopolitics, a successfully local-driven place-development and building preservation project called *Vardø Restored* (<http://vardorestored.com/en>) is based on small stories rooted in the citizens everyday life practices and housing. *Vardø Restored* has become an important driver for local regeneration, and an inspiration to other places at the North Atlantic fringe, like the Russian rural locality of Teriberka near Murmansk. The project initiative grew out of local needs for inclusive social development with the goal of increasing place identity, citizen engagement and restoration of the decaying old buildings in the city centre which had survived the war contrary to the national focus on reconstruction architecture. In the social development perspective of local stakeholders at Vardø, the national dimension in heritage policies – or, for that matter, geopolitics – is of little concern.

Although directly state-funded and with economic support from the Directorate for Cultural Heritage, the local-driven regeneration project reveals the contested nature of heritage as it unfolds in its diverse and partially overlapping international, national and local contexts. After a period of easing tensions in post-cold war era, the contestation would probably increase due to the region's growing geopolitical significance. Also, it would probably be fuelled by global trends towards collaborative governance and increased demands for democratisation of heritage management. How can such smaller stories become a resource for heritage management? How to find pathways for cultural heritage management serving both national and local needs? How to facilitate democratisation and social value in heritage management when geopolitics is at stake? In general, what is the role of cultural heritage in geopolitics?

3 Sept: [Session 109](#) - "Heritage as competitive internationalism" (organized by Luke James)

Title: Competing on different grounds? Norway on the World Heritage Committee

Herdis Hølleland

Abstract: Competitive internationalism takes different forms depending on a state's sense of self and its position in international society. These contrasts are vividly displayed in states' attitudes and ways

of participating in regimes of recognition such as the World Heritage Convention. In this paper, attention is directed to one of the smaller States Parties of the convention: Norway. Its unusual position entering the 2017 committee election warrants interest: Norway announced that if elected, it would not put forward any nominations during its tenure. Thus, the decision breaks with the well-established pattern wherein nominations and committee tenures tend to converge, statistics Norway forms part of until now. As a result, it is pertinent to ask what motivated this move: Why take a clear stance against common practice? Why choose to compete on different grounds? Carvalho and Neumann's (2015) explorative Small states seeking status: Norway's quest for international standing, serves as a lens to theorise Norway's position: How does the decision fit with the idea that small states seek status by being acknowledged as 'good powers'? That is, seeking to achieve status by making itself useful to great powers, taking on responsibilities, resolving confined yet important issues. Finally, by historicizing the decision, drawing on archival records and oral history, the question of break versus continuity can be approached: Looking back through Norway's previous committee priorities and actions, the decision may be seen as a means for Norway to reassert itself as a morally-attentive and just player on the international conservation scene.

Read more: Hølleland, Herdis & Jessica Phelps 2018. "Becoming a conservation 'good power': Norway's early World Heritage history" *International Journal for Cultural Policy*.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/YWt2bt3ExsJWysuAckEf/full>

Title: Fearing loss – saving face: A case study of Australia's resistance to World Heritage In Danger Listings

Herdis Hølleland, Luke James & Evan Hamman

Abstract: Competitive internationalism sets the scene for winners and losers. As international lists and rankings enable the possibility to rise and fall, 'fear of loss' becomes part and parcel of taking part. Within the field of heritage, the World Heritage List and its counterpart, the List of World Heritage in Danger (the 'In Danger List'), figure as the most prominent examples of competitive lists. Whilst not intended to be a sanction on States, the In Danger List has nonetheless gained negative connotations from certain States over the years. For these states, the In Danger List represents the counterpoint to the World Heritage List's ability to generate national prestige and, ultimately, contribute to international status gains. In this paper we draw on the concepts of 'losing face' and 'reputational damage' to explore how the In Danger List's association with fall and loss play out through the case of Australia. As a prominent player within the World Heritage regime, Australia is a particularly interesting case. In parallel to its active role in foregrounding World Heritage listing as a tool for conservation, Australia has also entered into long and contentious fights against In Danger Listings proposed for its World Heritage sites Kakadu (in the 1990s) and the Great Barrier Reef (2010-2015). While these sites have been subject to threats from resource extraction and associated development, the Australian Government has gone to great lengths to avoid In Danger Listings which, arguably, could have strengthened their conservation efforts. The aim in this paper is to approach the phenomenon of competitive internationalism, fear and loss and reputational damage, by addressing the following questions: what has motivated Australia's resistance to In Danger Listings and how has this motivation changed over time? To what extent has Australia's continual resistance towards In Danger Listings shaped the perspective of the In Danger List as an instrument for shame and blame? How have Australia's efforts to save political face, against the backdrop of clear scientific concern from the advisory bodies, contributed to raising its fear of loss? And, finally, what might we

learn about competitive internationalism from a perspective that highlights loss of face or reputation—or risk thereof?

4 Sept: [Session 089](#) - “Unsustainable Heritage? Change and Adaptation across Borders” (Organized by Rodney Harrison)

Title: Performance of Conservation and Preservation of Street Artworks

Abstract: In recent years, individual street artworks have been framed as cultural heritage. However, attempts to integrate street art and graffiti into formal heritage frameworks have not provided answers to the philosophical and practical problems of the preservation of street artworks. Instead of focusing on street artworks as passive objects to be conserved, preserved or managed, this research, applying non-representational theory and heritage studies, to an empirical case study from Bergen (Norway) analyses conservation and preservation of Dolk's street artworks as examples of lively theatrical performance emerging out of embodied actions, lived processes and social practices. This research argues that conservation and preservation of street artworks is not passive process, but an active process where both humans, social media and street artworks are active, relational and equally important actors contributing to a 'heritagization' process of street art. This case study illustrates that a destruction process, but also social media debates and street art performances, which have emerged as oppositional movements towards the conventional heritage practice and commodification process, can be not only the source for reconsidering the meanings and values of street art. It can also be a condition for protecting those values of street art related to 'everyday', illegality, anti-commercialism and transience. The aim of this study is to bring new insights within critical heritage studies by illustrating the creative potential of destruction, but also by exploring the interconnectedness between humans, social media and street artworks.