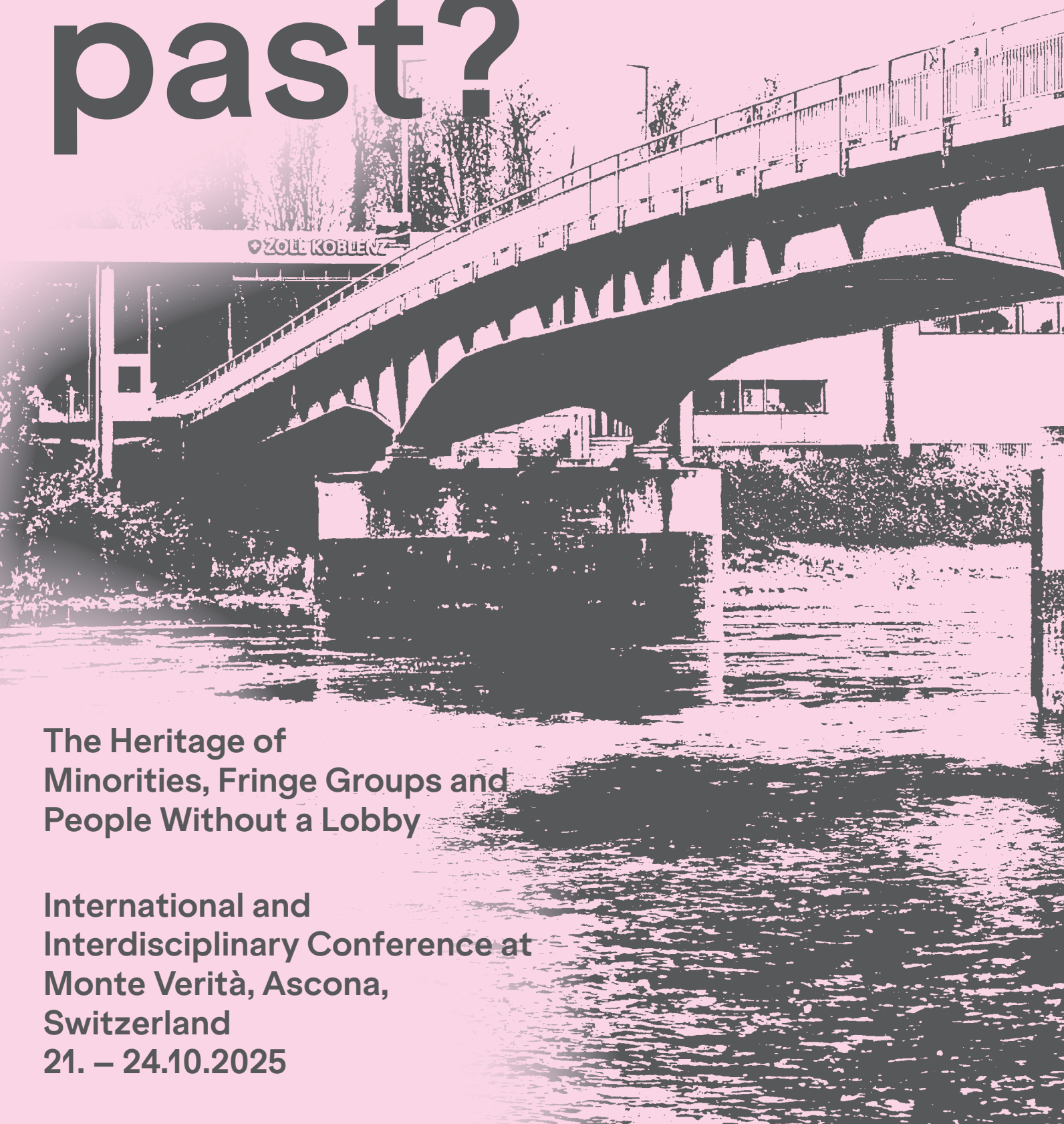
A future for *whose* past?



The Heritage of Minorities, Fringe Groups and People Without a Lobby

International and Interdisciplinary Conference at Monte Verità, Ascona, Switzerland
21. – 24.10.2025

A FUTURE FOR *WHOSE* PAST?
BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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Conference Venue

Fondazione Monte Verità
Strada Collina 84
CH-6612 Ascona

Organisers

ICOMOS Suisse
Swiss Cultural Heritage Network
ETH Zurich
EPFL

In 1975, the European Architectural Heritage Year was launched with the motto: "A future for our past." Fifty years later, we ask: *Whose* past will monument preservation safeguard in the future?

Climate change, globalization, migration, civil rights movements, and digital transformation have deeply reshaped living environments. Despite ongoing discussions about inclusion and representation, institutional frameworks and mechanisms still often marginalize those without political leverage, representation, or historical visibility. Although the boundaries of what is considered 'heritage' are shifting, the concerns of already marginalized groups are still not being sufficiently taken into account.

This conference addresses the question of who defines what is worthy of preservation. Under what conditions and through which voices, histories, and cultural expressions are certain narratives excluded from heritage frameworks? What roles do cultural experts, associations, and policies play in shaping (or limiting) recognition? Can and should we rethink or even completely redefine monument preservation from the perspectives of social justice, welfare, and remembrance policy?

The expanding discourse around intangible cultural heritage, Indigenous architecture, and postcolonial memory has already changed the field of monument preservation—but much work remains to be done. Would it be possible to conceive and practice monument preservation in a more inclusive way, and to learn from the perspectives of those who have been overlooked or underrepresented? What would it mean for heritage conservation to focus more on the heritage of marginalized communities? Which places and stories would become visible? And how would practice—materially, legally, institutionally—have to change to make room for this part of heritage?

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Occupation of the porteous building in Geneva, www.porteous.ge

Workshops

Public History, Citizen Science & Practices of Participatory Memory Culture

Insights from Collaborations with Indigenous Communities in Canada and Their Implications for the Transregional Engagement with Marginalised Cultural Heritage

Jasmin Gerig, Angela Müller, Anne Schillig/PH Luzern

This paper explores how recent and emerging approaches to Public History, participation, and citizen science contribute to the visibility of the cultural heritage of marginalized social groups, while also critically examining the inherent limitations of such approaches. Particular attention is given to the mechanisms underlying the collaborative production and representation of historical knowledge and memory practices. The discussion draws on a case study from the SNSF-funded project 'Postcolonial Visibility: The Emancipation of Canadian First Nations in Comparison with Swiss Images of Canada', based at the Lucerne University of Teacher Education (PHLU). "Strong Voices: Encounters with Indigenous Peoples from Canada" is a recent learning environment launched at the PHLU. It invites students to engage with the often-overlooked histories and present-day experiences of Indigenous communities in North America. The program encourages critical reflection and offers practical approaches to navigating sensitive topics within intercultural education.

Building on the premise that public history functions as a form of historical citizen science, this paper addresses the following questions using the case study mentioned above: How is historical knowledge, education, and marginalized cultural heritage co-produced with and by the communities concerned? What forms of participation and inclusion emerge in this process? Which actors and institutions promote, cultivate, and integrate citizen science into practices of collecting, archiving, representing, and mediating - and to what ends? Finally, what insights can be drawn from the Canadian example for the transregional engagement with marginalized cultural heritage, and what challenges and opportunities does this pose for educational initiatives? For Indigenous communities, the traditional 'land' is central to identity and memory. Land-based learning connects people to their territory, much like European heritage sites preserve collective memory and cultural meaning. Having access to land and understanding territory creates a sense of identity and community. Land in Indigenous contexts teaches through ongoing relationships and lived experience. This workshop invites reflection on how knowledge, identity, and belonging emerge through connection to place, both rooted in tradition and dynamically lived.

Keywords: Public History, Citizen Science, Participatory Memory Culture, Indigenous Communities, Postcolonial Visibility

Heritage Overkill

Nicolas Meier/UNIL

Switzerland is one of the most culturally rich countries in the world. On its small territory, it counts no less than 13 UNESCO sites (including transborder ones), which represent 0,31 site every 1000 km2. In comparison, that same ratio is 0,2 for Italy and 0,01 for Egypt. People-wise, the cultural fortune of Switzerland is equally big: 1,48 sites for 1 million inhabitants, when France is only at 0,78 and India at 0,03. It's a heritage overkill, that UNESO won't tolerate any longer. On its last assembly, the General Conference has decided that the Organisation will form now on only enlist sites from countries that have the lowest rates area-wise and people-wise. At the same time, it will ask to the richer countries to abandon some of their sites: UNESCO is seeking a world balance of ratios, putting Switzerland in front of a huge task! The workshop will stage the comity in charge of that counterselection, that devaluation. Its objective is to make participants aware of the fact that in any process of selection, the quest for beauty and authenticity is no more at stake than the selection itself. The heritage of the people without a lobby is somehow the counterheritage of the people with a lobby. As soon as a site is selected, enlisted, all the sites that don't look like it (resemblance considered as broadly as possible, even socially, financially, administratively) are automatically unselected – any selection is a counterselection. The question is then: do we really need to select anything at all? Wouldn't it be possible to just preserve and maintain everything? Isn't our environment one big cultural artefact that needs care?

Keywords: Switzerland, UNESCO sites, counterselection, counterevaluation

A Future for the Children's Past

Interdisciplinary Workshop

Maria Kouvari/ETH Zurich
Damian Zimmermann/Pestalozzi Children's Village Foundation
Anna Katharina Schmid/FICE International

Childhood studies emerged in the 1970s, propelled by postmodern and feminist approaches to theory and practice. Children have been one of the last groups to attract the attention of historians, following in the steps of previously marginalized histories of women, the working classes, and ethnic minorities.[1] Children are not considered to be a minority group. However, if the same criteria are applied to them as to other minority groups – such as prejudice, discrimination, and disempowerment – children could, in fact, be perceived as a minority, a notion which can be understood not only in demographic but also moral terms.[2]

In response to the call of this conference – commemorating the 50th anniversary of the 1975 European Heritage Year – this workshop discusses children as an underrepresented heritage group. The discussion will revolve around built environments of children, with a special focus on environments of institutional care, which occupy a unique place in Swiss public and scholarly discourse. Despite growing advocacy for the inclusion of children in heritage processes – encouraged notably by UNESCO – children's voices, experiences, memories, and emotions remain marginalized in processes of heritage making.[3] Architectural objects designed for children are often documented and inventoried according to criteria of style, design, and authorship, while many other objects and sites appropriated, experienced, and valued by children themselves are rarely acknowledged as heritage.

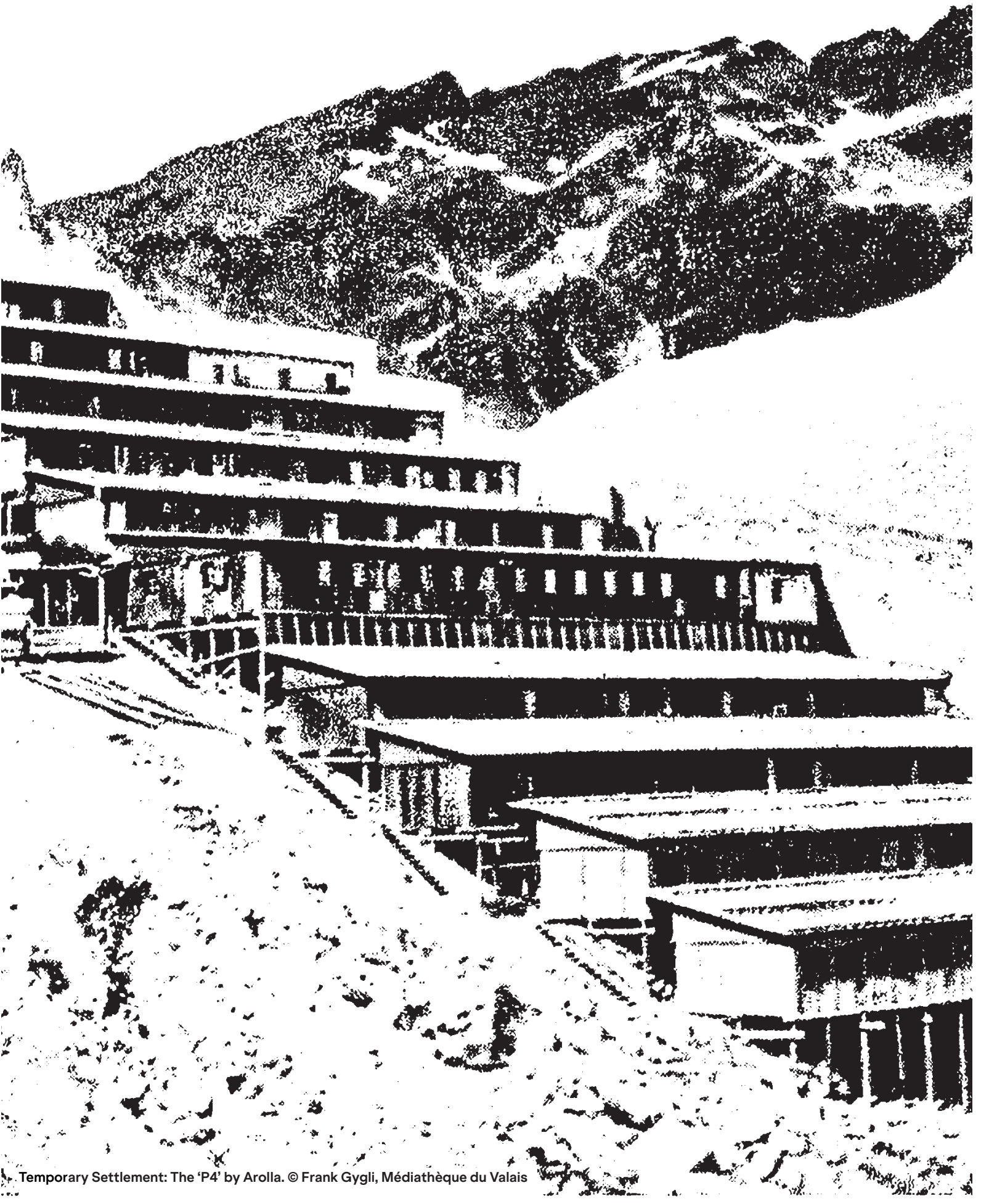
The workshop is structured into three parts: input presentations, group discussions, and a concluding session. It will engage with theories and concepts on children and heritage, focused case studies, and childhood in the present and its relevance for heritage processes. Key questions to be discussed include: How have children's experiences informed formal heritage processes? How do we understand the perspectives of children in the past? What is the relationship between the adult voice and the memory of childhood? Which histories are privileged in heritage processes? What are contemporary concerns about the well-being of children, and how do these shape our understanding of the past?

Bringing together an interdisciplinary team of architects, historians, heritage professionals, social pedagogues, child psychologists, and child-rights advocates, the objective of the workshop is: to promote a child-rights perspective in heritage discourse and practice; to forge interdisciplinary collaborations; and to advocate for a more dynamic, inclusive, and polyvocal understanding of heritage. Based in Switzerland, FICE International and the Pestalozzi Children's Village Foundation have been leading organizations in the field of child welfare. Founded in the aftermath of the Second World War, FICE International became the first organization established under the auspices of UNESCO.

The outcome of the workshop will be a working position paper, which outlines principles for child-inclusive heritage theory and practice, while addressing conceptual and methodological challenges to promote the heritage of children and – by extension – that of other underrepresented groups. This focus on children aligns with contemporary concerns about the well-being of children in view of armed conflict, migration, displacement, and separation, as well as broader debates on care, vulnerability, humanitarianism, and empowerment.

Keywords: Children, Care, Underrepresented Heritage Groups, Pestalozzi Children's Village, Child-Rights Perspective

1. A fundamental study in this direction (which has largely inspired this workshop) is: Kate Darian-Smith, and Carla Pascoe, Children, Childhood and Cultural Heritage (London: Routledge, 2013).
2. Yvonne Vissing, "Are Children a Minority Group?," Children's Human Rights in the USA. Clinical Sociology: Research and Practice, Center for Childhood & Youth Studies (Springer, 2023), 271–285; For children as a minority group see also: Allison James, Chris Jenks, and Alan Prout, Theorizing Childhood (Cambridge: Polity, 2007).
3. Bill Logan, "Patrimonito Leads the Way. UNESCO, Cultural Heritage, Children and Youth," Children, Childhood and Cultural Heritage (London: Routledge, 2013), 21–39.



Temporary Settlement: The ‘P4’ by Arolla. © Frank Gygli, Médiathèque du Valais

Extended abstracts

Giving a Voice to the Past

Intangible Heritage and Forgotten Territories

Roland Hochstrasser/Republic and Canton of Ticino

The territory of Ticino represents a form of cultural and linguistic minority within the Swiss Confederation: as the only officially monolingual Italian-speaking canton, it embodies a condition of being at the margins of the centre, where the dominant culture is often constructed through dialogue – or tension – with the German- and French-speaking regions.

Far from diminishing the complexity of its social and heritage fabric, this peripheral status actually reveals its richness. The southern Alpine territory is inhabited, crossed, or shaped by a multiplicity of minorities, often invisible in institutional heritage narratives. Acknowledging these minorities is not only integral to the very definition of heritage but also a means of questioning the implicit hierarchies that determine what deserves remembrance, protection, or transmission.

It is within this diversity that intangible cultural heritage today finds one of its strongest legitimacies – not merely as a supplement to monumental legacy, but as a tool for rebalancing collective memory. Ticino, historically marked by migration, cross-border exchanges, and cultural experimentation – most notably in the context of Monte Verità – thus offers fertile ground for rethinking heritage policies from the margins.

Over the years, the Ufficio dell'analisi e del patrimonio culturale digitale (UAPCD) has accumulated a wide range of experiences touching on multiple dimensions of cultural heritage. Whether material or immaterial, well known or overlooked, these heritage elements reflect the territory's complexity and bear the imprint of both majorities and minorities. They illustrate how forms of heritage can give voice to the past and help build a more inclusive historical narrative.

This pluralistic approach has been structured around the two services hosted by the office: the Osservatorio culturale del Cantone Ticino (OC) and the Sistema per la valorizzazione del patrimonio culturale (SVPC). These two entities rely on distinct yet complementary methodologies – quantitative and qualitative, synchronic and diachronic, analog and digital – which enable the exploration of the dynamic dimensions of heritage. Three case studies illustrate this work:

Intangible Heritage as the Voice of Territories - Stories, traditions, and memories are not mere historical testimonies; they serve as mediators between past and present. Projects such as the Guida letteraria della Svizzera italiana (http://guidaletteraria.ti.ch) and the cross-border project Libervie – LIBERVIE - LIBERtà di muoversi: VIE Culturali e Letterarie Transfrontaliere Accessibili e Inclusive (Interreg VI-A Italia–Svizzera 2021/2027) demonstrate how this heritage can connect places to forgotten narratives, transforming ordinary spaces into sites rich with memory and identity.

Giving Voice to the Past from an Inclusive Perspective - In the absence of institutional recognition, many forms of heritage remain invisible. Initiatives such as Sàmara (http://samara.ti.ch) and the Agenda culturale della Svizzera italiana (http://www.ti.ch/agendaculturale), which rely on open data approaches and digital tools, offer concrete ways to document, disseminate, and valorise often overlooked heritage. They also raise the question of public institutions' responsibility in shaping a more inclusive informational environment.

Tangible and Intangible Impacts on the Baukultur - Recognizing and integrating intangible heritage into territorial planning opens the door to architectural and urban projects that can reflect the cultural diversity of societies. The valorisation of forgotten or marginalized narratives inspires interventions that are more attentive to the memory of places and aligned with a sustainable Baukultur, in which intangible heritage becomes a structural component of the built environment.

In conclusion, without the recognition and valorisation of these discreet yet fundamental forms of heritage, it becomes difficult to truly give voice to the past. They are essential levers not only for constructing a shared memory but also for developing genuinely inclusive heritage policies.

Keywords: Intangible Heritage, Cultural Diversity, Open Data, Mediation, Participation

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Youth Camps in Bulgaria 1944 – 1989

Creation, Past, Significance

Ekaterina Tsolova/Independant Researcher

Children during singing class at the pioneer camp 'Kipilovo–Sayganitsa', Kipilovo, June 1969. © State archive Yambol, fond 541, opis 2, A.E. 66, Nr. 32

Between the years 1944 and 1989, numerous facilities for organized youth leisure were built in Bulgaria. For the socialist youth movement in Bulgaria, the vacation time for children and young adults – especially during the long summer holidays – played a major role. During this period, over 800 youth camps were established across the country in various organizational formats (Ministerstvo na informatsiyata i saobshteniyata. 1971–1973). Through games, sun, water, and fresh air, children and young adults were meant to recover from the "systematic learning effort", improve their health, and be raised in line with socialist ideals (LEX, 2024). The vast majority of Bulgarian children and young adults attended youth camps during this time. These camps form part of society's collective memory but evoke mixed feelings today – variated from nostalgia for carefree times to discomfort about educational methods that are now seen as controversial. Important witnesses of Bulgaria's social transformation, these camps must be thoroughly examined and actively integrated into the country's reckoning with its socialist past.

Today, the architectural structures of the youth camps are in a precarious state. Disputes and a lack of transparency around land and building ownership following the post-1989 privatization processes, along with limited state funding, have led to the decay of many sites. The often underestimated socio-historical value of these buildings – frequently remembered only as symbols of enforced or ideologically charged architecture – complicates their recognition as cultural heritage. None of the youth camps are protected or studied by Bulgaria's National Institute for Immovable Cultural Heritage (NINKN).

In the process of reassessing the value of these camps, their origin and development are also investigated: Who designed the youth camps, and how were they built? From planning to implementation, the process is analyzed by taking into account the various contributors to the creation of the camp - the architects, the camp staff and other professionals involved. The methodology includes site visits, interviews, and discourse analyses of archival documents, leading to an examination of the relationships between architecture, symbolism, and organization. Comparing diverse types of buildings allows for a more comprehensive analysis of the different planning strategies and the architectural legacy of the youth camps. In addition, the study examines the specific narratives embedded in spatial configurations and architectural design.

Architectural, artistic, social, and local historical values are taken under consideration, and the youth camps are interpreted as fragmented elements within today's landscape and urban development. The analysis focuses on dissonant elements at the intersections between the creation of the camp and the built heritage. This approach opens up a multifaceted discussion of the architectural legacy of youth camps as heritage structures.

This research addresses the cultural heritage of children and youth in Bulgaria and builds on the MAS thesis "SUMMER, SUN, AIR – Built Heritage of Youth Camps in Bulgaria 1944–1989" (Tsolova, 2024). It provides an overview of the development of the youth camps and focuses on the various involved and the connections between them – who built the structures, how they were designed, and for which target groups they were intended.

Keywords: Pioneer Camps, Socialist Architecture, Dissonant Heritage, Leisure Infrastructure

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Cultural Monuments of German Jews in Present-Day Poland

Why and How Should We Protect Them?

Tomasz Wolender/ICOMOS Poland

Szczecin. Jewish cemetery, a monument made of tombstones in 1988. © Tomasz Wolender, 2022.

This paper explores the complex challenges associated with preserving the cultural heritage of German Jews in the former German territories incorporated into Poland after World War II. In the postwar period, in cities such as Szczecin and Wrocław, Jews from the former eastern territories of Poland settled, having limited connection to the German-Jewish legacy. The number of these communities diminished radically after the 1968 communist repressions, which forced many to emigrate, leading to the near-total disappearance of Jewish communities in the region.

Today, only a limited number of Jewish heritage sites, primarily architectural structures, have survived. Many have been repurposed for secular uses; buildings related to the culture and religion of German Jews have lost their original purpose and have been adapted for various functions; cemeteries were frequently destroyed, neglected, or redeveloped without proper documentation. Although most surviving monuments are legally protected, enforcement and conservation efforts are inconsistent and underfunded. Public institutions and NGOs, including the POLIN Museum and the Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage in Poland, complement the legal safeguarding of this heritage. However, their initiatives are often uncoordinated and sporadic. Local Jewish communities where they exist typically lack the interest to engage in preservation work actively.

The paper examines two key case studies within the socio-institutional context: the liquidation and potential restoration of the Jewish cemetery in Szczecin and the contested future of the New Synagogue in Poznań. These cases serve as a premise to explore broader social, ethical and legal challenges linked to preserving the legacy of the nearly vanished community. Using the two case studies, the paper aligns the question of possible benefits from preservation efforts for contemporary local communities and the legal and ethical responsibility as justifications for investing in protecting heritage that no longer serves an active community with the legal and operational challenges linked to this specific heritage.

The research draws on archival materials, historical publications, and administrative documentation related to the legal protection of the case sites, supplemented by insights from student workshops, public consultations, and artistic interventions. Based on these records, the study considers a target group of restoration activities to search for the contemporary social significance of these monuments to local communities. It questions whether the mere fact of legal protection and protection of memory are sufficient arguments for the involvement of significant financial resources and investment processes to protect this type of heritage. Finally, the paper highlights the challenges linked to the specificity of the Jewish architectural heritage, which often requires a special approach related to religious issues and discusses the instruments and procedures that should be used to protect Jewish heritage monuments.

By addressing these questions, the paper seeks to provoke critical reflection on the ethical, social, and practical dimensions of preserving the legacy of German Jews in contemporary Poland. It contributes to the discussion on developing the systemic approach to this legacy preservation, which would also encourage future generations to value, preserve and benefit the remnants of a once-vibrant minority culture.

Keywords: Jewish Heritage Protection, Jewish Cemeteries, Synagogues, Reuse/New Function

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What Futures for the Jewish Communities of the Swiss Jura Arc?

Raphaël Chatelet/République et Canton du Jura
Olena Yatsenko/Bern University of Applied Sciences

The main objective of this study is to examine the consideration of synagogues in canton Jura both as religious institutions and as architectural heritage sites requires a broad perspective to understand the reasons behind their current condition and to make informed projections for the future. Previous research has shown that the establishment of Jewish communities in the Swiss segment of the Jura Arc dates back to the Middle Ages; however, these communities underwent significant expansion during the second half of the 19th century. At that time, the towns of Porrentruy, Delémont, Biel/Bienne, Saint-Imier, and La Chaux-de-Fonds witnessed the arrival of Jewish individuals, primarily originating from southern Alsace. These newcomers, mainly from the villages of Hégenheim, Unter- and Oberhagenthal, and Durmenach, located near the Swiss border and the city of Basel, substantially reinforced the existing Jewish communal presence.

Although little attention has been paid to this migratory movement can be traced back to 1848, a year marked by political unrest and anti-Jewish violence in Alsace, notably during the Judenrumpel riots, which compelled numerous Jewish families to seek refuge in neighboring Switzerland. It is important to note that it was not until 1866 that Switzerland formally recognized the right to freedom of settlement for all citizens, including those of Jewish faith. Prior to that date, Swiss Jews were confined to the villages of Lengnau and Endingen. Conversely, France had granted such civil rights as early as 1830, thereby facilitating the earlier migration of French Jews to the Jura valleys, preceding their Swiss counterparts.

Nonetheless, the integration process was frequently impeded by local resistance and varying degrees of antisemitism – phenomena observable on both sides of the Franco-Swiss border. Following a period of demographic and economic growth, these communities experienced rapid decline at the turn of the 20th century. The Jewish communities of Porrentruy, Delémont, and Saint-Imier eventually disappeared, while those in Biel/Bienne and La Chaux-de-Fonds managed to persist. This era also witnessed an increasing number of naturalizations, reflecting a broader aspiration for civic participation. A notable example is Maurice Goetschel of Delémont, who, in 1917, became the first Jewish member of the Swiss Federal Parliament.

The results of our study support the hypothesis that despite external pressures, these communities maintained distinct identities over time, owing to their religious and cultural specificities. By the late 19th century, however, a gradual shift toward cultural assimilation and integration into the dominant society became evident. This process coincided with a marked decline in religious observance.

These transformations can be attributed in part to broader economic changes. The industrialization of agriculture and the concentration of manufacturing and commercial activities marginalized the traditional livelihoods of many Jewish residents in the Jura. Additionally, a general trend toward secularization and cultural homogenization in Western societies contributed to the erosion of minority communal identities.

The construction of synagogues during this period served as a powerful symbol of both cultural affirmation and integration within host societies. Each of the aforementioned communities succeeded in erecting a place of worship by the late 19th or early 20th century. The subsequent fate of these synagogues varies: the one in Porrentruy was demolished in 1983 due to a lack of active members; the synagogue in Delémont – though no longer in use – remains the last rural synagogue in Western Europe. In Biel/Bienne and La Chaux-de-Fonds, recent restoration efforts have allowed these buildings to continue serving as active places of worship. In Hégenheim, a village of origin for many Jura-based Jewish families, the disused synagogue was repurposed for five decades as an artist's studio and has since been transformed into a public cultural space.

The question of how to preserve this architectural and cultural heritage is central to the present study. Although the physical disappearance of these buildings must be averted, the declining practice of religious Judaism poses a fundamental challenge to their continued function. Should the synagogues of the Jura not play a central role in the transmission of Jewish heritage and the distinct history of these communities? Could these buildings serve as cultural bridges between the Jewish and local Christian traditions? By opening themselves to the dominant culture while preserving their specificity, these vulnerable heritage sites may find a sustainable path forward – one that ensures their preservation and continued relevance.

Keywords: Minorities, Judaism, Jura, Anthropology, Architecture

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Neues Heim in Stuttgart Rot

From Refugee Camp to Largest Housing Project in the Federal Republic of Germany

Martin Klinger/Indepedent Researcher

IBA-Tag Wohnen Stuttgart Rot. © Martin Klinger

In 1949, ethnic German refugees from Yugoslavia founded the housing cooperative Neues Heim in Stuttgart. After fleeing at the end of World War II, they had been living in overcrowded and makeshift barracks on the edge of the forest in the Zuffenhausen district. When the situation became unsustainable, they began constructing their own housing – with limited financial means but considerable personal effort. The first three-storey row house with a gabled roof had 18 flats and provided space for 100 people. Many more followed, because the groundbreaking ceremony at 'Rotweg 58' marked the beginning of what was at times the largest housing project in the Federal Republic of Germany, the district of Stuttgart Rot, which provided living space for up to 17,000 people in the 1950s. The land was made available by the city and federal government through hereditary leaseholds. Urban planning followed the principles of the Charter of Athens, with clearly separated functional zones, drawing inspiration from the Weissenhofsiedlung developed during the 'Werkbundausstellung Die Wohnung Stuttgart 1927'.

100 years later, to mark the anniversary, another international building exhibition is being held, the 'IBA 2027'. Its guiding principle is the 'productive city', a deliberate counter-model of the Charter of Athens. The projects are taking place in Stuttgart and the surrounding region and are intended to point the way to the future. They are intended to show 'what will then be avant-garde'. The Neues Heim cooperative is also involved and is working with the IBA to create Das genossenschaftliche Quartier 'am Rotweg' . To mark the occasion, the old row houses from 1949 will be demolished starting in December 2023 to make way for the replacement buildings.

The Stuttgart Rot district is known for a number of 'avant-garde housing experiments', such as the organic floor plans of Hans Scharoun's 'Romeo and Julia' high-rise residential buildings, Richard Döcker's innovative research housing buildings and Peter Faller's 'halber Wohnhügel' . Previous research interest in Rot has largely focused on these special architectural features, all of which are listed as historical monuments. This paper argues that these celebrated designs would not have emerged without the groundwork laid by the cooperative Neues Heim and its modest post-war row houses. It raises the question: Why has the architectural legacy of this 'minority culture' been largely neglected in the discourse on heritage preservation? How is it decided what constitutes cultural heritage worthy of protection, and what role do minorities play in this process? The history of the Neues Heim cooperative and the simple, traditional-looking row houses of the post-war settlement have hardly been studied, even though they were essential to the lives of their former residents. The process shows how top-down principles define architectural heritage and often exclude minority perspectives. This paper attempts to close this research gap by exploring the question of what difference it makes who builds housing and for whom it is built. The thesis is that this question is closely related to the architecture in question and influences the development of a housing estate over time. How do the descendants of the original users themselves evaluate their built heritage, and how can the desire for non-preservation be taken into account? The replacement buildings of the IBA'27 respond to current demands, while the connection to history and the social roots of the Neues Heim cooperative could be lost. How can a balance be found between majority and minority cultures (heritage)? The new buildings in the neighbourhood are intended to be avant-garde and forward-looking, but the departure from the past reveals tensions between the desire to honour minority cultures and the orientation towards socially dominant architectural discourses.

The case study uses archive material, interviews and primary sources to reconstruct the development of the neighbourhood. It analyses how paradigms such as the Charter of Athens or the 'productive city' have been used in a variety of ways to shape or exclude the interests of user groups.

The work provides examples of the opportunities and risks that arise when minority cultures become the focus of attention. It discusses how architectural heritage can be preserved in the long term to represent a diverse society and what potential greater inclusion of minority perspectives offers – including for dealing with majority culture (heritage). The cooperative neighbourhood of Stuttgart-Rot thus becomes a starting point for a debate on the value, perception and communication of the architectural heritage of minorities.

Keywords: Migration, Housing Construction, Cooperative System, Monument Preservation, Settlement History

Junggesellenheime

Supervised Youth Homes of the SBB in Zurich

Ekaterina Nozhova/SBB

Junggesellenheime, Kohlendreieck. © Maurice Grüning, Architectural History Archive Zurich, 2020

"They thought Switzerland was paradise. Now they've lived for decades in eight square meters." This is how an article published in the "Society" section of the NZZ in May 2024 described the living conditions of migrant workers in the Junggesellenheime on Brauerstrasse in Zurich. Four three-story buildings in the heart of the city, originally built as supervised youth homes, were later converted into dormitories for single men and today serve as accommodation for workers of SBB and the Rhomberg Sersa Rail Group. Many of the residents, initially intended to stay only for a few years, have remained for decades.

The supervised youth homes (Junggesellenheime) were built by the SBB in 1965. The target group for these company-owned accommodations was young people from remote, less industrialized mountain regions, as well as those who had previously been placed in observation or juvenile homes, or – as contemporary reports put it – "from damaged environments, where they could no longer be entrusted to their parents without lasting harm." These youths were expected to begin apprenticeships in the city but, for educational reasons, could not live with their families or with third parties. Instead, they were to be gradually prepared for independent living in a supervised youth home run according to pedagogical principles, where they would also be supervised and guided outside of working hours.

To this end, four residential buildings using Durisol construction were built in central Zurich. Houses I, III, and IV each had 36 single rooms, three kitchens, and three toilet facilities. House II included 20 double rooms, two kitchens, a caretaker's apartment, and a common room for 60 people. The basement also featured a workshop, a laundry room, an equipment room, a storage room, central heating, and a large communal shower facility. Altogether, the complex provided space for 108 people in single rooms, 40 in double rooms, and one caretaker with their family.

The houses were constructed as post-and-beam structures with steel skeletons and Durisol exterior wall panels. Durisol was made from chemically mineralized wood fibers with cement added as a binder. Short construction time and the reusability of the components were considered key advantages of this method. The four buildings were originally intended as temporary structures and approved for only ten years. The plan was to relocate them to the Limmattal Rangierbahnhof (Limmattal marshalling yard) upon its completion. According to contemporary reports, only the floor structures and internal load-bearing walls could not be reused – not due to technical limitations, but because the building authority required them to be of solid construction.

In 2020, the buildings were added to the inventory of the City of Zurich as valuable socio-historical heritage assets. Yet the supervised youth homes, now functioning as dormitories for single men, are not a museum: life in eight square meters, with shared kitchens, two toilets, and one shower per floor, and visitation permitted only until 10 p.m., continues to this day.

How could a project with an originally progressive social mission become an "architecture of exclusion" – as phrased in the NZZ article?

A discussion of this housing typology – with small private single rooms, shared communal areas, and a more or less liberal house policy – always reveals two sides. On one side is a modern-utopian architecture inspired by the concept of Existenzminimum: a housing model tailored to new social types, which not only reflects but also enables social change. On the other side are measures aimed at alleviating the housing crisis, driven by a fundamentally defensive approach: they seek to control social developments perceived as challenges or even threats to existing norms, orders, and structures. The supervised youth homes exemplify both perspectives.

In discussing the future of these houses, we must ask what possibilities exist to promote an optimistic vision for this housing typology. It becomes essential to consider how these homes can be reimagined not merely as pragmatic responses to social needs, but as spaces for social innovation and positive community building. What structural, social, and cultural adjustments are needed to transform these facilities into a model for future-oriented living? This becomes the central theme of the discussion.

Keywords: Junggesellenheim, dormitory for singles, supervised youth home, Durisol, SBB

Testimonies of Minorities and Marginalised Groups in Baden-Württemberg

Reflections on Monument-Listing Practices

Kristina Hagen/Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Baden-Württemberg

Resettlers' home built in 1948 by order of the city of Grötzingen according to house displaced persons from former German territories. © Martin Hahn, Landesamt für Denkmalpflege im RP Stuttgart, 2024

The cultural monument listing process in Baden-Württemberg has always been embedded within a changing societal understanding of history and, consequently, in shifting perspectives on architectural culture and art (Widmaier 2019, 18). Thus, the listing of barns or industrial buildings in the 1970s responded to social history's findings, while the current listing of works by female architects documents an openness to social issues, to which gender studies have contributed. The recording of testimonies from minorities and marginalised groups likewise is not carried out in anticipation, but follows the usual temporal delay of around 30 years, based on scientific research and with recognition of expertise from the respective communities.

Accordingly, the Baden-Württemberg list of cultural monuments includes testimonies of religious and ethnic minorities such as the Waldensians (18th/19th centuries), the Pietists (from the 18th century), Jews (17th century–20th century), Muslims (20th century; Fig. 1) and other communities like the Sinti and Roma (20th century). While these groups' buildings can largely be described as self-representations, this is only partially true for buildings associated with marginalised groups or people without a lobby – such as a camp built under the Nazi regime and used thereafter, a resettlers' home for displaced persons from former German territories from 1948, a care and nursing centre for displaced persons from 1951 (cf. Senarclens de Grancy 2024), or a former hotel converted into a shelter for the homeless. However, it seems possible that a peer group might regard such sites as part of its heritage despite the lack of direct authorship, especially when continued use has left material traces.

In any case, the mentioned examples – with their clearly legible substance – could be relatively easily listed as cultural monuments under the Baden-Württemberg Monument Protection Act. A reappraisal of already listed cultural monuments from new perspectives becomes necessary when additional layers of meaning that may contribute to the monument's value need to be taken into account (Kleineschulte 2022, 134) – for instance, in the case of a Protestant provisional church ('Notkirche') built between 1947 and 1949, which has been reused as a Greek Orthodox church since the 1980s. The fact that its iconostasis is repeatedly repainted requires a reconsideration of the demand for historical authenticity linked to materiality that has been pursued by the state to date – by recognising the monument's reuse as a relevant layer. This issue also applies to Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu, and other community centres housed in industrial buildings outside of town that are not suitable or worthy of being listed as cultural monuments and whose functions are often not visible from the exterior. Yet they raise highly interesting questions about potential new monuments' ephemeral components.

Finally, one must consider the 'public interest' that, according to the law, has to be determined when granting status of a historic monument: How do representatives of various minorities and marginalised groups view such designation in individual cases, and how do majority representatives react? As with all sites under review for potential cultural monument status, reactions often unpredictably range from disinterest to rejection, to gradual or immediate, full acceptance. As always, it is essential to actively communicate, make processes transparent and, wherever compatible with legal requirements, allow participation and public involvement – as already demanded before 1975 and once again in the European Architectural Heritage Year in 2018 (Scheurmann 2018; Plein/Plate 2024; Plein 2024).

Keywords: Inclusive Cultural Heritage, Concepts of Authenticity, Civic Participation

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‘Socially Just’ Monument Conservation in the European Architectural Heritage Year 1975

A Turkish Childhood Home in the Old Town of Alsfeld

Annika Sellmann/Technische Universität Berlin

Am Roßmarkt, Alsfeld, Germany, in June 2024. Interview in front of the empty lot where the residential building had been demolished a few weeks earlier. © Annika Sellmann, CC BY-SA

Efforts in monument preservation theory to differentiate between ‘the heritage of minorities’ and its opposite confront a complex reality when applied to the historical investigation of medieval town centers in the 20th century. The story of Ahmet A. and his family’s home at Am Roßmarkt 18 exemplifies this complexity. He arrived via detours in Alsfeld, Germany, as a child from Eskişehir, Turkey. The story can be told within the framework of this conference thanks to an interview with Mr. A. and Wolfgang Lipphardt (mayor of Alsfeld from 1973 to 1987 of the social democratic SPD party), recorded in front of the now-demolished house in the old town. After initially being dismissed as a blight, the building was ultimately demolished in 2024. Additional sources include archival materials from the Council of Europe, the Bundesarchiv in Bonn, and the Alsfeld city archive. This narrative forms the first part of the presentation.

The old town of Alsfeld, described as “medieval” or “European”, is easily attributed value in accordance with the dominant German heritage paradigm. Since 1975, the town has carried the designation ‘European Model Town’. Two years prior, it was selected as part of the Council of Europe’s official European Programme of Pilot Projects. This was alongside four other locations in the former Federal Republic of Germany and by the German National Committee for the European Architectural Heritage Year (DNK; later the German National Committee for Monument Preservation). The selection emphasized Alsfeld’s rich stock of historic buildings, its largely intact medieval street plan, and its desity of half-timbered structures – subjects of architectural and technical study since the 19th century (Cuno & Schäfer 1883; Lehmgrübner 1905).

Mr. A.’s Alsfeld narrative begins in 1973, the final year of the German–Turkish recruitment agreement. His account reflects a childhood spent in an old town then targeted for urban renewal, during a period characterized by socially driven city planning initiatives.

From the perspective of the Council of Europe, preparations for the 1975 European Architectural Heritage Year aimed to broaden the discourse on monument preservation to include its social dimensions – particularly its economic and societal impacts – alongside conventional arguments based on cultural value. These social concerns were embedded in several foundational documents: the Brussels Resolutions of 1969, the 1973 Final Resolutions of the Zurich launching conference, the 1974 Bologna conference documentation Social Cost of the Integrated Conservation of Historic Centres, and the 1975 concluding texts – the Amsterdam Declaration and the European Charter of the Architectural Heritage (all CoE archives). The catalogue accompanying the traveling exhibition ‘A Future for Our Past: Monument Preservation and Heritage Conservation in the Federal Republic of Germany’ (Eine Zukunft für unsere Vergangenheit. Denkmalschutz und Denkmalpflege in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland), curated by the Bavarian State Monument Preservation Office, also reflects these concerns. In it, August Gebeßler identifies “social planning and urban preservation” and “upgrading modernization without displacement or significant loss of substance” as key tenets of the Integrated Conservation approach (Gebeßler 1975).

The second part of this presentation explores the theory and practice of Integrated Conservation, with a focus on its social implications. These provide a framework for assessing the relevance and applicability of the 1975 heritage strategies today. This is especially pertinent for sites undergoing the transition to recognized heritage – as was the case in the 1970s with Alsfeld’s old town. In processes where undervalued or neglected spaces are reclassified as heritage through institutional recognition and stakeholder engagement, it is vital to critically examine mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion, as well as their consequences, such as displacement – particularly when residential or lived-in environments are involved. The overlooked tensions and forgotten continuities within the vision of “socially just” monument preservation during the European Year of Architectural Heritage will be highlighted using the Alsfeld case study.

Keywords: Social Justice, Urban Heritage, EAHY 1975, Society of Migration

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The ‘Path of Diversity’ in St. Gallen

Role and Responsibilities of Heritage Conservation

Matthias Fischer/City of St. Gallen
Klaudia Fryckowska/City of St. Gallen

Kreuzbleiche Gymnasium, St. Gallen. In 1944, 1368 Jewish prisoners were liberated from the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in the so-called ‘Kasztner-Transport’ and brought to Switzerland, where they were initially housed in the Kreuzbleiche gymnasium, among other places.
© Staatsarchiv Aargau, Bildarchiv Ringier

The city of St. Gallen looks back on more than a thousand years of history, with its main architectural structures dating from the period following the great city fire of 1418. Plenty of buildings shaping the cityscape belong to the art historical as well as architectural heritage demon-strating the contemporary interaction of the majority society with the unknown.

Initiated by a postulate of the city parliament, a ‘Path of Diversity’ was developed in a participative way lead by an interdisciplinary group of experts and accompanied by the local population. It visualizes places of justice, engagement and human rights but also racism, exclusion as well as colonialism. Some of these places symbolize courageous advocacy for others – some remind of dark chapters in the city’s history. In spring 2025 the results have been published online (www.wegdervielfalt.ch: interactive map with additional information).

With this, the postulate assignment concludes, transitioning into an information transfer provided by the Office for Monument Preservation within the context of the ‘Architectural Heritage Year 2025’. Accompanied by lectures and guided tours in collaboration with partner institutions, it is focused on the annual exhibition entitled ‘Denkmal anders’ in April/May 2025. During the preparations for the exhibition as well as the in-depth work with the ‘Path of Diversity’ an inconsistency in the categorization of monuments was determined. Examples show that most buildings contained by the ‘Path of Diversity’ are inventoried or protected solely by their architectural significance neglecting non-structural incidents of the past. Only a few are inventoried based on their socio-historical significance, especially as achievements by minorities. Others, in particular places of discrimination, are still unprotected and not inventoried.

As a result, the following question arises: What can, should or must be done in heritage conservation to better account for social diversity, the ‘heritage of others’, minorities or people without a lobby? Aim and main task is the preservation and maintenance of historic cultural assets for future generations. In practice these are primarily monuments of special cultural heritage value. In that sense something is worthy of protection if it has a particular historical, social, scientific, artistic, architectural, craft, settlement or landscape significance. For better protecting the heritage of ‘Others’ these categories should be differentiated more clearly and comprehensively.

Heritage inventories are periodically updated and protection measures determined politically. Still the protection of buildings could be regarded as a one-sided process focussing mainly on the architectural significance neglecting buildings with structural alterations. Still their invisible historical value can generate a monument value.

Regarding the next actualization of the inventory the public and especially underrepresented populations in the inventory must be included. Equivalent to the ‘Path of Diversity’ it should be asked for identity-shaping buildings according to different population groups which need to be preserved as cultural heritage. Thereby not only the inventory can be expanded but further the value of the monuments enlarged. As an example, the ‘Kreuzbleiche Gymnasium’, is not only a testimony to the emergence of physical education in the early 20th century but also reminds of the history of refugees during the second World War.

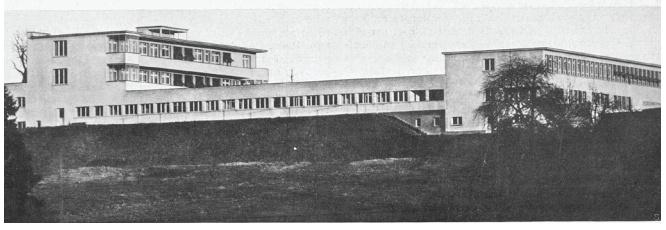
Architectural monuments tell stories - and it is the task of heritage conservation to tell these stories more holistically than before to illuminate both the positive and negative aspects of a building’s history and to do more justice to today’s social diversity and the heritage of minorities.

Keywords: Cultural Diversity, Minority History, Participation, Heritage Conservation, Public Engagement

On the Legacy of an Example of New Building in Schaffhausen

The Former Children's Hospital Has Morphed into the 'Stiftung Ungarbühl' for Adults with Development Constraints

Sabine Brinitzer/RPTUniversität Kaiserslautern-Landau



View of the former children's hospital from the West.
© Schweizerische Bauzeitung, 1931

"Up there in the fresh air and sunshine, with the right, careful nutrition … your child … will put on weight and return to good health."[1] This was the 1932 promise of a good recovery for children who had been weakened by infections, epidemics, or their premature birth, and also joyful testimony to the new building, which met all the functional, hygienical and spatial requirements. To this day, some Schaffhausen citizens remember the former children's hospital and the medical director who treated the children.[2] However, for many it is above all the eye-catching building that still stretches along the plateau of the Ungarbühl that is of permanent significance, its architecture attesting to the New Building movement in Schaffhausen.[3]

The first signs of a children's hospital date back as far as the 19th century, when it was housed in an historical villa. When a new build became necessary, "Hülfsgesellschaft Schaffhausen" as the owner organized a competition among four architects.[4] Members of the jury included Otto R. Salvisberg and Max Häfeli Sr. First prize went to Schaffhausen architects Scherrer und Meyer,[5] who had already designed the sports hall on the Emmersberg and the former "City – Garage", both in the New Building style, for Schaffhausen.

After functioning for 43 years as a children's hospital, in 1975 for economic reasons the building was assigned to the "Stiftung Ungarbühl" foundation and has been used ever since for adults with developmental impairments. The ad media for it outline the new purpose with the motto of "We offer you space to live', 'work' and 'relax'." Now it is the inhabitants with development constraints and their families for whom the former children's hospital acts as a living memorial as it, on the one hand, once again provides a protective, healing lifeworld, and, on the other, a place where people can meet up again and spend time together.

With the new purpose to be given the building, a conversion effort commenced, with rooms being combined, an additional floor added, and the facility expanded. In the context of the new wing planned for small, shared flats, the building has been taken off the VDK List of Heritage Cultural Assets[6] although all the conversion steps to date have been realized with great care and the original shape and architecture in the New Building idiom remain clearly perceptible. This shows most clearly that its mutability does not detract from its value or its transformational qualities, and it would precisely therefore have been key for this of all buildings to be officially granted renewed listed protection. In line with this conviction, when planning the new annex and weighing up whether it should snuggle up to the old building or set itself off from it, and despite it no longer being on the VDK list, Roland Busenhart und Partner treated it as an edifice firmly worthy of preservation. The result is a design that successfully does justice to the users' needs while at the same time taking up the architecture of New Building in order to transpose it into a contemporary idiom – a form of conversion and further use geared to the future. For the inhabitants of Schaffhausen the building erected in 1932 as a children's hospital possess an intangible mnemonic value. In general, it has a value in terms of architectural, social and medical history: At the same time, it is infused with material and architectural value. For today's inhabitants with development constraints, the availability of a home designed as well as possible to fit their needs is no doubt the highest priority. Related to this are, however, the specific experiences that they themselves, and their families, remember making with this building. Including the building once again in the VKD and thus restoring the official recognition of its architecture as well as conveying the architectural importance and historical urban significance of the entire ensemble would thus enable both relatives and society to consider the building over and above its function as "accommodation for disabled persons". Indeed, it would root the inhabitants in an important building, which would be very much in line with their intended participation in life outside it.

Keywords: Children's Hospital, Schaffhausen, New Building

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Audiovisual Cultural Heritage

Reactive Cultural Asset and Testimony of Diversity

Cécile Vilas/Memoriav

"Foreign workers". Schweizer Filmwochenschau from 20 February 1970. © Swiss Federal Archives, Cinémathèque suisse

In this presentation, we argue that it is specifically audiovisual documents that bring minorities into contact with the concept of 'cultural heritage' most quickly and incorporate them into the (future) cultural memory.

From the 20th century onwards, the production of image and sound recordings became accessible to broader, economically weaker circles. This enabled minorities and marginalised groups to use photos, tape recordings and films to document their lives, celebrations, views and networks.

However, these audiovisual documents are not always immediately recognised, evaluated or correctly preserved as cultural heritage by their producers, or by memory institutions for a long time. Therefore, there is a need for awareness-raising measures among these groups regarding the value and preservation worthiness of these documents. At the same time, memory institutions must open up their collection and preservation policies to documents of the most diverse provenance.

Audiovisual cultural heritage, a reactive cultural asset - Photographs, films and sound recordings provide a contemporary record of the living conditions of marginalised groups and people without a voice, who may never create built cultural heritage, or only do so at a later stage (e.g. as second-generation migrants). Audiovisual documents are therefore often the only evidence that shows, for example, the precariousness and temporary nature of minority housing and records it for the future. Marginalised groups often live in spaces that they repurpose for new uses. Audiovisual documents thus act as sensitive sensors that quickly document constellations and transformations. Audiovisual documents can be produced by minorities themselves and reflect an internal perspective. However, they are also an equally important testimony to the external perception of minorities and the associated discourses. In both cases, they are important sources for the lives of minorities.

From this perspective, audiovisual cultural heritage is often the first type of cultural heritage with which minorities of our time come into contact and find their way into the culture of memory.

Audiovisual cultural heritage: monitoring and preservation - The 'patrimonialisation' of audiovisual documents and their long-term preservation requires targeted measures. It is therefore essential that Switzerland's audiovisual cultural heritage is understood in all its diversity (in terms of provenance and subject matter) and catalogued in inventories. This means that minorities in particular must be made aware of the value of the documents they themselves have produced. Memory institutions should also incorporate this cultural heritage into their collection strategies with a keen awareness of its diversity and carry out appropriate monitoring to ensure that such holdings are not lost. The aim is to transfer the documents to an institution, preserve and index them, and make them accessible, wherever possible.

Memoriav, the competence centre for Switzerland's audiovisual heritage, consistently pursues these goals in its work, with a particular focus on preserving and maintaining the diversity of audiovisual documents. Since 2020, Memoriav has been conducting a comprehensive inventory project on audiovisual cultural heritage. Taking diversity into account is an important goal. In addition to institutions, associations (e.g. migrant associations) and religious communities are also being surveyed. Memoriav also supports the preservation of audiovisual collections. These often include collections with testimonials of minority groups: Examples include the video collection 'Stadt in Bewegung' (City in Motion) (Sozialarchiv Zürich) on the youth movements of the 1980s, as well as the preservation project for audiovisual materials from the Gay Archive (Sozialarchiv Zürich) and the feminist 'Radio Pleine Lune' (Archives contestataires, Carouge).

Memobase, the portal for Switzerland's audiovisual cultural heritage - Projects supported by Memoriav are made available on the Memobase portal wherever possible. Numerous collections from memory institutions reflect the great diversity of Switzerland's audiovisual cultural heritage. The 'Schweizer Filmwochenschau' (Swiss Newsreel) 1940–1975 and programmes from the Swiss public broadcaster SRG SSR complement the offering.

Keywords: Audiovisual Cultural Heritage, Memoriav, Memobase

‘Cultural Memory’, Minority Heritage

The Vallon Neighbourhood in Lausanne

Claude Grin/Swiss Coalition for Cultural Diversity

© Claude Grin

There are several definitions of the terms ‘minorities’ and ‘majority’. Louis Wirth, an American sociologist associated with the ‘Chicago School’ uses the term ‘minority group’ in his 1928 book The Ghetto. He defines a minority as “a group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are targeted [...] by differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore consider themselves to be the object of collective discrimination.”(Wirth, 1928) This implies a relationship between the dominated and the dominant. “A ‘minority’ whatever its nature, can therefore only be defined by taking into account intersectionality, multi-situated and multi-scalar belonging.”(Tartakowsky, 2020: 8) The concepts of memory, belonging, and heritage are interlinked. Heritage creation is therefore the process by which a new link is built between the present, the past, and the future. It is generally accepted that a sense of community and belonging is based on a shared cultural heritage. By reintroducing the concept of ‘cultural memory’ we are restoring its cultural significance. We remember the past, not only as individuals, but also across generations. As social and cultural communities, our memory practices are linked to politically and emotionally charged issues of national or ‘ethnic’ identity, historical trauma, and experiences of dislocation, loss, and forgetting. In other words, we reappropriate our emblematic objects, which we may or may not choose to share. Some ‘minority’ groups can be described as ‘visible’ and others as ‘transient’. By ‘visible’ I mean urban minorities who assert a reterritorialization by making themselves visible through distinctive signs and collective devices, particularly in practices in public space (commemorations, processions, political parades). By ‘transient minorities’ I mean migratory waves whose arrival and departure contextes vary according to economic growth and industrial history, and which engage a different form of temporality. In Switzerland, much of the post-industrial infrastructure has been destroyed or repurposed. Often, all that remains are ‘forced’ buildings and housing, as well as administrative and health control sites, which bear witnesses to institutional power. But in industrial wastelands and abandoned urban spaces, there are still ‘traces’ of emblematic places frequented by minorities: cultural venues, bars and cafés, public spaces, etc. Identifying these places of memory will enable them to be promoted as part of a process of “heritage preservation” for the neighborhood or part of the buildings and spaces.

The Vallon neighborhood in Lausanne will serve as our example. The Vallon neighborhood was built on the embankment of the Flon River, which ran through the city along the western side of the city hill, where the cathedral and parliament are located. The low cost of land encouraged the construction of workers’ housing from the 1870s onwards. There was a large Italian community, as well as a Russian community. At the end of the 19th century, the city built stables and sheds for the road maintenance department. During the 20th century, the neighborhood welcomed public facilities such as two waste incineration plants, which were dismantled in 2005. In the 21st century, the Vallon neighborhood is home to a marginalized and precarious population who live informally in public spaces. It houses several institutions that provide assistance to people in need, as well as numerous cultural activities. The former city warehouses, built between 1896 and 1909, have become a heritage landmark for the neighborhood’s various populations. In 2010, the city launched a consultation process with a view to developing the 1.4-hectare brownfield site on the former incineration plant. At the end of the consultation phase, residents reclaimed ownership of the participatory process and, through the Vallon Neighborhood Association (AQV), remained the city’s point of contact for issues related to the neighborhood’s expansion and development. Soil pollution from incineration plants, heavy materials, and high levels of dioxin in the soil remain too high for any significant project.

Keywords: Visible Minorities, Transient Minorities, Vallon District in Lausanne

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Poster Presentations 1

Gwendolin Ortega/ Valais State for Service Immobilier et Patrimoine	La Fauchère in Evolène and Jeannette Forclaz. A Woman in the Heart of the 16th-Century Alpine Heritage
Yekaterina Martinez Panina/ TU Munich	Balancing Heritage for the Invisible Minority: Repurposing Panopticon Prisons
Ibrahim Klingeberg-Behr/ University of Kassel	Monuments to Victims of Far-Right Violence in Germany – Commemoration, Mourning and Protest by Marginalised Groups in Public Space
Nina Gamsachurdia/ Independent Researcher	Icons – The Cultural Heritage of Christian Orthodox Minorities in Switzerland
Jan Hostettler/ Independent Researcher	For Tenants, Workers and Activists: Unforeseen Preservation and Remembrance Through Art in Public Space
Kathrin Gurtner, Ann-Kathrin Seyffer/ Swiss National Library, Prints and Drawings Department	‘Breaking Free from Thought Patterns.’ The Role of Archives in Relation to the Interpretive Authority in the Culture of Remembrance

Whose Fortress?

Middle Ages, Banners and Counter-Memories at Bellinzona UNESCO World Heritage Site

Eva Carlevaro/Independent Curator and Researcher
Domenico Ermanno Roberti/University of Reading

Banner displayed by GISO Ticino on Castel Grande in Bellinzona during a feminist demonstration for International Women's Day, March 8, (2021). © GISO Ticino

On an unremarkable autumn day in Bellinzona, the medieval Torre Bianca (White Tower) of Castel Grande became an unwilling participant in contemporary ideological struggles. A sudden detonation of red smoke and the unfurling of a xenophobic banner – 'MIGRANTI A CASA' (Migrants Go Home) – transformed the UNESCO-listed site into a contested signifier. The far-right group Junge Tat claimed responsibility, framing their intervention through the rhetoric of Fortezza Europa – a deliberate evocation of the Nazi-era Festung Europa – while deploying militaristic semiotics such as Ghibelline battlements and the Tyr rune, a symbol historically co-opted by the SS. This performative act of reclamation exposed the instability of Bellinzona's heritage as a fixed narrative, revealing instead its susceptibility to political reappropriation.

Officially designated in 2000 as an "outstanding example of a late medieval defensive structure" by UNESCO, Bellinzona's fortifications have long been entangled in competing historical claims. As the record shows, already at the time of inscription the Italian delegation at the World Heritage Committee emphasized the Milanese dukes' role in their construction. Denise Tonella's (2019) unpublished critical report, jointly commissioned by the city and the canton, challenged these dominant readings, arguing that the site's current permanent and temporary displays fail to engage with its palimpsestic past. Her proposal to reframe the site as a 'Fortress' rather than 'Castles' seeked to foreground its geopolitical function over the centuries – yet the question remains: whose memory does this fortress ultimately serve?

As Stuart Hall (1999) reminds us, heritage is never neutral but rather a 'selective tradition' that privileges certain histories while marginalizing others. The stratified fortress affiliation – once hailed as the 'gateway and key to Italy' under the Milanese dukes, whose castles were renamed after each of the Waldstätte following Bellinzona's 16th-century voluntary fall, then rechristened to St. Michele, St. Martino, and St. Barbara amid Ticino's quest for a new identity after independence in the 19th century, and finally given their current (though still not fully settled) names – epitomizes this tension. Rodney Harrison (2013) argues that heritage is not a static relic but a dynamic, future-oriented process that shapes collective identity. In this light, the far-right's intervention becomes not an aberration but a stark manifestation of heritage's inherent politicization.

The temporary exhibition 'Non siamo più nel Medioevo' (We Are No Longer in the Middle Ages) sought to destabilize these hegemonic narratives by engaging Michel Foucault's (1977) concept of 'counter-memory.' Its title referenced a feminist banner also hung in Castel Grande by the Ticino Young Socialists on International Women's Day a few years earlier – a gesture that, like the Junge Tat's action, reclaimed the fortress for alternative histories. Yet where the far-right reinforced exclusion, the exhibition redisplaying the banner on its opening day interrogated the site's gendered and militarized legacies, particularly the near-total absence of women in its archival record. Can a space so deeply inscribed with violence – both military and patriarchal – be reimagined as a site of emancipatory potential? How might marginalized voices resonate without lapsing into essentialism? At Bellinzona's fortress, we confront a fundamental question: Who holds the power to define – and thus, to inherit – the past?

Keywords: Cultural Heritage; UNESCO World Heritage, Bellinzona, Middle-Ages, Counter-Memory

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Whose World Heritage?

Global Visions and Local Realities at Petra World Heritage Site

Jiayao Jiang/University of Cambridge

The construction of souvenir shops and small supermarkets in Petra. © Jiayao Jiang

Petra, a world-renowned archaeological site, has long been a contested space where the interests of government authorities, local communities, and foreign archaeological missions from countries like Italy, Germany, Japan, France, and the United States intersect. The site, which contains remains of human activities dating back to the Nabataean period, spans over 26,000 hectares and encompasses a diverse natural and geological landscape. Petra became Jordan's first World Heritage Site in 1985 and witnessed a surge in tourism following the WHS inscription and its designation as one of the New Seven Wonders in 2007.

These international designations brought global attention –but also profound changes– to the lives of the local Bedul Bedouin communities, whose historical presence and cultural practices were largely overlooked in the original WHS inscription. The Bedouin have maintained a deep-rooted connection to Petra's landscape for generations, with six tribal groups reside around the site today: the Amareen in Beidha, the Bdoul in Umm Sayhoun, the Lyathneh in Wadi Musa and Taybeh, Rawajfeh in Rajif and the Saidiyeen in Dlaghah. The World Heritage listing triggered significant changes, most notably the forced relocation of many Bedouins from their ancestral cave dwellings within Petra to the nearby village of Umm Sayhoun in the early 1980s. This resettlement caused conflicts among different Bedouin tribes, government officials, and site managers, highlighting tensions over control and preservation. Coupled with access restrictions imposed by the Petra Archaeological Park, the relocation altered Bedouin connections to their land and threatened their intangible heritage. Heritage preservation initiatives in Petra often imposed rigid, externally defined notion of 'authenticity' constraining how local communities can present and live their culture. Over time, this dynamic has reshaped the Bedul Bedouins' self-perception, as their identity becomes increasingly filtered through the lens of tourism and expectations of a global audience.

With tourism now bringing over a million visitors to Petra each year, many local community members have shifted away from their traditional reliance on farming and turned to the tourism economy. While tourism has created formal and informal employment opportunities, it has also left the local economy increasingly dependent on external factors and vulnerable to regional political instability. The commercialization of Bedouin culture has reshaped local traditions and livelihoods, often reducing indigenous people to service providers offering cheap products and animal rides to tourists. This has had negative social consequences. Child labor has become more common, as young Bedouins are drawn to short-term earnings in tourism at the expense of their education and long-term development. Gender disparities are also evident: women are largely confined to craft production, which is perceived as suitable 'indoor' work and reflects traditional gender roles. In addition, historic tribal rivalries over land and resources have extended into competition over access to tourism revenues.

Drawing on firsthand experience in heritage management at Petra, this paper interrogates the social and political tensions embedded in the World Heritage framework as it plays out on the ground. The challenges faced by Petra's Bedouin communities exemplify the broader question of "whose heritage" is prioritized in the conservation of World Heritage sites. With UNESCO resources directed toward geological and climate-related concerns, current conservation efforts in Petra still focus primarily on its physical landscape. While the intangible heritage of the Bedouin – particularly their identity and connection to the land – has been largely overlooked. This paper argues that due to the international policy and the local tradition, World Heritage designation could also marginalize the local inhabitants, turning them into minorities and fringe groups within their own landscape.

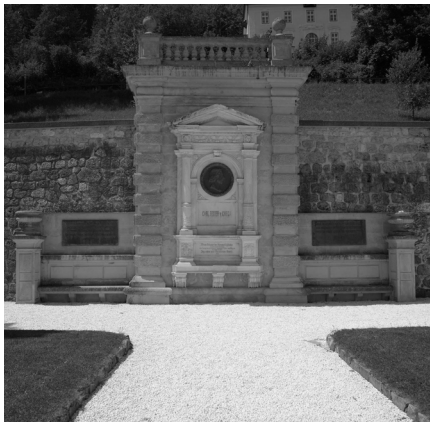
This study contributes to wider debates on exclusion and inclusion in heritage conservation by examining how institutional frameworks determine whose past is preserved and prioritized, noting that preservation inevitably involves selective prioritization. As such, the paper highlights the dissonance between global conversation visions and local lived realities, emphasizing the need for a reevaluation of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) to incorporate local values and voices. Recognizing and supporting community agency is essential not only to equitable heritage practice but also to the long-term sustainability of World Heritage Sites.

Keywords: World Heritage, local community, intangible heritage, sustainable tourism.

People Beside the Genius

People of Building, Operating and Using the (World Heritage) Semmering Railway

Roland Tusch/BOKU University
Günter Dinhobl/TICCIH Austria



Left: The modest memorial stone for the 1048 victims of railway construction was erected near the village of Klamm. © Roland Tusch
Right: The representative memorial to Carl Ritter von Ghega was erected at Semmering railway station in 1869 on the initiative of the Austrian Association of Engineers and Architects. ©Günter Dinhobl

In 1998, the Semmering Railway was the first railway to be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. One of the criteria for inscription emphasises the outstanding technical solution in planning and construction of the railway over the Alps, but also its continuous operation until today. Carl Ghega is considered as genius figure in the construction of the Semmering Railway. He is honoured with a monument at Semmering and a small museum is dedicated to him. However, the construction and operation of the railway required a large number of people, who usually only play the role of masses in the historiography.

First and foremost, the workers on the site who built the railway. In 1848, the Semmering Railway offered the opportunity to employ the rebellious revolutionaries far away from Vienna. On 7 August 1848, 500 workers arrived in Payerbach, later followed by skilled workers including masons from Bohemia, stone masons from Friuli and Piedmont, carpenters from Welschtirol (sic), dyke diggers from Slovenia and miners from the Saxon mining districts. Workers lived in temporary shelters housing three to four hundred people (Pap 2017). In addition to the 15,000 workers of the construction companies, doctors, nurses, teachers, priests, tavern keepers and bar staff were also employed on site. After completing the railway, most workers moved to the next construction site, while some stayed for its operation. Nowadays, two memorial stones - one in a cemetery and one in a field nearby - commemorate those people who died during the construction period: While 89 died in construction accidents, around 1,629 succumbed to diseases like cholera and typhoid due to poor sanitation, affecting workers, doctors, and nurses. Surprisingly, the locals were almost unaffected by the epidemics, which also shows that there were hardly any relationships between the workers and local people (Pap 2017).

There were also people in the state administration and its decision-makers, whose names are overshadowed by Ghega, but who contributed decisively to the realisation of the railway. Many planning and implementing engineers worked under the direction of Ghega: during the planning process C. Pilarsky and his assistants F. Dimmer, A. Rost, F. Semmerad and during construction and finalisation A. Lewitzki, F. Semmrad, E. Paulizza and J. Rosetti (Ghega 1854). In addition, for each of the 14 construction sections of the line, under the direction of C. Pilarsky one or two engineers of the state administration – 27 overall – were responsible for the building to be in time and within the (financial) resources.

The period of operation focuses on the people who have been running the railway for more than 170 years: line guards and dispatchers up to the train personnel such as engine drivers, stokers or conductors, but also lamp operators, workshop personnel, backrest workers or track masters. They are in the background, and it is difficult to get an overview of them: At least in the early times of operation, there is a list of accidents given by Birk and Aichinger (Birk, Aichinger 1860). However, railway operation also includes the people carried on the trains: travellers on their long way to Trieste or Vienna, or tourists on their way to Semmering region for holidays or at least a day trip from Vienna to ride through the picturesque Alpine landscape in 'pleasure trains'. However, several research desiderata still exist today like those people who passed the Semmering Railway in war times: in World War I on the way from Vienna to the front in the mountain war against Italy or in World War II and the Balkan campaign the deportations to death camps such as Auschwitz.

The culture of remembrance continues to focus on the genius of Ghega (Dinhobl 2003), while larger marginalized groups still remain aside. This is evident when comparing the Ghega monument and the monument for the victims of railway construction: first one within the railway station can be seen by every traveller, the second is hidden at the edge of a field more than 100 metres away from the line and in similar distance to the next cemetery.

Keywords: Semmering Railway, Construction Workers, Railway Engineers, Railway Staff

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The Other Side of World Heritage

The Heritage of Minorities, Communities and Indigenous Peoples

Birgitta Ringbeck/Independant Researcher
Mechtild Rössler/Independant Researcher

The 1970s were a key period in enhancing awareness of heritage conservation through the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, the 1972 World Heritage Convention and the 1975 European Architectural Heritage Year.

The growing interest in preservation was also due to the establishment of NGOs, in the field of nature protection and environment. For example, Earth Day emerged in this context in 1970 and a global environmental movement developed. The mobilization by civil society protecting the planet and its heritage led to the introduction of national legislation and international Conventions. In a way, the World Heritage Convention is also a legacy of debates around the preparations of the Stockholm conference and therefore documents not only diplomatic efforts in the cultural and natural heritage field but also of emerging civil society movements (Mc Cormick, 1996).

In Europe, the European Architectural Heritage Year (1975), a major initiative by the Council of Europe, promoted and enhanced protection of heritage. The campaign, under the motto 'A Future for Our Past' was a major success, contributing to the understanding of heritage across the continent. This enhanced new approaches to monument protection including testimonies of everyday life of people.

This paper illustrates the difficulties of nominating, protecting and safeguarding sites outside the nation state perspectives and how civil society and communities have emerged in the World Heritage arena over time.

Nominating heritage sites: the other side - The World Heritage Convention is ratified by 196 States Parties which makes it the most universal legal instrument in heritage conservation. It specifically protects and transmits the heritage of outstanding universal value. Nation states nominate natural and cultural heritage places for the UNESCO World Heritage List. Therefore, most sites are selected by national authorities due to their role as to key historic moments, cultural history events and longstanding nature protection areas. However, over time the Convention gained momentum with local communities, indigenous peoples and civil society.

In 1994 the World Heritage Committee adopted the Global Strategy devised an expert group, which called for an anthropological turn in selecting heritage places for the list. We analyse whether this paradigm change was successful in making the UNESCO World Heritage List more diverse? We also review, whether the 'heritage of others' and alternative ways of life are now better represented, protected and transmitted.

A major step forward was taken in 2017 when the 1st International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on World Heritage (IIPFWH), created by indigenous Delegates at the 41st session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in Krakow, Poland, met. This had far-reaching consequence, including the novelty that in 2025, for the first time, the UN Voluntary Fund has made available a grant mechanism for Indigenous Peoples to attend meetings of the UNESCO 1972 World Heritage Convention.

Over time underrepresented heritage was identified including cultural landscapes, sacred sites and heritage of minorities. Strategies were also developed to include a diversity of heritage places from underrepresented regions, including Africa (Priority Africa Flagship Programmes, Operational Strategy for Priority Africa 2022-2029), Small Islands States (SIDs) in the Caribbean and Pacific or Arctic Heritage.

Case Studies - In the following a few case studies from St Kilda (UK), Mt Athos (Greece) to Mont Perdu (France/Spain), from Uluru Kata Tjuta (Australia), Chiriquibete (Columbia) to Pimachiowin Aki (Canada) will underpin these arguments. Moreover, a number of sites in Europe, such as the ShUM-Sites (Germany) and the Moravian Church Settlements (Denmark, Germany, United Kingdom, United States) are testimonies for cultural and religious minorities who were persecuted, expelled and scattered across different regions of the world. These inscriptions highlight some difficulties in full comprehension and understanding of the complexity of such sites, which in turn makes does not make it easy to tell the full story in presenting and interpreting World Heritage. The authors also question why certain places never made it to the World Heritage List although their recognition would be an asset for the heritage of humankind.

Outlook - Recent discussions on colonial heritage, 'dark heritage places', memory sites and 're-emerging pasts' illustrate that further review is necessary to fully understand the stories related to each of the heritage places and spaces to guide processes of identification with communities and stakeholders concerned. A fresh look at the preparation of national tentative lists is also required and renewed and inclusive nomination processes. This will also be useful for future interpretation and visitor centres at sites and to make heritage overall more relevant for lives of peoples and future generations.

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The Lost or Still Salvageable Architectural Heritage of a Working-Class and Migrant City

Current Research and Debates in Biel

Florian Eitel/Neues Museum Biel

A row of windows in the attic as architectural evidence of home-based work in the watch industry. © Florian Eitel, 2023

Biel is an industrial city. World-famous watch brands such as Rolex, Omega, and Swatch manufacture their watches in Biel, which is why the city still refers to itself as a watchmaking metropolis. The newly opened Omega and Swatch company museums attract thousands of tourists to their premises every year. However, visitors learn nothing about the people who made the timepieces. The watch industry cultivates and capitalizes on the historical heritage of its brands, but it does not address the past of the industrial city of Biel as a whole.

Industrialization shaped the development of Biel in economic, demographic, migratory, political, and, last but not least, architectural terms like maybe no other city in Switzerland. With the boom in the watchmaking industry and the associated machine industry, the population increased sixfold in the second half of the 19th century. The city expanded rapidly. Small workshops, factories, manufacturers' villas, and workers' apartments sprang up everywhere. An ongoing research project in collaboration with the NMB Neues Museum Biel, the city of Biel, and the Swiss Society for Art History (Gesellschaft für Schweizerische Kunstgeschichte GSK) aims to document the significance of the watch industry for the development of Biel for the first time. A building typology is being developed, and buildings that are still standing are being recorded and researched. This reveals a latent imbalance in the social representation of the buildings listed in the cantonal monument preservation inventory and those preserved for other reasons: while the manufacturers' villas are generally still standing, factories have often been demolished, and workers' apartments are generally no longer standing or are no longer recognizable as such. They were not the focus of monument preservation and did not meet its criteria. Moreover, the hundreds of temporary buildings for the thousands of migrants from Italy, Spain, and the former Yugoslavia have almost completely disappeared. The poor-quality accommodation, which was far below Swiss standards, was mostly built in factory yards or on the outskirts of the city.

Deindustrialization from the mid-1970s onwards and the demographic influx into the city that has been ongoing for a good 25 years have caused many architectural reminders of socially disadvantaged and cultural minorities to disappear. This consistently blurs the traces of the past and selectively presents a history of the glory of watch companies and their patrons. In this politics of memory imposed from above, the contribution of the socially disadvantaged classes to the development of the city and the wealth it generated is not visible. It risks disappearing from the collective memory. Thirty years ago, thanks to oral tradition, everyone was still aware of who assembled the expensive Rolexes and Omegas. Now, however, this knowledge is dying out with every person from the industry who passes away and every building that is demolished. The proposed conference paper aims to highlight this tension between material evidence such as buildings and intangible knowledge using the case study of Biel.

The paper aims to show ways in which, despite the frequent lack of awareness and immense pressure on the real estate market, the architectural heritage of industry, the socially disadvantaged, and minorities can be protected, maintained, and communicated. In recent years, the question of built industrial heritage has become a subject of professional and political debate. In 2022, the reUsine association (https://reusine.ch/) was founded. The exhibitions held in recent years at the NMB Neues Museum Biel have also raised public awareness of the importance and threat to industrial heritage, including the exhibition on the former Burger & Jacobi piano factory (https://www.nmbiel.ch/ausstellungen/rund-um-biel-harmonie-und-misstoene-in-der-pianofabrik-burger--jacobi-). The exhibition on seasonal workers ("https://www.nmbiel.ch/ausstellungen/saisonniers") highlighted the immense importance of migration in the development of Biel. Forgotten architectural relics from the history of migration that are still preserved came to light. The barracks discovered in 2023 on the Bührer site received considerable social and media attention.

Thanks to reappraisal and visibility, the debate is getting stronger. The paper aims to provide an overview on the ongoing researches and political debates, and in that way questioning the definition of architectural heritage and the mission of monument preservation in Switzerland.

The Heritage of Italian Migration in Switzerland

The Case of Lausanne

Morena La Barba/University of Geneva

From the exodus of political refugees to the industrialization of the late 19th century, from the mass emigration of workers after the war to the current migratory flows of highly skilled people, Italian migration to Switzerland has long represented a minority. Not without its contradictions, the Italianità of immigration, and that of the Italian-speaking cantons, is now considered 'part of Switzerland's intangible cultural heritage'. Since 2012, 'Italianità in Valais' has been included in the lists of intangible heritage as a living tradition of the region. It is a somewhat discordant legacy, celebrated as a 'model of integration' but also marked by repression, conflict, and painful memories.

This presentation aims to contribute based on a) more than 25 years of experience and research on cultural associations of Italian emigrants; b) collaboration on an exhibition on Italian emigration in Lausanne; c) the creation of a participatory video research project on the role of associations in building a culture of human rights from the perspective of witnesses.

In Switzerland, the role of Italian cities and associations in inventing and building processes of integration and inclusion, between belonging and participation for immigrants, is a proven historical fact. Choosing the lens of observation of the city and associations seems relevant for analyzing the issue of cultural heritage and the processes of patrimonialization of migrant minorities.

The exhibition 'Lausanne, Switzerland. 150 years of Italian immigration in Lausanne', held at the city's Historical Museum from 18 August 2021 to 9 January 2022, marked an important step in recognising the contribution of Italian migration to the construction of the city's material and immaterial culture, given the extraordinary participation of the public and the press. Spanning a vast period, the exhibition highlighted the contribution of entrepreneurs of Italian origin to the major works that enabled the urban development of the city, while at the same time emphasizing the contribution of Italian labour in various sectors of the economy, the difficult conditions of seasonal workers, visits to the border, and the difficult years of xenophobic initiatives. The exhibition rooms highlighted the activities of associations, pioneers in creating consultative and representative bodies for migrants, as well as the so-called Italianità, with a corollary of objects symbolizing a tradition linked to food, sport, design, fashion, the arts, and cinema. An important section of the exhibition paid tribute, with oral testimonies, to the protagonists of this story.

The participatory video research aimed to reveal the role of Italian associations as the main promoters of a culture of citizenship (rights, integration policies, unionization). The video interviews were conducted in places representative of the different types of associations and forms of citizenship. The process yielded significant examples of what these places represent today for the witnesses and what they evoke in the collective and public memory. Not without contradictory and conflicting elements, the testimonies reveal how Italian associations, from an excluded minority, have contributed to creating a culture of citizenship based on values and practices of sociality and socialization. Even though associations are disappearing, with the ageing of the first migrants and the difficulties of generational transition, they still manage to transmit a 'living culture'. They still offer services and forms of sociality in line with the evolution of migration. They restore a sense of community to second generations and new migrants interested in history and memory that embodies values of citizenship.

Keywords: Italian Migration, Associations, Italian Identity, Collective Memory, Citizenship

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How Can the Memory and History of Seasonal Workers Be Incorporated into Our Heritage and Passed On?

A Critical Assessment of Two Initiatives Undertaken in Geneva

Patrick Auderset/Fondation Collège du travail; Jeanne Gillard/Rosa Brux, Archives contestaires; Charles Magnin/Fondation Collège du Travail, Archives contestaires; Nicolas Rivet/Rosa Brux

Exhibition 'Nous, saisonniers, saisonnières... Geneva 1931-2019', Geneva. © Aurélien Mole.

After the Second World War, Switzerland employed millions of foreign workers, many of whom were subjected to the status of seasonal workers, imposing harsh living and working conditions on them. Despite numerous struggles carried out since the 1970s, it was not until the agreement on the free movement of persons between Switzerland and the European Union came into force in 2002 that this status was abolished. Since then, the painful experience of these men and women could have disappeared from the collective memory. To avert this risk, a number of initiatives have been undertaken, notably two pioneered by the City of Geneva.

In 2009, following a television programme recalling the tragedy of the children of immigrants condemned to live in hiding in Switzerland in the second half of the 20th century, a Geneva city councillor sought to 'pay tribute to seasonal workers' by highlighting their contribution to Switzerland's prosperity. He requested that the City of Geneva organize an exhibition 'in collaboration with community associations' and install a work of art in a public place to 'remind future generations of this part of our history'. This presentation seeks to describe the process and issues that led to the realization of this project ten years later through the exhibition Nous, saisonniers, saisonnières... Genève 1931-2019 ("We, the seasonal workers... Geneva 1931-2019"), presented for a month in a former industrial building converted into an art space in the city centre.

The goal of this exhibition, combining memorial, historical and artistic approaches, was to put the seasonal workers themselves at the heart of the project, to give them a voice and to return their agency to them, while offering a documented historical account of this past. To invoke it, we drew upon various archives, from administrative sources, unions and associations, which are very rich but relatively unknown and under-exploited until now. We have focused on the seasonal workers' point of view in different ways: the production of filmed testimonies projected onto large screens at the heart of the exhibition, the presentation of personal archives and family photographs, and the creation of a map of Geneva illustrating the extent of their contribution to the city's development. We have also sought to show the contemporary echoes of past forms of discrimination by hinting at the situation of today's 'undocumented' workers.

The exhibition involved as well a rich programme of cultural mediation in collaboration with associations working with migrants. It was a great success, particularly with the people directly concerned and their families, for whom it often opened the way for the intergenerational transmission of a hidden experience. It also helped to generate academic, editorial and media interest in this overlooked chapter of Switzerland's recent history. However, the very limited duration allowed for the exhibition and the relatively small museum space allotted to it demonstrated the difficulty of conferring on subalterns a place in the public memory and collective consciousness.

In the absence of a museum space willing to host the exhibition on a long-term basis, discussions were held with the City of Geneva to respond to the strong public interest generated for the memory and history of seasonal workers. These discussions led to the development of two series of seven illustrated panels, resembling street signs, implanted in the public space along two different self-guided itineraries in the city, described in a booklet (saisonniers-saisonnieres.ch). Through QR-codes, each panel gives the visitor digital access, on a personal device, to site-specific narratives based on selected testimonies and historical research produced for the exhibition. At a time when historical and memorial markers are the subject of debate, notably from a feminist and decolonial perspective, the aim of these itineraries is to reinstate the testimony and history of seasonal workers in sites that resonate with their experiences. Few of these sites still have tangible traces of this history. As a result, it is these memorial panels themselves that are helping to awaken in the public a renewed historical awareness of places that are familiar to them. Inspired by trans-disciplinary artistic practices that have emerged across the Atlantic, these interactive panels are the result of extensive work in mediation to help unearth, display and give an audible voice to a memory that has up to now been largely absent from the public arena. However, like all memories, its preservation remains fragile.

Due to the dispersion of the panels in the city and the random aspect of visits of the public, it can be challenging to evaluate the visitors' perception of these itineraries. Nevertheless, the public's reactions can also be assessed through the number of online visits to the dedicated website and through the impact of organized guided tours for intergenerational publics, notably for seasonal workers and their families, and for school groups, often including students with strong ties to today's migratory populations.

Keywords: Seasonal Workers, History, Memory, Public Space, Geneva

Building a Sense of Belonging Through Heritage

Sylvie Pipoz/Municipality of La Chaux-de-Fonds
Sandrine Keriakos Bugada/Municipality of La Chaux-de-Fonds

A participant in the French course discovers and appropriates the city's urban planning through photography.
© Ville de La Chaux-de-Fonds, Aline Henchoz

Migration, and consequently integration, is part of the history of La Chaux-de-Fonds. Situated at an altitude of 1,000 meters, this industrial town developed in the 19th century by welcoming German-speaking, Jewish and Italian communities who left their mark on the area's social and architectural history.

Today, populations from Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Africa enrich the local culture, creating exchanges based on multiple memories, aesthetics and cultural references. In this context La Chaux-de-Fonds faces a double challenge: to maintain social cohesion and to reinforce a sense of belonging around a shared heritage. It is therefore essential to combine the missions of integration and valuing the heritage. Three axes guide this approach.

Axis 1 Strengthen the sense of belonging - Discovering the historical sites of one's new home encourages the appropriation of the area. Heritage thus helps to forge an emotional bond between residents and their living environment through mediation activities (workshops, visits, shared stories) run jointly by the integration and heritage departments. Long perceived as inherited and institutional, heritage can convey a dominant memory and leave minority narratives on the sidelines. By opening it up to sensitive, plural and lived forms, it becomes a powerful tool for identity recognition and inclusion.

The LOCAL (local orientation, advice and welcome office), in collaboration with the heritage development officer, offers guided tours in simplified French to help newcomers gain a better understanding of the city's history and project themselves more serenely into the future.

Axis 2 Heritage as a lever for inclusion and recognition - Heritage plays a key role in integration policies by recognizing, valuing and making visible the identities and cultural contributions of minorities. The inclusion of La Chaux-de-Fonds / Le Locle, watchmaking urban planning, on UNESCO's World Heritage List is an opportunity to share with migrant populations this belonging to a common heritage. The Space of Watchmaking Urban Planning (Espace de l'Urbanisme horloger) is the ideal place for exchanges on heritage from here and from elsewhere. People from migrant backgrounds have the opportunity to present there an element of their own culture. These encounters foster mutual understanding and reinforce the sense of a shared universal heritage. They enable everyone to connect their past with the present and to enrich themselves with the heritage of others. This process calms conflicts of loyalty and reinforces the idea that universal heritage connects us all.

Axis 3: Towards sharing a heritage - Public services must support local dynamics and encourage citizen initiatives, to make heritage a common tool. The co-construction of participatory projects reinforces the legitimacy of these approaches, which are levers enabling people from a migrant background to become actively involved in local life and to give meaning to their presence in the area. Groups of migrants have therefore publicly presented in the heart of the city their renewed view of the local heritage, illustrating their appropriation of the territory.

Keywords: Living Together, Heritage, Belonging, Encounters, Living Co-Construction

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Poster Presentations 2

Marco Silvestri/ Karlsruhe Institute of Technology	Making the Invisible Visible: The Ch'utillos Festival in Potosí and the Potential of Intangible Heritage for the Revaluation of Tangible Assets
Jakob Kröhn/ Independent Researcher	Between Participatory and Emancipatory Approaches: Case Studies of Marginalised Perspectives in (Re)valuation Processes of Cultural Heritage
Olaf Gisbertz/ TU Braunschweig	Grist, Grain and Black Gold. Exploited Heritage and Lost Identities in Historical Cultural Landscapes
Vasileios Chanis/ EPFL	A Future for Traditional Craftsmanship: Lessons and Challenges from a Cross-Mediterranean Pilot Programme
Julia Nuler, Theresa Knosp, Sophie Stackmann, Thomas Moser/TU Wien	Unvoiced Heritage
Britta Hentschel/University of Liechtenstein	The Visibility of the History of Poverty

Minorities and the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage

UNESCO's International Lists and the Swiss Inventory

Chiara Bortolotto/UNESCO
Florence Graezer Bideau/EPFL

Yenish People probably East-Switzerland, circa 1900. © Unknown Author, CC-BY-SA2.0

Since the 1960s, minority groups have been progressively incorporated into international instruments, particularly through the recognition of their linguistic, cultural, and religious rights. These initiatives reflect broader policy efforts to promote cultural rights, safeguard cultural diversity, and foster intercultural dialogue. The United Nations' International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), which came into force in 1976, marked a significant milestone by explicitly recognizing the rights of ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities. It provided a legal framework within which the international community could develop initiatives to encourage cultural inclusion and the valorization of minority languages and traditions. UNESCO's adoption of the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) further asserted that cultural diversity is a common heritage of humanity and a key driver of sustainable development.

The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) represented another turning point by emphasizing the central role of 'communities, groups, and individuals' in preserving cultural diversity. This opened the way for greater recognition of minority cultural practices and expressions, including those of Indigenous peoples. This shift led to a broader understanding of heritage, with potential for incorporating marginalized communities and granting new legitimacy to their cultural forms (Bortolotto 2011; Autant-Dorier 2015). Intangible heritage thus became a governance tool for managing diversity, reflecting the pluralism of contemporary societies.

However, this system remains heavily reliant on state policies, which largely determine the inclusion (or not) of minorities in the implementation of international frameworks (Eichler 2021). Despite the gradual development of international legal instruments and the establishment of permanent United Nations forums, such as the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, to amplify minority voices, their rights often remain marginalized or instrumentalized. Recognition operates within political frameworks that do not always safeguard self-determination and often spark debate over what constitutes shared heritage and legitimate culture.

In this context, our analysis focuses on the mechanisms by which minority heritage is identified and integrated into the Swiss Inventory of Living Traditions, revealing the logics underpinning contemporary patrimonialization. We examine how minoritized communities strive to gain recognition and validation for their cultural practices within institutional structures that, while rhetorically embracing diversity, impose normative – often implicit – criteria of legitimacy. The tensions surrounding the active participation of these groups raise crucial questions regarding access to heritage discourse, asymmetrical power dynamics, and institutional mediations that filter or shape narratives of cultural identity.

Aligned with the principles of cultural and linguistic diversity enshrined in the Swiss Constitution, our attention turns to the marginal – or altogether absent – role granted to minority groups. This includes both minorities not officially recognized by the Swiss state (such as populations from recent immigration, postcolonial backgrounds, or those with precarious legal status), as well as institutionally recognized minorities (such as specific linguistic or religious communities) who nonetheless remain marginalized in practice. This approach allows for a critical interrogation of the boundaries of Swiss pluralism and the selective mechanisms of visibility and invisibility operating within heritage policies.

These dynamics reflect broader social and political challenges linked to the recognition of minorities in a globalized world, where heritage serves as both a vehicle of symbolic valorization and a strategic tool for identity negotiation. They expose a persistent tension between inclusion and exclusion, in which minoritized groups navigate between cultural legitimacy and interests often dictated by external economic or diplomatic agendas. Ultimately, this analysis invites a rethinking of the concept of heritage from its margins – as a space of contestation, invention, and redefinition. A critical approach also urges us to revisit the category of 'minority' itself, shedding light on the implicit hierarchies, normalizing mechanisms, and strategies of (in)visibility it entails.

Keywords: Patrimonialization, Cultural Diversity, Minority Voices, Recognition, Norms

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A Future for Whose Past?

Corsica as an Example of a Minority (in the Sense of a Minority Component) within the French Republic, as Ticino Is a Minority within the Swiss Confederation.

Madeleine Allegrini/Independent Researcher
Monique Traeber-Fontana/Independent Researcher

Discussing Corsican culture means tracing the island's history through multiple exchanges, for example with the Maestri Ticinesi, craftsmen and architects from Ticino, between the 15th and 19th centuries, traditions, both "noble" and "popular" art, heritage, and the transmission of techniques now forgotten, such as Stucco lucido, as well as the rich and varied finishes and decorations and the subtle colorings of lime plasters with their strong symbolic meaning.The continuity of Baroque culture in Corsica is manifested in sacred art and its decorative paintings, which often continued to respect Baroque decorative principles even in the 19th century, several decades after Corsica became French.The French Revolution caused a rupture. In Corsica, some churches and most Franciscan convents were abandoned or completely denatured.

The judgment of Prosper Mérimée, the first Inspector of Historical Monuments, had serious consequences. In 1839, he wrote in his report: "The Corsicans have never been able to cultivate the arts. They have no grand buildings. Their 17th- and 18th-century churches are of no interest. They are roughly whitewashed... The interior decorations were executed by Italian daubers..." Corsican Baroque culture attracted no interest until the 1970s. After the two World Wars, another rupture occurred: the disappearance of know-how due to numerous deaths from wars and exile; artisans remaining in Corsica, fascinated by "progress", became dependent on industrial products.

The responsibility for the neglect of Corsican heritage until the first awareness in the 1970s was not only the State's fault but also stemmed from the resignation and disinterest of certain Corsican representatives, themselves victims of an inferiority complex and convinced of the little value of their heritage. The situation could have improved with the creation of a special status for Corsica in 1982, and especially with the establishment of a Corsican regional heritage service in 1993. Since then, encouraging progress has been made in several areas, notably in the inventory work of Corsican heritage. Unfortunately, no new concept has emerged to integrate into the notion of Historical Monument the material traces that constitute and characterize this local heritage.

In situ: In many villages, buildings and historical monuments are disfigured during rushed renovations, without prior documentation or consultation. Before subsidizing an intervention, it would be appropriate to require the conservation of the monument's historical evidence and the quality of restoration work that respects them.

A future for materials without lobbies: "Crimes against heritage" have often been committed in the name of progress, with the unbridled development and institutionalization of modern materials in the 20th century. Even today, local materials have no "certification". It will be necessary to reform current public procurement rules to allow the use of this local input. For example, in the application of plasters, a derogation is needed to use a few wheelbarrows of local river sand, while the use of exogenous materials is common; using modern "ready-to-use" materials and relying on a manufacturer's ten-year guarantee is unfortunately less risky for the contractor. The instructions for these modern materials prescribe applying the products to "sound surfaces", which too often leads to the destruction of all old plasters down to the construction stones. On old lime-plastered buildings, traces of decoration, aging, and occasional repairs tell stories of life and the monument's history: all these traces disappear irreversibly with the removal of the plaster down to the stone. Under current market procedures, it is impossible to preserve and reintegrate historical plasters in their original formula. For example, Roman cement from Antiquity, or "tuff" or "Corsican granite arena concrete" with multiple properties and used in Corsica for over two millennia, are now competing with modern materials guaranteed for 10 years.

Currently, we are facing the disappearance of old plasters and ancestral know-how using appropriate materials. Plasters with their local components, finishes and colorings must be systematically analyzed in a thorough study before any decision or restoration intervention. Soon, it will unfortunately be too late to affirm that they existed for hundreds of years.

The preservation of Corsican heritage should not be a matter of opposition between those advocating the use of local materials and the conservation of traces on one hand, and proponents of radical restoration disregarding the past on the other. It can only be ensured by positive and unifying collaboration among project managers, architects, researchers, art historians, companies, artisans, and representatives of cultural and institutional affairs. It is a problem of general and legal organization of heritage conservation and restoration, which should take into account the requirements of local particularities. Giving more money to municipalities will not help them better maintain their heritage. They need serious and technical support in their restoration projects.

Corsican culture, a minority within the French Republic as a whole, serves as a kind of beacon, reminding us that authenticity and respect for materials, know-how, vernacular traditions, and spiritual, intangible, and symbolic values can and must guide our choices.

We hope that our participation in this international congress dedicate to the heritage of minorities will help strengthen the essential connections needed to move forward in this race against time, but also to preserve the last witnesses of these ancient techniques so they may be passed on, before it is too late.

Keywords: Insularity, Maestri Ticinesi, Baroque continuity, Mérimée's curse, Materials without lobby

Maintaining Qsur

Recovering Continuity Towards a History of Minor Heritage in Morocco

Reda Berrada/EPFL

Qsar Nesrat in 1967 from the Archive du Ministère de L'Habitat, Royaume du Maroc in Habitats des Qsour et Qasbas des vallées présahariennes, J.Hensens, S. Mouline (Rabat, 1991), 43.

The separation between tradition – intended as vernacular practices – and modernity has been a leitmotif in the definition of Morocco's identity throughout the 20th century. Following the country's independence in 1956, Moroccan Architects were committed to defining a Modern Moroccan Architecture. While condemning a form of pastiche and eclectic citation of the past, they inquired how vernacular construction could serve as a reference to new building activities. The question itself revealed a contradiction: if the value of vernacular architecture were to be indexical, then it could not escape the logic of the citation: a static image lying outside of contemporaneity yet without a future. This contradiction is deeply rooted within the French colonial project in Morocco, to which heritage as a material condition and as discourse was instrumental. The paper explores how architects and planners acted at once as agents for the decay of vernacular built environments through the modernisation of Moroccan habitat while also displacing and negotiating meanings towards an alternative modernist practice: one that recognises the value of living built heritage and safeguards its continuity.

More specifically, this investigation will rely on the Qsar (plural: Qsur), a widespread type of walled earth village found in the Presaharian valleys of the Atlas mountains. It will argue that the representations of the Qsur mediated by drawings, surveys, field notes and photographs throughout the 20th century played a key role in establishing the norms and forms of minor heritage, i.e. non-monumental non-authored buildings making up the fabric of urban form in Morocco.

Spatial segregation between the 'native' city and the Ville Nouvelle under Protectorate Administration (1912–1956), mass housing design by the independent Moroccan State using rural dwelling patterns or self-building experiments involving international cooperation for the rehabilitation of villages as tourist attractions are but a few instances in which the Qsar helped define and maintain the values of minor heritage, the very values upon which its own maintenance and continuous use shall occur.

Keywords: Coloniality, Morocco, Vernacular, Heritage

Craftsmanship as Cultural Continuity in Heritage Conservation

Sustaining Skills in Architectural Heritage for Displaced Communities

Irene Ruiz Bazán/Politecnico di Torino
Sherine Al Shallah/UNSW Sydney

Craftsmanship and architectural heritage have been recognized as intertwined since John Ruskin's foundational reflections in The Seven Lamps of Architecture (1849). Ruskin emphasized the 'Lamp of Life' as a symbol of the ethical and cultural vitality embedded in the human labor that gives life to architecture. This notion continues to resonate in the Nara Document on Authenticity (1994), which advanced the understanding of heritage to include the living, evolving knowledge systems embedded in traditional practices.

With the adoption of the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, international heritage discourse has broadened to explicitly recognize craftsmanship as a vital component of cultural identity. However, for forcibly displaced communities, the rupture from place often leads to the erosion of these intangible heritages, particularly traditional building skills.

In this paper, we argue that preserving craftsmanship is essential to sustaining the cultural continuity and identity of displaced groups and that such preservation should be recognized as a form of cultural and human rights protection.

Our approach builds on a multidisciplinary framework that combines architectural conservation theory with legal analysis grounded in international human rights and refugee law. This combination allows us to address not only the physical elements of heritage but also the rights of displaced communities to access, practice, and transmit their cultural traditions.

The displacement of communities often results in the loss of connection to monuments, spaces, and materials that traditionally anchored craft practices. However, we propose that craftsmanship, as a form of embodied knowledge, can persist and adapt in exile. Artisans carry with them a repertoire of skills that can be recontextualized, adapted, or transmitted even in host countries. These skills contribute not only to the preservation of heritage but also to livelihood and resilience. Through training programs, diaspora networks, and international cooperation, displaced communities are increasingly engaging in efforts to preserve and transmit their intangible heritage. Such practices are not static; they evolve in response to new social, economic, and material conditions. In this sense, craftsmanship functions as a dynamic form of cultural continuity, capable of transforming exile into a space of cultural survival.

Current legal frameworks for the protection of cultural heritage in conflict and displacement settings often prioritize monuments and tangible assets. However, the protection of craftsmanship aligns with broader cultural rights under instruments such as the 2005 Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

In contexts of forced displacement, safeguarding intangible heritage may support future claims to cultural restitution and reinforce the right to return not only to land but to identity and tradition. International law, therefore, has a role to play in recognizing and protecting craftsmanship as a form of cultural resilience and restoration.

For example, the Syrian conflict has led to the displacement of millions and the destruction of historically significant architecture. Yet, many artisans from Aleppo have continued to practice their traditional crafts in exile, often adapting them to new materials or market conditions.

Craftsmanship should be viewed not merely as a remnant of the past, but as a living tradition essential to cultural identity and resilience. For displaced communities, sustaining these practices in exile is both a cultural right and a means of preparing for possible return. Recognizing the role of craftsmanship in both physical and intangible heritage conservation broadens our understanding of what it means to protect culture in crisis.

We advocate for heritage policies that integrate restoration practice with human rights protections, recognizing displaced artisans as key custodians of heritage. Only through such inclusive frameworks can we ensure that heritage survives beyond stones and structures – in the hands and memories of the people who created it.

Keywords: Craftsmanship, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Displacement, Cultural Identity, Architectural Conservation, Cultural Rights

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Words that Build Walls

Japanese Legal Language and the Marginalisation of Ainu Indigenous Heritage (1997–2024)

Cringuta Irina Pelea/Titu Maiorescu University

The cultural/architectural heritage of Japan's Indigenous Ainu tribes has faced a complex history of colonization, resistance, and cultural survival. Since the Meiji government's formal annexation of Hokkaido in 1869, the Ainu have struggled with systematic dispossession of their ancestral lands, forced relocation, and cultural suppression that profoundly impacted their traditional architectural practices as well. The 1899 Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Act initiated a period of aggressive assimilation, prohibiting traditional practices and reshaping Ainu-built environments. Traditional chise (houses) with their sacred roofing patterns and ritualistic spatial arrangements were replaced with Japanese-style dwellings, whereas many ceremonial spaces were dismantled or appropriated.

In light of this tormented historical context, my study aims to investigate power dynamics in the Japanese language policy acts, which have served as instruments of neo-colonization, and to juxtapose the Japanese legal language with the official discourse of the Ainu leaders and public speakers, who have constantly complained of the abusive character of the Japanese laws regarding the Ainu's rights. Even acknowledging the Ainu as Indigenous and not an "ethnic group" has been a milestone for Japanese legislation.

Two rationales inspired my proposal: the trial of May 2024, Ainu people versus the Japanese state concerning the protection of Ainu's cultural rights lost by the Indigenous population, and the Indigenous Museum of Upopoy, vehemently criticized by the Ainu as a neo-colonizing architectural space for holding against their wish Indigenous human remains.

Through temporal critical discourse analysis of the 1997 Ainu Cultural Promotion Act and the 2019 Ainu Policy Promotion Act and associated architectural heritage guidelines, juxtaposed with statements from Ainu communities and nonprofit organizations, I seek to examine three key questions:

1 - How has the linguistic framing of Ainu cultural/architectural heritage in Japanese language legislation evolved, and what does this reveal about shifting power relations in heritage designation?

2 - How do Japanese legal frameworks un-consciously exclude and marginalize Ainu cultural/architectural heritage through specific linguistic choices, legal terminology, and bureaucratic categorizations across Japan's national, prefectural, and local levels?

3 - How do Ainu communities articulate their cultural and architectural heritage values in response to Japanese official legislation, and where do these expressions align with or contest state-sanctioned heritage definitions?

My analysis employs an ethical framework that prioritizes amplifying existing Ainu public discourse and testimonies, ensuring Indigenous voices remain central to understanding heritage marginalization. Preliminary findings emphasize the existence of persistent colonial power structures embedded in Japanese legal terminology and specific linguistic mechanisms through which Japan's governmental institutions maintain control over Ainu Indigenous minority heritage decisions, albeit national legislation seemingly became more progressive.

Furthermore, I hope to make several contributions to cultural heritage/architectural studies: first, by placing the research focus on non-Western contexts and Japan's Indigenous populations who literally remain 'people without lobby'; second, by working on the original Japanese language policy acts, and demonstrating how legal language actively shapes heritage recognition and thus power dynamics to exclude Indigenous rights and third, by providing practical recommendations for decolonizing (Japanese) legal language in heritage management.

Keywords: Ainu, Indigenous Heritage, Japanese Legal Discourse, Colonial, Japan

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How to Become a Lobbyist for a Chinese Minority?

Heritagisation of Religious Practices in Two Branches of the Naxi in China's Yunnan Province

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In the 1950s, China launched an Ethnic Classification project, during which the state took a census of its inhabitants. It was inspired by Stalinist criteria for nationality, which state that people sharing "a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological makeup manifested in a common culture" belong to the same nationality (minzu 民族). It merged over 200 diverse ethnic groups in Yunnan Province into 26 nationalities (Mullaney, 2010).

The State sought to transform minority societies, reaching out to minority elites and founding the Minzu University of China (MUC). Non-Han Chinese elites who had backed the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in World War II and the Civil War (1945-1949) could obtain higher education there. Some of them participated in the ethnic surveys in the 1950s. Moreover, in 1956 the CCP decided to promote Mandarin, an official language based on the Beijing dialect of Han Chinese, and ethnic minorities began to learn it in school. The Ethnic Classification policy, cadre training system, and promotion of Han language in the 1950s created conditions for the rise of the lobbyist, proficient in Mandarin and loyal to the CCP. Such lobbyists might be religious experts, civil servants, or teachers; they helped transform their ethnicity to fit state expectations, for instance, orienting religious practice towards heritage conservation.

Baidi is in north-western Yunnan province. Its inhabitants are divided in two branches of the Naxi nationality, Nahan and Ruka, whose traditional rituals, the Nahan "Sacrifice to Heaven" and the Ruka "Akabala" dance, mark their identities. Both have religious specialists, the Dongba, who traditionally passed on their religious skills from father to son. Only the Dongba can read the famous Naxi script, registered in the Memory of the World Program in 2003.

During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), religious activities were regarded as superstitious and banned. Only in 1983, after the promulgation of the first Law on Protection of Cultural Relics in China, did the Dongba restart religious activities. Unlike in the era of family transmission, civil servants' intervention in religious transmission was omnipresent starting in the 1980s (Palmer & Goossaert, 2012). Rural cultural officials and public schoolteachers led the preservation of the ritual practices which were treated as heritage after China signed the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in 2003. Those lobbyists were born in the 1950s obtained secondary diplomas in the 1970s, and typically became public schoolteachers, with some later serving as local cultural officials. Their rural ties facilitate their role as "civil servant ethnologists" (Bodolec & Obringer 2020) who help implement cultural policies and shape local ICH policy.

In Baidi, while the Nahan Dongba S restarted learning manuscripts with the senior Dongba in the early 1980s, L became local cultural official. A few years later, L proposed the local gov-ernment finance renewed Nahan Sacrifice to Heaven rituals. From then on, N and Q studied religion with S. R is S's nephew and lived in the village while Q, a college student, learned manuscripts on vacation. Both S and villagers thought Q the best disciple, but he became a professor after getting his Ph.D, and he could not perform rituals from 1000 kilometres away. Q's religious knowledge thus did not serve Naxi society. After S's death, N ran the Sacrifice to Heaven for the Nahan until 2024. This year, N's two disciples replaced R, whose health was failing, but the Sacrifice to Heaven was not well performed, as the two disciples had not spent enough time preparing it due to job constraints. As earning income became more central to Naxi life, new generations of Dongba could not fully ensure heritage preservation.

Among the Ruka, R, an elementary school president and Chinese teacher, founded the Ruka Dongba Transmission School in late 1990s in his hamlet. Thanks to his job, he obtained many contacts; his school gained official support and became a heritage institution of the Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. Since China issued the ICH protection list in 2006, the Ruka not only registered their Akabala danse as Yunnan provincial ICH in 2014, but also registered a Ruka Dongba as the Sacrifice to Heaven's representative performer in 2024. Thus the Ruka have via their lobbyists received more political and financial support than the majority Nahan people, and ICH policy ignores the distinction between Ruka and Nahan.

Lobbyists thus have played a key role in implementing CCP policy towards minority societies, not only during the Ethnic Classification in the 1950s and religious revival of the 1980s, but also in today's ICH era and potentially tomorrow as well.

Keywords: Heritage, Minority, Oral Tradition, Religion

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Evaluating the Berlin Statue of Peace as Monument

The Politics of Minority Heritage Recognition

Nammyoung Hong/TU Berlin

Statue of Peace in Berlin during the 7th Action Week against Feminicide and Sexualised Violence (Aug 2024). © Choi Miyeon/Korea Verband.

The Statue of Peace was erected in Berlin in 2020 to commemorate the 200,000 so-called 'comfort women' who were subjected to sexual slavery by Japanese military during the Pacific War. The issue of 'comfort women' came to public attention in South Korea in the early 1990s, sparking a global movement for truth and reparations. This movement has since become a key reference point in discussions of wartime sexual violence and has significantly influenced international research in the field. In Germany, migrant women have responded by working as feminist activists for over 30 years to raise awareness of this history. They installed the statue in Berlin as a symbol against sexual violence. Soon after its unveiling, the Japanese government pressured the Berlin-Mitte district to remove it. The district office issued a removal order within a week. While this was successfully resisted in 2020 thanks to strong civil society mobilization, the statue again faced removal in 2024, and the controversy has intensified. As a result, civil society groups are now advocating for its official recognition as a monument (Denkmal) in Berlin.

This study assesses the significance of the Statue of Peace as a monument in Berlin through the lens of heritage discourse. Under Berlin's monument law, the criteria for official recognition (Denkmalfähigkeit) include artistic, historical, urban, and academic value. However, these criteria are implicitly grounded in traditional German notions of monument, which may be insufficient for recognizing heritage introduced by migrant communities.

So how should Berlin's Statue of Peace be interpreted within the framework of heritage discourse, particularly in the German context? The statue can be read through Sharon Macdonald's concept of difficult heritage, which refers to histories that are painful, contested, and not easily reconciled with a society's positive self image. Macdonald focuses on how Germany memorializes the Nazi past not as a source of national pride but as a critical moral reckoning. (Macdonald 2009, 2) While this concept has largely been applied to perpetrator nations, it is also relevant to victimized countries, especially in cases of wartime sexual violence. Victims of such violence have often faced sexual shame and social stigma, sometimes even being accused of collaboration with enemy forces in their own countries. Since the 1990s, many survivors, including former 'comfort women', have begun to break the silence, challenging the stigma and reclaiming their narratives. Wartime sexual violence has increasingly been recognized as a human rights issue that remains relevant today, and confronting it reflects feminist values rooted in bodily autonomy and self-determination. Although resistance to addressing these histories persists, feminist activists continue to commemorate and make them visible. In this regard, the Statue of Peace in Berlin may be understood as a manifestation of difficult heritage.

What, then, does the statue signify for Berlin? Gabi Dolff-Bonekämper's concept of conflict value (Streitwert) offers an analytical lens to address this question. In her work, she challenges the conventional criteria for heritage protection, arguing that they fail to account for politically contested sites, such as monuments from the former East Germany, most notably the Berlin Wall, that provoked widespread societal resistance. These sites, though not historically distant, possess Streitwert because they expose social tensions and provide a platform for public negotiation. In this sense, they carry present-day heritage value. (Gabi Dolff-Bonekämpfer 2017, 69-73)

Likewise, the Statue of Peace has sparked public controversy in Germany. The repeated efforts to remove it expose diplomatic pressure, political complacency, and public dissent, opening up critical discussions about memory politics in a city where freedom of expression is deeply valued.

Furthermore, opponents of the statue argue that its historical subject matter is unrelated to Germany and that it was neither created nor commissioned within the country. In contrast, some scholars and activists contend that the statue, depicting an Asian woman, reflects the lived experiences of migrant communities in Germany. From this perspective, the memories embodied in the statue are part of Germany's plural public memory. The statue is seen as a symbol linking migrant discrimination with broader structural issues related to gender, race, and nationality. As such, it affirms Berlin's identity as a post-migrant society and possesses Streitwert (conflict value) for articulating contemporary social and political tensions in Germany.

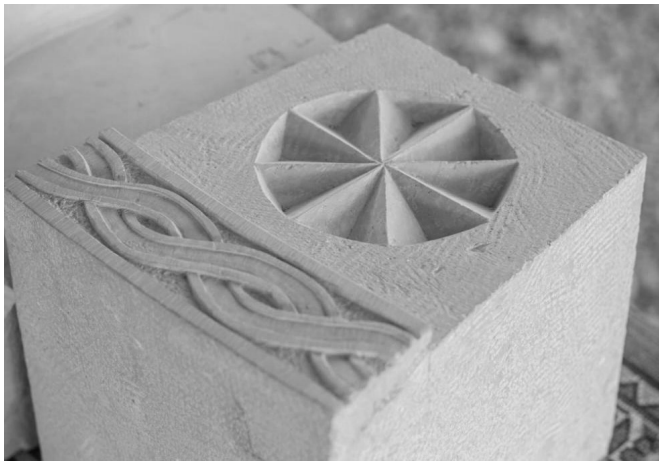
In conclusion, current efforts to designate the statue as a monument in Berlin may not succeed under the existing legal criteria. Nevertheless, from the perspective of broader cultural heritage discourses, the statue holds cultural significance by introducing new and necessary debates into Berlin society. On this basis, it deserves to be preserved.

Keywords: Statue of Peace in Berlin, Migrant, Difficult Heritage, Conflict Value

Across the Levant

A Syrian Stonemasonry Training Programme as a 'Contact Zone'

Emma Sweeney/World Monuments Fund (WMF), BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg



Stonemasonry Carving from Lebanon. © Emma Sweeney

"[In] this Levant region, [we] share a common heritage, we appreciate its importance... it is our identity." Participant, Stonemasonry Training Programme in Tripoli, Lebanon

The Global Peace Index 2024 revealed that the number of countries currently engaged in conflict is now at its highest since World War II (Vision of Humanity 2024). In 2024, a record 120 million people have been displaced globally due to conflict and violence, (UNHCR 2024). Heritage is increasingly promoted post-conflict as a tool to help rebuild societies (Labadi 2022; Albert 2023).

The concept of the 'contact zone' was introduced by Pratt (1991) to describe spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power. Recently, this definition has been expanded to include 'heritage diplomacy' as an emergent form of cultural relations, which creates a 'contact zone' between different stakeholders with divergent expectations. In a case study of the British Council Cultural Protection Fund (CPF), for example, Chalcraft (2021) raises the question of whether these 'contact zones' are what they are supposed to be – spaces and processes of mutual exchange furthering greater social cohesion – or if they serve the purposes of the international community.

The recent experience of CPF-funded projects led by World Monuments Fund (WMF) suggests that these purposes can be synchronous. In response to the conflict in Syria and the displacement of people to neighbouring Jordan and Lebanon, the 'Syrian Stonemasonry Training Scheme' delivered by WMF and supported by CPF was developed with the aim of training local Jordanians or Lebanese and refugees from Syria in traditional stonemasonry. This programme equipped the trainees with new skills to improve their livelihoods through subsequent employment and to restore their heritage across the region, post-conflict.

Between 2017 and 2022, 84 men and women graduated under the scheme in Jordan and in Lebanon. There was an evaluation of each of the projects after their conclusion, followed by a further evaluation commissioned by the British Council in 2023 to assess the longer-term results of the CPF investment. The methodology was qualitative ethnographic field research, using online and in-person key informant interviews (KII) and focus group discussions (FGDs) combined with survey and field observations.

The methods proved successful in collecting representative data for both projects, each of which involved the training of 42 people. In Jordan, 37 (88%) responded to the survey and 32 (76%) were interviewed, whereas for Lebanon, 39 (93%) responded to the survey and 28 (67%) were interviewed.

Our findings reveal that, as well as certifying the trainees, the programmes brought about an enhanced appreciation and understanding of neighbouring cultures, and the issues faced by locals and the Syrian diaspora. The courses were an important forum for increasing awareness around gender roles, and for teaching valuable social skills including confidence, communication, teamwork and improving language. The British Council will use this data, along with findings from other evaluations, to demonstrate the impact of CPF and to secure funding from the UK Government.

The 'Syrian Stonemasonry Training Scheme' demonstrates that these 'contact zones' can be spaces of equal representation where individual(s) can communicate, reflect, and move towards understanding. The experience from this project could inform similar government-funded 'heritage diplomacy' initiatives for post-conflict societies. As the number of people displaced due to conflict continues to rise and heritage projects are further instrumentalised as a tool for sustainable development, we recommend that the international community should share their learnings from 'contact zone' projects more broadly.

Keywords: Contact Zones, Post-Conflict Recovery, Cultural Diplomacy, Stonemasonry, Heritage Skills

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Building Bridges Between Archaeology and the Population

Examples of Participatory and Inclusive Methods Developed by ArchaeoConcept in an International Context

Ellinor Dunning/ArchaeoConcept
Camille Aeschimann/ArchaeoConcept

For several years, the company ArchaeoConcept (Biel, BE) has been developing activities to build bridges between archaeology and the public, in order to address certain societal challenges, including making heritage accessible to as many people as possible. Our team combines perspectives from archaeology, museology, and social anthropology to design and implement projects using distinctive methodologies. These approaches allow individuals, including those from minority backgrounds, to connect with archaeology and share knowledge.

In the first part of this conference, we will present the participatory and inclusive methods that have emerged from three projects: the Salons archéologiques (2018-2021), which aimed to explore the Swiss population's relationship with archaeology; the Accessibility of Archaeological Sites for All project (2022-2024), based on several collaborations with people with disabilities; and the Stories of Migration: From Past to Present project, co-designed with and for children, addressing the theme of personal, family, and ancestral mobility in Switzerland and will result in the creation of a podcast (2025-2026). The approaches developed in these three projects will then be compared using several criteria: the form of participation – its mechanisms and the participants involved (Simon 2010); the timing of participation – i.e., at what stages of the project it occurs; the project outcomes – their form (written or oral) and accessibility; and finally, the sustainability of each project and its potential for reappropriation or replication by others.

In the second part, we will draw on the comparisons and reflections from the implementation of the projects to present key issues concerning archaeological heritage and 'minorities' that we have identified as relevant.

First, we will reiterate the importance of considering heritage in relation to the cultural resources (knowledge, vocabulary, and social codes) acquired by a person throughout their life, which are often necessary for engaging with heritage. We believe this reflection is central to understanding the tensions around heritage appropriation, which lie between what professionals want and what is 'vernacular'. The relevance of the term 'heritage' itself is contested, as is its ability to encompass the history of all people. Next, we will examine in more detail the relationship between subjective, lived heritage and objectified, classified heritage. Clearly, both experts and non-experts can navigate between different systems of thought and practice concerning the same heritage object (Dunning and Aeschimann 2021).

Finally, the crucial questions of any participatory project arise: how can we acknowledge what people regard as their heritage without adopting an explanatory or paternalistic stance on a concept that may be external to their cultural references? How can we incorporate diverse perspectives and approaches to heritage into our work? How can we address the possibility that the cultural references of experts may be those of a minority group? We propose several approaches. One centers on the shared emotional responses elicited by archaeological remains, which are shared by both experts and the population, fostering dialogue between these groups whose boundaries are sometimes fluid (Dunning and Aeschimann 2021; Aeschimann, Catalfamo, and Dunning 2025). A second approach involves the relationship that can be built with archaeologists and their knowledge in certain research or mediation contexts. However, the challenge of avoiding power dynamics remains. A third approach is that it is essential to establish opportunities for dialogue with the local population around specific situations, such as a contested heritage object that has been the subject of negotiation. This "dialogue through practice" (Bitter 2018) is an exemplary mean of delving into the heart of the representations of the various cultural and social groups that constitute the population (Dunning and Aeschimann 2021; Aki and Bausch 2025). It also enables us to co-create the values that bind us to heritage.

We will conclude our presentation by connecting our reflections to international case studies. These cases illustrate that, depending on its mode of implementation, archaeology can serve as a powerful tool for addressing social issues and amplifying the voices of marginalised groups (van den Dries and Kerkhof 2018; Hamilakis 2017).

Keywords: Participatory Approaches, Inclusion, Practical Examples, Archaeology, Heritage

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Finding Heritage in Unexpected Places

Rethinking Heritage Significance of Everyday Environments by Everyday People

Lidwine Spoormans/ TU Delft
Rienje Veenhof/TU Delft

Courtyard view of a case study in Almere; © Victorien Koningsberger

This article argues for the emancipation of everyday environments in the current heritage discourse, building on the premise that unlisted, everyday neighbourhoods and buildings contain heritage significance. Everyday heritage has emerged as a key frontier in heritage studies (Fairclough, 2009). This development aligns with a broader shift, repositioning heritage as a community-led rather than expert-led process, moving attention from global to local interests and from objectivity to subjectivity. As a result, heritage is increasingly viewed as a resource for local identity and placemaking, rather than a static asset for conservation (Fairclough, 2009). The concept of everyday heritage refers to the built and lived environments that communities continuously use and experience, often without formal recognition as heritage, yet carrying the potential to significantly influence place identity and foster historical continuity. (Mosler, 2019; Fairclough, 2009). This requires a broader view of heritage practices, starting with rethinking heritage assessment, putting local users at the centre.

Our research into the heritage attributes of unlisted, residential neighbourhoods in the Netherlands from the 1970s/1980s reveals that different stakeholder groups and individuals attach a myriad of values to everyday environments. This supports two key arguments: first, heritage significance encompasses a broad spectrum that extends beyond conventional values of age, aesthetic, and cultural-historic value, as people convey value through a wider variety of attributes. In our case studies, people's views on heritage attributes are mediated by personal histories. People value their environment through the lens of family history and identity, e.g. childhood homes. They also mention 'hidden heritage': places that impacted their lives in the past but have been demolished, like schools or swimming pools. Stories and memories emerge as important attribute types. Other 'everyday' attributes key for daily users of the neighbourhood include activities, a sense of collectivity, and social contacts with neighbours. Although these attributes often remain invisible to outside perspectives, they play a vital role in the local heritage significance of these neighbourhoods.

Secondly, people attach values to everyday built environments, often considered 'unexceptional' by experts. Ordinary objects without evident aesthetic or historic significance, like blue plastic storage roofs in the Almere case, are valued as signifiers for 'their' neighbourhood. Similarly, residents value their house because it is their 'own', and often the first house they bought or rented. Investigating the lived experience provides depth to our understanding of the role of heritage in everyday lives. Identity and feelings of ownership make ordinary things extraordinary. This gap in perception is evident when comparing resident responses to professionals or 'outsiders', who focus on external attributes and the general historic narrative. Residents also acknowledge these, but additionally mention daily use attributes and compare situations across day and night, seasons, and years.

This underlines why everyday heritage, instead of being viewed as marginal and therefore disregarded, should be central to academic and institutional attention. Heritage significance, as a dynamic and social construct, should be informed by people's perception and the impact on their daily lives. Moreover, everyday environments require investigation due to their ubiquity and the large groups they affect. This shift challenges the heritage field to look beyond exceptionalism and to rethink the objects, buildings or places that we consider significant. As put by Lefebvre (1987): "The everyday is (therefore) the most universal and the most unique condition (...). Why wouldn't the concept of everydayness reveal the extraordinary in the ordinary?". Expanding the range of heritage objects and the values attached to them requires a broader spectrum of stakeholders in (re)defining heritage. Explicit efforts should be made to engage marginalised groups with limited lobbying power. This research aimed to reach a more diverse group by developing and applying a digital tool that combines visual and textual information and avoids expert language. Without the inclusion of a wide range of 'everyday' citizens, an informed, equitable assessment of the significance of everyday heritage is impossible.

Keywords: Everyday Heritage, Community-based Heritage, Participatory Methods, Digital Tools

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Teaching Multiple Layers of Heritage in a Conflicted Region

Ruth Liberty-Shalev/Technion, ICOMOS Israel
Shaden Hamed-Safadi/Technion, ICOMOS Israel

The Nebi Rubin market showing the minaret and the booths. © Matson (G. Eric and Edith) Photograph Collection, approx. 1920 - 1933

On a visit to the Palestinian town of Ramlah in the mid-19th Century, the British Consul James Finn described "..a procession...consisting of a rabble of Moslem children escorting out of the town the Shaikh of the Prophet Reuben." (Finn 1878, vol. 2: 342). Finn's description, though brief and somewhat condescending, provides an early account of the annual Nebi Rubin festival. By the 1920's this major event attracted as much as forty thousand local participants (Filastin, 27 September 1927: 1), from Ramle, Jaffa and Ludd and beyond – men and women, young and old, mostly Muslims, but also Christians and Jews (Yazbak, 2011: 170). The tomb of Nebi Rubin, nowadays forgotten amidst sand dunes, is among the hundreds of Maqamat (plural of Maqam) scattered throughout the Israeli/Palestinian landscape (Canaan, 1927: VI; Franzman & Bar 2013: 96), challenging our grasp of the region's past.

The Israeli/Palestinian landscape is full of such unintelligible architectural artifacts, begging to be defined as 'Heritage'. While this phenomenon is not unique to our region, perhaps it is more prevalent here than in other parts of the world. The region's recent history, which includes intense development and modernization, as well as armed conflict and its aftermath of ruin and rupture, displacement and replacement, left a landscape riddled with abandoned and disconnected fragments. Dealing with these architectural ruins and remnants is difficult for everyone. In this region, where national land disputes are ongoing and omnipresent, heritage is inherently contestable, and often conflictual. In this context, 'Heritage' tends to be viewed as, or to become, a narration of minority and majority relationships, past as well as present.

Attempting to overcome the 'Us/Them' dichotomy and to renegotiate a place for these historic artefacts in space (the current built environment) and in time (our histories), we embarked on the Arab Architecture Archive (AAA) project (Social Hub Technion, 2020). AAA is a recurring semester-long academic course, through which architecture students collect, analyse, and publicly display online historical and physical data about a group of local historic buildings. During the course, the students are exposed to documentation methods, alongside basic concepts such as tradition, typology, the vernacular, regionalism and modernism. The result is the digital Arab Architecture Archive, which was launched online in May 2020, and displays a geographical spread of the courses' accumulated outcomes so far. The course strives to offer an alternative to the nationalistic narratives which plague the practice of heritage conservation, and simultaneously to steer away from the high waters of contemporary post-colonial discourse, sticking to the physical objects, historical data and empirical knowledge rather than to ideological claims and theoretical constructs.

The systematic collection of data about the historic built environment has been extensively practiced in our region for various purposes, and can be traced back to early pilgrim-adventurers who documented the scenery of their spiritual journey to the holy land, European explorers of the 19th century who meticulously examined 'evidence' relating to the Bible, the local elite who attempted to capture the ways of the old world as these were giving way to modernity (Canaan, 1927), and post-1948 surveys taking stock of property, gained (Mayer & Pinkerfeld, 1950) or lost (Khalidi, 1992). Taking any of these as a complete and objective account of reality would be almost naive. However, understanding and presenting built heritage demands engagement with such rich and complex historical sources alongside the ability to critically navigate and distinguish valuable descriptive information from the observer's point of view. Rather than challenging the authority of contemporary top-down government regimes which acknowledge, prioritize and protect cultural heritage through statutory mechanisms, the project offers a participatory, dynamic, digital database, accessible to the public in Hebrew and Arabic. It presents 'bottom-up' interpretations of Middle Eastern building types, aiming to recover the meaning of each artefact in its typological contexts rather than by 'giving grades' of significance to each artifact on its own. Rather than using knowledge acquired to redraw boundaries in space and in time, the project emphasizes temporal and regional continuities and cultural exchange. This paper will present the AAA from two viewpoints and elaborate on our search for ways to overcome the disparity in the appreciation and protection of Palestinian and local built heritage in Israel, to bridge gaps and perhaps even to harness the power of heritage to heal ruptures.

Keywords: Contested Heritage, Architectural Fragments, Digital Archive, Bottom-Up Approach.

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Expanding Knowledge of Historical Monuments Through the Participation of Marginalised Groups & Minorities?

A Student Project and Its Benefits for Designating Historical Monuments

Irene Plein/ Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Baden-Württemberg

Graffiti on a house façade in the Benz Barracks proudly expresses the residents' commitment to their settlement. © Marie-Sophie Kessler

How can we determine the significance that non-experts attribute to architectural heritage and identify the objects they believe should be preserved for future generations? The Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Baden-Württemberg (State Office for the Preservation of Historical Monuments) posed this question in the lead-up to the major annual conference of the Vereinigung der Denkmalfachämter in den Ländern/VDL (Monument Preservation Authorities in the Federal States), entitled 'DenkMal miteinander - Teilhabe in der Denkmalpflege' (Preserving Monuments Together: Participation in the Preservation of Historical Monuments), which took place in Mannheim in June 2024. To this end, the State Office conducted a two-semester learning and research workshop with the Faculty of Social Work at Mannheim University of Applied Sciences and the Mannheim City Archive Marchivum. During the workshop, students conducted field research titled 'Protecting What We Love? What Mannheim thinks about monuments.'

From a list of potential monuments in Mannheim, the students selected four, verifying their relevance to the population through interviews. These included the Yavuz Sultan Selim Mosque on Luisenring, the largest mosque in Germany for many years, and the „Benz Barracks", a problematic neighborhood in the Waldhof-Ost district, as seen in the TV documentary „Harz aber Herzlich" (Harsh but Heartfelt). This brought into focus marginalized groups and minorities who use these sites and are not often heard in our majority society.

A conscious decision was made to forego a kind of 'referendum' on the value of the buildings and, instead, use the social science method of participatory observation. This method requires a neutral and respectful approach by the interviewer. It not only skims off insights but also initiates processes of insight in the conversation. The tasks included identifying the interest groups behind the buildings, developing questions to encourage storytelling, conducting interviews, and evaluating them. The aim was to uncover stories connecting people to the selected buildings and to determine their potential willingness to get involved.

The students presented the project's results at the conference and made them available to the public in an exhibition at the Marchivum. The methodological and content-related findings are currently being incorporated into the Baden-Württemberg State Office for the Preservation of Historical Monuments' inventory.

This presentation introduces the methodological approach used in the survey, its results, and how they influenced the monument's designation.

For instance, it became evident that Muslims involved in constructing the mosque are proud to leave their legacy for their descendants and the urban community. The mosque's close proximity to the church and the church's support in constructing the mosque laid the foundation for well-functioning ecumenism in Mannheim. These findings could be used profitably in the current listing process because they were not previously documented and would otherwise not have been available for the inventory.

In the case of the „Benz Barracks", however, the survey results did not lead to listing. For the telecommunications tower, which was also part of the project, the results did lead to listing, and it was designated a monument at the beginning of 2025.

This lecture will cover the arguments in favor of this project, its potential achievements, its suitability, and its limitations. Can it also be used to survey the opinions of marginalized groups and minorities in contrast to majority society? Is this a helpful approach for taking an inventory?

The student project is exemplary and can be replicated. Personal stories have been shown to lend cultural monuments vitality and authenticity. Dialogue strengthens the population's awareness of and attachment to their built cultural environment. It also helps marginalized groups see themselves as effective members of urban society. Projects such as this one promote participation and revitalization in our society and should therefore be in the interest of both monument preservation and local authorities.

Keywords: Citizen Participation, Monument Designation, Participatory Observation, Mannheim

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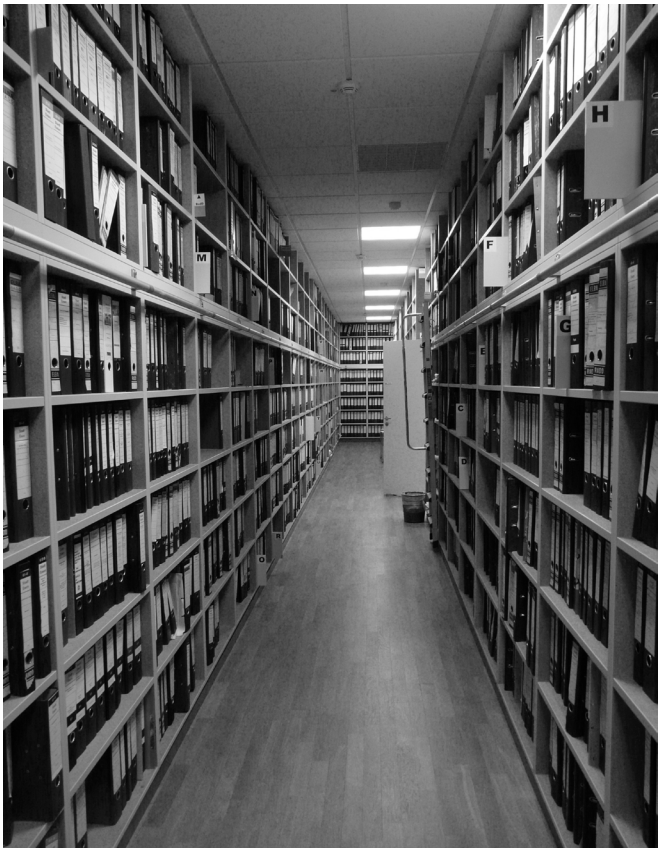
Diversifying Cultural Heritage Preservation

New Ways to Inventory

Annika Büttner/Municipality Essen



Archive Untere Denkmalbehörde Essen, © Untere Denkmalbehörde, Stadt Essen.

Governmental cultural heritage preservation is situated between science, politics, and the public. Its collective and individual interests are heavily influenced by the current zeitgeist and notably play into decisions about the value and upholding of our historic architecture. As such, certain groups and their culture are made visible, researched, and protected by a select circle of people who possess the sole legal privilege to assess them via the heritage protection law.

Since the introduction of the heritage protection law in North Rhine-Westphalia in 1980 over one thousand architectural monuments have been put under protection by the Cultural Heritage Protection Office of Essen ("Untere Denkmalbehörde"). As one of the largest UDBs in NRW with its own focus on art historical research, it looks back on a long history of registration and archiving (Fig. 1). Taking this into account, a plethora of scholarly and political interests as well as sociocultural changes can be discerned. A wholly new inventory method is to be conceptual-ised by systematically reappraising Essen's (and in conclusion NRW's) preservation history for the very first time.

It has been seldom questioned whose cultural heritage is represented within this preservation and which structural issues are tied to the exclusion or underrepresentation of minorities and marginalised groups within society. The inclusion with the subsequent acknowledgment and visibility of architectural and cultural value as well as historical, local, and biographical significance are assumed to result from the cooperation of a notably homogenous group of stakeholders occupying the space between authorities, politics, science, and social spheres. If cultural heritage preservation is to serve a broader spectrum of the so-called public (§ 1 and 2, DSchG NRW 1980 and 2022), it ought to question its own position and offer practices for democratic participation.

Therefore, this project aims to examine the reasons and motivations for researching and protecting architecture. Additionally, underrepresented and marginalised groups will be put in the limelight through new research focuses and amended research strategies in a separate pilot stage. In this context, connections with several associations, equality departments, and initiatives will be established, aiding in disclosing the status quo. Furthermore, peripheral groups and minorities will be made more visible by including them in the aforementioned processes in order to initiate the diversification of the cultural heritage preservation apparatus.

The project primarily concerns itself with individuals and groups of the queer community whose history in the 20th century has been rudimentarily worked through by various associations, work groups, and foundations in cooperation with the city of Essen. From 2020 to 2021 this culminated in the exhibition "Come out, Essen! 100 Years of Lesbian-Gay Emancipation" (Original: Come out, Essen! 100 Jahre lesbisch-schwule Emanzipation, Fig. 2) and a catalogue released under the same title (Berude & Nies, 2020). Moreover, special attention shall be given to the history of female employees and those perceived as such within male-dominated fields as their cultural accomplishments have yet to be systematically explored

Keywords: Diversity, Cultural Heritage, Architecture, Inventory, Archive, Preservation

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‘Fremde Impulse’ Revisited

Markus Harzenetter/Hessian State Office
for Monument and Sites, Wiesbaden

‘Little Warsaw’ on the Ruhr. The faded inscription on the Robotników bank in Bochum, Am Kortländer 2-14, is a reminder of the Polish bank for labourers that was based there from the end of the 19th century. © Hans Hanke, Bochum

‘Fremde Impulse - Baudenkmale im Ruhrgebiet’ [„Foreign influences – architectural monuments in the Ruhr region“] was a project of the two regional associations Rhineland (LVR) and Westphalia (LWL), in co-operation with the European Capital of Culture RUHR.2010. RUHR.2010 was the first time that a region was awarded the title ‘European Capital of Culture’; the 53 cities that are combined in the Regionalverband Ruhr (RVR) were presented as European Capital of Culture - represented by the city of Essen. The regional associations LVR and LWL are responsible for both the heritage authorities and large industrial museums, which this year dealt with the topic of migration and cultural heritage in different ways. The results from that time are to be reflected on again with a time lag of 15 years.

‘Foreign Impulses’ - an exhibition and publication project - wanted to let monuments speak. What do they tell us about living conditions yesterday and today? What traces did the various external influences leave on the buildings and settlements, in the landscape and in the urban structure of the Ruhr region? This project focussed in particular on change and transformation, on exchange and migration as a normal case of social and cultural change. It was divided into five different subject areas - art and architecture, faith, people, rule, capital and technology - each of which presented examples from the RUHR.2010 region’s stock of monuments.

The ‘Foreign Impulses’ project deliberately focused on the question of which material evidence should be read as ‘monumental’ in relation to the topic of ‘migration and exchange’ - and vice versa: How are traditional and generally recognised ‘classic’ monuments - such as churches and castles - interpreted by and for people with a migration background and how does this change the view of inventory and monument mediation?

In 2016, the Hessian State Office for Monument and Sites organised a conference on ‘Offenbach Transfer - a city and its inhabitants’ with a slightly different theme: at the time, Offenbach was considered the city in the Federal Republic of Germany with the highest proportion of foreign citizens (35%) and people with a migration background (58%). Offenbach is multicultural and is regarded as an ‘Arrival City’ with exemplary integration programmes for the Rhine-Main metropolitan region. The German contribution to the 15th International Architecture Exhibition La Biennale di Venezia 2016 ‘MAKING HEIMAT. Germany, Arrival Country’ also put Offenbach centre stage.

Is this primarily a globalised social landscape at a municipal level or can the presence of 155 nations also be seen in the historical overlaps and urban planning complexity? And what are the consequences for the realisation of historic preservation? What exactly characterises the so-called most international city in Germany and to what extent could the city, with its special history and architectural diversity, even be a model for other cities and regions?

The observations on these projects will be presented for discussion against the background of the key questions of the event, in particular on the question of how the architectural heritage of minorities is currently dealt with and whether and to what extent the current inventory criteria and the paradigms on which they are based can also be applied to this category of architectural heritage.

Keywords: Architectural Monuments, Migration, Ruhr Area, Rhine-Main Region

No Preservation Without Documentation

On the Presence/Absence of Women in Swiss Building and Garden Inventories

Laura Hindelang/University of Bern
Nina Hüppi/University of Bern

In 1970, Zurich architect Annemarie Hubacher and her husband Hans Hubacher together with their office built the hotel "Atlantis" in Zurich. © ETH-Bibliothek Zürich

What is the status of women's participation in Switzerland's built cultural heritage? What do we know about their involvement in historic buildings, gardens, and parks? And to what extent has their (co-)authorship of objects that are now defined as garden and architectural monuments been documented at all? An initial national survey (2025) conducted by the University of Bern asked cantonal and municipal offices of monument preservation and historic gardens about the presence of women in their inventories. In this article, we present an excerpt from the evaluation and an initial interpretation of the results.

The questionnaire for the online survey was sent to the 26 cantonal and 9 municipal offices of monument preservation and 7 historic garden agencies. The response rate was 60% for the monument preservation offices and 30% for historic garden agencies. The questionnaire covered items relating to the objects in the inventory, the inventory process, and legislation. Respondents were asked to state the number of buildings and gardens that had been built or commissioned by women. In addition, offices were requested to list the objects in a separate excel sheet indicating the involvement of women in the inventory in their role as architects or builders. The survey also queried whether there were any buildings and gardens known to have been included in the inventory because of the involvement of women. It also inquired whether the relevant building and planning legislation (theoretically or explicitly) provided the conditions for citing the involvement of women in a building or garden as a reason for its inclusion in the inventory. In order to deepen and contextualize the results, we then conducted qualitative interviews with selected inventory teams.

The responses from the offices varied greatly in terms of the amount of research required, the depth and level of detail of the information provided, and the explanations given regarding the status of the inventory, their own procedures, and their assessment of the validity and significance of the information. It can be assumed that the willingness to participate in the survey depended on the human, time and financial resources available at the individual office or agency and to the extent to which the topic was considered relevant.

Based on the current state of research, we had initially formulated the hypothesis that there are probably no buildings or gardens in Switzerland from before 1920 designed by women. The survey therefore focused not only on women as (landscape) architects, but also on women in the role of commissioners. This expanded notion of architectural and landscape participation in different roles made it possible to identify a significantly larger number of women involved in building and garden projects. Surprisingly, the survey also found female architects of buildings dating from before 1900. Nevertheless, identifying women in the inventories proved to be challenging: Databases do not usually record gender, and the default is male; first names are abbreviated, subsumed under 'family' or 'married couple'; also, female employees of architectural firms often remain invisible. Yet, female participation became also visible in new, unexpected objects, e.g., as clients commissioning coat of arms reliefs and boundary markers.

Inventories are a selection based on changing expert criteria, which in the best case provide a representative cross-section of a canton's architectural and landscape heritage and reflect the contemporary (architectural) historical discourse and state of knowledge. Due to the varying degrees of detail in the responses to the survey, the heterogeneity of the inventories, and the different legislation in Switzerland's federal system, this survey is an initial sample of the presence of women in Swiss inventories. However, the focus on women comes with limitations: the use of the binary concept of women and men does not reflect gender diversity within the group(s), and intersectional perspectives, and categories such as race or class, can only be considered in the interpretative analysis. At the same time, the data is meaningful as it reflects the state of documentation and the current challenges of finding women (as a gateway to gender diversity) in building and garden inventories.

It is important to note that the findings drawn from the survey refer to the status of the inventories and not to historical reality; they reflect accumulated or current knowledge regarding architectural and garden monuments classified as worthy of protection and therefore preservation, not regarding the entire building stock in its historical complexity. The revision or creation of new inventories therefore provide important opportunities for action: to update the inventory or the underlying criteria and their interpretation in dialogue with researchers, who are also in the process of continuously expanding and redefining their knowledge of women in the history of architecture and landscape.

Keywords: Women Architects, Women Commissioners, Historic Gardens, Architectural Monuments, Inventories

From Architectural Parasitism to the Aspiration for Heritage Recognition

‘The Locle Ness Monster’ DIY Skatepark

Jérôme Heim/HES-SO Neuchâtel

2024. © Jérôme Heim

The Collège des Jeanneret, constructed between 1954-1957 and inspired by the principles of Le Corbusier, is listed as a typical example of modernist architecture. The building has attracted particular preservation interest within a city recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site for its watchmaking urbanism, even though its architecture does not reflect that specific legacy. However, another type of heritage is emerging around this site – one that both relies on the building’s architectural presence and causes tensions with its preservation.

Since the late 1980s, the architecture of the school – particularly a smooth floor beneath a covered courtyard and adjacent sidewalks – has attracted the interest of skateboarders in search of ‘street spots’. The installation of a ramp nearby from 1990 to 2000 increased this appeal, especially as an existing concrete canopy allowed the informal yet tolerated addition of self-built architectural elements made for skateboarding. After several requests to municipal authorities for a skatepark since 2015, a group of young people formed the association SKILL (SKate In Le Locle) with the goal of building one by themselves (Heim 2021). ‘The Locle Ness Monster’ DIY skatepark was thus gradually constructed through a series of participatory work sessions, taking shape under and around the canopy – much like a parasite growing within the host that shelters it.

Do It Yourself (DIY) concrete skatepark projects began to emerge in abandoned or unused areas in the early 1990s in the United States, such as the Burnside Skatepark in Portland, Oregon, and the Washington Street Skatepark in San Diego, California. Elsewhere in the world – particularly in Europe and in Switzerland – the trend gained momentum in the mid-2000s, notably with the construction of the Black Cross Bowl in Basel. The spot in Le Locle features typical elements of similar DIY installations: steep transitions, bumps, banks, as well as pool copings and mosaics that echo the edges of Californian swimming pools. The head of the monster and its scaly body lining the skatepark forms the unique identity of the site, much like the iconic cross of Basel’s Black Cross Bowl.

While the reputation of a skate spot is primarily built on the performances carried out through photos or videos, the recognition of it as an important heritage often emerges when the site faces the threat of demolition. This was the case with the iconic ‘Undercroft’ spot in London, whose preservation was championed by a collective through a campaign involving written, photographic, and film-based documentation.

In Le Locle, a 2022 report concluded that the DIY skatepark did not comply with safety regulations. One of the main issues lies in the insufficient height of the canopy. To meet standards fully, either the canopy would need to be dismantled, or a significant portion of the skatepark would have to be removed. The first option clashes with the heritage value of the architectural structure. The second is perceived as a lack of recognition by skateboarders and other project participants for their work.

Before an alternative solution finally emerged to preserve both the canopy and the skatepark in their entirety, the threat hanging over the spot prompted the SKILL association to document its project. They organized an exhibition in support of the site, combining personal testimonies, written texts, press articles, and photographs. The exhibition highlighted the material value of the spot by emphasizing the originality of the forms, which were built in response to the architecture of the canopy. It also underscores the intangible value of the site for the skateboarding community – particularly in terms of fostering civic empowerment that benefits the broader population and enhances local quality of life.

Thus, while the existence of ‘The Locle Ness Monster’ DIY skatepark depends on the architecture that shelters it – much like a parasite – the desire to preserve it can be seen as a form of heritage-making, potentially at the expense of the architectural and historical value of the original structure.

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Urban Zombography of Graffiti ‘Living-Dead’ Spots in Switzerland

Towards a Critical Approach to Subcultural Heritage Recognition

Marc Tadorian /
HES-SO Fribourg

Contemporary graffiti, especially the so-called graffiti-writing (or writing) tradition, which emerged in the late 1960s in the northeastern United States, has become one of the most visible forms of popular expression in global urban culture and transgression (Bofkin, 2014). As a practice that is underground, eclectic, subversive, polyphonic, but above all ephemeral and deeply rooted in specific sites, it raises complex questions regarding the possibility of turning iconic graffiti spots into recognized heritage. These ‘living-dead’ places, filled with layered memories and contested meanings, are marked by both erasure and persistence and are haunted by their own disappearance. The imagined community of graffiti-writers (writers), bound by a now highly globalized and digitized culture, and the visible or invisible traces (Ingold, 2007) they leave behind, reflect a form of precarious yet enduring subcultural survival. This phenomenon is part of a broader urban memory dynamic that invites exploration from ethnogeographic and ethnogeo-historical perspectives, which is the core approach that this contribution follows.

For those involved, the world of writing, with its controversial contextual practice and “amnesiac history” (Tadorian, 2008), represents a translocal and transnational subculture rooted in local networks and defined by unique modes of sociability, spatiality, historicity, and reflexivity (Tadorian, 2021). Writers often view their activity as part of a living, authentic tradition that is increasingly vulnerable to erasure, distortion, or subcultural disaffiliation.

Beyond the recurring media debates opposing art and vandalism, these contested scriptural and figurative expression is gaining greater recognition in both popular and institutional spheres. This is evident from its presence in social science and art history research, contemporary art exhibitions and dedicated galleries and museums. There is also growing interest in it from municipal cultural policies in various contexts. However, this growing legitimacy brings new challenges related to documentation, archiving, inventorying, museum practices, and ethnographic research. It calls for a critical reflection on how to integrate the memory and knowledge embedded in these ‘living-dead’ subcultural sites into official heritage-making processes. More profoundly, it requires considering the conditions under which institutional heritage recognition can be built upon participatory and collaborative frameworks that respect the values, codes, controversies, and aspirations of the subcultural communities involved.

Drawing on previous (auto)ethnographic research (Tadorian, 2008, 2009, 2021) and extending an initial reflection inspired by the topic ‘A Future for Whose Past?’ (Glauser et al., 2025), this presentation explores these issues through two emblematic case studies in Switzerland.

The first is the Basel Line, a renowned site that, since the 1980s, has attracted prominent writers from across Europe and remains one of the most iconic graffiti spots in Switzerland.

The second focuses on the now-vanished BTI Tunnel in Biel/Bienne, a more discreet location, removed from the current urban landscape but symbolically powerful location preserved in the memory of older local writers. This ‘living-dead’ spot, now existing only in the imagination of a few witnesses, raises fundamental questions about the legitimacy and limits of heritage projects involving subcultural “things” that some people prefer to keep invisible and unshared outside their intimate circles.

Keywords: Urban Zombography, Subculture, Graffiti Writing, Spots, Collective Memory, Heritage-Making

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Squatted Houses Without Squatters – Squatters Without Squatted Houses

Chances and Limits of Heritage Conservation in Preserving the Legacy of Squats in Berlin

Kirsten Angermann /
Bauhaus-University Weimar

Mainzer Straße in June 1990, during the squat (Renate Hildebrandt © Mainzer_Straße-1-Juni1990, CC BY 3.0

When the first squats took place in West Berlin at the end of the 1960s, the squatters had no idea that, a decade later, it would evolve into a full-fledged movement. They could not have anticipated that the squats would eventually become an integral part of Berlin's identity in a reunified Germany. The squatters, who were quite diverse in composition – were often perceived as marginalised groups, but they also often received support and solidarity from outside the squatter scene (Azozomox 2021). The legacy of squatting, and therefore also that of the squatters, is a topic of much debate today. In recent years and decades, many squat projects have been evicted, sometimes receiving significant media coverage. The squatters had to leave, but the houses remained. So how is the legacy of the squats being dealt with today? Can (architectural) heritage conservation be used to preserve them? Does conservation offer methods for developing and communicating this heritage?

The paper is the result of the short-term research project "What remains? Squatted houses as (im)material heritage and case studies for procedural design", funded by Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, and expands on its questions on heritage conservation theory (Angermann et al. 2025). It discusses the aforementioned questions using case studies. One example is the former 'Kunsthaus Tacheles' in the centre of Berlin. When it was squatted in 1990, the building was due to be demolished. However, a group of artists squatted it, thereby saving it from demolition. The building was eventually placed under a preservation order. It then served as an alternative cultural centre until 2012, when it was evicted. After a comprehensive refurbishment, it reopened in 2023 as part of the newly developed 'Am Tacheles' neighbourhood. Traces of the 'Kunsthaus Tacheles' period have been preserved in the corridors and stairwells, and the graffiti has been consolidated in accordance with architectural conservation rules. While the physical traces of the building's subcultural use have thus been preserved, they now merely serve as a backdrop for a new, commercial venue that can only claim to be 'alternative'. The former squatters and visitors of the 'Kunsthaus Tacheles' are not part of the new concept.

This example will be contrasted with some other former squats where the situation is the opposite: buildings, that no longer show any traces of the occupation in the (vacated or evicted) buildings, but where groups of more or less organised former squatters exist, whose memories currently have no place. For example, Mainzer Straße, whose street battle-like eviction in 1990 is neither visible nor remembered in the now completely renovated street (Bartlitz et al. 2020). In many cases, the already existing monument protection does not acknowledge or convey the squatting history of the buildings.

In conclusion, the possibilities, limits and also risks of heritage conservation practices and concepts will be discussed, mainly against the backdrop of the German legal framework. What are the limits of preserving the material traces when dealing with the legacy of the squatting movement? What practices and concepts could complement this approach, allowing for a more holistic assessment?

Keywords: Conservation Theory, Heritage Studies, Squatted Houses, Squatting Movement, Berlin

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Atelierhaus am Flutgraben

A Continuous Ruin for a Continuous Presence

Sandra Bartoli /HM München
Silvan Linden/TU Berlin

The ongoing architectural project of repair, transformation, and maintenance of the Atelierhaus am Flutgraben in Berlin, started in 2012, can be understood as a borderline case of heritage conservation, which has allowed the development of a spatial and economic niche in connection with a specific form of use. The aim of the project is to help preserving affordable artist studios in the center of the city as the availability of such spaces has become gradually a rare instance for the past 20 years, with the consequence of a severe loss of a cultural realm for the city. The heritage-listed factory building from 1928 was originally used as a repair facility for the public trams and buses that was built along the Flutgraben Canal and the river Spree. Later on, it became an integrated part of the Berlin Wall, while still being operational, for this reason its facades towards the waters of the Flutgraben and Spree were bricked-up and border troops patrolled on its roof.

After the reunification, the ensemble was initially placed under protection as outstanding industrial architecture of the 1920s. In 2016, the so-called Mauerspuren ("wall traces") were added to the list – the remains of the GDR border fortifications, such as the remaining masonry-fillings of window openings, the walkways for border soldiers and the remains of signaling wires and lighting systems.

The special feature of the protection of architectural testimonies of different time periods lies not only in the fact that they sometimes literally 'get in each other's way' and complicate the definition of a monument preservation objective, but in particular, the fact that the traces of the Wall were often created without any consideration for the preservation of the building fabric (as an example the unprofessional penetration of the roof cladding, etc.) and that the designation as a protected monument is tantamount to the acceptance of structural damage.

The reunification also meant that the building lost its original function as a public transport workshop. The company was taken over by a representative of the workforce and (to this day) specializes in the sale and repair of trucks; however, it now only requires a fraction of the space and personnel. At first, individual artists rented some space in the building, and subsequently an association was formed to operate the upper floors of the workshop as a self-managed studio house. The rent is extremely low (today €1.5/m²) and subject to the – illegal – condition that the artist association is responsible for the maintenance of the building. As a result, the building, which was in dire need of renovation anyway, was only ever repaired and converted with the most minimal of effort; it was always more a case of retrofitting by adding instead of removing something – disused pipes, for example, remained in place because dismantling and disposal would only have caused unnecessary costs. As a result, the specific use by the artists is a prerequisite for the preservation of the traces of the Wall – just as the scientific study of the use of the building during the Wall period has its origins in projects by the artists themselves; the only publication to date was created by tenants of the building and is based on extensive archival research and interviews with contemporary witnesses.

The current renovation of the building is being carried out with public funds (Lottostiftung Berlin) and obliges the owner to continue the ongoing use for 30 years. The budget for the renovation is very small and allows – somehow in continuation of the previous practice – hardly more than securing the existing building. In this context, the interests of the preservation of historical monuments and the needs of the users overlap in a specific form of maintenance of the building. The initially unintentional practice of preservation by the tenants proves to be the economic and political basis for securing the studio building for the time being.

Keywords: Conversion, Grey Energy, Berlin Wall, Retrofitting

Unfixed Design

Reconsidering Conservation Criteria and Processes

Graham Skeate/University of Edinburgh,
KU Leuven & Una Europa

One half of a double-chalet awaiting settlework and boxing. © Graham Skeate

This paper reviews the suitability of conventional inventory criteria for recognising the architectural works of minority communities. Focusing on the self-built yards of Glasgow's Showpeople – travelling fairground workers who adapt post-industrial spaces into live / work environments – it questions heritage frameworks that divide tangible from intangible, formal from informal, and historic from the contemporary. Such distinctions can fail to account for the ways minority architectural practices embed cultural significance in indefinite materials – where social practices, built forms, and adaptive reuse are co-constitutive.

Glasgow's Showpeople live in sites referred to mainly as yards – clusters of caravans, chalets, sheds, workbays, and fairground equipment situated in the city's interstitial spaces. These yards evolve through cooperative building and placemaking, reworking the remnants of Glasgow's industrial infrastructure into configurations that support domestic life and the detailed upkeep of their fairground work. While the materials involved – shipping containers, corrugated steel, aluminium siding, pressure treated timber – may not meet the tangible criteria of architectural conservation, they are imbued with cultural matter: the embedded knowhow, labour, and social constructs of their builders. This paper proposes that the heritage value of such spaces resides not solely in finished forms but in their ongoing enactment through heritage systems. In short, it is not just what Showpeople build, but how they build that should be respected and conserved. Approaches to architectural conservation should be reconfigured to account for these contexts.

Drawing on extended fieldwork with Showpeople and informed by spatial theories attentive to material vitality and infrastructural spontaneity, this paper suggests the notion of operational heritage – an acceptance of certain built environments as unfixed systems maintained through ongoing adaptation. This notion is grounded in medium design (Easterling), vital materialism (Bennett), and the affordances of loose and open-form spaces (Franck & Stevens; Sendra & Sennett), offering a framework for recognising heritage as contingent and unfixed.

Showpeople's yards – routinely overlooked by conservation policy, even as their travelling fairs are celebrated – are vital to the ongoing cultural life of Showpeople. Their significance lies not in appearance or permanence – although this could be argued too – but in their capacity to support movement, maintenance, and social cohesion under unstable conditions. The paper proposes processual inventories as a conservation tool to provide minority builders a foothold: one that recognises material significance in adaptive methods and situated practices rather than static form or age. By foregrounding the sociomaterial factors of their self-built spaces, it calls for long-form heritage practices responsive to minority architectures and the communities that generate them – less about fixing meaning in time, and more about attending to how it unfolds.

Keywords: Heritage, Interstitial Spaces, Anomalous Architecture, Adaptive Conservation

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Informality of Urban Heritage

Peripheries as Grounds for Alternative Uses of Heritage and Inclusive Histories of Cities

Mesut Dinler/Politecnico di Torino

Urban peripheries, often excluded from formal heritage frameworks, provide a unique lens to explore urban memory and power dynamics. The concept of urban periphery refers not only to geographical separation from the historic city centre but also to a binary system (centerperiphery) resulting from the unequal distribution of power within society (Castells 1972, Soja 2000). In urban peripheries, it is possible to observe how heritagization processes and authorized heritage governance may conflict due to this power imbalance (García-Hernández & Maria Gravari-Barbas 2025). This contribution examines the Aurora district in Turin, Italy, as a case study to explore how informal practices and alternative narratives redefine cultural heritage while illuminating the power structures underpinning urban development and heritage policies.

Aurora has a rich history shaped by waves of migration, industrial activity, and resistance. This history begins with the late-nineteenth-century industrial transformation of the area into a small industry zone just outside the city walls, evolving into a working-class district frequented by Italian immigrant workers, and culminating in its current role as a district populated by international immigrants from China, North Africa, and the Middle East, as well as drug dealers, LGBTQ+ communities, and squatters (Castrov]ll] & Sem]nara 2004, AuroraLab 2017). Examining how marginalized communities interact with the built environment in Aurora, this paper discusses alternative heritage production/management or informal ways of engaging with heritage, such as accepting decay, allowing deterioration, utilizing graffiti, squatting, repurposing spaces in collaboration with squatters, and using historical buildings for political expression.

The main argument is that these unofficial uses, which challenge top-down management schemes, are closely tied to urban memory and historical spatial continuities in how marginalized communities use space (Harrison 2012). Aurora was also historically a site of antifascist resistance and labor strikes, which laid the groundwork for a culture of activism that persists today. This legacy is embedded in the current alternative heritage practices which challenge the exclusionary nature of top-down state-controlled formal heritage governance. In Aurora, informality emerges as a strategy of resistance and reclamation, fostering a more inclusive approach to heritage that acknowledges diverse histories and power structures.

This paper argues that informal heritage practices not only contest dominant narratives but also provide a means of understanding how power is negotiated in urban spaces (Hayden 1995). The histories embedded in Aurora's periphery – labor movements, migration, and cultural adaptation – serve as a microcosm of broader societal dynamics. These histories provide insights into how urban memory and heritage intersect with issues of social justice, equity, and belonging.

Situating cultural heritage within the broader context of global urban challenges, including migration, gentrification, and socio-political divides, this paper questions who determines what is preserved, whose voices are included, and how these decisions shape the urban future. Aurora demonstrates that heritage is not static but a dynamic process shaped by its participants. Informal practices in the district underscore the potential of heritage as a tool for fostering sustainable and democratic urban futures.

Keywords: Informal Heritage Practices, Urban Peripheries, Aurora District, Inclusive Heritage Frameworks, Turin

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Biographies

Conference Chairs

Braghieri, Nicola [Conference Chair] is Professor at the School of Architecture of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL). He is the author of several books and has published theoretical texts, scholarly essays, and critical reviews in international journals. As director of the LAPIS Laboratory, he investigates the relationship between art and science through the study of the theories and techniques of architectural and territorial representation, with a particular specialisation in the digital survey of vernacular heritage. His research and teaching are structured around three interconnected axes: Archaeological Drafting and the Vernacular Heritage; Architectural Drawing and Digital Fine Arts; Analogue Design and Compositional Practices.

Crevoisier Crelier, Mathilde [Conference Chair] is the president of the Swiss Cultural Heritage Network since 2024. She is a member of the Social Democratic Party and represents the canton of Jura in the Council of States. Mathilde Crevoisier Crelier is a member of the Council of States' Committee for the Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy and the Committee for Legal Affairs, and chairs the Committee for Science, Education and Culture. She lives with her family in Porrentruy.

Graezer Bideau, Florence [Conference Chair, Moderator, Paper] is a full professor at the College of Humanities and the School of Architecture, Civil and Environmental Engineering at EPFL, where she leads the research group Heritage, Anthropology, and Technologies (HAT). A graduate of the EHESS in Paris (PhD in History and Civilization), she was also visiting professor at the Politecnico di Torino from 2015 to 2022. Her work explores the intersection of culture and power, with a comparative focus on cultural policy, heritage governance, resistance, and urban and territorial development in China, Malaysia, and Switzerland. Her publications examine the relationship between the state, cultural institutions, identity, and memory, with particular attention to UNESCO World Heritage sites and intangible cultural heritage.

Langenberg, Silke [Conference Chair] is Full Professor of Construction Heritage and Preservation at the Department of Architecture at ETH Zurich. Her professorship is affiliated with both the Institute for Preservation and Construction History (IDB) and the Institute of Technology in Architecture (ITA). Previously, she was a full professor of Construction in Existing Contexts, Conservation, and Building Research at the University of Applied Sciences in Munich. She and her team address theoretical and practical challenges of inventorying, appreciating, and preserving monuments as well as recent buildings. Silke Langenberg initiated and leads the research and outreach project 'A Future for Whose Past?' of ICOMOS Suisse and ETH Zurich.

Nemec-Piguet, Sabine [Conference Chair, Moderator] Graduated in 1978 with a Master's degree in Architecture from l'Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne – EPFL, with a thesis on the revitalisation of an industrial quarter in the city of Geneva. Over the course of her professional career, she has participated in several studies on the improvement and assessment of historical urban quarters, mainly in Geneva. After working as an architect and city planner for the Regional Service for Monuments and Historical Sites, in the Department of Public Works in the state of Geneva, she was its director from 2002-2008. This was followed by the position of Director of the General Office for Heritage and Historical Sites for the state of Geneva from 2008-2019. This agency comprises three services: the service for Archaeology, the service for Monuments and Historical Sites, and the service for the Inventory of monuments. As part of her duties, she has served on several architectural competition juries, organized lecture series, edited publications on cultural heritage and written articles, most notably on the urban and architectural development of Geneva, the legal framework of urban development and Geneva heritage. From 1999 to 2011, she was a member of the Federal Commission for the Conservation of Nature and Landscape. From 2012 to 2023, she was a member and vice-president of the Federal Commission for the Preservation of Historic Monuments. Since May 2024, she has been President of ICOMOS.

Steiner, Sebastian [Conference Chair] studied history and social anthropology at the University of Bern. After completing his studies, he worked as a journalist for the Berner Zeitung and the Tages-Anzeiger. From 2013 to 2017, he was an assistant and doctoral candidate in the Department of Modern and Contemporary History at the University of Bern, where he also earned his doctorate. Sebastian Steiner then worked in various memory institutions, including the management of the Bibliothek am Guisanplatz, the library of the Federal Administration. Since 2022, Sebastian Steiner has been managing director of the Swiss Cultural Heritage Network. He is an associate researcher at the Historical Institute of the University of Bern.

Tombesi, Paolo [Conference Chair] is Professor of Construction and Architecture at EPFL since 2016. Before then, he held the Chair in Construction at the University of Melbourne. Known for his work on the construction of the Sydney Opera House, in 2024 he won engineering heritage awards from Engineers Australia and the Australian National Trust. Currently, he is conducting research on the building stock in Rapa Nui and Sri Lanka. He is also guest editing an upcoming issue of Buildings and Cities on the 'complexity of reconstruction'.

Organisational Team

Fabritius, Anne [Organisation] is a research assistant at the Chair of Construction Heritage and Preservation of Prof. Silke Langenberg. She integrates the topics of repair and maintenance in teaching. Previously, Anne worked as an architect at Baubüro In Situ in the field of "Einfaches Wohnen" and Re-Use in Zurich and with the association kitev in Oberhausen where she comanaged and implemented renovation works together with refugees. Anne completed her Master's degree at RWTH Aachen University in 2020 with a thesis 'Networking Processes as an Integration Tool'. As co-president of the association Architecture for Refugees Schweiz, she fosters hands-on projects and social networking towards inclusive space within the city.

Frandsen, Rune [Organisation, Moderator] studied architecture at EPFL Lausanne, graduating in 2015. From 2016 to 2019, he worked in various architecture firms in Geneva, focusing on timber construction. Alongside his architectural practice, he completed a Master of Advanced Studies in the Theory and History of Architecture at the GTA Institute of ETH Zurich

between 2017 and 2019. In 2020, he joined ETH as a doctoral researcher on a Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) project entitled 'Industrialisation in the Alps' completing his PhD in 2023 under the supervision of Prof. Silke Langenberg. His dissertation was awarded the ETH Medal. He is currently working on the project 'Heritage Year 2025: A Future for Whose Past?'. Rune also writes for architecture magazines (TEC21, Tracé), where he examines how administrative practices shape contemporary architecture.

Kasap, Orkun [Organisation] works as Senior Assistant at Construction Heritage and Preservation, ETH Zurich since August 2020. He studied architecture and urbanism in Turkey, Denmark, and Switzerland. He received his CAS Urban Management degree from University of Zurich in 2018. Upon receiving his master's degree in architecture from ETH Zurich in 2014, he worked at Gramazio Kohler Research and at NCCR Digital Fabrication until June 2019. He also worked in several architecture offices and participated in architecture competitions in Turkey and Switzerland.

Schaer, Andrea [Organisation, Moderator] studied prehistory, geography and archaeology of the Roman provinces at the University of Bern. From 2001 to 2019, she held various management positions at the cantonal archaeology departments of Jura, Aargau and Bern. Since 2015, she is the owner and managing director of Archaeokontor GmbH. Since 2023, she is also working as a research assistant for politics and continuing education at the Swiss Cultural Heritage Network. Andrea Schaer is a lecturer and associate researcher at the Institute of Archaeological Sciences at the University of Bern.

Guests & Moderators

Alatalu, Riin [Moderator, Guest] Vice-President of ICOMOS; Associate professor of cultural heritage and conservation in Estonian Academy of Arts; coordinator of UNESCO Chair in Heritage Studies in Estonian Academy of Arts; vice-chairperson of Estonian Heritage Conservation Council; member of ICOMOS University Forum, Rights-Based Approaches working group, CIVVIH, ICLAFI and ISC20C. Alatalu has worked in National Heritage Board, Tallinn Culture and Heritage Department and Estonian Ministry of Culture in leading positions. Alatalu has run several campaigns including Estonian National Cultural Heritage year in 2013, European Cultural Heritage Days, Visit Baltic Manors and other awareness raising activities.

Carobbio Guscetti, Marina [Guest] State Councillor of the Canton of Ticino (Social Democratic Party), Head of the Department of Education, Culture and Sport.

De Almeida Milani, Anna Karla [Moderator] received a 5 years B.Arch degree in 2015 (Universidade Estadual do Maranhão, Brazil), a triple M.Sc. degree in Historical Sciences with honours in 2018 (University Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, University of Padova and University of Évora), and a PhD in Architecture and Sciences of the City at Laboratory of Urbanism (2019-2024) under the direction of Prof Paola Viganò. Her Doctoral Thesis on the biopolitical history of an Italian company town received the EPFL Thesis Distinction as the best thesis in Architecture (2024). Since 2025, Dr. Milani has been a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Heritage, Anthropology and Technologies (HAT) research group with Prof. Florence Graezer Bideau, as well serving as Postdoctoral Researcher at the Laboratory of Urbanism with Prof. Paola Viganò.

Furrer, Bernhard [Moderator] is an architect (ETH/SIA) and heritage expert, currently working independently and serving as an expert for the Swiss Federal Office of Culture and for ICOMOS International on World Heritage matters. He is also a member of the monitoring group of ICOMOS Germany. Formerly, he was Deputy Chair of the Berlin State Heritage Council (2011–2019), Professor at the Accademia di Architettura in Mendrisio (2000–2012), President of the Swiss Federal Commission for Monument Preservation (1997–2008), and Head of Heritage Preservation for the City of Bern (1979–2006), where he managed the UNESCO World Heritage Site 'Old City of Bern'.

Gemnetti, Francesca [Guest] is former president of the Swiss Unesco Commission. She worked as independent lawyer and notary with own practice till 2008; then till 2023 she acted as lawyer and general secretary inside of the italian speaking public broadcaster Radiotelevisione della Svizzera italiana (SSR/RSI). Now, she is member of ICOMOS Switzerland and president of the Friends of the Ascona's Museum Association (Associazione Amici del Museo di Ascona).

Gilardi, Giorgio [Guest] Mayor of Ascona (Liberal Democratic Party).

González, Manuel Medina [Moderator] holds a master's degree in art history from the University of Bern and a master's degree in architecture from the University of Seville. His professional and academic experience has taken him throughout Switzerland as well as to Germany and Spain. His research focuses on historiography and the examination and contextual analysis of buildings that are facing demolition. He was involved in the exhibition "Die Schweiz: ein Abriss für das S AM Basel" and has been co-editor of the Central Swiss architecture journal Karton since September 2022. Manuel is a member of the ICOMOS Suisse Working Group 'A Future for Whose Past?'.

Hovland, Terje Birkrem [Guest] Chair of the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape of the Council of Europe (Ministry of Climate and Environment, Norway).

Jain, Rohit [Guest] holds a PhD in social anthropology and is a collaborative researcher focusing on migration, postcolonialism and global cultural economies. He is currently interested in the political aesthetics of public spaces and, in particular, how these can be made more democratic and polyphonic through collective interventions. Rohit Jain is co-founder of the Schwar zenbach Kompl ex, a long-term artistic-political project on anti-racist memory politics. He is currently researching strategies of postcolonial and post-migrant reparation at the Department of Design, Film and Art at Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts. In 2021, he co-edited the handbook Neue Schweiz (diaphanes).

Martin, Oliver [Moderator, Guest] holds a master's degree and PhD in Architecture from ETH Zurich. He held various positions at the Swiss Federal Office of Culture until he joined its executive board in 2012 as Head of the Baukultur section. In parallel, he chaired ICCROM Council from 2017 to 2021. He is one of the main authors of the concept of Baukultur and the related Davos Declaration 2018. Oliver Martin is the Chair of the Davos Baukultur Alliance, launched in 2023.

Sauter, Marion [Moderator] has been Professor of Building Culture at Bern University of Applied Sciences, based in

Burgdorf and Biel, since 2020. Sauter studied in Stuttgart and Karlsruhe and previously worked in architectural education at universities in Liechtenstein and Lucerne. As a former author of art monuments for the canton of Uri and head of house research at the Ballenberg Open-Air Museum, Sauter focuses primarily on vernacular architecture and transport history, and currently also on timber construction. Among other things, Sauter publishes www.holzbaukultur.ch.

Spiegel, Daniela [Moderator] is a trained architectural historian and holds the chair of Heritage Conservation and Architectural History at the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar. Her research fields include urban and architectural history of the 20th century as well as theory and history of heritage conservation, with special interest on contested heritage of Fascist Italy and the former GDR, toppling of monuments and heritage conservation of classic modernism. She is part of the teaching staff of the DFG Research Training Group 2227 'Identity and Heritage'.

Wyss, Helen [Moderator] is a freelance architect and art historian in Zürich and Fribourg, active in the fields of building in existing contexts, historic preservation of monuments and sites, and art and architecture education. She is currently a member of the ICOMOS Suisse working group 'A Future for Whose Past?'.

Participants

Aeschimann, Camille [Paper] holds a BA in Ethnology and Human Geography and an MA in Social Sciences with a specialisation in the Anthropology of Social Action from the University of Neuchâtel. She has been working at ArchaeoConcept since March 2018, initially as a scientific collaborator and anthropologist alongside Ellinor Dunning on the participatory project Salons archéologiques. She also coordinated excursions and the fair at the 2019 Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists in Bern. Since 2022, she has been leading an inclusive project aimed at improving accessibility to archaeological sites in Switzerland for all people, including those with disabilities. A Swiss handbook for site managers will be published in 2025, along with an international publication showcasing global best practices. In parallel with her work at ArchaeoConcept, Camille was for four years the French-speaking regional coordinator of a national participatory project raising awareness among youth about cultural and religious diversity in Switzerland. She enjoys designing and leading projects at the intersection of social sciences and archaeology, using an approach grounded in people's lived experiences.

Al Shallah, Sherine [Paper] is an economist, solicitor, teaching fellow and doctoral researcher with over twenty years' experience in senior policy roles. Sherine completed her postgraduate economics degree at the London School of Economics and Political Science and a postgraduate law degree at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, where she is currently pursuing a PhD in refugee cultural heritage protection under international law.

Allegrini, Madeleine Marina [Paper] is a Corsican-based heritage conservator specializing in wall paintings and the study of historical mortars and plasters. She received her academic training at Paris-Sorbonne and has lived in Corsica since 1982. A member of the French Federation of Conservators and Restorers (FFCR) and the Corsican Heritage Council, she has authored over one hundred technical reports for the DRAC and various heritage architects. Her published work focuses on restoration techniques and Baroque mural decoration in Corsica.

Angermann, Kirsten [Paper] has been teaching and researching at the Chair of Heritage Conservation and Architectural History at the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar since 2019. Since April 2024, she has been co-leading a research project on 'construction-inherent heritage values' with Prof. Hans-Rudolf Meier. Trained as an architect, she completed her doctorate at the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar in 2022. Her research focuses on the architectural history of the late 20th century and theoretical questions of heritage conservation. She also works independently in the field of monument preservation.

Auderset, Patrick [Paper] is coordinator of the activities of the Collège du travail and an independent historian. His work focuses on the conservation, inventory, and public dissemination of archives, particularly through publications and exhibitions. His main areas of interest are the history of the labor movement and social movements. He has authored several publications and co-organized exhibitions such as 9 novembre 1932 (Geneva, 2022), Nous, saisonniers, saisonnières… (Geneva, 2019), Sous le drapeau syndical 1845–2014 (Lausanne, 2014), and Une Suisse rebelle. 1968–2008 (Lausanne and Liestal, 2008–2009).

Bartoli, Sandra [Paper] is a landscape architect and architect, co-founder of the Büros für Konstruktivismus in Berlin. Her research focuses on sites of the entanglement of nature and city, such as Tiergarten in Berlin, a transgressive example of place, which leads to new definitions and models of what is "urban" under the challenge of the Anthropocene. In 2019, Bartoli co-edited the book Tiergarten: Landscape of Transgression (Park Books) with Jörg Stollmann. Bartoli was co-curator with Silvan Linden and Florian Wüst of the exhibition project Licht Luft Scheisse. Perspectives on Ecology and Modernity with the shows Archaeologies of Sustainability and Über Natur in Berlin at the Botanical Garden Museum and the nGbK in 2019. She is co-editor of the respective books, published in 2020 with adocs Hamburg. From 2017 to 2018, Bartoli began work on the research theme 'The City's Future Natural History' as an Endowed Professor for Visionary Forms of Cities at the Institute for Art and Architecture, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Bartoli is a full professor at the Architecture Faculty of Munich University of Applied Sciences.

Berrada, Reda [Paper] is trained as an architect (B.Sc 2020 and M.Arch 2023) and engineer (B.Eng 2015). He currently works as a scientific and editorial assistant at EPFL in the Arts of Sciences (LAPIS) and Theory and Project of Domestic Space (TPOD) laboratories. He will start doctoral research in February 2025 under the guidance of Prof. Nicola Braghieri (LAPIS, EPFL) on issues of minor heritage and its representation towards an operative preservation theory.

Bortolotto, Chiara [Paper] holds the UNESCO Chair in "Intangible Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development" at the University of Cergy Paris. She earned her PhD in Social Anthropology and Ethnology at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris). Her research focuses on the social life of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, and more specifically on the intersection between heritage and sustainable development. Her work is based on an ethnography of UNESCO, in which she explores the performative power of administrative apparatuses and the role of human emotions in shaping global gov-

ernance. By following the transformations of an international convention - from the international arena to local heritage projects - she engages with UNESCO, heritage agencies, and non-governmental organizations, while reflexively examining how this complex position challenges classical participant observation, the comfort zone of analytical distance, and triggers dilemmas of collaboration.

Brinitzer, Sabine [Paper] studied architecture (undergraduate studies) and art history with a focus on architectural and urban history, architectural theory, and monument preservation. Worked in architectural offices. Graduated in 1987. Conducted research and gave lectures and publications on 20th-century architecture. Freelance work at the German Architecture Museum in Frankfurt/Main. Further training in monument preservation in Paris. Earned a doctorate in 1994. Served as a speaker for the BDA Hessen and held teaching positions at TU Kaiserslautern and other universities. Completed her habilitation in 2004. Became a private lecturer in architectural history. In 2013, she became a project manager for monument preservation in Schaffhausen (CH). Independent since 2017. Since 2022, adjunct professor at RPTU Kaiserslautern. Teaching areas: architectural and urban history, monument preservation.

Büttner, Annika [Paper] is an art historian and Deputy Head of Department at the Lower Monument Authority in Essen. Her work focuses on monument protection and preservation, 20th- and 21st-century architecture, institutional and feminist art criticism, and the history of heritage inventories. Since 2023, she has held a lectureship at Ruhr University Bochum in architecture and heritage conservation. She previously worked as a research associate in both medieval art history and modern art criticism at Ruhr University Bochum. She studied art history and Romance philology in Bochum and Naples and has published on topics ranging from the Volksempfänger in the Third Reich to ecofeminist contemporary art practices.

Carlevaro, Eva [Paper] is an archaeologist specializing in the Roman and Celtic periods. Since 2022, she has been serving as a researcher and co-curator for the Bellinzona Fortress Project, contributing to its scholarly and curatorial development. She is also the editor of arCHeo, the journal of the Swiss Archaeology Association. Previously, Dr. Carlevaro worked as a curator at the Swiss National Museum, where she led numerous exhibitions and research projects. She earned her degree in the archaeology of Roman provinces, art history, and anthropology in Basel, later completing her PhD at the University of Zurich with a dissertation focused on Celtic settlements. Additionally, she holds a CAS in Cultural Management from the Stapferhaus in Lenzburg.

Chanis, Vasileios [Posterr] is a doctoral assistant at the Laboratory LAPIS of EPFL, under the supervision of Professor Nicola Braghieri. His ongoing research explores post-war interpretations of vernacular architecture, focusing on its correlations with the notion of the 'environment.' Alongside his doctoral studies, he serves as a teaching assistant at EPFL and as a guest lecturer at the University of Innsbruck. In addition, Vasileios continues to gain experience in the heritage sector, contributing to the protection and dissemination of traditional craftsmanship as an external collaborator with the collective Boulouki in Athens and the Braillard Foundation in Geneva. His academic work has been supported by funding from the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions of the EU, the Afenduli Foundation, the Swiss Federal Government, and the Leventis Foundation. Vasileios trained as an architect at the University of Patras and Delft University of Technology.

Chatelet, Raphaël [Paper] is a Swiss and French architect (dipl. EPFL / REG A) currently working at the Section des monuments historiques of the Republic and Canton of Jura and at Kistler & Vogt Partner AG in Biel/Bienne. He holds a Master of Science in Architecture and a Minor in Urban and Territorial Development from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL). His professional experience spans public heritage services and private architectural practices in Switzerland and Italy. He is Vice-President of the Jura Bernese regional group of Patrimoine Bernois and has participated in international urban workshops in Lebanon, Cyprus, Benin, and France. His work focuses on heritage, urban development, and the social dimensions of architecture.

Dinhobl, Günter [Paper] is a trained mechanical engineer, physicist, and historian. He has been working in the field of railway history and railway world heritage since 1996 and is a member of ICOMOS and National Representative of Austria of TICCIH (The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage). He is author of numerous lectures, papers and publications on railway history including railway world heritage and industrial heritage since the early 2000s: Die Semmeringbahn (2003/2018 – 2nd ed.); Eisenbahn/Kultur - Railway/Culture (2004, Editor); 'Railways as UNESCO World Heritage Sites' (IATM Journal 28/2009), Bahnbrechend zum 'Culturpflug unserer Zeit'. Kulturwissenschaftliche Zugänge zur Eisenbahngeschichte (2009), Weltkulturerbe in Österreich – Die Semmeringeisenbahn (Birkhäuser 2021, Co-Editor together with Toni Häflinger). He also (co-)curated railway history (special) exhibitions at the Technical Museum Vienna, Wien Museum, Südbahn Museum Mürzzuschlag, Austrian State Archives, and the Deutsches Museum Munich. For ICOMOS Austria he is member of the monitoring team for the Semmering Railway World Heritage Site since 2008. He was also involved in world heritage evaluations of ICOMOS International and has expertise on railway world heritage in Switzerland, Portugal, France, India and Iran.

Dinler, Mesut [Paper] is an assistant professor researcher at Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning at the Politecnico di Torino. He has been actively involved in several international conservation projects, having collaborated with institutions such as the Getty Conservation Institute, the Association for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, and Historic Charleston Foundation in partnership with US/ICOMOS. Currently, he takes active role in heritage-related research projects, including Horizon Europe projects funded by EU. He hold fellowships at ICCROM and the Bibliotheca Hertziana, Max Planck Institute in 2023. Mesut's research areas cover politics of heritage and heritagization processes, climate justice, integration of heritage in climate change and disaster risk management, urban and architectural history, digital humanities. He believes that heritage should be framed as a community practice, and only this way it can be a common resource in confronting societal challenges, and eventually achieving a sustainable and resilient future.

Dunning, Ellinor [Paper] has been a scientific collaborator and project coordinator at ArchaeoConcept since 2015. She completed a Master of Arts in Prehistoric Archaeology at the University of Neuchâtel in 2016, with a thesis on the relationship between the public and institutions in the context of archaeological site valorization projects in Switzerland, for which she received the Prix Jéquier. Holding a Bachelor's degree in Ethnology from the same university (2012) and having completed an Erasmus semester at the University of Halle an der Saale (Germany) in 2015, she is particularly interested in critical heritage studies–specifically, in the production of heritage and knowledge about the past, modes of transmission, and the plurality of narratives around material remains. She

has contributed to the development of inclusive and socially engaged archaeology through her involvement in various projects, including the SNSF-AGORA scientific outreach project Émotions patrimoniales, led by the University of Neuchâtel's Institute of Archaeology in partnership with the Laténium (2017–2020), and the ongoing Salons archéologiques project with Camille Aeschimann at ArchaeoConcept since 2018.

Eitel, Florian [Paper] is a historian and curator at the NMB Neues Museum Biel, where he has led the Department of History since 2017. He has curated numerous exhibitions on topics such as multilingualism, labor history, and local heritage, including Fleisch für Biel, Wir, die Saisonniers..., and Biel 4.0. Eitel holds a PhD in contemporary history from the University of Fribourg, with a dissertation on anarchism and globalisation in the Saint-Imier valley during the 19th century. His research and publications focus on anarchist movements, the watch industry, and urban labor history. He has taught public history at the University of Fribourg and contributed to various media productions and heritage initiatives. He is co-author of the forthcoming GSK-Führer Uhrenstadt Biel and actively involved in public outreach and cultural programming in Biel and beyond.

Fischer, Matthias [Paper] has been a monument conservator in the city of St. Gallen since 2016 and head of the Monument Conservation Office since 2022. He studied history, philosophy and art history at the University of Bern and completed the MAS 'Monument Conservation and Conversion' at the Bern University of Applied Sciences.

Fryckowska, Klaudia [Paper] has been a monument conservator in the city since 2022. She studied Classical Archaeology and Art History at the University of Regensburg, subsequently completing a postgraduate course in 'Monument Conservation and Building Research' at the Technical University of Berlin.

Gamsachurdia, Nina [Poster] had studied Art theory and restoration at the State Academy of Arts working at the Institute for Art Studies afterwards. Her research area has always been Byzantine art and aesthetics. In 1992, during the putch in Georgia, she was persecuted and fled to Switzerland. Today she works in Basel as an icon expert, restorer and curator. In 2018 she founded the organization ICONARIUM for the protection and repristination of icon art in Switzerland.

Gerig, Jasmin [Workshop] is an archaeologist and history teacher currently working as a research associate at the Lucerne University of Teacher Education, in the Institute for Subject Didactics of Social Sciences. Her work focuses on projects in the fields of heritage education and postcolonial visibility. For many years, she has been engaged with making tangible and intangible heritage visible and accessible, and with its communication in the contexts of museums, archaeology, and monument preservation.

Gillard, Jeanne [Paper] and Nicolas Rivet are curators and professors at the École de design et Haute école d'art du Valais (Édhéa). They are co-founders of the transdisciplinary group Rosa Brux. Their artistic practice addresses social and political issues such as living and working conditions, cultural norms, and ideologies. Through their projects, they bring together communities and fields of research that do not typically intersect, creating new spaces of visibility and action. Their exhibitions have been presented at MAMCO, Villa Arson (Qui a peur de Chantal Montellier ?), the Centre culturel suisse in Paris (Essayer encore, rater encore, rater mieux), the Centre d'art contemporain in Geneva (West Coast Sisters), and Le Commun (Nous, saisonniers, saisonnières… Genève 1931–2019), which was later expanded and shown at the NMB Nouveau Musée Bienne. In 2021–2022, Rosa Brux received a Swiss Art Award in the "criticism, publishing, exhibition" category. Their work has been featured in national and international press, including Kunstbulletin, Le Courrier, Texte zur Kunst, Art Press, and Mediapart.

Gisbertz, Olaf [Poster] is a senior researcher (PD, M.A) at the LWL office for Monument Preservation, Architecture, and Landscape Culture. He also heads the Centre for Building Research, Communication, and Heritage Conservation at the TU Braunschweig's innovation company (itubs mbH). From 2017 to 2022, he held a visiting professorship in Architectural History and Heritage Conservation at FH Dortmund. He was the spokesperson for the DFG network 'Building Research on Recent Structures 1945+' from 2018 to 2023.

Grin, Claude [Paper] is an EPFL-trained architect and holds a doctorate in anthropology from EPHE-PSL (Paris). She is president of the Swiss Coalition for Cultural Diversity. Her recent work includes mandates for the Swiss Federal Office of Culture as well as for the City of Lausanne.

Gurtner, Kathrin [Poster] studied architectural history and heritage conservation at the University of Bern and the École d'Architecture of the University of Geneva. She pursued further training in practical conservation at the Bern University of Applied Sciences and completed additional studies in archival science and image studies at the Danube University Krems. Formerly a scientific editor at the Society for Swiss Art History, she has been Deputy Head of the Federal Archive for Monument Preservation since 2004. Since its integration into the Graphic Arts Collection of the Swiss National Library in 2007, she has been responsible for the monument conservation and photography collections.

Hagen, Kristina [Paper] is an art historian working at the State Office for Heritage Conservation in Stuttgart. She studied European Art History, Medieval and Modern History, and East Asian Art History in Basel, Zurich, Siena, and Heidelberg, where she earned her Magister in 2006 and her PhD in 2016. From 2006 to 2013, she was a research associate at the University of Heidelberg and held a fellowship at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max Planck Institute. Her research focuses on monastic architecture, medieval and early modern power representation, and the theory and methods of heritage conservation.

Harzenetter, Markus [Paper] is an art historian and heritage conservator. Since 2015, he has served as President of the State Office for the Preservation of Monuments in Hesse (Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Hessen) and, since 2014, as Chair of the Association of State Heritage Offices in Germany (VDL). He studied art history, modern and contemporary history, and heritage conservation, earning his Magister Artium in 1990 and completing his PhD in art history in 1992 at the Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg. From 1995 to 2000, he headed the Department of Heritage Conservation for the City of Regensburg, then worked as a conservator and later head of the Bavarian Heritage List at the Bavarian State Office for the Preservation of Monuments. From 2004, he led the Department of Monument Survey and Research. In 2007, he became State Conservator and Head of the LWL Office for Monument Preservation, Landscape, and Building Culture in Westphalia. Since 2019, he has also been Honorary Professor at the Institute of Art History at Goethe University Frankfurt.

Heim, Jérôme [Paper] PhD in the humanities and social sciences, is a scientific advisor at the Haute école de gestion Arc/HES-SO in Neuchâtel. His research focuses in particular on the role of associations and residents in the socio-eco-

nomic development of territories. He is involved in urban planning projects that engage young people - particularly DIY-built skateparks - and studies the contributions of these projects for both participants and the cities that host them.

Hentschel, Britta [Poster] studied art history, philosophy, and church history in Munich, Rome, and Bonn. Doctoral scholarship holder at ETH Zurich, the Bibliotheca Hertziana, Max Planck Institute for Art History in Rome, and the Istituto Svizzero in Rome. Dissertation 2009 and teaching and research at the Institute for History and Theory of Architecture at ETH Zurich 2007–2016. Post-doctoral fellow at the Harvard Graduate School of Design 2011-2012, visiting professor at the Technical University of Kaiserslautern 2016–2017, teaching assignments at ETH Zurich, the University of Zurich, and the University of Liechtenstein. Various positions in Swiss monument preservation. Since 2022, university lecturer in history and theory of architecture at the University of Liechtenstein, and currently working on her habilitation thesis, "An Architectural History of Poverty."

Hindelang, Laura [Paper] is Assistant Professor of Architectural History and Preservation and the director of the Master's program 'Monument Preservation and Monument Management' at the University of Bern, Institute of Art History. Her current research project focuses on gender in architecture and its historiography before 1900 in Europe and the Ottoman Empire. Forming a second research cluster, collaborative research into architectural stained and flat glass has resulted in the co-edited volume Glass in Architecture from the Pre- to the Post- Industrial Era: Production, Use and Conervation (2024) and the monograph Glaskunst am Bau und Intermedialität. Das Atelier Stäubli in St. Gallen (2022). Finally, Laura has published extensively on the Arabian Gulf countries' architectural histories and the region's material and visual culture, including her first monograph, Iridescent Kuwait: Petro-Modernity and Urban Visual Culture, since the Mid-Twentieth Century (De Gruyter, 2022).

Hochstrasser, Roland [Paper] has been head of the Office for Analysis and Digital Cultural Heritage (UAPCD) within the Department of Education, Culture and Sport (DECS) of the Republic and Canton of Ticino since 2020. He serves on the boards of the Centre for Alpine Biology, the Switch Foundation, Memoriav, and the jury of the Swiss Cultural Capital program. He holds a degree in geography from the University of Lausanne, a MAS in Sustainable Urban Development, Resource Management and Governance from the IDHEAP, and a diploma in Management and Leadership in Archives, Libraries, and Documentation Services from the University of Bern.

Hong, Nammyoung [Paper] is a PhD candidate specializing in Urban Conservation and Cultural Heritage at TU Berlin. Her dissertation focuses on the preservation and transmission of memories associated with forced labor within Berlin's industrial heritage. She holds a dual master's degree in Historical Urbanism and Cultural Heritage Conservation fro m the Technical University of Berlin. Currently, she works as a correspondent for the Seoul Institute, reporting on Berlin's policies, serves as a focal point for emerging prof essionals at ICOMOS South Korea, and has previously worked in the Archives and Research Departments of the Berlin Cultural Heritage Administration. Recently, she co-authored a team report titled A Comparative Study of the Expansive Role of Heritage in the Interpretation of Sites of Memory (2023), published by the International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites in Sejong-si, Korea.

Hostettler, Jan [Poster] grew up near Solothurn. Since studying Fine Arts at the Institute of Art of the HGK FHNW, he has lived and worked in Basel. He has presented solo exhibitions of his work at the Museum Sankturbanhof Sursee (Brand, 2022), Kloster Schönthal (Scheitern, 2021), Kunsthaus Baselland (Beweise, 2015), and Galerie Bob Gysin (Zweifel, 2015). His engagement with the act of walking has led to his participation in group exhibitions such as Save Land. United for Land at the Bundeskunsthalle Bonn (2024), Walking Mountains at Museo Montagna Turin (2024), Walk! at Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt (2022), Voyage, Voyage at Kunstmuseum Olten (2017), and Warum ist Landschaft schön? at Kunsthalle Basel (2014). His works are represented in public collections and have received several awards, including a project grant from Pro Helvetia, a support grant from the UBS Cultural Foundation (2017), and the Prize of Excellence from the Solothurn Art Association (2014).

Hüppi, Nina [Paper] graduated in history and art history from the University of Zurich in 2010. She subsequently worked at Zurich's Amt für Raumentwicklung - Archäologie und Denkmalpflege. In 2024, she completed her SNF-funded PhD studies at the University of Bern, which investigated the history of model houses at Swiss national exhibitions with a special focus on the two women's work exhibitions (Saffa). She founded, together with art historians and architects, the association ProSaffa1958-Pavillon. Prior to this experience, she was a board member of the Zurich Chapter of the Swiss Werkbund (SWB). Nina is currently working at the University of Applied Sciences Bern.

Jiang, Jiayao [Paper] is a PhD candidate at the University of Cambridge, where she is researching the reconstruction of urban heritage in post-war Rome (1944 - 1951) within a transnational context. She holds a Master's in Architecture Conservation from Sapienza University of Rome and an Advanced Master in Monument Conservation from KU Leuven, as well as earlier degrees in architecture and engineering from Nanjing University. She has conducted research at UNESCO Amman, ICCROM, and the Bibliotheca Hertziana, and has presented work at international conferences including Docomomo and EAHN. Her publications address topics such as postwar reconstruction, urban morphology, and cross-cultural exchanges in architectural heritage.

Keriakos Bugada, Sandrine [Paper] holds a doctorate in literature and anthropology. After an academic career at the University of Geneva, she moved to the canton of Neuchâtel, where she has been working for several years in the field of integration, first at the cantonal level and then at the municipal level. Today, as Delegate and Head of the Integration and Social Cohesion Service for the City of La Chaux-de-Fonds, she has always focused on issues of living together, dialogue, participation, and exclusion in various political contexts.

Klingeberg-Behr, Ibrahim [Poster] is a doctoral candidate at the University of Kassel, Faculty of Architecture, Urban and Landscape Planning (ASL), where he researches memorials for victims of far-right violence in Germany since 1990, focusing on contested forms of collective memory. He holds an MSc in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Kassel and a BSc in Architecture from Leibniz University Hannover. A scholarship holder of the Hans Böckler Foundation, he has been involved in teaching, curatorial, and activist initiatives related to colonial legacies, contested monuments, and memory politics. He has published in Bauwelt and other academic and professional outlets.

Klinger, Martin [Paper] is an architect and researcher with a background in architectural theory and practice. He holds a Master of Advanced Studies in the History and Theory of Architecture from ETH Zurich (MAS gta ETH), where he wrote his thesis on postwar housing in the 1950s. He previously studied architecture at the Stuttgart State Academy of Art and Design

and spent a semester abroad at Tokyo University of the Arts. Professionally, he has led projects at Mühleisen & Partner and LBGO Architekten in Stuttgart and Munich. His work bridges architectural design, construction technology, and critical reflection, with particular interests in architectural heritage, housing, and graphic representation. He is a registered architect in Baden-Württemberg and a recipient of multiple academic scholarships and awards.

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Pipoz, Sylvie [Paper] is the heritage valorisation delegate for the City of La Chaux-de-Fonds, in Switzerland. As historian, art historian, teacher and museum educator, she works to forge links between built heritage, local history and the population. Beyond historical research, Sylvie Pipoz supports various heritage promotion projects focusing on watchmaking town planning, Art Nouveau and 20th-century architecture, always keeping the public at the heart of her concerns.

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Rivet, Nicolas [Paper] and Jeanne Gillard are curators and professors at the École de design et Haute école d'art du Valais (Édhéa). They are co-founders of the transdisciplinary group Rosa Brux. Their artistic practice addresses social and political issues such as living and working conditions, cultural norms, and ideologies. Through their projects, they bring together communities and fields of research that do not typically intersect, creating new spaces of visibility and action. Their exhibitions have been presented at MAMCO, Villa Arson (Qui a peur de Chantal Montellier ?), the Centre culturel suisse in Paris (Essayer encore, rater encore, rater mieux), the Centre d'art contemporain in Geneva (West Coast Sisters), and Le Commun (Nous, saisonniers, saisonnières… Genève 1931–2019), which was later expanded and shown at the NMB Nouveau Musée Bienne. In 2021–2022, Rosa Brux received a Swiss Art Award in the "criticism, publishing, exhibition" category. Their work has been featured in national and international press, including Kunstbulletin, Le Courrier, Texte zur Kunst, Art Press, and Mediapart.

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Skeate, Graham [Paper] With a background in the arts, literature and conservation, his efforts involve the application of these disciplines to architectural heritage; specifically, the detailing of incorporative, malleable developments in spatially atypical or overlooked urban realms. He is a PhD candidate at The University of Edinburgh (architecture) & KU Leuven (anthropology).

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