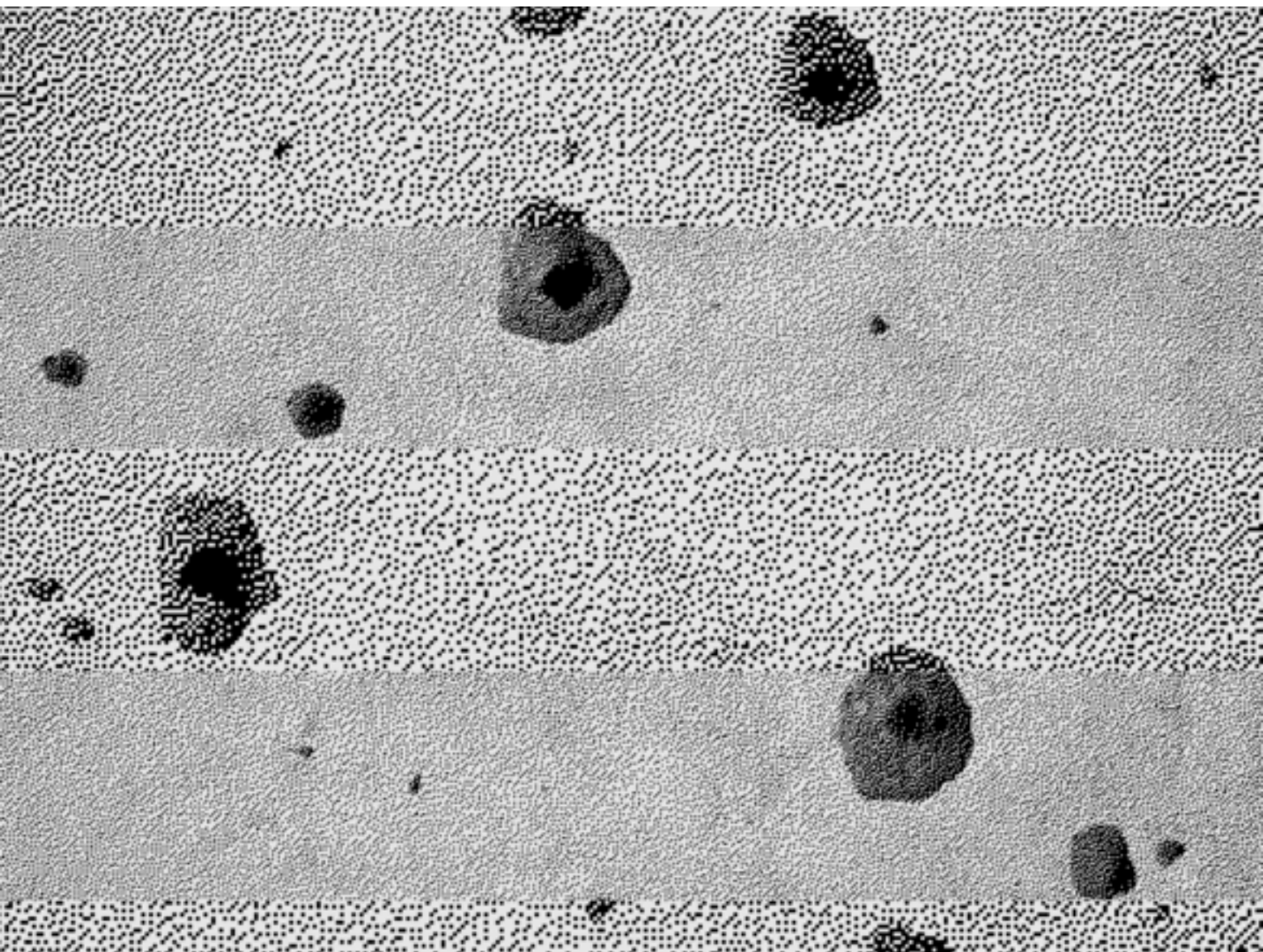


FRI, SEP 30 9:30AM

New York, Conference



LOCATION

Wood Auditorium

FACULTY LINKS

Jorge Otero-Pailos / Laura Kurgan / William Reynolds / Lucia Allais / David Gissen / Erica

Free and open to the public.

[Please register online to attend.](#)

Speakers

Azra Akšamija, Lucia Allais, Leila A. Amineddoleh, Zaki Aslan, Erica Avrami, Zainab Bahrani, Julián Esteban-Chapapría, David Gissen, Rodney Harrison, Nikolaus Hirsch, Mark Jarzombek, Laura Kurgan, Rosalind C. Morris, William Reynolds, Laurie Rush, Clive van den Berg, and Tim Winter.

Organized by Jorge Otero-Pailos and the Historic Preservation Program.

Fitch Colloquium: Preservation and War

What are the moral limits to war? The destruction of heritage has, at least since the Enlightenment, been considered a threshold beyond which military action becomes unjust, even criminal. Centuries before modern preservation laws, it was military jurists like Emmerich de Vattel who helped establish the notion that governments at war had a legal duty to protect heritage—including that of their conquered enemies. The regulation of modern warfare in many ways preceded and shaped that of modern preservation.

Military codes of conduct, such as the pioneering 1863 US Lieber Code, became the basis and inspiration for national and international preservation laws. The experience of World War II, and the now famous work of the Monuments Men, was a powerful catalyst for the creation of preservation institutions during peacetime, from the National Trust of Historic Preservation to UNESCO. Their aim was not so much to abolish war, but rather to fight more just wars in the future, to correct the moral transgressions of the past.

Preservation, in other words, is not conceptually outside of war, but very much embedded in it, where it can more effectively monitor, report on, influence and limit bellicose action. Military thinking is second hand to preservation: we organize as one would an army, around notions of readiness for battle, defensibility of assets, planned campaigns, managing trauma, and reconstruction.

To what degree, we may ask, is preservation thinkable outside of militarization, and its prewar—war—postwar continuum? What is the range of acceptable preservation actions and non-actions in the face of today's wars, when spectacles are made of the dynamiting of monuments, and the killing of

preservationists? The 2016 Fitch Colloquium brings together some of the world's leading experts in the spirit of dialogue and common pursuit of answers to these urgent questions.

About James Marston Fitch

Architect, preservationist, and founder of the Historic Preservation Program at Columbia University (1964) where he was a member of the faculty from 1954 to 1977. Fitch taught and lectured widely and was a true internationalist—studying and writing in Africa, the Middle East, Europe, and the former Soviet Union. Jane Jacobs considered Fitch “the principal character in making the preservation of historic buildings practical and feasible and popular.” The James Marston Fitch Colloquium became an annual event at Columbia GSAPP in 2000.

Schedule

9:30–10:00am

Welcome and Introduction

Amale Andraos, Dean, Columbia GSAPP

Jorge Otero-Pailos, Professor and Director of Historic Preservation, Columbia GSAPP

10:00am–12:00pm

Panel 1: Pre War

Tim Winter, Research Chair of Cultural Heritage, Deakin University

Laurie Rush, Cultural Resources Manager and Archaeologist, US Department of Defense

Leila A. Amineddoleh, Founding and Managing Partner at Amineddoleh & Associates

Lucia Allais, Assistant Professor of Architecture, Princeton University

David Gissen, Professor of Architecture, California College of the Arts

Moderated by Erica Avrami, James Marston Fitch Assistant Professor of Historic Preservation, Columbia GSAPP

12:00pm

Lunch

1:00-3:00pm

Panel 2: At War

Julián Esteban-Chapapría, Associate Professor, Universitat Politècnica de València

Zaki Aslan, Director of ICCROM-ATHAR Regional Conservation Centre, UAE

Laura Kurgan, Associate Professor of Architecture, Columbia GSAPP

Zainab Bahrani, Edith Porada Professor of Art History and Archaeology, Columbia University

Moderated by William Reynolds, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Historic Preservation, Columbia GSAPP

3:00–3:20pm

Coffee Break

3:30–5:30pm

Panel 3: Post War

Nikolaus Hirsch, Städelschule, Frankfurt

Mark Jarzombek, Professor of History and Theory of Architecture, MIT

Rodney Harrison, Professor of Heritage Studies, University College London

Azra Akšamija, Associate Professor, MIT

Clive Van Den Berg, Artist and Managing Partner, Trace

Moderated by Rosalind C. Morris, Professor of Anthropology, Columbia University

ABSTRACTS

Abstracts

Panel 1: Pre-War

Sandbags, Perimeters, and the Humanization of War

Lucia Allais

In 2015 the United Nations launched an initiative to make protection of cultural heritage at war “an imperative for humanity,” thus connecting two notions—heritage and humanity—that have belonged to separate realms of international law since the 1950s. Much can be learned about how to bridge this gap by reaching back before the bifurcation, to debates that raged in 1930s Washington and Geneva. Seeking to outlaw war altogether, advocates of “moral disarmament” refused to even discuss the legislation of cultural destruction. But it was the movement for the “humanization of war” that eventually prevailed, arguing for the “material protection” of art and architecture. Studying this material turn reveals not only the emergence of new philosophical arguments for sparing monuments and saving lives, but also the development of whole new technical toolkit for translating architecture’s aesthetic value into spatial media as varied as bombing perimeters, painted emblems, and sandbag photography.

Legal Mechanism for Deterring Destruction

Leila A. Amineddoleh

Destruction of heritage and monuments has occurred for millennia, with cultures even celebrating destructive acts through memorializing them in architectural structures. At the same time, leaders and military regimes use destruction as a form of propaganda and a tool of war, symbolizing power and degrading opposition. Laws have addressed destruction in attempts to avoid it during conflict. Surprisingly, the first military code of conduct to address art and charitable institutions was drafted in the US; the Lieber Code was penned during the American Civil War to prevent damaging acts during conflict. During the succeeding centuries, other codes and conventions have addressed this topic. In addition, human rights doctrines aim to preserve heritage for groups around the world. And recently, the International Criminal Court in The Hague has charged a defendant for the intentional destruction of heritage, an example of ways in which international laws aspire to halt destruction and deter vandalism.

The Rights of Monuments

David Gissen

Do monuments have international rights? And if monuments have such rights how would we articulate these rights and from what perspective? This talk presents some of the theory and methodology behind a one-week workshop held at the Columbia University Program in Historic Preservation that examined these questions (among others) and that attempted to state the rights of monuments. The rights of monuments might be one of the critical and theoretical tools through which we can examine the preservation of heritage, particularly as it becomes entangled in contemporary forms of social and political violence.

Finding Common Ground for Preservation vs Performance Destruction: Cultural Property Protection in Modern Conflict

Laurie Rush

NATO Allies and Partner Nations have discovered the common ground where identification, respect for, and protection of cultural property make sense for military mission success. However, as genocidal conflict evolves, meaningful efforts to protect monuments, collections, heritage sites, sacred structures and other forms of cultural property must shift to engage in the sphere of performance destruction as a component of hybrid warfare. In retrospect, the challenges of educating military personnel, developing “no strike” lists and requiring cultural resources impact evaluation for overseas military operations seemed daunting. Now, those who care about the most valuable cultural assets world-wide must contend with their transformation into targets for destruction, used as a method for strategic communication of extreme ideology and demonstration of power. The complexity increases when opportunities for international preservation are sacrificed in favor of perceived political or institutional gain. Tragically, heritage at risk needs military protection now more than ever.

The Diplomats of Preservation and Future Wars

Tim Winter

This presentation examines preservation and war through the lens of diplomacy, international relations, and geopolitics. Drawing on a range of examples, the talk offers a global perspective to highlight the importance of understanding how post-war preservation can foster new forms of cooperation and conflict. Wars have shaped where and when preservation occurs in the world, what projects receive support and who undertakes them. Only by turning to the themes of diplomacy and international relations can we understand how such connections play out. Pursuing the theme of pre-war, the talk looks to the future, and anticipates some significant changes in the international landscape of preservation diplomacy over the coming decades through the rise of Non-Western actors. It will be seen that the futures of the Middle East and East Asia give us reason to be both optimistic and apprehensive.

Panel 2: At War

Addressing Critical Measures to Preserve Cultural Heritage During Times of War in the Arab World

Zaki Aslan

During periods of war, physical structures and administrative mechanisms in place to safeguard cultural heritage are often dismantled. Due to declining State authority, historic treasures are threatened by damage, looting, abandonment and neglect. Such detrimental conditions affecting cultural heritage are heightened and challenge preservation initiatives needed to administer critical first aid measures.

The preservation of cultural heritage during times of ongoing conflict may seem superfluous amidst heavy death tolls. However, its use in post-conflict recovery is globally regarded as valuable assets that can be utilized for long-term socio-cultural and economic development.

Lessons in cultural preservation during war exist, but cannot be applied to any conflict situation. Chaos and uncertainty amid the horrors of war make the planning of an all-purpose set of guidelines difficult. An effective response needs to accommodate the changing demands of armed conflict based on a holistic review of the situation and implementation of an effective response.

Destruction and Preservation as Aspects of Just War

Zainab Bahrani

The concern with monument destruction in warfare is as old as the world's earliest historical texts and monuments. This remarkable historical evidence comes from Iraq and Syria, where history is now in the process of being systematically obliterated. What is the aim of such destruction and what are the limits of preservation in war? This paper will address destruction and preservation as aspects of war, and will introduce the Columbia University

The Spanish Civil War and Cultural Heritage

Julián Esteban-Chapapría

During the Spanish Civil War, July 1936 - April 1939, in which a group of rebel militarists and right-wing groups rose up against the government of the Republic, the damage to the cities and cultural heritage was serious.

After the start of the war both sides organized structures devoted to preserve the cultural heritage, although the lack of means prevented works of preservation and conservation to be carried out. One dramatic episode of the Spanish Civil War was the bombing by the rebel army of the Prado Museum, which forced the evacuation of its works of art to Valencia and Switzerland.

An issue was born among the victors after the war: the need to establish an official history. The goal was to legitimize what had been done, hide what was not in their interest, and misrepresent what should not even be ambiguous, the role and performance of the Republic, and the actions taken by the nationalists.

Conflict Urbanism: Aleppo

Laura Kurgan

I will be presenting work in progress based on an open-source, interactive, data-rich map the Center for Spatial Research has created of Aleppo at the neighborhood scale. Users can navigate the city, with the aid of high resolution satellite imagery from before and during the current civil war, and explore geo-located data about urban damage. Since 2012, the people of Aleppo—one of the oldest continuously-inhabited cities in the world—have been exposed to catastrophic violence. Many thousands have been injured, died, or fled. Our project focuses on their city and what has been done to it and what might happen to it in the future. Our work has been done intentionally from a distance and explores methods and experiments with what can be seen from this point of view. The work has benefited from an interdisciplinary seminar in Spring 2016, and a work by students and collaborators between GSAPP, the Arts and Sciences and beyond.

Panel 3: Post-War

Memory Matrix

Azra Akšamija

We live in a time when technology can be used to document an erasure as it takes place and to restore much faster than ever before. Hardly any other historic site has generated more intense public debate about these two issues than Palmyra. The impetus to defy Palmyra's destruction notwithstanding, the questions of whether, when, and how to restore it remain controversial. These questions provide the conceptual basis for the Memory Matrix—a public space

intervention referencing Palmyra's Arch of Triumph—that counters the destruction of monuments with the creation of new ephemeral monuments that engage new fabrication technologies and transcultural collaborations. The Memory Matrix endorses the use of technology to foster solidarity and educate those who have been stripped of their home, culture, history, and identity. Preservation can also positively encourage human interdependence in the face of global problems that are affecting communities across borders, today and in the future.

Dresden's Frauenkirche: Preservation and the Destruction of Complexity

Mark Jarzombek

The rebuilding of Dresden's Frauenkirche was heralded not only as a moment of national pride in the re-unification of Germany, but also as a geopolitical event, healing the still open wounds of WWII. Is it possible to see past the structuring of this project, or is the discipline of preservation so tied into the narrative of its self-justification that alternative readings are made impossible? The talk will try to bring out the paradoxes associated with the rebuilding to argue that there must be a role—perhaps only in academe—where conditions of post-traumatic complexity can be theorized and discussed.

Heritage, Difference and Post-Conflict Development

Rodney Harrison

While much is currently made of the regenerative potential for heritage to (re)build peace and community in post-conflict situations, such moves frequently neglect the primary functions which heritage has played in producing the different "transactional realities"—race, ethnicity, culture, nationality—along which fracture lines have been articulated and forms of violence have been targeted against particular segments of the population. Indeed, one might argue that heritage is not a remedy for, nor opposed to conflict, but the opposite—that conflict is actually integral to, and an inevitable outcome of, heritage. This paper aims to engage critically with the concept of post-conflict heritage, arguing that heritage cannot easily be disentangled from its collecting, ordering, and governing practices and the forms of violence which these practices may facilitate.

Authorship / Ownership

Nikolaus Hirsch

While the starchitecture system looks like an increasingly solipsistic and exhausted formalism – unable to claim any relevance beyond its own narrow field – preservation (and its relation to design) has become the new battleground for the cultural conflicts and political struggles of our time. In his lecture Nikolaus Hirsch will intertwine problems of preservation with his own design projects. He will expose extreme conditions of duration: From a monument with its brief of a maximum control over time and material to a project in which he purposely loses

control. Whose authorship and whose ownership are at stake? Which history?
Whose history?

A Pile of Stones: An Additional Monument for Palmyra
Clive van den Berg

Men are being thrown off rooftops in Syria and Iraq. Accused of being gay by members of ISIS, they are blindfolded and bound and then pitched to the streets below where crowds of men and boys wait with piles of stones. The killers photograph these murders from the tops of buildings or from the pavement. The photographs are then published by ISIS and form part of a visualized ideology skilfully disseminated through their own publications and released on other news platforms.

I have been working from these images. They are appalling, difficult to look at, as much due to the immediacy of the individual tragedies, as because these deaths cannot be mourned. Unnamed and unnameable these men are denied any connection with familial and social fabrics, leaving the killers photographs as the dominant public record of their deaths. I will discuss my recent sculptural interventions, whose commemorative purpose is informed by the monuments of Palmyra.

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