

Conference: Archaeology in Conflict

Veranstaltungen, Forschung

Daniela Hermetinger (Redaktion) am 1. April 2010

The international conference "Archaeology in Conflict" will be held from 6 to 10 of April 2010 in Tech Gate Vienna, Vienna International Center. It addresses the increasing loss of cultural property due to changes in warfare. Friedrich T. Schipper, University of Vienna, and Magnus T. Bernhardsson, University of Iceland & Williams College, are organizing the event.

Despite international conventions and public awareness, cultural property has increasingly become a target in the event of armed conflicts over the past 25 years. Those conflicts frequently form the context for the destruction of archaeological sites, religious buildings and cultural institutions such as libraries, archives and museums.

The conference brings together international scholars, such as archeologists and professionals in the field of cultural heritage, to discuss the ongoing events and their role in the protection of cultural property. A multidisciplinary approach within a multinational network of partners will enhance the understanding of the mechanisms involved in the targeting, looting and destruction of cultural property.

Illicit trade of antiquities

The illicit trade in antiquities goes hand in hand with the looting of archeological site. Up to 90 percent of international trade in archaeological assets is illegal. It forms one of the most profitable branches of organized crime and consequently adds to the war



[Conference program and information](#)

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chests of international terror organizations. The topic is therefore also considered a matter of international security.

Changing war scenarios

The Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 1954 was developed based on the experiences of World War II. In this time the damage of cultural property occurred mostly through air raids or artillery battles in urban contexts. The convention assumes wartime scenarios with regular armed forces of national states. However warfare has changed significantly since then. These days we face more and more inter-ethnic and inter-religious armed conflicts fought by irregular forces that are not necessarily constrained by the conventions of international law. Furthermore many governments tend to use private military and security companies that are not subject to international law. All these developments have added to the loss of cultural property since the end of World War II.

Conference Program

The program covers a wide range of topics presented by researchers and experts in archaeology, anthropology, international law, military, international organizations and NGO's (such as UNESCO or the International Committee of the Red Cross). On the opening day, the 6 April 2010, Friedrich T. Schipper and Magnus T. Bernhardsson will examine the possibility that the protection of cultural heritage can be an element of conflict solution and peace building. Sinje C. Stoyke, International Commission on Missing Persons in Bagdad, will talk about experiences as an archaeologist in mass graves in Iraq and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Over the course of the following days, numerous presentations will be held addressing, among other

topics, cultural property protection within the military (Joris Kila, Ministry of Defends, The Netherlands), archaeological inventories and cultural heritage management in the occupied Palestinian territories (Adi Keinan, University College London), illicit trade of cultural property and the internet (Katharyn Hanson, University of Chicago) and the protection of cultural and archaeological heritage in the case of Afghanistan (François Langlois, UNESCO). (dh)

Archaeology in Conflict

Tuesday, 6 April to Saturday, 10 April 2010
Tech Gate Vienna, Donau-City-Straße 1
Vienna International Center (VIC) - "UNO-City"
1220 Vienna

Detailed program and information

Opening day - 6 April:

Registration: 10 am to 4 pm

1 Opening Session: 4pm to 6 pm

"Archaeology in Conflict" is under the patronage of the Austrian Commission for UNESCO and is powered by the World Archaeological Congress and the Association of National Committees of the Blue Shield. It is organized by Friedrich T. Schipper, University of Vienna, and Magnus T. Bernhardsson, University of Iceland & Williams College, and hosted by Michael F. Pfeifer on behalf of the United Nations Youth and Students Association - Austria.

Druckversion

Impressum

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