



CoHERE-TRACES Joint Conference

Critical Heritages and Reflexive Europeanisation

28-29 September 2017 | Berlin

Berlin Wall Memorial – Bernauer Str. 119 (corner with Gartenstrasse), 13355 Berlin, Germany

The Conference "Critical Heritages and Reflexive Europeanisation" is a two-day international event promoted by the major EU-funded research projects CoHERE and TRACES, to be held in Berlin on September 28th and 29th hosted at the Berlin Wall Memorial.

During the symposium emerging and established scholars from the two research programmes will discuss European heritage practices, narratives and their role in the current cultural context. Drawing on the two projects' research activities and preliminary findings, the selected contributions will draw out the conference topics through three cross-thematic panels: "Neglected Heritages", "Performing heritage(s)" and "Heritage and Crisis". The conference will feature also voices from another EU-research project, UNREST, and from the European Commission. A keynote speech by Prof. Astrid Erll and a round table with museum researchers and practitioners, discussing post-colonial approaches to contentious collections, will complete the programme.

CoHERE - *Critical Heritages: Performing and Representing Identities in Europe* and **TRACES** - *Transmitting Contentious Cultural Heritages with the Arts: from intervention to co-production* are two three-year projects funded in 2016 by the European Commission as part of the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, both focusing on the "Emergence and transmission of European cultural heritage and Europeanisation".

<https://research.ncl.ac.uk/cohere/>

www.tracesproject.eu

The **CoHERE** project seeks to identify, understand and valorise European heritages, engaging with their socio-political and cultural significance and their potential for developing communitarian identities. CoHERE addresses an intensifying EU Crisis through a study of relations between identities and representations and performances of history. It explores the ways in which heritages can be used for division and isolation, or to find common ground and ‘encourage modern visions and uses of its past.’ The research covers a carefully selected range of European territories and realities comparatively and in depth; it focuses on heritage practices in official and non-official spheres and engages with various cultural forms, from the living arts to museum displays, food culture, education, protest, commemorations and online/digital practice, among others.

We take a broad but delimited understanding of heritage (mindful of the notorious difficulty of assigning a consensus definition) as a representational, discursive and performative practice involving conscious attempts to valorise aspects of the past in the present. Within the purview of CoHERE, heritage can be official or unofficial, tangible or intangible, or mixtures of these. It may not always be a social good productive of perceived-to-be progressive identities, respectful intergroup relations or benign moral positions, suggesting the existence of plural ‘heritages’ that are sometimes in conflict with one another, rather than a monolithic ‘common heritage’. Likewise, contemporary connections with events, cultures and sites from prehistory to the recent past may all be important for identity construction, and this is recognised in the temporal depth of the research.

Through an innovative research methodology, **TRACES** investigates the challenges and opportunities raised when transmitting complex pasts and the role of difficult heritage in contemporary Europe.

European cultural heritage is inherently complex and layered. In the past, conflicting or controversial perspectives on different historical memories and experiences have been colliding in the rich cultural landscape of Europe and continue to do so in the present. These contentious heritages are often particularly difficult to convey to a wide public and can impede inclusivity as well as prevent the development of convivial relations. Nevertheless, if transmitted sensitively, they can contribute to a process of reflexive Europeanisation, in which the European imagination is shaped by self-awareness, on-going critical reflection, and dialogue across different positions.

TRACES involves a multi-disciplinary team that brings together established and emerging scholars, artists, and cultural workers to develop a rigorous, creative and all-round investigation on contentious cultural heritages, and to experiment with innovative research methodologies. In order to achieve these objectives, TRACES has initiated a series of “Creative Co-Productions” in which artists, researchers, heritage agencies, and stakeholders collaborate on long-term projects researching selected cases of contentious heritage and developing new participatory public interfaces. Theoretical investigations pertaining to different research fields and disciplines will support and complement these art-based research actions, analysing and expanding their outcomes with the aim to identify new directions for cultural institutions and museums to effectively transmit contentious cultural heritage and contribute to evolving European identities.



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CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Berlin Wall Memorial – Bernauer Str. 119 (corner with Gartenstrasse), 13355 Berlin, Germany

→ Thursday 28th – INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE | 1st day

08.30 – 09.00 | Registration

09.00 – 09.30 | Conference Opening and Welcome

09.30 – 10.00 | Zoltán Krasznai: “Cultural Heritage topics in the upcoming 2018-2020 H2020 work programme and European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018”

10.00 – 10.30 | Chris Whitehead and Klaus Schoenberger: “Introducing CoHERE and TRACES”

10.30 – 11.45 | Cross-thematic Panel: “Heritage and Crisis” (1st session)

11.45 – 12.15 | Coffee break

12.15 – 13.15 | Cross-thematic Panel: “Performing heritage(s)” (1st session)

13.15 – 14.30 | Lunch break

Opportunity for self-guided visit to Berlin Wall Memorial site and exhibition

14.30 – 15.45 | Cross-thematic Panel: “Performing heritage(s)” (2nd session)

15.45 – 17.00 | Cross-thematic Panel: “Neglected Heritages” (1st session)

17.00 – 17.30 | Coffee break

17.30 – 18.15 | Keynote Speech: Astrid Erll, Goethe-University Frankfurt am Main



The conference is promoted by the EU funded projects: **CoHERE** – *Critical Heritages: Performing and Representing Identities in Europe* and **TRACES** – *Transmitting Continuous Cultural Heritages with the Arts*, both have received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme.

→ **Friday 29th – INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE | 2nd day**

- 10.45 – 12.30 | Opportunity for self-guided visit to Berlin Wall Memorial site and exhibition
 12.30 – 13.30 | Lunch break
 13.30 – 15.00 | Roundtable “Contentious Collections – Postcolonial Perspectives”
 15.00 – 16.15 | Cross-thematic Panel: “Heritage and crisis” (2nd session)
 16.15 – 16.45 | coffee break
 16.45 – 18.00 | Thematic Panel: “Neglected Heritages” (2nd session)
 18.00 – 18.30 | Closing Remarks

CROSS-THEMATIC PANELS

a) Neglected Heritages

Why do some pasts slip into oblivion? How are practices of remembering and forgetting shaped? Might there be cases where ‘forgetting’ is the better option? When, how and why should these heritages be ‘reactivated’, represented and transmitted?

b) Performing heritage(s): critical practices and processes

In what ways may heritage practices, processes and enactments enable the performance of multiplicity, diversity or the ‘subversive’? In what ways is heritage social and political practice? Can conflict-based, agonistic heritage practice be conducive to the creation of a new European imagination?

c) Heritage and crisis

What roles can and should heritage play to address social division and crisis in Europe? How can heritage – and especially contentious, difficult and competing heritage – contribute to a “reflexive Europeanisation”? Should it? How is heritage imbricated in conditions of crisis (social, political, ideological, financial), and how can heritage practice react to crisis?

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