

IASTE الكويت KUWAIT 2016



LEGITIMATING TRADITION

DECEMBER 17–20 | KUWAIT CITY, KUWAIT | KUWAIT UNIVERSITY | CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

In contemporary contexts of globalization, political conflict, and dynamic social and cultural change, legitimacy is often invoked, questioned, or challenged by various actors to achieve certain ends. This conference seeks to ask: What role does tradition play in legitimating practices that produce place-based or placeless built environments?

Recent IASTE conferences have explored the role of subjectivity, authorship, and power in the construction of traditions in space and place. These themes often implied processes of legitimation that affect the built environment in ways that are sometimes more hidden and sometimes more obvious. This conference will seek to address this issue and to uncover how traditions that relate to the production of the built environment have been legitimated or used as tools of political and social legitimation.

Legitimacy can be defined as the recognition and acceptance of someone or something as valid and proper; it can be established through accordance with established rules and standards, principles of reasoning and logic, or the status of being lawful. In the particular context of tradition, legitimacy can have several meanings, including authenticity, legality, and the possession of value or worth. These aspects of legitimacy are not inherent within traditions themselves, but are bestowed by agents for particular reasons. To understand legitimation, or the act of bestowing legitimacy, one must carefully unpack all of its components. The word legitimacy comes from the Latin verb *legitimare*, which means to make lawful. In theory, then, legitimacy refers to something that is legal because it meets the requirements of the law. However, in actuality, something can be legitimate without being legal, or it can be legal without being legitimate.

In the context of tradition, who legitimates (or de-legitimizes)? What are their reasons for doing so? In the context of the built environment, what gets saved, why, and for what purpose? Conversely, what is erased or left in a state of decay as a result of the legitimating of historic references? And what do these processes of dominant and counter narrative mean for present and future environments? These are some of the questions fixed in the constant negotiation over the meaning and value of tradition. With respect to a particular culture, the acknowledgement or denial of legitimacy can come from within or without; in other words, it is possible for a tradition to be internally but not externally legitimate, or vice versa. A discrepancy between internal and external views of legitimacy can lead to conflict, but disputes about legitimacy within the bounds of one group can have the same consequences. In political theory, legitimacy is sometimes conceived as being derived from the consent of the governed. Thus, if coercion or even violence is required to uphold a tradition, is it still legitimate? When politics within or between communities come into play, the exercise of power of the ruler over the ruled finds its expression in built form.

As in past IASTE conferences, scholars and practitioners from architecture, architectural history, art history, anthropology, archaeology, folklore, geography, history, planning, sociology, urban studies, and related disciplines are invited to submit papers that address one of the following tracks:

TRACK 1: BUILDING LEGITIMACY THROUGH TRADITION

Tradition plays a major role in legitimating, maintaining, and securing existing or imagined socio-political constructs. It may also be used to maintain the legitimacy of dominant narratives in volatile and eruptive regional environments. This track will look at how tradition has acted as an agent of legitimation in the construction of particular forms of the built environment, from the scale of a single building to that of an entire settlement.

TRACK 2: LEGITIMIZING TRADITION

Tradition itself may need to be legitimized. Many historic and traditional are sites lost due to a perceived lack of value, while others are saved because their worth is legitimized at the right time and to the right people. This track is concerned with how and why traditions are legitimized, by whom, and in what circumstances.

TRACK 3: TRADITION AND THE ETHICS OF PRACTICE

Papers in this track will explore how policies regulate tradition, and will interrogate the ethics of practice under these conditions. They will also investigate how policies secure, conceal, or overcome tradition, with a focus on how the law and other legal measures facilitate or inhibit transformations of traditions. This track opens the discussion up to the subject of social and cultural values encouraged or discouraged in different modes and techniques of practice.

Submission Requirements

Please refer to our website <http://iaste.berkeley.edu/> for detailed instructions on abstract submissions. A one-page abstract of 500 words and a one-page CV are required. For further inquiries, please email the IASTE Coordinator at iaste@berkeley.edu.

Proposals for complete panels of four to five papers are also welcome. Please indicate the track in which the panel fits. Panel submissions must include an overall abstract as well as abstracts and CVs from all proposed speakers. IASTE may accept the panel as a whole or only accept individual abstracts and place them in appropriate tracks.

All papers must be written and presented in English. Following a blind peer-review process, papers may be accepted for presentation at the conference and/or for publication in the IASTE Working Paper Series.

Contributors whose abstracts are accepted must pre-register for the conference, pay the registration fee of \$400 (which includes a special discounted IASTE membership), and prepare a full-length paper of 20–25 double-spaced pages. Registered students may qualify for a reduced registration fee of \$200 (which includes a special discounted IASTE membership). All participants must be IASTE members. Please note that expenses associated with hotel accommodations, travel, and additional excursions are not covered by the registration fee and must be paid directly to the hotel or designated travel agent. The registration fee covers the conference program, conference abstracts, and access to all conference activities, theme sessions, keynote plenary talks, receptions, the conference dinner, and a walking and bus tour of the city.

Conference Schedule

February 15	Deadline for abstract submission
May 6	Acceptance letter for abstracts/conference poster
July 15	Deadline for pre-registration and receipt of papers for possible registration in the Working Paper Series
October 7	Notification of acceptance in Working Paper Series
December 17–20	Conference
December 21	Post-conference one-day tours

Conference Organizing Committee

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Conference Site and Accommodations

Marina Hotel Kuwait
Marina Mall
Arabian Gulf Road
446 Salmiyah
13054, Kuwait

Conference Trips

A Kuwait City half-day tour included as part of the conference.

Additional Post-Conference Trips

Failaka Island trip
Desert Camp

Inquiries

Please submit abstracts online using the IASTE website <http://iaste.berkeley.edu>. Please use the following information when making inquiries regarding the conference.

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