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 placemaking built environments?

Recent IASTE conferences have explored the role of subjectivity, authority, 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 legitimetis, 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.

In the context of tradition, who legitimate (or de-legitimate)? 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 state as a result of the legitimation of historic artifacts and areas? 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 or between communities come into play, the exercise of power of the ruler over the ruled finds its expression in built form.

In this conference, scholars and practitioners from architecture, art history, architecture, 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**

Papers in this track will address how traditions are legitimated and used as tools of political and social legitimation. They will investigate how policies secure, protect, and transform traditions, and how they facilitate or inhibit transformations of traditions. This track opens the discussion up to the ethics of practice under these conditions. They will also investigate how 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 or between communities come into play, the exercise of power of the ruler over the ruled finds its expression in built form.

**TRACK 2: LEGITIMIZING TRADITION**

Papers in this track will explore how 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 legitimetis, 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.

**Submission Requirements**

Please submit abstracts online using the IASTE website for detailed instructions on abstract submissions. A one-page abstract of 300 words or less per page is required. For full papers, please send 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 your panel fits. Panel submissions must include an overall abstract as well as abstracts for each of the four proposed papers. IASTE may accept the panel as a whole or may accept individual abstracts and place them in appropriate tracks. Papers must be written and prepared in English. Following a blind peer review process, papers may not be accepted for presentation at the conference and/or for publication in the IASTE Working Paper Series.

Deadline for abstract submission: October 7

Deadline for full paper submission: May 6

**Conference Dates**

December 17–20 | KUWAIT CITY, KUWAIT | KUWAIT UNIVERSITY | KUWAIT UNIVERSITY

**Conference Sessions**

**Conference Committee**

IASTE and Conference Coordinator, University of California, Berkeley

IASTE 2016 Conference

Please use the following information when making inquiries regarding the conference.

**Conference Organizing Committee**

Nasser Al-Kazemi, IASTE President, University of California, Berkeley

Mark Gilliom, IASTE Director and Conference Director, University of Oregon

Omar Khalid, local conference coordinator, Kuwait University

Mohammed Aljassar, Local Conference Coordinator and Administrator, Kuwait University

Anis al-din Ragai, Local Conference Chair in the Arabian Gulf (in Brussels, University of Antwerp)

Victoria Dong, IASTE and Conference Coordinator, University of California, Berkeley

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**Conference Chairs**

Mohammed Alajmi,

Hussain Dashti,

Asseel Al-Ragam,

Mohammad Aljassar,

Mark Gillem,

Ipek Tureli,

Mrinalini Rajagopalan,

Chee-Kien Lai,

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