

Category

SH Social Sciences and Humanities

Session Number

SH-4

Session Title

Polar Heritage: Politics, policy, practice

Session Description

This session explores the processes through which heritage production is used to create collective memories of Polar Regions – from politics to policy and practice. Competing actors have enrolled historic sites as anchor points for selected narratives about the past that serve present purposes, or simply as objects that can be managed as an exercise of sovereignty. In this session we would like to engage with a wide range of different issues relating to Polar Historic Sites and Monuments (HSMs) specifically and polar heritage more generally. Topics could include exploring the politics of memory at intersection of environmental change, geopolitics, international relations (especially cultural diplomacy) and heritage in the polar regions; tensions between the material culture created through human activity and the containment of accumulation of material legacies of human presence in Antarctica; better understanding HSMs through archaeological, historical and site research; multi-disciplinary research on HSMs (for example working with environmental scientists to gauge human impacts); lacunae in polar heritage policy as well as issues related to heritage practice, for example maintaining an in situ physical presence while engaging the non-polar world with the significance of polar heritage and the role of polar museums in heritage dynamics.

Keywords: heritage; Historic Sites and Monuments; environmental change; cultural diplomacy; geopolitics; collective memory; heritage policy; polar museums

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