

# **Call for Papers: Patrimoine**

## **ASMCF-SSFH Postgraduate Study Day**

**Queen Mary University of London, Saturday 5 March 2016**

**Keynote speaker: Dr Tom Stammers (Durham)**

How do we view the past and how do we order the world around us? The term 'patrimoine', in the Francophone world, encompasses a range of historic and cultural places, objects and practices. From grand archives and collections down to the preservation of social and cultural heritage, the notion of patrimoine is fundamental to the ways in which actors from the collective down to the individual level bring order to memory and shape a conception of belonging.

The French Revolution marked the start of a new age of archives, making them the property of the people and a cornerstone of nationhood in the centuries to come, on paper if not in practice. The Revolutionary period also founded the Louvre, one of the world's greatest collections and the world's most visited museum, gathering collections of centuries past and building its own. Indeed, it is no coincidence that UNESCO has its headquarters in Paris, whose remit covers a wide list of cultural and natural phenomena, ranging from places and buildings to food and drink and to music and dance.

The practices of preserving patrimoine exist beyond the level of grand institutions; they are also private, individual activities. No matter the scale, to choose what qualifies as worthy of collection and preservation is extremely subjective to the person or institution organising. Academic fieldwork that examines texts, images, places, practices and other areas adds another level of subjectivity as we actively decide what elements of patrimoine are worthy for study.

In addition to analysing the subjectivity of what is highlighted by the processes of collection and heritage, the role of scholars is also to acknowledge gaps, erasure, and alterations. When we come to examine both public and private archives and collections, what is not preserved and remembered is as important as what is. Evaluating our assumptions around patrimoine seems ever more urgent at a time when we are faced with the increasing State patronage of 'heritage' whilst other millennia-old heritages disappear, the economic struggles of cultural institutions, and issues such as the digitisation of archives and the growth of 'big data'.

It is our intention that the conference theme will be widely interpreted, and bring together doctoral students and early career researchers from a broad spectrum of disciplines. We invite proposals for twenty-minute papers in English or French on any relevant topic. Suggested topics might include, but are not limited to:

- The politics of heritage and remembrance
- Inclusion and exclusion and the visibility of minorities
- Heritage, citizenship and the nation
- The “heritage industry”
- Collecting as creative or political practice
- Public vs. private collections and archives and their constitution
- Morality of preservation
- The history of heritage, such as the French Revolution and archiving practice
- Institutions’ special collections (libraries, archives, etc.)
- History of classification, archival science and information science
- Alternative understandings of patrimoine
- Postcolonialism and patrimoine
- The potentials and pitfalls of digitisation
- Editorial and publishing collections
- Role of the researcher in preservation

The conference is generously funded by the Society for the Study of French History and the Association for the Study of Modern and Contemporary France. In order to offset the costs of hosting this event, we ask that speakers and students in attendance join one of the societies if they are not already a member. Both societies offer affordable rates for postgraduates with membership benefits. Some travel reimbursements will be made available for speakers.

Proposals/abstracts of no more than 250 words, either in English or in French, should be sent to frenchpg2016@gmail.com. The deadline for submissions is January 15th, 2016.

For researchers at the beginning of their projects, we also welcome proposals for flash presentations of their research lasting no longer than 5 minutes and one PowerPoint slide (the research in question can cover any topic relating to the study of France, not solely to patrimoine). Please send an email to frenchpg2016@gmail.com to indicate your interest.

Organising Committee: Dan Callwood (Queen Mary, SSFH), Will Clement (Oxford, SSFH), and Clare Siviter (Warwick, ASMCF).