

Histories of Heritage



Questions of what aspects of the past to preserve, how to safeguard 'traditions' for posterity and, which legacies are excluded and obscured, are deeply rooted in our cosmologies and sensibilities. At the same time, they are also strongly moulded by ever-changing social, political and cultural movements as well as shifting power relations. Contexts of modernity, nationalism, colonialism, environmentalism and globalism framed the concept of heritage as it is commonly understood today and continue to shape our encounters/reactions/resistance to heritage. Understanding heritage as both an expression of the historical moment and as a marker of trends and continuities which are continually unfolding, provides an important framework for analysing the issue of what we categorise as heritage and why we privilege/contest/reject it as such.