CALL FOR PAPERS
Urban Issues in Patrimonialization

Session presented and co-chaired by
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CHAIRE de recherche du Canada en patrimoine urbain
ESG UQÀM

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In contemporary cities, patrimonialization, i.e., the fabrication of patrimony or heritage in its various discursive or material aspects, gives rise to specific issues linked to the particularities of city living, social environments, and urban development. More specifically, the conjunction of the processes of symbolic investment that have defined built patrimony for more than two centuries and of economic development processes in a context of metropolization and the rethinking of urban functions, increasing mobility, and worldwide competition among cities seems to be reflected in changes to the practices and very notion of patrimony. Light-years removed from the reified-in-itself historical monument and the traditional institutions that consecrated it, patrimony now seems fated instead to rely on external constructs ranging from citizen empowerment to community or real estate recalibrations. In this context, it functions either as an instrument of change, or as a discourse on the urban environment.

Beyond *rupture patrimoniale* (Rautenberg), *machinerie patrimoniale* (Jeudy), the *heritage game* (Peacock and Rizzo), and further still from the perils of Choay's "capacity to build," it turns out that patrimony's proliferation in public space and other spheres of human activity has highlighted what might be called, in Austin's sense (*How to Do Things with Words*), patrimony's *performative* character, i.e., the double characteristic of the patrimonial utterance, that of having no truth value and of performing some kind of action: in this case, we observe that urban patrimony does not merely change the meaning of the built whole it is applied to, it also changes the nature of the object it concerns and the subject that gives it life (Morisset). Above and beyond the post-1968 social struggles that used the defence of this or that block of houses as a basis for affirming a new form of social cohesion, patrimony began by consolidating its role as a lever for citizen's demands, particularly through *presentism* (Hartog), *patrimondialisation* (Gravari-Barbas), and a shrinking of territorial frames of reference that has given rise to "little worlds that surround us," i.e., the elevation of people's mere proximity to a declaration of identity. At this level, that of the city dweller, patrimony becomes the medium for political constructs and the identifying marker for those who represent it. Elsewhere, patrimony supports economic development of the territory using its cultural connotations to set a given city apart amidst "the chorus of globalization." A form of currency, it can support profound economic transformations linked to the older principles of urban requalification, but now channelled by business, particularly in tourist districts. Or by contrast it might provide a neighbourhood with "urban infra-sutures" (Dlandstudio), buttressed by community dimensions inherent in the definition of patrimony: at this point patrimonialization is motivated no longer by aesthetics or exceptionality, but by social meaning and notions of community appropriation, giving rise to local development without reversing habitual processes.

This session seeks to examine these three ways of performatively uttering the subjects and objects of built patrimony—patrimonialization—in the urban environment, from a transdisciplinary perspective. By more specifically targeting either citizens' discourse on "their" patrimony or operations relating to the attribution of patrimony-based social and property values, we hope to interrogate the transformation of patrimonial artefacts, the instrumentalization of patrimonial performativity, and the impact of these two contemporary dimensions of urban patrimony on the notion of patrimony itself. From this perspective, and with an eye to evaluating the issues and impacts of urban patrimony's performativity, proposals for papers might examine such topics as the effects of real estate valuation strategies in urban sites on the World Heritage List; local development projects based on the use value of the patrimony or, more generally, the semantic transformations brought about by such conversions; campaigns to save built elements or complexes for their patrimonial value, and so forth.

Please email abstracts no later than January 10th to
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