



SCIENTIFIC FINAL REPORT

Regnr Östersjöstiftelsen: 11/2016

Project manager: Irina Sandomirskaja

Project title: Transnational Art and Heritage Transfer and the Formation of Value: Objects, Agents, and Institutions.

1. Purpose of the project

A critical study of art and cultural heritage by investigating the notion of value and its formation in the production and transfer of culturally and historically significant artefacts. A multidisciplinary study, uniting scholars in cultural studies, philosophy, art theory and history, archival studies, sociology, economics and economic history, and history of ideas. The purpose is to approach aesthetic and historical artefacts from those various vantage points towards an understanding of the complex relationships between economic value and various forms of cultural and affective value.

2. The three most important results of the project and what conclusions can be drawn from them

The three most important results concern (1) a new approach to the problem of values, (2) this new approach to values demonstrates how objects of art and/or heritage are constituted, their mobility in space and mutability in meaning; and (3) the kinds of agency implied in these transactions given the determining role of values in the production of meaning.

Without claiming a full-fledged theory of value, this project constructed its own hypotheses combining special competences in various disciplines with a shared approach including Marxist political economy (use value contra exchange value; fetishism and commodity value), Simmel's philosophy of money (value produced in desire and exchange, not inherently present in things themselves; money as the leveler of all values) and de Saussure's opposition between value and signification (i.e., the differentiating/individuating aspect of meaning as opposed to the descriptive content of the reference).

With these three theories of value, it became possible to question the modern myth of heritage, in its turn inherited from 19th century nation building, that historical objects manifest stability, permanence, tradition, and identity. Already at the turn of the previous century, Alois Riegl demonstrated that the monument's symbolic economy is based on a complex process of formation in conflicts of aesthetic, historical, consumption, and practical use values. This ambivalence in the structure of value was further increased in the 20th century when such objects developed a multifaceted economic life: as marketable commodities on the international antique and contemporary art markets; as objects of



cultural property in military conflict resolution; as objects of cultural consumption in the flourishing tourism and entertainment industries; as objects of administration and management by state-owned and public cultural institutions and so on. This gives an object of heritage, including a piece of art taken in its aspect of heritage, features of mobility and mutability, apparently inconsistent with the function as symbol and myth. Physical mobility in transfer across national borders, as well as mass relocations in requisitions, lootings, reparations, restitutions, and other acts of law or lawlessness, presupposes mutability of meaning in the constant process of the reevaluation of value, including in acts of destruction and subsequent reconstruction. The symbolic status of heritage as inherited, i.e., inalienable, goods, remains valid ideologically but directly contradicts both practice and experience.

Preservation is an invention of modernity. Seen from the vantage point of heritage (as material embodiment of history and values), the past appears not as a preserved whole, nor as accumulation of treasures, but rather in a lacunary condition consisting of losses and compensations. This lacunary structure makes the past of heritage quite different from the past of history (narrative chains of causes and effects) or memory (phantoms of imagination). The category of missing (defined for our purposes as “presence-in-absence”) thus becomes central for the critique of the appropriation of the past in the form of cultural riches, symbolic as well as marketable commodities.

Also because of the ambivalence of value in the mutable and mobile object of the (lacunary) past, the role of agents and institutions involved in the production of value and negotiation of exchange becomes quite visible. The persona of the collector in whose activities desire combines with connoisseurship and systematization is paradigmatic for individual and institutional agency: museum and curatorial practices, art and antique dealing, activists of urban preservation movements, etc.

3. The project's contribution to the international research frontline

Heritage studies is nowadays one of the most popular and widely proliferating directions in cultural studies, especially in postcolonial theory, affect theory, posthumanism, and new materialism. Parallel to theoretical concerns in these areas there also arise new problems in practical matters of preservation in architecture, design, and museum technologies. Both theory and practice of heritage respond to the explosive rates of reappropriation of the past in popular culture and cultural consumption, most notable in global tourist and entertainment industries. It can be stated that heritage nowadays has developed into a third discourse of the past alongside those of history and memory. Yet, methodologically there is polarity in this area, one trend towards a critique of heritage as symbols of national ideology (criticized for “idealism” and “hegemonism”), the other seeking to transcend all interpretation by focusing on “vibrant matter”, materiality and strategies of individual perception. In the interstices, one finds increasing amounts of specialized studies by museum, archive, library, etc. specialists, which is highly illuminating empirical research (a biographical approach to objects, collections, actors, and institutions). With the notion of value in focus, this project created a balance between interpretation and materiality, between theory and practice, between the agency of humans and the agency of things, etc., by concentrating on the historicity and cultural technologies in value production, evaluation, and re-evaluation.

**4. New research questions that the project has led to**

The project opened up a field of further investigation on the Soviet (socialist) concept of heritage as value and consequences after the communism's fall as well as a critical discussion of the ongoing heritagization of the USSR itself, the reappropriation of the Soviet past in collective imaginations and propaganda thirty years after its collapse.

5. The contribution of the research to the knowledge of the Baltic Sea Region and Eastern Europe

The project will hopefully make an important contribution given the decades of experience under socialist (Stalinist) economic regimes in Europe, the communist utopian futurism, and communist ethical values that collide with values of consumption society as well as with the so-called traditional values promoted by illiberal regimes.

Based on the concepts of values in exchange, the project also suggested an interpretation of region formation based on the principle of affinities and proximities instead of the genetic, organicist conception of historical heritage in national and imperial mythologies. The Baltic Sea area is a good example of such a formation beyond strategic and tactical interests.

6. Dissemination of the results of the project within and outside the research community**ORGANIZED EVENTS:****2017 –2019, continuously:****Advanced seminar, including reading sessions and presentations by invited lecturers****Reading seminars, five sessions during 2017-18,**

works by Walter Benjamin, Alois Riegl, Krzysztof Pomian, Siegfried Krakauer and Konstantin Vaginov

Invited lectures, fourteen sessions throughout the project period; lectures by international specialists in the field**2017–2021****Symposiums, with Broad International Participation:**

November 2017 International symposium

Against the Scatter of the World: Rescuing, Keeping, And Moving Things (Stories, Biographies, and Geographies of Collectorship)

May – June 2018 International symposium, in two sessions

On Missing: Legacy, Heritage, Value, Historical Justice



Session 1: **The Property of Missing Persons**

Session 2: **Filling in the Gaps: Lacunae, Reintegration, and Value**

November 2018, International symposium

Cultural Technologies and The Transfer of Tradition in the Late Russian Empire

December 1 – 3, 2021 A Three Day International Symposium with Film Screenings

Forgetting and Unforgetting Victory and Defeat: the Event, the Document, the Representation and Re-Representation Of Memory

Day One: **The Event and its "Eventness" as a Philosophical, Historical and Political Problem**

Day Two: **Film Archive and Technologies of Memory: Making Use, Abuse, and Reuse of Historical Documentary Footage**

Day Three: **Art, Narratives and Strategies of Memorialization of Political Violence**

PUBLICATIONS:

Monographs:

(forthcoming 2022, Södertörn Philosophical Studies) Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback och Johan Hegardt, med inledning av Irina Sandomirskaja *Kulturarv – ett begreppspolitik*

(forthcoming 2022, Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie; the Academic Series) Irina Sandomirskaja, *Past Discontinuous: fragmenty restavratsii* [*Past Discountinuous: Fragments of Restoration*, in Russian]

Edited material – special sections in journals:

Carl Marklund and Irina Sandomirskaja (eds), *Against the Scatter of the World: Rescuing; Keeping and Moving Things*. *Baltic Worlds* XI:I, May 2018, pp. 41-70

(<https://balticworlds.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/BW-1-2018-Against-the-Scatter-of-the-World.pdf>)

Contributions by project members:

Irina Sandomirskaja, *Scattering, Collecting, and Scattering again. The Invention and Management of National Heritage in the USSR*

Carl Marklund, *The Icons of "the Red Banker". Olof Aschberg and the Transactions of Social Capital*



Johan Hegardt, *Letters from the Heart of Darkness. Dr. Ludvig Moberg, Ethnographic Collections, and the Logic of Colonial Violence*

Irina Sandomirskaja and Anna Kharkina (eds), Cultural Heritage and the Property of Missing Persons: Artifacts and their Phantom Owners, *Baltic Worlds*, XII:3, October 2019. Pp. 43–01

(<https://balticworlds.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/BW-3-2019-PDF.pdf>)

Contributions by project members:

Irina Sandomirskaja, *Introduction: The Property of Missing Persons: Cultural Heritage, Value, and Historical Justice*,

Irina Sandomirskaja, *The Missing of History in Heritage: H. G. Adler's Novel 'the Wall'*

Johan Hegardt, *The Internet, Archaeology and the Spectacular*

Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, *What is missing?*

“There is no heritage”. Irina Sandomirskaja's conversation with philosophers Jean-Luc Nancy and Peter Trawny on the subject of nationalism and cultural heritage

Irina Sandomirskaja (ed), *Lakuna, Ziianie, Otsutstvie (Lacuna, Gap, Absence)*. Special section. *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie* 2021:2, No 168. Pp. 10–69

(https://www.nlobooks.ru/magazines/novoe-literaturnoe-obozrenie/168_nlo_2_2021/)

Contributions by project members:

Irina Sandomirskaja, *Ot sostavitelia (From the Editor)*

Irina Sandomirskaja, *Lakuna v eskhatologicheskom izmerenii: ot totalnosti pamiati k beskonechnosti nezabvenii (The Lacuna in an Eschatological Dimension: From a Total Memory to an Infinite Non-Forgetting)*

Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, *The Lacuna of Hermeneutics: Notes on the Freedom of Thought (transl. into Russian)*

Refereed Journal Articles and Anthology Chapters by Project Members (other than listed above):



Anna Kharkina, *Cultural Enthusiasts, Civil Society and the Strategies of Heritage-Making in the Late Russia Empire*, Transactions of the Association of European Schools of Planning, 3(2), 2019, pp. 155-167

Anna Kharkina, *Losing the Past: Social Melancholy and Modernizing Discourse of Cultural Heritage Preservation*. Baltic Worlds, XIII (2-3), 2020, pp. 46-56

Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, "Den förträngda återkomsten" in: *Nostalgiens nya dåtider*, Mikael Kurkiala (red.), Tidenstecken. nummer 3, 2018, s. 87-97.

Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, "Object-oriented Philosophy, Money, and Politics" in: *Artful Objects: Graham Harman on Art and the Business of Speculative Realism* (Stockholm: Sternberg Press, 2020), 65-57.

Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, *The Lacuna of Hermeneutics. Notes on the Freedom of Thought*, Research of Phenomenology 51 (2021), p. 165-177.

Irina Sandomirskaja, "Image, Afterimage, Counterimage: Communist Visuality without Communism", *CBEES Regional Report*, pp. 23–30; Swedish version – AIOLOS, 2022, No 1, pp. 157–166.

Irina Sandomirskaja, "Retrotopia: Post-Pamiat' and a "Reactionary Choice of the Past" (Retrotopia: Postmemory and a Reactionary Choice of the Past), RussKoinon (Ekaterinburg), No. 1, 2021, pp. 164—180.

Ilja Viktorov, "Contemporary Art Market under post-Soviet Capitalism in Russia: Main Tendencies, Actors and Developments, 1990-2020", Acta Slavica Iaponica, forthcoming 2022

Other publications, conference presentations, invited lectures, courses:

Johan Hegardt, "Better Red than Dead" – Remembering Cold War Sweden", in Lars Kleberg, Tora Lane & Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback (Eds.). *Words, Bodies, Memory. A Festschrift in honor of Irina Sandomirskaja*. Södertörn Philosophical Studies, 23, 2019, pp. 31-42

Anna Kharkina, "What if the Bolshevik Coup Had Never Interrupted...: Nostalgia and Stories of Loss". *Baltic Worlds*, XI(1), 2018, pp. 80-81 (conference report)

Anna Kharkina, "The Idea of Russian Cultural Heritage". *Baltic Wolds*, XII(1), 2019, pp. 46-48 (conference report)

Anna Kharkina, presentations at international conferences:



“Imagining and Re-evaluating the past: the Cultural Heritage Discourse in the 19th-beginning of the 20th century in Russia”, 10th International Conference on Cultural Policy Research (ICCPR2018), Tallinn University, 21-25.08.2018.

”The Strategies of Heritage-Making in the Late Russian Empire”, The 2018 AESOP Congress. Chalmers tekniska högskola. 10-14.07.2018.

“A Fairy Tale that Was a Waking Dream”, 6th Graduate Workshop of the Russian Art & Culture Group “What is to Be Done? Discussions in Russian Art Theory and Criticism I”. Jacobs University Bremen.

Carl Marklund, presentation at the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies, Stanford Libraries

Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, ”Att berätta en historia”. In: Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback; Staffan Ericson (Ed.), *Tidvatten: Festskrift till Hans Ruin*, Huddinge: Södertörns högskola, 2021, pp. 11-22.

Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, *The Lacuna of Hermeneutics: Notes on the Freedom of Thought*, Public lecture as Gadamer professor at Boston College, Boston College (https://events.bc.edu/event/the_lacuna_of_hermeneutics_notes_on_the_freedom_of_thought#.YfV2ZJNKhz9)

Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, Anförande vid svenskt parlament – ”Kulturarv – Till vem testamenteras det?”, 2018

Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, *Price, Value, Dignity: a course of lectures*, Boston College, VT 2019

Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, *Memory and Oblivion: a course of lectures* course at Södertörn University, HT 2019

Irina Sandomirskaja, *On Critical Memory*, lecture at the Dpt. of Slavonic Languages and Literatures, Humboldt Universität, Berlin 2017

Irina Sandomirskaja, *Restoration-Revolution: Cultural Heritage as Theory and Practice in Proletarian Dictatorship*, presentation at the conference “On the Uses and Abuses of Cultural Heritage”, St Petersburg university, 2018

Irina Sandomirskaja, roundtable presentation at the panel “The Grabar Family as a Cultural Phenomenon”, Washington, the Association of East European and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES), 2018



Irina Sandomirskaja, *“On Love”*: *Restoration, Melodrama, Memory, Anachronism*, presentation at The Human Condition, The State Centre for Contemporary Art, Moscow, 2019 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGUVPBG3Fxs&t=614s>)

Irina Sandomirskaja, *Restoration and Lacuna: A Critique of Memory*, lecture at the Princess Dashkova Centre, Edinburgh University, 2019

Irina Sandomirskaja, *After the Departed Witness*, lecture at Clare College, University of Cambridge 2020

Irina Sandomirskaja, *From nasledie to nasledie: fragments of history of the Soviet symbolic economy of the past*, Presentation at the conference “Temporality and Material Culture under Socialism”, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut, 2021.

Ilja Viktorov, *The Russian Contemporary Art Market: Social Networks and Creation of Economic Value in Post-Soviet Context, 1990-2017*, presentation at the Twelfth Swedish Economic Historic meeting at Stockholm University, 2017

Ilja Viktorov, *The Russian Contemporary Art Market*, presentation at the CBEEES Advanced Seminar, November 2021.

Other

Video documentation of all international symposia organized by the project, archived at Södertörn university

Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/Research-project-Transnational-Art-and-Heritage-Transfer-1416159061749724>

Study trips:

Marklund, USA, archival research and conference presentation

Bydler and Kharkina, Malmö, archival and museum research (two trips)

Sandomirskaja and Kharkina, St. Petersburg, museum research and interviews

Sandomirskaja, Moscow, museum research, interviews, and conference presentation

Viktorov, Moscow, archival research, interviews (three trips)