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Protecting the heritage of humanity in the Cold War: UNESCO, the Soviet Union and sites of universal value, 1945–1970s

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ABSTRACT

The concept of world heritage prevailed in international policies in the conflict ridden Cold War period. In particular, UNESCO adopted measures to protect heritage sites of universal value; most notably, in the Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972). Despite the growing interest in internationalism in heritage conservation, socialist states' approaches for the protection of the heritage of humanity have largely been ignored in historical accounts. This article focuses on the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics' (USSR) heritage diplomacy and discusses the socialist politics of world heritage. By drawing on published sources as well as documents from UNESCO and Russian archives, it shows how international conflict has spurred the development of international heritage policies in a divided world. It pays special attention to the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954), which reflected the understanding of heritage as an international security issue as main tained by experts from socialist countries. Thus, the Soviet internation alist heritage politics reveal the relevance of the Cold War conflict as a continuation of wartime measures in the development of world heri tage and the diverging interpretations of this idea in the second half of the twentieth century.

Introduction: the socialist politics of world heritage

The notion of world heritage was established in the decades following the Second World War. Monuments, groups of buildings and archaeological sites as well as manuscripts, works of art, or entire archival and artistic collections could be recognised as belonging to the heritage of humanity[1] by regulations provided in international treaties. This granted them special protection by the international community. Although international concern for cultural and natural heritage had been taking shape since the late nineteenth century, it was in the context of the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation (UNESCO) that the idea of a heritage of humanity finally dominated international heritage policies. Most notably, the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (in short, the World Heritage Convention), adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 1972, recognised sites of cultural and natural heritage as being of outstanding universal value and therefore, in 'need to be preserved as part of the world heritage of mankind as a whole' (UNESCO 1972). Despite the recently growing historical interest in UNESCO World Heritage (Cameron and Rössler 2013; Anatole-Gabriel 2016; Gfeller and Eisenberg 2016), research has only marginally addressed the

post-war discourses of non-participating states. This included most socialist states that only ratified the UNESCO World Heritage Convention at a time of political upheaval during the post-socialist transition of the late 1980s and 1990s. Apart from the People's Republic of Poland (Röttjer 2015; Gfeller 2015), research discussing other formerly socialist states has only covered the processes after 1991 (Breidenbach and Nyíri 2007; Mentges 2012; Plets 2015). This article focuses on the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR) and thus provides insights into the different notions of the heritage of humanity that existed in the conflict-ridden period between the end of the Second World War, when most international initiatives emerged, and the 1970s, when the World Heritage Convention gradually began to supersede earlier efforts.

This article argues that the Cold War conflict was conducive to the articulation and development of the idea of a heritage of humanity, notwithstanding the world's division into opposing ideological camps. Conflict has long played a constituting role for heritage due to its vulnerability in the face of aggression and its power to demarcate difference (Viejo-Rose and Stig Sørensen 2015). Moreover, destruction constituted a 'normalized circumstance' throughout the twentieth century, transforming buildings into monuments in light of protection measures (Allais 2018, 6). Post-war universalism was furthered by the devastating experience of the Second World War and by the imminent threat of total destruction brought about by nuclear arms. Against this background, the discussion in this article deals with socialist politics of heritage at the international level and does not delve into the question regarding which of the sites were selected to be protected by the state, which has been addressed elsewhere (see Deschepper 2018; Kelly 2016). Rather, this article seeks to contribute to the contemporary history of heritage diplomacy, which has recently received increasing attention from heritage scholars (Winter 2015; Clarke 2018). It does so by analysing the approaches of Soviet experts and politicians to heritage sites of universal value during the Cold War. The first section considers the history of the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict adopted in 1954. This document shows how the need to identify sites of international significance at the state level was at first a response to the destruction suffered in war, before the international expert fora turned to international protection in times of peace. Similarly, it was the safety measures installed during the Second World War which prompted the standardisation of heritage inventories in the post-war Soviet Union (Iakovleva and Shchenkov 2004), which will be discussed in the second section. Finally, the last section highlights the facts that the Soviet approaches to international heritage protection were based on the possibility of a nuclear threat and that the protection of the heritage of humanity in times of peace was a contested issue. Due to the international subject matter, a multitude of actors, and complex governance in the Soviet Union[2], the discussion relies on a combination of sources, both in published form and held in UNESCO and Russian archives. This includes the proceedings of international meetings, international and national legislation, legal commentaries by Soviet scholars, Soviet publications on heritage as well as minutes and correspondence of Soviet institutions. The Soviet sources adhered to the state ideology of Marxism-Leninism and they are marked by political interests in the Cold War conflict. These ideological underpinnings shall be addressed in the discussion, revealing the political nature of post-war universalism and, by focusing on a socialist perspective on the heritage of humanity, providing new insights into the recent history of international heritage initiatives.

Heritage of humanity and protection in the event of armed conflict

It has been well-established in heritage historiography that international cooperation and discourses on world heritage emerged in the context of nineteenth century European diplomacy (Hall 2011; Swenson 2016). The idea of cultural artefacts belonging to all humanity – thus being above the rights of war – had been expressed by French intellectuals in response to international conflict from the French Revolution onwards (O'Keefe 2006, 15–16, 21). Against this background, the protection of cultural property entered international law as a subcomponent of regulations on

the conduct of warfare. It is necessary to consider this earlier history of international legislation here briefly, as it established the elements of the Cold War discourse as a rearticulation of earlier international conflict.

Diplomats and public intellectuals from the Russian Empire were central to the efforts to codify international law. The Brussels Declaration Concerning the Laws and Customs of War (1874) was drafted by F. F. Martens, a Russian diplomat and scholar of international law. The document was not ratified by the states participating in the international conference in Brussels, but it became the basis for the international documents later adopted at the Hague Peace Conferences in 1899 and 1907. The Russian Tsar Nikolai II convened both conferences with the aim of regulating the militarisation in Europe due to the fear of Russia's inability to keep up with the arms race (Inal 2013, 37). The conferences adopted the Convention with Respect to the Laws and Customs of War on Land, which urged sparing 'buildings dedicated to religion, art, science, or charitable purposes, historic monuments' and prohibited the seizure, destruction or intentional damage of historical monuments and works of art ("Convention (II)" [1899] 1981, 74, 81). The extended 1907 document was the international regulation governing the First and Second World Wars.

The failure to protect cultural property during the twentieth century world wars motivated the drafting of new international documents. The inter-American Treaty on the Protection of Artistic and Scientific Institutions and Historic Monuments (known as the Roerich Pact), which was adopted by 21 American states in 1935, represented the first legal document to deal with heritage protection not as a subcomponent but as a separate branch of international law. In addition to the aforementioned Hague conventions of 1899 and 1907, it was a precursor to UNESCO's Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954). The Roerich Pact was the result of international lobbying by the Russian painter and intellectual, Nikolai K. Rerikh (Nicholas Roerich) in response to the destruction caused due to the First World War (see Smirnov 2005, 14). Following the October Revolution, Rerikh found himself unable to return to Russia and realised his plans for an international treaty while residing outside the Soviet Union. The Roerich Pact recognised historic monuments, museums and other institutions as neutral entities and thus, to be protected by the belligerents. It postulated the need for an official heritage registry listing the objects that should be protected and marking them with a special symbol, the 'Banner of Peace', consisting of a red circle containing three dots. This wartime practice had been established by the introduction of the Red Cross symbol as a means of identifying persons and equipment used to help the wounded by the Geneva Convention of 1864. The supporters of the Roerich Pact believed that such a symbol would 'explain, even to a barbarian, the importance of safeguarding art and science' (Roerich 1930). Rerikh depicted saints such as Saint Sophia as a protective power for ancient towns who carried the new symbol of the Banner of Peace (Figure 1). Soviet authorities engaged in the question of adhering to a global treaty on heritage protection. For one, the USSR People's Commissariat of Defence considered the question of signing the Roerich Pact shortly after its adoption (see Rybak 2017). At the same time, the USSR National Commissariat of Foreign Affairs (NKID) discussed a parallel initiative by the League of Nations for an international convention (see Noblecourt 1956). However, the Soviet authorities' considerations just as the consultations within the League came to an abrupt end with the outbreak of the Second World War.

The initiatives of Rerikh and of the League of Nations were combined after the war in the Hague Convention initiated by UNESCO. The convention adopted Rerikh's idea of the Banner of Peace and launched an official symbol for the protection of works of art, monuments and historic buildings during war. The symbol, consisting of a blue and white shield (see Figure 2), was to be used for marking sites that would receive the same protection as that given to hospitals and medical personnel marked by the Red Cross (*The UNESCO Courier* 1954). The international protection of cultural property was legitimised by reference to the idea of a universal heritage belonging to all humanity: '[D]amage to cultural property belonging to any people whatsoever

Figure 1. N. K. Rerikh, *Sofiia Premudrost'* [St. Sophia – the Almighty's wisdom]. 1932. Tempera on canvas. Nicholas Roerich Museum, New York.
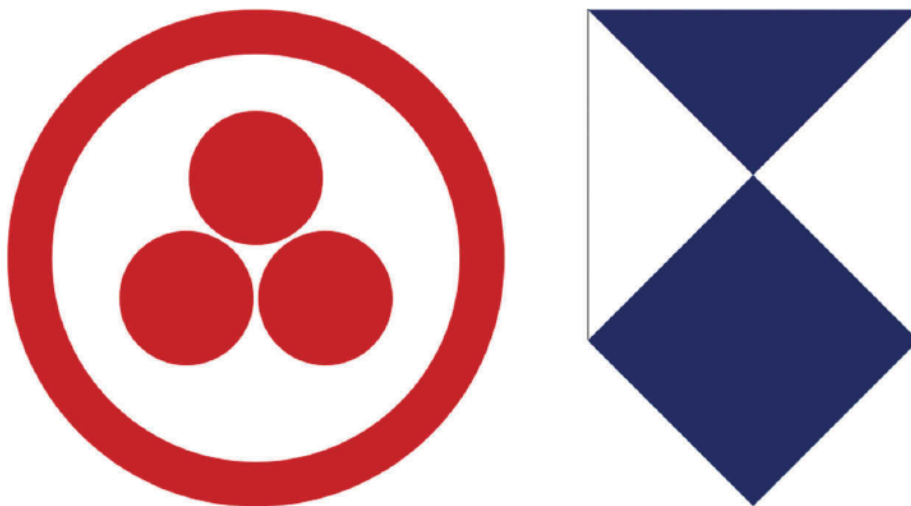

Figure 2. Banner of Peace of the Roerich Pact and Blue Shield emblem of the 1954 The Hague Convention. Wikimedia commons.

means damage to the cultural heritage of all mankind, since each people makes its contribution to the culture of the world' (UNESCO 1954).

The Hague Convention was the first legal document of a global dimension regulating the protection of cultural heritage in the event of armed conflict. The date of adoption is significant, as the post-war climate proved conducive for the articulation of the idea of heritage of all humanity, notwithstanding the emergence of the Cold War conflict. This initiative must be seen in the context of other conventions, in particular following the adoption of the Geneva Convention in 1949. In view of its political relevance, the member states of both UNESCO and the United Nations were invited to participate in drafting the Hague Convention (UNESCO 1953, 8). This included the USSR which, at this point, had only joined the United Nations and not UNESCO. Not incidentally, the USSR became a UNESCO member state on the same day as the UNESCO-sponsored Intergovernmental Conference on the Protection of Cultural Property in the

Event of Armed Conflict began its work in The Hague. Eleven delegates from the USSR and one delegate each from the Belarusian and Ukrainian SSR attended the conference between 21 April and 14 May 1954. Each delegation was headed by the deputy ministers of culture, and the USSR delegation also included members of the diplomatic services, translators and conservation specialists. The Soviet authorities used the occasion of the conference to arrange an exhibition on cultural heritage in the Soviet Union in the Municipal Museum The Hague and invited the conference participants to its opening (*Pravda*, April 29, 1954).

The conference in The Hague was illustrative of how the Soviet Union integrated the issue of heritage in their overall international diplomatic policies. The USSR, BSSR and Ukrainian SSR delegations ratified the convention and the first protocol in 1957, which was a logical consequence of the ratification of the abovementioned Geneva Convention in the same year. Moreover, in response to the Suez Crisis, they submitted a proposal to the UNESCO General Conference that sought to protect the cultural property of Egypt, and they called upon all states to ratify the Hague Convention (UNESCO 1958, 276). This instance shows how the USSR harnessed the protection of cultural property to oppose aggression by Western states, as the USSR sought to strengthen their position in the Middle East by increasing bilateral cooperation with Egypt. The Soviet involvement in the United Nations system reveals that the scientific, cultural, and educational activities of the USSR were closely connected to those with social, economic and political orientation. Indeed, the decision to join UNESCO on 21 April 1954 formed part of a larger initiative to reorient Soviet foreign policy following Stalin's death in the preceding year (Rubinstein 1964): the USSR acceded to the UN Extended Programme of Technical Assistance (EPTA) in 1953, to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 1954, and to the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 1957 (see Osakwe 1972). These international organisations provided suitable channels for international aid to developing countries in the context of decolonisation and for the dissemination of Marxist-Leninist ideas opposing US anti-communist propaganda (see Zhukov 1958). This included the emphasis on national culture, as expressed in the UNESCO's Declaration of Principles of International Co-Operation (1966), the support of national liberation movements in colonial territories by referring to the October Revolution, and finally, the repeated calls for recognition of socialist governments within UNESCO, first of the People's Republic of China and later of the German Democratic Republic.

During the Cold War, the idea of one-worldism (Meskell 2018, 11) took precedence through the articulation of incompatible universalisms (Del Pero 2014). Until the mid-1980s, the criticism expressed by either side of the ideological conflict focused on the opponent rather than on the international organisation, thus harnessing the channels provided by the UN system for their foreign policy (see Sayward 2013, 388).[3] In the case of the Soviet Union, the policy of peaceful coexistence was in the process of being fleshed out when they joined UNESCO. It was confirmed as the foundation of Soviet foreign policy at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956. According to the Soviet delegation, the objective of UNESCO, as determined in the Constitution, lay in the promotion of peace by furthering culture, education and science (Komissiia SSSR po delam IuNESKO [1954] 1989, 32). Moreover, the Soviet government considered the aims and objectives of other international organisations, such as the World Peace Council, promoting the Soviet politics of peaceful coexistence, to be 'the same' as UNESCO's (Zhukov 1960).

The so-called 'struggle for peace' was a central element of Soviet foreign policy, being directed at US imperialism in the wake of the Cold War (see Johnston 2008), that was also reflected in the Soviet participation in international heritage initiatives. Soviet experts maintained the understanding of heritage as an issue of international security and criticised UNESCO for neglecting culture's social and political dimension. In their opinion, as expressed in an internal memo of 1960, the Universal Day of Culture, promoted by the Roerich Pact, should serve fully the objective of strengthening peace (*Zamechaniia* 1960). The official Soviet position articulated during the conference in The Hague by the USSR Deputy Minister of

Culture, V. S. Kemenov, had also reflected this agenda. He emphasised the devastation suffered during the Second World War and referred to the Soviet 'struggle for peace' which was aimed at global disarmament. In accordance with this policy, the Soviet delegation submitted a proposal for banning nuclear weapons for inclusion in the final version of the convention, but this was rejected by the conference. Kemenov argued on the behalf of the Soviet delegation, that the protection of cultural property could not be achieved by marking buildings with a symbol while nuclear weapons continued to exist (Conférence intergouvernementale sur la protection des biens culturels en cas de conflit armé 1961, 299–300). Thus, when signing the final report and the convention, the Soviet delegations expressed their regret about this decision and declared that the convention, in their opinion, did not go far enough (312–313).

The position as expressed by Kemenov shows how heritage was embedded in the ideological warfare of the 'struggle for peace', as a continuation of discourse relating to the Second World War. In their comments on their collaboration with UNESCO in 1960–1961, the USSR National Commission for UNESCO reported that 'some 1,200 cultural monuments of world interest on Soviet soil' had been damaged by Nazi Germany during the war. Bearing this in mind, the Soviet authorities had called upon all states to ratify the Hague Convention, and they emphasised that the cultural heritage of humanity could only be protected if another world war were prevented (*Collaboration of the USSR* 1962, 16). At the same time, suggestions made by Soviet scholars for the Commission raised the question of whether a convention on disarmament would, in the end, prove more effective for safeguarding the heritage of humanity than the 1954 Hague Convention (*Predlozheniia komissii SSSR* 1962, 4). These statements show how the destruction of the Second World War served Soviet diplomats and scholars as a warning of the total destruction awaiting humanity in nuclear war, which was to be a recurring argument used by heritage experts from socialist countries during the following decades.

From safety measures to registries: Soviet approaches to heritage of universal value

The legislative efforts until the 1950s outlined above demonstrate that Soviet discourse was dominated by the primary association of heritage protection with wilful destruction. During and after the Second World War, the Soviet state invested in reconstruction projects, and scholars had already begun with the popularisation of a selection of heritage sites. Art historians, such as I. Ė. Grabar', one of the most influential Soviet restorers at the time, documented the historic monuments and sites in the Soviet Union's territory, which had been destroyed by Nazi Germany in a photo album for the general public (Grabar' 1948). In an environment saturated with patriotism, such photo albums familiarising readers with the Soviet peoples' cultural heritage became a popular post-war genre. The Academy of Architecture published a series dedicated to the 'treasures of Russian architecture' from 1944 onwards and an analogous series on the 'treasures of architecture of the Soviet peoples' was launched two years later. The texts which accompanied the photographs of historic monuments from the pre-revolutionary period described them as the basis of socialist urban planning and emphasised the development of national cultures in the republics (Severov 1947, 19). Passages denouncing the wilful destruction in war by Nazi Germany explicitly referred to the concept of world heritage (Upravlenie po okhrane pamiatnikov arkhitektury Ministerstva gorodskogo stroitel'stva 1950, 6). Most volumes were dedicated to one town or were structured around towns, which proved to be a popular method for propagating heritage in the post-war Soviet Union. Indeed, in 1946, the Committee for Architecture at the Council of Ministers issued an order for the protection of historic towns and drew up the first List of Historic Towns in 1948, comprising of 20 towns considered to be of all-Uunion value due to the high number of monuments in them (see Krogius 2009, 30–31).[4] These post-war initiatives illustrate how the efforts to protect and memorialise heritage destroyed

in the event of armed conflict soon merged with the plan to draw up and provide protection standards at the national level.

The same convergence may be observed in the implementation of the Hague Convention in the Soviet Union. This Convention established international protection measures and thus inspired the identification of sites of universal value in the participating states that required protection by the international community. The regulations presented in the Convention concerned, most notably, preparing proposals for the International Register of Cultural Property under Special Protection to be maintained by the Director-General of UNESCO. Each state was asked to submit a request for properties to be registered. In 1958, the USSR Ministry of Culture presented the Central Council of the Communist Party with a list of members for the consultative committee for the implementation of the Convention (Furtseva 1960). Two years later, A. G. Khalturin, the deputy head of the Department of Fine Arts and the Protection of Monuments of the Ministry, was able to report on progress in implementing the Convention. All the Soviet republics, as well as the towns of Moscow and Leningrad, had been asked by the Ministry to prepare lists of monuments which could be included in the international register. The final list of proposals had to be confirmed by the USSR Ministry of Defence and the Scientific Methodical Council for the Protection of Monuments at the USSR Academy of Sciences, before being presented to the USSR Council of Ministers. Khalturin was rightfully suspicious that this complex procedure, involving several Soviet institutions, would delay the entire process (Khalturin 1960).

The Ministry of Culture presented a list of the most significant cultural properties, including monuments as well as museum collections, to the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and the Navy (Kuznetsov n.d.). The Ministry of Culture of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) alone submitted almost eighty pages of properties listed under towns and other places (e.g., island complexes), among them all of the places that had been recognised by the List of Historic Towns of 1948. The properties comprised mainly of monuments predating the Soviet period in historic city centres as well as a large number of churches and monasteries. However, the extensive lists provided by the republics revealed the inconsistent methodologies used by state institutions at different levels in the Soviet Union to identify monuments of all-union or universal value. Faced with this issue, the Scientific Methodical Council criticised the RSFSR's lack of coordination and consistency in the selection of monuments. Moreover, they were aware of the current revision of the registries on the local and state levels in the RSFSR, as directed by a decree of the RSFSR Council of Ministers and the RSFSR Ministry of Culture in 1959. Thus, they advised that the lists compiled for the international register be re-assessed following reworking of these registries (Grigorov 1960).

This course of action shows how the efforts to establish a register of monuments of universal value was dependent on the existence of a central registry for the republics, and ultimately, for the entire Soviet Union. The lists compiled for the Hague Convention for the first time presented Soviet experts with the challenge of identifying monuments of universal value, transcending the governing structure of the Soviet state. Ultimately, these efforts did not lead to tangible results, as no entries have been made by the Soviet Union or any post-Soviet state in the international register to date. The provisions in Article 8 of the Hague Convention on the granting of special protection in 'adequate distance from any large industrial centre' (UNESCO 1954) proved difficult for the Soviet Union whose properties of international value were mainly situated in large cities (see Toman 1994, 132). In fact, the register has proved generally unsuccessful with only Vatican City State receiving international recognition (UNESCO 1994), and information about the use of the Blue Shield emblem at state level is limited globally (Hladik 2004, 382–383). Notwithstanding these limitations, the international register reveals the efforts directed at centralisation in a state like the Soviet Union and identifying the heritage of humanity around two decades before the UNESCO World Heritage Convention subsumed this task.

The centralisation of heritage registries and of protection measures in the Soviet Union was generally hesitant. The implementation of emergency protection measures during the Second

World War required the central coordination of restoration workshops and led to the establishment of new institutions overseeing heritage protection. However, the institutions' responsibilities at the all-union, republican, and local levels varied considerably and an incomplete patchwork of state organs remained over the following decades (Donovan 2013, 24–25). This also negatively impacted the identification of heritage sites in Soviet territory that were to be attributed with universal value as requested by the Hague Convention. In 1948, the USSR Council of Ministers adopted the decree On the Means of Improving the Protection of Monuments and Culture, which introduced the notion of monuments of all-union 'outstanding scientific, historical or artistic value' and required a register of all monuments protected by the state (Sovet Ministrov SSSR 1948). The competencies for monuments of all-union value were distributed between several government and academic institutions, depending on the type of monument, be they classified as architectural, archaeological and historical, or artistic. Due to this separation of responsibilities, there was no unified method of compiling lists, although they all had to be confirmed by the USSR Council of Ministers later.

In the 1960s, the Soviet authorities launched initiatives aimed at systematic documentation and establishing union-wide protection standards. Detached from the setting of armed conflict, this procedure identified new frameworks that guided the Soviet heritage discourse. In 1967, the USSR Academy of Sciences and the USSR Ministry of Culture started working on the *Corpus of Monuments of History and Culture of the Peoples of the USSR* (*Svod pamiatnikov istorii i kul'tury narodov SSSR*) in conjunction with the preparatory work for the first all-union law On the Protection and Use of Monuments of History and Culture, which was adopted in 1976. For Khalturin (1978), now acting as Vice-President of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the main idea of the law was expressed in defining the protection of monuments as the patriotic duty of every Soviet citizen. Thus, the law demonstrated the role of monuments in the 'ideological, political, moral and aesthetic education of the Soviet people' in the so-called developed socialist society under Brezhnev. This reflected the development of heritage legislation in the Soviet republics that paid increasing attention to the popularisation of monuments in film and public lectures (Sovet Ministrov RSFSR 1957), requesting that they be included in the curricula of educational institutions (Sovet Ministrov RSFSR 1960), and in tourist itineraries (Sovet Ministrov RSFSR 1966).

Towards international protection in times of peace

The central role of monuments in the so-called Communist education of workers (*kommunisticheskoe vospitanie trudiashchikhsia*) also shaped Soviet participation in international campaigns relating to monument protection organised by UNESCO in the 1960s (see *Prikaz Ministra kul'tury 1964*, 1). Following the ineffective International Register of Cultural Property under Special Protection, the idea of the heritage of humanity in international expert fora gradually shifted from the moral impetus of preventing destruction to improving the international system of heritage conservation, including legal measures, methods and techniques in peacetime. These considerations led to tangible results in the establishment of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) in Rome in 1959 and the decision to launch international campaigns for the preservation of historical monuments. The latter drew on the technical assistance provided for post-war and post-disaster reconstruction, such as the mission sent to Cuzco, Peru, after the earthquake in 1950. In the same way, the impending flooding of ancient temples due to the construction of the Aswan High Dam motivated the Egyptian and Sudanese delegations to ask for technical assistance from UNESCO. In 1960, UNESCO launched the International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia and designated them as 'an essential part of the cultural heritage of all mankind' (1960, 52). Paul Betts (2015) and Lynn Meskell (2018) have argued that the Nubia campaign not only shaped UNESCO's public

image as a warden of heritage, but also provided the basis for the World Heritage Convention, adopted in 1972.

The Soviet authorities expressed hesitance towards these developments in international heritage conservation. The USSR did not join ICCROM, instead pursuing the idea of a similar centre for Eastern Europe based in Moscow.[5] Their involvement in the Nubia campaign was limited to one archaeological expedition and to making financial contributions to the international campaign, which were raised from the touring exhibition of the Tutankhamen treasures. More substantial funds and resources were provided for the construction of the Aswan Dam, as part of the efforts to increase Soviet-Egyptian bilateral cooperation (Allais 2013). N. M. Kanaev, a Soviet diplomat and member of the USSR National Commission for UNESCO at the time, points out that the Soviet authorities did not share the understanding of common international responsibility for the ancient temples. Instead, they emphasised the principle of state sovereignty and thus claimed that Egypt and Sudan were responsible for taking care of their heritage themselves (Kanaev 2006, 182). Moreover, the international enthusiasm for the safeguarding campaign was viewed critically: In a document containing suggestions for the 1960s' UNESCO programme, the USSR National Commission raised the ironic question whether, in view of the danger of nuclear war, UNESCO would fight for the safeguarding of hundreds of millions of human beings to the same extent as they campaigned for ancient temples (*Predlozheniia Komissii SSSR* 1962, 3).

Corresponding to statements expressing the Soviet position mentioned above, the Commission regarded the 'struggle for peace' to be UNESCO's most important task, even proposing a 'Cultural programme of disarmament' in the mid-1960s (*Predlozheniia komissii SSSR* 1964, 91). Their position articulated on the Nubian temples illustrates how their perspective on preservation was saturated by policies of cultural development that emphasised national cultures, and of liquidating colonialism in the context of the Cold War. The directions for the UNESCO programme suggested by the Commission over the years reveal the context in which the protection of cultural heritage, not constituting a separate issue, was integrated. In particular, this included the support to developing countries in the development of their national cultural policies by establishing libraries and museums and training qualified staff (*Predlozheniia komissii SSSR* 1962, 9). National culture played a crucial role in the Marxist-Leninist understanding of development, according to the slogan of 'national in form, socialist in content'. Boris B. Piotrovskii, who had headed the Soviet archaeological expedition to Nubia, articulated this idea in a talk to the History Department of the USSR Academy of Sciences in 1975, where he assigned the threat of cultural homogenisation in the face of new technologies to be a problem emanating from capitalism (Piotrovskii 1975, 179). From the perspective of Soviet experts and diplomats, the heritage of humanity presented itself to a large extent as a question of cultural particularism.

The 1960s saw a proliferation of international initiatives aimed at articulating international standards for protection in times of peace, especially the adoption of the Venice Charter in 1964 and the related foundation of ICOMOS in the following year, both supported by the USSR. UNESCO's Fourteenth General Conference in 1966 decided to study the possibility of arranging a system of international protection for 'a few of the monuments that form an integral part of the cultural heritage of mankind' (61). A committee of experts assessed this question during the following years, which was paralleled by similar initiatives from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the United States. The three initiatives were later united in the World Heritage Convention (see Cameron and Rössler 2013, 11–20). The international experts involved worked on the assumption that new dangers, resulting from population growth, pollution, economic and industrial development were threatening cultural heritage. Accordingly, the report on the desirability of adopting an international instrument, drawn up by experts convened by UNESCO (1970a), called for extending the Hague Convention's 'Red Cross' to include peace-time protection for selected monuments and sites. The report was sufficiently cautious to point out that this international protection did not imply the internationalisation of

monuments, thus guaranteeing the principle of state sovereignty. During the post-war period, the articulation of state sovereignty prevailed in international organisations (Muschik 2018) and also shaped the global geopolitics of heritage (see Rehling 2017). Rather than having an inventory drawn up by an international organisation, the international experts proposed that states would be 'a better judge of the importance of its property' (Brichet and Matteucci 1969, 7).

The emphasis on state sovereignty also guided Soviet approaches on the question of how to safeguard the heritage of humanity. Experts from the Soviet Union were members of the committee which drafted the World Heritage Convention. The draft amendments submitted by the Soviet delegations, prioritised the recognition of state sovereignty and reflected the Soviet authorities' reservations about the provisions of the international document.[6] In particular, this concerned Article 4 of the Convention, recognising the primary duty of the State Parties to ensure protection, as well as Article 6, declaring that the duty of the international community in protecting world heritage involved 'fully respecting the sovereignty of the States' and no 'prejudice to property right provided by national legislation' (UNESCO 1972). However, more importantly, the heated discussion on the accession of the GDR to UNESCO motivated the Soviet delegation to propose deleting the provision that the Convention could only be ratified by members of UNESCO, instead proposing the following amendment by arguing for universal principles: 'This Convention shall be open to accession by all States' (UNESCO General Conference 1972). Due to a disagreement on financial and political issues, the Soviet delegation submitted an abstention in the vote on the adoption of the convention at UNESCO's Seventeenth General Conference in 1972, despite their general support for increasing international cooperation in this field. The Soviet delegate, D. V. Bykov, expressed the rejection of mandatory contributions to the World Heritage Fund. In addition, referring to the on-going dispute over the recognition of the GDR, he declared the universal principle of the convention to be incompatible with the fact that the document was only open to UNESCO member states. The Soviet state would not ratify the version of the document presented (Komissiia po delam IuNESKO [1972] 1989). The Soviet position on the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property was compromised in a similar way. During the preparation of this Convention, the Soviet delegation had already criticised parts of the draft text on the applicability of the regulations to non-metropolitan territories of states, as having 'the flavour of a colonial clause' (UNESCO 1970b, 21) and consequently did not adhere to the Convention. Both the 1970 and the World Heritage Convention were finally ratified by the USSR, the Ukrainian SSR and the BSSR delegations in 1988, after their position in foreign policy had been eased by the *perestroika* policies.

In contrast to these conventions, the USSR was ready to ratify the Hague Convention during the first years after its adoption and it thus remained the international document guiding the Soviet republics' outlook on international heritage regulations. The central importance of the conference in The Hague and protection in the event of armed conflict, more generally, is emphasised by Russian language accounts on international heritage conservation. In an overview on international law in UNESCO, the Soviet legal specialist Rubanik (1969, 155–156) described the Hague Convention not merely as a legal, but more so as a moral and political act. He criticised the United Kingdom and the United States for not ratifying the convention, especially in view of the on-going Vietnam War. His colleague M. M. Boguslavskii, also a Soviet expert in international law, stressed the importance of the Hague Convention ten years later in *Mezhdunarodnaia okhrana kul'turnykh tsennostei* (*International Protection of Cultural Property*). He attributed the recent domestic efforts in heritage legislation to the fostering of responsibility for monuments as outlined in The Hague Convention (Boguslavskii 1979, 102).

Boguslavskii provided a comprehensive introduction to international legislation on heritage protection, with information on international safeguarding campaigns, archaeological excavations, restitution, as well as Marxism-Leninism and heritage legislation in socialist countries. The publication was dedicated to Rerikh and Boguslavskii referred to him as the founder of

international heritage law (3). He prominently juxtaposed the Banner of Peace with the Blue Shield emblem and included Rerikh's painting *Sofiia Premudrost'* of 1932. The role of Rerikh, especially regarding the drafting of the Hague Convention, was canonised in the 1970s Soviet Union (see, e.g., Belikov 1977, 145). The book's subject matter was both immovable and movable cultural heritage, ranging from architecture and sites to paintings, books and other objects. Boguslavskii's legal commentary was illustrated with photographs that reflected the understanding of heritage of universal value, from the perspective of Soviet experts. The captions of the illustrations referred to natural disasters, as in the case of Venice and UNESCO's international safeguarding campaigns, and to restitution of cultural property obtained in the colonial period or of looted paintings and cultural objects during the war. Furthermore, it emphasised the destruction suffered in the Second World War, such as the Saviour Church on Nereditsa south of Velikii Novgorod and Warsaw Old Town.

Boguslavskii's account reflected the Soviet authorities' attitudes towards internationalism in heritage conservation, which were framed by the principles of Soviet foreign policies established in the Communist Party's Peace Programme, advocating disarmament, and the final act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (Helsinki Final Act) of 1975, as a result of the said programme (see Brezhnev 1975, 4). Moreover, the principle of socialist internationalism claimed that no national culture could develop without international exchange (Boguslavskii 1979, 5). The Helsinki Final Act of 1975 was referenced as the ruling document governing the organisation of the General Assemblies and Conferences of ICOM, ICOMOS, and IUCN in the Soviet Union in 1977–78. At the IUCN meeting in Aşgabat, the Soviet delegation even went so far as to propose that the Helsinki Accords should be included in the World Conservation Strategy as inspiration of conservation efforts, reflecting the policies of détente and the maintenance of world peace as a prerequisite for the Strategy's implementation (IUCN ed, 1979, 19, 119). On the other hand, Vladimir Ivanov, the chair of the USSR National Committee of ICOMOS, emphasised the role of cultural heritage in the current world as preserving peace among nations and development of national cultures, and advocated the use of monuments in education. Again, he referred to the destruction of the Second World War and called upon 'modernising' the Hague Convention, while the more recent international conventions were left unmentioned (Ivanov 1978, 5).

Conclusion

The approaches of Soviet authorities and experts to international heritage protection show the close relationship between heritage and international politics, as expressed by the concept of heritage diplomacy. Heritage was not merely the subject of soft power from the perspective of the principles of Marxism-Leninism; it was also the subject of socio-economic development, extending international aid to developing countries in building museums and libraries, and it was the subject of security policy in relation to the Soviet Peace Campaigns. This understanding was reflected in the Soviet authorities' priorities among UNESCO programmes and explained why they did not regard culture as separated from politics. The question of UNESCO's politicisation constituted one of the most contested issues in the Cold War period, ultimately motivating the US and the UK to withdraw from the organisation out of protest in 1985. In light of such occurrences, the different assessment of the role of politics for the way the heritage of humanity and international protection measures were conceived by socialist states during the Cold War, as presented in this article, should equally be reflected in scholarship dealing with the so-called capitalist countries.

The account presented in this article showed the constituting role of international conflict in the articulation and development of international heritage protection. It argued that the Cold War was conducive to the emergence and proliferation of the notion of a heritage of humanity, not merely stemming from the safeguarding measures implemented during and after the Second World War, but as the experiences of the Second World War were translated into the setting of

the Cold War conflict. The Hague Convention of 1954 reflected both and it was this document that Soviet authorities and experts sought to revise during the 1960–70s, rather than choosing to adhere to the World Heritage Convention in 1972. Against this background, the articulation of international protection measures in times of peace represented for the Soviet authorities a more contested terrain than its protection in the event of armed conflict, in which state sovereignty and guarantees against foreign aggression were immediately concerned.

This article conveyed this argument by means of initiatives that were superseded by others and thus lost their power over the course of time. On the one hand, this included the International Register of Cultural Property under Special Protection and the erstwhile singularity of the Hague Convention in defining international protection standards. On the other hand, socialist policies in relation to heritage ceased to play a considerable role in international forums after the disintegration of the Soviet Union and political transition in Central and Eastern Europe that ended the so-called Cold War. Focusing on the Soviet Union in this article provided insights into discourses and practices revealing the differences in approaches to the global discourse on the heritage of humanity in the conflict-ridden era of the Cold War. For socialist internationalism, the notion of universalism was inherently linked to the principle of state sovereignty and the development of national cultures. The sources presented in this article show how such socialist policies were integrated with the UNESCO discourse, both in Soviet publications and in international expert fora. During the Cold War, international protection of cultural heritage was employed as a means of ideological warfare. Ultimately and somewhat ironically however, this paved the way for asserting the idea of a heritage of humanity.

Notes

1. In this article, the concept of the heritage of humanity refers to the vision about heritage of universal value belonging to all humanity (see Prodan 2016, 137). It is a component of the Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments (1931), the Hague Convention (1954), the World Heritage Convention (1972), and later, the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003).
2. In the period investigated in this article, the USSR National Commission for UNESCO did not have a committee dedicated to heritage or cultural cooperation. As a result, the activities of the Soviet Union in these fields are scattered across the committees for education, libraries, the Major Project on Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values, and for technical assistance (see Romanovskii, Sisakiian, and Vakhrushev 1966, 206).
3. In 1985, the United States and the United Kingdom withdrew from UNESCO in protest against increasing politicisation and bureaucratic inefficiency. This decision by representatives of one side of the Cold War conflict ended the antagonism that had shaped UNESCO's activities for three decades.
4. This list included Moscow, Leningrad, Velikii Novgorod, Pskov, Rostov Velikii, Iaroslavl', Vladimir, Suzdal', Smolensk, Derbent (all RSFSR), Kyiv, Chernihiv, L'viv (all Ukrainian SSR), Tbilisi, Mtskheta (both Georgian SSR), Samarqand, Buxoro (both Uzbek SSR), Vilnius (Lithuanian SSR), Riga (Latvian SSR), and Tallinn (Estonian SSR). Historic sites in most of these cities were later included in the UNESCO World Heritage List or in the tentative lists submitted by the post-Soviet States Parties.
5. The source material does not indicate any dispute over different restoration methodologies in relation to this initiative. The plan for an Eastern European restoration centre never materialised, but it was brought forward repeatedly over the decades (see, e.g. Bericht über die Abstimmung [1975] 2017, 49).
6. See the draft amendments in UNESCO Archives, SHC/CONF.37 DR. 1972, E.2/355 E.

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