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‘It hurts me, dear friend’: The impact of the Italian annexation of the Dodecanese on international heritage politics

The paper discusses how the 1912 Italian annexation of the Dodecanese unsettled the international sphere and shaped international heritage politics lastingly. The Islands Hospitaller buildings were important for policies of Italianisation and accelerated the nationalisation of crusader sites elsewhere. Various European powers and transnational bodies, including the different successor organisations of the Knights Hospitaller became involved in a ‘heritage’ arms race during the interwar years, but the sites also played an important role in anti-colonial movements across the Mediterranean. As such they offer a prism to compare and link the uses of heritage across different regimes from the eve of the first world war to the end of the second and assess their legacies in the present.



Grand Masters' Palace, Rhodes, c 1930s, © Archaeological Service, Photographic Archives, Rhodes.

Astrid Swenson is Professor of European Historical Cultures at the University of Bayreuth, having previously taught in Cambridge, London and Bath. Her research on European history in comparative and transnational perspective focusses on heritage, memory and museums. Her publications include *The Rise of Heritage in France, Germany and England, 1789–1914* (Cambridge University Press 2013), *From Plunder to Preservation: Britain and the Heritage of Empire* (ed. with Peter Mandler, Oxford University Press, 2013), and *Art Looting and Restitution in the 20th Century* (special issue of the *Journal of Contemporary History* 2017, ed. with Bianca Gaudenzi). Astrid Swenson currently works on architecture and imperialism in the Modern Mediterranean through a study of crusader sites.