

World Heritage UK Annual Conference 2019 'Making the Most of World Heritage'

Heritage and the past in the UK's diplomatic futures

Andrew McClelland
Post-doc Research Associate

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Heseltine Institute for Public
Policy, Practice and Place



Overview

- International dimension
- UK's 'soft power'
- Heritage diplomacy / diplomatic futures

Source: Canal & River Trust



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International dimension

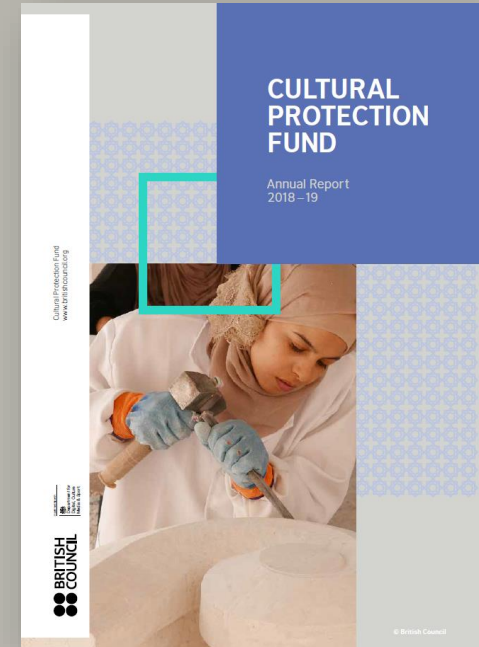
- “A snapshot of Heritage Alliance member activities that demonstrates international engagement in at least 38 countries across all seven Continents” — Heritage Alliance, 2018
- “... we will promote opportunities to build the capacity of organisations to make international connections & to benefit from doing so” — HLF, 2019



Cultural Protection Fund

Development aid

- £7,696,033 awarded in 2018/19, taking the total number of grants awarded over 3 years to 51
- “... the promotion of economic development & welfare is being achieved in developing countries... through activities such as vocational training, educational programmes & the targeted inclusion of women & minorities” — British Council/DCMS, 2019



Heritage Round Table

Knowledge exchange

“The work being undertaken by UK universities & heritage institutions is broad-ranging, diverse & impressive, illustrating the UK’s eminence in heritage science & research & its people-centred approach” — UK National Commission for UNESCO, 2019



Tourist Burma Building

In situ conservation

“... one of Yangon’s most prominent & historically significant buildings. It will be the first major project of its kind in Yangon & a model for the preservation of the entire downtown district” —

Turquoise Mountain Trust, 2018

Source: Turquoise Mountain



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UK's 'soft power'

Key characteristics

“Soft power rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others... In behavioural terms, soft power is attractive power. In terms of resources, soft power resources are the assets that produce such attraction” — Nye, *Public diplomacy in a changing world*, 2008



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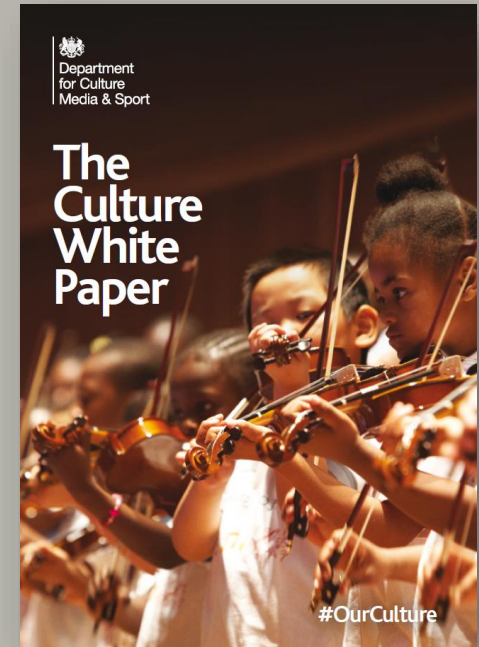
UK's 'soft power'

Influence & status

“Culture continues to expand the UK’s influence, promotes trade & investment & attracts visitors to experience the beauty of our landscapes, the treasures of our national heritage & the life of our towns and cities...

This respect & influence gives us status in global networks & international organisations”

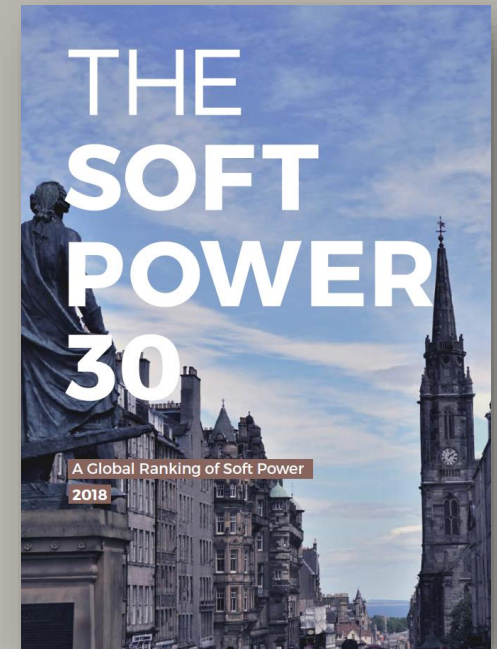
— DCMS, 2016



UK's 'soft power'

Top ranking

- “The UK’s soft power strengths continue to sit across the Engagement, Culture, Education, & Digital sub-indices. British soft power benefits from a wealth of publicly funded resources” — Portland/USC Center on Public Diplomacy, 2018
- “How the UK is perceived matters. Building on these investments, we will create a cross-government soft power strategy” — Cabinet Office, 2018



Soft power 'threats'

- “Many... have argued that possessing an attractive strategic narrative has become vital for states seeking to exercise influence & maintain credibility” — House of Lords Select Committee, 2014
- “Brexit has potentially significant implications for the UK’s soft power. It has already had a negative impact on perceptions of the UK in other European states” — British Council, 2018



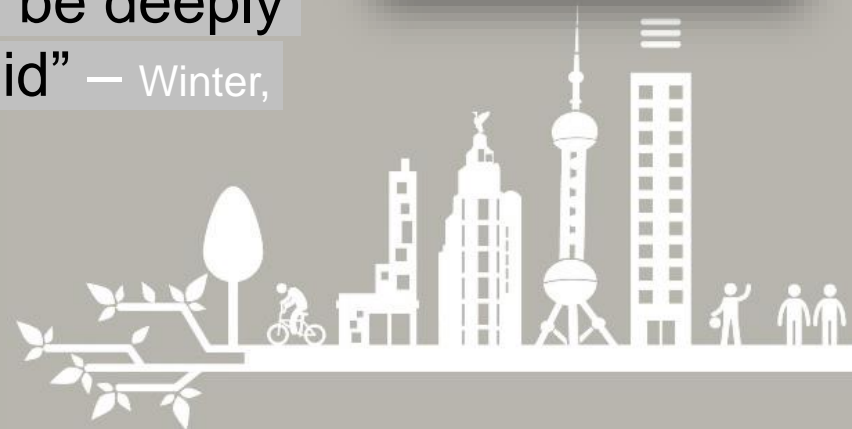
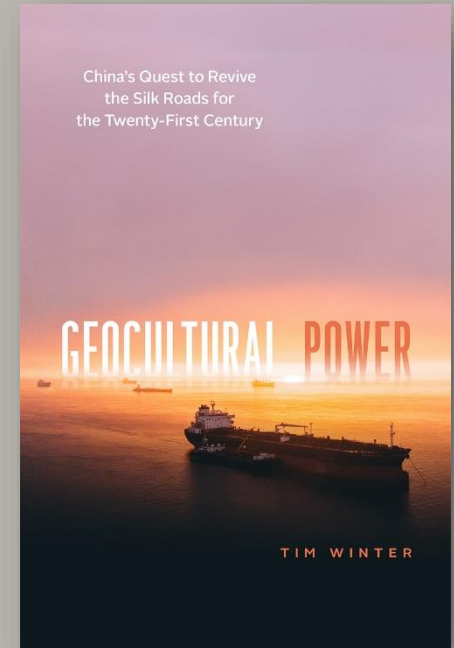
Heritage diplomacy

“Museums, archaeological sites, fortified cities, shipwrecks, & the artefacts of trade & exchange from centuries ago are thus called on to smooth out labyrinthine, fragmented histories & events, pulling them together into a singular, integrative story of a shared past, a shared heritage...”

... culture & heritage have come to be deeply entangled in other forms of ‘hard’ aid” — Winter,

2019

Hard / soft power



Critical tensions

INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL RELATIONS INSTITUTIONS BY COUNTRY/TERRITORY

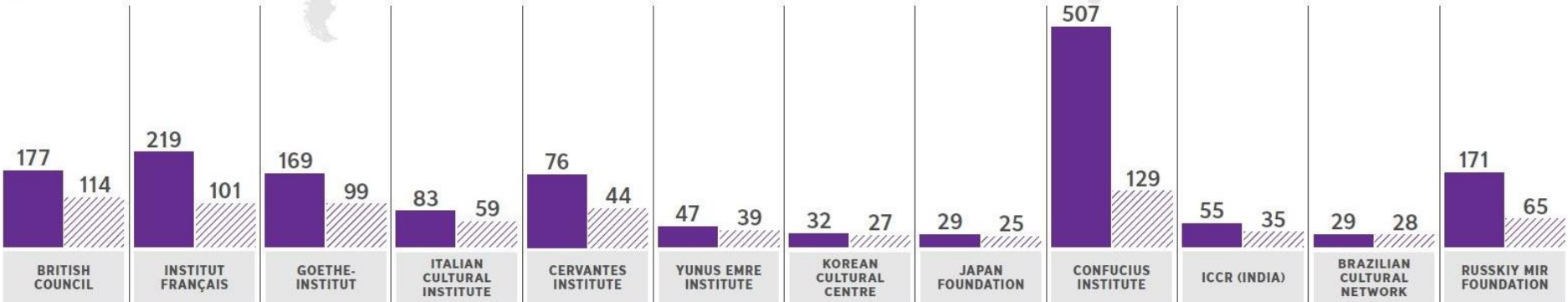
Click on the names of the cultural relations institutions to see their global coverage

Data correct as of October 2018

RESET ALL

Full-screen Snip

■ Offices/centres
▨ Countries



Source: www.britishcouncil.org



Critical tensions

UK's diplomatic futures

“Brexit has produced much heat & smoke but precious little light. There has so far been limited measured reflection on the UK's future place in the world... forces the UK to think more broadly about what it wants to be in this new era” — British Council, 2018



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Critical tensions

UK's diplomatic futures

“... divergent understandings of the past & its use in the present, including conflicting interpretations of the country's historical role in world affairs & the necessity to mediate an apparent resurgence in populist nationalism... revalorization by some of imperial heritages & colonial histories...”

... continuing strains on its structural integrity while respecting Devolution settlements with its constituent ‘nations’” — McClelland, 2019

