



CONFERENCE CONFLICT AND THE SENSES

FRIDAY 6 AND SATURDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2013,
IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM LONDON

The Fifth Imperial War Museums and University of Bristol Conference on

Materialities and Cultural Memory of Twentieth Century Conflict

In September 2001, IWM (Imperial War Museums) and University College London initiated a series of conferences focusing on the interdisciplinary study of twentieth and twenty-first century conflict – a focal point of which is the study of material culture and memory through a hybrid approach which embraces archaeology, anthropology, cultural history, military history, art history, cultural geography, and museum and heritage studies. The aim of the conferences is to offer an intellectual centre of gravity for a wide variety of scholars who specialise in different aspects of twentieth and twenty-first Century conflict, but whose work centres on some aspect of materiality.

The first two conferences focused on the First World War: the 2001 conference was published as *Matters of Conflict: material culture, memory and the First World War*, (ed.) N.J. Saunders, Routledge, 2004; the second conference, held in 2004, was published as *Contested Objects: material memories of the Great War*, (eds.) N.J. Saunders and P. Cornish, Routledge, 2009. With the third and fourth conferences, held in 2006 and 2007 respectively, we extended our remit to include the whole of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. These two conferences are currently being prepared for publication under the titles, *Bodies in Conflict: Corporeality, Materiality, and Transformation* (Routledge 2013) and *Conflict Landscapes: Material Culture and Meaning in Contested Places*.

Conflict and the Senses is the fifth in the series, and similarly covers the whole of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It acknowledges the recent increase of interdisciplinary interest in the role of the senses in human experience and cultural representation (smell, touch, sound). As modern conflict invokes the extremes of human behaviour, its relationship with diverse and multivalent sensorial dimensions suggests itself to be of critical importance in our understanding of conflict in the recent past and the present.

This conference, as with its predecessors, is free to all who participate, though if interest is particularly high we may need to operate a first come, first served policy. As has been our previous practice, the conference will comprise the speakers themselves and an invited peer audience.

Currently, we are planning to accommodate about 15 presentations on each day, each lasting 15-20 minutes. Papers which focus on the sensorial dimensions of any modern conflict (or its aftermath) during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries are acceptable as long as the emphasis is on the creative relationships between the senses, memory, material culture, landscape and conflict.

As a general guide, we are interested in any modern conflict (1900 – the present), in any location, and sensorial engagements with: personal experiences of conflict (or its

aftermath) by soldiers and civilians; landscape (battle-zones and conflict-related civilian spaces – such as the home, the museum, and commemorative places); artistic depictions/representations; souvenirs; tourism and heritage as legacies of conflict.

If you are interested in giving a paper or attending as part of the peer audience please send the following details to both Paul Cornish and Nick Saunders at the following emails: pcornish@iwm.org.uk and nicholas.saunders@bristol.ac.uk as soon as possible, and before 1 April 2013. Places are limited, so please let us know if you intend to attend for one or both days.

1/ Title of paper

2/ Your name, affiliation, and email

3/ 50 word synopsis of your paper

4/ An indication of whether you wish/are able to present your paper in person; and whether or not you are willing, in principle, to consider submitting a written version for subsequent publication.

This conference is organised by the University of Bristol (following Dr Nicholas Saunders appointment there in 2007 in the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology) and Imperial War Museums.