

Strongholds of the World

Interdisciplinary lecture series of the
Marburger Arbeitskreises für europäische Burgenforschung e.V., Germany,
and Aarhus University, research programme "Materials, Culture and Heritage", Denmark
in 2021

I. meeting:

When: Feb 4, 2021 12:30 PM Copenhagen

Topic: The World Heritage Site of Namhansanseong - A Military Stronghold in Korea

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Dr./PH.D. Doo-Won Cho, Seoul:

The military stronghold 'Namhansanseong' in Korea

Namhansanseong was an important military stronghold, as well as an emergency capital, from the 7th Century to the late 19th Century. Namhansanseong was never taken by enemies, though it was witness to several national and international battles throughout its history, and acted as a symbol of the defense of the kingdom with a Buddhist spirit of patriotism. The fortress was constructed by military Buddhist monks and managed for military purposes with 10 temples for the Buddhist monk army (Seungyeong Sachal) which was located inside the fortress for 300 years. The fortress is very meaningful historically and academically, not least because it shows a variety of Korean fortress construction techniques, but also because it bears witness to the exchange of important values of mankind and embodies various intangible values.

Namhansanseong consists of three different landscape components: a military component, a governmental component and a folklore landscape component. Each component is supported by authentic historical materials, and Namhansanseong's integrity and authenticity were recognized by its inscription as UNESCO World Heritage in 2014.

Namhansanseong is preserved and managed by Gyeonggi-do Namhansanseong World Heritage Centre (NHSS WHC). All measures for conservation management at Namhansanseong are carried out by Gyeonggi-do NHSS WHC in collaboration with the Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea, local governments, Namhansanseong Management Committee and Namhansanseong Cultural Heritage Guardians.



Our Speaker:

Ph.D. Doo-Won Cho is an expert on the World Heritage. He has studied in the Republic of Korea and in Germany architecture and monument preservation. He wrote his Ph.D. thesis about the royal Korean fortress town Suwon and its historical documentation in the “Hwaseong Seongyeok Uigwe” at the chair of monument preservation of the Otto-Friedrichs-Universität Bamberg, Germany. Since December 2019, he has been General Secretary of ICOFORT (International Scientific Committee for Fortifications and Military Heritage of ICOMOS) and he was ICOFORT Vice-president (2015–2019). He has worked extensively on the World Heritage Site Management of Korean fortress such as World Heritage Namhansanseong. He is one of team members for the formulation of 'ICOFORT Charter on Fortifications and military heritage(draft)'. Currently, he is an Expert committee member of World Heritage Division for the Cultural Property of Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea since 2017. He is an adjunct professor of the World Heritage Department at the Konkuk University in Seoul 2015–2019. Doo-Won Cho is also member of the Marburger Arbeitskreis für europäische Burgenforschung e.V./Marburg Working Group on European Castle Research.

Doo-Won Cho has been in charge of planning on the cultural policy of the Gyeonggi Cultural Foundation and research on the tentative cultural heritage, intangible cultural heritage and memory of the world of Gyeonggi-do Province, ROK. Otherwise, he is working at the Cultural Heritage team of the Gyeonggi Cultural Foundation and is in charge of World Heritage monitoring, - nomination, - conservation and management on the tentatively selected Sites like DMZ, Bukhansanseong fortress, Doksansanseong fortress etc.