Helaine Silverman
Editor

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Contested Cultural Heritage

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Religion, Nationalism, Erasure,
and Exclusion in a Global World

Springer

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Preface

What a pleasure it is to write these brief remarks presenting the next volume in the publication series on cultural heritage undertaken by the Collaborative for Cultural Heritage and Museum Practices (CHAMP) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign through the extraordinary vision of our editor at Springer, Teresa Krauss. Volume 1 dealt with *Cultural Heritage and Human Rights* (Springer, 2007). Volume 2 was concerned with *Intangible Heritage Embodied* (Springer, 2009). This volume, as its eponymous title indicates, considers *Contested Cultural Heritage* from the perspective of that which is erased, excluded, religiously laden, and politically fraught in the context of globalization today. Volume 4, forthcoming under the editorship of Dr. D. Fairchild Ruggles, explores *Heritage Cities*.

As cultural heritage becomes increasingly (indeed, inexorably) significant across the world, the number of issues for critical analysis and, hopefully, mediation rises in tandem. The literature has exploded in size and scope as my introductory essay attempts to indicate. Projects are burgeoning. These vary dramatically in size and scope, encompassing academic studies conducted by individual scholars or research center teams (the latter may be housed at universities or be private entities), large governmental and inter-governmental initiatives, NGOs from small and single-site or single-country-focused to regional to mega institutions such as World Monuments Fund and Global Heritage Fund, supra-governmental agencies such as UNESCO, ICOMOS, and ICAHM, and self-starting grassroots organizations. The projects themselves range from theoretical to applied. They may be ethnographic appraisals of a particular heritage situation (such as how people living in a particular place perceive their relationship to the local historic past), development work (such as how to rehabilitate an ancient irrigation system), politically empowering (such as assisting a historically disenfranchised group to assert land rights), religiously mediating (the work of the Department of Landscape Architecture–University of Illinois at the Indian site of Champaner-Pavagadh comes to mind), touristic (such as the multi-nation Ruta Maya and Qhapaq Ñan projects), and so on. Typically, every project is challenged by the inherently contested nature of cultural heritage.

This volume, like the others in the series, is the product of a conference held at the University of Illinois, funded through the generosity of a number of campus sponsors, among which the Center for Global Studies is most especially thanked

for its consistent support and encouragement since CHAMP's founding in 2005. As with most academic conferences, not all speakers ultimately wrote up their papers for publication. To the presenters at the conference leading to the present volume, I offer my sincerest thanks for their patience during the production process. I trust they will be pleased with the final product.

Urbana, Illinois   Helaine Silverman

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Chapter 1
Contested Cultural Heritage:
A Selective Historiography

Helaine Silverman

Although "contested cultural heritage" has not always been specified in these words, the concept has been cogently present for at least 25 years in anthropology, archaeology, history, geography, architecture, urbanism, and tourism (to name the most obvious disciplines) and is now a framework driving much applied research in these fields internationally. This is because we live in an increasingly fraught world where religious, ethnic, national, political, and other groups manipulate (appropriate, use, misuse, exclude, erase) markers and manifestations of their own and others' cultural heritage as a means for asserting, defending, or denying critical claims to power, land, legitimacy, and so forth. This introductory essay presents a selective historiography of contested cultural heritage as I perceive its development, illustrated by some of the better known cases of its instantiation and augmented by the contributions to this volume. I emphasize the more tangible aspects of cultural heritage (a bias from my training as an archaeologist) [Note 1] and draw heavily from anthropological/archaeological literature where academic attention to the issues has been greatest and whose practitioners dominate the roster of authors herein.

Shifting the Paradigm

Attention to contested cultural heritage is, fundamentally, awareness of the construction of identity and its strategic situationality and oppositional deployment—the knowledge that "self and society are not ... given, as fully formed, fixed, and timeless, as either integrated selves or functionally consistent structures. Rather, self and society are always in production, in process..." (Bruner 1983a:2–3). This statement was revolutionary at the time it was made and came from the heart of cultural anthropology in a volume entitled *Text, Play and Story: The Construction and Reconstruction of Self and Society* (Bruner 1983b). Its most compelling exemplification was Bruner and Gorfain's (1983) analysis of the dialogic narration and paradoxes of Masada, Israel's physically dramatic and ideologically sanctified site

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of Jewish heroism and resistance. Bruner and Gorfain recognized the multivocality of the Masada epic, identifying its competing political, moral, authoritative, and religious aspects. In so doing their study transcended a contribution to anthropological theory: in retrospect it can be seen as a pioneering recognition of heritage sites as sites of contestation [Note 2].

"Masada" (Bruner and Gorfain 1983) was virtually contemporaneous with two full-scale ethnographies of contested cultural heritage, one about Greece and the other about Quebec. These are the earliest such studies I am able to identify. Like "Masada," Herzfeld's (1982) study of Greek national identity was explicit about the role of contested cultural heritage in the push and pull of nation building and its larger geopolitical context:

> In 1821 the Greeks arose in revolt against the rule of Turkey and declared themselves an independent nation. . . they proclaimed the resurrection of an ancient vision. . . That vision was Hellas. . . This unique nation-state would represent the ultimate achievement of the Hellenic ideal and, as such, would lead all Europe to the highest levels of culture yet known.
>
> Europeans in other lands. . . were not uniformly impressed by the modern Greeks' claim to represent [Classic Greek culture]. By what token could the latter-day Greeks portray themselves as the true descendants of the ancient Hellenes. . . Were they still . . . the same as the Greeks of old? . . . they were not . . .
>
> Greek scholars constructed cultural continuity in defense of their national identity. . . .
>
> . . . the *idea* of Greece—like any symbol—could carry a wide range of possible meanings. . . Such is the malleable material of which ideologies are made.
>
> . . . paradox. . . difficulties threatened the coherence of the national ideology . . . . (Herzfeld 1982:3–4, 6; emphasis in original)

Handler (1985, 1988) studied Quebécois interest in their own French-origin cultural patrimony as opposed to the central discourse of Canadian *national* culture. In Quebec, cultural patrimony became a matter of *provincial*, which is to say *local*, concern and was deeply imbricated in new understandings and practices that challenged historic, mainstream patterns.

At the same time, Lowenthal (1985) published his more sweeping, influential, and transdisciplinary meditation on how the (Western) past has been understood, fashioned, and altered so as to become a usable, albeit "weighty" heritage. In *The Past Is A Foreign Country* Lowenthal illuminated how history, memory, and the physical remains of the past are employed to reveal the past and also how they enable *creation* of a past of our own liking—thus, a malleable past. He introduced concepts such as selective erosion, invention, and oblivion—the practice of which, on the ground, subsequently became demonstrated in almost countless studies including various in the present volume. Obviously, Lowenthal was not writing in a vacuum (as his extensive bibliography confirms), and here it is important to observe that he cited Hobsbawn's (1983) renowned essay on invented traditions, a concept that has become tremendously significant in heritage studies, particularly concerning intangible practices and debates over authenticity (see especially Bruner 1994; see e.g., Churchill 2006).

Archaeology participated in anthropology's "cultural turn" [Note 3], and in 1986 a veritable tsunami in archaeology was unleashed at a major international conference held in Southampton, UK—the first World Archaeological Congress

(WAC)—whose agenda focused on critical awareness of the treatment of the past in the present, concern with stakeholder empowerment and social justice, and related political and theoretically linked matters (see Campion 1989; Cleere 1989; Gathercole and Lowenthal 1990; Layton 1989; Miller et al. 1989; Shennan 1989).

> [WAC] insisted on recognizing that science, far from being politically neutral, constitutes a value system linked to dominant social interests, and the idea of science "being open to all" is ultimately a belief about the way the world should be, rather than how it is. WAC made clear statements that archaeology had long served state interests in shoring up nationalist identities and asserting territorial domains. At the same time, WAC put itself forward as a forum not merely for professional archaeologists and allied scientists, but for everyone interested in the past, with native people from underdeveloped countries specifically encouraged ... Since 1986, WAC has constituted itself as a uniquely representative nonprofit organization of worldwide archaeology that recognizes the historical and social role, and the political context, of archaeology, and the need to make archaeological studies relevant to the wider community. It especially seeks to debate and refute institutionalized views that serve the interests of a privileged few to the detriment of disenfranchised others. WAC explicitly values diversity against institutionalized mechanisms that marginalize the cultural heritage of indigenous peoples, minorities and the poor. ... attention to local archaeological communities trying to protect archaeological sites, or indigenous groups protecting sacred sites from industrial encroachment or tourism development. ... "value-committed archaeologies" ... or "engaged archaeology." ... archaeology carries in it a source of empowerment, not only in the generalized sense, as a means of knowledge production about the past, but more specifically as a means to grant time-depth and legitimation to individuals, groups or nations. ... political commitment and ethical judgement COUNT in archaeology and constitute an important FOCUS of inquiry ... interaction is taking place, accords are being struck and native voices are empowered to be involved in archaeological research. Community-based archaeology projects not only incorporate local knowledge, history, education and work schedules into research agendas, but the very objectives of archaeological research are now being set by local communities, as "value committed" archaeologists put themselves at the service of endangered ethnic minorities. In fact, this is the archaeology of the future. The discipline of archaeology is no longer the exclusive province of white European upper-class men, and there is no going back to a pre-WAC era of exclusionary, hierarchical and scientized knowledge that marginalizes the multivocal archaeology from the peripheries. The question of "who controls the past?" is no longer a conundrum because it must be generally conceded that there are many pasts and they will be known differently from many views. (Gero 2009, emphasis in original)

WAC consolidated its philosophy and membership in 1990 at its second meeting, held in Venezuela (see especially Stone and Molyneaux 1994; Bond and Gilliam 1994a). Here archaeologists explicitly took on the issues of power inherent in professional archaeological practice, societal norms, and governmental political policy, arguing that "social constructions of the past are crucial elements in the process of domination, subjugation, resistance and collusion. Representing the past and the way of life of populations is an expression and a source of power. These representations may frame relationships of social inequality, and can be intimately related to structures of power and wealth. They contain ideological and hegemonic properties that represent historical and sectional interests" (Bond and Gilliam 1994b:1).

Although the United States Congress surely was not reading academic literature, it is not coincidental that NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) was passed in the same year as the WAC-2 conference. The civil

rights concerns that were mobilizing Native American communities and their non-indigenous allies were consilient with the kinds of issues motivating WAC activism worldwide (e.g., Hammil and Cruz 1989). Indigenous peoples of Canada, Australia, and elsewhere around the world were now vociferously insisting on physical and ideological control of—or least participation in decision-making about—their cultural heritage, from sequestered human remains to sites to exhibited artifacts (e.g., Mamani Condori 1989; Rakotoarisoa 1989; Richardson 1989)—indeed, to the representation of themselves in the everyday (see e.g., Michaels 1987). And they were questioning the exclusive validity of Western science itself (e.g., Echo-Hawk 2000).

This assertion extended to the landscape itself whose occupation and use came to the fore as a prime battleground for contested claims between original inhabitants and more recent settlers, visitors, and overseers (e.g., Bender 1993; Bender and Winer 2001; Flood 1989; McNiven and Russell 2005; Smith 2001). In response to events on the ground, scholars were recognizing the landscape as socially constructed and engaged (e.g., Ashmore and Knapp 1999; Corner 1999; Cosgrove 1984; David and Wilson 2002; Duncan and Ley 1993; Hirsch and O'Hanlon 1995; Rotenberg 1995; Silverman 1990)—including landscape contestations in art (e.g., Cosgrove and Daniels 1988; McGill 1990) and as mapped (e.g., Bassett 1998; Cosgrove 1999; Edney 1990; Jackson 1989; Silverman 2002a; Wood 1992). Indeed, in 1992 "cultural landscape" became clearly acknowledged as heritage by UNESCO in the World Heritage Convention (http://whc.unesco.org/en/culturallandscape/), and in 2000 the European Landscape Convention was signed, recognizing cultural and historical landscapes in Europe (Scazzosi 2004).

Museums—as the premier sites of representation—were drawn into the paradigm shift as well. Their watershed was the Smithsonian's co-publication of *Exhibiting Cultures. The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display* (Karp and Lavine 1991) and *Museums and Communities. The Politics of Public Culture* (Karp et al. 1992). The book titles are self-explanatory. No longer were museums to be uncontested, authoritative spaces for the presentation and interpretation of dominant versions of history and culture. A new self-awareness among curators (certainly those trained in the social sciences) was leading to a new museology, informed by the same discourses rocking anthropology, archaeology, and allied fields. The changes can be seen in an extraordinarily prolific sequence of publications that cumulatively constitute the intellectual foundations of the contemporary field of museum studies [Note 4]. Within this arena, issues of contested cultural heritage have figured prominently, whether concerning the representation of African prehistory and the "ethnographic present" in white-dominated museums on and off the "Dark Continent" (e.g., Coombes 1994; Hart and Winter 2001; Schildkrout 1991; Kreamer 2006; see also Hall 1994; Spiegel 1994) or how Americans view the West of lore (see Dubin 1999a; Wallach 1994)—to cite just two dramatic examples [Note 5].

There was, then, in the 1980s an explosion of new ideas about cultural heritage [Note 6]. Contestation of cultural heritage lay evident before the academic eye, ripe for intervention and interpretation.

The Paradigm Realized

A continuous stream of publications in the 1990s consolidated the Kuhnian paradigm shift toward a socially engaged, politically aware study of the past that regards heritage as contested, recognizes the role of power in the construction of history, focuses on the production of identity, emphasizes representation and performance, and preferentially analyzes formerly colonial states and societies and their subaltern populations. The 1990s also witnessed the creation of new journals dedicated in significant part to expositions within the paradigm, notably *International Journal of Cultural Property* (founded in 1992) and *International Journal of Heritage Studies* (founded in 1994).

The shift in the heritage paradigm was particularly evident in Americanist scholarship for the USA has seen its share of contestation as previously disenfranchised groups have pushed to have their voices heard in the story of America. Two dramatic cases rocked the American archaeological world in the 1990s. They involved the serendipitous discovery of human remains and the resultant claims made by the descendant communities of historically abused minority groups to own and interpret the cultural heritage they argued belonged to them. Another example is Colonial Williamsburg, where the disenfranchised population was historically eliminated from the historical script.

The first case was the conflict over the discovery of an African burial ground in lower Manhattan in 1991, located where a new federal office building was being constructed (see, e.g., Harrington 1993; McCarthy 1996). The African American community of New York City was galvanized by the discovery (as were many others since slavery was not widely known to have been practiced in northern cities). Both the United States Government Services Administration (GSA) and the original contract archaeology team showed insensitivity to the academic let alone immense emotional and cultural significance of the find. Indeed, excavation to remove the burials began without a research design, without communication with the vibrant African American community, and with no African American expert participation in the project. At the time the mayor of New York City was himself African American and he became officially involved. Eventually, the rapid extraction of burials was halted, the contract firm was fired, a new contract firm was hired, and careful excavation of the burials under a sound research program was begun in consultation with African American scholars from Howard University, the premier historically black educational institution of the USA. Notwithstanding the loss of data and ethical tribulations, important information about the African Burial Ground was recovered, the slave remains were reburied, and today a beautiful National Historic Landmark stands as a memorial on this sacred ground.

The problem of contested heritage surrounding the African Burial Ground was serious. The GSA simply did not recognize the site as cultural heritage; the original contract archaeology firm was similarly driven by economics and efficiency. But legitimate stakeholder claims to their cultural heritage triumphed when not just the field project but also the analysis and interpretation were conducted by qualified scholars of the descendant community (see, e.g., Blakey 1998).

The second case concerned the find now known as Kennewick Man. Discovered in 1996 along the Columbia River in Washington state, controversy over the cultural affiliation of the skull ("Caucasian" or Native American Indian but without specific tribal origin; see Owsley and Jantz 2002) led to more than a decade of legal wrangling between archaeologists wanting to study it for its scientific information and Native American groups (supported by many other archaeologists) arguing that in their worldview no issue of ancestral migration into the continent was involved since their cosmology stated they had always been on the land (for a precise summary of the case, see Burke et al. 2008). Whose cultural heritage Kennewick Man was, and who had the moral and legal right to interpret and dispose of the "Ancient One," became enveloped in the recently passed NAGPRA law (see, e.g., Mihesuah 2000), the burst of dialogue between Native American peoples and archaeologists (a handful of whom were themselves Native American) (Bray 2001; Swidler et al. 1997; Watkins 2000; and the 1990s-dominated bibliographies in the previous references; the "Working Together" column in the 1990s *SAA Bulletin*, published by the Society for American Archaeology), and the development of a professional code of ethics by the Society for American Archaeology (Lynott and Wylie 1995).

We can also consider the ramifications of the paradigm at Colonial Williamsburg, one of the country's most visited historic places, where the sanitized white representation of pre-Revolutionary War- and Revolutionary War-era Virginia was challenged because the narrative and performance excluded the African slaves who had serviced the fine Georgian homes 200 years earlier. Colonial Williamsburg, a private, (self-professed) patriotic organization administering America's premier remaining colonial town, had to come to grips with the nation's shameful past. The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation implemented, with difficulty, new historical scripts acknowledging class distinctions and, especially, the existence of slavery (Handler and Gable 1997). But the "Other Half" optional tour through Colonial Williamsburg was not without its own contestation as tourists (black and white) accepted and rejected the facts and enactments put before them (Handler and Gable 1997). Most notorious was the controversy that arose in 1999 when Colonial Williamsburg innovated a slave auction, as would have happened in its era.

> Enslaving Virginia weaves the shameful history of human bondage into the fabric of storytelling at Williamsburg, underscoring a Revolution fought for the liberty of some, but not all. This edgy new representation of Colonial life casts costumed actors as slave leaders and slave owners while paying tourists find themselves in the roles of slaves.
>
> The reenactments are so realistic that some audience members have attacked the white actors in the slave patrol, who have had to fight to keep their decorative muskets. And when some early performances drove young children to tears, Williamsburg added "debriefing" sessions afterward to help calm them.
>
> One visitor even attempted to lead his own revolt against the slave handlers. "There are only three of them and a hundred of us!," he yelled. The actors had to step out of character to restrain him.
>
> At an attraction that historically has appealed almost exclusively to whites, the skits have stoked particularly strong emotions among African Americans, some of whom welcome frank discussion of a topic often given short shrift, even as they and others are discomfited by repeated images of subjugation. Several black actors have refused to portray slaves because they find it demeaning and emotionally wrenching. (Eggen 1999: A1)

Writing before Handler and Gable (1997) published their study of Colonial Williamsburg, Mondale (1994:17) generalized that "the intentionally preserved past (under the sponsorship of private and public agencies) is much more likely to conserve history as an amenity and an objet d'art, as quaintspace, than as an elemental, almost desperate struggle for shared meaning." His statement was prescient in its correct characterization of Colonial Williamsburg. And it anticipated current debates about the impacts of inscribing sites on UNESCO's World Heritage List, a topic requiring separate treatment.

Recovering an excluded past may be as difficult as including it. This is what we saw above concerning the controversy over representing slavery (and see Dann and Seaton 2002). Tunbridge and Ashworth addressed this issue by introducing the important concept of "dissonant heritage": "the heritage creation process is controversial in a number of respects. . ..The idea of dissonance . . . keeps at the forefront the ideas of discrepancy and incongruity. Dissonance in heritage involves a discordance or lack of agreement and consistency. . . [Also, the concept implies] a state of psychic tension caused by the simultaneous holding of mutually inconsistent attitudes or the existence of a lack of consonance between attitudes and behaviour. . . [Dissonance] is intrinsic to the nature of heritage. . . At its simplest, all heritage is someone's heritage and therefore logically not someone else's" (1996:20–21) (see also Meskell 2002:566).

Mondale (1994) takes a broad view on the issue of the "problematic past" and its conservation in the sense of remembrance, inclusion, and commemoration. He indicates the conundrums of "what to remember and what to forget. Selecting particular pasts to conserve is necessarily a matter of continuous negotiations among all interested parties" (Mondale 1994:15). Bruner (1996) provides us with a particularly compelling example from Ghana where the expectations of African American tourists concerning slave history at its source differ from Ghanaians' interest in the larger sweep of their history in which the dungeons of Elmina Castle (where slaves were held prior to their forced embarkation to the New World) played just one part. African American cultural heritage necessarily is different from Ghanaian and what emerges from the engagement are conflicting interpretations, contested claims of narrative ownership, and administratively enforced differentiation of patterns of site usage. Elmina Castle has multiple stakeholders and the process of history building is ongoing.

Indeed, cultural heritage may be very painful or troublesome, depending on the group you belong to, resulting in contestation of history and heritage. Lennon and Foley's (2000:46–65) treatment of the Nazi death camps in Poland exemplifies this: Jewish pain, enduring Polish anti-semitism. We could readily consider the struggle between multiple parties over Ground Zero in New York City as another example. Sather-Wagstaff (2009) cogently presents its transformation into a tourist attraction, while Meskell (2002) anticipates its transformation into a heritage site; these processes are occurring as economic developers and various municipal, state, and national authorities seek to impose their differing visions on this sacralized terrain.

In their introduction to *The Excluded Past*, MacKenzie and Stone (1994:1) are concerned with "the struggles that take place between subordinated groups who

seek access to, and a re-evaluation of, their past, and those who wish to deny them this goal" and why exclusion and omission happen. Forces of discriminatory ideology, power, social fabric, custom, and religious dogma may be responsible, among other factors. Typically, exclusion is directed at minority groups in a society. But an indigenous majority may be similarly dispossessed as was the case, for instance, in Zimbabwe (Pwiti and Ndoro 1999; see chapter by Larkin).

At its worst the exclusion of heritage leads to violence—violence toward cultural heritage that in the act of destruction of inanimate objects implicates loss of human life. Sadly, too many examples can be given, for example, the 1992 destruction of the Babri Masjid (mosque) in Ayodhya, India, by Hindu militants, which provoked riots across the subcontinent in which more than 2,000 people were killed. Hindus claimed that the mosque (built in 1528) was constructed over the temple site where Lord Rama was born. The Muslim destruction of the Hindu shrine (real or conceived) in 1528 assumed extraordinary significance four and half centuries later when fueled by particular contingencies (see discussion in Johnson-Roehr 2008; see also Dalrymple 2005; compare to the current struggle over Spain's Great Mosque of Cordoba: see Ruggles in this volume). Within the literature Bernbeck and Pollock's 1996 paper on the Ayodhya tragedy particularly interests me because their argument is phrased very much in terms of the archaeological literature of the time, with an emphasis on the linkages between archaeology, ethnicity, nationalism, and identity (see, e.g., Arnold 1990; Chapman 1994; Kohl and Fawcett 1995; Rowlands 1994; Schmidt and Patterson 1995; Shennan 1989; Smith 1989; also see Jones 1997, which was published the next year, and Meskell 1998, which was published the year after).

In addition to Ayodhya (Lal 2001; Sharma 2001), mention can be made of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 (Jansen 2005 and Knapp; Antoniadou 1998) and the Balkans War in 1991–1995 (Barakat et al. 2001; Chapman 1994; Sulc 2001), each replete with massive destruction of the cultural monuments and materials as well as human lives. It is small wonder that archaeologists remain engaged with contested heritage (see especially Golden 2004).

A different kind of violence in the contestation of cultural heritage has occurred in Britain, leading to a novel proposal by archaeologist Barbara Bender (1998) that is intellectually grounded in the paradigm shift I have been discussing. In 1985 (see Chippendale 1986) and again in 1988, there were violent clashes at Stonehenge (England's premier World Heritage Site) between New Age Druid cultists (accompanied by assorted others) and the site-protecting police. Since the mid-1970s "wierdos" (*sic*: Bender 1998:127) had been holding a Free Festival at Stonehenge, eventually attracting as many as 50,000 people. When police acted to evict these appropriators so as to protect the site from damage and, in Bender's opinion, acting on behalf of "English Heritage and the parts of the Establishment to promote a socially empty view of the past in line with modern conservative sensibilities" (1998:131), world heritage came into conflict—not just contestation over meaning—with a new group of stakeholders holding their own, non-archaeological, non-scientific interpretation of the great monument. Bender's remarkable mitigation of the struggle over use of the site was to create a "Stonehenge Belongs To You And Me" mobile exhibition in consultation with a group of free festivalers and

travelers (1998:149). Her goal was to legitimize the different voices in English heritage, rather than conceding all authority to English Heritage itself. Today there is negotiated access to the site (Darvill 2007; Stone 2008).

Amidst the many archaeological case studies of contested cultural heritage being produced in the 1990s, there were also important contributions from cultural anthropology (including the study by Handler and Gable discussed above). Several of Edward Bruner's studies are particularly noteworthy. In addition to Elmina Castle discussed above (Bruner 1996), Bruner (1993) studied New Salem, Illinois, where Abraham Lincoln lived for 6 years (1831–1837) as a young man, long before the apotheosis of the Civil War. Illinoisans claim New Salem as the place that transformed Lincoln into the figure he became as an adult—apocryphal New Salem is folded into the "Lincoln legend." Scholars argue that the tourist-impelled interpretation of Lincoln in the town is greatly exaggerated and inaccurate. Thus, New Salem is a contested site where history and popular interpretation of Abraham Lincoln clash.

Bruner's (Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1994) study of Maasai tourism in Kenya interrogates another kind of contested heritage—that desired by tourists who come to Mayers Ranch to see the enactment of "a colonial drama of the savage pastoral Maasai and the genteel British" and participate in a simulacrum of former colonial privilege. The Maasai performers who participate in the show manipulate social relationships with their white patrons and tourists so as to use their traditions to their own advantage, notably to earn money with which to live and propagate a Maasai way of life out of the view of tourists and their handlers.

Michael Herzfeld's (1991) influential study of the contest for ownership and interpretation of the past on Crete is fascinating because the actors in the conflict are all Cretan, consisting of local people in a formerly Venetian town (Rethemnos) pitted against the bureaucracy in charge of historic preservation. At issue is local, lived heritage ("social time") versus the officially privileged architectural heritage of the thirteenth through seventeenth centuries ("monumental time"), and the disputed ownership of history.

Michel-Rolph Trouillot has provided another holistic theoretical framework for understanding how power operates in the production and documentation of history. In so doing he explained the dynamics of heritage contestation:

> ... historical production occurs in many sites. But the relative weight of these sites varies with context... History is always produced in a specific historical context. (1995:22) ... History as a social process involves people in three distinct capacities: 1) as *agents* or occupants of structural positions; 2) as *actors* in constant interface with a context; and 3) as *subjects*, that is, as voices aware of their vocality (1995:23) ... differential exercise of power ...makes some narratives possible and silences others (1995:25) ... Power is constitutive of the story ... power itself works together with history (1995:28) ... facts are not created equal: the[ir] production ... is always also the creation of silences. (1995:29) (emphasis in the original)

We clearly see these factors at work in the contributions to this volume (see below).

Apprehending Contested Heritage in the New Millennium

The new millennium is seeing an ever growing and diversifying interest in the field of heritage studies. This is readily apparent in a rich crop of authored and edited volumes and in the need of the field for more topical publication venues, thus generating *Public Archaeology* (founded in 2000), *Journal of Social Archaeology* (founded in 2001), *CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship* (founded in 2003), *Archaeologies. Journal of the World Archaeological Congress* (founded in 2005), and *Heritage Management* (founded in 2008).

Several principal focuses have emerged dominant amidst the suite of issues I have identified above in my survey of the literature from the previous decades. There is significant overlap and cross-cutting in my categories below, which certainly can be reconfigured differently, but all instantiate contestation of heritage—inevitable because of heritage's intimate association with identity in its multiple domains of performance. Indeed, virtually the entire contents of the journal *Archaeologies* (see above) are devoted to critical contestations. As Ashworth et al. (2007:2, 3) recognize, "The inevitable outcome is that conflicts of interest are an inseparable accompaniment to heritage as practice and process... open to constant revision and change and [heritage] is also both a source and a repercussion of social conflict."

Based on the larger field of heritage scholarship concerning or invoking contestation, I would suggest the following as some of the major arenas of investigation evident in the new literature: (1) manufacture, marketing and consumption of heritage; (2) foreign ownership of trafficked illegal antiquities from source countries; (3) public outreach by heritage personnel (archaeologists, historians, museums, etc.) to previously disenfranchised stakeholder groups; (4) the concept of "value" including questions about UNESCO's actions in the work of cultural heritage; (5) local and national deployments of cultural heritage in a global world; (6) heritage and politics; (7) intangible heritage; (8) intersections of heritage with human and cultural rights (this issue is expressly addressed in Silverman and Ruggles 2007a [see also Ruggles and Silverman 2009b] and will not be further considered here, being a topic exceeding the scope of the volume at hand; this particular field is likely going to explode in importance in coming years [Note 7]).

Manufacture, Marketing, and Consumption of Heritage

Significantly increased world tourism has led to the outright marketing of major historic and archaeological sites by their national and international promoters, bringing more issues of consumption and contestation of heritage into play. Rowan and Baram's (2004) edited volume focuses on marketing heritage and consuming the past. I note two chapters in particular concerning the outright promotion of archaeological sites for the purpose of attracting tourist revenue. Ardren (2004) observes that the so-called Maya Riviera is crowded with Maya-themed hotels but the Maya people staffing the mass tourism industry receive poor wages and work in less than ideal conditions. And insofar as actual native Maya communities are concerned,

there is little economic benefit from the massive ancient heritage industry. Addison (2004) demonstrates that road signage in Jordan, a Moslem country rich in Islamic monuments, effaces that heritage from the tourist landscape by directing travelers almost exclusively to Christian sites. "It is not that the [Islamic] sites are unsigned. Every one of the Islamic holy sites, even in the most remote villages, is signed, but the signs are never visible from the heavily traveled tourist roads" (Addison 2004:238). Not only does the Jordanian heritage bureaucracy invest most heavily in Christian sites, favoring them over Islamic sites in terms of preservation, but also "Islamic heritage—history, religion, pilgrimage and Muslims themselves— are deliberately obscured from Western visitors" (Addison 2004:245). Addison believes that this Jordanian policy was influenced by the "eagerly awaited influx of millennium-minded Christian tourists" expected to appear in the year 2000. For this reason (among others), Jordan deliberately effaced its own national identity "and in particular its Islamic heritage" (Addison 2004:246). Of course, as Addison points out, the year 2000 was immediately followed by the September 11 attack and the second Palestinian intifada in 2001. Tourism to Jordan plunged. In response, "tourists must be courted into a landscape as free as possible of any hint of threat or discomfort. . . the Hashemite regime in particular has worked overtime to configure itself as a secular, Western-identified state" (Addison 2004:246).

AlSayyad's (2001) *Consuming Tradition, Manufacturing Heritage. Global Norms and Urban Forms in the Age of Tourism* is an important contribution identifying the commodification of traditional and historic environments for the purpose of tourism under the global regime. "[N]ations, regions and cities have utilized and exploited vernacular built heritage to attract international investors at a time of ever-tightening global economic competition. . . the tourist industry has introduced new paradigms of the vernacular and/or traditional, based on the production of entire communities and social spaces that cater almost exclusively to the 'other' " (AlSayyad 2001:vii).

Additional studies substantiate AlSayyad's statement. Shepherd (2009), for instance, gives multiple examples from China—for instance the newly renamed town of Shangri-La in northern Yunnan Province, which directly alludes to James Hilton's utopia. Meskell (2005) critiques the performance of ancient Egypt at the Pharaonic Village in Cairo. I have noted the Mochica Village that has been created on the grounds of the Royal Tombs of Sipán Museum in Lambayeque, Peru (Silverman 2005). Magnoni et al. (2007) demonstrate the enfolding of the ancient Maya landscape with the contemporary heterogeneous Maya in the production— by indigenous peoples as well as national tourism offices and the economic forces of globalization—of *El Mundo Maya* for the *Ruta Maya* tourist circuit (discussed below) (see also Ford, this volume) [Note 8]. Mortensen (2009) uses the phrase "creating Copán" to express the effort of the tourism "industry" (*sensu strictu*) to manufacture a tourist product in the context of a global commodity chain linking "the flows of people, technology, goods, capital and services between countries and regions" (Mortensen 2009:180).

Kelli Ann Costa (2004) has dealt with the organization of tourism and presentation of historic sites in Ireland. Her follow-up book, *Coach Fellas* (Costa 2009),

specifically considers Irish tour bus drivers who simultaneously perform as guides and are the crucial element in branding "people and place" as distinctively and authentically Irish. However, as she demonstrates, that vision of heritage contrasts with realities of contemporary Irish economic development.

Philip Duke's (2007) monographic study of tourism on Crete is especially interesting for its detailed observations of which archaeological sites are visited, what their condition is, if they are managed, and how foreign tourists encounter the Minoan past. As with Herzfeld's (1991) study of the more recent Venetian period Cretan past, locals are not sufficiently consulted in issues pertaining to the cultural heritage. Duke laments that "locals must continuously contest their access to the past of their own island, a past that is largely defined by academics, government bureaucrats, and the tourist industry" (2007:62). As interesting is Duke's observation that the larger—in terms of tourist numbers—draw of Crete is not its prehistory but its magnificent beaches. Duke cites a study by two tourism specialists who conducted an economic analysis in 2005 in which they analyzed what would make Crete's two most important archaeological attractions—Knossos and the Iraklio Museum— more appealing to tourists, since archaeological sites were not being sufficiently exploited as a resource. Their study advocated provision of amenities at the sites, "such as restaurants and audiovisual equipment." Duke criticizes their study for emphasizing "the means of delivery rather than the contents of the message itself," in other words, "the past has been coopted by the tourist industry" (2007:64).

Kreutzer's (2006) analysis of the economics of archaeological heritage management brings into focus the contest between archaeologists and developers working with income-seeking national governments. This is an issue familiar to Andeanists, for at various times in the past decade or so plans have been floated in Peru to privatize the more spectacular components of this country's remarkable precolumbian landscape. In Cuzco such plans have sometimes prompted mass protests. I have written about the resentment in Cuzco concerning entrance fees at particular monuments of the official tourist circuit, which inhibit or dissuade locals from enjoying their own cultural heritage, and the problem of "museumification," which generates an ongoing struggle between residents, municipal authorities, the private sector, and the global tourism industry (Silverman 2006a). Kreutzer recognizes the key issue: "The economics of privatisation policies threaten to disenfranchise the public from its own past" (2006:53). Appadurai takes a more general approach to the economics of the past: "The past is a scarce resource because its construction is subject to cultural as well as material constraints" (2007:48). He suggests that the economy governing the production of the past be examined.

A promising strategy for the future relationship between economics and cultural heritage was presented by Jeff Morgan, founder of the Global Heritage Fund (GHF), in his interview with Brian Williams on Fox News on September 28, 2009 as part of the channel's G20 meeting coverage [Note 9]. GHF works through partnerships with foreign governments and private entities (such as businesses, individual entrepreneurs, NGOs). Over the past 7 years that GHF has been in existence (it was founded by Mr. Morgan in 2002), it has invested $15 million in projects; my understanding is that these monies have been matched in the destination countries. In the

interview Mr. Morgan addressed the potential for cultural tourism to help developing countries, since making sites accessible necessarily involves development such as road building and other infrastructural improvements of the kind governments are expected to provide. Mr. Morgan argued that investment in showcase archaeological sites can help people living in poor countries (where individual income is "$2/day") by boosting those countries' economies through cultural tourism to the sites. For instance, he noted that Guatemala receives $400 million/year from Tikal. (It would be interesting to know what Guatemala does with that money.) Mr. Morgan advocates capacity building of governments and local communities. He is hopeful that GHF "can elevate the global crisis of our endangered heritage, and offer positive solutions for preservation and community development." The former goal is obvious: stop looting, stop uncontrolled development that destroys archaeological sites, stop destruction of the environment in which the targeted site is located. The latter goal is the one with which archaeologists, especially, have been concerned within the framework of "public outreach" as I discuss below. Most striking is the inclusion of cultural heritage preservation, as promoted by GHF, in the framework of the G20's global economic concerns and policies. This is dramatic testimony not just to the extraordinary power-brokering ability of Mr. Morgan and GHF's already impressive track record, but to the truly global significance of the marketing and consumption of cultural heritage—i.e., tourism—ideally with concomitant positive social, economic, and political development. But therein lies the proverbial rub for it is not a given that all domains will perceive widely shared positive results. Such outcomes must be specifically programmed.

Illegal Antiquities, Ownership, and Nationalism

Archaeologists have been concerned with looting and its resultant trafficking in illegal antiquities for quite some time. Following passage of UNESCO's 1970 "Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property," the *Journal of Field Archaeology* pioneered, in its very first issue in 1974, a regular feature column called "The Antiquities Market. News and Commentary on the Illicit Traffic in Antiquities." The goal of this section was stated to be "the proper recovery and the protection of antiquities." But at this time concern with looting and trafficking was largely academic and abstract: for archaeologists the pathology was the loss of context with which to reconstruct ancient civilizations; for UNESCO the issue was glibly glossed as "universally recognized" "respect" for the cultural heritage of "all nations" as well as nations respecting their own cultural heritage as a "basic element [of] national culture." Deeper analysis was missing on the role of certain material culture in the performance and reproduction of identity within societies and in the construction of nationalism.

Particularly with the Native American Indian empowerment movement in the USA, ultimately culminating in NAGPRA in 1990, interest in illegal antiquities expanded to encompass the role of ethnographic as well as ancient material culture

in the societies from which it was being removed. *The Ethics of Collecting Cultural Property* (Messenger 1989) was a state-on-the-art volume reflecting the broadened concerns of the time: Whose culture? Whose property? In a more recent volume, Brown (2003) has been explicit about the contestation of cultural heritage inherent in too many dealings between indigenous peoples/communities and the empowered establishment, across the realms of intellectual property rights, intangible heritage, and land. Hollowell (2009) presents a highly nuanced discussion of legal looting for in her case study there is a contestation of cultural heritage in the mind of every Native person on St. Lawrence Island who chooses to dig on community land so as to recover artifacts that can be sold to art dealers. "Diggers often felt emotionally torn between selling a unique object and wanting it to stay on the island. . .. In spite of their alienability, artifacts remained important cultural symbols for St. Lawrence Islanders" (Hollowell 2009:225).

It is not just "peoples" who seek the return of and/or control over their own cultural heritage. Countries—understood as those entities seated at the United Nations—increasingly in this decade are seeking the repatriation of particular objects. These countries are usually in the developing world, but not always (for instance Greece—see below—is a member of the European Union). We should be interested in *why* countries want to exercise their "right to those cultural properties which form an integral part of their cultural heritage and identity (i.e., their 'national patrimony')" (Warren 1989:8) and *how* those objects or cultural properties are manipulated in discourse and actuality.

Greece's dispute is only one of various involving source countries in the context of nationalism, tourism, and a coveted stake on the world stage (Greenfield 2007). Egypt seeks the return of the Bust of Nefertiti from the Berlin Museum and the Rosetta Stone from the British Museum, iconic objects that are huge tourist draws to their respective museums (see discussion in chapter by Ikram); indeed, in October 2009 Egypt announced it had cut all cooperation with France's Louvre Museum until it secures the return of its Pharaonic materials housed there. Nigeria wants to repatriate the Bénin bronzes from the British Museum (Greenfield 2007:124–128; see also Coombes 1994). Of particular interest are the series of Web articles by Dr. Kwame-Opoku (e.g., 2008) in which he argues, "How do a people remember their history when the records have been stolen by another State? The human rights of the African peoples. . . are being violated by this persistent and defiant refusal to return cultural objects [that] were not produced by the Europeans and Americans and were not meant for their use. Such a refusal also violates the freedom of religion in so far as many of the stolen African objects, for instance . . . the Benin altars . . . are necessary for the traditional practice of beliefs. . . Most of these objects should have been returned when the African countries gained Independence in the 1960s. The refusal to return the objects relating to power and culture is a denial of the right to self-determination." Peru is still embroiled in legal wrangling with Yale University over the repatriation of Hiram Bingham's collections from Machu Picchu, Peru's most famous archaeological site (Lubow 2007 *inter alia*). Eliane Karp-Toledo (2008), wife of Peru's former president, Alejandro Toledo, wrote in an Op-Ed piece for *The New York Times*, "I fail to understand the rationale for Yale to have any historical

claim to the artifacts. . . .The agreement reflects a colonial way of thinking . . . I wonder if it is pure coincidence that Yale delayed negotiations with Toledo, Peru's first elected indigenous president, until Peru had a new leader [Alan García, the current president] who is frankly hostile to indigenous matters. Why is it so hard for Yale to let go of these collections. . . Yale must finally return the artifacts that symbolize Peru's great heritage." Inca heritage and the precolumbian past have been fundamental in the construction of the imagined community called the Peruvian nation (e.g., Silverman 1999, 2002b). And the list goes on.

The massive looting of the Iraq National Museum in April 2003 is widely acknowledged to have been undertaken for profit rather than symbolic cultural erasure (Brodie 2006; Polk and Schuster 2005; Rothfield 2009; Stone and Bajjaly 2008 inter alia; see the more complex argument by Starzmann 2008), nor was looting restricted to the museum (see Rothfield 2008). Nationalism, however, came into play with the (quasi) reopening of the museum in Baghdad in 2009, a tangible effort to reforge the nation in this country with a long history of implication of archaeology in nation building (see Bernhardsson 2005 for an excellent survey). As reported widely in the international press, the reopening was controversial within Iraq with various factions (politicians, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Tourism, Shia and Sunni fundamentalists) differing on whether the move was premature, whether the museum had enough security, and if pre-Islamic materials should be exhibited. Nuri al-Maliki and senior officials were widely quoted as saying that they wished to demonstrate that the capital was secure and normal life was returning.

Indeed, antiquities need not be mobile for them to be removed from context—what looting and trafficking do. Violence to the archaeological record reached a culmination with the complete destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas by the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001, which was televised and condemned globally. As a warring party and de facto government, the Taliban contravened the 1954 Hague Convention, which seeks to protect monuments in times of violent conflict. This tangible and symbolic act was the most dramatic contestation of cultural heritage yet seen, for it simply denied and erased a block of time (everything pre-Islamic) as heritage at all. The Taliban asserted ownership over that cultural heritage, which it denied as heritage, and the right to dispose of it. Taking place in a country without a descendant community (there are no Buddhists in Afghanistan), the destruction also was a contestation of the right of the international community—including UNESCO—to intervene in foreign soil and to assert humankind's ownership of the world's cultural heritage, defined universally, but, of course, from a Western perspective (see Meskell 2002:564).

Public Outreach

One of the most dramatic changes in the heritage field has been in the area of public outreach, a catch-all term I will use here to encompass a range of practices such as interpretation, educational dissemination, civic engagement, community development projects—basically, everything that would fall within the purview of applied

anthropology. The clearest evidence of the change can be seen in a story told by Paul Shackel about an old, mud-coated sign, dating to the mid-1970s, that he found on the grounds of Harpers Ferry National Park: "Yes—we are archaeologists. Yes— we are doing archaeology. Please do not disturb us." (Shackel 2002:157). No longer does that attitude obtain.

Public outreach is manifested in sensitivity to stakeholders, whether they are a descendant community or non-related neighbors living in proximity to something that has been identified as "heritage" (on the latter, see Atalay 2007 for an especially interesting study). That label of "heritage" may spring from what Smith (2006) has called "authorized heritage discourse" (top-down), or the assertion of heritage may be locally generated (bottom-up). Public outreach is a decision by authorities (be they archaeologists or others) to relinquish exclusive control of the past and to transcend the purely academic or self-serving results of research.

Although still not widely enough accepted let alone enacted (see, e.g., McManamon 2000), this new model of *présent-ing* the past surged into the mainstream of heritage practice over the course of the 1990s and into the current century (see, e.g., Lynott and Wylie 1994; Watkins et al. 2000; Little 2002; Derry and Malloy 2003; Shackel and Chambers 2004; Silverman 2006b; Little and Shackel 2007). Smith and Wobst (2005:6) write, "Traditionally, archaeology has been done 'on' not 'by,' 'for,' or 'with' Indigenous peoples. . . . these groups are in disadvantaged positions in comparison to the dominant populations. Especially in developing countries, they are those people whose voices are the least likely to be heard."

A significant amount of applied research has been conducted by Australians "on" and more recently "with" the Aboriginal people of this continent. The scholars involved are deeply committed to assisting and enabling the Aboriginals to defend their land rights and customs in what has been a centuries-long contestation of indigenous culture versus a hostile dominant Anglo society. Flood (1989) provides a succinct summary of the development of cultural heritage legislation through the beginning of meaningful collaborations between white scholars and Aboriginal stakeholders. Yet the secondary title of her paper—"the development of cultural resource management in Australia"—is markedly different in its abstraction (one might say "objectification") from the wording chosen in more recent works. Lilley and Williams (2005) are open about the skepticism and open hostility of Aboriginal peoples toward archaeology and anthropology. They recognize that Aboriginals may perceive complicity in the study of their past in perpetuating colonial subjugation and that the "fight by non-Indigenous people against racism and human rights abuses is a form of paternalism" (Lilley and Williams 2005:228). They advocate "mutuality in a difficult postcolonial milieu" (2005:230): "equitable and mutually beneficial working relationships between archaeologists and Indigenous people, and on that basis help . . . advance the development of a tolerant, just, and open society. . .recognize . . . the need of all parties (. . . 'stakeholders') to come to grips with the past so they can make sense of the present and head more confidently into the future" (2005:234).

McNiven and Russell take the stakeholder argument one step further in a position that bores deepest into the uncomfortable contestation of cultural heritage between its cultural affiliates and ("good guy") non-affiliate researchers. They write,

> We fundamentally disagree with the stakeholder paradigm and interest-group model. Indigenous peoples are not mere stakeholders in their heritage—they own that heritage and have the right to fully control *if* and how research is undertaken on that heritage. . . . As such, they may wish (or not wish, as the case may be) to have non-Aboriginal guests research their cultural sites on their own terms and conditions. . . . The stakeholder model has appeal among many archaeologists and cultural heritage managers because it facilitates management of archaeological sites and associated conflicts over how such sites should be treated. Under the guise of democratization of the management process, the entire ownership issue is sidestepped and Indigenous peoples are reduced to mere participants in the management of Indigenous sites. (2005:236, emphasis added)

It is not just Indigenous/Aboriginal people who have been disenfranchised. In the USA, African Americans and other minorities have been poorly served in the national interpretation of the past, until recently. Recent examples of empowering outreach toward contested cultural heritage in the context of disenfranchised people include Mullins' (2004, 2007) applied archaeology project in Indianapolis, undertaken at the behest of the stakeholders themselves, that has reclaimed a rich but invisible African American history in a blighted neighborhood (see also Jackson 2009). James Wescoat (2007), a geographer and landscape scholar, describes a major project that has been mitigating Hindu–Muslim tension in a contested shrine at Champaner-Pavagadh in Gujarat, India—ground zero in 2002 of violent conflict—through a clever cultural heritage conservation and ethnic conciliation project.

Activist or to some degree socially engaged scholars are attempting to "do good." But we must recognize that public outreach is rife with tension or its potential. Almost universally, for one group to claim its heritage and desire to manipulate it in some manner to its own benefit will bring it into contestation, even conflict with another group—let alone when some group wishes to act upon a heritage that is not culturally its own. These problematic issues are developed in the case studies presented in the edited volume I have cited above.

Anne Pyburn (2006, 2007) has been sanguine in her assessment of the potential for the scholar himself/herself to be drawn into local/local–national disputes once the Pandora's Box of engagement is opened.

> It is nice [for the archaeologist] to bring wages into a poor village. It may not be nice to undermine the local political order by paying wages and giving power to village factions who oppose the local majority. . . It is also not really nice to tell local people who have been in mortal conflict with their government for generations over their land rights that you have come to take away the ancient altar their ancestors put on the land, so that the government can protect it for them. . . .. Heritage can affect people's life chances in the modern world, and consequently archaeologists cannot be the only arbiters of the past that we hope to reclaim. (2006:264)

Value and UNESCO

With promulgation of the World Heritage Convention (*Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*) in 1972, UNESCO became the foremost heritage authorizer, establishing the ground rules for the 185 signatories (as of June 2008) to this international document. Since its inception, however, scholars have recognized inherent problems in key principles of the document, in addition to obstacles concerning its implementation.

Byrne criticized the western hegemonic aspect of archaeological heritage management, which has been imposed as well as spread by an ideology that takes "universal value" as inherent and that privileges those sites which are "intelligible to the Occidental mind and . . . the Western way of experiencing the past" (1991:276). This would explain why 132 states-parties generated World Heritage Sites in only 82 countries as of 1992 (20 years after the Convention was signed) with the disparity largely coming from the non-Western world. Pressouyre worried that the Convention "condemns to oblivion the forms which have not been accepted into the history of civilization and the history of art" (1996:47). The disparity between, especially, European sites on the World Heritage List and sites in non-Western countries continues although UNESCO is striving to diminish the imbalance (see related discussion in Labadi 2007).

Pressouyre identified three types of fundamental contradiction in the World Heritage Convention: "impingement of [national] sovereignty, transfer of sovereignty [as when Germany was unified], properties endangered due to internal conflict [as when Yugoslavia broke up]" (1996:9). He also went on to indicate a contradiction between the Convention's requirement of uniqueness and representativeness (1996:16). For instance, "no absolute masterpiece (neither a Greek temple, nor a Maya pyramid, nor a Hindu pagoda) can pretend to be universally recognized" (1996:18).

Smith has analyzed heritage as a social and cultural practice and process (2006:13) that legitimates particular spokespersons and managers of "the past" (2006:29); "alternative and subaltern ideas about 'heritage' [are undermined]. . . as a result of the naturalizing effects of . . . the 'authorized heritage discourse' " (2006:11). That "authorized heritage discourse" makes heritage innately valuable (2006:29). It is the basic criterion of "outstanding universal value" in the Convention that many find most objectionable because it is both elusive and Western-biased (see, e.g., Cleere 2001; Pomeroy 2005; Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996:21).

Because World Heritage Sites are more prone to attract tourism than other sites (indeed, this may be the key reason why countries compete to have their sites placed on the UNESCO list), another issue of value is implicated in the listing beyond alleged "universal value." It is the value of these sites to stakeholders below the level of UNESCO, the global tourism industry, and the nation-state. What is their value and who decides? We can see this issue played out in microcosm—outside the sphere of World Heritage Sites—in Gordillo's (2009) study of architecturally modest historical sites in northern Argentina. Stakeholder attitudes there ranged from disinterest, to mild curiosity, to antagonism toward the ruins—the latter in terms of

a conflict over preservation versus use of the land for an industry that would provide badly needed jobs versus perceived tourism potential. Four case studies in a recent Getty volume (de la Torre 2005) explore "heritage values" as these impact site management. The Getty studies emphasize preservation of the significance and values of a place/site—to be elicited from various stakeholders replete with the conflicts and contestations that may emerge, such as no value being attached, or symbolic value at odds with potential economic value (on cultural heritage from the point of view of a team of economists, see Hutter and Rizzo 1997).

In an article in a recent issue of *The Economist* ("The Limits of Soft Cultural Power," September 12, 2009, p. 65), the director of the World Heritage Centre says that UNESCO should be protecting not buildings but human values (undefined). But, he continues, "the process breaks down in countries where governance hardly exists. And places where tourism and other economic activities are expanding uncontrollably may also trample on UNESCO's high principles, which seek to preserve the integrity of sites and their surroundings." Responding to the worldviews, politics, economic constraints, and pressures of 185 countries, UNESCO is itself conflicted over its own cultural heritage policies.

A country's nominations to the UNESCO World Heritage List can reflect conflicts over cultural heritage at home. Mexico is a case in point. In a fascinating study Bart van der Aa (2005) has analyzed Mexico's 22 World Heritage Sites in terms of their antiquity (precolumbian, colonial, post-colonial) and nature. He is able to demonstrate a careful, deliberate balance practiced by Mexico in nominating, almost in tandem, one archaeological site and one historic site each year beginning with the first nomination in 1987. Such a pattern cannot be coincidental and van der Aa relates it to the particularities of Mexico's official construction of national identity which overtly privileges "mestizo," the combination of indigenous and Spanish. He sees each of the identities comprising Mexico's official national identity as contested. Indigenous people are still at the bottom of the social ladder notwithstanding the nation's appropriation of the greatest of their centers (he does not develop the argument further, but it would be in government and private architecture, marketing for tourism, and so on). Those people descended from the Spanish conquistadores are tainted by the brutality of the conquest and conversion to Catholicism. Since the Mexican Revolution that which is "pure Spanish" has been officially de-emphasized or denied in favor of the hybrid culture. Inasmuch as under conditions of globalization, in which UNESCO participates, it is important for all countries to be represented on the World Heritage List for the marketing of national identity, Mexico has chosen to value sites representing the diverse components of its history. Furthermore, Mexico has now added a group of post-colonial sites to the Tentative List submitted to UNESCO. While one may certainly question the "outstanding universal value" of the Rivera and Kahlo Museum or the railway station at Aguascalientes (among other Tentative List sites), it is very interesting that Mexico, unlike the vast majority of states-party to the World Heritage Convention, is moving its concept of cultural heritage into the present era, seeing it as dynamic and in process. Van der Aa (2005:140) makes the important observation that heritage selection has a temporal character (i.e., nominations are a product of their

contemporary times). Mexico is undertaking "an orientation *towards* new kinds of heritage that might represent 'real' Mexicanness. It is, at the same time, a movement *away from* the former, one-sided, stress on pre-colonial and colonial heritage" (van der Aa 2005:141, emphasis in original).

Finally, UNESCO faces contestation of its own "universal" authority and the value of its product. Two high-profile, efficient, private, heritage-protecting organizations with politically unencumbered budgets and personnel—World Monuments Fund and GHF—conduct surgically effective interventions around the world (see GHF discussion above). And, in 2009, the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology at University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) launched a "Sustainable Preservation Initiative," directed by Lawrence Coben, which seeks to move heritage work further into the field of social responsibility through its explicit attention to stakeholder communities under the slogan "Saving Sites By Transforming Lives."

Local, National, International, and Global Intersections

Smith and Wobst (2005:6) have argued, "More and more decisions that affect Indigenous peoples and their communities are made at the global level, far away from local realities….often Indigenous peoples have neither voice nor representation in the global decision-making that affects their lives. Archaeologists have a responsibility to facilitate Indigenous voices [and] enable the voices of Indigenous peoples to be heard and inform decision-making at the global level." Silberman (1995:257) has incisively argued that "the archaeology of every new nation addresses *both* a domestic and an international audience." Today, tensions in the local, national, international, and global interface lie at the heart of contested cultural heritage. This fact is precisely apprehended by Lisa Breglia:

> For regional and national institutions charged with preserving and promoting culture, heritage comprises material spaces of intervention, such as archaeological ruins, used to produce symbolic meanings that forge identity, belonging, and community at regional and national levels…. Cultural heritage sites are key accoutrements of the … state as an 'imagined community'… But their material and symbolic significance does not stop at the nation's territorial borders. Cultural heritage sites are sites of international interest for tourism and conservation/preservation interests, as well as for academic researchers. (2009:61)

One of the most stunning cases of the intersection of local, national, international, and global interests in cultural heritage occurred in 1997 when 58 foreign tourists were massacred at the Temple of Hatshepsut, just outside the Valley of the Kings, in Luxor, Egypt. This was not purely a barbarism of fundamentalist Islam. The pathologies leading to the massacre had begun decades before with the Egyptian government's attempt to remove and resettle the local population in Gourna, whose homes sat over ancient tombs, which the Gournis had been looting for generations if not centuries (Fathy 1969; Mitchell 2001). Architect Hassan Fathy's plan to provide the Gournis with better housing in New Gourna, a town of his own creation, was resisted by the populace ("Even the peasant is slow to take an interest in proposals

for bettering his condition. He is apathetic and dumb, he has no education, no conception of national affairs, no status. He does not believe that he can help himself or make himself heard." [Fathy 1969]) and delayed by officialdom ("cooperating with the bureaucracy is like wading through a bog. . . we are all at the mercy of a system of official procedure that everybody hates" [Fathy 1969]) (see Mitchell 2001).

Meskell (2005) and Mitchell (2001, 2002) brought Fathy's tale of the two towns up to date, beginning in 1991 when Egypt began to aggressively pursue tourism in the context of liberalization and privatization. The same conflict between tradition and modernity that Fathy railed against came into play once more, with tourism being "a means to modernization, transforming its heritage into a tourist product and profit-making capital" (Meskell 2005:131; Mitchell 2002:250, n.14:362–363). Most Gournis have not wanted to leave their homes and move to New Gourna, not in Fathy's era and not since then (Mitchell 2001:217–218). The Egyptian government (backed by ICOMOS, the World Bank, USAID, see Meskell 2005:133–134; Mitchell 2001:222) has not wanted them to loot or intrude on the "past perfect" image of the west bank of the Nile River. In the 1990s the effort to evict the Gournis was "linked not just to arguments about archaeological preservation, but to demands to create a proper tourist experience. National heritage is now to be shaped by the forces and demands of a worldwide tourist industry" (Mitchell 2001:228). Gournis have made money, in varying degrees, from the tourism industry (directed at a pre-Islamic past that they do not necessarily claim as their own; see discussion in Meskell 2003) while being captive to its fluctuations. The attack was as much a protest against Cairo as it was against the West. The ancient Egyptian temple was the ideal vehicle for the murderers to assert their claims.

Recent studies of contemporary Maya populations in Central America also have emphasized multi-scalar antagonisms. Mortensen (2007) has written about the disparate treatment of the idolized ancient Maya and their downtrodden descendants in Copán, Honduras. The "ancient Maya have been transformed through archaeology and tourism into a valuable worldwide commodity" (Mortensen 2007:135), whereas the history of the larger number of non-Maya indigenous people and those populations themselves are officially marginalized. Nor is the situation of the contemporary Maya much better. Frühsorge (2007) considers pan-Maya activism in Guatemala with regard to particular Maya groups and with regard to the state. Since the end of the civil war in Guatemala in 1996, heritage claims to spectacular Maya sites and sacred landscapes are contested by the lowland indigenous Maya and highland Ladino elite (who assert Maya and indigenous descent). As Frühsorge recognizes, there are tensions between local and national histories, which are exacerbated by the privileging of the Classic Period Maya.

The living Maya of Mexico also are center stage in recent considerations of local, national, international, and global interconnections. Breglia has analyzed a particular situation on the Yucatán Peninsula, where the local Maya group is so feisty that "they do not even consider themselves to be descendants of the ancient Maya" whose Chunchucmil ruins partially overlap the community's federal land grant (2009:55). Notwithstanding the income earned by community members through participations in six seasons of excavation conducted by Breglia, "few embraced

the archaeological significance of the site [and they had their own] construction of a competing notion of heritage that challenged the nascent archaeological discourse" (Breglia 2009:56). These Maya were concerned with protecting their rights under the national land grant system (*ejido*). Breglia's analysis is exemplary in cautioning archaeologists, state, and international heritage management policy: "While cultural patrimony is linked with the state, national, and international discourses of universal cultural value and 'good' . . . the concept of patrimonio ejidal is a locally constructed and historically embedded concept tied to experiences of . . .debt peonage . . . and the socioeconomic transformations of the rural landscape" (Breglia 2009:57–58). Local people may feel much more inclined, based on experience and knowledge, to stake their future on the land rather than the promises held out to them by tourism development in the global context. The issue is further informed by the Mexican constitution, which gives the nation inalienable rights over archaeological remains rather than individuals or local communities. Thus, Breglia concludes that "distinct regional and even local (site-specific) understandings of Maya cultural heritage exist both in tandem and in tension with the Mexican nationalist discourse on cultural heritage, as well as with the criteria of universal cultural value defined by UNESCO" (2009:60).

The issue of land rights and cultural heritage manifested in archaeological sites (see Breglia above), particularly World Heritage Sites, necessarily creates linkages at all levels of administration, from the local community to UNESCO. Gillespie's (2009) treatment of Angkor provides the maximal case in point. Here, in a region decimated by the murderous Khmer Rouge regime (as occurred throughout Cambodia), some one hundred villages occupy the Archaeological Park. Land is vitally important to these impoverished farmers and is recognized as such by the government "so much so that the concept of security of tenure has become securely ensconced in the country's development rhetoric" (Gillespie 2009:339). The Archaeological Park has been zoned with decreasing degrees of protection emanating out from the high-profile core encompassing 208 sq km in which residential use and commercial development are prohibited. Moreover, Gillespie notes an "apparent lack of community consultation on issues, particularly that of security of tenure for residents within the Park" (2009:345). Although management of Angkor is a work in progress, the pressure of tourism must be gaining. I can envision a future situation in which Cambodia is de-mined, new archaeological sites are opened for tourism to relieve pressure on Angkor's monumental core, and farmers under new conditions of political freedom begin to protest for land rights that will earn them immediate tangible benefits rather than the often elusive and inequitably distributed income from tourism. Indeed, Gillespie observes that compensation provisions have been overlooked in the 2001 Land Law, whose Article 5 is basically an eminent domain argument: "No person may be deprived of his ownership [of land] unless it is in the public interest" (cited in Gillespie 2009:347)—and, indeed, UNESCO's concept of "outstanding universal value" is interwoven with the codified idea that World Heritage Sites "*belong* to all peoples of the world, *irrespective* of the territory on which they are located" (http://whc.unesco.org/en/about/, emphasis added). The tangible benefit of World Heritage Sites in developing countries readily

accrues to the national government through tourism income and economic development, usually to regional governments, and certainly to private enterprise. At the local level these benefits may be far less or even missing.

This issue of disparity was a key point of departure for my own project in Cuzco, former capital of the Inca Empire and today Peru's premier tourist destination. Among my goals was to assess local opinion about the benefits of tourism in this World Heritage Site (see, especially, Silverman 2002b, 2006a). I was surprised to find a significant range of public opinion, for where I saw exploitation the local population often saw opportunity—some work is better than no work, basically—notwithstanding an almost uniformly sanguine realization about economic inequities and the loss of social space in the historic center. Indeed, a fundamental theme throughout manifold studies of cultural heritage is the social construction of space and its obligatory counterpart, the contestation of space.

Several fascinating studies about local–national conflict over cultural heritage rights in Bolivia have recently been published. They concern disputes over the transfer of archaeological materials from their point of origin (local, indigenous) to a new place of display (national capital, hispanic, mestizo) and the repatriation of these materials. The most salient case concerns Aymara political mobilization which finally (and recently) culminated in this historically disenfranchised ethnic group gaining control over their ancestral site of Tiwanaku (a World Heritage Site) with tangible and intangible benefits accruing, including the return of the renowned Bennett Monolith of Tiwanaku from a traffic roundabout in La Paz to a new site museum on the altiplano under Aymara control (Scarborough 2008; see also Hastorf 2006:87). At the time (early 1930s), the removal of the Monolith from Tiwanaku, following its discovery, was framed as an act of rescue (protection from the local Aymara inhabitants, regarded as ignorant and destructive), but clearly it also was an appropriation of the indigenous past by a dominant society that had utter disdain for the civilization's descendants (indeed, it was disputed whether the ancestral Aymara had even created Tiwanaku). When the Monolith was finally returned to Tiwanaku and the Aymara, the context of the cultural restitution was one of rising political power for indigenous peoples.

A comparable story is told by Benavides (2004:164–178) concerning a precolumbian Ecuadorian carved monolith, known as San Biritute, which a local community claiming descent from the ancient culture wanted repatriated. It had been removed by force in 1952 and taken to the coastal city of Guayaquil. Now, in 1994, the *comuna* wanted it back and said they'd been trying to get it for decades. For the comuneros the monolith had ritual power, particularly to produce rain. In Guayaquil the archbishop wanted it put in a museum, not returned to the community where it could generate cultism. The conservative mayor of Guayaquil agreed and the monolith is exhibited in the museum where it can be seen but not worshipped. This struggle between a rural community and a major city over a precolumbian icon revealed a contest that "has very little to do with historical reasoning per se and much more to do with history's relationship with political authority and power" (Benavides 2004:174–175). Benavides provides other material supporting his overall argument that in Ecuador (as elsewhere) historical representation

plays a fundamental role "in the maintenance and functioning of national political domination" (Benavides 2004:179).

Especially with Gupta and Ferguson's (1992) attention to interconnectedness of space under conditions of human mobility and transnational cultural flows and Appadurai's (1996) discussion of the production of locality, the situation of heritage is yet more complicated. With the realization that we live under conditions of globalization, claims to cultural heritage now involve, among other important aspects, the role of diasporic populations. Hodder writes, "With globalisation 'others' have become less strange and have been imported into all societies as a result of human mobility, migration and tourism" (1998:127). Orser (2007) identified this issue clearly when he wrote about contestations between Irish Americans and the Irish living in Ballykilcline, Ireland over the rights of heritage. Diaspora is at the heart of Bruner's (1996) discussion of African American pilgrimage to slave sites in Ghana (see also Landry, this volume). Moreover, in this age of multiculturalism and in keeping with UNESCO's mantra of world heritage and universal value, all groups can claim what otherwise would be the heritage of others, supported, when necessary, by differing degrees of argumentation and historical legitimacy.

In the Political Arena

Cultural heritage policies and practices are inherently political, lending themselves to manipulation: What is considered heritage? Why? By whom? Why? What is not? Why? What is well managed? Why? What is ignored or erased? Why? What is included in the discourse of nationhood? Why? What is excluded? Why? Who benefits from repatriation or cultural restitution? Why? Earlier and recent literature bear directly on these questions.

In an oft-cited article Appadurai wrote that the past is "collectively held, publicly expressed and ideologically charged... versions of the past ... are likely to vary within the groups that form a society... discourse concerning the past between social groups is an aspect of politics, involving competition, opposition and debate" (1981:202). Rafael Samuel, the famous Marxist historian of British urban life, was also concerned with the politics of heritage, writing, "Politically, heritage... draws on a nexus of different interests. It is intimately bound up with competition for land use, and struggle for urban space. Whether by attraction or repulsion it is shaped by changes in technology. It takes on quite different meanings in different national cultures, depending on the relationship of the state and civil society, the openness or otherwise of the public arena to initiatives which come from below or from the periphery" (2008:287).

Istanbul is an excellent example of the political aspects of heritage. The city has been a microcosm of Turkey's ethnic mixing for centuries. Bartu (2001) recounts the intersection of heritage politics and urban development through consideration of debates over historic preservation and revitalization of the Pera/Beyoglu district, which was established in the thirteenth century by Genoese traders and functioned as an independent enclave in an otherwise Byzantine context. Under the Ottomans

in the fifteenth century it still maintained its independence and trading preeminence. In the nineteenth century it welcomed native minorities: Jews, Armenians, Greeks. Basically it was the non-Muslim district of the city and it became the most prosperous, progressive, and cosmopolitan. It was the European face of Istanbul and Turkey. When a mayor of Istanbul proposed massive urban renewal plans for Istanbul in the 1980s, to transform it into a global city, debate raged about Pera/Beyoglu. Couldn't it just be demolished since it wasn't *Turkish*? Bartu says, "Such a view demonstrated both the power of the Turkish nationalist project and its ambivalent relationship with Europe" (2001:138). Others defended the district with nostalgia for its glorious past, now run down. Was the district "heritage" and was it worth preserving? The questions surrounding the district became more complicated with the ascendancy of an Islamist municipal government in 1994 for whom Pera/Beyoglu represented cosmopolitan degeneration. Remarkably, though, the new party embraced architectural historic preservation and tolerance. Bartu's study demonstrates how fragile the politics of heritage are, and how amenable to political exploitation cultural heritage is.

Egypt exemplifies similarly entangled plural pasts. "Egypt's effective past is materially that of its Islamic heritage and the more recent European inlay. The Pharaonic past is a political card. It can arouse passionate responses... but it has not effectively become an integral or a predominant element of the materiality of Egyptian life" (Hassan 1998:212). I reached a similar conclusion in my study of the appropriation of the past in the coastal city of Nazca, Peru, famous for its World Heritage Site of giant geoglyphs traced on a vast plain. Although the iconography of the geoglyphs and memorabilia of them are abundantly visible in town, virtually no one draws a cultural connection to the precolumbian past (Silveman 2002b). And in Cuzco, where Inca ancestry is far more tangibly obvious in the built environment, cultural practices, and racial descent of the population, it is the Catholic present that is the material stuff of daily practice; "playing Inca" is basically restricted to those earning a direct income from such performances and to civically prescribed events—notwithstanding the frequent prideful statement among the populace at large of "I am descended from the Incas" (Silverman 2002b).

Dictators, in particular, as strong political actors, have the wherewithal, if so desired, to intervene in cultural heritage programmatically and rapidly. In this volume Higueras discusses Mussolini's actions on the Roman landscape. Gilkes also considers fascist Italy noting that "the fascists in Italy could draw inspiration directly from the everyday environment of the classical remains that littered Italian towns and cities... By overstepping the middle ages and other 'ages of decadence,' the fascists linked themselves to the Romans, whose imperial might and penchant for territorial aggrandizement were exemplars of what could be achieved by the fascist 'new men'" (2006:35).

Italian territorial reach extended to Albania, across the Adriatic Sea, where series of archaeological projects were commissioned to support Mussolini's interpretation of history (Gilkes 2006). Fascist archaeology also crossed the Mediterranean Sea into Libya, where "based on [an] extremely simple view of history, the fascists postulated that in antiquity there would have been large numbers of Latin

immigrants who came to the Tripolitanian part of the Roman province of *Africa Proconsularis*" (Altekamp 2006:63). "As a consequence, the presentation of Roman Tripolitania demanded monumental restoration and reconstruction" (Altekamp 2006:64). Today, cultural heritage in Libya is under the control of a different dictator, Muammar Gaddafi, during whose rule five archaeological sites have been inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List: a Roman city (Leptis Magna in 1982), a Phoenician trading post (Sabratha in 1982), a Greek colonial city (Cyrene in 1982), an oasis town (Ghadames in 1988), and a rock art site (Tadrart Acacus in 1985). In the week-long celebration of Ghaddafi's 40-year reign, events were held at the four World Heritage List (WHL) built sites as well as in Tripoli. This use of ancient sites for political reinforcement, of course, is not uncommon—the Shah of Iran held a blowout party at Persepolis; Evo Morales of Bolivia and Alejandro Toledo of Peru both took presidential oaths of office at their countries' signature sites, Tiwanaku and Machu Picchu, respectively. Although Ghaddafi does not appear to invest significantly in cultural heritage projects, he is not ideologically adverse to these pre-Islamic sites and draws on them when convenient. To have sites on the World Heritage List is to be a member of the world community. This reality seems not to be lost on dictators worldwide.

Politics and heritage are deeply entwined right now in a high-stakes game for legal international recognition, tourism, and investment in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), today the self-named Republic of Macedonia, versus Greece. On its "Permanent Mission to the United Nations" webpage, Macedonia has coined the slogan ". . .Cradle of Culture, Land of Nature. . ." and in Spring 2009 Macedonia launched an exceptionally appealing TV promotional ad, "Macedonia—Timeless" (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fP_bSxRIz-I), immediately contested by an unofficial YouTube response, "Macedonia is Greece" (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fP_bSxRIz-I). Macedonia's appropriation of Alexander the Great as the name of its international airport in Skopje, the capital, is so significant on the international stage that President Obama has been pressured by three hundred academic classicists to urge FYROM "to forego its hero-based focus, since they believe that the inhabitants, who are primarily Slavic-speaking, have no legitimate claim to the heritage of Alexander" (Rose 2009).

Multi-ethnic states face particular challenges (internal and external) in the adjudication and management of their cultural heritage, including that which is extraterritorial. Just as Greece claims that the Republic of Macedonia/FYROM is Greek, with its Slavic population dating to 1,000 years after Alexander the Great, so UNESCO's "efforts to preserve Tibetan cultural sites as examples of tangible world heritage [coincide with] Chinese state policies to strengthen political claims to Tibet through the promotion of cultural and heritage ties between China and Tibet" (Shepherd 2009:57). In 1994 three major sites in Lhasa (Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple, Norbulingka) were listed by UNESCO as a single World Heritage Site ensemble on the World Heritage List, along with China's other World Heritage Sites (cultural, natural, mixed), thus internationally affirming China's control of Tibet while promoting tourism to this already appealing destination and justifying modernization and economic development while reiteratively facilitating

Chinese authority and also the disappearance of authentic Tibetan culture. Shepherd argues convincingly that "UNESCO plays into the ongoing Chinese state project of creating an 'imagined community' across space and through time" (2009:64). UNESCO, which vociferously proclaims itself to be apolitical, is content to attempt to encourage physical preservation of the monuments it has listed as universal world heritage. What China does with that designation, short of actions that would require UNESCO putting Lhasa on the notorious List of World Heritage in Danger, is China's business.

Of particular interest in terms of multi-ethnic states is the agreement between five countries to participate in a mutually beneficial transnational tourist circuit called "La Ruta Maya." The idea was proposed by officials of the National Geographic Society (!) to the governments of Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, and El Salvador, each of which accepted. It has been a success most especially for the Central American signatories. Belize, in particular, has benefitted as an English-speaking country now with a significant independent tourism that combines ruins with spectacular beaches (compare with Crete, discussed above). Non-specialized travel agencies offer "Route of the Maya" tours, most typically covering the four smaller countries (Mexico is usually its own trip). Travel brochures emphasize the Maya past and living Maya communities. And here is where a paper by Rosemary Joyce becomes most interesting. In addition to questioning what makes one Maya site worthy of the UNESCO World Heritage designation but not others, and recognizing the intersection of archaeological authority with the global space of tourism and global cultural capital, Joyce (2003) worries that "mayaness" is being used for nation building in countries with multiple ethnic groups. Mayanization deprivileges other ethnic groups, such as the Lenca of western Honduras. Indeed, it is an accident of political borders that Copán is in Honduras rather than Guatemala as it is so near that border, just south of Quirigua, and so unlike the rest of Honduras' archaeological record. Cooperative international politics among countries that in the past have sometimes fought wars with each other have produced, in association with the global tourism industry and global capital, a strong Maya–non-Maya dichotomy in Central America. Interestingly, however, Honduras is starting to establish a pluralistic discourse about its national identity, recognizing its multiple ethnic groups while still privileging Copán. Guatemala and El Salvador similarly are starting to produce a multicultural ideology. Yet it is Maya sites that hold national attention as when Copán was chosen as the venue for an indigenous protest. "[T]he tactic drew on the rhetoric of mayanization and the conflation of Honduras with Copán that was part of long-established nationalist discourse. Pan-Indian activism had come to Honduras and when it did, it used the international visibility of the classic Maya site, and the indigenous authenticity of the contemporary Chorti Maya, to advance a uniquely modern cause" (Joyce 2003:93).

Politics of a different kind are implicated in the Musée du Quai Branly, the brainchild of former French president Jacques Chirac, which opened in 2006. The museum houses collections formerly in the Musée de l'Homme and Musée des Arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie, both created to showcase France's colonial holdings. Although the Musée du Quai Branly (a neutral, geographically based name chosen

to avoid controversy) is new, its exhibition script is traditional notwithstanding dramatic (though severely underlit) presentation and marketing as "arts premiers"— world class art—rather than being relegated to the status of anthropological or natural history curiosity.

Internecine museum politics intervened in the birth of the Musée de Quai Branly for it faced challenges from other museums in Paris over which had the right to maintain and exhibit certain categories of material (Price 2007). International politics are in evidence in that this material culture had been obtained from non-Western peoples who were in no position to resist relinquishing it and who ultimately had no role in its re-presentation in the Musée de Quai Branly. By maintaining possession rather than repatriating various items (notably those which are ethnographic with known ceremonial uses or religious connotation), Chirac and his museum were sustaining a colonial stance as much as non-Western peoples were being "honored." Rather, Musée du Quai Branly has not "confront[ed] the full story of France's past as a colonial power, . . . invite[d] meaningful participation by members of the fourth-world cultures represented in its collections, and . . . acknowledge[d] the continuing dynamism of those cultures in the twenty-first century" (Price 2007:178).

Finally, for as much as UNESCO can be decried as Western in orientation (see above and see below), nevertheless one is tempted to think that there are times when action should be taken concerning cultural heritage. Meskell (2002:565) raises this point concerning various erasures being perpetrated in one country against the heritage originating from another country or culture or group. In these cases, such as Saudi Arabia demolishing an Ottoman fort in Mecca, "neither the U.S. or UNESCO has intervened for a number of reasons: politics, timing, and cultural value" (Meskell 2002:565). There is, then, a "political dimensionality of heritage and what constitutes *worth* saving" (Meskell 2002:565, emphasis in original).

Intangible Heritage

Interest in intangible heritage as a major locus of manifold contestation has surged to the fore coincident with UNESCO's promulgation of the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity in 2001 and the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage in 2003 (see Ruggles and Silverman 2009a; Smith and Akagawa 2009; note the founding of the *International Journal of Intangible Heritage* in 2006). But even before these documents were promulgated, scholars were recognizing fundamental problems in the doctrine of universality and linking of "heritage" to economic development through tourism. Ucko, for instance, noted an "inherent assumption by archaeologists and national legislators that 'the past' is a national asset whose rights and interests must take precedence over the more particularized rights of groups which are often called ethnic" (1989:xii).

Since 2003 there has been particular concern with the potential for state abuse contained within the UNESCO documents. Pyburn writes, "Also common are situations in which preservation itself is a means of oppression, as when descendant groups have their cultural identity enforced and economic disadvantages naturalized

by constant official and public rhetoric about cultural continuity, authentic heritage, and characterization of the poor as 'traditional' and 'living in the past' " (2007:172). Pyburn's point is reiterated by Cojti Ren (2006:12), who writes of the situation of the Maya of Guatemala, "to be considered 'authentic Maya,' we must conserve the cultural practices and traits of our great past, such as the rituals, the cosmovision, the art, and the agriculture. Even dress and physical traits must be maintained as the traits of 'the real Mayas of the past.' Otherwise our identity is questioned." Smith has argued that the rhetoric of heritage disempowers "the present from actively rewriting the meaning of the past [and] the use of the past to challenge and rewrite cultural and social meaning in the present becomes more difficult" (2006:29).

These apparently unanticipated conundrums of the UNESCO convention are also highlighted by Silverman and Ruggles (2007b:3): "while heritage can unite, it can also divide... it can be a tool for oppression"; they speak of the "uneasy place" of heritage in the UNESCO convention. Logan (2007:37) worries that while it is implicit in the convention that all cultures should be preserved and protected equally, there are some aspects of various peoples' cultures that other societies might wish to see abandoned as being objectionable. The convention, then, is mired in the "clash between universalism and cultural relativism" (Logan 2007:39). Logan recognizes three types of conflict surrounding the cultural rights the convention is supposed to mitigate: (1) governments of multi-ethnic countries may find it convenient to abrogate the rights of their minorities so as to force assimilation and compliance with the regime; (2) selective interpretations of cultural heritage are used to influence mainstream cultural identity and opinion to the detriment of human rights; (3) there are "inherent contradictions in the human rights framework of concepts and instruments themselves [because] cultural rights can be in direct conflict with other human rights, particularly the rights of individuals and children and women as groups." Elazar Barkan (2007) raises similar problems with the convention, using as his examples the bioprospecting of National Geographic Society's Genographic Project and the plight (or not) of Muslim women encumbered (or not) by dress codes and behavioral restrictions (or not).

This Volume

In the context of the preceding pages I now briefly present the contributions to this volume. As with the discussion above, the papers can be organized in a number of cogent ways. The framework I present below is not intended to hinder the linkages among the papers but to highlight particular arguments made in terms of the venues of contestation of cultural heritage. The papers are very rich and I only touch on some of their dimensions.

Contested Spaces of Religion and Nationalism

Ruggles deals with the contestation for space (social, religious, political, cultural) in Spain between the Catholic majority and the Moslem minority that once—long

ago and for centuries—was the controlling force in Spain. Although Moslems were expelled in 1492, today a new kind of Moslem *reconquista* is taking place, with globalization being the context and facilitator of the immigration of a new wave of Moslem migrants into Spain. Moslems have reentered Spain. They claim their former Great Mosque in Cordoba for worship and assert social, political, cultural, and physical space for the performance of identity. They are in conflict with the dominant, majority Catholic population, which has historicized the pre-1492 past and uses the mosque as the Cathedral it has been for the past centuries (indeed, archaeological remains of a church underlie the mosque as well as being superimposed). At issue is Spain's Moslem community's demand to publicly perform their "differentness" from Spanish Catholic culture. The Great Mosque of Cordoba is the vehicle for a larger debate over the legitimacy of this "other" population in Spain. This debate is significantly informed by Spanish fear of Islamic terrorism, given attacks suffered by Spain. Yet, since the demise of Franco's regime, Spanish law guarantees religious freedom.

Religion and politics form the theme of Hartnett's paper as well. The centuries-long fight between Catholics and Protestants in Ireland has many manifestations, one of which is the painting of wall murals in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Republicans and Loyalists contest their right for space in the city, on the land. They assert contesting claims for political and cultural power and autonomy. Here the issue of Catholic versus Protestant strife in Northern Ireland is informed by centuries of dispute and violence, much as dispute and violence characterized first the Moslem *conquista* of Spain and then the Catholic *reconquista*. Space is the terrain of contestation in Belfast. As with Cordoba, there is contestation over space of performance of identity, identity being based on a number of cultural features such as religion.

Landry's paper also considers regime change, in this case from Communist to post-Communist in Benin, west Africa. Today various supra-national forces influence decisions being made in Benin that concern the country's economy. One of these—and by no means insignificant—is UNESCO's promotion of the Slave Route, which engenders tourism that brings in foreign currency. This tourism is transnational with links being forged between Benin and Afro-American communities across the Atlantic: African American tourists from the USA and the descendant communities of Haiti and Brazil. In addition to slave heritage, Vodun religion is significant in the engagement of Haiti, Brazil, and Benin, most notoriously Haiti. Landry is concerned with contests over history and the space of Vodun, with the right to interpret and profit from it, indeed to share it.

Owning and Displaying the National Past

Ikram and Kynourgioupoulou focus on the role of iconic elements of the ancient past in countries that have been conquered and colonized. In both cases—Egypt and Greece—we are drawn back to the UK, for the Rosetta Stone is in the British Museum, as are the more hotly contested Parthenon Marbles (see Fitz Gibbon 2005; Hitchens 1997). Even more so than the Rosetta Stone, the Bust of Nefertiti in

Berlin is Egypt's focus for repatriation. Both authors raise issues that transcend legal arguments over legitimate ownership. At issue is the role of the visible past in the construction of national identity. Today this is further enhanced by the global phenomenon of tourism: Greece and Egypt both have massive tourism industries. The new Acropolis Museum in Athens and the new museum being built on the Giza Plateau can both expect to see even greater attendance if they are able to display these two great icons of their respective pasts.

Zobler's paper is a fascinating discussion about forces of nationalism and regionalism in a country having a brilliant, long ancient past and a recent history of colonialism, the latter within the context of frequent European domination of an Islamic country. The museum, as an institution, is well known as a venue for the attempted creation of national identity as well as contestation or rewriting of history. The three museums analyzed by Zobler constitute a superb illustration of *intra*-national contests of history and identity.

Higueras considers nationalism and its relationship to a country's archaeological/historical past. His paper has two major thrusts, one of which is concerned with the visions of history that were inscribed on the Roman urban landscape by political actors in successive regimes—the Roman Empire, the liberal period, the Fascist State. Higueras, like Ikram, Kynourgiopoulou, and Landry, is concerned with the "value" of cultural heritage in its respective nation-states. When Italy came into being Rome immediately inherited a landscape of monuments to former greatness and development of the city led to new archaeological discoveries. These were put at the service of creating a new national sentiment overriding local identities. Then, when Mussolini came to power, he exalted the classical Roman heritage.

Erasing the Past

The second theme of Higueras' paper concerns the erasure of heritage in Rome: past negation in favor of future creation. Mussolini selectively appropriated the past; a past that was not considered useful was a disposable past. Mussolini self-glorified through remodeling of the urban landscape—at grave consequence for the residents of Rome's gutted vernacular landscape dating to the thirteenth through eighteenth centuries.

Larkin's paper deals with Zimbabwe, which is notorious for the erasure of its precolonial history by the brutal colonial regime that controlled the indigenous Shona people for generations. The almost achieved erasure of the site of Great Zimbabwe, so as to rewrite history and thereby claim territory, has few equals in the annals of the destruction of cultural heritage (see, e.g., Fagan 1981:44–46; Ndoro 1999).

Complicated Identities

The larger focus of Larkin's paper is the complicated identities of Zimbabwe's stone carving artists, who are encumbered by the historical trauma, contradictions of colonialism, and prejudices and stereotyped expectations of the international art world.

Some of the Zimbabwean artists seek to participate in the international art world as named fine artists, without reference to their national or ethnic identity at all; they eschew Shona cultural heritage in their work. Other artists explicitly draw on traditional themes of indigenous identity in the production of ethnographic art. Official authentification, gallery owners nationally and internationally, and the tourist industry all intervene in the scripting and success of artists' work, not always to the satisfaction of the artists themselves.

Galaty deals with a region where inter-ethnic strife has been so pervasive that it gave the world a word to describe its pathology: balkanization. The Balkans have long been the terrain of social, political, cultural, and religious contestation. In the Balkans new national borders complicate ancient and deeply held identities. Both in ancient times and recently, central powers have used heritage in creative ways to undercut rival claims to territory and move boundaries. The tensions inherent in the Balkans—and which erupted into multi-party war following the collapse of Yugoslavia—have presented special challenges to the government officials charged with managing heritage resources and developing them for tourism. Cultural heritage management in the Balkans is a highly politically-charged process, and it may be some time before we see a "Balkan Route" promoting inter-nation tourism like the Maya Route through Central America, nor is there a "mega-ethnic" identity—such as "Maya"—with which people can self-servingly identify.

Fantasy and Nation

The intersection of identity and scientific versus pseudoscientific knowledge is the basis of Hanks' very original contribution. She interrogates belief in ghosts and the hunt for them in historical buildings in England. Her sensitively attuned ethnography interprets ghost hunting as reflecting a national anxiety in Britain about "Englishness," which she relates to England's bloody historical disputes over religious legitimacy (Catholic vs. Protestant/Church of England) and to today's waves of immigrants who culturally, racially, and religiously do not conform to "Englishness" yet who are part of the national body politic in this multicultural country.

As is well known, new nations seek master narratives on which to create a sense of nationhood, an imagined community. Of particular interest is the case of the "Pyramids of Bosnia," related by Galaty and well publicized (see, e.g., Bohannon 2006, 2008), whose promotion by their "discoverer" is an attempt to generate a prideful and potentially profitable past on which to build a new nationalism. Archaeologists around the world, and many in the official Bosnian archaeological community, have condemned the interpretation of natural hills as the world's largest and oldest pyramids. But for the town of Visoko, in which they are located, this notoriety is fueling cottage industries servicing curious tourists.

Hanks' and Galaty's contributions also share attention to "bottom-up" constructions of heritage and how these may challenge official versions of history. In Hanks' case, ghost tours "democratize" history, opening it up to alternate interpretations

produced by non-credentialed members of the public who nevertheless are fully integrated into the nation. Galaty considers "how people on the margins of states negotiate, and help produce, history and heritage"—in this case tribal peoples largely isolated from the capital center of power yet, as he shows, "anything but passive participants in heritage creation and management."

Environmental Heritage

The Maya of El Pilar are the specific focus of Anabel Ford in her pithy contribution concerning archaeology's discovery of a new Maya center in the "romantic" or "foreboding" jungle. She is concerned with the purpose this placement on the world map of knowledge will serve to the local people of the community who are, and should be, the primary stakeholders in the future of that past. She criticizes the homogenization of "Maya" by the tourism industry and by the stratosphere of political power (i.e., NAFTA leaders) and argues that we should be focusing on the long-term success of the Maya forest adaptation rather than putting yet another temple site in the public domain of mass tourism whose script of "lost" or "perished" civilizations runs counter to historical fact. Ford emphasizes that the Maya at El Pilar, as elsewhere, are concerned with very present issues of a disputative nature: land tenure, social space in their respective nations, their representational appropriation in museums and other institutions, etc. Archaeologists can (judiciously) play a positive role in these contemporary matters through promotion and involvement in development projects, commitment to environmental issues in which the Maya figure prominently, and specifically with regard to the cross-border Maya, advocacy of a Peace Park serving to improve relations between Belize and Guatemala through adherence to sustainable agricultural and shared tourism policies, among other undertakings.

A Future Without Contestation?

As the scores of case studies presented in this introduction sadly illustrate, cultural heritage is an ever-present venue for contestation, ranging in scale from competitively asserted to violently claimed/destroyed. Can cultural heritage be well managed and beneficially promoted while simultaneously being kept within essentially benign parameters so as to efface or diminish contestation? This is difficult to achieve since heritage belongs to particular groups intra-nationally and notwithstanding UNESCO's attempt to generate a feel-good, international ethos of world cultural heritage and universal value. On the other hand, projects such as those undertaken by GHF offer some cause for optimism, though bear in mind that GHF is targeting unique sites, not entire national scenarios.

Let's play a mind game using Fekri Hassan's (1998:212–213) imagining of an idealistic future for cultural heritage in Egypt. The multiple dimensions encompassed in his prescription could well be contemplated by many of the states-party

signatories of the World Heritage Convention and certainly merit critical discussion in forums around the world. Here I remove Hassan's specific references to Egypt and Pharaonic, Hellenistic, and Islamic heritage, substituting A, B, C to enable the reader to insert the names of any country's particular history of cultural development, whether Western or non-Western:

> A stable political future of [name of country] depends upon an ability to integrate its pasts and recognize its ["A", "B" and "C"] heritage, and to place that variegated heritage within the course of a global civilization. [The country]'s links with the West are not limited to the recent history of confrontation, colonization, and decolonization. An active cultural and educational program to engage the public and schoolchildren in archaeological activities that show [the country]'s long multicultural and rich past is essential to combat ... a loss of affiliation, which is exploited by subversive extreme religious parties [substitute name of any negative group].

Hassan's recommendation linking knowledge and tolerance—if combined with equitable economic and development policies, enfranchising politics, and thoughtful social planning—might begin to establish the basis for a better present and future in societies around the world. In this scenario, cultural heritage could not only achieve the debatable and nebulous universal value dictated by UNESCO but also promote manifold benefits in local and national communities.

Notes

1. While tangible and intangible heritage are intimately linked, intangible heritage per se has received much recent attention with passage of UNESCO's *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage* in 2003 (see discussion of the development of this concept in Ruggles and Silverman 2009a; see also Ruggles and Silverman 2009b; Smith and Akagawa 2009).
2. This may explain, furthermore, why Masada was not inscribed on the World Heritage List until 2001. And it is manifest in the careful wording of Jerusalem's inscription on the World Heritage List (1981, 2000): see http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1483/ and http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/148 (accessed September 14, 2009), including the fact that the first inscription was proposed by Jordan, not Israel.
3. The cultural turn invokes contingency, agency, practice, social construction, attention to interpretive strategies, cultural contexts, and singular stories and places or micro history, etc. (see Bonnell and Hunt 1999). For instance, Sewell understands culture as "contradictory ... loosely integrated ... contested ... subject to constant change ... [and] weakly bounded" (Sewell 1999:53–54). Raymond Williams (1958) anticipated the cultural turn a generation before, stressing that society, history, ideology, art, class, and democracy are sites of ideological struggle.
4. The development of the literature, as I see it selectively, includes—chronologically—these highlights: Cameron 1971; Hudson 1977; Haraway 1984–1985; Lumley 1988; Vergo 1989; Weil 1990; Ames 1992; Hooper-Greenhill 1992, 2000; Findlen 1994; Kaplan 1994; McClellan 1994; Sherman and Rogoff 1994; Bennett 1995; Duncan 1995; MacDonald and Fyfe 1996; Barringer and Flynn 1998; Conn 1998; Yanni 1999; Black 2000; Asma 2001; Kreps 2003; Peers and Brown 2003; Anderson 2004a; Bennett 2004; Karp et al. 2006; Levin 2007; Ostow 2008. And see references in Note 5 below. I also note the numerous museum journals with critical (rather than practical) contributions, including: *Museum Anthropology* (founded in 1976 and in sync with changes in anthropology overall), *Journal of the History of Collections* (founded in 1989), *Museum International* (founded in 1997), *Museum and Society* (founded in 2003), *Collections* (founded in 2004), *Museums and Social Issues* (founded in 2006), and

Museum History Journal (founded in 2008). Although my literature list is culled, I think it fairly represents the explosion of critical museum inquiry beginning in the mid-1980s and increasing dramatically in the 1990s until the present—i.e., the paradigm shift discussed by Harrison (1993) and Anderson (2004b). The literature on museums is by now so vast (including publications by ICOM and UNESCO) that it exceeds the purview and possibilities of this chapter.

5. Other prominent examples of contested heritage in the museum include: Anderson and Reeves 1994; Clifford 1997; Crooke 2001; Dubin 1999b; Henderson and Kaeppler 1997; Holo 1999; Luke 2002; Price 2007; Simpson 1996; Stanworth 1994; Zolberg 1996.
6. I would add Henri Lefebvre's (1989) *The Production of Space*, whose unifying spatial theory—conjoining ideological, social, relational, political, performative, physical, and temporal aspects—was consilient with the social constructivism of contemporary anthropology. Clear antecedents to Lefebvre are Norberg-Schulz (1971) and Relph (1976).
7. At the time this volume goes to press, Langfield et al. (2009) has not yet been released.
   See also the brief essay on this topic by George Nicholas and Julie Hollowell on the WAC website: http://www.worldarchaeologicalcongress.org/site/nicholas_hollowell.php (accessed September 1, 2009).
8. Any treatment of Maya archaeological tourism must acknowledge an earlier, comprehensive, pathbreaking work: Quetzil Castañeda's (1996) *In the Museum of Maya Culture. Touring Chichén Itzá*, in which he argued that "the invention of the Maya as a culture derives from the historical complicities between Maya peoples, anthropological practices, tourist businesses, regional politics, nation building, New Age spiritualists, and international relations between Mexico and the United States."
9. The whole interview can be watched at this url: http://cts.vresp.com/c/?GlobalHeritageFund/e90eb825cd/be52bcbf00/3457febab4

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Chapter 2
The Stratigraphy of Forgetting: The Great Mosque of Cordoba and Its Contested Legacy

D. Fairchild Ruggles

As with any major monument that figures prominently in architectural history, the Great Mosque of Cordoba has a classic architectural "story" that explains it. This story attracts little attention in the USA, where the medieval past is of little interest because our national narrative does not depend on it. But in Europe, where a recent exhibition catalogue on Islamic art concluded with the question, "Que representa hoy al-Andalus para nosotros?" ("What does al-Andalus represent for us today?") (Cheddadi 2000:270), medieval history plays a powerful role in modern heritage politics. Especially in Spain, the interpretation of the medieval Iberian past, with its intertwining threads of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish culture, is a deeply political act.

It serves as a mirror for the present and provides the justification for either regarding Spain as a modern participant in a diverse global world or, conversely, maintaining a self-contained essential Spain, defined as a nation as well as a people.

The Great Mosque of Cordoba is one of the most visited and admired Spanish monuments. It is an impressive building that marks an important moment in the history of Islamic architecture and, more specifically, Iberian Islamic architecture. It was built beginning in 786 by the first Hispano-Umayyad emir, ᶜAbd al-Rahman I, called al-Dakhil ("the émigré"), who came to Spain (called al-Andalus) from Damascus, from where he had fled following the massacre of the rest of the members of his family in a coup d'état. This upheaval resulted in the end of the Umayyad dynasty of Syria (661–750), replaced by a new dynasty, the Abbasids, who ruled from their capital, Baghdad, until 1258. After a long journey across northern Africa, where ᶜAbd al-Rahman I had taken refuge with his mother's people, the surviving young prince resettled in Cordoba, where he founded the new Hispano-Umayyad line (756–1031), a small elite group of Arab Muslims ruling over a majority Christian population (on the genealogy of this dynasty, see Ruggles 2004).

This oft-repeated political and dynastic narrative—largely factual, although with an admixture of conjecture and legend—has a parallel architectural narrative [Note 1]. According to that, under the Abbasids Islamic architecture shifted its focus

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Fig. 2.1 Cathedral–Mosque of Cordoba, interior of original prayer hall. (Photo: D. Fairchild Ruggles)

from the Mediterranean to look eastward toward Mesopotamia, becoming more hierarchical and gaining an unprecedented grandeur of scale and luxury; meanwhile remote Spain carried forward the more Mediterranean Damascus style, with its clear debt to the Roman and Byzantine pasts.

The Mosque of Cordoba itself shows clear debts to Roman and Byzantine architectural traditions. It is a great basilica whose roof is supported by large marble columns with bases and carved capitals that reflect and reinterpret a classical vocabulary (Fig. 2.1) [Note 2]. While some of these were wrought new for the sanctuary, many others were spolia taken from ruined Roman and Visigothic sites in Cordoba and its surrounding areas. The mosque's roof rises high due to its structure of tiered arches, each arch composed of alternating voussoirs of red brick and white stone, an elegant yet durable configuration for which there is a direct model in the Roman aqueduct built to serve Merida in the first century CE. It also echoes the tiered arcaded construction of the Great Mosque of Damascus (finished 714–715), the capital city of the Syrian Umayyads. After the Cordoba Mosque's foundation in the late eighth century, the mosque was expanded various times in the ninth and tenth centuries, receiving a tall minaret in one such expansion and arcades around the inner face of the courtyard in another (Fig. 2.2). Its original *qibla* wall (the wall marked as being nearest to Mecca and thus guiding the orientation of prayer) was

Fig. 2.2 Cathedral–Mosque of Cordoba, plan of stages from 786 to 1010. (Plan: D. Fairchild Ruggles)
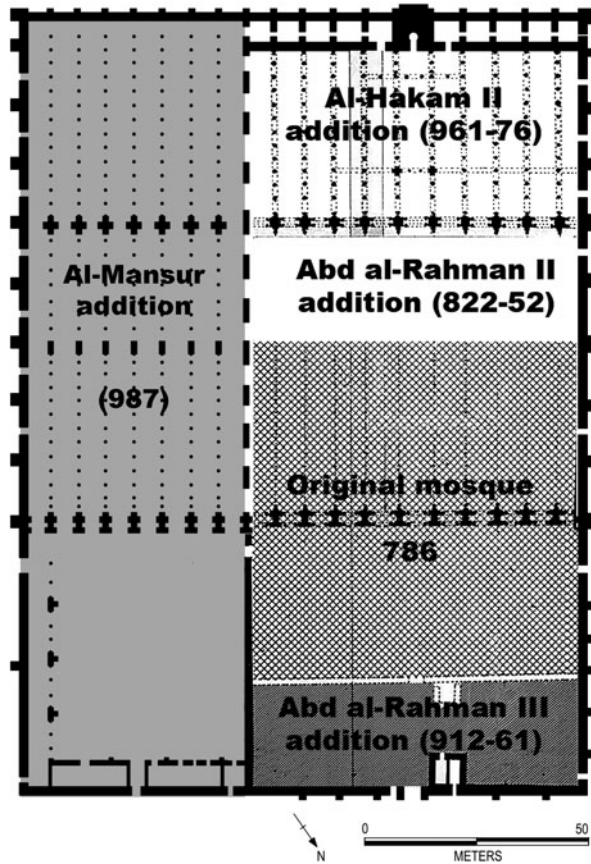
pierced and the *qibla* moved twice toward the southern extension. In the last of those southern additions, the mosque received its most famous architectural element: the beautiful mosaic *mihrab* (niche indicating the direction of Mecca), made in 965 by a Byzantine master artist sent from the Byzantine court as a gesture of diplomatic goodwill (Fig. 2.3). He brought not only his artisanal knowledge to the court of Cordoba (where such mosaic was otherwise unknown) but also the blue and gold glass tesserae with which to make the images of leafy vegetation and inscriptions that enframe the niche and the "voussoirs" (fake because they are referential rather than structural).

In 1236 Cordoba was conquered by Ferdinand III of Castile and the mosque was converted into a church to serve the Christian population. Despite the change in worship, there were few changes to the actual fabric of the building at that time. Although it is rarely written about—lacking the drama of co-option and destruction—this is perhaps the most interesting chapter in the building's history, revealing the degree to which people of different faiths in Cordoba (and elsewhere

Fig. 2.3 Cathedral–Mosque of Cordoba, mihrab. (Photo: D. Fairchild Ruggles)

in al-Andalus) felt comfortable in each other's religious spaces. The Mosque of
Cordoba had enormous symbolic status not only as a mosque representing the
Muslim faith but also as the historic progenitor of all other mosques in al-Andalus.
Yet, despite the clear presence of Arabic inscriptions indicating Quranic verses and
the dazzling mihrab that pointed to the conceptual presence of Mecca as clearly as
any arrow, the Christians did not hasten to demolish it. Instead, they used it as a
church, adding chapels and burial spaces, and in the thirteenth century, a mudejar-
style pantheon for Castilian royalty. Jerrilynn Dodds (1992:24) comments, "The
Christians who conquered Córdoba understood that there was much more power to
be gained from appropriating this extraordinary metaphor of their conquest than
from destroying it." In this way, most of its Islamic form and decoration was
preserved for the next 300 years.

Despite the possibility for such insight into interfaith relations, the architectural
story loses its thread here because for the next 250 years cities such as Seville and
Granada far outshone Cordoba. In the years following 1492, Spain officially purged
itself of its Muslims and Jews, although in actuality there were many people who
stayed behind, converts to Christianity but still steeped in Andalusian Islamic cul-
ture. But in the sixteenth century, the building suffered a dramatic change. In 1523
the architects of Charles V—the first of the Hapsburg kings in Spain—scooped
out the center of the venerable mosque and inserted a gothic cathedral choir so

Fig. 2.4 Cathedral–Mosque of Cordoba, exterior view. (Photo: D. Fairchild Ruggles)

that the mosque became the frame for the new cathedral (Fig. 2.4). Ironically, this act of destruction—which Charles himself purportedly perceived to be a terrible mistake—was probably the reason why this mosque still stands, while those of Toledo, Granada, Seville, and other cities were demolished and replaced entirely by huge churches (on the preservation and restoration of the Cordoba Mosque, see Edwards 2001).

This is how the story is told: a straightforward narrative of architectural foundation, conversion, preservation, and destruction. However, as I wrote at the outset, the medieval past is never neutral in Spain, and so too with the Mosque of Cordoba. That building, as the single most powerful emblem of Islam in Iberia, has come to represent much more than a mere development in architectural history. As the first and only surviving Spanish congregational mosque, it "stands in" for a lost, or simply repressed, Hispano-Islamic identity. This identity is claimed both by Spanish citizens and by others whose claim, though distant, is nonetheless aggressively—sometimes violently—asserted. Indeed, in a publicly released video, Osama bin Laden's second-in-command, Ayman al-Zawahri, called for a new reconquest of al-Andalus: "O our Muslim nation in the Maghreb …. restoring al-Andalus [is impossible] without first cleansing the Muslim Maghreb of the children of France and Spain, who have come back again after your fathers and grandfathers sacrificed their blood cheaply in the path of God to expel them" (reported by Noueihed 2007).

In the modern West, where Islam is the new Soviet Union, and where al-Andalus figures prominently in the rhetoric and terrorist agenda of al-Qaeda, the mosque is a site of conflict between two world views. One sees the mosque as a

historic monument, a relic of a firmly demarcated past that belongs to Spain, now safely converted to Christian use. This group continues to enjoy the celebration of daily mass in the church and welcomes the visits of thousands of daily tourists to Cordoba's major attraction. The other group sees the mosque as a symbol with powerful political currency. For them it represents a lost period of Islamic ascendancy, and Islam itself provides a tool to resist the Catholic Church and to recover a suppressed Muslim identity. In Spain, despite increasing secularism, the Church remains powerful: Spain is nominally 94% Catholic (CIA 2009), and the government still pays the salaries of the church clergy (Simons 2004). However, after the death of Franco in 1975, a small number of Spaniards chose to convert to Islam for motivations that varied from an embrace of the faith, to a desire to reclaim a lost heritage, to a rejection of Catholicism's associations with the repressive Franco regime. Therefore, depending on one's perspective, the Cathedral–Mosque is emblematic of medieval Iberian history (a closed chapter) or a site for prayer and resurgent Muslim identity. A point of clarification: I do not equate these attitudes toward Islam with either al-Qaeda extremism or ultra-conservative Spanish nationalism; nonetheless, those extremes do form part of the *discourse* within which the current claims to the monument are made.

Archaeology has recently begun to play an important role in this argument because under the Cathedral–Mosque there are the remains of a much older building, the Visigothic church of San Vicente, dating to 590. Historical sources relate that in the eighth century, the burgeoning Muslim community in Cordoba initially rented space in the church and then purchased the site from the Christian community, ultimately demolishing the old structure in 786 to make way for a new mosque with its prayer hall of arcades on columns (al-Razi, transmitted by al-Maqqari 1967, I: 368, and II: 7–11; Gayangos 1840–1843, I: 217–218; also Ibn ᶜIdhari 1948–1951, II: 244, 378; Ocaña Jiménez 1942). Because the story reveals the Muslims' fair treatment of the Christian community, and because the same kind of story was reported with regard to the acquisition of the Church of St. John in Damascus in the late seventh century and its reconstruction as a congregational mosque, a few modern scholars have asserted that there was no Visigothic church where the Cathedral–Mosque now stands (Terrasse 1932: 59, note 2) [Note 3]. They regard the story of a precedent church as a *topos* with no factual basis. However, archaeological excavations carried out in the 1920s by Ricardo Velázquez Bosco and in 1931–1936 by Félix Hernández Giménez (Hernández Giménez 1975) and expanded in recent years under the direction of Pedro Marfíl (Marfíl n.d.) unequivocally confirm the presence of a much older and smaller church under the present site of the Cathedral–Mosque.

Spanish scholars have known this for years. But as the Visigothic remains lay buried and out of sight, no one paid much attention to them until a few years ago when Muslims began asking for the right to pray in the Cathedral–Mosque. In 2004 the Islamic Council (*Junta Islámica*) formally petitioned Pope John Paul to allow Muslim prayer in the Great Mosque. Turned down, they petitioned again in 2006. In December of that year, Mansur Escudero, the Islamic Council's president, insisted publicly on the right to pray in the mosque and called upon Muslims to join him, but

the response from the Bishops was a categoric denial of the right to do so (reported in Nash 2007). On December 27, 2006, the Bishop of Cordoba reiterated that the Catholic Church had "authentic legal title" and "incontestable historic title" to the Cathedral (Asenjo 2006). Although the Islamic Council has repeatedly stated that its objective is neither repossession of the mosque nor the recovery of "a nostalgic Al Andalus" (reported by Fuchs 2006), the request was perceived in precisely those terms.

For Muslims, the struggle is not centered on the availability of places to pray, because, although Spain has an insufficient number of mosques to accommodate its growing Muslim population (Burdett 2008), Cordoba has had its own prayer hall and Islamic center for more than a decade. Handsome modern mosques have been built elsewhere in Spain (e.g., Granada and Marbella), although their construction has sometimes sparked resistance and hate acts (as occurred in Seville). Likewise for non-Muslims, the precise cause for alarm is not the occasional diversity of individual religious practice, since in the past high ranking, visiting Muslim dignitaries *have* been allowed to pray in the Mosque of Cordoba. It is not individual worship that provokes worry, so much as the public performance of *difference* realized by large congregations bowing and prostrating in prayer. At stake is the political power of the growing Muslim community that wishes recognition that they have a legitimate claim to this very historic monument. The justification for their request is implicitly grounded on the Cathedral's *prior* identity as a mosque.

However, archaeologists and historians knew that the premise of priority or originality was flawed, because if the Christian cathedral's identity could be challenged by the prior presence of a mosque, then the mosque's identity could be challenged by the even earlier existence of the Church of San Vicente. To make this very point, in January 2005 a selection of the Visigothic and Roman materials found on the site were brought out of storage and placed on display. These include carved column capitals, figural sculpture, fragments of altars, a font with Visigothic geometrical ornament, and especially crosses (Fig. 2.5). The objects are supplemented by photographs showing the excavations of the 1930s and present a floor plan showing the traces of the Visigothic church's aisles and apses revealed through archaeology (Fig. 2.6). Finally, an area of the mosque floor that had been excavated also has been left open, revealing pebble mosaic (believed to pertain to an outbuilding of the Visigothic cathedral) at a depth of approximately 3 m. In short, the curators of the Cathedral–Mosque created the Museo de San Vicente *inside* the Cathedral–Mosque.

It is very well done from a museological perspective with dramatic lighting and adequately explanatory labels. But the reason why this collection of Roman and Visigothic materials has been brought out now, instead of 75 years ago, is not a newly kindled interest in Visigothic archaeology (which—*pace* my early-medievalist colleagues—is no more popular in Spain than it is in the USA) but rather a deployment of that archaeology against growing Muslim claims on the building as a site of prayer and identity. Although the Cathedral–Mosque is protected by the Spanish government under the 1985 Spanish Historic Heritage Law No. 16 and

Fig. 2.5 Museo de San Vicente, display of Visigothic pieces. (Photo: D. Fairchild Ruggles)

by UNESCO, it is owned by the Catholic Church and is still an active Christian sanctuary. Its historical study is overseen by Manuel Nieto Cumplido, a canon-priest and the cathedral archivist, and its archaeologist is Pedro Marfíl. Both are capable scholars, deeply interested in the complex history of the Cathedral–Mosque, who would be affronted by the suggestion that they may have used historical evidence to influence contemporary politics. Indeed, the display that complements the Museo de San Vicente is an indication of their thorough and even-handed scholarship: in another part of the prayer hall is an equally well-presented exhibition of recovered fragments from the Islamic period and a collection of the plaster impressions taken of the mason's signatures scratched on the columns and capitals of the former mosque (Fig. 2.7). These are a remarkable testament to the humanity of the laborer, a real human presence. Some of the names are written capably (and can be seen here in several of the impressions), while others—simple abstract symbols—reveal the writer's illiteracy. Moreover, although Muslim names predominate, there are a few ostensibly Christian names, reflecting the mixing of communities that we know characterized Cordoba in the period when the mosque was built.

Another museological project has been to inscribe in stone the location where the former minaret once stood in the present courtyard (Fig. 2.8). This minaret was demolished in the tenth century and replaced by a larger tower to the north when the mosque was enlarged during the reign of ^{c}Abd al-Rahman III. The indication of its original location is not intrusive and in fact is missed by most visitors. But for the

Fig. 2.6 Museo de San Vicente, plan of mosque indicating the excavated apses of the underlying Visigothic church. (Photo: D. Fairchild Ruggles)

historically aware, it gives tangible presence to the vanished older mosque without interrupting the space of the complex as it exists today.

If asked, the curators would surely insist that their goal is to study and display *all* aspects of the building's complex history. But despite their broadminded intentions, the *reception* to their work has focused more narrowly on the issue of identity. When the new Museo de San Vicente opened in January 2005, it was popularly regarded in a very political light. Reporting on the new exhibition, the newspaper *Córdoba* referred to the "true Christian historical origins of the Mosque-Cathedral" and crowed, "Henceforth, one cannot explain the Arab Mosque without mentioning its historical Christian origins" (Recio Mateo 2005). Even at official levels, archaeology has been used to justify claims. The aforementioned Bishop's directive of December 27, 2007 specifically mentions Hernández's 1930s excavations in justifying the legitimacy of the Church's possession of the building. Occupying a space somewhere between the popular and the official, a plaque at the entrance to the Cathedral–Mosque exaggerates the role of the Church as steward: "It is the Church, through its Cathedral Chapter, that has made it possible to keep the former mosque of the Western Caliphate, the oldest cathedral in Spain, and a World Heritage Site, from becoming a heap of ruins. In fact this has always been one of the missions of
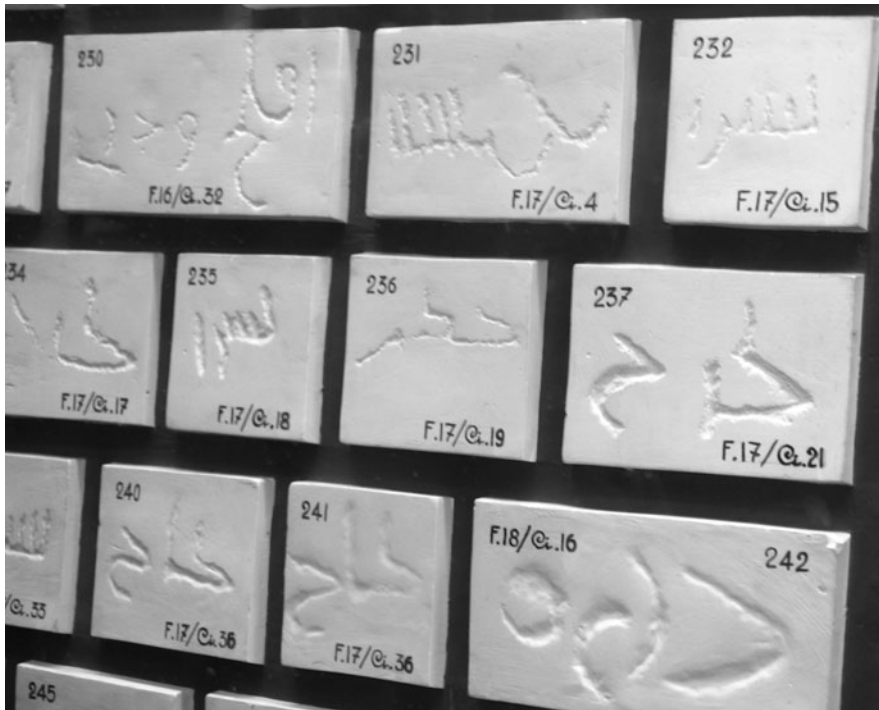
Fig. 2.7 Masons' signatures, on display in the Museo de San Vicente. (Photo credit: D. Fairchild Ruggles)

the Church; to safeguard and inspire culture and art. . ." This theme is carried further in the brochure, which is the only other historical information provided to visitors on site. Offered in multiple languages, it states,

THE ORIGINS
Beneath every cathedral is always a bed of hidden cathedrals. In the case of Córdoba, tradition traces back to its Visigoth origins. This fact is confirmed by archaeological excavations, whose remains can be found at the Museum of San Vicente (Saint Vincent) and in the pits where the remains of mosaics from the ancient Christian temple can be observed on site.

It is a historical fact that the basilica of San Vicente was expropriated and destroyed in order to build what would later be the Mosque, a reality that questions the theme of tolerance that was supposedly cultivated in the Córdoba of the moment. This was the main church of the city, a martyry [sic] basilica from the 6th Century, that would be remembered and venerated by Christians, centuries after its destruction.

There are myriad social and economic issues that make Islam and the prospect of Muslim repossession of the Cathedral–Mosque such a fraught issue. Suffice it to say that Spain is emerging from a period of phenomenal economic growth. As a result, since the death of Franco in 1975, and especially since Spain's entry into the European Union in 1986, it has received increasing numbers of immigrants and is becoming visibly diversified. Out of a population of 42 million, an estimated

Fig. 2.8 Cathedral–Mosque of Cordoba, courtyard with old (missing) minaret indicated in stone pavement. (Photo credit: D. Fairchild Ruggles)

4.8 million are immigrants—mostly from Romania, South America, and Morocco—clinging to the bottom of the economic ladder and hoping for upward mobility (Red Cross 2006). Of the latter, most arrive illegally, and the voyage by boat is dangerous and sometimes deadly. In modern Spain there are an estimated one million Muslims, mostly immigrants, but also a small number of natives who converted to Islam when the end of Franco's regime allowed new opportunity for religious freedom.

The controversy over the Cathedral–Mosque occurs amidst these palpable changes. Indeed, I think the controversy there is not really about prayer at all, because in actual practice, anyone can utter a quiet prayer in the Cathedral, communing with whatever version of God their religion teaches them to worship. But Muslim prayer, which demands oriented standing, bowing, and prostration, announces its difference visibly and actively. It resists assimilation to any order other than Islam. Therefore, the struggle in the Cathedral–Mosque is a struggle to cope with the changing demographics of Spanish society, to cope with difference, and specifically, with Islam. That the contest is not really between Visigoths and medieval Muslims, but between modern nations and between modern worldviews, is revealed by a brief comparison with another medieval building in Spain.

The so-called Church of El Tránsito in Toledo was built as a Jewish synagogue in the fourteenth century (Fig. 2.9). The patron was Samuel Halevi Abulafia, the powerful treasurer to Pedro I (called "Pedro the Cruel"), who added the synagogue to his

Fig. 2.9 Church–Synagogue "El Tránsito." (Photo credit: D. Fairchild Ruggles)

own residence in the Jewish quarter of Toledo in 1360. In 1492, with the expulsion of the Jews, the building was given by the Catholic Monarchs, Isabel and Ferdinand, to the Order of Calatrava, who converted it to use as a church, called the Church of San Benito. It later gained the popular name of El Tránsito (The Assumption of Mary). It remained as a church until the early nineteenth century when it served variously as army barracks and as a monastery, until in 1877 it was declared a national monument. It remained in private hands, however, until 1970 when it was acquired by the Spanish government and made into the National Museum of Judeo-Spanish Art.

The synagogue served its intended Jewish community for less than 150 years, whereas it was used as a church for more than 300 years. But in this monument, the prior claim of Jews (exiled and suppressed in 1492 along with the Muslims) and of Jewish heritage has been celebrated by peeling away the later Christian phases of the building and restoring it to its original state as a temple. The stucco ornament of the upper walls has been lovingly restored, and inscriptions written in both Hebrew and Arabic are visible as well as the shield of Castile, in deference to Peter, Samuel's protector (Dodds 1992b). So as not to interrupt the majestic space of the main hall, the former women's gallery, occupying a balcony on the north wall overlooking the hall below, has been turned into a museum with wall cases explaining aspects of Iberian Jewish life and religious practice. The issue of priority is firmly handled by locating the building's original moment in the era of Samuel Halevi Abulafia. There

is no mention of Roman or Visigothic remains, which lie under nearly everything in Toledo, the former Visigothic capital.

What is it that permits one church to be materially restored to its earlier state as a synagogue, but prevents another (converted from a mosque) from being similarly treated? The archaeological display in the Mosque–Cathedral of Cordoba wishes to answer that question by its insistence on an "original" Christian building. But the concept of originality is a convenient invention because, whether we think of this synagogue in Toledo as original, or in Cordoba whether we regard as original the mosque or the Visigothic church, it is always a matter of selecting a layer in the history of the built environment that we wish to remember. But the material presence of the objects on display in the Cordoba Cathedral–Mosque distracts us from this act of human selection and instead attempts to persuade us of a fundamental "underlying" archaeological and historical truth. The stratigraphy of Visigothic, Islamic, and Christian traces in the building provide a material record of the rich layering of society, layers that rest on ostensibly Western foundations.

Of course the very concept of "Western" is a construction motivated by cultural and political investments. While Spain celebrates its 800 years of Islamic history as a unique feature that enriches its culture, it also sees itself as a Western country, which requires a rejection of Muslim identity. It claims the Western rubric not simply as a post-reconquest phenomenon but in the sense of *originally* Western, which demands the operation of peeling back the layers of Muslim and mosque to reveal that pure, "original" layer of Christian and church. The display of gleaming, white Visigothic fragments in the Cathedral–Mosque of Cordoba accomplishes this (although it conveniently forgets that the sect of early Christianity practiced by the Visigoths was later suppressed by the Catholic Church of Rome). The museum display of tangible archaeological artifacts is essential for this purpose because it offers a factual underpinning to something that is really a political assertion [Note 4].

With this, let us turn from facts and artifacts back to narratives and storytelling, which is where we began. There is currently a fad for retelling the story of Islamic Spain. For example, the video *Cities of Light: The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain* (Unity Productions Foundation and Gardner Films 2007) was recently aired in the USA and several European countries (I was interviewed on camera for this). The best known books in English are probably Maria Menocal's vivid *The Ornament of the World* (2002) and David Levering Lewis's less scholarly *God's Crucible* (2008), and the bookstores in Spain are likewise full of books and historical novels on these subjects. Moreover, the taste for "Moorish" themes extends even beyond popular imagery to cuisine and other forms of exotic experience: a recent phenomenon is the emergence of Moroccan-style tea houses and "Moorish baths," such as in Cordoba and Granada. These are basically spas that offer a steam soak and massage, but in an evocative Andalusian setting of colored *zellij* tile and cusped arches, in the style of the Alhambra. In our taste for these, we look wistfully back to Islamic Spain as a time when everyone lived together happily: there was no Israel/Palestine struggle for cleavage or co-existence, no bombs strapped to the chests of young Muslim martyrs, no Guantánamo demonstrating the lie of American civil liberties, no Halliburton fattening the bank accounts of elected politicians. It is deeply satisfying, instead, to

imagine a time when a young Arab prince would found Spain's famous *convivencia*. But although the vision appeals to us on many levels, it doesn't quite stand up to scholarly examination.

The idea of *convivencia* (literally cohabitation, but more broadly referring to social tolerance) comes from the fact that, historically, the Christian and Jewish residents of conquered cities were accorded protection as *dhimmis*, in exchange for moderation with respect to public displays, especially of religion. These obligations are outlined in the Pact of ᶜUmar, supposedly drawn up in ca. 637 upon the conquest of Damascus and rewritten and copied multiple times thereafter. The version of the treaty given by Ibn ᶜAsākir (1105–1176) states, in the voice of the Christians themselves, that they would promise "to beat the *nākūs* [resonant board or bell] only gently in [the churches] and not to raise our voices in them chanting; not to shelter there, nor in any of our houses, a spy of your enemies; not to build a church, convent, hermitage, or cell, nor to repair those that are dilapidated, nor assemble in any that is in a Muslim quarter, nor in their presence; not to display idolatry, nor invite to it, nor show a cross on our churches, nor in any of the roads or markets of the Muslims" (Tritton 1970:5–6).

Islamic Spain had its own version of a submission treaty. The treaty of Tudmir, written in 713, similarly stated that the Muslim leader would grant the Visigothic ruler Theodoric (Tudmir) freedoms and even a degree of autonomy as long as the latter fulfilled certain conditions: "His followers will not be killed or taken prisoner, nor will they be separated from their women and children. They will not be coerced in matters of religion, their churches will not be burned, nor will sacred objects be taken from the realm, [so long as] he [Tudmir] remains sincere and fulfills the [following] conditions. . ." (Constable 1997; reproduced in Dodds, Menocal and Balbale 2008:16).

These treaties were the strategy of conquerors who sought to impose minority rule over a majority of a different faith, knowing that peaceful submission was far preferable to a state of continual war. From the perspective of the Christians and Jews, subordination was a small price to pay for the benefits of a well-ordered and reasonably just government, even if it was run by infidels (Dodds, Menocal and Balbale 2008:17). However, at the time, the emir ᶜAbd al-Rahman I had no idea that he was crafting a policy of interfaith tolerance. His actions were simply those of an astute administrator, careful not to destabilize his minority government's rule by threatening its base, a Christian majority. It is only in the modern era that we look back and identify this as *convivencia*, imbuing it with the values of mutual respect and tolerance for difference, and the fact that we do so says much more about the twentieth and twenty-first centuries' conflicts and yearnings than about the contestations and ethnic polyvalence of the eighth century. The modern perspective on Spain's medieval history is an interpretation that emerges from our own political needs. *All* history is an interpretation—a reinterpretation—of the past. It is, after all, a tale told by a human narrator who cares about the storyline.

So, from history we have the satisfying story of al-Andalus, land of interfaith *convivencia*, and from archaeology we have the insistence on material evidence to justify claims to heritage. Both are produced within a political frame. The political frame, however, is not only Spanish heritage and the nation's struggle to

assert itself as either pluralistic and liberal or essentialist and Christian. I think the drama of history and the particularity of archaeology distract our attention from the most politically relevant realm of all, which is the powerful realm of *representation*. Spain is a relatively small player in modern Middle Eastern politics but because of its 800 years of Islamic-Christian negotiations, conquest, exile, and diaspora, it provides an important analogue for East–West relations. In this light, medieval Spain serves as a metaphor for the global politics of the modern world, and the Cathedral–Mosque functions as a metaphor for medieval Spain—and hence the intensity of the disputes over its origins and who can and cannot pray there.

Notes

1. The history of the mosque is given in the primary sources, most prominently in al-Maqqari (1855–1861, I: 368 and II: 7–11), Gayangos (1840–1843, I: 217–218); also in Ibn ᶜIdhari (1948–1951, II: 244, 378). In secondary literature, these sources have been summarized and analyzed in Creswell (1932–1940 and 1989). An excellent current analysis is to be found in Dodds (1992a). See also Khoury (1996), although see Note 3 below.
2. All photographs used herein are the property of the author.
3. H. Terasse made the observation (1932), and K.A.C. Creswell pinpointed Ibn Jubayr as the conveyor of the story (Creswell 1989:291). Noha Khoury (1996) and other American scholars repeated the assertion, despite conclusive evidence for the prior presence of a church that had by then been brought forward by Spanish archaeologists.
4. This point seems obvious, and yet the outrage provoked by Dr. Nadia Abou El-Haj's (2002) book—asking some of the same questions about the framing of archaeology in Israel—indicates the deeply sensitive nature of these issues.

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Chapter 3
Aestheticized Geographies of Conflict: The Politicization of Culture and the Culture of Politics in Belfast's Mural Tradition

Alexandra Hartnett

Introduction

A culture war has been fought on the walls of Belfast. Factions which had long been accustomed to voicing their dissent through violence and fear-mongering no longer have the openly public support to back their campaigns of bigotry and hatred via the gun [Note 1]. Instead, those who still seek to express their dissent over the Northern Ireland issue have found alternative methods by which they can voice their opinion. The re-opening of the devolved legislature for the Northern Ireland Assembly has re-opened a dialogue at the political level; on the ground, however, where political assertions are embedded in social practice, "political" communities express their cultural authority (in a way that is no less critical although more intriguingly subversive) through the production of mural art.

As a local tradition, mural painting began a century ago as part of triumphal celebrations of a seventeenth-century colonial military victory that signaled the Protestant Ascendancy in Ireland. As a distinct form of material culture, murals were politically charged and "owned" by a segment of society that was economically and politically dominant in Northern Ireland. As such, they were used as an important dynamic in the process of legitimating that power. Following the growing violence that surrounded "The Troubles" of the 1970s and 1980s, this ownership came under dispute as nationalist muralists employed the same medium for their own dissenting purposes. The murals were therefore part of an active and violent conflict and were rooted in their contemporary political contexts. The mural subject matter at this time—both nationalist/republican and unionist/loyalist—reflected the violence endemic in everyday life by reproducing it in murals art as communities used them to create space and to claim the landscape; they served as a means to express domination and resistance as well as legitimation and dissent, depending on the painter and the audience.

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Since then, the role that these murals played and their subject matter have been transformed in parallel but distinct traditions within the sectarian communities in which they are most commonly found. Over time, as the peace process has gradually lowered the simmering tensions in the North, the murals themselves have become the story. Among other things, they have been the focus of academic projects (e.g., Hartnett 2009; Jarman 1998; Santino 1999) and popular publications (the Bill Rolston series) and even the subject of a Hollywood documentary (a forthcoming documentary by actor Vince Vaughan). They have escaped the boundaries of their communities through the very public portal of news agencies that seem to revel in showcasing their broadcasts in front of dramatic gable murals depicting double-storied, balaclava-clad figures toting guns and looming threateningly. The murals and their audiences' reading of them therefore created a unique landscape that evoked an undertone of violence that was muted locally by the traffic of everyday life; however, they also have generated a singular touristic experience that prompted *The Independent*'s travel writer, Simon Calder, to award the Belfast murals the UK's best tourist attraction above all others in 2007 [Note 2]. In light of this notoriety and touristic allure, the more daring visitors to Belfast traipse up the Falls Road and down the Shankill, camera in hand, while their less energetic counterparts take Black Taxi tours or big, yellow sightseeing buses that negotiate the narrow streets of sectarian neighborhoods to participate in conflict tourism, a thriving business in Belfast that capitalizes on peoples' fascination with the shadows of terror.

In 1996, a mural went up on Oakman Street in the nationalist Falls area that read, "History is written by the winner" (Fig. 3.1). Around that time, in the early years of the peace process, murals in this area began to depict fewer reflections of violence and more that drew on Irish cultural heritage: mythology, language, and history. As such, it would seem that the nationalist muralists began a new tradition by which they sought to own the past, their histories of defeats, and to win their present by exposing their heritage on mural walls. This was predominantly a nationalist/republican tradition while the dominant theme in unionist/loyalist murals remained the "men-with-guns" paramilitary archetype. More recently, however, with the true threat of peace looming ever closer, images that recreate the violence of the past are considered to be distasteful while those that highlight heritage are lauded. The state's newly formed "Re-Imaging Communities Programme" pays communities to paint over their paramilitary murals with depictions of local histories. The stakes, however, are equally high for the depictions of violence and this more subtle contestation of heritage. Civic agencies are actively encouraging this new discourse that sets into opposition local histories without acknowledging that they are reproducing the same paradigms of difference that have marked the Catholic and Protestant communities for generations.

This has in part contributed to one of the most startling transformations that the murals have undergone. They, as a material tradition, have become a critical locus of political commentary and are therefore an eminently powerful site for the production of meaning. Indeed, I would argue that gable murals have become the single most essential site of discourse in sectarian Belfast and are therefore a key element

Fig. 3.1 Nationalist mural, "History is written by the winner" (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

of a deeply historical social practice. They continue to be produced and reproduced; painted and defaced; and imagined and replaced because they are the medium by which this discourse continues. More than that, however, it must be acknowledged that, because murals are historically crucial sites of politics, history, religion, etc., if one wants to make a claim in sectarian Belfast, one must actively work within the social practice of mural-making; one must "deal in murals" to be heard and acknowledged. As a distinctive material tradition and like any other important monument, they are therefore repeatedly called upon for ideological, political, and social purposes as the dominant local forum of claims and contestation [Note 3].

These murals serve as both agents and subjects of history. As agents, their role is active and they are used to create distinct histories that are presented in opposition to competing visions of the past in order to create politicized space. In the latter guise, they are produced as a result of a series of historical and cultural events that distinguishes them as artifacts that are as tangible as any other material culture form that is distinct in time and space. Because of this duality as both art and artifact (cf. Jarman 1998:81), it is first necessary to address the local colonial processes that preceded and gave rise to the distinct cultural formations of mural-making in Northern Ireland. This also serves to highlight particular historical hot zones that are frequently used as fodder for the mural subject. The first part of this chapter will, therefore, touch on distinct historical moments that influenced the social complexities of Northern Ireland, moments that shaped the culture of heritage.

The second part of this chapter addresses, directly, mural-making in Belfast and how it developed out of the decorative traditions that were erected in celebration of the Battle of the Boyne in unionist communities and alongside political action in nationalist communities. The murals are not merely artworks but are politicized artifacts that create space as much as they define it. The final part of this chapter discusses the "Re-Imaging" of paramilitary murals with those depicting heritage, leading to the question: As a part of Belfast's heritage in and of themselves, whose voice do they now represent and how authentic is that voice? Who gets to own the past and who, really, is the "winner" of heritage creation?

Here, I stress the *choice* inherent in a community's heritage. I argue that heritage—that ephemeral essence that even David Lowenthal (1985) declined to define—is a subjective force in Northern Ireland that is shaped by contemporary actors in distinct groups in order to define themselves not in the way that they *were* but in the way that they *are*, in the way that they choose to see themselves today. This does not make it any less real or valid; instead, heritage is a subjective phenomenon that is experienced and, potentially, manipulated rather than an objective force that impartially defines a people. In choosing to highlight distinct aspects and moments of their chosen heritage in the murals, the communities that search for authenticity in Belfast have set themselves in opposition to each other by the very nature of their self-representation, designed as it is to validate their political stances and to accentuate the righteousness of their presence, their lived experience. In this case, heritage is an extension of the political.

Political Aspirations: A History Behind Mural-Making in Belfast

The English could nominally claim a presence in Ireland from 1169, when Cambrian Anglo-Normans were invited into a political struggle over the Irish kingship in order to make their fortunes as mercenaries-with-benefits (see Flanagan 1989; Frame 1998; Graham 2000; Orpen 1914; Rolston 1995a). Their place was consolidated when Henry II followed and incorporated much of Ireland into his feudal kingship. Although English power in Ireland fluctuated over the following centuries, this authority was consolidated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries during the Tudor and Cromwellian reconquests that sought to "civilize" the Irish (as well as the Catholic descendents of the Anglo-Normans, the "Old English") by introducing new religious reforms and old-fashioned persecutions into the colonial program of governance, including the shipment of thousands of intractable Catholics to the New World as slaves (Courbage 1997:172; see also Barnard 1979; Canny 1989; Canny 2001; Ellis 1985; Lennon 1994).

During this time, the colonial government planted thousands of English and Lowland Scottish "undertakers" or colonists across the country, perhaps as many as 100,000 by 1641, 30,000 of whom settled in Ulster (Ohlmeyer 1998:139). Catholic-owned property was confiscated and many of the native Irish were either forcefully transplanted to marginal land, driven there through penury, or were

allowed to remain on Protestant estates in order to work the land for its new own-
ers, many of whom were former soldiers who fought for the Crown in Ireland.
Sir Arthur Chichester (1563–1625) was among this group; he was granted large
tracts of land in Ulster, including that which surrounded the twelfth-century Anglo-
Norman Belfast Castle, following the Nine Years War (1594–1603). The town of
Belfast was incorporated by the Crown in 1613 and was populated predominantly
by Protestant settlers interested in commercial enterprises surrounding the rise of
industrial capital.

The defeat of King James II (1633–1701) by his son-in-law, William III of
Orange (1650–1702), at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, marked the ascendency
of the landowning Protestants of English and Scottish origins over Irish Catholics,
opening the door to exclusionary policies forbidding them from inheriting land if
there was a Protestant heir available; practicing their religion freely and openly;
obtaining a Catholic education; holding public office, voting, or practicing law;
teaching; carrying a sword; owning a horse worth over five pounds; and a myriad
of other freedoms. These Penal Laws were ratified in the English-controlled Irish
parliament between 1695 and 1759 and they were set in place to secure Protestant
interests in Ireland (see Cohen 1997; McGrath 1996).

However, in counterpoint to the Protestant ascendancy, a modern Irish nation-
alism was emerging that began among the Anglo-Irish elite with Henry Grattan
in the late eighteenth century. Nationalist sentiment expanded with the revolution-
ary efforts of Theobald Wolfe Tone and the United Irishmen [Note 4] and it was
popularized by Daniel O'Connell, who promoted a peaceful campaign for Catholic
Emancipation. It was later politicized by Charles Stewart Parnell, who argued for
home rule in the 1880s. And it culminated with the Easter Rising of 1916, when
Patrick Pearse and others led several thousand men and women to seize the General
Post Office in Dublin to proclaim the independence of Ireland. This rebellion was
brutally quelled by the British Army and its leaders were executed; however, these
men and women are widely considered to be martyrs and have been promoted
as such by those who took part in the republican movement in Northern Ireland.
Images taken from these moments of Irish nationalism therefore feature promi-
nently on republican murals. They are, in fact, used to draw a direct link between
the revolutionary moments of the past and those of the present.

By the early years of the twentieth century this unrest that had periodically
shaken the foundations of the Protestant Ascendency through the rebellious activ-
ities of Irish nationalists (both Catholic and Protestant) over the previous two
centuries made the prospect of Irish independence inevitable. The vulnerability that
the landowning elite experienced in light of the rise of republicanism and their own
decline in power in Ireland meant that their celebrations of Protestant identity and
unionist ideals took on additional importance to their own sense of community and
spurred them into "an all-class alliance whose differences were to be subsumed in
the interests of the survival of the state against any enemies, internal or external,
real or imaginary" (Rolston 2003:v). This community, which was already suffer-
ing massive insecurities due to fears of abandonment by the parliament in London,
was made even more vulnerable on the first day of the Battle of the Somme (July

1, 1916), during which the Thirty-six (Ulster) Division suffered more than 5,000 casualties—almost half of which were fatalities—during the first 2 days of combat. This devastation contributed to more general fears of ethnic extinction and abandonment as, increasingly uneasy and insular, they felt betrayed by the same government for which they had willingly sacrificed their young men.

At its essence, during the early decades of the twentieth century and after centuries of disenfranchisement, the largely Catholic population of the South did not want to be British but instead wanted to live in a state where they could celebrate their culture with impunity and express their ideological and political views freely; conversely, the largely Protestant population of the North did not want to be subsumed within a Gaelic counterculture but instead wanted to retain their British identity and follow British law (Boal and Livingstone 1984:163). After a protracted struggle that made heroes of some and villains of others, English and Irish negotiators came to the only solution that they saw possible and, in 1921, the Act of Partition created the Free State of Ireland. As a Free State, Ireland remained a part of the Commonwealth until 1949, when it declared itself to be the Republic of Ireland. Six of the eight counties in Ulster that had a Protestant majority remained part of Great Britain, but they accepted a devolved parliament that they themselves administered in Belfast until it was suspended in 1972 with the escalation of what is commonly called "The Troubles."

By the time of Partition in 1921, Belfast was already heavily segregated along religious lines. A steady stream of settlers had been drawn to it over the previous centuries, and by the early 1800s, with the onset of the industrial revolution, its prosperity was undeniable. This newfound wealth was tied to Belfast's dominance in the linen industry as well as other manufacturing enterprises that were associated with the rising consumption of manufactured goods that accompanied the expansion of European colonial power around the world. The settlers in Belfast were predominantly Protestant and the city was thought of as a stronghold that was "practically reserved" for them (Courbage 1997:184). In what has been called a "curious reversal of roles" (Boal and Livingstone 1984:163), however, nineteenth-century Irish Catholics were drawn to Belfast just as they were lured to industrial centers in England in the hope of finding work. For its established population, both elite and working-class Protestants, this influx of Catholic migrants triggered hostility among those who feared changes to their way of life, community, and employment opportunities. This fear was widespread and is demonstrated through the comments of a Dublin lawyer, M. Pointdergast, who said,

> We English Protestants came to this country as conquerors. The gentry here has always considered the Catholics as a pack of savages and has treated them as such... Now they (the Catholics) have become powerful by the force of numbers and by their political rights. (quoted in Courbage 1997:181)

As such, there arose a need to "transform 'areas where Protestants lived' into 'Protestant areas'," thereby allowing the people who lived there to claim the land through what Neil Jarman has called "the sectarianization of space" (1998:84).

The instability of early-nineteenth-century Belfast society was fed by several factors: the increasing segregation along with Protestant insecurities that surrounded the inevitability of Partition; the certainty that the British government was easing its colonial program of control in Ireland; the fear that the Protestant community was possibly facing retribution from Catholic Ireland; and the growing population of Catholics in Belfast who were becoming increasingly resentful of the religious discrimination that was held against them. In Belfast, this volatility manifested itself in violence and, by 1857, public disorder had escalated to full-out rioting between the two communities that lasted weeks and drove families out of their homes, prompting the Commissioners of Inquiry to conclude in the following year:

> Since the commencement of the late riots... the districts have become exclusive, and by regular systematized movements on both sides, the few Catholic inhabitants of the Sandy Row district have been obliged to leave it, and the few Protestant inhabitants of the Pound district have also been obliged to leave that locality. (quoted in Doherty and Poole 1997:534)

Seeking shelter in ethnically unified districts during periods of unrest is probably a universal instinct, grounded by a compulsion to transform the "imagined community" of Benedict Anderson (1983) into a geopolitical reality. By the 1910s, 59% of the city's residents were living in segregated communities (Boal and Livingstone 1984: 164). While these discrete areas in Belfast offered greater protection, they also proved to be more easily identifiable and therefore more vulnerable to attacks as communities became known as either Catholic or Protestant. Neighborhoods became enclaves, cut off from other communities as they drew in on themselves for succor, protection, and a sense of shared identity. This geopolitical isolationism served to separate the communities as quotidian interaction—at the butcher's, the chemist's, or the grocer's—was diminished, taking away the commonalities that were shared by both communities and reducing even further the possibility of integration. This spatial segregation reached its apogee in 1969, when the British Army erected the first "peace wall" between the Protestant Shankill Road and the Catholic Falls Road in West Belfast. Since then, communities have become consolidated by high walls, chain-linked fences, barbed wire, and highways that are designed to keep trouble in its place, all the while with the hope that separation will lead to indifference and indifference will lead to peace.

Uneasy Neighbors: Religion and Politics

Religion is the most common frame of reference used to define the two communities. It demarcates cultural difference and is used as a convenience to define each of the "others" in Northern Ireland. It does not lead to a comfortable and easy discussion, however, because there is much more than religion at play here. To reduce the distinctions between communities solely to their religious affiliation is to undermine the inherent complexity of the situation and its participants. Instead, the conflict in Northern Ireland "can best be thought of as ethnic, national, and political in nature, rather than simply religious" (Santino 1999:517). It can also be thought of as cultural. Many people today would have a hard time mounting a verbal attack

on the other side based on purely ideological arguments. However, "Protestant" and "Catholic" will not be going away any time soon as markers of identity because this is how the communities refer to themselves and to each other, and it has therefore become the dominant archetype through which the rest of the world accesses the conflict. At a fundamental social level, religion is still an essential element to these communities because it is through religion that communities are organized. Social groups and sports teams tend to be denominationally specific or, if not, they exist in communities that are ideologically grounded. Indeed, "(r)eligion plays a crucial role in the identification process" of people in Northern Ireland (Mitchell 2005:5) but no one is arguing over competing doctrines. As religion continues to be conflated with ethnicity (e.g., Boal and Livingstone 1984:164), and ethnicity with culture, we are stuck with religion as the overarching paradigm of identity.

This is in part because there is a history of approaching the conflict in Ireland as a political struggle wrapped in ideological difference. William Petty (1623–1687), who was Oliver Cromwell's chief surveyor of land that was earmarked for confiscation, was among the first to differentiate the people living in Ireland by their religion rather than their ethnicity. From that time, census reports paid close attention to the population ratio in the hope that Ireland would become a Protestant nation rather than a Catholic one, its people loyal to the Crown rather than the Pope (Courbage 1997). However, Petty himself did not hesitate to lay out his aims for the people of Ireland and he did so by stressing ethnicity, not religion, when he wrote,

> . . . without costly armies, the government can know no rest until most of the population has been made English, either by bringing in Englishmen or by sending out Irishmen. (cited in Courbage 1997:174)

At that point, to be English was to be Protestant; to be Irish was to be Catholic [Note 5]. Since then, the tie between Catholicism and Irish nationalism—and the more radical republicanism—as a cultural construction has become reified in the national consciousness. "Catholic" is therefore commonly used as a catchall to encapsulate both religion and politics in very general terms. "Republican" is used to describe people—Irish Catholics—who seek unification with the rest of Ireland through any means possible, including physical force. Nationalists—Irish Catholic in their heritage—believe in the unification of Ireland as a single nation with 32 provinces; they, however, do not always support the republican ideals that espouse the use of any means necessary to achieve their ends, violence included. Not all Catholics are nationalists and some would prefer, in fact, to remain part of Great Britain. Furthermore, many totemic "Irish Catholics" have stepped away from religion except as a marker of identity. Recent Irish attitudes toward religion in general and the Catholic Church in particular show the disillusionment and a distancing of many people from the Church in light of the exposure of abuses and corruption. This shift in Catholic attitudes has entered the consciousness of hard-line loyalists but not yet to the extent that it eliminates their overall impression of "otherness" and the certainty in the mainstream media that religion still lies at the heart of the matter [Note 6].

Others have interpreted religious iconography in nationalist murals as competing for cultural dominance with republicanism (e.g., Kenney 1998:157) or as a geographical marker of identity (e.g., Santino 1999:523). For many nationalists, religion

has become less of a belief and more of just another marker of Irish identity, much like the practice of naming a child Sean rather than John or wearing a Claddagh ring. Until recently, for example, a large mural of the Virgin Mary dominated the Lower Falls Road. The republican muralists I spoke with scoffed at this particular religious mural, saying, "The Church put that up, not us!," and they did not shy away from showing their disdain toward the Catholic Church as an institution which, they said, abandoned the republican cause when its soldiers sought its absolution and support during the Troubles [Note 7].

On the Protestant side, this community has long been divided internally and, in the eighteenth century, emigration to the Americas was seen as the best option for many Scots–Ulster Presbyterians who were marginalized and even persecuted by mainstream Protestantism (Courbage 1997:175; Griffin 2000:266). Indeed, they are considered by some to have been a "dangerous rival for supremacy in the kingdom" and as such were excluded from positions of power in Ireland and elsewhere to the extent that they have recently been referred to as having had "a second-class status in a second-class kingdom" (Griffin 2000:274, 287). Loyalists, who in general are descendants of fundamentalist Protestantism, condone violent action if it is used to further their cause. Before loyalty to the Crown, however, the loyalist is first committed to the defense of "his people" in an active construction of a distinct culture, unique in the UK (Moore and Sanders 2002:10). While their chief adversary has always been the Catholic community, the concessions that have been made to Irish nationalists over the twentieth century marked the English as "arch-betrayers," resulting in the community drawing into itself more tightly after witnessing its people, its culture, and its traditions threatened on all sides by the world around it (Moore and Sanders 2002:12). Unlike loyalists, unionists for the most part accept that Catholics have a role in Britain so long as they are not anti-British (Moore and Sanders 2002:14). They consider themselves to be firmly British and they see religion and ethnicity as less significant than political beliefs and shared principles.

As Mitchell (2005:8) notes, "(r)eligion acts as an ethnic marker amongst those who claim a religious affiliation, but who neither practice nor believe." As a means of identification, therefore, religion is unlikely to fade away as a defining trait any time soon. Identity in Northern Ireland is multi-faceted and embedded with deep-seeded prejudices that linger, intact, at odds with the process of peace and reconciliation despite the best intentions [Note 8]. Religion, therefore, while an underlying element of the conflict and an undeniable marker of identity, is rarely explored in the murals of Belfast except, in both sides, as a demonstration of persecution.

Making Murals: From Celebration to Intimidation

Peace was rarely easy in Belfast. As far back as July 12, 1813, violence surrounded the parades that celebrated the Protestant Ascendency in an Ireland that was undergoing rapid social change in the wake of the Act of Union in 1801. Yearly, the Protestant population commemorated the Battle of the Boyne as well as the lifting of the Siege of Derry (in 1689), staging lavish celebrations and parades in public and throwing balls, dinners, teas, and special church services in private. This took place

each July and August as early as 1796 following the creation of the Orange Order, a Masonesque association that was founded with the protection of those interests in mind (Beiner 2007:371; Fitzpatrick 2002:61). Over the following century, these celebrations were usually short-lived, unchallenged, and highly structured (Jarman 1998:84). However, during periods of civic unrest the parades served as a flashpoint for protest and violence that still flares up today.

In celebration, the red, white, and blue of the Union Jack were painted on sidewalk curbsides and lampposts while images of William of Orange, affectionately known as "King Billy," were painted on cloth banners that were carried by marchers and soon jumped to gable walls of the houses that lined the parade routes. William's image has remained for the most part static and instantly recognizable: he sits on a white steed while crossing the River Boyne with his sword held aloft in victory, much as he is in the 1778 painting by Benjamin West that exemplifies "the Catholic cause defeated or at least under control and a nation, Ireland, subdued" (Cullen 1995:58). The Protestant community thus took shelter in the memory of their single most vivid moment of conquest over the Catholic population at that moment when they were most vulnerable in the face of the undeniable prospect of an Irish Free State; this community chose to valorize and, in turn, mythologize their moment of ascendency by splashing the image of "King Billy" across their claimed space in order to vanquish, again, the Catholics who lived among them (Fig. 3.2).

Fig. 3.2 Loyalist mural depicting William of orange defeating King James at the battle of the Boyne, 1690. (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

These early murals of William's victory at the Boyne did not just mark the space. They created it. These murals were developed not only as a celebration of a particular colonial moment of the past but also as a contemporary marker of identity and entitlement. In areas of contested space, monuments like these marked both the land and its people as British. However, there is a fine line between celebration and triumphalism. While the parades served as a pageant of commemoration to one segment of the population, it came across as an exercise in saber rattling to the other. For the Catholics who lived in Belfast, and particularly those who lived on the streets through which the parades passed, this brought to mind the absolute Catholic defeat at the same event and the ensuing Penal Laws that persecuted Catholics in Ireland. Therefore, during the parade season of July and August, the parade routes that traversed Catholic neighborhoods were often seen (and remain) as deliberate provocations that were intended either to reinforce the superiority of one segment of the population or to incite the other to violence. Recently and perhaps most notoriously this has occurred along Ormeau Road in Belfast, at Drumcree in Portadown, and in the Bogside in Derry. It is therefore important to keep in mind that "(p)laces are not inert containers. They are politicized, culturally relative, historically specific, local and multiple constructions" that are experienced differently by different groups (Rodman 2003:205). It is no coincidence that many people who live in Northern Ireland choose to take their holidays during these months, often in the Republic or in Scotland, in order to avoid the civil unrest that seems inevitable in the summer months.

The celebrations that gave rise to the murals of King Billy in Protestant neighborhoods had their counterpart in Catholic society. Nationalist parades celebrated St. Patrick's Day, the Easter Rising (1916), Bloody Sunday (1972), and the Republican Hunger Strikes (1981). However, a major distinction separated these traditions. For years the Protestant "theatrical calendar" (Fitzpatrick 2002:61) was staged in public areas. They were institutionally ritualized and unchallenged, highly structured and officially sanctioned. This open tradition of triumphalism existed in direct opposition to the nationalist celebrations that were geographically restricted to Catholic strongholds and were actively repressed by the state (Jarman 1998:84, 2003:93–94; Santino 1999:517). Murals were unwelcome accessories. Unlike the built environment in Protestant areas, which were colorfully decorated with bunting and murals of King Billy, the walls in nationalist communities were left bare for many decades, even through their own private celebrations.

During the early years of "the Troubles" the Irish Republican Army (IRA) started to use graffiti as part of a hidden-in-plain sight discourse. While the spray-painting of sectarian identifiers such as Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), etc. can be considered a claiming of the landscape, the use of graffiti is also a way to disseminate information. A 1969 letter to the *Belfast Telegraph* said as much:

> These slogans were not put up by a lot of young hotheads. They are there for a purpose—and I think everyone who reads them will know quite clearly what the purpose is. (quoted in Boal and Livingstone 1984:170)

It was a medium that was used to direct activities as well as to issue warnings aimed at potential informants, promising certain retaliation if the republican cause were undermined by collusion with the British Army (Boal and Livingstone 1984:172). As a mode of communication, it is still in use today. "All drug dealers will be shot" was one particular piece of graffiti that I saw just off the Shankill Road during an internal loyalist gang war several years ago. More recently, "T.V. license men beware" featured prominently, perhaps demonstrating why Belfast has one of the highest incidences of television license evasion in the UK [Note 9]. As such, graffiti can be understood as "a twilight zone of communication" (Reisner 1971:1, quoted in Ley and Cybriwsky 1974:492) that is a way for the disenfranchised—or the outlawed—to express themselves freely in otherwise proscribed circumstances.

In the midst of the Troubles and in the eyes of British authority, republican graffiti was seen as an instrument of anticolonial discourse—an overt display of Catholic disorder—and "peacemakers" reacted harshly. For example, in 1980, a 16-year old boy was shot and killed by the police while he was painting republican graffiti on a wall (Jarman 1998:81). A decade earlier, in 1970, two men had been given a 6-month prison sentence for painting the Irish tricolor flag on a wall. This contrasted starkly against the ubiquity of the Union Jack in Protestant areas. However, to raise the Irish flag was more or less an act of resistance, a nod toward sedition against the British Crown and against Ulster, since it was illegal to fly any flag but the Union Jack between 1954 and 1987, when the Flags and Emblems Act was first enacted and then repealed. Punishment was a fine of £500 or up to 5 years in jail. According to Santino (1999:523), however, sectarian graffiti is now dissuaded by Republican leaders because it runs "counter to its claim of fighting a legitimate war effort." Graffiti is inherently subversive and, since many of the founders of the Provisional IRA are now legitimate politicians—Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness and President of Sinn Féin, Gerry Adams, for example—the language of subversion delegitimizes their stance as the official opposition.

Unlike the writing of graffiti, which is more akin to a hit-and-run kind of subversion, it was the early 1980s before uncontested nationalist murals were painted in Catholic strongholds and the choice of medium was undoubtedly seen as a republican complement to the long-standing loyalist tradition (Rolston 1995b). Unlike their unionist counterparts, however, the earliest republican murals did not depict a moment of triumph (indeed they *lost* the Battle of the Boyne); instead, they focused on the trauma of a particular form of martyrdom which Guy Beiner calls the "triumph of defeat" (2007:375): death by hunger strike. Hunger strikes had been valorized by Irish suffragettes and political prisoners in the early twentieth century, usually in the name of political rights or prison reform, and in 1981 republican inmates embarked on a hunger strike as a means of protest against the removal of their status as political prisoners in "The Maze," the Long Kesh prison, where incarceration without trial was common. By denying the prisoners political status, the British administration in Ireland removed the ideological root of republican violence and retooled it as thuggish criminality, just as they did in the 1910s before the South seceded and again in the early 1970s. This action was directed solely at the nationalist community (Moen 2000:2–3). As Moen writes,

By openly targeting those prisoners who most clearly epitomized the political nature of the conflict in the North, the British government facilitated a change in how the conflict was publicly presented and understood in the long term. ... In this broader, social sense, criminalization attempted to delegitimize the political motivation of anti-state activists and determined to create a moral distance between the state and other protagonists in the conflict. (2000:4)

However, one of the most prominent hunger strikers, Bobby Sands, is quoted on murals as having said, "Never will they label our liberation struggle as criminal." In all, 10 men starved themselves to deaths in the quest to be acknowledged as political prisoners rather than as criminals, but not before Sands was elected to British Parliament as a Sinn Féin representative for Northern Ireland. They raised international awareness to "the cause" and did so in a way that afforded themselves the mantle of activist rather than terrorist [Note 10]. Their public statement made this clear:

We, the Republican Prisoners of War. . . demand as a right, political recognition and that we be accorded the status of political prisoners. We claim this right as captured combatants in the continuing struggle for national liberation and self-determination. (quoted in Moen 2000:7)

Likenesses of these men—these heroes to the republican community—were taken from photographs and were among the earliest murals to be painted on the gable walls of Catholic neighborhoods. In an environment where "good" walls are regularly repainted with new images, a mural of Bobby Sands is a perennial fixture on the side of the Sinn Féin office on the Falls Road (Fig. 3.3).

Significantly, the incarceration of republicans who were willing to sacrifice everything for the cause became an integral part of the heritage of the nationalist community of Northern Ireland. They were thrown together in what turned out to be a remarkable environment for the intensive study of Irish culture, facets of which had been all but lost in many Catholic families over successive generations. Those who knew the Irish language taught others; those who were familiar with Irish mythology told stories like the Gaelic *seanachi*, the storytellers of old; and a prison newsletter focused on Irish or Celtic culture as much as it did republican ideals. Although there are exceptions, all of the republican muralists with whom I have spoken over the last decade have spent time in the Maze; it is there that they learned of Irish history, mythology, and language in the process of honing their republican ideals, and it was in prison that many of them first picked up a paintbrush. The experience of jail as a rite of passage for republicans therefore became a badge of honor rather than a veil of shame, and it has remained in the forefront of the life experiences of these muralists [Note 11]. Between 1969 and 2001, about 3,500 people were killed in the conflict, a startling proportion in a population of only 1.6 million. Of these, 1,523 people were Catholic, 1,287 were Protestant, and just over 500 were members of the British Army. A further 120 people were killed in campaigns that targeted England; 82 in the Republic of Ireland; and 14 elsewhere in Europe. Of those, 1,854 people were non-combatants; 155 people were under 16 years; and 193 others were over 60 years (for ongoing statistics, see http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/sutton/).

Fig. 3.3 Bobby Sands mural on the side of the Sinn Féin office of the Falls Road. (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

During this time, sectarian military activity was reaching a height of violence on both sides of the ideological divide while splinter groups and their offshoots crowded the sectarian alphabet soup. On the republican side there existed the Provisional IRA, the Real IRA, the Continuity IRA, the INLA, and the IPLO (Irish People's Liberation Organization). On the loyalist side were the UFF, the UDA (Ulster Defense Association), the UVF (Ulster Volunteer Force), the Red Hand Commandos, and the Red Hand Defenders. There were also the UDR (Ulster Defense Regiment), the B-Specials, the LVF (Loyalist Volunteer Force), the UYM (Ulster Young Militants), and the YCV (Young Citizens' Volunteers). Any fervent ideologue or ambitious thug with a tough stomach could find a place in one of these organizations, each of which had its own acceptable level of violence as well as a code of honor that couched criminal activities in ideological rhetoric. At times, the rhetoric served as a verbal balaclava wherein the organizations used politics and religion as an excuse to carry out bigotry and criminal activity in the open through the high-end operation of organized crime that revolved around the drug trade, money laundering, and weapons dealing [Note 12].

This sharp increase in violence and the politicization of everyday life led to a deviation in the mural tradition in Protestant areas where loyalists pulled their talents away from the triumphal murals of King Billy and over to more topical images that they felt related directly to their own increasingly sectarian convictions. While King

Fig. 3.4 An unfinished loyalist mural of a balaclava-clad gunman in "The Village" in South Belfast. (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

Billy was still present, particularly during the parade season, intimidating figures with black masks and large guns began to appear in political neighborhoods while faces were only revealed after death, in memorial murals (Fig. 3.4).

These paramilitary murals were far more prevalent in loyalist communities than in republican ones. Typically, working-class Protestant communities have been "claimed" by particular loyalist factions, and the murals served as clear demarcations of turf to competing loyalist sectarian terrorist organizations and they were appreciated as such. While taking photographs in "The Village," a Protestant community in South Belfast, I was offered comments with a wink and a smile, such as "That's a good one, isn't it?" Instead of feeling intimidated some people found the images comforting—an assurance to this enclave that a higher power, of sorts, was standing guard over them and that the hidden figures behind the masks—behind the murals—were protectors rather than aggressors. For others, however, including people who were part of the community, these murals were unwelcome when they portrayed armed and masked "paras" who loomed in an effort to intimidate, subdue, and overwhelm their audience [Note 13]. In June 2000, for example, an anonymous pensioner who lived on the Protestant Shankill Road wrote to the *Belfast Telegraph*,

> I would like to know who gave the vandals permission to put up all of the murals and paint my country's colours on the streets of the Shankill area to be walked on.. . . Do I want to see my road (painted) with murals? No. Did anyone ask me? No. . . . In 30 years, I was never frightened in my community, but I am now. This marking out of territory for various groupings will result in the death of someone, possibly a person just like me. When is this

madness going to end? If this is peace, give me conflict where the enemy doesn't live next door. For obvious reasons, I must remain anonymous. (*Belfast Telegraph*, June 24, 2000)

The pensioner was referring to a territorial dispute that was raging within the UFF/UDA in the summer of 2000. The leader of the UFF, Johnny "Mad Dog" Adair, had a list; if your name was on it you were highly encouraged to move, which is what 200 Protestant families did posthaste. Under his leadership, the UFF embarked on an unprecedented criminal rampage that led to a feud within his own organization. The general impression in the city was that the police were sitting back and letting the loyalist paramilitaries whittle down their numbers all on their own. Nightly, reports of murdered or knee-capped members were detailed on the news as each day saw an escalation in partisan conflict. During this time, Adair commissioned mural artists to cover the walls of the Lower Shankill with sectarian images that were designed to claim space, to assert dominance, and to challenge just about everybody as he sat in his car and watched the artwork progress. (Needless to say, the artists were not very talkative.) These particular murals, then, were representative of a grab for power that proclaimed a very particular group identity in the midst of a contested landscape that was witness to daily episodes of sectarian violence. The peace process has thus revealed more than bigotry; it has exposed the criminality behind operational paramilitary organizations in Northern Ireland who have used the conflict as a cover for organized crime, exposing those who have ridden the train of sectarianism for as long as they could, reaping benefits and killing with amnesty while they carved out drug empires in the shadow of religion, politics, and identity (Fig. 3.5).

Fig. 3.5 Loyalist mural of "Eddie" in the Lower Shankill housing estate commissioned by Johnny "Mad Dog" Adair. (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

During Adair's subsequent re-incarceration for directing terrorist activities and drug trafficking, many of the murals he had commissioned were quickly painted over as locals hastened to distance themselves from him. Two years later, another turf war was fought through the placement and defacement of murals that, this time, took place between the UVF and the LVF in which murals of the latter were systematically defaced, prompting the newspaper headline "Terror feud looming over mural attacks" (*Belfast Telegraph*, May 19, 2002). Murals, therefore, became an essential part of how these sectarian groups defined themselves, their politics, and their territory.

Starting in the mid-1990s, republican murals leaned away from this type of menacing fist-shaking. The introduction of political, historical, and heritage motifs shifted the public eye away from the paramilitary images and toward a far more compassionate image of nationalism in the North. The timing of this new direction in mural art coincided with shifting trends in the North as the IRA was attempting to downplay its image as a terrorist organization through a public relations battle fought by Gerry Adams, in particular, whose popularity was growing in the USA to such an extent that he was even invited into the White House to meet with Bill Clinton in 1998. The murals were, however, (and still are) used to disseminate political commentary (Fig. 3.6). They argued for the release of prisoners of war; they urged people to "Vote Sinn Féin"; they advocated for the end of Orange parades that passed through nationalist areas; they called for the withdrawal of British troops and the cessation of the use of rubber bullets; they warned against

Fig. 3.6 Republican mural located in the Ardoyne, "Collusion is not an illusion: It is State murder," accusing the British government of conspiring with the outlawed UDA. (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

collusion and damned the hypocrisy inherent in the police forces, both the Royal Uester Constabulary (RUC) and its successor, the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI); and as in Fig. 3.6, they accused the British government of colluding with loyalist paramilitary groups (see Rolston 1995a, b, 2003). When the British Army found murals politically seditious, they would hurl paint bombs at them, prompting the muralists to work in block-like, primary colors that could be easily repainted (http://rubenortiztorres.org/for_the_record/labels/Ireland.html).

Local republican muralists are, for the most part, gracious to visitors to such an extent that some of them will welcome you into their homes and put you up for the night. They exult in the international interest shown in their work and are happy to invite outside collaboration as they did with Rubén Ortiz-Torres, a Mexican muralist from Los Angeles who visited Belfast in 1992 and who was more or less coerced into painting a political mural with a well-known local artist, Gerard Kelly [Note 14]. The visiting artist understood this mural, which is even now prominently featured on Ballymurphy Road, to represent "Mexican and Irish heroes who in other contexts could be seen as villains; revolutionary heroes of the past and present." In a rather humorous account filled with British soldiers, paint bombs, and low-flying helicopters, Ortiz-Torres describes how his own input into the content and artistic style of the mural was negligible because "There was no other way than their own." According to Ortiz-Torres, in between telling him what to do Kelly spent much of the time "insulting the (nearby) soldiers while explaining... that the chopper had sophisticated spying systems from which they could hear and record [their conversation]." Ortiz-Torres explained how these murals become alienated from the artist and become a part of a public landscape that is entrenched in political discourse and identity issues, writing, "The mural began to have a life of its own. More than a piece of art . . . or a revolutionary illustration . . . it is a global barrio mural as eccentric as the reality that produced it."

Ortiz-Torres had to work within rigid boundaries so that the mural that was eventually produced would fit into the relatively narrow confines of what is considered to be acceptable mural art in Belfast. There is little sentimentality in this business and if a mural does not fit or is not popular, it will quickly be painted over, no matter who the guest artist is [Note 15]. Ortiz-Torres, who wanted to incorporate the army's paint bombs into an abstraction about the social life of murals in a contested landscape, had his ideas dismissed because, in nationalist Belfast, the images that grace the gable walls of the community must be meaningful to the people who live there through their shared experience and a mutual belief in what nationalist culture *is* in Northern Ireland. It is through that local production of knowledge and the knowledge of production that particular nationalist neighborhoods in Belfast clamor for their own murals, as is evident in the cul-de-sacs of the Ballymurphy estate, Turf Lodge, the Ardoyne, New Lodge, etc. Local residents who were active in the republican movement, particularly those who were "killed in action," feature prominently on the walls. Because they are local men and women, they are usually depicted with friendly smiles on their faces along with the guns in their hands. The immediacy of these images and the familiarity of their identities—someone's father, someone else's brother—transform what was a campaign of terror into something completely different for the people who habitually had their front doors shattered by the British

Fig. 3.7 Republican mural commemorating deceased IRA volunteers. (Note the peace wall in the background.) (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

Army. The friendly faces are brave defenders to local residents who look out at the murals through their kitchen window or pass by them every day on the way to the main road. The men portrayed in these murals are not interpreted as terrorists and they are never depicted in a sinister way (such as dressed in the black balaclavas that were so prominent on loyalist walls) (Fig. 3.7).

Other murals deliberately instill a connection between contemporary Catholic culture in Northern Ireland and that of the pre-Republic Irish Catholic community through highlighting experiences that they bore as a result of the anti-Catholic, colonial legislation that penalized their ancestors in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in particular. These are historical events that are marked by trauma and are meant to evoke the injustice and discrimination experienced by the Catholics in Ireland across time at the hands of the British colonial regime. Popular themes include the Irish Famine of 1845–1849—*An Gorta Mór*—in which the population of Catholic Ireland was reduced by at least 20–25% through starvation and emigration. The words "BRITAIN'S GENOCIDE BY STARVATION" and "IRELAND'S HOLOCAUST" are set against the emaciated figures shown alongside them. Other murals show the mass emigration in the form of overstuffed boats loaded with gaunt passengers heading off to the Americas. Similarly, representations can be found that depict the anti-Catholic legislation of the Penal Laws: a scene of a group of people standing at a mass rock, celebrating communion, after their churches were confiscated and their religion suppressed; students studying at a hedge school since one of the earliest Penal Laws stated that "no person of the popish religion shall publicly or in private houses teach school…" because it blocked conformity to the "true religion" and the adoption of "English habit(s) and language" (*7 Will III* c. 4, 1695).

Other murals, more openly political but arguably no more politicized, draw parallels between the struggles undertaken during the final decades of the twentieth century and those of the early century. Contemporary violence aimed at the British in the name of liberty and self-rule is purposefully compared to the struggle carried out by the heroes of the failed Easter Rising of 1916. The Easter Rising is a common theme among the historical murals; it celebrates the men and women who were willing to give their lives for the cause, just as latter day republicans were and are willing to sacrifice their lives for what they consider to be an extension of the same primary republican goal: a united Ireland free of British governance, intervention, and culture.

Republican muralists have established prominent visual links to other allegedly dispossessed and colonized cultures, including the Iraqis, Basque separatists, and Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank (Fig. 3.8). In the same series of murals along the "international wall" on the Lower Falls Road, anti-George Bush murals paint him with a giant straw in his mouth, siphoning off the natural resources of Iraq and situating his administration in opposition to freedom movements everywhere. In doing this, the muralists have deliberately forged an imagined community whose shared culture is rooted in the experience of colonial oppression and native

Fig. 3.8 Nationalist mural that reads, "Palestine. . . The largest concentration camp in the world!!! 3.3 million innocent people tortured, denied their freedom!" To the right, a play on a popular Palestinian peace and flag poster (partially visible on the *left*) that turns the flag into the Irish tricolor with "Tioc faidh árlá" below: "Our time will come." (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

resistance. Beneath the public relations level of nationalist human rights interest, however, there have been allegations of collaboration between the IRA and Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) guerrillas in Colombia, arms dealing with the PLO, and "cultural exchanges" or knowledge-sharing meetings with members of Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) (the Basque separatist movement in Spain). The murals of Belfast therefore provide a unique window into this subculture of ethnonationalist extremism. In the East Belfast Catholic enclave of the Short Strand, for example, a small mural was placed outside a shop-front featuring a snake twining around an axe with the words *bietan jarrai* beneath; it was there for a number of years. When I asked a local muralist about it, he told me that when a group from Spain was visiting they gave a couple of the "kids" "a wall and a paintbrush to see what they could do." This symbol belongs to ETA, which has killed over 800 people since 1968. The mural has recently been removed and, as a mural space, it has not been reused.

In framing the nationalist cause within the rubric of ideological struggle, nationalist muralists have drawn links between events in Belfast's recent history and events beyond Ireland. In the aftermath of the violence that erupted in 2001–2002 at the Holy Cross Primary School in the Ardoyne area, where worldwide coverage showed people taunting stricken children on their way to school in a flare-up of violence allegedly inflamed by the local UDA (the loyalist UDA), a striking nationalist mural went up just down the street from the school. In it, there is a clear association drawn between that experience and the 1957 crisis that arose around desegregation in Little Rock, Arkansas, when 17 black students were integrated into an all-white school (Fig. 3.9).

Strangely enough, however, images from the human rights march that gave rise to Bloody Sunday—when between 10,000 and 20,000 people marching in protest of republican imprisonment without trial were fired upon by the British Army, leaving 13 dead—are not the themes used on the murals in Belfast despite being one of the most visible civil rights moments in the North. Instead, Bloody Sunday murals are found solely in the city of Derry, where murals replicate black-and-white photographs taken during the march. These murals are starkly distinctive as a group and are markedly different from those in Belfast: no mythological themes are explored; no Celtic interlace traces the edges of the building; there is no use of the Irish language. The event of Bloody Sunday is implicitly the realm of the Derry muralists, a different community of artists living in a different political landscape with different life experiences. They themselves distinguish their work as being comparatively apolitical. On their website they write,

> . . . there is no intention of propaganda, nor is there any intention to isolate or intimidate any section of the community. These murals tell the story of the Bogside, told by the people of the Bogside. (http://www.bogsideartists.com/cradden2.PDF)

This is not a sentiment shared by the majority of muralists in Belfast who create even the most benign images with a barely veiled intent to seize the public consciousness and reshape it in their own vision.

Fig. 3.9 Nationalist mural in the Ardoyne: "Everyone has the right to live free from sectarian harassment: It's black and white!" (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

I have written elsewhere about the incorporation of Irish mythology in the Belfast murals so I will not discuss it in depth here (see Hartnett 2009). The vivid incorporation of Celtic themes retells the stories of the *Tuatha de Danann*, the Children of Lir, Cúchulainn of the *Tain Bó Cuailnge*, and other Irish fables, surrounding them with Irish interlace and Irish phraseology. Imagery of Celtic mythology, much of which was based on the artwork of Jim Fitzpatrick, has therefore been a common theme among nationalist murals, particularly in West Belfast, and it is far from benign. Instead, it is an openly political attempt to incorporate an essence of "Irishness" into the nationalist community. This is in part because West Belfast was the stomping ground of *Mo Chara*, a man who is an admirer of Fitzpatrick's art and a talented artist in his own right.

The Politics of Heritage in Mural-Making

When I first met Gerard Kelly, he was involved in a community project off the Falls Road, in West Belfast (Fig. 3.10). He and Danny Devenney were painting a series of vignettes based on decades-old photographs that local residents had provided. This mural, which stretched along a retaining wall overlooking the motorway, allowed the local community to stamp their personal histories on the landscape in an apolitical manner. The images were not sectarian; instead, they were snippets of everyday life: a child balanced on a rocking horse; a newly married couple smiling for the camera; a milkman pulling a horse-drawn cart. The muralists handed local children paintbrushes and had them draw what they saw in the corner of each panel, creating

Fig. 3.10 Muralists Gerard Kelly and Danny Devenny painting a mural in West Belfast for the Frank Gillen Community Centre. (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

a charming series of images. This is not the first time that the muralists have incorporated children into the process of mural-making. In fact, they have been willful collaborators in the mural process, or at least apprentices, and they have always been encouraged to participate, run errands, and generally feel that they are part of the action, producers of history.

Gerard Kelly, or *Mo Chara*, as he is known, is one of the men who received an informal Celtic studies education in prison. He picked up his nickname because his faulty memory hindered him from recalling other prisoners' names; so, in the process of learning Irish, he began to call everyone *mo chara*, which means "my friend"; they, in turn, returned the favor and the name stuck. Funnily enough, he does not see the irony in his nickname because *Mo Chara* delights in his truths of black and white in a city filled with shades of gray. His is a philosophy which seems frighteningly rational upon explanation, so simple and so forgivable. Yet it is so unforgiving, so irrational, and unabashedly rigid. *Mo Chara* excels at his art. However, at least until recently he would have told you that this is a means rather than an end, for he claimed to be fundamentally a political activist and freely admitted to me in 2001 that he would still be involved in sectarian violence if he had not been caught trying to pipe-bomb someone's car for the "Ra." He is unashamed in his retelling of his days in the IRA and Long Kesh prison and polishes his stories like the badges of honor he sees them to be.

Jack Santino also has interviewed *Mo Chara* and the same story he told me is repeated—almost to the word—in the Santino (1999) article "Public Protest and Popular Style." One thing that *Mo Chara* imparted to Santino and not to me, however, was that the person who may or may not have informed on him was later

found riddled with bullets (Santino 1999:522). With that level of dedication, it is difficult to imagine *Mo Chara* having any other goal but a republican one, which is something he did admit to me. His choice of mythological imagery was therefore no accident. Every time a child approached him to ask him what he was painting, it delighted Gerard Kelly and gave him the opportunity to shape young minds and, as Santino says, it allowed his politics to become their politics (Santino 1999:522). Elsewhere, I argue that these images are purely political in part because the artists align the myths with contemporary events and fictional characters with modern-day heroes (Hartnett 2009). Moreover, by the mere act of painting Irish imagery, mythology, and local history on these walls, nationalists are claiming the space as Irish. As with the loyalist murals, these murals are not just marking space, however; they are creating it. In building his images on the landscape it has been Kelly's goal to substantiate history, lend reality to myth, obviate complacency, and, in his own words, educate the children (Fig. 3.11).

The prevalence of the Irish language in republican murals was a direct result of the Long Kesh education that emphasized language as a defining and bonding cultural trait that reinforced cultural distinction and helped to forge a sense of Irishness in a community that had long been penalized when showing it in public. The Irish language is inherently politicized because at one time the English in Ireland instituted the death penalty for anyone who was caught teaching it; in the eighteenth

Fig. 3.11 A Mo Chara mural depicting with mythological imagery in the style of Jim Fitzpatrick, in progress. (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

century the colonial administration actively tried to stamp it out by anglicizing place names; and from 1947, 10 years after the South declared itself a Republic, it was illegal in Northern Ireland to erect road signs in Irish. In 1984, Martin O'Mulleoir, later a Sinn Féin councilor, was arrested for doing exactly that. Nationalist sentiment in the North persisted, however, and by 1989 there were more than 300 Irish road signs in nationalist areas despite their technical illegality (*The Boston Globe*, July 30, 1989). In Long Kesh, prisoners used the Irish language to communicate with each other in an open discourse of subversion in the presence of guards, none of whom knew the language. Irish remained officially prohibited until 1995, when it was given formal recognition. After that, following a major Sinn Féin campaign that focused on language, Irish was given "unprecedented recognition and funding in the North" (*The Irish Times*, May 13, 1999). Even now, there is a mural just off the Falls Road that proclaims, "*CEARTA TEANGA, CEARTA DAONNA*": "LANGUAGE RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS."

In reaction to the increasing legitimation of Irish culture in the North, its rising popularity in nationalist areas, and its creeping acceptance in Northern culture, the unionist community has sought to reinforce its own cultural identity in a way that distinguished it from both its Irish and English counterparts, neither of which were comfortable fits. Within a year of the Good Friday Agreement, there was a major push on the unionist side to promote Ulster Scots, or "Ullan," "an ancient hearth dialect linking Northern Ireland Protestants with their Scottish ancestral homeland" (*The Independent*, December 10, 1999). This dialect was unique to the northeast of Ireland, derived as it was from the Ulster plantations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The chairman of the Ulster Scots Society, Hugh McMillen, tried to liken it to the Irish experience, saying, "It may not exactly have been beat out of us but it was certainly pushed off us. There is a big interest now in the culture and it seems to be spreading" (*Belfast Newsletter*, February 24, 1999). However, only a handful of Ulster Protestants recognized it as distinct to their community:

> This was demonstrated a few weeks ago when some of its advocates placed street-name signs around a loyalist district in what they saw as a proud display of their heritage. The signs were torn down by enraged residents who, not being acquainted with Ulster-Scots, thought they were in Irish and were affronted by them. (*Belfast Newsletter*, February 24, 1999)

Nevertheless, the concept of a distinct Ulster Scots culture has made significant advances in the last decade. It is true that Union Jacks are still ubiquitous in unionist neighborhoods, especially during the marching season, and there are still many unionist murals that celebrate the Ulster soldiers who fought in the Battle of the Somme in 1916. Equally, it is easy to find murals dedicated to the Queen, the Queen Mum, and even Princess Diana (Prince Charles is curiously absent). However, it is the Ulster Scots identity that is growing in popularity as this community seeks to reinvent itself as neither Irish nor British (Fig. 3.12). As such, attempts have been made to emphasize "at once the antiquity of the Ulster-Scottish relationship and the ancient distinction between Ulster and the rest of Ireland" (Officer and Walker 2000:303). This is seen in a mural that states, "4,000 YEARS

Fig. 3.12 A loyalist mural depicting a Scottish piper playing over the grave of a UVF member. "Here lies a soldier." (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

OF ULSTER-SCOTS HISTORY AND HERITAGE… SHARED LANGUAGE, SHARED LITERATURE, SHARED CULTURE." References to an ancient and distinct history that belongs to a non-Irish group in Ulster are far from benign; instead, they are fully politicized claims to the land based on heritage.

Much has long been made of a prominent and long-lived loyalist mural at "Freedom Corner" on Newtonards Road in East Belfast (Harrison 1986:258; Hartnett 2009; Moore and Sanders 2002:11; Santino 1999:520), in which the Irish mythological figure Cúchulainn was co-opted by the UDA as an Ulster hero instead of an Irish one in the mold of a pre-Celtic inhabitant of the North with ties to Scotland who defended his territory from the Irish aggressors of the South. Since then, Cúchulainn has appeared in more murals in other loyalist communities, notably in the Highfield housing estate and the Lower Shankill Road, the former domain of Johnny Adair. This cultural borrowing of what was always considered an Irish hero has allowed the Ulster Scots population to pull back the baseline of

Fig. 3.13 Cúchulainn, a figure from Irish mythology who has been adopted by the loyalist community as a defender of Northern Ireland against the South. This particular mural also appropriates Ogham stones (although the example here is incorrectly depicted). (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

their history to create an analogy that legitimates their attempts at cultural and political hegemony in Ulster. The Cúchulainn mural on the Lower Shankill explains their position: "Here we stand, here we remain. We simply want to take our God-ordained place as indigenous Ulster people." In stressing their indigenity the Ulster Scots are claiming the landscape as theirs and summarily dismissing any Irish claims to it by painting them as the interlopers, like Connacht's Queen Maeve when she chased Cúchulainn into Ulster (see Gregory 1994) (Fig. 3.13).

Re-Imaging Belfast

The paramilitary murals showcasing masked gunmen are slowly heading toward obsolescence in today's political climate of reconciliation and restitution. This was punctuated by the terror attack of September 11, 2001 (9/11), which abruptly cut off any and all United States support of or sympathy for sectarian activities in Northern Ireland and made the use of terror, even if only exhibited as a balaclava-clad gunman, inappropriate (*Belfast Telegraph*, September 19, 2001).

In July 2006, the British government introduced the "Re-Imaging Communities Programme" and pledged £3.3 million to communities in Northern Ireland to pay for the replacement of paramilitary murals with seemingly benign images that are

meant to highlight local culture and history. In their July 2006 brochure, funded by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, they attest,

> This programme will help to replace paramilitary murals and emblems with positive images and to develop mural art and public art which celebrates life and helps people feel part of the community they live in.

Whether it is the government-sponsored program or just people tired of sectarianism, there is a clear shift in the type and style of murals currently being painted, particularly in loyalist areas. The seemingly benign murals that are going up in place of their intimidating predecessors are aimed at celebrating local histories and demilitarizing shared, public space. This is a laudable enterprise. However, in a town like Belfast two conversations can take place at the same time, one verbally and the other silently through the choice of idioms, sports affiliations, material culture (T-shirts, tattoos, rings, haircuts, etc.), and countless other quotidian choices selected either intentionally or unconsciously. Equally, murals are loaded with symbolism that is easily interpreted: the lily versus the poppy; the use of Irish versus Latin; interlace versus scrolls; the Celtics versus the Rangers. All of these seemingly harmless features proclaim an identity and assert spatial ownership. Local histories and claimed heritage can therefore be wielded as powerfully as any weapon, and both sides of the extremes of this divided city excel at spinning falsehoods and masking truths. As such, underlying tensions may be perpetuated not as exhibitions of intimidation and violence, but instead as coded claims to a contested heritage.

These new murals shift the onus of aggression from the loyalist paramilitaries to their republican counterparts and what they achieve is nothing short of brilliant: they have reversed the rolls of domination and resistance to make themselves the underdog instead of the oppressor and suddenly it is the Catholics who are walking all over the Protestants rather than the other way around. Extrapolating from the Cúchulainn myth, these men in the mural are "defending their community which was subject to constant attempts at ethnic cleansing," according to one. The Protestant communities which, in previous years, have been identified as dominant have turned the tables on their accusers by grasping hold of the mantle of victimhood and wearing it boldly. By claiming to be marginalized, they are claiming the power of resistance that had previously belonged to republican ideologues, as in Fig. 3.14, where they ask, "Can it change?" (Fig. 3.14).

Shortly before the Re-Imaging Communities Programme was instated, several murals went up in loyalist Belfast that anticipated the shift from paramilitary to community representations, including images of United States Presidents with Ulster heritage; locally born Footballer George Best and author C.S. Lewis; and the Titanic, which was built in the nearby Harland and Wolff shipyard. When I asked several Republican muralists what they thought of them, they laughed them off and said, "We started that stuff fifteen years ago..." and believed that their mural tradition had served as the template for the non-sectarian imagery going up on loyalist walls. There may be some truth to this. Recent equal-rights-themed murals that have been erected in loyalist Belfast are remarkably similar in style and rhetoric to some of those erected by their republican counterparts and are just as politically loaded. The

Fig. 3.14 A loyalist mural in the Lower Shankill area that reads, "Several hundred familys (sic) were forced to flee their homes last night as houses came under attack from republicans. . ." (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

East Belfast Historical and Cultural Society erected a long banner mural at Cluan place that advocates "Civil and Religious Liberties for All," "Better the Grave than Slavery," and "Defending the Community" in a series of images that states, "Ulster People Take Stand Against Republican Tyranny." By highlighting local culture and history in these vignettes, they effectively valorize unionist actions in what they call the face of republican aggression and English indifference. Captions accompany the images and among them are the following statements:

- "Republicans targeted the area in the early summer of 2002 with the purpose of driving the small Protestant community from the area. . ."
- ". . .republicans mounted their vicious sectarian attacks and then withdrew proceeding to choreograph media coverage of events—pushing forward the spin that it was their area under attack. . . Meanwhile, the small and beleaguered Unionist community was still reeling from the violent attack."
- "Despite their success against the IRA and the death of so many of their members the British government disbanded both of these fine organisations [the USC and the UDR], causing untold hurt to our community and leaving a sense of betrayal behind."
- "Many innocent Protestants were murdered simply because of their religion, others were injured and many burnt out of their homes. The community was in

Fig. 3.15 Cluan place mural that advocates freedom for Ulster unionists. (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

turmoil and felt that there was no one to defend it. It was then that they [the communities] decided to take matters into their own hands and organise themselves into groups [the UDA and the UVF] capable of defending their homes and businesses from these violent and horrific sectarian attack[s]."

Heritage in this case is being used as effectively by loyalist muralists as it ever has by their republican counterparts. If the identifying nouns were removed from these captions, they could easily be arguing nationalist sentiments since, for many years, it was republican murals that represented the nationalist community as the victim of the more politically powerful unionists and the violent loyalist paramilitary groups. The mural in Cluan Place demonstrates this with its caption, "How is freedom measured? By the effort which it costs to retain freedom!" The only difference is the word *retain* rather than *gain* (Fig. 3.15).

Other new and unique murals have replaced the earlier, menacing examples that were erected during Johnny Adair's reign in the Lower Shankill housing estate. One is a startling mural depicting the "red hand of Ulster," a vividly severed hand lying on a rock, thrown there by a bearded man in a ship that looks suspiciously like a Viking longship found in Sweden. The myth unfolds with two chieftains (or

Fig. 3.16 The "Red Hand of Ulster" in the Shankill estate. (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

Vikings) racing toward Ulster in order to be the first to claim it; as they approached it neck and neck, the more audacious leader cut off his own hand and threw it onto the shore, thus claiming Ulster for his people. This is thought to have been an origin myth that was adopted by the O'Neill family in the fourteenth century, and the severed red hand was their heraldic emblem until they were disempowered by the wars of the seventeenth century and the ensuing plantation schemes. Now a symbol of Ulster, this emblem has been adopted by the UFF, the UDA, the UVF, the Red Hand Commandos, and the UYM. It is in association with this myth that a mural commemorating the Red Hand Commandos further up the Shankill Road states the battle cry of the O'Neills, "*Lamh dearg abu*," which means "red hand forever" [Note 16]. By embracing this myth and showcasing it so prominently, Ulster Scots are making it clear that they are more entitled to Ireland than the Irish themselves (Fig. 3.16).

Another Lower Shankill mural is dedicated to Oliver Cromwell, an arch-villain in Irish historiography who slaughtered thousands but, proclaims the mural, "Lord Protector, Defender of the Protestant Faith." This mural is curious in a way, because it reintroduces religion as a key component in the northern divide, quoting Cromwell as saying, "CATHOLOCISM IS MORE THAN A RELIGION IT IS A POLITICAL POWER THEREFORE IM LED TO BELIEVE THERE WILL BE NO PEACE IN IRELAND UNTIL THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS CRUSHED" (*sic.*). This flies in the face of an earlier, long-standing mural in East Belfast that reads, "THE ULSTER CONFLICT IS ABOUT NATIONALITY..." Nor does it take into account that

Cromwell was equally distrustful of some branches of Protestantism and led an army against his former Presbyterian allies in Scotland (Drake 1966:259).

Beneath this bravado, however, there is almost a tangible anxiety. Situated as these Lower Shankill murals are, a single street over from the nationalist Falls Road, they overlook St. Patrick's Cathedral and the sole remaining Divis Flat, a former IRA stronghold and a symbol of republican resistance. Surviving resentment is thus vividly illustrated on the immediate landscape as the power embedded in heritage is passionately fought over within a few square miles.

Voicing Authenticity

For a while, the criticism directed at the ubiquitous display of the Union Jack and paramilitary murals was seen by unionists as a

> conspiracy [aimed at] the erosion of British identity . . . we never hear of anyone complaining about the number of [Irish] tricolours erected throughout the area. . .. We cannot fly the Union flag in case it offends, Orange parades are in jeopardy and banned from certain areas, Rangers and Linfield shirts are also now offensive, our very culture and existence is being threatened on a daily basis. (letter, *British Telegraph*, May 20, 2000)

In point of fact, the loyalists of the North are fighting a dead cause: the Anglo-Irish Agreement stipulated that, with a majority vote, the North could join the Republic and cede its ties to Great Britain. Through Britain's agreement to this, the Protestants of Northern Ireland felt betrayed by those to whom they had maintained such loyalty. This is expressed in the mural at Cluan Place (Fig. 3.17), where the community writes, from Ulster to Britain,

> Thou mayest find another daughter with a fairer face than mine, with a gayer voice, & sweeter, and a softer eye than mine, but thou canst not find another that will love thee half so well.

The Belfast gable murals have merged the objective and subjective pillars of history—the real and the mythologized pasts—into the public sphere of consumption. These images reiterate contentious and reconstructed events that are designed to proclaim, "here we were, here we are, and here we will remain." In doing so, they serve to cement the specter of the past into the reality of the present. They do not urge people to forget, to forgive, or to compromise. Instead, they encourage memories to linger at the edge of consciousness as people go about their daily lives, passing the murals on the way to work, to school, to the shops, to home. In relaying those histories, multiple communities are sincerely forging identities from a paradoxically earnest yet cherry-picked past through carefully selected scenes from a myriad of moments. It is in this way that the murals have taken on life of their own independent of their subject matter. They have become so important to community identity that they are, indeed, "more artefact than art" (Jarman 1998:81), with the added bonus that they have become an integral part of Belfast's "living history" and are a major source of tourist income.

Presently, those who once resisted State intervention in their choice of mural art have largely been appeased with grants between £5,000 and £50,000, depending on the size of the community project in question. This monetary incentive, as well meaning as it may be, has been yet another source of contention since the vast

Fig. 3.17 Centerpiece of the Cluan Place murals in East Belfast. (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

majority (if not all) of the blatantly paramilitary murals were located in loyalist communities; republican areas, which have long used culture and history to express their political convictions in mural art, have few (if any) murals that fall into the paramilitary category and therefore can solicit no claims to compensation.

While some people are delighted with the changes in mural art, not everyone agrees that this was the right move. First, when several loyalist murals were painted over with whitewash in Coleraine in 2001, 5 years before the Re-Imaging Communities Programme was instituted, the UDA was outraged. They said, "Whether people like it or not, these murals are part of our culture. ... We believe that [their removal] is another step to destroy our culture and we can't accept that" (*Belfast Telegraph*, April 29, 2001). This statement is enlightening. It reveals a self-styled and openly acknowledged culture of sectarianism and paramilitary mural-making that is not invalid just because it is illegal and maintained by violence and intolerance. It has been bred from decades of hate and fear and is arguably as real as any other cultural construct. Saying it is wrong does not negate its existence. This voice is authentic and, paradoxically, this outlawed terrorist group felt that it was their right, in every sense of the word, to express their identity and belonging in the public sphere through mural art. It is through the material culture of murals, after all, that opinions are voiced and knowledge is produced. Equally, the years of sectarian paramilitary activity in Northern Ireland is a genuine, valid, and

pivotal characteristic of Belfast's modern heritage; erasing menacing images does not erase that reality. Now that the State has become involved in the production of murals, which in and of itself has long been a tradition of the streets, of the people, and marked by a fluidity that has allowed for immediate self-representation and agency, it raises the question of whether that authentic voice has been co-opted by those in office who believe that the feelings and beliefs on the street should reflect the consensus in Stormont.

Beyond being a tourist attraction, the murals have become an intrinsic part of Northern Ireland's heritage and to erase them is to deny that history, controversial as it is, and to whitewash the lived experience. In the Lower Shankill, the former stomping ground of some of the most feared paramilitaries in Northern Ireland, the 2009 star project of the Re-Imaging Communities Programme is charged with erasing the remaining political murals and replacing them *not* with local images of history or culture but, instead, with almost comically apolitical "happy" murals that, rather startlingly, seem as though they have dropped from space into one of the most economically depressed communities in Europe that is marked almost viscerally with the shadows of violence (see *Belfast Telegraph*, June 17, 2009). By taking control of the mural-making, Stormont has taken control of the discourse that was pivotal to the production of meaning in sectarian Belfast. Nevertheless, the words and images that are painted on the walls of Belfast are not indelible aspects of the landscape. If left alone they fade until their messages and imagery break up under the pressure of time while local mural artists gradually leave the local behind them as they achieve worldwide recognition.

In the summer of 2007, two artists, Danny Devenny and Mark Ervine, came together on the Lower Falls Road in collaboration to paint a mural that replicated *Guernica*, a compelling composition through which Picasso sought to "express [his] abhorrence of the military caste which has sunk Spain in an ocean of pain and death" (Pablo Picasso as quoted in Brunner 2001: 80) (Fig. 3.18). Painted in response to the senseless slaughter of innocents in the Basque town of northern Spain that was carried out by the German Luftwaffe's Condor Legion on behalf of Franco in 1937 (see Thomas and Witts 1975), this image is regarded as a definitive anti-war statement and is widely considered to be one of the most important works of twentieth-century art. When Devenny and Ervine collaborated on their mural, it was widely covered by the media and was considered remarkable not just for its artistic content, but because it was one of the most notable collaborative efforts to be carried out by a Catholic republican, in this case Devenny, and a Protestant loyalist, Ervine, in the tradition of mural painting in Northern Ireland. Devenny told the papers,

> (Mark Ervine) still has his loyalist opinions, which I respect, and I still have my republican ones, but we found we had so many things in common. We wanted to show people, and particularly young people, that if we could work together anyone could. (*The Guardian*, August 31, 2007)

Sponsored by the search engine Gasta.com (which is advertised above the mural) and not the Re-Imaging Communities Programme, this collaboration retains the

Fig. 3.18 The Guernica mural, painted on the Lower Falls Road by Danny Devenny and Mark Ervine. (Photo: Alexandra Hartnett)

authenticity of agency on the part of the muralists of Belfast and opens, perhaps, a new tradition in mural discourse.

It is impossible now, I think, to imagine Belfast without the presence of its mural art. To do so would be to strip it of its uniqueness and its allure; it would certainly remove it from any top 10 lists of tourist attractions. Without an honest mural discourse, Belfast would lose the vitality for which it has fought as a city in which the daily practice of politics and culture is mediated not from above, from the government or from the media, but instead from below, from the people who live on the same streets that exhibit the murals so proudly. These cultural artifacts are the central site for the production and contestation of the social, the ideological, and the political, but they are also the medium through which heritage is claimed and displayed. They actively create social space in which the landscape of ordinary streets and ordinary houses becomes charged with meaning. The murals of Belfast therefore not only depict heritage; they *are* heritage.

Notes

1. This was proven most recently when the Real IRA attacked a British Army barracks in Massereene on March 7, 2009, leaving two dead and a number of others injured, including two pizza delivery men who were accused of being "collaborators" (*Belfast Telegraph*, March 9, 2009). The public reaction from most quarters was one of disgust and dismay that exposed

a genuine distaste for the renewal of violence in Northern Ireland. Subsequent sectarian violence has been similarly decried by many on all sides although the practice of "knee-capping," by which the ill-favored are shot in the knee, is still prevalent.

2. See http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/this-britain/simon-calders-best-of-britain-460125.html

3. I would like to thank Alison Kohn for her very helpful remarks on this, and also for reading and re-reading segments of this chapter tirelessly and critically, giving me much food for thought.

4. The United Irishmen was a group made up of Catholics and Presbyterians who promoted revolutionary ideals based on French experiences. They attempted to overthrow the English-controlled government in a failed 1798 rebellion.

5. The descendents of the Anglo-Normans, the "Old English," trod carefully and deliberately between the two groups, with some professing Englishness in public while practicing Catholicism in private (Howe 2000:34).

6. Currently, the suspicion and mistrust that marked the relationship between Catholic and Protestant is being carried over to new groups of "others" and is most clearly evident in racial attacks that have been perpetrated in loyalist areas against recent immigrants from Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa (*The Guardian*, December 23, 2003, March 23, 2006). Here, a more ethnically and racially visible quarry was driven out of "The Village" in South Belfast in an effort to retain the cultural homogeneity that is so greatly guarded in the sectarian community.

7. Others in this community do, of course, live their lives participating fully in the Catholic Church but may not consider themselves to be "political."

8. A 60-year-old Protestant doctor considers himself to be Irish even though he feels a very close cultural affinity with Scotland and plans to retire there. He is irreligious; but even though he is a highly educated professional who was married to a Catholic woman and whose grown children are also Catholic, he thinks nothing of referring to Catholics as "Taigs," a term that is offensive to Irish Catholics and is most often found in loyalist graffiti, such as KAT (Kill All Taigs); "Yabba Dabba Do, Any Taig Will Do" (http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/glossary.htm#R); and "To those Taigs who objected to our mural—hope you enjoyed living here" (*Belfast Telegraph*, May 5, 2001).

9. In the UK and Ireland, each household must buy a television license from the government that pays for national programming and costs over £140. Fines for evasion can be up to £1,000.

10. The hunger strike popularized by images of Bobby Sands and his compatriots remains a dominant theme and the republican movement takes credit for advancing hunger strikes internationally as a form of dissent through martyrdom. Accepting this as a transnational and legitimate form of human rights protest, republican muralists have expressed their solidarity with hunger strikers elsewhere by re-creating their images locally.

11. Sitting with them in a republican bar, they jovially point out the men in the room who had been incarcerated as political prisoners; it was at least half of the room, probably more. They especially enjoy telling me the story of Tommy Gorman, a sedate-looking man who was famous for having successfully escaped from a prison ship anchored on the River Lagan, the Maidstone, in 1972.

12. In 2003, for example, the UDA was known to have made a £5 million profit from drug dealing and racketeering (*Belfast Telegraph*, March 9, 2003).

13. See, for example, *Belfast Telegraph*, July 3, 2001, February 16, 2002, May 28, 2002.

14. All statements by Rubén Ortiz-Torres are quoted from this source: (http://rubenortiztorres.org/for_the_record/labels/Ireland.html)

15. One well-known artist who had collaborated on a much-publicized mural in the Ardoyne was shocked when he returned shortly after its completion only to find that it was already in the process of being repainted with another mural. "Well," the muralist told me with a shrug and a laugh, "It's a good wall."

16. In my experience, this is one of the very few—if not the only—loyalist murals that actively incorporates the Irish language.

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Chapter 4
Blood of Our Ancestors: Cultural Heritage Management in the Balkans

Michael L. Galaty

Introduction

The Balkan Peninsula is known for its messy mix of culture, language, and religion. It is, and always has been, a crossroads and, for most of its history, contested territory. The region's jumbled past makes studying its landscape and built environment, and managing its cultural heritage resources, a difficult, politically charged process. Both in ancient times and recently, central powers have used heritage in creative ways to contest and undercut rival claims to land and move boundaries.

My focus in this chapter, however, is not the behavior of central authorities per se; rather, I consider how people living on the margins of states negotiate, and help produce, history and heritage. Are heritage claims forced upon them by distant powers? Or, do they themselves function as creative agents, also using heritage to press territorial claims, build and break alliances, and generate social, political, and economic capital? My interest in this subject stems from the archaeological and ethno-historical research I have conducted in Albania, in particular in the high mountains of the tribal north. In Albania, individuals, even marginalized individuals, have been and are anything but passive participants in heritage creation and management. They are the ones who actively engage landscapes and build cultural, including architectural, environments. Whereas we expect leaders such as dictators to use and abuse the past, in fact, in Albania, the beliefs about culture, language, and religion that generate heritage, and allow and require management, often bubble up from below.

Although Albania constitutes the primary example in this chapter, the model I set out is, I believe, generally applicable to the wider Balkan region, if not the wider world. In what follows I describe six factors—though there are surely more—that together help shape particular local and national understandings of heritage. These are inscribed in and reflected by associated landscapes, including but not limited to those most manipulated by human beings, such as urban landscapes. The six factors

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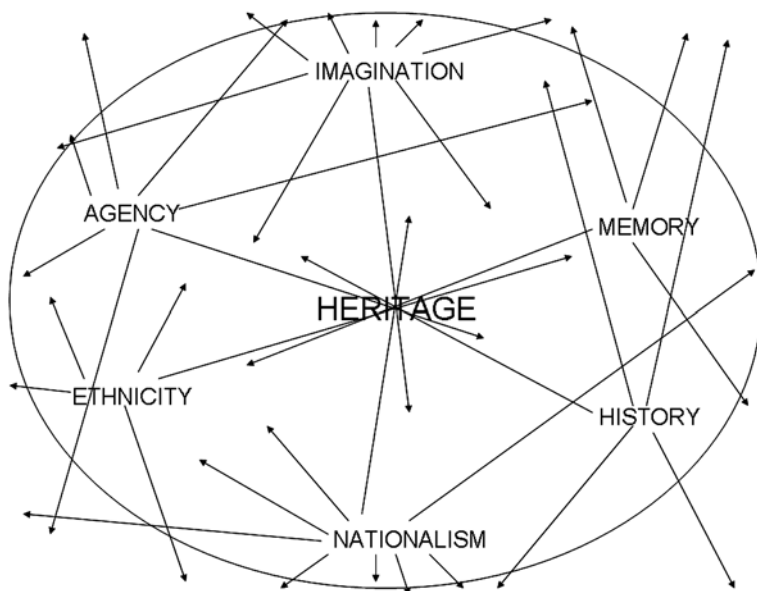
Fig. 4.1 Diagram of the generation of heritage structures. (Michael Galaty)

I will discuss are agency, imagination, memory, history, nationalism, and ethnicity (including religion, language, culture, and territory). Although all six of these factors may operate independently, it is when they intersect that heritage structures are produced (Fig. 4.1). It is thus worthwhile to search regional archaeological and historical records for points of nexus, where contributing factors draw or are drawn together and heritage structures result.

Factors in the Production of Heritage Structures

Agency

The theoretical underpinnings for my approach to these questions are drawn from Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. I find agent-centered models of heritage making to be most useful, helping to explain how and why variously marginalized individuals might actively influence the heritage-making process. In my experience, national and regional histories may be imposed from the top down, by central governments in both dictatorships and democracies (Galaty and Watkinson 2004), but more often than not, they rise from the bottom up, so that even people living in the most remote portions of a country have an impact on and stake in national heritage policy.

Bourdieu (1977:167–169) makes a distinction between the cultural fields of *doxa* and *opinion* (Fig. 4.2). The field of doxa encompasses the "universe of the

Fig. 4.2 Diagram of the relationship of doxa to opinion (adapted from Bourdieu 1977:168 by Michael Galaty)
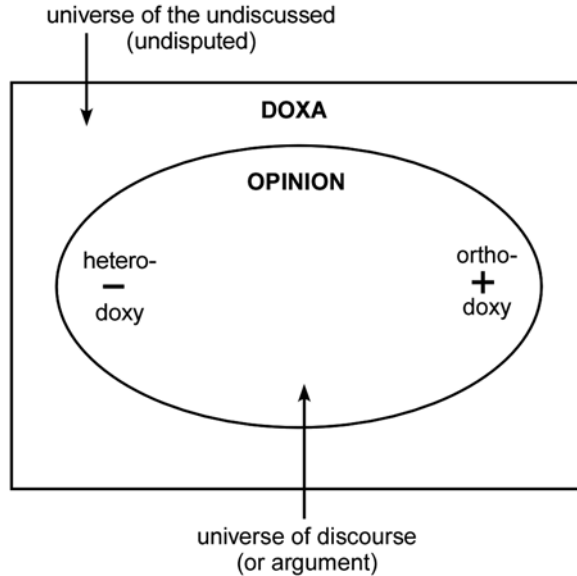
undiscussed," composed of ideas and behaviors that are inviolate and taken for granted. The field of opinion encompasses the "universe of discourse," wherein new and competing ideas and behaviors are subject to evaluation. In the realm of opinion, some new ideas and behaviors are rejected in favor of established, "orthodox" ways of thinking and doing, whereas other, "heterodox" ideas and behaviors will gain a foothold, thereby challenging orthodoxy. It is typically those individuals who are dominated who introduce heterodoxy into the system and those who dominate who resist it in favor of orthodoxy. It is also within the realm of opinion that individuals may bend or break cultural rules and "improvise," thereby producing challenging new riffs on old cultural norms and values. According to Bourdieu, it is this generative process that creates and renews culture.

I would argue that processes of heritage-making and nation- and identity-making unfold within the field of opinion, with corresponding effects on the built environment and on landscapes, generally. Some—I think very few—beliefs about history and heritage may rise to the level of doxa. But most of a nation's history is open to discussion. History can be used both by those with political power and by those with none to push or resist various agendas. Today, in some parts of the Balkans, the process of heritage making is working over time, as individuals, like great jazz musicians, compose through improvisation new forms and interpretations of their national history. Most of these compositions lodge in the realm of heterodoxy, but some rise to the status of regional and national heritage orthodoxy. It is this movement, this shifting of new heritage values from heterodoxy to orthodoxy—in John Bodnar's words (1993), from the "vernacular" to the "official"—that I address in this chapter.

Imagination

Bourdieu's concept of agency has been amended by various social scientists, including Anthony Giddens, for example, through his "theory of structuration" (1984), and Arjun Appadurai, through his concept of "imagination" (1996). In archaeology, specifically, John Robb speaks of "genres of action" (2001; see also Robb 2007, where this concept is applied), and Adam Smith goes a step further, describing a "relational view of action" (2001:167). All of these add complexity to the theory of practice, but only Appadurai captures a sense of "nostalgia" (1996:30). According to Appadurai (following Jameson 1989), all societies, modern ones in particular, experience a sense of "nostalgia," often for a past they never really experienced. This is especially true of societies that actively experience crisis, which, according to Bourdieu (1977), is a necessary prerequisite for agentive change.

Throughout history, with almost cyclical regularity, Balkan nations have experienced crisis, typically as a result of invasion, but also as a result of internal political contests (Galaty et al. 2009). It is during these periods of turmoil, the most recent of which began with the collapse of communism, that new heritage tropes are tested—or retrofitted for current consumption—both by those in power and by those without power, but most importantly, by those aspiring to power. These heritage tropes are the product of individual minds, but may quickly take on a collective, intra- and inter-structural life of their own. We may therefore talk about both individual imaginations—plural—and, in Appadurai's (1996) terms, a "collective imaginary"—singular. A particular landscape may offer the symbols necessary to construct a collective sense of imagination, and may thereby also function as a potent, tangible source of validation as collective imagination impinges on the ideological realm of doxa. Likewise, landscape may function as a point of resistance to collective forms of imagination, especially when developing heritage structures are to be used as tools of domination.

Memory

The creation of a viable collective imaginary, one that properly operationalizes individual and communal senses of nostalgia, depends upon the ability of agents to actively and effectively access and deploy systems of memory. Effective deployment of memory does not mean that the past is remembered as it in fact happened; rather, memories may be found or created that support or challenge nostalgic imagination, whether real or not (e.g., Alcock 2002; Van Dyke 2008). Paul Shackel (2001) argues that through memory people may create and commemorate three different, though not exclusive, forms of the past: an exclusionary past, a patriotic or celebrated past, and a past that enables or sanctifies a particular current social or political situation. These three forms of constructed past, or "heritage," are certainly applicable to the European situation, most especially to the Balkans, where the sources of memory are endlessly deep and people are actively engaged in memory making and heritage construction. As a result, Kathryn Fewster (2007), for example, argues, based on her

work in Spain, that the best way to study processes of memory making and heritage making is through a landscape-centered, ethno-archaeology. This is the approach I take below.

History

Imaginative, agentive action in heritage creation depends on a human propensity, in particular in times of crisis, to access and exploit feelings of nostalgia for the past. Different regional archaeologies and histories thereby allow and encourage certain forms of nostalgia and not others. Thus history, as it is recorded in written documents, provides one potential source of memories, however circumscribed. Another source of memories is the archaeological record, though in many countries this record was, until very recently, largely inaccessible, except as it was reflected in the visible, built environment and landscape. This was very much the case in Albania, which did not have a written history of its own prior to the late nineteenth or, officially, early twentieth century. Because individuals and groups so often reference the past as reflected in the landscape when creating heritage and a sense of tradition, the landscape sets powerful limits on what memories can and cannot be entered into systems of national discourse. In this way, the landscape may act as an arena in which heterodox ideas about the past are viewed and tested, accepted or discarded. It sets limits, however broad, on what is potentially believable, and what is not. One possibility is that these limits contract or expand depending on one's structural position and pose; that is, the view from the margins will not look the same as the view from the center. Given the key roles played by history and archaeology in heritage making, and the importance of the built environment and landscape as testing grounds for various forms of historical and archaeological discourse, an ethno-archaeological approach to decisions about heritage management is almost unavoidable.

Nationalism and Ethnicity

According to Benedict Anderson (1991), nations are themselves products of imagination and, as imagined communities, are wholly dependent on ideologies that create a shared national identity for citizens. This may be accomplished by emphasizing a group's shared ethnic origins, supported by linguistic and religious similarities. Or, by emphasizing its claim to a piece of territory. Building these ideologies, and building nations, is therefore a heritage-making endeavor. Consequently, nation building and nationalism depend strongly, if not almost entirely, on constructed versions of the past, versions that have been moved out of the realm of opinion and into the realm of doxa. As a result, processes of heritage making and decisions about heritage management are sharply exposed during periods of active nation making and identity making. The Balkan Peninsula has experienced well over a century of dynamic nation making and identity making, prior to and following the period of communism. It is thus an ideal place to study how individual and collective

agents create heritage structures, and furthermore how those structures are reflected in regional Balkan landscapes.

Albania

Albania is a small nation situated between Greece and the former Yugoslavia, along the Adriatic Sea. Most of Albania's Adriatic coast is bordered by plains, large portions of which were marshy until drained in the twentieth century. The interior of the country is dominated by rugged mountains, most of which rise precipitously to relatively high elevations. Albania's climate is Mediterranean along the coast, but cooler and wetter in the mountains, in particular in the north where the climate is Continental to Alpine. The Albanian language is Indo-European, but unrelated to any other extant European language. As a result of the Ottoman conquest, an estimated 70–80% of Albanians are Muslim, with Orthodox and Catholic Christian enclaves in the south and north of the country, respectively. The modern nation of Albania was founded in 1912 just prior to the outbreak of World War I. Its borders were drawn by the Great Powers such that today there are more ethnic Albanians who live just outside Albania, in Kosova, Macedonia, Montenegro, and to a lesser extent, Greece, than in it. Similar situations obtain for other nations throughout the Balkans.

There is some evidence to suggest that the Balkan region's borders have never been static and unchanging, and that historically, Albania, even more than most other Balkan nations, has been subject to shifting frontiers, migration of populations in and out of the region, and multiple invasions from various directions. The southern border of Albania, shared with Greece, illustrates well these points. This border possesses certain characteristics that define it as a frontier zone, including low population density on both sides. Today, on the Albanian side, the region is ethnically and religiously mixed, Greek and Albanian, Christian and Muslim. A sizable Greek minority lives just inside the southern Albanian border and has done for, at least, several centuries (Barjaba 1995). (The Greeks call southern Albania "northern Epirus," thereby emphasizing their claim to the territory.) Likewise, a sizable Albanian population once lived in Greek Epirus, but this population was forcibly expelled in the early twentieth century, and since then, Albanian place names have been systematically changed to Greek, thereby erasing from the landscape any evidence of the former Albanian presence (Hart 1999).

I would make the case that this region has always been a frontier zone, beginning in ancient times (Galaty 2002). Based on Greek and Roman records, it is possible to reconstruct the names of the various peoples—often referred to as "tribes"—who occupied the border zone (Wilkes 1992). Some of these peoples apparently spoke Greek, whereas others, so-called Illyrians, spoke a non-Greek language. Still others were bilingual. The border zone was, and still is, dotted with hill forts, many of which through time became more and more like Greek-style *poleis*. Historical records indicate that some of the border tribes fought each other, while others entered into political confederation. Into this mix were thrust, in the Archaic period,

Greek colonies at Apollonia and Dyrrachium (modern Durres). It is likely that colonists interacted with local Illyrian tribes, such that through time hybrid cultures formed. Eventually the whole region was brought under Roman dominion.

This brief historical sketch suggests several key points pertinent to the application of my heritage model to Albania. First, the region's history, both ancient and recent, is made manifest in the landscape. Second, this landscape is a fertile source of various heritage tropes that can be—and have been—put to multiple uses by different constituencies through time. Third, and finally, we have good evidence (discussed below) that the Albanian archaeological landscape was first turned to heritage-making purposes at the time of the Ottoman conquest. Importantly, these points hold, to greater or lesser degree, for the whole of the Balkans.

During the summer of 1998 I helped launch the Mallakastra Regional Archaeological Project, a large-scale, intensive regional archaeological survey project that sought to understand the relationship between the Greek colonists at Apollonia and the native Illyrians at the hill fort of Margelliç (Davis et al. 1998, 2007; Galaty et al. 2004; Runnels et al. 2004). While conducting field research, we found multiple examples of how the landscape had served through time as a source of symbolic capital necessary to manufacturing or resisting dominant themes of heritage orthodoxy (Galaty et al. 1999, 2009). For example, historical records and archaeological survey indicate that the colony had once boasted several temples, all of which had since nearly vanished. The location of one of these is still marked by a lone Doric column, allowing the place name Shtyllas, Albanian for "column." According to early traveler accounts (e.g., Leake 1835:373), the temple had been carted away by an Ottoman pasha to be built into a new palace. This behavior—appropriating ancient remains for use in a new, dominating built environment—one, we might assume, that was questioned and resisted by local Albanians—represents active agency on the pasha's part: one aspect of the landscape, the classical, linked to past glories, was removed to make way for a new heritage discourse, meant to prop up the new order.

This Ottoman heritage discourse had limits, though, and faltered when the new nation of Albania declared independence in 1912. Its leaders then actively searched for new forms of heritage around which to build national identity. To some degree, these leaders focused on the classical past, the monuments of which were readily and dramatically visible landmarks on the (southern) Albanian landscape. But in the end they opted to emphasize the purported Illyrian origins of the modern Albanian people and language (Galaty and Watkinson 2004). In building the Albanian nation and in creating an Albanian national identity, Albanian leaders imagined that they were the direct heirs of the Illyrian tribes and that Albania's "classical"—i.e., Greek—past was in fact a largely Illyrian one, perhaps influenced by Greek culture, but Illyrian nonetheless. Albanians could then make an autochthonous argument: since they were the direct descendants of the Illyrians, anywhere the Illyrians had once lived was presumably occupied Albanian territory. To this day, this argument underpins Albanian land claims throughout the western Balkans. Unfortunately for the Albanians, they are not the only Balkan people who claim descent from the Illyrians, a claim also made in many of the former Yugoslav republics.

When Enver Hoxha, Albania's ruthless communist dictator, came to power following World War II, he continued to pursue the Illyrian argument, elevating it to the level of national heritage orthodoxy. It subsequently became a key piece of his xenophobic foreign policy. Since Illyrians had resisted various conquering foreign powers—Greek, Roman, Byzantine—and survived, modern Albanians could, and would, do no less. The effects of totalitarian dictatorship on archaeology and on the production of national histories and identity have been very well documented (e.g., Díaz-Andreu and Champion 1996; Kohl and Fawcett 1995). In short, most, though not all, dictators use the past as a means of controlling citizens. Hoxha, though, took such behavior to new extremes. For example, he referred constantly to Albania's turbulent past as a means of justifying certain national policies, such as his program of "bunkerization" (Galaty et al. 1999, 2009). Beginning in the late 1960s and lasting through the early 1980s, Hoxha's government built as many as 800,000 bunkers throughout the country, thereby transforming Albania's rural landscape. These bunkers were meant to protect the country from foreign invaders, but their real purpose was to intimidate the Albanian people and reinforce the Communist Party's hold on power. Hoxha had other, equally dramatic ways of turning the landscape to his needs. For example, he had his first name inscribed on a hillside just outside the southern city of Berat (Fig. 4.3). Whereas Enver's name still, to the best of my knowledge, graces its Berat hillside, bunkers have not fared so well. The dominating discourse upon which the bunkerization policy was built is now openly mocked, and bunkers have been slowly removed from the landscape. The number one Albanian souvenir is still today soapstone bunker ashtrays.

Fig. 4.3 Enver Hoxha's first name inscribed on a hillside near the southern Albanian town of Berat (Photo: Sharon Stocker)

Hoxha's attitudes and policies had, and continue to have, however, a tremendous impact on Albanian national identity and the current central government's intentions and goals when it comes to heritage making and management. That said, a focus on official, state-sponsored heritage initiatives tells only one half of the story, running from the top down. What happens when we consider things from the bottom up? What effects do central government initiatives have on rural communities, and to what degree do people living in such communities themselves help shape national heritage policies?

A good example comes, again, from southern Albania. Once he had taken power, a key policy of the Hoxha government was to turn Albania into the world's only completely atheist state. One means of doing so was to erase religion from the landscape. Beginning in 1967, all of the country's 2,169 churches and mosques were closed and the vast majority of these were demolished (O'Donnell 1999:142). In 1998 we surveyed the remains of a church—the church of Shëndelli, i.e., St. Ilias— that had been destroyed by communist officials. Sometime thereafter, villagers at nearby Shtyllas had removed a carved stone block from the ruins of the church and set it up as an altar. The stone itself had been taken from the archaeological site of Apollonia at some point in the past and built into the church, another example of symbolic appropriation of the local built environment. Interviews with local villagers indicated that use of the stone as an altar had begun under communism and had continued through the 1990s. During communist times, the open practice of religion was punishable by imprisonment or, depending on the offence, death. The reclamation and use of the block as an altar is, therefore, an excellent example of just how seemingly powerless individuals might employ landscape features to challenge and resist official state policies. The government sought to build an Albanian identity free of religious ties, one that emphasized myths of ethnic origin. Local people pushed back against these policies, emphasizing their religious identity, instead.

Other examples of rural populations in southeast Europe producing history and heritage are worth noting. The so-called "Bosnian Pyramid" (Fig. 4.4), a few kilometers outside Sarajevo, was "discovered" by Semir Osmanagic in 2005. Although its identification has been roundly denounced by the Bosnian and international archaeological communities, local residents of Visoko, where the "pyramid" is located, have embraced it and Osmanagic. Simple economics may help to explain their popularity since the monument draws tourists and tourist dollars to the relatively impoverished region. However, professional archaeologists decry Osmanagic's "excavations," which are destroying the real archaeological sites that compose Bosnia's true cultural heritage. Thus, Bosnia's official heritage orthodoxy is being challenged by an outsider and his legions of rural supporters. It remains to be seen what this recent phenomenon will mean for cultural heritage management in Bosnia. For instance, will pride in a fictional Bosnian past translate into wider appreciation and protection for Bosnia's real past [Note 1]?

Albania has not experienced a phenomenon similar to Bosnia's pyramid fever. Nevertheless, interest in history and archaeology generally runs high but varies in intensity depending on region. In south Albania, for example, MRAP surveyed and mapped the necropolis of the Greek colonial city of Apollonia, composed of

Fig. 4.4 The Bosnian "Pyramid of the Sun" (Photo: Helaine Silverman)

hundreds of burial mounds and thousands of graves (Davis et al. 2007). When we first began work in Apollonia's necropolis in 1998, it was clear to us that the site was being badly looted. Additionally, there seemed to be little interest on the part of local people and authorities in stopping the looting, perhaps because much of it was sponsored by local mafia figures. In our experience, though, village farmers had little knowledge of the site's antiquity and almost no appreciation for its heritage value as a vital component of the local landscape. In effect, the region's archaeological heritage was not of use to local people as a vehicle for empowerment and was not engaged therefore in the arena of opinion and discourse. For this reason as well, local people were ambivalent about the looting of the necropolis. As compared to the Bosnian villagers of Visoko, southern Albanians ran to the opposite extreme.

The situation in southern Albania can be contrasted with that in northern Albania. Since 2004 I have co-directed, with Albanian colleagues Ols Lafe and Zamir Tafilica, the Shala Valley Project (SVP), an interdisciplinary regional research project that combines programs of ethnographic, historic, and archaeological survey in the valley of the Shala River (Galaty 2006, 2007; Galaty et al. 2006; Mustafa and Young 2008; Schon and Galaty 2006) [Note 2]. Northern Albania is the only place in Europe where so-called tribal societies—with tribal chiefs and councils, blood feuds, an oral customary law code, etc.—survived into the twentieth century. One of our primary research questions is when the tribal system formed and why, and why it survived as long as it did. Did the northern Albanian tribes, such as Shala, form

and survive primarily as a result of extreme isolation, or did other factors condition their formation and survival?

One way to address this question is to apply a world-systems theoretical framework. Using world-systems theory, we can think of Albania's state government, which formed in 1912, and the Ottoman administration before it as local cores and the northern tribes as peripheral players (see Schon and Galaty 2006). It may be that the Ottomans allowed the tribes their freedom in order to draft tribal warriors as mercenaries, in particular in their fight against the Montenegrins to the north. Because of their position along an active frontier—separating an Ottoman-free, Orthodox Slavic Montenegro from Ottoman-dominated, largely Catholic northern Albania—we can also describe the northern Albanian tribes as occupants of a contested periphery (*sensu* Allen 1997). Most scholars of frontier life consider contested peripheries to be zones of active cultural creation. Indeed, I would argue that in frontier zones, individuals and groups are in a unique position to actively create and manipulate regional and national histories to their own advantage, in particular vis-à-vis external, dominating powers. In this regard, I have found Nick Kardulias' concept of "negotiated peripherality" useful; the idea that people living in peripheral regions exploit their world-systemic position in important, often profitable, ways (Kardulias 2007). Negotiated peripherality, of course, dovetails well with the agent-centered approach I have already outlined. Our work has revealed that the people of Shala actively engage their history and heritage for a wide variety of reasons and use them in empowering ways. They actively negotiate their peripherality and probably have done so since settling in the high mountains. The implications and challenges for national programs of heritage management in the Albanian Alps are therefore many, and they are very different from those that obtain in the south.

The people of Shala themselves refer to the need for isolation to explain their presence in the valley and their continued existence. Oral histories indicate that they arrived in the valley several centuries ago and many elders can count back the 10+ generations of their patrilineages necessary to account for this period of time. By and large, our historical and archaeological data confirm these oral histories. Furthermore, according to many of our informants, their ancestors came either from the plain near Shkodër or from the region of Shala in Kosova. However, most Albanian anthropologists (e.g., Ulqini 1995) discount an initial migration from Kosova. If anything, northern Albanians moved to Kosova and/or adopted the clan name of Shala from Kosova. In terms of history and heritage making, there are important reasons why in the twenty-first century some residents of Shala would opt for an origin in Kosova. First of all, a deep historical connection between Albania and Kosova establishes Albanian primacy there at a time when the new nation's sovereignty is in dispute. Second, and perhaps more important, a recent, superficial connection between the two Shalas would call into question northern Albanians' beliefs about their own history, based on notions of isolation and resistance. As is the case in Bosnia, the villagers of Shala have presented a heterodox heritage agenda in the face of contrasting, official, academic—in this case, anthropological—orthodoxy. In southern Albania, on the other hand, the received orthodoxy has simply been ignored. In fact, Shala's version of history may gain

some traction nationally, since most Albanians support Kosova's recent declaration of independence. In the case of Shala, as was true in Bosnia, a small, marginalized group may have a disproportionate political effect through the medium of heritage construction.

The northern Albanian tribes are fiercely proud of having never been conquered by an outside power, the Ottomans in particular. While this is true—and for Albanians this rises to the level of historical and heritage orthodoxy—it may be that the Ottomans chose not to subdue the northern tribes for various self-serving reasons, such as the need for a ready pool of mercenaries. In order to exercise some control, though, sometime in the eighteenth century they established the *bajraktar* system (Ulqini 1991). Bajraktars were "banner chiefs," warriors who had taken an enemy's flag or standard in battle or been given one by the Ottomans. These non-traditional leaders were granted freedom of inter-regional movement and special access to trade goods, such as guns and ammunition for instance. In return each bajraktar promised to raise a levy of local fighters to serve in Ottoman military actions.

Generally speaking, bajraktars were powerful members of their respective tribes, but that power had been conferred by an outside authority and was therefore held suspect. Today, descendants of bajraktars are proud of their family heritage, but most tribal members do not attach any particular importance to that heritage. When the Ottoman occupation ended and a federal government was established in Tirana, government officials sought to disarm the mountain tribes (Vickers 1999:123). To do so, they first undercut the power of the bajraktars and then moved to disrupt tribal political systems, by co-opting local chiefs for example (Vickers 1999:118). At the same time, they sought to open the north to economic development (Vickers 1999:125–126). They built a road from Shkodër to Theth in Shala, for instance. The road paved the way for Albanian and foreign tourists and travelers, who had already discovered Shala in the early twentieth century. Most travelers' accounts from this period romanticize the Albanian mountain tribes and tribal life and emphasize their isolation. Clearly, isolation was presented to early travelers as Shala's primary survival mechanism, whether historically true or not. Today, Shala's residents can read these accounts, which have been translated into Albanian, and which reinforce the oral histories they already tell.

Communism nearly destroyed the tribal system. What is left of it is slowly disappearing as elders die and tribal members emigrate. In 1991 about 200 families lived year round in the village of Theth. Today, there are fewer than 20. But these 20 still actively negotiate their peripherality and are using history and heritage as keys to cultural survival. With the introduction of four-wheel drive SUVs, Shala is no longer isolated, if it ever truly was. We can make the drive from Shkodër to Theth in less than 3 h. Given the region's outstanding natural beauty, it is only a matter of time before waves of foreign tourists crest the pass into the valley. But instead of bemoaning the coming tide, the residents of Shala are prepared to meet it, profit from it, and at the same time preserve their way of life and culture. The new buzz word is ecotourism, including cultural and historical tourism. As is the case in many parts of the world, Shala's inhabitants believe that people will pay to visit

their valley and homes, and experience traditional northern Albanian culture. This of course requires that some vestige of traditional culture remains, and this presents something of a problem for the mountaineers: How much and what should they preserve? And if isolation produced their tribal culture in the first place, can it exist in the absence of isolation?

One response to this conundrum in some areas has been active retribalization. Some villages, for example, still employ the oral customary law code, the *Kanuni i Lekë Dukagjinit* (Gjeçov and Fox 1989). Some still hold occasional tribal councils. Some still fight blood feuds. But all of these are being reinterpreted and born again in a new and different world (Schwandner-Sievers 2001). Shala's current state of ongoing flux and retribalization is best viewed as radical history and heritage making at its most extreme. Bourdieu argues that it almost always takes some kind of crisis to convert a heterodox position to that of orthodoxy (1977:168). That is clearly what is happening in Shala. What is not clear is what kinds of history and heritage will emerge once the process has run its course.

This kind of radical reorientation presents special challenges to those government officials charged with managing heritage resources and developing them for tourism. As regards the situation in Shala and places like it, an aggressive approach might be to force people to adopt certain, contrived cultural stances: those that appeal to tourists. An even more aggressive approach would be to clear people out and sell the ruins of a dead culture to tourists. Another approach would be to let nature run its course. Whatever the official, government response might be, archaeologists are almost always dragged into the heritage-management decision-making process. We are culture brokers, whether we like it or not, and we almost always work closely with descendants—or purported descendants—of those we study archaeologically. Our interpretations of local archaeologies can make or break local, developing histories, histories that may serve to underpin strategies of cultural survival. To those who contest heritage and history, our opinions carry weight. Our work can be used to reinforce orthodox positions or legitimate heterodox challenges to orthodoxy. We must consider carefully our role in the history and heritage-making process, since the data we collect and the way they are interpreted can be used in unintended, unforeseen ways.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have tried to develop a framework for explaining how heritage structures are generated. The process whereby this occurs is the result of various factors, including agentive actions on the part of both dominant and resisting individuals and groups. I have argued that the creation of heritage is typically part of a strategy of nation building, linked to understandings of history and ethnicity via memory and feelings of nostalgia, and that this is particularly true in the Balkans. Furthermore, heritage has served this purpose for hundreds, if not thousands, of years, most starkly and recently under totalitarian dictatorships, with implications for the current political situation. It is likely that similar processes occur in nations

the world over, so that archaeologists and cultural resource managers must consider the impact that the results of their work will have on the development and evolution of heritage structures.

I also have argued that a nation's understanding of its heritage is, at least in part, a reaction to regional landscapes. In the Balkans, in particular in Albania, the past, both recent and ancient, is visibly inscribed in the landscape, most dramatically in the built environment, composed of ancient cities and hill forts, churches, and bunkers. As such, the landscape forms the backdrop against which processes of heritage creation unfold. Individuals and groups may manipulate the environment to meet heritage agendas, for instance by removing physical structures from the landscape. Conversely, the environment itself plays an active role, by setting broad limits in terms of how landscape might be used, and in some cases, abused, in contests over heritage.

Notes

1. To the best of my knowledge, no academic articles have yet been written assessing the heritage implications of the Bosnian "pyramid," but recently a lengthy exposé appeared in the November 2008 issue of the popular science magazine, *Discover* ("Pyramid Scheme?" by John Bohannan). Osmanagic's website (http://www.bosnianpyramid.com/) provides an interesting example of how the "pyramid" has been promoted in the years since its "discovery" in 2005.
2. Annual field reports for the Shala Valley Project are available at www.millsaps.edu/svp.

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Chapter 5
Re-imagining the National Past: Negotiating the Roles of Science, Religion, and History in Contemporary British Ghost Tourism

Michele M. Hanks

Ghosts are a part of contemporary Great Britain's popular culture, cultural heritage, and tourism industry. While ghosts do not figure in official tourism literature of Britain, ghosts are prominent in the tourist sectors of cities such as York and Edinburgh. Haunted ghost walks, a form of tourism in which tourists purchase guided walking tours of a city that recount the nation's and city's past through its ghosts, may seem like a benign and even frivolous mode of tourism. However, this form of tourism reveals a significant contestation of British cultural heritage in terms of attitudes toward science and religion, complicated by the tumultuous times or events that produce these ghosts constituting a feature of British cultural heritage. By examining past religious conflicts as well as by examining the significance and power of (ghost hunting) science, these tours challenge dominant representations of British cultural heritage by highlighting the explicitly grotesque, brutal, and disruptive. In this chapter, I argue that contemporary ghost tourism critically examines the British past along the axes of science, religion, and secularism and that these tours ultimately argue for an idealized understanding of the contemporary British nation as secular, tolerant, and, ultimately, scientific and rational.

Ghost Tourism in Contemporary Britain

In contemporary Britain, there are two very popular forms of ghost tourism: haunted ghost walks and overnight ghost hunts. The former is the focus in this chapter. Ghost walks typically last between 1 and 2 hours and consist of an often costumed guide who leads a group of tourists through a historically significant section of the city and describes the haunted heritage of city.

Tourists can purchase haunted ghost walks in a range of cities across Britain such as Bath, Chester, Edinburgh, London, York, and Whitby. Ghost walks operate in cities that attract huge numbers of international tourists, in the cases of Edinburgh, York, and London, as well as cities that attract mainly British national tourists such

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as Whitby and Scarborough. Ghost walks cost between £5 and £10 and typically leave in the early evening, between 7 and 9 p.m.

These are tours in which ghosts are conceptualized as objectively real entities distinct from a traditional religious association and grounded in a natural world best understood by science. While one might assume that such tours are appealing only to tourists who believe in ghosts or the paranormal, this is not the case. The tourists who purchase these ghost walks include a wide cross-section of the British public. According to tour guides with whom I have spoken, tourists tend to maintain a range of beliefs regarding ghosts. Some tourists are ardent believers who have had personal encounters with the paranormal. Others are highly dubious that ghosts exist. On each tour, the distribution of believers and skeptics varies; however, most guides estimate that there are slightly more tourists who believe rather than do not.

Regardless of their personal beliefs and experiences, the fact that so many people are eager to purchase ghost tours is significant. It points to the increasing significance and popular pervasiveness of ghosts as non-religious, naturally occurring entities. The 1980s to the present has been a period of increasing popular significance for ghosts. The number of popular publications grows each year [Note 1]. The number of ghost walks and paranormal tour companies continues to expand [Note 2]. For example, in 2008 alone, two new ghost walks opened in York. Television programming that foregrounds ghosts as objectively real and scientifically observable entities also has increased in recent years. During the 1980s and 1990s, television programs such as *Arthur C. Clarke's Mysterious World*, premiering in 1980, and *Strange But True?*, premiering in 1993, were incredibly popular. Following the popular success of *Most Haunted*, a British reality television program that shows researchers investigating the paranormal premiering on Living TV in 2002, there have been many similar shows [Note 3]. The demand for such programming is strong enough to warrant the founding of the Paranormal Channel, on Living TV network, in 2008. These numerous modes of popular culture and entertainment have enabled the emergence of a public that enjoys and seeks out ghosts and accepts the explanation of them as naturally occurring phenomena.

Ghost Tours in York

In Edward Readicker-Henderson's (2008) travel essay in *National Geographic Traveler*, he poses the question, is York "the most haunted city in the world"? Indeed, the North Yorkshire section of the BBC's website asserts that "York is the most haunted city in the world" (2009), citing the city's reported 504 ghosts. This reputation for ghosts and paranormal activity has led York to become one of the centers of ghost tourism in England. In York, there are 10 regularly operating ghost walks as well as numerous sporadic ghost walks run through pubs. Numerous tourist and heritage attractions focus on ghosts, such as the Ghost Cellar at the Treasurer's House, a National Trust property, and Haunted, a haunted house located in town. During most of York's ghost walks, guides lead tourists through the center of the

ancient walled city and focus their stories on such sites as the York Minster, the Shambles, and the former workhouse.

During the course of my research in York, I have had the opportunity to participate numerous times in each of the main commercial ghost walks in operation. In listening to the narratives offered on these tours and through interviewing many of the tour guides, several patterns began to emerge in the types of stories that were frequently told to me by members of the ghost hunting community. I heard stories about a range of tragic past events and ghostly aberrations. These stories tended to feature a rhetorical emphasis either on the encounter with the ghostly or on the historical circumstances resulting in the formation of ghosts. I refer to the former as stories of discovery and the latter as stories of the past. Both types of stories figure significantly in producing a particular vision of the British national past and the contemporary British nation.

For example, one story of discovery that I heard on two ghost tours in York in 2006 and that I discussed with one active member of the local ghost scene involved a family living in a house haunted by ghosts of the plague [Note 4]. Jim, a tour guide who leads one of two oldest tours in York and is personally interested and active in paranormal research, explained that this house has been the site of some of the most regular hauntings in the city. According to Jim, a family moved into the house without knowing its haunted reputation or traumatic association with the plague. Soon after moving in, the young children of the house began to have conversations with what their parents assumed to be imaginary friends in their bedroom. Later, the family pets refused to enter the room. The parents became concerned and eventually turned to a local member of the ghost hunting community. As a result of the ghost hunter's intervention, the family came to realize that the house was haunted and that their children had been talking to a ghost rather than an imaginary friend. Jim's telling of the story foregrounds contemporary interaction with and discovery of the ghosts. The nature of the historical events leading up to the emergence of the plague ghost is not the rhetorical emphasis. Jim's version of the story does not diverge in any significant way from other tellings, but does depict paranormal science as beneficial to the public and adding to the general welfare.

Another story I heard frequently in York—the story of the little girl in the staircase—is an example of a narrative of the past. Like the previous story, many of the ghost tours in York featured this narrative. I heard it on four different tours in 2006. When I asked several active members of the ghost hunting community about it, they were familiar with the story, although they had never been personally involved in researching it. John, a tour guide who is not at all active in the ghost hunting community and who shapes his tour using written accounts by ghost hunters, first told me this story in June 2006. According to John, in the late nineteenth century one of the wealthier Yorkshire families held a dinner party in the home that became the scene of tragedy. One of the children, a little girl around 8 years old, was eager to participate in the party but was too young and lingered by the top of the staircase watching the party from a distance. She somehow fell over the banister and the fall killed her. Her ghost is still present at the top of the staircase in the house looking down to where the party was held. In John's telling of

this story (as well as others I observed), the origin of the story is unknown. How John or the teller of the story came to know the details of this story is obscured. Instead of emphasizing the discovery, the story foregrounds historical detail and specificity—in this case personal tragedy.

While some narratives certainly included elements of both narrative structures (of discovery, of the past), they were often featured as different elements of the larger story. That larger story, I have come to believe, is a meta-narrative regarding the role of science in society.

Narrating the Power of (Ghost Hunting) Science

The ghost stories circulated through ghost tourism define paranormal science as a legitimate mode of inquiry and identify the ghostly phenomena in question as objectively real and collectively observable. In describing or predicting the production of this knowledge, objectivity, scientific rigor, and concrete evidence emerge as chief virtues. Sometimes, this can take the form of emphasizing the tentative understandings of ghosts that presently exist. For example, in her guide [Note 5] to haunted locations throughout Britain, well-known ghost researcher Sarah Hapgood notes, "this book is merely intended as a guide for those showing a healthy interest in the supernatural. At this stage in the game it is enough to investigate, for we are still a very long way off from obtaining sure scientific proof" (1993:32). Here, this well-known ghost researcher admits that evidence is still lacking; however, this only serves to solidify the sense that such research activity is indeed scientifically and methodologically rigorous and transparent and that further research is necessary. Without explicitly discussing religion, these descriptions firmly locate paranormal research and belief in the realm of science, rather than spirituality, and imply that science constitutes the best (if not only) mechanism for achieving such understandings.

Enacting the Superiority of Science over Religion

During ghost tours and in reading popular ghost tour guides, the dichotomy between scientific, paranormal research and religious belief emerged. For example, during the course of interviewing the author of a popular paranormal book, I asked about his involvement in a particular poltergeist case. While describing this poltergeist activity, the author emphasized the superiority of paranormal or scientific research over work done by traditional religious organizations. In particular, he punctuated the difference between the Anglican Church and contemporary paranormal researchers in their approaches to paranormal events. He said, "if you're having these sorts of problems [poltergeist events] and you get in touch with the Church you [would be] lucky if they come to do anything…maybe they come and toss around some holy water, but, at the end of the day, it's just that, water. What is that going to do for you?… That's all they'll likely do for you." By contrast, the author emphasized that the research team to which he belonged and good researchers in general were

committed to investigating the history of a property and trying to get to the bottom of each occurrence. He emphasized that their approach was more likely to yield conclusive results, and he was very proud of the fact that his group had been able to help several people after religious groups failed them. In his discussion of the distinction between ghost hunting and religion, a commitment to historical investigation and scientific research distinguishes ghost hunting from religion and supports the superiority of historical, scientific ghost hunting over religion in dealing with the unknown.

Many of the ghost tours I have observed mirror this emphasis on the superiority of ghost hunting as a science to other modes of religious inquiry. In fact, in many stories of discovery, guides emphasize that the family experiencing a haunting often turns to religious officials before resorting to ghost hunters. I have observed such stories in all but two of York's ghost tours. Such narratives depict religious officials as well-meaning although ultimately ineffective, whereas ghost hunters, equipped with the tools of science, come across as best able to unravel the mysterious phenomena in question.

Teaching the Past Through Ghosts

Much paranormal programming and, indeed, ghost tours foreground the significance of learning about ghosts, the paranormal, and the past. Many of the tour guides I have met suggest that their tours are beneficial to the public in the sense that they convey useful information about ghosts while also teaching tourists about York's past.

During the course of an interview, James, a long-time leader of a ghost tour who has an active interest in the paranormal, described the investigation of a local home by a paranormal group he knew. The woman who lived in the house had been experiencing strange sensations and hearing strange noises. She suspected that the house might be haunted. The team investigated the history of the house and spent a few nights using a range of technologies to monitor the house. Eventually the team determined that the house was haunted and they thought the most likely theory of the haunting was that a woman who was found murdered in the house in the late nineteenth century remained there. In describing this process of investigation to me, James emphasized that the woman who owned the house "didn't even know the history of the place [the house]. She had been living there for almost 5 years and didn't know a thing about it. It's a shame." For James, the contemporary resident's lack of familiarity with the local past, in this case the past of her own home, was an unfortunate deficit that ghost tours and paranormal investigators were in a position to address. Indeed, in conversations with active ghost hunters as well as tour guides, there was a shared sense that part of the project of paranormal investigation and certainly ghost tours was to inform people about the past. One tour guide told me in July 2006, "sure I tell ghost stories to tourists but I'm also telling them about what happened in the past. People should know these things."

Many of the ghost tour guides I encountered between 2006 and 2009 understand their public role as one of great importance. Indeed, many conceive of themselves as able to provide the general public with the historical narratives and nuance that (they believe) academic historians are rarely able to impart. Stories of discovery often feature tales of mistaken historical authorities, namely scholars or experts who first rejected the knowledge drawn from ghostly encounters only to later realize its usefulness. They invoke these stories to extol the virtues of scientific objectivity, here defined as a willingness to maintain an open mind to the claims and knowledge of all people.

The story of Harry Martindale is one such example. According to all of the ghost tour versions of the story I have heard, in 1953, Martindale was working as a plumber's apprentice to restore the plumbing in the Treasurer's House in York (now a part of the National Trust). In the course of this project, he was surprised to see a group of Roman soldiers sadly march across the basement in which he was working. In narratives of this paranormal experience, guides and enthusiasts emphasize that Martindale noticed features of Roman life in Britain of which contemporary historians and archaeologists in 1953 were unaware, such as cloth uniforms.

This narrative is one of the most famous and frequently circulated narratives in York. It is featured in all the York ghost tours, in the Yorkshire section of every ghost guidebook I have seen, and even in the National Trust. In fact, the National Trust, in addition to featuring an exhibit in the main part of its York property, maintains a "ghost cellar" open to visitors (for an extra fee) so they can see the very place where Martindale encountered ghosts.

Here, ghostly encounters are depicted as a means of achieving a more objective vision of the past than the knowledge produced by professional historians. They assert that such a commitment to the values of science enables the accumulation of greater and more detailed knowledge. There is a tendency, then, for ghost tours to present ghosts and paranormal science as able to access information unavailable to other parties because of their personal encounters with, and scientific monitoring of, the remainders of the past itself. In fact, the narratives of the past produced by ghost hunters are given greater urgency by their personally immediate and yet "scientifically" regulated contact with the spirits of the past. Here, despite the use of what many would identify as pseudoscience, ghost tours rhetorically extol the virtue and values of science, albeit a science founded on personal contact with the past.

Narratives such as Martindale's encounter with the Romans demonstrate the democratic nature of ghosts and critique the alleged elitism of modes of authoritative historical and scientific knowledge production. In the retellings I heard on the ghost tours (although not at the National Trust), all of the guides uniformly emphasized that Martindale was just a young apprentice when he saw the Roman ghosts. He had no background in historical research and was initially afraid to share his vision of the Romans with the public or historical authorities since they differed so strongly from common media depictions of Romans at the time. These retellings emphasize the universally shared capacity to contribute useful knowledge to popular understandings of the past, particularly through their encounter with ghosts.

During the course of numerous conversations and interviews with tourists in York, the degree to which ghost tours inform tourists' understandings of the past has become apparent. When I ask tourists to identify significant events in York's past and then explain how they learned about them, many of the tourists who purchased ghost tours refer to the past events foregrounded on the tour and cite the ghost tour as the source of that knowledge. Ultimately, the tourists generally embrace the visions and interpretations of the past articulated by ghost tour guides as historical truths.

The Ghostly Interpretation of British Secularism

Especially illuminating is the systematic pursuit of ghosts as evidence of past religious conflict. The ghost record of England in general and York in particular is littered with spirits resulting from a range of religious conflicts. The confrontations between Vikings and early Christians and the Reformation battles between Catholics and Protestants figure particularly prominently.

All of the ghost tours I took in York, London, and Edinburgh in 2006 and 2007 feature at least one ghost narrative of the past focusing specifically on past religious tumult. Figure 5.1 shows that these stories constituted a significant portion of each ghost tour I observed in York.

The narratives of the ghosts from the many religious battles fought in England, especially the conflicts between Vikings and Christians and Catholics and Protestants during the Reformation, define religious pluralism or secularism as chief components of an ideal social order. For example, several of the York ghost tours featured narratives of the religious conflict between Vikings and early Christians. According to one story that Jim, a ghost tour guide, told in July 2006, during the eighth century, Vikings invaded some portions of England. While inhabiting

	Ghost Tour A	Ghost Tour B	Ghost Tour C	Ghost Tour D	Ghost Tour E
Stories of discovery	3	2	1	2	1
Stories of religious conflict	3	3	2	2	3
Other stories	5	5	6	4	6

Fig. 5.1 Chart of the composition of York's ghost tours, based on my observation of these tours in July 2006. I had the opportunity to observe each tour twice, and in cases where there was a different composition of stories (as is the case in Ghost Tour B), I averaged the numbers

England, many of the Vikings engaged in violent conflict with the early British Christians over religious freedom. Early Christians would allegedly capture Vikings and force them to convert to Christianity or kill them in gruesome ways. Similarly, Vikings would capture early Christians and allegedly murder them in revenge and sacrifice them during certain rituals [Note 6].

Some ghosts remain from this period of religious conflict; however, they are quite unlike other, interactive ghosts in that they rarely appear in fully embodied human form. According to Jim, a tour guide, one of the most haunted areas is a local church where the early Christians tortured the Vikings to death. Spirits of the Vikings are more likely to appear in the form of bursts of light, cold spots, or incomprehensible voices.

The ghosts of the Vikings and early Christians rarely interact with contemporary Yorkshire residents. They do not touch or directly communicate with them. Here it is worth evoking Judith Richardson's (2003) point that ghosts function as a form of social memory. She noted that the ghosts of the Hudson Valley she studied rarely speak or interact with contemporary residents, and she argued that

> The fact that so many of the ghosts of the region are so inchoate or faded, so incapable of being identified, has aesthetic and historical implications. Embedded in these descriptions of ghosts is a problem of communication, a loss of essential information, an inability to articulate. . . the inarticulacy that defines so many instances of haunting in the Hudson Valley also shadows problems of historical continuity, of perennial change as repeatedly and cumulatively obscuring the regional past and undermining historical understanding. (Richardson 2003:27)

While Richardson conceptualizes the communicative failures of ghosts as problems of historical amnesia, something else is going on in York. The problem is not the silence, inchoateness, and fadedness of some of Yorkshire's ghosts; rather, they illustrate the presumed progress of religious tolerance in British social life. These narratives suggest that the British have moved so far beyond these conflicts between the Vikings and Christians that they are barely able to fully understand the ghosts of the events. On one of Jim's tours, while he was telling the graphic story of the torturing and violence between the Vikings and Christians, one female tourist was visibly either alarmed or disgusted. Jim reassured her that "all of this happened a long time ago," underlining the historical distance between the present and the past while also perhaps implying that contemporary Britain is free of such practices. If, for the residents of the Hudson Valley, the inability to remember is a product of failed historical memory, for the residents of York it is a vindication of their progress in the realm of secularism and multiculturalism.

These stories can be taken as a form of "mythico-history" (Malkki 1995). Lisa Malkki describes mythico-history as "represent[ing] an interlinked set of ordering stories which converge to make (or remake) a world. . . [It involves] a process of world making because it construct[s] categorical schemata and thematic configurations . . . relevant and meaningful in confronting both the past. . .and the pragmatics of everyday life" (1995:65). I suggest that the retellings of the conflicts between the Christians and the Vikings found on ghost walks constitute historically grounded

parables warning broadly of the problems of religious conflict and more menacingly warning everyone of religious plurality if not held in check.

Another ghost of England's tumultuous religious past who often emerges in many Yorkshire ghost tours is Thomas Percy, Earl of Northumberland. I encountered his story many times on tours. In the ghost tour run by Kevin, a guide who is not active in ghost hunting but draws some of his stories from ghost hunters, Percy serves as a ghostly reminder of the religious strife engendered by the Protestant Reformation, under the reigns of Henry VIII, Mary I, and Elizabeth I. According to Kevin's tour, while Percy was alive, he led a failed Catholic revolt against Queen Elizabeth I and was beheaded for this crime in York in 1572. After his execution, the authorities buried his body but displayed his head on a pole until one of his loyal servants stole it back in the middle of the night. The servant buried the head where he believed Percy's body to rest; however, according to ghost hunters and locals, the servant buried the head erroneously across town. Since that time, residents have allegedly seen Percy's headless ghost crossing the city of York looking for his head. This narrative serves as a warning against the intermingling of religion and the state. Indeed, while telling this story Kevin editorialized that this was a good example of "why the government should not get involved with religion." Chuckles of agreement by the mainly British tour group suggested that the tourists agreed with Kevin's assertion.

The Progress of the British Nation

Interestingly, the ghosts who emerge as a result of religious conflict generally reflect conflicts that are widely understood as resolved. The external threat of Vikings no longer exists. The conflict between Catholics and Protestants, while still pressing in some parts of the UK, is not often addressed in ghost tours or stories as a pressing English concern. The problems and conflicts engendered in the Reformation are conceptualized as largely resolved. Despite these resolutions, there *are* religious conflicts, albeit not necessarily violent ones, that are thought to be more pressing (the spread of Islam in Britain, for example). The emphasis on ghosts of such resolved conflicts can be seen as a further attempt to obscure ongoing contemporary religious conflicts. For example, governmental authorities have curtailed the ability of Neo-Pagans, Druids, and Wiccans to practice their spirituality in British public spaces. Barbara Bender (1998) has illustrated the ways in which "untraditional" modes of British spirituality (particularly those harkening back to an imagined pre-national polytheism) are erased, sometimes violently, from public spaces (in particular Stonehenge).

In addition, many ghost tour guides, as well as published authors like Sarah Hapgood, conceive of religious institutions as inciting conflict and tension and placing damaging restrictions on members. I have discussed the ways in which some ghost hunters in conversation assert the superiority of ghost hunting and science over religion; however, many ghost tours and published accounts of hauntings also offer stories focusing on the shortcomings of religion. For example, in published guides to

British ghosts (Brooks 1994; Evans 2006; Hapgood 1993; Jones 2002) I discovered several popular hauntings explained on the premise that the early Catholic Church caused religious servants to suffer by demanding chastity. One such story, found in Jones' anthology of contemporary British ghost stories, asserts that a monk and a nun fell in love and began a relationship; as a result, state authorities executed both. This story and other related stories critique the intermingling of church and state and the church's restrictions on social behavior (here depicted as natural). Several York tours feature a similar story about an illicit affair between a nun and a monk.

In addition to narratives of religious conflict, many York ghost tours feature stories born of religious conflict that play a more complicated role in championing the value of secularism and science. During the course of my fieldwork in 2006 and 2007, I encountered two distinct versions of a popular ghost narrative—the story of St. Margaret, a martyred Catholic who was eventually killed by violent forces of Henry VIII's reformation. In the version told by Kevin—a guide who relies on written accounts rather than personal work in ghost hunting—the state executed St. Margaret because she preserved her Catholic faith and her ghost now appears to visitors to the area in the form of a positive, reassuring light in or near her alleged former home on the Shambles in York [Note 7]. According to Kevin, some visitors take great comfort and religious confirmation in this encounter. Indeed, Kevin explained that some Catholic visitors make a special point of visiting the site.

Interestingly, many other tour guides, particularly those who are active or versed in local paranormal research, are highly skeptical of this narrative. For example, on one tour in June 2006, Jim noted that "now some guides will say that this house [standing in front of the house in question] is visited by the ghost of a saint. I hear that some of the people on his tour really like that. . .the problem is it just isn't so." In Jim's prevailing counter narrative, he explains that the house in question was not the actual home of St. Margaret and, based on historical evidence, she actually lived across the street. Jim cites the fact that the house in which people experience St. Margaret was not her actual home as grounds for skepticism. Jim's telling of the story does not differ significantly from other ghost guides.

This emphasis on the lack of factual evidence may indicate that many ghost walk guides are highly skeptical of traditional religious practices that focus on a deity or other sacred beings. Some tour guides, such as Jim, joke about the pleasure religious visitors experience when visiting the site. In the ghost hunters' telling of the improbability of this haunting, the power of a secular science trumps religious faith. Through an objective and thorough investigation of the history of this saint's past in York, ghost hunters believe that they are able to uncover the historical reality, thus shedding greater insight into both past events and present supernatural realities, better than religious authorities are able to do. Thus, the ghost hunters transform a narrative that could be seen as lauding faith into a parable of the importance of secularism and scientific objectivity.

In this rhetorical recasting, the ghost hunters construct themselves as part of a British modernity that is at once both secular in its tolerance of all religious systems and scientific and objective in its stance toward these systems of belief. In this narrative of St. Margaret, ghost hunters and guides like Jim imply that objective science

is the ultimate tool for uncovering the past and that religious-based systems of belief are ultimately not trustworthy. As these narratives of Vikings, Christians, and Reformation spirits cumulatively suggest, the ghostly narratives produced by ghost hunters and popularly dispersed by ghost tours (and literature) represent contemporary England in secular, tolerant terms. Such representations of British secularism misrepresent the political and social reality of the contemporary state of religion in England. Despite the ghost hunters' representation of England as a secular state that embraces all religious faiths and persuasions, it is important to remember that England maintains an official religion and that the Church of England enjoys a variety of unique fiscal and political privileges. Religious studies scholar Ninian Smart noted the ways in which the contemporary British state remains steeped in religion. In 1987, he noted that

> the symbolism of the Queen as the Head of the Church means that other religions, even if more vigorous, have the appearance of being second class—Catholicism, Judaism, Methodism, Nonconformist varieties, Sikhism, Islam, Hinduism, and so forth... What the situation presents...is the identification of official religion with the supreme symbol of national identity and loyalty. In events such as Coronations, Royal Weddings, we see celebrated traditional English or British nationalism, which has no explicit place for the 'new British', that is people who are citizens but historically have connections to religious and cultural traditions outside of the British Isles. (Smart 1987:385)

Similarly, Anne Rowbottom, in her ethnographic engagement with popular British understandings of the monarchy, argues that devotion to the monarchy serves as a form of civil religion. Noting that the Queen serves as the ultimate national symbol in the UK, she writes that "the monarchy may symbolize unity, but at the same time it emphasizes difference" (Rowbottom 2002:39). Indeed, while serving as the symbol of the nation, the Queen also maintains her role as the head of the Church of England and thus inclusion in the nation becomes bound up with Anglicanism.

While ghost hunters may deride a past ripe with religious conflict, the British present includes many tensions over the place of religion in the nation. Ghost hunters are unlikely to address the political role of the Church of England. By emphasizing secularism and praising tolerance of the present, ghost hunters strategically dismiss discussion and contestation over religious freedom in England, while simultaneously casting science as the civic devotion par excellence.

Ghostly Absences: Questions of National Belonging

In examining the construction of secularism and religiosity in these ghost narratives, ghostly absences are as telling as the presences. In the narratives I have recounted here, there is a noticeable absence of stories pertaining to contemporary religions other than Christianity in England. This is not accidental. In the course of reading the writing of ghost hunters, interviewing them, and observing their tours, I encountered no stories that emphasize Britain's contemporary or historical religious plurality, excluding Viking spirituality and Reformation era Catholicism and Protestantism. Ghosts of the Jewish, Sikh, Muslim, or Hindu residents of Britain are conspicuously absent. Notably, the vast majority of ghosts pertaining to religious conflict are drawn

from the distant past. There are, of course, ghosts of the more recent past (the last century, for example) that populate the ghost record; however, these ghosts rarely emerge from religious or social upheaval and are more often the result of personal or family crisis. There are religious crises and tragedies that occurred in England in both the last century and throughout the historical record that involve other religious groups; however, these remain absent from the popular ghost record. Here, ghost researchers' claims to scientific objectivity and impartiality naturalize the historical omissions and inclusions.

The absence of any ghostly evidence of Britain's religiously plural society is all the more remarkable considering ghost hunters' ability to appropriate the ghosts of external populations (such as Vikings and Romans) into the national repertoire of ghosts. For example, in telling narratives of the Viking presences in York, ghost hunters conceptualize these ghosts—while notably the reminders of an invading population—as *part of* Britain's national repertoire of ghosts.

Indeed, the ghostly inhabitants of York are often framed in explicitly nationalist terms, with many narratives claiming that England is the most haunted country in the world. In such claims, the nation becomes the repository of ghosts rather than the geographical or symbolic land of the nation. Such claims to hauntedness, stated in nationalist terms, illustrate the degree to which national identity is implicated in producing understandings of the ghostly. Benedict Anderson has written that the nation "is an imagined political community . . . imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" and that it is "imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (1983:5). This emphasis on the imaginary is analytically useful here. Ghosts, I believe, constitute both a mechanism for historical memory and a metaphor for citizenship. While the British nation is able and willing to transform the externality of Romans and Vikings into a variant of the British national past, that transformational ability is not extended to the multitude of religions that have also become part of the British nation [Note 8]. Indeed, here, the British nation remains presumably secular, although more aptly Anglican.

In his account of race in Britain, Paul Gilroy examines the relationship between blackness and Britishness and argues that Britishness has been racially defined as white. He notes, "blacks are represented in contemporary British politics and culture as external to and estranged from the imagined community that is the nation" (Gilroy 1987:153). I would add, drawing on critiques of religious inclusion in Britain (e.g., Rowbottom 2002), that Britain is not only raced as white, but also religiously identified as Anglican/Christian (although this can often take the misleading form of appearing as a form of secularism).

The externality of other religious traditions, like that of other races, is enacted in these stories. Gilroy's analysis of the perceived externality of blacks in contemporary Britain helps to explain the absence of non-white ghosts in the ghostly demography. These ghostly encounters reify understandings of Britishness and British history as respectively Anglican (or at least Christian) and as a force that has shaped many places of the world while not being shaped by those "external" populations. The ghosts and ghostly narratives I examined above are very public ghosts. More often than not they occupy sites that are recognized to be somehow

historically or religiously significant places. Michel de Certeau's observation that "stories carry out a labor that constantly transforms places into spaces or spaces into places" (1984:118) provides a lens for understanding the ghostly transformations at work. Indeed, such stories determine and define the nature of the space. In the case of the narratives of the British ghosts, claims regarding state religiosity and secularism populate the space.

Through ghost tourism, understandings and valuations of spirituality, secularism, and their role in the state are inscribed onto the spaces of Britain. Such inscriptions play several roles. First, these narrative transformations construct and confirm British space as secular, which masks the encoding of this space as Anglican and hostile to other religious systems. Furthermore, these narratives define the present as the culmination of British social progress, which here comes to mean the easing of tensions between warring religions. Indeed, the lesson of this progress remains ambiguous in these stories. On the one hand, it suggests that religious plurality is inevitable and the state must learn, and, indeed, over time has learned, to accommodate it while also suggesting that this plurality is itself the root of the problem. Both narrative threads ultimately construct religions other than the unmarked Anglicanism, or perhaps even Protestantism more broadly, as external or other to the core of the nation.

Conclusion

In many of the ghost hunters' narratives, scientific rigor, rationality, and empiricism emerge as the social ideal, capable of contributing to social welfare and national self-understanding, whereas religion remains a secondary, less effective force in society. Contemporary British ghost hunters' recourse to science, unlike recourses to religion, conceptualizes interaction with the ghostly as a universal category of experience. Debbora Battaglia has conceptualized such engagements with science as technoscience spirituality, defining it as a "hard faith in technoscience future" (2005:24). This hard faith in science is evident in the ways in which ghost hunters conceptualize and approach the project of producing ghostly knowledge. This chapter has demonstrated the ways in which such technoscientific spirituality, here ghost hunting, can be implicated in an ordering and reordering of the politics of religion and statehood.

Ultimately, ghost walks are a touristic moment in which notions of the British past and ideas regarding the ideal British nation are contested, challenged, and eventually reordered. Rather than celebrate the British past, as many forms of contemporary British heritage seek to do, ghost walks criticize and challenge its tendencies toward religious conflict and antiscience.

Notes

1. While the present historical era is especially ripe with ghosts, the British past has seen other such moments in which popular engagement with the paranormal or supernatural has reached epic heights. Recent historical scholarship has examined the significance of nineteenth-century

spiritualism in Britain (cf. Oppenheimer 1985; Owen 1989, 2004). Other historians have examined the transition from magical or religious explanations of the paranormal to ones grounded in the natural world (see Davies 1999; Waite 2003).

2. Certainly, the massive popularity of the Harry Potter book series and resulting films as well as other fictional and popular works focusing on the supernatural or paranormal has also contributed to the widespread interest in ghosts.

3. Interestingly, *Most Haunted* appears on American cable television on the Travel Channel, underlining the general significance of ghosts to the tourist industry.

4. When referring to both the ghost walk company and the tour guides, I try to obscure their identities as much as possible. All guides and interviewees are referred to by a pseudonym and I do not refer specifically to any of the ghost tours as a means of protecting the privacy of individuals.

5. Many such guides exist. They are a form of tourist literature for paranormal enthusiasts interested in visiting Britain's many haunted locations. They tend to provide information about accessibility and hours of operation, as well as accounts of the alleged ghosts that haunt the site.

6. I am not concerned here with the historical accuracy of these claims but rather with the ideological work they perform.

7. The Shambles is one of the oldest preserved medieval streets in Britain. It is now a hub of tourist activity in York that lives in the shadow of the York Minster.

8. Another compelling component of this nationalist discourse of inclusion and exclusion is the inability to reckon the British nation in terms of its former colonies or territories.

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Chapter 6
Collecting and Repatriating Egypt's Past: Toward a New Nationalism

Salima Ikram

Introduction

Egypt has a rich and diverse cultural heritage that spans over 6,000 years. The most well known period is the Pharaonic era that lasted some 3,000 years, and that has mesmerized people thereafter. Indeed, when people think of Egypt, they rarely think of the modern state—they think of Egypt's Pharaonic past in terms of its "mirabilia": pyramids and mummies that evoke the exotic and the esoteric. This perception has influenced current attitudes to the cultural remains from this era, objects and monuments that have come to be regarded as the patrimony not only of the modern-day Egyptians but also of the entire world. The same fascination is one reason why Egyptian artifacts are one of, if not *the* most, popular exhibits in any museum, regardless of whether the museum is in London, Paris, New York, or Berlin.

Most major museums in Europe and the USA contain a large number of objects from Egypt. These collections are rooted, for the most part, in the cabinets of curiosities found in aristocratic homes from the sixteenth century onward. The mania for collecting and acquiring Egyptian antiquities peaked during the imperialistic and colonial nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a time when the cultures of subject nations, or those found "inferior" to the European ones, were acquired by these nations as a matter of course, and their iconography and imagery appropriated by them (Reid 2002; Colla 2007).

At this time Egypt, like Iraq, Syria, Greece, and many parts of Eastern Europe, was under Ottoman control. For the most part, the Ottomans were relatively unconcerned with the antiquities found in the countries within their control as objects of historical worth, and tended to view them in economic terms, as gifts or objects for sale or in exchange for European technology. This encouraged the Europeans to view these countries as their personal hunting grounds for antiquities, and contributed to the large-scale removal of colossal statuary, entire buildings, and a vast range of other objects to private and public collections in the West. Western

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European museum collections, as well as those in North America, were augmented by souvenirs brought back by wealthy tourists, the booty seized by occupying armies, the gifts from the then rulers of Egypt to their European counterparts, the acquisitions (legitimate and illegitimate) made by individuals or governments, and the fruits of both legal and illegal excavations (Greener 1966; Vercoutter 1992). Whatever their origins, foreign museum collections have served to educate and inform people about Egypt's history and culture, and a wider, more global past. Indeed, these artifacts are Egypt's best ambassadors to the rest of the world and are also a vital part of Egypt's own past and contemporary identity.

Egyptian Law and Problems of Trade in Pharaonic Antiquities

Not all the artifacts that are now found outside Egypt arrived there by legal means. Many objects were acquired in direct contravention of antiquities laws [Note 1]. The earliest law on record concerning Egyptian antiquities was an Ordinance passed on August 15, 1835 (Khater 1960). It was designed to protect the antiquities of Upper Egypt in particular (although the law was applied to the whole country) from the agents of foreign governments and tourists who were purchasing or seizing antiquities by the sack full. The Ordinance of 1835 banned the export of antiquities without a proper permit and stated that all antiquities in the government's possession and all those that resulted from future excavations were to be deposited in the newly established Egyptian Museum located in the area of al-Azbakiya garden (Maspero 1914:Introduction). According to the Ordinance, this museum was to be built and organized following the European museums of the time; its construction was placed under the direction of Hakiakine Effendi and the museum itself under Yousouf Zia-effendi, who was also put in charge of the earliest incarnation of an Antiquities Service [Note 2]. Guards were to be posted at sites, and looting or the use of the antiquities as quarries by the locals was strictly prohibited. The reasons for protecting the monument as outlined in the Ordinance did not explicitly mention the economy, but that no doubt played a part in the passing of this law. More explicitly the law mentions a need to protect the integrity of the ancient remains, and a sense of national pride. Part of the Ordinance reads, "Ces sculptures, ces pierres ornées, et tous ces objets de même nature…sont exposés aux yeux du public de toutes les nations, et concourent puissamment à la gloire du pays qui les possède" ("These sculptures, these ornate stones, and all these objects of the same nature… are exposed to the eyes of the public of all nations, and speak powerfully about the glory of the country that possesses them") (Khater 1960:271).

Subsequent laws were passed in 1869 and 1874 dealing with the ownership of antiquities and laws regulating their export, even when they had been excavated with permits (Osman 1999; Khater 1960:274–279). These were more firmly and clearly articulated in the Decree of 19 March 1869 and the Order of 16 May 1880, which forbade the acquisition, sale, or export of antiquities without a license from the proper authorities and provided rules for excavation. Many of these laws were encouraged by the Frenchman Auguste Mariette, an early head of the Antiquities

Service and the Director of the Bulaq Museum, a later, public incarnation of the Azbakiya Museum [Note 3]. He wrote that Egypt had two museums: the Bulaq Museum and the entire country, which was filled with monuments (Khater 1960:62). He eloquently argued for more stringent rules and an end to easy export permits for antiquities. He pointed out, "Le temps où Lord Elgin enlevait les bas-reliefs du Parthénon est passé. L'Egypte possède les plus vielles archives qui existent de l'histoire de l'humanité. Ce sont les parchemins de son antique noblesse, et elle entend les garder" ("The time when Lord Elgin could remove the bas-reliefs of the Parthenon is past. Egypt possesses the oldest archives that exist in the history of humankind. These are the parchments of her noble antiquity, and Egypt understands she must protect them.") (Khater 1960: 63, quoting Palace Archives). Mariette was an ardent supporter of the antiquities laws, and zealously protected his charges, even when his own sovereign, the Empress Eugenie, requested objects from the Bulaq Museum collection as gifts (Greener 1966).

Further rules for excavation permits were laid out in the Decree of 17 November 1891, which forbade excavation in search of antiquities unless a permit had been granted by the General Director of Museums and Excavations and approved by the Permanent Committee of Antiquities. Throughout this period foreign excavations that had been approved by the relevant agencies were allowed to dig and to take a portion of what they had discovered to their own countries; this was a system that came to be known as "partage" (Khater 1960:280–284).

Then, an additional deterrent against illegal antiquities dealing, particularly at the local level, arrived in the form of the Law of 12 August 1897, which laid out the various punishments for people excavating without a permit and decreed that any antiquities thus extracted had to be returned to the government. Gradually, the laws that were passed during the nineteenth century laid the foundations for the idea of a national heritage that belonged to and helped to define the Egypt.

The next significant law to be passed regarding antiquities was Law 14 issued in 1912. It basically clarified and unified all previously passed laws regarding excavation, ownership, and sale of antiquities and provided a list of punishments for any infringement of the law. It stated that Egyptian antiquities were the property of the state and could only leave Egypt with proper permits issued by the government. It clearly articulated the rules for official antiquities shops. It also laid out the rights and responsibilities of excavators (Khater 1960:286–291).

Incidents of increased antiquities smuggling triggered the passing of Law 215 in October 1951. This law dramatically increased the severity of punishment for the illicit trade in antiquities and further stated that no antiquity could leave Egypt unless Egypt owned one or more objects that were similar to the one being exported, and then only with permits issued by relevant ministries and signed by accredited experts (Khater 1960). Shops registered with the government were permitted to sell antiquities that had been approved by the Antiquities Service. Several other minor laws were passed until the current (1983) antiquities law. It states (in translation) that "all monuments and artifacts uncovered in Egypt are the property of the Egyptian government. In addition, any object that has been duly registered as the property of Egypt, regardless of when it was discovered, should continue to be regarded as

such unless a clear record exists that it was legally sold or given to another owner."
This law did away with the earlier system of "partage," as well as the government-
authorized antiquities dealers, giving the latter a year in which to get rid of their
stock, but only within Egypt. Currently, a new antiquities law is being drafted that
will include clauses that will enable the Egyptian government to pursue artifacts that
clearly have been stolen from Egypt, particularly after the passing of the 1983 law.

Despite national and international legislations, the high value placed on Egyptian
artifacts in the market continues to encourage the wide-scale theft and destruction
of heritage throughout Egypt today. Nowhere is safe, not even the storage facilities
of the Antiquities Department. Sometimes even senior government (and military)
officials, such as the former governor of Giza, have been implicated in large-scale
international antiquities trafficking rings. Thus, the return of cultural heritage not
only has a moral and nationalistic impetus, but also has a strong economic element.

This is particularly apparent in the case of objects that have been illegally pur-
chased (knowingly or not) on the art market after having been unlawfully spirited
out of Egypt. The 1983 law is the basis of many of the lawsuits and requests for the
return of stolen antiquities that Egypt has engaged in since the mid-1990s. In some
cases, once alerted, the individuals, museums, or auction houses have graciously
returned the objects to Egypt.

In other cases, dealers such as Frederick Schultz and Jonathan Tokeley-
Parry have been tried and convicted (www.archaeology.org/online/features/schultz/
details.htm). A very recent example of an individual found to have traded illegally
in antiquities is the former United States military man Edward George Johnson.
Johnson purchased a group of objects that had been stolen from a storehouse belong-
ing to the antiquities organization in Maadi. The theft was discovered when he put
the objects up for sale—they had been excavated and published, and were therefore
identifiable.

Many museums also provide assistance in the repatriation of stolen pieces. The
Metropolitan Museum of Art's Egyptian Department noticed pieces (ducks carved
out of calcite) listed in the catalogs of two auction houses (Christie's and Ruper
Wace Ancient Art Limited) that their team had excavated in 1979. The museum
alerted the Supreme Council of Antiquities and the auction house. The object was
returned to Egypt without fuss and the theft investigated.

The most notable American museum to assist in the return of Egypt's cultural
heritage is the Michael Carlos Museum in Atlanta. The museum not only has been
extremely careful about purchasing artifacts, but has also been proactive in return-
ing objects to Egypt regardless of when they were acquired. As an act of good will,
the museum's director, Bonnie Speed, and curator of the Egyptian department, Peter
Lacovara, have returned fragments of the tomb of Seti I that the Carlos Museum had
obtained quite legitimately. They believe that the pieces should be restored within
the tomb in Egypt and will be more valuable there as they will be in context. After a
painstaking reconstruction process, the pieces have now been successfully installed
in the tomb. It is a pity that the pieces removed by Jean François Champollion
from the same tomb that are now in the Louvre Museum have not been similarly
treated.

The Carlos Museum also returned a mummy to Egypt. The mummy was purchased from an old collection in Niagara Falls that originally had been formed by authorized purchases made in the nineteenth century and was therefore quite legitimate. However, with careful study by the Carlos team as well as other Egyptologists, the mummy was tentatively identified as the body of King Ramesses I, the first ruler of the Nineteenth Dynasty, who ruled in about 1292 B.C. The mummy was displayed at the Carlos, and then was carefully transported to Egypt, where it was received with great pomp and is now installed in the Luxor Museum. The return of the mummy and the attendant ceremonies, broadcast throughout the country, made a marked impression in Egypt and were a moment of great nationalistic feeling and pride in their past as people celebrated the return of a pharaoh.

Not all museums are, however, as helpful as the Carlos. A New Kingdom funerary mask belonging to Ka-nefer-nefer held by the St. Louis Art Museum is the current subject of much wrangling. Director Brent Benjamin claims that the mask, bought in 1998, was a legitimate purchase and that all records were checked to establish its legitimacy. However, the Egyptian government has documentary evidence that this mask left Egypt illegally in the twentieth century. Despite this evidence as well as reports written by reputable Egyptologists, the St. Louis Art Museum refuses to relinquish the mask. An end to the dispute is not yet in sight.

In an effort to combat the theft of antiquities and to retrieve stolen ones, Dr. Zahi Hawass, Director General of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities, has established the new Department for the Repatriation of Stolen Antiquities, which makes lists of stolen objects and disseminates them to museums and law enforcement authorities throughout the world, such as Interpol and Art Loss. Currently the on-site storehouses are being inventoried so as to establish tighter controls over the antiquities that are not kept in museums.

Iconic Artifacts

All of the objects that have been mentioned thus far are valuable remains of Egypt's past, though none, save for the putative Ramesses I, is an iconic object. Recently, Egypt has been repeatedly requesting the repatriation of certain iconic objects: the Rosetta Stone, which is in London, and the bust of Nefertiti, which is in Berlin, although requests for the former have not been taken very far in legal terms.

The Rosetta Stone was discovered and taken by Napoleon Bonaparte's soldiers as part of the collection that was being made for the French Republic by Bonaparte's savants. After Britain defeated the French in the Mediterranean and in Egypt, they seized the stone and deposited it in the British Museum. However, prior to this, the French had made a series of copies of the stone that had been distributed to scholars throughout Europe so that they could try to decipher the language of the ancient Egyptians. The stone was significant in that the same text was written in three scripts: hieroglyphics on top, a cursive form of colloquial hieroglyphics or Demotic in the middle, and Greek at the bottom. Using the Greek and Egyptian texts

in tandem, the Frenchman Jean François Champollion managed to unlock the secret to translating hieroglyphics in 1822 (Adkins and Adkins 2001). This has proven to be the key to understanding ancient Egypt.

Thus, the Rosetta Stone is an icon of Egyptology and, although not terribly visually glamorous, it is a vital part of the history of Egypt and Egyptology. The stone remains in the British Museum, where it is much visited. Dr. Hawass had originally requested that the stone be returned to Egypt. However, after due deliberation, he has withdrawn this request as the legal issues regarding ownership of the stone are fraught with complexity. He has, however, repeatedly requested that the Rosetta Stone be lent to Egypt for a short period so that Egyptians, the majority of whom cannot travel abroad both due to financial and political reasons, can view the stone. To date this request has been denied, although there is currently a dialogue with possible positive outcomes regarding this. Once the security and insurance issues are resolved, it might well occur in our lifetimes.

The more controversial of Egypt's requests is for repatriation of the bust of Nefertiti, which is now in Berlin's Egyptian Museum (Fig. 6.1). For most people,

Fig. 6.1 The bust of Nefertiti on display in the Berlin Museum. (Photo: Salima Ikram)

this image of Nefertiti is, aside from pyramids and mummies, *the* symbol of Egypt. It is also an icon of female beauty, used to promote soaps, perfumes, and other beauty products not only in Egypt but also throughout the world.

This painted limestone bust was discovered in 1912 by the German excavator Ludwig Borchardt and his team at the site of Tell el-Amarna, the city founded by King Akhenaten and Queen Nefertiti. At this time, "partage" was practiced on excavations. In 1913 the representative for the Antiquities Service, the Frenchman Gustave Lefebvre, was assigned to divide the finds. Records no longer exist that clearly list the division of finds or any comments made regarding this particular division. Somehow (accounts vary), the iconic Nefertiti seems to have traveled to Berlin, while another unfinished piece, carved in quarzite, remained in Cairo as the "share" of the Egyptian government.

The bust was initially displayed in the home of the man who financed the German expedition, Dr. James Simon. Most of the objects from the German expedition were put on display in the Egyptian Museum in Berlin in the winter of 1913–1914, save for Nefertiti (she made a brief appearance, probably for the benefit of Kaiser Wilhelm II, at the opening of the exhibition). German museum records suggest that Borchardt feared that the Egyptian Antiquities Service might demand her return; this concern on the part of Borchardt implies that Nefertiti might not have been extracted completely legally from Egypt [Note 4].

Nefertiti was finally moved to the Berlin National Museum in 1920, and put on display around about 1923, complete with a lavishly illustrated publication written by Borchardt (1923) concerning the piece. Egypt was outraged. Negotiations to retrieve Nefertiti commenced in 1924 under Pierre Lacau, Director of the Egyptian Antiquities Service, and have continued. In 1929 Egypt even offered to exchange valuable pieces in its Cairo collection for the Nefertiti bust. However, the German government ultimately decided against this. Later in 1935, Hermann Göring, the Prussian prime minister, decided to return the bust, but was thwarted by Adolf Hitler. In fact, after World War II, ownership of the bust was debated between East and West Germany—it wound up in the West, and by the 1970s "Nofri" had become the cultural symbol for Berlin. After World War II, Egypt again sought the repatriation of the Nefertiti bust from the Allies, but to no avail. Subsequently, Egypt has repeatedly asked for the return of the bust, but with no success. Even some Germans have felt that the bust belongs in Cairo, and in 1984 the "Nefertiti Wants to Go Home" pamphlet and movement was born under the auspices of Herbert Ganslmayr and Gerd von Paczensky, who suggested that the bust be displayed alternately in Cairo and Berlin as a solution to the dilemma. Finally, Egypt appealed formally to UNESCO in 2005 to resolve the conflict. It remains unclear to this day as to whether the Egyptian Antiquities Service or the Germans at the time had been at fault in removing Nefertiti from Egypt, although new evidence concerning this issue has recently come to light (Krauss 2008, 2009).

Most recently there have been heated exchanges between Dr. Dietrich Wildung, (now former) Director of the Berlin Museum, and Dr. Hawass. These have resulted in a stalemate. However, there might be some progress in the near future. Instead of requesting the unconditional return of Nefertiti, Dr. Hawass has asked for a

short-term loan of the bust to coincide with the opening of new museums in Cairo and Minya, the largest city near the site of el-Amarna.

Until now Wildung has asserted that the bust is too fragile to travel. But current events demonstrate that it is not too fragile for him to have allowed two Hungarian artists, Andras Galik and Balint Havas, to fit the bust onto a modern bronze body, albeit briefly. The artists brought to Berlin a bronze body that they had fashioned in Budapest. In Berlin, on May 26, 2003, under museum supervision, they arranged to have the ancient Nefertiti head placed briefly upon the bronze body. The event was taped, and the video and the headless bronze were put on view in adjacent rooms of the Hungarian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. The ancient head was returned to its glass case in Berlin and did not travel. But one must wonder why a cast of the bust would not have sufficed for this exercise. This publicity stunt generated international opprobrium on Wildung and the artists, and assisted the cause of those who were working for the return of Nefertiti. Nefertiti once more dominated the news, not least in Egypt. Since then, Dr. Hawass has called for an international committee to judge whether the bust can travel and whether conditions in Egypt will be acceptable for the well-being and safety of this unique piece. He writes in a letter to D. Wildung,

> Given the immeasurable delight and pride which this object could bring to Egyptians who have never had the opportunity to see it, it seems that a thorough and impartial evaluation by a scientific committee is called for to be sure that every possible scenario for its safe display in Egypt has been exhausted before our request for [its] loan is denied. We would never endanger any of our treasures by insisting that they travel against the advice of an impartial commission of experts. However, we do maintain that the evaluation of these objects should be carried out by a balanced and diverse international committee, including experts from Egypt and from other non-Western nations. (Zahi Hawass, 2007, personal communication)

Certainly, the presence of Nefertiti in Egypt would give the Egyptians a sense of national pride and would also eliminate their confusion when they visit the museum in Cairo in search of the famous bust, only to be told that it resides in Berlin.

Tourism

Having Nefertiti (and other iconic objects) return to Egypt, even briefly, is not just important for Egyptian national pride, but also plays a part in Egypt's struggle for economic survival. Tourism is among the most important sources of the nation's income, perhaps ranking second only to remittances (Ikram 2006:88, 127, 139). Ancient Egypt permeates the day-to-day life, on an economic level, of a large percentage of Egyptians, and as such, their patrimony is becoming of increasing interest to them. Having special displays of objects that have been returned to Egypt by foreign institutions, or seized by the antiquities police, has already increased museum attendance nationally. If such exhibitions were organized for iconic artifacts, it would boost attendance both among local and foreign visitors. Indeed, the Museum of Stolen Things, which has been in operation since the 1950s in part of the Cairo Citadel, is a very popular venue among Egyptians. It not only draws attention

to their heritage, but also highlights the work of the police in apprehending those who are seen to be robbing each individual Egyptian of his or her patrimony.

Arguments Against Restitution: Poverty and Fundamentalism

The arguments for the restitution of cultural property are many, and include both nationalism and economics. Arguments against this process sometimes include the perceived rights of the possessor, but more often poor museum conditions, religious fundamentalism, potential warfare, and political unrest are cited as reasons for retaining artifacts that rightfully belong in their home countries. It should be noted that not all Western museums containing Egyptian antiquities are in perfect working order; many suffer from damp, flooding, and inadequate storage facilities. In Egypt, although the museum conditions are not as good as the wealthiest museums in the West, they are gradually improving. New cases and climate controls are being established in older museums, and new museums are being built to modern standards, thereby invalidating this argument.

The threat of fundamentalism to cultural heritage has been brought into sharp focus with the tragic and needless destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan, and is, sadly, a worry in many countries. In Egypt, a land rich in monumental sculpture, there was a great deal of furor in the wake of this demolition, and it was a topic of conversation amongst intellectuals and people on the street. One of the most prominent Muslim leaders, the Sheikh of al-Azhar, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, had asked the Taliban to reconsider their decision to tear down the Bamiyan Buddhas early in 2001, although he was severely criticized for his stand. The Grand Mufti of Egypt, Ali Gomaa, also spoke out against the destruction, but to no avail.

The destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas sparked discussion concerning the propriety of displaying images (for Muslims) in Egypt. In April 2006, Egyptian newspapers brought a *fatwa* (religious legal opinion) issued by the Grand Mufti's office to the public's attention; this *fatwa* had probably been issued earlier (possibly in 2003), but had never been implemented. The *fatwa* stated that it was forbidden for Muslims to use statuary representing living beings, particularly humans, as decorations within the house. The fatwa was strictly limited to statues of humans in the domestic context and did *not* mention works of art in museums or any Pharaonic or Coptic statuary. It did not even touch on the public statues that are abundantly scattered or erected throughout Egypt. This prompted further discussions in Egypt and raised fears that Pharaonic and Coptic monuments were at threat, putting antiquities staff and police more on their guard. Thankfully, none of the older artifacts was attacked. The only casualties resulting from this *fatwa* were three statues in the Garden Museum of sculptor Hassan Heshmat (active 1970s and 1980s). Subsequently, Gomaa went on record specifically saying that people should *not* destroy statues or monuments and that public art works, museum objects, and archaeological sites were in a separate category. These discussions helped subsequently clarify the *fatwa* that pertains *exclusively* to statues in the home. It is interesting to note that earlier muftis, such as Mohammed Abdou (early twentieth

century) and Ahmed el-Tayeb, had stated that statues were not *haram* or forbidden, but unfortunately they never made any *fatwa* protecting them. On the whole, it seems as if Egypt's official religious body would not collude with anyone attempting to destroy the country's heritage, and would censure those who did. Furthermore, it is hard to imagine the government condoning a widespread destruction of statuary in a country with over 10 state-owned institutions that teach sculpture and painting, and that erect statuary in public spaces.

If there is a threat to Egypt's cultural heritage from anyone, it will be from a very small group of individuals. For the most part two- and three-dimensional images are an intrinsic part of Egyptian life, whether used in advertising, to commemorate religious events (such as going on Haj), or as part of their religion if they are Copts.

A more real threat to cultural heritage is posed in the event of war, as is demonstrated by the tragic example of the Iraq Museum. However, warfare is not limited to certain areas. Looting, whether brought about by war or a local or regional crisis, is possible anywhere, and is thus an invalid reason for withholding cultural heritage.

Heritage and National Identity

For the Egyptians, their Pharaonic polytheistic past has been key to creating a sense of national identity (Fig. 6.2), partially as this past is non-denominational and unites

Fig. 6.2 Saad Zaghloul's mausoleum, constructed in 1931, epitomizes the deceased leader's nationalist vision whereby Pharaonic Egypt unified the state. (Photo: Salima Ikram)

all the people of Egypt. These symbols were first used in the nineteenth century, and then again during the early twentieth century when Egypt made its bid for freedom from the British (Haikal 2003). This use of the Pharaonic past is reflected in Egyptian stamps and currency, newspaper mastheads, symbols for the national bank, and many national monuments including the pyramid-shaped Monument to the Unknown Soldier that also serves as President Anwar Sadat's grave-marker, making him the first Egyptian ruler to be buried beneath a pyramid since the time of the Pharaohs (Reid 2003–2004; Haikal 2004).

Now, once again, in the twenty-first century, Egypt uses its Pharaonic past to engender a sense of national history, pride, and unity that is secular in nature. The new courthouse on the corniche at Maadi in Cairo is built in a neo-Pharaonic style, linking the contemporary to the ancient and stressing the continuity of Egyptians, their culture, and their laws (Fig. 6.3). New books in Arabic on the ancient past are being published by independent scholars as well as under the auspices of the Supreme Council of Antiquities. The latter and the National Museum have sponsored several series of short courses for children and adults at the Egyptian Museum that are well attended. These not only educate people about their past, but also provide a sense of connection to their past and help articulate and emphasize a national identity. Twelve new regional museums are under construction; of these, four have been completed. These museums not only provide a venue for the creation, articulation, and emphasis of Egyptian nationalism on a regional level, but also serve to improve the local economies.

The increase in TV broadcasts on Egyptian subjects is also contributing to the increased awareness of the modern Egyptians of their past and their connection to it, and reaches the nation's population in far-flung areas. Events such as the (televised)

Fig. 6.3 The National Courthouse on the corniche in Maadi alludes to the Pharaonic era and the past grandeur of Egypt. (Photo: Salima Ikram)

Fig. 6.4 Moving the colossal granite statue from downtown Cairo into the desert reaffirmed the Egyptians' faith in their technological prowess and reaffirmed their link with the Pharaonic past. (Photo: Salima Ikram)

recent removal of the statue of Ramesses II from in front of Cairo's main train station (Ramesses Station) to a more salubrious location at the entrance of the future Grand Museum had Cairenes of all ages out on the streets for most of the night (Fig. 6.4). One young boy, about 5 years old, who lived in the neighborhood, tearfully waved at the statue as it went by saying, in Arabic, "Ramesses, I will miss you!" The vision of the colossal statue of Ramesses II progressing through the streets of Cairo served as a reminder of Egypt's Pharaonic past, and stressed the connection of the modern nation to its predecessors.

Conclusion

Clearly Egypt's ancient past is an intrinsic part of its national identity and economy. It also provides a common ground that unifies Christians and Muslims. At a time when religious fundamentalism and sectarianism are a worldwide problem that threatens the present and future as well as the past, shouldn't governments urge anything that promotes a secular unity and sense of nationhood regardless of creed? Shouldn't the modern Egyptians have access to iconic images from their past, even briefly, to help them bolster their national identity and serve as a rallying point?

Most of the discourse on contested heritage is focused on a few highly visible pieces in Western collections. No one in Egypt is demanding the return of the obelisks that are now part of the embedded urban landscapes of Rome, Paris, London, Istanbul, and New York. Nor is anyone asking for the return of the vast bulk of collections outside Egypt. Repatriation requests are only being made for stolen pieces and a very few unique objects that are symbols of Egypt. The increasing recent trend of voluntarily returning demonstrably stolen artifacts is encouraging. It is hoped that, as standards continue to improve in Egyptian museums, the pressure will mount to repatriate even the most iconic representatives of Egyptian culture abroad, giving Nefertiti the chance to come home.

Notes

1. My thanks to Dr. Zahi Hawass for providing access to the information concerning the repatriation issues regarding stolen objects discussed in this chapter, and to Iman Abdulfattah and Shirin Ikram for obtaining the texts of some of the laws pertaining to antiquities. Needless to say, cases discussed in this paper are but a very few examples of antiquities theft. I am also grateful to Dr. N. Warner and Dr. J. Kamrin for discussions on the topic and their comments on this chapter.
2. Interestingly, it appears that Champollion, who is best known for deciphering hieroglyphics, was an early instigator and catalyst for this Ordinance. In 1828 he led an expedition to Egypt to study the monuments in situ, and to obtain examples of Egyptian antiquities for the Louvre. After acquiring what he wanted, and at the behest of Egypt's ruler, Muhammed Ali Pasha, he outlined the requirements for an antiquities service in Egypt and the rules that needed to be enforced to protect the monuments. Many of these can be seen in the Ordinance of 1835 (Khater 1960:29–33).
3. Unfortunately this museum was run more like the European private royal collections than a public museum. Gradually its contents were gifted away, and in 1855 the Khedive Said gifted the museum's contents to the Archduke Maximilian of Austria in exchange for technological expertise.
4. Information concerning the Nefertiti bust was gathered from papers kept in the Supreme Council of Antiquities office in Cairo, museum panels in the Berlin Museum, and the extremely useful website www.nofretete-geht-auf-reisen.de/ewelcome.htm, consulted in April, May, and September 2008.

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Chapter 7
National Identity Interrupted: The Mutilation of the Parthenon Marbles and the Greek Claim for Repatriation

Vasiliki Kynourgiopoulou

Introduction

History comprises many layers of accumulated collective memory, which act as a conscious or unconscious influence on the decisions of individuals as well as on the collective actions of the great social forces of history. Just how individual and social decision-making interact is a problem that is still under debate. We could however suggest that basic historic experiences clearly affect the mentality of groups. Especially in the case where culturally different nations claim common inheritance, such experiences give rise to conflicting attitudes or lead to lasting antagonisms. Historical experiences may vividly represent national consciousness and often act as testimonies of cultural and national identities based on cultural patrimony, as in the case of Greece. My approach examines the historical consciousness of the Greeks and the creation of cultural and national identity based on cultural heritage.

Modern discourse on repatriation focuses mainly on the ownership of artifacts and the prerogatives of academic research and stewardship, excluding the very heart of the matter which is *who actually has the right to curate, preserve, display, and interpret cultural heritage*. It is true that with the age of globalization, national differences are to be seen as regional or even local as there is great advocacy in favor of "a common heritage," "one global identity," and "one cultural past." National heritage is regarded as the display of a particular historical narrative which, because of its affiliation with history, is no longer considered inheritance of its people. Does archaeology therefore reinforce the sense of nostalgia of the past but at the same time regard history as separate from its people? It is within the contradictory context of repatriation and globalization that I examine the role of archaeology and consider Greece's claim for the repatriation of the Parthenon Marbles and the need for reconstruction of historical monuments not only for nationalistic purposes but for existential reasons.

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Historical Consciousness and National Identity

It is true that historical consciousness—or the historical unconscious—is determined by events of the past. Historical consciousness deals with past events that have been accepted and therefore have become part of a personal or collective identity. Historical knowledge or knowledge of the past that has been preserved through time is usually refined by social methods and political regimes and thus shapes historical consciousness in another way. Modern scientific thought has revealed the sphere of the unconscious and has taught us to take into account what we call collective memory. But the rationalism suggested by the scientific method also urges us to extract historical events from their anonymity and complexity, to see them as products of comprehensible actions and causal connections, to dispel legends and myths. History may be said to increase our knowledge of the past, but in doing so it reduces the unknown power of the past. Respectively in collective identities the awareness of a shared past is indispensable, what Renan (1881) famously called "*avoir fait de grandes choses ensemble, et vouloir en faire encore*" ("having done great things together and wishing to do more"). Historical awareness is at the very root of collective identity as this collective knowledge denotes unity and relation. For a community or nation, common recollections of the past and cultural elements which they all recognize and identify with create the idea of a relation with each other. The notion of identity and its dependence through cultural heritage invokes a categorical fixture, unchangeable and permanent through time.

Following the creation of the Modern Greek state, Gaston Deschamp (1892) noted the significance of classical heritage for the Modern Greeks, "the Greek wants to adapt to the European customs while simultaneously [keeping] the originality peculiar to his race. His pride urges him to imitate the Western manners and modes. At the same time however, he preserves an old fund of tenderness for the local traditions, from which he would part with difficulty. Among cultivated Greeks this sort of duality is striking."

A Greek historian of the nineteenth century summarizes the Modern Greek idea of nationhood in his call "not to run to Europe thirsting for a *Master*... nor can one ignore the country's history and cultural foundations" (Giannopoulos 1965:56). Such a view of modern national identity was not uncontested in Europe, however. In the nineteenth century the gap between the European perception of Greekness and Greek national identity and the Greek perception of Greekness became quite evident. Indicative of this gap is Leo von Klenze's address to King Otto during his visit to the Acropolis: "[You have] stepped today, after so many centuries of barbarism, for the first time on this celebrated Acropolis, proceeding on the road of civilisation and glory, on the road passed by the likes of Themistocles, Aristidis, Kimon, and Pericles, and this is and should be in the eyes of your people the symbol of a glorious reign ... All the remains of barbarity will be removed, here as in all of Greece, and the remains of the glorious past will be brought in new light, as the solid foundation of a glorious present and future" (Meliarakes 1884).

For the Modern Greeks the marbles of the Parthenon, located atop the Acropolis, constitute not only the foundation of nationhood but also have become the symbols

of Greece's hybrid architectural and cultural identity. The Parthenon Marbles evoke the idea of diachronic identity, the sense of permanence and continuity in time. Hacked off the Parthenon by Lord Elgin 200 years ago and taken to Britain, Greece wants its marbles back. They constitute one of the most famous cases of return and restitution.

The "Elgin" Marbles?

In 1799 Thomas Bruce, the seventh Earl of Elgin, was appointed the British Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire and was stationed in Athens. At this time he was planning to decorate his country home in Scotland and therefore originally planned to ask for permission to produce drawings and make casts of the Parthenon sculptures in order to make copies back home. Studying them closely, however, he became much more interested in the original pieces than the casts and thus moved toward a particular agreement with the Turkish authorities. His second request was specifically to "excavate" and remove material from the monument. As the Greek people were under Turkish occupation, Elgin offered the irrevocable assistance of Britain in the French-Turkish war and pledged allegiance to the Ottoman Empire. Hence, he managed to acquire a much questioned permit or *firman*, and through bribery he was able to remove large parts of the Parthenon.

From 1801 to 1804, Elgin brought back to London a very large proportion of ancient Greek sculptures from the Parthenon. From 1803 to 1816 the marbles were in his possession. In 1816, he sold the majority of the marbles to the British government in order to pay off debts (Hitchens 1997). The Select Committee of the House of Commons debated the issue and considered the value and importance of their acquisition as public property. And so they entered the British Museum.

By the term "Elgin marbles", therefore, specific reference is made to the group of sculptures that were removed by Lord Elgin. To this date, the British Museum holds almost half of the Parthenon frieze, one whole caryatid, metopes, parts of columns from the Parthenon, pedimental figures, and a number of sculptures from the monuments on the Acropolis.

The Parthenon Marbles

These sculptures have acquired different meanings over the centuries—for instance, from the archaeological and artistic symbols of Athenian superiority during Pericles' time to folk stories of spirits living in the sculptures as human beings petrified by magicians (Andronikos 1985). For most of the nineteenth century, ancient Greek archaeology was perceived as the most representational artistic production of European culture and achievement whereas for the local Greek population it was considered part of the Athenian landscape with supernatural connotations. Andronikos (1985) refers to the vivid tales of locals narrating the removal of the

Parthenon Marbles by Lord Elgin's assistants and the despair of the caryatids over the savage abduction of their sister (Gennadios 1930; Kakridis 1978).

The Parthenon Marbles represented the great European knowledge of ancient art and architecture and were the symbols of European roots. The whole of the nineteenth century—the age of neoclassicism—saw the revival of ancient Greek and Roman models. It was therefore imperative for Western institutions, in the making, to provide evidence of curatorial connoisseurship and conservation praxis. At the same time the creation of Modern Greece led to the need for appropriate conservation methods for the protection of antiquities both classical and Byzantine, as they were considered parts of the Greek national identity.

Britain, one of the greatest topographies of neoclassical art and architecture, saw the opportunity for exhibiting authentic images of ancient Greece as a nostalgic move toward classical revival. The marbles of the Parthenon became the canons of artistic supremacy away from the visual revulsion of Modern Athens in the making. The new class of educated Europeans was now able to study ancient Greek art and architecture in the clean and safe environment of the British Museum, establishing therefore their imagined ancestral heritage and legitimizing their intellectual superiority (Bastea 2000; Hamilakis and Yalouri 1996; Herzfeld 1982; Kitromilides 1989; Skopetea 1988). Indeed, Hitchens (1997:17) indicates that the British Museum is obliged by law to refer to the specific group of sculptures acquired by Lord Elgin as "Elgin Marbles."

The Greek Claim for Restitution

Notwithstanding their location in London, Modern Greeks have considered the sculptures as part of their national heritage and living symbols of their hybrid identity. They are the symbols of past achievements and the markers of their cultural development. The Parthenon sculptures in the British Museum became the "missing link" of a much needed cultural past. Hamilakis writes,

> The frequent condemnation of Lord Elgin's activities in his own country by prominent personalities helped to raise the issue in the newly founded Hellenic state. The earlier folk tales (..) were now reshaped and re-told by folklorists in such a way as to fit in the national narrative; rather than being seen as evidence for "superstition" (as foreign travellers saw them) or as testaments of a cosmological construction of "otherness," they were presented as evidence for the living consciousness of the population as descendants of Ancient Greeks and as custodians of their ancestral heritage. (1999:9)

Perhaps their restitution would mark the cultural achievement of Modern Greeks.

Ever since their installation at the British Museum the marbles have become the focus of diplomatic negotiations between the two countries, the focus of controversy over repatriation issues. In 1984, Melina Merkouri, the then Minister of Culture, demanded their restitution and officially started the debate of legal ownership. In September 1984, Greece filed a restitution request with UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee. During several sessions and, in particular, in 1989, 1991, 1994, and 1996, the Committee adopted recommendations calling for "an

amicable settlement of the dispute" with reiterations made in 1999, in order to encourage new bilateral negotiations between Greece and the UK.

The Greek thesis of repatriation rests on the indefinable relationship between object and subject, as the Parthenon Marbles are considered inalienable treasures belonging to the Greek people. They are regarded as elements that constitute Greek nationhood, and thus their function and interpretation can only be properly understood in their original context.

The argument for restitution of the Parthenon Marbles should also be examined in terms of Greek architectural identity. Since the creation of the Modern Greek state, specific emphasis has been placed on architecture as the confirmation of national identity. Greek architectural identity re-creates and legitimizes those principles and values that derived from the classical architectural heritage: ideology and nationhood. More specifically, in the nineteenth century when Europe emphasized the re-creation of the classical Greek past in Modern Greece and the abolition of anything Ottoman, neoclassical architecture in Athens provided a visual image of the new nation—a visual image in terms of its physical criteria, motifs, and aesthetic values, combined with social values of unity, permanence, and progress. Architecture can be properly understood in its totality. The full purpose and design of a building, its decorative parts, and its aesthetic and symbolic values can be properly understood within their topographical context in full motion of images and symbols; "monumental architecture addresses the collective aspect of life, meaning the life of society as a whole, and is usually created within the historic, social, economic, and political framework of the time. Its appeal, however, goes beyond the historical limits of the time in which it was created" (Boibondas et al. 1977). As such the Parthenon and its ideology, philosophy, and symbolism can be properly interpreted once the majority of the pieces are together. Architecture is the thread between theory and practice, and it is also in this context that the repatriation of the Parthenon Marbles should be examined.

The British Museum has refused the restitution or return *lato sensu* even within the framework of exchange (see Jenkins 2007; St. Clair 1998). In fact, in recent years there have been a series of offensive remarks in the British press, hinting to a new era of colonialism, making gloomy predictions about the new Acropolis Museum and Greece's efforts to care for their monuments. The Parthenon Marbles have become British national heritage and the British elite are in control of that legacy: "Britain conjoins family and nation, personifying the national heritage, stamping public treasures with a private imprimatur" (Lowenthal 2004:67). "Phrases such as 'The Rokeby Venus,' 'The Portland Vase,' 'The Elgin Marbles' [held] "more than passing proprietary meaning. They summarized a proper custody and appeared to state a desirable case" (Hazzard 1981; cited in Lowenthal 2004:67).

Colonial Hubris

With the advent of globalization, the idea of cultural difference has given way to a "constructed cultural whole" where different cultural patrimonies are seen as one

and cultural heritage is "administered" by organizations with financial power. The greater issue that derives from the rhetoric of the "cultural stock market" is that in promoting equality through globalization we are in fact reviving colonial ideas. As great colonial museums, such as the British Museum, attempt to prevent the abolition of museum dominance over "national patrimony," one sees these institutions becoming defensive over the issue of archaeological freedom and research. As more and more States make claims for the repatriation of their national heritage, one hears the claim—including among some archaeologists—that "legitimate archaeology" (which is the dictum of many museums) is being "killed off" in an effort to limit academic freedom, deny cross-cultural respect, and destroy the notion of "global heritage." But the real issue is the display of cross-cultural respect and co-operation versus colonialism, a term I use here to represent enforcement of doctrines that institute profitable partnerships and exclude members of the community by claim of arbitrary ownership.

The Greeks' right for the repatriation of Parthenon Marbles should be re-examined with the understanding that the marbles need to be interpreted as sacred and essential symbols of the Modern Greek hybrid identity. Modern Greek hybrid identity is based on memory, symbols, and traditions with ties that bring the past into the present or bridge the past and the present (see Clogg 1979; Herzfeld 1982, 1987). Tradition, whether "invented" (Hobsbawm 1983) or not, has a ritual or symbolic function within society. Invented traditions are usually created in response to a mass need, and are politically driven. Usually, there are certain pre-conditions for the creation of traditions. Such pre-conditions involve the way people are ready for tradition—especially after wars or radical social changes—in order to gain some form of cultural identity. Traditions suggest social/political stability within a nation and often act as types of public symbols.

The British Museum's case—bolstered by the idea of *international* patrimony—in fact projects ideas that reinforce the idea of colonial ownership. The most striking of all arguments was put forward in 1985, when the then director of the British Museum, David Wilson, defended the Museum against the Greek claim for repatriation of the Parthenon Marbles, arguing that a "Third World country" like Greece is unable to sustain the upkeep of the marbles (a ridiculous claim since the Parthenon Marbles have been subjected to unsuccessful and injurious conservation techniques while in the British Museum) and that Greeks are merely an "ex-colonial" people who strive to establish their national identity. He stated,

> As a result of European wars and pillage, the European heritage has been distributed more than once. There is little that one would wish to be returned to their original owners (who are they in any case?) or redistributed among the European treasuries and museums. But this self-satisfied attitude causes pain when one turns to the real feeling of ex-colonial people who feel a need to establish their national identity. Much of the material from Third World countries was not collected as a result of war or pillage. Much came as a result of gifts and barter and of genuine spirit of scientific enquiry by Europeans eager to know more about the people of the period; the material now housed in museums all over the world was acquired legally and with the full—even eager—permission of their owners. This is true of the Elgin Marbles as of spears from Fiji. It is difficult to adjust modern terms to the morality of the past.

> The Third World and other countries bent on return and restitution should, however, realize that they are themselves in danger of being considered vandals if they persist in their course with regard to the great international collections. The universal museums have looked after their collections for many years—they are great monuments to man's mind, its possibilities, its weaknesses, its similar or different reactions. (Wilson 1985:105–106)

Interpreting Wilson's arguments, we can identify a strong colonial attitude of superiority that leads to dangerous presuppositions of cultural heritage and identity. First, Wilson's attempt to differentiate between European heritage and colonial heritage serves the need of many Western European institutions to claim the roots of European civilization and science. As Bilsel (2000:12) puts it, "to differentiate between the European heritage and the ex-colonial people's lack of heritage serves Wilson's political agenda of acknowledging the rootedness of the European culture, on one hand, while underlying the constructedness of the other's identity on the other." Wilson not only attempts to construct a common European identity, rooted in the classical past, but also constructs his argument on the principle of the differentiation between "us" and "the other." He infers, moreover, that once the marbles became part of the British past and therefore British identity, they were acknowledged as European heritage. He ignores the topography of the marbles by taking them out of their historical and geographical context which places them in Greece. By calling Greece and its people "a colony," he emphasizes the sense of colonial superiority. But Greece was never a British colony, nor were the marbles given willingly with the full permission of the local (Greek) people. The marbles were taken by Lord Elgin without the consent of the Greek people as Greece at the time was part of the Ottoman Empire. We might therefore accept that the Turkish administration in Athens was at the time the rightful owner of the marbles. If so, does this imply that every colonial power has the right of ownership over every material culture of the country it colonizes? Even the idea of "a gift" implies ownership and in the Greek case it is erroneous to talk about the marbles being given as a gift since they were never officially the possession of the Turkish administration in Athens. Instead, what should be emphasized is the general European attitude of the nineteenth century.

Nineteenth-century Athens, in particular, presented the "great experiment" for the European powers of the time as they were aspiring to reproduce the mighty ancient Greek civilization by eradicating anything Byzantine (Bastea 2000; Mpiris 1996; Philippides 1984).

The Greeks of the time were considered unworthy of their classical heritage. Christine Boyer notes with irony, "Thus an imaginary gap seems to separate the people of Europe from those of Greece and although the latter might be the living ancestors of Europe upholding the role of Ur-Europa, they were simultaneously blamed for being immature and backward children held down by their ancient past. This places nineteenth century Greece in an impossible position; it was to be the standard of civilization in the abstract sense, but judged in reality to be a humiliated Oriental vassal clearly inferior to—and in the end dependent on—the more modern Europe. This bind, moreover, served Eurocentric purposes and legitimized the plundering of Greece's past" (1994:158).

It was therefore in the hands of Europeans to identify the roots of the Western world by excavating in the *topos* of the "other." The excavated material became an important source of information both in terms of aesthetic and archaeological value. Historians along with architects and politicians projected the parts of history that *they* considered valuable. This created an unpredictable and capricious memory based on parts of history that in many cases were false or altered. For example, Greece's heritage and history in Asia Minor was butchered in order to claim its ancient heritage. At the time when the whole of Europe was in a state of mind dedicated to finding its "true" ancestors and justifying its cultural superiority over indigenous cultures, Greece was argued to be the land of ancient superiority, the amalgam of Western civilization. Its people, therefore, could not have any connections with their Ottoman past or local traditions: "what is true may be forgotten. But it is the customary fate of new truths to begin as heresies and to end as superstitions" (Lorenz 1978:5 quoting Huxley 1853). In the nineteenth century in particular, Europe projected historical thought as a compensating function, making up for the lack of history by exaggerating a consciousness of it. "Only in contemplating the past can we find a scale by which we can measure the speed and force of the movement in which we are leaving ourselves" (Troeltsch 1922:8). The particular idea of history as a device for measuring time and motion in the present was a common process.

Nations, Stakeholders, and Memory

The notion of cultural patrimony can be understood only in terms of cultural memory. It is memory and cultural production that make a nation. Nationhood, by definition, is achieved through the homogenous interpretation and placement of cultural objects in a group's collective identity. Although paradoxically UNESCO defines cultural patrimony as both particular and universal, the identity of a nation is signified based on its cultural patrimony—both tangible and intangible. The displacement of the visual image of a cultural object disrupts the collective memory of identity, as in the case of the Parthenon Marbles. Continuing this line of argument, the destruction of the cultural record through either pillaging or decay breaks the cultural lineage between the past and the present. The 2002 UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity emphasizes this point: "particular attention must be paid to … the specificity of cultural goods and services which, as vectors of identity, values and meaning, must not be treated as mere commodities or consumer goods." The persistence and insistence of the British Museum to keep the marbles on display treats them as cultural objects of commodification rather than as cultural testimonies of the past and the present of national identity.

In a similar vein, for centuries museums around the world have gathered material culture from various cultures and excavated, accessioned, catalogued, interpreted, and displayed these artifacts. Yet, until recently, these same museums have made

very few attempts, if any, to include native or source peoples in that process. The dismissive treatment of national descent has fueled the assertion of cultural hegemony over artifacts. Just as the Greeks seek the return of the Parthenon's marbles, Africans petition for the return of the Benin bronzes, Hungarians seek the return of the Crown of St. Stephen, and Egypt pushes for the return of the Rosetta Stone and bust of Nefertiti.

The idea of "reverse archaeology" might lead in more profitable directions when considering repatriation. Reverse archaeology seeks the return and reinstitution of artifacts to their original sites just as "reverse anthropology" should collect and use ethnographic data in order to share it with native peoples and help future generations to understand and value their native language and customs. Museums should work with natives and locals in a spirit of mutual co-operation and education. Repatriation is an open dialogue, the acceptance of rights and long-standing traditions for the formation of identities. It should not be considered as a doctrine, an imposed factual discipline of superiority, or an institutional colonization.

The act of institutional colonization on the part of the British Museum inherently characterizes Greeks as inferior and incapable to safeguard cultural heritage. This claim is false. Greece is now actively committed to limit antiquity theft. An example is the recent return (in February 2008) of two life-size headless marble statues of Artemis and Apollo from the archaeological area of Butrint, Albania, which were found in the possession of looters in Athens. At the hand-over ceremony, Michalis Liapis, ex-Greek Minister of Culture, emphasized that Greece's co-operation with Albania demonstrated Greece's commitment against art trafficking and that Greece has reinforced its campaign for the return of ancient artifacts from museums and private collections around the world that were illegally acquired. The Butrint return followed the very successful return of five classical pieces in July 2003 by Prof. Zachos, ephor for the province of Ioannina (*Athens News Agency* 2008). Greece, along with Italy, Portugal, and Spain, has ratified the 1970 UNESCO Convention for the Protection of Antiquities and the Illicit Trafficking of Antiquities, as it is a country with rich archaeological heritage and suffers from illegal export. The repatriation of cultural heritage should be understood as an issue of cultural continuity and survival, not a theme of financial dispute.

The Parthenon has been and will continue to be a site of memory. The Greeks as well as the universal community sees not only the Parthenon as the architectural and artistic epitome of the classical Greek past but also the continuation and "living use" of the Parthenon as a monument in a post-modern context within the urban fabric of modern Greece. The Parthenon in the context of modern Greece is a historical monument that does not so much emphasize the nationalistic identity and self-perception of the Greeks but rather reinforces their existential pride and cultural identity. Monuments in their original setting represent "institutes of memory" where the natives and the international community can learn, appreciate, and pass on traditions and cultural idioms to future generations.

The New Acropolis Museum

The New Acropolis Museum has been designed by Bernard Tschumi and Michael Fotiadis (Fig. 7.1). The symbolism of the creation of the New Acropolis Museum is evident in both the exterior façade (Fig. 7.2) and the interior design. Tschumi's (2009a) design concepts of light, movement, and tectonics reveal the contemporary architectural praxis with the conceptual clarity of ancient Greek buildings. Set a few meters across from the original site of the Parthenon, the upper galleries of the new museum offer the direct interplay between old and new, as the Acropolis is mirrored on the main façade of the new museum (Fig. 7.3). It represents a new architectural identity based on the reflective interplay between exterior and interior. Although the interior signifies the historicity based on the archaeological record of ancient Greece, the exterior carries the ancient narrative to contemporary times and re-introduces Greece to a post-modern dialogue of the New Modern Greek identity (Fig. 7.4). The new museum addresses the relationship between cultural identity constructions (culture and heritage) and the significance of local, municipal, regional, and national agencies, as manifested in political and cultural institutions, such as museums.

The built environment, in particular, can be decoded as a way in which the different component parts of spatial identity, while still recognizable in their particular iconographies and materials, can be synthesized into a single, "hybrid" image. The museum becomes the hybrid space where aesthetics, architecture, and sculpture

Fig. 7.1 The New Acropolis Museum. The actual shape of the museum mimics the shape and location of the Parthenon on the Acropolis Hill. (Photo: Vasiliki Kynourgiopoulou)

Fig. 7.2 The New Acropolis Museum entrance. (Photo: Vasiliki Kynourgiopoulou)

blend in a post-modern context and create a dynamic narrative of the process of discovery. This discovery is based not only on a new architectural praxis that seeks to engage with the ancient Greek landscape but also on a new dynamic Greek identity that represents Greece as capable of ensuring the protection of its ancient monuments in the museum context. Greece opens the dialogue for a post-modern role of museums, not as static institutions of collecting, but as dynamic places of multiple identities.

The Parthenon Gallery of the museum opens out into a vast space, where the siting of the marbles visually coincides with their original siting on the Acropolis. The open space areas and glass façades in the museum further engage the viewer in a journey through history from the open-air archaeological excavations outside the museum to the most sensitive and protected items in it. The transparent sections throughout the museum allow the visitor to be in constant contact with archaeology, not in a static setting but surrounded by modern and contemporary buildings. As Tschumi explains,

> The top is the rectangular Parthenon Gallery around an outdoor court. The characteristics of its glass enclosure provide ideal light for sculpture, in direct view to and from the reference point of the Acropolis. The Parthenon marbles will be visible for the Acropolis above. The enclosure is designed so as to protect the sculptures and visitors against excess heat and light. The orientation of the marbles, which will be exactly as at the Parthenon, and their

Fig. 7.3 The reflection of the Parthenon on the main gallery of the Parthenon sculptures in the New Acropolis Museum. (Photo: Vasiliki Kynourgiopoulou)

> siting will provide an appropriate context for understanding the accomplishments of the Parthenon complex itself. (2009b)

The complexity of the design treats the sculptures in an almost anthropomorphic sense, as they are considered valuable for understanding the accomplishments of the Parthenon complex itself.

Prospects

Part of the polarization between Greeks and the British Museum stems from a lack of co-operation. Is the case of the Parthenon Marbles one of stewardship or ownership? Where do we draw the line between a systematic approach for the protection of antiquities and self-appointed decision-making that excludes the "other"? In the words of Paul Theroux, "Greece itself is a cut-price theme park of broken marble, where the visitor is harangued in a high-minded way about Ancient Greek culture, while some swarthy little person picks your pocket" (Theroux 1995:324–325). Continuous co-operation between British and Greek curatorship should be promoted, rather than claims of protective ownership.

Greece's claim for repatriation is based on the symbolic value and understanding of the Parthenon, which is now mutilated without the marbles. The British

Fig. 7.4 The architecture of the New Acropolis Museum blends with neoclassical buildings and ancient Greek ones. (Photo: Vasiliki Kynourgiopoulou)

Museum's dismissal of the claim for repatriation touches upon the dismissal of the opinion of the British public who increasingly seem in favor of the return of the Parthenon Marbles. In 1996 the British TV Channel 4 undertook an opinion poll on this matter. It demonstrated over 92% in favor of the return. Additional opinion polls carried out by Market & Opinion Research International, Ltd (MORI) in 1998 and 2002 also showed an increase of those in favor of the return of the marbles to Greece.

The New Acropolis Museum represents the new exhibition praxis and most importantly interprets national patrimony within the timeless context of architectural and cultural exchange. Within the contemporary discourse of repatriation, Modern Greek cultural heritage should be considered part of the common European cultural heritage without excluding its purpose and significance on a national Greek level. The Parthenon Marbles are part of the Greek collective identity and not mere archaeological objects of European scientific interest. Their role in the collective memory and identity of the Greeks should be acknowledged. The discourse on repatriation therefore is not only one of the return of cultural objects to their countries of origin but one of the re-examination of institutional colonial and imperialistic image-making in the twenty-first century.

So where does an artifact rightfully belong? Is there a moral imperative for cultural patrimony to be returned to their countries of origin despite the legality or

illegality of acquisition? Or should artifacts that have been legally removed from their countries of origin be viewed as cultural ambassadors that promote understanding between people? Recent archaeological study (Pyburn 1998) has shown that the difference between archaeologists and living people is more economic than cultural. Western archaeology operates on the basis of subjective methods of scientific research. An example is archaeology's comparison of the West and the East or "Orient" in terms of cultural production and upkeep. Western cultural institutions are self-regarded as the true keepers of knowledge and scientific thought. Archaeology is complicit in regarding Modern Greece as the product of Europe, delinking it from the ancient past and thereby masking nationalistic sentiments through colonial superiority. From that perspective, any claims of a Greek hybrid dynamic identity bridging the past and the present are considered disproportionate.

True collaboration requires that we not only listen carefully to what stakeholders tell us but also understand that no museum is in a position to act as a "scientific academy" that decides the interpretation, display, and right of ownership of the marbles while it considers the natives as "ignorant locals." Globalization can indeed fuel the politics of nationalism; it also, however, promotes cultural respect and understanding.

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Chapter 8
Syrian National Museums: Regional Politics and the Imagined Community

Kari A. Zobler

Introduction

Syria became a sovereign nation in 1946 after a long period of colonization by the Ottoman Empire and France. Europe carved up the former Ottoman Empire by imposing new and relatively arbitrary national borders (through the Sykes–Picot agreement crafted by France) that largely ignored the region's myriad ethnic groups and complex political landscape. This had a lasting legacy. Modern Syria encompasses members of diverse political, ethnic, and religious affiliations who share common ground, but not the same cultural background.

Despite Syria's long history of exploitation and occupation by foreign powers, many of which arrogated to themselves the right to control and recast the region's proud past for their own ends, the Syrian nation-state has continued to refashion its national identity using its cultural patrimony, while tolerating vestiges of the colonial era. On the front lines, archaeologists uncover the material remains of Syria's ancient inhabitants, but once these objects leave the trenches they are re-contextualized in museums.

Postcolonial Syria inherited a national museum system originated by nationalist intellectuals and later manipulated by the French in order to solidify its fledgling authority, as well as justify its cumbersome borders. These museums were refashioned to promote Syrian identity and cast off the colonial yoke, though the process is still ongoing as they reconcile political independence with the vestiges of a colonial system and lack of financial resources. The different stories of Syrian identity that Syria's museums relate through the re-contextualization of the past provide an excellent case study for examining the construction of local communities within a national shared heritage in a relatively new nation-state. Thus, Syria provides an ideal case for examining the appropriation of heritage in building community cohesion and national legitimization.

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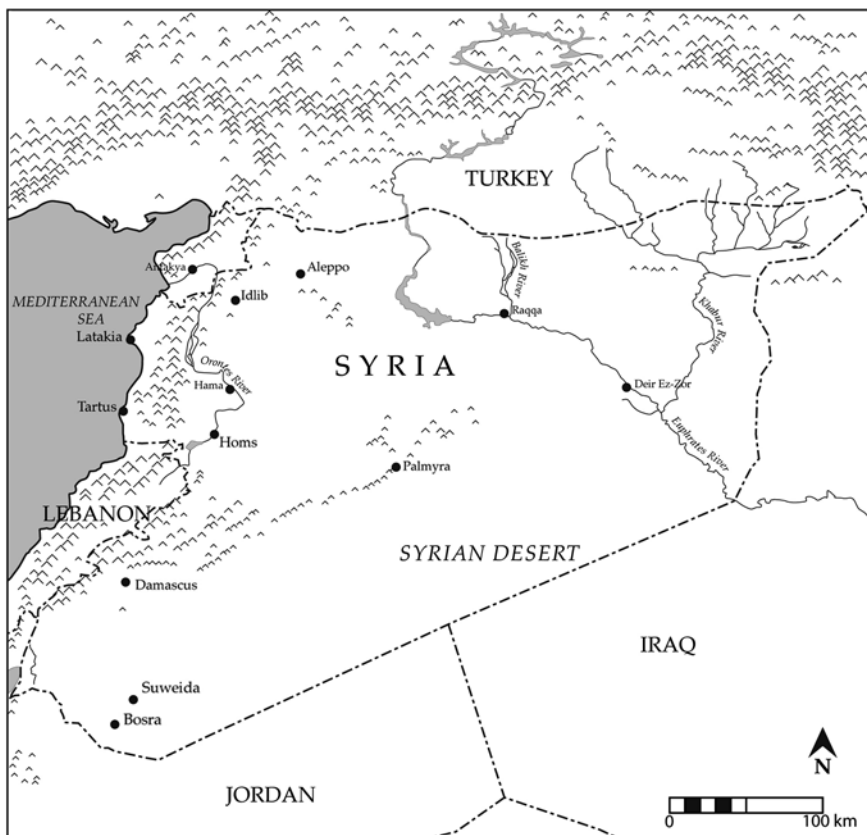
Fig. 8.1 Map of Syria showing the locations of national museums. (Kari Zobler)

Whereas foreign expeditions once exported Syria's antiquities to fill the museums of the Ottoman Empire, Europe, and the USA, now the Syrian National Museum network safeguards and exhibits the nation's archaeological collections (Fig. 8.1). Although these institutions are administered by a single government entity—the Directorate-General of Antiquities and Museums—and draw from the same cultural patrimony, the museums portray unique visions of Syrian identity and heritage. In this chapter, I examine the construction of community and national identity in Syria through the museum system in a multi-scalar approach, examining three museums, each occupying a different hierarchical level in the Syrian museum system in terms of bureaucratic authority, the tourist industry, and resource base. The museums are the *National Museum of Damascus*, representing the official narrative of the capital and the only museum in this study located in the southern part of the country; the *National Museum of Aleppo*, which represents a significant northern center and regional perspective; and the *Raqqa Museum*, which is a small provincial institution in north-central Syria at the confluence of the Euphrates and Balikh Rivers.

Collecting the Past: Theoretical Underpinnings
for Understanding Syria

The Near East has long occupied the Western imagination (Said 1978). Western merchants, missionaries, tourists, archaeologists, and adventurers have journeyed to the region in search of an exotic "other" and the Biblical origins of their own identity. Many have explicitly sought an authentic experience, and much of the modern tourist market has been predicated on providing it. In this regard, modern museums are one of the primary mechanisms for adroitly repackaging heritage to meet patterns of consumption (Hobsbawm 1983; Hooper-Greenhill 1992), national agendas, and regional politics. Virtually outside this process, archaeologists uncover the material remains of past cultures, but rarely consider the subsequent re-contextualization of these artifacts in the modern eye and tourist market. This disjunction is especially acute in the Syrian museum system.

The desire to collect is a familiar part of ancient and modern life, allowing us to grasp the material manifestations of memory (Baudrillard 1996; Pearce 1992). In Near Eastern antiquity, heirloom items were often reused and kings kept collections of their forefathers. Nabonidus, the king of Babylon, like other kings before him, commissioned excavations to investigate earlier buildings and recover antiquities. Spolia (re-appropriated architectural elements) were frequently incorporated into later structures for political and ideological aims (Brenk 1987; Shaw 2003:36), and theft of iconic objects was a source of conflict, such as the removal of cult statues by conquering armies. In 1595 B.C., Mursilis I, the Hittite king, stole the cult statue of the god Marduk from its cult center at Babylon during a military campaign and brought it to his own capital. The return of this statue by a Kassite king of Babylonia was considered a major achievement, although subsequent conquerors of Babylon would also take the statue as a symbol of their domination. Collection implies ownership and universal dominion over the lands from which objects originate (Barringer and Flynn 1998). The exhibition or occlusion of collected material draws on a public consciousness of the past and our relationship with it in the present.

While the desire to collect has long existed, the museumization of the past in the Middle East has been a more recent phenomenon, linked to the Ottoman expansion and developments in Europe. By the late nineteenth century, museums already had a long history in Europe, acting as sources of national pride representing the antiquity of the region's cultural heritage, the legitimacy of the modern state, and in some instances, evidence of a nation's imperial scope (Duncan and Wallach 2004). The modern museum was born at the Louvre following the French Revolution, which represented the first public museum in which communal ownership and identity were emphasized (McClellan 1994). Occupation of Syria by the Ottoman Empire, which was influenced by European museums, created a climate of familiarity in Syria with European museum practice at the turn of the twentieth century. As a colonial holding of the French during the Mandate following World War I, Syria was heavily influenced by French museology.

With the birth of the Syrian nation-state, political boundaries were codified under a single government whose mission was to legitimize its own position both domestically and abroad by creating a sense of community cohesion around a shared cultural heritage (Lowenthal 1994). Anderson (1983) has demonstrated that the concept of the bounded nation-state is a modern political aberration that presented significant problems for group cohesion in an artificially constructed region with diverse ethnic, religious, and linguistic groups. Thus, the new government of the Syrian Arab Republic developed a strategy for community cohesion that would transcend diversity. One strategy was co-option of the past and manipulation of the presentation of heritage so as to create a sense of shared identity in the "imagined community" of the nation-state. Syrian national museums became the keepers of the material evidence of this cohesion, built on a shared past and landscape.

Museums are legitimizing spaces for the production of knowledge, in which they shape the information presented just as they frame the objects themselves (Hooper-Greenhill 1992). As the official authority on the production of knowledge and keepers of the past, museums function as disciplinary spaces in which particular narratives are emphasized. By experiencing the narrative presented in a national museum, the public is inculcated into the nation-state through a "ritual of citizenship" (Duncan 1995). The power of the modern museum and its manipulation by the nation-state has been termed the "exhibitionary complex" by Tony Bennett, who sees the increasingly public nature of museums and antiquity display and their accompanying representation as forming "vehicles for inscribing and broadcasting messages of power . . . throughout society" (1995:333). Thus, the museum became poised as the ideological vehicle for identity creation and community cohesion of the modern nation-state.

The Birth of the Syrian Arab Republic and the National Museum of Damascus

Damascus is one of the world's oldest cities, founded in approximately 9000 B.C. (Burns 2005; Pitard 1987). It has served as an important Roman trading center, the Umayyad imperial capital, the burial place of Saladin, and the political seat of a French colony. Today, Damascus is the capital of the Syrian Arab Republic and a thriving cosmopolitan city with a population of over four million people. The palimpsest of occupation, competing interests, and architectural achievement present in Damascus represents, in microcosm, changes occurring throughout the region over millennia.

The French occupation of Syria arose out of a desire for the national prestige of colonial holdings in the imperial era following World War I, as well as competing economic interests with Britain [Note 1]. The Mandate (1918–1946) was essentially a military occupation that was incredibly costly and never entirely effective (Fieldhouse 2006). It is in this climate that the national museum system arose, and through which it survived to contribute to the formation of Syrian identity within a colonial, and then liberated, discourse.

Fig. 8.2 Photograph of the courtyard of the *Madrasa al 'Adiliya*, following its 1919 restoration. (Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford)

The National Museum of Damascus has long been a Syrian cultural institution producing identity through the archaeological past. It is located near the banks of the Barada River, across from the Ottoman monument of Al-Takiyya Sulaymaniya in the heart of downtown Damascus. Its present location was chosen to house the material based on the exigencies of exhibiting a pre-existing collection amassed by the Arab Academy (*al-majma'al-'ilmi al-'arabi*) at the turn of the twentieth century, first displayed in the *Madrasa al 'Adiliya* in the Bab al-Barid (Fig. 8.2). This collection was created with donations from the local community and first curated by Amir Ja'far 'Abd al-Qadir, who was a former student of the École du Louvre (Watenpaugh 2004:93). The collection focused on Islamic material, reflecting the organization's mission to exhibit ancient and historic Syrian culture as a means for combating the ideological intrusion of Ottoman imperialism, which was viewed as manifestly and intentionally deleterious to Arab identity. Until this time, significant archaeological finds in Syria were removed to Constantinople by the Ottoman state (Faraj al-Ush et al. 1999; Shaw 2003; Watenpaugh 2004).

The original collection of the Arab Academy, which was amassed in 1919, focused on material from the Islamic period, highlighting these and other more ancient artifacts in three rooms of the *madrasa*. Islamic material filled the central dome, while pre-Islamic material and the offices and library of the Arab Academy occupied the remaining two rooms. The Arab Academy formed part of the nationalist movement during this period, collecting in a time of brief Syrian independence under a reluctant King Faysal's United Syrian Kingdom (1918–1920),

which included Lebanon and Palestine. The group's collection focused on Islamic unity in Syria in an era characterized by recovery from Ottoman occupation and resistance to French interests.

The French solidified their colonial presence in Syria during the Mandate (1918–1946). The French colonial policy was intent on maintaining political and ethnic distinctions between the people and territories of Syria and Lebanon in an effort to effect better overall control of "la Syrie intégrale" (Fieldhouse 2006). The French holdings in Syria were split into five separate "states," centered on Damascus, Aleppo, Homs, Hama, and Alexandretta. Damascus and Aleppo were fused into the single state of Syria in 1925, and Alexandretta was ceded to Turkey in 1939. The majority of governance by the French High Commissioner and the ministries was carried out in Beirut, while the rest of Syria was left to a thin veneer of local control with French "advisors." By the terms of the Mandate, France was required to relinquish direct control of the region by April 1926, having provided the infrastructure for a viable local government, similar to the British agreement with Iraq of 1930. The French were, however, reluctant to do so and the drafting and ratification of a new constitution languished for years after the deadline.

Control of the Arab Academy collection shifted to the Ministry of Public Instruction of Syria through decrees made by the High Commissioner in 1926 and 1928, yet the collection continued to be housed at the *madrasa*. With the creation of the *Service des Antiquités* around 1920, national museums in Damascus and Aleppo were formalized. Transference of the Damascus Museum under French administration was part of the larger move to seemingly create the infrastructure for a new nation-state, while simultaneously undermining that effort. The French authorities were also likely interested in containing nationalist organizations that displayed evidence of the region's rich history, as they were simultaneously coping with the Great Rebellion of 1925–1927. Even in the official Damascus Museum guide that was published in the 1960s, the High Commissioner's decree of May 8, 1928, which effectively shifted control of the collection by placing the Arab Academy under French direction, portrays this action as an "emancipation" which led to the "prodigious development" of the museum (Abdul-Hak n.d.:2).

During the 1920s and early 1930s, many new archaeological sites were discovered and excavations commenced—including large-scale excavations at Palmyra, Mari, Dura Europus, and the Qasr al-Hayr al Gharbi—to document past glories and to add to the museum's collection (Abdul-Hak n.d.; Faraj al-Ush 1999). Much of the materials from these early excavations were split between the Syrian museums and the Louvre. Although the Louvre was already full of antiquities from centuries of colonial expansion in the Middle East, there was an increased sense of urgency because of restricted excavation regulations in nearby Turkey and British Iraq, which encouraged many British and American archaeologists to shift their attentions to Syria, where antiquities export laws were far more favorable to the imperial powers (Goode 2007:206–210).

Once the wealth of Syrian antiquities was realized, it became clear that the original *madrasa* was spatially inadequate to house the National Museum of Damascus and a new building was planned for construction. The Ministry of

Religious Endowments, which had been controlled by the French since 1923–1924 (Fieldhouse 2006:261), was assigned the task of identifying a suitable location for the new museum, and two delegates were sent to France to study European museological practice (Issa 2007:16). In 1936, construction began on a new National Museum designed by Michel Écochard specifically to house the existing collection and newly excavated material (Watenpaugh 2004:196). In an effort to amass even more materials, French authorities expropriated antiquities from the regional collection in Aleppo dating to the Classical and Islamic eras. What little prehistoric material the Damascus Museum contained was sent to Aleppo, which was designated the official museum for all objects dating before 500 B.C. (Abdul-Hak n.d.). The new policy favored Damascus in the balance of antiquities, and neglected Aleppo, which had suffered much under the Ottoman regime's policy of expropriating antiquities. Aleppo was one of the only viable options for expropriation by the French, however, since it boasted its own small collection and was one of the few regions of French Syria still under full control of the Mandate, as many other regions, such as those of the Druze and Alawites, had seceded. During the same year, negotiations were held between the Bloc Party of Syria (a popular nationalist, yet French collaborative group) and the French government in Paris to settle the terms of Syrian independence, still anathema to the French.

The French intended to use the new museum as a means to engender cohesion around a collaborative, more secularized national icon—marginalizing the Islamic period and the inherent political and religious overtones. While its original installation betrays its purpose as an Arab nationalist tool by using Islam as a key ideational parameter, the new museum under the French sought to "balance" the Syrian past by highlighting Hellenistic and Byzantine material. The French invoked past colonization and foreign occupation as an ex post facto justification and legitimization of their own colonial venture—it was an inexorable, recurrent, and beneficial historical pattern. They also sought to dilute Arab nationalist agendas, accentuating the diversity of Syria's past by de-emphasizing religious or ethnic commonalities.

The original plan of the two-story Damascus Museum included a hall, two exhibition galleries, four other rooms, and an administrative section (Faraj al-Ush 1999). The upper floor consisted of three rooms. In 1952, the administrative offices were moved to the second floor; artifacts from newly excavated sites in the north (such as Mari, Ugarit, and Raqqa) were displayed in the vacated area. A new, three-story section was added to the museum in 1953 to exhibit modern art and Islamic antiquities, and a Department of Islamic-Arab Antiquities was officially created in 1954. A new west wing opened in 1961, which included a gallery, three halls, and a lecture space, partially to house the recently donated Damascene Hall (see below). Prehistoric materials were exhibited on a temporary basis until their permanent inclusion in the museum in 2004 (al-Moadin et al. 2006).

Although Damascus is teeming with historic buildings—the Ottomans and Umayyads having left a particularly significant mark on the urban landscape—the national museum was installed in a modern, newly constructed building, placed across from an important Ottoman monument. The Damascus Museum was a significantly more modern setting than the original Ayyubid *madrasa*, which served

as a traditional center of learning and cultural shorthand for the production of knowledge.

In order to anchor its place as the national authority on the Syrian past, the new museum sought to authenticate itself by adopting the façades of older structures. The synagogue of Dura Europus, the nation's oldest synagogue dating to the Roman period, was excavated in 1922 and the murals were partially reconstructed within the museum in a special wing built for its inclusion (Faraj al-Ush et al. 1999). The next planned addition was of the Hypogeum of Yarhai from Palmyra, which was excavated in 1934 and emphasizes a foreign presence in ancient Syria (Faraj al-Ush et al. 1999). As international politics shifted and excavations continued, there was a renewed interest in the Islamic era in the installment of façades. The front entrance received the columned façade of the Qasr al-Hayr al Gharbi, greeting the visitor with a decidedly Islamic identity (Fig. 8.3). The palace façade, which had been excavated in 1939, was completely installed by 1950. Within the museum, a room of a traditional Damascene house was reconstructed, showcasing the wood paneling and traditional inlay of eighteenth-century Islamic architecture (Fig. 8.4). This room façade, donated to the museum in 1958 by Jamil Mardam Bey, Syria's prime minister, was a portion of his historic home that had escaped damage by French strike planes (Issa 2007:106) during the last violent throes for independence at the close of the Mandate. Its placement in the museum showcases not only national pride in the Islamic past, but also suggests divine favor in the struggle against the French and growing nationalist sentiment.

Fig. 8.3 Front entrance of the National Museum of Damascus with the façade of the Qasr al-Hayr al Gharbi. (Photo: Kari Zobler)

Fig. 8.4 Interior of the
Damascene Hall in the
National Museum of
Damascus. (Photo: Kari
Zobler)

Although the French had a clear plan for the new museum, the institution
gradually took on the more nationalist approach of the Bloc Party, later the
Nationalist Party, which maintained increased control as World War II loomed and
French military resources were diverted elsewhere (Fieldhouse 2006:270). Although
direct control of Syria by the French effectively ended in 1941, the Mandate offi-
cially wore on until 1946 (Fieldhouse 2006:275–277). The museum was completed
4 years after the official end of the Mandate, opening in 1950, and was placed under
the direction of the newly formed Directorate-General of Antiquities and Museums
around 1952. A guide to the museum was printed in 1952 for its first major exhi-
bition, explaining the collection and some of the state-sponsored archaeological
excavations (Directorate-General of Antiquities and Museums 1952).

The departure of the French signaled a shift in the museum's focus to again high-
light the Islamic past, though objects from all periods of Syrian history are included.
Classical and Byzantine material forms the second main focus of the museum.
While excavation of these Hellenistic sites may have begun as a French strategy

for diffusion of the Syrian Islamic past, the continued presence of the material in the museum indicates a strategy of inclusion for Western cultural elements. Since the museum itself is a Western concept, nationalists in the newly formed Syrian government sought to present Syria on the global stage with a diverse heritage, familiar to foreign powers and tourists alike.

In the years following its opening, the National Museum of Damascus has grown to almost four times its original size, with major additions in 1953, 1963, 1974, and 2004 (al-Moadin et al. 2006:3). The museum also has altered its organization, though it has retained the same general focus with the exception of the reintroduction of pre-Islamic antiquities. It is primarily divided into five sections following a chronological scheme: Prehistoric, Ancient Orient, Greco-Roman and Byzantine, Islamic, and Modern Art (al-Moadin et al. 2006; Issa 2007). The museum does not address more recent political history, such as the French Mandate or the rise of the Ba'th Party. Artifacts are displayed within these general headings, which function more as a didactic device for publications than as a suggested path for viewing the museum, though the visitor is encouraged to begin with the prehistoric material in the Concise Guide (Faraj al-Ush et al. 1999:8). Rooms and vitrines are generally organized by excavation site, but the overall script is one of unity. In addition to the five main departments, the museum also includes a sculpture garden, a café, and gift shop.

Attendance at the museum is mixed between foreign tourists and locals, with separate entrance fees, though foreigners seem to make up the majority of the institution's patronage. Signage is inconsistent and is frequently in English and/or Arabic, though its inconsistencies make it difficult for either locals or tourists to interact with the exhibits on a more profound level. Older metal plaques detailing the origins of the contents of each room as well as museum policies are in French and Arabic, betraying the building's inception as a French colonial institution (Fig. 8.5). The official language of the office of the Directorate-General of Antiquities and Museums is still French.

Increased outreach to the local population and changing Syrian political alliances are slowly attaining visibility within the museum. A new educational center recently opened (in 2007–2008) near the museum's entrance, allowing children the opportunity to write in cuneiform, make clay figurines, and conduct their own mock archaeological excavations. The intent is to more fully involve local school children in their ancient past, which is infrequently mentioned in primary school textbooks, which focus on Islamic heritage. Syria's positive diplomatic relationship with China is also becoming apparent, with Chinese cultural festivals occurring on the grounds of the museum and temporary exhibits planned around the theme of Chinese culture.

Perhaps the impetus for some of the museum's recent community outreach activities stems from a new agreement between Italy and the Syrian Arab Republic that is intended to overhaul the museum system, with special focus on Damascus. A new initiative for the "Renovation and Reorganization of the National Museum of Damascus and Rehabilitation of the Citadel of Damascus" was signed between the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Directorate-General of Antiquities and Museums of the Syrian Ministry of Culture on November 24, 2004 in Damascus

Fig. 8.5 Entrance plaque outside the National Museum of Damascus. (Photo: Kari Zobler)

(a similar agreement with the Idlib Regional Museum was signed in 2005). The project, begun in February 2007, is scheduled to last for 3 years. The plan includes a mandate for increased community involvement, specialized training for the Directorate-General staff, new museological guidelines, a heritage database and increased outreach to archaeological sites, updated storage and exhibition equipment, and a complete re-design of the permanent exhibitions. The proposed exhibition changes are planned to be tested on the Classical section and are targeted toward modernization of the displays and improved text panels.

The National Museum of Damascus' mission is to represent Syrian culture from a singular national perspective, irrespective of regional differences, both ancient and modern. The museum invokes the authenticity of the Syrian past in a unified form to justify modern cohesion under originally colonial borders, encompassing diverse ethnic and religious populations. The authentic Syria is manifested through the collection of artifacts from across the national territory, which are repackaged in the museum for tourist audiences and the "imagined community" of the nation-state.

Regional Museums and the Renegotiation of Identity

The National Museum of Damascus does not operate in isolation, but in a network of approximately 30 Syrian museums administered by the Directorate-General of Antiquities and Museums. Although all museums in the Syrian national system rely on the same pool of archaeological resources, each exhibits a distinct narrative of

the Syrian past. Whereas Damascus presents the image of a unified Syria, provincial museums in the north focus on regional achievement and ancient autonomy, independent of the cultural accomplishments of the south. This regional focus is due largely to historical circumstances, which include both ancient rivalries and modern politics. Two additional case studies illustrate the disjuncture between the museological script of the National Museum of Damascus in comparison to its regional counterparts. The National Museum in Aleppo and the Raqqa Museum offer two alternate narratives of Syrian heritage, presenting distinctly northern perspectives on Syrian identity.

The National Museum of Aleppo: Northern Identity and Ancient Autonomy

Aleppo, located in northwestern Syria, rivals Damascus as one of the world's oldest continually occupied cities. It boasts a rich and varied history of strategic importance as a trade center, political outpost, and contact zone between the Hellenistic sphere of the Mediterranean, Anatolia, and Mesopotamia, positioning it as an important center for the negotiation of Syrian identity. Aleppo has long rivaled Damascus in trade and as the preeminent seat of political power. Today, this bustling provincial capital is home to more than one and a half million residents. It boasts a vibrant tourist economy centered on the Islamic ruins of the Aleppo Citadel and the famed covered *souq*, and balances urban expansion with a UNESCO-recognized historic city center.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Aleppo was home to its own local intellectual club dedicated to the scholarly study of the past, the Archaeological Society (*Jam'iyyat al-'Adiyyat*), which was founded in 1931 by Kamil al-Ghazzi, a local historian who became the group's president (Watenpaugh 2004:194). Unlike the Arab Academy of Damascus, which was formed in response to Ottoman occupation, the Aleppo academics' collection was amassed during an era of French collaboration, and was first curated by a Frenchman, Georges Ploix de Rotrou, who was part of the society. The collection was first housed in the home of the High Commissioner's representative, which was located near the now famous Baron Hotel (Watenpaugh 2004:194).

At the beginning of the Mandate, French policy makers desired to divide Syria into five separate "states" as a means to pacify multiple ethnic groups, which were easier to administer separately than as a single entity united under Arab nationalism. Aleppo would have become the capital of one of these, achieving its long-standing goal of political distinction from Damascus. A large government facility was built in the Sharia al-Maari area at the center of town to serve as the nerve center for the intended secession. When the Mandate ended and these plans were still not fully realized, the building became the National Museum of Aleppo (Saouaf 1958:6). The contents of the museum were assembled from the previously orphaned Archaeological Society collection (now including many replicas), and the museum aligned its focus accordingly.

When the national museum system was institutionalized under the French Mandate's *Service des Antiquités*, the Aleppo collection was reorganized. The institutionalization of Syria's museums meant that objects could be relocated to other locations, regardless of their region of origin. Such was the case in Aleppo, which sent many of its objects dating after 500 B.C. to the National Museum of Damascus (Abdul-Hak n.d.; Saouaf 1958). While some detailed copies were made to replace the requisitioned objects in Aleppo, most of the originals were removed to Damascus to bolster their museum collection in preparation for the new museum facility.

Although the Aleppo Museum houses many of the same antiquities as Damascus, especially since so much of the original holdings were replicated, the museum's focus is decidedly prehistoric. The museum focuses on excavated materials from the entire north of Syria, including the Aleppo and Raqqa Provinces, including prehistoric, pre-Islamic, Hellenistic, and Islamic material.

The design of the Aleppo Museum building is reminiscent of a Byzantine palace, with a central courtyard and three stories of surrounding rooms. The façade of the building is a replica of the Tell Halaf/Guzana portico (Fig. 8.6). Thus, the building mimics a palace both in façade and internal structure. The original government purpose for the building is appropriate for the invocation of ancient icons of authority. It is interesting that the National Museums in Damascus and Aleppo both employ

Fig. 8.6 Front entrance of the National Museum of Aleppo, featuring a façade replica of the Tell Halaf/Guzana portico. (Photo: Kari Zobler)

Fig. 8.7 Prehistoric gallery on the first floor of the National Museum of Aleppo. (Photo: Kari Zobler)

palace façades to mark their entrances, illustrating the importance of the museum as a cultural institution. It is telling that the Damascus Museum, which focuses on shared Islamic identity, is faced with an Islamic palace, while the Aleppo Museum, which emphasizes local antiquity, chose a northern palace of the pre-Islamic era.

The three-story museum is currently undergoing renovations, but the exhibit organization has remained much the same. The bottom floor consists of prehistoric and pre-Islamic antiquities arranged chronologically and secondarily by site of origin (Fig. 8.7). Exhibits are a mixture of museum displays and project-based displays, with varying degree in the quality of presentation. The second floor is occupied by office space. The third floor, which is only partially open for exhibition and is in a continuing state of renovation, exhibits Classical and Byzantine material as well as a small, closed Islamic section. The architectural message of the museum is clear: the later achievements of foreign colonists and the Islamic unity emphasized by the south are supported (literally and figuratively) on the firm foundation of the prehistoric and pre-Islamic past, particularly in the north.

While Damascus seeks to unify all of Syria under one national banner, and thus emphasizes presumably shared aspects of heritage such as Islam, the Aleppo Museum presents itself as a survey of the north alone. It emphasizes the material dealing with Aleppo's antiquity and early cultural diversity in the north, with little mention of southern archaeological materials or cultures. While this focus began as a mandate from the French controlled museum system, its continuation has become

part of a modern strategy. The unifying force of Islam presented so strongly in the Damascus Museum is not even open to the public of the Aleppo Museum. The ideological implications are manifest: national identity is subordinate to regional identity.

The Raqqa Museum: Modest Resources, Limitless Future

Raqqa (or Ar-Raqqa) is a small but growing regional city (population of just under 200,000) located in a remote section of the *jezireh* in northern Syria, at the confluence of the Balikh and Euphrates Rivers. The environmental advantages of the region have been recognized for millennia, as evidenced by nearby Tell Bī'a and the prehistoric Tell Zeydan.

Established by the Seleucids in the third century B.C., and rumored to have been founded by Alexander the Great, the Hellenistic city of Raqqa, named Kallinokos, functioned as a trading outpost for much of antiquity [Note 2]. It was conquered by ʹIyād ibn Ghanim in the seventh century A.D. and renamed ar-Raqqa, during which time it served a strategic function between the regions of modern Syria, Iraq, and Turkey. Under the Umayyads, the town remained relatively small, but was agriculturally prosperous. A fortified garrison was built by the Abbasids in 771–772 A.D. west of the city, establishing an Abbasid presence in northern Syria and functioning as an outpost against Byzantium. The garrison town expanded to the north and was named al-Rāfiqa, which functioned in tandem with Raqqa. In 796–797 A.D., the city gained fame as government capital and summer retreat for Hārūn al-Rashīd, though the majority of imperial administration remained in Baghdad. The city served as an important checkpoint for inland travel and trading along the Euphrates from Baghdad. After the death of Hārūn al-Rashīd, Raqqa declined in regional importance and was ruled by Bedouin. It enjoyed a brief florescence under the Ayyubids before being destroyed by invading Mongols in the thirteenth century. In the sixteenth century, the Ottomans designated Raqqa as a police post within the newly created province of Raqqa, but administration still remained in Edessa (modern Urfa), Turkey. Foreign Bedouin populations from the Arabian Peninsula moved into this region during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, altering the balance of power with regard to the sedentary tribal population, the *shawai'a*, who already lived there [Note 3].

When the French Mandate began as the Ottomans vacated, the city of Raqqa remained part of Raqqa Province, but was no longer tied to Turkey. While under Mandate, Syria was generally split into five "states," the *jezireh*, including Raqqa, was administered directly by France at Deir ez-Zor. Raqqa's remote position during the Mandate briefly improved its political position, when because of its distance from the new seat of power, the Bedouin of the province briefly declared independence from the French and set up their own administration. Within 15 months, however, the French had regained control of the region.

Soon after the end of the Mandate, Raqqa underwent a demographic shift, as a significant population of Syrians from the eastern town of Deir ez-Zor migrated to

the city. The migration was partially brought on by increased economic opportunity in Raqqa because of cotton cultivation, which had been introduced to the area in the 1940s. With the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, cotton prices soared, which spurred further cultivation. Due to the influx of new residents, Raqqa expanded quickly and urbanized, which created an even sharper divide between townspeople (who were cultivating the cotton) and Bedouins. Since many of Raqqa's more influential inhabitants still trace their families back to Deir ez-Zor, ethnic tensions have mounted between populations. Raqqa was made the official seat of Raqqa Province by the Syrian government in 1961, and expansion continued in the area as a result of the Tabqa Dam Project, spurring increased economic growth and many archaeological salvage excavations.

The Raqqa Museum serves as a valuable cohesive entity, exhibiting the shared past associated with the land and territory of Raqqa Province more than any particular ethnos. Located in a modest, two-story Mandate-period building in the heart of the provincial center (Fig. 8.8), the museum collection, installed in 1982, in what was formerly the police headquarters, includes pre-Islamic, Classical, and Islamic material from al-Rāfiqa. As in Aleppo, many of the best pieces excavated in Raqqa Province were sent to Damascus to augment the capital museum. Additionally, Raqqa has the added hindrance of much of its remaining material being usurped by Aleppo, which asserted cultural dominance over the north during the Mandate.

Fig. 8.8 Exterior of the Raqqa Museum. (Photo: Kari Zobler)

Fig. 8.9 First floor interior of the Raqqa Museum. (Photo: Kari Zobler)

Thus, although the province of Raqqa is rich in archaeological heritage, much of the finest material is sent to either the Aleppo or Damascus Museums.

The museum is organized chronologically, with pre-Islamic and Classical material occupying the bottom floor (Fig. 8.9), as well as the administrative office of the museum, while the second floor is comprised of Islamic material from excavations at al-Rāfiqa. Due to limitations in exhibition space, which the collection has long outgrown, much of what is held by the museum is occluded in storage facilities. Many of the displays have been organized by individual excavations in the province, and thus the quality of information and the language of presentation vary widely.

Although it was an important trading-post between Bedouin and townspeople, Raqqa proper does not have the same antiquity as the much larger centers of Aleppo or Damascus. The mélange of ethnic groups and subsistence economies of the province, which are exemplified in the city center, evidence the limits of a shared communal past on which to draw. The museum, therefore, chooses to focus on the future of the province, rather than its past. Nowhere is this ethic of development more emphasized in Raqqa than on the museum's main floor, where a detailed model of the future Raqqa Museum is encased in glass (Fig. 8.10). Over 15,000 square meters of land along the Euphrates River has been designated as the appropriate site for the new museum, in a new part of the city that includes widened, modern streets and an athletic stadium. The proposed construction would vastly

Fig. 8.10 Model of the future Raqqa Museum. (Photo: Kari Zobler)

increase exhibit space in an entirely new facility, providing a point of pride for the community. Today, much of the museum's holdings remain in storage awaiting construction of the new edifice. It has been more than 15 years since this model was first proposed, yet no new facility has materialized. The future of the museum and its collection has become so entrenched in the Raqqa Museum discourse of regional identity through progress that the model itself has been "museumized" and is encased in its own exhibition glass.

Thus, the Raqqa Museum does not focus on the region's antiquity (as does Aleppo) or its ideological cohesion under Islam (as in Damascus), but instead emphasizes future growth and development, reflecting the economic changes of recent decades. A clear sense of shared identity and community cohesion is created through emphasis on the future prospects of the region, rather than its tangled past. With a uniquely regional focus, Raqqa's presentation of the Syrian past portrays present concerns and a vision for the future.

The Future of Syrian Museums

Syrian museums continue to cope with the vestiges of a colonial system in terms of hierarchy and collection, while selectively reshaping it to address current situations. Thus, although each museum draws from the same heritage and is administered by

the same office and all communicate through a Western medium, each museum in the Syrian system presents a unique past, creating distinct formulations of Syrian identity. The National Museum of Damascus narrates a script of a united Syria based on past glories and modern cosmopolitan inclusivity. The National Museum of Aleppo portrays Syria as ancient, with the history of the north providing the roots of its legitimacy. The Raqqa Museum generates a script of progress and modernity, with an interest in the past but hopes clearly directed toward the future.

The established hierarchies between different scales of museums and their current trading partners directly relate to available resources and to each museum's ability to form a cohesive presentation of the past. During the Mandate, the French shaped Syrian heritage in the museum to portray a diverse Syria with Western emphasis. During the post-Mandate nationalist era, these priorities were gradually realigned, especially in major centers like Damascus, so as to center on an ostensibly shared Islamic identity. While this focus again privileged a particular population in an increasingly cosmopolitan nation, decision-making was autonomous. The politically powerful will always maintain a strong role in defining heritage, though in the museum identity is built through visitor consensus. With the increased partnering of the Directorate-General of Antiquities and Museums with foreign nations, such as the museum reorganization agreement signed with Italy, it will be interesting to see how representations of Syrian identity are further restructured along with the exhibits themselves. Further analysis may illustrate whether this new era of collaboration signals the dawn of a broadening museological discourse, or a return to foreign identity construction mirroring the colonial system.

One way Syrians may continue to reclaim their identity in the museum is through the incorporation of spolia. As the traditional form of heritage appropriation, spoliation transmits a conventionalized ideological message by incorporating the physical remnants of another structure—re-contextualizing tangible and intangible aspects of heritage. In fact, the museums of Damascus and Aleppo incorporated spolia during the waning years of the Mandate and its immediate aftermath, representing a re-appropriation of the museum as a local institution. In an interesting reversal, not only are spolia being incorporated into museums, but the historic structures that formerly housed them are becoming museum objects themselves. Like museum objects, these architectural elements lend authenticity and historical legitimacy to the modern edifices. This is a powerful statement on the authority of the new museum system.

The future role of Syrian museums in defining national and regional identity will be a great one. Although in other Middle Eastern countries the museum has been regarded as an emblem of national pride and a means through which to experience citizenship, Syria's museums have, until recently, been more concerned with asserting national identity on the global stage and communicating provincial identity internally, rather than serving as the means for heritage introspection. Perhaps future exhibits will address more contemporary socio-political conditions as well as continue the shift toward community outreach, which has already begun. The ongoing contestation of Syrian cultural heritage in the national museum system highlights its significance in identity construction and community cohesion. Syrian identity

will continue to be renegotiated, and national museums at all levels will remain significant forces in that process.

Notes

1. For an in-depth historical overview of the French Mandate Period and post-Mandate nationalist fervor, see, e.g., Goode (2007), Khoury (1987), Longrigg (1972).
2. For a comprehensive treatment of the Classical and Islamic periods of Raqqa, see Heidemann (2006).
3. For a summary of Raqqa's history from the Ottoman period to the present, see Lewis (1987) and Rabo (1986).

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Chapter 9
Contestation from the Top: Fascism in the Realm of Culture and Italy's Conception of the Past

Alvaro Higueras

We have made Italy, now we have to make Italians.

(Massimo d'Azeglio, 1798–1866)

It is from Italy that we launch into the world our manifesto of overwhelming and incendiary violence with which today we found Futurism, because we wish to free this country from its foul gangrene of teachers, archaeologists, tour guides and antique dealers.

(Marinetti *1909*)

Nature . . . is the eternal past of our eternal present, the iron necessity of the past in the absolute freedom of the present. And beholding this nature, man in his spiritual life recovers the whole power of the mind and recognizes the infinite responsibility which lies in the use he makes of it.

(Gentile *1922*:252)

The glories of the past [to] be surpassed by the glories of the future.

(Epigraph on the columnar gate,
Museo della Civiltà Romana,
EUR, Rome, 1937)

Introduction

In this chapter I review the evolution in the valuation of cultural heritage in Italy from the formation of the kingdom to the fascist period, a time span from 1860 to 1945. This time span is punctuated in the early twentieth century by nascent philosophies and new approaches to heritage born from claims by Italian intellectuals. In this analysis three periods are considered: (1) the birth of the kingdom of Italy

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and liberal politics (1860–1910) (first epigraph above); (2) the philosophies brewing in Italy (1910–1922) (second epigraph above); and (3) fascism and the imperial re-creation under Mussolini (1922–1943) (third and fourth epigraphs above).

Valuing Cultural Heritage

The discussion of how the past and cultural heritage are valued during the lifespan of the kingdom of Italy is central to this chapter. This case serves to show that there can be very different readings and uses of the rich past and heritage such as the one in Rome and Italy. More specifically, I will pinpoint here sources for contestation—drives not always emanating from a dominated and disadvantaged minority (e.g., Ross 2007). The facts related to the uses of the past reflect the vibrancy and dynamics of the new fascist regime in contrast to the liberal yet traditional politics of the kingdom in its making of the Italian nation and nationality. In the first quote, made at the very formation of the kingdom of Italy in 1860, d'Azeglio states that a new Italian identity had to be constructed as the backbone of the new congregation of very diverse peoples under one king. My objective is to gauge the achieved "improvements" in the city in relation to heritage rather than the existence of nationalism in the realm of cultural heritage policies in each period (see below).

In contrast to the liberal period that inaugurates the history of Italy, the fascist period is a complete novelty in the European and Italian political spectrum. The contestation started by the trend of futurism prepares for the surprisingly easy acceptance of fascism in the country. The 1909 futurist manifesto (second quote) proposes an important set of subversive propositions to the cultural sphere of the order established since 1870 with the kingdom of Italy. While it is understood that nationalism was both a political and cultural instrument in the process of unification of the odd territorial polities that controlled the peninsula before 1870, it grew with new steam in the early twentieth century but then dwindled to a non-existent leitmotif in the management of Italian cultural heritage during the late twentieth century.

The city of Rome serves as our sample for this case study. It is the most important archaeological site in the country, as it was the capital of classical Roman society for about 1,000 years. Rome became the seat of the papacy after it lost its capital status in the year 330, and it regained its importance in the sixteenth century as the Popes increased their power and created the Papal States in the peninsula. Finally, as the capital to the new capital of the kingdom of Italy in 1870, Rome is where all the commemorative monuments for the unification and the new urbanization of the twentieth century took place. The projects of creating the new capital amidst the remains of ancient Rome and the spatial relationship between old and new were an underlying factor in the development of the city. But most importantly, the relationship between politics and monuments is critical in reflecting the political trends dominating the country.

While in Rome, it is difficult not to be very surprised by the conspicuous architectural remnants of the liberal *and* fascist periods: megalomaniac monuments like the *Vittoriano* in the very central Piazza Venezia built in 1900 to honor Vittorio Emmanuelle II reflect the liberal period, and square-like buildings surrounding

classical monuments belong to the fascist period. These monuments epitomize the momentum both political periods enjoyed: Italy celebrating the king of Savoy who became king of Italy, and Mussolini making sure to inscribe every new building he built. Both periods left a strong mark in the city, but the first was dedicated to building a capital for the new kingdom while the second, with a more intrusive strategy, concentrated on markers for the new empire. Many features in the city witness the fascist period: numerous wall inscriptions still bear references to Benito Mussolini and obelisks and symbols of fasces on administration and sports buildings. Italy has had little reckoning with the consequences of fascism, at least in the material arena of fascist tangible heritage.

Using the Nationalism Card

Italian culture is rich and diverse and based on distinct regional traditions. The unification process and nationalism in their romantic shades were the key to the convergence of these traditions. Nationalism is an important concept in discussions that involve government policies or major revolutionary processes. However, for our present discussion nationalism is not useful to distinguish the two periods concerned: both liberal and fascist periods are embedded in a wave of nationalism, albeit with different results (see Adamson 1989:254). They conceived the classical past in distinct manners and materialized the coexistence of modern and ancient and the role of the classical past in the sphere of cultural heritage in very different ways.

Kohl and Fawcett acknowledge that not all nationalist trends in history are negative: "Like any form of archaeology, a responsible nationalist archaeology refuses to blur the distinctions between race, language and culture and denies the purity or biological superiority of any culture over any another" (1995:18). It is sensible to agree on this, however rare these non-chauvinistic nationalist policies might be. One of those rare situations is nationalism in Italy, which only later through fascism tended to bring out the worst facets of nationalist policies (not necessarily related to cultural heritage) [Note 1].

Nationalism was a crucial idea in the inception of the new Italian nation in 1860. It first had a political importance by creating a unified state from very conflicting and distinct polities dominating the peninsula. Then, from the very start of the kingdom of Italy, there emerged a radically new way of managing the cultural heritage only in part inherited from the pre-1870 political setting. In the case of Rome, Italy inherited all the lands and properties privately owned and exploited by the Papal State. After a strong period of nationalism on heritage came the fascist use of it. As said above, nationalism is today of minimal importance in the management of the rich cultural heritage in possession of the Italian State. Regionalism and local empowerment trends have changed the way heritage is managed in the country, while still having the national heritage institution in charge of supervision tasks.

In both periods of this analysis nationalism written large will be central in heritage policy making (see Guidi 1996). They correspond to the definition Kohl and Fawcett favor: "all forms of nationalism are social constructions of reality, they are 'imagined communities,' subconsciously fashioned and/or consciously invented and

manipulated by social groups" (Kohl and Fawcett 1995:14). The creation of Italy is a very convincing example of this definition. Hobsbawm (1992) argues in this vein that states or nationalist politicians may, in fact, make nations, but they cannot totally make them up. It should be obvious that one could not have constructed mid to late nineteenth-century Italians out of cultural traditions other than peninsular.

The advent of nationalism and the creation of Italy implied a strong change in the land property system, if not in the property of antiquities, in the policies of property of monuments and artifacts, and in the way the rich Roman underground was explored. From an archaeological point of view, this implies a change from making holes in the ancient *Orti* (gardens) of the city, or opening tumuli in Etruscan lands, to the systematic excavation of archaeological sites such as the Forum or the Palatine hill in the center of Rome, and, as Rome became the new capital, a dense urban expansion and the consequent discoveries below the surface.

Finally, it would seem contradictory that the first period we treat here is named *liberal* while it has a strong nationalistic foundation. In normal situations, liberalism and nationalism are opposites within a political scenario. Beiner (1999:167) thinks that "Nationalists in nineteenth-century Italy wanted to unify previously independent regions; nationalism was an expansive, cosmopolitanizing force." In other words, the aim was to be an inclusive process that needed to amalgamate very different peoples. Adamson (1989) is less convinced about viewing nationalism as an ingredient in the post-unification decades as he thinks it shed many features from its original unification-bound political agenda. Gentile suggests (2003:ix) that the leaders of the new Italy renounced "overt and aggressive" nationalism after the "revivalist" regional nationalisms that fueled the unification process. After renouncing this kind of nationalism, they concentrated on "internal unity and development." This is the crux of the first decades of the new Italy: leaders were aiming at an overarching nationalism rather than encouraging local ones.

Ancient Heritage and Origins of Interest in the Classical Heritage

The present analysis starts with the advent of the new kingdom of Italy. Thus, we concentrate on a polity that is embedded in a strong nationalistic spree in its dealings with its new heritage and the past. This new state encompassed each of the several states that had settled the Italian Peninsula: the Papal States, the kingdom of Naples, and the Austrian provinces in Italy. It is only in the new kingdom that nationalism is the driving force in the task of building the new unitary polity. This new process results in a more academic approach to the preservation of classical architecture and monuments with the launch of serious management and study of antiquities.

The interest in heritage and monuments predates the formation of the Italian State. A history of management of classical antiquities starts in the mid-fifteenth century with the discovery of underground riches in the city and hinterland of Rome controlled by the Papal States. *Orti* or gardens in private hands were sacked for statues and classic artifacts. Those riches were collected and displayed in the Vatican

and Capitoline museums or in private collections in Rome. Two centuries later, the discovery of Pompeii and Herculaneum was a crucial event, with the start of excavations under the auspices of Charles III Bourbon, King of Naples. The archaeological strategy at these sites consisted in the detachment of central motifs in murals and their display in the Naples museum.

Contestation from the Top

Fascism is the main political actor in this chapter. Fascism represents a case of contestation mechanism emanating from a democratically elected government. Benito Mussolini won the elections in 1922 and, sensing the hesitation of the King to invite him to form a government, promoted the "March to Rome." It was Mussolini's first and successful attack on the established order. The context for such contestation was not entirely negative: Italy had emerged victorious from World War I and had been granted domination of the Istria Peninsula (and some islands in the Aegean Sea). Once in power, fascism would launch attacks in different phases against the stagnated yet nationally-oriented political establishment: it attacked the liberal, yet nationalistic, governments that seem to have lost steam, or as Adamson (1989:425) suggests, it never really made an impact in the making of the country.

The Philosophies at the Birth of Fascism

There were two contrasting new cultural waves or philosophies at the birth of fascism: *Attualismo* and *Futurismo*, blooming at the beginning of the twentieth century and intended to be an overarching, abrupt change in the way history was treated in the country. They had consequent impact in the realm of Italian cultural heritage. While their *material* impact on cultural heritage may be limited (the latter will rather thrive in art), their proposals will be put into practice by the establishment of the new fascist society starting in 1922 as they intend to challenge the traditional perspectives on the past. Their principles are essential for the *valuation* of heritage during the fascist era. The two philosophers at the origin of both currents, Giovanni Gentile and Filippo Marinetti, respectively, became central figures in the fascist government of Mussolini, as a new breed of active philosophers entrenched in the materialization of their ideas.

Our understanding of the two of the introductory quotes, because of the intricacies of philosophical analysis, is uneven. There is really no difficulty to understand Marinetti's aims and his appreciation of the academics dealing with Italy's heritage in the second quote. However, once part of the government, he was hardly to be as radical as his thoughts suggest. On the contrary, the third quote that refers to the philosophical current of Actualism, as Gentile's idealism is named, requires our recourse to the literature on the topic. Both lines of thought supported the new and popular political alternative of fascism.

Attualismo

Claudio Fogu leads the research on the close relationship between Gentile's thinking and the fascist political system. Fogu (2003:198) suggests that "the Italian victory in the Great War had proven that all 'history belongs to the present' of consciousness and is therefore 'entirely immanent in the act of its construction'." Fogu says that Gentile called for a new political subject that would orient itself toward this actualist vision of historical action, representation, and consciousness. Fascism responded to that call organizing its vision of history around a basic actualist principle: history belongs to the present.

Fogu (2006) underlines that it is a process in which fascism is a *historic* agent, supported by deeply rooted "Latin-Catholic rhetorical signification of presence that had sustained the development of Italian visual culture for centuries," and that not only made history, but also made it present to mass consciousness and "appealed to masses and intellectuals" (Fogu 2006:17).

In his particular take on the past, Mussolini and his exultation of the classical Roman heritage led to the grand aim of improving on the past. This improvement occurred not only in the material realm with new buildings that enhanced the past but that were clearly meant to surpass it; there was also an "imperial" sphere, in the physical re-creation of the new empire with conquests in the Balkans and Africa.

Futurismo

The *Manifesto Futurista* was published in Italy by Filippo Marinetti in 1909. This document was extremely explicit in accusing the faults of a stagnant liberal society which had settled into the aims of its original Romantic ideas of nationalism and the idea of a unified country. It also was aimed at raising issues that, as in this case, related especially to the state of cultural heritage in Italy, or more precisely how the past is viewed and considered in a society. In this case the contestation wish was quite strong as it explicitly stated, and eventually Marinetti would lead his contestation from within the new government of Mussolini.

Futurismo is the trend that condemns the wave of liberal thinking that had led culture and politics of the kingdom (conversi 2009). Fogu suggests that the "crisis of liberalism" was quintessentially cultural, and that the "new politics" of fascism dipped their roots in the multifaceted fabric of a modernist cultural front that had denounced the moralistic and optimistic view of associated evolutionary modernization (Fogu 2006:4).

Evolution in the Management of Cultural Heritage

Nationalist policies often use archaeological heritage to launch programs aimed at defining the origins of new nations, or establishing the foundations of new systems, or re-creating ancient times, with little care for the details of the changing processes

since those "glorified" and emulated times. This was true in the liberal as well as the fascist periods under consideration here.

As the new kingdom of Italy formed and Rome became its capital, there was a high interest in upgrading the status of classical monuments and integrating them as part of the new city. The Pope as the bishop and de facto mayor of the city had given little interest to the classical monuments in their original setting, ordering many haphazard improvements to the city. The Egyptian obelisks and marble bath tubs found during looting-like sprees in Roman villas and baths are set in the squares of Rome. All these ancient objects were subject to consecration under the crosses of the Christian church. Then there were the Napoleonic projects of the early nineteenth century aimed at improving spots of the city important to the Emperor, such as Piazza del Popolo and the area of Trajan's column.

First Phase: Liberal Period and the Integration of Past Landscapes

A new chapter of the management of the heritage of Rome started shortly after the declaration of the city as the capital of Italy. The first ideas of managing heritage in the new Italy started in the creation of an "official" space named Central Archaeological Area of Rome (CAAR). The CAAR is the expanse comprising the Roman Forum, the Imperial Fora, the Colosseum, the Circus Maximus, and a sizeable buffer zone surrounding these monuments. At the time of the creation of the kingdom, most of the CAAR was hidden under medieval city blocks, by private gardens, as in the case of the Palatine, and under a thick soil deposit from centuries of abandonment. The preservation of this area with a high concentration of classical monuments would contrast with the strong expansion of new neighborhoods for new living quarters, within the third-century city walls, or with the works of the embankment of the Tiber River, that allowed the discovery of a wide array of archaeological remains which would then start filling the new National museums. There was, overall, a subtle integration with the classical monuments, a balance that would only be changed with the building of the Vittoriano, the largest white marble monument in Rome, in 1900, to commemorate the King of Italy, located at one end of the CAAR, next to the Imperial Fora.

Before the serious excavations of the Roman Forum and the Palatine Hill started in the early twentieth century, the *Piano di Sistematizzazione della Zona Monumentale Riservata di Roma* (Management Plan for the Reserved Monumental Area of Rome) for CAAR was planned from 1887 as an archaeological park enhancing heritage preservation as well as recreational purposes in the heart of the city. While it does not include the Imperial Fora, which is densely built over (1 in Fig. 9.1), it included large expanses of green areas on the Circus Maximus (2 in Fig. 9.1) and the surroundings of the Baths of Caracalla (3 in Fig. 9.1). This *Piano* is not a Master Plan (or *Piano Regolatore Generale, PRG*) strictly speaking. It is, rather, an important attempt to safeguard a potentially rich archaeological area. A large part of it, as within the area of the Imperial Fora, was covered by buildings constructed over the ancient Roman walls serving as foundations and a considerable
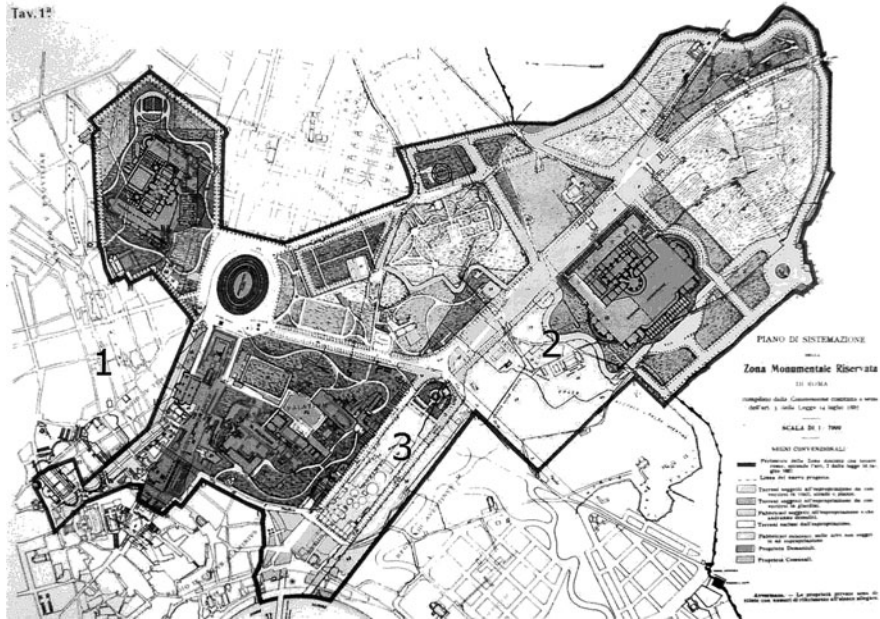
Fig. 9.1 The central archaeological area of Rome, as conceived by Fiorelli as an archaeological park in 1887. *1*: Fori Imperiali; *2*: Circus Maximus; *3*: Baths of Caracalla (Benevolo 1988:26–27)

layer of soil deposition resulted from the abandonment of many of these areas through time. In other words, at this point in time there were few attempts to urbanize the area: it became the historical center of the city around which were developed new quarters and avenues.

There were quite a few PRGs in the twentieth century. A feature common to all the plans is that the large archaeological park, after the initial plan of 1887, will gradually lose its central status in the heritage management process. The plan of 1887 was utopian in that it failed to foresee the future development needs of Rome, namely the building of streets and avenues. So the following PRGs start viewing the area as an important crossroads in the expansion of the city with the building of wider avenues and the demolition of many blocks of the original city. This process had its major occurrence during the fascism period with the building of *via dell'Impero* linking the Colosseum and Piazza Venezia, and hence joining two halves of the city.

The PRG's plans were always shady when addressing the degree of intervention in the space of the CAAR. The tendency is that the 1887 plan is preserved only in its very core and the following plans contemplate improvements in its limiting areas, reducing the green areas and "buffer" zone to the monuments. The first large avenues built in the city tended to reach the boundaries of the archaeological area without crossing it. However, soon they would be impinging constantly on the heritage of the area. Overall, the CAAR is a very static but significant free space in the heart of

Rome in the first phase. But it stands in such an important setting that this situation changed radically in the second phase.

Second Phase: Fascist Remodeling of the Classical Landscapes

A second phase in the project for managing the heritage in the CAAR area started soon after Mussolini became head of the government. The objective from 1923 on was to start a decade-long project that would transform the city, once again, into the capital of the newly "named" empire. This was achieved through great works that definitely destroyed the idea of the CAAR, taking, then, the shape of wide avenues, adequate for large parades, a classic feature of fascism.

This is the period of the *sventramenti* or "gutting" of the city: the demolition of dozens of blocks of houses, churches, and buildings erected in the period from the thirteenth to eighteenth century. Thus was achieved the extension of the avenues of Rome to reach the CAAR, which became a crucial area for communications in the city. The main axis of Rome was to be *via dell'Impero* (today's *via dei Fori Imperiali)*, opened in 1933 after the removal of part of a hill (Fig. 9.2). This "destructive" spree also allowed the paving of streets surrounding the Colosseum (with the razing of a few Roman monuments and inhabited buildings). In the decades that followed, any changes to the initial status of this crucial artery were minimal given, first, the high importance of the avenue for fascist society and, second, the post-World War II economy of the city. However, on the positive side, the gutting

Fig. 9.2 Removal of the Velia Hill for the construction of via *dell'Impero* 1932 (Archivio Storico Istituto Luce)

of more than a dozen city blocks allowed the pursuit of more serious excavations, especially in the area of the Markets of Trajan and the Fora of Augustus and Nerva. These works little affected the ancient structures on this side of the CAAR, in contrast to the remains surrounding the Colosseum. In their way, with the addition of the restoration of the Senate of Rome to its original interior features (removing the baroque decoration of the church that occupied it), these works allowed the integration of ancient remains into the city after centuries of being covered. These excavations occurred at both sides of *via dei Fori Imperiali*, which still stands today over a wide tract, splitting in two the Imperial Fora area. The level of the new avenue still keeps the underground remains protected. No plans are in place to reduce the area of the fascist avenue to a more moderate width so as to pursue the excavations of the fora.

By 1932, when fascism was well consolidated, Mussolini started his more controversial years of colonization and racial politics. Rome had made great strides in the excavations within the CAAR, such as on the Palatine hill and in the Roman Forum. The strategy of PRGs was then suspended and the development of the city relied on more haphazard but important works, all intent on "gutting" the city—creating wide, imposing avenues in a city that had none, such as the *Via della Conciliazione*, the avenue approaching the Vatican from the river bank, and the new fascist city of EUR (Esposizione Universale Roma, begun in 1935 by Mussolini), the epitome of fascist architecture that then would be reproduced in a smaller scale in the new towns founded in the empire, be it south of Rome in Sabaudia (Caprotti 2007) or in cities of the African colonies, such as Asmara in Eritrea. In the archaeological sphere, excavations in Rome itself as well as in the colonies (Munzi 2001) reflected the interest of Italy in classical Roman heritage. Strong Italian interest in excavation and restoration in Libya, for instance, is a trend that still continues today; Libya itself is not empathetic to Roman sites as part of the country's Islamic cultural heritage.

Fascism and the new policies toward enhancing the concept of a new empire rested on the display of the monuments of classical Rome along the stout and geometric lines of the new fascist buildings. In the capital of Rome the fascist architects had no qualms about creating a hand-to-hand coexistence, or rather, a side-by-side integration of buildings of both periods. That is the case of the awkward juxtaposition of the mausoleum of Augustus surrounded by fascist-style buildings with the characteristic friezes and inscriptions. Mussolini removed the concert hall of Rome that used the funerary vault of the emperor. Unfortunately, at some point in the twentieth century the monument fell into disrepair. When Mussolini had the idea of making a new city, he created from scratch the EUR neighborhood, some 15 km south of the CAAR.

While I have concentrated here on the urban changes introduced by fascism amidst the CAAR, the politics of the reviving a sense of *Romanità* ("romanness"; see Stone 1999; Visser 1992) is heavily supported by the opening of large museums that gathered a broad sample of the architectural achievements of classical Roman society. This situation contrasts with the high art/low didactics of the Vatican and Capitoline museums at the time. This is the case of the plaster-cast holdings of the Museo della Civiltà Romana in the EUR which displays scale-size plaster casts of

arches, gates, aqueducts, and other monuments from every region of the empire. The museum had mostly a didactic function in both periods of our analysis, but it added on a major role of propaganda to celebrate the 2,000 years of Augustus' birth in 1937, during Mussolini's watch, not unlike the propaganda that promoted the rule of the same Augustus (see Arthurs 2007).

Final Comments

In this brief essay I have underlined the particular way the rise and establishment of fascism and its new approach to gauging the past correspond to a process of political contestation. This phenomenon, emanating from a solid power base, is contestation from an official establishment side. This process materializes in a more vigorous, hands-on intervention in the realm of classical Rome in contrast to policies that aimed at treating heritage in a romantic, less politically exploited fashion.

The power base of fascism grew at a fast pace in its aim to grab political power, turning rapidly from a minority into a major player in Italian politics and taking power in 1922. Once in government, fascism thrived on changing the romantic and liberal ideals and moral structure of the existing kingdom of Italy, born a mere 50 years earlier. Those ideals were the structured on the liberal political thinking of the nineteenth century and did not attempt to use the Roman past as a vehicle for the construction and empowerment of the new society. Fascism sought to renew the ideals of Italian society with a very different consideration and appropriation of the classical past. It aimed to improve the past, using classical Rome as a model to better the society proposed since the unification. That project ultimately failed as the new fascist empire shrank during World War II and fascism and the monarchy were abolished after 1945.

In the realm of the management of cultural heritage and monuments, the differences between our two periods lie in the transition from a "pacific coexistence" toward an "active involvement" in the role of archeological heritage within civil society and daily life. In the fascist period excavations were accompanied by restoration and then were followed by impingement of the archeological zones, showing the involvement of politics in the new constructions of the city.

This example of a government contesting the traditional perceptions and uses of the past is not unique to Italian fascism. However, the difference in Italy's case is that fascist politics tweaked and improved on tendencies already existing, but that had had a small, secondary role in the political discourse and pragmatic decisions of the first government of the kingdom of Italy.

Note

1. Oddly enough, and on a related note, I sense that current difficult times for cultural heritage in Italy are, in part, determined by the inexistence of those grander objectives of nationalist ideas in current policies.

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Chapter 10
Touring the Slave Route: Inaccurate Authenticities in Bénin, West Africa

Timothy R. Landry

> *[The Slave Route] is for everyone. Not just Africans or African-Americans . . . the Slave Route is a world heritage—anyone who wants to take the time can come here and learn about our history.*
>
> (statement by Béninois tour guide, interviewed July 2008)

Social Constructions of Memory

French essayist Jean Améry is often quoted as saying, "No one can become what he cannot find in his memories" (1996:84). Indeed, people often find that their *sense of being* is connected to the people and events they recall from their individual and collective pasts. And the numerous, often political ways that memory and cultural heritage are performed on the social landscape can often lead to varying degrees of contestation between social actors. These somewhat messy social exchanges have occupied the careers of many scholars in fields such as anthropology, sociology, and psychology, to name a few. Whether we understand memory and its relationship to cultural heritage to be about shared collective experiences (Halbwachs 1992), embodied performances (Stoller 1995), or the products of habitual action (Bourdieu 1977; Connerton 1989), it is tempting to invoke habitus (Bourdieu 1977) in an effort to explain the ways that collective memory retains its social efficacy over time and across generations. Nevertheless, habitus fails to provide us with the necessary tools to examine the meaning behind processes of creative and embodied remembering. Reacting against habitus as a sufficient model for exploring memory (see Farnell 2000), I find it more useful to interpret processes of meaning-making, especially as it relates to memory and remembered performances, as embodied *action*. For me, memory, like many other aspects of culture, is best appreciated as a creative and

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dynamically embodied phenomenon that allows for expressive, performative, and active rememberings.

This perspective is aptly illustrated in the context of the "Black Atlantic." As Gilroy (1993) has shown, people on both sides of the Atlantic actively remember the trans-Atlantic slave trade in many innovative ways. Across the former slave coast in West Africa, sites such as the *Maison des Esclaves* of Goreé Island in Sénégal, Elmina Castle in Ghana, and the Slave Route in Bénin (Fig. 10.1) have drawn particular attention from scholars interested in Africa's slaving past, as well as from tour agencies that market tours designed for African American tourists who travel to Africa on a "pilgrimage" to explore their cultural heritage through "roots tourism" (see Bruner 2005a; Ebron 2002).

Unlike Ghana and to a lesser extent Sénégal, slave tourism to Bénin is still in its infancy. This is partly because international tourists were discouraged from traveling to Bénin under the rule (1972–1991) of the Marxist-Leninist dictator Mathew Kérékou. But due to popular discontent surrounding Kérékou's military government, a national conference was established in February 1990, resulting in the formation of a democratic Béninois government. Kérékou peacefully transferred

Fig. 10.1 "The Slave Route," Ouidah, Bénin. (Photo: Timothy R. Landry, December 2006)

the leadership of Bénin to the new, democratically elected government in 1991. Under the leadership of President Nicéphore Soglo, the new government made it their mission to heighten international attention paid to Bénin. Government officials began creatively mobilizing and invoking the nation's past in ways that appealed to the international community, including the tourism industry. Reflecting this shift in Béninois politics, the peoples of Bénin began marketing their past as one of the largest ex-slaving ports in West Africa.

The government anticipated that African Americans, especially, would be interested in "returning home" to Africa so that they might explore their roots vis-à-vis "heritage tourism." With international support, Bénin began using the trans-Atlantic slave trade as its inspiration to implement a tourism campaign that promised to attract tourists with an interest in Bénin's slaving past. Since the birth of the Slave Route project in 1991, many collective memories that focused on Bénin's role in the trans-Atlantic slave trade have become important to the project's success. In particular, a systematic attempt was made to capitalize on the historical role played by Ouidah, formerly the largest slaving port in West Africa, in the Atlantic slave trade by placing monuments to the slave trade and its victims along the road from Ouidah to the beach where slaves were once forced onto ships bound for the Americas (Law 2004:2–3).

In addition, to attract tourist monies to Bénin, the government began developing strategies to attract international visitors having an interest in Vodun, a major indigenous religion found in southern Bénin (with versions known as "Vodou" in Haiti and "voodoo" in the Western imagination). Supported by an international awareness of "voodoo," and following the success of Haiti's *négritude* movement that positioned Vodou as both a source of nationalism and an emerging marker of Haitian-ness for Haitians living both in Haiti and in the Haitian diaspora (Largey 2006), Béninois officials saw great potential for Vodun to serve as a catalyst for nationalism. Soglo and his government began working to de-criminalize the practice of Vodun, which had been heavily persecuted by the previous government in an effort to strip local religious leaders of their political power (Joharifard 2005).

Since the development of the Slave Route, many Vodun leaders have become deeply involved in international tourism. Memories of the trans-Atlantic slave trade also have been robustly connected to the development of "National Vodun Day," a national holiday now observed annually on January 10th to celebrate Bénin's indigenous religious diversity. Supporting these governmental ventures, each year the royal palace of Daagbo Hounon, the Supreme Chief of Vodun in Bénin, has become actively involved. Through his involvement, and with the coming of international tourists from around the world, we see multi-layered local and international participation, as well as a blurring of local categories, as contemporary Béninois "Vodun" is elided with and strongly connected to Bénin's slaving past.

When considering complex places of remembering, such as Bénin, it is important to understand that "remembering can use far more than the written word … it can rely on buildings, spaces, monuments, bodies, and patterns of representing self and others" (Birth 2006b:176). Whereas Ghanaian tour groups and government officials have been able to market their past by appealing to African Americans who

wish to learn about the lived experiences of enslaved Africans at Elmina Castle, Bénin's emphasis of historical sites such as the former Portuguese fort and the family compound of Brazilian slave trader Francisco Felix de Souza constitutes a less marketable telling of the former lives of European buyers and African slave traders.

However, despite the material focus on slave sellers and buyers, international tourists and local scripts tend to spotlight the lives of enslaved Africans. While walking the path of the Slave Route, many tourists stop and pause as they contemplate their individual histories. Indeed, on several occasions I watched African American tourists on the beaches of Ouidah weeping as they considered that they might be standing on the same beach where some of their ancestors might have boarded a slave ship bound for the Americas. While a moving and justifiably profound experience for African American tourists, history tells us that it is also unlikely, since slaves sold to foreign buyers from Ouidah went mainly to the province of Bahia in Brazil. In fact, "Brazil is thought to have taken around 60% of all slave exports from the Ouidah region ... relatively few slaves from Ouidah went to the British Caribbean or North America" (Law 2008:12). However, it is unlikely that an African American tourist will hear this from a local tour guide or tour agency.

Instead, when African American tourists travel to Bénin to learn about their ancestral roots, they will probably hear stories and accounts that, while historically inaccurate, thrive in the memories created by local, national, and international agencies. Birth aptly reminds us that "any view of the past in the present cannot be limited by an assumption that the past only serves present needs or is only a creation of present interests" (2006b:180). Such a revisionist model, he argues, "deprives the past of its potentially uncanny, disruptive, and contested presence" (Birth 2006b:180). In an effort to avoid presentism—a model in which one sees the past as functioning only to meet the needs of the present—I maintain that one's relationship with the past is dynamic. The past's vitality became evident as I watched Béninois actively remember while creatively negotiating the ways in which they wish to mobilize their slaving past to meet the needs of broad local and international audiences. In so doing, Béninois actively mobilize their memories in ways that are both socially fruitful and disrupting. The ways in which Béninois and international tourists envision and consume the past have the potential to vary greatly as re-interpretations of past events simultaneously challenge and change the present.

The Slave Route Project

In 1991, in reaction to the impending 500th anniversary of Columbus' arrival in the Americas, Haitian representatives proposed the development of the Slave Route Project. While under the guidance of a new democratically elected president, Nicéphore Soglo, the people of Bénin began working alongside Haiti, and with the help of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), to develop the Slave Route. In 1993, the General Conference of UNESCO approved the project and agreed to partially fund the construction of tangible monuments in Bénin that would clearly demarcate important "stations"

along the Slave Route (UNESCO 2005). Supported by the government of Bénin and UNESCO, the Slave Route Project was officially launched in 1994. As a recent post-Communist country struggling to establish a new identity that was nevertheless rooted in the past, the development of the Slave Route Project and the legitimation of Vodun helped local people attract international tourists from around the globe.

With tourism on the rise from international visitors who desired spiritual experiences, local interest in marketing Vodun grew, and the Slave Route project receded into the background (Araujo 2005). In an effort to save the Slave Route project while still marketing local religion, regional officials and event organizers in Bénin decided to combine the Slave Route project with national strategies designed to attract tourists interested in Vodun. This merger subsequently led to the creation of National Vodun Day, which celebrates Bénin's indigenous religions while simultaneously paying respect to the millions of Africans who died during the trans-Atlantic slave trade. A shift from commemoration to repentance (see Law 2008) is highlighted annually on the morning of January 10th at the start of National Vodun Day, when His Majesty Daagbo Hounon, the Supreme Chief of Vodun in Bénin, performs the ceremonial Walk of Repentance (Fig. 10.2). On this day, Béninois congregate on the beaches of Ouidah to celebrate the nation's indigenous religions, and to make ceremonial retribution to the millions of Africa souls who were sold into

Fig. 10.2 His majesty Daagbo Hounon Tomadjlehoukpon (*center*), the supreme chief of Vodun in Bénin, participating in the walk of repentance on National Vodun Day, Ouidah, Bénin. (Photo: Martine de Souza, January 2006, used with permission)

slavery by former Dahomean kings. The ceremonies are repeated annually, similarly to the ways they were performed for "Ouidah '92, The First International Festival of Vodun Arts and Culture" [Note 1]. These efforts helped President Soglo increase the influx of tourist monies to Bénin, especially to Ouidah. A growing number of expensive European restaurants and plush beach resort hotels are being built in Ouidah and the surrounding areas, attracting more and more tourists who wish to travel to Ouidah to experience Bénin's slaving past and/or rich local religious practices.

Performing the Slave Route

For the average visitor, the Slave Route of Ouidah officially begins at *Singbome*, the former residence of the infamous Portuguese slave trader Francisco "Chacha" Felix de Souza [Note 2]. King Gezo, who reigned as king of Dahomey from 1818 to 1858, thanked de Souza by making him his representative in Ouidah for helping Gezo orchestrate a successful coup d'état against his brother, King Adandozan (ruled 1797–1818), that ended with Gezo forcibly taking the throne of Dahomey in 1818. With de Souza as King Gezo's viceroy (c. 1820–1840), de Souza met with

Fig. 10.3 Wall mural inside the temple of Dagun across the street from Dantissa, Ouidah, Bénin. When asked what the mural depicted I was told by the head Dagun priest that the painting showed Dagun in the form of a serpent resting on a pile of earth coming to Ouidah from Brazil via Francisco Felix de Souza, who is shown here paddling the boat. (Photo: Timothy R. Landry, July 2008)

Fig. 10.4 The principal priest of the vodun Dagun, Ouidah, Bénin. (Photo: Timothy R. Landry, July 2008)

European slave traders on behalf of the king and negotiated the buying of European goods and selling of African slaves. Drawing on their former glory, the historical value as well as the political and economic presence of the de Souza family is still evident in Ouidah today. Just outside the back gate of Francisco de Souza's former residence and the current de Souza family compound stands a large tree, in a sacred site known locally as *Dantissa*. Today this paved street corner is used as a ceremonial center for the serpent spirit Dagun, the de Souza family's personal spirit, which is said to have originated in Brazil and been brought to Ouidah by Francisco Felix de Souza himself (see Guran 2008) (Figs. 10.3 and 10.4). However, according to contemporary oral histories, this same space is also the site from which Francisco de Souza sold slaves to European buyers on behalf of the kingdom of Dahomey.

Imagined as an auction block (Fig. 10.5), and labeled in French as *"la place des enchères"* (the place of auction), Dantissa was probably not an auction block in the classic sense. That is to say, the king's representatives, such as de Souza, more than likely sold slaves for prearranged (not auctioned) prices. Ignoring this fact, tour guides often lead tourists to believe that African sellers auctioned off African slaves to European buyers at the southern entrance to the de Souza family compound.

Fig. 10.5 The "auction block" monument found outside the back entrance of Singbome, the de Souza family compound in Ouidah Bénin. Note the four-story house in the background, which is the current residence of the current "Chacha," the de Souza head of household. (Photo: Timothy R. Landry, December 2006)

Pointing to this matter of history, historian Robin Law reminds us that slaves— at least in Africa—were never sold in open markets (i.e., auctions); instead, they were sold out of the homes of African slave merchants (Law 2004:132). The "auction block" model that is presented in Ouidah is likely fashioned after American and Caribbean images. Because African American tourists are vividly familiar with grotesque images of slave auctions, "the auction block," regardless of its historical inaccuracy, has the capacity to generate strong emotional and visceral reactions from international tourists who travel to Bénin to understand their pasts, thereby adding to the efficacy of the script that is generated by Bénin's *Slave Route*. Indeed, while not historically "authentic," the Slave Route of Ouidah engages actively with authentic imaginings of the ways that Westerners, especially, *believe* or *imagine* the past to have been (Delyser 1999).

    After visiting the "auction block," visitors continue their 3.5-km walk down a dusty rural road that eventually leads to the beach. In addition to the major stops along the way that dominate the public narrative, small statues that were erected for Ouidah '92 to commemorate the former kings of Dahomey and other important figures (such as Amazonian warriors [Note 3] and Vodun spirits) dot the landscape on the way to the beach.

Fig. 10.6 The Tree of Forgetting, Ouidah, Bénin. Sculpture by Béninois artist, Dominique Kouas. (Photo: Timothy R. Landry, December 2006)

After passing two such sculptures, visitors find themselves at the next major stop—the *Tree of Forgetting* (Fig. 10.6). While historians have been unable to support local claims (Law 2004; Rush 2001; Singleton 1999), Béninois people adamantly believe the Tree of Forgetting is the former resting place of a sacred tree that was erected by King Agadja of Abomey (ruled 1708–1732). As told by local tour guides, this tree was the first of two major ceremonial centers where enslaved Africans stopped as they made their way from the "auction block" to the beach where they eventually boarded French and Portuguese slave ships bound for the "New World." Local people believe that millions of people—chained together—walked around the Tree of Forgetting (nine times for men and seven times for women) to ensure that their spirits would forget their real identities and the atrocities that were done to them by "their own people," thus making sure that their spirits would not seek retribution from the African kings in the afterlife. Although it is dramatic, this story is unsubstantiated, as scholars are unable to find historical evidence of the existence of a Tree of Forgetting prior to the creation of the Slave Route in 1993 (see Law 2004).

Halfway to the beach, in the village of Zoungbodji, the script that is produced by the Slave Route takes a notable turn, shifting away from Africa's role in the

trans-Atlantic slave trade and toward a more common narrative that focuses on the lived experience of African slaves. Zoungbodji houses three important stops in Bénin's Slave Route. The first of these places is the alleged former resting place of Zomaï, one of de Souza's slave confinement barracks, also known as a barracoon (Fig. 10.7). Today, tour guides tell visitors that slaves were ushered into the dark enclosure where they waited until they were finally marched to the beach and loaded onto waiting slave ships. While historic records support the existence of private slave holdings around Ouidah, the Zomaï quarter in Ouidah proper is probably "the location of de Souza's stores of gunpowder" (Law 2004:137), and the place known as Zomaï in the village of Zoungbodji is probably the product of creative imaginings, since "the location of a barracoon in Zoungbodji is not corroborated in any contemporary source" (Law 2004:137). Indeed, Law has suggested that the oral histories that surround Zomaï today have "been embellished in the recent quest for 'sites of memory' connected to the slave trade" (2004:137).

Along with Zomaï, the village of Zoungbodji also houses the *Mass Grave Memorial*, where those Africans who died while waiting to board European slave ships were allegedly buried (Fig. 10.8). As art historian Dana Rush explains, "[T]he monument is constructed upon what is believed to be the ancient common grave

Fig. 10.7 Sculpture that marks what has come to be known as the Zomaï Enclosure in Zoungbodji, Bénin. The sculpture by Béninois artist, Dominique Kouas, depicts several faces bearing Fon (two on each cheek, temples, and forehead) and Yoruba (three on each cheek) scarification marks indicating their ethnic membership, highlighting the fact that many different ethnic groups were affected by the slave trade. (Photo: Timothy R. Landry, December 2006)

Fig. 10.8 The mass grave mosaic in Zoungobodji, Bénin, by Béninois artist, Cyprien Tokoudagba. The mosaic depicts African peoples, chained at the neck, walking together as they presumably head for ships bound for the New World. (Photo: Timothy R. Landry, December 2006)

for slaves who died in the Zomaï Enclosure" (2001:43). Marked by a large mosaic depicting bloodied images of African slaves chained together boarding ships bound for the Americas, the monument provides visitors with a tangible place to honor the dead in personally appropriate ways. As with Zomaï, there is no historical evidence to suggest that this is in fact a burial site. Rush writes that "[t]here have been no archaeological excavations to prove or disprove" that the monument serves as a grave marker for hundreds, if not thousands, of slaves who may have died while being housed in the Zomaï enclosure. Although possibly not historically "accurate," both the Zomaï enclosure and the mass grave marker are supported by what one may expect—or imagine—to find in a site designed to remember Africa's slaving past while also attempting to generate the symbolic capital necessary from the international community, most notably the descendants of African slaves, to ask for forgiveness for past atrocities. Lacking the historic slave castles of Ghana (see Bruner 1996), the designers of the Slave Route undoubtedly have used both historical value and creative license to create spaces for international tourists that will potentially invoke feelings of compassion, empathy, and forgiveness.

Nestled in the village of Zoungbodji, the *Tree of Return* (Fig. 10.9) marks the halfway point from Ouidah to the beach. However, unlike the Tree of Forgetting,

Fig. 10.9 The Tree of Return, Zoungbodji, Bénin. The tree in this photo is reported to be the actual tree planted in the nineteenth century by King Agadja of Dahomey. (Photo: Timothy R. Landry, December 2006)

the tree that stands in Zougbodji is said to be the same tree that was planted by King Agadja. The Tree of Return is marked by a cement sculpture by Béninois artist Cyprien Tokoudagba that depicts the forest spirit Aziza. As told by local tour guides, enslaved Africans—while chained together—would walk around this tree three times to make certain that their spirits would return to Africa after death. Unable to retaliate for wrongs done to them, thanks in part to the ritual potency of the Tree of Forgetting, in a contradictory yet evocative gesture, their spirits are guaranteed safe passage back to their homeland because of the Tree of Return.

While the Tree of Return was probably not used ceremoniously by local officials to ensure the spiritual return of Africans who died as a result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the tree "is recorded in contemporary accounts, under the alternative name of 'The Captain's Tree' . . . as the place where arriving European slave-traders were met by the . . . local authorities of Ouidah" (Law 2004:153). Interestingly, the Tree of Return in its former incarnation as *L'Arbre des Capitaines* (The Captain's Tree) has a great deal of documented historical significance as a rendezvous point for African sellers and European buyers of African slaves. This history, however, is not the one told by local tour guides. Nevertheless, while logistically impossible and historically unproven (see Law 2004; Rush 2001), the story told to tourists provides them (especially African Americans) with exaggerated yet palatable images of Bénin's involvement in its slaving past.

After visiting the village of Zoungbodji, visitors continue the last half of their long walk to the beach. After walking for nearly an hour, one can finally see the *Door of No Return* (Fig. 10.10) in the distance, emerging from the horizon on Bénin's sandy shoreline. Bearing UNESCO's seal, the Door of No Return, designed and built by Béninois artist Fortuné Bandeira, is the only official monument associated with the Slave Route Project as established by UNESCO and the government of Bénin. Symbolic of the actual space where millions of Africans boarded European

Fig. 10.10 The Door of No Return, Ouidah, Bénin. Designed and decorated by Fortuna Banderia. The door of no return remains the only official monument of the Slave Route. (Photo: Timothy R. Landry, July 2008)

ships, never to return to Africa, this impressive monument has become an icon for Bénin's tourism industry and is rapidly becoming a dominant symbol, invoked by people all over the country as a mark of national pride. Each year on January 10th the Door of No Return becomes the central backdrop for National Vodun Day (Figs. 10.11 and 10.12), as thousands of Béninois and international tourists join to congregate at the beach to pay their respect to local spirits and to the millions of people who died during the Atlantic slave trade.

In December 2006, I walked Ouidah's Slave Route for the first time with a group of American university students. Our tour guide reminded us that the road on which we were walking was the same road that millions of enslaved Africans followed as they made their way to the beach, where they eventually boarded French and Portuguese slave ships bound for the "New World." Perhaps out of some sort of reverence, I felt compelled to walk the sandy road barefooted. With each step, our tour guide told stories of the past—horrific stories of torture and death. The air was almost tangible with pain as we all contemplated our own personal histories. My family's identity as former slave owners in the American south raced to the forefront of my memory as my personal relationship with Bénin's slaving past loomed heavy on my mind. I felt a sense of guilt that grew as my awareness converged with my family's history. Another student in our group, an African American woman, also became overwhelmed at times, albeit for different reasons. On several occasions she

Fig. 10.11 National Vodun Day, Ouidah, Bénin. Note the door of no return, which serves as the backdrop for the festivities of National Vodun Day each year on January 10th. (Photo: Timothy R. Landry, January 2007)

Fig. 10.12 National Vodun Day celebration along the Slave Route in Ouidah, Bénin, as local people make their way down the dusty road to the beach. (Photo: Martine de Souza, January 2007, used with permission)

stopped to "breathe it all in" and stand on the soil where, she said, her "ancestors may have once stood."

During that first visit to Bénin I wanted to experience the Slave Route with as few academic biases as possible. Therefore, I made a conscious decision not to read any scholarship about the Slave Route prior to the trip. While walking from the site described as the auction block to the beach, our tour guide told many stories and fielded many questions for other visitors that provided us with emotional rememberings of the past. The experience was moving and generated feelings of sadness, guilt, and anger, sometimes all at the same time. After walking the Slave Route for over 2 h and while talking with other American visitors, it became clear to me that the script provided by our Béninois tour guide, coupled with the terrain that was marked by several purposefully constructed monuments, successfully created a space that felt "authentic." The experience created a type of authenticity that was not measurable by a fact-checker or a history book. Rather, for many of the visitors (including myself), the "authenticity" of the Slave Route was generated through dynamically embodied social action (see Varela 2004), including multi-sensorial social experiences that operated alongside of, and in conjunction with, our preconceived imaginings of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

Zoungbodji—Contested Heritage in Local Spaces

When I experienced the Slave Route for the first time in 2006, the village of Zoungbodji had a profound effect on me. As I have already mentioned, the village is home to Zomaï, the alleged former resting place of one of de Souza's barracoons; the Tree of Return, which newly enslaved Africans are said to have circumambulated three times to ensure their spirit's eventual return to Africa; and the Mass Grave Memorial, where hundreds if not thousands of Africans who died while in Zomaï purportedly were buried. For me, as for many of the visitors with whom I spoke, the village of Zoungbodji was the Slave Route's pulsating heart. Housing Zomaï and the Mass Grave, Zoungbodji provided many international visitors with the emotional experience they were seeking.

The Mass Grave Memorial especially generates a defined air of reverence. Demarcated by a cement wall, and protected by a chained gate, the Memorial is protected purposefully by local villagers. Before stepping past the gate, visitors are asked to remove their shoes. As is customary in many parts of Bénin, removing one's shoes shows respect and honor to important people and spirits. In this case, respect is given to the souls of those who died as a result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, as well as to spirits who animate and elevate the Mass Grave Memorial to a space of profound significance for both local people and international visitors.

Echoing the symbolic potency of removing one's shoes, visitors are also asked by the tour guides to "keep silent" as they reflect on the memorial's significance to local and international peoples alike. As I walked around the memorial, I noticed that other visitors—most of whom were American—were leaving small tokens of their respect behind. While most people left offerings of money at the base of the memorial, I noticed that others had left letters; one African American woman left an article of clothing. Some people walked around in silence; others talked to the memorial as if it were a person or perhaps even a spirit; still others stood or knelt in contemplative tears. Marked with a cement wall and empowered by the removal of shoes and silence, the Mass Grave Memorial has become a "sacred space" where visitors are able to "pay their respects" to the millions of people who lost their lives as a direct result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade (e.g., Sturken 2004; Zertal 2000).

My subsequent visit to the Mass Grave Memorial in 2008 was quite different. As I did in 2006, I had traveled to Bénin the second time to examine the relationships that exist between international tourism and local religious ideology. This second time, however, I came informed by the literature I had avoided in 2006 and also I was able to travel the Slave Route with a local tour guide who acted as a docent for three separate tour groups that were visiting from the USA. The first group was scheduled to arrive about a week after my landing in Ouidah. I was told about their arrival and invited to join them as they traveled to various "tourist sites" around the city of Ouidah. Upon their arrival in Ouidah, the tour guide, whom I will call "Annette," took the group of 15 to the former site of Ouidah's "auction block" and then to the village of Zoungbodji. Annette stood on the road that led to the village and told the tourists about Zomaï, the Tree of Return, and the Mass Grave Monument. All the stories were the same as what I had heard her tell many times before—but this

time, the tour group did not enter the village. I was surprised that Annette avoided the village completely because many visitors with whom I had spoken in the past had found their experiences at Zoungbodji to be one of the most memorable. After finishing our day with the tour group, Annette thanked the tour group and wished them a safe and pleasant stay while they were visiting Bénin.

Once back at her home, I asked Annette, "Why didn't you take the tourists into Zoungbodji? I'm sure they would have loved to have seen those monuments."

She simply responded with a shrug, "Well, I couldn't."

"Why?" I pushed."

She replied, "The visits used to be okay, as you know. Back in 1993 there used to be a guide from the village—I don't know what happened. But when tourists came, they gave him money, you know, a tip. Then people started getting jealous and they didn't want him to be the guide any more because they felt he was making too much money. Since then, there isn't a guide in the village any more, except us, the guides who go there to do our tours. The problem is: The villagers still want money. Tourists will say, 'Make tickets so we can buy them!' But no one is doing that. The problem is, who do you give the money to? I can't remember the year, but I brought tourists there and the villagers were very angry. They even slapped one of the tourists because they wanted to seize his camera. They pretended that they wanted money because he took a picture, but that wasn't the reason. . . .. They told me they wanted money because *I* am making money off *their heritage.*"

Past Events and Present Disruptions

Like so many local tour guides, Annette is becoming discouraged because, as she said, "I love sharing the history . . . but I can't show the tourists everything any more. It's too dangerous for me to tell the entire story. It's frustrating. I don't want to just tell people about our history, I want to *show* them."

Annette's dissatisfaction with the way "things have to be" was also expressed by an African American female tourist in her mid-50 s who said, "I spent thousands of dollars to travel to Bénin and I can't see what I came here to see? You've got to be kidding me!" Annette could only apologize and placate the woman by stressing her responsibility to everyone's safety. Of course, Annette later confided to me that she understood why the woman was angry and conceded that if she were in her position, she would have felt the same way.

As tour guides such as Annette continue to work with tourists in countries such as Bénin, where the per capita income is around $1,500 per year, tourist monies—in the form of tips—can make a huge difference in the everyday lives of local peoples. Annette asserts that her proficiency in English, coupled with her genuine interest in the history of "her people," gives her the "power" to continue doing her job regardless of the many difficulties that arise along the way. However, few residents of Ouidah speak English, nor are many educated in local history or trained to be a tour guide by local agencies. Yet people from varying backgrounds in Bénin are hoping to profit (either economically or socially) from international tourism. The

overwhelming interest in international tourism and tourist monies begs the question: How does one determine who is allowed to profit from tourist capital in social spaces such as Zoungbodji that are laden with a great number of social complexities that range from questions of heritage "ownership" to local constructions of entitlement? These are not easy questions to address; in Bénin, local city government and other officials are negotiating with village elders as they search for an amicable solution.

In Bénin as in other parts of the world, local peoples have long been disempowered by international and local governments while also serving as the primary stewards of cultural heritage. In the case of Bénin, where local officials are beginning to work with local villagers and community leaders to ensure inclusive resolutions to heritage issues, I believe that local authorities must work with their communities to develop solutions that meet both the social and economic needs of the residents. However, to make these conversations fruitful in Zoungbodji, where villagers are coping with an ever-increasing number of international tourists, local questions of "heritage ownership," such as those directed to Annette by local villages, must be addressed. What makes these questions exceedingly important, especially in the case of the Slave Route, is their sheer complexity. Who can say they "own" the heritage of the Slave Route? There are many stakeholders—including the government of Bénin, local Béninois (including the descendants of slave traders), African Americans, and, of course, the international community, as Ouidah positions itself to be included as a UNESCO-sanctioned "world heritage" site [Note 4].

In November 1994, the 45 participants at a conference on "authenticity" held in Nara, Japan, authored "The Nara Document on Authenticity." Supported by UNESCO, the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the authors of the Nara Document suggest that "[r]esponsibility for cultural heritage and management of it belongs, in the first place, to the cultural community that has generated it, and subsequently to that which cares for it." In the case of the Slave Route (as with many other communities looking to market their "cultural heritage"), the obvious question is, which "cultural community" should be seen as its generator? With many stakeholders living on both sides of the Atlantic, it is clear that there is no single vested community. As with so many other heritage sites, the Slave Route has drawn significant attention from people around the globe—all of whom claim a degree of "ownership" over the values expressed in the Slave Route.

The Ename Charter for the Interpretation of Cultural Heritage Sites (2005) rightfully complicates the issue of heritage "ownership" for local and international officials whose aim it is to consider all stakeholders involved in the Slave Route on both sides of the Atlantic by addressing issues of multivocal interpretations. In fact, the authors of the Ename Charter explicitly argue that "the traditional rights, responsibilities, and interests of the *host community*, *property owners*, and *associated communities* should be respected" (emphasis mine). Following this charter, allowing for, and even encouraging, multiple stakeholders from both Africa and the

African Americas will help to position Ouidah firmly on the international stage as it is considered for "world heritage" status.

Inaccurate, Maybe. Authentic, Definitely

After considering the inclusion of all stakeholders, and tending to the needs and desires of the various local communities involved, questions of "authenticity" still remain. The authors of the Ename Charter acknowledge that "cultural heritage sites can be contentious and should acknowledge conflicting perspectives." However, they also suggest that "interpretation should be based on a well-researched, multidisciplinary study of the site and its surroundings." What should local and international communities do when these "well-researched" studies (such as Law 2004) find that much of the script produced for a given site such as the Slave Route is based on historically unsupported interpretations provided by institutions such as UNESCO?

Thinking about "authenticity" and its relationship to the Slave Route of Ouidah, one day in July 2008, I was talking to Jean, a Béninois friend, as we walked to the beach from Ouidah to buy coconuts. Although we were not actively participating in the Slave Route, we happened to be traversing the same physical path. We passed all the monuments, briefly greeted tourists, and walked under the Door of No Return. On the way back, each carrying several coconuts that we were going to use to prepare dinner, we overheard a local tour guide talking to a group of American tourists about the Tree of Forgetting. Skeptical about the historical accuracy of the narratives that are maintained and produced by the Slave Route, I asked Jean, "Can you believe that people really think that Africans stopped at that very spot to perform a ceremony that's logistically impossible?" [Note 5]. He looked at me and said, "Impossible? What do you mean? It happened. It really happened." While surprised by his assertion, my interest was piqued. MacCannell (1999:93) has argued that "authenticity itself moves to inhabit mystification" and, indeed, many people on both sides of the Atlantic, including Jean, a 21-year-old Béninois university student, believe the script—complete with its historical inaccuracies—which is repeatedly re-established and re-affirmed by the Slave Route.

How does one explain authenticity when the value of "the authentic" is contested? As I have demonstrated, historians have argued that some of the "facts" presented on the Slave Route are either invented fantasies or "imaginative reconstruction[s]" (Law 2008:21). However, many local residents unequivocally believe them to be "authentic." In reference to Appadurai's now seminal work, *The Social Life of Things* (1986), Bruner points out that "authenticity today is becoming a matter of the politics of connoisseurship, of the political economy of taste . . . [and] a matter of power" (2005a:163). I would add that a claim to authenticity is often deeply intertwined with Bourdieuian notions of distinction (Bourdieu 1979). The power of social distinction, ownership, or, in the case of heritage sites, stewardship of the "authentic" has the potential to give people important access to a site's social, economic, political, and symbolic capital.

Attending to the many complexities that surround the question of authenticity, anthropologist Edward Bruner has provided us with several ways of examining authenticity that offer insight into the ways we should approach a study focused on discourses of authenticity that may be created and maintained vis-à-vis sites such as the Slave Route of Ouidah. According to Bruner, there are four meanings for authenticity: *verisimilitude*, *genuineness*, *originality*, and *authority* (2005a:151). In the case of the Slave Route, we can use three of Bruner's categories—verisimilitude, originality, and authority—as heuristic devices that will enable us to think less rigidly about experiences or places that some may deem "authentic."

Verisimilitude

Before people even begin packing a suitcase, they begin their trips with preconceived ideas of what they will experience. As tourists, they have undoubtedly been influenced by many factors, including images of their destination spot as purveyed in mass media. In the case of the Slave Route, Americans encounter Bénin's slaving past with pre-formed images that have been partially constructed by childhood textbooks, movies, public discourse, and works of art. Accordingly, most tourists "know" what to expect. And as long as their experiences match those expectations, as long as "Africa" and their predetermined ideas of what slavery in Africa was like match their imaginations, visitors are likely to see the Slave Route as "authentic"—regardless of the historical inaccuracies.

When considering the "authentic" value of the Slave Route, it is important to keep in mind that the Slave Route was designed by UNESCO and the government of Bénin to fit well into global imaginings of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. People expect to experience Bénin's slaving past in ways that align with their imaginations and preconceptions. Thanks in part to scientific authority and by extension the power of "observation," the West has long privileged visual perception over our other senses when determining "objectively" what is real and what is imagined (see Ingold 2000; Landry 2008; Stoller 1989). Because Bénin lacks impressive monuments relevant to the trans-Atlantic slave trade such as Elmina Castle found in Ghana, the local government has worked closely with UNESCO and local artists to erect visual representations such as sculptures and placards that represent points of interest in Bénin's slaving past. These images have given tourists a point of visual reference to experience places such as the auction block that either no longer exist or may have never existed in Bénin.

Regardless of the historical inaccuracy of many of Bénin's slave monuments, local tour guides actively present them as real representation and remembering of the past. Following in the success of Sénégal (Gorée Island) and Ghana (Elmina Castle), the government of Bénin and UNESCO have together made a calculated decision to develop the Slave Route as a tourist site that focuses on the victims of the slave trade—instead of on the vivid rememberings of the lives of Africa's slave traders that dramatically punctuate Bénin social and religious landscapes. While

the Slave Route is, in some instances, historically inaccurate, it has nevertheless become "real" to those people, especially to Africans and African Americans, who embody the realities of the Atlantic slave trade everyday. On one hand, scholars have shown that a site's authenticity is often embedded in its ability to be "credible and convincing"—in the words of Bruner, verisimilitudinous (Bruner 2005a:149; Delyser 1999). Because the Slave Route plays into salient global imaginings of what people think the trans-Atlantic slave trade was like, its credibility and ability to convince are bolstered not by history but by rich and vivid imaginations.

Originality

At first glance, especially given its historical inaccuracies, one may be tempted to reject the possibility of "originality" in the Slave Route. People who are able to mobilize the proverbial "original" are able to enjoy the social capital it provides. Of course an object or space, whatever it may be, is not inherently better than a copy. But Western cultural actors in particular give "the original" a great deal of social power. Middle-class and elite adventurers travel long distances, and at great expense, to see the "real" Mona Lisa or a "real" Monet, for example. For many people, a photo or a near-as-possible copy just is not enough. However, the copy (or the inauthentic) does not exist in vain. As Geertz (1986) has pointed out, copies serve to authenticate the original, thereby giving it greater value. For many people, "the original" seems to pulsate with what Walter Benjamin (2008) may have called an "aura" or perhaps a magical energy—a mana-like substance that, while intangible, is critical to the tourist experience (Mauss 2001).

As the Slave Route is described by some as a "fiction" (Araujo 2005), and critiqued by scholars for its historical inaccuracies (Law 2004; Rush 2001), it may be difficult to imagine why so many people—locals and internationals alike—believe the Slave Route to be "authentic." Yet a close anthropological reading of the "text" of the tourist experience can provide important clues to how international visitors understand their experiences in Bénin within the framework of "authenticity." Let us consider some discursive strategies.

While in Ouidah I heard several tour guides and countless local residents describe the Tree of Return as "the actual tree that was planted by King Agadja." As visitors stand in the presence of this very large tree, many of them comment on its grand size. The size alone seems to provide international tourists with sufficient "evidence" to adequately suggest that the tree is indeed over 200 years old. Seeing the tree as an "original"—as *the tree* that was circumambulated by millions of enslaved Africans performing a ceremony to ensure their spirit's return to Africa—becomes an effortless and convincing exercise in visualization.

Around the Tree of Return, English-speaking tour guides are commonly heard using phrases such as "the actual tree" or "the very place" with their American visitors. In so doing, tour guides are able to emphasize notions of "the original," thus adding to the Slave Route's "authentic" value. The site's authenticity is further

heightened by values that are seemingly invariable. While tour guides can forget to emphasize "the original," or grow bored as they repeat the same tired descriptions day after day—thereby diminishing their role in the creation of an authentic experience for tourists—they can never reduce the symbolic capital embodied by Africa itself. Africa's quality as the quintessential "original" is further supported by tour guides as they remind visitors—often multiple times—that they are traversing the "same path" and walking on the "same soil" that enslaved Africans traveled on a little more than 200 years ago. For many tourists, especially African Americans, Africa is considered a "homeland." Referring often to their trip to Africa as going "home" or traveling to the "motherland," their time in Africa is understood as a pilgrimage (Bruner 2005a; Ebron 2002) rather than a simple vacation, as Africa itself becomes, in their imaginations, the ultimate "original." Through a careful and strategic use of language coupled with images of and embodied reactions to "the original," the Slave Route's claims to "authenticity" are strengthened.

Authority

The ability to claim "originality" and transform Ouidah into a space that reflects a visitor's preconceived imagined realities is further supported and sustained by UNESCO's "persona" as an authoritative agency. Bruner (2005a) has accurately speculated that a site's authenticity may be heightened by virtue of authority. When considering authority and thinking about the relationships that exist between "authenticity" and cultural heritage, it is helpful to reflect on UNESCO's symbolic capital in that arena. Because of its position as an international agency that is well positioned on the global stage as a source of cultural authority interested in questions of authenticity, interpretation, and representation, UNESCO—seen as a source of all things "credible" and "truthful"—has the necessary symbolic capital to present, often without question from the laity, certain "truths" about a given site (Bourdieu 1979). In considering these issues, Bruner asks, "[W]ho has the authority to decide which version of history will be accepted as the correct or authentic one?" (2005b:151). By its very nature, authority is rarely given to the downtrodden or the subaltern. Authority, which is often accorded by virtue of social power and dominance, has the capacity to define what society sees as "true" (Foucault 1980, 1995). While scholars of Bénin have critiqued the historical accuracy of Ouidah's Slave Route, they do not carry the same social capital as UNESCO or the government of Bénin. Simply put, UNESCO and the local government carry the necessary symbolic capital—"a reputation for competence and an image of respectability and honourability" (Bourdieu 1984:291)—that enables them to mobilize the past and create and promote the narrative of their choosing.

While the last "station" on the Slave Route—The Door of No Return—is the only official monument of the Slave Route and the only one that bears UNESCO's seal, several tour guides in Ouidah often tell tourists about UNESCO's involvement in the Slave Route from the beginning of the tour. For its part, UNESCO is able to position itself as an agent of authenticity because it wraps itself in the language of

science. On its official website for the international Slave Route project, UNESCO claims to be "[d]rawing on the expertise of an International Scientific Committee"; it strives to support "scientific research through a network of international institutions and specialists" (UNESCO 2005). At the same time, drawing on a wide range of people from varying backgrounds and with a multitude of perspectives, UNESCO is beginning to support multiple meanings, explanations, and values (see ICOMOS' Ename Charter of 2005).

While the inclusion of multiple interpretations of the past make a site's script more "authentic," many Westerners think of authenticity as an objective concept, one that is somehow measurable and indisputable. To many people, including tourists, an artifact or a site either exudes the "aura" of realness or it does not. UNESCO's authoritative efficacy is directly related to its overt support for "scientific research" and its continuous use of scientific language in public discourse and educational materials. Because of UNESCO's firm position in the realm of scientific ventures and truth-finding, Béninois are able to use UNESCO's claims to authority to present their saleable rendition of the past as unequivocally "true." Just as our collective imaginations affect the way we preview and later internalize our traveling experiences as authentic, our imaginations also affect the ways we understand "science." And UNESCO, perhaps unintentionally, is able to profit from the West's pre-imagined notion of science as a venture in "Truth"-finding.

Concluding Remarks

When one thinks about the various qualities that make cultural heritage "authentic," one may be compelled to believe that for something to be authentic it must be positioned in historical Truth. However, as I have shown in this chapter, authenticity is not dependant on accuracy. Instead, authenticity, as it relates to cultural heritage, is measured and experienced through embodied action and performance while also being couched in the politics of capital (i.e., symbolic, political, or economic) and the creative processes of remembering. Just as ritual has the capacity to make religion "really real" for its adherents, sustained symbolic and political capital work to make heritage such as the Slave Route "really authentic" for a wide variety of stakeholders (see Geertz 1973).

Calculated decisions about authentic representation are made as managers of a variety of sites across the west coast of Africa consider the many stakeholders on both sides of the Atlantic. In both Ghana and Bénin, the thematic influence of Gorée Island off the coast of Sénégal is undeniable—despite the controversy surrounding its historic "authenticity," Gorée is touted as "the most powerful visual image of the slave trade" (Law 2008:11). The imagery of Gorée continues to contribute greatly to the ways we imagine the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Gorée's Porte du Non-Retour has been successfully emulated by other sites such as Cape Coast Castle (Ghana) and the Slave Route (Bénin).

With the memory of the trans-Atlantic slave trade still strong in Ouidah, each time a person actively participates in or reproduces the script created by the Slave Route, local memories of the slave trade are reinforced—and thereby remembered not as replicable historical "facts" but rather as embodied, creative performances. Examination of important historical sites off the western coast of Africa reveals that the trans-Atlantic slave trade is not remembered in the same ways. The *Maison des Esclaves* in Sénégal, for example, provides visitors with a slave-centric script that is heavily vested in the horrific and lived realities of slavery. The Slave Route in Bénin, by contrast, alternates between a historic legacy that the Béninois have "come to terms with" (Singleton 1999:159), focusing on Bénin's tangible monuments such as the former Portuguese fort and the de Souza family compound that highlight Africa's historic role in slave trading, and that of a historical telling that attends to more emotionally sensitive scripts, centered in the village of Zougobodji, which places the horrific lived experiences of enslaved peoples front and center.

Rush criticizes the narrative of The Slave Routs as "both simplified and embellished" (2001:42). Yet, as I have suggested, convenient simplifications and fictive embellishments do not make the narrative any less *authentic*. Instead, in the Slave Route, UNESCO has joined forces with the local government and individual tour guide interpretations to create a narrative that is accepted as "authentic" by both local residents and international tourists.

As I have shown, the Slave Route's authentic value is best explored as a subjective reality, one that takes collective memories and shared cultural realities into account. Unlike positivist notions of measurable and testable "truths," the Slave Route's authenticity is not dependent on historical or scientific "fact." Rather the Slave Route's authenticity is one that is firmly positioned in embodied action, memory, and collective imaginings of the past. International tourists who travel to Bénin to explore Bénin's slaving past experience the authentic through their bodies. I have argued that visitors trust the authentic value of the Slave Route because of its ability to convince. And its ability to convince is further bolstered by the authority embodied by UNESCO, the local government, and local agents as well as the strategic use of "the original." As people of varying nationalities, races, and ethnicities traverse the Slave Route in Ouidah, many have moving and even life-changing experiences that are made possible because of the Slave Route's authentic value. For these people, an authentic experience is not contingent on its historical accuracy. Rather, human experiences, including visiting heritage sites, owning cultural artifacts, or believing the inherent authority of a given person or institution, are dependent on their ability to convince, and on the collective need and/or desire for social actors to perform convincingly. In the end, memories and experiences are real because they must be, not because they just are.

de Souza and her lovely family who over the years have become great friends as they have welcomed me into their family. I also would like to offer a special *merci beaucoup* to all my friends in Bénin who opened up their homes and their lives to me, especially to His Majesty Daagbo Hounon Tomadljehoukpon, the Supreme Chief of Vodun in Bénin, and His Majesty Kabiyesi Oba Onikoyi, King of the Ouidah Yoruba community and its vicinities.

Notes

1. Although called "Ouidah '92," the festival was not actually celebrated for the first time until February 8–18, 1993. The festival highlighted Vodun-/Vodou-inspired art from Bénin, Haiti, and Brazil, among other places, and emphasized the dynamic transnational relationships that are still maintained by people in Africa and the African diaspora.
2. The word *singbome* roughly translates as "two-story house." According to de Souza family history, the name singbome was adopted to describe the compound because Francisco Félix de Souza was the only resident of Ouidah in the early to mid 1800 s who lived in a multi-story home. Today, the descendants of Francisco Felix de Souza still live there, and de Souza's burial place and various personal effects are housed here, too.
3. Dahomey's Amazon warriors were an all-female army whose members, according to oral history, severed their right breast so as to improve their proficiency with bows and arrows and, later, firearms.
4. Since October 31, 1996, the city of Ouidah has been on UNESCO's "tentative list" for World Heritage consideration because of its historical importance in the trans-Atlantic slave trade.
5. For a lengthy discussion regarding the unlikelihood of the ceremony, see Law (2004) and Rush (2001).

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Chapter 11
Carving the Nation: Zimbabwean Sculptors and the Contested Heritage of Aesthetics

Lance L. Larkin

Introduction

Amid the world's highest inflation, political chaos, rampant corruption, regular public health disasters, extraordinary personal suffering, and international critique, Zimbabwe still retains a cultural life struggling to survive. Indeed, one particular "product" of this southern African country retains international allure: its art. Zimbabwean stone sculptors are well known in international art markets, and prior to the current troubles, tourists and art dealers alike were their key consumers and disseminators. With its extraordinary international success, it is appropriate to speak of a Zimbabwean stone sculpture *movement.*

The history of this art form and its contemporary dilemmas and opportunities are the subject of this chapter [Note 1]. My theoretical framework follows postcolonial calls to highlight a historical specificity grounded in place, linking global identity politics to nationalism *and* to international trade (Loomba et al. 2005). I seek to understand how these artists position their work within international markets and other institutional ideologies, including the framework of the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (see discussion in Ruggles and Silverman 2009). However, to understand the effect of institutionalizing heritage, it is necessary to first examine the historical legacy of the artwork.

Contested History Born in the Colonial Encounter

The Zimbabwean landscape is dotted with ancient structures built by carefully fitting together unmortared stone (Fig. 11.1). Over 250 "stone houses," or *zimbabwes*, are found scattered throughout the country and into South Africa (Garlake 1994). The ruin now known as Great Zimbabwe was once a flourishing center for a loose confederation of rulers (Matenga 1998), and large, ancient urban centers such as

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Fig. 11.1 The ruins of Great Zimbabwe consist of massive structures surrounded by unmortared stone walls, often 30 feet tall. (Photo: Lance Larkin)

this were responsible for a consolidation of wealth under state rulers. Eventually, as the population grew, stresses on the environment created dispersal into small villages (Sylvester 1991). The *zimbabwes* had fallen into ruin by the time of European colonialism (Winter-Irving 1995).

Today we know that these ruins were once thriving settlements built by the ancestors of the contemporary Shona [Note 2], dating to the thirteenth century (Beach 1998). But during the colonial era indigenous origins were not acknowledged by the white regime. Instead, the white Rhodesian government attributed these ruins to the biblical Queen of Sheba or the Phoenicians (Bent 1893; Frederikse 1990).

In addition to the finally crafted stonework of the *zimbabwes*, stone carving was a hallmark of Shona civilization. As an example, stone plinths topped with carved bird emblems were found in the Great Zimbabwe ruins (Fig. 11.2)—eight of which were quickly stolen by Europeans (Matenga 1998). Despite the abandonment of the ancient city centers, Shona people have continued sculpting to the present time, carving personal wooden religious items (Dewey 1991; Nettleton 1984). However, the link between indigenous wood carving and contemporary sculpting is tenuous at best.

The contemporary Zimbabwean stone sculpture industry finds its roots in the British colonial period in Rhodesia, the name of the country before independence. In 1955 the colonial government built the Rhodes National Gallery to show exhibitions of European art. Frank McEwen, an English museum curator working in France, was invited to be the first director. McEwen arrived in 1956, provided contacts with

Fig. 11.2 One of 10 soapstone birds found at the Great Zimbabwe ruins by Europeans at the end of the nineteenth century. Eight and a half birds were removed from the country by Europeans, with only four and a half being returned to the country in 1981 after independence. (Drawing by Lance Larkin)

the European art scene (he knew Braque and Picasso among others), and worked to promote local art (Zilberg 1996). The colonial government's suppression of indigenous artistic expression upset McEwen so much that he started encouraging local people to express themselves through sculpture workshops at the gallery (Arnold 1986; Zilberg 2001). The politics of art would soon converge with the politics of the nation.

In December 1962, 70 years after colonization, a hard-line conservative party took office in Rhodesia. Pressured by the UK to change to majority rule, by 1970 the Rhodesian government had declared the nation a republic and broke links with Britain in order to maintain white rule (Godwin and Hancock 1993). This Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) resulted in the United Nations quickly imposing sanctions. In consequence, the Rhodesian ruling elite focused on becoming

Fig. 11.3 Artists now display their sculpture at Tengenenge on pedestals in a literal forest artwork. (Photo: Lance Larkin)

self-sufficient by localizing the production and assembly of necessities (Chitiyo 2000), with help from sanctions-busting countries such as the USA, which continued importing Rhodesian chrome (DeRoche 2001).

The sanctions affected most sectors of the Rhodesian economy, including the newly burgeoning arts movement. The stone sculptors' art cooperative at Tengenenge started in 1966, when Tom Blomefield's tobacco farm was threatened by the international sanctions placed on Rhodesia. Blomefield decided his African workers could make an income from sculpting, and he turned his farm into a sprawling outdoor art market (Fig. 11.3) (Winter-Irving 2001). Although Tengenenge village would become quite successful, the politics of the time placed the continuation of indigenous art in a precarious position [Note 3].

Confident in their moral superiority, the Rhodesian government strengthened institutional racial segregation and exploitative policies after the UDI (Bourdillon 1998; Moore 2005) [Note 4], increasingly becoming more isolated from the rest of the world. But the struggle for indigenous nationalism gained speed within Rhodesia. Black Africans demanded sovereignty and called on the international community to support indigenous self-determination (DeRoche 2001). The resulting war for independence increased worldwide political pressure against the Rhodesian regime. Interestingly, publicity for the cause also occurred through non-standard means on an international level. In this regard the stone sculpture movement became an important facet of nationalist discourse—a selling point for art, the independence movement, and the postcolonial nation. In short, the colonial history of Zimbabwe has had profound effects on the stone sculpture industry.

The Sculpture Industry and Rhodesian Politics

The early success of Zimbabwean stone sculpture was due in large part to McEwen's international art connections. McEwen provided a link to established art networks in an industry driven by galleries, exhibitions, and trade journals. He often described the sculpture in terms of "tradition" and links to African mysticism (Pearce 1993; Zilberg 1996). The marketing of "traditional" Zimbabwean stone sculpture by early patrons such as McEwen also connected the movement to a "tangible heritage" via the sculptures found at ancient Great Zimbabwe. Art dealers and exhibition reviewers also romanticized the sculptures' cultural significance. One article described the exhibition at the 1962 First International Congress of African Culture in Rhodesia in these terms:

> The exhibits have been arranged so that the viewer passes from a dark room full of dimly lit fetishistic shrines into the light and magnificence of a room full of Yoruba masks and head-dresses, Ife and Benin bronzes and the terra cottas of the little known Nigerian Nok culture. Then McEwen has brilliantly juxtaposed African sculpture with photographs of works by Picasso, Braque, Brancusi and Julio Gonzales, all of whom were profoundly influenced by the African art they encountered in the early years of the century. (*Newsweek* 1962)

A key component of selling the artwork at this time was the implicit theme of cultural difference. But by 1965, McEwen, as director of the Rhodes National Gallery in the capital city of Harare, found himself in a socio-political paradox. The government of Rhodesia had declared its independence from Britain in order to continue white rule, while McEwen—a white European—was promoting indigenous self-expression through sculpture. McEwen's strategy in selling this art form to the overseas market was to mobilize his contacts with the European art scene and to highlight traditional African religion to them. He linked the new art to a deep-seated stone-carving tradition, evidenced at Great Zimbabwe, while also emphasizing that it was a modernist art form "unsullied by Western schools of thought regarding the arts" (McEwen 1968 n.p.).

In a 1991 television documentary, *Zimbabwe: Talking Stones*, McEwen stated, "These gentle, spiritual, wonderful people—the Shona—highly mystical and religious, they had stopped carving [but] of course, there had been sculpture in Rhodesia Zimbabwe four or five hundred years ago" (Bowe and Bulley 1992). This mystification of the art's long history gave it legitimacy as both a "fine" *and* an "ethnographic art," which proved quite successful at the time [Note 5]. In Zimbabwe, sculpture as "modern" artwork with links to "tradition" was hailed by dealers, collectors, critics, and scholars at the start of the movement in the 1960s and 1970s as worthy of collection (Beier 1968; Camden Arts Center 1970; Johnston 1973; Kuhn 1978; Polakoff 1972). Following global art-collecting trends during the early twentieth century, European collectors and ethnographers were personally vested in promoting indigenous arts as modernist and worthy of "fine art" status (Clifford 1988).

Despite Zimbabwean stone sculpture's rapid rise to international fame during the late colonial period, the white Rhodesian population remained ambivalent, showing varying degrees of interest and revulsion for this new art form (*Newscheck* 1962).

The lack of early support for stone sculpture among white Rhodesians coincided with the fight by black Africans for independence. The indigenous artistic battle for legitimacy was also reflected in the sculpture.

Sculptors' artwork has displayed themes of war since the 1970s and themes emphasizing indigenous identity and critique of the colonial state entered the stone sculpture movement as the nationalist struggle accelerated. Tengenenge provides an important link to the early years of the "movement," as demonstrated in a photograph Tom Blomefield showed me in 2001 of one sculpture created during the 1970s depicting a man holding a submachine gun with bandoleers slung over both shoulders. Other pieces included, for example, the sculpture of an armed guerrilla and the bust of the nationalist leader Joshua Nkomo (Male 1978).

Debates in Parliament over closing the National Gallery added to the controversy about the sculpture when government officials stated that there was too much "Modern Art" being shown in the museum instead of "European classic artwork." One Parliament member decried the exhibits of indigenous art, saying, "How can you possibly ask me to subscribe to [a] culture when I say in my mind it is a monstrosity, it is something conceived by a diseased mind?" (*Rhodesia Herald* 1966). Despite, or perhaps in response to, this reaction, some scholars who specialized in African arts joined McEwen in promoting the Zimbabwean stone sculpture movement (Fagg and McEwen 1972).

White Rhodesians' criticism of the contemporary stone sculpture during the early years is put into context by surveying local newspapers for articles on African artists. The noteworthy point here is more the sin of omission than commission. Newspaper articles about Rhodesian artists that were collected by the National Gallery's library in 1959 and 1960 did not contain a single mention of black African artists. This silence did not change much over the final two decades of white rule, despite McEwen's tenure at the Gallery, and his emphasis on indigenous artwork. For example, in 1961, only 14% of the newspaper coverage about art mentioned black artists [Note 6].

In addition to the National Gallery, few other outlets for the art were open in Rhodesia during the independence war, and this created a lack of representation between creators and consumers. One gallery owner worried that "the work had to stand by itself, and its full cultural significance was not always realized" (Winter-Irving 1995:176). In other words, the artists could not speak directly to the buyers about their own artwork, and their sculpture was for the most part invisible within Rhodesia during the fight for independence.

As the internal war for black majority rule escalated in 1974 and 1975, and after McEwen had left the country, only 11% of newspaper articles about Rhodesian art mentioned local black artists. When the independence war reached a climax, and rumors of a political compromise started to circulate in 1978 (Frederikse 1990), the number of articles about art that addressed non-Western artists rose to 25% [Note 7]. But only after independence in 1981 did the number of African artists mentioned in newspaper articles discussing the arts jump to 60%.

The events of the war for independence from the Rhodesian regime were refracted into the sculptors' lives, and the artwork reflected "life experiences" of

artists during these times. These life experiences sometimes invaded the sculptors' lives even if the events were not directly reflected in their art. For example, one artist was thrown in jail as he was carrying a piece of stone to his workshop. The police arrested him because he was on the outskirts of a riot, and they took him as a suspect in a rock-throwing incident (H.E.W. 1964). Therefore, institutional racism in the form of what we would now consider "racial profiling" affected sculptors in the streets while the Rhodesian government debated the sculpture movement's cultural significance.

Fine Art or Ethnographic Art?

Although McEwen encouraged gallery workshop students to explore their indigenous identity, he has been criticized for encouraging the sale of the exotic Other, as did many other patrons of African art elsewhere at the time (see Clifford 1988; Harney 2004; Perkins and Morphy 2006). McEwen also dismissed the role of early Christian missionaries in training artists as woodcarvers who later became well-known sculptors (Pearce 1993; Zilberg 1996). Regardless of McEwen's failings, an exhibit of black Rhodesian art that he organized at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1969, and two other exhibits he organized in France in 1971 and 1972, exposed the work and identity of Zimbabwean artists to many collectors from all over the world (Winter-Irving 1995).

As such, McEwen provided venues for validation of black Africans' creativity within museums and galleries—the "fine art" world. Institutional acceptance of the sculptures resulted in a valorization of individual artists and provided a pedigree for "fine art" collectors (Price 1991). The modern aesthetic was also subtly reinforced by stories of indigenous identity—ethnographic details that were purportedly embedded within the artwork—told to consumers by dealers. Despite McEwen's condemnation of unoriginal work that was made for tourists—which he dubbed "airport art"—McEwen inadvertently instigated this lucrative route of production by insisting the artists create ethnographic work (McEwen 1967, 1972).

McEwen ascribed religious ideas to the artwork, leading to a conflation of "fine art" and "ethnographic art." Many critics contested the attributed visual links to "tradition" and religion (Roberts et al. 1982), but it is important to keep in mind that the Euro-American dichotomy between "fine art" and "ethnographic art" was entangled in liberal ideas that led to the rise of modernism in Europe (see below) and were imbricated in the rise of nationalism and nation building in southern Africa (see Errington 1998). Although some sculptors' representations included pieces about ancestral spirits, other artists rejected the early European positioning of the sculpture as an exotic art commodity, springing from an indigenous "cultural heritage," and instead carved symbols of contemporary issues.

This evocation of the concept of "cultural heritage," linking modern and ancient stoneworking, began in the 1960s and continues today as was demonstrated in 2001, when a 25 year-old Zimbabwean sculptor in Harare told me that artists not only "remind people about their culture [through their art]," but also tell new stories

about society (personal communication, September 20, 2001; Nayanhongo 1988). Surely herein lay the threat perceived by some white Rhodesians during the period of minority rule, isolation, and the ensuing indigenous struggle for independence.

But "heritage" is an inherently contested assertion. Jean Comaroff has succinctly defined the limits of heritage, saying, "[it] is history and culture as legacy, a quality to be alienated in the market, thereby reproducing identity in its postcolonial form" (2005:136). And, indeed, although Zimbabwean sculpture is now recognized around the world, some artists contest the historical legacy of the artwork as "heritage." For example, Dominic Benhura, a second-generation sculptor, has been extremely successful in fine art markets and has complained about the confines of the "Zimbabwean art form" as intangible cultural heritage. He has used his lucrative income to open a workshop teaching new artists how to sculpt and providing stone, a place to stay, and food (personal communication, July 19, 2001).

Many artists' incomes are at risk and predicated on or against the heritage of the Zimbabwean stone sculpture movement. In my research I link a theoretical understanding of heritage with the discord of some Zimbabwean artists about their exotification within the market. I attend to the subtlety of history *before* it is commodified in the form of "heritage," to understand the contestations of identity within the stone sculpture industry in the present, as illustrated below.

Codified Cultural Heritage

The name of the country taken after independence—Zimbabwe—means "stone houses," referring to the famous stone ruins in the countryside that index a major regional polity that flourished in the thirteenth century. Thus, the crafting of the modern nation in a fundamental way was both a literal and metaphoric reference to stone sculpting of the past. However, it was not just the post-independence government that gave institutional salience to the ruins of the past and the sculpting practices of the present. UNESCO codified Zimbabwe's cultural heritage when it listed the Great Zimbabwe ruins as a World Heritage Site in 1986 (ICOMOS 1986).

Additionally, "traditional" Zimbabwean art forms have been welcomed into UNESCO's canon of Intangible Cultural Heritage [Note 8]. Despite the sculpture's colonial and postcolonial contested background of whether it is a continued cultural tradition or not (Zilberg 1996), the Zimbabwean sculpture movement fits within international protocols as an "intangible heritage," according to Zimbabwe's entry in UNESCO's "Definitions for Cultural Heritage":

> [The intangible heritage of Zimbabwe is] the totality of tradition-based creations of a cultural community, expressed by a group or individuals and recognized as reflecting the expectations of a community in so far as they reflect its cultural and social identity, its standards and values are transmitted orally, by imitation or by other means. Its forms are, among others, language, literature, music, dance, games, mythology, rituals, customs, handicrafts, architecture and other arts. (UNESCO 2001)

Although Zimbabwean sculpture is not *explicitly* listed in Zimbabwe's UNESCO entry for intangible heritage, the art form has been promoted by the

post-independence government as "traditional" and worthy of protection. At the first Nedlaw Sculpture Forum in 1984 in the National Gallery of Zimbabwe (previously the Rhodes National Gallery where McEwen worked), the Director of Arts and Crafts in the Ministry of Youth, Sport, and Culture announced the need for increased state funding for individual sculptors and the need for artists to reflect the new social order in their artwork. During the 1980s, the government even briefly examined every shipment of sculpture leaving the country so as to verify its "quality" (Hava 1984). Even more explicitly, sculpture has acted as official ambassador of the nation. In 1981 a poem and a sculpture titled "Happy Marriage" were sent as a gift to Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer from the recently liberated nation of Zimbabwe (H.R. 1981).

Furthermore, the Zimbabwean government includes the National Art Gallery—the primary instigator of the contemporary Zimbabwean stone sculpture movement in the 1960s and one of its lasting patrons today—under its support via the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture (Mapurisana 2001). As a parastatal institution, the museum is officially recognized, although directed to "be commercially viable" (NGZ n.d.), and it continues to emphasize the sculpture through its permanent collections.

However, the invention of this "artistic tradition" is based in the tangible heritage of the ruins at Great Zimbabwe, which have proven remarkably resilient in the popular imagination (Zunidza 2001). Consequently, in addition to early patrons' support of the sculpture movement, its invention as a tradition (e.g., Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) was solidified through a link with past sculptural practices at Great Zimbabwe and nation-building practices via the post-independence government and international institutions such as UNESCO (Anderson 2000).

Practices of "official" authentication solidify ideas of a static culture within institutional preferences, as has been the case in Zimbabwe since independence (Ucko 1994). For instance, the call for Zimbabwean museums to recognize their role "in the promotion and preservation of our cultural heritage, but also [their] positive contribution to economic development and nation building" (Munjeri 1991:454) implies an ideology of a static culture based on the "tangible" constructions of the past (e.g., Great Zimbabwe)—and it is this idea of "Zimbabwean" or "Shona" stone sculpture as a never-changing entity that has some contemporary sculptors chafing against the confines of this categorization [Note 9]. Moreover, the idea of protecting intangible heritage is predicated on an idea of "culture" as a static, bounded entity. Such a static view of protected cultures directly contradicts African societies' mixing and cross fertilization both before and after colonization (Amselle 2004). Ironically, too, this static view of intangible heritage contradicts UNESCO's own acknowledgment that cultures do indeed mix. For example, UNESCO has highlighted the "glass beads and fragments of porcelain of Chinese and Persian origin [found in Great Zimbabwe] which bear testimony to the extent of trade within the continent" (ICOMOS 1986). Despite the contradiction in UNESCO's literature about static cultural practice, the salience of this ideology persists—and sculptors must contend with ideas of unchanging perceptions within global art markets.

Complications of the Art Market

The art scene in Zimbabwe manifests complex layers of acceptance, negotiation, and outright rejection of the "traditional" and nationalist nature of the sculpture movement in relation to the Western art market's modernist underpinnings. Despite being marketed as a "traditional" art form, the readily recognizable carved stone style has quite recent origins. It began in the 1960s when European gallery owners began to promote stone carving as a *continuation* of "traditional" carving as practiced by the Shona people. The modern art mediators encouraged local artists to present their sculptures as an indigenous tradition with ancient roots. Many contemporary sculptors are comfortable with this association and produce sculptures that are overtly linked to commonly shared notions of traditional Shona culture. This is exemplified by works bearing such titles as "Witchdoctor" and "Spirit Ancestor" (Fig. 11.4).

At the same time, however, many other contemporary Zimbabwean artists see themselves not as bearers of an ancient Zimbabwean tradition but as *modern* artists—indeed, these artists see themselves as encumbered by an emphasis on their national origins or, even worse, notions of "dark Africa." These sculptors adeptly use Western art markets to their professional benefit. They travel and show their artwork internationally, deploying tools of modernity to further their careers as artists—not "Zimbabwean" or "Shona" artists [Note 10], but simply "artists." These sculptors resent when they are marginalized from the world of "fine art" by being categorized as part of the "traditional" Zimbabwean stone sculpture movement

Fig. 11.4 Although this sculpture is more complex than most "tourist artwork," it epitomizes carved "tradition," highlighting a Zimbabwean party wherein the musicians take a break while eating sadza (indigenous porridge), their instruments resting on the ground in front of them. (Ngoni Chandigwa, 2001, untitled) (Photo: Lance Larkin)

Fig. 11.5 Displayed in a United States gallery, this sculpture is representative of the "classic" Zimbabwean sculptural style: abstract, smooth faces with pointy heads. (Unknown artist, 2000, untitled) (Photo: Lance Larkin)

(Fig. 11.5). The differing self-identifications between artists bearing purported ancient cultural traditions and the avant-garde artists of Zimbabwe are reprised in the Western art market's dichotomy of "tourist art" (or craftwork) and "fine art" [Note 11].

Zimbabwean sculptors are motivated to produce sculptures that sell. However, they face restricted access to international markets. Based on my research in the region in June–December 2001 and Summer 2008, I hypothesize that some sculptors work actively to transcend or even contest these limits, while others accept or at least accommodate the polarized scheme of "fine art" versus "tourist art" that structures the Western art market (Court 1992). In either case, the artists must accommodate both African and Western dealers who routinely distinguish between what they define as "fine art" and "tourist art" (Bascom 1976; Ben-Amos 1977; Price 1991). The latter category is, further, often conflated by dealers with anonymous "tribal art." While some scholars of the visual arts explore how this dualist

classification functions either on the ground, or in a theoretical scheme (Clifford 1988; Graburn 1976; Kileff and Kileff 1996; Zilberg 1996), few interrogate the problems that the categories themselves raise, and fewer still explore art movements that encompass both poles simultaneously (Myers 2002). To address these gaps, I position Zimbabwean stone sculpture not only as a *modernist* art movement that embodies *both* ends of the dichotomy between "fine art" and "tourist/tribal art" permeating international art markets, but as an art tradition that occupies the contested domains *between* the opposed poles of this system.

For the artists, there is more at stake in rejecting the "fine art"/"tourist art" distinction than mere income, important though that is. Unlike Western artists, whom art institutions and popular media alike proclaim as paragons of a unique vision in a liberal progression of culture (Bürger 1984; Foster 1996; Poggioli 1968), African artists often find themselves defined as creating certain types of artwork that are produced in a village by a "tribe," with no individual identity and no link to the art world at large (Farrell 2003; Oguibe 2004b). In other words, most African sculptors are condemned to produce anonymous, "primitivist" art created by an ethnic group, rather than creating work as artists holding agency and having knowledge about how their work fits into international art worlds. By contrast, those few Zimbabwean sculptors who manage to produce pieces that dealers classify as "fine art" must work within rigid confines of the market that restrict their output in other ways (Enwezor 2003; Gutsa 2001; and see below). From these conjoined restrictions, Zimbabwean artists are often limited in what they sculpt and must resign themselves either to playing the role of image producers within "tourist art" workshops (Jules-Rosette 1984) or to displaying their work in "fine art" exhibitions that insultingly categorize all the artists as "African" (Oguibe and Enwezor 1999).

The exclusion of "fine artists" from certain markets echoes Zimbabwe's rejection by Western nations as a participant in the global economy. That is, just as the focus on "primitivist" Zimbabwean sculpture by dealers and critics disenfranchises artists from the high-stakes, avant-garde, international art market (Errington 1998; Kinsella 2005; Zilberg 2002), so, too, does Zimbabwe's president, Robert Mugabe, distance the country from global commodities markets (Wines 2006). International economic sanctions on Zimbabwe, due to human rights violations [Note 12], have resulted in a flight of capital that is limiting most Zimbabwean sculptors' access to the profitable "fine art" markets and from major contemporary exhibitions of the West. Similar to the controversy surrounding the current government, the early link to "tradition" constitutes a wedge that currently divides sculptors regarding the future of their intangible heritage.

Uneasy Juxtaposition Between Modernism and "Tradition"

The division of sculptors who ascribe to the "traditional" origin of the sculpture and those who contest this heritage springs from ideologies embedded within a Euro-American art historical tradition. Delving into these hegemonic configurations, I visited seven United States galleries that all label sculptures produced by

artists of Zimbabwe as either "Shona" or "Zimbabwean," and often cluster all the artists together in one exhibit. It is striking that a Manhattan gallery—which has been featuring work from Zimbabwe for 20 years—does not promote shows by individual sculptors, as they do for all their other shows (including some artists from South Africa). While visiting this studio, I overheard a conversation between the gallery owner and a potential buyer. The owner explained one contemporary Zimbabwean sculptor's mixed-media artwork as "Primitivist with sophistication," demonstrating that even in one of the major modern art centers of the world, Zimbabwean sculpture is still positioned in contrast to "modernity." Indeed, most galleries in the USA exhibiting Zimbabwean artists tie their sculpture to ethnicity or "tradition."

According to another gallery owner—a Gambian who had traveled extensively in Africa—the misnomer of "Shona sculpture" was an easy and necessary label for marketing the artwork, although he did not "want to oversimplify [by using that title]" (personal communication, March 19, 2007). I contend that Western categorizing of the movement places sculptors in the difficult position of either complying with or contesting their place within the markets, and, indeed, their own sense of self.

One very successful "fine art" sculptor in Zimbabwe told me in August 2001 that early in his career he tried selling an abstract stone sculpture plant form to the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, but they would not buy it because the artwork was not "Shona stone sculpture." Other "fine art" sculptors discuss a disjunction between the myth of the sculpture, as it is often marketed, and reality. For example, Tapfuma Gutsa (2001) has noted the misguided but frequent trust of buyers in the "traditional tales" told to them by the gallery owners about Zimbabwean sculptors. At the same time, this sculptor defended his own borrowing of themes and stylistic conventions from the West because, as he explained, "the West has borrowed from Africa."

To highlight how the dichotomy between "fine art" and "tourist/tribal art" constrains artists' options, I turn to an ethnographic example. The Zimbabwean "fine artist" Blessing Chitsinga [Note 13] sells his sculptures for thousands of United States dollars. He emphasizes the importance of showcasing individual pieces on pedestals, rather than clustering many works together in a single space (Fig. 11.6), "so the sculptors are not selling their work like they are [located] in a flea market" (personal communication, May 26, 2008). In this way, Chitsinga battles against the income-deflating category of "primitive" sculpture and the anonymity of "traditional" artwork (Kinsella 2005).

By contrast, sculptor James Lovemore sells his pieces at the Avondale People's Market, a crowded open-air venue in Harare hosting stalls of individual sculptors (Fig. 11.7). Lovemore believes that only those artists who produce realistic pieces—as represented in much "tourist art"—have mastered sculpting (Fig. 11.8). To Lovemore (personal communication, May 24, 2008), the rows of "tourist art" in the market stalls represent skill in an art form that is authenticated by its seriality (Steiner 1999), rather than being evidence of mass-produced unoriginality. For this reason, Lovemore claims, anyone who can create realistic art should be

Fig. 11.6 This untitled
artwork has been mounted by
the artist on a wooden
pedestal in his rural stand.
Much further in the
background to the left,
another sculpture is seen
creating an uncluttered space
using distance. (Zvabata,
2001, untitled) (Photo: Lance
Larkin)

Fig. 11.7 Sculpture displayed at the Avondale People's Market. (Photo: Lance Larkin)

Fig. 11.8 Tourist art includes realistic animals and busts of African queens and warriors. (Nicholas Tandi, 2002, "Bride") (Photo: Lance Larkin)

able to achieve the financial success of "fine art" sculptors. Lovemore believes that if those who produce "tourist art" were given a chance to display their pieces in a large exhibition, they would be more likely to gain the backing of wealthy patrons.

These sculptors interpret international art markets in very different ways. Chitsinga believes that sculpture should be displayed as though in a Western museum, to raise its value through an economy of expectation: if it is sold in institutional settings with an emphasis on display, it will be categorized as "fine art," will be worth more, and will be elevated to a higher level of distinction (see Bourdieu 1984; Plattner 1996). Although Lovemore eloquently explains his understanding of "good" artists, he does not say why more Zimbabwean sculptors "are not given a chance." Chitsinga acknowledges contested domains within the market (Oguibe and Enwezor 1999), while Lovemore sees the realms of "tourist art" and "fine art" as separated only by the opportunity to gain patronage. The contrast of views articulated by these two sculptors demonstrates how the polarity of "tourist art" and "fine art" is contested and complicated by local conceptions of the international art market.

This example illustrates how one "fine artist," Chitsinga, understands and uses the market while the lesser-paid "tourist artist" is economically constrained by the artist's choice of style. On the surface, the contrast is not dissimilar to United States art practices in local markets (e.g., Plattner's 1998 findings on realism and collector interest); however, the differences between modernism in Western and African contexts have been explored extensively by scholars (Comaroff and Comaroff 1993; Ferguson 1999; Mudimbe-Boyi 2002; Rutherford 1999). Unfortunately, even those artists who learn that the Euro-American art markets expect African artists to

produce what I term an "art of difference"—and then work to transcend the limits imposed by that expectation—must still contend with the constraints of Western patronage (Oguibe 2004a).

As I discovered during fieldwork in 2001, some artists acknowledge the Western-imposed dichotomy of "fine art" versus "tourist art" and explicitly highlight the socially constructed categories. One successful "fine art" sculptor said, "It takes skill and specific tools to make [tourist art] consistently. You can't condemn a craftsman for doing his work. Even when making something not necessarily for yourself, but saying, 'So-and-so will like this'—the importance is in the admiration of the work" (personal communication, November 23, 2001). Acknowledging the Western aesthetic dichotomy, this sculptor implied that artists actively construct personal aesthetics tied to the market—while sometimes co-opting or contesting those values to various degrees (Herle et al. 2002; Price 2007; Thomas 1991).

For their part, many contemporary art critics condemn the Zimbabwean art movement as contrived and inauthentic, overwhelmed by unoriginal artwork (Byrd 2000) and in danger of devolving into "tourist art" (Feshbach 1993). Rather than assessing these critics' claims to evaluate the value and "authenticity" of the artwork (Bowe and Bulley 1992; Breitz and Bowyer 1995; McEwen 1968) in a fine/tourist framework, it is critical to examine the sculpture in light of the Western art historical ideologies within which the artists must contend.

Modernism and Postmodernism as Obfuscation of Capitalism

Modernity as an *identity* is dependent on self- and group-affiliation, which is often contested in public spaces (Taylor 2001). The fraught choice to carve either "fine art" or "tourist art" is a decision all Zimbabwean artists must negotiate—being situated as they are within Western art history and the markets. Consequently, sculptors must choose an identity based on institutional art history practices that control the present by categorizing what is documented from the past (Preziosi 1994).

The legitimization of "primitive art" occurred within the New York marketplace (among other major art markets) in the early twentieth century as modernism and primitivism rose as contradictory, but mutually implicated movements (Stoller 2003). The historical *modernist* movement is based on a trend of thought that encouraged a liberal improvement of the human condition by examining all aspects of life and making "progressive" changes. One problem with modernism was its dependence on the judgments of certain cultural brokers to declare what was "progressive" and what was not: in the domain of art, the brokers decide who gains access to museums, who does not, and on what terms.

In the Zimbabwean context we have seen that the stone sculpture movement was marketed by Frank McEwen, a curator from Europe who encouraged the Shona to sculpt as a return to their roots, looking to the ruins at Great Zimbabwe as proof of their talent (Zilberg 1996). McEwen perceived African artists as "unsullied" by

Western schools of thought regarding the arts and, consequently, with "an infinite potential of natural creativity" (McEwen 1968). His well-meaning, but patronizing interaction left the artists without voices for McEwen described their work to buyers in terms of his own version of "Shona tradition." Indeed, because Zimbabwean stone sculpture was created toward the end of the modernist art era, it helps us understand the current contestation of cultural heritage by illuminating the art form's transition from modernism to postmodernism [Note 14].

Postmodernism, as the name suggests, followed modernism as a frame of thought that rejects bourgeois culture, often as a self-proclamation by scholars who want to critique their own counterparts [Note 15]. Within anthropology and the arts, "postmodernism" has referenced a diversity of ideas, but generally opposes a clear central hierarchy while celebrating complexity, contradiction, ambiguity, and the interconnectedness of the contemporary world (Harney 2004:150; also Marcus and Myers 1995). Although the "postmodern turn" in anthropology encouraged critiques of how ethnography is performed and written (Marcus and Clifford 1986), some scholars now see it as falling a bit short. Postcolonial denouncements call for a scholarly "heightened incorporation of genealogical critique in relation to historical contexts and colonial questions, rather than to the hyper-aestheticization of the anthropologist as 'writer'" (Dirks 2001:234). Similarly, scholarly critiques of postmodernism reflect challenges by artists who contest the "heritage" implied in "multicultural" or postmodern art markets.

Pushing past the boundaries of postmodernism involves giving sculptors a voice that is not constrained by modernist dealers and gallery owners, and also one wherein postmodern art dealers and scholars do not "define the limitations of appreciation and expectation, or what we might call the confines of perception, within which African artists are either constructed or called upon to construct themselves" (Oguibe and Enwezor 1999:19). I regard the rejection of Zimbabwean stone sculptures by contemporary avant-garde art markets (e.g., Zilberg 2002) as an exemplar of how postmodernism excludes many non-Western artists. In order to understand how artists' contestation of Zimbabwean *sculptural* heritage excludes them from markets, it is critical to highlight power relationships to see who wields influence, and in what ways.

Although many artists now talk directly with a buyer or collector about their artwork, thereby avoiding mediation—and exotification—by patrons such as McEwen, we must remember that dealers and gallery owners hold the capital to sell the work to the end consumer (Dirks 2001:236). The obscuring of world capitalism by focusing on culture and the postmodernist (albeit multicultural) turn only conceals the academy's complicity in the markets' inequalities (Dirks 2001:238). We must not just consider how heritage solidifies culture into unchanging "traditions," but also acknowledge how those practices—when overlaid with the Western art markets' division between "fine art" and "tourist art"—distance many artists from a lucrative living. Postmodern multiculturalism cannot be celebrated without acknowledging how the focus on "culture" has allowed scholarly critique to be sidelined, ignoring the impoverishment of, and a lack of access to the modern world by, many Africans (Ferguson 2007).

A Heritage Not Carved in Stone

The Zimbabwean stone sculpture movement was created and marketed as a perpetuation of "tradition" during the transition from colonialism to the modern nation-state. The European patrons of the movement spoke of the sculpture as a contemporary art form that was built on "natural talent" and "traditional culture." McEwen directly linked the sculptors' talents to what we would now call "tangible heritage" via the ruins at Great Zimbabwe. The selling of the stone sculpture's "heritage" via "tradition" and the past continued as both the post-independence government and institutions such as UNESCO codified links to Zimbabwe's "intangible heritage" of sculpting. The historical trajectory of the Zimbabwean stone sculpture movement has continued to affect artists although—following independence from the white Rhodesian regime—the contested heritage of the *colonial* subject is no longer found within their artwork.

However, the explicit link between modern Zimbabwean sculpture and "traditional" subject matter or stories about the work has created a problem for those contemporary artists who assert that they do not want to be confined to a category of "Zimbabwean" or "Shona" sculpture. They propose leaving behind these categories, which have solidified into an inflexible art form, or an "intangible heritage" that is unchanging and must be carved in certain ways. Much like many African artists' and scholars' calls to push past the confines of postmodernism's Eurocentric bias of insisting on boundaries created by difference (Oguibe and Enwezor 1999), these sculptors wish to be taken at face value as artists who can borrow from the West without worry of being labeled "inauthentic" (Gutsa 2001; Sibanda 2001).

During the 1980s and 1990s, art markets around the world expanded as tourism became more prevalent, governments cut funding for the arts, and artists gained more independence from previous patrons (Harney 2004; Mullin 2001). In Zimbabwe, sculptors were able to experiment with different themes and forms although—similar to other indigenous modern art movements around the world (Myers 2002)—they were constrained within the confines of "difference" (Errington 1998). The disadvantage of Zimbabwean stone sculpture's status as de facto "intangible heritage" is the expectation that the art will follow certain forms (Figs. 11.9, and 11.10)—formats which some contemporary artists fight against.

Artists who sell their ethnicity, often to tourists, now find themselves living in a country in which they are increasingly unable to feed their families. In spirit-crushing irony, the government of Zimbabwe has scared off tourists, thus limiting the income of the majority of its artists who rely on the ethnic tradition of their "heritage." This has resulted in many sculptors traveling to South Africa in order to sell sculpture, flaunting the confines of state borders in order to earn money for basic necessities. Additionally, dealers in most of the "fine art" galleries in South Africa are rejecting the output of "tourist sculpture," proclaiming that the movement is contrived and passé; consequently, Zimbabwean artists now make only a limited income because they are excluded from upscale galleries.

Fig. 11.9 "Flow sculptures" of abstract families are common amongst "tourist Zimbabwean artwork." (Unknown artist, 2008, untitled) (Photo: Lance Larkin)

Fig. 11.10 Many sculptors carve curved triangular faces similar to this iconic Zimbabwean artwork. (Unknown artist, 1998, untitled) (Photo: Lance Larkin)

In light of the receding market for Zimbabwean sculpture in "fine art" galleries in South Africa, one is prompted to ask if these markets are now excluding sculptors further afield as well. My research in the USA has shown that gallery owners believe that "the jury is still out [on Zimbabwean stone sculpture] because galleries and museums don't know the good [sculpture] from the bad" (Anonymous gallery owner, personal communication, April 14, 2007); this owner added that fewer people are buying the sculpture as "fine art." Unlike similar modern art movements elsewhere in Africa that were also encouraged by the post-independence government (e.g., for Senegal, see Harney 2004), internal buyers and indigenous art critics are lacking in Zimbabwe (*The Sunday Mail* 2001). This lack has resulted in an environment in which domestic consumers are virtually non-existent (*Newsweek* 1962, and confirmed by my own observations), despite efforts by the National Gallery to educate indigenous consumers (Sibanda 1986). As international art dealers are giving up on exporting sculpture from Zimbabwe because of the difficulties that the Zimbabwean government places on them, and as most sculptors traveling out of the country to sell their sculptures in neighboring South Africa are limited by their own financial resources, the vibrancy of the art form is reduced by the conjoined constraints of making a living and selling ethnicity to do so.

Since the birth of the stone sculpture industry in the late 1960s, sculptors have had to contend with a "cultural heritage" based on an "art of difference." The white Rhodesian regime condemned the artwork, while European patrons highlighted this "heritage" as a selling point. Currently, as the foreign markets contract and Zimbabweans travel to South Africa to sell sculptures to tourists, "fine art" sculptors condemn the "cultural heritage" links to the ruins at Great Zimbabwe, attempting instead to carve links with the *modern* nation-state and *global* art world.

Notes

1. The research upon which this chapter is based encompasses interviews with sculptors, dealers, and gallery owners during 6 months in Zimbabwe in 2001 and 2 weeks in 2008, 11 weeks in South Africa in 2008, and ongoing research in the USA.
2. Currently, the Shona account for 82% of the nation's population (Central Intelligence Agency 2009).

3. The village continues today as a flagship for the art. In 2003 a museum was completed on-site, highlighting the first-generation sculptors who started sculpting here, and many of the artists who have lived and worked in Tengenenge since the start of the movement.

4. For instance, the indigenous people had already been forcibly removed to inferior land so that white commercial farmers could grow cash crops such as tobacco and cotton (Alexander et al. 2000; Worby 2000). As in many colonies, ethnocentrism supported the white rulers' belief that European techniques of agriculture would utilize the land more efficiently (Hughes 2006).

5. Among dealers, curators, and some scholars, the term "ethnographic art" is used in contradistinction to "fine art" to designate art(ifacts) that are often displayed with a description that includes technical, social, or religious elaboration, whereas "fine art" is often displayed with the assumption that aesthetic merit alone is sufficient, and the artwork may stand on its own, with only the briefest of biographical information (Price 1991).

6. The dearth of coverage on indigenous art is put in perspective by noting that the European population in cities and towns in 1969 was only 21% (Godwin and Hancock 1993), and was even less in rural areas.

7. The "West and the rest" dichotomy has been problematized by many scholars as an oversimplification of power relations (e.g., Said 1979; Dutton 1995; Loomba et al. 2005). In the context of this chapter, I use this category while acknowledging that "the West" and "Euro-American" are both short-hand for an art-historical ideology that is *not* limited to certain geographical regions or nation-states. In the context I discuss, for example, both categories include dealers in Europe, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and the USA.

8. The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage defines intangible heritage as "the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills—as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith—that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage" (UNESCO 2003:2).

9. An Internet search on December 15, 2008 for "Shona sculpture" yielded 18,900 "hits," demonstrating the continued use of ethnicity as a framing device for the movement; by contrast, a search for "Zimbabwean sculpture" only found 1,880 "hits." The difference of these numbers points to evidence of continued ethnic or tribal framing of the artwork.

10. It should be noted that many sculptors in the country are a mix of nationalities due to immigration from Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, and Angola (Zilberg 1996).

11. Zimbabwean "tourist art" thematically consists of realistic African busts, animals, and abstract family "flow" figures (see Kileff and Kileff 1996), while "fine art" is broader thematically, relating to virtually any topic and is often abstracted to varying degrees (see Mor 1987; Sultan 1999).

12. In 2001 the USA passed the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act, which in combination with egregious civil rights abuses by the Zimbabwean government led to a flight in capital from the country, leading to inflation of 231 *million* percent and the collapse of Zimbabwean currency (Associated Foreign Press 2009; Biden et al. 2001).

13. This name is a pseudonym, as are all names in this chapter except those of publicly recognized figures. The artwork shown in this chapter as referenced in these interviews was *not* created by the person being interviewed.

14. In periodizing the modernist movement I bear in mind the cautionary note urged by Loomba et al. (2005) to ground "eras" in a continuing history and acknowledging that there are many practices shared between modernism's purported successor, postmodernism—including continued perpetuation of ethnocentric discourse (Harney 2004:239).

15. Similar to modernism, various professional circles have had different referents regarding postmodernism, depending on the discipline and location (e.g., for economics, see Joy and Sherry 2003; for cultural studies, see Morley and Chen 1996; on art history, see Oguibe 2004a; for English, see Torgovnick 1990).

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Chapter 12
Afterword: El Pilar and Maya Cultural Heritage: Reflections of a Cheerful Pessimist

Anabel Ford

As we consider the contested landscape of cultural heritage, the facets elaborated in this volume are touch points for profitable discussion: social identity, political claims, national propaganda, ownership, respect, and interpretation. Yet, cultural heritage is fluid and constantly changing depending on the context of space and time. At the regional and global scale, the forces of homogeneity and unity reign, while at the national and local scales, heterogeneity and diversity prevail. With the growing world of tourism, cultural heritage has become a novelty realized through travel to the locale or its virtual substitute through print and moving media. Travel can be a positive opportunity that brings societies together to share common values of culture. But it also can generate tension when cultural values come into conflict. The case of the ancient Maya is significant on this point (Fig. 12.1).

When, in 1983, I first encountered El Pilar, a major Maya center straddling the border of Belize and Guatemala, it was unmapped and unknown to the academic community (the name itself, El Pilar, harks back to Spanish explorations). Of course, it was a recognized place in the local area, one known to have an abundance of water, unusual in a region of absorbent limestone bedrock. There were lumber and chiclero camps at the site, again because of the water. Local villagers who traversed the area were familiar with its geography—hills of covered ancient temples and corozo palms that were exploited for fronds and nuts. The illegal antiquities market had impacted the site: when we mapped it, we enumerated some 65 looters' trenches. But none of the local community or foreign explorers and archaeologists who traversed the terrain aiming for the interior sites—Tikal, Uaxactun, Yaxhá, and Naranjo, all within a radius of 50 km—had discerned the archaeological qualities of El Pilar. At its most vibrant—the period from A.D. 600 to 900—El Pilar had a population of more than 20,000 people, who lived in a mosaic landscape of city homes and gardens. Through archaeology, a cultural heritage that was lost was found. What would be its future? And for which stakeholders? At the threshold of the twenty-first century, do we need yet another Maya temple as a travel destination?

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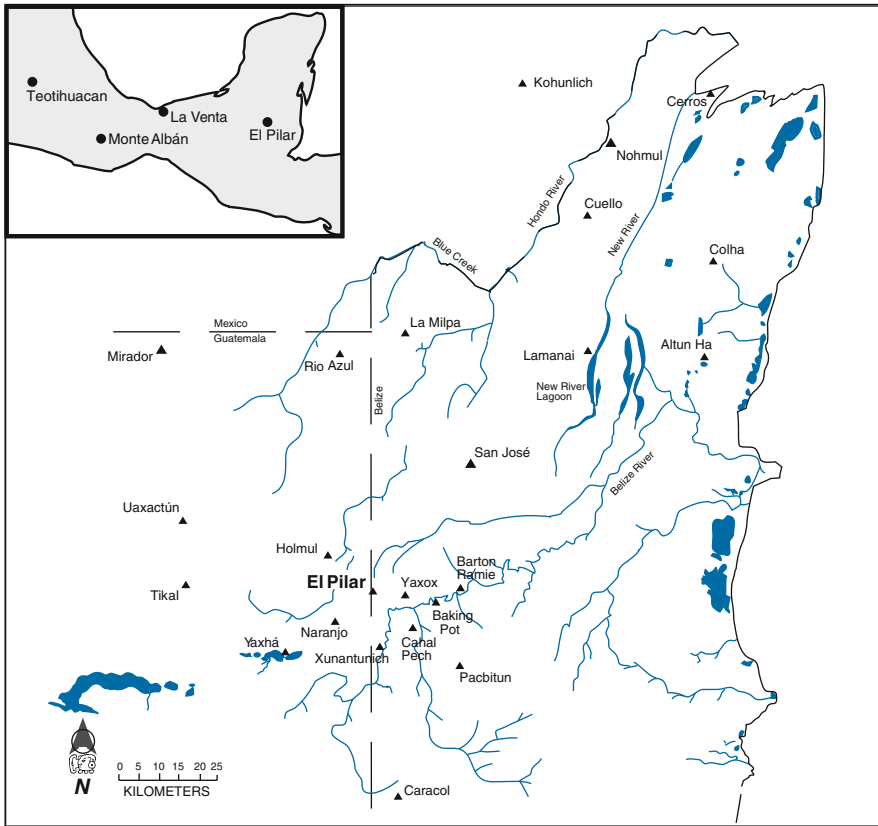
Fig. 12.1 The central lowland Maya area with El Pilar and other major centers located. (Anabel Ford)

A century ago, a romantic interpretation of the ancient Maya was constructed by scholars for Chichen Itzá. This was a time when, worldwide, water was abundant, natural resources seemed endless, and tropical forests appeared as the last terrestrial frontier. The Carnegie Institute of Washington was explicit that Chichen Itzá needed to be promoted as a mecca of travel to arouse public interest and support archaeology (Sullivan 1991:82–84). Across time and space, the promotion of the Maya has become homogenized with the iconic Chichen style, even as archaeologists working in the Maya region find more diversity (Webster 2002). And just as more responsible tourism venues are emerging and the desire for unique destinations is expanding, the Maya tourism fashion has taken the iconic Castillo at Chichen Itzá and made it *the* narrative. So successful is this icon that, in March 2006, a meeting of NAFTA leaders (Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, United States President George W. Bush, and Mexican President Vicente Fox) used the Castillo at Chichen as the backdrop.

The Maya tourism narrative—emphasizing great temples and spectacular art—leaves little room for consideration about how the ancient Maya prospered within the tropical forest that so challenged early explorers. Yet careful reflection is needed (Ford and Havrda 2006): what of the contemporary Maya who continue to live in their traditional settlements with forest gardens, at the periphery of their developing nations of Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize? Their gardens contain all the dominant plants of the Maya forest, 90% of which are classified by economic botanists as useful (Campbell et al. 2006).

Research has shown that local Maya communities have a perspective on themselves and tourism (Ford 1998) that can correct the impression of foreign visitors that the Maya failed. They offer a link in the same space from the flamboyant prosperity of the Classic Maya of the ancient past to the sustained activities of the traditional Maya households of today. Indeed, rarely is the connection made that the language of the Maya hieroglyphs (Macri and Ford 1997) is the same language spoken by contemporary Maya farmers—a language embedded in the forest and its resources (Atran 1993). Instead, the contemporary Maya are too often cavalierly blamed for the destruction of the Maya forest. How can this paradox be reconciled?

As cultural heritage has been transformed into global currency with tourism, we see more emphasis on political ends, often privileging the foreigner while ignoring local stakeholders. Recently, particularly in the setting of archaeology, there has been an explicit effort to promote public outreach, local participation, and community inclusion in the development of visitor destinations. The power in shaping the narrative needs to encompass multivocality. Since cultural heritage is always fluid and open to contest, it provides alternative space for social, cultural, and traditional practice that can begin to integrate other equally valid perspectives.

Political and national claims are historically rooted, and often entrenched and resistant to change in the short term, but inevitably change occurs in the long term. My project at El Pilar has emphasized the development of a participatory process involving scholars and the local stakeholders. Claims can be negotiated, as my work at El Pilar has demonstrated (Ford 1998). The claims may be found within the context of national and social space, in museums, or in land tenure. How information is generated and distributed impacts the story of a cultural heritage. This is where collaboration is most critical. There are many dimensions to participation and to the evaluation of stakeholders. The importance of conceptually sharing ownership, respecting diverse views, and engaging varied interpretations plays out most clearly in this arena. Fundamental to my project is the recognition that when social identities change, a provision for the performance of identities can embrace the change. One successful venue of the project has been the promotion of traditional village living arts (Ford et al. 2005; Ford 2006).

Of special promise for the future is the concept of Peace Parks (Ali 2007), which has transformed nationalist interests, creating spaces where contest can be conciliatory. The Peace Park initiative for binational El Pilar highlights the ancient Maya site as a shared cultural and natural heritage of two nations, Belize and Guatemala (Fig. 12.2). Today, El Pilar is the heart of the 5,000-acre El Pilar Archaeological
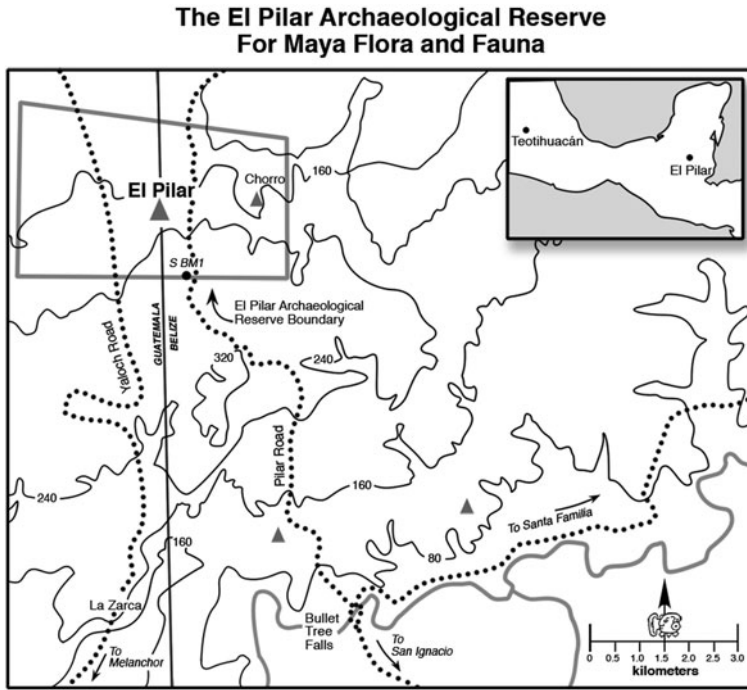
Fig. 12.2 The El Pilar archaeological reserve of Belize and Guatemala. (Anabel Ford)

Reserve for Maya Flora and Fauna, which links Belize and Guatemala and celebrates the culture and nature of the Maya forest. Where the cultural heritage of the ancient Maya is a critical component of tourism in both countries and the natural heritage of the Maya forest is globally recognized as a target for conservation, the El Pilar model can resonate locally, nationally, regionally, and internationally. Simultaneously, the concept of Peace Parks acknowledges the sovereignty of each country while underscoring the regional quality of the cultural and natural heritage of the Maya, both of which transcend national boundaries.

A future without contestation? Difficult but possible. Across the globe there has been recognition of the plight of our natural resources and a push to promote biological diversity. I can envision a similar recognition for the value and qualities of the world's cultural heritage. We are a global society and, as a result, there is a movement toward increasing cultural homogeneity. Awareness of the intangible cultural heritage in language, land use, and other furtive forms provides a platform for celebrating cultural diversity, as validated by UNESCO's 2001 *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity* and UNESCO's 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage*. Humans have occupied the earth for millions of years, and over that course of time we have transformed the natural resources of our space to our needs. Explicit recognition of the value of diversity in our natural heritage is a starting point to promote the values inherent in the diversity of our cultures.

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Subject Index