

Heritage and Violence

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For a long time, heritage has been associated with positive and productive values: the construction of ideas of community and nation and even international identities. During the last decade and a half, however, there has been a growing concern with the legacies of violence, the product of a hundred years of global, civil and ethnic wars, genocides, colonialism and dictatorship. This is a fast-growing subfield in heritage studies and the deployment of heritage consumption.

In this chapter, we will set out some of the prevalent characteristics of legacies of violence and conflict; together, these broadly frame heritage work in this area. We then look at civil conflict and violence perpetrated by the state, and at circumstances where the heritage of violence has an international dimension. Focusing on more detailed cases helps understand the specific dynamics that give this subfield of heritage its distinctiveness. We have chosen state violence across a range of countries in South America and ethnically organized conflict in Sri Lanka; there are of course many other cases that would serve equally well. Finally, we look at issues of engaged practice and “memory work”; aspects of this subfield that, we argue, will be of increasing importance in the future.

Heritage and Violence

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Introduction

For a long time, heritage has been associated with positive and productive values: the construction of ideas of community and nation and even international identities. During the last decade and a half, however, there has been a growing concern with the legacies of violence, the product of a hundred years of global, civil and ethnic wars, genocides, colonialism and dictatorship. This is a fast-growing subfield in heritage studies and the deployment of heritage consumption. A variety of descriptors have been proposed: negative; dissonant; painful; dark; difficult (Tunbridge & Ashworth 1996; Dolff-Bonekämper 2002; Meskell 2002; Logan & Reeves 2008; MacDonald 2008; Biran et al. 2011). In parallel, archaeologists and heritage practitioners have been paying closer attention to the conflicts that emerge in cases of apparently peaceful heritage, including classic *lieux de mémoire*. We will not refer to these here, as they will be tackled in other chapters (see Herzfeld this volume). We will focus on heritage that is directly associated with violence.

A general distinction can be drawn between heritage that is a direct outcome of violence, such as battlefields, concentration camps, memorials, mass graves and prisons, and heritage that existed before conflict but was touched by it and therefore changed forever. This can include traditional heritage sites (such as Dresden's old town or Canterbury Cathedral), as well as everyday environments such as urban settings or agricultural landscapes. Examples here are the lasting heritage of apartheid and the ways in which this is inscribed on the land, and the killing fields of Cambodia (Hall 2001; 2009a; Totten and Parsons 2012).

The way conflict affects places also varies. Violence can transform places materially, as happened with the National Library of Sarajevo, bombed by the Serbs (Riedlmayer 1995; Hall 2002). Or traces of violence can be inscribed through association; an example is the train station of Montoire-le-Loir, where Hitler shook hands with Pétain (Dolff-Bonekämper 2002). Monuments can gain new significance through the collateral damage of conflicts, as has been the case with many Mesopotamian sites and museums damaged forever by the war in Iraq (Stone & Bayali 2008). Monuments can also become targets in themselves, as happened during the Bosnian War (Chapman 1994; Hall 2002; Bevan 2005) or with the Palestinian villages and olive groves razed by the Israelis (Bardenstein 1999). Increasingly, "landscapes of destruction" are becoming emblematic of heritage in our contemporary

world (González-Ruibal 2008).

In this chapter, we will set out some of the prevalent characteristics of legacies of violence and conflict; together, these broadly frame heritage work in this area. We then look at civil conflict and violence perpetrated by the state, and at circumstances where the heritage of violence has an international dimension. Focusing on more detailed cases helps understand the specific dynamics that give this subfield of heritage its distinctiveness. We have chosen state violence across a range of countries in South America and ethnically organized conflict in Sri Lanka; there are of course many other cases that would serve equally well. Finally, we look at issues of engaged practice and “memory work”; aspects of this subfield that, we argue, will be of increasing importance in the future.

On Violence

Before addressing specific case studies and situations, though, is the question of why so much attention is now being paid to violence in heritage studies? In 2014 the European Union opened a call within the Horizon 2020 programme which specifically addresses “the cultural heritage of war”; this is only part of the many heritage projects that the EU has funded in recent years dealing with the material and immaterial legacies of violence (civil, ethnic, international). It can be argued that this is consciously related to the Union’s image as promoter of peace—it received the Nobel Prize in 2012—and the troubled recent history of Europe. Yet individual countries, such as the United Kingdom, are also investing important resources in conflict and post-conflict studies, in which heritage plays a prominent role.

Heritage, as a product of modernity and capitalism, shows similar expansive, even voracious, qualities. While the modern episteme needs to encompass within its rationality all that is real, capitalism has a long-recognised ability to commodify everything, including cultural production, as Horkheimer and Adorno (2001 [1944]) observed 70 years ago. While the German philosophers were thinking in popular culture, their insights can be extended to the dynamics of heritage today, which encourage passivity and acceptance in the style of the theme park; indeed, it can be argued that heritage is now part of the experience economy (Harrison 2013: 84-88). As with modernity in general, conventional and mainstream heritage seeks to encompass (and commodify) all that is real.

Today, there are no longer aesthetic or other conventions that define and limit that which heritage can be considered to be, at least in practice. Commodification is not restricted to positive values and goods. It can also embrace pain, disease, trauma or violence. Consequently, this negativity applies to heritage. Perhaps the most eloquent example of this cannibalisation of suffering is the phenomenon of dark tourism (Lennon and Foley 2000), but none the less important is the trivialisation of places of trauma through marketing strategies, such as cafés or shops (Shepherd 2013: 236-238). While dark tourism is based on a fascination for violent pasts, the trivialisation of painful places often

works in an opposite way, eliding the troubling side of history to make places easier to incorporate in the experience economy.

It would be wrong, though, to see the association between violence and heritage as only a commercial strategy of late capitalism. On the one hand, for thousands of years sites of pain have been not only visited, but have also been part of commercial strategies; in pilgrimage, for example, and the selling of relics (Lennon and Foley 2000: 3-4). Fascination with death and disaster clearly predates modernity. On the other hand, to see the evident success of the heritage of violence in our contemporary world as merely economic would be to indulge in a crude reductionism that denies insights into both its complexity and its rationale. In the rest of this chapter, we offer a reading of the heritage of violence that reaches beyond the superficialities of the experience economy for deeper insights into the role that heritage plays in the world today.

To get to these deeper meanings, we have to dig beneath the moralistic veneers of the experience economy; the tendency to empty discourses on abstract values that Levinas called the “humanism of the arrogant” (Levinas 2008: 213): “war against war perpetuates war, stripping it of its bad conscience”. Simmons (1990: 90) has expanded this key insight: “considering the unchanging conditions of man making war on man, the century of genocide in which we live, and the repeated atrocities, is morality not meaningless? According to Levinas, morality can only have meaning when it has its own justification, when it is not absorbed by ontology and politics, when it exists outside of the violence of ontology and politics”. The insistence on simply rejecting war that is promoted at many heritage sites, serves to negate the political symptoms of conflict and offers to clean the conscience of nations and supranational organizations. In seeking this outcome, commodified heritage obscures the specifics of violence and conflict, transforming every war and every violence to the same war and the same violence. This naturalizes what is in reality historically and culturally specific. Consequently, the heritage of violence, which is potentially subversive and thought-provoking, serves to produce the self-satisfying passivity that Horkheimer and Adorno (2001) denounced in popular culture: violence is in human nature, the heritage of conflict testifies to that nature, and therefore we can only contemplate (and enjoy) the heritage of conflict while lamenting the fate of the human race.

Beneath – and despite – this tendency to commodification, though, violence and conflict shape individual and collective memory and indelible traces in the material world. Rather than dismissing the heritage of violence as beyond hope, appropriated by the theme parks and memorabilia of the experience economy, we need to look for different approaches. This means examining structural problems in specific contexts and in long-term perspective. For example an important issue that is seldom considered is the problem of how violence shapes subjectivity at a deep level. This troubled both Frantz Fanon (2004 [1961]) and Hannah Arendt (1969); extreme, protracted violence, physical and symbolic, may produce longterm ontological changes in the subject. In this situation, violence becomes so enmeshed in the making of the person that no discourse on peace and

reconciliation (including heritage discourses) can effectively excise it.

Fanon and Arendt formulated concepts of violence at much the same time, but in very different contexts: Fanon from within the movement for Algerian liberation; Arendt from the experience and memory of fascism, the rise and repression of the anti-war movement in the US and the threat of nuclear Armageddon (Fanon 2004, first published in 1963; Arendt 1969). Subsequent work has developed these themes, exploring decolonization in the second part of the twentieth century and the legacy of violence in postcolonial states (Ngugi 1998; Mbembe 2001) and the violence of the “end-time” of late capitalism (Zizek 2008; 2012; 2013). In turn, this work challenges core assumptions of northern and western scholarship; the hubris of detached and authoritative interpretation; the assumption that violence is an aberration in the north but an endemic condition of the south (Mignolo 2011). Increasingly, these rich and insightful theoretical strands are informing insights into the relationship between heritage and violence that avoid the seductive trap of the experience economy and its attendant advocates.

Archaeology, then, can be put at work examining how the materiality of history is practically engaged in the production of troubled selves by continuously actualizing past grievances. After all, material things are known for their ability to fix meanings, direct behaviour and stabilise collectives (Olsen 2010; Hodder 2012). Some questions here would be: how can collectives created through violence be destabilised and reassembled? How can we reorder things to change the vicious circle of conflict? How can we do that while escaping the cycle of neutralisation and commoditisation of pain in the process of unearthing violence (Starzmann 2013)? And how can insights into the meanings of materiality be used in the mediation of conflict situations, averting the use of violence (Hall 2013)?

Legacies of Violence

In considering legacies of violence, then, there are a number of characteristics that will shape the role that heritage plays, irrespective of the location, scale or specific nature of conflicts

Firstly, and perhaps most importantly, has conflict ceased? If a conflict is active, the production of heritage will vary accordingly. Conflicts that are denied by those who control the territory, such as in the Armenian Genocide, do not produce heritage in loco, but in the diaspora. On-going struggles, such as the Colombian or the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts, hamper forms of memorialisation and the transformation of places into heritage sites. Another relevant issue is whether a conflict has ended with the victory of a specific side or through international intervention, as this heavily affects the politics of remembrance by introducing a set of values that may be at variance with realities on the ground and local feelings (Viejo-Rose 2013).

The two cases that we look at in more detail below present contrasting circumstances in

this regard. In South America, legacies of violence are attached to the dictatorships that had come to an end by 1990; as in South Africa, the record of these conflicts is now being taught to students who were not alive in their time. But Sri Lanka's thirty-year civil war only ended in 2009 and the war-time distinctions between Tamil and Sinhalese define both the politics inside the country and its international relations. Conflict remains endemic in our contemporary world (for example, across the Middle East and parts of Africa); increasingly, heritage practitioners will find themselves in situations where conflicts remain open.

This leads immediately to a second key characteristic; is there a shared master narrative (Alexander 2004)? This is evidently unlikely where a conflict remains open and heritage interventions will inevitably be cast as partisan; an example here is the set of positions taken in response to Meskell's comparison of the heritage legacies of Lower Manhattan and Afghanistan's Bamiyan Valley in the immediate aftermath of the 2001 destruction of the World Trade Center in New York (Meskell 2002). Where conflicts have been at least in part settled a master narrative becomes established. This can be more or less spontaneous, the product of social reconciliation, but it can also be crafted by the State, as in the case of the American Civil War where claims for reconciliation enabled the transformation of battlefields into heritage sites, albeit not free from contention (Sutton 2012).

However, the assumption that there will be a settled master narrative for conflicts that have long been formally resolved may often be unjustified. An example here is Japan's Yasukuni Shrine to those killed in wars between 1861 and 1951; because some of those commemorated at Yasukuni were convicted of war crimes, commemorations regularly provoke protests by Korea, Taiwan and China (Economist 2013). Haber (2010) argues that an "objectifying" archaeology – that sees narratives as settled – would constitute a "regime of truth" that could itself be a form of repression, and insight that is aligned with Mignolo's general critique of the continuing claims to a normality of non-violence by dominant northern and western powers (Mignolo 2011). Challenging these truth claims does not mean the abandonment of analytical rigour and the use of scientific techniques. If anything, engagement with archival evidence, oral recollection and the complexities of past and present political interests makes the value of archaeological techniques all the more important. When the results of such research may be critical in litigation and tested against the rules of legal evidence there is no latitude for technical error or unjustified assumptions.

A third factor that, we argue, will shape the nature of heritage work in this area will be the characteristics and extent of state intervention. Legacies of violence range from domestic conflict to eliminationism (following Goldhagen 2009). There is evidently a spectrum here. In Spain, for example, it has been left to relatives of the killed by the dictatorship to remember their dead (Renshaw 2011) and there was no nation-wide heritage initiative (such as a museum) after the re-establishment of democracy in 1978 (Monegal 2008).

An example of an intermediate set of circumstances – where heritage and legacy issues

are widespread but below the level of explicit state intervention – is the heritage of slavery and colonial appropriation in Cape Town and the treatment and commemoration of burial grounds (Hall 2009a; Shepherd 2007). However, the dynamics of heritage discourse and practice changes appreciably when there is evident state interest. This is the case with Robben Island – off the coast of Cape Town – and the intertwined narratives of political imprisonment, the representation of the African National Congress as a liberation movement and party in government and the life story of Nelson Mandela (Corsane 2006). State policies vary widely, even within countries. Goebel and Keene (2011: 31-32), for instance, compare the wildly different ways in which the sieges of Leningrad and Stalingrad have been memorialised. Likewise, the same State ideology does not mean a similar behaviour towards the cultural heritage of a vanquished enemy. The same authors note the differing ways in which Poles and Russians have dealt with two occupied cities, Breslau and Königsberg. The latter was razed to the ground by the Soviet power, whereas part of the former's history was respected and appropriated by the Polish state (Goebel and Keene 2011: 40-41).

Contemporary conflict heritage may also be transnational nature, as modern wars are rarely localized in a single country or region. In these circumstances, questions of legacies of violence will be between, rather than within, states. After a conflict is over, a diversity of actors (victims, governments, veterans) may make claims over sites or objects beyond national boundaries, that are pivotal in the definition of their individual or collective history, whether they are places of mass extermination (Kouoyomedjian and Siméone 2005), battlefields (Ziino 2012) or stolen works of art (Nicholas 1994). Wars do not only result in destruction – they also produce massive de-localisations of heritage.

Together, the status of conflict (whether it is in the past or continuing), the degree to which there is a shared interpretation of what happened and the scale of the issue (and particularly the level of involvement of the state) will shape legacies of violence as they are expressed through heritage. Together, these factors structure processes of remembrance and commemoration, and engagement with communities and the “memory work” that we discuss at the end of this chapter.

Reconstruction is perhaps the most debated issue in the relationship between conflict and violence, and remembrance and commemoration. Reconstruction has been regarded as an effective way of coping with a traumatic past and achieving reconciliation by nation-states and international agencies (Ibreck 2013). Such approaches, however, often provoke as much conflict as they intend to overcome. In Spain, reconstruction after the Spanish Civil War has been criticised since the dictatorship that emerged from the war used the occasion to reconstruct villages and towns according to their exclusionary nationalist and imperialist ideals (Muñoz-Rojas 2011; Viejo Rose 2011). In the former Yugoslavia the European Union has invested heavily in heritage reconstruction (Schwartz 2012). However, the multicultural model espoused by the organisation, and by governments such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, has not gained support from local communities (Dacia Viejo 2013). The prevalence of these debates and disagreements again makes the point that questions of the heritage and legacies of violence are inherently political and

are invariably associated with the dispositions of power – the key point in Arendt's and Fanon's founding formulations of contemporary theories of violence (Arendt 1969; Fanon 2004).

A key issue for reconstruction projects is the role of ruins. Here, attitudes change through time, not the least due to the physical processes of ruination, since the materiality of the past cannot be frozen in time and physical processes of decay continue (see Olivier 2004: 185-186; González-Ruibal 2013). While claiming broad benefits for reconstruction and remembrance, policies may privilege the few and use the opportunities offered by large urban refurbishments to raze heritage or reshape it to serve the needs of elites. An example here is the controversial restitution of Beirut (Charlesworth and Nelson 2012).

Civil conflicts and state violence

These general characteristics of the heritage of violence may become particularly complex in situations that involve civil conflicts and violence by the state. Damage from conflicts may be extensive and closure and reconciliation difficult to achieve, contentious and rarely satisfactory to all stakeholders.

Producing a new narrative after civil conflict is often difficult because there will usually be a part of the population that identifies with former perpetrators of violence. While analyses often emphasize the primary distinction between hegemonic, authorized heritage and grassroots or subaltern initiatives (Smith 2006), community groups and social movements are often internally divided. Victims may differ as to how the past should be remembered—if at all. Thus in Argentina, the transformation of a former detention centre into a heritage site has provoked intense debates among stakeholders about the activities that should take place in the restored facility, and about the narrative that should be displayed (Hidalgo 2012). Similar debates have characterized consideration of other once-clandestine centres of detention, of mass graves and of places associated with state terrorism (Zarankin & Salerno 2012).

It is also worth noting that civil conflicts are rarely just that: internecine wars and dictatorships are usually inserted within major, long-term conflicts. In South America some have argued that the dictatorial regimes that ravaged their countries during the second half of the twentieth century should not be seen in isolation, but rather as enmeshed in the long-term history of violence through colonial conquest, slavery and class conflict (e.g. López-Mazz forthcoming). This requires a comprehensive heritage perspective that integrates slave plantations, sites of genocide and detention centres within the same programme. Such an approach requires the integration of pre-conflict cultural heritage and a critique of interpretations that deploy earlier heritage for the purposes of nationalist narratives (Rowlands 2008; Mire 2011). In general terms, it is a mistake to require, as a criterion for success, that there is unanimity in the processes and outcomes of developing narratives of the past through the heritage of violence and conflict. As Latour notes “things” – here the material traces of the past – may bring people

together because they divide them (Latour 2005:13). Total agreement around “the thing heritage” is neither feasible nor desirable, and much less so in post-conflict situations.

Genocides are usually the outcome of extreme civil conflicts and violent state regimes, and have particular challenges for remembrance and commemoration (Totten and Parsons 2012). In considering the implications for the legacies of these kinds of violence and conflict the broader term “eliminationism” is preferable: a set of phenomena that are directed towards the destruction of particular groups without necessarily implying their total destruction (Goldhagen 2009). So defined, eliminationist policies have abounded during the last hundred years and have been remembered, or denied recognition, in different ways.

The definitive genocide, the Nazi extermination of the Jews, has been the object of countless studies of memory and heritage, many of which focus on the way Germans have remembered (or forgotten) their criminal history through time (Kosher 2000). The tendency of the state to produce a rather pacified interpretation of the past has been challenged by grassroots initiatives, in which alternative forms of heritage have been produced, most famously the “topography of terror” (Bernbeck and Pollock 2007). The stories portrayed in former extermination camps have varied substantially since 1945. Recent developments include an increasingly comprehensive narrative that includes minorities other than Jewish (such as Roma-Sinti, Poles, Soviet citizens and homosexuals). There has been an expansion of “dark tourism”, which has resulted in problems of trivialisation and commodification (Ronson 2004). There is the increasingly pressing question of authenticity (Marrus 1997); as time passes, more conservation work has to be undertaken, replacing most of the original fabric of the genocide sites. In this context, archaeology is reclaiming a more prominent role in the research, management and presentation of the Holocaust (Theune 2010, 2013; Sturdy Colls 2012).

African eliminationist atrocities have begun to receive attention by heritage researchers. In Rwanda, the production of a genocide heritage started soon after the events in 1994 and has been substantially shaped by the new (Tutsi) government. This has included both places related to the massacre, as well as a museum, the Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre. The Rwandan state’s master narrative presents colonialism as the root cause of the 1994 massacre and also emphasises the universal character of genocides; this approach, it has been argued, is intended to facilitate reconciliation among Rwandans and to alleviate national guilt (McKinney 2012). However, the image of a peaceful past only interrupted by colonial intervention may be contradicted by archaeological data, presenting ethical and political issues for archaeologists who find evidence for a less bucolic narrative (Giblin 2010). A similar contradiction applies in Sierra Leone. Here, and unsurprisingly, a long civil conflict between 1991 and 2002, with eliminationist dimensions, has been commemorated in a new master narrative that uses cultural heritage to portray a peaceful coexistence in the past. However, this idealized vision of the past makes it difficult to come to terms with trauma and to understand the political causes of recent troubles (Basu 2008). Again, and more broadly, effective critiques of heritage narratives need to

take account of analyses of the deployment of violence in the postcolonial state that build on Fanon's (2004) insistence that the ever-present threat of violence defines political relationships (see Mbembe 2001; Ngugi 1998). At the same time, the silencing of violence in postcolonial contexts cannot be understood outside the framework of the coloniality of power (Quijano 2000). Sanitizing and simplifying the legacies of violence in Africa or Latin America suits well the interests of the West, which is always complicit in one way or another with the sources of conflict in former colonized nations.

In Sudan the state has created a decentralized heritage network, with museums in different areas of the country that have been affected by conflict. The aim is to portray the diversity of Sudanese identities and a non-conflictual multiculturalism. Seen, though, from the perspective of Mbembe's analysis of the dynamics of power and violence in Cameroon, though, this looks like a sanitized interpretation of cultural identity that is at odds with historical evidence. Leturcq suggests that, as a counterpoint, the negative aspects of identity should also be represented in heritage narratives and "diversity" replaced by the concept of "alterity", in which exchanges between different ethnic groups are emphasised, whether these interactions are conflictive, cultural or commercial (Leturcq 2009). Of course, as an alternative approach to representing the legacy of violence, this would not be in the interests of the Sudanese state.

Eliminationism is the disposition of state violence at its most extreme, directed at exterminating both people and also memory. Consequently, and in order to make a *tabula rasa*, there will be a drive to destroy all material traces the group targeted for elimination. Again, the Holocaust is the paradigmatic case. More recent campaigns have included the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan and the razing of the Babri Masjid in Ayodha, India (Bernbeck and Pollock 1996; Meskell 2004). There is a mirroring tendency to eradicate the traces, and memory, of perpetrator regimes; in Germany the architectural legacy of the Nazi regime has largely been destroyed. Controversies often emerge around the commemoration of perpetrators (see MacDonald 2009; Pinkepank 2008; Burström & Gelderblom 2011). For example, while Nazi sites may serve an educational function, they may also become places of memory for neo-Nazis (Hansell 2011). It can be argued that the "Spuren des Terrors" - the traces of terror that have been identified and marked out in different German cities (Braun et al. 2002) - can be more effective than the preservation of Nazi architecture. Stolpersteine, bronze cobbles, serve as reminders of the deportation of Jews from a particular place, while fragments from the Berlin Wall are effective as material traces for remembering dark pasts (Klausmeier and Schmidt 2004).

International conflicts and heritage

Compared to civil conflicts, dictatorships and genocides, the heritage of international wars may appear less controversial. Master narratives have been crafted for the First and Second World Wars that are widely accepted; in the first case based on the idea of sublime but meaningless sacrifice, in the second on the concept of the "good war".

Nevertheless, disagreements emerge. One concerns the representation of a multiplicity of voices that have been silenced in formal narratives, ranging from colonial fighters to women sexual slaves. Their stories are rarely represented at heritage sites, memorials and museums, which are usually male- and Western-oriented.

A further issue is the question of “enclave heritage”. Modern wars tend to affect wide areas and involve the displacement of huge numbers of people (as soldiers, volunteers or refugees). This produces “heritage out of place”. Gallipoli is perhaps the best-known case - a place in Turkey that is regarded as national heritage by Australians (Ziino 2012). Other examples abound, especially for the Second World War (Beaumont 2012). Also characteristic of the legacy of modern warfare are “people out of place”. For instance, volunteers who fought for the other side, as with the many SS volunteers from Norway, Denmark or France and died fighting for Nazi Germany: how are their remains to be treated? Should they be remembered in any way? (Jasinski et al. 2012: 271). And how should the Cold War be remembered (Schofield and Cocroft)? While nuclear confrontation never materialized, the proxy wars that were triggered caused untold suffering in what was designated, as part of the ideology of the time, the “Third World”.

Issues of enclave heritage also apply to the legacy of colonial conflicts, and to colonialism more generally. Colonial forts, monuments to war heroes and cemeteries are often allowed to decay, which is not surprising, given the inequities of colonial conquests (Chadha 2006). Colonial nations may or may not reclaim this heritage and their attitudes to it are often ambivalent; individual initiatives may weigh more than those of states (Logan & Than Bihn 2012). States may deliberately annihilate the heritage of those regions that they occupy, both during war and in peaceful times. An example here is Algeria, where the French destroyed large parts of the Islamic heritage of the country (Le Cour Grandmaison 2005: 104). Indeed, the beginning of this behaviour can be traced back to the origins of modernity, with the Spanish razing of indigenous heritage in the Americas during the wars of the sixteenth century.

Heritage and state violence in South America

Many of the prevalent characteristics of the heritage of conflict and violence are demonstrated in the historiography of heritage and twentieth century dictatorships in South America. Looking in more detail at this region provides additional insights into the ways in which the need for commemoration and remembrance can intersect with heritage practice.

Between 1920 and 1990, fifteen countries in South America had authoritarian regimes in which military juntas usurped civil systems of government, suspended civil rights and instituted martial law. These regimes depended on methods of repression that included censorship, exile, detention, torture and murder. At the heart of these technologies was a particular form of terror captured in the neologism “the disappeared” (*los desaparecidos*). When someone had been disappeared, the place and details of detention were unknown

(Crossland 2000). Few returned and, since the fact or manner of death remained undisclosed, family, friends and community were denied any closure (Feitlowitz 1998; Klein 2007). Between 1980 and 1990, these authoritarian regimes began to collapse. Removal of the most overt forms of repression strengthened broad coalitions seeking social justice and redress, increasing in turn the demand for evidence and the desire for a master narrative that could make sense of what had happened (Feitlowitz 1998; Funari, Zarankin and Salerno 2010). This demand has drawn together a broad alliance of heritage practitioners with expertise in oral and written testimony, forensic research and archaeology. As a result, it is now acknowledged that this continent-wide system of violence has a distinctive heritage that is inscribed in the materiality of places, buildings and the apparatus of terror, and is imbricated with testimony and memory. As an instance of heritage violence and post-conflict recovery, the story of *los desaparecidos* can be understood as stigmatization, disappearance and evidence for resistance. A particularly powerful feature of this work has been the direct engagement as former victims in constituting remembrance through their own testimony. And international complicity with South American regimes of terror, particularly by the USA, connects the regional specificity of this heritage work with international regimes of violence (Hall 2010).

Stigmatization was the process of marking out categories of people as opponents to order and stability. In general terms such people were “communists”, to be identified by their appearance and choice of dress. Melisa Salerno (2010) has shown how militarized regimes, heavily invested in the symbolism of uniforms and bodily regimentation, claimed contrary appearance and dress as evidence of dissident beliefs and subversion. Through this device, victims could be detained and incarcerated without any explicit knowledge of their political beliefs or actions.

Disappearance lies at the heart of an archaeology heritage violence because, in the absence of documentary evidence and with only the fragmentary recollection of a few survivors, the material traces of clandestine detention centres offer some hope of substantiating the record of the past, and therefore of attaining closure. Clandestine detention centres were usually set up in existing buildings and identified by code-names. Mapping this network and recording the remnants of its detention centres offers the opportunity of grounding the fragmentary recollections of survivors and the occasional documentary source in a substantial system of meaning that recovers memory and defeats the objective of eradicating the lives of the regimes’ victims through the processes of disappearance (Mazz 2010; Zarankin and Niro 2010).

More tenuous, but invaluable in augmenting the system of meaning and memory, is material evidence of resistance to the regime of humiliation, torture and de-humanization in the detention centres. Examples are evidence for escape attempts, prisoners’ craft work such as toys made from wood and bone and graffiti (Mazz 2010; Navarrete and López 2010; Salerno, Zarankin and Perosino 2012; Biasatti 2011).

Oral testimony often plays a key role in assembling the heritage of conflict and violence; this is all the more powerful when former victims are directly engaged in the

reconstitution of the past (Funari, Zarankin and Salerno 2010). Here is Claudio Niro writing about his own detention:

“9 May 1976, I arrived at Vesubio, a clandestine center of detention located at Camino de Cintura and Richieri highway (Mantanza Department). Four individuals following Suárez Mason’s orders got me off a Ford Falcon. I was hooded and my hands were tied at my back. Meanwhile, the individuals insulted me and hit me, forcing me into a room. Once inside, they made me stand against a wall with my legs wide open. Several torturers kicked my testicles once and again. This procedure was called “ablande”. It was intended to intimidate the prisoner before getting him or her into the torture room ... “Cuchas” were small rooms where four or five people stayed hooded, handcuffed and leg-ironed to walls and other prisoners. Once in the “cuchas”, kidnappers forced us to take off our clothes and wear brown uniforms they had previously handed us in. This procedure made us lose -along with our clothes- all traces of an exterior life ” (Zarankin and Niro 2010: page?).

One consequence of closure – of developing a broadly accepted master narrative as has been the case with the South American dictatorships – is that stories of violence may be objectified as residing “elsewhere”, in the past, or in distant and exotic places (Haber 2010). Consequently, a significant dimension of the South American master narrative of repression and torture is the now-incontrovertible evidence of complicity by the United States by means of the covert set of agreements known as Operation Condor. Operation Condor provided the South American regimes with advice, communication facilities and intelligence support and, at times, active assistance with covert operations (Feitlowitz 1998, Dinges 2004, Klein 2007, Mazz 2010). “Condor was a Cold War-era covert network of U.S.-backed Latin American military regimes in Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay, later joined by Ecuador and Peru in less central roles. The secret Condor apparatus enabled the militaries to share intelligence--and to seize, torture, and execute political opponents across borders. Condor agents also assassinated key opposition leaders around the world” (McSherry 2005:1). The discovery of the “terror archives” in Paraguay in 1992 provided evidence of some 50 000 murders, 30 000 disappearances and 400 000 detentions by the security services of the participating countries. There are evident parallels with present-day covert security operations; connections such as these keep the heritage of conflict and violence relevant to live issues of human rights and social justice.

Conflict and world heritage in Sri Lanka

In contrast with South America, where the last dictatorship ended more than two decades ago, the experience of conflict and violence is more recent in Sri Lanka. Here, civil war began in 1983 with an insurgency by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (the LTTE, or Tamil Tigers), claiming the right to an independent state in the north and eastern part of the island. Conflict continued until a ceasefire in 2001 and a fragile truce that lasted until 2005. The war finally ended in 2009 with a decisive victory by government forces and allegations of extensive human rights violations that remained unresolved five years later (Sri Lanka Government 2011; United Nations 2011; Weiss 2011). It is estimated that

between 80 000 and 100 000 people were killed over the full course of the war. While the Sri Lankan conflict is defined in terms of local religious and ethnic identities, its narrative is inseparable from wider claims to rights based on heritage that have been exacerbated by the involvement of UNESCO and the designation of a large region at the heart of the island as a World Heritage site.

There is little evidence for closure here. Gordon Weiss, who reported on the closing stages of the war, has described “a pervasive sense of guilt coated by a collective apathy born of the effort to forget ... unpunished murderers in palm-fringed villages share the streets with the families of their victims, and have done so for decades” (Weiss 2011). Mutual mistrust is rooted in the sharply polarized ethnic identities of Tamil and Sinhalese, with mutual stereotyping. For example after the ceasefire broke down and war resumed in 2005 those living in the north had unrelenting stereotypes of Sri Lanka’s south: “most knew nothing or very little of the Sinhalese-dominated state, other than as an aggressor intent on their destruction. Many of the people who lived in the Vanni had fled from the oppressive occupation of the army in the Jaffna peninsula, where they had seen torture, summary execution and the random killing of civilians in ‘security incidents’. This latent fear was exacerbated by the unremitting sledgehammer propaganda of the Tigers, who erected giant billboards throughout the area featuring gory mosaics of President Rajapaksa killing babies, and Sinhalese soldiers bathed in the blood of Tamil children. Just as in Israel, where Israeli children no longer speak Arabic and have never met a Palestinian, conflict had entailed a total separation of nationalities. Many of the young Tamils who filled the Tiger ranks had never met a Sinhalese” (Weiss 2011).

This ethnic stereotyping, which has defined and given continuing momentum to the conflict and which saturates life in Sri Lanka today, is closely tied into interpretations given to the island’s cultural heritage, which provides a continual trace of architecture, monuments, art and written texts that span more than 2000 years. The dominant convention, strongly endorsed by the state, is that the country’s heritage is a straightforward narrative of successive Buddhist states withstanding external aggression. In this interpretation, the Sinhalese lineage was established in the sixth century BC when the island’s first king was banished there from northern India. The Sinhalese state flourished at Anuradhapura until the fifth century AD, after which its rulers were forced to fend off continual aggression from southern India, retreating eventually to Kandy. After 1505, the Sinhalese were subjected to colonial domination by Portugal, the Netherlands and Britain, finally achieving independence in 1948 (see, for example, Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority 2013). The state’s heritage narrative, then, is one of proud and persistent defence of religion and civilization against external aggressors; Tamil Sri Lankans are, and always have been, an “enemy within”.

However, as has long been pointed out, neither the documentary or the archaeological evidence supports this straightforward interpretation. Both artistic representations on the remnants of urban architecture and excavations of living areas suggest a considerable degree of syncretism. This is supported by the documentary record, which maps a

complex history of alliances, intermarriages, disagreements and skirmishes with South Indian polities, which is hardly surprising, given the proximity of the island to the mainland. "Contrary to the view expressed in classical texts on North Indian elite groups instrumental in introducing advanced institutions to an island largely populated by backward forest dwellers ... intrusive techno-cultural elements from South India introduced the earliest recognizable social, economic, political and religious-cultural institutions to different ecological zones in Sri Lanka" (Seneviratne 1996:311).

Central to both Sri Lanka's nationalist claims to heritage and counter-interpretations of the historical records is the Cultural Triangle, a rich and extensive complex of archaeological sites and religious centres across the centre of the island, including the urban complexes of Anuradhapura, Ritigala, Polonnaruwa and Sigiriya. In the late 1970s, and in the face of growing Tamil counter-claims of historically-based rights to the land, the Sri Lankan government lobbied for the designation of places in the Cultural Triangle as a World Heritage site. UNESCO was wooed with a lavish display: "the first of January 1980 was a full-moon day and one of the most auspicious days of the year. Every effort was made to convince the Director-General of UNESCO to be present on that day to inaugurate the campaign ... there were 3000 monks at Jetavana monastery in its hey-day and that for the restoration we must have an equal number; 3000 chairs were provided and we had 4000 participants. We asked for 10000 children dressed in white to sit on the stone paving of the upper terrace; this too was done. The full complement of the Cabinet of Ministers was present on the inauguration dais. We hoped that 100 000 persons would attend and there were double the number on the occasion ... The vast upper terrace of the stupa was decorated along its perimeter with two hundred flag poles and a drummer to each pole. Strands of bunting in the colours of the Buddhist flag were draped from the top of the giant stupa to the base of each flag pole. The colour and spectacle of the occasion was completed by the procession of dignitaries, accompanied by dancers and drummers, who circumambulated the stupa once before climbing to the top of the three basal terraces and placing there a relic-casket to the chanting of sacred verses by Buddhist monks" (Silva 1993: 179-80).

UNESCO granted World Heritage status to the Cultural Triangle in 1982. Ten years later, this decision was reaffirmed by UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor: "the Cultural Triangle project is indeed steering the proper course with its underlying dedication to safeguarding the national cultural heritage in order to foster and strengthen a sense of identity that cannot but contribute to the socio-economic development of the whole nation. Let us seek together the best and most practical means to lead this campaign to a successful and rewarding conclusion" (Mayor 1990). This emphasis on the dominant, Sinhalese identity claims has, in turn, shaped excavation, conservation and restoration strategies with an emphasis on Buddhist Theravada sites with monumental structures, royal parks and sculptured art. Monuments belonging to 'heterodox' Buddhist sects such as the Mahayanist and Tantrayanist, as well as Hindu monuments, have not been accorded the same degree of importance, contributing further to writing more complex, alternative, histories out of Sri Lanka's prevalent heritage narrative (Seneviratne 2008).

This appropriation of cultural identity in the context of violent and escalating conflict resulted in heritage assets themselves becoming targets in Sri Lanka's war. In 1984, the LTTE carried out two attacks on the Cultural Triangle, killing pilgrims to Anuradhapura and resulting in the requirement for a strong security presence across the Cultural Triangle as a whole. Despite this the LTTE was able to carry out a successful attack on the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic in Kandy in 1998, coinciding with the celebrations for Sri Lanka's 50th anniversary of independence from British Colonial rule. Sixteen people, including three suicide bombers, were killed with extensive damage to the temple and to surrounding buildings.

But despite this Manichean representation of Sri Lanka's cultural heritage and its endorsement by UNESCO (which continues in the publications distributed at Cultural Triangle sites today) there has still been a persistent counter-narrative founded in the research and scholarship of Sri Lanka's rich corpus of texts and surviving material culture. For example Guneratne (2002) has shown how the separate historical lineages of Sinhalese and Tamil were a function of nineteenth century colonial typologies – now well understood in other contexts – and a contemporary, language-based nationalism. He, along with others, argues that Sri Lanka's primary historical links are rather with South India, which is not surprising given close geographical proximity. Rajasingham-Senanayake (2002) stresses the significance of cultural hybridity expressed through mixed settlement, intermarriage and bilingual and bicultural communities in many parts of the country.

The case of Sri Lanka, then, shows both how heritage can be deployed as an artefact of aggression in conflicts and how international agencies, claiming to be “above” politics, can be suborned by partisan positions. Here, indeed, cultural identities and claims to rights based in the past are so closely connected to the determinants of violent conflict that it is difficult to see how there can be lasting reconciliation without first resolving a master narrative of the country's history that is equally acceptable to Tamil and Sinhalese Sri Lankans.

Legacies of violence and engaged practice

The cases from Sri Lanka and South America show that the claim of analytical detachment, whether made in the name of archaeology as science or from an assertion of radical insight, is never justified: heritage practitioners are invariably implicated in the historical and political contexts in which they work. A more appropriate epistemology is Latour's insistence that “word” and “world” are part of a continuum of knowledge creation; a set of translations connected in a chain of “circulating references” that we “pass over” repeatedly and compulsively as we seek to deepen our understanding by both generalizing from particular instances, and by reducing the complexity of individual circumstances to their essential features (Latour 1999). In the context of the heritage of conflict and violence, this process of “packing the world into words” can be chillingly powerful. In Zarankin and Niro's work in Argentina, for example, the chaos and terror of detention and torture are reduced into a survivor's narrative and assembled along with the material traces of the detention centre and fragmentary police records as a set of

“circulating references” that are evidence for a persistent “technology of power”, a syndrome far more substantial than the individual experience.

Another important issue for discussion has to do with the temporality of violence. Memories of conflict tend to blur the duality between the recent and the deep past. It is usually assumed that the closer events are in time, the more they matter to people. Yet this is not necessarily always the case: traumatic events can be extremely resilient to disappear and the stubborn materiality of the past collaborates to this resilience. Remote events can be very important in the present, like the Mughal conquest of India during the sixteenth century, the defeat of Catalonia during the War of Succession (1712-1714) or the Jewish revolts of the first and second centuries AD (Bernbeck and Pollock 1996; Hernández Martínez 2012: 258-260; Kohl 1998: 238; Abu El-Haj 2001: 1, 55, 130). In all these cases, ancient wounds are part of the cultural memory of contemporary communities (Hindus, Catalonians, Jews) and heritage acts as a bridge to unite past and present: the supposed remnants of the temple of Rama, the ruins of the siege of Barcelona in 1714 and the citadel of Masada of the 1st century AD. They are not less controversial or important for present narratives than the last dictatorship in Argentina.

A strand that runs through much of the heritage work reviewed in this chapter is the relationships with local communities, victims and other individuals or collectives directly affected by conflict. Communities that have undergone traumatic political experiences are prone to be fractured along different faultlines, more so than in peaceful contexts. Archaeologists and heritage practitioners may be caught in a mesh of contending and incompatible narratives and memory practices (see Renshaw 2011; González-Ruibal et al. forthcoming). This may be aggravated when conflicts are ongoing (Goodhand 2000). Intra-community conflicts are usually difficult to navigate and require in-depth knowledge of the situation, which is often hard to acquire in the framework of a conventional archaeological or heritage project involving a team for a limited amount of time and a limited number of years. An approach is required that can build trust between local stakeholders, to better understand the intricacies of the political situation (see Meskell 2005). In countries that have been (or are still) ruled by dictatorship, silence towards certain issues is likely to prevail and some questions will be probably asked with standard replies showing compliance with the prevalent order. The community, participatory or public paradigm of science that may work under liberal regimes is then of limited use, and perhaps even counterproductive. It may then be necessary to develop new protocols for heritage studies under these sociopolitical circumstances.

In these circumstances, reconciliation is often cast as the primary objective, and is extensively appropriated by international institutions, funding agencies, heritage managers and scholars (Scham and Yahya 2003; Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2007; Carman & Sørensen 2009: 23). The concept of reconciliation, however, needs closer analysis, as engagement with the long tradition of a critical theory of violence shows. Along with concepts such as “peace”, “liberty”, the merits of reconciliation seem incontrovertible. Yet precisely because of this, such terms can become drained of real meaning. Some have

criticised an “ideology of reconciliation” which is rather a claim for national unity, forgetting past wrongs and foregoing justice (Schaap 2008). Despite the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, for instance, retributive justice has been elided, narration has superseded conventional juridical procedures and old structures of inequality and conflict have remained in place (Van der Walt et al. 2003). In this context heritage—a form of national narrative— may take centre stage, with sanitised and nostalgic displays (Hall 2006; Hall and Bombardella 2005; Meskell 2011; Shepherd 2013). Reconciliation may also be used to stifle dissent; under the pretext of social reconciliation, the government of Rwanda has instituted a law against “divisionism” as a weapon against political opponents (Waldorf 2009).

Partisan closure, however, is by no means the inevitable outcome of the use of heritage to attempt reconciliation after violence and conflict. Museums and heritage sites can rather become places where the political roots of conflicts are dissected and where debates around controversial issues are sparked. Criticizing the concept of reconciliation does not mean that this is not a viable objective: the idea is to develop a notion and a practice of reconciliation that can accommodate justice and dissent simultaneously (Schaap 2008). A good example here is the alternative approach to cultural interpretation, pioneered for Sri Lanka’s Cultural Triangle by Seneviratne. Writing in 2003, during the fragile cessation in hostilities, he argued that the the kinds of nationalist representations that had been staged at Anuradhapura in 1980 had resulted in a “crisis of education” that had “unleashed violent, anarchic and parochial responses from the next generation that is rapidly developing a bias towards social fascist and fundamentalist ideologies” (Seneviratne 2003: 180). Given this, he made the case for using Sri Lanka’s heritage resources for conflict resolution, launching a project at Anuradhapura that presented the diversity of Sri Lanka’s history that used the tangible heritage of the site: “rather than carrying out a monologue with the past, we now carry out a dialogue with the past. We now utilize archaeology and heritage studies as a major instrument of conflict resolution ... Unless and until we learn to present the past by incorporating all communities as its stakeholders and develop an unbiased historical explanation of the past, it will only alienate different groups for different reasons” (Seneviratne 2008: 193).

The outcome of approaches such as these can be the restoration of memory. In contrast to a reactionary nostalgia, such as the yearning of military juntas and their civilian supporters for a prelapsarian world of regimented order, a restored memory assists in processes of restitution and redress by insisting on understanding historical sequences of cause, effect and consequence (Boym 2001; Hall 2013). Documenting complex historical sequences through material evidence has always been, after all, the backbone of archaeology, whose work brings to light not only the glorious but the abject and violent as well. The discipline can thus be put at the service of post-conflict societies by promoting a deeper and more complete understanding of the past and by exposing the shortcomings of the simplistic views so cherished by ideologies of exclusion.

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