Negative Heritage and Past Mastering in Archaeology

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I mages of the World Trade Center site flooded the media in the aftermath of September 11, and have continued to do so in New York City. The World Monuments Watch moved quickly to feature Ground Zero in its October 2001 issue as a place of heritage, requiring both salvage and commemoration. The site was supra-positioned, listed as site 101 in their register of 100 endangered sites around the globe. The lingering physical marks of violence coupled with the mass grave site have reconfigured its value as a newly constituted tourist site, encouraging us to reflect on the economic and symbolic dimensions of heritage making. The president and the chairman of the World Monuments Watch declared that "weapons of mass destruction are not always aimed at battleships or military installations, but at the cultural icons that bind and inspire communities around the world," underscoring the significance of the WTC's historic import and potent symbolic capital. They describe how "our landmarks—the Mostar Bridge, the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan, and the World Trade Center— have become prized targets for terrorists because they are what defines the cultures, ideals, and achievements of the people who created them, who use them, who live with them" (Perry and Burnham 2001:3). Quite understandably, the authors have made a personal connection between their own expertise in the her-

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itage field and the events of September 11, yet they also reveal how the mate-
riality of certain sites is enshrined in our own culture and how dominant the lan-
guage of heritage has become. Despite the potency of the WTC site, it would be
unthinkable to preserve the site as it remains—it requires a complete reconfig-
uration including appropriate memorialization. In this regard it is a salient ex-
ample of what I would term "negative heritage", a conflictual site that becomes
the repository of negative memory in the collective imaginary. As a site of mem-
ory, negative heritage occupies a dual role: it can be mobilized for positive di-
dactic purposes (e.g. Auschwitz, Hiroshima, District Six) or alternatively be erased
if such places cannot be culturally rehabilitated and thus resist incorporation in-
to the national imaginary (e.g. Nazi and Soviet statues and architecture).

Monuments are mnemonics that may serve both as reminders of the past
and harbingers of the future (Lowenthal 1985). While seemingly uncontrover-
sial, "heritage" occupies a positive and culturally elevated position within many
cultures, yet we should recognize that not all individuals, groups or nations
share those views, or have the luxury of affluence to indulge these desires.
Moreover, we uncritically hold that heritage, specifically "world heritage," must
necessarily be a good thing and thus find it difficult to comprehend groups who
support counter claims, whether for the reasons of a religious, moral, eco-
nomic, or political nature. Exploring how cultural difference is accommodated
or elided within the language and practice of archaeological heritage forms the
focus of this paper. Taking these two volatile landscapes as my starting point, I
argue that the Bamiyan Valley and Lower Manhattan are salient markers that
compel us to reflect upon the ordinary construction and conventions sur-
rounding heritage, at home and elsewhere.

The World Trade Center as Heritage

In New York City on December 31, 2001, the Waterford crystal ball dropped in
Times Square to herald the New Year. Literally marked by the events of
September 11, the ball was inscribed with the names of those who died and
some of the countries who lost citizens in the attacks. The memorialization of
the dead through material culture has become a hallmark of post-September
11 culture. Place-making in New York has similarly intensified, from temporary
memorials, to thousands of tourists viewing the devastation, to the planning
and implementation of new buildings and statues. Some have experienced
the materialization as helpful in the healing process, while others see it as
commodified outgrowth typical of tourist voyeurism.[1]

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Closer to home there was an outcry against the blatant profiteering of a Georgia company marketing commemorative medals out of recycled steel from the WTC site. Selling for $30 on the web, the jewelry both represents the twin towers on the exterior and is part of the WTC by its very fabric.[2] Their clearly capitalist incentive was couched in claims to historic authenticity, asking "who wants a piece of history": whereas relatives of the victims were outraged that some are "making money out of our loss." The very fabric of the destroyed WTC towers will be an ever-present reminder of the attacks. In December 2001 large swathes of steel from the towers were hauled off to be recycled into appropriate memorial structures: "Fragments of the terrifying but graceful facades of the towers, which remained standing like some Gothic cathedral amid the ruins, had to be saved" (Lipton and Glanz 2002: 16). The structures will not be remembered in their present state but in an aesthetic and culturally acceptable design. Discussion over the potential form of the memorial and the projected use of space itself started almost immediately following the attacks.

We are witnessing the desire for grounded materiality at a staggering rapidity, to apprehend the objects and physical signs of a newfound heritage in real and tangible ways. This familiar desire for material commemoration and the physical marking of the event, is juxtaposed against the realization that the attacks (and the subsequent war on Afghanistan) have been experienced through virtual means. The events of September 11 have inaugurated a resurgence of the real, and of the violence of the real, supplanted within a supposedly virtual universe (Baudillard 2001). The moments of impact when the hijacked planes hit the towers were televised repeatedly, a fantasmatic screen apparition turned reality. It was the ultimate fantasy, albeit nightmare fantasy, foretold in H. G. Wells novel *War in the Air* (1908), Lorca's New York poetry, penned in 1929, and in innumerable Hollywood disaster movies (Zizek 2001: 17). "The Attack on America" and its sequels, "America Fights Back" and "America Freaks Out" have continued to unspool as a succession of celluloid hallucinations each of which can be rented from the corner video shop: *The Siege, Independence Day, Executive Decision, Outbreak*, and so on" (Davis 2001). But even in *The Matrix* with its *desert of the real*, famously recaptured by Zizek, the twin towers of the WTC survived civilization's destruction.[3]

The American public has been thrust back and forth between these two poles: the endless virtuality of the media coverage with its endless reproducibility and the aura of the real, material and spatial realities that have followed from the attacks. As a consequence of the virtual material tension, Ground Zero has been mythologized in what Blake has referred to as the "seis-

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mic shift of the spatiality of American patriotism" (Soja and Blake 2002:157). As part of a patriotic resurgence we have witnessed an increasing desire for materiality, for historical marking and heritage creation and consumption. We can be sure that another landmark will be added to the list, a yet untitled museum dedicated to the disaster, for which the selection of objects is already underway.

A team of architects, museum experts and city officials have been sifting and gathering artefacts and architectural pieces from Ground Zero for some time. They are compiling the "raw materials" for potential display as part of a museum collection and memorial. "The attempt is to create an archive that is already attracting interest from dozens of museums and artists, from the Smithsonian Institution to a museum in France to a sculptor in Greensboro North Carolina" (Lipton and Grlanz 2002:1). Yet the fetishization of the site and the objects within it has been left unchecked, they are simply "artefacts of anguish". There is something inherently disturbing about the incipient musealization of Ground Zero, about the desire to instantly represent it, capture its aura, commodify it, and publicly perform it again and again, simply because we can. "The artifacts, as the collectors call them, will be invaluable, if only as a tactile, three-dimensional expression of the unspeakable scale of the disaster...they serve as an ad hoc museum, though one unlike any museum that has existed before" (Lipton and Glanz 2002:16)[4]

In December 2001, the Coalition for the Rebuilding of Lower Manhattan released a pamphlet and reconfigured map of the area, simply entitled *Above Ground Zero*. It mirrors the site's transformations; a walking trail is delineated, viewing platforms are marked, ghost buildings are delineated by dotted lines, and temporary memorials are mapped onto the site with the iconic symbol of the teddy bear. Yet the map is not static, it has a built-in periodicity. The map makers indicate which buildings were struck by other buildings, and where debris is being hauled from cranes to barges on the Hudson river. This endless reproducability of the event in two and now three dimensions, inflected with an equally vehement desire for authenticity and material expression, has become the hallmark of our relationship with the recent past in Lower Manhattan. Yet one has the sneaking suspicion that already this negative heritage will become at best a global commodity fetish or, at worst, a nightmarish theme park.

Coupled with the presidential mandate to buy, travel, visit, dine out, go to the theatre and generally *consume*, some are encouraging us to voyeuristically participate in the constitution of a new tourist enclave. A Pennsylvania company planned to charge $2000 (U.S.) for an exclusive weekend package with extensive tours of the site. As one grieving family member remarked, "it is a bur-

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ial ground...a cemetery, where the men and women we loved are buried."
Others have likened it to "a freak show" where visitors gaze in the hope of see-
ing bodies retrieved (Murphy 2002), complaining that the site constitutes an
open grave that does not have to be publicly viewed in its present state, but
could rather wait till all operations were completed and a memorial erected.
The new musealization (Huyssen 1995:14) down town iterates the deathlike
qualities of heritage, made famous by Benjamin and Adorno. Museum and
mausolea have more than a semantic overlap, both entomb dead visions. So
how do we responsibly tour, much less capitalize upon, such a recent and dev-
astating nightmare come true? Surely this is the real unimaginable.

The Bamiyan Buddhas: Politics and Negative Heritage in Afghanistan

With political intent, the president and the chairman of the World Monuments
Watch (Perry and Burnham 2001) situate the destruction in New York City next
to that of the Taliban erasure of the Bamiyan Buddhas, suggesting an overt par-
allelism in both the perpetrators and causalities. Discourse surrounding de-
struction of the statues is linked to that of the WTC towers themselves, iterating
a discursive culture of barbarity and cultural iconoclasm. Both were undeniably
political acts with devastating results of differing extremes. As archaeologists we
might pause to consider the Bamiyan destruction since this does fall within our
purview and we are obliged to think through the entangled and uncomfortable
issues this episode presents. Here I want to explore the polymorphous inter-
ventions of negative heritage, since it can be mobilized in strategies of re-
membering or forgetting. For the Taliban, the Buddhist statues represented a
site of negative memory, one that necessitated jettisoning from the nation's con-
struction of contemporary identity, and the act of erasure was a political state-
ment about religious difference and international exclusion. For many others
today that site of erasure in turn represents negative heritage, a permanent scar
that reminds certain constituencies of intolerance, symbolic violence, loss and
the "barbarity" of the Taliban regime.

Decried as "cultural terrorism," the iconic destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas
is inexorably the major episode that defined the Taliban's relationship with the
past. They were destroyed using strategically placed dynamite as onlookers pho-
tographed the detonations. While a full discussion of the mediating circum-
stances lies beyond the scope of this paper, I attempt to briefly chart the diverse
and sometimes contradictory agendas of both the Taliban and the internation-

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al community, using recent reports that epitomize the conflicting politics sur-
rounding heritage and cultural difference. Recognition of cultural difference
does not entail Orientalist notions that Middle Eastern societies have failed to
constitute a civil society (Turner 1994) or that "primitive modernities" lack the cul-
tured priorities of their Euro-American counterparts, simply that certain groups
may have different relationships with their different constituent pasts.

On February 26, 2001 the Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar issued
an edict that the statues "should be destroyed so that they are not worshipped
now or in the future." UNESCO and the international community had fought off
an earlier threat of destruction in 1997. His decision to rescind the earlier
agreement occurred in tandem with Taliban clerics' opposition to the display of
pre-Islamic figures in the Kabul museum and may have been spurred by a vis-
it by Italian Buddhists. A proponent of the ultraconservative Wahhabi line of
Sunni Islam, Mullah Omar had previously issued a decree to protect the nation's
cultural heritage, suggesting that unilinear explanations based singularly upon
religion or politics cannot suffice. Others cite collateral factors, involving mili-
tary operations, internal politics and international relationships (Gamboni 2001)
to explain why heritage was held hostage. We cannot overlook the fact that
Bamiyan province is home to the Afghan Shiite Muslim minority and, directly
before the edict, control of this unstable region vacillated between the Taliban
and their opposition. Another determining factor was certainly animosity over
the Taliban's inability to achieve international recognition: the subsequent
economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council were on ac-
count of alleged links to Islamic terrorism. Ironically, since the United Nations
failed to recognize the Taliban, they made it impossible for them to nominate
the Bamiyan Buddhas for the World Heritage List of protected sites.[5]

The destruction formed a nodal point in national and international politics,
yet religion and politics are not easily disentangled. Gamboni (2001:11) argues
that "returning or reducing the Buddhas to their original religious function
(against all evidence to the contrary)—and exercising upon them the most rad-
ical right of the owner—amounted to a provocative affirmation of sovereignty,
not only upon the territory and the people but upon the values." Some inter-
national commentators saw these statues as part of living Buddhist tradition,
while many saw them simply as static markers of the past that had passed in-
to the realm of artefactual history.[6] These various assertions underscore the con-
flictual nature of heritage in multi-religious, transnational contexts. And while
UNESCO is making new attempts to recognize cultural and religious diversity,
these do not extend to extreme beliefs involving idolatry. According to a Taliban

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envoy, the destruction was undertaken as a "reaction of rage after a foreign delegation offered money to preserve the ancient works at a time when a million Afghans faced starvation." The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York had previously offered to buy the statues. What was clearly an iconoclastic gesture might have also been considered a vital international move to draw attention to the nation's plight, while simultaneously reinforcing its religious specificities. That most countries, organizations and individuals cannot condone this action is a given, my point here is to demonstrate the volatility of negative heritage, and its mobilizations, in specific political climates.

Just as there has been a new rhetoric of heritage around the site of Lower Manhattan, there has been an almost deafening cry over the "antiquities" toll in the devastated and war-ravaged Afghanistan. While many of these reported incidents are not new, they have suddenly been foregrounded as a result of Operation Enduring Freedom, American politics, and more cynically, by the U.S.-backed desire for the UNICAL pipeline that would potentially traverse the country. Archaeologists have recently been interviewed about the loss of antiquities and archaeological sites in Afghanistan and, given our profession, perhaps it is not surprising that many speak exclusively about the cultural toll of the war. One archaeologist stated that the American bombing would not do as much damage as the Taliban had done themselves, while another commented that archaeologists "would need to include a new line in the their grant proposals—for a "herd of goats" to walk first through suspicious terrain" (Cook 2001:2). Archaeologists are not generally known for their political acuity. In the widespread coverage of reported looting (museums and archaeological sites), little mention is made of the foreign intervention and warmongering that have framed the current situation.[7] One Afghani interviewee encapsulated the problem very simply: "What can we do? We are hungry. We have no food in our homes. We have to dig up these things and sell them...We don't worry about our history. We just think of our hunger." And while Afghanistan's provisional government claims a cessation of looting, others report that digging has continued. A local police chief retorted quite rightly that in the midst of such devastation archaeology seems like a small matter: "The government is very busy and has more important things to deal with, like kidnappings and killings."

There are uncomfortable repercussions from the outcry against Afghanistan and other developing countries over the protection of *their own* heritage. For example, many counties have yet to sign the 1954 Hague Convention, including Afghanistan, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Japan. The convention states that "damage to cultural property belonging to any people

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whatsoever means damage to the cultural heritage of all mankind, since each people makes its own contribution to the culture of the world" (UNESCO 2000:1). The Cold War destabilized the U.S. and Britain's commitment to preserving heritage in the context of war, and certain countries were unwilling to place limitations on the means of warfare. Since the Balkan crisis there has been active prosecution of offenses against cultural property by an international tribunal in the Hague, specifically the destruction of the Mostar Bridge and Dubrovnik (Prott, de la Torre, and Levin 2001:13). Phrased in terms of war crimes, this has set a precedent for future actions, perhaps potentially even those such as the bombing of Afghanistan. Speaking specifically about Afghanistan, Colin Renfrew has stated that "the time is ripe for an international convention to make the destruction of cultural artefacts a crime against humanity" (Bone 2001). The loss of heritage can easily be decried as a crime that effects multiple generations, erasing cultural memory and severing links with the past that are integral to forging and maintaining modern identities. Yet it is dangerous to place commensurate value on people and things and to couch these acts in a language reserved for genocide, since they do not inhabit the same order of existence.

There are other contradictions for archaeologists to face, such as the recent UNESCO recognition of cultural diversity. Within the discourse of global heritage there is little room for specific cultural, political or religious positions that diverge from Western, secularist viewpoints. World heritage is but one facet of the move towards globalisation and while a shared world heritage is desired by certain countries, it is not a universal presumption. The strategies through which such a construct would be achieved are also fractious. As of 2001, various countries including Britain, Germany, Switzerland, and Japan have failed to ratify the 1970 UNESCO convention to prevent the international trade in stolen art and antiquities. Since the 1950s there have been separate inter-American and European conventions in operation. Given these inequities, how can specific nations and institutions take the initiative to legislate for others? I am not suggesting we relinquish the desire to preserve international heritage, simply that we acknowledge the hypocrisy of specific organizations and institutions, especially the media, in their outcries to implement certain global policies and that we recognize the complexities of embracing real cultural diversity *on the ground*.

Moreover, there are cultural politics of a more transparent nature. First, on October 14, 2001, hundreds of right-wing Hindu militants stormed the Taj Mahal and defaced the white marble walls with graffiti, although it was barely covered in the Western media (Ghazaleh 2002). The religious nature of these destructive actions (i.e. anti-Muslim) had to be elided in the face of political ne-

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cessity. Second, Saudi Arabia has recently been charged with "cultural massacre" by the Turks over the demolition of an Ottoman fort in Mecca (al-Ajyad Castle). The 220-year-old castle, which was demolished despite protests and reassurances from the Saudis, was built on a hill overlooking the Grand Mosque by the ruling Ottomans in order to protect the city and its Muslim shrines from invaders. The Turks believe that the Saudis are trying to erase any memory of the Ottoman empire, while the Saudis claim that more space is needed to accommodate the increasing numbers of pilgrims who visit the holy shrines. The Turkish cultural minister has already made the obvious claim, likening the Saudi government to the Taliban and their destruction at Bamiyan. Yet the Saudi Arabian situation is formulated upon ethic cultural difference rather than religious, since both are Islamic contexts. This incident has received little coverage and, since Saudi Arabia is an important American ally and oil provider, it is unlikely to cause many ripples. To date neither the U.S. or UNESCO has intervened for a number of reasons: politics, timing, and cultural value. This incident provides a sobering example of the political dimensionality of heritage, and what constitutes *worth* saving.[8]

Destruction of a specifically "monumental" past was at issue in the Bamiyan valley. Yet the past is destroyed in every excavation performed; it is a central understanding of the discipline that archaeology is a destructive process. Professionals also make choices about what is saved and what is not; "salvage archaeology" is premised on the recognition that not everything can be maintained or preserved. Innumerable sites are also destroyed for economic reasons, mostly for the purposes of development, and decisions are made on a daily basis about what constitutes historical significance and what falls short.

Conservation is a critical act and a means of extending and cementing cultural identities and historical narratives over time through the instantiation of cultural heritage (Matero 2000:5). Similarly, the very concept of destruction is a culturally situated one. For example, the implementation of the ICAHM charter in Thailand ensures the integrity of existing physical fabric of religious shrines (stupas), whereas Thai practice acknowledges the inevitability of decay, mirrored in the Buddha's final lesson on impermanence (Byrne 1995). Furthermore, the practice of removing antiquities, preserving them and even museum containment may be considered destructive by indigenous groups: Native American and Aboriginal communities would be the most obvious examples. What happens when the directive to conserve results in a cultural construal of loss? If heritage must be problematized through the lens of cultural difference, then the related antithetical concepts of conservation and destruction also have to be rethought.

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Past Mastering

Both the World Trade Center and the Bamiyan valley give us pause to ask an un-pleasant question. What is to be done with dissonant heritage, heritage that does not conform to prevailing norms or sites that are inherently disturbing? Archaeologists and other cultural arbiters make decisions about erasure, the forms of history that are designated as unworthy or undesirable. All negotiations with conflictual heritage ultimately entail a certain past mastering.

A salient example of negative heritage, as played out over the long term, can be seen with certain strands of recent European history. Europe has witnessed a long history of war and persecution between nations, classes, races and reli-gions that has left its own legacies, which inevitably contradict putative notions of unity and thus present a clear challenge to any deployment of the past to promote integration. In the 1985 Convention for the Protection of Architectural Heritage of Europe, cultural heritage is to be deployed at three prioritized lev-els: European, national and regional (UNESCO 2000:70)—integration being the prime motivation. Negative heritage will undoubtedly be elided in a deliberate policy of collective amnesia, or will alternatively be re-interpreted (fictionalized) within a new commodification of European heritage (Ashworth 1995:81).

Not everything can be saved or perhaps should be. An obvious example would be the remnants of a Nazi past, as symbolic capital inflected with the emotions of guilt, loss and mourning. Negative heritage has been so pervasive in post-war Germany that a specific term, *vergangenheitsbewältigung*, is used to convey the process of coming to terms with the past, of mastering it (Rosenfeld 2000). Post-war Munich confronted its survivors with an enormous task with re-gard to its architectural legacy: some opted for a radical purging and denazifi-cation, others for adaptive normalization. Three constituencies emerged in the decades that followed: modernist, traditionalist, and those that saw the didac-tic potential of a "critical preservation" of the Nazi past. Monumentality was in-timately tied to memory, but also with forgetting and moving forward. By preserving the monument the social obligation to engage in more active re-membrance is partially removed, its inherent exteriority affects the internal ex-perience (2000:108). Moreover, Holocaust monuments have been accused of topolatry, especially at the sites of extermination. This view holds that monu-ments betray the memory, since memory is internal and subjective and thus in-compatible with public display and musealization (Huyssen 1995:258).[9]

There has been no fixed policy over the ensuing decades towards dealing with Nazi heritage. While numerous buildings and symbols were eradicated af-ter the end of the war, in the 1970s some were protected as potential didactic

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heritage in the ongoing project of penance, resulting in an inconsistent treat-
ment of Nazi architecture. Problematically, these sites have also been reinvig-
orated as neo-Nazi places of pilgrimage and operate as staging grounds for the
potential resurgence of Nazi ideology. Germany still wrestles with the polar
positions of cleansing the Nazi past or mobilizing it as a didactic ruin field: *ver-
gangenheitsbewältigung* remains an ambiguous concept of past mastering.
Ironically and hauntingly parallel to the heightened activities at Ground Zero,
Rosenfeld suggests that touring Nazi buildings in cities like Munich may provide
the most effective strategy of economic and emotional adjustment so that
tourism may represent the ultimate past mastering.

Past Talk: The Language of Heritage

From the outset, heritage has concerned itself with issues of identity, locality, ter-
ritory, ethnicity, religion and economic value. Western constructions of heritage
have also been consistently informed by the fabric of Christianity, despite the
avowedly secular nature of contemporary society, and have yet to find a way of
incorporating Christianity's historic enemy, Islam (Graham et al 2000:25).
Historically, our present concept of heritage crystallized in Europe in synchrony
with the origins of the nation-state, while the notion of the past as a resource for
the present is also characteristic of the modern era. Intimately connected to the
Enlightenment, the formation of national identity relied on a coherent nation-
al heritage that could be deployed to fend off the counter claims of other groups
and nations.[10]

Heritage is connected to issues of ownership and like other natural, non-re-
newable resources, is seen as a scarce commodity or property. There are two im-
plications here worth exploring: the first deals with notions of ownership and
control, the second with an essentialized vision of the past as akin to a natural
resource. Among many Native American or Australian Aboriginal groups "the
past" is not to be bought or sold, studied or scientifically tested, displayed or ob-
jectified in ways that Western participants might see fit or unproblematic. The
past is a teleological category in our case, whereas other groups do not perceive
our version of the past as past at all. Contemporary repainting of Aboriginal rock
art sites is a case in point: some may see this as tantamount to vandalism,
whereas indigenous people are appropriately conducting their traditional life-
ways, living and interacting with what outsiders deem a separate, reified cate-
gory, *the past* (Mowaljarlai *et al.* 1988:692). Relationships to heritage such as
these cannot be captured in the male-biased language of patrimony or own-

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ership, nor can they reside within the dominant perspective that valorizes a val-ue-hierarchical, dualistic, rights based framework (Warren 1999:15-6), thus challenging the adequacy not only of our semantic categories, but of our fundamental conceptual taxonomies that reflect the very hallmarks of our distinctive modernity.

Residues of the past exist in the present as archaic reminders of a world that was, albeit in infinite variability rather than monolithic expressions or reflections. Those material residues cannot be "authentically" recreated and are thus finite. In the U.S. the first steps toward site protection came about with Roosevelt's 1901 Forest Service, followed by the 1906 Antiquities Act, the natural preceding and shaping any notions of an archaeological past. The Antiquities Act gave the president discretion to protect "historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures" that were situated on lands owned or controlled by the government and also to create reserves. This act also recognized that "significance" is tantamount to "historical, scenic and/or scientific values" as mirrored by the first sites nominated (Grand Canyon, Death Valley, Joshua Tree etc: McGimsey and Davis 1984). Natural resources and places provided the model for this paradigm of non-renewability and are similarly marked as sites and places that entreat protection and visitation.[11] Employing the same language and criteria for inclusion (i.e. outstanding aesthetic and scientific value, universal value, historical import), archaeological remains are literally naturalized, perhaps even perceived as "god given?" It is unlikely that the two are ideologically or conceptually comparable (although living communities are similarly marginal to each), and the conflation eschews the social construction and value systems inherent to both. Such compounding serves to present the role of archaeologists as good conservationists or ecologists (literally saving the planet).

I focus on the construct of global world heritage, since its discursive formulation has assumed an overwhelmingly positive mantle in recent decades. However, global world heritage could be perceived by some as an extension of the colonial project, traveling to, knowing and mapping territories outside one's own national boundaries. The language of the UNESCO conventions reinforces Western notions of *value* and *rights*, while the *ownership* and *maintenance* of the past is suffused with the concepts surrounding *property*. A close reading of the language of heritage, specifically the UNESCO conventions embody older paradigms of cultural history and traditional art historical value-systems instead of the more recent alignment of archaeology with social anthropology and the social sciences.[12] The convention clearly recognizes that not all property can be listed, rather only those select few that are outstanding from an "international

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viewpoint." Further it states that the committee can act with "full independence in evaluating the intrinsic merit of property, without regard to other considera- tion" (UNESCO 2000:26). First of all, this operates within the language of pre- sumed objectivity, a hangover from the era of positivism, and second, it erases the centrality of cultural issues whether, social, political or religious. Other sec- tions of the convention make overtures to "local people" that might be construed as cultural pluralism: "participation of local people in the nomination process is essential to make them feel a shared responsibility" (2000:27). However, much of this redeeming language is paternalistic, interpolating "locals' and their her- itage into predetermined schemes of global world heritage.

The notion of a common heritage has recently been amplified by the bur- geoning global museum, heritage park and tourist industries. World heritage and world tourism recursively reinforce and enhance each other in an ever-grow- ing and influential lobby. Since the proliferation of global tourism after WWII, high profile campaigns such as the "Save Venice" movement or the UNESCO rescue of Abu Simbel are salient examples of this connectivity (Ashworth 1995:71-2). Furthermore, the very concept of world heritage is flawed by the fact that it priv- ileges an idea originating in the West and requires an attitude toward material cul- ture that is also distinctly European in origin. The fact that world heritage is underpinned by the globalization of Western values has ultimately prompted challenges, resistance, and misunderstandings. UNESCO policy (2000:1) analo- gously attempts to conflate global and local interests: "cultural and natural prop- erty demonstrate the importance, for all the peoples of the world, of safeguarding this unique and irreplaceable property, to whatever people it may belong...parts of the cultural or natural heritage are of outstanding interest and therefore need to be preserved as part of the world heritage of mankind as a whole." French ar- chitectural historian Françoise Choay, has referred to this imperialism as the "ec- umenical expansion of heritage practices" (Gamboni 2001:9). Any real success of world heritage will depend upon the degree to which the Enlightenment in- spired universalism gets sanctioned as truly universal.

The language of UNESCO might seem pervasive and implacable; however there are clear national alternatives already in operation. I see real potentials for the fu- ture of heritage as crystallized in the language and expressed sentiment of the Australian Burra Charter. The charter recenters the place of culture in a living context termed "places of cultural significance," rather than as reductively static ob- jects of outstanding artistic or scientific merit. These places are important be- cause they provide an "inspirational sense of connection to community and landscape" that are part of lived experience. Place is connected to "tangible ex-

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pressions of Australian identity and experience" with the acknowledgement that places of "cultural significance reflect the diversity of communities." Heritage is both to be cared for and *used* by various groups, if deemed appropriate.[13] There are well known cases where public information is withheld, such as the locations of sacred sites, and entire tracts of countryside have been returned to Aboriginal custodians such as Uluru. Correspondingly, there is a clear recognition that for some places "conflicting cultural values may affect policy development and management decisions...including, but not limited to political, religious, spiritual and moral beliefs. This is broader than values associated with cultural significance" (Burra Charter 1999).[14] While this national document cannot double as a global mandate, it certainly does reflect a heightened awareness and concern for cultural difference, the clear inclusion of indigenous groups with whom ultimate decision making resides, and a focus on conflict resolution that is not evident in the older UNESCO conventions. Moreover, it explicitly advocates a multi-disciplinary approach, ongoing negotiation, and aims for, where possible, the co-existence of differing viewpoints and traditions. Australia has effectively been a world leader in constructing heritage in partnership with indigenous communities and has not been open to the types of criticism sustained by the United States (see Lilley 2000).

Closing Thoughts

Violence, sanctioned memory and the politics of place have inescapably constituted sites of heritage in Lower Manhattan and in the Bamiyan valley. Through these extreme examples we are impelled to rethink the more mundane, but no less political, constructions of the past and those specific sites that are consecrated as heritage. After all, the material world is a constant reminder of an ever-present past and yet certain decisions by particular individuals and organizations render particular places as valuable, important, aesthetic and meaningful. Heritage inhabits spatial, temporal, cultural and economic domains, however the notion of cultural good is often synonymous with economic success. The language of cultural heritage is synchronous with that of the natural world—a non-renewable resource that is to be preserved for the benefit of a common humanity. But who defines a "common heritage" and "common humanity" in the age of recognized cultural difference? The Burra Charter has been used as a positive example of one nation's attempt to negotiate, and even relinquish control of heritage, in the face of cultural diversity.

This essay has revolved around the deployments and interventions of something I have termed negative heritage, which operates between the dual poles

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of transformation and erasure, depending on the social and temporal context. Timing is key in decisions to erase heritage sites, whether Nazi architecture or the Bamiyan Buddhas, where specific national modernities cannot rehabilitate or accommodate specific manifestations of the past. And only time transforms negative or dissonant heritage into the romantic monuments and theme parks of collective nostalgia. Ancient sites are purified through the march of time and the cultural amnesia that accompanies temporal passing. How can we define or apprehend an arbitrary moment in time that transforms the product of the past into an object of heritage? Preservation privileges the construct of historical respect rather than the needs of the present (Adorno 1981:175). Archaeologically, an object re-touched or re-worked in antiquity is of interest to scholars, yet this same process is denounced or actively prevented when it occurs in living contexts. By what mechanism is authenticity compromised? It can only be the arbitrary passing of culturally determined time that sanctifies the past as past.

Returning to Ground Zero, we have witnessed the rapid and devastating transformation of the World Trade Center from the penultimate site of virtual capital into a site of negative heritage, replete with numerous instances of contemporary and potential musealization. It is timely that we thus ask what constitutes appropriate memorialization in this volatile context. What will be remembered and forgotten? How will the didactic potential of the site and the cultural capital of museums and memorials be balanced against the extreme pressure of economic and political forces? Numerous groups remain buried at the site: occupants of the WTC, fireman and policemen, migrant workers and the highjackers. We are now at an important juncture: the ongoing memorialization of the event can take the shape of current nationalist fervor, highlighting the "axis of evil" and the war against terrorism, or can attempt to mediate between the numerous agendas and interest groups and mobilize the materials of the very recent past to confront religious, national and cultural difference, and to perform a service in the public sphere. Given the disenchantment of a post 9/11 world, the latter calls for a hybrid heritage where multiple meanings and a multicultural agenda are tacitly embraced from the outset. New York City, the ultimate world city, can make a public and powerful connection between the events of September 11 and thus potentially further the understanding of cultural difference and intolerance in a global context.

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END NOTES

[1]Material signs also serve to link nations and individuals, making emotional and semiotic statements. A battered flag, raised by firefighters at the WTC site in the early aftermath of the attacks, was sent to Afghanistan to be flown at the site of a temporary prison holding Taliban prisoners. As a material referent for the events of September 11 (inscribed with the names of the victims), it was a symbolic act that instantiated and justified the retaliation. Original ownership of the flag was then called into question by yacht owners, Shirley and Spiro, who claimed it was taken from their boat moored in Lower Manhattan. Chen, D. W. 2002. "For History or Tax Break, Claiming a Sept. 11 Icon," in *The New York Times*, pp.35. New York, March 3. In all these mobilizations, authenticity is paramount.

[2]Items such as shell casings and bullets from European battlefields in WW1 were also crafted and transformed into material culture memorabilia by soldiers and widely distributed. The processes of commodification and profit were, however, not the primary motivation or concern. Saunders, N.J. 2000. "Bodies of Metal, Shells of Memory: "Trench Art" and the Great War Recycled," *Journal of Material Culture* 5:43-67.

[3]In the film human beings are mere batteries for the new mechanical world order, although they live in a perpetual dream state, deluded through virtual means by a simulation program called the matrix. Many cultural commentators have drawn attention to the present blurring of genres.

[4]A comparable example would be the musealization of Hiroshima.

[5]The timing of Mullah Omar's edict was key: it was issued while a SPACH delegation was in Afghanistan and during a high-profile UNESCO conference on the fate of cultural heritage in Central Asia.

[6]Pakistani archaeologist Ahmed Hasan Dani, argued "they are not here to be worshipped. They are works of art."

[7]Looting in the US and other nations similarly remains a significant concern. Brodie, N, Doole, J and Renfrew, C. Editor. 2001. *Trade in Illicit Antiquities: the Destruction of the World's Archaeological Heritage.* Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research.

[8]Cases which evoke the most vociferous outcries over loss are those which represent aesthetic sites—those which tacitly fit Western criteria for artistic merit and cultural meaning. While not all heritage is salvaged, many cultural commentators feel more able to point the finger at developing countries such as Afghanistan citing reasons of ignorance and barbarism, while downplaying religious sensitivities, local feelings, economic necessity or the implementation of other systems of knowledge and value. Archaeological heritage in these specific locales can easily be transformed by political machinations: the Buddhas were in desperate need of conservation for many years with little concern. Higuchi, T, and G. Barnes. 1995. "Bamiyan: Buddhist Cave Temples in Afghanistan," *World Archaeology* 27:282-302. Righteous indignation fomented when Afghanistan became a flash point and the Taliban became demonized throughout the world, reiterating the truism that archaeology is imbricated in political struggles and is far from value-free.

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[9]Auschwitz receives over 70,000 visitors or pilgrims each year. Cole, T. 1999. *Selling the Holocaust*. New York: Routledge.

[10]In England, John Ruskin and William Morris were confronted with the mass destruction of the past from burgeoning capitalism and industrialization. They were among the first to promote stewardship, arguing that one generation had no right to destroy remnants of the past since heritage belonged equally to future generations (Gamboni 2001:7).

[11]An examination of the UNESCO Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage Convention and the European Landscape Convention clearly reveal the isomorphic relationship between cultural and natural heritage.

[12]Article 1 of the convention purports three categories: monuments, groups of buildings and sites. In defining what constitutes "outstanding value," criteria are listed as "history, art or science" as opposed to living traditions, communities etc. Criteria include "a masterpiece of human creative genius," "a civilization," or "a significant stage in human history" that can "meet the test of authenticity." UNESCO. 2000. "Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (Paris 16 November 1972)." US/ICOMOS Scientific Journal–International Cultural Heritage Conventions 2:19-36.

[13]Here Aboriginal people are the most important stakeholders, Article 32.2.

[14]The Cultural Diversity Code (essentially an ethics code that accompanies the Charter) acknowledges that "cultural difference is the responsibility of society as a whole; in a pluralist society, value differences exist and contain the potential for conflict; and ethical practice is necessary for the just and effective management of places of diverse cultural significance."

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