INTRODUCTION

THE IMPACT OF CONFLICT ON CULTURAL HERITAGE: A BIOGRAPHICAL LENS

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THE CONCERN OF THIS VOLUME IS THE WEB OF MEANINGS AND connotations associated with particular places as a result of wars, conflicts, and their aftermaths.[1] It is about how cultural heritage is both affected and generated by conflict, and how such heritage is subsequently interpreted, responded to, and used. The chapters brought together here arose from a large collaborative research project, funded by the European Union, that explored the uses of cultural heritage in post-conflict reconstruction processes in five countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, France, Germany, and Spain, with case studies added from Denmark and Serbia. The authors who together explored the varied facets of these processes brought with them a wide range of academic backgrounds, including archaeology, environmental psychology, geography, history, international relations, politics, and social anthropology; and all perspectives were needed as these are complex and intractable processes which affect individuals, generations, and policies. Together we explored different aspects of the historical processes and sought suitable methods for investigating dramatic and often still traumatic parts of the European cultural space. One major outcome is the detailed account of a number of specific places as presented in this volume and in the YouTube videos (http://www.youtube.com/user/CRICResearchProject) that accompany it. Through these two sources the means by which places are rethought and remade during post-conflict phases, including reconstruction, are considered and analysed. In particular, the volume demonstrates that places are not just 'the heritage of war' but actively participate in the recovery and remaking of communities.

Situated within the growing literature on the agents of memory of war (e.g., Ashplant et al. 2004; Bevan 2007; Gegner and Ziino 2012; Winter 2001), this volume demonstrates that the aftermath of conflicts can be analysed through the changes wrought to particular places as they absorb the impacts of conflict and emerge with altered roles, connotations, and meanings. This, however, does not mean that place is a passive receptor. On the contrary, the chapters show that place itself, just like people and institutions (Gegner and Ziino 2012: 3), can exercise agency, a dimension of post-conflict heritage construction that has been little explored. The scope of the volume is, therefore, at once broad, paying particular attention to post-conflict heritage landscapes, and sharply focused on the minute, and the at-times seemingly banal changes that post-conflict reconstruction activities introduce to the places we live in and with.

There are several reasons for the approach advocated in this volume. First, the approach recognises that the complex phenomena of post-conflict heritage needs to be analysed and contemplated at different scales, ranging from studies in the instrumentalisation of decision making to the scrutiny of the links between actions and effects. Second, it acknowledges the importance of materiality and aims to introduce this underexplored dimension into debates about post-conflict heritage. Third, by investigating place the volume responds to the need to shift the gaze from the impact of conflict on particular monuments or collections to encompass a broader understanding of heritage including the significance of the temporal and geographical dimensions of place and how these contribute to the wider meanings of heritage. Finally, the approach retains the intimate relationship between heritage, place, and identity helping to demonstrate their interconnectedness.

The particular focus of the volume is on what may loosely be termed 'recon-struction activities', taking these as the analytical lens through which we examine the impact of conflict and its aftermath on social identities – in particular, the construction of meaning and the sense of belonging in places. These complex relationships can be analysed from a number of angles and at different scales. Here we have chosen to investigate the biographies of particular places. This specificity allows us to pinpoint how cultural heritage is affected or indeed made by conflict, and how it can become activated by post-conflict reconstruction and recovery activities. Place was selected as a means of addressing both the concrete impacts and the intangible marks that conflicts leave on the fabric of specific sites: buildings, monuments, bridges, parks, or squares. Place is a powerful focus because it is at once the means and the medium for reconstruction and recovery efforts. In addition, there is clear evidence that places imbued with symbolism have often been targeted for deliberate destruction during conflicts. This gives such places additional layers of meaning post-conflict causing them to become foci of attention during reconstruction. History shows us both how frequently

such places are deliberately targeted and how often they have been used as tools for the rebuilding of belonging and meaning. The concept of biography of place is therefore a powerful tool for analysing in detail how meaning of place is reconstituted during conflict and post-conflict.

Accordingly, this volume presents the biographies of a number of places that, through a series of circumstances born of modern European conflicts, came to play important historical roles in their particular localities and in the shared imaginary of Europe as a whole. Each place has in various ways been affected by conflict and reshaped by post-conflict activities, tensions, and intentions. The aim is to explain the importance of such places for the reconstruction of society after conflict and to show how they are used in various ways to voice concerns, claims, and interpretations of the conflict, to 'move on' or to silence memory. Embodying certain discourses, these sites become significant, influencing how societies come to formulate accounts of events and how they envision the future. What the case studies clearly indicate is that some places become iconic representations of complex events, gaining an array of meanings that transform them into signifiers for understandings that go well beyond their own context-specific histories and which sit apart from official heritage valuation and management policies. Irrespective of their 'heritage value', such sites become 'invested places' that are owned by larger communities. Some of the chapters make it possible to explore these dynamics and to analyse the processes through which sites become iconic, their destruction becoming 'memory events', and their very names signifiers for wartime violence. When looking at these sites we therefore try to look beyond the layers of symbolism to understand what actually happened at and to the place. Indeed, one of our aims is to track the processes through which places acquire or lose meaning, how particular understandings are generated, but also how these may be manipulated or changed. The biographical approach allows the authors to hone in on particular places, analysing how the processes of interpretation and reinterpretation unfold through time, and how claims about historical events are shaped through different post-conflict stages and experiences and by different kinds of actors. In so doing the volume also explores how conflicts can continue to live on in different forms as a result of the reconstruction and remaking of places. Our overall ambition is to aid the understanding of post-conflict reconstruction processes and their impacts by connecting wide-ranging, theoretical appraisals of reconstruction and memorialisation to the insights that arise from analyses of the specific physical places through which they are articulated.

ON LEGAL INSTRUMENTS AND ESTABLISHED PRACTICES

The consistent connection between war and heritage is the main concern underwriting this volume. Examples are wide-ranging, including cases from

different historical contexts and from different countries, and they consistently illustrate how heritage can be called upon to back political claims, legitimise power, or inflict harm on opponents. The destruction can take many forms (Viejo-Rose 2007: 103), including deliberate targeting, misuse, looting, vandalism, and iconoclasm. A key moment in the official recognition of this relationship dates to the Napoleonic Wars, when the vast scale of rampant looting and destruction was acknowledged at the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815). This concern was furthered through the development of nation-states, which throughout the nineteenth century boosted a sense of identity through references to a national past (e.g., Díaz-Andreu and Champion 1996), resulting in growing awareness of national ownership of cultural heritage. As a result, the notion of national cultural property became increasingly important in the definition of identities, belonging, and boundaries (Anderson 1983). This national reframing of heritage was accompanied by various attempts to develop formalised and binding legal instruments, including some pertaining to cultural property during war. These were not heritage laws as such, but rather regulations included under rules of war. The Lieber Code of 1863, prepared during the American Civil War (1861–1865), is often cited as the first stage in this process of codification (Schindler and Toman 1988). It detailed the conduct of Union soldiers, ordering them to protect art, libraries, scientific collections, and instruments 'against all avoidable injury', and to acknowledge and protect 'cultural objects and sites in occupied territories' (Boylan 1993). The Lieber Code was instrumental for the subsequent formulation of the Hague Conventions on land warfare of 1899 and 1907 and other international treaties. Today the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its subsequent protocols of 1999 are core instruments; the principles for cultural property set out in these conventions have become part of customary international law (O'Keefe 2006; Toman 1996).

A number of significant issues pertaining to our understanding of heritage and its protection are embedded within this legal history. One is the disquiet about the deliberate destruction of heritage as opposed to collateral damage that gradually became an area of explicit concern. The distinction was clearly acknowledged in the 1954 Hague Convention and has become further emphasised in more recent texts such as the 2003 UNESCO 'Declaration concerning the Intentional Destruction of Cultural Heritage'. Another is the complex relationship between heritage and conflict as revealed in early legal texts, notably in their reference to 'cultural property' rather than heritage. This terminology, of course, connects heritage to concepts of ownership and material value, and focuses concerns on return and reparation – a conceptualisation that overlooks the complexities of immovable and intangible heritage and introduces an unhelpful (and often inaccurate) assumption of ownership being well defined. A further consequence of the focus on heritage as property is

that legal concerns are limited to its physical integrity and develop no measures to protect against other forms of misuse and appropriation.

These attitudes to heritage are carried forward into post-conflict reconstruction efforts. In practice, reconstruction plans often focus entirely on tangible cultural heritage with scarce recognition of its intangible dimensions and are carried out within a simplistic understanding of ownership and heritage value. There is also a strong tendency for heritage reconstruction to be undertaken separately from concerns about social recovery, resulting in links between different aspects of communities' recovery being poorly understood and the importance of cultural dimensions underappreciated. Heritage reconstruction guidelines are primarily formulated according to architectural conservation practices such as those in the Venice Charter of 1964; the ideal is that the integrity of the monument should not be distorted (Articles 14–15). This means maintaining or returning the monument to its original state, employing minimal interference and clearly marking interventions. The guidelines are grounded in a position that sees the original state as the authentic form, thus leaving it unclear how later historical additions and changes, including those caused by conflict, can become part of the site and may need to be acknowledged during reconstruction. This reflects an attitude towards heritage that presumes it can exist in isolation from its wider contexts. Post-conflict reconstruction of heritage is carried out as if it involves a purely technical process, a matter of stone and mortar, rather than of meaning and symbolism. Moreover, post-conflict reconstruction as a social project is usually discussed from the point of view of politics, where security, rule of law, and governance overshadow interrelated issues to do with memory and cultural impact. The collaborative effort presented in this volume has therefore been guided by the pressing need to analyse reconstruction processes historically to understand what is actually involved, in what is never just a project of physical conservation, but also part of the establishment of a new meaning-scape. Without analyses of the seminal decisions and dynamics that drive the (re)construction of symbolic places, the nature and consequences of these processes will continue to evade us. The chapters in this volume thus seek to connect the material aspects of reconstruction with their symbolic, social, and political dimensions to understand them as processes, and thus trace how meanings are generated, shared, contested, and transformed.

ON THE AGENCY OF MATERIALITIES: HERITAGE, SITES, AND PLACE

In the past two decades the ways in which we look at cultural heritage have evolved dramatically, and we are beginning to come to grips with its complex nature and its multi-faceted ramifications. The research that underlies this volume made a conscious choice to move beyond traditional sites of heritage,

such as monuments and museum collections, to look closely at how particular places become so laden with symbolic meaning and affective associations that they are seen as cultural heritage by various groups or by the state. In so doing we hope to enrich our understanding of heritage and more specifically the multiple ways in which conflict creates and transforms it. Motivating this decision was also our concern that there is a lack of substantive work on how cultural heritage fares in situations of armed conflict and their aftermath, despite a recent growth in the study of heritage sites representing or embodying conflict or contestation – often collectively termed 'dissonant' heritage (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996), 'difficult' heritage (Logan and Reeves 2008; MacDonald 2009), 'heritage that hurts' (Uzzell and Ballantyne 1998), or 'dark' tourism/ 'dark' heritage (Lennon and Foley 2000; Carr 2012). We have also seen a growing concern with the relationship between war and memory that includes deliberations over the role of heritage (e.g., Gegner and Ziino 2012; Winter 2001). Nonetheless, we still lack in-depth analysis and comparative studies of the nature of such sites, including debates about on what basis we identify some as 'sites of conflict' or 'war heritage' while ignoring others. To understand this intuitive nomenclature, we need to scrutinise the processes through which such sites come into existence, their varied impacts, and what causes the meanings associated with them to change over time. This volume aims to link such considerations to detailed factual investigations.

It is well known that heritage sites act as anchors of symbolic meaning in urban and rural spaces, that they contribute to the construction of places, and that they are crucial to the relationship between people and their built environments. Not all places are the same, however, and why and how some become linked to heritage in a significant manner is not well understood. At one level, their construction as significant heritage depends on recognition and agreements; it is in this sense that heritage is a process or discourse rather than merely tangible remains (Smith 2006). Nonetheless, we argue that the places themselves – their physical character – also matters, and that understanding the impact of materiality, and the effects and influences that tangible heritage may have, is essential to detailed analysis of such places.

This concern with materiality sits in an interesting tension with recent discussions of the concepts of site and especially that of place, as there have been calls for more nuanced insights into how such spatial entities are created and how they are contingent on their construction through meaning making and action. Within such discussions 'site' is often used to imply a physical location, whereas 'place', it is argued, is created through meaningful engage-ment or is considered to represent the social construction of 'placeness'. The tension is only an impression, however, as both site and place need anchorage; both concepts comprise materiality even if this characteristic has not been the subject of substantial consideration in recent theorisation. The exception is the

phenomenological approach to landscape in which the physical setting plays a formative role through its impact on how individuals interact with space (e.g., Tilley 1994).

Here we aim to demonstrate that materiality is an important aspect of place. It affects our phenomenological encounter with particular places through both their physical presence and their visual effects; but impact goes beyond the bodily encounter. Places are also loci for experiences and events, means of recall, and foci of memory. Through these connections places provide testimony to events: they are evidence. They are the tangible results of bombings, battles, reconstructions, decay, and dismantling. Places exist in networks of references, citing other places through repetition or borrowing of forms, and in their materiality places carry meaning – linked to other places and over generations. Our experiences of the built environment that we inhabit, and our formation of connections to it, are profoundly influenced by its materiality.

In terms of conflict and post-conflict activities these tangible qualities of place are important, helping to explain why such places become targeted – for both destruction and reconstruction. Firstly, their physicality creates an obvious focus for attention and activities; alterations to their physical form can be observed and responded to: the 'message' of the destruction is unavoidable. Second, as argued above, they matter because within this physicality lie intangible values, which explain why some places are imbued with symbolic meaning and emotions and others are not. Places can therefore be used as tools both for the destruction and for the rebuilding of society, including ephemeral aspects such as belonging and meaning, sense of value, and notions of integrity.

Conflict affects the heritage in a manner that can be tangible, immediate, and visual, and through this it also affects the intangible meanings and associations linked to such heritage; post-conflict reconstructions similarly affect both dimensions. Moreover, because of the close interconnections between tangible and intangible heritage, it is difficult to damage the one without also affecting the other. Understanding the quality of materiality is therefore essential to our task, as it provides the tangible focus of experiences, practices, and meanings. The aim of the volume is therefore not only to explore how war impacts certain places but also how these in turn, irreversibly transformed by the conflict, shape behaviour and attitudes.

Responding to this challenge, this volume provides the biographies of a number of places, analysing how through their tangible presence and trans-formations they came to play specific roles in post-conflict processes of rebuilding and recovery. In some cases the particular buildings or sites studied became memorial sites, in others they became sources of conflict and dissonance, and yet in others they were used for the purpose of reconciliation or in the creation of new identities. Comparison across the cases illuminates the variegated ways in which place has agency, how in the aftermath of conflict it

shapes attitudes and creates atmospheres, and how it acts as a signpost of meanings both old and new. Collectively the cases therefore help to illustrate some of the diversity of how these connections are drawn and redrawn.

ON DESTRUCTION AND CONSTRUCTION: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURAL HERITAGE AND WAR

The relationship between cultural heritage and conflict involves a dynamic of construction, destruction, and reconstruction: new heritage sites emerge as a result of conflict even as existing ones are targeted, obliterated, and reinterpreted. Existing research on the impact of armed conflict on cultural heritage tends to focus either on its destructive effects on the physical integrity of sites or on the attempts to mitigate that destruction, increasingly expressed in terms of 'cultural emergency relief' (e.g., Frerks et al. 2011). Although these are all important contributions, what this volume addresses is the often-neglected dimension of conflict as transformative of cultural heritage, how it engenders new sites and adds new symbolic dimensions to existing ones even as others are destroyed and disappear. It thus adds to the emergent research areas concerned with the creation of war heritage (e.g., Gegner and Ziino 2012), but aims to bring attention to the processes and mechanisms involved by presenting sites as co-authors of their own history in order to avoid treating heritage merely as a victim or product of war. Heritage sites have particular agency for they are effective means of creating narrative links between people, their pasts, and their surroundings including potentially contradictory claims. The memorial site at Verdun is both one of mourning and loss, and one of creation of a national spirit, pride, and hope for a different future. Dresden's Frauenkirche can be simultaneously a symbol of hope and of suppression, just as Gernika's rebuilt square can be an aspiration to both tradition restored and the establishment of a new order. Such cases show how places may contain semantic contradictions without losing their evocative power.

Conflict transforms how landscapes are read and buildings understood; battles and atrocities imbue certain places with new significance even as others seem to be forgotten. This can be observed in media coverage of wars in which dramatic headlines single out specific places or events, such as 'The Tragedy of Guernica. Town Destroyed in Air Attack' (*The [London] Times*, 28 April 1937), or more recently 'Mostar's Old Bridge Battered to Death' (*New York Times*, 10 November 1993). As a result, certain heritage sites are prioritised, drawing horrified gazes to their destruction. But as argued above the relationship between cultural heritage and armed conflict runs far deeper than such material damage, and questions arise about intentionality and consequences that accompany the destructive acts (Viejo-Rose 2011a: 53–58) and which deeply influence their long-term impact. Cultural heritage can be deliberately targeted

in order to damage an opponent's morale or its tourist industry, to send a
message about the cultural distinctiveness of the 'other' or to defy the interna-
tional community, threatening and installing fear. The consequences of this
form of violence pan out over a long period: from the immediate shock and
grief, to a protracted period of mourning over the loss, to longer-term feelings
of resentment, to a generation that grows up without the materiality of that
cultural referent. This volume shows that only by considering the long view is it
possible to begin to appreciate the full impact of violence on cultural heritage.

Post-conflict reconstruction efforts are a crucial part of this impact. Even
when buildings and monuments are rebuilt, the narrative of their destruction
usually remains mixed in with the new mortar. The impossibility of recovering
the damaged heritage sites as an untainted original by restoring them to their
pre-conflict state is clearly a reality on the ground, although belied by most
reconstruction rhetoric and guidelines. Different examples of these tensions are
explored in the volume. In the cases of Gernika and Dresden, we investigate the
transformation of places that were already highly symbolic before they were
subjected to catastrophic aerial bombardments, whereas in the case of Belgrade's
Generalštab the symbolism arose directly from the building's destruction.

MEANING AND MATERIALITY IN THE AFTERMATH OF CONFLICT: A SLIPPERY RELATIONSHIP

The impact of conflict on heritage is thus not limited to the conflict itself, for
cultural heritage is equally used and transformed during post-conflict phases
when efforts are aimed at the recovery of society. Moreover, the interpretations
and propagandistic uses of the conflict and its destruction of heritage usually last
well into the post-war period and taint the reconstruction (Viejo-Rose 2011a
and b). In the aftermath, cultural heritage can therefore be used to serve a
number of functions acting simultaneously as receptor, container, and reflector
of intention, meaning, and emotion. Whether it is rebuilt, restored, ignored, or
preserved in a ruined state, each action will be presented and interpreted as part
of the construction of the new, post-conflict, society. New heritage sites
emerge as a result of this process.

Despite these complex links, the aftermath of conflict is a weakly defined area
of cultural politics, and although there are some legal precedents and frame-
works available for reparation and repatriation activities, such as the 1954 Hague
Convention, there are no clearly formulated guidelines for post-conflict recon-
struction planning, responses, and directions. The guidelines that do exist,
moreover, are often fragmented in terms of differentiated tasks spread out and
formulated by a wide array of institutions with varying agendas and more-or-
less short-term aims. In practice, the reconstruction of material cultural heritage
is therefore commonly separated from the thinking about the urgent and

pressing needs of societies emerging from conflict. In recovery, culture is set well down the list of priorities, which are headed by 'hard', though undoubtedly crucial, political goals such as security and rule of law. As a result, the reconstruction of cultural heritage is primarily formulated according to architectural and museum conservation guidelines, such as the 1964 Venice Charter, that indicate professional 'best practice' for the conservation and restoration of monuments generally. This approach focuses on technical processes and does not provide nuanced guidance on the essential influences and importance of symbolism, nor how these influences are intricately linked to societies through a fine mesh of associated ideas, beliefs, and traditions. In this volume, we seek to bring these two dimensions back together and explore how what happens to cultural heritage during conflict and in its aftermath ultimately impacts on the reformulation of community values and identities.

BIOGRAPHY OF PLACE

The concept of biography has in recent years been applied outside its original reference to the stories of individuals and is used increasingly as an approach to the study of things as well as landscape and place. The concept of the biography of things is, for example, widespread within cultural studies. Influenced by writing such as Kopytoff's 1986 article 'The Cultural Biography of Things', it is argued that people and things are entwined, or that they inform each other: '[a]t the heart of the notion of biography are questions about the links between people and things; about the ways meanings and values are accumulated and transformed' (Gosden and Marshall 1999: 172). In its application to portable things the concept of biography has been useful for acknowledging and analysing the changing meanings of objects and of seeing the relationship between people and things as a kind of entanglement (Appadurai 1988). Although it may be criticised for maintaining an anthropocentric understanding of how the world is constituted, it replaced earlier approaches that tended to present things as passive reflections of society and people's intentions. Granting importance to the biography of things also carved the way for later arguments about the agency of objects leading to increased recognition of the formative influence objects may have and how they assert agency on their environment, including affecting meanings and actions (e.g., Gell 1998) or arguments for the blending of human life and things (Latour 2005; Olsen 2010: 129ff.).

Surprisingly, the concept, and thus the analytical lens, that the biographical approach can provide, has mainly been used for the study of portable objects. Other kinds of materialities, such as places, have not been equally explored, ignoring the potential for enhancing analyses of places both as artefacts of material practices and as agents. Granting things and places agencies would move us 'towards understanding them as co-constitutive of the world, as beings